FROM DEPENDENTS TO INTERDEPENDENCE: THE ARMY WIFE IDEAL AND THE MAKING OF ARMY FAMILY POLICY, 1942-1983

BY

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the cultural concept of the Army wife ideal as it appeared and was negotiated in prescriptive literature, periodicals, and lived experiences from 1942 to 1983. Codified in response to the massive influx of married soldiers entering the Army during WWII, the historically-rooted Army officer's wife ideal provided a platform for the Army to shape the millions of brides into what military leaders needed for success—devoted morale boosters dedicated to the Army and its mission. In codifying the ideal and altering it after the war to engage soldiers' wives as advocates for the Army and its mission, purveyors of the ideal also created a platform for wives to shape the Army into what they needed to meet the unique demands associated with life married to service. Actual Army wives, as individuals and as part of national advocacy organizations, modeled the foundational elements of the ideal while simultaneously challenging the Army, Department of Defense, jurists, and national leaders to help them address the realities they faced married to the Army. Their efforts made it clear that the strength of the Army was closely tied to the strength of the Army family. Those who engaged in defining and shaping the meaning and responsibilities of Army wives (and, more broadly, military wives) shaped U.S. Army family policy and transformed the Army from an institution that viewed families as merely dependents to one that embraced them as interdependent partners.

Dedication

To my maternal grandfather, Charles Garland Burns, who sparked my love of history, and who took me to his World War II Army reunion where the idea for this dissertation began. And to the wives of the Lucky Seventh, including my maternal grandmother, Mildred Ansardi Burns, who inspired and informed this study.

Acknowledgments

It is fitting that a trip with my maternal grandfather inspired this study of Army wives. All of my life, my grandpa wove stories of the Great Depression and World War II into our time together. A map of the route he and other members of the 7th Armored Division fought through Europe during World War II hung in his office, and copies of books about the war lined a wall of shelves in his den. Each year, he and my grandmother attended reunions of the Lucky Seventh. In 2002, after my grandmother had passed, my grandpa took me with him to Lucky Seventh's reunion in San Antonio, Texas. While there, I heard stories from the wives of those who had served alongside my grandpa and began to wonder how they knew what to do and why they seemed to think, as an Army wife later told me, that they had "fought the war together." I remain eternally grateful to my grandpa for all he did to help me discover and nurture a love of history, and to his beloved wife/my dynamic grandma for always encouraging me (and all of her grandchildren) to "remember who you are." Thank you, Charlie and Mildred.

My paternal grandmother, Peggy Igoe McMurray, also nurtured my love of history. Grandma Peggy could (and would) speak for hours on end about all topics of family, local, national, and international history. I am grateful to her for the example she set for our family, especially the women in it. Because of how much she valued education, it seemed natural to me to want to pursue an advanced degree. Because of her strong will, I learned a sense of determination that served me very well during the process of writing this dissertation. And because her ambitions were so often thwarted by the time in which she lived, I have always felt a responsibility to seize opportunities to have my voice heard and to lead. Thank you.

Other family members also delighted me with stories of the past, as well as support for this dissertation. First and foremost, to my dad, William Igoe McMurray, thank you for instilling

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This work would not have been possible without the support, guidance, example, feedback, and assistance of my dissertation committee. Thank you to Dr. Kim Warren, for her support, keeping me focused on completion, and the many hours she spent on my work. The arc of this study became clear in a class Dr. Ann Schofield taught. I will always appreciate her for pushing me to deepen my analysis of parts of *U.S. Lady* magazine and for reading and commenting on two versions of the same research paper that helped me understand the direction

of this dissertation. Dr. Brent Metz and Dr. Beth Bailey's comments will help me immensely as I work to make this dissertation into a publishable book. Thank you.

None of my scholarly work would have been possible without the influence, guidance, support, editing, mentoring, love, and friendship of Dr. Miriam Forman-Brunell. There are not enough words to thank her for all she has done for me as a scholar and as a person. I doubt I would have had the thought or courage to pursue a doctorate in history without her, and I *know* I would not have been able to get through the program without her. I am eternally grateful that she took me under her wing.

A number of other faculty members, students, and staff at the University of Kansas also helped me during my graduate work. During my first two semesters as a graduate student, I had the privilege of serving as a teaching assistant for two of the most phenomenal and effective teachers I have ever seen in a classroom. Thank you to Dr. Leslie Tuttle and Dr. Jonathan Earle for setting an incredible example, mentoring me as a teacher, and supporting me as a friend. Thanks also to Dr. Jeffrey Moran for his helpful feedback and all of the opportunities to laugh while learning, and to Dr. Jenny Weber for making me a better writer and encouraging me throughout the program. Thanks to Dr. Marta Vicente and my classmates in WGSS 801 (Cammie Brennan, Katy Cook, Jenny Guthrie, Mary M'Ba, Bryce Myers, Sho Ogawa, Chris Robinson, Lisa Stockton, Stephanie Stillo, and Sherry Warren) who helped me grapple with feminist theory and prepared me with the tools necessary to more deeply understand the power of discourse, militarization, and marginalization.

The wonderful librarians at the University of Kansas, especially Tami Albin, Sara Morris, and Carmen Orth-Alfie, also deserve thanks for providing much-needed assistance on various parts of this study. Kathy Buker at the U.S. Army Combined Arms Research Library helped me

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As a historian, it is difficult to examine any event without first looking at the subject decades before the scope of the study begins. For this dissertation, it meant looking at the precedents Army officers' wives set dating back to the Revolutionary War. For me as a student of history, it means noting the influence of a number of very special teachers who contributed to my desire to learn more and, eventually, complete a doctorate. Thank you to the following teachers and professors, who helped nurture my love of history and learning: Mary Ann Didde, a trained history instructor who I was lucky enough to have as the most kind and loving Kindergarten teacher and whose enthusiasm for me and my efforts to complete my dissertation put the wind in my sails on several occasions; Deborah Grechus and Suzanne Sybert, who assigned some of the most memorable history lessons that made me want to learn more; Barry Reynolds and Jim George, the most inspirational and transformative teachers who taught me to love words and see that the value of learning as the process, not the grade; Nancy Briggs, who demonstrated every day the power of contagious enthusiasm; Kris Larson, who taught me the

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Introduction

For as long as men have fought wars, women have always provided necessary skills for waging it. Throughout history, wives, sisters, daughters, girlfriends, prostitutes, and the poor often followed military camps providing health care, laundry services, sexual and emotional sustenance, and even military support for fighting forces. Although women performed tasks essential to the proper functioning of any given military, commanders traditionally viewed them as nuisances and did not officially sanction their presence. Military officials only allowed wives of high-ranking officers in the U.S. to accompany their husbands to various stations. Despite the positive impact officers' wives made on readiness and morale, prior to World War II, the Army's approach to families was best summed up by its long-held adage: "If the Army wanted you to have a wife, they would have issued you one."

On August 15, 1983, Army Chief of Staff General John A. Wickham, Jr. turned the axiom on its head with the release of the *White Paper, 1983: The Army Family*. In the twenty-three-page report, he argued that there existed a "sense of interdependence" between the Army and Army families.[1] "It is not a we/they situation," Wickham said of the relationship between the Army and Army families, "it is us—US as in U.S. Army."[2] As interdependent partners, both the Army and Army families relied on one another. Whereas families depended on the Army for housing, income, health care, education, and community, the Army relied on families, especially wives, to support the Army and work on behalf of it. The publication of Wickham's white paper spurred the development of groundbreaking policies and programs that aimed to embrace family

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[1] U.S. Army, Chief of Staff, *White Paper, 1983: The Army Family*, by John A. Wickham, Jr. (Washington DC: Office of the Chief of Staff of the Army, 1983), cover letter.

[2] Ibid.

members "as true partners" in achieving the Army mission. These included the development of the Army Family Action Plan, a formal process through which families had the opportunity to shape the standard of living in the Army, as well as the development of Family Support Groups, the predecessor of Family Readiness Groups that exist today.[3] In its first three decades of existence, the Army Family Action Plan process led to 128 legislative changes and 184 policy changes, including issues related to housing, relocation, medical care and benefits, minimum standards for Army child care, and education for Army children.[4] This acknowledgment and fostering of interdependence between the Army and Army families represented a major change from the Army's previous conception of family members as troublesome dependents.

In a second white paper on the Army family released in 2003, Army Chief of Staff Eric Shinseki cited demographic transformations within the Army that included more married soldiers and the requirements of the all-volunteer force as motivating factors for General Wickham to initiate "the first systemic effort to design programs, policies, and a research agenda comprehensive enough to address the Army's family concerns as a whole."[5] While there is validity to this argument, the official explanation oversimplifies and elides the process of cultural

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[3] Ibid., 23.

[4] "Army Family Action Plan: DOD Working with Families," *Military Times*, December 1, 2014, accessed October 1, 2016, http://www.militarytimes.com/story/military/benefits/2014/12/01/mission-family-army-family-action-plan/19739437/.

[5] U.S. Army, Chief of Staff, *The Army Family: A White Paper*, by Eric Shinseki (Washington DC: Office of the Army Chief of Staff, 2003). See also Jennifer Mittlestadt, *The Rise of the Military Welfare State* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015) and John Worsencroft, "Family Matters: The United States Army and the Search for Stability in the Reagan Era, 1980-1984" (The Professor Russell F. Weigley Award 2012 Honorable Mention, Army Heritage Center Foundation, 2012), accessed October 22, 2014, https://www.armyheritage.org/education-programs/for-students/weigley-award.

and institutional change, one in which Army wives' played an active role. How and why has the relationship between the Army and families, specifically wives, changed over time? How did the Army and Army wives identify and negotiate the expectations of each other? How did the Army's conception of Army families change from dependents to interdependence? What role did Army wives play in that change?

Between the pre-WWII axiom and the issuing of *White Paper, 1983: The Army Family* there was a major philosophical and policy shift in the ways in which the U.S. Army viewed families, which included the development of official policies, benefits, and practices that were not in place when the Army axiom was in place. This study complicates the history of the Army's changing relationship with families by exploring the Army's investment in the creation and dissemination of the ideal of the Army officer's wife and the role that ideal played from its codification from 1942 to Wickham's call for the development of programs that fostered a "sense of interdependency" in 1983.[6] Prescriptive manuals, periodicals, and personal experiences related to the Army officer's wife ideal shed light on the changing relationship between the Army and Army families. The Army officer's wife ideal is a set of historically rooted values, norms, and assumptions meant to guide Army wives in their private and public lives. Although deemed an ideal for officers' wives, the ideal, like officers' wives themselves, was meant to shape the expectations and behavior of enlisted wives as well. The cultural concept of the Army officer's wife ideal normalized compliance with the Army mission by inspiring the devotion of wives of Army officers and enlisted men. Because the Army did not recognize wives as official members, the ideal was neither an official order nor a static code. Instead, the fluid principles

[6] U.S. Army, Chief of Staff, *White Paper, 1983*, cover letter.

and practices shifted over time as the Army at times in contention with Army officers' wives reshaped the embodied ideal. How Army wives interacted with the ideal and its purveyors reveals that negotiations over how wives could best serve the Army and how the Army could best serve Army families began long before Wickham called for the development of a comprehensive Army family policy that conceptualized the relationship between the Army and Army family as interdependent. This dissertation complicates the history of the Army's changing relationship with families by exploring the construction of the ideal of the Army officer's wife and the role that prescription played from its codification in 1942 to Wickham's call for the development of programs that fostered a "sense of interdependency" in 1983.[7]

This dissertation argues that the ideal of the Army officer's wife, as it was defined, invoked, prescribed, and promoted from World War II to the 1983, created a platform from which the Army defined the duty of wives to the military and a springboard for wives reconciling military and marital expectations with personal desires. Inscribed on the cultural body of the Army officer's wife ideal are the expectations negotiated between the Army and generations of Army wives. It is important to note that prescriptive literature tells us how the Army *wanted* Army wives to conduct themselves, not what they actually did. In invoking and engaging with the ideal, real Army wives commanded the attention of military, political, and international leaders and ultimately shaped U.S. Army policy. Prescriptive manuals, periodicals, oral histories with actual officers' wives serving from World War II through 1983, Army policies, and legislation serve as evidence of the intense debate occurring around the relationship between spouses, the service, and the state.

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[7] Ibid.

More than a history of military spouses, this is a socio-cultural study of intellectual and institutional change within the Army to meet its every-changing requirements in the post-WWII world. The publication of guidebooks defining the Army officer's wife ideal and sheds light upon the importance of spouses to military planners. The ideal was not static. While foundational elements of the ideal remain constant—the Army always needed wives to put the Army first and boost morale, purveyors of the ideal and Army wives themselves demanded changes to various prescriptions based on the circumstances of various time periods, including the realities of war. Changes to the Army officer's wife ideal in prescriptive and popular literature reveal an active debate about the relationship between Army wives, the Army, the nation, and the state.[8]

Steeped in the rhetoric of idealized family values, morality, and patriotism, and relying on essentialized depictions of men and women, WWII-era prescriptive literature that initially codified the ideal, conscripted wives of Army men of all ranks into the service of the military and the state. Popular culture and guidebooks published after the war—like short stories about military spouses featured in *U.S. Lady* magazine—reinforced the ideal by highlighting and normalizing the military's expectations of officers' wives and those meant to aspire to be like them. Examination of these discursive sources and the standards they set for the everyday lives of Army wives reveals the Army's agenda for its brides—that they dedicate themselves strictly to their husbands and the military—as well as brides' agenda for the Army: that it provide the services wives deemed important to fulfilling the ideal and/or themselves. The gendered, patriarchal, and militarized ideal articulated in various etiquette books and perpetuated by

[8] For more on how cultural symbols like the Army officer's wife represent a site of negotiation of other issues, see Miriam Forman-Brunell, *Babysitter: An American History* (New York: New York University Press, 2009).

prescriptive and popular sources within and outside the Army community influenced women's domestic, political, and social actions.

Army wives did not simply accept the Army's prescriptions for their lives. Like the ideal, they were not monolithic. Over the course of four decades of engagement with the ideal, Army wives' personal performance of the ideal shaped the Army. Influenced by changes to the ideal that included calls for engagement in domestic and foreign affairs as well as social movements, Army wives challenged the ideal to accommodate the realities they faced as Army wives. By the mid-1960s, Army wives were not only negotiating for their own individual circumstances, they were organizing collective action that gained publicity and garnered the attention and responses of Army, political, and international leaders.

This study of changing ideas and policies related to families within the U.S. Army complicates women's history, particularly the historiographical debate about the impact of the WWII on women by showing that the wartime experience for Army wives launched a decades-long debate about their relationship with the Army that shaped Army policy and practices, U.S. legislation, and foreign policy. It also aims to challenge military historians to account for the significant contribution of spouses to military affairs. Far from dependents, Army wives were active agents in the shaping of U.S. Army family policy as well as contributors to the Army's mission at home and abroad.

Scope

The Army is the focus of this dissertation because it is the oldest and largest branch of the U.S. military. The ideal of the Army officer's wife sought to reach a predominantly white, middle-class, heterosexual population of women married to college-educated Army officers

serving nine or more years. Although limited to a specific audience, officers' wives set the standard for other spouses to emulate, so enlisted wives and eventually husbands of female officers and same-sex partners have had to contend with cultural conceptions of what it meant to be married to the Army. Since the end of World War II, the percentage of married officers has ranged between 70.1 and 88.1 per cent. Enlisted marriage rates were lower, ranging form 30.7 percent in 1953 to 52.3 percent in 2011.[9] The total number of Army spouses varied based on the size of the Army over time, from an estimated three million during World War II to just fewer than 300,000 in 2014.[10]

The Army's transition from viewing families as dependents to acknowledging and fostering the interdependence between the Army and Army family represents the culmination of a four-decade-long debate centered on what it meant to be an Army wife that began during World War II. Due to the manpower requirements of World War II, the U.S. Senate Committee

[9] Nancy L. Goldman, "Trends in Family Patterns of U.S. Military Personnel During the 20th Century," in *The Social Psychology of Military Service*, ed. Nancy L. Goldman and David R. Segal (Beverly Hills/London: Sage, 1976), 126; Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Military Community and Family Policy), *2014 Demographics: Profile of the Military Community* (Washington, DC, 2014), 35, accessed May 22, 2016, http://download.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/Reports/2014-Demographics-Report.pdf.

[10] Bureau of Labor Statistics estimate in William M. Tuttle, *Daddy's*, *Gone to War: The Second World War in the Lives of America's Children* (New York: Oxford, 1993), 31; Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Military Community and Family Policy), *2014 Demographics*, 44.

on Military Affairs suspended prohibitions limiting officers' rights to marry in 1942.[11] The resulting flood of millions of married men into military service resulted in "a pronounced shift in the internal structure of the armed forces" from a single-man's fighting force to a "familistic institution."[12] In addition to changing the composition of the Army, married soldiers and their wives also changed military and government policies, which were unprepared to provide housing, allowances, medical care, and other essential services for the wave of soldiers and their families entering the Armed Forces during World War II. In 1942, the Roosevelt Administration tasked the Federal Security Agency (FSA) with studying how and to what extent the military should be responsible for the welfare of military wives.

Throughout 1942, military directives and federal legislation responded to the FSA findings, formalizing the connection of soldiers' and officers' dependents to the military and the state. In February of 1942, Secretary of War Henry Stimson directed the Judge Advocate General, leader of the legal arm of the Army, to provide legal advice and assistance to soldiers and their dependents throughout the Army. That same month, Stimson oversaw the creation of Army Emergency Relief (AER), a private nonprofit organization that collected and administered funds to distressed Army servicemen and their families. In the summer of 1942, Congress passed the Servicemen's Dependents Allowance Act, which provided direct financial support to

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[11] U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Military Affairs, *Suspensions of All Prohibitions against the Marriage of Officers*, 77th Cong., 2nd sess., 1942. Between 1940 and 1942, an average of one thousand servicemen married every day. Beth Bailey, "Marriage," in *The Reader's Companion to American History*, ed. Eric Foner and John Arthur Garraty (Boston, Houghton-Mifflin, 1991), 700-02. The military grew from one hundred eighty thousand soldiers and officers in 1938 to eight million by the end of World War II. Rich Anderson, "US Army in World War II," *Military History Online*, February 11, 2007, accessed February 1, 2013, http://www.militaryhistoryonline.com/wwii/usarmy/introduction.aspx.

[12] Goldman "Trends in Family Patterns," 119-21.

dependents. The law allocated monthly payments of $50 for a wife, $12 for one child, and an additional $10 for each additional child. Soldiers contributed $22 from their paychecks to support their families; the U.S. government supplied the balance.[13] Congress set the initial payment date for September 1, 1942.[14] This dedication of funds subsidizing military families reflected both the enormity of the U.S. commitment to the war effort, as well as the military and the state's growing concern for the families of military personnel.

The following month, October 12, 1942, the War Department created the Office of Dependency Benefits (ODB) to administer family allowances. Brig. Gen. H.H. Gilbert oversaw approximately 10,000 people who staffed the ODB. From their offices in Newark, New Jersey, Gilbert ad the ODB staff processed and distributed over four million family allowance checks a month.[15] From October 1942 to August 1945, the ODB disbursed over thirteen billion dollars to nearly four million military dependents. Of those, nearly three million were Army wives.[16] By providing for a system of services, allotments, and allowances to military dependents, the AER, the Servicemen's Dependent Allowance Act and the ODB integrated dependents into the military

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[13] "Army Explains Allowances for Soldiers' Dependents," *New Journal and Guide*, August 1, 1942, 4. See also Denzel C. Cline, "Allowances to Dependents of Servicemen in the United States," *Annals of the American Academy of Politics* (May 1943): 227.

[14] Harry Grossman and Robert H. Cole, "Some Observations on the Distribution of Family Allowance Benefits in World War II," *American Sociological Review* 10, no. 5 (October 1945): 614. See also Betty Sowers Alt and Bonnie Domrose Stone, *Campfollowing: A History of the Military Wife* (New York: Praeger, 1991).

[15] Grossman and Cole "Some Observations," 615. Harry Grossman, "Administration of the Servicemen's Dependents Allowance Act of 1942," *Social Security Bulletin* 6, no. 7 (July 1943), 21.

[16] U.S. Army, Chief of Staff, *The Army Family*, 2; Bureau of Labor Statistics estimate in Tuttle, *Daddy's Gone to War*, 31.

and reversed long-standing policies regarding families of military personnel that treated families as nuisances to rather than as dependents.

The conceptualization of Army wives as *dependents* persisted until 1983 when Wickham fundamentally redefined spouses as partners. The *White Paper, 1983: The Army Family* contributed further by creating a forum where family members (primarily spouses) could address their needs and concerns with Army leaders.[17] Although the release of Wickham's *White Paper, 1983: The Army Family* institutionalized the interdependent partnership between the Army, Army wives, and their families, the debate about what "partnership" means persists today. While transformations in Army demographics that include retaining an All-Volunteer Force, male spouses of female soldiers, and LGBT partners could challenge the authority of the idealized conception of military spouses, the Army officer's wife ideal continues to try to define what the Army expects from spouses and what spouses can expect from the Army.

The Ideal

The perceptions and expectations of Army wives were rooted in precedent and protocol. Army officers' wives starting with Martha Washington had been idealized as loyal to their husbands, patriotic in their actions, subservient to the military, and powerful morale-boosters. The officer's wife ideal called on wives to put the Army's mission first and dedicate themselves to supporting soldiers' spirits. The foundational principles she embodied informed advice on all aspects of Army officers' wives' everyday lives—from marriage to homemaking and childrearing to socializing, Army leaders expected senior officers' wives who they allowed to

[17] Laura Avery, *Implementing the Army Family Covenant: How Well is the Army Doing?* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 2009), 6-7.

accompany their husbands to various posts and encampments to move without complaint as the Army ordered, tolerate long absences from their spouses while maintaining the home fires, and submit to Army rules and regulations even though they were not themselves Army personnel. The ideal directed wives to attend to their husbands' morale while also caring for all the men under their husbands' command, making the best of whatever conditions and supplies the Army provided, hosting meals and parties, and always remaining in good spirits.

Until shortly before the U.S. entered the Second World War, the Army's long-standing expectations of the imagined officer's wife remained implicit. Army leaders drew upon a long-held tradition of transforming war brides into proper Army officers' wives through the mentoring of more senior officers' wives until war broke out at the end of 1941. Like the military and government agencies, the senior officers' wives who had been inculcating new officers' wives into to the Army's way of life for generations, were unprepared to socialize the millions of women who married soldiers and officers during WWII. Without firm knowledge of and conformity to Army protocol and procedures, the flood of new Army brides and the demands of their young families would draw away resources from the military's war mission, potentially overwhelming the Army.

In order to keep the military system functioning, wives had to be made willing to support the Army mission and their husbands' morale by: being ready to move according to military needs, accepting and reinforcing military hierarchies, raising patriotic children, volunteering on behalf of the Army, and being prepared for deployment, separation, and death. But the Army had neither the staff nor the resources to teach *every* new bride how to follow its protocol and procedures. To fill the gap in personnel, Army leaders needed a new method to train Army brides on topics ranging from preparing for deployment to preparing for death, from Army pay to

pensions, and from servicemen's income tax to addressing mail to servicemen.[18] At the same time as the military and the state debated the Servicemen's Dependents Allowance Act, an Army commander asked Nancy Shea, a "seasoned Army wife," to make the Army's expectations of its dependents explicit in a variety of "semi-official" guidebooks aimed at officers' wives.[19] Over two decades of marriage to West Point Graduate Augustine "Gus" Shea, Shea accumulated a "definite set of rules" she was "glad to pass along" to others like her.[20] Following the commander's request, Shea dutifully wrote a manual for new Army brides and secured a publisher.

The Army Wife, Shea's pioneering guide first published in 1942, included hundreds of pages of social customs aimed to socialize officers' wives into the Army's militarized culture. Drawing upon the advice of numerous Army officers and their wives, the handbook claimed to offer "a clear account of what the Army wife may expect from the Service and what the Service

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[18] The importance of spouses knowing and conforming to military protocol is evident in Collins's *Army Woman's Handbook*, in which 173 pages are dedicated to defining allotments, regulations, shipping goods and mail, life insurance, legal aid, wills, property rights, and other procedures, and a mere forty one pages are dedicated to homemaking, etiquette, entertaining, and organizations for women in the Army. Clella R. Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook* (New York: Whittlesey House, 1942).

[19] Although the manual was not published directly by the military, the author was encouraged to write the manual by an Army colonel. Also, military advisors including several Majors and Brigadier General contributed to each edition, which maintained a "semi-official status." By 1966, the manual was revised with the "full cooperation of Pentagon Authorities"Nancy Shea and Anna Perle Smith, *The Army Wife*, 4th ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), dust jacket. One of Shea's contemporaries, Clella R. Collins, noted that the advice she offered about benefits in *Army Woman's Handbook* was "written from one Army woman to another," her advice actually was "largely a rewriting of material from recent War Department Bulletins." Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook,* 6.

[20] "Author of 'Army Wife' Tells of Evacuation," *Los Angeles Times*, March 1, 1942, 22.

expects of her."[21] Although Shea addressed the manual to officers' wives, the ideal was meant to shape the realities and expectations of all Army wives. Shea's "semi-official" construction of the Army wife ideal included a prescription for women married to the Army: model Army wives would devote themselves to the Army mission and readiness through unending sacrifices for the good of their husbands, the Army, and the state. Consistent with the dominant middle-class domestic ideals of the postwar era, Shea informed Army wives that they had fundamental responsibilities to tend to the home, family, community (via volunteerism), and, most importantly, their husbands' morale**.** Yet, because wives of both enlisted and commissioned Army men also lived under the authority of the state, the paradigmatic Army officer's wife also differed distinctively from broader gender ideals. As Shea's guidebook reveals, the Army not only relied on a wife to be "feminine," but also loyal to patriarchy at its highest levels—the military and the state—through her devotion to her: (1) husband and his military mission; (2) home (that kept him supplied); raise patriotic children (potential future soldiers or soldiers' spouses); (3) service, paid, and unpaid work (that kept the bases running); (4) willingness to observe social customs and obligations (that perpetuated the Army culture and the military system); and (5) uplifted spirits (despite frequent relocation). A lack of conformity to the overlapping expectations, the handbook warned, led to an Army wife's failures as a woman, military wife, and an American![22]

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[21] Nancy Shea, *The Army Wife*, revised ed. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1942), front book cover.

[22] For more on the difference between military and corporate life, see Ellwyn R. Stoddard and Claude E. Cabanillas, "The Army Officer's Wife: Social Stresses in a Complementary Role," in *The Social Psychology of Military Service*, ed. Nancy L. Goldman and David R. Segal, (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1976).

Long unrecognized as a historical document, *The Army Wife* importantly served to conscript wives and to construct an ideal to live by. While the guidebook provided a way to train new brides without taxing the Army system or officially incorporating wives as members of the regiment, Shea authoritatively informed unwitting recruits that, "'You're in the Army now.'"[23] Advertised as a book "women want" that "covers every problem of Army life," and gave readers "everything you need to know to assure your husband's success and your happiness" and included "the answers to women's problems in a world at war," *The Army Wife* quickly became a national best seller.[24] Broadly circulated, by March of 1942, the manual was in its fifth printing.[25]

[23] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1966, 1.

[24] *The Army Wife* was advertised in the *New York Times* no less than five times during World War II. For advertisements quoted, see Advertisement, *New York Times*, November 8, 1942, SM38; and Display Ad 103, *New York Times*, January 9, 1944, BR12. Two articles note the popularity of *The Army Wife:* "Three Honored by Pen Women," *The Washington Post*, December 6, 1942, S11 (This article also notes that another instruction manual penned by Shea, *The Navy Wife*, was a best-seller); Fanny Butcher, The Literary Spotlight, *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 10, 1946, B10. Shea penned an article in the October 1957 edition of *U.S. Lady*, in which her byline reads: "Mrs. Shea, a service wife for more than 35 years has built a well-deserved reputation for herself as an authority on service etiquette through her lectures and such books as *The Army Wife*." Nancy Shea "Service Etiquette," *U.S. Lady*, October 1957, 33. The popularity of the manual is also evident in newspaper coverage about its author, Nancy Shea. In *The Washington Post* from November 21, 1942 to September 30, 1943, for example, seven articles featured Nancy Shea's literary inspirations and endeavors and her personal life. The *Chicago Daily Tribune*, *New York Times*, and *Los Angeles Times* also ran stories about Shea and her work.

[25] "Author of 'Army Wife' Tells of Evacuation," *Los Angeles Times*, March 1, 1942, 22.

Nevertheless, by the end of World War II, other advice manuals had emerged to transform the millions of new war brides into ideal Army wives.[26] Clella Collins, an experienced Army Colonel's wife and President of the Association of Army Wives, wrote *Army Woman's Handbook*, the most publicized other than Shea's manual. More than just advice books, *The Army Wife*, *Army Woman's Handbook,* and other advice literature aimed at Army officers' wives are significant historical texts that shed light on the ideal Army officer's wife as the military imagined her.[27] The wartime editions of *The Army Wife* and *Army Woman's Handbook* aimed to prepare women for their role as Army officers' wives by providing a good deal more than useful household advice; they codified an ideal of Army wives as supportive of their husbands and subservient to the military.

The Army Wife and other contemporary publications set into motion a thriving subgenre of advice literature aimed at the wives of military men that the military would continue to endorse long after World War II. Since the 1940s, a plethora of prescriptive manuals and periodicals that promote other iterations of the wartime ideal have similarly sought to socialize

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[26] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*. Other advice manuals published during the war include: Clella R. Collins, *Welcome Home, My Darling! A Handbook on Family, Money and Morale for the Veteran's Wife and Mother* (Macon, GA: Lyon, Harris and Brooks, 1945); Marion May Dilts, *Army Guide for Women* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1942); and Catherine Redmond, *Handbook for Army Wives and Mothers and for Daughters, Sisters, Sweethearts, Grandmothers and All American Women Who Have a Soldier Away at War* (Washington: Infantry Journal and Penguin Books, 1944).

[27] Although neither manual was directly published by the military, Army colonels encouraged Shea and Collins to write their guidebooks. Dilts notes that she based her advice on "Army Regulations, Field Manuals, Technical Manuals, official circulars, and other War Department publications." Dilts, *Handbook for Army Wives*, Author's Foreward. Also, military advisors including several Majors and Brigadier General contributed to each edition of *The Army Wife*. The 1966 edition of *The Army Wife,* bosted it was published with the "full cooperation of Pentagon Authorities" and maintained a "semi-official status." Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1966, dust jacket.

officers' wives to behave in ways that benefits the Army. While the foundational elements of the ideal always remained intact, specific suggestions related to homemaking, socializing, volunteering, employment, and motherhood varied based on the military's mission and broader social transformations. Prescriptions calling on wives to advocate on behalf of the Army prevalent in postwar alterations to the Army officer's wife ideal further entrenched wives in the Army. Actual Army officers' wives would make skillful use of the Army's ideal to advocate for their own needs and those of their families within the Army. In doing so, they argued that what benefitted Army families benefitted the Army. The ideal would not represent the lived realities of Army wives. Instead, it represented how the Army and those who perpetuated the notion that those married to the Army should serve as encouraging and loyal wives who would put the mission ahead of family and inspire their husbands to fight—and to re-enlist. Until Wickham declared that the interdependence of the Army and Army families in 1983, the ideal demanded of wives that they view themselves as merely dependents of the Army, not integral parts of it.

Today, there is no shortage of guidebooks directed at the wives of military men. While the thematic foci of all are on the rules and rituals for the survival, success, and prosperity of Army wives, what cultural work did these guides perform? Rarely "heralded or even deemed noteworthy," Shea's guidebook and its successors provided more than helpful hints to homemakers. Insinuated into the ordinary routines of everyday life prescribed in the guides was an Army strategy that asked officers' wives and those expected to emulate them to sink themselves into the arms of marriage as well as the Army. Ironically, compliance with the ideal also provided a means by which Army wives could claim authority and advocate for their needs within the confines of the military institution and its Army officer's wife ideal.

Historiographies

Although Army wives and the Army officer's wife ideal have been largely left out of the official Army history, military wives have been the subject of many scientific studies. Social scientists have taken the lead in research on issues related to the unique stresses and lived experiences of military life for spouses. As early as 1945, for example, sociologist Evelyn Millis Duvall interviewed seventy-seven wives and girlfriends of deployed soldiers to examine the mental health of those dealing with wartime separation. In "Loneliness and the Serviceman's Wife," Duvall concluded that the level of participation in social events directly related to the degree of loneliness felt by military dependents and girlfriends.[28] Sociologist Reuben Hill not only explored family adjustment to separation during World War II, but also reunion after it. In *Families under Stress* (1949), Hill warned that "the capacity of families to take up the slack in the social order is approaching an upper limit," and that the "tremendous resilience and recuperative strengths" of military families "must be fostered and conserved."[29] In the late 1960s and early 1970s, as Army leaders prepared to transition to an all-volunteer force, the military sponsored multiple social science studies on the impact military service had on family life. The partnership between the military and social scientists to research the unique stressors and

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[28] Evelyn Millis Duvall, "Loneliness and the Serviceman's Wife," *Marriage and Family Living* 7, no. 4 (November 1945): 77-81. Duvall recommended access to mental health services, child care, and community recreation programs, as well as the "develop[ment of] common attitudes of respect for [wives] and [their] place in the war effort and in the crises that lie ahead." Duvall, "Loneliness and the Serviceman's Wife," 81.

[29] Reuben Hill, *Families under Stress: Adjustment to the Crises of War, Separation, and Reunion* (New York: Harper & Bros, 1949), 2.

challenges like securing employment often associated with military families grew over time, with numerous studies published in the twenty-first century.[30]

As with sociological studies, most of the psychological and anthropological research on military spouses has examined the impact of separations on wives.[31] In response to the number of men captured or killed during the Vietnam War, psychologists published a plethora of studies on POW/MIA wives.[32] Then, in the nineteen nineties, many studies examined the impact of post-

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[30] The Rand Corporation's National Defense Research Institute that purports to help "improve policy and decision making through research and analysis," has released a large number of recent studies related to military families. See, for example Anita Chandra, Sadraluz Lara-Cinisomo, Lisa H. Jaycox, Terri Tanielian, Bing Han, Rachel M. Bruns, and Teague Ruder, "Views from the Homefront: The Experiences of Youth and Spouses from Military Families," (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2011), accessed October 30, 2016, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/ rand/pubs/technical_reports/2011/RAND_TR913.pdf; James R. Hosek, ed., "How Is Deployment to Iraq and Afghanistan Affecting U.S. Service Members and Their Families? An Overview of Early RAND Research on the Topic," (Santa Monica: RAND, 2011) accessed October 30, 2016, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/ pubs/occasional_papers/2011/RAND_OP316.pdf; Nelson Lim and Daniela Golinelli, "Monitoring Employment Conditions of Military Spouses," (Santa Monica: RAND, 2006), accessed October 30, 2016, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/ technical_reports/2006/RAND_TR324.pdf.

[31] See, for example: Chester Pearlman "Separation Reactions of Married Women," *American Journal of Psychiatry* 126 (1970): 946-50; Douglas Bey and Jean Lange, "Waiting Wives: Women Under Stress," *American Journal of Psychiatry* 131 (1974): 283-6; Barbara Dahl and Hamilton McCubbin "Prolonged Family Separation in the Military: A Longitudinal Study," in *Families in the Military System*, ed. Hamilton McCubbin, Barbara Dahl, and Edna Hunter (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1976); Don LaGrone, "The Military Family Syndrome," *American Journal of Psychiatry* 135, no. 1 (1978): 133-4.

[32] See, for example: Richard C.W. Hall and William C. Simmons, "The POW Wife: A Psychiatric Appraisal," *Archives of General Psychiatry* 29 (1973): 690–4; Ludwig Spolyar, "The Grieving Process in MIA Wives," in *Family Separation and Reunion: Families of Prisoners of War and Servicemen Missing in Action*, ed. Hamilton McCubbin, Barbara Dahl, P. Metres, Edna J. Hunter, and John A. Plag (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1974), 77-85; and Philip J. Metres, Jr., Hamilton I. McCubbin, and Enda J. Hunter, "Families of Returned Prisoners of War: Some Impressions on their Initial Reintegration," in *Family Separation and Reunion: Families of Prisoners of War and Servicemen missing in Action*, ed. Hamilton I. McCubbin et. al. (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1974), 147–155.

traumatic stress on military marriages.[33] More recent studies explore the occupational demands of military life in terms of the impact of war, stress, separation, and reunion on the military families.[34] Because military and government agencies have funded many of these studies, the findings often reinforce rather than challenge the military's demands of dependents. Even those conducted by independent scholars have not considered the origins of and changes to the expected beliefs and behaviors of military spouses.

In the mid-1980s, political scientist Cynthia Enloe was the first to focus new scholarly attention on the many ways in which women's lives were being militarized. Her numerous publications on militarization are representative of a growing body of feminist scholarship that

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[33] See, for example: William M. Bennett, *Army Families* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Army War College, 1974); Kathleen B. Jordan, Charles R. Marmar, John A. Fairbank, William E. Schlenger, Richard A. Kulka, Richard L. Hough, Daniel S. Weiss, "Problems in Families of Male Vietnam Veterans with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder," *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* 60, no. 6 (December 1992): 916–26; and Mary Jo Peebles-Kleiger and James H. Kleiger, "Re-Integration Stress for Desert Storm Families: Wartime Deployments and Family Trauma," *Journal of Traumatic Stress* 7, no. 2 (1994): 173–94.

[34] See, for example: Stoddard and Cabanillas, "The Army Officer's Wife," 151-74; Michael D. Glenn, Jean C. Beckham, Michelle F. Dennis, and Scott D. Moore, "Violence and Hostility among Families of Vietnam Veterans with Combat-Related Posttraumatic Stress Disorder," *Violence & Victims* 17, no. 4 (September 2002): 473–89; Lolita M. Burrell, "Moving Military Families: The Impact of Relocation on Family Well-Being, Employment, and Commitment to the Military," in *Military Life: The Psychology of Serving in Peace and Combat*, ed. Carl A. Castro, Amy B. Adler, and Thomas W. Britt, vol. 3 (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2006), 39-63; Tina Watson Wiens and Pauline E. Boss, "Maintaining Family Resiliency Before, During, and After Military Separation," in *Military Life: The Psychology of Serving in Peace and Combat*, ed. Carl A. Castro, Amy B. Adler, and Thomas W. Britt, vol. 3 (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2006), 13-38.

has challenged the insignificance of military wives' activities.[35] Enloe and others argue that, just as a masculine ideology helps to turn men into soldiers, notions of patriotic motherhood, marital fidelity, national sacrifice, respectability, and sometimes even a version of the "liberated woman" have been used by the military to shape and militarize women into proper soldiers' wives supportive of military functioning. In exploring the process and affect of militarizing women, Enloe and others demonstrate the significance of women and notions of gender in understanding international relations.[36] While Enloe and those who built on her research examine the connection of military spouses to larger issues of military efficiency and effectiveness, they have not questioned the significance of the army wife ideal as an integral part of militarization. This dissertation builds on these important studies by examining the part played by a prominent cultural figure: the Army officer's wife ideal.

While social scientists continue to debate the impact of the military lifestyle on family formation and individual identities, historians of the military establishment, gender, and second wave feminism have largely neglected the significance of military wives in twentieth-century

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[35] Enloe's many publications on the topic of women and militarization include: *Bananas, Beaches & Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990); *Does Khaki Become You?: The Militarization of Women's Lives* (London: Pandora Press, 1983); and *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women's Lives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000). Other, less referenced, feminist scholarship on military wives and feminism include: Lynne R. Dobrofsky, "The Military Wife and Feminism," *Signs* 2, no. 3 (April 1977): 675-84; Margaret C. Harrell "Gender- and Class-Based Role Expectations for Army Spouses," in *Anthropology and the United States Military: Coming of Age in the Twenty-first Century*, ed. Pamela R. Frese and Margaret C. Harrell (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), 69-94.

[36] Other scholars have explored the roles women and constructions of notions of gender play in international relations. Cf. Elaine Tyler May, *Homeaward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988); Katharine Moon, *Sex Among Allies: Military Prostitution in U.S.-Korea Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013); Saundra Pollock Sturdevant and Brenda Stolzfus Zeiger, *Let the Good Times Roll: Prostitution and the U.S. Military in Asia* (New York: New Press, 1992).

American history.[37] Despite this historiographic void, major trends in various history subfields inform my study of Army wives, families, culture, and the development of Army family policy. In the 1970s, new military history pioneers like David Higginbotham shifted the focus from strategic, operational, tactical, and biographical inquiries to the impact of war on American culture and society and vice versa.[38] In *The War of American Independents: Military Attitudes, Policy, and Practice, 1763-1789* (1971), Higginbotham argued that the military was a projection of society. The social conditions in which the American Revolution took place fundamentally shaped the colonists approach to the war. Since the publication of this ground-breaking study, new military historians have expanded the context of old military history by questioning: the impact of society, culture, and politics on a country's ability to wage war; the social, cultural, and political after effects of war; the society and culture of military organizations; and the relationship between military organizations and the communities from which they spring.[39] Despite this paradigm shift, however, the deployment of idealized Army wives has yet to appear on the scholarly radar of new military historians.

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[37] For a review of social scientists' twenty-first century approaches to the military and the family, see Shelley M. Macdermid Wadsworth, "Family Risk and Resilience in the Context of War and Terrorism," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 72, no. 3 (June 2010): 537-57.

[38] Don Higginbotham, *The War of American Independents: Military Attitudes, Policies, and Practice, 1763-1789* (New York, MacMillan, 1971).

[39] See, for example: Peter H. Wilson "Defining Military Culture," *The Journal of Military History* 72, no. 1 (January 2008): 11-41. Wilson argued that viewing the military from a social and cultural perspective "offers new insight into how [soldiers] functioned and the nature of their interaction with the state and society." Similarly, historian and military analyst Phillip S. Meilinger's argued that the "beliefs, traditions, and behavior patterns" of the broader culture shaped the U.S. military, particularly after World War II. Phillip S. Meilinger, "American Military Culture and Strategy," *Joint Forces Quarterly* 47 (2007): 80-6.

Along with the insights of new military historians, this work also draws upon the work of women and gender historians who emphasized the fluidity between public and private life for women. This dissertation draws and builds upon the work of historians Linda Kerber and Nancy Cott, whose studies revealed that evidence of women's agency in the political realm is evident when scholars look for it beyond the traditional places of politics. In "The Republican Mother: Women and the Enlightenment–An American Perspective" (1976) and *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (1980), Kerber demonstrated the significance of women's roles beyond their assumed place in society.[40] In these studies, Kerber examined the role of women in civic culture, arguing that women's domestic duties, especially childrearing, had significant political implications and shaped the new country. As *Women of the Republic* revealed, Revolutionary Era women without a public identity were active agents in defining the political world around them. For Kerber, women's contributions to the building of America through their work as wives and mothers "represented a stage in the process of women's political socialization…. A process in which an individual develops a definition of self as related to the state." In *The Bonds of Womanhood: "Women's Sphere" in New England, 1780-1835* (1977), Cott's examination of women's work, religion, education, domesticity, and sisterhood through their letters, diaries, and the sermons and speeches of those who mentored them, she similarly revealed that women in New England held considerable power and influence for women in the

[40] Linda Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980);Linda Kerber, "The Republican Mother: Women and the Enlightenment–An American Perspective," *American Quarterly* 28, no. 2 (Summer 1976): 187-205.

Early Republic.[41] Further, the sense of sisterhood that developed through the bonds and within the boundaries of womanhood, served as the foundation for the emergence of feminism.

By revealing women's unofficial political roles and the intimate connections between gender, family, and politics, these studies and those by other historians who found connections between gender, the family, and the state, demonstrated that women's gendered and domestic work was also political work. As these studies made clear, evidence of women's influence on politics exists if scholars look for political work in nontraditional places. These studies provide a useful way to understand the dynamics between the paradigmatic Army officer's wife and the official Army family policy.[42] Like Kerber, Cott, and others whose scholarship provided agency to specific groups of women, this dissertation gives agency to Army wives, demonstrating the ways in which those wives who never wanted to throw off the mantle of Army wife, claimed that title and the ideal in a way that made them active participants in shaping the idealized expectations of Army wives, Army family policy, the Army, and the state. By looking for wives' impact on the Army in an unsuspecting place, the definition of a wife, this study finds that, even though the Army felt it could put constraints on women around the definition of wifehood, actual Army wives found a way to become engaged in the process of defining the ideal themselves through active agency in their families, the Army, and politics. In doing so, they modernized the

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[41] Nancy F. Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: "Women's Sphere" in New England, 1780-1935* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1977).

[42] For other historical studies that focus on the overlap between public and private life include, see Sara Evans, *Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left* (New York: Knopf, 1979); Mary Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1890-1865* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981); May, *Homeward Bound.*

Army's family policy. By becoming agents in defining the Army's role for them, Army wives contributed to the development of Army policies, practices, and priorities.

Turning to a different though related historiography, Jennifer Scanlon's *Inarticulate Longings: The Ladies' Home Journal, Gender, and the Promises of Consumer Culture* (1995) uses the *Ladies' Home Journal* to examine "women's experiences with the developing consumer culture of the early twentieth century."[43] Scanlon argues that, while the *Ladies' Home Journal* "offered clear albeit limited cultural definitions of womanhood, it also gave voice to women's own concerns. In doing so, the *Ladies' Home Journal* helped sowed the seeds for women's later demands for autonomy and self-definition."[44] Similarly, Sarah A. Leavitt's *From Catherine Beecher to Martha Stewart: A Cultural History of Domestic Advice* (2002) shows that the historical value of domestic advice manuals "lies in uncovering the way certain women understood the connections between their homes and the larger world."[45] Although these cultural histories do not examine military wives' interactions with the discursive sources directed at them, they nevertheless demonstrate that the text and subtext of advice literature aimed at women responded to as well as shaped broader social and cultural trends.

While professional historians have largely overlooked Army wives as their primary subjects of inquiry, soldiers' spouses have *themselves* filled in the gap. In *Campfollowing: A History the Military Wife* (1991), military wives Betty Sowers Alt and Bonnie Domrose Stone traced the history of military wives from the American Revolution through the Vietnam War.

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[43] Jennifer Scanlon, *Inarticulate Longings: The Ladies' Home Journal, Gender, and the Promises of Consumer Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 1.

[44] Ibid., 2.

[45] Sarah A. Leavitt, *From Catherine Beecher to Martha Stewart: A Cultural History of Domestic Advice* (Chapel Hill: Univeristy of North Carolina Press, 2002), 3-4.

Although the authors aim to give a thorough history of Army wives from the American Revolution through the Vietnam War, their work unfortunately asserts no argument and fails to turn a critical eye on the military institution or the military wife ideal. Like prescriptive literature aimed at military wives, their book declares that it takes "a special kind of woman to be a military wife." That special woman "*must be* a patriot, and a helpmate… courageous and resilient, and have a sense of humor." Perpetuating rather than questioning the ideal, the introduction discursively asserts that military wives "must cheerfully yield satisfaction of her needs and desires to the needs of the military… [and] those who do are part of a heritage rich in sacrifice, adventure, and fulfillment."[46]

Not every military spouse writing about those married to the military has failed to critically assess the institution of which they are a part. In her PhD dissertation "Bye, Bye Miss American Pie: Wives of American Servicemen in Southeast Asia, 1961-1975" (2005), historian Elizabeth Brown attempts to shed light upon the disruptions brought to the Armed Forces during the Vietnam era. Drawing upon interviews with ninety-eight former military spouses, Brown argues that wives from the early years of the Cold War were politically silent. She contends that a traditional "code of silence" under which military spouses operated was broken only by a wave of young brides who entered the military during the tumultuous Vietnam War and "demanded that defense policymakers provide them social services and include the women's counsel in their planning."[47] Brown concludes that the women she presents the first challengers of the expected ideal forever changed life for military spouses by giving them voice within the military

[46] Alt and Stone, *Campfollowing*, xii.

[47] Ibid.

institution.[48] While the evidence does show that a younger generation of military wives advocated for their needs during the late 1960s and beyond, seasoned officers' wives participated in and often led advocacy efforts. Further, Brown credits the unpopularity of the Vietnam War and the rise of the women's movement with instigating these changes. Brown's argument that the activism of young military wives during the Vietnam Era exposed the Armed Forces's neglect of wives and families during the 1950s and early 1960s to the American public, which, in turn, prompted military commanders to address the inadequacies of their treatment of wives and families obscures the importance of pre-Vietnam War wives to military planners as well as the complexity of wives' experiences, their early challenges to the prescribed ideal, and their early activism.

In *Unofficial Ambassadors: American Military Families Overseas and the Cold War* (2007), Donna Alvah, a historian unaffiliated with the military, analyzes the role of military families (especially wives) who travelled to foreign bases en masse during from 1946 through 1965. Drawing upon official pronouncements, Congressional budget debates, and prescriptive and popular literature aimed at military wives, Alvah argues that U.S. military spouses stationed abroad represented a "soft power" approach to strengthening international relations. Alvah's work reveals the many ways in which military commanders used families in their mission to spread peace and democracy. But Alvah's exclusive focus on military wives' impact on foreign relations fail to examine the gendered ideal that shaped military wives into unofficial ambassadors or the consequences of wives' new role. This dissertation shows how the development of Alvah's unofficial ambassadors was rooted in the foundational elements of the

[48] Elizabeth Brown, " Bye, Bye Miss American Pie: Wives of American Servicemen in Southeast Asia, 1961-1975" (PhD diss., University of Colorado, 2005), 201, 203, 391.

ideal, and how the escalation of responsibilities to include advocacy on behalf of the Army, nation, and state led to more activism and, eventually, policies and programs that embraced families as partners, not dependents.

Like Alvah, historian Susan Zeiger used gender as a category of analysis in the field of foreign relations. Whereas Alvah examined the impact U.S.-born Army wives traveling to foreign bases after WWII had on Cold War foreign policy, Zeiger explored the role foreign-born war brides had on U.S. foreign policy in the twentieth century. In *Entangling Alliances: Foreign War Brides and American Soldiers in the Twentieth Century* (2010), Zeiger argues that Americans "sought to make meaning on a popular level of their relationships with other countries" through gendered perspectives of women and women's sexuality projected onto foreign war brides impacted U.S. foreign policy.[49] While Zeiger's study demonsrates that the cultural representations and private affairs of a specific subset of military wives shaped American foreign affairs, her focus on war brides fails to account for the impact military wives in general and Army wives specifically had on U.S. foreign policy. Further, in focusing only on war brides "as a special category of female immigrant and as a cultural construct," Zeiger denies agency to the warbrides, who participated in shaping perceptions of their countries of origin and U.S. foreign policy.[50] This dissertation builds on Zeiger's approach by exploring both the cultural construct of the Army officer's wife ideal and how Army officers' wives participated in shaping U.S. Army, national, and international policies.

