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THE CHASM BETWEEN TWO PARALLEL WORLDS

by

Brandi Harline

**Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree**

of

**HONORS IN UNIVERSITY STUDIES
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The Chasm between Two Parallel Worlds

Addressing the Communication Gap between Social Scholars and Military Leaders.

Brandi Harline

Honors Thesis

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College of Social Work

Abstract

In much of the research conducted on military issues, problems are identified years, sometimes decades, before the military publicly acknowledges these concerns; an example of this is sexual assault, which scholars discussed for over thirty years before the military acknowledged the issue. In this paper, I study the value differences between the military leadership and the scholars who study military topics and how these different values may hinder effective communication between the two groups. The method I use in identifying the standards by which the two groups identify problems is content analysis on articles published by the two communities, calculating the percentage of time spent addressing different aspects of concerns regarding the military, including the effects of military culture on the rest of American society, the well-being of individual service members and mission accomplishment, or any combination of these categories. I find the military and the academic community have different priorities in assessing problems and, therefore, their appreciation of these problems is at odds with each other. I conclude with the proposition that scholars would improve the chances their research would reach the audiences able to instigate the changes if the scholars placed more emphasis on those things the military values, namely mission accomplishment and unit integrity.

Introduction and Literature Review

       I have a 1917 Navy recruiting poster hanging on my wall. The poster features a young woman wearing the well-known Navy cracker jack uniform which is about three sizes too big for her. Beside the playful looking young woman standing in a child-like stance is the words "I wish I were a man, I'd join the Navy." Right beside this poster, I have a certificate hanging I attained in 2001 when I crossed the equator aboard the USS Kitty Hawk. The incongruity between the poster and my certificate hanging right next to each other never fails to make me smile. As a female sailor, I feel like I occupy a place in a man's world. Not only that, but having served for almost eight years, I have learned to be quite comfortable in this world.

       There is an element of humor in my choice of wall-hangings evident to many of my fellow women sailors. According to Howe (2002), humor originates from a relationship of the observer with the observed and a resolution within his/her mind of a collision between old perception and a new reality. The collision between the armed forces as a source of America's power and the integration of minorities who have traditionally lacked power into the military is still a source of tension for many of the citizens of our country. The old perception involves America as a patriarchal society and the military as the epitome of masculinity in our culture (Gat, 2000; Goldstein, 2001; Kimmel, 1994; Mitchell, 1998). This is evident in many Hollywood productions throughout history and even up to today, including "Flags of our Fathers", "Saving Private Ryan", and "The Guardian". In all of these films, the soldiers' role is romanticized. All the service members are male, and the women in these movies remain on the periphery of what is going on. One may argue that at least two of these movies are

from time periods in which women were not in the military. However, women have always been a part of the American military, even though their participation was not always acknowledged (Holm, 1982; Segal, 1995; Stiehm, 1996). Is the large number of movies made from these times expressing nostalgia for the time when women were not so prevalent in the military? Is there a reason why military movies seem to come from past time periods more often than, say, romantic comedies? Not only are the Hollywood soldiers male, but many of them are white, and racial minorities are presented as being weak members of the military. African Americans alone make up 25% of our military, and there are many other races serving in our Armed Forces (University of Michigan, 2007). Not only is the tension surrounding racial minorities and women in the military exemplified through Hollywood productions, but it is evident elsewhere as well: the news media, academic circles, and the arenas in which laws and military policies are made.

The military is an institution that must constantly change to meet the demands placed upon it by the leaders of our country. Our country, being a democracy, is managed by an endlessly shifting population, which results in a continuous altering of the priorities that are a large factor in determining who can and will serve in the military. Examples of the values which change the populace of the military would be the discontinuation of the draft (Huntington, 1957), women's rights activism (Holm, 1982; Stiehm, 1996), desegregation of ethnic minorities in our country (Evans, 2003, Loury, 1998; Garamone, 1999), the ongoing politics regarding the inclusion of gays and lesbians (Shilts, 1993; Pazy and Oron, 2001; Kier, 1998; Barkawi, Dandeker, Wells-Petry, and Kier, 1999) and several other factors that may not even be on the radar of the American public (such as hazing, postpartum weight changes of service members, etc.) (Abrams,

2001; Pershing, 2006). While the rest of American society is trying to prioritize the

many conflicting values held by the citizens of our society, such as freedom to choose to

serve or not serve in the military, gender roles and the family, and the national security of

the United States, the military has had to determine which of these values take priority

over other less important ones (Segal, 1995). For the military and the politicians that

make policies regarding the military, national security is and always has been the highest

priority. Having an all-volunteer military is a value that was adopted after the Vietnam

War, and maintaining gender roles does not currently agree with the military's official

stance on personnel development, although lower level leadership may, even now, still be

learning to value and encourage the contribution of all members, male and female

(Katzenstein, Fainsod, and Reppy, 1999).

