
AMBIVALENCE AT THE ACADEMIES: ATTITUDES TOWARD WOMEN IN THE MILITARY AT THE FEDERAL SERVICE ACADEMIES

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In this paper I analyze comparative data on attitudes toward women at the Federal Service Academies relative to Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) students and active-duty officers using data from a 1998-1999 Triangle Institute for Security Studies survey. This paper serves as a pilot study for a more organizationally grounded analysis of masculine culture. I illustrate this approach by comparing patterns of gender related attitudes across a range of military institutions, while controlling for demographic and selection variables. I find that cadets at the academies are more ambivalent toward women than are senior officers or ROTC students, and that some of this effect can be attributed to socialization within the academy context. The relationship between culture, discrimination, and sexual harassment was evident at all of the academies. However, I also find that this relationship cannot be assumed by the existence of a masculine culture alone as patterns of gender attitudes vary across the services.

Introduction

The highly publicized rape scandal at the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) raised troubling questions about the link between masculine organizational cultures and hostile environments for women. A report released in September 2003 by a congressional panel¹ blamed the widespread sexual abuse among cadets on the culture, gender climate, and leadership of the USAFA. In this paper

I analyze data from a survey of the USAFA and other Federal Service academies in order to look more closely at the role of organizational culture in perpetuating negative attitudes toward women within military institutions. Importantly, I put the academies in context relative to other military organizations to examine whether ambivalence toward women is more extreme in the academy environment.

In this analysis there are two primary goals. The first is to provide comparative data on attitudes toward women at the Federal Service Academies relative to ROTC students and active-duty officers. The second major goal is to explore the relationships revealed by this data between masculine organizational cultures, work-related gender discrimination, and sexual harassment. Previous research has found a significant and positive relationship between masculine culture, discrimination, and sexual violence. I argue that research on the ‘masculinity’ of culture and its relationship to other gender related attitudes is incomplete if not situated in a comparative organizational framework. This paper is a pilot study for a more organizationally grounded analysis of masculine culture. I illustrate this approach by comparing the patterns of gender related attitudes across a range of military institutions.

Background

During 2003, at least 142 women came forward to allege that they were raped or sexually assaulted by male peers while enrolled as cadets at the USAFA (LA Times, Sep 30, 2003). In the period preceding this, the U.S. military had its own series of high-profile scandals. Well-publicized examples include the sexual violence against female aviators and civilians at the Naval Aviator’s Tailhook Convention in 1991 and the sexual abuse of female Army recruits at Aberdeen in 1997. In the aftermath of Tailhook and Aberdeen, Congress and the Department of Defense (DoD) conducted investigations and brought several of the alleged perpetrators to court within the military justice system. However, leadership also acknowledged that at least some of the problems were systemic and established commissions to recommend policy changes and training programs to reduce the prevalence of sexual harassment and violence (Segal 2001).

What makes the rape cases at the Air Force Academy even more troubling is the fact that they occurred despite heightened awareness and policy interventions designed to prevent sexual assault and discrimination. The military community had actively instituted new policies and educational programs to address the problem of sexual violence against women. The USAFA in particular had enjoyed a reputation for being at the forefront of gender integration within the military community (USAFA Report 2003:58).

Although the Federal Service Academies are a small organizational population, collectively they are a significant supplier to the military of newly commissioned officers each year. The historical context is a critical element in understanding each of these institutions due to the deep reverence they hold for their unique place in American history. Women were first admitted to the academies in 1976, and the proportion of women at each of the academies has remained below 20 percent.

The U.S. Military Academy (West Point)

Founded in 1802, West Point has traditionally been the most prestigious entry point for commissioned officers in the United States Army. Currently, West Point graduates more than 900 officers annually; the student body, or Corps of Cadets, numbers 4,000, of whom approximately 15 percent are women. West Point takes great pride in the success of its prominent alumni, stating that “much of the history we teach was made by people we taught.” Military leaders including Grant and Lee, MacArthur, Eisenhower and Patton, Westmoreland and Schwarzkopf, are among the more than 50,000 graduates of the Military Academy. As a preparatory school for the U.S. Army, the curriculum is oriented towards infantry and other ground combat occupations.

The U.S. Naval Academy (Annapolis)

The Naval Academy was founded in 1845. The Naval Academy serves as a preparatory school for officers in both the Navy and the Marine Corps. Nearly 1,000 newly commissioned Ensigns

(Navy) and 2nd Lieutenants (Marine Corps) graduate from the Naval Academy each year; approximately 15 percent of each class is female. Notable graduates include Admiral Chester Nimitz, President Jimmy Carter, and Senator John McCain.

