

**“Selling Soldiering to Consumers: Advertising, Media, and the Volunteer Army”**

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## **Selling Soldiering to Consumers: Advertising, Media, and the Volunteer Army**

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University of Pittsburgh, 2013

A study of the United States military's recruiting during the "all-volunteer," post-conscription era requires synthesizing scholarship on advertising, propaganda, and politics. Throughout the twentieth century, before the draft ended, advertisers contracted by the US government waged countless national campaigns meant to inform, persuade, and rally, producing what cultural historian Paul Rutherford describes as the "colonization of the American public sphere." Some of the most iconic advertisements touted military service. "We Can Do It!" and "Uncle Sam Wants You" are icons of American recruitment history that originated as advertisements in propaganda posters. Their legacy remains potent after decades of distance. In the late 1960s during the Vietnam War, the United States military faced numerous public relations challenges due in part to the momentum of the anti-war movement. The mass medium of advertising provided a venue in which image control could be asserted. With a major shift toward the volunteer concept of manpower recruitment and retention impending, advertising strategies became more important than ever before. This project investigates the role of advertising in transitioning the army branch, in particular to a volunteer recruitment model. The army has had the largest ranks to fill and the most challenged reputation, which is why it is also the branch that enjoys the largest recruiting budget. Drawing on rich archival materials and extensive research, I argue that the origins of volunteer-era recruiting strategies predate the overturn of the draft by

decades and that recruiting advertisements operate ideologically in addition to their practical intent. By tracing the evolving conceptions of service in depictions, I examine the cultural influences, political contexts, public policy, and visual representations that enabled the volunteer military to be a success. In revealing the above, I also provide an overview of the history of the advertising industry's partnerships with the department of defense across the twentieth century.

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## **PREFACE**

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First and foremost, I could not have pursued this study without the wisdom, enthusiasm, and tireless feedback from my advisor, Dr. Ronald J. Zboray, and one of my mentors, Mary Saracino Zboray. I first began investigating the topic of volunteer era recruitment in one of their graduate seminars on audience reception. My final paper studied the evolution of modern army advertising campaigns, and this interest blossomed into a research project that has engrossed me for years. Due to their thoughtfulness and consideration, I was informed regularly about citations, calls for papers, and information regarding grant funds. One of these leads resulted in a predoctoral research fellowship where I collected the materials for this project.

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Women's Studies Program, which supported research in the National Archives in 2006. And I thank the Women's Studies Program at Pitt for not only providing me with the research funding but for also allowing me the opportunity to present portions of this research on two separate occasions, in their Brown Bag Lecture Series. The John W. Hartman Center for Sales, Advertising, and Marketing History at Duke University supported me in 2006 with a Travel to Collection Grant to research in their JWT archive, where Marine Corps account work is located. Thank you to the library staff there, especially Lynn Eaton, who helped me with materials and allowed me to present my work while on-site.

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I want to thank my daughter, Emilia Irene for inspiring me want to try harder, and to be a more empowered, more intelligent, and more productive woman. Because of her, I hope to set the kind of example my mother was for me.

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

A study of the United States military's recruiting during the "all-volunteer," post-conscription era requires synthesizing scholarship on advertising, propaganda, and politics. Throughout the twentieth century, before the draft ended, advertisers contracted by the US government waged countless national campaigns meant to inform, persuade, and rally, producing what cultural historian Paul Rutherford describes as the "colonization of the American public sphere."<sup>1</sup> Some of the most iconic advertisements touted military service. J.M. Flagg's 1917 poster, featuring the World War I slogan, "Uncle Sam Wants You," beckoned patriots to enlist in the army.<sup>2</sup> A strong, decisive female figure (reminiscent of "Rosie the Riveter") in the famous 1942 J. Howard Miller poster proclaimed during World War II that "We Can Do It!"<sup>3</sup> These icons of American

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Rutherford, *Endless Propaganda: The Advertising of Public Goods* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), xiii, 237-255.

<sup>2</sup> The definition of advertisements is complicated due to the practices of synergy, cross-promotion, product placement, and the increasing overlap between entertainment media and marketing. For this dissertation military recruitment advertisements are defined as print, televised, or digital commercials crafted specifically toward the sole purposes of promoting recruitment, enlistment, retention, and public favor for the United States military branches. Accordingly, film texts featuring plotlines or characters that include positive depictions of military service or patriotism are not placed in the same category as military recruitment advertisements. They could be considered military recruitment tools but this dissertation does not regard them as ads.

<sup>3</sup> The icon of "Rosie the Riveter" appeared first as the subject of a song in 1942 by Redd Evans and John Jacob Loeb. Norman Rockwell also illustrated a cover of the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1943 that featured a "Rosie." "Rosie the Riveter," is often conflated with the woman in the "We Can Do It!" poster. "We Can Do It!" emerged from a Westinghouse "War Production Coordinating Committee" campaign. For further reading on the history of "Rosie the Riveter"

military history originated as advertisements in propaganda posters but their legacy remains potent after decades.<sup>4</sup> In the late 1960s, the United States military faced numerous public relations challenges due in part to the increasing momentum of the anti-war movement. The mass medium of advertising provided a venue in which complete image control could be reasserted. With a major shift toward the volunteer concept of manpower recruitment and retention impending in the 1970s, advertising strategies became more important than ever before.<sup>5</sup> A new, market-driven All-Volunteer Army's (AVA) task was to construct demand in order to maintain a steady supply of soldiers. By harnessing advertising to facilitate demand during an unpopular war, the military and its advertisers were better prepared to employ mass media recruitment during the volunteer era. Advertising buffered what many feared would be a doomed transition to the AVA. To do so, the Department of Defense (DoD) increased recruitment spending for all of the armed service branches, especially for the army. And, more so than ever before, they targeted audiences of women of all races as well as male racial and ethnic minorities to fill the ranks. Army recruitment appropriated the rhetoric of the civil rights and women's rights movements, in framing the armed services as an Utopian meritocracy, where gender, race, and/or ethnicity mattered far less than ability. With the help of mass media and a commercial advertising agency, the DoD ushered in the massive recruitment transition.

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images, see James J. Kimble and Lester C. Olson, "Visual Rhetoric Representing Rosie the Riveter: Myth and Misconception in J. Howard Miller's 'We Can Do It!' Poster," *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 9:4 (2006): 533-570; and Lincoln Cushing and Tim Drescher, *Agitate!, Educate!, Organize!: American Labor Posters* (Ithaca, NY: ILR Press, 2009).

<sup>4</sup> A lively market exists for collecting original and reproduction posters of military propaganda ads. The iconic statuses of "Uncle Sam" and "Rosie" translate into pop cultural references and branding onto everyday commodities such as t-shirts, buttons, calendars, tote bags, etc. The continued use of these figures evidences the cultural longevity that advertising can possess.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas W. Evans, "The All-Volunteer Army After Twenty Years: Recruiting in the Modern Era," *Army History: The Professional Bulletin of Army History*, no. 27 (Summer 1993), 40-46.

In 1973 when conscription was discontinued, military pay was increased as an enlistment incentive, and, for the first time ever, the Army began advertising on national television.<sup>6</sup> There remains a common misconception that conscription ended in the United States to reflect public opinion so that politicians could appease anti-war, anti-draft constituencies following Vietnam. Although an unpopular war and draft-weary public helped condition the acceptance of a volunteer military, historian Beth Bailey credits prominent economists, including Milton Friedman and Allen Greenspan, who successfully proposed the viability of a “free-market” military to lawmakers.<sup>7</sup> The All-Volunteer Military’s (AVM) task was to construct demand to maintain a supply of soldiers in all the branches. But the All Volunteer Army (AVA), in particular, faced steep challenges due to issues of size and status. The army branch had the largest ranks to fill and the lowest reputation among the armed forces.<sup>8</sup> To compensate, the AVA’s early recruitment budget dwarfed those of the other branches.<sup>9</sup> Print and television commercials for the AVA implemented individualistic strategies of marketing, promising recruits the access to opportunities rather than framing service as a civic duty. The volunteer army also used multiple media to disseminate mass messages thanks to the advancements in televisual and, eventually, digital technologies. The goal became to reach recruits as individuals, in their domestic, increasingly technology-equipped spaces.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Beth Bailey, “The Army in the Marketplace: Recruiting the All-Volunteer Army,” *Journal of American History* 94:1 (June 2007): 47-74.

<sup>8</sup> See Beth Bailey, *America’s Army: Making the All-Volunteer Force* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009) 69-71; and Richard W. Stewart, ed., *American Military History Volume II: The United States Army in a Global Era: 1917-2003* (Washington DC: Center of Military History, 2005), 370-71.

<sup>9</sup> K. A. Goudreau, “Draft- Seminar on Recruiting Research, 1/30/1978,” Accession Number 94-074, Box 5, Folder 1, in Smithsonian Institution Assistant Secretary for the Sciences, Manpower Research and Advisory Services Records, Smithsonian Institution Library (Hereafter, “SIL”).

Historians and political theorists who study the volunteer era, such as Beth Bailey, Bernard Rostker, and Melissa Brown trace the practice of army recruiting based on personal incentives and targeting audiences demographically, and based on specific configurations of gender, race, ethnicity, and/or class to the periods either during or immediately following the Vietnam War.<sup>10</sup> But the origins of volunteer military recruitment strategies and sales pitches can be traced deeper into the history of twentieth century conscription. Although conventional wisdom follows that identity-based marketing would increase significantly when it became most necessary, i.e., after the end of the draft, my extensive archival research locates this approach to military marketing back in the 1940s, if not earlier.

In the 1970s, emphasis on individualism and individuality in the army's recruitment tactics reflected a neo-liberal rationale made by Gates Commission economists and military strategists who explored the possibility of eliminating the draft.<sup>11</sup> The commission was

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<sup>10</sup> Rostker, Bailey, and Brown have contributed tremendously to the study of the American military during the volunteer era and as my citations will show, my own research would be impossible without their work. As the literature review will demonstrate, this project intends to complement the expanding catalog of volunteer era recruitment histories. See Bernard Rostker, *I Want You! The Evolution of the All-Volunteer Force* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2006); Beth Bailey, *America's Army: Making the All-Volunteer Force* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009); and Melissa T. Brown, *Enlisting Masculinity: The Construction of Gender in US Military Recruiting Advertising during the All-Volunteer Force* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012). See also Samuel W. Black, ed., *Soul Soldiers: African Americans and the Vietnam Era* (Pittsburgh: Senator John Heinz Regional History Press, 2006); Rachel Brett and Irma Specht, *Young Soldiers: Why They Choose To Fight* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2004); and Peter A. Padilla and Mary Riege Laner, "Trends in Military Influences on Army Recruitment: 1915-1953," *Sociological Inquiry* 71:4 (2001): 421-36.

<sup>11</sup> I use the term neoliberal to reference the economic theory of neoliberalism, which emphasizes and encourages individualism, the primacy of free markets, and governmental deregulation. See Pierre Bourdieu, *Acts of Resistance: Against the Tyranny of the Market* (New York: New Press, 1999).

assembled by President Nixon to research the viability of an All Volunteer Force (AVF).<sup>12</sup> Its resulting report asserted, “We unanimously believe that the nation’s interest will be better served by an all-volunteer force.”<sup>13</sup> The recommendation did not come without skepticism and controversy. Military sociologist Charles Moskos argued that “The abandonment of conscription (in the US) has jeopardized the nation’s dual-military tradition, one half of which... is the citizen soldiery.”<sup>14</sup> Morris Janowitz, another prominent military sociologist, feared that a volunteer force would lead to “a predominantly or even all Negro enlisted force in the army,” because of economic hardships that disproportionately harm underprivileged racial minorities.<sup>15</sup> Anthropologist Margaret Mead argued in favor of a national service system because it, “would provide an opportunity for young adults to establish an identity and a sense of self respect and responsibility.”<sup>16</sup> Citing socio-economic inequality, then-president of Saint Xavier College in Chicago, Harry Marmion wrote that a volunteer concept was undemocratic. He charged that self-interest guided many of the arguments for ending the draft, and posited that an “all-volunteer army would liberate the middle class from the legal necessity of serving but commit others to compulsory service by economic circumstance... in effect, forcing the poor and the less fortunate

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<sup>12</sup> Thomas W. Evans, “The All-Volunteer Army,” 40-46. The AVA or all-volunteer army was formerly titled the modern volunteer army or MVA. This could be because most of the Civil War was fought by volunteers, and remained all-volunteer until July 1863.

<sup>13</sup> Thomas S. Gates Jr., *The Report of the President’s Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force* (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1970), iii.

<sup>14</sup> Charles C. Moskos, “From Citizens’ Army to Social Laboratory,” *Wilson Quarterly* 17:1 (1993): 85.

<sup>15</sup> Morris Janowitz, “The Logic of National Service,” in *The Draft: A Handbook of Facts and Alternative*, ed. Sol Tax (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), 67.

<sup>16</sup> Margaret Mead, “A National Service System as a Solution to a Variety of National Problems,” in Tax, *The Draft*, 105.

into the armed forces.”<sup>17</sup> Even the phrase “volunteer service,” signifies unfettered free will. It becomes problematic to imply such agency when the economic incentives promised to enlistees through recruitment communications ensure that those who are the most in need are also those most drawn to service.<sup>18</sup> As political scientist, Ronald Krebs observed, “Leading scholars of civil-military relations often argue that the installation of the AVF in 1973 marked the end of, or even ... severed the link between citizenship and military service.”<sup>19</sup> And moral as well as philosophical arguments about the importance of service as a civic duty circulated widely, within military circles before and during the volunteer era.<sup>20</sup> As Beth Bailey writes, among the high-ranking military members of the Gates Commission who were less enthusiastic about ending conscription, there were five major categories of concern:

(1) an all-volunteer force would be alienated from civilian society, thus undermining civilian control of the military and increasing the likelihood of a coup d'état; (2) an AVF would have negative effect on civilian society because military service offers education and training and makes men better citizens; (3) an AVF would lead to unnecessary military involvements overseas; (4) an AVF would lower military morale and be less effective; and (5) an AVF would be less flexible and less able to meet emergencies.<sup>21</sup>

Other military personnel worried about the potential for lowered standards of admission, should service demands not meet the supply of volunteers. One of the philosophical worries was that shifting to a volunteer force would alienate the civilian public from the realities of military life,

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<sup>17</sup> Harry A. Marmion, *The Case Against a Volunteer Army: Should America's Wars be Fought Only by the Poor and the Black?* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1971), 46.

<sup>18</sup> In the volunteer configuration of recruitment, the very notion of service shifts to refer more so to the employment opportunities and benefits rather than civic obligations.

<sup>19</sup> Ronald R. Krebs, “The Citizen-Soldier Tradition in the United States: Has Its Demise Been Greatly Exaggerated?” *Armed Forces and Society* 36:1 (Oct. 2009), 153.

<sup>20</sup> Bailey, *America's Army*, 26-27.

<sup>21</sup> Citing minutes from commission meetings she found in an archive, Beth Bailey noted that one additional, oft-repeated concern that the list overlooked was the fear that an AVF would be “all black.” This fear was assuaged as unlikely with casual racism, “given (the) present military standards” for admission. See Bailey, *America's Army*, 29.

particularly during times of war. The human costs would be obscured from economically privileged groups for whom the incentives offered for enlistment were available via other means. Given the host of concerns and anxieties surrounding a volunteer concept of the United States military, it is surprising that the transition was successful enough to endure.<sup>22</sup>

Many scholars of American volunteer military history agree that during the draft-era, service in the armed forces was framed as a civic obligation.<sup>23</sup> Conversely, the free-market economy of recruitment was incentive-based and demand-driven.<sup>24</sup> The market-driven military advertised like a business, branding itself carefully to audiences.<sup>25</sup> Print advertisements and the new television commercials paraded the myriad of economic incentives to enlist. And the characters in the 1970s ads embodied intersecting ideals of valor, strength, citizenship, and self-motivated ambition more than ever before. By offering increased military salaries, access to comprehensive health care, potential tuition benefits, career training, etc., the AVA advertised more than just patriotic cultural capital to prospective recruits.<sup>26</sup> It promised individual socio-economic upward mobility in an increasingly neo-liberal cultural milieu.

When I first began researching military recruitment, I intended to study the AVA's advertising campaigns from 1973 to the present day. My research question then asked, "How can we understand and situate the role of advertising in the transition to a volunteer concept of military service?" After examining the history of military advertising at length, I learned that the corporate advertising agency responsible for transitioning the army to the volunteer era, which

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<sup>22</sup> See Rostker, *I Want You!*, 747-56; Bailey, *America's Army*, 165, 172.

<sup>23</sup> Krebs, "Citizen Soldier Tradition," 153-174.

<sup>24</sup> Bailey, "Army in the Marketplace," 47-50.

<sup>25</sup> Bailey, *America's Army*, 26-27.

<sup>26</sup> Pierre Bourdieu wrote about non-financial forms of capital, such as cultural capital that influence structures of power, social interaction, and access to privileges. See his *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (London: Routledge, 1984).

eventually authored the iconic “Be All You Can Be” campaign, was hired by the Department of Defense to craft campaigns for the branch back in the 1940s. And the advertising industry writ large assisted with military propaganda first during World War I. Both of these realizations have influenced the chronology of my project and provoked new research questions. Harford Powel famously explored, “What the War has Done to Advertising,” in his 1942 article exploring American advertising during World War II. I reverse the question: What has advertising done to (and for) military marketing?<sup>27</sup> Additionally, I wished to investigate the relationship between volunteer era recruitment strategies and previous conscription-era advertising for the military. In order to understand fully the advertising industry’s partnerships with government in support of the American military, it became necessary to reconfigure and broaden the chronology to encompass the twentieth century.

My dissertation examines the origins and evolution of recruitment strategies for the all-volunteer army, through their partnership with the commercial advertising agency, N.W. Ayer and Son. The army’s post-conscription recruitment campaigns, “Be All That You Can Be,” “Army of One,” and, most recently, “Army Strong,” required enormous budgets that far exceeded those of all other branches combined.<sup>28</sup> And there remains a presumption that the sophisticated, highly individualized, multi-media recruitment of contemporary time started in 1973, when the draft was overturned. I argue that the origins of many volunteer era recruitment practices date back to the period of twentieth century conscription in the United States. With a

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<sup>27</sup> Harford Powel, “What the War Has Done to Advertising,” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 6:2 (Summer 1942): 195-203.

<sup>28</sup> The Army’s 2006 recruitment and advertising budget was \$854,146,000 and the total of all the branches was \$1.4 billion. Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), “Defense Budget Materials FY2006,” *US Department of Defense Official Website*, <http://www.defenselink.mil/comptroller/defbudget/fy2006/index.html>, accessed 15 Dec. 2007.



host of examples from primary source materials, I demonstrate how a strategy of using individual incentives as the justification for enlistment pre-dates the volunteer era by decades, appearing extensively in conscription-era recruitment. Even a variation of the renowned “Be All You Can Be” slogan appeared first in in a Women’s Army Nurse Corps advertisement recruiting nurses for Vietnam in the 1960s.<sup>29</sup>

The army branch’s methods of advertising military service, before and following the draft’s end, developed rapidly to accommodate broader trends in consumer marketing, popular culture, and civilian life. Technological advancements enabled the AVA to recruit with incredible specificity, using old and new media, including television, radio, print, the Internet, electronic gaming, and other digital venues. And the biggest shift in recruitment advertising following the draft’s overturn, came in representing a demographically diverse army, and employing the rhetorics of women’s rights and civil rights to pursue racial, ethnic, and/or gender minorities with promises of equality through service. The venues for mediation of recruitment messages diversified, too. During WWI and WWII propaganda posters served as a primary venue for positive military marketing. By the 1970s and into the 80s and 90s, military recruitment messages infiltrated the domestic spaces of potential recruits via the most advanced technological tools available. Consumer research practices from marketing research and business literature enabled military recruiters to craft individualized recruitment appeals with increased efficacy. Recruitment in the domestic realm intended to disarm military skepticism and reluctance by issuing calls to serve through otherwise mundane channels of passive entertainment: by advertising in popular magazines, on successful television and radio programs, and eventually through video games, websites, comic books, and more. Military messages strove

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<sup>29</sup> See Chapter 3 below.

to colonize the lives of potential recruits with emotionally-branded, pro-service, incentive-based messages. Overt and covert advertisements (in English and in Spanish) aired on television, radio, websites, and in movie theaters, supplementing print ads and billboards. Action-packed video games promised authentic battle and first-person combat simulations. Some of these digital games were distributed at no cost to consumers who already had access to personal computers. Passive recruitment was complemented by active, traditional recruiting officers, assigned geographically, and according to socio-economic data. They frequented high schools and ran Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps programs, facilitated through provisions in American public policy. Armed Services Career Centers could be found in shopping malls across America. Recruiters used emails, websites, household and cellular telephones.<sup>30</sup> Implementing this multi-pronged approach required a great deal of money as well as teams of expert ad men and women to mobilize resources and apply emerging persuasive techniques facilitated by new communication technologies.

In order to examine pre- and post-AVA recruiting advertisings' styles and strategies, I must first establish the history of and relationship between advertising and military recruitment (Section 1.1). Next I take a closer look at the advertising agency that worked for the army branch for decades, and during the transition from the draft to a volunteer era (Section 1.2). After that, in Section 1.3 I conduct a review of relevant literature. I follow with how this work will contribute to existing scholarship (Section 1.4). The method of compiling materials and conducting this research is introduced in Section 1.5. And to conclude, I preview each of the chapters.

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<sup>30</sup> [Section 9528 of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001](http://www.defenselink.mil/prhome/docs/no_child_act.pdf), Section on Military recruitment (PDF - English), Accessed 18 Jun. 2008, [http://www.defenselink.mil/prhome/docs/no\\_child\\_act.pdf](http://www.defenselink.mil/prhome/docs/no_child_act.pdf).

## 1.1 A BRIEF HISTORY OF (MILITARY) ADVERTISING IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

As recruitment budgets ballooned in the volunteer era, the US Army account was coveted by some of the largest marketing firms in the world. The same ad agencies that have produced campaigns for DeBeers, Microsoft, Disney, Ford, Visa, MasterCard, Phillip Morris, and McDonalds have been employed by the Department of Defense to create advertisements that sell the unusual commodity of soldiering.<sup>31</sup> In 1973 N.W. Ayer and Son, who had handled publicity for the Army since 1967, weathered the transition to AVA. They were responsible for the 1981 “Be All That You Can Be” slogan that remained the Army’s tagline for 20 years. In 1987, facing a scandal concerning misallocated funds, Ayer was forbidden to bid on a subsequent contract.<sup>32</sup> The firm of Young & Rubicam won the coveted deal and was the advertiser for the Army from 1987-2000. The Leo Burnett firm developed “Army of One,” serving the Army from early 2001 to late 2005. Since late 2005, McCann Erickson worked for the AVA, with “Army Strong” representing the newest campaign.<sup>33</sup> The AVA’s roster of firms included some of the most

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<sup>31</sup> For access to many iconic ad campaigns and their creators, see Bob Garfield, “Ad Age Advertising Century: Top 100 Advertising Campaigns of the Century,” *AdAge Website*, 1999, <http://adage.com/century/campaigns.html>, accessed 5 Dec. 2006.

<sup>32</sup> Philip H. Dougherty, “Advertising: Ayer is Challenging Army’s Latest Move,” *New York Times*, 27 Jan. 1987.

<sup>33</sup> On the transition from Ayer to Young & Rubicon during the “Be All That You Can Be” years, see Phillip H. Doherty, “The Media Business: Advertising; Pentagon Faults Army Ad Placing,” *New York Times*, 6 July 1988. On Young & Rubcam’s conclusion of the “Be All You Can Be,” campaign, see Steven Lee Myers, “Army, Its Recruiting Not All It Could Be, Decides to Overhaul Its Advertising,” *New York Times*. On “Army of One,” read James Dao, “Ads Now Seek Recruits for ‘Army of One,’” *New York Times*, 10 Jan. 2001. On “Army Strong,” see Gary Sheftick, “Army Selects New Advertising Agency,” *United States Army Official Website: News Section*, 13 Dec. 2005, <http://www4.army.mil/racing/read.php?story=8330>, accessed 30 Dec. 2007.

reputable and experienced in United States advertising history. But the army's relationship with N.W. Ayer in particular, is worthy of close examination, due to its length as well as its timing.

Ayer was first hired by the Department of Defense to advertise the army branch in the 1940s, during and following World War II. The partnership between the federal government and the industry of advertising dates back to World War I, however, when copywriters and executives lent their expertise to the Wilson administration's Committee on Public Information (CPI). The CPI sought to sway public opinion in favor of intervention in World War I.<sup>34</sup> George Creel, its leader who was formerly an investigative journalist, stated that the CPI developed, "not propaganda as the Germans defined it but... the propagation of faith."<sup>35</sup> Although propaganda and advertising differed, when advertisers got into the business of "propagating the faith" for their government, these spheres began to blur.<sup>36</sup> The advertising industry donated an estimated \$5 million in space and services to the CPI.<sup>37</sup> Industry leaders reasoned that they stood to benefit by gaining legitimacy and esteem in the eyes of other professionals via this important public service work. At that time, advertising was an increasingly lucrative albeit beleaguered field. According to media theorist, Stuart Ewen, "In its early days, the mass advertising industry that developed in concert with the mass needs of industrial corporations continually had to sell itself

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<sup>34</sup> A fuller examination of this history occupies a section of the next chapter.

<sup>35</sup> Burton St. John, *Press, Professionalization, and Propaganda: The Rise of Journalistic Double-Mindedness: 1917-1941* (Amherst, NY: Cambria Press, 2010) 40.

<sup>36</sup> See Paul Rutherford, *Endless Propaganda*; Gerd Horton, *Radio Goes To War: The Cultural Politics of Propaganda during World War II* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); and Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920-1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

<sup>37</sup> Inger Stole, *Advertising at War: Business, Consumers, and Government in the 1940s* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012), 48-49.

to industry.”<sup>38</sup> Historian Roland Marchand writes that although advertisers saw themselves as “apostles of modernity,” they coveted recognition from other titans of industry.<sup>39</sup> And “ad men” brainstormed numerous strategies to increase their status in the eyes of experts they hoped to call inter-professional colleagues, including scientists, engineers, industrial designers, and other cultural elites.<sup>40</sup> Although the CPI was public service work, the industry gained positive public relations from its volunteer work.<sup>41</sup> Marchand writes that, “Service with the Committee on Public Information during World War I helped bring advertising men new stature.”<sup>42</sup> And one could argue that when gross advertising revenue doubled between 1918 and 1920, the industry’s higher, government-approved profile only helped in corroborating the legitimacy of professional persuasion.<sup>43</sup> Although advertising earned plenty of positive public relations through public service work, some scholars and military personnel have criticized advertising’s role in patriotic propaganda and government campaigns. Harford Powel denounced the ways that war impacted advertising as a whole, particularly in terms of the excessive money spent.<sup>44</sup> He questioned whether the US government should advertise at all and conceded that while recruiting advertising for the Army and Navy seemed necessary, any other government advertisements should be approached with caution. To Powel, when the government authored the advertising

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<sup>38</sup> Stuart Ewen, *Captains of Consciousness: Advertising and the Social Roots of Consumer Culture* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), 32.

<sup>39</sup> Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream*, 1-50.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>41</sup> A section of Chapter 2 recognizes domestic divides in public and industry support for the United States’ involvement in World War I. It is important to qualify the positive impact of advertising’s CPI work by acknowledging that many Americans from all walks of life were against the war.

<sup>42</sup> Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream*, 8.

<sup>43</sup> Ewen, *Captains of Consciousness*, 32.

<sup>44</sup> Harford Powel, “What the War Has Done to Advertising,” 195-203.

message, the lines between advertising and propaganda became too ambiguous.<sup>45</sup> In his historical examination of public service advertising, Paul Rutherford articulated little difference between his definition of propaganda and the numerous public good, public risk, and political advertisements that colonized the public sphere.<sup>46</sup> For Rutherford, if it was for the government, no matter who authored it or what it cost, it was propaganda. In 1948, Jeannette Hodson wrote critically about the use of propaganda in the Women's Army Corps.<sup>47</sup> Despite some criticism, upon American involvement in World War II, the advertising industry was again called to serve through the Office of War Information (OWI). During this time, industry leaders also formed the Advertising Council with the goal of lending their expertise to the practice advancing the public good. The Advertising Council soon became the War Advertising Council, and then the Ad Council, after WWII.

By the 1940s, the advertising industry had become one of the most influential in the nation. Advertisements colonized the public and private spheres of Americans, to sell, as Marchand puts it, "the American Dream."<sup>48</sup> The medium of advertising across the twentieth century evidences the evolution of a cultural history.<sup>49</sup> The advertisers for popular brands and products strove to keep ad styles and contents current by incorporating broader social configurations dictated by historical moments and contexts, for example depicting women

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 202.

<sup>46</sup> Rutherford, *Endless Propaganda*, 3-17.

<sup>47</sup> Jeannette Hodson, "Propaganda Techniques Employed in the Women's Army Corps," *Journalism Quarterly* 25 (June 1948): 151-56. For writing on the subject of women and the military, see Mary Sargent Florence, Catherine Marshall, and C.K. Ogden, *Militarism Versus Feminism: Writings on Women and War* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1915); Melissa Herbert, "Amazons or Butterflies: The Recruitment of Women Into the Military During World War II," *Minerva: Quarterly Report on Women and the Military* 9.2 (30 Jun. 1991): 50-68.

<sup>48</sup> Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream*.

<sup>49</sup> T.J. Jackson Lears, *Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America* (New York: Basic Books, 1994).

entering the labor force while American men were serving abroad during World War II. Such ads normalized and legitimized women's workforce participation through representations. Ads tried simultaneously to reflect some version of reality while inspiring demand for goods, services, and ideas. Advertising also aimed to spread trends among mass audiences with the goal to influence consumer behaviors. This did not mean that advertisers hoped to spur indiscriminate and endless consumption. And during WWII, many commercial campaigns dovetailed the messages of military propaganda, presenting thrift, sacrifice, patriotism, and thoughtful consumption as civic obligation.<sup>50</sup> According to historian Charles McGovern, consumption "became a principle vehicle for the articulation of citizenship during [World War II]."<sup>51</sup> And as one of the oldest and largest advertising firms in the nation, N.W. Ayer and Son sold both consumer goods and military ideals for their clients during times of war and peace.

## 1.2 THE AGENCY BEHIND THE ARMY

Founded in 1869 by Francis Wayland Ayer in Philadelphia, and often credited as the oldest advertising agency, N.W. Ayer and Son pioneered numerous industry firsts. They were the first agency to combine fine art with advertising. The agency's *Ad Age Encyclopedia of Advertising*

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<sup>50</sup> For histories of consumer politics and the intermingling of advertising with civic participation, see Charles F. McGovern, *Sold American: Consumption and Citizenship, 1890-1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006); and Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumer's Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003); for a case study examining commercial advertising that argued for careful consumption during World War II, see Jessica L. Ghilani, "DeBeers' 'Fighting Diamonds:' Recruiting American Consumers during World War II," *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 36: 3 (2012): 222-45.

<sup>51</sup> McGovern, *Sold American*, 327.

entry notes that, under the leadership of legendary art director Charles Coiner, renowned painters, illustrators, and photographers were commissioned to create art for Ayer's clients. They included N.C. Wyeth, Rockwell Kent, Georgia O'Keefe, Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dali, Leo Lionni, Edward Steichen, Charles Sheeler, and Irving Penn, advertising for DeBeers, Steinway, Dole, Ford, DuPont, and Cannon Mills.<sup>52</sup> Ayer was the first to bill with "open contracts," which eventually became an industry standard. They were also the first to hire full-time copywriters, establish an art department, and designate a separate copywriting department.<sup>53</sup> Their client roster included AT&T, DeBeers Consolidated Mines Inc., Ford Motor Company, R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, Philip Morris Companies, United Airlines, Nabisco, Burger King, Morton's Salt, and more.<sup>54</sup> They were responsible for many famous slogans including, "A Diamond is Forever," "I'd Walk a Mile for a Camel," "When it Rains, it Pours," and "Reach Out and Touch Someone." They were named Advertising Age's agency of the year in 1978. They were the 18<sup>th</sup> largest agency in 1985.<sup>55</sup> Despite pioneering many eventual industry standards, the agency was reluctant to innovate strategies in order to maintain their competitive edge. Librarian and archivist, Mimi Minnick wrote that, "The inherent conservatism of Ayer left the agency vulnerable to the 'creative revolution' of the 1960s and 1970s, the restructuring of the 1980s, and the economic recession of the early 1990s."<sup>56</sup> Although Ayer folded in 2002, following a series

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<sup>52</sup> Mimi L. Minnick, "N.W. Ayer & Son, Inc.," in *Advertising Age's Encyclopedia of Advertising, Volume 1, A-E* (Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2002) 125-130.

<sup>53</sup> See: Ralph Hower, *The History of an Advertising Agency: N. W. Ayer & Son*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1949).

<sup>54</sup> Minnick, "N.W. Ayer & Son, Inc.," 125-30.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, 128.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid, 125.



of mergers and acquisitions in the 1990s, their imprint on the history of advertising endures.<sup>57</sup> And Ayer's work for the army continues to earn them recognition from within and beyond the industry, long after the firm's dissolution. Through their recruitment campaigns for the army client, they transitioned the branch to a volunteer era, and they authored its most iconic slogan, "Be All You Can Be." In *Advertising Age's* ranking of the top 100 advertising campaigns of the twentieth century, "Be All You Can Be," was number 18.<sup>58</sup> Ayer took great pride in this partnership as evinced in internal agency correspondence records, located in the N.W. Ayer Agency Records at the Smithsonian Institution's Archives Center Library in the National Museum of American History.

Ayer has been credited with helping the army transition to a volunteer era, and began proclaiming this success as early as two years into the volunteer concept. From a special issue of Ayer's internal newsletter, *Ayernews*, from January 1975, dedicated almost entirely to the firm's work for the army, chairman Neil O'Connor wrote:

We believe that the Army's recruiting mission is one of the most unique and crucial assignments in the history of advertising. Its significance to N.W. Ayer transcends mathematics. Ayer, like the Army depends upon people, ideas and productivity.... Ayer and Ayer people have played significant roles in helping develop a revolutionary concept, the Volunteer Army into a practical and successful reality. Army advertising represents a unique case history. Results or non-results are measurable on a monthly, even daily basis. And our product is accountable as a strategic part of the Army's marketing mix in achieving those objectives... At the close of Fiscal Year 1974, the active Army exceeded its authorized strength of 781,600 and exceeded its key recruiting objectives for non-prior

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<sup>57</sup> To read more about the history of Ayer, see *Ayer: 125 Years of Building Brands* (New York: Ayer Worldwide, 1994); Bart Cummings, ed., *The Benevolent Dictators: Interviews with Advertising Greats* (Chicago: Crain, 1984); Deanne Dunning and Blake Hunter, "The New Ayer," *Communications Arts* 12.1 (1970); and Stephen Fox, *The Mirror Makers: A History of American Advertising and Its Creators* (New York: Morrow, 1984).

<sup>58</sup> It was also the only military campaign in the list. See Bob Garfield, "The Advertising Century: Top 100 Advertising Campaigns," *Advertising Age*, March 29, 1999. Accessed March 15, 2013, <http://adage.com/article/special-report-the-advertising-century/ad-age-advertising-century-top-100-campaigns/140918/>.

service, prior service, and reenlistment.... For the first time in eight years, Army ROTC enrollment is up, 18.4% over the previous school year. The Army is proud of these achievements. So are we.<sup>59</sup>

An ad appeared on the same page as the letter. It was from the “Join the People Who’ve Joined the Army” campaign, which preceded “Be All You Can Be,” and addressed volunteer-concept naysayers confidently. In large font and bold typeface, the title read, “Some people wondered if a volunteer Army would work. 300,000 young people believe it will.”<sup>60</sup> This issue of the company newsletter provided a comprehensive overview of the army account responsibilities at the time, with representative images and descriptions. Ayer’s work for their military client was diverse, spanning multiple media and multiple methods: television commercials, print ads, motion pictures, direct mailings, public relations campaigns, endorsements and sponsorships, recruiter promotion kits, pamphlets, brochures, classified newspaper ads, and more. Ayer’s graphic designs and logos for the branch also were featured in the issue. The issue highlighted all facets of Ayer’s army client, and mentioned different sales tactics used for the regular army, the reserves, the ROTC, and reenlistments. The army campaign served an important public relations role for the agency just as the agency performed important public relations functions for their client.

During the Vietnam War and in those decades preceding it, armed service accounts did not pay well especially. The incentives to advertise for the branches came in generating visibility and positive public relations for major agencies, accustomed to more lucrative corporate and commercial clients. Ayer advertised for commercial giants with much larger advertising budgets

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<sup>59</sup> Neal W. O’Connor, “Introduction to January 1975 issue of *Ayernews*,” *Ayernews* (August 1975): 2, in Ayer Agency Records, “Business Records,” National Museum of American History (hereafter, “NMAH”), Smithsonian Institution (hereafter, “SI”).

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

than the Department of Defense during the draft era. Even though it was for pay, Ayer's work with the Army was regarded, particularly during conscription as a public service not entirely unlike the public campaigns created by the Ad Council. The real value of such an account in Ayer's early army advertising came via the bragging rights it yielded among other industry agencies.<sup>61</sup> The intra-industry cache generated enough incentive for Ayer to take the account despite the comparatively modest fees paid by the Department of Defense. Over time, particularly after the end of the draft and as recruitment budgets increased, the account grew to become more lucrative for Ayer in terms of both political and financial capital. But until the mid-1970s, the army account did not generate revenue as steep as corporate brands. By the late-1980s, when the relationship dissolved, the army had grown to become Ayer's second most lucrative client in terms of billings, which topped \$100 million.<sup>62</sup> The account became sought after both to raise an agency's profile and also for the ever-expanding DoD recruitment budget. Because it was a government client, Ayer had to reapply to maintain the relationship. Between 1967 and 1986 they continued to win the account against top firms like Leo Burnett. Internal memos and intra-agency correspondence indicated that by the 1980s, Ayer's agency identity was linked closely to their historical advertising services to the army. Ads for Ayer that ran in industry trade publications like *Advertising Age* and *Ad Week* boasted the same army slogans developed for recruitment. Ayer advertised itself by touting the evolution of their role as agency

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<sup>61</sup> The agency was paid for the services provided to the army client, but the branch budget was much lower than that of commercial clients. As far as the archival materials indicate, no tax incentives were offered to the agency for its service, because it was still paid work.

<sup>62</sup> *AdAge Encyclopedia*, s.v. "N.W. Ayer and Son (N.W. Ayer & Partners)," (New York: Advertising Age, 2003). Accessed May 4, 2013. <http://adage.com/article/adage-encyclopedia/n-w-ayer-son-n-w-ayer-partners/98517/>.

for the army.<sup>63</sup> They cited the many army slogans along the way, their role in ensuring the success of an all-volunteer concept, their utilization of compelling and action-oriented imagery, and their longstanding relationship with the Department of Defense as reasons to be proud. This history suggests the importance of Ayer to an understanding of recruitment in the United States armed forces.

### **1.3 AN OVERVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE**

Selling soldiering to Americans during and following conscription required strategic and often delicate persuasion. This was a complex task for even the most seasoned ad agencies, such as Ayer. Corporate ads addressed audiences most often as individual consumers, rather than obliged citizens. And with a volunteer military, service requirements were no longer drafted obligations. The pitch in demand-driven military recruiting worked to distance the military branches from traditional notions of civic duties and service obligations, presumably because that rhetoric offered inadequate incentives for individuals to volunteer of their own volition. The army in particular required a great deal of strategic persuasion during the volunteer era. Over the last decade or so in particular, a number of comprehensive studies of volunteer military recruitment saw publication, including those from Bernard Rostker, Beth Bailey, and Melissa Brown, mentioned above. Each of these scholars employs similar methodologies, in compiling extensive primary and secondary source materials in the literatures from military history and policy. Their

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<sup>63</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, “Ayer Newsletters,” Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

work has been integral to my own research, and my dissertation presents new information, complementing and sometimes challenging the existing body of academic literature. By synthesizing the complex and important histories of advertising and the ad industry's relationship with the US government and contextualizing popular and consumer cultural spheres, my work situates the study of recruiting advertising in broader sociological and cultural terms. My study finds that conscription-era recruitment set the precedent for the volunteer concept of recruiting. And my unique disciplinary framework combines communication and cultural studies, offering a different perspective from these scholars' backgrounds in military studies, history, and political science. In examining the mass mediated history of commercial recruitment for the US army, I bridge scholarly work on advertising, propaganda, politics, feminism, and public relations to understand the cultural trajectory of these relics of advertising history.

Theoretically, I configure scholarship from feminism, communication, cultural studies, history, and political science to understand army recruitment in the twentieth century. At its core, however, this is a study of advertising and militarism. Within and beyond the field of communication, scholars have examined the history of American advertising and the influence of war. While some may wish to dismiss advertising as low culture, unworthy of critique or even pause, scholars from media studies, American studies, cultural studies, and history trace its influence and meaning, connecting it also with studies of branding, public relations, and consumerism in American society. To build from the scholarship referenced in section 1.1, an extensive body of literature exists studying advertising and consumer culture in America. Roland Marchand attributes the messages of advertising as a cultural site where notions about the "American Dream" originate. Charles McGovern and Lizabeth Cohen link consumerism to ideas about American patriotism and citizenship. Jackson Lears, Michael Schudson, and Stuart Ewen

study the advertising industry in its fledgling, formative years.<sup>64</sup> Inger Stole studies public skepticism and contempt for the advertising industry, as well as the ways advertisers attempted to mitigate such criticisms, during the Great Depression and in World War II. Cynthia Lee Henthorn connects public relations, patriotism, technological innovations, with consumer culture in her examinations of post-War suburbia. Thomas Frank provides a cultural history of the creative revolution and baby boomer consumerism. Nancy Walker writes about the influence of popular magazines on shaping notions about gender and identity for audiences of women in the twentieth century.<sup>65</sup> Communication scholars, Robert Hariman and John Louis Lucaites' work studying public culture sheds light on understanding advertising as a potentially iconic medium.<sup>66</sup> And many scholars from a variety of fields have analyzed military recruitment practices in contemporary time. Cultural anthropologists Catherine Lutz and Leslie Bartlett, examine the socio-economic and militarized implications of allowing Junior ROTC programs to exist in public high schools.<sup>67</sup> Political theorist and feminist Cynthia Enloe defines militarism as a step-by-step process through which daily public and private interventions by a military, its values and/or its ideology, come to seem natural and even beneficial for the individual and society writ large.<sup>68</sup> The ideological work of militarism normalizes and neutralizes that which

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<sup>64</sup> Ewen, *Captains of Consciousness*; Lears, *Fables of Abundance*, 137-260; Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream*, 25-206; Michael Schudson, *Advertising, the Uneasy Persuasion: Its Dubious Impact on American Society* (New York: Basic Books, 1984).

<sup>65</sup> Nancy Walker, *Shaping our Mothers' World: American Women's Magazines* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2000).

<sup>66</sup> Robert Hariman and John Louis Lucaites, *No Caption Needed: Iconic Photographs, Public Culture, and Liberal Democracy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

<sup>67</sup> Catherine Lutz and Leslie Bartlett, *Making Soldiers in the Public Schools: An Analysis of the Army JTORC Curriculum* (Philadelphia: National Youth & Militarism Program American Friends Service Committee, 1995).

<sup>68</sup> Cynthia Enloe, *Does Khaki Become You?: The Militarization of Women's Lives* (London: Pandora Press, 1983).

was previously problematic, e.g., the military's role as the provider of opportunities to underprivileged individuals that volunteer for service.

Employing Enloe's characterization of militarism to examine it in a specified recruitment context, Lutz and Bartlett conducted a study in 1995 on the Army Junior ROTC presence in American public schools. Using statistical data produced by the Department of Defense, they examined a variety of recruitment-related questions involving tactics, the exaggerated promises of economic incentives versus the actual acquisition of these promised rewards, the targeting of minority students, the targeting of financial disadvantaged students, and the varying methods through which recruitment strategies were informed by the gender of the potential recruit.<sup>69</sup> While their study was certainly relevant for this particular research, it avoided the topic of mass-mediated military recruitment campaign advertising strategies, because it was situated within the limited context of the public school system, and only examined direct, and unmediated, JROTC presence. That said, from my archival sources, it is evident that even direct recruitment processes have been developed with care and vetted with purpose by marketing professionals.

Examining the complex configurations of militarism, race, gender, with promised socioeconomic incentives necessitates a theoretical concept representative of structural interplay. Critical and feminist theories guide the analysis in this dissertation. Pierre Bourdieu examines civil society and its numerous forms of non-financial capital that contribute to status within the social hierarchy of a capitalist system.<sup>70</sup> He writes that cultural capital, social capital, and political capital contribute to an individual's status and therefore their standing within a structural system. In a Bourdieuan interpretation of volunteer recruitment tactics, the advertised

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<sup>69</sup> Lutz and Bartlett, *Making Soldiers*, 3-12.

<sup>70</sup> Bourdieu, *Against the Tyranny*, 101-113.

incentives offered to individuals signal access to status and opportunity. They intend to entice people who otherwise lack access. Michel Foucault's configuration of power also illuminates the mechanisms through which institutions and individuals engage in relationships of structural power, constraining agency of those operating within a cultural or political structure, such as the military.<sup>71</sup> Patricia Hill Collins' writes of matrices of power and the feminist theoretical concept of intersectionality that, "As opposed to examining gender, race, class, and nation, as separate systems of oppression, intersectionality explores how these systems mutually construct one another."<sup>72</sup> Collins' argues that this degree of integration makes it difficult to attempt to examine one category of identity in isolation from the others. For the purposes of this project, the concept of intersectionality is an invaluable tool with which to explore recruitment campaign strategies and their specific advertisements. The nuances of identity often overlap enabling or disabling privilege and/or invisibility. Feminist scholars have written also about how the female body is marked in ways that the male body is not.<sup>73</sup> Intersectionality suggests that an African American female soldier might experience recruitment and soldiering differently than a white female soldier, and that both of them would differ from a white male soldier.

In order to grasp fully the intersections of race, class, gender, and nation in tandem with the strategic component of the militaristic campaigning, it is lastly, of use to discuss literature addressing the socio-historical contexts of advertisements and the media society in which they

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<sup>71</sup> Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977* (New York: Pantheon, 1980).

<sup>72</sup> Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1990), 221–38.

<sup>73</sup> Susan Bordo, *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Londa Scheibinger, ed., *Feminism and the Body* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Dianna Taylor and Karen Vintges, eds., *Feminism and the Final Foucault* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004); and Iris Marion Young, *On Female Body Experience: "Throwing Like a Girl" and Other Essays* (Oxford University Press, 2005).



have flourished. Thomas Frank wrote about countercultural co-optation and the concurrent significance of individuality in American culture.<sup>74</sup> He argues that an increasingly fragmented consumer culture touted notions of a ruggedly individual, romantic, rebel, (anti-)hero, who appealed to various countercultural spheres. Such iconic figures from both fiction and real life included Holden Caulfield, Jack Kerouac, Johnny Cash, or James Dean.<sup>75</sup> These figures and the mythos that surrounded them inspired youth marketing and advertising to shift dramatically. The narratives of advertising perpetuated the notion that identity could be articulated through consumer choices and styles of dress.<sup>76</sup> This is relevant to military marketing as the commercial advertising practices also shifted the strategies for armed force recruitment in the 1990s and into the twenty-first century. Echoing some of the ideas about rebellion in America, historian Grace Elizabeth Hale studies how pockets of white, heterosexual, middle class America have come to identify with outsider status, despite inhabiting numerous privileged categories of identity.<sup>77</sup> The most recent army recruitment campaigns, including “Army of One” and “Army Strong” reflect

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<sup>74</sup> Thomas Frank, *The Conquest of Cool: Business Culture, Counterculture, and the Rise of Hip Consumerism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997); Thomas Frank, “Why Johnny Can’t Dissent,” in *Commodify Your Dissent*, ed. Thomas Frank and Matt Weiland (New York: W. W. Norton, 1997) 31-45.

<sup>75</sup> Frank, “Why Johnny Can’t Dissent,” 32-34. The figures possess the cultural capital of being mass and yet still somehow “cult” icons, hence their ability to maintain some authentic character, lending them further romanticization. Their mainstream statuses are less significant towards this particular type of cultural capital. Each narrative of rebellious individuality possesses mobility and traction to perpetuate the respective statuses as culturally “edgy” or marginal figures. All the examples of such beloved cult figures are white and male. It was difficult if not impossible to come up with equivalent minority examples that have reached widespread, cult recognition like the above-mentioned individuals. Some arguable possibilities might be Janis Joplin, Kurt Cobain, Batman, Malcolm X, Jimi Hendrix, Jane Fonda, Bonnie Parker (though less recognizable without Clyde), Che Guevara, or Deborah Harry.

<sup>76</sup> Frank, *The Conquest of Cool*, 19, 81, 116.

<sup>77</sup> To clarify, she acknowledges nuances of identity and variations of privilege within demographics without totalizing the experiences of views of an otherwise dominant ideological group. Grace Elizabeth Hale, *A Nation of Outsiders: How the White Middle Class Fell in Love with Rebellion*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

this cultural trajectory by providing campaign mastheads indicative of an increasingly individualized series of anti-appeals to audiences.<sup>78</sup> In studying military recruitment during the volunteer era, there remain gaps in recent scholarship that to which this study will contribute.

#### 1.4 CONTRIBUTIONS TO EXISTING SCHOLARSHIP

To reiterate, my dissertation's primary arguments are that the practice of marketing military service with individual incentives, using demographically tailored messages predates the volunteer era. One of the fears of the volunteer concept expressed by sociologists, politicians, and military figures was that in advertising incentives, the noble and civic good of service would be obscured if not absent from military messages. Existing histories of volunteer era recruitment literature tend to disregard draft-era recruitment as a site for inquiry and understanding. And scholarship on draft-era recruitment and/or propaganda uses either the early post-war period of the 1940s or the volunteer transition as logical end-points.<sup>79</sup> My study establishes firmer connections between the periods by demonstrating shared strategies for military marketing across both eras of recruitment models. One of the prevailing volunteer-era anxieties was that recruiting for the AVF would require publicizing individual incentives at the expense of

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<sup>78</sup> See section 3.0 on anti-advertising and the creative revolution.

<sup>79</sup> Barbara Benton, "Friendly Persuasion: Woman as War Icon, 1914-1945," *MHQ: The Quarterly Journal of Military History* 6:1 (1993) 80-7; George Vogt, "When Posters Went to War: How America's Best Commercial Artists Helped Win World War I," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 84:4 (Winter 2000-2001), 39-47; and Walton Rawls and Maurice Rickards, *Wake Up, America! World War I and the American Poster* (New York: Abbeville, 2001); Marguerite Elizabeth Hoyt, "You Have a Date with a (Blonde) Bond: Women in Anglophone World War II Poster Art," Ph.D. Diss., Johns Hopkins University, 2003;

presenting service as a civic good. In doing so, the basis of military service as a noble endeavor would also disappear, causing damage to the public image of each branch. If anything, the volunteer military transition verified the cultural power of late 20<sup>th</sup>-century consumer capitalism. Advertising military service as a commodity good situates the volunteer era within the history of American consumer culture. Fostering the demand-driven military began during the era of conscription, demonstrating that honor and individual good were never mutually exclusive in the army's recruitment strategy. My method of connecting the history of advertising with the study of military recruitment using primary source materials from archival collections sheds new light on the topic.

In order to determine the relationship between recruiting advertising across both eras of recruitment models, I have collected a wealth of primary source materials through archival study. Through extensive visual and textual analysis, my dissertation examines the strategies in which Ayer marketed the army branch during their partnership. This narrowed framework allows for extended lines of inquiry, by which I can study campaigns and advertisement exemplars in depth. My materials include actual advertisements, edited advertising copy, ad agency meeting minutes, archival papers from Ayer's business records, military manpower records from another archival collection, and Department of Defense reports on recruitment as well as extensive reference materials from existing scholarship. Primary sources include reports on recruitment compiled and funded by the Brookings Institute, the RAND Corporation, and the Department of Defense, as well as ad agency annual reports and archival records from meetings that include edited advertising copy and tear sheets.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> For history and information of the RAND Corporation and their National Defense Research Institute, see their corporate website here: <http://www.rand.org/>. The aforementioned RAND

Although scholars have given much attention to the visual cultures of military propaganda during wartime, considerably less has been written about commercial military advertising during and following conscription. Beth Bailey's work examines advertisement examples peripherally in her thorough history of the volunteer army. Melissa Brown studies

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reports include the following documents in chronological order: Richard J. Shavelson, Gus W. Haggstrom, and John D. Winkler, *Potential for Military Recruitment From Two-Year Colleges and Postsecondary Vocational Schools* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, Jan. 1983); James N. Dertouzos, *The Effects of Military Advertising: Evidence from the Advertising Mix Test* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1989); Beth J. Asch and James N. Dertouzos, *Educational Benefits Versus Enlistment Bonuses: A Comparison of Recruiting Options* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1994); Beth J. Asch and Bruce R. Orvis, *Recent Recruiting Trends and Their Implications: Preliminary Analysis and Recommendations* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1994); Bruce R. Orvis, Narayan Sastry, and Laurie L. McDonald, *Military Recruiting Outlook: Recent Trends in Enlistment Propensity and Conversion of Potential Enlistment Supply* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1996); Carole Oken and Beth J. Asch, *Encouraging Recruiter Achievement: A Recent History of Military Recruiter Incentive Programs* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1997); James R. Thomas, *Reengineering DoD Recruiting* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1997); Beth Asch, M. Rebecca Kilburn, and Jacob A. Klerman, *Attracting College-Bound Youth Into the Military: Toward the Development of New Recruiting Policy Options* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1999); Michael P. Murray and Laurie L. McDonald, *Recent Recruiting Trends and Their Implications for Models of Enlistment Supply* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1999); Bruce R. Orvis and Beth J. Asch, *Military Recruiting: Trends Outlooks, and Implications* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2001); James N. Dertouzos and Steven Garber, *Is Military Advertising Effective? An Estimation Methodology and Applications to Recruiting in the 1980s and 90s* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2003); Ronald D. Fricker, Jr. and C. Christine Fair, *Going to the Mines to Look for Diamonds: Experimenting with Military Recruiting Stations in Malls* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2003); Beth Asch, Can Du, and Matthias Schonlau, *Policy Options for Military Recruiting in the College Market: Results from a National Survey* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2004). The following Brookings Institute reports are also included in chronological order: Martin Binkin and Shirley J. Bach, *Women and the Military* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1977); Martin Binkin, *America's volunteer Military: Progress and Prospects* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1984). And finally, the Department of Defense funded the following reports: Paul R. Sackett and Anne S. Mavor, eds., *Attitudes, Aptitudes, and Aspirations of American youth: Implications for Military Recruiting / Committee on the Youth Population and Military Recruitment* (Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2003); Paul R. Sackett and Anne S. Mavor, eds., *Evaluating Military Advertising and Recruiting: Theory and Methodology / Committee on the Youth Population and Military Recruitment--Phase II* (Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2004).

various configurations of masculinity in advertisements as being central to military identity. But overwhelmingly, military advertising scholarship is difficult to locate in the field of communication. Communication scholar Roger Stahl examines the rhetoric of war and military combat as fodder for entertainment in popular culture.<sup>81</sup> He argues that this works rhetorically to persuade implicit (or at least complicit) agreement with recent American military interventions. The existing literature from the field of communication lacks the gender studies and critical cultural studies frameworks that inform my project. The ads themselves function as cultural signposts that communicate ideas about popular, albeit traditional American values, gender norms, racial identity, and contemporary socio-economic mobility.

