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Gender Integration Into The Military: A Meta-Analysis Of Norway, Canada, Israel, And The United States

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Gender Integration into the Military:
A Meta-Analysis of Norway, Canada, Israel, and the United States

By

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BA, University of Charleston, WV 1990
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A DISSERTATION

Presented to the faculty of

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GENDER INTEGRATION INTO THE MILITARY: 
A META-ANALYSIS OF NORWAY, CANADA, ISRAEL, AND THE UNITED STATES

Abstract

Over the past 15 years, the Global War on Terrorism has necessitated an examination of the military’s practices and the way that they meet the complexities of new and different types of war and tactics. Vital to this examination are policies related to the inclusion and deployment of women in combat. Burba stated war is not a setting for social testing, but the American Military must embrace the social subtleties of gender differences in an effort to meet the Armed Services requirement for an ever-changing asymmetrical battlefield.

This study compares and contrasts the American current policy divergent to three other countries’ policies that have successfully integrated women into combat: Norway, Canada, and Israel. Through this examination, an opportunity to recognize gaps in training and procedural information that are most important to the successful implementation in the United States is revealed.

The scientific data, although supporting the fact that physiological differences exist between men and women, were not supported in the argument that all women should be excluded from combat units. In all case studies, it was found that women who volunteered for combat assignments performed equally as well as their male counterparts without degradation of operational readiness or a lower unity of cohesion.

However, I was not surprised that the leaders of the three counties observed that the successful integration of women into combat units is not about changing a culture. It is simply a leadership issue.
University of New England
Doctor of Education
Educational Leadership

This dissertation was presented by

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my dad, the late Dannie R. Wooten, who passed away 4 months to the day that I was to graduate. He was always a very proud dad and Oompa, but I believe my dissertation would have given him an even greater sense of pride and extremely happy. Love you dad . . . miss you.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation has been one of the most laborious tasks that I have ever completed in my personal life or professional military career. I did not achieve this alone, it could not have been done without all of you. To my beautiful wife, Michelle, thank you for your love, support, patience, and for being my sounding board and editor over the past three and half years (now we can enjoy a weekend). To our son, Evan, thank you for being such a great son, constant motivator, and terrific distractor when we had to get away from this and play a round of golf. To my advisory team and mentors, I send a special thanks to each of you. Dr. Michelle Collay, thank you for the countless hours assisting me with phone calls, emails and all your time spent in editing; you are a true educator and mentor. Dr. Carey Clark, thank you for all your vast knowledge in methods and revision advice, most of all, thank you for your patience and the efforts to edit, and still give great advice in the last sprint. To Dr. Elizabeth (Ely) Harwood, thank you for your assistance, guidance, brilliant insight, confidence in me, and mostly your sincere friendship. To the many others along this journey who had a part in the success of this research. Mr. Pete Scheffer, a great soldier, leader, educator, and true friend. Thank you for everything from giving me your knowledge, but sharing your excitement in knowing this is possible. Dr. Ella Benson, for all your assistance and guidance, even when it wasn’t your turn to be my professor—and for the birthday treats! And to all my great friends, peers and colleagues who without your insights, motivation and enthusiasm, this could have never happened. Finally, to my mom, Linda Wooten, who shares in this accomplishment with me; thank you for always knowing I could do it . . . Love you.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Over the past 15 years, the Global War on Terrorism has necessitated an examination of the American Military’s practices and the way that they meet the complexities of new and different types of war and tactics. Vital to this examination are policies related to the inclusion and deployment of women in combat. Burba (2007) stated that war is not a setting for social testing, but the American Military must embrace the social subtleties of gender differences in an effort to meet the American Armed Services requirement for an ever-changing asymmetrical battlefield along with the specific skills required of its entire population to match future technological advances in weaponry and tactics.

In January of 2013, the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD; 2013b) announced that by January 2016, all jobs would be open to women, including Special Operations units such as U.S. Army Rangers and U.S. Special Forces (Vanden, 2013). This action rescinds the long standing exclusionary policy that is not only institutionally transforming, but also challenges practices, beliefs, and attitudes about women in combat that have developed over many years—238 years to be exact.

From a historic perspective, the U.S. Congress passed the Women’s Armed Services Integration Act of 1948 (McSally, 2007) with its Ground Combat Exclusion Policy that dictated how many women could be in one branch of service, which jobs they could hold, and the military rank they could achieve (McSally, 2007). During that time, and into the 1960s and 1970s, having women in combat roles was virtually unthinkable; however, when reviewing this
law, the historical context in which it was written cannot be dismissed. Examining the historic precedent brings to light the social evolution that has occurred in the American Military.

Since the American Revolutionary War, fighting American wars has been officially legalized as a “males only” occupation with laws and policy established to reflect and maintain that exclusiveness. However, women have always served in combat, even if unofficially and not formally recognized by the U.S. Congress. During the last 50 years, significant social, cultural, and technological changes have occurred that influence how we view the nature of war and how we prepare and deploy the military. A prime example of how the military views combat enemies occurred during the September 11, 2001, attacks. Prior to those attacks, wars were fought on a linear battlefield; there were distinct enemy and friendly lines. September 11, 2001, changed that structure to an asymmetrical battlefield where the enemy can be located adjacent to or in the same battle zone of the American Armed Forces.

![Linear (symmetrical battlefield) vs. Nonlinear (asymmetrical battlefield)](Figure 1. Linear (symmetrical) and nonlinear (asymmetrical) battlefields. From U.S. Army, FM 3-90)

Technological advances in weaponry and the diminished desire of men to serve in the military coupled with the evolution of the societal roles of women emerge as pivotal components driving the need for change. Today, women comprise about 14 percent of the active force and roughly 17 percent of the Reserve Components (Burrelli, 2013) compared to 1.4 percent in 1960.
and slowly increasing to 11.4 percent in 1990 (Rutgers Institute for Women’s Leadership, 2010). In recent decades, changes in both law and policy have altered women’s roles in the larger society and the military jobs they are allowed to perform. According to the Alliance for National Defense (AND; 2013), “Evolutionary rather than revolutionary, several of the most dramatic changes occurred following the first Gulf War with the repeal of both the ban on women serving aboard combat aircraft and combat ships” (n.p.). Policy changes followed these legislative actions.

**Problem Statement**

The criticisms leveled at the DoD’s definition of direct ground combat are that it is not relevant and makes no sense when describing the asymmetric battlefield of today. The terms “well forward on the battlefield,” “forward line of own troops,” and “forward edge of the battlefield” imply a linear array of military forces that were envisioned during the 20th Century Cold War. Today’s modern conflicts in the Middle East and other hot spots around the world are fought asymmetrically, meaning that the line of battle is not well defined. In short, the wars waged in Iraq and Afghanistan bear no resemblance to the physical circumstances that led to this definition. The complexities of today’s operational environment in combat have changed; accordingly, the roles of women in combat have also changed.

Rescinding the Combat Exclusion Policy (DoD, 1994) for women in the American military service presents opportunities and challenges that require a comprehensive systematic integration plan to secure success in the short and long term. An institutional change that challenges core beliefs and current practices, such as this one, demands committed leadership at all levels demonstrating, over time, through their words, actions, and decisions, that they embrace new roles for women in the U.S. Army, and hold themselves and others accountable.
Absent a consistent implementation, resistance, and inertia will stall and ultimately compromise leader’s ability to drive change. According to Bolman and Deal (2008), organizations embark on deep change when faced with major problems or opportunities; here the American military has a great opportunity. Those senior leaders charged to respond to this directive are hindered by conflicting current policy. They are charged to manage the change at their level and implement women into their combat units as combat power. However, current policy concerning integration of women into combat units has not caught up to the termination of the Combat Exclusion Policy (DoD, 1994), for women are authorized to engage the enemy, on the ground with small arms weapons, but not allowed in these units that historically conducts such operations.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is the examination and presentation of successful gender integration policies through a cross-case analysis of three other developed countries. The findings indicate that, whether or not the gender standards are normed to conform to less physically strong women or neutrally aligned across the genders, unit morale and cohesion (i.e., unit effectiveness) are not degraded by integration of the sexes. Moreover, the very small percentage of women who volunteer for combat assignments perform equally as well as do men. The progress of integration shows that, for the plan to succeed, it must be a leadership issue, rather than a social or cultural issue.

The significance of this study is its importance in revisiting the assumptions held by many political advisors, policy makers, and stakeholders about the challenges and opportunities arising from women formally joining combat units. By examining other countries’ policies of gender integration a cross-cultural perspective provides insight into how American military women might fully function in combat arms units. The second purpose of the study is to
document various strategies and develop a disciplined initiative for American military leaders to facilitate a successful transition from a longstanding political directive opposed to women in combat toward a more progressive position that will meet the evolving needs of the American Armed Forces. It is anticipated that this exploration will lead to an accurate depiction of the American military woman’s environment and improve leadership knowledge of the critical gaps in the current knowledge base about the new generation of women that limit the understanding about how they can optimally function in their military environment.

**Research Questions**

In this study, I compare and contrast the current American policy that is divergent from three other countries’ policies that have successfully integrated women into combat: Norway, Canada, and Israel. Through this examination, I reveal an opportunity to recognize gaps in training and procedural information that are most important to the successful implementation in the United States. In addition, the research uncovers indicators for a successful model through the assessment of the factors in the American policy that currently stands and the factors that possibly were eliminated or totally overlooked. Four questions guide the cross-case policy analysis and should be addressed well before the American Military begins implementation. The long-term questions might take between 5–10 years to answer. They are discussed in the conclusion of the study.

**Research Questions**

1. What are the current organizational conditions that restrict women’s advancement in the American Military?
2. How does the American gender integration policy compare and contrast with the gender integration policies of the three other developed countries of Norway, Canada, and Israel?

3. What are the gaps in training and procedural information that are most important to the successful implementation in the United States?

4. What are the beliefs and assumptions held by political advisors, policy makers, and stakeholders about the challenges and opportunities arising from women formally joining combat units?

**Assumptions**

The current structure of the American Military is inequitable to women, especially when it pertains to promotion, advancement, and operational experience. In my personal experience, I hear many general comments from senior leaders state, “Our system has worked for 238 years, why are we changing it now,” and few state, “It’s about time women are given the same opportunity serve as men.” The combat arms’ leaders will question this policy change, but the idea that only courageous, brave, tough men can defeat the Nation’s enemies will no longer be a valid assumption. When a woman can lead a brigade into battle as an “infantrywoman,” the long-held image of combat as “men only” will give way to women as equals in all military roles.

**Societal Opinion**

Military and civilian advocates for full gender integration argue that women can compete alongside men in the workforce, in athletics, and on the battlefield (Simons, 2001). However, the debate over gender equality continues in every corner of the work environment in the United States, especially among those people who remain virtually single-gender (Ms. Foundation for Women, 2013). Similarly the struggle for women’s parity in American society and in the role of
women in the American Military continues. The irony of the debate in military settings is that modern warfare has already placed women in direct ground combat engagements with the enemy over the past 2 decades and particularly over the past 15 years in postwar Iraq and in Afghanistan, in spite of the DoD (1994) policy that excludes women from ground combat. Policymakers from the Revolutionary War to the present have attempted to exclude women from combat; however, an examination of the historical sources shows that women have stood side by side with their male counterparts in every major conflict that the United States has fought (Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 2008).

The contributions of women to readiness and effectiveness in ground combat units are clearly documented in the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars. In fact, Putko (2008) concluded, “There is not the slightest doubt that women can perform their assigned duties in the combat zone, including engaging in combat actions essential to their personal and unit’s self-defense, with skill and valor equal to their male comrades” (p. vii).

In the past, the DoD referred to a public survey on the lack of public support for assigning women to combat jobs (U.S. Government Accountability Office [GAO], 1998). This might have been true; however, since the 1990 the Gulf War and more recently, the public clearly supports expanding the role of women in combat. Gallup surveys of public opinion have produced data that tell the story. In 1991, 52 percent of people surveyed responded they were in favor of women serving in combat roles (Brown, 2013). In 2001, the Gallup Organization polled the public regarding women serving in combat jobs; again, 52 percent were in favor of women serving in these jobs (Brown, 2013). When asked 7 years later in a September 2007 Gallup poll, the numbers jumped to 74 percent. Finally, in January 2013, the public opinion rose to 84 percent in favor and 6 percent with no opinion; more than eight in 10 Americans believe that
women should either (a) have the opportunity to serve or (b) be required to serve the same combat assignments as men serve. Public opinion has clearly changed over the last few decades in favor of women performing combat operations. However, in addition to the DoD arguments against assigning women to combat roles, some scholars and military historians have come forward to offer their theories about how women will perform in combat.

**Countries Providing Insight for Gender Integration Policy**

In this study, I compare and contrast the current American policy against three other countries’ policies that have already integrated: Norway, Canada, and Israel. Through this examination, I take an opportunity to recognize gaps in training, and will reveal procedural information that is most important to the successful implementation in the United States. In addition, I assess the factors in American policy that should be eliminated or totally overlooked regarding indicators for a successful model. I now present a brief introduction of the three countries that are examined in this meta-analysis.

**Norway**

The Norwegian women contributed greatly to their country’s military during WWII; however, despite the contributions and positive experiences from both the Officers Training School and the Army Communication School, the Norwegian Parliament debated and decided in 1953 that women could no longer serve in the Norwegian Military (Steder, 2014, as cited in Vaernø & Sveri, 1990). In 1976, the Norwegian Parliament reconsidered its decision and decided to allow women into noncombat positions. The first women to enter officer training occurred in 1977 in the Norwegian Air Force; however, the heated debate over women serving in combat positions continued until 1984. The Norwegian Parliament introduced the Military Occupational Equality [policy] of 1984 (Steder, 2014) for men and women, which allowed men and women to
have the same opportunity on a volunteer basis to enter any organization in the Norwegian Military. Thus, Norway was the first North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) country to take on this decision; thus, it became a pioneer country for women in the military.

Canada

The Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) is right on a par with the American Military employing 17 percent of all military personnel as women compared to 16 percent for the United States. However, unlike the United States, Canada supports the roles of women in all positions within its military, including small combat units. As discussed previously, most policies of integrating women were developed in response to political pressure, and Canada was no exception. The Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC; 2013) Tribunal directed in 1989 that women must be fully integrated into all Canadian Force roles except service on submarines. The Minister’s Advisory Board on CAF Gender Integration and Employment Equity removed the 2001 restriction; the advisory board had been up to transform beliefs about women’s integration by the “adoption of not only a policy, but also a belief in the need for a respectful workplace” (Cawkill, Rogers, Knight, & Spear, 2009, p. 17).

Israel

The Israeli Supreme Court ruled that the Israeli Ministry of Defense’s 1995 policy of not allowing women into the Israeli Air Force pilot’s course was solely founded on gender and, therefore, constituted unlawful discrimination (Finestone et al., 2014). This decision initiated radical changes in the combat active service opportunities for women in the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF). Today, women serve in combat roles in many IDF units, including the light infantry brigade, artillery, and Border Police.
Conclusion

As women’s roles continue to develop, expand, and cultivate a place in the American Military, women will experience unique challenges. They will also likely struggle to permeate interpersonal activities informed by traditional norms inherent to the culture of the military.

The combat branches of each service have a boastful history of courage and audacity in battle. The amount of intense training required is enormous and inflicts stress on the body and mind. Some leaders have long considered women to lack the physical or mental capacity to handle the stresses of the training and the actual combat. Although some women warriors accept formal exclusion from battle, the current policy limits women’s access to advancement alongside their male counterparts.

A large portion of the research that I have included elucidates the previous contributions that women have made, and the societal and cultural opinions about them, and challenges the scientific, theoretical, and physiological issues and perspectives that have originated from a historically all-male organization. Historical narratives relay the accomplishments that women have proven in battle, the change in enemy tactics, the current ideology about today’s modern battlefield, and how counterinsurgency operations require the best that all American Military service members have to offer.

Senior leaders are responsible for this transition and a successful integration will demand a critical mass of support from leaders at every level. As it is outlined, this change will be implemented in phases and evaluated after each stage is completed. The U.S. Marine Corps has completed this initial phase and four women have tested in the infantry course. In 2013, the U.S. Marine Corps graduated its first female marines from their rigorous and challenging infantry course and lauded them as an absolute success. The next stage will be evaluated to determine
how these four women will do in combat units, if they are assigned to such units. The magnitude of the change is enormous because the U.S. Army, as of October 2014, issued its timeline to incorporate women into the elite U.S. Army Ranger School. On April 20, 2015, 19 women started Ranger Class 06-15. Eight women successfully completed the Ranger Assessment Program week; however, all were recycled into the next Ranger Class 07-15 for failing to meet specific patrolling standards and given a second attempt at patrolling. After the second attempt, five women were dropped from the course and three women were given a day-one recycle into Ranger Class 08-15, that started on June 21, 2015. These three women successfully met the standards of the Benning Phase and moved on to the Mountain Phase on July 10. All three women passed the knot test, military mountaineering skills assessment, the foot movement up Mount Yonah, and were given opportunities to lead patrols—one woman recycled into Ranger Class 09-15 to start the Mountain Phase. Two women received a passing grade in the mountains during platoon-level combat patrols, and moved on to the Swamp Phase. The two women also met the standards of the Swamp Phase, proficiently leading waterborne platoon-level combat patrols, and became the first women ever to earn the Ranger Tab. They graduated August 21, 2015.

