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ABSTRACT

How do current day military institutional practices structure the daily lives of military wives? To answer this question, I use the theories of greedy institutions, militarization, and the life-course perspective to investigate the effects of deployments, temporary duty assignments, and training exercises, which coalesce to create long-term family separations, as well long work hours and frequent family geographic moves. In total, I conducted in-depth interviews with 38 women and 2 men, used as supplemental data, who were married to active duty U.S. military service members at the time of their interview. I find the military's organization of work creates certain work-family constraints that produces a sense of disorder within military family life. This disorder is constituted and sustained through military wives' experiences of chronic uncertainty, related to when service members will be away for training, a deployment, or when they will be released from work at the end of the day. Due to these constraints, military wives' reproductive labor becomes structured through the ways that institutional practices impact military families. As a result, service members' military work responsibilities become privileged, which reproduces the gendered division of labor. Furthermore, I find that these institutionally produced work-family constraints position military wives in a subordinate social location. To sustain themselves within this social positioning, participants draw upon particular forms of sense-making, that includes perceptions of military authority, comparing reproductive labor with military work, and the use of children as a form of motivation, all of which result in military wives' accommodation and acquiescence of the military's institutional practices. Finally, as a result of these institutional constraints, participants often struggle to maintain a sense of self outside of their family and institutional roles. Negotiating their liminal position, some participants activate institutional discourses related to two military wife stereotypes, the wife who wears her husband's rank, and the dependapotamus, which are operationalized within a process of comparison and disassociation. These stereotypes are constructed within the military's system of stratification, which results in the reproduction of social class within military family communities. Overall, this study demonstrates how the gendered division of labor is enduring within the U.S. military, as well as how military wives' reproductive labor and forms of sense-making sustain the military institution. These findings also document how the work that is required by military wives to sustain themselves within the work-family constraints created by the military, results in the reproduction of the very social conditions they confront on a daily basis.

**MAKING MILITARY WIVES: MILITARIZING SOCIAL REPRODUCTION OF
MILITARY FAMILIES**

By

William James Oliver

M.A. Syracuse University, 2011

M.S. Dowling College, 2008

B.S. State University of New York, College at Brockport, 2004

Dissertation

**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology**

Syracuse University

August 2020

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Acknowledgements

I want to thank my mentor, Andrew London. You have always supported me as a researcher, teacher, graduate student, and friend. In the long process that led to the completion of my dissertation, you patiently read through early chapter drafts that were nearly the length of this entire dissertation. However, you stayed positive and helped me work through my ideas, guiding me in a process that can often seem quite overwhelming. You have included me in research, we've talked about teaching, and you provided me with every opportunity I could think of to develop as a research and teacher.

I would also like to thank Gretchen Purser who, when I found myself without an advisor or committee, helped keep me on track at a time when I had little focus. You are the only remaining original committee member as everyone else has retired or taken jobs elsewhere. I appreciate that you stuck with me. Further, I would like to thank the other members of my dissertation committee: Madonna Harrington-Meyer, Jackie Orr, and Janet Wilmoth. Your helpful and encouraging feedback carried me to the finish at a time when the world was being upended by a global pandemic.

Finally, I would not have completed this dissertation without the love and support of my wife, Jess. You took on so much at home so that I could find time to write. I can never truly explain how grateful I am for that. You keep this family together; you are our foundation. Finally, you have also been my sounding board for even my more outlandish ideas and I always feel so much better after talking things through with you. You certainly have a way of helping me through my most neurotic moments. I would never have completed this dissertation, or this degree without you. And to our son Bram, the "good luck" card you gave me before my

dissertation defense helped calm all my nerves and kept me focused. I kept it with me the entire defense.

This dissertation is dedicated to the participants of this study. Thank you for taking some of your very precious time thoughtfully taking me on a journey through your feelings, emotions, and experiences.

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Chapter I. Introduction

The military is a unique employment setting compare to many civilian jobs. The threat of war, or being deployed for reasons including combat operations or peacekeeping missions is always a reality of military service. In addition to moving to a new duty station¹ every few years, service members often leave for long training exercises, as well as having long work days when not in the field training. However, the organizational make-up of work in the military does not only impact service members. For those married to service members, the military's institutional practices have important structuring effects on their lives as well. Due to these effects, in 2011, First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden launched the Joining Forces initiative to address issues facing military families and veterans. For military spouses, Obama and Biden's work focused around the long-standing issue of military spouses' low employment outcomes. Since military families move to new duty stations across the U.S. and overseas every few years, maintaining proper state license or credential requirements negatively impact military spouses' ability to stay employed when each state they move to has different requirements. As a result of Obama and Biden's initiative, by 2016 all 50 states signed onto the campaign, waving many state requirements for military spouses, heralding the Joining Forces initiative a great success in improving the lives of military spouses (Shane III 2016).

When interviewed about Joining Forces in 2012, First Lady Obama admitted that when she began work on the initiative, she discovered how little she actually knew about the experiences of military spouses, as well as how little the public actually knew (Bruce 2012). Joining Forces may have addressed an important issue faced by those married to U.S. service members. But First Lady Obama's surprise about how little is known about the lives of those

¹ I use the term duty station to describe the location of the unit a service member is assigned to, or a service member's military place of work.

married to U.S. service members raises further important questions about the effects of the military on military families. Currently, in the U.S. military there are 3.5 million individuals on either Active Duty or in the Reserves and National Guard, of which 1.3 million comprise the active component. Additionally, there are approximately 1.6 million military family members linked with Active Duty service members (2018 Demographics: Profile of the Military Community 2018), a group totaling the combined population of nearly 21 U.S. states (Shores and Scott 2005). Yet surprisingly, within academic research contemporary studies exploring the daily lives of these families are limited in number, especially studies that explore military wives' reproductive labor and responsibilities in their families in a post-9/11 U.S. military context. Further, we know very little about how those closely connected with the military, such as military wives, make sense of the influence of the military within their own lives, since they are not official members. In fact, according to Wilmoth and London (2013: 15), "the most understudied individual-level area to date concerns the implications of military service for those whose lives are linked to military personnel and veterans." Given the intensive military operations over the past two decades, it is surprising how little we know about military wives' lived experiences. As a result, in this dissertation I take up the following overarching research question: *how do the military's institutional practices structure the daily lives of military wives?*

Historical Context

To begin investigating this question, I present a brief historical overview of the relationship between the U.S. military, military families, and more broadly the work of women that supports military operations. Women's roles within and on the periphery of the military institution have a long history within the U.S. In this discussion I demonstrate the shifting stance the state and military have historically taken regarding the presence of military families, and

more specifically civilian women, either as military wives or in other military supporting roles in society. As Sherman (1990: 48) suggests, the nostalgic image of the soldier waving goodbye to his family, “leaving his wife standing forlornly in the doorway, children clinging to her skirts, left behind to keep the home fires burning, is charming, but misleading.” Women have provided vital labor to the sustainment of the U.S. military since its inception during the American Revolution (Wilmoth and London *forthcoming*), and continue to do so in the modern era. Images of women left behind to run their family partially accounts for the marginalization of women’s history that documents their contributions to the institution (Small 1998). The first 150 years of U.S. military history demonstrates that the military primarily ignored, at least in an official capacity, the presence of military wives and their families. According to Burland and Lundquist (2013), the saying, “if the Army wanted you to have a wife it would have issued you one” sums up the military’s historical stance on service members having families until the military draft ended and the era of the All-Volunteer-Force began in 1973.

From the official creation of an American military to its early operations in the West, women and their families are historically interconnected with the U.S. military. During the American Revolution, military policies did not make reference to families (Albano 1994). However, throughout the war it is estimated that more than 20,000 women provided important support to the American Army either through their work to support their homes or as camp followers (Small 1998). Both during the American Revolution, as well as during the U.S. government’s occupation of westward territories, families accompanied service members, and in some cases, wives and children received partial food rations for services they provided to the armies they accompanied (Albano 1994; Wherry 2000). Such food rations mark one of the first times the military enacted policy directed at families. Though payment for these services was

often left to the discretion of husbands, even though women provided vital support for service members and other families (Albano, 1994).

Regardless of the support women provided for their husbands and the larger military institution, the military's stance on wives and their families was either to ignore their presence or to officially work to limit their presence. In 1847, the U.S. military enacted policies that only allowed single men to enlist. During the Civil War, women in the North and South ran their farms while their husbands or other family members were away (Anderson 2007; Campbell 2013). In the South, military pay was insufficient to support many farming families, resulting in wives leaving their farms to seek support from social institutions (Campbell 2013). In addition to running families, over 20,000 societies were created by women in the North to provide supplies and support for the war effort (Campbell 2013). Due to the public role of women, both in running their homes, and in their work to support the war, the military was forced to address the work of women. As a result, the U.S. government provided an ad hoc response to military wives (Albano 1994). For the first time, widows received pensions and financial support was provided to families with wounded soldiers (Campbell 2013). While the government addressed issues related to families and military casualties, for the wives who traveled with their husband, providing direct support of the Northern army, officially, the military did not address their presence (Albano 1994).

The experience of military wives in relation to official recognition often operated through the military's system of stratification. Overall, when the military began officially acknowledging the presence of wives and families, there were few official policy changes. According to Albano (1994), in 1891, the military explored the living conditions of military families and the Army began considering the presence of families through changes in pay for enlisted soldiers. Yet, the

evaluation of these living condition did not result in any documented changes (Wherry 2000). During this period, the military also began acknowledging that many senior noncommissioned officers (NCOs) or officers would marry. As a result, access to service members' benefits were offered to those married to senior NCOs or officers. However, officially, policies that restricted enlistment to single males continued, as did policies designed to discourage reenlistment from married service members (Albano 1994).

The need for personnel in the buildup to World War I and World War II brought about more significant changes to military family policies. During these periods, access to housing benefits, rehabilitation benefits for service members and their family members, and increased pay for married service members were enacted (Albano, 1994). While these policy changes demonstrate an institutional recognition of the presence of families, policies discouraging or prohibiting the enlistment of married men remained intact, especially during the peacetime, inter-war years (Albano 1994). However, due to labor shortages during these wars, the military and other state agencies began to take a different stance on women's roles not only in direct relation to the military, but in the civilian labor market. For example, during WWII the War Manpower Commission and the Office of War Information recruited women into wartime manufacturing jobs, while countering public opposition to women filling these types of jobs (Yesil 2004). Notably, these trends demonstrate that as the state and military's needs historically change, institutional recognition and support for women's labor in relation to these needs also changes.

Not until the 1960's was there significant change in military policies that demonstrated a full acknowledgement that service members have families and that these families accompany them during their military tours. The most significant change to military family policies began in the 1960's with the sustainment of a large standing military during the Cold War (Albano 1994).

Additionally, in 1973 the end of military conscription and the creation of the All-Volunteer Force (AVF) ushered in a new era in the history of the U.S. military. During the World Wars and continuing through the Cold War, draftees generally left their families to fulfill their mandatory obligations to the military, and then reintegrated into civilian life, rejoining their families once their tours of duty were completed. Also, prior to and during the Vietnam War, many service members put off marriage or starting families until after their military tour (Clever and Segal 2013; Cooney and Hogan 1991; Goldscheider and Waite 1986). As a consequence, the number of military families who accompanied service members to their duty stations remained relatively small compared to today (Albano 1994; Segal and Segal 2006). The only exception was for senior ranking officers who were the most likely to be married and have children (Clever and Segal 2013). As the need for a large military force continued throughout the Cold War, the military began taking steps to institutionalize the role of military wives through volunteer roles in family support programs (Clever and Segal 2013), finding a way to capitalize on the presence of wives to support military family needs. Such institutional change represents one of the first times official policies began integrating civilian women more openly into the institution, using military wives' labor as a way to support institutional goals.

The move from a conscription to a volunteer military also ushered in a new occupational framework, where the use of volunteers meant the military needed to recruit and retain service members rather than draft them. Organizing itself in an occupational framework and moving away from an institution organized around mandatory service, the military reorganized itself in order to become more appealing to potential recruits (Moskos Jr. 1986). Within this occupational framework, the military became an ever-growing source of long-term employment for service members, and as a result, the number of families that now accompany service members has

greatly grown (Moskos Jr. 1986). Additionally, without a draft the military began competing with the civilian labor market to recruit volunteers. Due to this new competition, the military implemented a wide range of family policies including health care, subsidized housing costs, child care, and military schooling to entice individuals to enlist (Lundquist and Xu 2014). The intent of these policies was to provide incentives to potential recruits. Unlike the period of conscription, when the military discouraged the presence or creation of military families, in the contemporary period, military service encourages marriage, primarily due to these fringe benefits reserved for those legally married to a service member (Lundquist and Xu 2014).

With the increase in military marriages and the formation of military families, the military found itself in a bind. The move to a volunteer military and the subsequent increase in families meant the military lost many of its unencumbered service members. Since a majority of service members now have families, they have new responsibilities that go beyond simply their military duties (Enloe 2000; Kohen 1984; Mederer and Weinstein 1992). As a result, a large concern that drives many military family policies is the potential impact families have on the retention and recruitment of service members (Jans 1989). In response, military family policies tend to be “reactively” created to address family concerns in an effort to prevent families from impeding the military’s mission, while also remaining desirable to those who are married, or who plan to marry, and/or have children (Kohen 1984:401). Thus, since the creation of the AVF, military family policies have evolved from barely acknowledging the presence of wives and families to a more focused concern regarding how their presence impacts recruitment, retention, unit cohesion, and military readiness² (Enloe 1988, 2000; Harrison and Laliberté 1994).

² Military readiness is a widely used term to describe the military’s capability to engage in military operations at any given time. This includes maintaining both equipment and training so that all personnel and equipment are always ready for war.

This brief overview of the varying ways women are historically connected with the U.S. military demonstrates the institution's evolving stance on this topic. According to Wherry (2000), historically, the military moved extremely slow in its recognition of the presence and impact of military wives, and other civilian women on the sustainment of the institution. Similarly, research on military wives and families has also followed at a similar pace (Wherry 2000). In fact, there are few studies of military families or studies that focus specifically on military wives before the start of the AVF era. In many ways, the potential impact of the presence of either entire families, or having married service members seems to be a factor in driving the underlying focus of a significant portion of the research on this topic. New institutional concerns regarding how the presence of wives and families will impact the military's ability to retain service members and sustain military readiness are common underlying questions found in investigations on military families (see Bourg and Segal 1999; Bowen 1989; Jans 1989; Kirby and Naftel 2000; Lakhani and Hoover 1997). I do not suggest these studies do not care about the needs of families, but family needs are often conflated with military needs. In this study, I step away from these underlying concerns, and instead focus on the narratives of current military wives, to explore how they experience the military. Rather than considering how the military is impacted by families, or how the effects on families in turn impacts the military, my focus is on how military wives are impacted by the military, and how they navigate and sustain themselves within these institutional effects.

The Current Study

Questions regarding the connections between paid and unpaid forms of work and families has a long history within sociological and feminist research. Sociological studies of these dynamic social relations range from studies of women's unpaid labor in the second shift, and

how these women sustain themselves within the second shift (Hochschild 2003), the continuation of domesticity within American households (Williams 2000), family challenges related to time, family labor, and employment (Hochschild 1997; Gerson and Jacobs 2004), to women's exit from high paying jobs in the so called "opt-out" revolution (Stone and Hernandez 2012). Studies focusing on these topics greatly contribute to our understanding of how work and family intersect to shape our lives. Yet, research like these are scarce within the literature on military families, and more specifically studies that focus specifically on the experiences of military wives. Several studies in the late 1990's and early 2000's in the U.S. military (Harrell 2000a, 2000b, 2001) and Canadian military contexts (Enloe 1988, 2000; Harrison and Laliberté 1994) provide insight into the lives of military wives, and their roles in the home in relation to these militaries organizational structure. Historically, these studies are from very different pre-9/11 militaries when compared to the current military context. Several more recent studies address this topic in the British Reserves (Basham and Catignani 2018) and British Active Duty component (Hyde 2015, 2016). Though, we know very little about the daily lives of contemporary military wives whose husbands are still serving in the U.S. military. The aim of this dissertation is to begin to address this paucity of research by using in-depth interviews with current military wives. Rather than exploring their lives after they separate from the institution (Burland and Lundquist 2013), this study investigates their daily lives while their husbands are still serving.

Institutional Practices

Through their marriage, military wives face a unique set of institutionally produced challenges specific to the military context. Institutional practices³, or the different ways military work takes shape includes deployments, training exercises, long and sometimes erratic work hours, as well as frequent family moves to new duty stations (Castaneda and Harrell 2008). Segal (1986) and Harrison and Laliberté (1993) connect these practices with common work-family constraints experienced by military wives. These constraints include spouse's risk of injury or death, frequent family separations, and normative constraints that encompass a range of military expectations regarding military wives' behavior, such as volunteering in military family support programs. The effects of these practices and work-family constraints on military wives are documented in the U.S., Canadian, and British militaries. Studies demonstrate similar outcomes within these contexts over recent decades. For instance, in terms of geographic moves, referred to as Permanent Change of Station (PCS), as service members are re-assigned to new duty stations across the U.S. or overseas, recent studies demonstrates military wives' ability to find or maintain employment is significantly impeded (Booth 2003; Castaneda and Harrell 2008; Cooke and Speirs 2005; Hosek et al. 2002). As a result, initiatives such as Joining Forces was

³ According to Selznick (1957: 18), an organization is an impersonal tool that is used by a group of individuals to meet certain or several goals. An organization is thus "expendable" once the goals have been obtained. However, an organization ceases to be simply a tool when it becomes "infused with value," which is the process of institutionalization (Selznick 1957: 17). Institutionalization occurs throughout the history of an organization, and is a process where members of an organization become committed to the organization and find significance in the organization itself. Through the functional social processes operating in an organization, such operations become commonplace and begin to structure and give meaning to the organization. When this process occurs, an organization takes on a life of its own, becoming resistant to change, and accordingly takes on a specific identity that is maintained by its members. For example, Selznick (1957: 19) uses the example of the Marine Corps' maintenance of an institutional framework that operates to preserve its "identity" as an undefeatable fighting force. Once the Marine Corps developed this identity and its members became devoted to this identity, the Marines became more than an organization or an expendable tool, but an institution with value and meaning. Importantly, Selznick (1957: 20) argues that, "organizations do not so much create values as embody them. As this occurs, the organization becomes increasingly institutionalized." Thus, the social processes that are part of and structure the organization, as well as the purpose of the organization, takes on meaning that the institution represents. Institutional practices can represent many different features of an institution, from informal practices that sustain the value and meaning of an institution, to the institution's more formal organizational structure. Here, my focus is on the organizational structure of the military, considering how the military organizes work through specific institutional practices.

developed. However, older studies demonstrate family and service member separations due to training, ship deployments, or combat deployments structure military wives' reproductive labor, often leaving the majority of parenting and domestic responsibilities to military wives (Enloe 1988, 2000; Harrell 2000a, 2000b, 2001; Harrison and Laliberté 1993; Mederer and Weinstein 1992). Yet, unlike employment outcomes, we know little about how these institutional practice shape military wives' lives in the current military context. As I discuss in the following sections, studies investigating such effects are over 20 years old and conducted before 9/11 and the start of the Global War on Terror (GWOT)⁴.

In Chapter 3, I take up this topic to investigate how current day military institutional practices, or the organization of military work shape military wives' family responsibilities. One of the most common feelings described by participants in this study is how military work creates the sense of instability and uncertainty within family life, coalescing in the overall experience of instituted disorder (Auyero 2011; Bourdieu 2000). Thus, in this chapter I ask the questions, *how do current day institutional practices construct and sustain a sense of instituted disorder within military wives' daily lives? And, further, how do these institutional practices related to the organization of military work structure participants' reproductive labor and role in their family, positioning them in a subordinate social location?*

Making Sense of Being a Military Wife

Military wives' actual motivations for taking on the brunt of the reproductive labor tends to vary within the limited research on this topic. Two 20-year-old studies that address this question focus on women married to officers. According to Harrell (2001), institutional

⁴ I use the term Global War on Terror to demarcate the historical time period starting with the events of 9/11 and continuing to the present. During this historical period U.S. military operations greatly increased, starting with the invasions and occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq, and continuing in numerous forms to the present day. The experiences investigated in this study are shaped by these military operations in important ways, and should be interpreted and understood as experiences specific to this time period.

expectations of military wives' behavior often forces wives to take on what they perceive as a "good" military wife role. While no longer official policy, military wives' fulfillment of this role was once evaluated by officer promotion boards, which Harrell (2001) suggests has lingering effects within the military wife ranks today. However, regardless of the institutional expectations, Mederer and Weinstein (1992) argue that wives married to officers maintain varying degrees of commitment to their respective support roles based on their level of commitment to traditional gender ideologies. Since the military wife role is strongly based in a gendered division of labor, wives who hold less traditional gender ideologies also tend to be less committed to their role within the military (Mederer and Weinstein 1992). In more recent work, Basham and Catignani (2018) find military wives of British Reservists make sense of their institutionally constructed family roles during a deployment by simply asserting they are "just making it work."

Questions remain in terms of how military wives develop this form of acquiescence, as well as the strategies they use to make sense of and accommodate institutionally produced work-family constraints. Overall, there is not only limited research on the impact of current day military's institutional practices on military wives, but we also know very little about how military wives make sense of these institutional practices and their structuring effect. Through a lens of militarization, feminist scholars such as Enloe (1988, 2000) and Hyde (2016) argue military wives are socially positioned in a subordinate social location as a result of the way the military structures their lives. Military wives are placed within a traditional gender role in their family, taking on roles that both supports their families, but also alleviating service members of family responsibilities so they can focus on their military responsibilities. As a result, military

wives find themselves within a liminal position, formally outside, yet providing important labor that supports the military (Enloe 1988, 2000; Hyde 2015, 2016).

In considering their social positioning, we know very little about how military wives navigate the subordinating effects of the military's institutional practices. I find participants draw upon specific forms of emotion management as a way sustain themselves within the gendered division of labor, while also comparing themselves with other military wives they label as "bad" wives. This form of comparison and differentiation operates through military wife stereotypes. In considering these methods of navigating the effects of the military within their lives, I ask the following questions. In Chapter 4, *how do participants talk about, make sense of, and acquiesce their social position and subsequent reproductive labor in relation to the work-family constraints produced by the military? Essentially, what does it take to sustain oneself within a subordinate social position?* Further, in Chapter 5 I ask the question, *how do participants sustain a sense of self in relation to their family labor, institutional roles, and the greater military institution through the use of military wife stereotypes, and how does the use of these stereotypes reproduce the military's system of stratification?*

Key Concepts and Theoretical Frameworks

In this section, I define two key concepts to this study, social reproduction and reproductive labor. I then explore the greedy institution framework, processes of militarization, and the principles of location in time and place and linked-lives found within the life-course perspective. In discussing these theoretical frameworks, I demonstrate how families, military wives' lived experiences, and the military institution are interconnected. These concepts and theoretical frameworks create a foundation for this study's analyses. Within each analytical chapter, I also present a condensed review of specific literature important to the topics explored

and analyses conducted in that particular chapter. Taken together, the discussion and literature review found below, and the individual discussions found within each analytical chapter provide a comprehensive overview of research on military wives, and the frameworks that inform my analyses. As I document in each analytical chapter, the empirical findings in these chapters demonstrates how the social processes of these theoretical frameworks operate within military wives' daily lives. As a result, these theories not only provide an overarching perspective for analyzing the connection between the military and military families, but each chapter shows how these theories play out in daily life.

Gendered Labor: Social Reproduction and Reproductive Labor

In feudal societies production and reproduction both occurred within the home (Glenn 1992; Secombe 1974). The Industrial Revolution and the rise of capitalism led to a split in the labor process, separating production and reproduction, where production moved into the industrial sector, while reproduction remained primarily in the home (Secombe 1974). This division created a shift in men and women's positions in society, constructing an ideological division along gendered lines. Economic productivity was considered legitimate work through its association with waged labor, becoming connected with the male "public sphere," while work labeled as non-market activity, or domestic labor, became associated with women and the "private sphere" (Glenn 1992). As a result of this new waged labor system, which helped create these ideological "separate spheres," the split between domestic and industrial labor led to the erasure of domestic work and the conceptualization of this form of work as non-economic and thus essentially non-legitimate or non-productive work (Secombe 1974).

Rather than actually splitting into two separate spheres, domestic labor was still, as it is today, integrally tied to industrial labor in several important ways. According to Marx and

Engels (1969: 31), “every system of production involves both the production of the necessities of life, and the reproduction of the tools and labor power necessary for production.” The process, or work required to sustain life in this manner, both on a daily basis and intergenerationally, is referred to as social reproduction (Glenn 1992). Social reproduction includes, “activities and attitudes, behaviors and emotions, responsibilities and relationships” involved in this process (Laslett and Brenner 1989). For Marxists, social reproduction reproduces social systems of inequality, primarily focusing on the reproduction of social class. In the 1970’s, this ideological split between the production of goods and the production of labor power moved to the forefront of Marxist-feminist research aimed at challenging the invisibility, and thus delegitimized labor of women in the domestic sphere (Duffy 2007). However, even as more women entered waged forms of labor, their domestic roles remained (Holmstorm 1981). As a result, social reproduction is used as a tool to understand systems of gendered inequality, framing social reproduction is a legitimate form of work (Laslett and Brenner 1989). Reproductive labor is defined as the work required within the process of social reproduction. For instance, according to Glenn (1992:1), reproductive labor includes, “activities such as, purchasing household goods, preparing and serving food, laundering and repairing clothing, maintaining furnishings and appliances, socializing children, providing care and emotional support for adults, and maintaining kin and community ties.”

As a result, capital benefits from domestic labor through the family’s consumption of goods and services, as well as the production of labor power through the work required to sustain life and support industrial workers (Secombe 1974). Where capital pays for the labor of one, it also benefits from the labor of both the industrial worker and the domestic worker, who provides vital labor that also produces surplus value (Benson 1969). Therefore, domestic labor is

productive labor, which is essential to the capitalist system (Secombe 1974). In addition to employers, men also benefit from the organization of reproductive labor in this manner. For men, this arrangement allows them to focus less on the home and domestic work, while benefiting from women's reproductive labor (Glenn 1992). Additionally, when alleviated of domestic responsibilities, men focus on their own employment without the distractions of also having to take on responsibilities in the home. Such a system benefits both men and their employers as this produces an unencumbered worker arrangement (Williams 2000).

As the postindustrial economy challenges the financial stability of many families, there has been rise in dual-earner families in the U.S., especially in the middle-class where many families are no longer able to sustain themselves on the income of a single earner. This growing trend has led many scholars to consider what this means for the gendered division of labor and the roles that men and women play in the home and at work. While aspects of the social relations between work and families have changed, many contend the gendered roles within the home have not disappeared (Coltrane 2000; Gazso-Windle and McMullin 2003; Gerson and Jacobs, 2004; Hochschild 1997; Jones 2012; Stone and Lovejoy 2004; Williams 2000). For example, women's participation in paid employment has significantly increased, while the roles of women and men in the home has hardly changed, leading to what Hochschild (2003) terms a "stalled revolution." According to Williams (2000), domesticity has not disappeared, but has simply transformed as the economy changed and as women's employment statuses changed. The roles of "homemaker" and "breadwinner," regardless of women's employment, remain "unbending" (Williams 2000: 6). As a result, processes of social reproduction and reproductive labor remain primarily organized within the gendered division of labor.

In addition, rather than cultural norms following suit, traditional gender roles and gendered assumptions about workers and their responsibilities at home and at work continue to structure assumptions employers make about workers (Williams, 2000). For example, Williams (2000) argues the fundamental structures of domesticity continue to operate in the workplace, which impacts the division of labor at home. Despite the increase in “family friendly” workplace policies, employers still assume the workplace and the home are “separate spheres” where women’s primary role is the family caretaker and men’s primary role is the family breadwinner (Jones 2012; Williams 2000). Such assumptions greatly impact employment opportunities for women, such as being “mommy tracked,” as well as expectations that male employees will privilege their workplace responsibilities above their family responsibilities, because there is an assumed family caretaker at home (Gerson and Jacobs 2004; Williams 2000).

Similar to this work in the civilian context, I conceptualize the military family and military wives’ reproductive labor within Marxist-feminist critiques of domesticity and relations of power constructed through society’s modes of production. According to Smith (1975), the social position of women must be analyzed in relation to the family, which in turn must be analyzed in relation to the modes of production. Thus, I analytically frame military wives’ reproductive labor, as well as the ways they make-sense of this labor, in relation to the organization of military work and its structuring effect on military families. This relationship is often separated by scholars, focusing on one facet of this relationship, but leaving the full interconnecting relationship between the positions of women in the family and the modes of production unexamined. For instance, Cohen (2004) argues many examinations of women and the family may focus on unpaid gendered work, but often do not examine how this is tied to the organization of work in the current capitalist system. Such parceling is often due to the

dichotomy of separate spheres that structures research agendas, leading scholars to conceptualize the family as a separate, non-economic entity (Thorne 1992). Ferree (1990) continues this sentiment by contending that when such parceling occurs, the important links between family structure and the organization of work are obscured, as well as the construction and maintenance of unequal forms of paid and unpaid labor. The way work is organized in a society reproduces itself and its power relations within the family; a contention that challenges frameworks that examine the family and family roles as separate from the modes of production. Overall, the family is a site of domestic activity, but also a place for economic activity (Enloe 1988, 2000; Philipps 2008; Smith 1975), just as I contend in this dissertation that the military family is a site of domestic activity, but also a site of military activity, that is not separate from, but created through the interconnection between the military and military families.

The Military and Family as Greedy Institutions

In this section, I discuss the greedy institution framework, which is one the most common theoretical frameworks used to investigate military wives. I first discuss how Coser (1974) defines the greedy institution and then explore how this framework is used in military wife research. Overall, I suggest the greedy institution provides a useful analytical tool for mapping the institutional work-family constraints experienced by military wives. Yet, within the body of literature using this framework, the most thorough investigations of military wives' experiences are at least 20 years old. Additionally, based in role theory and structuralist forms of conceptualizing social institutions, I also discuss limitations of this theory, which connect with conceptualizations regarding how families and forms of work are understood. These limitations are also discussed in Chapters 3, 4 and 6, where my analyses within these chapters work to add a

more nuanced way of conceptualizing how processes of greedy institutions operate, without reproducing separate sphere ideologies.

The concept of the greedy institution originates from Coser's (1974) investigation of social institution's attempts to harness commitment and loyalty from their members. Coser (1974) argues individuals have the ability to expend only a certain amount of resources, such as time and energy, towards numerous social institutions. For many, the groups or organizations they belong to only demand so much, allowing individuals to maintain ties with many different groups (Coser 1974). However, Coser (1974: 4) defines certain social institutions as greedy institutions, which he suggests maintain "omnivorous" demands upon its members. As a result, greedy institutions are constantly competing with one another for the resources of their members, vying for members' commitment and loyalty (Coser 1974). If institutions are able to successfully incorporate members within their social boundaries, in turn placing institutional pressure upon members, then these institutions will have more control over the expenditure of its members' resources. Institutional pressure ensures members do not direct their time or energy toward other competing institutions (Coser, 1974). Commitment and loyalty are maintained through members' identification with a specific role-set. According to Coser (1974: 7-8), "occupants find their identity anchored in the symbolic universe of the restricted role-set of the greedy institution." For example, according to Coser (1974) women have a socially constructed role in the family, and the more they connect with that role, the more the family's greedy needs will be met.

While there are similarities with Goffman's (1961) total institution, these two frameworks should not be conflated (Segal 1986). Coser (1974) suggests members of a greedy institution do not have to be physically located within the institution, like in the total institution, because greedy institutions use symbolic boundaries in order to separate members from outside

influence. Coser (1974) contends most institutions can never fully separate individuals from the effects of other social institutions, or from the outside world. Individuals are always divided between multiple institutions. Therefore, greedy institutions “seek exclusive and undivided loyalty and they attempt to reduce claims of competing roles and status positions on those they wish to encompass within their boundaries” (Coser, 1974: 4). Unlike Goffman’s (1961) total institution that constructs physical boundaries between individuals and the outside social world, greedy institutions use social structures, pressures, or demands to gain loyalty. For instance, in a family setting organized along traditional gender roles, women face greedy demands from the family, which interferes with their ability to find employment. Employment thus competes with the family for women’s time and energy (Coser 1974). If a woman identifies with the gendered division of labor, and therefore does not seek outside employment, then the greedy demands of the family will be more readily met. An important feature of this conceptualization is that social institutions are viewed as separate, rather than socially interconnected. An important limitation I address later in this section.

In the context of military wife studies, the greedy institution framework is commonly used as a theoretical lens. Segal’s (1986) assertion that the military and family represent two greedy institutions is the first publication to use this framework within the military context. Over the past 34 years, Segal’s (1986) article influenced much of the theoretical framing of this topic (see: Bourg and Segal 1999; Bowen 1989; Harrell 2000a, 2000b, 2001; Harris 2009; Vuga and Juvan 2013; Ziff 2017; Ziff and Garland-Jackson 2020). In this foundational article, Segal (1986) conceptualizes the military and military families as two competing greedy institutions demanding a great deal from military wives and service members alike. Segal (1986) argues both institutions expect large amounts of one’s time, energy, and overall devotion. In this context, the

military and the family are conceptualized as *separate* institutions that are in constant competition. Military wives consequently find themselves stuck in-between the military's demands and the demands of their family (Bourg and Segal 1999; Segal 1986).

Using this framework, the family and military are conceptualized as greedy institutions in different ways. According to Segal (1986) the military places greedy demands on the family, expecting it to adapt to the demands of the military and support service members military obligations, such as long work hours, or absences created by deployments. The family places greedy demands on women in particular, who are societally expected to fulfill the primary role as domestic workers and parents (Coser 1974; Segal 1986). This framework is conceptualized through a heterosexual nuclear family form and the traditional division of labor, which is justified by the assertion that women face constraints in the labor market hindering their ability to change their socially expected family role through employment (Coser 1974; Segal 1986). The adaptation of either the military (Bourg and Segal 1999) or families (Segal, 1986) to oppositional institutional demands is commonly argued as an approach to solving the conflict between these greedy institutions. For example, Segal (1986) suggests if women maintain their own employment, service members will need to take up more responsibilities in the home, which will counter the greedy demands of the family placed on military wives. For this to happen, Segal (1986) argues the military must carefully consider the needs of military families within its policies. In doing so, the military will further gain the commitment of military wives, because the demands of the family will be somewhat lessened.

Mapping Work-Family Constraints

Overall, Segal's (1986) use of the greedy institution influences how many researchers conceptualize the dynamic relationship between the military and military families. As

demonstrated by the small, but influential body of literature I discuss below, the concept of the greedy institution is useful in mapping the work-family constraints experienced by military wives, especially in relation to military demands that are often greater and take form differently than the demands of many civilian occupations (Shores and Scott 2005). Some of the most comprehensive studies of the experiences of women married to service members were conducted in the late 1990's and early 2000's. Other than Segal's (1986) foundational article, research conducted by Margaret Harrell in the late 1990's represents perhaps the most widely cited research. In her work, Harrell (2000a, 2000b, 2001) documents the institutional demands or the greediness of both the military and the family by exploring not only the domestic labor taken up by women married to soldiers, but also the institutional expectations related to military wives' behavior. Overall, Harrell (2000a, 2000b, 2001) finds that military wives, regardless of their husband's military rank, take up the brunt of the domestic responsibilities and run their families, as service members focus on their military duties. In terms of institutionalized expectations of behavior, Harrell (2001) contends Army wives are expected to volunteer large amounts of their time within the Army community. This is especially the case for officers' wives, whose volunteer work sometimes resembles a full-time career. Such volunteer labor often includes attending or participating in ceremonial functions, unit morale and family activities, attending or hosting social events, as well as fulfilling the role of homemaker and family leader not only during deployments or extended training exercises, but on a daily basis (Harrell 2001). According to Harrell (2001), wives married to officers worry about how their behavior will impact their husbands' careers, which is the primary reason they fulfill their expected military wife roles.

Conversely, women married to junior enlisted soldiers are expected to fulfill a different Army wife role. While still participating in unit functions and providing domestic labor in their families, they are also expected to adhere to the Army's rank structure and thus submit to the informal authority of women married to Army officers, as well as other aspects of the overall hierarchy created by the Army's rank structure (Harrell 2000a, 2000b). Senior enlisted wives find themselves in between these two roles, expected to participate and volunteer, because their husbands are also leaders within the enlisted ranks, but these expectations are somewhat limited or can vary when compared with those of officers' wives (Harrell 2000a).

The rank of a service member highly correlates with social class within the military community, which is also investigated in these studies. Since military pay is organized based on military rank, as one's rank increases, so does one's pay. Additionally, officers and enlisted service members have different pay scales, meaning that junior officers earn higher incomes than some mid-level NCOs. Thus, military families are organized socially and economically through service members' rank. Harrell (2000b, 2001) documents the class differences between lower enlisted wives and officer's wives originating from the military's pay system, as well as the aforementioned military expectations that create "unofficial" guidelines for military wives married to senior NCO's or officers to act as leaders in military family communities. Additionally, Harrell (2000a) finds that women married to junior enlisted soldiers are less likely to be employed, which in part is due to having young children and a lower income not best spent on childcare.

As a result of these social class differences, there are several stereotypes of military wives that take shape through the military's system of stratification. Women married to lower enlisted soldiers face the stereotype of being uneducated and bad with financial decisions

(Harrell, 2000b). This is a perception that matches with the current day stigmatizing of civilian women of color in the lower class or living in poverty (Fraser and Gordon 1994). On the other hand, wives married to officers are more likely to have a college degree, and due to their volunteer work, are more likely to maintain social ties within military family communities (Harrell, 2001). These wives face stereotypes similar to white, upper-middle, and upper-class women who enact their status (Harrell 2001). Other than Harrell's (2001) investigation of this topic, there is only one contemporary study that explores the use or construction of military wife stereotypes. In Ziff and Garland-Jackson's (2020) study, military wives draw upon military wife stereotypes to differentiate themselves from what they define as "bad" military wives, in order to avoid stigmatization. In their boundary work, wives frame themselves as different than other wives who are accused of wearing their husband's rank, which they refer to as "the status hungry wife." Military wives also use the "dependapotamus" label, which is a highly stigmatizing stereotype constructed from civilian stereotypes of welfare recipients, in an effort to further create boundary work between themselves and other military wives (Ziff and Garland-Jackson 2020). The use of these stereotypes in relation to issues of social class and military wives' boundary work is investigated in Chapter 5 of this study.

In recent years, use of the greedy institution in investigations of military wives' experiences in the U.S. military context are limited. Instead, many investigations of this type have shifted their focus to other nation's militaries. For example, Vuga and Juvan (2013) study the military and family demands in the Serbian military, asking which institution is greedier, the military or the family. They conclude while both place great demands on military wives and service members, the military's demands are greedier (Vuga and Juvan 2013). In the context of the Israeli Defense Forces, Erna-Jona (2011) investigates how the greediness of the military

shapes the division of labor in the family by comparing families with a male service member to families with a female service member. Erna-Jona (2011) finds that for servicemen the greedy demands of the military create a traditional gendered division of labor at home, while for servicewomen, a more equal share of domestic labor takes shape. Thus, servicewomen are not alleviated of domestic responsibilities like servicemen. Basham and Catignani (2018) explore the labor of British Army Reserve wives, considering how their reproductive labor supports the military's mission. In terms of these wives' sense-making, Basham and Catignani (2018) find these military wives often adopt a standpoint that they are "just making it work" when describing their family responsibilities in relation to service members' deployments; a form of acquiescence I investigate in Chapter 4. While Basham and Catignani (2018) use the greedy institution framework, they also extend their analyses by utilizing concepts of militarization, which I also adopt in this dissertation.

Limitations of this body of literature

Overall, studies similar to Harrell (2000a, 2000b, 2001), which map the work-family constraints faced by military wives are limited. While the greedy institution is still utilized, scholars in the U.S. context have moved to investigating other topics. For instance, Ziff's (2017) study of the experience of surrogacy among military wives. As a result, there are no recent studies that continue the work of Harrell and explore reproductive labor in the contemporary period. This means we know very little about military wives' experiences of work-family constraints in the contemporary, post-9/11 U.S. military. Given both institutional and societal changes over the past 20 years there is a need for more up-to-date research on this topic. We also know little about how military wives make sense of the influence of the military within their

lives, nor how they navigate the greediness of the military, which I argue below, structures the greediness of the family.

Additionally, there is paucity of sociological literature that investigates the effects of the military's system of stratification within military family communities and how this structures social relations. The effects of military rank on military wives' lived experiences represents an important and extremely significant feature of military wives' lives we know little about, especially given the connections between rank and social class relations. Harrell's (2000a, 2000b, 2001) investigations highlight the influence of rank, but in the context of the late 1990's U.S. military. We know very little about how wives' make sense of, and navigate the experience of rank in the contemporary U.S. military. Therefore, I explore this topic through the use of military wife stereotypes in Chapter 5.

Finally, the greedy institution is useful in demonstrating the strain that is placed upon military wives by the military institution and mapping the work-family constraints that are experienced by military wives (Bourg and Segal 1999; Bowen 1989; Harris 2009; Vuga and Juvan 2013). However, this framework is also limiting in specific ways. The greedy institution relies on structuralist perceptions of social institutions that are based in gender normative conceptions of work and family roles. The family and the military are thus framed within the concept of separate spheres. Understanding military wives' navigation and negotiations of work-family constraints created by the military is vital in understanding the dynamic structuring relationship between military families and the military institution. I do not suggest that the military does not place greedy demands on service members and military wives. Yet, many studies implicitly take for granted the greediness of the military and family as features of these institutions. However, they do not fundamentally connect, as Marxist-feminist scholars

demonstrate, the ways the family and its greediness are produced by the demands and organization of work in the military. Just as capitalist modes of production construct the family and family labor, the organization of the military's institutional practices shapes the military family and the reproductive labor of military wives. As a result, research on the military, military families, and military wives rarely progress past structuralist perspectives of family structures and family roles. For instance, analyses of social relations based in gender are limited within the above literature, and the gendered division of labor is theorized within a separate spheres framework. While Harrell's investigations provide great descriptive data of gendered social relations, she avoids discussions that connect institutional greediness with gender, and how the family is structured by the greediness of military practices. As Harrell (2001: 71) suggests in the conclusion of her analysis of women married to Army officers:

the military spouse situation provides an excellent case study of gendered roles and uncompensated labor. However, rather than engage in a theoretical or ethical evaluation of expectations of officers' wives, these conclusions will instead center upon the more pragmatic aspects of why the Army persists on maintaining these role expectations...and the penalties or tradeoffs the Army suffers in doing so.

