

# Women Inside the Canadian Military, 1938-1966

by

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## **Abstract**

This dissertation inserts servicewomen into military history and women's and gender history by analyzing how women voiced their place in the Canadian military between 1938 and 1966. It studies how women negotiated the conditions of their service during the Second World War, resisted demobilization in 1946, and shaped the terms on which women entered the forces permanently in 1966. Drawing on official texts, unofficial histories, and personal scrapbooks, the thesis identifies the voices of women who pursued military careers and makes three arguments. First, women have actively negotiated with defence officials for a place in the armed services in war and peace. Second, servicewomen have adopted a perspective that went beyond the war in their plans for future service and their reflections on past service. Third, servicewomen crafted their legacies and pushed for recognition of female military expertise. The thesis moves beyond Ruth Roach Pierson's pioneering work on women in the Second World War to consider women's long-term identifications with the forces.

Chapter one covers the establishment of the wartime women's services. Chapter two studies wartime debates over alcohol and sexual (im)morality. Chapter three analyzes reports on the future of women in the forces written in 1946 by Acting Captain Adelaide Sinclair, Lieutenant-Colonel Daisy Royal, and an unnamed senior member of the Royal Canadian Air Force. Chapter four examines women's continued participation in the military community through veteran's organizations and cadet groups, and discussions over their place in the armed services between 1946 and 1955. Chapter five concentrates

on a 1965 study recommending a permanent place for women in the services. Chapter six explores how servicewomen narrated their histories in scrapbooks and unofficial histories.

The research answers Cynthia Enloe's appeal to listen carefully to women inside the military, and identifies ways women's voices have been silenced, by both defence officials and scholars. The thesis highlights the military as a site of feminism, linking paramilitary women, servicewomen, veteran's organizations, and cadets. Studying women's negotiation of their military roles and their history reveals the policing of gender norms in the armed services, Canadian society, and the scholarship of the Second World War.

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## Table of Contents

<b>Abstract</b> .....	<b>ii</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>iv</b>
<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	<b>viii</b>
<b>List of Illustrations</b> .....	<b>ix</b>
<b>List of Appendices</b> .....	<b>x</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter One – Entering and Exiting the Women’s Services, 1938-1946</b> .....	<b>54</b>
<b>Chapter Two – Alcohol, Sex “Delinquency,” and the Women’s Services, 1941-1946</b> .....	<b>119</b>
<b>Chapter Three – Building Bridges: Wartime Women’s Services Design Their Successors</b> .....	<b>186</b>
<b>Chapter Four – Renewing Ties: The Interim Period and Re-entrance, 1946-1955</b> ..... .....	<b>244</b>
<b>Chapter Five – Becoming a Permanent Part of the Defence Forces of Canada: The Minister’s Manpower Study (Men) and Uniformed Women</b> .....	<b>305</b>
<b>Chapter Six – Constructing Female Military Tradition(s): Servicewomen’s Scrapbooks and Unofficial Histories</b> .....	<b>373</b>
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	<b>439</b>
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	<b>451</b>
<b>Appendix One – Ethics Clearance Form</b> .....	<b>477</b>

## List of Illustrations

Figure 1: Scrapbook of Lieutenant Beulah Irene Rosen (nee Jaenicke), CWM 20060087-006_p9.....	385
Figure 2: Scrapbook of Lieutenant Beulah Irene Rosen (nee Jaenicke), CWM 20060087-006_inside cover .....	391
Figure 3: Scrapbook of Lieutenant Beulah Rosen (nee Jaenicke), CWM 20060087-006_p2.....	393
Figure 4: Photograph album of Minnie Eleanor Gray in Europe, CWM 20110057-021_p44,.....	397

## List of Appendices

Appendix One –Ethics Clearance Form.....	478
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## Introduction

Through a close reading of official texts, unofficial histories, and personal scrapbooks, this dissertation considers the long history of women voicing and defining a place for themselves in the Canadian military between 1938 and 1966. The thesis responds to Ruth Roach Pierson's ground breaking *"They're Still Women After All": The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood* (1986), and makes a case for reframing Canadian women's military history by extending the time frame beyond the Second World War and exploring women's movement into and out of the Canadian armed services.<sup>1</sup> The dissertation starts just before the war, when women formed paramilitary groups and lobbied for the creation of women's services in the face of the reluctance of defence officials.<sup>2</sup> It travels through the war to the disbandment of the women's divisions of the army, navy and air force in 1946, which occurred despite concerted efforts to craft a place for women in the postwar forces. The account continues with women's participation in veterans' organizations and their re-entrance into the armed services in 1951. It then analyzes how some women pursued a military career despite efforts to "phase out" air force women in the mid-1960s. The dissertation ends in 1966, when the decision was made that servicewomen had a permanent place as full-time members of the

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<sup>1</sup> The term "Canadian armed services" refers to the army, navy, and air force. The unification of the Canadian armed services occurred shortly after this study ends. During the time period covered by this study, the Canadian Army, the Royal Canadian Air Force, and the Royal Canadian Navy were separate institutions with their own organizational structure and culture. The term "Canadian armed services" is used here because it is useful to have a collective term that conveys plurality.

<sup>2</sup> The terms "paramilitary corps," or "paramilitary groups" refer to organizations that were not officially part of the defence forces of Canada, but adopted trappings of a military unit.

defence forces of Canada.

The dissertation makes a case that historians should take servicewomen's voices seriously. It makes three related arguments. First, it argues that women, both inside and outside the armed services, have actively pursued their visions of female military service. Women have expressed their plans as they engaged in ongoing negotiations with military and civilian defence officials over the parameters of women's military service. These negotiations were influenced by the larger power relations of gender, class, race, ethnicity, age, and sexual orientation. Thinking and action began in 1938 and continued in peacetime; the research presented here shows that women were drawn to military service in both periods. Second, the thesis demonstrates that some servicewomen took the long view in their plans for women's military service. Canadian women's military history has typically concentrated on women's service in the Second World War; the employment of extended time frames by servicewomen reveals a need to think beyond this limited periodization. Third, the thesis argues that servicewomen's efforts to negotiate a place for themselves have included efforts to shape their individual legacies and secure a place for women in the (re)telling of the Second World War. Their efforts illustrate that some servicewomen had long-term identifications with the Canadian armed services and that historians have not properly appreciated women as important repositories of military knowledge. Servicewomen are recognized here as precisely that.

The engagement here with (service)women's voices responds to Cynthia Enloe's call for scholars to "pay [...] close attention to women *inside* militaries" in *Globalization*

*& Militarism: Feminists Make the Link* (2007).<sup>3</sup> While Enloe is an anti-militarist scholar and focuses on contemporary women, her criteria for listening to women inside militaries generate useful strategies for women's military history. Enloe argues that since servicewomen are a heterogeneous group, scholars must analyze women's enlistment patterns "over several decades" and must track changes in the enlistment rates of women from "diverse ethnic and racial and socioeconomic backgrounds." In other words, she encourages a statistical analysis that tracks shifts in the percentages of women from different groups. She states that examining women's enlistment patterns requires simultaneously tracking the government's recruitment policies, interrogating the government's justification for the employment of servicewomen, and recognizing servicewomen's diverse reasons for enlistment. In addition, she argues that paying attention entails the study of servicewomen's different experiences, without forgetting that these experiences are shaped by "their male peers and superiors." Enloe emphasizes "listening to silences" in servicewomen's accounts, noting that scholars must be aware of how servicemen of all ranks and the patriarchal armed forces have silenced servicewomen on topics such as sexual harassment. Civilians also shape the employment of women, and in Enloe's view, scholars who wish to pay attention must analyze the range of civilian reactions towards servicewomen.<sup>4</sup>

This dissertation applies some of Enloe's criteria. Following her suggestion, it explores how women and defence officials negotiated women's place in the armed

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<sup>3</sup> Cynthia Enloe, *Globalization & Militarism: Feminists Make the Link* (Lanham: Rowam & Littlefield Publishers, 2007), 63, 69-70. Emphasis in text. The quotation comes from page 63 and is adapted from a chapter title. Enloe repeats the phrase throughout the chapter. See pages 63-92.

<sup>4</sup> Enloe, *Globalization & Militarism*, 69-70. The quotations come from page 69.

services over several decades. The thesis simultaneously traces the defence policy that governed the employment of women, the motivations behind that policy, and women's diverse reasons for enlisting in the armed services. Some women were attracted to the power, prestige, and authority associated with the armed services.<sup>5</sup> The armed services are powerful state institutions. Minority groups have fought to gain access to military service in order to improve their social position and status, and some women have viewed military service as an avenue to improve the rights of all women. Other women, especially those who enlisted during the war, rejected the notion that they joined to improve women's rights, stating that they enlisted because they wanted to perform their patriotic duty. Some other women had economic motives and were attracted by the financial independence that military service promised.<sup>6</sup>

The dissertation departs from Enloe in several areas. First, it adds the analysis of reasons why women left the armed services to her tactics for analysing women's enlistment patterns. Scholarship on civilian women's labour trends helps contextualize why women enlisted, why some women served for a short period, and why others made military service their career. Second, Enloe seeks to understand changes in the statistical

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<sup>5</sup> Leisa D. Meyer, *Creating GI Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women's Army Corps During World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 1-10; Ruth Roach Pierson, "They're Still Women After All": *The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986), 97-9; Lucy Noakes, *Women in the British Army: War and the Gentle Sex, 1907-1948* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 1-20; and Cynthia Enloe, *Does Khaki Become You? The Militarization of Women's Lives*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (London: Pandora Press, 1988), 116-33.

<sup>6</sup> W. Hugh Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War: The Canadian Women's Army Corps, Their Story* (Dartmouth, NS: Writing and Editorial Services, 1983), 10, 385-6; Tim Cook, *The Necessary War: Canadians Fighting the Second World War*, vol. 1 (Toronto: Allen Lane, 2014), 8-9; Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*, 1-2; and James W. St. G Walker, "Race and Recruitment in World War I: Enlistment of Visible Minorities in the Canadian Expeditionary Force," *Canadian Historical Review* 70, no. 1 (March 1989): 1-26.

composition of women who serve in the armed services but this dissertation does not provide a statistical portrait. It provides instead a long history of women communicating their vision of women's place in the armed services. Third, unlike Enloe, this dissertation excludes military nurses. Military nurses saw themselves as different from other servicewomen. Their professional status and enlistment in the medical services differentiated them from the servicewomen studied here.<sup>7</sup> Fourth, the dissertation takes a different approach to "listening to silences." Enloe concentrates on how the patriarchal armed forces and servicemen have silenced women, and excludes the possibility that servicewomen have in effect been silenced by scholars. Most of the sources used in the thesis originated with servicewomen who identified with the armed services and rarely discussed contentious issues such as sexual harassment. The study recognizes these silences where possible, but acknowledges that more work needs to be done in this area. In contrast to Enloe, this dissertation pays more attention to scholarly silence and makes it a part of the conversation in certain chapters.<sup>8</sup>

Servicewomen who have strongly identified with the armed services have been shadowy figures in feminist scholarship on gender and war. Enloe has admitted that she was "reluctan[t] to dwell on women soldiers" in the 1980s. In 1988, she commented on the backlash that she faced from servicewomen after the first release of *Does Khaki Become You?: The Militarization of Women's Lives*. She writes,

Those women exerting so much energy inside the military

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<sup>7</sup> Cynthia Toman, *An Officer and a Lady: Canadian Military Nursing and the Second World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007), especially 95; and Enloe, *Globalization & Militarism*, 63-92.

<sup>8</sup> Enloe, *Globalization & Militarism*, 63-92.

establishment may find it insulting when a civilian feminist like me argues that a military is so fundamentally masculinized that no woman has a chance of transforming that military into a place where women and men can be equal.... I've come to understand that when a 'feminist-in-khaki' hears another woman arguing that the military is basically misogynist, she hears someone telling her that she can't accomplish what she's set out to do, that she's letting herself be duped if she persists in trying. The message reeks of condescension.<sup>9</sup>

While Enloe has since listened to military women, her analysis is still geared towards fostering demilitarization. Her scholarship is an overtly political act that at times leaves a lingering sense that (service)women are still being “duped.” Words such as “exploited,” “manipulated,” and “maneuvered” dominate her discussion about how defence officials have relied on women’s labour. Similarly, she cautions researchers that they must guard against being “seduc[ed] by militarization,” reminding them to be critical of military discourse.<sup>10</sup>

Examining why some servicewomen pursued a military career and others did not reveals much about the policing of the gender boundaries of the armed forces and of women’s roles in society. British historian Lucy Noakes argues that “[w]omen in military uniform provide a very visible challenge to existing gender roles, not just in wartime, but also, when they become permanent members of the military, in peacetime.”<sup>11</sup> She elaborates, “As the distinctive character of the armed forces has historically emphasized its masculine nature, any move to increase the numbers of women in the military, or the

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<sup>9</sup> Enloe, *Does Khaki Become You?*, xvii. Meyer also uses the same quote. See *Creating GI Jane*, 4.

<sup>10</sup> For example, see Cynthia Enloe, *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women's Lives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 153-97, 235-87; and Enloe, *Globalization & Militarism*, ix-xi, 1-18, 39-92. The quotation comes from *Globalization & Militarism*, 82.

<sup>11</sup> Noakes, *Women in the British Army*, 16.

range of roles available to these women, is inherently problematic, questioning a fundamental aspect of the military's identity."<sup>12</sup> Part of the military's identity, as Noakes explains, is that it is "culturally distinct from civil society, providing a space where the violent actions rejected by civil law are not only condoned but often encouraged...."<sup>13</sup> The exclusion of women is one way that militaries have differentiated themselves from civil society. Yet militaries, while separate from civil society, are also subject to civil society and are supposed "to reflect the mores and values of the society which the armed forces serve and defend."<sup>14</sup> As Noakes states, debates over minority groups' efforts to gain access to military service reflect the tension between militaries' need to differentiate themselves from civil society but at the same time follow the social norms of the society they protect and recruit from. Shifts in women's roles inside militaries reflect shifts in civil society, and changes in women's place inside militaries can prompt changes in civil society. The examination of women's diverse visions of their place in the armed services provides insight into civil-military relations and the (re)construction of gender norms in Canada.

Defence officials and (service)women reinforced some gender norms as they continuously negotiated women's place in the Canadian armed services. Since gender is a relational concept, some attention is paid here to the policies that governed the employment of servicemen over several decades to discover how officials drew the line

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<sup>12</sup> Noakes, *Women in the British Army*, 16.

<sup>13</sup> Noakes, *Women in the British Army*, 16.

<sup>14</sup> Noakes, *Women in the British Army*, 16.

between treating servicewomen as military personnel and treating them as women.<sup>15</sup>

Defence officials perpetuated gender boundaries when they excluded servicewomen from several positions within the armed services.<sup>16</sup> Servicewomen served as non-combatants during the Second World War and their exclusion from the higher status combat roles continued in the ensuing years. They were not permitted to prove their total commitment in the manner that many men did. Senior female officers did not question the combat restriction, even as they planned for women's future military engagement and sought to expand servicewomen's career opportunities. Female officers' plans were also influenced by the ideal of female domesticity. They accepted that marriage and motherhood were the desired goals for many women. Some servicewomen left the armed services because they shared these goals. Other women found an alternative to the heterosexual nuclear family in military service.

Canadian servicewomen occupied a precarious position within the armed services during the years covered by this study. Women remained a small proportion of the total strength of the armed services and those who pursued a military career in the peacetime services constituted an even smaller minority. Nevertheless, an exploration of women's attempts to secure a place for themselves in the armed services and their attempts to craft their legacy provides multiple insights. It acts as a window into how women's voices are heard and silenced, both by state institutions and by historians. Focusing on women also

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<sup>15</sup> Geoffrey Hayes and Kirk W. Goodlet, "Exploring Masculinity in the Canadian Army Officer Corps, 1939-1945," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 48, no. 2 (Spring 2014): 40-69.

<sup>16</sup> Joan W. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (December 1986): 1053-75; and Joanne Meyerowitz, "A History of 'Gender,'" *American Historical Review* 113, no. 5 (December 2008): 1346-56.

taps into larger questions about the negotiation of military and gender identities in Canada, the construction of civil-military relationships, and the place of the Second World War in Canadian historiography.

### **Historiography**

This dissertation bridges two fields of the discipline: military history and gender and women's history. Military historians and women's historians have had limited engagement with one another.<sup>17</sup> Laurel Halladay argues in her essay, "Renegotiating National Boundaries: Canadian Military Historians and Thematic Analysis" (2005-2006), that Canadian military history has been "distorted by" the focus on how Canadian nationhood developed through warfare, and in particular, during the world wars.<sup>18</sup> She emphasizes that Canadian military historians have alienated themselves from the discipline because they have largely ignored the "thematic" approaches of gender, race, ethnicity, labour, and migration. Halladay also critiques thematic studies, such as works on the wartime relocation of Canadian Japanese, for "not explicitly deal[ing] with the wars themselves." She states that these studies are set in the war years, but are not connected to the war because the group experience is privileged "over the event" of war.<sup>19</sup>

According to Halladay, military historians' lack of gendered analysis is present in

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<sup>17</sup> Laurel Halladay, "Renegotiating National Boundaries: Canadian Military Historians and Thematic Analysis," *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies* 8, no. 2 (Winter 2005-2006): 7-16. See also, Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*, 4. For a discussion of the lack of work on wartime masculinity, see Hayes and Goodlet, "Exploring Masculinity in the Canadian Army Officer Corps, 1939-1945," 45.

<sup>18</sup> Halladay, "Renegotiating National Boundaries: Canadian Military Historians and Thematic Analysis," 1-16. The quoted phrase comes from page 2.

<sup>19</sup> Halladay, "Renegotiating National Boundaries: Canadian Military Historians and Thematic Analysis," 13.

two ways. The discussion here will start with her second point. She argues that evidence of the limited gendered analysis can be found in the fact that Ruth Roach Pierson's *"They're Still Women After All"* and Jeffrey Keshen's *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers* have not fostered sustained dialogue among scholars but were written to fill holes. These scholars were driven by what she calls "a gap-filling' historical motivation."<sup>20</sup> Halladay devotes more space to her first point. She states that the most obvious evidence of borders erected around the field can be found in historians' reluctance to use memoirs, especially those "created outside the elite structure."<sup>21</sup> Halladay claims that military historians have only selectively used memoirs because "the memoir genre...is seen to have been tainted by the contributions of a number of women whose experiences obviously do not fit into military history as it is currently done."<sup>22</sup> She wonders if women's exclusion from combat, their inability "to make anything like the total commitment to the country that enlisted men who actually fought were" able to do, led women to write less "overtly and traditionally patriotic" narratives.<sup>23</sup> Thus, she reminds historians that military history is also a political act and suggests that military historians have excluded women's stories because their accounts have the potential to disrupt the patriotic tone of Canadian military history.

In addition, Halladay implies that military historians have omitted women's stories because historians have given more weight to those who had more authority inside

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<sup>20</sup> Halladay, "Renegotiating National Boundaries: Canadian Military Historians and Thematic Analysis," 13.

<sup>21</sup> Halladay, "Renegotiating National Boundaries: Canadian Military Historians and Thematic Analysis," 1-8. The quotation comes from page 7.

<sup>22</sup> Halladay, "Renegotiating National Boundaries: Canadian Military Historians and Thematic Analysis," 7.

<sup>23</sup> Halladay, "Renegotiating National Boundaries: Canadian Military Historians and Thematic Analysis," 8.

the military and in the field of history in general. She claims that historians have ignored the fact that memoirs written by Brigadiers, Generals, and Majors are no less subjective than those written by other ranks, resulting in an overvaluation of senior male officers' memoirs. Halladay links the privileging of elite male voices with the development of the field: earlier in the article she observes that early official historians were military officers. She describes the elitism of (past) professional military historians, commenting on their dismissal of "amateur" historians. Halladay builds up to, but does not explicitly make the point, that historians have dismissed women's voices because women were largely excluded from the senior officer ranks.<sup>24</sup>

Although Halladay is correct in stating that military historians have not fully incorporated a gendered analysis into their work and that women's memoirs can challenge the boundaries of military history, she reproduces the very framework that she challenges. She defines total commitment as combat, and as a result, replicates traditional assumptions about gender roles. Nor does she support her speculation that women were less patriotic than men. Despite her criticism that military historians have privileged senior male officer's memoirs, she cites, but does not analyze servicewomen's memoirs. Halladay raises some helpful criticisms of military history but does not go far enough in her analysis.<sup>25</sup>

This dissertation shows instead that the limited engagement between the two fields can be better seen in how Canadian historians have studied, or rather not studied,

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<sup>24</sup> Halladay, "Renegotiating National Boundaries: Canadian Military Historians and Thematic Analysis," 7-9.

<sup>25</sup> Halladay, "Renegotiating National Boundaries: Canadian Military Historians and Thematic Analysis," 8.

servicewomen. Gender historians and military historians have both marginalized servicewomen because of an underlying assumption that women are not inherently military material.<sup>26</sup> British scholars, such as Lucy Noakes, and American historians, such as Leisa Meyer, have made similar arguments about their respective literatures. Noakes remarks, “Women in the armed forces have been viewed at best with ambivalence as feminists have focused on oppositional movements and the lives of women who have resisted patriarchal authority. Military women, working within an organization which have long been an important symbol of male authority have largely been absent from these feminist histories.”<sup>27</sup> In *Creating G.I. Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women’s Army Corps During World War II* (1996), Meyer asserts that feminist scholars’ “unwillingness to address women’s positions *within* the military” comes from “their own discomfort with the combination of the ‘feminine’ and the ‘martial,’ a discomfort that reinforces ideological constructions of gender that define ‘soldiers’ as male, and ‘women’ as essentially non-military.”<sup>28</sup> She also suggests that feminists’ discomfort has led feminist scholars to portray servicewomen “primarily as victims.” Meyer supports this point by quoting Enloe’s self-confessed reluctance to dwell on women soldiers in the 1980s.<sup>29</sup> Noakes and Meyer recognize that the armed services were masculinized, but

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<sup>26</sup> See Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*, 4-5; and Noakes, *Women in the British Army*, 7-12. For a discussion of the emphasis on male combat stories and the difficulty that female writers had had when writing about the First World War, see Margaret Higonnet, “Not So Quiet in No-Woman’s Land,” in *Gendering War Talk*, ed. Miriam Cooke and Angela Woollacott, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 205-26. For an example of the international work on female soldiers, see the chapters in Gerard J. DeGroot and Corinna Peniston, ed. *A Soldier and a Woman: Sexual Integration in the Military* (Harlow, England: Longman, 2000). The collection does not have a chapter on Canadian servicewomen.

<sup>27</sup> Noakes, *Women in the British Army*, 7-12.

<sup>28</sup> Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*, 4. Emphasis in text.

<sup>29</sup> Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*, 4.

stress that servicewomen had agency. Feminist scholars in North American and Britain have had difficulty analyzing servicewomen because these women are embedded in a longstanding “symbol of male authority.”<sup>30</sup>

Military history, on the other hand, consistently subordinates women to male combatants. Official historians concentrate on the operational aspects of Canadian military history.<sup>31</sup> They devote little space to women in their histories of the Canadian army, navy and air force during the Second World War. In his *Official History of the Canadian Army in the Second World War, Vol I, Six Years of War: The Army in Canada, Britain and the Pacific* (1955), C.P. Stacey discusses army servicewomen on roughly 12 pages of his over 500 page text. Even early official histories that focused on work that went into “supporting operations,” such as Gilbert Tucker’s *The Naval Service of Canada: Its Official History, Vol. II, Activities on Shore During the Second World War* (1952), pays little attention to women. The official histories on the army and naval participation in the Korean War focus on the fighting men.<sup>32</sup> Subsequent official histories

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<sup>30</sup> Noakes, *Women in the British Army*, 12.

<sup>31</sup> Official historians controlled the writing of the world wars until the 1960s. See Tim Cook, *Clio's Warriors: Canadian Historians and the Writing of the World Wars* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006), 201-52.

<sup>32</sup> Colonel C.P. Stacey, *Official History of the Canadian Army in the Second World War, Vol. I : Six Years of War: The Army in Canada, Britain and the Pacific* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 1955), 117-8, 124-7, 137-8, 189, 210-11, 517, accessed November 1, 2014, <http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/his/oh-ho/detail-eng.asp?BfBookLang=1&BfId=27>; Gilbert Norman Tucker, *The Naval Service Of Canada: Its Official History, Vol. II: Activities on Shore During the Second World War* (Ottawa: King’s Printer, 1952), 274, 282, 318, 322-26, 331, 337, 343, 478-9, 487, 490-1, accessed November 1, 2014, <http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/his/oh-ho/detail-eng.asp?BfBookLang=1&BfId=47>; F.W. Wood, *Official History of the Canadian Army in Korea: Strange Battleground* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 1966), accessed December 12, 2014, <http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/his/oh-ho/detail-eng.asp?BfBookLang=1&BfId=35>; Thor Thorgrimmson and E.C. Russell, *Canadian Naval Operations in Korean Waters, 1950-1955* (Ottawa: Naval Historical Section, Canadian Forces Headquarters, Department of National Defence, 1965), accessed December 12, 2014, <http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/his/oh-ho/detail-eng.asp?BfBookLang=1&BfId=39>. Many of the official histories can be found online. For a fuller list, see <http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/his/oh-ho/index-eng.asp>.

continue this trend. The navy's combat activities are the center of *No Higher Purpose: The Official Operational History of the Royal Canadian Navy in the Second World War 1939-1943* (2002) and *A Blue Water Navy: The Official Operational History of the Royal Canadian Navy in the Second World War: 1943-1945*, Vol. II, Part II (2007). Although the more recent official histories expand on Tucker's limited analysis of naval women, the history of the WRCNS is relegated to an appendix in *A Blue Water Navy*.

Interweaving personal reminiscences with official records, this WRCNS history provides a helpful overview of the factors that shaped the formation and development of the WRCNS. Of particular value for this dissertation was Acting Captain Adelaide Sinclair's "recommendations for a future women's naval service in the event of a mobilization for war."<sup>33</sup> However, the discussion of Sinclair's report in the WRCNS history is brief and the history's placement at the back of the book reinforced the privileging of the male combatant.

Professional military historians have also made servicewomen token actors in single service studies over a long period.<sup>34</sup> For example, in *Canada's Navy: The First*

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<sup>33</sup> W.A.B. Douglas, *The Creation of a National Air Force: The Official History of the Royal Canadian Air Force*. Vol. II (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), 184, 220, 310; Brereton Greenhous, Stephen J. Harris, William C. Johnston, and William C.P. Rawling, *The Crucible of War: The Official History of the Royal Canadian Air Force*, Vol. III (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 634; W.A.B Douglas, Roger Sarty and Michael Whitby with Robert. H Caldwell, William Johnston and William G.P. Rawling, *No Higher Purpose: The Official Operational History of the Royal Canadian Navy in the Second World War, 1939-1943*, Vol. II, Part I ( St. Catharines: Vanwell Publishing Limited, 2002); W.A.B. Douglas, Roger Sarty, Michael Whitby, with Robert. H Caldwell, William Johnston and William G.P. Rawling, "Appendix V: The Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service," in *A Blue Water Navy: The Official Operational History of the Royal Canadian Navy in the Second World War, 1943-1945*, Vol. II, Part II (St. Catharines, Ont.: Vanwell Pub., 2007), 594-606. The quotation comes from "Appendix V: The Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service," 602.

<sup>34</sup> For example, see Marc Milner, *Canada's Navy: The First Century* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999); J. L. Granatstein, *Canada's Army: Waging War and Keeping the Piece*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Toronto: University

*Century* (1999), naval historian Marc Milner references naval women twice as wartime and peacetime solutions to labour shortages. However, women's contributions are not examined in any detail, making, as Leisa Meyer observes of the American military, "women's entrance into the military... [seem] a marginal development."<sup>35</sup>

More recent military histories continue to sideline military women. Although he occasionally references wartime servicewomen and briefly discusses women's efforts to gain access to combat in the 1970s, army historian J.L. Granatstein defines the soldier as male in the second edition of *Canada's Army* (2011).<sup>36</sup> Granatstein explains: "The soldier has specialized skills... he belongs to a self-regulating and exclusive organization distinct from civil society, the soldier accepts that his profession makes him responsible to the civil authority."<sup>37</sup> His few references to army women confirm Granatstein's assumption that soldiers are male and expose his failure to analyze fully the army as a gendered institution. For example, he writes that "in March 1942 the CWACs became female soldiers, equal in all respects to the men, including eligibility for veterans' benefits – except that they were paid less and were not intended to serve in combat."<sup>38</sup> Here Granatstein reinforces soldier as a male category, because he judges servicewomen's

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of Toronto Press, 2011); Brereton Greenhous and Hugh A. Halliday, *Canada's Air Forces, 1914-1999* (Montreal: Art Global, 1999).

<sup>35</sup> Milner, *Canada's Navy*, 104, 216; Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*, 4. The quotation comes from Meyer, 4.

<sup>36</sup> Granatstein, *Canada's Army*, 191, 313, 383-6, 395

<sup>37</sup> Granatstein, *Canada's Army*, xi.

<sup>38</sup> Granatstein, *Canada's Army*, 191, 490-1 n36. In the footnote, Granatstein directs readers who are interested in "women and the Veterans Charter," to a collection that he edited with Peter Neary, called *The Veterans Charter and Post-World War II Canada*. This collection has little discussion of servicewomen, and it is likely that Granatstein meant Peter Neary and Shaun Brown's chapter in *The Good Fight*. See Peter Neary and Shaun Brown, "The Veteran's Charter and Canadian Women Veterans of World War II," in *The Good Fight: Canadians and World War*, ed. J.L. Granatstein and Peter Neary (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1995), 387-415; and Peter Neary and J.L. Granatstein, ed., *The Veterans Charter and Post-World War II Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998).

membership status based on how their pay and benefits compared to men. He notes, but does not explore the more obvious gender differences of unequal pay and women's exclusion from combat. He does not explain why women were paid less than men and served only as non-combatants. Furthermore, he does not discuss the work of historians who have explored how gender norms shaped women's access to veterans' benefits. There is no commentary on how women's restriction from combat shaped their access to benefits.<sup>39</sup> Granatstein marginalizes servicewomen because he upholds male standards as the military norm, presents women as a different type of soldier, and refers to, but does not analyze, gendered differences.<sup>40</sup>

Military historians writing about war and society have overlooked servicewomen as well. The literature has covered topics such as conscription during the world wars and civil defence programs in the Cold War. Work on racial minorities in the armed services reveals the diversity of experiences and the ways that the armed services reinforce larger power relations. Such works remind historians that they must recognize that the armed

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<sup>39</sup> Neary and Shaun Brown, "The Veteran's Charter and Canadian Women Veterans of World War II," 401; and Granatstein, *Canada's Army*, 313, 503 n7. On page 410, Neary and Brown note, "Having advanced towards pay equity and made other gains while in the services, Canada's women veterans...were equally eligible with men for almost all the benefits of the Veterans Charter.... Women were equally eligible but within the framework of a program that first and foremost sought to meet the needs for men." For Neary and Brown's discussion of the uneven application of benefits to ex-servicewomen, see 410-11. For a longer analysis by gender historians, see Jennifer Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl: Employability, Domesticity, and the Gendering of Canada's Welfare State, 1939-1947* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 8-11, 129-62; and Grace Poulin, "Invisible Women: Aboriginal Servicewomen in Canada's Second World War Military," in *Aboriginal Peoples and the Canadian Military: Historical Perspectives*, ed. P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Craig Leslie Mantle (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007), 156-63. For an in-depth study of the development and consequences of the Veterans Charter, see Peter Neary, *On to Civvy Street: Canada's Rehabilitation Program for Veterans of the Second World War* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011). Curiously, Neary does not include Stephen's earlier monograph in the bibliography for *On to Civvy Street*.

<sup>40</sup> Granatstein, *Canada's Army*, 313.

services are not monolithic institutions.<sup>41</sup> Despite the occasional attention to ethnic and other diversities, servicewomen have a limited presence in Canadian military history. A rare exception is Grace Poulin's chapter on servicewomen in *Aboriginal Peoples and the Canadian Military: Historical Perspectives* (2007), published by Canadian Defence Academy Press (CDAP).<sup>42</sup> Her work will be discussed below. Even the broadening of military history into society has left women out of the narrative.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> For example, see J. L. Granatstein and J.M. Hitsman, *Broken Promises: A History of Conscription in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1977); Daniel Byers, *The Zombie Army: The Canadian Army and Conscription in the Second World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2016); Desmond Morton, *Fight or Pay: Soldiers' Families in the Great War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004); Andrew Burtch, *Give Me Shelter: The Failure of Canada's Cold War Civil Defence* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012); R. Scott Sheffield, "Indifference, Difference and Assimilation: Aboriginal People in Canadian Military Practice, 1900-1945," in *Aboriginal Peoples and the Canadian Military*, 57-71; and Mathias Joost, "Racism and Enlistment: The Second World War Policies of the Royal Canadian Air Force," *Canadian Military History* 21, no 1 (Winter 2012): 17-34. For a helpful bibliography of Canadian military history, see Desmond Morton, *A Military History of Canada*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2007), 319-38. For a helpful bibliography on the world wars, see Andrew Iarocci and Jeffrey A Keshen, *A Nation in Conflict: Canada and the Two World Wars* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), 224-30.

<sup>42</sup> The work is part of the Strategic Leadership Writing Project run by the Canadian Forces Leadership Institute. Colonel Bernd Horn, the Chairman of the Canadian Defence Academy Press, explains that the project has the aim of building "a distinct body of Canadian literature on conflict, war and society," which is meant to both foster professional development within the forces and greater public appreciation of Canada's military heritage. Many of the works focus on leadership and current issues. See Colonel Bernd Horn, Preface to *Lipstick and High Heels*, vii. For the emphasis on leadership, see Allan English, ed., *The Operational Art : Canadian Perspectives: Leadership and Command* (Winnipeg: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2006); Robert K. Walker, ed., *Institutional Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Contemporary Issues* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007); Karen D. Davis, ed. *Women and Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Perspectives and Experience* (Winnipeg: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007); Bernd Horn and Roch Legault, ed., *Loyal Service: Perspectives on French-Canadian Military Leaders* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007); and Terry Copp and Mark Osborne Humphries, ed., *Combat Stress in the 20th Century : the Commonwealth Perspective* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2010).

<sup>43</sup> Craig Leslie Mantle, "Introduction," in *The Unwilling and The Reluctant: Theoretical Perspectives on Disobedience in the Military*, ed. Craig Leslie Mantle (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2006); Craig Leslie Mantle, ed. *The Apathetic and the Defiant: Case Studies of Canadian Mutiny and Disobedience, 1812 to 1919* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007); Harold G. Coombs, ed. *The Insubordinate and the Noncompliant: Case Studies of Canadian, Mutiny and Disobedience, 1920 to Present*, (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007); and Robert H. Caldwell, "The V.E. Day Riots in Halifax, 7-8 May 1945," in *The Insubordinate and the Noncompliant*, 259-88. For a sense of the larger literature, see the works cited in Craig Leslie Mantle, "Introduction," in *The Unwilling and The Reluctant: Theoretical Perspectives on Disobedience in the Military*, 10 n1-9; and Christopher M. Bell, "Mutiny and the Royal Canadian Navy," in *The Unwilling and The Reluctant*, 108 n2-3.

The exclusion of servicewomen speaks to the continued presence of a larger issue in military history: the implication that certain contributions are more historically significant than others. The production of combatants is a central purpose of the armed services; this makes the armed services culturally distinct from civil society. The combatant is an important figure, especially in wartime. Active combat-related roles typically have the highest status in the armed forces. Gender binaries have been mapped onto the combat/non-combat hierarchies. Women were relegated to the lower-status non-combatant roles.<sup>44</sup> Military historians have replicated these hierarchies. For instance, in *The Necessary War: Canadians Fighting the Second World War, 1939-1945* (2014), Tim Cook acknowledges that his popular synthesis of social, cultural, and operational military history is “weighted towards the fighting arms and those who took part in combat rather than those in logistical or administrative positions.” Similarly, Cook recognizes that military women performed key work, but admits that he all but excludes their story because he focuses on combat.<sup>45</sup> The emphasis on the fighting arms of the Canadian armed services reinforces the gendered binaries of male protector/female protector, of male combatant/female non-combatant, and of male military figures/female non-military figures. The marginalization of women in military history is thus linked to the subordination of non-combatants to combatants.

Women’s and gender historians have also reproduced the binary of male combatant/ female non-combatant by prioritizing female peace activists over female

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<sup>44</sup> Noakes, *Women in the British Army*, 3; and Mathias Joost, “Racism and Enlistment: The Second World War Policies of the Royal Canadian Air Force,” 23-5.

<sup>45</sup> Cook, *The Necessary War*, 6-11. The quotation comes from page 10.

military personnel.<sup>46</sup> North American women's and gender historians have written extensively on women and peace. They have documented that many nineteenth and twentieth-century female peace activists argued that women were "naturally" more peaceful than men and that male aggression caused wars.<sup>47</sup> Other scholars have made similar arguments. Political scientist Micheline de Sève declared in 1987 that "[t]he relationship between women and peace is relatively simple to establish. Being without weapons, women have everything to fear from off-duty, drunken soldiers and marauding troops."<sup>48</sup> Like some military historians, de Sève defines the soldier as a male. Titles such as Harriet Hyman Alonso's *Peace as a Woman's Issue: A History of the U.S. Movement for World Peace and Women's Rights* (1993) imply a straightforward connection between

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<sup>46</sup> Noakes, *Women in the British Army*, 12-14.

<sup>47</sup> For example, see Amy Swerdlow, "Ladies' Day at the Capitol: Women Strike for Peace Versus HUAC," *Feminist Studies* 8, no.3 (Fall 1982): 493-520; Barbara Roberts, "Women's Peace Activism in Canada," in *Beyond the Vote: Canadian Women and Politics*, ed. Linda Kealy and Joan Sangster (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), 276-308; Frances Early, "The Historic Roots of the Women's Peace Movement in North America," *Canadian Women's Studies* 7, no. 4 (Winter 1986): 43-8; Ruth Roach Pierson, ed., *Women and Peace: Theoretical, Historical, and Practical Perspectives* (New York: Croom Helm, 1987); Amy Swerdlow, *Women Strike for Peace: Traditional Motherhood and Radical Politics in the 1960s* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993); Harriet Hyman Alonso, *Peace as a Women's Issue: A History of the U.S. Movement for World Peace and Women's Rights* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1993); Linda Scott, *Reconstructing Women's Thoughts: The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom Before World War II* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997) Frances Early, "'A Grandly Subversive Time': The Halifax Branch of the Voice of Women in the 1960s," in *Mothers of the Municipality: Women, Work, and Social Policy in Post-1945 Halifax*, ed. Judith Fingard and Janet Guildford (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 253-80; Frances Early, "Canadian Women and the International Arena in the Sixties: The Voice of Women/La Voix des femmes and the Opposition to the Vietnam War," in *The Sixties: Passion, Politics and Style*, ed. Dimitry Anastaksis (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008), 25-41; Lisa Yaszek, "Stories 'That Only a Mother' Could Write: Mid-century Peace Activism, Maternal Politics, and Judith Merrill's Early Fiction," *National Women's Studies Association Journal* 16, no. 2 (Summer 2004): 70-97; Tarah Brookfield, *Cold War Comforts: Canadian Women, Child Safety, and Global Insecurity* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2012); and Lorna R. McLean, "The Necessity of Going: Julia Grace Wales' Transnational Life as a Peace Activist and a Scholar," in *Canada: New Essays on Women, Gender, Work, and Nation*, ed. Catherine Carstairs and Nancy Janovicek (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2013), 77-95.

<sup>48</sup> Micheline de Sève, "Feminism and Pacifism, or, The Art of Tranquilly Playing Russian Roulette," in *Women and Peace*, 44. Noakes also notes that feminist scholars' emphasis on women's peace activism has contributed to a marginalization of military women. See Noakes, *Women in the British Army*, 12-14.

women and peace, thereby reinforcing the gendered binary of female peace activist and male warrior.<sup>49</sup>

Women's and gender historians' work on female peace activism duplicates the gendered binary partly because it emerged when pacifist women sought feminist foremothers as a corrective to the historical tradition, popular in military history, of "great man" narratives.<sup>50</sup> Ruth Roach Pierson starts her introduction to *Women and Peace: Theoretical, Historical and Practical Perspectives* (1987) by commenting that women's leadership in the then current peace movement justifies their "right and need" to learn about historical peace movements. She positions the edited collection as an antidote to the historical privileging of men's actions and war over women's actions and peace. Scholars affiliated with peace movements contributed to this collection. Peace activists also produced much of the early scholarship on women's peace activism.<sup>51</sup> Two early works were Amy Swerdlow's "Ladies' Day at the Capitol: Women Strike for Peace Versus HUAC" (1982) and Barbara Roberts' "Women's Peace Activism in Canada" (1989). Swerdlow was a member of Women Strike for Peace, and Roberts had ties to Voice of Women. In these articles and their subsequent monographs, Swerdlow and Roberts link the lack of contemporary awareness of peace history with what Roberts

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<sup>49</sup> For example, see Alsono, *Peace as a Woman's Issue*; Williamson and Gorham, ed. *Up and Doing: Canadian Women and Peace*; and Sharon Macdonald, Pat Holden, and Shirley Ardener, ed., *Images of Women in Peace and War: Cross-Cultural and Historical Perspectives* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire : Macmillan Education in association with the Oxford University Women's Studies Committee, 1987).

<sup>50</sup> Cook, *Clio's Warriors*, 210, 216-22. For a helpful overview of the shifts in women's and gender history, see Catherine Carstairs and Nancy Janovicek, "Introduction: Productive Pasts and New Directions," in *Feminist History in Canada*, 3-22.

<sup>51</sup> Ruth Roach Pierson, "Introduction," in *Women and Peace*, xi.

describes as “[t]he erasing of women’s historical record...”<sup>52</sup> Roberts traces the “long-standing tradition of women’s peace activism,” noting the connections between early twentieth century feminist-pacifist arguments and similar late twentieth century ones. Harriet Hyman Alonso similarly tracks her “political foremothers” in *Peace as a Women’s Issue*. Driven by a search for their roots, the early scholarship on women’s peace activism concentrated on the previously neglected side of the binary and sustained the gender binary of male fighter/women peacemaker.<sup>53</sup>

Admittedly, some women’s and gender historians have challenged the assumption that women are inherently peaceful. For example, Pierson emphasizes that women have held diverse opinions on war and peace in her contribution to an interdisciplinary collection entitled *Images of Women in Peace and War: Cross-Cultural and Historical Perspectives* (1987).<sup>54</sup> Yet the argument that women are inherently peaceful persists. For instance, Deborah Gorham observes in 1989 that “several contributors” to an anthology on women’s historical and contemporary peace activism, called *Up and Doing: Canadian Women and Peace*, thought women’s nature made them more “natural” peace activists.<sup>55</sup>

The separation of male warriors and female peace activists continues in more recent works. In *Cold War Comforts: Canadian Women, Child Safety, and Global*

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<sup>52</sup> Swerdlow’s “Ladies’ Day at the Capitol: Women Strike for Peace Versus HUAC,” 493; Roberts, “Women’s Peace Activism in Canada,” 276-8; and Swerdlow, *Women Strike for Peace*. The quotation comes from Roberts, 278.

<sup>53</sup> Swerdlow’s “Ladies’ Day at the Capitol: Women Strike for Peace Versus HUAC,” 516; and Roberts, “Women’s Peace Activism in Canada,” 307 n42.

<sup>54</sup> Ruth Roach Pierson, ““Did your Mother Wear Army Boots?” Feminist Theory and Women’s Relation to War, Peace, and Revolution, in *Images of Women in Peace and War*, 205-227; Berenice A Carroll, “Feminism and Pacifism: Historical and Theoretical Connections,” in *Women and Peace*, 2-28; and Macdonald, Holden, and Ardener, ed., *Images of Women in Peace and War*.

<sup>55</sup> Deborah Gorham, “Introduction to Part one: Peace History,” in *Up and Doing*, 29-33; and Deborah Gorham, “Introduction to Part Three: Acting For Peace,” in *Up and Doing*, 141-3.

*Insecurity* (2012), Tarah Brookfield, a historian of gender, children and youth, blends work on defence policy, pacifism, and Cold War politics with literature on Cold War families. She explores how women mobilized maternal feminism to justify their involvement in programs ranging from civil defence to international adoption. Although Brookfield recognizes that women held both pro-war and anti-war attitudes, most of the “warriors” she describes were peace activists. Gender historian Veronica Strong-Boag simultaneously challenges and reinforces the separation of male combatant and female non-combatant in her comment on the book: “Men might have supplied the Cold War’s military face, as with Dr. Strangelove, but the other not-so-gentle sex supplied many of the key strategists for peace.”<sup>56</sup> Strong-Boag links men with war and women with peace. As illustrated by the work on women and peace activism, women’s and gender historians have been more comfortable studying women who sought to shape defence policy through their opposition to the traditionally masculine activity of war, than they have been examining women who participated in the armed services.<sup>57</sup>

Studies on peace activism tie into another prominent theme in women’s and gender history: the (re)evaluation of domesticity in post-Second World War Canada. Starting in the 1990s, North American scholars have questioned the applicability of Betty Friedan’s analysis of disillusioned middle-class women caught in the suburbs in her *The Feminist Mystique* (1963) and of the popular television character June Cleaver, a stay-at-

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<sup>56</sup> Brookfield, *Cold War Comforts*. The use of “not-so-gentle sex” is doubtless ironic.

<sup>57</sup> Noakes also makes a similar point. See Noakes, *Women in the British Army*, 12-14.

home suburban housewife.<sup>58</sup> Chapters within the edited collections, *A Diversity of Women: Ontario, 1945-1980* (1995) and *Feminist History in Canada: New Essays on Women, Gender, Work, and Nation* (2013), show that not all Canadian women were frustrated suburbanites. These chapters show that women experienced and responded to the suburban and nuclear male breadwinner family ideals in a variety of ways. Some women embraced the model, while others felt trapped by suburban life. Here too servicewomen have largely been ignored. The literature is valuable, however, for its discussion of women's labour patterns: the (re)evaluation of domesticity helps situate women's movements into and out of the armed services. The literature also provides insight into the factors that shaped women's personal and professional decisions.<sup>59</sup>

Source selection and methodological approaches have contributed to the general absence of servicewomen in monographs on the construction of postwar femininity and domesticity. Valerie Korinek emphasizes the theme of diversity in *Roughing It in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties* (2000). She selected the January, May and September issues of each year for close content analysis and

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<sup>58</sup> Daniel Horowitz, "Rethinking Betty Friedan and *The Feminine Mystique*: Labor Union Radicalism and Feminism in Cold War America," *American Quarterly* 48, no. 1 (March 1996): 1-42; J. Paul Grayson, "The 'Feminine Mystique' and Problems of a Cohort of Female Canadian University Students in the Early 1960s," *The Sixties: A Journal of History, Politics and Culture*, 8, no. 1 (2015): 50-74; Joanne Meyerowitz, ed., *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960*. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994); Joy Parr, ed., *A Diversity of Women: Ontario, 1945-1980* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995); Magda Fahrni, *Household Politics: Montreal Families and Postwar Reconstruction* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005); Judith Fingard and Janet Guildford, ed. *Mothers of the Municipality: Women, Work, and Social Policy in Post-1945 Halifax* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005); Carstairs and Janovicek, ed., *Feminist History in Canada*; and Magda Fahrni and Robert Rutherford, ed. *Creating Postwar Canada: Community, Diversity, and Dissent, 1945-75* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008).

<sup>59</sup> Parr, ed., *A Diversity of Women: Ontario, 1945-1980*; Fingard and Guildford, *Mothers of the Municipality: Women, Work, and Social Policy in Post-1945 Halifax*; Carstairs and Janovicek ed., *Feminist History in Canada*; and Fahrni and Rutherford, ed. *Creating Postwar Canada*. For an American example, see Meyerowitz, ed. *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960*.

demonstrates that feminist material co-existed with more “traditional fare” in the popular Canadian women’s magazine. Through an examination of readers’ letters, she shows that women had variety of opinions on suburbia, marriage, motherhood, and careers. Korinek does not discuss servicewomen. Emily Spencer builds on Korinek’s work in *Lipstick and High Heels: War, Gender and Popular Culture* (2007).<sup>60</sup> Spencer reports that she carefully read “two-hundred and twenty-two copies of *Chatelaine*” in her study of popular perceptions of gender and war between 1928 and 1956. Starting with 1928, she read “the entire twelve issues for every fourth year,” and the “odd-numbered months” for the other years. Her research reveals that *Chatelaine* published one article on air force women in March 1953 and two responses to this article in May 1953. Spencer argues that “how *Chatelaine* represented modern Canadian womanhood changed noticeably with the perceived threat to peace in the late 1930s.”<sup>61</sup> The magazine began shifting “in 1936/7... [when] the capable competent woman began to give way to the ‘lovely’ feminine woman who existed largely in the shadows of her husband and children.”<sup>62</sup> Servicewomen barely appear in Spencer’s study on gender and war, which suggests the possibility that servicewomen had a minimal presence in *Chatelaine*. The reliance on *Chatelaine* has played a role in the lack of historical studies on servicewomen.

Servicewomen also have a scarce presence in women’s labour history. For instance, in *Transforming Labour: Women and Work in Post-war Canada* (2010), Joan

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<sup>60</sup> Valerie Korinek, *Roughing It in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000); Emily Spencer, *Lipstick and High Heels: War, Gender and Popular Culture* (Winnipeg: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007). For Spencer’s discussion of the article on air force women, see pages 188-9, 195 n100-1.

<sup>61</sup> Spencer, *Lipstick and High Heels*, 27.

<sup>62</sup> Spencer, *Lipstick and High Heels*, 4.

Sangster examines women's labour force participation during the postwar years. She concludes that many mothers worked, but she notes that even working women accepted the social norm that a mother's place was in the home. Sangster fails to discuss the women workers employed by the armed services.<sup>63</sup>

There have been efforts to bring military history together with social, cultural, and gender history, but even here military women are at best marginal figures. Collectively, the works that connect the fields provide insight into the culture, organization, and concerns of the armed forces. Stephen High assembles articles on base construction, American soldiers, and children's experiences in *Occupied St. John's* (2010), but there is no specific chapter related to servicewomen. The edited collection, *Canada and the Second World War: Essays in Honour of Terry Copp* (2012), contains a wide assortment of topics that range from the role of journalists, to more traditional analysis of battles, to articles on memory and commemoration. Cynthia Comacchio's chapter on youth and Jonathan Vance's chapter on memory briefly note that women served. Nevertheless, the collection has neither a specific chapter on nor sustained discussion of servicewomen.<sup>64</sup>

Some authors have bridged military and gender history. For example, military and naval historian Isabel Campbell's *Unlikely Diplomats: The Canadian Brigade in Germany, 1951-64* (2013) covers North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) strategy,

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<sup>63</sup> Joan Sangster, *Transforming Labour: Women and Work in Post-war Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), Kindle Version.

<sup>64</sup> Stephen High, ed., *Occupied St. John's: A Social History of a City at War, 1939-1945* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010); and Geoffrey Hayes, Mike Bechtold, and Matt Symes, ed., *Canada and the Second World War: Essays in Honour of Terry Copp* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2012).

the “troop experience in Germany,” and military families.<sup>65</sup> Canadian military historians have contributed to the growing body of literature on masculinity. Laurel Halladay (2008) analyses the performance of gender among military entertainers. Mark Humphries (2010) investigates the relationship between masculinity and war trauma. In “Exploring Masculinity in the Canadian Army Officer Corps, 1939-1945,” (2014) Geoffrey Hayes and Kirk W. Goodlet build on the work of social historian Jeffrey Keshen and historian of sexuality Paul Jackson. Hayes and Goodlet examine the “changing and often-competing notions of masculinity....”<sup>66</sup> The studies on military families and wartime masculinity are a welcome addition to the scholarship on gender and war, which, as Hayes and Goodlet note, has paid more attention to wartime femininities.

The literature that does exist on Canadian servicewomen has predominantly revolved around a single service, a single war, and/or a single question. Much of the scholarly literature, such as the work by Ruth Roach Pierson, Tina Davidson, and Jennifer Stephen, concentrates on the wartime Canadian Women’s Army Corps (CWAC). Some scholars, such as Gayle Thrift and Amber Lloydlangston, have narrowed their

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<sup>65</sup> Isabel Campbell, *Unlikely Diplomats: The Canadian Brigade in Germany, 1951-64* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2013). For examples of historical studies that discuss families in warfare, see also Brookfield, *Cold War Comforts*; Morton, *Fight or Pay: Soldiers’ Families in the Great War*; and Jody Perrun, *The Patriotic Consensus: Unity, Morale, and the Second World War in Winnipeg* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2014). For interdisciplinary scholarship on military families, see Enloe, *Does Khaki Become You?*; Deborah Harrison and Lucie Laliberte, *No Life Like It: Military Wives in Canada* (Toronto: James Lorimer and Company Publishers, 1995); and Laurie Weinstein and Christie. C. White, ed., *Wives and Warriors: Women and the Military in the United States and Canada* (Westport, Co.: Bergin and Garvey, 1997). Weinstein and White’s edited collection has chapters on more contemporary challenges and experiences of servicewomen, such as the military policies around homosexuality.

<sup>66</sup> Laurel Halladay, “A Lovely War: Male to Female Cross-Dressing and Canadian Military Entertainment in World War II,” *Journal of Homosexuality* 46, no 3-4 (2008): 19-34; Mark Humphries, “War’s Long Shadow: Masculinity, Medicine and the Gendered Politics of Trauma, 1914–1939,” *Canadian Historical Review* 91, no. 3 (September 2010): 503-31; and Hayes and Goodlet, “Exploring Masculinity in the Canadian Army Officer Corps, 1939-1945,” 40.

focus to specific CWAC officers. Historians who have explored the other services, such as Jeffrey Keshen, Barbara Winters and Grace Poulin, have also focused upon the Second World War.<sup>67</sup> Lieutenant-Commander (retired) Karen D. Davis' contextual chapter for *Transforming Traditions: Women, Leadership and the Canadian Navy, 1942-2010* (2010) represents an exception to the typical periodization, devoting an equal amount of space to the Second World War and to peacetime. Her work is also unusual because she briefly analyzes female veteran's participation in veteran's organizations, noting that women continued to identify as a member of the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service (WRCNS, or, as they are commonly known, Wrens) after their discharge.<sup>68</sup>

Studies with longer time frames tend to move quickly through the 1950s and 1960s. Scholars Patricia Bowley and Kris Wright devote a single paragraph to the 1950s and 1960s in their essay, "Canadian Enlisted Women: Gender Issues in the Canadian Armed Forces Before and After 1945" (1997). Similarly, Canadian Forces Second Lieutenant Marta Rzechowka has one paragraph on the 1950s and one on the 1960s in

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<sup>67</sup> Tina Davidson, "'A Woman's Right to Charm and Beauty': Maintaining the Feminine Ideal in the Canadian Women's Army Corps." *Atlantis* 26, no. 1 (Fall/Winter 2001): 45-54; Diane G. Forestell, "The Victorian Legacy: Historical Perspectives on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," (PhD. Diss., York University, 1985); Jennifer Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl: Employability, Domesticity, and the Gendering of Canada's Welfare State, 1939-1947* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007); Pierson, "They're Still Women After All"; Grace Poulin, "Invisible Women: Aboriginal Servicewomen in Canada's Second World War Military," 137-162; Jeffrey A. Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers: Canada's Second World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), 172-193; Barbara Winters, "The Wrens of the Second World War: Their Place in the History of Canadian Servicewomen," in *A Nation's Navy: In Quest of Canadian Naval Identity*, ed. Michael L. Hadley, Rob Huebert and Fred W. Crickard, (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), 280-96; Gayle Thrift, "'This is Our War, Too': Mary Dover, Commandant of the Canadian Women's Army Corps," *Alberta History* 59, no. 3 (Summer 2011): 2-12; and Amber Lloydlangston, "Molly Lamb Bobak Official War Artist (1920-2014)," *Canadian Military History* 23, no. 2 (Spring 2014): 119-27.

<sup>68</sup> Lieutenant-Commander (retired) Karen D. Davis, "Once a Wren, Always a Wren: The Experience and Contribution of Canada's Wrens, 1942-2010," in *Transforming Traditions: Women, Leadership and the Canadian Navy, 1942-2010*, ed. Stéphanie A.H Bélanger and Karen D. Davis (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2010), 1-22.

her article, “Gender Integration and Modern Military Forces: A Comparative Analysis” (2010).<sup>69</sup>

The central debate in Canadian women’s military history has been whether or not women’s military service emancipated women. Pierson laid the terms for the debate in “*They’re Still Women After All*” (1986). Drawing primarily from government records, she argues that women’s wartime contributions did not lead to improvements in their rights and status. Canadian women, she emphasizes, were a source of temporary labour: they were brought in to fill shortages and then pushed back into the home after the war ended. She describes the continuation of various inequities, such as the persistence of unequal pay, the maintenance of women’s combat exclusion, the reinforcement of sexual double standards, the end of wartime daycare provisions, and the disbandment of the women’s services.<sup>70</sup> Pierson drew from the first edition of Cynthia Enloe’s *Does Khaki Become You?* Pierson’s and Enloe’s position in the 1980s reflected second-wave feminists’ ties to the peace movement and efforts to dismantle patriarchy. Both had attended an international symposium on “Women and the Military System” in 1987 that was organized by the International Peace Bureau and Peace Union Finland. Their work was an expression of their anger that the promises of wartime emancipation had not been

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<sup>69</sup> Patricia Bowley and Kris Wright, “Canadian Enlisted Women: Gender Issues in the Canadian Armed Forces Before and After 1945,” *Minerva* 15, no 1 (March 1997): 9-26; and Second Lieutenant Marta Rzechowka, “Gender Integration and Modern Military Forces: A Comparative Analysis,” *Canadian Army Journal* 13, no 2 (2010): 71-88.

<sup>70</sup> Pierson has since reflected on her research. See Ruth Roach Pierson, “Archival Research as Refuge, Penance, and Revenge,” *Queen’s Quarterly* 114, no. 4 (Winter 2007): 490-99. In this article, she explains that her analysis was also shaped by her personal experience of sexual double standards. See chapter six for a longer discussion of this article.

realized.<sup>71</sup>

Tina Davidson and Jennifer Stephen expand on elements of Pierson's book. In "A Woman's Right to Charm and Beauty': Maintaining the Feminine Ideal in the Canadian Women's Army Corps," (2001), Davidson conducts a close examination of two "official internal [army] publications" used to maintain wartime morale. She argues that in these publications army officials promoted an image of "respectable femininity" through an emphasis on the "visible signifiers of femininity such as cosmetics, hairdos and lingerie...."<sup>72</sup> Stephen, who studied under Pierson, analyzes the mobilization of women into and out of the labour force in *Pick One Intelligent Girl: Employability, Domesticity, and the Gendering of the Welfare State, 1939-1947* (2007). She examines how female educational psychologists and other educated middle-class women attempted to create space for themselves in the federal bureaucracy. Through a focus on CWAC Captain (Dr.) Olive Ruth Russell, Stephen explores how this women's service applied educational psychology in personnel screening in efforts to avoid the recruitment of "undesirable" women.<sup>73</sup> Furthermore, she argues that the priority placed by the government on domesticity guided the rehabilitation of female veterans. Although Stephen moves into the immediate postwar years, her focus remains on the long-term effects of the war. Her final sentences evoke Pierson's argument: Stephen writes that

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<sup>71</sup> Enloe, *Does Khaki Become You?*, xvi-xxii; Pierson, "They're Still Women After All," 262n1, 266 n 54; Eva Isaksson, "Introduction," in *Women and the Military System*, ed. Eva Isaksson (New York: St Martin's Press, 1987), 6-7; Ruth Roach Pierson, "'They're Still Women After All' Wartime Jitters over Femininity," in *Women and the Military System*, 30-46; and Cynthia Enloe, "Beyond 'Rambo': Women and the Varieties of Militarized Masculinity," in *Women and the Military System*, 71-93.