The Air Force Academy (USAFA)

The Air Force Academy was founded in 1954, over a century after Annapolis and 150 years after West Point, to respond to the needs of the newly established United States Air Force. USAFA cadets and leaders obviously have a much shorter history to draw upon, both as an academy and in relation to the Air Force. However, the structure and training program was very deliberately modeled after West Point and Annapolis, and they continue to benchmark against the two older academies. Seventeen percent of cadets entering for the Class of 2007 are female.

Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC)

The establishment of ROTC programs at the nation's civilian colleges was first authorized by Congress in 1916 in order to facilitate the training of Reserve officers, but these programs now serve as a pipeline for both reserve and active-duty officers. Students in ROTC programs can attend almost any civilian college, take the majority of their classes with students from diverse backgrounds, and may live in dormitories or off-campus surrounded by other students who are not associated with the military. Officers who were commissioned via a ROTC program serve alongside Academy graduates throughout the military, but they do not experience the 'total institution' environment shared over four long formative years at the Academies.

It is also essential to examine the organizational context within which these institutions exist today. The academies do not operate in a vacuum; they exist solely to train future leaders for service within each branch of the U.S. military. Therefore, any study of the academies must also consider the context in which they operate—as preparatory schools for the U.S. Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps.²

In my analysis, I compare the academies to the services as groups, but I also examine institutionally specific variations that may impact culture and gender related attitudes. In Table 1, I present three organizational level attributes that are potentially related to attitudes toward women in the military. These are: percentage women, percentage of positions open to women, and founding date.

	USAFA	USMA	USNA	ROTC	Airforce	Army	Navy	Marine
% Women	17	15	15	varies	19.4	15.3	14.4	6
% Positions open to women	99.7 ^a	67.2 ^a	n/a ^b	varies ^b	99.7	67.2	94	62
Founding Date	1954	1802	1845	1916	1947	1775	1775	1775

^a - Airforce and Army % positions open to women are used for USAFA and USMA respectively.

^b - n/a for USNA because graduates go into both the Navy and USMC.

Percent Women

The variations in percentage women are relatively small between each organization. The exception is the Marine Corps which has historically limited their percentage of women to roughly five percent. Of the services, the Air Force has the largest percentage of women (WREI 2003).

Occupational Segregation

The military services vary significantly in the percentages of occupations and positions open to women³. This was a direct result of the 1994 change in federal policy that revised the risk rules that prevented women from serving in combat occupations. Women can now serve in 99.7 percent of Air Force positions, and 94 percent of Naval positions, as compared to 67.2 percent in the Army and 62 percent in the Marine Corps (Harrell et al 2002). The admission of women to air and naval combat occupations offers an interesting test of the role of combat exclusion in the status of women within the organization. Within the Army and the Marine Corps women are automatically ineligible for the ground-combat occupations that are at the core of their service's identity. "The combat exclusion reflects and reinforces widespread attitudes about

the place of women in the military. . . . Put bluntly, women may not be regarded as ‘real’ soldiers until they are able to do what ‘real’ soldiers do, which is to kill and die in combat” (Dunivin 1994). My analysis includes a comparison of attitudes toward women by service to determine whether or not the reduction in occupational segregation in the Air Force and Navy has resulted in more positive attitudes toward women within these services.⁴

Cadets at the academies do not have ‘occupations’; however, the occupational segregation of their parent services potentially has an impact on attitudes even within these educational institutions. Cadets are competing throughout their four years for their final standing within their class. Each cadet’s rank in the class is then used to determine their options during occupational selection. Female cadets at West Point and Marine Option females at Annapolis cannot request ground-combat occupations, even if their class rank is competitive with the males in the selection pool. Females at the Air Force Academy and female Naval cadets at Annapolis do not face similar constraints.

Organizational Age (founding date)

Organizations are shaped by the historical context in which they were founded (Aldrich 1999), and these institutions in particular have a long memory for their own role in America’s history. The Navy, Army, and Marine Corps were founded in 1775, and were effectively all male for the first 200 years of their existence. By contrast, the Air Force was founded in 1947—only one year before Congress passed the Women’s Armed Services Integration Act. This legislation allowed women to serve in regular active peacetime forces, but still with extensive limitations on their overall percentage and occupational opportunities (WREI 2003). As the youngest, most technically oriented military service, the Air Force has the highest percentage of women and is widely perceived as having a culture that is more favorable for women than the other services. It seems likely that it will take longer for occupational integration to have an effect on attitudes in organizations that hold a deep reverence for their own (male) history.

Data

I analyze data from the 1998-1999 Triangle Institute for Security Studies (TISS) Project on the Gap between Military and Civilian Society. For sample statistics see Table 2: Descriptive statistics for variables selected from TISS Survey, 1998-1999.