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[49] Susan Zeiger, *Entangling Alliances: Foreign War Brides and American Soldiers in the Twentieth Century* (New York: New York University Press, 2010), 2..

[50] Ibid., 5.

In *America's Army: Making the All-Volunteer Force* (2009), Beth Bailey uncovered a rich discourse on the meaning of citizenship, social change, and Army readiness needs embedded in cultural representations of Army service in the All-Volunteer Army. After the Nixon Administration called for the "logic of the market" to "replace the logic of citizenship" to motivate Americans to serve in the Army, Army leaders had to compete with the free market in order to remake itself into an all-volunteer army. In recruitment advertisements and practices, as well as Army policies and benefits, Bailey argued, "America directly confronted the legacies of the social change movements of the 1960s."[51] Like the Army officer's wife ideal, the representations of service changed over time as mass-market advertising campaigns "reframe[d] potential recruits as 'customers' and the army itself as a 'product.'"[52]

Building on Bailey's work, Jennifer Mittelstadt examined the expansion of military benefits and social programs after the transition to the All-Volunteer Force in *The Rise of the Military Welfare State* (2015). Specifically, Mittelstadt explored "how military service intertwined with citizenship and entitlement through the history of welfare provision in the late twentieth-century Army."[53] Mittelstadt dedicated an entire chapter to Army wives' demands for support in the late 1970s and early 1980s. In it, she argued there was an "awakening" of Army wives who "contested their subordinate position," and demanded "that the army aid and support them" during this time period.[54] Viewing Army wives' demands for support through the lens of

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[51] Beth Bailey, *America's Army: Making the All-Volunteer Force* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 4, xi.

[52] Ibid., 68.

[53] Jennifer Mittelstadt, *The Rise of the Military Welfare State* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015), 5.

[54] Ibid., 121.

the Army as "a social welfare institution" from the development of the All-Volunteer Force onward, however, fails to account for the decades of engagement and advocacy that already existed among Army wives.[55] This dissertation challenges Mittelstadt's assessment of activism during this era, arguing that Army wives advocated for benefits to improve their family life in the Army beginning after WWII.

Journalist Karen Houppert focused explicitly on the Army officer's wife ideal itself in one chapter of *Home Fires Burning: Married to the Military—for Better or Worse* (2005), a chronicle of a year-in-the-life of military wives with deployed husbands.[56] Although Houppert drew upon Shea's *The Army Wife*, her seventeen-page exploration of the ideal reveals little insight into the discursive workings of cultural ideals.[57] The ideal of the Army officer's wife, according to Houppert, is a direct *order* from the Army to wives. My analysis illuminates the contested cultural spaces surrounding the ideal where the Army gave shape to dependents and dependents influenced the Army. Rather than looking for expressions of traditional feminism as Houppert does, this study sees Army wives as agents of change who upheld the foundational elements a traditional ideal and used it to help the Army adapt to the rapidly-changing demands of the post-World War II Army.

A study of the construction, manipulations, use, and maintenance of the Army officer's wife ideal is clearly notably absent from the considerable body of scholarship on the history of women in modern America and the military. And yet, the ideal and the actual officer's wife were unique among American women. Military wives lived in a closed militarized society in which

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[55] Ibid., 4.

[56] Karen Houppert, *Home Fires Burning: Married to the Military—for Better or Worse* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2005).

[57] Houppert, *Home Fires*, 55-71.

nearly every element of their daily lives, including entrance to military bases where they lived, access to medical services, and position in the social hierarchy, depended upon their husbands' rank. Patriotism ennobled the sacrifice of an Army officer's wife's own needs for the good of her country. As a specific subset of wives and mothers, Army wives' difference was not determined by race and class (although the military obviously perpetuated race and class differences, too), but by marital standing and their connection to national defense and the state. Intimately tied to the military system, Army wives provide labor and resources critical for proper military functioning. This study interrogates the ideal of the Army officer's wife as a historically constructed figure through which the Army, the state, and soldiers' spouses confronted changes in the structure and duty of the Army, changes in American society, and negotiated their relationship with one another as they transitioned from dependents to interdependence.

Sources

This qualitative historical study of the Army officer's wife ideal from 1942 to 1983 and the development of an Army family policy rooted in a sense of interdependency draws upon evidence from the most widely distributed advice books about the Army officer's wife ideal published from World War II to the Vietnam War.[58] After World War II, Shea and others revised the Army officer's wife ideal in prescriptive literature. Journalists, the military, and real military spouses promoted the ideal in *U.S. Lady*, a monthly magazine published specifically for military spouses between 1955 and 1968. Twenty-nine volumes of *U.S. Lady* provide evidence of the proliferation of the ideal, changes to it, and the ways in which women responded to the military's

[58] See, for example: Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*; Redmond, *Handbook for Army Wives & Mothers;* Nancy Shea, *The Army Wife* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1942); Shea, *The Army Wife*.

expectations them.[59] Twenty oral histories conducted as part of the Army Family Oral History Project as well as published memoirs reveal how real wives accepted, challenged, utilized, and transformed the Army officer's wife ideal. [60] Congressional and presidential records, Supreme Court records, and newspaper articles, which show how national advocacy organizations of military wives formed beginning in the late Sixties, shaped the military's approach to families, official military policy, legislation, and international diplomacy illustrate the unique connection between Army wives and wives of those in other branches, the Army, and the state.

Theory and Methodology

Three theoretical constructs shape my interpretation of the Army officer's wife ideal. First, Cynthia Enloe's feminist theory of militarization and marginalization is used to understand the dual constraints under which the Army officer's wife ideal operated. Enloe argues that women are essential for the military because they provide the labor, support, and morale boosting required to run an army. By accepting and supporting the military agenda and way of life, women become militarized, meaning, they accept and are used to further military objectives. Because women's militarization has been crucial for the maintenance of fighting forces, military commanders have sought to control them by presenting them as marginal to the military mission. The combined forces of militarization and marginalization shape my understanding of how the

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[59] Although the magazine was a for-profit venture and not officially a military publication, the civilian editors of *U.S. Lady* published essays and announcements sponsored by the Armed Forces as well as responses to questions from members of various branches answered letters lent *U.S. Lady* a semi-official status within the military institution. No other magazine directly targeted military spouses until 2002, when Babette Maxwell founded *Military Spouse Magazine*.

[60] Army Family Oral History Project: 20th Century United States Army Spouse Interview Collection, Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS.

archetype of the Army officer's wife demanded wives provide labor required for proper military functioning while simultaneously reminding them that their husbands, not they, worked for the military.

My examination of the ways in which the words, ideas, and symbols associated with the Army's ideal officer's wife influenced real wives' experiences and the Army itself draws upon Foucault's discourse theory. Foucault argues that discourses, created by political and economic entities, serve their own purposes while ultimately shaping its the realities on non-dominants. Consequently, individuals are shaped by the language, thoughts, and symbols to which they are exposed. In order to control the flood of women who joined the military by marriage during World War II, the Army created a discourse that built upon familiar notions of the good officer's wife who put the military mission first, supported her soldier-husband, and cheerfully accepted the burdens of military life. These regularly prescribed, promoted, and patrolled notions have shaped the lived experiences of Army officers' wives since. That officers' wives were products of the discourses that surround them, not agents of their own free will, is evident in the fact that military wives' advocacy on their own behalf has not sought to obliterate the submissive and supportive role of the wife; rather they have sought assistance meeting the Army's expected ideals of wives.

Finally, Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony influences my analysis of the ways in which the notion of the officer's wife is perpetuated within the military system. Gramsci defined cultural hegemony as "the 'spontaneous' consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group; this consent is 'historically' caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group

enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production."[61] It was—and remains—seasoned Army officers' wives who usher new officers' wives into the military way of life and police other wives' adherence to the prescribed ideal. As an officer rises in the military hierarchy, the expectations and responsibilities of his wife increase. Regardless of her husband's rank, all officers' wives were/are expected to set a precedent for enlisted wives to follow. Army wives do not "'spontaneously' consent" to the lives the military asks them to live; they live within the boundaries of a discourse created and perpetuated by the social hierarchy of the Army.

Overview

This dissertation, which is divided into five parts, traces the history of the ideal of the Army officer's wife. The first half of the dissertation focuses on the ideal itself as it was originally codified and distributed in Shea's *The Army Wife* and Collins's *Army Woman's Handbook* during World War II. From the foundational elements of the ideal to specific advice for living, the first two chapters reveal the pervasiveness of the Army's expectations of wives. Chapter three moves from reliance on the manuals themselves to Army officers' wives' responses to the ideal during World War II. The final two chapters show how Army wives, Army leaders, programs, and policies, purveyors of the ideal, and politicians invoked the foundational elements of the ideal, while simultaneously negotiating, contesting, and shaping other parts of the ideal in ways that changed not only the ideal, but also the Army's view of and policies related to wives and families.

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[61] Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, trans. and ed. Quentin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 12. Quoted in T. J. Jackson Lears, "The Concept of Cultural Hegemony: Problems and Possibilities," *The American Historical Review* 90, no. 3 (June 1985): 568.

Chapter one focuses exclusively on the two foundational elements of the Army officers' wives ideal as imagined by the Army and codified in Nancy Shea's *The Army Wife* and Clella Collins's *Army Woman's Handbook* during World War II. It argues that the prime needs of the Army—readiness and morale—shaped the expectations of those who married into it. In order to be ideal, Shea and Collins informed readers, it was essential that Army wives put the Army and its mission, as well as the morale of their husbands, before all else. Shea and Collins naturalized their prescriptions that Army wives prioritize readiness and morale throughout their manuals. In ways similar to advice civilians received regarding the total war effort, the authors used a combination of patriotism, guilt, and threats to persuade readers to comply with their prescriptions. It is important to note, however, that these foundational elements existed long before the World War II. The emphasis on supporting the mission and boosting morale indicates the importance of Army wives to military planners. Although classified in the Army as dependents, this chapter demonstrates that the Army needed Army wives, like their soldier spouses, to accept orders and dedicate themselves to boosting morale in order to maintain optimal readiness. The foundational elements of the ideal informed all other advice offered in *The Army Wife* and *Army Woman's Handbook*. Although specific advice changed over time, these foundational elements have remained part of the ideal.

Chapter two argues that the Army's requirements of readiness and positive morale shaped prescriptions for nearly every aspect of WWII-era Army wives. Specific advice on marriage, homemaking, childrearing, entertaining, and paid and unpaid work found in the pages of Shea and Collins's manuals reveals the many ways in which the ideal of the Army officer's wife served the needs of the Army over the needs Army wives. While much of the domestic advice mirrored that of the civilian world, Army wives' interactions with their husbands, homemaking,

child rearing, and socializing were constructed to expressly benefit the Army mission and boost morale. Together, chapters one and two show that, although masked as helpful guidebooks, the manuals existed to indoctrinate Army officers' wives to live a life that would benefit the Army, while, at the same time, trying to make them believe they were benefiting from it. Shea articulated this in the front cover of her handbook on which she warned new brides that "the way in which [an officer's wife] meets these expectations will not only affect her happiness and well-being but will have considerable influence on her husband's career."[62] The officer's wife ideal instructed women to live in-service of the Army and their husbands for the good of the country. Thus, the wartime ideal was a gendered, patriarchal, and militarized ideal that demanded officers' wives put the needs of the Army before their own. Although the wartime ideal required that officers' wives provide the services crucial for waging war, it also constructed wives as mere dependents. Wives were not viewed as partners in the Army; rather, the wartime ideal demanded that they view themselves as marginal to the military mission.

Army officers' wives' responses to the demands placed on them are the focus of chapter three. Oral histories of six officers' wives who married Army men from 1940-1945 and lived in Army culture for an average of 23.6 years reveal a gap between the ideal prescribed in the manuals and the reality they faced being married to Army officers during World War II. The Army wives' oral histories indicate that they viewed themselves and their efforts as important to the Army mission and morale. This chapter concludes that the majority of the wives embraced in the foundational elements of the ideal as it was codified in prescriptive literature during World War II. Although they accommodated prescriptions to support the mission and boost morale, the difficulties Army officers' wives faced due to the realities of wartime and Army bureaucracy led

[62] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, front book cover.

many to defy or ignore various edicts of the ideal. Rather than seek official policies or programs to address the problems they faced, Army officers' wives during this period sought personal solutions, challenging, adapting, and defying specific prescriptions for homemaking, childrearing, socializing, and working as they saw fit. Their methods of addressing the difficulties they faced indicate that Army officers' wives viewed themselves as subordinate to the Army, not partners in it. Despite their failures to consistently embody the Army officer's wife ideal, none of the wives reported that their challenges to the ideal negatively impacted their husbands' career paths. Instead, their experiences showed that the ideal was malleable as long as the foundational elements were upheld.

Chapters four and five turn from the ideal as it was originally codified and received during World War II to the ways in which purveyors of the ideal, Army wives, and leaders of the military, nation, and state invoked, challenged, and adapted the Army officer's wife ideal to meet the needs of changing military and social realities during the Cold War. Chapter four argues that advocacy on behalf of the Army, the nation, and the state became a central feature of the Army officer's wife ideal after World War II. Guidebook authors, military leaders, Army officers' wives (as well as those in other branches), and publishers of *U.S. Lady* magazine invoked the foundational elements of ideal when calling on Army wives to use their unique role as military wives to seek solutions to problems in the Army and support the nation's Cold war objectives. Because wives' dedication to the mission and morale provided the basis for their advocacy, purveyors of the ideal encouraged, rewarded, and normalized wives' calls for improvements to military practices, policies, and procedures, as well as the positive impact wives made on the Cold War through soft diplomacy. This chapter concludes that, by making advocacy on behalf of the Army part of the expectations of ideal Army wives, revisions to the Army officer's wife ideal

(and, more broadly, the military wife ideal) from 1945 to 1968 challenged the long-held notion of Army wives as merely dependents of the Army, created a role for Army wives as partners in the Army and the Cold War mission, and provided a model for future Army officers' wives to use the ideal to advocate on their own behalf.

Chapter five argues that a sense of interdependency between Army wives and the Army emerged during the period from 1969 to 1983. During this period, Army wives joined forces with other military spouses and formed national advocacy organizations that sought solutions to the unique issues they faced. Beginning with the development of the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia, Army wives engaged military, political, and international leaders, as well as members of the media, to secure humane treatment for their husbands held captive in Vietnam. Army wives and even ex-wives and widows asserted their rights to benefits promised to their soldier spouses through subsequent national advocacy organizations, including the National Military Wives Association, Ex-Spouses of Servicemen for Equality, and Survivors of Sacrifice. Faced with wives' organized efforts, an unpopular war, and subsequent transition to an all-volunteer force, Army leaders as well as politicians, jurists, and the press engaged with national advocacy organizations and responded to their calls with policies and legislation. Because of the connection between family satisfaction and re-enlistment and a tradition of activism (albeit on behalf of the military), the transition to an all-volunteer force amplified wives' demands. Although Army wives engaged in national advocacy organizations often challenged Pentagon policies and leaders of the military, nation, and state, they did not aim to dismantle the Army or their unique position in it. Rather, activist Army wives used the traditional foundational elements of the ideal and tradition of advocacy on behalf of the Army as a platform on which they could build organized efforts to seek policies to help them better

embrace and embody the ideal. Alterations in Army policy stemming from wives' early advocacy aimed to facilitate, not challenge, wives' acceptance of the Army officer's wife ideal. Far from seeking independence from the demands of them, this chapter argues that Army wives' advocacy through national organizations and the official responses to their efforts further enmeshed Army wives as interdependent partners in the Army.

Combined, these chapters about the changing nature of the Army officer's wife ideal reveal the development of the interdependent partnership between Army families and the Army, the fluidity of cultural constructs, and how cultural ideals can be invoked to affect change. The engagement of Army wives (and other military spouses), military and political leaders, and promoters of the ideal of the Army officer's wife in its meaning transformed the perception, role, and policies related to Army wives from a set of expectations focused on wives as dependents to one that saw them as advocates and partners in the mission long before General Wickham announced that the Army and Army families were interdependent. The requirements of postwar occupations overseas and the Cold War coupled with a period of intense focus on the American family led the Army and promoters of the ideal to expand their expectations of wives. Army families living at home and on bases around the globe advocated for the good of the Army, the nation, and the state. Army wives' experiences with their expanding roles in the Army, as well as calls for advocacy, led them to organize for help meeting the realities they faced married to the Army. By 1983, the highest ranking officer in the Army formally acknowledged the need for Army families, embracing those it formerly considered dependents—Army families—as interdependent partners in the Army.

Chapter One
Basic Training: The Foundation of the Ideal

When Alma Nemetz, a nineteen-year-old from a large Polish Catholic family, married her husband in 1939, he was in the National Guard and had a civilian job as a maintenance manager. In 1940, after her husband's National Guard unit was activated, Nemetz's husband joined the Army as an officer, and was sent to Fort Huachuca, Arizona. Even though she had never left her small hometown of Kingston, PA, Nemetz packed her belongings and followed her husband to Arizona. She described herself as "a new bride as green as grass" who was unaware of Army protocol and procedure. Like the generations of Army brides before her, Nemetz sought guidance on the Army way of life from an experienced officer's wife. "I called on [a lieutenant colonel's wife she knew only as Mrs. Ocutz] and explained to her that I was a new bride and I didn't know anything," Nemetz remembered. She then asked Ocutz "if she would be kind enough to teach, or tell, or show [Nemetz] what to do."[1] Even though Nemetz failed to bring a calling card with her on this request (Ocutz would have to teach her to do that), Ocutz took Nemetz under her wing. Nemetz credited Ocutz with teaching her "[a]bout protocol, just everything!" Ocutz taught Nemetz the traditional "roles of an Army life," which included "husband's helpmate, a protocol officer, a travel expert, an entertainer, a support persons, at times a single parent, [and] a qualified interior home decorator."[2] This "job description" summarized the Army's ideal for officers wives as Nemetz learned it from Ocutz and her twenty-

[1] Alma Nemetz, interview by Dana Fontenot, November 8, 1999, Army Family Oral History Project, Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 5.

[2] Ibid., 19.

three years of experience in the Army. Nemetz valued her training and credited Ocutz with giving her "a good start" in the Army.[3]

Two years later, when eighteen-year-old Janie Arison joined the ranks of new Army officers' wives, she also sought advice on Army rules and protocol. Unlike Nemetz, Arison found guidance on becoming an ideal Army officer's wife in a new manual written for her and the millions of other brides marrying the military. When asked if she read *The Army Wife*. Arison responded "Oh yes." When asked if she believed it, Arison also responded "Oh yes." When asked if she followed the advice offered in Shea's guidebook, Arison cited the first two items from a list of twelve "Things You May or May Not Know" in Shea's *The Army Wife*: "Officers didn't wheel baby carriages, didn't carry umbrellas."[4] "Are you serious," her incredulous interviewer challenged. "Of course," Arison responded. "It is written in the book."[5] The contents of the manual mirrored the instruction Nemetz received from a senior officer's wife—officers wives were expected to help their husbands, follow Army protocol, move frequently, entertain, volunteer, raise children, and make homes in accordance with the Army's expectations. When asked if she met the expectations of her, Arison responded, "Yes, [I] did what was expected of me."[6] Arison asked her interviewer to try to get a copy of *The Army Wife* for both of them. "I don't know why I ever gave mine away or threw it away," she lamented. "Wonderful reading."[7]

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[3] Ibid., 5.

[4] Janie Arison, interview by Betty Rutherford, January 18, 1999, Army Family Oral History Project, Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 14. Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 84-85.

[5] Ibid., 12.

[6] Ibid., 12.

[7] Ibid., 14.

Although Arison learned the Army's expectations for wives from a book instead of an experienced officer's wife, the ideal remained the same: wives were to dedicate themselves the Army, the mission, and their husband's morale.

This chapter examines the foundational elements of the Army officer's wife ideal as articulated in the first wave of prescriptive manuals published during World War II: that wives support the Army, its mission, and its soldiers' morale. These essential expectations of Army officers' wives, which were rooted in tradition dating back to the American Revolution, complemented messages related to the total war effort and the expectation that all Americans prioritize the military mission. It does not examine wives' responses to the foundational elements; rather, it focuses on the ways in which the ideal was codified in the wartime manuals that Shea and Collins wrote. Drawing upon tradition and using an essentialized ideal, Shea and Collins urged millions of new brides to conform to their prescriptions that Army officers' wives, like Army personnel, prioritize the Army's needs above their personal needs and desires, and those of their families. Dedication to the morale of soldiers and the Army undergird all advice in *The Army Wife* and other WWII-era guidebooks. In order for the mission to succeed, wives had to be trained to accept that the mission and soldiers' morale came first. Guidebook authors deployed a combination of patriotism, duty, guilt, threats, and cautionary tales throughout their manuals in order to persuade readers to embrace the foundational elements of the ideal. They also consistently reminded wives that they, unlike their husbands, were marginal to the Army mission. The connection between the essential elements of the ideal and the Army's requirements for its soldiers reveals that Army leaders and the state relied on wives compliance with military objectives in order to achieve their missions.

In this chapter, I argue that the foundational elements of the Army officer's wife ideal were intimately connected to what Army leaders deemed essential to success. Rather than treat Army officers' wives and those meant to follow their example as a group of people relying on the military for financial support, Army leaders drew on traditional notions off the role of Army officers' wives that used their unpaid labor to build an army of soldiers with good morale who would willingly subordinate themselves to the needs of the military, nation, and state. Prescriptions to boost morale and prioritize the Army and its mission informed all advice in *The Army Wife* and other wartime-era guidebooks. These foundational tenets of the ideal, which remain firmly intact even today, reveal the intimate connection between Army marriages and the Army itself. Ultimately, the foundation of the ideal affirmed the notion that the Army required the participation and contributions of soldiers' spouses to be all it could be.

Mission readiness and morale form the foundation of successful militaries. Readiness, "the ability of military forces to fight and meet the demands" of them, applies to the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of warfighting.[8] Military historian Paul Fussell defines morale as a "prevailing mood and spirit, conducive to willing and dependable performance, steady self-control, and courageous, determined conduct despite danger and privations, based upon conviction of being in the right and on the way to success and upon faith in the cause or program and in the leadership." Good morale, the "confident, aggressive, resolute, often buoyant, spirit of wholehearted co-operation in a common effort," is often characterized by "zeal, sacrifice, or

[8] Joint Chiefs of Staff*, CJCS Guide to the Chairman's Readiness System*, CJCS Guide 3401D (Washington, DC, November 15, 2010), accessed May 30, 2016, http://www.dtic.mil/cjcs_directives/cdata/unlimit/g3401.pdf. For more on readiness, see: S. Craig Moore, J.A. Stockfisch, Matthew S. Goldberg, Suzanne M. Holroyd, and Gregory G. Hildebrandt, "Measuring Military Readiness and Sustainability," (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1991) accessed September 1, 2012, http://www.rand.org/pubs/reports/R3842.html.

indomitableness."[9] Combined, readiness and morale impact all elements of the Army from an individual soldier's ability to successfully and willingly follow commands to the effectiveness of the entire Army. Beginning in boot camp, civilians are turned from individuals into part of a mission-ready Army system. From that rite of passage on, Army men and women are to put the military first in their lives. A variety of sanctioned repercussions, awards, and programs ensure Army men and women maintain the appropriate level of readiness and morale.

Even though Army rules and protocol dictated WWII-era Army officers' wives' lives, they were not official members of the military. Because Army spouses were not formally in the Army, they were not under the direct control of military leaders or mandates. And yet, WWII-era Army wives, like their modern-day counterparts, lived within the Army system and relied upon it to make accessible everything from the home in which they lived to the food that they ate. The Army also depended on wives to support its mission and inspire its soldiers. Military leaders knew that wives' ignorance of or unwillingness to embrace the military mission and live by the Army's rules and regulations, procedures, and protocols could negatively impact military readiness and morale.

It was vital to the wartime mission that the wave of new military brides learn and live the Army way of life, but the Army was not equipped to train millions of Army brides while also preparing to wage a two-front world war. Building on traditions that dated back to Martha Washington's dedication to the Continental Army, WWII-era guidebooks demanded that wives put the Army mission and husbands' morale above all else for the good of the readers, their husbands, the Army, and the nation. Guidebook author Clella Collins directly connected wives'

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[9] Paul Fussell, *Wartime: Understanding Behavior in the Second World War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 144.

labor to the war effort and the good of the nation in the opening pages of *Army Woman's Handbook*. "In such a widespread coming together of women whose each heartbeat is timed to the common rhythm of their men's marching feet lie the essentials for the finest combat weapon ever devised for defense," she wrote, "a closely knit and might organization of women whose reason for existence should be cooperation with those in charge of the welfare of our nation."[10] As this quote makes clear, Army wives' dedication to boosting readiness and morale, characteristics which were meant to guide wives in all of their actions, contributed to the success of the Army, the nation, and the state.

The Army Way: Creating Mission-Focused Marriages

Responding to structural requirements for military readiness, guidebook authors focused most of their advice on Army policies and procedures. Information about Army terminology, expectations of those living on base, addressing mail, and other protocol dominated each of the wartime manuals aimed at Army wives, rather than surviving the many realities that accompany marrying into the Army. Emphasizing what was deemed necessary to Army readiness over advice for wives' well being shows that guidebooks prioritized maintaining military readiness over their readers. The tactics authors used to encourage compliance with Army rules and order also reveals the importance of developing a mission-first mindset.

Shea wove military protocol and procedure into chapters that predominately followed a chronological format from visiting West Point and military weddings to less romantic topics such as death. Chapters dedicated to special subtopics such as foreign service and travel as well as the new "Army" of citizens—Army wives—conclude the manual in its second edition

[10] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook,* ix.

published in 1942.[11] Using "an informal conversational style," Shea regularly presented her guidance as a "simple, friendly advice in the spirit of helpfulness to young Army wives, in the hope that it may make their paths easier."[12] Shea noted that she hoped that her "efforts may in some way help the struggling young Army women to understand *what is expected of them in the Service*."[13]

By comparison, Collins dedicated only a few chapters to homemaking, courtesies, and entertaining (according to the Army's standards, of course), but the majority of her manual—173 of her 214 pages of advice—instructed readers on the Army's standard operating procedure, regulations, and forms for all aspects of life and death in the service.[14] Collins provided reasoning for her emphasis on Army protocol and wives responsibility to learn it—wives owed the Army their service because they benefitted from the pay, lifestyle, housing, and other amenities that accompanied being married to an Army officer. "As Army families have such a semiofficial status and are eligible for certain definite privileges, it should be borne in mind that [Army families] are equally subject to and bound by Army regulations and customs of the services," Collins informed readers. In the following sentence, Collins reinforced the importance of wives dedicating their life and work to the Army mission with a reminder that "Wives of

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[11] Shea, "Our New Citizen Army," in *The Army Wife*, 1942, 283-306.

[12] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, xv and xvi.

[13] Ibid., xvi. Emphasis mine.

[14] Dilts only included information about the life, training, service, and overall structure in the Army in the 205 pages of her guidebook. Half of Redmond's manual includes encouragements for readers to contribute to the war effort and advice on whether or not to follow her husband to an Army camp, homemaking, jobs, and etiquette. The remaining 123 pages focus almost exclusively on instructing readers on military procedure related to pay, other benefits, and procedure for addressing mail, as well as instructing wives to learn key terms, insignia, and Army history. Dilts, *Army Guide for Women*; Redmond, *Handbook for Army Wives and Mothers.*

Army men should bear this in mind."[15] In total, seventeen of Collins's twenty-one thematic chapters told officers' wives how the Army wanted them to put their affairs in order and prepare for deployment, Army pay, gratuities and pensions, military law during wartime, life insurance, legal aid, wills, executor, women's property rights, deeds and promissory notes, servicemen's income tax, military procedure in the event of death, relief organizations, communicating with servicemen, buying war bonds, and mail to servicemen.

Both authors' focus on teaching new brides the Army's standard operating procedure reveals that the Army needed new Army brides to learn and adapt to the Army way of life in order to effectively support their husbands, the military mission, the Army, and the state. Without instruction and training in the Army's unique practices, Army wives could have negatively impacted the war effort by failing to support Army policies and protocols designed to ensure military discipline and success or by overwhelming military departments with questions about specific issues or requests to prioritize individuals and families over the Army. Like in Army basic training, tactics mattered in achieving a desired end. The popularity of Shea's manual, which was in its thirteenth printing in 1942, as opposed to Collins's manual, only in its second printing in 1942, indicates that readers responded more to Shea's personal approach over Collins's prioritization of Army policies.

For the Good of the Mission, Nation, and Husbands: Coercing Compliance

Whether educating readers on Army regulations or offering prescriptions for homemaking, entertaining, and socializing in the Army, Collins and Shea cloaked their instruction in patriotic purpose and personal necessity to inspire readers to adhere to the Army

[15] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook,* 180.

way of life. In a chapter entitled "Our New Citizen Army," Shea asserted, "Army women can do much for national unity."[16] Statements like this tied wives' compliance with the expectations of them to the good of the nation in order to get them to "[s]tep right up and do [their] part."[17] Collins deemed learning what the Army expected of wives a "paramount duty" for all Army brides who wanted their husbands to survive the war. "United by a common bond—the welfare of our menfolk—it becomes our paramount duty to study and to know the Army into which they are all poured at this time," she continued.[18] Collins went further, connecting wives' compliance with the Army way of life to her readers' personal well being. Collins promised readers that they would develop a "sympathetic understanding of the colossal task facing every officer in the Army today" if they subsumed themselves to the Army officer's wife ideal.[19] While Collins encouraged empathy for the "colossal task" officers in the Army faced, no such understanding was offered to those married to soldiers and officers and the realities they faced. Shea and Collins's patriotic visions would only be possible if their readers and their husbands united in submission to the Army and its mission. The significance of the Army's task, in turn, encouraged Army wives to support the military mission—a mission that the guidebooks presented as more important than anything else.

In case inspirational messages were insufficient to get spouses to subsume themselves to the military mission, Shea and Collins both warned of consequences for failing to follow military protocol. In the introduction of *The Army Wife*, Shea recounted a talk given by a retiring General

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[16] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 293.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, viii.

[19] Ibid.

Officer of the Army that entitled "The Unwritten Efficiency Report." In it, the General Officer asserted "that as an officer chooses the military career as his profession, so does a young woman choose a career in the Service when she pledges her troth to an Army officer." As Shea retold the story, the General Officer explained that, as part of the service, wives should support the Army's mission and would be held responsible for their work. While officers have written efficiency reports filed in Washington, wives had an "'unwritten efficiency report" that was "unfiled [sic] but known, labeled and catalogued throughout the service." Shea repeated the unnamed General Officer's warning that "[t]his unwritten efficiency report may be the means of bringing special assignments of honor to an officer, or it may deprive him of an enviable detail for which he has worked faithfully…"[20] This was not the last of such threats.

In the same six-page introduction, Shea included an additional warning that her readers' failure to meet the Army's expectations of them could prove detrimental to their husbands' careers. "There are a few sad examples of officers in the Army today (and also in the Navy) who should be holding key commands but who have been 'passed over,'" Shea cautioned. "Sometimes the fault lies at the wife's door!"[21] Fault came in many forms including being "the stormy petrel type" or "the too ambitious type," both of which Shea noted could "hurt her husband's career permanently."[22] Collins echoed this sentiment. "A wife who is tactful, courteous, and pleasant in her social relations, one who, if she finds conditions not to her liking, knows enough to remain silent is of great assistance to any officer; one who, on the contrary, is spiteful, dictatorial, and constantly critical of officers, their families, the conduct of affairs on

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[20] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, xvi; Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, 180.

[21] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, xvii.

[22] Ibid.

post, and the commanding officer, or who otherwise finds fault materially injures her husband's reputation, as well as her own."[23] Threats like these, which were woven throughout guidebook connected Army wives' compliance with the Army's expectations of wives to their husbands' successes or failures within the military system.

Collins included similar warnings in *Army Woman's Handbook*. "[A] wife can make or break her husband," she asserted before vaguely citing "[n]umerous instances" that were "on record" in which "an officer's efficiency has been discounted heavily, where he has failed to achieve positions of trust and distinction, and even where transfers have been made" due "entirely" to the wife. Reasons included in the manual to blame wives for any potential failure to achieve promotion ranged from those related to the military—"the fact that the wife was indiscreet in her speech or showed too plainly a lack of knowledge of military customs"—to personal faults such as ignorance of what were deemed "ordinary social customs" or the "custom[s] of good breeding."[24] As this advice made clear, ideal officers' wives would tie their self worth to their husbands' success in his chosen career and the Army mission.

Collins reinforced the notion that a wife's compliance with the ideal had significant impact on her husband's military career with assertions that it was the husband's responsibility to teach his wife how to live in service of her soldier husband, the Army, and, through the former, the nation. "It should be again emphasized that the responsibility is the man's," she opined. "He should instruct his wife in all things connected with the military life that she should know and should particularly warn her against criticism of the administration, as such criticism is

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[23] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, 180.

[24] Ibid., 181.

accredited to him."[25] The Army bolstered such warnings with promotion philosophies that examined the officer's performance as well as their family when considering advancement. If an Army officer's wife failed to support the mission and morale, promotions boards questioned her husband's leadership abilities and ability to command a unit of soldiers.[26]

Connecting the demands of the Army officer's wife ideal with the good of the nation, Shea and Collins situated wives' acceptance of the ideal in the war effort. Army officers' wives in 1942 lived in a country and a military that was shifting to accommodate the needs of a world at war. Government leaders expected civilians of all ages to contribute to the war effort. Shea and Collins told readers that Army wives were expected to do the same. "REMEMBER THAT THIS IS WAR," Shea cautioned, "the like of which we never have been engaged in before."[27] Collins similarly told readers, "Cooperation in this present-day emergency is also demanded of women. Our immediate objective is, of course, cooperation with national-defense measures."[28] Presenting her instruction to support the mission as unquestionable and natural, Collins continued, "It is unnecessary to state that all women with husbands, sweethearts, or sons in the Army will give their fullest support."[29] For the good of the mission and military readiness, the guidebooks implored Army wives to maintain the attitude, create and keep homes, entertain,

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[25] Ibid., 180.

[26] The Army officially considered officers wives and families in professional evaluations of its officers into the 1970s. The promotion qualifications changed along with the transition to the All-Volunteer Force. For more, see Margaret C. Harrell, "Army Officers' Spouses: Have the White Gloves Been Mothballed," *Armed Forces & Society* 28, no. (Fall 2001): 55-75.

[27] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 293. Emphasis in original

[28] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, vii-viii. Similarly, Shea declared that "Our slogan should be 'the best for our fighting men.'" Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 294.

[29] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, vii-viii.

raise children, and volunteer in a way that benefited the Army, soldiers' and officers' morale, and military readiness.

In addition to tying wives' compliance with the ideal to the success of their husbands' career, the mission, and the nation, Shea and Collins informed readers that their personal success was determined by their ability to whole-heartedly submit themselves to the Army way of life. "Now, whether or not she likes Army life depends in a great measure on herself—just how adaptable she is, and whether she can make the necessary adjustments," Shea explained.[30] The phrase "necessary adjustments" indicates that the wife alone must adapt to the needs and requirements of the Army, not that the Army will adapt to meet dependents' needs. Collins painted an idealistic reward for "[a] good Army wife and mother [who] uses all her resources"—she would develop an "enviable zest in life," that would mean "she stays young and interesting and becomes both buffer and bulwark of strength for her busy husband."[31] In short, Shea and Collins made it clear to readers that learning and adapting to the Army's way of life—essentially becoming all the Army needed them to be—would improve readers' marriages, selves, and lives. While these sorts of comments regularly appear throughout the manual, there are few sentiments that allude to the ways in which wives' compliance with the ideal directly benefitted the Army.

Camp Followers Only: Reinforcing Wives' Marginality

Although the guidebook authors demanded that wives must learn the Army way of life to facilitate the mission, the Army officer's wife ideal they prescribed mandated that wives view themselves as marginal to Army. Cynthia Enloe's studies of the military's impact on women

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[30] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 299.

[31] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, 179.

revealed the significance of women to military missions and the ways in which the Army could maintain control over spouses as well as the services they provide by marginalizing them.[32] According to Enloe, decision makers "needed women to play a host of militarized roles: to boost morale, to provide comfort during and after wars, to reproduce the next generation of soldiers, [and] to serve as symbols of a homeland worth risking one's life for."[33] Military commanders saw Army wives as specifically well-suited "to perform these sanitary and caring tasks because of their innately 'sympathetic' natures and housekeeping proclivities," she continued. Enloe asserted that military leaders realized Army wives could "provide the military with a useful pool of cheap labor," even unpaid labor "if it [could] be incorporated into the expected role of 'military wife'." In order to get women to fill vital social services and maintain a standing army, militaries needed to bring wives "under sufficient military control."[34] Without wives' commitment to the military's agenda and way of life, husbands would be less able to serve and

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[32] Enloe was the first to examine militarization and gender and remains the leading scholar of women's roles in the military and militarization. Other feminist theorists follow Enloe's logic in examining the role of women within the military and militarization. Cf. Cynthia Cockburn "Gender Relations as Causal in Militarization and War," *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 12, no. 2 (June 2010): 139-57; Lynne Segal "Gender, War and Militarism: Making and Questioning the Links," *Feminist Review* 88 (April 2008): 21-35; M. Adelman "The Military, Militarism, and the Militarization of Domestic Violence," *Violence Against Women* 9, no. 9 (2003): 1118-52; Cynthia Cockburn, *The Space Between Us: Negotiating Gender and National Identities in Conflict* (London: Zed Books, 1998). Philosopher Laura Duhan Kaplan demonstrates the impact of women's marginality, arguing that "The ideal of the caretaking woman helps exclude women from public institutions by reminding women that their first responsibility is to family." Further "this ideal helps co-opt women's resistance to war by convincing women that their immediate responsibility to ameliorate the effects of war takes precedence over organized public action against the war." Laura Duhan Kaplan "*Woman* as Caretaker: An archetype that Supports Patriarchal Militarism," *Hypatia* 9, no. 3 (Spring 1994): 131.

[33] *Enloe, Bananas, Beaches & Bases, 44.*

[34] Ibid., 3-5.

less likely to reenlist. "The key to control," Enloe argued, "is to define women as creatures marginal to the military's core identity, no matter how crucial in reality are the services they perform (and the symbolism they provide) to the smooth operations of the military."[35] Long before Enloe wrote her studies, Shea and Collins deployed the method of simultaneously militarizing and marginalizing Army officers' wives in order to control them.

Throughout their guidebooks, Shea and Collins regularly reminded readers that their husbands, not they, were the soldiers. For example, *The Army Wife* warned that notices of change of station "are your husband's orders, not 'our orders,' and if the War Department has given him no advance notice, simply remember that you come in the category of a 'camp follower,' and if you chose not to accompany your husband to his new station, that is your affair."[36] A chapter of *The Army Wife* entitled "Camp Followers of the U.S. Army" began "Army life is like a three-ringed circus, and Army women must be necessarily versatile," before asserting that there was no reward for a wife's versatility or labor on behalf of the Army. "[S]he will receive no silver trophy, no blue or red ribbon," Shea noted, but those who subsumed their selves to the Army would "gain a sense of satisfaction and achievement, which, if combined with a lot of fun, adds up to that elusive thing everyone is seeking, happiness."[37] By idealizing wives who put the needs of the military ahead of their own, instruction manuals concurrently militarized and marginalized readers. Adherence to the ideal relegated Army wives to a life of subservience to her soldier husband and the Army. Without commitment to the Army's mission, and a willingness to put its

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[35] Enloe, *Maneuvers*, 45.

[36] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 155.

[37] Ibid., 277.

mission ahead of their selves, their families, and their lives, none of the other prescriptions could resonate.

An Attitude Becoming of An Officer's Wife: Making Ideal Morale Boosters

Morale was of the upmost importance to Army leaders on the eve of WWII. On July 30, 1941, General George Marshall, U.S. Army Chief of Staff during the war, wrote to the commanding generals about how to create "unified efficient fighting force of citizen soldiers." Marshall placed the prime emphasis on building morale. "First in importance," the Army Chief of Staff stated, "will be the development of a high morale and the building of a sound discipline based on wise leadership and a spirit of mutual cooperation throughout all ranks."[38] The reason Marshall provided for his emphasis on morale was simple: "Morale, engendered by thoughtful consideration of officers and enlisted men by their commanders, will produce a cheerful and understanding subordination of the individual to the good of the team. This is the essence of the American Standard of discipline, and it is a primary responsibility of leaders to develop and maintain such a standard." In other words, he noted, "It is morale that wins the victory."[39] General Dwight D. Eisenhower similarly asserted that "Morale is the greatest single factor in successful wars" and "[p]essimism never won any battle."[40] For these WWII-era military leaders, it was clear that morale was closely connected to military readiness.

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[38] George C. Marshall, Prewar Plans and Preparations, Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, July 30, 1941, in *United States Army in World War II*, ed. Kent Roberts Greenfield (Washington, DC: Center for Military History, 1991), accessed September 1, 2012, https://archive.org/stream/PrewarPlansAndPreparations/PrewarPlansAndPreparations_djvu.txt.

[39] James Charlton, ed., *The Military Quotation Book: More than 1,200 of the Best Quotations* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2002), 134.

[40] Ibid.

The War Department established entire military departments and organizations to maintain and boost morale throughout WWII. In March 1941, leaders of the War Department created the Morale Branch of the Army to promote good esprit de corps through recreation and welfare services for servicemen.[41] Seven months later, the Army Information and Education Division formed The Research Branch of the War Department, which was tasked with studying the thoughts and beliefs of U.S. soldiers to provide leaders with an accurate the psychological, sociological, and statistical overview of their fighting forces. Under the direction of sociologist Samuel Stouffer, a team of sociologists gauged the morale of more than half a million soldiers through their responses to questions about their feelings toward the Army, the enemy, the war, and their combat experience, housing, recreational activities, and mental health.[42] General Marshall even suggested that civilian volunteer organizations coordinate efforts to support the expanding armed services. President Roosevelt agreed, and urged organizations like the Salvation Army, YMCA, YWCA, and others to support the troops and boost morale through recreational activities. On February 4, 1941, the United Service Organization (USO) joined six civilian organizations in a single mission to lift the spirits of America's troops and their families. Over the course of the war, more than 700,000 civilian volunteers supported countless troops at

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[41] Frank H. Kluckhohn, "Public Morale Viewed as a Defense Problem," *New York Times*, August 24, 1941, E8; Hanson W. Baldwin, "Maneuvers Show Army's Faults and Virtues," *New York Times*, September 28, 1941, E3.

[42] Samuel Stouffer and Edward A. Schuman, eds., *Studies in Social Psychology in World War II* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1949), 1: 1. Vol. I, The American Soldier: Adjustment during Army Life. For more information on the Samuel Stouffer and the Research Branch, see Joseph W. Ryan, *Samuel Stouffer and the GI Survey: Sociologists and Soldiers during the Second World War* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2013).

over 3,000 USOs nationwide.[43] The institutional focus on morale reveals the significance of it to military leaders and the military mission.

Shea and Collins mirrored military leaders' intense emphasis on maintaining high morale. Throughout their advice manuals, and the other wartime prescriptive literature aimed at Army wives, they urged readers to make their husbands' outlook top priority. As Shea declared, "Our slogan should be 'the best for our fighting men!'"[44] Like their advice about putting the Army mission first, Shea and Collins used a combination of patriotism, duty, and guilt to bolster their prescriptions that Army wives dedicate themselves to boosting soldiers' morale. Also like the prescriptions for prioritizing the mission, suggestions for morale boosting were rooted in long-held expectations of Army officers wives, not just the total war effort. Because the Army mission was most important, the advice focused on boosting husbands' morale, not maintaining the morale of wives. The focus on what Army wives should do for their husbands reveals the significant contribution make to their husbands, the Army, the nation, and the state. Although they classified families as dependents, Army leaders needed wives to contribute to the war effort in order to succeed.

For the Good of the Army: Wives Ideal Morale Boosters

Like Generals Marshall and Eisenhower, guidebook authors connected good morale with military success. Whereas military leaders focused on the morale of soldiers and officers, Shea and Collins focused on wives' ability to support and promote good morale within the Army.

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[43] U.S. Army Military History Institute, *Home Away from Home: The USO*, by Molly Bompane, accessed July 14, 2013, http://www.army.mil/article/15952/Home_Away_from_Home__The_USO/.

[44] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 293-4.

Casting the Army, not Army wives, in the role of dependent, Shea asserted that "[t]he morale in Army camps depends upon the women behind the men."[45] In her twenty-nine-page chapter entitled "Our New Citizen Army," Shea tied Army wives' ability to boost morale to the success of the Army system itself. "To fight a war men need guns, tanks, ships, planes," she explained, "but to WIN a war men need inspiration, courage, and hope. They need a sweetheart, a wife… for whose love and protection they will make the supreme sacrifice if called upon."[46] Heralding officers' wives' ability to support and inspire their husbands as their most significant contribution to winning the war reinforced the overarching theme that wives subsume themselves to their husbands, his mission, the military, and the state.

Collins connected wives' compliance with the morale-boosting ideal to military readiness. "Our husbands and sons will have a better morale while away if we insist on their getting things in shape before leaving," she wrote.[47] Associating the need to boost morale to the success of the state, Collins continued, "The question of morale helped to defeat France when she was in danger. If our home keepers accept the building and sustaining of morale as their most effective contribution, women can be responsible for one of the greatest sources of strength of any country in time of war—a strong and united home front."[48] These assertions of wives' ability to embolden soldiers in the context of the Army's focus on morale shows the importance of the Army officer's wife ideal to the military mission in terms of morale and, in turn, readiness.

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[45] Ibid., 293-4.

[46] Ibid., 294. Emphasis in original.

[47] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, 5

[48] Ibid., viii. Shea echoed this sentiment when she proclaimed, "Army women can do much for national unity." Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 293.

Patriotism, Positivity, and Perseverance: Prescriptions for Dealing with Difficulties

Despite the authors' demanding messages that wives promote good morale for their husbands and the base, Collins and Shea offered their readers little tangible advice of how to tend to their own morale or meet the demands of the Army officer's wife ideal. Collins quipped that there was no challenge posed by living within the Army system that could not be overcome with a smile, sense of humor, and flexibility. Ideal wives, Collins wrote, would become "versatile and tolerant, too busy for self-centeredness and too wide awake to the all-engrossing present for dullness or worry." This Army of unselfish happy ideal Army officers' wives would "be prepared to take up under whatever conditions exist the routine of housekeeping and hospitality for which the Army is famous and to make the most of every opportunity."[49] Couching her advice in patriotic language and tying her readers' actions to the Army's mission to win the war, Collins continued "We must come to know that much of the burden is lightened by a cheerful attitude and encouragement at home."[50] These prescriptions implied that those who failed to meet the demands of the ideal were self-centered, negative, and selfish. The problem was with Shea and Collins's readers, not with the Army's expectations of wives.

Similarly, Shea likened an officer's wife's ability to achieve all that was expected of her to a circus rider taking jumps. "Just so must the Army wife take whatever comes… she must be able to 'take it'," Shea asserted in the "Our New Citizen Army" chapter. "All this calls for courage, tact, self control, philosophy, and above all, a sense of humor," Shea continued. "Without the last-mentioned trait," Shea surmised, "she is *sunk*."[51] In the face of wartime

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[49] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, 177.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 278–9.

shortages, being able to "take it" often proved difficult for Army wives. Shea filled a chapter entitled "Business of the Army Household" with unrealistic expectations for wartime Army wives to persevere. In an era when housing and supplies were scarce near military camps, Shea expected wives to adapt to the Army lifestyle because "That is the Service!"[52] Promoters of the ideal demanded wives' positivity and ability to meet the expectations of the ideal was demanded because it was necessary for military readiness and morale.

When discouraged with Army life, Shea encouraged her readers to find perseverance and perspective by thinking of the Army wives who preceded them. "When your lot seems drear," Shea advised weary Army brides "go to the post librarian and ask for some of the books written by officers' wives of frontier days." Shea asserted that stories of those "brave women [who] fought prairie fires, experienced pestilence, earthquakes, Indian raids, lived through floods, stagecoach holdups, grasshopper scourges, and mutinies," would "furnish entertaining reading" and provide "insight into the customs of the 'old Army.'" The author went so far as to provide a bibliography of four books written by Army wives of previous generations.[53] These accounts of the "old days" were meant to counter and diminish any difficulty World War II-era wives had with Army life. The implication was that wives had it far better, so they should be happy and submit to the Army's expectations of them.

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[52] Ibid., 89.

[53] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 73-4. The books Shea suggested include: Ellen McGown Biddle, *Reminiscences of a Soldier's Wife* (Philadelphia, Press of J.B. Lippincott, 1907); Martha Summerhayes, *Vanished Arizona: Recollections of My Army Life* (Philadelphia, Press of J.B. Lippincott, 1908); Katherine Gibson Fougera, *With Custer's Cavalry* (Caldwell, ID, Caxton Printers, 1940); Francis M. A. Roe, *Army Letters from an Officer's Wife, 1871-1888* (New York: Appleton, 1909).

Even in the event of their husbands' death and the end of their conditional relationship with the Army, Army wives were to protect the Army system. First and foremost, guidebook authors instructed wives to maintain a high morale in the midst of their personal tragedy for the good of the Army. Shea began a section entitled "Army Etiquette toward Persons in Grief," with an absurd platitude about how people keep their spirits high instead of grieving in the Army. "In Army circles, when death occurs, there is no outward display of mourning except in the observance of the military customs of Service," Shea wrote. "There are no drawn shades, no crepe-hung doors, muffled bells or hushed voices, despite the deep sorrow of the family of the deceased. There is a certain esprit!"[54] According to Shea, this is possible because ideal wives realize that"[d]eath is accepted as an inevitable happening… [and] post life goes on in an uninterrupted manner except during the actual funeral service."[55]

In a chapter entitled "Procedure in the Event of Death," Collins similarly encouraged her readers to "be as businesslike and unemotional" as possible in order to "help husbands as well as ourselves in this crisis by planning for the worst if it should come." Preparation was Collins' readers' "duty" to their family, country, and husband, whose mind would be "free of one of the worries that perhaps beset him now in a greater measure than thought of facing the enemy ever did…. No real soldier fears death, but he does fear the thought of unfinished business." In typical fashion, Collins concluded with an unrealistic reward for wives who follow her advice, which read, "It is when we are best prepared that things do not happen."[56]

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[54] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 194.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, 138.