<sup>72</sup> Davidson, "A Woman's Right to Charm and Beauty': Maintaining the Feminine Ideal in the Canadian Women's Army Corps," 45-54. The quoted phrases come from pages 46, 46, and 51.

<sup>73</sup> Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl*, 89.

women “soon discover[ed]” that they “were the subjects of a considerably straitened employment policy. For them, the labour market was anything but ‘free.’”<sup>74</sup> Pierson’s study thus remains the starting point for the (re)examination of women in the Second World War. Her work continues to shape Canadian women’s military history.<sup>75</sup>

Barbara Winters, Jeffrey Keshen, and Wendy Cuthbertson represent the other side of the emancipation debate, arguing that the women’s wartime work laid the foundations for long-term improvements in women’s socio-economic rights and status. Winters, a naval reservist at the time of writing her 1996 article on the WRCNS, concludes that Pierson’s work has limited applicability because she failed to account for the differences between the services. Keshen, in *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers: Canada’s Second World War* (2004), critiques Pierson’s analysis for underemphasizing the wartime mixed messages: the narrative that argued that women had broken barriers competed with one that offered reassurances that women remained feminine. Keshen states that gender roles did change slightly because wartime Canadians worried too much over women’s entrance into the masculine military for there not to have been shifts in women’s gender roles. Both Winters and Keshen criticize Pierson’s work for having too strict a definition of progress, claiming that her analysis ignored elements of change and the sense of liberation in women’s recollections. They argue that, though servicewomen were never fully equal to their male counterparts, wartime women’s services created economic

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<sup>74</sup> Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl*, 224.

<sup>75</sup> For examples of Pierson’s influence, see Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl*, 4; Brookfield, *Cold War Comforts*: 4; Robert Teigrob, *Living With War: Twentieth-Century Conflict in Canadian and American History and Memory* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), 75; and Andrew Iarocci and Jeffrey A. Keshen, *A Nation in Conflict: Canada and the Two World Wars* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), 201-3, 222-3 n10.

opportunities for women and established the groundwork for their postwar re-entrance into the armed services. Winters notes that women with limited “education or skills training” enlisted because the military had better pay and benefits than civilian jobs. Keshen comments on servicewomen’s pay-raises from two-thirds to fourth-fifths of their male counterparts and remarks that civilian women’s wartime work fueled postwar wage equality campaigns.<sup>76</sup> Cuthbertson applies Keshen’s discussion of women’s equal pay campaigns in her *Labour Goes to War: The CIO and the Construction of a New Social Order, 1939-1945* (2012). She argues that, while the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) wartime support for equal pay “was dependent on the wartime condition of mass female employment in industry,” it created the conditions for Ontario’s 1951 equal pay legislation.<sup>77</sup>

The other side of the emancipation debate has added to the discussion of servicewomen, but suffers from some of the problems of Pierson’s camp. Winters and Keshen provide valuable insight into the navy and air force, and pay some attention to female military insiders. They complicate Pierson’s “all or nothing” approach and tendency to treat servicewomen as victims of the masculine military. Their assessments of postwar shifts is limited, however, because they, like Cuthbertson, only briefly mention the postwar years and remain confined to the debate about women’s emancipation. There is no sustained analysis of the postwar years, which makes it hard to assess the accuracy of their arguments. Several scholars who write on gender and war,

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<sup>76</sup> Winters, “The Wrens of the Second World War: Their Place in the History of Canadian Servicewomen,” 286-96; Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 177-193; and Wendy Cuthbertson, *Labour Goes to War: The CIO and the Construction of a New Social Order, 1939-1945* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012).

<sup>77</sup> Cuthbertson, *Labour Goes to War*, 144.

such as Cynthia Enloe, Emily Spencer, Lucy Noakes, and Helen Smith and Pamela Wakewich, have urged scholars to move beyond the war years.<sup>78</sup> In addition, Keshen's overview approach limits his analysis. He concentrates on the commonalities between the services, and, as a result, fails to fully explore the differences.<sup>79</sup> In his most recent work, *A Nation in Conflict: Canada and the World Wars* (2015), written with Andrew Iarocci, Keshen concludes that the World Wars "accelerated" the shifts in gender roles. While he and Iarocci are quick to note the societal backlash against servicewomen and wartime (im)morality, they position the World Wars as "the most transformative events in the history of modern Canada." As in Keshen's earlier work, their argument is suspect because that there is little analysis of the post-1945 period.<sup>80</sup>

Scholarship on racial and sexual minorities broadens Canadian women's military history without changing this framework. Grace Poulin's work on Indigenous wartime servicewomen provides a welcome corrective to previous work that tended to discuss servicewomen as a homogeneous group. Poulin briefly explores how archival practices created difficulties because Indigenous servicewomen were not specifically identified in the file lists. She compares Indigenous women's experiences with previous findings, and argues that Indigenous servicewomen had similar and different experiences from white servicewomen. In a larger assessment of what women gained or lost from their service, Poulin writes that the discrimination continued in the postwar period. Her work addresses

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<sup>78</sup> Spencer, *Lipstick and High Heels*, 8-22; Pamela Wakewich and Helen Smith, "The Politics of 'Selective' Memory: Re-visioning Canadian Women's Wartime Work in the Public Record," *Oral History* 34, no. 2 (2006): 56-68; Enloe, *Globalization & Militarism*, 69; and Noakes, *Women in the British Army*, 1-19, 160-2.

<sup>79</sup> Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 172-193.

<sup>80</sup> Iarocci and Keshen, *A National in Conflict: Canada and the World Wars*, 1.

an understudied topic, but within the standard single war and emancipation question framework.<sup>81</sup>

Historians of sexuality have also demonstrated that servicewomen were not a homogeneous group.<sup>82</sup> Gary Kinsman and Patrizia Gentile studied gay servicemen and lesbian servicewomen as part of their *The Canadian War on Queers: National Security as Sexual Regulation* (2010). They reveal that peacetime lesbian servicewomen benefited and suffered because of their military service. Their work illustrates some of the attractions of military service for women. Kinsman and Gentile observe that military service provided some women with alternatives to the heterosexual family, with career opportunities and a chance at self-sufficiency.<sup>83</sup> As their work focuses on state repression and resistance to that repression, there is understandably little analysis of the policies that guided the employment of women.

Although Cameron Duder also does not explore the employment policies in his *Awfully Devoted Women: Lesbians Lives in Canada, 1900-65* (2010), he too deepens the understanding on a neglected group in women's military history. Duder draws on Nancy Olson's 1998 MA thesis on wartime naval officer Alexis Alvey, letters between Alvey

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<sup>81</sup> Grace Poulin, "Invisible Women: Aboriginal Servicewomen in Canada's Second World War Military," 137-62. See also Grace Poulin, *Invisible Women: WWII Aboriginal Servicewomen in Canada* (Ontario Native Women's Association: Thunder Bay, 2007); and Judy M. Iseke and Leisa A Desmoulins, "Critical Events: Métis Servicewomen's WWII Stories with Dorothy Chartrand," *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 33, no. 2 (2013): 29-54. For aboriginal women's voices, see Muriel Stanley Venue, ed., *Our Women in Uniform* (Calgary: Bunker to Bunker Publishing, 2004).

<sup>82</sup> The term "wartime servicewomen" will refer to women who served in the women's division of the army, navy, and air force. The term "peacetime servicewomen" will refer to women who served in the army, navy, and air force. In both cases, the term "servicewomen" does not refer to military nurses. Those interested in military nurses should explore Cynthia Toman's *An Officer and a Lady* and Barbara Dundas' *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*.

<sup>83</sup> Gary Kinsman and Patrizia Gentile. *The Canadian War on Queers: National Security as Sexual Regulation* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 15, 62-3.

and her partner and fellow officer Grace Brodie, and four interviews with military women. One of these four women served in the Second World War. Duder allows servicewomen's voices to emerge through extensive quotations from his interviews. The interviews and his work provide important material on servicewomen's motivation for enlisting, the reactions they experienced on enlistment, their off-duty life, the challenges lesbian women faced in the armed services, and what women gained from their service.<sup>84</sup> Furthermore, Duder observes that his interview participants developed lasting ties with the armed forces. He writes,

Given the temporary nature of military life for women, it might not at first appear that their years in the military were important in terms of community formation. However, for Cheryl, Barb, and Billie, the military was an entrée to a wider lesbian world than they had known.... [E]ach of these women continued the lesbian friendships they made in the military and remain friends with their fellow servicewomen to this day.<sup>85</sup>

This dissertation expands on Duder's argument that servicewomen with short periods of service developed enduring connections from their military service. A military career was one form, but not the only form, of long-term association the armed services.<sup>86</sup>

Although Duder broadens the history of servicewomen with his concentration on lesbianism, he does so within the pervasive framework that associates women's military service with emancipation. Certainly, community building was meaningful to the women

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<sup>84</sup> Cameron Duder, *Awfully Devoted Women: Lesbians Lives in Canada, 1900-65* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 52-3, 210, 220-1, 251-61; and Nancy Olson, "Assembling a Life: The (Auto)biography of Alexis Amelia Alvey, 1942-1945" (master's thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1998). For a helpful study on male homosexuality, see Paul Jackson, *One of the Boys: Homosexuality in the Canadian Military During World War II* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004).

<sup>85</sup> Duder, *Awfully Devoted Women*, 259.

<sup>86</sup> Duder, *Awfully Devoted Women*, 252.

involved. Still, as described below, the preoccupation with the emancipation framework is limiting, and this dissertation shifts away from that approach.

The debate over whether the Second World War improved women's status and rights in Canada is confining in two ways. First, it is hard to escape. The association of war with emancipation is embedded in the sources and the international scholarship on gender and war. Even with its longer period, Emily Spencer's analysis of *Chatelaine* works within the framework. While she has an earlier start date for the shift in gender roles, her conclusion about the emphasis on women's roles as wives and mothers aligns with Pierson's analysis. A brief survey of American and British historiography on women and the Second World War reveals a similar single war focus and preoccupation with emancipation.<sup>87</sup> Second, as gender historian Joan Scott has said, historians will never satisfactorily resolve the emancipation debate because progress and liberation are contested terms. She rightly asks, "What constitutes an improvement or revolution; how

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<sup>87</sup> For examples, see Maureen Honey, *Creating Rosie the Riveter: Class, Gender, and Propaganda during World War II* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1984); Sherna Berger Gluck, *Rosie the Riveter Revisited: Women, the War and Social Change* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1987); Meghan K. Winchell, *Good Girls, Good Food, Good Fun: The Story of USO Hostesses During World War II* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008); Marilyn E. Hegarty, *Victory Girls, Khaki-Wackies, and Patriotutes: The Regulation of Female Sexuality during World War II* (New York: New York University Press, 2008); Melissa A. McEuen, *Making War, Making Women: Femininity and Duty on the American Home Front, 1941-1945* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2011); and Donna B. Knaff, *Beyond Rosie the Riveter: Women of World War II in American Popular Graphic Art* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2012). For a helpful review of the British, American and Canadian literature, see Spencer, *Lipstick and High Heels*, 1-22. There are exceptions to this single war and single question preoccupation. See, for example, Noakes, *Women in the British Army* and Yvonne Tasker, *Soldiers' Stories: Military Women in Cinema and Television Since World War II* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2011). Some collections bring the wars together, see Margaret Randolph Higonnet, Jane Jenson, Sonya Michel and Margaret Collins Weitz, ed., *Behind the Lines: Gender and the Two World Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987).

does one measure it; what indicators does one use?”<sup>88</sup> The dispute between those who adopt and those who challenge Pierson’s approach rests on a debate over the definition of progress. Scott has called the debate over progress of rights the “watershed theme.” It links to the notion that a nation is built through war. It is the idea that war represents a pivot point, a time where intense turmoil either overthrows existing social norms or reinforces them. Although Scott encouraged scholars to escape the watershed theme as early as 1987, historians have continued to (re)visit the same ground.

The growing body of literature on disobediences in the Canadian armed services offers insights into female agency over the long term. The Canadian Defence Academy Press has published three edited collections on disobedience: *The Unwilling and The Reluctant: Theoretical Perspectives on Disobedience in the Military* (2006), *The Apathetic and the Defiant: Case Studies of Canadian Mutiny and Disobedience, 1812 to 1919* (2007) and *The Insubordinate and the Noncompliant: Case Studies of Canadian Mutiny and Disobedience, 1920 to Present* (2007).<sup>89</sup> Despite the lack of direct analysis on servicewomen, the edited collections demonstrate that Canadian military personnel have resorted to tactics such as noncompliance, desertion, riots, and in rare cases mutiny, in

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<sup>88</sup> Joan W. Scott, “Rewriting History,” in *Behind the Lines: Gender and the Two World Wars*, ed. Margaret Randolph Higonnet, Jane Jenson, Sonya Michel, and Margaret Collins Weitz (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 25-30. The quotation comes from page 25.

<sup>89</sup> Craig Leslie Mantle, “Introduction,” in *The Unwilling and The Reluctant: Theoretical Perspectives on Disobedience in the Military*, ed. Craig Leslie Mantle (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2006); Craig Leslie Mantle, ed. *The Apathetic and the Defiant: Case Studies of Canadian Mutiny and Disobedience, 1812 to 1919* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007); Harold G. Coombs, ed. *The Insubordinate and the Noncompliant: Case Studies of Canadian Mutiny and Disobedience, 1920 to Present*, (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007); and Robert H. Caldwell, “The V.E. Day Riots in Halifax, 7-8 May 1945, in *The Insubordinate and the Noncompliant*, 259-288. For a sense of the larger literature, see the works cited in Craig Leslie Mantle, “Introduction ” in *The Unwilling and The Reluctant: Theoretical Perspectives on Disobedience in the Military*, 10 n1-9; and Christopher M. Bell, “Mutiny and the Royal Canadian Navy,” in *The Unwilling and The Reluctant*, 108 n2-3.

order to shape their conditions of service.

Of particular use for this dissertation was Craig Leslie Mantle's discussion of Leonard Smith's monograph on mutiny in the French Army during the First World War. Smith applied the work of Michel Foucault and theorized that "mutinies...were an outgrowth of a 'power relationship' in which the protagonists – the leaders and the led – constantly negotiated the parameters of authority." A cycle ensued: "disobedient 'confrontations'" caused the parameters of authority to shift, which in turn changed when subsequent dispute(s) "redefined the prevailing boundaries yet again."<sup>90</sup> The concept of a never-ending cycle of negotiations between multiple protagonists with different levels of authority has potential for the analysis of women's resistance in this dissertation. The concept makes the less powerful ("the led," or lower-ranking members) key players in the negotiations and, consequently, brings their voices into the analysis. Extended to servicewomen, it sheds light on the nature of their resistance and the institutional policies that placed boundaries on that resistance. The dynamism of the concept also prompts a long periodization: the parameters of military service are theorized to be neither static nor constantly in flux. Instead, a set of parameters that governs the conditions of service is established for a period of time.

The few existing studies of peacetime servicewomen usually concentrate on either employment policies or the personal experiences of these women. The studies written by authors who have worked for the Department of National Defence typically have a longer

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<sup>90</sup> Mantle, "Introduction," in *The Unwilling and The Reluctant: Theoretical Perspectives on Disobedience in the Military*, 1.

time frame and a policy focus. In 1966, Lieutenant-Colonel (retired) L. J. Davis crafted a brief tri-service internal defence report on the employment of women in the services. It starts with the Northwest Resistance in 1885 and ends in 1966. Servicewomen's voices are absent from this top-down study of policy. Danielle Hards builds on the report in her 1994 MA thesis. Unlike Davis, Hards incorporates stories from her time in uniform. Hards, who wrote her thesis while she was a member of the Canadian Forces with 18 years of service, covers an extensive period. She begins with Indigenous women warriors in early settler accounts and goes to the 1990s. Her work has two limitations. First, as she acknowledges, there is an incomplete discussion (only 5 pages) of the 1950-1967 period. Second, since Hards analyzes the development of the armed services policy on the employment of women, she follows Davis' top-down perspective. Although the voices of other servicewomen are not present, Davis' and Hards' works were helpful in identifying the major phases in the employment of servicewomen.<sup>91</sup>

Barbara Dundas expands on Davis' report in her *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, written for the Department of National Defence. Despite its lack of footnotes and limited textual references, Dundas' work provides a helpful overview in an illustrated format. Dundas has been cited by academic historians such as Keshen. While she charts women's movement in and out of the armed forces, her narrative on the whole has an upward trajectory. Moments of uncertainty are overwhelmed by a general

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<sup>91</sup> Lieutenant-Colonel (retired) L. J. Davis, "Employment of Women in Canada's Armed Forces Past and Present," 1966, Directorate of History and Heritage, National Defence Headquarters, Ottawa, Canada [hereafter DHH], Directorate of Women Personnel Fonds, 90/447, file 90; and Danielle Hards, "'We are the Girls Behind the Boys Behind the Guns:' Military Women and the Canadian Forces" (master's thesis, Carleton University, 1994), 1-14, 16-63.

discussion of women's "ever widening role[s]."<sup>92</sup> Women's entrance into combat roles is a part of Dundas' discussion. Her work is cited by Marta Rzechowka who summarizes roughly a hundred years of Canadian and American women's military service to show the consequences of two different national approaches to integrating women into combat. She presents the Second World War and Canadian women's peacetime return to the armed services as stepping stones towards full-fledged membership as defined by combat eligibility.<sup>93</sup>

Patricia Power's MA thesis represents an exception to the separation of employment policy analysis and women's experiences. In 1998, Power explored the on and off-duty life of peacetime air force women from 1951 to 1966 through the lens of changing technology. She argues that, although women were brought in and dismissed because of modifications to RCAF's radar systems, servicewomen were much more than a "reserve 'force' of labour."<sup>94</sup> The reserve force of labour explanation, she states, disregards women's agency. Power insists that individual air force women left the service when their personal goals did not align with their workplace conditions. While Power reminds historians to listen to servicewomen's choices, she occasionally slides into a reductionist view of gender. She concludes that men and women have different relationships to the work force because women and men have different "priorities" in life. She implies that women privilege their families and men prioritize their careers. There is

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<sup>92</sup> Barbara Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military* (Montréal: Art Global and Dept. of National Defense in co-operation with the Dept. of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2000). The quoted phrase is the title of chapter 4.

<sup>93</sup> Rzechowka, "Gender Integration and Modern Military Forces: A Comparative Analysis," 71-88.

<sup>94</sup> Patricia A Power, "'With Their Feet on the Ground': Women's Lives and Work in the Royal Canadian Air Force, 1951-1966" (master's thesis, Ottawa University, 1998), abstract.

little discussion of women who pursued a life-long military career. Power's work was nevertheless useful in filling in some of the substance of air force policy and welcome as an example of scholarship that took women's voices seriously.<sup>95</sup>

There is an extensive literature on Canadian military history itself, to which this dissertation contributes. The wider scholarship also excludes servicewomen. Contributions have ranged from studies of individual chroniclers, such as Tanya Schaap's 2014 analysis of the Canadian female war artist CWAC Lieutenant Molly Lamb Bobak's illustrated diary; of official historians, as in Tim Cook's *Clio's Warriors: Canadian Historians and the Writing of the World Wars* (2007); and of comparative North American studies in Robert Tiegrob's *Living With War: Twentieth-Century Conflict in Canadian and American History and Memory* (2016). Cook provides a discussion of the trends in Canadian military history. He reads the work of official historians through a favourable lens, arguing that they have played important roles in the development of Canadian military history. Laurel Halladay and Robert Tiegrob are more critical of the work of professional military historians, official and academic alike. Halladay's article has been described in detail at the start of the historiography section. She offers a critique reminiscent of Joan Scott's problematization of the watershed theme because she invites scholars to push beyond the emphasis on how wars "made Canada." Tiegrob expands on Halladay's critique, claiming that Canadian historians are still too embedded in the "good war" narrative. He analyzes a wide range of publically available histories, from official

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<sup>95</sup> Power, "'With Their Feet on the Ground': Women's Lives and Work in the Royal Canadian Air Force, 1951-1966," abstract.

histories to academic studies to films and museum exhibits. However, he marginalizes women with his selection criteria. He chose his sources based academic and public reception, and the amount of debate generated. As a result, he reproduces the traditional gendering of war because servicewomen have been understudied.<sup>96</sup>

Canadian women's military history has several main problems. First, there has been little crossover between military historians, and women's and gender historians. Second, historians have paid limited attention to servicewomen's positions in the armed services. Third, historians have studied servicewomen in a narrow fashion. Most of the work has applied the Second World War as watershed to a single service, or branch of the armed services. Even works that have extended the literature by studying a previously neglected group or branch have done so within the emancipation framework/watershed theme. There has been little work on the 1950s and 1960s. A new approach to Canadian women's military history is needed.

This dissertation offers that approach by taking servicewomen's voices seriously. Many of the voices heard here come from educated, white, middle-class servicewomen. These women spoke on behalf of and sometimes incorporated the voices of women from different backgrounds. As noted above, and discussed more in depth below, the dissertation draws on a diverse set of sources in order to draw in a range of experiences. Since servicewomen's chronicles of and plans for women's military engagement often

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<sup>96</sup> Tanya Schaap, "'Girl Takes Drastic Step': Molly Lamb Bobak's *W110278 — The Diary of a CWAC*," in *Working Memory: Women and Work in World War II*, ed. Marlene Kadar and Jeanne Perreault (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2015), 171-190; Donald Schurman, "Writing About War," in *Writing About Canada: A Handbook for Modern Canadian History*, ed. John Schultz (Scarborough, ON: Prentice-Hall Canada, 1990), 231-50; Cook, *Clio's Warriors*; Halladay, "Renegotiating National Boundaries: Canadian Military Historians and Thematic Analysis," 1-16; and Teigrob, *Living With War*, 1-16, 59-88.

did not neatly fall into either wartime or peacetime periods, this dissertation adopts an extended timeframe that pushes the analysis away from the debate over the Second World War as a period of emancipation and as a watershed for women's rights. The Second World War was not the only time that women negotiated a place for themselves in the armed services. The longer periodization works with the literature on disobedience in the armed services. This literature shows that the parameters of military service are fluid, subject to negotiation, and change when conflict between the leaders and the led results in new parameters. Taking women's voices seriously also necessitated a tri-service study, which is another departure from much of the literature. A tri-service approach was required because servicewomen often identified with a particular branch of the armed forces and not necessarily with their "sisters-in-arms" in the other services. The tri-service framework reveals that senior female officers identified problems that crossed all three of the wartime women's services, but offered different solutions. The attention to servicewomen's voices in the historical record, a longer periodization and a tri-service analysis enable a fuller appreciation of the complexities of Canadian women's history.

### **Methodology and Sources**

The dissertation's methodology draws from feminist scholarship on gender and war. Cynthia Enloe's discussion of the criticism she faced from "feminists-in-khaki" illustrates that there are multiple feminist approaches for studying gender and war. Some feminists have viewed the armed services as a source of female liberation, and others as a source of female oppression. The feminist approach adopted here revolves around

allowing servicewomen's voices to shape the direction of the dissertation. Women's accounts, which are described in detail below, are at the center of the story. Drawing from the work of Leisa Meyer and Lucy Noakes, the dissertation works to balance recognition that women chose to enter and leave the armed services for a variety of reasons with an analysis on how larger power relations shaped those choices. As discussed above, the study also applies Enloe's criteria for listening to military insiders and adopts the concept of never-ending cycle(s) of negotiations between multiple protagonists with different levels of authority from the literature on disobedience in the armed services.

The historical records consulted for this dissertation include official texts, unofficial histories, anecdotal collections, popular histories, servicewomen's memoirs, interviews, and scrapbooks. Not every source covers both the Second World War and peacetime, but some material in each category link the two periods. Official texts, defined here as any document produced by a uniformed or civilian representative/employee of the Department of National Defence (DND), encompass a range of material and include official histories, internal reports, official correspondence, memoranda, briefs, and meeting minutes. Some of the accounts were internal defence reports written by senior female officers in the context changing employment policies for servicewomen. Tim Cook's insights on official historians can be extended to these senior servicewomen. He writes that those tasked with producing or gathering the war records were aware of their responsibility in writing the first accounts. He states that early official historians knew that "there were reputations at stake" and that their positions lent "their findings...far

more weight than other historical works or private memoirs.”<sup>97</sup> Senior servicewomen wrote with the authority and responsibility of their position, and with the pressure that they were the first women to write such reports.<sup>98</sup> Official texts are examined in this dissertation as both group documents and the work of individuals. Official texts are group documents. They often followed specified format(s) and copied from previous official texts. Yet the documents reveal that military personnel held individual and competing attitudes towards women. Thus, the documents are read with an awareness that they reflect specific viewpoints within a larger institutional setting.

There are several difficulties in working with official texts. An interpretative challenge was that not all official texts were signed, which makes it harder to assess how the author’s background shaped the document. Military personnel also are instructed to put the service first; they are supposed to bury their individuality for the “good” of the service. Cook’s observations on official history point towards another interpretative issue. He writes that scholars have distrusted official histories because these are viewed as sanitized versions of events. Once again, his comments can be applied more broadly. Senior female officers undoubtedly excised certain events from their official texts because they wrote within the confines of a hierarchical organization in which men significantly outnumbered women. Nevertheless, many official documents were intended for internal eyes only and were written by those busy with the task of administering or organizing groups of servicewomen. Consequently, these texts capture official thinking at

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<sup>97</sup> Cook, *Clio’s Warriors*, 5. On page 4, Cook defines official histories as “those authorized by an institution, group, or person, where that same agent agrees to support the project financially.”

<sup>98</sup> The sentiment often appears in comments by the first women in a particular trade. See Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 134.

a particular moment in time.

The official texts come from two main holdings: Library and Archives Canada (LAC) and the Directorate of History and Heritage (DHH) of the DND. The Directorate of Women Personnel (DWP) housed at DHH, was an invaluable source of information. As the name suggest, the DWP looked after women, both civilian and military, employed by the DND. The DWP fonds include, but are not limited to, multiple internal reports on twentieth century military women, press releases, top level briefings on the employment of women, and reunion material. The DWP fonds provided avenues into the attitudes of defence officials and the images of servicewomen they wanted to portray.

LAC and DHH both have records from women's veterans' organization. These groups preserved both wartime documents (station newspapers, photographs, concert programs, lecture notes, wartime correspondence) and a record of their peacetime activities (reunions, peacetime newsletters). At least one veterans' organization, the Vancouver Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service Association, made scrapbooks. The organizational records demonstrate how some servicewomen constructed their long-term connections to the armed services and how they wanted their stories told.

Servicewomen have recorded their stories in a variety of formats. Some of their stories have been chronicled in unofficial histories of the women's services.<sup>99</sup> Others have been recorded in anecdotal and popular histories. Two of the most useful of these

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<sup>99</sup> See for example, Mary Ziegler, *We Serve That Men May Fly* (Hamilton, ON: R.C.A.F. (W.D.) Association, 1973); Rosemary "Fiddy" Greer, *The Girls of the King's Navy* (Victoria: Sono Nis Press, 1983); Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War*; and Ada Arney, *Here Come the Khaki Skirts...the Women Volunteers: A Pictorial Review of the Canadian Women's Army Corps during the Second World War* (Cobalt, ON: Highway Book Shop, 1988).

texts are Jean Bruce's *Back the Attack!: Canadian Women During the Second World War-at Home and Abroad* (1985) and Carolyn Gossage's *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots: Canadian Women at War* (2001). Bruce and Gossage both provide a brief contextual history and a "notebook" section that offers wartime letters, newspapers, and servicewomen's recollections. Longer testimonies are available in edited anthologies, such as *Women of the War Years: Stories of Determination and Indomitable Courage* (2000), *Equal to the Challenge: An Anthology of Women's Experiences During World War II* (2001) and *Our Women in Uniform* (2004). These collections are invaluable resources of women's voices because they contain testimonies written by veterans. Several of the stories were collected decades after the war. These works provide valuable first-hand perspectives but were read with awareness that the passage of time undoubtedly influenced how the stories were told. In addition, some of the published collections were wrapped up in feminist events. The first few published accounts appeared in 1975, which was International Women's Year.<sup>100</sup> Others were part of milestone events. For example, several generations of naval women contributed to *Transforming Traditions*, an edited collection tied to the navy's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Although servicewomen voiced unpleasant memories and stories of discrimination, most of the published accounts tend to emphasize the positive aspects of their service.

A limitation of servicewomen's accounts is that certain voices dominate. Wartime servicewomen produced most of the published and unpublished firsthand accounts of

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<sup>100</sup> United Nations, "International Women's Day: History of the Day," accessed October 1, 2016, <http://www.un.org/en/events/womensday/history.shtml>; and Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War*, 11. The United Nations held its first celebration of International Women's Day on 8 March 1975.

women in the military. As Karen D. Davis states in her contextual chapter in *Transforming Traditions*, “Available documentation of the experiences and contributions of Canadian military women, including those who served in the navy, from 1951-1967 remains quite scarce.”<sup>101</sup> Rosalee Auger van Stelten, Shirley Brown, and Vi Dudley-Mathiesen are three exceptions. Auger van Stelten and Brown are contributors to *Transforming Traditions*. Auger van Stelten also narrates her experiences in the peacetime navy through poems, anecdotes, and photographs collected in a book-length account called *Wren: Memories of Navy Days, From Royal Yacht to Quonset Hut*. Dudley-Mathiesen served in the wartime and peacetime air force. She writes about the high and low points of her military service in a provocatively titled memoir *Sweet ‘N’ Sour*. As her title suggests, a lingering sense of pride and bitterness colours her account. Dudley-Mathiesen describes servicewomen’s contributions and the way the air force failed her and her fellow servicewomen in a series of anecdotes. A few peacetime veterans, several of whom were wartime veterans who rejoined the peacetime services, have contributed to anthologies and left scrapbooks that chronicle their service. Most of the peacetime material comes from career servicewomen or women with strong and long-lasting attachments to the armed services. Thus, many accounts are written by those who enjoyed their time in the military and are committed to maintaining a positive image of their services. Several of the female authors of the official texts were career women who wrote from their own perspective and on behalf of women who had much shorter periods

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<sup>101</sup> Karen D. Davis, “Once a Wren, Always a Wren: The Experience and Contribution of Canada’s Wrens, 1942-2010,” 1-22.

in the armed services. Career women's plans for servicewomen's future roles were also tempered by institutional expectations.<sup>102</sup>

The Canadian War Museum (CWM) and DHH have several transcripts of interviews with wartime and peacetime servicewomen. Portions of interviews can also be found online through the *Memory Project*. In addition, the author conducted nine interviews with peacetime air force women to supplement the few published and unpublished sources. These women were recruited through a post on the RCAF Airwomen website.<sup>103</sup> Several of them offered advice to guide my research. While their voices are not always directly present in the text, the stories that they shared informed the reading of official texts and the writing of the dissertation itself. Their experiences allowed for a deeper understanding into the culture of the armed services and enabled a deeper interrogation of the official texts.

Finally, the dissertation draws upon scrapbook albums prepared by servicewomen, or their representatives. Scrapbooks compiled by and/or about

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<sup>102</sup> For a selection of servicewomen's accounts and collections containing their stories, see Jean Bruce, *Back the Attack!: Canadian Women During the Second World War-at Home and Abroad* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1985); Carolyn Gossage, *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots: Canadian Women at War*, rev. ed. (Toronto: The Dundurn Group, 2001); Orpha E. Galloway, *Women of the War Years: Stories of Determination and Indomitable Courage* (Gladstone, Manitoba: self-published, 2000); Lisa Banister, ed., *Equal to the Challenge, Equal to the Challenge: An Anthology of Women's Experiences During World War II* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2001); Phyllis Bowman, *We Skirted the War!* (self-published, 1975); Ruth Tierney, *Petticoat Warfare* (Belleville, ON: Mika Publishing Company, 1984); Sue Ward, *One Gal's Army* (Prince George, BC: Caitlin Press, 1996); Phyllis D. Harrison, *Saga of An Airwoman* (Penticton, BC: self-published-Sage Press, 1995); Bélanger and Davis, ed., *Transforming Traditions*; Rosalee Auger van Stelten, *Wren: Memories of Navy Days from Royal Yacht to Quonset Hut* (Victoria: self-published, 2010), 75; and Petty Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Class (retired) Rosalee Auger (van Stelten), "The Good, The Bad, and The Royal: The Challenges and Opportunities of Being a Wren," in *Transforming Traditions*, 37-42. For other accounts of women who served in wartime and peacetime, see Nellie Ross, "Nellie Ross," in *Equal to the Challenge*, 377-92; Pearl Bordts, "Pearl Bordts- née Klenman," in *Equal to the Challenge*, 269-79; and Theresa Loyie, "Fighter Control Operator Theresa Loyie," in *Our Women in Uniform*, 39-46.

<sup>103</sup> <http://www.rcfairwomen.ca/>.

servicewomen are scattered throughout multiple archives, though most of those examined in this dissertation reside in the CWM. As Susan Tucker, Katherine Ott, and Patricia Buckler state in their introduction to *The Scrapbook in American Life* (2006), scrapbooks are ambiguous and partial sources. They can be but are not always autobiographical. Some compilers narrate a special event and others have longer timeframes.<sup>104</sup> Scrapbooks are messy sources. It can be hard to translate even one album into a coherent narrative. One of the biggest interpretative challenges is that, though scrapbooks are deliberate creations, scrapbook-makers do not always provide contextual detail and may opt to show fragments of lives or events instead of a completed narrative. Another interpretative challenge is that scrapbooks “offer both permanency and fluidity.” As Ott and Buckler assert, though scrapbooks preserve ephemera (items designed with a temporary purpose in mind), they also “exemplify ephemera made from other ephemera.”<sup>105</sup> In other words, even though compilers created their scrapbooks to preserve their memories, the albums are not permanent objects. Albums fall apart, pages go missing, and the order in which a historian sees the pages may not match the original order, resulting in the possibility of multiple interpretations and re-interpretations.<sup>106</sup> Scrapbooks by and/or about servicewomen are used here to supplement and complicate the official texts and previous scholarship.

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<sup>104</sup> Susan Tucker, Katherine Ott, and Patricia P. Buckler, “Introduction,” *The Scrapbook in American Life*, ed., Susan Tucker, Katherine Ott, and Patricia P. Buckler (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006), 1-22;

<sup>105</sup> Tucker, Ott, and Buckler, “Introduction,” 18.

<sup>106</sup> Tucker, Ott, and Buckler, “Introduction,” 1-22.

## **Organization**

A chronological focus was chosen in order to trace how women envisioned their roles in the armed services across all three services and across three decades. This also made it possible to spot how servicewomen and defence officials bridged the wartime and peacetime services. The additional ways in which servicewomen built and expressed their long-term identifications emerged in part from the chronological shaping of the thesis.

Chapter one uses the metaphor of a dance to explore how individual women and defence officials negotiated women's movement into and out of the wartime services from 1938 to 1946. Individual women and defence officials had their own ideas about who should serve in the defence forces, and these ideas were altered during the war. The chapter examines the origins of the women's services, as well as the development and revision of recruitment and discharge policies. It argues that the formation of the women's services, recruitment criteria, and discharge policies resulted from the complex and contested relationship between individual women, women's organizations, government authorities, and defence officials. The chapter is the first discussion of the military as a site of women's activism, a theme continued in chapters four and five.

Chapter two covers the same time period as the previous chapter, and uses wartime contestations over alcohol to explore how servicewomen defined a place for themselves in the armed services. Servicewomen's drinking was highly controversial. The chapter also employs alcohol to re-examine the debates over servicewomen's sexual "immorality." Scholars have explored the role of class and sexual bias in military

officials' discussions of "illegitimate" pregnancy and venereal diseases. However, scholars have not fully factored alcohol into their analysis, even though military and civilian authorities frequently assumed that alcohol contributed to servicewomen's (im)morality. The chapter situates servicewomen's drinking in wartime debates over alcohol and the role of alcohol in military culture. It explores how defence officials accounted for servicewomen's sexual (im)morality and the steps they took to protect the public reputation of the women's services. An important theme of the chapter is that servicewomen resisted efforts to regulate their off-duty behaviour. The examination of contestations over alcohol and the link to wartime (im)morality reveals that servicewomen were not simply victims of the patriarchal male military.

Chapter three analyses another understudied wartime conversation. It explores senior female officers' claims to a place for women in the postwar armed services. Much of the chapter focuses on three reports that were written in 1946 as the women's services were in the final stages of demobilization. The authors of the reports tried to negotiate the legacy of the women's services and used lessons learned from the war to make two claims for female authority. They claimed authority for women as sources of military knowledge and as military planners. The authors emphasized that only female veterans had the embodied knowledge to balance the needs of the service with women's special needs as women. By making recommendations on matters such as uniforms and accommodation for future servicewomen, the authors of the 1946 reports declared that women had a role to play in future conflicts. Women's wartime service set the stage for future claims that women possessed invaluable military expertise. Some of the

recommendations for the organization, administration, and employment of women in future military engagements seem likely to have become part of military practice.

Female veterans did not simply disappear into the home after the war ended. Chapter four looks at how female veterans, peacetime servicewomen, and defence planners re-negotiated women's role in defence matters between 1946 and 1955. Disbandment of the wartime women's services did not erase the women's connections with the military. The chapter explores women's participation in veterans' organization and cadet groups. It identifies connections between women's involvement in veterans' organizations, cadet groups, and the armed services. It shows that defence officials factored servicewomen into defence plans and relied on female military experts. Those who favoured having servicewomen in the peacetime armed services argued that mobilization would be more efficient if women were in place to oversee women's participation in the armed services in times of war. The armed services expanded as Canadians participated in the Korean War and sent troops to support NATO missions in Europe. The need for military personnel legitimized the re-entrance of women in 1951. While domesticity remained a powerful ideal and goal for many women, there was a persistent narrative from 1946 to 1955 that there was a place for a small group of women in the armed services. What that role was depended on who was asked.

Chapter five focuses on the debates over the continued employment of servicewomen that occurred between 1956 and 1965. It does so through an examination of a 1965 study entitled "Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform – Regular Force." The chapter demonstrates how and why the authors of the study refuted long-standing

objections to the employment of women. By incorporating servicewomen's behind-the-scenes criticisms and memoirs, the chapter exposes some of the study's assumptions and brings women's voices into the conversation. In addition, bringing in behind-the-scenes criticisms reveal that military personnel used feminist arguments to lobby for expanded opportunities for women in the armed services. Although the authors recommended a permanent place for women in the armed services, the average woman was defined as a short-term employee. The decision to retain women, which firmly established military service as a female career, rested on a series of negotiations involving multiple parties.

Many servicewomen built relationships with the armed forces that lasted beyond the years of their service. The final chapter, through an examination of servicewomen's scrapbooks and published unofficial histories, analyses how some women constructed, renewed, and preserved their relationships with the armed services over time. The chapter argues that servicewomen, and those speaking on their behalf, carefully narrated their histories in ways which conform to and challenge scholarly narratives. Unlike academic historians, servicewomen and the historians speaking for them did not confine their accounts to the war years. Servicewomen's scrapbooks and published unofficial histories of the wartime women's services are closely linked. Scrapbooks provided material for the histories funded by veterans' organizations, and some of the historians modelled elements of their books on the scrapbooks. At first glance, the titles of published works and content of scrapbooks promise a history of the wartime contributions of servicewomen. A closer look reveals that servicewomen and their representatives narrated a range of servicewomen's long-term connections to the armed services.

## **Chapter One – Entering and Exiting the Women’s Services, 1938-1946**

“Madam, I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of [blank], in which you offer to serve as auxiliary with the Canadian Armed Forces. Your patriotic offer is appreciated.”<sup>107</sup> With these words, Captain G.R. Benoit began his reply to Miss M. M. Johnston of Vancouver, British Columbia in his capacity as the Supervisor of Recruiting for Military Training at the Department of National War Services. While Johnston was ready to enlist, the Department of National War Services and the Canadian Armed Forces were not ready for her on 15 August 1941. Continuing his letter, Benoit informed Johnston that “[a]rrangements have not yet been completed where-by your services might be utilized at the present time.”<sup>108</sup> The letter ended with a promise to contact Johnston when the recruiting criteria had been established. It was written shortly after the Canadian Women’s Auxiliary Airforce (CWAAF) and the Canadian Women’s Army Corps (CWAC) had officially been formed. An Order-in-Council of 2 July 1941 had authorized the creation of the CWAAF, which was renamed the Royal Canadian Air Force (Women’s Division) [RCAF (WD)] in 1942. The CWAC was officially started with an Order-in-Council dated 13 August 1941. The Women’s Royal Canadian Naval

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<sup>107</sup> CWAC Scrapbook, George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum’s Military History Research Centre, CWM Archives 58E 3 4.1, Control No. 19800821-001.

<sup>108</sup> CWAC Scrapbook.

Service (WRCNS), commonly called the Wrens, was established on 31 July 1942.<sup>109</sup>

The letter was just one of the countless exchanges between determined women eager to serve and watchful military authorities guarding access to military service. Benoit's letter to Johnston was preserved in a scrapbook about a paramilitary group called the Canadian Women's Training Corps (CWTC). Margaret Johnston was one of the hundreds of women who joined, trained, drilled, marched, and fundraised for the war effort with the CWTC. Women formed paramilitary groups, such as the CWTC, in the 1930s and 1940s. Paramilitary groups were organizations that were not formally part of the defence forces of Canada but adopted elements of armed services such as a rank structure. The CWTC scrapbook compiler(s) hinted at a female tradition of military service and established the connection between the paramilitary and official women's services when they identified Renee Haweis and Nancy Hewitt as first CWTC and then CWAC officers.<sup>110</sup> The letter and the CWTC scrapbook illustrate the central theme of this chapter: there was a dance between government and women drawn to military service in the creation of the women's services, a dance which continued after formation.

Drawing on the concept of never-ending cycle of negotiations between the leaders and the led from the literature on disobedience in the military, this chapter focuses on the continuous negotiations between defence officials and individual women over women's

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<sup>109</sup> Ruth Roach Pierson, *"They're Still Women After All": The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986), 95; and Jeffrey A. Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers: Canada's Second World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), 176.

<sup>110</sup> CWAC Scrapbook. See also Pierson, *"They're Still Women After All,"* 96-100. The term "women's paramilitary corps" is borrowed from Pierson.

entrance into and exit from the women's services.<sup>111</sup> Women drawn to military service perceived and filled a gap in the defence of Canada. They created paramilitary corps because the government had not yet established official women's services and by doing so voiced their ideas of women's military roles. Paramilitary women also expressed their plans for women's military service when they lobbied the government. Labour shortages, and desires to minimize the increasing influence of paramilitary women and keep them under Canadian government control, led government authorities to reconsider their initial opposition to the women's services.<sup>112</sup> Once the question of formation was settled, defence officials and individual women constructed servicewomen's place in the armed services. Wartime officials responded to the worry that an institution designed to turn "boys into men" would do the same for women by creating a vision of respectable female servicewomen.

Defence officials crafted their vision through recruitment criteria. These established who was permitted access to military service in ways which reinforced larger power relations of race, age, sexuality, (dis)ability and class. The ideal candidate was a white, young, single, able-bodied, patriotic "lady." Military officers enforced the age, height and weight restrictions, barred racialized minorities, and refused to enlist "unrespectable" women.<sup>113</sup> Women had their own understandings of the desirable

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<sup>111</sup> Craig Leslie Mantle, "Introduction," in *The Unwilling and The Reluctant: Theoretical Perspectives on Disobedience in the Military*, ed .Craig Leslie Mantle (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2006), 1-10.

<sup>112</sup> Pierson, "They're Still Women After All," 96-100;and Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 175-6.

<sup>113</sup> Pierson, "They're Still Women After All," 90-113; Jennifer A. Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl: Employability, Domesticity, and the Gendering of Canada's Welfare State* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 61-97; Grace Poulin, "Invisible Women: Aboriginal Servicewomen in Canada's Second

candidate. They showed this when they ignored the recruitment criteria. Some women successfully lied about their age. Others, who met the criteria, resisted by refusing to enlist in the women's services. Family members weighed in too. Officers helped disapproving family members search for female relatives who ran away from home. Over the course of the war, military officials partially redrafted recruiting criteria when the desired candidates failed to enlist in the required numbers. Officials changed certain elements, such as age limits, but held firm on others, such as exclusion of mothers with young children.

Servicewomen and military officials also negotiated discharges. New women were recruited, while others willingly and unwillingly left the armed services. Servicewomen showed their dissatisfaction with military service with short-term tactics, such as going absent without leave (AWOL or AWL), and/or adopting long-term solutions, such as seeking their discharge. Some women used short-term tactics when their work became too stressful. Others requested their discharge because they felt they were needed at home. While wartime officials supported the ideal of female domesticity, they also wanted to avoid the loss of trained personnel. Authorities denied discharge requests, surveyed servicewomen, and sent worn-out servicewomen to recuperate at health centres. Officers discharged those they perceived to be physically or morally "unfit." Discharge was an imperfect solution, and officers reviewed discharge provisions

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World War Military," in *Aboriginal Peoples and the Canadian Military: Historical Perspectives*, ed. P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Craig Leslie Mantle (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007), 137-63; and R. Scott Sheffield, "Indifference, Difference and Assimilation: Aboriginal People in Canadian Military Practice, 1900-1945," in *Aboriginal Peoples and the Canadian Military*, 65-7.

around marriage and going AWOL.<sup>114</sup>

Historians have analyzed elements of the dance. Ruth Roach Pierson and Jeffrey Keshen attribute the formation of the women's services to two overarching factors: labour shortages and women's activism, in particular, that of paramilitary women. What little has been written about the paramilitary corps focuses on Joan Kennedy and the British Columbia Women's Service Corps (BCWSC). Kennedy and other women lobbied the government for the creation of women's auxiliary services and official recognition of their paramilitary organizations. Labour shortages provided the right climate for women's activism to succeed in Pierson's assessment, while Keshen places more emphasis on Kennedy's actions. Their recognition of the dance ends with the formation of the women's services. Pierson describes but typically does not analyze the changes in recruitment criteria. Keshen does not list the recruitment criteria. Furthermore, they interpret any shifts in service conditions through the framework of whether or not women were liberated by their wartime service. Pierson observes that military officials identified low wages as a recruitment barrier, and that military and civilian women successfully lobbied to reduce the wage gap between servicewomen and servicemen. She emphasizes the continued wage gap between servicewomen and men as a sign of inequity. In contrast, Keshen frames the pay increase as a sign of reform.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Some of the accounts of women who allegedly misbehaved were taken from unpublished sources. The names of these women and of their families have been shortened in order to protect their privacy. The names of women who identified themselves in published accounts, as well as female and male officers in the unpublished records have been left alone.

<sup>115</sup> Pierson, "*They're Still Women After All*," 95-103; Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 175-7; and Susan Wade, "Joan Kennedy and the British Columbia Women's Service Corps," in *Not Just Pin Money: Selected Essays on the History Of Women's Work in British Columbia*, ed. Barbara K. Latham and Roberta

Authors of early postwar internal defence histories, master's theses, and popular histories also cite labour shortages and paramilitary women's activism as the immediate causes of the wartime women's services, but date the origins of Canadian servicewomen to the First World War. They note that the Militia Council considered the creation of a Canadian Women's Army Auxiliary Corps in 1918 but failed to act. W. Hugh Conrod blames governmental inertia that coincided with declining manpower needs, while Barbara Dundas simply points to the end of the war.<sup>116</sup> Dundas mentions that there were plans to create a Canadian chapter of the British Women's Royal Air Force, but that no action was taken because the end of the war made women's service seem obsolete, and there was a perception that there were greater housing costs for women. J.N Buchanan and J. M. Hitsman provide no explanation why the corps was never established. Buchanan suggests that the federal government's inaction created space for women's paramilitary corps.<sup>117</sup> These authors describe the situation in various levels of detail, but

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J. Pazdro (Victoria: Camosun College, 1984), 407-28. For popular anecdotal histories that include recollections from paramilitary, see Jean Bruce, *Back the Attack!: Canadian Women During the Second World War-at Home and Abroad* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1985), 21-35; and Carolyn Gossage, *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots: Canadian Women at War*, rev. ed. (Toronto: The Dundurn Group, 2001), 29-44.

<sup>116</sup> The repeated use of "manpower" in this chapter and subsequent chapters is deliberate. The term comes from wartime and peacetime military documents. It is a heavily gendered term, and is used for this very reason. The term exposes the assumption that the military is a masculine domain. The more gender-neutral "labour planning" does adequately not capture the masculine culture that existed in the armed services.

<sup>117</sup> J. N. Buchanan, "The Canadian Women's Army Corps, 1941-1946," *Army Headquarters Report*, no. 15, 1 May 1947, Directorate of History and Heritage, National Defence Headquarters, Ottawa, Canada [hereafter DHH], 1-10, accessed October 1, 2014, <http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/his/rep-rap/ahqrd-drqga-eng.asp?txtType=3&Rfid=203>; J.M. Hitsman, "'Manpower' Problems of the Women's Services During the Second World War," *Army Headquarters Report*, no. 68, 17 June 1954, DHH, 1-5, accessed October 1, 2014, <http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/his/rep-rap/ahqrd-drqga-eng.asp?txtType=3&Rfid=257>; W. Hugh Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War: The Canadian Women's Army Corps, Their Story* (Dartmouth, N.S: Writing and Editorial Services, 1983), 16-28; Mary Ziegler, *We Serve That Men May Fly* (Hamilton, ON: R.C.A.F. (W.D.) Association, 1973), 4-6; Jean Bruce, *Back the Attack!: Canadian Women During the Second World War-at Home and Abroad* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1985), 21-35; Barbara Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military* (Montréal: Art Global and

typically do not analyze the shifts in recruitment and discharge policies. As with Pierson and Keshen, any explicit recognition of the dance ends with the formation of the women's services. This chapter shows that women and defence officials continued to negotiate the terms of women's entrance and exit into the armed services even after the creation of the women's services.

### **Origins of the Women's Services**

Authorities at National Defence Headquarters (NDHQ) once again started to consider using uniformed women in the summer of 1940.<sup>118</sup> Canadian army officials had noticed a difficulty in filling certain trades, especially cooks and clerks. By 1941, NDHQ officials who predicted the need for more combat troops thought that the circumstances now justified wider use of female labour. The timing fit larger employment trends. The press began explicitly talking about the "manpower crisis" in 1941. Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King announced in Parliament in March 1942 that "womanpower" was the solution to the widespread civilian and military labour shortages.<sup>119</sup>

Female volunteers and employees filled clerical shortages at military units and district headquarters across Canada, as well as at NDHQ. Some of the women who

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Dept. of National Defense in co-operation with the Dept. of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2000), 34-5, 41-62; Carolyn Gossage, *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots: Canadian Women at War*, rev. ed. (Toronto: The Dundurn Group, 2001), 29-44; Danielle Hards, "'We are the Girls Behind the Boys Behind the Guns:' Military Women and the Canadian Forces," (master's thesis, Carleton University, 1994), 30-1; and Tina Davidson, "Hemlines and Hairdos: Body Management for the Feminine Ideal in the Canadian Women's Army Corps," (master's thesis, Lakehead University, 1999), 41-5.

<sup>118</sup> The term "National Defence Headquarters" follows the lead of Buchanan's 1947 internal defence report. See Buchanan, "The Canadian Women's Army Corps, 1941-1946," 4.

<sup>119</sup> Pierson, *"They're Still Women After All,"* 100-1; and Stephen, *Pick one Intelligent Girl*, 18-25.

volunteered as clerks, drivers and telephone operators in British Columbia came from the female paramilitary corps that emerged in the 1930s and 1940s. Ten women from Victoria, British Columbia, formed the Women's Auxiliary Drivers' Club on 5 October 1938. Joan Kennedy was one of these women; she acted because of the Munich Crisis of 1938. The founders of the Women's Auxiliary Drivers' Club were also inspired by the British Auxiliary Territorial Service, which was the British Army's women's auxiliary. The Women's Auxiliary Drivers' Club turned into the British Columbia Women's Service Corps (BCWSC) and Kennedy became president in 1939. The organization grew. Roughly 1, 200 women had joined the eleven units across British Columbia by August 1940. The BCWSC helped women set up corps in other provinces. Affiliated groups emerged in places such as Edmonton, Alberta, Peterborough, Ontario, and Halifax, Nova Scotia. After the war started, English and French-speaking women created a series of similar groups: the Canadian Auxiliary Territorial Service; the Women's Volunteer Reserve Corps of Montreal, which had units in Quebec, Ontario, and the Maritime Provinces; and the Corps de Réserve National féminin. The precise membership numbers are not known. Defence officials offered competing estimates in 1941. One official estimated that approximately 6,700 Canadian women belonged to various paramilitary corps in the first few months of 1941. Another claimed there were roughly 40,000 women by April 1941.<sup>120</sup>

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Paramilitary corps formed to prepare women to assist the armed services. Groups

<sup>120</sup> Wade, "Joan Kennedy and the British Columbia Women's Service Corps," 408-20; Pierson, "*They're Still Women After All*," 95-103; Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 175-7; and Copy of Lieutenant-Colonel H.T. Cock to Lieutenant Colonel J.H. Hills, A.G.D., War Department, Washington D.C., 24 April 1941, DHH, 75/174, file 8.

organized themselves on military lines. Most groups conducted some form of drill. Many corps adopted military ranks and some required that members purchase their own uniforms. Many paramilitary women later enlisted in the women's services of the army, navy and air force. Some had the support of male military personnel. Male veterans served as instructors, and commanding officers permitted female paramilitary corps the use of military facilities. Training differed by organization but most groups accepted the gendered division of labour. The corps trained women for support functions. Some groups taught signalling, mechanics, map reading, first aid, and driving. Others taught women army clerical and cooking procedures.<sup>121</sup> A number of groups envisioned a role for women in home defence, and some engaged in weapons training. The founders of the Women's Auxiliary Driver's Club followed through on their plans of revolver lessons, which they discussed at the first meeting. Other groups such as the Women's Auxiliary Service Patrol of Victoria also provided weapons instruction. As Pierson argues, defence officials disapproved of the weapons training because they were uncomfortable with the thought of women in combat. Government officials initially distanced themselves from and refused to officially sanction paramilitary groups.<sup>122</sup>

Paramilitary women repeatedly lobbied the Department of National Defence (DND). In December 1938, the BCWSC founders proposed the formation of an

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<sup>121</sup> Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 175-7; Pierson, "They're Still Women After All," 95-103; Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 175-7; Wade, "Joan Kennedy and the British Columbia Women's Service Corps," 407-28; Bruce, *Back the Attack*; 21-35; Gossage, *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots*, 29-44; and Conrod, *Athene. Goddess of War*, 17-19.

<sup>122</sup> Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 175-7; Pierson, "They're Still Women After All," 95-103; Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 175-7; and Wade, "Joan Kennedy and the British Columbia Women's Service Corps," 407-28. See also the works cited in notes 115 and 117.

“‘Auxiliary Military Service of Canada,’ ...and that their club be recognized as its first unit, ‘in connection with coastal defence.’”<sup>123</sup> DND officials denied the request because they said that the money that would be spent on the organization was needed elsewhere. Kennedy and BCWSC ignored the rejection and the group requested official sanction in June 1939, September 1939, and May 1940. Representatives from other groups made similar requests. Wartime officials rejected applications on the grounds that, if they officially sanctioned one corps, they would have to sanction them all. Not all paramilitary corps met with government approval.

Kennedy continued her organizational work. She and a BCWSC unit went on cross-country trip from 10 October 1940 to 5 December 1940. The trip had several purposes. It was meant to help coordinate and gain support from with representatives from similar organizations. Kennedy also sought the endorsement of public figures. She met with military officials in order to gain a better sense of where and how women could be employed. Kennedy and a fellow member of the BSWSC personally delivered their findings to federal government officials. Government officials promised that they would consider the proposal. Prominent feminist Nellie McClung later expressed her support for a women’s service in a letter to Mackenzie King.<sup>124</sup>

The federal government faced increased pressure to form the women’s services after Joan Kennedy was appointed the BC commandant of the Canadian Red Cross in the summer of 1941. Frustrated by a lack of response from government officials and

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<sup>123</sup> Wade, “Joan Kennedy and the British Columbia Women’s Service Corps,” 411.

<sup>124</sup> Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 175-7; Pierson, “*They’re Still Women After All*,” 100-3; and Wade, “Joan Kennedy and the British Columbia Women’s Service Corps,” 419-26.

prompted by the Canadian Red Cross' plans to increase its BC presence, she merged the BCWSC with the Canadian Red Cross. Kennedy's appointment fueled concerns that she and other paramilitary women were becoming too influential.<sup>125</sup>

Paramilitary women troubled government authorities. Their concern can be seen in a letter, dated 24 April 1941, from Lieutenant-Colonel Harry Tredennick Cock, who worked in the Canadian Army's Adjutant-General Branch as the Deputy Director for Personnel Services, to Lieutenant-Colonel J.M. Hills, who worked in the United States' War Department. The government had mixed reactions. Though the official policy was to claim ignorance about women's paramilitary efforts, Cock reported that defence officials were very aware that several "have done very valuable work...." His acknowledgement of their contributions was tempered by his description of them as "forty thousand wild woman who have organized themselves into unauthorized Corps of a military nature," and his complaint that "[t]here are also some Corps which obviously are a pain in the neck." Cock's complaint painted the paramilitary women as out-of-control and a potential threat to the patriarchal state. He might have exaggerated their strength because of his frustration with certain groups. Unregulated women had not waited for government direction and the numbers indicated that the groups appealed to many women. Forty thousand women was a significant number of women with some degree of military training, who had already proven that they were willing to challenge government dictates

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<sup>125</sup> Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 175-7; and Wade, "Joan Kennedy and the British Columbia Women's Service Corps," 419-26.

about who should serve.<sup>126</sup>

Worries about paramilitary women exerting too much influence overlapped with a belief that Ottawa needed full control over the employment of uniformed women in order to solve manpower needs. Army officials noted some of disadvantages of employing civilian women in 1940 and 1941. For example, the army could not force civilian women “to be available for work ‘on Sundays and holidays when needed,’” but could demand this of military personnel. The army had the authority to transfer military personnel but not female civil servants to different stations. Officials also noted that they would save money by employing women. Women were cheaper employees than men because they were paid less. International developments intensified the situation. Several British women’s organizations presented proposals in 1939 and 1940 for the employment of Canadian women. The Canadian government started planning for a women’s air force auxiliary after the British government asked in February 1941 if Ottawa would permit the British Women’s Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF) to recruit Canadians for British Commonwealth Air Training Plan (BCATP) schools, or if it would create a Canadian equivalent. As Canadian women lobbied for official recognition and worries over their influence grew, the British government sent WAAF members to Canada in the spring of

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<sup>126</sup>.Cock to Hills, 24 April, 1941. For a discussion of how paramilitary lobbied and troubled government authorities, see the works cited in note 115. For examples of wartime press coverage, paramilitary women’s offers of aid, and paramilitary women’s recollections of being snubbed, see Bruce, *Back the Attack!*, 21-35. For a brief description of the organization of National Defence Headquarters during the Second World War, see J.M. Hitsman, “Attempts to Integrate Canada’s Armed Forces Before 1945,” *Canadian Forces Headquarters Report*, no 15, December 1970, DHH, 24, accessed January 1, 2015, <http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/his/rep-rap/cfhqrd-drqgfc-eng.asp?txtType=4&RfId=306>; and Colonel C.P. Stacey, *Official History of the Canadian Army in the Second World War*, Vol. I, *Six Years of War: The Army in Canada, Britain and the Pacific* (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 1955), Appendix J, “Organization of the Department of National Defence (Army), April 1945,” accessed November 1, 2014, <http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/his/oh-ho/detail-eng.asp?BfBookLang=1&BfId=27>.