The original sample of 4,891 respondents includes senior military officers, military academy cadets, ROTC students from a national sample of colleges and universities, civilian ‘elites’ (meant to capture decision-makers in DC), and a sample of ‘general public’ civilians. I exclude all civilians from my organizational analysis and all cases with missing data⁵ for the key variables of interest. My final sample included 2,595 total respondents including cadets, senior military officers, ROTC students, and Reservists.⁶ The military academy sample includes cadets in their senior year at the federal service academies: United States Military Academy (USMA or West Point), United States Naval Academy (USNA or Annapolis), and the United States Air Force Academy (USAF). The active-duty officers were from the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps. The Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) students were from Army and Navy ROTC programs at a sub-sample of colleges in the United States.

The military respondents are not representative of all military personnel. There are no enlisted respondents, and the officers were selected based on attendance at selective schools at four different stages in a typical military career. The focus on this subset of officers was deliberate, and supports the comparison with cadets who were also selected based on credentials and achievement to attend an elite military training program.

I focus my analysis of dependent variables on the respondents who expressed *ambivalent* attitudes towards military women. I categorize their opinions as ‘ambivalence’ to convey that these are attitudes about how women affect military organizations. Respondents of both genders expressed this ambivalence. These questions are capturing concern about the role of women in military organization—not necessarily a more generalized misogyny.

Table 2 - Descriptive statistics for variables selected from the TISS Survey, 1998-1999 (n=2595)

<i>Dependent Variables</i>		Description	min	max	mean	std dev
Masculine Culture: (5 point scale)		Even though women can serve in the military, the military should remain basically masculine, dominated by male values and characteristics (strongly disagree to agree strongly)	1	5	3.069	1.447
Discrimination: (2 questions, recoded and combined into single ordinal measure, values=0, .5, 1)		If, under present standards, your commander was female, how would you feel? (more, equally or less confident) Overall, are men and women held to the same standard in the military? (harder, same, or easier standards)	0	1	0.427	0.37
Harassment: (2 questions, recoded and combined into single ordinal measure, values=0, .5, 1)	<i>Attitudes Toward Military Women</i>	How do you think the military has done in dealing with the problem of sexual harassment? (done too little vs. gone too far) Consider how the military justice system deals with sexual harassment (letting guilty go free vs. punishing the innocent)	0	1	0.246	0.355
<i>Independent Variables</i>						
USAF		Cadet at Air Force Academy	0	1	.133	.339
USMA		Cadet at West Point	0	1	.096	.294
USNA		Cadet at Annapolis	0	1	.299	.458
ROTC		College student enrolled in ROTC	0	1	.054	.227
Air Force		Air Force Officer	0	1	.037	.190
Army		Army Officer	0	1	.090	.286
Navy		Naval Officer	0	1	.069	.254
Marine Corps		Marine Corps Officer	0	1	.020	.141
Gender		Male	0	1	.865	.342
Religion		Self-identified Christian denomination	0	1	.871	.335
Political Affiliation		Republican	0	1	.551	.498
Race		Self-identified as 'white'	0	1	.860	.347
Region		Grew up in the south	0	1	.297	.457

Masculine Culture

Respondents were asked whether they agreed with the statement: 'Even though women can serve in the military, the military should remain basically masculine, dominated by male values and characteristics.' I categorized all respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with this statement as being supportive of masculine culture. The wording of this question is key, for it allowed respondents to address the 'maleness' of the military on a cultural level separate from other more tangible concerns related to gender integration.

Sexual Discrimination

I provide descriptive results for two questions related to individual discriminatory attitudes. Respondents were asked: (1) Would they be equally confident with a female leader, and (2) are women held to easier standards in the military? I categorized these two questions as revealing potentially discriminatory attitudes because they express a concern that women are less capable. Opinions about women's ability to perform as leaders and to meet the same standards are potentially discriminatory to all women in the military and across all organizations. For the ordinal regression, I created a dependent variable for 'Discrimination' that was the mean of the sum of the respondents who said that they would feel more confident with a male leader and who said that women are held to lower standards.

Harassment

Unfortunately, there were no questions on this survey about sexual violence, so my analysis is limited to sexual harassment. The TISS survey asked for opinions on the military's response to the problem of sexual harassment. I characterized the respondents as ambivalent if they stated that the military had 'gone too far' in dealing with the problem of sexual harassment, or if they said they were more concerned that the military justice

system is too often punishing the innocent than if the guilty are going unpunished. For these respondents the primary ‘problem’ of sexual harassment is not its prevalence or the harm done to victims, but what they perceive as an excessive response by the organization that is threatening to the male culture (Firestone and Harris 1999).

Widespread perceptions of a ‘witch hunt’ atmosphere can also contribute to the silencing of victims of sexual harassment and violence (Zimmerman 1995). If there is a general perception that the organization has ‘gone too far’ and is punishing the innocent, then new allegations will be greeted with skepticism and resentment. If this attitude is widespread, it can contribute to a gender climate that is intimidating to victims. For this reason, the survey’s sexual harassment questions provide a measure of gender climate that is also very relevant to sexual violence. I created a new variable for ‘Harassment’ that was the mean of the sum of the respondents who agreed that the military had gone too far or was punishing the innocent in response to sexual harassment.