When leaders of organizations choose to oppose a cultural shift, they might believe that their opposition is founded on logical thought and sound judgment; however, when others fail to support their initiatives, they assume that the others are not thinking rationally or are somewhat out of touch with the objectives. In a study about change and resistance patterns, Conner (1992) posed the question, “Why the double standard? The answer may lie in the circumstance that whenever the challenges confronted differ significantly from the capabilities we possess, we are threatened” (p. 126). Some leaders in the American military might not realize that they have the
capability to accept a policy change such as formally assigning women to combat roles; they might perceive that a lack of resources or rationale exists to accommodate the change. Therefore, the resistance to this change might not be the change itself, but it might be the implications to the change, or the “perceived” implications.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of the literature review is to provide a historical examination of women in combat, to review both sides of the argument, and to recommend approaches for American military leaders to transition from the old culture of gendered roles into the new culture of women in combat as formal members of combat units.

Pryce, Pryce, and Shackelford (2012) illuminated unique aspects of the wars in Afghanistan and previously in Iraq. One section of the book details general information about “women warriors” (p. 88). Pryce et al. outlined the circumstances that led the American Military to give women an expanded role in combat, which included the increased need for volunteers because of the lack of male volunteers and cultural restrictions for warfare in Muslim countries that prohibited any U.S. Army men from performing necessary aspects of routine duty such as physically inspecting Muslim women. These culturally driven additional duty requirements obligated servicewomen to perform those essential responsibilities.

The operational environment of modern military warfare with advanced weaponry and the reality of armed conflict with new enemy tactics and counterinsurgency operations will require the best soldiers, airmen, sailors, marines, and leaders—men and women. With an emerging, new kind of enemy, it has been established that the Global War on Terror will be a protracted and costly fight (Record, 2003). The American Military will be called upon consistently to protect its self-interests, its borders, and the citizens of the United States.

In January 2013, the DoD (as cited in Lopez & Henning, 2013) announced that, by January 2016, all jobs will be open to women, including Special Operations Units such as the
U.S. Army Rangers and the U.S. Special Forces (Vanden, 2013). The American Military is on the brink of a historical change and, in 2016, men (and women) will have to adopt and adapt to this policy change. Through this literature review, I provide multiple perspectives regarding the integration of women, which might allow American Military leaders a different lens through which to view the transition to allowing women to serve in combat units. In addition to the historical perspective, the present day wars in Afghanistan and postwar Iraq offer an unprecedented opportunity to examine the performance of women during combat operations.

**Overview of Women in Combat**

Women have served with honor and distinction as far back as the Revolutionary War in 1776. De Pauw (1981) stated that at least a few hundred women fought in the American Revolutionary War. De Pauw also discussed evidence of women’s participation in artillery units. According to De Pauw, approximately 400 women frequently carried the water used to swab out canons and many often passed themselves off as men to serve in the American Civil War.

During World War II, the U.S. Army’s chief of staff, General George C. Marshall secretly conducted an experiment without informing Congress. General Marshall heard that the British used women in mixed battery antiaircraft combat duty against the German Army (Parham, 2006). General Marshall used women in the same capacity and stunned the general staff by showing that the units mixed with men and women in equal proportion performed better than all-male units performed and had higher unit cohesion.

Heroic stories recount women’s performance in combat in the past decade under stressful situations while receiving enemy fire. When reading the citation of U.S. Army Sergeant Leigh Ann Hester’s award, one can fully appreciate what a certain percentage of women can bring potential to the U.S. Army. Sergeant Hester was first woman since World War II to be awarded
the Silver Star medal for valor in combat. The citation stated, “She skillfully led her team of [Military Police] Soldiers in a counterattack after about fifty insurgents ambushed a supply convoy they were guarding” (Hall of Valor, 2013). Another combat veteran, U.S. Marine Corps Lance Corporal Carrie Blais, shot and killed an insurgent during a firefight in Haditha, Iraq. Fraley (2011, as cited in Wise, 2006) provided other exemplary acts of bravery of women in Iraq and Afghanistan, stating,

Private First Class Teresa Broadwell Grace, an M249 gunner, was awarded the Bronze Star with V for Valor for actions during an October 2003 firefight in Karbala, Iraq. After her unit was ambushed, Grace’s High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle (Humvee) drove into the kill zone and “her commanders estimate that Grace and her comrades killed more than twenty Iraqis during the encounter.” (p. 22)

Sexual Harassment

Combat is more stressful than other assigned missions are for both genders. During combat operations and extended deployments, all soldiers become physically fatigued, often only getting 4–6 hours of sleep. They are also physically fatigued because of the fear of death and the unknown every time they go on a mission. The inherent missions conducted in a garrison, or “at home” environment can be mitigated with safety measures and supervision—when beginning a mission, the unknown of whether one will talk to one’s loved one again in the next 16 hours is an enormous stress. Women are more likely to experience the added stressor of sexual harassment (Chaumba & Bride, 2010; Lipari, Cook, Rock, & Matos, 2008; Street, Vogt, & Dutra, 2009) and other interpersonal stressors related to being a women in a male-dominated setting (Miller, 2000; Rona et al., 2007; Vogt et al., 2005; Weatherhill et al., 2011). However, women also face sexual harassment and assault in noncombat roles; and, with the anticipated, limited number of women
who will take advantage of entering combat units, a noticeable spike might not exist in the amount of sexual assault and harassment cases.

This research makes the ongoing investigation of the current factors unique to women’s service experiences even more vital, especially when the formerly all-segregated combat MOS will now be integrated in 2016. As research will indicate, it is important to explore all factors, strengths, and challenges within the American Military context to eliminate harassment and other interpersonal stressors.

Vealey (2014) discusses a 2000 investigation conducted by Laura Miller concerning gender harassment in the military using a qualitative design by which U.S. Army men and women were observed and interviewed from 1992–1994 to examine their hostility toward military women. Miller reported that resistance from the men came from their perceptions that women did not have to perform at the same standard as men. Miller (2000) specified a number of stereotypes that were held by the men about military women:

1. that the physical training standards were easier for women;
2. that women should not be allowed to participate in the military because of inherent physical weaknesses;
3. that military women took advantage of pregnancy;
4. that women were allowed more time to improve their education; and
5. that women were assigned less difficult and less labor-intensive duties than military men were assigned. (p. 24)

Dutra et al. (2010) conducted on a sample of active duty women soldiers in the U.S. Army who presented for routine post deployment screenings as part of a larger, longitudinal study of women’s deployment stress and health outcomes (Dutra et al., 2010). In this quantitative
A pilot study, Dutra et al. examined combat exposure experiences and military sexual harassment to assess the impact of these stressors on self-reported post deployment PTSD and depression symptoms among 54 active duty U.S. Army women. Approximately 75 percent of the sample recognized combat exposure, more than 50 percent recognized sexual harassment, and one-third endorsed symptoms of PTSD that resulted more from military sexual trauma than from combat exposure (Vealy, 2014). However, data were collected shortly upon return from their deployment and might not reflect the long-term impact of deployment.

The U.S. Department of Justice (2013) documented five statistics in its National Crime Victim’s Right’s Week Resource Guide:

1. In 2010, victims Ages 12 or older experienced a total 188,380 (20 percent) rapes or sexual assaults.
2. Of the victims, 92 percent were female.
3. Of the victims, 25 percent were assaulted by a stranger, 48 percent were assaulted by a friend or acquaintance, and 17 percent were assaulted by an intimate partner.
4. Of the victims, 35 percent reported the assault to law enforcement.
5. The total reports of sexual assault in the American Military were 3,158 (15 percent).

(p. 30)

According to DoD (2013a), 3,374 incidents of sexual assault were reported, which was 16 percent—a 1 percent increase—and below the national average. The DoD’s information supports the supposition that females of all ages are victimized in and out of the American Military. The American military is a microcosm of American society; therefore, it follows that the treatment of women in the American Military would be similar to the treatment of women in America generally.
Although sexual assaults in the military are pervasive, mirroring those in the population as a whole, women’s secondary status has historically made them vulnerable, and their growing empowerment works to undercut assumptions of a masculine superiority. In a military culture with an explicit hierarchy, many more men have power over women, which can cultivate an atmosphere in which power is abused. Although problems with sexual assault and harassment have a potential to increase with integration, allowing men and women to serve with each other as equals will likely build respect and trust as women prove that they are as capable as men are. Military leaders have stated that sexual assault and harassment violate core professional values and culture, and have developed a package to confront the problem head-on (U.S. Department of the Army, 2014). Although military and governmental leaders strive to address pervasive sexual assault within the military, other factors have influenced the development of the integration of women into the American Military.

**Historic and Current Policy**

Women have always participated in the Nation’s wars, in official or unofficial capacity and, over several decades, these roles and the jobs of women have changed. Consequently, a major emphasis in this study concerns leaders’ beliefs about their roles in changing the culture to support the integration and the changing roles of women in all the services, for in these studies, war is always the catalyst.

During the colonial era, women followed men onto the battlefield, assisted in logistical support, and perhaps even fought, but the historical records of these encounters are thin. Nevertheless, better documentation and evidence now exists of their contributions from the American Revolutionary War. Catherine Greene’s letters, written during the winter of 1777–1778, while quartered with her husband, General Nathaniel Green, tell of several stories of life in
the American Continental Army and the wives who participated in the American Revolution War (Campbell, 2010, as cited in Bradford, 2010). Each American Continental Army unit was allowed a certain percentage of wives to help with various tasks around camp, but they were not following their husbands to fight the enemy (Bradford, 2010).

General George Washington often complained about his logistical challenges and he found solace in this endeavor when he realized that women were essential for completing chores such as sewing, cooking, cleaning, and even boosting morale. Washington even considered these women official members of the American Continental Army and gave them half rations in return for their services.

A minority of women gained notoriety when they stepped forward and conducted combat operations. One such famous woman is Margaret Corbin, who was detailed to bring water to the cannons and keep them cool while firing. While commanding an artillery unit at Fort Washington, her husband died in action and Margaret took his spot, and was wounded; years later, she became the first woman to receive a pension.

Another courageous woman who performed a similar feat at Monmouth in 1778 was Mary Ludwig Hays, known to many as “Molly Pitcher.” William “John” Hays enlisted as a gunner in the American Continental Army. It was common at the time during the American Revolutionary War for wives to be near their husbands in battle and to help as needed; Mary followed Gunner Hays back to New Jersey during the war’s Philadelphia Campaign (1777–1778). John Hays fought in the Battle of Monmouth in Freehold, New Jersey, on June 28, 1778, which was consequently a brutally hot day. Mary was present as well, and she made countless trips to a nearby spring to fill pitchers of cold water for soldiers to drink and to pour over their cannons to cool them down for which tireless efforts the soldiers nicknamed her “Molly Pitcher.”
According to accounts, Mary witnessed her husband collapse at his cannon, unable to continue with the fight. Mary immediately dropped her water pitcher and took his place at the cannon, operating the weapon throughout the remainder of the battle until the colonists achieved victory.

Another category of women in combat was women who dressed as men to enter Army units and fight for their country. Such an example was Deborah Sampson who enlisted as Robert Shurtleff and later identified as a woman once wounded. Along with the others who “cross-dressed,” she ultimately was found out and routinely sent home; none ever received a pension or compensation for any injuries because of their “unwomanly” actions or for service to their country (Bradford, 2010).

The American Civil War was the epicenter of American military historiography that documented the roles of women in the military. Bradford (2010) said that, according to historians, more than 250 women were cross-dressers and, as in the American Revolutionary War, they were released once they were discovered. Nevertheless, more than 400 women actually served in the Civil War. Schultz (2004) estimated that 20,000 women worked in hospitals, both on the sides of the North and South. Leonard (1994; as cited in Bradford, 2010) described the service of Mary Walker, the only woman doctor in the Union Army; Sophronia Bucklin, a battlefield nurse; and Annie Wittenmyer, who organized medical supplies and kitchens for wounded soldiers. Regardless of the contributions of women during the American Civil War, nursing became systematized and doctors became professionalized. Some women, such as Dorothy Dix, who served as superintendent of nurses in the Union Army, were in charge of entire hospitals and even wore the rank of officers (Bradford, 2010).

The War with Spain in 1898 was the Nation’s first overseas war, and it demonstrated a need for a permanent staff of professional nurses that could expand in wartime as needed. This
need ultimately created the U.S. Army Nurses Corps in 1901. By the early part of the 20th century, women were officially serving in the military; gone were the days of women seamstresses and cooks.

At the conclusion of World War I, women were again released from the service and not allowed to serve again until World War II because of “manpower” shortages. On May 15, 1942, the U.S. Congress enacted legislation accepting women volunteers into the Women’s Auxiliary Army Corps for noncombat service. On July 30, 1942, Congress authorized the formation of the Women’s Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Services. Although “Auxiliary” was dropped from the title within the U.S. Army unit, both groups were officially reserve organizations. In addition, the shortage of male pilots led to the formation of the Women’s Auxiliary Ferry Squadron on September 10, 1942. These women pilots, under the command of Nancy Love, were to deliver aircraft from the factories to the battlefield and training areas, and only 5 days later, the Women’s Flying Training Detachment was formed. By this point, the need for not only women, but also competent, strong women was easily discernible among senior civilian leadership within the services. At the war’s end, many stateside military leaders advocated the deactivation of women’s units, but on June 12, 1948, the U.S. Congress passed the Women’s Armed Services Integration Act, granting permanent military status to women (Bradford, 2010).

In 1973, the U.S. Army opened all Reserve Officer Training Corps programs to women, and in 1976, authorized their entry into the U.S. Military Academy (West Point); and then the question became, “What jobs should they be trained to do?” (Bradford, 2010, p. 874). The U.S. Coast Guard had the most flexibility because, in wartime, it fell under the U.S. Navy and was not subject to the combat exclusion clause. The other services struggled with the issues of women serving in combat, and with the defeat of the ERA amendment, the fear of a woman draft and
subsequent service on the front lines loomed. By the 1990s, America witnessed over 40,000 women serving in the Persian Gulf during the Gulf War and had a better understanding of how the lines between combat and combat support could not easily be distinguished or completely drawn. These historical examples indicate that sometimes women were recognized as full members of the military and gained full compensation, while other times they were denied access and opportunity. For example, women began training to be U.S. Army helicopter pilots in 1974; yet, until just recently, they were denied the opportunity to fly combat missions. The U.S. Armed Forces fundamentally define themselves as war fighters; therefore, being excluded from directly fighting a war casts women as “other,” that is, unable to meet the definition.

The DoD (2013) rescinded the Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule of 1994, known as the “Risk Rule” and as the Combat Exclusion Policy (DoD, 1994) for women, that had included a matrix assessing the threat of combat exposure on a linear battlefield (GAO, 1998). This matrix assigned a “P” level of hazards on the battlefield with a P1 being the highest and P7 being the lowest. The policy stated that females could not serve in units with a rating of P4 or lower. The then new Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta followed this action, directing the U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps to study opening more specialties and assignments to women, and to submit their expansion plans for his approval. The outcome of this action effectively opened tens of thousands of previously closed military positions to the assignment of women. Therefore, since 1994, the DoD (as cited in AND, 2013) has defined direct ground combat as engaging the enemy on the ground with individual or crew served weapons, while being exposed to hostile fire and to a high probability of direct physical contact with the hostile force’s personnel. [It] takes place well forward on the battlefield while locating and closing with the enemy to defeat them by fire, maneuver, or shock effect. (n.p.)
The presence of women in the military has raised controversy throughout the different phases of this integration. A panel of active duty women and veterans testified before the Military Leadership Diversity Commission (MLDC, 2010) that was developed in 2009 to evaluate the Combat Exclusion Policy (DoD, 1994) and to determine whether it should be reversed. During the 2010 exchange, retired U.S. Marine Corps Lieutenant General Frank Petersen, in a 2011 National Public Radio interview expressed his concerns about getting rid of the ban. Peterson stated,

Here is my problem; we’re talking about ground combat, nose-to-nose with the bad guys, living in the mud, eating what’s on your back, no hygiene and no TV. How many of you have seen how infantrymen, the ground troopers, live, and how many of you would volunteer to live like that?

The U.S. Department of the Army (2013) initiated a deliberate service-wide effort to be certain that performance could be applied and understood in combat, and termed it Soldier 2020. This concept is designed to ensure that U.S. Army organizations are employed with the best-qualified soldiers. This effort includes opening previously closed positions and MOS to females, while maintaining overall combat effectiveness (Cone, 2013). Today, female soldiers occupy crucial combat support roles in combat arms battalions around the world and recent wartime experience has proven that few practical limits exist to the vital contributions that women make in combat operations.