In the event that preparation for the inevitable did not prevent death, as Collins suggested, ideal widows would not only accept, but also understand that their conditional relationship with the Army was over. In a section entitled "Breaking up the Army Home," Shea informed readers that ideal widows should be grateful for the two to four weeks allowed to grieve, pack up their entire home, find a new place to live, and leave quarters, the base, and the Army way of life that they had embraced. Dismissing any grief the widow may need to tend to in favor of supporting the Army system, Shea wrote that "[t]wo weeks is usually long enough [time] in which to pack household goods, make adjustments and attend to all official business before clearing a post."[57] This "generous allowance," she noted, was available only "if the Commanding Officer approves," of course.[58] Even in death, Army readiness, morale, and housing for the families of living officers in the unit took precedence.

In the following paragraph, Shea finally acknowledged that dealing with the death of a spouse would be challenging. "Whatever the circumstances," she wrote, "it is one of the most difficult undertakings! She feels now that her life with the Army is over,"[59] In the rest of the section, which totaled three paragraphs, Shea affirmed that wives' inclusion in the military was, indeed, conditional. Shea's advice strongly implied that widows were no longer welcome in the system in which they had invested time and service, made friends, and whose standards they had adopted. After losing their officer husbands, widows were told to adjust to a civilian lifestyle to which they are unaccustomed. According to Shea "there will be days of heartbreak and loneliness when she will long for the companionship of Army friends who sympathize and

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[57] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 206.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Ibid., 207.

understand."[60] The solution Shea offered protected the Army system by marginalizing Army widows. Shea emphasized that a widows' problems are theirs alone to bear. She concluded the section with the prescription that a widow "should try to interest herself in some worth-while work as quickly as possible, and avoid feeling sorry for herself."[61] All of Shea's advice is more than what Collins' offers readers—six and one half pages that detail the "Procedure in the Event of Death," which begins, somewhat ironically, with a section entitled "Widow's Responsibility" and ends with a section on transporting dependents from the base.[62] This conditional relationship with the Army perpetuated the conception of wives and children as dependents, not partners in the WWII-era Army.

Conclusion

From its first pages through the last, World War II-era guidebooks made it clear that dedication to the Army's mission and boosting morale were essential elements of the Army officer's wife ideal. More than a reflection of the total war effort, Shea and Collins drew the traditional expectations of Army officers' wives when writing their guidebooks. The authors of the WWII-era editions of *The Army Wife* and *Army Woman Handbook* promised their readers that dedicating their lives to the military mission and boosting morale would benefit wives. "There is something about the Service . . . some indefinable thrill, that gets into the blood stream, and despite all the bad features and disadvantages, the average Army woman 'hankers' for post

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[60] Ibid., 208.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Collins, "Procedure in the Event of Death," chap. 14 in *Army Woman's Handbook*, 139-45.

life," Shea raved. An ideal Army wife "loves the Army with its glitter and discomforts, the bugle call and the monotony, the excitement and tenseness that go to make life for the Army Wife glamorous and thrilling," she continued.[63] Shea noted that the benefits of Army living were vast. "The Army woman learns that she must meet each new situation with philosophy, and that adaptability to change strengthens her fiber, stimulates her mentality, and satisfies something in her soul," she surmised. "She remains young at heart, her life is well rounded by contacts with all types and kinds of people, and she herself is interesting."[64] Collins's daughter, Betty Cleon Collins, reflected on the promise of Army life in her poem, "The Army Wife," which was featured at the beginning of her mother's manual. "So, it's follow your man, and live while you can! As he's ordered from pillar to post," the final verse concluded. "When the years you scan—from where you began—Your life is far richer than most."[65] The idealized future both authors constructed was held out as a reward for those who put the military mission and their husbands' morale above their own hopes and dreams. In encouraging wives to strive to adhere to an ideal defined by the needs of the Army, the purveyors of the ideal demonstrated that the Army depended on those it classified as dependents in order to be successful in World War II.

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[63] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, xx.

[64] Ibid., 281.

[65] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, front matter.

Chapter Two
Marching Orders: Building Ideal Army Lives

The foundational elements of prioritizing the Army and boosting morale infused advice about all aspects of the historically-rooted Army officer's wife ideal as it was codified during World War II. Shea and Collins encouraged readers to create happy homes dedicated to preparing Army husbands for their next mission out of whatever was available. Faced with housing shortages, personal struggles, and deployments, ideal officers' wives were told to remain cheerful in order to maintain their husbands' morale. The ideal also demanded that Army officers' wives set an example of supporting the mission and good morale for their children to follow. Like Army wives, Army leaders expected children to support the mission and boost morale. Prescriptions that reinforced the foundational elements of the ideal did not stop at the Army wife's door. Promoters of the ideal also demanded that wives embrace and reinforce Army hierarchies and protocol when socializing. Shea and Collins even instructed ideal wives to provide additional service to the military through paid and unpaid work. By marrying into the Army, wives married a military organization and therefore were expected to dedicated their lives and work to the Army's mission.

This chapter moves beyond the foundational constructs of the ideal to examine specific advice related to homemaking, childrearing, entertaining, and paid and unpaid work found in the 1942 editions of the Nancy Shea's *The Army Wife* and Clella Collins's *Army Woman's Handbook*. Again in this chapter, the focus is on the Army officer's wife ideal as the Army imagined her, not real interactions with it. It argues that the Army's requirements of readiness and positive morale shaped prescriptions for every element WWII-era Army wives, including homemaking, childrearing, socializing, and service. As they did with their advice to support the mission and boost morale, Shea and Collins deployed patriotism, guilt, warnings, and rewards to

coerce wives to accept their advice. Although presented as helpful guidebooks, the manuals did not provide guidance for how Army wives could advocate for the development of Army practices, policies, or programs to help wives address the many difficulties they encountered due to the war and their marriage to an Army soldier. Instead, the guidebook authors privileged the needs of the Army at the expense of their readers. The pervasiveness of the prescriptions in all parts of Army wives' lives reveals the depth of the Army's dependence on the support and labor of the spouses they classified as dependents.

Home Is Where the Army Tells You It Is: Making and Maintaining Ideal Army Homes

Finding a place to live during WWII was particularly trying. Wartime conditions exacerbated the national housing shortage that began during the Great Depression. Millions of Americans—approximately 15.3 million according to census estimates—seeking war jobs or following loved ones relocated during the war. Of those who moved, more than seven million were women who moved during the first three and a half years of the war.[1] The War Production Board's suppression of any construction unrelated to the war only compounded housing problems on the home front.[2] When housing was available, rent was usually prohibitive. As a result, many wartime women shared homes with roommates, family members, and in-laws.[3]

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[1] Susan Hartmann, *The Home Front and Beyond: American Women in the 1940s* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1982), 166; William Chafe, *The American Woman: Her Changing Social, Economic, and Political Roles, 1920-1970* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), 125; Ellen Carol DuBois and Lynn Dumenil, *Through Women's Eyes: An American History with Documents*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2012), 512.

[2] Donna Alvah, *Unofficial Ambassadors: American Military Families Overseas and the Cold War, 1946–1965* (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 19.

[3] Doris Weatherford, *American Women and World War II* (New York: Facts on File, 1990), 277–9.

The transient nature of life in the Army, severe housing shortages near military bases, makeshift accommodations, and exorbitant rent prices exacerbated the problems civilians faced for Army wives who followed their husbands from one military camp to another during WWII.[4] The Army provided little assistance to wives of servicemen seeking homes near their husbands, further complicating Army wives' struggles to secure affordable housing and did it provide much help with transportation of Army wives and children from one base to the next.[5] According to Donna Alvah "until 1942, disapproval, and at best, ambivalence, characterized Army policy on families."[6]

WWII-era prescriptive literature aimed at Army officers' wives treated housing shortages in a similarly cavalier way. Shea dedicated a mere page and a half to wartime accommodations near Army bases. In the section, entitled "Living Conditions in Army Boom Towns," Shea informed readers that trailers or "cardboard-box houses" might be the only housing available. "This is not unusual, my dear," she explained in a tone reserved for experienced older sisters. "In fact that is the accepted way that most brides are beginning their Army marital careers today."[7] This statement tried to normalize and diminish the housing problem while also asserting that marrying into the Army was a profession. If wives were lucky enough to secure housing, Shea instructed them not to have high expectations. "If your husband is fortunate enough to rank

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[4] Alvah, *Unofficial Ambassadors*, 18–19; DuBois and Dumenil, *Through Women's Eyes*, 516.

[5] Alvah, *Unofficial Ambassadors*, 62. The Army also provided limited assistance with transportation and health care for Army wives and children.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid., 295–6.

quarters, you may count yourself lucky…. But," she cautioned "don't expect any of the niceties of social life that exist in peacetime."[8] Despite the shortages and struggles, Shea presented domestic responsibilities in the face of wartime realities as minor obstacles that their readers could easily overcome. "Just so must the Army wife take whatever comes and be able to adjust herself," she instructed, "she must be able to 'take it'."[9] Again, the onus fell on the wives to adapt to the Army at war, not on the Army to consider the needs of dependents. Instead of offering practical suggestions for securing housing or making a cardboard box a mission supporting, morale-boosting home, Shea dedicated the remainder of the section to advice on the importance of forming social networks in the Army.

Prioritizing the Army's needs over those of dependents, Collins asserted that an ideal wife (i.e. an "energetic wife" who followed her Army husband "from pillar to post") would not even expect to have a house or an apartment. Although idealized dependents would expect nothing from the Army, Collins still expected them to support the mission, readiness, and morale by carrying with them "the essentials" to give a "homey touch" to "whatever space she was able to find in the overcrowded areas to which her busy husband will probably be ordered."[10] Challenging her own essentialist assumptions that wives will naturally bring certain items, Collins provided a list of odds and ends for wives to bring with them as they followed their soldier husbands wherever the Army ordered them. It is difficult to imagine that "a few scatter rugs," "cigarette boxes," "a couple or three pairs of chintz curtains," and the other items that

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[8] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 292-3.

[9] Ibid., 278–9.

[10] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, 184.

Collins suggested could help Army wives create morale-boosting, mission-supporting homes out of cardboard boxes as the ideal Collins proffered demanded.[11]

Even when Collins acknowledged that Army life would be difficult, she offered no practical suggestions for survival. Neither Collins nor Shea acknowledged non-traditional households prevalent during World War II, for example. Instead, their advice focused exclusively on nuclear families as Army wives and children, not extended families, were considered Army dependents. Instead of providing advise rooted in the realities of wartime America, Collins and Shea informed their readers that ideal Army wives could persevere by deploying the positive attitude, which the Army needed from them. "Abrupt changes of orders may mean leaving most that she has held dear outside of her immediate family almost overnight," Collins conceded before reminding readers that "home in the Army is ever where the hat is, and the heart is always there too."[12] Collins then charged Army wives with a duty to overcome any obstacle that would prevent them from making the quality of home the Army demanded. "One must be prepared to take up under whatever conditions exist the routine of housekeeping and hospitality for which the Army is famous and to make the most of every opportunity," she wrote.[13] As the guidebooks make clear, the Army expected Army families to serve as well. Hence, the responsibility for domestic success fell on Army wives alone, not the government or a community service. The emphasis on wives' positivity and perseverance in the face of adversity indicates that purveyors of the ideal were aware that wives' attitudes impacted the morale of the fighting men and, through that, military readiness.

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[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid., 177.

[13] Ibid.

Shea's "Business of the Army Household" chapter fostered the idea that an Army wife's ability to make a home would come naturally to her. In an era when housing was scarce, especially near military camps, the handbook noted that, "Army women have a knack of being able to do these things and also make a home out of a tepee, a nipa shack or whatever Uncle Sam assigns their husbands as 'quarters.'"[14] That "knack" including combining "all the qualities of being a financier, a culinary artist, an interior decorator, an expert in marketing and buying, the perfect hostess, a devoted wife and mother, a social success and a woman who can make a Second Lieutenant's pay stretch to the *n*th degree without ever breaking," Shea wrote. Shea dismissed the enormity of the task at hand with a joke—"A pretty big order, isn't it?"—to end that paragraph. Faced with nerve-wracking challenges, Army wives were expected to remain pleasant while fulfilling their domestic expectations. "An Army wife never complains… [instead] she smiles and hopes," Shea instructed her readers.[15] "Most Army homes have an indefinable charm," she continued, "– a charm that reflects the personality of its present owner, regardless of shabby furnishings, bare walls or lack of servants."[16] Failing to acknowledge all the many problems faced by wives and mothers on the home front, she insensitively asserted that, "The only tragedy that upsets a seasoned Army woman is to be separated from her husband."[17] Despite all of these difficulties, Shea glibly informed Army wives that "there is something mighty attractive about being a 'camp follower'!"[18] If Army wives could not create the morale-

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[14] Ibid., 88–9.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid., 89.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, xvii.

boosting home the ideal demanded and the Army needed, there was only one reason—the Army wife failed. No shortage or difficulty could excuse a wife's failure to make her home ideal and enjoy it. Naturalizing homemaking skills and dismissing the difficulty of it in this way suggested that failure to make a charming, ideal Army home rested exclusively with the Army wife.

Although Shea and Collins attempted to naturalize homemaking as what Shea described as "an instinct with most women," they still dedicated entire chapters to encouraging readers to approach homemaking "like a business" to be studied, systematized, and perfected.[19] Shea went so far as to title her chapter on homemaking "Business of the Army Household."[20] The chapter title and prescriptions in it indicate that the Army expected professional service in exchange for the allowances it afforded dependents. In the homemaking chapter, Shea asserted, "The Army household is a business, and the Army wife is the business manager." Throughout the chapter, Shea advised readers to adopt business practices: "Every successful business in the world is built upon system, and without system business does not continue to thrive." Shea declared that the "keynote" of the system for Army homes was "efficiency," a quality that mirrored the foundation of the Army system.[21] Efficiency "requires systematic planning," Shea explained, before encouraging readers to adopt the military practice of strategic planning for daily, weekly, and monthly schedules for housekeeping, marketing, and meal preparation.[22] The number of pages Shea dedicated to importance of planning and scheduling also reflected the importance of the topic to Army planners. Twelve of the twenty pages of the "Business of an Army Household"

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[19] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, 177.

[20] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 88-108.

[21] Ibid., 90.

[22] Ibid., 90–101.

chapter were dedicated to planning and schedule making. Collins similarly stated, "it is imperative that you know what is expected of you" so that her readers could "plan ahead" and "know how to chart your course."[23] The authors' emphasis on wives running an efficient home supportive of Army men and their mission reveals a strong connection between home life and military readiness. Additionally, presenting effective planning as essential to an Army wife's success left much room for Army wives to blame themselves, rather than the living conditions and programs the Army provided for families.

Shortages of consumer goods, housing, and services made completing domestic duties problematic at best for WWII-era Army wives.[24] Still, Shea maintained high expectations of wartime Army wives' homemaking abilities and noted that they, not their husbands, were responsible for overcoming any obstacles. "Don't ask or expect Ted to help you with the dishes," Shea ordered because "[h]e is working for the Government."[25] This advice, like the entire chapter, painted a picture of submission and patriarchy. Although Army leaders classified them as dependents, they depended on Army wives to prioritize the Army, the wellbeing of its soldiers, and their mission. Without wives to provide the household labor and positive outlook for its soldiers, readiness and morale would be negatively impacted. In addition to the stated expectations included throughout the "Business of an Army Household" chapter, the number of pages dedicated to homemaking (twenty total) illustrates the priority that the Army placed on domestic ideals.

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[23] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, 178.

[24] Hartmann, *Home Front*, 82–5.

[25] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 92.

Shea and Collins dismissed obstacles in favor of promising readers that intangible rewards would come from following sound business practices they suggested for homemaking. "[N]owhere in a women's world can [the] business of homemaking be more exciting or engrossing or earn greater dividends than in the Army," Collins raved.[26] Shea expounded on those dividends in a single-sentence subsection, "The Value of System," that concluded her "Business of the Army Household" chapter. "The Army family which earnestly tries to run its establishment on a business basis, will find that system and efficiency bring proportionate returns, as they do in a thriving business," she proclaimed.[27] The returns did not include increases in dependents' benefits or services provided to families. Rather, they focused on the benefits in terms of efficient and effective homemaking that served the Army. The authors' numerous references to the rewards for organized homes reveals that Army leaders believed that military readiness began inside Army homes. The lack of actual rewards for effectively running an Army home reminded readers that they were not actually in the Army. Reinforcing wives' marginality to the Army system made it easier to control their free labor.

Further reinforcing the notion that wartime Army wives owed their labor to the Army that provided them with benefits, Shea emphasized that no official rewards or commendations would be given to wives who created morale-boosting homes that supported the military mission. In the first paragraph of her chapter for camp followers, Shea noted that Army wives would receive no recognition or rewards for their efforts. To reinforce that point, Shea ended the chapter with a twelve-line poem "The Regular Army Wife." The use of poetry, which Collins also employed, relied on sentimentality and emotions to encourage compliance with the ideal. For example,

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[26] Ibid., 177.

[27] Ibid., 108.

"The Regular Army Wife" ends: "But there's never a song for the battles won Afar from war's red strife, Nor a wreath of laurel for brave deeds done By the Regular Army Wife." [28] As this poem reveals, Army leaders needed wives to live their lives in support the military system, but never assume they were an essential to it. Marginalizing new Army wives in this way made it easier to control them.[29]

Shea and Collins did, however, promise personal rewards for overcoming a lifetime of difficulties associated with homemaking in the Army. Namely, that Army life would help wives be youthful and interesting forever. "Life was filled with adventure," Shea noted before providing a single assurance to her readers—that the "thrilling stories" that result from such living conditions would "lose nothing in hair-raising quality by repetition." Although "tension and nervous strain there are in this kaleidoscopic life, and much to discourage and dismay," Shea noted, "at least there aren't many dull moments." The Army wife who learned the Army way and practiced "adaptability to change," Shea noted, "strengthens her fiber, stimulates her mentality, and satisfies something in her soul." In short, Shea declared, "she remains young at heart, her life is well rounded…, and she herself is interesting."[30] Shea and Collins regularly listed personal returns such as these in order to encourage compliance with their prescriptions. Neither Shea nor Collins question whether this reward was worth living "an ever-changing role: with or without servants, with or without social contracts, with or without conveniences, with or without…

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[28] Ibid., 277 and 282.

[29] For more on the practice of marginalizing women in order to control them, see Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches & Bases.*

[30] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 281.

personal friends, and nearly always financially overburdened."[31] While Shea and Collins extolled the personal rewards for compliance with the prescriptions that readers would feel when looking back on their struggles, the authors failed to mention the primary objective of the homemaking ideal—the many ways in which wives' efficiently planned households benefitted the soldier, the mission, the Army, and the state.

In order to encourage compliance with demands that homes serve the Army, Shea and Collins warned their readers that their husbands' future promotions depended on wives' compliance with the demands of the ideal. "Remember, responsibilities gravitate to the shoulders that can bear them," Collins counseled her readers in a two-page section of the Army Wife at Home chapter entitled "Suggestions for the New Army Wife." This section made explicit the connection between Army wives' success in homemaking and their soldier spouses' success in the Army. "Your role as an Army wife should be given careful study and consideration," Collins wrote in the introduction of the section, because "[y]ou, as his wife, will contribute largely to his career." She concluded the introductory paragraph with instruction of how best to help his career: "if you are ambitious for his success and happiness, strive for that point of view [that Army wives' contribute to their husbands' careers] in all that you do in building mutual background of home life and social relationships."[32] Two pages later, Collins reminded readers again that "a wife's part in strengthening her husband's ability is largely measured by the type of home life she builds as both a bulwark and a fortress for his career."[33] Shea deployed similar tactics to encourage compliance with her homemaking prescriptions for Army wives. The first

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[31] Ibid., 280.

[32] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, 178.

[33] Ibid. 180.

paragraph of Shea's "Business of the Army Household" chapter concluded, "An Army officer's wife *must* be successful if she is ambitious and wants her husband to wear stars some day—on his shoulders, of course!"[34] More than rewards, these assertions served as implied threats for those who failed to comply with the ideal. Statements like these attempted to remove personal ambition from wives; their ambition was to be tied to their husbands' success in the Army that, ideally, would better the entire military system.

Overall, the handbooks provided little guidance and demanded much patience and patriotism among those juggling the realities of wartime. In a chapter entitled "Our New Citizen Army," Shea maintained that "Army wives and mothers have greater responsibilities toward their husbands and children."[35] The burdens of Shea's readers multiplied in the absence of servants who left to make munitions instead of making beds. At home with their children, wives were to overcome obstacles, and keep the home fires burning. Aiming to reframe domesticity in patriotic terms, the handbook urged "[a]t this time, as in no other the American mother can recapture the spirit of 'Home Sweet Home'."[36] The handbook politicized the domestic ideal for wartime Army wives with other homilies such as "Homes that pull together unite the nation."[37] Collins echoed this sentiment on the first page of her preface, which began "If our homekeepers accept the building and sustaining of morale as their most effective contribution, women can be responsible for one of the greatest sources of strength of any country in time of war—a strong an

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[34] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 88. Emphasis in original.

[35] Ibid., 294.

[36] Hartmann, *Home Front*, 295.

[37] Ibid.

united home front."[38] Shea and Collins informed their readers that ideal Army officers' wives would create homes to keep their Army husbands' spirits lifted and remain prepared for the mission while also raising ideal Army children. The connection between homemaking and the war effort indicates that the domestic responsibilities of Army wives, like their civilian counterparts, had a distinct patriotic function during the war. But Shea and Collins often implied that Army wives owed their domestic duties to the Army because of the advantages afforded to them as Army dependents. Collins explicitly stated that, because an Army wife "shares and receives under the protection of an orderly Army post or in a pathless wilderness," whether "in a fine house or an Army tent," she owed it to the Army to make an ideal home and keep it interesting for her Army husband. Similar to her soldier spouse, the Army needed her to be, as Collins concluded, "prepared even if war comes and the cards are stacked against her."[39] Like prescriptions to support the Army's mission and promote morale, Collins and Shea's homemaking advice demanded their readers make and maintain homes that support their husbands, his mission, the Army, and the state.

No Brats Allowed: Prescriptions for Raising Mission-Embracing Morale-Boosting Children

A surge in births accompanied the wartime rush to the altar. During WWII, the U.S. population increased by 6.5 million people.[40] Disruptions, psychological stresses, prolonged separation, and shifts in family roles shaped childhood at the time. According to Steven Mintz, Pearl Harbor was "as much a watershed in the lives of young Americans as it was for their

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[38] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, viii.

[39] Ibid., 178.

[40] Steven Mintz, *Huck's Raft: A History of American Childhood* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004), 256.

elders."[41] The ensuing war "politicized the lives of the young," he asserted.[42] While psychologists, sociologists, journalists, and government employees questioned the impact of World War II, separations, and working mothers on children, Shea and Collins provided relatively little advice on raising children within the Army system and a militarized family. They also failed to provide any suggestions on how to raise children on the meager monthly allowance of $50 for wives, $12 for one child, and an additional $10 for each additional child that the government provided for dependent Army children.[43] Instead, the authors followed their typical model of advice giving—connecting wives' parenting to the success of their children, their husbands' careers, the military mission, and the nation.

If children existed within ideal Army homes, guidebook authors demanded that they, like their mothers, boosted soldiers' morale and supported the Army's mission. In a single-paragraph section sandwiched between five paragraphs on the Army wife and military weddings, Collins imparted to her readers that the "responsibility for children rests directly on the parents." Like Shea, Collins informed readers that it was of the utmost importance that mothers make sure that children, like wives, be, "brought up to respect Army traditions and to comply with Army customs" because Army children, like Army wives and homes, served "as an index to the officer's general ability."[44] As this advice made clear, Army marriages, homes, and children were to serve the Army. Their lives and labor were deemed successful when it enabled soldiers

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[41] Ibid.,254. William M. Tuttle, Jr. echoes this sentiment—"Pearl Harbor…. Forever changed the lives of America's home front children." Tuttle, *Daddy's Gone to War*, 4.

[42] Mintz, *Huck's Raft*, 255.

[43] "Army Explains Allowances for Soldiers' Dependents," *New Journal and Guide*, August 1, 1942, 4. See also Cline, "Allowances to Dependents," 227.

[44] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, 182.

to serve the Army better. Collins provided no guidance on how to engender respect for Army traditions and customs in small children. This failure to provide guidance on helping children negotiate the psychological and emotional stresses of war reflects the U.S. government's general attitude toward helping civilian families cope with wartime stresses.[45] As Steven Mintz showed, the U.S. government's efforts to provide centralized childcare and assistance for mothers paled in comparison to the government of Great Britain, which "constructed central kitchens, public nurseries, and rural retreats for working mothers and their children" and required employers "to give working mothers an afternoon off each week to conduct family shopping." The Army did not provide centralized programs to help spouses meet the exigencies of the war or the demands of the Army officer's wife ideal. Instead, the Army expected wives to meet the childrearing demands of the ideal without assistance, much money, or their husbands.

Unlike Collins, Shea dedicated an entire chapter to Army children. Like Collins, however, Shea offered little tangible advice for raising children within the Army system. The first four of the chapter's thirteen pages detailed formalities associated with an Army baby's christening including how to address the invitation and what to serve at a reception. As Shea's advice made clear, celebrations for the birth of Army children, like every other part of an Army wife's life, must serve the Army by adhering to its policies and protocol. The following eight pages included an overview of a child's education ranging from nursery to preparatory schools. The sections dedicated to nursery school and kindergarten provided no suggestions for securing early childhood education on or near Army bases. Instead, Shea offered her general opinion of the value of each stage of education. In the portion entitled "Getting Johnny Into the First Grade," Shea admonished "the attitude of young Army parents who insisted on pushing their

[45] Mintz, *Huck's Raft*, 261.

children," which she described as "[t]he bane of [her] teaching experience."[46] Rather than educate readers on how to secure a good education for children raised in a transient lifestyle, Shea ignored the real problem and blamed "parental pride" and tradition for the persistence of the notion that "Johnny must start school at six."[47] After five paragraphs dedicated to not pushing "Johnny Into First Grade," Shea concluded the section with a single paragraph in which she included two sentences of advice specific to education on an Army base. In them, Shea encouraged readers "to write either to the Education or Recreation Officer, or to the Post Adjutant" to "make inquiries in regard to the school situation," explain their "particular needs" to school officials, and "mention the sex and age of your child and the grades in which you are interested."[48] Shea treated preparatory schools, the next section of the chapter, in a similarly cursory manner. Like many of the other realities Army wives would have to face, it was left to Army wives to determine how to fulfill the Army's expectations of them.

Shea's childrearing chapter ended with a list of ten general rules for children on an Army post.[49] These included directions that children: learn the guidelines of the recreational facilities and related to government horses, do not impose on neighbors or annoy them with unnecessary noise, do not vandalize or deface anything, be respectful, stay away from military facilities like gun sheds, and respect older people. Both authors' emphasis on rules for Army children contrasted with what Steven Mintz described as the "relaxation of social restraints on the young"

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[46] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 150.

[47] Ibid., 151.

[48] Ibid., 152.

[49] Ibid., 142-54.

that were typically the result of "wartime exigencies and demands on families."[50] The Army expected ideal Army wives to raise children who, like the wives, would know and adhere Army policies and practices for the benefit of the Army and its mission.

In addition to the childrearing chapter, Shea included four paragraphs on children in "Our New Citizen Army," the last chapter of her guidebook. Here again she failed to guide her readers to any available Army services or organizations to assist children in adjusting to wartime disruptions, insecurities, and deployments. In lieu of practical suggestions to ease the impact of war on children, Shea articulated the expectation that parents ease the ramifications of growing up in a nation at war. "Parents," she asserted, had "a definite duty" to help children "understand what war is." Although she chose the word parents, Shea's advice was directed at her readers, the wives, who she deemed responsible for helping children "understand what war is." Shea reinforced that point in the same section. "On Army posts and off," Shea wrote, "Army wives and mothers have greater responsibilities toward their husbands and children."[51] Those responsibilities included tending to the "routine needs of children" and helping children "participate intelligently in war-effort activities and to feel that their contributions count."[52] Like her prescription that her readers boost their husbands' morale, Shea encouraged Army wives to prioritize the health of children and "above all, keep him happy." Shea's suggestions for maintaining children's well-being included "victory gardens" for adolescents and "giving [older children] the chance to do something worthwhile, without taxing their strength."[53] This advice,

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[50] Mintz, *Huck's Raft*, 259.

[51] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 294.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Ibid., 295.

meant to benefit the Army and the war effort, would be difficult to fulfill given the demands of war and the shortages of supplies, especially for those living on or near a military base.

While studies of American childhood reveal that children of all ages "were expected to contribute to the nation's defense," as Mintz argued, Army children had a special connection to the state.[54] As World War II raged in Europe, Shea told her readers that they were fighting a battle for traditional American families. "This war may help America recapture 'home life,' something we feared was lost," Shea dreamed. Like conformity with the demands of the Army officer's wife ideal, winning the war for traditional family values was a patriotic endeavor. "Family life once made America great," Shea asserted. If wives were successful, America would be as well because, as she noted, "Homes that pull together unite the nation."[55] Collins imbued her advice with similar patriotic purpose, arguing that women who complied with the Army officer's wife ideal could help shape the future of America. "We, as Army wives and mothers of sons now carrying the torch for posterity, must think toward that future for which our men our fighting," she proclaimed. "We must rededicate ourselves to the tenets of our religion and our government, reconsecrate ourselves to the service of our country and those sons who are yet to come."[56] In addition to supporting the mission, maintaining soldiers' morale, and making Army living conditions homelike, the ideal tasked Army wives with engendering patriotic participation in the Army lifestyle and war effort for the good of the state.

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[54] Mintz, *Huck's Raft*, 258.

[55] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 295.

[56] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 206-7.

It's the Army's Party, Don't Cry (Even if You Want To): Entertaining Obligations for Ideal Army Wives

Customs and courtesies form the basis of military life. Tradition inspired people to serve, informs military practice, and helps maintain order and discipline. The importance of traditions and formalities extend beyond who will salute whom and when to soldiers' home lives. Strong social relationships help create a sense of camaraderie and security amongst soldiers.[57] The number of pages Shea and Collins dedicated to informal and social obligations reveal the importance and extensiveness of social obligations in the Army, as well as the significant role Army wives were expected to play fostering such formalities. Shea dedicated thirty-three pages to entertaining; Collins included seventeen and a half pages. For both authors, their chapters on entertaining were the second longest chapters in their manuals. Their emphasis on entertaining obligations made it clear that the Army needed Army wives to participate in many military customs and courtesies in order to the Army as a tradition-bound organization, as well as support their husbands' careers, Army readiness, and the nation.

According to both authors, simplicity was the keynote of an Army party, but the extensiveness of their advice reveals that imbedded in military gatherings were a host of military rules, beliefs, and traditions, on which a soldier and the Army's success depended. Readers had to learn: how to properly arrive at and depart a base; how to attend and host breakfasts, brunches,

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[57] Roger W. Little explored this topic in his dissertation "A Study of the Relationship between Role Behavior and Participation in Small Groups" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1955). He drew upon evidence gleaned from being embedded as a medic with troops during the Korean Conflict. In "Guardians of the Golden Age: Custodians of U.S. Military Culture," Pamela R. Frese shows that military customs and courtesies continue to be practiced in retirement. Pamela R. Frese "Guardians of the Golden Age: Custodians of U.S. Military Culture," in *Anthropology and the United States Military: Coming of Age in the Twenty-first Century*, ed. Pamela R. Frese and Margaret C. Harrell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 45-68.

lunches, coffees, and all types of dinners; what drinks to serve and who should serve them; who to invite and where to seat them; and a variety of other prescriptions for proper social etiquette. Like the rest of the advice they offered, Shea and Collins told wives that their conformity with their prescriptions would benefit their husbands and his career. Their advice for entertaining reinforced the hierarchies that formed the foundation of Army order and discipline. In adhering to the protocol set forth by these authors and military tradition in general, World War II-era Army brides did more than host and attend dinner and parties—they supported and bolstered the military customs and courtesies that were the basis of the Army's unique culture and society.

Guidebook authors connected official Army policy to the social expectations of Army officers' wives throughout their chapters dedicated to social expectations within the Army. Shea entitled her chapter on Army courtesies "The Army Bride is Entertained and Repays Her Obligations." The word obligation implies that Shea's prescriptions were not optional; they were requirements. Shea began her chapter with an exaltation of socializing in the Army. She distinguished military courtesies from their civilian counterparts, noting that there was "an informality in extending invitations that [was] not found in the fashionable circles of civil life." Further emphasizing the point, Shea claimed that the "social life on a small post resemble[d] that of a large family." *The Army Wife* privileged the preservation of Army tradition and order—"the free manner in which an Army community… submits to transfer… without breaking up any of its social activities"— as one of the "chief charms" of Army social life, a benefit to the participants, not the Army. Framing frequent moves as a positive, Shea claimed that moves to foreign bases "seem[ed] to knit the families closer together, and develop[ed] a camaraderie the like of which is found in no other organization."[58] Shea followed this idyllic depiction of the

[58] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 109.

Army as a close-knit family with more than four pages of detailed instructions on how to accept or decline social invitations that belied her previous sentiments about the Army as an informal, close-knit family.

"Military Courtesy," Collins's chapter on social etiquette, began with five lines of an Army regulation to inform wives that were always on duty at social occasions. Whereas the regulation was written for those formally inducted into the service, Collins assured her readers that it "may be used as an infallible reference upon all occasions" for the many "calls of courtesy that must be made in the service."[59] The Army regulation noted, "The interchange of visits of courtesies between officers is of great importance, and the well established customs of the army in this respect will be scrupulously adhered to." The connection between military courtesy and military readiness is evident in the last sentence of the regulation Collins cited, which read, "Failure to pay the civilities customary in official and polite society is to the prejudice of the best interest of the service (AR 605-125)."[60] Families, like soldiers, were expected to socialize for the benefit of the Army.

One way that socializing and entertaining supported the Army was by reinforcing the notion that the Army and its requirements took precedence over individual needs. A slew of formalities accompanied Army couples on their moves to new bases. Despite the many demands on moving wives, Shea told her readers to respond to invitations within twenty-four hours of receiving them as Army protocol demanded.[61] Officers were expected to make what the

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[59] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, 186 and 190.

[60] Ibid., 186.

[61] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 109-14. These pages include specific suggestions for acceptance or regrets sent for a variety of parties and invitations (e.g., "The Informal Written Dinner Invitation.")

guidebook authors referred to as "official calls" to the post commander and all intermediate officers upon arrival to the base, for example. Collins advised her readers that social calls should be made to the commanding officer and his wife "within 24 hours after arrival unless otherwise advised by the commanders or their staffs." These calls "should not last more than 15 or 20 minutes," she wrote, but they should be "the first act of the family upon arriving at a post." According to Collins, Army wives were responsible for ensuring that this essential formality was completed. "[T]he wife must be meticulously careful that [the social call to the commanding officer and his wife] is done promptly," she wrote. Reinforcing that point, Collins continued, "Now that you know that this is the very first thing to do, be sure to do it and see that your husband does it." Collins dismissed the facts that "[m]oving is a chore that tries the patience of even an old seasoned Army family" and "[t]here is much else to do," stating that wives must meet the social expectations of them because "one of the essential prerequisites of the Army wife is that she be a able to 'take it.'" Collins concluded her statement on calling upon the commanding officer with an additional reminder that wives "first trying task is these calls," not unpacking, shopping for food, tending to their children's needs (or those of themselves or their husbands), or resting. So important was the point that Collins stated it three times, and offered specific advice of how to go about going on these calls. "Put on your best-looking street frock, your hat, and your gloves, of course," she advised. "Be sure that your calling cards and those of your husband are in your purse. Then sally forth at your earliest opportunity to begin properly your family's social army career at this new post."[62] As the social customs of calling made clear, the Army, and especially those at the top of the hierarchy, were the most important priority for soldiers and their spouses.

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[62] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, 186-7.

Encouraging Army wives to develop a sense of community among themselves also benefited the Army. Shea told readers "not to invite the same people every time" even if "they are your best friends, and you enjoy them" because her readers had "social *obligations*."[63] Collins charged Army wives already living on base to "establish and extend hospitality to those who are strange," even describing the act as a "paramount duty" for them.[64] Reinforcing the notion that entertaining was for the Army, not themselves, Shea similarly informed "wives of older officers in the Service" that they had "a very definite responsibility toward the wives of the younger officers." She asked her readers to "put [themselves] in the bride's place, think back to the last war or before, and recall how strange and ill at ease you felt upon entering Army life." The purpose of such courtesies, Shea noted, was to make new brides "feel at home."[65] Framing courtesy in militaristic terms, Shea declared, "Anything that we can do today to make the world a cheerier place and to help our neighbor is our duty."[66] Such advice aimed to built a network of Army wives and informal support services that could educate wives on Army rules, regulations, and life on an Army post, as well as alleviate the number of demands millions of new brides could make on traditional Army support services.

Although both authors regularly noted there was no rank among women, in reality, the same hierarchies that defined and determined the Army informed the interactions between Army wives. Shea and Collins encouraged wives to practice their submission to Army hierarchies in

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[63] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 124. Emphasis mine.

[64] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, 179.

[65] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 200.

[66] Ibid.

their social interactions with one another.[67] For example, the Shea conveyed to her readers that the "ranking officer's wife present" was responsible for presiding over the tea table.[68] Shea also advised new brides, "Formality should be observed with older people or those with whom you are not on intimate terms."[69] Younger women should "always wait for their elders or the ranking officer's wife to make her departure" before leaving an Army gathering, Shea noted.[70] According to *The Army Wife*, custom also dictated that junior officers' wives hosting parties "ask the Commanding Officer's wife, or some older person, to pour tea."[71] Rank even informed the types of entertaining wives were encouraged to plan. "Formal dinners given by ranking officers are often returned by buffet suppers given by junior officers," Shea informed readers, for example.[72] Promotions for officers meant more responsibilities for wives. Collins reinforced the Army's system of rank, noting "the higher the husband's rank the greater the obligation of the wife to set an example of friendliness, good taste, and correct observance of the social demands of the husband's position."[73] What was most important was that courtesies were repaid. "Be meticulous about returning your obligations in some manner," Shea advised. "Your seniors will respect your

[67] Shea reminded readers of this throughout the guidebook. E.g., "Again, let me repeat, there is no rank among women. Army wives are only 'camp followers'." Ibid., 302.

[68] Ibid., 116.

[69] Ibid., 112.

[70] Ibid., 114-5.

[71] Ibid., 126.

[72] Ibid., 127.

[73] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, 179.

efforts if you are sincere and unaffected. They expect little!"[74] In fact, she declared, "anyone in the Army who attempts to entertain beyond a scale appropriate to the officer's grade and pay is definitely condemned." According to Shea, this "unwritten law" should result in "little rivalry among hostesses."[75] Collins similarly reminded readers "husband's rank is never justification for rudeness among women."[76] Statements like these emphasized wives' common bond while simultaneously marginalizing them from the Army's hierarchy that entertaining was meant to reinforce.

In addition to submitting themselves to Army hierarchies while entertaining, Shea and Collins expected wives to submit to their husbands and his wishes. "If your husband is a salad tosser, or one of those male geniuses who loves to cook," Shea encouraged wives to "give him free reign." The result, she promised, was that their "party-giving will be different, successful and original."[77] Female guests should "not expect an officer to make two trips around the table" in order to serve her. Instead, Shea advised that, "A lady, unless she should happen to be incapacitated, should serve her own plate."[78] Guidebook authors also encouraged Army wives to entertain Army customs and Army men, not themselves. The acts of deferring to and not burdening their Army officer husbands prepared Army officers' wives not to burden their husbands or the Army with their needs in other areas of life.

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[74] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 302.

[75] Ibid., 123-4.

[76] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, 179.

[77] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 127-8.

[78] Ibid., 121.

Reflecting the notion that a system is only as good as the sum of its parts, Collins again framed her advice as a benefit to her readers' husbands and their careers. Collins claimed that a woman could "be of great assistance to the officer by adhering as strictly as possible to those rules of social conduct that obtain for the officer himself." She continued that a wife's "social life is important in maintaining a reputation for culture, intelligence, and hospitality in the community, and it establishes her family on a footing which has increasing value to her husband and her children as the years pass."[79] Cementing the connection between military orders and expectations of military marriages, Collins noted "all [Army rules of social conduct] apply more or less to the family in general."[80] Shea claimed that the "social demands" she defined as "'musts' of military conduct for the officer's lady… mark[ed] a man in the Army more clearly than we like to admit."[81] Throughout their guidebooks, Collins and Shea repeated their charge that wives learn the Army's customs and courtesies for the good of the Army and their officer husbands. "You would do well to study carefully this section on customs of the service and army-post etiquette," Collins wrote in a section entitled "Suggestions for the New Army Wife," because "the wife's possession of this information can be of great benefit to the career of a young officer." Possession of information on customs and Army post etiquette, in turn, benefited the Army in terms of high morale and readiness.

Whether participating in or hosting social functions, Shea and Collins informed readers that they were always "on inspection." Requiring wives to do more than merely participate in prescribed social activities. Shea explained that Army officers' wives owed their hostesses "the

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[79] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, 180.

[80] Ibid., 186.

[81] Ibid.

courtesy of entering into the spirit of the party, and he or she should strive to be entertaining at his best."[82] Collins similarly cautioned new brides to "Remember, you as the newcomer to Army routine will be judged by the same standards that apply to the old regulars."[83] When new brides had "finally gotten 'the rice out of [their] hair'" Shea asserted that they must return the courtesies extended to them because "[h]ospitality accepted from others should be returned, just as social calls and all obligations should be repaid."[84] Rather than get behind on their obligation to repay hospitality, Shea encouraged wives to throw a "few small parties each month" unless they "prefer[ed] to 'save up' as your obligations 'pile up' and then give one large, wholesale party."[85] When hosting an Army party, Shea instructed hostesses to use "her loveliest tea cloth, her best tea service, and the quarters are shining and at their very best."[86] This advice was important enough to repeat again a mere nine pages later when Shea advised readers again to "[h]ave all silver shining" and "[i]f you can't have it gleaming, then don't use it."[87] Framing proper partying in a personal context, Collins informed readers that, "[p]utting people at ease is a very real mark of social genius."[88] Both authors warned that failure to adhere to social customs and expectations led to personal repercussions for readers. Shea told brides, "your popularity will depend upon your poise, your graciousness, and your charm" at parties; and Collins warned, "[i]t is an

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[82] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 118.

[83] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, 178.

[84] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 123.

[85] Ibid., 124.

[86] Ibid., 116.

[87] Ibid., 125.

[88] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, 189.

uncomfortable feeling to wake up to the fact that one is being left out of things, but that is what happens when one neglects the small formalities of social obligation." Rather than question those who would exclude others, Collins told readers simply, "These are demands upon the wife that come with the husband's position."[89] Presenting the demands of ideal in this way, Collins and Shea privileged the Army's needs and tried to quell any potential challenge to their prescriptions.

The authors' strategies for entertaining and being entertained reinforced demands that wives participate in the social side of the Army for the benefit of their husbands and the Army, not themselves. Whether aware of it or not, the authors emphasized entertaining in order to support the systems of courtesy, hierarchy, and camaraderie necessary for the Army to properly function. Collins deployed threats to coerce conformity with the social needs of the Army. The expansiveness of the prescriptions for entertaining indicates that the Army needed wives to dedicate all of their actions for the improvement of their husband's career and, through him, for the betterment of the Army. As the entertaining prescriptions reveal, wives had to host and attend parties, but the Army would always be the guest of honor.

For the Good of the Order: Prescriptions for Service

Social customs were not the only way in which World War II-era officers' wives were expected to serve the Army. Tradition dating back to the Revolutionary Era dictated that wives work on behalf of the service. Martha Washington set the precedent of officers' wives volunteering for various charitable activities. Each winter, Martha Washington left her family and friends and went on an exhausting journey to General Washington's military encampments. There, she worked on behalf of the Army, serving as her husband's confidant and assistant, comforting sick and wounded soldiers, and hosting social activities. General George Washington

[89] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 118; Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, 179.

so valued his wife's morale-boosting contributions to the war effort that he petitioned Congress to reimburse her travel expenses.[90] Generations of Army officers' wives orally relayed expectations for service set during this time to new Army brides. When Shea and Collins wrote their guidebooks, they embraced the tradition of service. Building on historical precedents, Shea and Collins implored their readers to support the Army in a variety of ways ranging from charitable service to military service and paid employment. The demand that ideal wives fulfill the tradition of service regardless of pay or recognition further shows the connection between Army wives and military readiness, the Army, and the state. Their volunteer and paid labor supported soldiers and the system they served.

Like their other prescriptions, Shea and Collins situated their advice about volunteer work within the war effort. Shea explained that the Commanding Officer's wife would "be taken up with Red Cross activities or other war work, for which she will expect you as a newcomer to volunteer." Immediately following this charge, Shea reminded readers that WWII was a "TOTAL WAR" that required readers to contribute to the war effort.[91] She provided an overview of five charitable and service organizations through which wives could serve in her guidebook's appendix.[92] Like Shea, Collins declared that, "[c]ooperation with this present-day emergency is also *demanded* of women."[93] Deemed Army wives' "contribution" to the war effort, Collins

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[90] Encyclopedia Virginia, s.v. "Martha Washington's Wartime Expenses," accessed October 12, 2012, http://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/media_player?mets_filename=evr4704mets.xml.

[91] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 293. Emphasis in original.

[92] Ibid., 307-311. The organizations reviewed include: Society of the Daughters of the United States Army, thrift shops, Army Relief Society, American Red Cross, and The Army and Navy Memorial Aid Society.

[93] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, vii. Emphasis mine.

depicted wives' work on behalf of the Army as an unquestionable and universal service. "It is unnecessary to state that all women with husbands, sweethearts, or sons in the Army will give their fullest support and as much time as possible to the Red Cross and all Army Relief Agencies," she explained. In providing specific examples on volunteering for the good of the service, Collins (like Shea) reinforced the importance of wives laboring for the war effort.[94] Collins told readers that "women active in our community" could "keep propaganda free of hate" and "work toward the elimination of hate from the preliminary preparations for total war." Together, she suggested, this "closely knit and mighty organization of women whose reason for existence should be cooperation with those in charge of the welfare of our nation" could take "a real step… toward something of use at the peace table."[95] Statements such of these cast officers' wives as actors on the world stage and contributors to the welfare of the state and international relations. But, like the rewards for housekeeping, these rewards were intangible and not meant to supersede the repeated message that wives were marginal to the military mission.

Collins went beyond the scope of charitable service urging her readers to sign up for military service. Collins viewed the Army's attempt to recruit 75,000 women volunteers for service such an "immense military project" that she dedicated an entire chapter to the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC). She began by acknowledging that, "[i]t's a strange thing for the Army of the United States to say, 'We want women,'" before stating that women were "badly" needed to help with clerical work, cooking, dispatching, and "in 57 other capacities" to free

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[94] "The local American Legion will give information as to further service, and each home-town Civilian Defense League is looking for volunteers," Collins informed her recruits. Ibid., viii.

[95] Ibid., viii-ix.

"soldiers capably of and eager for combat duty." Collins then provided a detailed two-page overview of a typical day, including responsibilities, uniform, and hierarchy of the WAAC'S. Shea concluded the four-page chapter by noting that "Service with the WAAC'S, unlike that with the Navy Waves, is open to wives of officers and enlisted men of both services," before providing directions for interested readers to go to the "regular recruiting station" for more information and to volunteer.[96] In calling on and allowing servicemen's wives to serve in not alongside the Army, Collins and the Army formalized the connection between ideal Army wives labor and the needs of the Army and the state. She also showed that the Army's needs to precedence over traditional expectations of Army wives.

Shea similarly prioritized the Army mission and the nation's wartime production needs over traditional gender norms for wives in a section that encouraged readers to volunteer for paid war work a year before the government began actively recruiting married wives and mothers for war work. Published a year before the government began to actively recruit married females into the labor force, Shea's suggestion that readers of the 1942 edition of *The Army Wife* "get a job" starkly contrasted public policy and attitudes toward working wives in the early 1940s.[97] Despite wartime production needs and a severe manpower shortage, civilian society was slow to accept the notion of housewives and mothers working outside the home. Historically, married women were expected to care for the home and the family while men filled the breadwinner role. Emphasis on traditional roles had increased during the Great Depression, when wives who sought employment were accused of taking jobs away from men, and deemed selfish and

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[96] Ibid., 212.

[97] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 297.

destructive to their families.[98] When employed married women were depicted in the popular culture of the early 1940s, they–like their Great Depression counterparts–were depicted as villainous, self-centered, and harmful to their families.[99] A Gallup poll conducted in 1943 revealed that only thirty percent of men would allow their spouses to take a full-time job working on a machine in the war of production.[100] Employers, who feared that female employment would have a detrimental effect on the family remained reluctant to hire women, particularly wives and mothers, to fill jobs in male-dominated fields during the first years of the wartime emergency.[101]

At a time when civilian wives and mothers were being held to traditional domestic gender ideals and working wives were depicted as miscreants in popular culture,[102] Shea explained, "[t]his war is not only a man's job; it is a woman's job, too."[103] Shea also informed readers that "[w]omen are taking men's places in munitions plants, in factories of all kinds…"[104] And"[i]n the United States women are volunteering for war work daily…"[105] Far from fostering

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[98] William H. Chafe, *The Paradox of Change: American Women in the 20th Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 11–17 and 122–3. See also Hartmann, *The Home Front and Beyond*, 15–17; Maureen Honey, *Creating Rosie the Riveter: Class, Gender, and Propaganda during World War II* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1984), 70–2; Maureen Honey, "The Working-Class Woman and Recruitment Propaganda during World War II: Class Differences in the Portrayal of War Work," *Signs* 8, no. 4 (Summer 1983): 678.

[99] Honey, "The Working-Class Woman," 678.

[100] Poll cited in Rosalind Rosenberg, and Eric Foner, *Divided Lines: American Women in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1992), 131.

[101] Chafe, *The Paradox of Change*, 122 and 130.

[102] Ibid.

[103] Ibid.

[104] Ibid.

[105] Ibid., 298.

characterizations of working mothers as selfish or villainous, Shea depicted women breaking with traditional notions of gender and taking paid employment as aligned with the expectation that Army wives prioritize the Army mission above all else.