Harrell (2001) then proceeds to analyze whether, given the amount of money spent on family support programs, using Army wives' labor is the most cost-effective way for the Army to maintain unit readiness. Chapter 3's exploration of military institutional practices aims to address this limitation by investigating how institutional practices directly shape military wives' reproductive labor, and reproduce the gendered division of labor in military families. I also suggest that the greediness of the family, stems not from an a priori family structure, but from the greediness of the military, which directly structures the demands placed on military wives by the family. Understanding this theoretical distinction is vital to the analyses and interpretation of the findings within this dissertation. To address this limitation, I incorporate theories of

militarization and features of the life-course perspective to create the conceptual link between the military and military families, which is missing from the conceptualization of the dynamic ways greedy institutions interact with one another.

Militarizing Women's Lives

In this section, I discuss militarization and feminist scholars use of militarization in relation to gender inequality and the military. Where the greedy institution conceptualizes the military and family as separate institutions, militarization and feminist scholars use of militarization breaks down these conceptual barriers of the public and private spheres. Thus, militarization becomes a useful analytical tool to further investigate the dynamic social relations produced between the military and military wives, addressing the limitations stemming from scholar's use of the greedy institution. While the military may be greedy, institutional practices that connect with gender make visible how this greediness is maintained within relations of gender and power, and sustained for the specific institutional purpose of harnessing women's labor to support the military and state's use of the military.

The conceptual framework found in militarization studies views the military and family as co-constitutive social forces. Theorizing military wives through a framework of militarization often uses analyses that connect the macro with the micro, such as connecting the state and military institution with the banality of military wives' everyday lives (Bernazzoli and Flint 2009a, 2010; Hyde 2016). Theories of militarization also break down conceptual boundaries between the public and private spheres, demonstrating co-constitutive social processes (Bernazzoli and Flint 2009a, 2010) that I suggest properly link the family with the military. Frequently embedded within critical and feminist frameworks, militarization is conceptualized as a process not relegated to global politics and the state, or simply to military service members

(Bernazzoli and Flint 2010), but also within spaces far from understandings of what constitutes the “front lines” of war (Dowler 2002, 2012; Enloe 2000). Enloe (1988) argues militarization has two dimensions, one material and one ideological. The material dimension is represented by the “encroachment of the military institution into the civilian arena” (Enloe 1988: 9), such as an increase in civilian workers who depend on military contracts for their livelihood. In the current study, I conceptualize this “encroachment” within military family life. Enloe’s (1988) ideological dimension works through the normalization of these material conditions within society. An example of such normalization is the use of the military to confront civilian social issues, like the use of the military as a “common-sense” way to break up labor strikes (Enloe 1988: 10). Overall, Enloe’s (1988) theorizing of militarization points to the sometimes subtle, while other times overt ways that the military becomes a vital social institution that is integrated into society.

Stemming from this form of theorizing militarization, these processes are viewed as pervasive within society, which have the effect and intent of organizing features of society in a manner that meets the needs of the military and state’s reliance upon the military. Therefore, scholars argue militarization is a productive social process found in everyday life (Henry and Natanel, 2016; Lutz, 2001, 2002). Lutz (2002: 723) suggests the military’s “shaping of other institutions in synchrony with military goals” is a vital component to this process. For instance, Dowler (2012) discusses a patriotic cake put on display in a bakery, intended to show support for the invasion of Iraq, as an example of militarization operating in the most banal places in our lives. In mobilizing society for war (Dowler 2012), militarization structures aspects of life, such as reproductive labor (Basham and Catignani 2018; Enloe 1983, 2000), as well as hierarchically ordering social relations based in gender, class, race, sexuality (Lutz 2002), and ability. Such

forms of power do not often operate through authoritative direct force, but through the structuring of the banal processes of everyday lives, shaping places that are often not considered part of the military institution, nor state apparatus (Bernazzoli and Flint 2009a; 2010; Enloe 2007; Henry and Natanel 2016).

Militarization scholars often call for the use analyses to connect the macro, or broader institutional and state forces, with the micro, or within the social processes of individual's daily lives. These analyses are used to deconstruct the complex diffusion of military and state power within society (Bernazzoli and Flint 2009b; Dowler 2012). From the state's political strategic planning in geographic regions, to the individual activities of daily lives, analyses of militarization bring to light the multiplicity of ways power is enacted within various social sites that invariably support the military and the state's use of military force (Bernazzoli and Flint 2009a, 2009b; Dowler 2012; Staeheli and Kofman 2004). For example, studies of military communities located near military installations demonstrate such interconnectedness of various sites and scales (Bernazzoli and Flint 2009a; Lutz 2001, 2002; MacLeish 2013). Hyde's (2016: 858) analysis of a British Army military installation in Germany, and the experience of British military family members during an Army unit's deployment to Afghanistan reveals how militarization is "understood, absorbed or negotiated by subjects in everyday life." Hyde's (2016) research shows the interconnectedness and simultaneity of the experiences of events as they unfold on the "front lines" in Afghanistan, and with military families on the "home front" in Germany. Hyde's (2016) intent is to argue that when breaking down conceptions of public and private, or military and civilian, we observe what she calls the imbrication of the military and family. By showing how experiences at the "home front" are linked with the "front lines," we

observe how the simultaneity of experiences unfolds in different ways based on one's location in either Germany or Afghanistan (Hyde 2016).

Feminist Contributions: Militarization and Gender

Feminist scholarship often uses militarization as a way to explore how militaries historically use women's labor to sustain institutional goals. In doing so, this body of literature demonstrates the interconnectedness of the military with military families, which I suggest is missing in the greedy institution. Through their research, feminist scholars demonstrate why a separate spheres framework is analytically limiting, but also that it is politically invoked for specific reasons. For instance, investigations of the gender constitutive processes enacted by the military link the sustainment of military operations with the reproduction of gendered social relations in military families (Basham and Catignani 2018; Enloe 1988, 2000; Harrison and Laliberte 1994). These researchers often explore many of the same underlying topics regarding military wives' lived experience, such as the work of Harrell (2000a, 2000b, 2001), however, feminist scholars use militarization to frame these social and institutional relations through the sustainment of gendered inequalities. In essence, the greediness of the military is analyzed through a lens of gendered relations of power, where women's lives are shaped in ways that supports the military's overall mission.

Women's labor has always supported the military, yet, when relegated to the private sphere, this labor is often rendered invisible. In particular, this body of research demonstrates how the sustainment of separate spheres creates gendered roles for men and women in order to support the military. The reproduction of gendered public and private spheres, and the relegation of women into the socially and politically constructed private sphere (Gary 2016), is argued to illustrate similarities between the organizational makeup of the military and capitalist society, as

these structuring processes relate to the reproduction and institutional use of these spheres (Basham and Cantigliani 2018; Harrison and Laliberté 1993; Hyde 2016). These work-family dynamics frame servicemen within a breadwinner status and military wives as homemakers (Regan de Bere 2003). These gendered social relations sustains the military's maintenance of a masculine form of combat readiness through the institutional reproduction of separate spheres, where men ideologically fight on the "front lines" to protect their families back home (Elshtain 1995), while women stabilize their families and the "home front" (Basham and Catignani 2018; Enloe 1983, 2000; Harrison 2003; Harrison and Laliberté 1993, 1994). Here, the structure of the military family is theorized in direct relation to the military institution and the production of gender inequalities (Harrison 2003; Harrison and Laliberté 1993, 1994; Woodward 2003). Harrison and Laliberté (1993, 1994) suggest the reproduction of these gendered social relations is vital to the military's reproduction of an institutional combat ideology based in hyper-masculinity and patriarchy. These authors argue that maintaining these social relations is justified through an institutional and national need to remain combat ready. Thus, military wives' position within the gendered division of labor is sustained by privileging the concept of national security. As Enloe (1988) further argues, the gendered social order constructed by the military is justified by the idea that this form of social ordering is required to protect the nation and its citizens.

State, military, and economic institutions commonly draw upon gendered dichotomies of public and private spheres to denote key features, players, and sites of these entities' activities. In the civilian context, Massey (1994) argues the production of such bounded identities of places, like the home and work, are fundamentally related to relations of gender and power. Therefore, Massey (1994) argues we must always ask, who is it that desires to construct and maintain such

boundaries? Hyde (2016) uses the work of Massy (1994) to call into question dichotomies, such as civilian and military, arguing these concepts overlap with social understandings of female and male. Bernazzoli and Flint (2009b) similarly argue these dichotomies blur the interconnectedness of the state, the military institution, and society at large, thus blurring processes of militarization. In her study of domestic abuse in British military families, Gray (2016) finds the military continuously redefines the boundaries between the home and the military, demonstrating the political foundation of maintaining conceptions of separate spheres. By socially and politically redefining what constitutes public and private, the military makes decisions related to when it will and will not intervene in domestic abuse cases. Findings suggests the military will intervene only when domestic abuse threatens the sustainment of a military unit's combat effectiveness (Gary, 2016). When combat effectiveness is not impacted, domestic abuse is framed as a private family issue. Furthermore, Basham and Catignani's (2018) examination of the institutionally constructed conditions in the home, shaping the domestic labor of women married to British Army Reservists, establishes a connection between the social construction of family gender roles and the public/private divide. While these authors use the greedy institution as a way to frame the demands the military places on military wives, Basham and Catignani (2018) also draw upon militarization to break down the dichotomies conceptualizing the "home front" and "front lines." Overall, their analyses reveal how, through the domestic labor of women, "home is a site from which war materializes" (Basham and Catignani 2018:167). Studies like Basham and Catignani (2018) demonstrate how militarization adds to the use of the greedy institution, while also not reproducing false dichotomies between the military and the family. Instead, these authors show how the family, and labor within the family are directly tied to the military. Further, they also

demonstrate how this labor supports the military, just as women's reproductive labor in the civilian context reproduces labor power, and supports capitalist modes of production.

Investigations of Militarization and Gender

In exploring the institutional and family roles of military wives, linking their family roles with the military's institutionally constructed work-family constraints, feminist scholars directly explore military wives' reproductive and emotional labor. Much like the work of Harrell (2000a, 2000b, 2001), these scholars investigate the division of labor in the home and role military wives take on in terms of providing social and emotional supporter for both husbands and other military families (Enloe 1988, 2000; Harrison and Laliberte 1994; Medder and Weinstein 1994). Feminist research on military wives points to the institutional production of gender as a method of sustaining military operations through the use of women's reproductive labor. Enloe (1988, 2000) contends the military has always had to deal with the presence of military wives, working to ensure they do not disrupt the military's mission. Within this potential problem, the military finds its solution: harnessing women's labor (Enloe 1988, 2000). Through the reproduction of gender roles that accompany the ideological model military wife, less constraint is placed upon the military, because wives provide the gendered labor required to support the military's mission within their families. Additionally, military wives also provide social support to one another within military family communities, which further supports the military's mission (Enloe 1983, 2000; Harrison 2003; Harrison and Laliberté 1994). Where the military places great demands on service members, which has far reaching consequences stretching into the military family, military wives are the military's answer to addressing these work-family constraints.

Research on women married to U.S. Naval submarine officers documents the emotional support military wives provide, which aids the Navy's mission. Mederer and Weinstein (1992)

find that officers' wives are expected to provide an array of duties for both the Navy and their families, which includes fulfilling the role of domestic laborer by maintaining their homes and caring for their children, but also providing emotional support to their husbands, as well as other families within the military community. The importance of social support is one aspect of the social relations between wives and military families that the military takes seriously. Due to the great demands the military places on military personnel, the role of military wives becomes a vital part of their husband's military career. For example, if an officer has family problems, this creates a perception that they are incapable of handling difficult situations and that their family is not setting an example for the rest of the military families. Such institutional expectations demonstrate how the military maintains the gendered division of labor, which is vital for the sustainment of military operations (Mederer and Weinstein 1992). Keeping families functioning is, of course, the responsibility of military wives (Albano 2002; Drummet et al. 2003). Additionally, if a spouse's behavior is deemed inappropriate or not in accordance with military policy, this will negatively impact a soldier's evaluations and career trajectory (Drummet et al. 2003). Social support is also shown to reduce the strain that wives and military families face, and is one reason why the military expects officers' wives to run family programs that are designed to create cohesion among a unit's family members (Enloe 1988, 2000; Rosen, Moghadam, and Rosen 1989).

Explanations for wives' motivations for fulfilling these family and institutional roles are limited within the literature and tend to vary. As aforementioned, Harrell (2001) finds wives worry about hurting their husband's career, citing this as an important motivation. In addressing issues of gender, Mederer and Weinstein (1992) find that wives married to officers maintain varying degrees of commitment to their respective support roles, which is based in their gender

ideologies. Wives who hold less traditional gender ideologies also tend to be less committed to their role within the military, and expected role within their family, whereas those with more traditional views are more willing to fulfill the military wife role. These findings highlight the variation in how military wives actually fulfill these expected roles (Mederer and Weinstein 1992). However, Mederer and Weinstein's (1992) is quite outdated, and representative of few studies that address military wives' sense-making.

Connections between rank and military wives is also explored within this body of literature. In the context of the Canadian military researchers document how women married to active-duty service members are impacted by their husband's rank, framing these effects as another example of gendered forms of militarization (Harrison and Laliberté 1994). Military rank is a stratification system where service members are given certain duties, responsibilities, and privileges based on their particular rank. Service members are also legally expected to follow regulations regarding fraternization with service members of a different rank or institutional position, consenting to socialize with those who are the same or a similar rank. Fraternization regulations ensure the maintenance of an institutional ordered hierarchy, which crafts unit and service member bonding in an effort to maintain combat readiness and a combat ideology within military units (Harrison 2003; Harrison and Laliberté 1993, 1994). Rank is therefore both a hierarchical institutional system that is justified as a method of organizing command and control, as well as a system that constructs social relations within the same institutional hierarchy. Although military wives are not official members of the military, service members' rank similarly plays an important role in structuring their social relations with fellow military wives. According to Harrison (2003: 76), "the military rank structure, which encourages wives to participate in a parallel social system in which every wife's place is relative to the other wives

mirrors her husband's place in the ranked world of the men." Rather than framing the influence of rank as an example of the greediness of the military system, feminist scholars argue rank is another example of the way gender relations are interwoven with the military's work to socially organize military wives (Harrison 2003; Harrison and Laliberté 1994).

The sustainment of women's traditional gender roles, combined with the institutional expectations of their behavior and commitment to their husbands' military careers places women married to service members in conflicting social and institutional positions. Hyde (2015) refers to wives' positioning as insecure, where military wives inhabit a position officially outside the military institution, while also being expected to adhere to expectations of behavior and run families so the military can maintain its combat effectiveness. Caught in-between their official civilian identification, while also fundamentally impacted by the military, this insecure or liminal position is a common thread that runs through the feminist literature exploring gender and militarization. According to Enloe (2000: 161), which is supported by Wherry (2000), women married to service members are "fundamentally marginal, at least to the publicly articulated meaning of the military, even while they are integral to that same institution's day-to-day maintenance." Within these investigations of women's gendered labor in relation to the organization of the military and institutional expectations of behavior, there is again a lack of current sociological research exploring how wives experience institutional forces that channel their labor into the home, while also navigating institutional constraints, and sustaining oneself within this marginal and subordinate social location. I investigate these topics in Chapters 4 and 5 of this dissertation.

Overall, I analytically frame my dissertation in relation to the feminist literature that fundamentally links the social relations of the home and women's reproductive labor with the

institutional and gender constitutive forces of the military. Rather than sustaining concepts of separate spheres, I theoretically and analytically view the military and military family as interconnected, or as Hyde (2015) asserts, the family and military are mutually imbricated. Smith (1975) argues this point in the context of capitalist society, and Harrison and Laliberté (1993, 1994) adopt her arguments for the context of western militaries. Thus, in this dissertation, I draw upon militarization to consider how military wives' lived experiences connect with and are structured by the institutional forces of the military. My use of militarization complicates our understanding of the greediness of the military and the family by demonstrating how the needs of military families and the needs of the military are not separate, but fundamentally interconnected. In turn, military wives are not caught in-between the greedy demands of these institutions, but both forms of greediness operate in tandem. In doing so, I argue militarization offers an additional analytical tool in the study of military wives.

The Life-Course Perspective

In this section I briefly discuss recent sociological research that uses a life-course approach to investigating the connections between the military and military families. While often used in veterans research, there are several studies that investigate military wives' connections with the military through their marriage to a service member. An important component of this framework is the role of marriage. I investigate military wives' lived experiences by interviewing women currently in military marriages. According to the life course perspective, marriage creates a link between the military and military wives; an important connection undertheorized in above literature. Additionally, the life-course perspective takes into consideration the connection between biography and broader historical contexts. In considering the principle of location in time and place, I argue we must historicize the findings of this dissertation by linking them with

the historical period of the GWOT. The institutional practices and forms of sense-making adopted by military wives must be historical situated, which links the timing of participants' military marriages with the broader geopolitical climate.

The life-course theoretical perspective is an approach to exploring life trajectories as they connect with our biographies, the historical contexts we inhabit, and social structures (Elder Jr., Kirkpatrick Johnson, and Crosnoe 2003). Historical events, the social institutions we traverse throughout our lives, and even the experiences of our parents combine to shape the pathways our own lives follow (Wilmoth and London 2013). Life-course research often investigates these pathways when considering how our lives intersect with historical events. For instance, Pavalko and Elder Jr. (1990) investigate divorce rates in the post-World War II U.S., considering when marriages occurred in relation to the start of the war, and when divorces occurred after the war. In considering the connections between war and life-course outcomes, there is a growing body of literature investigating how military service influences the life-course (Wilmoth and London 2013). For the purposes of the current study, similar to concepts of militarization that connect state and military institutions with everyday life, the life-course perspective connects the micro and the macro, exploring how historical events, as well as social structures and institutions, shape individuals' lives (Modell and Haggerty 1991). Military service is a powerful influence within lives, impacting among many things, educational, economic, and health outcomes among veterans, as well as having a great influence upon military wives and their children's lives (Wilmoth and London 2013).

The life-course perspective consists of five major principles: life-long development, human agency, location in time and place, timing, and linked lives. The concepts of location in time and place, and linked lives are relevant to this dissertation. Location in time and place

connects with the historical context of this study, which is situated within experiences linked with the time period of the GWOT. Further, linked lives relates to the connections between the military and military wives, which take shape through military wives' marriage to a service member. Below, I briefly define each concept and discuss the use of the life-course perspective within the military context and this study in particular.

Location in Time and Place

Location in time and place connects the trajectories of individuals' lives with the historical contexts they live within, or specific life events they experience (Wilmoth and London 2013). For example, the experience of women during periods of war shapes their life trajectories, as well as their wartime experiences (Wilmoth and London 2013). Location in time and place is an important principle connecting biographies with history, and the life experiences that occur due to this intersection. This principle is salient to this study, due to the mass U.S. military deployments over the past 20 years of war, and the timeframe participants of this study are connected with the military through their marriage to a U.S. service member. While the length of participants' marriages varies within the sample, at the time of data collection, most participants experienced one or several deployments, or anticipated a deployment in the near future. Additionally, the overall organizational make-up of the military experienced at these points in time are directly connected with the military's work to sustain operations during the GWOT. Therefore, the greediness, or demands experienced by participants, as well as the way militarization operates within participants' lives is historically specific to the post-9/11 invasions and occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq, and the subsequent military operations that have followed. The institutional practices explored in Chapter 3 and the forms of sense-making investigated in Chapter 4 and 5 connect with the larger institutional impact of these military

operations on the structure of military work, and the location in time and place of participants as military wives.

Linked Lives

The principle of linked lives provides a framework for conceptualizing the relationship between the military and military wives that does not separate the family and the military institution, but portrays them as fundamentally tied, or linked together through the institution of marriage. Linked lives examines the interdependence of lived experiences and life trajectories through our social relationships. According to Elder Jr. (1994), linked lives is a foundational concept to the life-course perspective. This principle is key to this study because linked lives frames individuals' experiences as fundamentally linked to socio-historical events and social institutions, such as a spouse's occupation, through social relationships (Elder Jr., Johnson, and Corsnoe 2003). Relationships with family tend to be some of the most vital relationships that shape our lives (Wilmoth and London 2013). For military wives, their marriage to a service member connects them to the military, making their marriage a key component to shaping the lives of military wives in relation to the military (Burland and Lundquist 2013; Enloe 2000; Lundquist and Xu 2014; Wilmoth and London *forthcoming*). A military marriage shapes important features of life, such as where military wives live and what their family roles are. While those not legally married are certainly impacted by the military, official institutional recognition of women married to service members, as well as "unofficial" expectations of behavior, including family roles, are not institutionally present for those not legally married to a service member. Information about deployments are not often shared with those not in legal marriages, and access to military benefits comes with one's marriage. In combination with the concept of location in time and place, the experience of war fundamentally impacts not only

service members, but military wives as well, which is specific to and operate through their marriage. Overall, linked lives acknowledges that, at a fundamental level, our social relations tie together the family and military institution, and thus the experiences of individuals located within these social institutions.

Several studies of military families use this framework to demonstrate these interconnections. However, in the growing body of life-course and military studies literature, there are only a few empirical studies using linked lives that explore military wives (Wilmoth and London 2013). Lundquist and Xu (2014) find that the fringe benefits available to married couples, such as increased pay and access to family housing, encourages a higher frequency of marriage within the military community than in the civilian community. Also, due to the desire to access these benefits, couples tend to also marry younger than in the civilian community. Lundquist and Xu (2014) contend that marriage, and early marriage in particular, is useful for the military, because through marriage comes the expectation for military wives to fill the military wife role. This legal arrangement helps to initiate a set of social relations that enables the military to use women's labor to support its institutional goals. Such expectations of the military wife role do not exist prior to marriage (Burland and Lundquist 2013). Marriage is the important link between military wives and the military. This is a link that Burland and Lundquist (2013) contend has effects that extend deep into military and veteran families, and helps to illuminate how the military family is structured by the military institution. Burland and Lundquist (2013: 166) argue that military families "do time" in the military alongside the soldier and are thus themselves embedded in the institutional context."

Linked lives brings an important component to the analyses of this study, by defining marriage as the institutional link that connects the military and military wives. Where I use

militarization and linked lives to connect the structure of the family, and military wives' experiences with the military, a key limitation of the greedy institution, I also use linked lives to demonstrate the way a greedy institution, such as the military, builds commitment and loyalty. Within studies of militarization, marriage is an undertheorized component to these dynamic social relations. The way military wives navigate the work-family constraints and their subsequent reproductive labor is constructed through their marriage to a service member. The institution of marriage is also greedy, placing important social and structural pressures upon military wives, and their relationship to work-family constraints created by their husband's military job. Therefore, including the role of marriage to this dyad is vital when developing an analysis of the organization of military work and institutional practices, which structures reproductive labor, as well as how military wives make sense of, acquiesce, and in some cases, resist the structuring effect of the military within their lives.

Contributions to the Literature

There is a clear paucity of studies that explore lived experiences of military wives in recent years. This study provides an up-to-date investigation of military institutional practices and how these practices are experienced by military wives. Studies exploring the sense-making of military wives is also very limited in both past and current studies. While investigating institutional practices and work-family constraints, we do not know how military wives think about these constraints, nor the reproductive labor they take on as a result of military forms of work. Therefore, this study also dives into the narratives of military wives to investigate their strategies and forms of sense-making that sustains them within the constraints produced by the military and their marriage to a service member. Theoretically, I add to our understanding of the greedy institutional framework, by addressing several limitations. As stated above, the

greediness of the military and family are often take-for-granted in military wife studies. In my analyses, I explore how these institutional processes actually play out, by investigating the interconnections between the military and the family, and considering how these interconnections are understood by military wives.

The analyses in each analytical chapter also demonstrate key features of the theoretical frameworks discussed above. Using the findings in each chapter, I speak back to these theories, demonstrating how they operate within the daily lives of military wives. The military may be a greedy institution that places great demands on military wives, militarizes them through the ordering of social relations, and links them with the military through their marriage. However, how these processes unfold in daily life is not often clear in the literature. Therefore, to build these theories, while also using them, I connect the findings of each chapter back to these frameworks, discussing how they further work to build our understanding of these complex institutional and social processes.

Organization of the Dissertation

In Chapter 2, I discuss the data and methods used in this study. I explore issues of accessing the military family community, and the use of in-depth interviewing as a method to gain access. I explore the sampling frame for this study, discussing the specific characteristics of the sample, and limitations to the sample, which I also further address in the conclusion of this dissertation in my suggestions for future research. I then explore my epistemological stance, considering the use of in-depth interviews within the knowledge production process, exploring issues of reproducing hierarchies. I also consider issues related to the differing social locations of the interviewer and participants, specifically focusing on issues of gender. Since all but one interview was conducted by phone, I enter an extensive discussion of the limitations, problems,

and potential solutions to using this form of data collection. I also address some of the potential strengths to phone interviews. The chapter ends with a discussion of this study's data, and my analyses.

There are three analytical chapters within this dissertation. The first analytical chapter, Chapter 3, explores the military's institutional practices of deployments, temporary duty assignments, training, long and erratic work hours, and frequent geographic moves. Here I explore how these institutional practices, or forms of military work are experienced by military wives, the effects these practices have in structuring wives' anticipations of the present and future, and finally, how these practices create a ubiquitous sense of instituted disorder (Auyero 2011; Bourdieu 2000) within military wives' daily lives. I argue these experiences work to structure military wives' reproductive labor. This chapter provides the foundation for the topics and analyses explored in Chapters 4 and 5.

In Chapter 4 I investigate participants' forms of sense-making related to the work-family constraints examined in the previous chapter. In this chapter I use Hochschild's (2003) work on gender strategies, specifically exploring participants' forms of emotion management, and the use of the economy of gratitude. I also draw upon Connidis and McMullin's (2002) work on sociological ambivalence. Hyde (2015, 2016) and Enloe (1988, 2000) assert that women married to service members inhabit an insecure and marginal social position, which I also document in the previous chapter. Therefore, in this chapter I explore the forms of emotion management, and the processes of managing ambivalence that work to sustain participants within this subordinate social location. There are multiple forms of emotion management I investigate in this chapter. First, I explore how participants use military authority to shape their understanding of institutional practices, contending that this form of authority cannot be changed. Second,

participants normalize the gendered division of labor by comparing their family roles with their husband's stressful, dangerous, and more difficult military service. Additionally, participants frame the gendered division of labor as work they do for their children in order to buffer them from the instituted disorder created by the military. Finally, I explore how participants manage ambivalence, which often develops when their forms of emotion management are not fully successful in acquiescing their institutionally created social position. Overall, I find the conditions participants work to acquiesce, such as their role within the gendered division of labor, also reinforces and reproduces these same gendered social relations, and their overall marginality.

In the final analytical chapter, I explore how participants manage their liminality through the use of two class based military wife stereotypes: wearing husband's rank and the dependotamus. While facing institutional practices that structure their lives in intimate ways, but officially labeled as civilians, participants face a double-bind when constructing a sense of self. In this chapter, I once again draw upon Hochschild (2003) to explore how participants engage in a process of comparison and disassociation with other military wives. In this process, participants use these military wife stereotypes as a form of boundary work. In essence, participants support their own way of managing work-family constraints by pinpointing others who fill the military wife role differently, and are thus labeled as "bad" military wives (Ziff and Garland-Jackson 2020). Overall, I argue, through these processes of self-sustainment, the military's system of stratification built within the hierarchy of rank, and participants' liminal and subordinate social positioning are reproduced.

In the concluding chapter, I provide an overview of the main findings of this study. Further I engage in a brief discussion of policy, considering the potential impact of certain family

policies within broader concepts of militarization. I also discuss limitations and suggestions for future research stemming from both the findings of this study, as well as its methodological limitations. Overall, my research elucidates how institutional practices structure military wives' lives. I find these institutional practices profoundly shape the reproductive labor of military wives, by constructing an ever-present sense of instituted disorder (Auyero 2011; Bourdieu 2000) within family life. In addressing this disorder, military wives' labor is channeled toward the family in their effort to respond to institutionally produced work-family constraints. I also discover that the effects of the military on military wives' lives requires a great deal of emotion management (Hochschild 2003) on the part of military wives. Being a military wife is often not easy, and I find that wives draw upon an array of different forms of sense-making to sustain themselves. Further, I find military wives sometimes look outward toward other military wives in a form of boundary work that uses military wife stereotypes. Since these stereotypes are constructed within the military's system of stratification, not only are wives' gendered roles in their home reproduced through this process of self-sustainment, but also social class hierarchies.

Chapter II. Data and Research Methods

Accessing Military Family Communities Through Interviewing

Many organizations surround themselves with material and social boundaries that prevent outsiders from gaining entry, which makes researching organizations, and organizational members a difficult task. As Okumus, Altinay, and Roper (2007) find in their attempt to research an elite hotel chain, organizations are often wary of researchers entering their domain, especially if their work is perceived as a potential threat to, or critique of their organization. For the military, physical barriers prevent outsiders from entering military facilities. Yet, more importantly, the military erects social boundaries through the sustainment of a military community that is socially constructed in relation to the civilian population. For example, Harrison (2003: 74) writes that members of the military community are, “taught to believe that civilians are incapable of understanding the military life, and they are encouraged to become more or less insular within the military world.” In addition, military culture creates a politically directed mistrust that assumes a conservative form of ideological moral superiority over the civilian world, which sustains a strong insider/outsider binary (Ortner 2010). As a result, without Department of Defense (DOD) support, which provides legitimacy to researchers and their research topics, as well as aiding researchers with access to military installations and military community members, gaining access to the military community is a significant challenge.

The challenge of researching members of an organization is especially difficult for those conducting participant observation. Understanding organizational culture and witnessing social interactions first-hand is often a required component to research associated with organizations. I suggest these challenges make researching the military even more imperative, because institutions erect boundaries for specific reasons. Impeding researchers creates a certain degree

of invisibility, which in turn allows institutional practices to go understudied and unchallenged (Gusterson 1997). To address issues of access, I use in-depth interviewing as a method to gain access to military families without direct DOD support. Interviewing enables me to dive into the lived experiences of military wives and explore their forms of sense-making, developing an analytical story based on *their* experiences, thoughts, and ideas.

Sampling Frame

Below, I discuss my sampling criteria. This framework was designed to recruit participants who experienced active-duty military life as the spouse of a U.S. active-duty service member, historically situating their lived experiences within the period of the GWOT. Overall, this sample includes a diverse set of experiences. For some participants' their experiences extended across 12 to nearly 20 years of a military marriage, while for others they were more recently married and still getting a sense what a marriage to a service member entails.

Branch Selection

There are significant institutional and cultural differences between the branches of the U.S. military. Each branch has a unique culture and history, as well as differing regulations and policies, creating distinctive differences for branch members and the surrounding communities. However, in this project I do not focus on a specific branch of service. Rather, I recruited spouses from the Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marines. Pragmatically, recruiting across the service branches, as opposed to one specific branch, provides the best opportunity to recruit participants from an institution that is difficult to access (Harrell 2000a).

This sampling decision creates certain limitations that require acknowledging. Analyzing participants' narratives as a combined whole, without considering their husbands' service branch, risks conflating lived experiences and producing an essentialist version of their lives. To

address this potential sampling shortfall, I closely considered participants' narratives in relation to their husband's service branch, making note of distinctive differences and cross-referencing those differences with participants whose husbands were in different service branches. Overall, the most distinctive differences emerging from these data were the differential experiences of women married to Naval service members and the Navy's rotation of sailors assigned to sea duty and shore duty. While on sea duty, sailors are in preparation for and eventually leave on a ship deployment. During this rotation, work schedules are often exceptionally difficult on families. Whereas during shore duty, sailors are often not working in preparation for a ship deployment, and work-family life is often less tumultuous. Other military service branches do not follow this same cycle, meaning the relationship between the organization of work and family life varies based on organizational structure of each branch. However, these differences did not pose an analytical issue. For those associated with the Navy, their experiences changed or varied in similar ways to those not connected with the Navy. For example, as husbands were promoted and took different positions, such as moving from the infantry to an Army basic training instructor, participants' experiences changed in similar ways as those who experienced the Navy's rotation of sea duty and shore duty.

Participant Criteria

I recruited participants who are currently married to U.S. active-duty service members in the U.S. military and who are stationed in the U.S. or overseas. I extended this framework to include three participants whose husbands were recently retired from the active component and one who was active Reserve.⁵ All participants were married to a service member at the time of

⁵ It was not until the actual interviews were underway that I learned that these participants' husbands had recently left the active component, making them fall outside my original sampling frame. Since there was little, to no empirical difference between these participants' discussions of their experiences while their husbands were on active duty, and the rest of the sample I decided to keep them in the sample. I assessed these participants' data in comparison to other interviews before this decision was made.

the interview. Since marriage creates a link between the military and spouses, and women and men in non-martial relationships with a service member do not receive status as a military dependent, a non-married couple falls outside of the scope of this study. I also excluded any current dual military couples. This study focuses on civilian experiences; therefore, dual-military couples also fall outside the scope of this project. However, those retired from the military, whether previously in a dual military marriage, but since retired, or those in the military prior to their current marriage were included, as they met the criteria of a current civilian in a military marriage.

The inclusion of only currently married couples requires a brief discussion in relation to the themes and topics explored in this dissertation. A primary focus of this study's analyses is the forms of sense-making related to military wives' reproductive labor, and their fulfillment of family and institutional roles that are structured by the military. My aim is to explore how participants' talk about and understand their lives in relation to these institutionally produced work-family constraints. Including only those currently married to a service member narrows the scope of this goal to those who remain in military marriages, which means their forms of sense-making must be considered carefully. In 2017, the divorce rate among U.S. active-duty service members was approximately 3.1 percent, with about 21,290 divorces out of 689,060 married service members (Bushatz 2018). According to the CDC, this compares with a slightly lower 2.9 percent divorce rate among civilians in 2017. Consequently, there are many experiences and forms of sense-making that are left out of this study. For instance, the experiences for those who leave their marriage due to the institutional constraints created by the military are not represented here. As a result, the overall picture created by this dissertation is incomplete, and demonstrates the experiences of a specific group of women currently married to U.S. service members. In my

discussion of directions for future research in Chapter 6 I explore this limitation in more detail and make suggestions for future research.

Many studies of military spouses limit their analyses to either the enlisted ranks (Harrell 200b), the officer corps (Harrell 2001; Mederer and Weinstein 1992), or they do not make a clear analytical distinction between the two (Harrison and Laliberté 1993; Higate and Cameron 2004; Vuga and Juvan 2013). These are reasonable sampling frames that enable researchers to tease out nuanced experiences specific to these groups of spouses. Yet, in limiting samples in these ways, comparative analyses based on rank are not possible. Important to my analysis is the inclusion of participants married to service members in the enlisted ranks, as well as officers. Therefore, in order to maintain an even distribution of those married to enlisted service members and officers, as interviews progressed, I continually assessed my sample characteristics and requested referrals based on military rank. I also followed up specifically with those volunteering for this study based on their husband's rank. This procedure created a somewhat even distribution of participants married to enlisted service members and officers. Those married to mid-level or senior enlisted service members or junior officers comprise the largest portion of the sample. A sample demographics table is found in Appendix B.

Recruitment of Participants

Recruitment and data collection occurred in three phases. Each phase was comprised of active recruiting, interviewing, transcribing, and preliminary data analysis. The first phase occurred between July, 2016 and January, 2017. After transcribing and assessing this group of interviews, the second phase of data collection occurred between May, 2017 and August, 2017, with the final phase occurring between January, 2018 and March, 2018. Between phases two and three, I also transcribed interviews and conducted preliminary data analysis. Based on

preliminary findings at each stage, I made adjustments to interview topics based on emergent themes within the data collected from the previous phase or phases. This strategy enabled me to refine my interview protocol, and adjust my focus to accommodate themes I did not anticipate learning about.

Referrals - Snowball Sampling

Referrals from participants was the most successful avenue for recruitment. I found participants excited that researchers were interested in *their* experiences and not service members' experiences, which led to many participants referring this project to friends. A limitation of snowball sampling, which I address below, is that referrals often lead to a homogeneous sample. However, while this is a limitation, referrals are a useful tool to gain access to groups that may be suspicious of outsiders. Referrals from friends who vouch for a research project and the overall experience of participating in academic research, is sometimes invaluable. Within my recruitment announcement and after completing each interview, I requested participants forward my contact information, along with the study announcement to anyone they felt would be interested in the project. Through this processes, potential participants either directly contacted me, expressing their desire to participate, or potential participants' contact information was provided to me by a former participant of the study. Copies of my recruitment materials and informed consent forms are located in Appendix D through E.

Social Media - Facebook Military Spouse Groups

Facebook provided the opportunity to advertise this study to a large number of military spouses. I requested colleagues and those within my own connections with the military community to share this project's announcement through their Facebook networks. Due to membership restrictions, I was unable to join and post my request for participants on any

Facebook military spouse groups directly. However, at the conclusion of each interview I requested that participants share my announcement on any Facebook groups they were a member of. Facebook recruitment was quite successful with over one-third of those participating in this study recruited through social media.

A benefit of this form of recruitment is that my announcements reached into the general military spouse population, and were not contained within participants' close social networks. Since military rank often structures the social relations of those married to service members, limiting their social networks to other spouses married to someone of the same or similar rank as their own husband, the potential for snowball sampling to produce a homogeneous sample based in rank was possible. Recruitment with Facebook help overcome this potential issue.

Sample Characteristics

This sample is comprised of 40 spouses married to active-duty service members, including women and men married to servicemen from the Army (N=18), Air Force (N=9), Navy (N=8), and Marines (N=5). Based on rank, 23 participants were married to enlisted service members at the time of their interview, and 18 were married to officers. Five participants identified as prior service, three of which identified as female and two as male. This sample is limited in racial/ethnic diversity, with 32 participants identifying as White, three as African American, two as Mexican-American, and one as Indian-American. 38 identify as female and two as male. Three participants were between the ages of 18 and 24, 21 participants between 25 and 34, and 16 were 35 years or older. All participants identified as heterosexual. At the time of their interview, 33 participants were living with their own children, or also with their spouse's children from a different marriage, while 7 participants did not have children. Additionally, 14 participants were employed in either full-time or part-time work, and 26 were unemployed.

However, participants' overall employment history varied, making their employment experiences more complex than what their employment status was at the time of their interview. Many participants experienced periods of employment and periods of unemployment since marrying their husband. See Appendix B for a table of demographic characteristics.

Sample Limitations

There are two limitations of this sample that originate from my use of snowball sampling. This sample lacks racial diversity, which limits the analysis to considerations of gender and class.⁶ When talking with one participant about her experiences as a Black military wife, she used her husband's experiences as a Black officer as an example of the implicit biases regarding race in the military. Whenever her husband was in a uniform that did not carry rank insignia, such as his physical training (PT) uniform, other service members consistently assumed he was enlisted because he was Black. How similar experiences unfold within the military spouse community falls outside this study due to the sample's limitations, and lack of data on the intersection of race and participants lived experiences. The connections between rank, class, and race is an important lived experience that requires exploration within the family community, as well as for service members themselves. In the discussion of limitations of the study and directions for future research, I return to this topic.

The second limitation is represented in the small number of males married to service members. My initial plan included a subsample of military husbands, yet their recruitment was mostly unsuccessful. The reliance and success use of referrals with female participants limited my ability to find military husbands, since an overwhelming majority of my participants did not

⁶ A consideration and analysis of these data based in the Whiteness of the sample could provide key racial findings related to the construction of participants' narratives in relation to race. However, such an analysis is outside the scope of this study. In the conclusion, I return to a discussion of race and considerations for future research.

know any, nor had they met any military husbands. Additionally, of the five husbands to whom I was referred by study participants, only two continued with the study past our initial phase of contact and completed an interview. No military husbands responded through other avenues of recruitment, such as Facebook, and my attempts to contact groups specific to military husbands went unanswered. According to MacLeish (2013), many male spouses feel emasculated by the idea of being military husbands, which may have affected their willingness to participate in this project. More research regarding not only the experiences of military husbands, but their recruitment is required. I also return to this topic in the concluding chapter.

Within my analyses I included the two self-identifying male participants. Therefore, they were present in my many research and analytical memos, and thus informed my overall thinking regarding participants' experiences and the themes that arose from my analyses. However, due to the small sample size, these participants do not appear in the body of this text. In order to stave off inaccurate assumptions, I decided there were distinctive differences between female and male participants that required a larger sample of males before any comparative analyses could be accurately conducted and presented to the reader.

Data Collection

In-Depth Interviews

All communications with participants prior to an interview were conducted through e-mail. After receiving the contact information of a potential participant, or after being contacted directly by a potential participant, I sent an initial e-mail to introduce myself, provide general information about the study, and thank the individual for their interest in participating. I also reiterated the criteria for participation to ensure potential participants met the requirements. A copy of the informed consent form was also included in these emails. My intent was to create a

sense of initial rapport with potential participants, while also providing them with the proper information required for them to make an informed decision regarding their participation. After ensuring potential participants did not have any questions about the study, their interview was scheduled. A reminder email was sent to each participant one day prior to each scheduled interview.

Due to participants' vast geographic locations I conducted the majority of the interviews by phone. Of the 40 total interviews, 37 were conducted by phone, two over Skype, and one in-person. Each interview ranged from approximately 60 to 165 minutes in length, with an average of approximately 115 minutes. As mentioned previously, upon completion of an interview, I asked the participant if they felt comfortable sharing my study's announcement or contact information with other military spouses. The day after each interview was completed, I sent each participant a follow-up 'thank you' e-mail. Upon the immediate completion of an interview, I wrote a one- to two-page summary of the interview, taking note of important themes or data, providing a general summary of the participant's experiences, and including a reflexive component focusing on the interview process itself. In this memo, I noted any issues or concerns I felt required attention before I conducted another interview.

All interviews were recorded on a digital voice recorder and transcribed verbatim for data analysis. Transcripts were assessed for potential identifying information, including names, locations, and unit designations. All participants and their spouses were given a pseudonym. Identifying information, such as the names of military installations were changed into broad designations, such as "a military post on the East coast." Additionally, to ensure the confidentiality of participants, quotations used within this text were further edited, omitting information not pertinent to the analytical discussion at hand, but that might be used to identify

the participant. Since the use of snowball sampling meant that some participants might know each other, extra scrutiny was given to the quotations within this dissertation.

