

# Social Work Student's Perceptions of Womens' Roles in the Military

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Nichole Restivo  
*University of Central Florida*

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SOCIAL WORK STUDENT'S PERCEPTIONS OF WOMENS' ROLES IN THE  
MILITIARY

by

NICHOLE RESTIVO

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the Honors in the Major Program in Social Work  
in the College of Health and Public Affairs  
and in The Burnett Honors College  
at the University of Central Florida  
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Thesis Chair: Dr. Ana M. Leon

## **Abstract**

Women have continually become more visible in the military. With the recent changes that now allow women to participate in direct combat occupations, various questions and concerns emerge about how the public perceives these new role changes for women. This exploratory-descriptive study examined the perceptions of 50 University social work student's (B.S.W. and M.S.W.) about women's roles in the military. This research was conducted using Qualtrics.com, and included demographic questions. Frequencies, chi-squares and cross tabulations were used to examine relationships between variables. The results indicated that although no significant relationship between these variables was found, other possible considerations on the topic emerged. One important, though not statistically significant finding of this study was that social work students are accepting of women in the military. This research has implications for social work education as well as, in practice. Evaluating social work student perceptions toward women serving in the military can lead to a better understanding of biases against women in military roles.

*Keywords:* women in the military, perceptions, military sexual assault, military sexual trauma, roles, social work, students

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## **Problem Statement and Statistical Overview**

Throughout history women have had a role in war. Over time these roles have changed and broadened to better accommodate women within the armed forces. Advancing technology and a shift in the importance of peacekeeping have enabled women to serve important roles during wartime. Along with the different roles served by women in service, other issues such as military sexual assault have also emerged. Military sexual assault occurs at rates that are generally equal to or high than the rates of sexual assault in the civilian sphere. Given the very low percentage of women that are in the military, roughly 14%, this makes military sexual assault a huge issue for women serving in the military (Turchik, 2010). In-military rape and sexual harassment have surfaced in insurmountable numbers, reaching a total of 3,158 reported incidences in 2010 and 3,192 reported sexual assaults in 2011 (Department of Defense, 2012). Given the presence of unreported incidences, some estimate that the more accurate number in 2010 is 19,000 sexual assaults and rapes (Department of Defense [DoD], 2011). Through analysis of multiple sources, one study estimates that the percentage of women who experience sexual harassment in the military, to include physical and verbal is somewhere between 9.5% and 33% (Turchik, 2010). This large range accounts for different studies that examined various populations of women in the military, such as women who sought services through Veteran's Affairs and those in each branch of the military.

As women's roles in the military have progressed over time, so has the number of women who serve. Women made up almost 1% of the service population in the 1950s-60s (Nevin & Lorenz, 2011, p.272) compared to nearly 14% of active duty soldiers today (as cited in Women in Military Service For American Memorial Foundation, Inc. 2011). The Department of



Veteran's Affairs (VA) reports that women veterans make up over two million of the total veteran population in the United States (VA, 2013). It appears that women are becoming more integrated into the military as both active duty soldiers and veterans. The presence of women within the armed forces has been steadily increasing for decades, which is evidenced by the number of women who have served in various wars over time. The Department of Defense and the Coast Guard report that women made up roughly 1,500 of the soldiers who served in the Spanish- American war and over 410,000 women served in World War I and II combined (as cited in Women in Military Service For American Memorial Foundation, Inc. 2011). Part of women's participation in World War I and II was due to women filling jobs that were previously occupied by men, due to the increased deployment of men (Nevin & Lorenz, 2011, p.272).

Following the terrorist attack on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, 11% of those deployed were women, and more than 200,000 women served during Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF)/Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), and Operation New Dawn (OND) (National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics[NCVAS], 2011). Between September 11, 2001 and January 2013, 152 women soldiers were killed in action in Iraq and Afghanistan (Barry, 2013, p.20). Women's visibility in the military continues to grow, with the help of policies that are open to what women have to offer to the armed services. Policy that expands opportunities for women is key in getting women involved in occupations that have not traditionally been available to them, including the recent lift on the ban keeping women from serving in combat (Barry, 2013). Another significant policy change was in 1917, when the Navy was one of the first to open enlistment to women, and motivated nearly 12,000 women at that time to enlist (NCVAS, 2011). It is clear that women want to be a part of the global force that is the United States military.

With the increasing number of women in the military, various challenges emerge. For instance the visibility of in-military rape and sexual harassment has gained attention. The problem of in-military rape has been perceived as a violation of rights of those who have been victimized, but also as abuse of the bureaucratic system within the ranks of the military; leading to incidences of rape being reported and dismissed by those in higher ranks. Often a person who alleges sexual assault will not be permitted to change duty sessions during the investigation of the incident, and therefore must continue to work with the perpetrator (Nevin & Lorenz, 2011). Although this one issue has become wide-spread within the military as well as, to civilians, additional challenges exist within the military. Such problems include military women fitting into groups that are predominately male (Rosen, 1999; Mackenzie, 2012; Turchik, 2010). Women have had to work toward being accepted in occupations and roles that they have not traditionally held, such as mechanics, commanders, and combat pilots (DeGroot, 2007).

This study is important to social work as little is known about how social workers providing services perceive women in the military and how biases may affect service delivery provided by social work students and social workers. Since social work students may provide services to returning female veterans, it is important to understand their perceptions of women in the military and to identify the biases held by this group of future service providers. This research study hypothesizes that similar to the general population, social work students are not aware of the challenges (i.e. discrimination, sexual harassment, rape, traditional roles) faced by women in the military.

## **Literature Review Search**

The literature used in this thesis was found using the University of Central Florida's online library database. The main criterion for the search of the literature was information on women serving in the military and perceptions of women in the military. The library's OneSearch of the Ebscohost database was used, as well as, Military and Government Collection, a database specific to military-related subjects. Proxy sites to Ebscohost such as, Academic Search Premier and CINAHL Plus were also used. Through these databases, journals such as, Military Psychology and Air Force Law Review showed up and had multiple articles that were used. Certain key phrases used to find the greatest number of relevant articles include: perceptions of women in the military, attitudes toward women in the military, in-military rape, viewpoints of women serving, perceptions of women serving, gays and lesbians in the military, and sexual harassment in the military. Using these key words and phrases yielded the best results in the search for literature. Overall, finding literature that could be used for this specific topic was difficult. Close to 15 peer reviewed articles were found, within these articles there was varying amounts of useable information for this topic. Going outside of this database system and using government sites such as the Department of Defense and Veteran's Affairs was also very useful in creating a statistical picture of the problem.

## **Review of the Literature on the Topic**

### **Roles of Women in the Military**

#### **Historical Roles**

Throughout history, women have been serving in the military, despite the popular belief that women's roles should be in creating life rather than taking it (DeGroot, 2007, p.26). In some societies involvement in the military is the right of all members and is also an important role in becoming a meaningful and regarded member of society (Silva, 2008 & DeGroot, 2007). Because women in some societies have not always been permitted to serve, this has been a place where they have not been able to officially gain status (Silva, 2008 & DeGroot, 2007). However, women have been serving in wars as long as wars have been waged, going as far back as Joan of Arc and others, disguising themselves as men in order to fight (DeGroot, 2007, p.25). Women in the history of the military provided support roles to the men serving, women would travel with the military to cook, do laundry and provide first aid to the soldiers, one such woman known for this was Martha May in the 1750s (DeGroot, 2007, p. 24). Women eventually became more included in the military through providing formal nursing and medical assistance to soldiers (DeGroot, 2007; McDonald, 2012; Barry, 2013, p.19). Women played a vital role in WWII when they took on hundreds of thousands of jobs that had been occupied by men, which fueled the war effort at that time (Nevin & Lorenz, 2011, p.272). Since the early 1900s women have been forming military organizations to support women in the military and to give validity to women's military participation (DeGroot, 2007, p.30). Such organizations are founded on a global scale and included the Women's National Service League in Britain and the Polish Women's Circle (DeGroot, 2007, p.30).

Only recently has the United States lifted the ban on women in combat however, the military has been slowly progressing to include women for many years (Barry, 2013). In 1967, the United States abolished the use of a quota system, which limited the amount of women who could enlist and become officers in the military to 2% of enlisted and 10% of officers (Barry, 2013). Prior to lifting the ban, fully excluding women from combat occupations, in 1994 the Pentagon abolished the military's "risk rule", this rule excluding women from any occupations where a high probability of group combat existed, which kept them from many jobs that they are now able to occupy, such as fighter pilots and street patrols (Barry, 2013, p.20).

### **Women in the military during the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the United States along with the majority of Western Countries have progressed enough to open up many occupations to women that were previously restricted. However, many militaries globally, still exclude women from serving in combat and armor units, where direct contact with an enemy is likely (Barry, 2013). Although there are several countries that do permit women in combat positions, Israel is a good example of still having unequal treatment in the military based on sex and gender. For example, the Israeli military highly genders their soldiers into very masculine men and women who are in combat or feminine women who usually only work in administrative jobs (Nevin, 2010). Prior to the professionalization of the military, as more men were needed on the frontlines, women took their places in many of the domestic avenues of the military, such as the cooking and first aid (Degroot, 2007). In 1948 the Women's Armed Services Integration Act was passed to create a permanent corp. of women in every military department (Mackenzie, 2012). With the transitions from frontline fighting to more fluid

boundaries during war, women have had roles in fighting, without being in combat, through their roles in peacekeeping and disaster relief (DeGroot, 2007 & Mackenzie, 2012). In the United States' most recent war, it was the prolonged counter-insurgency in Iraq and Afghanistan, that created the fluid war boundaries that now exists, resulting in one of the reasons why the presence of women has increased in combat units (Barry, 2013, p.20). Women have been considered less intimidating to locals abroad during peacekeeping missions and have been able to do many of these jobs better than the men before them (DeGroot, 2007).

Although women have taken on many of the more "peaceful" jobs encountering people of other nations, women have become more and more visible in war, as evidenced by 78% of the women's deaths in the armed services in Iraq, since the terror attack of September 11<sup>th</sup>, have been categorized as hostile (Mackenzie, 2012). However, the war in Iraq and Afghanistan has not been the only place where women have served in dangerous and hostile territories, women have been serving with distinction and commanding men since the Gulf War (Matthews, Ender, Laurence & Rohall, 2009). The service that women gave in the Persian Gulf Wars and Panama has been considered essential in our success in these encounters (Rosen, et. al, 1996, p.540).

There is a clear history of women serving with distinction in the United States military. Mary Edwards Walker, a volunteer nurse during the Civil War, was the first Woman to be awarded the Medal of Honor (Cobblestone, 2011). In 1942, during World War II, women first flew military planes, as a part of the team of pilots named the WASPS. In 2010 the remaining WASPS were awarded the bronze medals from the United States (Siegel, 2010).

In the 2000s women have been becoming even more involved in what would be considered dangerous military occupations and combat. As of 2003, all soldiers have received extensive combat training, and in 2009 the first all-female unit of Army soldiers was put on the ground in Afghanistan to carry out several search and engagement missions (Mackenzie, 2012). This unit called the Lionesses not only engaged with locals and were the first to engage in ground combat, but ended up working directly with Marine Infantry units on the ground in Iraq (Schreibersdorf, 2011). The military has begun to recognize new dangers of many military occupations that, previously, had not been considered combat jobs; with these changes, as of 2012 women now occupy 14,000 combated related jobs (Mackenzie, 2012). And although, women were not able to officially serve in combat roles until 2013, women have been able to enroll and be trained in infantry, according to the military's exclusion policy, women have long been in combat, in occupations such as, pilots, mechanics, intelligence, attack helicopters, and street patrols (Matthews, Ender, Laurence & Rohall, 2009, p. 242).

### **Global Roles**

Around the world women have been an active part of the military for centuries. In 1917, the First Russian Women's Battalion of Death was formed, and fought in battle and won against German soldiers (DeGroot, 2007, p. 27). Soviet women continued to be visible in their country's armed forces during World War II, when their occupations consisted of fighter pilots in combat, when there were not enough men to serve in those roles (DeGroot, 2007, p. 27). Women on a global scale have been fighting on behalf of their countries much longer than they have been recognized for doing so. Women in countries such as, Iran, Iraq, Syria and Israel have been fighting for decades, however they have been invisible in their service and unable to claim the political and economic status that is granted to veterans

(DeGroot, 2007, p. 31). After 1945 Vietnamese women were included in combat with their male counterparts out of necessity (DeGroot, 2007, p.27).