The analysis of independent variables includes organizational affiliation and demographic characteristics of the respondents. Testing the attitudinal differences of respondents by organization is critical. I created dummy variables for each military organization in the TISS survey. The organizations included in my results are: the Air Force Academy (USAFA), West Point (USMA), the Naval Academy (USNA), ROTC, the Air Force, the Army⁷, the Navy, and the Marine Corps.

I also use logistic regression to control for demographic factors that are known to influence beliefs about gender. I was limited by the characteristics of the TISS sample and the content of the questions, but the sample itself provided natural controls for age, rank, education, and income.⁸ Discussion of the significant demographic variables is presented with the results.

Results

In Table 3, I present the distribution of attitudes by organization and gender.

TABLE 3: Distribution of Attitudes by Organization and Gender

	Students				Officers			
	USAF	USMA	USNA	ROTC	Airforce	Army	Navy	Marine
Masculine Culture								
<i>Even though women can serve in the military, the military should remain basically masculine, dominated by male values and characteristics</i>								
Male	55.08	63.18	60.67	42.98	40.7	42.5	45.12	60
Female	26.87	15.79	25.98	14.71	15.38	15.4	15.79	0
Gender Gap	28.21	47.39	34.69	28.27	25.32	27.2	29.33	60
Gender Discrimination								
<i>If, under present standards, your commander was female, how would you feel?</i>								
Male	24.76	37.39	30.79	31.9	26.74	21.6	27.71	42.31
Female	8.82	7.69	8	0	7.69	0	0	0
Gender Gap	15.94	29.7	22.79	31.9	19.05	21.6	27.71	42.31
Overall, are men and women held to the same standard in the military?								
Male	68.63	74.67	68.45	71.3	59.3	65.2	64.46	68.63
Female	19.12	17.95	22.05	50	0	15.4	15.79	0
Gender Gap	49.51	56.72	46.4	21.3	59.3	49.8	48.67	68.63
Sexual Harassment								
<i>How do you think the military has done in dealing with the problem of sexual harassment?</i>								
Male	32.81	21.74	23.02	10.34	18.6	13	30.54	21.15
Female	14.71	5.13	8.66	11.43	15.38	0	21.05	50
Gender Gap	18.1	16.61	14.36	-1.09	3.22	13	9.49	-28.85
Consider how the military justice system deals with sexual harassment.								
Male	30.48	36.09	36.13	26.96	26.74	20.5	33.93	30.77
Female	22.39	10.26	12.6	11.76	15.38	0	21.05	0
Gender Gap	8.09	25.83	23.53	15.2	11.36	20.5	12.88	30.77

Masculine Culture

The broad pattern that emerges on masculine culture is that cadets felt more strongly than active-duty officers or ROTC students that the military should remain a fundamentally masculine organization. There are two interesting outliers, the male Marine Corps officers⁹ and AFA cadets. Sixty percent of male Marines agreed, whereas the average for the other three services was 43 percent. Within the subset of the academies, the male USAFA cadets were less supportive of masculine culture than other male cadets. At both USAFA and the Naval Academy, there was relatively high female support for male culture.

Discrimination

As shown in Table 3, there is no clear organizational pattern that emerges for the sexual discrimination questions. Between 20-40% of the males stated that they would be more confident with a male leader than with a female. Interestingly, none of the females from the Army, Navy, or ROTC agreed with this, but approximately 8% of the female cadets at all of the academies and within the Air Force sample agreed that they would be more confident with a male commander.

The most significant finding on the standards question is the high percentages (range from 59-75%) of all males who stated that women are held to lower standards. Clearly the perception of a double standard that favors women is widespread, particularly for military men. This has negative implications for women in a community that has high expectations for performance and strong ideals of meritocracy.

Sexual Harassmen

The distribution of attitudes about sexual harassment was fairly consistent across organizations, with less variation than for the culture and discrimination questions. The USAFA and Navy are

notable in that for both questions a higher percentage of both males and females stated that the military has gone too far and is punishing the innocent.

Gender Gap

The most consistent pattern within Table 3 is the magnitude of the gender gap in attitudes. Men in all groups are much more likely to place a high value on masculine culture, to hold discriminatory attitudes, and to believe that the military has gone too far in responding to sexual harassment. The gender gap averaged approximately 43 percentage points for masculine culture, and 38 points for the discrimination questions. The gap was only 16 percentage points for the harassment questions. The gender gap also varied by organization; the average gender gap was greatest for the West Point cadets (32% points), and least for ROTC students (17% points).