In-Depth Interviewing: Epistemological Stance

Any in-depth interview research must take into consideration hierarchy. Not only is the military built upon hierarchy, but hierarchy also shapes the lives of military families in significant ways. When exploring the experiences of individuals whose lives are shaped by hierarchy, I used the type of interview relationship that postmodern, feminist, and narrative methods espouse. Within these frameworks, interviews are conceptualized as collaborative, rather than hierarchical relationships that are found in more traditional interviewing frameworks (Holstein and Gubrium 2003; Oakley 2003). Using a flexible interview protocol, with broad main questions, my goal was to provide participants with the freedom to describe or narrate their experiences. In doing so, my intent was to learn about how participants experience the presence of the military, and make sense of that presence within their lives.

With these goals in mind, I adopted the “responsive interview” developed by Rubin and Rubin (2005) and the “active interview” developed by Holstein and Gubrium (2003). These techniques allow for flexibility within the interview process. Researchers are encouraged to shift questions and probes according to how participants structure their narratives with the intent of developing a research relationship where participants are encouraged, through open-ended questions, to tell stories and develop narratives of their lived experiences. Within these interview perspectives, participants are always viewed as active members of the conversation. The best relationship with interview participants is a collaborative one, which recognizes the active role participants take, as well as the standpoint from which participants engage with researchers and their questions (Holstein and Gubrium 2003). Both the active interview and the responsive

interview maintain that researchers and participants jointly negotiate and are active participants in the interview process. Data produced in each interview is unique to the specific social act of the interview (Holstein and Gubrium 2003). This means researchers must be open to changing interview questions when required and allowing participants to feel empowered to take on a significant role in the interview process (Holstein and Gubrium 2003; Rubin and Rubin 2005). In contrast, more traditional and masculine forms of interviewing frame participants as passive subjects and interviews as fundamentally hierarchical acts (Oakley 2003).

Through the use of these interview methods, researchers are able to learn how participants make sense of their experiences. For example, I often began an interview by asking why participants chose to participate in this study. This broad question often produced insightful descriptions of participants' experiences, and gave me a sense of some of the topics or issues the participant felt were important and wanted me, or the public to understand. This type of question, and other similar broad questions, were designed to provide participants with the freedom to choose how and when to bring the military into their stories. If all of my interview questions included specific wording about the military, I would lose this ability to dive into participants' forms sense-making, and what they found most important (DeVault and McCoy 2006).

Reflecting on the Origins of this Study

My own journey with this project began nearly 20 years ago when I contracted with the Army as a Reserve Officer's Training Corps (ROTC) cadet. After four years of college, I moved on to my first unit in the Army National Guard, which deployed to Iraq soon after I arrived. Since I was in a non-deployable status at that point, having not yet attended my branch specific officer's basic course, I stayed behind. Little did I realize my experiences with this deployment, at just 25 years old, would have a profound impact on my academic trajectory.

About a week before my unit was set to deploy, the Army hosted a unit deployment ceremony for service members and their families in a massive armory in New York City. Family members were invited to attend a lunch, but since I was staying behind, I did not have any family in attendance. Our unit was a large direct support maintenance company, meaning we had close to 200 soldiers who would provide direct support in the form of mechanics, small equipment repairpersons, and specialized repair services for combat units. As I wandered around the lunch feeling awkward as I was not deploying with my platoon, I was invited to sit with one of my platoon's chief warrant officers, technically my subordinate at the time. This man was a tall, 50 something year old, ex-boxer, sitting at the head of a large table that was still not quite big enough for his many family members, and me. It was in that moment, as I looked around at the tables filled with families and friends, that I realized how the war in Iraq, which seemed so distant from NYC, had actually extended its reach to that lunch. This lunch may have been for the members of the unit, but it was also for those families, who, for over a year, would wait in limbo, hoping that this lunch was not one of the last meals they had with their loved one.

I did not think much more about this experience until after the unit was "in country," when family members began contacting the chain of command back in the U.S. Apparently, someone had learned that the unit was operating much closer to Baghdad than they had been led to believe. Fearing for the safety of the deployed soldiers, family members demanded answers. How this information was learned I never found out, but I remember being surprised in the moment, and thinking again about how the war was being experienced at home by families. This experience also stands out in my memory, because during my time in the Army I only heard about families when they were perceived as causing problems. Granted, as a member of the National Guard, this experience is very different from the active component. Yet, I was surprised

by the response of annoyance and the frustrations when someone had to interact with one of the deployed soldiers' family members. These experiences in particular led to the inception of this study. In many ways, they inform my underlying disposition as a researcher exploring topics related to the lived experiences of those within military families. The other important lesson I learned from these experiences is that I did not, nor did many in the public, have a good understanding of what the experience of being the family member of a service member is like. Understandably, during the GWOT and the mass deployments in support of military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, deployments often overshadow other aspects of military family's lives. Yet, as I discovered during my research, the military pervasively enters many of the most banal aspects of military family members' lives.

In her important exploration of the militarization of women, Enloe (2000) aptly titles her book *Maneuvers*. According to Enloe (2000: xii), "militaries rely on women" and military leaders and political officials work to mobilize groups of women to support the institution's needs in a process she calls "maneuvers." In many ways, I take up Enloe's (2000) concept of "maneuvers," but from a different angle. There is no question that Enloe's work profoundly impacts my understanding and exploration of the lived experiences of military wives. When this project began, a particular goal of mine was to assess the visibility of the military's maneuvers within participants narratives. Yet, I realized, the participants in this study also maneuver. They maneuver to find ways to run families when their husbands leave for 15 months. They maneuver to find the headspace to take care of children while living within a constant state of uncertainty related to the health and safety of their husband deployed to a war zone. They maneuver to find a way to acquiesce and move to the only duty station in the continental U.S. they never wanted to move to. They find ways to resist institutional power to live a life outside of the military

institution. In many ways, this study is about maneuvers as well, but the maneuvers of women married to service members as they carve out a space for themselves while occupying a liminal position, neither officially inside the military (Hyde 216), yet still impacted by the institution in profound and fundamental ways. One of the goals of my research is to elucidate such self-sustaining maneuvers undertaken by military wives.

In-Depth Interviewing: Considering Intersecting Social Locations

As a male researcher interviewing primarily women, a consideration of the methodological literature focusing on gender and interview methods, as well as a reflexive discussion is important to this study. The social sciences were founded on research that privileged the experience of males, relying on anecdotal evidence to consider women's experiences, if considered at all (Reinhard and Chase 2003). The study of society, the military, and war are no different in this exclusion. Qualitative interviewing, along with feminist research methods, have worked to change this (Reinharz and Chase 2003).

Methodologically, the topic of in-depth interviewing and gender is extensively discussed, yet there are few discussions that address a male researcher interviewing women. With regards to data production, Padfield and Procter's (1996) study of young women's work and family goals demonstrates that gender differences can influence what researchers learn from participants. Comparing their interview data when interviews were conducted by a female or a male researcher, they find that, overall, there are few differences in the data in relation to the gender of the interviewer. Yet, for certain topics, such as whether a participant had an abortion, participants brought up and shared this experience without being asked by the researcher during interviews with a female interviewer, but not during interviews with a male interviewer. As a result, close consideration of one's data and the type of topics discussed, or possibly omitted, is important to

the research process. For example, due to the sensitive topic of women obtaining restraining orders against their husband, Ptacek's (1999) used female researchers to collect specific data, acknowledging that discussing certain issues with a male could be uncomfortable for participants. While these effects are important, Reinhard and Chase (2003) do not suggest gender differences between the researcher and participant are necessarily a shortfall, because the collected data is no less "true." However, they do suggest researchers must give careful consideration to the differing social locations of the participant and the researcher to explore what is and is not present within their data.

To address this methodological concern, after each interview, I immediately wrote a memo that not only summarized the important information discussed, but also reflexively considered the interview as a gendered social interaction. I documented my immediate impressions regarding how participants responded to main questions, as well as follow-up questions or probes. I also documented responses to more sensitive topics, such as deployments and the experience of death or injury in order to plan and strategize ways to discuss these topics. Based on Clarke's (2006) experience when studying perceptions of aging, she suggests using memos or a research journal as a way to reflect upon one's own reactions and perceptions, as well as participants' responses to interviews. Such memos and journals are a way to "open up the research process to scrutiny" (Clarke 2006:27). While most of my self-reflection did not change my initial plan, there were several topics that often posed a challenge and require further discussion.

Two surprisingly challenging topics related to participants' domestic responsibilities and finding time to socialize with friends. Broaching these topics was often more difficult than expected and required thorough consideration. When these topics came up in conversation, I was

often first presented with short or brief statements about participants' role in their home. Participants often summarized their domestic and parenting responsibilities by simply saying something like "I just do everything." Further, discussions of finding time to socialize with friends often resulted in a brief statement about having a "girls' night." I eventually developed several follow-up and probing questions, such as asking participants to walk me through their typical day, to develop more detailed data with regards to domestic responsibilities. I was never able to fully gain more details about "girls' nights." This could simply be the result of how infrequent such events occurred. When inquiring about finding time for oneself, this question was often met with a visceral laugh from participants, indicating the absurdity of the idea. However, I also made note of the possible gender differences unfolding during the interview, and that wives' personal time with other female friends might be a more intimate topic than I had anticipated. When living in an institution founded on hyper and toxic forms of masculinity, the symbolic meaning behind a "girls' night" might be more powerful than I expected.

The brief statements I sometimes initially received about domestic responsibilities made me consider DeVault's (1999) ideas regarding what she terms linguistic incongruity. According to DeVault (1999: 66), many experiences, especially for women, do not "translate" into the dominant form of language. Given that many participants explained their reason for agreeing to an interview was that they felt the experiences of military wives were overlooked and unheard by the public, the lack of experience describing details of their domestic labor could be one explanation. However, I also have to consider the influence of gender within these topics, suggesting that there are certain limitations to these data, which stem from the social location of myself in relation to participants. As a result, I posit that this study's data, as in all studies, presents partial experiences, and one "truth" among countless, which requires further

development through future research. As I discuss in the concluding chapter, aspects of my analysis should be tested in data collected by female researchers, with the intent of adding to these data to develop a more complete picture of military wives' lives.

Researchers often grapple with the topic of disclosure. How much should a researcher disclose about themselves to their participants? What will the effect on their data be? Generally, questions like these often develop around more positivist perspectives than qualitative methods. In fact, feminist methods call for a closer connection between the participant and researcher. Trevino (1992) draws upon Oakley's work on feminist interview methods to develop rapport with female participants through sharing personal information. For example, Trevino (1992) openly discusses his feelings about the topics explored during interviews. When considering my own connection with participants, I used a similar strategy, working to connect with participants either through my experiences as the primary parent and domestic worker in my own family, as well as drawing upon my own experiences in the Army National Guard. Sharing this information helped me connect with many of the experiences that participants discussed in relation to their family roles. I was also able to occasionally interject my own experiences to help demonstrate my understanding of their experiences. Also, my ex-National Guard status made me a partial insider. At times, I was able to draw upon my past military experiences to connect with participants. However, I did not have experience with the active-duty military, so I often did not have the same experience, which meant that participants did not make assumptions about what I did and did not know about active-duty military life. In some ways, my partial insider and outsider status enhanced the quality of the narrative data I was able to obtain.

Finally, while I will discuss conducting phone interviews below, an important consideration for male researchers conducting interviews with women is how participants feel

about meeting with a male researcher. For in-person interviews, researchers need to plan carefully, considering issues of location and the social interaction, in what Travino (1992) refers to as “desexualizing the research encounter.” The use of phone interviews mitigated many of these important issues. Participants were able to conduct their interviews from home, without having to meet a male researcher in a “neutral” location. For the one in-person interview I conducted, I addressed these issues by asking the participant to pick the location of our interview, requesting she select a public setting. I also arrived early to the fast food restaurant that was selected for the interview location, and maintained a professional distance from the participant by always keeping the table between me and the participant. When the interview was over, rather than exiting with the participant, I remained in the restaurant until the participant had driven away.

In-Depth Interviewing by Phone

Overall, discussions of qualitative interviewing by phone are limited in number, with conflicting arguments regarding the use of this method as a primary form of data collection. In terms of recruitment, Lavrakas (1993) notes the poor response rate of phone interviews compared with in-person interviews, while Groves (1979) finds participants report preferring in-person to phone interviewing. However, there is a need for more current information regarding this preference, given the primacy of phone use today and the varying ways phones are used. Shuy (2003) suggest phone interviews are most frequently used for survey data collection, not in-depth interviewing. As a result, Shuy (2003) explores the advantages and disadvantages of in-person and phone interviews by comparing several studies, finding inconclusive results when exploring participant responses to sensitive questions. For instance, depending on the study, participants were either more or less likely to share information regarding illegal drug use over

the phone. Further critiques of phone interviews include arguments about the absence of important non-verbal forms of communication that hinders the ability of researchers to collect quality data (Aquilino 1994; Groves 1990). Others contend phone interviews are more strenuous than in-person interviews, which leads to quicker participant fatigue (Lavrakas 1993; Sweet 2002).

On the other hand, there is research to suggest that phone interviews provide certain advantages over in-person interviews. In terms of quality data, Sturges and Hanrahan's (2004) study of visitors and correctional officer's perspectives on jail visits was initially planned for in-person interviews. Due to unforeseen issues, half their interviews were conducted over the phone. In a comparison of their data, these authors find little difference in the quality of data or the types of responses. They concluded that phone and in-person interviews yield similar results (Sturges and Hanrahan 2004). Further, Babbie (1986) suggests participants are more likely to share sensitive information over the phone, because they do not have to face researchers in-person. Phone interviews may provide participants with a sense of "anonymity" (Lechuga 2012; Sturges and Hanrahan 2004). Novik (2008) also notes the advantage of phone interviewing in terms of geographic location of participants, which is a key methodological consideration in this study. Finally, Lechuga (2012) suggests phone interviewing allows researchers to take more detailed notes and maintain a steady conversation with participants that is not interrupted by the visual presence of a researcher's note taking.

The conflicting perspectives on phone interviewing, and this study's reliance on phone interviews as the primary source of data collection, requires a brief reflexive discussion and response to the aforementioned critiques of this method. Only one of the 40 interviews conducted in this study took place in-person, which does not provide sufficient data to

thoroughly compare with the data collected via phone. However, I am able to speak to the notion of participant fatigue. Given the average length of an interview was approximately 115 minutes, with several lasting closer to 180 minutes, there is little evidence that participants experienced a greater degree of fatigue than if the interviews were conducted in person. Lavrakas, (1993) and Sweet (2002) suggest fatigue sets in as early as 20 minutes into a phone conversation. This did not happen in my experience. Participants seemed eager to talk and did so at great length.

In considering sensitive topics, in my estimation, participants shared detailed information regarding intimate feelings about their marriage, struggles balancing their own life goals in the face of military constraints, and discussions of other life events. In a few instances, upon reflection, participants asked me to omit specific information from the data transcripts. This indicates the degree to which participants shared their private and sensitive experiences during their interviews. My overall subjective impression of these data is that the use of phone interviewing did indeed provide a sense of anonymity as described by Lechuga (2012) and Babbie (1986). The only issue worth noting further is the majority of interviews took place during the workday, when participants' husbands were not home. However, several interviews took place in the evening or on the weekend when the participant's husband was home. During these interviews, there were several points where the participant's husband was heard in the background making comments about the conversation, while passing through the room in which the participant was located. I took careful note of these instances in order to consider if the presence of participants' husbands impacted these data. Overall, I made the decision that the topics of discussion during these incidences were not topics participants would have reason to alter due to the presence of their husband. Further, there were no distinctive differences in the

tone of these interviews compared with others that would indicate a clear problem with the inclusion of these data.

The final feature of phone interviewing that requires comment is the contention that during a phone interview, the researcher loses the ability to use important forms of non-verbal communication. Using non-verbal communication is useful to develop rapport with a participant. Also, this form of communication provides a participant with visual cues that tells them the researcher is closely listening and understands the points the participant is making. In regards to this critique of phone interviews, I agree that losing this form of communication creates a challenge to the interview process that requires careful planning to address. Relying on verbal cues to indicate listening and interest in participants' narratives, without interrupting the participant is challenging. I found when the situation permitted, sharing my own stories that related to participants' stories and experiences not only helped me develop rapport, but also helped me indicate to the participant I was intently listening and understood what they were conveying, as my stories connected with theirs. Further, managing silence without non-verbal cues required me to become more comfortable with silence over the phone. Transcripts of early interviews demonstrate my somewhat awkward attempts to fill silence due to the absence of non-verbal cues indicating a participant was still in thought and had not finished what they were saying. Throughout this process, I was forced to develop a level of discipline with regards to silence in the context of a phone conversation. Finally, I found that I needed to develop unobtrusive, verbal cues, such as "uh huh's" or "yeah" to replace non-verbal head shaking and eye contact to indicate to a participant my close attention and genuine interest in their words, feelings, and experiences. Like any interview, whether in-person or on the phone, this required a degree of improvisation depending on the participant. However, methodologically, carefully

thinking through how to develop rapport without non-verbal cues was at the forefront of my interview strategy.

Interview Protocol

In-depth interviewing is a useful tool for exploring the complexity of participants' lived experiences, and their motivations and modes of understanding. My interview questions were constructed around the following topics: (1) background on participant and spouse, how they met their spouse, and transition into the military; participant's role within their own family; (2) participant's role within the military community; (3) participant's employment or pursuit of college education; (4) institutional and social expectations of fulfilling the military wife role; (5) inter-spouse social relations; (6) experiences when spouses are away on training exercises or deployments. A list of the interview protocol is located in Appendix C.

Data Analysis

Narrative Truths and Vocabularies of Motives

Narratives provide researchers with a unique opportunity to enter the lives of participants, exploring their experience through their method of constructing and telling stories. Stories are inevitably the way we create meaning and remember our experiences, a perspective I take when analyzing and writing about participants' lives. Miller (2005: 11) argues that, "we act with intention and purpose and make sense of past experiences, present and future hopes and expectations, in relation to particular historical, cultural, and social contexts." Furthermore, Miller (2005: 11) adds that narratives allow researchers, "to explore the ways in which selves are constituted and maintained. These enable us to see how individuals make sense of periods of biographical disruption and personal transition." For my research, I rely upon participants forms of narrating their lived experiences. As Comfort (2008: 127) asserts, through her use of Spencer

(1982), she is interested in participants' "construction of a "narrative truth"" rather than a historical or empirical truth.

Furthermore, to explore the social processes unfolding within participants' lives, I focus on the construction of participants' narratives, analyzing patterns that emerge based on how they describe their experiences and make-sense of those experiences. I use Mills' (1940) "vocabularies of motives" as a foundation to consider participants forms of talk (DeVault 1999), exploring how they construct and make meaning of their lived experiences. According to Mills (1940), the way actors explain motives related to their actions and behaviors are socially situated in historical and institutional contexts that change as the context changes. Explanations of motives represent the ways actors construct meaning, and that such meaning-making is in itself a "social phenomena" requiring exploration (Mills 1940: 904). Campbell (1991) suggests that Mills' work calls for a specific form of research that explores when vocabularies of motives are used, what the vocabularies are in relation to the social situation, consider why certain vocabularies are used, and finally to elaborate on how they aid in the understanding of actor's motives. For example, in her analysis of the continuation of their romantic relationships with incarcerated individuals, Comfort (2008) uses Mills' (1940) work to explore her participants' forms of sense-making related to the sustainment of these relationships. Comfort (2008) finds that participants reframe incarceration as something positive for their partners, which only makes their relationship healthier and stronger. Thus, women navigate the institutional processes of subordination built within the prison system and frame the process as a worthwhile endeavor (Comfort 2008). While I do not embark on the exact program of study outlined by Mills (1940) and Campbell (1991), I draw upon Mills' (1940) assertion that motives are institutionally and socially situated. In particular, considering explanations of motives, such as exploring

participants' forms of sense-making, provides a useful analytical tool in exploring how participants understand and navigate the institutional forces they encounter on a daily basis.

Preliminary Analyses

After each interview was transcribed, I re-read the summary of the interview written immediately following the interviews. Then, I simultaneously listened to each interview while reading the transcript, making note of inflections and other important data that the initial transcription may have missed, especially for the thirteen transcripts transcribed by a transcriptionist. I adopted this strategy from Mehta's (2012) analysis of interview transcripts. My intent was to develop an overall sense of the participant, their identification with the many roles they took on in their family and the larger military community, and to document themes that may require further questions in later interviews.

Open and Focused Coding

Overall, my interviews yielded rich and detailed data, as well as a wide breadth of data requiring several phases of coding. One phase of open coding, followed by an additional one to two phases of focused coding were utilized to develop the themes present in this text (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw 1995; Ruban and Ruban 2005). I used ATLAS.Ti qualitative data manager throughout the analysis process, supplemented by analytical memoing. Overall, there were 92 open codes produced through this phase of analysis, for a total of 874 quotations documented across the 40 interviews. Using ATLAS.Ti's comment option, I maintained notes or interpretations regarding quotes, including reasons for my coding decisions.

Due to the large volume of data, and with the intent of preserving larger meanings produced through narration (DeVault 1999), open coding often incorporated large portions of text. There were two reasons for this process of analysis. First, my intent was to allow the

evolution of a narrative to unfold within each open code, enabling an examination of participants' patterns in their sense-making, as well as exploring their language patterns when describing experiences. For example, through this form of analysis, I discovered when participants describe difficult experiences, they often mitigated the seriousness of these experiences by comparing them to their husband's military experiences. When compared to a deployment or leaving family for months at a time, participants' own struggles seemed less intense. This became an important pattern in participants' narratives that is relevant to the analyses in Chapters 4 and 5.

The second purpose behind this method of open coding was more pragmatic. Due to the large amount of data, initial coding was required to organize these data by topic. Each open code represented a key theme, and each theme was organized by a larger topic. For example, within the topic of inter-spouse conflict, there were eighteen open codes, including codes such as "gossip about housewives" or "stealing service." After completing open coding, these data were organized around broad topics that then required several rounds of focused coding. A codebook was maintained through the data analysis process, documenting each open code, organizing open codes by topic, and including a description for each code that indicated how the code was used to demarcate portions of text.

Focused Coding

A select group of topics were explored in more detail through one to two rounds of focused coding. During focused coding, broader analytical topics became reorganized into more concise themes or data patterns. While conducting focused coding, I used ATLAS.Ti's report option to create a document containing all quotations for a single open code. Along with these quotations, ATLAS.Ti can include information, such as the participant from which the open code

is attached to, as well as any comments I wrote for each coded quotation. Being able to connect quotations to specific participants facilitated my ability to cross reference my focused coding with particular participants' characteristics, and my overall assessment of the participant. This enabled me to more closely analyze participants' sense-making. By using my written descriptions of each participant, which documented specific features, such as how connected the participants was to a military wife identity, what their husband's rank was, were they employed or not, among other characteristics, I could clearly develop an understanding of the patterns that emerged from the focused coding. Using this method, I closely considered who the quotations were from, and what patterns emerged in relation to the participants who did or did not fit within these emerging patterns.

For each topic that was analyzed with focused coding, the data was again organized by themes. While focused coding often produced a large number of codes, the data presented in this dissertation represent the most frequently coded patterns or themes that transcended characteristics, such as participants' employment status, husband's military rank, and branch of service. In doing so, my intent was to search for experiences that cut across these dimensions of participants' lives, noting where there was a common set of experiences or forms of sense-making. While variation existed within participants' experiences, my focus was on these dominant themes.⁷ I also conducted analytical comparisons based on husband's rank, which were relevant for the analyses presented in Chapter 5. Additionally, the intent of my focused coding was to scrutinize the use of language and patterns that arose within participants forms of talk. Carefully exploring commonalities within larger narratives provided insight into participants'

⁷ Variation in these data was often quite unique, created by a specific set of circumstances that required a great deal of discussion to properly analyze and explain to the reader. As a result, most variation was left out of the analytical discussions and presentation of the empirical findings. My overall goal was to look for dominant themes that cut across all the interviews.

forms of sense-making. Therefore, while descriptive data was important, especially for Chapter 3, closer examinations of participants talk was conducted through focused coding as a way to develop an understanding of common ways participants made sense of their lived experiences.

Finally, I often cross-referenced focused codes with the original larger text. My intent was to ensure participants' original ideas were not lost within a coding process that tends to whittle narratives into short edited quotes. As a result, the clusters of data found in the text of this thesis are not simply parceled out or decontextualized to fit within a particular argument, but removed after careful scrutiny with regards to the participant as a whole, as well as the longer narration the quotation originates from.

Chapter III. Written in Pencil: Institutional Practices and the Construction of Instituted Disorder

As I skimmed through Google search results relating to websites created by and for women married to service members, I came across an article about a recently designed app called *Organized Chaos*. This app, created by a military wife, aims to help military families synchronize the intermixing of family and service members' schedules by using calendars, checklists, and countdowns to important dates. When I watched the interview with the app's creator, I was reminded of the many experiences participants described to me regarding the organization of military work, and the way their husband's work responsibilities impacted their family roles. Pervasive in many of my conversations was an enduring sense of uncertainty within participants' daily lives, which profoundly structured their expectations of what that particular day, week, or even year held in store. So prominent was this uncertainty that it warranted an app like *Organized Chaos*.

The military is an institution filled with contradictory notions of efficiency and strict organizational order, and yet also known by service members and their families for its disorganization (MacLeish 2013). Such contradictions are depicted in institutional platitudes like "hurry up and wait." As participants described their experiences, it was clear that their lives were filled with these same contradictions of both order and disorder, where reproductive labor and the structure of one's family intersects with the military's institutional practices. As a result, the notion of disorder and the desire for stability was prominent within participants' stories. For instance, Susan is a 35-year-old Mexican-American stay-at-home mother with one child. After marrying her husband, she had to leave her job to move with her husband to his new duty assignment. Susan acknowledged that the military will move her family quite often, and that her

husband is frequently absent due to training or long work hours. As a result of these realities and the way they impact Susan's life, she decided to forego looking for employment until her husband leaves the military, and their life is more stable. When talking about these experiences, Susan explained to me how she defines what it is like being a military wife.

Being a military spouse means that you have to take on...a lot of responsibilities, and a lot of changes. That's all I can really say. I think that is just the basis of the military spouse. You need to deal with change. You need to be able to deal with uncertainty.

The assertion that one's future, either weeks or months away, is difficult to anticipate and plan for was one of the most common experiences interwoven within the narratives regarding the military's institutional practices and how it organizes work. In considering the prominence and pervasiveness of this sense of uncertainty, I realized that uncertainty was often a reminder of the structuring effect of the military within military wives' lives. The military unapologetically structures daily life through its work schedules, training exercises, deployments, and frequent geographic moves, all of which have a profound impact on families and the division of labor within families. However, this structuring effect also occurs in uncertain ways, and within this chapter I argue that the coalescence of not only institutional practices, but the uncertainty and instability created by these practices fundamentally structures military wives' reproductive labor. Bourdieu (2000) and Auyero (2011) label such institutionally constructed forms of uncertainty, which leads to individuals living in a constant state of waiting, as instituted disorder. As a salient feature of participants' stories, in this chapter I investigate the question, *how do current day military institutional practices construct and sustain a sense of instituted disorder within military wives' daily lives?* And, further, *how do these institutional practices and the experience of instituted disorder structure participants' reproductive labor, positioning them in a subordinate social location?*

To answer these questions, I first discuss the sociological literature exploring how work is organized in the military, as well as discussing the literature on waiting and instituted disorder. I then explore how participants describe the military's institutional practices, considering how these practices shape military wives' reproductive labor. These practices create the foundation that instituted disorder is built upon. I then explore the experience of chronic uncertainty, which is built within the military's organization of work. Lastly, I investigate how institutional practices become privileged within military wives' lives, creating a hierarchy that further sustains instituted disorder and its structuring effect within military families. Overall, I argue that the military's institutional practices, the chronic uncertainty linked with these practices, and the subsequent privileging of service members' military jobs leads to the constitution and sustainment of instituted disorder, which has powerful structuring effects. Both military families, and subsequently reproductive labor that reproduces the gendered division of labor within military families are the result of the coalescence of these social processes. These findings demonstrate not only how the greediness of the family operates through the ways the military's institutional practices impact military families, but also demonstrate the interconnection of the military and military families, an important conceptualization found within the militarization literature. Thus, the findings in this chapter demonstrate how militarization and the concept of linked-live both operate within military wives' daily lives.

Literature and Theoretical Framing

In this section, I briefly discuss the literature and theoretical framing used in this chapter's analyses, which accompany the broader frameworks discussed in chapter one. I begin by discussing research documenting the features of military work that impact military wives' lives. This discussion sets up my analyses of the military's institutional practices. I then explore

the concept of waiting and connect this with uncertainty, considering how sociologists understand and use these terms. Finally, I discuss how waiting and uncertainty are applied in the military context, connecting the construction of instituted disorder and participants' reproductive labor. This body of literature informs my investigation of participants' experiences with chronic uncertainty and hierarchy, which stems from how the military organizes work and its institutional practices.

Features of Military Work

Within the literature, the organization of military work is often categorized in similar ways. Segal (1986) and Bourg and Segal (1998:17) break down what they call the "organizational demands" of military work into the categories of "risk of injury or death, geographic mobility, separations, long working hours and shift work, residence in foreign countries, and normative constraints;" the last being comprised of various features of the institutional culture and traditions that place expectations of behavior upon military wives. Many of these features of military work are often considered as events experienced at one point in time, such as a combat deployment or a geographic move. Within this chapter, I also classify military work similar to Segal (1986) and Bourg and Segal (1999), exploring the institutional practices of deployments, training, and temporary duty assignments, features of the military's institutional practices that create long term family separations and family disruptions, as well as investigating the effects of geographic moves, and long work hours, all of which structure military wives' reproductive labor. However, I explore these features of military work differently than as singular events, but as a coalescence of experiences, all of which inform and shape participants' work in their family and sustain the gendered division of labor.

The Sociology of Waiting

I review the literature on waiting and uncertainty, as these features of life are fundamentally built into the military's institutional practices related to the organization of military work. The notion of uncertainty connects with concepts of both time and waiting, which are also linked with relations of power (Auyero 2011). Flaherty, Freidin, and Sautu (2005: 400) contend that Durkheim was one of the first sociologists to explore time, defining it as a social institution. Foucault (1977) explores the use of time as a way to produce discipline in schools, religious institutions, the workplace, and the military. The control of time aids in the development of docile bodies conditioned by time tables, bells ringing to indicate the end of class, or in the very movement of bodies, such as marching to a desired rhythm (Foucault 1977). Time is also explored in terms of deprivation as it relates to labor. For example, families, and particularly women face ever growing strains on their time, both in the workplace and at home (Hochschild 1997; Jacobs and Gerson 2004), which is structured by the interconnection of economic production and household activities.

Explorations of time within these works most often explore time as a controlling force, where individuals are subject to the power of time, either through its strict organization or through a sense of the having an absence of time. However, waiting, or as Gasparini (1995) and Schwartz (1974) call "waiting time," is less explored within sociology (Auyero 2011), and requires its own set of analyses when considering issues of power (Gasparini 1995:29). According to Gasparini (1995: 30), waiting and expectations are interconnected, suggesting that as one waits, for example, for a train at a train station, they also hold certain expectations or anticipations regarding the train's arrival. Thus, Gasparini (1995: 30-31) argues that, "waiting may be considered both as a gap and as a link between the present and the future....waiting is at

the crossroads not only of the present and future, but also of certainty and uncertainty.”

Gasparini (1995) distinguishes between short term and long term waiting, where long term waiting, or waiting that becomes a normalized condition of life can lead to what he calls a reclassification of social roles, where waiting can define an individual. For example, Gasparini (1995) contends that waiting is a normalized feature of Christianity, where members await the resurrection, which is then linked with the construction of individual's faith. Conditions of waiting thus have subjective qualities that help define individuals, based on behavior modifying conditions associated with waiting. As a result, Gasparini (1995) argues that waiting and uncertainty, in some situations, can be further linked to power and stratification.

Several prominent studies demonstrate this relationship between waiting, uncertainty, and power. For example, Bourdieu (2000) and Schwartz (1974) both argue that waiting is a particular form of differentially experienced power. “Making people wait, of delaying without destroying hope, of adjourning without totally disappointing...is an integral part of the exercise of power - especially in the case of powers which...depend significantly on the belief of the ‘patient’ and which work on and through aspirations, on and through time, by controlling time and the rate of fulfillment of expectations...” (Bourdieu 2000: 228). In this sense, waiting is the opposite of power that operates through the scheduling of time, instead operating through the creation of unending anticipations. According to Schwartz (1974: 844), possessing the power to make someone wait enables them to “modify [their] conduct in a manner congruent with one's own interests.” This final point is extremely relevant to this study, as we consider how uncertainty and waiting become forces that structure women's reproductive labor. Where Lutz (2002) defines militarization as a process that orders social relations, waiting and uncertainty represents one of the many ways this process unfolds in military wives' daily lives.

Waiting and the Military

Within the military context, MacLeish (2013) uses the experience of waiting to describe Army life for both soldiers and families. In his words, waiting is “a defining feature under which life is reproduced rather than the unremarkable dead time breaking up the steady unfolding of meaning and eventfulness” (MacLeish 2013: 96). In MacLeish’s (2013) work, waiting often occurs in the context of anticipations for the next deployment. However, as I demonstrate within this chapter, waiting and uncertainty are ubiquitous structural forces that are produced by the military’s institutional practices. According to Maeland and Brunstad (2009: 2) “war consists of 5% terror and 95% boredom (waiting),” an assertion Basham (2015) demonstrates in her ethnographic study of British military units. These authors document how waiting is an integral feature of military operations and military life in general. I argue that it is this same temporal control that operates through service members marriage to military wives, directly impacting the structure of military families, which operates through the constitution and sustainment of instituted disorder. The experience of instituted disorder and the effects it has on the family in turn solidifies military wives’ reproductive labor within their families.

Contributions to the Literature

There are two primary contributions to the literature offered in this chapter; one theoretical and one substantive. First, studies that rely solely on the greedy institution framework place military wives in-between two competing institutions, the military and the family. In exploring how instituted disorder is constructed and sustained, my aim is to expose the co-constitutive forces that are both experienced in, as well as structure the family, and in particular the reproductive labor and family roles taken on by military wives. Thus, I aim to demonstrate how instituted disorder provides a nuanced way to explore the greediness of the military. The

findings in this chapter also demonstrate how processes of militarization operate within military wives' daily lives, stemming from the way work is organized in the military, and the structuring effect this has on military families, and organizing lives within the gendered division of labor. Rather than separate from one another, the structure of the family and the demands it places on military wives stems from the military and the sustainment of instituted disorder within military wives' lives, all of which has an important structuring effect on the gendered division of labor and the use of military wives' labor that supports the military. The second contribution of this chapter is to provide an up-to-date, and more nuanced investigation of the lived experiences of women married to U.S. service members, with regards to their family roles and their relationship with the military institution. As depicted in Chapter 1, many of the studies exploring how military wives experience institutional constraints, such as deployments or geographic moves, are outdated. These findings suggest that the structural impact of the organization of military work has a similar and enduring effect on military families and military wives, indicating that traditional gender relations in the military have not radically changed over the last 20 years. However, comparative work is required to fully analyze these similarities and differences.

Institutional Practices

In this section I explore how participants experience institutional practices related to how work is organized in the military. First, I focus on the forms of work that create long term family separations, which include deployments, training exercises, and temporary duty assignments. I then focus on the day to day experiences of participants in relation to service members' work schedules. Finally, I consider the experience of frequent geographic moves. Overall, this section demonstrates the institutionally produced work-family constraints that participants describe, which are the result of their marriage to a service member, and how these constraints create

disruptions within family life. Instituted disorder begins to take from through these family effects.

Deployments, Training, and Temporary Duty

Rebecca (a 30-year-old White stay-at-home mother with three children): “I really feel that we’ve been apart more than we’ve been together.”

Deployments represent the epitome of “work” in the military, and over the past two decades military families were placed in a constant state of flux due to the operational tempo of military units deploying in support of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Deployments impact families in numerous ways due to service members’ lengthy family separations. However, deployments are not the only cause for family separations, and these separations are only part of the broader experience of being married to a service member. Personnel needs require service members to leave their families on Temporary Additional Duty/Temporary Duty Travel (TAD/TDY) for varying amounts of time, and training exercises also require military wives to run their families on their own for significant amounts of time. Taken in full, service member’s absences often occur quite frequently and for a variety of reasons, which have an important structuring effect on the family and military wives’ reproductive labor. Castaneda and Harrell (2008) suggest that military wives often do not make specific distinctions between the reasons for these absences, but instead simply assert that overall, their husbands are frequently gone. Within these data, I find similar feelings among participants, and that experiences like these are common for participants married to officers and enlisted service members alike, as well as similarly experienced across the service branches.

Within this section, I document the coalescence of experiences related to deployments, training exercises, and TAD/TDY’s, all particular features of military work and institutional

practices that produce dynamic military family structures, fundamentally shaping participants' reproductive labor. In MacLeash's (2013: 8) study of Fort Hood, he finds,

Most of these units followed some version of the Army's grueling rotational schedule: twelve-month tours frequently extended to fifteen months, separated by twelve months of "dwell time" back in Texas. Portions of these respites at home were inevitably consumed with weeks of predeployment field training for the next tour. With this schedule, going off to war was often less a one-time event than a repeated shuttling between home and Iraq.

Following in MacLeash's (2013) research exploring life at Fort Hood, I depict the experiences of military wives in relation to the institutional forms of military work, which create long-term family separations. These separations can last several weeks or several months as the result of training exercises, to ten or fifteen months as the result of a deployment. However, as MacLeash (2013) suggests, separations are not experienced as singular events, but as a repeated cycle. Therefore, rather than focus on one particular moment or experience in participants' lives, such as a single deployment, I focus on the coalescence of these institutional practices, exploring a totality of experiences where military wives face several years of repeated long-term family separations. Taken in its entirety, war and the preparation for war are not singular events within women's lives, but an ever-present, yet unpredictable cycle that structures anticipations of future family separations, which I argue powerfully channels women's labor toward the home and family as they respond to these work-family constraints.

A military deployment is often one of the most stressful experiences faced by military wives and their families. Fear of husbands' safety, is often compounded by responsibilities such as running a home, taking care of children, and managing one's employment. Yet, participants' narratives demonstrate that husbands' absences often begin well before they deploy. As a result, common conceptions of military wives' experiences underestimate the length of time family separations occur, as well as the overall impact on family life. For example, as Jenna, a 37-year-

old White stay-at-home mother with two children explains, “I mean the other thing that I think people don’t really realize either is, even before the deployment, leading up to it, years before...he’s gone so much during training as well. So, you know, it does feel like a lot of single parenting.” Kathy is a 33-year-old White mother of two school age children. She is one of the few participants who also works full-time in a company that allows her to work remotely from home. This arrangement enables Kathy to also manage her household and children when they come home from school. During our interview, Kathy described her husband’s lengthy absences, using the following story of her first deployment experience as a way to depict the length of time service members are away from their families.

They did a lot of field training... and when they would send them away for actual National Training Center training in California, and things like that, they wouldn’t go for 30 days, they would go for 60. I tell everybody, we got married, and then he had a whole bunch of [training]. I had my son and then he was pretty much gone from the time I had my son, which was the end of January. So I think it was like February he [left for training] for like a month, came home for a few days, went to California for 60 days. No no no, came home went to Georgia for 6 weeks, came home went to California for 60 days, came home for leave and then deployed for 15 months. He came back and my son was two years and about a month. He was just over two. So, I mean I was pretty much on my own... That first year into the first two and half years really established how the rest of our relationship would play out, um, because I just take care of everything and now when he’s not around, it’s no skin off my back.

In an experience similar to Kathy, Riley described what it was like for her after she and her husband moved to a new duty station and her husband began preparation for a deployment. Riley is a 30-year-old White mother of two school aged children, who was employed at the time of our interview. “We got there [and] he immediately left for two, month long trainings. And then he deployed...And so, I’m [there], and I don’t know anybody. I was really isolated...So, it was just rough because I’m worried about him in Afghanistan and um, and then being by myself, and I was really depressed.” While these feelings demonstrate the emotional affects military wives experience due to their husbands’ frequent absence, they also illustrate the degree to which

military wives find themselves alone, running their family and often taking care of children while sometimes also balancing their own employment.

As many participants assert, family separations are often longer than initially expected, due to the combination of both training and deployments. These absences have a powerful structuring effect within the family, where military wives are faced with exceptionally long periods of time where they run their home, or parent their children on their own. Kathy's assertion that these experiences structured her role in her family is indicative of the experiences of many participants. Long-term family separations tend to solidify the roles of wives within their families, because absences are not singular events, where families return to a more equitable "normal" division of labor afterward. Instead, the anticipation of, and preparation for absences, in combination with the frequency and length of absences, results in military wives often permanently maintaining their primary role in their home and family.

In addition to the cycle of training and deployments, TAD/TDY's, which occasionally last as long as a deployment, also produce long-term separations, which has a similar structuring effect on military wives' family responsibilities. For example, Victoria is a White 27-year-old who does not have any children. Due to constant moves, and her husband's frequent absences, Victoria has not worked since her husband entered the military. During our interview, Victoria described a period where her husband was rarely home due to several TDY's. "[At one duty station] we were there for 24 months, and the job that my husband had, he was constantly in [other countries]. Constantly. In those two years he was only home collectively for 6 months." Victoria's husband also deployed prior to this particular duty assignment, meaning that she experienced several years where her husband was away longer than he was home. Moreover, when discussing the combination of TAD/TDY's and deployments, Val, a 40-year-old White

stay-at-home mother with one child described her experiences while she and her husband lived overseas. During her husband's military career, Val experienced varying periods of employment and unemployment, as well as spending time working on her college degree at several different institutions. However, both were continuously interrupted by her husband's absences, family moves, and her subsequent responsibilities at home. For instance, when living overseas Val states, "Generally [I] was alone. I had my son, and he would turtle on my back. My husband was deployed [or on TDY] pretty much on and off the entire three years we were [overseas]. So, I was pretty much alone there." TAD/TDY's tend to be a feature of military work often overlooked in the literature. However, as these data document, they add to the experience of long-term family separations, and are another example of forms of military work that leave military wives to run their home and family on their own.