Because the military's need for manpower and the people available for military

service do not always accommodate accepted conventions regarding suitability of

different populations for military service, there are often tensions between service

members who are forced to work with colleagues who belong to groups which have not

historically interacted with each other as equals, for example: Caucasians and a variety of

racial minorities (Loury, 1998; Evans, 2003), men and women (Firestone and Harris,

2003; Holm, 1982), and even those who grew up in wealthy homes and those who grew

up with very few material resources (Segal, Bachman, Freedman-Doan, and O'Malley,

1999; Gibson, 1990). These changes to the personnel composition of the military may be

precipitated by new policies made as a result of personnel shortage, equal rights activists,

by the demands of American citizens, or any mixture of these factors. Yet, unlike other

institutions in America, the rank structure of the military does not allow for lesser value

of service members who fit into minority groups. All service members fit into the rank

structure (with the exception of the women who served in the World Wars as "civilians").

If military leadership has determined specific minority groups are suitable for military

service, those people become full military members who hold rank equal to that of their

counterparts who have previously served in these positions of authority (Holm, 1982,

Loury, 1998). And in the military, rank and uniform supersede every other identifying

characteristics of a person (Holm, 1982).

Although there is no place within the military rank structure for unequal status,

not all service members are protected from the prejudices that are fostered in American

Society (Miller, 1997; Holm, 1982; Loury, 1998) Service members who belong to

minority groups are granted equal rank and equal pay, but their level of respect among

their peers may vary based upon their membership in a particular minority group and the

worth attributed to that group by the rest of American society (Holm, 1982, Loury, 1998,

Shilts, 1993). The disparity between equality in rank and pay and discrimination toward

minority groups in practice is oftentimes manifested in the assignments these service

members are given, their limited level of responsibility, the limits in the military

occupations specialties they are allowed to fill, and the amount of scrutiny,

discrimination, harassment, or even violence they experience from their peers (Degroot,

2001; Holland, 2006; Levy, 1998; Miller, 1997; Nantais and Lee, 1999; Pazy and Oron,

2001; Pershing, 2006; Stiehm, 1996, Loury, 1998). As minority groups have been

integrated into the military, they each have had to prove the value of their contributions to

their peers and the rest of America, sometimes with significant costs including

harassment and assault among other things)(Barkawi, Dandeker, Wells-Petry and Kier,

1999; Holm, 1982; Kier, 1998; Levy 1998; Quester and Gilroy, 2002; Segal and Segal 2005).

Despite the fact that these service members have proven themselves on the battlefield time and time again, the citizens of America have short memories. As soon as the newly accepted minority groups prove their value to the maintenance of America's security, the majority of American citizens are quick to return to the long-standing, familiar preconceptions they have always held (Segal, 1995). Examples of this include the African American citizens who have been an integral part of the defense of our nation's security who still face the prejudice of civilians in the different areas of the country in which these men and women serve (Loury, 1999) and the women who served in World War II, but did not receive veterans' benefits upon release from service (Holm, 1982). Conversely, the mission of the military and the importance of the completion of that mission make it necessary for the military to utilize all the available resources, including manpower. It is for this reason that the military continues to remember the contributions the rest of America would rather forget (Levy 1998). This is evident in the website endorsed by the U.S. Navy that commends women's military service and advocates for women's full inclusion into the armed forces, in spite of the fact that America is still struggling to recognize that we have had countless service women die in the service of their country ("Women in the U.S. Military", 1992).

There is another group within the United States that recollects the contributions of minorities to our military— the academic community. There are countless articles written about the significance of these groups within the services and the challenges minority group members face on a daily basis. Many of the problems these members

cope with have been documented by researchers long before the military leadership has been aware of or publicly acknowledge these issues. An example of one of these issues is sexual assault and its effects on those service members who survive this crime. This issue has been a major topic of discourse among researchers for the past three decades, yet the Department of Defense has refused to acknowledge the severity of the problem until 2005 when very proactive measures were taken to protect female service members and provide adequate treatment should a rape occur (Army Sexual Assault Report, 2005; Seeking Justice, 2005).