My research uncovered new information about military advertising that yields the potential to contribute to existing lines of scholarship on the volunteer military with a communication perspective. Although scholars from history, communication, and political science have written about US military advertising and propaganda, the bulk of the research produced has focused on the WWI, WWII, and Vietnam without bridging these eras or drawing connections between the strategies for persuasion.<sup>82</sup> Disciplinarily, this project encompasses the intersections of new military history, mass communication theory, cultural studies, American studies, and gender studies.<sup>83</sup> An interdisciplinary approach enables me to examine the

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<sup>81</sup> Roger Stahl, *Militainment, Inc.: War, Media, and Popular Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2009); Roger Stahl, "Have You Played the War on Terror?," *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 23.2 (2006): 112-30.

<sup>82</sup> See Bailey, *America's Army*, 47-74; Stahl, "Have You Played?" 112-30; and Rutherford, *Endless Propaganda*, 237-55.

<sup>83</sup> The discipline of new military history strives to inject the people's social or cultural history and politics into the field of military history. See John Whiteclay Chambers II, "Conference Review Essay: The New Military History: Myth and Reality," *Journal of Military History* 55:3 (July 1991): 395-406.

historical, cultural, and political ramifications of advertising, media technologies, and communication in the instance of contemporary military recruitment.

## **1.5 SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

At the center of this dissertation lies a duo of archives within the Smithsonian Institution, in the National Museum of American History's Archives Center Library and at the Smithsonian Institution Library's Archives. The first library archive contains the N.W. Ayer Papers. The Ayer records houses the Army account's samples, advertising proofs, and final ad copy for the bulk of the twentieth century. It also contains business records, oral histories, company ephemera, and collections from other clients and campaigns. While there, I compiled digital photographs, scans, and photocopies of advertising samples and tear sheets, videotape copies of television commercials, company newsletters, internal memos, transcripts from oral history interviews with Ayer's creative staff, and research reports integral to developing the army campaigns. The Archives Center's advertising history archivist, Vanessa Simmons, worked on the intake for the Ayer papers when the NMAH first received them, and served as my on-site mentor. Margaret Vining, curator in the NMAH's Division of Armed Forces History advised me on the project and the research. And I consulted many other NMAH staff members who made suggestions about additional materials of relevance. This is how I learned about a collection at the Capital Gallery in the Smithsonian Institution Library that also contained useful materials.

The Manpower Research and Advisory Services Records span the years of 1971-1994, compiling working papers, conference proceedings, committee briefings, presentation notes, lists

of addresses and minutes from working groups, notes, research studies, and policy literature regarding the volunteer military concept. The former secretary of the Smithsonian, Leonard Carmichael became principle investigator on a contract with the Office of Naval Research, heading the Organization of Manpower Research and Advisory Services. Although the focus of the materials was the Navy branch, the timing corresponded also to the volunteer transition, which became the central subject matter of many of the conferences, meetings, and research. In examining the longer-term viability of a volunteer recruitment model for then navy, plenty of comparisons and information also addressed the army branch and the American armed forces, in general. The papers contained additional information on foreign conscripted and volunteer militaries. And the bulk of this collection shed light on the study of the American army.

I was given a great deal of access and support, thanks to a predoctoral research fellowship at the National Museum of American History, which enabled me to have office space on site, as well as the uninterrupted time to research. I was also exempted from many of the fees charged to researchers for using the materials and granted permissions to use the materials in my own research and eventual publications.

My methods of primary source collection entailed a systematic compilation. Beginning with the Ayer records, I requested and combed through the boxes of army materials, first. Then I examined the business records and oral history transcripts. I photographed, photocopied, and/or scanned everything that was related to army advertising, in its broadest terms. This included the tear sheets that depicted ads, pamphlet and direct mailing samples, “write to us and we will send you,” incentive items like hats, posters, medals, and pins, clippings from press coverage in major newspapers or trade publications, and more. I requested to have DVD copies made of the television commercial collection, which included mostly 15 and 30 second spots but also some

program intro and outros, for example, when the army was a sponsor of a program or an important sporting event. I took copious notes on each print and televised advertisement, including their location in the archive with series, box, and folder numbers, their date of publication whenever available, and the media venues where they ran whenever available. Most of the advertising tear sheets were large scale, and bigger than the dimensions of the magazines where they ran. Many were poster sized, and too large for the scanners, requiring me to hold my camera high above in order for the lens to capture everything. Sometimes in order to compile the images, I would kneel on a chair in order to do so. I was not always able to capture perfectly framed, perfectly focused photographs of the advertisements. And my method of compilation had a lot of room for human error. My sources I compiled include numerous images that are too blurry or too askew to salvage. Thankfully, I took multiple photos of each advertisement, which gave me the ability to select among options. I would sometimes take additional “macro” photos of text from a closer angle, in order to swiftly collect the information in an ad without having to handwrite or type transcriptions. I would also take photos of the bottom of ads that had dates and titles for publication, immediately following the larger scale photos so I was able to correspond the images with the additional information. Because this strategy seemed to have too much room for potential error, I also handwrote dates and publication information as part of my note taking process. Not every ad indicated the dates and/or the site(s) for distribution, but most did. Some tear sheets had handwritten notes directly on the print, indicating that the item was still in development. Regarding the sample of advertisements, I immediately eliminated ads in development because there were already too many texts to choose from, to include any that may have never saw publication.



When it came to the business records, the process required more hunting with a smaller but rewarding bounty. I paged through issues of the company newsletter, *Ayernews*, year by relevant year, to hunt for discussions of the army account or campaign. If the account was written about, mentioned, or pictured, I made a photocopy. Photocopies were easier when it came to the *Ayernews* materials for a few reasons. First, these materials were already the appropriate size to be photocopied without special paper or equipment. Second, unlike the organized boxes of army account work, nearly all of which was relevant, in the business records there was rarely a great deal of army-related material at once, save for one special issue from 1975, dedicated entirely to the army account and Ayer's work in transitioning to the volunteer era. I did photocopy the entire issue of the issue in order to understand how Ayer personnel conceived of their work and their client. I also sorted through the press clippings and photographed anything that mentioned Ayer's work for the army. Finally, the oral history transcripts included helpful titles that explained a little about the content discussed. This allowed me to know which transcript had information about the army client.

When I compiled materials from the Manpower Records, the materials were already sized in a way that made photocopying easy. But the materials were dense enough with information and text that I also took notes with my laptop in order to summarize content and not be bogged down with so many photocopies that I end up overwhelmed. I did take a few photographs of charts and tables rather than format my own or have them get lost in a pile of papers.

With regard to selecting content to use, it was easier to sort through Ayer's business records research and the information from the Manpower Records, in part because only some of the text discussed subjects pertaining to this study. The advertising tear sheets and other army recruiting papers presented the challenge of selecting. I needed to be cautious about selection

biases, and tried to ensure that my own assumptions and preconceptions were not influencing the figures I selected to feature. When it came to selecting sample ads, I first looked for themes. I used an inductive approach to analysis, wherein I found themes within ads, such as “jobs and salary,” “Vietnam,” “technical equipment and skill acquisition,” or “equal opportunity for women.” I sorted through and renamed digital image files, titling them according to theme and year. Then I selected a few representative samples for each area I wanted to discuss here. I did not use a random sample, which is a limitation in the generalizability of this work. But I am not conducting empirical studies or making statistical claims that would require random sampling. Such a study would be interesting for the future, as I have saved the original images with their previous, more anonymous titles, in the order in which they appeared in the collection, making a random selection feasible. Because I approach the subject with qualitative and critical methods of analysis, I believe that using the thematic groupings and representative examples offers an accurate portrait of the trajectory of army advertising.

Each primary source offers unique insight into understanding the recruitment narratives of twentieth century military advertising. It is fitting to employ a multi-pronged approach to researching Army recruitment, as it mirrors the exhaustive strategies employed to recruit. I synthesize voices from experts in the Department of Defense, recruitment research think tanks, and the advertising industry with the landscape of popular culture and the polysemic visual and textual messages of recruiting advertising. Ads convey information about target audiences via demographic representations and the tear sheets from the Ayer papers feature dates and locations of publication. Ayer’s business records provide additional information about strategies for military marketing before, during, and following Vietnam. The ads themselves remain important relics of American culture and military history, offering contemporary audiences the chance for

both visual nostalgia and critique. The market for propaganda poster collecting is just one way that such nostalgia manifests. In order to assemble the collection of primary sources that illuminate my study, I conducted extensive archival research.

## **1.6 PREVIEW OF CHAPTERS**

To that end, my order of chapters follows the chronology of this history. The chapter that follows this introduction examines Ayer's work for the army in the 1940s, but first it situates the advertising industry's influence and assistance with government propaganda during times of war. This connection must be explored because although the work was not contracted for pay like Ayer's army campaigns, it shows the advertising industry's early military marketing practices. I share examples from primary source materials that demonstrate demographic targeting, individual incentivization, and strategic persuasion.

Chapter 3 investigates the reunion between Ayer and the army during the 1960s, amid the Vietnam War, an increasingly war-weary public, a raging anti-war movement, and social movement activism from civil rights and women's rights communities. All of these made the process of recruitment a tremendous challenge. There were policy changes that shifted the military's attitude toward women's enlistment, which also altered the landscape for gendered recruitment advertising. During this time, the viability of a volunteer concept of military recruitment was being explored. I explain policy changes, political context, and cultural moment. I examine Vietnam-themed ads and unpack the meaning of the "Your Future, Your Decision, Choose Army," campaign. I also reveal the different methods of advertising to men during

conscripted war versus advertising to women volunteers. Women were technically the army's first modern "volunteer" force.

Chapter 4 studies the transition from the draft to a volunteer era of military recruitment through the trajectory of the campaign, "Today's Army Wants to Join You." The conclusion of US military involvement in Vietnam in August 1973, and the aftermath of military scandals led Ayer's advertising for the early volunteer army to create distance between military "service" and prevailing "soldier" archetypes. Images of weapons and allusions to combat all but disappeared from the messages of this period's army advertising. The economic downturn, as well as a changing private sector and dwindling employment opportunities helped the volunteer military. I examine these variables and evaluate samples from advertising to demonstrate the process of public relations in Ayer's attempt to put space between the drafted army and the volunteer army amid negative public opinions about the American military writ large.

Chapter 5 studies the campaigns Ayer authored for the army branch leading up to the end of their relationship, including "Join the People Who've Joined the Army," "This is the Army," and "Be All You Can Be." Ads of this period were more diverse, more racially inclusive, more steeped with the language of meritocracy, and more overtly feminist than ever before. Advertisements targeted audiences of racial and ethnic minorities with representations, language choice, and media placement. Advertisements also targeted women from all racial and ethnic backgrounds. As military roles for women expanded, and ads touted army service as a sphere where ability and equality mattered, the elephant in the room remained the ban on women from combat operations. I examine debates about women's service roles within military and feminist circles. I track the influence of the women-in-combat issue on the Equal Rights Amendment

debates. I explain what is known as the “womanpause of 1981” and I detail Ayer’s final work for the army. Numerous advertising examples are presented and analyzed.

Finally, I conclude with a summary of the study, an epilogue of the end of Ayer’s work for the army, and an overview of what came next for volunteer army recruiting. The contemporary multi-media landscape for volunteer era recruitment is evinced with a short case study examination of the Official Game of the US Army and a reflection on future recruitment. In order to reach the contemporary moment of sophisticated, targeted, technologically integrated military marketing, the army and the rest of the armed services had to transition successfully to the volunteer era. Thanks to Ayer and their many campaigns, the volunteer concept has endured. My work brings new perspective to this growing body of historical literature and cultural examination.

## 2.0 THE FOUNDATIONS OF ADVERTISING FOR MILITARY SERVICE

*Advertising, the vital \$450,000,000-a-year industry which sparks most other industries and pumps lifeblood into the nation's press, had great trouble converting itself to war. In the first shock of conversion—as happened in many of the industries it represents—much advertising was terrible: hysterical, ridiculous, extreme. But US advertising, whose virtues are seldom praised outside its own precincts, has so successfully weathered the crisis that by last week much of it had reached new high standards... When war came, some experts thought at first that advertising itself might die: many a firm, no longer having goods to sell to civilians, no longer had an ostensible reason for continuing to advertise. But advertising did not seriously decline. In 1940 advertisers spent \$450,000,000; in 1941, \$469,000,000; in 1942, \$440,000,000. Advertising held up because businessmen well knew what had happened to firms which had stopped advertising in World War I: the makers of such now-nearly-forgotten products as Sapolio, Pear's Soap, Omega Oil suffered; some even died. -Time Magazine, 1943<sup>84</sup>*

At the turn of the twentieth century, the advertising industry was developing rapidly in the United States. Amid its growth and exposure, the US government began to rely on the expertise of these powerful, professional persuasion industries to convey messages about patriotism and public service. The strategic input of advertising professionals was valuable especially during American military involvement in foreign wars. Even prior to US involvement in World War I, professional artists and admen were working to foster public approval for policies of interventionism and isolationism, depending on the goals of the campaign and political

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<sup>84</sup> “The Press: Advertising in the War,” *Time Magazine*, March 22, 1943, accessed February 12, 2011, <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,796133,00.html#ixzz1MAawi7wy>.

perspectives of the client.<sup>85</sup> Money and power were at stake for individuals and entities within the government and private sectors. The economic costs of war were high and the human costs were higher. In 1915 a group of prominent New York City businessmen and professionals along with former President of the United States Theodore Roosevelt, established the pro-interventionist American Defense Society. They used fliers and pamphlets to promote United States entrance into war.<sup>86</sup> Soon after, at an annual convention in 1916 the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) adopted an anti-war resolution.<sup>87</sup> The IWW released a poster promoting their position of isolationism, titled “Warning: The Deadly Parallel.” The poster outlined the IWW’s anti-war, anti-capitalist, pro-worker, pro-peace position. It also overviewed a list of casualties of the war by that point, broken down by nation. The poster concluded in larger, capitalized font that, “Ten million human lives stand as a monument to the national patriotic stupidity of the

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<sup>85</sup> Although by the turn of the twentieth century there was a rich history of isolationist policies in the US, military historians considered World War I to be a significant departure. Following the conclusion of the War in 1919, a public backlash developed known as the “slump of idealism.” In reaction to Wilsonian foreign policy, there was a surge in pro-isolationist rhetoric and negativity toward foreign affairs, and particularly European interventions. Reflecting on the cost of war and the loss of lives, many questioned the necessity of US involvement. In an article from 1939 by John Crosby Brown, he discusses the use of Allied propaganda that encouraged US involvement in WWI. Isolationists questioned the legitimacy of the slogan, “To make the world safe for democracy.” He also detailed the branding of pro-isolationist movements that called themselves “pro-peace” and in turn, interventionists as “pro-war.” To read more, see John Crosby Brown, “American Isolation: Propaganda Pro and Con,” *Foreign Affairs* 18:1 (1939): 29-44. For citations on isolationism and its contrasts with interventionist policies of Wilsonian idealism, see Lloyd E. Ambrosius, *Wilsonian Statecraft: Theory and Practice of Liberal Internationalism During World War I (America in the Modern World)* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1991); Frank A. Ninkovich, *The Wilsonian Century: US Foreign Policy Since 1900* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

<sup>86</sup> Melissa Haley, “Guide to the Records of the American Defense Society 1915-1942,” *The New York Historical Society*, accessed 12 August 2011, [http://dlib.nyu.edu/findingaids/html/nyhs/americandefsoc\\_content.html](http://dlib.nyu.edu/findingaids/html/nyhs/americandefsoc_content.html).

<sup>87</sup> “Warning: The Deadly Parallel: Declaration by the Industrial Workers of the World,” University of Arizona Special Collections Library, AZ 114 box 1, folder 1, exhibit 2 Accessed 12 August 2011, <http://www.library.arizona.edu/exhibits/bisbee/docs/002.html>.

working class of Europe! Who will be to blame if the workers of America are betrayed and led into the bloodiest slaughter of history? Who?"



# WARNING

## The Deadly Parallel

### A DECLARATION.

By the Industrial Workers of the World.

We, the Industrial Workers of the World, in convention assembled, hereby reaffirm our adherence to the principles of Industrial Unionism, and rededicate ourselves to the unflinching prosecution of the struggle for the abolition of wage slavery, and the realization of our ideals in Industrial Democracy.

With the European war for conquest and exploitation raging and destroying the lives, class consciousness, and unity of the workers, and the ever growing agitation for military preparedness clouding the main issues, and delaying the realization of our ultimate aim with patriotic, and therefore, capitalistic aspirations, we openly declare ourselves determined opponents of all nationalistic sectionalism or patriotism, and the militarism preached and supported by our one enemy, the Capitalist Class. We condemn all wars, and, for the prevention of such, we proclaim the antimilitarist propaganda in time of peace, thus promoting class solidarity among the workers of the entire world, and, in time of war, the general strike in all industries.

We extend assurances of both moral and material support to all the workers who suffer at the hands of the Capitalist Class for their adherence to the principles, and call on all workers to unite themselves with us, that the reign of the exploiters may cease and this earth be made fair through the establishment of the Industrial Democracy.

### PLEDGE GIVEN

To Nation by American Federation of Labor.

We, the officers of the national and international trades unions of America in national conference assembled, in the capital of our nation, hereby pledge ourselves in peace or in war, in stress or in storm, to stand unreservedly by the standards of liberty and the safety and preservation of the institutions and ideals of our republic.

In this solemn hour of our nation's life, it is our earnest hope that our republic may be safeguarded in its unwavering desire for peace; that our people may be spared the horrors and the burdens of war; that they may have the opportunity to cultivate and develop the arts of peace, human brotherhood and a higher civilization.

But, despite all our endeavors and hopes, should our country be drawn into the maelstrom of the European conflict, we, with these ideals of liberty and justice herein declared, as the indispensable basis for national policies, offer our services to our country in every field of activity to defend, safeguard and preserve the republic of the United States of America against its enemies, whomsoever they may be, and we call upon our fellow workers and fellow citizens in the holy name of labor, justice, freedom and humanity to devotedly and patriotically give like service.

## War's Toll

CASUALTIES IN ENTENTE ARMIES 5,719,400, IN TEUTONIC FORCES 3,384,800, SINCE WAR BEGAN, FIGURES AT WASHINGTON SHOW.

Washington, D. C., March 11.—There have been 5,719,400 casualties in the entente armies and 3,384,800 in the Teutonic forces since the war began, according to authoritative figures obtained here today. The classified figures by countries follow:

	Killed	Permanently Disabled	Temporarily Disabled	Missing	Total
England .....	265,400	162,500	107,500		415,400
France .....	870,000	540,800	400,000		1,810,800
Russia .....	1,500,000	784,200	800,000		3,084,200
Italy .....	105,000	49,000	55,000		209,000
Belgium .....	50,000	22,000	40,000		112,000
Serbia .....	60,000	28,000			88,000
<b>Totals .....</b>	<b>2,790,400</b>	<b>1,576,500</b>	<b>1,402,500</b>		<b>5,719,400</b>
Germany .....	883,200	450,000	245,000		1,588,200
Austria-Hungary .....	523,100	255,000	291,800		1,069,900
Turkey .....	127,000	110,000	70,000		307,000
Bulgaria .....	7,500	7,000	6,000		20,500
<b>Totals .....</b>	<b>1,550,800</b>	<b>822,000</b>	<b>612,800</b>		<b>3,384,800</b>

TEN MILLION HUMAN LIVES STAND AS A MONUMENT TO THE NATIONAL PATRIOTIC STUPIDITY OF THE WORKING CLASS OF EUROPE! WHO WILL BE TO BLAME IF THE WORKERS OF AMERICA ARE BETRAYED AND LED INTO THE BLOODIEST SLAUGHTER OF HISTORY? WHO?

Figure 1. "Warning."

In Figure 1, the American branch of the global union, the IWW included extensive data about the human cost of war to dissuade support domestically.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

Messages that aimed to persuade for both the pro-Wilsonian/internationalist and pro-isolationist camps, mirrored the deep divisions in public opinion at the time. According to art historian James Rodger Alexander, the medium and messages of political posters were integral to selling what was an extremely unpopular military intervention during World War I.<sup>89</sup> Once the US declared war on Germany in April, 1917, posters worked in conjunction with other media to marshal public support for the war. Posters could configure strong visual arguments using emotional appeals entrenched with the psychological savvy of public relations (PR).

In 1917, PR was still a fledgling, but affiliated sub-industry of advertising. One of the formative figures in public relations was also the nephew of prominent psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud: Edward Bernays applied the theories of psychology to the practice of marketing. He experimented with the notion that audiences might be moved more significantly by emotional impulses than rational arguments. For government propaganda specifically, PR became a very powerful psychological tool in framing mass messages, ideas, and images with emotional gravity.<sup>90</sup>

Many examples of emotional marketing emerged with the domestic promotion of World War I in America. President Woodrow Wilson established a Committee on Public Information (CPI) in April 1917 with the goal of promoting favorable attitudes about the war among US

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<sup>89</sup> James Rodger Alexander, "The Art of Making War: The Political Poster in Global Conflict," in *Visions of War: World War II in Popular Literature and Culture*, eds. M. Paul Holsinger and Mary Anne Schofield (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1992) 96-113.

<sup>90</sup> *Century of the Self: Part 1*, Directed by Adam Curtis (London: BBC Four, 2002). Part 1 of the BBC Four documentary series, *Century of the Self* examines historically the influence of Sigmund Freud's theories of psychoanalysis. Freud's nephew, Edward Bernays was the first to propose that advertising utilize psychology instead of making rational appeals to consumers. The documentary examines the development of a public relations industry and the move toward psychological techniques in advertising.

citizens.<sup>91</sup> Bernays worked for the CPI to construct and circulate the idea that American involvement in World War I would spread democracy throughout Europe. The CPI's means of message dissemination included newsprint, radio, telegraph, films, posters, and brief public addresses delivered by volunteer lecturers.<sup>92</sup> Although posters were merely one medium through which to propagate messages, they remained important to the process. Posters allowed for static images to be juxtaposed with text. They could be positioned prominently and placed according to local community demographics. At the time of US entrance into World War I, Americans were already familiar with the creative medium of posters through the industries of art and advertising. As librarian and author Libby Chenault writes,

In the decades preceding the First World War, not only had many formal artists been drawn to the medium, but the poster, with its graphic appeal, had also become a tool of advertising, commerce, and industry. Innovations in color lithography and the development of larger and faster printing presses in the second half of the nineteenth century greatly facilitated the emergence of the modern, mass-produced poster defined by its powerful integration of emotionally evocative graphic images with brief, but direct and effective, textual messages.<sup>93</sup>

The ease and economic functionality of the poster medium, with its possibilities for easy mechanical reproduction and mass distribution, made it an exemplary tool in the dissemination of propaganda during wartime.<sup>94</sup> Some of the most enduring and iconic emblems of American

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<sup>91</sup> Rachel Botsman and Roo Rogers, *What's Mine Is Yours: The Rise of Collaborative Consumption*, (New York: HarperCollins, 2010), 21.

<sup>92</sup> For the text of one such citizen speech and an examination of the Committee on Public Information (CPI), headed by the journalist appointed as civilian director, George Creel, see Stuart Ewen, *PR: A Social History of Spin* (New York: Basic Books, 1996), 102-127.

<sup>93</sup> Libby Chenault, "American Posters of the Great War," Online at *Documenting the American South* website, accessed on 26 Apr 2006, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/wwi/postersintro.html>.

<sup>94</sup> Extensive scholarship exists examining the propaganda posters of World War I and World War II. See Anthony R. Crawford, ed., *Posters of World War I and World War II in the George C. Marshall Research Foundation* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1979); Peter Paret, Beth Irwin Lewis, and Paul Paret, *Persuasive Images: Posters of War and Revolution from*

patriotism emerged through the medium of posters supporting the Great War. Notable American artist and illustrator James Montgomery Flagg developed many of them, including the still popular, “I Want YOU” poster for which he modeled as Uncle Sam. The urgency of the textual and visual call to arms in “I Want YOU” persuaded the American public’s enlistment both figuratively and directly. The explicit message encouraged Army service while an accusatory subtext generated guilt among those populations who were less enthusiastic about US involvement in Europe. This tactic married recruitment advertising intended for a relatively narrow audience with broader emotional marketing to the general public. Emotional marketing that served the function of PR could be integrated seamlessly into the poster format. The process of selling World War I created ample opportunities to test a strategy of military advertising that continued into the volunteer era of recruitment.

This chapter begins by examining the broader historical conditions that yielded interactions between government and the private advertising sector. First it establishes the origins of a relationship between government and advertising. Then it explores more specifically the role of the one firm, N.W. Ayer and Son, hired by the US government to handle multiple pivotal recruitment moments in the twentieth century. This agency eventually transitioned the army to a volunteer force in the 1970s, authoring the branch’s most memorable campaigns in the process. Their working relationship dates back to the American entrance into World War II. N.W. Ayer and Son (Ayer) was hired by the Department of Defense (DoD) to create print advertisements for the army in the 1940s. The ads that Ayer created ran in newspaper and

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*the Hoover Institution Archives* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992); Phillipp P. Fehl, "Propaganda and the Integrity of Art: Notes on an Exhibition of War Posters 1914-1918," in *WWI Propaganda Posters: A Selection from the Bowman Gray Collection of Materials Related to WWI and WWII* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Ackland Art Center, 1969).

magazine periodicals. This chapter will showcase some of Ayer's earliest work for the DoD, establishing the foundation of their agency-client dynamic. This relationship developed into one so trusting that Ayer's contract with the DoD was renewed with regularity from the 1940s into the 1980s, despite a disruption during the 1950s. During the 1970s, Ayer was responsible for the significant task of transitioning a war-weary, anti-draft public into accepting the concept of volunteer soldiering in the American army. After contextualizing the history of advertising during the periods of war that defined the first half of the century, I analyze this early relationship between Ayer and the army through exemplary primary source texts found in various archival collections but most prominently, the Ayer Collection at the National Museum of American History's Archives Center Library. Before Ayer and the army could fathom a partnership, experts in psychological persuasion like Bernays, demonstrated to US government officials the power and potential of emotional marketing.

## **2.1 PROMOTING WAR TO THE PUBLIC: PSYCHOLOGY, PERSUASION, AND ADVERTISING**

The CPI and the Wilson Administration that created it viewed emotional marketing to be a necessity within war propaganda. Wilson's foreign policy was a departure from previous presidential strategies of relative isolationism. However noble it sounded, for some citizens the idea of spreading democracy across Europe remained too abstract a justification for war. The CPI relied on emotional tactics to reach a broader swath of citizens, using appeals that conjured

fears and threats.<sup>95</sup> For example, many posters used depictions of endangered women and children to highlight symbolically American values that were under alleged attack.

Women and children represented innocence, sanctity, vulnerability, and the maternal homeland all at once in poster propaganda of the era.<sup>96</sup> When used in conjunction with threatening imagery and text positioning German soldiers as animalistic, uncivilized, and evil, the cultivated feeling of national and international threat became even more powerful. Although war propagandists in many contexts have used symbols and metaphors that dehumanize an enemy group, it is difficult to trace the exact origins that likened German soldiers to Huns in Allied messages. Some art historians have written that the German *pickelhauben*, or spiked military helmets used until 1916, offered symbolic inspiration.<sup>97</sup> Military historians cite a reference made in a speech by Kaiser Wilhelm II in 1900 where he expressed aspirations for German imperialism addressing troops departing for China during the Boxer rebellion.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> I should clarify that not every individual within the CPI agreed with using emotional or inflammatory tactics in order to stir support for World War I. And at first the organization took care to ensure a skeptical American public that they would not replicate the unethical propaganda tactics of Germany. Even the framework of selling the war shifting as the message needed to be refined to appeal to the American public. The battle between civilization and barbarism evolved to be democracy versus dictatorship. For more on the CPI and the history of American propaganda, see Susan Brewer, *Why America Fights: Patriotism and War Propaganda from the Philippines to Iraq* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

<sup>96</sup> For examinations of women and children depicted in propaganda posters of World War I, see Pearl James, ed., *Picture This: World War I Posters and Visual Culture* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010); Jessica Ghilani, "Making Propaganda Posters Into T-Shirts and Tote Bags: Recruiting Female Audiences Then and Now," *Minerva Journal of Women and War* 4.2 (2010): 44-64; Walton Rawls and Maurice Rickards, *Wake Up, America! World War I and the American Poster* (New York: Abbeville, 2001); and Barbara Benton, "Friendly Persuasion: Woman as War Icon, 1914-1945," *MHQ: The Quarterly Journal of Military History* 6.1 (1993): 80-7.

<sup>97</sup> Note that pickelhauben were not unique to the German military uniform.

<sup>98</sup> For examinations of the origin of the German "Huns" trope, see Waldemar Zacharasiewicz, *Images of Germany in American Literature* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2007), 88; and Christopher M. Clark, *Kaiser Wilhelm II: Profiles in Power*, (Harlow: Longman, 2000), 169. The

Through some configuration of the above, propagandists strategized and branded the Germans as barbaric, akin to the Huns. Through propaganda posters that were positioned prominently in public areas across the cities, towns, and main streets of the nation, two divergent but emotional approaches persuaded---one, with love (i.e., mother, child, national home), the other, with fear (i.e., German Huns who will take it all away). These ideas combined fruitfully to sell the idea of war on a psychological level. German “barbarism” was an attack on American values that threatened the sanctity of innocent women and children. Women and children became symbolic shorthand that evoked the comforting concept of “homeland.” And what was meant by the idea of a “homeland” was kept purposely ambiguous by the creators of these messages. It could encompass domestic, private spaces where people lived and reared their families; those spaces that bring comfort, rest, and nourishment. It could evoke the ideological values of freedom, in pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness. It also could envelop the nation itself, in reference to the United States’ physical land. The power and promise of public relations rested in the reality that emotions are interpreted with subjectivity, allowing for multiple, polysemic understandings of the same simple but symbolic configurations of texts and images.<sup>99</sup>

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notable passage read, “Just as a thousand years ago the Huns under their King Attila made a name for themselves, one that even today makes them seem mighty in history and legend, may the name German be affirmed by you in such a way in China that no Chinese will ever again dare to look cross-eyed at a German.” A translated version of the text from the original speech can be found here: Roger Chickering, Steven Chase Gummer, and Seth Rotramel, eds., “Wilhelm II Hun Speech,” *German History in Documents and Images* website (accessed 13 July 2011) [http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub\\_document.cfm?document\\_id=755](http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=755).

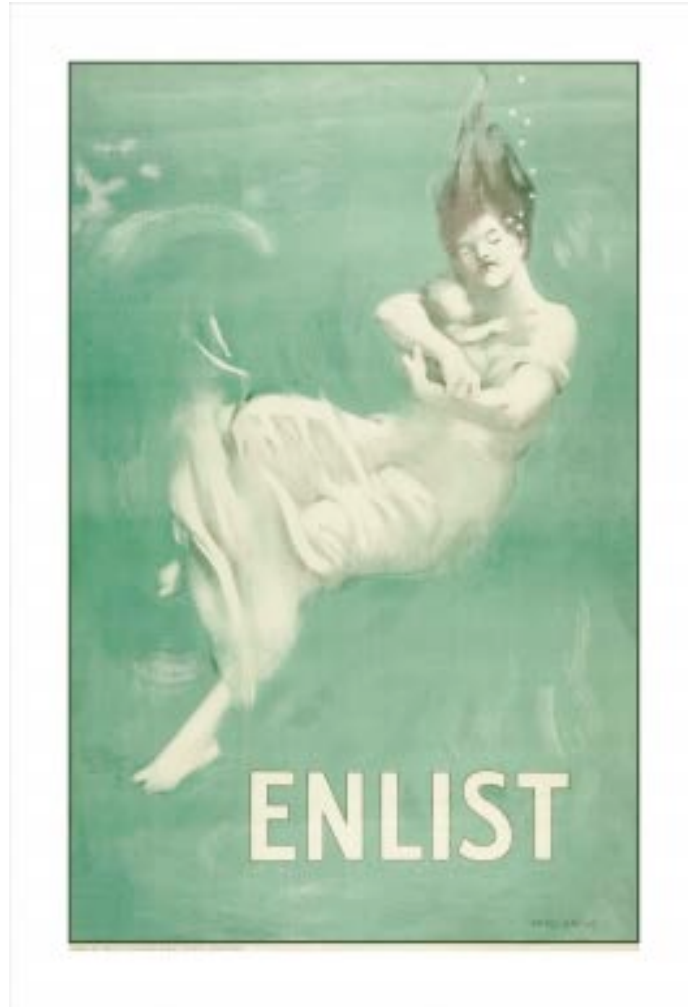
<sup>99</sup> For studies of polysemy and visual media as a polysemic medium, see: Leah Ceccarelli, “Polysemy: Multiple Meanings in Rhetorical Criticism,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 84:4 (1998) 395-415; Claudiu V. Dimofte and Richard F. Yalch, “Consumer Response to Polysemous Brand Slogans,” *Journal of Consumer Research*, 22 (March 2007) 515-522; Celeste Condit examines the limitations of audience with regard to polysemic interpretations in Celeste M. Condit, “The Rhetorical Limits of Polysemy,” *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 6:2 (1989) 103-122.

Although it preceded US combat involvement in World War I, one propaganda poster from 1915 provided a compelling visual argument with the symbol of a woman and child. Without exposure in news coverage to the specific tragedy it references, many citizens who would have otherwise aligned with isolationist policies were persuaded to intervene in Europe. The sinking of the Lusitania influenced public opinion, allowing propagandists a concrete moment to reference in posters.<sup>100</sup> Figure 2 features a simple, evocative message titled with, “Enlist.”

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<sup>100</sup> For a history of the sinking of the Lusitania see: Diana Preston, *Wilful Murder: The Sinking of the Lusitania*, (New York: Doubleday, 2002); specifically speaking to its influence on public opinion and war tactics during WWI, see pages 448-450; See Also: Thomas Andrew Bailey and Paul B Ryan, *The Lusitania Disaster: An Episode in Modern Warfare and Diplomacy*, (New York: Free Press, 1975).





**Figure 2. "Enlist."**

This haunting visual composition evoked the sinking of the Lusitania in Figure 2.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Army Heritage Museum Poster Collection, "World War I Recruiting Post: 'Enlist'" (Army Heritage Museum Digital Library, 2008) accessed 12 March 2011, <http://www.army.mil/-images/2008/04/06/13531/>.

Artist Fred Spear created for the Boston Committee of Public Safety the poster in Figure 2 that offered a visual shorthand of the tragedy of the sinking of passenger ship, Lusitania in May 1915.<sup>102</sup> This poster was released quickly in June of the same year with minimal text, allowing the angelic yet haunting image of floating mother and child corpses to provide much of the visual and emotional argument, justifying United States entrance into World War I. The mother and child serves as visual metonymy, representing both the sunken ship as well as the many passengers who died. The unseen power of sinking functioned as the Aristotelian rhetorical concept of enthymeme. The conclusion (i.e., to enlist) could be inferred from the visual depiction. No explicit deductive arguments were necessary and none were provided. German military torpedoing and sinking of the ship, which was carrying both civilians and Allied weaponry, lead to nearly 1,200 deaths including 159 Americans.<sup>103</sup> With guidance from professionals in art, writing, and advertising, such posters conveyed visual and textual arguments that fostered and amplified support for the eventual American entrance into World War I. And posters continued to be used alongside other media in promoting the war. After the war ended, the CPI's work was no longer needed. By that point the very word "propaganda" came to be viewed with great suspicion and stigma. In response to public critique, Bernays used the phrase "public relations," rebranding the practice of manufacturing public opinion through mediated mass persuasion.<sup>104</sup> And the CPI's strategies for selling war became a model for marketers of subsequent wars and military actions.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Harry Rusche, "A Note on Enlist," "*—the rest is silence.*" *Lost Poets of the Great War*, Emory University website, Last accessed April 5, 2011, <http://www.english.emory.edu/LostPoets/>.

<sup>103</sup> Diane Preston, *Lusitania: An Epic Tragedy* (New York: Walker and Company, 2002).

<sup>104</sup> Bernays is regarded by many to be the father of public relations along with his colleague from the CPI, Ivy Lee. But despite the assertion by Adam Curtis in *Century of the Self*, the phrase

## 2.2 ADVERTISING AND WORLD WAR II

In order to understand the process through which the American government came to entrust a private industry with a matter as significant to national security as military manpower maintenance and recruitment, especially during a volunteer era, it is important to examine the trajectory of that relationship's early formation. World War I, with the establishment of the CPI, marked an early moment of intermingling between the government and the advertising industry's professionals. Later, in the 1940s, the industry's expertise and cooperation were sought yet again by the US military branches and governmental officials. The United States Office of War Information (OWI) was established in 1942 to serve as the CPI to promote involvement in World War II. The OWI depended on input from professionals. The stakes involved in selling war were high. For the advertising industry, working with the government offered legitimacy and the potential to improve their credibility in the eyes of a very skeptical public.

During the foreign wars of the first half of the twentieth century, the professional wisdom of American advertisers proved itself to be useful for the US government as it waged campaigns to recruit citizen support and participation. The Ad Council estimated that the advertising industry donated \$1 billion in space and labor toward World War II.<sup>106</sup> The tool of propaganda was honed carefully and with help from industry experts. Governmental agencies increasingly

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“public relations” was not coined by Bernays. Historians trace it to the *1897 Yearbook of Railway Literature*. See Burton St. John III, “Public Relations as Community-building, Then and Now,” *Public Relations Quarterly* 43 (Spring 1998): 34. The reference to “public relations” appears in the preface of *The Yearbook of Railway Literature* (Chicago: Railway Age, 1897).

<sup>105</sup> Ewen, *PR* 3-4.

<sup>106</sup> Megan Cassada, “Encyclopedia Entry on Military Advertising,” in *The Advertising Age Encyclopedia of Advertising, Volume II, F-O*, eds. John McDonough and Karen Egolf (Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2002) 1048.

hired private advertising firms to assist in constructing messages. At the same time there were also significant professional developments within the industry of advertising. Agencies were developed and organizations established to improve public opinion about the profession.

In 1941, the year prior to the establishment of the OWI, the Association of National Advertisers and the American Association of Advertising Agencies convened to discuss the pervasive backlash against advertising in the US.<sup>107</sup> Advertisers believed they could improve the images of their clients with strategic branding. But they determined that the industry itself needed more positive public relations to improve its own image. James Webb Young of J. Walter Thompson Company (JWT) proposed taking the skills of advertising and applying them to social causes, organizations, and government agencies.<sup>108</sup> This would increase good will toward advertising as a profession and practice. The industry's profile would be raised domestically as a result. To fulfill this goal, the Advertising Council was formed.

By the time the United States joined World War II, the ad agencies of Madison Avenue were well versed in the practice of selling patriotism during wartime. The Advertising Council was renamed the War Advertising Council in February of 1942.<sup>109</sup> Media industries were expected to be as cooperative as advertising. The OWI requested that creators of popular culture align their messages to meet the patriotic goals of the moment. For example, although they had no official authority to censor, the Bureau of Motion Pictures (BMP) in the Domestic Operations

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<sup>107</sup> For histories of the Ad Council, see: Advertising Council, *Matters of Choice: Advertising in the Public Interest: The Advertising Council (1942-2002)*, Ad Council Website, 2002, accessed 26 Nov 2011, <http://adCouncil.org/About-Us/Story-of-the-Ad-Council>; John W. Hartman Center for Sales, Advertising, and Marketing History, "Library Guide: World War II Pathfinder," Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, Duke University, Accessed 12 May 2011 <http://library.duke.edu/specialcollections/hartman/guides/ww2-pfinder.html>.

<sup>108</sup> Advertising Council, *Matters of Choice*, 2002.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

Branch of the OWI requested that Hollywood studios implement a patriotic litmus test in the process of producing movies. Film scholar Rick Worland wrote that, “the guiding principle, ‘Will This Picture Help Win the War?’” functioned to influence the content of cinema.<sup>110</sup> Producers could submit “story treatments, script drafts, or completed movies voluntarily” to be evaluated according to their domestic and international impact on the war. BMP staff would offer suggestions for changes when appropriate.<sup>111</sup> Although not all studios cooperated, this represented another moment of governmental collusion with private media industry.

When it came to advertising during World War II, behavioral messages about sacrifice and civic duty needed to be consistent throughout official government propaganda and in private consumer advertising. Conflicting messages encouraging consumers to buy with impunity would go against the government’s need for civilian rationing. Wartime advertising historian Frank Fox wrote that the industry survived by shifting from an emphasis on brand selection and advertising practices to wartime conservation measures.<sup>112</sup> Advertising thrived during wartime because its services came to be viewed as necessary for victory. Advertisers knew how to sell war to the American public. More significant than the sinking of the *Lusitania* to the selling of the Great War, the domestic attack on Pearl Harbor provided compelling rhetorical assistance in persuading public support for direct military involvement in World War II. The lessons learned during World War I allowed for some refinement of messages, particularly in the wake of the Great Depression. Although advertising professionals volunteered their expertise to the Office of War Information, private firms continued to serve their paying, corporate clients, integrating

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<sup>110</sup> Rick Worland, “OWI Meets the Monsters: Hollywood Horror Films and War Propaganda, 1942 to 1945,” *Cinema Journal* 37.1 (Autumn 1997) 50.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>112</sup> Frank W. Fox, *Madison Avenue Goes to War: The Strange Military Career of American Advertising 1941-1945* (Provo, Utah: BYU Press 1975), 169.

sales pitches that reiterated patriotic objectives. Some firms even secured payment for their services to government clients. The US government contracted recruitment and enlistment campaigning to the advertising agencies, Ayer and JWT.

JWT's government accounts included the War Manpower Commission, the Naval Aviation Cadet Program, Woman Power, and the US Cadet Nurse Corps.<sup>113</sup> As outlined by the president of JWT in a newspaper editorial in 1941, the advertising industry's roles during wartime were twofold. First, advertisers stimulated the domestic economy by encouraging responsible consumption among civilians in order offset war expenses.<sup>114</sup> Second, advertisers were the patriotic messengers who could convey the government's policies and programs to the American public.<sup>115</sup> War, especially World War II, was very good for American advertising. Despite the squeeze on consumer options caused when manufacturing sectors transitioned to serve the "Victory Industries," advertising thrived between 1941 and 1945, growing expenditures from \$2.2 billion to \$2.9 billion.<sup>116</sup> By this time, the advertising industry had become one of the most lucrative in the nation. Advertisements colonized the public and private spheres of Americans, to sell, as historian Roland Marchand put it, "the American Dream."<sup>117</sup> The medium of advertising in the twentieth century demonstrated visually and textually the evolution of a

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<sup>113</sup> J. Walter Thompson Company, "Finding Aid: World War II Advertising Collection," Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, Duke University, Accessed August 12, 2010 <http://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/rbmscl/jwtworldwariicollection/inv>.

<sup>114</sup> See Mei-Ling Yang, "Creating the Kitchen Patriot: Media Promotion of Food Rationing and Nutrition Campaigns on the American Home Front During World War II," *American Journalism* 22 (Summer 2005): 55-75.

<sup>115</sup> J. Walter Thomson Company, "Finding Aid," 2010.

<sup>116</sup> Fox, *Madison Avenue* 170.

<sup>117</sup> Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920-1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

cultural history, according to historian, T.J. Jackson Lears.<sup>118</sup> The contents and styles of popular advertisements stayed current by accommodating broader social configurations as dictated by historical moments and contexts, for example in depicting women entering the labor force while American men were serving abroad.<sup>119</sup> Although the following was a propaganda poster produced by the government, it depicts a group of women workers fulfilling both traditionally feminine and traditionally masculine jobs (Figure 3).

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<sup>118</sup> T.J. Jackson Lears, *Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America* (New York: Basic Books, 1994).

<sup>119</sup> Cynthia Lee Henthorn, *From Submarines to Suburbs: Selling a Better America: 1939-1959*, (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2006) 71-72.



Figure 3. "Women."

In Figure 3, animated cartoons of working women each assume labor force roles.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> POS - WWII - US .J71.F34 1944, "World War II Poster: Women There's Work to be Done," Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540.



The 1944 cartoon poster proclaimed, “WOMEN: there’s work to be done and a war to be won... NOW!”<sup>121</sup> Women were shown engaged in a range of labor roles: fixing a car, serving refreshments to the other women, carrying equipment, nursing, buffing, cleaning, measuring, assembling, and taking inventory of the “WOMEN” sign. Propaganda posters and the advertisements it inspired normalized and legitimized women’s workforce participation through representations. Ads tried simultaneously to reflect some version of normative reality while manufacturing desires for goods, services, and ideas. Accordingly, Figure 3 provided ideologically instructive messages about acceptable roles for women during war.

Advertising also attempted to manufacture trends by aiming to influence consumer behaviors and actions. For example, Depression and WWII era ads largely emphasized thrift, patriotism, sacrifice, and civic obligation. The constructions of American citizens’ civic duties were propagated through propaganda and wartime advertising. The wartime scope of those civic duties most often entailed sacrifice. Citizens were actively discouraged from wasteful spending, which required advertisers to craft messages that sometimes seemed counterintuitive to their own consumerist objectives. As the images (Fig 4 and 5) demonstrate, a large volume of domestic propaganda circulated within the public sphere, instructing citizens to ration, manage with less, and conserve.

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid.



Figure 4. "Of Course I Can!"

Figure 4 is an example of pro-rationing propaganda featuring a woman.<sup>122</sup>



Figure 5. "Do With Less."

Figure 5 is an example of pro-rationing propaganda featuring a male soldier.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> "'Of Course I Can!' World War II rationing propaganda," Smithsonian Institution Education Website, Accessed 26 March 2011: <http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/idealabs/wwii/>.

<sup>123</sup> "'Do With Less,' World War II rationing propaganda," Smithsonian Institution Education Website, Accessed 26 March 2011: <http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/idealabs/wwii/>.

During both World War I and World War II, Madison Avenue “went to war,” by serving as propagandists and consultants, offering expertise in psychology, branding, PR, and design to rally public support for the American military.<sup>124</sup> The profile of the industry improved significantly among governmental officials and within the American public who witnessed its growth in legitimacy. Similar to the domestic, visual culture of World War I, ads and propaganda during World War II articulated instructive expressions of patriotism and military support to an American public. And increasingly government sectors were counting themselves among the paying clients of full service firms.

As detailed in Section 1, N.W. Ayer and Son (Ayer) was hired by the DoD to work with the United States army branch.<sup>125</sup> Ayer was among the vanguard of agencies that forged a boom in the advertising industry, convincing many brands to contract their marketing needs off-site rather than do them in-house. Ayer crafted some of the most famous slogans in American history. They include DeBeers’ “A Diamond is Forever,” Morton Salt’s “When it rains it pours,” AT&T’s “Reach out and touch someone,” Camel Cigarettes’ “I’d walk a mile for a camel,” and eventually, the US Army’s “Be all you can be.” After acquisitions and mergers,

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<sup>124</sup> Fox, *Madison Avenue*, 1.

<sup>125</sup> Mimi L. Minick, Vanessa Broussard Simmons, and Katie Richards, Unpublished, “N W Ayer Advertising Agency Collection, 1849-1851, 1869-2001: History,” Washington DC: National Museum of American History Archives Center Library, 2004. For more information on the history of Ayer, see: Fairfax Cone, *With All Its Faults: A Candid Account of Forty Years in Advertising* (Boston: Little Brown, and Company, 1969); Bart Cummings, *The Benevolent Dictators* (1984); Stephen Fox, *The Mirror Makers* (New York: William Morrow, 1984); Ralph M. Hower, *The History of an Advertising Agency* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1939); Martin Mayer, *Madison Avenue, USA*. (Lincolnwood, IL: NTC Business Books, 1992); Martin Mayer, *Whatever Happened to Madison Avenue: Advertising in the ‘90s* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1991); and Daniel Pope, *The Making of Modern Advertising* (New York: Basic Books, 1983).

Ayer was bought by a Paris firm and dissolved in 2002.<sup>126</sup> To reiterate, the company's archival records remain in the National Museum of American History's Archives Center Library, where ample primary sources exist to document the longstanding relationship Ayer held with the United States government, through their services for the army branch. With the support from these sources, I survey the origins of what became a very significant agency-client relationship of trust and responsibility. Starting with the work Ayer created to encourage continued military service following the conclusion of World War II, primary sources will provide evidence of the origins of Ayer army advertising. The services Ayer provided to army clients were not continuous. Through the 1950s, and during the Korean War, because the army did not hire Ayer to produce copy and manage recruitment campaigns during that time period there is a lapse in archived army client records.<sup>127</sup> Instead, the firm Dancer Fitzgerald Sample worked alongside the Advertising Council, which removed "War" from the title after World War II, assisted Truman Administration officials, former OWI analysts, and the Department of Defense's Office of Public Information in framing foreign policy during this decade of the Cold War.<sup>128</sup> The army resumed their relationship with Ayer in 1960. And, despite the requirement that agencies competitively bid to win the army as their client, the Department of Defense selected Ayer without disruption in the following decades.

There were numerous reasons why it made sense for the Department of Defense to hire a private ad firm to assist with recruitment following wartime. Weary from the challenges of serving overseas, many soldiers wished to return to their civilian jobs in the years following

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<sup>126</sup> Minick, Simmons, and Richards, "Ayer Collection" 2004.

<sup>127</sup> For an historical account examining the promotion of the Korean War, see Steven Casey, *Selling the Korean War: Propaganda, Politics, and Public Opinion 1950-1953* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008). See also Brewer, *Why America Fights* 144-153.

<sup>128</sup> Brewer, *Why America Fights* 144-153.

World War II. It was important to convince some of the returned soldiers to consider continued service in order to maintain the manpower levels presumed necessary to American security. Recruitment campaigns were not only targeted to civilians who had never served in the military. The retention of soldiers who were already trained mattered. During peacetime, the DoD lacked a coordinated multi-media symphony of patriotic wartime propaganda that included newsreels, radio broadcasts, songs, posters, and Hollywood films. Additionally, the immediate exigencies that once stirred feelings of national duty and service were far less pronounced during peacetime. The postwar period was also complex. Although the Allied Forces were victorious, the human costs of war were high. Still, the end of war and the return of American troops signaled celebration. Before the anxieties of the Cold War began to mount, there were only ambiguous “enemies” on which to place blame or incur wrath, complicating the task of selling peacetime enlistment. The brief period before the Soviet Union exploded an atomic bomb in 1949 and before the Korean War began in 1950, when the US was not engaged in an overt, declared, foreign war, Ayer marketed military service with advertising that mimicked commercial campaigns. Without a firm commitment of combat troops the selling of soldiering had to change. Propaganda with emotional marketing gave way to increasingly individualized commercial marketing.

Even for those in the business of persuasion, “propaganda” came to embody more negatives than positives. The communication theorists that pioneered the field such as Edward Bernays and Harold Lasswell wrote extensively on their conceptions of propaganda prior to WWII, when far fewer everyday citizens were aware of it.<sup>129</sup> WWII saw the most negative and

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<sup>129</sup> During WWI George Creel described the CPI’s mission as a “propagation of the faith” to remove negative connotations about German propaganda. See: Burton St. John, *Press*,

extreme example of propaganda's power to manipulate through the atrocities of Adolf Hitler. And after the War advertisers had to contend with the general public's legitimate fears about the practice as well as its overlaps with the objectives of advertising and public relations. In many ways the emotional and psychological aspects of propaganda connected with individualized marketing. When the CPI created posters preying upon fear and anxiety about a world unsafe for democracy, they were also marketing to individuals. Individual marketing preys upon presumed emotional desires held by individuals. Propaganda from the CPI during WWI and the OWI during WWII posited that the only assurance of national stability was a world safe for democracy (and freedom, innocence, individuality, and more). Recruitment ads for military service after WWII (authored by copywriters) framed stability at the individual level as financial independence. Although both approaches employed the emotional, the latter framework placed more emphasis on individual incentives. Eventually advertisers capitalized on audiences' individual desires to achieve the American Dream. This was another emotional marketing strategy that functioned individual and was used in a variety of spheres, including military recruitment. Justifications for military service during times of war differed from those during times of peace, in part because conscripted recruitment ensured that ranks would fill. Ayer's challenge was to advertise service in a Postwar time of peace.

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*Professionalization, and Propaganda: The Rise of Journalistic Double-Mindedness: 1917-1941* (Amherst, NY: Cambria Press, 2010) 40. To read Harold Lasswell's writing on propaganda, see his book: *Propaganda Technique in World War I* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1971); To read Edward Bernays' writing on propaganda, see his book: *Propaganda* (Brooklyn: IG Publishing, 2005).