Additionally, participants often describe the structuring effect of their husbands' deployment on their daily schedules, even after their husbands have left. For example, according to Victoria,

Your schedule has to adjust. Your spouse is going to be able to call you from Afghanistan sometime in a six to eight-hour window in the middle of your day. And how are you going to structure your day around missing that one phone call? And that timeframe is going to change. Maybe it's going to be 10:30 in the morning and maybe it's going to be 10:30 at night. You don't know.

The impact of the cycle of long-term family separations on military families, such as changing the structure and dynamics of the family, and structuring the reproductive labor of military wives demonstrates the intimate ways the military family is fundamentally interconnected with the military institution (Hyde 2016). I suggest Victoria's story depicts what Hyde (2016) refers to as the simultaneity of experience, which demonstrates how military wives' lives, seemingly separate, and far from the "front lines" are still tied to the military institution and influenced by

events taking shape far from their homes. Victoria's description of how her schedule is still structured by her husband's, even in his absence, demonstrates not only the simultaneity of experiences, but also the pervasiveness of the military within participants' lives, and the structuring effects of militarization. The imbrication of these two institutions means that wives' experiences of family life are determined through institutional practices and the decisions of military and state leaders. This interweaving of family and military operations is depicted by Victoria, who not only talked about her experiences of her husband's frequent long-term absences, but also how life is still interconnected with her husband's military schedule, even after he deploys.

Whether through an endless and often unpredictable cycle of training and deployments, or in conjunction with TAD/TDY's, institutional practices that organize military work have far reaching structural implications for military wives. The cycle of service member absences and family separations are often not singular events in participants' lives, but ever-present features of the military apparatus and how it organizes work that is built under the guise of sustaining military readiness and organizational needs. These experiences also connect military wives' lives with the state's decisions regarding the use of military force abroad. Throughout my conversations, training exercises, TAD/TDY's, and deployments were an anticipated part of life. Yet, training meant to sustain military readiness, and the experience of a deployment were often not described as singular, extraordinary events that wives and families make it through, before returning to normalcy. Instead, for many participants, this continuous cycle *is* normalcy, and focusing attention solely on deployments obscures this lived reality.

Perceptions of Unyielding Work Hours

Kathy: “In the civilian world if you need a sick day you stay home. In the military world sick days don’t happen. You have to be dying, and so that was an adjustment to realize like he might have a sore throat or he might have the flu, but he better get over it and puke into a bucket at work.”

Few studies explore features of institutional practices and the organization of work outside of deployments and the effects of deployments on service members, military wives, and their children. Castaneda and Harrell (2008) investigate service members’ working hours, along with deployments and training, documenting their impact on the employment outcomes of military wives. Yet, there is little current research depicting the ways military wives reproductive labor is structured by military service members’ daily work schedules. My aim within this section is to explore this feature of military institutional practices. As many interviewees assert, they feel there is an implicit assumption made by military leadership that there is an able and willing wife in each family, ready to run the home and family as required, while service members focus on their daily work and prepare for absences due to training and deployments. Participants often contend that even when their husbands are not deployed or away on training exercises, they work long hours constraining their ability to help out in the home and with their children.

Military work often requires service members to work long hours, where their day starts with physical training in the early morning, often around 6:00am or 6:30am, and ends sometime between 5:00pm and 7:00pm at night. Some duty shifts also include periodic night shifts or being on 24-hour duty. Participants’ depictions of their husbands’ work schedules convey a work-family dynamic where the home and family become participants’ responsibility due to these work schedules. Additionally, husbands are also often described as being exhausted when they come home at night, limiting their help. For instance, Tracy is a White 27-year-old with a

newborn. Tracy was employed, but once she added parenting to the responsibilities she already balances in her life, she was unsure if she would continue working. Tracy described the work-family constraints she experienced in the following manner:

I'm always keeping up with appointments, setting up things, bill paying [pause], um, you name it. I mean if there's an important phone call to be made, I have to always do it. And that's [slight pause], that's yeah, whether he's deploying or not. I mean that's kinda just the norm, and something I've gotten used to...He leaves and 4:30 in the morning and he gets home at 6:00 at night, and then within two hours he's passed out asleep....And I mean there would be like a solid week where I might talk to him for maybe an hour. Like, enough time to eat the dinner that I fixed him and as soon as he got done eating, he would just be sitting there, sitting straight up and falling asleep. And of course, I can't get angry with him. The poor guy, he is like so exhausted. But it took a toll. Like after that happens for like so long it takes a toll on your relationship.

As many participants describe, their husband's work hours meant that they were gone for the majority of the day. When their husbands were home, their long work days resulted in little or no help around the house. As Emma, a 32-year-old White employed mother with two children, and a job that lets her work from home, contends, "I don't mean to put my husband on watch here, but I do everything." Further, Carrie, who is a 34-year-old White stay-at-home mother of two children, described very similar experiences to Tracy, connecting her husband's schedule with her family responsibilities.

I mean he would have PT in the morning. It's super early. Be gone doing that, and so I would have to get the kids up, get them ready, get them ready for school, breakfast, you know, all of that. And then he would come home, take a shower, have like 30 minutes and then run off to work for the entire day. And so, he was just constantly, before we were even up, you know, working, out the door. So, all of that was on my shoulders to take care of the kids. There was no help there. You know? And then he was at work all day, and he may or may not get a lunch break. You know? So, um no, you know there's no stability there to know when he's coming back or what his schedule will look like. And then he'd work late hours and then come home and have to study to keep up with [his job]. Um, so, all day he was really just consumed, you know, with his military life, and schedule, and job. And so, I would be the one to take care of the house, and the kids, and laundry, and cleaning, and dishes, and getting groceries, and paying bills, and you know, all the finances. And then sports, and signing them up for sports, or taking them to practices, and then you know, or we're involved in church, so also doing church activities

as well. So it was just all on my shoulders to schedule and maintain, um, as far as the house and finances and kids go.

Assertions like these are common in participants' stories of their daily lives, which depict the degree to which reproductive labor and military work are linked. Institutional decisions made in regards to service members' work schedules fundamentally structure family roles and women's family responsibilities. In the previous section, the discussion revolved around service members' long-term absences, however, even within daily and weekly life, participants also experience somewhat similar absences due to the long hours their husbands work.

Geographic Moves

Susan: "I think I'll always struggle. It's hard not to. It's hard to pick up and go all the time. We got married and everything just changed, because before you know it, we had to leave. Then we were [at his new duty station], and then six months later we had to leave. We're going to [another duty station], and three years later we're going to have to leave. So, that's just not a lot of stability man. It's hard."

Scholars often explore the frequency of military geographic moves, or Permanent Change of Station (PCS), in relation to military wives' employment outcomes, exposing the ways frequent moves impede military wives' ability to find and maintain employment (Booth 2003; Castaneda and Harrell 2008; Cooke and Speirs 2005; Hosek et al. 2002). I also find similar experiences within these data. While educational and employment outcomes warrant exploration, in this section I investigate geographic moves in relation to family life disruptions produced when a family moves to a new duty station, which often occurs every few years. Geographic moves that disrupt the everyday life of the family further places military wives in a bind. As participants often assert, they frequently take on the labor of planning and executing family moves, while also rebuilding their home, family operations, and their relationships with other military families at their new location. Additionally, similar to the ever-present expectation of husbands' absences due to deployments, training, or long work hours, the overall experience of

geographic moves is stretched across time as Susan's experience of frequent moves demonstrates. Participants often describe the feeling of never being truly settled, knowing they will move again in a few years. As I discuss in the next section, this experience leaves families' in an ever-present state of waiting and anticipation, which has an important structuring effect on family life and the gendered division of labor.

The experience of frequent geographic moves is perhaps one of the most disruptive features of the institutional practices I explore. While husbands' absences certainly structure the organization of family life, frequent moves uproot important social connections for military families. Winstanley, Thorns, and Perkins' (2010) interviews with civilian couples who experience geographic moves demonstrate the link between families' social needs, the home, and the social context of their new place of residence, describing how family members are compelled to build a space where they feel at home after they move. According to Seek (1983: 467), family moves disrupt the normalcy of family life. Families operate based on the development of members' acclimation to the "nearness to shops, schools, public transport, sport facilities and the city, affinity to a pleasant surrounding and nearness to friends and relatives."

Such disruption in family life further structures military wives' reproductive labor. Due to husbands' work responsibilities and absences, in addition to daily family life, every two to three years military wives are responsible for reconstructing their homes and how their family operates in a new geographic setting. For example, military wives have to construct new schedules and organize how their family operates based on new schools and the time it takes to drive there; intimate features of family life often taken-for-granted. Therefore, geographic moves represent yet another facet of the structural forces related to institutional practices and the organization of military work that directly structures the organization of daily family operations

and women's labor. By creating family instability and life disruptions, military wives are forced to take on the brunt of the reproductive labor, because family disruptions require someone to address them in order for families to function. Due to the demands of service members' military work, military wives are thus left to respond to these disruptions. Family disruptions take on a powerful structuring effect within military families, which connects the organization of military institutional practices and work with the ordering of family life and family labor.

Participants frequently discuss the disruption in family life, as well as the responsibilities they take on with each geographic move. As illustrated by many participants, they often describe how they are responsible for moving their families and reorganizing family life once they arrive at their new home, because their husbands go right back to work once they move. Ava is a 28-year-old White stay-at-home mother with two children. Over the past few years Ava has experienced periods of employment, which are always disrupted by family moves. However, Ava explained that she eventually felt trying to maintain a job, while also constantly moving and taking care of the majority of family responsibilities was too stressful. As a result, she decided to become a stay-at-home mother instead. In relation to the experience of frequently moving, Ava explains, "It's really, it's really hard. And then you're still trying to get your house in order, and get on a schedule. And then you've got to try and find out where all these new places are to go grocery shopping or, it's like the little things actually that add up, um to the stress." Ava's description adds to our understanding of the labor involved in frequent family moves by demonstrating how she organizes her family based on new schedules, find new stores for shopping, and that it is the "little things" that add up and create stress. Such "little things" represent the banal and taken-for-granted features of family life that wives must work to reset when their family moves, as well as the way institutional practices permeate into even the most

banal features of family life, structuring reproductive labor and organizing the family in a way that meets the needs of the military.

Additionally, many participants describe disruptions in their social networks as a reason for feeling isolated within their families and home; experiences that when combined with their family responsibilities structurally channels their labor toward their family. This severing of social ties further acts to structurally direct women's labor toward their families. By the time families become accustomed to their new community and their home, as well as the more banal facets of interwoven family and community life, the cycle will start anew, which is often isolating. As Carrie describes:

So, the stability in just relationships in general. Even like, I know that old man working at the grocery store for 5 years. Or it's just stability in relationships. Which comes with not moving. Just staying in one area. Then teachers, like for my kids to have the same teacher when they each reach second grade. Or whatever. Things like that. It's just that stability and familiarity. Just knowing where you're driving to a location in the area. I mean like, everywhere you move you don't know anything, and it takes a year before you learn shortcuts to places. [laughs] You know? Or just things that local people know. You know?...It's just stability all around that just comes from not moving and being in one place, and having the same address, and um, you know, running into people that I've known for years. I don't have to explain my history to everybody when I meet them. They know, that's Carrie and Frank [Carrie's husband], and he does this, and she does this. It's like I don't have to explain how many kids we have and how long we've been married over, and over, and over again every couple of years. You know?

Carrie's story speaks to the multiplicity of affects related to family disruptions and instability constructed by frequent geographic moves. Her experiences and dislike for moving is representative of the ways that families' daily activities that sustain how they operate are socially interwoven within communities, as well as how these connections are severed when families move. For example, Ava described her struggle to find and maintain friendships when her family frequently moves.

We have been at four different military bases and we've only been married six and half years, and any time we transition or move to these new places, it's the same struggles. It's

the same struggles of trying to find someone to just be friends with, and then you know you're moving, your husband's making friends because he's got all these people he's working with, when you're still at home taking care of the children, and what have you. And then you try to just socialize with people and try to find people... And then here I am, you know, we've been stationed, or he's been stationed I should say [here] for the past two and half, it will be three years in December, and I just recently in the past eleven months have made friends. And it hasn't even been until like the past six months, right before we're getting ready to PCS, because he's supposed to be PCSing in December, I've actually found friends that I could truly relate with and talk to. And that's all kind of ending because now we're PCSing and having to move again.

Geographic moves have several important effects on the family and military wives lived experiences. The feeling of isolation is common within participants' narratives, which I suggest is important in the structuring of reproductive labor. Not only are service members kept busy at work, leaving military wives to put in the labor required to successfully move their family, but when isolating military wives by severing their social ties to communities, the family becomes the one static feature of their lives. In essence, military wives become marginalized by these social disruptions, isolating them within their family, which they need to rebuilt, since their social world is disrupted in ways that service members' worlds are not. When reproductive labor is primarily military wives' responsibility, the area of their lives that they are responsible for becomes the area of life most disrupted by frequent geographic moves. I suggest this further constrains military wives within their family, directing their labor towards the home.

Overall, the institutional practices of deployments, TAD/TDY's, training, long work hours, and frequent geographic moves have a powerful structuring effect within the family and military wives' reproductive labor. These practices of organizing military work also create instability within the family, primarily through service members absences, and moving to new locations, which severs family ties and military wives' ties with their community. In creating this family instability, the foundations of instituted disorder are laid. However, instituted disorder takes on more characteristics, which I explore in the following sections.

The Experience of Chronic Uncertainty

Patricia (a 35-year-old White stay-at-home mother with two children): “When you write something on the calendar, you never write it in pen, you write it in pencil, ‘cause it’s probably gonna get changed. That’s like the number one rule in the military for spouses, is don’t ever write anything down in pen, ‘cause you’re gonna have to change it. And, it’s happened a lot. You have Plan A, you have Plan B, and then you have Plan C, and you go back to A really quickly.”

Overall, chronic uncertainty is constructed through the military’s institutional practices, because these institutional practices often unfold in uncertain ways, which leave military wives in a state of anticipation, but also limbo. Such waiting has a powerful structuring effect on the family and military wives’ reproductive labor. In this section, I investigate, in turn, the constitution of chronic uncertainty, the second component to instituted disorder, which is produced through uncertainty regarding when family separations will occur, what service members’ work hours will look like, and when and where families will move next.

Uncertain Family Separations

In relation to the experience of long-term family separations a common theme emerged within these data. Participants live with an ever-present anticipation for their husband’s next deployment, training exercise, or temporary duty assignment. I find these anticipations have a significant effect on participants’ ways of making sense of their immediate and long-term future, structuring their family roles and reproductive labor. As Jessica, a 32-year-old White stay-at-home mother with two children explained, even when her husband was not deployed, he was constantly away training in anticipation of going back to war. “You really honestly never know when he’ll be home. Because they would have field training and stuff like that, and so even when they were home, they were always doing exercises to prepare to go back overseas.” As a result, this chronic uncertainty was often depicted by assertions that you can never plan too far into the future, because those plans will often be disrupted. Furthermore, participants often asserted that

they never knew when deployments would actually end, rarely meeting their initial planned end date. However, this does not mean they always end later than expected. Sometimes participants describe the surprise of a deployment ending early, while other times they are extended well past their expected end. As Tonya, a 28-year-old White military wife with no children, who volunteers in local community organizations rather than search for employment explains, “My husband was s’posed to be coming home, like really soon, and then [his deployment] got extended. So, I was s’posed to go surprise him [on the West coast]. But now he’s not gonna be there.” The extension of her husband’s deployment means that Tonya is left waiting for her husband, while also having her plans of a post-deployment trip unexpectedly cancelled. The assertion that plans are often disrupted by changes such as this are commonly discussed by participants, which has a powerful effect on how participants expect how their future will unfold. As I will describe below, Tonya decided to stop planning too far in the future, and instead focus on her daily volunteer work, taking each day at a time. This is one of the reasons Tonya decided not to look for employment, but to volunteer, which was more flexible and fit her approach to living each day at a time.

Unexpected changes also occur when TAD/TDY’s are sprung on service members and their families. Within these data, TAD/TDY’s have a reputation of coming on quickly with little warning. Cynthia is a 32-year-old White stay-at-home mother with one child, who is also working on her undergraduate degree while her kids are in daycare. Cynthia describes herself as a planner and type-A personality, struggling with her husband’s variable work schedule. As Cynthia discussed with me, unexpected TAD/TDY’s effect the way she views the future and how she makes plans for her family. “You think something’s gonna happen, where you think your husband is s’posed to be home for certain things, and then last minute he gets told he’s

going TDY. Um, I, uh, I don't, I, um, [long pause] I really like planning things, so that's where it's been hard. Having to find that my husband all of a sudden has to go." Cynthia's hesitations demonstrate how difficult it is for her to experience such a degree of uncertainty in her life. As evident within these data, one of the most predictable features of the cycle of long-term family separations is that military wives can expect their husbands to leave, and for significant amounts of time. However, when this will occur, and how it will likely unfold is often uncertain, leaving wives to confront a ubiquitous sense of waiting and anticipation.

Unpredictable Work Schedules

Within our conversations regarding their husbands' long work hours, participants often also discuss the unpredictability of service members' work hours, which directly impacts their ability to maintain family plans and or weekly family schedules. Alicia is 30-year-old White stay-at-home mother with two school aged children. While her husband tries to participate in family activities, such as their children's sports, Alicia describes how she is often left waiting until the last minute to know if her husband will actually make it to these activities and what this will mean for her plans. Alicia used a recent experience to demonstrate how family activities, her family responsibilities, and her own plans intersect with her husband's variable work schedules.

Alicia: He gets home from work anywhere between 3:00 to 6:00 depending on the day and what time they decide to release him. Um, which makes it difficult...I sort of rely on him to take one kid to one activity, if we have activities on the same night. But it's not always [pause], doesn't always work out that way.

Interviewer: Do you know when he's gonna be working late or get out early?

Alicia: No, it kinda is whenever, they decide really. I mean it happened one night this week. I guess that was Wednesday. Um, 'cause my son had baseball...I don't go to every practice, just 'cause some of 'em are pretty late, and it's hard. I don't really like keeping our daughter up that late if I don't have to. So, I hadn't planned on going, and I was gonna just catch up on stuff around the house. And then [pause], like right before practice started, he called me, and told me that he couldn't leave yet. So I had to get over there. So it's really just, really random as to how they decide that.

Such experiences represent the waiting and uncertainty produced by the organization of military work. Instituted disorder often occurs on a daily basis, as wives anticipate how plans will unfold, while also waiting to find out if husbands will be home as planned. Patricia demonstrates the experience of waiting, expectations, and uncertainty. Instead of discussing her husband's inability to leave work when planned or when needed, she experienced the opposite, where her husband is commonly called back to work.

The only time we get with [service members] is when they're home. And that's not even guaranteed. They could get called in. They could get called away for something at the drop of a hat. He could be in the middle of dinner and get called away....Like right now I have no idea what time he's gonna get home tonight. It could be midnight before he gets home. I'm, hoping it's not, but it's always a possibility. It's a possibility he doesn't come home until tomorrow sometime. Um [slight pause,] so [slight pause], it's hard to, it's hard 'cause you can't plan anything. So, even if you do plan something, you have to be prepared for it to fall through. Um, we went to the movies the other night, and while in the movies, his phone went off, and the first thing I thought was, oh, he's gonna have to leave. 'Cause that's like the first thing that comes to my mind when we're out and his phone goes off is he's gonna have to leave. And it's happened once or twice where we were at the zoo one time, and we're walkin' around, and his phone went off; he goes we have to go. And we had just gotten like halfway through the zoo, and my kids wanted to keep going, and I'm like we have to go home; Dad's gotta go to work. Well we don't want to! And it, I think that's the hard part is when the kids are involved, they don't understand. Um, I can understand it; it sucks, but I can understand it. The kids just wanna have fun, and when Dad's home they wanna be with him. And then when they can't, it hurts them and it makes them feel like they're just not wanted. So I think it's harder on the kids than it is on the wife. We can survive because we've been through it. We know it's coming, we know it can come. Kids, they just, they don't get it; it's hard for them.

Experiences like these demonstrate not only the variability in service members' work schedules that military wives are forced to accommodate, but also how plans are disrupted by this variability, and that these experiences often coalesce to structure how one expects the future to unfold.

The experience of living in a state of uncertainty gains footing quickly when time is already stretched thin and experiences in the past inform expectations about the present and

future. Often participants assert that their default expectation is that their husband will be delayed or their plans will be disrupted, as Patricia's story demonstrates. As a result, military wives live with an ever-present sense of waiting for, or expecting that not only will husbands be unreliable to help with family needs, but that plans could be, or will most likely be disrupted when husbands are included in those plans. As a result, I argue chronic uncertainty plays an important role in structuring military wives' reproductive labor. Experiencing chronic uncertainty often means that military wives are more inclined to take on the brunt of the family responsibilities, because this is the most reliable route to finding a semblance of stability within their lives. When uncertainty is produced by service members' jobs, if military wives leave their husband out of the equation, and take on the family's needs primarily on their own, they are able to create some stability.

Within my interviews, I make a point to ask about finding time for oneself, or focusing on their own goals, like educational goals, given the institutional constraints participants face. Most participants explained that finding time for themselves was a challenge and somewhat rare. Many of the stories about finding personal time were also interwoven with discussions of uncertainty related to their husband's work schedules and ability to leave work when planned. Ellie is a 30-year-old White stay-at-home mother considering graduate school once her children are in school themselves. In the meantime, Ellie explains that she has too much on her plate at home to add school into the mix. Ellie used a recent experience to describe her husband's unpredictable work schedule in relation to her own personal time.

Ellie: Right now, he's in training, so sometimes he'll get home early, sometimes he'll get home late. So he's usually home by [pause], 4:30, 5:30. Rarely, rarely is he not home by dinnertime. Every once in a while, he's not home by dinnertime around 6:00 or so. Um, so if he's gonna be late it's usually nights that I have something planned. Like last Friday, he was [training], and he was s'posed to be home by 5:30. And, um, and I had a girl's

night planned, and I was s'posed to be there at 6:00. But, um, his debrief took a long time. He didn't come home till 7:30.

Interviewer: Were you able to still get out or—?

Ellie: Yeah you know, um, I just took 'em with me, and I had him meet me there and, um, got the kids from me.

Interviewer: What's it like experiences these types of situations?

Ellie: That's kinda frustrating though because, when he's in situations like that, he can't really call me and talk to me. Because he's not really supposed to have his phone on him. So, it's like okay, I'm watchin' the clock. I'm like oh my gosh, he's not here. I don't know why he's not here. And so, every once in a while, he can like sneak me a text real quick and say hey, we're still debriefing, or this is takin' longer, or you know. But I can't just call him and ask him, 'hey where are you'. You know? Kind of sucks. [said with a sigh]

While Ellie's husband is generally home in time for dinner, I posit that Ellie's comment that her husband is normally delayed at work when she has plans speaks to her experiences and many other participants subsequently learned anticipations of how their plans will unfold. I suggest that an important impact of waiting and uncertainty is that these experiences do not have to occur on a regular basis to have a fundamental impact on participants and the decisions they make about trying to find time for themselves. As Schwartz (1974) asserts, waiting can be a powerful behavior changing force.

In addition to personal time, participants sometimes describe strategies they use to ensure they are prepared for the unexpected. While working on her bachelor's degree, Cynthia explained why it is important for her to get ahead in her classes.

What I like to do, is the second class starts I try to get two weeks ahead, the first week. And have that buffer. Because, [my son] will get sick, you know, at some point. Um, he'll catch a cold, or you know [my husband] has a weekend off and he wants to spend time together. And so, I'll always try to make buffers. And I feel like I'm always riding this surfboard of fear.

Cynthia's plan to create a buffer demonstrates her attempt to address her responsibilities in the home, like take care of her son when he is sick, in relation to her own school work, while also anticipating changes in her husband's work schedule, or her husband's inability to help when her son is sick. Cynthia, like many participants explain, waits, expects, and plans her life in relation to these forms of chronic uncertainty. I argue these effects demonstrates how service members' work, and military wives' subsequent family responsibilities become privileged over wives own personal time and life goals; a key feature of instituted disorder I explore later in this chapter. In essences, these social arrangements marginalize military wives, in relation to military institutional practices, accommodating and privileging their husband's military job, and adjusting their own live accordingly.

You Need Orders in Hand: Moving with Uncertainty

The experience of chronic uncertainty is further produced through the sometimes nightmarish PSC process. While many participants discuss geographic moves that went smoothly, other times what seemed like an easy move turned into a disaster. Often wives assert that you should never plan a move until you have service members' orders to the next duty station. While orders enable wives to schedule movers, whose cost will be defrayed by the military, and to start the process of finding housing on a new base, "having orders in hand" is also symbolic of the expectation that things will change and not go according to plan. Until wives have orders, they often assume where they are told they are moving to will most likely not be where they actually go. Any information about their next duty station that is received before they have the actual orders should be only partially trusted. Since family moves are a monumental undertaking, especially when children are involved, participants often begin planning when they first learn where they will be moving to next. However, regardless of orders

or not, as many participants describe, even after receiving official orders, their expected duty stations ends up changing.

The potential bureaucratic nightmare of a PCS is emblematic of chronic uncertainty constructed within life experiences that are connected with the military. For example, Jenna described her feelings about her family's upcoming move in relation to prior moves.

It just makes it a little overwhelming. And part a me is like it's not [pause], there's really not much I can do. We really don't know where we're gonna be. Until you get your orders, things could change. Generally, they have an idea of where they're putting you. Things can change at the last minute. They haven't for us necessarily once things have been kinda put into movement. But until we know, which they say November we'll know, but in my experience, it tends to be months later than they say that they can produce a location. And then it's all that scrambling to figure out, to get your kids and family established, and then look for work, and all that stuff.

Jenna demonstrates the way chronic uncertainty is experienced and internalized. She admits that her family has not experienced drastic changes during their prior moves. Regardless, there is still a sense of anticipation that things *will* change. In an example of the times when orders do change, Cynthia described, what she refers to as their nightmare move.

Cynthia: With this move we were told in October/November that we wouldn't have our orders 'till February. Um, which we didn't. And October/November they were saying well, maybe you'll be going to Columbia South Carolina, that didn't happen; well you might be goin' to Colorado, that didn't happen; Washington State, that didn't happen; Virginia; that didn't happen. And it was like, just tell us when you know. Because every time I'd start looking for pediatricians, daycare, places to live, and then it wouldn't happen. So finally I just stopped and I said, when we get our orders let me know and I'll figure it out. But, that didn't work either, because February came and went. March, April. In April our house sold, and [no one would get] back to us. We didn't get our orders until a week before we left. So we got our orders. The packers came the next day, the movers came the day after that. So when it happened, it happened really quickly. So that's kind of just like, plan, do your best, and know that 98% of your work will not happen.

Interviewer: That's gotta be tough.

Cynthia: It is, and at the same time looking back on it, I thought well, if we go to Columbia, I'll know where his daycare will be, and I'll know who his pediatrician is. If we go to Washington State I'll know. Virginia I'll know, and Colorado I'll know

[Laughs. So, [Laughs] there's that. So [Laughs]. So, if you move anytime between the ages of 0 and 5, which he's already at 1 ½, then I'll have a school picked out.

Interviewer: That is a good way of looking at it.

Cynthia: [Laughs] You kind of have to. You know? Otherwise it's just kind of depressing.

In a final example of the ways a PCS can occur in unpredictable ways, I turn to an experience described by Alicia. Alicia's husband was nearing the end of his enlistment, when they moved to an installation on the East coast. Alicia and her husband assumed this would be their last military move. As a result, they bought a house that they loved and planned on settling in this location at least until their children finished high school, if not permanently. However, everything changed when Alicia's husband received new orders to a military post in the South.

Um, this last one from [the East coast] was really hard, just because [pause], we bought a house there, and were under the impression that we, he was going to finish his contract out there. And, our, his orders were very sudden. We had less than three months from the time he got his orders, to when we he had to report here...Um [pause], so [pause], selling the house was difficult, and [pause], um [pause], not just because we didn't sell it before we left, but emotionally it was [pause], I was very invested in the house, and the area, and [slight pause], it was really hard to leave. Um, both of our kids were really happy in their school, loved our house, loved the area...Um [pause], so that has been really hard, getting used to not [pause], loving [our new duty station]. We're not in love with [it] yet, so [pause], that's kind of been an adjustment.

Alicia's story demonstrates several important points. First, military wives inhabit what Hyde (2015) refers to as an insecure position. While experiences like Alicia's may never occur, the anticipation of how the future will unfold in relation to past and present experiences floats within countless possibilities that participants potentially face. Additionally, Alicia states, "we're not in love with [it] yet." Just as Cynthia framed her nightmare experience in a positive way, saying it would be depressing if she looked at it differently, I suggest the inclusion of "yet" within Alicia's story depicts similar forms of sense-making required to acquiesce the experience of

chronic uncertainty. From Alicia's interview, it was clear that this move was extremely difficult for her. However, given her husband's orders, what option did she have?⁸

Ultimately, what these experiences of chronic uncertainty demonstrate is that the sustainment of instituted disorder requires service members' military jobs to occupy a place of privilege within family's lives; an assertion I explore in the following section. Further, there is a degree of emotion management required when experiencing these types of situations, which I investigate in the following chapter. The experience of chronic uncertainty places military wives in a bind where they are required to accommodate the organization of military work through the ever-present state of uncertainty they live within. This insecurity has a powerful impact on military wives' family roles.

Privileging Institutional Practices

Susan: "Well I take care of everything. I mean, my husband works. He comes home and eats. Right now he's out in the field. He's been gone for 10 days. And, so, you know, I take care of our son. We've just finished unpacking [laughs]. Everything that has to do with the house, and everything that has to do with laundry. Like all that other stuff that he just doesn't have to worry about, I do."

The final component in the constitution and sustainment of instituted disorder is the production of hierarchy. Specifically, the privileging of service members' military responsibilities, and the military's institutional needs above the needs of the family or military wives. As I depict in the section, participants learn to live and run their families by finding ways to accommodate the military's institutional practices, due to the insecure position these practices

⁸ While most participants described moving whenever their husband was assigned to a new duty station, two participants decided to not move. One participant with three children moved closer to where she grew up, and her husband visited when he was able. Due to her husband's unique military job, in the 10 years after 9/11 he was away on deployments more than he was home. Facing this reality led to the decision for this participant to move home, which she and her husband felt would be more stable for their children. The other participant decided not to move because her husband was going to be reassigned back to where they were currently living after a two-year assignment on the other side of the country. Since this family had already experienced several moves in recent years, and they did not want to uproot their children to only move back two years later, the decision was made that the participant and their children would not move with the service member for this one time.

place them within. Where Enloe (1988) suggests militarization contains an ideological component, which she explains is a process of normalizing the increasing presence of the military within society, in the context of military families this process of normalization is depicted through the privileging of husband's military work. As a result, when military wives use their knowledge and experiences regarding institutional practices, and combine them with the experience of chronic uncertainty related to these practices, the military is placed in a privileged hierarchical position, which further solidifies military wives' family responsibilities and reproductive labor. Within participants' stories regarding each of the institutional practices explored in this chapter, examples of these hierarchical social relations that shape military families, and military wives' roles within their families are also present. In this final section, I investigate these examples as they relate to the way work is organized in the military.

Planning and Anticipating the Future

Deployments represent much of the discussions regarding the experiences of military wives and their families. The expectation of a deployment was often discussed by participants, as well as the experience of training and preparations for the next deployment. Below I document two examples demonstrating how participants struggle to make decisions about their own lives in relation to deployments. Each documents the multiplicity of ways instituted disorder impacts participants, their roles in their family, and how they run their family. Each also demonstrates how military wives' decisions are built through the accommodation of the military and the constraints it creates within family life. This accommodation is vital to the structuring effect instituted disorder has within military families, and how this also structures military wives' reproductive labor.

For Tonya, who does not have any children, living with uncertainty has greatly influenced how she lives her life. At the time of our interview, her husband was deployed and she was on a spontaneous road trip across the country.

Sea duty sucks. So, when we moved here, we were here for like a month or two, and then he went on a one-month debt. And a debt is when they go away for a short amount a time. And then they went out to sea for a month. And then they went out for like three months. Then they went out for four months. And then they went out for their deployment...So, they have the workups. And the workups are what really suck, because... not everybody has to go on them. To like any of them. So, you could have an entire weekend planned because you don't have to go on this debt, and then, all of a sudden you get a phone call, and they're like oh yes, you gotta go. Nothing is ever set in stone. It's like you could have your plans set, and everything's perfect, right down to the last detail, and you could walk out the door, and you get a phone call, and it's just destroyed all your plans. Over something so simple. Nobody ever told me that. We'd have plans, and we'd have to turn around and you have to drive back like ten hours. It made me kinda never ever wanna plan anything. Like this entire road trip nothing's planned. Because, if I make a plan, and it gets messed up, I'm gonna get discouraged. So, I just don't like to plan. I just do it. I just go. And, that's how you have to be. Like you just have to be able to go with it. And it sucks.

Tonya's outlook on the future is indicative of many participants' forms of sense-making enacted through a hierarchical frame of reference, where service members' military jobs takes precedence over military wives' and their family's life. As a result, Tonya lives her life spontaneously, which she is afforded because she does not have children or a job to consider, instead volunteering in local community organizations when able. However, for other participants, the presence of children, in particular, further adds to the privileging and accommodation of husbands' military work. For example, Carrie's husband was one of the few participating in this study that had never deployed even though he spent many years in the military. However, at the time of our interview, Carrie and her husband anticipated a deployment within the next year. This anticipation weighed heavily upon Carrie, impacting how she plans for her future, planning around her husband's deployment.

Carrie: It's really quite unique in that being in for 13 years, he's not actually had an overseas deployment. So we've really been lucky in that regard. I know it's coming and we've just, you know, been lucky. [laughs]

Interviewer: So what has that been like for you to prepare for it?

Carrie: Well, I think he's heard anywhere from you know, like next summer on. But we can get our orders within 6 weeks and he'd have to be gone. So, I'm just preparing myself you know, right now even, with trying to figure out, do I even start my master's degree, because I don't even know if he'd be deployed then. Or how that would look or work. And so, I'm already thinking about it. I'm already trying to prepare for it. Um, but, yeah, it's, it's just trying to wrap our minds around it all...and then preparing the kids. And then how can I do this by myself. I am already thinking about those things...Can I do all of this um, you know, by myself. Even though he's here and we don't even have deployment orders, but I'm always thinking about that, because I know that could happen at anytime. So I just don't want to be caught off guard. I want to be able to make it work. If that makes sense....And you know, and it's like, well, you know, should I do this, should I not? Can I even do this? I don't even know. [laughs] It's hard figuring it all out and then just waiting in limbo. You know? So. Yeah.

While many participants describe planning as an integral part of living within the work-family constraints explored in this chapter, planning is often difficult, as participants assert that one must also be flexible and prepared for plans to change. Tonya and Carrie both face structural constraints when considering how to run their lives, and what decisions they should make regarding anything beyond the immediate future. As Carrie asserts, "Should I do this, should I not? Can I even do this? I don't even know. It's hard figuring it all out and then just waiting in limbo." These words speak volumes to the experience of chronic uncertainty, but also to the way husbands' work and the military are privileged within wives' planning. For Carrie, "waiting in limbo" produces an anticipation, or I suggest a form of readiness, much like the readiness of a military unit. As Gasparini (1995) and Schwartz (1974) argue, waiting, when linked with power, has behavior changing qualities. The decisions participants often make about their roles in their family, and as well as other facets of their lives are fundamentally structured by their experiences, which ultimately operate through a process that privileges the military.

It's Like the 1950's

Within participants' daily life, similar processes that demonstrate this privileging often unfold within discussions regarding the traditional point of view the military takes in terms of families and family roles. When discussing work-family dynamics described earlier in this chapter, many participants feel the military workday is structured upon antiquated notions of the traditional gendered division of labor; an assertion they argue is demonstrated by their husbands' work schedules. However, within participants' discussions there are further examples of the sustainment of a military hierarchy, where service members' work schedules are privileged, and participants organize family life to accommodate the military. For example, Carrie describes her husband's work schedule and her perception of how she feels the military views her role in her family:

I think it is encouraged that wives, especially mothers, stay at home. It is unheard of for a military member to take on duties for children on a day-to-day or week-to-week basis, as far as picking up and dropping off at school, etcetera. It is solely the spouses' responsibility and it is encouraged for that to be the way it should be. Their schedule with PT, etcetera all reflect that as well. The military spouse with children has no choice but to be held responsible for those duties and more while the military relies on the spouse to do that so the military member is free to complete his duties at any time.

Similar to Carrie, Val explains that she feels it is often "all or nothing" when it comes to the division of labor in the home.

There's no happy medium. It sounds horrible to say, but military families are set up. Historically the military is very June and Ward Cleaver, and there's still a lot of leaders that are stuck in that mentality of the wife stays home, the wife does everything, and supports her spouse while he's gone.

The assertion that military work is organized around the ideology of domesticity is well documented within these data and supports arguments made by Williams (2000) that domesticity has far from disappeared in society. In the case of the military, participants' narratives depict an

organization of military work and institutional practices that are built upon a bedrock of domesticity.

Much like Val, several participants also describe their role in their family using images of women in 1950's television shows. Kim is a 36-year-old White stay-at-home mother of two children. In her interview, she explained that due to the structural constraints that shape the family, her family represents what she terms the "conservative ideal." Since moving will interrupt her attempts to maintain a career, Kim feels that working and paying for daycare is not a viable option, since many jobs will not cover the costs of daycare. Additionally, given her responsibilities at home, Kim acknowledges that being employed would be too difficult to balance, given her husband's current work schedule. Kim has a college degree, and even though she describes herself as a liberal and feminist who strongly supports the equal division of labor in the home, she jokingly says, "I see a lot of Betty Draper in myself sometimes." While in favor of equity in domestic and parenting responsibilities, Kim contends that her husband's work schedule does not allow for such an arrangement to occur. In comparing herself to the television show *Mad Men* and its representation of the 1960's ideal wife, Kim's comparison speaks volumes with regards to the ways military wives support their husbands' work and the family roles they fulfill as a result of this work.

These experiences are further demonstrated when participants describe times when they need their husband's help with family related issues, like taking children to the doctor, or watching children while participants themselves go to the doctor. Stacey is a 30-year-old employed military wife with no children at the time of our interview. When talking about her husband's unyielding work schedule, she describes an experience when she needed her husband

to take time off from work to drive her home from surgery as an example of the types of situations she faces due to her husband's work.

I had a surgery and I needed [my husband] to take me because...I can't drive myself back, it's a surgery [laugh]. But his platoon leader, or no his squad leader was giving him a hard time and so they went, 'you're not even married, blah, blah, blah'...So, he told my husband to bring in a marriage certificate.

Experiences like these create a perception of military work and their husbands' chain of command as extremely unyielding. As a result, many participants assert that the military is less family friendly than many perceive, and that they must work around the military rather than expect it to accommodate their needs or their family's needs. For example, Ava learned very early in her marriage that the Army, "wasn't as family oriented as [it] preaches they are. They would, on several occasions, not allow my husband to get off work to get the kids when I had a prior engagement." The contention that the military is not family friendly is also expressed by Emma, based on her experiences with her second pregnancy. When Emma went into labor her husband requested to stay home but was denied the request.

He's like, my wife thinks she might be going into labor today; I'm gonna stay home. And [his boss] was like, my wife has six kids. So, she'll be fine. Just come to work. And it's like, what? I mean my husband isn't, he's not making any career moving decisions for the world. He's filing paperwork. So, like [pause], it just [pause], they don't care! Like they've done it. 'Cause their wives don't work. Or their wives don't do anything. And they're just like my wife handled it. Your wife can handle it. And even when they say they're family oriented, like they're not.

Often experiences of unyielding work schedules do not have to occur frequently for participants to learn to expect that they cannot rely on their husbands, due to their own work responsibilities, and the chances that their chain of command will allow them to take leave work or take time off. While they would like to rely on their husbands, experience tells them they often cannot.

He Goes Right Back to Work

Service members' reassignments occur for reasons such as promotions, changes in one's military job, or for training related to a promotion, and are based in bureaucratic decisions based in personnel needs. Often participants contend that after a move, service members go right to work at their new assignment, while wives are left to rebuild their home and create new systems of operation for their family. An important theme that emerged when participants discussed geographic moves was the labor required to move and reorient a family. However, participants also often asserted that these responsibilities were left for them to handle, since their husband went right back to work after they moved. Linking geographic moves, the labor involved in these moves, and the role participants explain taking on in these moves further depicts this hierarchical ordering where husbands focus on their military work and their wives take on all other responsibilities. When talking with Val about her many moves, an example of this theme arose as she explained what she feels the public does not realize about military moves.

And that's another thing people don't really know. They focus on the military member having to be the one that moves and settles in a new unit, but they don't think about the spouse. The military member goes right to work, and what is the spouse left with, a houseful of boxes. And then worrying about, if you have children, worrying about enrolling them in school, and worrying about them making friends, finding grocery stores, finding doctor's offices, making sure all the medical records are transferred. The military member worries about the military member. The spouse, worries about everything else.

Similarly, Tracy had recently moved to a new duty station at the time of our interview. When asked what her role in their family move was, she explained.

A great example is us moving into this new house. You've got to call 50 million people to get utilities, and you know trash, and water, and gas, and all this other stuff hooked up. Figure out movers, you know, like, all this other kind of stuff. And unfortunately, because his job is so demanding, and they have like strict rules about when you can be on cell phones...and with his job being as demanding as it is, because he's an officer, um, you know I always get left with stuff like that to do.

Service members' "demanding" jobs is often used to describe why participants take on so many responsibilities in their family. However, underlying these assertions is the hierarchical relationship existing between the military, service members' work responsibilities, and the role of military wives within their families. When considered together, the privileging of the military takes shape through institutional practices and the production of chronic uncertainty, where wives learn to accommodate the military, and take on the primary role in the family because this is more stable than expecting husband's to help out or the military to accommodate wives' needs as they take care of family issues.

Conclusion

Within this chapter I explore participants' experiences of instituted disorder. I find institutional practices of organizing military work play an important role in structuring military wives' roles within their family. In addition to these experiences, participants also live with chronic uncertainty that is directly tied to the military's institutional practices, connected to families by their marriage to a service member. Work hours, deployments, training exercises, geographic moves are all subject to change at any moment, leaving women's responsibilities in the home, and the structure of the home, subject to change, sometimes at a moment's notice. As a result, husbands' military responsibilities and the needs of the institution take precedence over family needs. For example, as Susan, quoted in the beginning of this chapter asserts, the *basis* of being a in a military marriage is dealing with uncertainty and change, which I argue also requires a form of accommodation that privileges these features of the military by organizing life around husband's military job.