1941. The formation of official Canadian women's services would enable the federal government to employ Canadian women in Canadian organizations under its authority.<sup>127</sup>

By the summer of 1941, paramilitary women and their supporters, government officials, and military officers had negotiated their way to the formation of the women's services. Defence officials overcame their initial reluctance to employ women because of labour shortages, domestic pressures from paramilitary women, and pressure from Britain. Defence officials chose to establish new organizations instead of sanctioning pre-existing organizations because this enabled the government to set its own recruiting standards and sidestep the political dilemma of being seen to favour one corps over the other.<sup>128</sup>

### **Early Recruitment**

Differences existed between the women's services, but a general idealized recruit can be described. In 1941, the desired servicewoman was a British subject, and "between the ages of 21 and 41."<sup>129</sup> She had "at least Grade VIII schooling and ... [was] single, or married without dependent children."<sup>130</sup> Physically she had to be healthy, a minimum of

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<sup>127</sup> Pierson, "*They're Still Women After All*," 95-103, 114; Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 175-7; Lieutenant M.E. Abey, "The Canadian Women's Army Corps Overseas, September 1939— June 1944," *Canadian Military Headquarters Reports*, no 120, 31 July 1944, DHH, 1-2, accessed November 3, 2015, <http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/his/rep-rap/cmhqrd-drqgmc-eng.asp?txtType=2&RfId=120>; and Hitsman, "'Manpower' Problems of the Women's Services During the Second World War," 1-5. The quotation comes from Pierson, 101.

<sup>128</sup> Pierson, "*They're Still Women After All*," 102- 3; and Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 175-7.

<sup>129</sup> Pierson, "*They're Still Women After All*," 113. For an overview of how recruitment was handled in the three women's services, see Hitsman, "'Manpower' Problems of the Women's Services During the Second World War," 8-15.

<sup>130</sup> "Canadian Women on Active Service- Introduction," *Canadian Geographic Journal*, December 1943, 266.

five feet tall, and at least 105 pounds.<sup>131</sup> Physical standards, which were premised on insurance charts, laid out the “average body build” for women according to age and height. A woman was classified as “over weight” if she weighed “more than 10” pounds over the average and “under weight” if she was more than 10 pounds under.<sup>132</sup> She had to have a “good character” and people willing to vouch for her.<sup>133</sup> A woman who met these criteria qualified for the enlisted ranks.

Established after the other two services, the WRCNS initially envisioned their ideal servicewomen to be “British subjects of the white race,” between 18 and 45 “years of age on the date of attestation.”<sup>134</sup> Naval officials were open to bending the regulations for special cases. The possibility of enlisting a specially-qualified woman up to forty years of age was written into early WRCNS regulations.<sup>135</sup>

The WRCNS’ racial exclusion followed naval practice. In 1938, the Royal

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<sup>131</sup> “No Overweights Enter C.W.A.C.,” *Ottawa Citizen*, August 26, 1941; Royal Canadian Air Force Public Relations, Release No 429, 15 August 1941, DHH, 181.009 (D 876).

<sup>132</sup> “No Overweights Enter C.W.A.C.”; and Appendix II, Physical Standards Canadian Women’s Army Corps, “The Canadian Women’s Army Corps Regulations, 1941,” copy at DHH, 75/174, file 2.

<sup>133</sup> Royal Canadian Air Force Public Relations, Release No 429, 15 August 1941, DHH, 181.009 (D 876); Hitsman, “‘Manpower’ Problems of the Women’s Services During the Second World War,” 8; Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 48-62; “Letters of Reference W.D,” D. of M. Circular no 15, July 26/43, DHH, 71/110; and Staff Sergeant Ruth Bergstrom (née Legg-Bagg), interview by David W. Edgcombe, Ottawa, ON, interview transcript 31D 1 Bergstrom, Canadian War Museum Oral History Project, George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum’s Military History Research Centre, accessed June 1, 2014,

<http://collections.historymuseum.ca/public/objects/common/webmedia.php?irn=5373416>.

<sup>134</sup> *The Regulations for the Organization and Administration of the Women’s Royal Canadian Naval Service*, 1942 (Ottawa: King’s Printer, 1942), Article 2 (1), copy at LAC, Isabel J. MacNeill Fonds, MG30 E 373 1, file “Regulations for the Organization and Administration of the W.R.C.N.S.” 1942. The copy has the “of the white race” crossed out, and a “see amendment 21” written beside. See also Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 62; Emilie Anne Plows, “Serving Their Country: The Story of the Wrens, 1942-1946,” *Canadian Military Journal* 9, no. 2 (2008): 85; and Mathias Joost, “Racism and Enlistment: The Second World War Policies of the Royal Canadian Air Force,” *Canadian Military History* 21, no 1 (Winter 2012): 18-25.

<sup>135</sup> *The Regulations for the Organization and Administration of the Women’s Royal Canadian Naval Service*, Article 2 (1); Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 62; and Plows, “Serving Their Country: The Story of the Wrens, 1942-1946,” 85.

Canadian Navy (RCN) officially modified regulations and specified that naval personnel had to be white and British. Although the Minister of National Defence for Naval Services advised the navy to remove the racial barrier in November 1942, Naval Regulations were not officially amended until July 1944. An amendment also removed the racial restriction for women in 1944.<sup>136</sup>

Racial restrictions existed in the other services. For example, Wing Commander H. P. Crabb informed RCAF recruiting centres in October 1941 that “[n]otwithstanding the regulations in the K[ing’s] R[egulations] (Air), only those of pure European descent will be accepted for appointment or enlistment in Aircrew....Orientals and Negroes who are British subjects cannot be barred from enlistment in any category in General Duties for which they might be suitable.”<sup>137</sup> Aircrew, which included pilots, had the highest status. The general duty trades, which included cooks, had the lowest status. Aircrew applicants required a minimum of two years high school and had a lower maximum age of enlistment of 32. The RCAF’s educational standards, as air force historian and Canadian Forces member Mathias Joost observes, also acted as a racial barrier because of systemic discrimination in the educational system. Air force policy followed the racialized division of labour in Canadian society.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 62; Joost, “Racism and Enlistment: The Second World War Policies of the Royal Canadian Air Force,” 18-19; Plows, “Serving Their Country: The Story of the Wrens, 1942-1946,” 85; and Tim Cook, *The Necessary War: Canadians Fighting the Second World War, 1939-1943* (Toronto: Allen Lane, 2014), 160-1.

<sup>137</sup> Wing Commander H.P. Crabb to all RCAF Recruiting Centres, 7 October, 1941, Library and Archives Canada (hereafter LAC), RG 24, vol. 298, file 304-117, S.45-12-1 (DAFM), as quoted in Joost, “Racism and Enlistment: The Second World War Policies of the Royal Canadian Air Force,” 25.

<sup>138</sup> Joost, “Racism and Enlistment: The Second World War Policies of the Royal Canadian Air Force,” 17-34; Cook, *The Necessary War*, 160-1; J. M. Hitsman, “Manpower Problems of the Royal Canadian Air Force During the Second World War,” *Army Headquarters Report*, no. 67, 15 Jan 1954, DHH, 11-14,

The desired servicewoman differed slightly from the desired serviceman. Men were recruited in larger numbers and for a greater variety of trades than woman. The preference for men can be seen in the recruitment criteria. The RCAF had a lower minimum age of enlistment for men than women in 1941, but stressed morals for both genders. A male applicant who wanted to enlist as an “unskilled airman” had to be British subject, between 18 and 41 years of age, “medically fit,” and have a “good moral character,” letters of reference, and a high school “Entrance Examination or its equivalent.”<sup>139</sup>

A key difference in the recruitment of men and women related to marital status. Single men were preferred, but married men with dependent children were enlisted. Male recruits were refused and servicemen discharged if they had “too many dependents.” The armed services paid servicemen additional money, or allowances, for their dependents. The definition of too many dependents and military personnel’s eligibility for dependents’ allowances shifted. Initially men were awarded allowances for up to three dependents and servicewomen were not paid dependents’ allowances. By 1943, a man was entitled to allowances for a maximum of six children, his wife, and a parent. In contrast, a woman was eventually entitled to allowances for her parents and siblings but not for her husband or her children. As subsequent chapters will show, the argument that servicewomen were cheaper employees carried over into the peace. The costs associated

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accessed October 1, 2014, <http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/his/rep-rap/ahqrd-drqga-eng.asp?txtType=3&Rfid=257>;

<sup>139</sup> R.C.A.F. Personnel History 10 September 1939-1945,” vol. 1, 38-9, DHH, 74/7. This is an unpublished, undated, multivolume typed manuscript and the page numbers have been added by hand. For a discussion of the high school entrance exam, see R. D. Gidney and W. P. J Millar, *How Schools Worked: Public Education in English Canada, 1900-1940* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012), 225-30.

with men's dependents contributed to the continued preference for single women.<sup>140</sup>

Officers faced more stringent requirements than the general recruit. Early female army and air force officers required some university education or comparable credentials. Higher educational requirements for female officers aligned with practices for male officers. Historians Geoffrey Hayes and Kirk W. Goodley briefly remark with reference to men that educational attainment formed part of army officials' vision of masculinity as Canada entered the war. Previous experience supervising and organizing women was also an asset for female recruits. An air force applicant with previous experience, especially in the paramilitary corps, was rated more highly than a woman with comparable credentials who lacked experience.

Officers also required a higher level of maturity. This requirement created space for older women in the officer ranks of the CWAC, where the maximum age of enlistment was 55. The WRCNS permitted women who were 18 years old to enlist, but they were prohibited from becoming officers until they were 21 years of age. Even when the CWAC later dropped the minimum age of enlistment to 18, wartime officials set 19 as the minimum age to hold a commission. Air force permitted 18 year-old women and men to hold commissions, but only in certain trades. For example, female Messing

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<sup>140</sup> Joost, "Racism and Enlistment: The Second World War Policies of the Royal Canadian Air Force," 17-34; J. M. Hitsman, "Manpower Problems of the Royal Canadian Air Force During the Second World War," *Army Headquarters Report*, no. 67, 15 Jan 1954, DHH, 11-14, accessed June 1, 2015, <http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/his/rep-rap/ahqrd-drqga-eng.asp?txtType=3&Rfid=256>; Stacey, *Official History of the Canadian Army in the Second World War*, Vol I, 49-53; Gilbert Norman Tucker, *The Naval Service Of Canada: Its Official History. Vol. II Activities on Shore During the Second World War* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1952), 251-318, accessed November 1, 2014, <http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/his/oh-ho/detail-eng.asp?BfBookLang=1&Bfid=47>; and Pierson, "*They're Still Women After All*," 114-17. Quotation comes from Stacey, 53.

Officers had to be at least 21 years of age even after the RCAF lowered the minimum age of enlistment. Wartime officials believed that the necessary maturity for supervising others was not present in an 18-year-old female. While age does not necessarily bring maturity, the association of age and maturity lingered in the criteria that governed officers' appointments.<sup>141</sup>

Army and air force officials envisioned military training as a condition for commission. CWAC officer candidates needed to have any relevant "training and qualifications as may be authorized by the Minister of National Defence..." and the civilian educational requirements.<sup>142</sup> At first, air force officials dictated that female officers would be drawn from the enlisted ranks. Plans had to be adjusted after they selected the women destined to be the first group of officers and non-commissioned officers (NCOs). Officials learned that a promise of a commission was required before highly sought after candidates would leave "good positions." Officer ranks offered better

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<sup>141</sup> Geoffrey Hayes and Kirk W. Goodley, "Exploring Masculinity in the Canadian Army Officer Corps, 1939-1945," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 48, no. 2 (Spring 2014): 45; *The Regulations for the Organization and Administration of the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service*, 1942 (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1942), Article 4 (2d); Ziegler, *We Serve That Men May Fly*, 9-16; Pierson, "They're Still Women After All," 113; Royal Canadian Air Force Public Relations, Release No 429, 15 August 1941, DHH, 181.009 (D876); Buchanan, "The Canadian Women's Army Corps, 1941-1946," 11; "The Canadian Women's Army Corps Regulations, 1941," Section III (para 18), copy at DHH, 75/174, file 2; G.O. 228/1943 "Regulations for the Canadian Women Army Corps," Section III (6), Section IV (9), Appendix 4 to CWAC History, copy at DHH, 111.3C1 (D1); and "R.C.A.F. Personnel History 10 September 1939-1945," vol. 2, 447, 463-503. For examples of press coverage, see Sarah Hogenbirk, "Wearing Air Force Blue and Army Khaki: Constructions of Canadian Military Women During the Second World War" (master's major research paper, York University, 2010), footnote 36.

<sup>142</sup> As reprinted in Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War*, 31. See also Buchanan, "The Canadian Women's Army Corps, 1941-1946," 11; and "The Canadian Women's Army Corps Regulations," Section II (para 10), DHH, 75/174, file 2 Handwriting on regulations says "Approved by PC 6289 of 13 August 1941." The integration of the CWAC in 1942 prompted a new set of regulations that replaced the first. See "Regulations for the Canadian Women's Army Corps, 1942," copy at DHH, 113.3C1 (D1). See Section II (para 14) for qualifications for Officer, and Section III (para 22) for enlistment criteria for the enlisted ranks.

pay, prestige, and power. Subsequently, provisions were made for the direct entry of women into the officer ranks.<sup>143</sup> Although air force officials modified policy around direct entry, their preference for well-educated women remained. Still, defence officials had to acknowledge women's expectations because the women's services competed for recruits with each other and with civilian industries.

Military archivist and defence historian J.M. Hitsman concluded in his postwar report on the women's services that "the question of commission direct from civilian life" remained unresolved.<sup>144</sup> He quoted from a report prepared by the senior CWAC officer in 1946, Lieutenant-Colonel Daisy I. Royal, in which she declared that the CWAC lost opportunities to enroll skilled women because there were limited "opportunities for direct appointment of personnel qualified by civilian employment...." The CWAC typically used direct commissions to quickly fill gaps, and smooth the entrance of women with specialized training such as dieticians. Male army officers who received direct commissions were usually specialists, or transferred into the Active Force from the Reserve Force. Royal and her naval colleague, Acting Captain Adelaide Sinclair, advised creating more direct-entry spots in order to attract top candidates if and when the services reformed.<sup>145</sup> The air force permitted direct entry female officers and senior female

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<sup>143</sup> "R.C.A.F. Personnel History 10 September 1939-1945," vol. 3, 622.

<sup>144</sup> Hitsman, "'Manpower' Problems of the Women's Services During the Second World War," 9.

<sup>145</sup> Hitsman, "'Manpower' Problems of the Women's Services During the Second World War," 8-10; Acting Captain Adelaide Sinclair, "Report on the W.R.C.N.S.," 31 May 1946, Section XIV: Officers, copy at DHH, 75/554; Lieutenant-Colonel Daisy I. Royal, "Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," 29 Aug 1946, Section XIII: Officers, para 12, copy at DHH, 81/208; untitled history of The Canadian Women Army Corps, Section VI, copy at DHH, 81/208; and Stacey, *Official History of the Canadian Army in the Second World War*, Vol I, 127, 131-2. Based on internal evidence and the correspondence with Pierson's work, the author believes that the untitled history is what Pierson has identified as Colonel Margaret Eaton's "History of C.W.A.C: Preliminary Historical Narrative." See

officers recommended future policy shifts because experience taught them that their desired officer candidates expected appropriate compensation.

Wartime officials relaxed other recruitment standards when women simply refused to enlist in sufficient numbers for certain jobs. All three women's services experienced difficulties in recruiting qualified female cooks and other domestic-service jobs throughout the war. This pattern aligned with civilian trends. Many women left low-paying domestic jobs for better paying war industry jobs. The manufacturing sector replaced domestic service as the largest employer of women by the end of the war.<sup>146</sup>

The services tried various tactics to boost recruitment. Women willing to enlist as cooks in the CWAC received special treatment shortly after recruiting began. As Conrod recounts in his popular history, "Cooks aspiring to the CWAC could now be older, thinner or fatter than originally specified."<sup>147</sup> The pressing need for more cooks forced the navy to enlist and subsequently train inexperienced women in the naval cookery school. The RCAF made special recruiting arrangements to fill the high demand for cooks. Initially recruits were obtained through the federal Department of National War Services. In October 1941, the RCAF worked out an arrangement with the Department of National War Services that permitted them to accept female candidates at RCAF recruiting stations. Aspects of the ideal servicewoman shifted as defence officials

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Pierson, 177-8 for discussion in text and 278 n37 for the citation. When the author consulted the DHH reference that Pierson lists, the file had the appendixes but not the history. The quotation comes from Royal.

<sup>146</sup> Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 149-157; and Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl*, 3, 39, 61, 88-9.

<sup>147</sup> Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War*, 42. Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 149-157; and Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl*, 3, 39, 61, 88-9.

attempted to fill certain positions.<sup>148</sup>

Individual women had their own ideas about what they were qualified for and some circumvented recruiting criteria. Female and male adolescents of diverse backgrounds lied about their age in order to enlist. Indigenous female veterans informed historian Grace Poulin that they pretended to be older. An unnamed airwoman quoted in Jean Bruce's anecdotal history explained that she succeeded in her underage enlistment because her father was a career soldier. She admitted, "I didn't tell the truth about my age, not exactly. I was twenty when I came out, and I'd been in for three years! My father wasn't going to stop me. He'd been in the Army all his life."<sup>149</sup> This unnamed airwoman claimed a familial tradition of service and participation in a time-honoured technique of sidestepping rules in order to secure her desired military role.

A family tradition of service emerges in another reminiscence of a woman who ignored the age limits. Fourteen-year old Pearl Bordts (née Klenman) and her older sister obtained falsified identification cards to enlist in the CWAC in 1941. They joined her father who had re-enlisted in the army and two brothers who had gone overseas. Her

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<sup>148</sup> Sinclair, "Report on the W.R.C.N.S.," Section IV: Categories, Royal, "Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," Section XIV: Employment of CWAC Personnel, para 12-13; Ziegler, *We Serve that Men May Fly*, 50, 59-60; Naval Service Minute Sheet From Commander Adelaide Sinclair, Director WRCNS to CNP, 31 August 1944, LAC, R112-616-8-E (formerly RG 24-D-1-c), vol. 34266, file 4360-900/660; "Early Recruiting for the Women's Division," [September 1946?], DHH, 181.009 (D876); Royal Canadian Air Force Public Relations, Release No 471, October 1941, DHH, 181.009 (D876); Royal Canadian Air Force Public Relations Release no 459, 20 September, 1941, DHH, 181.009 (D876). The quotation comes from Release No 471.

<sup>149</sup> Unnamed airwoman, Nova Scotia, "I didn't tell the truth," as quoted in Bruce, *Back the Attack!*, 76; Cynthia Comacchio, "'To Hold on High the Torch of Liberty': Canadian Youth and the Second World War," in *Canada and the Second World War: Essays in Honour of Terry Copp*, ed. Geoffrey Hayes, Mike Bechthold, and Matt Symes (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2012), 37; Cook, *The Necessary War*, 27; and Poulin, *Invisible Women: Aboriginal Servicewomen in Canada's Second World War Military*, 139. The quotation comes from Bruce, 76.

younger sister joined at a later date. Bordts offered several reasons why she and other Canadians committed identity fraud in order to enlist. She did so because of her mother's stories of being a First World Nurse and a desire to help family members caught up in the Holocaust. Bordts commented that she and her younger sister, who enlisted separately, participated in a general trend among men and women when they claimed to be older in order to enlist. She remarked that many male and female youth lied because the Great Depression had fostered a desire for meaningful work. Many single and married women entered the work force because they wanted to help with family finances.<sup>150</sup>

Stories of underage women lying about their age are more common, but the experience of Mrs. Dales reveals that overage applicants successfully hid their age as well. Journalist Marilyn Lamborn spoke to Dales for an article about a postwar CWAC reunion. Lamborn reports that Dales admitted that "I lied about my age." Dales was a "few years older than the 45-year age limit" and a grandmother when she successfully enlisted as a cook.<sup>151</sup> The armed services had trouble attracting cooks, which may have helped Dales bypass the age limits.

Not all applicants successfully sidestepped military officials' enforcement of the

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<sup>150</sup> "Pearl Bordts- née Klenman," in *Equal to the Challenge: An Anthology of Women's Experiences During World War II*, ed. Lisa Bannister, (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2001), 271-2. For other examples of women who lied about their age, see Former member CWAC, "I did it all on my own," as quoted in *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots*, 72; and Piper from British Columbia, "Mainstreeting," in Bruce, *Back the Attack!*, 45. For discussions of family finances as a reason why women enlisted, see Poulin, *Invisible Women: Aboriginal Servicewomen in Canada's Second World War Military*, 159-152; and Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 156-7.

<sup>151</sup> Marilyn Lamborn, "CWAC Reunion," undated clipping pasted in Staff Sergeant Olga Munroe, Scrapbook of Olga Munroe, George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum's Military History Research Centre, CWM Archives, 58A 1 290.12, Control No. 20130024-012.

ideal servicewoman. The women's services had a roughly 25 per cent rejection rate.<sup>152</sup> Certain body types were unwelcome. As exemplified by "white race" requirement, racialized bodies were often excluded. One servicewoman poignantly recalled being ordered to reject an application from a Japanese Canadian woman. Poulin comments on the limited media coverage and numbers of Indigenous servicewomen. As historian Tina Davidson concludes, while there was awareness of diverse body types in military media, wartime publicity typically featured a white, able-bodied, young, and conventionally attractive woman.<sup>153</sup> A preference for slim but not too slim youth was embedded in the physical standards attached to the 1941 CWAC regulations. The average body build table included "for guidance" only, specified the average height and weight for the 21 to 25 age range. There were tables which ranged from the minimum to maximum age of enlistment. For example, the senior RCAF (WD) medical officer, Squadron Officer Jean Flatt Davey, had a table that went from the minimum to the maximum age of enlistment.<sup>154</sup>

Physical "misfits" attempted to enlist. Clara C. tried multiple times to convince the services that she was fit to serve. Junior Commander Margaret Eaton recorded Clara C.'s unsuccessful enlistment attempts in a letter to the senior CWAC officer in Ottawa.

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<sup>152</sup> Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 187.

<sup>153</sup> Cathryne H. Armstrong (nee Blackley), "A Time of Service," in *Women of the War Years: Stories of Determination and Indomitable Courage*, ed. Orpha E. Galloway, (Gladstone, MB, Canada: self-published, 2000), 2; Poulin, "Invisible Women: Aboriginal Servicewomen in Canada's Second World War Military," 137-63; and Tina Davidson, "'A Women's Right to Charm and Beauty': Maintaining the Feminine Ideal in the Canadian Women's Army Corps," *Atlantis* 26, no. 1 (Fall/Winter 2001): 45-7.

<sup>154</sup> Appendix II, Physical Standards Canadian Women's Army Corps. "The Canadian Women's Army Corps Regulations"; Table A- Average Body Build (Women), LAC, Jean Flatt Davey Fonds, MG30 E386, folder Questionnaires, Statistics, n.d. 1942-1943. The range of ages corresponds with the maximum and minimum age requirements established in 1942, "R.C.A.F. Personnel History 10 September 1939-1945," 622. The quotations come from Appendix II.

Clara C. attempted to join the RCAF (WD) after she was released from the CWAC in November 1941. Her discharge was authorized under paragraph 33 of the CWAC regulations, which permitted female officers to seek discharge for a probationary recruit that they deemed unsuitable. After the RCAF (WD) refused her application, Clara C. re-applied to the CWAC under an alias but was discovered “before any further action was taken.”<sup>155</sup> Clara C. clearly disagreed with the officers’ assessments because she applied repeatedly, but was unable to convince officers of their error. Still, she caused enough of a fuss that Ottawa requested a physical description. Although the available documentation does not specify the reason for the request, it is likely that Ottawa wanted a description in case Clara C. tried to enlist elsewhere.

While Eaton provided no specific reasons for Clara C.’s discharge, justification for her discharge was embedded within Eaton’s deceptively simple physical description of Clara C. Eaton presented Clara C. as unfit CWAC material when she described her as “40 years of age, weighs 160 pounds. She has fair complexion, blue eyes, fair hair, is heavily built and has considerable gold in her teeth.”<sup>156</sup> Eaton surrounded and, as a result, minimized Clara C.’s socially desired features (fair complexion) with her negative

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<sup>155</sup> Copy of letter from Margaret Eaton, Junior Commander, Staff Officer CWAC, to Officer Administering, Canadian Women Army Corps, National Defence Headquarters, 27 February [1942?], DHH, 325.009 (D252), vol. 4. There is no year listed on the document, but surrounding documents are from 1942. Paragraph 33 states, “Whenever a Recruit attached to the Corps on probation is found to be in any way unsatisfactory or unlikely to become an efficient Volunteer, a report will be made to the District Officer Commanding by the Officer Commanding The Canadian Women’s Army Corps unit concerned. In the event of the District Officer Commanding deciding that the Recruit is to be returned to civil life, action will be taken as early as possible for her to be struck off the strength of The Canadian Women’s Army Corps. Directly the Recruit has been struck off strength, a report will be forwarded to National Defence Headquarters and a demand for replacement, if required, submitted.” See “The Canadian Women’s Army Corps Regulations, 1941,” Section V (para 33), DHH, 75/174, file 2.

<sup>156</sup> Eaton to Officer, Administering, 27 February [1942], DHH, 325.009 (D252), vol. 4.

attributes. The description began with a reason that she was unfit: Clara C.'s age placed her in the top age bracket. Eaton concluded that she was physically inadequate by classifying her as 160 pounds and "heavily built." Finally, Clara C.'s multiple gold fillings diminished her looks in Eaton's assessment. Historian Sharon Cook argues that interwar magazines informed women that they risked ruining relationships and losing jobs if they lost their natural beauty. Advertisements identified white teeth as desirable, especially for women. For example, *Maclean's* carried a 1926 Pepsodent advertisement that featured a young man and woman. Readers learned that with the use of their dental product "[s]he has overcome the social handicap of 'off-colour' teeth." Forhan, a tooth powder manufacturer, painted a stark picture in 1932: "She was a BEAUTIFUL WOMAN before her teeth...went bad."<sup>157</sup> Eaton, who was from the socially elite Timothy Eaton family, implied that Clara C. lacked both social status and discipline because she had failed to take proper care of her teeth. Newspaper advertisements advised brushing twice a day, and suggested that Canadians could avoid costly dental visits with proper tooth care. Canadian dentists began promoting public dental health education as an important part of preventive dental care in the early twentieth century. Good oral health enabled social advancement, or so the media consistently informed Canadians by the 1920s.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> Sharon Anne Cook, *Sex, Lies, and Cigarettes: Canadian Women, Smoking, and Visual Culture, 1880-2000* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012), 213-215. The quotations both appear on page 214. See figure 7.3 on page 214 for Forhan quote. See page 213 for Cook's discussion of the Forhan tooth powder advertisement.

<sup>158</sup> Carlos Quiñonez, "Why was Dental Care Excluded from Canadian Medicare," *NCOHR Working Papers Series* 1, no 1 (2013): 2, accessed March 30, 2016, <http://ncohr-rcrsb.ca/knowledge-sharing/working-paper-series/content/quinonez.pdf>; and Donald W. Gullet, *A History of Dentistry in Canada* (Toronto: University

Brushing teeth was bound up in Canadian class and race relations. Between 1890 and 1930, school medical inspectors committed to middle-class perception of cleanliness ‘discovered’ improper hygiene predominantly among working-class children and children from racial and ethnic minorities. Poverty limited access to nutritious foods and hampered parents’ ability to ensure their children met these middle-class standards. Struggling families postponed visits to the dentists during the Great Depression. Public health officials who visited First Nations reserves in British Columbia during the 1930s remarked upon First Nations children’s unfamiliarity with tooth-brushes and bathtubs. Their alleged unfamiliarity with these hygiene tools justified white middle-class intervention among Indigenous populations. Clara C.’s gold teeth helped to justify the intervention of CWAC officers who removed her and subsequently worked to bar her from service.<sup>159</sup>

Clara C.’s gold teeth also might have placed her outside class-based standards of respectable femininity. A respectable “lady” was modest; she was feminine without being gaudy. Historian Melissa McEuen argues that, while wartime American advertisers presented lipstick as women’s patriotic duty and a way to remain respectably feminine when taking on stereotypically male jobs, anti-VD posters negatively featured women

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of Toronto Press, 1971), 137, 165-85. For example of ads that glorify white teeth, see “Have Bright White Teeth- take care of your Gums,” *Toronto Daily Star*, September 28, 1932; and “Teeth 3 Shades Whiter in 3 Days,” *Toronto Daily Star*, June 13, 1931. For the advised twice a day brushing and avoiding costly dental visit, see “Tamblyn Stresses the Importance of Clean Teeth,” *Toronto Daily Star*, July 20, 1932.

<sup>159</sup> Quiñonez, “Why was Dental Care Excluded from Canadian Medicare,” 2; Mona Gleason, “Race, Class, and Health: School Medical Inspection and ‘Healthy’ Children in British Columbia, 1890-1930,” in *Children’s Health Issues in Historical Perspective*, ed. Cheryl Lynn Krasnick Warsh and Veronica Jane Strong-Boag (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2005), 287-299; Gullet, *A History of Dentistry in Canada*, 165-95.

with “deeply colored full lips.”<sup>160</sup> Class-based beauty norms linked prostitutes with heavy and bright make-up. CWAC regulations specified a restrained application of cosmetics. Nail polish was to be “clear or lightly tinted” and not “brightly coloured.”<sup>161</sup> It is possible that Clara C.’s teeth, in Eaton’s view, drew too much attention and thus disqualified her for service.

The case of Clara C. exemplifies the dance over the recruitment criteria. Defence officials crafted regulations that defined their desired servicewoman in terms of age, weight, marital status, class, and race. By applying, Clara C. and other women contested this vision. Some women succeeded, while others, such as Clara C, failed when female officers upheld the notion of the ideal servicewoman. Elements of the ideal servicewomen shifted as defence officials responded to servicewomen’s actions, changing wartime conditions, and growing hostility towards women in service.

### **Modifying and Backlash**

Wartime officials broadened their targeted group as the war continued. In February 1942, officials lowered the minimum age of enlistment into the RCAF (WD) to 19 and further reduced it to 18 roughly three months later. The upper age limit was raised to 45 by the end of 1942.<sup>162</sup> A July 1943 Department of Manning Circular reported that the Air Council considered further extending the maximum age of enlistment to 50. Although the Air Council decided to keep the upper age limit at 45, they were prepared to

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<sup>160</sup> Pierson, “*They’re Still Women After All*,” 122-4, 153-5; and Melissa A. McEuen, *Making War, Making Women: Femininity and Duty on the American Home Front, 1941-1945* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2011), 44-51. The quotation comes from Winchell, 50

<sup>161</sup> Pierson, “*They’re Still Women After All*,” 122-4, 153-5. The quotation comes from page 154.

<sup>162</sup> “R.C.A.F. Personnel History 10 September 1939-1945,” 621-2.

make a case-by-case exception for “an outstanding woman over 45.” Recruiting staff were strongly cautioned that they must be certain that the woman was truly extraordinary before they sent her application to Air Force Headquarters. In addition, they were not to make any “special effort” to gather overage applicants.<sup>163</sup> A similar shift in the age of entry into the enlisted ranks occurred in the CWAC in April 1942. By the end of 1943, the CWAC’s maximum age of enlistment had risen to 50. The WRCNS avoided the problem because it formed later.<sup>164</sup>

Manpower demands contributed to the shifting entrance standards for the CWAC, RCAF (WD) and the organization of the WRCNS. The revised age limits expanded the possible pool of female recruits. The first few years of war went badly for Canada and its allies. France fell in 1940. The Japanese captured Canadians who were part of the garrison in Hong Kong in December 1941. Although Canadian naval forces kept Atlantic shipping lanes open, there was a sense that the Germans were winning the Battle of the Atlantic as 1942 came to a close. The ramping up of the Battle of the Atlantic and the need for more support staff by 1942 prompted senior naval officials to reverse their earlier objection to forming a woman’s service. Naval officials requested help from the British Admiralty to form its women’s service in January 1942. Canadian pilots sustained

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<sup>163</sup> “R.C.A.F. (W.D.),” D. of M. Circular no. 15, 26 July 1943, DHH, 71/110. Emphasis in original.

<sup>164</sup> “R.C.A.F. Personnel History 10 September 1939-1945,” 621; Hitsman, “‘Manpower’ Problems of the Women’s Services During the Second World War,” 5-8; Pierson, “*They’re Still Women After All*,” 113; “Regulations for the Canadian Women’s Army Corps, 1942,” Section II (para 14), Section III (para 22), copy at DHH, 113. 3C1 (D1); and G.O. 228/1943 “Regulations for the Canadian Women Army Corps,” Section III (para 6), Section IV (para 9).

heavy casualties during bombing raids.<sup>165</sup> Historian Jeffrey Keshen calculates that “in 1942 and 1943 an average of almost 5 percent of planes were lost in every raid launched by Bomber Command.”<sup>166</sup> In addition, Canadian Anglophones were frustrated with what they saw as a lack of war enthusiasm among Canadian Francophones and there were calls in English Canada for more troops. Wartime authorities shared this sentiment: Prime Minister Mackenzie King asked Canadians to release him from his no-overseas conscription pledge in an April 1942 plebiscite.<sup>167</sup> Enlistment criteria for men and women dropped in order to replace the losses and fill new spots as the war effort expanded.

The armed services debated tapping into another previously excluded pool of recruits. Air Force officials discussed the possibility of opening up the services to married and single women with dependent children at a Command Staff Officers Conference held during the fall of 1942. A recommendation which emerged from conference was that “married women with children may be enlisted if adequate provision is made for the children, and that single pregnant women be retained in the service if the child is also adequately cared for.” No action appears to have been taken on this recommendation.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> Tucker, *The Naval Service Of Canada: Its Official History*, 321-6; W.A.B. Douglas et al, *A Blue Water Navy: The Official Operational History of the Royal Canadian Navy in the Second World War Vol 2, Part 2* (St Catharines, ON: Vanwell Publishing, 2007), 596; and Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 16-17, 176, 230-40.

<sup>166</sup> Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 235.

<sup>167</sup> Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 16-17, 176, 230-40. The conscription crisis has been the subject of much scholarly attention. For a sample, see C.P. Stacey, *Arms, Men and Governments: The War Policies of Canada, 1939-1945* (Ottawa: Minister of National Defence, 1970), Tim Cook, *Warlords: Borden, Mackenzie King and Canada's World Wars* (Toronto: Allen Lane, 2012); J. L. Granatstein and J. M. Hitsman, *Broken Promises: A History of Conscription in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1977); Daniel Byers, *The Zombie Army: The Canadian Army and Conscription in the Second World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2016); and Cook, *The Necessary War*, 30-43, 173-198, 418-423.

<sup>168</sup> Memorandum from Squadron Officer K. Walker for Air Vice-Marshal J.A. Sully, A.M.P., to D. of P., 14 Oct, 1942, LAC, RG 24, vol. 3566, file HQ. 1101-2-16, vol 1.

CWAC officers discussed the Air Force's willingness to retain single pregnant women at a November 1942 CWAC Staff Officers' Conference. Colonel Joan Kennedy, the senior CWAC officer, asked the officers to indicate where they stood. Six of the eleven officers supported flat-out discharge for single pregnant women, while two advocated "discharge with discretion," which offered a more individualized approach of permitting some to stay. The remainder felt that the servicewomen should "remain in the C.W.A.C. to be cared for by the R.C.A.M.C. [Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps]." Based on the surviving meeting minutes, it is unclear whether the remainder wanted a servicewoman to be retained permanently, or only until she gave birth. Both options were discussed. All officers approved permitting the re-enlistment of servicewomen discharged for pregnancy provided they had made childcare arrangements.<sup>169</sup>

The air force's and army's consideration of women with dependents fit in with civilian trends. The federal government established the National Selective Service Women's Division (NSSWD) as part of the Department of Labour in 1942. Initially, the NSSWD targeted single women. By 1943, the NSSWD told married women with children that they could combine patriotic part-time work with their familial duties. Nevertheless, married women workers and working mothers remained controversial figures. For example, 122, 283 Quebecers signed a 1943 petition that called for the ban of working mothers with children under sixteen. Mothers who sent their children to daycare were accused of abandoning their children and welfare experts blamed working mothers

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<sup>169</sup>; Minutes of the Canadian Women's Army Corps Staff Officer Conference, Ottawa, 18-20 November 1942, Appendix 12 to CWAC History, DHH, 113.3C1 (D1).

for juvenile delinquency. Federal and provincial governments provided limited funding for day-cares and ended income tax exemptions for married women after the war.<sup>170</sup>

Despite a need for more recruits, the armed services held fast to certain standards. The prohibition against dependent children remained throughout the war. The armed services discharged all servicewomen, whether married or single, who became pregnant. Civilian and military officials argued that the retention of pregnant women was simply too expensive. Pregnant women, they said, would generate additional costs because they required altered uniforms, specialized girdles, and medical care. Military bases were not equipped with maternity wards. In addition, government and military authorities insisted that a pregnant woman in uniform was bad imagery. As will be discussed below, there were rumours that servicewomen had high rates of illegitimate pregnancy. Military officials carefully guarded against perceptions of impropriety and wanted to avoid associations between pregnancy and military service. Servicewomen discharged for pregnancy were sent home in civilian clothes.<sup>171</sup>

Certain officials regretted lowering age and educational standards. Female officers worried that the Director of Army Recruiting allowed recruiting standards to

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<sup>170</sup> Pierson, *“They’re Still Women After All,”* 29-31, 48-60; 80-2; 216-8; Keshen, 158-9, 204-13; and Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl*, 38-65.

<sup>171</sup> “R.C.A.F (Women’s Division) Plan for Organization and Suggestions Concerning Employment” [hereafter “RCAF (WD) Plan”], 30 October 1946, p.19, copy at DHH, 79/308; General Advisory Committee on Demobilization and Rehabilitation, “Interim Report of the Sub-Committee on the Special Problems of Discharged Women,” 1942, 3-5. LAC, LAC, R112-616-8-E (formerly RG 24-D-1-c), vol. 34242, file 4430-906, vol. 1; Pierson, *“They’re Still Women After All,”* 183; Glad Bryce, *First In, Last Out: the RCAF, Women's Division and Nursing Sisters in World War II* (Toronto: University Women's Club of Toronto, 2010), 10; and Peter Neary *On to Civvy Street: Canada’s Rehabilitation Program for Veterans of the Second World War* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2011, 114. For an example of recruitment see *CWAC Digest: Facts about the C.W.A.C.*, copy at DHH, 156.003 (D1). The pamphlet is undated but internal evidences puts it at mid- 1943.

become too lax in 1942. Senior female officers, such as Colonel Margaret Eaton and her successor Lieutenant-Colonel Daisy Royal, alleged in their reports that a policy of “wholesale enlistment” guided the 1942 summer recruitment drive. They explained that wholesale enlistment was a concerted attempt to recruit as many women as possible. The army had waived requirements for civilian trades training, and enrolled women with less education than previously.<sup>172</sup>

These educated women blamed wholesale enlistment for an influx of “bad types” who damaged the CWAC’s reputation. In their estimate, “bad types” caused disciplinary problems and were the reason why the corps had problems with venereal disease and pregnancy. Male and female officers advocated careful screening in order to prevent the enlistment of “bad types.” They argued that respectable patriotic women would not join if they armed forces permitted the enlistment and retention of ““problem personnel.””<sup>173</sup>

According to historian Ruth Roach Pierson, a “whispering campaign” emerged by the summer of 1942 and became a priority for military officials by the early months of 1943, when studies showed that it had a detrimental impact on recruiting. Family members were reluctant to support the enlistment of their female relatives because they feared for their loved ones’ safety and reputation. The whispering campaign was rife with rumours about the high rates of venereal disease and pregnancy, especially illegitimate pregnancy, in the women’s services. Wartime and subsequent scholarly studies have

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<sup>172</sup> Pierson, “*They’re Still Women After All*,” 177-8, 278 n 37; Royal, “Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women’s Army Corps,” Section 11 (para 1-3); and untitled history of The Canadian Women Army Corps, Section 2.

<sup>173</sup> Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl*, 85-95; and Pierson, “*They’re Still Women After All*,” 169-87. The quotation comes from Stephen, 95.

proven that these rumours were false. Internal reviews, such as those conducted by air force chaplains, and external reviews, such as one conducted by the marketing research firm Elliot-Haynes Limited, traced many of the rumours back to servicemen and a public that reportedly feared change.<sup>174</sup> For example, a Wartime Information Board report framed the whispering campaign as “a symptom of resentment against an innovation which is somehow felt to be ‘unwomanly.’”<sup>175</sup> The WRCNS largely escaped the whispering campaign because it had better success in establishing itself as a more “lady-like” service.<sup>176</sup>

The 1942-3 push for recruits made the whispering campaign a serious problem. Defence planners were predicting significant expansion in 1943. There were approximately 28,000 servicewomen in July 1943. Military authorities calculated in 1943 that the three services “urgently need[ed] 65,000 more service women to release men for combat duty.”<sup>177</sup> Although the women’s services never grew as large as authorities anticipated, their predicted scope was impressive.

Defence officials fought the whispering campaign with a concerted publicity

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<sup>174</sup> Pierson, “*They’re Still Women After All*,” 169-187; Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl*, 66-7, 84-95; Buchanan, “The Canadian Women’s Army Corps, 1941-1946,” 25-31; Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War*, 15-38, 60-68; Davidson, “A Woman’s Right to Charm and Beauty,” 45-53; Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 37-42, 47-48, 54-60; Hitsman, “Manpower” Problems of the Women’s Services During the Second World War,” 10-19; Keshen, *Saints, Sinners and Soldiers*, 175-193; Ziegler, *We Serve That Men May Fly*, 113-132; and Diane G. Forestell, “The Victorian Legacy: Historical Perspectives on the Canadian Women’s Army Corps,” (PhD diss., York University, 1985), 135-76. For a study on the discourses of sexuality in Canadian history see Gary Kinsman, *The Regulation of Desire: Homo and Hetero Sexualities*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Montreal: Black Rose, 1996).

<sup>175</sup> J.D. Ketchum, Memorandum “Immorality of Service Women,” 19 March 1943 as quoted in Buchanan, “The Canadian Women’s Army Corps, 1941-1946,” 29.

<sup>176</sup> Hitsman, “Manpower” Problems of the Women’s Services During the Second World War,” 14.

<sup>177</sup> Pierson, “*They’re Still Women After All*,” 133, 272 n 13. The 28 000 comes from footnote 13 on page 272.

campaign conducted by the Combined Services Committee in 1943. Internal and external surveys conducted in 1943 provided material for the campaign. The reviews demonstrated that pay, uniforms, and previous poor publicity kept women from enlisting. The Combined Services Committee responded to women's complaints when it highlighted women's improved pay and uniforms. Senior servicewomen and civilian women's groups, such as the National Council of Women, had advocated for a pay raise in 1942. Servicewomen's pay was raised from two-thirds to fourth-fifths of their male counterparts in summer 1943. The publicity campaign saw street car advertisements, advertisements placed in foreign language newspapers, and two films produced by the National Film Board (NFB). The NFB films celebrated servicewomen as competent contributors to the war effort. These messages coexisted with reassurances that women remained feminine. For example, *Proudly She Marches* had female recruits run out of a gas hut with tears streaming down their face as a male narrator wryly exclaims that "all girls like to have a good cry once in a while." Defence officials responded to servicewomen's and civilian criticism of the women's services in the 1943 publicity campaign.<sup>178</sup>

Military officers also saw military personnel as a source of recruits. In January 1943, the RCAF Directorate of Manning advised that centres should ask enlisted women for the names of two friends that they felt might want to enlist. Then, centres were asked to send those named recruitment material and a letter saying that their friend had enlisted.

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<sup>178</sup> Pierson, "They're Still Women After All," 113-17, 135-47, 170-87; "R.C.A.F. Personnel History 10 September 1939-1945," 630; Keshen, *Saints, Sinners and Soldiers*, 179-80; and Yvonne Matthews-Klein, "How They Saw US: Images of Women in National Film Board Films of the 1940's and 1950s," *Atlantis* 4, no. 2 (Spring 1979): 22-6. The quotation appears as it is quoted in Keshen, 179.

In August 1943, the RCAF tried bribes. Male and female personnel secured one-day leave for every RCAF (WD) recruit. RCAF WD enlistments rates saw noticeable improvements between August and September 1943. September proved to be an extremely fruitful month; 900 women were enlisted in that month.<sup>179</sup>

Efforts paid off for all three services. They all recruited more women in 1943 than they had done in previous and later years. The RCAF (WD)'s entrance standards were revisited in January 1944, when the initial maximum age of entrance was reduced to 40 because officials wanted to sustain enrolment at roughly 15,000. The RCAF (WD) stopped recruiting January 1944. By the end of the year, the air force announced a reduced commitment to the BCATP and the impending closure of flying schools. The other two services continued recruiting in 1944. The CWAC hit maximum strength in April 1945 and the Canadian navy in January 1945.<sup>180</sup>

Servicewomen and military officials negotiated recruitment criteria throughout the war. Military officials opened the services to younger and older women when labour shortages grew during the war. Servicewomen obtained better pay because of women's activism, and because poor pay was a barrier to recruitment. The armed services improved enlistment numbers after it agreed to better pay and offered reassurances that servicewomen could retain their femininity. As the next section shows, family members

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<sup>179</sup> "Names Please," D. of M. Circular no 8, 13 January 1943, DHH, 71/110; Ziegler, *We Serve That Men May Fly*, 115; R.C.A.F. Personnel History 10 September 1939-1945," 365; and Hitsman, "'Manpower' Problems of the Women's Services During the Second World War," Appendix A

<sup>180</sup> Tucker, *The Naval Service Of Canada*, 321-6, 295 n57, 526; R.C.A.F. Personnel History 10 September 1939-1945," 621-34; Hitsman, "Manpower" Problems of the Women's Services During the Second World War," 15, Appendix A; Ziegler, *We Serve That Men May Fly*, 147-52; Hogenbirk, "Wearing Air Force Blue and Army Khaki," 55-60. On page 326, Tucker lists the WRCNS maximum strength at 5, 893. He does not date this.

were also part of the dance. Military officers corresponded with concerned relatives over the recruitment of women.

### **Problematic/Undesirable Recruits**

Familial conflicts were elevated into military concerns when family members reached out to military officials. One of the Indigenous women interviewed by Grace Poulin described how she and a group of mostly underage friends joined the army. To her disappointment, her father secured her discharge after a neighbour informed him that she had enlisted. Relatives of other women wrote the armed services seeking news of their loved ones who ran away. A query from Phillippa Marie B.'s concerned and sick mother prompted Lieutenant-Colonel T.C. Evans to direct the CWAC Staff Officer posted to M.D. 2's headquarters to look into whether Phillippa B. was serving in the CWAC. She was "alleged to have left home some time in January, 1942." Lieutenant-Colonel Evans asked the CWAC Staff Officer to follow up with the NDHQ Records Officer responsible for the CWAC if she was unable to find anything within the district and pass along any information to Mrs. B. The search request included Phillippa B.'s physical description, photo, and a potential alias. Unlike Clara C., twenty-four-year-old fair blue-eyed Phillippa B. fell firmly within the physical and age requirements.<sup>181</sup>

Tellingly, Evans believed that it was worth finding out if the CWAC was inadvertently hiding a woman whose only recorded "crime" was that she defied parental authority. Evans' response follows the larger trends identified by historians of juvenile

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<sup>181</sup> Poulin, "Invisible Women: Aboriginal Servicewomen in Canada's Second World War Military," 139; and Lieutenant-Colonel T.C. Evans, Liaison Officer, M.D.2, to Staff Officer, CWAC, Headquarters, M.D.2, 21 March [1942?], DHH, 325.009 (D252), vol. 4. Based on surrounding documents, the year is 1942.

delinquency. Historian Tamara Myers has documented how parents brought their “unruly” daughters before the juvenile court system. Defying parental authority was justification for sending girls to reform institutions. As was in the case of the “wild” paramilitary women, wartime officials did not want women they perceived to be unruly or uncontrollable. There was nothing in Evans’ letter which suggested that Phillipa B. might have had cause to leave home. The only indication that Evans might have considered the possibility that Mrs. B. lied came when he stated that Phillipa B. “alleged[ly]” ran away in January. Phillipa B. symbolizes the paradoxical phenomenon in which women sought refuge from hierarchical family power relations within an overtly hierarchical male-dominated institution. Women were prepared to falsify information, or so wartime correspondents who provided potential aliases believed. Evans’ reaction and Mrs. B’s query demonstrates that military officers and relatives worked to shore up family authority. A letter from a concerned relative was all it took to launch an investigation in an institution anxious to avoid any appearance of impropriety.<sup>182</sup>

“Spousal and family desertion” rates rose during the war. Much of the literature on Second World War desertion in families focuses on deserted wives, though historian Nancy Christie briefly mentions that federal authorities permitted some service wives

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<sup>182</sup> Evans to Staff Officer, CWAC, Headquarters, M.D.2, 21 March [1942?]; Barbara Winters, “The Wrens of the Second World War: Their Place in the History of Canadian Servicewomen,” in *A Nation’s Navy: In Quest of Canadian Naval Identity*, ed. Michael L. Hadley, Rob Huebert and Fred W. Crickard, (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1996), 295; Cameron Duder, *Awfully Devoted Women: Lesbians Lives in Canada, 1900-65* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 223, 251-59; and Tamara Myers, *Caught: Montreal’s Modern Girls and the Law, 1869-1945* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), especially 166-75. Duder has more to say on how military service contribution to the formation of lesbian communities in the postwar period. For a discussion of military service as an alternative to heterosexuality in the 1950s, see Gary Kinsman and Patrizia Gentile. *The Canadian War on Queers: National Security as Sexual Regulation* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 15, 62-63.

who deserted abusive husbands to retain access to government benefits. The wartime economy enabled men and women to desert through military service and through increased opportunities to work elsewhere.<sup>183</sup> Military officials were troubled by their belief that women perceived military service as a way out. CWAC Captain Olive Ruth Russell stated in 1943 “that the CWAC recruiting drive was attracting ‘undesirable’ women, anxious to escape ‘the ordinary duties of living or the consequences of some misdeeds’ under the shelter of the services.”<sup>184</sup> Wartime authorities discovered that 31.5 per cent of the 95 unmarried servicewomen “discharged from the CWAC for pregnancy between January 1 and May 31, 1946...had been pregnant before enlistment.” Historian Magda Fahrni speculates that some single pregnant female recruits might have enlisted in the armed services because they wanted to escape familial and societal disapproval.<sup>185</sup> Second World War discussions around female desertion focused on perceived lapses in their domestic and caregiving responsibilities. A belief in wartime Canada was that the war disrupted women’s place in the home. Anxieties over the stability of Canadian society deepened with hasty marriages and high divorce rates. Men and women feared that wartime separation brought wartime infidelity, and for many, their worries proved to

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<sup>183</sup> Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 121-44; Desmond Morton, *Fight or Pay: Soldiers' Families in the Great War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), 93; Nancy Christie, *Engendering the State: Family, Work, and Welfare in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 108-11, 258-9, 314-15; and Jody Perrun, *The Patriotic Consensus: Unity, Morale, and the Second World War in Winnipeg* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2014), 154-84. For an American example, see *Wives Without Husbands: Marriage, Desertion, & Welfare in New York, 1900-1935* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007). The quotation comes from Keshen, 123.

<sup>184</sup> Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl*, 92.

<sup>185</sup> Pierson, “*They’re Still Women After All*,” 179; and Magda Fahrni, *Household Politics: Montreal Families and Postwar Reconstruction* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 205 n173. The quotation comes from Pierson, 179.

be true.<sup>186</sup>

Leslie J. pleaded for military assistance after his wife Sarah “Sally” J. left him and their six-year old son in order to pursue a married man who managed the restaurant where she had been a waitress. While her husband was vague about what happened, he stated that Sally J. was fired because she pursued her employer’s husband. Leslie J. wrote to the RCAF because Sally J. had repeatedly indicated that she planned to enlist in the RCAF (WD). He asked for news if she had already enlisted. If RCAF officials discovered that she had not enlisted, he requested that they watch out for her and inform him if she attempted to enlist. In order to help their search, Leslie J. provided RCAF authorities with his wife’s maiden name and a physical description. The letter contained an emotional appeal. He professed his love for his wife. Furthermore, he stressed that worry was taking an emotional and physical toll on him and her “aged mother.”<sup>187</sup> There are common elements between the search request for Sally J. and the one for Phillippa B. Both included a concerned frail mother, a potential alias, and a woman who saw military service as tool of resistance and/or alternative to the nuclear family.

Leslie J.’s letter also shares similarities with letters from deserted wives and other single mothers appealing for aid. Deserted wives and their supporters often portrayed a deserted woman as a morally upright wife and mother, who was forced to ask for help

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<sup>186</sup> Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 121-77, 194-227.

<sup>187</sup> Copy of letter from Leslie J., 9 March, 1942, enclosed with letter from Flight Lieutenant R. S. Cross to Commanding Officer, CWAC, Toronto, 18 March, 1942, DHH, 325.009 (D252), vol. 4. Gossage also reproduces Leslie J.’s letter. See “Runaway Wife,” in *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots*, 80-1.

because of the actions of an errant husband.<sup>188</sup> Leslie J. offered a male version of these rhetorical strategies. He began the letter by depicting himself as a good provider who was compelled to ask for assistance because of extenuating circumstances. As Leslie J. explained, he was “employed and living in Hamilton, Ontario” until a bout with the flu and then pleurisy sent him to hospital. Sally J.’s disappearance created family hardship. Leslie J. informed the RCAF that Sally J. dropped their son off to her mother and failed to arrange their son’s schooling before she left. There were additional hardships. Not only was Leslie J. “too ill to be able to look after anything,” but also Sally’s mother already had her hands full caring for Sally’s ill brother.<sup>189</sup>

Throughout the letter, Leslie J. shored up his masculine identity, even as he admitted physical weakness. For instance, he showed himself to be a good protector, despite being confined to bed. Leslie J. justified not seeking the help of police because he wished to avoid publicly shaming his wife. Yet, other statements within the letter raise doubts about his credibility and his declared motivations for avoiding the police. Placing “ads’ in the Toronto Evening Telegram [sic]” seems a curious action for a man concerned with protecting his wife’s reputation. Leslie J. mentioned the advertisements as proof of his extensive search efforts. In addition, he asserted his status as head of the household and seemed unconcerned with embarrassing his wife when he granted the

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<sup>188</sup> Christie, *Engendering the State*, 107-11; Margaret Hillyard Little, “‘A Fit and Proper Person’: The Moral Regulation of Single Mothers in Ontario, 1920-1940,” in *Gendered Pasts: Historical Essays in Femininity and Masculinity in Canada*, ed. Kathryn McPherson, Cecilia Morgan and Nancy M. Forestell (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1999), 123-38; and Linda Gordon, *Pitied But Not Entitled: Single Mothers and the History of Welfare* (Toronto: Maxwell Macmillan Canada, 1994), 6, 7, 19-22, 25-6, 33, 41.

<sup>189</sup> Copy of letter from Leslie J., 9 March, 1942.

armed forces blanket permission to share his wife's description. The only limit he placed on the search was that the description must be shared only for the purpose of locating his wife. In the post-script, Leslie J. acknowledged that women enlisted for "the duration" and that the RCAF had authority over its personnel. He requested that air force authorities use "your own judgement" if his wife was in service.<sup>190</sup> Despite the fact his wife had left, Leslie J. assumed that he could still control his wife.

Air force officers shored up Leslie J.'s masculine authority when they accepted his versions of the events and concurred that he had the right to know his wife's whereabouts. Flight Lieutenant R.S. Cross advised Leslie J. that the RCAF records indicated that they had not received any applications from his wife. Cross promised Leslie J. that the recruiting centre in Toronto would "take necessary action" if she applied. The RCAF's response did not end there. Both the RCAF Toronto recruiting centre and the Toronto CWAC were notified. The letter was copied and circulated in the CWAC.<sup>191</sup> Concern with protecting the reputation of the RCAF (WD) and the CWAC contributed to the official responses to Leslie J.'s letter. Leslie J. provided RCAF authorities with a reason to discharge Sally J. if she had already enlisted or prevent her from enlisting when he painted his wife as an immoral woman. Based on her husband's account, she had abandoned her wifely, motherly, daughterly and sisterly duties for a married man. Sally J.'s apparently questionable judgement and character, combined with

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<sup>190</sup> Copy of letter from Leslie J. 9 March, 1942.

<sup>191</sup> Copy of letter from Flight Lieutenant R.S. Cross to Leslie J., 18 March 1942, enclosed with letter from Flight Lieutenant R. S. Cross to Commanding Officer, CWAC , Toronto, 18 March, 1942, DHH, 325.009 (D252), vol. 4. Marginalia on the Cross' letter to the Commanding Officer CWAC reveals it was copied and circulated. There are two sets of distinct writing in different ink. One says "Pass Stat[?] [illegible] Please notify if came for our information desk." The second note is, "Copy sent, Lt Commander Eaton."

her status as mother with a dependent child disqualified her from military service.

Officers also wanted to prevent the enlistment of the “criminal class.” CWAC Captain Olive Ruth Russell confided in a private letter that “the ‘professional thief and prostitute’” frequently visited recruiting stations.<sup>192</sup> Inquiries conducted by Toronto-based army examiners uncovered applicants who did not declare that they had court records and dependent “illegitimate” children.<sup>193</sup> Other female applicants openly admitted their criminal history, indicating that they did not view it as a barrier to their enlistment. Lieutenant Mary Demchuk informed the CWAC Recruiting Officer stationed at Military District 12 Headquarters about a recent interview with a local prison inmate and potential applicant named Victoria B. Victoria B. was imprisoned on the charge of vagrancy. Demchuk explained that Victoria B. had asked a local doctor to treat her through incarceration because she thought jail would prevent her from buying drugs. Faced with her upcoming release, Victoria B. sought another structured environment with the support of the prison matron, Mrs. Bodnar, who testified that Victoria B was a conscientious worker and model inmate. Victoria B. reportedly believed that army discipline would help prevent her from sliding back into her drug habits.

Although Demchuk never explicitly stated that Victoria B. was an undesirable candidate, she clearly tried to prevent her application. Demchuk requested that the CWAC Recruiting Officer have someone tell Matron Bodnar whether Victoria B. should even bother to apply, cautioning that the Matron might continue to encourage the

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<sup>192</sup> Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl*, 92.