In this paper, I focus on the lapse between researcher's detection of issues within the Armed Forces and the military leadership's acknowledgement of these issues. Specifically, I explore the idea of a different set of standards the military uses to assess problems and compare these standards with those of scholars. I address the following question: What causes the breach in communication between civilian researchers who specialize in military issues and the leadership in Washington DC?

This communication gap is important, because scholars have a lot to offer the leadership when it comes to information about what is really going on with service members. One of the weaknesses of the military is that information does not flow up the ranks as well as it makes it down the ranks (Holm, 1982; Shilts, 1993). Service members who have issues do not have the same right that civilians do to make sure their problems are taken care of. People who are in the military have to rely on their chain of command to make the necessary changes happen. Sometimes lower leadership is not really aware of the effects of certain group dynamics that ostracize members and how this affects both

the individual service member as well as the entire group (Holm, 1982; Shilts, 1993; Loury, 1998).

Dr. Eric Ouellet, in his book Military Sociology, introduces the book with a chapter on new directions military sociology should take. Ouellet recommends military sociologists take a different perspective to the reality of the military world. He suggests sociologists "learn to better understand the world as it is" through an interpretive perspective. He then defines interpretive perspective as "understanding the fundamental nature of the social world at the subjective level of experience… within the frame of reference of the participant, as opposed to the observer of action." Ouellet states that while the interpretive tradition can create social change, it is primarily concerned with understanding how our perceptions and preconceived ideas shape social life (2005). The objective of my research is to clarify the frame of reference of the military leadership.

Methods

Through my experiences as both a service member and a scholar, I have learned the main priority of the military is goal accomplishment and unit integrity, while the civilian research community is more focused on the wellbeing of the individual service member and the effects of military culture on overall American society. I tested this hypothesis by collecting articles written within the past 10 years by civilian researchers and compared these to publications endorsed by the military within the same time frame. The military publications consist of military directives, articles or curriculum meant to be used for military training, briefings given by military leaders, and the military's public position regarding minorities. The military publications were collected as I found them. I

chose not to use any method of randomization due to the fact that military publications are not generally made freely available to the public and therefore the number of publications available is small. The scholarly articles were collected off the search engine J-Stor. The keywords I used in my search were "U.S. military" and "issues", "U.S. military" and "gender issues", "U.S. military" and "minority groups", "U.S. military" and homosexuality, and "U.S. military" and "policies". Most of these keywords brought up numerous hits. However, very few of them were applicable to my study; mainly because they were not specifically about issues within the U.S. military or they addressed issues within American society as a whole, rather than just the military. I initially expected there would be many scholarly articles from which to choose, however, when I applied the restrictions of being within the past decade, the amount of available articles significantly decreased. As I accrued my list of articles, I decided that I would analyze everything I found within the restrictions listed above. There were a handful of scholarly articles that I did not actually analyze due to the fact that I had reached a saturation point, that is, the same patterns were consistently emerging in the data.

At the outset of the study, I established two categories based on what I had noticed through previous research and my experience with the military and how military members think. These categories were focused on the individual service member and the focus on mission accomplishment/ unit integrity (The term unit integrity refers to the ability of a unit to function as one entity, rather than a group of individuals). However, as I began my content analysis, I realized that I needed a third category that encompassed the influence of military culture on the rest of American society and the effects of American politics on military mores. While categorizing the paragraphs, I realized that

not all paragraphs can be neatly assigned a grouping. For these, I tallied them into all

relevant categories and calculated them in a separate tally from those paragraphs placed

into a single grouping. I expected there would be paragraphs that would not fit into a

category, for example paragraphs that are strictly explaining the methods used in research

or raw data unaccompanied by discussion. I did not categorize those paragraphs and did

not count those paragraphs in my final calculations. I then counted up all the marked

paragraphs and calculated the percentage of paragraphs within each article assigned to

their respective categories. Thus, if one added up all the percentages for each paper, they

would add up to 100%.

I analyzed eight different military publications and nine scholarly articles and

calculated the percentages for each article. For the percentage of the entire sections

(military and scholarly), I added the total amount of paragraphs in each category from all

the articles in each section together. After attaining the entire sum of paragraphs for each

category over the military and scholarly sections, I then calculated the percentage of each

category.

Analysis Results

Consistent with my hypothesis, I found that the difference in focus between

military and academic publications was quite stark, as seen in the tables below. As table

one shows, the military articles were focused solely on unit integrity/goal

accomplishment 75% of the time. The other 25% of the time, the focus was split between

the wellbeing of the service members and both the wellbeing of service members and unit

integrity/goal accomplishment (13% and 12% respectively). The military's effect on

mainstream American culture was never mentioned in any of the military publications I looked at.