The experiences described by participants demonstrate how instituted disorder is constituted and sustained. Overall, there is a form of temporal manipulation found within

participants' narratives that is based in their understanding and anticipation of the outcomes of the daily and long-term unfolding of their lives. Consequently, I suggest instituted disorder operates as an institutional form of power, demonstrating how militarization operates as a productive force (Basham and Catignani 2018; Bernazzoli and Flint 2009b; Hyde 2016; Lutz 2002), focusing women's reproductive labor, and their sense of responsibilities toward their family. I further argue that chronic uncertainty acts as a binding force, connecting these features of instituted disorder together, because uncertainty sustains the presence of the institution and its organizing role within participants' and their family's life. Thus, rather than unfolding in the "static" and "nostalgic" private sphere (Massey 1994) of the home, the spaces that military wives inhabit are imbued with an ever-present sense of the military, thus interconnecting the family and military in a way that demonstrates the imbrication of these social institutions often constructed separate from one another (Hyde 2015).

Overall, what unfolds within participants' narratives are descriptions of the many and varying ways the military's institutional practices create the experience of instituted disorder within their lives. This disorder has profound structuring effects, that not only structures military families, placing these family in a state of insecurity, but through this insecurity military wives form expectations of the future, which structures how they take on the reproductive labor within their family. Thus, the features that constitute and sustain instituted disorder structure military families in a way that directs military wives' labor towards their home and family, placing them in an insecure (Hyde 2016) and marginal (Enloe 1988) social location. Where military forms of work are considered demanding or greedy, these findings depict how this greediness structures the gendered division of labor by creating instability within military families. In response, military wives address these work-family constraints, which organizes their labor to support the

military's needs, accommodating its greediness. Important to these findings is that instability is produced by the erratic presence of service members in their family, further demonstrating how family instability operates through the institutional link created by marriage. Military practices shape service members lives, which in turn shapes family life and military wives' family roles. Additionally, the findings in this chapter document the experiences of women in military marriages during the GWOT. The organization of institutional practices are thus historically specific to the larger global events occurring in this time period. Therefore, the way the military structures military wives' reproductive labor, or their decisions about employment and education, are all impacted by the important link their marriage creates with the broader geopolitical. The experiences documented in this chapter thus demonstrate how historical events have far reaching implications for those who never come close to the battlefield (Hyde 2015, 2016).

Finally, the findings in this chapter raise an important question, especially in relation to hierarchy and the privileging of service members' work responsibilities, and thus the needs of the military institution. Participants' narratives regarding their reproductive labor and family roles demonstrate an accommodation and acquiescence of institutional practices and chronic uncertainty. Yet, how do women married to service members come to this reality? How are their practices of accommodating their husband's work schedules or the uncertainty involved in geographic moves accepted? I address these important questions in the next chapter.

Chapter IV. “You make the best of your environment:” Investigating Military Wives’ Forms of Emotion Management

In some ways the institutional constraints faced by women married to U.S. service members, and the social relations built within families and military marriages, are similar to the gendered work-family dynamics existing in the civilian context. Issues of reproductive labor and the social positioning of wives in a way that privileges husbands’ work are similar issues that countless activists and scholars have written about for many years. Yet, most civilian jobs do not require the degree of family separation required in the military, the degree of uncertainty and instability experienced in family life, nor are most civilian husbands’ subject to “ideological codes” like patriotic service and sacrifice that are used to frame the importance of their job (Taber, 2015).⁹ Through her research in the British Army, Hyde (2016) suggests women married to service members inhabit an insecure social position, neither inside nor outside the institution. As a result of this liminality, the organization of the military has profound effects on military wives’ lives, constructing family roles that reproduce gendered social relations in the home. Yet, regardless of these unique circumstances, we know little about how military wives make sense of their social positioning within their family, marriage, and the military institution, nor how they make sense of their reproductive labor as a result of this positioning. Further, we have little understanding of how inhabiting a subordinate and insecure social position is acquiesced, and how this acquiescence is sustained. Therefore, within this chapter, I ask, *how do participants talk about, make sense of, and acquiesce their social position and subsequent reproductive labor in*

⁹ Ideological codes are important features of the military, which also impact military wives’ ways of making sense of their family roles. Notions of patriotism, civic duty, or national defense certainly play a role within these social processes. However, within my interviews, topics such as these were rarely brought up by participants. As a result, questions related to the role of ideological codes, or perspectives on geopolitics are not taken up in this study, but raise important questions for future research.

relation to the work-family constraints produced by the military? Essentially, what does it take to sustain oneself within a subordinate social position?

Below I present a brief discussion of the theoretical framing for this chapter, connecting this framing with the broader theories discussed in chapter one. The remainder of the chapter is then organized into five sections, where I explore participants' forms of sense-making related to the accommodation and acquiescence of their subordinate social position. The first section explores participants' use of a somewhat ambiguous and broad sweeping concept of military authority as a way to accommodate institutional practices and their sense of having little control in relation to these practices. Next, I explore the normalization of the gendered division of labor. Here I focus more specifically on participants' reproductive labor and family roles, investigating how this feature of the military's institutional practices are acquiesced by also drawing upon the broad concept of military authority. Third, I explore how participants reframe their labor and social position within their family by arguing that they take on these roles to support their husband, enacting what Hochschild (2003) calls an economy of gratitude. The fourth section explores how participants with children use children as a form of motivation, reframing their reproductive labor as way to produce stability in their family. Finally, in the last section I explore how participants manage their ambivalence when their emotion management is not fully successful.

Overall, this chapter demonstrates the degree of work required by military wives to accommodate and acquiesce the greedy work-family constraints created by the military. Where militarization is framed as a productive force that organizes society in specific ways (Lutz 2001, 2002), and the military is conceptualized as a greedy institution, placing great demands on military wives, this chapter demonstrates how these processes are accommodated and acquiesced

within daily life. For instance, living within instituted disorder is not an easy task. Frequently participants describe managing feelings of ambivalence, where resentment or frustration regarding their roles in their family, or the privileging of their husband's job and the military institution, surface. As Rebecca explains,

I mean, be prepared that it's never not ever going to be about you.... I mean you're in the back seat. You know? Your spouses' career is what you're gonna be centered around...so it definitely takes a degree of strength and just having that, you know, understanding that you can't ruminate and let that build because you'll never make it. You know?... It's just the way it is.

Rebecca shows how military wives have to find ways to emotionally manage their social positioning and family roles in order to "make it." When talking with Cynthia about her experiences after marrying her husband, she explained that,

It's definitely 1920s. Um and when I first experienced it, I resented the hell out of it. Because I felt like I've worked so hard to be this person, and now it's being taken away. And what I realized was, it's only being taken away if I give it away.

Exploring some of the many ways participants "make it" is the focus on this chapter. My aim is to examine how participants manage the types of feelings described by Rebecca and Cynthia to provides a nuanced explore how accommodation and acquiescence is produced within military wives' daily life.¹⁰

Review of the Literature and Theoretical Framing

Within this section, I begin by describing the limited research on the topic of military wives' sense-making in relation to their family roles, as well as their subordinate social positioning. I then discuss the concept of sociological ambivalence, considering how this concept

¹⁰ My focus in this chapter is to investigate how accommodation takes form through participants sense-making, rather than why it occurs. Considering why accommodation occurs is an important question for future research. As institutional forces structure the family, which results in a process where military wives accommodate their husband's military jobs, these data provide empirical findings that could begin a deeper theorizing of accommodation and acquiescence. For instance, what is the role of habitus or symbolic violence within these processes? Answering questions such as these require a focused analysis of these data which was beyond the scope of this study.

aids in our understanding of participants' forms of sense-making related to their social position and subsequent family responsibilities. Finally, I take up Hochschild's (2003) concept of gender strategies, and specifically the idea of emotion management and feeling rules, which act as a guide to the analyses within this chapter.

Sense-making in the Military Family

To my knowledge, there are few studies that explore the sense-making of women married to U.S. service members. Mederer and Weinstein (1992) connect women's gender ideologies with the fulfillment of Naval wives' domestic labor and supporter role, while Harrison (2001) suggests women married to Army officers connect their family roles with their husband's military promotions; if they do not properly do their part in their family, the Army will see their husbands as unfit officers. A more recent study exploring women married to British Reservists, finds that these military wives frame their family roles during weekend drills or during their husband's deployments by asserting that they just "make it work" (Basham and Catignani 2018: 158). However, exploring this form of sense-making in detail is not the intent of these authors. Within the contemporary U.S. military, MacLeish (2013) finds the use of "love" permeates military installations. Ranging from the love of one's country, to love for one's husband, love is used in myriad ways to explain individual's military service, or the role military wives take on to support their service member husband.¹¹ Outside of these studies, there is an absence of research that explores how military wives make sense of their social positioning, their reproductive labor, and overall family roles.

¹¹ I also find participants often use love as an explanation for why they take on the roles they do in their family. How love connects with the institution of marriage is not explored here, but warrants further investigation. I address this further in the concluding chapter.

Sociological Ambivalence and the Uneasiness of Social Locations

Hyde's (2015) examination of women married to British service members draws upon the work of Skeggs (1997) who explores the construction of working-class women's subjectivities as they negotiate their gender and class social positioning. Within her work, Skeggs (1997) utilizes Bourdieu (1987: 2) who asserts that individuals are both "classified and classifiers" within their negotiations of their social positions. As such, Skeggs (1997:2) argues that the women in her study, "are not ciphers from which subject positions can be read-off; rather, they are active in producing the meaning of the positions they (refuse to, reluctantly or willingly) inhabit." Thus, social positioning is sustained by varying responses built within one's own recognition of their classification (Skeggs 1997), a process that plays out in similar ways as military wives make sense of their own subordinate social locations, which they are well aware of (Ziff and Garland-Jackson 2020). However, as Skeggs (1997) finds, these social processes are filled with ambivalence, asserting that class positions are seldom inhabited comfortably, but instead are often filled with uneasiness. Working from Skeggs (1997), I suggest that the accommodation and acquiescence of participants' social location works to assuage this uneasiness.

I also use sociological ambivalence as an analytical tool to tease out the uneasiness described by Skeggs (1997). Merton and Barber first established a sociological understanding of ambivalence (Hillcoat-Nalletamby and Phillips 2011), which was based in the idea of conflicting "normative expectations of attitudes, beliefs, and behavior" related to given statuses or roles in society (Merton 1976: 6). In updating this work, Connidis and McMullin (2002) argue that the reliance on normative expectations, statuses, and roles is an oversight of the dynamic features of social life, creating a somewhat static view of society. Instead, they contend roles and statuses are not simply accepted or rejected, but are negotiated in complex and varying ways, sometimes

accepted, while other times challenged or redefined (Connidis and McMullin 2002). Thus, these authors argue that sociological ambivalence is a dynamic social construct, which complicates taken-for-granted normative roles when considering the diverse ways individuals make sense of and traverse constrained choices stemming from their positioning within various social structures (Connidis and McMullin 2002). Connidis and McMullin (2002: 558) argue that ambivalence is a “useful concept when imbedded in a theoretical framework that views social structure as structured social relations, and individuals as actors who exercise agency as they negotiate relationships within the constraints of social structure.” Hence, negotiations represent individuals’ strategies, derived from their ways of making sense of ambivalence produced by structural constraints.

Notably, Connidis and McMullin’s (2002) reconceptualization embeds sociological ambivalence within critical theory and symbolic interactionism. They contend social relations are constructed within inequalities based in ability, class, gender, ethnicity, race, and sexual orientation, which produces conflict. Ambivalence arises from within these social locations and intersecting categories, and issues of power become central to their framing of ambivalence (Connidis and McMullen 2002). Moreover, managing ambivalence sometimes reproduces structures of power, while other times challenges structural arrangements (Connidis 2015). The connections between ambivalence and social change further conceptualizes ambivalence as a dynamic social force, teasing out the many ways individuals makes sense of, and respond to structural constraints. As a result, structured ambivalence moves analyses beyond questions of conflicting role fulfillment, which is present in the greedy institution framework, and instead explores how agency and structure interact in complex ways within daily life, sometimes reproducing unequal social relations, while other times challenging or redefining them.

Gender Strategies

The organization of work in the military is bound within processes of gender, where traditional gender roles in the home are produced and sustained. Therefore, I turn to Hochschild's (2003) work on the second shift, focusing on the production and enactment of gender strategies to analyze the methods participants use to negotiate the structuring effects of instituted disorder, particularly their reproductive labor. Hochschild's (2003) conception of one's gender strategy is comprised of an assessment of an individual's social setting and social relations, and their resulting actions or behaviors. An individual's gender strategy consists of three components; emotion management, self-perception, and strategy of action. A gender strategy operates through the mobilization of emotion management and self-perception, which is played out in an individual's behavior or plan of action (Potter 2015: 1970). In other words, what one thinks and does is built and sustained within a process of management, or what Hochschild (2003) calls "maintenance programs," where individuals assess their given situations in relation to how they feel, and how they think they should feel, and then develop a plan of action accordingly. Hochschild (2003) refers to one's assessment of how they feel about their given situation as "feeling rules."

Importantly, actor's gender strategy and plan of action are not designed to address small or immediate issues, but are instead based on managing long-term outcomes, such as the social dynamics of one's marriage. According to Hochschild (2003), the formation of gender strategies partially comes from an actor's strategy of action. This strategy is not intended to address short-term goals or based in a single outcome, but is a generalized plan, "spanning across time rather than ending at a single point" (Potter 2015: 1969). Swidler (1986) uses the concept of "strategies of action" to similarly describe this process, where she suggests that actors' learned

understandings of their social worlds act as a “took kit” for individuals to evaluate and address social situations. Participants’ strategies of action are observed through their ways of talking about military work-family constraints, their experiences with these constraints, and how this informs their expectations for the future, all of which coalesce in their strategy of action.

Within this chapter, I consider how participants’ make sense of the effects of instituted disorder within their lives, and in particular, their reproductive labor and the gendered division of labor, exploring how their emotion management produces a gender strategy that leads to the acquiescence of their subordinate social positions that privileges their husband’s military work and the military institution. Within my exploration of participants’ forms of sense-making, Hochschild’s (2003) analytical framing aptly maps onto these data. While not every component of her theorizing links perfectly,¹² Hochschild’s (2003) work acts as a guide within my analyses that investigate the complex social dynamics produced within the military family, and the ways participants manage these social relations. In what follows within the proceeding sections is my work to explore participants’ forms of sense-making, primarily through their emotion management and feeling rules, which aids in the formation of a gender strategy that ultimately upholds traditional gendered social relations.

Contributions to the Literature

In addition to developing an understanding of participants’ forms of sense-making, this chapter also makes a further contribution to the literature by explicating the dynamic social processes that unfold through the imbrication (Hyde 2015, 2016) of the family and military institutions. Where the greedy institution suggests military wives are caught between the needs

¹² For example, Hochschild (2003) focuses on gender ideologies that she defines as traditional, transitional, or egalitarian. Rather than include gender ideologies based in these three categories, which are useful within the civilian context, I consider wives sense-making in relation to military cultural norms related to the model military wife, which fits within a traditional gender ideology.

of the military and the needs of their family, this framework does not account for the social processes through which women make sense of and acquiesce these different needs as they occupy a liminal social location. These data could be interpreted as representative of the pushes and pulls that military wives experience from both institutions; however, as I have argued in previous chapters, this analytical framing loses sight of the interconnectedness of the military and the family. These constraints (that of family responsibilities and military responsibilities) are not separate, but interlocking. Additionally, where the greedy institutional framework perceives these processes through conflict over the normative fulfillment of roles, Connidis and McMullin (2002) and Skeggs (1997) argue that actors negotiate their social positioning in complex ways, which is oversimplified by concepts of normative role fulfillment. Working from this set of ideas, this chapter provides insight into participants' gender strategies, which shows how forms of consent are constituted in relation to these pushes and pulls found within the institutional work-family constraints of a greedy institution. Overall the findings in this chapter demonstrate that forms of sense-making go well beyond concepts of normative role fulfillment.

Analyzing the emotion management of military wives also offers a look into processes of militarization, demonstrating how these processes are sustained through individuals' forms of sense-making. In organizing social relations in support of the military's needs, questions remain regarding how individuals interact with these structuring processes. Enloe (1988) uses the example of an increased number of civilians finding their livelihood through contracts with the defense department to demonstrate how militarization occurs in society. However, while their jobs may rely on these contracts, inquiries regarding how these employees make sense of this reality, and how their sense-making is also an important part of this overall process is left unanswered. Within this chapter, my intent is to use Hochschild's (2003) work as a guide to

demonstrate and analyze processes of militarization and how these processes are sustained through accommodation and acquiescence.

Don't Overanalyze It: Perceptions of Military Authority

Kathy: "The Army doesn't care. The Army just says 'do this when we tell you to'."

Jenna: "It's not a job for us. You know? As a spouse, it's not my job. But yet, it still dictates where I live. Where I have lived. You know? Where we're gonna be. Whether I can have more pets. Whether I'm gonna be, you know [trails off in thought]...if a wife gets a job in a certain city and the family has to move, etcetera. But it's, sort of the nature of the lifestyle."

I find when participants talk about the military's impact on their lives, they often use a form of sense-making that is built within their understanding of military authority. This form of sense-making is constructed in the assertion that participants' husbands have legal contracts with the military, and the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ)¹³ creates a form of hierarchical authority that service members are legally obligated to follow. As a result, institutional practices, and the chronic uncertainty tied with these practices, are understood through broad and somewhat ambiguous interpretations of the military's authority. This assertion is never described by participants in specific terms that connects their perceptions with particular regulations, but instead draws upon a meta-narrative that produces an all-encompassing way to understand how the military operates. As participants assert, when the military tells their husband to do something, they do it. While military wives are not subject to this same legal authority, their marriage to a service member links them to this system in important ways. If service members are ordered to work late, or move to a new study station overseas, these orders will have far reaching implications not only for the service member, but also for military wives and military families. As a result, the impact of the military on military families is understood in a militarized

¹³ The UCMJ is the laws and regulations found within the military's justice system.

manner, where this impact is framed as a result of military authority or military orders that the family, just like the service member, has to follow.

Within this section, I first explore the use of military authority as a foundational feature of participants' sense-making, where their social positioning becomes framed as a fixed feature of military life and the institution itself; an ineffable quality of what constitutes being married to a service member that neither service members nor participants can change. I then explore how this form of sense-making evolves within participants' narratives. Generally, once military authority is established, participants then explain that this "reality" needs to be implicitly accommodated and accepted. Finally, I explore how participants relate this overarching form of sense-making with the gendered division of labor and their acquiescence of the roles they take on in their family. Overall, I argue that the activation of military authority is the cornerstone that all other forms of emotion management explored in this chapter are structured upon, and that through the forms of emotion management documented below, military wives both acquiesce their social positioning while also reproduce it.

When They Say Go, You Go

As documented in the previous chapter, participants prepare and learn to expect that their husband will be called away with little warning. In these cases, participants often use vast sweeping statements regarding military authority and the necessity of accepting this lack of agency in relation to these types of experiences. For example, when discussing her husband's frequent absences, Tracy makes sense of these experiences using military authority as a frame of reference. "Your spouse is gone a lot, and pretty much, like the Army owns them and they're under contract with them. You know? Pretty much the Army is always going to take precedence over anything...and that's something that's unfortunate." Likewise, when talking about her

husband's unpredictable work hours Stacey asserts, "That's part of the job....When they tell you to do something, you do it...[and] you're not going to make it if you can't deal with it....Not that it's not a big deal, but we just kind of put it on the back burner." Within these somewhat simple statements are powerful broad sweeping forms of emotion management. The concept of ownership expressed by Tracy, or the contention that when given an order, you do it, demonstrates common all-encompassing ways military work is understood in reference to military authority.

This form of sense-making is further elucidated when participants discuss family disruptions, demonstrating this process of accommodation and acquiescence. If husbands are legally obligated to follow orders that requires them to work late, deploy for 6 months to a year, or leave for a month-long training exercise, then there is little participants can do to change their situation at home. Their only recourse is to acknowledge their lack of control in relation to the military and move on with their lives accordingly. When discussing the experience of chronic uncertainty related to her husband's work schedule Ava states, "Yeah, my schedule's always around him and I can't do anything if it changes. I just have to go with it, 'cause there's no changing what the military says." Likewise, Jessica demonstrates her way of making sense of the combination of her husband's deployments and lengthy training exercises by stating, "So I mean you just have to be able to [pause], you know, at any point when the Army says go, you have to do exactly what they say. And, you know, adjust your lives, or adjust your life accordingly." Additionally, when discussing her husband's deployments Stacey asserts, "I mean you can't do anything about it. You know? You can't control how often he calls you or when he gets to come home for R&R. You can't control when he leaves or when he goes. I mean it's all out of your hands." The acquiescence of service members' frequent, long, or sometime unpredictable

absences and the structuring effect this has on participants' reproductive labor requires work in order to manage the feeling of having no control over the military or how it impacts your life. This form of emotional management is accomplished by framing the loss of control within a broad understanding of military authority, where institutional practices are understood as fixed features of military life. Since husbands are legally obligated to follow their orders, wives argue there is little they can do with regards to how their husband's military job impact their own lives.

From Military Authority to "Rolling with the Punches:" Learning Not to "Overanalyze"

I find participants' emotion management tends to evolve within their narratives. This evolution is demonstrated as participants transition from making specific statements about military authority, to the use of even broader all-encompassing statements about the need to accept that you have no control over the life disruptions produced by the military. For example, Alicia's husband worked in a civilian job prior to joining the military, resulting in a difficult transition to the military "lifestyle" in comparison to their prior civilian life.

I was very much used to him working a 9:00 to 5:00 job and being home.... That was extremely frustrating and a huge learning process for me, just 'cause it worked so differently than what I'd been used to.... So, I just really made an effort to not [long pause], like be down or negative, and I just stayed really busy. He deployed like almost right immediately after we got [to his first duty station]. We had to stay in a new place with no support system, and I was pregnant with our daughter at this point. Um [pause], so that was extremely stressful.

Alicia explained to me that due to these early experiences she learned that, "You just have to learn to keep your expectations really, really, really low. Which I learned very early on."

Learning to keep her expectations low is representative of a common method of accommodating military authority by acquiescing how the military dictates life. In a sense, participants actively place themselves in a reactionary position within their marriage and family, where they prepare for, and respond to the military and its structuring effects *as needed*. Through the evolution of

their sense-making, moving from a framework that draws upon military authority to a form of accommodation depicts one of the ways participants sustain themselves in their marginal social position (Enloe 2000; Hyde 2015).

Further examples of the accommodation of military authority are depicted by participants often short, but powerful statements when discussing the challenges of dealing with institutional practices and chronic uncertainty. During my discussion with Tonya, it was clear that she greatly desired more stability in her life. However, she also stressed to me that you cannot “overanalyze” the instability and uncertainty. In Tonya’s view, “Really just don’t let it eat away at you. Like don’t. Like just roll with the punches... Why are you gonna keep dwelling on it? Like, if you can’t change it, you can’t change it.” Along this same line of thought, Victoria explained to me that accepting how the military operates and moving on with your life is the only choice military wives have. “I mean, that’s you’re *only* [said with great emphasis] option. You have to. And I don’t know if you’ve heard this before...but you have to ‘embrace the suck’. I mean that’s *literally* [said with great emphasis] your only choice. You have to embrace the suck.”¹⁴

Additionally, Alison, a 42-year-old White employed mother of two school aged children, explained how she balance the family disruptions created by the military, in addition to her job and taking care of her children. “You just kind of have to take it like, you know what, there’s nothing you can do to change this, so you’ll just have to figure it out.”

Notably, wives are left with little room to make sense of the wide-ranging effects the military has on their lives when military authority is used as a frame of reference. In other words,

¹⁴ “Embrace the suck” is military terminology, which demonstrates an interesting connection between institutional discourses and this method of making sense of military authority within participants’ lives. Embrace the suck is a common phrase service members use, representing a form of socialization among some military wives who also use this terminology. Considering how institutional forms of sense-making used by service members transfer into the home is an important question for future research. How much of military wives’ forms of sense-making is learned from their husbands, the military’s institutional culture, or from other military wives socialized into the institution, are important questions for future research.

viewing the military in this manner and contending that service members are legally obligated to follow orders, which they assert is a basic feature of the job, leaves military wives with no room to navigate the disorder documented in the previous chapter. Thus, I find that participants' forms of emotion management are built around developing a form of acceptance and accommodation. "Rolling with the punches" becomes the most viable option, unless one desires to live in a perpetual state of frustration and resentment. As Tracy states above, "the Army is always going to take precedence...and that's something that's unfortunate." Yet, rather than ruminate, wives develop forms of emotion management that allow them to, "put it on the back burner." In relation to this form of understanding, as Stacey asserts in the beginning of this section, unless military wives find a way to accept the myriad ways the military impacts their lives, then they are "not going to make it." Val demonstrates this form of thinking when she states, "Spouses are really good about just doing life, and just knowing that you kinda don't have control over certain things...Like you're just doing life. You just keep on going...For the most part, I feel like most women, they just truck on. You gotta, you gotta keep living life."

Normalizing the Gendered Division of Labor

Here my focus shifts more specifically to participants' normalization and acquiescence of the gendered division of labor. In this section, I explore the assertion that husbands are not present in any capacity to expect them to take on responsibilities in the home, which frames reproductive labor in a pragmatic way. Participants' family responsibilities are justified by husband's absences; absences that, given military authority, no one can control. This form of sense-making normalizes the gendered division of labor, built upon the implicit understanding that participants' family roles are an inevitable feature of a military marriage. In turn, gender hierarchies, where military wives are socially positioned subordinate to their husbands' military

job and work responsibilities are reproduced¹⁵ Given these work-family constraints, many participants contend that equal responsibilities in the home simply cannot exist within the military context.

When exploring how participants frame their reproductive labor as an extension of their acceptance and accommodation of military authority, wives' emotion management reproduces and sustains their roles within the gendered division of labor. For example, as Jessica asserts,

My life is not going to stop just because my husband is gone. You know? There's still things that have to be done. The trash still has to be taken out, the kids still have to be fed. You know? They still have to go to school. I mean things still have to be done even though he's not here. And so, it's like, when people say, I don't know how you do it, I don't think I could do it. It's like okay well, yeah, but, I don't have a choice. This is just the way things are.

Kim also demonstrates this common way of making sense of family responsibilities when she discusses her role as a parent.

With [his] weird schedule, it's just a fact that ninety percent of parenting is just gonna fall on me on a day to day basis. *It just is* [said with great emphasis]...And I don't wanna compare his work schedule to a deployment...But I mean, I've kind of gotten used to being a single parent. In some ways, other than the duration of it, I mean I feel like a deployment is [pause], in some ways it's going to be just par for course. You know?...It's just, it's just such a weird mental head space.

Further, when describing her role in her family Alicia explains that,

I could never rely on him to be a backup I guess. If that makes sense. It's [slight pause], 'cause he leaves all the time and he's not around, or his work schedule like is just never [long pause as thought trails off]...Um [pause], I think I've gotten pretty good at it, and kinda come to terms with it.

¹⁵ This is not to suggest that service members never help around the house or co-parent. The division of labor within each household varies. Often husband's roles are influenced by their responsibilities related to their duty assignments, as well as the disposition of service members' chain of command. However, no participant I talked with described a division of household labor or parenting responsibilities that was close to egalitarian.

Feelings of having limited choice are clear within these participants' interviews, as well as their accommodation of their family responsibilities, in light of their husband's work responsibilities and absences.

In many ways, there is a sense of futility in any attempt to change these family arrangements, and instead, the best option is to accommodate and acquiesce them. This feeling is extremely strong when coupled with the necessity to keep their family functioning in the face of these work-family constraints. For instance, participants often assert they have little choice but to take on the primary role in their family in order to keep it functioning, since their husband cannot. For example, as Carrie explained,

Yeah, I mean, I've had, I've really had to be a stay at home mom for the past 10 years in raising our kids, and be home because my husband's schedule never allowed for the stability to be there with child care and you know, um, I was always the one that had to be there to do everything with the house and the kids. Because his work hours dictated all of that.

I argue participants' acquiescence of the gendered division of labor is normalized when they contend that "this is just the way things are;" a form of emotion management originating from participants' framing of military authority that extends specifically into the context of household labor. Phrases such as "it's just a fact," or "kinda come to terms with it" are a dialectic that demonstrates the management of one's sense of having limited control with regards to family roles, normalizing structural constraints and participants' reproductive labor.

Laboring in the Shadow of Military Service

Susan: "So with my husband, he works. And he works very, very hard, you know."

Kathy: "You know they say 'happy wife happy life' I feel like it's the opposite, I feel like 'happy soldier happy family.' So, you know, if he's happy and things are going well with his career than we're all happy, and it's good for us too."

In this section, I explore how participants emotion management operates through a process of comparison, which enables them to frame the gendered division of labor as a way to support their husband, who they assert has the more difficult, stressful, and dangerous job. First, I find that participants' own experiences are often talked about in relation to their husband's military job. When this comparison is enacted, participants are able to more easily inhabit their social position and accept their role within the gendered division of labor, because they use their husband's experiences to downplay their own experiences and family responsibilities. I posit, this form of sense-making leads to a second form of sense making related to supporting their husband which is constructed within an economy of gratitude (Hochschild 2003).¹⁶ In some ways, by deemphasizing their feelings about their own experiences, and redefining their struggles through a comparative lens, participants find a way to create meaning within their labor, while also finding a way to sustain themselves within their liminal social position.

Comparative Sense-Making

As my interviews progressed, a pattern emerged in how participants talked about their overall lives in relation to the military, how their lives unfolded across their years of marriage, and more specifically, how they made sense of their roles and responsibilities in their home and family. Often, when discussing their own sacrifices due to their military marriage, participants also included brief statements about their husband's military work. These statements accompanied longer discussions regarding participants' struggles, tacked on at the end of their conversations, somewhat mitigating their experiences by comparing them to military service. For example, after talking with Victoria about the strain of constant moves, and her husband's

¹⁶ My intent within this section is not to directly compare the preparation for war or going to war with other forms of work, nor to down play the experiences of service members. My point however, is that this process of emotion management is prevalent within my interviews, which depicts the internal work required to make sense of and acquiesces these participants' social positions and their reproductive labor.

frequent absences due to deployments and TDY's, she brought our discussion to a close by interjecting a brief, but powerful comparative statement. With regards to being married to a service member, Victoria states, "It is probably more emotionally and psychologically taxing than probably just about anything else I can think of. I mean [pause], as far as wives go." Using a similar formula, Tonya states, "I don't think people realize the kind a stress that we're actually under. And even the ones who act like they're not...there's so much that we're responsible for. And I mean [slight pause], it's a different kind of responsibility. It's not like [slight pause], our husbands. You know? But still, it's sucky. We're uprooted too." Additionally, Susan interjects a comparative statement about her husband when discussing her perception of the sacrifice women make when they marry a service member.

They give up a lot to be with their husband. You know? To move away. Stuff like that. And I think that, you know, it's important, that [pause], yes, you know, our husbands are out there working hard, and they're out there deploying and, you know [pause]...like, they're out there *really doing the job* [stated with emphasis]. But as part of the military life, but in different ways, we also do give up a lot.

I find this same line of reasoning is carried into discussions of participants' family roles, where service members' jobs are framed as more challenging, stressful, and dangerous than anything military wives experience. For example, when discussing her experiences with chronic uncertainty and family life disruptions that led her to live her life day to day and limit her long-term planning, Tonya says she would rather be a spouse than a military member.

He's working his ass off trying to be like the best he can. And so, I know he's out there doing that...I know what he goes through. So, like when you put it in perspective, like, what he does is way worse. 'Cause I would hate to be out there, like in, 110 degrees, blistering heat, you know, freezing cold. I would take being the spouse over being the service member.

Further, when Ellie describes the challenges that would be involved in trying to continue her education while also handling her responsibilities at home, she compares these struggles with her husband.

My concerns all of a sudden seem so minimal...Like, who cares? Because compared to what he's going through, what I've got going on's like pretty easy. But to me it's a big deal.... In this world it is a big deal, but in that world, it's not a big deal.

As these data demonstrate, participants' comparative forms of emotion management often downplay their family responsibilities in relation to their husband's experiences in the military. I suggest these comparisons assuage the experience of inhabiting a subordinate social position by framing their family roles and reproduce labor in relation to service members' experiences. In doing so, participants are able to more easily adopt their role within the gendered division of labor, by comparing their experiences to their husband, who they suggest is in a worse position. As I will explore in the next chapter, this form of comparative sense-making is also common when participants discuss and compare themselves with other military wives. Hochschild (2003) finds that women often compare themselves to their husband to assess the equity of the division of household labor. In a similar method found here, participants compare themselves to their husband's military experiences. Relative to these experiences, participants seem to inhabit the more favorable position within their family and in relation to the military.

The Economy of Gratitude

Once the comparison is made between service members and participants' family responsibilities, I find emotion management tends to take shape through an economy of gratitude. Hochschild (2003) introduces the concept economies of gratitude to explore how men and women think about family and work roles by relying upon feelings of gratitude regarding the roles one's spouse takes on either in the home or at work. For example, in marriages where a

woman earns more than her husband, her husband views his wife's income as a gift to the family that requires a reciprocal gift of the husband taking on more domestic responsibilities (Hochschild 2003; Pyke and Coltrane 1996). According to Pyke and Coltrane (1996: 63), "grateful individuals feel indebted to their spouses and obligated to reciprocate in some manner, whereas displeased individuals expect their spouses to do even more because they have tolerated something unpleasant." Instituted disorder may produce negative effects on family life, however, rather than expecting their husbands to do more, when participants talk about their husband's military service in comparison to their own experiences, they find a way to temper ambivalence and sustain themselves within a social location that subordinates them to their husband's military work.

I find within participants' narratives the economy of gratitude is used to frame participants' reproductive labor as a gift to their husbands who have more difficult jobs. Interestingly, participants do not frame husband's work within any discussion of patriotism or their service to the country, but instead most often situate the discussion around husband's daily stress level, the difficulty of his job, or how hard he works. I argue this frame of reference takes on important meaning, because it enables military wives who undertake these family roles to create meaning out of their labor, framing their reproductive labor as a motivation and gift, rather than simply something they do, because they have no other choice. For example, as Ellie asserts,

I feel like I help my husband a lot...I run the house. Like my husband is able to focus on his job, and not have to worry about anything at home. He doesn't have to stress about anything getting done. I'm not dependent on him to get things done, because I'm getting it done, and he can just relax. He doesn't have to stress about anything at home, 'cause he has a stressful job...I just try to make it as easy as possible for him. And I have a good attitude about everything. So he feels good about going into his job, and he doesn't feel guilty about his career choice. Um, because some people do. They feel guilty about moving their family, and the hours, and all that. So I, on the small scale, I feel that's what spouses can do for their husbands. Create a positive environment for them, and make their lives less stressful, in that way.

Similar to Ellie, Kathy states

My thought is he has to lead 150 guys so I don't want him thinking about if the trash was taken out, if the bills were paid, if my son makes it to soccer, if my daughter makes it to dance...He needs to do the best he can so they can do the best they can. Um, and so that kind of helped me operate.

Further, when talking about deployment more specifically, Alicia states,

The family is responsible for a huge part of the soldier... It was really important for me to make sure he understood and felt confident that things were taken care of at home. Um, because I would imagine that kind of stress, or like worrying about your family [slight pause], is gonna interfere with your ability to do your job.

Finally, Susan explained to me that her husband has an important job and he needs the role she plays in their family to support him. "Well, I'm the supporter. He has a very important job. And *it's hard* [said with emphasis]. You know? *It's hard for him* [said with emphasis]. You know my job is to support him...Because he needs that."

These examples illustrate participants' framing of their reproductive labor as a gift to their husband. However, through this gift participants also tie meaning to their work, which provides them with a sense of motivation. Above Kathy states that in knowing that her work helps her husband do his job, "that kind of helped me operate." While wives' reproductive labor is fundamentally structured through processes of instituted disorder, these quotations demonstrate how military wives reframe their labor as something they do to buffer their husbands from family needs, allowing them to focus on their strenuous and difficult military jobs. The meaning given to their labor is developed by comparatively framing their experiences with their husband and defining their family role in relation to what husbands have to endure due to their military jobs. This comparative form of emotion management is powerful, because it frames the gendered division of labor and participants' social position in a process that both subordinates, while also leading to acquiescence.

Children as a Motivation

Carrie: “So, just being a stay at home mom is really, I had to do that in order for us to all function well.”

Val: “Most of us kind of sit back, and don’t take any credit at all, and just do what we have to do because...if you don’t, everything’s gonna fall apart.”

I find participants with children often contend that life is more stable and a bit easier for their children if they take on the primary role in their family. Additionally, participants also suggest that their children become accustomed to them taking on most of the work in the family, which further acts as a motivation for these participants to sustain their role within the gendered division of labor. In this section, I explore these two features of participants emotion management constructed around their intent to create stability for their children and their children’s expectation that participants will take on the brunt of the family labor. Similar to participants’ sense-making that reframes their role within the gendered division of labor through a sense of purpose found in supporting their husband, participants also find a purpose through their children. However, within these data, military authority still acts as a cornerstone for this form of emotion management, where participants’ family responsibilities aim to create stability for their children by constructing a boundary between their children and the military, acting as a buffer for their children from the instability of instituted disorder.

Constructing Stability

Importantly, when discussing family roles in relation to the loss of control, participants who have children commonly find a sense of motivation and agency in their labor by asserting that they are able to regain a semblance of control for their children through their reproductive labor. Sometimes this form of emotion management requires symbolic boundary work, while other times participants draw upon their own childhood as frame of reference. During our

interview, Kathy repeatedly returned to the discussion of chronic uncertainty in relation to her children, explaining her motivation was to create stability for them. Kathy makes a clear distinction between the home and the world outside of their home, defining this space as a safe space away from the instability of the military.

You don't get to have control. All you can do, like I said, is we try to do the best we can to control our household and make it happy basically for our kids. Because outside of our happy little bubble there's a whole shit storm out there...I think it's true for our kids. Like, there isn't a ton of chaos or transition. We try to keep things as even keel at home as possible, and stable, because we can't control what the military dictates to us, but we can control how our family responds to it...So, our house really feels like our safe place. It feels like our home. When we walk in the door, it's where we want to be.

Furthermore, later in our conversation, Kathy returns to this topic stating, "I refuse to ever sacrifice time with my kids...I won't miss things. I just won't. Because, my husband can't control what he misses. If he's able to be present, he never misses. But his job requires him to not be present." Overall, Kathy reframes her reproductive labor as a way to support her husband, and their children. While acknowledging the sense of having little control in relation to the military, she defines her labor as a way to counter this instability for the rest of her family.

Similar to Kathy, Alicia connected her motivation to her goal of providing a stable childhood for her children, aiming to create a childhood experience like the one she had when growing up.

I personally never felt comfortable being, [slight pause] unavailable, because I knew he couldn't be...I guess there's never really been an alternative for me. If that makes sense. Like it's just something [slight pause], that [slight pause], I do for [slight pause], not only for him, but mostly for our kids to keep the house running smoothly. Just because [slight pause], I had a very [slight pause], ideal childhood, I guess. Basically, it was [slight pause], very calm and happy and loving, and, I want that for my kids. So mostly for them just to provide the kind of childhood that we want them to have...I feel like the more I plan and schedule, the more stable it is for them. So even if it's kinda difficult 'cause of his schedule, if I just kind of do my part to make everything [pause], like if I plan everything, and he just shows up when he can, it's a little easier for them 'cause they know what to expect.

Through this form of framing family roles, there is a sense of agency gained by these participants, where meaning is given to their labor by linking their family responsibilities with the goal of keeping their families stable in the face of institutional work-family constraints. Skeggs (1997: 2) and Bourdieu (1987) argue individuals are active in defining and giving meaning to the social positions they inhabit. Skeggs (1997) also finds such strategies are commonly used by women who inhabit subordinate social positions, asserting that strategies are often not about actually gaining power, but more about creating the perception of not being powerless. Here we see how women married to service members still acknowledge institutional forces, but rather than stopping with this acknowledgement, they redefine their labor as a way to counter institutional forces, shifting their perceptions of having little control and power. Sometimes this process requires boundary work, where the home and family are perceived as separate from the chaos of the military; a process described by Kathy. Lamont and Molnár (2002) argue that symbolic boundaries are constructed for numerous reasons, including as a form of contestation. In constructing this form of emotion management, participants give new meaning to their labor, defining their family role as something more than a role that is institutionally thrust upon them. Instead, their reproductive labor is viewed as a way to gain back elements of control and stability.

Children's Expectations

In addition to participants' motivations to create stability for their children, many also contend that their children become accustomed to mothers, not fathers, taking on the brunt of the labor at home. As a result, participants describe feeling more than a sense of motivation stemming from their children, but also a sense of pressure. Within these data, multiple interviewees described nearly identical ways of describing these expectations. For instance,

Andrea is a 45-year-old White stay-at-home mother with three children. At the time of our interview, Andrea's husband had been away for training, or deployments more than he was home. In response to her family role created by her husband's long absence, Andrea states,

It's just, um... we're in a routine. I got it. Like everything's goin'. I do everything. We're like goin' like this, kinda like a wheel. But when he comes home it's the little spoke in the wheel. Where does he fit in, you know? What is he gonna do? You now? I do everything. The kids expect me to do everything. The kids are used to me doing everything. So there's always a lot a resistance, with the children. They don't want him to do things. So I always have to be the buffer.

In a very similar explanation, Lindsey, who is a 30-year-old White stay-at-home mother with two children describes not only her sense of developing a routine that makes life stable, but that her children become use to this, setting a family precedence in terms of reproductive labor.

You kind of get in your own little routine of things with the kids and everything else...He'd be gone for a week or two, and me and the kids would get in our own routine...You're so used to doing everything as the wife, because they're not there, and then when they get back you're just like 'oh no I can do that, because I'm just used to it. And then that would cause sometimes like problems, because the kids would expect 'well mom does this'. You know? So, that's sometimes just the easiest for everybody.