The dire need for workers to meet the demands of the wartime economy ultimately resulted in a shift in the policy toward the employment of civilian wives and mothers.[106] By March of 1943, a campaign to recruit married women into the workforce was in full swing.[107] To motivate women to join the workforce, dominant wartime recruitment themes emphasized patriotism, the temporary nature of employment, and retention of femininity. These strategies for mobilization were seen in official war propaganda, advertisements, and popular culture. Historians have argued that the dominant themes included in wartime propaganda that encouraged women to work served to meet the needs of a nation at war, while not undermining the domestic ideal.

Shea did not utilize typical recruitment strategies in her endorsement of officers' wives' employment, however.[108] Throughout the "Get a Job" section, Shea never told readers that they should work in order to bring husbands home more quickly or provide financial support for their family. Instead, she raved about the personal fulfillment, possibility, and independence readers

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[106] Ibid., 130–3. For a discussion of wartime recruitment of women, see: Honey, *Creating Rosie the Riveter.*

[107] The campaign to recruit women into war work was in full swing by March of 1943. Honey, *Creating Rosie the Riveter*, 27; Chafe, *The Paradox of Change*, 131.

[108] For more on dominant themes in wartime propaganda, see Melissa Dabakis "Gendered Labor: Norman Rockwell's *Rosie the Riveter* and the Discourses of Wartime Womanhood," in *Gender and American History Since 1890*, ed. Barbara Melosh (London: Routledge, 1993), 182–204; DuBois and Dumenil, *Through Women's Eyes*, 511 and 539; Hartmann, *Home Front*, 23; Honey, *Creating Rosie the Riveter*; Ruth Milkman, *Gender at Work: The Dynamics of Job Segregation by Sex During World War II* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 49–61.

could find in employment. "Women are glorying in their independence today," Shea raved. "[N]o more white collar jobs for the young women who are born mechanics or who have secretly longed to be birdwomen."[109] While this sentiment seems to challenge the wartime belief that women's war work was for their country, not for their own financial or individual ambitions, the "Get a Job" section existed within a larger chapter entitled "Our New Citizen Army," which urged women to labor in ways both unpaid and paid for the good of the mission to defeat the Axis powers.[110] Shea's use of metaphor further connected women's war work to the Army mission—"Women are taking men's places in munitions plants, in factories of all kinds, and it is not too fantastic to picture our 'women of Mars' [the Roman god of war] marching off to war."[111] Shea's use of the term "marching" did not connote femininity; rather it likened working Army wives to soldiers. Finally, Shea's emphasis on household labor would have made it difficult for wives to fulfill the potential for independence promoted in the "Get a Job" section of the 1942 edition of *The Army Wife*.

Interestingly, comparisons to domestic duties were not used to describe jobs available to wartime Army wives. The employment section of the handbook did not attempt to reconcile women's new economic position with their traditional family role.[112] Neither were the jobs presented as simplified versions of a man's job. Like the other recruitment strategies employed in the "Get a Job" section, these messages challenged ideals set forth by mainstream recruitment

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[109] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 297.

[110] For more information on using the wartime emergency to recruit women to war work, see: DuBois and Dumenil, *Through Women's Eyes*, 511

[111] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 297.

[112] Milkman, *Gender at Work*, 49–50; Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 297.

messages. The differences in messaging as well as the challenge to the traditional Army officer's wife ideal reveals that Army leaders expected Army wives to adapt as needed in support of the Army's mission and the needs of the state. Like officers' wives' compliance with the ideal in general, Army wives' labor, whether volunteer work, military service, or paid employment was essential to the success of the mission. As ideal spouses, it was their job to support the mission… with a morale-boosting smile, of course.

Conclusion

Army readiness and morale informed prescriptions for all aspects of the historically-rooted Army officer's wife ideal as Shea and Collins codified it in 1942. Wartime publications of related to the Army officer's wife ideal reveal that, in order to successfully achieve the mission at hand (i.e. win the war), Army leaders needed Army officers' wives, like their husbands, to live their lives in service of the Army and the state. The manuals ordered Army wives to make and maintain homes, raise children, labor, and socialize in ways that benefitted the Army and its mission. Using patriotic language, guilt, warnings, and the promise of rewards, guidebook authors presented their prescriptions for homemaking, child rearing, entertaining, and volunteering or working as natural and unquestionable. That the ideal served the Army over Army wives is evident in the lack of guidance to address problems wives faced due to their marriage to the military. Instead, problems were presented as wives' burden alone to bear. Shea and Collins repeatedly made it clear that a wife's failure to fulfill the expectations of the Army officer's ideal would reflect poorly on the Army wife, her husband, and his future in the Army. As the sections on military service and paid employment indicate, however, traditional expectations of Army officers' wives were subject to change based on the needs of the Army.

Advice related to homemaking, childrearing, entertaining, and paid and unpaid work found in the 1942 editions of the Nancy Shea's *The Army Wife* and Clella Collins's *Army Woman's Handbook* demonstrates that the Army depended on those deemed dependents to serve the Army. Their homemaking, childrearing, socializing, and labor reinforced Army hierarchies, traditions, customs, and courtesies deemed necessary for Army readiness and morale.

Chapter Three
Active Duty: Living with the Ideal

Although Alma Nemetz, an Army officer's wife from 1940 to 1963, initially learned what the Army expected of her from Mrs. Ocutz instead of a guidebook, she internalized much of the expectations found in the prescriptive manuals published during World War II. When asked if she "dressed up" to go to the commissary as the guidebooks advised, Nemtz answered, "No, but we had to be dressed decently…. You had to wear a dress. There was no such thing as jeans in my day."[1] Although Nemetz reported adhering the majority of the prescriptions in the guidebooks like the wardrobe expectations the ideal put forth while shopping, at other times Army wives created their own more relaxed standard. "We had 'Come As You Are' early in the morning – pajamas, curlers, anything," she remembered.[2] Nemetz's personal experiences relayed in her oral history indicate a typical conformity to and contestation of the standards included in prescriptive literature for WWII-era Army officers' wives. This accommodation was necessary to meet the many demands of the Army officer's wife ideal.

The scope of prescriptions for Army wives reveal the extensive nature of dependence the Army had on officers wives (and the enlisted wives who were encouraged to follow their example). Promoters of the ideal commanded wives to support Army readiness and morale through their dedication to making hospitable homes for Army officers, raising patriotic children, observing Army customs and courtesies, and laboring in both paid and unpaid positions. Rather than ascribing a value for their efforts, the language used in prescriptive manuals and Army policies demanded that Army wives to view themselves as merely dependents of the Army, not

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[1] Alma Nemetz, interviewed by Dana Fontenot, November 8, 1999, transcript, Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 12.

[2] Ibid.

partners. In doing so, purveyors of the idealized notions of the Army officer's wife attempted to marginalize wives in order to control them. In reality, Army officers' wives serving during World War II both embraced and challenged the Army officer's wife ideal prescribed to them.

This chapter examines oral histories of six women whose husbands were Army officers during World War II. Their personal stories indicate that women who joined the ranks of Army officers' dedicated themselves to the foundational elements of Army officer's wife ideal. Each relayed stories in which they supported mission readiness and served as morale boosters. Still, the emphasis on expectations for Army officers' wives and the consequences for those who did not realize them often resulted in a gap between the ideal and the real for Army wives. Combined, their oral histories reveal the complexity of their experiences with the ideal. This chapter argues that, while WWII-era Army officers' wives embraced the foundational elements of prioritizing the mission and boosting morale as they strove to accommodate the ideal, they also struggled to meet specific expectations of them. As a consequence, adapted specific advice regarding parenting, socializing, volunteering, and working prescribed in *The Army Wife* and *Army Woman's Handbook* to fit their unique needs. Also evident in the oral histories of Army wives is that wives did not challenge their secondary status. When faced with challenges, military dependents sought personal solutions rather than make demands of the Army.

Happily Married to the Mission: Embracing the Foundational Elements of the Ideal

Each of the World War II-era Army officers' wives interviewed indicated that they played supportive roles in their marriages. In dedicating themselves to their husbands and his mission, they adhered to the foundational elements of ideal. When asked about her favorite things to do, for example, Janie Arison replied, "I don't think I ever did anything just for me… I

was strictly an Army band wife."[3] For Arison, her husband and his mission in the Army were her priorities. Other Army officers' wives interviewed echoed Arison's sentiments. Gloria Hamilton, who had been raised in the Army, met her husband on a blind date when she and her college classmate went on a trip to West Point. When asked if she found time to do something for herself while taking care of her Army family, Arison answered simply "Not really."[4] In lieu of following her personal passions, Hamilton lived the ideal by dedicating her life to her husband. Arison and Hamilton's affirmation of the foundational elements of the ideal reveals the pervasiveness of the Army's expectation that ideal wives subsume themselves to their husbands. Wives' willingness to support their husbands and his career was a necessary precondition on which the rest of the ideal could be built.

In addition to dedicating their lives to their husbands, the ideal encouraged officers' wives to subsume themselves to the Army mission and prioritize the Army's needs above their own. All of the Army officers' wives' oral histories are filled with examples of how they accepted that the Army took precedence in their marriage and family. When her husband took courses while stationed at Fort Leavenworth, for example, Hamilton said that she "did all the things that wives for years have done at Leavenworth" including coloring his topographical maps to "make them easier to read" and "[trying] to keep the children quiet so [he] could study."[5] In doing this, Hamilton supported the Army and its mission. When the war began and her husband became a commissioned Army officer, Mary Jane McNulty, like other wartime brides new to the

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[3] Ibid., 15.

[4] Gloria Hamilton, interview by Betty Rutherford, October 16, 2001, Army Family Oral History Project, Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 1 and 13.

[5] Ibid., 13.

Army, had to accept the many demands associated with Army life. When asked what she thought of her husbands' frequent absences from family life due to his service, McNulty responded simply, "[i]t went with the job."[6] McNulty's unwillingness to question orders or the impact separation had on herself and her children indicates how entrenched the foundational elements of the ideal were in her mind. For McNulty and others, the Army mission took precedence over their personal needs.

Other Army officers' wives also prioritized the mission over their personal wishes and well being. Cleda Pattison remembered having surgery on the same day her husband was ordered to Fort Leavenworth. The Army granted Pattison one month to pack her house and move to Leavenworth. No special accommodation was made for Pattison to recover from surgery before clearing quarters. She did not issue any complaints; instead, she packed up all of her belongings according to the protocol Shea and Collins described, and journeyed to Fort Leavenworth where she moved into a motel for a second time.[7] Even when recovering from surgery, officers' wives put the Army's needs ahead of their own. This was not seen as a burden. Instead, all of the wives interviewed expressed missing life in the active-duty Army.

Nemetz diminished her own feelings about where she would like to live, noting that she "accepted" the Army lifestyle and "[w]herever my husband was sent, I followed."[8] When the Army sent her and her family to Germany, Nemetz expected her husband to meet her and their

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[6] Mary Jane McNulty, interview by Dana Fontenot, April 29, 2001, Army Family Oral History Project, Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 19.

[7] Cleda Pattison, interview by Betty Rutherford, May 1, 1998, Army Family Oral History Project, Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 20. For information on changing station, see Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 155-9 and Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, 25-7.

[8] Nemetz, interview, 13.

young children at the train. He did not. Rather than be outraged, Nemetz came to terms with the fact that, as she said, "his duty called him elsewhere." Alone in a foreign country with small children, Nemetz sought help from a military police (MP) officer who contacted Nemetz's husband for her. In accordance with the ideal, Nemetz expressed gratitude to the Army for the service it provided to her.[9] Nemetz continued her positive outlook when her husband met her at the MP office and took her to a hotel where the family would live for an entire month before getting quarters.[10] Knowing that she was not alone in her struggle to negotiate the prescribed ideal and lived realities of being married to the Army emboldened Nemetz. When asked what she thought about moving to Occupied Germany with two small children, Nemetz responded, "I wasn't the only one doing it!"[11] Sentiments like these normalized the Army's expectations of wives.

Internalizing the foundational elements of the ideal, Nemetz placed the onus for adapting to Army orders solely on the shoulders of Army dependents. Even later in her career, when the Army sent Nemetz's husband to Korea for a year and a half, she did not ask for assistance from the Army for herself or her children during the long separation. Instead, Nemetz told her interviewer, "I just learned to deal with [those] things."[12] Shea acknowledged that separations were "hard," but said Army wives "had to learn from different experiences."[13] Like Shea and Collins, Nemetz cited a cautionary tale that reinforced the notion that wives must prepare, adapt,

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[9] Nemetz noted that the MPs were "very gracious to us." Ibid., 10.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid., 8.

[12] Ibid., 13.

[13] Ibid., 14.

and adjust in order to be successful Army wives. Nemetz remembered a sad story of an officer's wife who "didn't know one blessed thing about how to run a house or anything," after her husband died in service to the Army.[14] Reflecting Shea and Collins's prescriptions, Nemetz placed responsibility for this widow being ill equipped for life without her husband squarely on the shoulders of the widow and her husband.[15] Nemetz recalled that the widow was not prepared to continue after her husband's death "because the husband took care of all the bills" when he was alive.[16] Rather than dwell on the difficulties this wife faced or hold the Army accountable for helping her, Nemetz learned from the cautionary tell. Nemetz reflected that she felt lucky her husband "always let me do an awful lot of it [paying bills and caring for the house] because if the time came that he had to leave, I would be prepared."[17] In addition to preparing for the "Widow's Responsibility" to her family and the Army in the event that her husband died while serving his country, preparation served an essential function of promoting her husband's morale.[18] Nemetz relayed that her husband declared, "I am not afraid because you know how to take care of things."[19] Nemetz's dedication to her husband, his mission, the Army, and the state helped her ease her husband's worries about his family at home so that he could focus on his mission wherever the Army sent him.

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[14] Ibid.

[15] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 206-8. Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, 139-145.

[16] Nemetz, interview, 14.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Collins included a section entitled "Widow's Responsibility" in a section entitled "Procedure in the Event of Death." Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, 139-145.

[19] Nemetz, interview, 14.

Interviews with Army officers' wives reveal that they dedicated themselves to boosting their husband's morale in other ways as well. Faced with housing shortages, numerous relocations, obstacles, and family as well as financial struggles, the wives interviewed reported maintained a positive outlook. Edith Clagett's family lived alongside others in rows of cement houses at Fort Buchanan in Puerto Rico after the war. The houses had "terrible plumbing," she reported, and neighbors could hear everything in the poorly constructed homes. Clagett dismissed the poor quality of the homes the Army provided families, joking that, "It was really communal living." Although assigned what she described as "the worst housing that we ever had," Clagett claimed that she and her family "had the most wonderful time" living in Puerto Rico. Army families bonded in the close quarters, babysat for each other, and became like family. Clagett and her family visited their neighbors from that station for the rest of her lives.[20] Throughout the twenty-four year career in the Army, Clagett followed her husband and his orders around the globe. Along the way, she negotiated language barriers during a six-week hospital stay to deliver her first baby in a foreign country, struggled to make friends in postwar West Germany, was disturbed by rampant infidelity of Army officers other than her husband in Puerto Rico, and lived through a revolution in Brazil. Undeterred by these challenges and dedicated to the positive outlook the ideal demanded, Clagett told her kids "'If I drop dead tomorrow, don't feel bad. I had a great life.'"[21] Even in retirement, Clagett remained dedicated to the ideal's prescriptions for positivity as it related to the Army.

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[20] Edith Clagett, interview by Betty Rutherford, January 29, 2000, Army Family Oral History Project, Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 8.

[21] Ibid., 18. Clagett emphasized that point to her interviewer, assuring her "I really did."

None of the wives interviewed questioned the ideal's foundational elements of supporting the mission and boosting morale. Nemetz's story typifies the experiences and outlook of the WWII-era Army officers' wives. Over the course of twenty-three years serving as an Army officer's wife, Nemetz endured frequent deployments, loneliness, single parenthood, and the reality that her husband could die while serving her country. Still, when asked to reflect on her time as an Army officer's wife, Nemetz shared that she enthusiastically believed she would choose Army life again if she could do it all over. "I loved the Army," Nemetz exclaimed. "It was good to me and I was good to it!"[22] Although real Army wives would regularly challenge the expansive lists of prescriptions *The Army Wife* and *Army Woman's Handbook* depicted as crucial, they embraced with the ideal through their unwavering devotion to the foundational elements of it. That their husbands were all promoted showed that the prescriptions were subject to interpretation as long as Army wives remained committed to the Army, the mission, and morale so that the Army could achieve optimum readiness and morale.

Making a Home Out of a Tepee: Army Wives' Double Burden

Finding, making, and maintaining ideal Army homes was challenging for all six of the WWII-era Army officers' wives interviewed. Janie Arison's introduction to Army housing included living in a hotel in Abilene, Texas that she referred to as a "dump."[23] Mary Jane McNulty also had to resort to living in a hotel near an Army base. "It was awfully hard in those days," McNulty remembered. The attitude of those already living near military bases exasperated difficulties the national housing shortage caused. As an unwelcome newcomer to Hattiesburg,

[22] Nemetz, interview, 18.

[23] Arison, interview, 1.

Mississippi, where her husband was stationed, McNulty had an especially challenging time finding decent housing. McNulty recalled that, "the people of Hattiesburg didn't like all these Army people coming to their town," McNulty informed her interviewer.[24] According to McNulty, she considered herself "fortunate enough to live in the hotel for about three months."[25] With two children, including one still in diapers, the quarters were cramped. McNulty continued to search for better housing accommodations. She found it "under a football stadium of all places," she exclaimed. McNulty recalled that the Army actually "moved some of the wives underneath the football stadium" to deal with the severe housing shortage near Camp Shelby. "After that we went to the Mississippi College dormitories to live." There, the McNulty family had "two rooms and a bath," but, she noted, they had to share "a central dining room" with other Army families trying to make family homes out of a collegiate dorm.[26]

Cleda Pattison also struggled to find housing that was both adequate and safe during WWII. Pattison had met and married her husband, an ROTC graduate, prior to the United States entering WWII. When her husband was called to active duty in 1940, Pattison chose to follow him with their two sons in tow. Pattison's first move was to Lowville, New York, a small town fifty-five miles from the military base where her husband was stationed.[27] While there, Pattison lived in a home with what she described as a "penny-pinching" landlady who unplugged the refrigerator at night without telling her. One day after drinking curdled milk, Pattison's sickened

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[24] McNulty, interview, 4.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Pattison, interview, 8. Pattison noted that–despite the distance–her husband would visit late Friday until Sunday prior to Pear Harbor. The visits were shorter after the United States' entrance into the war.

sons had to be rushed to the hospital.[28] Eager to get her family out of harm's way, Pattison moved to a warehouse apartment even though renovations were still in progress. Although she thought the apartment was "fresh and clean," its proximity to railroad tracks led Pattison to relocate once again. "I had two little boys who liked to be outside," Pattison explained "and I couldn't take it; the railroad track was too close. I had to find something else."[29] Her next apartment was infested with rats. "I'd look up overhead at the pipes and there'd be a rat, and I was doing the laundry," Pattison remembered. "Well, the rats began to be so bad, that they were gnawing and gnawing at night… and the boys got frightened… And that was enough of that… I found another place and we moved again."[30] Eventually, Pattison followed her husband to California. There, she secured a tiny house near Boulder City, Nevada. The home had one room and a little porch, an electric plate, and a sink. She kept her milk and butter in a large Army issued can meant for ice and washed the laundry, including her son's diapers, in the shower.[31]

Even when the Army provided housing to families, it came with complex rules and complications. When Gloria Hamilton's husband was stationed at Camp Polk during the war. The Army required couples without children to share quarters that she characterized as "pretty small houses to begin with."[32] According to Hamilton, the Army "would just assign couples" haphazardly, putting people that did not know one another together. Army couples deployed a variety of strategies to survive cohabitating with strangers in tight quarters. "A lot of very interesting things happen in that kind of housing," Hamilton informed her interviewer. "Either

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[28] Ibid., 7.

[30] Ibid., 4–5.

[31] Ibid., 12–3.

[32] Hamilton, interview, 2.

people went in and drew the line down the center and said, 'This is your half, this is our half,'" she recalled. "Or they ran a very complicated time schedule, 'You can have the kitchen between six and seven and we will have it between seven and eight.' Or they just decided as we did, to live like a family."[33] Hamilton said that she and the other officer's wife with whom she lived "shared money," "cooked together," and worked together to make quarters feel home using "lots of covered boxes and things" that took the place of furniture. Like ideal wives, Hamilton and the wife with whom she lived made the best of the situation that Army put them in. "We enjoyed it," she remembered. "They were very nice."[34]

Housing challenges extended beyond the Second World War. After the war, Pattison and her family could not find housing, so they lived in WWII barracks. While living there, Pattison tried hard to live up to the handbook's all-encompassing ideal for Army wives. Unable to afford or acquire furnishings, Pattison and her family slept on Army cots and used footlockers for seating. She secured a card table around which her family could eat (sitting on their footlockers) and an electric plate on which she could cook breakfast and lunch. Pattison told her interviewer that she was "really harassed" about the electric plate. Although cooking at home was necessary to stretch her husband's Army pay, Army regulations stated that she could not cook meals for her family in barracks. "It was extremely unpleasant living under those conditions [and] not being able to cut back on our expenses," Pattison recalled. Rather than complain to her husband's superiors, break the rules, or advocate for change, Pattison disclosed that she and her family "just depleted our savings during that summer."[35] Pattison did not blame the Army or lack of services

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[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Pattison, interview, 26-7.

for the difficulties and expenses she incurred because the Army failed to provide adequate housing for its dependents. Instead, she told her interview that she and her sons "sort of accepted this is the way we live now and we just sort of took things in stride. We didn't really look ahead, there was no planning that could be done. You just had to live each day and take each day as it came and do whatever the day demanded and that was it."[36] That Pattison did not challenge the Army's primacy over her family's needs and maintained a positive attitude indicates that she embraced the foundational elements the ideal and embodied a marginal status in the Army.

Other Army wives reported wrestling with the Army's domestic expectations of them. Like Pattison, Mary Jane McNulty was reprimanded for breaking the Army's rule about cooking in quarters. While stationed at Camp Perry, McNulty and her family lived in a single-room with "six double-deck bunks" and no kitchen. After McNulty grew tired of dining at what she described as the "the central place to eat," she made a little stove and cooked pork chops and baked beans in her home. "Of course, somebody smelled the food and told us," she recalled. McNulty was forbidden to cook in quarters anymore. Neither the cooking restriction nor the sparse accommodations bothered her as much as the lack of a private bathroom. Each day, McNulty had to take her five children to the central latrine for showers. The experience was far from ideal. McNulty did not request a separate latrine for her family; instead she carried a bottle of Lysol with her so frequently she got a nickname—the "Lysol Kid."[37]

McNulty's struggles to find safe housing for herself and her children overlapped with international affairs when her family was stationed in postwar Germany. McNulty's husband had secured a small first-floor apartment in Zindorf near the military camp before she and her kids

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[36] Ibid., 13.

[37] McNulty, interview, 17.

arrived. A maid was assigned to the family, but, as McNulty conveyed to her interviewer, by the time she got to her new quarters "the maid had taken everything [her husband] had bought—all the food and everything—and just left." The family slept on cots for a while and tried to make the best of their temporary housing.[38]

Later, McNulty tried to create a mission-embracing and morale-boosting home in Furth near a Displaced Persons camp. When McNulty returned from delivering her baby in Nuremburg, she said she found that people had "went into their house and wrecked our kitchen and stole anything they could." Shortly after that invasion, she and her family moved back to Zindorf.[39] Although McNulty reported being "glad to be closer to where John [her husband] was stationed," she and her children were still living approximately forty miles from his base at Warner Kaserne.[40] When McNulty and her children returned to the United States in 1953, the postwar housing boom resulted in increased options of improved dwellings.[41] McNulty's husband found "a new three-bedroom ranch with a two-car garage" in Warwick Neck, Rhode Island shortly after arriving there. Still, McNulty and her four young children had to stay with

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[38] Ibid., 8.

[39] Ibid., 9.

[40] Ibid., 9.

[41] Due to postwar housing demands and spurred by government subsidies, the availability of cheap land, the GI Bill, new building techniques, and investors, the number of single-family homes surged after WWII. For more on the postwar housing boom, see Kenneth T. Jackson, "The Baby Boom and the Age of the Subdivision," in *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 231-45; Adam Rome, "Levitt's Progress: The Rise of the Suburban-Industrial Complex," in *The Bulldozer in the Countryside: Suburban Sprawl and the Rise of American Environmentalism* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 15-44.

her parents-in-law in Linthicum, Maryland for four months due while waiting for her family's baggage to arrive from Germany.[42]

While stationed in postwar Germany, Arison, like McNulty, struggled to secure quarters that she could make into an ideal Army home. She said that the "town Major," an Army man tasked with finding quarters, took the her husband and herself to tour the house the Army assigned to them. Arison was horrified to find a German family still living there. She conveyed that the Major "brushed" who she described as a "frightened [German] woman" out of the way, ushered the Arisons in, and said, "'This is a house you can have. Now look around.'" On their tour, Arison and her husband saw a young German girl who lived in the house coloring or writing at her desk. Arison remembered the young girl's hands shaking in fear. Shocked, Arison asked the Major what he was going to do those living in the house. "'Well, I don't care. We won the war,'" he dismissively responded.[43] Shocked at the treatment of the Germans, especially a young girl she saw as innocent, Arison rebuffed Shea's prescription that the "Army wife take whatever comes and be able to adjust herself."[44] Arison called the Major a "dirty rotten lousy son of a bitch" and told him "I wouldn't live here if I had to sleep on the ice."[45] Arison's challenge to the Major and the Army officer's wife ideal did not result in a reprimand for her husband as the guidebooks warned. Instead, she and her husband returned to living in a hotel until the couple could find quarters that did not displace Germans.

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[42] McNulty, interview, 13.

[43] Arison, interview, 5.

[44] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 278–9.

[45] Arison, interview, 5.

On and off base, Army wives struggled to satisfy the Army's expectations of homemakers in quarters. The "Systematic planning" and "efficiency" *The Army Wife* suggested could not keep Clagett's "household machinery well oiled and running smoothly" as the manual promised when the lack of Army housing forced her family to live in a hotel.[46] Consequently, Clagett spent much of her first six weeks in Charleston, South Carolina, washing clothing for her family of six people in a hotel sink.[47] In Clagett's words, the reality of meeting the homemaking expectations of the ideal while living in a hotel was "drudgery."[48] Limited quarters also led Mary Jane McNulty to resort to washing her husband's Army uniforms in the bathtub. Soaking, scrubbing, starching, and pressing his summer uniform was made more difficult by the Army requirement that "suntans," the summer uniform, which McNulty said had "those three creases in the back of the shirt" she had to neatly press.[49] McNulty would have preferred to send the laundry out, but Army pay would not allow it. "We couldn't afford the dry cleaners," McNulty lamented. "[E]verything went to rent and food."[50]

Gloria Hamilton felt that because of her domestic and maternal responsibilities, she had little-to-no time for herself.[51] However, while stationed near Washington D.C., Hamilton and a friend took trips to the nation's capitol once a week to visit the Supreme Court, Congress, art

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[46] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 90-1.

[47] Clagett, interview, 16.

[48] When she worked outside the home, Clagett noted it allowed her to hire domestic help, which "took the drudgery out of housework and all that stuff." Clagett, interview, 15.

[49] McNulty, interview, 4.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Hamilton, interview, 13.

galleries, and the Smithsonian. She and her friend declared, "We just aren't going to clean the house this day, we are going to go out and learn Washington." As she described it, "[i]t was a good thing [for us] to do."[52] Although Hamilton challenged the domestic ideal promoted in *The Army Wife* and *Army Woman's Handbook* on that day, the ideal weighed heavily on the minds of Army wives. For example, Hamilton typically adhered to the expectations of her because she feared the type of repercussions Shea and Collins warned their readers about. Hamilton shared her memory of an Army wife who failed to meet the expectations while also stationed at Fort Leavenworth. "They [the couple] lived close to us and I had to keep going over to rescue her. The house was a mess, everything was a mess," Hamilton recalled. "She just couldn't cope. That is unfortunate."[53] As Hamilton's recollection makes clear, the responsibility for the home was the wife's alone, and therefore, the fault for its poor condition of it rested with the wife.

Despite consistent struggles to find adequate housing, Army wives reported embracing the domestic expectations of the Army officer's wife ideal. Pushing the boundaries of Shea's prescription that wives make homes out of whatever the Army provided, Mary Jane McNulty said she "tried to make [her] houses look different from each other." She considered it a fun challenge because "[e]veryone had the same thing." For McNulty, "it was fun to make it look different."[54] In line with Collins's prescription that ideal wives carry "the essentials" to give a "home touch" to whatever housing was available, McNulty noted that she "always took a trunk with me full of things from home—little things to make it look more personable."[55] During her

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[52] Ibid., 6.

[53] Ibid., 17.

[54] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, 184. McNulty, interview, 24.

[55] McNulty, interview, 24.

interview, McNulty shared a toast her son made on his parents' sixtieth wedding anniversary. His words celebrated McNulty for being the ideal Collins and Shea prescribed. "My mother has moved so much, if ever she had to move into a foxhole, she would find a way to make cookies!"[56] McNulty had a lot of experience with making a home out of anything—during her husband's military career she moved fifty four times.[57] Alma Nemetz also moved frequently to follow her husband. When asked if she had any final comments about her time being an Army wife, Nemetz responded simply, "Home is where the heart is."[58] In adhering to Shea and Collins's prescriptions that spouses make ideal homes out of whatever the Army offered, the WWII-era Army officers' wives interviewed embraced and embodied the Army officer's wife ideal.

Raising an Army: Negotiating Prescriptions for Parenting the Army Way

It was difficult for actual Army wives to adhere to Collins and Shea's prescriptions that readers raise children who, like idealized Army officers' wives, embraced the mission and tended to soldiers' morale. The separations and frequent changes of station associated with the military lifestyle exasperated typical parenting difficulties for the WWII-era Army officers' wives. While those interviewed reported struggling with and adapting prescriptions for childrearing, each woman interviewed remained dedicated to the foundational elements of the ideal. When faced with difficulties, the wives interviewed dedicated themselves to the mission,

[56] Ibid., 26.

[57] Ibid., 23.

[58] Ibid., 20.

maintaining good morale, and the military. As the ideal demanded, they insisted their children do the same.

Change of station often meant wives had to travel with children and without their husbands from one post to the next. After World War II, when hundreds of thousands of military family members joined soldiers stationed abroad, this included international travel.[59] Janie Arison shared memories of a journey to Taiwan with two small children that was particularly arduous for her. "Oh how I ever got on that plane," Arison recalled "I don't know." Babies traveling with two other women got sick, so Army officials required all three Army wives and their children to leave the plane and take up residence in a Quonset hut in Honolulu. While detained there, Arison had to make formula in an old cauldron stirring it with tongs while her baby cried and her older son ran out on the runway. Like the advice manuals, the Army provided little help to her during this time. Instead, the Army provided her only what she described as a "filthy dirty bed" on which to sleep.[60] Arison relayed that she and her family "were again thrown off the plane or stopped at Wake." There, the pilots helped her with her parenting duties, turning on the plane engine for her to warm a bottle for her daughter. She described this stop as "ghastly."

Arison's journey was further complicated when an Army representative informed her, "There are no dependents in Formosa [Taiwan]." This news "scared [Arison] to death." She did not know what to do "in the middle of the ocean with these two babies." Neither Shea nor Collins prepared her for how to deal with such obstacles or an avenue for wives to suggest Army policies to more adequately meet the needs of families stationed abroad. With few other options,

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[59] Alvah, *Unofficial Ambassadors*, 2.

[60] Arison, interview, 10.

Arison brushed off the bad memory like the ideal encouraged and focused on the result. "Anyway, I got there," she informed her interviewer. In total, that trip took sixteen days. During that time, she carried her baby in an "old fashioned, wood" carrying seat that was very heavy with one arm and tried to wrangle her toddler son the other. "I was a wreck when we got there," Arison remembered. "A total wreck... I think I weighed ninety pounds and I had had nothing to eat for sixteen days except a piece of ham stuck in between two pieces of bread…"[61] The physical toll the travel made on Arison was her burden alone to bear. Although an Army dependent, Arison, like many other wives, learned that she could not depend on the Army to meet her needs.

When she finally arrived in Taipei, Arison's husband greeted her with "a great big marching band" and "the red carpet like royalty [was] arriving." An exhausted Arison handed her daughter to a servant her husband hired, who she just met, and said "I don't give a damn if I never see her again.'" The journey to be with her husband traumatized Arison. "It was a horror," she concluded.[62] Despite the difficulties she endured, Arison did not blame the Army for failing to provide adequate travel arrangements for families. As a dependent she was conditioned not to make demands of the Army. Still, during the nine years she was stationed in Taiwan, Arison only travelled back to the United States once, when her mother died suddenly.

If Army officers' wives could not follow husbands "from pillar to post," as Collins suggested, they often had to raise their children alone.[63] In 1944, Alma Nemetz, like hundreds of thousands of many WWII-era military wives gave birth while her husband was serving in

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[61] Ibid.

[62] Ibid, 10-11.

[63] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, 184.

Europe.[64] "It was hard. Very, very hard," Nemetz recalled. Nemetz's husband was on reconnaissance duty in Belgium when their son was born, so she tried to send a message about her son's birth to her husband via the Red Cross. Even though the Red Cross "promised" her that they would let her husband know he had a son, the note never arrived. Nemetz did not know why the message did not get relayed to her husband, but she suspected it might have been "because he was on reconnaissance all the time." She did not express dissatisfaction with the lack of communication. The mission took prominence over her husband even hearing the news that he was a father. Ultimately, it took two months for Nemetz's husband to discover that he was a father. The notification was not due to the Army or the efforts of the Red Cross; instead, Nemetz's husband authorized some of his staff members to open any letter that came through from her and send word into the field. According to Nemetz, this process "hurt" her husband. It was "about a year and a half" before Nemetz's husband was able to meet his son.[65] When Nemetz's husband was sent to Korea approximately a decade later, she found herself a single mother again.

In response to a question about how she dealt with raising another child alone, Nemetz modeled the advice Shea and Collins offered:, "I just learned to deal with these things."[66] She did admit that "[i]t was tough" to raise a teenaged boy by herself because her son "needed a father."[67] Rather than retire from the Army or demand to serve at a post where families could

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[64] Number of births based estimated based on the number of Army children receiving family allowances from the Office of Dependency Benefits, which number approximately 1,825,000. Tuttle, *Daddy's Gone to War*, 31.

[65] Nemetz, interview, 7.

[66] Ibid., 13.

[67] Ibid.

accompany officers, the Nemetz family, like other Army families, adapted. Nemetz called on her brothers to be male influences for her sons. She also sought ways for her and her children to maintain contact with their Army officer father. Nemetz and her husband recorded reel-to-reel tapes and sent them to one another. "I didn't want him to miss out on what the kids were doing," Nemetz said of her motivation to regularly record tapes for her husband. Nemetz said she made sure her children shared "[w]hatever happened during school or whatever transpired [that day]" on one side of the tape. Nemetz filled the other side. Nemetz's husband would respond by telling his family about his day and advising his wife "on any problems [she] was having with the house." When asked how often she sent a tape, Nemetz responded "Everyday." Rather than complain about the cost or ask for assistance from the Army to communicate with the father and husband the Army's orders took away from them, Nemetz stated the cost "wasn't too bad" and "[a]t least we could hear each other's voices and the kids could talk to their dad."[68]

Whether alone or with their husbands, meeting the parenting demands of the ideal was often difficult for the wives interviewed. Edith Clagett was an Army nurse at the end of World War II when she met and married her husband. During Clagett's twenty-four years as an Army wife, she raised four children. Clagett knew the stakes were high because, as the guidebooks warned, Army children had a direct impact on their officer fathers' careers. Clagett remembered a story about a young man who she said "went and painted graffiti on the General's garage" and the "family was moved off post in 24 hours." "That was a lot of punishment," she noted. "The whole family was gone."[69] Clagett relayed that the story of the family being kicked out of their quarters, like the warnings Shea and Collins peppered throughout *The Army Wife* and *Army*

[68] Ibid., 17-18.

[69] Clagett, interview, 21.

Woman's Handbook, "really impressed everybody in [Clagett's] family." Clagett said her husband "was very much determined that his children would not be an embarrassment."[70]

Despite the promises offered in the guidebooks, Clagett did not find fulfillment in parenting alone; rather, she felt consumed by her various commitments to her children and their organizations. "I was being swallowed up by Girl Scouts," she stated. "In fact I was being swallowed up by everything."[71] Exasperated, she took a refresher course to become a nurse. A career did not free her from the Army's expectations of her, however. In order to meet the many demands of the Army officer's wife ideal, Clagett sought help from other Army wives, servants, and sitters. Clagett noted that working as a nurse allowed her to pay for "somebody to come do the cleaning and another person to come do the ironing." She remembered that "it was very nice" and paying for help "took the drudgery out of housework and all that stuff."[72] Clagett's inability to find personal fulfillment in the domestic prescriptions found in *The Army Wife* and *Army Womans' Handbook*, as well as description of housework as "drudgery," challenges the notion that homemaking and parenting on behalf of the Army was a reward in and of itself. Clagett hired a maid and houseman when she lived in Oberstdorf, had help in Heidelberg, and relied on assistance from her fellow Army wives in Puerto Rico and at other stations.

Others also followed Shea's advice to employ servants when they were available and affordable.[73] When stationed in Germany, Mary Jane McNulty said she "hired a registered nurse

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[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid., 14.

[72] Ibid., 15.

[73] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1954, 92-3. McNulty, interview, 8 and 22.

to live in," and a housekeeper to help her with her responsibilities.[74] When asked if she took her children to Army band performances, Janie Arison responded, "Oh, no. Oh, honey I would never take them. There was always a sitter."[75] Arison even had a "cadet girl" (the girlfriend of a cadet) live with her family and provide childcare when needed.[76] This type of help freed officers' wives to tend to the many other demands of raising children in the Army and the many other expectations of the Army officer's wife ideal. Those who perpetuated the ideal deemed Army wives responsible for finding solutions to the personal and family difficulties that accompanied their role as Army wives.

The most significant challenge Army mothers faced was the impact that frequent change of stations had on their children. Edith Clagett said her daughter Carol never became "accustomed to frequent moves." Clagett shared a memory of one year in particular. "[P]oor Carol was a senior in high school and changed school four times. Poor Carol couldn't wait to get out of Brazil," the last change of station for her family that year.[77] Clagett's references to her daughter as "poor Carol" and the experience of four moves in a single school year belie the rosy depiction of childhood presented in *The Army Wife*.

Army life was not idyllic for Cleda Pattison's children either. Pattison prepared a list of three attributes she believed Army children must possess in order to endure the frequent change of stations that are part of Army life. According to Pattison, Army children must have above average intelligence, be emotionally stable, and have a feeling of security in order for them "to

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[74] McNulty, interview, 22.

[75] Arison, interview, 6.

[76] Ibid., 7.

[77] Clagett, interview, 15.

come through unscarred."[78] Pattison's choice of the word "unscarred" as well as the necessary preconditions for Army children indicates that Army wives struggled to raise children who thrived in the Army environment. That the list focused on personal attributes instead of Army policies and practices reveals that she viewed the frequent relocations the Army ordered as personal family problem, not a problem she expected the Army to fix.

During his tenure as an Army child, Gloria Hamilton's son was also exposed to many moves, which the handbook deemed "firsthand geography lessons."[79] Despite what the handbook said, a change of station during her son's senior year proved to be a problem for Hamilton and her family. Hamilton blamed the move to a new high school as the cause of her son's rejection from his first choice college. Her son floundered at a large state university as a result. His grades went down and Hamilton noted that she and her husband "went around with this horrible lead feeling in [their] stomachs" because they were worried that their son was going down the wrong path. At a certain point, Hamilton and her husband intervened. Their son told them he did not care if he lived or died. Hamilton's response demonstrates how much she embodied the ideal. Supporting the Army and its mission above her son's feelings, she told him, "Well if you really don't care if you live or die, I think what I would do is enlist in the Army and I would ask for Medics and I would go to Vietnam and start pulling a few people off the battle field who do care if they are going to die." Hamilton justified the comment, saying that it "came out of nowhere," and that she "just wanted him to do something" because he "was such a fine young man, but he was all wrong." She reported thinking "even if he gets killed he will at least be doing something

[78] Pattison, interview, 2.

[79] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1954, 217.

worthwhile."[80] Even though she said her statement was "a terrible thing," Hamilton's son dutifully followed her advice and joined the Army. In doing so, he fulfilled the Army child ideal.[81]

When he returned from war, Hamilton's son decided to become a doctor. Although he eventually finished college and even became an oncologist, his experience illustrates that the frequent moves extolled in the handbook were not always as positive as the handbook authors suggested. According to Hamilton, the problem extended beyond her family. In her story about her son, she noted that many of the people protesting the war in Vietnam were Army kids "who had somehow not been able to contend wit the moving around." Simplifying the problem and excusing the Army from culpability, she concluded, "so you were either blessed or it was tough."[82] Even though she conceded that, "children learned a lot by moving around," she also noted that the many moves "sometimes it sort of breaks your heart."[83] Despite all the difficulties Hamilton's children faced growing up in the service, she praised the Army, characterizing it as "a good place to raise [children]."[84] Other wives echoed her sentiment. Purveyors of the ideal demanded Army officers' wives support and embrace the Army; the WWII-era wives interviewed did.

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[80] Hamilton, interview, 11.

[81] Ibid., 10-11.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Ibid., 10.

[84] Ibid., 15.

Military Courtesies: Entertaining in and for the Army

Army officers' wives who also strove to meet exigencies of the service while balancing the ideal's domestic demands, the realities of wartime, and their personal needs. In practicing the social customs proffered in the guidebooks, they performed two essential tasks: they helped establish a sense of community and camaraderie in a transient military culture and they reified the traditions that formed the foundation of Army life and contributed to their husbands' careers. Whereas wives struggled to meet the homemaking and childrearing requirements of the ideal, the wives interviewed reported loving the social expectations of the ideal, and living in accordance with them.

Alma Nemetz and her husband followed the prescription that officers call on their superiors when arriving on a base to the letter. "We always called on the two highest ranking above us," she explained. In order to follow Army protocol that they arrive neither early nor late, Nemetz and her husband would circle the block until the "specified time" when they would "rap on the door." She credited "books" like *The Army Wife* with informing her how long an officer and his wife should call on superiors—"The book says you don't stay any longer than you can smoke a cigarette!" Despite the tediousness of this prescribed social custom, Nemetz reported that "[i]t was a wonderful thing to look forward to."[85] Nemetz cherished the camaraderie socializing created. "I remember the closeness," she recalled about a time her family was stationed in Germany. "We banded together… because were all in the same boat." If one wife had unexpected company, her band of officers' wives "would call each other and give up part of

[85] Nemetz, interview, 6. Neither Shea nor Collins mentioned using cigarettes to time calls. Shea advised "the proper length of a call is about twenty minutes, never longer than thirty minutes." Collins wrote "Formal calls should not last longer than 15 or 20 minutes." Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 81. Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, 187.

[their] meal" for the wife in need. "One would give up a dessert, another her starch, her main dish—then they would have a whole meal," she recalled. The purpose was not sisterhood; the purpose was necessity. "We did that for everybody else knowing that it would come back to us someday," she disclosed. Guidebook authors demanded that hospitality be observed, so wives came up with protocols to live up to the Army's expectations of their service. As Shea and Collins had informed their readers, failure to do so reflected poorly on the Army wife, her officer husband, and was detrimental to Army careers, readiness, and morale. Wives bonded together to meet the requirements of the ideal, rather than challenge the expectations of Army wives. Nemetz fondly recalled this time of camaraderie to meet the needs of unannounced Army guests. "It was very enjoyable," she concluded "I loved it."[86]

Edith Clagett relished her hosting duties as well. While stationed at Fort Leavenworth, she hosted an annual cocktail party. Fostering a sense of community and camaraderie, she invited approximately 120 people each year. Of those, approximately eighty would show up. Despite the fact that such a large party was expensive and difficult to manage in an Army-issued apartment, Clagett characterized it as "just wonderful." The epitome of the hostess Shea and Collins idealized, Clagett served good food to her guests. She took the hostess prescriptions a step further, printing "every recipe [she] had ever used for entertaining," which she said she gave to "everybody" who attended her parties.[87]

When asked if she liked to entertain, Janie Arison responded, "Oh, loved it. And still do." Arison regularly hosted dinner parties, which were her specialty. As the bandmaster's wife, she said she was in "a unique position" in terms of proximity to power and authority. Noting this, her

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[86] Nemetz, interview, 12.

[87] Clagett, interview, 21-2.

interviewer asked who she would invite to her parties. "Always the officers," Arison emphatically responded, noting that it "didn't matter whether they were generals or lieutenants," all officers were invited. She overcame any potential discomfort due to the disparity in rank by making sure that she "[a]lways had a lot of crazy stuff" for guests to do, like dumping a trunk of costumes out on the floor and making everyone put on an item. Guests also played charades and enjoy the music her bandmaster husband and others played. "Oh, we had a lot of crazy fun," she reminisced.[88] When she was seven months pregnant, Arison hosted a dinner party for fourteen people. That night, she said, she "laughed so hard" that she "threw [herself] into labor." Consistent with the foundational elements of the ideal, there was no advice for this situation in which the Arison's medical needs were more pressing than those of the Army or the party she hosted for it. Conveniently, an obstetrician was one of her fourteen guests. He got her to the hospital where she gave birth to her son an hour and a half later.[89]

Mary Jane McNulty's most fond experiences as an Army wife revolved around a formal parties. "I loved getting dressed in a ball gown," she gushed.[90] While stationed in occupation Germany after the war, she and her husband were invited to the British zone to attend a St. Andrew's Day celebratory dinner with the Canadian Black Watch. She stayed at the commander of the Black Watch's home. She noted that, unlike their American counterparts, a male member of the Canadian military unit "lived in the house and took care of everything." McNulty remembered being "horrified" when the commander's wife handed McNulty's gown to the "bat

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[88] Arison, interview, 14-5.

[89] Ibid, 7-8. Despite Shea and Collins's emphasis on entertaining and Arison's embodiment of the entertaining ideal, Janie Arison ironically reported that she "never felt that [she] had any responsibility to give teas or anything like that." Ibid., 14.

[90] McNulty, interview, 26.

man," as she remembered them calling him, to press her dress. She was pleasantly surprised with the result of his ironing—"he did a beautiful job!" McNulty did not question why the U.S. Army did not provide paid military members to help with the duties prescribed to Army officers' wives. Instead, she focused on fulfilling the expectation that she socialize for the benefit fo the Army. Dressed in her neatly pressed gown, McNulty, her husband, the Black Watch commander, and his wife went to the formal party at the officers' club that lasted for two nights.[91] "I thought that was just fabulous," she raved. Reinforcing the many ways in which entertaining was a reflection upon the wife and the officer, McNulty stated "We were invited back a second time, so I guess I behaved myself."[92]

Army officers' wives' dedication to the entertaining ideal reveals one way in which actual officers' wives enthusiastically embodied and embraced the Army officer's wife ideal. McNulty said she liked having the responsibility of hosting the formal dances, teas, and luncheons held at the Officers' Club because, as she noted, "It was something to do."[93] More than "something to do," social activities built a sense of camaraderie necessary to survive the exigencies of service. Social gatherings were also a way to bolster husbands' morale. Alma Nemetz remembered that the Officers' Club provided nice music and a dinner on Saturday nights. She, her husband, and other Army couples spent many weekends dancing there.[94] In embracing the social requirements of service, Army officers' wives supported the Army system, created a sense of community, and reproduced military culture.

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[91] Ibid., 21-2.

[92] Ibid., 26.

[93] Ibid., 16.

[94] Nemetz, interview, 11.

Serving the Order: Negotiating Volunteer and Paid Employment Expectations

Because military readiness required that dependents, like soldiers, serve the military, Shea and Collins emphasized the Army's expectation that wives support their Army husband and the military system through volunteer work, paid employment, and even military service. Shea and Collins informed their readers that work would benefit their officer husbands' careers. Wives responded by dedicating themselves to service that supported the Army. After reviewing Edith Clagett's activities as an Army wife, Betty Rutherford, Clagett's interviewer exclaimed, "You did everything!" Clagett's response to the question of if she felt "pressure to participate in these activities," reveals the connection between wives' service and their husbands' success. "Yes. David had a lot of pride," she replied.[95] Naturalizing wives' labor on behalf of the Army, Rutherford followed up, "in the Army, you just sort of do volunteer work, don't you?" "Yeah, you have no choice," Pattison responded. "Did you mind that," Rutherford asked. "No," Clagett responded, modeling the ideal, "no it didn't bother me at all."[96] In accordance with the ideal, Cleda Pattison and other officers' wives interviewed also reported enjoying the volunteer and social responsibilities the Army and their husbands needed them to fulfill. While she was "never a gray lady or work in the pharmacy," Janie Arison "was always taking care of somebody."[97] In caring for her family, friends, and base, Arison, like her contemporaries, supported military readiness and promoted good morale.

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[95] Clagett, interview, 20-1.

[96] Pattison, interview, 35.

[97] As an Army wife, Arison volunteered at schools on base and in the Embassy Shop. Arison, interview, 4.

Because wives were not official members of the military, they did not carry official rank. However, the expectations of Army wives expanded as their husbands' rank progressed. Like other officers' wives, Mary Jane McNulty's responsibilities increased alongside her husband's rank.[98] McNulty credited her active engagement of the Women's Club prior to her husband's promotion to a commanding officer with easing her transition to a leadership position. "I knew all of the ladies," McNulty reported, "which was very helpful."[99] As a commander's wife, McNulty held regular meetings to ensure "the ladies… had everything in order." She also coordinated "big bazaars to raise money" to be "used where it was needed in the post community." McNulty reported that they "made quite a bit of money" to subsidize the government's budget for the post.[100] McNulty's experience with increasing responsibilites mirrored advice offered in the guidebook. Collins informed readers that "the higher the husband's rank the greater the obligation of the wife to set an example of friendliness, good taste, and correct observance of the social demands of the husband's position."[101] More than simply conforming to the ideal, McNulty professed she "loved" doing everything her husband's rank required her to do in order to support the Army.[102]

Cleda Pattison's volunteer efforts also increased with her husband's rank. Within two days of arriving in Japan, Pattison was tapped to become president of the troubled Women's Club there. As the commander's wife, the needs of Regional Camp Tokyo took precedence of

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[98] McNulty, interview, 15.