<sup>193</sup> Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl*, 93-4.

application unless informed otherwise. The interview was framed as a pre-emptive measure. Demchuk justified the time that she spent interviewing a repeat offender by explaining that the CWAC needed “some record of her [Victoria B.] in case she applies for enlistment through a Civilian or Army Recruiting Centre where she may not be known.”<sup>194</sup> The district CWAC Staff Officer heeded Demchuk’s warnings and decided that “we don’t need this recruit.”<sup>195</sup> Officials tasked with filling labour shortages by recruiting women placed the needs of the service above those of individual women. The rejection of Victoria B. fit in with the arguments of officers for more careful screening because it prevented them services from wasting valuable time and money training women who would be discharged.

It is not known how representative Demchuk’s letter and those from concerned relatives are. Her letter was found in a file of correspondence on enlistment and those from concerned relatives were buried in a multi-volume file filled with routine correspondence on the administration from one military district. Nevertheless, as shown above, the letters tapped into larger conversations about “problematic recruits.” Tamara Myers’ observations about court records are applicable here. She writes that court records are rich but problematic sources. Women’s and girls’ voices are absent in the official

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<sup>194</sup> Lieutenant Mary Demchuk, No 12 District Recruiting Detachment, to CWAC Recruiting Officer, Headquarters, M.D. 12, Regina, Saskatchewan, letter, dated 20 October 1943, DHH, 168.009 (D91). For an explanation of how recruiting was organized, see Stacey, *Official History of the Canadian Army in the Second World War*, Vol I, 116. For an overview of vagrancy in Canadian law, see Prashan Ranasinhe, “Reconceptualising Vagrancy and Reconstructing the Vagrant: A Socio-Legal Analysis of Criminal Law Reform in Canada, 1953-1972,” *Osgoode Hall Law Journal* 48, no. 1 (Spring 2010): 55-94.

<sup>195</sup> Lieutenant Mary Demchuk, No. 12 District Recruiting Detachment to CWAC Recruiting Officer, Headquarters, M.D. 12, Regina, Saskatchewan, dated 20 October 1943. The quotation comes from a person writing to the District Recruiting Officer on behalf of CWAC Staff Officer. Illegible handwriting combined with the fact it was initialled makes it hard to identify the person.

records produced by members of powerful institutions, who typically have more authority and status than the women involved. Nevertheless, Myers states that the records show that adolescent girls resisted.<sup>196</sup> The sources examined here show that individual women negotiated their entrance into the armed services and used military service for their own purposes.

### **Getting Out**

Gaining quality recruits was only one of the wartime challenges in the women's services. Retaining them was another. Once in, not everyone remained eager to serve. Familial responsibilities pushed women such as Private Alice W. to request a compassionate discharge. She changed her mind and was permitted to remain after she learned that her sister would care for their sick mother.<sup>197</sup> Recruits were asked to sign a declaration that the personal information on the enrolment form was true and agree to serve in the CWAC.<sup>198</sup> Not all women signed. The Canadian Army investigated why some women refused to commit to the armed services by signing "the declaration" on the attestation form in the spring of 1942. Captain Isabel Cronyn explained that, as of mid-May, Military District Two [M.D. 2] had 308 completed declarations, and 85 incomplete

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<sup>196</sup> Myers, *Caught*, 10-15.

<sup>197</sup> 2/Lieut Grace L. Russell, A/O.C. "B" Coy, CWAC M.D.2, to Staff Officer CWAC, MD. 2, 19 May 1942, DHH, 325.009 (D252), vol. 5; and copy of letter from Captain Isabel Cronyn, Staff Officer to Officer i/c Records National Defence Headquarters, re M.F.M. 153 Form of Attestation Canadian Women's Army Corps, 15 May 1942, DHH, 325.009 (D252), vol. 5.

<sup>198</sup> "Regulations for The Canadian Women's Army Corps, 1942," Section III (para 23 d); "Regulations for The Canadian Women's Army Corps, 1942," Appendix 1: Attestation Form (M.F.M. 153); and Lieutenant-Colonel H.T. Cock for Major General B. W. Browne, Adjutant General, to G.O.C. in C. Pacific Command, G.O. C. in C. Atlantic Command, All District Officers Commanding, DHH, 75/174, file 2. The letter states, "While Items 1-14 of M. F. M. 153 or 153A (FR) and the Declaration will be completed by recruits, the Oath of Allegiance and the Certificate of Enrolling will not be completed until the period of probation is completed and the recruit enrolled as a volunteer."

declarations. Growing pains and administrative issues, rather than servicewomen's refusals, accounted for the majority of the incompletes. Most of the missing forms (69) from M.D. 2 came from personnel currently posted to the basic training centre at Ste. Anne de Bellevue, Quebec. The training centre had been only open for a few months when Cronyn submitted her report.<sup>199</sup>

Ten women, including Private Alice, refused to sign. The reasons were broken down as follows: one listed illness, three had "applied for discharge on compassionate grounds," two were "awaiting discharge," one claimed familial responsibilities because of her daughter's upcoming marriage, and the final three were "contemplating marriage and believe[d] by not signing will be able to get out of army."<sup>200</sup> Those who listed marriage as grounds for refusal followed societal expectations that women should prioritize marriage over outside work. For these women and critics of the women's services, marriage was incompatible with military service. Although women who refused to sign represented a fraction of the incomplete cases, senior army officials took the matter seriously. They were concerned enough that towards the end of May, the Adjutant-General ordered all district officers commanding to send Ottawa the details of why CWAC servicewomen resisted signing and which ones had done so.<sup>201</sup>

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<sup>199</sup> 'B' Company, M.D. 2, Statement as to Declarations, attached to copy of letter from Captain Isabel Cronyn, Staff Officer to Officer i/c Records National Defence Headquarters, re M.F.M. 153 Form of Attestation Canadian Women's Army Corps, 15 May 1942, DHH 325.009 (D252), vol. 5; untitled history of The Canadian Women Army Corps, Section IV Military Training, copy at DHH 781/208; and Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War*, 69-71.

<sup>200</sup> 'B' Company, M.D. 2 Statement as to Declarations.

<sup>201</sup> 'B' Company, M.D. 2 Statement as to Declarations; and Airmail from Major H. A. U [?] Breuls for H.F.G. Letson, Major General, Adjutant General to All District Officers Commanding, 26 May 1942, DHH, 325.009 (D252), vol. 5. For a discussion about worries over servicewomen's marriageability, see Pierson, "They're Still Women After All," 159-61.

Women who completed the enrolment process sometimes also presented marriage as a reason why they should be released. Acting Captain Adelaide Sinclair and Lieutenant-Colonel Daisy Royal argued in 1946 that many naval and army servicewomen had tried using marriage as grounds for discharge, even though they were told marriage was insufficient grounds. Many married personnel filled key roles, and there were too many married servicewomen to have permitted discharge upon demand. Morale, discipline and the quality of work suffered when many of these requests were denied.<sup>202</sup>

Sympathetic officials permitted the release of married servicewomen where possible. The federal government prioritized domesticity in mobilization and demobilization planning.<sup>203</sup> Acceptance of female domesticity underlined the air force's policy. Air Officers Commanding were informed in April 1944 that while marriage did not grant an airwoman an automatic discharge, it did "not preclude a discharge being authorized on compassionate grounds related to marriage if such compassionate grounds are sufficiently substantial." The definition of a substantial ground was left open to interpretation with one exception. Provided the air force's labour needs permitted, Air Officers Commanding were to approve discharge requests from married women who wanted to "set up a home, and particularly where the husband is being repatriated and discharged from one of the Armed Forces and where the discharge of the airwoman may be of assistance in his rehabilitation." With these guidelines, senior officers revealed that

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<sup>202</sup> Royal, "Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," Section X (para 6); Sinclair, "Report on the W.R.C.N.S.," Section XVII: Welfare; Agenda for Conference-District C.W.A.C. Officers NDHQ 6 February 1945, DHH, 325.009 (D252), vol. 12.

<sup>203</sup> Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl*. See also, Jennifer Stephen, "Balancing Equality for the Post-war Woman: Demobilising Canada's Women Workers after World War Two," *Atlantis* 32, no. 1 (2007): 122-30.

they believed a returning male veteran, especially an injured one, was owed his wife's company. The policy upheld masculine privilege and entrenched the assumption that even in wartime, a married women's place was in the home. Air force policy also responded to some women's wishes. Some married women actively lobbied for their discharge for a multiple reasons. Some likely wanted to be with their husbands, and others may have simply been tired of serving. Others might have wanted a different job, and some might have wanted to exercise their right to be a housewife.<sup>204</sup>

Individual servicewomen disenchanted with military service saw domesticity as the better option. In her response to a 1943 questionnaire sent to women serving at Royal Roads, one Wren complained, "I don't feel as though I'm helping this war and now I'm married I think I'd like to and should have my discharge as I'm not happy."<sup>205</sup> Marriage combined with job dissatisfaction prompted some airwomen to request their discharge. Flight Lieutenant R.C. Henstock, the station chaplain at the RCAF #4 Service and Flying Training School, informed the Director of Chaplain Services (P) on 24 June 1944 that many disgruntled married women had approached him, seeking his guidance on leaving the services. Many airwomen were unconvinced by his explanation that the current war situation justified their retention because they observed many under-employed airmen.

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<sup>204</sup> Policy letter from [illegible] for J.A. Sully, Air Vice Marshal, for CAS to Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Eastern Air Command, Air Officer Commanding of Western Air Command, No 1. Training Command, No. 2 Training Command, No 3. Training Command, and No. 4. Training Command, 6 April 1944, LAC, RG 24, vol. 3367, file HQ 425-1-8. As Randall Wakelam explains, Air Officer Commanding refers to "the commander of a group of units, e.g., AOC Western Air Command." See *Cold War Fighters: Canadian Aircraft Procurement, 1945-54* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011), xiii.

<sup>205</sup> Attachment to letter from A/Lieut.-Cmdr A.C. Tate RCNVR, Chief Public Relations Officer, to Lieut.-Cmdr. William Strange RCNVR, Assistant Director of Naval Information, November 8, 1843, DHH, Naval Information Fonds, 91/940, box 8, file 7700 W.R,C.N.S., R.C.N. Press Releases.

The station's airwomen countered Henstock's argument, arguing that there was a surplus of women in the air force. They saw no reason why married women should serve because there was no longer a labour shortage. He asked if there was anything he could do to help some long-serving airwomen obtain their discharge. Henstock prioritized service needs over individual rights when he reasoned that the retention of disengaged women would hurt the RCAF.<sup>206</sup>

Marriage was only one cause of job dissatisfaction. Naval servicewomen took advantage of the opportunity created by a 1943 survey designed to assess the attitudes of cooks and stewards. They protested their job assignments and work conditions. Lieutenant-Commander A.O. Tate, the Chief Public Relations Officer, observed that respondents knew "their Unit Officer would read them." With this in mind, he took their complaints seriously and was more skeptical of the overly positive answers. The survey revealed that the majority of servicewomen in those hard to fill categories were unhappy. The listed causes for dissatisfaction included but were not limited to underwork, overwork, and boredom. Tate conceded that a minority of women in these trades actually enjoyed their duties. One replied that she simultaneously contributed to the war effort and received valuable training that she doubted she could have afforded on her own. Her postwar goals included pursuing an education in the food service industry. While some servicewomen enjoyed their services, others expressed their dissatisfaction when the

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<sup>206</sup> Copy of letter from Flight Lieutenant R.C. Henstock, Station Chaplain (P), to Air Commodore W.E. Cockram, Director of Chaplain Services (P), 24 June 1944, LAC, RG 24, vol. 3367, file HQ 425-1-8.

work they performed failed to meet expectations.<sup>207</sup>

Air force cooks and messwomen also grumbled that they were overworked in a 1943 RCAF (W.D.) Personnel Survey. The twenty-two question survey tried to ascertain how airwomen felt about issues such as the quality of training, housing, recreation, discipline, and overwork. Assistant Section Officer P. Wetzel performed much of the legwork and reported to the Air Member for Training at Air Force Headquarters (AFHQ). By mid-March, 19 of the 47 stations had reported their results. Her initial findings revealed that six stations believed their cooks and messwomen were overburdened. Wetzel legitimized certain complaints. She commented that the Station Medical Officer and Commanding Officer of No. 5 Bombing and Gunnery School corroborated mess workers' complaint and noted that this school was short six cooks. Based on her interim report, even the perception of overwork had to be taken seriously. Feeling overworked created unhappy servicewomen, who in turn hampered recruiting efforts when they refused to invite female relatives and friends to join.<sup>208</sup>

Some servicewomen demonstrated their unhappiness with military life and attempted to control their military service by going AWOL. Going AWOL signals a (temporary) rejection of military discipline. Ex-WRCNS member Lorna Cooney recalled that she threatened Lieutenant Alexis Alvey that she would go AWOL in order to avoid being posted to Dartmouth. Cooney's threat to her superior officer worked.<sup>209</sup> Others

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<sup>207</sup> A/Lieut.-Cmdr A.C. Tate RCNVR to Lieut.-Cmdr. William Strange RCNVR, Assistant Director of Naval Information, November 8, 1843.

<sup>208</sup> Assistant Section Officer P. Wetzel, "Interim report on W.D. Personal Interview," DHH, 181.002 (D498).

<sup>209</sup> "Lorna Cooney – née Stranger" in *Equal to the Challenge*, 157.

repeatedly went AWOL in an attempt to force a discharge. Female army officials discussed how to handle “the question of chronic A.W.L.” in the CWAC at a December 1944 meeting. The challenge in answering that question was how to hold onto trained personnel while still maintaining discipline. Reposting and compassionate discharges were two options that were considered. Army examiners presented reposting as an alternative to compassionate discharges because it would address job dissatisfaction, which was what drove many to request a discharge. Some thought that reposting only worked in certain cases and pointed out that it was “very difficult to repost a girl who is thought to be A.W.L. because of dissatisfaction and unhappiness in her posting, if she is repeatedly A.W.L.”<sup>210</sup> Under this rationale, it was easier to simply get rid of disciplinary problems than try to address the root cause. However, senior officials in all three services disliked discharge as a solution because it rewarded undesirable behaviour.<sup>211</sup>

Determined servicewomen cast around for a way out. Historian J.M. Hitsman has cautiously suggested that some servicewomen deliberately became pregnant after marriage proved to be insufficient grounds for a discharge. Anecdotal evidence collected after the war indicates that some women manipulated the policy around pregnancy, which reflected sexual double standards. Pregnant servicewomen were discharged while their male counterparts who often fathered the babies were not. According to a former CWAC officer quoted in Carolyn Gossage’s popular history, several servicewomen who felt trapped by their service saw pregnancy as a means of escape. Lieutenant Marguerite

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<sup>210</sup> Minutes of Meeting of Advisors, held 13 Dec 1944, DHH, 325.009 (D252), vol. 12.

<sup>211</sup> Sinclair, “Report on the W.R.C.N.S.,” Section XI: Discipline; Royal, “Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women’s Army Corps,” Section IV (para 7); “RCAF (WD) Plan,” 9-10; and Pierson, *“They’re Still Women After All,”* 179.

Downes testified in an interview that many of women discharged on medical grounds were discharged because they purposely got pregnant.<sup>212</sup>

Conversely, some pregnant servicewomen did not want to be discharged. Policy dictated that pregnant women be returned to Canada, where they would be discharged. Nano Pennefather-McConnell remembered one case where an unmarried pregnant airwoman “purposely missed her troopships’ sailing, and was charged with desertion for missing a draft in wartime. (A man would have been court martialled, imprisoned and eventually dishonorably discharged.) But that rule really didn’t fit her situation.”<sup>213</sup> The airwoman missed her troopship because she wanted to inform the father that she was pregnant. She had to wait to inform him because he went away on sea duty. Pennefather-McConnell was one of the female sergeants tasked with supervising the airwoman who was “confined to barracks under guard.” In the end, the Commanding Officer decided that “there was no punishment available for her crime.”<sup>214</sup> The airwoman remained in England on “leave until her baby was born” because her pregnancy was too far advanced for wartime repatriation.<sup>215</sup> This airwoman successfully avoided punishment, even though she had been charged with desertion.

The reason why the Commanding Officer had difficulty punishing the airwoman

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<sup>212</sup> Former officer, CWAC, “Disgruntled Women,” in Gossage, *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots*, 79; Hitsman, Manpower” Problems of the Women’s Services During the Second World War,” 17; and Lieutenant Marguerite Downes, interview by Shawn Caferky, December 27, 1985, Reginald H. Roy collection of interviews, Canadian Oral Military History Collection, University of Victoria, MP3 file, SC104\_DN\_045, accessed 10 March 2016, <http://contentdm.library.uvic.ca/cdm/compoundobject/collection/collection13/id/377/rec/11>.

<sup>213</sup> “Nano Pennefather-McConnell,” in *Equal to the Challenge*, 130.

<sup>214</sup> Nano Pennefather-McConnell, *We Never Stopped Dancing: An Airwoman’s Scrapbook* (Shawville, QC: Life Profiles Publishing, 2002), 117.

<sup>215</sup> Pennefather-McConnell, *We Never Stopped Dancing*, 118.

requires a brief discussion of military law. Modifying discipline designed with men in mind for women remained a contentious wartime question. As will be discussed in more depth in chapter three, air force women, like army and naval servicewomen, could not be punished with detention. The *King's Regulations for the Royal Canadian Air Force* [*K.R. (Air)*] governed air force women, with some exceptions. AFHQ sent out a letter dated 5 January 1943 which explained RCAF (WD) personnel were not to be awarded “detention, field punishment or punishment drill....”<sup>216</sup> Detention and imprisonment were listed as separate punishments in the *K.R. (Air)*. Imprisonment was tied to cases where “discharge with ignominy” was also warranted. Desertion was one of those situations. Unless a discharge with ignominy was called for, detention was to be used.<sup>217</sup> The author of the 1946 “R.C.A.F. (Women’s Division) Plan for Organization and Suggestions Concerning Employment,” [hereafter “RCAF (WD) Plan”], states that “discharge for pregnancy has been carried out under ‘Services no longer required,’ and later under K.R. Air 195 (18) ‘demobilization.’”<sup>218</sup> Pregnancy thus fell under a different category of discharge.

Wartime cases of desertion rested on the question of intent. The *K.R. (Air)* defined

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<sup>216</sup> AFHQ letter from [illegible] for Air Vice-Marshal J.A. Sully, for Chief of the Air Staff, 5 January 1943, LAC, RG 24, vol. 3367, file HQ 426-1-2, vol. 1.

<sup>217</sup> Canada, *King's Regulations for the Royal Canadian Air Force* [Hereafter *K.R. (Air)*] (Ottawa: Edmond Cloutier, King's Printer, 1943), Chapter XVI, Section 3, para 595-6.

<sup>218</sup> “R.C.A.F. (Women’s Division) Plan for Organization and Suggestions Concerning Employment” [hereafter “RCAF (WD) Plan”], 30 October 1946, 10, copy at DHH, 79/308. See also *K.R. (Air)*, para 195 (10), para 195 (11), para 195 (17); D.M.S. Circular Order No 27, 4 November, 1944, LAC, Jean Flatt Davey Fonds, MG30 E386, Folder Memorandum, Daily Routine Order, Air Medical Circulars, 1944-1945; and Gossage, *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots*, 157-9. It seems that pregnancy secured army women a medical discharge. See Gossage, *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots*, 158. It is unknown whether there was more than one author of the “RCAF (WD) Plan” but the word “author” was chosen to improve the narrative flow in this and subsequent chapters.

a deserter as a person who went AWOL for more than 21 days. Deserters were also defined as those who deliberately left in order to avoid participating in a particular action, or military service itself. This definition appears in *Extracts from Manual of Military Law 1929: Reprinted for Use in the Canadian Army* and the *British Manual of Air Force 1939*. Cowardice, familial concerns, suspicions of a partner's infidelity, and battle exhaustion were wartime explanations for why servicemen deserted. Servicemen and servicewomen used desertion as a tool. Some deserted because they wanted out of their military service. As Pennefather-McConnell tells it, the airwoman who deliberately missed her troopship ignored orders designed to remove her from military service. She was not running away from battle or a dreaded assignment. Instead, the airwoman avoided her troopship because she wanted to inform the father of the baby.<sup>219</sup>

By the end of the war, 90 CWAC servicewomen and six RCAF (WD) servicewomen had deserted.<sup>220</sup> It is impossible to tell just how many women were discharged for pregnancy because the records are incomplete. Military personnel aware of the social stigma for unwed mothers protected their comrades by destroying records.

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<sup>219</sup> Terry Copp and Bill McAndrew, *Battle Exhaustion: Soldiers and Psychiatrists in the Canadian Army, 1939-1945* (Montreal : McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990), 106-8, 135; Chris Masden, *Another Kind of Justice: Canadian Military law from Confederation to Somalia* (Vancouver : UBC Press, 1999), 84- 7; C. P. Stacey and Barbara M. Wilson, *The Half Million: The Canadians in Britain, 1939-1946* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 154-68; *K.R. (Air)*, Chapter XV, section 4, art. 553; Canada, *Extracts from Manual of Military Law 1929: Reprinted for Use in the Canadian Army* (Ottawa: Edmond Cloutier, King's Printer, 1943), Chapter 3, para 17; and Great Britain, *Manual of Air Force Law 1939* (London, UK: H.M. Stationary Office, 1939), Chapter 3, Para 17.

Chapter 3, paragraph 17 of the *Extracts from Military Law* reads, "The offence of desertion or attempting to desert His Majesty's service implies an intention on the part of the offender either not to return to His Majesty's service at all, or to escape some particular service..." The RCAF also used the 1933 British *Manual of Air Force Law* at the start of the war. See Masden, 87.

<sup>220</sup> Hitsman, "'Manpower' Problems of the Women's Services During the Second World War," 16.

Pregnancy was not recorded as a reason for discharge for a similar reason.<sup>221</sup> In Hitsman's view, the enlistment of Americans and age accounted for most of the desertions in the CWAC. He explains that most Americans enlisted because the CWAC and RCAF (WD) had a lower minimum age of enlistment than the American military in 1943. Hitsman argued that American enlistees deserted because they became unhappy, which was caused by the fact that they were too young and immature to handle the discipline and sacrifices of military life. Decades after the war ended, Conrod declared that the CWAC desertion rate— ninety out of a total enlistment of 21, 624— proved that morale and contentment remained high in the CWAC.<sup>222</sup>

Military officials and servicewomen negotiated women's exit from the military. Servicewomen sought temporary and permanent absences from the military for a variety of reasons, which included a desire to establish a home. Wartime officials debated how to handle chronic cases of AWOL. The discharge of chronic AWOL cases and desertion represented a loss of trained military personnel. The next section covers how military officials studied and implemented measures designed to hold on to trained personnel.

### **Identifying and Solving Military Strain**

Desertion accounted for a small fraction of women released from military service. Hitsman concluded that the leading causes for discharge among women "were neuropsychiatric illnesses, pregnancy (among both married and unmarried women), and

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<sup>221</sup> Pennefeather-McConnell, *We Never Stopped Dancing*, 121; Mary Saunders (née Carry), "Mary Saunders- née Carry, in *Equal to the Challenge*, 35; Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War*, 186; Bryce, *First In, Last Out*, 69-70; and Hitsman, "'Manpower' Problems of the Women's Services During the Second World War," 17.

<sup>222</sup> Hitsman, "'Manpower' Problems of the Women's Services During the Second World War," 11- 16; and Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War*, 245-6.

general unsuitability.”<sup>223</sup> Neurosis was a vague diagnosis that covered a host of disorders, including anxiety, fear, and compulsive disorders.<sup>224</sup> The RCAF reported that by “the end of 1945 more than 1, 000 women were discharged for medical reasons; about half were neuro-psychiatric cases, the proportion being somewhat higher than for men.”<sup>225</sup> Army women had similar rates. Roughly 54% (1849 out 3450) of CWAC medical discharges fell under these categories. The WRCNS had lower discharge rates for neuropsychiatric reasons compared to the other two services: neuropsychiatric cases accounted for 28 of 159 medical discharges.<sup>226</sup> Hitsman offered no explanation why the Wrens had lower rates. For him, the differences were less important than the fact that the rates of neuropsychiatric discharges proved that military service caused undue strain on women. He repeated wartime stereotypes that women were the “weaker” gender.<sup>227</sup>

Morale and discipline suffered when poor manpower allocation at army training centres reportedly overtaxed the strength of CWAC cooks and waitresses. Lieutenant-Colonel Margaret Eaton uncovered health problems in this respect during an inspection tour she conducted in December 1943. She upheld the perception that women were the weaker sex when she emphasized that the army could not simply substitute one woman

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<sup>223</sup> Hitsman, “‘Manpower’ Problems of the Women’s Services During the Second World War,” 16. For his discussion of “wastage,” see pages 16-18.

<sup>224</sup> Copp and McAndrew, *Battle Exhaustion*, 8, 166.

<sup>225</sup> “RCAF WD Plan,” 6. The author also reported, “In the same period more than 1, 000 women were discharged on compassionate grounds. Of those discharged because of pregnancy (non-medical grounds) about half were unmarried.” See page 6.

<sup>226</sup> Hitsman, “‘Manpower’ Problems of the Women’s Services During the Second World War,” 16-17. The quotation comes from page 17.

<sup>227</sup> Hitsman, “‘Manpower’ Problems of the Women’s Services During the Second World War,” 16-17. For a discussion of how British medical and other officers drew similar conclusions, see Hazel Croft, “Emotional Women and Frail Men: Gendered Diagnostics from Shellshock to PTSD, 1914-2010, in *Gender and Conflict Since 1914*, ed. Ana Carden-Coyne, (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012), 114.

for one male in these jobs.<sup>228</sup> The officer in charge of M.D. 2, Major-General Arthur Potts, and other officers within the district concurred. Experience showed that long hours, “considerable heavy lifting and being on their feet all day long [pushed] ... the girls [to] feel a strain beyond their endurance in doing what was originally a man size job.” Potts supported the proposed new ratio of “five C.W.A.C bodies” for every three men.<sup>229</sup>

The words chosen by Potts and his subordinates framed servicewomen as outsiders. Servicewomen’s individuality was stripped away when they were reduced to “C.W.A.C. bodies.” The contrasting use of “girls” with “men” and “man size” confirmed men’s physical prowess and reinforced the military as a masculine domain. The male officers repeated a frequent theme in wartime recruitment material. Scholar Yvonne Mathews-Klein has documented that recruitment films gendered the awkwardness that recruits experienced when they first stepped into the military environment. As she observes, women’s awkwardness “arises from the fact that they are physically out of place: too short to reach the top bunk, designed for taller, stronger men.” In contrast, men’s awkwardness was depicted as quickly overcome through training.<sup>230</sup> Male standards remained the norms by which servicewomen were judged and, in Potts’ assessment, found wanting.

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<sup>228</sup> Copy of Memorandum from Lieutenant-Colonel Margaret Eaton, A.A.G. CWAC, to A.G. (through V.A.G.), 8 January 1944 attached to letter from [illegible] Brigadier General for Major-General H. F.G. Letson, Adjutant General, to District Officer Commanding, M.D. 2, Toronto, Ontario, 11 Jan 1944, DHH 325.009 (D252), vol. 11.

<sup>229</sup> Officer Commanding, No. 23 C.A.C. (B). T.C. as cited in copy of letter from Major General Arthur E Potts, DOC MD 2, to the Secretary, Department of National Defence, Ottawa, 18 Jan, 1944, DHH, 325.009 (D252), vol. 11.

<sup>230</sup> Yvonne Mathews-Klein, “How They Saw US: Images of Women in National Film Board Films of the 1940’s and 1950s,” *Atlantis* 4, no. 2 (Spring 1979): 23. Emphasis in original.

Servicewomen's accounts indicate that wartime and postwar defence officials had reason to speak about the strain of military service. Dorothy Tarkington's story illustrates how military service tested servicewomen's mental endurance. She recalled how she and her friend went AWOL in October 1944 because they desperately needed a break from "about six weeks of curfew and unpleasant work..." At the time, Tarkington and her fellow CWAC servicewoman were stationed in Antwerp, Belgium. A curfew was in place because of German bombardment. They had the grim task of processing dead soldiers' personnel effects. When Tarkington and her friend returned, they discovered that they had been presumed to be dead. In their absence, a German shell had destroyed a café that they were reported to have been in at the time of the bombardment. While reassurances were given that servicewomen would be safe and steps were taken to ensure that servicewomen served well behind the front lines, Tarkington's experience demonstrates that some servicewomen faced dangerous work conditions. Most servicewomen served in Canada, with some having overseas postings in Newfoundland, United Kingdom, the United States, and North West Europe. The posting to Antwerp as part of 21<sup>st</sup> Army Group was a rare and prestigious one for CWAC servicewomen.<sup>231</sup>

Tarkington and her friend were punished for going AWOL as a coping mechanism for exhaustion. The two were punished by being sent back to England. Their ill-timed attempt to escape the horrors of war showed senior officers that Tarkington and her friend were "too 'high spirited' for further work in the ETO [European Theatre of

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<sup>231</sup> Dorothy M. Tarkington, "Dorothy M. Tarkington," in *Women of the War Years*, 281-2; Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 54-60; Keshen, *Saints, Soldiers, and Sinners*, 188-90; and Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War*, 195-98.

Operations].”<sup>232</sup> The punishment likely operated as a warning to servicewomen attached to 21<sup>st</sup> Army Group: ignoring military protocol resulted in losing a coveted overseas spot. It also likely soothed hurt feelings. Tarkington recalled how military personnel understandably resented the hours they spent searching the wreckage for the women’s bodies.

Their punishment corresponded and diverged from those awarded to men who went AWOL as a coping mechanism for battle exhaustion. Removal from the front was one strategy adopted for men thought to have rejected military discipline. Supporters of removal insisted such a strategy allowed authorities to treat the underlying mental condition that caused the serviceman to disobey and return the serviceman to combat readiness. Many men treated for battle exhaustion were forced to return to the front lines. Increasing casualties over the war led to debates among medical officers, psychiatrists, and military officials who disagreed over how far to remove servicemen from the front. Some said the serviceman would recover best if kept close to his unit, while others advocated for removal to England. Certain Canadian psychiatrists insisted that Canadian servicemen should be sent home. Other wartime authorities favoured strict discipline as the solution to AWOL rates. Officers awarded harsh sentences of imprisonment and hard labour as deterrents. These punishments, as noted above, were not available for servicewomen.<sup>233</sup>

While the horrors of combat were recognized as contributing to men’s battle

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<sup>232</sup> Tarkington, in *Women of the War Years*, 281-282. The quotation comes from page 282

<sup>233</sup> Copp and McAndrew, *Battle Exhaustion*, 44-62, 106-107; Marsden, *Another Kind of Justice*, 84; Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 54-60; and Pierson, “*They’re Still Women After All*,” 111.

exhaustion, for women it was often military service itself. The Director of Army Recruiting accepted the stereotype that women were more emotional and reinforced the army as a masculine institution. He stressed that men and women were biologically and mentally different. "Indiscriminate application of masculine standards," he remarked in 1943, had only intensified women's difficulties with transitioning to military life.<sup>234</sup> Absent from his report was any recognition that wartime suffering and conditions caused emotional instability. There was no discussion that CWAC servicewomen had been stationed overseas for almost a year and had lived through the German bombing of United Kingdom and Northern Europe.

By 1944, servicewomen's "inability to adjust themselves to their environment" had become a well-worn "explanation" for female medical discharge rates. For instance, Major-General H. F. G. Letson, the army's Adjutant-General, stated, "[O]f 1,000 discharges from the C.W.A.C., 551 have been from neuropsychiatric reasons; that is to say, inability to adjust themselves to their environment."<sup>235</sup> Neuropsychiatric discharges constituted a serious problem because it represented a loss of personnel, a barrier to recruitment, and a CWAC morale problem. Letson wanted the rates lowered.

Letson's discussion of neuropsychiatric discharges took place when he defended a female medical officer. Major-General Potts alleged that Major G. C. Maloney had overstepped her authority during her recent visit to his district when she allowed female

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<sup>234</sup> Appendix C.W.A.C. Recruiting, 54-27-111-20 FD 58 (D.A.R.2), Director of Army Recruiting, to D.A.G. (C), 28 Sept 43, pg 2, Appendix 17 to C.W.A.C. History, DHH, 113.3C1 (D1). For Pierson's discussion of this document, see "*They're Still Women After All*," 180-181.

<sup>235</sup> Major-General H.F.G. Letson, Adjutant General, to District Officer Commanding, M.D. 2, 23 February 1944, DHH, 325.009 (D252), vol. 11.

NCO's to complain about their superiors. According to Potts, Maloney was there to instruct on venereal disease. He claimed that she acted against military discipline and procedure when she permitted the complaints. She then, as Potts told it, had the audacity and the impropriety to write down these complaints. Maloney, who had the title of CWAC Consultant, provided a different version of events. She reported that the NCOs' criticisms occurred in a meeting that was intended to be a talk about the importance of "more careful supervision and understanding of personnel."<sup>236</sup> Letson, the Adjutant-General, supported Maloney's version of events, noting that she added in an interview that she did not seek out nor validate the criticisms. He reminded Potts that the policy set by the Adjutant-General's office allowed servicewomen of all ranks to confide in their medical officers. The defence of Maloney ended with a parting shot, with Letson declaring that the pressing nature of the CWAC morale issue justified looking into any possible solution.<sup>237</sup>

The opening of tri-service convalescent homes was one solution to the morale issue and strain caused by military service. Tri-service convalescent homes were designed to enable the retention of personnel for the duration of the war by providing a place for women temporarily to relax. Defence officials saw tri-service convalescent

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<sup>236</sup> Copy of letter from Major-General Arthur Potts, DOC MD 2, to The Secretary, Department of National Defence, Ottawa, 10 February [1944, the year is not fully filled in but internal evidence and other correspondence says 1944], DHH, 325.009 (D252), vol. 11; and Copy of Memorandum from Major G.C. Maloney, RCAMC, CWAC Consultant to D.G. M.S, 3 February 1944, DHH, 325.009 (D252), vol. 11.

<sup>237</sup> Major-General H.F.G. Letson, Adjutant General, to District Officer Commanding, M.D. 2, 23 February 1944.

homes as an alternative to discharging women worn out by their service.<sup>238</sup> No. 1 Women's Service Health Centre (No.1 WSHC) in Harrison Hot Springs, British Columbia was authorized in September 1944. With its "pleasant homelike surroundings," it had more the "nature of a Health Resort than a Military Unit."<sup>239</sup> This description came from No.1 WSHC's commanding officer, Major C.B. LaSalle of the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps.

The descriptions of the centre's specialized care and the repeated emphasis on its un-military atmosphere demonstrates the armed services' commitment to the preservation of women's femininity. Patients had their own rooms, which addressed women's alleged need for greater privacy. The available activities revealed an acceptance of and fostered a standard of femininity. Patients were invited to participate in sports such as rhythmical exercises, archery and swimming, educational activities such as language courses, beauty culture, and handicrafts, and recreational activities such as dances and concerts. LaSalle insisted that participation was voluntary. Servicewomen in their role as patients were free from the regimentation of military life, except when medical practice dictated otherwise. Bedtimes, meal times, and medical treatments operated on a strict schedule. The hard work paid off: LaSalle reported that No 1 WSHC improved the health of several hundred servicewomen.<sup>240</sup>

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<sup>238</sup> Agenda for Conference- District C.W.A.C. Officers N.D.H.Q, 18 April 1944, DHH, 325.009 (D252), vol. 12.

<sup>239</sup> Progress Report & Final Report, Dec-45 and Jan-46 –No.1 Women's Services Health Centre, RCAMC, from Major C.B. Lasalle to Command Medical Officer, H.Q. Pacific Command, 25 January 1946, DHH, 147.99009 (D2).

<sup>240</sup> Progress Report & Final Report, Dec-45 and Jan-46 –No.1 Women's Services Health Centre, RCAMC, 25 January 1946.

Newspaper articles described the health service centres with language similar to that used in LaSalle's internal report. Luxurious grounds, minimal military discipline, handicrafts, and high-quality food were all highlighted in *The Winnipeg Tribune's* article on No 2 WHSC at Oakville, Ontario. Worries over servicewomen's femininity were addressed with the comment that "the 'feminine touch' is encouraged and there are few rooms without family pictures or personnel mementos." Personalized treatments and rooms decorated with an "individual colour scheme" further reinforced the break from the military environment. According to the article, the military environment featured barrack rooms and repeated messages of servicewomen's duty to put the good of the service above their individual needs. WHSC were depicted as places that restored servicewomen's health by allowing women to express their femininity and their individuality.<sup>241</sup>

No 1 WHSC staff treated a variety of physical and mental ailments. Progress reports documented cases which included, but were not limited to, in-grown toe nails, appendectomies, pneumonia, measles, bone fractures, ectopic pregnancy, hysterectomy, fatigue, anxiety neurosis, and exhaustion. The number of cases varied. For example, Lasalle reported that No 1 WHSC staff cared for seven appendectomy cases, seven fatigue cases, eight anxiety neurosis cases, three ingrown toe nails, and host of other ailments in July 1945. Dental work and physical therapy was also routinely provided. A

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<sup>241</sup> "Servicewomen Enjoy Rest at Health Centre in Oakville," *Winnipeg Tribune*, July 6, 1945. For a discussion about individuality and femininity, see Pierson, "They're Still Women After All," 182-7; and Ziegler, *We Serve That Men May Fly*, 114-115.

Female Assistant Chaplain took care of servicewomen's spiritual well-being.<sup>242</sup>

Access to these health centres and their services was limited. Servicewomen diagnosed with fatigue required a psychiatric assessment before they were sent to the centres. The closure of No 1 WSHC in January 1946 resulted in patients being turned away.<sup>243</sup> Only certain women were viewed as deserving. Those who repeatedly misbehaved in order to secure a discharge and other chronic offenders were deemed unfit for the WSHCs. Army Officials in M.D. 2 remarked, "Any salvaging of volunteers should be done in light of whether the girl will be useful in the C.W.A.C. and not entirely on the basis of whether the girl needs convalescent treatment."<sup>244</sup> In other words, the army wanted a return on its investment. Faced with labour shortages and the need to reassure the public that servicewomen remained feminine, female and male officers saw WHSC as a solution to larger problems. The armed services wanted to avoid the loss of much needed personnel and used feminine touches as a means to treat servicewomen worn out by their service.

## **Conclusion**

Negotiations between women, government officials, and military authorities predated the war. Even before the women's services officially formed, women who

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<sup>242</sup> Progress Report for Month of October 1945 re #1 WSHC, RCAMC, 21 November 1945, DHH, 147.99009 (D2); and Progress Report for Month of July 1945 re #1 WSHC, RCAMC, 4 August 1945, DHH, 147.99009 (D2). For the range of ailments, see the progress reports in DHH, 147.99009 (D2).

<sup>243</sup> Major A.G. Duncan on behalf of D.M.O for M.D. 13, to O.C #113 Depot Coy C.W.A.C., O.C. #2 Admin Unit C.W.A.C., O.C. #15 Admin Unit C.W.A.C., O.C. #16 Admin Unit C.W.A.C., O.C. #34 Admin Unit, C.W.A.C.; Patients for admission #1 W.S.H.C., Harrison Hot Springs, B.C., 3 July 1945, DHH, 169.009 (D132); and Captain Grace Brankley, O.C. #2 Admin Unit C.W.A.C., to District Medical Officer, Military District No 13, 2 January 1946, DHH 169.009 (D132).

<sup>244</sup> Minutes of Meeting of Advisors, held 13 December 1944.

pursued their military interests had their supporters and detractors. The Militia Council approved a proposal to form a women's auxiliary during the First World War, but the corps existed only on paper. Women subsequently marched their way into a space created by an absence of government policy. They prepared for a role in the defence of Canada when they organized and joined paramilitary corps. Senior defence planners committed to traditional notions of femininity initially refused paramilitary women's offers of aid. Politicians and military officials changed their mind because of labour shortages, growing fears about paramilitary women's influence, and international pressure. In 1941, the establishment of an official women's service of the army and air force seemed the answer to all these problems. It took another year before the navy concurred.

The dance between wartime authorities and individual women continued after formation of the women's services as recruitment criteria was set and then revised. Government and military officials seeking to legitimize the women's services tried to reassure future servicewomen, their families, and the broader society that servicewomen's femininity remained intact. The ideal servicewomen were typically depicted as young, white, patriotic, able, respectable, and feminine. Recruitment criteria and discharge provisions played a role in shaping and enforcing this vision of the ideal candidate. Officials tasked with drafting the required qualifications wrote them to exclude racialized minorities, mothers with young children, overweight women, underweight women, and immoral women. Yet women had their own ideas of the ideal recruit. Members from each of these and other unwanted groups tried enlisting. Some were successful, while others were barred by officers determined to protect the reputation of

the women's services.

Aspects of the ideal servicewomen shifted during the war as individual women and defence officials negotiated the recruitment criteria. The armed services lowered the minimum and raised the maximum age of enlistment in 1942 because filling manpower demands required a larger pool of candidates. When women refused to enlist in certain trades, officers removed barriers. They revised qualifications and created space for exceptional women to enlist. Certain barriers proved immovable. From formation to disbandment, a dependent child disqualified a woman from serving. Unmarried and married women who became pregnant while in uniform were discharged, whether they wished that outcome or not.

Servicewomen's individual negotiations were bound by a range of factors. Not all family members supported female relatives who saw the armed services as an escape mechanism. They secured military officials' assistance with their search for "runaway women." The needs of individuals clashed with the personnel needs of the services. Determined to retain trained personnel, the services conducted surveys designed to access servicewomen's attitudes and created health centres to treat women weighed down by what officers described as women's "inherent inability" to adjust to the masculine military environment. Boredom, dangerous and stressful work, and family responsibilities led some servicewomen to go AWOL, desert, and/or request their discharge. Military officials struggled with how to solve the issue of servicewomen who repeatedly went AWOL. From recruitment to discharge, women engaged in constant negotiation with the officials who drafted the rules and the military personnel responsible for enforcing them.

## Chapter Two – Alcohol, Sex “Delinquency,” and the Women’s Services, 1941-1946

The memories of an anonymous Royal Canadian Air Force (Women’s Division) [RCAF (WD)] veteran and Canadian Women’s Army Corps (CWAC) veteran Alice Petite Samuel reveal that servicewomen held diverse attitudes towards the regulation of alcohol during the Second World War. “Many airwomen resented the fact that the men had their wet canteens where they could buy and drink beer, and women were stuck with tea, coffee, milk, and pop in theirs,” said the air force veteran. “Mind you, our crowd got around that sometimes by making a deal with the flight sergeant who ran the sergeants’ mess.”<sup>245</sup> Samuel recalls, ““You had to go to town if you wanted to drink. Some girls got around but [I] didn’t associate with them.””<sup>246</sup> The RCAF (WD) veteran was proud of her resistance, while Samuel distanced herself from female drinkers.

Their responses reflected competing attitudes towards servicewomen’s wartime alcohol consumption. Critics of female drinkers, which included both servicewomen and authorities, drew on old temperance rhetoric. They argued that alcohol caused servicewomen to go against societal definitions of feminine respectability. Nineteenth and twentieth-century temperance reformers had presented female drinkers as immoral, linking alcohol with prostitution and child neglect. According to these reformers, women

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<sup>245</sup> Former Member, RCAF (WD), “Coffee, Tea, Milk, or Pop,” in Carolyn Gossage, *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots: Canadian Women at War*, rev. ed. (Toronto: The Dundurn Group, 2001), 185.

<sup>246</sup> As quoted in Grace Poulin, “Invisible Women: Aboriginal Servicewomen in Canada’s Second World War Military,” in *Aboriginal Peoples and the Canadian Military: Historical Perspectives*, ed. P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Craig Leslie Mantle (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007), 153.

transgressed gender norms when they drank and entered civilian public drinking establishments, which were predominantly working-class male spaces. Second World War temperance advocates and defence officials proposed the strict regulation of alcohol, including the exclusion of servicewomen from civilian and military drinking spaces. Supporters of female drinkers questioned these regulations. Supporters reflected the views of interwar women who had opposed “the idea that all drinking women were disrespectful.”<sup>247</sup> Many working-class women had demanded space in government-licenced beer rooms and beverage parlours, while middle and upper-class women had supported government legislation that permitted a “moderate” domestic consumption of alcohol. Proponents advocated allowing servicewomen to consume alcohol in civilian and military-operated facilities.

Drawing on Squadron Officer (and Dr.) Jean Flatt Davey’s archival collection at Library and Archives Canada (LAC), official correspondence, internal defence reports, and servicewomen’s recollections, this chapter analyzes wartime discussions on servicewomen’s alcohol consumption. The chapter demonstrates that servicewomen’s alcohol consumption were shaped by the complex interaction between official policy, gender, rank/class, location, branch of the armed services, and personal beliefs. The different opinions on drinking rested on whether one emphasized the gender identity or the military identity of servicewomen. Opponents prioritized servicewomen’s gender identities. For example, Squadron Officer Jean Flatt Davey, the senior RCAF (WD)

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<sup>247</sup> Dan Malleck, *Try to Control Yourself: The Regulations of Public Drinking in Post-Prohibition Ontario, 1927-44* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012), 174.

medical officer, adopted a conservative attitude that labelled female drinking as dangerous because it led women to engage in “sex delinquency, or, more simply, extra-marital sexual relations.”<sup>248</sup> Proponents, such as the author of the “RCAF (WD) Plan,” insisted instead that alcohol was dangerous only when consumed outside of military facilities. The author of the Plan emphasized servicewomen’s military identities, arguing that servicewomen had the right to drink because they served in the armed services.<sup>249</sup>

The chapter builds on the growing social history of alcohol in the military. Historians have interrogated wartime debates over alcohol for insights into civil-military relations, showing that the debates reveal a clash between the male military society and the largely female civilian/home front society. In addition, historians have demonstrated that alcohol served many functions in the armed services, which have ranged from treating war wounds to boosting morale. However, the literature has mostly focused on servicemen and civilian women.<sup>250</sup>

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<sup>248</sup> Jean Flatt Davey, Address given at conference of representatives of 55 National Organizations called by the National Council of Women, (lecture, Royal York Hotel, Toronto, February 1 and 2, 1945), Library and Archives Canada (hereafter LAC), Jean Flatt Davey Fonds, MG30 E386, folder on Lectures, Addresses, Informal Talks, n.d., 1942-1945.

<sup>249</sup> “R.C.A.F. (Women’s Division) Plan for Organization and Suggestions Concerning Employment” [hereafter “RCAF (WD) Plan”], 30 October 1946, p.15, copy at Directorate of History and Heritage, National Defence Headquarters, Ottawa, Canada [hereafter DHH], 79/308.

<sup>250</sup> For work on servicemen, see Tim Cook, “‘More a medicine than a beverage’ ‘Demon Rum’ and the Canadian Trench Soldier of the First War,” *Canadian Military History* 9, no. 1 (2000): 6-22; Tim Cook, “Wet Canteens and Worrying Mothers: Alcohol, Soldiers and Temperance Groups in the Great War,” *Histoire sociale/Social History* 35, no. 70 (2002): 311-29; Tim Cook, “‘He was determined to go’: Underage Soldiers in the Canadian Expeditionary Force,” *Histoire sociale/Social History* 41, no. 81 (May 2008): 41-74; Tim Cook, *The Necessary War: Canadians Fighting the Second World War, 1939-1945 Vol I* (Toronto: Allen Lane, 2014), 145-6, 293-4, 323-7; Dean Oliver, “‘My Darlin’ Clementine’? Wooing Zombies for \$6.50 a Night: General Service-NRMA Relations in Wartime Calgary,” *Canadian Military History* 7, no. 3 (1998): 46-54; Jeffrey A. Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers: Canada’s Second World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), 113-15; 129-133; and Fay Wilson, “Booze, Temperance, and Soldiers on the Home Front: The Unraveling of the Image of the Idealized Soldier in Canada,” *Canadian Military History* 25, no. 1 (2016): 1-36. For social histories of alcohol, see Sharon Anne Cook, “Through Sunshine

Social historian Jeffrey Keshen's chapter on servicewomen in *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers: Canada's Second World War* (2004) has a balanced discussion of drinking in the women's services. He observes that the armed services regulated servicewomen's drinking as part of their efforts to "project an image [that servicewomen were] of exceptional moral stature" and that servicewomen resisted these efforts. His chapter, however, simplifies the story. It does not explore how rank shaped servicewomen's access to alcohol and ignores that the fact that wartime authorities had conflicting views on the best way to control servicewomen's alcohol consumption. Like the scholarship in general, Keshen's monograph devotes more space to controversies surrounding servicemen's drinking than servicewomen's.<sup>251</sup>

This chapter departs from this literature by using analysis of alcohol regulations to interpret wartime preoccupations with servicewomen's sexual (im)morality. Military officials repeatedly drew connections between alcohol, venereal disease (VD), and "illegitimate" pregnancy. Historians, however, have paid little attention to women's use of alcohol and its relationship to sexuality. Women's and gender historians have taken

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*and Shadow': The Women's Christian Temperance Union, Evangelicalism, and Reform in Ontario, 1874-1930* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), Cheryl Krasnick Warsh, "John Barley Corn Must Die: An Introduction to the Social History of Alcohol," in *Drink in Canada: Historical Essays*, ed. Cheryl Krasnick Warsh (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 2-26; Cheryl Krasnick Warsh, "Smoke and Mirrors: Gender Representation in North American Tobacco and Alcohol Advertisements Before 1950," *Histoire sociale/Social History* 31, no. 62 (1998): 183-222; Craig Heron, *Booze: A Distilled History* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2003); Craig Heron, "The Boys and Their Booze: Masculinities and Public Drinking in Working-class Hamilton, 1890-1946," *The Canadian Historical Review* 86, no. 3 (September 2005): 411-52; Matthew J. Bellamy, "'To Ensure the Continued Life of the Industry: The Public Relations Campaign of the Ontario Brewers during WWII,'" *Histoire sociale/Social History* 48, no. 97 (November 2015): 403-23; Robert A. Campbell, *Sit Down and Drink Your Beer: Regulating Vancouver's Beer Parlours, 1925-1954* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001); and Scott Thompson and Gary Genosko, *Punched Drunk: Alcohol, Surveillance, and the LCBO, 1927-1975* (Halifax and Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing, 2009).

<sup>251</sup> Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 182-7. The quotation comes from page 182

their direction from Ruth Roach Pierson's *"They're Still Women After All": The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood* (1986), which only briefly references alcohol. Instead, Pierson emphasizes how class bias and sexual double standards shaped official responses to "illegitimate" pregnancy and VD in the women's services. Historians Grace Poulin and Jennifer Stephen have added race and ethnicity to the discussion, while Tina Davidson and Sarah Hogenbirk remind readers that servicewomen had sexual agency. Past scholarship, including this author's, suffers from the same shortcoming as Pierson's: there is no sustained discussion of how alcohol influenced servicewomen's pursuit of pleasure.<sup>252</sup>

The chapter is divided into five sections. The first two sections explore the contested role of alcohol in civilian and military societies. The chapter begins with a discussion of wartime temperance campaigns and of the changing social attitudes towards alcohol. It uses the temperance debates to introduce civilian women's ambivalent class-based relationships with alcohol. The next section provides an overview of alcohol in the armed services. Servicewomen's accounts reveal that, for some, learning how to drink marked their transition from civilian to military personnel. Women navigated the diverse uses for alcohol in the armed services and a multi-layered system of military regulations

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<sup>252</sup> Ruth Roach Pierson, *"They're Still Women After All": The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986), 168-214; Jennifer A. Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl: Employability, Domesticity, and the Gendering of Canada's Welfare State* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 85-98; Grace Poulin, "Invisible Women: Aboriginal Servicewomen in Canada's Second World War Military," 151-4; Tina Davidson, "Hemlines and Hairdos: Body Management for the Feminine Ideal in the Canadian Women's Army Corps," (master's thesis, Lakehead University, 1999), 163-203; and Sarah Hogenbirk, "Wearing Air Force Blue and Army Khaki: Constructions of Canadian Military Women During the Second World War" (master's major research paper, York University, 2010). Pierson's references to alcohol appear on pages 202 and 206.

that governed their drinking in both public and military spaces. Public criticism and the fear of public criticism influenced the development of the military regulations. Defence officials frequently referenced public criticism when they modified the rules which governed servicewomen's drinking. The strong associations of alcohol with masculinity meant that servicewomen's alcohol consumption tapped into larger concerns that military service produced "mannish" women who assumed male behaviours and privileges. The association of alcohol and female promiscuity also made servicewomen's drinking a moral issue. In light of these fears and the need to legitimize the wartime women's services, some defence officials adopted a conservative approach towards servicewomen's drinking.

The remaining three sections take a closer look at the links between servicewomen's sex "delinquency" and alcohol. Women's respectability existed on a spectrum during the war. "Good girls" represented one end of the spectrum, while "loose women" existed at the other. Respectable women were supposed to regulate men's passions and enforce the limits of respectable behaviour during heterosexual encounters. Medical and religious authorities had come to accept that women had sexual desires by the 1940s, but insisted that these natural impulses could only be safely released within the bounds of marriage. Scholar Meghan Winchell concludes that, though American women's paid and unpaid war work helped "expand the sexual choices and actions of respectable single women," premarital sex remained a line that "good girls" were not

supposed to cross. A similar expectation existed in Canada.<sup>253</sup>

Equipped with temperance arguments that blamed alcohol for social problems, wartime authorities frequently cited alcohol as a cause of servicewomen's "immorality." Davey, and other defence officials, perceived women's drinking as dangerous because alcohol transformed the moral guardians of society: they believed that it turned respectable women into "loose" women and impaired women's ability to restrain men's sexual advances. The chapter covers the diverse explanations for servicewomen's immorality before turning to armed services solutions for VD and "illegitimate" pregnancy. Defence officials implemented a variety of measures designed to reduce rates of sex "delinquency" in the women's services.

The analysis of the associations of alcohol with sex "delinquency" concludes by arguing that servicewomen resisted and accepted armed services efforts to control their off-duty activities. Servicewomen weighed the risks and rewards of the various leisure activities. Alcohol facilitated bonding with fellow military personnel, yet servicewomen were punished if they drank excessively. Servicewomen were discharged if the armed services found evidence of their sexual "immorality." Drawing from Leisa Meyer's

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<sup>253</sup> Pierson, *"They're Still Women After All": The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986), 168-87; Reverend Alfred Tyrer, *Sex, Marriage and Birth Control: A Guidebook to Sex Health and a Satisfactory Sex Life in Marriage*, 10<sup>th</sup> ed. (Toronto: Marriage Welfare Bureau, 1943) ; Jean Flatt Davey, "Informal Talk to Airwomen," (lecture, June 1944), LAC, Jean Flatt Davey Fonds, MG30 E386, Folder on Lectures, Addresses, Informal Talks, n.d., 1942-1945; Meyer, *Creating GI Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women's Army Corps During World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 122-78; Meghan K. Winchell, *Good Girls, Good Food, Good Fun: The Story of USO Hostesses During World War II* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 1-11, 106-34; Marilyn E. Hegarty, *Victory Girls, Khaki-Wackies, and Patriotutes: The Regulation of Female Sexuality during World War II* (New York: New York University Press, 2008); and Donna B. Knaff, *Beyond Rosie the Riveter: Women of World War II in American Popular Graphic Art* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2012), 81-110. The quotation comes from Winchell, 6.

monograph on wartime American servicewomen, the chapter shows that pleasure and danger co-existed in the Canadian women's services.<sup>254</sup>

It is important to note that the chapter focuses on alcohol's association with heterosexual "immorality." Davey's archival collection does not reveal her stance on women's same-sex relations. The silence mirrors Canadian Army and RCAF wartime conclusions. Army officials concluded that female homosexuality happened infrequently. Air force officials claimed that "[h]omosexuality has not been a problem in the WD," adding that "the number [of women discharged for homosexuality] has been negligible."<sup>255</sup> Historian Paul Jackson reports that he searched but did not find lesbianism mentioned in "program and policy papers of the women's forces," court-martial records, and personnel files while he researched *One of the Boys: Homosexuality and Military Service during World War II* (2004).<sup>256</sup> Similarly, British historian Emma Vickers admitted in a recent interview that she regretted that she "wasn't able to interview any women," for her *Queen and Country: Same-Sex Desire in the British Armed Forces, 1939-45* (2013).<sup>257</sup> The chapter discusses female homosexuality where sources permit,

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<sup>254</sup> Leisa D. Meyer, *Creating GI Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women's Army Corps During World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 122-78.

<sup>255</sup> DHH, 181.009 (D3553), as quoted in Carolyn Gossage, *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots: Canadian Women at War*, rev. ed. (Toronto: The Dundurn Group, 2001), 16. See also Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 182-3.

<sup>256</sup> Paul Jackson, *One of the Boys: Homosexuality in the Canadian Military During World War II* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004), 22, 82-3.

<sup>257</sup> Emma Vickers, "Queen and Country: Emma Vickers on Same-Sex Desire in the British Armed Forces," interview by Justin Bengry, *Notches*, October 16, 2016, accessed February 18, 2017, <http://notchesblog.com/2016/10/06/queen-and-country-emma-vickers-on-same-sex-desire-in-the-british-armed-forces/>. In the interview, Vickers speculates that her failure to find female interviewees "has something to do with contemporary labels and the fact that same-sex desire between women has never been illegal in the same way that it was for men." See Emma Vickers, *Queen and Country: Same-Sex Desires in the British Armed Forces* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013).

but concentrates on alcohol's association with female heterosexual "sex delinquency" because the available sources focused on that link.

### **Wartime Campaigns against Alcohol**

In November 1943, Mrs. F. Elsie Laurence advised the senior RCAF (WD) Staff Officer that she and her husband were concerned that the RCAF's attitudes towards drinking threatened the welfare of their daughter, who was a corporal in the RCAF (WD). Mrs. Laurence reported that their daughter was pressured by her superiors to attend parties where the "main feature" was alcohol because the officer believed that it was their daughter's "duty [as] an NCO to assist with the unhappy developments of such entertainment...." Laurence requested that the RCAF "discourage this crude form of entertainment" for airwomen and provide them with alternative leisure options.<sup>258</sup>

Laurence modified tactics mobilized by female temperance advocates during the First World War. The Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) and other temperance bodies had argued that Canadian servicemen required protection from the corrupting influence of alcohol. WCTU leaders threatened recruitment efforts when they warned government officials that many mothers would not allow their underage sons to enlist if the government provided servicemen with rum rations and wet canteens. Wet canteens were recreational facilities that sold alcoholic beverages, non-alcoholic drinks, and food. Like First World War advocates, Laurence wanted her child protected. She cautioned that the air force risked ruining the reputation of its servicewomen if officers

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<sup>258</sup> F. Elsie (Mrs. J.L.) Laurence to Wing Officer Willa Walker, 30 November 1943, LAC, RG 24, vol. 3367, file HQ 426-1-2, vol. 2.

did not address the prevalence of drinking.<sup>259</sup>

The Second World War reinvigorated temperance campaigns. Reformers claimed, as they had in the First World War, that alcohol endangered the war effort because it produced violent behaviour, triggered the breakdown of families, reduced workers' efficiency, influenced servicemen to have sexual relations with "loose" women infected with VD, and caused fatal "errors of judgement" by military personnel. Angered by Second World War food shortages, some Canadian women complained that the beer and liquor industry wasted valuable resources on non-essential goods.<sup>260</sup>

Temperance activists were concerned because Canadians drank more beer during the Second World War. Historian Graham Broad attributes the increased beer consumption to the following factors: longer working hours, greater "consumer purchasing power" and "a forthright sense of entitlement" that their wartime service gave Canadians certain privileges.<sup>261</sup> Canadians had more disposable income, but the production of "big ticket items," such as cars and electrical household appliances, decreased after 1941. Canadians responded by purchasing larger amounts of alcohol, restaurant food, and movie theatre tickets. Temperance advocates reacted to the increased

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<sup>259</sup> F. Elsie (Mrs. J.L.) Laurence to Wing Officer Willa Walker; and Cook, "Wet Canteens and Worrying Mothers: Alcohol, Soldiers and Temperance Groups in the Great War," 324-5.