In reviewing women's contributions to their country's armed forces, there appears to be a double standard. This is demonstrated in the Israeli military, where although men and women have a minimum mandated service to do, female Israeli soldiers are permitted to obtain limited combat occupations, however they train male soldiers in combat (DeGroot, 2007, p.28; Barry, 2013, p.23). There is a clear gender distinction when the historical roles of female French and Chinese soldiers are examined; women have been permitted during times of war, by their Armies, to enter combat zones, but only to lure unsuspecting enemy soldiers to be killed (DeGroot, 2007, p. 30). In the United Kingdom, women are partially permitted to combat positions, however, the assignment of women to these jobs is up to the military's judgment on how their placement could affect combat effectiveness, leaving room for women to continue to be excluded (Barry, 2013, p.23). Fortunately, there are militaries around the globe that have progressed to allow women to become a part of infantry units. Both Canada and Denmark lifted their ban on women serving in combat in the 1970s and 1980s (respectively), following studies that lacked significant finds to support women's inferiority in combat situations (Mackenzie, 2012). The results of these studies showed that there was no significant difference between the physical, psychological or social capacity of soldiers in combat roles, based upon gender (Mackenzie, 2012). Women continue to make progress in fully integrating into the armed services.

### **Perceptions of Women**

There are deeply rooted obstacles that women and other minorities have had to overcome in order to serve in the military. In 1992, president George H.W. Bush stated in the Presidential



Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, that women should be kept from serving in combat because they cannot carry their own weight, they impact group dynamics, interfere with male bonding and that men have an instinct to protect women, which would interfere in a combat environment (Mackenzie, 2012, p. 3). Women who want to serve have had to overcome these stereotypes about their capabilities as a soldier. The argument that the average woman is not physically as strong as the average man is a recurring theme and reason when it comes to keeping women out of combat. All armies set higher physical fitness standards for infantry units; in the UK, only a small, 0.5% of women meet the physical fitness requirements to be in an infantry unit (Barry, 2013, p.23-24). Furthermore, evidence from disciplines, such as sports medicine, indicate that women may be more easily injured and take longer to recover from injuries, compared to men (Barry, 2013, p.24). There is a similar notion that implies that the level of physical fitness of a soldier directly equates to the same level of task completion (Mackenzie, 2012, p.3). Being as fit and strong as possible does not necessarily mean that a unit's mission will be successful or even completed (Mackenzie, 2012).

There appears to be a gendered distinction in the amount of approval there is toward women serving in the military, as evidenced by a study done by Matthews, Ender, Laurence & Rohall (2009). In this study, women demonstrated higher levels of approval of other women serving in combat roles, this variation could be accounted for by the traditional authoritarian beliefs and gender role attitudes that were reported by military students (Matthews, Ender, Laurence & Rohall 2009). Those from military academies, where women make up 15% of the academy's population, showed beliefs that a unit's effectiveness would decrease with women serving in that unit (Matthews, Ender, Laurence & Rohall, 2009, p.

242-243). There also appears to be a distinction between males at a military academy versus a civilian college. That distinction is that those who receive an education at a military academy generally show more traditional views toward women, whereas men at civilian colleges showed more liberal view toward women serving in the military (Matthews, Ender, Laurence & Rohall, 2009, p.242). Male ROTC students and students at various military academies, such as West Point, scored higher on attitudes toward anti-femininity, hierarchy and toughness (Zurbriggen, 2010, p.545). In studies, where the experience of men was explored, when women were integrated in to units, showed that the majority of men reported no distraction from the women and their presence had no change on their tactical or command capabilities. Yet, the majority of men also reported feeling uncomfortable with women serving in armor and infantry units (Barry, 2013, p.25). Ironically, the inclusion of women into gender-integrated units has yielded an increased level of group effectiveness (Mackenzie, 2012, p. 5).

### **Challenges of Women in the Military**

#### **Military as an Entity of Tradition**

The military is a microcosm for larger society, replicating the social hierarchy and gender norms found within civilian life and society (Silva, 2008, p.939). The United States' military has been seen as an institute of tradition, historically American traditions (DeGroot, 2007, p.32). This suggests that the military will require time in changing the culture towards accepting women in service, much like the progression greater society took in accepting women in roles outside of the home and child rearing. As a product of society, built to reflect the values and morals of the United States, the military still holds biases against women and their military involvement (Matthews, Ender, Laurence & Rohall, 2009, p. 242). In a study conducted by

Walker they found that an increased proportion of women in a unit resulted in a decrease in the overall acceptance of women by members of that unit (1995). This study suggests that women are still seen as outsiders in certain professions and possibly seen as unfit or unqualified to obtain such professions. Many of these biases are based on untrue stereotypes that women soldiers are then left to overcome and debunk individually. Evidence of this is stated in a study that highlighted that women overall, meet the performance standards of the military and often surpass men in meeting these standards (Matthews, Ender, Laurence & Rohall, 2009, p. 243). During the era of military professionalization, women were replaced by men in their roles as cooks and nurses, among other traditional roles they previously occupied. This shift moved the military and soldiering toward becoming predominately male, leaving modern day women as the gender minority within the armed forces (DeGroot, 2007, p.25).

### **Masculinity in the Military**

With the majority of our military's soldiers being male, masculine qualities have been valued by this profession, and is what is expected from both men and women. This expectation of masculinity leaves women to reconcile their new masculine identity with their socialized feminine identity (Silva, 2008, p.938). Women are trapped balancing the tough, aggressive expectations of the military with their inherit fragile and passive nature, as society has prescribed (Silva, 2008, p. 941). The military is based on the model of martial culture, which thrives off physical aggression and a system of measure that is based on the notion that killing makes a man and a soldier (DeGroot, 2007, p.24-31). This system of measurement perpetuates the dichotomy of weak and strong within the military, by which all actions and service are based on. Within this system those who have seen combat or deployment find themselves at the top, having the most status. This status comes from combat and deployment being correlated with the most

masculinity and toughness (DeGroot, 2007, p.26). This way of measuring the military service of our soldiers gives the impression that there is only one worthy occupation, which is combat, and leaves every soldier trying to fit that mold, as a way to achieve status. This way of measuring military personnel maintains the gender binary, creating an environment that solely recognizes aggressive behavior, regardless of gender (DeGroot, 2007, p.26). As women attempt to enter into this predominately male environment, their ability to adapt is curbed by the lack of other females in these occupations, signaling what is known as the Lone Women Effect, which can make transitioning more difficult, due to the lack of camaraderie women experience when they join the service (Barry, 2013, p.27).

### **Sexual Harassment in the Military**

As aggressive and masculine attitudes are encouraged in the military, the occurrence of sexual assault is called into question as a consequence of the emphasis on domination and masculinity. One study conducted at the Naval Academy, suggested that preconceived attitudes toward women manifested through derogatory language and incidences of sexual harassment and discrimination (Klein, 1988). In Murnen et. al.'s meta- analysis there was a clear relationship between traditional masculinity and rape perpetuation (2002). This study provides insight into a possible connection between the masculine nature of the military and the rates, at which in-military rape and sexual harassment occur. Women in the military are at a higher risk for encountering sexual harassment and rape than in other occupations (Mackenzie, 2012, p. 5). Sexual harassment and in-military rape, are huge problems for women serving, as seen in the 24.6% of women who have reported being raped while serving (Booth, 2012, p. 919). In another study conducted by Sadler et al, 30% of the study participants reported being sexually victimized during their military service (Sadler et. al, 2000, p.475).

The issue of in-military rape and sexual harassment is one that has been gaining visibility since the first assessment of the issue was conducted in 1988. This study resulted in 64% of women and 17% of men, at the time, reporting incidences of sexual harassment (Fitzgerald, 1999, p.244). Recent reports from the Department of Defense sheds light on the issue of in-military rape and sexual harassment as it stands today. The amount of reported incidences in 2010 reached 3,158, and 3,192 in 2011 (Department of Defense, 2011, 2012). This number is estimated to represent only 14% of the total number of sexual assaults and rapes for 2010, considering the large amount of unreported incidences (Department of Defense, 2011, p. 22). Ongoing research on this topic has taken place and the experiences of subgroups within the military are becoming more known, as are discrepancies in the rates of sexual harassment. Women of color are at a greater risk of experiencing sexual harassment, as are women serving in the Marines and Army, as opposed to other branches of the military (Fitzgerald, 1999, p.251).

For women of color this link could be associated with higher rates of blacks and women being enlisted personnel and the power dynamic that takes place between those of different ranks, leading to black enlisted and female enlisted personnel experiencing more sexual harassment. This variation is seen in studies of black men as a way to examine the rates at which they experience sexual harassment and for the various definitions of sexual harassment that women encounter throughout different branches of the military (Fitzgerald, 1999, Settles, 2012). When looking at the difference in rates of sexual harassment by branch of service, a possible explanation for the variation among each branch could be dependent upon the overall perception and acceptance of women in that branch of the military. For instance, cadets at West Point Military Academy, which is an Army affiliated military academy, scored lower of overall

acceptance of women, when compared to cadets at an Air Force academy and a civilian college (Matthews, Ender, Laurence & Rohall, 2009).

The number of women who enlist are more likely to report sexual harassment, sexual coercion and hostility compared to female officers. Overall, in the study conducted by Fitzgerald et al, female officers made up roughly 3% of those who reported sexual coercion, as compared to 14% of enlisted female personnel (Fitzgerald, 1999, p.254). The variance between incidences of sexual coercion for enlisted versus officer personnel may be influenced by the hierarchical organizational structure of the military, where those who enlist are lower in status and power (Settles, 2012).

There are many negative consequences for those men and women who have experienced rape and/or sexual harassment while serving in the military. According to Sadler et al, women veterans who have experienced rape or dual victimization (rape and physical assault), are less likely to earn a college degree and less likely to make more than \$25,000/year in salary (Sadler et al, 2000, p.476). This same study concluded that women veterans who experienced either rape or dual victimization are also likely to report experiencing chronic health problems and use prescription medication (Sadler et al, 2000, p.477). One suggestion to decrease the amount of sexual harassment and sexism in the military has been to fully extend occupational opportunities to women, as a way to break the barriers and power dynamics between men and women (Barry, 2013, p.21). Through continuing to curb the inclusion of women in the armed forces, it creates a type of glass ceiling. Since the majority of senior leaders in the military are retired infantry or armor officers, it stands to reason that many of these higher-level positions are not open to

women or are much more difficult for women to achieve, creating a power differential between men and women in the service (Barry, 2013, p.21).

With the presence of in-military rape and sexual harassment, the term, military sexual trauma has been coined as a way to recognize and diagnose survivors of sexual assault during their service to the military. Military sexual trauma is an overarching term to cover any physical or emotional abuse that happens while a person is in the military. This includes incidences of domestic violence of those who are in military (Valente, 2007). The department of veteran's affairs estimates the occurrence of military sexual trauma to exist for 16-23% of military personnel (as cited by Valente, 2007). MST is an additional and an increasingly important issue to examine and research.

### **Other Marginalized Groups in the Military**

#### **Gays and Lesbians in the Military**

As part of understanding the full experience of women serving in the military, examining the experiences of other minority groups in the military gives us, valuable insights on the similarities between these marginalized groups and women. For instance in the lesbian and gay community within the military, a certain amount of trauma has been attributed to the military environment and the stress that environment has created for someone who identifies as gay, in a culture that traditionally has not accepted gays and lesbians. The gay and lesbian population in the military has been restricted in that they have not always been able to safely self-disclose, specifically referring to the restrictions of Don't Ask Don't Tell, and the concealment policy for LGBT individuals and their sexual orientation. Due to the stress of nondisclosure of such personal beliefs and characteristics, concealment of one's sexual orientation has been seen to increase the risk of Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), in the gay and lesbian veteran

population. PTSD is seen in a variety of survivors, from combat war veterans to survivors of sexual assault. According to Cochran et al, (2013), in the case of gay and lesbian veterans, PTSD manifests through increased risk of alcohol abuse and misuse and greater rates of depression. This unique existence of trauma due to the shame that is created for this group because of their sexual orientation is similar to the trauma that some female soldiers, who have been sexually assaulted, have experienced.