Historian Robert Westbrook analyzes the individual justifications for service in an article examining the cultural and patriotic significance of pin-up photographs to US soldiers.<sup>130</sup> Although he specifically discusses soldiers during World War II, he argues that increasingly liberal and individualized motivations for service mattered. Franklin Delano Roosevelt's "Four Freedoms for which we Fight" offered Americans a philosophical foundation in wartime patriotism. Lester Olson writes about artist Norman Rockwell's renderings of the "Four Freedoms" posters as sites for visual rhetoric.<sup>131</sup> And the realm of the visual assisted in providing a rhetorical rationale for war. But more personal, emotional aims mattered too. Westbrook writes that when asked directly, soldiers justified their service as part of an obligation to the women of the United States (their wives, girlfriends, and even celebrity crushes).<sup>132</sup> Rather than philosophical theories about governance or freedom, the pinups were concrete visual emblems of a reason to fight. And after World War II, professional ad agencies like Ayer seized upon such individualized appeals. The tactic of emphasizing substantial benefits to individual soldiers predated the recruitment strategies of the all-volunteer era. And it was helpful for the army branch to have Ayer's breadth of commercial military recruitment expertise when they eventually transitioned out of a draft-driven force in 1973. Ayer gained knowledge of the recruitment process following World War II, in a time of relative peace. This proved to be useful when Ayer also needed to recruit from a war-weary, post-Vietnam American public.

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<sup>130</sup> Robert Westbrook, "'I Want a Girl, Just Like the Girl That Married Henry James': American Women and the Problem of Political Obligation in World War II," *American Quarterly* 42.4 (Dec. 1990) 587-617.

<sup>131</sup> Lester Olson, "Portraits in Praise of a People: A Rhetorical Analysis of Norman Rockwell's Icons in Franklin D. Roosevelt's 'Four Freedoms' Campaign," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 69:1 (1983) 15-24.

<sup>132</sup> Robert Westbrook, "I Want a Girl, Just like the Girl," 1990.

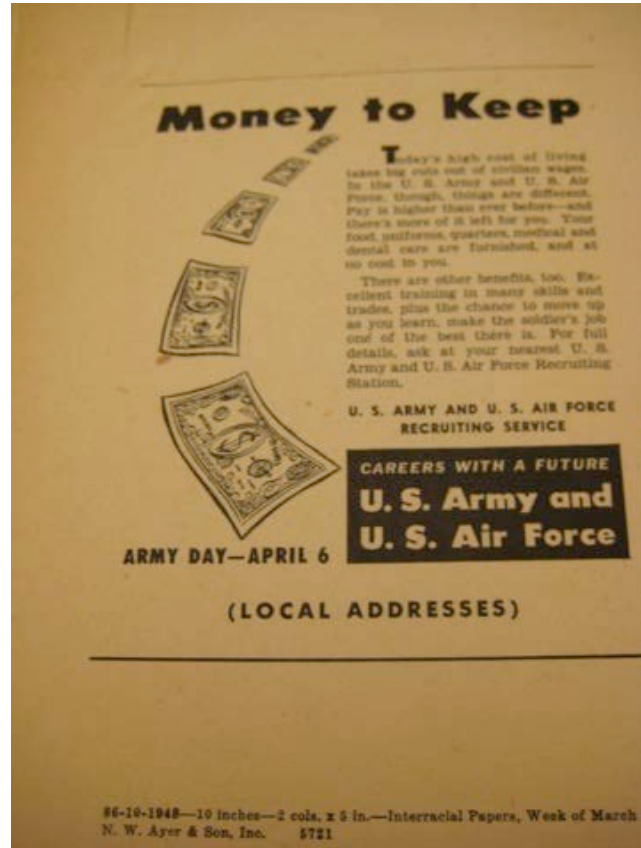
### 2.3 ADVERTISING THE ARMY, POSTWAR

In 1945, some of the first ads Ayer created for the army were simple ones that looked similar to newspaper classifieds. Employing heavy text and sparse imagery they encouraged men to consider military enlistment. The promise of job training, education, and steady salaries targeted populations strategically, based on individual economic demographics. By selling benefits and incentives to individuals, military service was framed with the language of opportunity, rather than civic obligation. In addition to narrowing their targets to economically disadvantaged groups, some ads aimed directly at racial and ethnic minority populations. Ads aimed at African American men were placed in black newspapers, stating directly that military service was ideal for people of color. One ad that focused on economic opportunities available to soldiers read, “Money to Keep,” with dollar bills lining a road-like path (Figure 6). The text below the ad cataloged it as running in “Interracial newspapers.”<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> “Ayer Agency Records: US Army Account 1940-1948, 1967-1987, ‘Money to Keep,’ Print advertisement” Collection 59: Series 4: Box 2: Folder 1, Washington, DC: National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution (Hereafter, NMAH, SI).





**Figure 6. "Money to Keep."**

Figure 6 featured dollar bills that paved a path to enlistment.<sup>134</sup>

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

The financial incentives were highlighted for a target audience of African Americans, that advertisers presumed would lack access to opportunities that enabled socio-economic ascension in a still racially segregated United States. Another ad aimed at audiences of black men read “The Army Offers New Higher Pay to Men Who Can Qualify” (Figure 7).<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> “Ayer Agency Records, “‘New Higher Pay,’ Print advertisement” NMAH, SI.

# THE ARMY OFFERS NEW HIGHER PAY TO MEN WHO CAN QUALIFY

If you are 18 to 34 inclusive and were discharged from the Army, Navy, Marines or Coast Guard on or after May 12, 1945, there may be a great opportunity for you in the Regular Army. If you had served six or more months in any of certain specialties, you may enlist in the Army now directly into certain non-commissioned grades. In addition to the specialties listed here, there are many more for which you may be qualified. Ask about them at your U. S. Army Recruiting Station.

\* Bring both your discharge certificate and your occupational history (W.S.A.G.O. Form 100 - Report of Separation).

MOS

- 059 Foreman, Construction
- 114 Machinist
- 229 Medical Equipment Maintenance Technician
- 304 Electric Motor Repairman
- 348 Parts Clerk
- 514 Radar Crewman (Designated Set)
- 623 Finance Typist-Clerk
- 683 Bombight Mechanic
- 740 Radio Operator, Intermediate Speed
- 754 Radio Mechanic, AAF
- 861 Surgical Technician
- 941 Camera Technician

A GOOD JOB FOR YOU  
**U. S. Army**  
CHOOSE THIS  
FINE PROFESSION NOW!

(LOCAL ADDRESSES)

5-10-1947 - 18 inches - 2 cols. x 5 in. - Negro Newspapers, Week of Jan. 20  
N. W. 3000 W. 10th, S.W. 8700

Figure 7. "New Higher Pay."

Figure 7 promised steady and high pay to those who can qualify.<sup>136</sup>

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

Underneath the ad text clarifies that it ran in “negro newspapers.” The caveat about needing to qualify was rarely included in ads that were cataloged to have run in “weekly newspapers.” “Weekly newspapers” seemed to refer to general-audience newspapers about which racial demography was unknown or presumed to be largely white. Financial gain became a major focal point of the ads of the mid-1940s, particularly after World War II. Depending on the target and placement of the piece, education, job training, and/or health benefits would also be highlighted. This pragmatic sales approach was a departure when juxtaposed with the emotional platitudes of wartime propaganda. But in the context of privately contracted work for clients by advertising professionals, it looked very similar to other commercial copy. Artful imagery laden with symbolism was replaced by text or direct visual references to money. The content of the written copy offered explicit information and instruction to the reader. And the scale and size of an advertisement was a lot smaller than your average poster. The deductive argument of the persuasive pitch also differed significantly from the propaganda of wartime. Apart from the exigency of war, it was unrealistic for an ad to implement emotional marketing with minimal text, expecting the audience to draw inevitable, enthymematic conclusions. These changes were necessary because as mentioned above the task of selling soldiering during peacetime posed a different challenge for advertisers. The contemporary moment lacked much of the immediate emotional justifications available during World War I and World War II, provided by the sinking of Lusitania and the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Although the task of persuading enlistment during wartime represented significant difficulties of its own (particularly when you consider the scope of and framework of wartime duty and the human risks involved in foreign combat), convincing the public to enlist during peacetime was not necessarily easy. Individuality became integral to peacetime persuasion.

Individuals could be courted with promises of personal benefits and financial gain. Another tool advertisers used in post-war recruitment was targeting. Unlike broadcasting which aimed to reach the widest swath of the American public with the most general but broadly appealing messages, targeting addressed smaller, more specific groups by identifying populations based on unique demographics. Class status, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, geography, and the ways that they can intersect, each represent potential sites for individualized appeals through which advertisers could narrow their focus. Although there were moments during wartime recruitment that utilized strategic targeting ---for example in locally catered content of public lectures to inspire support for WWI offered by the CPI's volunteer Four Minute Men--- wartime propaganda most often aimed broadly.<sup>137</sup>

Following World War II advertising for military recruitment targeted with presumptions about demographic stereotypes related to race, ethnicity, and/or class to reach economically disadvantaged sectors of the public. Newspaper periodicals could already target narrower audiences, based on geography, locality, political party, ethnicity, race, and profession. Ayer produced ads in newspapers for the army, using configurations of race, ethnicity, and/or class that corresponded with the text, tone, and incentives of each respective sales pitch. Ads that utilized strategic configurations of demography, with the intent to appeal to non-white and/or non-middle class audiences were also placed strategically in newspapers with the readership the army hoped to target. For example, ads emphasizing the economic stability of a steady paycheck

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<sup>137</sup> For more on the Four-Minute Men, see Alan Axelrod, *Selling the Great War: The Making of American Propaganda* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 113-134; Alfred E. Cornebise, *War as Advertised: The Four and the American Crusade 1917-1918* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1984).

would run in economically depressed areas.<sup>138</sup> When visuals were included, those too would be placed to carefully reach a narrower public. For example, the ads featuring African American protagonists would appear in black newspapers.<sup>139</sup> Sometimes the same exact text of an ad would be created featuring two different races of protagonists. Only those ads that featured white protagonists ran in the largest, most broadly catered periodicals such as national Sunday newspapers, *Life Magazine*, or the *Saturday Evening Post*.<sup>140</sup>

Most often the ads aimed directly at black men or men from ethnic groups that recently immigrated to America differed noticeably in tone and approach from the ads highlighting education benefits available to enlistees. This was intentional too. Education was and continues to be a signifier that overlaps with class status. Education offers one potential path to upward mobility. When personified figures were included in the visual landscape of classified ads mentioning education, the men represented demographical profiles that were white and male. See Figures 8-10.

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<sup>138</sup> Corroborated in the Ayer papers' memos on the army account as well as the Manpower Recruitment and Retention papers at the Smithsonian Archives. See "Agenda for the "Marine Corps and Navy Man and Woman-power: Requirements and Considerations" 5-7 March 1978," *Smithsonian Institution Manpower Research and Advisory Services Records, 1971-1994*, Accession # 94-074 Box 5 Folder 2.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> At the bottom of the tear sheets in the Ayer Collection's army client records, many reference the date(s) and placement(s) for scheduled publication. Unfortunately for most of the black and white, text-heavy, classified-style ads being discussed in this section the only description of placement was, "Sunday Newspapers," "Weekly Newspapers," or "Black Newspapers." For the ads to be discussed later in this chapter and in subsequent chapters much more information was available, evidencing the frequent practice of targeted placement based on geographic and demographics.

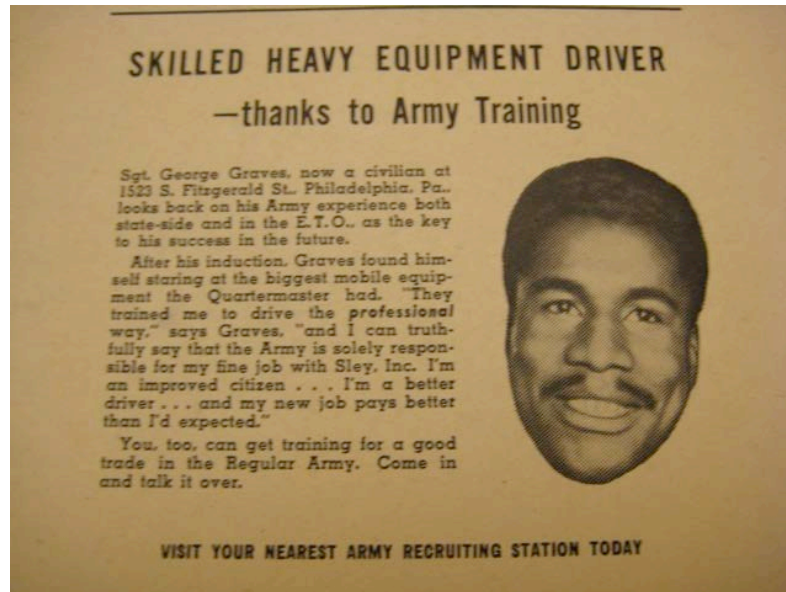


Figure 8. "Skilled Driver."

Figure 8 boasts training and transferable skills in a recruitment message to African American audience.<sup>141</sup>

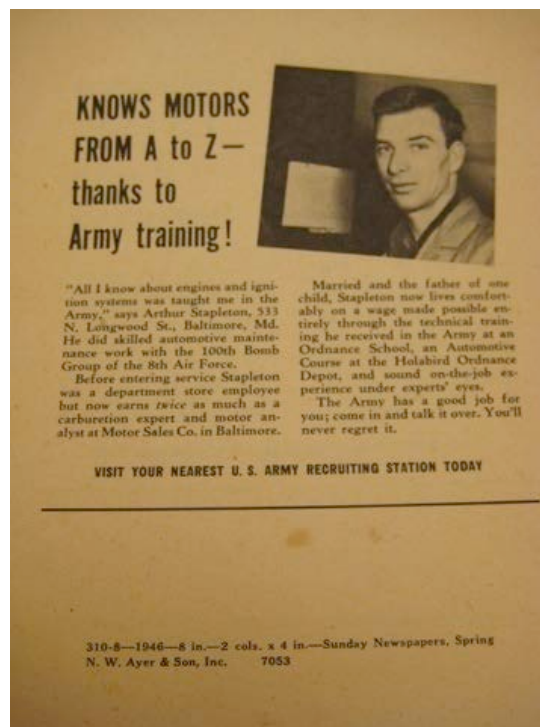


Figure 9. "Knows Motors."

Figure 9's protagonist with ethnic features praises military service for its job training.<sup>142</sup>

<sup>141</sup> Ayer Agency Records, "'Skilled Heavy Equipment Driver,' Print ad," NMAH, SI.

<sup>142</sup> Ayer Agency Records, "'Knows Motors,' Print ad," NMAH, SI.

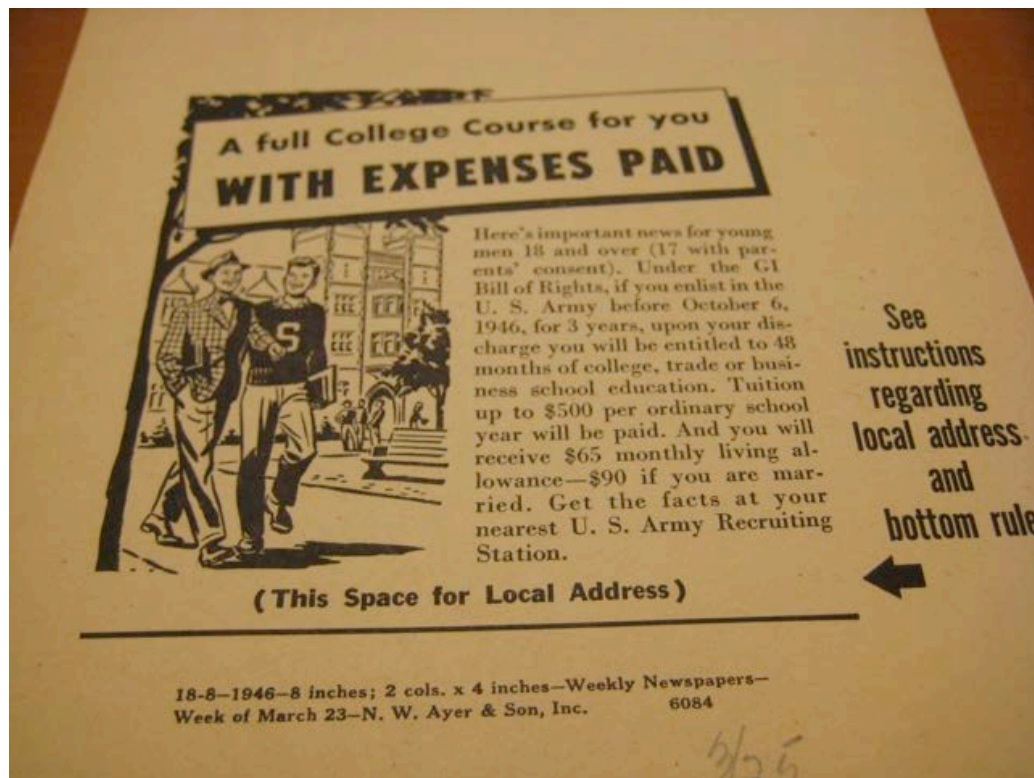


Figure 10. "With Expenses Paid."

Figure 10 shows two men clad in fine clothing as they stroll through an idyllic college campus, creating the comfortably middle class backdrop for selling military enlistment.<sup>143</sup>

<sup>143</sup> Ayer Agency Records, "With Expenses Paid," Print ad, NMAH, SI.



In the ads tailored to black or ethnic/recent immigrant audiences (see Figures 8 and 9) the emphasis was not on college education. Instead, minority-focused ads mentioned the potential to learn skilled trades through military service. Perhaps the difference in message was a nascent acknowledgment by Ayer and the army that the educational opportunities in a segregated United States were so limited. The personified figures in Figure 8 and 9 lacked visible racial, ethnic, or economic signifiers indicative of upper middle class privileges. An assumption of disadvantage was inherent to the sales pitch. And in this regard, 1940s army ads were not promising equality through military service, regardless of race or ethnicity. They were maintaining a status quo of inequality while touting working class job opportunities for historically underprivileged groups. The college course ad (see Figure 10) featured illustrated protagonists embodying comfortable, middle class, whiteness. Sporting clothing evocative of preparatory schools and country clubs, they already appear to have status and demographic advantages not typically afforded to minorities. The first two stressed the immediate acquisition of tangible skills: job training rather than the uncertain, indirect path toward a “college, trade, or business school education.” The visual composition of the ads differed in complexity, too. Figure 10 included a broader snapshot of the landscape scene. The setting evoked that of a university campus. The layout encouraged audiences to imagine what college might be like: walking with a friend, carrying your books, enjoying the acquisition of knowledge, and taking in the scenic beauty around you. The marketing tactic of the college ad has much more visual interest than the direct (and disembodied, decontextualized) gazes of the protagonists in Figure 8 and 9. Although all of the ads ran in Sunday newspapers Ayer made specific decisions about ad placement based on demographics, periodical audience, and readership. With varying strategies and promises, each ad highlighted individualized advantages available to enlisted soldiers.

The magazine ads of the post-war 1940s that Ayer created for the army adopted visual complexities and composition similar to the ad above touting college educations (Figure 10). They also featured social relationships and in some instances, romantic relationships. Although these ads were aimed mostly at men, the potential recruit was not the only person who warranted persuading. Ayer recognized that target audiences rarely exist within social vacuums. I will explore how the important task of convincing parents, spouses, friends, and loved ones became integral to selling recruitment during the all-volunteer era in the upcoming chapters. But many ads of the post-war 1940s also demonstrated the need to recruit an entire social sphere, rather than just an individual recruit.

Some magazine advertisements Ayer created for their army client seemed interested in persuading the family members of recruits as much as the individual recruits themselves. Unlike the above-mentioned classified format that typically minimized the complexity of visual imagery and kept only direct, concise text, a magazine format offered increased space and flexibility to weave narrative into both visuals and text. Ads could feature spouses or parents interacting with would-be-soldiers. The representations of recruit spouses and parents evidenced the need to recruit among indirect but overlapping target groups. Complex visual narrations in the ads also had the potential to serve public relations functions for the army brand. Wholesome, seemingly all-American families were portrayed as strong military families, allowing audiences to identify with a fictionalized (as well as imagined non-fictionalized) military life. The following magazine advertisement from the post-war period of the 1940s (Figure 11) ran in publications like *Look*, *Colliers*, *Life*, and the *Saturday Evening Post* according to the tear sheet data.

**JUNE** is an important month for you!



**JUNE**—month of brides and grooms—is also a vitally important month for thousands of young men this year. Here's the reason:

By enlisting in the Regular Army before July 1, 1946, you can secure yourself of two big benefits.

The first is family allowances for your dependents. Under the present law, such allowances will be paid for the support of your dependents throughout the term of your enlistment, provided you enlist before July 1, 1946.

The second advantage applies to men physically and mentally qualified who are now in the Army or who have been recently discharged. Up to June 30, 1946, you can rejoin the Army within 90 days after honorable discharge, and be enlisted in the grade you held when discharged.

Act now, before June passes! Get full information at your nearest U. S. Army Recruiting Station.

**Highlights of the Armed Forces Voluntary Recruitment Act**

1. Reenlistment for 1, 2, or 4 years. (One-year enlistments guaranteed for men who have been in the Army one month.)
2. Reenlistment can mean 16 to 34 years' service. (24 and 32 years' enlistment for men now in the Army, who may reenlist at any age and former service not depending on length of service.)
3. An increase in the enlistment bonus to \$100 for each year of previous service (one-year bonus was last paid to those who served one year, provided transportation in return, 90 days after last honorable discharge.)
4. Up to 90 days' paid furlough, depending on length of service, with travel paid to home and return, for men who reenlist within the prescribed time.
5. A thirty-day furlough each year with full pay.
6. Shortening and pay (based upon length of service) to all men who are discharged by transfer.
7. Option to retire at half pay for the rest of your life after 20 years' service—renewing for three-quarters pay after 25 years' service. All previous active federal military service counts toward retirement.
8. Benefits under the GI Bill of Rights for men who enlist before October 6, 1945.
9. Family allowances for the term of enlistment for dependents of men who enlist or reenlist before July 1, 1946.
10. Choice of branch of service and overseas tour (if those still open on enlistment).
11. Reserve and 6, U. S. commissioned officers returned from active duty may be enlisted in Grade 1 (Major General) and retain their senior commissions, provided they reenlist within the prescribed time.

**Enlist Now!**

**A GOOD JOB FOR YOU  
U. S. Army  
CHOOSE THIS  
FINE PROFESSION NOW!**

Figure 11. "June is Important."

Figure 11 depicted a bride and groom gazing at each other with adoration.<sup>144</sup>

<sup>144</sup> Ayer Agency Records, "June is an important month for you!" Print ad," NMAH, SI.


The text of the ad, “June is an important month for you!” explained that the title referred both to June’s popularity for weddings as well the final eligible dates during which army enlistees would receive two unique benefits: family allowances for dependents (of both new and re-enlistments) and the possibility to re-enlisting at the same army grade (for those who were recent honorable discharges or who were still currently serving). The inclusion of the bride with her groom-in-uniform and the references to marital partnership served various rhetorical functions, some practical and some more abstract. First, the figure of the bride represented visually the idea of a dependent for whom the army promised an allowance. Second, the couple was clearly a military couple as the groom is wearing an armed services dress uniform. Using an illustration of this loving military couple allows audiences, especially women to consider military service for its stable career prospects. The happy couple caught in a snapshot of post-wedding bliss sold military life softly to young (heterosexual) women who were married or soon-to-be-married. Third and in conjunction with the first and second, it sold the promise of stability: relationship, marriage, salary, benefits, job training, and money for your dependents (the wife and perhaps someday children). This ad was compelling because it treated the recruitment process as a courtship while evoking a presumed, normative goal of successful, traditional courtship.

Another ad (Figure 12) featured a married couple but was less optimistic in its presumption of spousal support. It aimed for populations in which that honeymoon phase of marriage had passed.


This is a series of editorial illustrations which have been prepared by the National Guard Bureau, and are published in the National Guard Magazine, July 1917. The National Guard Magazine, July 1917. The National Guard Magazine, July 1917.

## **"Me— a part-time widow?"**

"Honey, I've been thinking about joining the new National Guard today."  
 "What's been making a bug at you?"  
 "Honey, Betty, it's a man's duty—the new thing."  
 "I don't want my husband to be a widow."  
 "It's small thinking—just I could help some more than I help you now up there at the office, too."  
 "True?"  
 "It's only one evening a week—and I'll be the regular thing you every time."  
 "What does that make me? A part-time widow?"



"No, no! and have yourself a time with the girls—or even in the Army. That's a club for men, too."  
 "Sounds fun."  
 "It's extra money, Honey—in my old grade, \$100 a year plus. Pay all our expenses."  
 "A washing machine... a new car... your pet?"  
 "The 'best' is all for it, too."  
 "Tell me more."  
 "An extra two weeks for summer training—and the company will make up the difference in my pay."  
 "And we'd be giving something personal toward peace—and permanent?"  
 "Absolutely!"  
 "My dear!"



"Listen to me, 'National Guard Academy' with Paul Williams, Army Lieutenant, U.S.A., 2207, 2207, 2207, 2207.  
 The new National Guard is a fantastic, unexplored new world to the soldier, strength, independence, freedom and adventure. It's a world of adventure, of service, of the highest. There are National Guard units in every State, in every Territory and in every Nation. The National Guard is the best of all worlds."

The full information about the new National Guard, contact the officers at your local post, or write the Adjutant General in the capital city of your state.

# **The National Guard**

OF THE UNITED STATES

947 color U.S. Army

Figure 12. "Part Time Widow?"

In Figure 12, a wife laments the possibility of distance and life disruption, should her husband decide to enlist.<sup>145</sup>

<sup>145</sup> Ayer Agency Records, "Me—A Part Time Widow?, Print ad," NMAH, SI.

The bickering between this married couple over the husband's enlistment decision initiated with a dramatic title, "Me—a part-time widow?" The wife had a strong reaction to the idea of being a soldier spouse. The images and text unfolded in narrative form, with more plot development than the earlier scene of a bride and groom. The text itself was a series of quoted dialogue between husband and wife. The content of this script included a hefty dose of spousal skepticism. Arms at her sides with her head cocked, a conventionally attractive, white, brunette woman in an apron exclaimed, "I didn't raise *my* husband to be a soldier!"<sup>146</sup> The advertisement italicized the word "my," to fully highlight circumstances where wives of potential recruits might hesitate to support military enlistment decisions. It also envisioned a marital partnership in which both parties participated in significant household decisions. Their conversation continued. "Betty" the wife asked, "Who's been waving a flag at you?" to mock her husband's newfound interest in the National Guard.<sup>147</sup> The distribution of power in this ad was more equitable and it was the skeptical wife who needed to be convinced rather than the desired male recruit. In the ad, after the couple discussed salary and advancement opportunities the wife relinquished her criticisms about soldier husbands. The ad ran during the summer of 1947 in *Collier's*, *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Life*, and *Look*.<sup>148</sup> Recruiting not just the would-be-soldier but also their loved ones became standard protocol for advertising during the volunteer era. Across decades of military recruitment advertising, fictional couples who were heterosexual had significant

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<sup>146</sup> Ayer Agency Records, "Me—A Part Time Widow?" Magazine ad," NMAH, SI.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid. To be clear, the National Guard is the joint reserve branch that comprises inactive members of the army and air force. Ayer handled the advertising for both in the 1940s, and 1960-1988.

<sup>148</sup> Ayer Agency Records, "Me—A Part Time Widow?," NMAH, SI.

representation.<sup>149</sup> Despite the traditional conservative reputation of the military, ads such as Figure 12 represented a partnership in which women were able to influence enlistment decisions for their husbands. The agency afforded to women in the ads that featured wives with household agency still aligns with conservative notions about family and women's roles in a domestic space. But wives were not the only familial symbols represented in this process of persuasion. Other military advertisements demonstrated that the recruitment process transcended individual recruits also by targeting families with stable finances and a(t least one) secure breadwinner.

One ad Ayer created for magazine publication featured two young children, male and female. The most unique tactic of this 1947 Army National Guard advertisement was that it marketed to men with otherwise secure civilian jobs in Figure 13.

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<sup>149</sup> Although the DoD's "Don't Ask Don't Tell" policy banning armed servicepersons who identified openly as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender, did not exist until the 1990s, the branches of the armed services and their advertisers marketed a heteronormative world in which couples were exclusively comprised of one man with one woman; For an extensive history of military service by gays and lesbians, see: Randy Shilts, *Conduct Unbecoming: Gays and Lesbians in the US Military* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994).



Figure 13. "To Guard the Peace."

Figure 13 shows innocent seeming children playing in an idyllic meadow thanks to the protection offered by the National Guard.<sup>150</sup>

<sup>150</sup> Ayer Agency Records, "To Guard the Peace,' Magazine ad," NMAH, SI.



Symbols of paternalism, maternalism, and Americana populate the ad's text and visuals. A poetic header read, "To guard the peace of these sun-swept hills," evoking a phraseology that could easily appear in patriotic songs like "America the Beautiful." The text below read, "The national guard needs many virile, alert young men to help it guard the peace."<sup>151</sup> Though the ad utilized traditional notions of military enlistment as a civic duty by emphasizing the honor and heroic value of service to one's country, it also touted the individual, economic incentives offered by the National Guard. Recognizing that the approaches were not mutually exclusive, Ayer made sure to partner pretty prose about guarding sun-swept hills with pertinent information about pay. Those with steady jobs could augment their incomes with, "A full day's pay at new high Regular Army rates for one night each week of Armory training and for each day of summer field exercises."<sup>152</sup> An italicized disclaimer below the narrative assured readers concerned about the balance of responsibilities that, "Many employers...grant their Guardsman employees time off for summer field training without sacrifice of income or vacation period." The strategy Ayer took in an ad, which ran in *Look*, *Colliers*, *Life*, and *Saturday Evening Post*, was savvy and unique in contrast with newspaper recruitment pitches.<sup>153</sup> It made sense to presume that potential guardsmen recruits with secure employment might want additional funds to cover any increase in familial responsibilities. The adorable children visualized in the ad not only represented the symbolic innocence that was worth guarding, but also the practical realities of many young family men: more money paid to feed more mouths. This emotional tactic combined elements of lifestyle branding, emotional marketing, and pragmatic persuasion. Increasingly, Ayer ads for the army of this period featured multi-pronged approaches like this one.

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<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

Later into the 1940s, ads emphasized peacekeeping and domestic security while also flagging the threats of communism posed by the developing Cold War. Communism provided symbolically, both within public discourse and within the dialogue of army advertisements, incentives to innovate and achieve global technological superiority. The goal of technological supremacy served as both individual and political rhetorical incentives for enlistment. “A vital message to young men on the new Army Technical School Plan,” (Figure 14) bridged personal motivation toward skill acquisition with patriotic duty. The text states that those already enlisted or those considering enlistment are eligible for specialized training at “some of the finest technical schools in the world.”<sup>154</sup> See Figure 14.

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<sup>154</sup> Ayer Agency Records, “‘A vital message,’ Print ad,” NMAH, SI.



### Figure 14. "A Vital Message."

Figure 14 includes a focused trainee who gained technical skills while serving.<sup>155</sup>

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

In the ad, a young man sits engrossed while he assembles a piece of equipment. His actions intend to demonstrate for audiences that military service offered the chance to learn. The persuasive message: unique skill sets, particularly useful in civilian sectors of industry, awaited you in the Army. Ads like Figure 14 ran in magazines like *Popular Mechanics*, *Popular Science Monthly*, *Saturday Evening Post*, *Colliers*, *Life*, and *Look*, indicating that when technical skills were promised to recruits, ad placement could be both general (in the case of *Colliers*, et al) and specific (in the cases of *Popular Mechanics* or *Popular Science Monthly*) in audience targeting. This style of ad utilized scientific and technical language to mark the acquisition of expertise afforded to trained army men. Ads occasionally included subtextual connotations that trained army men were more likely to be desirable to single women.

Recruitment ads of this era encompassed both army and air force branches. Ayer handled both and used a pitch similar to Figure 14 in Figure 15. This one offered the path to flight reading, “Never before an opportunity like this for a career in aviation.”<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> Following World War II, the United States Army Air Forces (USAAF) was established as the aviation wing of the American military. The USAAF eventually became the United States Air Force. For this reason and during the early years of the air force branch’s existence, recruitment services provided by Ayer enveloped both the Air Force and Army. To read more see Bernard C. Nalty, *Winged Shield, Winged Sword: A History of the United States Air Force Vol. I*, (Washington, D.C.: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1997). The quoted content comes from the advertisement Ayer Agency Records, “‘Never before,’ Magazine ad,” NMAH, SI.

**Never before an opportunity like this  
for a career in aviation**

The U. S. Air Force is not in front today in everything pertaining to aviation. Nowhere else are so many trail-blazing developments taking place. Nowhere else is there to be found better training for a successful career in aviation.

The Air Force is now opening the doors to high school graduates, offering them a truly great opportunity to get into the exact phase of aviation that interests them—acquiring them the world's finest training and good pay while they learn.

The Air Force Aviation Career Plan is new. It's different . . . unlike anything ever offered before! It cannot be equaled anywhere else at any price. If you are a high school graduate between 17 and 34 years of age, it is now possible—under the Aviation Career Plan—for you to qualify for, and be assured of attending, the Air Force Specialist School of your choice, free of charge!

A man interested in any one of more than 80 specialties can then equip himself thoroughly for the work he prefers, while earning high pay. Requirements: a real enthusiasm for aviation, and the ambition to get ahead in a growing field.

There is no finer way to insure a sound career than to join an organization which is interested enough in you to give you a choice of its opportunities—helps you join. That is exactly what the Aviation Career Plan does. Full details on this great new program are available at U. S. Army and Air Force Recruiting Stations, Air Force bases, Civil Air Patrol units, or by writing to the Commanding General, Air Training Command, Randolph Field, Louisiana.

Listen to "Sound Off"—"Voice of the Army"—"Should We Wait?" and Hear Student Reactions to your radio.

**U. S. ARMY AND AIR FORCE RECRUITING SERVICE**

**HERE ARE SOME OF THE  
YOU CAN SELECT**

- AIRPLANE MAINTENANCE
- AVIATION MECHANICS
- ARMAMENT
- ENGINE COMMUNICATION
- WEATHER
- PHOTOGRAPHY AND COMMUNICATIONS
- VEHICLE OPERATIONS
- AUTOMOTIVE MAINTENANCE
- ADMINISTRATION
- SUPPLY

**OUR ARMY AND AIR FORCE SERVE THE NATION AND MANKIND IN WAR**

Figure 15. "Never Before."

Figure 15 displays military men working on an airplane and described career opportunities.<sup>157</sup>

<sup>157</sup> Ayer Agency Records, "Never before," NMAH, SI.

A team of men working on an airplane conveys the idea that the path to an exciting career in flight begins with service. Ads like the above in Figure 14 and 15 persuaded enlistment by promising access to technical training. The subtext of these ads suggested the protagonist's excitement about learning to use the world's most innovative equipment. The technical emphasis served as a Cold War precursor, reassuring to broader American audiences a public relations message about the power, security, and innovation of the US military. These ads worked in conjunction with those that utilized the languages of fear and global uncertainty to amplify patriotism amid Cold War anxiety. And they were plentiful. With emphasis on the creative, computerized, and powerful development of weaponry such ads offered visual and textual arguments preemptively about the ascension of an aspiring superpower. One ad (Figure 16) included copy that referenced increasing global turmoil that threatened domestic and international peace. The slogan, "Before You Sleep Tonight" read like a warning.



Figure 16. "Before You Sleep."

Figure 16's ominous night sky was patrolled and protected by American military aviation.<sup>158</sup>

<sup>158</sup> Ayer Agency Records, "Before You Sleep," Magazine ad," NMAH, SI.

The text reproduces the slogan's tone, "There is some straight thinking to be done by every American citizen who wants to live and sleep in peace. In the boiling turmoil of the world around us one fact emerges – and it is clear, *cold*, and indisputable."<sup>159</sup> The dramatic rhetoric of the prose builds to a fever pitch. And a direct allusion to a mounting threat of the Cold War is evident. As the text continued, bravado and patriotism were peppered with careful anxiety, stressing the necessity for American technical dominance. "The world's finest scientific minds must keep America far out in front."<sup>160</sup> This two page ad was a center spread in Look Magazine, April 27<sup>th</sup> 1948.<sup>161</sup>

Ayer created a few recruitment ads that were intended to provoke fear toward the end of the 1940s. A phrase found in one series of magazine ads read, "Your Army and Air Force Serve the Nation and Mankind in War and Peace." Such language stressed the increasing importance of national security in a post-WWII era of the Cold War.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> Emphasis added. Ibid.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid. This was among the only two page military ads I encountered from the period.

<sup>162</sup> Ayer Agency Records, "'He Sold Peace to an Unbeliever,' Magazine ad," NMAH, SI.





**Figure 17. "He Sold Peace."**

Figure 17 set a scene for recruitment that glimpsed the height of combat action. A weapon protruded from the arms of a determined, handsome soldier.<sup>163</sup>

<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

Purposeful text hinted at the ideological differences between democracy and communism, resulting in an even more anxious visual landscape as seen in Figure 17. It reads, “The American is free to think and do and believe as he pleases. Freedom is his birthright. Perhaps that’s why he is ready to fight for it. Maybe that’s the reason he’s the world’s fightingest soldier.”<sup>164</sup> This short passage from within the advertisement’s textual content illustrated notions about American liberty, free thought, military might, and individuality. Rhetorical uses of words like “perhaps” and “maybe” helped measure sweeping claims. Other parts of the text emphasized the supremacy of American ideals and the altruism of US soldiers. “Today, as always, the American Infantryman works for peace. It was not enough that he helped win the victory. Now he’s out to make it stick.” The ad took a pre-emptive approach to defend against any accusations of preemptive war mongering. The complexity of the accompanying visual augmented the ideological intricacies of the text. It features a handsome, confident, stone-faced man pointing his large weapon with assertion. The slogans and title displayed in increased font, waxing about unbelievers and the American military’s role in war as well as peace. The entire visual and textual composition worked to assert the precariousness of peacetime amid global instability. A battle for dominance between competing systems of governance was mounting. The ad argued that without a strong military and constant innovation “peacetime” itself would not endure. Among other popular publications, this ad was published in *Life Magazine* for the week of February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1948. Unwavering paternalism came through in the language of the header. If logic alone could not convince “unbelievers” then the ad’s visual suggested that coercion via the threat of force was a solution. This subtextual message enabled audiences to infer that the handsome protagonist with his confident movie-star scowl sold peace to an unbeliever aligned

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<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

otherwise with ambiguity. His confidence represented a kind of visual public relations synecdoche for the confidence of the US military writ large. To that end, this specific recruitment tool sold more than individual job training, access to skills, or economic stability. It sold the ideology of American democracy. “He sold peace to an unbeliever,” argued compellingly that the American military was a global force with which to be reckoned, and that it would fight for dominance.

By the summer of 1950 the American military was at war with communist North Korea. And the National Advertising Council took over the bulk of recruitment efforts for the branches of service, increasing efforts to recruit women into the Women’s Army Corps (WAC).<sup>165</sup> According to military historian, Bettie J. Morden:

The National Advertising Council prepared and distributed thousands of newspaper ads, outdoor advertising signs, bumper stickers, and fact sheets to over 1,500 newspapers, magazines, and other media outlets as a public service to enhance the recruiting campaign. The theme was ‘Share Service for Freedom.’<sup>166</sup>

Eventually television and radio advertisements supplemented the above mix to offer a vast multi-mediated approach to recruitment not seen since World War II. But in 1952 Congress froze the funds designated for recruitment advertising, justifying that an active military draft rendered recruitment (of men) unnecessary. With time these budgets were restored and eventually increased. Government funds were allocated toward retention and recruitment of specialists and

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<sup>165</sup> Dancer Fitzgerald Sample created for the army at least one television commercial and perhaps print ads too through the 1950s. Because of the freezing of recruitment funds, it is unclear how and how much the agency was paid. The research seems conflicting. But according to an archived issue of *Billboard Magazine* a list of “The Billboard Scoreboard: TV Film Commercials in Production” indicated that the firm was working for the army as late as 1955. “The Billboard Scoreboard: TV Film Commercials in Production,” *Billboard Magazine*, 15 January 1955.

<sup>166</sup> Bettie J. Morden, *The Women’s Army Corps, 1945-1978* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 2000) 101.

women, specifically to medical posts.<sup>167</sup> Many elected officials were uncertain about an ongoing need for private advertising agencies to create military advertising. Some viewed it as a waste of taxpayer dollars.<sup>168</sup>

Although the Army has been very loyal to Ayer, particularly by the 1970s, the hiring of private firms to create military advertising was still a new practice in the 40s. In 1947, the army account was worth \$4.5 million in billings. Transitioning leadership and organization within the army branch led to a period of agency hopping, prior to the freezing of recruitment funds in 1952, at which point the ad firm Dancer Fitzgerald Sample was serving the army's recruitment needs, perhaps without payment.<sup>169</sup> With the large amount of money at stake in the period between 1947 and 1952, competition among firms was fierce.<sup>170</sup> Ayer's contract with the army was suspended in 1948 and did not resume again until 1967 when they were hired again to recruit during an increasingly unpopular Vietnam War.<sup>171</sup> The ads Ayer created in the years immediately preceding a transition to the volunteer era of recruitment followed in the steps of

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<sup>167</sup> Casey, *Selling the Korean War*, 2008; Cassada, "Military Advertising," p. 1048.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> *Madison Avenue and the Color Line: African Americans in the Advertising Industry*, includes the story of a young black draftee named Roy Eaton who worked for the Armed Forces Radio Service, writing and producing programs. In the course of this work he interacted with representatives from Dancer-Fitzgerald-Sample, who taught him about creating advertising copy and who were cited as then-ad agency for the army. See Jason Chambers, *Madison Avenue and the Color Line: African Americans in the Advertising Industry*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009) 96.

<sup>170</sup> In 1947, Ayer lost the National Guard account to Gardner Advertising, Inc. In 1948, the army followed. Selection procedures were not transparent and the army account itself became inactive and then divided. Rather than hiring a single agency to advertise for the entire branch, each of the six units hired their own firms. The army worked briefly with JWT in 1950, then they switched agencies to Dancer Fitzgerald Sample. Finally, after all the shuffling, army advertising converted entirely to in-house until 1967 when they rehired Ayer. So during the Korean War, in-house and Dancer Fitzgerald, Sample handled recruitment for the army branch. See Cassada, "Military Advertising," 1048-1049.

<sup>171</sup> Minick, Broussard, and Richards, "Ayer Agency Collection," 2004.

their 1940s-era post-war work. These advertisements employed strategies later used to recruit during the volunteer era, when the draft was overturned and no longer a mechanism to guarantee that ranks were filled. While balancing delicately the practice of promoting patriotic ideals in ads that emphasized benefits for individuals, Ayer targeted a recruitment demographic that was new to their army work: women. Ads for women in the late 1960s glimpsed the campaigns and practices used to ensure a successful transition after the draft was ended. By the late 1960s, Ayer and the army were no longer recruiting women as wives who supported their husbands' prospective enlistment decisions. Instead young women themselves became a coveted crop of potential recruits for service to the Women's Army Corps. The strategies for recruitment of women in the late 1960s began to allude to some of the advancements in gender equity made by activists that were the vanguard of a second wave of feminism. But for a few years the traditional values of the army still reigned supreme. And, within the visual and textual arguments of these particular ads, a gender divide remained ever-present.

### 3.0 STRANGE BEDFELLOWS: GENDERED RECRUITING DURING VIETNAM

*Before the Vietnam War, the utilization of women as military personnel was essentially token. In 1964, only 1.1% of uniformed personnel were female. In 1974 the figure had risen to 3.5%. Morris Janowitz and Charles C Moskos, Jr.*<sup>172</sup>

*'Representation,' it has been said, means more in the United States than in any other nation. Indeed, the American self-image is that of a country where unity is achieved amid social diversity; where people of many backgrounds can live in harmony and come together for a common cause; and where through democratic governance, the nation's great institutions can be called upon to 'represent' (or 'present again') the varied community interests and characteristics of the general population.... The fact is that the American military has never been statistically representative of the population across all major demographic dimensions; nor is it clear that population representation is either possible or desirable.* Mark J. Eitelberg<sup>173</sup>

In 1966 influenced by strategic challenges the United States faced during the Vietnam War, the Department of Defense initiated a task force that reassessed military policies toward women in

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<sup>172</sup> Morris Janowitz and Charles C Moskos, Jr. "Report on Five Years of the Volunteer Force: 1973-1978 in January 1979," in Manpower Research and Advisory Services Records 1971-1994, box 5 folder 8, Archives Division, Smithsonian Institution Archives (hereafter "SIA"), Smithsonian Institution Library, Washington DC.

<sup>173</sup> Although this quote dates to the late 1980s, when the volunteer concept of military service had more than fifteen years of success behind it, debates continued about the indefinite long-term viability of a volunteer force. The quote came from a paper presented by a professor at the Navel Postgraduate School in Montgomery, California. Notes from the conference included copies of this specific paper addressing demographic population representation in the armed forces. The documents were part of the Manpower Research and Advisory Services Records, SIA,, which includes Mark J. Eitelberg, paper on "Population Representation in the American Military" presented the Biennial Conference of the Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society October 1989, box 7 folder 10 agenda 25.

the armed forces.<sup>174</sup> The manpower demands of wartime corresponded with the expanding roles women assumed in civilian labor forces. The findings of the task force resulted in significant policy changes in 1967 that enabled enlisted women to advance higher into the ranks, to receive more gender-equitable retirement provisions, and to access a diversified array of service roles.<sup>175</sup> As of 1948 a law had capped the female ratio of military enlistment at 2%. In 1967 that law was overturned, though the ratio of women in the armed services remained below 2% until the end of the decade.<sup>176</sup> Simultaneously military analysts around the world marveled at the comprehensive participation of women in the Israeli armed forces; a recruitment model that differed from prevailing Western notions about military-enlisted women.<sup>177</sup> Domestic attitudes toward women's liberation and gender equity were shifting thanks to activist efforts and media attention as a second wave of feminism marshaled forward more progressive gender mores. Military manpower specialists in the United States took notice. And the advertising industry used progressive representations of women to appeal to modern female consumers. An ad (Figure 18) from 1967 shows diversity in race and gender among the employees of long-time Ayer client, AT&T.<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Martin Binkin and Shirley J. Bach, *Studies in Defense Policy: Women and the Military* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution 1977), 12-13. See also Binkin and Bach citation 22: United States Department of Defense, "Report of the Inter-Service Working Group on Utilization of Women in the Armed Services," *Department of Defense* (August 31, 1966).

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

<sup>176</sup> The Women's Armed Services Integration Act from 1948 enabled women's legal, permanent service in the armed forces but also capped their overall participation to 2%. Prior to 1948, women were only permitted to serve in times of war. See: "Women in the US Army: A New Era," US Army Official Website, Accessed 14 July 2013.

<http://www.army.mil/women/newera.html>.

<sup>177</sup> Binkin and Bach, *Women and the Military*, 12-13.

<sup>178</sup> "N.W. Ayer Advertising Records, "Troubleshooters," Print ad, National Museum of American History (hereafter, NMAH), Smithsonian Institution (hereafter, SI).



Figure 18. "Troubleshooters."

In Figure 18, both men and women comprised a group of "troubleshooters" for telephone giant, AT&T.<sup>179</sup>

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.



The ad also conveyed a shared sense of professionalism via the serious expressions and sternly crossed arms. This tactic sought to unify the workers shown, regardless of their rank, role, race, and/or sex. Such representations of diversified workplaces reflected a shift in attitudes about the importance of diversity and inclusion in the public sphere. Advertisers were cognizant of social impacts made by the civil rights and women's rights movements. In order to remain contemporarily salient, even typically conservative firms like Ayer appropriated gender and race inclusivity in their ads as shown in Figure 18.

By the 1960s there were more so than ever before powerful, competitive firms of all sizes in the advertising industry.<sup>180</sup> In order to compete, agencies hoped to acquire a range of high-profile clients and unique accounts. New strategies proved that successful campaigns were about more than products. A "creative revolution" changed the industry significantly.<sup>181</sup> Smaller firms were able to win coveted contracts with provocative copywriting and imaginative art direction. The practice of crafting "anti-advertisements," such as Doyle Dane Bernbach's (DDB) memorable work for Volkswagen, flourished amid countercultural movements, changing the way firms promoted and branded their clients.<sup>182</sup> As Lawrence Samuel writes:

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<sup>180</sup> For historical examinations of the advertising industry in America, see: Stephen Fox, *The Mirror Makers: A History of American Advertising and Its Creators*, (New York: Vintage, 1985); Stuart Ewen, *Captains of Consciousness: Advertising and the Social Roots of Consumer Culture*, (New York: McGraw Hill, 1976); Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920-1940*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

<sup>181</sup> For historical analysis of the impact of the creative revolution in advertising, see Thomas Frank, *The Conquest of Cool: Business Culture, Counterculture, and the Rise of Hip Consumerism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 88-103. For overviews Bill Bernbach and DDB, see: Lawrence R. Samuel, "Thinking Smaller: Bill Bernbach and the Creative Revolution in Advertising of the 1950s," *Advertising and Society Review*, 13:3 (2012); and Doris Willens, *Nobody's Perfect: Bill Bernbach and the Golden Age of Advertising*, (Lexington, Ky: CreateSpace, 2009).

<sup>182</sup> The central message of DDB's campaign for Volkswagen, "Think Small," broke many of the period's more mechanized "rules" for advertising cars. Car campaigns from this time presumed

The (Volkswagen account) would not only make Bill Bernbach and his agency the envy of Madison Avenue but redirect the course of advertising history. The headline of one of the first ads the agency produced for Volkswagen simply read "Think Small"—precisely what DDB itself had been doing for the past decade. Thinking "smaller" (i.e., opting for simplicity and understatement in an era defined by complexity and overstatement) was, ironically, the "biggest" thing an adman could do.<sup>183</sup>

For examples of the Volkswagen account work produced by DDB, [click here](#).<sup>184</sup> Rather than arguing that theirs was the best, newest, most attractive product, Doyle Dane Bernbach crafted for Volkswagen and other clients memorable, witty ads. Thomas Frank writes that this new approach to advertising hoped to flatter the American public by inviting them to be in on the joke of advertising's insincerity.<sup>185</sup> Humor, sarcasm, self-effacement, and perceived brand honesty became commonplace among many popular commercial campaigns.<sup>186</sup> For example, a popular 1963 campaign for the national car rental company, Avis Inc., highlighted its second place status among the competition. The slogan implied that their position meant they "Try Harder" to please customers.<sup>187</sup> DDB took chances with anti-ads and caused firms, large and small, conservative

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that bigger and newer were automatically better. Automotive body designs were revised annually by American car manufacturers, which marked the year of manufacturing and purchase for savvy consumers. One tongue-in-cheek ad from DDB claimed that, "Volkswagen doesn't do it again," which poked fun at the perpetual cycle of new cars being designed, redesigned, and promoted through advertising.

<sup>183</sup> Lawrence R. Samuel, "Thinking Smaller," *Advertising and Society Review*, 2012.

<sup>184</sup> Doyle Dane Bernbach, "Even the bottom of a Volkswagen looks funny," magazine advertisement, author's collection. For more on the history of Volkswagen advertising, see: Kate McLeod, *Beetlemania: The Story of the Car that Captured the Hearts of Millions*, (New York: Smithmark Publishers, 1999); Alfredo Marcantino and David Abbott, *Remember Those Great Volkswagen Ads?* (London: Booth-Clibborn Editions, 1993).

<sup>185</sup> Thomas Frank, *Conquest of Cool*, (1998) 52-73.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

<sup>187</sup> "Advertising: Trying Harder," *Time Magazine* 24 July 1964.

and progressive to take notice, including Ayer.<sup>188</sup> And thanks to advancements in market research, even smaller firms could serve large, mainstream clients. Small firms were sometimes considered better equipped to craft highly specified campaigns with target marketing.

Alienated geographically from Madison Avenue, Ayer remained relative traditionalists serving their local, national, and global clients out of Philadelphia. The Philadelphia location kept them in closer proximity to Washington and by the summer of 1967 the Department of Defense re-hired the agency to handle army, air force, reservist, and WAC recruitment during the Vietnam War. In the late 1960s the civil rights and women's rights movements not only increased diversity awareness, but they paired with anti-war movement politics to increase public skepticism of corporations and institutions. Large advertising firms such as Ayer faced double the scrutiny, for promoting "corporate America," and for being themselves part of it. Older, more conservative agencies like Ayer faced steep challenges to meet an increasingly fragmented and savvy American public with compelling messages about their clients.<sup>189</sup> As the cultural zeitgeist inspired increasing contempt for conformity, individuality, authenticity, and uniqueness became of paramount importance for many young people. The advertising industry's best chance at resonating in a moment of corporate and government skepticism was in promising individual expression through consumerism. But the practice of marketing the atypical commodity of service to one's country, even with support from a military draft, required a great deal of finesse.

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<sup>188</sup> By conservative, I mean ad firms that were traditional in approach versus the progressive firms of the creative revolution. Lawrence R. Samuel, "Thinking Smaller," *Advertising and Society Review*, 2012.

<sup>189</sup> Within Ayer paper documents, company memos indicate that the agency identity was traditional, conservative, and reliable. Ayer's people took pride in that but also acknowledged their vulnerability in competing for client contracts. See Ayer Agency Records, "Business Records and Personnel," Series 7 and 8, NMAH, SI.

The military draft itself was under public scrutiny because of controversial exemptions offered to college students and other socioeconomically privileged groups.<sup>190</sup> Entire communities faced the realities of war first hand, as thousands of young men left to serve in combat abroad. The civilian population at home witnessed the aftermath in death tolls, combat injuries, and post-traumatic stress, during a time with scant mental illness support in the US Department of Veterans Affairs. Declining domestic support for the war also caused declining morale among soldiers abroad. The Vietnam War weighed heavily in hearts and minds, and without the War Advertising Council to assist with messaging, like it did during World War II, the reputations of each branch brand suffered.

In 1967, the US government attempted to compensate for the shift in public opinion with some public relations campaigning. The army was in special need of assistance in persuading draftees to choose the army for their selected branch of service, due to its low status among the branches and due to the substantially large number of young men they required.<sup>191</sup> As historian Beth Bailey states, “The army had to recruit far more young men than did the navy, air force, or marines. And it came in dead last of the four in public regard.”<sup>192</sup> To that end, Ayer created a series of recruitment advertisements aimed at drafted men toward that purpose. Although the army account generated modest revenue of only \$3 million for Ayer in 1970, that figure ballooned to \$40 million by 1975, in part because recruitment ventures expanded to envelop

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<sup>190</sup> For details of these exemptions and a history of draft resistance, see Michael S. Foley, *Confronting the War Machine: Draft Resistance during the Vietnam War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

<sup>191</sup> Beth Bailey, *America's Army: Making the All-Volunteer Force* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 69.