[99] Ibid., 20.

[100] Ibid., 22.

[101] Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook*, 1942, 179.

[102] Ibid., 15.

her personal need to adjust to a new country or her family's need for her to unpack and create an ideal Army home. Pattison dutifully accepted the position. Later, n Washington, Pattison served as President of the Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, and Airmen's Club. The Club's purpose, according to Pattison, was "to take care of the young soldiers when they came to Washington." Pattison described it as a "'the home away from home' for soldiers." She and other officers' wives provided "very inexpensive" rooms and "a lunchroom that served quite decent food" for single soldiers from all branches of the military.[103] Their labor directly benefitted the bachelors of the U.S. Armed Forces. The wives did not ask for anything in return. The label dependents encouraged wives to view their labor as something they owed to the Army in exchange for the benefits they received as Army spouses.

Gloria Hamilton's volunteer efforts reveal one way in which Army wives' work functioned as soft diplomacy. While stationed in Naples, Hamilton volunteered as treasurer of the Women's Club, through which she and other officers' wives stationed in Italy worked together to "raise money for the poor people in the city and things like that."[104] During that same time, her daughter broke an elbow. The Army's only clinic in Naples for families in Naples could not treat a broken elbow, so Hamilton and her daughter had to be flown to Germany for medical assistance. It took a plane ride over the Alps, an ambulance ride, and about five days, Hamilton recalled, to get her daughter to the surgeon who finally "put her all together."[105] Family medical emergencies in a foreign country did not free Hamilton from her responsibilities to the Officer's Wife Club, however. In order to fulfill what she viewed as crucial volunteerism

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[103] Pattison, interview, 30-1.

[104] Hamilton, interview, 9.

[105] Ibid., 9-10.

on behalf of the Army, Hamilton left her daughter in the German hospital, flew back to Naples, signed checks to various people and organizations, and made plans to meet her husband in Garmisch for Christmas, before returning to the hospital and her injured daughter several days later. Hamilton then took her daughter, who she described as "with one arm in a sling and unable to carry anything," across Germany. The trip "was tough," she said "because I don't speak German. We had to change trains about three times, nobody to help wrestle the bags." Despite these many obstacles, which her dedication to volunteer service on behalf of the Army exasperated, Hamilton embraced the challenge and the ideal. "[T]hat was worth it too," she said, "because Christmas was heavenly."[106] While her labor ensured that Christmas was also better for those to whom she wrote checks, the Army and the state got the credit. Ideal Army wives did not take credit for their work on behalf of the Army; instead, they viewed themselves as marginal to the military mission.

During World War II, Shea encouraged wives to seek paid employment to support the war effort. Half of the spouses interviewed held jobs, but none lived up to the employment ideal Shea promoted. Army wives generally found it difficult to realize the expectations, especially when faced with the exigencies of the war. Janie Arison attempted to adhere to the wartime ideal of female employment. After her husband was deployed in 1943, Arison worked as a bank teller. "It was wonderful," she recalled.[107] While working at the bank, Arison had a job offer to be a secretary for Debbie Reynolds, Hollywood star and customer at the bank where Arison worked. "Oh, I wanted to do that so badly," Arison stated. Even though *The Army Wife* told its readers that times had changed, Arison was unable to fulfill her employment dream: her husband would

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[106] Ibid., 10.

[107] Arison, interview, 16.

not allow it. "No way, kiddo, you are going to Uniontown," Arison remembered her husband saying. "I'm not letting you loose in Palm Springs." As his reason for not "letting" her take the job, Arison said her husband always claimed, "I would have lost you." When he said that, Arison responded simply, "No, you wouldn't have." Her commitment to her marriage, like her commitment to the Army, remained firmly intact.

Arison's experience illustrates the ambiguity wartime Army wives faced with messages of independence and possibility on the one hand, and the tenacity of traditional notions of gender on the other. Instead of "glorying in [her] independence" as the employment section of *The Army Wife* suggested, Arison did what her husband expected of her.[108] According to Arison "My life was totally for Lin."[109] Coupled with the theme of traditional domestic roles inscribed in the handbook, Arison's commitment to the ideal indicates that she followed her husband's orders rather than take the wartime job she longed for.[110] That wartime Army wives were urged to play supportive roles to their husbands and the nation undermined the potential for equality encouraged in some parts of the handbook and discouraged in others. "I always regretted that," Arison said of her missed opportunity. "I think that might have been a fun thing to do."[111] Although the fact that she was being interviewed for the Army Family Oral History Project would motivate Arison to report that she complied with the Army's expectations of her, her willingness to share complaints and disappointments validates the authenticity of her assessment that she dedicated her life to her husband.

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[108] Ibid.

[109] Arison, interview, 12.

[110] Ibid., 16.

[111] Ibid.

Gloria Hamilton worked in a job traditionally held by women during WWII. While her husband was overseas, Hamilton worked as an executive secretary for the Camp and Hospital Committee of the Red Cross.[112] Hamilton did not have much to say about the job, other than "I felt I was doing a little something too."[113] Hamilton said that working made separation from her husband easier.[114] Hamilton's use of the term "interesting" to describe her job indicates that she found her wartime employment intellectually stimulating. Despite her positive experience and the possibilities put forth in *The Army Wife*, Hamilton did not hold a job for the rest of her tenure as an Army wife.

Edith Clagett joined the Army during the war. Although Clagett's decision to enlist in the military aligned with the handbook's message that women could work in a variety of fields previously unavailable to them, in fact, she worked as a nurse, an occupation traditionally deemed female.[115] The military accepted women into the military out of necessity, but primarily in conventional roles, such as Clagett's. During World War II, 76,000 women worked as Army or Navy nurses.[116] Clagett's motivation for employment contradicted the reasons extolled in the "Get a Job" section. Clagett noted she was motivated to enlist out of a sense of patriotic purpose

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[112] Hamilton, interview, 3.

[113] Ibid., 15.

[114] Ibid.

[115] Clagett, interview, 2. It is interesting to note that during this era, Clagett remembered that she dreamed of a traditionally female profession: airline stewardess. Further, Clagett's experience in the military reflects Elaine Tyler May's assertion about women's opportunities in the military. "Occupations in the military reflected the gender-based divisions in the civilian labor force." Elaine Tyler May, *Pushing the Limits: American Women 1940-1961* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 41.

[116] DuBois and Dumenil, *Through Women's Eyes*, 508.

after her wartime boyfriend was killed in 1944. In her words, she got very "noble" after his death and saw it as her place to "replace a fighting man."[117] Hence, her reason for employment was more consistent with the major themes of patriotism found in recruitment propaganda than those stated in the manual. Clagett married a soldier seven months after joining the Army and left the military less than two months after her nuptials.

Later, Clagett returned to nursing, but the Army continued to take precedence in her life. Clagett had to stop working as a nurse when she and her children joined her husband who was stationed overseas from 1964 to 1967 because the Embassy in Brazil forbid wives from seeking employment after a coup d'etat.[118] Clagett had no choice but to continue performing prescribed social roles. Along with other wives, she volunteered for the Red Cross.[119] When her family returned to the United States, however, Clagett decided to go back to college. "I wasn't going to go back to work. I just did it to feel complete," she explained.[120] Reversing the gender roles dictated by *The Army Wife* manual, Clagett ended up working as a nurse for the next sixteen years. "I figured I made him [her husband] look good for the first twenty-five years," she said, "and he made me look good for the second twenty-five years."[121] Like other wives, Clagett both accommodated the ideal and pushed the boundaries of it.

Despite the many demands they faced in the service, Army wives regularly reported loving their lives serving alongside their husbands in the Army. Clagett raved about "the

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[117] Clagett, interview, 14.

[118] Ibid., 16–7.

[119] Ibid., 17.

[120] Ibid., 19.

[121] Ibid.

adventure" of being an Army wife. She embraced the many moves she made during her career, stating, "there were many times that I was glad that we were leaving. I liked the adventure of starting over. I guess I like the fact that you got rid of all the old stuff, you gave stuff away."[122] As she described it, each new post offered an opportunity for Clagett to "reinvent" herself, to "do something you wouldn't even think about doing otherwise." She said she "did ceramics like you can't believe" at Fort Leavenworth, took painting in Puerto Rico, went "back to school an awful lot," and "did things that wouldn't have been available to [her] if [she] had stayed in the same hometown."[123] When asked how she felt about being a "band mother," Janie Arison responded, "Oh, I loved it. Oh yes, of course. Anything to do with the band. And that's the way I still am about the Army Band. Just love it."[124]

When interviewer Betty Rutherford asked Cleda Pattison if she would "choose this life again, the Army life," Pattison hesitated to respond. "That is a difficult one to answer, my dear," she said. Like an ideal Army spouse, she asserted, "I don't really have any complaints." Still, the reality of her life in the Army was difficult. "I mean, there were some bleak moments," she conceded "but there could very well have been equally as bad moments anywhere else." Pattison continued to struggle to articulate her feelings. "It's hard," Rutherford said of Army life. "I think that's it," Pattison affirmed "But no, I mean there are a lot compensations of being in the military," she rebounded. After noting "a lot of money" was not one of the benefits, she said, "the traveling and the living in foreign countries and things of that sort that you have an opportunity to do is compensation for the lack of friends, I think." Looking to the next generation

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[122] Ibid., 23.

[123] Ibid., 23-4.

[124] Arison, interview, 9.

for corroboration, she continued "And I don't think our sons ever had any regrets. I don't recall their ever having complained at the time."[125] Like Pattison "there were a lot of things [Mary Jane McNulty] didn't like" about military life. Still, when asked, "If you had to do it all over again, would you," McNulty enthusiastically responded, "Yes. Yes I would!"[126] Neither she nor Pattison would have abandoned their post. While they struggled with the ideal, they ultimately embraced it.

Conclusion

Oral history interviews with actual Army officers' wives who entered the Army near the same time as Shea and Collins codified the traditional Army officer's wife ideal in their guidebooks reveal the ambiguity that surrounded the ideal. Army wives adapted the ideal to meet their needs, embracing, shunning, or contesting prescriptions for homemaking, childrearing, socializing, and working when necessary. Despite accommodating the ideal to meet their needs, none of the wives challenged the notion that it was an Army wife's duty to support the Army through dedication to the mission and morale. Rather than challenge the Army to create or fix policies and practices related to families, Army wives repeatedly framed difficulties and challenges as personal problems. The lack of demands made upon the Army indicates that real wives did not challenge their secondary status as dependents. Although Army officers' wives provided essential services to the Army and its soldiers, Army wives, like the Army itself, viewed spouses as subordinate to the Army mission, not an interdependent part of it.

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[125] Pattison, interview, 27-8.

[126] McNulty, interview, 27.

Chapter Four
"She Will Change as Conditions Demand": Operation Advocacy, 1945-1946[1]

The wife of the highest-ranking man in the Army encountered the realities of the Army's changing mission almost immediately after World War II. A mere three months after Japanese leaders signed the armistice ending the war in Pacific, President Truman ordered General Marshall on a diplomatic mission to China. Faced with another prolonged separation from her husband, Katherine Tupper Marshall adjusted to meet the new demands of the postwar mission, found a cause that would benefit her husband, the Army, and the nation, and dedicated herself to it. Less than a year after General Marshall went overseas to attempt to build a united, non-communist China, Mrs. Marshall's memoir, *Together: Annals of an Army Wife*, was published.[2] Advertised as "one of the great true love stories as our time" and a "story of a husband and wife traveling together the road from obscurity to fame," the 292-page memoir included stories of the Marshalls' fifteen-year Army marriage.[3] Widely read, as indicated by the fact it was reprinted more than fifteen times in the late-1940s, *Together* ranks in the top ten nonfiction books published in 1947.[4] More than simply a memoir of "the woman behind the man who is making America's top defense decisions," *Together* was a military love story, and as such, was

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[1] Nancy Shea, *The Army Wife,* 2nd rev. ed. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948), *xiii*.

[2] Katherine Tupper Marshall, *Together: Annals of an Army Wife* (New York: Tupper and Love, 1946). Other wives also wrote memoirs and biographies of Army wives during this period. These include: Maurine Doran Clark, *Captain's Bride, General's Lady: The Memoirs of Mrs. W. Clark* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1956); Fanny Dunbar Corbusier, *Recollections of Her Life in the Army* ([United States]: Phyllis Corbusier, 1959); Eleanor Sliney, *Forward Ho!* (New York: Vantage Press, 1960); Virginia Johnson, *Lady in Arms* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967).

[3] Display Ad 15, *Washington Post*, November 24, 1946, 56. Book cost $3.50.

[4] "Marshall and Biographies," The George C. Marshall Foundation, accessed January 9, 2016, http://marshallfoundation.org/blog/marshall-and-biographies/#sthash.bEmDAfOR.dpuf; Daniel Immerwahr, "The Books of the Century: 1940-1949," *The Books of the Century*, accessed January 9, 2016, http://www.booksofthecentury.com/.

comprised of three entities (the officer, the officer's wife, and the Army), each with unique needs, but a single top priority: the Army. That the Army was most important is evident in the first note of thanks in the acknowledgments. Rather than thanking her husband, family, or friends for supporting her in writing her memoir, Mrs. Marshall thanked the press and radio for supporting "General Marshall" in "his efforts to build up the Army, train and equip it."[5]

While it is clear that the ideal's foundational elements of supporting the mission and boosting morale remained in tact in the body of Mrs. Marshall's prescriptive text, the very act of writing her memoirs reflects a new element of the post-World War II Army officer's wife ideal: advocacy on behalf of the Army. Concerned that her husband's failure to write his version of history would leave "the historian merely the official reports from which to paint a biographical portrait," Mrs. Marshall modified the ideal of devoting her life and work to her husband to do what she deemed was best for her General Marshall, the Army, and American history—write a biography of her husband.[6] She did this despite the fact that her husband, the highest-ranking Army man at the time, did not wish to have a biography written about him.[7] In the forward she wrote that she believed that she "could perform neither a greater service nor pass the long months more interestingly than by putting into an informal narrative the material I had collected since our marriage in 1930."[8] Reviews indicate that Mrs. Marshall could defy her husband's

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[5] Marshall, *Together*, acknowledgments. Throughout the acknowledgments and foreword, Marshall refers to her husband exclusively as "General Marshall."

[6] Ibid., Foreword.

[7] General Marshall declined all invitations to be interviewed for a biography. In the foreword of her memoir, Mrs. Marshall mentions, "there have been many requests for a biography of General Marshall" for the past three years. General Marshall discouraged any effort to write a biography and told Mrs. Marshall that he would never write his own memories. Ibid.

[8] Ibid.

wishes while still maintaining the Army officer's wife ideal. According to the *Christian Science Monitor,* Mrs. Marshall's first draft of the history of General Marshall and the Army he led was written "with [the] warm unaffected friendliness and wholesome pride" and "pervaded with the delicate reticence of good taste" that only the most ideal postwar Army officer's wife could provide.[9] Reporters heralded Mrs. Marshall for giving "the public what she alone was equipped to give"— "a timely book for all who care to know what manner a man has helped bring to Americans the military security that has blessed them" that "will be most valuable to future historians."[10] Although she defied her husband's wishes, Mrs. Marshall was cheered as a model Army officer's wife because of her advocacy on behalf of her husband, the Army, and the nation.

Mrs. Marshall was part of a growing contingent of Army wives serving alongside their husbands during the period from 1945 to 1968.[11] A new wave of prescriptive sources seeking to inform Army wives of their expanding responsibilities to their husbands, the Army, and the state flooded the market during the early years of the Cold War. These included three revised editions of the popular guidebook, *The Army Wife*, and seven new manuals written by military wives for

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[9] Merrill Moore, "Fifteen Teeming Years," *Christian Science Monitor*, January 16, 1947, 18.

[10] Ibid. Mrs. Marshall even went so far as to include an appendix entitled "Official Biographical Sketch General of the Army George C. Marshall" at the end of her memoir.

[11] After World War II the U.S. military "experienced a steady rise in the percentage of total active-duty force who were married and had children." By 1960, the number of family members outnumbered the number of uniformed personnel on active duty—52.2% of active duty personnel were married. Between 1953 and 1974 the percentage of married military personnel increased 48%, more than the rate of increase in civilian society. The growing number of dependents taxed defense budgets and traditional sources of family support like chaplains and charities. Goldman, "Trends in Family Patterns," 119-21; U.S. Army, Chief of Staff, *The Army Family*, 3.

military wives.[12] Modifications to Shea's postwar publications and those of their contemporaries reflected an increased commitment to domesticity and women's traditional roles consistent with prevailing standards. More so than in the wartime edition, readers faced: intense pressure to procreate, increased standards of domestic responsibilities, and female subordination to their husbands and the military. The emphasis on domestic expectations reflected messages civilian wives received. Like their civilian counterparts, postwar Army officers' wives were encouraged to fuse their ambitions with their husband's and funnel their ambitions into their husbands' careers. More than mirroring messages civilian wives received, the increased attention to wives' roles, responsibilities, and importance to achieving readiness and mission success during the Cold War revealed the Army's increasing dependence on wives to help them achieve their mission. In the face of domestic and international, and real and imagined threats against the Army, wives' ability to embrace and accept the Army's mission and dedicate themselves to building the morale of their soldier spouses became even more important during the Cold War.

Guidebooks authors made it clear that wives were expected to adapt to constantly changing conditions and to thrive.[13] As *The Army Wife* informed readers in 1948, "The average

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[12] Prescriptive manuals included: Clella Reeves Collins, *Welcome Home, My Darling! A Handbook on Family, Money and Morale for the Veteran's Wife and Mother* (Macon, GA: Lyon, Harris & Brooks, 1945); Elizabeth Happen, *If You Marry a Soldier* (New York: Vantage Press, 1955); Betty Kinzer and Marion Leach, *What Every Army Wife Should Know* (Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1966); Society of the Daughters of the United States Army, West Point Chapter, *—And join the Army, Too* (West Point: West Point Chapter of the Daughters of the United States Army, 1956); Helen Westpheling, *Army Lady Today* (Charlotte, NC: Heritage House, 1959); Ester Wier, *Army Social Customs* (Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole, 1960).

[13] Shea began her postwar text with an acknowledgment that the Army was in a state of flux. "Today, with the constantly changing conditions in the reorganization of our postwar Army, I feel that, were it possible, this edition of The Army Wife [sic] might best be presented in loose-leaf form because there will still be many changes in the next few years." Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1948, xiii.

Army wife is versatile, however, and she will change as conditions demand."[14] One of those changes included addressing the 1954 edition of the manual to wives of Army men of all ranks. Calls for wives to adapt to the conditions of the postwar Army also informed Army wives that the ideal was subject to interpretation and change. Alterations to the ideal and the expectation that wives "change as conditions demand" expressed in prescriptive literature and called for by real wives marked a significant step in the path from dependents of Army to interdependency.

In 1955, a magazine for service wives named *U.S. Lady* began vigorously promoting the military wife ideal to more than 30,000 monthly readers via glossy images of military wives enjoying life at bases at home and abroad, editorials, fiction, and advertisements.[15] Like *Shea and Collins,* the editors of *U.S. Lady* meant to instruct the large number of military wives of all ranks, which numbered more than 1.2 million in 1955, following their husbands to stations around the globe on the practices, protocol, and courtesies.[16] Also like *The Army Wife* and *Army*

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[14] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1948, xiii.

[15] George Lincoln Rockwell, a retired Navy officer, started the magazine in September of 1955 as a money-making venture. Unsatisfied with early profits, Rockwell sold *U.S. Lady* to trained journalists John and Alvadee Adams after publishing only four issues. John B. Adams had previously worked in news as reporter-photographer for *The London Daily Express* and a wire-photo editor for the Associated Press, correspondent for CBS (South America, Pacific Theatre during WWII, and the White House). From 1949 to 1953 Adams was the civilian information officer for the Department of Defense. Immediately before he purchased U.S. Lady from Rockwell, Adams worked as a public relations executive. Alvadee Adams, who earned a master's degree in journalism, met John when she was also a foreign correspondent for CBS news in South America. They were married in 1942 and had two daughters. John Adams died in March of 1968 of a heart attack. Alvadee Adams continued as publisher and editor of the magazine until May of 1968 when, despite maintaining a high circulation of 30,000, the magazine ceased publishing. Philip H. Dougherty, "Advertising: On Selling to the G.I. Joneses," *New York Times*, December 23, 1966; "John B. Adams, 58, A Publisher, Dies," *New York Times*, March 22, 1968; and Alvadee Eugenia Hutton Adams obituary, *Washington Post*, August 13, 2003.

[16] Goldman, "Trends in Family Patterns," table 1.

Woman's Handbook, the magazine was a private, for-profit venture with a semi-official status in the military.[17] Due to its nature as a monthly periodical that depended on subscribers, *U.S. Lady* also served as a forum for wives to forum for wives to engage with the military.[18] Throughout the thirteen years it was published, *U.S. Lady* provided a site for: wives to ask questions and air their struggles about military life and expect a response from a military official, department, or a journalist; editors, military departments and leaders, fellow wives, and others to educate wives on political and military matters and encourage readers to use their unique roles as military wives to work for the betterment Army; and a place where editors, military leaders, and politicians praised and rewarded military wives for their work on behalf of their families, the military, and the state. The engagement of wives and military leaders, as well as other officials, in prescriptive literature and periodicals during the period from the end of World War II through 1968 was a necessary part of the transition from viewing wives as dependents to the emergence of an accepted and useful partnership between the Army and the Army family.

Alterations to the Army officer's wife ideal (and, more broadly, the military wife ideal) and increasing level of official engagement with it took place against the backdrop of

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[17] There was a marked increase in the popularity of women's magazines that emphasized white, middle-class, nuclear families during the postwar era. *McCall's* magazine boasted twenty-one million readers in 1964; *Good Housekeeping* had fifteen million readers that year. Stephanie Coontz, *A Strange Stirring: The Feminine Mystique and American Women at the Dawn of the 1960s* (New York: Basic Books, 2011), 65.

[18] Historians have similarly argued that civilian women's magazines have both celebrated and subverted the prescribed domestic ideal of its readers. See, for example Joanne Meyerowitz, "Beyond the Feminine Mystique: A Reassessment of Postwar Mass Culture, 1946–1958," in *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960*, ed. Joanne Meyerowitz (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994), 229-62; Scanlon, *Inarticulate Longings*; Nancy A. Walker, *Shaping Our Mothers' World: American Women's Magazines* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2000). Because the ideal for military wives in *U.S. Lady* and its readership were closely connected to the state, it was distinct from its civilian counterparts.

reconversion from World War II and the emergence of the Cold War. On September 6, 1945, just four days after Japanese leaders signed the instrument of surrender, President Truman announced a twenty-one-point plan for reconversion that included the immediate demobilization of the military. Massive defense cuts meant every program was scrutinized and that the standing Army decreased from eight million soldiers to one million by 1948.[19] The end of WWII also ushered in a new period of the U.S. as a superpower. In a world defined by postwar rebuilding efforts and the emerging Cold War, foreign policy and military experts wrestled with the extent of the United States's responsibility to the rest of the world. On March 12, 1947, President Truman announced to a joint session of Congress that the United States would provide military, economic, and political support to democratic nations facing internal or external threats. This interventionist stance, deemed the Truman Doctrine, reoriented U.S. foreign policy and placed more demands on the Departments of Defense and State. The following year, Congress passed the Economic Cooperation Act (the Marshall Plan), which funded efforts to rebuild Western Europe. Soldiers charged with rebuilding nations and protecting a fragile peace were sent around the world both to countries that had been wartime allies and those that had been foes.[20]

Gender norms were also in flux during this period. During World War II, nearly twenty million women worked for wages.[21] After the war, employers laid off women in droves to make

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[19] U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Armed Services, *The National Defense Program, Unification and Strategy*, 81st Cong., 1st sess., 1949; Harry S. Truman, "Annual Budget Message to Congress: Fiscal Year 1948," January 10, 1947, accessed October 25, 2016, http://trumanlibrary.org/publicpapers/index.php?pid=2046&st=&st1.

[20] Harry S. Truman, "Special Message to the Congress on Greece and Turkey: The Truman Doctrine," March 12, 1947, accessed October 25, 2016, https://trumanlibrary.org/publicpapers/index.php?pid=2189&st=&st1.

[21] Chafe, *The Paradox of Change*, 133.

way for returning servicemen.[22] While many women were eager to leave the work force, others felt disappointed about doing so. Such was especially the case among women in jobs with high pay and status.[23] Yet even those in lower-paying feminized jobs had enjoyed the social independence that paid employment provided. According to historian Elaine Tyler May's study of families in the 1950s, women were shaped, contained, and ultimately subordinated by the conservatism and the constraints of the postwar era.[24] Spurred by fears about the spread of communism and possible return of an economic depression, post-World War II Americans sought safety and stability in marriage and parenthood.[25] For many, the traditional American family provided security in an insecure world. Along with the elevated importance of the American home was the glorification of wives and mothers within it.[26] A slew of expert advice, advertisements, movies, television shows, and magazines glorified domesticity and women's role in the home. Army officers' wives stood at the intersection of postwar alterations to the feminine ideal and revised Cold War-era requirements for the military.

This chapter argues that the authors, editors, and contributors to *The Army Wife*, *U.S. Lady*, and other sources dealing with the Army wife ideal published between 1945 and 1968 informed Army wives of their new mission: to advocate on behalf of the military. While promoters of the ideal always encouraged Army officers' wives to support their husbands, the

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[22] DuBois and Dumenil, *Through Women's Eyes*, 517; May, *Homeward Bound*, 77; Milkman, *Gender at Work*, 102.

[23] DuBois and Dumenil, *Through Women's Eyes*, 517.

[24] May, *Homeward Bound.* See also Milkman, *Gender at Work*, 1–11; Meyerowitz, *Not June Cleaver*, 3.

[25] See May, *Homeward Bound*; May, *Pushing the Limits*, 52–3.

[26] May, *Homeward Bound*, 11, 20–6.

Army, and the nation, postwar defense cuts, missions around the globe, and Cold War threats meant that Army leaders looked to Army wives to them defend they system in which they were increasingly being seen as partners. Those engaging with the ideal called on wives to contribute to foreign affairs and protect and defend the Army from internal and external threats (while also maintaining homes, raising kids, volunteering, and boosting morale for the good of the Army mission). Authors, journalists, magazine editors, military officials, and fellow military spouses framed their calls for wives to work on behalf of the Army within the context of the foundational elements of the Army officer's wife ideal. Although Army wives challenged specific aspects of the ideal, Army policies and practices, and leaders during this time period, they continued to dedicate themselves to supporting the mission and boosting morale. In doing so, they, like the purveyors of the ideal, adapted the ideal while simultaneously reifying the essential qualities of it. In heralding wives and their advocacy as significant to the Army and its mission and responding to issues real military wives raised, those who engaged with the ideal paved the way for recognition of the mutually dependent relationship between the Army and Army families.

"G.I. Wifehood": Militarizing the Relationship between Army Wives, the Army, and the State

Shea revised *The Army Wife* in 1948, 1954, and 1966 after to, as she wrote in the introduction to the 1948 edition, reflected the "constantly changing conditions in the reorganization of [the] postwar Army."[27] Revisions to the post-WWII editions of *The Army Wife* increasingly celebrated Army officers' wives as integral parts of the Army team and heralded a partnership between Army wives, the Army system and mission, and foreign affairs. The

[27] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1948, 1.

changing expectations of Army officers' wives shows that military leaders no longer viewed them as merely dependents; instead, they deemed wives a tool in the Army's arsenal that could be deployed to help the Army meet its postwar and emerging Cold War demands. Shea acknowledged the emergence of a partnership between the Army and those classified as dependents in the 1954 edition of *The Army Wife*, in which she removed the chapter entitled "Camp Followers of the U.S. Army" and added to the first page a declaration for all Army brides to read: "We are no longer "mere 'camp followers'!"[28]

The guidebooks' message that wives were part of the Army increased with each revision. The 1948 edition of *The Army Wife* informed Army wives that they were "just as much in the service of the government as her husband."[29] In 1954, Shea introduced a subchapter entitled "The Army Team" through which she informed readers that Army wives had "*definite responsibilities as members of the Army team*," including loyalty to country and the military unit and the commanders under whom her husband served.[30] In that same edition, Shea even referred to wives as "integral parts" of the Army team who were "almost as much in the service of the government as her husband."[31] As such, Army wives, like soldiers, needed to be loyal to their country and a chain of command that included the "commanders under whom your husband serves" and "the Commander-in-Chief, the President of the United States." By 1966, readers of *The Army Wife* learned that the Department of the Army recognized the "value and importance"

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[28] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1954, 1. For more on the connection between dependents and U.S. military policy and foreign relations during the Cold War, see Donna Alvah, *Unofficial Ambassadors*.

[29] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1948, xvii.

[30] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1954, viii. Emphasis added.

[31] Ibid., viii and xv.

of wives "supporting role."[32] Clarification of wives' "supporting role" came two pages later. "When your husband took his oath he promised to live up to the regulations of the Army, and as an enlisted man or officer he observes the rules. As an Army wife, never forget that you are the 'silent' member of the team, but a key 'man.' You belong to a strong team that has never lost a war, so take pride in the aims and ideals of the United States Army."[33] These revisions made it clear that wives were integral the Army mission and system that would have to adapt to meet the needs of their husbands, the Army, and the state.

Politicians' engagement in military family affairs lent credence to assertions in prescriptive manuals that wives were becoming part of the Army team. In October 1948, President Truman established the President's Committee on Religious and Moral Welfare and Character Guidance in the Armed Forces.[34] While the committee, which operated until 1951, primarily focused on military personnel, it held several hearings focused on dependent medical care and hospitalizations.[35] In 1949, Congress adopted the Wherry Act, which aimed to alleviate housing shortages near military bases and bolster the construction industry. Through this legislation, all married, career military personnel were eligible for long-term, low-interest loans

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[32] Shea *The Army Wife*, 1966, 1.

[33] Ibid., 3.

[34] Executive Order 10013 of October 27, 1948, Establishing the President's Committee on Religious and Moral Welfare and Character Guidance in the Armed Forces (1948), accessed October 25, 2016, https://www.trumanlibrary.org/executiveorders/index.php?pid=199&st=10013&st1.

[35] For more information on this committee, see Official File, President's Committee on Religious and Moral Welfare and Character Guidance in the Armed Forces, White House Central Files: Official File, 1945-53, Record Group 220, Boxes 21 and 34, Harry S. Truman Library and Museum, Independence, Missouri.

guaranteed by the Federal Housing Authority (FHA).[36] In 1953, President Eisenhower ordered a committee to study substandard housing conditions for married enlisted families near military posts. Findings from this study as well as problems in career retention following the Korean War resulted in the Army launching Operation Gyroscope, a program aimed at reducing attrition among career personnel by alleviating problems associated with Army family life, in 1954.[37] Two years later, Congress passed the Dependents Medical Care Act of 1956. This act, which marked the "creation of the military health benefit," made healthcare services available to active duty and retired dependents.[38]

By the 1950s, colleges and universities began offering courses entitled "G.I. Wifehood" that taught military wives-to-be "what life holds for them if they marry a man in the Service," "the history of the Service," information on rank and pay, and "something about our Defense establishment."[39] In "G.I. Wifehood" courses like in prescriptive and popular sources, authorities informed students that wives' labor not only helped their husbands, but also the Army and the nation. The militarization of Army spouses through institutionalized training is evident throughout the 1954 and 1966 editions of *The Army Wife.* The first page of the first chapter of the 1954 edition of *The Army Wife* encouraged prospective brides to enroll in G.I. Wifehood

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[36] Wherry Act (Housing Near Military Establishments), Pub. L. No. 87-176 (1949).

[37] Ernest F. Fisher, *The Army and The Noncomissioned Officer's Families* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 1999), 18.

[38] U.S. Under Secretary of Defense, Center for Naval Analysis, *The Evolution of the Military Health Care System: Changes in Public Law and DOD Regulations*, by Michelle Dolfini-Reed and Jennifer Jebo (Washington, DC, 2000), 1, 3.

[39] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1954, 2-3.

courses. Like their service to the military, these were "non-credit" courses.[40] Still, Shea deemed it "wise preparation, for future Army wives need to be well equipped to adapt themselves." In 1954, Shea began offering a history of the U.S. Army in a chapter entitled, "Army Esprit de Corps."[41] G.I. Wifehood courses show that military decision makers viewed wives as important and worthy of training during the period from 1945-1968.

Within the Army, officials developed family services that made an emerging partnership relationship with Army families official. On July 25, 1965, one month before President Johnson ended the military's marriage draft deferment with Executive Order 11241, Army leaders established the Army Community Service Program (ACS). Considered the first serious attempt to establish a functional system of family services for Army dependents, ACS aimed to address problems associated with the proliferation of families that taxed traditional support sources like the chaplains and charities.[42] Readers of the 1966 edition of *The Army Wife* could learn "about every subject of concern to you on a foreign assignment" through "up-to-date" overseas reports available at the ACS office on post. Shea also encouraged wives of those assigned to Military Advisory Groups or Military Attachés to also "familiarize" themselves with "all current reports concerning the country" to which their husbands were being assigned.[43]

ACS staff offered formal training courses designed to help transform civilians into ideal Army wives. In Spouse Orientation and Leadership Development Courses (SOLD) sessions,

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[40] Ibid., 2.

[41] Ibid., 2, 19-24.

[42] By 1960, family members outnumbered uniformed personnel in the active-duty force. U.S. Army, Chief of Staff, *The Army Family*, 3.

[43] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1966, 231-2, 283.

Army representatives acting in an official capacity informed new wives of their responsibility to the service. As the rate of recurring deployments increased, programs like Mobilization and Deployment Family Readiness and Family Advocacy Program assisted commanders in promoting readiness among the Army family team, disseminating resources to empower families and fostering stability during times of deployment.[44] The involvement of the Department of the Army and military leaders in family affairs indicates a formalization of the relationship between the Army wives and the Army.

In a new subchapter of the 1966 edition of *The Army Wife* entitled "Indoctrination of Wives," Shea highlighted Army-sponsored programs for wives including orientation tours, lectures, and films designed to brief them on various missions. The Army's reason for offering this was one of self interest: "The Army understands that if the wife is informed, and knows the score about her husband's work, she will have a positive attitude toward the Army and be a happier and more helpful wife."[45] Shea also set the expectation that the "farsighted husband" would help "educate his wife Army-wise" in order to "keep her happy and interested in his job" and "stimulate more contentment and pride in the Army." Suggested sources of Army information included the post newspaper, which Shea encouraged husbands to interpret and explain to wives, and other Army publications such as *Army Digest, The Army Times,* or *U.S.*

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[44] Ferne Controy, "Army Community Service Honors 48-year History," *U.S. Army*, July 22, 2013, http://www.army.mil/article/107819/Army_Community_Service_honors_48_year_history/; U.S. Army, Chief of Staff, *The Army Family*, 9.

[45] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1966, 6.

Lady.[46] Like official recognition, policies, and courses, the focus on indoctrinating wives listed in *The Army Wife* indicates the Army was aware of and responding to its dependence on wives.

In addition to formal policies, Army officials escalated its involvement with the ideal. Beginning in 1948, military departments began working with Shea on *The Army Wife.* In 1948, Shea thanked "a number of Public Relations officers of the War Department and the Air Force" for assisting her writing the postwar edition.[47] The level of official involvement increased with each edition. In the 1954 edition, Shea thanked a Brigadier General from the Office of the Chief of Information, Department of the Army and senior officers from the Magazine and Book Branch of the Public Information Division for their guidance in revising *The Army Wife*. Shea also noted that the Heraldic Branch, Office of the Quartermaster General and the Military Attaché Branch of G-2 gave certain chapters "a final check."[48] By 1966, publishers of *The Army Wife* raved that the book was written was written "[w]ith the full cooperation of Pentagon authorities," and had achieved a "semi-official status" in the Army.[49] By consulting on the work, Army departments corroborated Shea's advice and elevated its status within military circles. Their involvement with those who promoted the ideal also revealed the importance of Army wives to Army planners.

Revisions to the contents of *The Army Wife* also made it clear that wives had achieved a more official status within the Army. In a new first chapter in the 1954 edition of *The Army Wife* entitled "Army Esprit de Corps," Shea informed readers that the Department of the Army had

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[46] Ibid., 10.

[47] Ibid., xi.

[48] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1954, vi.

[49] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1966, dust jacket.

taken "definite steps" to "'integrate' wives and to make them feel that they 'belong.'"[50] An indication of wives' increasing level of importance to military planners was an increased focus on morale in the guidebooks. The 1954 edition of *The Army Wife* included a subchapter on that topic entitled "Morale of Army Wives." This new section included advice that readers tend to their personal wellbeing and provide themselves with the skills necessary to adapt to the many demands of Army life because morale is "a quality prevalent in every successful military organization."[51] The emergence of an interconnected relationship between spouses and the Army are evident in other passages as well. "You are not only a part but an *important* part of the oldest of the military Services," Shea asserted in the 1954 edition of *The Army Wife*.[52] Although the guidebook declared wives were part of the military, it also reminded readers that wives' focus on their morale was not to come at the expense of tending to their husbands' morale. An Army man "must have a congenial, happy home life" in order "to do his best."[53] Shea reminded Army wives that confessing worries to one's husband "just isn't done."[54] Instead, Shea advised wives to

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[50] Both the 1942 and 1948 editions of *The Army Wife* were dedicated to the "Cadet Girl." In 1941 and 1942, the first chapter, entitled "Engagements: The 'Kaydet [*sic*] Girl' at West Point," was forty-pages long and discussed topics ranging from where to stay and what to wear while visiting a boyfriend at West Point to West Point traditions, from engagement announcements to the brides' "personal trousseau." In 1948, Shea dedicated the entire first chapter to "The Cadet Girl: At West Point—The Flying Cadet Girl." Like its wartime counterpart, this twenty-four-page chapter includes information pertinent to visiting, socializing, and dating a West Point man. Army engagements are covered in a separate twenty-five-page chapter. Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 1-43; Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1948, 1-24 and 25-49.

[51] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1954, 1. Quotation is in a new chapter entitled "Esprit de Corps." A section on morale is also included in the 1966 revision. Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1966, 4-5.

[52] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1954, 2-3.

[53] Ibid., 4.

[54] Ibid., 4-5.

"reassure your husband through daily letters of your wellbeing."[55] Despite many changes to the ideal, the foundational tenet that wives support the mission boost the morale of their soldier spouses remained intact.

New brides learned from the first page of the 1966 edition that "[e]ven though yours is a supporting role, the Department of the Army recognizes its value and importance."[56] The pages of *U.S. Lady* included articles written by military officers, announcements sponsored by the Armed Forces, and provided a forum for wives to asks questions of and receive answers from various branches of the military and the government. These additions to the messages wives received reflected the increasingly formalized and entrenched partnership between the Army and Army wives that emerged during this period.

For the Good of the Order: Modeling Ideal Advocacy for the Army

Like official engagement, programs, and classes, *U.S. Lady* editors regularly encouraged military wives stay well-informed of military, national, and international news in order to be better advocates for their husbands, the Army, and the state. It is important to note that, although the magazine promoted activism, only actions that would directly benefit the military, its objectives, and/or military men were suggested. Thus, although it shifted the boundaries of acceptable behavior for officers' wife, this activism was part of, not a challenge to, the prescribed ideal.

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[55] Ibid., 5.

[56] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1966, 1.

Editors regularly included political and military news at home and abroad as well as legislation about the military before Congress in the pages of *U.S. Lady*.[57] In October of 1957, for example, *U.S. Lady* editors John and Alvadee Adams "strongly endorsed" Ralph J. Cordiner's "system of military pay designed to keep skilled and experienced men in the Armed Forces." Because the plan paid service members based on skill instead of longevity, proponents claimed it would cut turnover rates and "strengthen the military and save billions." Connecting the political to the personal, *U.S. Lady* editors informed wives, "You owe it to yourself and your family to find out NOW how the Cordiner proposals will affect you."[58]

Once informed, *U.S. Lady* editors encouraged readers to act. The final sub-section of the editorial supporting Cordiner's plan, called on wives to "HELP!" get the bill passed because Cordiner and his supporters "CAN'T get this bill passed alone"[59] In response to the rhetorical question "Want to know who CAN get the bill passed?," the editors told wives "YOU CAN!" This enthusiastic vote of confidence encouraged soldiers' spouses to view themselves as important in both the political and military process. Far from serving in silence, *U.S. Lady*'s readers were told to "Talk about [the plan] with your family and relatives —military and civilian, both men and women." The Adamses also used guilt to get military wives to answer their calls

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[57] Relying on *U.S. Lady* as opposed to soldier spouses for the news was different from the prescribed ideal of the time. Nancy Shea directed readers to create a calm and relaxing after-work routine for their husbands, including being rested and relaxed so that, if their husband's wished, they could "make informative remarks on the news" to her. Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1954, 148.

[58] John B. Adams and Alvadee Adams, The Editorial We, *U.S. Lady*, October 1957, 4. Capitalization in original.

[59] Ibid. Capitalization in original.

for activism—"Continued apathy on your part could kill this bill."[60] Assuring readers that their voices would be heard, the editors noted that "Congressmen are particularly sensitive to the letters they receive" and "employ staffs to read, analyze, answer and bring mail to their attention…." Hence, it was military wives' "right, duty and privilege" to have their voices heard by powerful people.[61] In providing information and calling on wives of all branches to support the military, *U.S. Lady*'s editors cultivated a pool of informed, engaged, and vocal military wives.

Capital Command Post, a regular column in *U.S. Lady*, regularly included information about proposed legislation pertaining to the military. Proposals regarding promotion, pay, and housing received the most coverage. Largely laudatory, the recurring one- to two-page spread often featured optimistic titles such as "Better Times are Coming" and "The President Points the Way."[62] But, when Congress introduced legislation that military commanders worried would hurt military morale, Fred Lardner, the column's author, implored his readers to advocate on behalf of the military. In March of 1959, as legislators considered a variety of career service improvements, including dependent medical care, housing, promotion of World War II officers, and survivor benefits, Lardner also directed wives to "Write Congress about Your Hopes and Fears."[63] Reinforcing their power in the political process, Lardner told readers that they could

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[60] Ibid., 38.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Fred Lardner, "The President Points the Way," Capital Command Post, *U.S. Lady*, December 1957, 5, 42. Fred Lardner, "Better Times are Coming," Capital Command Post, *U.S. Lady*, October 1957, 5, 42.

[63] Fred Lardner, "Write Congress about Your Hopes and Fears," Capital Command Post, *U.S. Lady*, March 1959, 16-7.

"help assure approval of such legislation by writing Congress." The rest of his column included instructions women on the proper way to address members of Congress in a letter and other helpful tips for writing legislators like noting the bill number, reasons why they support its passage, and experiences as military wives. So important was the passage of legislation benefitting the military that Lardner asked readers to "be a little dramatic" in their letters and that "a tear or two might help." Lardner concluded the column with a list of each member of the House and Senate Armed Service Committees to whom he and the magazine's editors hoped its readers would write. While there is no response from Congressmen regarding any letters readers of Lardner's call may have written, political and military leaders directly addressed military wives in the pages of the magazine. In March 1964, for example, Senator Paul H. Douglas (D-IL) responded to wives' criticism of his proposed cuts to commissaries and PXs that *U.S. Lady* editors had featured in the magazine. Sen. Douglas explained that his fiscal opposition to funding commissaries and PXs near towns with sufficient services to support the military population. He then reminded readers that he voted for military pay raises. Validating military wives' activism, Douglas ended his response with a public acknowledgment of the "bold and forthright" women who wrote the letters to which he responded.[64]

When Defense Department officials faced mounting criticisms related to the size of the military and its budget in April 1964, reporter Fred Lardner implored readers, "Ladies, Take up Arms in Defense of your Husbands!" Although "Military men can seldom speak for themselves," Lardner noted, "properly informed service wives can do some speaking for them." Lardner suggested wives send critiques of a variety of anti-military books including *Fail Safe*, *Seven*

[64] Paul H. Douglas, "Senator Douglas Gives His Point of View on Commissaries and PXs," *U.S. Lady*, March 1964, 5. An anonymous military wife's critical response to Senator Douglas's letter was printed in May of 1964. "Dear Senator Douglas," Mail Call, *U.S. Lady*, May 1964, 27.

Days in May, *The Victors*, *Dr. Strangelove*, *Man in the Middle*, and *The Caine Mutiny* to newspapers and magazines. "We're not saying the military is always good or always right, and the other guys are always bad or wrong," Lardner clarified, "but we [*U.S. Lady* readers] can help stop the opposite impression from gaining credence."[65] Countering the submissive ideal of Army wives, Lardner commanded wives to defend the military through advocacy.

Lardner's Capital Command Post column appeared in every issue of *U.S. Lady*. Over the course of thirteen years of publication, he kept military wives up to date on issues that could affect them, their husbands, the military, and the nation ranging from Vietnam to military pay, from birth control to legislation related to benefits for widows. In his April 1967 Capital Command Post, Lardner informed readers that the Department of Defense had authorized distributing birth control to military wives. Framing the development of the policy as a benefit for the military rather than progress for military spouses' access to health care, Lardner wrote that the program "[was] designed to reduce maternity hospital costs, ease the housing shortage, reduce family travel costs and reduce income tax exemptions."[66] Whether writing about birth control or other topics, the information Lardner provided each month empowered readers and encouraged advocacy on behalf of the military (which included spouses). As a letter to the editor published in the June 1964 volume of *U.S. Lady* noted, "Service wives are becoming aware of

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[65] Fred Lardner, "Ladies, Take up Arms in Defense of Your Husbands!" Capital Command Post, *U.S. Lady*, April 1964, 48.

[66] Fred Lardner, "Civilian Influence on the War," Capital Command Post, *U.S. Lady*, April 1967, 46, 48. Quote on page 48.

politics and they part they should and could play. No little credit for this goes to Capital Command Post!"[67]

Service wives also wrote articles championing activism of their fellow soldiers' wives. Nancy Dulin, an Army officer's wife, proposed her own plan to combat the reenlistment problem: solve the poor housing problem, Dulin critiqued quarters for being "just shelters, not *homes*." Worse, she complained, the shelter that housing developments on military bases "most nearly resemble[d] slum clearance areas for the underprivileged." Asserting "[w]e are professional people" she demanded that their "standard of living should be commensurate with that position…" Although she questioned whether the military "thinks we aren't smart enough to see the difference between the way we live, and the way we could," Dulin asserted that, as an Army wife, she had the "right to consider myself an authority." Emboldened by her role as a soldiers' spouse, Dulin even suggested better housing plans, including: increased privacy, storage, garage, outdoor areas to safely confine dogs and small children, and, most importantly, facilities to "live graciously."[68] Throughout her three-page article, which included illustrations of and blueprints for her proposed housing plan as well as a detailed analysis of the cost, Dulin offered suggestions to improve military housing in order to improve the military. "I'm not a contractor, nor am I an architect, but like other service wives, I consider myself an authority… I've had eleven different homes in the nearly eight years I have been married to a professional soldier," she wrote, "so I feel I have the right to consider myself an authority."[69] For Dulin, her

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[67] Marguerite N. Watkins, "CAPCOMPOST Helps Get Out the Vote," Mail Call, *U.S. Lady*, June 1964, 3. Watkins then reminded readers that the League of Women Voters was "of considerable assistance to absentee voters."

[68] Nancy Dulin, "Nancy Dulin's Dream House," *U.S. Lady*, October 1957, 8.

[69] Ibid.

role as an Army wife justified sense of authority over Army housing policy. Publication of the article in *U.S. Lady* legitimized Dulin's assertions.

In "Inequality, Intimidation, and Initiative," Navy wife Trudy James Sundberg endorsed *U.S. Lady*'s "campaign to get out the military vote in this year's presidential election" and urged her fellow military spouses to become active in the democratic political process.[70] Sundberg rooted her pleas in history, arguing that "women have taken action, and have accomplished much toward strengthening the foundations of democracy" since passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. Challenging readers to be active voters, Sundberg asked, "How do we as service wives measure up to the citizenship record of women voters at large?" She answered with a critique of the military's traditionally low voting record. Sunberg bolstered her advice by noting that Defense Department officials had, "in numerous official statements," implored wives to become "'experts on politics'" and "encourage their husbands to vote by helping to keep them politically informed." The cause for the Defense Department's calls for wives to engage in politics was simple: "there is no real security in political ignorance or inertia." Sundberg ended with support for service wives' sense of worth and calling on them to engage in politics. "Freedom is not free. Each one of us must take the initiative in exercising, defending, appreciating and using our rights and freedoms. Your vote DOES count. Your opinions count, and YOU count. Vote to keep it that way for yourself, for your children, and for those who shall inherit the earth."[71] Although Sundberg did not endorse a particular candidate or position, the

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[70] Trudy James Sundberg, "Inequality, Intimidation, and Initiative," *U.S. Lady*, September 1960, 5 and 51.

[71] Ibid. Capitalization in original.

implication was that politically engaged military wives would advocate on behalf of the military by voting and vote for legislation and legislators who supported it.

For the Good of the State: Making Advocacy on Behalf of the State Ideal

One of the most significant modifications to the postwar prescriptions is that, unlike its WWII-era counterparts, the Cold War-era Army officer's wife ideal included the expectation that Army wives contribute to foreign affairs. After the end of the war, hundreds of thousands of dependents accompanied soldiers abroad. Allowing so many family members to travel to overseas bases represented a major change in military family policy. Living in bases around the world, military wives had the unique ability to represent the American way of life and build good will for the United States.[72] The Army produced pamphlets like "Serving Your Country Overseas" to prepare soldiers and dependents to be what the pamphlets described as "Unofficial Ambassadors" to foreign countries in which they were stationed.[73] Through these pamphlets, the Army informed readers that they represented the U.S. in their interactions with people native to the countries in which she was stationed.[74] The authors of texts aimed specifically at Army wives included called on readers to be aware of their demeanor in interactions with local people

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[72] Alvah, *Unofficial Ambassadors,* 2. Alvah notes that, "Although military families had lived in U.S. overseas since the early twentieth century, there numbers were few in contrast to the hundreds of thousands of spouses and children who traveled to foreign stations after the end of World War II." By 1960, Alvah estimates that 462,000 dependents accompanied soldiers abroad.

[73] Armed Forces Information and Education, Department of Defense, *Serving Your Country Overseas* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1965). See especially pages 2-12 that cover sections entitled: "As Others See Us," "You Represent the United States," and "Be an Unofficial Ambassador."