The regression analysis focuses on comparing the patterns of gender related attitudes *across organizations*. The first model tests the relationship between organization and three separate dependent variables: masculine culture, discrimination, and sexual harassment. The second model adds demographic independent variables. The results of the ordinal regression are presented in Table 4 (*see next page*).

Masculine Culture

Both models show that Cadets and Marine Corps Officers were significantly more likely to value a highly masculine culture than were ROTC students or the officers from the other services. The results are presented in odds ratios. Naval Academy cadets were 2.09 times as likely as the reference group to agree that the military should retain its masculine culture. Of the demographic characteristics, gender, religion, and political affiliation were significant. Males, Christians, and Republicans were more likely to have strong, positive opinions about masculine culture.

Table 4. Exponentiated Coefficients from Ordinal Regression on Masculine Culture, Gender Discrimination, and Sexual Harassment by Organization and Demographic Variables - with Army Officers as Reference Category

<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>Dependent Variable</i>					
	Masculine Culture		Discrimination		Harassment	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
<i>Organization:</i>						
USAFA	1.509*** (.175)	1.879*** (.223)	1.059 (.127)	1.332* (.168)	1.670*** (.219)	1.878*** (.251)
USMA	2.044*** (.270)	2.565*** (.342)	1.638*** (.225)	2.113*** (.299)	1.480** (.220)	1.615*** (.244)
USNA	2.095*** (.192)	2.766*** (.265)	1.262** (.120)	1.667*** (.167)	1.501*** (.158)	1.684*** (.182)
ROTC	.941 (.154)	1.244 (.205)	1.347 (.228)	2.102*** (.375)	.766 (.158)	.883 (.185)
Air Force	.776 (.150)	.860 (.169)	.911 (.186)	1.012 (.214)	1.071 (.248)	1.121 (.262)
Navy	.966 (.145)	.985 (.149)	1.120 (.175)	1.185 (.191)	1.793*** (.408)	1.821*** (.303)
Marine Corps	2.189** (.575)	1.996** (.531)	1.961* (.534)	1.839* (.508)	1.415 (.407)	1.331 (.385)
Male		5.552*** (.635)		7.748*** (1.037)		2.675*** (.375)
Christian		1.385** (.149)		1.281* (.146)		.916 (.110)
Republican		1.559*** (.115)		1.633*** (.129)		1.230* (.104)
Race (white)		1.154 (.121)		1.092 (.123)		1.127 (.135)
Region (south)		.878 (.096)		.941 (.076)		.893 (.080)
df	7	12	7	12	7	12
model chi2	104.91	414.8	21.99	373.47	36.25	105.72
LR chi2 (diff)		309.89***		351.48***		69.47***

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p.001 (two-tail tests), Standard errors are in parentheses.

Gender Discrimination

Model 1 shows that only West Point, Naval Academy cadets, and Marines held more discriminatory attitudes than the reference group of Army Officers. However, the addition of demographic variables in Model 2 had a large impact on the organizational coefficients. Males were 7.75 times as likely to express discriminatory attitudes as females. In Model 2, I find that cadets at all three academies, ROTC students, and Marine Corps Officers held more discriminatory attitudes.

Sexual Harassment

In both models, Academy cadets and Navy Officers believed more strongly than the other services or ROTC students that the military has gone too far and is punishing the innocent in their organizational response to sexual harassment.

In the full model on each dimension of gender attitudes, I find that cadets, as a group, are more ambivalent toward women in the military than are senior officers.

Discussion

The results indicate that there is a high level of support for masculine culture by respondents from all of the military organizations in the TISS survey. Previous research on military culture offers several organizational explanations for these results. The military population is not representative of the general population. Cultural uniformity is easier to create within this structured, traditional context, and is highly valued. "Leadership, unit cohesion, sacrifice, the group goal is always more important than the individual" (Lipsky 2003:38). As an all-volunteer force,¹⁰ individuals who choose to join now populate the military. Initial entry training for all of the services and for the academies is steeped in indoctrination into tradition. New members are required to memorize and recite facts about the history, symbols, and rituals that are unique to each organization (Lipsky 2003). In addition, the military has rigidly

defined roles and hierarchy—it is a system that clearly delineates power relations and gives enormous authority to seniority (in rank or billet assignment). Members can be easily sanctioned for failure to conform to institutional norms.

With respect to gender, cultures can socialize individuals into stereotypic gender roles, and attach a gender to norms and values so that they are defined by the group as ‘masculine’ (Alvesson & Due Billing 1997). Traditional and conforming cultures like the military would clearly be expected to reproduce the masculine norms that were found at all of the institutions in this study.

Demographic Factors

A brief overview of previous research on demographics and gender related attitudes underscores that the unique demographics of the military population are a factor in the results. The respondents’ gender, political affiliation, and, to a lesser degree, religion, were all significant on the attitudinal dimensions.