As table two shows, the scholarly articles yielded quite different results. The most common focuses was on the service member (47% of the time) and on the effects of the military culture on American society (30%). Fourteen percent of the categorized paragraphs addressed both the wellbeing of service members and the effects of military culture on mainstream American society. And mission accomplishment was given attention in scholarly writings 8% of the time, which contrasts sharply with the publications that are put out by the military, which focused on mission accomplishment/ unit integrity a total of 87% of the time.

Examples of the paragraphs and why I categorized them:

I categorized the following paragraph as being concerned with mission accomplishment/ unit cohesion.

"Protecting the lives of Sailors and Marines and preserving valuable material assets are critical benchmarks in *ensuring that America's naval forces remain operationally ready to meet their daunting global commitments*."

The main concern of the paragraph is the readiness of the naval forces. Although it does talk about protecting the lives of Sailors and Marines, their safety is not really the primary concern, but rather, a means to and end.

I categorized the following paragraph as being concerned with American society.

"Perhaps it is time for the *Administration, the congress, and the Pentagon* to reconsider the evidence that is used to justify the gay ban. Or if military leaders remain unwilling to join most of the rest of NATO, they should at least have the integrity to admit that *current American policy is based on prejudice, not on military necessity*.

I categorized it as such because the main focus was on politicians and how they make the policies the military abides by, rather than mission accomplishment, unit cohesion or the wellbeing of service members.

The following paragraph is focused on the good of the individual service members.

"To cope with their harassment experience, both *men and women* in 1995 were most likely to use individual, informal strategies such as ignoring the behavior, making a joke of the incident, or telling the harasser to stop…"

I categorized this paragraph as being mainly concerned with the wellbeing of individual service members because the focus of the paragraph is on how service members react to harassment. The paragraph does not talk about the effects of this harassment on the mission or how this harassment affects the rest of American society or how American politics is altering military mores.

I grouped this paragraph as being about both the wellbeing of the service member and mission accomplishment/ unit cohesion.

"Being an officer can influence men's opinions in several ways… As women advance up the career ladder in a downsizing Army, *male*

> *career officers may attribute their own limited opportunities to*
>
> *competition from women…* Commanders must learn to deal with such
>
> issues as *sexual harassment, assignments for pregnant soldiers, and*
>
> *fraternization between men and women soldier.* Some officers object to
>
> integrating women into their units because they must manage not only
>
> their own feelings also the opinions and reactions of their male
>
> subordinates and any *disciplinary problems* that may arise as a result."

I categorized it in both categories, because the paragraph talks about the perceived affects

of women in the service on male officers' careers, but then it goes on to talk about the

increased responsibility involved with leading a command that includes women and why.

I grouped the next paragraph as being about both American society and the

individual service member.

> *"[Experts] believe that if the American [gay] ban is lifted,* many
>
> gays and lesbians will reveal their sexual orientation. This belief is
>
> premised on the flawed assumption that *culture and identity politics* are
>
> the driving forces behind gay soldiers' decisions to disclose their
>
> homosexuality. What the evidence shows is that *personal safety plays a*
>
> *much more powerful role than culture* in the decision of whether or to
>
> reveal sexual orientation."

I categorized it as such because it begins by talking about the experts' belief about the

gay ban and the gay ban's association with culture and politics. However, at the end of

the paragraph the focus brought around to the safety of service members who are gay or

lesbian.

I did not find any paragraphs that focused on American society and mission accomplishment/ unit cohesion simultaneously.

Military published Articles: Percentage of paragraphs addressing the following issues: effects of military culture on American society in general, wellbeing of service members, unit integrity and goal accomplishment, and both the wellbeing of individuals and mission accomplishment.

Article Title	American Society	Service member	unit integrity/ goal accomplishment	both service members and goal accomplishment
Total of all military published articles (8 total)	**0%**	**13%**	**75%**	**12%**
Sec. of Def. W.S. Cohen (Jun 1997).	0%	0%	100%	0%
Sec. of Def. W.S. Cohen (Dec, 1997)	0%	0%	89%	11%
Women in the U.S. Navy: Historic documents	0%	23%	54%	23%
A Vision of Tomorrow's Challenges and Solutions	0%	0%	100%	0%
DoN's Policy on Hazing	0%	30%	35%	35%
Sailors, Marines, and Civilians	0%	7%	93%	0%
The Status of Female Members of the Armed Forces	Report to congress	No discussions, just numbers		
Undersecretary of Defense Briefing on Armed Forces 2002 Sexual Harassment Survey	0%	25%	71%	4%

Scholarly Work Addressing Military Issues: Percentage of paragraphs addressing the following issues: Effects of military culture on American Society in general, wellbeing of service members, unit integrity and goal accomplishment, and both the wellbeing of individuals and goal accomplishment, both the individual wellbeing and effects on American society.