Only recently, with the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell (DADT), have gay and lesbian soldiers been truly recognized in their oppression within the military. Since the policy, Don't Ask, Don't Tell (1994), was implemented over 13,000 members of the service have been discharged (Wallenberg, Anspach & Leon, 2011, p.476). During the implementation of DADT, gay and lesbian soldiers found to be gay or lesbian in the military could face a dishonorable discharge and their rights to Veteran's benefits taken from them (Wallenberg, Anspach & Leon, 2011, p.477). The institutionalized discrimination for gays and lesbians led to a harsh and psychologically damaging environment for our gay and lesbian soldiers serving for many decades before this repeal (Wallenberg, Anspach & Leon, 2011). The stress of concealing one's sexual orientation has been linked to an increased risk of mental disorders, such as PTSD, and substance abuse (Cochran, Balsam, Flentje, Malte & Simpson, 2013, p. 431-432). According to J. Griffith et al, 2002, the stress that this concealment created for this population has also been linked to lower work satisfaction and less trust and communication among unit members (as cited by Moradi, 2009). In the work done by Badgett et al. 1996, the act of concealing ones' sexual orientation has led to greater isolation among gays and lesbians in the military and lower rates of commitment to work (as cited by Moradi, 2009).



Women show a significantly greater acceptance of gays and lesbians serving in the military, as opposed to men (Wallenberg, Anspach & Leon, 2011, p.486). In a study, approval of women, gays, and lesbians serving in the military scored similar responses in people, (Matthews, Ender, Laurence & Rohall, 2009, p. 249). This outcome demonstrates a significant similarity in these populations and an important link when identifying trends in the acceptance and the attitudes toward the service of minority groups. Following the repeal of DADT there has been an increase in the ability of units to pursue and complete a mission, in fact, the presence of the LGBT community widens the skill set that the military has to use (Mackenzie, 2012, Barry, 2013, p.21). This repeal has not caused sexual tension within units, giving reason to suggest that neither would an increased presence of women in the military (Barry, 2013, p.27). This type of shift in performance and policy illustrates how much of the discrimination in the military, is based off biases and false notions, rather than a person's ability to be a successful soldier.

### **Men of Color in the Military**

The experience of serving in the military, for men of color, has had a similar journey as the experience for women, gays and lesbians. Like the institutionalized sexism in the military, institutionalized racism and segregation in the military has also been an obstacle for our soldiers of color to overcome (Shields, 1984, p.94). For men and women of color, institutionalized racism manifested into segregated units, race- based quotas as a part of recruitment strategy and excluding African Americans from benefits such as being able to move up the ranks to more superior positions (Shields, 1984). Often their service was curbed, allowing them only to work low-skilled jobs (Shields, 1984). Historically, the argument to keep segregation between black and white soldiers was that black soldiers were intellectually inferior to white soldiers (Shields, 1984, p. 94).

Following World War II, where black and white soldiers fought together for one of the first times, white soldiers reported getting along very well with black soldiers, however segregation stayed in place (Shields, 1984, p. 94). In the Korean War, as the military faced a shortage of white soldiers, black soldiers replaced them, slowing integrating units (Shields, 1984, p. 95). During the Vietnam War, racism was perpetuated in the way the draft was established, most of those drafted were African Americans, opposed to White soldiers who enlisted (Shields, 1984, p. 96). The issue with the disparity between the enlisted and draft populations during this war, is that those drafted had little say in their occupation, putting more men of color on the frontlines than white men (Shields, 1984, p. 96). Part of overcoming the racial differences in the military is improving the treatment of our black and minority soldiers, the way sexual harassment is perpetrated within the military has proven to be a part of this.

Men also experience sexual harassment with about 15% of men having at least 1 sexual harassment experience at work, in jobs outside of the military, about 35% of men in the military experience this annually (Settles, Buchanan & Colar, 2012, p. 256). The military is highly structured and based off organizational power differences, and top-down chains of command, this is the type of environment that sexual harassment is most prone to occur in, partially due to the domineering roles that it produces (Settles, Buchanan & Colar, 2012, p. 257). Looking at sexual harassment as it relates to men of color, it appears that men of color experience this more often than white men, in part because of men of color are more likely to be of lower ranks (Settles, Buchanan & Colar, 2012, p. 259). There has also been a correlation between the rates at which sexual harassment occurs for enlisted personnel verses officers, due to power dynamics between those in upper level and lower level positions (Settles, 2012). Not only do enlisted

personnel experience more sexual harassment, but black men make up a higher percentage of the enlisted population, putting men of color at a greater risk of experiencing harassment (Settles, Buchanan & Colar, 2012, p. 257).

Similar to the challenges and trauma that gay and lesbian soldiers have endured while having to conceal their sexual orientation while serving, men of color, who have experiences sexual harassment, are more likely to have lower work satisfaction and more work role limitations, because of their increased risk of sexual harassment (Settles, Buchanan & Colar, 2012, p. 259). Black men are also more likely to have an increased negative affect from experiencing sexual harassment, due to race-related stressors (Settles, Buchanan & Colar, 2012, p. 257). As illustrated, there are distinctions in the way minority groups are treated in the military, and there are individual consequences, such as men of color experiencing more work-role limitations, if they have experienced sexual harassment, including less motivation to complete work tasks, and a decrease in work productivity (Settles, 2012). The experience of men of color is paramount in understanding how power differences are manifested within the military and how minority groups and women are affected by it.

## **Discussion of Relevant Theories**

### **Theory of Masculinity**

For women the issues of social gender norms and how they are replicated and perpetuated in the military continues to create a place where women soldiers are in a “man’s world” when they serve, as explained through theories of masculinity (Zurbriggen, 2010, p. 539). The theory of western masculinity is one that illustrates men in control and aggressive, and women as weak and naïve, this culture has been perpetuated in military culture and in military training; leaving little place for women (Zurbriggen, 2010, p. 539). The notion that women are weaker and less

capable than men has been the argument to keep women out of the military and out of combat for decades.

The military uniquely creates a masculine identity through demanding certain values and reinforcing these values in the members. The environment within the military teaches and praises emotional control, physical fitness and strength, heterosexual desire, risk-taking and aggressiveness, among others (Higate, as cited by Hinojosa, 2010). The military also plays into the hegemonic ideal and subsequently, masculine identities. This is seen in what the military has to offer and why it appeals to certain individuals. Benefits of being a member of the military include financial security and the means to be a good provider, as well as, physical strength and dominance (Hinojosa, 2010). These qualities are part of the larger societal hegemony, where men are seen as gaining value through becoming a provider and holding power in his household. Within the military this hegemonic masculinity is demonstrated through the past exclusion on combat occupations for women, which left the dominance for male soldiers only (Hinojosa, 2010).

### **Role Theory**

Role theory examines the ways that men and women differ in their tasks in society. This becomes important when trying to understand why certain occupational fields have traditionally excluded women. Understanding the division of labor is essential to understanding the roles that men and women occupy. Women's labor have been largely, is not entirely, influenced by their ability to bare children and women's ability to care for a dependent infants, through activities such as, nursing. The responsibility of caring for infants and children has created a need for women in a specific sphere, where they are not too distant from these children, thus excluding them from occupations that require travel or danger, such as warfare (Eagly, Wood & Diekmann,

2000). Unfortunately, the division of labor has been partially responsible for resulting in lower wages for women and less women in higher organizational positions. The way labor had been divided as also created inequality and a gender hierarchy between men and women, where women are not seen as capable of occupying these positions and jobs (Eagly et al, 2000). This division has separated the realms of work that men and women perform and has played a part in assigning specific roles to men and women (Eagly et al, 2000).

Institutional sex differences and roles tend to reflect typical characteristics and behaviors of men and women (Eagly et al, 2000). Women and men also work to acquire the resources and skills to fit into an appropriate role, as a way to insure that they perform these roles correctly. For instance, women may learn sewing and cooking as means to prepare for life as a homemaker (Eagly et al, 2000). Subsequently, these activities that are used to fit the societal mold for men and women, then become stereotypical of each respective sex, and incorporated into the gender role for that sex (Eagly et al, 2000). Gender roles are the prescribed expectations of society based on individuals observed sex (Eagly et al, 2000). This is demonstrated in the way that some gay men, who exhibit traditionally female characteristics are portrayed as more fragile and they are assumed to be the recipient of sex, rather than the active individual.

Part of understanding the way that roles are established and maintained in society and in the military, is examining aspect of roles through evolutionarily theory. Evolutionarily the role of women has been to bare and care for offspring, where the role of man has been to create offspring, which is demonstrated in the amount of time females put toward having healthy offspring, such as pregnancy, lactating and child rearing, whereas men, do not partake in these roles (Hannagan & Arrow, 2009). Evolution has shaped the parental roles and begins to explain

the difference in the way that men and women view sex (Hannagan & Arrow, 2009). In military training part of the focus is to socialize members to become a group, where women are generally seen as outsiders and harmful to the group (Hannagan & Arrow, 2009). The maintenance of Warrior culture in the military has created the role for women in the military as either intruders or as a sexual resource (Hannagan & Arrow, 2009). Due to this view of women, sexual assaults may be seen as a way to protect the group, or as a way to bond members of the group, such as in gang rapes (Hannagan & Arrow, 2009).

### **Theory of Unit Cohesion**

In the Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces (1992) some concerns around allowing women into combat were rooted in the notion that women would hinder unit dynamics and male bonding (Mackenzie, 2012, p. 3). The theory behind unit cohesion has also been an obstacle for women to overcome. Unit cohesion allows a military unit to resist any outside pressures or stresses and to persevere through difficult situations (Kirke, 2010). Unit cohesion refers to group solidarity that takes place between people of similar demographics, such as age, gender and values. This bonding creates a commitment and trust between members that can sustain the stress of war and combat (Manning, 1994). However there are different levels of cohesion between members of a group.

Task cohesion refers to the bonding that takes place when a group has a common goal or task to complete; therefore members bond over cooperating to achieve the task (Kirke, 2010).

Social cohesion is the interpersonal bonding that happens between members of a common group outside of the completion of a task (Kirke, 2010). This interpersonal bonding is considered by Manning to be essential to completing tasks as a group and to manage individual stress (as cited in Rosen et al., 1999). This bonding is explained by George to happen between individuals on a

level of similarity, such as socioeconomic status, age, or gender (as cited in Rosen et al., 1999). A unit's combat effectiveness is partially reliant on the skills and task completion of that group, however Savage considers the social bonding that takes place among members of that group to be most important (Savage as cited by Rosen, et. al, 1996).

This cohesion is dynamic and happens on different level groups and forms several varying types of relationships. Specifically in the military, military personnel are members of multiple groups, and therefore member form different identities and loyalties based off that group (Kirke, 2010). And an example would be the difference between a soldiers' group cohesion in his/her troop verses squadron, verses unit (Kirke, 2010). Within these many groups there are thought to be primary and secondary groups. The mantra of a primary group is the ideal of the "we", whereas, a secondary group is much broader and less bonded than the primary (Kirke, 2010). In addition to primary and secondary groups there is a strata of possible relationships between group members. Members can be close friends, where their relationship transcends their relationship in the military. Members can be friends, which are considered a personal peer-to-peer relationship between members, there is one step below this, which is the existence of mutual respect, and trust between members, which is not personal. Under this there is informal access and nodding acquaintance. Informal access is the ability to speak to another member outside of a formal appointment, and nodding acquaintance, which is members who know each other only by sight and have no other relationship (Kirke, 2010).

Despite policies and presidential commissions, studies indicate that gender plays an inconsistent role in unit cohesion. A study done by Rosen et al.'s (1996) indicated no significant relationship between the amount of women in a unit and that units' ability to complete a task (as

cited in Rosen et al., 1999). Further studies show that the presence of women in training groups had no affect on the performance of men in a group, but it did have a positive affect on the women (Walker, 1995). During this study, where differences occurred, it favored the presence of women, resulting in increased self-confidence, improved fitness and rifle marksmanship among men and women of the group (Walker, 1995). The U.S Army Research Institute on Behavioral and Social Sciences concluded from a study that the amount of women in a unit had no significant effect on a unit's capabilities (Rosen, 1996).

Yet, a study conducted by Rosen & Martin (1997) indicated a negative relationship between the amount of women in a unit and cohesion between men in that unit (as cited in Rosen, 1999). Another study conducted by Rosen et al, (1999) showed a significant relationship between the presence of women in a unit and negative effects on unit cohesion in 4 out of the 5 experimental groups (p. 374-376). Each group was made up of a different generation of service members, serving in a different war, which also suggests an overall inconsistency in the attitudes toward women in the military (Rosen et al., 1999, p. 374-376). In one study, the amount of women in a unit negatively correlated with the amount that male acceptance of women, combat readiness, vertical and horizontal cohesion; however, for women this correlation was positive (Rosen, et. al, 1996, p.547). The occurrence of interpersonal bonding has the ability to strength a unit, however when the core values that take place during bonding are broken, this can become detrimental to the unit's cohesion (Nevin & Lorenz, 2011, p.276). One incidence where these bonds can be broken is when sexual assault happens within a unit. Sexual assault in a unit breaks the trust that is built between fellow comrades that is essential to carrying out missions effectively (Nevin & Lorenz, 2011).