As these data depict, participants' forms of sense-making demonstrate their acknowledgement of their reactive social position in relation to the military. Institutionally, there is intense pressure to take on responsibilities at home. However, the particular forms of emotion management explored in this section demonstrates participants' attempts to address their sense of having constrained control through a cyclical from of sense-making where they redefine their family role as a way to gain back control, by keeping their family running within the disorder of the military. Yet, in doing so they reproduce the very social position they are working to sustain themselves within. Accepting the uncontrollable and in turn creating normalcy becomes a way of deflecting constant reminders of one's lack of control in relation to forces shaping family roles. Additionally, whereas discussions of instituted disorder demonstrate the interweaving of the

home and the military institution, here we see participants redefine the home as a site where their labor creates an island of stability within a sea of disorder.

Managing Ambivalence

The final form of sense-making explored in this chapter is the management of ambivalence. I suggest investigating ambivalence is an important part of this story, as participants forms of emotion management are not always completely successful. As I document below, sometimes resentment or frustrations about the role participants undertake in their families linger, and participants work to find ways to quell these feelings in order to continue to acquiesce institutional constraints. Therefore, I first demonstrate how some forms of emotion management are precarious. I then explore how participants work to assuage their resulting ambivalence. Finally, I explore how participants' forms of emotional labor designed to support their husbands requires social support to sustain. Overall, these forms of emotion management are, at times, incomplete. As a result, managing one's social position is often an ongoing process.

Individual's roles and status are often negotiated in varying and complex ways, not simply accepted or rejected. Ambivalence originates from the methods individuals use to make-sense of, and navigate their constrained choices (Connidis and McMullen 2002). According to Ziff and Garland-Jackson (2020: 7) women married to service members, "embrace the gendered component of their role;" a contention they adopt from Hautzinger and Scandlyn (2013) who further suggest that women married to service members desire gendered credit for their labor in their families. While I do not refute these claims, I suggest the processes of making sense of their gendered labor, and sustaining that labor, is often more complex. Embedded within many participants' narratives is an uneasiness that accompanies inhabiting a subordinate social position (Skeggs 1997). Uneasiness often stems from what Hochschild (2003) refers to as feeling rules,

where an individual's feelings conflict with how they think they should feel. When participants construct forms of emotion management around supporting their husband, having a sense of ambivalence about these roles can violate their feeling rules (Hochschild 2003), because they feel they should not struggle to support their husband who has a difficult and dangerous job. Thus, this violation of feeling rules (Hochschild 2003) is especially strong when participants frame their reproductive labor through a comparison of their husband's military experiences.

Upsetting a Delicate Balance

I find participants often discuss frustrations when those not affiliated with the military talk about the experiences and work of women married to service members as something extraordinary. These frustrations depict the precarity of sustaining forms of emotion management, especially in relation to participants' experiences when they feel they have little control. For example, when describing her family responsibilities, Jessica demonstrates this sense of frustration.

You know one of the things people used to say to me that used to drive me crazy was. I mean there was no reason for it, but they would say, wow, I don't know how you do it. And it's like, well, I don't have a choice. Like, this is my life...I can't, help his deployment, I can't change that. So I'm just going to make the best of it and keep living my life.

When talking with Nancy, she also expresses similar frustrations. While sharing details about her family role during a deployment, Nancy, a White 24-year-old without children who is employed and working on her college degree, while also very active in volunteering in military family programs, bluntly stated to me in a startling and frustrated tone, "A lot of people, they're like, how do you deal with a deployment? I'm like, *I have to* [stated with great emphasis]." To suggest that women married to service members are doing something extraordinary, highlighting the structural constraints they experience, sometimes upsets the delicate balance of maintaining a

sense of normalcy that participants work to construct through their emotion management. When participants draw upon military authority as a form of sense-making, their acquiescence is built from a position of accommodation, and sometimes avoidance, where one learns to stop ruminating on aspects of their life they cannot control. The institutional constraints experienced by participants is anything but ordinary, and therefore, an open acknowledgment of this sometimes upsets the strategies employed by participants to build and sustain a sense of normalcy. There is a delicate balance maintained by participants' sense-making, and the sustainment of their gender strategies sometimes requires continuous work. While participants openly admit to institutional pressures within their interviews, for others to do so, seems to upset this delicate balance.

You Can't Blame Your Husband

Sustaining wives' strategies also takes shape by addressing random or recurring feelings of frustration or resentment related to their responsibilities at home. As observed in these data, emotion management is an integral feature of participants' overall gender strategies, which culminates in their acquiescence of institutional constraints and the gendered division of labor. For work-family constraints to be accepted, which is built within the sense-making described in this chapter, participants need to reign in feelings that challenge their strategies. For example, during our interview, Alicia she asserted that, "I do tend to get a little [pause], I try not to get upset at [my husband] because it's clearly in no way his fault, but [pause]...I have to catch myself not to be annoyed at him about it." Likewise, in my discussion with Lindsey, she stated,

I pretty much like run the household. I make sure all the bills are paid, because [my husband] isn't reliable in the sense of, is he home or is he not home. Like they do workups. So like, Tuesday he leaves for two weeks, and then he comes back. And, you know, last month he was gone for a month. And so you know it's just easier for me to just be in charge of a lot of these things...It's more responsibility for me, which kind of pisses me off sometimes. But, you know, who else [pause] you just gotta do it...I'm sure

if I was so resentful, like, I'm sure it would of ruined our marriage. Because, you know, I would have been so angry. And, I mean it really like, this, this is, this was what was handed to us. So you know what, like there's no getting out of it...And yeah, it really sucks, and adulthood really sucks, but, this is a part a life.

Additionally, Tonya makes the assertion that,

When you look to him to help you and he can't, you're just letting yourself down. You're expecting him to be able to do something and he can't. And then you let those feelings sit inside, and then you just start getting mad, and you resent him for nothing.

Underneath these statements is a sense of dissonance related to participants' responsibilities in their family and their husband's inability to help at home. A violation of feeling rules, or feeling different than one thinks they should feel (Hochschild, 2003) occurs, because blaming service members, or holding on to one's resentment means that one's emotion management is not working. To sustain oneself, where women married to service members fulfill the reproductive labor thrust upon them by the military, frustrations and resentment require strict management. Once curbing these feelings, strategies that acquiesce having limited control and participants' fulfillment of their role within the gendered division of labor can successfully continue.

Managing Ambivalence Through Social Support

In addition to participants forms of sense-making related to military authority or supporting their husband's military service, sustaining an economy of gratitude also requires the management of ambivalence. Reproductive labor is more than a physical manifestation, but also includes mental and emotional labor (Glenn 1992). I find that economies of gratitude not only operate through reproductive labor, but also intense emotional labor. When participants discuss supporting their husband through their work in the home, they also describe the emotional labor that accompanies this support. In working to buffer their husband from family responsibilities, participants describe censoring themselves around their husband, especially when dealing with,

or in talking about stressful days or issues with children. Importantly, what develops within these discussions is not only an example of the emotional labor women married to service members enact, but that maintaining a gender strategy often requires work and the social support from others to sustain.

Participants' emotional labor takes on many versions related to a variety of experiences. Below I draw upon several different examples of participants' emotional labor to demonstrate this point. At the time of our interview, Ellie was managing one of her family's six moves in nine years, struggling to sell their old house, while also acclimating her family to their new home. Rather than talking with her husband about these issues and her experience in taking these tasks on by herself, Ellie finds support from her sister who is also in a military marriage.

I feel a little guilty venting to him, because I know he's already stressed... I've had like meltdowns. Really, it's been just really stressful. Um, everything has gone wrong with that house. I feel so guilt—feel a little guilty venting to him about it. I have my sister to vent to...I can vent to my sister about military stuff and she knows exactly what I'm talking about. And it's nice too, because, I don't have to censor myself.

Similarly, Patricia described “censoring” herself around her husband when it comes parenting; a behavior described by many participants.

Patricia: I don't talk to my husband about our kids, because, it is a stressful life, and he is so stressed. So sometimes when my kids do certain things I won't tell him, I'll tell my dad or my friends, and get their opinion. Only because he can't fix it...So, I don't wanna stress him about it because I'm stressed. But there are times when I'll just... he'll come home from work and I just break down. And I'm like oh today was tough. The kids were doing this, and that, and this. And blah, blah, blah. And I can see it in his face he gets stressed about it 'cause he can't fix it. So, I think over the last year or so, I've dropped that a lot.

The emotional labor described by participants further demonstrates that the roles they fill encompass a wide range of labor; from the physical and mental labor required to keep a home and family operating, to the emotional labor required to address the stress husband's face as a result of their military jobs.

My intent here is not to map the forms of emotional labor wives enact, but to further demonstrate the emotion management required to enact specific forms of gender strategies, and the way these strategies require social support in order to sustain. As I documented in this chapter, the acquiescence of participants' social locations is sometimes fragile and an uneasy position to inhabit. As Stacey explained to me, "I mean I had family, you know. I would call my mom and cry...talk to a friend about it. I was really cautious about what I told [my husband] because I didn't want to stress him out any more than he was already." I argue that in order to create successful forms of emotion management that sustains participants' family and their supporter roles, women married to service members require support themselves. Often participants explain that finding friends or having social support outside of one's marriage is vital to making it as a military wife. Here, we see how social support buttresses one's uneasiness (Skeggs 1994) regarding their insecure and subordinate social position (Hyde 2016). However, an important note about this support is that it is often disrupted as families move to new duty stations every few years, where participants' social ties are severed, and they are sometimes left feeling isolated within their home, while they acclimate to their new geographic location. I argue that frequent family moves further aids in the production of participants' insecure positioning, and thus helps sustain their family roles.

Conclusion

In this chapter I explored participants' forms of emotion management to consider how military wives acquiesce and sustain themselves in a subordinate social position. I find acquiescence takes shape in several different ways. First, participants draw upon a broad and all-encompassing perception of military authority to manage their sense of having little control in relation to institutional practices. This form of emotion management also aids in the

normalization of the gendered division of labor and the subsequent reproductive labor participants take on. I then explored how participants developed forms of emotion management based in a comparative process, where their family roles and experiences are compared with their husband's military service. In essence, participants compare the greediness of the military in relation to themselves and their husband, drawing upon the conception of separate spheres to differentiate their reproductive labor from their husband's military service. Since participants hold a more favorable position within this comparison, they frame their subordinate social position, which is constructed partially through the privileging of their husband's military work, through an economy of gratitude. Returning to participants overall sense of having limited control, and specifically focusing on the effects of chronic uncertainty on families, participants with children reframe their family responsibilities as a way to create stability for their children. This becomes a powerful motivating force within these participants' strategies of self-sustainment. Finally, I explore how these forms of emotion management are sometimes precarious, requiring work to maintain. Often this precarity operates through feelings of ambivalence, which participants work to assuage. Overall, I argue these forms of emotion management not only support those inhabiting a subordinate social position, but that the social relations they work to acquiesce, such as the gendered division of labor, are reproduced through these very forms of self-sustainment.

There are several important effects of participants use of an all-encompassing understanding of military authority that require discussion. First, participants do not talk about their social positioning, nor their reproductive labor in their family in relation to filling a model military wife role or frame their responsibilities within discussions of role fulfillment. Instead, I find this ideological military wife role is filled *because* of the ways military wives must manage

life within institutionally produced work-family constraints. Where the greedy institutional framework espouses a competition between the family and military (Segal 1986), we observe through these processes of self-management that the structural conditions military wives face exists due to the structuring effect of the military within the family. Thus, participants rely on forms of emotion management to navigate their subordinate status within a gendered division of labor that is constructed by military work-family constraints, and further sustained by participants' acquiescence of their role in managing these constraints. These social conditions must be accommodated if participants desire to have a successful military marriage, because if they do not, resentment will linger, which will most likely impact their marriage. Marriage, and the link between service members, the military's institutional practices is important to these forms of emotion management. While work-family constraints operate through marriage, military wives' forms of emotion management operate through their marriage as well, working to sustain their marriage by assuaging ambivalence. I argue that understanding this connection is important to understanding the forms of sense-making explored in this chapter.

Furthermore, an additional component of these strategies worth addressing is the alleviation of service members from family responsibilities. When service members are allayed from family responsibilities through these forms of sense-making, life disruptions are connected with the military and military authority, not husbands themselves. Participants' modes of understanding focus on an institution that is viewed as having a fixed form of control within their life. This mode of understanding, where service members and their wives are *both* impacted by the institution's power structure, has a profound effect on how participants make sense of their own lives vis-a-vis the military. What occurs is a process of normalization of wives' gender subordination within their family and marriage. When defining militarization, Enloe (1988)

suggests the normalization of the military's "encroachment" into society is a key component to this process. I suggest these forms of sense-making demonstrate how militarization becomes a process that structures society to meet the needs of the military, while also being normalized. For military wives, normalization occurs through their use of military authority to make sense of their husband's military jobs. Highly gendered social relations based in the military's institutional practices are thus also sustained.

As a result, these experiences and strategies set the stage for the division of labor, thus socially reproducing these gendered social relations. The greediness of the military, and its use of military wives' labor that sustains military families, in turn supporting military operations, are sustained within these forms of emotion management. Overall, I argue the findings of this chapter further demonstrate how the processes of the greedy institution, which harnesses time and energy of members in order to support its own needs, as well as processes of militarization, unfold within daily life. These institutional processes are sustained through complex forms of sense-making, where military wives seek stability and normalcy within their family life, as well as their marriage.

Chapter V. Navigating Liminality: Stereotypes, Stratification, and “Bad” Wives’

Dependency

In the previous chapters, I documented the production and maintenance of instituted disorder, exploring how institutional work-family constraints intersect with participants’ lives in a way that structures their reproductive labor. Next, I explored participants’ sense-making related to the structuring effect of institutional practices, chronic uncertainty, and institutional hierarchy on the sustainment of participants’ roles within their family. The coalescence of these institutional forces and participants’ sense making situates military wives in a liminal social location. While formally considered civilians by the military, the military structures military wives’ lives in fundamental ways, where their lives frequently resemble a military more than civilian experience. Additionally, military wives’ reproductive labor plays an integral role in the functioning of the military institution. Given this social and institutional setting, Hyde (2015) argues that military wives inhabit a double-bind, straddling a civilian/military dichotomy, or existing in a hybrid quasi-military and quasi-civilian state. Overall, my aim in this chapter is to explore wives’ varying forms of sense-making as they work to sustain themselves within this liminal position, and to consider the effects of this sense-making within the reproduction of military hierarchies.

In managing one’s sense of self in relation to the role participants take on in their family and in the broader military family community, comparing oneself to other military wives was a common feature of participants’ narratives. For example, after several minutes of describing her supporter role, Susan ends her discussion by making sense of this role based on her love for her husband. However, she also compares herself with other military wives who she claims do not support their husbands the same way she does.

That's kind of like my role. You know? But because I love him, because I love him so much. You know? For me, I'm OK with that. I'm OK, with having that role. Other women though, like other wives that don't love their husbands like the way they should, are going to have a problem with that role.

This pattern of comparison emerged as a common theme related to participants' sense-making regarding the roles they take on in their family or the larger institution. While explanations based in love and care are quite common in women's descriptions of their family roles (Cancian 1986; Canican and Oliker 2000), rather than explore this feature of participants' narratives, I explore how comparisons sometimes operate through discourses connected with two stereotypes built within the military's system of stratification; the military wife who wears her husband's rank, and the dependapotamus; the latter being a stereotype resembling derogatory civilian perceptions of welfare recipients and the welfare queen. In exploring these stereotypes, I consider how comparisons sustain participants located in a subordinate and liminal social position by disassociating themselves from what they consider examples of "bad" military wives (Ziff and Garland-Jackson 2020). By using stereotypes constructed within the military's system of rank hierarchies, I also consider how this process unfolds through discourses of gender, built through class differentiation. Therefore, in this chapter I investigate the following questions. *How do participants sustain a sense of self in relation to their family labor, institutional roles, and the greater military institution through the use of military wife stereotypes, and how does the use of these stereotypes reproduce the military's system of stratification?*

Within this sample, every participant described taking on the reproductive labor and family roles required of them to sustain themselves and their family. However, the manner in which they described their sense of self, in relation to their family responsibilities, often differed. From the perspective of the military, Enloe (2000) describes the characteristics of a model military wife. Her list includes, but is not limited to, a wife's identification with her husband's

career and with her supporter role within that career, being a competent single mother, not troubling her husband with family issues, finding enjoyment in volunteering in the military family community, and being comfortable with the social hierarchy based in rank (Enloe 2000). While some participants described their struggle to maintain what they felt was an individual sense of self, in relation to their family and institutional roles, others described the rewards of fully embracing the military and the role of a military wife, fitting many of Enloe's (2000) characteristics. Yet, regardless of how participants viewed themselves in relation to institutional constraints and the discourses associated with the model military wife, sustaining one's sense of self often required a strategy of comparison, which sometimes operated through the use of military wife stereotypes.

During participants' interviews, discussions of the wearing rank or the dependapotamus stereotype often originated when participants described the sometimes contentious social relations existing within military family communities. Admittedly, I found conflict within military family communities surprising. While participants certainly discussed the importance of making friends and developing a support network comprised of military wives, conflict also became a central feature in their narratives. Often descriptions of inter-spouse conflict formed through discussions related to military wife stereotypes commonly used to define wives married to lower enlisted service members, or those married to more senior enlisted NCOs or officers. Sometimes participants themselves openly used these stereotypes during their interview, while other times features of these stereotypes emerged during their interviews in more subtle ways. As I closely explored interview transcripts, I realized that within participants' depictions of inter-spouse conflict there was often an underlying strategy of comparison, similar to Susan's example of love discussed above. These comparisons appeared as strategies participants used to support

their own decisions regarding their role in their family, in the military institution, as well as their overall strategy of sustaining a sense of self in relation to institutional work-family constraints. In essence, I found that within the conflict spouses described, there was also an underlying process of moral boundary work (Brown 2009; Lamont and Molnár 2002; Ziff and Garland-Jackson 2020), where participants compared and disassociated themselves from wives who took on the role of being a military wife differently.

In this chapter, I explore how participants use these two military wife stereotypes in a process of moral boundary work, by comparing and disassociating themselves from those they deemed “bad” military wives. I demonstrate that the knowledge and use of these stereotypes becomes a discursive tool activated in a process of supporting one’s own sense of individual self, based in how they take up both family and institutional roles structured by the military. I find this comparative process unfolds within the conflict that participants contend exists within military wives’ social relations, which often takes shape through the military’s system of stratification. Given the connections with social class, I also find that comparisons draw upon civilian discourses regarding the concept of dependency, and that it is through labeling other wives as dependent that participants are able to construct an independent sense of self. While stereotypes are used in myriad ways, I explore how they are entangled within wives’ processes of self-sustainment, where they navigate their liminal and subordinate social position through a process of comparing themselves with other wives within the military’s class-based system of stratification.

This chapter is organized as follows. I first document how participants talk about and perceive themselves in relation to their family and institutional roles. This brief analysis will act as the foundation for exploring wives’ strategies of self-sustainment. I then examine the ways

participants define the wearing rank and the dependapotamus stereotypes to create working definitions for each. Finally, I explore how wives use these stereotypes within the process of comparison and disassociation. There are three themes that emerge from participants' narratives that are used in their moral boundary work: inappropriate behavior; the theft of husband's military service; and having a dependent identity. For each theme, I explore how these stereotypes are used.

Literature and Theoretical Framing

To begin, I briefly review the limited research that examines military wives and their relationship with military rank. Since the stereotypes I explore are embedded within the military's system of stratification, understanding how wives experience and are impacted by their husbands' rank is important to this analysis. I then return to Hochschild (2003) and her discussion of the process of comparison, in which she describes how women caught within the second shift use comparisons as a way to navigate inequality in their marriage. I suggest that the comparisons I document operate in similar ways. I then briefly discuss processes of class differentiation, linking this with research on stereotypes and the concept of dependency. Finally, since I argue that military wives' processes of comparison and disassociation represent moral boundary work, I briefly explore this concept. Taken together, these conceptual frameworks lay the foundation for the analytical discussion that follows.

Military Rank

Key to this chapter is the connection between the use of military wife stereotypes and the military's system of stratification. Overall, there are few studies that explore military wives' experiences with military rank, and only one current study fully exploring military wife stereotypes. As discussed in Chapter 1, Harrell (2000a, 2000b) documents the stereotypes of

women married to junior enlisted Army soldiers, which she connects with many civilian stereotypes of women based in their lower-class position. Harrell (2001) also finds that women married to Army officers take on quasi-leadership roles in family communities and are perceived through stereotypes related to upper-class women. Hyde's (2015) more recent exploration of a British military unit, complicates the findings of past research, depicting rank as a dynamic construct within participants' narratives. According to Hyde (2015: 116) "through my analysis, rank is brought in and out of focus in people's narratives. It is foregrounded then elided, appropriated and disavowed, then frequently upheld at a further point. In such a way, rank becomes difficult to frame as an absolute thing in itself." As Harrell (2001) suggests, institutional expectations may exist for women married to Army officers; however, their existence does not mean unrelenting compliance. For instance, Hyde (2015) frames rank as more than a comprehensive system used for organizing service members and their wives, but a complex set of social processes enacted in myriad ways. When navigating the impact of their husband's rank during interactions with women married to higher or lower ranking service members, Hyde (2015: 106) finds that wives will "mobilise a 'civilian' identity" to distance themselves from their husband's rank.

As previously mentioned, to my knowledge, there is only one study that explores military wife stereotypes in detail. According to Ziff and Garland-Jackson (2020), military wives draw upon these military wife stereotypes as a form of symbolic boundary work, which are used to avoid stigmatization, while also gaining agency and a sense of self. Ziff and Garland-Jackson (2020) analytically focus on the reproduction of gender through the use of these stereotypes. Given the sample they obtained, which only contains one participant married to an officer, the rest married to enlisted service members, they do not explore the way these stereotypes are

constructed within social class. As a result, their analysis somewhat conflates the use of these stereotypes among military wives across the military's rank hierarchy. In this chapter, I consider the gender and class-based foundations of these stereotypes, an analysis that is absent within the literature. However, my analyses have a particular focus related to how these stereotypes demonstrate one of the many methods participants use to navigate their liminal social position, which happens to operate through the military's system of stratification. Therefore, features of my analyses are similar to Ziff and Garland-Jackson (2020). However, my analytical focus deviates from theirs to consider forms of self-sustainment in a slightly different way.

The Politics of Comparison

In organizing these analyses, I first return to the work of Hochschild (2003) and her exploration of the process of constructing maintenance programs related to the division of labor in the home through the practice of comparison. Hochschild (2003) finds that when women work to acquiesce their role within the second shift, they do so by first comparing their responsibilities, identity, and overall life to those of their husbands. When this becomes an unsustainable comparison, in an attempt to ward off resentment due to the division of labor being inequitable, wives turn their comparisons outward toward other wives or husbands located within their social circles (Hochschild 2003). Such comparisons with their counterparts become a strategy to make sense of, and ease feelings about their second shift labor by comparing themselves to those who they view as being worse off. For example, a wife will compare herself with a wife she knows who takes on more responsibilities in the home, or a wife whose husband does even less than her own husband. When framed in this way, one's own family labor appears more favorable. In comparing oneself to other women or men in a similar family dynamic, these comparisons provide wives with important self-sustaining information. Hochschild (2003) refers

to this form information as the “going rate” of men and women in similar relationships and couples’ social circles. Moving one’s relational assessment outward, away from the home, and toward other couples, aids in the acquiescence to second shift labor and, ultimately, the sustainment of one’s marriage. As Hochschild (2003: 60) suggests, “many women struggle to avoid, suppress, obscure, or mystify a frightening conflict over the second shift. They do not struggle like this because they started off wanting to, or because such struggle is inevitable or because women inevitably lose, but because they are forced to choose between equality and marriage. And they choose marriage.” In a similar way, the participants in this study also choose marriage. But, sustaining one’s marriage, in relation to the institutional work-family constraints they face on a daily basis, often requires strategic forms of comparative work.

An important analytical feature of the politics of comparison is wives’ use of their counterparts within their own social networks as a way to gain information required for their comparisons. According to Hochschild (2003), how far feminist ideals have successfully integrated these networks creates the foundation upon which comparisons are built (Hochschild, 2003). This information is what Hochschild (2003) calls the “cultural foundation” of judgements. Since comparisons operate within a couple’s social circles, we can assume this process of comparison generally occurs within class boundaries. Since Hochschild (2003) does not explore this point, we are left to infer how class operates within this process of comparison, while also asking: How could this process operate between larger social groups, such as between those located differentially within a system of stratification? Relevant to this study, I ask, how do the participants in this study use a similar process of comparison, but one that unfolds within the military’s class system? Thus, further analytical tools are required to explore this particular process of self-sustainment in the context of the military.

Activating Stereotypes: Class and Gender Differentiation

In considering the intersection of gender and class within the politics of comparison, I turn to research exploring class differentiation through gender performativity. In Skegg's (1997) research on working class women's attempts to "(dis)identify" and "dissimulate" from their working-class positions through their representation of class, she notes that working class women use depictions of middle-class women as a standard for comparison. "In every judgement of themselves a measurement was made against others. In this process the designated 'other' (based on representations and imaginings of the respectable and judgmental middle class) was constructed as the standard to/from which they measured themselves. The classifying of themselves depended upon the classifying systems of others" (Skeggs 1997: 74). In a process of comparison similar to Hochschild (2003), but in reference to class, comparison becomes a powerful tool in the process of sustaining or differentiating one's subjectivity in relation to one's social positioning. Through comparison one's subjectivity is constantly constructed and redefined based on an attachment to, or disassociation from, one's social location (Skeggs 1997).

Processes of comparison and differentiation also take shape through the use of stereotypes that enable those within certain class locations to construct boundaries between their group identity and those of a different social status. Skeggs (1997) finds working-class women use this information to separate themselves from their own class. Yet, in other situations, stereotypes or the representation of those in other social locations are used to sustain group identification and distance individuals from other groups. For example, in Armstrong and authors' (2014) analysis of female college students' use of slut shaming, they argue the term slut is used to create status differentiation. Armstrong and authors (2014: 101) argue, "labeling facilitates the drawing of class boundaries via distinctive styles of performing gender." Symbolic

boundaries are constructed when the term slut is used by lower-status and higher-status women as a way to identify inappropriate forms of female gender performance. Proper and improper gender performativity are defined based on one's social class position (Armstrong et al. 2014; Bettie 2003). Armstrong and authors' (2014) argue that the process of differentiation based in class and gender are designed to create boundaries and construct a sense of moral superiority between different status groups. The use of slut is therefore about labeling inappropriate forms of gender performance or the femininity of those outside one's own social class position, thus constructing and sustaining one's own class identity.

Military Wives and Dependency

Within my analyses, the theme of dependency emerged as an underlying component to wives' comparisons and their disassociation. Evaluating participants' definitions of these labels, as well as their use of these stereotypes, brought forth the common sentiment that these stereotypes make a clear distinction between 'good' and 'bad' military wives (Ziff and Jackson-Garland 2020). This distinction is based on one's ability to maintain an institutionally structured and expected role in the home, while also maintaining a sense of self that is not reliant on husbands, their hard work and sacrifice, and is not fully consumed by their husband's military career. Similar assertions are made by women who receive welfare benefits, identifying waged labor as a route to constructing a sense of independence (Scott, London, and Gross 2007). To address this theme, I turn to Fraser and Gordon's (1994) genealogy of the concept of "dependency."

Dependency is a highly provocative concept, which in the contemporary post-industrial period has been feminized and is used as a discursive tool to stigmatize the poor based on race¹⁷, class, and gender, as well as many other social categories. Dependence stands in contrast with independence, built within dichotomies such as, weak/strong, disreputable/virtuous, and female/male (Fraser and Gordon 1994). Fraser and Gordon (1994) map the changing meanings connected with dependency, demonstrating how definitions of this concept are embedded within historical contexts of shifting economic structures. They contend there are four key registers of dependency—economic, social-legal, political, and moral/psychological, which they describe as follows:

The first is an economic register, in which one depends on some other person(s) or institution for subsistence. In a second register, the term denotes a social-legal status, the lack of a separate legal or public identity, as in the status of a married women created by coverture. The third register is political: dependency means subjection to an external ruling power and may be predicated of a colony or subject caste of noncitizen residents. The fourth register we call the moral/psychological; dependency in this sense is an individual character trait similar to a lack of will power or excessive emotional neediness (Fraser and Gordon 1994: 6-7).

Relevant to this study is the contemporary feminization of this term most often associating women, and often immaturity, with dependency (Fraser and Gordon 1994). These features affix to the stereotypes explored in this chapter, furthering both a class and gender analysis of military wives' work to sustain their sense of self in relation to other military wives.

¹⁷ As discussed in Chapter 2, and will be further addressed in Chapter 6, in the civilian context dependency not only has strong associations with gender and class, but also race. However, within this chapter I do not address race within the use of these stereotypes. Perhaps due to the Whiteness of the sample, race was never brought up in participants conversations about these stereotypes, but instead was strongly connected with social class. Further, my intent within this chapter is to analyze how the use of these stereotypes reproduces the military's system of stratification within military family communities. Therefore, race is not part of the analyses, but, as I discuss in Chapter 6, race is an important feature of this story that needs to be addressed within future research on this topic.

Moral Boundaries

Through the use of military wife stereotypes, and in their comparison with and disassociation from other military wives, participants rely on boundary work. In my analyses, boundary work takes shape through the use of moral boundaries. Lamont (1992: 4) defines moral boundaries through “moral character: they are centered around such characters as honesty, work ethic, personal integrity, and considerations for others.” I find this form of boundary work connects with dependency, perceiving “bad” wives’ behaviors and motivations within a framework of character flaws. According to Brown (2009: 854), moral boundaries represent “an expression of individual’s identity and belief systems.” Ziff and Garland-Jackson’s (2020) study draws upon Lamont and Molnár’s (2002: 168) definition of symbolic boundaries, which is defined as the “conceptual distinctions made by social actors to categorize objects, people, practices, and even time and space.” While I suggest the use of stereotypes falls into this form of symbolic boundary work, the more intimate and underlying processes of comparison that unfold, where participants draw on civilian and military identities, is representative of moral boundary work.

Contributions to the Literature

Overall, participants face institutional forces on many fronts, which places them in a liminal, marginal, and insecure social position (Enloe 2000; Hyde 2015), creating a form of “contested personhood” (Comfort 2008: 22) or liminality. As a result, I find participants often rotate between drawing from a military or civilian subjectivity as a point of reference. Thus, those they compare themselves with are accused of sometimes being too closely identified with the military, which represents their dependency, while in other cases they are accused of not being a “good” military wife, which places them too close to the civilian side of their social positioning. This reference point varies depending on the individual, where they are located

within the system of stratification, and based on how they make sense of their family and institutional roles. Therefore, while stereotypes and boundary work are formed through social class, within these social class distinctions, boundary work operates more through one's own sense of self, shifting between a civilian and military perspective, selectively using features of these stereotypes to define someone in the opposite manner as their own sense of self.

The findings of this chapter also connect with this dissertation's overarching theories in several important ways. The processes of comparison and disassociation found within these data demonstrates how military rank becomes operationalized through military wives' marriage, and that based in the link-lives perspective, marriage becomes an avenue for military wives to use their husband's rank as a way to compare themselves to other wives. Thus, we see how the institutional connection created by marriage becomes an avenue for military wives to make sense of themselves in comparison to others through the military's system of stratification. To my knowledge, there are no studies that consider how rank operates through this institutional link created by marriage. However, this link also demonstrates how militarization operates in complex ways. As military wives draw upon rank hierarchies as a way to compare themselves with other wives, the result is to organize themselves along rank and thus class. The overall effect is to reproduce the military's ranked system of stratification within military wives' social relations, and within military family communities. Therefore, these findings depict how militarization operates in even the most intimate ways, where an individual's strategies of self-sustainment and their perception of self become entangled within this structural process.

Navigating a Civilian and Military Sense of Self

Carrie: "And I mean I, uh, like there's always the like the tug a war between like, psychologically you kinda need to live your own life just to get through."

In the process of acquiescing institutional work-family constraints, many participants also discuss their difficulties in constructing an identity outside of their husband's military job. Understandably, as institutional forces structure their lives in a way that organizes their family responsibilities and reproductive labor, finding time to develop a career, or even socialize with friends is a challenge. I find that as wives navigate their liminal positioning inside and outside of the institution, they develop varying ways of constructing a sense of self. Additionally, those married to senior enlisted service members or officers often experience increased institutional expectations to volunteer or maintain an expected persona as a more senior military wife. Experiencing work-family constraints, and for some, these additional institutional expectations, often disrupts military wives' ability to maintain a sense of self separate from their institutionally structured position in their family and the military. While some participants openly embraced a role similar to Enloe's (2000) characteristics of a model military wife, others fulfilled these roles while also aiming to create a sense of self outside of their husband's military career and being identified solely as a military wife.

For those who struggled to maintain a sense of self, they often described the institutional role of the military within these struggles, which further depicted wives' liminal position. Institutionally, spouses are labeled as "dependents," and their military ID cards are called dependent ID cards, which also contains their husband's or wife's military rank. Many participants use their ID card as an example of the ways the military removes their identity.

According to Victoria,

You literally have no identity. At all. You're put into the [computer] system and you're given a dependent ID card. And after that you have no identity. And when you go to the doctor, they don't ask for your social security number, they ask for your sponsor's social security number. They take that identity of that spouse away completely. To the DOD I'm just a dependent number. That's all.

Cynthia discusses a similar experience after marrying her husband.

I remember signing all of these forms and thinking this is such bullshit. I'm no longer an individual. Now I'm whoever [pause], my identification is through my husband's social security number. And that was like tough, that was a really tough system to follow. Because I've always prided myself in being very independent and all of a sudden there was no interdependence, it was complete dependence.

These experiences demonstrate the struggle over one's sense of self in relation to the structural forces stemming from the military's institutional practices regarding military wives.

For some participants, filling their family role was a primary source from which they developed a sense of self. For others, especially participants married to senior enlisted NCOs, or officers, balancing military expectations meant that a great deal of their time and energy went into their volunteer work. For these wives, their volunteer work and role as a model military wife became their source for developing a sense of self. For example, Carrie is married to an officer and describes her struggle to maintain an individual sense of self while also running her family and volunteering in military family support programs to the degree her husband's chain of command expected her to.

You kind of lose your identity a little bit in that as well. Because you are so focused on your husband, and what he's doing, and his career, and then what's expected out of you, especially as an officer's wife. You kind of fall in line with all of that and your identity gets a little bit warped in that. I mean it took me a good year or two to figure out what I like, not what I liked as Stephen's wife. Not what I liked as a Pilot's Wife. Not what I like as an officer's wife. I lost a little bit of my identity.

For wives married to enlisted service members or officers, the coalescence of both work-family constraints and institutional expectations greatly funnel wives in a specific institutional direction. Yet, not everyone desires to adopt a full model military wife identity, given that they are married to a service member, but did not enlist themselves. While Carrie could be viewed as someone who fits the model military wife (Enloe 2000), she does not define herself through this label.

Yet, when so much of her life is constructed by this role, she struggled to see herself as anything other than a military wife.

In contrast, for some participants, their family role became their source for constructing their sense of self. Patricia is a stay at home mother, and during our discussion she described finding her own identity difficult given all the work she does to keep her family running smoothly. She explained that rather than seeing herself as a stay at home mom, she defines herself through the many tasks she takes on in her family.

I don't say I'm a stay at home mom. I'm a housekeeper. I'm a cook. I'm a short order chef! I'm...I'm everything. I'm the soccer mom who's takin' them to the sports they wanna go see. I'm everything. But it's, it's a big job, and it's not easy. And that's a lot a hats to wear.

Additionally, when further talking about her family roles in relation to her husband's military career Patricia explained, "It kinda makes me feel like I've been thrown into the military. And I always say, I didn't sign up for the military, my husband did." Acknowledging the influence of the military in her family responsibilities, Patricia demonstrated the conflicted state many participants live within.

Alternatively, while many participants struggled finding or maintaining their sense of self, some participants fully embraced their military and family roles, contending that being a military wife can be difficult, but also extremely rewarding. For these participants, their sense of self was closely connected with being a military wife, and their family and volunteer labor was wrapped within this larger understanding of what it means to be married to a service member. Nancy, who is married to an officer and active in her volunteer labor, maintained a sense of self that was closely connected with being a military wife, and a wife married to an officer.

It's kind of like, it's interesting because I feel like my husband's career is kind of mine as well. You know? Like I play a very important role in his career. I help him out by being

[the family support group] leader....You know, so that's my way of contributing to his career.

During her interview, Nancy connects both her family role and her volunteer labor as a form of contribution to her husband's military career progression. In maintaining a stable family, while also active in the military community, Nancy explained that her husband can present himself as a model officer, and she can present herself as a model wife, which shapes how his superiors perceive her husband, which contributes to his promotions. For Nancy, her sense of self was closely built within the characteristics of Enloe's (2000) model military wife.

Whether stemming from the military's organization of work, and the creation of work-family constraints, or the "normative expectations" (Segal 1986) experienced by participants married to higher ranking service members, participants describe how they navigate these forces in an attempt to develop a sense of self within the constraints produced by the institution, as well as the social position these constrains place them within. Regardless of how they actually come to feel about their military and family roles, one thing is clearly demonstrated by these data: sustaining a sense of self is strategic. I argue that through processes of comparison and disassociation, military wife stereotypes become a source of comparative information enabling participants to differentiate themselves from military wives who respond to these institutional forces differently than they do. In pinpointing these differences, which develop through stigmatizing stereotypes, military wives are able to discursively 'other' military wives based in the military's system of stratification; a process also found within Ziff and Garland-Jackson's (2020) research on this topic. This comparison helps to sustain participants' family and institutional labor, and their sense of self, because these stereotypes demonstrate examples of "bad" military wives. As a result, when labeling others in this way, participants are able to construct themselves as "good" military wives. Overall, the use of these stereotypes is less about

who fills or does not fill the military wife role, since all participants take on the responsibilities associated with this role, but more about differentiating oneself from those who do it differently.

Wearing Rank: Formations of Class and Gender

Emma: “A lot of them were more senior ranking, and they just kinda wear their spouse’s rank. And the first question out a their mouth is what does your husband do?... What’s your husband’s rank?”

Tonya: “They think they’re entitled. Like one person would get upset because the guy at the gate didn’t salute her, even though her husband gets saluted. It’s like the craziest stuff that you think could possibly happen, happens.”

One of the most prevalent stereotypes present in participants’ narratives is the assertion that a military wife wears her husband’s rank. Wearing rank refers to wives who expect or demand perks or respect based on the military rank of their husband. Demands for ideal parking, a spot at the head of the grocery line, military discounts in stores, or expecting recognition and respect are common descriptions of a wife who wears rank. Patricia described this stereotype with the following scenario. “I’ve seen people get mad because somebody is in line before them and they know this person, and their husband’s lower rank, and they should of let them go first.” Further, one of the most common ways of describing wearing rank is a scenario where a wife demands the guard at the entrance to a military instillation salutes her, because her husband’s rank is higher than the guard’s rank. Nearly every participant who talked about wearing rank described a version of this example. For instance, Peri is 37-year-old employed Indian-American with no children. At the time of our interview Peri was newly married, which meant she was still getting acclimated to military life. During our interview, Peir talked extensively about the effects of rank within military wives’ social relations, since this was one features of military life that greatly surprised her. When defining wearing rank, she used the guard booth scenario as a way to describe the wearing rank stereotype.

If you're coming through the gate, the gate guard should salute YOU, because your husband's rank is on your [spouse] ID. And so when they ID you, the idea is that they should show reverence to the fact that your spouse is high ranking, and therefore YOU are.

Overall, this stereotype is constructed on the assertion that women who wear rank are using their husband's military status as a way to construct a similar status for themselves when interacting with fellow military wives, the greater civilian community, or in certain situations, when interacting with service members. How successful attempts to improve one's status are, and how frequent wearing rank occurs, is difficult to tell within these data. Yet, knowledge of this stereotype was ubiquitous, and as I demonstrate below, wearing rank was often used as a filter through which the behavior of higher status wives was interpreted by wives married to lower ranking service members.

Since wearing rank is constructed within the military's rank hierarchy, military wives married to senior NCO's or officers are most likely to be labeled with this stereotype. For example, Patricia, whose husband is a mid-level NCO, emphatically depicts how this stereotype operates through rank.

Yeah, there's a lot of wives who wear their husband's rank, and it shows in a big way. Um, especially if they're staff sergeants [E-6] and above. Or if they are officers wives, *they wear that like it's nobody's business* [stated with great emphasis]...It gets very catty when wives rank up.

Patricia's demarcation between wives who do and do not wear rank starts at E-6, which is the rank of her husband. However, she implicates women married to officers (who are higher ranking than E-6) as the most prevalent abusers of rank. Tonya, who is also married to a mid-level NCO, uses an event within her neighborhood in military housing to demonstrate both the assertion that women married to officers are most likely to wear rank, as well as describing how rank is actually worn in daily social interactions.

Like officer's wives normally are pretty bad. You get enlisted wives that are pretty bad, but it's mostly officers. We had one lady, like a kid did something, like threw something in somebody's yard. And somebody called the kid a little asshole. And she said, 'As a chief's wife [senior enlisted], I don't feel [that language] is appropriate. Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.' This had absolutely nothing to do with the conversation, but she just had to throw in that she was a chief's wife. Like her opinion mattered more because she was a chief's wife.

These data depict a clear distinction between wives married to junior and mid-level NCO's and those married to anyone of the similar rank or above. Military wives married to lower-ranking service members do not have the institutional power to wear rank, which means this stereotype cannot be used to describe those married to junior enlisted service members.

Some participants describe witnessing this behavior first hand, while others imply that they heard stories about a wife wearing rank, which they assumed were true. As Meghan, a 31-year-old African American stay-at-home mother with one child who is married to a mid-level NCO asserted, "I mean you'd hear women wearing their husband's rank, and everyone thinks it's a big joke, *but it's true* [stated with emphasis]." My goal here is not to test for the existence of the "status hungry wife" (Ziff and Jackson-Garland 2020), or assess lived experiences of this stereotype in comparison to common narratives that exist within the military's institutional culture. My point is that accusations of military wives who wear rank structures perceptions related to wives married to senior NCO's or officers, embedding this phenomenon within formations of class and class differentiation. As Wendy, a 26-year-old Mexican-American college student with one child and who is married to junior enlisted service member explained this phenomenon, "I guess it's like working class versus the officers."