Article Tile	American Society	Service member	Good of Unit/ Mission accomplishment	Both service members and goal accomplishment	Both members and American society
Total of all scholarly articles (9 total)	**30%**	**47%**	**4%**	**4%**	**14%**
Miller, Laura L.	3%	80%	1%	6%	9%
Belkin, Aaron	55%	8%	13%	16%	8%
Militarizing Inequality: A Conceptual Framework	84%	1%	0%	0%	14%
Weber, Rachel N.	20%	46%	10%	8%	10%
Firestone, Juanita M. and Richard J. Harris	3%	84%	6%	6%	0%
Nantais, Cynthia and Martha F. Lee	21%	24%	3%	0%	53%
Gat, Azar	9%	80%	0%	0%	11%
Segal, David R. & Mady Wechsler Segal	35%	61%	0%	0%	0%
RAND Researchers	0%	60%	30%	10%	0%

Discussion

 The results of this analysis highlight the sometimes conflicting functions of the military and the academic community. The main function of the military is to maintain the security of America as well as perform the tasks appointed by the U.S. government. Because this operation is so essential to the wellbeing of our country, service members are socialized from the very outset of their military careers to place duty above all other interests in their life, including their own wellbeing and that of their comrades. In contrast, social scholars function in our society as advocates for less powerful populations. These scholars have made it their mission to study our society, the plight of less fortunate groups, and the effects different populations have on each other or the ways that powerful organizations, like the military, negatively impact minority populations.

 These two differing functions necessitate different precedence in ideals. The military is governed by a distinctive set of values: mission accomplishment above all else, loyalty and trust between all unit members, order compliance at all times, and the willingness of all members to sacrifice self for the good of the group. In this system, individual wellbeing is instrumental in that it furthers the larger goals of mission accomplishment. Social scholars follow a different set of ideology than do members of the Armed Forces. The principles that rule the academic world consist of equality (safety, feelings of fulfillment, access to resources, etc.) for all citizens, the report of subjective experience of less powerful citizens, the scrutiny of all available knowledge, continuous social improvement, and mutual respect and consideration among all members of society. For scholars, individual wellbeing is an end in itself and evaluating the conditions the individual faces is a significant priority of social research on the

military. Neither of these values systems is better than the other. Quite the opposite, these values ensure that both groups realize the goals each sets out to accomplish.

Serving as both a service member and a scholar, I have often felt the tension of balancing these two sometimes conflicting set of values within me as I studied issues plaguing military members. As a scholar, I would read of the plight of specific populations within the armed forces and feel outraged that anyone would be forced to face the challenges particular service members sometimes face. At the same time, as a service member, I would be weighing the cost of protecting these populations and how it might serve or impinge on the cohesion of the unit and the success of the mission.

Invariably, I have come to the conclusion time and time again that all service members should feel valued and safe. Despite the fact that as a service member, I have often agreed with the scholars putting forth their suggestions, the rationale I used is very different. Rather than considering safety and feelings of worth being an undeniable right of all people, the foundation on which I based my conclusion was that feelings of worth and security motivate service members to commit to the unit and the mission more effectively than any other incentive that could be offered. If a service member feels like they are an essential, irreplaceable part of the organization that values them as such, he or she will have a stronger commitment to the unit and the mission. Not only that, but personnel will be committed to watching over their comrades in the very dangerous environments that are a necessary element of military service. Along with the increased physical protection, the feeling of belonging to the group oftentimes serves to shield service members from more severe psychological effects of traumas they will likely encounter.

The rationale I used as a service member was seldom addressed in the scholarly articles I looked at. This is understandable considering the audience these articles are written for. However, if a scholar would like to reach the population examined in the research, the information should also address the primary motivation of the Armed Forces- the good of the unit and mission accomplishment. I am not insinuating that the people who serve in our Armed Forces are stupid and unable to make these connections on their own; rather they are very intelligent people who could benefit from the perspective of uninvolved individuals whose primary mission is to look after the welfare of all people. Nonetheless, if the military leadership is not able to perceive the fact that the scholar understands the primary mission of the military; the scholar is never going to have effective communication regarding possible improvements to the military organization.