[74] For more information on dependents and soft diplomacy during the Cold War, see Alvah, *Unofficial Ambassadors.*

because they represented the United States, and, as such, their actions could affect foreign relations.[75] Promoters of the ideal and practitioners of foreign policy expected Army wives to represent the American way of life in a positive manner in order to build good will. The emphasis on wives' expectations abroad increased in each subsequent edition of *The Army Wife*. Revisions to *The Army Wife* reveal the increasing importance of Army wives in foreign affairs during the early years of the Cold War.

While the 1942 edition of *The Army Wife* included a single thirty-two-page chapter about geography, climate, and what to pack and expect when readers' husbands were assigned to "Foreign Service," the 1948 version included two whole chapters with seventy pages dedicated to wives' "Duty at Home and Abroad" and "Duty in the Occupied Countries."[76] These chapters, which Shea added after the Defense Department authorized dependents to join military personnel stationed abroad in 1946, provided detailed instructions for positive interactions with people abroad and information about the responsibilities that accompanied orders "outside of the continental limits of the United States."[77] Shea encouraged wives to maintain an attitude of "*fairness, firmness, aloofness* and above all *awareness*" with all Germans they encountered in Occupied Germany, while still "promoting Allied good will and of paving the way to an enduring peace."[78] Wives were expected to extend good will beyond the city or base in which

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[75] For more on the importance of dependents stationed abroad to foreign relations, see Alvah, *Unofficial Ambassadors.*

[76] Shea, "Foreign Service," in *The Army Wife*, 1942, 230-61; Shea, "Duty at Home and Abroad," in *The Army Wife*, 1948, 218-82; Shea, "Duty in the Occupied Countries," in *The Army Wife*, 1948, 283-328. None of the types of statements cited in the Cold War-era chapters appeared in the "Foreign Service" chapter of the 1942 manual.

[77] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1948, 224; Alvah, *Unofficial Ambassadors,* 2.

[78] Ibid., 287, 298. Emphasis in original.

they lived by participating in "special leave tours arranged by the Theater Special Services." The provided reason: "it is only through direct contact that we can come to a friendly appreciation of other peoples and understand their ways of living."[79] Part of a large contingent stationed abroad, officers wives were uniquely suited for this endeavor.

In the 1948 edition, Shea informed wives that they had "tremendous influence overseas" and therefore played "an integral part in representing the Army for good or ill."[80] According to Shea, the State Department made provisions for wives of Army Attaches to "attend lectures on life in foreign capitals and briefings concerning the country to which their husbands will be assigned." State Department officials also sent wives a booklet to guide them "in preparing for your roles as an Army Attaché's wife."[81] As Shea made clear, the State Department recognized the impact wives could make on the image of the U.S. abroad. This significant change in the Army officer's wife ideal reflected the increased role military wives played in international affairs due to the fact that military dependents were joining soldiers stationed around the globe and the Cold War. Changes in specific prescriptions like those related to wives' service abroad reinforced the notion that the ideal, like the wives themselves, could "change as conditions demand."[82]

Although the number of pages dedicated to wives serving abroad in the 1954 edition of *The Army Wife* dwindled to fifty-seven pages in 1954 and thirty-four pages in 1966, the emphasis

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[79] Ibid., 298-9.

[80] Ibid., xviii-xix.

[81] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1954, 349.

[82] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1948, xiii.

on wives' duty to foreign relations did not wane.[83] In a chapter in the 1954 edition of *The Wife* entitled "Duty Overseas," Shea told readers to view themselves as "ambassador[s] of the American way of life."[84] Throughout the chapter, she reminded wives that their "influence" on foreign people "should at all times be helpful to our national objectives."[85] Shea repeated these messages to such an extent throughout the forty-four-page chapter that she saw fit to include an emphatic disclaimer that the messages were not redundant. "The emphasis placed on the fact that you, your husband, and your children are official and unofficial 'ambassadors at large' on an overseas assignment may strike you as redundant. Even if I repeated it for each country, each city, and each post, it could not be emphasized enough. IT IS *THAT* IMPORTANT!"[86] Army Attachés's wives received similar messages in the twelve-page chapter dedicated to those joining their husbands in foreign capitals. Shea told wives to be aware that their actions would be "scrutinized" by those around them, to "think of the possible consequences of something you are about to say before you say it," and to "never complain about the country or the people." By calling wives ambassadors, providing pages of training on wives' "duty overseas," and insisting on the importance of their interactions with people abroad, Shea and those who advised her on the 1954 edition of *The Army Wife* escalated the messages proffered in the previous edition and made it clear that the Army was becoming dependent on wives' soft diplomacy in order to meet its Cold War objects.

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[83] Shea, *"*Duty Overseas," in *The Army Wife*, 1954, 268-311; Shea, "Army Attaché's Wife in Foreign Capitals," in *The Army Wife*, 1954, 345-56.

[84] Ibid., 286.

[85] Ibid.

[86] Ibid., 311; 349-50. Emphasis in original.

Like in the previous edition, readers of the 1966 version of *The Army Wife* learned that Army families had "a tremendous impact overseas" that could "be helpful to our national objectives."[87] Unlike in previous editions, Shea declared in the 1966 edition of *The Army Wife* that Army wives were part of the "National Security Team" As "spokesmen for the United States," wives were "very much in service of the government."[88] Indicating that diplomacy abroad was fully entrenched in the Army wife ideal, Shea told readers, "Your principal job, besides making a home, rearing a family and strengthening your husband's morale, is to help him make friendly contacts with the people among whom you are stationed." [89] *The Army Wife* instructed readers to "do a little homework" before journeying abroad to ensure that wives' actions abroad would "at all times be helpful to our national objectives."[90] In addition to studying the culture, Shea told wives that they "must also attend and be interested in the cultural and sporting events, with the idea of winning and keeping friends for the United States."[91] These new demands of the ideal reveal that just as wives depended on the Army for housing, medical care, income, the Army depended on wives to achieve its objectives and promote positive foreign relations at stations around the globe.[92]

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[87] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1966, 293.

[88] Ibid., 282; 3-4; 248.

[89] Ibid., 293.

[90] Ibid., 248.

[91] Ibid., 283.

[92] For more on the connection between dependents and U.S. military policy and foreign relations during the Cold War, see Alvah, *Unofficial Ambassadors*.

U.S. Lady also contained articles that presented wives' everyday activities as significant to the military's Cold War agenda.[93] The magazine informed readers that, by building personal relations with people when stationed abroad, each wife had the ability to foster friendly foreign relations and become an active part of the arsenal for democracy. In articles such as "Teacup Allies" and "Cuisine Diplomacy," authors highlighted wives who used food to spread a positive view of America and capitalism.[94] "By founding the Speakers Bureau, Mrs. Douglas and subsequent Ambassador's wives who sponsor the organization have made great progress in furthering good will between English and American women," Jane Metzger wrote in "Teacup Allies. The "[i]nterchange of ideas and questions over the tea cups may never move any mountains, nor shape any high level decisions, but it *is* an education, and, as the British ladies would say, the 'greatest fun.'"[95] Similarly, an editorial in the December 1960 issue featured participants in the International Conference on Women's Activities who hoped to spread international understanding through their volunteer efforts.[96] In her article "For Foreigners

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[93] Donna Alvah uses *U.S. Lady* magazine as evidence for her argument that military families' interactions with locals near overseas bases represented "soft power" in U.S. foreign policy during the Cold War. Alvah, *Unofficial Ambassadors*. Rather than focus exclusively on military spouses living abroad and U.S. foreign relations, this dissertation examines the incorporation of spouses into U.S. foreign policy objectives is an important part of the evolution of Army family policy from viewing families as dependents to acknowledging and embracing the interdependent relationship that exists between the Army and Army families from World War II through 1983.

[94] Jane Metzger, "Teacup Allies: 'Pushbutton Queens' from the USA are Winning Friends in England with Lectures on Why We Live the Way We Do," *U.S. Lady*, January 1960, 16-7. Gertrude M. Watten, "Cuisine Diplomacy: French and American Ladies of Orleans Dispense with Formality and Forge Friendships," *U.S. Lady*, June 1964, 31.

[95] Metzger, "Teacup Allies," 41. Emphasis in original.

[96] John Adams and Alvadee Adams, "Times have Changed at Berchtesgaden," The Editorial We, *U.S. Lady*, December 1960, 4-6.

Only," Army wife Pat Donat's article described how she used her "understanding heart," gestures, smiles, bows, and money to overcome the language barriers she faced during a shopping trip in Tokyo. As a result the good nature and patience she modeled, Donat reported having a wonderful shopping experience and successful cultural exchanges with shop owners. Donat described her shopping trip as "an experience in friendship" and cultural understanding.[97] Combined, these articles illustrated to thousands of readers that military wives could fulfill the commands that Cold-War Army wives (and their counterparts in the other branches) help improve foreign relations through positive interactions with locals abroad.

U.S. Lady editors also included direct pleas for wives' engagement in foreign affairs. An editorial featured in the May 1960 issue that detailed Eleanor Roosevelt's visit with wives of servicemen studying how to fight communism at the economic level at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces at Fort McNair, noted that Mrs. Roosevelt saw military wives as particularly well-suited for fostering a positive view of the United States. According to the editorial, Mrs. Roosevelt viewed the military wives in attendance as actively engaged in foreign relations. "'You have more knowledge than most of my audiences about this widening responsibility of ours,'" Mrs. Roosevelt said. "I hope I will have your help in solving some of these new problems [associated with Russians' impressions of capitalism]."[98] By making her plea the feature of their editorial, *U.S. Lady* editors called on all readers to rise to the former First Lady's call for engagement in foreign affairs. In June of 1964, *U.S. Lady* editors featured a four-page spread about conferences in which members of American and allied women's clubs received instruction on how they could best contribute to U.S. aims abroad. According to the article, over a thousand

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[97] Pat Donat, "For Foreigners Only," *U.S. Lady,* February 1960, 12-13.

[98] John Adams and Alvadee Adams, "Mrs. Roosevelt Talks to the Ladies," The Editorial We, *U.S. Lady*, May 1960, 4, 43.

delegates representing several hundred women's clubs listened to speeches from political, military, and diplomatic leaders about how military spouses could help "promote goodwill."[99]

When faced with profound social, cultural, economic, and political transformations spurred by the civil rights movement, the steady march of middle-class mothers into the workforce, anti-Vietnam protests, and other challenges to patriarchy, the editors of *U.S. Lady* encouraged readers to dedicate themselves to the ideal, including advocating on behalf of the military. Articles provided guidance on topics challenged by the tumultuous realities surrounding the Vietnam War including finding marital balance and being patriotic.[100] In a salute to "the wives who wait" featured in the April 1967 edition of *U.S. Lady*, First Lady Johnson praised "the American Service wife" for "stand[ing] as bravely as her husband in this struggle." Bolstering wives' importance to fulfilling the mission, Mrs. Johnson asserted that the service wife's "selflessness and her valor are as essential to the final goal of peace as are his." Mrs. Johnson concluded by connecting military wives' service to the good of the state: "[The service wife's] performance has been magnificent. It lends strength and resolution to the Nation as a whole."[101] Military leaders reinforced the First Lady's sentiment that service wives were important to the military family, military, and the state. The Information Office, Commander in Chief Pacific helped distribute surveys about issues wives cared about to Army, Navy and Air Force commands throughout the Pacific. The responses, which were published in two parts in the April

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[99] "U.S. Ladies Meet at 4 European Conferences," *U.S. Lady*, June 1964, 36-9.

[100] For examples, see Norman M. Lobsenz, "The Delicate 'Marital Balance," *U.S. Lady*, July-August 1968, 6-7, 33; John B. Adams and Alvadee Adams, "Time for Soul Searching," The Editorial We, *U.S. Lady*, July-August 1967*, 5*.

[101] Lady B. Johnson, "The First Lady Salutes the Wives Who Wait," *U.S. Lady*, April 1967, 7.

and May 1967 volumes of *U.S. Lady*, provided readers with information about housing, shopping, schools, and each installation's policy regarding housing and services for waiting wives.[102] Like the other articles that praised officers' wives potential to positively impact the military and foreign relations, this article and the survey bolstered readers' sense of themselves and their importance within the military.

Rewarding the "Better Half of the Military" for Activism

Early covers of *U.S. Lady* included a tagline that read "For the Better Half of the Military Reads It!"[103] *U.S. Lady* editors regularly praised real wives for their activism on behalf of the military and state. The March 1959 volume of *U.S. Lady* featured a fictional story entitled "Sally and the Saboteur" that illustrates one of the ways in which magazine editors informed readers of their importance to and even superiority over other parts of the military. The story began by using the trope that a smart woman was a dangerous woman to reinforce the officer's wife ideal and demand soldiers' wives stay out of military matters.

> Sally Marvin had one of those perverse minds that would have done credit to a four-star admiral, but as part of the equipment of a young Navy wife it sometimes got her into trouble with her husband. Only the past week, for instance, she had told Jim that it was wrong to let officers breeze into military areas without showing their ID cards. Now her lieutenant USN husband was delighted for Sally to rule their split-level home, and also that paragon of perfection, James Marvin, Jr., but where things military were concerned he had a strong opinion that his wife should not, to use a nautical expression, rock the boat. [104]

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[102] *U.S. Lady*'s Pacific Bases Survey, *U.S. Lady*, April 1967, 32, 40-5.

[103] From March 1960 until April 1964, the magazine's masthead proclaimed, "The Better Half of the Military Reads It!" Other volumes had mastheads that read either "For Service Families" or "The Service Family Journal."

[104] Richard Wathen, "Sally and the Saboteur," *U.S. Lady*, March 1959, 7, 38.

Sally persisted. When her husband countered that the Navy "didn't need help from civilians to know how to run itself" Sally yelled, "Don't you dare call me a civilian!" Sally's strong response indicated the pervasiveness of the notion that wives were becoming seen as vital partners in the military.

After the two call a truce, James invited Sally to a welcome ceremony for the Commander of the Peruvian Navy. When the two arrive, James sent Sally with a WAVE photographer named Miss Carey to the roof of a nearby building so that she could have a good view of the ceremony. Sally and Miss Carey breezed by a number of checkpoints without showing identification. When they reached their destination, Sally glanced over at a male officer also on the roof. After noticing that the officer had his hands in his pockets (something her husband told her a Navy man would never do) Sally began to suspect the male was an imposter. When she saw a short, thick-barreled carbine gun peaking out from under his coat, Sally's concerns about the man and safety on the base became a reality. Sally immediately alerted the WAVE photographer that they were in trouble, but the stunned female soldier was unwilling to challenge a man dressed as an officer. Undeterred, the brave officer's wife "knew that she must act—for the Navy, for country, and for self-preservation." Sally grabbed the WAVE's heavy camera, thrust her own little camera into Miss Carey's hand, and told her to distract the imposter. When he was not looking, Sally used the large camera to knock the imposter unconscious, then called her husband to the roof. James and the other Navy men quickly identified Sally's victim as a South African anarchist who hoped to assassinate the visiting Commander. "The field was won," the story concluded. Because of a military wife's heroism, "the Nation's and the Navy's honor had been successfully upheld."[105] This story of a smart (albeit fictional) Navy wife

[105] Ibid.

accomplished more than preserving the Navy's and the nation's honor—Sally's story also challenged the notion that women had no active and crucial role in the military. To the contrary, "Sally the Saboteur" and articles like it informed *U.S. Lady* readers that the military needed wives' engagement and activism.

In a four-page spread entitled "Blue Chips in the Blue Yonder," author Bob Crawford praised seasoned servicemen's spouses who organized workshops at Lacland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas "to 'sell' the young wives of newly commissioned second lieutenants on the Air Force as a career.'"[106] The workshops included addresses on customs, courtesies, and protocol in the Air Force as well as entertaining and a style show that contrasted ""proper and improper clothing to be worn on an Air Force Base." For example, older wives informed new brides, "shorts for street wear" were "tabu [*sic*] practically everywhere." Although Crawford dedicated the majority of this article to the ways in which military wives perpetuated the ideal, he also noted that instruction in military affairs for new brides, including information on the dangers of communism, the role of the United States in world affairs, and the Air Force mission.[107] Crawford also praised the Blue Chips for facilitating family-friendly changes on base including adding more welcoming language to base documentation concerning wives and establishing remedies for problems with housing.

Articles like "Blue Chips in the Blue Yonder" validated those who pushed the boundaries of the traditional prescribed ideal. "'No dependent goes unnoticed,'" instructor Mrs. Phil B. Gage assured the nearly 3,000 women who attended her seminar on serving overseas. "'Each is

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[106] Bob Crawford, "Blue Chips in the Blue Yonder," *U.S. Lady*, October 1957, 19-20.

[107] Ibid., 20.

an *official ambassador* of the United States.'"[108] Even military officials applauded wives expansion of their role—a major general, John H. McCormick, formally commended the Blue Chip's founder; an Air Force psychologists credited "Blue Yonder Workshops" with the upswing in the number of men who intended to make the Air Force a career; and Lt. Col William B. White, director of military education, 3700th Pre-Flight Training Group, saw the Blue Chips as powerful partners in his operation whose service benefited the military. "'There is no doubt in my mind that the difference in the viewpoint of officers whose wives attend the workshop will tip the scales in our direction a sufficient number of times to constitute a savings of several millions of dollars a year when these officers start weighing the advantages of a service career,'" White asserted. "If just 20 of them decide to stay with us that's more than two million dollars of skill in our aircraft.'"[109] Statements like these made it clear that neither military wives nor military officials limited the responsibilities of soldiers' spouses to the home, family, volunteerism, and their husbands' morale.

The U.S. Lady-of-the-Month competition, a regular feature, also reinforced and redefined the ideal. Each month wives of some of the nation's highest-ranking military commanders selected the most admirable woman associated with the military from those nominated by their husbands or peers. Magazine editors rewarded winning wives' adherence to the prescribed ideal with two to three pages of text and pictures detailing their support of their husbands, sound parenting methods, and support of the military through volunteerism. In April of 1968, for example, the magazine's editors cheered Sonja Reiss, wife of Lt. Col. Matthew William Reis, for "successfully juggl[ing] the rearing of three children, household chores, children's music lessons,

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[108] Ibid. Emphasis mine.

[109] Ibid.

her community welfare work, plus gracious entertaining in her home." The article ends: "Sonja is truly an outstanding representative of the United States and of the service to which *her husband belongs*" [110] Photographs of these ideal officers' wives showed them smiling ear-to-ear and surrounded by loved ones in family settings. *U.S. Lady* awarded the title U.S.-Lady-of-the-Month to female military officers in seven of the twenty-seven volumes examined for this dissertation. Unlike the officers' wives awarded the same title, female officers were never featured with families. They were, however, heralded for possessing the traits of ideal officers wives, including patriotism, sense of humor, and selflessness. Like messages found in articles, advice, instruction, and fiction, the U.S. Lady-of-the-Month feature promoted the military's gendered expectations of wives and women. The pervasiveness of this message helped naturalize women's link to the military through their adherence to the prescribed military wife ideal.

Mission First: Maintaining Wives' Marginal Status

Despite their incorporation into the Army system, editors of and contributors to *U.S. Lady* regularly reminded readers that they were still marginal to the military. The pages of *U.S. Lady* reinforced the primacy of the military's mission by presenting soldiers' spouses submission to it as natural. In a column about Civil Defense featured in the October 1957 edition, Nancy Shea informed readers that "[s]ervice wives instinctively accept the occupational hazards of their husbands' business." She continued that "each wife should strive to be independent." Lest readers get the wrong message about independence, Shea clarified her statement: "By that I

[110] Betty Simpson, "U.S. Lady of the Month Sonja Reiss," *U.S. Lady*, April 1968, 8. Emphasis mine.

mean she should stand on her own two feet, accept her rightful responsibilities and not burden her husband with jobs that her hers."[111]

For servicemen's wives for whom subservience to their husbands and submission to the military mission did not come naturally, purveyors of the ideal provided instruction and examples so that they, too, could become ideal military wives. In "What it Takes to be A Commanding Officer's Wife," *U.S. Lady* contributor Lee Lorick Prina told readers that aspiring commanding officers' wives should develop "knowledge of etiquette service protocol and a diplomat's sensitivity for saying and doing the right thing." [112] Prina instructed readers with hopes of becoming a C.O.'s wife to create "an aura of charm, graciousness and serenity and" be "gracious and friendly to those above and below her husband in rank and their wives," but never "'run after them,' 'hound them' or see too much of them socially." Although Prina reported that ideal wives could "help or hinder [husbands] in the degree of [their] success," she also reminded readers that wives' influence was limited to "the social structure of the Armed Forces." Reinforcing readers' marginality, Prina cautioned, "It's an unhappy set-up for the husband and his fellow workers where the wife interferes." Because "everyone wants to look up to someone," she suggested isolation for a C.O.'s wife so that wives of lower-ranking soldiers would not be close enough to know a C.O.'s wife's flaws. The author dismissively concluded that, "the C.O.'s wife will just have to accept a little loneliness for her position." In exchange for her commitment

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[111] Nancy Shea, Service Etiquette, *U.S. Lady*, October 1957, 33.

[112] Lee Lorick Prina, "What it Takes to be A Commanding Officer's Wife: Sh-h-h! Ladies Discuss This Topic in Low Tones at Tea Parties and Club Meetings," *U.S. Lady*, October 1957, 15.

to the military wife ideal, "the commanding officer's wife has a great potential to make service life richer"—for her husband, his subordinates, and their families, but not for herself.[113]

Short stories found throughout *U.S. Lady* also bolstered the notion that wives should not make too many demands of the Army. In "Riffed," the main character, Yetta Trumble, struggled to accept her husband George's "ego-shattering reduction in rank" from lieutenant colonel to sergeant, but maintained the positive attitude the military desired of all servicemen's spouses.[114] Although Yetta "wished George would tell the Army to go to blazes and strike out boldly into civilian life," she modeled ideal behavior and dutifully "kept her personal feelings completely to herself" because she knew that "by acting cheerful and calm she could best help her husband."[115] Exemplifying the morale-boosting aspect of the ideal, Yetta cheerfully responded to George' s "shamed" and "embarrassed" expression when telling her about the smaller household budget with optimism and support. Without counting the money, Yetta assured him that the money he allotted for the home was enough. "You know," she continued, "these quarters are every bit as good as some of the lieutenant colonel ones we were assigned."[116] Yetta never questioned or blamed her soldier husband, the military, or its new mechanized system of ranking that led to George's demotion. Instead, she wondered if she were to blame, asking herself if she should have entertained more, done more club work, or better fulfilled her social obligations. Deciding no good came from dwelling on "might-have-beens" and "should-have-dones," Yetta decided to rally her spirits with a pep talk: "Yetta Trumble, change that tremble to a rumble and get this

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[113] Ibid.

[114] B.J. DiGiacomo, "Riffed," *U.S. Lady*, November 1960, 6.

[115] Ibid.

[116] Ibid.

business of living… After all, things certainly could be worse. At least they were housed and fed, and George was working…. Yes," she reassured herself and reminded readers, "things could be worse."[117]

As the story ends, Yetta had forgone her frustration in favor of the positive and supportive attitude the military expected of its wives. After accepting the situation "with her old-time ease," Yetta knew that her "family is going to be all right too, now that I've had my courage recharged."[118] A senior military wife affirmed the value of Yetta's compliance with the expectation that wives put the military first and dedicate themselves to bolstering moral to the military. "Yetta, you are a rock," a senior military wife said to Yetta. "The best soldier this Army ever had…"[119] Like the fictional story of Yetta Trumble, the articles, anecdotes, and advice found within the pages of *U.S. Lady* reinforced the foundational elements of the officer's wife ideal as they were passed down through tradition before being codified in the 1942 edition of *The Army Wife* while simultaneously revising wives' position in the Army. As Shea informed readers in 1954, "I assure you that you are not only a significant factor in your husband's career but an important though 'silent' member of the team."[120] Like good soldiers, Army planners expected wives were to support the Army system, not make demands of it. Marginalizing wives helped the Army control them.[121] As Army wife Anna Perle Smith's 1966 revision to Shea's classic for

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[117] Ibid.

[118] Ibid., 38.

[119] DiGiacomo, "Riffed," 38.

[120] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1954*, vii*

[121] For more on the ways in which the military marginalizes others to control them, see: Enloe, *Maneuvers.*

publication first chapter began "SO you are with the Army now!!"[122] The use of the word with, not in, reminded readers that although the Army depended on wives, spouses remained dependents, not part of the Army

The Personal Is Military: Army Wives' Advocacy for Their Families, the Army, and the State

Although Shea encouraged Army wives to "change as conditions demand," the Army itself was slow to develop or adapt the services wives depended on for help.[123] When faced with the failure of the Army system to provide services and procedures to help wives achieve their mission, many Army wives challenged specific requirements of the ideal, Army officials, and the Army system. In doing so, they did not defy the foundational elements of the ideal—the expectation that wives would support the mission and boost morale, rather they built on that foundation to improve their lived experiences and the Army. Those stationed abroad also shared stories of their soft diplomacy contributions for the good of the state. Many of their experiences mirrored the real and fictional examples of wives challenging the old order found in prescriptive and popular literature from the same era. Their experiences illustrate that the new expectation

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[122] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1966. Nancy Shea and her husband divorced in the mid-1950s and she died in October 1963, leaving it to another Army wife to revise the last edition of *The Army Wife.* Like Shea, Anna Perle Smith was a seasoned Army wife. Her husband, Joseph Smith, graduated from West Point in 1923 and rose the rank of Lieutenant General. As an Army and later Air Force officer, he served in many high-profile posts including in the Roosevelt's War Department. Smith retired in 1958. In 1948, Anna Perle Smith helped form the Arlington Ladies, an organization to assist families during burials at Arlington National Cemetery. She remained active in military activities throughout her life. She and her husband were married sixty years when he died in 1993. Anna Perle Smith died on July 4, 2011. Florida Divorce Index, 1927-2001, s.v. "Augustine Francis Shea," accessed April 12, 2011, http://www.ancestry.com/. Matt Schudel, "Anna Perle Smith, Air Force Spouse," Obituary, *Washington Post*, July 15, 2011.

[123] Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1948, xiii.

that wives work on behalf of the Army, challenge the system when needed, and that they protect and defend the Army had become part of the ideal.

Advocating for Army Families

Motherhood motivated many wives to confront Army practices and policies. During their oral history interviews, Army wives proudly shared memories of asserting themselves and demanding something other than what the Army offered for the good of their children and families. Army wife Grace Fontenot proudly shared her memory of directly challenging an Army doctor when she was dissatisfied with the medical care her son received at an Army medical facility. "'No sir, I am not going to take him home," she declared. "'He is going to spend the night here in the hospital.'" When the doctor said no, Fontenot threatened the doctor. "'I tell you I am not going to take him home. And if you insist, I'll call Colonel So-and-so [the hospital director]. And we will see who is going to win, me or you…. I tell you I am not taking him home.'" The Army doctor conceded to Fontenot's demands. When her children told her she embarrassed her son, she responded, "I don't care how I embarrass Greg. When Dad is not home, I'm the mother/father and I am taking care of you kids the best way that I know how. I am not going to put up with any shenanigans from anybody.'"[124] Fontenot found the authority to defy an Army officer's medical orders because of her unique role as an Army mother. As she noted, "I was being demanding because I knew what I could and couldn't do all by myself with four kids

[124] Grace Fontenot, interview by Betty Rutherford, October 28, 1999, Army Family Oral History Project, Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 34-5.

and a house. There's no way in the world that I could have picked Gregory up if he had passed out. No way. And I knew that, you see."[125]

Fontenot passed that lesson of defiance along to her daughter, Dana, who told the interviewer, "I wanted her to tell you that story because when we came into the Army she gave me one piece of advice and one piece of advice only. That was: Every time you move to find out the Post Commander's name and the Hospital Commander's name and not to take any crap from anybody!" Confirming that advice, Grace responded, "Yes, that is right. When it comes to my kids, I would fight a den of rattlesnakes before I wouldn't get my way." For Fontenot, the reason was clear: "the military came first. We came second… [so] you have to fight for your rights." Dispelling any objection, she added, "You are not being abusive or you are not being demanding where you shouldn't be." [126] Instead, Fontenot felt it was her duty to challenge authority for the good of her Army family and, through it, the Army.

Other wives also asserted themselves on behalf of their families. When Mary Jane Stone's two-bedroom home became to small for her family of six, she learned about Army housing policy and determined a good time to make an appeal for a larger house. Her advocacy on behalf of her family worked. The officials in charge of quarters responded that they "happen to have three sets of quarters that are vacant and you may take your pick." The Stone family ended up living in quarters far larger than what she had. "So we had this lovely duplex," Stone recalled with pride. "It was just fabulous."[127]

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[125] Ibid., 34-5

[126] Ibid., 34-5

[127] Mary Jane Stone, interview by Betty Rutherford, October 8, 1998, Army Family Oral History Project, Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 10.

Army wife Haroldine Nisbet developed a system to address a grocery problem Army families faced when stationed in Paraguay. At that time, wives could order limited items from the commissary, but deliveries only came once a month and only in the amounts too large for an individual family. Local markets were not an option for many due to the conditions there. "There were wives who were very unhappy and getting along very poorly" due to the problem. Seeing "no reason for this," Nisbet joined with other wives to order cases of items they used in bulk and divided them among themselves. Because "the sergeant who was in charge of this, of course, didn't want to have anything to do with this," Nisbet would get the wives together for coffee and to make the list. Nisbet would use an abacus to add all the items on the list, then made itemized lists "of who got what out of each case and how much they owed." When the items arrived, Nisbet and others would "sort their items and tally them up." Nisbet would then collect the money and turn it over to the MIL Group in charge in Paraguay. The wives' coordination of orders led to increased shipments to the commissary in Paraguay. As a result, Nisbet's husband received a "really nasty letter" from a military man in Panama accusing the group of "a big black market operation." Nisbet was so offended that she wrote a letter to the man in charge of the Southern Command, General Rossen. She noted that the Army was not charged for anything she and other wives ordered. "It is not black market," she told him. "Every can of everything that's ever gone out of here is accounted for." Nisbet's strong defense of her actions yielded a positive response from the general who called in the middle of the night to apologize for the Army man's accusation and inform the Nisbets that "he had put [that] guy back in his place."[128] The fast

[128] Haroldine Nisbet, interview by Dana Fontenot, November 18, 1999, Army Family Oral History Project, Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 21.

response from the general validated the importance of families to Army leaders and Nisbet's advocacy to improve the Army commissary system.

Advocating for the Good of the Order

In addition to advocating on behalf of their families, Army wives from this period also altered traditional customs and courtesies upheld for generations and the Army as well. When officers arrived at a new station, custom dictated that they and their wives call on senior officers. The purpose was to get to know one another. Army wife Marion Bartholdt did not think the customary short call fulfilled its intended purpose, so she challenged tradition in order to improve it. When her husband took over a battalion, she said, "'we will not do that.'" Instead of calling, she invited "all the wives and husbands in for dinner, in groups of three." Over the course of a full meal, "They got to know us and we got to know them." Although her husband told her she "was obstinate because [she] was always fighting him," she held firm. "I called it Marion's Restaurant, because we had quite a few people to have over. It was just wonderful. There was just a different feeling about it. I had put myself out for them and that I wanted to. We really got to know each other after the evening was over. Leaving a calling card was only minutes, what 10 or 15 minutes, then jumping up and running out. I just never saw any sense to that. I mean its just tradition. I think sometimes traditions could be improved upon. I felt there was an improvement to be made."[129]

Bartholdt continued to adjust the ideal to meet the realities she faced throughout her life as an Army wife. When her husband was in charge of battalion in Germany, a former battalion

[129] Marion Bartholdt, interview by Anne Burke, April 28, 1998, Army Family Oral History Project, Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 8-10.

commander's wife informed her that she forced wives to attend social functions. The outgoing commander's wife proudly told Bartholdt that she even went so far as to pick up a wife who never came because she was busy at home with her children. Bartholdt responded that she "would never do anything like that." Instead, she "purposely" brought her children to the first meeting and sat them right by her. Putting families before Army courtesies, Bartholdt informed the wives whose husbands served under her husband's command, "I understand the situation, I want you to do what you really want to do. If you need to bring your children with you they are welcome. If you feel the need to stay home, please do." The reason: "I didn't want them to feel they HAD to attend any function." Instead of being bound to participate in "mandatory fun," Bartholdt thought wives "should be able to pursue those interests or sit at home and watch TV if they want to." Rather than see a decline in participation due to her new tactic, Bartholdt found that the wives "all came to anything we had." When asked why she thought participation increased when the pressure to participate decreased, Bartholdt responded, "I think they just came because they felt like wanted to come and they enjoyed it."[130] In both instances, Bartholdt felt that her challenge of traditions to suit her needs improved outcomes for the Army.

Army wives did more than challenge traditions; they also created new procedures to help families deal with the realities of Army life. When asked if there was "one particular thing" that she did that she was most proud of, Edith Clagett told a story of when a lady interested in working in a nursery who had what she described as "some 'get up and go' too" came to her for advise of where to get a job. Clagett had her husband inquire about nurseries at Fort Mead. He reported back that there were none. This shocked Clagett, and spurred her to change the base. Clagett reported that reported that she was "instrumental in raising the money" to transform "old

[130] Ibid., 8-10. Emphasis in original.

barracks" into a nursery. Clagett proudly noted "That is something nobody else had done." Clagett's interviewer noted that the nursery Clagett had built in 1950 was still at Fort Mead.[131] One officer's wife armed with bake sales transformed the base for generations of Army families. In changing the base for the good of the Army, Clagett conformed to the foundational elements of the ideal while also adapting it to better serve Army families.

Long before the emergence of Family Support Groups, wives had to deal with the deployments without much support. When asked if she "rall[ied] with the other women in those housing areas and sort of form your own family support system," Army wife Marion Bartholdt responded simply, "Not particularly."[132] Evelyn Kayes felt that wives "were kind of left on our own." Kayes said that she experienced "the many hardships and difficulties faced by Army families between the years of WWII and the late 1960s when families had little formal support from the Army." When husbands deployed wives were told, "you can't stay on post and that is it. What you decided to do was up to you." For Kayes, it was "tough" trying to find housing for herself and eight children. Further complicating matters, she had to find a place close to base if she wanted to use the PX and Army hospital. With no ability to stay on base when her husband deployed and no family services to help her, Kayes "had to live in a motel for about 8 weeks and that was something. We had a motel with 8 children. Not much fun." [133] Army wife Inez Cardillo also remembered trying to juggle a move and a newborn when her husband deployed as "a really tough time." At that time, wives "didn't have anything like relocation services or support groups

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[131] Clagett, interview, 23.

[132] Ibid., 7.

[133] Evelyn Kayes, interview by Teri Vila, June 20, 2003, Army Family Oral History Project, Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 7.

for the families at all," so "[i]t was just thirty days and you are out of the quarters." Without Army family services, Cardillo turned to her family for help clearing quarters. Two months later, with the help of another Army wife, she boarded a ship bound for Europe where her husband was stationed with her five-year-old and eleven-week-old sons, a golden retriever, eleven footlockers, and thirteen pieces of luggage. Without Army services to help her join her husband when he was stationed abroad, Cardillo had to pay for her passage herself.[134]

The absence of any policy to inform wives when their husbands were captured, missing in action, or killed left Jerry Jones Scally and others to develop ad hoc procedures to inform fellow Army lives. Scally had been "part of a party" tasked with telling another wife that her husband had died, so she was worried when two officers' wives from her husband's battalion "'dropped in'" on her. Scally, who was pregnant and living with her parents, remembered her needs were not met when the women came to tell her that her husband was missing in action. The wives, who were not trained to help Scally in her time of grief, refused to "even let [her] go to the bathroom by [herself]." That frustrated Scally because, as she remembered, "all I wanted to do was be by myself." Instead of being alone, Scally played the role of ideal Army hostess to the two wives and the priest they brought with them until Scally's mother returned home. "So it was awful," Scally recalled.[135]

When her husband was battalion commander at Fort Lewis in 1963, Virginia Callaghan and another wife developed a more efficient system for notifying the battalion of news she called a "wifeline." Rather than physically visiting the battalion in order to spread communication, the

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[134] Inez Cardillo, interview by Anne Burke, April 28, 1998, Army Family Oral History Project, Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 7-8.

[135] Jerene (Jerry) Jones Scally, interview by Betty Rutherford, February 12, 2000, Army Family Oral History Project, Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 4-6.

battalion commander's wife would tell the sergeant major's wife who would then continue to spread the news via a phone tree. Callaghan would check to make sure the other wives were handling it. According to Callaghan, "they did." This relieved a major burden for Callaghan and allowed her to spend more time with her children.[136] Her actions also improved the efficiency of notifying Army wives of important information.

Although wives were regularly informed that they were not members of the Army and therefore had no rank, responsibilities and influence did increase as their husbands were promoted. When Lois Arter's husband became a general, she had enough clout to help create family programs. "I felt it was my first opportunity to really be a part of what he was doing," she recalled. "I felt we were always a team, but I felt even more of a team when he became a General."[137] Recognizing that women "'were not born General's wives'," Lois Arter and a fellow senior officer's wife helped establish a "Charm School" for new generals wives. Together, the senior officers' wives "pushed having the wives come for the pre-command courses" because they thought it would help wives "take part in whatever their husbands were doing."[138] Arter also helped establish family support system for the National Guard, which "had no family support system whatsoever," and advocated for National Guard spouses to get ID cards so that they could use commissaries and gain access to other services on base when their husbands deployed. She defined this project in terms of mission readiness, a foundational element of the Army officer's wife ideal. "We really worked… with the people of the 6th Army

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[136] Virginia Callaghan, interview by Betty Rutherford, February 20, 1998, Army Family Oral History Project, Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 18.

[137] Lois Arter, interview by Margaret Wood, May 17, 2000, Army Family Oral History Project, Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 10.

[138] Ibid., 10.

so they were prepared [for deployment]," she noted.[139] Arter's stated motivation indicates the extent to which wives embraced the ideal while changing it. "I guess my career was my husband, and still is very much so."[140] Arter was able to make profound changes that benefitted Army families as well as the Army itself while simultaneously upholding the foundational elements of the Army officer's wife ideal.

Like individual women, wives clubs also worked for the good of the order. Haroldine Nisbet cheered wives clubs for establishing childcare centers on bases. Even though she was not part of a group setting one up, she said wives "knew who had put them there and who was supplying things and keeping them running and checking out how they were doing it."[141] Nisbet added, "You know, they say the Army takes care of its own, baloney! It's the people in the Army that take care of each other," she asserted.[142] She knew from experience.

Near the end of her interview, Army wife Marion Bartholdt's interviewer asked her if there was anything about how Army life affected her that she wanted to share. Bartholdt, a woman who raised four children in the Army and lived in stations around the globe admitted, "I wasn't the best Army wife in the world." Although she "always moved willingly and gladly," she struggled with the social expectations of the ideal because she was not a "joiner." Striving to improve, Bartholdt gave herself the authority to adapt the ideal to suit her personal strengths. Still, she strove to improve. "I finally had to have a little talk with myself," she recalled. "I said, Marion, just toughen up and do it your way." Emboldened, she told her husband, "you're the one

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[139] Ibid., 10.

[140] Ibid.

[141] Nisbet, interview, 23.

[142] Ibid.

that works in the Army. It's your thing, you adore it, that's all you wanted to do. Now I have to approach it my way. I can't do it just like everybody expects me to do." Throughout her career she stayed true to the foundational elements of the ideal, but challenged norms and systems to better serve families. As she reflected upon her life, she stated, "I did some things along the way and probably said some things that I shouldn't have done, but I'm not sorry."[143] Bartholdt couched her challenges in necessity. "I think that that is harder on the women than it is on the men," she asserted. "I know it was, I know it was."[144] Bartholdt's interviewer, a fellow Army spouse, agreed with her. "Oh, I know, it is too, and it still is." The interviewer then connected Bartholdt's actions to the development of the Army family policies of today. "I think that's one of the reasons… there's so much emphasis on family support and family team building right now, because of lessons like the ones that you learned."[145]

Advocating for the Good of the State

Army officers' wives who joined their husbands overseas expressed awareness that contributing to foreign affairs through socializing, shopping, and volunteerism was an expected of them. Mirroring lessons found in guidebooks and ACS classes, Betty Rutherford asserted that she and other officers' wives were "great ambassadors by shopping."[146] In Rutherford's estimation, Army wives were great "because they go places that other people don't bother to

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[143] Bartholdt, interview, 22-3.

[144] Ibid., 24.

[145] Ibid. Burke was the interviewer.

[146] Callaghan, interview, 7. Rutherford was the interviewer.

go."[147] In storefronts and bazaars far from bases, women like Betty Rutherford followed the advice learned from prescriptive manuals, *U.S. Lady*, and formal classes to help create a positive perception of the United States for people living near bases around the world.

Wives' compliance with social courtesies while overseas indicated that they took advice about their influence abroad seriously. Mary Jane Stone recalled that she "had" to call on everybody above her husband on the Diplomatic list when joined her husband on Attaché duty in Manila. Junior attachés, in turn, called on her and her husband. "That is all we did in the mornings," she lamented. Even when she entertained in her own home, Stone had to consider the Army's mission and the state. "When you entertained you had to have 60% of your guest list foreign, 30% could be Embassy personnel or other military personnel," she recalled.[148] Despite her frustration with the rules, Stone complied with them. Haroldine Nisbet, the wife of the MIL Group Commander in Paraguay, hated crowds and cocktail parties, but remembered she "had to go to Embassy doings—cocktail parties—about four days out of the week." At these parties, Nisbet was held accountable for knowing military and diplomatic protocol. "You couldn't leave until the Ambassador did. The Ambassador couldn't leave until the Minister of Defense did, etc.," she recalled.[149] Phrases like "had to" indicate that Stone and Nisbet did not like these courtesies. Their compliance with the customs expected of them, however, indicated that they accepted the Army military and cultural leaders' desire that wives positively impact U.S. foreign relations through soft diplomacy.

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[147] Ibid., 16.

[148] Stone, interview, 22.

[149] Nisbet, interview, 16-7.

Like shopping and socializing, wives' volunteerism also waded into foreign affairs. When stationed in Oberammergau, Germany after World War II, Haroldine Nisbet saw the difference between capitalist and communist governments. "When you went to the other side to see, they had a façade of buildings, but you could look right through to the damage that they hadn't repaired," she remembered. This was in stark contrast to the western side where "there were sidewalk cafes, everyone was doing well and was happy." According to Nisbet, "The difference was just night and day as to what the systems themselves offered to the same people."[150] Germans saw the difference as well: hundreds of thousands of East Germans fled to West Germany during the time Nisbet lived in Oberammergau. She and others in the Protestant Women of the Chapel "made stuffed animals for the little children who were coming across in Berlin before they put up the wall." Through her volunteer work, Nisbet met a father who had just emigrated to West Germany from East Germany. Frustrated with the East German government for plowing through his flowerbeds, the man's family left their home "with nothing but the clothes on their backs" because the man believed "that the Americans would treat them well." [151] The goodwill Nisbet and other military wives extended through their volunteer work helped bolster others' positive perspective of Americans.

Conclusion

In December of 1960, Mrs. Al Webber wrote to the editors of *U.S. Lady*. Her praise of the magazine summarizes the impact *U.S. Lady* had on readers: "Your editorials, articles, and

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[150] Ibid.

[151] Ibid.

features have been informative as well as inspiring."[152] *U.S. Lady* did more than simply inform wives of \ the prescribed military wife ideal and inspire them to adhere to it. By heralding the work of soldiers' spouses in furthering the military mission, including official recognition of their activities and grievances, imagining scenarios in which military wives save the day, informing readers of news relevant to the military, and encouraging activism, the magazine's editors and contributors broadened the boundaries of wives' expected behavior and encouraged readers to awaken their political consciousness.

As an increasingly interdependent relationship between dependents and the Army developed during the period from 1946 to 1968, the Army needed wives to work to improve the Army system. Empowering wives to advocate for that which they deemed would improve readiness and morale was crucial to meeting the demands of the Cold War. Although the wives interviewed struggled to live up to the ideal and challenged the system, most expressed admiration and acceptance of the Army way of life. When asked if she would choose Army life gain, Tess McGregor responded simply, "Absolutely."[153] Mary Jane Stone expanded on McGregor's fondness of Army life. "There were lots of drawbacks and a lot of disappointments but looking back on it, in my late years, I can say that probably I was glad that I did it. I am glad I didn't marry a civilian."[154]

It was through their affinity for the Army that this generation of Army wives, bolstered by the ideal as promoted in prescriptive and popular sources, ushered in changes to Army

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[152] "Mrs. Al Webber, In League with the League," Mail Call, *U.S. Lady*, December 1960, 1.

[153] Mary McGregor, interview by Betty Rutherford, February 10, 2000, Army Family Oral History Project, Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 16.

[154] Stone, interview, 20.

programs and policies in order to meet the needs of families who, in turn, contributed to readiness, morale, and foreign affairs. Far from fostering feminism or challenging wives' connection to the military mission, wives advocated for that which would aid them in fulfilling the ideal prescribed to them throughout the pages of *The Army Wife, U.S. Lady*, and other prescriptive and popular sources. In encouraging and responding to wives' advocacy on behalf of their husbands, the Army, and the state, cultural and military leaders created a forum and precedents for spouses to voice concerns about Army family policy and other matters they encountered in order to improve the Army. Praising individual efforts of those who modeled the ideal and advocated for the Army provided a model for future Army officers' wives to use the ideal to advocate on their own behalf. Combined, these alterations to Army wife ideal mark an important step on Army wives' path from dependents to interdependency. The call for wives' advocacy on behalf of the military within the confines of the ideal represented an acknowledgment of wives' importance to the Army mission and set a course for activism that continued long after *U.S. Lady* and *The Army Wife* stopped publishing.

Chapter Five
Operation Joining Forces: Making the Army-Army Family Relationship Interdependent, 1969-1983[1]

On June 28, 1947, a twenty-two-year-old Sybil Bailey married a recent Naval Academy graduate, James (Jim) Bond Stockdale. Like many new Army officers' wives during that time period, Sybil Stockdale turned to one of Nancy Shea's guidebooks for information about the customs and courtesies of Navy life. According to her memoir, Stockdale considered Shea's *The Navy Wife* her "constant guide," was "thrilled at the future it portrayed," and adhered to the prescriptions found in it.[2] As her husband's rank increased, Stockdale continued to follow the officer's wife ideal as Shea prescribed, taking on additional responsibilities commiserate with her husband's rank and mentoring twenty-five wives of men under her husband's command.[3] When her husband's plane was shot down over Vietnam on September 9, 1965, however, Stockdale discovered that neither *The Navy Wife* nor eighteen years of experience as an officer's

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[1] The title of this chapter borrows from a national initiative First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden launched in 2011. As the program's motto—"Taking action to serve America's military families"—indicates, Joining Forces aims to help American service members and military families through wellness, education, and employment opportunities. This program represents the epitome of interdependency that military wives, the military, and the state began to recognize during the time period of this chapter. White House, "About Joining Forces," accessed October 1, 2016, https://www.whitehouse.gov/joiningforces/about.

[2] Jim Stockdale and Sybil Stockdale, *In Love and War: The Story of a Family's Ordeal and Sacrifice During the Vietnam Years* (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), 45-6; Sebastian Ruiz, "Liberty Station Becomes Home to Stockdale Museum, Hero's Tribute," *San Diego Community Newspaper Group*, October 27, 2007. Nancy Shea worked with Navy wife Anne Brisco Pye to merge prescriptions in *The Army Wife* with Navy customs and courtesies. Their joint effort provides evidence of the similarities of prescriptions and connection between military wives of all branches. Stockdale's references to that book and lived experiences as a Navy officer's wife indicate that she embraced those foundational elements of the officer's wife ideal. Nancy Shea and Ann Brisco Pye, *The Navy Wife* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1942. Revised editions were published in 1945, 1949, 1955, 1965, and 1966.

[3] Stockdale and Stockdale, *In Love and War*, 53.

wife had sufficiently prepared her for the realities of her husband being a prisoner of war (POW). Seeking to address the needs of her family as well as her husband and those held captive with him, Stockdale formed a national advocacy organization of military spouses, defied and shaped the Pentagon's policies related to POWs, commanded the attention and action of the president of the United States, and affected international negotiations to end the war in Vietnam. For her work to publicize the mistreatment of prisoners of war and efforts on behalf of military families, the U.S. Department of the Navy honored Stockdale the Distinguished Public Service Award, the highest award given to civilians. The accompanying citation, given "in recognition and appreciation for her outstanding service," praised Stockdale for "her courageous and determined actions" and "indomitable spirit" that "reflected the finest traditions of the Naval service and of the United States of America."[4]

As Stockdale's story reveals, a sense of interdependency between military wives and the military emerged during the period from 1969 to1983. This chapter explains how military leaders and wives began to see themselves as mutually dependent on one another, rather than viewing wives as dependent on the military. Building on decades of calls for individual military wives to advocate on behalf of the military as well as the precedent of collective action in the civilian world, Army wives joined with their counterparts in other branches of service to form a variety of national advocacy groups meant to address issues that directly impacted military wives and their families. Stockdale and other POW wives formed the first national advocacy group of military wives, the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast

[4] Ibid., 447. Stockdale is the only wife of an active-duty naval officer ever to be so honored. Alletta Cooper and Andres Caballero, "A POW Dad And His Family's Fierce, Loving Allegiance," Morning Edition, *NPR*, May 27, 2016, accessed October 2, 2016, http://www.npr.org/2016/05/27/479507187/a-pow-dad-and-his-familys-fierce-loving-allegiance.

Asia, to address their concerns about their husbands' treatment. Although military wives had organized before this time, they worked in organizations like the Red Cross of Officers Wives Clubs that served the military effort rather than issues they deemed important.[5] Army wives and their counterparts in other branches during this period sought solutions in terms of military policies and practices, legislative changes, judicial rulings, presidential priorities, and international agreements to address issues unique to their experience as military wives. Working through the League, military wives from all branches joined together to shape military, national, and international conversations not just about POWs, but about the war itself.