The U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) currently leads two efforts within Soldier 2020. Effort 1 is to study the physical demands required for each military occupational specialty; Effort 2 is to examine extensively the institutional and cultural factors associated with integrating women into combat units. In collaboration with the U.S. Army
Medical Command’s U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine, TRADOC’s first effort has identified critical physically demanding MOS specific tasks. Applying scientific rigor and methodology, the U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine is using laboratory equipment to measure soldiers’ mental and physical capacities while they carry out these tasks. These measurements are designed to determine the physiological capabilities (e.g., strength, endurance, and energy) that an individual must have to complete specific tasks to acceptable standards. These measurements will also help the U.S. Army to establish clear, updated standards across the force (Haviland, 2013). TRADOC’s Effort 2 employs focus groups, interviews, surveys, soldier feedback, an ongoing literature review, and collaboration with numerous outside agencies to study current policies and processes that will provide potential implementation strategies and possible barriers to success that might be driven by culture and tradition.

Early in November 2014, the U.S. Army’s Airborne and Ranger Training Brigade that is stationed at Fort Benning, Georgia, selected 31 female soldiers to serve as observers and advisers for a potential U.S. Ranger Course Assessment that began in the spring of 2016. The women assisted the U.S. Airborne and Ranger Training Brigade cadre in observing all major blocks of instruction and training during this assessment, but not in serving as ranger instructors or in training and evaluating female U.S. Ranger students, but only in assisting the current male cadre.

The observers and advisers included 11 officers and 20 noncommissioned officers (NCOs). Beginning in November 7, 2014, the female soldiers were involved in weekly training events to prepare them to understand the mental and physical demands placed on U.S. Ranger students. According to Major General Scott Miller (as cited in Department of the Army Public Affairs, 2014), the commanding General of the Maneuver Center of Excellence stated,
I was very satisfied with both the quality and quantity of the volunteers we received, their performance and professionalism over the course of the week was extraordinary. This group did very well for what was a very physically challenging week for any Soldier.” (n.p.)

The U.S. Army will decide later in 2016 whether to assess the U.S. Ranger Course. If the decision is made to continue allowing females in the U.S. Ranger Course, the assessment of the course will include both female and male soldiers, as well as female soldiers to serve as observers and advisers to the cadre who conduct the course.

The Secretary of Defense announced in January 2013 (DoD, 2013b) that, by January 2016, all combat arms jobs in the military would be open to women. This new policy will challenge the values and beliefs within an organization and a culture that has existed for over 238 years. To ensure that leaders have strategies and approaches to integrate women into combat roles, I describe how the changing societal opinions have reversed since 1991, revealing a noticeable acceptance of women in combat and how women have served courageously in combat in the past 20 years.

During the past 15 years, the duties that women have taken on and the roles they have played in the military have changed. More than 200,000 women have served in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and many of them have found themselves in direct ground combat situations, despite a Pentagon policy opposing that from occurring.

Conclusion

For integration of women in the American Military to succeed, leaders at every level must support the historic transition that affects both men and women in the American Military. Conner (1992) explained, “Change is often perceived as a perplexing jungle that many people,
organizations, and even whole societies enter only to become entangled in the undergrowth of confusion and dysfunction” (p. ixx). A generational shift is occurring and no time is better than now to implement this policy. If not now, when? A new group of leaders has entered the American Military in the past decade and is currently composed of senior officers and NCOs in the ranks. They are more technologically advanced, more “liberal” in their acceptance of others, and more likely to respond positively to this change than have been previous generations.

Senior leaders are responsible for integrating women into combat roles and it will demand a critical mass of support from soldiers at every level. Small steps are underway, and the integration of women into previously “male only” roles is being piloted within the American Military. The U.S. Marine Corps recently graduated its first women from their rigorous and challenging infantry course, and this accomplishment was lauded as an absolute success. The next stage of their development within combat units will be evaluated to determine how these four women will do, if they are assigned to such units. Although the magnitude of the change toward full integration of genders is enormous, the assumption of resistance to change in the “normal” order of our society has been challenged.

All leaders will execute this transition, fulfilling the requirements of their roles. Although some leaders might embrace it and the promise that it holds, other leaders might not genuinely support it, but they will attempt to make this transition a smooth one. Any given organizational culture can be strong or weak, the difference is in deciding to put away old ways of thinking and to embrace new changes with an open mind. Schein (1984) attributed the strength of an organizational culture to two factors: (a) the consistency and stability of group membership, and (b) the duration and intensity of group, shared experiences. It might take some time for this consistency to take shape; however, the intensity and group experiences have already occurred
during the past 15 years in Afghanistan and postwar Iraq. Women have attained more respect than ever before for their contributions in fighting two wars alongside their male counterparts. They have proven that their capacity to handle the physical and mental rigors of war are equal to men, and have done so while graciously being placed “second” to men in the military.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents a meta-analysis methodology used to examine information derived from on-line and national governmental sources used to explore the standards, policies, and composition of women in the Norwegian, Canadian, and Israeli Militaries compared to American Military. These accounts are used to analyze valid arguments for and against the integration of women into the American Military combat teams as compared to the successes and challenges of other foreign militaries who have already initiated the integration. A qualitative meta-analysis study, in particular an argumentative and interactive policy analysis style, is used because combining these two styles will provide the reader arguments that might bridge the gap between two opposing sides of the dispute and enrich understanding of opposing viewpoints. In the chapter, I present a description of the policy analysis method, and an overview of how the policy analysis will unfold.

Policy Analysis Style

Policy analysis is a multifaceted arena in which lie several activities used to support policy and policy processes. Mayer, Daalen, and Bots (2004) identified six major clusters of activities as a model for analyzing policy; however, the list is not all-inclusive and more activities were conducted, which make the research not only richer and more comprehensive, but also more complex.

1. Research and analyze.
2. Clarify arguments and values.
3. Democratize.
5. Provide strategic advice.
6. Design and recommend.

Depending on the specific policy analysis design, one, two, or more clusters might be involved and might prevail over the others, while the remaining might become subordinate or irrelevant. The activities are designed in a logical way as related to one another: the further the activities are from each other, the greater the field of tension that exists and the more difficult unification becomes. This does not imply that the activities are discordant; they are yet connected, as the illustration suggests; however, it simply means that the tension must be resolved.

In the policy analysis styles linked to activities model in Figure 2, one can observe the six activities on each point of the hexagon with the six, policy analysis styles: the argumentative style.
style, the participatory style, the interactive style, the process style, the client advice style, and the rationale style. For this policy analysis, I used the argumentative and interactive styles for their relevance and alignment with the problem. These two approaches are impelling archetypes.

The argumentative style assumes that policy is made, defended, and criticized through the medium of language (Mayer et al., 2004). When analyzing policy using the argumentative style it is important to listen carefully to the semantic game that surrounds the policy problem or the issue. The attention of the issue will shift to a debate and, within the debate, rhetoric, arguments, untruths, and facts that are not based on any type of scientific or academic review will be injected. The ambition of this type of policy analysis is to inject recommendations and improvements on the policy to the parties that have been cross-talking for years and to bridge the gap between opponents.

This research site and scope addresses the policy of integrating women into combat units; therefore, the second style I chose is the interactive style. According to Mayer et al. (2004), the interactive style assumes that individuals—experts, analysts, clients, stakeholders and target groups—have or may have differing views of the “same” policy problem. An insight relevant to policy can be obtained by bringing about a confrontation and interaction of different views. The interactive style has a strong socio-constructive foundation. Different views of reality can be valid simultaneously. Through continuous interaction and interpretation—the “hermeneutic circle”—it is possible to gain an insight.

(p. 14)

With the interactive style, specific groups such as stakeholders, policy makers, target groups, and academic and medical advisors are brought in to develop solutions to current issues,
which brings about multiple interaction by which the participants learn about their own views in relation to others, have the opportunity to refine those views, and, therefore, become enriched.

Using the policy analysis framework—and specifically paying attention to the argumentative and interactive styles—I show that three of the four countries explored have already gained knowledge from over a decade of integration. I also show that they learned from previous experiences what worked and what did not work, debated at their respective Department of Defense levels and amended policy to meet the requirements of the changing environment, and influenced how the policy is executed at the lowest levels of command and supervisory management.

Two types of policy action or activities abridge the argumentative approach to policy analysis, making the policy easier to understand by making judgments according to justifications for the policy, logic, and richness of the data used, scientific or otherwise. The two abridged actions in this case are (a) research and analyzing and (b) clarifying values and arguments. Both the policy actions and the argumentative style are object-oriented in that policy is ultimately captured in a written policy, model, or product. Remembering that researching and analyzing policy occur at department levels, questions asked before making policy (a) are consistent and relevant to the issue at hand; (b) are about facts, causes, and effects; and, therefore, (c) call for scientific research. Action regarding clarifying values and arguments is also done at department levels and is on the other side of the argumentative style. This action is founded on questions that are derived from ethics, society, and opinions of public policy that occur when prolonged conflicts and social issues occur regarding fundamental and normative argumentative differences. Using this type of action will not only produce instrumental recommendations for
policy making, but also will also allow researchers to analyze the system that reinforces the political debate.

The interactive style of policy analysis used in the three countries that are explored, and is abridged by the mediate and democratize actions of policy analysis. The interactive style, coupled with the two actions, is subject-oriented in that it is focused on the stakeholder level as in the policy of integration, and represents the troops, leaders, and supervisors on the ground; therefore, it is captured in the quality of the policy itself. The interactive style assumes that the stakeholders have different views or opinions about the same issue. Therefore, insights are gleaned from the target groups through structured meetings, interviews, and interactions. This brings about multiple insights whereby the policy analysis is enriched and more informative to the political debate at the object-oriented level (research and analyze, and clarify values and arguments). Using interactive style is informative to the processors and planners, and is more likely to lead to an acceptance that will bring about positive effects to the users or, in this instance, the stakeholders.

Using these two styles of policy analysis—argumentative and interactive—when exploring the three countries’ policies, will allow a more thorough understanding of the findings when comparing the successes of the countries’ studied to the struggles that the American Military might have when integrating in 2016. The three countries researched have integrated women for over 2 decades; therefore, I have used the two styles of policy analysis that allow a rich analysis of the questions that must be answered for the successful integration of the American Military:

1. How do the current standards for entry into direct ground combat units compare with what is actually required to perform the mission of a direct ground combatant?
2. What jobs did women perform in Iraq and currently perform in Afghanistan that are physically and mentally different from what would have performed had they served in a direct combat unit?

3. How do the gender-neutral standards compare, if changed, with the previous (male) standards and how do the new standards affect military performance in direct ground combat units?

4. Does integration affect unit morale and cohesion in direct ground combat units and, if so, how?

5. Have the sexual harassment and assault claims lessened, remained the same, or rose since integration?

First, I conducted a policy analysis, comparing and contrasting the current American policy against policies of the countries’ that have already integrated. Through this examination, I was able to recognize gaps in training, medical, and procedural information that are most important to the successful implementation in the United States. In addition, I performed an assessment of the factors in American policy that the policy eliminated or totally overlooked, regarding indicators for a successful model.

Second, I examined the countries that allow women in combat units and the standards at which they compete for assignments. When comparing standards, only physical standards were evaluated and whether the selected countries used gender-neutral standards in training. I considered the Military Need Factor, which is the total number of conflicts and was derived from the Correlates of War. An exploration of how much a military was used over the period from 1948 to 2016 provides a decent snapshot of operational readiness, rapid response time, and military need. Although the Correlates of War do not directly give an assessment, they do
present each conflict’s start and end dates. If a nation’s military was used in two conflicts simultaneously, it will be double-counted to capture the stress that this puts on a military’s personnel.

Lastly, I have performed an examination of the population and prescribed ratio of women to men in the entire military and those who choose combat arms. When comparing the other three militaries against that of the United States, the American Military is the busiest and the biggest; therefore, a ratio is particularly important when calculating the numbers.

**Selection of Cases**

The three countries, Norway, Canada, and Israel, were chosen because of the amount of time that women have been integrated into their combat arms branches, the types of missions that have been performed currently and in the past, and the organizational structure of their militaries compared to the American Military. Prior to choosing these countries, I did not have any knowledge of the success or failure rates, if any, of their integration of women into their militaries so that I would not specifically select a high success rate with full integration.

Norway was the first NATO country to implement fully an equality policy in its military in 1984; and the CAF opened all military occupations to women in 1989, with the exception of submarine service, which opened in 2000. Throughout the 1990s, the introduction of women into the combat arms increased the potential recruiting pool by about 100 percent. Women in the Israeli Defense Force were on full combat duty as far back as 1948, during the War of Independence; however, their participation then ceased immediately upon the end of the war. It was not until the 1990s that Israeli women were allowed to become combat pilots. In 2000, an Equality Amendment to the Defense Service Law allowed women to serve in any role in the military and gave them equal rights with men.
Women already serve in close combat specialties in the following countries: Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Israel, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Romania, Spain, and Sweden (Haring, 2013). Perhaps best known for its use of women in the military is the IDF in which women comprise 34 percent of the force and are conscripted along with their male peers. The IDF restricts the service of women to 88 percent of available positions; however, women do serve in close combat positions in the Caracal Combat Regiment and in the Border Patrol. To narrow the focus of this research, I arranged to compare Israeli, Canadian, and Norwegian Militaries with the American Military as it pertains to integrating women into combat units.

In the IDF, women are excluded from some units because of religious considerations necessitated by Orthodox Jewish law. In a 2005 study of female combatants, Israeli commanders reported that women “exhibit superior skills” in

- Discipline and motivation.
- Maintaining alertness.
- Shooting.
- Managing tasks and organization.
- Displaying knowledge and professionalism in weapons use. (Cawkill et al., 2009)

The Norwegian military, which does not receive much notoriety concerning their integration policy, has employed women in all ground combat specialties, and in all units, since the early 1980s. They were the first NATO country to allow full integration by allowing women to serve on submarines and all other functions since 1985 (Nielson, 2001). The Norwegians also report that women increase operational effectiveness and, thus far, no evidence exists that unit cohesion has been affected by having women in combat units. Similarly, according to the CAF,
which has also been fully integrated since the 1980s, reported that no negative effect exists on operational performance or team cohesion because of the presence of women in combat units.

The scope of this analysis includes the previously mentioned foreign countries’ developed standards, policies, and composition when integrating women into combat arms units and specialties. The study is limited to exploring (a) the design and implementation process used, (b) societal objections and approvals, (c) challenges, and (d) successes or failures of the transition. This study does not evaluate or provide conjecture on the decision to integrate women into combat arms units, nor does it provide insights from a political perspective.

I assumed that, although the decision to transition women from supporting roles to combat roles in the U.S. Army might cause controversy, every male senior leader in the U.S. Army would execute the change. Many U.S. Army leaders might not agree with the transformation, but they will support the directives to integrate women within their units. I focus on “the best business rules” provided by other militaries that have already taken on this venture and forged ahead when other countries looked on in disdain, and provide emphases on how to facilitate integration by gaining stakeholder support so that integration can be accomplished with minimal adverse impact.

**Norway**

The Norwegian Military has created a well-functioning organization based on diversity, total equality, and efficiency in leadership skills. Women have the same rights as men to all positions, both military and civilian, in the Norwegian Armed Forces; however, it is yet a largely all-male dominated military with only 14 percent of its service members consisting of women.

Today, Norway, is led by an arduous front-line of women, including Prime Minister Erna Solberg and her mostly female cabinet, which includes Defense Minister Ine Eriksen, who is
leading the charge to an inclusive, cohesive, unisex defense force. Norway wants its armed services to become as progressive and gender-blind as the top echelons of government (Campbell, 2014). Norway has even further integrated the sexes by adopting same-sex living arrangements in some units, which has raised international scrutiny. However, this has occurred for several years in the Norwegian Armed Forces and, for the service members, this is old news.

On June 14, 2013, Norway’s Defence Ministry proposed amending the Conscription Act, Law No. 29 of July17, 1953, about military service and the Home Guard Act, Law No. 28 of July 17, 1953. The law extended full conscription to all citizens, including women, beginning January 2015. The conscription for women applies to women born on January 1, 1997, or later, and the law will conscript women from Age 19. It also proposes minor changes to the rules on military law and National Guard law because of developments in the military and society.

**Canada**

Canada is very progressive regarding the ratio of women in its military, and the areas or jobs in which they can serve, and is considered by many countries to be at the forefront military gender integration. Women in the CAF can enroll in any occupation, which includes combat arms branches, and serve in any operational environment. In every military job or specialty, men and women are selected for training, promotions, postings, and all career opportunities in exactly the same way; their service is based on rank, qualifications, and merit.

**Statistics.** As of January 2014, the percentage of women in the CAF, Regular Force, and Reserve combined was at 14.8 percent, with more than 9,400 women in the Regular Force and more than 800 women in the Reserve (Women in the CAF, 2014).