I admit it is difficult to read about some of the challenges service members face without getting upset about it. This is just as true for service members as it is for scholars. However, if the motivation of scholarly articles is to criticize the military and express indignation at the fate of particular service members (no matter how just their anger), the audience who has the power to most quickly affect the changes scholars are calling for, namely the military leaders in Washington DC, is never going to hear the message being conveyed. Scholars have the power to educate military leaders and influence change in the way service members are treated. However, the motivation of the writing has to change from being about what the scholar wants to say, to being about what the military leaders need to hear. If the scholars who specialize in the military are able to make the connection between individual wellbeing and mission accomplishment

in their writing, they could improve communication between the two communities immensely.

Conclusion

Scholars have done so much throughout the history of our country to instigate change. The people who are able to provide constructive criticism to the communities in which they exist as well as those around them are an integral part of any community. However, to induce change, the scholar needs to talk to more than just other scholars. The merit of the ideas being portrayed needs to be communicated to a significant number of people or a number of significant people. To make society transform, one has to see through the eyes of the community members and address needs and desires they have. I propose that scholars can more effectively influence change within the military by addressing the concerns of military leadership, including mission accomplishment and unit integrity, along with the interests of other social scholars.

It may be difficult for a person who has dedicated their life to improving the plight of those less fortunate people to see the world as a service member does. How could a person ever put the accomplishment of a mission ahead of the wellbeing of a person? That is a fair question, until you look at it through the eyes of a service member. Most people who join the military have a profound love for their country. Even if that love was not something that was a part of us when we join, it is something that develops as we invest our lives into the wellbeing of our country. This devotion grows as we learn to love Petty Officer Lain from India, Lieutenant Holdeman from Chicago, Chief Harrell from New York, and as we get to know "family members" from all over the country.

The military has a deep-rooted sense of community that exists on a national level. Our commitment to the accomplishment of the mission at all costs arises from the love we have of our fellow Soldiers and Sailors. And because we love our fellow service members, we want to make sure that their family and friends are safe. Above all, we want to make sure that if one of our comrades has to give his life in protection of all that he holds dear, his life is not being sacrificed for naught. Those who have to pass on can do so peacefully, knowing that those they leave behind will be taken care of. When we join the military, we all have different reasons. But for those of us who continue to serve, we all do it because we love our country and want to ensure the safety of our family. When the military puts the mission before individual service members, the military is putting the wellbeing of 300,000,000 ahead of the few minorities that may be suffering.

Discrimination also looks different through the eyes of a military leader. Once you see issues through the eyes of the leadership, their reluctance to immediately confront issues becomes understandable. The leadership has to think about what protection of a few select members is going to do to the unit cohesion. If they step forward and single out a specific minority group, are the others going to resent the change that comes about because of these members? Are these particular members going to be ostracized even more? Are their colleagues' perceptions of their value to the unit going to be tainted?   Is loyalty to service members belonging to the "protected" demographic group going to dwindle? What happens to members belonging to that group on the battlefield? Will singling one group out in anyway actually help or hinder that particular group's fate in the long run? When you think about the issues in this light and look at the

changes that have happened within the military even in the recent past, their lack of direct confrontation no longer appears to be a lack of response.

A few years ago, the Secretary of the Navy declared the number one priority of the Navy is to improve the leadership of its sailors. This leadership training takes precedence even above the War on Terror. The high priority placed upon leadership has resulted in the increase of classes offered and required of Sailors; the resources for learning that are available to Sailors, and the overall emphasis on leadership. Does this confront the issues that scholars are concerned about? After attending one of these leadership classes, I would argue that it certainly does. In this class, we were taught the values of our subordinates, even those who may not perform as well as others. We were given skills to help us "empower" our people to be the best Sailors they can be. We were taught that the worst thing that we, as Sailors, can do is to limit the productivity of our personnel because of discrimination or prejudice, because "our personnel are our greatest resource". We were taught that everybody who wears the uniform of a U.S. Sailor or Soldier is a valuable asset to our military and must be treated as such. Most importantly, we were taught that this is our military, and we are responsible for the continuous improvement necessary to maintain our effectiveness. I would contend that although no particular group was the sole focus, the military was addressing any prejudices we may have. Rather than saying "don't treat these people in this way", the message was treat ALL people with the respect afforded to members of the military, because anyone of those members may be the one that ensures mission accomplishment or the safety of his comrades.

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