<sup>260</sup> William Lyon Mackenzie King, "Temperance and the Total War Effort," in William Lyon Mackenzie King, *Canada and the Fight for Freedom*, (Toronto: MacMillan, 1944), 238; Graham Broad, *A Small Price to Pay: Consumer Culture on the Canadian Home Front, 1939-45* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2013), 156-163; Cook, "Wet Canteens and Worrying Mothers: Alcohol, Soldiers and Temperance Groups in the Great War," 311-329; Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 112-15; Cook, "'More a medicine than a beverage' 'Demon Rum' and the Canadian Trench Soldier of the First War," 9-10, 12; Heron, *Booze*, 179-85, 293-6; and Bellamy, "'To Ensure the Continued Life of the Industry: The Public Relations Campaign of the Ontario Brewers during WWII," 404-5, 414-5, 422. The phrase "errors of judgement" comes from King.

<sup>261</sup> Broad, *A Small Price to Pay*, 158. See also Bellamy, "'To Ensure the Continued Life of the Industry: The Public Relations Campaign of the Ontario Brewers during WWII," 414.

beer consumption by pressuring their government representatives to suspend the production of liquor, shut down public drinking spaces, and bring back temperance legislation.<sup>262</sup>

Provincial and federal governments had enacted prohibition in the First World War, but had moved towards a system of government control designed to encourage a “moderate” consumption of alcohol in the interwar period. The specifics varied by province. Most provincial governments followed the path of British Columbia, which issued liquor permits to limit and control the purchase of alcohol. Individuals with liquor permits were allowed to purchase alcohol for home consumption at government-operated liquor stores in 1921 and were allowed to drink at licensed public drinking establishments in 1925. When the Second World War began, only the Maritime Provinces had yet to introduce government licensing of public drinking venues. Public drinking establishments were alternatively called beer parlours, beverage rooms, and taverns. They were often attached to hotels and just sold beer, which had the reputation of being a working-man’s drink. Alcohol was also available in restaurants that catered to middle and upper-class clientele. Racial and gender hierarchies limited access to alcohol. Indigenous peoples were denied the legal right to drink in public establishments until 1951, and the right to buy alcohol for domestic consumption until 1956. As will be discussed below, the regulation of women’s public drinking meant that most women drank in private.<sup>263</sup>

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<sup>262</sup> Broad, *A Small Price to Pay*, 6, 125-181. The quoted phrase comes from page 156.

<sup>263</sup> Heron, *Booze*, 269-77, 292, 319-20; Robert A. Campbell, *Demon Run or Easy Money: Government Control of Liquor in British Columbia from Prohibition to Privatization* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1991), 22-87; Campbell, *Sit Down and Drink Your Beer*, 15-27; Malleck, *Try to Control Yourself*, 1-13, 17-20, 164-5; Mariana Valverde, *Diseases of the Will: Alcohol and the Dilemmas of Freedom*

Temperance reform had garnered some support by 1942. Polls conducted by the Canadian Institute of Public Opinion in March 1942 showed that 60 per cent of Canadians surveyed supported legislation that would restrict the “amount of hard liquor” they could purchase per week, but 72 per cent opposed legislation that would “prohibit the sale of all alcoholic beverages (including wine and beer) in Canada.”<sup>264</sup> Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King met with a delegation from the Canadian Temperance Federation in September 1942. King was troubled by the delegation’s report that Canadians were consuming more beer and that those behind the “liquor traffic” were profiting from the war. He introduced new federal restrictions on alcohol in December 1942. The federal government banned alcohol advertisements, and cut “the quantities of alcohol that would be made available for public sale (10 percent for beer, 20 for wine, and 30 for spirit). . . .” King also asked the provinces to shorten liquor store hours, and most agreed.<sup>265</sup>

The brewing industry fought back. Prohibitionists were presented as unpatriotic, and as threats to national health. Soon after King preached temperance in December 1942, the Canadian Breweries Limited released what they called “An Alternative Speech on Temperance.” Their ad circulated widely, with its argument that prohibition was dangerous because it deprived workers of a way to refresh themselves. Prohibition would

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(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 143-70; and Thompson and Genosko, *Punched Drunk*, 23-65. See Heron, for a discussion of the path that each province took.

<sup>264</sup> “Gallup Opinion and Fortune Polls,” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 6, no. 2 (Summer 1942): 310. See also Broad, *A Small Price to Pay*, 160; Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 112-15. Broad analyzes the same polls and directed the author’s attention to “Gallup Opinion and Fortune Polls.”

<sup>265</sup> “Urge Total Abstinence in Canada for Duration,” *Toronto Daily Star*, February 19, 1943; and Broad, *A Small Price to Pay*, 93-4, 159-63. The quotation comes from Broad, 161.

deny “a hard-working man who drinks beer moderately” a substance that “not only nourishe[d] his system, but relieves the nervous and physical strain of his busy day.” This marketing technique celebrated liquor’s health benefits and the worker’s entitlement.<sup>266</sup>

The federal government also faced backlash from unionized workers. Public beer drinking figured in the construction of working-class masculinities. Workers insisted on their right to drink beer and targeted Victory Bonds, a symbol of Canadians’ patriotic and financial support for the war. They wore buttons that warned “No Beer-No Bonds.” King’s Cabinet listened to labour’s threats and pressed King to drop the restrictions on beer. King kept the 1942 limits until August 1945 but prohibition did not return.<sup>267</sup>

There were several reasons why governments did not re-introduce prohibition during the Second World War. Historians point to the following factors: an organized brewing industry that launched a concerted anti-prohibition campaign, governments’ unwillingness to lose a valuable source of revenue (the taxing of alcohol), and senior military officials’ tolerance of a morale boosting beverage. In fact, King had had to settle for the 10 per cent reduction of beer in 1942 because Cabinet members would not support a 20 per cent reduction. Cabinet members refused, historian Matthew Bellamy argues, because they worried about upsetting “industrial workers, veterans, and military men....”

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<sup>266</sup> “An Alternative Speech on Temperance,” *The Globe and Mail*, January 12, 1943; “To Ensure the Continued Life of the Industry:’ The Public Relations Campaign of the Ontario Brewers during WWII,” 402-23; and Warsh, “Smoke and Mirrors: Gender Representation in North American Tobacco and Alcohol Advertisements Before 1950,” 213-6. For Broad’s discussion of the advertisement, see *A Small Price to Pay*, 162-3.

<sup>267</sup> Broad, *A Small Price to Pay*, 93-4, 159-63; Heron, “The Boys and Their Booze: Masculinities and Public Drinking in Working-class Hamilton, 1890-1946,” 411-52; and Bellamy, “To Ensure the Continued Life of the Industry:’ The Public Relations Campaign of the Ontario Brewers during WWII,” 415-22. For a discussion of Victory Bonds, morale and patriotism, see Jody Perrun, *The Patriotic Consensus: Unity, Morale, and the Second World War in Winnipeg* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2014), 82-129.

Federal-provincial relations also prevented the government from re-introducing prohibition. Many Cabinet members rejected outright prohibition because they feared angering Quebecers, who were believed to be the least in favour of temperance.<sup>268</sup>

In addition, calls for prohibition failed because social mores had changed. Prohibition and the World Wars modified the drinking habits of Canadians. Craig Heron argues that the repeal of prohibition had encouraged domestic consumption because most provinces opened government liquor stores several years before they licenced public drinking establishments. Although alcohol was available, it was a luxury that many could not afford in the interwar period. Wartime wages removed the financial barrier, and this was especially true for women who earned a lot less than men.<sup>269</sup>

Like men, women increased their alcohol consumption from the 1920s to the 1950s, but their consumption was less visible. Historian Cheryl Krasnick Warsh concludes that Canadian primarily drank at home because women's rate of liver disease increased steadily between the 1920s and the 1950s, but they were rarely charged with public drunkenness.<sup>270</sup> Women drank at home because of restrictions imposed by provincial liquor control boards and beer parlour operators. For example, women were not permitted in Quebec taverns in the 1920s and were still prohibited from entering

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<sup>268</sup> Broad, *A Small Price to Pay*, 159-163; Bellamy, "'To Ensure the Continued Life of the Industry: The Public Relations Campaign of the Ontario Brewers during WWII,'" 415-422; Lisa Jacobson, "Beer Goes to War,"; Jenel Virden, "Warm Beer and Cold Canons: US Army Chaplains and Alcohol Consumption in World War II," *Journal of American Studies* 48 (2014): 79-97; Campbell, *Demon Run or Easy Money*, 86-94; and Malleck, *Try to Control Yourself*, 215-26; Heron, *Booze*, 293-6.

<sup>269</sup> Warsh, "Smoke and Mirrors: Gender Representation in North American Tobacco and Alcohol Advertisements Before 1950," 207-22; Heron, *Booze*, 204-13, 286-93; and Sharon Anne Cook, *Sex, Lies, and Cigarettes: Canadian Women, Smoking, and Visual Culture, 1880-2000* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012), 236.

<sup>270</sup> Warsh, "Smoke and Mirrors: Gender Representation in North American Tobacco and Alcohol Advertisements Before 1950," 207-22.

approximately 200 Quebec taverns in 1984. British Columbian women could legally buy beer when beer parlours first opened in 1925. However, many beer parlour operators soon announced they would not serve alcohol to women. Since beer parlours were located in hotels, operators worried that the prohibitionists would turn the public against them by painting beer parlours as centres of prostitution. Provincial Liquor Control Board officials shared these concerns, and successfully pressured the British Columbia Hotels Association (BCHA) to “ban women from Vancouver beer parlours” in 1926. Women’s insistence that they had the right to drink in public brought an end to the ban a year later. Divided beer parlours with a “men’s” only space and a separate place for “ladies and their escorts” replaced the ban in 1927. Other provinces followed suit. The Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO) approved divided men’s and “ladies and escorts” beverage rooms in 1934. Women usually required male escorts in order to gain admittance to beer parlours and beverage rooms.<sup>271</sup>

Class influenced where women drank. Working class women increasingly socialized with men in public drinking venues. Craig Heron notes that a “newer form [of working-class masculinity] based on public courtship in commercialized spaces and companionate socializing with spouses after marriage” solidified in post-prohibition Canada. Some couples went on dates in beer parlours and beverage rooms.<sup>272</sup> Unescorted

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<sup>271</sup> Campbell, *Sit Down and Drink Your Beer*, 51-77; Heron, *Booze*, 178-81, 269, 281-93; Malleck, *Try to Control Yourself*, 162-85; and Warsh, “Smoke and Mirrors: Gender Representation in North American Tobacco and Alcohol Advertisements Before 1950,” 207-22. For a discussion of the regulation of women’s domestic consumption, see Thompson and Genosko, *Punched Drunk*, 145-166.

<sup>272</sup> Heron, *Booze*, 292. For examples of servicewomen’s accounts of heterosexual socializing over alcohol, see Vi Dudley-Mathiesen, *Sweet ‘N’ Sour* (Sidney, B.C: Family Compact, 1985), 17, 53-5; Nano

women risked being viewed as either prostitutes, or promiscuous women looking for a good time.<sup>273</sup> Middle-class women generally drank in private venues. Heron argues that late nineteenth and early twentieth century bourgeois women had supported a “moderate consumption of alcohol in their households” but opposed the working-class saloon, which was the precursor to the post-prohibition beverage room. Middle-class women often drank in private homes or restaurants even after the arrival of the cocktail lounge in the post-1945 period. In his history on female same-sex relationships, Cameron Duder observes that the barroom was a site for working-class lesbians to meet, but was not a key social space for many of his lower-middle-class interview participants into the 1950s and 1960s. He noted that many described the gay and lesbian “bar scene as dangerous, violent, and seedy” and as a result, tended to drink socially at house parties.<sup>274</sup>

Temperance and anti-VD activists had applied similar criticisms to beer parlours during the Second World War. Reformers cited beverage rooms as a cause of illegitimate pregnancy. They blamed female drinkers and beer parlours as the source of VD. Dr. Donald H. Williams, the Director of the Division of Venereal Disease Control in British Columbia Provincial Board of Health, expressed a common wartime sentiment.<sup>275</sup> He provided the province’s attorney general “a list of nineteen Vancouver beer parlours that

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Pennefather McConnell, *We Never Stopped Dancing: An Airwoman’s Scrapbook* (Shawville, QC: Life Profiles Publishing, 2002), 40, 70-2.

<sup>273</sup> Heron, *Booze*, 204-13, 288-93; Warsh, “Smoke and Mirrors: Gender Representation in North American Tobacco and Alcohol Advertisements Before 1950,” 207-22; Campbell, *Sit Down and Drink Your Beer*, 51-77; and Malleck, *Try to Control Yourself*, 162-85.

<sup>274</sup> Heron, *Booze*, 204-13; and Cameron Duder, *Awfully Devoted Women: Lesbian Lives in Canada, 1900-65* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 7-10, 18, 129, 205-13, 232-47. The first quoted phrase comes from Heron, 204. The second quoted phrase comes from Duder, 245.

<sup>275</sup> Campbell, *Sit Down and Drink Your Beer*, 51-77; Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 113-15, 129-43; 182-7; 252-5; Pierson, “*They’re Still Women After All*,” 189-197, 204-12; and “Backs Ald Saunders 100 P.C. to Stop Drinking by Women,” *Toronto Daily Star*, December 7, 1942.

he considered ‘a menace to national defence’ because of ‘diseased prostitutes using their premises for solicitation’ in April 1942.<sup>276</sup> Williams became the head of the federal government’s anti-VD program in 1943 and was awarded the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. The program oversaw civilian and military anti-VD efforts. The armed services produced pamphlets that warned servicemen that they risked catching VD if they had sex with women they “picked up” in or outside of beer parlours. Female drinkers were depicted as wartime threats and beer parlours as immoral places.<sup>277</sup>

Owners of beer parlours across the country reacted to the public criticisms of female drinkers and the support for stricter government control. They stopped single women from entering their establishments out of fear that they would be shut down by civilian authorities or placed out-of-bounds by military officers for enabling the spread of VD. The BCHA supported the provincial liquor board’s ruling in late April 1942 that Vancouver, Prince Rupert, and Esquimalt beer parlours must have minimum, six-foot high barriers “constructed to ‘permit no visibility’” between the men’s only and the “ladies and escorts” spaces. The barrier was supposed to prevent unattached men and women from co-mingling as well as stop prostitutes from “luring” potential clients over to the “ladies and escorts” side.<sup>278</sup> The barriers, with their inherent assumptions about the

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<sup>276</sup> Williams to Wismer, 8 April 1942, British Columbia Archives, GR770, Box 5, file 199A, as quoted in Campbell, *Sit Down and Drink Your Beer*, 60.

<sup>277</sup> Campbell, *Sit Down and Drink Your Beer*, 51-77; Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 129-43; 252-5; Pierson, “*They’re Still Women After All*,” 189-97, 204-12; and *Three Queens but I’ll Pass*, as found in Private Minnie Eleanor Gray, Photograph Album of Minnie Eleanor Gray in Europe, George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum’s Military History Research Centre, CWM Photo Archives, 52C 4 89.8, Control No. 20110057-021.

<sup>278</sup> Campbell, *Sit Down and Drink Your Beer*, 51-77; Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 129-43; 252-5; and Pierson, “*They’re Still Women After All*,” 189-97, 204-12.

associations of alcohol consumption with sexual morality and class, were a physical reflection of the contradictory attitudes towards women's drinking during the Second World War.

### **Alcohol and the Armed Services**

CWAC Captain Olive Ruth Russell echoed First World War temperance concerns when she complained to Esther Lloyd-Jones, her former professor at Columbia University and a leading figure in personnel work, that “[a] great many young [women] who have never drank before have learned how to do so since joining one of the armed services.”<sup>279</sup> Veterans' accounts support Russell's assessment. Several veterans contrast their pre-war abstinence with their later participation in a central element of wartime military life. RCAF (WD) veteran D. Phyllis Harrison adopts this narrative strategy in her memoir. Harrison describes the beer parlours and liquor store in Brandon, Manitoba, as “foreign territory” in her pre-service days. She remembers her excitement when she received a liquor permit during basic training, noting it made “one feel just a little giddy to think you now had joined the ranks of humanity free to decide to BUY A BOTTLE.”<sup>280</sup> For Harrison, her ability to choose for herself represented a higher level of citizenship gained through her military membership.

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<sup>279</sup> Olive Ruth Russell to Doctor Esther Lloyd-Jones, n.d. LAC, Olive Russell Papers, MG31 K13, vol. 2, file 14, as quoted in Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 187. For an analysis of Russell's life, see Susan Ruth Swallow, “Olive Ruth Russell: A 20<sup>th</sup> Century Progressive (master's thesis, the University of Western Ontario, 1996). For Russell's connections with Lloyd-Jones, see Swallow, 19, 86, 119 n7.

<sup>280</sup> D. Phyllis Harrison, *Saga of an Airwoman* (Penticton, B.C.: Sage Press, 1995), 22-3, 47. Emphasis in text. The quotations come from page 23 and 47 respectively. For other examples, see WRCNS Public Relations Officer, Toronto, “Waited on Hand and Foot,” in Jean Bruce, *Back the Attack!: Canadian Women During the Second World War-at Home and Abroad* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1985), 101; Doris Konkol, in Appendix 2 to Glad Bryce, *First In, Last Out*, 173; Nano Pennefather McConnell, *We Never Stopped Dancing*, 70; and Dudley-Mathiesen, *Sweet 'N' Sour*, 18, 50-1, 54, 115-6. For an example of underage drinking of a self-professed pre-war “innocent” see Greer, *The Girls of the Kings Navy*, 113.

Drinking was strongly associated with military service. The parents of RCAF (WD) veteran Doris Konkol (née Condie) assumed that their daughter had learned how to drink in the air force. Unlike Mrs. Laurence, who sought alternative entertainments for her daughter, the Condie's supported what they believed was their daughter's new interest. Their preparations for Konkol's first leave home included buying her liquor. A curious Konkol questioned why there was liquor in her normally dry household. Her father's astonishment that she had not become a drinker left a lasting impression on Konkol. She recorded this and other wartime encounters with alcohol in her submission to the Ridge Meadows Ex-Servicewomen's Association scrapbook. Vi Dudley-Mathiesen recalls the shocked reactions when fellow military personnel found out that she "didn't drink."<sup>281</sup>

Some servicewomen had tried alcohol before they enlisted. RCAF (WD) veteran Nano Pennefather-McConnell, who grew up in Ontario, was one of them. She writes in her memoir that she was thankful that her "parents had taught [her] how to drink moderately at home" because overseas service demanded that servicewomen quickly "learn to live with the prevalence of drinking among people in the services." Still, she was initially troubled by servicemen's heavy alcohol consumption and had to adjust to the quantities that military personnel drank. Her memories align with C.P. Stacey's and Barbara Wilson's work on Canadians overseas. They state that English pubs represented a new experience for many Canadian servicemen, who often over-indulged in these places. Unlike the stark Canadian beverage rooms, English pubs permitted music and

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<sup>281</sup> Doris Konkol, in Appendix 2 to Glad Bryce, *First In, Last Out*, 173; and Dudley-Mathiesen, *Sweet 'N' Sour*, 51.

other forms of entertainment. English pubs, in Pennefather-McConnell's experience, were more hospitable to women. Stacey and Wilson note that Canadian servicemen enjoyed dates or female companionship in pubs. Alcohol was part of civilians' transition into military life even for those with previous experience.<sup>282</sup>

This is not to suggest that all military personnel drank. Some servicewomen had internalized the social stigma around women drinking. Servicewomen stigmatized female drinkers. One airwoman criticized the drinking habits of civilian women. Frustrated that officers' wives looked down upon uniformed women, she exclaimed, "It is a bit hard— after all we don't want their men, if that's what they are worried about, and ten to one our morals are just as good or better than theirs— at least I don't sit around and drink!"<sup>283</sup> Even though Phyllis Harrison described the giddy freedom at being able to purchase alcohol, she found it hard to overcome ingrained behaviour. Many years passed before she actually purchased a bottle.<sup>284</sup> Servicewomen judged each other based on their drinking habits. Military personnel abstained for various reasons despite pressures to drink. Some, such as the CWAC training officer who refrained from drink in order to provide an alternative role model for her subordinate officers, did so out of moral conviction, while others, such as Doris Konkol, were swayed after they experienced

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<sup>282</sup> Pennefather-McConnell, *We Never Stopped Dancing*, 70; C.P. Stacey and Barbara M. Wilson, *The Half-Million: The Canadians in Britain, 1939-1946* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 34-46; and Cook, *The Necessary War*, 327-8 The quotation comes from Pennefather-McConnell, 70.

<sup>283</sup> Letter, 28 March 1943, reprinted under "Completely Snubbed," in Bruce, *Back the Attack!*, 84. See also, Poulin, "Invisible Women: Aboriginal Servicewomen in Canada's Second World War Military," 153.

<sup>284</sup> Harrison, *Saga of an Airwoman*, 47.

unpleasant side-effects.<sup>285</sup>

Historian Grace Poulin speculates that some Indigenous servicewomen chose not to drink because of racial and gender discrimination. Racial stereotypes presented Indigenous women as being sexually “loose” and Indigenous people as more susceptible to alcohol abuse.<sup>286</sup> Poulin reasons that it was safer for Indigenous servicewomen to avoid alcohol. Financial reasons motivated some Indigenous servicewomen who helped support their families. Jannett Generous, an Indigenous veteran, explained that she did not drink because she was underage. Alice Petite Samuel, an Indigenous veteran quoted in the introduction to chapter, also refused to drink.<sup>287</sup>

Alcohol served many roles in the armed services. First World War medical officers and fellow soldiers treated shell-shock and pain with rum. Second World War medical officers resurrected First World War treatment methods. A medical officer treated Doris Konkol’s shock with a restorative shot of brandy after her air force driving duties took her to the site of a gruesome plane crash. Military personnel self-medicated with alcohol: it helped them cope with wartime loss, trauma, and fear. Drinking saw military personnel through remembrance rituals and allowed them to deal with their own

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<sup>285</sup> Training Officer, “Beer-Drinking,” in Bruce, *Back the Attack!*, 43; Doris Konkol, in Bryce, *First In, Last Out*, 172-4; and Poulin, “Invisible Women: Aboriginal Servicewomen in Canada’s Second World War Military,” 153.

<sup>286</sup> Poulin, “Invisible Women: Aboriginal Servicewomen in Canada’s Second World War Military,” 153; and Thompson and Genosko, *Punched Drunk*, 167-88. For work on the stereotypical imagery of Aboriginal women, see Sarah Carter, *Capturing Women: The Manipulation of Cultural Imagery in Canada’s Prairie West* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1997), 156-93; Adele Perry, *On the Edge of Empire: Gender, Race, and the Making of British Columbia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001); and Jean Barman, “Taming Aboriginal Sexuality: Gender, Power, and Race in British Columbia,” *BC Studies* 115/116 (Autumn/Winter 1997/98): 237-66.

<sup>287</sup> Poulin, “Invisible Women: Aboriginal Servicewomen in Canada’s Second World War Military,” 153; Heron, *Booze*, 319; and Thompson and Genosko, *Punched Drunk*, 167-88.

impending mortality. Alcohol helped some men survive. Servicemen recall learning tips from experienced colleagues over beer, while others blamed impaired officers for the death of colleagues.<sup>288</sup>

Military personnel also determined who was an insider or an outsider through their alcohol consumption. One CWAC corporal recalls being bought beer by two Royal Canadian Artillery bombardiers after she finished her first dinner in the bombardier's mess.<sup>289</sup> She interprets their actions as proof that they welcomed her.<sup>290</sup> Conversely, Mary Ziegler concludes in her popular history that air force women were "somewhat discriminated against" because they lacked wet canteens.<sup>291</sup> The air force veteran quoted at the start of this chapter remembers that "many airwomen resented" that men had wet canteens and servicewomen did not. Drinking signified whether or not servicewomen were full-fledged members of the armed services.<sup>292</sup>

Drinking also indicated manhood. Military historian Tim Cook explains that alcohol helped underage civilians become servicemen in the First World War. He writes, "The act of drinking was often understood to be one of the distinguishing marks between men and boys.... After the first few sputtering attempts, an infantryman learned to hold

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<sup>288</sup> Cook, "'More a medicine than a beverage' 'Demon Rum' and the Canadian Trench Soldier of the First War," 6-22; Jacobson, "Beer Goes to War," 299-305; Virden, "Warm Beer and Cold Canons: US Army Chaplains and Alcohol Consumption in World War II," 79-97; Doris Konkol, in Bryce, *First In, Last Out*, 172-4; Cook, *The Necessary War*, 145-6, 293-4, 323-7; and Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 130-1.

<sup>289</sup> A bombardier was the equivalent to a corporal. See Canadiansoldiers.com, "Table of Ranks and Appointments," CanadianSoldiers.com, accessed June 15, 2016,

<http://www.canadiansoldiers.com/ranks/tableofranksandappointments.htm>.

<sup>290</sup> "Ack-Ack Guns," in Bruce, *Back the Attack!*, 42.

<sup>291</sup> Zeigler. *We Serve so that Men May Fly*, 87.

<sup>292</sup> Former member, RCAF (WD), "Coffee, tea, milk, or pop," in Gossage, *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots*, 185-6 A similar story appears in a different collection. See "Beer in the toilet tanks," in Bruce, *Back the Attack!*, 83. See also Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 130-34.

his rum, and these young soldiers soon measured up to the group expectations.”<sup>293</sup> Men proved to their colleagues that they were “manly” men through their alcohol consumption. During the Second World War, military newspapers carried funny stories about men who successfully drank large amounts of poor-quality or strong alcohol. Servicewomen’s alcohol consumption was linked to worries over their adoption of female masculinity. Historians Leisa Meyer and Donna Knaff argue that some American servicewomen adopted traditionally male attributes, roles, and privileges, which produced anxieties that military service attracted “mannish” women with male “appetites.”<sup>294</sup> An unnamed military official informed the *Ottawa Journal* in January 1942 that the RCAF barred women from Ottawa beverage rooms because the women’s services wished to avoid public criticism. A reporter for the *Ottawa Journal* protested the RCAF’s decision, arguing that it was unjust to deny army and air women a “man’s prerogative” even as they did “a man’s job.”<sup>295</sup> The journalist did not question that drinking in public and serving in the military were masculine activities, viewing servicewomen’s public drinking as a logical extension of their performance of traditionally male roles.<sup>296</sup>

Servicemen’s alcohol consumption created problems too. Defence officials worried when servicemen’s drinking threatened good relations with civilians at home and

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<sup>293</sup> Cook, “‘He was determined to go’: Underage Soldiers in the Canadian Expeditionary Force,” 56. Fay Wilson uses the same quotation to make a similar point. See Wilson, “Booze, Temperance, and Soldiers on the Home Front: The Unraveling of the Image of the Idealized Soldier in Canada,” 8.

<sup>294</sup> “There’s No Justice!: Women in Air Force Banned From Beer Parlours Here,”; Knaff, *Beyond Rosie the Riveter*, 48-132; Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*, 9, 32-70, 150-6; Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 180-7; Pierson, “*They’re Still Women After All*,” 168-214; and Jackson, *One of the Boys*, 180-4.

<sup>295</sup> “There’s No Justice!: Women in Air Force Banned From Beer Parlours Here,” *Ottawa Journal*, 6 January 1942; and Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 130-34, 180-7.

<sup>296</sup> Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 130-34.

abroad. Intoxicated servicemen harassed civilian women in beer parlours and on the street. Determined to protect their tough reputations, Second World War servicemen drank heavily and fought with men in other branches, Allied servicemen, and men conscripted for home defence under the National Resources Mobilization Act (NRMA). Some servicemen caused trouble because they believed that their uniform earned them special privileges. A captain stationed near Fort William, Ontario, threatened that he would have the St. Louis Hotel declared “out-of-bounds,” or off-limits to military personnel, after the hotel staff disobeyed his command to serve one of his underage soldiers. Several Ontario hotel owners requested the “out-of-bounds” designation because they did not want rowdy servicemen in their establishments.<sup>297</sup>

Military authorities tried to keep good relations with civilians by declaring beer parlours, beverage rooms, and taverns off-limits. A desire to avoid bad press was one justification for the out-of-bounds restriction. Many locations received this designation after a fight occurred or rumours that a particular venue was a haven for prostitution. Military officials prohibited military personnel from entering certain commercial establishments if numerous soldiers stated that they picked up VD in a particular drinking spot.<sup>298</sup>

The out-of-bounds designation also applied to women and varied by location. Ottawa air force women were banned from beverage rooms, but Toronto air force women

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<sup>297</sup> Oliver, “‘My Darlin’ Clementine’? Wooing Zombies for \$6.50 a Night: General Service-NRMA Relations in Wartime Calgary,” 46-54; Malleck, *Try to Control Yourself*, 232-6; Stacey and Wilson, *The Half-Million: The Canadians in Britain, 1939-1946*, 34-46; and Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 130-34, 230-4.

<sup>298</sup> Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 130-34; and Malleck, *Try to Control Yourself*, 232-36.

were not. Naval servicewomen who were part of the cast of “Meet the Navy,” a traveling show about navy life, were ordered to conduct themselves according to the place they were visiting. They could frequent beverage rooms if local WRCNs had permission to do so. It was, however, against the rules for them to consume alcohol before a performance. “Meet the Navy” performers were also not allowed to have alcohol on the train that the navy leased specifically for the show. An inebriated performer would not have been good press for a show designed to entertain military personnel and boost community relations and recruitment.<sup>299</sup>

The out-of-bounds designation also varied by service. Air force women were allowed in Toronto beer parlours and Chinatown, while their army counterparts were not. Toronto-based air force officials insisted that “[t]here is no reason why they shouldn’t be allowed to go into beer parlours. They are well behaved and we have had no complaints about them in the beverage rooms.” CWAC officials informed the *Toronto Daily Star* that only reason they imposed the ban was because they considered it inappropriate for their servicewomen to visit those places. The ban did not extend to CWAC servicewomen visiting Toronto while on leave.<sup>300</sup>

RCAF (WD) women had to earn their right to drink in public. In August 1942,

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<sup>299</sup> “Beverage Rooms, Chinatown Taboo for Women Soldiers,” *Toronto Daily Star*, January 31, 1942; “Backs Ald Saunders 100 P.C. to Stop Drinking by Women,” *Toronto Daily Star*, December 7, 1942; “Beer Parlors Forbidden to Members, Says C.W.A.C.” *Toronto Daily Star*, December 5, 1942; Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 129-32 139-40; Greer, *The Girls of the King’s Navy*, 69-74; and Extract of Minutes of Meeting of Defence Council, 11 December 1942, LAC, RG 24, vol, 3367, file HQ 426-1-2-1, vol. 1. For an analysis of military personnel who performed with the shows, see Laurel Halladay, “‘It Made Them Forget About the War For a Minute’: Canadian Army, Navy and Air Force Entertainment Units During the Second World War,” *Canadian Military History* 11, no. 4 (Autumn 2002): 20-35.

<sup>300</sup> “Beer Parlors Forbidden to Members, Says C.W.A.C.,” *Toronto Daily Star*, December 5, 1942.

Air Force Headquarters (AFHQ) banned airwomen undergoing basic training from civilian drinking spots because of “malicious gossip.”<sup>301</sup> The policy created enforcement issues. Air force police faced the difficult task of differentiating “basic trainees” from graduates. While Air Vice-Marshal J.A. Sully acknowledged this challenge, he insisted that it was the air force police’s responsibility to ensure that the trainees followed the rules.<sup>302</sup> The RCAF Department of Manning concluded in October 1942 that “ignorance of the regulations” caused some female recruits to drink en route to basic training. The RCAF Department of Manning explained that the “whispering campaign” made it imperative that recruiting staff teach recruits air force standards for proper behaviour in public settings, including the prohibition against drinking on trains.<sup>303</sup> Airwomen could drink in civilian settings once they demonstrated their knowledge of air force regulations.

Rank determined women’s access to alcohol in military settings, just as class did in civilian society. The armed services provided men with wet canteens, but only allowed servicewomen dry canteens, which were recreational facilities that sold non-alcoholic beverages and snacks. RCAF (WD) Wing Officer Willa Walker explained the gender-based restrictions in her reply to Mrs. Elsie Laurence, the concerned mother of an RCAF (WD) corporal. Walker wrote that, “unless these parties have been held while the personnel concerned were on weekend passes or leave away from the station,” she was

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<sup>301</sup>Copy of letter from Vice-Marshal J.A. Sully for Chief of the Air Staff to Air Officer Commanding, No. 1 Training Command, 27 August 1942, LAC, RG 24, vol. 3367, file HQ 426-1-2-1, vol. 1; and Paper re WD discipline problems, Aug/Sep 1942, Wking [sic] paper used by S/O Wetzel in preparing WD History, DHH, 181.003 (D1470). The quotation comes from the paper used by S/O Wetzel.

<sup>302</sup>Copy of letter from Air Vice-Marshal J.A. Sully for Chief of Air Staff to Air Officer Commanding, No 3. Training Centre, Montreal, P.Q., 11 September 1942, LAC, RG 24, vol. 3367, file HQ 426-1-2-1, vol. 1.

<sup>303</sup>“Drinking on Trains,” D. of M. Circular no. 3, 9 October 1942, DHH, 71/110.

confused by Laurence's account of widespread drinking at parties. Walker explained that airwomen were strictly prohibited from airmen's wet canteens. She also noted that only sergeants and above could drink the beer in Sergeant Mess, that airwomen were not allowed in the Officers' Mess, and that the rules forbade all ranks from storing alcohol in their barracks.<sup>304</sup>

However, Walker glossed over the fact that rank, like class, brought certain privileges. Air force regulations permitted the selling of "wine, spirits, or other intoxicants" in Officers' Messes to members and their guests. There were two caveats: the mess had to have the permission of the commanding officer and sale of alcohol had to be legal under local laws.<sup>305</sup> Under Air Force Administrative Order A33/15 of 30 June 1943, women became "full members of the appropriate mess and ... [had] the same rights and privileges of the mess as male members thereof." Thus, female air force officers could buy alcohol in their mess. Perhaps Walker thought it pointless to mention the conditions in Officers' Messes because Corporal Laurence was not an officer and so not a member. Walker's use of the term "airwoman" conformed to definitions in air force regulations. An airwoman was the female equivalent of an airman, and the term referred to any member who did not hold a commission.<sup>306</sup>

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<sup>304</sup> Copy of letter from Wing Officer Willa Walker for Air Vice-Marshal J.A. Sully for Chief of the Air Staff to Mrs. J. L. Laurence, 11 December 1943, LAC RG 24, vol. 3367, file HQ 426-1-2, vol. 2; F. Elsie (Mrs. J.L) Laurence to Wing Officer Willa Walker, 30 November 1943, LAC, RG 24, vol. 3367, file HQ 426-1-2, vol. 2; and Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 182-7.

<sup>305</sup> Canada, *King's Regulations for the Royal Canadian Air Force* [hereafter *K.R. (Air)*] (Ottawa: Edmond Cloutier, King's Printer, 1943), Chapter XXIV, Section 1, para 865, Section 2, para 877A.

<sup>306</sup> Air Force Administrative Order, A33/15, 30 June 1943, as quoted in "Privileges- W.D. Officers and Nursing Sisters' Quarters" n.d. LAC RG 24, vol. 3367, file HQ 426-1-2, vol. 2; and *K.R. (Air)*, Chapter I, Definitions. para 2(VI), Chapter I, para 3. For an account of how rules against fraternization created dating

Female officers in the other services were subject to similar rules. A WRCNS public relations officer described having a bar in the officer's wardroom as a perk of wearing a uniform. In 1942, CWAC Regulations specified the Officers' Mess as the only place within barracks where "intoxicating liquor" was permitted.<sup>307</sup> The privileges of rank mirrored class-based drinking practices. Middle and upper-class women viewed beverage rooms and beer parlours with suspicion, but accepted a moderate domestic consumption of certain alcoholic beverages, such as wine or cocktails. Drinking was also allowed in respectable clubs and restaurants. Officers, who tended to be well-educated women of the middle and upper-middle classes, were permitted to drink in private military settings.

Also, if the author of the "RCAF (WD) Plan" is to be believed, Walker spoke prematurely or omitted certain facts when she informed Laurence that airwomen below the rank of sergeant were not allowed in the Sergeants' Mess. The RCAF official states in the "Plan" that some stations made up for the lack of female guests at parties in Sergeants' Messes by inviting airwomen but not airmen. Men's presumed entitlement to female companionship trumped military protocol in these cases. Airwomen's gender gained them access to spaces reserved for more senior non-commissioned members. The author argued that allowing low-ranking airwomen as guests was an injustice because

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issues, see Former Member, RCAF (WD), "Going Out in Uniform," in Gossage, *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots*, 256.

<sup>307</sup> WRCNS Public Relations Officer, Toronto, "Waited on Hand and Foot" in Jean Bruce, *Back the Attack!: Canadian Women During the Second World War-at Home and Abroad* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1985), 101; Regulations for the Canadian Women's Army Corps, 1942," Section VI (para 48), copy at DHH, 113.3C1 (D1); and Lieutenant-Colonel Daisy I. Royal, "Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," 29 August 1946, Section IV (para 4d), copy at DHH, 81/208.

low-ranking airmen were “not invited” to the parties and female NCOs were denied the privileges of rank when low-ranking airwomen’s gender enabled them to be in spaces allocated to more senior NCOs. Despite what Walker claimed, the rules about alcohol were bent or ignored.<sup>308</sup>

**“If alcohol has been a factor the woman is going to use this as an alibi:” Accounting for “Sex Delinquency” in the Women’s Services**

Several decades of temperance reform had made alcohol an obvious explanation for what officials saw servicewomen’s sexual “misbehaviour.” The armed services took rumoured and actual cases of servicewomen’s sexual “indiscretions” seriously. Rumours that the women’s services created promiscuous women hampered recruitment efforts. Wartime authorities responded to these rumours by stressing that servicewomen were respectable women. Officials searched for answers when faced with unmarried servicewomen who became pregnant and servicewomen who were infected with VD. Alcohol was a clear culprit.

The armed services specifically looked for the presence of alcohol in their investigations into “illegitimate” pregnancy. The “Case History for Pregnancy” questionnaire, which was to be filled out “in every case of pregnancy, miscarriage or abortion,”<sup>309</sup> asked whether the airwoman had consumed alcohol in cases “when conception occurred out of wedlock.”<sup>310</sup> Army medical officers posed a similar query and

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<sup>308</sup> “RCAF (WD) Plan,” 16.

<sup>309</sup> Special Gynaecological cases-R.C.A.F. (W.D.), D.M.S. Circular Order No. 251, 13 September, 1944. The forms were kept confidential.

<sup>310</sup> Case History for Pregnancy, LAC, Jean Flatt Davey Fonds, MG30 E386, Folder Questionnaires, Statistics, N.D., 1942-3. The form appears in two separate folders in Davey fonds. See Case History for Pregnancy, LAC, MG30 E386, folder Questionnaires, Statistics, N.D., 1942-3; Appendix A Case History

demanded a “yes” or “no” answer.<sup>311</sup> Wartime authorities presumed that drinking led women astray and turned respectable young women into “loose women.”

Military authorities treated alcohol as an excuse in their investigations into servicewomen’s “immorality” and a barrier in inquiries of servicemen’s “immorality.” RCAF medical officials believed that servicewomen would honestly report their drinking “since if alcohol has been a factor the woman is going to use this as an alibi.”<sup>312</sup> The assumption was that unmarried servicewomen would search for any mitigating factor to explain why they became pregnant and that the services should accept the excuse. In contrast, Brigadier G.B. Chisholm, a senior army medical officer, hinted that servicemen lied about their drinking when asked where and from whom they contacted VD. Chisholm instructed that officers should not “‘accept an answer of ‘being too drunk to remember.’ Repeated sincere questioning will produce the truth.”<sup>313</sup> Drinking was a gendered alibi in the armed services.

Military officers’ unwillingness to allow servicemen to use alcohol as an excuse in VD investigations reflected the priorities of these male-dominated institutions. Davey told airwomen that men showed more concern for VD than pregnancy because men might catch VD but did not get pregnant. In addition, Davey claimed that VD was “a very

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for Abortion, attached to D.M.S. Circular Order No. 251; 13 September, 1944, LAC, MG30 E386, folder Memorandum, Daily Routine Order, Air Medical Circulars, 1944-1945. The appendix is identical to the case history for pregnancy sheet with a single modification: the word “pregnancy” is crossed off in the title and the word “Abortion” is typed above the crossed-out word.

<sup>311</sup> Army HQ Form 8972 (Meds/9h), 31 May 1943, as quoted in Gossage, *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots*, 157.

<sup>312</sup> Command W.D. Staff Officers Conference, 30 January 1945, LAC, Jean Flatt Davey Fonds, MG30 E386, folder Command Women’s Division Staff Conference Reports, 1944-1945.

<sup>313</sup> Department of Public Health, *Annual Report, 1943*, 97, as quoted in Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 139.

large problem in the country as a whole and it's a bigger problem among the men" in the armed services.<sup>314</sup> Military and government administrators identified VD as a major cause of lost *manpower* and promiscuous women as the source of infection. Authorities insisted that VD threatened the war effort because the treatment of VD took servicemen away from their duties. Men's excuses of drunkenness interfered with official efforts to find the ones held responsible for VD.<sup>315</sup>

In addition, drunkenness was a contested alibi for what many authorities saw as servicemen's "deviancy." Military authorities held competing opinions on whether alcohol caused male homosexual activity. Paul Jackson argues that many military medical doctors concluded that alcohol was responsible for "temporarily turning heterosexual men into homosexuals." Military courts typically would not allow servicemen to use drunkenness as a defence for male homosexual behaviour. Under military law, "alcohol was understood to lower's one resistance to homosexual behaviour: the underlying intention was always there, alcohol merely facilitated its expression."<sup>316</sup> The records do not reveal if wartime authorities applied similar perspectives to Canadian servicewomen. Jackson uncovered no incidents where servicewomen were court-martialed for homosexuality, but, as will be discussed below,

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<sup>314</sup> Davey, "Informal Talk to Airwomen,"; Davey, "Informal Talk to Airwomen,"; and Davey, Address at Chelsea Club Luncheon, (lecture, May 17, 1944), LAC, Jean Flatt Davey Fonds, MG30 E386, Folder on Lectures, Addresses, Informal Talks, n.d., 1942-1945. The quotation comes from the "Informal Talk to Airwomen."

<sup>315</sup> Davey, "Informal Talk to Airwomen"; Davey, Address at Chelsea Club Luncheon, (lecture, May 17, 1944) LAC, Jean Flatt Davey Fonds, MG30 E386, Folder on Lectures, Addresses, Informal Talks, n.d., 1942-1945; Sinclair, "Report on the W.R.C.N.S.," Section XVII: Welfare, copy at DHH, 75/554; and Royal, "Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," Section X, (para 5b).

<sup>316</sup> Jackson, *One of the Boys*, 93, 142. The first quotation comes from page 142. The second quotation comes from page 93.

they were disciplined with alternative tactics such as discharges. He remarks that Canadian military psychiatrists dismissed the need to investigate lesbianism in the Canadian women's services.<sup>317</sup> Jackson speculates however that senior military officials sidestepped the prosecution of lesbian servicewomen because that would have been an admission that servicewomen were sexual agents.<sup>318</sup> The same reasoning can be applied to pregnancy. The military's acceptance of alcohol as a reason why unmarried women became pregnant let officers downplay women's sexual agency and make alcohol the culprit.

Servicewomen's anti-VD material also downplayed their sexual agency and presented them as passive. For example, a 1943 pamphlet and film, both called *For Your Information*, advised that "[o]ften under the influence of alcohol, without intending it, a woman may expose herself to venereal disease. This does not mean that intercourse necessarily results in infection, but infection may ensue."<sup>319</sup> The warning framed all intercourse as potentially risky and VD as an unintentional consequence of alcohol-induced behaviour. Alcohol loosened women's control on their normal sexual desires. Male anti-VD material mobilized the image of a dangerous female drinker in a different manner. As Ruth Roach Pierson notes, men were taught that alcohol made them more

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<sup>317</sup> Jackson, *One of the Boys*, 20-4, 78-109. Emma Vickers speaks about a similar lack of prosecution of lesbian women. See Vickers, "Queen and Country: Emma Vickers on Same-Sex Desire in the British Armed Forces."

<sup>318</sup> Jackson, *One of the Boys*, 78-109.

<sup>319</sup> *For Your Information*, LAC, RG 24, vol. 6618, file HQ 8994-6, vol. 11 as cited in Pierson, "*They're Still Women After All*," 202. For Pierson's analysis of the gendered differences in VD literature, see 200-11. See also Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 183-4.

likely to spend time with female carriers of VD.<sup>320</sup> The pamphlet, *Three Queens but I'll Pass*, advised servicemen that “[a]ny gal you can ‘pick up’ on the street, around some beer parlour... is usually carting around both VD sisters.” The phrase “VD sisters” referred to syphilis and gonorrhea.<sup>321</sup> Servicewomen’s anti-VD pamphlets and films lacked similar cautions that they might “pick up” male carriers of VD. Instead, servicewomen’s literature reflected social norms that designated women as the moral guardians of society and the ones responsible for policing sexual activity in heterosexual relationships. Servicewomen were cautioned that alcohol jeopardized their morality and respectability.

Squadron Officer Jean Flatt Davey departed from the published anti-VD material in her “Informal Address to Airwomen,” delivered in June 1944. The talk was part of larger efforts to reduce rates of VD and pregnancy in the women’s services. Alcohol, she explained, lowered standards of morality for both men and women. Davey cautioned airwomen that alcohol made men dangerous because, under its influence, even a “perfect gentleman,” would shift his sense of “the respect which is due a woman, of the way you should be treated just as fast as your ideas will change of the respect to which you’re entitled from him.” Like the author of the 1946 “RCAF (WD) Plan,” Davey held men and alcohol responsible for servicewomen’s “immorality.”<sup>322</sup>

Davey’s departure from the norm was limited. She acknowledged that airwomen might feel that it was unfair that women were held to higher standards of sexual morality,

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<sup>320</sup> Pierson, “*They’re Still Women After All*,” 206.

<sup>321</sup> *Three Queens but I’ll Pass*. See chapter six for further discussion of this pamphlet.

<sup>322</sup> Davey, “Informal Talk to Airwomen.”

but advised women to accept that was the way the world worked. Servicewomen, she emphasized, must live up to those standards. The fact that Davey pitched her talk as a conversation between women likely enabled her to acknowledge male drinkers as a potential threat and the unfairness of sexual double standards.<sup>323</sup> While Davey did not challenge the sexual double standards, she did warn air force women that alcohol affected men and women's judgment in similar ways.

Davey addressed airwomen and national women's organizations on the normalization of "sex delinquency." She consistently identified alcohol, the wartime environment, and poor sex education as the causes of "illegitimate" pregnancy, abortion, VD, and "shot-gun marriages."<sup>324</sup> When Davey talked about the wartime climate, she described what she saw as women's misplaced but understandable desire to reward those who might die the next day. In her opinion, petting, necking, and sexual intercourse were all dangerous outside of marriage. She likened petting and necking to "playing with a stick of dynamite with a very short fuse which has already been lighted."<sup>325</sup> Her explanations for sex "delinquency" fit the Australian pattern described by historian Marilyn Lake. Lake argues that during wartime older middle-class feminists who were committed to a version of femininity tied to chastity clashed with younger women committed to a version of femininity tied to sexual enjoyment.<sup>326</sup> Davey, who was born in

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<sup>323</sup> Davey, "Informal Talk to Airwomen."

<sup>324</sup> Davey, Address given at conference of representatives of 55 National Organizations called by the National Council of Women. See also, Davey, "Informal Talk to Airwomen."

<sup>325</sup> Davey, "Informal Talk to Airwomen."

<sup>326</sup> Davey, "Informal Talk to Airwomen,"; Davey, Address given at conference of representatives of 55 National Organizations called by the National Council of Women; and Marilyn Lake, "Female Desires: The

1909, obtained her medical degree from the University of Toronto in 1936. An unmarried Davey admitted at a National Council of Women conference in 1945 that “like many other women I have always said that I bitterly resent any form of social laws which prevent me going out and having a baby if I want one.” Lest her audience think less of her, Davey immediately reaffirmed her belief that a healthy child needed a two-parent home. Ultimately, she reaffirmed her position that social laws geared at preventing sex outside of marriage protected the children and the nation.<sup>327</sup>

Alcohol frequently appeared in wartime discussions of “illegitimate” pregnancy in combination with the age of the uniformed female drinker. In 1942, the legal drinking age was 21, but the minimum age of enlistment was 18. The head of the Liquor Control Board of Ontario remarked that people presumed that those in uniform were of legal drinking age. Toronto Reverend Harold Martin informed the *Toronto Daily Star* on 5 December 1942 that he witnessed what he believed were underage servicewomen going into beer parlours. Two days later, the *Toronto Daily Star* reported Martin’s conclusions that most cases of “illegitimate” pregnancies involved beer parlours and underage female drinkers. Martin’s concerns mirrored those of social welfare experts and juvenile court workers, who complained about the rising rates of youth delinquency. In 1939, 983 female adolescents appeared before juvenile courts and 1,430 in 1943. More young women were charged with “breaking curfew, vagrancy, indecency and incorrigibility” as the war progressed. As Jeffrey Keshen and Tamara Myers argue, these types of charges

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Meaning of World War II,” in *Gender and War: Australians at War in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by Joy Damousi and Marilyn Lake (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 60-75.

<sup>327</sup> LAC, “Biography/Administrative History,” archival description for Jean Flatt Davey Fonds; *Canadian Who’s Who*, Vol. XV, s.v. “Davey, Jean,” (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980).

represented an attempt to discipline female adolescents for sexual misconduct. Absentee or neglectful mothers were held responsible for the increase in youth delinquency.

Temperance advocates claimed alcohol turned women into neglectful mothers, and girls into juvenile delinquents.<sup>328</sup>

Military officials considered servicewomen's youth as well as other explanations for servicewomen's sex "delinquency." The pregnancy questionnaires recorded servicewomen's age. Unmarried pregnant servicewomen were asked a series of questions: the services wanted to know if the women had been drinking, if they "were pregnant before enlistment," if they conceived while on-duty, if they conceived while on leave, and if they had participated in "organized recreation or sports."<sup>329</sup> RCAF Group Captain M.M. Sisley, the Director of Provost and Security Services, reported in November 1942 that "alleged lack of adequate entertainment and recreational facilities on stations" encouraged women to find their own entertainment. He reasoned that bored airwomen wandered into "places of questionable repute" and, as a result, "into trouble." Female officers reached similar conclusions. At a February 1945 District CWAC Officer's Conference, the CWAC Consultant for the Director-General of Medical Services (DGMS) cited "insufficient recreational facilities in some localities coupled with

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<sup>328</sup> "Beer Parlors Forbidden to Members, Says C.W.A.C.," *Toronto Daily Star*, December 5, 1942; Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 132, 204-210; Tamara Myers, *Caught: Montreal's Modern Girls and the Law, 1869-1945* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), especially 166-175; Malleck, *Try to Control Yourself*, 233; and "The Canadian Women's Army Corps Regulations, 1941," Section III (para 18); copy at DHH, 75/174, file 2. The quoted phrase comes from Keshen, 208.

<sup>329</sup> Army HQ Form 8972 (Meds/9h), 31 May 1943, as quoted in, Gossage, *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots*, 157; and Pregnancy Code, LAC, Jean Flatt Davey Fonds, MG30 E386, folder on Medical Reports, n.d., 1942-1945.

drinking in unsupervised places” as the leading cause of “illegitimate” pregnancy.<sup>330</sup> Like Sisley, the CWAC consultant implied that servicewomen became pregnant because they lacked alternate activities and were not allowed to drink in military facilities. Alcohol exacerbated the other conditions that pushed women towards the “loose women” end of the spectrum of feminine respectability.

Archival research shows that Davey reconsidered alcohol’s role in extra-marital sexual relations over the course of the war. She claimed it was “a big contributing factor” for extra-marital sexual relations in her “Informal Address to Airwomen” in June 1944. In a February 1945 talk at a National Council of Women conference, however, Davey stated she had “been surprised that alcohol has not figured more prominently in cases of illegitimacy.” Her conclusion likely surprised her audience as well, because the National Council of Women included many groups involved in temperance reform. She reported that alcohol was “definitely not a factor in over 50% of cases” but was “a factor in some 35 to 50%” of out-of-wedlock conceptions among young women.<sup>331</sup> Her changing attitudes towards alcohol as a factor cannot be attributed to the shift in audiences. She emphasized that the low incidence of alcohol fuelled pregnancies in her “Medical Survey of R.C.A.F. (WD),” which was written sometime in 1944 or 1945. In this internal report, she hinted that inadequate sex education and officer training had more to do with

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<sup>330</sup> Minutes of District C.W.A.C. Officers’ Conference, 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> February 1945, Ottawa, Canada, DHH, 113. 3C1 (D1), Appendix 30; and [unclear] for Group Captain M.M. Sisley, Director of Provost & Security Services to Command Assistant Provost Marshals at Eastern Air Command, Western Air Command, No. 1 Training Command, No. 2 Training Command, No. 3 Training Command, No. 4 Training Command, 16 November, 1942, LAC, RG 24, vol. 3367, file HQ 426-1-2-1, vol. 1.

<sup>331</sup> Davey, “Informal Address to Airwomen,”; and Davey, Address given at conference of representatives of 55 National Organizations called by the National Council of Women.

servicewomen becoming pregnant or infected with VD than drinking.<sup>332</sup>

An unsigned medical report suggests that the confidential Case History for Pregnancy questionnaires may have altered Davey's opinion. These questionnaires would have been sent to Davey in her role as the senior female medical officer. She is likely the author of the medical unsigned medical report presented at Command W.D. Staff Conference in January 1945. The report stated that an analysis of pregnancy case histories had revealed that that alcohol contributed to 34.7% of pregnancies, played no role in 53.2%, and data was lacking for the remaining 13.1%. Adding the percentage of the missing data to the number of known alcohol-related pregnancy gives a range of approximately 35 to 48% for alcohol-induced pregnancies, close to the number presented to the National Council of Women. Different audiences likely contributed to the slight discrepancy in statistics. Davey talked generally about illegitimate pregnancy at the national women's conference, while the medical report was service specific. Nevertheless, Davey's overall conclusions remained consistent across internal and external audiences in 1945.<sup>333</sup>

Other senior female officers placed even less stress on alcohol than Davey did.

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<sup>332</sup> J. M. Hitsman, "'Manpower' Problems of the Women's Services During the Second World War," *Army Headquarters Report*, no. 68, 17 June 1954, DHH, 26 n83, 26 n84, accessed October 1, 2014, <http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/his/rep-rap/ahqrd-drqga-eng.asp?txtType=3&Rfid=257>; and "RCAF (WD) Plan," 15. The Medical Survey was attached in an appendix to the 1946 proposal to reform the women's division, called the "RCAF Women's Division Plan for Organization and Suggestions Concerning Employment" ["RCAF (WD) Plan"]. Hitsman and the "RCAF (WD) Plan" do not date her survey. The copy of the "RCAF (WD) Plan" consulted for this dissertation did not the appendices.

<sup>333</sup> "Command Staff Officers' Conference, Medical Problems" (report, Ottawa, Ontario, January 26, 1944), LAC, MG30 E385, folder Command Women's Division Staff Conference Reports, 1944-1945; and "Command Staff Officers' Conference, Medical Survey," (report, Ottawa, Ontario, January 30, 1945), LAC, Jean Flatt Davey Fonds, MG30 E385, folder Command Women's Division Staff Conference Reports, 1944-1945.

Lieutenant-Colonel Daisy Royal attended the 1945 conference where the CWAC Consultant for the DGMS criticized the lack of proper recreational facilities and unsupervised drinking. While Royal briefly acknowledged recreational facilities as a factor, she dropped alcohol from her discussion of women's sexual immorality in one of her last reports as the head of the CWAC. She did, however, list wet canteens in her discussion of how to improve military facilities.<sup>334</sup> Instead of blaming alcohol, Royal stated that VD and "illegitimate" pregnancy occurred because the lowered recruitment standards in 1942 permitted an "influx of undesirable types" into the Corps.<sup>335</sup> As Pierson explains, CWAC officers of upper and middle classes "equated unskilled and poorly educated women and those low in intelligence with 'bad type[s].'"<sup>336</sup> Pierson bases her argument about class and sexual bias partly on Royal's report.<sup>337</sup>

Class shaped descriptions of the female heterosexual "sex delinquent." Royal and Acting Captain Adelaide Sinclair, the Director of the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service (WRCNS), insisted in 1946 that most unmarried pregnant women were young, had the lowest level of education, and worked in the least skilled jobs. Sinclair did not provide a specific age range. In the army, women between 19 and 24 years of age had the highest rates of "illegitimate" pregnancies, and the air force found that the majority

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<sup>334</sup> Royal, "Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," Section V (para 4), Section X (para 5); and Minutes of District C.W.A.C. Officers' Conference, 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> February 1945, Ottawa, Canada.

<sup>335</sup> Royal, "Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," Section XI (para 1b).

<sup>336</sup> Pierson, *They're Still Women After All*, 178.

<sup>337</sup> Pierson, *They're Still Women After All*, 178, 279 n37.

(70%) of cases occurred among women 19 to 23 years of age.<sup>338</sup>

Pierson challenges the validity of the army's conclusions. She states that a 1944 study reported that unmarried pregnant CWAC servicewomen had a "slightly" lower intelligence score than the "mean CWAC score, [which was] based on a sample of 1, 428 cases...." The findings are questionable because the army had intelligence test "scores for only 219 of the 276 unmarried pregnant women" and did not account for the missing data. Furthermore, Pierson adds that other studies showed that the introduction of careful personnel screening did not reduce the numbers of "illegitimate" pregnancies.<sup>339</sup>

Wartime air force officials nuanced their discussions of the typical female heterosexual "delinquent" because they questioned certain findings. Air force officials did not share Royal's and Sinclair's firm belief that the majority of cases of "illegitimate" pregnancies in the women's services occurred among the least-skilled workers. RCAF analysts did not challenge the statistics for women's alcohol intake but they were skeptical whether there was a causal link between women's trades and "illegitimate" pregnancy. The analysts noted trade data was meaningless because there had been no accounting for the proportion of women in these trades. Although Davey admitted that illegitimacy was primarily a young woman's issue, she also told airwomen that single servicewomen from all educational levels, social backgrounds, age groups, trades, and ranks faced the consequences of engaging in premarital sex. Purpose influenced her

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<sup>338</sup> Acting Captain Adelaide Sinclair, "Report on the W.R.C.N.S.," Section XVII: Welfare, copy at DHH, 75/554; Royal, "Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," Section X (para 5); Command Staff Officers' Conference, Medical Survey," (report, Ottawa, Ontario, January 30, 1945); and Pierson, "*They're Still Women After All*," 178, 279 n39.