<sup>192</sup> Although she is speaking of the volunteer era, her statement is also true during the Vietnam War, when Ayer was hired to help. Ibid, 69.

multiple media such as radio and television advertisements.<sup>193</sup> But despite the relatively low figure in 1970, the army remained a very visible and non-traditional brand that diversified the client base of the firm and grew to become Ayer's second most lucrative account before a corruption scandal severed the relationship. This chapter will examine the campaigns created by Ayer for the army in the years immediately preceding the dissolution of the military draft. To illustrate the reestablishment of an Ayer-army partnership, I provide an overview of primary sources from the Ayer Collection at the National Museum of American History's Archives Center Library as well as information about the period as discussed in the papers of the Manpower Research and Advisory Services Records collection in the archives of the Smithsonian Institution Library. First, I review some of the ads and slogans aimed at recruiting and retaining draft-eligible men. Many of these ads featured masculinity appeals and individual incentives for enlistment. There was a noticeable shift in the ads depending on the campaign slogans of the period. Campaigns corresponded with the knowledge of the impending shift to a volunteer concept of military manpower recruitment and retention, while also reflecting the tensions within the general public regarding the ongoing Vietnam War. After examining the Vietnam-era recruitment tactics aimed at draft-eligible men, I delve into the unique approaches geared toward recruiting women in larger numbers into the armed services. Ayer developed campaigns for both the Women's Army Corps' (WAC) and the Army Nurse Corps' (NC) recruitment as a part of their responsibilities for the army branch client. The strategies employed to enlist women for each respective unit varied greatly, in part because of the need for nurses in

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<sup>193</sup> The \$2 million figure comes from Ibid, 70. The \$40 million figure comes from one of the many press clippings in the Ayer archival records: "Ayer Retains \$40m Army Recruitment," *Campaign* (London) 28 March 1975.

dangerous areas of Vietnam.<sup>194</sup> I evaluate the differing strategies of recruiting for the NC and recruiting for the WAC. Finally, I discuss the overall shift toward a volunteer concept, as the advertising of military service and the DoD itself, braced for the brave new military era of demand-driven, marketplace recruitment.

### **3.1     MARKETING MASCULINITY DURING THE DRAFT: CHOOSE ARMY**

In the mid-1960s, the army's advertising budget was modest, particularly in comparison with that from late 1940s, when Ayer and the army last partnered, when you could buy a bit more media space for your dollar, and when there were no television commercial or radio broadcast expenses for which to budget. Until the late 1960s, the military relied on public service announcements to handle its television and radio media. With only \$2 million to spend in 1968, Ayer focused on crafting campaigns that marketed military service to draft-eligible men, to those already drafted, and to a previously-"underutilized" target enlistment market of young women.<sup>195</sup>

The Women's Army Corps needed women to fill a larger number of administrative support and

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<sup>194</sup> According to Department of Defense policy restricting female service members from combat zones, nurses were not to be stationed in the most dangerous areas. Unfortunately, the conditions of the Vietnam War were not reliable when it came to predicting combat zones with certainty. As a result some medic units that contained female cadets of the Nurse Corps were caught in combat that did result in cadet and soldier casualties. See: "History of the Vietnam Women's Memorial," Vietnam Women's Memorial Foundation Website, Accessed: 14 July 2013. <http://www.vietnamwomensmemorial.org/history.php>.

<sup>195</sup> The idea to recruit what was referred to as "underutilized groups" was also termed "alternative manning strategies." See "Agenda for the conference 'Marine Corps and Navy Man and Woman-power: Requirements and Considerations 5-7 March 1978,' Manpower Research and Advisory Services Records 1971-1994, box 5 folder 2, Smithsonian Institution Archive (hereafter SIA).

nursing roles during wartime. Because Ayer and the army hoped to convey traditional American values in their recruitment of women, the strategy for recruitment took an unexpected turn. Military service, at least within the ads targeting women recruits, offered as a setting for courtship and romance. Ayer took up the unlikely project of selling military service as the ideal backdrop for dating while the United States was still at war.

Ayer's re-hiring by the army energized the firm, which released company-wide memos that celebrated achieving such a coveted national account.<sup>196</sup> The first of these memos dated March 16, 1967, announced the assignment quoting Neal O'Connor, then-president and chief executive of Ayer:

We have received word that the US Army has selected N.W. Ayer to handle Recruiting Advertising and Publicity for the Army, ROTC, and Army Reserves... Ayer has been selected by the Army from a field of six agencies in competition for the account... The assignment for Army Recruiting is for the fiscal year 1968, which begins July 1, 1967.<sup>197</sup>

The memo also itemized the agencies in the competition, as did each subsequent memo detailing Ayer's contract reappointment. Although the 1968 account began with billings lower than they had been in the 1940s, the visibility of this client offered public relations opportunities for the firm itself, particularly as it struggled to remain relevant in an increasingly competitive advertising industry marketplace.<sup>198</sup>

The task of marketing military service during an ongoing and growingly unpopular foreign war presented unique challenges for the agency. Despite industry-wide shifts resulting

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<sup>196</sup> The internal newsletter for the agency, *Ayernews*, frequently included coverage of the army account. And many company memos detailed the appointment and reappointments of Ayer by the army. The first of these was: John D. Upton, "Memo to Department Heads- New York Office," 16 March 1967, as well as others are located in Ayer Agency Records, "Business Records and Personnel," Series 7 and 8, NMAH, SI.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid.

<sup>198</sup> Beth Bailey, *America's Army*, 69-71.

from the influence of the creative revolution, Ayer's previous work for the army set the tone for many of the 60s-era ads, particularly in the process of recruiting men. Figures. 19 and 20 juxtapose in style the different time periods of these two Ayer army ads. Conversely, in prose and in sales strategy they were quite similar. In 1948, realistic illustration dominated the visual landscape for military ads. Text appeared below imagery setting verbal foundation for the overall composition. (See Figure 19).





Figure 19. "To Keep Them Safe."

Figure 19 portrayed two visual landscapes that appeared to be in tension until the text made evident their harmonious connection.<sup>199</sup>

<sup>199</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Records, "To Keep Them Safe," Print ad, NMAH, SI.

Within Figure 19 protective paternal figures hovered above the idyllic schoolyard full of happy, thriving children at play underneath their watchful military umbrella. Personified militarism, replete with tanks, helmets, and uniforms engendered safety and comfort among the most innocent inhabitants of Anytown USA. The prose read, “To keep them safe,” illustrating the benefit of a powerful military tasked with ensuring national security. The tagline served public relations functions, too, reiterating the idea that both peacetime and wartime were fragile and uncertain, making an argument for the necessity of a well-supported military in the wake of World War II. A subtler expression of Cold War anxieties was still present in this ad. The conclusion of the text also drew deeper, more strategic links between a schoolyard and eventual military might. It concluded, “This June four hundred thousand boys will leave their schools to start in work. What finer work is there than this which serves the peace?”<sup>200</sup> In this example, not only did the military oversee the safety of America’s children, but they also enabled (boy) children to grow into strong would-be soldiers.

Two decades later the rhetoric persisted, attempting to persuade school-aged boys to enlist, albeit without literal inclusions of school children or potent, poetic allusions to peace and service in an ad from 1967. The military draft and the reality of wartime required Ayer’s messages to be more direct and less sentimental in the process of recruiting young men. Figure 20 portrayed a trio of pilots running toward waiting army helicopters, clad in helmets and jumpsuits.<sup>201</sup> No faces were visible but the bodies were masculine archetypes with enough generic appeal to enable the projections of a range of male identities. For a still image, the ad conveyed incredible movement. The momentum of the running men and the circulating

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<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>201</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Records, “Who Says High School Grads Can’t Be Pilots?,” Print ad, NMAH, SI.

helicopter blades beckoned high school graduates to consider escaping their otherwise mundane civilian circumstances for a life of excitement, purpose, and adventure.

**Who says high school grads can't be pilots?  
Not the Army.**

You can become an Army helicopter pilot right out of high school. If you want to fly when you graduate, look into the opportunities you'll find in Army Flight Training.

It's not easy. The Army doesn't take just anyone. To start, you must be in top physical and mental condition. Next, you have to pass rigid entrance tests. Go through basic training. And complete a 4-week pre-flight course. Then you start 8 months of flight training.

When you're finished, you'll get your wings and the rank of Warrant Officer in the U.S. Army. You'll be entitled to extra flight pay and the same military courtesies and privileges as a commissioned officer.

See your local Army Recruiting Sergeant about Army Aviation Opportunities. It's your chance to start an exciting career while giving valuable service to your Country at this important time in history.

**Army**

Army Opportunities  
Dept. 100  
Hampton, Va. 23369  
Please send me your 40-page booklet, "The Secret of Getting Ahead."

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_  
Education \_\_\_\_\_

W97-281-17-1627-PP-1 page, bleed-8 11-16 x 11 7-16-Flying Magazine, September-H. W. Ayer & Son, Inc.

**Figure 20. "Who Says Grads Can't?"**

Figure 20 encouraged high school graduates to consider immediate service in the military where thrilling experiences and impressive skill acquisition awaited.<sup>202</sup>

<sup>202</sup> Ibid.

The text promised military enlistment as an immediate option for high school graduates interested in flight training. It read, “You can become an Army helicopter pilot right out of high school.... It’s not easy. The Army doesn’t take just anyone.... You must be in top physical and mental condition.” The ad used no sentiment, no school children, and little reference to patriotic duty in pitching armed service. In that regard, it was different from the direct appeal to pathos in the example from twenty years prior (Figure 19.). The ad from the 1940s portrayed the social incentive of a greater good as the primary reason for enlistment. Protecting the peace, keeping children safe, and serving your country with honor were implicit to the sales pitch from Figure 19. Conversely, the ad from the 1960s conveyed enlistment as a mechanism for young thrill seekers to advance as individuals, becoming pilots with hard work and determination. Figure 20 made clear via text that despite wartime needs, the army remained selective, which attempted to mitigate potential perceptions that the branch was desperate for recruits.<sup>203</sup> Simulated but realistic photographs replaced hypothetical, idealized illustrations. The practice of using photographs without collage or significant manipulation constrained the potential for artistic fantasies of protection like that seen in Figure 19. But the urgency of the political moment was captured in the photograph’s landscape. Although the field in which the men ran could be anywhere in the US or abroad, nothing specifically marked it as the United States or any other nation the way that the American flag flew visibly above the frolicking schoolchildren in the ad from the 1940s. The removal of any immediate sense of place mattered during a time of war when the fears of automatic combat deployments weighed heavily on hearts and minds. Although the scene of Figure 20 could have occurred anywhere, nothing about the ad evoked Anytown, USA. And although the soldiers depicted at the top of Figure 19 were also unmarked

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<sup>203</sup> As the earlier quote from Bailey indicates, the branch suffered from low status.

by place, their duties were to “keep the peace,” rather than fight a war. Wartime recruitment during a military draft required a lot of maneuvering around widespread anxieties about the realities of combat operations.

The draft was necessary because there were not enough volunteers, making wartime recruitment was a complex process. Advertising to young draft-eligible men required some obfuscation of the realities of soldiers’ probable deployments. The scene of Figure 20 remained vague on purpose. Ads aimed at men avoided completely the topics of wartime casualties and injuries. Vietnam made it necessary to sell the concept of agency and free will to draft-eligible men. Young men (and their parents and families) were treated to messages trumpeting the potential to enlist and thereby choose, rather than be forced on individual terms, taking control of an undesirable but largely unavoidable circumstance. In wartime recruitment, perhaps the most compelling message to young draft-eligible men told them to make their own destinies. Many from the late 1960s that Ayer aimed toward men suggested this possibility.

Army advertisements of the late-1960s that hoped to reach young men focused also on skilled training, future marketplace opportunities, and steady pay, assuming for audiences that patriotism was either a preexisting, common-sense variable or an otherwise irrelevant aspect of the recruitment process during a draft. Unlike Ayer’s peacetime ads following World War II for their army client, Vietnam-era army ads contained few platitudes or emotion. Wartime sacrifice and the grim media coverage of the military involvement in Vietnam were somber enough. Ayer used a slogan that seemed self-conscious of the waning public approval for the war as well as widespread draft anxieties. “Your future, your decision, choose ARMY,” beckoned audiences to take hold of their uncertain futures, to disregard the criticisms, panic, and fears about war, and to make their enlistment decisions at the individual level, rather than be subject to external

(including parental) influences or government forces. This blatant appeal to human agency enticed young men to choose their own fates rather than wait to be called up with a low number in the draft lottery. The campaign comprised ads that minimized allusions to Vietnam. In fact some of them seemed to assert distance with intensity. “Go to sea. In the Army” was one such ad that depicted a large ship in the water (Figure 21).<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>204</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Records, “Go to Sea,” Print ad, NMAH, SI.

10 U. S. SECOND BOSSA 245

# Go to sea. In the Army.

Or fly the sky. Or highball a train.  
Or handle a dozer.

The Army teaches special skills of all kinds. High school graduates who enlist now can choose from hundreds of job training courses.


Along with seamen to man our ships and flyers to pilot our choppers, we need marine and aviation mechanics, Electronics experts. Surgical assistants. Scuba and deep-sea divers. Technicians skilled in malaria control, combat weapons operators, and many more.

If you qualify, we'll guarantee your course selection before you sign up. You'll learn a rewarding career skill. There's something for every interest. First come, first served.

Use coupon or write:  
Army Opportunities, Dept. 200A,  
Hampton, Va. 23369.  
Your future, your decision . . .  
choose ARMY.

Army Opportunities Dept. 200 Hampton, Va. 23369  
Please send me more information on job and training opportunities.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Education \_\_\_\_\_ 2 W 2 78



DE-001-78-PP-01240-1 (page bleed, 6 1/2 x 9 1/2) - Popular Electronics, Popular Mechanics, Mechanics Illustrated, Feb.

Figure 21. "Go to Sea."

Figure 21 distanced the duties of soldiering from the realities of the Vietnam War.<sup>205</sup>

<sup>205</sup> Ibid.



The text continued by offering additional scenarios, none of which evoked treading through the jungles of Southeast Asia or serving in combat. From the text of Figure 21, army enlistees itemized possibilities continued, “Or fly the sky. Or highball a train. Or handle a dozer.”<sup>206</sup> This particular ad from 1969 ran in *Popular Mechanics*, *Mechanics Illustrated*, and *Popular Electronics*, clarifying the technically-engaged niche audience Ayer hoped to target. The visual and textual persuasion within this series of ads indicates that within the “Choose ARMY” campaign Ayer was making the argument for preemptive enlistment or careful branch selection. At least within the discourse of the advertising, preemptive enlistment offered the possibility to exert control and perhaps avoid undesirable military assignments that drafted soldiers were facing. Whether recruits managed to do so mattered less than selling the possibility. Although the army certainly had many positions to fill worldwide, their largest manpower demands were from the war. Nevertheless, ads that used the “Your future, your decision, choose ARMY,” slogan persisted with safe and noticeable distance from a Vietnam theme. The last sentence of the third paragraph of Figure 21 mentions the need for technicians skilled in malaria control as well as combat weapons operators. Although malaria was not Vietnam-specific, those options, with the direct mention of “combat,” were buried in the rest of the prose between promises of skilled job training and the guarantee that course selections for recruits would be assured prior to signing up.

A few of the “Your Future, Your Decision, Choose ARMY” ads were created with an overt Vietnam theme. Deployment to Vietnam was a reality for so many that it could not be left completely out of the landscape of campaigns. Advertising was and continues to be a medium where representations of reality remain integral to brand credibility. Removing Vietnam from the

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<sup>206</sup> Ibid.

framework for recruitment in the late 1960s was too dishonest. Typically, the ads that placed Vietnam into the narrative of recruitment used photographic imagery as the central voice. Little textual interference cluttered up Figure 22, which was one of the more aggressive and dramatic ads of the “Choose ARMY” series, arguing for retention of enlisted soldiers, by asking them to “Stay ARMY.”<sup>207</sup>

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<sup>207</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Records, “Makes a Good Soldier Better,” Print ad, NMAH, SI.



**Figure 22. "Makes a Good Soldier."**

Figure 22 let the masculine power of the army ranger speak for itself.<sup>208</sup>

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<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

Caked with dirt and sweat, the handsome, masculine protagonist of Figure 22 was shown holding a weapon with assertion. He seemed confident and comfortable, despite the potential to infer combat circumstances. The ad may have depicted combat training, but allusions to combat of any sort were significant during a time of war. Although the audiences saw little beyond this figure, and there were no textual references to Vietnam, an army ranger in action evoked wartime battle. Other Vietnam-themed ads used imagery from combat situations to convey the reality of war.

Specifically, one of the first Spanish-language recruitment pitches from the American military displayed a group of men wading through water, holding weapons, in a scene clearly meant to evoke Southeast Asia. The Spanish words in Figure 23 were few.

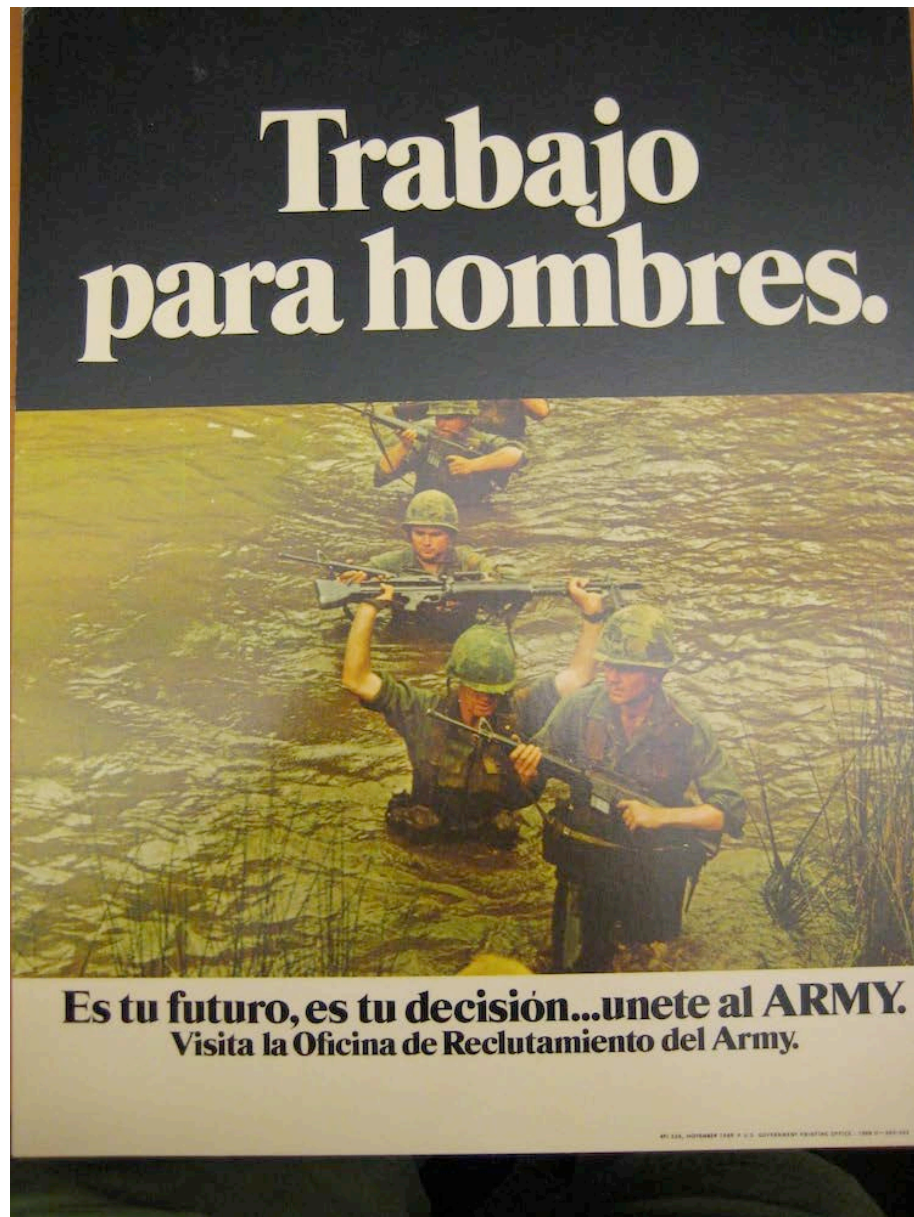


Figure 23. "Trabajo para Hombres."

Figure 23 was one of the oldest Spanish-language ads created for American military recruitment.<sup>209</sup>

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<sup>209</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Records, "Trabajo Para Hombres," Print ad, NMAH, SI.

Despite the condensed prose, the machismo appeal of the translated text of “Trabajo para Hombres,” i.e. a “man’s job,” or “jobs for men,” mattered.<sup>210</sup> Combat operations in America were quite literally the domain of men, solely. Draft era anxieties stemmed from the fears and risks of combat. By framing combat as the ultimate expression of unbridled masculinity, ads like this one worked strategically to lure young men into “proving” themselves in a traditionally, stereotypically, and hegemonically masculine manner. But Figure 23’s English-language equivalent (Figure 24) contained no such phrasing about manhood. Instead, the English language ad’s title referenced educational opportunities, indicating the assumption of a socio-economic divide between Spanish-language, potentially immigrant audiences of Hispanic young men versus middle class or aspiring middle class white men. Although plenty of households of American citizens spoke Spanish at home, the choice to use a language other than English in the ad beckoning the audience to prove its manhood also signaled to immigrant populations, regardless of status.

Historically, immigrants have comprised large numbers of the United States military. Considering that America has been called a ‘nation of immigrants,’ this is not surprising. And according to the United States Bureau of Citizen and Immigration Services (USCIS), military service has become a path to citizenship for many immigrants. Contemporarily, since 2001 nearly 90,000 service members have been naturalized as citizens by USCIS. This figure does not include the spouses or children of military service people who were also granted citizenship due to their status as family members of enlistees.<sup>211</sup> The ad appealed to audiences who lived where

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<sup>210</sup> Ibid.

<sup>211</sup> United States Bureau of Citizen and Immigration Services, Fact Sheet: Naturalization Through Military Service,” 14 July 2013, Retrieved from <http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.5af9bb95919f35e66f614176543f6d1a/?vgnnexto>

the Spanish language was spoken at home. And plenty of Americans born in the United States also lived in Spanish-language households. Despite the lack of narrative text, there was an urgency and anxiety to the ad that removed the need for lengthy verbal extrapolation. The ad sold a “man’s job” to Spanish-speaking audiences.

While still concise, the English language equivalent had a bit more writing and a much more concrete promise of individual incentive, even though the scene was otherwise nearly identical. A group of men waded through water with weapons poised for to defend and battle. In September of 1969, the ad depicted in Figure 24 ran in *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *Generation* magazines.





**Complete your education. Learn to command.**

The Army can help you add a personal dimension to your hard-won academic credentials. Army Officer Candidate School teaches leadership. It fits a man for command, anywhere, during all the years that lie ahead. OCS isn't easy. It takes mental and physical fortitude. But if you're accepted for the course, it will be because the Army knows you can make it. And because you know you can make it. That's how leadership begins.

**Your future, your decision . . . choose ARMY OCS.**

Use coupon or write: Army Opportunities, Dept. 100A, Hampton, VA 23669

Army Opportunities  
Dept. 100  
Hampton, VA 23669  
I'd like to learn more about the Army's course in leadership.

Name  Age

Address

City  County

State  Zip  Phone

College  Class of

201-002-AR-PF-006/010-1 page bleed, 8 1/2 x 11 3/4--Newsweek, September 27; Time, September 16; Generation, Sept. 11; N. W. Ayer & Son, Inc. (75-2548)

10E 9-89 1N 27-9-89

**Figure 24. "Learn to Command."**

Figure 23 was visually similar to Figure 24, but in English with weapon-wielding men wading in the water.<sup>212</sup>

<sup>212</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Records, "Learn to Command," Print ad, NMAH, SI.



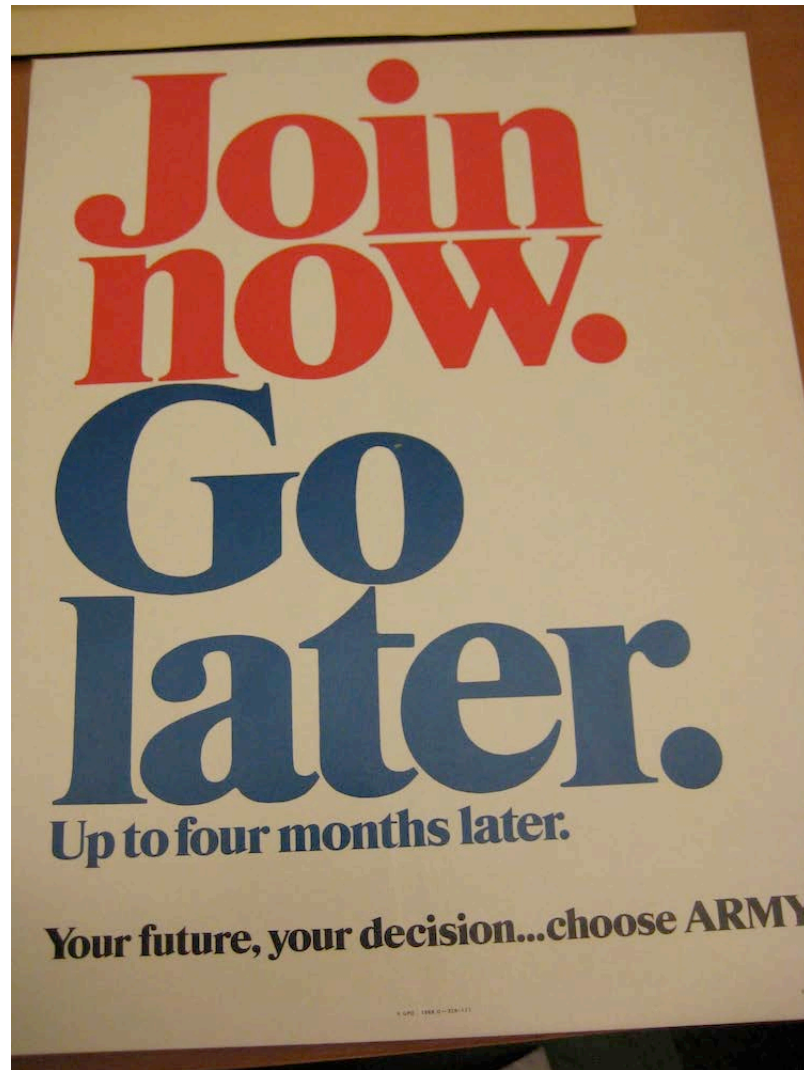
Their weapons are positioned to defend and their faces convey focus. The header mentioned educational opportunities as well as leadership skill development available to enlisted army soldiers. This middle-class signifier and marker of upward mobility appeared only in the English-language text of Figure 24, marking differences in sales tactics based on perceptions about ethnic minority status. The agency of the “Choose ARMY” slogan provided the conclusion of the sales pitch in both cases.

Rhetorically, “Your Future, Your Decision, Choose ARMY,” was strategic and subtle. Psychologically, the draft weighed on emotions of those men who were eligible, whether they were eventually called to serve or not.<sup>213</sup> The root of the slogan’s power was in its nascent acknowledgement of the anxieties provoked when target audiences were faced with their own uncertain futures. These anxieties came through in the simple directive of Figure 25. “Join Now, Go Later,” was another ad from the “Choose ARMY” campaign that emphasized individual control of an undesirable situation.<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>213</sup> For one of many psychological studies evaluating the mental health impact of the Vietnam-era military draft on those draft-eligible men in the US, see Norman Hearst and Thomas B. Newman, “Proving Cause and Effect in Traumatic Stress: The Draft Lottery as a Human Experiment,” *Journal of Traumatic Stress* 1:2 (1988): 173-180.

<sup>214</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Records, “Join Now. Go Later.,” Print ad, NMAH, SI.



**Figure 25. "Join Now. Go Later."**

Figure 25 promised a delay in deployment date to enlistees.<sup>215</sup>

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<sup>215</sup> Ibid.

The appeal of 1968's "Join Now, Go Later" was obvious, with little textual explanation needed. "Going later" in its most obvious sense preyed on the perception of dread felt over the inevitability of serving in Vietnam during the war. Even more important, it promised the possibility that the war might end before it was time to "go." Getting to delay drafted service by a few months carried a lot of persuasive weight. Capitalizing off the broader message of the "Choose Army," campaign, getting to go later allowed for additional agency to be seized by draft-eligible young men. And individual agency was a commodity during the draft, when so many young people, along with their families, were at the mercy of lotteries and Department of Defense-determined deployment dates.<sup>216</sup>

"Choose Army," itself contained multivalent meanings that could be ascribed to the subjective circumstances of individuals. It alluded to a forced volunteer, who enlisted preemptively. Those men who feared the draft were offered the chance to take control of the situation by self-enlisting or at the very least, selecting a branch very eager to place them. Those who feared their uncertain job prospects apart from the draft in terms of career, salary, training, educational opportunities, and more were offered a realistic option that promised direction. And the slogan was portable.

The obvious appeal to agency in "Your choice, your decision, choose ARMY," hoped to resonate with potential enlistees, and a slight change of wording made it useful toward retention efforts as well. "Your future, your decision, stay ARMY," tagged advertisements that ran in the numerous army publications or in posters hung around army bases. These ads seized the rhetoric of choice to sell continued enlistment to current soldiers. One specific ad ran the word "choice"

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<sup>216</sup> To read about the Vietnam Era draft lottery drawings, see: "The Vietnam Lotteries," *United States Selective Service System* website, Accessed 14 July 2013. <http://www.sss.gov/lotter1.htm>.

three times in its short three-paragraph pitch. Other synonyms were also featured like “options,” “your pick,” and “chance.”<sup>217</sup> Another seemed to stress the need for retention specialists to cater their pitches individually, offering options to current enlistees that would permit them to change their assignments to one more suited to their interests (Figure 26).

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<sup>217</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Records, “Bet You Didn’t Know,” Print ad, NMAH, SI.

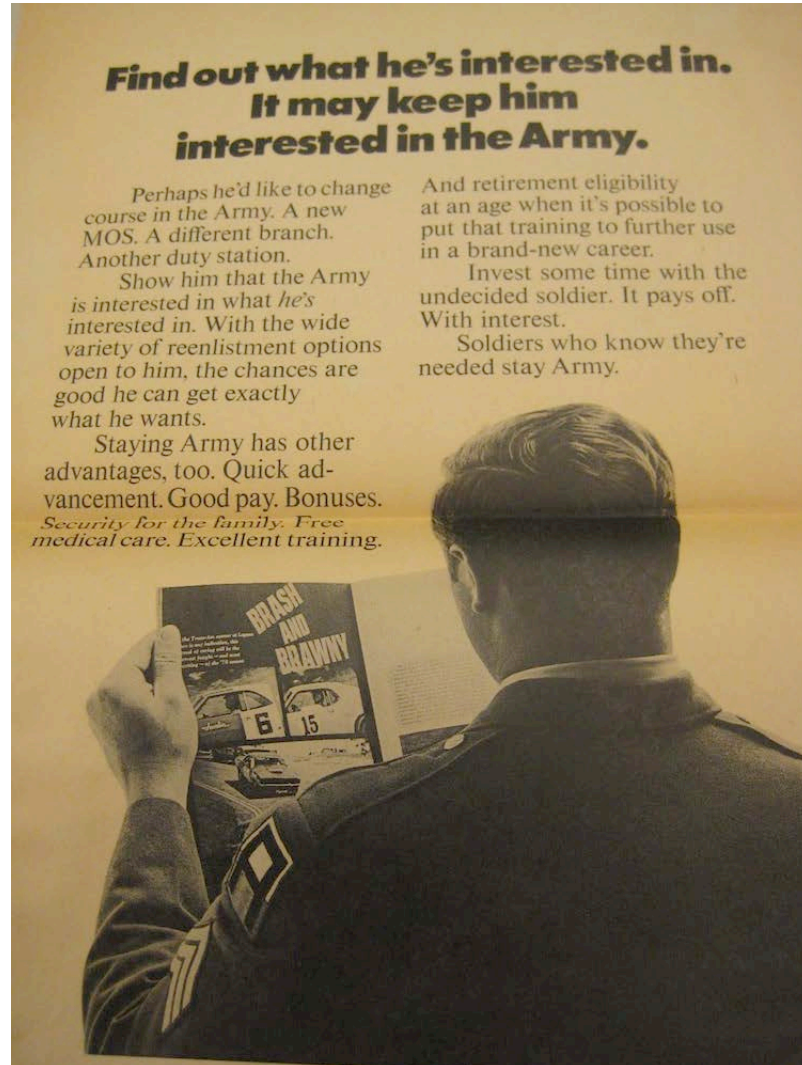


Figure 26. "Brash and Brawny. Stay Army."

Figure 26 posited the idea that recruitment and retention should happen interpersonally, on a micro level among soldiers.<sup>218</sup>

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<sup>218</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Records, "Stay Army," Print ad, NMAH, SI.

The back of the head of a broad-shouldered, uniformed man as he read a magazine was coupled with a header that said, “Find out what he’s interested in. It may keep him interested in the Army.”<sup>219</sup> This “Stay ARMY,” ad highlighted additional pay, bonuses, family security, healthcare, training, and retirement benefits for those “undecided soldiers.” The soldier’s magazine reads, “brash and brawny,” which reiterated textually the vision of this brawny, masculine, enlisted army man. The visual subtext argues that brash, brawny, masculine men stayed in the army, even in times of war. The textual subtext tries to sell the idea of micro-recruitment and retention, within interpersonal contexts. Every satisfied soldier, especially if he was in supervisory role was to take part in retention efforts. Retaining soldiers during wartime was part of the overall recruitment strategy. The portable slogan streamlined the creation process for the army’s advertiser.

Still, the CHOOSE Army campaign’s lifespan was brief. The Special Assistant Modern Volunteer Army (SAMVA) office requested a full-scale review of Ayer’s advertising, citing lack of imagination.<sup>220</sup> Ayer’s burden to overcome was the army “brand’s” low status and expectations were high, despite the small billing. As Beth Bailey wrote, “The Vietnam War was an enormous obstacle.... No one knew how long America’s involvement in Southeast Asia would last. And no one knew how long the experience of Vietnam would shape American youths’ attitudes toward the military, even after the US combat role ended.”<sup>221</sup> To mitigate the recruitment challenges faced by the army branch, the Department of Defense increased their advertising budget and Ayer went to work.

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<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

<sup>220</sup> Ted Rogers, interview by Robert Griffith, August 25, 1983, cited in Bailey, *America’s Army*, 71.

<sup>221</sup> Bailey, *America’s Army*, 71.

### 3.2 MARKETING MASCULINITY DURING THE DRAFT: TODAY'S ARMY

Ayer launched a new army campaign in 1971 with an updated slogan and a \$10 million raise, allocated by the DoD to test army ads on broadcast television and radio, along with a promise for more rapid growth in future budgets.<sup>222</sup> The strategy was to emphasize with even more insistence the concept of individuality in the recruitment marketplace. Ads stressed individual rewards for soldiers and realigned the military identity to seem more inviting and flexible to young people. The new campaign referenced vaguely the iconic James Montgomery Flagg poster of World War I, where Uncle Sam pointed assertively to the audience and exclaimed, “I Want You For the US Army.” “Today’s Army Wants to Join You” individualized and softened the WWI-era pitch considerably. Ayer pitched the idea to military personnel and they bristled. But the campaign went forward because Ayer was certain it would resonate with targets.

“Today’s Army Wants to Join You” represented an increasingly audience-centered approach to recruitment that was changing the landscape of the American military. In preparation for an impending volunteer era, this campaign suggested that the modern military was less conformist and more malleable than stereotypes otherwise conveyed through popular media or expressed in public opinion. And despite the ongoing war in Vietnam, most of the ads that populated this campaign avoided the subject of combat entirely. All types of entry level and trained specialist personnel were needed for military roles during wartime. But this narrowly targeted ad (Figure 27) encouraging medical professionals with families to join, focused more

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<sup>222</sup> Prior to this time period, the army branch relied on Public Service Announcements for their non-print recruitment media. See: Bailey, *America’s Army*, 72-74.

heavily on the potential to live in stable domestic or international contexts, within the US or abroad in Europe.

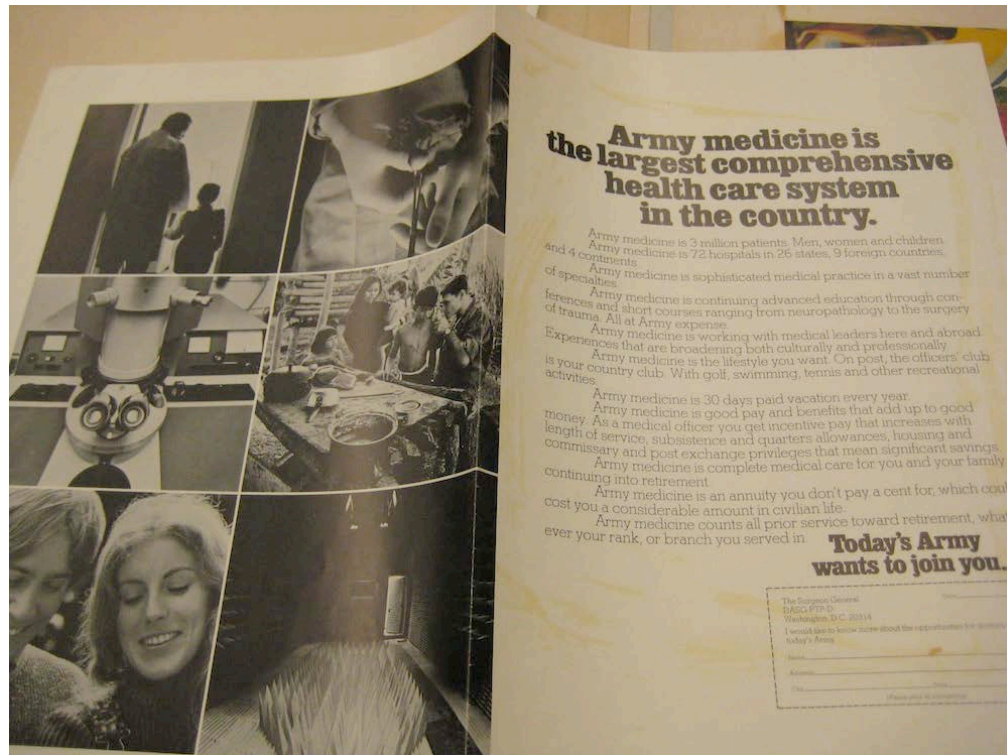


Figure 27. "Today's Army Medicine."

Figure 27 showed caregiving for family and for patients, to attract medical professions to enlist in the largest comprehensive health care system in the country.<sup>223</sup>

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<sup>223</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Records, "Today's Army Medicine," Print ad, NMAH, SI.



Social status and financial signifiers peppered the ad, encouraging doctors to enlist because, “The officers’ club is your country club. With golf swimming, tennis, and other recreational activities.”<sup>224</sup> Paid vacation, benefits, raises, allowances, and housing were all mentioned as incentives to individuals. The male figure, shown almost entirely in silhouette in the ad’s top right image panel, conveyed a paternalism as he held a child’s hand. This scene along with the others made no references to Vietnam despite the increased wartime need for medical staff. The ad intended to appeal to professionals already established in their civilian life, setting it apart from the bulk of Today’s Army texts. And those audiences of draft-eligible men, without the same degree of certainty were targeted with even more fervor. General recruitment ads made many of the same references to accessing lifestyles and opportunities indicative of increased social status.

In Figure 28, no representative protagonist was pictured. Instead an attractive civilian flight attendant greeted the audience from the center aisle of an empty flight cabin. Although she spoke no words, her conventional attractiveness and warm smile mirrored a provocative 1971 campaign for National Airlines. The “Fly Me,” series featured numerous beautiful, smiling, female flight attendants that stated their names and invited the audience aboard with unsubtle, sexual, and sexist undertones.<sup>225</sup> In the context of the visible “Fly My” campaign, Figure 28


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<sup>224</sup> Ibid.

<sup>225</sup> The “Fly Me,” campaign provoked protests and feminist criticism by members of the National Organization of Women (NOW), who picketed the National Airlines ticket office and the advertising agency responsible for the work. F. William Free of F. William Free & Company created the campaign for National Airlines that members of NOW said reduced women to sex objects. In order to try to make peace (and either make light of them or display the breadth of his insensitivity to sexism), Free handed out bouquets of roses to the protesters. See: Stuart Laviertes, “F. William Free, 74, Ad Man Behind ‘Fly Me,’” *New York Times*, 8 Jan 2003.

argued that (sexual) access to beautiful women and a fabulous jet-set lifestyle awaited enlistees who need not fear the potential for deployment in Vietnam.

**Take the Army's  
16-month tour of Europe.**



Right out of high school.  
In today's Army you can enlist for European duty that guarantees at least 16 months with one of seven crack outfits stationed in Germany, France, Denmark, Switzerland and Austria are just across the border. All within easy reach of any free weekend. Italy and the Riviera are just a few hours away. Just waiting for you on some of that 30 days paid vacation you earn each year in the Army.

This is your chance of a lifetime. To live and work in Europe. To get to know places like no tourist ever can. To get to know the people. Pick up the language. Something to tell your grandchildren about.

If you want to live and work where tourists only visit, drop us the coupon. Or talk to your nearby Army Representative about enlisting in Armor, Artillery or Infantry for European duty.

**Today's Army  
wants to join you.**

Army Opportunities  
Dept 200 Hampton, Va 23060

I'd like to spend 16 months in Europe.  
Send me more information on European duty in today's Army.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Education \_\_\_\_\_

Figure 28. "Tour Europe."

Figure 28 suggested that high school graduates could see Europe not as tourist but as soldiers.<sup>226</sup>

<sup>226</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Records, "Tour of Europe," Print ad, NMAH, SI.

Even more persuasive than the promises offered in the above ad was the assignment: European duty ensured that Vietnam was avoidable. The ad promised that recruits could live in places where tourists only visited. With thirty days paid vacation and the Riviera available for weekend getaways, American military service in Europe was sold as recreational, in which unique experiences in the world could be forged, cementing the subtle sexual undertones of the ad's "Fly Me" motif in the accompanying image.

Recreation, status, and vacation were premises of many of the "Today's Army wants to join you," advertisements. One even combined the theme of summertime to juxtapose the impending responsibilities new high school graduates faced as they entered the job market. During the "Today's Army," campaign it also became near protocol for an ad to mention specific monthly salary amounts, like in Figure 29.



Figure 29. "Summer Job."

Figure 29. "Summer Job." Figure 30 appealed to young people uncertain of their plans as they their last summers for a summer job ended.<sup>227</sup>

The often-romanticized post-adolescent job of being a summer lifeguard evokes images of tanned, barely-clad bodies basking in sunlight. Figure 29's snapshot of the last summer for a summer job depicts a sea of young, lithe, attractive men and women wearing bathing suits. The implication was that the army understood that young men might want to sow their wild oats prior

<sup>227</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Records, "Summer Job," Print ad, NMAH, SI.

to enlistment. And the options were kept open for new enlistees, attempting to attract even the most indecisive of recruits. “If after your 3-year enlistment you’re interested in college, there’s 36 months of financial assistance at the college of your choice,” the ad promises.<sup>228</sup> Vietnam and combat are complete absent from this ad. Such carefree, upbeat ads were a far cry from those created in the years preceding “Today’s Army wants to join you.” Beach scenes, the jet set, and family friendly conditions for trained medical professionals sold volunteer-style service amid a wartime draft. The command that draft-eligible men seize their agency and free will to “Choose ARMY,” morphed gradually into a softened and humble request from the low-status branch about how “Today’s Army” would adapt to suit the needs, desires, and lifestyles of young people. This shift attempted to groom audiences, advertisers, and army personnel to prepare for an impending demand-driven military marketplace.

### **3.3 GLAMOUR-IZING MILITARY SERVICE IN THE WOMEN’S ARMY CORPS**

With a military draft ensuring the required manpower for war, Ayer diversified their strategic persuasion to meet a new and increasingly relevant target of young women, for the Women’s Army Corps and the Army Nurse Corps. Among Ayer’s biggest obstacles at this time was to overcome their inexperience targeting women as more than mere supporters of soldiers, but as potential recruits for enlistment. Between the political context of war and the desire to increase military womanpower, the agency had much to prove to their renewed army client. The ads

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<sup>228</sup> Ibid.

aimed at women contrast significantly from those geared toward men and with good reason. The military draft was a safety net that guaranteed the army a steady stream of male enlistees. Advertisements reflected with subtlety the social and political conditions of the late 1960s. By recruiting women with greater interest in forging careers Ayer became a more equal opportunity marketer, even if their approach reified sexist stereotypes. But this type equity did not transcend all categories of difference or marginalization.

Despite the power of the civil rights movement in the late 1960s, it was rare to see ads with protagonists of color representing ideal soldiers, draft-eligible recruits, or WAC/NC cadets. This differs at least from those 1940s era classifieds-style advertisements that ran in African American newspapers. Perhaps the whitewashing of military representations can be attributed to the lack of Ayer-authored newspaper ads during this period. In the late 1960s, Ayer created campaigns that ran primarily in popular general interest and niche magazines. The magazine ads of both periods lacked in military representations of racial diversity. Aesthetically, the magazine ads in the 60s also looked very different from those of the 40s by adhering to the customs of private sector ads that favored photography and text rather than illustration and text.<sup>229</sup> Made possible by advancements in camera technologies, photography reigned supreme when it came to advertising in the 1960s. This was as true for the ads featuring women as it was for the ads aimed at men.

Unlike many of the dramatically masculine, Vietnam-themed army ads, on the whole Ayer's WAC recruitment conveyed military service as a carefree, exciting way to forge new experiences and make new friends. If you obscured the text, photographs depicting attractive,

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<sup>229</sup> See examples of contained in Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream*, (1985); Charles F. McGovern, *Sold American: Consumption and Citizenship, 1890-1945*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006); Thomas Frank, *Conquest of Cool*, (1998).

stylish, and conventionally feminine young women could be mistaken easily for commercials selling gum, yogurt, or feminine hygiene products. A few ads even promised military enlistment for women as a great way to meet male suitors as well as acquire useful skills and job training. Figure 30's protagonist, Amy looked every bit as stylish and charming as Marlo Thomas, star of the popular late-1960s proto-feminist television sitcom, *That Girl*.<sup>230</sup>

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<sup>230</sup> Running from 1966-1971, *That Girl* was a popular situation comedy starring Marlo Thomas who also created the series. The quirky, clever central character was an aspiring actress living in New York City, making ends meet through temporary employment and odd jobs. Television historians regard this show to be a logical predecessor to future female-fronted situation comedies starring single, career-focused women protagonists like *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* and *Murphy Brown*. For more on the historical and popular cultural impact of *That Girl*, see "She Made It: Women Creating Television and Radio: Marlo Thomas," in *The Paley Center For Media* website, Accessed 5 August 2011, <http://www.shemadeit.org/meet/biography.aspx?m=57>. For a theoretical analysis of Thomas's *That Girl* character, Ann Marie as a safe, single, protofeminist girl, see: Moya Luckett, "Sensuous Women and Single Girls," in Hilary Radner and Moya Luckett, eds., *Swinging Single: Representing Sexuality in the 1960s*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999) 293-294; See also: Katherine J. Lehman, *Those Girls: Single Women in Sixties and Seventies Popular Culture*, (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2011).





**Amy's  
an expert  
in psychological  
warfare.**

No gal Friday job for her. Amy wanted more challenge than some office routine. More responsibility. She was willing to work harder. Make decisions. Amy got what she wanted as an officer in the Women's Army Corps.

As a Psychological Warfare Officer, Amy analyzes the customs, habits and psychology of people in other countries. She helps set information requirements to gauge public opinion and morale for psychological exploitation.

Amy's an executive. That's what being an officer is all about. Managing. Deciding. Using your brains, your wits. And your college education. There are lots of Army jobs open to gals like Amy.

Like Communications. Public Relations. Management Consulting. Finance. Personnel Management.

If you'd like to put your ability and college degree to work, think about becoming an Army officer. We don't think there's any greater executive opportunity for a young woman today.

**The Women's Army Corps.**

Army Opportunities  
Department 400  
Hampton, Virginia 23369

T 4-5-68

Send me more information on executive opportunities as a WAC officer.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

College \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Date Graduated \_\_\_\_\_ Will Graduate On \_\_\_\_\_

**Figure 30. "Psychological Warfare."**

**Figure 30.** "Psychological Warfare." Figure 30's Amy was no gal Friday.<sup>231</sup>

<sup>231</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Records, "Psychological Warfare," Print ad, NMAH, SI.

With confidence Amy is shown leaning in to listen to her handsome, well-dressed partner in conversation. Although the audience is not informed of the content of their exchange, the body language speaks volumes. Her bright, engaged smile and comfortable closeness suggests an intimate flirtation. Her hands clutches a bouquet of flowers meant to signify a romantic gift. Audiences were told that, “Amy is an expert in psychological warfare,” which conveyed subtle, embedded misogyny, as if to warn about her potential to manipulate as well as entice.<sup>232</sup> This interpretation magnifies in the context of her black gloves, mod 1960s trench coat, and scarf, which evoked the highly stylized spy films of the era. If the text was swapped out and replaced this ad could have just as easily sold toothpaste, shampoo, or perfume. But it was selling enlistment in the WAC. The 1968 ad ran in the April issue of *Time Magazine College Edition* and the May issue of *Mademoiselle*, just in time to be read by senior students anticipating their impending graduations.<sup>233</sup> A series of similar ads came out over the following two years. And each of them focused both on the potential for professional as well as personal growth through military service. This ad in particular was light and airy. The protagonist appears fun and enviable. The slogan pokes fun at the tensions and psychological games of romantic courtship.

It is hard now perhaps to imagine positive reception to an ad making light of any type of warfare at a time when much of the public was weary of war. The tongue in cheek reference to Amy’s psychological expertise might have sounded crass and tone-deaf had it appeared in serious news publications covering the financial and human costs of war in Vietnam. But it ran in magazines aimed at young people, with focus on fashion and beauty, catering to an overwhelmingly female readership. The story at the bottom of the ad explained Amy’s disinterest

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<sup>232</sup> Ibid.

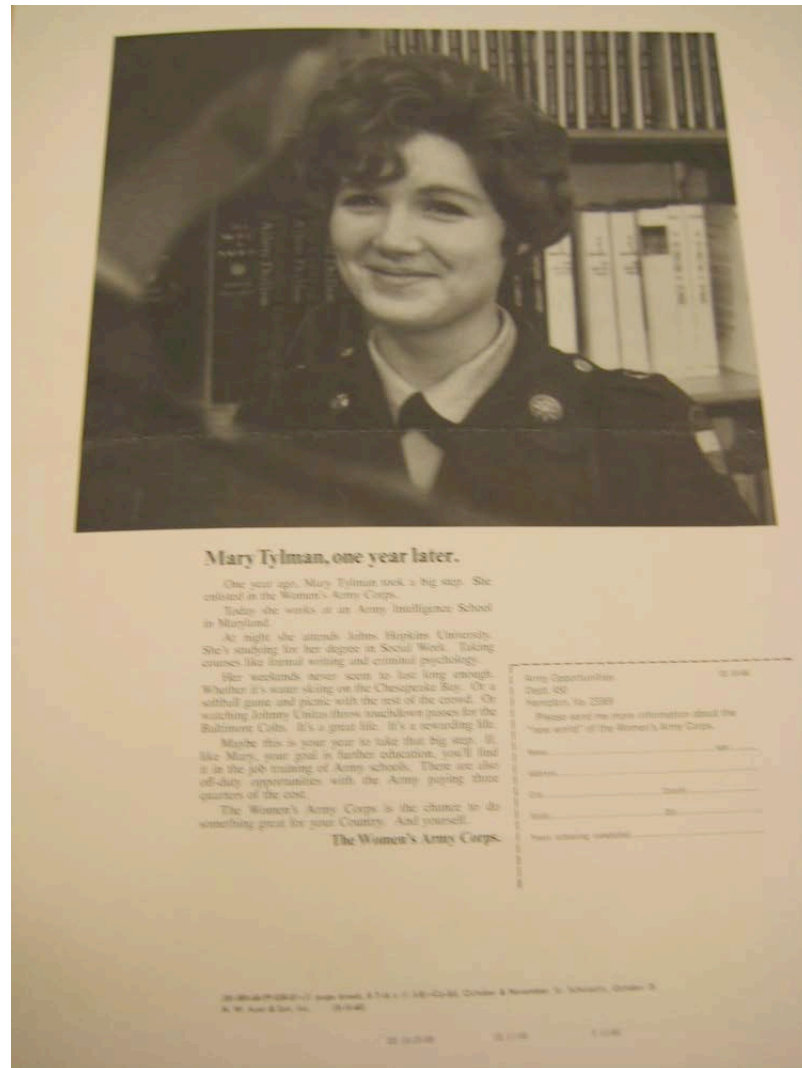
<sup>233</sup> Ibid.

in secretarial work. The ideals of proto-feminism appeared again when the ad's narrative insisted, "No gal Friday job for her.... Army jobs available to gals like Amy: like communications, public relations, management consulting, finance, personnel management." The pursuit of a career beyond the scope of the norm dovetailed with the repeated referencing of the modern protagonist as gal, signaling loudly to all the similarly modern women she represented or inspired. In this ad Ayer positioned the army as an institution that encouraged young women to pursue fulfilling career paths, facilitating travel, excitement, job training, responsibility, and most visibly from its central image, the promise of meeting new people. The "psychological warfare" occurring within the ad looks fun and romantic rather than stressful or dangerous. This image of two people display more a ritual of courtship rather than warfare. And a few key stereotypes about military femininity, like the idea that women only served to snag husbands, and that their ambitions were socially situated, rather than focused on career, were reified in the process.

Another ad from the same period worked visually to reproduce the idea that WAC cadets find career and social fulfillment through service. A pretty young woman in Figure 31 smiles at a male figure, with the camera's lens photographing behind his right shoulder. "Mary Tylman, one year later," told the success story of a WAC cadet who pursued a college degree, acquired job training, and made social connections thanks to enlistment.<sup>234</sup>

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<sup>234</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Records, "One Year Later," Print ad, NMAH, SI.



**Figure 31. "One Year Later."**

Figure 31's Mary smiled at a male figure. Both of the characters were in uniforms.<sup>235</sup>

<sup>235</sup> Ibid.