Not surprisingly, research has shown that women typically hold more egalitarian views than men towards gender roles (Grant et al 2001, Bryant 2003). This study found a significant gender gap in attitudes across all institutions, but also some notable variations. The wide gender gap indicates that there is a female subculture that has not been assimilated into the dominant culture. The implications of this are that as the minority group, the onus is on women to fit in. The effort to conform to the group norms can create tension and uncertainty for women (Alvesson & Due Billing 1997:108). Women must actively engage in emotional work to function in an unfamiliar masculine culture, while men can take their own assimilation for granted (Martin 1992). There are several plausible explanations for the variations in the magnitude of the gender gap. Of the services, the Air Force has the smallest gap, while USAFA has the smallest gap within the subset of the academies. The Air Force and USAFA are also the youngest organizations within this population, with over 170 years in between founding dates between these and the older services. The ROTC programs are the most integrated by percentage female, and have the small-

est gender gap in attitudes. This lends support for the role of organizational age, period, or cohort effects¹¹ (Aldrich 1999).

A study of U.S. college students (Lottes and Kuriloff 1992) found that religion and political orientation produced significant differences in sex-role measures related to traditional attitudes towards female sexuality, male-dominance, and feminism. The religious affiliation and level of church attendance in the military population differs from that of the general public. Military personnel are more likely to attend church regularly and to hold traditional Christian religious beliefs. They are also more politically conservative and likely to identify themselves with the Republican Party.

Race and region had no effect on attitudes, and in this case the lack of significance is in itself notable. Racial minorities in the military are over-represented relative to the general population. Research on gender role attitudes by race has had mixed conclusions. The literature on race and gender has focused primarily on differences in attitudes between blacks and whites in the United States, so there is insufficient data on Hispanic or Asian racial and ethnic groups. While there is still considerable controversy on racial differences, the majority of the literature supports an expectation that whites hold more traditional gender role attitudes (Kane 2000:429).

Region was a variable of interest because southerners are over-represented in the military (DoD 2002). Southerners are also widely characterized as being more conservative in their political and religious beliefs. Southerners of both genders are perceived to hold more traditional beliefs about appropriate gender-roles (Rice and Coates 1995), but this analysis did not find that translated into ambivalence toward women in the military context.

Hypermasculinity

Some gender theorists have labeled extreme forms of masculine culture 'hypermasculinity.' Within a hypermasculine culture, it is theorized that anything identified as feminine (individuals, personality traits, actions, and even objects) will be devalued as 'other' and counter to the masculine ideal. Hypermasculinity is character-

ized by “expressions of extreme, exaggerated, or stereotypic masculine attributes” (Rosen et al 2003), and can foster violent and criminal behavior. Within the military context, the relationship between hypermasculinity and violence was demonstrated in a study of abuses by a Canadian unit in Somalia (Winslow in Rosen et al 2003). Hypermasculine culture is imparted to recruits and cadets as part of the indoctrination into the military, and is then reinforced through continued socialization with peers (Morris 1996). This culture is associated with denigration and objectification of women. A study of military culture and rape concluded that, “In essence, normative standards of masculinity that emphasize aggressiveness, dominance, and independence, and that minimize sensitivity, gentleness, and other stereotypically feminine characteristics have been found to be associated with heightened propensity to commit rape” (Morris 1996). More recently, the prisoner abuse scandal at Abu Ghraib in Iraq is an example of highly sexualized, demeaning, and in some cases violent, treatment of prisoners by soldiers of both genders. What is it in military culture that would foster or allow this behavior by young soldiers, particularly within a high-stress and isolated environment? It is outside the scope of this paper to examine this question in any detail, but the cultural origins of sexualized abuse within the military context is a vital topic that could benefit from a hypermasculine analysis.

Hypermasculinity theories predict that highly masculine cultures will also have greater prevalence of gender discrimination and sexual harassment. The Rosen et al study tested the relationship between culture, gender integration, and unit cohesion and found a significant negative relationship between hypermasculinity and gender integration. Army soldiers were surveyed at the company level to measure differences by company in ‘gender-related unit climate.’ The survey included measures for cohesion, combat readiness, acceptance of women, discrimination, group hypermasculinity, and support for spouses. The study found that the Army units with greater percentages of women were less likely to have a highly masculine culture. The line between ‘healthy,’ or at least benign, masculine culture and hypermasculine extremes is unclear, and has not been defined by previous research. However,

my results suggest that isolation from mainstream societal influences within predominantly male military institutions may contribute to a form or level of hypermasculinity that has potentially negative connotations for the women within that institution.