<sup>339</sup> Pierson, "*They're Still Women After All*," 178, 279 n39.

message. Davey stressed that all sorts of women got into “trouble” because she wanted to break through women’s indifference. She told airwoman that, in her medical experience, most single pregnant women “didn’t think it was possible for this sort of thing to happen to me.” Yet, she emphasized that “illegitimate” pregnancy was “happening to perfectly ordinary every day sort of women from perfectly ordinary every day sort of homes, like you and your friends and me and my friends.”<sup>340</sup>

Although much of the conversation on illegitimate pregnancy centered on explaining what made respectable women slide over to the “loose women” side on the spectrum, military personnel analyzed servicemen’s responsibility to varying degrees. Some officers did not discuss servicemen at all. For example, Royal did not mention the studies that showed that army men often fathered babies born to unwed army women in her “Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women’s Army Corps” (1946). Officials from the other services hinted or explicitly stated that military men shared some of the blame. Sinclair briefly hinted that many of the alleged fathers were naval officers and enlisted men in her “Report on W.R.C.N.S.” (1946).<sup>341</sup> Davey had no such hesitation. She warned airwomen that alcohol turned men dangerous. The author of the “RCAF (WD) Plan” also explicitly held men responsible for women’s sexual immorality. The author suggested that a breakdown of air force discipline allowed higher ranking servicemen to prey on lower ranking airwomen. The discussion on “mixing ranks” at parties in the Sergeant Messes concludes with the following lament: “it is regrettable that

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<sup>340</sup> Davey, “Informal talk to airwomen.”

<sup>341</sup> Royal, “Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women’s Army Corps,” Section X (para 5); Pierson, “*They’re Still Women After All*,” 170-2, 194, 204-211; Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 183; Sinclair, “Report on the W.R.C.N.S.,” Section XVII: Welfare; and “RCAF (WD) Plan,” 16.

unscrupulous R.C.A.F. officers and senior N.C.O.s were responsible for a large proportion of the problems of illegitimate pregnancy in the Women's Division."<sup>342</sup> The language painted RCAF (WD) as victims of unscrupulous men and ignored servicewomen's sexual agency. Still, the RCAF official who wrote the plan recognized and protested against the gendered power dynamics in the armed services. Officers tended to be better educated and from the middle to upper classes. The author drew attention to the fact that some men abused their military and, in some cases, their class authority.<sup>343</sup>

The author of the Plan also suggested that alcohol enabled "unscrupulous" air force men to prey on airwomen. Military and civilian defence officials reading the report would have known that beer was served in Sergeants' Messes. In addition, the report stated that allowing low-ranking airwomen as guests "brought up the question of 'wet canteens.'" Airwomen did not have wet canteens. Thus, the RCAF officer implied that airwoman gained access to alcohol in the Sergeants' Messes, where they met servicemen who took advantage of women's loosened control of their normal sex drives. Wartime authorities' discussion of servicewomen's sexual "immorality" frequently, but not always, referred back to alcohol. Armed with their explanations, defence officials implemented numerous methods designed to reduce the rates of sex "delinquency" in the women's services.<sup>344</sup>

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<sup>342</sup> "RCAF (WD) Plan," 16.

<sup>343</sup> "RCAF (WD) Plan," 16.

<sup>344</sup> "RCAF (WD) Plan," 16.

## **Fighting Sex “Delinquency”**

The women’s services applied a series of proactive measures that sought to prevent the “delinquent” behaviour from occurring in the first place. For those who believed that alcohol created the conditions for premarital sex, the control of women’s alcohol consumption was a logical solution. The author of the “RCAF (WD) Plan” hinted at civil-military tensions, stating that women were denied access to military wet canteens because of “government policy.” Public opinion, the author of the “Plan” claimed, influenced the government’s policy on wet canteens.<sup>345</sup>

In contrast, several defence officials requested that the armed services open wet canteens for women. The Minister of National Defence (Air) proposed in December 1942 that the services explore “the establishment of canteens of our own” because there had been complaints about servicewomen drinking in public.<sup>346</sup> RCAF Commanding Officers sought permission for airwomen to drink beer on their station, arguing that the lack of wet canteens encouraged “surreptitious drinking in undesirable locations.”<sup>347</sup> CWAC officers recommended that the army re-examine the wet canteen policy for non-commissioned CWAC personnel in February 1945. The recommendation came after CWAC Consultant for the DGMS informed the District CWAC Officer’s Conference that unsupervised drinking contributed to illegitimate pregnancy. Defence officials suggested that supervised military wet canteens would reduce public complaints and the number of pregnancy cases. Temperance advocates and defence officials agreed that

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<sup>345</sup> “RCAF (WD) Plan,” 26.

<sup>346</sup> Extract of Minutes of Meeting of Defence Council, 11 December 1942.

<sup>347</sup> “RCAF (WD) Plan,” 26.

servicewomen's drinking must be managed, but disagreed over the method of regulation.<sup>348</sup>

The debate over the best way to regulate alcohol continued even as the women's services underwent demobilization. Each service recorded wartime lessons for the purpose of guiding the organization and administration of the future women's services. The next chapter will analyze these plans. The relevant point here is that female and male officers supported wet canteens for servicewomen. Officers held diverse opinions as to which women should have access to alcohol in the future women's services. The senior WRCNS Officer, Acting Captain Adelaide Sinclair, adopted a conservative approach that mirrored middle and upper class women's relationships with alcohol. She included wet canteens for Petty Officers with the proviso of "if policy permits" in her list of recommended, but not required, improvements to servicewomen's quarters.<sup>349</sup> With the same caveat of "if policy permits," Royal proposed extending wartime policy which only allowed sergeants and above to drink in military facilities.<sup>350</sup> The author of the "RCAF (WD) Plan" also wanted wet canteens for lower ranking servicewomen. The Plan suggested opening up airmen's wet canteens to future airwomen "at certain hours, [and] at the discretion of the Commanding Officer of the station." The restricted hours and the caveats of "if policy permits" reveal the continued ambivalence towards women's

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<sup>348</sup> Minutes of District C.W.A.C. Officers' Conference, 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> February 1945, Ottawa, Canada; and Royal, "Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," Section V (para 4d).

<sup>348</sup> Royal, "Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," Section V (para 4d).

<sup>349</sup> Sinclair, "Report on the W.R.C.N.S.," Section VII: Quarters.

<sup>350</sup> Royal, "Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," Section V (para 4d).

drinking.<sup>351</sup>

Royal and the author of the “RCAF (WD) Plan” drew upon First World War military justifications for wet canteens for servicemen. Wet canteens were initially banned from Canadian training camps at home and overseas during the First World War. Morale, discipline, and international relations quickly deteriorated. Men brought alcohol on to the base and those overseas went into nearby English towns, where Canadians soon gained a negative reputation. British and Canadian officers argued that wet canteens should be established on military bases because that would reduce servicemen’s complaints, restrict what men drank, and keep the rowdiness out of public view. Officers also claimed that, since wet canteens served beer, they were better for men because beer typically had lower alcohol content, and was viewed as less harmful and more nourishing than hard liquor. Royal echoed the health and morale arguments, stating the provision of wet and dry canteens would improve “the comfort, morale and general well-being of women” in the future CWAC.<sup>352</sup> The RCAF author repeated the improved control and public relations arguments. They insisted that the wet canteens would allow the RCAF to “make the rules” and reduce bad press by reducing the numbers of women in beverage rooms.<sup>353</sup>

In addition, the Plan mobilized servicewomen’s military identities as a

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<sup>351</sup> RCAF (WD) Plan,” 26; Cook, “Wet Canteens and Worrying Mothers,” 326.

<sup>352</sup> Royal, “Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women’s Army Corps,” Section V (para 4d); Backs Ald Saunders 100 P.C. to Stop Drinking by Women,”; Minutes of District C.W.A.C. Officers’ Conference, 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> February 1945, Ottawa, Canada; Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 130-34; Cook, “Wet Canteens and Worrying Mothers,” 316-29; Bellamy, ““To Ensure the Continued Life of the Industry:’ The Public Relations Campaign of the Ontario Brewers during WWII,” 403-23; Virden, “Warm Beer and Cold Canons: US Army Chaplains and Alcohol Consumption in World War II,” 79-97.

<sup>353</sup> “RCAF (WD) Plan.” 26;

justification for wet canteens. They emphasized that granting women wet canteens was a matter of equality and ethics: “if they are enlisted as responsible people, airwomen should have the same privilege as airmen in this respect.”<sup>354</sup> Like the *Ottawa Journal* reporter cited above, the RCAF reinforced servicemen’s standards as the military norm and tied servicewomen’s right to drink with their membership in a masculine organization. Yet the author of the Plan left room for gender variance with the caveats that servicewomen would only be permitted in wet canteens at “certain hours” and if the commanding officer approved.

Supporters of servicewomen’s wet canteens insisted that these facilities would enable better supervision of military personnel, which was a method used to regulate both homosexual and heterosexual activity. The armed services could scrutinize its personnel in military settings. Army officials were concerned that the homosocial military environment created space for same-sex relations. Personnel were instructed that homosexuality was not a problem in the CWAC, but “[w]hen there are large groups of women all living together, it must be watched for ALWAYS...”<sup>355</sup> There was a longstanding association of lesbianism and female masculinity with alcohol. As Cameron notes, working class lesbians often met in bars. Leisa Meyer observes that alcohol often served as an excuse to get rid of lesbian servicewomen.<sup>356</sup> Wet canteens would allow the armed services to observe servicewomen for any signs of misconduct.

Officers also monitored servicewomen in civilian locations. RCAF (WD) veteran

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<sup>354</sup> “RCAF (WD) Plan,” 26

<sup>355</sup> DHH 325.009 (D252), as quoted in Gossage, *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots*, 161. Emphasis in text.

<sup>356</sup> Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*, 9, 32-70, 150-6; and Duder, *Awfully Devoted Women*, 239.

Nano Pennefather-McConnell remembers that a female officer asked her for a list of pubs frequented by airwomen. The officer had been told “to investigate rumours that airwomen were doing a lot of drinking.” Pennefather-McConnell reports that her group of friends drank as usual, but never saw the officer. She suspected that the officer had simply avoided the places on the list. Years later, the officer informed her that she thought that Pennefather-McConnell had told airwomen to stay away from those pubs since the investigations came up empty. The officer’s request for the list of pubs was in itself a method of regulation as the gathering of names warned of impending inspection. The officer likely hoped to encourage proper conduct by enlisting Pennefather-McConnell’s help with her investigation. Pennefather-McConnell’s experience reflects larger trends. Defence officials were sensitive to public criticism of uniformed female drinkers. Suspicion that servicewomen drank excessively justified increased surveillance of servicewomen’s off-duty behaviour.<sup>357</sup>

Police patrolled bars as well. RCAF Flight Sergeant D.S. Howell of No. 1 Training Command reported the “result[s] of [a] special check on CWAC & RCAF (WD) Personnel” conducted on 10 December 1942. Howell listed the number of servicewomen found at each location and any male companions. For example, military police checked Toronto’s “Piccadilly Hotel at 2145 hrs,” where “[t]wo CWAC personnel observed in beverage room with army men.” A visit to the Royal York Hotel’s beverage room at 2000

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<sup>357</sup> Pennefather, McConnell, *We Never Stopped Dancing*, 40.

hrs turned up two CWAC and five RCAF (WD) servicewomen but no men.<sup>358</sup> Civilian police raided commercial drinking establishments across the country, and reported when they caught servicemen in “immoral” acts, such as sleeping with unmarried women. Police scrutiny was another method of supervision that was intended to deter misconduct.<sup>359</sup>

The women’s services carefully monitored servicewomen’s bodies. Army recruits were screened more closely for pregnancy after a 1943 army study revealed that 31.5 per cent of unmarried CWAC servicewomen released for pregnancy between 1 January and 31 May 1943 had been pregnant when they joined. The scrutiny continued throughout women’s military service. A visit to the clinic for any reason was grounds for pregnancy testing in the experience of CWAC veteran Mabel Anne Beck (née Morriss). Ex-air force Corporal D. Phyllis Harrison recalls having to sign for a monthly issue of sanitary napkins during air force basic training. Those who did not sign for their supplies were brought before officers to explain why. Rosemary “Fiddy” Greer narrates a similar experience at her first posting after basic training. It took Wrens stationed at HMCS *Stadacona* some time to discover that this was the navy’s way of monitoring their sex lives. They found out when the medical officer called Greer’s shipmate in to account for

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<sup>358</sup> Pennefather-McConnell, *We Never Stopped Dancing*, 40; Extract of Minutes of Meeting of Defence Council, 11 December 1942, LAC, RG 24, vol. 3367, file HQ 426-1-2-1, vol. 1; Flight Sergeant D.S. Howell, NCO i/c Service Police, No. 1 Training Command, RCAF, Results of Special Check on CWAC & RCAF (WD) Personnel, 10 December 1942, LAC, RG 24, vol. 3367, file HQ 426-1-2-1, vol. 1; Paper re WD discipline problems, Aug/Sep 42, Wking [sic] paper used by S/O Wetzell in preparing WD History; [unclear] for Group Captain M.M. Sisley, Director of Provost & Security Services to Command Assistant Provost Marshal, Eastern Air Command, Western Air Command, No. 1 Training Command, No. 2 Training Command, No. 3 Training Command, No. 4 Training Command, 16 November, 1942.

<sup>359</sup> Malleck, *Try to Control Yourself*, 232-6; and Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 130-4.

why she had not signed for her supply. After that, the Wrens made sure to regularly sign for their sanitary napkins and often passed this information on to newbies.<sup>360</sup> The women's services sought to avoid the negative publicity of a pregnant woman in uniform with its testing and discrete tracking of women's menstrual cycles.

On top of monitoring servicewomen's bodily chemistry, the armed services reportedly tried to manipulate it. Decades later, Greer remained convinced that the navy had resorted to chemical methods. She believed that the navy laced its coffee with saltpetre to lower naval personnel's sex drive. A more skeptical Harrison admits that it might have been only a rumour that air force personnel were given saltpetre-flavored porridge.<sup>361</sup>

The services combatted sex "delinquency" through recreation. The Young Women's Christian Association had long used recreation as a solution to the perceived immorality of female workers. The idea was to steer women away from questionable amusements into wholesome activities.<sup>362</sup> Activities varied depending on the military facility. Servicewomen posted to isolated areas recall putting on skits, plays, and other shows. Others posted in or near cities like Ottawa amused themselves in restaurants, dance halls, and service clubs. Stations frequently hosted dances. A wide array of sports

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<sup>360</sup> Pierson, "They're Still Women After All," 179; Mabel Anne Beck, "Mabel Anne 'Nan' Beck (née Morriss)" in *Equal to the Challenge: An Anthology of Women's Experiences During World War II*, ed. Lisa Banister, (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2001), 218; Ruth Masters, "Ruth Masters," in *Women of the War Years: Stories of Determination and Indomitable Courage*, ed. Orpha E. Galloway, (Gladstone, MB, Canada: self-published, 2000), 172; Harrison, *Saga of an Airwoman*, 80; and Greer, *The Girls of the King's Navy*, 84-5.

<sup>361</sup> Rosemary "Fiddy" Greer, *The Girls of the King's Navy* (Victoria: Sono Nis Press, 1983), 84; and D. Phyllis Harrison, *Saga of an Airwoman* (Penticton, B.C.: Sage Press, 1995), 80-1.

<sup>362</sup> F. Elsie (Mrs. J.L) Laurence to Wing Officer Willa Walker; and Carolyn Strange, *Toronto's Girl Problem: The Perils and Pleasures of the City, 1880-1930* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 116-143, 175-208.

teams and bands formed on many stations. The services organized traveling groups of entertainers composed of service personnel. Programs from these shows, such as “Meet the Navy,” are found in servicewomen’s scrapbooks. More serious types enjoyed the various study groups, where they learned new languages and other skills. Movies were another popular form of entertainment.<sup>363</sup>

Another way female officers combatted sex delinquency was by publicly upholding the reputation of the services. Whether writing to concerned parents or speaking to the media, female officers denied that there was a drinking problem in their service. For example, CWAC Major Isabel Cronyn told Toronto press in September 1942 that she had encountered “only one” drunk servicewoman to date. Cronyn countered rumors of drunkenness by presenting herself as the expert with the insider knowledge.<sup>364</sup>

The case Cronyn referred to was likely one that she handled during her time as the Officer Commanding of CWAC “B” Company, Military District Two. The following story draws from the reports written by the officers who handled the case. On 8 February 1942, military police responded with Toronto City Police to a complaint that an Ottawa-based servicewoman (Recruit W.) was causing trouble at a private dwelling. Army Captain F.E. McMahon described the house as a residence of Chinese restaurant workers. Upon arrival, the police discovered that the unidentified intoxicated woman had left for

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<sup>363</sup> Mary Ziegler, *We Serve That Men May Fly* (Hamilton, ON: R.C.A.F. (W.D.) Association, 1973), 26, 71-88, 95-98, 114-5; W. Hugh Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War: The Canadian Women’s Army Corps, Their Story* (Dartmouth, N.S: Writing and Editorial Services, 1983), 291-99; and Greer, *The Girls of the King’s Navy*, 69-8. For an example of a veteran who pasted in a concert program, see CWAC CQMS Elizabeth Gartner, CWAC Scrapbook, George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum’s Military History Research Centre, CWM Archives 58E 5 3.2, Control No. 19840184-012.

<sup>364</sup> “Drunkenness Charges Denied,” *Toronto Daily Star*, September 21, 1942; and Copy of letter from Wing Officer Willa Walker for Air Vice-Marshal J.A. Sully for Chief of the Air Staff to Mrs. J. L. Laurence.

Union Station. They learned that the servicewoman had come and gone multiple times from the house over the past few nights from a witness referred to only as a “Chinaman.” While the police investigated, a fellow servicewoman had found Recruit W. stumbling down the street and brought her to the YWCA.<sup>365</sup> The next morning Recruit W. was kept in custody until she was brought before the female Staff Officer, Junior Commander Margaret Eaton. Eaton sent Recruit W. back to the YWCA with an NCO as a guard. Recruit W was returned to Ottawa on 10 February.<sup>366</sup>

Recruit W. had crossed a few lines with her behaviour. Under the 1941 CWAC regulations, she committed the offence of drunkenness. Furthermore, she committed her crimes in public and displayed unfeminine behaviour. Military psychologist Captain Olive Ruth Russell labelled women who were uncooperative and failed to exhibit what she felt was appropriate passivity for women as unsuitable for the CWAC. Cronyn portrayed Recruit W. as an aggressive, uncooperative, and dirty drunk. It reportedly took “several hours of forceful persuasion” to get an “obstreperous and incoherent” Recruit W. to go to bed on 8 February. Cronyn thought it worth documenting that, when Recruit W was searched at the YWCA, “[h]er water bottle was found to contain liquor, and her underclothes were not clean.”<sup>367</sup> She went against gender norms with her excessive

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<sup>365</sup> Copy of letter from Junior Commander Margaret C. Eaton, Staff Officer CWAC to Officer Administering, CWAC, 10 February 1942, DHH, 325.009 (D252), vol. 4; Junior Commander Isabel Cronyn, O.C. “B” Coy, CWAC, M.D. No. 2, Report on Recruit W. Ottawa, 9 February 1942, DHH, 325.009 (D252), vol. 4; and Copy of letter from Captain F.E. McMahon, for H.C. Witthun OC 12 Cdn. Pro. Coy, to D.A.P.M, M.D. 2, 9 Feb 1942, DHH, 325.009 (D252), vol. 4. The quotation comes from Eaton’s letter.

<sup>366</sup> Copy of letter from Junior Commander Margaret C. Eaton, Staff Officer CWAC to Officer Administering, CWAC.

<sup>367</sup> Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl*, 85-92; and Junior Commander Isabel Cronyn, O.C. “B” Coy, CWAC, M.D. No. 2, Report on Recruit W.

drinking, public drunkenness, and aggressive behaviour.

Since Recruit W. exhibited traits of an alcoholic, she committed another transgression of gender norms. Doctors, psychologists, and women's temperance organizations all framed alcoholism as a male disease. North American and British mental health experts viewed alcoholism as evidence of a "personality disorder" and a "problem of gender identity." These views persisted into the 1950s.<sup>368</sup> Male alcoholics violated gender norms because they exhibited dependency, which was a stereotypically female trait. American historian Lori Rotskoff explains that female alcoholics were doubly transgressive "because they engaged in deviant behaviour" that psychologists perceived as "masculine neurosis."<sup>369</sup>

Recruit W.'s dirty underclothes were another mark against her. Uncleanliness constituted proof of poor military discipline. CWAC Piper Beverly J. Hodgins (née Macdonald) inserted a wartime army manual, "Don't be a Stinker," into her postwar scrapbook. Changing one's underclothing frequently helped one avoid becoming a stinker, which according to the pamphlet was a highly undesirable fate.<sup>370</sup> Uncleanliness

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<sup>368</sup> Valverde, *Diseases of the Will*, 52-4, 104-10; and Lori Rotskoff, *Love on the Rocks: Men, Women, and Alcohol in Post-World War II America*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 64-86. The term "personality disorder" appears in Valverde, 104. The term "problem of gender identity" appears in Rotskoff, 69.

<sup>369</sup> Valverde, *Diseases of Will*, 104-10; Rotskoff, *Love on the Rocks*, 69, and Stephen Patnode, "'Their Lack of Masculine Security and Aggression Was Obvious': Gender and the Medicalization of Inebriety in the United States, 1930-50," *Canadian Bulletin of Medical History* 24, no. 1 (2007): 67-92. For a discussion of female alcoholics in the US, see Michelle L. McClellan, "Fame through Shame: Women Alcoholics, Celebrity, and Disclosure," *Journal of Historical Biography* 13 (Spring 2013): 93-122.

<sup>370</sup> Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl*, 85-92; Nancy Olson, "Assembling a Life: The (Auto)biography of Alexis Amelia Alvey, 1942-1945" (master's thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1998), 53 n17; "Hygiene and Sanitation," (Lecture, Recruits Training), LAC, MG30 E386, Jean Flatt Davey Fonds, folder on Lectures, Addresses, Informal Talks, n.d., 1942-1945; and "Don't be a Stinker," undated army manual, in Beverly J

also represented women's lack of femininity and their potential immorality. North American interwar and wartime soap advertisements warned women that they jeopardized their relationships if they had dirty clothes. Historian Melissa McEuen argues that, among American military women, "uncleanliness was linked to a disinterest in ideal womanhood and a propensity towards sexual aggressiveness."<sup>371</sup> An ideal woman was concerned with her appearance. A 1942 American advertisement for Lux soap transformed dirty underwear into a wartime threat. Featuring the headline "Undies are Gossips!" Lux counselled that a woman's underwear would absorb her sweat and then "tell her friends" that she has "Undie Odor." According to Lux, dirty underwear was an equivalent threat to careless talk.<sup>372</sup>

Fear of mixed-race relationships produced yet another mark against Recruit W. Mixed-race relations challenged notions of Canada as a white Christian settler society. Canadian society perceived Chinese men to be dangerous to white women as it was believed the men would lead women to a life of immorality. Civilian courts often judged women and girls found in the company of men of Chinese background as sexually immoral. Morality officers investigated white women for visiting Chinatown or

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Hodgins, CWAC Scrapbook, George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum's Military History Research Centre, CWM Archives, Textual Records 58E 6 3.1, Control No. 19830184-001.

<sup>371</sup> Cook, *Sex, Lies and Cigarettes*, 217; and Melissa McEuen, *Making War, Making Women: Femininity and Duty on the American Home Front, 1941-1945* (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 2011), 115-132. The quotation comes from McEuen, 115. For link of uncleanliness, alcohol, and immorality, see Margaret Jane Hillyard Little, "*No Car, No Radio, No Liquor Permit*": *The Moral Regulation of Single Mothers in Ontario, 1920-1997* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1998), 103-5; Campbell, *Sit Down and Drink Your Beer*, 73-74; and Valverde, *Diseases of Will*, 169.

<sup>372</sup> McEuen, *Making War, Making Women*, 124-5. The advertisement appears on page 125.

associating with men of Chinese background.<sup>373</sup> Elise Chenier has documented that white women and men of Chinese heritage formed a variety of relationships in Toronto in the first half of the twentieth-century. These relationships ranged from legal marriages to strategic arrangements between economically and socially marginalized white women and Chinese bachelors. Chenier concludes, “Oral history evidence suggests that young working-class women got a better deal in heterosexual relationships with men of Chinese heritage than they did with men of white heritage, at least during the dating stage.”<sup>374</sup> Men of Chinese descent offset their lower social status by helping more with domestic chores or allowing women more decision-making power. Wartime tabloids reported on poor white woman who bargained sexual services for food and/or shelter from Chinatown restaurant owners. The repeated mentions of Chinese men in the case reports indicate that the officers involved shared racist fears.<sup>375</sup>

Recruit W.’s actions demonstrate that some servicewomen rejected the armed services’ attempts to control their off-duty lives. The armed services tried numerous ways to guide servicewomen’s behaviour that ranged from providing alternative leisure activities to close supervision. Yet Recruit W.’s actions and the arguments of officers who advocated for wet canteens suggest that supervision was inadequate. The special

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<sup>373</sup> Joan Sangster, *Regulating Girls and Women: Sexuality, Family and the Law, 1920-1960* (Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2001), 121; Constance Backhouse, “White Female Help and Chinese-Canadian Employees: Race, Class, Gender and Law in the Case of Yee Cun, 1924,” *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 26, no. 3 (1994): 35-52; and Elise Chenier, “Sex, Intimacy, and Desire among Men of Chinese Heritage and Women of Non-Asian Heritage in Toronto, 1910-1950,” *Urban History Review* 42, no. 2 (Spring 2014): 29-43.

<sup>374</sup> Chenier, “Sex, Intimacy, and Desire among Men of Chinese Heritage and Women of Non-Asian Heritage in Toronto, 1910-1950,” 33

<sup>375</sup> Chenier, “Sex, Intimacy, and Desire among Men of Chinese Heritage and Women of Non-Asian Heritage in Toronto, 1910-1950,” 29-43.

checks of beverage rooms did not prevent public criticism, nor stop single women from having intercourse. Recruit W.'s experience also illustrates that breaking the rules had consequences: she spent the night in custody and was sent back to Ottawa. Servicewomen navigated the risks and rewards when choosing their leisure activities.

### **Servicewomen's Responses to the "Delinquency" Control Measures**

Charles Power, the Minister of National Defence (Air), recognized servicewomen's agency when he informed the Defence Council in December 1942 that he "doubt[ed]" that the services would be able to stop "service women [from] frequenting taverns and beer parlours."<sup>376</sup> Servicewomen's postwar accounts demonstrate that Power had accurately assessed the wartime situation. For example, CWAC veteran Company Quartermaster-Sergeant (CQMS) Elizabeth Gartner blended alternative leisure activities with beer-related souvenirs into wartime scrapbook. Gartner remembered her trips to St. Paul, Minnesota, and Chicago, Illinois, with a combination of concert/play programs, matchbooks from bars, beer coasters, and drink and food menus. Other servicewomen remark that they spent their off-duty hours traveling, taking in shows, and drinking.<sup>377</sup> Military personnel simultaneously participated and rejected the efforts to control their sexuality.

Servicewomen continued to drink even after being disciplined. An army veteran describes being brought before a colonel "after one of our nights on the town." She admits that she omitted the size of the bottles when questioned by the male colonel, who

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<sup>376</sup> Extract of Minutes of Meeting of Defence Council, 11 December 1942.

<sup>377</sup> CWAC CQMS Elizabeth Gartner, CWAC Scrapbook, George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum's Military History Research Centre, CWM Archives, 58E 5 3.2, Control No. 19840184-012.

had a reputation for being a heavy drinker. The colonel let her off with a warning because she had a clean record. The warning did not prevent her from accepting a party invitation from the “cook and his wife” later that night. The cook gave her a bottle of beer as she left and it broke after she smuggled it into barracks. This time she did not escape punishment: she was confined to barracks and lost her pay for ten days. Another CWAC servicewoman told a story about how her work relationship with the cooks in the officers’ mess enabled her to obtain alcohol when she was confined to barracks for being late to parade. Although she did not specify why she was late, she was a self-professed frequent drinker and loved partying off base. Punishment did not deter these women from having their fun in the manner of their choosing.<sup>378</sup>

Military camaraderie helped servicewomen defy the military rules around alcohol. The two army women in the previous paragraph mentioned that cooks supplied them with alcohol. An anonymous airwoman told a funny story about how her group of friends arranged for a male flight sergeant to sneak them beer. The flight sergeant, who managed the mess, would pass them beer through the window at night, which they then hid in the toilet tanks of the women’s barracks. After multiple successes, they then discovered the downside of their storage system. They were caught when plumbing backed up because water had loosened the labels in the tanks. Her sense of accomplishment comes across decades later. As quoted at the start of this chapter, the anonymous airwoman began the story by saying that many air force women “resented” the fact that only men had wet

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<sup>378</sup> Former Member, CWAC, “Only three bottles of beer, sir,” in Gossage, *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots*, 190-1; and Former Member CWAC, “All the booze we wanted,” in Gossage, *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots*, 255-6.

canteens and then described how servicewomen “got around” the rules. By sharing the story for an anecdotal popular history, she let readers know that servicewomen resisted unfair rules. Still, the experience of Alice Petite Samuel suggests that some servicewomen followed military rules.<sup>379</sup>

Recreation, the surveillance of servicewomen’s bodies, and the rumoured chemical control methods had mixed results as well. One CWAC officer recalled a female major’s skepticism when a visiting psychologist told a group of female officers that they would see a reduction in promiscuity once they organized sports for women. The doubtful major then interjected, ““Nothing will take the place of sexual intercourse!””<sup>380</sup> The major was proven correct because pregnant servicewomen were discharged throughout the war. The surveillance made it harder for servicewomen but not impossible to hide proof of their “indiscretions.” A former WRCNS servicewoman states that another woman successfully hid her pregnancy for eight months “because of her bulk.”<sup>381</sup> Naval women sidestepped attempts to control their sexuality when they avoided naval coffee and participated in the charade of signing for their sanitary napkins. However, naval women felt compelled to participate in this charade. Resistance had its limits too.<sup>382</sup>

Social pressures shaped women’s pursuit of their off-duty pleasures. Senior

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<sup>379</sup> Former member, RCAF (WD), “Coffee, tea, milk, or pop,” 185-6; and Poulin, “Invisible Women: Aboriginal Servicewomen in Canada’s Second World War Military,” 153. The content and narrative structure of “Coffee, tea, milk or pop” is very similar to “Beer in the toilet tanks,” in Bruce, *Back the Attack!*, 83.

<sup>380</sup> “Cut Down on Promiscuity,” in Bruce, *Back the Attack!*, 50.

<sup>381</sup> Former Member, WRCNS, “Because of her bulk,” in Gossage, *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots*, 188.

<sup>382</sup> Greer, *The Girls of the King’s Navy*, 84-5.

officers severely criticized a female officer who spent the night in a hotel with a male naval officer. A WRCN veteran explained that there was criticism “not only because she was doing it, but because she was doing it in uniform.” The officer broke a cardinal rule: servicewomen were taught that they should “*never* disgrace your uniform.”<sup>383</sup> Like uniformed women’s presence in beverage rooms, the issue was public nature of the WRCNS officer’s “impropriety.” All ranks risked their peers’ disapproval if they were caught engaging in “immoral” behaviour in uniform. Alice Petite Samuel, an Indigenous CWAC veteran, recalls that she refused to link herself with women who “got around” and pushed what she saw as the limits of respectability.<sup>384</sup>

An RCAF (WD) veteran used alcohol consumption as a divider between respectable and unrespectable servicewomen decades later. She criticized airwomen who tarnished the reputation of all air force women by “get[ting] real drunk” in civilian establishments. Once again it was the amount consumed and the public nature of the drinking that were the problems. The airwoman remained committed to defending her individual and the service’s reputation because she emphasized that only “some” airwomen became “real drunk.” She differentiated the majority of servicewomen, like herself, from the heavy drinkers.<sup>385</sup>

The social expectations placed on servicewomen made it hard for them to abstain. Servicemen’s heavy drinking initially made Nano Pennefather-McConnell uncomfortable. She mobilized the image of women as a moral restraining force in a letter

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<sup>383</sup> WRCNS member, “Doing it in Uniform!,” in Bruce, *Back the Attack!*, 99.

<sup>384</sup> Poulin, “Invisible Women: Aboriginal Servicewomen in Canada’s Second World War Military,” 153.

<sup>385</sup> Former RCAF (WD), “Let’s Have Some Respect,” in Bruce, *Back the Attack!*, 83.

home, remarking that servicewomen “feel it is our duty (?) [sic] to go out with as many Canadians as possible, to keep them from spending all their money on drinking.”

Pennefather-McConnell quotes this letter in her memoir and then writes that servicewomen had to find ways to cope when their “aircrew friends” invited them out to pubs while on leave. The coping tactics included making sure that they went for food and drinks, and not just drinks.<sup>386</sup> Her experiences illustrate that servicewomen were expected to provide female companionship to their male colleagues.

Military customs created additional pressures to drink, which at times placed servicewomen in danger. Officers had little choice about attending mess parties where heavy drinking ensued. According to one CWAC, “You could be ordered to go.” Attending mess parties placed women, such as herself, who had grown up in a dry household, in tough situations, especially if one had her experience of serving with predatory officers. Like the author of the “RCAF (WD) Plan,” she argues that unscrupulous officers took advantage of naïve servicewomen. She states that these “older...permanent-force” men were protected by the old boys network, claiming that the Medical Officer “did nothing about” the officer who fathered children with several servicewomen. She avoided unwelcome attention when she successfully took on the role of “kid who had to be protected.”<sup>387</sup> Her experience reflects Paul Jackson’s conclusion that armed services largely “ignored indecent sexual assault between male and female servicepeople.” Jackson uncovered only one case where a male serviceman, in this case

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<sup>386</sup> Pennefather-McConnell, *We Never Stopped Dancing*, 55, 70. The quotation comes from page 70.

<sup>387</sup> “Treated like Dirt,” in Bruce, *Back the Attack!*, 43.

an RCAF officer, was convicted of indecently assaulting a servicewoman.<sup>388</sup>

Shifting attitudes that had loosened premarital restrictions on sexual expression created pressures for women to be sexually available for men. Servicemen criticized their female colleagues for being “frigid.” Many servicemen adopted a proprietary view towards servicewomen in their respective branch. Servicemen checked on servicewomen in whom they were interested to see if they were with other men. “Brothers-in-arms” censured servicewomen for going on dates with men from other branches of the Canadian armed services and other countries.<sup>389</sup>

Intoxicated servicemen fought with other men who interfered with “their” women. According to historian Dean Oliver, one widely publicized clash in Calgary, Alberta, between men conscripted for home defence under the National Resources Mobilization Act (NRMA) and men who “volunteer[ed] for General Service [GS]” began when two NRMA soldiers stopped an intoxicated GS soldier named Private S. from accompanying two CWAC servicewomen into the restricted CWAC area.<sup>390</sup> As Oliver remarks, the NRMA soldiers’ actions challenged Private S.’s sense of masculinity: Private S. defended his hurt pride by attacking the NRMA soldiers, who easily repelled him. The reader is left to wonder how the servicewomen felt about Private S. and whether

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<sup>388</sup> Jackson, *One of the Boys*, 82, 147-264; and Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*, 122-78. The quotation comes from Jackson, 82.

<sup>389</sup> Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*, 122-123; Davidson, “Hemlines and Hairdos: Body Management for the Feminine Ideal in the Canadian Women’s Army Corps,” 163-203; Betty (Fillmore) Rogers, *A Girl in Blue: My Days in the R.C.A.F. (W.D)* (Sackville, NB: self-published, printed by Mount Allison Reprographics Department, 1993), 9, 18, 20-1,65, 99; Greer, *The Girls of the King’s Navy*, 119; and Ruth Tierney, *Petticoat Warfare* (Belleville, ON: Mika Publishing Company, 1984), 59-60.

<sup>390</sup> Oliver, “‘My Darlin’ Clementine’? Wooing Zombies for \$6.50 a Night: General Service-NRMA Relations in Wartime Calgary,” 49. See also Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 130-4.

he misread their intentions. Servicewomen had to navigate men's sense of entitlement to female company.<sup>391</sup>

Men's sense of entitlement carried negative consequences for some women. Vi Dudley-Mathiesen insists that, in her naiveté, she thought a pilot was joking when he uttered "you get the room and I'll get the booze" as part of his invitation to a dance. The bluntness of the invitation demonstrates that military personnel thought that sex was more likely to happen when under the influence of alcohol. She implies that she handled the situation by drinking very little, which gave her an advantage over her date who had consumed a lot, and keeping her reservation at the YWCA. Her inebriated date was confused when they arrived at the YWCA in the taxi and his confusion allowed her to evade his efforts to seduce her. The pilot assuaged his bruised ego by determinedly yelling "Welsher" at her every time he saw her after the dance. Harassment was a threat experienced in servicewomen's off-duty lives.<sup>392</sup>

Some servicewomen faced violence in their on-duty lives. CWAC veteran Pearl Bordts writes that several CWAC servicewomen stationed in Halifax were "attack[ed]" by the janitor who snuck into their barracks. She fended him off by tossing a pot of hot water on him and running away. Another veteran instructed Glad Bryce to include her story of being sexually assaulted by an airman in a popular history of the RCAF (WD). The veteran wished to stand up for other women she knew had suffered the same

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<sup>391</sup> Oliver, "'My Darlin' Clementine'? Wooing Zombies for \$6.50 a Night: General Service-NRMA Relations in Wartime Calgary," 50-1; and Daniel Byers, *The Zombie Army: The Canadian Army and Conscript in the Second World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2016), 201.

<sup>392</sup> Dudley-Mathiesen, *Sweet 'N' Sour*, 53-55.

trauma.<sup>393</sup> The airman snuck into the darkroom and groped the air force woman when she was in the process of developing photos. The assaults were uncovered when a doctor, suspicious there was something wrong at her work place, stopped her during one of her visits to a friend in the hospital. After his gentle questioning uncovered what happened, he told her that other servicewomen had been assaulted. Reluctant at first, the servicewoman agreed to the doctor's request to be a witness when he "said it would prevent other women from going through what she had..." Military officials supported the airwoman and the airman was discharged. She switched jobs and enjoyed working as a Hospital Assistant for the rest of her war service. The stories of violence and harassment reveal that servicewomen faced hostility in their work environments.<sup>394</sup>

Consensual sexual exploration carried the risk of discharge. Stories of colleagues simply disappearing with little or no explanation are scattered throughout multiple accounts. Veterans recall that pregnancy was the usual assumption. The armed services used discharge as a disciplinary technique to punish "immoral" servicewomen. Servicewomen were discharged for becoming pregnant and not their male colleagues who fathered the children. Yet servicemen had access to condoms and servicewomen did not. Double-standards shaped the enforcement of VD. Initially, army and air force women who contracted VD were let go, while men were fined and treated.<sup>395</sup> Senior

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<sup>393</sup> Pearl Bordts, "Pearl Bordts- née Klenman," in *Equal to the Challenge*, 276. The rest of the paragraph closely follows Bryce's description taken from the interview. See Bryce, *First In, Last Out*. 111-2.

<sup>394</sup> Bryce, *First In, Last Out*. 111-2.

<sup>395</sup> Pierson, "They're Still Women After All," 168-214; "Doing it in Uniform!," in Bruce, *Back the Attack!*, 99; Greer, *The Girls of the King's Navy*, 84; and Former Member, RCAF (WD), "You never knew for sure," in Gossage, *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots*, 187. For a discussion of the reasons why pregnant women were discharged, see chapter 1 of this dissertation.

officials from all three services agreed in 1942 that “the preponderance of argument in equity and expedience favours retention rather than discharge” of servicewomen who contacted VD.<sup>396</sup> Servicewomen became entitled to the same medical treatment for VD as servicemen in July 1942. Nevertheless, VD and “illegitimate” pregnancy remained proof that a woman had become immoral, and, as a result, it remained a justification for their discharge. Servicewomen faced pressures to be sexually available for men, but, almost invariably were the ones to deal with the consequences if evidence of their sexual activity (i.e. pregnancy or VD) was discovered.<sup>397</sup>

Servicewomen were punished for homosexual behaviour. Homosexuality was considered a “psychiatric disorder” and a perversion of normal sex drives. Leisa Meyer argues that the American army often found it easier to discharge suspected lesbians for alcohol-related offenses, like repeated charges of drunk and disorderly conduct, than to prosecute them for lesbianism. Although he makes no reference to alcohol, Paul Jackson reports that Canadian officials also handled servicewomen suspected of lesbianism quietly, posting them elsewhere or discharging them on medical grounds.<sup>398</sup> Ex-Wren Rosemary Greer writes she learned that two of her shipmates who “slept together in a lower bunk” simply vanished with no explanation shortly after they had been “found

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<sup>396</sup> Memorandum from AG to MGO, QMG, CGS, 9 July 1942, LAC, RG 24, Reel no C-5318, HQC 8994-12, as quoted in Pierson, *They're Still Women After All*, 190.

<sup>397</sup> Pierson, *They're Still Women After All*, 168-214; “Doing it in Uniform!,” 99; Greer, *The Girls of the King's Navy*, 84; and Former Member, RCAF (WD), “You never knew for sure,” 187. For a discussion of the reasons why pregnant women were discharged, see chapter 1 of this dissertation.

<sup>398</sup> Knaff, *Beyond Rosie the Riveter*, 48-132; Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*, 9, 32-70, 150-6; Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 180-7; Pierson, *They're Still Women After All*, 168-214; and Jackson, *One of the Boys*, 180-4.

out.”<sup>399</sup> Wren Margaret remembers that her unit Wren Officer “was very gay indeed. She had two other Wren officers part of her little entourage to the point where again it became a terrible scandal and the Navy solved that by moving her to different position in Ottawa, sending one of the girls up to Sydney, I think, and the other one to the west coast.”<sup>400</sup>

The armed services forced lesbian servicewomen to quit. Nancy Olsen argues in her M.A. thesis that Acting Lieutenant-Commander Alexis Alvey’s promising naval career came to a halt partly because WRCNS Director Adelaide Sinclair knew and disapproved of Alvey’s relationship with another female officer. As Olson tells it, Sinclair maneuvered Alvey into a tough spot. Sinclair had her transferred to a less prestigious posting, a transfer Alvey had rejected when Sinclair informally offered it to her. A disgruntled Alvey asked to be either given an administrative position that she felt suited her skillset or to be discharged. Her discharge request was accepted. Women who deviated from the respectable femininity were handled quietly.<sup>401</sup>

Alvey’s personal and service life reflects a larger trend. Like Alvey, servicewomen navigated around tactics designed to control their off-duty behaviour. The tactics co-existed with pressures to drink and be sexually available for men. Stories of enjoying a drink with colleagues are interspersed with stories of the negative consequences of alcohol consumption. Colleagues who overindulged left unpleasant memories. As cited above, an RCAF (WD) veteran remained bitter that fellow servicewomen disgraced the uniform and threatened the reputation of all servicewomen

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<sup>399</sup> Greer, *The Girls of the King’s Navy*, 84;

<sup>400</sup> Jackson, *One of the Boys*, 247.

<sup>401</sup> Olson, “Assembling a Life: The (Auto)biography of Alexis Amelia Alvey, 1942-1945,” 49-57; Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 182; and Gossage, *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots*, 161.

because they got “real drunk” in public. Servicewomen’s pursuit of their off-duty leisure carried rewards and risks.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter documented the prevalence of alcohol in wartime conversations of servicewomen’s “immorality.” It demonstrated the limits of previous scholarship which has focused on the ways in which class and sexual bias influenced the approach of the armed services to wartime cases of VD and “illegitimate” pregnancy in the women’s services. As this chapter has shown, authorities did not solely blame wartime immorality on the recruitment of “bad types.” Decades of temperance reform and experiences in the First World War had equipped Second World War authorities with alternative explanations for servicewomen’s “immorality.”

When defence officials investigated the causes of servicewomen’s sex “delinquency,” they often turned to alcohol. For example, the armed services specifically looked for the presence of alcohol in their investigations into “illegitimate” pregnancy and they found some evidence to support this presumption in their statistical analysis of pregnancy questionnaires. Alcohol was included in various ways in official explanations for women’s sex “delinquency.” In one explanation, alcohol led youthful women astray. In another explanation, it was unscrupulous men who took advantage of women’s lowered morals. Yet another version held that servicewomen drank, and as a result got into “trouble” because they lacked alternative forms of recreation. Finally, some blamed the absence of supervised military drinking facilities. Squadron Officer Jean Flatt Davey, the senior RCAF (WD) medical officer, expressed many of these explanations during the

course of the war.

Alcohol symbolized different things depending upon whether the individual saw servicewomen through their identity as members of the service or as women. Drinking was strongly associated with military service and, for some wartime authorities and military personnel, alcohol was a justified reward for service. Alcohol often served as a way to resist military rules. Those who supported servicewomen's right to drink linked alcohol with women's full membership in the armed services. Others saw alcohol as an evil enabler. Critics of female drinkers argued that alcohol loosened women's control over their morals, which caused the wartime problems of VD and "illegitimate" pregnancy. The competing views linger in postwar accounts. Some veterans remember that drinking represented that they were one of the gang; some still resent the fact that servicemen had wet canteens but servicewomen did not. Other veterans continued to distance themselves from women, such as Recruit W., who disgraced the uniform by becoming drunk in public. Those who favoured wet canteens for servicewomen typically emphasized servicewomen's military identities, applying male military norms to women, while those who opposed wet canteens emphasized their gender identities and so stressed civilian standards.

The debates over servicewomen's drinking were a continuation of concerns raised by First World War temperance reformers who worried that military service would introduce men to alcohol and thus immorality. Reformers opposed wet canteens and successfully introduced prohibition. Military officials supported wet canteens, claiming that these facilities improved morale, control of men's alcohol consumption, and public

relations. Second World War mothers and officials echoed First World War worries and applied First World War solutions to servicewomen. Civilian and military defence officials proposed wet canteens as a solution to negative publicity that surrounded women who drank in public beverage rooms and beer parlours. Beverage rooms and beer parlours had the reputation of being working-class male spaces and women risked being classified as loose women if they entered these spaces without an escort.

The associations with alcohol with masculinity meant that servicewomen's alcohol consumption tapped into larger concerns that the services produced masculine women who assumed male privileges. As a result, the regulation of servicewomen's drinking was a part of larger efforts to promote an image of respectable femininity. The armed services implemented a multi-faceted set of rules for women's alcohol consumption that echoed the policing of alcohol in the civilian world. The rules differed by rank, location, and service. For example, the armed services denied alcohol to low-ranking servicewomen, but allowed NCOs and Officers to drink in military facilities. This rank based restriction reflected civilian acceptance of middle-class women's drinking in private spaces. In addition, the armed services discharged servicewomen who became pregnant or infected with VD, and provided alternative social activities. Servicewomen simultaneously accepted and rejected the methods used to control them. Their wartime decisions and postwar recollections reveal that alcohol symbolized how they envisioned their place in the armed services.

## Chapter Three – Building Bridges: Wartime Women’s Services

### Design Their Successors

Women continued to be drawn to military service even after Japan surrendered in August 1945. On 25 February 1946, Belva S. expressed her interest in enlisting in the “permanent army.” A local Canadian Women’s Army Corps (CWAC) representative replied that she would not be able to enrol because the army had no plans for “a permanent army force for women...” This exchange occurred while senior female and male officers considered the position of women in the peacetime armed forces.<sup>402</sup>

This chapter explores women’s negotiations over the future of women in the Canadian army, navy and air force and examines three early attempts by servicewomen to shape their wartime legacy. It does so through a close examination of three under-studied reports that were written in 1946 as the women’s services moved towards disbandment. The reports are the “Report on W.R.C.N.S.” by Acting Captain Adelaide Sinclair,<sup>403</sup> the “Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women’s Army Corps,” by Lieutenant-Colonel Daisy I. Royal, and the unsigned “R.C.A.F. (Women’s Division) Plan for

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<sup>402</sup> Miss Belva S. to CWAC, 25 February 1946, Directorate of History and Heritage, National Defence Headquarters, Ottawa, Canada (hereafter DHH), 325.009 (D252), vol. 14; and Copy of letter from B. for Major R. Grace Grant, District CWAC Officer, 26 February 1946, DHH, 325.009 (D252), vol. 14. See also W. Hugh Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War: The Canadian Women’s Army Corps, Their Story* (Dartmouth, NS: Writing and Editorial Services, 1983), 235-38; Army Circular from Major-General E.G. Weeks to GOG-in-C, Pacific Command, All Officers Commanding, re Discharge Policy-CWAC, 20 Feb 1946, DHH, 112.21009 (D163); and Barbara Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military* (Montreal: Art Global and the Dept. of National Defense in co-operation with the Dept. of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2000), 93.

<sup>403</sup> The author thanks Robert Caldwell, a naval historian at the Department of National Defence, for pointing the author towards this report. He mentioned that Sinclair wrote her report with the intention that it would be of future use.

Organization and Suggestions Concerning Employment” [“RCAF (WD) Plan”]. It is likely that Wing Officer Winnifred May Taylor wrote or at least contributed to the RCAF report since the duties of the senior female staff officer included advising on administrative matters and the other two reports were written by senior female officers.<sup>404</sup> The reports are not identical. Sinclair included reports written by other officers while Royal positioned her narrative as continuation of a previous history that covered the CWAC from 1941 to April 1945. The “RCAF (WD) Plan” operated as a “proposal to rebuild the division...”<sup>405</sup> Although not entirely parallel reports, the authors all drew lessons from wartime experience to prepare for the re-employment of women in future military engagements.

Sinclair, Royal, and the author of the RCAF report argued that wartime problems caused by military inexperience with servicewomen could be avoided by using female veterans as defence planners when the services re-organized. They emphasized that only ex-servicewomen had the skills required to write regulations, organize clothing, and arrange accommodations for the servicewomen of the future. In their view, the wartime experience proved that future servicewomen should be treated like servicemen, except where servicewomen’s gender-specific needs required different treatment. The war had also exposed previous defence planners’ weaknesses. According to Sinclair, Royal, and the author of the RCAF report male military officials knew what worked from male

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<sup>404</sup> Mary Ziegler, *We Serve That Men May Fly: The Story of the Women’s Division Royal, Canadian Air Force* (Hamilton: R.C.A.F. W.D Association, 1973), 111.

<sup>405</sup> Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 93; and Lieutenant-Colonel Daisy I. Royal, “Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women’s Army Corps,” 29 August 1946, preamble to Section I, copy at DHH, 81/208. The quotation comes from Dundas.

military standpoints and civilian women understood women's gender-related needs. However, only female veterans had the embodied knowledge required to successfully navigate the tensions between servicewomen's identities as women and military personnel. The authors of these three reports claimed female authority in two key ways: as repositories of military knowledge and as military planners, anticipating and legitimating the re-employment of women in future military engagements. The assertion of female authority will be demonstrated by exploring the analysis of and solutions to the wartime issues of discipline, clothing, and accommodation in the 1946 reports. The recommendations on pay, promotion, and marriage provided further parameters for women's future employment.

The 1946 reports are "parting shots." They were submitted one to two months before the women's services officially disbanded. The WRCNS officially disbanded on 31 August 1946. Sinclair submitted her report on 31 May 1946, the date of her discharge, making its submission one of her last acts as Director. The "Report on W.R.C.N.S." was Sinclair's wartime legacy, and she sought to ensure that legacy when she donated a copy to Library and Archives Canada in 1982. The CWAC officially disbanded and Royal was discharged on 30 September 1946. Her report is dated 26 August 1946. The "RCAF (WD) Plan" was dated 30 October 1946. The RCAF (WD) officially disbanded and its senior officer, Taylor, was discharged at the end of December 1946.<sup>406</sup>

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<sup>406</sup> Ruth Roach Pierson, *"They're Still Women After All": The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986), 124; Biographical file for Royal, Daisy Isabel, DHH; Biographical file for Sinclair, Adelaide, DHH; Biographical file for Taylor, Winnifred May, DHH; Hitsman, , "Manpower' Problems of the Women's Services During the Second World War," 19; Research Branch of the Library of Parliament, *History of the RCAF (Women's Division) 1941-1971* (Ottawa: May

The authors of the 1946 reports preserved their insights for future generations, and in doing so, wrote an early version of the wartime histories of their respective services. A theme of a female tradition of military service emerges from their repeated emphasis that only servicewomen knew how to discipline, clothe, or house the next generation of women. Recommendations around pay and promotion provide hints that the authors anticipated the career military women that emerged in the 1950s and 1960s. Yet the authors reinforced gender hierarchies even as they asserted female authority. The masculine nature of the military was evident because male standards were upheld as the norm and domesticity was presented as a desired goal for women. The two known authors were educated women from middle to upper-middle class backgrounds. Many of their claims for female authority revolved around creating space for women like them. The authors of the 1946 reports repeatedly insisted on the presence of female officers in the future organization and the administration of future women's services. Wartime female officers tended to be educated, upper-middle class women.<sup>407</sup> While the authors pointed to shared problems between the women's services, they tendered different

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26, 1971), 9-14, copy at DHH, 90/447, DWP, file 104; Zielger, *We Serve that Men May Fly*, 156, Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War*, 235-44; Gilbert Norman Tucker, *The Naval Service of Canada; Its Official History Vol. II Activities on Shore During the Second World* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1952), 491, accessed November 1, 2014, <http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/his/oh-ho/detail-eng.asp?BfBookLang=1&BfId=47>; and "Report on W.R.C.N.S.," Library and Archives Canada (Hereafter LAC), Adelaide Helen Grant Sinclair Fonds, R6498-0-9-E (formerly MG30-E391), folder W.R.C.N.S. Report Re WRCNS Organization and Problems, ca. December 1945. Some women remained in uniform and were demobilized after the official end dates.

<sup>407</sup> A detailed discussion of Sinclair's and Royal's backgrounds will take place below. See Chapter One for the recruitment criteria for wartime female officers. For a discussion of how wartime female officers and female civilian bureaucrats attempted to carve out a space for themselves in the wartime and postwar bureaucracy, see Jennifer Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl: Employability, Domesticity and the Gendering of Canada's Welfare State, 1939-1947* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), especially 1-17, 157-65.

solutions. These varying solutions speak to the need for an extended look at postwar mediations of women's involvement with the Canadian armed services.

### **Writing the Parting Shots: The Context and Influences**

Canadian society had already begun transitioning into the postwar period when the 1946 reports were written. The women's services were in the process of demobilization. Several stations had closed and units had disbanded. Many servicewomen had already been discharged. Others anxiously waited to be discharged with mixed emotions. Some veterans describe feeling sad because they had to say goodbye to close friends, but they were looking forward to creating a home with their husbands. Not all women were ready to trade their uniform for civilian clothes. RCAF (WD) veteran Mary Mark recalls, "[T]here was a tidy number reluctant to cut loose from the dear old Service. Rather we would wait until the Service chose to cut loose from us."<sup>408</sup> Department of Veterans Affairs counsellors advised ex-servicewomen on how to use their rehabilitation training and education benefits. As historian Jennifer Stephen has shown, the federal government's commitment to female domesticity shaped ex-servicewomen's access to these programs. Government officials envisioned the male nuclear breadwinner family model as a central component of postwar stability. Officials hoped to encourage civilian and ex-servicewomen to return to the home with programs such as the Home Service Program. Still, some Canadian voters and government officials worried whether there was going to be a Great Depression, and whether female civilian

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<sup>408</sup> Ziegler, *We Serve That Men May Fly*, 156. For veterans' description of their mixed emotions, see the various chapters in Lisa Banister, ed. *Equal to the Challenge: An Anthology of Women's Experiences During World War II* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2001).

and military war workers would return home.<sup>409</sup>

The 1946 reports were part of larger conversations over the shape of the peacetime forces. Government officials pressured the services to demobilize. Past experiences had taught the armed services to expect downsizing and reduced defence spending. The army and navy had been scaled back after the First World War, and the RCAF, which formed in 1924, had its spending reduced in the 1930s. Parliament limited the peacetime navy to 10,000 permanent, full-time members and the army to 25,000 in October 1945. The air force's total strength was capped between 15,000 to 20,000 permanent members. Historian Isabel Campbell remarks in her work on Cold War forces in Germany that Canada's permanent forces were larger than they had been at the start of the Second World War, but the numbers were "half of what the military had requested...."<sup>410</sup> Defence planners grappled with how to meet postwar security needs with scaled-down numbers.

There were senior officials in all three services who wished to retain a nucleus of

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<sup>409</sup> Pierson, "They're Still Women After All," 124, 215-20; Barbara Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military* (Montréal: Art Global and the Dept. of National Defense in co-operation with the Dept. of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2000), 91-4; Tucker, *The Naval Service of Canada; Its Official History Vol. II*, 490-491; Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl: Employability*, 99-224; Jennifer Stephen, "Balancing Equality for the Post-War Woman: Demobilising Canada's Women Workers After World War Two," *Atlantis: A Women's Studies Journal* 32, no. 1 (2007): 125-35; Jeffrey Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers: Canada's Second World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), 258-86; and Doug Owrarn, "Canadian Domesticity in the Postwar Era," in *The Veterans Charter and Post-World War II Canada*, ed. Peter Neary and J.L. Granatstein (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998), 212-13.

<sup>410</sup> Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 93; Government of Canada, "Air Reserve," Royal Canadian Air Force website, July 24, 2013, accessed January 11, 2014, <http://www.rcaf-arc.forces.gc.ca/en/air-reserve/index.page>; Isabel Campbell, *Unlikely Diplomats: The Canadian Brigade in Germany, 1951-64* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2013), 30; C.P. Stacey, *Arms, Men and Governments: The War Policies of Canada* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1970), 1-6; and Desmond Morton, *A Military History of Canada*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2007), 130-224. For a helpful overview of military culture see Allan D. English, *Understanding Military Culture: A Canadian Perspective* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004). The quotation comes from Campbell, 30.

women and others who opposed retention. The Cabinet Defence Committee discussed an August 1946 memorandum to have women in the Auxiliary Air Force and the peacetime establishments of the RCAF in a September 1946 meeting.<sup>411</sup> The Minister of National Defence, Douglas Abbott, challenged the August 1946 memorandum and insisted that there were more pressing matters to discuss. He supported a “uniform policy,” noting that the navy and the army had already decided against having women in their reserve forces.<sup>412</sup>

Major-General E.G. Weeks, the army’s Adjutant-General, had informed the Minister of National Defence on the army’s position in the weeks leading up to the meeting. According to Weeks, the army felt that the best method was to place officers who volunteered on the Supplementary Reserve List. This simultaneously would keep the lines of communication between the service and veterans open, reinforce the Cabinet’s refusal to permit women in the postwar “active” armed forces, and avoid the purported higher costs of housing women. Sinclair had submitted her report and the WRCNS had already disbanded before this meeting took place. Royal’s report came almost two weeks after the Cabinet Defence Committee met, and she mentioned a CWAC Reserve List. A few weeks after Cabinet rejected the RCAF’s August proposal, the RCAF made a subsequent attempt with the “RCAF (WD) Plan” in late October. The RCAF was

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<sup>411</sup> Agenda for the 22<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Cabinet Defence Committee, 18 September 1946, DHH, 2002/03, series 1, file 2; Pierson, *They’re Still Women After All*, 124; Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 93; and Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War*, 237-42.