In reviewing the literature many scholarly works were found to support the topic of this paper. Conceptual articles, such as DeGroot (2007), Mackenzie (2012) and Barry (2013) were used to support concepts within this paper. DeGroot (2007), provided a picture that chronicled the role of women in the military. The focus of this review of the literature was relevant to the topic in DeGroot (2007), which focused on how past roles of women in the military have led women to where they are now. The articles by Mackenzie (2012) and Barry (2013) were similar to DeGroot (2007), in that they viewed how women have had roles in the armed services, and how those roles have changed, making argument to lift the ban on women in combat. Other conceptual articles were not as clear in their reason and purpose, and also showed some bias, such as Schreiberdorf (2011). This article was a media review that looked at women in the military and their progress, however it was not peer reviewed, and offered no review of the literature. In the articles DeGroot (2007), Mackenzie (2012) and Barry (2013), the presence of a literature review was different from the empirical articles that were included in this paper. There was no review of the literature in these conceptual articles; instead the information gathered from other sources was used throughout the entire paper.

The empirical articles in this paper had adequate literature reviews within them, these articles were also very clear in their purpose and reason for study. In Cochran (2013), researchers were exploring the consequences of concealment of one's sexual orientation, as it affects and relates to the Lesbian and Gay population within the military. This focus was a result of the recent repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell, that created much discrimination against this population in the military, as Cochran (2013), explains in the study's review of the literature. Matthews, Ender, Laurence & Rohall (2009) reviewed past studies that suggested that there are varying

degrees of acceptance of women in the military. This review also gave an overview of the changing roles of women in the military, as it related to the acceptance of women in these roles. This overview was complimentary to what Matthews, Ender, Laurence & Rohall (2009) studied, which were the perceptions of women in various occupations in the military. Both studies by Rosen (1996, 1999) provided an in depth review of the literature. Rosen (1996) explored which minority theory best described the experience of women in mixed-gender units. The review of the literature in this article examined training statistics for women, and unit cohesion, which supported the research question; does more women in a unit equate to more acceptance. Rosen (1999) not only used Rosen (1996) in the review of the literature, but explored how units become cohesive and the impact women have had on group dynamics in other studies. Rosen (1999) conducted a study to further explore an appropriate minority theory, as well as, see how men and women perceive the presence of women in a unit to affect aspects of group cohesion. Overall, the reviews of the literature for the articles used in this paper were purposeful in their nature and directly related to the focus of the article.

## **Importance/ Rationale for study**

### **Micro**

Micro social work generally happens on an individual level, with the client and a social worker. From a clinical perspective this relationship is likely to occur in a therapeutic setting, with a goal of a diagnosis or some type of treatment plan for the client to achieve an improved health status. When working with veterans certain conditions and experiences are imperative to be aware of, such as Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and the occurrence and frequency of in-military rape and therefore Military sexual trauma (MST). Having the knowledge that these experiences and conditions acutely affect this population is important when assessing veteran clients and being able to appropriately assess and diagnose. This study is meant to focus on what skills and knowledge social workers have on the topic of women in the military, as a way to assess how prepared undergraduate and graduate level social work students are to work with veterans.

### **Mezzo**

One aspect of mezzo or community-based social work is to understand family dynamics and being able to assist in solving problems within those dynamics. Women in the military have varying experiences, from each other and from their male counterparts. These experiences whether it is in-military sexual harassment or assault or institutionalized sexism, or their experience in combat-ridden environments, all of these have the capability to affect the family system. The implication for social work is that social workers not only need to understand the individual experiences of their veteran clients, but they also need to understand the pervasiveness of these experiences in the family, and be equipped to work at these problems within a group setting.

Potential implications for social workers who work with veterans through the military, could be the understanding the dynamics on military bases, and being able to work at these problems from a community perspective. Social workers will also have to address issues affecting veterans and active military personnel through the agencies they are employed by. Whether that agency is Veteran's Affairs or one that independently works with military, social workers need to be prepared to intervene in their agencies as a way to advocate for specific services and conduct outreach to this population.

### **Macro**

Social workers who work on the policy aspect of micro and mezzo issues will encounter opportunities to advocate for our military personnel. As the literature and studies continue to surface and bring to light the challenges our service men and women face, it will become the task of social workers who specialize in influencing policy and systems to make changes. The presence of sexual assault and harassment in the military, against men and women, is an occurrence that is becoming more widely known and is becoming a source of advocacy for social workers. The violations that take place against individuals in the military has to be address by policy makers and those that can truly change the system that has created a military where rape occurs so frequently. Social workers have the job of researching these macro-level issues and formulating plans to advocate for changes that will prevent sexual assault and harassment from happening in the military.

## Focused Research Questions

Over Arching Research Question: How do social work students perceive women serving in the military?

Research Question #1: There is a relationship between student gender and student's perception that women are equally fit to assume combat roles.

Research Question #2: There is a relationship between students' military status and their perception that women can assume non-traditional roles (*fighter pilot, mechanic, combat nurse, typist in the pentagon, commander, hand-to-hand combat soldier, jet transport pilot, air defense gunner, crew member on a combat ship*) in the military

Research Question #3: There is a relationship between student veteran's branch of service and their perceptions that women who join the military should expect to be victims of sexual assault.

Research Question #4: There is a relationship between student veterans' branch of service and their perceptions that women have no place in the military.

## Methodology

### Research Design

The research design was an exploratory-descriptive online study, that utilized a 37 item survey modified from Matthews, M. D., Ender, M. G., Laurence, J. H., & Rohall, D. E. (2009). Role of group affiliation and gender on attitudes toward women in the military. *Military Psychology*, 21(2), 241-251. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/08995600902768750> (see appendix D). The purpose of this study was to examine research questions regarding the relationships between the following independent variables (gender, military status, military branch, etc.) and university social work student's perceptions of women in the military. This research was designed from similar research studies, however there was scarce research on the topic of student perceptions of women in the military. The researchers were unable to find any studies on social work students and their attitudes toward women or the military. The study contributes to the existing, but limited body of knowledge on this topic. This study tested four research questions related to the independent variables of (1) social work student's gender, (2) student military status, and (3) student's military branch of service.

**Table 1: Variable/ Operationalization**

Variable	Operationalization	Measurement	Type of Variable
Perception that women are equally fit to assume combat role (dependent variable)	Perception is measured: ___ Agree ___ Neutral/Not Sure ___ Disagree	Likert scale survey Question #12 in survey	Ordinal
Perception that women can assume non-traditional roles	Perception is measured: ___ Agree ___ Neutral/Not Sure	Likert scale survey Question #10 in survey	Ordinal

in the military, to include: <i>fighter pilot, mechanic, combat nurse, typist in the pentagon, commander, hand-to-hand combat soldier, jet transport pilot, air defense gunner, crew member on a combat ship.</i> (Dependent Variable)	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree		
Perception that women who join the military should expect to be victims of sexual assault (Dependent Variable)	Perception is measured: <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral/Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree	Likert scale survey Questions #22 in survey	Ordinal
Perception that women have no place in the military (Dependent Variable)	Perception is measured: <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral/Not Sure <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree	Likert scale survey Questions #18 in survey	Ordinal
Gender (Independent variable)	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Other	Question #25 in demographic section of survey	Nominal
Military Status (Independent variable)	<input type="checkbox"/> Active military <input type="checkbox"/> Active reserve <input type="checkbox"/> Veteran (less than 20 + years in military) <input type="checkbox"/> Retired military (more than 20 years in military) Other: _____	Question #33 in demographic section of survey	Nominal
Branch of Service (Independent variable)	<input type="checkbox"/> Army <input type="checkbox"/> Air force <input type="checkbox"/> Navy <input type="checkbox"/> Marines <input type="checkbox"/> Coast Guard	Question #31 in demographic section of survey	Nominal

	<input type="checkbox"/> National Guard  Involved with more than 1 (Indicate which)  _____		
Age	Open-ended question where participants include their chronological age in years	Question #23 in demographic section of survey	Nominal
Education Level	<input type="checkbox"/> BSW <input type="checkbox"/> MSW	Question #26 in demographic section of survey	Nominal
Marital Status	<input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> single <input type="checkbox"/> divorced <input type="checkbox"/> widow/ widower <input type="checkbox"/> Other	Question #27 in demographic section of survey	Nominal
Race/ Ethnicity	<input type="checkbox"/> Black <input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/ Latino(a) <input type="checkbox"/> Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> White/ Caucasian <input type="checkbox"/> Other	Question #28 in demographic section of survey _____	Nominal
Religious affiliation	<input type="checkbox"/> Muslim <input type="checkbox"/> Catholic <input type="checkbox"/> Christian <input type="checkbox"/> Hindu <input type="checkbox"/> Jewish <input type="checkbox"/> Atheist <input type="checkbox"/> Agnostic <input type="checkbox"/> None Other: _____	Question #29 in demographic section of survey	Nominal
Military Service	Participants indicate if they ever served in military <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Question #30 in demographic section of survey	Nominal



Years of service	_____ Fill in # of years	Question #32 in demographic section of survey	Interval
Branch of Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Army <input type="checkbox"/> Air force <input type="checkbox"/> Navy <input type="checkbox"/> Marines <input type="checkbox"/> Coast Guard <input type="checkbox"/> National Guard Involved with more than 1 (Indicate which) _____	Question #31 in demographic section of survey	Nominal
Wars Served	<input type="checkbox"/> OIF <input type="checkbox"/> OEF <input type="checkbox"/> Gulf War (Desert Storm) Other: _____	Question #34-37 in demographic section of survey	Nominal
Military Status	<input type="checkbox"/> Active military <input type="checkbox"/> Active reserve <input type="checkbox"/> Veteran (less than 20 + years in military) <input type="checkbox"/> Retired military (more than 20 years in military) Other: _____	Question #33 in demographic section of survey	Nominal

## Measurement/Instrumentation

### Description of the survey

This survey was modified from Matthews, M. D., Ender, M. G., Laurence, J. H., & Rohall, D. E. (2009). Role of group affiliation and gender on attitudes toward women in the military. *Military Psychology*, 21(2), 241-251. and asked a series of questions regarding the participant's opinions of women in the military. A section of the survey focused on opinions toward specific occupations of women in the military. Another portion focused on perceptions of women's overall presence in the military. The distinction between these two types of questions is important to the study as a means of gauging the sample's overall perception of women in the military, not just in certain jobs.

Survey questions 1-9, 11, 13-15, were used from an instrument from a previous study, which consisted of a 185 question survey (Matthews et al., 2009). These questions asked participants the degree in which they agreed with women working in various occupations, such as truck mechanic and hand-to-hand combat soldier. Participants answered one of the following: "Strongly agree", "Agree", "Neutral", "Disagree", "Strongly Disagree". That study used military students from various military academies and compared their responses to these questions against students that attended a civilian college. For this study, the survey questions were changed to a 5-point Likert scale, however during data analysis responses were collapsed changing the Likert scale to a 3-points. Other questions were added to include participant information on their opinions of sexual assault, discrimination and biases against women in the military. The purpose of combining these types of questions was to get a full picture of the sample's overall opinions and perceptions of women in the military, not just about their occupations. As well as, how much the participants accept the idea of women in the military.

### **Determining Survey Questions**

The purpose of this survey was to examine social work student's perceptions of women in the military. For the purpose of this study, specific occupations have been deemed important to ask student's about, such as combat pilot. For this reason, questions 1- 10 were chosen from another study to ask social work students. As a way to gauge student's perceptions of women in the military, overall, the remaining questions were decided upon as important to this study, to include what student's think of women commanding units. One research question in this study asked about certain attitudes toward women being sexually assaulted during their service. To measure participants' perception of sexual assault in the military questions 17-22 were included as a part of this survey. The demographic questions for age, gender, biological sex, social work program year, race/ethnicity, marital status, religious affiliation, military service, branch of military service, military status, number of years served, and during what wars they served. This was because the researcher anticipated a relationship between a participant's military history and perceptions of women's roles in the military. The original instrument modified for this research had no reliability or validity. Due to this research's survey being adapted and modified for the purpose of this particular study, there was also no information on the reliability or validity of the instrument.