Enlistment was framed as a courageous, bold, and risky decision. And Mary's life was called both "great" and "rewarding." Readers learned from the text that education benefits enabled her to attend Johns Hopkins University at night, after working her rewarding day job in the WAC. The social opportunities created through her job and her education were enumerated with a paragraph about how her weekends never lasted long enough. Although the ad's text avoided explicit references to dates or courtship, multiple statements about social activities coupled with the visual imagery enable polysemic readings.<sup>236</sup> The smile she flashed to a male figure could indicate either professional fulfillment or it could be read as social flirtation. The ad's vagueness was intentional so that the character sketch of protagonist Mary would appeal broadly. "Mary Tylman" ran in the *College Edition* of *Time Magazine* in April of 1968, then again in the May issue of *Mademoiselle*, also timed strategically to run right as students were about to graduate.<sup>237</sup> In the ads aimed at women from the late 1960s, WAC cadets were shown rarely in consort with other women. Instead, lone representative females were depicted amid exchanges with male figures. In every instance the women had smiles on their faces and if a male face was visible, it smiled too. Although this particular ad never stated to young women targets that enlistment could bring you dates and perhaps someday a husband, some ads were less subtle.

"The Army Needs Girls as Well as Generals," boasted an ad that displayed a pretty young brunette reviewing a file folder in close contact with an older, handsome gentleman general

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<sup>236</sup> To read about advertising and polysemy, see: Linda M. Scott, "Polysemy in Advertising," *Advertising and Society Review*, 13:2 (2012); Leah Ceccarelli, "Polysemy: Multiple Meanings in Rhetorical Criticism," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 84:4 (1998) 395-415; Claudiu V. Dimofte and Richard F. Yalch, "Consumer Response to Polysemous Brand Slogans," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 22 (March 2007) 515-522.

<sup>237</sup> Ayer Records, "One Year Later," NMAH, SI.

figure (Figure 32).<sup>238</sup> The female character looked knowingly and with flirtation at the audience. Her subdued smirk demonstrated a satisfaction in career choice as well as in her social working relationships. As she reviewed the documents with the other figure in the ad, it appeared as though Ayer and the army wanted audiences to ascribe sexual tension or even romantic partnership to the heterosexually configured pair.

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<sup>238</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Records, “The Army Needs Girls,” Print ad, NMAH, SI.



**Figure 32. "The Army Needs Girls."**

**Figure 32.** "The Army Needs Girls." Figure 32's female protagonist flashed a flirtatious, knowing glance at the audience.<sup>239</sup>

<sup>239</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Records, "The Army Needs girls," Print ad, NMAH, SI.

Although there was a cultural precedent for referring to adult women as “girls,” to be discussed below, the ad’s title statement that “the army needs girls,” reverberated with sexual tension as well as imbalanced power. Together, the female and male soldiers of Figure 32 looked relaxed and intimate, with their hands grazing visibly beneath the folder and their lips smiling. The text of the ad continued:

Generals make the army go. But so do girls. Girls who can keep things moving in the office. Handle personnel. Figure the payroll. Work in fields like photography, medicine, public information. Girls who can do these and dozens of other jobs get every chance to further their education. To advance in rank and pay. To travel and share the Army adventure. Off duty they meet and make dozens of new friends. It's a big Army, after all, and it's full of young people who want to go places and do things. If you'd like to be somebody that others depend on, the Army needs you. Just ask a general if that isn't so.<sup>240</sup>

With written copy that reflected the social and cultural ambitions of young, driven women, the ad highlighted travel and off duty opportunities to make friends with other young people who populated the branch and shared similar goals. It painted military service as recreational and fun, not serious and dangerous. Paired with the photograph, it also positioned military service as the place to find romance. Ads such as these ran in popular women’s fashion magazines and student-oriented publications including *Glamour*, *Mademoiselle*, *Co-Ed*, *Ingénue*, *Senior Scholastic*, and more.

The insistence that the cadets within the Women’s Army Corps were “girls,” seemed out of place in a sales pitch evoking ideals aligned with second wave feminism by promising opportunities for merit-based advancement in rank and pay, educational benefits, and job training. But it feminized the power dynamic making clear a number of things potentially relevant to an agenda selling heterosexual courtship. Most noticeably, it made clear in a casual,

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<sup>240</sup> Ibid.



approachable tone that non-career priorities also were acceptable reasons to join. The assumption that career alone would not be sufficient enticement for female enlistees played off broader, lingering stereotypes about women's status in the American workplace.<sup>241</sup> After all, the majority of Ayer account personnel that worked for the army were older men who, from a description within an oral history interview about Ayer culture and the army client, harbored relatively traditional attitudes about gender roles.<sup>242</sup> WAC ads also featured women's service roles in administrative settings, where the people they would be working for would more likely be seasoned (and therefore typically older) military men who had already climbed the ranks, especially during a war. Selling WAC service as a place to land dates or perhaps even catch a husband seemed less out of place within the broader advertising culture of the period, a lot of which was still overtly sexist.<sup>243</sup> Further, "girls" signaled heteronormativity and gender-conformity in a military landscape rife with gendered anxieties regarding the maintenance and upkeep of cadet femininity within the WAC. Needing "girls" as well as generals used strategic language as important for military public relations as it was for recruitment. Debates occurred both within and beyond the DoD about female uniform design, hairstyle, appearance, and many

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<sup>241</sup> For a history of working women in the US, See: Alice Kessler-Harris, *Out to Work: A History of Wage-Earning Women in the United States*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); Margery Davies, *Women's Place is at the Typewriter*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984).

<sup>242</sup> Extensive descriptions of the account personnel, the army clients who liaised with Ayer, and the process of managing this unique government relationship were revealed alongside some descriptions of the social and workplace culture in an oral history interview transcript from Ted Warwick, former art buyer at the agency. Those descriptions referred to gender and the workplace, the acquisition of models (almost all of who were actual army men and women), the development of campaigns, and more. N.W. Ayer Advertising Records, "Ted Warwick Oral History Interview," Transcript, NMAH, SI.

<sup>243</sup> For analysis of sexism in advertising, see Erving Goffman, *Gender Advertisements*, (New York: Harper Collins, 1988).

other aspects of the WAC.<sup>244</sup> A great deal of the discussions hinged on perceived nervousness about whether military service would make women too masculine. Calling the enlisted women “girls” served to disarm as well as disempower. It softened the new normal for an American civilian public. With the revocation of Congressional policy that capped the percentage of female military personnel, a broadening of recruitment focus moved beyond the target of draft-eligible men to encompass audiences of women. Although as a gendered noun, “girls” corresponded to popular military lingo that referred to male soldiers as “boys,” (i.e. “bring our boys home”) and carried popular cultural resonance thanks to television programs like the aforementioned *That Girl*, it served an additional purpose. The disarmingly soft sounding, “girls,” worked to temper gender anxieties among audiences for whom the concept of a military with comprehensive gender inclusivity, like in Israel, remained shocking and unfathomable. It defensively suggested that the US military’s women were still *just* girls; non-threatening, feminine, attractive, but much-needed girls. It also spoke to perceived marital status and sexual experience, as indicated by many popular songs of the late 1960s, including Neil Diamond’s 1967 hit, “Girl You’ll Be a Woman Soon,” and Gary Puckett and the Union Gap’s “Woman, Woman,” (1967) and “Young Girl,” (1968), all of which explored the topics of boundaries, age, and sexual desire in reference to “girls.”

Gender anxiety was palpable in the pervasive reinforcement of WAC cadets’ femininity through advertisements. In fact, one ad took even further effort to make clear how feminine, beautiful women were also armed service members. It began by echoing a myth about the

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<sup>244</sup> See Leisa Meyer, *Creating GI Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women’s Army Corps During World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992); and Bettie J. Morden, *The Women’s Army Corps, 1945-1978*, CMH Pub 30-14 (Fort McNair: United States Army Center of Military History, 2000).

Women's Army Corps, "If I join the Women's Army Corps they'll cut off my hair." Pretty protagonists were pictured grooming themselves in a mirror. The ad reassured feminine targets as well as the gender-role-anxious public that:

Some girls believe the myth that the Women's Army Corps will try to make foot soldiers out of them. Cut their hair. And give them a baggy uniform. Well, that's just plain nonsense. Off duty or on, a girl can tint, tease, frost, iron her hair, or top it off with a new wig. So there's never a hang-up with hair. There's even a place for your wig stand. We know how special a girl's hair is to her total look. After all, we're girls too. And we wouldn't dream of telling her how to wear it. We do have one very practical rule that says hair should be kept above the collar while on duty. Just like any professional girl in uniform. And there's one big regulation about the uniform-- that they make a girl look like one! It's her patriotic duty to stay looking trim and attractive. A girl in the Women's Army Corps looks great because she feels great. About the world of travel, new friends, and job opportunities she's discovered. Send the coupon and we'll share it with you. Your world is bigger in the Women's Army Corps.<sup>245</sup>

Again this ad referred to WAC cadets as girls, describing their on and off duty appearances, and reassuring everyone who would listen that the uniform was designed to highlight a feminine shape. To assert that one's level of attractiveness was the patriotic duty of WAC cadets took the pitch a bit farther than the other ads, venturing into overtly sexist territory. But compared to an even more extreme example, this ad was tame.

"Great myths of the Women's Army Corps" featured cartoon illustration evocative of department store advertisements and New Yorker cartoons. The protagonists were drawn in various situations, meant to illustrate visually each myth as it was relayed. Figure 33 advertised a culmination of public anxieties over upholding prevailing gender roles among civilian life, within the armed services. The myths related specifically to some aspect of heteronormative female identity and heterosexual availability.

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<sup>245</sup> Emphasis added to highlight a key phrase about the uniform's "regulation." N.W. Ayer Advertising Records, "If I Join," Print ad, NMAH, SI.

# Great myths about The Women's Army Corps.

*It's almost laughable the impressions some people have about the Women's Army Corps. So, we'd like to set the record straight. To squelch the myths. Give you the real story. The facts.*


**"It's against regulations to be feminine."**

There's absolutely nothing in the books that says a woman can't be a woman in the Women's Army Corps. She is quite capable of handling the serious business of the Army with one hand, while powdering her nose with the other. Women are gifted that way. In fact, they thrive on responsibility. Women in the Corps gain greater poise and more self-confidence at a younger age than those working in civilian jobs. And we have the girls to prove it.




**"Marriage is out for the duration."**

The Corps wouldn't dream of cramping a girl's style in such an important thing as marriage. After all, we're women too! When one of our girls finds her man, she can get married. At any time during her period of service. And if she marries a serviceman, every effort will be made to station the newlyweds together.




**"Just about anybody can join."**

The truth of the matter is that seven out of ten applicants don't measure up to Corps standards. Those that do meet high educational, mental and physical requirements. They come to us from high school, college and the professions. They bring to the Corps a high sense of duty and a willingness to accept responsibility. The Corps is proud of them. You can understand why.



**"Your uniform is your wardrobe."**

That's only the half of it. The other half is your off-duty wardrobe. You can wear just about anything you want on your off-duty hours. And since you don't have to buy clothes for work, you have more money to spend on clothes for fun, dates and travel.



Now that the myths are out of the way, maybe we can settle down to talking to you about the great jobs, the travel, and the exciting challenges waiting for you in the Women's Army Corps. Stop in at your local recruiting station. We'll be glad to give you the details. Or send for more information that will help squelch more myths. Use the coupon or write to: Army Opportunities, Dept. 400/450A, Hampton, Va. 23369. Please indicate education in your letter or on the coupon.

### The Women's Army Corps

Army Opportunities 4 SS 20-4-70  
 Dept. 400/450, Hampton, Va. 23369 Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Please send me more information on opportunities in the Women's Army Corps.  
 (check one)  
 I am a \_\_\_\_\_ high school student or \_\_\_\_\_ graduate.  
 I am a \_\_\_\_\_ college student or \_\_\_\_\_ graduate.  
 Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_  
 State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date Graduated \_\_\_\_\_ Will Graduate On \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

**Figure 33. "Great Myths of the WAC."**

Figure 33 displayed, discussed, and debunked prevailing myths about gender and service.<sup>246</sup>

<sup>246</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Records, "Great Myths of the WAC," Print ad, NMAH, SI.

Fears that masculine women would comprise the WAC or that conventionally feminine women would be molded into masculine ones for the purpose of executing service responsibilities played out visually and textually in this advertisement. Even a proposal scene between a male serviceperson and a WAC cadet is displayed in the ad to assert heterosexual and feminine identities. Rather than merely debunking the notion that female service members were prohibited from marrying during enlistment, the visual narration offered an idealized scenario of the pretty WAC cadet being proposed to by an army man. The corresponding text promised that, “If she marries a serviceman, every effort will be made to station them together.”<sup>247</sup> Because such a circumstance would need substantial time to unfold, the ad was equally careful to deal with the more pressing, immediate myths. For instance, the uniform wardrobe conundrum was spun into a positive. Having work provide cadets with their required outfits meant women could allocate their salaries toward off-duty clothing, “for fun, dates, and travel.”<sup>248</sup>

Ayer’s recruitment of women for the WAC paid a great deal of attention to female enlistee appearances. Beyond the obvious recruitment objectives, these ads served public relations functions, intending to combat the general civilian public’s fears and resulting negative stereotypes about the WAC and the NC. Gender identity anxieties about these specific female-focused units dated at least as far back as the WAC’s inception in 1940s.<sup>249</sup> The public and the Department of Defense feared that female military members would become masculinized through service. Gender panic was part of why much debate and toiling occurred in the process

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<sup>247</sup> Ibid.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid.

<sup>249</sup> The branch first formed as the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) in 1942, primarily to fill domestic service member needs during World War II. Before the WAAC, women’s service roles were confined to that of army nurses. The Nurse Corps was established in 1901 and still exists today. For histories of the WAAC and the WAC, see Morden, 2000. See also Jeanne Holm, *Women in the Military: An Unfinished Revolution* (New York: Presidio Press, 1994).

of selecting the silhouettes for female military uniforms. Subjective notions about gender and bodies informed the debates over how to execute a middle ground between practicality, seriousness, and body-conscious sex appeal. As indicated in the text from one 1969 WAC ad, “girls” still had to look like “girls.”<sup>250</sup> Still, many negative stereotypes existed in the public sphere, influencing civilian attitudes toward female enlistees.<sup>251</sup> Some believed that WAC cadets were already “mannish” for wishing to enlist in the first place. The defensive tenor of Ayer ads from this period, stressing the femininity of the WAC’s “girls,” placed gratuitous emphasis on dates, clothes, hairstyle, socializing, travel, and fun. The centrality of such frivolousness provoked unintended public relations consequences for the branch. Historian Kara Dixon Vuic theorized that through the proliferation of such stereotypes it became easier to belittle and degrade the service contributions of women in the WAC and the NC during Vietnam.<sup>252</sup>

### **3.4 BE ALL THE NURSE YOU CAN BE (AND WERE MEANT TO BE)!**

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<sup>250</sup> Ayer Records, “If I Join the Women’s Army Corps,” NMAH, SI.

<sup>251</sup> For writing about women’s military participation and gender anxiety, see: Leisa Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*, 1992; Marilyn E. Hegarty, *Victory Girls, Khaki-Wackies, and Patriotutes: The Regulation of Female Sexuality during World War II* (New York: NYU Press, 2008); Karen Anderson, *Wartime Women: Sex Roles, Family Relations, and the Status of Women During World War II* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1981); Although they write about World War II, this period marked the origins of many notions regarding gender, sexuality, and women’s military service.

<sup>252</sup> Advertisements reflected many of these stereotypes, serving as a venue for dissemination. Kara Dixon Vuic, *Officer, Nurse, Woman: The Army Nurse Corps in the Vietnam War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 5-7.

Kara Dixon Vuic contends that for the Nurse Corps, female cadet reputations were caught in a binary between negative masculine and feminine stereotypes about gender identity and sexuality.<sup>253</sup> The same, she argues, was true for members of the WAC. A masculine female cadet trope reflected public anxiety about gender roles and homosexuality. The feminine cadet trope led some to believe that military nurses in particular were husband-hungry and desperate, rather than brave, skilled, and noble. Women's wartime army service in Vietnam was small in scale but not insignificant. The Vietnam Women's Memorial Foundation estimates that around 11,000 American women served in the Vietnam War, with nearly 90% fulfilling the need for nurses.<sup>254</sup> But as Vuic asserts, a prevailing impression of Vietnam War nurses pigeonholed women to be there for heterosexual male entertainment, as much as work.<sup>255</sup> And some media messages reinforced stereotypes this notion further.

Popular culture shaped the way that advertisers and the American public viewed military nurses. Director, Robert Altman's popular 1970 film adaptation of the 1968 book, *MASH: A Novel About Three Army Doctors*, depicted the Korean War period in dark comedic fashion. Womanizing male protagonists, nicknamed "Hawkeye" and "Duke" were excellent surgeons but mediocre soldiers who exhibited unbridled sexism toward the blond bombshell head nurse who they nicknamed, "Hot Lips." Though satirical, the book and film, as well as the eventual television series, *M\*A\*S\*H* influenced common notions about military medicine during combat conditions.<sup>256</sup> The success of these multiple media texts could be attributed partially to the

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<sup>253</sup> Ibid.

<sup>254</sup> "History of the Vietnam Women's Memorial," Vietnam Women's Memorial Foundation Website, Accessed: 14 July 2013. <http://www.vietnamwomensmemorial.org/history.php>.

<sup>255</sup> Kara Dixon Vuic, 110.

<sup>256</sup> For a study of the show's popular influence see: James H. Wittebols, *Watching M\*A\*S\*H, Watching American: A Social History of the 1972-1983 Television Series*, (Jefferson, NC:

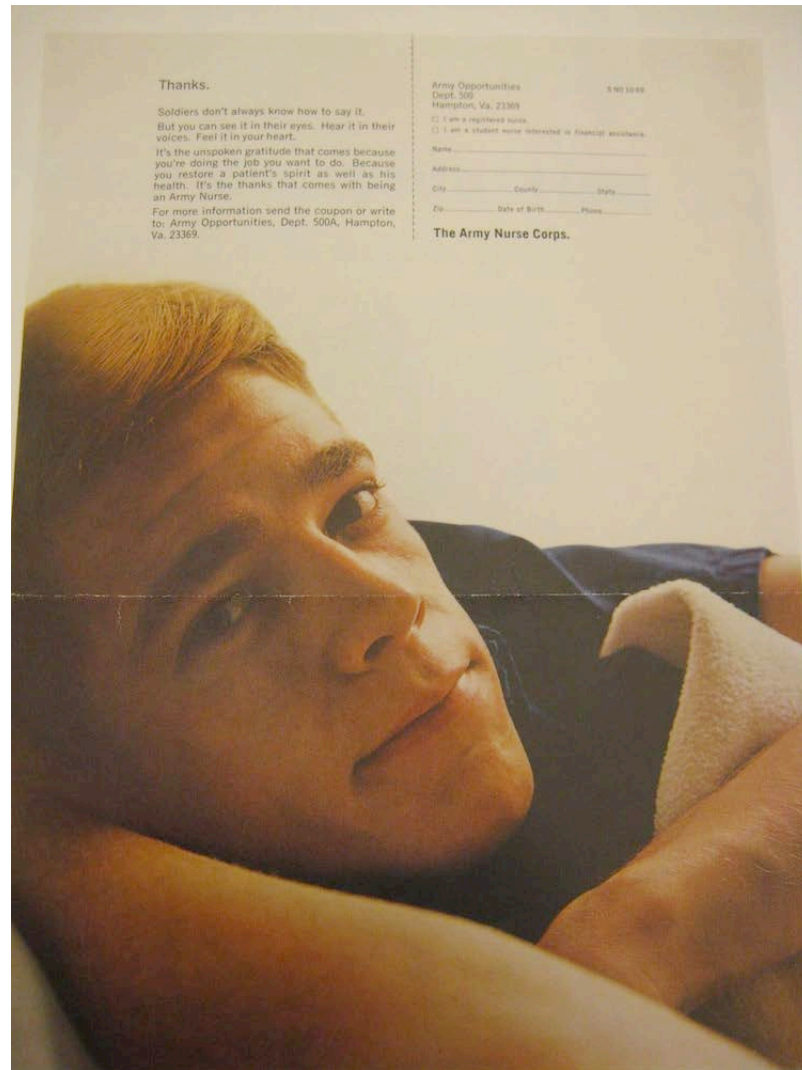
timeliness of the subject during the Vietnam War. And in order to remain relevant and resonant with audiences, in addition to shaping ideas about social norms the advertising industry has followed the lead of popular culture and other mass media. Although wildly popular and influential, *MASH* the novel and eventual film contained comedic satire that did not transfer into Ayer ads for the Nurse Corps.

Unlike the relatively lighthearted approach to WAC ads, Ayer developed Vietnam-focused recruitment campaigns for the NC out of necessity. NC recruitment perpetuated both negative and positive ideas about women's contributions to the war. Many of the NC ads reified stereotypes about gender, maternalism, caregiving, and in some cases, romance. Ads like Figure 34 were partially to blame for the notion that military nurses serving in Vietnam were just desperate husband hunters. Because of the need to staff the Army Nurse Corps for deployments to Vietnam, any negative wake of public opinion had the potential to hurt recruitment. And within the genre of targeting nurses, ads had to make many allusions to Vietnam. Still in the recruitment of women, even ads containing overt references to Vietnam portrayed a far more glamorous and romantic sets of circumstances than ads that aimed at men (Figure 34).

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McFarland and Company, 2003); See also: Richard Hooker, *MASH: A Novel About Three Army Doctors*, (New York: Morrow, 1997); *M\*A\*S\*H*, Directed by Robert Altman (1970: Los Angeles, CA: 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox, 2006) DVD; *M\*A\*S\*H*, Developed by Larry Gelbart (1972-1983: Los Angeles, CA: 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox, 2006) DVD Box Set.






**Figure 34. "Thanks, Army Nurse."**

Figure 34 displayed a vulnerable soldier in care of an army nurse.<sup>257</sup>

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<sup>257</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Records, "Thanks," Print ad, NMAH, SI.

The suggestive bedroom eyes of a handsome figure as he clutched his blanket and gazed at the audience created intimacy and sexually tension. He looked healthy and comfortable. The parts of his body that the audience could see were clean and fully intact. Not a single bruise, bump, or blemish appeared on his face. His apparent physical and presumed emotional health glamorized the patient population for nurses in Vietnam. It was difficult to not read romance in this ad. Such an undeniably tender and amorous depiction also made it that much easier for the public to ascribe the desires for heterosexual courtship among female service people. The notion of a husband-hungry female service member continued to be a problem for military public relations, leading some civilians to doubt the altruism of enlisted cadets. But the text of Figure 34 preserved the Army Nurse Corps reputation, speaking about the significance of the work performed by nurses in Vietnam. Gender norms permeated the ad, by commenting that male soldiers were not always capable of finding the language of emotional vulnerability and gratitude. Like film narratives with strong silent types as objects of female heterosexual desire, modern Vietnam-era Florence Nightingales saved the day. A similar tactic was present in Figure 35, where a pretty, well-coiffed nurse checked on the beds in her medic tent.



**Be the nurse you were meant to be.**

In the Army, you're needed as a nurse and nothing less. Needed for your skills and training. For the pride and dedication you bring to your profession.

You're needed, too, for your woman's touch. Your cheerfulness. Your reassuring smile in the middle of a long night.

Be all the nurse you can be.  
Be an Army nurse.  
The Army Nurse Corps.

Use coupon or write:  
Army Opportunities, Dept. 500A,  
Hampton, Va. 23369.

Army Opportunities Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Dept. 500  
Hampton, Va. 23369  
Please send me information about nursing in the Army.  
☐ I'm a registered nurse.  
☐ A student nurse interested in financial assistance  
Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Figure 35. "Be The Nurse You Were Meant to Be."**

Figure 35's nurse checked on injured soldiers from within a medic tent.<sup>258</sup>

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<sup>258</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Records, "Be the Nurse You Were Meant to Be," Print ad, NMAH, SI.

The text of the ad conveyed gender essentialism while reproducing notions about women as innate caregivers. The woman's touch, cheerfulness, and smile would bring comfort to war-torn soldiers in recovery.<sup>259</sup> The title's use of the phrase "meant to be," conveyed a sense of gender destiny that could also be read as a reference to romance or to career path. Nurses who were meant to enlist were adept and "natural" caregivers who were also perhaps meant to meet a mate in the military. This ad, created in 1969, was published in February issues of the *American Journal of Nursing*, and *RN* as well as the May 1970 issue of *Glamour* magazine. In addition to the compelling visual and associated essentialist language of Figure 35 was the earliest iteration of what became the army's most successful, popular, and iconic slogan.

The final paragraph of Figure 35 conveyed a proto-version of Be All You Can Be in beckoning women to "Be all the nurse you can be."<sup>260</sup> The most recognizable volunteer-era recruitment slogan originated in this advertisement from the late 1960s, and it aimed at women. Women's enlistment in the armed forces during Vietnam remained volunteer-based, so the advertising had to "try harder." Although this observation remains absent from existing literature studying pre- and post- volunteer era military recruitment, it is not surprising that the origins of marketing volunteer military service began during the recruitment of women volunteers. Recruiting women offer Ayer and the army a trial run for what eventually became necessary for the broader volunteer concept's survival. Gender essentialism and blatant heteronormativity permeated many Army Nurse Corps recruitment clips created by Ayer. And not all of them employed visuals evocative of Vietnam. Some ads displayed women holding babies, titled with phrases like, "You can grow fast, too. In the Army." Others highlighted benefits that would

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<sup>259</sup> Ibid.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

enable nurses to advance their education and therefore, their careers. Many depicted women protagonists giving care to unseen, presumably male patients. But when ads referred overly or indirectly to female deployment to Vietnam they also endeavored to depict safe, clean, and even romantic interactions between representative female service members and male soldier-patients.

On the whole, Army Nurse Corps ads were more serious in tone, particularly compared to the corresponding series of Women's Army Corps ads that ran during the Vietnam War. Opportunities and potential deployment needs within the WAC varied from that of the NC, due to the practical demand for medical professionals in combat zones. WAC ads battled notions of masculinity among female service members, in part by displaying women in heterosexual configurations and by highlighting their conventional femininity. In featuring the potential for heterosexual partnership and cross-continental romantic intrigue, ads that ran in women's fashion magazines and publications aimed at college students, Ayer glamorized the female cadet experience within the WAC. Such neat and tidy "workplace romance" depictions of female service were increasingly difficult to put forth in NC ads, when the direst staffing needs were in Vietnam. And the casual, recreational approach to WAC recruitment unintentionally provoked myths and stereotypes that hurt female cadet reputations, influencing public opinion of both corps.

Within the landscape of gendered recruitment, Ayer relied on many stereotypes, tropes, and allusions. Advertising military service during wartime was a complicated and increasingly difficult task, particularly as the public's support for the war deteriorated over time. Draft-era recruitment at the conclusion of the Vietnam War adopted the values of individuality by extolling the personal incentives for enlistment. As slogans and campaigns evolved during the renewed partnership between the army and Ayer, individuality and modernity became significant

to the sales pitch. From “Your future, your decision, Choose ARMY,” to “Today’s Army Wants to Join You,” ads that were created to appeal to draft-eligible men avoided the subject of war. “Today’s Army,” in particular was marked by the de-emphasis and eventual disappearance of references to combat or deployment in Vietnam. With the draft providing a steady stream of enlistees for the army branch, Ayer turned their focus to a target audience previously underutilized: women. Within many of the ads, particularly as the volunteer era approached, increasing emphasis was placed on individual incentives, benefits, salary, and job training. Each of these individualized economic sales tactics came to propagate the majority of ads during the earliest years of the volunteer military phase, when the market-driven recruitment model was still precarious and untested.

#### 4.0 ADVERTISING FOR UNCLE SAM DURING THE VOLUNTEER ERA: THE ALL-VOLUNTEER CONCEPT AND A MARKETPLACE RECRUITMENT MODEL

*The Vietnam War conditioned though it did not determine the way in which conscription was ended and the bases on which the all-volunteer force was constructed. Instead of a national service concept the political definition that guided the emergence of the all-volunteer force was one of economic incentives and pay comparable to the civilian sector. One must therefore conclude that the all-volunteer concept as a device for maintaining an extensive military force represents a drastic departure from US traditions which formerly have relied extensively on notions of citizen obligation. Morris Janowitz and Charles C Moskos Jr.<sup>261</sup>*

*In increasing the overall DoD end-strength it would appear to be more cost effective to put more money into recruiting and advertising than into higher wages. K. A. Goudreau<sup>262</sup>*

Toward the end of the Vietnam War, with an impending volunteer era on the horizon, Ayer and the army developed campaigns that marketed choice and agency to draft-destined male recruitment targets. Strategically and contextually, their approach was to argue that young men could make informed decisions without being subject to the harsher combat realities of compulsory service during wartime. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, general public opinion of

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<sup>261</sup> Morris Janowitz and Charles C Moskos Jr., "Five Years of the All Volunteer Force: 1973-1978," in folder entitled, "The future Adaptation of the All Volunteer Force January 22-23 1979," Smithsonian Institution Library (hereafter, "SIL,") Accession Number 94-074, Box 5, Folder 6; See also Morris Janowitz and Charles C Moskos Jr., "Five Years of the All Volunteer Force: 1973-1978," *Armed Forces and Society* 5: 2 (1979) 171-218.

<sup>262</sup> K. A. Goudreau, "Draft- Seminar on Recruiting Research, 1/30/1978," SIL, Accession Number 94-074, Box 5, Folder 1.

the American military suffered due to the length and nature of military operations in Vietnam. The war in Vietnam resulted in nearly 60,000 American soldier deaths as well as over 150,000 American soldier injuries.<sup>263</sup> Because of the increasing ubiquity of television and the concentration of network news, civilians on the domestic front were exposed to visual and verbal reports about the death and injury tolls as well as to incidents involving American soldiers committing crimes of war abroad. The most damaging incident involved massacred villages of Vietnamese civilians. When news of excessive violence against civilians spread in the mainstream US media and around the world, people were outraged. It became clear that the some actions of American troops led to death and destruction among innocent and unarmed Vietnamese people. And although this was far from the gravest cost, the exposure of such crimes ultimately hurt the American military's reputation domestically and abroad.<sup>264</sup> The imagery that circulated in the mainstream media depicting the Vietnam War included the disturbing visuals of bloodied and dismembered civilian dead, captured by US Army Public Information Detachment photographer, Ronald Haeberle.<sup>265</sup> The Vietnamese civilians who were photographed alive had

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<sup>263</sup> W. Chambers, II, ed., *The Oxford Companion to American Military History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 849. For a comprehensive history of the conflict, see George C. Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2001); George C. Herring, *The Pentagon Papers* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993). A history examining the demography of the US combat soldiers in Vietnam can be found in Christian G. Appy, *Working Class War: American Combat Soldiers and Vietnam* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993).

<sup>264</sup> Henry Camm, "Vietnamese Say G.I.'s Slew 567 in Town," *New York Times*, Nov. 17, 1969; Seymour M. Hersh, "The Massacre at My Lai," in, *Tell Me No Lies: Investigative Journalism that Changed the World*, ed. John Pilger (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 2005) pp.85-119. See also James S. Olson and Randy Roberts, *My Lai: A Brief History with Documents* (New York: Bedford/ St. Martin's, 1998).

<sup>265</sup> Haeberle took photos with Army equipment as well as his own personal camera. The photos from his personal camera were the ones sold to media outlets and disseminated after the story broke. Jo Ellen Corrigan, "Plain Dealer Exclusive in 1969: My Lai Massacre Photos by Ronald Haeberle," *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, Nov. 20, 2009.



looks of terror and despair on their faces. The American public learned of the massacre at My Lai 4 over a year after it occurred. Although the United States military attempted a cover up, investigative journalist Seymour Hersh broke the story that was illustrated Haeberle's photographs published in *Life Magazine*, a popular general interest publication.<sup>266</sup> Although the extreme stereotype of American soldiers as "baby killers" existed before the massacre at My Lai, the news coverage of that event yielded photographic evidence corroborating the idea.<sup>267</sup> One of the most powerful propaganda messages from an anti-war group of artists, called the Art Works Coalition, appropriated a graphic photo of civilian casualties in the aftermath of the massacre to reveal the horrors of war. The image paired with simple but evocative text taken from Mike Wallace's CBS interview about the series of events at My Lai 4.<sup>268</sup> [To view the image, click here.](#) Member of the First Platoon, Charlie Company, Paul Meadlo detailed the actions taken by him as well as other soldiers in the South Vietnamese village of Song My on Wallace's popular television program in 1969. When Wallace questioned his guest about the types of victims killed by Meadlo and others, he asked if the dead included children and babies. Art Works Coalition incorporated both the question and statement phrases "And Babies? And babies." into their

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<sup>266</sup> In the late 1960s and into the '70s, *Life* frequently included military recruitment advertisements within its pages. And the haunting depictions of death galvanized the public while advancing the arguments of a growing anti-war movement.

<sup>267</sup> Jerry Lembcke, *The Spitting Image: Myth Memory, and the Legacy of Vietnam* (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 58-59, 95.

<sup>268</sup> To view the anti-war propaganda poster, go to the Library of Congress online catalog, accessible here: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/yan1996001395/PP/>; See: Art Works Coalition, "And Babies," Poster, Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, 26 Dec 1969, reproduction number: LC-USZ62-130601. For analysis of the image, see: M. Paul Holsinger, ed., *War and American Popular Culture: A Historical Encyclopedia* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999), 363-64; and Susan A. Brewer, *Why America Fights: Patriotism and War Propaganda from the Philippines to Iraq*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009) 221.

piece.<sup>269</sup> Historian M. Paul Holsinger asserts that, “No single work went further to convince many Americans that the United States had no reason to be an active participant in a war where even the smallest children were the ‘enemy.’”<sup>270</sup> Understandably, because lives were at stake at home and abroad, public response to the war varied widely. But anti-war arguments were gaining traction. Following the massacre at My Lai’s coverage in mainstream news media, some groups within and outside of the antiwar movement denounced US soldiers and veterans who served in Vietnam. And there were Vietnam veterans who spoke out also against the war. Scholars of many perspectives and fields cite the My Lai affair as a watershed moment for public opinion and public response. Political scientist and historian, Susan Brewer writes that during the murder trial that found Second Lieutenant, William Calley guilty of killing 22 innocent Vietnamese civilians, “antiwar moderates teamed up with advertising professionals to mount a campaign called, ‘Unsell the War.’”<sup>271</sup> Costing around \$1million, “Unsell the War” encouraged everyday citizens to demand that American soldiers serving in Vietnam be brought home by the end of 1971. The campaign used multiple media, with print, radio, and television advertisements imploring the American public to write their congressional representatives.<sup>272</sup> And Jack Ladinsky notes “By 1971 there was a mood strikingly different from the ceremonialism and merriment after World War II or the more subdued elation and relief after Korea.”<sup>273</sup> By all accounts it stands to reason that the advertising professionals hired to sell military service in the early 1970s

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<sup>269</sup> Art Works Coalition, “And Babies,” Poster, LC-USZ62-130601.

<sup>270</sup> Holsinger, 1999. See also, Lucy R. Lippard, *A Different War: Vietnam in Art* (Seattle: Real Comet Press, 1990), 27-28.

<sup>271</sup> Susan A. Brewer, *Why America Fights*, 221.

<sup>272</sup> To read more about the “Unsell the War” campaign, see: Mitchell Hall, “Unsell the War: Vietnam and Antiwar Advertising,” *The Historian*, 58:1 (Autumn 1995) 69-86.

<sup>273</sup> Jack Ladinsky, “Vietnam and the Vets,” in *Military in America*, ed. Peter M. Karsten (New York: Free Press, 1986) 439-440.

were concerned especially with public relations, branding, image and the damage done to all three in the wake of scandal.

It is difficult to quantify or measure the public reaction to the US military's reputation in the wake of the Vietnam War. Cultural critics and historians have argued that a popular anti-war movement alongside critical coverage in mainstream news media hurt military morale.<sup>274</sup> Some continue to blame the War's outcome and the withdrawal of the United States Military on that media coverage. But during the war, any negative impact on recruitment numbers was buffered by conscription. The draft produced a guaranteed population of compulsory soldiers. Although recruitment advertising still occurred to brand and sell individual branches for preemptive or voluntary enlistment, and to attract women to enlist into military roles available to them, the stakes for advertising were comparatively low. The volunteer era after the war in Vietnam activated different circumstances of recruitment, with even more complex public relations needs and even higher stakes for advertising. Despite the historically contextual challenges inherent to military recruitment in the early 1970s, the decision to end the draft was both political and economic.

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<sup>274</sup> For histories of news coverage during the war in Vietnam, see: Pilger, *Tell Me No Lies*; William M. Hammond, *Reporting Vietnam: Media and Military at War* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998); David C. Hallin, *The "Uncensored War": The Media and Vietnam*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986). See also, Herbert J. Gans, *Deciding What's News* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1979); Clarence R. Wyatt, *Paper Soldiers: The American Press and the Vietnam War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995). For histories of the anti-war movement, see: Charles DeBenedetti, *An American Ordeal: The Antiwar Movement in the Vietnam Era* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1990); Adam Garfinkle, *Telltale Hearts: The Origins and Impact of the Vietnam Anti-War Movement* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997); Fred Halstead, *Out Now: A Participant's Account of the Movement in the United States Against the Vietnam War* (New York: Monad Press, 1978); Melvin Small, *Antiwarriors: The Vietnam War and the Battle for America's Hearts and Minds* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2002).

Among Richard Nixon's promises during his campaign for presidency in 1968 was to put an end to the military draft and transition the US to a volunteer armed service recruitment model. When Nixon was elected he assembled a commission, chaired by former Secretary of Defense, Thomas Gates to explore the long-term viability of a volunteer structure for the American military. The fifteen-member Gates Commission was comprised of economists, policy experts, and military specialists.<sup>275</sup> They submitted their report in February of 1970.<sup>276</sup> Soon after the formation of the Gates Commission, the army branch began researching the challenges it might face in a volunteer era with their own special task force, Project Volunteer In Defense of the Nation, known as PROVIDE. Richard Stewart explains "PROVIDE addressed such topics such as cost, standards of quality, personnel management, numbers needed to recruit, and even the possible socioeconomic impact of an all-volunteer force."<sup>277</sup> The knowledge of an impending volunteer era significantly figured into the recruitment campaign strategies of the military branches and their ad agencies, even during the end of the draft era. Maneuvers to rehabilitate the public image of the armed forces attempted to compensate for public relations problems that arose in the wake of critical media coverage and military scandals such as the abovementioned massacre at My Lai. Slogans and media campaigns highlighted the most positive and optimistic

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<sup>275</sup> Beth Bailey, *America's Army: Making the All-Volunteer Force* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009). See also Bernard Rostker, *I Want You!: The Evolution of the All-Volunteer Force*, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2006), 1-142

<sup>276</sup> Thomas S. Gates Jr., *The Report of the President's Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1970).

<sup>277</sup> Richard W. Stewart, ed., *American Military History Volume II: The United States Army in a Global Era: 1917-2003*, (Washington DC: Center of Military History, 2005) 370-371.

representations of military service, gun-free, and removed from any symbols of Southeast Asia.<sup>278</sup>

As demonstrated in Chapter 3, the anticipation over an impending transition to a volunteer concept of recruitment was palpable in the campaigns of the latter Vietnam War years. The rhetorical strategy highlighted agency and choice. Even the two army slogans of the period, “Your Future, Your Decision, Choose ARMY,” followed in 1971 by “Today’s Army Wants to Join You,” conveyed both current and evolving contextual exigencies. This chapter examines the precarious early period of transition when the recruitment messages produced by Ayer and the army helped to secure the longer-term viability of an all-volunteer concept of military service and repair the public image of the army branch. First, I consider archival literature and documents from researchers and policy experts who examined the gravity of this transition for the American military. In the policy literature and research reports of the period, it was clear that many experts believed a volunteer model of military recruitment and retention to be vulnerable and risky. Anxieties permeated the language of these reports, wherein the transition was often referred to as a volunteer “experiment.” Conferences and working weekends were organized around the subject of how to use advertising and public relations to generate positive results, improving the reputations of the armed forces’ brands broadly while recruiting specific individuals targeted demographically within the civilian population to enlist. While analyzing this literature, I also detail the historical, social, and political circumstances that influenced the strategies and the possibilities of selling a volunteer force. Next, I reconcile the concerns of the

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<sup>278</sup> Although military training for many roles certainly included preparation on the handling and use of guns, the ads toward the end of the war and during the transition to the volunteer era are weaponless, largely. The gun as a visual signifier is laden with meaning and the baggage of violence. Ayer constructed campaigns that put distance between the violent iconicity of guns by minimizing if not eliminating them from campaigns.

aforementioned parties with the advertising messages and media created by Ayer for the army, which continued to be the most vulnerable among the branches in terms of social capital/status, public relations, and sheer volume of ranks to fill. Specifically I examine the “distinctions” drawn between the concepts of soldier versus service member.<sup>279</sup> Finally, I look at the most popular visual and textual tropes found within recruitment advertisements. I highlight messages that figured with increased significance into the landscape of “all-volunteer” recruitment advertising.

#### 4.1 THE VOLUNTEER CONCEPT OF ENLISTMENT IN THE SHORT TERM

*Over the short run, because of lowered manpower goals and the dramatic increases in military pay, the armed forces have been able 'to make the volunteer force work.' In addition, they have been assisted by high levels of youth unemployment and the new emphasis on recruiting and utilizing women.* Morris Janowitz and Charles C Moskos Jr.<sup>280</sup>

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<sup>279</sup> In choosing the word “distinction” to describe the process of distancing that occurred between the branding of service member as a professionalized role rather than soldier, evoking a combat one, I purposely invoke the work of Pierre Bourdieu who writes about non-financial forms of capital as significant to both issues of identity as well as social status in hierarchical contexts. Professional service member carried with it more cache than that of soldier. Soldier conjured violent imagery and the literal and figurative baggage of war. See Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique on the Judgment of Taste*, translated by Richard Nice, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984); Bourdieu, “The forms of capital,” In *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, J. Richardson, Ed. (New York, Greenwood, 1986) 241-258.

<sup>280</sup> Morris Janowitz and Charles C Moskos Jr., “Five Years of the All Volunteer Force: 1973-1978,” in “The future Adaptation of the All Volunteer Force January 22-23 1979,” Smithsonian Institution Library Accession Number 94-074, Box 5, Folder 6.

On the fifth anniversary of the end of conscription, recruitment and retention specialists gathered to strategize methods to make more efficient this project of a demand-driven military. As Janowitz and Moskos suggest to facilitate a market-driven model in which volunteers sign up to fill the ranks, the military increased budget allocations toward recruitment and advertising efforts. Years earlier, the army's volunteer-transition research group, PROVIDE determined that financing the post-draft recruitment model would present tremendous challenges for the army, in particular. Richard Stewart writes:

Perhaps the biggest single hurdle in creating an all-volunteer force was money. The draft brought in young men for a short period of service at artificially low wages, essentially "taxing" a segment of society. With the ending of that tax, the government would have to find enough money to provide monetary incentives—viable wages and even bonuses for some specialties—for new recruits. Without competitive pay, the Army could not enlist or retain the best soldiers. Money was also needed for advertising for the US Army Recruiting Command (USAREC) if the Army was to become an attractive career choice and bring in enough quality American youths.<sup>281</sup>

Ultimately, "mass" military marketing became a priority over the strategy to increase individual wages, for both new and re-enlisting soldiers. Because of the potential to craft, control, and widely distribute specific messages, advertising was a venue central to the post-war, "volunteer era." Mass media offered the chance to distribute messages across broad audiences of ideal targets while presenting the military in a positive light to the rest of the nation. Rather than significantly raising salaries for enlisted individuals with the hope that word of mouth could spread to a general public, salaries were increased modestly and priorities were shifted toward messaging. It mattered more to spread the message that military life included stable salaries for enlistees.

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<sup>281</sup> Richard W. Stewart, *American Military History Volume II*, 370-371.

Although the Gates Commission surmised that a volunteer concept would succeed so long as enlistment was incentivized further and at the individual level, advertising was the medium of choice through which to disseminate information about any and all enlistment incentives. There would be no way to know whether the existing incentives were enough to entice young people to volunteer for military service if those young people were not made aware of those incentives. Advertising also offered the opportunity to begin restoring the public images of military branch brands in a controlled venue. Military strategists operated with public relations logic. Mass media brought the potential to craft careful messages for civilian public consumption. As Beth Bailey writes, it also helped that then-secretary of the army, Stanley Resor was the son of two significant figures in the advertising industry, and believed deeply in its persuasive potential.<sup>282</sup> Quoting Assistant Secretary of the Army, William K. Brehm, Bailey writes that the goal was to, “Let advertising do for the Army what it has done successfully for business.”<sup>283</sup> Ayer who previously advertised in ways Bailey describes as “peripheral,” because the draft guaranteed that ranks would fill no matter what, assumed a central role in ushering forward a volunteer army in a period when public skepticism of the branch endured.<sup>284</sup> Though the account was described by Ayer’s director of creative services as “a brutal assignment,” the agency framed their increased volunteer-transition responsibilities as “a copywriter’s dream,” and “the most important assignment in the advertising business.”<sup>285</sup> One of the major obstacles was selling military service to the influential people surrounding prime targets of young men and women for recruitment.

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<sup>282</sup> Resor’s mother was Helen Lansdowne Resor, a renown copywriter, and his father, Stanley B. Resor, headed JWT for 40 years. See: Beth Bailey, *America’s Army*, 69.

<sup>283</sup> Ibid, 70.

<sup>284</sup> Ibid.

<sup>285</sup> Ted Regan interview quoted in Ibid, 71.



While recruitment targets remained the key audience of military advertising messages, they were not the only group that needed to be persuaded. After all, enlisted members of the military were once civilians with influential civilian peers and family members. If a prospective recruit's primary reference groups were not on board with a decision to enlist, the military could lose that recruitment prospect along the way. The recruitment of an individual necessitated often the implicit approval of their social influencers. One way of guarding against influencer negativity was to make evident and readily available information about the benefits of enlistment. Only slight salary increases were made to correspond with cost of living changes. And instead sights were set on advertising as a venue in which the military branches could spread the good news of military life while re-exerting public relations control after years of critical investigative journalism coverage and powerful anti-war movement arguments. The methods of message-dissemination, both visual and textual mostly were more of the same from draft-era ads, minus the guns and absent of any allusions to the Southeast Asian region. But one major difference was the framing of the US military as employer, in competition with the private and non-profit sectors for job candidates. To that end and in order to be competitive with other sectors, military ads emphasized themes of technology and/or technical training as part of many of the available "jobs" in service during this period.

The issue of jobs was a touchy one in the 1970s. Waves of deindustrialization and the shift toward a service economy in the United States began to accelerate by the 1970s and into the 1980s.<sup>286</sup> Fewer entry-level manufacturing jobs were available where workers enjoyed salaries

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<sup>286</sup> Although the history of American deindustrialization envelops a frame of time that precedes and exceeds the 1970s-80s, the number of jobs lost during this period is staggering. See Jefferson Cowie and Joseph Heathcott, "The Meanings of Deindustrialization," in *Beyond the Ruins: The*

with benefits and the protections of a union. John Russo and Sherry Lee Linkon, former directors of the Center for Working-Class Studies wrote that:

Indeed, while deindustrialization is often thought of as a trend of the 1970s and 80s and its history dates back to the early 20th century, it is not merely history. On the one hand, the social costs of deindustrialization persist over decades and generations. Jobs lost in the late 1970s continue to affect communities and individuals today. On the other hand, factories are still closing and industries are still downsizing, so deindustrialization continues to affect American workers and their communities.<sup>287</sup>

The “social costs” of deindustrialization included a job marketplace rife with anxieties over job scarcity during a time of economic inflation. Although the military branches were in competition for recruits with other employment sectors, the lack of job opportunities available outside of the armed services facilitated the objectives of a volunteer era. Indeed, unemployment and underemployment rates benefited the volunteer army. And the advertising industry was benefitting from increasingly technologized mechanisms for proficiency in marketing.

By the 1970s, computer technologies were facilitating efficient and effective data compilation for governments, non-government organizations, and businesses. The existence of databanks filled with personal information generated controversy and debate over privacy rights.<sup>288</sup> But commercial advertising firms were using marketing data and focus group research

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*Meanings of Deindustrialization*, edited by Jefferson Cowie and Joseph Heathcott, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003) 1-18.

<sup>287</sup> John Russo and Sherry Lee Linkon, “The Social Costs of Deindustrialization,” in *Manufacturing a Better Future for America*, edited by Richard McCormack, (Washington, DC: Alliance for American Manufacturing Press, 2010).

<sup>288</sup> See Alan F. Westin and Michael A. Baker, *Databanks in a Free Society: Computers, Record Keeping, and Privacy* (New York: New York Times Books, 1972); James B. Rule, *Private Lives and Public Surveillance: Social Control in the Computer Age* (New York: Schocken Books, 1974); See also Allen Easton, “Who’s Afraid of the Big Bad Databanks?” *Journal of Marketing Research* 12:3 (Aug. 1975) 440-53.

in increasingly sophisticated ways.<sup>289</sup> Technologies that eased the collection and management of consumer data influenced significantly the marketing strategies and practices that developed during this time. Having accurate and specific information about individuals and/or families allowed agencies like Ayer to implement carefully targeted advertising with increased demographic specificity. The “wide” net cast by advertisements distributed in mass media was actually a number of smaller nets, tweaked to appeal to key niche audiences. The body of marketing research from the 1960s and 1970s varied broadly in theories and tactics, but embedded in each method was the universal goal of advertising: the desire for messages to resonate with consumers. Recruitment messages were nets cast with nuance to those jobless and without prospects, those underemployed and dissatisfied, those high school students uncertain of their futures, those who wished to go to college but could not afford the payments, those who already graduated amid an economic downturn, and those already enlisted, unsure about re-enlistment.

Among the already enlisted demographic, military service looked far more appealing in a post-Vietnam era. Not only did service roles shift outside of the context of war, but also the economic conditions made for a competitive job marketplace within other sectors. But as detailed above, rather than incentivizing re-enlistment via wage increases, branches approached the post-war adjustment period by prioritizing allocations for advertising. The Department of Defense could have opted to reward a population of already-interested, and, in some cases, already-invested individuals by increasing monetary and benefit incentives for enlisted and soon-to-be enlisted soldiers. The market conditions were such that they did not need to increase

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<sup>289</sup> Robert Bartels, *The History of Marketing Thought* (Columbus, OH: Grid. Inc., 1976); see also issues of the *Journal of Marketing Research* from this period. One special issue in August 1978 was dedicated to the shifts in market segmentation research.

salaries dramatically. Instead, advertising became the primary mechanism for filling the ranks.

As political scientist, Melissa Brown writes:

Recruiting materials draw a picture of the military that is meant to appeal to the self-image of potential recruits, and they may not provide a highly accurate view of military life... Recruiting materials, however, must in some way ring true to their audience, even if the image provided isn't a perfect reflection of reality. They also must resonate with the audience and its preconceptions of military service, gender roles, and America's national identity and role in the world.<sup>290</sup>

Recruitment advertisements were the central venue of persuasion in the volunteer era but they remained sites of tension between reality and representation. Erving Goffman's theories about advertising and gender argue that through exposure, audiences receive instructive information about gender identities and gender behaviors. Although Goffman qualifies advertising as simulations of reality he argues, that they should appear more uncanny and strange to audiences than they actually do.<sup>291</sup> Advertisements, like any mass media text, can be subject to multiple interpretations. They are polysemic, carrying numerous potential meanings. And advertising agencies employed the most advanced marketing tools available to facilitate the best chances for campaign success. But Ayer's volunteer era work for the army was unfamiliar terrain. And military service remained a non-traditional commodity, unlike soap or jewelry or cars.

Although the early volunteer era army campaigns were not considered to be universal successes, Ayer was rewarded with many consecutive renewals of their army contract. The agency credited this reassignment in part to their efficacy in assisting the branch to meet their

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<sup>290</sup> Melissa T. Brown, *Enlisting Masculinity: The Construction of Gender in US Military Recruiting Advertising during the All-Volunteer Force*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012) 7.

<sup>291</sup> Erving Goffman, *Gender Advertisements*, (New York: Harper Collins, 1988).

volunteer-transition goals.<sup>292</sup> In a letter dated December 15, 1972, to the executive vice president of one of Ayer's new clients, First National Bank of Nevada, the army account was mentioned in boastful terms as follows, "After a vigorous national competition, (Ayer) was reappointed by the US Army... and thus given recognition for the advertising programs created by Ayer which made a volunteer Army possible."<sup>293</sup> Ayer took pride in their volunteer army work and they met the increased responsibilities and challenges of the volunteer era with measured success. Using the logic of the marketplace, Ayer's volunteer army advertisements aimed to reach a wider, more anonymous cache of adolescents and post-adolescents who might feel uncertain about their futures and ambivalent, if not hostile toward military service.<sup>294</sup> This hostility made sense in the context of the culture of the period.

## **4.2 SELLING A CONFORMIST ENCLAVE AMID THE COUNTERCULTURAL REVOLUTION**

The Vietnam War was its own public relations crisis for the military branches. Advertising agencies with military accounts, such as Ayer and JWT, had to contend with negative public opinion surrounding the outcome of the war as well as specific scandals, mentioned in sections

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<sup>292</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, "Business Records: Letter from Tyler Macdonald to Jordan Crouch," Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid.

<sup>294</sup> Beth Bailey, *America's Army*, 66-87.

previous.<sup>295</sup> But the 1960s also marked a rise of youth cultures and alongside them, countercultural movements. The concepts of youth and adolescence became defined socially and accepted widely in American society following World War II. Youth culture scholars such as Susan Douglas and Christine Feldman emphasize the influence and centrality of mainstream mass media toward the process of identity formation for young people.<sup>296</sup> Dick Hebdige details the importance of dress and appearance as stylish signifiers that broadcast one's subcultural identity or countercultural affiliations to those around you.<sup>297</sup> Dress and appearance could signal to others one's conformity or nonconformity to norms, fads, and trends. And Thomas Frank studies the history of marketing countercultural identity as well as nonconformity to young people in the 1960s and 70s.<sup>298</sup> The intermingling of these histories reveals the breadth and depth of the challenges faced by advertisers tasked with selling soldiering to consumers. Beyond the immediate culturally contextual challenges were also logistical ones.