<sup>412</sup> Memorandum from Major General [unclear], Vice Chief of the General Staff, to Deputy Chief of the General Staff (A) and Deputy Chief of the General Staff (B), 24 September 1946, DHH, 2002/03, series 1, file 2.

dedicated to keeping women.<sup>413</sup>

Senior officials acknowledged that women had military expertise when they debated how to retain trained servicewomen. One approach was to transfer servicewomen to the civilian staff. The army's Brigadier L. M. Chesley, a Deputy Chief of the General Staff, and Acting Captain Sinclair were numbered among the officers who held this view. Chesley expressed his desire to at least temporarily keep demobilized CWAC officers in staff positions and other ranks in clerical work shortly after the army announced its intention in February 1946 to disband the CWAC by the end of September. Top military brass emphasised that accomplishing the projected timetable required the substitution of male soldiers and civilians for servicewomen. Chesley argued that forcing women to leave in order to replace them with inexperienced civilians was simply inefficient and unfair to CWAC servicewomen.<sup>414</sup>

For Sinclair and the navy, veterans turned civilian employees represented the ideal solution. The Navy retained its investment, kept women in clerical jobs where they had "shown more aptitude than male ratings," and avoided the problems of employing

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<sup>413</sup> Copy of Memorandum from Major-General E. G. Weeks, Adjutant-General, to the Minister of National Defence (through the CGS), 4 September 1946, DHH, 2002/03, series 1, file 2; Acting Captain Adelaide Sinclair, "Report on the W.R.C.N.S." 31 May 1946, copy at DHH, 75/554; Lieutenant-Colonel Daisy I. Royal, "Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," 29 August 1946, Section I: para 3, Section XIII: para 8, copy at DHH, 81/208; Major-General E.G. Weeks, Adjutant-General to the Vice Adjutant-General, 12 July 1946, DHH, 75/174, file 7; Memorandum from the Office of the Minister of National Defence to Deputy Minister, Chief of the General Staff, Adjutant-General, re Inclusion of Women in the Armed Forces, 4 October 1946, DHH, 75/174, file 7; and "R.C.A.F. (Women's Division) Plan for Organization and Suggestions Concerning Employment" [hereafter "RCAF (WD) Plan"], 30 October 1946, copy at DHH, 79/308.

<sup>414</sup> Brigadier L.M. Chesley, Deputy Chief of the General Staff (A), to Deputy Adjutant-General (A). 23 February 1946, DHH, 112.21009 (D163), Army Circular from Major-General E.G. Weeks to GOG-in-C, Pacific Command, All Officers Commanding, re Discharge Policy-CWAC, 20 February 1946; and Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War*, 237-38.

servicewomen in peacetime. Sinclair envisioned multiple problems with the peacetime retention of women that mostly revolved around her acceptance of gender norms and the ideal of female domesticity. For example, naval women would have a higher turnover rate than their male colleagues because they would leave either when they married, became pregnant, or wanted “greater opportunities.” Sinclair linked “greater opportunities” to civilian career advancement further on in her review of the navy’s debate over the peacetime role of women.<sup>415</sup>

Other defence officials insisted that servicewomen must compose the “nucleus of [w]omen....”<sup>416</sup> They mobilized the wartime rhetoric that women had proven themselves and wartime justification that women freed up men for combat roles. Gibson presented the air force’s arguments for the retention of women in the August 1946 memorandum. The air force said that the war had demonstrated that the previous organizational approach was flawed. It did not provide enough manpower. “Woman power” played an essential part in winning the war and the number of air force trades open to women had grown from 8 to 57. A nucleus of uniformed women would thus enable “rapid mobilization and efficient expansion... [in future] national emergencie[s].” Employing

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<sup>415</sup> Sinclair, “Report on the W.R.C.N.S.,” Section XIX: Peacetime. For discussions of her report, Tucker, *The Naval Service of Canada; Its Official History Vol. II*, 490-91; Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 93; W.A.B. Douglas, Roger Sarty, Michael Whitby, with Robert. H Caldwell, William Johnston and William G.P. Rawling, “Appendix V: The Women’s Royal Canadian Naval Service,” in *A Blue Water Navy: The Official Operation History of the Royal Canadian Navy in the Second World War, 1943-1945*, Vol. II, Part II (St. Catharines, Ont.: Vanwell Pub., 2007), 594-606; and Brian Keith, “Women in the Canadian Armed Forces,” rough draft 1969, 3-4, DHH, 90/447, Directorate of Women Personnel Fonds (hereafter DWP), file 3.

<sup>416</sup> Colin Gibson, Minister of National Defence (Air), Memorandum to the Cabinet, 22 August 1946, Cabinet Document No D72 Copy No 10, DHH, 2002/03, series 1, file 2. Gibson used the phrase “nucleus of Women’s Division Personnel.” Variations of the phrase appear in official texts from the 1940s and 1950s. For example, Sinclair uses the term “a nucleus for a women’s Service.” For Sinclair’s use of the term, see “Report on the W.R.C.N.S.,” Section XIX: Peacetime.

uniformed women would allow the RCAF to reserve “the largest percentage of non-combatant or sedentary trades” for women and save “a far larger number of the all important combatant trades for airmen.” The RCAF justified keeping women because it would maximize manpower: they would have to force fewer men into lower status trades.

In addition, a nucleus of uniformed women would ensure that the air force had a ready supply of “well-trained” women. These women would be familiar with “immediate needs of the Service and of great importance, trained in the ‘up-to-the minute’ methods, technique and equipment.”<sup>417</sup> The assumption was that female veterans turned civilian employees would not have the proper skill-set because aviation technology and the air force’s systems had changed rapidly during the war. The highly technical RCAF still promoted itself as the modern service in the 1950s. Although the term career does not appear in the August memorandum, the proposal was an attempt to create a continuous place for women in the air force.<sup>418</sup>

Nevertheless, Gibson and senior RCAF officials envisioned a narrow place for future air force women. Masculine privilege was maintained through the feminization of certain trades and the elevating of combat trades, which were reserved for men. Gibson and RCAF officials supported a vision of active, aggressive masculinity. They assumed men would prefer the combat trades, and women would be content with the non-combatant trades. Male privilege was further reinforced because the RCAF remained a

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<sup>417</sup> Gibson, Memorandum to the Cabinet, 22 August 1946.

<sup>418</sup> Andrew Iarocci and Jeffrey A. Keshen, *A Nation in Conflict: Canada and the Two World Wars* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), 149-78; Brereton Greenhous and Hugh A. Halliday, *Canada’s Air Forces, 1914-1999* (Montreal: Art Global, 1999), 121-38; and “Read This Ad: Modern Work for Modern Women in Canada’s Air Force,” *Globe and Mail*, March 28, 1958.

masculine environment. The number of women was drastically reduced. At its peak, the wartime RCAF (WD) had roughly 15,000 officers and other ranks. Plans called for 450 women spread among the fifteen Auxiliary Squadrons. The maximum peacetime strength for the Auxiliary Air Force was set at 4,500. The 1946 restructuring of the air force re-established a multi-tier organization. On the top was the Regular Air Force, which was responsible for protecting Canadians at home and abroad. The second level was the Auxiliary Air Force. It had almost the same status as the Regular Force. It functioned as a home defence force, a nucleus for the Regular Force, and as “an active reserve force.” This was followed by a Reserve Force and the Royal Canadian Air Cadets. Thus, the place for women was further restricted because RCAF officials envisioned them in the second-tier.<sup>419</sup>

The two approaches to the peacetime use of women’s labour rested on different assessments of personnel needs and costs. Neither side challenged the female combat exclusion. While air force officials thought there were enough non-combat roles to warrant women in its peacetime reserves, others disagreed. Weeks concluded that, since “the Reserve Force consists largely of operational units, it would be impractical to integrate C.W.A.C. personnel with males.”<sup>420</sup> Weeks raised additional challenges. As subsequent chapters will show, critics argued well into the mid-1960s that servicewomen's gender-specific needs meant they were more difficult and more

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<sup>419</sup> Gibson, Memorandum to the Cabinet, 22 August 1946; and Government of Canada, “Air Reserve.” The term “active reserve force” comes from the RCAF website (<http://www.rcaf-arc.forces.gc.ca/en/air-reserve/index.page>).

<sup>420</sup> Copy of Memorandum by Major-General E. G. Weeks, Adjutant-General to the Minister of National Defence (through the CGS), 4 September 1946; and Hitsman, “Manpower” Problems of the Women’s Services During the Second World War,” 15, Appendix A.

expensive to house, train, and oversee than men. Weeks used this argument and concluded that the army would spend more than it would gain from women's service. Similarly, Sinclair stated that the Navy preferred men for permanent personnel because women were restricted from serving at sea. She also conformed to the male breadwinner ideal when she argued that the limited spots should be reserved for men because employing women in peacetime would prevent some men from pursuing "a Naval career."<sup>421</sup> The wartime employment of servicewomen was justified as a temporary phenomenon and the wartime imperative of winning the fight justified what officials believed the extra costs associated with servicewomen. After the war ended, military officers, who were dealing with government-imposed budgetary and manpower limits, reconfigured women as risky, overly expensive, and unnecessary employees.

RCAF officers offered a different cost assessment. Gibson communicated the RCAF's arguments in his memorandum to Cabinet. He reminded Cabinet members that public opposition had negatively affected the wartime recruitment of women. It had taken time, money and a concerted publicity campaign to educate the public that servicewomen remained respectable while they performed valuable work. Gibson argued that the RCAF risked losing this hard won public support and hurting future recruitment efforts if there was no nucleus of servicewomen. The constant presence of women would also keep other women interested in serving. Otherwise, he implied, there was the possibility that the service would not attract enough women to support the calls for higher numbers in times

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<sup>421</sup> Sinclair, "Report on the W.R.C.N.S.," Section XIX: Peacetime; Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl*, 99-224; and Stephen, "Balancing Equality for the Post-War Woman: Demobilising Canada's Women Workers After World War Two," 125-35.

of emergencies.<sup>422</sup> Underneath this argument was the assumption that most women would not automatically choose to serve in the RCAF unless the service capitalized on wartime momentum. Gibson's memorandum also positioned the RCAF as more enlightened because it had to train the public and potential recruits to accept what it already knew. Anti-militarist scholar Cynthia Enloe advises readers that they should critically examine military officials' justification for the recruitment of women. She argues that Western military officials constantly work to manipulate citizens they are supposed to protect in order to align citizens' views with the priorities that militaries set. Gibson's positioning of the RCAF as enlightened figures must be recognized as both a tactic and an acknowledgement that the RCAF saw a place for women in the peacetime forces.<sup>423</sup>

Sinclair did not perceive a problem in the recruitment of women in future wars. Instead, she doubted that the navy would be able to compete with the civilian labour market and secure enough good quality women to serve in the peacetime navy. Some of Sinclair's misgivings stemmed from a wartime belief that only deviant women desired military service. She declared that military service was "not a natural life for women in peacetime." Fewer women would want to wear a military uniform because it would lose the wartime glamour. The greater "freedom and opportunities for advancement" in civilian employment would also deter experienced and inexperienced women from serving. This inability to attract the right type of women would become a liability when

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<sup>422</sup> Gibson, Memorandum to the Cabinet, 22 August 1946.

<sup>423</sup> Cynthia Enloe, *Globalization & Militarism: Feminists Make the Link* (Lanham: Rowam & Littlefield Publishers, 2007), 63-92; and Cynthia Enloe, *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women's Lives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 36, 44-7, 235-37.

fighting future wars, because the senior officers would be drawn from their ranks.<sup>424</sup>

Sinclair's views reflected wartime and immediate postwar tensions. Polls conducted among servicewomen showed that many desired postwar work. Other educated women who assumed positions of responsibility in the federal bureaucracy presented similar opinions. These middle-class feminists reasoned that women had proven that they were capable and deserved to be treated as full citizens. Full citizens were employed citizens. Jennifer Stephen argues that middle-class feminists who assumed positions of responsibility in the federal bureaucracy applied this "right-to-work" discourse to themselves, but did not extend it to working-class women, racialized women, and women from ethnic minorities. The right-to-work discourse competed against the government's emphasis on female domesticity.<sup>425</sup> The authors of the 1946 reports doubtless reacted to these larger conversations around the position of women in the armed forces, domesticity, and women's employment goals.

Royal's language shows that she also responded to, or at least, read Sinclair's account. For instance, Sinclair wrote, "The importance of appropriate and smart uniforms cannot be over-emphasized. Its effect on recruiting, morale, efficiency and public opinion is at times amazing."<sup>426</sup> Royal parroted Sinclair in this respect, changing the occasional word or phrase. She stated, "The importance of appropriate and smart uniforms cannot be

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<sup>424</sup> Sinclair, "Report on the W.R.C.N.S.," Section XIX: Peacetime. For the association of military service with deviant female sexuality, see Leisa D. Meyer, *Creating GI Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women's Army Corps During World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 6, 26-7, 43, 143, 150-166, 178; and Pierson, "They're Still Women After All," 169-187.

<sup>425</sup> Stephen, "Balancing Equality for the Post-War Woman: Demobilising Canada's Women Workers After World War Two," 125-35.

<sup>426</sup> Sinclair, "Report on the W.R.C.N.S.," Section X: Uniform.

too greatly stressed. Its effect on morale, health, efficiency of serving personnel, recruiting and public opinion is great.”<sup>427</sup> There are multiple places where Royal used almost identical language to Sinclair.<sup>428</sup> The similarity of language speaks to wartime co-operation among the women’s services to solve shared problems.

### **Authors’ Background**

Acting Captain Adelaide Sinclair<sup>429</sup> (née MacDonald) and Lieutenant-Colonel Daisy Royal (née Walmsley) based their authority on their civilian backgrounds and experiences as female officers. They were the senior female officers of their respective services when they submitted their reports. Both were awarded the Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) for their contributions.<sup>430</sup>

Sinclair was a well-educated and well-connected woman with vast experience in supervising other women. Born in 1900, she was educated at Toronto’s prestigious Havergal College. Sinclair humorously told wartime journalists that she took a domestic science course in 1917 because her family required her to learn how to cook in order for her to attend university. The anecdote toyed with class-based femininity and suggested her family’s wealth, by referring at once her family’s ability to send her to university and

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<sup>427</sup> Royal “Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women’s Army Corps,” Section VI (para 1).

<sup>428</sup> Sinclair and Royal use similar phrasing in their discussions of the Orders-in-Council, the purpose of their reports, and the need for female veterans as defence planners. See Sinclair, “Report on the W.R.C.N.S.,” Section I: Reorganization; and Royal “Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women’s Army Corps,” preamble, Section I: para 1-2.

<sup>429</sup> Sinclair signed the memorandum accompanying her report as Acting Captain. There is some debate over whether that rank was official. See Emilie Anne Plows “Serving Their Country: the Story of the Wrens, 1942-1946,” *Canadian Military Journal* 9, no. 2 (2008): 83-91.

<sup>430</sup> Biographical file for Royal, Daisy Isabel, DHH; and Biographical file for Sinclair, Adelaide, DHH. For history of the awards see Veterans Affairs Canada, “Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE),” Veterans Affairs Canada, accessed November 1, 2014, <http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/medals-decorations/orders-decorations/gc>.

her training in a stereotypically feminine skill. She earned her bachelor's degree in political science in 1922 and a master's degree in 1925 from the University of Toronto. During her M.A. studies, she worked as the assistant to the Dean of Women. Her education continued with post-graduate work at the London School of Economics, where she met the celebrated British economist Sir William Beveridge. She also trained at the University of Berlin. In 1927, she returned to Canada and taught economics at the University of Toronto until her marriage to Toronto lawyer Donald B. Sinclair in 1930. Sinclair became the president of the North American Kappa Alpha Theta fraternity upon her husband's death in 1938. She claimed in wartime interviews that this experience best prepared her for her job as Director of the WRCNS. In 1942, she left the Kappa Alpha Theta to pursue war work in Toronto. Prior to her appointment as Director, Sinclair worked for the Wartime Prices and Trade Board.<sup>431</sup>

Sinclair's military career began in March 1943. She was sent overseas to England for four months for officer's training. At forty-two years of age, she was the first Canadian woman to become the Director of the WRCNS on 18 September 1943 with the rank of Commander. The details around the circumstances of Sinclair's appointment are limited. The Minister of Defence for Naval Services, Angus L MacDonald, ordered

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<sup>431</sup>"Man of the Week Heads Wrens," newspaper clipping, September 25, 1943, in Biographical file for Adelaide Sinclair, DHH; "Introducing the Director" *The Tiddley Times: The W.R.C.N.S* (Apr-May 1944), n.p., copy at DHH, Wren Association of Toronto Fonds, 92/74, file 17; "His Majesty's New Year 1945 Honours List," *The Tiddley Times: The W.R.C.N.S* (Jan-Feb 1945), 24, DHH, 92/74, file 17; Rosemary "Fiddy" Greer, *The Girls of the King's Navy* (Victoria: Sono Nis Press, 1983), 156; Jean Donald Gow, *Alongside the Navy, 1910-1950: An Intimate Account* (Ottawa: JDG Press, 1999), 149; and Douglas, Sarty, Whitby, Caldwell, Johnston, and Rawling, "Appendix V: The Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service," 601. The Beveridge Report was influential on the Canadian social reconstruction after the war. See Raymond Blake, *From Rights to Needs: A History of Family Allowances in Canada, 1929-92* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009); and Nancy Christie, *Engendering the State: Family, Work, and Welfare in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 11, 262, 274-77.

senior naval brass in January 1942 to find ““a suitable lady”” to become Director of the WRCNS.<sup>432</sup> The choice of Sinclair disappointed naval personnel, such as Alexis Alvey, who believed that the director should come from within the WRCNS. According to Sinclair’s friend Jean Gow, the wife of a Canadian naval officer, it shocked Sinclair as well. Sinclair had enough political clout that the Director of Naval Personnel brought her to MacDonald for her interview. She later told Gow that the Director of Naval Personnel ignored her objections that she lacked “Navy connections” when he took her to MacDonald.<sup>433</sup> Her class background contributed to her selection and was understood to have compensated for her inexperience in naval affairs.

Decades later, Sinclair still positioned herself as an expert in female military matters and claimed authority for women as military planners. In a postwar interview with Gow, Sinclair recounted one dispute when she told senior male naval officials that she would go to the Minister if they went against her wishes regarding the promotion of a servicewoman. The Chief of Naval Personnel asked Sinclair to promote a servicewoman to officer after a well-connected father protested the fact that promotion board refused to commission his daughter. Sinclair agreed with the male and female officers of the promotion board that had determined that this servicewoman was not officer material. She refused and responded to senior male officers’ attempts to intimidate her by

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<sup>432</sup> Quote from Naval Council Meeting, 5 January 1942, 44<sup>th</sup> Meeting Minute, LAC, RG 24, 4044 NSS 1078-3-4 V1, 1, as quoted in Douglas, Sarty, and Whitby with Caldwell, Johnston and Rawling, “Appendix V: The Women’s Royal Canadian Naval Service,” 597.

<sup>433</sup> Gow, *Alongside the Navy, 1910-1950*, 149. See also Douglas, Sarty, Whitby, with Caldwell, Johnston and Rawling, “Appendix V: The Women’s Royal Canadian Naval Service,” 601; and Nancy Olson, “Assembling a Life: The (Auto)biography of Alexis Amelia Alvey, 1942-1945” (master’s thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1998), 55-6, 55 n 23.

threatening to go to the minister. Senior male officers knew that Sinclair had the ear of high-ranking government officials. Sinclair knew this too. The story occurred during her larger conversations with Gow about the power in being older women, Sinclair's reputation for maintaining her femininity, and Sinclair's ability to handle disagreements with senior naval officials in order to fulfill her responsibility to maintain high standards and the unity of her Wrens. The anecdote repeated a message delivered in her earlier report: problems arose when feminine advice was not heeded.<sup>434</sup>

Royal's educational background and political connections were not as extensive as Sinclair's. Born in 1910, Royal was better educated than the average Canadian. Royal had her senior high school matriculation, which historians R. D. Gidney and W.P.J Millar state was the "equivalent of completing first-year university" in the interwar years. She worked as a public school teacher for three years before she married *Winnipeg Free Press* photographer Frank Royal. Her father William Walmsley served multiple terms as Mayor of Winnipegosis, Manitoba, including during the war. Colonel Margaret Eaton recommended Royal as her successor when she retired from the service in the late fall of 1945.<sup>435</sup>

Unlike Sinclair, Royal moved up the ranks. Royal's military career began in

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<sup>434</sup> Adelaide Sinclair, interview by Jean Gow, edited interview transcript, 15-26, DHH, 84/301. For the official historians' discussion of this incident, see Douglas, Sarty, Whitby, with Caldwell, Johnston, and Rawling, "Appendix V: The Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service," 601.

<sup>435</sup> R. D. Gidney and W.P.J Millar, *How Schools Worked: Public Education in English Canada, 1900-1940* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012), 148; Department of National Defence (Army) Public Relations, Press release P.N. 619-44, 30 Sept 30 1944, DHH, 92/252, series 7, box 125, file 101; Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War*, 149, 157, 183, 189, 215, 228-9, 238-9, 241, 249; "Lieut.-Col Daisy Royal Lauds Job Done By CWACs," *Winnipeg Tribune*, Dec 8, 1945; and "Manitoba Municipalities: Winnipegosis," The Manitoba Historical Society, August 14, 2015, accessed December 15, 2015, <http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/municipalities/winnipegosis.shtml>.

October 1941 when she joined as a private. She quickly became a second-lieutenant, was promoted through the various officer ranks and commanded CWAC companies in 1942 and 1943. In May 1943 she was promoted to Major and assigned the command of the CWAC basic training centre at Vermilion, Alberta. Royal was sent overseas, where she trained with British equivalent of the CWAC, the Auxiliary Territory Service, in November 1943. Following her return in March 1944, she served with the Directorate of Military Training in Ottawa and as the commandant of the CWAC basic training centre at Kitchener, Ontario. Her promotion to acting Lieutenant-Colonel was announced in September 1944.<sup>436</sup>

Royal had the title of Staff Officer, CWAC at National Defence Headquarters when she submitted her report. Ruth Roach Pierson concludes that the position and authority of the senior CWAC officer increasingly diminished during Royal's stint. Royal tried to be promoted to full Colonel and get the title of Director of CWAC or Officer Adminstrating but was unsuccessful on both counts. Royal's failure to secure these titles forms part of Pierson's larger discussion of how female officers had remained subordinate to and had less power than male officers.<sup>437</sup>

As stated above, it is likely that Wing Officer Winifred Taylor worked on the "RCAF (WD) Plan" in some capacity. She was the senior RCAF (WD) staff officer when it was submitted. Born in 1909, Taylor completed her grade ten and two years of

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<sup>436</sup> Pierson, *"They're Still Women After All,"* 123-4; Press release P.N. 619-44, 30 September 30 1944, DHH, 92/252, series 7, box 125, file 101, Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War*, 149, 157, 183, 189, 215, 228-9, 238-9, 241, 249; "Lieut.-Col Daisy Royal Lauds Job Done By CWACs," *Winnipeg Tribune*, December 8, 1945.

<sup>437</sup> Pierson, *"They're Still Women After All,"* 124; Conrod, *Athene: Goddess of War*, 238-239.

commercial education. She worked for Canada Wire and Cable Company from 1927 to 1928 and for Lever Brothers Ltd from 1928 to 1941, where she ran the order department. Unlike Sinclair and Royal, Taylor remained single until her death in September 1972. She updated her wartime training with two weeks of RCAF reserve training in September 1954.<sup>438</sup>

Taylor had been a second lieutenant for the Red Cross Corps before she enrolled as a second class airwoman in October 1941. Part of the first group of women to enlist, Taylor left basic training as an Assistant Section Officer. In November 1942, she was promoted to Squadron Officer and became the first female commander of an RCAF station when she was appointed the Commanding Officer of No. 6 Manning Depot. Taylor went overseas in June 1944. She took over the position of Senior WD Staff Officer from Wing Officer Willa Walker, who retired in October 1944. Wing Officer Taylor was awarded a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE), one level below the OBE.<sup>439</sup>

### **Re-organization**

The 1946 reports are “how to manuals” on the reorganization of the women’s services. The authors all tied the purpose of their reports to this topic. Since the “RCAF (WD) Plan” was a proposal to rebuild the organization, its author went immediately into what steps planners should take. Step number one was to secure the government’s

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<sup>438</sup> Directorate of Public Relations, National Defence, Armed Forces News, Release NO H-616, 20 September 1955, in her Biographical file at DHH.

<sup>439</sup> Wing Officer W.M. Taylor,” May 1945 in her Biographical file at DHH, “Taylor, Winnifred May,” in her Biographical File; Ziegler, *We Serve So that Men May Fly*, 29, 112; Hitsman, “‘Manpower’ Problems of the Women’s Services During the Second World War,” 24 n26; and Research Branch of the Library Parliament, *History of the RCAF (Women’s Division) 1941-1971*, 9-10.

approval. Sinclair and Royal listed this step after an introduction in which they justified the usefulness of their reports. Both explained that by recording the lessons learned during the war, their reports would help future defence planners reform the women's services more efficiently. The two held that there were "fundamentals" about human nature and insisted their advice would be relevant because this consistency of human nature trumped potential changes to how warfare was conducted. Their need to defend their reports demonstrates the continued unease around women's military service. These senior female officers were aware that they had to carefully pitch their advice and navigate around unsupportive male colleagues.

There are slight variations in what the authors presented as the appropriate context for re-formation. The RCAF author stated that women's services should be put in place in any crisis which required additional personnel. Royal first proposed a similar rationale but subsequently provided a narrower definition of what justified the reformation of the next "Women's Force". Only war warranted immediate the creation of the next CWAC. Consistent with her opinion that women did not belong in peacetime navy, Sinclair explained that only "future war" or "threat of war" justified reorganization.<sup>440</sup> Despite their cautious phrasing, Sinclair and Royal saw reformation of the women's services as a strong possibility. They used phrases such as "in any future organization" or "in any future mobilization" in their reports.<sup>441</sup> Indeed, the very act of making the recommendations indicates a hope for reformation because the reports were more than

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<sup>440</sup> "RCAF (WD) Plan," 1; Sinclair, "Report on the W.R.C.N.S.," Section I: Reorganization; and Royal, "Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," preamble to Section I, Section I.

<sup>441</sup> Sinclair, "Report on the W.R.C.N.S.," Section I: Reorganization; and Royal, "Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," preamble to Section I, Section I.

records of past service.

The second step in setting up the next women's services was that former female officers from the Canadian women's services should be brought in immediately to help with planning. Sinclair's and Royal's language became less cautious when discussing the role for female wartime officers. For instance, Royal stated, "An Order-in Council would be necessary to permit the re-organization of a Women's Force and it is highly desirable that this be approved immediately in the event of another war, thus paving the way for early 'man-power' planning and the recruiting of women for employment in static formations." The ambiguity disappeared in the next sentence, where she emphasized that "it is felt that if women are to be used, they should be included in the initial planning and discussions."<sup>442</sup> Royal rambled when she discussed securing the government's permission, but wrote more assertively when she covered women's roles.

The third step was to put these veterans to work. Female veterans needed to write regulations, arrange for clothing, and organize housing before large-scale remobilization occurred. Once these items were in place, the ex-servicewomen would form a nucleus of officers whose knowledge could be passed down to the next generation.<sup>443</sup> The authors of the 1946 reports insisted that female expertise was needed to draft and implement the regulations around discipline, uniforms and accommodation. As the following sections will explore, they embedded their arguments for female authority into their discussions of these issues.

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<sup>442</sup> Royal, "Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," Section I (para 1-2).

<sup>443</sup> "RCAF (WD) Plan," 1-4; Sinclair, "Report on the W.R.C.N.S.," Section I: Reorganization; and Royal, "Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," Section I (para 1-4).

## Discipline

The authors of the 1946 reports insisted that women were the most suited to disciplining women because they best understood other women. Sinclair, Royal and the author of the “RCAF (WD) Plan” also echoed the appeals of late nineteenth and early twentieth century prison reformers when they recommended that female officers should be consulted on punishments for female offenders. Prison reformers channelled maternal feminist rhetoric when they called for female prison administrators, wardens, and juvenile court officers. Reformers argued that women’s roles as mothers or future mothers made them the most qualified to supervise and discipline other women. In addition, reformers raised concerns that male guards both victimized and were victimized by female prisoners. Royal and the air force writer reflected these reform traditions when they insisted that a female officer needed to be in the room whenever a servicewoman was brought up “on charge” for breaking the rules.<sup>444</sup>

Only Sinclair explicitly explained why female officers were needed. She claimed that masculine chivalry weakened wartime discipline. Naval servicewomen desired strict discipline and strict discipline ensured an efficient reputable service. Apparently, some naval men “learnt to their cost that undeserved leniency did not pay.” Sinclair explained that some men failed to impose proper discipline because they were uncomfortable with

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<sup>444</sup> Kelly Hannah-Moffat, *Punishment in Disguise: Penal Governance and Federal Imprisonment of Women in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 18-91; Tamara Myers, *Caught: Montreal’s Modern Girls and the Law* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 37-70, 84-135; and Joan Sangster, *Regulating Girls and Women: Sexuality, Family, and the Law in Ontario, 1920-1960* (Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2001), 92-110. For helpful works of American history, see Estelle Freedman, *Maternal Justice: Miriam Van Waters and the Female Reform Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); and L. Mara Dodge, *“Whores and Thieves of the Worst Kind”: A Study of Women, Crime, and Prisons, 1835–2000* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2002).

correcting women or were swayed by feminine wiles. Some men, but only men, “were susceptible to blue eyes or tears.”<sup>445</sup> Women, she implied, saw through these tricks.

Male air force officers apparently did not have their naval colleagues’ problem. The RCAF officer remarked that during the war “the administration of discipline in accordance with Air Force Law, charges being heard by subordinate commanders and commanding officers, whether male or female was found to be satisfactory.” The RCAF left space for female officers to have the power to punish both men and women. The next sentence weakened the gender neutrality. In it, the author advised that women required “certain special provisions.” These special provisions were areas in which rules and policies for men were inapplicable for women. Several pages later, they listed female officer’s attendance during the punishment of airwomen as a special provision.<sup>446</sup> The RCAF author stated that women must always be involved in the punishment of other women, which in turn, implies that the author believed that women possessed different abilities that male military personnel used to dealing with men did not have.

The authors of the 1946 reports re-inscribed gender hierarchies even as they presented women as capable disciplinarians. For the author of the “RCAF (WD) Plan,” male standards represented the norm. Royal and Sinclair situated female officers as

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<sup>445</sup> Sinclair, “Report on the W.R.C.N.S.,” Section XI: Discipline. The genre of film known as the “weepy” was associated with women, and was popular in the 1930s and 1940s. See Jill Richards, “Weepies, Women, and *The Fault in Our Stars*,” Post45, February 10, 2014, accessed June 20, 2016, <http://post45.research.yale.edu/2014/10/weepies-women-and-the-fault-in-our-stars/>; Molly Haskell, *From Revenge to Rape: The Treatment of Women in the Movies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 154; and Mary Anne Doane, *The Desire to Desire: The Woman's Film of the 1940s* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987).

<sup>446</sup> “RCAF (WD) Plan,” 6, 9. The quotations come from page 6. For a brief discussion of the claims of gender neutrality and the wartime reality of gendered differences in the RCAF discipline, see Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 53.

representatives of male officers, in whom the power to punish resided. For instance, Royal wrote that in the future, a Unit Commanding Officer “would delegate powers of discipline to his CWAC Officer, where such existed.”<sup>447</sup> In other words, she indicated that units would be commanded by men, who would have a CWAC officer on their staff. Sinclair recommended that since Captains typically implemented the punishment suggested by the Wren Unit Officer, future Wren Unit Officers should, like the Executive Officer, be allowed to administer more serious punishments “in the Captain’s absence.” The Executive Officer was the second-in-command. Wartime naval ship Captains were typically male. Lieutenant-Commander Isabel Macneill was a highly publicized exception.<sup>448</sup>

Despite Sinclair’s insistence that women must be present in matters of discipline, she reinforced gender hierarchies in a few ways. She restricted future female officers’ greater power of punishment to when the Captain was away. Sinclair did not question the other wartime restrictions on women’s authority. Under wartime Wren Regulations, Wren Unit Officers commanded and administered what Sinclair referred to as “minor punishment” only to other women.<sup>449</sup> The regulations specifically stated that female officers and non-commissioned officers had the same powers of their “equivalent ranks and rates in the Royal Canadian Navy except that” women could not “assume command

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<sup>447</sup> Royal, “Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women’s Army Corps,” Section IV (para 8). For the RCAF’s recommendation on discipline, see RCAF (WD) Plan,” 9-10.

<sup>448</sup> Sinclair, “Report on the W.R.C.N.S.,” Section XI: Discipline; and “Women Holds Rank of Ship’s Captain,” undated clipping in scrapbook, LAC, Isabel Janet MacNeill Fonds, MG30 E 373, Scrapbook.

<sup>449</sup> Sinclair, “Report on the W.R.C.N.S.,” Section XI: Discipline; and *The Regulations for the Organization and Administration of the Women’s Royal Canadian Naval Service*, 1942 (Ottawa: King’s Printer, 1942), Article 12, copy at LAC, Isabel J. MacNeill Fonds, MG30 E 373 1, file “Regulations for the Organization and Administration of the W.R.C.N.S.” 1942.

over other Naval personnel unless such other Naval personnel are placed specifically under their orders.”<sup>450</sup> The Wren Unit Officer reported to the Commanding Officer of the Establishment. Wren Unit Officers and Commanding Officers of the Establishment were gendered positions in the wartime Wrens regulations. The pronoun “she” was used for the Wren Unit Officer in the Wren regulations, while the Commanding Officer of an Establishment was referred to as “he.”<sup>451</sup> Sinclair further softened her recommendation with the caveat “if regulations permit.”<sup>452</sup> The other reports had similar restrictions. The authors concurred that punishing women required female guidance, but said little about extending that guidance to future servicemen.

The authors of the 1946 reports continued wartime negotiations over whether punishments designed for men could be administered to women. As the author of the “RCAF (WD) Plan” recalled, “Detention was not finally approved for women in the services; but it was felt by senior officers of the three women’s services that no satisfactory method had been evolved to deal with the few serious breaches of discipline.”<sup>453</sup> The Canadian army, navy and air force had their own disciplinary codes and rapid expansion resulted in changing regulations during the war. These codes were not uniformly applied. Officers used their own discretion in balancing punishment with wartime practicalities. Rank, type of offense, and when the offense occurred during campaigns all interacted to determine what punishment military personnel received.

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<sup>450</sup> *The Regulations for the Organization and Administration of the Women’s Royal Canadian Naval Service*, 1942, Article 12 (6).

<sup>451</sup> *The Regulations for the Organization and Administration of the Women’s Royal Canadian Naval Service*, 1942, Article 12.

<sup>452</sup> Sinclair, “Report on the W.R.C.N.S.,” Section XI: Discipline.

<sup>453</sup> “RCAF (WD) Plan,” 9-10.

Scholar Chris Masden remarks that there is an inherent tension built into Canadian military law that has shaped its particular character. There is eternal conflict between the “strictly utilitarian and practical purposes in the maintenance of discipline within the armed forces” and the fact that a “Canadian soldier remains a citizen with all the protections and responsibilities that such a status entails under civil law.”<sup>454</sup> In other words, the needs, rights and expectations of the collective must be balanced with those of the individual. The chief function of military law is to produce well-disciplined troops who follow orders and act as expected in all situations, especially on the battlefield.<sup>455</sup>

Civilian attitudes and gender norms influenced the punishment options. Public pressure led to a 1930 amendment of the Army Act that limited British and Commonwealth forces’ ability to sentence soldiers to death. A mishandled hanging in the 1930s contributed to a 1937 Canadian governmental inquiry where members debated whether or not capital punishment was a civilized punishment. While the death penalty remained for men and women until 1976, women were more likely to have their death sentence commuted and whipping was a punishment reserved for male offenders. Historian Carolyn Strange attributes these contradictions to societal and cultural beliefs in the differences between men and women’s bodies. Women were fully clad when they

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<sup>454</sup> Chris Masden, *Another Kind of Justice: Canadian Military Law from Confederation to Somalia* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999), 3. For how military justice worked in the Second World War, see Masden, *Another Kind of Justice*, 76-96. For a discussion military justice was unevenly applied, see Paul Jackson, *One of the Boys: Homosexuality in the Military during World War II* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2004). For discussions of how Canadian military law, see Teresa Iacobelli, *Death or Deliverance: Canadian courts martial in the Great War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2013); and Kenneth Watkin, “Canadian Military Justice: Summary Proceedings and the Charter,” (LLM Thesis, Queen’s University, 1998).

<sup>455</sup> Masden, *Another Kind of Justice*, 3-9.

were executed, while whipping would have required them to bare their bodies to the male gaze. Ruth Roach Pierson drew a related conclusion in her work. She interpreted the army's refusal to award the harsher punishments, such as death and detention, as proof of women's unequal status. Her analysis is limited by the fact that she provided no explanation as to why the army refused to award detention to women.<sup>456</sup>

Wartime supporters of detention wanted a way to deter servicewomen who deliberately and repeatedly committed offenses in order to obtain discharge. The inability to impose detention meant that discharge was the only way to handle these cases. This solution, in Sinclair's and other officers' view, "hardly fitted the crime" and rewarded misbehaviour by giving these servicewomen "what they wanted..."<sup>457</sup> Some airmen resented that they were punished more harshly than their female counterparts. One airwoman remembered that air force women were able to "get away with a whole lot more than the boys could."<sup>458</sup> In contrast, feminist scholars who have studied women's civilian imprisonment argue that female criminals are treated more harshly because society punishes them for their double crime. Since women were viewed as the 'natural' moral guardians of the home and society, they not only committed the offence but they

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<sup>456</sup> Masden, *Another Kind of Justice*, 84-5; Carolyn Strange, "The Undercurrents of Penal Culture: Punishment of the Body in Mid-Twentieth-Century Canada," *Law and History Review* 19, no. 2 (Summer 2001): 343-385; and Pierson, "They're Still Women After All," 120.

<sup>457</sup> Sinclair, "Report on the W.R.C.N.S.," Section XI: Discipline; Memorandum from Squadron Leader G.L. Creed, D/ Directorate of Provost and Security Service to Air Member for Personnel, 6 August 1942, LAC, RG 24, vol. 3367, file HQ 426-1-2-1, vol. 1; Memorandum from [illegible] for Air Vice-Marshal J.A. Sully, Air Member for Personnel to Chief of Air Staff, 16 December 1942, LAC, RG 24, vol. 3367, file HQ 426-1-2-1 vol. 1; Note from Wing Officer Willa Walker for Air Vice-Marshal J.A. Sully, Air Member for Personnel, to Directorate of Provost and Security Service 20 September 1943, LAC, RG 24, vol. 3367, file HQ 426-1-2-1 vol. 1; and Note from [illegible] for Group Captain M. M. Sisley, Directorate of Provost and Security Service, to Air Member for Personnel (Attn: Wing Officer Willa Walker), September 4, 1943, LAC, RG 24, vol. 3367, file HQ 426-1-2-1, vol. 1.

<sup>458</sup> As quoted in Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 53.

also “sinned” against their very nature.<sup>459</sup>

In 1942, senior officers in all three services had reaffirmed the no detention policy on two general grounds. First, servicewomen would not be detained because the numbers of serious offenders did not justify female detention facilities. Segregating female offenders from male offenders had become common penal practice by the Second World War. Prison reformers had argued it was necessary to separate men and women in order to protect women from men, and to protect men from “fallen women.” The Kingston Penitentiary for Women opened in 1934 in part because the government concurred that female inmates needed their own building.<sup>460</sup>

The Royal Commission to Investigate the Penal System of Canada (Archambault Commission) criticized the Kingston Penitentiary for Women in its 1938 report. The commissioners opposed the institution because it isolated women from their support networks, and separate female prisons were too expensive to run for the small number of female offenders. All Canadian women incarcerated for over two years were sent to Kingston. The Archambault Commission concluded that female offenders should be sent to reformatories and declared “that no women should be confined in penitentiaries.”<sup>461</sup> Historian Joan Sangster notes that women who were viewed by the Ontario court system

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<sup>459</sup> Pat Carlen and Anne Worrall, *Analyzing Women's Imprisonment* (Portland: William Publishing, 2004), 28-31, 77-8, 108-116.

<sup>460</sup> Memorandum from [illegible] for Air Vice-Marshal J.A. Sully, Air Member for Personnel to Chief of Air Staff, 16 December 1942, LAC, RG 24, vol. 3367, file HQ 426-1-2-1, vol. 1; and Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 53; Hannah-Moffat, *Punishment in Disguise*, 45-91.

<sup>461</sup> Canada, Royal Commission, *Report of the Royal Commission to Investigate the Penal System of Canada* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1938), 148. This insight comes from Kelly Hannah-Moffat, who quotes and discusses the report. See Hannah-Moffat, *Punishment in Disguise*, 90. For her discussion of the opening and running of Kingston Penitentiary for Women, see 45-125.

between 1920 and 1960 as able to be rehabilitated were sent to reformatories while women sent to prison were viewed as “hopeless repeaters.”<sup>462</sup> The differing guidance in the reports of the women’s services reflected larger societal debates on how to deal with female criminality.

The idea that some offenders could be reformed and others could not had its equivalent in military law. Detention was introduced in 1906. Kenneth Watkin, a military lawyer, remarks in his M.A. thesis that detention was to be “awarded, instead of imprisonment, to those personnel who were to be retained in the Army.”<sup>463</sup> The expectation was that servicewomen were to serve only for the duration of the war. The purpose of detention did not align with the purpose of the women’s services. Why keep a disciplinary and potential public relations nightmare when it would be less risky to quietly discharge female offenders?

Fear that the public believed that women did not belong in prisons contributed to the second reason given in 1942. Senior officers rejected detention because they worried about public backlash. For example, in a December 1942 memorandum, senior RCAF officials explained that the Canadian army, navy, air force and the British Women’s Auxiliary Air Force opposed detention because “[t]here might be an unfavourable public reaction if such punishments were meted out to women.”<sup>464</sup> The anonymous author of an

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<sup>462</sup> Joan Sangster, “Criminalizing the Colonized: Ontario Native Women Confront the Justice System, 1920-1965,” *Canadian Historical Review* 80, no. 1 (March 1999): 60.

<sup>463</sup> Watkin, “Canadian Military Justice: Summary Proceedings and the Charter,” 43.

<sup>464</sup> Memorandum from [illegible] for Air Vice-Marshal J.A. Sully, Air Member for Personnel, to Chief of Air Staff, re Discipline- R.C.A.F. WD, 16 December 1942, LAC, RG 24, vol. 3367, file HQ 426-1-2-1, vol. 1. For other examples of the wish to avoid public backlash, see From Wing Commander D.E. MacKell, D. of P. to Directorate of Provost and Security Service, 14 September 1942, LAC, RG 24, vol. 3367, file HQ

internal defence paper on discipline issues in 1942 added that favourable publicity was crucial because the RCAF (WD) relied on volunteer enrolment. Negative public opinion harmed recruitment, and wartime authorities grew concerned as enrolment figures dropped towards the end of 1942. Cases of pregnancy, venereal disease and lesbianism were carefully managed so as to not give more cause for alarm. A desire to prevent further bad press guided how servicewomen were punished.<sup>465</sup>

The differing discussions on detention in the 1946 reports demonstrate that the objections to servicewomen persisted even after the war ended. Once again, only Sinclair explained the reasoning behind the wartime policies. Naval servicewomen were never detained because “suitable facilities were not available.” The lack of proper facilities contributed to the navy’s dislike of detention as a female punishment. Sinclair was vague about who disapproved of detention, but was clear that the majority of her Wrens were well-behaved. Concerned with protecting her Wrens reputation, she repeated earlier explanations when she implied detention was not needed because there were few serious breaches of discipline.<sup>466</sup>

The writers each assigned future organizers the problem of detention but provided slightly different guidance. Sinclair’s vaguely-worded proposal left room for future inclusion or exclusion of detention. She advised that “women be subject to naval discipline with the possible exception of some unsuitable punishment.” Royal opposed

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426-1-2-1, vol. 1; Memorandum from Squadron Leader G.L. Creed, D/ Directorate of Provost and Security Service to Air Member for Personnel, 6 August 1942, LAC, RG 24, vol. 3367, file HQ 426-1-2-1, vol. 1; and Paper re WD discipline problems, Aug/Sep 42, Wking [sic] paper used by S/O Wetzel in preparing WD History, DHH,181.003 (D1470).

<sup>465</sup> Pierson, “*They’re Still Women After All*,” 170-214; and Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 182-4.

<sup>466</sup> Sinclair, “Report on the W.R.C.N.S.,” Section XI: Discipline.

future use of detention, advocating extending wartime discharge regulations to enable easier removal of “constant offenders” and a preventative approach through the “welfare angle.” The latter entailed using social workers and recreational provisions to help servicewomen adjust to military life and maintain morale. The RCAF author advocated “guard rooms” and noted possible places where airwomen could be detained. The author of the RCAF report cited female wartime knowledge and authority figures to support their recommendations. Peacetime servicewomen required the possibility of a more serious punishment for serious offences because senior female officers from all three services pointed out the same inefficiency in the wartime approach.<sup>467</sup>

Even without the possibility of detention, military justice was at times quite harsh. One WRCNS servicewoman convicted of stealing from a fellow servicewoman at Cornwallis was “paraded out in front of everyone and stripped of all her badges, patches and insignias....Then she was dismissed from the service.”<sup>468</sup> A military uniform simultaneously differentiates its wearer from civilians and those in other forces, while working to make its members a part of a larger unit. Military insignia were restricted to military personnel. Insignia functioned as part of the system of identification that defines who is military and who is civilian. Insignia also worked to differentiate members within individual branches of the armed forces. The stripping of the badges, patches and insignia was a very public declaration to military personnel that this servicewoman was no longer one of “us.” It represented a humiliation. Mary Ziegler remarks in her commemorative

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<sup>467</sup> Sinclair, “Report on the W.R.C.N.S.,” Section XI: Discipline; “RCAF (WD) Plan,” 10; and Royal, “Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women’s Army Corps,” Section IV (para 6), Section X.

<sup>468</sup> Former Officer WRCNS, “Stripped of all her badges,” in Carolyn Gossage, *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots: Canadian Women at War*, rev. ed. (Toronto: The Dundurn Group, 2001), 177.

history of the RCAF (WD) that the uniform was associated with power and prestige. Ziegler states that, once servicewomen adjusted to how they looked in uniform, they gained the sense of prestige because they were privileged insiders. An air force uniform was a restricted and limited issue. A servicewoman who witnessed the stripping of the badges described it as a sobering experience and a very effective deterrent.<sup>469</sup> The authors of the 1946 reports mobilized the disciplinary functions, benefits, and limitations of wartime uniforms in their advice to future defence planners.

### **“Practical and Attractive” Uniforms**

Uniforms were of the utmost importance to the writers of the 1946 reports. This is evident in the amount of space dedicated to the topic of clothing. Sinclair devoted eight pages of her roughly fifty-page text to uniforms. It was the single longest section in her report. The sections on administration and basic training were almost the same length. Royal allotted three pages of her roughly thirty-page report on this issue, and like the others, she mentioned uniforms in other sections. The sections on administration and officers were her longest with five pages a piece. The RCAF author covered uniforms in their equipment section and their advice on civilian clothing in its own section.

Altogether, the author of the RCAF report spent almost two pages of their almost thirty pages on clothing and awarded the most space to accommodation. Most of their clothing

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<sup>469</sup> Ziegler, *We Serve so that Men May Fly*, 23; Susan Turnbull Caton, “Fashion and War in Canada, 1939-1945,” in *Fashion: A Canadian Perspective*, ed. Alexandra Palmer (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 254-61; Former Officer WRCNS, “Stripped of all her badges,” in Gossage, *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots*, 177; Former Member, WRCNS, “I refused in Go,” in Gossage, *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots*, 177; and Nathan Joseph, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms: Communication Through Clothing* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 30-46. For a useful overview and analysis of the various cultural meanings of uniforms, how uniforms have disciplinary and subversive effects, see Jennifer Craik, *Uniforms Exposed: From Conformity to Transgression* (New York: Berg, 2005).

recommendations were written entirely in capital letters, while the recommendation for pay equity was not.

All authors announced that, though “materials and styles change,” wartime experience provided some guiding principles.<sup>470</sup> Ex-servicewomen should guide future discussions around clothing provisions. Sinclair specified ex-servicewomen as advisors and cautioned against over-reliance on “merely interested laymen.”<sup>471</sup> The senior female air force officer was singled out as a required member on “committees to approve W.D. equipment.”<sup>472</sup> Royal shared the larger consensus that former female officers be brought in to oversee clothing provisions before large-scale re-mobilization occurred. All stressed the urgency of having ex-servicewomen’s insight. The three reports contained phrases along the lines of “they should be included in discussions from the beginning”<sup>473</sup> and “there should be no delay in this [clothing and kit] planning.”<sup>474</sup>

The reason why the authors insisted on ex-servicewomen was tied to another principle. According to the authors of the 1946 reports, only female veterans had the knowledge to ensure a cost-effective and efficient militarized femininity. The authors of the 1946 reports made this point when they discussed wartime clothing issues. For example, all commented that inadequate provisioning resulted in insufficient variety of sizes for different body types. Their solution was to recommend the stockpiling of

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<sup>470</sup> “RCAF (WD) Plan,” 12. Sinclair and Royal have a similar sentiment, see Sinclair, “Report on the W.R.C.N.S.,” Section X: Uniform, and Royal, “Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women’s Army Corps,” Section VI (para 12); Buchanan, “The Canadian Women’s Army Corps, 1941-1946,” 41-2; and Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War*, 241-2.

<sup>471</sup> Sinclair, “Report on the W.R.C.N.S.,” Section X: Uniform.

<sup>472</sup> “RCAF (WD) Plan,” 12.

<sup>473</sup> Royal, “Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women’s Army Corps,” Section VI (para 12).

<sup>474</sup> “RCAF (WD) Plan,” 1.

uniforms for multiple body types before the armed services started actively recruiting women. The stockpiling would take place when future military engagements necessitated reformation. As the next chapter demonstrates, defence critics objected to the peacetime practice of stockpiling women's uniforms.<sup>475</sup>

Sinclair, Royal, and the RCAF author all wrote that the failure to properly design, research and test servicewomen's uniforms led to the waste of invaluable wartime resources. The three women's services experienced problems with the summer uniform. The original summer duty dress of the CWAC was not practical. Royal reported that the service wasted valuable time and money because the initial material required "constant dry cleaning and pressing" in order to maintain a smart appearance. In addition, servicewomen suffered because "the lined jacket together with a shirt and collar and tie proved very uncomfortable during the hot summer weather."<sup>476</sup> A couple paragraphs later, Royal listed a series of mandatory features for future work clothes. These included both practical elements ("comfortable," "easily laundered" and "light weight") and design elements ("smart").<sup>477</sup>

Future uniforms had to be functional as well as stylish. Those responsible for the wartime women's services accepted the stereotype that women were fashion conscious and worried about their image. Wartime officials brought in civilian fashion designers,

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<sup>475</sup> "RCAF (WD) Plan," 1; Sinclair, "Report on the W.R.C.N.S.," Section X: Uniform, Section I: Reorganization; and Royal, "Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," Section VI (para 13).

<sup>476</sup> Royal, "Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," Section VI (para 3). See also, Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War*, 189; "RCAF (WD) Plan," 12; and Sinclair, "Report on the W.R.C.N.S.," Section X: Uniform.

<sup>477</sup> Royal, "Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," Section VI (para 5).

and publicity material celebrated the attractive uniforms as a perk.<sup>478</sup> The authors of the 1946 reports repeated these assumptions and addressed wartime worries that women lost their femininity by donning a masculine uniform when they insisted on fashionable future uniforms. Nevertheless, the authors simultaneously stressed that the uniforms must be suited for the jobs that women would perform. With these principles, the authors reinforced gender norms even as they positioned military service as an area of work for future women.

The authors further legitimized assertions of female authority by referencing key military concerns. Royal echoed Sinclair when she implied that the success or failure of recruiting drives hinged on uniform design. These senior female officers reminded readers that a well-dressed and comfortable servicewoman was a happy, productive, healthy employee. The army and air force had unresolved issues with the physical training outfits. Army servicewomen voiced their opinion when they “refused to wear” their ill-fitting, ugly shorts. Armed services discipline military personnel’s bodies and create a sense of comradery by enforcing uniform regulations.<sup>479</sup> A wartime army pamphlet warned soldiers that no one liked an ill-kempt, dirty colleague. A dirty soldier was a “Stinker” and that was “a fate worse than death.” A well-groomed woman dressed per regulations symbolized good discipline and morale. As shown in chapter two, dirty

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<sup>478</sup> Pierson, “*They’re Still Women After All*,” 139-42.

<sup>479</sup> Royal, “Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women’s Army Corps,” Section VI (para 6); RCAF (WD) Plan,” 12; Joseph, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms: Communication Through Clothing*, 65-102; and Craik, *Uniforms Exposed: From Conformity to Transgression*, 21-50, 79-102.

clothes were a sign of immorality.<sup>480</sup> Historians Helen Smith and Pamela Wakewich explain that the “‘healthy’ body” was equated to the “‘productive’ body.” Civilian and military authorities grew increasingly worried over Canadians’ nutrition standards during wartime. They blamed the high rates of medical rejections of male recruits partly on poor diet.<sup>481</sup> Servicewomen’s refusal to wear assigned clothing for activity designed to produce healthy disciplined troops in a country concerned with manpower shortages thus tapped into wartime fears.

Civilian women generated debate when they put on a uniform and servicewomen sparked controversy when they put on civilian clothing. Servicewomen’s ability to wear civilian clothes enabled them to move between civilian and military status to some degree. Regulations limited when and where they could wear civilian clothing. All three authors noted that civilian clothing caused spatial and logistical complications. Civilian clothing took up extra space in already tight quarters and space was at a premium when transporting troops.

Sinclair and the author of the RCAF report pointed out an additional challenge. Servicewomen wearing civilian clothing damaged morale and discipline because it highlighted class distinctions. The uniform was a homogenizing factor. Not all

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<sup>480</sup> “Don’t be a Stinker,” undated army manual, in Beverly J Hodgins, CWAC Scrapbook, George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum’s Military History Research Centre, CWM Archives, Textual Records 58E 6 3.1, Control No. 19830184-001.

<sup>481</sup> Helen E. Smith and Pamela Wakewich, “Regulating Body Boundaries and Health During the Second World War: Nationalist Discourse, Media Representations and the Experiences of Canadian War Workers,” *Gender & History* 24, no 1. (April 2012): 59; Ian Mosby, “Making and Breaking Canada’s Food Rules: Science, the State, and the Government of Nutrition, 1942-1949,” in *Edible Histories, Cultural Politics: Towards a Canadian Food History*, ed. Franca Iacovaetta and Valerie J. Korinek (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 409-427; and Charlotte Macdonald, *Strong, Beautiful and Modern: National Fitness in Britain, New Zealand, Australia and Canada, 1935-1960* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011), 127-150.

servicewomen had Sinclair's background and many could not afford nice civilian clothing. For some servicewomen, the uniform was the only nice clothing they had and some supplemented their postwar wardrobes by wearing modified wartime uniforms to their university classes. Sinclair listed class distinctions as one reason why the navy firmly upheld the policy which restricted civilian clothing to leave and sports, despite servicewomen's pleas for more opportunities to wear civilian clothing.<sup>482</sup> Naval brass also refused requests because "the wearing of uniform required a higher standard of behaviour and made it enforceable."<sup>483</sup> Scholar Nathan Joseph explains in his work on uniforms as a system of communication that a uniform functions as a mechanism of control: "it is not only an emblem but also a reminder of behaviour appropriate towards this emblem."<sup>484</sup> A uniform visibly identified a woman as part of the service and subjected her to increased surveillance.

Each author of the 1946 reports had different reactions to the civilian clothing controversy. Sinclair did not provide any recommendations. However, she concluded her part of the clothing section by listing the multiple reasons for the wartime restrictions. The placement of the recommendations, combined with the absence of recommendations on civilian clothing suggests that she supported having a similar policy in the future. The author of the RCAF plan recommended that future women should follow male

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<sup>482</sup> "RCAF (WD) Plan," 9; and Sinclair, "Report on the W.R.C.N.S.," Section X: Uniform; and Former member, RCAF (WD), "You could tell who had money," in Gossage, *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots*, 184.

<sup>483</sup> Sinclair, "Report on the W.R.C.N.S.," Section X: Uniform.

<sup>484</sup> Joseph, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms: Communication Through Clothing*, 66.

standards.<sup>485</sup> On the one hand, this recommendation could be read as an effort for further integration and greater equality. As Joseph explains, the type of uniform indicates “the degree of acceptance accorded individuals within an organization ranging from begrudging acknowledgement to ordinary membership to elite status.”<sup>486</sup> A standardized civilian clothing policy would mean that future servicewomen would demonstrate their military status in conditions similar to their male colleagues. On the other hand, the author did not advocate a standardized uniform, upheld the masculine standard as the norm, and repeated wartime emphasis on the need for a feminine uniform for servicewomen.

Royal advocated change. She insisted that wearing civilian clothing boosted morale. Her solution to the issues of lack of control and space was that the army should dictate what future army women wore when out-of-uniform. This could be done one of two ways. The army could either provide the clothes, or approve certain designs.<sup>487</sup> Feminine insight, the reasoning ran was needed to ensure that clothing policies produced happy, healthy and fashionably feminine employees. The authors of the 1946 reports also claimed that feminine insight was needed to ensure that accommodation contributed to the production of healthy and happy employees.

### **Accommodation**

Sinclair described accommodation as “the worst bottleneck in the development of

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<sup>485</sup> Sinclair, “Report on the W.R.C.N.S.,” Section X: Uniform; “RCAF (WD) Plan,” 9, 16. The quotation comes from page 16.

<sup>486</sup> Joseph, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms: Communication Through Clothing*, 70

<sup>487</sup> Royal, “Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women’s Army Corps,” Section VI (para 7).

the W.R.C.N.S.”<sup>488</sup> Housing shortages delayed bringing in new drafts of Wren recruits. The WRCNS shared in a larger problem. Halifax operated as a key port in the North Atlantic convoy system which transported goods and personnel. Millions of military personnel passed through the city. Jeffrey Keshen cites a figure of 18 million military visitors by September 1943. Cities, industrial towns, and resource communities across the country grew overcrowded because Canadians moved in search of war jobs, the services expanded, and military families followed their loved ones. For example, Ottawa gained 24, 000 civil servants who searched for places to live in one of the most expensive rental markets.<sup>489</sup>

The housing shortage, in Sinclair’s view, was compounded by male defence planners’ unfamiliarity with women’s unique bodily needs. She declared that “certain essentials were omitted” when her office was not consulted on housing plans. Female veteran guidance and expertise was required in future accommodation planning. Sinclair and the other report authors covered more than just sleeping arrangements in their sections devoted to accommodation. They drew on wartime lessons to explain what future servicewomen needed in terms of washrooms, laundry facilities, recreational centres, and sick bays.<sup>490</sup>

One wartime lesson was that future servicewomen would benefit from more

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<sup>488</sup> Sinclair, “Report on the W.R.C.N.S.,” Section VIII: Quarters.

<sup>489</sup> Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 76-90; Jody Perrun, *The Patriotic Consensus: Unity, Morale, and the Second World War in Winnipeg* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2014), 167-184; and Douglas, Sarty, Whitby, with Caldwell, Johnston and Rawling, “Appendix V: The Women’s Royal Canadian Naval Service,” 602-3.