Enhancing Subcultures

Another organizational factor may be that the Academies are a form of ‘enhancing subculture’ of their parent military services. In enhancing subcultures, the dominant culture is reproduced in an exaggerated form (Martin 1992). In this case, the results indicate that the masculine norms that are the hallmark of the military are indeed exaggerated at the Academies. Self-selection, the competitive admissions process, and the relative isolation from civilian society at the Academies may reinforce reverence for the traditional masculine culture. Once cadets graduate and serve in the active-duty force, their experiences and external contacts will greatly increase, thereby mediating conformity.

My discussion so far has focused on the overall finding of masculine culture and ambivalence across all groups, but it is more interesting to note the differences. Marines were more supportive of masculine culture and held more discriminatory attitudes, but were similar to the Army officers on sexual harassment. The Naval officers were extreme only on sexual harassment, and the Air Force officers were similar to the Army on all dimensions. The finding of similarity between the Army and the Air Force is surprising in light of the differences in occupational opportunities between these two organizations. The fact that the Air Forces’ occupational integration does not also contribute to other more favorable attitudes is contrary to expectations. One of the reasons cited by proponents of women in combat is that women can only be accepted as full members of the military community once they share in combat missions. That the Air Force attitudes are so strikingly similar to the Army belies this conclusion. Perhaps this effect will take hold in the next generation of officers as more women actually serve in combat jobs, but it has not yet made an impact on attitudes.

Naval officer attitudes were similar to Army in both the culture and discrimination areas, but they were significantly more concerned that the military has gone too far or is punishing the innocent in responding to sexual harassment. This is very likely a backlash from the Tailhook scandal; there was widespread resentment and fear within the male officer community over the organizational response to Tailhook (Zimmerman 1995). They also did not differ from the Army officers on women serving in combat, despite the fact that 94 percent of Navy positions are now open to women. This provides evidence for the role of unique historical experience as one determinant of current attitudes.

The Marine Corps officers place a high value on their masculine culture. However, the relationship between 'being Marine' and discrimination was significant but relatively weak. I conducted regression analysis on the leadership and standards questions in separate tests to look more closely at the Marine Corps officers' results. I found that concerns about female leaders had the strongest effect. The leadership issue may be a direct result of Marines' experience in the most segregated (by both overall percentage and occupation) military organization. Only five percent of Marine Corps officers are women, so relatively few Marines will have had any experience working for a woman.

The results for the ROTC students are mixed. They are similar to the Army officers in their attitudes towards culture and harassment, but they are also likely to trust a female commander and to believe that women are held to easier standards. Unfortunately, the ROTC students come from multiple colleges and the sample is a mix of Army and Navy ROTC students. For this reason, I cannot make any organizational comparisons with the ROTC sample. However, they do serve as an important generational comparison group with the Academy cadets. The fact that the ROTC students are more similar to the Army officers than to their peers of the same age group at the academies demonstrates that the differences between officers and Academy cadets cannot be attributed solely to age or cohort effects.

The findings suggest that the most obvious and immediate remedy for discrimination and harassment may be to increase the per-

centage of women in the military. Across all organizations, the respondents' gender had by far the strongest effect on attitudes towards women. However, increasing the percentages of women in the services would be an enormous policy change that currently has little support within the military or federal government. Legislators and military leaders have identified culture rather than further integration as a primary target for potential organizational changes intended to improve the gender climate. Consequently, I focus my discussion on cultural factors.

I have corroborated the expectation that highly masculine cultures *can* foster an organizational environment that is ambivalent towards women on multiple dimensions. All three of the academies were at the extreme end of this sample in masculine culture, discrimination, and harassment. There may be something about the combination of a total institution and a competitive, physical training environment that puts women at a severe disadvantage. The academies are uniquely isolated institutions that deliberately employ intense and sometimes demeaning training methods in order to completely transform civilian youth into military officers. Unlike ROTC students and active-duty officers, cadets have little interaction with the outside world that can serve to moderate the totality of their indoctrination. As a result, attitudes toward women in particular may become more extreme as women are judged solely on their ability to fit in this highly masculine institution. More extensive longitudinal and comparative studies are needed to better isolate the specific causes of the negative gender climate that I found for all of the academies. However, my findings indicate that the Air Force Academy should not be reviewed in isolation. Similar patterns of gender related attitudes exist at all of the academies. Administrators at West Point and Annapolis would be wise to examine their own institutions, even in the absence of a major scandal.

Cadets' extreme attitudes can also be interpreted using the enhancing subculture model. Some cadets may view themselves as the 'true believers' who must honor the Academy legacy through strict adherence to tradition. Women are a relatively new presence in military organizations, so they are marginal, if not antithetical, to military traditions. Efforts to improve the gender climate using this

theoretical perspective could focus on integrating the academies more effectively into their parent services. A possible response would be to encourage more active-duty enlisted soldiers to apply to the academies. They would bring a 'real-life' perspective of the military that might reduce the creation of the exaggerated form of military culture that currently exists at the academies.