The National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia provided a model for military wives to have their other unique needs addressed. Beginning in 1969, military wives from all branches of service joined forces to assert their rights to benefits the military promised their soldier spouses through three distinct national advocacy organizations: National Military Wives Association (MWA), Ex-Spouses of Servicemen for Equality (EXPOSE), and Survivors of Sacrifice (SOS). Military wives used strategies from the

[5] Shea encouraged WWII-era Army wives who grew up as Army brats to join the Society of the Daughters of the U.S. Army, which sought to "carry on the ideals, traditions and customs of the Service; to support worthy causes and patriotic activities; to participate loyally in the social activities of the military communities in which the members are located; to renew old acquaintances and cement new friends, and to preserve the identity of Regular Army Officers' daughters who have married or who have lost touch with the Army on entering civil life." Shea, *The Army Wife*, 1942, 283. Shea and Clella Collins encouraged wives to join the newly formed Association of Army Wives that provided information on military life for its members. Collins included an impassioned plea that Army wives join the association and "rededicate ourselves to the tenets of religion and our government, reconsecrate ourselves to the service of our country and those sons who are yet to come" in order to ensure that "America must never again be caught unprepared" as it was on December 7, 1941. Despite the lofty, mission-focused, and patriotic goals, the Association of Army Wives does not appear to have continued after World War II—the few articles that mentioned the Association of Army Wives were published in 1942 and no major newspapers included stories on the Association after March of 1945. Collins, *Army Woman's Handbook,* 1942, 206-7; Shea, *The Army Wife,* 1942, 304-306.

larger women's rights movement of the Sixties and Seventies to express their own issues, in particular concerns about the treatment of POWs and their families, and survivor and other military benefits. Like civilian women engaged in the women's movement, military wives engaged in consciousness raising, lobbied Congress, challenged policies in the courts, and publicized their cause to advocate for improved treatment in the military. Although civilians, military wives living on posts were segregated from larger society and did not see themselves or their actions as parts of the larger women's rights movement of the Sixties and Seventies because their concerns were specific to being married to the military. While working to address concerns specifically defined as military women's issues, Army wives and wives from other branches learned that the personal was military—problems customarily understood as personal and private were often not rooted in the individual, but rather in military society and culture and therefore required public, political, and military solutions.[6] Unlike those active in the women's movement, military wives did not challenge the traditional Army officer's wife ideal; rather, they sought aid, policies, and support in achieving the demands of the ideal.

By 1969, the expectation that Army wives advocate on behalf of Army readiness and morale was firmly entrenched in the Army officer's wife ideal. Guidebooks published in this era continued to include demands that wives support the mission and dedicate themselves to boosting morale.[7] A 1977 study of military wives showed that "[m]any wives still believe[d] that volunteer activities [were] implicitly required for their husbands' advancement." The same study

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[6] For more on the connection between the personal and the political, see Evans, *Personal Politics.*

[7] A sample of guidebooks published during this era include: Mary Gross Preston and Joyce Johnson, *Mrs. NCO* (Chuluota, FL: Beau Lac Publishers, 1969), Mary Gross Preston and Evelyn Baird Fondren, *Mrs. Fieldgrade* (Chuluota, FL: Beau Lac Publishers, 1970), Oretha D. Swartz and Bruce McCandless, *Service Etiquette* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1977).

revealed that an officer's wife's responsibilities increased with her husband's rank. "[A]s she increases the chances of a successful career for her husband," the study concluded, "she correspondingly increases her service as a volunteer to the military structure and the military community at large."[8] Whether responding to the realities of war or advocating for benefits, military wives built upon the foundational elements of the Army officer's wife ideal (and, more broadly, the military officer's wife ideal)—that they support the mission and boost morale—to justify, empower, and embolden their causes.

Political and military leaders seeking to quell antiwar activists or curry political favor, engaged with the issues military family advocacy organizations raised in unprecedented ways. In engaging with military family issues through advocacy, legislative and military policy changes, and legal challenges, military wives, military leaders, and politicians paved the way for the emergence of a fully interdependent relationship between spouses and the Army and the Army family. As Army planners prepared to change from conscription to the AVF, its leaders focused on the enlistment and re-enlistment of military soldiers and officers more than ever before. Issues impacting Army families including military benefits, pay, and quality of life became seen as crucial to maintaining a standing army.[9] Because families' positive perception of the Army way of life was closely tied with reenlistment, family support issues and spouses' satisfaction were

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[8] Lynn R. Dobrofsky, "The Wife: Military Dependent or Feminist?" in *Changing Families in a Changing Military System,* ed. Edna J. Hunter (San Diego, CA, Naval Health Research Center, 1977), 35.

[9] For more on the development of the AVF, see: Bailey, *America's Army*, especially chapter one.

brought to the forefront through various Army studies and policies aimed at retention.[10] Collectively, the advocacy of national organizations of military wives as well the political and military responses to it during this period paved the way for Army Chief of Staff General John A. Wickham to announce a series of programs designed to foster "a sense of interdependence" between the Army and the Army families in 1983.[11]

A Joint Mission: Military Wives and the Vietnam War

Army wives have always lived with the threat that their husbands would be captured and held prisoner or would be missing in action (MIA) while serving their nation during wartime. In addition to causing personal and family stress, the Pentagon's policy of delaying benefits until it could confirm that the POWs or MIAs were not deserters caused financial hardships for U.S. military families from all branches of service during the Vietnam Era. Official policy also maintained that military families could not to speak publicly about POWs and MIAs. The Pentagon established this practice to try to ensure the safety of POWs. That the policy was known and obeyed is evident in MIA wife Valerie Kushner's interview with reporter Hugh Sidney in which Kushner noted, "I wanted to yell from the first day, but I was told by the Army that would not only not help me, but squelch me."[12] But POW/MIA wives discovered that these policies exasperated their day-to-day realities. Frustrated with the military's POW/MIA policies,

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[10] U.S. Army, Chief of Staff, *The Army Family*, 3; John S. Brown, *Kevlar Legions: The Transformation of the U.S. Army, 1989-2005* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History United States Army, 2011), 341.

[11] U.S. Army, Chief of Staff, *The Army Family*, cover letter.

[12] Hugh Sidey, "Memories of Divided Families: The Raid that Failed to Free POWs, the Wives Who Still Wait," *Life*, December 4, 1970, 36-43. Quote on page 36.

wives from around the nation joined together to form the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia, a powerful national advocacy organization military wives established to ensure the humane treatment of their husbands and expedite their release.[13] According to Michael J. Allen, "American POWs and MIAs dominated public discussions of the Vietnam War after 1968 and played a central role in political debates and international diplomacy concerning the war's end."[14] This was, in no small part, the result of the sustained activism of members of the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia who demanded the attention of the press, legislators, military leaders, and even the president of the United States. Faced with challenges to military readiness and morale related to the Vietnam War and the antiwar movement, Defense Department officials and political leaders eventually engaged with and even coopted their cause, changing Pentagon policies related to benefit distribution to POW wives, making the North Vietnamese's inhumane treatment of POWs public, and making the treatment and release of POWs a focal point of international negotiations over the end of the war in Vietnam.

The development of the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia began as a personal endeavor for one military wife. After her husband was captured, Nancy Stockdale suffered financial hardships due to the Pentagon's policy of delaying benefits until it could confirm that the missing were not deserters. Like the real and fictional women featured in *U.S. Lady* magazine, Stockdale took the initiative to correct what she saw as

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[13] The Defense Department reported 591 members of the Armed Forces were held prisoner during the Vietnam War, including members from each branch. The vast majority of POWs were officers. Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs, *Report No. 1*, 103rd Congress, 1st sess., 1993, 144.

[14] Michael J. Allen, *Until the Last Man Comes Home: POWs, MIAs, and the Unending Vietnam War* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 14.

"the incompetence of the [benefits] system." After two weeks of calls to Navy representatives about her husband's pay, Stockdale "screeched" to the person on the other end of the phone, "'I've waited long enough! I'll give you until Monday to find out about that pay for me or I'm going to call the admiral in Washington who's head of all Navy personnel!'" Stockdale's threat worked. Within two hours, she learned that her husband's pay and other military benefits had been restored.[15] Stockdale soon realized that, like her personal struggle to gain access to her husband's military pay while he was held captive, the many other issues the families of the more than soldiers held prisoner in Vietnam faced were also systemic military issues, which would require an organized effort of military families to address.

After enduring more than a year of her husband being held captive by the North Vietnamese and frustrations about accessing military savings deposit program, Stockdale sought the solace of other military wives. She called wives living in San Diego whose husbands were also missing or captured, but due to the Pentagon's restriction on families speaking about those held captive or missing, she remembered that the wives were "so terrified they'd hardly talk on the phone" about their struggles with a person they did not know. In order to get to know the wives and build a network of military wives, Stockdale invited wives of several other missing or captured in Vietnam living near her for lunch at her home in the fall of 1966. The initial lunch meeting "stretched into an all-afternoon affair" during which thirteen POW/MIA wives shared

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[15] Stockdale and Stockdale, *In Love and War*, 121-2. League co-founder Sybil Stockdale married her husband, a navy officer, on June 28, 1947. He was released in February of 1973 during Operation Homecoming. See also Evelyn Grub and Carol Jose, *You Are Not Forgotten: A Family's Quest for Truth and the Founding of the National League of Families* (St. Petersburg, FL: Vandamere Press, 2008); Sebastian Ruiz, "Liberty Station Becomes Home to Stockdale Museum, Hero's Tribute," *San Diego Community Newspaper Group*, October 27, 2007, accessed July 1, 2016, http://www.sdnews.com/view/full_story/303797/article-Liberty-Station-becomes-home-to-Stockdale-Museum--hero-s-tribute.

information they had heard from military leaders, commanding officers' wives, and personal experience. Eventually, the military wives shared fears that the North Vietnamese were not treating their husbands well and that the Pentagon was not doing enough to locate them.[16]

Building upon the momentum of that lunch, POW/MIA wives in California as well as a group of wives in Virginia began working together to publicize their concerns about the treatment of those held prisoner in Vietnam. In 1967, Stockdale shared a "white paper" State Department officials had sent to POW wives with members of the press. The "white paper" included the State Department's conclusion that U.S. airmen "were being subjected to emotional and physical duress, which is a flagrant violation of the Geneva Convention." Stockdale penned a cover letter in which she pleaded to reporters, "I *beg, beseech, and implore* you to print the enclosed information in your publication so that the world may know the *truth* about the treatment of our prisoners." According to Stockdale, a strong sense "that the men back there in Washington had made a mistake" motivated her to make her case to the press.[17]

The following year, a survey of thirty-three POW/MIA wives' mail from their husbands revealed evidence that the North Vietnamese were in what Stockdale described as "total violation" of the "most basic tenets" of the Geneva Convention. Stockdale shared the survey results with a reporter from the *San Diego Union*.[18] In communicating with the press, Stockdale

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[16] Quoted in Stockdale and Stockdale, *In Love and War*, 145-6.

[17] Stockdale and Stockdale, *In Love and War*, 224. Emphasis in original. Stockdale stated her motivation in a December 1972 interview with the *New York Times*. Cited in Bruce Weber, "Sybil Stockdale, Fierce Advocate for P.O.W.s and Their Families, Dies at 90," *New York Times,* October 15, 2015.

[18] U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Hearings Before the Subcommittee on National Security Policy and Scientific*. 91st Cong., 2nd sess., 60 (1970) (testimony of Sybil Stockdale).

and other POW/MIA wives violated a long-standing Pentagon policy that required families maintain public silence on POW/MIA issues. They did not, however, challenge foundational tenets of the ideal. As Stockdale noted in her memoir, "I knew, too, that there was just so much I could do. I could only criticize my own government privately; there was nothing the enemy would like better than to have me criticize the U.S. government publicly."[19] Stockdale later stated in her testimony before the Committee on Foreign Affairs on the POW/MIA issue that the group of POW/MIA wives represented "an effort to supplement that which our Government is doing to ensure humane treatment for our men and in no way reflects any discredit on the efforts made by our Government."[20] Rather than challenge the military, the nation, or the state, the wives built on prescriptions promoted in *U.S. Lady* to improve military practices and policies they saw as threats to their soldier spouse or the institutions he was charged to protect. None of the wives who spoke to the press members were publicly reprimanded for their actions.[21]

In June of 1969, Stockdale joined forces with other small groups of waiting wives to form the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia.[22] The

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[19] Stockdale and Stockdale, *In Love and War*, 222.

[20] U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Hearings Before the Subcommittee on National Security Policy and Scientific*. 91st Cong., 2nd sess., 61 (1970) (testimony of Sybil Stockdale).

[21] Weber, "Sybil Stockdale," *New York Times*, October 15, 2015; Stockdale and Stockdale, *In Love and War,* 145-6; Grub and Jose, *You Are Not Forgotten*; Ruiz, "Liberty Station," *San Diego Community Newspaper Group*.

[22] U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Hearings Before the Subcommittee on National Security Policy and Scientific*. 91st Cong., 2nd sess., 61 (1970) (testimony of Sybil Stockdale). The National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia was formally incorporated in the District of Columbia on May 28, 1970. The League continues to operate today as the National League of POW/MIA Families. National League of POW/MIA Families, "About the League," accessed June 15, 2016, http://www.pow-miafamilies.org/about-the-league/.

group held regular meetings. Their organization provided an outlet to process feelings, share information, and advocate for their husbands. The official aims of the group were "to inform fellow Americans and world citizens of the codes for treatment of combatant prisoners," to "make known the true and desperate plight of the American prisoners of war and the men listed as missing in action," and to hold the North Vietnamese Government accountable for the treatment of prisoners.[23] The National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia members used the media to call for the humane treatment of prisoners, the president and Congress to publicly acknowledge the Vietcong's mistreatment of POWS, increased public awareness of the POW/MIA issue, and their husband's expedited release.[24] The League's mission and publicity efforts resonated with military families around the nation. Within months, the League grew to 350 members. "Never was a national organization launched more efficiently," Stockdale boasted.[25] Over the next four years, League membership rapidly grew to more than 3,000 members as the *New York Times*, *Life*, the Today Show, and other media outlets

[23] U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Hearings Before the Subcommittee on National Security Policy and Scientific*. 91st Cong., 2nd sess., 61 (1970) (testimony of Sybil Stockdale).

[24] Stockdale and Stockdale, *In Love and War*, 145-6; Ruiz, "Liberty Station," *San Diego Community Newspaper Group*, October 27, 2007.

[25] Stockdale and Stockdale, *In Love and War*, 311.

featured members of the League in stories about the POW/MIA issue.[26] Joining together empowered POW/MIA wives. According to Stockdale's memoir, "Being together gave us all strength."[27]

As it grew in size and influence, the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia directed its grassroots efforts at influencers who could make the North Vietnamese adhere to the Geneva Convention's mandate for the treatment of war prisoners, including leaders of the military, elected office, and the state. Within just three years of Stockdale inviting fellow POW/MIA wives to lunch at her home, members of the advocacy organization she co-founded waded into international affairs. On October 4, 1969, Stockdale and five other League members met with four members of the North Vietnamese delegation. In addition to asking about their loved ones, the delegation of League members delivered 400 "letters of inquiry from the families of other captured and missing American servicemen" as well as hundreds of letters meant for those held prisoner in Vietnam. When Stockdale introduced

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[26] "Wives Organizing to Find 1,332 G.I.'s Missing in War," *New York Times*, July 31, 1969; Sidey, "Memories of Divided Families," 36-43; Joseph Lelyveld, "Dear President Nixon--the P.O.W. Families," *New York Times Magazine*, October 3, 1971, 56; Nan Robertson, "P.O.W. Wives Await Peace with Joy and Dread," *New York Times*, December 6, 1972; Steven V. Roberts, "Wives Waiting for P.O.W.'s with Hope and Anxiety," *New York Times*, February 5, 1973. *Life* magazine featured Army wife Valerie Kushner, whose husband, Hal, was also held prisoner in Hanoi, on the cover. The headline "P.O.W. Wife," subhead, "As Hanoi releases three fliers, anger and agony over a husband still gone," and illustration of a P.O.W. were also featured. Cover, *Life*, September 29, 1972. On January 20, 1970, Sybil Stockdale appeared on the *Today Show* to promote the plight of families of POWs. John Howard Griffin, Families of POW's, *Today Show*, NBC, January 20, 1970. Membership figures gleaned from Joseph, Lelyveld, "Dear President Nixon."

[27] Stockdale and Stockdale, *In Love and War*, 226.

herself, a member of the North Vietnamese delegation interrupted her and said, "Oh yes, Mrs. Stockdale, we know who you are and we know about your organization."[28]

League members also lobbied Congress and other leaders present at the Paris peace talks to "take whatever action is necessary" to "ensure the basic standards of human decency" for the Americans held prisoner in Vietnam.[29] The League publicized the trip "so that the world would be come aware of the desperate plight" of those help prisoner or missing in Vietnam and their families at home. Working with the American Red Cross and *Reader's Digest*, the League encouraged those sympathetic to their cause to write letters to North Vietnamese delegates in Paris and leaders in Hanoi protesting the treatment of U.S. prisoners and asking for information about the missing.[30] The League's public relations campaign highlighted the plight of prisoners of war and proved that a group of organized military wives could shape diplomatic negotiations.

The League also exerted influence over domestic politics. In November 1969, the League achieved a major victory for their cause when the Ninety-First Congress opened investigations on the prisoner of war issue. The first round of Congressional hearings resulted in a resolution protesting the treatment of United States servicemen and calling on the North Vietnamese to

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[28] Weber, "Sybil Stockdale," *New York Times,* October 15, 2015.

[29] U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Hearings Before the Subcommittee on National Security Policy and Scientific*. 91st Cong., 2nd sess., 61-2 (1970) (testimony of Sybil Stockdale).

[30] "What You Can Do for American Prisoners if Vietnam," *Reader's Digest*, November 1969, 61-6.

adhere to the Geneva Convention in its treatment of American military personnel held captive.[31] Both houses of Congress unanimously adopted the resolution condemning the North Vietnamese's treatment of POWs.[32] When the Subcommittee on National Security Policy and Scientific Developments convened a series of hearings on "the problem of American prisoners of war in Vietnam," the League's National Coordinator, Stockdale, provided information on the experience of POW wives, as well as the League's origins, aims, and efforts. Stockdale ended her testimony with an appeal to Congressmen to "enlighten their constituents" about the conditions American prisoners of war were enduring in Vietnam, ask their opinion, and share their concerns "again and again" with the North Vietnamese.[33] The legislators who followed Stockdale praised members of her national organization of military wives for their efforts on behalf of American POWs, their courage, and their resolve. The legislators' comments reveal the increasing awareness of the interdependence that existed between military dependents, the military, the nation, and the state. Congressman Zablocki, for example, pledged to the POW/MIA wives "that as widely as possible within our means" members of Foreign Affairs Committee of which he was part would "make your views known to others." He also assured wives that his subcommittee was "in a privileged position to bring the POW issue continuously to the attention of the Executive Branch, the State Department, the Pentagon, and others that deal

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[31] H. Con. Res. 454, 91st Cong., 2nd sess. Quoted in U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, "American Prisoners of War in Southeast Asia, 1970: Committee on Foreign Affairs House of Representatives, *Hearings Before the Subcommittee on National Security and Scientific Developments*. 91st Cong., 2nd sess., (1970), 1-2.

[32] Ibid., 2.

[33] U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Hearings Before the Subcommittee on National Security Policy and Scientific*. 91st Cong., 2nd sess., 62 (1970) (testimony of Sybil Stockdale).

with international affairs on a daily basis."[34] Another Congressman, Representative Dante B. Fascell, commended the wives for having "rendered a very valuable service," and praised them for "advocating the very essence of international politics. He concluded, "I admire you for having not only perceived it, but putting it into action."[35]

The attention the League received for its cause, emboldened members' efforts to encourage Congressional and public support for their cause. During a four-day meeting in Washington D.C., League members marched on Congress, held a press conference on the steps of the U.S. Capitol, and then went inside to lobby members of Congress on behalf of POWs.[36] Their sustained advocacy yielded results.[37] Over the next several years, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee held public hearings on the problem of those who continued to be listed as prisoners of war or missing in action in Southeast Asia, the House formed the Select Committee on Missing Persons in Southeast Asia and which investigated the POW/MIA issue and held hearings to determine if the Missing Persons Act "adequately protect[ed] the rights of the

[34] Ibid., 63 (statement of Clement J. Zablocki, Committee on Foreign Affairs).

[35] Ibid., 65 (statement of Dante B. Fascell, Committee on Foreign Affairs).

[36] "POW League Sets Up Research on Congress," *Stars and Stripes,* September 24, 1970, 1.

[37] According to Allen, "By presenting the nation's failure in Vietnam as a private trauma, League families illustrated the costs of defeat in terms that were easily grasped and difficult to refute, giving them unrivaled authority in debates about the war." Allen, *Last Man*, 4-5.

missing person and their next-of-kin."[38] A group of military wives operating as grassroots activists had commanded the attention and action of congressional leaders.[39]

National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia members also used the court system to advocate for their cause. In July 1973, five League members brought suit against the Secretaries of the Air Force, Army, and Navy. With the backing of League leaders, wives of those missing in Vietnam challenged the constitutionality of the Missing Persons Act, which defined the circumstances under which U.S. military personnel missing in action could be declared dead. Under the Act, military officials could change the status of those missing in action without notifying the next-of-kin or allowing them to speak on their missing relative's behalf. The plaintiffs claimed that this process violated the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment. On February 13, 1974 a three-judge panel ruled in favor of the military wives. Following that judgment, each branch of military service changed their policies so that reviews of MIA status would not be conducted without allowing the primary next-of-kin to attend status reviews and comment on the matter.[40] National League of Families of American

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[38] U.S. Congress, House, Select Committee on Missing Persons in Southeast Asia, *Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations*, 94th Congress, 2nd sess., 1976; James Rosenthal, "The Myth of the Lost POWs," *New Republic*, June 30, 1985.

[39] Advocacy continued after the war. According to Allen, "it was the families of the missing, particularly those active in the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia, who were responsible for the stubborn persistence of the postwar accounting effort. By insisting on a full accounting and refusing to accept anything short of this elastic standard, they exerted intense pressure on U.S. government officials and their Vietnamese counterparts to continue the search indefinitely. Never numbering more than a few thousand members, the League was among the most formidable interest groups in wartime and postwar Washington." Allen, *Last Man*, 4.

[40] McDonald v. McLucas, 371 F. Supp. 831 (S.D.N.Y, 1974); Pamela M. Stahl, "The New Law on Department of Defense Personnel Missing as a Result of Hostile Action," 75-175, *Military Law Review*, Vol. 152, p. 120, Allen, *Last Man*, 141-4.

Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia members' advocacy had changed official U.S. military policy and gained the support of Congress. That Defense Department officialsresponded to the wives' advocacy shows that the highest levels of military decision makers deemed family issues important to the overall military operation.

A Presidential Priority

Perhaps the most prestigious partnership the League formed was with the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces. League members believed that they must get the president to engage with their cause in order to ensure the humane treatment and safe return of their husbands. Frustrated with President Johnson's handling of the war and the POW/MIA issue, League members threw their support behind Richard Nixon in the 1968 election.[41] On January 20, 1969, the first day of Nixon's presidency, League members sent more than 2,000 telegrams about their cause to the White House.[42] Undeterred by the lack of response, members of the League lobbied their congressmen for help getting an appointment with someone in the Nixon Administration.[43] A Defense Department memo circulated in early May 1969 noted that League members "will not accept indefinitely a response that busy schedules do not permit visits with wives of Americans

[41] In an interview with the *San Diego Union*, Stockdale asserted "Nixon had to win." Beverly Beyette, "Navy Wife Keeps Vigil for Captive Pilot," *San Diego Union*, October 27, 1968, 1, 8. Cited in Allen, *Until the Last Man*, 28.

[42] United States Office of the Secretary of Defense Historical Office. *The Long Road Home: U.S. Prisoner of War Policy and Planning in Southeast Asia*, by Vernon E. Davis (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1975), 240.

[43] Ibid.

who have risked their lives for the country."[44] Conceding to their calls, the memo noted, "If audiences with senior Government officials will help convince the families that they and their men are not forgotten by the United States, such visits will have served a worthwhile purpose."[45]

Faced with unceasing pressure to meet with POW/MIA wives and growing disapproval of the war effort, President Nixon eventually embraced the National League of Families of Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia's cause. Five months into his presidency, Nixon ordered a major policy change: the Nixon Administration would follow the League's lead and launch what his administration called a "Go Public" campaign highlighting the treatment of prisoners of war in Vietnam in an effort to use public opinion to pressure the Vietcong into obeying the Geneva principles concerning POWs. Later that week, Defense Department officials met with League members at the Pentagon.[46] A Defense Department staff member present for the meeting reported that the League members "endorsed new public affairs initiative and were appreciative of the visit."[47]

Although they approved of the "Go Public" campaign, it was enough to League members who continued to call for a meeting with the president. On July 24, 1969, Sybil Stockdale and six other military wives met with Secretary of Defense Laird, who assured the wives that the Nixon

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[44] International Security Affairs, Staff Memo, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, May 2, 1969. Quoted in Davis, *The Long Road Home*, 241.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Ibid.

[47] International Security Affairs, Memo for Nutter re: Meeting with Group of Wives of POWs/MIAs from Norfolk Area, May 23, 1969. Quoted in Davis, *Long Road Home*, 241.

Administration was "committed to the interests of the prisoners and the missing."[48] Still, League members would not relent in their calls to meet with Nixon himself. After nine months of League members' sustained appeals for an appointment with the president, Laird wrote a memo to President Nixon, urging him to meet with a representative group of POW/MIA wives in order to convey his commitment to their cause.[49] Three months later, on December 12, 1969 President and Mrs. Nixon met with twenty-six members of the League.[50] In a mere twenty-four minutes, the wives successfully appealed to the president to engage with their cause. Immediately following the meeting, President Nixon politicized his involvement with the POW/MIA issue when he escorted a select group of five wives to a meeting with the White House Press Corps. There, Nixon, who was facing a growing antiwar movement, sought to gain support for the war effort in Vietnam by publicly engaging with POW/MIA wives. In the first presidential statement directly addressing the POW/MIA problem, he assured the women standing beside him that he heeded their message, then used the wives' cause to quell anti-war sentiment.

> Finally, I would simply add that while we all know that there is disagreement in this country about the war in Vietnam and while there is dissent about it on several points, that on this issue, the treatment of prisoners of war, that there can be and there should be no disagreement. The American people, I am sure, are unanimous in expressing their sympathy to these women, to their children, and also in supporting their Government's attempt to get the Government of North Korea and the VC to respond to the many

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[48] POW/MIA parents joined the military wives for this meeting. Daniel Z. Henkin, Memo for the Secretary of Defense, June 23, 1969. International Security Affairs, Memo for the Secretary of Defense, July 23, 1969. Cited in Davis, *Long Road Home*, 241-2.

[49] U.S. Secretary of Defense, Memo for the President, by Melvin Laird, September 25, 1969. Quoted in Davis, *Long Road Home*, 243.

[50] Richard Nixon, Daily Diary: December 12, 1969, accessed July 6, 2016, https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/PDD/1969/019%20December%201-15%201969.pdf.

> initiatives which we have undertaken to get this issue separated out and progress made on it prior to the time that we reach a complete settlement of the war.[51]

Immediately following his statement, the president departed, leaving five League members to deliver prepared remarks about the conditions their husbands faced. The wives then took what spokesperson Sybil Stockdale referred to as "simple questions" about letters from their husbands from the White House Press Corps. Footage of the press conference aired on the major networks that evening.[52] Two years later at National League of Families' dinner, the president credited his December 1969 meeting with League members with convincing him to make the release of POWs and those missing in action became a "Presidential priority."[53] The League's grassroots activism had influenced the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces.

Although the president only formally met with the League at the White House twice more before the end of his presidency, League members and the Nixon Administration continued to engage each with each other. On December 20, 1970, President Nixon released an open letter to the wives of American POWs in Southeast Asia in which he outlined his administration's "efforts to solve this problem" of "the enemy's cruel and manifestly illegal policy toward our men" and gain early release of U.S. prisoners of war. He also praised the Congress, United Nations, and Red Cross for their engagement with the League's mission. Near the end of his 1,300-word letter, the president praised the POW/MIA wives. "Along with the others in the

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[51] Richard Nixon, "Remarks Following a Meeting With Wives and Mothers of Prisoners of War and Servicemen Missing in Action in Vietnam," December 12, 1969. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, accessed October 2, 2015, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=2368.

[52] Stockdale and Stockdale, *Love and War*, 365-8. Quote on page 367.

[53] Richard Nixon, "Remarks to the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia," September 28, 1971. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project,* accessed October 2, 2015, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=3170.

Government closest to this problem, I will not forget the strength, the loyalty and the dignity with which you have borne your burden," he wrote. The president then closed with a pledge to POW/MIA wives "that we will not rest until every prisoner has returned to his family and the missing have been accounted for."[54]

Despite the pledge and publicity, League members expressed frustrations that the president had not met with them in over a year. Empowered by their shared experience and national network, League members continued to call for meetings with Nixon or key policymakers. In January 1971, after months of calls for another meeting with the president, the Nixon Administration invited League members to a meeting with Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. Stockdale recalled that the wives were pleased to meet with a high-level policy maker and "had high hopes [Kissinger] would give [them] a sense of optimism for 1971." When League members learned that Kissinger would send his assistant, General Alexander Haig, to the meeting in his place, however, Stockdale and other League members decided to "let our rage register with this General Haig, whoever he was."[55]

During the meeting, League members interrupted General Haig to share their dissatisfaction. League members refused to let the general respond. Instead they informed him that they were tired "of hearing the same old line" and that they did not believe Kissinger was concerned about their cause. Stockdale conveyed that League members "were just plain sick and tired of seeing assistants to assistants and being shuttled around at the convenience of policy makers." When the general assured League members that Kissinger would meet with them when

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[54] Richard Nixon, "Open Letter to Wives and Families of American Prisoners of War in Southeast Asia," December 26, 1970, in *Public Papers of the President: Richard Nixon, 1970* (Washington DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1971), 1157-60.

[55] Stockdale and Stockdale, *Love and War*, 382.

they returned to Washington in two months, Stockdale responded, her voice shaking with rage, "'We don't want to wait two months to see Dr. Kissinger, General Haig. We want to see him in two days. We'll still be here on Monday, and if he cares about our men, he'll somehow make the time to see us. We're tired of being put off. Do you understand what we're saying?" General Haig understood. That evening, Kissinger met with League members for an hour and a half meeting. At the end of the meeting, Kissinger agreed to a follow-up meeting with League members when they returned to Washington D.C. in two months.[56] Kissinger kept that appointment. Kissinger met with League members at least three more times the following year.[57] By May of 1972, Stockdale had spent enough time with Kissinger that she wrote he "seemed like an old friend."[58] Additionally, the League and/or POW wives appeared in the White House subject logs on eighteen separate occasions between April 1971 and May 1973.[59]

On May 15, 1972, in the midst of a re-election campaign the Nixon Administration asked the League to endorse, the president's staff invited League members back to the Oval Office for

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[56] Stockdale and Stockdale, *Love and War*, 382-6.

[57] Ibid., 409-12.

[58] Stockdale and Stockdale, *Love and War*, 412.

[59] Formal meetings took place on October 16, 1972 and January 26, 1973. The White House, President Richard Nixon's Daily Diary, October 16, 1972, accessed January 2, 2016, https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/PDD/1972/086%20October%2016-31%201972.pdf; The White House, President Richard Nixon's Daily Diary, January 16, 1973-January 31, 1973, accessed January 2, 2016, https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/PDD/1973/092%20January%2016-31%201973.pdf. National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia and/or POW wives appeared as subject of conversation on six dates in 1971 (April 16, May 6, June 1, September 14 and 28, December 23), five times in 1972 (September 30; October 5, 16, 17, and 20), and seven times in 1973 (February 13, 14, and 20; March 6 and 14; April 9; and May 25). Presidential Daily Diary, *Nixon Presidential Library and Museum*, accessed July 7, 2016, https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/dailydiary.php#Diary.

a second meeting with the President of the United States. During the meeting, Nixon shared updates on the war effort, a confidential time table for the end of the war, and assurances that the U.S. would not remove military forces until the North Vietnamese released all prisoners and conducted a thorough accounting of the missing. The president also invited photographers into the Oval Office to document the meeting. But Nixon was not the only person using the meeting to further his cause. When asked if League members would like to meet with the press in the Rose Garden after the meeting, Stockdale seized the opportunity. Stockdale had learned that "unless you document it in the press what official Washington tells you, it might as well never happen."[60] From private meetings, to public pledges, policy changes, and diplomatic efforts on behalf of those held captive or missing in Vietnam, the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia had achieved their objective: the Nixon Administration had made their cause a presidential priority.

Because of the League's sustained advocacy on behalf of American soldiers held prisoner in Vietnam, diplomats included a provision for the mass release of all POWs in the Peace Accords, which leaders the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the Republic of Vietnam, the Provisional Revolutionary Government, and the United States signed on January 27, 1973, seven years after the League began its efforts. From February 12th through late March 1973, 566 American military personnel classified POW or MIA returned to American soil in what Secretary of Defense Laird deemed Operation HOMECOMING.[61] On May 24 of that year,

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[60] Ibid., 412-3. Quote on page 413.

[61] Seventy-six of the 566 American personnel were members of the Army. Lori S. Tagg,"Operation HOMECOMING: Repatriation of American Prisoners of War in Vietnam Described," *U.S. Army,* December 30, 2015, accessed June 2, 2016, https://www.army.mil/article/160491/Operation_HOMECOMING__Repatriation_of_American_prisoners_of_war_in_Vietnam_described.

President Nixon hosted what was the largest dinner ever held at the White House at that time to honor the returned soldiers and their wives. There, in front of 1,280 guests, President Nixon toasted the POW wives and mothers who had urged him to engage with their cause. After calling them "the bravest, most magnificent women I have ever met in my life," the president asked for all of the men to rise and stated, "as President of the United States, I designate every one of the women here, the wives, the mothers, and others who are guests of our POW's, as First Ladies. Gentlemen, to the First Ladies of America—the First Ladies."[62] Rather than admonishing League members for challenging the military and political system as part of a national advocacy campaign on behalf of those held captive or missing in Vietnam, the President of the United States rewarded them with a new title that showed their connection to the military, the nation, and the state.

Politicians, reporters, and scholars have criticized Nixon for coopting POW/MIA wives' cause for his political purposes. H. Bruce Franklin argued that the Nixon Administration seized upon the POW/MIA issue "as an indispensable device for continuing the war, functioning on the domestic front as a potent counterforce to the anti-war movement while providing an ingenious

[62] Richard Nixon, "Toasts at a Dinner Honoring Returned Prisoners of War," May 24, 1973. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. Accessed June 2, 2016. http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=3858. There is no evidence that the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia incorporated this phrase into future advocacy efforts.

tool for building insurmountable roadblocks within the peace talks."[63] The archival record certainly lends credence to the argument that Nixon used the POW/MIA for the benefit of the war effort. After meeting with Senator Bob Dole on April 14, 1971, Nixon shared Dole's suggestion "that we ought to try to gin up a new cosmetic move regarding POW wives" with his Chief of Staff, H.R. Haldeman.[64] Haldeman's diary also reveals that Nixon took a last-minute meeting with the POW wives on October 16, 1972 "because we had no story to counter the *Post* espionage story, or sabotage story."[65] Nixon also called on his Secretary of State Henry Kissinger to "keep them [POW wives] on track" and ordered him to meet with the wives that week "to work out something with them that will buy us three months' time." As Nixon shared

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[63] H. Bruce Franklin, *M.I.A., Or, Mythmaking in America* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1993), 48. Other historians have similarly argued that Nixon used the POW issue (and, therefore, POW wives) as a public relations strategy to improve U.S. support for the war effort in Vietnam. E.g., Jeffrey Kimball, *Nixon's Vietnam War* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1998), especially chapter 8, "Nixon's War: 1969," pages 146-175. Seymour Hersh, reporter for the *Dayton Journal Herald* also raised suspicions Pentagon officials were using POW/MIA wives to their own ends in a five-part expose on the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia. Seymour Hersh, "Pentagon Directs Efforts by Wives," *Dayton Journal Herald*, February 16, 1971, 14. Cited in Allen, *Last Man*, 40.

[64] H.R. Haldeman Diaries Collection, January 18, 1969-April 30, 1973, National Archives and Records Administration, accessed July 1, 2016, https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/haldeman-diaries/37-hrhd-audiocassette-ac06b-19710414-pa.pdf.

[65] Ibid., October 16, 1972, National Archives and Records Administration, accessed July 1, 2016, https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/haldeman-diaries/37-hrhd-audiocassette-ac25b-19721016-pa.pdf. POW wives also mentioned in Haldeman's Diary entry for May 7, 1972. Haldeman noted that Nixon agreed with his "idea of getting Hughes back immediately to get the POW wives organized. Wants to be sure that I really discipline the bureaucracy, and take all the steps necessary to do that." H.R. Haldeman Diaries Collection, January 18, 1969-April 30, 1973, May 7, 1972, National Archives and Records Administration, accessed July 1, 2016, https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/haldeman-diaries/37-hrhd-audiocassette-ac21b-19720507-pa.pdf.

his motivation with staff members, "we can't afford to let them come unglued at this point, while everything else is going so well."[66]

When viewed through the frame of political corruption that resulted in impeachment, Nixon's engagement with POW/MIA does, indeed, seem to be strictly for his political benefit. When that same partnership is examined through the lens of the development of the Army Family Policy, however, the partnership between the POW/MIA wives and the president reflects the sense of interdependency emerging between Army wives, the Army, and the state during this era. While members of the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia depended on the Commander in Chief taking on their cause in order to aid their soldier spouses, President Nixon also depended on POW/MIA wives in order to achieve his ends. League members lobbied U.S. government officials for their cause, attempted to address North Vietnamese leaders at the Paris Peace talks, sought to influence governmental and international humanitarian experts gathered in Geneva, garnered public support, and spurred official action on behalf of those captured and missing in Vietnam.[67] In joining together on behalf of POWs/MIAs,

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[66] H.R. Haldeman Diaries Collection, January 18, 1969-April 30, 1973, April 15, 1971, National Archives and Records Administration, accessed July 1, 2016, https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/haldeman-diaries/37-hrhd-audiocassette-ac06b-19710415-pa.pdf. After presidential candidate McGovern called said the U.S. should remove all troops from Vietnam even if the prisoners were not released, Nixon aide Ken Khachigian informed Pat Buchanan , "This is a flat out statement of admission that the POW's [sic] are secondary in importance to getting out of Vietnam. This statement got very little press attention, and it ought to be elevated this week." Ken Khachigian, Memorandum for Pat Buchanan, July 24, 1972, accessed July 1, 2016, https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/documents/contested/contested_box_47/Contested-47-37.pdf. In a memorandum to Haldeman dated November 29, 1972, President Nixon challenged the notion that he met with the POW wives for political reasons. "I have to do the things that do that appear to be so contrived and so planned, and so well ordered." Richard Nixon, Memo to Haldeman, November 29, 1972, accessed July 1, 2016, https://www.nixonlibrary.gov/virtuallibrary/releases/jan10/040.pdf.

[67] Davis, *Long Road Home*, 220-22, 240-5.

the President of the United States, Secretaries of Defense and State, military members held prisoner, and a national organization of military wives dedicated to serving their husbands, the military, and the state showed each other how interdependent they all were. The president and his staff needed wives to cultivate favor for the war effort, the Defense Department needed spouses' support of and contributions to the military mission to gather intelligence on those help captive in Vietnam, and POW/MIA wives needed the president and his staff as well as military leaders to prioritize their issue in order to save their husbands. Using their national network of military spouses and building on organizing experienced military wives practiced in their daily activities supporting the mission and morale of the military, League members used their role as military spouses as a platform to spur changes meant to address their personal desire to see their husbands who were held captive or missing in Vietnam treated humanely and returned home. In doing so, they changed military policy, commanded the attention of leaders of all branches of government, cooperated with military leaders to help the mission, and shaped part of an international treaty. Their advocacy and the government's response to it showed how interdependent military wives' lived realties and military and state objectives had become.

Mutually Beneficial: Military Wives Organize for Military Benefits and the Military's Benefit

In January 1969, President Nixon charged Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird with convening a commission to develop "a detailed plan of action for ending the draft."[68] Three months later, Nixon announced the creation of the President's Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Forces, also known as the Gates Commission, which studied and then unanimously

[68] Nixon to Laird, January 29, 19969, AVA-CMH. Quoted in Bailey, *America's Army*, 24.

endorsed the notion of an all-volunteer force. In 1973, Laird announced the formation of the All-Volunteer Force (AVF) and the end of the draft.[69] In *America's Army*, Beth Bailey argues that individual liberty and free market informed the transition to the AVF. No longer seen as an "obligation of citizenship," military leaders focused on pay and benefits to encourage enlistment in military service.[70]

This profound change in the Army that made retention and, consequently, the satisfaction of Army families, a critical issue for Army planners. As early as 1971, the Defense Department sponsored a variety of studies on retention factors that revealed "a number of family related variables" were "important for personnel considering reenlistment."[71] Social scientists began examining the impact academic, career, and volunteer services made on Army officers' wives' satisfaction with the Army way of life, as well as the various role stresses Army officers' wives face in their "complementary role." [72] Others suggested policy changes and programs "aimed at resolving some of the differences in priorities that exist[ed] between families and the military" including reducing family disruptions and "reorientation courses" to "alleviate the pain of

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[69] Bailey, *America's Army*, 21-32; U.S. Army. Chief of Staff. *The Army Family*, 1, 3, 8.

[70] Bailey, *America's Army*. See especially chapters 1 and 2.

[71] Robert Vineberg and Elaine N. Taylor, *Summary and Review of Studies of the VOLAR Experiment* (Monterey, CA: Human Resources Research Organization, 1972). 17-81. Note: VOLAR refers to Project Volunteer Army.

[72] Elizabeth M. Finlayson, "A Study of the Wife of the Army Officer: Her Academic and Career Preparations, Her Current Employment and Volunteer Services," in *Families in the Military System*, ed. Hamilton I. McCubbin, Barbara B. Dahl, Edna J. Hunter (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1976); Stoddard and Cabanillas, "The Army Officer's Wife: Social Stresses in a Complementary Role," *Social Pysch*.

readjustment."[73] Research findings that committed and satisfied military spouses and families positively impacted reenlistment supported the notion of a mutually dependent relationship between Army spouses and the Army, and lent support to Army wives' calls for benefits and services to assist them in fulfilling the Army's expectations of them. On November 30, 1970, Army Chief of Staff General Westmoreland delivered a keynote address in which he charged the Army commanders gathered at the Pentagon to make service in the Army "'more enjoyable, more professionally rewarding, and less burdensome in its impact on our people *and their families*.'"[74] For Westmoreland, it was essential that Army personnel and recruits viewed the Army as responsive to their needs and those of their families in order to inspire them to volunteer for duty that meant they could die for their country. In March of 1980, the Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel reinforced, "[the Army's] commitment to the Army family has been made at the highest level. We know that the Quality of Life impacts on readiness and on attracting and retaining quality soldiers the Army needs. We've got to continue to get better in this vital area."[75] The Army had acknowledged the connection between family satisfaction and retention, the Army's commitment to Army families, and the motivation for that commitment: military readiness in terms of retention.

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[73] M. Duncan Stanton, "The Military Family: It's Future in the All-Volunteer Context," in *The Social Psychology of Military Service*, ed. Nancy Goldman and David R. Segal. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1976). Quotes on pages 144-6.

[74] William C. Westmoreland, keynote address, Army Commanders' Conference, The Pentagon, November 30, 1970, edited transcript, 2. Quoted in Bailey, *America's Army*, 51. Emphasis added.

[75] Bernard Rostiker, *America Goes to War: Managing the Force During Times of Stress and Uncertainty* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND National Defense Research Institute, 2007), 72.

At the same time that Army wives were using their broad networks of contacts, organizing experience, and unique roles as military wives to address quality of life issues they faced, the Army became more responsive to their calls for benefits and services. While making their case for benefits, education, access, equal treatment, national organizations of military wives also made the case that the strength of the U.S. Armed Forces lied in the strength of the military's commitment to families. In doing so, national organizations of military wives paved the way for interdependency between military families and the military, the nation, and the state.

Stronger Together: The National Military Wives Association

In 1969, six wives frustrated with the lack of a survivor benefit plan for military widows and children formed Military Wives Association (MWA), a military family advocacy group dedicated "to the task of correcting obvious discrepancies and inequities now being suffered by personnel of the armed forces and their dependents."[76] Their major focus was securing benefits for widows of military personnel through law.[77] Following the precedent set by the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia, MWA members lobbied legislators to provide compensation for military families in the event that the service member died. Like their predecessors working for the safe return of their husbands, MWA members reinforced the foundational elements of the ideal through their advocacy, noting their sacrifice for the mission and morale as well as promises made to their husbands when they joined

[76] *The Anne Arundel Times*, October 30, 1969. Quoted in Syndney Talley Hickey, "Speaking up, Empowering Families & Meeting Needs… Then and Now," National Military Family Association Newsletter*, The Voice for Military Families,* May/June 2009, 1.

[77] Sarah Slavin, *U.S. Women's Interest Groups: Institutional Profiles* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1995), 389-90.

the military. MWA members also claimed that service widows deserved the same benefits that widows of Congressmen, civil service workers, and Foreign Service personnel received.[78] On September 21, 1972, after two years of sustained effort, Congress headed the MWA's demands for survivor benefits and passed Public Law 92-425, the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP). As MWA members had asked, the law provided annuities for the widow or widower and surviving dependent children of active duty and reserve military personnel upon the death of a service member.[79]

With their initial mission achieved, MWA leadership set its sights on other goals. In 1976, the MWA became the National Military Wives Association (NMWA) and began fighting for legislation important to families and developing programs designed to help "military families recognize their potential to be their own advocates."[80] NMWA members offered Issues Workshops and other programs to educate military families on benefits available to them. In December 1979, association president Rosemary Locke testified before the White House Conference on Families that frequent moves "brought real financial hardship" to military families and hampered career opportunities for the non-military spouse. Although Locke's testimony was critical of certain parts of the military, Locke re-affirmed the foundational elements of the ideal, noting that, although her her role in a military marriage was "quite

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[78] Hickey, "Speaking up, Empowering Families," 1.

[79] Pub. L. No. 92-425 (September 21, 1972), 706.

[80] National Military Family Association, "History," accessed September 1, 2016, http://www.militaryfamily.org/about-us/history.html. The Association changed its name again in 1983, this time to the National Military Family Association (NMFA). NMFA continues to operate today, working for causes such as medical care, transition benefits, separation allowances, and survival benefits, as well as providing scholarships for military spouses, provide awards for volunteering and military family service, and educate members. *The Anne Arundel Times*, October 30, 1969 quoted in Hickey, "Speaking up, Empowering Families," 7.

challenging," it was also "rewarding."[81] In 1981, NMWA members journeyed to Washington D.C. to "re-educate" members of Congress on the needs of military families. In their meetings with more than 150 legislators, NMWA members used their position as military wives to advocate for their unique needs.[82] They did not present themselves as challengers to the military; rather, they were supporters of it who needed help to achieve what the military, nation, and state asked of them as military families.

Rooting calls for changes to military policies and practices in dedication to the mission and morale proved a successful tactic for the NMWA. Their method of advocacy and national prominence paved the way for a coordinated NMWA and Department of Defense operation—a "comprehensive survey" of NMWA members stationed in Europe. The survey included questions about issues that had long affected military families such as medical and dental care as well as educational opportunities.[83] The survey laid the groundwork for the Department of Defense to create the Office of Family Policy in 1988.[84] As the NMWA's motto, "Together we're stronger," indicates, organizing into a national advocacy group empowered military wives

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[81] James T. Yenckel, "Saving the American Family: Three Views from Home Base," *The Washington Post,* December 1, 1979. See also: National Military Family Association, "History," accessed September 1, 2016, http://www.militaryfamily.org/about-us/history.html; Sarah Slavin, *U.S. Women's Interest Groups: Institutional Profiles*, 389-90. President Carter convened the White House Conference on the Families "to examine the strengths of American families, the difficulties they face, and the ways in which family life is affected by public policies." Jimmy Carter, "White House Conference on Families Statement Announcing the Conference," January 30, 1978, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29884.

[82] National Military Family Association, "About Us," accessed September 1, 2016, http://www.militaryfamily.org/about-us/.

[83] Peter S. Jensen, Ronel L. Lewis, and Stephen N. Xenakis, "The Military Family in Review: Context, Risk, and Prevention," *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 25, iss. 2 (1986): 225-34.

[84] Slavin, *U.S. Women's Interest Group*, 389-90.

to united and work together with military leaders to create changes to address their unique needs as military spouses. The Department of Defense's work with the organization indicates that the military was also becoming aware that it was stronger when it acknowledged an interdependent relationship with spouses instead of viewing them as simply dependents.[85]

Beyond Marriage: EXPOSE and the Fight for Benefits after Divorce

Ex-spouses of military personnel further highlighted the mutual dependence that existed between the military and military spouses in their cause. In March of 1980, a dozen ex-spouses of military personnel met to discuss frustrations about the long-held policy that military wives lost all military benefits upon divorce from their soldier spouses. The policy frustrated ex-spouses of servicemen who had complied with demands that wives dedicate themselves their husbands and the military so that husbands could better serve while they were married. Turning their anger that the military based the allocation of benefits on marital status instead of service into action, the women formed a national advocacy organization, Ex-Spouses of Servicemen for Equality (EXPOSE). "'We feel that those [benefits] are ours'," EXPOSE co-founder and president, Nancy Abell claimed. "'Certainly we have earned them rather than the people that the man has married after he is retired.'" EXPOSE's reasoning reflected the demands of the officer's wife ideal. As Abell noted in an interview with the *Washington Post*, the military "'depended on the women to take care of the home and the children so that these men were free to follow their

[85] The group continues to operate today as National Military Family Association. Its chapters around the globe seek to educate military and civilian communities about the rights and benefits of military families and provide financial services, government relations, and public relations for military families. According to their website, their testimony and other efforts paved the way for the various benefits including the establishment of the Dependent Dental Plan, the extension of Supplemental Security Income benefits to families stationed overseas, and securing Congressional support for the "Transition Assistance Plan" in the 1990s. The association also provides scholarships to military families. National Military Family Association, "About Us," accessed September 1, 2016, http://www.militaryfamily.org/about-us/our-story.html.

military mission." Over the course of two years, EXPOSE members made their case that the policy was unjust because wives served alongside military members to legislators and in the courts. In doing so, they challenged existing laws and supported the creation of new legislation that acknowledged the interdependent nature of the relationship between military spouses and the military.[86]

A year after its founding, the United States Supreme Court heard EXPOSE's legal challenge to the military benefits system. In *McCarty v. McCarty*, former military spouse Patricia McCarty claimed that, because spent twenty years helping her husband as he rose to the rank of colonel, she was entitled to half of her husband's retirement benefits under California's community property laws. McCarty's ex-husband, Colonel Richard McCarty, challenged that the federal laws that created the military retirement superseded California's community property laws. On June 26, 1981, the Supreme Court ruled six to three that military pension benefits could not be considered part of a property settlement in a divorce due to the supremacy clause.[87] "'It's like you've been slapped in the face'," EXPOSE president Nancy Abell told the *Washington Post.* Military wives who had spent years striving to meet the demands of the military wife ideal were angry to be made to feel their service on behalf of their soldier spouses, the military, and

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[86] Nancy Scannell, "Military Wives Up in Arms," *Washington Post*, July 9, 1981.