- The Royal Canadian Air Force comprises the highest percentage of women at 18.7 percent.
- Similarly, the Royal Canadian Navy has a representation of women of 18.4 percent.
- The Canadian Army is represented by women at 12.4 percent.

**Initiatives.** With diversity in the workplace becoming an increasingly important objective, gender issues are receiving heightened visibility in the CAF. Initiatives are currently being implemented that will increase the parity for women in the military by eliminating discriminatory practices and attitudes, rather than by granting special privileges and status.

**Recruiting and retention.** The Canadian Defense Department intends to approve an active recruiting campaign, showing women in all roles with the intent to attract more women into the forces, particularly in the combat arms branches. They are actively recruiting women for challenging career opportunities featuring excellent training and rewarding pays and benefits. The CAF Recruiting Group regularly conducts outreach activities with women’s professional associations, educators, and students to increase their awareness of these career opportunities.

**Defense Advisory Group.** The CAF supports the operation of Defense Employment Equity Advisory Groups for each of the four groups designated by the Employment Equity Act of 2014 (Backgrounder, 2014), including the Defense Women’s Advisory Organization. The objective of the Defense Advisory Groups is to consult with designated group members, provide advice and insight to the leadership on issues relevant to their membership and implementation of employment equity.

According to the Government of Canada (2014) as cited in Women in the CAF, 2014), the Defense Advisory Groups are looked upon to assist management with the employment equity action plans, provide direction to resource outlets, harmonize relations with the four identified designated group members, escalate retention rates, and provide evolitional, viable teams, and
productive working environmental situations. These groups are mandated to discuss evolving employment equity policies, encourage new strategies regarding recruitment and retention, and support facilitation of positive work environments (np.).

**Diversity training and education.** All members of the CAF must clearly understand the rules of employment equity and diversity, and how they can benefit the organization. All personnel receive awareness training and information sessions throughout their career and have direct contact through their chain of command to the latest information on the subject of employment equity and diversity. Basic Diversity Training is given to both officers and noncommissioned members during their respective basic course and more advanced training is provided when they reach their advanced leadership educational courses. The curriculum includes sessions in personal conduct policies such as harassment prevention and resolution, personal conduct and relationships, sexual misconduct, and sexual harassment.

**Israel**

Military service is obligatory for both men and women in Israel. Women constitute approximately a third of the conscripts and nearly 20 percent of the standing professional army. Of all army positions, 92 percent are open to women, including the elite units in the Artillery Corps—including the “Sky Riders” who operate unmanned aerial vehicles—and combat roles in the Israeli Navy, Air Force, Home Front Command, and Military Police in the West Bank. In addition to the Caracal Battalion, in August 2015, the Israeli Defense Force completed recruiting for the new mixed-gender, light-infantry battalion “Lions of the Jordan”—another border patrol unit that is stationed along the eastern border of the Jordan Rift Valley.

Women in combat roles serve in the same manner as their male counterparts, although women in the Israeli Military normally serve only 2 years. The length of service for men was
reduced in July 2015 from 3 years to 32 months, and an initiative is underway to lengthen the
women’s draft from 24 months to 28 months to cover the shortfall and reduce the gap between
men and women’s service time. Following field testing in early 2015, Israel decided not to allow
women to serve in tank units. However, after reviewing the policies of other Western militaries,
Israel did leave room to reconsider that decision and to allow women to serve as combat
engineers who would operate heavy equipment in enemy territory (Sudilovsky, 2015).

Analysis

A fundamental adherence to traditional values exists in the American Military, and
perhaps, most importantly, the policies are driven by organizational or institutional factors. By
observing the political and organizational achievements of Norway, Canada, and Israel, the
American Military can view its own unique challenges and be a true learning organization.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The approach taken in studying the integration of women into combat units, as a model for the United States, is to evaluate and assess how other countries developed plans, policies, standards, and procedures for military services that have previously been integrated. Studying foreign militaries provides a social, cultural, and historical context for observing the dispute regarding whether women should be fully integrated in American Military combat units.

Integration Policies of the United States and other Foreign Countries

In 2009, the Ministry of Defense in the United Kingdom commissioned a very in-depth study and produced an exceedingly worthy analysis for the arguments that oppose women in small combat units and those that support the practice. Military representatives from 27 countries were contacted to obtain information relating to their policies, practice, and experience of integrating women into combat roles. Although 27 countries provided information, all 27 countries, including the United States, held the same concerns. For this study, only three foreign countries were analyzed: Norway, Canada, and Israel in order of their individual integration dates. A myriad of justifications existed for those countries that do not yet include women in small combat units; however, in the beginning of integration, the countries that allowed gender integration had the same concerns. In fact, the two primary reasons for not allowing gender integration revolved around physiological (physical standards) and psychological (unit cohesion) factors.

The Ministry of Defense found that many countries do allow women to serve in small combat arms units, with the Nordic countries being particularly progressive. However, the three
countries that still maintain a combat exclusion policy are the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia. As with the United States, inclusion policies have been imposed on the Nation’s military because of political and legal pressures (Cawkill et al., 2009). For the countries that did rescind their individual exclusion policies, only a very small number of women actually volunteered for the position. Every country is about even on percentages at around 15 percent with the exception of Norway, which is at around 3 percent (Cawkill et al., 2009). The percentages are low because of the high physical demands and aggressiveness of men who taunt the women not to join. Where combat roles are open to women, many are simply not attracted to the close, ground combat elements of the job.

![Figure 3. Countries that allow women in combat. From “Map: Which countries allow women in front-line roles?” by M. Fisher, 2013, The Washington Post, Worldviews. Adapted with permission.](image)

**United States**

In January 2013, the DoD (as cited in Lopez & Henning, 2013) announced that by January 2016, all jobs would be open to women, including Special Operations units such as U.S. Army Rangers and U.S. Special Forces (Vanden, 2013). The U.S. Army is on the brink of a
historical change and, in 2016, men (and women) must adopt and adapt to this policy change. Researchers provide multiple perspectives regarding the integration of women into combat units and present concerns along with risk mitigation that leaders have instituted from other countries, allowing them to navigate the transition of allowing women to serve in combat units. In addition to the historical perspective, the present day war in Afghanistan and previous war in Iraq offer an unprecedented opportunity to examine the performance of women during combat operations.

The U.S. Congress passed the Women’s Armed Services Integration Act (1948) with its Ground Combat Exclusion Policy that dictated the number of women who could be in one branch of service, which jobs they could hold, and the military rank they could achieve (McSally, 2007). During that time, and into the 1960s and 1970s, the idea of having women in combat roles was virtually unthinkable; however, when reviewing this law, the historical context in which it was written cannot be dismissed. Examining the historic precedent brings to light the social evolution that has occurred in the American Military.

The DoD (2013) rescinded the Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule of 1994, known as the “Risk Rule” and as the Combat Exclusion Policy (DoD, 1994) for women, which had included a matrix assessing the threat of combat exposure on a linear battlefield (GAO, 1998). The rescinding was due to the experiences women faced during the Gulf War in 1990. This matrix assigned a “P” level of hazards on the battlefield with a P1 indicating the highest level and P7 indicating the lowest level. The policy stated that women could not serve in units with a rating of P4 or lower. The then new Secretary of Defense Panetta followed this action, directing the U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps to study the feasibility of opening more specialties and assignments to women and of submitting their expansion plans for his approval. The outcome of this action effectively opened tens of thousands of previously closed military
positions to the assignment of women. In addition, the DoD (1994, as cited in AND, 2013) has defined direct ground combat as

> engaging the enemy on the ground with individual or crew served weapons, while being exposed to hostile fire and to a high probability of direct physical contact with the hostile force’s personnel. [It] takes place well forward on the battlefield while locating and closing with the enemy to defeat them by fire, maneuver, or shock effect. (n.p.)

After the elimination of the Combat Exclusion Policy (DoD, 1994), General Martin Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said that the DoD would be pursuing all avenues to provide the most opportunities for women to help provide greater upward mobility (Scott, 2013). To comply with the chairman’s intent, the U.S. Army presented the topic of women in combat positions in the U.S. Army’s 2013 Posture Statement. The U.S. Army Vision (HQDA, 2009) stated that, the American Military was to be “globally responsive and providing full range of capabilities is no longer about gender or race. It is about professionalism and leadership” (n.p.). The U.S. Department of the Army’s (U.S. Senate, 2013) 2013 Posture Statement said:

> The Army is committed to ensuring that female Soldiers are provided career opportunities that enable them to reach their highest potential while enhancing overall Army Readiness. Over the last year, the Army opened more than 13,000 positions to women. In January 2013, the DoD rescinded the Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule, thus enabling the elimination of unnecessary gender-based restrictions for assignment. The Army is currently developing, reviewing and validating occupational standards, with the aim of fully integrating women into occupational fields to the
maximum extent possible. We are proceeding in a deliberate, measured and responsible way that preserves unit readiness, cohesion and morale. (p. 7)

Senior leaders have been responsible for this transition and a successful integration will demand a critical mass of support from leaders at every level. As outlined, this change will be implemented in phases and evaluated after each stage is completed. The U.S. Marine Corps completed this initial phase in which four women were tested in the infantry course. In 2013, the U.S. Marine Corps graduated its first three women from their rigorous and challenging enlisted Infantry course and lauded as an absolute success. As of February 2015, 358 women had volunteered and 122 had graduated with a 34 percent success rate. As of July 2015, 29 women had volunteered for the Marine Infantry Officer Course, but none has yet passed the course (Lamothe, 2015). The next stage will be evaluated to determine how these four women will do in combat units, if they are placed in such units. The magnitude of the change is enormous because the U.S. Army, as of October 2014, issued its timeline to incorporate women into the elite U.S. Army Ranger School. On April 20, 2015, 19 women started Ranger Class 06-15. Eight women successfully completed the Ranger Assessment Program week; however, all were recycled into the next Ranger Class, 07-15 for failing to meet specific patrolling standards, and were given a second attempt at patrolling. After the second attempt, five of the eight women were dropped from the course, and three women were given a day one recycle into Ranger Class 08-15, and started the course again on June 21, 2015. These three women successfully met the standards of the Benning Phase and moved on to the Mountain Phase July 10. All three women passed the knot test, military mountaineering skills assessment, the foot movement up Mount Yonah, and were given opportunities to lead patrols—one woman recycled into Ranger Class 09-15 to start the Mountain Phase over. Two women received a passing grade in the mountains during platoon
level combat patrols and moved on to the Swamp Phase. The two women also met the standards of the Swamp Phase, proficiently leading waterborne platoon level combat patrols, became the first women ever to earn the Ranger Tab, and ultimately graduated on August 21, 2015.

**Norway**

The Norwegian women contributed greatly to their country’s military during WWII; however, despite the contributions and positive experiences from both the Officer’s Training School and the Army Communication School, the Norwegian Parliament debated and decided in 1953 that women could no longer serve in the Norwegian Military (Steder, 2014, as cited in Vaernø & Sveri, 1990). In 1976, the Norwegian Parliament reconsidered its decision and decided to allow women into noncombat positions; therefore, the first women to enter officer training occurred in 1977 in the Norwegian Air Force; however, the heated debate over women serving in combat positions continued until 1984. The Norwegian Parliament introduced the Military Occupational Equality [policy] in 1984 (Steder, 2014) for men and women; this policy allowed men and women to have the same volunteer opportunity to enter any organization in the Norwegian Military. This meant that Norway was the first NATO country to take on this decision, and that it became a pioneer country for women in the military.

In February 2013, select, women troops—from countries that allow full integration along with other partnered militaries that have fully integrated—met in Washington, D.C., at the Women in Combat Symposium (Haring, 2013) to discuss women’s roles in combat operations. One panel included American, Canadian, and Norwegian women who served in the wake of the removal of previous exclusionary policies. The panel was asked to identify traits that are critical to success in combat. The most common response was that teamwork was of first importance, calmness in stressful situations was second, and competence was third. The representatives from
Canada, Norway, and Sweden talked about their militaries’ move to full integration. According to Haring (2013), all three countries admitted that

Full integration took more than 10 years, and that today few women serve in the combat specialties. Robert Egnell from Sweden provided perspectives that get to the heart of fully integrated military organizations. He asserted that integration is not achieved by making it an equality issue. Rather, it is more likely achieved by focusing on the enhanced capabilities that women bring to the operational success of the force. (p. 58)

No formal assessments have been conducted in Norway of the effect of mixed-gender teams in the combat role; however, the general opinion is that female representation will increase operational effect (Cawkill, 2009). No incidents have been reported to indicate that cohesion will decrease or that operational effectiveness will be compromised. Gender-related concerns for the Norwegian Military are retention and recruitment. To alleviate the stress of diminishing combat power and staying with the policy of equality between the genders, as of June 2013, the Norwegian Parliament passed a bill that conscripts women into its armed forces, becoming the first European and first NATO country to make military service compulsory for both genders (Fouche, 2013).

Canada

The CAF is right on a par with the American Military employing 17 percent of all military personnel as women compared to 16 percent for the United States. However, unlike the United States, Canada supports the roles of women in all positions within its military, including small combat units. As discussed previously, most policies of integration have attributed to political pressure, and Canada is no exception. In 1989, the CHRC (2013) Tribunal decided and directed that women must be fully integrated into all CAF roles, except service on submarines.
The Minister’s Advisory Board on CAF Gender Integration and Employment Equity (Backgrounder, 2001) removed the 2001 restriction. The advisory board had been set up to transform beliefs about women’s integration by the “adoption of not only a policy, but also a belief in the need for a respectful workplace” (Cawkill et al., 2009, p. 17).

From the beginning of the CAF integration, many people assumed and believed that the changes would affect combat effectiveness and they questioned women’s ability to serve in a male “unique” culture. Women did experience sex and gender stereotyping; however, they have developed strategies to negotiate and adapt to the CAF culture, and over the years, the CAF has improved its understanding of the cultural changes through the increased representation of women in leadership roles and on operational deployments with the deployments to Afghanistan and Iraq (Cawkill et al., 2009). The Army Lessons Learned Center (1998, as cited in Cawkill et al., 2009) stated,

Cohesion of mixed gender combat arms units was a leadership challenge. In a nonhomogeneous environment, there needed to be a search for common ground or a point on which all team members could identify, and it was considered a leadership responsibility to provide the framework and common ground to facilitate team building. The cause of breakdown in unit cohesion, especially where gender was concerned, was reported to stem from the following:

- Inequitable leadership and discipline.
- Favoritism or harassment of distinct groups.
- Fraternization (especially within the chain of command).
- Isolation and segregation of distinct groups. (p. 18)
The Army Lessons Learned Center (1998, as cited in Cawkill et al., 2009) acknowledged that for a full integration of women into small combat units to be successful, standards must be the same for both genders across the board to show fair equality and that competent leadership would be instrumental to ensure total success. The CHRC (2013) then decided that sufficient leadership commitment existed to ensure that external monitoring was no longer a requirement for the integration of women into small combat units. The introduction of women, despite some initial resistance, is reported to have provided the opportunity for women to contribute to the evolution of culture across the organization and to operational effectiveness (Cawkill et al., 2009). The Canadian Expeditionary Force (2009, as cited in Cawkill et al., 2009), and the Canadian Army Lessons Learned Center (1998, as cited in Cawkill et al., 2009) both reported, There have been no gender-related issues arising from current expeditionary operations, or awareness of evidence that gender integration has had a negative effect on operational performance or team cohesion. In practice, adjustments are made to accommodate the successful functioning of mixed-gender units in operations, but in most cases problems are resolved “on the ground”. Recruitment of women to the combat arms is progressing at a slow pace, but the view from the Gender Integration Office is that the Canadian experience would not contribute to arguments justifying the exclusion of women from ground combat roles. (p. 20)

How have the CAF accomplished this? First, by not lowering physical standards, women in the armour and infantry branches are required to pass the same assessments as the men. Captain Ashley Colette, who was awarded the Medal of Military Valour for leading a combat platoon in Afghanistan, carried 210 mannequins in battle exercises. Secondly, after discovering that segregating men from women in training led to poor cohesion, the CAF trained women and
men together, without exception. Male and female recruits eat together, sleep in the same barracks room, and train together; both male and female instructors teach the required courses to both genders.

**Israel**

The Israeli Supreme Court ruled that the 1995 Israeli Ministry of Defense policy of not allowing women into the Israeli Air Force pilot’s course was solely based on gender and, therefore, constituted unlawful discrimination (Finestone et al., 2014). This decision initiated radical changes in the combat active service opportunities for women in the IDF. Today, women serve in combat roles in many IDF units, including the light infantry brigade, artillery, and the Border Police.

**Karakal or caracal (light infantry).** Karakal is a special battalion that is comprised of both women and men. All of the physical training and military training exercises are conducted together and are required by all members of the battalion. The unit is fully combat mission ready and mainly stationed in the south at the Egyptian border and in the East at the Jordanian border.