The process of creating captivating, action-oriented advertisements to be seen by as many individuals within the desired age bracket as possible carried risks. Casting the widest net could also alienate nonconformists easily. But the distribution of broadly cast messages promised the potential for large-scale persuasion. The other option to incentivize at the individual level risked overshooting the incentives to the detriment of fiscal conservation. Increasing substantially the

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<sup>295</sup> Since the 1940s, JWT has handled recruitment for the US Marine Corps. David Flynn, "Marine Corps Recruiting Command, JWT Partnership Turns 65 Years Old," *Marine Corps Recruiting Command Website*, Unit News, 13 July 2012, Accessed 20 July 2013, <http://www.mcrc.marines.mil/News/tabid/5312/Article/66706/marine-corps-recruiting-command-jwt-partnership-turns-65-years-old.aspx>.

<sup>296</sup> Susan J. Douglas, *Where the Girls Are: Growing Up Female with the Mass Media* (New York: Times Books, 1994), 13; Christine J. Feldman, *"We Are the Mods": A Transnational History of a Youth Subculture*, (New York: Peter Lang Press, 2009).

<sup>297</sup> Dick Hebdige, *Subculture, The Meaning of Style* (London: Routledge, 1979).

<sup>298</sup> Thomas Frank, *The Conquest of Cool: Business Culture, Counterculture, and the Rise of Hip Consumerism*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

salaries for enlisted army gambled winning only those who already considered military service and might have enlisted or reenlisted for less money. Determining the “worth” of soldiering was a task fraught with ethical, contextual, political, and historical repercussions. And marketing soldiering both visually and rhetorically required a different type of maneuvering than that for a consumer product. The necessary components to determine, implement, and fund substantial increases in military pay along with other individual incentives were cost prohibitive. An ad could relay the current cost-of-living-adjusted pay to more people who maybe never considered service. An ad could spark interest among unemployed and underemployed groups unaware of military opportunities and benefits. The army wanted to reach working class folks who intended to transition from high school directly to the factory, only to see their local factories closing their doors. An ad could generate buzz about job training opportunities, education benefits, and health care options. Although anti-conformity and stylish individuality were important to young people, comparatively they were frivolous concerns. When bills and debts mount, the nuances of individual identity become less immediate than the need to keep food on the table. Still, many ads towed a delicate line between emphasizing the practical benefits while signaling that individuals could still be themselves while enlisted in the army. And, above all else, ads offered a hegemonic promise of image control. They could fortify patriotic lifestyle messages, branding the emotional and historical aspects of service for both target audiences and a broader population of people who recalled the casualties, costs, scandals, and public relations problems during and following the war in Vietnam. For all of these reasons advertisers and the military determined that the most cost effective method of transitioning to the volunteer era was to increase money spent persuading enlistment among coveted new recruits via advertising in mass media realms like print magazines, newspapers, and television. Considering the findings from the Gates’

Commission, this decision could have been lethal to the volunteer concept. If the social conditions were not favorable to the creation of demand, the volunteer model might have failed.

Arguably, the most significant variable in this configuration of selling soldiering in a volunteer era was the economy. From the accounts of many prominent historians and economic analysts, the 1970s marked the end of a post-World War II period of rapid growth.<sup>299</sup> The economy contracted for the first time since the Great Depression and the stagnation of growth was exacerbated by a global energy crisis.<sup>300</sup> Energy shortages caused inflation in spite of high unemployment rates, creating an economic circumstance that came to be known as “stagflation.”<sup>301</sup> The condition of stagflation in the 1970s facilitated the objectives of an all-volunteer military concept, even more so than the Gates Commission could have anticipated. The scarcity of jobs for recent high school graduates was considered an asset and even a supply-creator, as demonstrated in the graph shown in Figure 36.

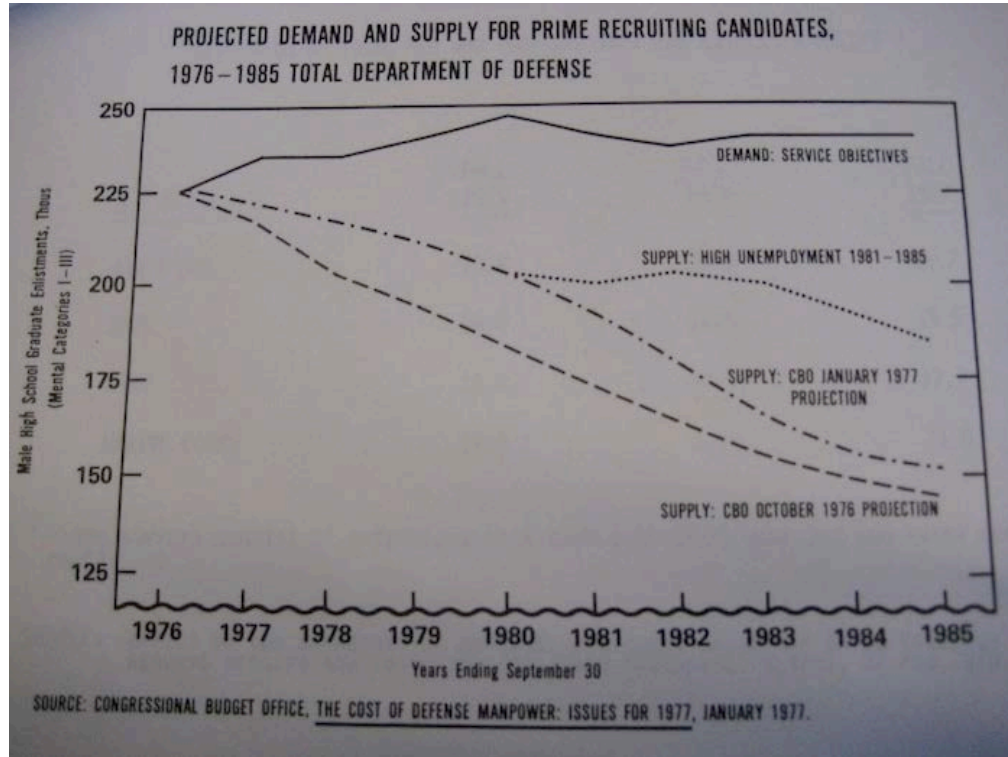
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<sup>299</sup> On the American economy in the 1970s, see Thomas Borstelmann, *The 1970s: A New Global History from Civil Rights to Economic Inequality* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011), 122-174; Beth Bailey and David Farber, eds., *America in the Seventies* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004); David Frum, *How We Got Here: The '70s, The Decade that Brought You Modern Life* (New York: Basic Books, 2000); William A. McEachern, *Economics: A Contemporary Introduction* (Mason, OH: South Western Cengage Learning, 2011), 431-433.

<sup>300</sup> Yanek Mieczkowski, *Gerald Ford and the Challenges of the 1970s* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2005) 128-149, 203-210.

<sup>301</sup> Borstelmann, *The 1970s*.





**Figure 36. "Prime Recruiting Candidates."**

Figure 36 is a graph that depicts projections for continued supply to a volunteer force.<sup>302</sup>

Although Figure 36 illustrated projections of demand and supply for prime recruiting candidates into the mid-1980s, the broken lines representing supply as of 1976, 1977, and 1981-1985 predicted high rates of unemployment to be ongoing. Framed implicitly by the graph and echoed in the corresponding conference paper was an assumption that high unemployment would be

<sup>302</sup> Congressional Budget Office, *The Cost of Defense Manpower: Issues for 1977*, January 1977, Folder 5 of Smithsonian Institution Assistant Secretary for the Sciences, Manpower Research and Advisory Services Records, 1971-1994, SIL.

conducive to a volunteer force recruitment strategy. Such arguments were made to assuage skepticism over the longevity of a volunteer concept very early into the transition.

#### **4.3 FROM SOLDIERS TO SERVICE MEMBERS: DISTINCTIVE ENLISTMENT AFTER VIETNAM**

The policy arguments positing military service as an intelligent, beneficial, and strategic post-high school trajectory for recent graduates were repeated through advertisements. Advertisers strived to convince audiences of these arguments after the war. One of the difficulties of selling enlistment during the volunteer era was distancing the military branches from the vivid and violent imagery conjured by the war in Vietnam. A critical and war-weary public denigrated many Vietnam War veterans upon return. As recently as Memorial Day, 2012 President Barack Obama called the treatment of Vietnam veterans in the United States a “national shame.”<sup>303</sup> The association of “soldier” with that of “enlisted armed-services member” deepened the challenges that Ayer faced. To counter this connotation, Ayer selected recruitment scenarios depicting non-combat roles with personnel often wearing military “dress” uniforms rather than battledress fatigues. By showing enlisted military figures in the uniform clothing that looked most similar to professional business attire, an important distancing occurred. The selections of uniforms represented a crucial re-branding through dress. This preference articulated with subtlety the availability of military “professions.” Memories of draft lotteries and the resistances and

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<sup>303</sup> Jeff Mason and Lauren MacInnis, “Obama Calls Treatment of Vietnam War Veterans ‘a Disgrace,’” *Reuters* (Washington, DC) May 28, 2012.

controversies they inspired still lingered, so it was prudent to remind audiences about professionalized military careers.<sup>304</sup> Although the volunteer concept of military service was a controversial manpower recruitment and retention strategy, draft-driven conscription in twentieth century American history had its imperfections. Service drafts in America were rare occurrences outside of the circumstances of an ongoing war.<sup>305</sup> Particularly by the early 1960s a variety of available deferments rendered a draft-driven vision of universal service obsolete. Deferments based on education, occupation, paternity status, and marital status were available. Bernard Rostker wrote that, “For all practical purposes, this meant that anyone who wanted to could avoid military service.”<sup>306</sup> Each type of deferment option connected with either socio-economic status or social capital. This likely influenced the ability to opt out as easily as Rostker asserted. But the volume of options demonstrated the presence of draft skepticism within existing policy circles. The configuration of agency in a drafted military career differed from that of a volunteer military career. In theory, and despite the varied incentives encouraging those in need to enlist, people *chose* to be there. On its surface this might sound small but in context, the distinction mattered. Post-Vietnam, it made sense to design an advertised world of military service to be removed far from combat operations and from the negative stereotypes of the war. It was feasible to perform this distancing because the onset of a volunteer era corresponded with a relative time of peace.

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<sup>304</sup> David E. Rosenbaum, “Statisticians Charge Draft Lottery Was Not Random,” *New York Times*, Jan. 4, 1970.

<sup>305</sup> The first national draft was implemented during the Civil War. World War I and World War II were additional occasions of drafted conscription. Although President Truman ended conscription in 1947, it was reinstated because of the Cold War in 1948, remaining intact until 1973. For more information and a comprehensive history of the build up and maintenance of the volunteer force, see Bernard Rostker, *I Want You! The Evolution of the All-Volunteer Force*, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2006), 1-142.

<sup>306</sup> Rostker, 3.

Although the US continued to engage in a Cold War, service opportunities were more peaceful particularly without foreign combat operations among them. The mundane, everyday experience for an enlisted army member post-1973 differed vastly from that during Vietnam. Voluntary military service in a post-Vietnam era hyped steady wages, job training, and opportunity for professional advancement. Ayer made extensive efforts to distinguish volunteer military service from draft-era conscription. And they did so by picturing enlisted army personnel in professionalized contexts, mentioning a few signifiers of upward mobility, such as opportunities for travel and advanced education. They did so to nod toward the cultural capital and status such experiences yield.<sup>307</sup> This approach was risky. When Ayer pitched the “Today’s Army Wants to Join You” campaign to top ranking officials, one asked, “Do you have to say it that way?”<sup>308</sup> The point of the slogan was to reverse traditional, recognizable, and even iconic calls to service, such as that of JM Flagg’s famous, “I WANT YOU” poster. In saying, ‘we want to join you,’ Ayer presented a softer, more conciliatory branch, in a time when antimilitary sentiments remained extensive. Although army officials bristled at the slogan, recruitment ads were not designed to appeal to important generals and high-ranking military personnel.<sup>309</sup> They aimed at young people. Individual incentives were highlighted in campaigns across the branches but the army in particular highlighted job opportunities that yielded the acquisition of transferable marketplace skills for individuals of varying levels of experience and technical knowhow. The skills were “yours to keep,” according to an oft-repeated ad phrase (see Figures 37 and 38).

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<sup>307</sup> Bourdieu, writes that there are three forms of cultural capital. This type would fall into the category of cultural capital in an institutionalized state. See Bourdieu, “Forms of Capital,” 242.

<sup>308</sup> Beth Bailey, *America’s Army*, 73-74.

<sup>309</sup> Ibid.

U.S. RECORD BOOK

## The job you learn in the Army is yours to keep.



The jobs a lot of young men and women learn in today's Army can become careers in the Army. Or in civilian life. Jobs they never knew we had, or knew they'd be good at.

We have more than 200 job-training courses. Taught by excellent instructors, in good schools, with the best equipment around. Jobs that could cost them a lot of money to learn in civilian life.

Today's Army pays young men and women while they learn. Starting at \$288 a month, with promotions and raises as fast as they earn them. Along with free meals, housing, clothing, medical and dental care. And 30 days paid vacation each year.

And there's a lot more they can get that few other jobs give them. A chance to travel. To live and work in places tourists only visit. Like Europe, Hawaii, Panama, Alaska.

Send us the coupon or write to Army Opportunities, Dept. 200A, Hampton, Va. 23369. You may help a lot of young men and women learn jobs that are as valuable to them as to the Army.

### Today's Army wants to join you.

Army Opportunities  
Dept. 200, Hampton, Va. 23369

Please send me your free booklet on job training and opportunities for my students in today's Army.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Figure 37. "The Job is Yours to Keep."**

In Figure 37, an ad from the Today's Army campaign touted military service as a path to job training and transferable marketplace skills.<sup>310</sup>

<sup>310</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, "'Today's Army: The Job You Earn is yours to Keep,' magazine advertising copy," Archives Center, National Museum of American History (hereafter, "NMAH"), Smithsonian Institution (hereafter, "SI").



Figure 38. "Yours to keep."

In Figure 38, the skills you acquire come with you, whether you remain enlisted or reenter civilian life.<sup>311</sup>

In both Figures 37 and 38, at least 50% of the depicted personnel wore their dress uniforms, signaling professionalism to audiences. Nearly everyone was smiling and looked content as well as competent. The text corresponded with the visuals arguing for enlistment rather than entering a low paying job with little opportunity for advancement after high school or struggling to find any job at all. These army ads encouraged target recruits to consider the benefits and stability

<sup>311</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, "'Today's Army: The Job You Earn is yours to Keep,' magazine advertising copy," Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

derived through military service.<sup>312</sup> When packaged as jobs, service roles offered salary and thirty days vacation, annually. Enlisted personnel enjoyed access to technical training with complex computing equipment, steady wages, housing, travel opportunities, healthcare, paid vacation time, and more. Although implicit and imaginary, the connotative differences between “soldier” and “service member” mattered. Ads spread the good news about the comfortable, stable, mundane professional lives of service members while silencing negativity surrounding soldiers in both Figures 37 and 38.

An increasingly common aspect of ads from this period, such as Figures 37 and 38 was the integration of racial and gender diversity in the personification of army soldiers. These two were variations on the same theme with some identical elements. Figure 38 features four black and white versions of the same images depicted among the nine full color photos from Figure 38. The inclusion of women and men seemed noteworthy for military ads of the period as was the inclusion of African American soldiers with white ones.<sup>313</sup> But the consumer research of the 1970s indicated that audiences did not respond negatively to commercial ads depicting racial and/or gender integration. The same could be presumed for military ads, which was why Ayer likely chose to depict diversity among the ranks. The ranks were indeed diverse and, after the volunteer model was implemented, the numbers of enlisted racial and ethnic minorities, as well as women from every race and ethnicity rose. This will be explored in depth in Chapter 5.

To further this important trope of professionalized service members, “jobs” continued as a theme. The advertisements of this period, particularly when aimed toward a generalized

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<sup>312</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, “‘The Job You Earn is yours to Keep,’ magazine advertising copy,” Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

<sup>313</sup> See William V. Muse, “Product-Related Response to Use of Black Models in Advertising,” *Journal of Marketing Research* 8:1 (Feb. 1971), 107-109.



audience of young people presumed to be white and male, positioned soldier enlistees using computers, machinery, and electronics to draw an important visual link between cutting-edge technology and military service.<sup>314</sup> This connection offered public relations benefits in addition to recruitment potential. The military's advanced tools and technology were visualized symbolically for everyday Americans. Although weaponry could be included among the military technologies, obvious combat equipment was shown rarely. Even without picturing guns or tanks, the message remained that the military was advanced and technologically equipped. Perhaps even more significant, these depictions of young, uniformed people working in skilled trades just as civilian professionals do, solidified that military service is diverse and encompasses a wide range of non-combat roles, particularly during times of peace. Among audiences for whom "soldier" immediately conjured the imagery of guns and weapons, this was another crucial "service member" distinction. In terms of public relations, ads offered visual and rhetorical justifications for implicit support of maintaining significant peacetime military budget allocations, as well as the assurance that the United States military was a thoroughly civilized, modern institution.<sup>315</sup>

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<sup>314</sup> From evaluating hundreds of ads from the period, I can claim that the representations of identity within these campaigns support notions of hegemonic whiteness and maleness. When multiple individuals are included in ads from this period, a group features diversity in the representations of gender and race. Diverse multi-person ads ran in general interest publications like *Senior Scholastic*, *Newsweek*, *Time*, or *Life Magazine* as well as niche magazines. Singular white male protagonist ads appeared in general interest publications as well as male-interest publications like *Popular Science*, *Popular Mechanics*, *Hot Rod*, *Motortrend*, *Sports Illustrated*, and more. When singular nonwhite, non-male soldiers were depicted, ads rarely ran outside of niche publications such as *Black Sports*, *Black Enterprise*, *Essence*, *Jet*, or *Mademoiselle*. This can be detected through the race and gender of the protagonists depicted, as well as the media industry placements.

<sup>315</sup> In light of the advertisements seen in the late 1960s and examined in chapter 3, depicting gun-wielding, dirt-clad, conventionally-masculine men, ads from the volunteer era made army service look civil, interesting, and at times, mundane.



To infuse the visual landscape of these ads with a sense of authenticity, Ayer and the army were in the practice of using “real soldiers” whenever possible, selecting army brand representatives with great care.<sup>316</sup> The models looked wholesome, earnest, and happy, regardless of race, gender, or ethnicity. Some ads (such the two-page ad depicted in Figure 39 and Figure 40) included groupings of enlisted army personnel, smiling together to indicate their satisfaction and camaraderie.

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<sup>316</sup> An oral history interview transcript with Ayer executive, Ted Regan revealed that the models in army account ads were almost always actual enlisted army personnel. N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, “Oral Histories,” Archives Center, NMAH, SI.



**Figure 39. "Many people for many jobs."**

In Figure 39, a racially, ethnically, and professionally diverse group of enlisted army men and women accompany text (see Figure 39) touting a diverse and plentiful range of job opportunities.<sup>317</sup>

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<sup>317</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, "'300 Steady Jobs,' magazine advertising copy," Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

**We've got over 300 good, steady jobs.**

Jobs in construction, transportation, communications, computers.

Jobs for photographers, printers, truck drivers, teachers, typists, TV cameramen and repairmen. Cooks, electricians, medical aides, meteorologists. Motor and missile maintenance men.

Jobs for young men. And young women.

Jobs in Europe, Hawaii, Panama, Alaska. And just about any place in the States.

We'll train you to do the jobs. Train you well, in good schools, under excellent instructors, with the best equipment obtainable.

And you get full pay while you train.

You also get unusually good fringe benefits, including a chance to continue your education. In many cases at our expense. In most cases with at least 75% of your tuition paid.

And if you qualify we'll give you your choice of training. We'll put it in writing, before you sign up.

**Today's Army wants to join you**

Army Opportunities  
Dept 900 Hampton, Va 22060  
Get free to know more about the job training and promotion opportunities in today's Army.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Education \_\_\_\_\_

Figure 40. "300 Jobs."

In. Figure 40, the accompanying text promises audiences that the army has many kinds of jobs available for many kinds of people, regardless of race, gender, or ethnicity.<sup>318</sup>

<sup>318</sup> Ibid.

Figures. 39 and 40 represent parts of a two-page magazine advertisement aimed broadly to eager job-seekers. This was one of the first ads depicting men and women together that had accompanying text mentioning the availability of jobs for both sexes. The inclusion of women made evident that the policy changes highlighted in Chapter 3 were influencing the strategic recruiting of women during a volunteer era. Featuring women coupled with men in ads, also flagged for both sexes an enticing albeit, heterosexually-coded potential to find romantic partners through service. Although this tactic was used frequently in WAC and NC ads aimed at women from the late 1960s, it was a different strategy toward the volunteer recruitment of men. Sex-diverse ads contained multivalent meanings and audiences likely interpreted the ads based on their own frames of reference.<sup>319</sup> The visual portion of the ad (Figure 39) highlighted additional diversity in terms of service roles. Most of the service people wore uniforms signifying professionalism, with just a few hard hats that could evoke combat operations. But when you even include the scuba diver, it would seem glaring to leave out a more traditional “soldier” wearing fatigues. Proportionally, this distancing of service roles from soldiering continued, with such a small portion of the group appearing to fulfill possible stereotypes. The text corresponded, using the word “jobs” six times touting the availability of work in, “construction, transportation, communications, computers,” for, “photographers, printers, truck drivers, teachers, typists,” and more.<sup>320</sup> “Jobs for young men. And young women,” in places all over the world.<sup>321</sup> These were jobs that enlistees would be paid to learn during training, with the opportunity to choose a

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<sup>319</sup> See James Hay, Lawrence Grossberg, and Ellen Wartella, Eds., *The Audience and Its Landscape*, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996); James L. Machor and Philip Goldstein, eds., *Reception Study: From Literary Theory to Cultural Studies* (New York: Routledge, 2001).

<sup>320</sup> N.W. Ayer Agency Records, “300 Jobs.”

<sup>321</sup> Ibid.

specialization alongside the opportunity to pursue higher education at a subsidized cost.<sup>322</sup> The messages were multiple but the takeaway was clear: there was something for everyone. Depending on an individual's needs, jobs, romantic partners, travel, training, salary, benefits, and more were there for the taking upon enlistment.

#### **4.4 'NEED A JOB? TAKE A JOB!': JOBS PLUS TRANSFERABLE SKILLS FOR SERVICE MEMBERS**

It was no accident that broad allusions to jobs proliferated recruitment ads from this specific period. But there were also advertisements that offered job-related incentives in concrete terms. Many of the ads that did so highlighted the potential to attain technical training in the military. The prospect of receiving technical training or learning a skilled trade offered further potential for upward mobility to those uninterested or unable to pursue higher education amid deindustrialization and during economic downturn. Historically, both rates of military enlistment as well as enrollments in higher education see increases during times of high unemployment.<sup>323</sup>

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<sup>322</sup> Ibid.

<sup>323</sup> For studies on the increase in postsecondary education enrollments and unemployment rates, see Alan L. Gustman and Thomas L. Steinmeier, "The Impact of Wages and Unemployment On Youth Enrollment and Labor Supply," *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 63:4 (1981) pp. 553–560; J. Peter Mattila, "Determinants of Male School Enrollments: A Time-Series Analysis," *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 64:2 (1982) pp. 242–251; In particular, Figure 2 illustrates the historical trends in college enrollment increases during times of high unemployment in Lisa Barrow and Jonathan Davis, "The Upside of Down: Postsecondary Enrollment in the Great Recession," *Economic Perspectives*, 4 (2012) pp. 117–129. For information on the rates of military enlistment during economic downturn, see Thomas Evans, "The All-Volunteer Army After Twenty Years: Recruiting in the Modern Era," in *Army History: The Professional Bulletin*

If traditional mechanisms that yield upward mobility were unavailable to young jobseekers, the military brought potential for skill acquisition along with related economic and social benefits. Earning potential within and beyond a military career grew with the acquisition of these transferable skills. In order to juxtapose high- and low-skilled jobs, while skewering the drudgery of entry-level work, Ayer created ads like Figure 41. The realm of low-tech was visually exemplified in Figure 41 via bulky mailroom equipment.

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*of Army History*, 27 (Summer, 1993) pp. 40-46; Lizette Alvarez, "More Americans Joining Military as Jobs Dwindle," *New York Times* Jan. 18, 2009.



**In the time it takes  
to get out of the mailroom,  
you could be into  
advanced electronics.**

Working your way out of the mailroom and into a meaningful job could take years. So why not get into something that'll pay off in a matter of months? Like advanced electronics.

If you have the aptitude and determination, you could trade in that job of yours for a career. In the United States Army Strategic Communications Command.

We'll supply all the electronics training you need. And the job to go with it.

In a few short months you could be working with some of the most sophisticated electronic communications equipment this side of the moon. From computers and cryptographic networks to microwave systems and communications satellites.

And you can pick the electronics specialty you want: Electronics Technician, Data Communications Specialist, Satellite Equipment Technician, Computer Technician. And others.

Or you can pick any one of five great places to work: Europe, The Pacific, Alaska, Korea, Panama. And we'll tell you what jobs are open. There's a good chance you'll get both the job and the place you want.

Ask your Army Representative about the STRATCOM option. It could be the start of a new career. One that'll pay off for you now. In the Army. And later in civilian life.

**Today's Army  
wants to join you.**

Check one or more of the following specialties you are interested in:

<input type="checkbox"/> Electronics Technician	<input type="checkbox"/> Data Communications Specialist
<input type="checkbox"/> Satellite Equipment Technician	<input type="checkbox"/> Computer Technician
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify):	

Name (Last, First, Middle): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Best time to call: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Figure 41. "Advanced Electronics."**

In Figure 41, a young man is flanked by boring mailroom equipment.<sup>324</sup>

Learning "advanced electronics" promised much more excitement and career advancement than sorting letters or other paper-pushing available in many entry level positions. Advanced electronics promised status as well as skill-acquisition. Although even the most entry-level

<sup>324</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, "'Advanced Electronics,' magazine advertising copy," Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

white-collar jobs offered some appeal, particularly amid deindustrializing manufacturing sectors, for most people sorting mail would be too monotonous to be a calling or career. The fashionable dress of the bored mailroom worker pictured in Figure 41 signaled to audiences a more robust personality, too of-the-moment to be satisfied with such dull work. His floppy hair sent a subtle but significant message regarding the status of conformity in the modern military. Rarely in volunteer-era ads did you see the “high and tight” hairstyle on the male protagonists.<sup>325</sup> The culture of the late 1960s and 1970s saw more length and diversity in young men’s hairstyles. This ad suggests that military service members could also be hippies, bohemians, rock and rollers, glam, mods, or disco. The training one could acquire while serving the military came with the bonus incentive of transferable skills for a modern job marketplace. The chart from Figure 36 offers the assumption guiding ads such as this one: a high unemployment rate yields fewer ranks to fill. The jobless need wages and if they can acquire skills along the way then they will be better able to transition back to civilian life, eventually.

Beyond the types of visual pairings and the skill acquisition inherent to learning such equipment, a significant selling point for enlistees was that they could earn a wage with benefits while living on a base that provided a range goods and services gratis that would have to be paid for in civilian life. The promise of acquiring technical skills to become more competitive in the private job marketplace was an important subliminal takeaway. A number of ads promoted

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<sup>325</sup> Interestingly, on the subject of hair and haircuts, one “Today’s Army” ad from the draft era in 1971 aimed at men with no allusions to Vietnam and was titled, “We care more about how you think than how you cut your hair.” It depicted a white man in a barbershop chair, about to get a haircut. He had sideburns and length on top, in a style that fit with the popular cultural moment. The ad hoped to appeal to young men by acknowledging that the modern army respected self-expression and individuality through style. The ad ran in *Readers Digest*. N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, “‘We care more about how you think,’ magazine advertising copy,” Archives Center, NMAH.



prominently this element of enlisted military life, with some even highlighting the possibility through the bolded font title, as in Figure 42.



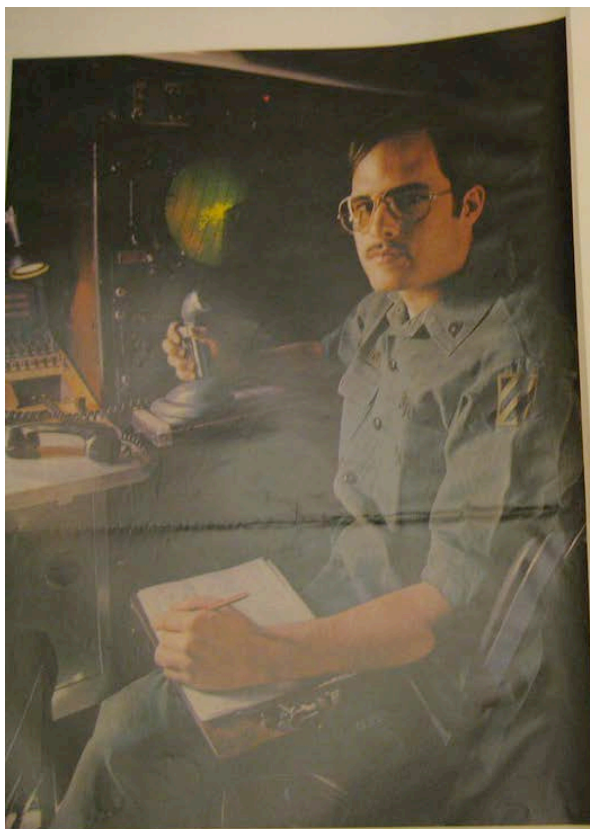
Figure 42. "\$288 a Month Isn't Everything."

In Figure 42, the same African American male is depicted in four scenarios depicting enlisted military life."<sup>326</sup>

<sup>326</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, "'\$288 a month isn't everything,' magazine advertising copy," Archives Center, NMAH.

In Figure 42, a smiling African American male in four “day in the life” scenes accompanied text that emphasized the ease of saving a military salary while living on base. The title referenced that the salary itself was just one method of your compensation. Although this particular protagonist wore clothing that signaled professionalization only once within the four-image tableaux, the word soldier was absent completely. In more casual uniform clothing, this service member demonstrates the everyday life on base. He was not shown learning complex technological equipment. But he was not shown wielding guns or engaging in combat training, either. Although with food, housing, clothing, and healthcare already paid for, the salary of \$288 per month would go much farther than it would with a civilian job. Employment continued to be a significant selling point for enlistment, especially when it paired with long-term prospects mentioned in the ad, including subsidized college costs or the acquisition of skills/technical training during service.

The theme of technology worked to solidify military reputation in the eyes of civilians while promising to recruits that technical training opportunities awaited them upon enlistment. This technical training could become an advantage in the private civilian job marketplace and as the economy contracted, such advantages became more attractive than ever. Although not every enlistee wished to pursue college education, well-paying jobs for inexperienced high school graduates were scarce. In a demand-driven military marketplace the promise of concrete professional skills mattered. So, for the young people uninterested in university degree programs, technical training was presented as the alternative path to skill acquisition. The realm of the “technical” was flagged in a variety of ways both visual and textual. Figure 43 emphasized the professional skills that could be attained through direct military enlistment in the image as well as the written copy.



## It's no job for an amateur.

When today's Army sends a man through 18 weeks of intensive training to become a ground control approach specialist, you can bet he becomes one before he sits down behind his console.

A thoroughly trained professional. One the Army can depend on. One the men and women in the aircraft on his radar screen can depend on.

Today's Army has hundreds of jobs that require the same brand of professionalism this one does.

Jobs we'll train you to do. And, if you're qualified, we'll guarantee the training you choose, in writing, before you enlist.

We'll also pay you while you learn. Starting at \$326.10 a month before deductions, with a raise to \$363.30 four months later. And that includes meals, housing, free medical and dental care, and 30 days paid vacation each year.

If you'd like to start building a rewarding career, in the Army or in civilian life, take the first step. Send us the coupon, or call 800-523-4800, toll free, anytime. In Pennsylvania, call 800-462-4955.

**Today's Army**

The job you learn is yours to keep.

Army Opportunities  
P.O. Box 2010, Washington, D.C. 20360  
1-800-523-4800 (toll free) or 800-462-4955 (in PA)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Send me information about the Army's training and career opportunities.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**Figure 43. "No Job for an Amateur."**

The message of Figure 43 is that without technical training or experience, finding and keeping a job was difficult during the recession.<sup>327</sup>

While seated with a clipboard in one hand and mechanical equipment in the other, a white male with eyeglasses and a moustache made for a relatable protagonist. His facial hair and cut offered reassurance to those unwilling to shave their heads. His working uniform was functional without being stuff, but still looked different from battledress. He had a job as stated in the ad's title and

<sup>327</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, "'No job for an amateur' magazine advertising copy," Archives Center, NMAH.

his role as “ground control *specialist*” functioned as a play on words. The anti- “amateur.” Words like “job” and “professional” litter the text, compensating for his lack of suit. Certainly, civilians wearing similarly functional attire performed many professional jobs every day. He looked self-assured and comfortable even though he was flanked by computing and communication equipment.<sup>328</sup> The campaign slogan read, “Today’s Army: The job you earn is yours to keep,” making evident again that an individual’s professionalization and training were portable and transferable to the civilian job sectors. In a time of job scarcity, this made for a convincing pitch. The title of the ad juxtaposed with subtlety the competitive advantage of being a trained professional versus an inexperienced, entry-level, “amateur” when it came to job marketability. A monthly salary figure was offered during the training process. And other fringe benefits, such as healthcare, housing, and base privileges were mentioned. Ads such as this one ran in *Time Magazine*, *Popular Science*, *Popular Mechanics*, and more. Although jobs-themed ads were prevalent during the 1973-1975 recession, they were not the only method of encouraging volunteer enlistment.

One unique ad from the “Today’s Army” campaign was text-heavy with a small photograph depicting a recruitment officer with a young male in civilian clothing. The ad stood out among those in this campaign because it alluded to the draft in its title and text. Most of the post-1973 ads that ran following the military draft’s overturn avoided references to the Vietnam War or the era of military conscription. This ad addressed the shift to a volunteer concept directly. Its title as shown in Figure 44 read, “Now that you don’t have to go into the Army, here’s why you should.”

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<sup>328</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, “‘No job for an amateur,’ magazine advertising copy,” Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

**Now that you don't have to go into the Army, here's why you should.**

Those few years between high school and adulthood can be frustrating. You feel the responsibility, if not the need, to pay your own way, so you look for a job. But with only a high school diploma and no work experience, the jobs aren't all that hot.

And the pressure builds. People tell you you're old enough to settle down, that it's time to decide what you're going to do and be, but you know you're not ready.

You know you'd like more time. Time to think about what you've learned in school. Time to try different things, visit other places, meet new people, and just plain get to know yourself.

Today's Army can provide that time you need. And a lot more.

We offer you an immediate opportunity to serve yourself as you serve your country. An experience in maturity, in responsibility, in personal growth.

Army training will challenge your mind as well as your body. We offer a choice of over 200 job-training courses. Jobs you can learn and pursue in the Army or in civilian life. And if you qualify, we'll guarantee that training in writing before you enlist.

There is also an opportunity to continue your formal education. Either in Army schools or in colleges and universities near your post.


Our travel opportunities read like a map of the world. Europe, Alaska, Panama, Hawaii, and some pretty exciting places here in the States. You may even find a place you'd rather live some day.

And you'll live pretty well, too. We'll start you out at \$307.20 a month before deductions, with a raise \$342.30 in about four months. But when you add free meals, free housing, free medical and dental care, 30 days paid vacation a year, and other Army benefits, your salary goes a lot farther than it would in civilian life.

When you add it all up, we're making the Army more worth your while. A positive, meaningful, productive way to spend the next 3 years of your life.

You could become a better person for it. And we a better Army.

For more information, write Army Opportunities, P.O. Box 55101, Philadelphia, PA 19143. Or call 800-243-6000, toll free, anytime. In Connecticut, call 1-800-882-6500.



**Today's Army wants to join you.**

**Figure 44. "Now that you don't have to go."**

Figure 44 referenced carefully the military draft.<sup>329</sup>

While Figure 44 openly alludes the military draft, and by proxy, the Vietnam War in the ad's title, "Now that you don't have to go...", it did so in order to juxtapose the differences between pre- and post-war choices offered to enlisted soldiers. Compared to Ayer's other clients, ads for

<sup>329</sup> Additional information and analyzation of Figure 46 in the Section 6. N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, "Now That You Don't Have to Go," magazine advertising copy," Archives Center, NMAH, SI.



the army contained a great deal of text, due to the amount of information involved in conveying enlistment incentives to audiences. But Figure 44 was wordy even by army ad standards. By distributing such ads, Ayer hoped implicitly that audiences were willing to read such extensive text in an ad while they leisurely flip pages of a magazine. When compared to other army ads from the period, it stood out because of the ample text as well as the public relations maneuvers inherent to this pitch. The ad tries to sound youthful by parroting slang: “With only a high school diploma and no work experience, the jobs aren’t that *hot*.”<sup>330</sup> The ad tried to articulate the plight of the next crop of high school graduates, who managed to avoid the draft era of enlistment but who were graduating into economic downturn. It editorialized fears surrounding the weight of responsibility and the fraught transition between kid and adulthood. Ambivalence and uncertainty permeate the ad to try and capture the emotions and complexity of being a post-adolescent: “You know you’d like more time... Time to just plain get to know yourself.”<sup>331</sup> Eventually the ad read similarly to others from this time, highlighting job training, salary, promotions, fringe benefits, experiences, travel, independence, adventure, travel, but most of all choice. The word “soldier” was absent but so was “professional.” For the targets of this style of pitch, “professional” would sound too stodgy. Instead, it hinted at professionalization in different terms. The ad argued that the branch, “offer(s) a choice of over 200 job-training courses. Jobs you can learn and pursue in the Army or in civilian life.”<sup>332</sup> The army offered, “a positive, meaningful, productive way to spend the next three years of your life.”<sup>333</sup> Experiences rather than jobs appealed to young people just out of high school, who were not going to college but

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<sup>330</sup> N.W. Ayer Records, “Now That You Don’t Have to Go,” NMAH, SI. Emphasis added.

<sup>331</sup> Ibid.

<sup>332</sup> Ibid.

<sup>333</sup> Ibid.

who were not ready to commit fully to adult responsibilities. Visually, a young, floppy haired man in a sweater vest stood with a recruitment officer. Both smiled. In the stifling post-secondary binary between job and college, the army became a detour from either. Delay your decision between them, or enable yourself to have a choice in the first place by enlisting. The ad's stated three-year commitment would be meaningful but mercifully temporary. Three years was shorter than many college degree programs, and far less of a commitment than one's anticipated lifelong career. This rhetoric followed a relatable but hypothetical narrative about recent high school graduates, unprepared and uncertain about their professional futures.

#### **4.5 “NOW THAT YOU ARE HERE, WHY NOT STAY?”: PERSUADING ARMY RETENTION IN THE VOLUNTEER ERA**

The persuasive challenges in trying to sell military enlistment to a public still weary from the Vietnam War and still critical of the American military in general made the volunteer concept uniquely vulnerable. For this reason, Ayer was instructed to dedicate some of their advertising efforts toward the retention of those already enlisted. They did so through a variety of creative appeals, including the targeting of military families for whom the pitch had to broaden to accommodate more than merely in individual soldier. See Figure 45 for an example.



**Figure 45. "A Family of Families."**

Two military families in Figure 45 smile to accompany text arguing for re-enlistment.<sup>334</sup>

<sup>334</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, "'Family of Families,' magazine advertising copy," Archives Center, NMAH, SI.



The two families depicted in Figure 45 signaled that the army was a family-friendly sphere, during a time of great anxiety about the status of the American family as an institution. Popular culture from the period stirred social and moral panic about conventional family values. For example, in 1971, the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) screened the first documentary-style reality television series titled, *An American Family*.<sup>335</sup> The first of its kind, this popular reality television program depicted the Louds, a white, upper middle class nuclear family of seven. During the course of the series, the family's matriarch, Patricia requested a divorce from her husband of 21 years and the eldest son, Lance, came out to his family as homosexual, making him the first openly gay character on television.<sup>336</sup> Although neither of these reality plot twists would yield much attention if the program aired today, both were dramatic and controversial revelations in the early 1970s. To contrast, imagery like Figure 45 depicted volunteer army service as a venue where heterosexual couplings and traditional nuclear families were thriving. And recruiting to retain was a family matter for many enlisted members.

Ayer assumed that the decision making process for a recruited or retained individual rarely occurred without external familial influences. So ads that displayed members of the army with important loved ones worked dually, to signal the branch's family-friendliness and to acknowledge the broader persuasive scope in recruitment.<sup>337</sup> As explored in previous chapters,

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<sup>335</sup> See: "Lance Loud: A Death in An American Family," PBS Website, (2002), Accessed 16 July 2013, <http://www.pbs.org/lanceloud/american/>.

<sup>336</sup> Ibid; For an extended, theoretical examination on the cultural meanings and influence of *An American Family*, see: Jeffrey Ruoff, *American Family: A Televised Life*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001).

<sup>337</sup> Whether or not actual army life delivered the promises of advertising remained to be seen. And certainly, many types of families and more diverse enlistees have identified as gay, lesbian, and bisexual over the years. For an extensive history of military service by gays and lesbians, see: Randy Shilts, *Conduct Unbecoming: Gays and Lesbians in the US Military*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994). For a study of the lived experiences of people the armed services, see:

the process of recruiting or in the case of Figure 45, retaining an individual rarely occurs in a social vacuum. Recruitment includes parents, friends, and spouses when applicable. Retention efforts might be even more vulnerable to the influence of family members because the burdens and benefits of military life are known variables rather than unknown ones. As a logical progression from the ads in Chapter 3 that targeted young women by promising the potential for military romance, retention ads in the early volunteer era acknowledged the prevalence of military couples, explaining that one reason to stay put is because your spouse is already enlisted. See Figure 46.

1-17-50  
10 (1.5 inches high)

# "I want to be where my husband is."

Sergeant Jenny Preston, a medical specialist, found more than a challenging career and a chance to continue her education in the Army. She found a husband.

"There were many reasons I reenlisted. The main reason, however, was to be with my husband. He's also in the Army.

"Our chances of being together in the Army are a lot better than if I was just a dependent. We have a much richer life together. I'm looking forward to traveling together and seeing a lot more of the world.

"We're hoping to see Japan and Hawaii and I'm planning to return to the Philippines for a visit.



"My husband and I are saving as much as we can so the \$10,000 bonus was very, very nice.

"My job has been very rewarding because I'm dealing with people's lives. And what could be more important than that?"

Sergeant Preston feels the Army has given her all the things a woman needs. A richer social life, job satisfaction, a good salary, regular promotions, educational opportunities, free housing, dental and medical care.

Your Army Career Counselor has a bookful of job, duty station and training opportunities just waiting for you. Talk to him about it. He'll give you lots of other reasons for staying in.

# Why are you staying in?

100-4001 (12-17-50) 11 x 17 30 Army Headquarters-Publicity  
U. S. Army G. S. Co., Inc. 17-18-50 3P 100-4001

**Figure 46. "Where My Husband Is."**

In Figure 46, a young nurse wants to be where her husband is.<sup>338</sup>

<sup>338</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, "'I want to be where my husband is,' magazine advertising copy," Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

The ad endeavored to demonstrate the benefits of sharing an employer with your husband. But her impressive title highlighted in the first sentence of the text coupled with her assertive, confident stance to signal a protofeminism making the case that enlisted women could “have it all.”<sup>339</sup> Military life for enlisted couples offered the potential to travel and share experiences. And two stable salaries plus benefits made for a comfier life in general. Sergeant Jenny Preston enjoyed her life as a medical specialist. And she was lucky enough to meet her husband in the military to boot. The Sergeant Jenny character stated her reasons for re-enlistment include her fulfilling career as well as the increased chance of being geographically stationed with her spouse while enlisted. The point makes evident the importance of a social sales pitch while highlighting the changing composite of an ideal female service member, particularly when juxtaposed with the female-targeted ads from Chapter 3.

Early into the volunteer era, many advertisements demonstrated that recruitment and retention endeavors were family affairs. And recruitment itself was a responsibility shared among all enlisted personnel. Ads that ran in military publications and newspapers were tagged with, “Tell them why you’re staying in,” to encourage recruitment during casual, conversational exchanges with colleagues. See Figures. 46 and 47.

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<sup>339</sup> Ibid.

# "I just like Army life."

Specialist 6 Mary Reed knows a good life when she lives it.

"The reason I reenlisted is very simple. I just plain like Army life. The Army has been good to me and for me."



"I've continued my education. I'm helping others—I'm doing counseling work. I have a feeling of accomplishment, something I didn't feel as a civilian."

"I'm meeting a lot more people in the Army than I would ever have met back home. And I'm involved in all kinds of activities like camping, sports, bowling. I'm having fun and preparing for the future at the same time."

"I've done a lot of traveling, too. I've been to Europe twice. I've seen Germany, France, Switzerland, Italy. I like Rome very much. Now I'm looking forward to a tour of the Orient."

Mary Reed likes to tell people how much she likes the Army. You probably have as many reasons for staying Army as she does. So when the subject of reenlistment comes up, tell your buddies exactly how you feel.

Remind them about how good they have it in the Army. They may be taking Army benefits for granted. Educational opportunities, duty station options, bonuses, travel, medical and dental care, tax benefits, to name a few.

Tell them to talk things over with their Career Counselors for more facts on what they have coming. They'll like what they hear.

## Tell them why you're staying in.

284-001-72 PP-0015—page 8/m 10-1/4 x 200 lines—Army Times—Future  
N.W. Ayer & Son, Inc. (4-24-72) 22224 3P

Figure 47. "I Just Like Army Life."

In Figure 47, a female army specialist itemizes the benefits and opportunities in the military.<sup>340</sup>

<sup>340</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, "'I just like Army life,' magazine advertising copy," Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

The protagonist in Figure 47 named Mary included her travels, her social interactions, and her benefits among the reasons why she will tell her colleagues that she is staying in. Similar to the breezy ads recruiting women for the WAC in Chapter 3, Mary's activities, travels, and perks make army life grand. And she will tell you all about them while wearing pumps and a miniskirt, signaling visually her gender-conforming femininity within a masculine enclave. This ad also nodded toward an unthreatening protofeminism with the confident, casual position of protagonist, Mary in her chair while wearing her dress uniform. These first-person-style accounts put the onus of retaining enlisted ranks on other enlisted ranks, taking the social aspects of recruitment one step farther than before. The subtler pitches where family members are persuaded to approve of a recruit's enlistment decision as seen in many of the general civilian magazine and periodical ads seem insignificant compared to asking one soldier to confide in another soldier about why they love their employer. But who better to spread word of mouth advertising than happy troops? And who better to target than an audience of people already enlisted? Convincing someone to volunteer for something with which they have familiarity is less significant a request than convincing someone to volunteer for the new and unfamiliar.

#### **4.6 SELLING VOLUNTEER SERVICE AFTER THE DRAFT**

In a period fraught with post-war upset, the army alongside the other armed service branches still had ranks to fill. By capitalizing on a matrix of economic and social conditions, most notably economic downturn, stagflation, and deindustrialization, advertisements worked like beacons for job-seekers. Ads broadcasted some version of the following: *Unable to find an adequate job with*

*good wages and benefits? In need of skilled technical training? Want to have money for college so you can earn a degree and therefore higher earning potential? Join the military.* Such practical pitches worked discursively to distance service members from the lingering and negative stereotypes attached to “soldier” by avoiding the gore and guns of Vietnam, while using themes of technological advancement. The trope of technology worked toward patriotic public relations measures to maintain an ideology of military superiority while the Cold War continued.

Ads of the volunteer era were inclusive racially, in addition to depicting men serving alongside women. Compared with the Vietnam War-era ads aimed at men and women, this was a significant shift. Removing combat circumstances from service imagery enabled a portrait of enlisted life that was exciting, professional, and practical. Ads stressed travel and leisure opportunities as well as skill acquisition and training. The military service sector competed for desirable recruits against other sectors for employment. Advertising strategies confirmed what Charles Moskos famously wrote in 1977; that under a volunteer concept, the military transitioned “from institution to occupation.”<sup>341</sup> He also predicted with prescience that the volunteer model would lead eventually to a military that comes to rely increasingly on private contractors for military work. Post-war service offered numerous professional opportunities for enlisted members of the army. Retention ads distributed via military periodicals reached audiences making reenlistment decisions. Recruitment and retention were often social processes despite the growing emphasis on individual incentives for enlistment. Friends, family, spouses, and more figured into the landscape for enlistment decision-making and Ayer was careful to address such influencers in the visual and textual compositions of ads. And increasingly, ads began to

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<sup>341</sup> Charles C. Moskos Jr., “From Institution to Occupation: Trends in Military Organization,” *Armed Forces and Society*, 4:1 (October 1977) 41-50.

appropriate the discourses of inclusion found in social movement rhetoric. Slogans from the civil rights movement and second-wave feminism began appearing in army advertisements. The roles on display in ads positioned service as increasingly meritocratic and diverse. “Jobs for young men. And young women,” was just the beginning.<sup>342</sup> Chapter 5 will explore the importance of minorities to the volunteer era’s short and medium term success.

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<sup>342</sup> Ayer, “300 Steady Jobs.”



## 5.0 “SOME OF OUR BEST MEN ARE WOMEN”: STRATEGIC TARGETING, MINORITIES, AND THE VOLUNTEER ERA

*The termination of the draft corresponded with the increased emphasis on ‘equal employment’ for women in the American economy. We are dealing with a remarkable increase in the entrance of women into the labor force combined with governmental and public pressure to expand employment opportunities for women. One result has been a striking increase in the utilization of females in the armed forces from 1973-1978. In fact, it can be argued that without the greater number of women in the labor force generally, the relative success of the initial phase of the all-volunteer force would not have taken place. Before the Vietnam War, the utilization of women as military personnel was essentially token. In 1964, only 1.1% of uniformed personnel were female. In 1974 the figure had risen to 3.5%; by 1976 it stood at 5.3%; and by early 1978 it reached 6.1% or a total of 126,000 women in uniform. Projections for 1983 are for women to comprise 11.1% of the enlisted force. Morris Janowitz and Charles C Moskos Jr.<sup>343</sup>*

As the above quote indicates, the American military during the volunteer era of enlistment needed women more so than ever before. In addition to needing women from various racial and ethnic backgrounds, it also needed male minorities to fill the ranks. To best reach these groups, advertising campaigns were catered to market military service in ways that Ayer believed were most likely to resonate with their target audiences. The print advertisements that resulted from the campaigns were placed in general as well as niche interest magazine publications. And television commercials were produced to run during popular sporting events on the broadcast

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<sup>343</sup> Morris Janowitz and Charles C Moskos Jr., "Five Years of the All Volunteer Force: 1973-1978," in "The future Adaptation of the All Volunteer Force January 22-23 1979," Smithsonian Institution Library Accession Number 94-074, Box 5, Folder 6.

networks. The television commercials were a newer development in an increasingly-multimedia approach to selling soldiering. But rather than mirror the targeted campaigns from print by featuring racial, ethnic, and gender diversity within audio-visual representations of the ranks, the clips focused on portraying a more whitewashed portrait of the branch by overwhelmingly using white male actors as the protagonists. Although the hegemonic invisibilities of whiteness and maleness likely were part of the mechanisms behind this decision, such choices also demonstrate that much like print campaigns in the wake of the Vietnam War, television commercial campaigns served important public relations purposes.<sup>344</sup>

Although as Janowitz and Moskos, the Vietnam War pre-conditioned the American public to welcome the end of military conscription, it did not determine a volunteer era.<sup>345</sup> The War remained a lingering and often negative influence on public opinions about the military. Historian, Beth Bailey argues that the War created “a perfect political storm,” paving the way for a volunteer era.<sup>346</sup> By and large, as I argue in Chapter 4, the visual and rhetorical landscape of early volunteer era recruitment ads attempted to put some distance between the wartime combat connotations evoked by the word “soldier” and the everyday experiences of military service during times of peace. Service roles were presented as alternatives to conventional job training or higher education. Because of recessions and high unemployment, the economic context of the mid-1970s enabled further the process of selling a jobs-centric framework for enlistment, particularly among groups who were historically under-represented or underprivileged. Plenty of

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<sup>344</sup> See Patricia Hill Collins, “Black Feminist Thought in the Matrix of Domination,” in *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1990), 221-38.

<sup>345</sup> Janowitz and Moskos, 1979.

<sup>346</sup> Beth Bailey, *America’s Army: Making the All-Volunteer Force* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009) 3.

young people lacked access to opportunities that traditionally enabled upward mobility, such as higher education. So, ads stressed that if you joined the army, the G.I. Bill would provide funds to pursue higher education. As manufacturing sectors contracted and waves of deindustrialization accelerated, blue-collar jobs that paid well, with full benefits and union protections grew scarce. Consequently, ads emphasized that steady pay, full benefits, and the acquisition of skills and/or technical training awaited those who enlisted in the volunteer military. Such skills were valuable doubly, as they were transferable to other sectors of the job marketplace. And because the Gates Commission determined that the best way to transition to the volunteer era was to advertise and incentivize further all the reasons for individuals to enlist, the army and its agency worked to deliver information to targeted groups.<sup>347</sup>

But not all targeted groups were desired in equal volume or scope in the process of strategic military marketing. In addition to the recommendation that advertising become a significant priority, the Gates Commission argued that the logic of a supply and demand marketplace for job opportunities would provide crucial assistance toward the volunteer military transition. Thus began a trajectory of prioritizing racial, ethnic, and/or gender minorities for recruitment into the enlisted ranks. By seeking a matrix of historically underprivileged identities for whom incentivizing jobs, benefits, salary, etc., would be most resonant, advertising for military recruitment, and especially army recruitment, diversified in representations and language choices.

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<sup>347</sup> Thomas S. Gates Jr., *The Report of the President's Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1970), iii; See also, Beth Bailey, "The Army in the Marketplace: Recruiting the All-Volunteer Army," *Journal of American History* 94 (June 2007): 47-74.