## **IRB & Protection of Study Participants**

This survey posed no harm to participants. The purpose of this survey and study were to measure perceptions of women's roles in the military an online survey. The survey asked only about the participant's opinions on the topic of women in the military, and questions regarding demographics. All survey submissions are anonymous. The informed consent provided those participants who felt uncomfortable with feelings resulting from participation in the study with the contact information for the UCF counseling center. The researchers of the study received approval from the University of Central Florida's Institutional Review Board to conduct this research on November 5, 2013 (Appendix A).

## **Sampling Plan/Recruitment of Participants**

There are 344 BSW and 306 MSW students. All BSW and MSW students in the School of Social Work were invited to participate with the hopes that a convenience sample of 100 students would be obtained. Unfortunately, the final sample for this study considered of 30 BSW students and 20 MSW students for a totally sample of 50. In order to comply with FERPA guidelines an email was sent from the BSW and MSW Program Advisors on behalf of the researchers. Potential participants were emailed an invitational email, describing the study's purpose and invited them to participate. Each email also had a link to take students to the survey in Qualtrics.com. This link took participants directly to the informed consent page, followed by the 37 item survey.

## **Inclusion Criteria**

In order to participate in this study the following inclusion criteria was met:

1. Must be 18 years of age or older
2. Must be a BSW or MSW student in the School of Social Work at the University of Central Florida.
3. Must be able to read English

## **Ethical Considerations**

This study was completely voluntary and participants were aware through the informed consent that they were able to end their participation at any time, up to the submission of the survey. Only those that were 18 years of age or older were permitted to give their informed consent to participate in this study. And only those that were able to give informed consent should have participated in this study. Vulnerable individuals or populations at risk were not being asked to complete this survey. All participation was anonymous. The researchers had no way of determining which students participated. And because no personal identifying data is collected, the researchers do not have the ability to link survey responses with participant identities.

## **Data Collection Plan**

### **Data Collection Process & Timeline**

Data collection procedures began in the Fall semester of 2013 and continued through January 2014. Approval was obtained from the School of Social Work director and the IRB at the University of Central Florida. The researchers did not know who chose to participate nor are they able to link student identities with survey responses. The survey on Qualtrics.com opened for participation after November 5, 2014 and received the first response on November 15, 2014. The survey stayed open for participation until January 28, 2014. The data on Qualtrics.com was accessed only by the researcher and her committee chair.

### **Data Management Strategy**

All anonymous data was recorded by the researcher on a secure, password protected computer. Only the researcher and her committee chair have access to the data. The researcher created a codebook (Appendix E) to organize the data and used SPSS to analyze the data.



## **Data Analysis**

The researchers used SPSS to analyze the data and used a p value of .05. The researcher examined the relationships between variables using descriptive and inferential statistics, which included frequencies, Chi-Squares, and cross tabulation tables. Dependent variables in this study were the perceptions that women are equally as fit to assume combat roles, perception that women can assume non-traditional roles, perception that women in the military should expect to be victims of sexual assault and perception that women have no place in the military. These dependent variables were measured on an ordinal level; independent variables including, gender, military status, and branch of service were measured on the nominal level.

### **Recoding**

Before processing the study's data through SPSS there was a data cleaning process. Upon reviewing the results there were 56 surveys started, however two of these surveys had only partially completed the survey, and 4 did not answer any questions. These surveys were discarded from the overall results, leaving the researcher with a total sample of 50. The researcher recoded certain responses to make better use of the data as the were widely distributed in low numbers. This included combining the branch of service into one question, instead of 5 separate questions. "Army" was coded as 1, "Air force" as 2, "Navy" as 3, "Marines" as 4, "Coast guard" as 5, "National guard as 6, and "Army and National Guard as 7. For branch of service, one participant had served in both the Army and National Guard, as a means to prevent duplicate responses to survey questions the 7<sup>th</sup> code for this question combined this participant's answer.

The results were reviewed in an Excel spreadsheet prior to SPSS, as a way to organize and consolidate the data. This process included renumbering the survey questions and deleting

unnecessary columns such as, text column from fill-in questions. This type of question was taken out of the results, however the questions and responses, if any responses were given, were documented in a separate word file. The survey results were checked for consistency with the researchers codebook prior to analyzing the data in SPSS, as a way to make sure the results were correctly coded.

The researcher recoded and collapsed the data in efforts to better utilize the frequencies, chi squares and cross tabulation tables. The process of collapsing the data took place through recoding all the survey questions and answer, both in the codebook and in an excel spreadsheet. This spreadsheet was used and uploaded to SPSS, where further tests of the variables took place. To recode survey responses for questions 1-22 options (excluding question 15): “agree” and “strongly agree” were recoded as a 1. “Disagree” and “strongly disagree” were recoded to be a 2, and “neutral/not sure” remained coded as a 3. Demographic questions that were recoded included the participant’s program of study, “B.S.W. Junior” and “B.S.W. Senior” were recoded together as a 1. “M.S.W 1<sup>st</sup> year and “M.S.W. 2<sup>nd</sup> year” were coded as a 2. Through combining these survey responses the researchers were able to get a larger picture of the perceptions of the sample.

## Results

### Description of Sample

The sample consisted of fifty (n=50) total students, 30 Bachelor level Social Work students and 20 Master's level (see table 2). All participants were asked the following demographic questions. Of the participants only 10% identified their gender and sex as male (n=5), while 90% identified their sex as female (n=45), and 2% who identified gender as "Non-binary" (n=1). Out of 50 total respondents, 24% were between the age of 18-21 (n=12), 26% between the ages of 22-25 (n=13), 12% between 42-45 (n=6), 10% were between 30-33 (n=5), 6% between 54-57 (n=3), 8% were between ages 26-29 and 8% between 38-41 (n=4 each), 2% was between 34-37, 2% between 50-53, and 2% between 58-61 (n=1 each) (see table 1). 56% of the total participants identified as White/Caucasian (n=28). 20% identified as Black/ African American (n=10). 16% identified as Hispanic/ Latino (n=8), 4% were Asian (n=2) and 4% identified as Other (n=2), one response given was Native American (n=1). The majority of the sample affiliated themselves with being Christian (40%). 12% of respondents answered Catholic (n=6); 6% answered Jewish (n=3); 2% were atheist (n=1); 12% identified as agnostic (n=6); 14% identified as None (n=7); and 14% answered Other (n=7) and gave responses such as Baptist (n=1); Buddhist (n=1); Pagan (n=2), and Zen (n=1) (see table 1). Participants were asked of their marital status, 60% of the sample was Single (n=30); 22% was Married (n=11); 12% were divorced (n=6); 2% were separated (n=1), 2% were Unknown and 2% were Other, responses given for Other included "Engaged" (n=1).

**Table 2: Demographics**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative</b>
<b>Program year</b>				
BSW	30	60.0	60.0	60.0
MSW	20	40.0	40.0	100.0
<b>Biological sex</b>				
Male	5	10.0	10.0	10.0
Female	45	90.0	90.0	100.0
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	5	10.0	10.0	10.0
Female	44	88.0	88.0	98.0
Other	1	2.0	2.0	100.0
<b>Age</b>				
18-21	12	24.0	24.0	24.0
22-25	13	26.0	26.0	50.0
26-29	4	8.0	8.0	58.0
30-33	5	10.0	10.0	68.0
34-37	1	2.0	2.0	70.0
38-41	4	8.0	8.0	78.0
42-45	6	12.0	12.0	90.0
46-49	0	0.0	0.0	90.0
50-53	1	2.0	2.0	92.0
54-57	3	6.0	6.0	98.0
58-61	1	2.0	2.0	100.0
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>				
Black	8	16.0	16.0	16.0
African/American	2	4.0	4.0	20.0
Hispanic/Latino	8	16.0	16.0	36.0
Asian	2	4.0	4.0	40.0
White/Caucasian	28	56.0	56.0	96.0
Other	2	4.0	4.0	100.0
<b>Religious Affiliation</b>				
Catholic	6	12.0	12.0	12.0
Christian	20	40.0	40.0	52.0
Jewish	3	6.0	6.0	58.0
Atheist	1	2.0	2.0	60.0
Agnostic	6	12.0	12.0	72.0
None	7	14.0	14.0	86.0
Other	7	14.0	14.0	100.0
<b>Marital Status</b>				
Married	11	22.0	22.0	22.0
Single	30	60.0	60.0	82.0
Divorced	6	12.0	12.0	94.0

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative</b>
Separated	1	2.0	2.0	96.0
Other	1	2.0	2.0	98.0
Unknown	1	2.0	2.0	100.0

Additional questions were asked to those that had military experience. These questions were used to answer research questions as well as, to gain a better picture of the sample. Only 6 participants (12%) answered that they had served in the military (see table 3). 2 had served in the Air Force and 2 served in the Navy. 1 respondent served in the Army and 1 served in the Army and National Guard. Most of the respondents, 66.7%, served between 1-4 years (n=4), and 33.3% served between 9-12 years (n=2) (see table 2). 50% of those that had military experience were currently considered Veterans (n=3); 16.7% were Active, 16.7% were Active Reserve, and 16.7% answered Other. 2 participants had served during Operation Iraqi Freedom; 1 served during Operation Enduring Freedom; and 2 served during the Gulf War or Desert Storm; only 1 respondent answered that they has served in some other war that was not one of the three listed above.

**Table 3: Military Demographics**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative</b>
<b>Military Service</b>				
Yes	6	12.0	12.0	12.0
No	44	88.0	88.0	100.0
<b>Branch of Service</b>				
Army	1	2.0	16.7	16.7
Air Force	2	4.0	33.3	50.0
Navy	2	4.0	33.3	83.3
Army&Nat'l Guard	1	2.0	16.7	100.0
<b>Years Served</b>				
1-4	4	8.0	66.7	66.7
9-12	2	4.0	33.3	100.0

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative
<b>Military Status</b>				
Active Military	1	2.0	16.7	16.7
Active Reserve	1	2.0	16.7	33.3
Veteran	3	6.0	50.0	83.3
Other	1	2.0	16.7	100.0
<b>Wars Served</b>				
OIF	2	4.0	33.3	33.3
OEF	1	2.0	16.7	50.0
Gulf war/ Desert Storm	2	4.0	33.3	83.3
Other	1	2.0	16.7	100.0

### Research Questions

**Research question-#1:** There is a relationship between student gender and student's perception that women are equally fit to assume combat roles.

In this research question the independent variable was gender and the perceptions that women were equally fit to assume combat roles was the dependent variable. Chi-square and cross tabulation tables were used to determine statistical significance. The Pearson chi-square value for this variable relationship was  $p= 0.933$  (see Table 4). Out of the 5 males that answered this question 3 agreed that women are equally as fit to assume direct combat roles in the military; 1 male disagreed and 1 reported "Neutral/Not sure". Of the women that answered this questions, 29 "agreed", 10 "disagreed" and 5 were "Neutral/ Not sure". Due to very small sample size and the significant lack of male participants in this study, it was not possible to find a statistically significant relationship between these variables. However, the cross tabulation table indicated that 66% of participants, regardless of gender, agreed that women are fit to assume combat roles.

**Table 4: Cross Tab/ Chi Square Research Question 1**

		Women are equally fit to assume direct combat roles in the military			Total
		Agree	Disagree	Neutral/Not Sure	
How do you identify your gender?	Male	3	1	1	5
	Female	29	10	5	44
	Other	1	0	0	1
Total		33	11	6	50

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.844 <sup>a</sup>	4	.933
Likelihood Ratio	1.116	4	.892
Linear-by-Linear Association	.475	1	.491
N of Valid Cases	50		

a. 6 cells (66.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .12.

**Research question-#2:** There is a relationship between students’ military status and their perception that women can assume non-traditional roles (*fighter pilot, mechanic, combat nurse, typist in the pentagon, commander, hand-to-hand combat soldier, jet transport pilot, air defense gunner, crew member on a combat ship*) in the military.

In this research question the independent variable was the respondent’s military status and dependent variable was their perception that women can assume non-traditional roles in the military. To test this research question cross tabulation and chi-squares were used. The result of the chi-square was  $p=0.494$  for this variable relationship, indicating that there is no statistically

significant relationship between variables (see Table 5). The frequencies showed that there were 6 participants that had served in the military, 5 out of the 6 (83%) agreed that women can assume non-traditional roles. In addition, 90% of those that had not served in the military still agreed that women can assume non-traditional roles in the military.