**Totchanim (artillery).** Women are integrated into the artillery branch in various combat and command positions in many fields, for example, command posts over advanced operational and attack systems, management and calculation of artillery fire, operation of communication devices, and conducting meteorologist case studies to improve artillery fire accuracy. The women serve in combat units and complete advanced training after which they are integrated into continuous security operations across Israel. The female combatants commit themselves to a 36-month, mandatory military service and to reserve duty.

Women in the IDF serve in combat roles voluntarily, and women that do volunteer gain the same rights as their male counterparts. Israeli commanders have recognized that women often
exhibit superior skills in areas such as discipline and motivation, maintaining alertness, shooting abilities, managing tasks in an organized manner, and displaying knowledge and professionalism in the use of weapons. Despite this, these women often face the same ongoing battle against skepticism and mistrust in the form of teasing from their fellow male combatants and negative messages from high-ranking officers. A resistance yet exists to fully integrating women into small combat units, but that seems to stem from women taking over an all-male position within the forces (cohesion). Although women in the IDF can volunteer for combat positions, it remains highly unlikely that they would ever be involved in direct ground combat. Once a combat unit is deployed, women are withdrawn from that unit and placed in noncombatant assignments or evacuated to rear areas.

<table>
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<th>Gender Data as at September 09:</th>
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<tr>
<td>UNITS OPEN TO WOMEN</td>
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<td>Light infantry</td>
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<td>Shallow water diving</td>
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<td>Pilots</td>
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<td>Border Patrol</td>
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Arguments for and Against Women in Combat

The 2013 decision to integrate American women into the all-male combat specialties was met with a full range of reactions. Some people believed that it would degrade American national security, and erode combat effectiveness, decision-making, tradition, and even intelligence, as archaic as that may seem. For the past 3 years, the reasons for not integrating women into combat units centered on two primary concerns: physiology and unit cohesion. The remaining trepidations have been demolished by 15 years of combat in which women have performed as courageously as have men.

Universal Arguments

Goldstein (2001), who is known for work on women in the military, noted,

Combat forces in the world’s state armies today include several million Soldiers (the exact number depending on the definition of combat), of whom 99.9 percent are male’, while “there is little historical evidence for the participation of women in war.” (p. 10)

Goldstein (2001) suggested that, throughout history, armies have identified themselves as a masculine force that is motivated by its masculinity to military performance, and sociological studies since the end of World War II have supported this interpretation of the phenomena: soldiers fight for their (male) comrades. In writing about the Wehrmacht (unified armed forces of Germany), Janowitz and Shils (1948) credited the extraordinary performance of this doomed army (the Wehrmacht) to the intense personal male bonds within the primary military group. Masculinity was a key motivating factor used to encourage solidarity on the line and “the man who lived up to the code of the combat soldier had proved his manhood” (Janowitz & Shils, 1948). King (2000) posited that the bonds that male soldiers made in the 20th century were critical (if not vital), were based on trust, and yet exist in the professional military forces today.
Although no one would deny the powerful bond among troops, scholars have consistently argued that the cohesion–performance effect of today’s professional troops cannot be verified and is not proven to depend upon their personal friendships (Mullen & Copper, 1994). On the contrary, combat performance—and, specifically, cohesion—relies more on training, professional competence, and completing the task. Accordingly, individuals are judged not so much on their personal characteristics, but on their professional ability and they are accepted into the section, platoon, and company on this basis (King, 2000).

In 2008, American paratroopers defended a small outpost called Outpost Restrepo, named in honor of a young army medic, Juan Restrepo. The outpost was located in the Korengal Valley in Afghanistan and is well known because of the vicious battle between 2nd Platoon, Battle Company, 173rd Airborne Brigade, and the Taliban. Junger (2010) recounted the peculiar kinship among these soldiers. Sergeant Brendan O’Byrne, one of the central figures in Junger’s account, rather than amplifying the soldiers’ love for each other, stated, “There are guys in the platoon who straight up hate each other, but they would also die for each other. So you kind of have to ask, how much could I really hate the guy?” (Junger, 2010, p. 79). The paradox is interesting, but can be understood once recognized that cohesion was not dependent on personal friendliness, but depended on competence. Specifically, in combat, the soldiers united around their training, their drills, and the execution of these collective tasks—whatever their personal differences.

Although scholars debate the cohesion–performance effect among certain groups, in combat, Brian Mullen and Carolyn Copper (1994) illustrated that cohesion is based on professional competence and not cultural judgment about a persons, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or their gender. King (2013) noted four individuals, Kier, Belkin, Segal, and
MacCoun who were integrally involved in the rescinding of the American Don’t Ask Don’t Tell policy, have concluded through their studies that gender becomes less relevant as professional competence is prioritized. This professionalism is being judged. As of 2014, women have been allowed to enter the U.S. Marine Corps Infantry Training and, in 2015, the U.S. Army is now allowing women to enter the U.S. Army Ranger School, and this pattern will continue as the American Military moves forward with full female integration into combat units. These pilot programs have already proven that a very small minority of physically capable women might be integrated into combat units if they are judged on their performance, not their gender, just as ethnic minorities and homosexual men have been incorporated before at different points during the last 50 years. Substantial evidence exists from the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan that women have performed equally as men over the last 15 years (the Iraq War officially ended in 2012). This parity is strongly shown in the military of several foreign nations, a particularly great example of which is the Canadian Army. This force might be advantaged by a liberal multicultural and multilingual national culture. Integration began in 1989 with the Canadian Army, and it is now widespread and loudly expressed for particular female soldiers. As an example of this model, Major Eleanor Taylor, who was an infantry company commander with First Battalion, the Royal Canadian Regiment, in Kandahar in 2009, has been widely identified as having the potential to become the first female infantry battalion commander. Female Canadian soldiers have affirmed that, as long as professional standards are enforced and they are able to meet the standards, they have in fact been able to integrate.

From observing all three countries, it is clear that, for any organization to accept fully integrating women into combat units, leaders must recognize that it will be a leadership challenge, not a measure of masculinity. Of interest is the way that the senior leadership of all
three countries’ have acknowledged that, for those “on the ground,” no severe drawbacks existed from having women in their combat organizations—in fact, the research showed that these organizations flourished, made them more efficient, and increased unit cohesion. With the American Military accepting the new integration policy in January 2016, it will be fascinating to examine how the United States performs compared to the other countries in integrating women in their combat units, despite the opponents’ arguments about the disruption of unit cohesion and the lowering of standards that might lead operational degradation.

Two Thematically Common Opinions: Equitable Standards and Unit Cohesion

The word “standards” has been used broadly in the American Military as a counter argument to allowing women in the combat arms segments, the majority of which is individual emotion that is used to balance research with impartial scientific data. The major concern is that, although standards might not be lowered for women, they will be bent to ensure the direct inclusion policy results in complete success, ultimately degrading the reputation and the hierarchal world of combat arms.

Browne (2012) maintained that the commission’s implication that the difference between the sexes in strength is solely a consequence of men’s greater size. This assumption is manifestly false. Although it is true that, all else being equal, men and women with equally lean body mass have largely equivalent strength because male and female muscular tissue is virtually identical. All service members receive the same training and must meet the same health standards. For example, in the 18th Air Borne Corps, the standard for completing the 12-mile road march is that the soldier must carry a load of 35 pounds and a weapon, wear the helmet, and finish the march in 3 hours or less—the physical standard is the same for both genders. However, one could argue
that carrying equipment or wounded soldiers, is more a function of size rather than gender, and that the capabilities of smaller men and larger women overlap.

Lastly, Browne (2012) concluded that gender integration would diminish cohesion by reducing discipline. However, caution should be used when discussing metrics according to psychological factors such as cohesion. A significant challenge with laboratory experiments of cohesion is that it is difficult, if not impossible, truly to capture the aspect of cohesion that is militarily important. The American Military views cohesion as a “performance enabler” rather than a “performance enhancer” (Griffith, 2007). It correlates with military performance “by maintaining the organized group at its tasks in the face of severe stresses of battle” (Griffith, 2007 as cited in Marlow, 1979).

The argument most often used by opponents of integration of women into combat units is that physical differences in men and women (including size, strength, and speed) make war-fighting a strictly male endeavor. According to this argument, women simply do not possess the physical characteristics or stamina to be successful ground combat warriors; therefore, allowing women to serve in ground combat would negatively affect military effectiveness (Browne, 2007). Others argued that team cohesion and morale would be negatively affected if women were to serve in combat, for men are naturally inclined to protect women (Caidid, 2013).

Browne (2007) argued that physical differences in men and women are significant and that these differences mean that women should not be allowed to perform ground combat jobs. Browne’s (2007) evidence included certain differences: “Women have only one-half to two-thirds the upper body-strength of men” (p. 21). Brown stated that, in addition to inferior strength, women run more slowly, have less endurance, and have less aerobic and anaerobic capacity. They tend to be shorter and weigh less. Finally, their throwing speed and accuracy is usually less
than is that of their male counterparts. Obviously, one cannot doubt the physical differences of the sexes; however, the question is now: How relevant are the differences in modern warfare? In fact, Maginnis (2013) stated,

Women in the U.S. Armed Forces are regularly held to lower training standards than men. That means that when they’re called into active combat situations, they won’t bring the same physical strength and skills training as men do. In training, male marines are required to lift 40 pounds, while female trainees must lift only 20. If a ship is sinking and the only way to save it is to lift a 40-pound piece of equipment, the female marines will be less qualified for the task. On top of this disparity is a looming draft. Security experts foresee another American draft within this generation; if women can serve in combat, every male and female over the age of 18 will be in danger of being called up. There will be ludicrous measures by which women's lesser suitability for combat roles is masked. These include lowering the bar of requirements for women wishing to enter combat units, placing benches next to walls that trainees jump over (only for the women to use), running laps in circles (instead of straight-line runs from point A to point B) to make it less obvious that the women are lagging behind the men, and more. (n.p.)

Mitchell (1997) is a U.S. Army veteran, a 1981 ROTC graduate from the University of Cincinnati, Ohio, and a political theorist known for the theory of political difference, theology of interpersonal relations, and critical analysis of gender integration of the American armed forces. Mitchell believed that bringing women into combat units would yield soaring attrition rates, skyrocketing medical costs, lower rates of deployment, and mushrooming levels of single parenthood. Mitchell also pointed out that, women have the capability to become pregnant;
therefore, pregnancy would be used as an excuse to avoid deployments; therefore, it would raise the single parent rate in the U.S. Army.

Differences between the genders exist and, as in society more generally, policies about equitable treatment of both genders continue to evolve. However, when considering women’s capacity to serve on the battlefield, the changing structure of warfare shows that the disparity plays no role in the capabilities of either gender. Before the attacks of September 11, 2001, wars were fought on a linear battlefield; the enemy and friendly lines were distinct. However, the 2001 attack changed that structure to an asymmetrical battlefield in which the enemy could be located adjacent to or in the same battle zone as the American forces.

Over the past 13 years, more than 60 percent of American combat casualties have been the result of improvised explosive devices (Barbero, 2013); therefore, the question of physical strength as a discriminatory factor in deciding which soldiers should serve in direct ground combat units seems irrelevant. Physical prowess is inconsequential when the most deadly weapon a service member faces is an improvised explosive device. In counterinsurgency operations, the strongest weapon is not a bullet. A fully loaded M4 Colt rifle used by the U.S. Army weighs only 7.5 pounds, and every woman in the U.S. Army must qualify twice annually; therefore, it has already establishing that women are efficient in the capability of using the weapon if needed.

One of the principal arguments against having women in combat units is that team cohesion and morale would be negatively affected if women were integrated into all male combat units, for men are naturally inclined to protect women. Browne (2007) wrote, “Men are unlikely to be able to view their comrades as ‘just another soldier’ and are likely to take unwise risks in protecting them” (p. 181).
Physical Standards

One primary central concern expressed when discussing the integration of women into combat units comes from both proponents and opponents, and it concerns the physical standards required and the physical and physiological differences between men and women. The United States is working towards establishing its physical standards for the combat arms as decision makers’ toil through the years of data from researching the challenges, limitations, and acceptance of women, specifically into small combat units. Every other foreign nation that has accepted full integration of women into its ranks has already established its own standards for military entry and for the different jobs within their armed forces. In the United States, the physical standards are different for younger service members compared to older service members, and women have different physical standards than their male counterparts. The latter has fueled the debate because some argue that, although the standards are different, they are actually the same with respect to the amount of energy that is being used by each sex (Burrelli, 2013). At the heart of the debate is the subject of gender-norming, where many argue that the result is often the “lowering” of standards. Another topic of discussion is whether the physical standards for certain jobs are a true test of what is realistically needed to perform the jobs effectively.

When studying physical standards of the American Military, it is important to look at the evolution or history of the policy regarding standardization across the DoD. Secretary of Defense Panetta (1993) said that Federal Law, United States Code, Title 10 of the Armed Forces states:

(1) Shall ensure that qualification of members of the Armed Forces for, and continuance of members of the Armed Forces in, that occupational career field is evaluated on the
basis of common, relevant performance standards, without differential standards of evaluation on the basis of gender.

(2) May not use any gender quota, goal, or ceiling except as specifically authorized by law.

(3) May not change an occupational performance standard for the purpose of increasing or decreasing the number of women in that occupational career field. (p. 51)

The execution of the policy, as stated then and as it is now, is not always as clear-cut.

Burrelli (2013), a specialist in Military Manpower Policy noted

A plain reading of the term suggests that men and women would be required to meet the same physical standards to be similarly assigned. However, in the past, the Services have used this and similar terms to suggest that men and women must exert the same amount of energy in a particular task, regardless of the work that is actually accomplished by either. For example, the Air Force Fitness Test Scoring for males under 30 years of age requires males to run 1.5 miles in a maximum time of 13:36 (min:sec): the female maximum time is 16:22. A female who runs at this slower rate would actually receive a higher score than a male who runs nearly three minutes faster. The minimum number of push-ups for males and females in the same age group is 33 and 18, respectively. In the case of push-ups, males and females who achieve the minimum passing number of push-ups receive the same score. As written, this language can be the subject of differing interpretations. (p. 12)

Thus, as the American Military moves forward in further integrating women, lessons can be learned by studying other countries’ use of physical standards and the various paths each took toward policy change.
United States

The U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, and U.S. Marine Corps test service members twice a year with a running event and two-timed events that test upper body and abdominal strength, with the U.S. Air Force testing once a year. The U.S. Navy uses a fourth event to test flexibility, and all four branches use gender norming when conducting their respective physical fitness testing.

Members of the U.S. Army must take the army physical fitness test at least twice per year. To be eligible for promotion, transfer, or admittance to a U.S. Army school, one must meet the fitness test standards. The physical fitness test involves 2 minutes of pushups, 2 minutes of sit-ups and a 2-mile run. Taking one’s age and gender into consideration, each test is scored individually. The better one performs on the test, the higher one’s score. To pass the test, one must receive a score of 60 or higher for each individual event, with a cumulative score of at least 180. The special operations U.S. Army Rangers are subjected to stricter standards and must undertake a pull-up test, 5-mile run, 16-mile hike, and 15-meter swim.

The U.S. Marine Corps tests abdominal strength with the same 2-minute timed sit-ups as the U.S. Army, but the abdominal strength test is a “crunch”-type exercise. Instead of arms clasped behind their heads, marines will fold them across their chests or rib cages. One repetition is counted when the forearms touch the thighs, and they return to the start position. Marines cannot bounce or arch their lower backs, and their buttocks must remain in contact with the floor. The U.S. Marine Corps modified the sit-up to provide a better evaluation of abdominal strength and to reduce the potential for neck and back injuries (Borlik, 1998). The number of repetitions to achieve the maximum score is 100 for both men and women.

Instead of push-ups, marines do untimed pull-up tests and are scored according to how many pull-ups they can complete before dropping from the bar. Female marines take the flexed-
arm-hang test in place of the pull-ups test. For this test, the score is determined by how long the marine hangs on the bar with proper elbow flexion. The 3-mile run is scored according to the time it takes to complete the run. The total score from all three events must meet the U.S. Marine Corps Physical Fitness Test third-class standards. The minimum score is 135 for the Age 17–26 group, 110 for the Age 27–39 group, 88 for the Age 40–45 group and 65 for marines Age 46 and older.

The U.S. Navy’s physical readiness test involves a 2-minute pushups test, 2-minute sit-ups test, and 1.5-mile run. All three tests are given individual scores according to the sailor’s age, gender, and performance. These three scores are then added together and divided by three to obtain the sailor’s average score. To graduate from U.S. Navy boot camp, students need an average score of at least 60. After boot camp, sailors need an average score of at least 50.

Training to be a U.S. Navy Sea Air Land (SEAL) Forces involves a much more strenuous physical fitness test. The U.S. Navy SEALS’ basic underwater demolition test involves a 500-yard swim, 2-minute pushups test, 2-minute sit-ups test, untimed pull-ups test, and a 1.5-mile run. The SEALS must meet minimum standards in all five tests to pass successfully.