An important component of the process of comparison and disassociation is not the actual use of this stereotype, but the knowledge of this stereotype, which provides some wives with an institutionalized discursive tool to compare themselves with, and disassociate themselves from; a

process I discuss below. According to Hochschild (2003), this comparative process informs wives of the “going rate” of those in similar family situations as themselves. Wearing rank and the many assumptions that are built within this stereotype provides wives with a source of comparison, either by comparing themselves to specific wives they have encountered, or more generally to the stereotype itself. Further, according to Armstrong et al. (2014: 103), when accusations related to the label of “slut” are invoked, there does not need to be a “real” slut to create meaning. Instead, they assert that “slut stigma still felt very real. Women were convinced that actual sluts existed” (Armstrong et al. 2014: 102). Similarly, the common use of specific examples of wearing rank, such as the wife demanding the guard at the gate to a military installation salutes her, demonstrates the existence of an institutionally sustained discourse relating to higher-status military wives, which lower-status wives have available to draw upon and use to make sense of their actual interactions with higher-status wives. In doing so, they are able to compare and disassociate themselves from these wives, which also results in the reproduction of the military’s system of stratification and the sustainment of “working class versus officers” institutionalized social relations.

Wearing rank connects with the concept of dependency through what Fraser and Gordon (1994) term the socio-legal form of dependency. Here the assumption is that these wives do not have an individual identity, but instead they are subsumed by their husband’s military career. When military wives wear rank, they are demonstrating their lack of individuality, and their need to rely on or be dependent on their husband’s military rank as a way to create their own form of status. In doing so, these wives are perceived as stealing their husband’s hard work and military service, which stands in direct contrast to the forms of sense-making explored in the previous chapters. For example, when considering sense-making formed through economies of gratitude

(Hochschild 2003), where military wives' labor is framed as a gift to their husband, wearing rank becomes a direct violation of this form of emotion management.

The Dependapotamus

Val: "So you know the word dependapotamus,...nobody ever wants to think of themselves as that, 'cause that's like the worst of the worst."

The second stereotype I explore in this chapter, and the most divisive stereotype to emerge from participants' narratives, is the dependapotamus. In this section I explore how this stereotype is defined, connecting participants' definitions with Fraser and Gordon's (1994) analysis of dependency. I find this label, often shortened to dependa, originates from the military's institutional labelling of women and children married to service members as "dependents." During her interview, Kathy explained these institutional connections based in how she understands the definition of this stereotype. "So, you know, spouses are called dependents, and our kids are dependent's kids, so they are people who marry a soldier for those dependent benefits." According to Susan, the label combines the idea of economic dependency (Fraser and Gordon 1994) with wives' self-care. "She's [financially] dependent on her husband, and at the same time, she kinda let's herself go. So, hippopotamus." As these definitions demonstrate, the dependapotamus stereotype connects with many discourses that stigmatize those in the lower class and poor civilian community, which are linked to motivations regarding employment or not being a fit mother. Also, there are clear connections between the dependapotamus and the stigmatizing concept of dependency, which is currently associated with young, Black, unemployed mothers.¹⁸

¹⁸ Within these data, the actual origins of the dependapotamus stereotype are not clear. Since these connect closely with similar civilian class, gender, and racial stereotypes, and investigation of the origins of the dependapotamus stereotype could provide key insight into how this stereotype is sustained within the military, as well as how civilian forms of discrimination are carried into the military by service members.

According to participants, the dependapotamus is widely known within the military community, and they suggest service members and spouses alike use this discourse to describe military wives, and frequently wives married to junior enlisted service members. From her work in the late 1990's, Harrell (2000a, 2000b) finds similar class-based stereotypes of Army wives married to junior enlisted soldiers, but does not refer these stereotypes with a specific label. This suggests that the overall class-based stereotyping of lower-status military wives has an institutional history that has evolved into the current day dependapotamus label. My intent within this chapter is not to map a genealogy of this label, but to use participants' narratives to demonstrate connections with formations of class, developing an overall working definition of this stereotype.

While wearing rank has clear underlying associations with features of dependency, where those who wear rank are considered dependent on their husband's military career and rank status, the assertion that wives who fit the dependapotamus stereotype are dependent takes shape in several ways. First, the group of wives most likely labeled in this manner are those married to junior enlisted service members, which is similar to current day associations of dependency with young Black females (Fraser and Gordon 1994). Second, similar to Fraser and Gordon's (1994) economic feature of dependency, these military wives are accused of seeking out service members to access their military pay and benefits, becoming dependent on their husband for his financial support. Rather than dependent on the welfare state, as asserted in the civilian context, through their marriage to a service member, these women are accused of being financially dependent on the military by marrying a service member. Further, since these military wives are not employed, they are accused of over-identifying with their husbands' military career, because they have no career of their own to develop an identity around. This characteristic connects with

Fraser and Gordon's (1994) definitions of the socio-legal features of dependency, denoting an individual's lack of an individual identity, which suggests that instead their identity is consumed by another. This problematic behavior is often framed through the lens of individual character flaws, which connect with the moral/psychological feature of dependency. Below, I map each of these characteristics of the dependapotamus, demonstrating their association to Fraser and Gordon's (1994) breakdown of the concept of dependency.

Within these data, women married to junior enlisted service members are more likely labeled as a dependapotamus than wives married to senior enlisted service member or officers.¹⁹ According to Nancy, who is married to an officer, officers are less likely to marry someone who fits this stereotype, because they have the experience to know about this issue and to avoid it.

It's not going to happen to someone higher ranking. They have the experience. But, I think for the most part, it's like specialists [E-3] and below, where they meet these girls out on the town and are like, oh I don't have anything going on, I'm 18, 19, and might as well marry a soldier.

The important class-based assertion is that young, lower-class civilian women tend to seek out junior enlisted service members, transplanting the lower-class desire to access state benefits to avoid employment into the military community. As Tonya, who is married to a mid-level NCO asserts, for many women, marrying a service member and living off his benefits is a fundamental goal in life; a contention that makes a clear class connection between those who marry junior enlisted service members and those who become a dependapotamus.²⁰

There's a lot of them too. There's a ton of 'em! It depends on how desperate the person is, to be honest. Like [they have] no aspirations in life but to get knocked up by some

¹⁹ Given the breadth of behaviors the dependapotamus label covers, use of this stereotype is more flexible in comparison to accusations that wives wear rank, which is dependent on one's location within the military's system of stratification. Several participants who were married to both mid-level enlisted service members and officers worried about being labeled in this manner due to their lack of employment. Also, a few participants experienced a rapid climb within the hierarchy of rank as their husbands were promoted within the enlisted ranks, and then finally becoming officers. For these wives, their mobility seemed to provide them with the ability to draw upon both stereotypes.

²⁰ Tonya is also quoted in the previous section. I find that participants who are institutionally positioned between those married to officers or junior enlisted service members are more likely to outright use these stereotypes or use them in describing interactions with lower- or higher-status wives.

[junior enlisted] guy. And that's called a tag chaser. And she ends up being a dependapotamus.

Several participants even asserted that mothers will teach their daughters how to seek out service members in order to gain access to military benefits, using the military as an avenue towards exiting their lower-class status.

Many participants' definitions of a dependapotamus combine the economic, socio-legal, and moral/psychological components of dependency (Gordon and Fraser 1994). For instance, when Victoria, who is married to an officer, explained her understanding of how this stereotype is defined, her understanding of this stereotype was based in the economic feature of dependency, while also connected with the stigmatization of women's sexual activity, linked with having children to gain benefits.

Victoria: It's almost a game to some of the spouses that fall in that stereotype. Because you have as many babies as you can have, but you don't want your WIC to run out, you just want it to keep overlapping. You know? But in that, you also get more child care hours at the daycare on post, if you have more of them. Um, if you have 4 kids, instead of 1 kid, you're eligible for a bigger house on post.

Interviewer: And before you said this is generally associated with the lower ranks?

Victoria: Yes. Because the idea is you know, you don't work and you don't do anything as a spouse except have babies and spend your husband's money, and then think you're entitled to all of these things.

According to Susan's way of understanding this stereotype, she explained that a wife labeled in this way, "becomes very reliant on her husband. Like she just relies on his income, and she doesn't do much for herself, so she becomes a dependent. She becomes too dependent on her husband." Riley, who was employed at the time of her interview, echoed this definition during her interview, "It's like, a lot of soldiers would get married, and so the person that they got married to wouldn't work and would stay at home with the kids, and would become very dependent." The argument that wives who fit this stereotype become dependent on their husband

is prevalent within participants' definitions, and is one of the primary underlying critiques of those labeled in this manner. I find this commonality is an important feature of wives' narratives and, as I explore later in this chapter, this feature of dependency becomes an important element of participants' comparison and disassociation, because in essence they are demonstrating that they are not dependent, but in fact independent.

The contention that women labeled as a dependapotamus create drama is another common theme, further demonstrating key features of the moral/psychological component of dependency, which is highly feminized and often associated with young Black mothers' immaturity (Fraser and Gordon 1994). In the context of the military, drama is often linked with unemployment, suggesting that these military wives have an abundance of time to cause problems because they are not employed. As Jenna, who is married to an officer explained,

Especially those who don't necessarily have work outside of the family, they tend to have a lot of time. And so, it's a loop of something that may be insignificant can become heightened. And sort of that drama and web becomes something to think about. And almost like a coping mechanism of, well now I have something to do, because I'm, you know, getting involved in the drama.

Furthermore, the drama described by participants takes shape in many different forms, but is often connected with dependency, because this drama is associated with military wives becoming consumed by their husband's military career. These definitions also sometimes connect, in subtle ways, with female stereotypes (Ziff and Garland-Jackson 2020). As Barbara, a White 34-year old with three children who works remotely from home, described the drama created by military wives in the lower ranks, "It's like the kind a things that you only see on soap operas." For example, often participants described rivalries between those who either argue that they support their husband better than others, or assert that they are experiencing more serious hardships than other wives. According to Wendy, "It's like, I'm supporting my husband better

than you support your husband. You know?" Peri says this type of conflict often unfolds over Facebook.

As soon as one woman posts a picture of her husband's dirty boots in like the front of the house, followed by a trail of his clothes to the couch, there are immediately like 380 comments with similar photo updates, or "Amen sister," hashtag "preach." And then the hashtag "blessed," be glad your husband is home, and the deployed wives, you know like preach. So, it's sort of like, the commentary is very much one of, solidarity in that we're all in this together, but then it's also divisive in that like, well, look how good you have it your husband is here. Or look how lucky you are, your husband is a certain rank. So, it's a confusing sort of paradigm.

The dependapotamus represents a coalescence of the many stereotypes that are connected with military wives, and in particular wives married to lower-ranking enlisted service members. The various ways of defining this label are never invoked or come through in participants' interviews as a single entity, encompassing all of these characteristics. Much like accusations of wearing rank, some participants clearly define the dependapotamus with specific experiences or in reference to wives they have encountered in person, while others are clearly upset by these stereotypes and discuss them based in the institutional definitions they learned from others. Yet, much like wearing rank, the actual existence of an individual meeting these criteria does not need to exist for it to offer wives a discursive tool for comparison (Armstrong et al. 2014). Further, the dependapotamus label is firmly embedded within formations of class, where stigmatizing characteristics of dependency that exist in the civilian context are transplanted into the military context. Where wearing rank draws upon stereotypes of middle- and upper-class women (Armstrong et al. 2014), the dependapotamus firmly reproduces stigmatizing connotations regarding the lower class and poor. Therefore, like wearing rank, the dependapotamus is constructed within formations of gender and class, which provides those positioned differently within the military's system of stratification a discursive tool to compare themselves with other military wives.

Social Comparisons among Military Wives

The previous sections demonstrate how participants describe and define those who are accused of wearing rank or being a dependapotamus. When examining these data, several common themes arose, which are examined below. The first theme relates to behavioral comparisons, where wives create moral boundaries between themselves and other wives by using discourses related to inappropriate behavior. The second theme is theft of husband's service, which draws upon stereotypes of dependency. The third and final theme is the coalescence of the first two, which create the assertion that the women who wear rank or who are dependent do not have a sense of identity or independence.

Inappropriate Behavior

There are common gender stereotypes constructed through class that connect with definitions of inappropriate behavior for those labeled with these stereotypes. Often, participants suggested wives who wear rank are snotty or pretentious, treating others with disrespect due to differences in their husband's rank. Such perceptions of behavior are common civilian middle- and upper-class character flaws found within class-based stereotypes (Armstrong et al. 2014). Simply put, those who wear rank are accused of using their husband's status to look down on women married to lower ranking service members, while also giving themselves a sense of authority and power within their social interactions with fellow wives. Conversely, women who are labeled as a dependapotamus are viewed in infantilizing ways, where the blanket concept of "dramatic" is used to label a range of family issues women married to junior enlisted wives are accused of creating.

When participants described wearing rank, they often used stories where a wife who was wearing rank treated them negatively. For these participants, examples of higher status wives

wearing rank became a way for them to differentiate themselves from this behavior, demonstrating that since they have their own individual sense of self, they would never engage in this type of behavior. For example, in an experience described by several participants, Alison, whose husband was a mid-level NCO at the time of our interview, described her first interaction with the wife of her husband's boss where she was informed by this higher status military wife that, "I'm just letting you know right now, I'm your neighbor and I'm your husband's boss' wife, and that's how it is, and we're not friends." In response to this Alison says, "And all I was thinking was like, wow, what a bitch." During her first experience with a deployment, Liz, a 24-year-old White undergraduate student with no children who was also working several part-time jobs explained similar feelings of condescending behavior from senior wives. Liz's, husband was not making the military a career. Therefore, Liz lived a fairly non-military lifestyle, focusing on her college education and her part-time jobs, viewing herself as different than many of the military wives who had been in military marriages for many years. In describing these military wives and how she is different, Liz says, "I think there is also some sort of um [pause], you don't want to seem like you're a baby, and they kind of make you feel that way at times. There's this snootiness I guess."

In describing these experiences, participants used these examples as a way to define "bad" wives within the military community. Here, this behavior is associated with a "bad" wife, because women who wear rank are accused of using their husband's status to enact authority over other wives, or to improve their own status through their husband's military career. This form of identity work stands in contrast to Alison and Liz, who more closely draw upon a civilian sense of self, which they contrast with the condescending behavior of those who more closely connect with a military identity.

One of the clearest examples of these comparisons comes from Patricia's discussion of a military family lunch she attended and what she deemed as the inappropriate attire worn by a higher-status wife.

A person at our unit, her husband was a higher rank, he was a first sergeant. Um, and she walked into a lunch that was with our highest ranking military official, in bootie shorts and a tank top, when I was dressed very nicely for this. I had my hair done nicely. And her reasoning was, well my husband's a first sergeant, and I don't have to. It doesn't matter what your husband's rank is, you have a standard to carry yourself.

Patricia's story demonstrates the intersection of class and gender, where she draws a line between herself, her proper appearance, and a wife who abuses her husband's rank. Patricia's sense making demonstrates the varying ways participants' boundary work takes shape. In asserting that wives have a standard to follow, Patricia is pulling from a specific point of reference that matches more closely with a model military wife. In a different frame of reference than demonstrated above, Patricia accuses this particular wife of abusing her husband's rank, but also of shying too close to a civilian identity. I argue these conflicting and varying points of reference demonstrate how the process of comparison and disassociation takes shape within the liminal social position participants inhabit, neither official members, nor fully outside the institution. Comparisons and the method behind using this stereotype is malleable, able to accommodate the particular individual, how they view their own sense of self in relation to the military, their place within the stratification system, and within specific situations, such as Patricia's lunch event.

Infantilizing Lower Enlisted Wives

While wearing rank is associated with an appropriation of husbands' rank, and subsequent condescending behavior, the dependotamus is often connected with dramatic and infantilizing behavior. These assertions are respective of the moral/psychological feature of

dependency, which starting in the 1950's infantilized women by labeling them as immature, explaining their behavior through personality and character flaws (Fraser and Gordon 1994). An important component of discussions regarding drama is that this behavior is often connected with wives who are labeled as complainers, whiny, too emotional, or who engage in inappropriate behavior, like infidelity. I assert that when military wives' struggles with military life are linked with an accusation of inappropriate behavior related to the dependapotamus, participants draw a distinction between themselves and others by asserting that those who create this form of drama are not cut out to be a military wife; thus these wives are labeled as "bad" military wives. I argue that pinpointing those who are struggling helps support one's own sense of self when similarly faced with challenging or difficult life experiences stemming from the military.

Like wearing rank, drama is also often constructed along class lines, where participants disassociate themselves from behavior they connect with women married to junior enlisted service members. Within this form of sense-making, wives' source of comparison more closely resembles a model military wife, where those who create drama are considered not cut out for the military life. For example, Nancy, who volunteered to run several family support groups, views her family and volunteer work as a vital contribution to her husband's military career. Nancy thus connects closely with the model military wife persona, interpreting drama as inappropriate gendered behavior formed through class. During our conversation, Nancy distances herself from this behavior based on her status difference as a military wife married to an officer.

I can only say that this is my perspective on it [pause], but the way, and I'm just being totally honest with you, whether it sounds good or bad, you know, I'm just being honest. Um, I think it's a rank thing, you know, the gossip, or you know, being cliquey.

For Kathy, who is also active in the military family community in ways similar to Nancy, she distances herself from this behavior as well. When talking about the issues family support group

leaders have to address, she asserts that when she runs these groups she does not accept this form of behavior among the participating wives.

Just like girly gossipy nonsense, or starting the rumor mill, or these three are friends so they don't include anybody. I don't put up with it. Anyone can tell you I don't have any drama in my life...I just don't have a lot of room for it.

For participants who connect more closely with the model military wife role, and who are active volunteers within support groups and family communities, drama stands in contrast to their version of being a military wife, where their labor supports their husband's jobs, as well as the military's larger mission. Thus, their approach to being a military wife acts as their frame of reference within their comparison and processes of disassociation. As leaders within the family community, they condone this type of behavior that does not represent how a military wife should behave. Further, when some connect this behavior with women married to junior enlisted wives, such as Nancy, this connection has far reaching effects in terms of reproducing stratification.

For other wives who may not closely identify with a model military wife role, they often draw upon other class-based experiences to activate their comparisons. For example, while Barbara is married to an officer, she is not as active in volunteering as Nancy and Kathy. Therefore, she does not draw upon the same frame of reference as they do. Instead, she draws upon her civilian middle-class status to differentiate herself from other military wives. Barbara is college educated, was raised in a white, middle-class family, and her civilian identity is what she most closely associates with. Barbara disassociates herself from the behavior of women married to junior enlisted service members, which she defines through infidelity, and domestic issues, comparing her exposure to these experiences through her middle-class upbringing and through the assertion that these are lower-class behaviors.

You're moving into base housing and it's like the neighbors are doing things they're not s'posed to do with each other. And you know, this person's having domestic issues. And I was just, I wasn't raised around any of that. And it feels kinda, like this is horrible to say, it's almost like a lower class of people that are um [uncomfortable laugh], I don't know [pause], it's a group of, it's just, [pause], you know a lot that I'd never been exposed to. And then it was kinda like well, do I wanna be friends with these people?

The connection between rank and institutional expectations of women married to higher ranking service members to enact a quasi-military identity, taking on leadership roles within the military family community, partially explains the class origins of these behavioral assumptions. Wives who identify with this role are more likely to pull upon a model military wife definition to make sense of other wives. However, these stereotypes are malleable, as in the case of Barbara, who still draws upon the same overall framework of drama, but compares this with her civilian and middle-class upbringing, instead of a model military wife sense of self. Therefore, regardless of how military wives view themselves in relation to others, participants are still able to draw upon these stereotypes in a range of ways.

While ways of defining drama often link with the types of behavior described above, drama is also commonly defined through the perception that lower status wives' often struggle to handle the work-family constraints created by the military. Several participants who were active in running multiple family support groups used their experiences with women married to junior enlisted wives in a form of moral boundary work when talking about the dependapotamus stereotype. For example, Rebecca, distances herself from women married to junior enlisted service members when talking about emotional wives, especially junior enlisted mothers, who struggle during deployments or when husbands are away on training.

So I think, you know, when somebody is overly emotional about it or like, looks or seems like they're on the verge of a breakdown. Like they are going through a really hard time. You feel for them, but at the same time you're like, maybe you're not cut out for this.

Riley, married to an officer, explained similar perceptions when describing her experiences of working with women married to lower enlisted service members in family support programs.

And then there's people, you know, I'm guilty of judging people that call me and say, well I ran out of diapers, or I [pause], and I'm like, oh my god your husband's gone for like a week. How are you going to deal with this when your husband's gone for a year?

Here, Rebecca and Riley, who are experienced military wives, who volunteer in family support programs, and have experienced multiple deployments make a clear connection with the stigma associated with dependency, as well as draw upon a model military wife frame of reference to distance themselves from wives who struggle. These lower status wives are perceived as dependent on their husbands, demonstrated by their supposed emotional state, or the way they struggle when husbands are away, while Rebecca and Riley, who may have also struggled as well in the past, have overall succeeded and continue to succeed as military wives.

The use of the dependapotamus stereotype as a way to construct and maintain moral boundaries operates in similar ways as the use of wearing rank. Both draw upon discourses associated with those who are differentially located within the military's system of stratification. Additionally, they both adopt class stereotypes from the civilian context, which are also malleable, and modified as needed to work within a military setting. For those who activate the behavioral components of the dependapotamus label, their boundary work operates in ways that link with the sustainment of oneself within the work-family constraints, and institutional leadership roles that many wives married to senior NCO's or officers describe. Wives who enact inappropriate behavior through the production of drama stand in contrast to the leadership roles these participants take on in the military family community. Much like Patricia's critique of a higher status wife's inappropriate attire, these wives draw upon a model military wife frame of reference, in essence comparing themselves with those who do not properly fit this model.

Additionally, when comparing oneself to wives who struggle, I suggest this comparison similarly helps sustain wives within their liminal social position. By highlighting those who struggle, participants are able to demonstrate their ability to endure work-family constraints and military life, as opposed to others. Just as Hochschild (2003) finds women look outward from their family to use wives who struggle more than they do as a frame of reference for one's experiences, this same process occurs through the use of these military wife stereotypes. However, since these comparisons operate within rank and social class, the overall effect is not only that military wives find ways to support their own sense of self by comparing themselves to others, but that the military's system of stratification is also reproduced within these comparisons.

Stealing Husband's Service

Stealing service emerged as the second theme within participants' discussions of wearing rank and the dependotamus. Accusations of stealing service occurred when wives were perceived as using their husband's hard work and sacrifice for their own gain. While taking shape differently based on rank and who is making this assertion, I find stealing service permeates participants' forms of sense-making, regardless of where they are located within the system of stratification.

Wearing Rank as a Form of Dependency

Peri: "When I was single, I would never have ever cared or thought about who someone's husband is. So why should I now? That's my attitude. But a lot of wives don't think that way."

Within participants' discussions of wearing rank, a common theme emerged within their process of comparison and boundary work. The behavior of wearing rank was interpreted as a form of stolen service. Many participants held strong feelings about this behavior, interpreting wearing rank as an abuse of service members' hard work and sacrifices. For example, when talking about her perceptions and experiences with the wearing rank stereotype, Patricia asserted

that. “I try not to be that way. I never use my husband’s rank, because I just think that’s just catty, and you’re not the one who served. They got that rank, not us” Where earlier Patricia drew upon a sense of self closer to a military identity to critique the attire of another military wife, here she uses wearing rank as a way to demonstrate her civilian sense of self, which further shows the malleability of these stereotypes. Further, Liz also asserts a nearly identical form of reasoning. “You’re not that rank at all... Your spouse earned that rank through hard work and you didn’t.” The similarity in these quotations is suggestive of an institutionally sustained shared meaning and interpretation of this form of unacceptable behavior.

While these are somewhat simple statements, they convey important forms of sense-making that link with participants’ sustainment of their sense of self, and the somewhat contradictory ways sense-making takes shape. This form of boundary work does more than separate participants from accused “bad” wives. Wearing rank acts as a buttress for wives’ own forms of sense-making related to their family roles, and their own sacrifice and work in supporting their husband’s career, as well as their supporting their family in relation to their husband’s military career. For wives who frame their reproductive labor as a way to support their husband, wearing rank stands in drastic contrast to this form of acquiescence. I posit that all participants took on the family roles that are powerfully shaped by the military institution. Yet, fulfilling this subordinate position, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, requires specific forms of sense-making. The discursive existence of an example of a ‘bad’ military wife, who steals her husband’s hard work for her own gain, provides wives with an example of a wife incorrectly enacting these institutionally shaped roles. For a military wife who frames her reproductive labor as a way to support of her husband and his hard work, but at the same time may also struggle with ambivalence, drawing upon the wearing rank stereotype enables her to

distinguish herself from someone who she views as truly subsumed by her husband's military career, and thus not supporting their husband in the proper way. When struggling with ambivalence, this wife is able to point to someone who is abusing her husband's hard work, which can help alleviate some of her ambivalence, because her ambivalence does not mean she is a bad military wife, when compared to wives who abuse their husband's rank.

Further, the justification for vilifying wearing rank are mirrored with the pejorative use of "dependency" in the military context. Within these descriptions, this framework begins to unfold, where wives differentiate themselves by reinforcing the idea that they are not in the military, their husbands are. Using your husband's rank to improve your own social status is viewed as a form of dependency, where these wives rely on their husband and his military rank and career to develop their sense of self. In Tonya's story above, she critiques a wife for interjecting her husband's rank into a mundane social interaction. From Tonya's perspective, such behavior demonstrates an inappropriate identity that is too closely tied to her husband's rank. For wives married to lower enlisted service members, wearing rank develops as a discursive tool to compare themselves to, looking at their own sense of self, and differentiating themselves as individuals. They are not like other wives, who are clearly subsumed by their husband's career.

Entitlement in the Lower Ranks

The contention that certain wives steal their husband's service also operates within discourses connected with the dependapotamus stereotypes. This concept is based in the assertion that women married to junior enlisted service members seek out service members with the intention of marrying them in order to gain access to military benefits. Furthermore, once access is gained, these wives develop a sense of entitlement, which results in complaints and

demands for more benefits from the military. In this sense, stolen service occurs when these wives are perceived as taking advantage of service members, and thus living off their pay and benefits, which is earned through the service members' hard work. Overall, these wives are accused of using their husband's military service to improve their own economic status, representing a key component of dependency (Fraser and Gordon 1994).

This form of comparison and boundary work often takes shape through discussion of wives who complain or whine about the military and the lack of support they feel the military provides families. Janet is a 34-year-old White military wife, married to a mid-level NCO, with two children and was employed at the time of our interview. While Janet may not identify as closely as other wives with the model military wife, she expressed, on several occasions, how pleased she is with military life, and the support the military provides families. However, when talking about the drama associated with women married to lower ranking service members, she stated:

I see a lot of women that maybe are fresher into the military life and haven't embraced it or something. I don't know what's going on with them. They're ungrateful for what they're given, and they don't feel like it's enough or whatever it is...I've never been one to complain...Spouses attack the military and they're ungrateful for what they're given, and they don't feel like it's enough or whatever it is. I don't say anything.

Jessica, who is married to an officer and holds similar perspectives as Janet demonstrates this form of labeling and comparison when also talking about her perception of military benefits. "I think they do pretty good with the families...So, more than likely if you're one of the crazy spouses that are always like nitpicking every little thing, and that just plays the system. They're the ones that want to complain." In describing this same comparative process, Vicki, who is White employed, mother of two children, and married to a senior NCO, specifically uses lower status wives as a way to differentiate herself, drawing upon the notion of entitlement to

demonstrate that she is not dependent like other “bad” military wives. “I think I actually see myself as definitely different from many of lower-rank wives, because they expect everything to be handed to them and that’s not how life really works.” These participants assert that military wives married to lower ranking service members feel entitled to, and dependent on their military benefits, and unlike these participants, they are ungrateful for what they receive.

Stealing husband’s service is also often connected with wives’ lack of employment, which is used to again demonstrate wives’ dependence on their husband’s hard work. Given her husband’s frequent moves and constantly changing work schedule, Ava described her struggle to maintaining a job. Eventually, she decided to give up trying to stay employed while balancing her family responsibilities, which she described as a difficult decision. However, in her interview, she worked to differentiate herself from women married to junior enlisted service members who are also stay at home mothers like herself.

You know, there are a lot of working military spouses, um, but it’s more common to be a stay at home mom and home school your kids. And so, I’m a little different in that aspect too because of me being, me wanting to work, I should say. Me wanting to contribute.

Even though Ava is not employed, she disassociated herself from other stay at home mothers through what she describes as a difference in motivation. For Ava, she may be unemployed, but she states that she *wants* to be employed, unlike other wives. During our conversation it was clear that Ava greatly struggled to find her sense of self without being employed. As a result, she finds a way to make sense of this by comparing herself to the stereotype of the unemployed, junior wife.

As demonstrated in previous chapters, wives discuss taking on a supporter role during their interviews. Yet, by demonstrating that one is not dependent on their husband and that they have the desire to economically contribute to their family, regardless of their actual employment

status, these military wives not only find ways to make sense of their employment status, but also their subordinate position within the family and the supporter role they inhabit. They do this by producing a sense of individuality built through comparisons with other wives. In highlighting these differences, they can demonstrate that they are not consumed with their husband's career and their sense of self is not dependent on him and his military service, as they assert is found within the lower military ranks.

Demonstrating Independence

When asserting that wives of a different status have an identity dependent on their husband or the military, they are also asserting that their own identity is something more, and that they are in fact independent. Fraser and Gordon (1994) assert that independence stands in contrast with dependence, and that within a capitalist society those with power are framed as independent, such as men's independence that comes from their economic labor, whereas women's domestic labor is framed through a lack of power and their dependency. I argue as military wives use these military wife stereotypes, they are in fact affirming their independence in an attempt to give themselves a sense of power. This power is gained when they demonstrate how they are different from those who are dependent. Hence, wives who do not wear their rank or do not fit the dependotamus stereotype are independent, regardless of the institutional forces that greatly structure their lives on a daily basis, or the marginal social location they inhabit. Further, for military wives who take on the brunt of the reproductive labor, move frequently, work to support their children and their husband, as well as wives who volunteer and are active in the model military wife role, one strategy in gaining a semblance of independence is by demonstrating that they are not so consumed by this labor and institutionally structured position that they lose their sense of individuality within it. This line of thought represents the complex

duality of wife's experiences and their related sense-making as they work to acquiesce institutional constraints, while also finding or maintaining a sense of independent self within these constraints.

In the previous sections, participants' narratives often operated through rank, where they drew upon specific discourses, demarcating themselves from military wives differentially located within military rank hierarchies. However, as participants' narratives progressed into their discussion of having an independent self, their discussions and their status based in rank became indistinguishable. Regardless of rank, participants' narratives came to resemble each other's, as participants described how they do not fit these stereotypes and are thus independent, unlike other military wives. For example, when talking about military wife stereotypes, Liz explained,

My husband's job wasn't just my identity. I have my own identity, and yes I'm married to a spouse who's in the military, but I also have other things going on in my life...I'm very proud of what my husband has accomplished in the military, and like I said, I'm very proud as a spouse, but those are his accomplishments and I feel as though I have my own accomplishments. I know people who truly think of themselves as the same identity of their spouse, and whatever rank they are.

During a similar conversation Janet explained,

I'm just the mama. I keep the ship running here. And I mean, I'm still proud, I'm still proud, I'm super proud to be a military wife, but it's just not at the forefront of my brain or my thoughts. Um, maybe for those women, if they have engrossed themselves into more of um leader roles...they identify with that, you know. I mean the rank and maybe whatever their husband's job is. I don't know. I don't know the reasons why they would identify more but um, yeah.

These examples demonstrate the underlying process of comparison and disassociation where participants explain how they are not like these stereotypes. Here, Liz and Janet first demonstrate their support for their husband, which is understandable, given the work they take on to support their husbands. Similar to the sense-making in the previous chapter, to define oneself as independent in the context of military wives' lives, wives need to demonstrate that their

independence does not take away from their support of their service member husband. After laying this important groundwork, they both assert their sense of individuality and hence their independence.

In a more direct comparison to military wife stereotypes Peri states, “I think, one of the things that quickly becomes apparent is [long pause], many, many, many of the women do not have an identity outside of their spouse or outside of being attached to the service member....and myself worth and my identity is really not connected to [my husband].” Additionally, Barbara, who is married to an officer combines her education, employment, decisions regarding children, and the assertion that she has her own life outside of her husband.

I feel like I don't fit into any of the stereotypes. I've gone to college. I have a job. I waited until we were almost 30 to have kids. Like I feel like we're normal people...Like I have my own successes and life. I don't need my husband to validate my existence.

To further demonstrate this process, below I present a portion of a story from Val, which she used to demonstrate the moment she realized that after many years of her military marriage, she was actually not totally consumed by her husband's career like other military wives. For Val, the idea of having a sense of self outside of being a military wife was difficult to sustain until she had several discussions with her boss at work, who was also a retired service member.

He would tell me, ‘You know what, the wives that are out there, my husband's this or my husband's that, or I run this organization, or whatever they're like. He's like, that's all they have. He's like they're compensating for the fact that they have nothing else. He's like, but you don't have to be like that, because the wives who sit back and just do it, he's like, that's because they have other things going on, and it's not 100% of who they are.’ And I was like that's so profound! He saw something in me that I didn't even see in myself at the time.

Val explains this realization marks an important point in her life, where she began viewing her accomplishments as her own, in comparison to many of the wives she's encountered throughout her military marriage. A key component to Val's experience is the realization that she was not

dependent on her husband's career, which for much of her marriage she often felt consumed by. The way this realization is constructed through a comparative process of disassociation, where Val's boss explains the difference between those dependent on their husband for their identity and Val, who is not dependent, is representative of the processes I investigate within this chapter, as well as how important this process is within some military wives strategies of self-sustainment. Val's realization provided her with validation and a sense of agency and self-actualization that she explains she had not experienced before.

In comparing and disassociating themselves from wives through the use of the military's system of stratification, there is an underlying theme that culminates through notions of inappropriate behaviors, stolen service, and the connections with dependency. Wives who are viewed as enacting this behavior do not have an identity of their own, but instead are subsumed by their military marriage and their husband's career. Overall, military wives' comparisons pinpoint those who are not independent. In a system that ambiguously locates women married to service members, marginalizing and subordinating them, while also heavily relying on their labor, using wives perceived to be without an individual identity or a sense of independence as a reference point is a powerful comparative tool. Regardless of how military wives construct their sense of self, sometimes connecting with Enloe's (2000) characteristics, while at other times mobilizing a civilian identity, military wife stereotypes, and their use in the process of moral boundary work constitutes a strategy of sustainment, where ultimately military wives work to find a path to live within greedy and powerful structural forces enacted upon them by the military institution.

Conclusion

Military wives are bound within a fundamental contradiction based in this social positioning. Institutional forces and social expectations develop a specific place for these women to exist, yet, for many, maintaining this position requires multiple forms of sense-making. Their sense-making often focuses on their primary role in the home, which is embedded in institutional power structures, while also turning outside of the home in a process of comparison. Hochschild (2003) finds that women stuck within the social relations of the second shift turn to their social networks to assess the “going rate,” finding those they can favorably compare their lives to. In the interlocking contexts of the military and family, these outward looking comparisons develop not within immediate social networks, but within the military’s system of stratification and through the use of stereotypes that are constructed within formations of social class. In doing so, military wives become active within the militarization process by differentiating themselves within systems of stratification, reinforcing social class. The result of these comparisons is to organize military wives’ social relations, and military family communities within rank, which sustains the military’s social ordering of service members, and their families within this same system. Importantly, rank becomes operationalized through one’s marriage, which acts as the key link between how these stereotypes are constructed within rank hierarchies, and their use within military family communities.

A key component to the process of comparison and disassociation, or wives’ moral boundary work, is the connection with the stigmatizing forces of dependency. While often perceived as a concept used in the civilian population in relation to welfare recipients, and the state’s reproduction of gender, class, and racial inequalities, this concept also takes shape within the military institution. Given the similarities between the benefits service members receive and

the welfare state, as well as the hierarchical organization of the military based in social class and gender, it is not surprising that the stigma of dependency develops within the military as well. Further, as a result of the institutional forces embedded within the reproduction of traditional gender roles, it is no surprise that the avoidance of dependency and the sustainment of a sense of self considered individual and separate from the military develops within these stereotypes. The existence of conflict between military wives, and the stereotypes explored in this chapter, certainly develop from a wide array of influences. Those influences connect with how the military hierarchically organizes itself based in gender and class, and shape the effect this organization imposes on military wives' social relations.

While many participants viewed military wife stereotypes negatively, my conversation with Peri stands out. According to Peri, these stereotypes should be viewed in two different ways. Yes, trying to enact authority over other wives by wearing rank or creating drama was wrong. Yet, she felt if we consider the context in which these stereotypes occur, we can better appreciate why someone would use them. According to Peri, "It's like a defense mechanism. Like, our defenses are not inherently bad," wives are simply "trying to reestablish where you belong in that hierarchy." For example, in considering Peri's remarks, the institutional expectations experienced by women married to senior enlisted NCO's and officers places these wives in a bind in relation to these stereotypes. Some participants asserted that the military expected them to maintain friendships only with other military wives married to the same or similar rank as their own husband. In addition, regardless of wives' connection with a model military wife role, participants also described feeling like their behavior will have a direct impact on their husband's career. This feeling was not only described by those married to more senior NCOs or officers, but often existed across experiences of rank. My point is participants

experience a wide range of institutional pressures, not only in relation to reproductive labor, but through behavioral expectations as well, which create the conditions for these stereotypes to exist. Developing friendships based in husband's rank could easily be perceived as wearing rank. However, for a wife accused of wearing rank, she may be doing what she feels is best to support her husband. Just as being a stay at home mother, due to the work-family constraints that make employment unfathomable for many participants, creates the conditions for these women to fit within the stereotype of the dependant. In the end, wives who closely identify with their husband's military career and the characteristics of the model military wife role are finding their own way through these institutional forces, just as wives who remove themselves from the military community, and aim to live, as much as it is feasible, a non-military lifestyle.

Chapter VI. Conclusion

Summary of Main Findings

Sociology has a long history of engaging with topics related to work and families, and issues regarding paid and unpaid forms of work. In the 1990's and early 2000's, anthropologists and feminist scholars investigated the lived experiences of women married to active duty service members (Harrell 2000a, 2000b, 2001; Harrison and Laliberté 1994). Yet, similar sociological studies that explore the relationship between the military and military families are rare, especially in the current era of the GWOT. As a result, we know very little about the daily lives of contemporary military wives whose husbands are serving on active duty in the U.S. military. To address this clear paucity of research, I used in-depth interviews with military wives to investigate the overall research question of, *how do the current day institutional practices of the military structure the daily lives of military wives*. In this dissertation, I engage with three theoretical frameworks used in explorations of military life; the greedy institution, militarization, and the principle of location in time and place and linked lives, both found within the life-course perspective. These theories provide the overarching theoretical framing of the data, and many of the empirical findings within this study demonstrate how these processes operate within the daily lives of military wives.

The third chapter documents the coalescence of institutional practices through the experience of instituted disorder. In this chapter I asked, *how do current day institutional practices construct and sustain a sense of instituted disorder within military wives' daily lives?* And, further, *how do these institutional practices related to the organization of military work structure participants' reproductive labor and role in their family, positioning them in a subordinate social location?* These practices include deployments, training, temporary duty

assignment, work hours, and geographic moves, and connect with the experience of chronic uncertainty. Within this chapter, I also explored how the sustainment of hierarchy, which privileges service members' work responsibilities, and thus the military's needs, structures participants' reproductive labor and their overall social positing in relation to their husband's military job and the greater military institution. This chapter also documents how work-family constraints are experienced across time. When considered in combination with chronic uncertainty, coupled with the construction of hierarchical social relations, the structuring effect of the military on military families and military wives becomes visible. The manner in which these institutional practices operate as interconnected experiences that link together and stretch out across participants' marriage is a key finding of this chapter, because these effects have a powerful structural influence on military wives' lives. These findings are also important because they demonstrate how military practices and the larger geopolitical climate impacts military families and military wives' labor. For instance, the experience of deployments and preparations for deployments in particular, locate these empirical findings within the concepts of timing and place, and linked-lives found within the life-course perspective, where these experiences have a clear historical connection with U.S. military's operations occurring during the period of the GWOT.

My use of instituted disorder (Auyero 2011; Bourdieu 2000) also provides a nuanced understanding of the social processes of greedy institutions and processes of militarization. I argue that using instituted disorder builds a different understanding of the dynamic social processes that link together the experiences of military wives and the military, supported in the militarization literature (Basham and Catignani 2018; Enloe 1983, 2000). Where the greedy institution places military families and the military institution in competition with one another

(Segal, 1986), this chapter's findings show how women's reproductive labor is structured *through* instituted disorder, directly connecting the greediness of one's family with the structuring effects of the military on military families. Reproductive labor is thus organized through the structural forces of the military's organization of work. When the military and family are framed in competition, the structure of the family and the gendered division of labor are conceptualized as pre-existing conditions, rather than constituted and sustained by the military institution. By shifting this framing, the co-constitutive forces interconnecting the military and family become visible. I argue instituted disorder connects the institutions and spaces inhabited by military wives in important theoretical ways. In doing so, these findings demonstrate the link marriage creates, bridging the military with military wives' lived experiences. Since institutional practices are related to service members military jobs and responsibilities, instituted disorder structures families through service members and military wives' marriages. When drawing upon instituted disorder, and a linked-lives frame of reference, the empirical findings in this chapter depict how the military and families are interconnected institutions.

This chapter also produces an up-to-date look at the lived experiences of military wives during the GWOT, which historicizes their experiences within the life course perspective of location in time and place, while also considering if these experiences have changed over the past decades. Harrell's (2000a, 2000b, 2001) research demonstrates some of the most thorough explorations of the lives of women married to U.S. service members, taking into consideration their varying experiences in relation to different institutional practices. Yet, when many participants assert being a military wife is like living in the 1920's or 1950's, these empirical findings demonstrate that the reproductive labor of military wives has not changed in drastic

ways over the last decades. In many ways, the greediness of the military is quite enduring, as well as institutional practices that are based in domesticity and traditional gender ideologies.

Additionally, the findings in Chapter 3 are important as they demonstrate not only how processes of militarization unfold within military wives' daily lives, but how the military institution organizes military wives in a way that utilizes their reproductive labor to support military readiness. Militarization is a process of social ordering (Lutz 2002), and as this chapter demonstrates, military wives' family roles are organized, in part, through their husband's military work and the resulting experience of instituted disorder. In responding to the uncertainty and family disruptions created by the military, military wives find a way to produce their own form of readiness, which they enact through their reproductive labor. Whether in a family with or without children, military wives' labor works to prepare their family and ensure family members are ready for service members to leave at any given time. In doing so, military wives directly support the military's readiness, through the creation of a form of family readiness.