**Table 5: Cross Tab/ Chi Square Research Question 2**

Have you ever served in the military? \* Women in the military are able to assume all the roles listed in Questions 1-9 in the military Cross tabulation

		Women in the military are able to assume all the roles listed in Questions 1-9 in the military			Total
		Agree	Disagree	Neutral/Not Sure	
Have you ever served in the military?	Yes	5	1	0	6
	No	40	2	2	44
Total		45	3	2	50

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.400 <sup>a</sup>	3	.494
Likelihood Ratio	2.634	3	.452
Linear-by-Linear Association	.000	1	1.000
N of Valid Cases	6		

a. 8 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .17.

**Research question-#3:** There is a relationship between student veteran’s branch of service and their perceptions that women who join the military should expect to be victims of sexual assault.



In this research question the independent variable was a student veteran's military branch of service and the dependent variable was their perception that women who join the military should expect to be victims of sexual assault. Cross tabulation tables and chi-squares were used to determine the relationship between these variables. The value of the chi-square was  $p=0.564$ , indicating that there was no statistically significant relationship between variables (see Table 6). Results of the cross tabulation however, showed that 90% of participants who had served in the military reported that women should not expect to be victims of sexual assault, while serving.

**Table 6: Cross Tab/ Chi Square Research Question 3**

		Women who join the military should expect to be victims of sexual assault.			Total
		Agree	Disagree	Neutral/Not Sure	
Have you ever served in the military?	Yes	1	5	0	6
	No	4	34	6	44
Total		5	39	6	50

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.146 <sup>a</sup>	2	.564
Likelihood Ratio	1.818	2	.403
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.060	1	.303
N of Valid Cases	50		

a. 4 cells (66.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .60.

**Research question-#4:** There is a relationship between student veterans' branch of service and their perceptions that women have no place in the military.

In this research question the independent variable was the student veteran’s branch of service and the dependent variable was their perception that women have no place in the military. The descriptive tests run for this research question were cross tabulations as well as, chi-squares. The result of the chi-square was unable to be determined due to the small number of veterans in the sample. Because all 6 (100%) of these participants disagreed with the statement that women have no place in the military, this variable was held constant in SPSS, and no chi-square values could be computed (see Table 7).

**Table 7: Cross Tab Research Question 4**

		Women have no place in the military.		Total
		Agree	Disagree	
Have you ever served in the military?	Yes	0	6	6
	No	1	43	44
Total		1	49	50

### **Frequency of Survey Questions**

The first ten questions of this researcher’s survey asked about participant’s perceptions of the roles that women currently serve in the military. These questions were asked on a likert scale, and respondents agreed or disagreed with each statement, based on their knowledge of the roles of women. Question #1 asked: women in the military should be fighter pilots, 92% of participants agreed (n=46), 2% disagreed (n=1) and 6% were neutral/not sure (n=3). Question #2 stated: women in the military should be truck mechanics, 90% of respondents agreed (n=45), 2% disagreed (n=1), and 8% were neutral/ not sure (n=4). Question #3 stated: “women in the

military should be nurses in combat”, 100% of respondents agreed (n=50). Question #4 stated: “women in the military should be typists in the Pentagon”, 94% agreed (n=47), 6% were neutral/not sure (n=3). Question #5 stated: women in the military should be military commanders, 90% agreed (n=45), 8% disagreed (n=4), and 2% were neutral/not sure (n=1). Question #6 stated: women in the military should be hand-to-hand combat soldiers, 78% agreed (n=39), 10% disagreed (n=5), and 12% were neutral/ not sure (n=6). Question #7 stated: women in the military should be jet transport pilots, 92% agreed (n=46), 4% disagreed (n=2), and 4% were neutral/not sure (n=2). Question #8 stated: women in the military should be air defense gunners, 90% agreed (n=45), 4% disagreed (n=2), 6% were neutral/not sure (n=3). Question #9 stated: women in the military should be crew members of a combat ship, 86% agreed (n=43), 6% disagreed (n=3), and 8% were neutral/ not sure (n=4). Question # 10 stated: women in the military are able to assume all the roles listed in questions 1-9 in the military; 90% agreed (n=45), 6% disagreed (n=3), and 4% were neutral/ not sure (n=2).

The next twelve survey questions asked more direct questions about the respondent’s opinion toward women in the military. Question #11 asked: women are currently assigned to jobs in the armed forces that would expose them to combat; 52% agreed (n=26), 12% disagreed (n=6), and 36% were neutral/ not sure (n=18). Question #12 asked: women are equally fit to assume direct combat roles in the military; 66% agreed (n= 33), 22% disagreed (n=11), and 12% were neutral/ not sure (n=6). Question #13 asked: women in the military are currently assigned to dirty jobs like repairing trucks or other heavy equipment, 40% agreed (n=20), 16% disagreed (n=8), and 44% were neutral/ not sure (n=22). Question #14 asked: women in the military are currently assigned to jobs where they have command over men, 46% agreed (n=23), 24%

disagreed (n=12), and 30% were neutral/ not sure (n=15). Question #15 asked: thinking about opportunities and equal treatment for women, would you say women's treatment and opportunities are better in the military, better in civilian employment or there isn't any difference; 50% responded better in the military (n=25), 16% responded better in civilian employment (n=8), and 34% responded that there is no difference (n=17). Question #16 asked: women in the military face the same challenges faced by men in the military; 16% agreed (n=8), 70% disagreed (n=35), 12% were neutral/ not sure (n=6), and 2% were unknown or missing (n=1). Question #17 asked: women in the military are often victims of sexual assault, 78% agreed (n=39), 16% disagreed (n=8), and 6% were neutral/ not sure (n=3). Question #18 asked: women have no place in the military, 2% agreed (n=1), 98% disagreed (n=49). Question #19 asked: women who join the military are usually lesbians, 100% disagreed. Question #20 asked: women in the military are discriminated against, 84% agreed (n=42), 8% disagreed (n=4), and 8% were neutral/ not sure (n=4). Question #21 asked: the military environment is very hostile environment towards women, 54% agreed (n=27), 16% disagreed (n=8), and 30% were neutral/ not sure (n=15). Question #22 asked: women who join the military should expect to be victims of sexual assault, 10% agreed (n=5), 78% disagreed (n=39), and 12% were neutral/ not sure (n=6).

**Table 8: Survey Question Frequencies**

<b>Survey Question</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative</b>
Women in the military should be fighter pilots				
Agree	46	92.0	92.0	92.0
Disagree	1	2.0	2.0	94.0
Neutral/Not sure	3	6.0	6.0	100.0

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative</b>
Women in the military should be truck mechanics.				
Agree	45	90.0	90.0	90.0
Disagree	1	2.0	2.0	92.0
Neutral/Not sure	4	8.0	8.0	100.0
Women in the military should be nurses in combat.				
Agree	50	100.0	100.0	100.0
Women in the military should be typists in the Pentagon.				
Agree	47	94.0	94.0	94.0
Disagree	0	0.0	0.0	94.0
Neutral/Not sure	3	6.0	6.0	100.0
Women in the military should be military commanders.				
Agree	45	90.0	90.0	90.0
Disagree	4	8.0	8.0	98.0
Neutral/Not sure	1	2.0	2.0	100.0
Women in the military should be hand-to-hand combat soldiers.				
Agree	39	78.0	78.0	78.0
Disagree	5	10.0	10.0	88.0
Neutral/ Not Sure	6	12.0	12.0	100.0
Women in the military should be air defense gunners.				
Agree	45	90.0	90.0	90.0
Disagree	2	4.0	4.0	94.0
Neutral/Not Sure	3	6.0	6.0	100.0
Women in the military should be crew- members of a combat ship.				
Agree	43	86.0	86.0	86.0
Disagree	3	6.0	6.0	92.0
Neutral/Not Sure	4	8.0	8.0	100.0
Women in the military should be jet transport pilots.				
Agree	46	92.0	92.0	92.0
Disagree	0	0.0	0.0	92.0
Neutral/Not Sure	2	4.0	4.0	96.0
Unknown	2	4.0	4.0	100.00

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative</b>
Women in the military are able to assume all the roles listed in Questions 1-9 in the military				
Agree	45	90.0	90.0	90.0
Disagree	3	6.0	6.0	96.0
Neutral/Not Sure	2	4.0	4.0	100.0
Women are currently assigned to jobs in the armed forces that would expose them to combat				
Agree	26	52.0	52.0	52.0
Disagree	6	12.0	12.0	64.0
Neutral/ Not Sure	18	36.0	36.0	100.0
Women are equally fit to assume direct combat roles in the military				
Agree	33	66.0	66.0	66.0
Disagree	11	22.0	22.0	88.0
Neutral/Not Sure	6	12.0	12.0	100.0
Women in the military are currently assigned to dirty jobs like repairing trucks or other heavy equipment.				
Agree	20	40.0	40.0	40.0
Disagree	8	16.0	16.0	56.0
Neutral/Not Sure	22	44.0	44.0	100.0
Women in the military are currently assigned to jobs where they have command over men.				
Agree	23	46.0	46.0	46.0
Disagree	12	24.0	24.0	70.0
Neutral/Not Sure	15	30.0	30.0	100.0
Thinking about opportunities and equal treatment for women, would you say women's treatment and opportunities are better in the military, better in civilian employment, or there isn't any difference?				
Better in Military	25	50.0	50.0	50.0
Better in Civilian	8	16.0	16.0	66.0
No Difference	17	34.0	34.0	100.0
Women in the military face the same challenges faced by men in the military.				
Agree	8	16.0	16.0	16.0
Disagree	35	70.0	70.0	86.0
Neutral/Not Sure	6	12.0	12.0	98.0
Unknown	1	2.0	2.0	100.0

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative
Women in the military are often victims of sexual assault.				
Agree	39	78.0	78.0	78.0
Disagree	8	16.0	16.0	94.0
Neutral/Not Sure	3	6.0	6.0	100.0
Women have no place in the military.				
Agree	1	2.0	2.0	2.0
Disagree	49	98.0	98.0	100.0
Women who join the military are usually lesbians.				
Agree	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Disagree	50	100.0	100.0	100.0
Women in the military are discriminated against.				
Agree	42	84.0	84.0	84.0
Disagree	4	8.0	8.0	92.0
Neutral/Not sure	4	8.0	8.0	100.0
The military environment is a very hostile environment towards women.				
Agree	27	54.0	54.0	54.0
Disagree	8	16.0	16.0	70.0
Neutral/Not sure	15	30.0	30.0	100.0
Women who join the military should expect to be victims of sexual assault.				
Agree	5	10.0	10.0	10.0
Disagree	39	78.0	78.0	88.0
Neutral/Not Sure	6	12.0	12.0	100.0

### Other Findings

Other important findings, not related to the research questions in this study were participant age and their perception that women have no place in the military. After running a cross tabulation table of these two variables the results indicated that the perception that women do have a place in the military is shared across multiple generations. The age intervals ranged from 18- 61, and 98% reported that women do have a place in the military. Only one respondent disagreed, saying women do not have a place in the military. This respondent was between the ages of 22-25.

Results also yielded interesting discrepancies between social work program status and knowledge about the roles that women currently hold in the military. M.S.W student's appeared to be more knowledgeable compared to B.S.W. students. When students were asked if women are currently exposed to combat 16% (n=5) of B.S.W. students disagreed, opposed to 5% (n=1) of M.S.W. students. B.S.W. students also disagreed that women are equally as fit to assume combat roles 26% (n=8) of the time, compared to 15% (n=3) of M.S.W. students.

Although the over 50% of the sample was White/Caucasian, the sample included other races and their perceptions. 20% of participants identified as Black/ African American. When asked, women have no place in the military, only one participant out of ten agreed with this statement, who identified as Black/African American. This finding might be important for further research, in which perceptions of women in the military are more closely examined through the possibility of racial disparity. Similar results were seen when branch of service and religion were examined. In this study there were 6 participants with military experience, however only the participant from the Navy agreed that women have no place in the military, compared to participants who served in the Army, Marines, National Guard and Air Force. Forty percent of the sample identified as Christian and, the only participant who agreed that women have no place in the military identified as Christian.



## **Limitations**

Limitations to this study include a lack of literature on the specific topic of social work student's and their perceptions and opinions of women in the military, resulting in insufficient instruments with reliability and validity to measure the variables in this study. The instrument being used in this study was adapted specifically for this study, and the researchers were unable to determine the reliability or validity of the instrument. This may have created a limitation in analyzing the completed survey, and determining significant relationships between variables. Since this was an online survey, the return rate for these is lower than face-to-face data collection (Yegidis, Weinbach & Myers, 2011). The researcher received a limited amount of data from male participants in this study, possibly due to the significant difference in the amount of male and female students in the field of social work. The sample was made up predominately of female participants.