The U.S. Air Force physical fitness test requires airmen to complete a 1-minute pushups test, 1-minute sit-ups test, and a 1.5-mile run. Similar to the U.S. Army, the three individual scores from the U.S. Air Force physical fitness test are added together to obtain a cumulative score. Airmen with a cumulative score of 90 or higher are considered “excellent,” while a total score of 75 to 89.9 is considered “good.” A total score of 70 to 74.9 falls into the “marginal” category, while a score of less than 70 falls into the “poor” category. Airmen scoring in the “excellent” or “good” categories must take the physical fitness test only once per year. Airmen
scoring in the “marginal” or “poor” categories must take the test every 3 months, along with attending a health and fitness program.

**Norway**

In the Norwegian Armed Forces, various alternatives are available to the physical fitness testing requirements, rather using gender norming standards or intervals of taking the tests. Regardless, all entry-level recruits, cadets in basic officer training, all compulsory military personnel in basic training, and all permanently employed officers, NCOs, and enlisted personnel are subject to physical fitness testing. They have the choice of testing themselves on multiple occasions, using multiple tests, and in these tests, they can choose which of the best results they wish to count. Personnel over 50 years of age take the tests on an equal footing with other military personnel, although with no regard to the time requirements of the tests. Such test programs are meant to emphasize the health-enhancing effect of being physically active.

The physical fitness test for compulsory personnel consists of one form of aerobic activity and three strength requiring activity. The testing of the 3000-meter run, and the pull-up, sit-up, and the push-up events are administered 3 times: within 3 weeks of entering, before transferring from training to different parts of military service, and within the final quarter before leaving military service. With the pull-up event, men hang vertically with hands in an overhand grip and the feet off the floor, the extended body is then raised until the chin is above the upper part of the beam and lowered until the arms are fully extended. For women, the same body movement is required; however, they hang horizontally from a gymnastics beam with the hands in an overhand grip and the arms and legs extended, and the heels are placed on a bench or something similar to achieve a horizontal starting position. The service member then lifts her body until the chest touches the beam and lowers it until the arms are fully extended. The sit-up
event is performed in a normal fashion except that the legs are positioned on a box, bent at the knee, with the buttocks touching the side of the box being used and the push-up is performed as in the American Military. Officers, NCOs, and enlisted personnel are obligated to take a physical fitness test of their own choosing anytime between January 1 and December 15. The test program is divided into three groups with Group A consisting of individual aerobic activities, and Group B a selection of physically demanding proficiency badges in which a passed proficiency test corresponds to a score of 4 and a passed proficiency test in two or more badges to a score of 6. Group C is a selection of proficiency badges and a 15-kilometer walking test, in which a passed proficiency test corresponds to the minimum military physical standard, which is a score of 2. As with the compulsory personnel, Norwegian women officers, NCOs, and enlisted members are tested using gender norming standards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Norwegian Classification of Test Scores in the 3000m Run for Compulsory Military Personnel, mins</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Men</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 5.* Norwegian classification of test scores in the 3000m run for compulsory military personnel. From *Physical Fitness Tests in the Nordic Armed Forces: A Description of Basic Test Protocols*, by J. Malmberg, 2011, Oslo, Norway: The Norwegian Defence University College, Norwegian School of Sports Sciences/Defence Institute, p. 77–78. Adapted with permission.
### Norwegian Classification of Test Scores in Pull-Ups for Compulsory Military Personnel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>14 reps</td>
<td>20 reps</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>12 reps</td>
<td>16 reps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>9 reps</td>
<td>12 reps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6 reps</td>
<td>8 reps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4 reps</td>
<td>5 reps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 reps</td>
<td>3 reps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>&lt; 2 reps</td>
<td>&lt; 3 reps</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 6. Norwegian classification of test scores in pull-ups for compulsory military personnel. From Physical Fitness Tests in the Nordic Armed Forces: A Description of Basic Test Protocols, by J. Malmberg, 2011, Oslo, Norway: The Norwegian Defence University College, Norwegian School of Sports Sciences/Defence Institute, p. 77–78. Adapted with permission.*

### Norwegian Classification of Test Scores in Sit-Ups for Compulsory Military Personnel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Men / Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>70 reps</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>58 reps</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>46 reps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>34 reps</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>20 reps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>10 reps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>&lt; 10 reps</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 7. Norwegian classification of test scores in sit-ups for compulsory military personnel. From Physical Fitness Tests in the Nordic Armed Forces: A Description of Basic Test Protocols, by J. Malmberg, 2011, Oslo, Norway: The Norwegian Defence University College, Norwegian School of Sports Sciences/Defence Institute, p. 77–78. Adapted with permission.*
Canada

In Canada, physical fitness standards are gender-neutral and women are allowed to serve in any capacity in the CAF, as long as they meet the standards for each position. Three fitness standards (selection, maintenance, and course) are used in the Canadian military and each has its own purpose (Matsel et al., 2012). The selection standards that are the most challenging are the elite antiterrorism unit, Joint Task Force-2, the Canadian Special Operations Regiment, the CAF Department of National Defense Fire Fighters, and the Search and Rescue technicians (Matsel et al., 2012). The standards are gender-neutral; therefore, it is not necessary to describe each fitness standard at length; however, Matsel et al. (2012) depicted all standards, and the selection standards, which are the most demanding:

- 1.5-mile run in less than 9 minutes, 45 seconds.
- 40 push-ups with no rests.
- 40 sit-ups in 1 minute.
• Five over-hand, straight-arm pull-ups.

• Bench press 143.3 pounds from chest to full arm extension (one time).

• CAF Swim Test.

If an applicant meets all of the minimum standards, he or she is awarded 55 points; however, it takes a total of 75 points to pass the test. Therefore, an applicant must achieve more than the minimum standard in at least some test categories (p. 49).

Maintenance standards are designed to “ensure that CAF personnel attain and maintain the necessary level of physical fitness to perform common military tasks or occupation specific tasks” (Matsel et al., 2012, p. 51). Course standards are used to ensure that personnel have a minimum physical fitness level to apply for additional certifications. Many similarities are found between the selected countries regarding the physical events, structure of their physical standards and the challenges women faced when applying for the positions. Studies that each country has conducted on integrating women into military occupational specialties heavily influence these standards. Even when applied in a neutral setting, the perception is that the standards were yet lowered to appear that the challenges were yet equal. Matsel et al. (2012) stated that, although the standards were the same for both men and women, some personnel perceived that enforcement of the standards was inconsistent, and that double standards were applied. They noted the retention rather than the release of women who did not pass standards, the (informal) lowering of battle school standards for women, instructors treating women differently (i.e., being more lenient or afraid to discipline), and favoritism toward women (i.e., women were asked if they need a bathroom break more frequently than were men).
In Israel, the military’s combat fitness department adapted the physical standards required for the elite units to make them suitable for women. Therefore, the men in those units will be required to meet the same standards, rather than their more rigorous standards. Military regulations were also adjusted to enable the entry of women into the units (Poch, 2014).

This situation is quite different from any other country, especially the United States. Although most personnel will either enforce gender-neutral standards or enact some sort of gender-norming standards, Israel devised a mixture of the two standards. For example, if the IDF policy states that women are allowed 7 hours of sleep and men are only allowed 6 hours, now men and women will be allowed 7 hours of sleep.

Unit Cohesion

MacCoun (1993) argued that two types of cohesion actually exist. According to MacCoun, social cohesion refers to the quality of the bonds of friendship and emotional closeness among unit members. However, task cohesion refers to the commitment among unit members to accomplish a task that requires the collective efforts of the unit. Wong, Kolditz, Millen, and Potter (2003) contradictorily argued that successful unit performance is determined by social cohesion rather than task cohesion. Wong et al. (2003) ignored a large body of empirical research on military and nonmilitary groups showing that social cohesion has no independent impact on performance. They provide no evidence for the representativeness of the interview quotes they cite as evidence or for the reliability or validity of their measures. Their methodology fails to meet social science standards for causal inference (p. 1).
RAND (2010) conducted an extensive review of MacCoun (1993) on unit cohesion regarding the two aspects of social and task cohesion. All evidence indicated that task cohesion is much more important to unit accomplishment than social cohesion and some of the studies disclosed that high social cohesion among groups is linked to negative group behaviors.

The need to distinguish task cohesion from social cohesion is profoundly interesting and important. Scholars such as Mullen and Copper (1994) have found that these distinctions have profound consequences for predicting and influencing unit performance. They have repetitively found that task cohesion has a small but reliable correlation with group performance, whereas social cohesion has no reliable correlation with performance, and at high levels, it can even undermine task performance. Mullen and Copper (1994) analyzed 66 cohesion performance correlations from 49 studies; they found that the relationship between cohesion and performance was “due primarily to commitment to task rather than interpersonal attraction or group pride” (p. 210). Mullen and Copper’s (1994) established in their meta-analytic review that, if an argument for the cohesion–performance effect exists, it is that task cohesion not social cohesion correlates with performance.

Browne (2007) argued that physiological factors and threat to unit cohesion make women completely unsuitable to serve in direct ground combat units. Browne further argued that women leaders adversely affect morale, and that men cannot be socialized to accept women as equals, especially during combat operations. Browne cited a wide range of research in the fields of anthropology, biology, and psychology to support the claims. Browne theorized that lifting the exclusion of women from ground combat would be deeply irresponsible and could not be taken seriously, and that the change would be about diversity, not about military effectiveness. Browne further said that those whose expertise is combat, not diversity, should analyze this integration
policy, for major biological and psychological (cohesion) differences. Browne categorized three fields of research to support the theory: anthropology, biology, and psychology.

Browne (2012) analyzed the MDLC’s (2010) recommendation to allow women into ground combat, often citing Browne (2007). Browne (2012) further broke down the three fields into pregnancy (anthropology), physical strength (biology) and cohesion (psychology).

Browne (2012) raised questions about women’s participation in combat and argued that pregnancy presents a substantial readiness challenge. Browne also noted that women sometimes intentionally become pregnant to avoid deployments, which inevitably causes rifts among the male troops and decreases morale. For statistical purposes, Browne gathered data from the U.S. Army to gain a snapshot of what might occur in other branches of the American Military such as the U.S. Navy or the U.S. Marine Corps.

Although the American Military, (as cited in Grindlay & Grossman, 2013) maintains records of military pregnancy rates, it does not release them; nevertheless, it estimates in its survey that the number is approximately 11 percent. The 11 percent rate would be equivalent to 8,250 soldiers not available to deploy because they are pregnant. Moreover, this survey was conducted while the U.S. Army was engaged in fighting two wars simultaneously. The percentage might seem high; therefore, one could assume that Browne (2007, 2012) had a valid argument. However, to place these numbers in perspective, one should look closely at the nonavailable rates for an organization that has only males—the U.S. Army’s Unit of Act, a Brigade Combat Team (BCT) that maintains an average of 5,000 male soldiers.

Arnold, Drennan, Hoffman, Orgeron, and Willough (2011) provided data that indicate on any given day, approximately 75,000 soldiers are categorized as unable to deploy or are non-available. This number represents 13 percent of the U.S. Army’s authorized end strength, and the
reasons categorized as non-deployable were administrative, legal, and medical conditions. Arnold et al. further broke down the non-available personnel by BCTs:

- In fiscal year 2010, nearly 14.5 percent of soldiers in BCTs were unable to deploy by the unit’s deployment date, which was up from 9.9 percent in 2007.
- From fiscal years 2007–2011, the average number of soldiers per BCT who were unable to deploy on their deployment date steadily increased: 2007 – 391 (9.9%); 2008 – 467 (12%); 2009 – 502 (13%); and 2010 – 567 (14.5%).

At the time, it was estimated that the U.S. Army personnel office expected the non-deployable rate to be as high as 16 percent in 2012. Arnold et al. maintained that, if the current upward trend in the percentage of non-deployable soldiers in a BCT were not reversed, it could jeopardize the combat readiness of deploying units.

In analyzing the 11 percent of women in the military who were pregnant, one finds that the American Military (2008, as cited in Grindlay & Grossman, 2013) conducted the survey on all military, not merely the U.S. Army. Nevertheless, for comparison, one could rationally state that this average could easily be equivalent to the U.S. Army data (Arnold et al., 2011). One must consider that 11 percent of the 75,000 women in the U.S. Army is equivalent to 8,250 women non-available for deployment. There are 10 BCTs currently in the U.S. Army inventory. Therefore, using only a 14 percent non-available average that occurred in 2010, the number of non-available personnel is 7,000 males out of 50,000 of an all-male unit. When analyzing the numbers of non-available personnel, by comparison, it could be reasonably assumed that pregnancy has the same bearing on mission readiness as legal, administrative, and medical non-available personnel in all male units.
Current Situation of Military Gender Integration in the United States and other Foreign Countries

Under the Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule of 1994 (DoD, 2013), women in the American military were excluded from assignments in which the primary mission was to engage in direct ground combat, and were permitted to be excluded from other assignments in certain circumstances. On January 24, 2013, then Secretary of Defense Panetta rescinded that policy, along with endorsement from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Dempsey, and the services were directed to open the closed positions and units to women not later than January 1, 2016. The underlying principle behind repeal of the 1994 policy was that no individual who wants to serve her or his country should be forbidden from competing for or serving in any military capacity solely because of gender. Instead, every soldier, sailor, aviator, and marine should be judged on individual merit and ability. According to Secretary of Defense Panetta and General Dempsey (2013), it was and yet is their belief that merit-based military assignments strengthen and enhance the Nation’s military readiness and effectiveness. The change in policy also correctly reflects “on the ground” realities in which women, particularly in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, have long served side by side with men in ground combat to which 15 years of conflict can attest.

The change in policy directive and guidance provide timelines for action that each branch of service must complete. Each department had to provide detailed plans for implementation by May 15, 2013, and to provide quarterly progress reports to the Secretary of Defense thereafter, validate gender-neutral occupational standards not later than September 2015, and complete all studies by October 2015. The directive also stated that the integration of women into newly opened positions and units must occur “as expeditiously as possible,” but not later than January
The DoD has been tracking, monitoring, and providing oversight of the services’ and SOCOM’s integration efforts, but does not have plans to monitor the services’ implementation progress after January 2016 in integrating women into newly opened positions and occupations.

- The largest numbers of closed positions are in the U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps; there are fewer closed positions in the U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force. All the services have closed positions that are cross-assigned to SOCOM.
- Since the 2013 directive and guidance, as of March 2015, the DoD gave notice to the U.S. Congress of its intention to open approximately 91,000 total positions in the U.S. Army (including certain positions cross-assigned to SOCOM), the U.S. Navy, and the U.S. Marine Corps. Most of these positions are in MOS already open to women.
- The U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, and U.S. Marine Corps are the only services requesting an exception to policy.
- Calendar year 2015 is the last year of the transition period. Information has been scarce, progress to date has been spotty, and the services’ implementation processes raise several concerns.

Interagency Activities

The DoD has left it to each of the separate branches of the American Military to develop its own methods for establishing valid occupational standards and make other integration decisions and their individual plans has variable levels of detail and take very different approaches. Furthermore, 2 years into the 3-year transition period, the U.S. Marine Corps did not meet its original planned deadline of December 2013 to validate physical standards, develop physical screening tests, and recommend any exemptions. Therefore, the U.S. Marine Corps (2013, as cited in National Women’s Law Center, 2015) outlined a new integration plan, without
explanation for the changes. How the American Military and SOCOM are working together to validate standards or make integration decisions for positions cross-assigned to SOCOM is unclear; however, it is safe to assume that open communication occurs between the various branches up to the DoD. In addition, the required quarterly progress reports have not been made public, which leaves one wondering to what extent the DoD is overseeing the implementation of the plans.

A slight delay has occurred in assigning women to open MOS in closed units and, as of mid-2015, the timing only allows for another 5 months until full implementation. Many women have already qualified in the open occupations that are in closed units, and both the U.S. Army (2013) and the U.S. Marine Corps (2013) report that, when women have been assigned to positions in previously closed units, they have performed well. The U.S. Army has opened all positions in closed units (with the exception of certain positions in Special Operations units) to women in open MOS, and the U.S. Marine Corps has opened only a few such positions to women, none of which are in combat arms units. Therefore, in the American Military, only the U.S. Army has opened any positions that are cross-assigned to SOCOM.

The U.S. Marine Corps’ implementation plan, outlined in 2014 is hushed on how it is establishing and validating gender-neutral standards for all of its MOS. The focus of the plan involves several studies encompassing women who volunteer for the Infantry Officers Course, the enlisted Infantry Training Battalion, and a new Ground Combat Element Integrated Task Force. Women volunteers will take time away from their current career paths to participate in the training, but they are not able to be members of the closed MOS unit even if they meet the requirements. Notably, the U.S. Marine Corps has not announced what is being evaluated, how the results will be used, how data gathered will be used in deciding whether to request that any
occupation or unit remain closed, and particularly whether and how the physical tests that are part of the studies have been validated as occupational requirements. The U.S. Marine Corps (2014, as cited in the National Women’s Law Center, 2015) has stated that the Ground Combat Element Integrated Task Force study will test whether a gender-integrated unit will perform as well as a gender-restricted unit, review and refine gender-neutral occupational standards, and quantify the tasks, conditions and standards that have previously been “largely qualitative” (p. 3).