In Chapter 4, I explored participants' forms of emotion management, considering how these social processes operate to sustain participants within a subordinate social position. In this chapter I asked, *how do participants talk about, make sense of, and acquiesce their social position and subsequent reproductive labor in relation to the work-family constraints produced by the military? Essentially, what does it take to sustain oneself within a subordinate social position?* In the previous chapter, I found that within the processes of instituted disorder is the privileging of service members' work responsibilities. This privileging has the effect of reproducing the gendered division of labor and structuring military wives' reproductive labor. Within this chapter I find this privileging operates through forms of emotion management that sustains, and also reproduces, the social position military wives inhabit. These findings show

how participants activate a broad interpretation of military authority as a way to accommodate institutional practices and their sense of having little control in relation to these practices. Using this as a point of reference, participants' sense of having little control, as well as the gendered division of labor, become normalized. While military authority often acts as the cornerstone for participants' modes of understanding institutional work-family constraints, I find they also draw upon an economy of gratitude (Hochschild 2003), where they compare their experiences with their husband's military experiences. I also find that mothers often use their children as a form of motivation, reframing their reproductive labor as way to produce stability in the family, thus counteracting chronic uncertainty. However, often these strategies of emotion management do not fully lead to acquiescence. In these cases, sustaining one's subordinate social position requires the management of ambivalence.

The findings in this chapter are important for several reasons. First, there are few studies that consider how military wives navigate institutional work-family constraints. Studies that focus on gender ideologies (Mederer and Weinstein 1992) and love (MacLeish 2013) document brief explorations of women's sense-making. Yet, overall we know very little about how military wives frame their family roles, reproductive labor, or their overall marriage to a service member. As a result, there are important questions regarding how military wives' sense-making connects with the ways greedy institutions harnesses the time and energy of members (Segal 1986), as well as how militarization becomes normalized within military families. For instance, the findings in this chapter provide insight into participants' strategies of sustaining the gendered division of labor and their overall marginalization in relation to the military and their husband's military work. Overall, the greedy institution provides little insight into how members make sense of institutional demands. These findings demonstrate that this is a process that requires a

great deal of work on the part of military wives. This work revolves around the development of strategies that frame work-family constraints in a way that sustains military wives within their marriage, while also finding ways to assuage ambivalence when their strategies are not always successful.

Additionally, these findings demonstrate how participants' forms of acquiescence also reproduce the very social relations they work to accommodate and acquiesce. This further depicts how militarization operates not only through institutional practices, but also how these processes are normalized through participants' attempts to navigate these structuring forces. As a result, this chapter adds to our conceptualization of the military and military family as co-constitutive (Bernazzoli and Flint 2009a, 2010; Hyde 2016), rather than in competition (Segal 1986). For example, the pushes and pulls between the family and the military that participants experience are not pre-existing conditions, but processes that unfold together, and that military wives navigate in complex ways. Overall, this chapter showed how forms of consent related to the process of militarization operates through sense-making that normalizes these work-family dynamics.

In Chapter 5, I explored the use of military wife stereotypes within a specific process of comparison and disassociation. In this chapter I asked, *how do participants sustain a sense of self in relation to their family labor, institutional roles, and the greater military institution through the use of military wife stereotypes, and how does the use of these stereotypes reproduce the military's system of stratification?* I first document how participants perceive themselves in relation to their family and institutional roles, considering how their sense of self becomes a form of "contested personhood" (Comfort 2008) in relation to institutional work-family constraints that structured these women's role in their family and in the institution. I then explored

participants' ways of defining the wearing rank and dependant stereotypes, which I connect with concepts of dependency. Finally, I investigated participants use these stereotypes as a way to support their own sense of self through a comparative process, using moral boundaries to differentiate oneself within the military's system of stratification. Overall, my findings suggest that when military wives face institutional forces that constrain their sense of self, their comparisons and disassociations buttress their own sense of self in relation to their institutional and family roles. Essentially, wives draw upon readily available institutional discourses related to military wife stereotypes in a process of class-based comparison, demonstrating their difference from other military wives. However, since these stereotypes often operate within the military's system of stratification, when invoked they, end up reproducing this hierarchy. The overall effect is to organize military wives and the larger military family community within military rank hierarchies as wives disassociate from one another. In a somewhat inadvertent way, the structuring effect of militarization plays out, where military rank becomes a powerful structural force organizing military wives' social relations.

As discussed in Chapter 5, there are few studies that explore how the military's system of stratification impacts the lives of military wives. Ziff and Garland-Jackson's (2020) study of boundary work and the use of military wife stereotypes provides a recent look at this topic. However, there are limitations to these studies, such as Ziff and Garland-Jackson's (2020) focus on gender, but not class. This chapter offers a more detailed discussion of how these stereotypes operate within the military's system of stratification. However, as I discuss below, there are countless questions and avenues for further research that stem from this single chapter. I suggest these stereotypes are used in varying ways. In this chapter my focus is to explore their use in relation to how military wives sustain themselves and their sense of self in relation to the

structural forces that constrains them. Combined with the findings from the Chapter 4, both chapters work in tandem to demonstrate the social processes involved when sustaining oneself within a highly marginalized social position, normalizing the primacy of the military within military wives' lives; a process of militarization we know very little about given the sparse research on this topic.

Overall, my goal in this study was to develop a more nuanced look at the lived experiences of military wives. I posit that these findings help us better understand the social conditions, strategies, and experiences military wives face and enact on a daily basis. However, in addition to these lived experiences, we also learn how the military institution and the military family are socially reproduced, which does not occur only through military wives' reproductive labor. As those in this study demonstrate, in their work to sustain themselves and their family, participants reproduce the social conditions they also work to acquiesce. Exploring how participants talk about and make sense of instituted disorder, as well as their emotion management that normalizes the gendered division of labor, depicts how these social conditions are reproduced. Further, as participants draw upon military wife stereotypes to sustain their own sense of self, a response to the work-family constraints created by the military, this self-sustaining strategy also reproduces the military's system of stratification, organizing military wives' social relations within categories of military rank.

Theoretically, my intent in this study was to move the study of military wives and military families forward by exploring the nuances of these institutional and social processes that challenge structuralist understandings of work and families. In exploring participants' forms of sense-making, both in relationship to institutional practices, as well as in relation to their own subjectivities, my aim was to demonstrate the complexity of military wives' lives, linking these

findings with theories of militarization and the linked lives perspective, while reframing the greedy institution. Rather than perceiving these experiences and motivations through an essentialized stereotype of a military wife, or structuralist conceptions of normative roles, these findings demonstrate the complexity of social processes not found in the sociological literature. Faced with an institution that significantly impacts their lives, yet does so through their marriage to a service member, the participants in this study find ways to endure these social conditions, sustain their marriage, assuage resentment, and overall maneuver (Enloe 2000) to keep living life within these institutional and social conditions. In the end, these processes demonstrate the social reproduction of military and family life.

Finally, the experiences within this study demonstrate how the geopolitical has far reaching effects, that structure the organization of military families, the stability of those families, and military wives' daily lives. The life-course perspective connects our experiences with larger institutions and historical events through our social relationships. The findings of this study depict this connection between the global events unfolding during the GWOT and the experience of instituted disorder within family life; a connection that is created through military wives' marriage to a U.S. service member. As a result, service members are not the only ones entangled within state decisions about the use of military force across the globe. These decisions have deep implications for those who never come close to a battlefield, but who feel the battlefield's reverberating effects in their daily life. Therefore, the story of U.S. military operations during the era of the GWOT is only partially told when the focus is on service members or veterans. On the other side of these experiences are those married to service members, who relocate, provide unpaid care work, parent on their own, give up or put on hold their educational or career goals, as well as provide the social and emotional support for service

members and their children. These forms of reproductive labor occur when service members are home, deployed, and even after, when their husband's leave the military. Adopting and somewhat modifying Philipps' (2008) investigation of women's unpaid work, I argue military wives represent the "silent partners" of military service members, and the military institution. These "silent partners" need to be brought to the foreground of military studies, gender studies, and studies of work and families, in order to inform society of the realities of what constitutes and sustains the military as an institution, as well as the far-reaching effects of war. Ultimately, I argue the military would cease to function without the sacrifices and labor these individuals provide on a daily basis. This labor is taken up by women who did not enlist, yet are just as implicated within the geopolitical as are their husbands.

Reflecting on Policy Implications

This study investigates the lived experiences of military wives, considering how the military structures daily life. From this standpoint, the themes presented to the reader intend to develop a story based in military wives' narration of their experiences. Within this study I do not actively address military policies, but instead consider how the military is organized and how institutional decisions impact military wives and their families. From a quality of life standpoint, policies, and a review of current military practices could improve family life in significant ways. When participants often talk about aspects of their lives being hard, or a challenge, there are clear quality of life concerns raised within these findings. Yet, there are also larger institutional considerations that complicate this discussion. Below I will briefly layout these complications, ultimately leaving a full discussion of the implementation of specific policies for others to take up. I argue any family policy must also consider and work to address larger issues related to the institutional culture of the military, processes of militarization, and the state's use of violence.

When considering the experiences documented in this dissertation, there are clear places of departure for potential policies to alleviate the work-family constraints faced by military wives. Issues of unpaid labor are raised by these empirical findings. The military provides a socialized version of health care to service members and their families; a form of health care many are fighting to bring to the civilian sector. In continuing this somewhat progressive health care system, policies addressing unpaid care work could alleviate the strain military wives face when they work to balance family responsibilities, careers, and the institutional constraints created by the military. If wives are compensated for their reproductive labor, this could also alleviate some of the negative effects related to family moves, such as employment disruption. Providing respite care during service members' absences could also further assuage some of these constraints. Overall, the list of potential policies is nearly endless.

However, there are larger issues to consider, which, as aforementioned, is why this study does not take up policy more directly. First, the highly masculine institutional culture of the military requires scrutiny, because this institutional culture shapes how the military interacts with military families and military wives' needs. The sustainment of masculine institutional norms is a bedrock of the U.S. military culture (Harrison and Laliberté 1993, 1994). As a result, family policies inherently stand in opposition to the military when these policies fail to privilege the military, placing families on equal footing. Additionally, many experiences described by participants do not stem from official policies, but informally through the military's institutional culture. Therefore, where policies could alleviate some of the issues found in this study, family policies that privilege family needs and the needs of military spouses, which ideologically challenge this institutional culture, seem unlikely to be implemented, especially at the unit level. I argue that in any consideration of military family policies, the larger implications of these

policies as they relate to how policies also address broader institutional and societal issues are vital. Policies cannot be superficial answers to these issues, but instead need to address the covert ways issues of gender operate within military units, which directly impact families. One should not occur without the other.

Additionally, any discussion of military family policy must also consider larger geopolitical and state issues related to the use of U.S. military forces, the sustainment of war and the use of violence as a means to address global issues. Much like processes of militarization, which connect decisions to use military force on a global scale with the daily lives of military wives, discussions of military family policies should also be considered in relation to how these policies are implicated within broader discussions of the sustainment of war and the military industrial complex. In alleviating issues related to the greediness of the military, the effects of these policies can only further integrate military spouses within the greedy institution, and unequal social relations of gender and class. In many ways, policies that alleviate hardships will also result in the further militarizing of women, children, and other parts of society in the process. The issue of family policies thus faces a double-edged sword, where issues related to the types of policies and the degree to which they actually address family issues comes in conflict with institutional practices built within gendered inequalities, issues of war, and the U.S. government's global policies. I argue it is important to create policies that truly improve quality of life, but that also consider the sustainment of gender and class inequality, as well as the practice of war. Policy discussions must not be complicit within systems of inequality and the use of violence. Instead, policies designed to address both these macro and micro issues simultaneously will help with immediate outcomes in family life, while also working towards addressing these larger institutional and societal issues.

If there is an institutional desire to stabilize families, addressing these larger institutional and cultural components through policies that also address immediate quality of life issues is a useful place to start. However, as aforementioned, the slippage into piecemeal policies that work to further integrate women and children within processes of militarization, and work to support the state's use of violence is a real possibility. How to enact policy and move away from this cycle is something I, nor the findings in this dissertation, cannot fully answer. Therefore, instead, I present these considerations as a suggestion or guide for others who more directly confront these types of policy issues.

Limitations and Considerations for Future Research

In many ways, this study raises more questions that it provides answers. Therefore, I conclude with a discussion of several considerations for research that emerge from these data, as well as suggested research arising from this study's limitations.

Researcher's Varying Social Locations

As noted in chapter 2, the data and methods chapter, careful consideration of the differing social locations of participants and interviewers are required within qualitative research. Specific to this study, as a male researcher, it is necessary to consider the limitations of this study's data. In chapter 2, I addressed several topics that often required more work to talk about with participants than initially expected, while one topic in particular, participants' "girl's night," yielded little data. As a result, there is a need for further research on the topics undertaken in this study, as these data present a partial story, constructed within the particular social act of each interview. Given my study's connections with gender and relations of power, further research on this topic but by researchers occupying a different social location than myself is warranted. Undoubtedly, they will produce forms of data missing from this particular study, and further help

develop a more holistic understanding of the gendered processes women married to service members face on a daily basis.

Diversity in the Military Family Community

There are clear limitations to this study based on its lack of diversity as the majority of participants identified as White. As I discuss in Chapter 2, exploring race as an integral component to the experience of those married to service members represents a significant gap in the literature. During their interviews, several participants referred to the military as a post-racial institution; an idea supported by their assertion that since the U.S. military desegregated in the 1950's, prior to the rest American society, and that pay is tied to one's institutional position, the military is no longer impacted by issues of race. However, while I was conducting interviews for this study, news reports began documenting that Black service members were disciplined at higher rates than White service members (Vanden Brook 2017; Herreria Russo 2017; Price 2017). Additionally, as I write this conclusion, the nation is embroiled within protests regarding the murder to George Floyd by Minneapolis police, the systemic racial targeting of Black people, indigenous peoples, and people of color by the police (BIPOC), and the continuation of white supremacy within the United States. Studies that explore the lived experiences of BIPOC within the military are vital to challenging assumptions that places the U.S. military outside of this country's current social climate and national history. As my exploration of military wife stereotypes demonstrates, social biases found in the civilian context exist within the military. It is not a social institution disconnected from a society's lived reality or its history. This includes not only studies of race, or studies that consider the intersection of race, class, and gender, but also sexual orientation. Despite the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell in 2011, we know very little about the diversity of military families. In the civilian context, scholars have challenged

essentialist definitions of family, moving it outside a white middle-class framework. Yet, the “military family” remains, in many ways, an essentialized construct. Research that explores the diverse family forms within the military will help us better understand how families and the military are interconnected.

The findings in Chapter 5 also point to the need for intersectional analyses of military wives’ lived experiences. Admittedly, I do not explore race in conjunction with the dependotamus stereotype, even though similar civilian stereotypes, such as the welfare queen, are constructed within racial discrimination. While gender and social class appeared in discussions regarding the use of these stereotypes, discussions of race were absent within these data. This silence is an important feature of these data that requires further investigation. My intent within this dissertation was to present a story of those not often heard within our society, and to construct the themes presented to the reader based in participants’ own narratives. Therefore, my lack of a racial analysis or discussion stems from the absence of discussions of race within my interviews. While my focus was predominantly on gender and class, the absence of race within participants’ conversations does not mean race is not important to these stories. In fact, race plays a key role in the construction of these stories. Yet, within these data it was difficult to tease out the influence of race within participants’ interviews. With a more focused analysis that considers the construction of participants’ narratives in relation to their own social identities, race could become a dominant feature of these data. Questions such as, what is the role of whiteness within these data, and how does whiteness structure the narratives documented in this study, could be examined when taking this type of approach. However, this specific type of analysis was beyond the scope of this study.

The inclusion of men within studies of military families are also important to broaden our understanding of the gendered processes that unfold in the military, which is historically a masculine, misogynist, and patriarchal institution (Kronsell 2005). I suggest studies of military families should include women and men for comparative analyses. Exploring the lived experiences of men married to female service members, including how the gendered division of labor is filled and negotiated would provide insight not only into the experience of men, but also changes in the military institution, and how processes of gender in the military and family operate. While the military is a gendered institution, gendered processes are often taken for granted, since we have little data that analyze gendered experiences comparatively. For example, one male participant, in particular, adopted a large amount of the reproductive labor in his family, suggesting there are complicated and nuanced ways the division of labor is filled in military families. While this study demonstrates how gender roles seem to endure within the military, there are interesting questions that remain, which comparative analyses can address in ways this study cannot. Additionally, in reference to the institutional roles the military expects military wives to fulfill, we know very little about how these expectations operate in relation to men married to officers. Clear questions of the equitability of institutional practices arise when we explore the possible variations in institutional relationships between women and men.

Further, stemming from the data collected for this study, I find that women and men married to service members adopt different ways of talking about the social support they provide their service member partner. The two male spouses I interviewed were retired from the military. When discussing how they support their wives, they often discussed the career advice they provided, drawing on their own military service experiences. Interestingly, several female participants had prior military experience as well, yet they did not construct narratives regarding

how they support their husband in similar ways as the male participants. Their support was always constructed within gendered forms of labor and emotional support. This difference is visible from interviewing only two males, thus demonstrating an important gendered difference that requires further investigation.

This study focuses on women currently married to service members. This means that the findings in this study are limited to those who find a way to maintain their marriage in relation to the institutional pressures that this study documents. Thus, this is only part of the story. We know very little about women or men involved in military divorces. What were the reasons for their divorce? What were their interactions with the military institution, leading up to, during, and after the divorce? When children are involved, how has divorce impacted their family's relationship with the military and the service member? These are just a few of the many questions that studies on this topic could address. I suggest that by exploring the experiences of military divorces, we can continue to develop the story regarding how those married to a service member experience the military within their lives. By focusing on women who are currently in a military marriage, their forms of sense-making, and overall narratives, depict the specific experience of women who find ways to live within the military. But, what about those that do not?

Since marriage creates the link between the military and women and men married to service members, we need to explore love and the institution of marriage as a social structure within this context and its connections with the reproduction of women's subordinate social positioning. In this study, I explore the many ways military wives manage their marginality. Yet, when considering marriage, and the powerful social forces connected with love and marriage, there are endless questions related to how socially produced conceptions of love and being a

supportive spouse operate in the military context. We could ask, how is marriage and love constructed within notions of patriotism, or within cultural constructs that privilege military service? I suggest these powerful social structures intersect in unique ways within military families and within military marriages that require investigation. Exploring how love as a social construct, as well as the institution of marriage intersects with the military will further shed light on the intimate connections between powerful social institutions, like the military, the institution of marriage, and how these institutions are constituted through and a reliance upon, marriage and love.

Longitudinal Studies

Finally, conducting longitudinal studies of women married to service members would provide great insight into not only their evolving experiences across the time, but researchers could also document the changing perceptions of being in a military marriage and managing the effects of the military across time. As participants exit the military, either through their partners' retirement or through divorce, researchers would gain a useful perspective regarding how those in military marriages manage institutional constraints, as well as how the constraints themselves may evolve throughout a 20-year marriage.²¹

Closing Thoughts

I do not suggest that these findings in this study are generalizable to the entire military population. However, these findings do provide insight into the social and institutional processes that operate within the military institution and its link with military families. As such, I attempted to present the reader with common experiences that are woven throughout participants' narratives about their lived experiences. Undoubtedly, military wives will

²¹ In order to retire from the military with full pension and veteran's benefits a person must serve 20 years.

experience these themes in different ways. However, I have tried to stay true to those who graciously opened up their lives to me, sharing their laughter and their tears, while they walked me through personal and intimate experiences. I am indebted to the participants who found the time in their busy schedules to guide me through an honest exploration of their lives. The portrait that I paint within this dissertation is, of course, incomplete but also representative of a portion of the story I aimed to explore. I hope that each interviewee will be able to find a piece of themselves within these stories, analyses, and discussions.

Appendix A

Table 1. Military Rank Structure

	Pay Grade	Air Force	Army	Marines	Navy
Junior Enlisted	E-1	Airman Basic	Private	Private	Seaman Recruit
	E-2	Airman	Private	Private First Class	Seaman Apprentice
	E-3	Airman First Class	Private First Class	Lance Corporal	Seaman
	E-4	Senior Airman	Specialist	Corporal	Petty Officer Third Class
Senior Enlisted	E-5	Staff Sergeant	Sergeant	Sergeant	Petty Officer Second Class
	E-6	Technical Sergeant	Staff Sergeant	Staff Sergeant	Petty Officer First Class
	E-7	Master Sergeant, or First Sergeant	Sergeant First Class	Gunnery Sergeant	Chief Petty Officer
	E-8	Senior Master Sergeant, or First Sergeant	Master Sergeant, or First Sergeant	Master Sergeant, or First Sergeant	Senior Chief Petty Officer
	E-9	Chief or Command Chief Master Sergeant, or First Sergeant	Sergeant Major, or Command Sergeant Major	Master Gunnery Sergeant, or Sergeant Major	Master Chief Petty Officer, or Command Master Chief Petty Officer
	E-10	Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force	Sergeant Major of the Army	Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps	Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy
Officers	W-1	-	Warrant Officer	Warrant Officer	-
	W-2	-	Chief Warrant Officer	Chief Warrant Officer	Chief Warrant Officer
	W-3	-	Chief Warrant Officer	Chief Warrant Officer	Chief Warrant Officer
	W-4	-	Chief Warrant Officer	Chief Warrant Officer	Chief Warrant Officer
	W-5	-	Chief Warrant Officer	Chief Warrant Officer	-
	O-1	Second Lieutenant	Second Lieutenant	Second Lieutenant	Ensign
	O-2	First Lieutenant	First Lieutenant	First Lieutenant	Lieutenant Junior Grade
	O-3	Captain	Captain	Captain	Lieutenant
	O-4	Major	Major	Major	Lieutenant Commander
	O-5	Lieutenant Colonel	Lieutenant Colonel	Lieutenant Colonel	Commander
	O-6	Colonel	Colonel	Colonel	Captain
	O-7	Brigadier General	Brigadier General	Brigadier General	Rear Admiral Lower Half
	O-8	Major General	Major General	Major General	Rear Admiral Upper Half
	O-9	Lieutenant General	Lieutenant General	Lieutenant General	Vice Admiral
	O-10	General	General	General	Admiral
Special	General of the Air Force	General of the Army	General of the Marine Corps	Fleet Admiral	

Appendix B

Table 2. Participant Demographics

	% (N)
Age	
18-24	7.5% (3)
25-34	52.5% (21)
35 and older	40% (16)
Self-Identified Gender	
Female	95% (38)
Male	5% (2)
Race/Ethnicity	
White	85% (34)
African-American	7.5% (3)
Mexican-American	5% (2)
Indian-American	2.5% (1)
Employment Status	
Employed (Full-Time/Part-Time)	35% (14)
Unemployed	65% (26)
Has Children	
Yes	82.5% (33)
No	17.5% (7)
Spouses' Service Branch	
Air Force	22.5% (9)
Army	45% (18)
Marines	12.5% (5)
Navy	20% (8)
Space Force	0% (0)
Spouses' Military Rank*	
Junior Enlisted (E-1 through E-4)	10% (4)
Mid-Level Enlisted (E-5 through E-7)	27.5% (11)
Senior Enlisted (E-8 through E-9)	17.5% (7)
Junior Officer (O-1 through O-3)	25% (10)
Senior Officer (O-4 through O-6)	20% (8)

Appendix C

Table 3. Interview Protocol

Main Questions/Topics Addressed During Interviews
1. Could you tell me why you decided to volunteer for this research project?
2. Could you tell me a little bit about yourself and your background before meeting your husband? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. How did you meet your husband?
3. Did you have any expectations about what marrying someone in the military would be like?
4. What was your life like after your got married? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Were there things about the military you needed to learn? b. Were there things you had to give up or adjust to?
5. Could you walk me through your typical day? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Can you describe what your role in your family is?
6. What is a deployment like?
7. If employed: Could you tell me about your job?
8. If in school: Could you tell me about school? What are you studying? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. General inquiries about balancing work/school and family responsibilities
9. When do you find time for yourself? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What kinds of things do you do to relax?
10. Do you participate in any family support programs or volunteer?
11. Are there expectations placed on spouses to volunteer or be involved in the community?
12. Could you tell me about your relationships with other spouses? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. General inquiries about spouses and friendships
13. Do spouses get along?
14. Do you feel the military cares for and meets the needs of families?
15. Through all the difficult experiences you've described, what helps motivate you?
16. How do you see yourself compared to other spouses?
17. Do you think spouses serve too?
18. Can you describe how you define a military spouse?
19. What advice would you give someone if you knew they were married someone in the military?
20. Do you think the military relies on spouses?

Appendix D

Request for Participation Announcement

The following is a request for military spouses, men and women, domestic and overseas, to participate in PhD research focusing on the experiences of military spouses:

I am William Oliver and am a former member of the Army National Guard and now a PhD Candidate in the Department of Sociology at Syracuse University. I am currently working on a dissertation project that explores the experiences of military spouses. My own experiences in the National Guard have motivated me to focus my doctoral research on this very important topic.

Although military spouses and their families make an enormous sacrifice, I believe that *their experiences* are scarcely heard or properly understood to the degree they deserve within academic research and within popular media. Therefore, my project plans to create a space where military spouses in heterosexual and same-sex marriages are able to talk about how they feel the military has shaped their lives and their family's lives. Through these narratives I plan to use this data to examine what the military spouse experience is truly like in order to develop a more holistic picture of the military spouse experience and truly bring to light the tremendous role they play in their families and communities.

If you are in a heterosexual or same-sex marriage and your spouse is female or male, either enlisted or an officer currently on active duty in the Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, or Navy, living in the continental U.S. or overseas, you are invited to participate in an in-person, Skype, or phone interview that should last about 90 minutes. Thank you for taking the time to read this invitation. Your participation in this project is deeply valued and appreciated.

If you are willing to participate please contact me via my Syracuse University email: wjoliver@maxwell.syr.edu.

Appendix E

Consent Form 1. Oral Script

Dissertation Title: Militarizing Social Reproduction: Re-conceptualizing Work, Military Families and Spouses, and the Role of the Military Spouse

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to tell you about my research. My name is Will Oliver and I am a graduate student in the Department of Sociology at Syracuse University. I am inviting you to take part in a research study about military spouses. This study is my dissertation, which is a requirement for me to complete my Ph.D. Throughout the research study, I will be supervised by my academic advisor Dr. Andrew London a professor in the Department of Sociology here at Syracuse University.

Involvement in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to take part in the research project after hearing more about it or if you choose to participate you may still withdraw at any time without penalty. If at any point you wish to end your participation please let me know and we will end the interview or if you later decide you would like your interview removed from the project, please let me know and I will do so. To begin, I will briefly explain the study to you. Please feel free to ask questions. I will be happy to explain anything in detail if you wish. Please note that this is a dissertation research study conducted through Syracuse University. This is not a Department of Defense or a Blue Star Families study.

My dissertation intends to explore what it is like to be a military spouse by interviewing spouses and talking with them about their experiences. The goal of this project is to develop a better understanding of exactly how the military impacts military spouses' lives. If you choose to participate I will ask you questions about your family life, work life, your experiences with the military and with the military family community, and your experiences with deployments if your spouse has been deployed. This will take approximately 90 minutes of your time. All information will be kept *confidential* and your name will never be used in connection with this research. Each participant will be assigned a pseudonym in order to safeguard the confidentiality of their information and I will change other possible identifying information such as unit designations or duty stations as well. Only your pseudonym will be used in my dissertation, any academic publications, or academic conference presentations.

I am also requesting your permission to digitally audio record this interview. I wish to audio record this interview so that a paid transcriptionist or I may transcribe it at a later date for data analysis. No other forms of recording, such as video recordings will be used during this interview. I may use direct quotes from this interview in my dissertation, academic publications or conference presentations, but I will never use your real name. You will be assigned a pseudonym for this project and this name will always be used instead of your real name. Are you OK with me audio recording this interview? And are you OK with me possibly using direct quotes from this interview? To protect your confidentiality all audio recordings and transcripts will be stored on my personal computer and a back-up external hard drive, which are both password protected. Each transcript will contain your assigned pseudonym and the date of the interview, so that your name will never be attached to the transcript. Only my faculty advisor, possibly a transcriptionist who has signed a confidentiality agreement, and I will have access to

the complete interview transcript. After completing my dissertation, I will delete your audio recording on my personal computer, but will keep its back-up file for 5 years, after which I will delete this file as well. The transcriptions I plan to keep indefinitely, as I plan to continue research on military spouses and families, but will always maintain the electronic file in a password protected electronic device and any hard copies will be stored in a lockable document box. Please know that I will do everything possible to protect your confidentiality, except in legal or ethical situations where abuse, or intent to harm oneself or others becomes apparent.

The risks to participating in this project are minimal, however, there is a possible risk that certain questions may bring up emotional experiences and may be difficult to answer. If at any time during the interview you wish to skip a question or topic, then we will do so and move to a different topic. If you wish to stop the interview, then we can do that as well. If you wish to have your interview removed from this project, then please let me know and all data and your personal information will be deleted, without penalty. This is your right as a participant. Your participation is completely voluntary. Since we have communicated over email, there is always the risk of a breach in confidentiality using this form of communication. [*if interview is being conducted over Skype* -Using Skype also creates the potential risk in a breach of confidentiality]. Also, if your interview is transcribed by a transcriptionist, there is a slight risk of a breach in confidentiality when files are transferred to and from the transcriptionist and myself. Unfortunately, we are subject to the degree of privacy permitted by these forms of Internet communication, and therefore I cannot fully guarantee your confidentiality when we communicate using the Internet. If this occurs, you will be immediately notified and will have the choice to stay in the project or have your interview removed. Would you like to continue?

While there are minimal risks, there are also benefits to your participation. The experience of being a military spouse has been an under researched topic in recent years. Your perspectives will help contribute to a better understanding of how your life is impacted by being married to someone in the military. Hopefully this experience may even be enjoyable.

If you have any questions, concerns, or complaints about the research, please contact me by email at wjoliver@maxwell.syr.edu, or my faculty advisor Professor Andrew London by telephone at (315) 443-5067 or by email at anlondon@maxwell.syr.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you have questions, concerns, or complaints that you wish to address to someone other than the investigator, or if you cannot reach the investigator contact the Syracuse University Institutional Review Board at 315-443-3013 or by email at orip@syr.edu.

- Before we formally begin, have all of your questions been answered?
- Are you at least 18 years of age or older?
- Do you wish to participate in this research study?
- Do I have your permission to record this interview?
- Do I have your permission to be quoted?
- Did you receive the copy of the informed consent form that I emailed you?

Consent Form 2. Written Consent

Dissertation Title: Militarizing Social Reproduction: Re-conceptualizing Work, Military Families and Spouses, and the Role of the Military Spouse

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to tell you about my research. My name is Will Oliver and I am a graduate student in the Department of Sociology at Syracuse University. I am inviting you to take part in a research study about military spouses. This study is my dissertation, which is a requirement for me to complete my Ph.D. Throughout the research study, I will be supervised by my academic advisor Dr. Andrew London a professor in the Department of Sociology here at Syracuse University.

Involvement in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to take part in the research project after hearing more about it or if you choose to participate you may still withdraw at any time without penalty. If at any point you wish to end your participation please let me know and we will end the interview or if you later decide you would like your interview removed from the project, please let me know and I will do so. To begin, I will briefly explain the study to you. Please feel free to ask questions. I will be happy to explain anything in detail if you wish. Please note that this project is a dissertation research project conducted through Syracuse University. This is not a Department of Defense or a Blue Star Families study.

My dissertation intends to explore what it is like to be a military spouse by interviewing spouses and talking with them about their experiences. The goal of this project is to develop a better understanding of exactly how the military impacts military spouses' lives. If you choose to participate I will ask you questions about your family life, work life, your experiences with the military and with the military family community, and your experiences with deployments if your spouse has been deployed. This will take approximately 90 minutes of your time. All information will be kept *confidential* and your name will never be used in connection with this research. Each participant will be assigned a pseudonym in order to safeguard the confidentiality of their information and I will change other possible identifying information such as unit designations or duty stations as well. Only your pseudonym will be used in my dissertation, any academic publications, or academic conference presentations.

I am also requesting your permission to digitally audio record this interview. I wish to record this interview so that a paid transcriptionist or I may transcribe it at a later date for data analysis. I may use direct quotes from this interview in my dissertation, academic publications or conference presentations, but I will never use your real name. You will be assigned a pseudonym for this project and this name will always be used instead of your real name. Are you OK with me recording this interview? And are you OK with me possibly using direct quotes from this interview? To protect your confidentiality all recordings and transcripts will be stored on my personal computer and a back-up external hard drive, which are both password protected. Each transcript will contain your assigned pseudonym and the date of the interview, so that your name will never be attached to the transcript. Only my faculty advisor, possibly a transcriptionist who has signed a confidentiality agreement, and I will have access to the complete interview transcript. After completing my dissertation, I will delete your audio recording on my personal computer, but will keep its back-up file for 5 years, after which I will delete this file as well. The transcriptions I plan to keep indefinitely, as I plan to continue research on military spouses and

families, but will always maintain the electronic file in a password protected electronic device and any hard copies will be stored in a lockable document box. Please know that I will do everything possible to protect your confidentiality, except in legal or ethical situations where abuse, or intent to harm oneself or others becomes apparent.

The risks to participating in this project are minimal, however, there is a possible risk that certain questions may bring up emotional experiences and may be difficult to answer. If at any time during the interview you wish to skip a question or topic, then we will do so and move to a different topic. If you wish to stop the interview, then we can do that as well. If you wish to have your interview removed from this project, then please let me know and all data and your personal information will be deleted, without penalty. This is your right as a participant. Your participation is completely voluntary. Since we have communicated over email, there is always the risk of a breach in confidentiality using this form of communication. Also, if your interview is transcribed by a transcriptionist, there is a slight risk of a breach in confidentiality when files are transferred to and from the transcriptionist and myself. Unfortunately, we are subject to the degree of privacy permitted by these forms of Internet communication, and therefore I cannot fully guarantee your confidentiality when we communicate using the Internet. If this occurs, you will be immediately notified and will have the choice to stay in the project or have your interview removed. Would you like to continue?

While there are minimal risks, there are also benefits to your participation. The experience of being a military spouse has been an under researched topic in recent years. Your perspectives will help contribute to a better understanding of your life is impacted by being married to someone in the military. Hopefully this experience may even be enjoyable.

If you have any questions, concerns, complaints about the research, please contact me by email at wjoliver@maxwell.syr.edu, or my faculty advisor Professor Andrew London by telephone at (315) 443-5067 or by email at anlondon@maxwell.syr.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you have questions, concerns, or complaints that you wish to address to someone other than the investigator, or if you cannot reach the investigator contact the Syracuse University Institutional Review Board at 315-443-3013 or by email at orip@syr.edu.

I am 18 years old or older. Yes No

I have read and understand all the information presented to me. Yes No

My questions and/or concerns have been properly addressed. Yes No

I have received a copy of this consent form for my own records. Yes No

I agree to participate in this research study. Yes No

I agree to have my interview audio recorded. Yes No

I agree to be quoted in this research study. Yes No

Signature of participant

Date

Printed name of participant

Signature of researcher

Date

Printed name of researcher

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- Wilmoth, Janet M., and Andrew S. London. Forthcoming. "The Role of the Military in Women's Lives." In *Handbook of Aging and the Social Sciences (9th Edition)*, edited by K. F. Ferraro and D. Carr. Boston: Elsevier.
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- Vuga, Janja, and Jelena Juvan. 2013. "Work-Family Conflict Between Two Greedy Institutions - The Family and the Military." *Current Sociology* 61(7): 1058-1077.
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Ziff, Elizabeth. 2017. "The Mommy Deployment": Military Spouses and Surrogacy in the United States." *Sociological Forum* 32(2): 406-425.

Ziff, Elizabeth, and Felicia Garland-Jackson. (2020). "'I'm Not Your 'Typical' Military Wife": The Construction of Gender and Agency Through Stereotypes." *Armed Forces & Society* 46(3): 376-396.

Curriculum Vitae

WILLIAM J. OLIVER

Teaching Faculty Fellow

302 Maxwell Hall • Syracuse, NY 13244 • (518) 391-8927

wjoliver@maxwell.syr.edu

EDUCATION

Syracuse University, Sociology Ph.D. <i>Making Military Wives: Militarizing Social Reproduction of Military Families</i>	2020
Syracuse University, Sociology M.A.	2011
Dowling College, Adolescence Education M.S. , Concentration: Social Studies <i>The Effects of Socioeconomic Status on Math Achievement of High School Students</i> Summa Cum Laude	2005 - 2008
State University of New York, College at Brockport B.S. , History Cum Laude	2000 - 2004

TEACHING EXPERIENCE: COURSE INSTRUCTOR

Qualitative Methods in Sociology (<i>Online/In-Person</i>) (SOC 319) <i>Syracuse University</i>	Fall, 2019 Spring, 2020 <i>Summer, 2016</i> <i>Summer, 2017</i>
The Deviance Process (SOC 343) <i>Syracuse University</i>	Fall, 2015
Introduction to Sociology (Online) (SOC 101) <i>Syracuse University</i>	Summer, 2015
The Sociology of Families (SOC 281) <i>Syracuse University</i> 2014	Summer, 2013 to Spring,
The Sociology of Work (SOC 200) <i>Hamilton College</i>	Spring, 2014

Human Society (SOC 151)
Utica College

Fall, 2013

TEACHING FELLOW: MAXWELL SCHOOL OF CITIZENSHIP AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Quantitative Methods for the Social Sciences (MAX 201)
Syracuse University Fall 2016 to
 Spring, 2020

Critical Issues in the United States (MAX 123)
Syracuse University Fall, 2014 to
 Spring, 2015

TEACING EXPERIENCE: TEACHING ASSISTANT

Intermediate Social Statistics (Grader) (SOC 714)
Syracuse University Spring, 2013

Urban Poverty (SOC 300)
Syracuse University Fall, 2011 to
 Spring, 2012

Introduction to Quantitative Research (SOC 318)
Syracuse University Fall, 2010 to
 Spring, 2011

RESEARCH AREAS

Sociology of Families
 Sociology of Work and Occupations
 Gender
 Militarism/Militarization
 Organizations/Institutions
 Qualitative Methods
 Feminist Methodologies

PUBLICATIONS

- 2018 Wilmoth, J., London, A., and Oliver, W. "Military Service Experiences and Older Men's Trajectories of Self-Rated Health." In Avron Spiro III, Richard A. Settersten, Jr., and Carolyn Aldwin (Eds.), *Long-Term Outcomes of Military Service*. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.
- 2019 London, A., Wilmoth, J., Oliver, W., and Hausauer, J. (2020) The influence of military service experiences on current and daily drinking among veteran men, *Substance Use & Misuse*.

Professional Reports

- 2015 London, Andrew, Janet Wilmoth, William J. Oliver. *The Effects of Military Service on the Financial Capabilities of Veterans and Active Duty Personnel*. Report prepared for JPMC.

PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS

- 2018 *Resisting instability: Readiness in the military family*. Paper presented at the Syracuse University Department of Sociology Colloquium: "Population and Place."
- 2018 *The military's organization of work: Producing class conflict over collective action among military family communities*. Paper presented in the Sociology of Work and the Workplace regular paper session at the American Sociological Association's Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA.
- 2017 *"Happy soldier, happy family:" Exploring militarized relations of production and conflict among military wives*. Paper presented at the Maxwell School's 10th Decade Project: Work, Labor, and Citizenship mini-conference, Syracuse, NY.
- 2017 *Considering issues of gender, interpretation, and representation: Methodological reflections of a man interviewing women*. Paper presented at the Eastern Sociological Society's Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA.
- 2013 *"Studying-Up": Issues of gaining access and recruitment for the qualitative researcher*. Paper presented at the Eastern Sociological Society's Annual Meeting, Boston, MA.
- 2013 *"Greedy Institutions" and social control: The extraction of the physical and emotional labor of Army officers' wives*. Paper presented at the 2nd Annual Sociology Graduate Research Symposium, Syracuse, NY.
- 2012 *Living with a "Greedy Institution": The institutional and social control of Army spouses*. Paper presented at the Eastern Sociological Society's Annual Meeting, New York, NY.

Roundtable Presider

- 2014 Eastern Sociological Society's Annual Meeting: Pedagogy: Classroom Activities, Roundtable, Baltimore, MD.

Paper Session Discussant

- 2012 Eastern Sociological Society's Annual Meeting: The Military and "The Unspoken," Paper Session, New York, NY.

RESEARCH GRANTS

The Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Tenth Decade Project - Work, Labor, and Citizenship Research Grant - *Awarded \$2,500*

AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Syracuse University Department of Sociology Dissertation Fellowship	2018 - 2019
Syracuse University Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award	2017
Teaching Fellow - The Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs	2014 - 2017
Syracuse University Graduate Fellowship	2009 - 2010 2012 - 2013

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Quantitative data analysis/collaborative research	2012 - 2019
Research Assistant, Dr. Andrew London and Dr. Janet Wilmoth	

SERVICE TO PROFESSION

<i>Research on Aging</i>	2015
Article Reviewer	

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

Sociology Graduate Student Department Search Committee Representative	2015 - 2016
Sociology Graduate Student Department Faculty Representative, Elected	2012 - 2014
Labor Studies <i>Sweatshop Workers Speak Out</i> Event, Co-Organizer	2013
Syracuse University's 2 nd Annual Sociology Graduate Research Symposium, Co-Organizer	2012 - 2013
Syracuse University's Labor Studies Working Group Member	2012 - Present
Graduate Student Organization Senator, Elected	2011 - 2013
Graduate Student Organization Travel Grant Subsidy Committee Member	2012 - 2013
Graduate Student Organization Library Committee Member	2011 - 2012
Graduate Student Organization Inn Complete Committee Member	2011 - 2012

TECHNICAL SKILLS

ATLAS.ti: Qualitative Data Analysis & Research Software
 STATA: Data Analysis and Statistical Software
 Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)
 Statistical Analysis Software (SAS)
 Microsoft Office Suite (Excel, Power Point, Word)
 G Suite (Docs, Sheets)
 Blackboard

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Sociological Association
Eastern Sociological Society
The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi
Golden Key International Honor Society
Alpha Chi, National Honor Society
Kappa Delta Pi, International Honor Society In Education