Challenges of this study include the use of a sample of convenience. The researcher was not able to make generalizations from the study and sample to other BSW and MSW programs elsewhere, due to the sample of convenience being a non-probability sampling technique. The total number of the sample presented another challenge to the study. Since the total sample was relatively small (50 participants) this created limitations with what type of statistical tests could be conducted. Further limitations exist with the scope of the instrument used in this study. Expanding on the survey to examine attitudes toward women taking on more traditionally masculine roles, as a means to see how accepting students are of women in combat. More descript tasks that women can do in the military, might change the outcome of responses, if the nature of these roles was described as inherently dangerous. For instance, instead of asking in the

opinion of the participant, women can assume the role of hand-to-hand combat soldier, the questions might ask, “women can shoot enemies” and “women can be navy seals”.

Limitations within this sample included a lack of male responses, which are grounds for further research. Using a quota sampling technique in the future would safeguard against having an inadequate amount of male/female participants and military/non-military participants.

Another sample that would be advantageous to investigate is more veterans. Other studies suggest that military students are less accepting of women (Matthews et al., 2009), however there is a lack of research on the perceptions of veterans toward women in the military.

## Discussion

The findings from this study suggested that there was no statistically significant relationship between social work students and perceptions of women in the military. The relatively small sample size may have contributed to the lack of significant relationships. Although there were no statistically significant relationships between variables in the research questions, as a whole, social work students “Strongly Agreed” with most of the survey questions. This indicates that social work students in this sample were accepting of women to have various and non-traditional roles in the military. Upon running cross tabulation tables for program year and “women are currently exposed to combat in the military”, participants in their undergraduate social work program were more likely to disagree with this statement, compared to those in their master’s program. This could imply that greater educational efforts need to focus on the population of women veterans. Expanding education through elective courses that focus on the military population would give social work students insight into what experiences and possible disorders to be aware of when working with veterans.

The fourth research question in this study inquired about a relationship between branch of service and perception that women have no place in the military, as a means to reveal variance in perceptions based on branch of service. However, this relationship was not able to be determined given the small sample of student veterans, yet this may be the basis for future research. Other research found that perceptions do vary based on branch of service, and those at WestPoint military academy (Army) generally had lower acceptance of women in almost all non-traditional roles (Matthews et al., 2009). Other research might look at why there is a difference between the knowledge of BSW students and MSW students, as a way to investigate if the difference in

knowledge is equated to a difference in social work curriculum. Since social work's with a BSW work in the field, uncovering the source for the difference in knowledge could prove important to carrying out effective social services. Results of this study suggests that overall, 90% of social work students do not think that women should expect to be victims of sexual assault or deserve to be discriminated against. Literature suggests that military sexual assault and trauma is not specifically geared just toward women, men are often victims, which this research did not focus on (Settles, Buchanan & Colar, 2011). Additional research on social work students and their perceptions and knowledge on men and sexual assault in the military would be an important addition to the existing research.

The results of this research reflected what was found in the literature. The researchers anticipated fairly liberal views from civilian college students (Matthews et al., 2009). The literature suggested that civilian students are generally more accepting of women in the military, compared to students at military academies. Although this research was not comparative, it did focus on civilian college students. The overall results, as mentioned above, were overwhelming in favor of women in the military, despite past military experience. Female students at military academies were more likely to be in favor of non-traditional roles for women in the military, compared to their male counterparts (Matthews et al., 2009). Given that women make up more of the students in the social work department, this sample of this research consisted of mostly females, and the results reflected positive perceptions toward women in various occupational roles in the military, as suggested by past research (Matthews et al., 2009).

## **Implications**

### **Practice**

The findings in the research may hold implications for the way social workers practice with clients. Since this study investigated the opinions and perceptions of future social workers toward women in the military, the final data may suggest a gap in knowledge or a bias that is held within social workers. The completion of this study has revealed social work students' general feelings about women in the military. As women continue to increase in numbers in the military, the amount of women seeking services will also increase. One study suggested that up to 34% of women in the military have experienced sexual harassment and/or assault (Valente, 2007). Therefore, it is imperative that there are services and service providers that understand their experiences and are able to assist them in obtaining services. This study suggests that students beginning to enter the field of social work exhibit acceptance toward women in the military, which could mean that the services provided by these future social workers will include interventions that are sensitive to their experiences. It is important for the overall health of this clientele that future social workers are open-minded about the services this population may need.

### **Education**

It is important to know what views and biases future social workers might hold toward working with women in the military. Social work students are expected to actively self-reflect and self-correct as a means to uncover any biases or lack of knowledge that might be held while assisting clients that could prevent the acquisition of resources for clients (Council on Social Work Education, 2008). As social workers are called to advocate for appropriate access to services, it is pertinent to understand student's attitudes since one would expect social work students to be culturally sensitive and competent (Council on Social Work Education, 2008).

Cultural competency and commitment to diversity are foundational aspects of social work. Social work higher education stress that the necessary values and concepts are being instilled in future workers; so that they are best equipped to handle the diverse populations that they serve (Council on Social Work Education, 2008). Therefore, if there is a gap in knowledge or significant biases that are being held by future social workers, that needs to be addressed at the educational level quickly.

### **Research**

Upon conducting a review of the literature, the researchers were not able to find other studies in the literature that focused on the population of women in the military and social work students. This opens up many doors for future research, to include the possible comparative elements from various university students, or the opinions of students in other service driven majors. The use of a qualitative research design such as focus groups and/or interviews to further examine perceptions of women in the military may provide a more in depth and diverse view of the relationship between perceptions of students and women in the military. This research tested for significant relationships between military-service, branch of service, and gender and student's perceptions of women in the military, and opens opportunity to be expanded upon, to include research on perceptions based on branch of service. Additional research to examine the difference in knowledge and curriculum between students receiving their bachelors verses masters degree in social work might highlight ways to improve social work education across the board and better prepare all social work students to effectively work with the female veteran population. Additional research using pre and post tests within the population of students in military academies is needed to better measure differences in attitudes towards women serving in the military.

## **Appendix A: IRB Letter of Study Approval**



University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board  
Office of Research & Commercialization  
12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501  
Orlando, Florida 32826-3246  
Telephone: 407-823-2901 or 407-882-2276  
[www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html](http://www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html)

## Approval of Exempt Human Research

From: **UCF Institutional Review Board #1  
FWA00000351, IRB00001138**

To: **Ana M. Leon and Co-PI: Nichole L. Restivo**

Date: **November 05, 2013**

Dear Researcher:

On 11/5/2013, the IRB approved the following activity as human participant research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review: Exempt Determination  
Project Title: Social Work Student's Perceptions of the Roles of Women in the Military  
Investigator: Ana M Leon  
IRB Number: SBE-13-09769  
Funding  
Agency: Grant  
Title:  
Research ID: N/A

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please contact the IRB. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request in iRIS so that IRB records will be accurate.

In the conduct of this research, you are responsible to follow the requirements of the Investigator Manual.

On behalf of Sophia Dziegielewski, Ph.D., L.C.S.W., UCF IRB Chair, this letter is signed by:

Signature applied by Joanne Muratori on 11/05/2013 12:31:26 PM EST

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Joanne Muratori'.

IRB Coordinator



## **Appendix B: Invitational Email to Students**

**To whom it may concern:**

My name is Nichole and I am completing my Honors in the Major Undergraduate Thesis under the supervision of Dr. Ana Leon. My research topic is social work student's perceptions of the roles of women in the military. I am emailing you today to ask for your assistance in the data collection process of my research. Through Qualtrics.com a 37 item questionnaire has been compiled to collect information on student perceptions from undergraduate and graduate level social work students.

You are receiving this email because you are either an MSW or BSW student in the School of Social Work at the University of Central Florida. In compliance with FERPA legislation and to protect the identity of those students that will be invited to participate, I will not have any information on students that participate.

Instead, the social work office staff has agreed to send out this email to students. The staff will not reveal to me any information on who was invited to participate. This study is anonymous which means that once you complete the survey no one including the researcher will know your identity or be able to track your survey responses to you. Participation in this study is also voluntary and you will not receive any compensation for participating in the study. However, as in other research your participation will help to further explore an important topic. It is anticipated that the survey should take no more than 20 minutes to complete.

Should you wish to participate please go to the link below. There you will find an informed consent with more information on the study and the actual survey on Qualtrics.

Thank you for considering taking time out of your day to read this and I look forward to working with you if you decide to assist this research study.

-Nichole Restivo

## **Appendix C: Informed Consent**

**Please read this consent form carefully before deciding whether you wish to participate in this study. To participate in this study you must be at least 18 years of age.**

University of Central Florida  
School of Social Work

Researchers at the University of Central Florida (UCF) study many topics. To do this we need the help of people who agree to take part in a research study. You are being invited to take part in a research study, which will include about 100 people. You can ask questions about the research. You have been asked to take part in this research study because you are a social work student at the University of Central Florida. You must be 18 years of age or older to be included in the research study.

This research is being conducted by Nichole Restivo, a BSW Social Work student who is conducting the study for the Honors in the Major Undergraduate Thesis Program. I will be primarily responsible for collecting the data, but since I am an undergraduate student, I will be closely supervised by my Thesis Chair and mentor, Dr. Ana M. Leon.

**Study Title:** Social Work Student's Perceptions of the Roles of Women in the Military

**Purpose of the Study:** The purpose of this study is to investigate social work student's perceptions of women in the military. Social Work students represent those who will be our future service providers, and will be responsible for providing care to this population of women either in active military or who return home as veterans.

**What you will be asked to do in the study:** You will be asked to complete a **37** item survey that will ask you questions about your perceptions and opinions regarding women in the military. You will also be asked general questions about yourself. The survey will take about **20** minutes to complete, and since it is an anonymous survey, you are asked to **NOT** include your name or any other information that will personally identify you.

**Voluntary Participation:** Your participation in this study is voluntary. There is no penalty if you choose not to participate, and you have the right to terminate your participation at any point during the study without penalty. You can terminate your participation by not completing the survey. If you do not wish to answer any of the questions in the survey, you may leave them blank. You can begin the survey and then decide that you do not wish to complete it. Participation in this survey does not affect any grades or course grades.

**Location:** You will be directed to a Qualtrics.com link where you will find an informed consent that will give you more information on the study. Should you choose to participate that link will also direct you to the actual survey.

**Participation Time Required:** The survey will require approximately **20** minutes to complete.

**Risks:** The questions in the survey are only asking about your opinions. However, should you feel uncomfortable after completing the survey or wish to talk to someone about any personal feelings you have after participating in the study, you may seek assistance at the UCF Counseling Center. The Counseling Center is located on the UCF main campus in Building 27, the phone number is (407) 823-2811, or you can email them at [councntr@ucf.edu](mailto:councntr@ucf.edu). The website link is <http://counseling.sdes.ucf.edu/>.

**Benefits:** As a research participant, you will not benefit directly from this research, except to maybe acquire additional knowledge about the research process. Your participation will help us further understand perceptions about the roles of women in the military. You will not be compensated for your time in completing this survey or for participating in the study.

**Confidentiality/Anonymity:** This study will be completely anonymously. You are reminded not to include any information that may identify you on the survey. There will be no identifying information collected in the survey that can link your survey responses to your identity. Only Nichole and Dr. Leon will have access to the data. The data from the completed surveys will be kept by Nichole in a locked file cabinet at home for the IRB required 3 year period. All findings from the study reported by the researchers in any papers, or publications will be reported in aggregate/group form and individual responses will not be identified.

**Who should you contact if you have any questions about this study?**

Study contact for questions about the study or to report a problem: **Nichole Restivo**, BSW Student, UCF School of Social Work at [nichole.restivo@knights.ucf.edu](mailto:nichole.restivo@knights.ucf.edu) or **Dr. Ana M. Leon**, LCSW, Thesis Chair and mentor, School of Social Work, P O Box 163358, University of Central Florida, Orlando FL, 32816-3358.

**IRB contact about your rights in the study or to report a complaint:** Research at the University of Central Florida involving human participants is carried out under the oversight of the Institutional Review Board (UCF IRB). For information about the rights of people who take part in research, please contact: Institutional Review Board, University of Central Florida, Office of Research & Commercialization, 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501, Orlando, FL 32826-3246 or by telephone at (407) 823-3778.