This chapter examines the strategic targeting of minorities in army recruitment advertising during the volunteer era of enlistment. I argue that by designing advertisements that appealed to groups of racial and ethnic minorities and women of all races and ethnicities, Ayer and the army hyped military service as a Utopian meritocracy. They chose language and visual representatives that promised ascension in socio-economic status, capitalizing on popular tropes of equity in the wake of the civil rights and women's rights movements.<sup>348</sup> Ads with smiling faces accompanied text, mentioning opportunities such as education, travel, and promotions. Historically these opportunities were reserved for only the privileged among young people. With purpose and clarity, the discourses of merit as well as equity permeated army-advertising text. Harnessing rhetoric found typically within social movement circles, the army posited that volunteer service in the 1970s was a rare sphere in which race, gender, class, and/or ethnicity posed no barriers to achievement. In order to illustrate the above, first I examine the social and political contexts in which the merit/equity approach was distributed. Here I will review relevant literature from cultural studies, social movement history, and policy studies. Next, I provide an overview of the campaigns by analyzing numerous examples visually and textually to illustrate the fruition of this strategic marketing process. Lastly, I look at samples of Ayer's final work for the army and explain why the recruitment of women in particular was put on hold in the 1980s.

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<sup>348</sup> Although ads made no direct references to the previous decade's legislative actions made in support of civil rights and women's rights, such legislation provided some measured confidence in the federal government's attempts to facilitate civic equality. These legislative actions include the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the Immigration and Nationality Services Act of 1965, the Fair Housing Act of 1968, the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

## 5.1 1970S POLITICS AND THE LINGERING INFLUENCE OF WAR

Although the US soldiers who served during the war in Vietnam faced some criticism following the My Lai massacre, the ranks were far from monolithic. David Cortright writes about the antiwar actions taken by enlisted military soldiers during the draft era, providing an overview of GI movements and GI resistances that echoed the objectives of an antiwar movement.<sup>349</sup> Concerns and criticism also came from high ranking military figures. In 1971, retired Colonel Robert Heinl published a scathing indictment of the caliber and quality of soldiers in the Vietnam War while detailing morale problems, desertions, defections, and in some cases, conditions nearing the point of mutiny.<sup>350</sup> The piece opened by stating that, “The morale, discipline and battle-worthiness of the US armed forces are, with a few salient exceptions, lower and worse than at any time in this century and possibly in the history of the United States.”<sup>351</sup> And he went on to paraphrase a remark made in 1971 by former army chief of staff, General Matthew B. Ridgway that, “Not before in my lifetime ... has the Army’s public image fallen to such low esteem.”<sup>352</sup> The prevailing attitude that “reluctant” draftees did not make the best soldiers assisted in furthering the process of preconditioning a volunteer-era.<sup>353</sup> Toward the end of the war and in the period following, the US military, and the army in particular, faced steep condemnation, making the transition to this new recruitment model more vulnerable and debated.

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<sup>349</sup> David Cortright, *Soldiers in Revolt: GI Resistance During the Vietnam War* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2005).

<sup>350</sup> Colonel Robert D. Heinl Jr., “The Collapse of the Armed Forces,” *Armed Forces Journal* (June 7, 1972) 30-37.

<sup>351</sup> Heinl, “Collapse of Armed Forces,” 30.

<sup>352</sup> Heinl, “Collapse of Armed Forces,” 36.

<sup>353</sup> Bailey, *America’s Army*, 2009, 3.

In ramping up efforts to recruit successfully during the early period of the volunteer era, the US military doubled (and in some cases, more than doubled) the numbers of recruiters, recruiting stations, and total dollars spent on recruitment between 1971 and 1974.<sup>354</sup> The legacy of the anti-war movement lingered and transitioned to a “counter-recruitment” movement in response to the volunteer concept.<sup>355</sup> As presented in Chapter 1 and 4, uncertainty about the sustainability of this model for recruitment abounded. And advertisements provided a venue for careful, controlled messages that served both practical military marketing and public relations functions. Some ads referenced the draft directly but most avoided the subject as well as any references to Vietnam. In one unique advertisement from the early volunteer era, the draft became a central subject, removing any sense of dichotomy between soldier and service member. This ad differed from the bulk of the advertisements from the period detailed in Chapter 4 in that it addressed directly potential criticisms and skepticism held over the volunteer transition. “We may not have a draft but we still have a need,” the ad (Figure 48) presented only text with no visuals to make multiple points.

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<sup>354</sup> Cortright, *Soldiers in Revolt*, 187.

<sup>355</sup> Ibid.

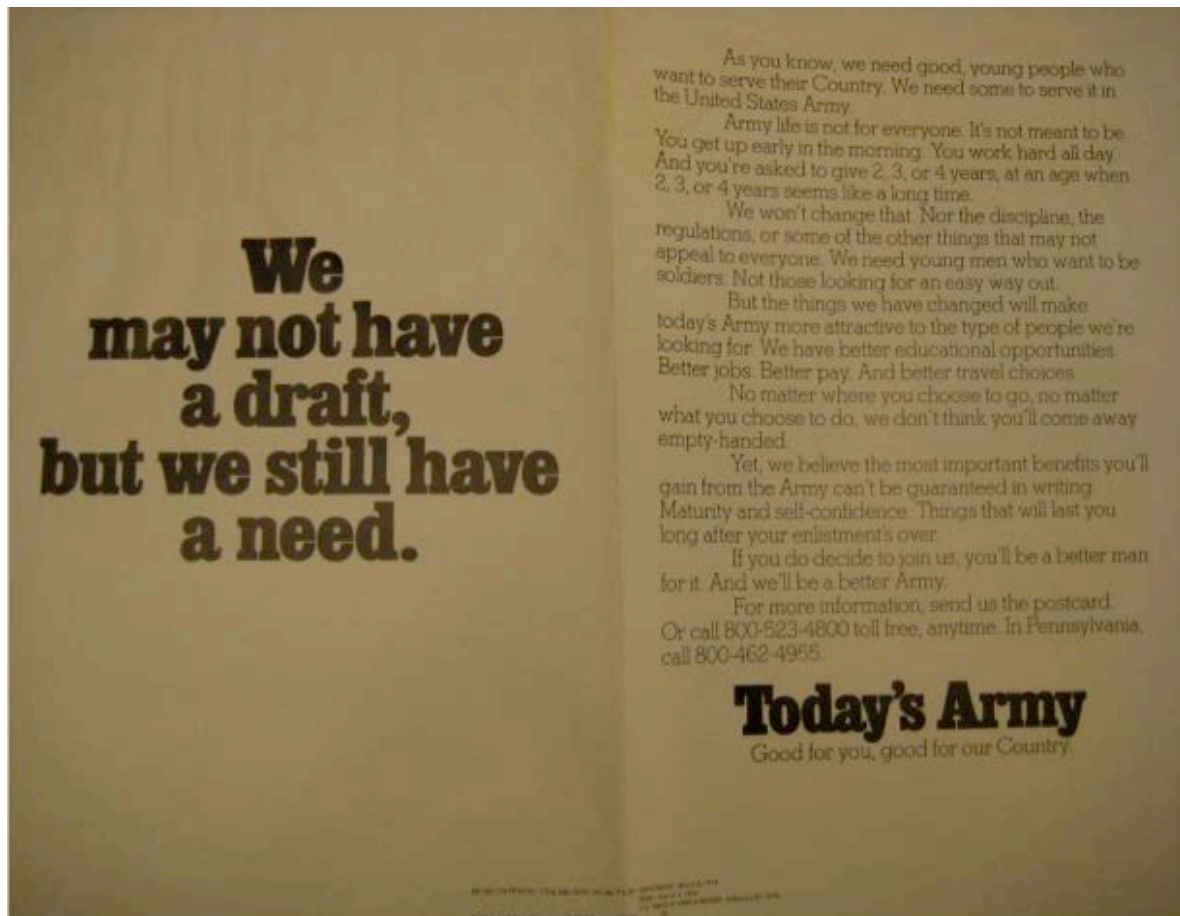


Figure 48. "We Still Have a Need."

In Figure 48, the text strives with subtlety to allay lingering anxieties about military selectivity, going forward.<sup>356</sup>

First, the ad addressed overtly the elephants in the room: the draft and by association, the Vietnam War. Using plain, serif text it clarified simply that the end of the draft did not absolve

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<sup>356</sup> See additional discussion of this ad based on Ayer's company newsletter in Section 6. N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, "'We may not have a draft but we still have a need,' magazine advertising copy," Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

the United States from a need to fill military ranks. One of the fears that policy and military analysts expressed about moving to a volunteer recruitment model was that recruitment standards would deteriorate further, out of desperation, if not necessity.<sup>357</sup> If the reputation of soldier quality during the Vietnam War was any indication, the volunteer model offered plenty of causes for concern. And the anxieties that permeated the transition from a draft to volunteers became evident especially in the second point made with subtlety in the language of Figure 48: the volunteer army did not accept everyone. Nods to tradition, history, and discipline rang out with phrases like, “Army life is not for everyone... You work hard all day... We need young men and women who want to be soldiers. Not those looking for an easy way out.”<sup>358</sup> The ad went so far to counter the steep criticisms waged at the army that one could easily interpret the tone to be defensive and insecure. Because this ad stood out among its peers from the period, its importance is more contextual than influential. But its existence, no matter how unusual, among the other ads offers a more complex portrait of military recruitment during the volunteer era’s early period, making it worthy of examination. In early 1974, this ad appeared in numerous popular general interest and current events publications, including February issues of *US News and World Report* and March issues of *Time* and *Newsweek*.<sup>359</sup> Ads such as Figure 48 prioritized public relations objectives over straightforward recruitment. As a recruiting device, the copy presented for target audiences the promise of competition and if not individuality, a type of elitism via the stated selectivity of the volunteer force. This discursive framework fit a context of American culture in which qualities such as competition and status held inherent value in an

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<sup>357</sup> Heinl, “Collapse of Armed Forces.”

<sup>358</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, “‘We may not have a draft but we still have a need,’ magazine advertising copy,” Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

<sup>359</sup> Ibid.



increasingly neoliberal milieu.<sup>360</sup> The language attributed an embedded (if not embattled, underdog, as if to employ an anti-advertising tropes, akin to Avis's "We Try Harder" campaign) status by virtue of the self-congratulatory nods to hard work and discipline. When juxtaposed with the series of ads that itemized individual incentives for enlistment, it stood apart. Although the ad evidenced internal anxieties surrounding the shift to volunteers as well as the tenuous state of military public opinions, most messages sold service as another sector of the marketplace.

## **5.2 THE MARKET FOR MERIT: THE ARMY ONLY SEES GREEN**

Among those advocating for a shift to the volunteer concept was prominent Chicago School economist, Milton Friedman. He along with other Gates Commission members jettisoned the paradigm of military service as civic obligation. In its place was the logic of markets.<sup>361</sup> A supply of recruits for the volunteer military would be born from socio-economic inequities embedded within a stratified capitalist system that rendered some more in need of individual incentives for enlistment than others. Historically, access and barriers to opportunities have varied and correlated with identity positions. Critical race theorist Kimberlé Crenshaw writes about intersecting demographic categories that inform not only the identity of an individual but also their potential for marginalization and systemic, institutionalized

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<sup>360</sup> I use the term neoliberal to reference the economic theory of neoliberalism, which emphasizes and encourages individualism, the primacy of free markets, and governmental deregulation. See Pierre Bourdieu, *Acts of Resistance: Against the Tyranny of the Market* (New York: New Press, 1999).

<sup>361</sup> Bailey, *America's Army*, 4, 87.

discrimination.<sup>362</sup> Black feminist theorist Patricia Hill Collins writes about identity as it operates within matrices of power.<sup>363</sup> Each of these theories posit race/ethnicity, gender, and class as important on an individual level and for social mobility, particularly when it comes to treatment, opportunity, and privilege. And historically, data on income inequality supports these theories, particularly when comparing wages across different races and between men versus women.<sup>364</sup> Although income is only one metric for understanding inequality the advertisement of a stable salary has been integral to the recruitment process during the volunteer era. Barring some exceptions, those individuals with identity positions in dominant groups enjoyed privileges, both systemic and experiential. Many minorities occupying single or overlapping categories of marginalized identities lacked equal access to opportunities that facilitated upward social or socio-economic mobility. Military sociologist Brenda L. Moore writes that “The successful heavy recruitment of African Americans was an effect of their poor opportunities in the civilian sector.”<sup>365</sup> Gates Commission members recognized that lacking economic difficulty in the civilian sector produced favorable conditions for a volunteer model of recruitment and retention in the military. And despite oft-repeated concerns over whether a volunteer force would be

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<sup>362</sup> Kimberlé Crenshaw, “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color,” *Stanford Law Review* 43:6 (July 1991):1241-99.

<sup>363</sup> Patricia Hill Collins, “It’s All in the Family: Intersections of Gender, Race, and Nation,” *Hypatia* 13: 3 (1998): 62-83.

<sup>364</sup> For examinations, both historical and contemporary, on the correlation between identity positions such as race and/or gender with socio-economic status, see Leslie McCall, *Complex Inequality: Gender, Class, and Race in the New Economy* (New York: Routledge, 2001); Dennis L. Gilbert, *The American Class Structure in an Age of Growing Inequality*, (New York: Sage Publications, 2010); David Grusky, ed., *Social Stratification: Class, Race, and Gender in Sociological Perspective* (Boulder: Westview, 2001).

<sup>365</sup> Brenda L. Moore, “From Underrepresentation to Overrepresentation: African American Women,” in *It’s Our Military Too!: Women and the US Military*, ed. Judith Hicks Stiehm (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996), 115-35.

disproportionately “poor and black,” ads began to feature more and more diversity in race, ethnicity, and gender representations.<sup>366</sup>

The practice of featuring more minorities in ads made sense in order to recruit them with increased efficacy. But the decision to increase the volume of minorities in the armed forces did not come without its own anxieties. Many sociologists and military theorists wrote with concern that the ranks of a volunteer era would fill disproportionately with poor people and people of color.<sup>367</sup> In an article about anxieties surrounding the issue of African American “overrepresentation” in the volunteer army, Moore notes that, “some claimed that the disproportionately high rate of black participation in the military would discourage white participation. It was argued as the number of black military personnel increased, the number of white Americans interested in enlistment would decrease.”<sup>368</sup> She concluded that despite apprehensions, African American “recruitment has not much affected the interest of white

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<sup>366</sup> The phrase comes from this title: Harry A. Marmion, *The Case Against a Volunteer Army: Should America's Wars be Fought Only by the Poor and the Black?* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1971). The anecdote in footnote 21 described Gates Commission members' unobvious racism and comes from, Beth Bailey, *America's Army*, 29.

<sup>367</sup> Some references in which concern about the military's changing demography amid the volunteer transition include: John Sibley Butler, “Assessing Black Enlisted Participation in the Army,” *Social Problems* 23:5 (1976): 558-66; Department of the Army, *Measuring Changes in Institutional Racial Discrimination in the Army*, (Washington, DC: DA Pamphlet 600-43, 1977); Morris Janowitz and Charles C. Moskos Jr., “Racial Composition in the All-Volunteer Force,” *Armed Forces and Society* 1:1 (1974): 109-124; Charles Moskos, “The Enlisted Ranks in the All-Volunteer Army,” in *The Military in American Society*, ed. In John Keeley (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1978); Alvin J. Schexnider and John Sibley Butler, “Racial Composition in the All-Volunteer System: A Reply to Janowitz and Moskos,” *Armed Forces and Society* 2:3 (1976): 421-32; and Martin Binkin and Mark J. Eitelberg, *Blacks and the Military*, (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1982).

<sup>368</sup> Moore, “Underrepresentation,” 132. In sentence two, she is referring to writing by Alvin J. Schexnider, “Race in the United States Military,” *Armed Forces and Society* 6:4 (1980): 586-613.

middle-class men in military service.”<sup>369</sup> Others feared that the systemic racial inequities found in the hiring, promotion, and advancement practices of the civilian sector would become even more visible in a majority (racial and ethnic) minority military.<sup>370</sup> Still campaigns to recruit people of color marshaled forward in the 1970s, stating that “The Army Only Sees Green.”<sup>371</sup> The phrase carries dual meanings, to refer to the color of money as well as the color of one’s uniform. This informal slogan appeared in an advertisement targeting African Americans in popular black magazines such as *Jet* and *Ebony*. While the stable salary was an important selling point for recruitment, the message about branch unity mattered too. Making clear that the only color that mattered in the armed services was that of your uniform, which indicated the branch of enlistment, the army ad argued that military service was a progressive and “colorblind” sphere of racial equity and meritocracy. Appropriating civil rights rhetoric for pro-military ends, Ayer and the army argued worked to appeal to racial and ethnic minorities via visual representations featuring people of color, strategic media placement in targeted niche publications, use of word choice as well as the Spanish language when appropriate, and more. Leading campaign copy would include multiple versions with racial, gender, or language changes being the only differences. Frequently, there would be one version with white protagonists, whitewashed to appeal to general interest, white, American audiences and a second or sometimes even third

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<sup>369</sup> Moore, “Underrepresentation,” 132.

<sup>370</sup> To read about some of the debates among sociologists and military theorists on the effects of a volunteer military with an influx of underprivileged enlistees, see John Sibley Butler, “Inequality in the Military: An Examination of Promotion Time for Black and White Enlisted Men,” *American Sociological Review* 41:5 (1976):807-18; Robert Hauser, “On Inequality in the Military (Comment on Butler, ASR October, 1976),” *American Sociological Review* 43:1 (1978): 115-18; John Sibley Butler, “Military Inequality: Reply to Hauser,” *American Sociological Review* 43:4 (1978): 607-10.

<sup>371</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, “‘The Army Only Sees Green,’ magazine advertising copy,” Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

version, intended to appeal to African Americans, women, or Spanish language audiences. The diverse versions would have the same general composition and scenery, replacing white men with more diverse demography, depending on the placement. Although marketing meritocracy and diversity was not universally popular within and beyond the military, in order to weather the volunteer transition, it was necessary. Worries about diverse recruitment also surrounded the expansion of women's service roles extensively.

### **5.3 IF YOU LIKE MS, YOU'LL LOVE PVT!: FEMINISM AND THE ARMY**

With the aid of sexist stereotypes, there were plenty of reasons for military strategists to fear an influx of women from all racial backgrounds into the military ranks. The bulk of the worries stemmed from the idea that if women filled the ranks in larger proportions, then gender equity in combat roles would follow. In an article broaching the subject of women in combat from an international perspective, political theorist George H. Quester summarized anxieties on the subject:

How much of our aversion to military employment for females has been due to societal attitudes that women should not be involved in killing and destruction, that they should be sheltered as somehow more pure and humane than men? How much instead has been due to fears that sexual morality would be compromised when women and men were brought together in battlefield situations? How much is due to any need for physical stamina that the female could not satisfy?<sup>372</sup>

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<sup>372</sup> George H. Quester, "Women in Combat," *International Security* 1:4 (Spring 1977): 80.

Arranged as a series of hypothetical questions, Quester provided an overview of the arguments stemming from antiquated and sexist notions. Such attitudes about women's service were widespread. Major General Jeanne Holm noted in her book, *Women in the Military: An Unfinished Revolution* that, "Just below the surface of the military ranks at all levels, there persisted a deep well of resistance and even resentment toward women and their growing incursions into previously all-male preserves."<sup>373</sup> The rebranding of military service as an equal opportunity provider for men and women also met resistance within parts of the women's movement.

Many second-wave feminists in the US were against combat equity, albeit from an anti-war perspective rather than a sexist one. Feminist political theorist Cynthia Enloe writes with suspicion about whether gender equity can be achieved in such a hierarchical, patriarchal, and unapologetically masculinist sphere as the American military.<sup>374</sup> And many second-wave feminists rallied against the Vietnam War, putting forth arguments for peace, pacifism, and abolishing the military.<sup>375</sup> But there remained an ideological split between radical and liberal feminists; "liberal" feminists were for reformist policy measures that would increase equity

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<sup>373</sup> Jeanne Holm, *Women in the Military: An Unfinished Revolution* (New York: Presidio Press, 1993), 387-88.

<sup>374</sup> Cynthia Enloe, *Does Khaki Become You?: The Militarization of Women's Lives* (London: Pandora Press, 1983); See also idem, "Feminists Thinking About War, Militarism, and Peace," in *Analyzing Gender*, ed. Beth Hess and Myra Marc Ferree (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1987); *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women's Lives* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000).

<sup>375</sup> See Micaela DiLeonardo, "Moral, Mothers, and Militarism: Antimilitarism and Feminist Theory," *Feminist Studies* 11 (1985): 599-618; Amy G. Swerdlow, *Women Strike for Peace: Traditional Motherhood and Radical Politics in the 1960s* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); Alice Echols, *Daring to Be Bad: Radical Feminism in America, 1967-1975* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989); Ellen Willis, "Radical Feminism and Feminist Radicalism," in *The '60s Without Apology*, ed. Sohnya Sayres, Anders Stephanson, Stanley Aronowitz, and Fredric Jameson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).

between genders in all spheres, including the military; “Radical” feminists viewed the military as one of the institutional mechanisms that maintained patriarchy.<sup>376</sup> Military sociologist, Melissa Herbert has researched the overlap of pro-feminist and pro-military attitudes, to understand when and why the views were sometimes in conflict. Although in this particular case she studied attitudes in the early-1990s, she determined that:

The clear findings are that those with a feminist ideology are likely to support the right of women to equal participation in the military. In contrast, militarism indicates a slight likelihood of lack of support. The critical point is that while these relationships are both correlated in the expected direction, support for feminist goals is the much larger force shaping our attitudes toward the role of women in the military. That is, people's views on women's rights are much more important than are their views on national defense.<sup>377</sup>

From Herbert’s research, the influence of liberal feminism on attitudes toward women’s service is more pronounced and encompassing than the ideology of militarism, perhaps because of the gender divide involved in comparing groups of people who identify as feminist versus those who are pro-military. In other words, because women are more likely to identify as feminists (liberal

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<sup>376</sup> For theories about militaries and patriarchy, see Cynthia Enloe, *Maneuvers*; Susan Jeffords, *The Remasculinization of America: Gender and the Vietnam War* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989); Sara M. Evans, “Sons, Daughters, and Patriarchy: Gender and the 1968 Generation,” *American Historical Review* 114:2 (2009): 331-47. For writing on the differences between liberal and radical feminisms, see bell hooks, *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*, (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2000); Chandra Talpade Mohanty, *Feminism Without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003).

<sup>377</sup> Melissa S. Herbert, “Feminism, Militarism, and Attitudes Toward the Role of Women in the Military,” *Feminist Issues* 14:2 (1994): 46.

or radical), they are also more inclined to view women's comprehensive integration into the military with positive attitudes. For liberal feminists, desiring reformation toward a more equitable, gender-integrated society includes the military institution in addition to other institutions. Despite Herbert's research indicating liberal feminists' favorable attitudes regarding military service, she writes from personal experience that as a feminist member of the armed services she encounters tension and hostility from both military colleagues and feminist peers alike, for being a feminist armed service member. According to Herbert speaking about the 1990s, many feminists and military members viewed the positions to be in ideological conflict.<sup>378</sup> Some military figures and conservatives have argued against women's expanded military service roles, if not against women's military service entirely. Military theorist Brian Mitchell argues that the mere presence of women leads to a detrimental feminization of the American military. Using rigid, biologically essentialist notions of masculinity and femininity, he also contends that military branches and advertisers missed an opportunity to market the armed services as a bastion of unapologetic manhood amid second-wave gender role confusion:

In all societies, it is necessary for young males to do things that establish their identity as men.... In the early years of the AVF, the American feminist movement was very successful at destroying sex roles, denigrating masculinity, and integrating civilian occupations. The military could have capitalized on the movement's success by offering military service as a refuge for men who still wanted to be traditional men.... Men simply do not aspire to be women or to emulate women, and whatever women are, men will seek to be anything other.<sup>379</sup>

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<sup>378</sup> Ibid, 25.

<sup>379</sup> Brian Mitchell, *Weak Link: The Feminization of the American Military* (Washington, DC: Regnery Gateway, 1989), 217-18.



His views are not anomalous. In a *New York Times Magazine* article from 1979, George Gilder outlines his “Case Against Women in Combat.”<sup>380</sup> He was arguing specifically against women in combat, and not about excluding women from the armed services entirely. In the 1970s and ‘80s, many other conservatives and antifeminists spoke out against women executing military combat roles, in the wake of feminism’s second wave. The zenith of ideological conflicts involving women’s comprehensive military service came during congressional debates over the proposed Equal Rights Amendment (ERA).<sup>381</sup>

The political battles over the ERA provided those members of Congress in opposition to it with an opportunity to highlight many of the fears regarding an expansion of women’s service roles in the military to encompass overt combat operations and compulsory service. On multiple occasions, edits in the ERA’s military service content attempted to uphold the exemption of women from a military draft and combat operations. When such revisions were proposed, they were voted down overwhelmingly.<sup>382</sup> The enthusiasm to ensure that the ERA encompassed equity within the armed services was born mostly from anti-ERA strategy rather than a commitment to feminism. Conservative members of congress recognized with prescience that anxieties surrounding military equity ultimately would become the ERA’s fatal controversy.<sup>383</sup> Led by antifeminist and conservative activist, Phyllis Schlafly, a group called Stop ERA campaigned that the amendment would remove gender-specific privileges enjoyed by women

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<sup>380</sup> George Gilder, “The Case Against Women in Combat,” *New York Times Magazine*, 28 January 1989, 10-12; 29.

<sup>381</sup> Beth Bailey, *America’s Army*, 134, 165.

<sup>382</sup> Quester, “Women in Combat,” 82-83.

<sup>383</sup> Ibid.

such as the exemption from Selective Service registration.<sup>384</sup> Still, Ayer and the army opted to depict women alongside and apart from men to advertise that military service offered unique opportunities for training, travel, benefits, and even equity. This remained the strategy until the army instituted a “womanpause” in 1981, during which they stopped actively recruiting women for the armed services.<sup>385</sup> The 1981 womanpause refers to a request made by the army branch to stop actively recruiting women until further studies occurred to determine women’s roles and utilization in the armed forces. It came following the failure of the Equal Rights Amendment and the Carter Administration’s decision against requiring women to register with the Selective Service System. The Reagan administration, Department of Defense officials, and the All-Volunteer Force Task Force evaluated the volunteer armed services and women’s place within them. Determining whether or not the volunteer force remained viable and whether service policies regarding combat exclusions were indeed discriminatory against women were among some of the debates that occurred during this time. Although the ads did shift to reflect this pause, women did not disappear from the recruitment advertisement landscape entirely. The visual landscape of military advertisements no longer featured women as central protagonists if they were pictured at all. Ads became more male dominated than ever before during the volunteer era. Regardless, without the recruitment of underprivileged and increasingly diverse groups of Americans in the 1970s, the volunteer concept may have failed. And advertisers continued to recruit men from various racial and ethnic backgrounds to fill the ranks into the

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<sup>384</sup> Beth Bailey, *America’s Army*, 131-32, 169. See also Elizabeth Kolbert, “Firebrand: Phyllis Schlafly and the Conservative Revolution,” *The New Yorker* (7 November 2005): 134; Donald T. Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism* (Princeton University Press, 2005), 138-59.

<sup>385</sup> Bernard Rostker, *I Want You!: The Evolution of the All-Volunteer Force* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2006), 564-67. See also Beth Bailey, *America’s Army*, 171; Jeanne Holm, *Women in the Military*, (1993), 387-88.

1980s and 1990s. The period during which Ayer marketed a meritocratic and diverse army included fascinating campaigns and copy, the bulk of which appropriated social movement rhetoric from women's rights and civil rights slogans.

#### **5.4 ADVERTISING THE DIVERSE VOLUNTEER ARMY**

With the success of the volunteer concept hanging in the balance, and in advance of the 1981 “womanpause,” Ayer and the army implemented tropes of racial, gendered, and ethnic diversity in recruitment advertising to entice people within these historically underprivileged groups to enlist. Military service promised job training, salary stability, and other cited benefits, all of which amounted to the potential for socio-economic status ascension. Although the initial post-Vietnam campaign, “Today’s Army Wants to Join You,” invited recruits to join a gentler, more conciliatory army, where service roles that seemed removed from combat evocations were at center stage, by the mid-1970s, Ayer switched to a bandwagon sales approach. The clunky slogan, “Join the People Who’ve Joined the Army,” became catchy when sung to correspond with the accompanying jingle heard in army television and radio commercials. On its surface, “Join the People,” employed a humanized, democratically-focused, community-based strategy that straddled notions of civic responsibility with the logistics of financial necessity. It also summoned historian Arthur M. Schlesinger’s phrase about America as “a nation of joiners.”<sup>386</sup>

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<sup>386</sup> Quoting Alexis de Tocqueville, Schlesinger wrote that although individuality was important in America, citizens of this democratic nation also learned to “voluntarily help one another.” Arthur M. Schlesinger, “Biography of a Nation of Joiners,” *American Historical Review* 50:1

Soldiers with beaming smiles wore all types of military uniforms and disarmed the American public with their wholesome appeal. Accompanying text outlined the many benefits available to enlisted army people. Ads displayed men and women from various racial and ethnic backgrounds in a variety of civilian and military contexts. Many ads depicted vignettes featuring the same protagonist(s) in different settings. By employing a compilation of scenes within the same piece, ads pictured lives that struck balance between armed service work and recreation. Plenty of popular culture depicted military settings and shaped public perceptions of armed service. For example, *M\*A\*S\*H*, the television series, continued to entertain audiences from 1972-1983. And by the late 1970s, popular films releases were exploring the topic of the Vietnam War in larger numbers. Such films included *The Boys in Company C* (1978), *The Deer Hunter* (1978), *Coming Home* (1978), and *Apocalypse Now* (1979).<sup>387</sup> Numerous major motion pictures also examined Vietnam veterans' transitioning back to civilian life, such as *Taxi Driver* (1976), *Heroes* (1977), *Coming Home* (1978), and *The War at Home* (1979). Although many of these narratives about war reflected the American public's lingering resentments about Vietnam, media representations of soldiers became further normalized through repetition. By now, advertisements for the army eschewed the practice of relying on a "serviceperson" trope, outlined in Chapter 4. Instead some ads returned to the practice of embracing signifiers of soldiering in the most traditional sense, with a few even picturing weapons, tanks, and other combat gear.

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(Oct. 1944) 1-25; See also: Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, (Henry Reeve, Trans., New York, 1900) 115.

<sup>387</sup> The earliest major motion picture based on the Vietnam War was John Wayne's *The Green Berets* from 1968. And plenty of films in the 1980s were about the Vietnam War, including Oliver Stone's *Platoon* (1986), Stanley Kubrick's *Full Metal Jacket* (1987), *Hamburger Hill* (1987) and *Casualties of War* (1989).

One ad that was part of the “This is the Army,” sub-campaign of “Join the People,” promised a hefty signing bonus, ample access to weapons, and lots of adventure (Figure 4.2).<sup>388</sup>

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<sup>388</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, “‘A \$3000 Bonus,’ magazine advertising copy,” Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

**WE'LL GIVE YOU  
A \$3000 BONUS.  
AND PLENTY OF OPPORTUNITY  
TO EARN IT.**

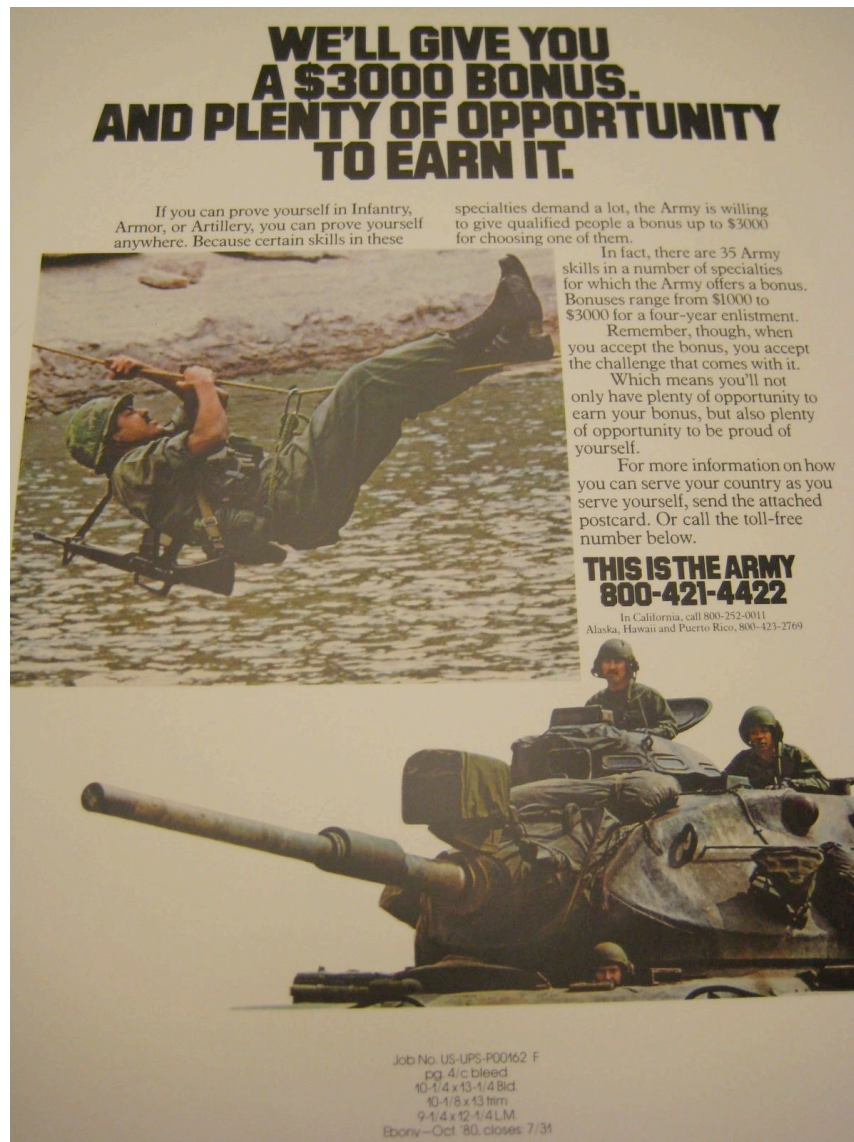
If you can prove yourself in Infantry, Armor, or Artillery, you can prove yourself anywhere. Because certain skills in these specialties demand a lot, the Army is willing to give qualified people a bonus up to \$3000 for choosing one of them.

In fact, there are 35 Army skills in a number of specialties for which the Army offers a bonus. Bonuses range from \$1000 to \$3000 for a four-year enlistment. Remember, though, when you accept the bonus, you accept the challenge that comes with it. Which means you'll not only have plenty of opportunity to earn your bonus, but also plenty of opportunity to be proud of yourself.

For more information on how you can serve your country as you serve yourself, send the attached postcard. Or call the toll-free number below.

**THIS IS THE ARMY  
800-421-4422**

In California, call 800-252-0011  
Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico, 800-423-2769



Job No. US-UPS-P00162 F  
pg. 4/c bleed  
10-1/4 x 13-1/4 Bld.  
10-1/8 x 13 trim  
9-1/4 x 12-1/4 L.M.  
Ebony—Oct '80, closes 7/31

**Figure 49. "A \$3000 Bonus."**

In Figure 49, recruits are offered a signing bonus for enlistment and a lot of adventure.<sup>389</sup>

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<sup>389</sup> Ibid.

Figure 49 targeted audiences of African American men and ran in the October 1980 issue of *Ebony Magazine*, a popular magazine publication for African Americans.<sup>390</sup> A man in combat gear used physical strength alone to pull himself across the river while hanging from a rope as his gun dangled from his shoulder. As though that alone lacked enough powerful masculine incentive, three helmeted men manned a camouflage tank in the accompanying visual vignette below. By combining visual representations, individual financial and nonfinancial incentives, and strategic media placement, ads attempted to recruit African American men in larger numbers to the volunteer ranks. Other ads highlighted combat training with the inclusion of weapon technology while targeting African American men with the promise of status through leadership opportunities in addition to steady pay.

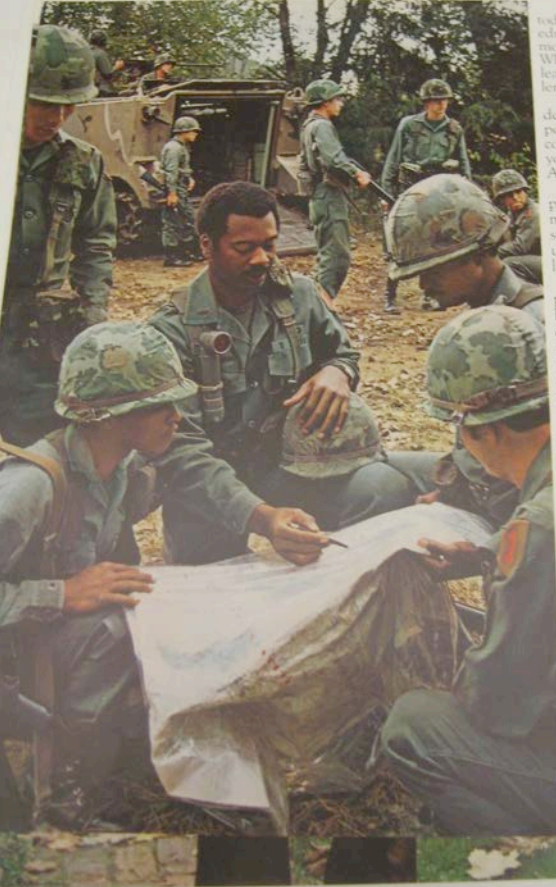
In Figure 50, helmeted men wielded guns as they stood near a tank in the background of an ad that featured a racially diverse circle of men examining a map together.<sup>391</sup> The leader stood apart from the group with his helmet on his knee and pencil in his hand. And the ad itself guaranteed elite leadership experience while still evoking the inclusive, democratized appeal of slogan, “Join the People Who’ve Joined the Army.”

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<sup>390</sup> Ibid.

<sup>391</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, ““Lead the People Who’ve Joined the Army,” magazine advertising copy,” Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

## LEAD THE PEOPLE WHO'VE JOINED THE ARMY.



The people joining today's Army are better educated and more highly motivated than ever before. Which makes the job of leading them more challenging than ever.

If you're looking to develop your leadership potential, check into the college program that can give you the training you'll need. Army ROTC.

In the Army ROTC program, you'll learn how to manage people, money, and supplies. You'll also receive up to \$1000 a year for your last two years of college.

But the most rewarding part is you'll graduate with both a commission and a college degree, and start leading the people in today's Army—which also includes the Army Reserve and Army National Guard.

For more information, send the attached postcard or write: Army ROTC, P.O. Box 7000, Department A-G, Larchmont, New York 10538.

**ARMY ROTC**  
LEARN WHAT  
IT TAKES TO LEAD

**Figure 50. "Lead the People."**

In Figure 50, an African American male leads a racially diverse group of ROTC cadets in training.<sup>392</sup>

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<sup>392</sup> Ibid.



Although Figure 50 recruited for the Army Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), Ayer maintained slogan continuity for the regular army and army reserve, alike. It was significant to depict an African American male as the leader of the racially diverse cadets shown in the ad. Similarly to early volunteer era recruitment, ads from this period situated military service as both competing with and complementing other sectors of the job market. The primary difference was that the few years of distance from the Vietnam War. As Chapter 4 demonstrated, early volunteer era ads were absent of most visual and textual allusions to guns, soldiers, and combat. Even if this absence was relatively short, it was noticeable and significant. This short gap enabled a swift return to traditional visual representations of combat operations, complete with gun-toting soldiers. Although combat assignments comprised only a few of the hundreds of Military Occupation Specialties (MOS), as one ad from the 1980s put it, “everyone else (was) in a supporting role.” See Figure 66 below. Still, non-combat MOS were displayed with much higher frequency than combat MOS. In many cases army ads illustrated role diversity without defining narrowly any one MOS. This tactic of portraying occupations with some amount of ambiguity enabled recruitment to occur by advertising military service as an acquisition of portable skills that could be beneficial in many sectors of employment. Leadership experience was one such beneficial and portable skill set, especially for people of color, who were often subject to institutional as well as more blatant forms of racism in hiring and promoting decisions. In the late 1970s when this ad ran, it was still atypical for African American men to be depicted in the mainstream mass media occupying leadership roles. Nontraditional roles for women were also emphasized in military recruitment ads of the volunteer army.

One “Join the People Who’ve Joined the Army” ad (Figure 51) featured a female protagonist with the headlining title of “Specialist.”<sup>393</sup> The ad ran in February 1978 issues of *Senior Scholastic* magazine.

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<sup>393</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, “‘Specialist,’ magazine advertising copy,” Archives Center, NMAH, SI.



Figure 51. "(Female) Specialist."

In Figure 51, a conventionally attractive, blonde woman with shorter hair and a full face of makeup is shown in three contexts.<sup>394</sup>

<sup>394</sup> Ibid.

The female “Specialist,” the text tells us, aspired to a medical career but worked in the army repairing helicopters. Shown in three photographic vignettes, she labored with focus repairing a helicopter, lunched happily with girlfriends in civilian clothing, and flew with a supervisor in one of the aircrafts she repaired. Her quiet determination in the top and bottom scenes was offset with a disarming display of happiness in the center of the ad. In quoted first-person narration, she mentioned that her confidence grew upon enlistment and that she relished mastering a skill that “few other people can” do. Although the text contained no direct references to feminism, the ad oozed a tempered, approachable version of it. We saw a confident, happy, capable, feminine, strong female, thriving through her military service. The caption that overlaid the ad’s visual vignette header described logistical information about pay and benefits. The “hands on” experience referenced in the first person account amplified the benefits outlined in the “pay and benefits” paragraph. Being paid while learning what ultimately became one’s specialty was an attractive offer for women eager to join the workforce but possibly unsure of where to start. The notion that the women who want to work may not know where to start became a theme in a later, more openly feminist pitch within the “This is the Army,” series of ads that appeared under the “Join the People” campaign, just prior to the launch of “Be All You Can Be.”

Although nods to feminism were present subtly in Figure 51, some ads chose a more direct approach. Using one of the same protagonists and a few of the same basic themes of “Specialist,” “If You Like Ms., You’ll Love Pvt,” appropriated the tenets of second-wave feminism to posit military service as a sphere for gender equity and job opportunities.<sup>395</sup> See Figure 52.

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<sup>395</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, “‘If You Like Ms., You’ll Love Pvt.,’ magazine advertising copy,” Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

# If you like Ms., you'll love Pvt.



Today's Army may be your most equal opportunity.

From operating construction equipment, to repairing engines, to driving trucks, women routinely get opportunities in today's Army that they rarely get anywhere else.

In fact, of the Army's more than 300 MOS's (Military Occupational Specialties) only a relatively few Combat Arms are closed to women.

The result is that a lot of young women coming into the Army come into their own. They get to try things and learn skills they might never have otherwise. They get the opportunity to succeed or fail on their own merit. Women in today's Army get what they earn. But they also have to earn what they get.

Find out more about the hundreds of skills and the unique opportunity available to women in today's Army.

Send one of the postcards or call toll free: 800-431-1976. In New York call 800-243-5614.




1996

**Figure 52. "If you like Ms."**

In Figure 52, a marital status-neutral honorific signals to feminist audiences.<sup>396</sup>

<sup>396</sup> Ibid.

The persuasive crux of Figure 52 was that Ayer's target demographic, i.e., women interested in employment, steady wages, and benefits, might also align ideologically with feminism. Those who preferred the marital status-neutral "Ms." over "Miss" or "Mrs." could really enjoy the gender-neutral honorific of "Pvt.," which was short for Private. The text below the title and central image began plainly, "Today's Army may be your most equal opportunity."<sup>397</sup> Of the 300 plus MOS, the ad claimed that, "only a relative few combat arms are closed to women."<sup>398</sup> Using the language of meritocracy, where women and men achieve based on their efforts and abilities rather than sex, the ad promised a haven for liberal feminists and modern young women in the armed forces. The "Ms." moniker in the ad was co-opted from liberal feminists. In the 1970s "Ms." signaled feminism recognizably thanks to prominent women's rights activist, Gloria Steinem's magazine publication of the same name.<sup>399</sup> Regardless of whether the army genuinely wanted to fill the ranks with feminists, many ads that targeted women nodded toward feminism similarly.

The "This is the Army" series included an integrated layout with text and visuals collaged together. Some of the people depicted were floating alone while others were pictured conducting tasks. The demographically targeted versions of ads varied in racial and gendered make up. Some ads displayed all men from various racial backgrounds. Some showed only white men. A few were gender integrated. And one included only women. To draw comparisons, see Figures. 49, 53, 54, and 55.

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<sup>397</sup> Ibid.

<sup>398</sup> Ibid.

<sup>399</sup> For the history of *Ms. Magazine*, visit "HerStory: 1971-Present," *Ms. Magazine*, Accessed 20 June 2013: <http://www.ms magazine.com/about.asp>.



# THIS IS THE ARMY

**"I DON'T THINK ABOUT THE BENEFITS MUCH. I JUST ENJOY THEM."**  
 Pvt. Roger Harris, Ft. Sill, Oklahoma  
 In addition to \$448.80 a month to start (before deductions), a soldier today also



receives some surprising benefits.

**FOOD, CLOTHING, AND SHELTER**  
 You could bank almost your entire paycheck and still live off what the Army provides. Three hot meals a day. Uniforms. Modern living quarters. And health and dental care available to you at no cost.

**SKILL TRAINING**  
 You'll receive intensive training on some of the most sophisticated equipment in the world. And learn in months what can often take years anywhere else.

**FREE TIME**  
 When you have time off, most Army posts have ball fields, gyms, libraries, and craft shops to help you enjoy it.

**EDUCATION**  
 The Army will pay up to 75% of your tuition costs for approved courses taken off duty. And with the Army's VEAP Program, you could accumulate up to \$14,100 for your education.

**PEOPLE**  
 There's no military hardware to replace the human heart, no computer to out-think

the mind. We need people. We are people. So share the pride that comes from serving your country. Contact your local Army Representative. Look in the Yellow Pages under "Recruiting."



**JOIN THE PEOPLE WHO'VE JOINED THE ARMY.**  
**800-421-4422**  
 In California, call 800-252-0011;  
 Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico, 800-425-2768.

Figure 53. "Benefits."

In Figure 53, a smiling, masculine white male carries a tray full of food.<sup>400</sup>

<sup>400</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, "Benefits," magazine advertising copy," Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

# THIS IS THE ARMY

**"I LIKE BEING A WELDER. BUT I ALSO LIKE BEING A WOMAN."**  
E-2 Vicki Griner, Fort Hood, Texas

Of all the things you can be in the Army, there's one thing you won't be: stereotyped. You'll get a real chance to do what your talents and interests allow you.

**EQUAL**  
The Army is serious about equality. Except for several frontline combat specialties that



are closed to women, Army skills are open to anyone who qualifies. From Aircraft Repairer to Wire Systems Installer, the opportunities are many. And they are real.

**TRAVEL**  
The Army has posts in Europe, Alaska, Hawaii, the Canal Zone, Korea, and throughout most of the continental United States. And special programs to help make you feel part of the local scene.

**FREE TIME**  
It's much more than just time off. It's time to enjoy all the friendships and facilities an Army post has to offer. There are gyms, swimming pools, libraries, theaters, and clubs, to name a few.

**PAY & BENEFITS**  
Here, equality is most obvious. Both men and women get the same starting pay. More than



\$419.00 a month, before deductions. Plus room, board and health care. And a chance to take up to 30 days paid vacation. Even your first year.

**PEOPLE**  
There's no military hardware to replace the human heart, no computer to out-think the mind. We need people. We are people. So share the pride that comes from serving your country. Contact your local Army Representative. Look in the Yellow Pages under "Recruiting."



**JOIN THE PEOPLE WHO'VE JOINED THE ARMY.**  
**800-431-1976**  
In N.Y., call 800-243-5614.

Job No. US-185-P50027  
8-1/2" x 11-1/8" bld  
8-1/8" x 10-7/8" trim

Figure 54. "I also like being a woman."

In Figure 54, four enlisted army women reassure audiences of their femininity.<sup>401</sup>

<sup>401</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, "'I Also Like Being a Woman.' magazine advertising copy," Archives Center, NMAH, SI.



# THIS IS THE ARMY

**"I'VE ALWAYS HAD A LOT OF CONFIDENCE IN MYSELF. BUT I THINK THE ARMY HAS ENHANCED EVEN THAT."**  
— Jim Brown, U.S.A.

Few things are as demanding as being a soldier. Or as rewarding. Because, as a soldier, you really get to know who you are.

**THE CHALLENGE**  
The challenges are mental as well as physical. Because no matter how wet, cold, or tired you get, you have to be mentally sharp. There are difficult exceptions.

**RECREATION**  
No matter where you are stationed, you'll usually find a lot to do both on and off post. Most posts have sports and entertainment facilities.

**PAY & BENEFITS**  
Starting pay is more than \$419.00 a month, before deductions. Plus room, board and health care. And a chance to take up to 30 days paid vacation. Even your first year.

**PEOPLE**  
There's no military hardware to replace the human heart.

**THE REWARDS**  
The most precious rewards are the lessons you learn. In leadership. Responsibility. Friendship. And the pride that comes from doing something exceptionally well.

no computer to out-think the mind. We need people. We are people. So share the pride that comes from serving your country. Contact your local Army Representative. Look in the Yellow Pages under "Recruiting."

**JOIN THE PEOPLE WHO'VE JOINED THE ARMY.**  
**800-431-1976**  
In N.Y., call 800-243-5614.

781-001-79-87-0031 OUTDOOR LIFE pg. h/c bld. bld: 6 5/8 x 11 3/8 trim: 6 1/8 x 10 7/8 June 1979

Figure 55. "This is the Army: Confidence."

In Figure 55, men are depicted in various outdoor scenes.<sup>402</sup>

<sup>402</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, "'Confidence,' magazine advertising copy," Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

Figure 53 presented only one protagonist; a smiling white man with traditionally masculine features and broad shoulders, carrying a tray filled with food. His uniform included a necktie and dress shirt. The opening copy described with first person narration that he rarely thought about the benefits offered to enlisted army men. He just enjoyed them. Of the benefits itemized in the descriptive content that followed, the first section referenced food and clothing. The tray full of food made clear that meals were provided. The smile on the face of the man offered further reassurance about his satisfaction with this arrangement. This contrasted significantly with one of the only “This is the Army” ads that included just women.

Figure 54 began with the voice of a female army soldier exclaiming that she liked being a welder but she also liked being a woman. In the top right, a smiling woman with her safety goggles placed atop her head, held a blowtorch as she took a break from welding. The composition of the image with a working female, wielding tools and a uniform traditionally associated with masculine labor, conjured immediately the imagery of Rosie the Riveter, the cultural icon of working women during World War II, that endured into the latter half of the twentieth century (and beyond) to symbolize feminism and female strength.<sup>403</sup> Smaller images balanced the rest of the ad, with other women pictured at a computer desk, with a horse, and clad in dress uniform, respectively. The descriptive copy that followed the first person narration assured women that gender stereotypes were sexist problems to be encountered in other sectors,

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<sup>403</sup> The icon of “Rosie the Riveter” is often confused with the woman in the “We Can Do It!” poster. “We Can Do It!” emerged from a Westinghouse “War Production Coordinating Committee” campaign. For further reading on the history of “Rosie the Riveter” see: James J. Kimble and Lester C. Olson, “Visual Rhetoric Representing Rosie the Riveter: Myth and Misconception in J. Howard Miller’s ‘We Can Do It!’ Poster,” *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 9:4 (2006): 533-570.

not the army. The first selling point included in the ad was about equity, aptly titled, “Equal.”<sup>404</sup> The combat caveat that articulated women’s exemption from certain military jobs made clear that the military equity being described had limitations. When compared to the “This is the Army” ad picturing all men, no such caveats were necessary. Figure 57’s areas of persuasion for military recruitment talked about hard work, in “the challenge” section. It included no subtitled section promising “free time” the way that the ad for women did. The selling points were direct and free from platitudes about merit, equity, or gender stereotypes. Although the ad for women claimed that military branches were stereotype-free havens for feminists, the juxtaposition of gendered ads for “This is the Army,” reveals numerous gender assumptions. But advertising a feminist-friendly army required a delicate balancing act. The elephant in the room remained the issue of combat.

No matter how many times the word “equal” appeared, the combat exemption sentence nullified the meritocratic promise. As Beth Bailey explains in her study of the volunteer army, *America’s Army*:

As women’s possible roles in the army changed, army recruiting advertising tried to keep pace. Someone eventually realized that advertising femininity and glamour might not be the most effective way to recruit women who wanted to repair trucks and operate bulldozers... But with all the gender-neutral ads and the repeated claims that ‘Today’s Army may be your most equal opportunity,’ recruiting advertising more or less painted itself into a corner... For all the talk about ‘hundreds of challenging specialties open to women in every field’... there was one huge omission. Women were barred from combat.”<sup>405</sup>

Even though the internal debates among feminist groups regarding the issue of gender equity in combat operations were unresolved in the 1970s, the process of selling equity was rendered

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<sup>404</sup> Ayer Records, “I Also Like Being a Woman,” SI.

<sup>405</sup> Beth Bailey, *America’s Army*, 163.

insincere at best and hypocritical at worst, in a field where strict gender restrictions endured. Nonetheless, Ayer developed numerous “feminist” ads recruiting women for the army’s non-combat roles aggressively. One such ad (Figure 56) made light of the practice of defaulting to male pronouns with the header, “Some of Our Best Men are Women.”<sup>406</sup>



Figure 56. "Some of our best men are women."

In Figure 56, six women are shown performing a variety of military jobs.<sup>407</sup>

<sup>406</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, “‘Some of Our Best Men are Women,’ magazine advertising copy,” Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

<sup>407</sup> Ibid.

The ad opened with the argument, “If there’s one place where opportunity is genuinely equal, it’s in the Army,” and closed with the reassurance that, “Everyone is judged on ability and how hard one works.”<sup>408</sup> Textual bookends flagged to women facing sexism in civilian sectors that regardless of gender, women had access to (most) military opportunities. Despite eventual, numerous American military scandals regarding rampant sexism, sexual harassment, and rape across the armed forces, ads proclaimed the volunteer military to be a feminist haven without ever using the f-word.<sup>409</sup> Traditionally masculine jobs such as truck driving, carpentry, and more were juxtaposed with traditionally feminine ones including cooking, typing, and taking dictation. Each job named individually called attention to the broad variety of opportunities available for women in military service. Another similar ad made light of stereotypes about women while depicting another traditionally masculine job in Figure 57.

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<sup>408</sup> Ibid.