[87] McCarty v. McCarty, 452 U.S. 210 (1981); Louise Everett Graham, "State Marital Property Laws and Federally Created Benefits: A Conflict of Law Analysis," *The Wayne Review* 29, no. 1 (Fall 1982): 1-55. This was not the first Supreme Court Case related to military benefits. In 1973, the Supreme Court heard a case regarding the extension of dependents' benefits to male spouses of military personnel. U.S. Airforce Lieutenant Sharon Frontiero challenged the military practice that required male spouses of servicewomen to prove they were dependent on their wives in order to receive benefits. Four justices ruled that, due to the Equal Protection Clause of the Constitution, the practice of making only male spouses of servicewomen have to prove they were dependent on their soldier spouses in order to receive benefits was unconstitutional. Frontiero v. Richardson, 411 U.S. 677 (1973).

the state was "'not worth anything'."[88] According to Abell, "'Women from all over the country are just really up in arms.'" Following the ruling, EXPOSE membership quickly grew to 1,800 members nationwide. Membership continued to grow to 5,000 active members by September of 1983.[89]

Undeterred by the ruling, the growing advocacy group focused its efforts on lobbying Congress for legislation that would provide ex-spouses of military members half of military pensions after twenty years of marriage.[90] Other military-wife organizations joined EXPOSE in their cause. "If Congress doesn't address this issue this year, we'll be back yearly until it does," NMWA president Rosemary Locke warned.[91] The unified effort yielded results. A year after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that military retirement pay was not community property in 1981, Congress reversed the ruling when it passed the Uniformed Services Former Spouses Protection Act. The law authorized state courts to treat military retirement pay as marital property that could be divided upon divorce. The legislation also provided medical benefits to ex-spouses who had

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[88] Nancy Scannell, "Military Wives Up in Arms," *Washington Post*, July 9, 1981.

[89] Ibid.; Jean McNair, "Former Spouses of Servicemen Fighting a Battle for Benefits," *Washington Post*, September 19, 1983, D3.

[90] Linda Greenhouse, "Divorced Wife May Not Share Army Pension," *New York Times*, June 27, 1981. Greenhouse reported, "Groups including the National Organization for Women and the Women's Legal Defense Fund criticized the decision as failing to recognize the economic contributions of women who choose "traditional" roles as homemakers." The National Military Wives Association testified before Congress in favor of equitable division of military retirement pay in divorce settlements in 1980.

[91] Scannell, "Military Wives Up in Arms," *Washington Post*, July 9, 1981.

spent twenty years married to an active-duty service member. This legislation, a direct result of EXPOSE's advocacy, acknowledged the significant contribution spouses made to the military.[92]

Survivors of Sacrifice: Military Widows Organize to Protect Survivor Benefits

Legislative advances for military families did not protect them from budget cuts. In the summer of 1981, the Reagan Administration announced that it would cut Social Security payments to military widows and their children beginning in October of that year as part of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981.[93] Almost immediately some of the estimated 26,000 widows of soldiers who fought in Vietnam began writing letters to their legislators asking them not to cut the benefits their spouses earned.[94] For military widows, the issue was deeply personal. One widow noted that the loss of approximately $360 a month meant she would not be able to send her children to college.[95] Others complained that they felt Congress had betrayed their late spouses. But military wives' individual efforts did not put a stop to the cut in benefits.

Building on the tradition advocacy that was entrenched in the ideal after WWII and contemporary examples of women organizing on behalf of causes within and outside of the

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[92] U.S. Navy Legal Service Offices – JAG, "Uniformed Services Former Spouse Protection Overview," *Military.com*, accessed September 2, 2016, http://www.military.com/benefits/military-legal-matters/uniformed-services-former-spouse-protection-overview.html.

[93] Military widows had been receiving benefits for dependents until the dependent children were 18 (the children received benefits until they were 22), but cuts that were part of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act that went into effect October 1, 1981 meant that payment to the widow would stop when their children reached age 16. Cathleen Decker, "Another Loss for War Widows," *Milwaukee Journal,* December 8, 1981, 5.

[94] Judy Mann, "Success Story," *Washington Post*, December 24, 1982.

[95] Judy Mann, "Commitment," Washington Post, March 10 1982.

military, more than 400 widows from all branches of service joined together and formed Survivors of Sacrifice (SOS) late in 1981. Through this national advocacy organization, military widows lobbied for the benefits the government promised their husbands when they joined the military. Evelyn Grubb, co-founder of the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia fifteen years earlier, became an active member in SOS. “I’m one who was in the POW/MIA thing without a determination," she said in an interview with the *Washington Post*. “It took nine years to get his body back and buried. I fought that battle and now I'm back in Washington fighting this.”[96]

Like Grubb, other SOS members participated in a public relations campaign urging military widows and those sympathetic to their cause to write their congressmen. SOS members also traveled to Washington to speak directly with legislators and the press. In their letters and meetings, SOS members conveyed their basic argument to government officials: “you ought to keep your word to a man that gives up his life for you.”[97] On Veterans Day 1981, military widows held a press conference during which Marine widow and SOS co-founder Madeline Van Wagenen announced she would return the flag that draped her husband’s coffin to the president. “We’re on Social Security because our men did what the government told them to do,” Van Wagenen stated to the press. “Our husbands had definite contracts with the government.”[98] In rooting her argument for the extension of benefits to military widows in service member’s military contracts, Van Wagenen argued that the military’s contract with service members extended to military families. When Van Wagenen had the opportunity to meet with the

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[96] Ibid.

[97] Mann, “Success Story.”

[98] Decker, “Another Loss for War Widows.”

Secretary of the Navy Harrington, she raised the issue again. "'My husband *and I* had a contract when *we* joined the Marine Corps.'" Van Wagenen then showed the Secretary Harrington documents that detailed the Navy's promise to her husband to "take care of your family" and educate his children if he died in combat. "We joined and those rights were vested the day he was killed," Van Wagenen told the Secretary of the Navy. Faced with her argument, Secretary Harrington responded, "Madeline, you're absolutely right." Following the meeting, the Secretary of the Navy took Van Wagenen and her son to meet with a presidential advisor and staff member at the White House who then took on her cause. According to Harrington's interview with the *Washington Post*, "The purity of the issue hit me, it hit Ed Meese and it hit the president." He also noted that SOS members' cause was "an issue the president believed in very strongly."[99]

SOS members' public relations campaign was also successful with legislators. Within months of states their advocacy organization, SOS members formed an alliance with a Republican congressman from California, Duncan Hunter, who took on their cause and allowed SOS members to use his offices as their headquarters. From their headquarters at the Capitol, SOS members cultivated political allies who would support legislation restoring their benefits and help them get appointments with key people in the Defense Department who SOS members target for support of their cause. The issue resonated with members of the House and Senate. On May 27, 1982, Senator Alan Cranston (D-CA) introduced S.2585, the Military Widows and Surviving Children Benefits Restoration Act, which would restore benefits to the level they were before the passage of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981. Days later, Representative G.V. Montgomery (D-MS) introduced similar legislation in the House. The number of co-sponsors for the proposed legislation showed how effective SOS members had

[99] Mann, "Success Story." Emphasis added.

been lobbying for their cause: fifty-two senators co-sponsored the Cranston's bill; eighty-seven congressmen co-sponsored the House version.[100] When approval of the bill stalled, SOS leaders convinced Cranston and Senator Dan Quayle to introduce an amendment to restore benefits for Vietnam casualties' widows and children, which passed as part of a continuing resolution. SOS members had achieved their goal. The Defense Department had to pay an estimated $49 million in benefits to all eligible dependents of servicemen who died during the Vietnam War. The *Washington Post* reported, "Survivors of Sacrifice had only their own money and their own time to give to their effort. They had no legislative experience. Yet they were able to come to Washington and petition the highest levels of government. They found not callous disregard for their cause, but a government run by people who responded with compassion and decency." [101] As SOS area coordinator Barbara Graves realized, creating change was "very difficult to do by yourself," but "If you have a group, at least you have some kind of network so you know what's happening."[102]

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[100] Military Widows and Surviving Children Benefits Restoration Act, S.2585, 97th Cong. (1982).

97th Congress, May 27, 1982, accessed July 1, 2016, https://www.congress.gov/bill/97th-congress/senate-bill/2585?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22Military+Widows+and+Surviving+Children+Benefits+Restoration+Act%5Cr%5Cn%5Cr%5Cn%5Cr%5Cn%22%5D%7D&resultIndex=1; U.S. House of Representatives, H.R.6527 - Military Widows and Surviving Children Benefits Restoration Act, 97th Congress, June 2, 1982, accessed July 1, 2016, https://www.congress.gov/bill/97th-congress/house-bill/6527?q={"search"%3A["Military+Widows+and+Surviving+Children+Benefits+Restoration+Act\r\n\r\n\r\n"]}&resultIndex=3. Representative Duncan Hunter (R-CA) introduced H.R. 7188, another version of the house bill on September 24, 1982.

[101] Mann, "Success Story."

[102] Karen Clarke, "Widows of Men Who Died in Service Fighting For Social Security Benefits," *The Day*, March 22, 1982, 15. See also Mann, "Commitment."

Military wives working with other wives in national organizations learned that they could successfully demand military, national, and international leaders address issues particular to their experiences being married to the military. By organizing, military wives could educate and empower themselves and join other wives to address their unique needs. Working through national organizations, military wives made the case that what was personal to military families was important to the military. Political and military leaders' responses to military wives' advocacy affirmed that the strength of the Army and broader military was connected to the strength of Army families.

Traditions and Transitions: Army Wives Experience in a Time of Change

Although none of the wives interviewed for the Army Family Oral History Project indicated that they participated in a national advocacy organization of military wives, all experienced the transition between what many deemed the "old Army" and the "new." As new brides, these women called on senior officers and their wives, had calling cards, wore white gloves, volunteered on base, participated in Officers Wives Clubs, and dressed up to go to the commissary. The persistence of the traditional ideal did not mean Army wives enthusiastically embraced the Army's expectations of them, however. Marilyn Pittman, an Army wife with twenty-six years of experience, explained the ambivalence many wives felt about the traditional demands of them. "There were times when I got tired of doing these things, but at the same time, you know, I did feel it was part of my duty to do that. If my husband was going to be an officer then there were certain things that, yes, I should do."[103] Pittman's use of the word "duty" echoes the claims national advocacy organizations of military wives made during this era: they also

[103] Marilyn Pittman, interview by Judie Lee, April 3, 2002, Army Family Oral History Project, Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 13-14.

served. By the 1980s, when the husbands of most of those interviewed had retired, the formality of the "old Army" had faded away. Army wives' lived experiences indicate Army wives serving alongside their husbands during the period from 1969 to 1983 felt, often simultaneously, nostalgic for the old ways, enthusiastic about new opportunities, and frustrated with persistent problems related to being married to the Army.

Donna Cooper was married to her husband for three years when he was drafted into the Army in 1963. Over the next twenty years serving alongside her husband as he rose to the rank of Major, Cooper experienced both the old Army and the new. When she began her tenure as an Army wife, Cooper embraced the traditional ideal. She actively participated in the Officers Wives Club, which hosted "lots of lunches, lots of Hail and Farewells" and did "very formal" things. She also wore makeup and "'dressed'" when she went to the commissary. "That is what was expected," Cooper noted, not challenging the expectation.[104] She also performed traditional duties like volunteering at the Red Cross and Army Community Services (ACS). While working for ACS in the early 1970s, Cooper contributed to the readiness of the installation, distributing informational welcome packets to the officers who regularly arrived at Fort Eustis for a short Army Maintenance Officers Course. Cooper's volunteer work with ACS also included talking with wives who "just came to visit because so many of them were all alone, with their husbands gone." That Cooper described listening to waiting wives as having "provided quite a service" indicates that she was aware that the morale of wives impacted the morale of soldiers and, in turn, the Army.

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[104] Donna Cooper, interview by Vera Samson, June 8, 2002, Army Family Oral History Project, Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 6.

Within the first decade of marrying into the Army, however, Cooper noticed old Army customs and courtesies fading away. In 1973, after a short tour in Africa, she returned to the United States as a commander's wife. "That is when I began to see a major difference in the Army as far as wives were concerned," she remembered. "Everything that I learned about protocol kind of had been thrown by the wayside. Wives worked. Young wives had no desire whatsoever to be in the Wives Club. There was not a need because more and more wives were working and they had their own careers as opposed to when we first went in and wives supported their husbands. That is what you were there for." Although Cooper would start a career as an elementary school teacher while her husband was still in the Army, she expressed a strong dislike for the new order. "I think it is too bad in some ways," she said of the new system. "I don't think the military in general is as close. I don't think the wives are as close," she lamented.[105] "The young girls had no loyalty whatsoever."[106]

After her husband retired from the Army, Cooper continued to attended meetings at the Officers Wives Club. She noted that she participated because she felt "obligated" to help subsequent commanding officers' wives. Eventually, however, Cooper grew so frustrated with "hearing these young wives complain because their husbands are going to be gone for two weeks" that she "began to get a little bit cynical" and stopped attending meetings. Her frustrations were rooted in her own experience and the foundational element of the ideal: that wives support the mission. "It was hard for me to keep my mouth shut," she said. Instead, she wanted to say to a generation of wives facing short-term separations, "'You have no idea. You

[105] Ibid., 26.

[106] Ibid, 16.

have no idea. They are not even being shot at. You have no idea.'"[107] Still, Cooper conceded that the old Army had its flaws. "Maybe we were too formal," she conceded. "Maybe that wasn't altogether good either."[108] Cooper's comment reflects the ambivalence Army wives felt about the values of the old order versus the new.

Norma Donlon also expressed nostalgia for the traditional rules and rituals that shaped her early years as an Army officer's wife. "Back in those days [1964], we still wore gloves and hats, even in Hawaii when it was so warm, you know, but that was real old Army," she remembered.[109] Following prescriptions in *The Army Wife* and *U.S. Lady*, Donlon dedicated herself to her husband, the Army, and the mission. "I always took very seriously the responsibilities that came with my husband's job." For Donlon, Army wives' service also resulted in "pull[ing] that unit together," so that, "in a time of great crisis and great need," wives could "reach out and help" each other.[110] When confronted with a young commander's wives who did not participate in coffees and other volunteer and social gatherings, Donlon would pull them aside and say "you know, you have to think if the men trained all the time to do these terrible dangerous missions, what is the outcome of that, someone could be killed. If you don't know these women, how are you going to help them?" Her intent was to show wives "the purpose in what they're doing" because, as she noted, "it just changes how they perceive that."[111]

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[107] Ibid., 26-7.

[108] Ibid., 27.

[109] Norma Donlon, interview by Erin West, January 3, 1999, Army Family Oral History Project, Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 3.

[110] Ibid., 19.

[111] Ibid.

Whether encouraging young brides to adhere to rules and rituals of the old Army or demanding the military, nation, and state respond to the demands of national advocacy organizations, Army wives upheld the foundational tenets of the Army officer's wife ideal and held others accountable to it.

Army Wives' Impact Retention

Although the foundational elements of the ideal remained firmly intact, the Army and its relationship to families were changing due to the retention requirements of the All-Volunteer Force (AVF). The success of the AVF depended heavily on retaining soldiers. By the early 1980s, various studies had established the critical role families played in retention. This was evident in the experiences of two Army wives who influenced their husbands' decisions to retire. In 1969, Jerry Jones's husband asked her, "'How badly do you want me to make a star?'" Jones, who had been raised in the Army and served nearly twenty years alongside her husband responded simply, "'Not particularly, Tom.'" After noting that he was not "keen" on what it would take to make the rank of general, Jones told her husband to "get out" of the Army. "What is the point," she asked. As the studies had suggested, her input mattered. Jones's husband retired at the rank of colonel after twenty years of service.[112]

Tess McGregor's husband also retired after she asked him, "Why don't you get out?" McGregor listed the "horrendous" hours that were usual for jobs in the Pentagon and needing extra money to pay for two kids going to college as reasons to accept job offers in the civilian world. "So he did retire in 1968," she noted. Although McGregor had encouraged her husband to

[112] Scally, interview, 32

retire, she struggled adjusting to civilian life. "It was very hard for me when Mac retired in 1968," she recalled. "They talk about the men having an adjustment when they retire. I am the one that had the adjustment to make, I really did."[113] More than a decade before Army leaders called for programs meant to engage Army wives as partners and convince them to maintain their commitment to the service, McGregor remained attached to the Army way of life in retirement. Contrary to studies that found that the frequency of moves impacted retention, McGregor worried that she would not like life without regular moves. "I thought I am going to go crazy not being able to move again," she thought. The family never moved again, however. "I didn't go crazy," McGregor joked.[114] McGregor's commitment to the Army lifestyle mirrored her commitment to the Army itself. When asked if she would choose a life in the Army again, McGregor responded emphatically, "Absolutely."[115]

The Persistence of Problems

Although advocacy groups provided a platform for Army spouses to raise their concerns to the highest levels of the military and government as early as 1966, the Army's practice of developing family services on an ad hoc basis did not result in a comprehensive Army family policy. While performing traditional duties for the Army, Cooper witnessed an expansion of services for wives. When she volunteered, Cooper received free childcare for her two children in what she described as "excellent" facilities.[116] She also received support to continue her

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[113] McGregor, interview, 11.

[114] Ibid., 9, 11.

[115] McGregor, interview, 16.

[116] Ibid., 10-1.

education. In 1979, Cooper was part of a group of seventeen women who earned a college scholarship from the Officers Wives Club at Fort Leavenworth in Kansas. Cooper used the scholarship to complete a Bachelors Degree in Education. "I had a lot of fun going to school," she remembered. Like the Army officer's wife ideal demanded, she continued to live her life in service of others. Cooper's studies did not get in the way of her participating in the Officers Wives Club or dedicating herself to her children. "I had my schedule pretty well planned so I went to school three days a week. I was still able to be at all the games, be at practices. All the mother things."[117] Having access to services and support did not free her from the foundational elements of the Army officer's wife ideal. Cooper was still expected to put the Army and its needs first. This included tending to Army children and volunteer activities that supported mission readiness and morale.

By the late 1970s, there was still no official policy to notify Army wives that their spouse had been killed in action. "There was nothing formal," Army wife Betty Rutherford recalled. "[T]here was no family support group, there was no plan [for dealing with people dying during a training exercise and/or someone dying in a car accident – that both helped then], nothing like that." As a result, Rutherford felt she had to "pull myself up and deal with this."[118] Unlike widows from previous generations, however, the widow Rutherford had to notify was allowed to stay in quarters until her children finished that semester of school.[119] Speaking as part of a mutually dependent team, Rutherford assessed the progress of Army family policy. "So, I think

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[117] Ibid., 22.

[118] Elizabeth Rutherford, interview by Erin West, November 20, 1998, Army Family Oral History Project, Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 11-12.

[119] Ibid., 13.

we're addressing it better now or being more honest about it, but we can really make it better."[120] Although Army leaders were becoming more aware of the positive impact the development of family services had on retention, readiness, and morale, the Army had not formally acknowledged the interdependence that existed between the Army and Army families or developed a comprehensive Army family policy to adequately address the realities of being married to the military.

The Promise of Change: Toward Interdependency

By 1983, Army wives' efforts to improve their lives and the Army and broader military through national advocacy groups as well as the reenlistment requirements that accompanied the transition to the AVF made Army and Defense Department leaders vividly aware that the strength of the Army was intimately connected to the strength of the Army family. Beginning in the late 1970s, the Army developed new programs, practices, and policies to respond to Army wives' unique needs. In August of 1979, the Seventh Army (U.S. Army in Germany) convened a Women's Symposium in Munich, Germany, where Army wives could share their problems related to Army life with commanders and work together to develop solutions to those issues.[121] This unprecedented formal meeting between Army commanders and Army wives helped the U.S. Army in Germany identify and prioritize concerns that could negatively impact reenlistment or morale.

The following fall, the Army Officers Wives Club of Greater Washington Area joined forces with the Association of the U.S. Army to sponsor the first ever Army Family Symposium.

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[120] Ibid.

[121] U.S. Army, Chief of Staff, *The Army Family*, 7.

The purpose was to identify issues Army wives faced and ask Army leaders to resolve those issues.[122] Organizers tapped their networks to make sure that Army leaders attended the event. They also connected their conference to the overall retention strategy with the slogan, "We recruit soldiers, but we retain families!"[123] Nearly 200 people attended the symposium, including Army leaders who organizers had convinced to attend. At the symposium, Army wives called on Army leaders to establish an Army Family Liaison Office and to provide assistance with issues associated with being an Army wife: deployments, frequent relocations, and securing employment. The delegates also asked for changes in the official language the Army used to discuss families, replacing "dependent" with a "spouse" or "family member."[124] The new terms dispelled the notion that wives were a burden on the Army in favor of a more accurate representation of their significant contribution to the Army. Within a year of the symposium, the Adjutant General's Office opened the Army Family Life Communications Line at the Pentagon and began building an Army family liaison department.

Spurred by calls from national advocacy groups and forums with Army wives, Army leaders also began developing services and studies to help the Army better support families. In the early 1980s, the Army began sending chaplains for specialized training in Family Life Ministry so that they could better educate Army wives on issues related to the Army lifestyle and services available to them.[125] At the same time, the Army and all other branches of the

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[122] Ibid.

[123] Judith Stiehm, *Arms and the Enlisted Woman* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989), 214.

[124] Ibid.; Rostiker, *America Goes to War*, 72; Jennifer Mittlestadt, *The Rise of the Military Welfare State* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015), 136-7.

[125] U.S. Army, Chief of Staff, *The Army Family*, 11.

military created family services units comprised of social scientists and social workers. According to Cynthia Enloe, the Department of Defense tasked family services units with "devising strategies to socialize women into being contented military wives and thereby reducing family problems that might undermine readiness and reenlistment." This included efforts to make wives more amenable to the mobility of military life and publishing a "Military Family" newsletter that provided military spouses with information on employment options, domestic abuse, and new youth programs for military children.[126] In 1982, the Army fulfilled one of the requests the delegates of the Army Family Symposium had made and opened the Army Family Liaison Office. In creating this office, the Army established a formal avenue for Army spouses to share feedback with the military, as well as an organization through which the Army could educate and encourage Army families to live in service of the Army.

Conclusion

From 1969 to 1983, the Army officer's wife ideal continued to represent a platform from which the Army could shape spouses into what it needed to achieve its objectives, and Army wives shape the Army into what they needed to meet the unique demands of Army life. During this period, Army wives invoked the ideal while joining wives from other military branches in national advocacy organizations meant to address specific problems they faced. In developing and implementing new programs and policies meant to address some of the unique needs of Army wives on an ad hoc basis, Army leaders tried to coerce spouses to dedicate themselves to the Army mission and boosting soldiers' morale as generations of idealized Army wives had done before them. The foundational elements of the officer's ideal remained firmly intact. It was

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[126] Enloe, *Maneuvers*, 167-8.

wives' commitment to supporting the mission and boosting morale that provided a successful platform to change the Army's family policies. Army wives' efforts in national advocacy organizations spurred Army leaders to establish new programs, which acknowledged the significant contribution of those they classified as dependents made to the Army mission.

Despite this progress, problems persisted for Army families. Although Cooper received child care in exchange for volunteering on behalf of the Army, for example, thousands of Army children remained on waiting lists for child care. Further, reports showed that by the early 1980s, more than seventy per cent of Army child care centers did not meet fire and safety codes, and the Army insufficiently screened, trained, supervised, and paid the staff at child care centers. Army studies also revealed that poorly executed family programs like the childcare centers negatively impacted Army recruitment, morale, and retention.[127] These studies made it clear that the close connection between Army family satisfaction and Army readiness and morale. A comprehensive plan to sufficiently address family issues had to be developed.

[127] Brown, *Kevlar*, 348.

Conclusion

Betty Rutherford spent the majority of her life a dependent of the U.S. Army. Her mother, Helen (Frink) Kraft, was part of the wave of women who married into the Army in 1942. Betty was born the following year. She, like her mother and millions of other Army dependents, benefitted from the Army Servicemen's Dependents Allowance Act. After the war, Rutherford traveled the world with her mother as her father rose to the rank of major general. In 1966 while stationed in Germany with her family, Betty married First Lieutenant Jerry Rutherford. Over the next twenty-nine years serving alongside her husband as he rose to the rank of major general (too many prep phrases), Rutherford experienced changes in the Army's relationship with families.

In retirement, Rutherford and another former commanding officer's wife launched the Army Family Oral History Project "to preserve a record of spouse contributions to the story of the United States Army."[1] Rutherford conducted many interviews of Army wives before being interviewed on November 20, 1998. "What I have learned through reading, and listening, and talking, is that, in my opinion, Army wives are an extraordinary breed of women," she assessed. The reasons she provided mirrored the demands of the ideal codified during World War II.

> They accept challenges without ever being told they're being challenged. They follow their husbands, literally around the world, and live in the most God-awful places, and have babies, raise children, far away from their mothers and the majority do it willingly… They're married to men who say, I love you more than anything in the world, but the reality is he will leave her and go off and fight and even die, and it takes special women who can accept that.

Reflecting post-World War II changes to the ideal she added that Army wives "complain, but they have that right" and "are Ambassadors for the United States throughout the world in ways that are amazing, really." Far from a dependent, Rutherford viewed herself as a partner in her husband's military service. "It's funny, we're retired now and I'll say, 'We were in the Army,'"

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[1] Army Family Oral History Project, AFOHP Finders Guide, accessed July 3, 2015, http://usacac.army.mil/sites/default/files/documents/cace/CARL/History/army_family.pdf.

Rutherford told her interviewer. When asked if she was in the Army, Rutherford noted that it was her husband who served, "but what I really mean is, I was in the Army."[2] From her birth into an Army family until during World War II her husband's retirement from it, Rutherford spent fifty-two years "in the Army." Over that period of time, she and other Army wives experienced and shaped the transformation of the Army's idealized notion of Army families from dependents to interdependency.

After four decades of engagement with the meaning of the relationship between the Army and spouses that took place on the cultural body of the Army officer's wife ideal, the Army Chief of Staff announced that the "Army's need to articulate a philosophy for it's families" had become "an institutional obligation." On August 15, 1983, Army Chief of Staff General John Wickham issued *White Paper, 1983: The Army Family*. In his cover letter, Wickham called for a comprehensive Army Family Policy that recognized the "interdependent" relationship between the Army and Army families.[3] The accompanying twenty-two-page examination of the "history, present status, and future" of the Army family included the Army's new "stated philosophy" on Army families, which read:

> A partnership exists between the Army and Army Families. The Army's unique missions, concept of service and life-style of its members--all affect the nature of this partnership. Towards the goal of building a strong partnership, the Army remains committed to assuring adequate support to families in order to promote wellness; to develop a sense of community; and to strengthen the mutually reinforcing bonds between the Army and its families.[4]

According to Wickham, "formal articulation of an Army Family Philosophy represent[ed] a break with the past," or, as he later described it, "a cultural shift that [made]

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[2] Rutherford, interview, 33-4. Emphasis in transcript.

[3] U.S. Army, Chief of Staff, *White Paper, 1983*, cover letter.

[4] Ibid.

taking care of families a priority responsibility of leaders."[5] The white paper called on the Army to engage spouses in the development of policies and programs designed to ensure the Army met its goal "to increase the bonding between the family unit and the Army community—create a sense of interdependence."[6] The reason for Wickham was clear: "The Army enlists Soldiers, but it re-enlists families. If you do not take care of the family, you're not going to encourage the Soldier to stay in, so we've got to deal concretely and institutionally and financially and programmatically with family matters."[7]

White Paper, 1983: The Army Family affirmed what Army wives had long asserted: that the "*ad hoc* programs established on a piecemeal basis that treat the symptoms but not the causes of family stress [were] no longer sufficient."[8] To address this, the Army needed to transform the manner in which it provided for Army families. *White Paper, 1983: The Army Family* called for the development of a formal Army family policy—the Army Family Action Plan (AFAP)—meant to provide "the roadmap" for the Army of the future. Far from viewing Army wives as dependents, AFAP required Army leaders to embrace them as valuable partners in the making of Army policies, programs, offices, and regulations.[9] As Wickham declared in the opening pages of his white paper, "It is not a we/they situation, it is us—US as in U.S. Army."[10]

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[5] Ibid. Elizabeth M. Collins, "Retired General Wickham Recalls Army Family Action Plan," *U.S. Army* accessed September 1, 2016, http://www.army.mil/article/16043/.

[6] U.S. Army, Chief of Staff, *White Paper, 1983*, 23, cover letter.

[7] Collins, "Retired General Wickham Recalls."

[8] U.S. Army, Chief of Staff, *White Paper, 1983*, 16.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid., cover letter. Capitalization in original.

In order to highlight "the importance of Army families to overall Army success," Army leaders declared 1984 "The Year of the Army Family." On April 17, 1984, "in recognition of the profound importance of spouse commitment to the readiness and well-being of service members on active duty and in the National Guard and Reserve, and to the security of our Nation," President Ronald Reagan established Military Spouse Day. "Since the early days of the Continental Army," his proclamation began "the wives of our servicemen have made unselfish contributions to the spirit and well-being of their fighting men and the general welfare of their communities." Reagan acknowledged that military spouses "made countless sacrifices to support the Armed Forces." The sacrifices he listed mirrored the ideal of the Army wife as it was codified in World War II. Reagan praised military families who "subordinated their personal and professional aspirations to the greater benefit of the service family." In doing so, military families "frequently endured long periods of separation or left familiar surroundings and friends to re-establish their homes in distant places." Reflecting the post-World War II changes to the ideal, he noted that Army wives and families "became American ambassadors abroad." Finally, Reagan reinforced the interdependency between the Army and Army families, describing wives' service alongside their soldier spouses in militarized terms. "Responding to the call of duty… military spouses have provided exemplary service and leadership."[11] The establishment of Military Spouse Day and the accompanying proclamation acknowledged military spouses' service to the military, nation, and state at the highest levels.

Also in 1984, Army leaders established the U.S. Army Community and Family Support Center (CFSC), a field operating agency for AFAP. After its founding, CFSC coordinated a

[11] Ronald Reagan, Proclamation 5184, "Military Spouse Day, 1984," April 18, 1984, accessed November 6, 2016, https://www.reaganlibrary.archives.gov/archives/speeches/1984/41784j.htm.

variety of morale, welfare, and recreation programs designed for Army families including: "child care, youth programs, schools, libraries, sports and athletics, financial counseling, spouse employment programs, in-theater support to deployed Soldiers, Family Readiness Groups, lodging, and fitness centers."[12] The Army's investment in families was substantial. Construction in childcare centers alone rose "from zero dollars in 1981 to $42,360,000 in 1986."[13] These morale, welfare and recreation programs, which had long been offered to soldiers, embraced Army wives as partners in the Army.

The following year, the Military Family Act of 1985 formalized the military's commitment to military families. An outgrowth of the responsive engagement by the U.S. Armed Forces to critically evaluate and address evolving military family support requirements, the Military Family Act of 1985 established an Office of Family Policy in the Department of Defense that would coordinate all programs and activities of military departments relating to military families. The act also authorized the Secretary of Defense "to conduct surveys of military families to determine the effectiveness of Federal programs and the need for new programs." Far from treating Army wives and those in the other services as merely dependents, the Act embraced spouses as partners to be recruited and retained, directing the Secretary of Defense "to issue regulations ensuring employment opportunities for military spouses in the same geographic area as their husband or wife is assigned," "to have established at each military installation a youth sponsorship program to facilitate the integration of children to new surroundings brought about due to a parent's permanent change of station," and to report to

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[12] "U.S. Army MWR History," U.S. Army MWR: Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Programs, accessed September 1, 2016, http://www.armymwr.com/commander/aboutmwr.aspx.

[13] U.S. Army, Chief of Staff, *The Army Family*, 8.

Congress "on the desirability and feasibility of providing relocation assistance to members of the uniformed services and their families through DOD contracts with private firms." Other retention factors like pay and relocation were instituted as well. The Act mandated that the military help military families ensure "that their dependent children will not be unduly disrupted or burdened by transferring between schools with different graduation requirements."

The policies and programs that followed the publication of the *White Paper, 1983: The Army Family* represented direct responses to the issues Army wives had faced trying to live up to the ideal in World War II, raised in the pages of *U.S. Lady* magazine and personal exchanges after the war, and sought to address through national advocacy organizations beginning in the mid-1960s. The codification of the Army officer's wife ideal in *The Army Wife* and *Army Woman's Handbook* in 1942 launched four decades of discussion about that nature of the relationship between the Army and those married to it. During World War II, prescriptive manuals informed readers what the Army expected of Army wives—primarily that they support the mission and boost morale. Although actual Army wives embraced those foundational elements, they adapted specific advice related to household management, parenting, socializing, volunteering, and working to meet their unique needs as Army wives. After World War II, wives engaged in the development, distribution, and shaping of the Army officer's wife ideal and the Army itself. Spurred by postwar prescriptions to become advocates of the Army, Army wives embraced the foundational elements of the ideal as they worked to improve, defend, and promote their husbands and the military at home, as well as the standing of the U.S. abroad. Purveyors of the ideal as well as Army leaders rewarded wives for their activism on behalf of the Army. Building on calls for them to advocate on behalf of the Army as directed, Army wives joined with wives from other branches to form national organizations through which they could demand

military, national, and international leaders address the issues military wives deemed important including the treatment of prisoners of war and the allocation of benefits to those who served alongside their husbands. Far from challenging the ideal, members of the national advocacy organizations embraced it. In invoking their support for their husbands, the Army, and the state, their advocacy became part of the Army's idealized notion of wives, became seen as interdependent partners rather than dependents. The foundational elements of the ideal remain intact today, but prescriptions for Army wives' service to the Army changed to reflect new missions, political realities, and the increasing awareness in the minds of military families that the strength of the Army was intimately connected to the strength of the Army family.

Codifying and revising the ideal created a platform for the Army to shape wives into what it needed to meet its objectives. It also created a platofrm for Army wives to shape the Army into what they needed in order to live up to the Army's expectations that they improve readiness by supporting the mission and boosting morale. Army wives, the Army, and the state's engagement in cultural notions of the Army wife ideal from 1942 to 1983 resulted in institutional change within the Army. After centuries of viewing spouses as merely dependents, the Army acknowledged that the Army was also dependent on families.

Epilogue

Army wives, the Army, and the state continue to engage with the Army wife ideal, adapting it to meet changing realities. The ideal of the Army wife (and, more broadly, military spouses) remains a popular topic in the twenty-first century advice literature. Military spouses, authors, and organizations, as well as military departments, have written guidebooks to inform soldiers' spouses of the military's expectations of them. Like the guidebooks published during World War II, twenty-first-century guidebooks such as *Military Life 101: Basic Training for New Military Families* and *Intro to Army Life: A Handbook for Spouses and Significant Others Entering the Army Lifestyle* are filled with military protocol and policies meant to guide military spouses in their daily lives.[1] In 2005, as the United States Armed Forces continued its missions in Afghanistan and Iraq, Navy wife Babette Maxwell started *Military Spouse*, a print magazine "dedicated to providing the spouses of our country's military service members with outstanding

[1] Janet I. Farley, *Military Life 101: Basic Training for New Military Families* (Lanham: Rowan and Littlefield, 2016). Allison Mewes, *Intro to Army Life: A Handbook for Spouses and Significant Others Entering the Army Lifestyle* (Eagle, ID: Aloha Publishing, 2014). Other guidebooks published in the past ten years include: Janelle Moore and Don Philpott, *The Deployment Toolkit: Military Families and Solutions for a Successful Long-Distance Relationship* (Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield, 2016); Hillary Sigrist, *Warrior Wife: Overcoming the Unique Struggles of a Military Marriage* (Bloomington, IN: WestBow Press, 2015); Judy Davis, *Right Side Up: Find Your Way When Military Life Turns You Upside Down* (Saint Paul: Elva Resa, 2014); Sheridan Scott, *Now You Tell Me!: 12 Army Wives Give the Best Advice They Never Got* (Warwick, NY: Arundel, 2012); U.S. Army War College, *Battle Book for the Company Commander's Spouse* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 2010); Janelle Moore, Cheryl Lawhorne Scott, and Don Philpott, *The Military Marriage Manual: Tactics for Successful Relationships* (Lanham, MD: Government Institutes, 2010); Sheryl Garrett and Sue Hopping, *A Family's Guide to the Military for Dummies* (Hoboken, NY: John Wiley & Sons, 2009); Meredith Leyva, *Married to the Military: A Survival Guide for Military Wives, Girlfriends, and Women in Uniform* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2009); Lissa McGrath, *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Life as a Military Spouse* (New York: Alpha Books, 2008); John A. Bonin, *Everything You Always Wanted to Know about the Modular Army, But Were Afraid to Ask: A Spouses' Survival Guide* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Military Family Program, U.S. Army War College, 2007); U.S. Army War College, *Customs & Courtesies/Protocol* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Military Family Program, U.S. Army War College, 2007).

resources that are tailored to their unique lifestyle." Mirroring the format of *U.S. Lady*, *Military Spouse* provides information on deployment issues, moving, relationship building, budgeting, and family planning. In 2008, *Military Spouse* began rewarding those who complied with the foundational elements of the ideal Military Spouse of the Year.[2] The following year, Army wives began Army Wife Network, provides podcasts, hosting Twitter chats, hosting blogs, and providing an extensive resource database meant to promote, as their tagline notes, "interactive empowerment for Army wives by Army wives."[3]

In 2007, Lifetime debuted *Army Wives*, a television show produced with the assistance of the Department of Defense. Over the course of seven seasons, the show's storylines obliterated old traditions like the segregation of officer and enlisted wives, delved into recurring family problems like alcoholism and infidelity, and engaged in more current topics such as the impact of recurring deployments on Army marriages, post-traumatic stress disorder, soldier suicide, and male spouses of female soldiers. Countless blogs, Facebook pages and groups, and Twitter accounts provide personal perspectives and invite comments on the unique roles military spouses

[2] Military Spouse's Facebook page, accessed November 8, 2016, https://www.facebook.com/MilitarySpouse.

[3] Army Wife Network website, accessed November 8, 2016, http://www.armywifenetwork.com/.

fill.[4] These include blogs and dedicated to male spouses of female soldiers, as well as LGBT couples.[5] Although the advice varies based on the audience and the medium, the publications, television show, and social media forums all promote the ideal of supportive, morale-boosting military spouses.

As promoters, purveyors, and consumers of the ideal engaged in dialogue about what it means to be married to the military, they also continued to change and adapt Army family policy. Once they proclaimed spouses and children interdependent partners in the Army, rather than dependents of it, Army leaders have dedicated significant time and resources to the development and constant revision of policies and programs meant to engage spouses and improve the morale, welfare, and readiness of Army families. The Army Family Action Plan (AFAP) began in 1983 continues to serve as a "platform to voice quality-of-life-issues, feedback, ideas, and suggestions… to let Army leadership know about what works, what doesn't and how [Army

[4] See, for example She is Fierce website, accessed November 8, 2016, http://www.sheisfierce.net/; Going Green Journey website, accessed November 8, 2016, http://goingreenjourney.blogspot.com/; Somewhere Over the Camo, accessed November 8, 2016, http://www.somewhereoverthecamo.com/; Army Wife 101 website, accessed November 8, 2016, http://armywife101.com/; The Professional Army Wife, accessed November 8, 2016, http://www.theprofessionalarmywife.com/; Army Wife Network Facebook page, accessed November 8, 2016, https://www.facebook.com/ArmyWifeNetwork/; Proud Army Wife Facebook page, accessed November 8, 2016, https://www.facebook.com/ProudArmyWifeForLife/; Proud Army Wife website, accessed November 8, 2016, https://www.facebook.com/Proud-Army-Wife-242292075810551/.

[5] See for example: Macho Spouse for Male Military Spouses website, accessed November 8, 2016, http://malemilspouse.com/; Lesbian Army Wife website, accessed November 8, 2016, http://www.lesbianarmywife.com/; Lesbian Army Wife Facebook Page, accessed November 8, 2016, https://www.facebook.com/lesarmywife/; LGBT Army Spouses Facebook page, accessed November 8, 2016, https://www.facebook.com/groups/1594953260758949/; Army Husbands Facebook page, accessed November 8, 2016, https://www.facebook.com/ArmyHusbands/; Military Husbands Facebook page, accessed November 8, 2016, https://www.facebook.com/malemilitaryspouse/.

family members] think problems can be resolved."[6] Twenty-first-century Army spouses can search AFAP issues and submit their own via an official Army website.[7]

In 2007, Army leaders signed the Army Family Covenant, "a long-term commitment to resource and standardize critical support programs for Soldiers, their families and civilians." During the first three years operating under the covenant, the Army doubled funding to improve and standardize family programs and services, healthcare, and housing—all issues addressed in Army wife guidebooks and by Army wives' lived experiences dating back to World War II. Responding to changing realities, the Army Family Covenant also expanded education and employment opportunities for spouses.[8] Total Army Strong, the successor to the Army Family Covenant, was rolled out seven years later. According to Lt. General David D. Halverson, Total Army Strong represented the Army's "continued commitment to Soldiers, families and civilians." Like Army Family Covenant, Total Army Strong represented a substantial investment in "a system of programs and services to mitigate the unique demands of military life, foster life skills, strengthen resilience and promote a strong and ready Army."[9] Today, Army spouses can enroll in a "graduate-level" Military Family Program at the Army War College "designed to better prepare [Army spouses] for their roles as senior leaders." The four "Concentrations" of the

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[6] "Army Family Action Plan," *U.S. Army MWR*, accessed November 8, 2016, http://www.armymwr.com/family/afap.aspx.

[7] "Army Family Action Plan Issue Management System," *Army OneSource,* accessed November 8, 2016, https://www.myarmyonesource.com/skins/aos2/display.aspx?ModuleID=a10586da-73a1-4402-9107-58b7bf046a21.

[8] J.D. Leipold, "'Total Army Strong' to Succeed Army Family Covenant," *U.S. Army*, accessed November 8, 2016, https://www.army.mil/article/136184.

[9] Ibid.

program—leadership and readiness, family growth and resilience, personal growth and resilience, and personal financial management—reflect the advice offered in the wartime prescriptive manuals and raised by Army wives since 1942.[10]

National movements of Army and military spouses also continue to embrace the foundational elements of the ideal as the platform for their advocacy. The National League of POW/MIA Families and National Military Family Association continue to influence politicians and shape military policies and practices related to their constituencies' unique needs. In 2009, two years before the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," spouses, families, and allies of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender service members and veterans formed The American Military Partner Association (AMPA). With the mission of "connecting, supporting, honoring, and serving the partners and spouses of America's LGBT service members and veterans – our nation's modern military families, AMPA worked to raise public awareness for their causes, conducted surveys of its constituents, hosted forums in Washington, DC, initiated lobbying efforts, and participated in legal challenges to assert their members' rights to veterans benefits.[11]

Advocacy organizations today benefit from the presence of social media. The development of Battling Bare, an online community dedicated to promoting mental health awareness in the military, reflects this trend. In April 2012, after tour combat tours in Iraq, U.S. Army Staff Sergeant Rob Wise began to display symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. After he locked himself in a hotel room with weapons and alcohol, his wife, Ashley, turned to AFAP for help. AFAP connected Ashley with one of the counselors it provides for families in

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[10] "USAWC Military Family Program (MFP)," *United States Army War College*, accessed November 8, 2016, http://www.carlisle.army.mil/orgs/mfp/index.htm.

[11] The American Military Partner Association, "About," accessed November 8, 2016, http://militarypartners.org/about/.

crisis. Exhausted after twenty-four hours with no sleep and frightened for her husband, Ashley told the counselor about her husband's actions and her concern for his safety. The Military Police promptly detained her husband on domestic assault charges. Faced with a dishonorable discharge and the loss of the military health benefits her husband needed, Ashley wrote a poem on her naked back, hoisted her husband's assault rifle over her head, took a photo, and posted it on Facebook.[12] The poem, which is rooted in the foundational tenets of the ideal, read, "Broken by battle/ Wounded by war/ I love you forever/ To you this I swore /I will quiet your silent screams/ Help heal your shattered soul/ Until once again, my love/ You are whole.."[13] Ashley's post went viral. Rob was released within seventy-two hours. He went on to serve the Army until he was honorably discharged two years later.

Ashley did not stop with her personal victory. Instead, she turned her personal issue and viral status into a platform for consciousness raising to improve mental health services offered to soldiers and, in doing so, improve the Army. Ashley formed a Facebook group, Battling Bare, where thousands of other military wives in similar situations shared their experiences and posted photos with the poem scrawled on their own backs. Within three months, the group had 25,000

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[12] Robert Johnson, "This Picture by a Desperate Army Wife has Started a Movement and Saved Her Family's Future," *Business Insider*, accessed June 30, 2012, http://www.businessinsider.com/battling-bare-ashley-wise-facebook-group-ft-campbell-2012-6; Battling Bare Facebook page, accessed November 8, 2016, https://www.facebook.com/BattlingBARE/?fref=ts.

[13] Jenny Sokol, "Wife's Campaign to Help Soldier Goes Viral," *The Orange County Register*, July 16, 2012, accessed August 22, 2013, http://www.ocregister.com/articles/ashley-363414-one-husband.html.

followers.[14] The following month, the Army News Service announced that the Army, other military services, and the Department of Veterans Affairs would standardize "the diagnosis and treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder, known as PTSD" in order to "get rid of the stigma involved" and increase "a Soldier's level of trust and fairness."[15] Reaction to an NPR story about 22,000 soldiers discharged for misconduct after having been diagnosed with PTSD or other mental health issues, which included twelve senators calling on the Army to investigate the allegation, Army leaders launched a "a 'thorough, multidisciplinary review'" of soldiers discharged. The investigation built upon other commitments the Army, in conjunction with Army families and politicians, had made to mental health.[16] Their efforts continue today. April Wise, like leaders of other advocacy organizations made up of Army spouses and partners, regularly posts information on mental health to her Battling Bare Facebook group. Building upon the foundational elements of the ideal and embraced as mutually dependent partners, Army spouses and their allies—like Ashley and the 45,682 followers of Battling Bare—consistently work to improve the readiness and morale of the Army by taking care of the unique needs of Army families.[17]

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[14] Robert Johnson, "This Picture by a Desperate Army Wife has Started a Movement and Saved Her Family's Future," *Business Insider*, accessed June 30, 2012, http://www.businessinsider.com/battling-bare-ashley-wise-facebook-group-ft-campbell-2012-6; Battling Bare Facebook page, accessed November 8, 2016, https://www.facebook.com/BattlingBARE/?fref=ts.

[15] David Vergun, "Army Standardizes PTSD diagnosis, treatment," *U.S. Army*, August 3, 2012, https://www.army.mil/article/84928.

[16] Michelle Tan, "Army Launches Review of Soldier Misconduct Discharges," *Army Times*, December 3, 2015, accessed November 8, 2016, https://www.armytimes.com/story/military/pentagon/2015/12/03/army-launches-review-soldier-misconduct-discharges/76731238/.

[17] Johnson, "Picture by a Desperate Army Wife."

On August 14, 2015, General Ray Odierno delivered his farewell address as Army Chief of Staff in front of a crowd that included the Secretary of Defense, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Army's most senior leaders. Like most retiring officers, Odierno offered special thanks to his wife of forty-three years, Linda.

> She is the epitome of selfless service. She always put others before herself. She's always been by my side — through the good and the bad. She's always been the strength of our family. She's been the role model for so many spouses throughout the Army. And the reason is because she always treated everyone with dignity, respect and with a little touch of love. She sacrificed her entire life for me. I can never repay her for that.[18]

The retiring Four-Star General then folded his prepared remarks and extemporaneously spoke about spouses' contributions to the Army. "It's often hard for me to stand up here and make other people understand how much our spouses sacrifice. You don't understand," the man with thirty-nine years of military experience said, "everything that they do every day in order to make us a better Army. I don't believe there is any other profession that we count on our spouses to do so many things." After highlighting his wife's dedication to military families and wounded warriors, as well as the other ways she dedicated her life to the Army, General Odierno's voice cracked as he said, "I simply can never repay you, honey. I love you with all my heart, and you've made me a better man. Thank you very much."[19] Odierno ended his farewell with an affirmation of the importance of families to the Army and the state. "The strength of our nation is

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[18] "Army Chief of Staff Retirement Ceremony," *C-SPAN*, August 14, 2015. Accessed April 23, 2016. http://www.c-span.org/video/?327635-1/retirement-ceremony-army-chief-staff-general-ray-odierno&start=4420.

[19] Page King, "Retiring Army Chief of Staff Showed Humility," *The Leaf-Chronicle*, August 17, 2015, accessed April 23, 2016, http://www.theleafchronicle.com/story/news/local/2015/08/18/retiring-army-chief-staff-showed-humility/31852571/.

our Army. The strength of the Army is our soldiers. The strength of our soldiers is our families. That's what makes us Army Strong."[20]

Three days later, *Military.com* reported that the former Army Chief of Staff's comments had gone viral. "When the Army Chief of Staff retires, people notice," the article noted, and Odierno's choice to "spotlight" his wife's service instead of focusing on issues in Iraq or the downsizing of the military drew much attention in military circles. Odierno's comments that spouses made a better Army put an end to "endless debates" on whether spouses serve and sacrifice. The debate is over," journalist and military spouse Amy Bushatz reported. "Yes, we sacrifice. Yes, we serve."[21] Odierno's comments and the reception of them reflected the endurance of the foundational elements of the traditional Army officer's wife ideal, as well the institutional change in the Army's conception and treatment of spouses from dependents to interdependency.

[20] "Army Chief of Staff Retirement Ceremony," *C-SPAN*, August 14, 2015.

[21] Amy Bushatz, "Retiring Army Chief's Spouse Remarks Go Viral," Spouse Buzz, *Military.com*, August 17, 2015, accessed April 23, 2016, http://www.spousebuzz.com/blog/2015/08/retiring-army-chiefs-spouse-remarks-go-viral.html.

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