By submitting a completed survey you are agreeing to participate in this study and verifying that you are at least 18 years of age. By completing this survey, you also give the researcher permission to report your responses anonymously in the final manuscript of her Honors in the Major thesis paper to be submitted to the Honors College as part of her course work.

**Please retain this form for your records. Thank you for your participation.**

## **Appendix D: Data Collection Tool**

**Survey**  
Women in the Military

**We are interested in your OPINION of what jobs women should or should not be performed in the military. Please indicate your perception for each of the following nine statements related to jobs that a woman might have in the military. No previous knowledge is needed to complete these questions, please rely strictly on your perception. Please use the scale provided (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral/Not Sure, Disagree and Strongly Disagree) to indicate your perception.**

1. Fighter pilot

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral/Not Sure
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

2. Truck mechanic

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral/Not Sure
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

3. Nurse in a combat zone

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral/Not Sure
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

4. Typist in the Pentagon

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral/Not Sure
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

5. Military commander

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral/Not Sure
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

6. Hand-to-hand combat soldier

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral/Not Sure
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

7. Jet transport pilot

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral/Not Sure
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

8. Air defense gunner

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral/Not Sure
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

9. Crew member on a combat ship

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral/Not Sure
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree



**We are interested in your overall OPINION about what women in the military face today. Please indicate your view on each of the following statements as they pertain to women in today's military by marking the appropriate response. No previous knowledge is needed to complete these questions, please rely strictly on your PERCEPTION. Please use the scale provided (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral/Not Sure, Disagree and Strongly Disagree) to indicate your perception.**

10. Women in the military are able to assume all the roles listed in Questions 1-9 (*fighter pilot, mechanic, combat nurse, typist in the Pentagon, commander, hand-to-hand combat soldier, jet transport pilot, air defense gunner, crew member on a combat ship*) in the military.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral/Not Sure
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

11. Women are currently assigned to jobs in the armed forces that would expose them to combat.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral/Not Sure
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

12. Women are equally fit to assume direct combat roles in the military.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral/Not Sure
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

13. Women in the military are currently assigned to dirty jobs like repairing trucks or other heavy equipment.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral/Not Sure
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

14. Women in the military are currently assigned to jobs where they have command over men.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral/Not Sure
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

15. Thinking about opportunities and equal treatment for women, would you say women's treatment and opportunities are better in the military, better in civilian employment, or there isn't any difference ?

- Better in the military
- Better in civilian employment
- No difference
- Don't know

16. Women in the military face the same challenges faced by men in the military.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral/Not Sure
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

17. Women in the military are often victims of sexual assault.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral/Not Sure
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

18. Women have no place in the military.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral/Not Sure
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

19. Women who join the military are usually lesbians.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral/Not Sure
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

20. Women in the military are discriminated against.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral/Not Sure
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

21. The military environment is a very hostile environment towards women.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral/Not Sure
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

22. Women who join the military should expect to be victims of sexual assault.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral/Not Sure
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

**The following questions provide a little information about you.**

23. What is your age?

\_\_\_\_\_

24. What is your biological sex? (this is the assigned sex that you were born with)

- Female

- Male
- Other

25. How do you identify your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Other

26. What year are you in?

- B.S.W. Junior
- B.S.W. Senior
- M.S.W. 1<sup>st</sup> Year
- M.S.W. 2<sup>nd</sup> Year (Including Advanced Standing)

27. Marital Status

- Married
- Single
- Divorced
- Separated
- Widow/Widower
- Other

28. What is your race/ethnicity?

- Black
- African American
- Hispanic/ Latino(a)
- Pacific Islander
- Asian
- White/ Caucasian
- Other

29. What is your religious affiliation?

- Muslim
- Catholic
- Christian
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Atheist
- Agnostic
- None

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

30. Have you ever served in the military?

- Yes
- No

31. If you answered 'yes' to question #30, how many years have you served in the military?  
\_\_\_\_\_

32. If you have served in the military, indicate which branch of the military you served in?

- Army
- Air force
- Navy
- Marines
- Coast Guard
- National Guard

Involved with more than 1 branch of the service (Indicate which) \_\_\_\_\_

Never Served in the military

33. Indicate which war(s) you served in—check all that apply.

- OIF/OEF
- Iraq War
- Gulf War (Desert Storm)

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

34. Military status:

- Active military
- Active reserve
- Veteran (less than 20 + years in military)
- Retired military (more than 20 years in military)

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!

## **Appendix E: Research Codebook**

Name	Label	Variable	Code	Level
Fight Pil.	Women in the military should be fighter pilots.	Question 1 On survey	1= Strongly Agree 2= Agree 3= Neutral/Not Sure 4= Disagree 5= Strongly Disagree 99 = Unknown	Ordinal
Mech	Women in the military should be truck mechanics.	Question 2 On survey	1= Strongly Agree 2= Agree 3= Neutral/Not Sure 4= Disagree 5= Strongly Disagree 99 = Unknown	Ordinal
Comb. Nurs	Women in the military should be nurses in combat.	Question 3 On survey	1= Strongly Agree 2= Agree 3= Neutral/Not Sure 4= Disagree 5= Strongly Disagree 99 = Unknown	Ordinal
Typist	Women in the military should be typists in the Pentagon.	Question 4 On survey	1= Strongly Agree 2= Agree 3= Neutral/Not Sure 4= Disagree 5= Strongly Disagree 99 = Unknown	Ordinal
Mil.Comm.	Women in the military should be military commanders.	Question 5 On survey	1= Strongly Agree 2= Agree 3= Neutral/Not Sure 4= Disagree 5= Strongly Disagree 99 = Unknown	Ordinal
H2H comb	Women in the military should be hand-to-hand combat soldiers.	Question 6 On survey	1= Strongly Agree 2= Agree 3= Neutral/Not Sure 4= Disagree 5= Strongly Disagree	Ordinal

			Disagree 99 = Unknown	
Jet Trans	Women in the military should be jet transport pilots.	Question 7 On survey	1= Strongly Agree 2= Agree 3= Neutral/Not Sure 4= Disagree 5= Strongly Disagree 99 = Unknown	Ordinal
Air Def. Gun	Women in the military should be air defense gunners.	Question 8 On survey	1= Strongly Agree 2= Agree 3= Neutral/Not Sure 4= Disagree 5= Strongly Disagree 99 = Unknown	Ordinal
Comb. Ship	Women in the military should be crew-members of a combat ship.	Question 9 On survey	1= Strongly Agree 2= Agree 3= Neutral/Not Sure 4= Disagree 5= Strongly Disagree 99 = Unknown	Ordinal
All Above	Women in the military are able to assume all the roles listed in Questions 1-9 ( <i>fighter pilot, mechanic, combat nurse, typist in the Pentagon, commander, hand-to-hand combat soldier, jet transport pilot, air defense gunner, crew member on a combat ship</i> ) in the military.	Question 10 On survey	1= Strongly Agree 2= Agree 3= Neutral/Not Sure 4= Disagree 5= Strongly Disagree 99 = Unknown	Ordinal



Comb Expose	Women are currently assigned to jobs in the armed forces that would expose them to combat.	Question 11 On survey	1= Strongly Agree 2= Agree 3= Neutral/Not Sure 4= Disagree 5= Strongly Disagree 99 = Unknown	Ordinal
Equal fit	Women are <u>equally</u> fit to assume direct combat roles in the military.	Question 12 On survey	1= Strongly Agree 2= Agree 3= Neutral/Not Sure 4= Disagree 5= Strongly Disagree 99 = Unknown	Ordinal
Dirty jobs	Women in the military are currently assigned to dirty jobs like repairing trucks or other heavy equipment.	Question 13 On survey	1= Strongly Agree 2= Agree 3= Neutral/Not Sure 4= Disagree 5= Strongly Disagree 99 = Unknown	Ordinal
Comm. Men	Women in the military are currently assigned to jobs where they have command over men.	Question 14 On survey	1= Strongly Agree 2= Agree 3= Neutral/Not Sure 4= Disagree 5= Strongly Disagree 99 = Unknown	Ordinal
Opportunities	Thinking about opportunities and equal treatment for women, would you say women's treatment and opportunities are better in the military, better in civilian employment, or	Question 15 On survey	1= Better in the military 2= Better in civilian employment 3= No difference 4= Don't know 99= Unknown	Ordinal

	there isn't any difference?			
Same Challenge	Women in the military face the same challenges faced by men in the military.	Question 16 On survey	1= Strongly Agree 2= Agree 3= Neutral/Not Sure 4= Disagree 5= Strongly Disagree 99 = Unknown	Ordinal
Vic. Sex Assault	Women in the military are <u>often</u> victims of sexual assault.	Question 17 On survey	1= Strongly Agree 2= Agree 3= Neutral/Not Sure 4= Disagree 5= Strongly Disagree 99 = Unknown	Ordinal
No place Milt	Women have no place in the military.	Question 18 On survey	1= Strongly Agree 2= Agree 3= Neutral/Not Sure 4= Disagree 5= Strongly Disagree 99 = Unknown	Ordinal
Lesbians	Women who join the military are usually lesbians.	Question 19 On survey	1= Strongly Agree 2= Agree 3= Neutral/Not Sure 4= Disagree 5= Strongly Disagree 99 = Unknown	Ordinal
Discriminate	Women in the military are discriminated against.	Question 20 On survey	1= Strongly Agree 2= Agree 3= Neutral/Not Sure 4= Disagree 5= Strongly Disagree 99 = Unknown	Ordinal
Hostile	The military environment is a very hostile environment	Question 21 On survey	1= Strongly Agree 2= Agree 3= Neutral/Not Sure 4= Disagree	Ordinal

	towards women.		5= Strongly Disagree 99 = Unknown	
Expect Vic S.A	Women who join the military should expect to be victims of sexual assault.	Question 22 On survey	1= Strongly Agree 2= Agree 3= Neutral/Not Sure 4= Disagree 5= Strongly Disagree 99 = Unknown	Ordinal
Age	What is your age?	Age	1= 18-21 2= 22-25 3= 26-29 4= 30-33 5= 34-37 6= 38-41 7= 42-45 8= 46-49 9= 50-53 10= 54-57 11= 58-61 12= 62-65 99= Unknown	Interval
Sex	What is your biological sex? (this is the assigned sex that you were born with)	Sex	1= Male 2= Female 3= Other 99= Unknown	Nominal
Gender	How do you identify your gender?	Gender	1= Male 2= Female 3= Other 99= Unknown	Nominal
School yr	What year are you in?	Year	1= B.S.W. Junior 2= B.S.W. Senior 3=M.S.W. 1 <sup>st</sup> Year 4= M.S.W. 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year (Including Advanced Standing)	Nominal

			99= Unknown	
Marital	Marital Status	Marital status	1= Married 2= Single 3= Divorced 4= Separated 5= Widow/Widower 6= Other 99= Unknown	Nominal
Race.ethn	What is your race/ethnicity?	Race/ethnicity	1= Black 2= African American 3= Hispanic/Latino(a) 4= Pacific Islander 5= Asian 6= White/ Caucasian 7= Other 99= Unknown	Nominal
Religion	What is your religious affiliation?	Religion	1= Muslim 2= Catholic 3= Christian 4= Hindu 5= Jewish 6= Atheist 7= Agnostic 8= None 9= Other 99= Unknown	Nominal
Military service	Have you ever served in the military?	Military service	1= Yes 2= No 99= Unknown	Nominal

branch	If you have served in the military, indicate which branch of the military you served in?	Military branch	1= Army 2= Air force 3= Navy 4= Marines 5= Coast Guard 6= National Guard 7= Army & Nat'l Guard 99= Unknown	Nominal
Yrs in service	If you answered 'yes' to question #30, how many years have you served in the military?	Years in military	1= 1-4 2= 5-8 3= 9-12 4= 13-16 5= 17-20 6= 21-24 7= 25-28 8= 29-32 9= 33-36 99= Unknown	Interval
Milit. status	Military status	Current Status	1= Active military 2= Active reserve 3= Veteran 4= Retired 5= Other 99= Unknown	Nominal
OIF	I served during Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF)	Wars served	1=Yes 2=No 99= Unknown	Nominal
OEF	I served during Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF)	Wars served	1=Yes 2=No 99= Unknown	Nominal
Gulf war	I served during the Gulf war or Desert Storm	Wars served	1=Yes 2=No 99= Unknown	Nominal

Other wars	Have you served during any other wars?	Wars served	1=Yes 2=No 99= Unknown	Nominal
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