Academy alumni may also play a role in fostering enhancing subcultures. Alumni are active in the screening and socialization of potential Cadets. Those who are no longer in the military may have had limited experience with military women. Alumni are also not subject to sanctions from military leaders for open opposition to the expansion of opportunities for military women. Alumni have been vocal opponents of the integration of women, arguing that the academies have gotten 'soft' (Lipsky 2003).¹²

There is some evidence from this data that the ambivalence towards military women by cadets is not sustained. I conducted an additional analysis of the officers to see if academy *graduates* hold the attitudes that characterized the current cohort of cadets. I found no significant differences in attitudes towards women by commissioning source. While longitudinal data is obviously needed to test this finding to see if this older set of academy graduates were ever actually as negative as the younger cohort, it does show that attitudes in the officer community may converge with experience and seniority. It is also possible that academy graduates with more ambivalent attitudes towards women are selecting out or failing to advance, and leaving the military because they cannot or do not want to adapt to a 'politically correct' environment.

Conclusion

The results of this analysis have interesting organizational implications. The academies as a group showed a pattern of ambivalence towards women across culture, discrimination, and harassment. While my data does not allow any causal inferences to be drawn between these three dimensions, there is theoretical justification for concluding that hypermasculinity may foster discrimination and harassment within the academy context.

However, my findings for the larger military services show that the positive relationship between masculine culture, discrimination, and harassment cannot be assumed to hold for other organizational groups. The variations between the military services in gender attitudes demonstrate that masculine culture by itself may not be a primary causal agent in perpetuating negative outcomes for women. At a minimum, the Marine Corps officers serve as an example of a group that holds strong masculine culture attitudes without the hostility towards sexual harassment programs that was evident at the academies and in the Navy.

Theoretical models of military culture that focus exclusively on masculinity may not accurately predict other attitudes and outcomes for women. Additional research is needed to identify factors seemingly unrelated to gender that may play a role in fostering more positive attitudes towards women. Without this research, there is the danger that policymakers will rely on inadequate models of military culture as they respond to urgent calls for change. This could result in misdirected efforts for cultural overhaul that produce unintended consequences or fail to improve attitudes towards military women.

Notes

¹ The Panel to Review Sexual Misconduct Allegations at the U.S. Air Force Academy was established by Congress in April of 2003.

² The Naval Academy serves as the academy for both the Navy and the Marine Corps, midshipmen (cadets) select a 'Marine Option' and are commissioned as Marine Corps 2nd Lieutenants upon graduation.

³ Positions and occupations differ due to the relative size of different occupations. Women may only be excluded from one or two occupations, but if these occupations represent a significant percentage of the total force (e.g. infantry in the Army and Marine Corps), then the number of positions open to women will be dramatically reduced.

⁴ The percentages cited for occupations open to women reflects only that women are eligible to serve in these occupations; the actual numbers of women remain negligible in most of the open occupations. For more on this see Harrell et al, 2002.

⁵ 105 cases were dropped for missing data. These observations were fairly evenly distributed across all of the variables in my model, so the

deletion did not disproportionately diminish the size of any of the organizational subgroups.

⁶ I also included Reserve officers in my statistical analysis but do not present the Reserve data in this paper due to space limitations.

⁷ The reference category for my regression analysis is Army officers. The Army is the largest service in the United States and has traditionally been a dominant player in setting the norms and future direction of the entire military establishment. As such, they serve as a reasonable baseline for attitudes within the military population. However, it should be noted that this baseline is conservative relative to civilian norms.

⁸ I could not control for age, military rank, education, or income because of the extreme uniformity within each grouping by these characteristics. This was particularly true for the cadet population, where there was almost no variation in age (~21), rank (cadet), and education (all seniors in an elite military college). All respondents were surveyed within a military school. Selection for these schools is based on meeting specific criteria for age, rank, and education. Income levels are based on rank and time in service.

⁹ Marine Corps Officers were the smallest subgroup within the sample, with 55 total Marine respondents. While the percentage of females was representative of the Marine population (4.22% in sample vs. 4.7% in Marine Corps), this meant that the number of female Marine respondents was extremely small (n=2). The female responses have been included in the tables, but not in the discussion as there are too few observations to draw any conclusions.

¹⁰ The U.S. military ended the draft in 1973. The military has service limitations of a maximum of 30 years for all military personnel. Consequently, all military personnel now on active-duty entered by their own volition.

¹¹ It is not possible to test the 'time' effects individually because all three organizations were founded in the same year—thus they are all representative of one organizational age, cohort, and period.

¹² The role of alumni in selection and socialization of Cadets was suggested by several Academy professors in attendance at the Panel on Women in the Force, 2003 Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces & Society Biennial Conference.

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