<sup>409</sup> As recently as May 2013, sexism in the American military has remained rampant and pervasive, according to prominent generals, military experts, investigative journalists, researchers, and elected officials, alike. An article on the subject notes that, “Sexism and harassment in the military have created a ‘permissive environment’ in which sexual assaults can occur, said Army Maj. Gen. Gary Patton, director of the Pentagon’s Sexual Assault Prevention and Response office.” Tom Vanden Brook, “Sexism Must be Treated Like Racism, Top Officer Says,” *USA Today*, 14 May 2013. A Pentagon survey estimated that 26,000 people in the armed forces were sexually assaulted in 2012, which rose from 19,000 in 2010. See Jennifer Steinhauer, “Pentagon Study Sees Sharp Rise in Sexual Assaults,” *New York Times*, 7 May 2013. Although more women are enlisted in the armed forces today and the combat exemption has been lifted, the sheer volume of exposés on military sexism and sexual assault spans too widely to cite in a comprehensive manner. The problem is so extensive and widespread that the phrase, “military sexual trauma” has been coined to refer specifically to post-traumatic stress suffered by victims of sexual abuse in the military. See “Military Sexual Trauma,” National Center for PTSD: US Department of Veterans Affairs, January 2007. Accessed 26 June 2013. <http://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/pages/military-sexual-trauma-general.asp>.



**YOU DON'T FIX A TURBINE ENGINE  
WITH WOMAN'S INTUITION.**

You do it with ability. That means understanding the breakdown of a 3,750 horsepower engine—and knowing how to fix that engine when it breaks down.

Heavy job? You bet. But if you've got the head for it, the Army will give you the responsibility.

The fact is, assigning women jobs that aren't traditionally female is part of today's Army. Here's another fact: except for a few specialties in Combat Arms, hundreds of Army MOS's (Military Occupational Specialties) are open to women.

Which means you can count on finding equal job opportunities in the Army few other places can equal. Opportunities ranging from rigging parachutes, to driving heavy construction equipment, to repairing missiles.

So if you're looking for an organization that will look solely at your ability, look into today's Army.

For more information about the hundreds of equal opportunities available in today's Army, send one of the postcards in this book. Or, better yet, call toll free: 800-431-1234. In N.Y., call 800-942-1990.

**JOIN THE PEOPLE  
WHO'VE JOINED THE ARMY.**



**Figure 57. "Women's Intuition."**

In Figure 57, a smiling female mechanic works her stereotypically masculine job.<sup>410</sup>

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<sup>410</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, "'Women's Intuition,' magazine advertising copy," Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

Figure 57 used words like ability, responsibility, equal opportunity, and described how jobs that were not “traditionally female” were open to women who enlisted. But in both Figures. 56, 57, and other ads aimed at women, a necessary caveat made clear that not every opportunity was created equal for men and women. Although the text promised that assignments and advancement were based on abilities rather than assumptions about sex, the carefully worded combat exemption appeared in paragraph two. The language of the combat qualifier minimized its significance as much as possible, provoking an inference that such an exemption was more of a benefit than limitation. The positive spin on combat exclusions intended to neutralize the cognitive dissonance inherent in arguing for military equity with the language of feminism in the face of the remaining significant role segregation. And the “Join the People” campaign was rife with contradictions already.

It was difficult to recruit via an argumentative fallacy; i.e., bandwagon, particularly within the otherwise status-embattled army branch. “Join the People,” ads performed multiple functions toward public relations and practical recruitment purposes, leaving room for audience interpretation depending on members’ own demography and interests. Arguing that just about anyone should “join the people who have joined the army,” contradicted the content of much of the ads’ written copy. For example, Figure 51’s portrayal of service as a venue for mastering elite specializations and building confidence rang hollow when presented alongside a slogan that says to enlist for the sake of popularity. The popularity of the army remained unpredictable, no matter how removed from the negative imprint of Vietnam.<sup>411</sup> But in context, the first-person narrative of Figure 51 enabled technical specializations to seem accessible and military service approachable thanks in part to the beaming smile and confident, focused demeanor of the woman

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<sup>411</sup> Beth Bailey, Bailey, *America’s Army*, 69.

protagonist. The message could resonate for young people with little previous work experience or difficulty in finding fulfilling employment. Many ads with first-person narrative prose discussed the confidence and skills gleaned through service, making the option both appealing and unintimidating for insecure post-adolescents.

Implicit to the language of the slogan, the “Join the People” campaign claimed that others have enlisted in the new volunteer army and therefore, you should too. Peer pressure had the power to influence youth in social spheres and in mass media too. But the approach risked damaging the American people’s existing confidence in the army branch. So as not to fan further speculation that the volunteer force lowered standards in order to fill ranks out of necessity, most ads still mentioned elite training, hard work, and technical specialization. In doing so, ads operated preemptively to allay fears that just anyone could join and be accepted. “Join the People,” provided a strong rhetorical foundation for the next campaign that argued for military service as a venue in which one could live up to their full potential, by being all that they could be. It also signaled a rhetorical shift, as the final contingent of Baby Boomers were of age to serve. Tom Wolfe wrote about the rise of narcissism in the 1970s, admonishing Boomers in particular as the “me generation.”<sup>412</sup> He denounced the rise of a socially defined youth culture that led to a preoccupation with self-fulfillment. In Wolfe’s view, the self at the individual level was prioritized over community. The embedded values of this shift came through in the language and meaning of “Be All You Can Be.” The slogan emerged to become the army’s and arguably the entire American military’s most iconic recruitment campaign of the volunteer era.

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<sup>412</sup> Tom Wolfe, *The Right Stuff*, (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1979).



## 5.5 REGARDLESS OF DEMOGRAPHY: BE ALL YOU CAN BE

In 1973, Ayer received an additional \$39 million to advertise for their army client. By 1986, at the time Ayer lost the client due to alleged bid-rigging and kickbacks, the army was Ayer's second most lucrative contract, surpassing many commercial brands.<sup>413</sup> Prior to the scandal, the hefty government paycheck also afforded the agency bragging rights. Every year when Ayer had to resubmit their bid for the army contract to the department of defense, they reigned victorious over some of their biggest agency rivals. Company newsletters and internal correspondence spoke with enthusiasm about what the client meant for Ayer financially and in terms of their morale and identity as an agency. They even used the new marquee slogan, "Be All You Can Be," in trade paper advertisements publicizing their work (see Figure 58).

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<sup>413</sup> Beth Bailey explains that the issue resulted because of, "the complicated interface between a civilian advertising firm and rigid federal regulations about documentation and accounting practices." in *America's Army*, 196. For coverage of the scandal, see George Lazarus, "Ayer Tossed Out of Federal Bidding," *Chicago Tribune*, 26 November 1986. "The Army Suspended N.W. Ayer from Any Bidding," *Los Angeles Times*, 26 November 1986.

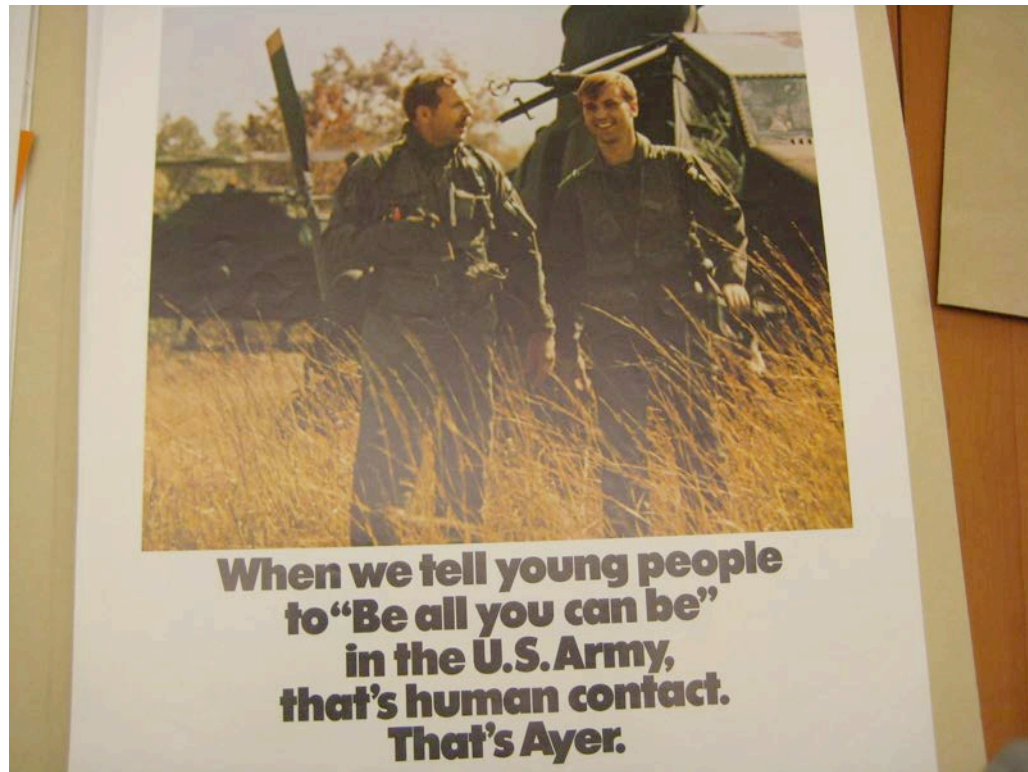


Figure 58. "Be all you can be with Ayer."

In Figure 58, a trade paper advertisement promises that Ayer clients reach their full potential.<sup>414</sup>

And although the womanpause of 1981 did lead to less aggressive pursuit of female targets, some ads still contained women.<sup>415</sup> "Be All You Can Be," provided the perfect rhetorical launch pad for minority recruitment. The positive slogan offered reassurance about individuality in a culture that valued neoliberalism increasingly by promising that army service fostered individual potential. This worked well with the languages of meritocracy and achievement. Spanish

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<sup>414</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, "'Be All You Can Be With Ayer,' magazine advertising copy," Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

<sup>415</sup> Bernard Rostker, *I Want You!*, (2006), 564-567.

language versions of ads marketed military service to Hispanic populations. And more of the same interchangeable content made it easier to target based on race and gender as well as ethnicity. See Figures. 59-60.

**THE ARMY CALLS IT CARTOGRAPHY.  
HE CALLS IT THE START OF A CAREER.**

For SP4 Mario Canedo, Army skill training in cartography is helping set his career path for life. At first, Mario didn't know what kind of career to take up. His father always asked him what he was going to do with his life, but Mario never really had any plans for his future. Then Army training helped him to focus on his abilities and interests.


Now he's an Army cartographer. He creates maps for the infantry and artillery which show the contours and characteristics of the terrain such as the hills, valleys, lakes and rivers.

Mario has now built up enough confidence and experience to make cartography a career if he chooses. Even his father is surprised at how much Mario has grown.

Army experience is helping Mario feel better about his future. And it can help you or someone you know to do the same.

The Army provides the opportunity to explore any of dozens of technical fields. To find out more, visit your local Army Recruiter, or call toll-free 1-800-USA-ARMY.

**ARMY.  
BE ALL YOU CAN BE.**



Sosa & Associates

Figure 59. "Cartography Career."

In Figure 59, an English language ad promised career training in the army.<sup>416</sup>

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<sup>416</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, "'Cartography Career,' magazine advertising copy," Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

**EL ARMY LO LLAMA "CARTOGRAPHY."  
EL LO LLAMA EL COMIENZO DE UNA PROFESION.**

Para SP4 Mario Cañedo, el entrenamiento especial del Army en "cartography" le ayuda a enca-  
minar su carrera.

Al principio, Mario no sabía cual profesión quería. Su padre siempre le preguntó que iba hacer  
con su vida. No tenía metas para su futuro. Entonces el entrenamiento del Army le permitió enfocar en sus habili-  
dades y en lo que a él más le gusta.

Ahora él es un Cartógrafo del Army. El crea mapas para la infantería y artillería que muestran  
los contornos y características del terreno tales como montañas, valles, lagos y ríos.

Mario tiene bastante experiencia para convertirla en una profesión si quiere. Además, su padre  
está muy orgulloso de lo que él ha logrado.

La experiencia del Army deja que Mario se sienta más seguro de su futuro. Y puede ayudarle a  
usted o algún amigo a hacer lo mismo.

El Army ofrece la oportunidad de explorar cualquiera de  
los muchos oficios técnicos. Para más infor-  
mación, visite a su reclutador del Army,  
o llame gratis al 1-800-USA-ARMY.

**ARMY.  
SEA TODO LO QUE PUEDE SER.**



Sosac & Associates

**Figure 60. "Cartography Profesion."**

Figure 60 uses the Spanish language to advertise the same career path as Figure 59.<sup>417</sup>

<sup>417</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, "'Cartography Profesion,' magazine advertising copy," Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

Although the Spanish language army ads were subcontracted to Sosa & Associates, Ayer made evident the army client's desire to reach audiences of Hispanic young people with some carefully placed ads in both languages.<sup>418</sup> The ad displayed the determined face of a young Hispanic man, shown with modern mapmaking equipment, in a high tech workplace. The inset photo showed the same soldier interacting with another soldier out in the field. The transferable marketplace skills promised that military service offered career opportunities. This was central to the sales pitch. The same strategy of using the same ad template to appeal to different audiences while framing volunteer army service as the start of a career continued for ads featuring African American and white protagonists. See Figures. 61-62.

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<sup>418</sup> To read about the background of Hispanic advertising pioneer, Sosa & Associates, see Randall Rothenberg, "Sosa Takes the Off Path to Success," *New York Times*, 29 May 1990.



**Figure 61. "The Perfect Job (White Woman)"**

In Figure 61, a strong white female protagonist wears head gear.<sup>419</sup>

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<sup>419</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, "'The Perfect Job 1,' magazine advertising copy," Archives Center, NMAH, SI.





**Figure 62. "The Perfect Job (Black Woman)"**

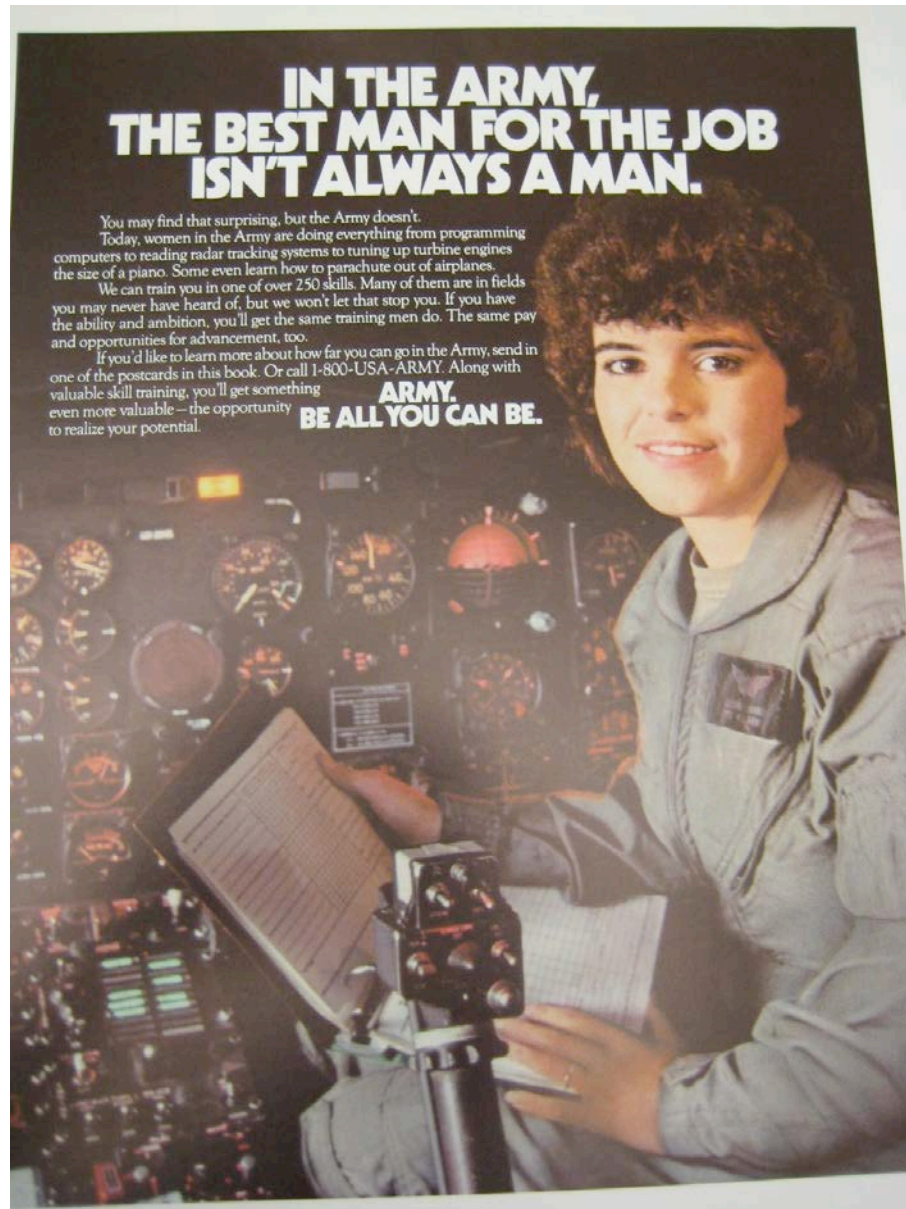
In Figure 62, a strong black female protagonist wears head gear.<sup>420</sup>

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<sup>420</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, "'The Perfect Job 2,' magazine advertising copy," Archives Center, NMAH, SI.



Figures. 61 and 62 were the same exact ad featuring racially targeted female leads. The visual compositions included large photos depicting serious, helmeted, female soldiers behind reflective visors that mirrored the horizon in front of them. They wore bright red lipstick that tempered preemptively the possibility for masculine inferences from their determined, serious faces. Smaller portraits of the same women smiling and without visors served to offset the severity of the larger depictions while reiterating their femininity. The text contained no references to equality and no overt language of feminism. It simply described the exciting challenges that awaited recruits, regardless of gender, taking for granted that feminism would be signaled inherently. Although the visuals from these ads could have been swapped for photos of men, a few “Be All You Can Be” ads still called attention to women’s liberation in specific, direct terms, like in Figure 63.



**Figure 63. "Best Man for the Job."**

Figure 63 made light of the default to male gendered pronouns.<sup>421</sup>

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<sup>421</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, "'The Best Man for the Job,' magazine advertising copy," Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

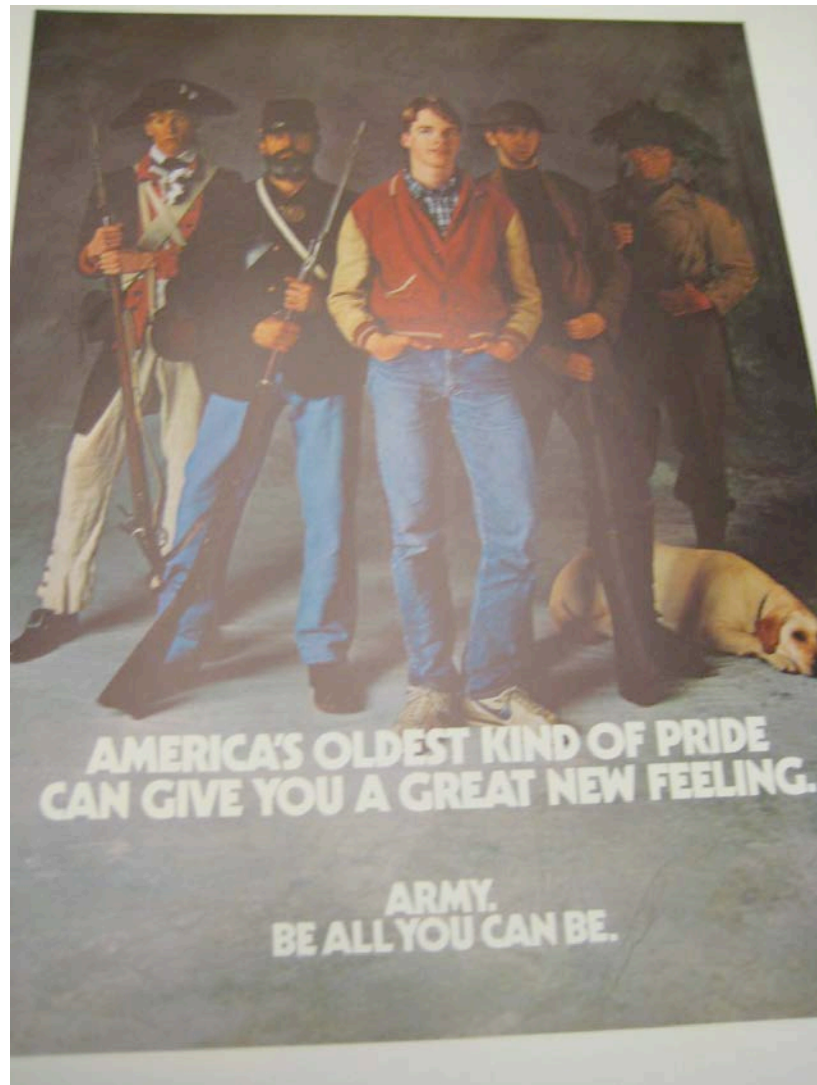
Figure 63 promised that, “If you have the ability and ambition, you’ll get the same training men do.”<sup>422</sup> Statements about pay and promotion equity followed with no combat caveat to be found. By poking fun at the practice of defaulting to masculine pronouns, the ad signaled for women that the modern volunteer army was more progressive and more inclusive than ever before. As ERA debates continued, this strategy made sense for public relations purposes, also. If for some reason the combat exemption had been lifted during that time, the transition to advertising an equitable, gender-neutral military would have been smooth. Although Ayer continued to market military service to racial and ethnic minorities, the womanpause of 1981 did change the landscape of military recruitment advertising for women and men.<sup>423</sup>

The burden of selling the image of a meritocratic military lessened when women were no longer central targets for recruitment. It remains to be seen whether the feminist-themed recruitment of women in advertisements stemmed from genuine interest in fostering a diverse volunteer army or from public relations maneuvers to obscure a more complex reality in which rank and file replicate a gendered status quo. Regardless, after 1981 ads depicting white men conveyed military masculinity in the most predictable fashion. Interestingly though not surprisingly, any ads that referenced army branch history, bravado, and traditions were all male and excluded visible or inclusive representations that featured people of color. See Figures. 64-66.

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<sup>422</sup> Ibid.

<sup>423</sup> Bernard Rostker, *I Want You!*, (2006), 564-567.



**Figure 64. "America's Oldest Pride."**

In Figure 64, men wear army uniforms from the past.<sup>424</sup>

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<sup>424</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, "'America's Oldest Pride,' magazine advertising copy," Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

Figure 64 provides little textual content, allowing the slogan to evoke military pride, honor, and history rather than individual incentives. The genius of “Be All You Can Be,” as a slogan was in the ease with which it transitioned from nodding toward individual potentiality, benefits, etc., to stoking national patriotic pride. White male soldier figures were clad in uniforms from previous times of war in Figure 64. Even a favored military war dog was included.<sup>425</sup> But racial, ethnic, and/or gender minorities were all absent from this history. The combat exemption explained the absence of women. But the racial demographics of the military history depicted above minimize, if not entirely erase the military service contributions of minorities. The exclusion of people of color from the ad could also explain the lack of reference to individual incentives for enlistment. Referring back to Figure 53, the white male figure in an ad from the previous “This is the Army” series claimed he rarely thought about the benefits, marking his demographic privileges in ways that were difficult to ignore even if not on purpose. None of the ads from the Ayer archive that featured people of color and/or women excluded references to salaries, benefits, or other individual reasons for enlistment. The shadowy human forms in Figure 65 betray little demographic information, but the presumption of masculinity remains. The header and text reference hard work, determination, and elite training.<sup>426</sup> Figure 66 on the contrary displays one white male figure, facing forward, wearing combat fatigues, and wielding a gun, with a serious, confident visage that could easily swap with the grittiest ads from Vietnam War-era

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<sup>425</sup> The Labrador retriever depicted, symbolized the war dogs used in Vietnam. Although various breeds served a few different functions during combat, this particular dog served on combat tracker teams. Sadly, the Vietnam War was the only war in which military dogs were not permitted to return to the United States. See: John C. Burnam, *A Soldier's Best Friend: Scout Dogs and Their Handlers in the Vietnam War*, (New York: Sterling Publishing, 2008).

<sup>426</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, “‘Life Isn’t Easy,’ magazine advertising copy,” Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

recruitment.<sup>427</sup> The titled of the ad proclaimed that, “Everyone else is in a supporting role.”<sup>428</sup> Considering the painstakingly worded combat caveats from the ads targeting women just a few years prior to the creation of this ad, it is significant that this ad asserts that all other military roles matter less. Juxtaposed with the inclusivity and diversity of other ads, the figure’s white race and male gender enable a subtle white, masculine supremacy to come through.

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<sup>427</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, “‘Everyone Else In Supporting Role,’ magazine advertising copy,” Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

<sup>428</sup> Ibid.

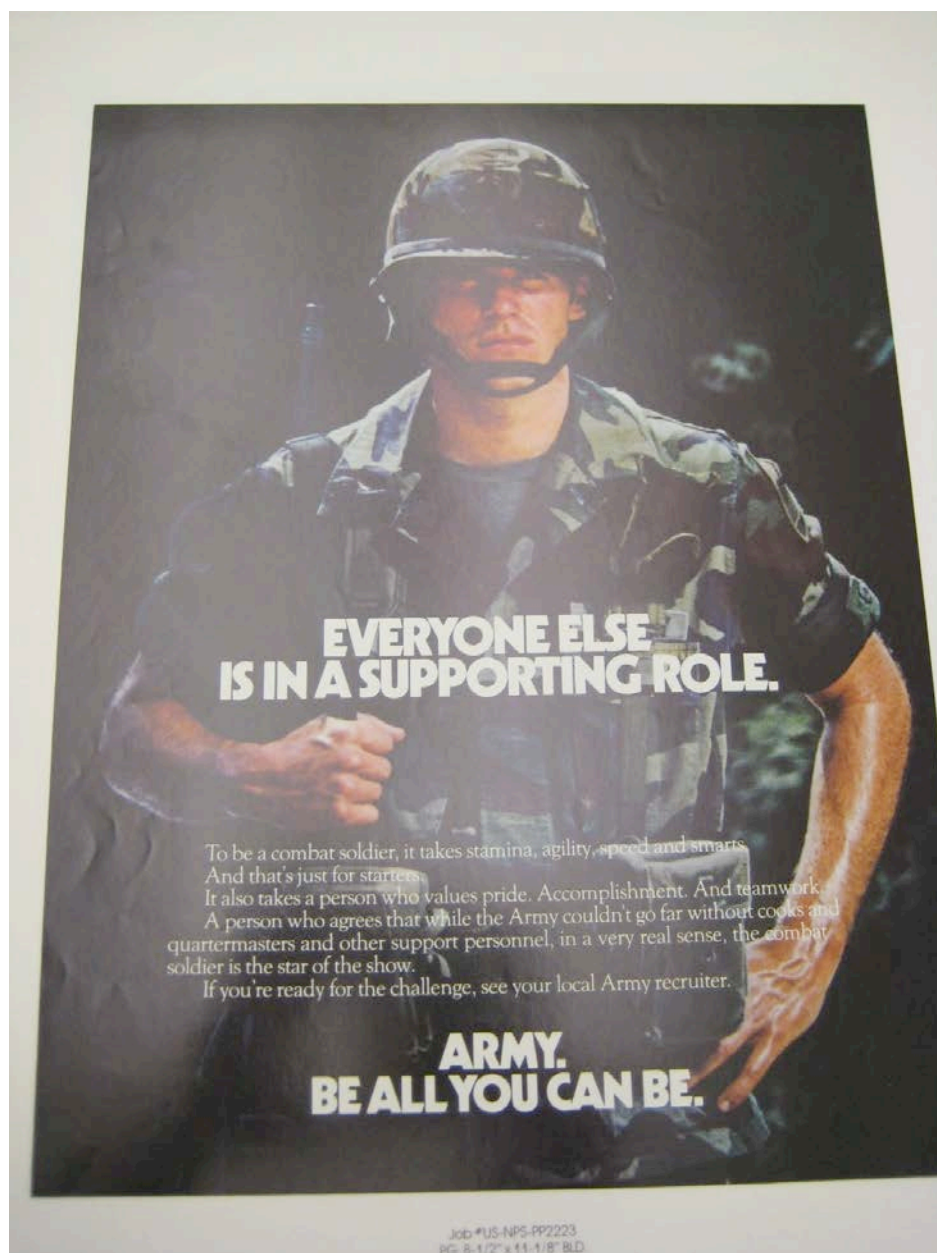


Figure 65. "Why should the Army be easy?"

In Figure 65, uniformed men in silhouette dangle from ropes.<sup>429</sup>

<sup>429</sup> Ayer Records, "'Life Isn't Easy,' NMAH, SI.





**Figure 66. "Everyone else in a supporting role."**

In Figure 66, a gun-toting white male faces forward.<sup>430</sup>

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<sup>430</sup> Ayer Records, "'Supporting Role,' NMAH, SI.



Figure 66's protagonist could have been the star of an action film. And the corresponding text offered no consolation prizes in its statement: "in a very real sense, the combat soldier is the star of the show."<sup>431</sup> While the statement was accurate in the simplest respects, that soldiers were and are needed to fight wars, the ad's refusal to mince words was surprising, considering earlier volunteer era recruiting ads. Statements about combat without a hint of self-consciousness would have never appeared in the earliest AVA advertisements. On some level, this ad was a tribute to the success of the volunteer transition, in the wake of unpopular war. It also indicated that even after years of courting racial and ethnic minority men as well as women of all racial and ethnic backgrounds; despite selling merit and ability over the primacy of any one demographic configuration; the "ideal soldier" in Ayer and the army's traditional views remained a strong, masculine, (handsome), white, man.

Through the 1980s, concerns about inclusion, equality, and merit all but disappeared from the visual and rhetorical landscape of army recruitment advertising. Individuality reigned supreme and ads portrayed military service as thrilling as live-action video games. For Ayer, part of the process of becoming as you, "be all you can be," involved powerful, traditional, often conventional, masculinity, like those from Figures. 64-66. In her study of the armed forces during the volunteer period, Melissa Brown argues that although the recruitment strategies used to transition to a volunteer force involved increased emphasis on individual benefits as well as demographic diversity (in recruiting women specifically), the AVF continues to rely on tropes of masculinity in recruitment communication. She writes:

Masculinity is still a foundation of the appeals made by the military but... each branch deploys various constructions of masculinity that serve its particular personnel needs and culture, with conventional martial masculinity being only one among them. Some

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<sup>431</sup> Ibid.

military watchers would claim that over the course of the AVF, the service branches other than the Marines have pursued a recruiting strategy that focuses only on economic benefits, that they try to appeal to women at the expense of men, that the ads are carefully gender balanced, and that masculinity is not part of the pitch. Based on an examination of recruiting advertisements, these claims can, for the most part, be rejected.<sup>432</sup>

While ads such as Figures. 65 and 66 offered glimpses of what army advertising became in the 1990s, they also harkened back to ads recruiting men during Vietnam (in Section 3.1, specifically Figures. 22-24). My research support's Brown's assertion, and employing conventional masculinity for recruitment transcends both draft-era as well as the AVF, despite the brief interruption to allow the American public to recover from Vietnam. For comparison, Figure 66 called to mind an ad from the Vietnam War (Figure 67).

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<sup>432</sup> Melissa T. Brown, *Enlisting Masculinity: The Construction of Gender in US Military Recruiting Advertising during the All-Volunteer Force*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012) 4.



**Figure 67. "Choose ARMY OCS."**

**Figure 67.** "Choose Army OCS." Figure 67's protagonist raised his gun.<sup>433</sup>

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<sup>433</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, "'Choose Army OCS,' magazine advertising copy," Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

A warrior trope conveyed conventional masculinity in both Figures. 66 and 67, even though many years and the volunteer transition separated them. The recognition in Figure 66 that all non-combat military roles were peripheral went unstated in Figure 67, which published in September 1968.

Though Ayer lost the army account in 1986, due to client enthusiasm for “Be All You Can Be,” the slogan transcended agencies to sell soldiering through 2001. The campaign did get a new tagline from Young and Rubicam, who won the bid for the account in 1987. Their pitch was, “Army: Get an Edge on Life,” which wound up being added to the end of the “Be All You Can Be” jingle.<sup>434</sup> “Get an Edge on Life,” focused even more so on individual incentives for enlistment. In 1986, the federal government banned Ayer from bidding on any further contracts due to corruption allegations in accounting records and the agency suffered greatly from this loss. In retrospect, in the wake of the ERA’s failure to pass, the swift request made by army officials to take a “pause” from recruiting women for the branch rendered insincere the many references to equality in army ads, claiming that merit mattered more so than gender. Although some radical feminists were skeptical of the masculine enclave that is the American military in the first place, the branch’s desire to stop seeking women for the force, actively provided concrete confirmation of the military’s priorities.<sup>435</sup> The acting Assistant Secretary of the Army ordered the number of enlisted women to be leveled off and to stop recruiting women, rendering previous advertising usage of feminist rhetoric as flagrant cooptation. Even the advertising

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<sup>434</sup> Beth Bailey, *America’s Army: Making the All-Volunteer Force* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009) 196.

<sup>435</sup> Cynthia Enloe, “Women: The Reserve Army of Army Labor,” *Review of Radical Political Economics*, 12:2 (July 1980) 42-52.

diminished non-combat MOS as mere “support,” adding insult to injury to those that advocated for military equality.

In 2001, the short-lived “Army of One” campaign was launched. The controversial slogan central to the new campaign, “Army of One” attempted to reflect the complicated relationship between popular culture that emphasized individuality and glorified nonconformity with service in an enclave of procedures, orders, and hierarchies. The slogan was unpopular within and beyond military circles for its cognitive dissonance and inherent contradictions. But the launch of the campaign evidenced the shift in military marketing practices, toward an even more micro-targeted method of reaching individuals. Military service was presented as a chance to exist in an action film. Roger Stahl examines the framing of military service as entertainment for thrill seekers via popular cultural venues like video games, films, extreme sports, and reality television programs.<sup>436</sup> And media outlets for recruitment diversified further to encompass video games, websites, and eventually social media venues. One of the most expensive and globally popular recruitment projects of the contemporary digital era came in the form of a video game titled, *America’s Army: The Official Game of the US Army*.

After the first few years of the volunteer were underway, campaigns like “Join the People,” “This is the Army,” and eventually, “Be All You Can Be,” fortified the volunteer concept by proving that even the most embattled of the armed forces could succeed via strategic, thoughtful, compelling advertising appeals. Historical distance between the American public and the Vietnam War enabled representations of military opportunities to be encompassing, including racial, ethnic, and gender diversity as well as the return of traditional allusions to soldiering and

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<sup>436</sup> Roger Stahl, *Militainment, Inc.: War, Media, and Popular Culture*, (New York: Routledge, 2009); Roger Stahl, “Have You Played the War on Terror?,” *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 23.2 (2006): 112-130.

combat, complete with depictions of weaponry and guns. Without the serviceperson trope employed in the early days of the volunteer era, the public relations work of recruitment advertising would have fell short. And without the emphasis advertisements placed on recruiting minorities and historically underprivileged groups, the volunteer concept may not have succeeded. With nods to civil rights and feminism, ads of the 1970s brought military service opportunities into the forefront. Budgets for advertising ballooned and Ayer launched the most recognizable military slogan of contemporary history. A brief examination of the post-Ayer era of army recruitment will follow in the conclusion.

## 6.0 CONCLUSION

As a child of the 1980s, I spent my share of time watching cartoons on Saturday mornings. I remember watching episodes of *G.I. Joe* with my brother and waiting to see which “real life” scenario would be included at the end of the episode to teach kids lessons about public safety. The lessons helped solidify the ideology of militarism in the eyes of children and parents by performing a public service in what was otherwise a blatantly pro-military program that assisted both with recruitment (at least for public opinion if not for enlistment) and public relations. Each of these lessons closed with the reminder that, “knowing is half the battle.” And that phrase represents concisely what has maintained my interest in this subject topic and this history. When people ask me what I research, whether they are other scholars in communication, academics from the social sciences, humanities, or biomedical sciences, undergraduates, grad students, faculty, or staff; persons otherwise removed from academia entirely, with no connection to the type of research required to complete a doctorate; whether they are from military families, themselves enlisted military/military veterans, or have no personal connections to military service; regardless of who I speak with about what I study, they know something about military recruitment. They have seen ads. They have visited museum exhibits of war propaganda. They remember G.I. Joe. They collected the “write to this armed service branch and get a free,” hat, poster, medal, pin, comic book, or other military ephemera that was promised in recruitment

campaigns from the volunteer era. They loved one of the video games. They read the comic books. They played with the little green army men. I could go on. The point is that no matter the background or demography, this topic resonates with all sorts of people. When I describe what I study, I am never met with eyes that glaze over or tune out. Instead, people light up with excitement, or anger, or skepticism. People are eager to share their own personal memories about interacting with these messages from propaganda, military advertising, recruitment, or pop culture. That this subject is simultaneously complex and incredibly accessible makes my work easier due to the conversations and suggestions for research direction that inevitable follow. Even when I speak with international colleagues for whom American military recruitment is less familiar, the discussion then turns to military recruitment across the globe. Indeed, knowing my topic and being able to learn from others' knowledge of it has been half the battle. But the second half of this battle makes up for the first. In striving to do justice to a tremendously complex but also broadly familiar subject matter, it is easy to be overwhelmed. It is easy to feel as though my voice has no place in this conversation. It is easy to talk myself out of doing this important work. Because I lack first-hand military experience I try to make up for it with enthusiasm and an open mind.

I am interested still in the history of advertising's moments of intersection with politics and culture. And this is an evolving, unraveling, dynamic subject matter. This topic is never static. Things change rapidly. That the most prominent and successful commercial ad firms also authored iconic public service and military messages fascinates me. Examining longer-term clients of advertising firms enables understanding the evolution of a partnership as much as a brand. Ayer's work for the army had to meet different challenges in different decades. And not all campaigns saw equal success. But each campaign required teams and research and testing. Each



campaign required pitches and revisions and strategy. And the assignment, described internally as one of the most important for advertising in contemporary time, required bridging notions about personal incentive with ideals of public good.

Ayer's approach to marketing the volunteer force underscored this goal, as an issue of their company newsletter, *Ayernews* described in August 1973.<sup>437</sup> Its cover photo featured Figure 44 from section 4.5, in which a recruiter was shown with a young civilian man, a great deal of text described the volunteer era's offerings, and the title of the ad read, "Now that you don't have to go, here's why you should."<sup>438</sup> The accompanying cover article examined the end of the draft and what that meant for Ayer's army client. It described the ad (Figure 44) as one of six decidedly different samples for the account, where the American people were approached with the tone, "of a corporate dialogue, ... acknowledging the end of the draft while at the same time emphasizing the many ways in which the army can benefit the individual as well as the nation."<sup>439</sup> Figure 48 from section 5.1 was another of the six ads from this series. Philosophically speaking, the article summarized how Ayer conceived of the differences between conscripted and volunteer-era recruitment, which, from my own research, represents an accurate portrait of army recruiting advertising's differences between the draft and volunteer eras. That is: the AVA provoked some necessary reprioritization in sales pitch, but the volunteer era did not require a

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<sup>437</sup> The article mentioned that the ad targeted "high school students and particularly to influencing adults." It was being tested in major newspapers, "a medium as yet untapped by other Armed Forces branches," and also ran in issues of *Newsweek*, *Reader's Digest*, starting in July of that year. "Army Recruitment Advertising Takes on New Tone: Corporate Dialogue Acknowledges End of Draft," *Ayernews* (August 1975) 1, in N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, "Business Records," NMAH, SI.

<sup>438</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, "'Now That You Don't Have to Go,' magazine advertising copy," Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

<sup>439</sup> N.W. Ayer Advertising Agency Records, "*Ayernews* August 1973, Business Records," Archives Center, NMAH, SI.

total or even very drastic reset in army advertising tactics. Instead, emphases shifted accordingly, focusing on individual benefits and civic contributions through service, with adjusting proportions. Those ratios of emphasis realigned, depending on the era. The truth of the matter is that the army in the twentieth century has always had to sell itself harder than the other armed forces, to mitigate its low status and its large volume of ranks to fill. This is why it hired Ayer back in the 1940s. Even during wartime drafts, the army (with the help of the advertising industry) has advertised to encourage branch selection among draftees. To adapt to a volunteer era, individual benefits became central, but civic benefits still mattered because the army brand needed to maintain positive associates with its image. But in order to appeal to the last contingents of the “me generation,” selling service with “me” first made sense. In draft-era ads, especially from the 1940s (see section 2), Ayer argued that civic benefits mattered in their national campaigns, placing individual benefits as additional justification for army enlistment. But even a few of the micro-targeted newspaper ads from section 2 that ran in the 1940s, individual benefits and incentives were the central pitch, especially when marketing to racial and ethnic minorities. Eventually, most draft-era ads aimed at men also adopted the “me first” configuration, particularly after the volunteer concept was on the horizon.

Incorporating the noble good with the individual good in advertising for the AVA enabled positive military public relations, by defending against reservations expressed in critical literature that spoke out against a volunteer concept. Fears that an all-volunteer force would sever the link between military service as a civic duty were allayed by including that military service benefits the nation as well as the person. And it is worth noting that although the volunteer concept changed the structure of obligation during times of war for many young men, it did not remove entirely a significant compulsory one. After all, the selective service system

still requires registration for all men, ages 18-25. Although there was little anxiety about returning to a draft model for recruitment, even during the height of “the Long War,” this debate will continue, and recruitment will shift with technologies, popular culture, politics, and policy changes.

## **6.1 AN OVERVIEW OF POST-AYER ARMY RECRUITMENT AND SOME FINAL THOUGHTS**

By 1981, the prominent advertising agency of N.W. Ayer and Son created their last in a long line of iconic slogans for the United States Army: “Be All You Can Be.” The transmission of the phrase and the broader recruitment campaign it represented were perhaps best articulated through the slogan’s catchy, celebratory jingle, featuring an unmistakably masculine chorus. Evocative of 1980s military pop culture like G.I. Joe and Rambo, this slogan straddled the volunteer era’s tension: between self-incentives and civic good. Polysemic interpretations enabled either or both understandings to come through for audiences. In being all one could, you were living up to your potential. But in order to reach that potential, one might also be a noble military serviceperson, demonstrating teamwork, hard work, skill, bravery, heroism, nobility, or any of the other advertised, patriotic, civic values attainable via soldiering. Although the slogan was in operation into 2001, the popular culture and countercultures of the 1990s reflected a general “Generation X”-related malcontent, informed by the angst-ridden, rebellious, nonconformist messages of grunge and punk rock music. As historian Grace Elizabeth Hale has

observed, postwar America saw the “nation of joiners,” morph into a “nation of outsiders.”<sup>440</sup> And the zeitgeist of the 1990s mutated things further. As youth culture became more fragmented, cynical, and postmodern than ever before, the advertising industry absorbed those values in targeting young people for consumer commercial campaigns.<sup>441</sup> “Be All You Can Be,” suddenly sounded too earnest, “lame,” and precious to entice a nation of outsiders to fill the volunteer ranks, posing a challenge for the Army’s recruitment ideology. “Be all you can be,” and the sentiment it represented became passé to the audience the Army targeted. And so, as journalist Matt Kennard claims in his book about recruitment, the military sought an “irregular army” of outsiders, tolerating bigotry, criminal records, and otherwise unsavory behavior in order to recruit enough volunteers to fight the War on Terror.<sup>442</sup> In many respects the spirit of this decision was encapsulated, albeit unintentionally in the short-lived but controversial replacement of “Be All You Can Be.” 2001’s “Army of One,” traded cognitive dissonance for nonconformist “outsider” appeal. Although 2006 saw the replacement of “Army of One,” with the current, grammatically ambivalent campaign, “Army Strong,” that “Army of One” was launched in the first place, spoke volumes about marketers’ estimation of the youth willing to enlist during the War on Terror. And although the noble aspects of soldiering still appeared in some of the recruitment from “Army of One,” they have been revitalized with much more prominence in “Army Strong.” “Army of One’s” misstep was with regard to public relations. It tried too hard to

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<sup>440</sup> Arthur M. Schlesinger, “Biography of a Nation of Joiners,” *American Historical Review* 50:1 (Oct. 1944) 1-25; Grace Elizabeth Hale, *A Nation of Outsiders: How the White Middle Class Fell in Love with Rebellion*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

<sup>441</sup> Martin Mayer, *Whatever Happened to Madison Avenue: Advertising in the '90s* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1991).

<sup>442</sup> Matt Kennard, *Irregular Army: How the US Military Recruited Neo-Nazis, Gang Members, and Criminals to Fight the War on Terror*, (New York: Verso, 2012) 152.

appeal narrowly to potential recruits without factoring in that military recruitment campaigns also perform public relations tasks.

Although the bulk of recent literature studying the volunteer transition suggests that recruiting advertising in the volunteer era shifted significantly to emphasize individual rewards, at the expense of advertising service as a civic good, my research reveals that army recruiting in particular combined positives for both individuals and for society going back to the 1940s. The input that ad industry leaders provided to the US government in working with the CPI and the OWI led to the formation of the Advertising Council. And all of this work yielded status for the industry as well as practice in learning how to market nontraditional commodities like military service and patriotism for government. The Ad Council continues to serve the public and improve the stature of the advertising industry via the positive public relations it generates. And private advertising firms continue to receive contracts from the Department of Defense in order to sell military service, literally and figuratively to the American public.

This study discovers that the process of designing appeals to women during the war in Vietnam provided ample opportunity for Ayer to gain experience in testing a volunteer recruiting advertising model. Even the iconic “Be All You Can Be” slogan appeared first in a recruiting ad for the Nurse Corps during the Vietnam War. And in the 1970s, when “alternative manning strategies,” as they were known, were being explored to ensure the All-Volunteer Force’s success, advertisements marketed meritocratic opportunities to racial and ethnic male minorities as well as to females from all racial and ethnic backgrounds with the language of civil rights and women’s liberation. Although the marketing of meritocracy and diversity may have never been more than public relations maneuvering, and was tempered in later decades of the volunteer concept, its inclusion along with the enlistee minorities it targeted was integral to the volunteer

era's success. And although scandals and controversies about sexism, racism, homophobia, and other bigotry in the ranks continue to appear in news coverage, when it comes to public policy, the American military is more diverse and inclusive than ever before.

In 2010, a Congressional bill repealed Don't Ask Don't Tell (DADT), the military policy regarding homosexuality and armed service, which banned harassment of closeted homosexual or bisexual service members but also prohibited service from anyone who was openly gay, lesbian or bisexual.<sup>443</sup> And in 2011, the Department of Defense lifted a ban on women from living with combat units and opened 14,500 positions that were previously closed to servicewomen.<sup>444</sup> In November 2012, with the legal counsel of the ACLU, four servicewomen sued the Pentagon and Secretary of Defense, Leon Panetta regarding the military's combat exclusion policy regarding women. The lawsuit charged that women were already serving in combat roles, but were going unrecognized due to the ban. And the combat exclusion closed more than 200,000 positions to women, narrowing their access to military opportunities as a result. By January 2013, Panetta announced he would be lifting the ban on women from combat roles, opening up thousands of front-line positions to them. In reality, women were serving already in combat positions that were not "front-line" or "elite commando" ones, such as in piloting warplanes or serving on ships in combat zones. Some women even were on the ground but unable to be acknowledged for their efforts in formal ways due to the ban. Women's promotions and advancements in the ranks were hindered due to this lack of recognition and its relationship with the ban. In 1994, the combat exclusion was adjusted partially but still barred

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<sup>443</sup> Elizabeth Bumiller, "Obama Ends 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' Policy," *New York Times*, 22 July 2011.

<sup>444</sup> Elizabeth Bumiller and Thom Shanker, "Pentagon Is Set to Lift Ban on Women in Combat Roles," *New York Times*, 23 January 2013.

women from infantry, armor, combat engineering, smaller scale special operations units, and artillery. Although the details of the ban being lifted are unfolding as I write this, it seems significant, especially after spending so much time making sense of the cognitive dissonance in marketing equality while mentioning the combat ban in the same breath. I am still not certain that armed service is a venue in which women can achieve equality. But as a woman who is not in the military, I am reluctant especially to criticize any policy measures poised to enable enlisted women to achieve status and recognition for their work.

When I began this study, I harbored many assumptions about service, advertising, the kinds of language that would be employed most often, the types of representations that would be included, the types of people for whom ads resonated, how messages would shift before and following the volunteer era, and I could go on. After spending years studying these messages and this history, I am left with more questions than I have assumptions. The captivating campaigns, the technologized tools, the calculated strategies, and the influences from popular culture, politics, and policy continue to change the landscape for recruitment constantly. This subject has been a moving target from the beginning and it is one that I hope to continue to study for decades to come.

## APPENDIX A

### CASE STUDY: THE OFFICIAL GAME OF THE US ARMY

On the 224<sup>th</sup> birthday of the United States, July 4<sup>th</sup> 2002, the US military unveiled what would eventually become an immensely popular multi-mediated recruitment, branding, and public relations strategy for the army branch. An interactive, online video game entitled, *America's Army*, accessible through an Internet website for no monetary cost, employed a complex multi-sensory approach, encouraging video gamers and potential recruits alike to *become*, by participating in missions that boasted realistic war simulation experiences. The successful development of this particular style of marketing and recruitment, known as the “advergame,” and increasingly as “militainment,” revolutionized advertising approaches across the various military institutions in the US and abroad.

The “Office Game of the US Army” boasts over nine million downloads and unique users, worldwide. The game play is structured as a “first person shooter,” occurring from the perspective of each user’s soldier character and gaming subjectivity. *America's Army* automatically generates an identity and avatar during the process of registration. The only option has been to play as a male, corresponding to previous military policies in the United States that restricted women enlistees from serving in overt combat roles. To date, you cannot generate a



female character, but you do encounter them in the game's medical and secretarial units. The game's specific objectives require players to advance their individual scores, rankings, and military titles by working in teams to complete various missions that simulate or at least promise to simulate a realistic contemporary military experience. The first person perspective occupied by players allows them to "see" their teammates' cyber-embodiments on their computer screens and be seen on the screens of their teammates. The atmosphere is participatory and interactive. And it has revolutionized strategic recruitment by becoming such a popular, accessible, and heavily merchandized branding tool for the army branch.

The "first person shooter" (of FPS) perspective of *America's Army* offered players the chance to experience realistic, but safe, distant, virtual soldiering. Users registered through the website to access and download files for the game. Prior to allowing registered users to play in teams with other gamers via the Internet, one must pass "basic training" tests to evaluate skill level and techniques. This process weeded out people who might inadvertently sabotage missions due to their lack of experience. Players who passed basic training, "offline" and separate from rank-increasing, mission game play, could advance to playing "live" in teams with other people who passed basic training. While each player operated within the team in order to advance in the game by completing missions, users were scored and ranked as individuals. This way, players were not penalized entirely for the actions of their less experienced teammates, and individuals could come and go the cyberspace without detriment to the unit. Proper 'netiquette' suggested users remained active in the game until a mission completed, but nothing explicitly forbade users' agency from coming and going. Even though players worked on teams to earn "honor points" and climb up the Army hierarchy, they were in constant competition with one another for these points. This ensured that less experienced players mingled with the expert

players while increasing their individual ranks. Game administrators monitored the online play to ensure that users operated according to the game's honor code and rules. If a player was caught shooting members of their own team, their squadron leader, or civilian populations in the simulated cyber-Middle East, they incurred demerits lowering their honor point scores. Multiple, consecutive infractions caused players to be banned from game play for an administrator-determined amount of time.

The interactive website housing *America's Army* offered users a variety of features to occupy time between game playing. The advergame component of the official website enjoyed recruitment advertisement ubiquity, linking to the US Army's main website at the bottom of every page. The top of the homepage included a visible calendar, highlighting upcoming, in-person and online *America's Army* events for players to attend. Also prominent were ads touting more recent synergistic expansions of the *America's Army* brand, including an arcade game, a graphic novel, and other merchandise tie-ins. There were 'Frequently Asked Questions' pages, with answers tailored to Mac users, Windows users, concerned parents of gamers, and game players themselves. Within the 'FAQ' sections, web administrators justified cyber-police patterns, user-censorship, and other facets of the site. And player agency meant that these game consumers were also producers of virtual media. Frustrated forum participants could seek uncensored refuge in one of the numerous 'unofficial,' *America's Army*-themed message board forums. Within the official website's "Community" link, users could interact with one another outside of game play. The "Community" included blogs authored by the most successful players, interviews with game researchers and developers, and content from 'authentic' members of the real *America's Army*: enlisted soldiers. There were tricks on how to succeed at the game most efficiently alongside trouble shooting tips. There was a bulletin board on which

announcements can be posted to inform players about the unofficial *America's Army*-related gatherings of people who play the game, indicating that the engagement in play, even when the play is post-human and disembodied, was a site for curiosity and interest. Finally, under the 'Community' page, as stated above, an expansive message board forum section had subforums to cover every possible topic related to *America's Army*. While players of *America's Army* could be as young as thirteen years old, the majority of the people who posted on the message board forum, "R and R," discussed politics, major purchases, voting, careers, and other adult-aged signifiers, indicating that they most were adults. the game itself, and an "R and R" section for topics unrelated to the game.

Surveys of players were conducted regularly by employees of the website to gather data about the effectiveness of this recruitment advergame. In the surveys, in common practice with most focus group research and surveys, gender was one of the first questions posed, so administrators were aware of broader demographics than those targeted. To encourage user participation in surveys, they offered random prize drawings to win *America's Army* t-shirts and stickers. Logoed merchandise could be purchased directly from the store, where you found gender-neutral gifts like mugs and stickers. But the apparel was sized as menswear. The action figures, sold for ten dollars plus shipping costs, were both masculine looking male figures, wielding guns. Historically, the action figure toy genre targets a younger male audience. These items were no longer available for purchase as of 2009, and were replaced with additional projects: stickers featuring military graphics and icons, "drinkware" including coffee and travel mugs, and "custom edition gear grip pro gaming harness," for the most serious of players. The pro gaming harness appeared to be a laptop and travel case featuring the *America's Army* logo. More recent expansions of this synergistic adver-game project included an arcade game, a

graphic novel, and sequel missions with new game challenges. Demographic analysis of their online merchandise store and the venues through which developers expanded the brand indicate that their target audience continued to be young but post-adolescent men. The shift away from selling the action figures indicated an attempt to target slightly older young men than in years previous.

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