<p>| Table: Changes in and Status of Military Service Opportunities for Women as of March 2015 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positions opened since January 2013</th>
<th>Positions closed as of March 2015</th>
<th>Percent of positions closed as of March 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Army</td>
<td>68,500</td>
<td>176,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Force</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navy</td>
<td>17,100</td>
<td>9,200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marine Corps</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>54,800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>91,600</td>
<td>245,100</td>
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<td>SOCOM</td>
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<td>25,700</td>
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Figure 9. Changes in and status of military service opportunities for women as of March 2015. From “GAO analysis of DOD data, military personnel: DOD is expanding combat service opportunities for women, but should monitor long-term integration progress,” by U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2015, July 20, Washington, DC: Author. Adapted with permission.

Conclusion

The decision in 2013 to rescind the Combat Exclusion Policy (DoD, 1994) and to integrate women into direct ground combat units is a monumental victory for proponents of gender integration and for those who have maintained the continuous battle to remove all barriers to women’s service in the military. The American public, policy makers, and stakeholders realize that the nature of the battlefield has forever changed since the Persian Gulf War, and the American Military must be more accepting of women filling diverse roles in the military.

This study was conducted under the assumption that the 2013 decision would be upheld and that there would be full implementation of the integration policy in January 2016, or shortly thereafter. It was assumed that, when the policy is implemented, the leaders of every branch and
at every leadership level would conduct themselves professionally and enforce whatever standard is assigned to them, even if they do not fully agree across the entire American Military. With these assumptions, near-term and long-term questions will require answers; the near-term questions will be answered through normal reporting procedures and data collection; the far-term questions will require further research and will be answered after more information will be gleaned within 5–10 years after full integration.

**United States**

The DoD’s goal is to ensure that the American Military mission is met with the best, most fully qualified, and most capable people, regardless of gender. To that end, each service and SOCOM is working with various scientific and research agencies to review and validate operational standards to ensure that they are current, definitively tied to an operational requirement, and applied on a gender-neutral basis. Each service and SOCOM is conducting a thorough doctrine, training, education, facilities and policy analysis to ensure deliberate and responsible implementation; finally, each service and SOCOM has identified decision points by which they will make final determinations to open occupations and positions or to request an exception to policy to keep a position or occupation closed. The Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff must personally approve any exceptions to policy.

Early in November 2014, the U.S. Army’s Airborne and Ranger Training Brigade stationed at Fort Benning Georgia selected 31 female soldiers to serve as observers and advisers for a potential Ranger Course Assessment that would begin in the spring of 2016. The female observers and advisors assisted the Airborne and Ranger Training Brigade cadre in observing all major blocks of instruction and training during this assessment, but not serve as U.S. Ranger
instructors or train and evaluate female U.S. Ranger students, but only assist current male U.S. Ranger instructors.

The observer and advisers include 11 officers and 20 NCOs. Beginning November 7, 2015, the female soldiers were involved in weekly training events to prepare them to understand the mental and physical demands placed on U.S. Ranger students. Major General Miller, commanding General of the Maneuver Center of Excellence (as cited in Department of the Army Public Affairs, 2014), stated,

I was very satisfied with both the quality and quantity of the volunteers we received, their performance and professionalism over the course of the week was extraordinary. This group did very well for what was a very physically challenging week for any Soldier.

(n.p.)

On July 10, 2015, the U.S. Army released an All Army Activities message 113-2015, stating that the U.S. Army (a) opened all positions in open occupations, encompassing 60,000 positions in all components; (b) validated the physical standards for all occupations, including those currently closed to women; (c) completed its gender integration study; (d) opened 20,563 positions in MOS 12B (combat engineer) to women, and that (e) all remaining occupations and positions will be opened to women in 2016, unless the army requests an exception to the policy, according to a rigorous analysis of factual data regarding the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for the position. The U.S. Army is moving towards a qualitative accessions strategy, and Soldier 2020 is the U.S. Army’s effort to enhance the force readiness through implementing a scientific approach for verifying and evaluating MOS-specific physical performance requirements.
Norway

On October 14, 2014, the Norwegian parliament passed a bill extending mandatory military service to women as part of a plan to promote gender equality, and in January 2015, this measure to increase general-neutral conscription became effective, which might lead to an even larger influx of women into the service. In Norway, women are accepted in combat roles in an effort to reflect their status as equals within their society; however, attitudes, behavior, and cultural barriers are probably the greatest obstacles to women’s opportunities and influence their desire to make military service a lasting career (Fugslet, 2015).

Today, Norway, led by an arduous front-line of women, including Prime Minister Erna Solberg and her mostly female cabinet, including Defense Minister Ine Eriksen, is leading the charge to an inclusive, cohesive unisex Defense Force. They want the Armed Services to become as progressive and gender-blind as the top echelons of government. Norway has even further integrated the sexes by adopting same-sex living arrangements in some units, which has raised international scrutiny. However, this has occurred for several years in the Norwegian Armed Forces and, for the service members, this is old news.

Bergstrom (2014) conducted a gender research study in Norway in March 2014 and established that unisex rooms made gender insignificant, finding that the Norwegian Army described the phenomenon as degenderization: “When boys and girls shared the same room, gender was no longer significant” (np). Lilleaas and Ellingsen (2014) reported on a study of Norway’s Armed Forces, finding, counter to their expectations, that the recent introduction of unisex rooms in the Norwegian Army was associated with a decline in sexual assault. Unisex dorms broke down the barriers associated with gender disruptiveness and was replaced by a shared position as soldiers (Ruppanner, 2014). The main conclusion of this study is that male and
female soldiers can live harmoniously in a shared space without increase in sexual violence against women.

Canada

Canada is considered extremely progressive regarding the proportion of women in its military and the areas in which they can serve. The CAF are vastly considered as being at the forefront of military gender integration. Women can enlist in any occupation, which includes operational trades, and serve in any environment. In all trades, Canadian men and women are selected for training, promotions, and all career opportunities equally in the same way that is based on rank, qualifications, and merit.

Throughout the 1990s, the introduction of women into the combat arms increased the potential recruiting pool by 100 percent (Women in the CAF, 2014). It also provided opportunities for all persons to serve their country to the best of their abilities. Today, all equipment must be suitable for a mixed-gender force. Combat helmets, rucksacks, combat boots, and flak jackets are designed to ensure that women have the same level of protection and comfort as their male counterparts. The women’s uniform is similar in design to the men’s uniform, but conforms to the female figure, and is functional and practical.

As of January, the CAF (2014) quoted the percentage of women in the CAF, Regular Force, and Primary Reserve combined was at 14.8 percent, with more than 9400 women in the Regular Force and more than 4800 women in the Primary Reserve. The Royal Canadian Air Force comprises the highest percentage of women at 18.7 percent. Similarly, the Royal Canadian Navy has a representation of women of 18.4 percent and the Canadian Army 12.4 percent. Women today are joining the CAF with the broadest range of options for occupations and career advancement. Just less than 500 Canadian soldiers, sailors, aviators, and airwomen are currently
serving with task forces deployed on expeditionary operations by Canadian Joint Operations Command. Although the CAF do not keep track of the gender of deployed personnel, one can safely assume that qualified women are serving on the majority of the combat missions.

Israel

In 2014, the IDF Artillery Corps opened its elite unit to female soldiers for the first time. Although they have played supporting roles in artillery combat units for well over a decade, it marked the first time that the elite unit accepted females. Six female soldiers from the August 2014 draft passed the physical aptitude test that allowed them to join the elite Moran, Meitar, and Skyrider units, part of the Artillery Corps’ David’s Sling Formation (Poch, 2014).

The Skyrider unit is one of the units in the IDF that uses drones; its mission is to gather intelligence from hard to reach locations and the service requires all soldiers carry extremely heavy equipment for long periods. The women that make the decision to enlist for the Skyrider organization will commit to 3 years of military service, the same term that men serve. Normally, women are only required to serve 2 years in the IDF, unless they are part of a specialized unit, such as this.

Female soldiers wishing to serve in elite combat units have already had a number of options open to them, such as serving as a naval commander, air force pilot, in antiaircraft divisions, combat intelligence, combat search and rescue, the Owl division of the Engineering Corps and the K9 Oetz unit attached to Golani, as well as the technological combat unit. This is the first instance of female soldiers being allowed into elite combat units in the armored divisions. Early in 2014, the IDF reported in Israel Hayom (as cited in Poch, 2014) a 64 percent rise in women volunteering for combat roles in the IDF.
According to Artillery Corps Base Commander Col. Yuval Ben-Dov, the military’s combat fitness department adapted the physical standards required for the elite units to make them suitable for women. As a result, the men in those units will be required to meet the same standards, rather than more rigorous ones. Military regulations were also adjusted to enable the entry of women into the units, the majority of the jobs in these units require strong mental fitness, and for that, there is no difference between women and men. (n.p.)

Summary

In this chapter, I explored the gender-integration policies of the United States and other foreign countries, the arguments for and against integration, the two common themes that are considered problematic because of integration, and the current situation pertaining to integration within the American Military and observations of other countries’ successes. In the process, the history of women in combat, the practice, and recent battlefield demands were brought to light, and the research demonstrated how women have proven themselves on the battlefields in a multitude of ways, from wars of previous centuries to the present day.

Although the debate surrounding the new policy of the integration of women into ground combat units yet exists, a focus on full implementation is necessary, for members of the military have no choice but to accept the change. By examining other countries’ policies on integration as the research demonstrates here, military analysts will now have the background to further examine and study how to integrate women successfully and will have the ability to mitigate future challenges. In today’s asymmetrical battlefields, as seen in the Middle East and other hot spots around the world, all military personnel, whether American or foreign allies, serve in harm’s way. Women’s roles in the American Military have expanded over time as policies have
changed, providing greater opportunity; often in response to mounting pressure of equal rights, but also because of the development of new roles to meet the needs of the leaders on the ground. As these commanders look for new ways to increase the effectiveness of their units, the increasing roles of women have bridged the gap between policy and practice; further necessitating the requirement to have women in combat.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

Any policy that is implemented at the local organization level or at the national level (e.g., the American Military full integration policy) requires multiple levels of debate, surveys, and interviews from stakeholders. When applying a policy analysis at a level of the DoD, I used an approach that is broad and versatile and reflects the field of applied policy research and advice, where a multitude of perspectives and methods have been developed. The model serves three purposes: understanding policy analysis as a discipline, contributing to the design of new policy analysis methods and projects, and guiding others in evaluating such methods and projects. I will restate the policy activities and policy styles reviewed in Chapter 3 and provide the findings and recommendations for current and future leaders of the American Military. The conclusion further addresses research on full integration that will need to be completed within 5-10 years.

As noted in Figure 10, six archetypal policy analysis activities exist along the points of the hexagon with congruent analysis styles located between two of the points. This conceptual model allowed me to develop the approach to the method used in the research by combining insights from two styles that are adapted from the activities. The activities provide pointers or a road map to evaluate the policies by identifying those activities to pursue and use that information as the basis for the successful analysis. First, I will discuss the four activities along points aligned according to the relevancy with the analysis styles used in the policy exploration of integrating women into combat units.
Activity and Style Approach to Policy Analysis

Research and analyze

Clarify values and arguments

Democratic style: What is good for the people?

Rational style: What is good knowledge?

Polyvalent: What is good for the organization?

Value, validity, reliability, etc.

Selection criteria

Confronting, assessing, and evaluating arguments etc.

Managed, legitimate, accountable, etc.

Politics (interest, power, decision, implementation)

Acceptance and learning

Process, representation, policies, learning, etc.

Democratic legitimacy

Advising strategically

Advise

Design and recommend

What is good for policy

What is good for the process

What is good for the people

Participant style: What is good for the people?

Idealistic and generic values and criteria

Pragmatic and particular values and criteria


Research and Analysis Activity

One level of analysis was based on direct comparisons across cases guided according to three questions:

1. Have the amount of sexual harassment claims dramatically increased, decreased, or stayed the same in the countries that have already integrated women into combat roles?

2. Are women performing at the same level as their male counterparts?

3. Has there been a shift in the cultural climate where women have integrated?

These questions and other, similar questions are relevant to policy analysis; are about facts, causes, and effects; and are the drivers of this research. According to Mayer et al. (2004), policy analysis is undeniably a form of applied research that uses research methods and
techniques that are scientific or derived from science, such as surveys, interviews, statistical analysis, but also simulation and extrapolation. The research and analyze cluster activity is matched with a perspective on policy analysis identified as knowledge generation where institutions such as statistical agencies, scientific research organizations and other research agencies gather and analyze, on request, knowledge and information for policy purposes. This activity fits within this research on integration of women policy change because the political agenda influences research priorities, and the results of the research activities might influence the political agenda.

**Clarify Values and Arguments**

This activity is about the “what” or “why” a conflict of opinions exists between proponents and opponents of the issues in this policy analysis. The prolonged military conflicts (e.g., the 15 years of continuous war in Afghanistan or the prolonged conflicted discussion over the past 20 years) pertain to the integration of women into combat units and social beliefs surrounding that decision. Conflicting beliefs have created a stalemate and often are described through central normative and argumentative differences. In this activity, policy analysis is used to improve the quality of debate by identifying the one-sided or limited nature of arguments and examining where blind spots or gaps exist in the debate.

**Democratize**

The democratize activity is ultimately as straightforward as the word itself—this policy analysis maintains a normative and ethical objective that allows equal access to, and influence on, the policy process for all stakeholders involved. Experts and senior military leaders are involved in this process at the DoD level; therefore, they mandate the decision. However, policy analysis approaches address this top-down approach by calling attention to views and opinions
that lead to or maintain inequality typically overlooked in policymaking and decision-making about access.

Mediate

Within the larger discussion of integrating women into combat units, obviously, some leaders support it and some do not, but some leaders might support the policy if they are given the right information and are involved in the decision-making process. Here, analysts supervise the interaction and designs the rules and procedures for negotiating in a policymaking or decision-making process. The mediation cluster comprises different types of activities with a focus on analyzing contextual factors (stakeholders, issues, dependencies, tensions, and tradeoffs), and designing and possibly facilitating meetings in which different stakeholders and decision makers consult and negotiate. The policy analyst mediates during the design of the negotiation process and its execution (Mayer et al., 2004).

Depending on the specific policy analysis design, one, two, or more clusters might be involved and might prevail over the others, while the remaining might become subordinate or irrelevant. The activities are designed in a logical way and are closely related, for the farther the activities are from each other, the greater will be the field of tension, and the more difficult unification will become. This situation does not imply that the activities are discordant; they are yet connected as the illustration suggests; it simply means that the tension must be resolved.

Argumentative Style

For this policy analysis, I used the argumentative and interactive styles for their relevance to and alignment with the problem. These two approaches are impelling archetypes. The argumentative style assumes that policy is made, defended, and criticized through the medium of language (Mayer et al., 2004). When analyzing policy using the argumentative style, it is
important to listen carefully to the semantical game that surrounds the policy problem or the issue. The attention of the issue will shift to a debate, and, within the debate, rhetoric, arguments, untruths, and facts will be injected that are not based on any type of scientific or academic review. The ambition of this type of policy analysis is to inject recommendations and improvements on the policy to those parties who have been cross-talking for years and to bridge the gap between opponents.

**Interactive Style**

This research site and scope of the analysis addresses the policy of women integrating into combat units; therefore, the second style I chose is the interactive style. According to Mayer et al. (2004), the interactive style assumes that individuals—experts, analysts, clients, stakeholders and target groups—have or may have differing views of the “same” policy problem. An insight relevant to policy can be obtained by bringing about a confrontation and interaction of different views. The interactive style has a strong socio-constructive foundation. Different views of reality can be valid simultaneously. Through continuous interaction and interpretation—the “hermeneutic circle”—it is possible to gain an insight. (p. 14)

With interactive style, specific groups such as stakeholders, policy makers, target groups, and academic and medical advisors are brought in to develop solutions to issues at hand which brings about multiple interaction whereby the participants learn about their own views in relation to others, have the opportunity to refine those views, and, therefore, become enriched. It should be noted that this style of policy analysis is conducted at the very senior level within the DoD.


**Fairness Versus Effectiveness**

The second level of analysis reflects the research study questions. Drennan (2014) presented an excellent analysis approach focused on the two basic elements to frame the arguments of those that oppose and support the integration policy. Drennan suggested that the proponents view the decision to allow women into combat units as a question of fairness, and that those who oppose the integration policy see the change leading to a degradation of military effectiveness.

The proponents’ point of view and position on the decision to integrate women into direct ground combat units can be summarized under a fairness frame. Fairness (or neutrality) is the concern; therefore, complications exist because of the combat exclusion policies: The first argument addresses discrimination and is based on the policy itself; advocates believe that policies that exclude women from serving because of their gender are discriminatory and that such policies can ultimately hinder or otherwise harm the career opportunities of military women (Drennan, 2014). Discrimination by gender labels men and women by status; therefore, it automatically places men in a superior status and implies that women are second-class citizens and second-class service members.

The second argument made by proponents addresses the need to broaden the recruiting and retention pool. The operational environment of modern military warfare with advanced weaponry and the reality of armed conflict with new enemy tactics and counterinsurgency operations will require the best soldier, airman, sailor, marine and leader, both men and women. With an emerging, new kind of enemy, it has been established that the Global War on Terror will be a protracted and costly fight (Record, 2003). The American Military will consistently be called upon to protect its self-interests, its borders, and the citizens of the United States. The
American Military currently is comprised of a force that is 86 percent male and 14 percent female (Defense Manpower Data Center, 2013); by allowing the 14 percent of the population to contribute and have the same opportunity as the 86 percent, the United States will be drawing upon 100 percent of its resources and completely seeking out the best available people.

Subsequent to this “fairness” argument exists the belief that of the current 14 percent, many of them will now have the opportunity to not only make it to the flag officer (General) ranks, but command a division, corps or army, a position that can never be held by any officer other than one from combat arms organizations. I mention commanding an army in this model because U.S. Army generals predominately command units such as the U.S. Central Command, which coordinates the military’s operations worldwide and is the commander of the American Military in any combat contingency operation.

A third argument for allowing women in direct combat units is that full integration will ultimately “level the playing field” and, thereby, mitigate the existing problem of sexual harassment and sexual assault as it has done in all three countries examined in this study. Following the announcement to rescind the Combat Exclusion Policy (DoD, 1994), this position was made clear in a statement by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (2013, as cited in DoD Memos, 2013b) in a press conference:

We’ve had this ongoing issue with sexual harassment, sexual assault. I believe it’s because we’ve had separate classes of military personnel. At some level….when you have one part of the population that is designated as warriors and another part that is designated as something else, I think that disparity begins to establish a psychology that in some cases led to that environment. I have to believe, the more we can treat people equally, the more they are likely to treat each other equally. (n.p.)
However, the opponents of gender integration focus on two perceived problems: the first perceived problem is the long-standing usual arguments of unit cohesion and the second perceived problem is the physical standards—both of which opponents contended will reduce combat effectiveness, unlike proponents who tend to base their arguments on values, fairness, social norms, and equality principles. Therefore, the major differences between the two are that the former is based on abstract principles and the latter is based on practical issues; nevertheless, both sides rely on practical necessities and political beliefs to support their arguments.

The second perceived problem expressed by opponents is that full integration will lead to lowering entrance and sustainment standards within combat units, making them “gender-normed” standards and thus reducing the unit’s combat effectiveness. Opponents believe that it would be unjust to allow women in combat and to place them in a situation in which they would be completely unable to take care of themselves, or if need be, to care for another service member, which would reduce both members’ chances of survival in a combat situation. Opponents view the Combat Exclusion Policy (DoD, 1994) not as discriminate legislation, but as a means to protect the service members, and to ensure that the United States has the most powerful and reliable fighting force possible. However, if the forces were not to use the remaining 14 percent of service members who are women, that goal would be contradictory, for the excluded women might be a powerful and reliable entity in the American Military’s combat formations.

**Findings and Conclusions**

In this study, I compared and contrasted the current American policy divergent to three other countries’ policies that have successfully integrated women into combat: Norway, Canada, and Israel. Through this examination, I revealed an opportunity to recognize gaps in training and
procedural information that are most important to the successful implementation in the United States. In addition, I examined the factors in the current American policy that might have been overlooked regarding indicators for a successful model. Four questions guided the focus of the study:

1. What are the current organizational conditions that restrict women’s advancement in the American Military?

2. How does the American gender integration policy compare and contrast with the gender integration policies of the three other developed countries of Norway, Canada, and Israel?

3. What are the gaps in training and procedural information that are most important to the successful implementation in the United States?

4. What are the beliefs and assumptions held by political advisors, policy makers, and stakeholders about the challenges and opportunities arising from women formally joining combat units?

Despite the recent changes implemented to increase the number and types of positions open to women in the American Military, gender restrictions continue to affect the types of positions they can fill. The MDLC (2011) stated that the DoD and military service exclusionary policies regarding the assignment of women are institutional barriers to women’s career advancement and to greater gender diversity among senior military leaders. The diversity commission recommended eliminating these policies. To accomplish this assessment, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness initiated the Women in the Services Review, comprising a senior leader steering committee and a working group with representatives from the Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, and Navy.
1. What are the current organizational conditions that restrict women’s advancement in the American Military?

The MLDC (2011) measured the consequence of gender restrictions on women’s career opportunities in the American Military and progression to leadership positions. The diversity commission’s analyses found that women were not fully represented at both the senior NCO and general officer levels and had significantly lower retention rates relative to their male counterparts (MLDC, 2011). The commission reasoned the combat exclusion policies to be a significant structural barrier to the inclusion and advancement of women in the American Military. Clearly, the MDLC (2011) found that these policies work at two levels. First, they explicitly prohibit women from serving in certain tactical/operational career fields, such as infantry in the Army. Second, within the career fields that are open to women, the policies may prevent women from getting key assignments because they prohibit women from being assigned to units that are likely to be involved in direct offensive ground combat. (p. 66)

The greatest number of positions closed to American Military women is in the U.S. Army, which happens to be the largest branch of the American Military. Most closed positions are located in occupations that are closed to women, primarily in the infantry branch, but also in the armored forces, field artillery, Special Forces, and combat engineers. Positions in open occupations that are closed to women are typically located in ground combat units at or below the battalion level, which accommodates approximately 800-1000 personnel. The types of units that are closed are led by junior officers; therefore, women who reach the rank of major and higher are likely to find that the number of positions closed to them is greatly reduced. A greater percentage of open positions does not mean that women are equally competitive for promotion,
command, or key assignments, especially when command and key assignments are at the brigade or division level. One will conclude from the MLDC (2011) that, until women can volunteer for combat arms branches, they will never command a division, which subsequently excludes them from being a combat arms officer, combat arms is a prerequisite.

2. How does the American gender integration policy compare and contrast with the gender integration policies of the three other developed countries of Norway, Canada, and Israel?

This inquiry about how four developed countries are integrating women into all combat positions in all service branches is too broad a topic for a one-dimensional policy analysis. However, some findings emerged from the policy analysis that illuminate each of the three countries’ similarities with that of the United States regarding military employment. Some countries are more open to women serving in any capacity (e.g., Canada) and other countries have similar restrictions closely resembling those of the United States, which will be limited regarding serving in ground combat positions. For example, Israel allows women to volunteer and to integrate fully into combat units; however, if operational deployment orders are issued, it is highly unlikely that the women in that unit will be able to deploy with their assigned unit.

Each military branch has different service entities that comprise the Nation’s armed forces, each has conducted studies, and each is in the process of opening more service areas to women or at least of reviewing the discussion from time to time, according to their respective laws.

When analyzing the American Military compared to the other allied countries’ militaries who sought a full integration, two key themes were constant across cases: concern about unit cohesion and sustaining equitable physical standards. However, the research appeared to show that the United States’ stakeholders and policy analysts were more concerned with lowering the
standards, which would ultimately affect combat effectiveness, while Norway, Israel, and Canada were more concerned with the culture and sexual harassment. For example, after an extended time integrating women in combat units, Norway found that women increase operational effectiveness and that no evidence exists that unit cohesion is affected by having women in combat units. Similarly, the CAF, which has also been fully integrated since the 1980s, reports that no negative effect has occurred in operational performance or team cohesion because of the presence of women in combat units.

In the beginning of the CAF integration, some leaders held assumptions and beliefs that the changes would affect combat effectiveness and questioned women’s ability to serve in a male “unique” culture, as occurred in the United States. Women did experience sex and gender stereotyping during the initial phase of CAF integration; however, the Canadian leaders have developed strategies to negotiate and adapt to the culture, and over the years have improved understanding of the cultural changes through the increased representation of women in leadership roles and on operational deployments. Similarly, Israeli commanders have recognized that women often exhibit superior skills in areas such as discipline and motivation, maintaining alertness, shooting abilities, managing tasks in an organized manner, and displaying knowledge and professionalism in the use of weapons. Despite their performance, women often face the same ongoing battle against skepticism and mistrust in the form of teasing from their fellow male combatants and negative messages from high-ranking officers. There is resistance to integrating women fully into small combat units, but that seems to stem from women taking over an all-male position within the forces (cohesion).

Until the final policy is implemented, to what degree women will be allowed to serve in a combat capacity in January 2016 is yet to be determined. To date, the U.S. Air Force is the only
branch of the American Military that has not submitted an exception to the policy not to allow women to serve in combat units—the U.S. Marines, U.S. Army, and U.S. Navy have all submitted the exceptions.

3. What are the gaps in training and procedural information that are most important to the successful implementation in the United States?

When considering the training and procedural gaps that might occur when implementing a full integration plan, one can look back to the integration of the female engagement teams (FETS) used in Iraq and Afghanistan. The FET is a product made out of necessity during the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars, and consists women soldiers specifically trained to conduct host nation engagement activities in a culturally respectful manner. For example, in the Middle East, it is culturally offensive for a man to touch a woman who is not his wife; therefore, the FETS will conduct body searches on the women at checkpoints. FETS are extremely effective, especially when attached to Special Operation units such as the U.S. Navy SEALs and U.S. Army Special Forces when conducting raids.

Some of the findings about challenges in gender integration were superstitions related to women in combat, for example, concerns about fraternization, misunderstandings about women’s health and welfare needs, and lack of experience from the men working with women. According to the NCOs and officers who worked, supervised, and commanded the FETS, the best way to meet these challenges has been to allow women to demonstrate their capabilities through integrated training, physical training competitions, and team building exercises. Rather than focusing on gender, emphasis was on the extensive training and development of the team to become a well-trained, motivated, and professional asset that will help the unit achieve its objectives during deployment. It was found that the inclusion of women engagement in
American Military doctrine, policy, education, and training would assist organizations at all levels to understand how women will enhance the organization and develop a better war-fighting team. A clear mission and standard procedure will enhance women’s integration and employment. Full integration is a critical capability that can be incorporated into future military operations.

From analyzing the beliefs of proponents for and opponents against integration, the analysis indicates that, if the American Military leaders truly desire for the policy to succeed, one will be able to justify the existence of the policy; if one detests the policy, one can also develop his or her own justifications for the failure of the policy. It can also be asserted that integration should not be achieved by framing access as an equality issue; rather it is more likely to be achieved by focusing on the superior capabilities that women bring to the operational success of the force. A conclusion of the study is that all American Military service members, male and female, should have the same just right to at least attempt, if they choose, to participate in combat and elite positions during their career to achieve their full potential. If not allowed to achieve a key milestone or “gate” in one’s military career, the deprivation could potentially cause a domino effect, forcing a service member to de prioritize the ranks and duties that he or she is not allowed to achieve.

The purpose of this analysis was to compare varying policies and procedures adopted by other foreign militaries similar to that of the American Military so that this research could contribute to the discussions and analysis of the 2013 decision to integrate women into ground combat and elite special operations combat positions. This was accomplished through a framing analysis of the debate in governmental websites and organizational policies to identify arguments for and against in integrating women into ground combat organizations. Throughout the research,
the analysis identified key stakeholder groups and used a different lens or perspective to achieve a better understanding of the perspectives, arguments, and avenues of other nations that have allowed an achievable transition to a fully integrated military. With a thorough understanding of the stakeholders and their perspectives, one can see potential obstacles and can suggest actions to gain acceptance of the new policy.

4. What are the beliefs and assumptions held by political advisors, policy makers, and stakeholders about the challenges and opportunities arising from women formally joining combat units?

The analysis of proponent and opponent stakeholder groups shows that stakeholders, political advisors, and policy makers base their respective arguments for and against integrating women into direct ground combat on assumptions, values, social constructs, and traditional Judeo-Christian beliefs that women are inferior to men. The scientific data, although supporting the fact that physiological differences exist between men and women, did not support the argument that all women should be excluded from combat units. I conclude that, although two common themes of concern existed throughout the research across cases—unit cohesion degradation and inequitable physical standards—the three countries examined reported that no effect occurred on unit morale or cohesion, and that it did not matter whether physical standards were general neutral or gender-normed: All three countries reported that a very small number of women volunteered for the combat organizations, which is on a par with the numbers who volunteered for the U.S. Army Ranger Course. Nevertheless, in those small percentages in all three countries, women are performing equally as well as men, and in some specific areas, they perform even better. More importantly, Norway and Canada found that integrating women into the combat organizations is a leadership issue and not a social, sexual, or culture issue. They
found that educating leaders on professionalism and equality creates a successful organization. Surprisingly, sexual harassment decreased in Norway, which is the only country that is known to implement cohabitation in one of their organizations, housing two women and four men in a single room.

Recommendation for Leaders

How is it that the American Military can be a pioneer in scientific research, technological advances, racial integration, religious freedom, and the inclusion of gays and lesbians, but at the same time, be so overwhelmed with the “problematic” issue of allowing a service member to become a combat arms specialist? After all, the American Military discovered Kevlar, first used the Internet in the 1960s, commissioned the first Buddhist chaplain in 2008, now allows gays and lesbians to serve freely, and now acknowledges gay marriage with the same benefits as “traditional” marriages.

The answer to the puzzle is that it is somewhat problematic for the leaders on the ground who will execute the policy, but it is more problematic for the politicians and senior military officials who fail to recognize (a) the great contribution women have made, (b) the future contributions that they will make as the other of the two sexes, and (c) that they are just as courageous as men are. The mid-level leader on the ground will have fewer problems because women’s service in the American Military will be viewed as a leadership opportunity, instead of a leadership challenge or concern. The field grade officers, sergeants major, command sergeants major, master gunnery sergeants, chief master sergeants, and master chief petty officers will execute this policy without hesitation and will learn from other countries’ similar experiences for more than 20 years. From the beginning of the CAF integration, the assumptions and beliefs were the same as in the American Military: that integrating women into direct combat units
would affect combat effectiveness, degrade unit cohesion, and questioned women’s ability to serve in a male “unique” culture. However, although the women in the CAF did experience sex and gender stereotyping, they also developed strategies to negotiate and adapt to the culture and, over the years, have improved its understanding of the cultural changes through the increased representation of women in leadership roles and on operational deployments (Cawkill et al., 2009). The Army Lessons Learned Center (1998, as cited in Cawkill et al., 2009) stated:

Cohesion of mixed gender combat arms units was a leadership challenge. In a nonhomogeneous environment, there needed to be a search for common ground or a point on which all team members could identify, and it was considered a leadership responsibility to provide the framework and common ground to facilitate team building. (p. 18)

Therefore, the recommendation of current leaders and future leaders is to evaluate one’s units constantly, to educate oneself continually, and to treat everyone equally in an organization that promotes equality and diversity.

Questions for Further Research

The decision to rescind the Combat Exclusion Policy (DoD, 1994) was a groundbreaking one by Secretary of Defense Panetta in January 2013 for all the proponents who have fought for over 2 decades to ensure that women were given the parity with men. The American Military woman has fought with honor and distinction since World War II and, following the 1990 Persian Gulf War, women were deploying at a rate never seen before in history. The overwhelming success of women’s performance was once again elevated during the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars over the last 15 years and definitely fueled the debate once again about the barriers that were placed in front of women in the American Military.
Through the course of this study, it has been evident that the subject of integrating women into direct ground combat arms organizations is a sensitive issue and a very broad topic. In this study, I explored the debate by analyzing the integration policies and processes of three other developed countries with the intent of gaining a better understanding of the values, issues, and assumptions held so that I could expand the understanding and knowledge about these concerns for the American stakeholder. A tremendous opportunity remains for the United States to fully embrace the 2016 integration policy and to continue to be a learning organization by continually improving the policy. For this to occur, further research must be conducted within the next 5–10 years; and the researchers should answer one important question: After the rescinding of the ground Combat Exclusion Policy (DoD, 1994), will allowing women in full combat roles assist them in achieving full career potential after the January 2016 implementation?

In this study, I explored, examined, and analyzed the ongoing debate surrounding the integration of women into direct ground combat units as viewed through broadcasting, books, and online media. In my research, I identified the key stakeholder groups, the arguments presented for and against by each side in the debate, how each side frames the debate, and how these frames are constructed from underlying assumptions and values. Most importantly, in the study, I examined the successful integration of women into the military services of three other developed countries, with similar concerns and arguments pre-integration. In so doing, I hope that the readers can better understand the debate, the possible implications of change, and areas for future study as the American Military moves forward with gender integration.
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