<sup>490</sup> Sinclair, “Report on the W.R.C.N.S.,” Section VIII: Quarters; Royal, “Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women’s Army Corps,” Section V; and “RCAF (WD) Plan,” 7-8.

privacy. Military planners had failed, the authors of the 1946 reports claimed, when they applied male standards to women. Sinclair proposed using divisions in sleeping quarters, and Royal suggested extending the partitions “from floor to ceiling and [that] doors [be] provided from the entrance.”<sup>491</sup> All the authors recommended that women’s showers and baths needed to be partitioned off from one another when the services re-organized. Servicewomen recall the challenges of communal barrack living. Several remember it was initially hard to use shared washrooms when they would not even undress or wash in front of female relatives. One veteran remembered rumors that a former academic showered in her bathing suit. Former air force corporal D. Phyllis Harrison explained that they learned in basic training that the “Victorian maxims...about not looking at your own naked body— let alone that of another adult human being— be it male or female,” no longer applied.<sup>492</sup>

Men might be able to cope with showers alone, but future servicewomen needed their baths. All three reports contained this suggestion, which acted as a critique of applying masculine standards to women. The air force writer and Royal justified their proposition on the grounds that women’s personal hygiene required baths. Royal rationalized any potential cost incurred by her proposals by stating that the changes would improve women’s morale and health. The author of the “RCAF (WD) Plan”

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<sup>491</sup> Sinclair, “Report on the W.R.C.N.S.,” Section VIII: Quarters; and Royal, “Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women’s Army Corps,” Section V (para 5).

<sup>492</sup> Sinclair, “Report on the W.R.C.N.S.,” Section VIII: Quarters; Royal, “Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women’s Army Corps,” Section V (para 5); “RCAF (WD) Plan,” 8; Former Member, WRCNS, “Bathing suit in the shower,” in Gossage, *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots*, 122; Zeigler, *We Serve That Men May Fly*, 21, 37; Greer, *The Girls of the King’s Navy*, 34; and D. Phyllis Harrison, *Saga of an Airwoman* (Penticton, B.C.: Sage Press, 1995), 45.

obliquely addressed the cost issue. They implied that the savings generated from servicewomen's "need [for] fewer wash basins than men" could be transferred to bath tubs.<sup>493</sup> Air force women were instructed that staying healthy required taking proper care of their skin which in turn, involved "a daily bath or shower- warm or cold –with soap." Air force women were told that during menstruation they should not bathe in cold water.<sup>494</sup>

Dorothy Robertson's unpublished memoir reveals that the authors of the 1946 reports were in touch with what servicewomen wanted and experienced. Robertson recounts the limitations of HMCS *Ste. Hyacinthe*, a former First World War army camp turned into a wireless training center for male sailors. She recalled being dismayed at the washroom, with its lack of a bathtub and the unfamiliar urinal. A bathtub was installed after her group "muttered mutinously."<sup>495</sup>

Not only did servicewomen require modified washroom facilities, they also required more attractive accommodation. Sinclair and Royal advocated curtains and giving servicewomen even more freedom "in decoration of their sleeping quarters" than

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<sup>493</sup> "RCAF (WD) Plan," 7; and Royal, "Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," Section V (para 4-5).

<sup>494</sup> "Personal Health- Cleanliness and Nutrition, Lecture 5" in F.M Douglas copy of C.W.A.A.F. Training Depot, Officers & N.C.O's Course, 1941, DHH, 181.009 (D874); and "Hygiene and Welfare- Lecture No. 8." in F.M Douglas copy of C.W.A.A.F. Training Depot, Officers & N.C.O's Course, 1941, DHH, 181.009 (D874). Quotation comes from Lecture 5. Douglas' copy of the health lectures are almost identical to the ones found in Squadron Officer/Dr. Jean Davey's fonds at LAC. Menstruating women should shower or bath in warm water every day in Davey's version. See "Hygiene and Sanitation," (Lecture, Recruits Training), LAC, Jean Flatt Davey Fonds, MG30 E386, folder on Lectures, Addresses, Informal Talks, n.d., 1942-1945; and Health: Sex and Special Health Problems (Lecture, Recruits Training), LAC, Jean Flatt Davey Fonds, MG30 E386, folder on Lectures, Addresses, Informal Talks, n.d., 1942-1945.

<sup>495</sup> Dorothy Roberston, "I Go (Not) Down to the Sea in Ships: Recollections of a Canadian Wren," 45, unpublished memoir, DHH, 95/62.

was permitted under wartime policy.<sup>496</sup> The RCAF (WD) report did not mention those items. Instead, the author advised that female officers and senior NCOs should have a small-sitting room in their quarters because “[a]though W.D. Officers and senior N.C.O.s have privileges of their respective messes, it is sometimes advisable for them to remain in quarters.” No reason was given as to why it was sometimes advisable but the recommendation exposed air force women’s differential status. The author predicted times where future female officers and NCOs would not be welcomed in the mess. Sitting rooms were used for relaxing and entertaining.<sup>497</sup>

Ruth Roach Pierson interprets Royal’s accommodation recommendations as part of the army’s preservation of wartime femininity and glosses over the assertions of female authority. Wartime medical officers suggested that bringing in domestic, homey touches would improve morale, and in turn reduce sexual “immorality.” Male and female officers explained that servicewomen’s rates of neuropsychiatric illnesses were caused by their inability to adjust to the masculine military life. The authors of the 1946 reports continued the wartime advice that women required more privacy because they were more ‘naturally’ suited to and relied on the comforts of home.<sup>498</sup> Yet the accommodation recommendations called for further feminization of the masculine military environment. Why bother suggesting improvements if the authors did not anticipate their use?

Servicewomen reportedly required more living space than servicemen. Sinclair,

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<sup>496</sup> Royal, “Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women’s Army Corps,” Section V (para 4-5). See also, Pierson, “*They’re Still Women After All*,” 182-3.

<sup>497</sup> “RCAF (WD) Plan,” 7; and “Precis on Officer’s Mess,” in F.M Douglas copy of C.W.A.A.F. Training Depot, Officers & N.C.O’s Course, 1941, DHH, 181.009 (D874).

<sup>498</sup> Pierson, “*They’re Still Women After All*,” 182-3. For the wartime discussion of neuropsychiatric illnesses, see Chapter 1 of this dissertation.

Royal, and the RCAF author repeatedly requested more room. For example, wartime experience proved that men's lockers had to be adjusted for women. Men's lockers were too tall for women and did not allow for adequate storage of women's clothing. Women's clothing took up too much space. Rather than recommend a change in uniform, Royal and the author of the RCAF report advised constructing larger lockers to accommodate women's clothing needs. The authors reiterated messages found in wartime recruitment films and discussions of overwork. The need to modify facilities presented women as outsiders and as physically out of place in the masculine military.<sup>499</sup> While a wartime fear was that the military environment would create masculine women, these recommendations point to a feminization of the military albeit in restricted manner. The modifications were presented as the cost of having servicewomen and necessary for happy, productive, well-disciplined female troops. Servicewomen, the authors argued, proved themselves valuable capable military personnel during the war and as result, future servicewomen were entitled to the items that experience showed were required for them to adequately perform their duties.

### **Pay, Promotion, and Marriage**

Women's civilian and military service gave new momentum to the campaign for equal pay in the postwar period. The Veteran's Charter enshrined gender equality rights for women. However, as Don Ives notes, a key governing principle of the Veteran's Charter "was that veterans should enjoy these equal benefits only to the degree entitled

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<sup>499</sup> "RCAF (WD) Plan," 8; Royal, "Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," Section V (para 4g); Sinclair, "Report on the W.R.C.N.S.," Section VIII: Quarters; and Yvonne Matthews-Klein, "How They Saw US: Images of Women in National Film Board Films of the 1940's and 1950s," *Atlantis* 4, no. 2 (Spring 1979): 23.

by their service.” Time spent in combat granted higher levels of entitlement, which servicewomen could not access because they were restricted from combat. The writers of the 1946 reports attempted to make the armed forces a more equitable employer for future servicewomen and secure positions of responsibility for some women.<sup>500</sup> All recommended that female military personnel were entitled to the same basic pay as male personnel and insisted on female oversight of promotions. Still, the authors of the 1946 reports left other inequities in place because they upheld the male breadwinner nuclear family model.

Sinclair felt strongly about equal pay. She left no doubt about the importance of ending the wage gap when she wrote, “it is one of the strongest recommendations of this report that it be adopted by the Navy.” Equal pay was the ethical option in her view, especially since naval women had proven that they were more naturally skilled than men at certain jobs. Her additional reasons reflected her economics training and work experience. It was an administrative nightmare to maintain the wage gap yet match naval women’s pay to the CWAC and RCAF (WD). Sinclair also exclaimed, “It is felt too, that the amount of time spent by highly paid senior officers on devising, amending and arguing about different rates for women could easily cost the country as much as it would

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<sup>500</sup> Don Ives, “The Veterans Charter: The Compensation Principle and the Principle of Recognition for Service,” in *The Veterans Charter and Post-World War II Canada*, 87; Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl*, 129-204; Stephen, “Balancing Equality for the Post-War Woman: Demobilising Canada’s Women Workers After World War Two,” 125-6, Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 168-71, 188-93; Peter Neary and Shaun Brown, “The Veteran’s Charter and Canadian Women Veterans of World War II,” in *The Good Fight: Canadians and World War II* (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1995), 386-415; Peter Neary, *On to Civvy Street: Canada’s Rehabilitation Program for Veterans of the Second World War* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2011), 111-16, 138, 216-17; “RCAF (WD) Plan,” 17; Sinclair, “Report on the W.R.C.N.S.,” Section IX: Pay and Allowances; and Royal, “Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women’s Army Corps,” Section III (para 1).

to pay the women male rates without argument!”<sup>501</sup> Equal pay was simply more cost-effective and efficient. Sinclair prepared for anticipated male opposition with her range of reasons and exclamation.

The discussions on pay provide insight into civilian-military relationship in wartime and early postwar Canada. There were different views on the role of the Canadian armed services. One view was that the services were trend-setters. Sinclair remarked that ideally equal pay for men and women would be already realized before another war, but if equal pay had not been implemented, the Navy should bring it in. The author of the air force plan blamed the federal government for servicewomen’s wartime unequal pay for equal work and suggested that the government decided to pay women differently than servicemen “because of certain civilian rates of pay.”<sup>502</sup> The discussion painted the RCAF as more progressive than their civilian government overlords and revealed different solutions to the tension between servicewomen’s gender and military identities. The RCAF implied that they felt servicewomen’s pay structure should conform to their “brothers-in-arms” while the wartime government decided that women’s pay should match their civilian “sisters.”

Another view was that the armed services should reflect the societal norms of the country that they serve and defend. The second principle underlined Sinclair’s and Royal’s recommendations regarding dependent’s allowances. Dependent allowances were introduced during the World Wars in order to boost male recruitment. Military pay,

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<sup>501</sup> Sinclair, “Report on the W.R.C.N.S.,” Section IX: Pay and Allowances. The official historians discuss her recommendations, see Douglas, Sarty, Whitby, with Caldwell, Johnston, and Rawling, “Appendix V: The Women’s Royal Canadian Naval Service,” 602.

<sup>502</sup> “RCAF (WD) Plan,” 17; and Sinclair, “Report on the W.R.C.N.S.,” Section IX: Pay and Allowances.

especially for the lower ranks, was insufficient to cover family expenses. Initially, servicewomen did not receive dependent's allowances. As mentioned in chapter one, service women gained access for their parents and siblings after civilian women's groups and senior female officers protested. Pierson has documented two remaining gendered differences. Servicewomen's husbands were ineligible and women did not receive benefits for children because women with dependent children were not allowed to enlist.<sup>503</sup>

Sinclair and Royal identified a different injustice. They remarked that it was unfair that servicewomen who married servicemen had to wait six months before they were eligible for the dependent's allowance, whereas civilian women did not. In advocating that this inequity be redressed, Sinclair and Royal reinforced the male breadwinner model because they declared that servicewomen's status as wives should be considered at the same level as their civilian counterparts. In their opinion, wives who happened to be servicewomen should have equal access to benefits gained through their relationship to male military personnel. Conversely, Sinclair and Royal did not recommend that servicemen who married servicewomen should be entitled to these allowances through their wives' service. This possibility existed in the "RCAF (WD) Plan," which had the shortest discussion on pay and allowances. Its authors

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<sup>503</sup> Minister's Manpower Study (Men) [hereafter MMS (M)], "Employment of Women in the Regular Force," para 26-32, 69a, 79 a, Attached to Memorandum to Defence Council From Chief of the Defence Staff, Employment of Women in the Regular Force, dated 2 Sept 1965, DHH, Raymond Fonds, 73/1223, series 1, box 11, Ffle 19; Leisa D. Meyer, *Creating GI Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women's Army Corps During World II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 1; Pierson, "They're Still Women After All," 113-7; Perrun, *The Patriotic Consensus*, 154-66; and Nancy Christie, *Engendering the State: Family, Work, and Welfare in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 46-93, 196-248.

recommended that the male standards for pay and allowances be applied to women but did not specify what the allowances were.<sup>504</sup>

Sinclair outlined a systemic problem with navy's wartime method of promotion that she believed would be corrected with changes to pay structure. Promotion in the "old system" was used to reward faithful service, while she felt that pay could be used. The problem with the old system was that sometimes personnel were promoted past their abilities in order to reward hard work. Even with the new system in place, Wren officers would still be needed on the promotion board. Perhaps Sinclair had the battle with male officers that she described to Jean Gow in mind when she insisted that female oversight was essential because "masculine susceptibilities led at times to over-estimating Wrens' capacities and and [sic] general suitability."<sup>505</sup> Sinclair did not describe any specific wartime cases of when male naval officers overestimated women's abilities. Tellingly, this was the second time she attributed wartime problems to "masculine susceptibilities." As discussed above, Sinclair claimed that naval men created discipline issues when they gave into crying women.

The author of the "RCAF (WD) Plan" also presented women as the best judge of other women. Promotion recommendations for airwomen and female officers alike required an evaluation conducted by a female officer. The RCAF report writer joined Royal and Sinclair in their attempts to widen the opportunities open to women. Royal and Sinclair drew upon the wartime difficulty in securing highly-qualified women when they

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<sup>504</sup> Royal, "Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," Section III (para 2- 3); Sinclair, "Report on the W.R.C.N.S.," Section IX: Pay and Allowances; and "RCAF (WD) Plan," 17.

<sup>505</sup> Sinclair, "Report on the W.R.C.N.S.," Section XIII: Advancements, Section XIV: Officers. The quotation comes from Section XIV.

advised increasing the numbers of direct-entry officers when the services re-organized. Sinclair's demonstrated her class bias, and possibly defended her own promotion path, when she cautioned against "potential officer material" spending too much time in the ranks.<sup>506</sup> In contrast, the author of the RCAF report advised looking to the ranks for female administrative officers. The author also suggested the possibility of RCAF career women with the advice that women should have female career counsellors if counsellors were kept for men.<sup>507</sup> In different ways, Sinclair, Royal and the RCAF author created space for women to advance.

Based on the October 1946 report, the RCAF was prepared to both accommodate married women who wished to serve and those who wished to be discharged because they married. The "RCAF (WD) Plan" was an attempt to fulfill the air force's vision of women as part of the peacetime air force. Its author reinforced the potential for women to remain in an air force uniform for a number of years. The section on marriage covered the administrative elements. For example, the author advised where to record the change in her last name. The author of the RCAF report directed readers back to the discharge section, where it "strongly recommended" permitting women who "were married before or after enlistment" to apply for a compassionate discharge once they had given six months service. Only service after women completed basic training counted towards the minimum and they must prove they were "needed to set up a home." A woman who entered already married would have to prove her circumstances had altered in order to

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<sup>506</sup> "RCAF (WD) Plan," 19-20; Sinclair, "Report on the W.R.C.N.S.," Section XIV Officers; and Royal, "Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," Section XIII (para 12)

<sup>507</sup> "RCAF (WD) Plan," 18, 20. The quotation comes from page 20.

qualify.<sup>508</sup> The discharge provisions reinforced the gender norm that women's place was in the home.

Accommodation only went so far. The author of the RCAF plan reaffirmed pregnancy as a ground for discharge. Although sympathetic that the policy would pose challenges to a few individuals, the RCAF writer declared that male and female officers “should never be allowed” to have non-commissioned uniformed spouses and other relatives as their guests in the Officer's Mess. Good discipline, the author of the RCAF report emphasized, required upholding what they called “traditional” practices which prevented the mixing of the ranks on stations.<sup>509</sup> The recommendation was in response to some stations allowing airwomen to attend parties in Sergeant Messes. As Leisa Meyer describes in the American context, the civilian practice of encouraging women to marry well (i.e. equal to or above their own class and social standing) came up against military regulations around fraternization. Some veterans described finding ways around these rules and the author acknowledged this wartime reality with the recommendation for the Officer's Mess. The author implicitly supported married female officers because they explicitly stated women's husbands should not be guests.<sup>510</sup> The rights of the service outweighed individual rights, and servicewomen's military identity overshadowed their gender identity. The RCAF author wanted future women to follow military practice and not civilian standards.

The other services had different suggestions. Sinclair concluded that “marriage

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<sup>508</sup> “RCAF (WD) Plan,” 10-11, 15. The quotation comes from page 10-11.

<sup>509</sup> “RCAF (WD) Plan,” 16-19. Emphasis in original. The quotation comes from page 19.

<sup>510</sup> “RCAF (WD) Plan,” 16, 26; Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*, 133-9; and Former Member, RCAF (WD), “Going Out in Uniform,” in Gossage, *Greatcoats and Glamour Boots*, 256.

presents problems in a women's force" but offered no solutions.<sup>511</sup> Like Sinclair, Royal explained that married women caused morale issues when they were not discharged upon request. She proposed a way to reduce unhappiness while holding on to trained personnel. Royal suggested allowing women who married during service to go on leave as a solution.<sup>512</sup> Her proposal offered a compromise between service needs and women's wishes. It was a way for women to combine military service and marriage, as she did herself during the war. The authors of the 1946 reports crafted a tradition of female military service with their suggestions on how to build upon wartime policies on pay, promotion, and marriage. They recorded their insights in hopes that future defence planners would avoid wartime problems. Defence officials and historians have listened selectively to the reports.

### **The Legacy of the Reports**

Defence officials and their staffs consulted the 1946 reports in the decade following the war. Those tasked with understanding the army's past and planning for the army's future applied Royal's findings. Official historians archived war records and wrote texts to help Canadians make sense of the war. J.N. Buchanan, who was employed by the Army's Historical Section, outlined Royal's recommendations in her 1947 text on the CWAC. Buchanan presented Royal's work as a credible reference. She directed those interested in issues such as housing to two items in the Historical Section's holdings: the CWAC Director-General's "C.W.A.C. Narrative and appendices," and Royal's work.

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<sup>511</sup> Sinclair, "Report on the W.R.C.N.S.," Section XVII: Welfare.

<sup>512</sup> Royal, "Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," Section X (para 6).

While Buchanan reported that the CWAC Director-General's "C.W.A.C. Narrative" had factual inaccuracies, she raised no issues with Royal's work. Buchanan failed to mention within her text that she talked with Royal a couple of months before she submitted it. They discussed Royal's report, and she allegedly informed Buchanan that the Adjutant-General had accepted her report. Brigadier T.G. Gibson, the Vice Adjutant-General, mentioned Royal's report in the body of his 1949 plans for the future mobilization of women into the army. Chapter Four will analyze Gibson's plans.<sup>513</sup>

Army Historical Section archivist and historian J.M. Hitsman continued the bridging function of the 1946 reports in his 1954 work, expanding on Buchanan's manuscript and employing all three of the reports in his tri-service analysis of wartime personnel issues. Unlike Buchanan, Hitsman admitted that he gained valuable insight from speaking with female military experts. Peacetime female air force and naval officers lent him a copy of their service's report. Peacetime servicewomen had in their possession wartime reports that were written with the intention of shaping future policy. Whether female officers read the 1946 reports as they oversaw the re-entrance of women into the armed services in 1951 is not known, but Hitsman claimed that they read his 1954 study of wartime problems.<sup>514</sup> He positioned wartime veterans as invaluable resources, and

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<sup>513</sup> Tim Cook, *Clio's Warriors: Canadian Historians and the Writing of the World Wars* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006), 93-201; J.N. Buchanan, "The Canadian Women's Army Corps, 1941-1946," *Army Headquarters Report*, no. 15, 1 May 1947, Directorate of History and Heritage, National Defence Headquarters, Ottawa, Canada (hereafter DHH), 41-46, accessed October 1, 2014, <http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/his/rep-rap/ahqrd-drqga-eng.asp?txtType=3&Rfid=203>; Copy of a note by J.N. Buchanan about Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps prepared by Lt-Col D.I. Royal, n.d.; DHH 81/208; and Memorandum from Brigadier T.G. Gibson, Vice Adjutant-General, to the Adjutant-General, 19 August 1949, DHH 75/174, file 7. Buchanan's note is undated, but she stated she talked with Royal on 11 March 1947.

<sup>514</sup> J. M. Hitsman, "'Manpower' Problems of the Women's Services During the Second World War," *Army*

linked wartime and peacetime servicewomen in the last paragraph of his report. It reads:

This report was written by J.M. Hitsman. It was read in draft by Mrs. D.B. (formerly Captain) Adelaide Sinclair, wartime Director of the W.R.C.N.S., and Miss (formerly Wing Officer) W.M. Taylor, sometime Senior W.D. Staff Officer at A.F.H.Q., both of whom provided very helpful comments and additional information. The draft was also read by the three senior officers in the Department of National Defence presently concerned with Women's Services- Lieutenant (W) M.E. MacDonald (Navy), Major M. Evis (Army) and Squadron Leader S.I. Evans (R.C.A.F).<sup>515</sup>

Hitsman linked generations when he brought a draft of his work on wartime personnel problems to the attention of female officers positioned to address them.

The peacetime generation of senior officers had their own experiences to draw from. Lieutenant Margaret Ellis MacDonald, Major Marjorie Evis, and Squadron Leader Sylvia Isabel Evans all had lengthy wartime experience. Evis and Evans enlisted in 1941 and MacDonald in 1942. They all demobilized in 1946. Evis returned in 1949, and the other two in April 1951. As previously discussed, the authors of the 1946 reports recommended that wartime female officers be recalled when the women's services reformed. The presence of these veteran officers in the peacetime services suggests that Sinclair, Royal, and the author of the RCAF plan anticipated the return of experienced female officers/administrators.<sup>516</sup>

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*Headquarters Report*, no. 68, 17 June 1954, DHH, 23-26, accessed October 1, 2014, <http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/his/rep-rap/ahqrd-drqga-eng.asp?txtType=3&RfId=257>; Memorandum by J .M. Hitsman, 3 December 1953, DHH, 75/554; J. M. Hitsman to Lieutenant (W). M.E. MacDonald, R.C.N. (R) Women's Advisory Group, 7 December 1953, DHH, 75/554. For a discussion of how official historians used Hitsman's reports, see. Douglas, Sarty, Whitby, with Caldwell, Johnston and Rawling, "Appendix V: The Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service," 596 n9.

<sup>515</sup> Hitsman, "'Manpower' Problems of the Women's Services During the Second World War," 19.

<sup>516</sup> Biographical File for MacDonald, Margaret Ellis, DHH; Biographical File, Evis, Marjorie, DHH;

Historians writing since Hitsman have paid little attention to the 1946 reports, using them primarily as records of past service and mining them for facts and figures. The 1980s saw a re-evaluation of women's contributions to the war effort. In her pioneering contribution, Ruth Roach Pierson (1986) cites Royal's report as one example of how CWAC officers illustrated a class and sexual bias when dealing with "illegitimate" pregnancy and VD. She also observes that Royal advised defence planners that future servicewomen's barracks and eating facilities required more domestic touches. The ways in which Royal planned ahead are overshadowed by Pierson's emphasis on the army's commitment to preserving servicewomen's femininity. W. Hugh Conrod (1983) quickly summarizes Royal's report in his history of the CWAC. He remarks that Royal continued the tradition established by her predecessor, Colonel Margaret Eaton. Both tried to secure a place for women in the peacetime forces in their "final message[s]" to military and civilian authorities. Although he recognizes that Royal reviewed wartime lessons for future audiences, Conrod does not analyze her recommendations.<sup>517</sup>

More recently published work continues this trend. Barbara Dundas, in her 2000 history of women in the Canadian military, describes the "RCAF WD Plan" as an unsuccessful "proposal to rebuild the division ...." She also quotes some of Sinclair's criticisms of a postwar women's naval service. The rest of Sinclair's analysis and the specifics of the "RCAF WD Plan" are absent from her discussion.<sup>518</sup> In his 2004 social history of the war, historian Jeffrey Keshen briefly reviews women's re-entrance into the

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Biographical File for Evans, Sylvia I, DHH.

<sup>517</sup> Pierson, 178, 182-3, 273 n58, 280 n57; and Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War*, 241-42. The quotation comes from Conrod, 241.

<sup>518</sup> Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 93.

armed forces but does not use the 1946 reports in his overview chapter on military women. In the second volume of the two volume history of the Royal Canadian Navy in the Second World War (2007), official historians repeatedly cite Sinclair's report in their discussion of how wartime naval women were trained, paid and housed. They write that Sinclair wrote her report with the idea that women would be employed in future wars. However, the bulk of their discussion focuses on explaining how the wartime Wrens formed and operated.<sup>519</sup> This chapter has addressed this historical neglect and contended that the authors' claims for female authority made the 1946 reports transitional documents

## **Conclusion**

Acting Captain Adelaide Sinclair wrote, "It is most important to decide where the line is to be drawn between treating Wrens as naval ratings and as women."<sup>520</sup> She, along with Lieutenant-Colonel Daisy Royal and the author of the "RCAF (WD) Plan," continued a long tradition of middle-class women reformers when they positioned wartime servicewomen as the ones best suited to draw this line for the next generation of military women. The authors of these three reports argued that the wartime had shown the limits of male military knowledge. Civilian women lacked the institutional awareness that military woman acquired during their wartime service. Training was delayed, time was lost, and money wasted because Canada had lacked female military experts at the outset of the Second World War. The authors of the 1946 reports repeatedly emphasized

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<sup>519</sup> Douglas, Sarty, Whitby, with Caldwell, Johnston and Rawling, "Appendix V: The Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service," 594-606; and Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 192-3, 335.

<sup>520</sup> Sinclair, "Report on the W.R.C.N.S.," Section II: Conditions of Service.

that recalling female veterans would ensure efficient, economical mobilization in future national emergencies.

The authors simultaneously opened up room for career military women and reinforced (white) heteronormative ideals of female domesticity when they mobilized their wartime experience to write the best practices for the future organization, mobilization, and administration of the women's services. The armed services remained a masculine domain. Sinclair, Royal, and the author of the RCAF report accepted that the standards for the men were the norm except where women's special needs required "special[ized] provisions...."<sup>521</sup> One wartime lesson was that discipline, clothing, and accommodation were three areas where it was essential to have female oversight before the first woman was recruited. Sinclair insisted that some men created trouble when they allowed their masculine chivalry to overpower the interests of good discipline. Similarly, the other two authors agreed with her that female officers were more proficient judges of their female subordinates' abilities. Ex-servicewomen had worn the female uniform, and the three reports argued that with this familiarity, female veterans would ensure future uniforms enabled women to present a good image while allowing them to perform their duties. Likewise, veterans had first-hand experience with the wartime deficiencies in accommodation and understood what women needed to ensure they were happy, healthy, and productive employees.

Once the scaffolding of regulations, uniforms, and accommodations were put in place, attention could be turned to other issues such as pay, promotion, and marriage.

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<sup>521</sup> "RCAF (WD) Plan," 6.

Wartime servicewomen, the authors of the 1946 reports declared, had won their successors the right to equal pay. The authors all also advised that female officers must be involved in all disciplinary issues and promotions when the women's services re-organized. Nevertheless, Sinclair, Royal and the author of the RCAF plan offered future defence planners different solutions to the wartime debates over detention, civilian clothing, and marriage. Sinclair and Royal had to carefully frame their attempts to create positions for women because they wrote their reports after the senior male naval and army officers had rejected women for the peacetime forces. In contrast, senior RCAF officers and the Minister of National Defence (Air) wished to keep a nucleus of women in the postwar air force. The RCAF plan was part of the RCAF's repeated attempts to secure a place for women. Despite their differences, all authors used servicewomen's need for certain specialized provisions to claim authority, and legitimate women as military planners and as military experts.

Sinclair's "Report on W.R.C.N.S.," Royal's "Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," and the unsigned "R.C.A.F. (Women's Division) Plan for Organization and Suggestions Concerning Employment," are early histories of the women's services and are transitional documents. The authors provided defence planners with their version of wartime lessons and with their vision of the next iteration of the women's services. Some of their recommendations became part of military practice when women, including some wartime servicewomen, returned to the Canadian armed services in the 1950s. Defence officials turned to wartime veterans to help plan the re-entrance of women into the armed services and returning members formed the core of

the peacetime nucleus of women.

## Chapter Four – Renewing Ties: The Interim Period and Re-entrance, 1946-1955

Nellie Ross experienced difficulties adjusting to civilian life. She recalls, “It was wonderful to see my family again, but I was let down with such a thump. All that activity overseas – and here there was nothing to do.”<sup>522</sup> Her wartime service had seen her rise through the ranks of the Royal Canadian Air Force (Women’s Division) [RCAF (WD)], and she had been stationed as a Signals Officer overseas. Ross coped by transitioning into the reserves and “work[ed] there part-time” from 1946 to 1951. The reserves and her participation with the “female Air Cadets” helped her feel connected and stay informed on service issues. Her military involvement held her interest while she searched for a civilian job that inspired her. Dissatisfied with her pre-war retail job, she used her rehabilitation grants to attend art school and qualified for a job working on newspaper advertisements. Four years later, Ross once again lost interest in her work. She readily re-enlisted for full-time service with the RCAF when the opportunity presented itself in 1951.<sup>523</sup>

Posted to RCAF Station Trenton in 1951, Flying Officer Ross served as the assistant adjutant and housing officer. Ross addressed a discrepancy in recreational facilities. Servicewomen and men with the rank of Corporal or higher had designated

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<sup>522</sup> Nellie Ross, “Nellie Ross” in *Equal to the Challenge: An Anthology of Women’s Experiences During World War II*, ed. Lisa Banister, (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2001), 377-92. The quotation comes from page 387.

<sup>523</sup> Ross, “Nellie Ross” in *Equal to the Challenge*, 377-392. The quoted phrase comes from page 388.

places where they could drink with colleagues of similar rank. Low ranking airmen also had a space but airwomen did not. According to ex-RCAF sergeant Vi Dudley-Mathiesen, Ross acted because she knew from her wartime experience and personnel skills that “it was better” to have airwomen drink the “odd beer on station” than have them drink in nearby public beer parlours.<sup>524</sup> In 1953, Ross spent two years in England. When she returned to Canada, Ross served for one more year and retired with the rank of Flight Lieutenant, having reached the mandatory retirement age. Her military service remained a happy memory. In her words, she “enjoyed working with hundreds of men- at times I was the only woman there.”<sup>525</sup>

Ross’ experience provides insight into what happened to ex-servicewomen in the immediate postwar years and pushes the narrative beyond the familiar one of the return to domesticity. Her story demonstrates that some women created a home for themselves in the Canadian armed services. Her narrative also illustrates the central theme of this chapter: the disbandment of the women’s services did not erase the connections between servicewomen and the Canadian armed services. This chapter explores the diverse ways wartime servicewomen and defence planners understood women’s place in the broader military community between 1946 and 1955. Chapters four and five add the military as a site of women’s activism. While women’s and gender historians have demonstrated the diversity of women’s roles in the postwar period, these historians have largely ignored female defence employees. Instead, these historians have concentrated on women’s peace

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<sup>524</sup> Vi Dudley-Mathiesen, *Sweet ‘N’ Sour* (Sidney, B.C: Family Compact, 1985), 152-3. The quotation comes from page 153.

<sup>525</sup> Ross, “Nellie Ross” in *Equal to the Challenge*, 377-92. The quotation comes from page 392.

activism and civilian employment.<sup>526</sup>

This chapter covers two separate yet overlapping phases in Canadian women's military history: the interim period (1946 to 1951) and the re-entrance period (1951 to 1955).<sup>527</sup> The interim period spans the demobilization of the wartime's services to government's decision to approve women's 1951 return to the armed services. Only the RCAF enlisted women into its regular (full-time) and reserve (part-time) forces in that year. The other two services recruited women for their reserves. The re-entrance period covers women's re-engagement in the armed services and the services' review of women's return to the armed services. Most women signed up to serve for either three or five years. The services modified their employment policy regarding women in 1954 and 1955. By 1955, the Canadian Army and Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) opened their regular forces to women, while the RCAF lowered the number of full-time positions for

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<sup>526</sup> Davis, "Employment of women in Canada's Armed Forces, Past and Present," 4, 14; "Historical Notes-Women in the RCAF- 1941-1960," para 4-5, in "Souvenir Book of the Twentieth Anniversary of the enlistment of airwomen into the RCAF during World War II –and – the Tenth Anniversary of airwomen enrolled in the RCAF Regular and Reserve Force," Directorate of History and Heritage, National Defence Headquarters, Ottawa, Canada [hereafter DHH], 79/208, Folder 3; Research Branch of the Library of Parliament, *History of the RCAF (Women's Division) 1941-1971* (Ottawa: May 26, 1971), 10, copy at DHH, Directorate of Women Personnel Fonds [Hereafter DWP Fonds], File 104; "The Interim Period"; and Cynthia Toman, *An Officer and a Lady: Canadian Military Nursing and the Second World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007), 159, 186-7. There has been some work on military nurses in the interim period. See Nancy Power Shiner, "In the Best Interest of the Service: RCAF Flight Nurses as the 'New Woman', 1945-1959" (master's thesis, Dalhousie University, 1998); Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 98-102. For works which simultaneously demonstrate and challenge the power of domesticity, see Becki L. Ross, *Burlesque West: Showgirls, Sex, and Sin in Postwar Vancouver* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009); Joy Parr, ed. *A Diversity of Women: Ontario, 1945-1980* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995); Tarah Brookfield, *Cold War Comforts: Canadian Women, Child Safety, and Global Insecurity, 1945-1975* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2012); and Valerie J. Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000). See the introduction to this dissertation for a discussion on the literature on women's peace activism. For a helpful set of articles on the postwar period, see Magda Fahrni and Robert Rutherford, ed. *Creating Postwar Canada: Community, Diversity and Dissent, 1945-1975* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008).

<sup>527</sup> The term the "interim period" comes from internal defence reports from the 1950s and 1960s. For example, see "The Interim Period," June 1957, DHH, 79/208, folder 2.

servicewomen in the regular forces.<sup>528</sup>

The sections on the interim period explore the variety of ways that journalists, veterans, and defence planners envisioned women's place in the military community. Newspapers advertised the disposal of female wartime equipment and updated their readers on how servicewomen adjusted to civilian life. At least one reporter wanted to inform readers on women who delayed their transition to civilian life.<sup>529</sup> Many female veterans quite happily left their military service behind to start families or take up civilian work, but even those women re-defined their ties to the Canadian armed services. Ex-servicewomen stayed involved in military affairs when they fostered the next generation of service folk through cadet/cadette organizations. Others preserved wartime friendships and maintained involvement through veterans' organizations that called for the employment of women in the peacetime forces. The sections on the interim period build on the scholarship on veterans' construction of military communities. Historian Cameron Duder and Lieutenant-Commander (retired) Karen D. Davis have noted in their respective works that even after being discharged from the armed services, servicewomen remained connected to each other and their former employer.<sup>530</sup>

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<sup>528</sup> Research Branch of the Library of Parliament, *History of the RCAF (Women's Division) 1941-1971*, 13.

<sup>529</sup> Davis, "Employment of women in Canada's Armed Forces, Past and Present," 4, 14; "Historical Notes-Women in the RCAF- 1941-1960," para 4-5; Research Branch of the Library of Parliament, *History of the RCAF (Women's Division) 1941-1971*, 10; "The Interim Period"; Toman, *An Officer and a Lady*, 159, 186-7. Governmental and military research projects on women, written in the 1960s and 1970s, often gloss over the interim period. Typically, there are one to three sentences which simply state that a few female messing officers and nursing sisters were retained after the women's services disbanded. The short piece "The Interim Period" is an exception to general lack of discussion on peacetime female messing officers. The writer of one page text gives a general overview. He/she does not name or provide any specific details about individual women.

<sup>530</sup> Cameron Duder, *Awfully Devoted Women: Lesbians Lives in Canada, 1900-65* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 259; Lieutenant-Commander (retired) Karen D. Davis, "Once a Wren, Always a Wren: The

The records show that senior male military officials continued to envisage a place for women in the peacetime forces during the interim period. They repeatedly drafted plans to enrol women into the armed services. These plans repeated many of the wartime lessons outlined in the reports that were analyzed in the previous chapter. As the authors of the 1946 reports anticipated, veteran female officers were brought back to help organize women's return to the armed services. Defence officials justified women's employment by citing manpower shortages and the wartime rhetoric that "womanpower" had helped win the war.

The discussion of the re-entrance period begins with an analysis of Cabinet's restrictions on the employment of servicewomen, which differentiated Second World War servicewomen from women who served during peace. Yet, there were continuities as well. Returning veterans, like Nellie Ross, still faced a male centered military. Ross' experience as the "only woman" highlights the limited presence of women in the postwar period. Her efforts to secure airwomen a wet canteen demonstrate that anxieties over the masculinizing influence of military service continued. The chapter explores these anxieties by analyzing conversations about women's uniforms and the scope of women's employment. It concludes with a discussion of discharges. Peacetime servicewomen, like their wartime counterparts, deliberately misbehaved when service life did not meet their expectations. Drawing from the literature on disobedience, the reports of deliberate misbehaviour are analyzed as an attempt by the "led" to redefine the conditions of their

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Experience and Contribution of Canada's Wrens, 1942-2010," in *Transforming Traditions: Women, Leadership and the Canadian Navy, 1942-2010*, ed. Stéphanie A.H Bélanger and Karen D. Davis (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2010), 13.

service.<sup>531</sup> Senior female officers partly responded to their subordinates' complaints by using them to legitimize their recommendations for policy changes.

The periods are linked by the arguments that women continued to be drawn to the military and that there was a reoccurring narrative from 1946 to 1955 that peacetime servicewomen were needed. Although female domesticity remained a dominant ideal for women, this chapter shows that this ideal co-existed with the claim that armed services, often coming from women themselves, required uniformed women. Canadians inside and outside the military argued that peacetime servicewomen would ensure that the armed services, and the country they defended, were prepared for emergencies that would demand the large-scale mobilization of women. Disagreement nonetheless remained over what uniformed women's roles should be.<sup>532</sup>

### **Press Reminders of Wartime Servicemen during the Interim Period**

Material evidence of women's service circulated after the war. Parts of servicewomen's kits entered postwar civilian society. *The Chilliwack Progress*, a British Columbian newspaper, reported in August 1946 that "[a] quantity of CWAC clothing and equipment will be retained against future requirements but much wearing apparel of a non-military character" would soon be available for civilian purchase.<sup>533</sup> This two

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<sup>531</sup> Craig Leslie Mantle, "Introduction," *The Unwilling and The Reluctant: Theoretical Perspectives on Disobedience in the Military*, ed. Craig Leslie Mantle (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2006), 1-10; Craig Leslie Mantle, ed. *The Apathetic and the Defiant: Case Studies of Canadian Mutiny and Disobedience, 1812 to 1919* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007); and Harold G. Coombs, ed. *The Insubordinate and the Noncompliant: Case Studies of Canadian, Mutiny and Disobedience, 1920 to Present* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007).

<sup>532</sup> "Report on Wren Officer Employment," attached to memorandum from Acting/Lieutenant (W) M. W. Fahrig RCN (R) to Staff Officer (Wrens), 29 Nov 1954 to SO (Wrens), Library and Archives Canada (Hereafter LAC), RG 112-616-8-E, vol. 34266, file HQ 4360-909/100, pt. 1.

<sup>533</sup> "CWAC Clothing for Civilian Wear," *The Chilliwack Progress*, August 28, 1946.

sentence snippet focused on how the end of the women's service represented civilian gain. Wartime rationing had resulted in shortages of stockings and shoes. Historian Graham Broad argues that wartime advertisements sold Canadians the message that winning the war would enable them to consume in the postwar period. Consumption was thus reward and motivation for supporting the war. Subscribers to *The Chilliwack Progress* were informed of subsequent opportunities to purchase military or military-inspired clothing in 1949. Advertisements for the Bargain Centre Store in Chilliwack listed army khaki pullovers and CWAC dresses in its Thursday to Saturday specials. The advertising of postwar consumption of servicewomen's goods was one reminder of women's wartime service.<sup>534</sup>

Canadian periodicals also occasionally carried stories on what happened to servicewomen in their post-service life. For instance, Adelaide Sinclair's appointment as executive assistant to the Welfare Deputy Minister in November 1946 prompted *Globe and Mail* staff writer Kenneth Cragg to report on the fate of popular senior female officers. Officers such as Colonel Margaret Eaton had resumed or were about to resume their pre-war mixture of volunteering and domestic duties. Ex-CWAC Captain Olive Ruth Russell and ex-Wren Lieutenant-Commander Edna Whinney had found work in the Department of Veterans Affairs. Wing Officer Winnifred Taylor represented the

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<sup>534</sup> Graham Broad, *A Small Price to Pay: Consumer Culture on the Canadian Home Front, 1939-45* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2013), 88-12; Jeffrey A. Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers: Canada's Second World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), 104-6, "Rayon Hose-To-day," in Lieutenant Beulah Irene Rosen (nee Jaenicke), Scrapbook of Lieutenant Beulah Irene Rosen (nee Jaenicke), George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum's Military History Research Centre, CWM Archives, 58E 9 2.2, Control No. 20060087-006; "Weekend Specials," *The Chilliwack Progress*, August 31, 1949; and "Bargain Centre Specials," *The Chilliwack Progress*, September 14, 1949.

exception. She remained in uniform, overseeing the final disbandment of the RCAF (WD). Cragg mostly referred to the women by their wartime military rank as he celebrated their postwar achievements. No mention was made of women who failed to find work or those who were disappointed that they were unable to remain in the armed services.<sup>535</sup>

Historian Ruth Roach Pierson concludes that, between 1945 and 1947, most of the popular press helped to reinforce the male breadwinner ideal. She points to Canadian Press staff correspondent Margaret Ecker Francis' 1947 article, "When Fluffy Clothes Replaced the Uniform," in the *Canadian Home Journal*. Pierson argues that, though Francis noted servicewomen's inability to find skilled work and their anger over the gendered wage gap, she reinforced gender norms because she emphasised the "successful transition from uniform service to 'civvy street.'" For example, Francis reported on how service life had made women more efficient housekeepers with higher standards of cleanliness.<sup>536</sup> While Cragg's and Francis' articles upheld gender norms, their articles continued wartime tributes to women's contributions into peacetime.

Some women delayed their transition from uniform to "civvy street." A small number of military nurses moved into the peacetime armed services. Female dieticians had enrolled in the wartime Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps (RCAMC) and the peacetime RCAMC employed five dieticians in 1946. Six female dieticians, called messing officers in the air force, transferred to the RCAF Medical Branch when the

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<sup>535</sup> Kenneth C. Cragg, "Toronto Women is Aide to Welfare Deputy Minister," *The Globe and Mail*, November 1, 1946.

<sup>536</sup> Ruth Roach Pierson, *"They're Still Women After All": The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986), 217.

RCAF (WD) disbanded. Wing Commander Margaret St. Clair Clark raised the total number of female messing officers to seven when she rejoined the RCAF in 1947 to head the RCAF's Food Service Branch. Clark had spent the previous two years as the Supervisor of Dietetic Services at the Department of Veteran Affairs. The RCAF had thirteen dieticians by the end of the interim period. The number of uniformed women was small, but represents one way that the armed services held onto women in the postwar period.<sup>537</sup>

Dieticians were kept, like nurses, because there was a recognized need for their services and their jobs were accepted as female work. The retention of dieticians fit in with a larger emphasis on nutrition as reflected in the emergence of Canada's Official Food Rules, the precursor to Canada's Food Guide. The first version appeared in 1942 and it was revised in 1944. The Food Rules were the cornerstone of a massive education campaign largely directed at mothers, who did much of the work feeding their families, and designed to combat wartime malnutrition. The Food Rules also reflect the role of food as a symbol of Canadian identity. Historian Franca Iacovetta argues that "Canada's postwar food and nutrition gatekeepers" used cookbooks, films, periodicals to teach Cold War immigrants Canadian middle-class customs and gender roles. Historian Ian Mosby

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<sup>537</sup> Davis, "Employment of women in Canada's Armed Forces, Past and Present" 12-15; Cynthia Toman, *An Officer and a Lady: Canadian Military Nursing and the Second World War* (Vancouver : UBC Press, 2007), 156-63; J. M. Hitsman, "'Manpower' Problems of the Women's Services During the Second World War," *Army Headquarters Report*, no. 68, 17 June 1954, DHH, 19-22, accessed October 1, 2014, <http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/his/rep-rap/ahqrd-drqga-eng.asp?txtType=3&RfId=257>; "She Feeds The Air Force," Release no 8611, January 1956, p 1-3 in Biographical File for Margaret St. Clair Clark, DHH; "Information re RCAF (WD) in World War II" [no date], 90/447,DWP Fonds, File 104; "The Interim Period," June 1957, DHH, 79/208, folder 2; Research Branch of the Library of Parliament, *History of the RCAF (Women's Division)1941-1971*, 10.

states that female “nutrition experts” tended to be nutritionists, dieticians, and home economists. Men performed most of the university-based food science research and headed many of the nutrition and dietary associations. Female Red Cross nutritionists targeted low-income mothers with their nutrition education classes. Other nutrition experts ran and studied postwar school lunch programs in Montreal, Toronto and other Canadian cities. Many programs were short-lived. The Red Cross ended its Toronto study after two years.<sup>538</sup>

Little is known about the female dieticians who served in the interim period. As stated above, government and military studies often simply note that there were dieticians in the armed services. Even wartime veterans who rejoined the peacetime forces were unaware that messing officers remained. Vi Dudley-Mathiesen writes in her memoir that only a few wartime nurses stayed in the peacetime forces. Her discussions of officers focus on the ones with whom she had a professional and/or personal relationship with. Dudley-Mathiesen served as a non-commissioned member, and might not have discussed messing officers because she may not have dealt much with them.<sup>539</sup>

The lack of scholarly attention to messing officers can be partly attributed to peacetime administrative practices. Messing officers were integrated in the interim period

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<sup>538</sup> Ian Mosby, “Making and Breaking Canada’s Food Rules: Science, the State, and the Government of Nutrition, 1942-1949,” in *Edible Histories, Cultural Politics: Towards a Canadian Food History*, ed. Franca Iacovaetta and Valerie J. Korinek (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 409-427, Charlotte Macdonald, *Strong, Beautiful and Modern: National Fitness in Britain, New Zealand, Australia and Canada, 1935-1960* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011), 127-150; Ian Mosby, *Food Will Win the War: The Politics, Culture, and Science of Food on Canada's Home Front* (Vancouver : UBC Press, 2014), 41-60, 127-9, 160-1, 197-99; and Franca Iacovetta, *Gatekeepers: Reshaping Immigrant Lives in Cold War* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2006), 137-71.

<sup>539</sup> Dudley-Mathiesen, *Sweet ‘N’ Sour*, 124.

into their respective branch, and awarded the same pay and ranks as men. During the war, air force women had their own system of ranks that used different names for equivalent male ranks. It is possible to identify whether a wartime officer was male or female from their rank alone. For example, the Chief Messing Officer for the RCAF (WD) had the rank of Wing Officer, which was the female equivalent to the male Wing Commander. The RCAF applied the male officer ranks to female officers in the postwar period. Thus, when Margaret St. Clair Clark returned, she was called Wing Commander Clark. It is hard to tell on peacetime official texts if an RCAF officer is male or female unless one has, as in the case of Clark, additional information. The author of an unsigned official report states, “[O]n all the records, except for their personal ones, they were listed as men.”<sup>540</sup> Administrative practices hid messing officers.

RCAF officials also attempted to draw press attention away from messing officers and nursing sisters in the late 1940s. The RCAF drafted a press release on ““Women in the Regular Air Force”” in July 1947 in response to an Ottawa radio station reporter’s request for information. Senior military officials refused to approve the press release because they believed that it was poorly timed. They directed the Director of Public Relations (RCAF) in 1947 to nudge the radio station reporter in a different direction by “suggest[ing] to him, because of the small number involved [in the Regular Air Force], that such a story would not have much news value....”<sup>541</sup> No explanation was offered as

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<sup>540</sup> “The Interim Period”; and Mary Ziegler, *We Serve That Men May Fly* (Hamilton, ON: R.C.A.F. (W.D.) Association, 1973), 11. The quotation comes from “The Interim Period.”

<sup>541</sup> Air Commodore DE MacKell, for Air Member for Personnel to Director of Public Relations (RCAF), 8 July 1947, DHH, 79/208, folder 2; and Memorandum from R.V. Dodds, Director of Public Relations (RCAF) to D/AMP, 7 July 1947, DHH, 79/208, folder 2.

to why it was a bad time. The request demonstrates that at least one civilian was aware that there were military women in the peacetime RCAF.

A need to recruit dieticians appears to have prompted different public relations tactics. The armed services struggled to enlist dieticians throughout the 1950s. The extensive qualifications contributed to the difficulties: minimum qualifications (based on professional standards set by the Canadian Dietetic Association) specified a university degree in household science or home economics plus a one year internship. A January 1956 press release about Wing Commander Clark detailed her almost twelve years of wartime, interim, and postwar service, stating that she was “one of the 23 women who are home economic specialists making a career as messing officers in the Air Force.” Since the RCAF had begun recruiting women for non-medical trades in 1951, it was now acceptable to report that not all uniformed women had entered “civvy street.”

The press release on Clark balanced the message that the RCAF offered female dieticians responsibility with reassurances that female messing officers remained feminine. It noted that Clark was the senior dietician and that there were nine male messing officers, making it possible for the reader to infer that Clark supervised men. The RCAF press officials countered potential anxieties tied to female masculinity through a description of Clark as “charming and enthusiastic” and a comparison of mothers with messing officers. The release states, “Just as mother is the expert on food in the home, so are women the majority of food experts in the Air Force.” Most messing officers, RCAF press officials implied, remained feminine because they used women’s “natural” abilities and filled stereotypically female roles, albeit in a military environment. By describing

Wing Commander Clark's lengthy career and the importance of her female expertise, the RCAF sought to depict itself as a potential long-term employer and thus to increase recruitment.<sup>542</sup>

Servicewomen and their kit were still news items in the interim period. Journalists covered servicewomen's transition into civilian life. In addition, at least one journalist negotiated with military authorities over a newspaper story on wartime servicewomen who stayed in uniform. The press also helped ex-servicewomen build new connections with the armed services by reporting on female veterans' participation in military-related groups.

### **Staying Connected, 1946 to 1951**

Canadian women organized and volunteered with a wide variety of organizations in the interim period. Some joined groups that fought to keep wartime price controls. Ex-servicewomen formed a variety of veteran's organizations that enabled them to display their continued attachment to the larger military community. Female veterans established their own branch within larger mixed-gender cross-service organizations, such as the Canadian Legion, or service specific organizations, such as the RCAF Association. The immediate postwar years also saw women from all three women's services create and

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<sup>542</sup> "She Feeds The Air Force"; Wing Commander Margaret St. Clair Clark, The Party Line, "Food Services in the RCAF," *The Roundel* 8, no. 8 (October 1956): 13-17; Memorandum to Secretary Personnel Members committee DHH 80/193, box 11 file 236; Memorandum from Lieutenant (W) E.E. MacDermott, Secretary of the Inter-Service Recruiting Committee, to Secretary of the Personnel Members Committee, 29 July 1952, attached to Extract from Minutes of PMC Meeting 4/385, held 14 August 1952, Item One-Year, Subsidized Internship- Dieticians, PMC Control Number PMC 43-2-1, DHH, 80/193, box 11, file 236; Joan Sangster, *Transforming Labour: Women and Work in Post-War Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 16-53, Kindle; and Julie Guard, "Women Worth Watching: Radical Housewives in Cold War Canada," in *Whose National Security? Canadian State Surveillance and the Creation of Enemies*, ed. Dieter Buse, Gary Kinsman and Mercedes Steedman (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2000), 73-88.

build female-run veterans groups. Local chapters of the Ex-Wrens Associations, Canadian Women Army Corp Associations, and W.D. Associations sprang up across Canada.<sup>543</sup>

While these veterans chose to remember their service, others left their service behind. Florence McBride (née Plant) married after her discharge and never spoke of her service with her neighbors. Decades later, she attributed her refusal to her fear of losing her good reputation. McBride believed that other women waited to share their experiences because they, too, were silenced by the wartime disapproval towards servicewomen. Many servicewomen waited years, sometimes even decades, to participate in veterans' groups because they were busy with childcare and other responsibilities. As chapter six will discuss, many servicewomen delayed publishing their individual experiences and history of their service for similar reasons.<sup>544</sup>

Female veterans experienced a range of acceptance in mixed-gender organizations. Some ex-servicemen supported the efforts of female veterans within the larger mixed gender organizations and within women's own organization. The *Chilliwack Progress* printed a call for CWAC veterans and any other personnel who served at "A6"

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<sup>543</sup> Davis, "Once a Wren, Always a Wren: The Experience and Contribution of Canada's Wrens, 1942-2010," 11-5; Glad Bryce, *First In, Last Out: the RCAF, Women's Division and Nursing Sisters in World War II* (Toronto : University Women's Club of Toronto, 2010), 175; Ruth Russell, *Proudly She Marched: Training Canada's World War Women in Waterloo County, Vol 1: Canadian Women's Army Corps* (Waterloo, ON: Canadian Federation of University Women, Kitchener-Waterloo, 2006), 160-66; Anne Kallin with Joan Smeaton, *Proudly She Marched: Training Canada's World War Women in Waterloo County, Vol. II: Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service* (Waterloo, ON: Canadian Federation of University Women, Kitchener-Waterloo, 2007), 112-17; "Royal Canadian Air Force Association," *The Roundel* 1, no. 9 (July 1949): 38-9; and W. Hugh Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War: The Canadian Women's Army Corps, Their Story* (Dartmouth, N.S: Writing and Editorial Services, 1983), 378.

<sup>544</sup> Bryce, *First In, Last Out*, 175; Russell, *Proudly She Marched*, 160-66; and Colonel (retired) Margaret Dunn, foreword to *Athene, Goddess of War*, 7. See chapter one for a discussion of the wartime backlash towards servicewomen.

Canadian Engineering Training Centre to join an association of former A6 personnel. Male-dominated veteran organizations lent space to female veterans' organizations. Individual male veterans, however, sometimes opposed the applications of ex-servicewomen to the local Legion chapter. Florence Gray (née Lough) was initially rejected by the Legion in Kenora, Ontario. Her father, a Legion employee, had encouraged her to apply for membership and complained when she was initially rebuffed. She protested as well, and was subsequently granted membership. The rejection stayed with her and she never visited the Legion.<sup>545</sup> Another female army veteran recalled, "[t]he Legion didn't want us anywhere near them." The exclusion led some women to form women's branches of the Legion.<sup>546</sup>

Veterans participated in these organizations for several reasons. Regular monthly meetings and outings such as dances, bowling, and hobby nights helped members maintain old bonds and create new ones. The events provided a social outlet for women busy raising families and/or working. Female veterans spent extensive volunteer hours planning and hosting reunions, which further helped to rejuvenate ties. Reunions also reminded the public of servicewomen's wartime service because organizers placed ads in newspapers. Visits to active ships and military bases connected veterans with those actively serving in the postwar years. The Ex-Wrens Association's use of names of ships and the RCAF Association practice of referring to local chapters as wings borrowed from

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<sup>545</sup> News in Brief Regarding W.R.C.N.S. Associations From Coast to Coast," Anniversary Issue, *The Wren Newsletter* 1, no. 2 (August 29: 1948), 2, copy at DHH, 92/74, file 7; "Ex Members of A6 Form Fraternity," *The Chilliwack Progress*, November 19, 1947; "News in Brief Regarding W.R.C.N.S. Associations From Coast to Coast," *The Wren Newsletter* 1, no. 2, anniversary issue, (Aug 29, 1948): 2; and Russell, *Proudly She Marched*, 162.

<sup>546</sup> Russell, *Proudly She Marched*, 162.

and strengthened military traditions.<sup>547</sup> Nevertheless, the “Ex” in the name Ex-Wren Association emphasized the loss of military status.

Chapters ranged in size and levels of activity. National newsletters helped publicize and connect groups with one another. Some chapters operated as more social outlets, while others were committed to social work. The Ex-Wrens Association HMCS “Nonsuch Division,” located in Edmonton, Alberta, boasted a membership of 150. The “Nonsuch Division” conducted a variety of fundraisers in 1947-1948 to fund its efforts to build a library for the local hospital. Other chapters engaged in volunteer work that crossed international borders by financing monthly “food gifts” to British Wrens. The volunteer work reflected larger Cold War trends. Tarah Brookfield argues that women used traditional feminine work for political ends. Women knitted and raised money for international relief efforts. While Brookfield examines women’s participation in civil defence, her monograph focuses more on women’s anti-war work and efforts to relieve the suffering caused by war. The records of women’s veterans’ organizations demonstrate that anti-war work is only part of the story, and that some Canadian women leaned towards the military. Through their volunteer work, female veterans supported other veterans, local communities and actively serving personnel.<sup>548</sup>

Veterans also kept connected to and assisted the armed services by fostering the development of the next generation of military personnel through cadet/cadette groups.

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<sup>547</sup> “News in Brief Regarding W.R.C.N.S. Associations From Coast to Coast,” Anniversary Issue, *The Wren Newsletter* 1, no. 2 (August 29: 1948), 2; “From Coast to Coast,” *The Wren Newsletter* 1, No 4 (1950), 3; and “Royal Canadian Air Force Association,” *The Roundel* 1, no. 9 (July 1949): 38-9.

<sup>548</sup> “News in Brief Regarding W.R.C.N.S. Associations From Coast to Coast,” Anniversary Issue, *The Wren Newsletter* 1, no. 2 (August 29: 1948), 2; and Tarah Brookfield, *Cold War Comforts*, 23-50, 161-188.

Male and female veterans co-operated to form the Girls Auxiliary to the No. 147 (Chilliwack) Squadron in Chilliwack. Cherie Hall, a RCAF (WD) aero-engine mechanic, recruited other ex-WDs to instruct, drill and staff the administrative office for a Vancouver-based cadettes group in the early 1950s. The ex-WDs functioned as visible manifestations of female military traditions when they wore their wartime uniforms while training Vancouver cadettes.<sup>549</sup>

Cadet organizations created ties between generations of military women. Naval female cadet groups modelled their name and organizational structure after the WRCNS. Called “the little sisters of WRCNS” by a local newspaper, the Wrenettes of Winnipeg, Manitoba, followed their “older sisters” in acting as the administrative support staff for the male cadet groups.<sup>550</sup> Vi Dudley-Mathiesen draws readers’ attention to the organizational and generational links in her memoir of the nine years she spent in air force uniform. She transitions her last story from her Second World War service and her first story from her peacetime service with an account of her participation with the Vancouver cadettes in a section she calls “And, In the Meantime.” In this section, Dudley-Mathiesen names former airwomen turned cadette instructors who re-joined the RCAF Regular and Reserve forces, and female veterans who continued supporting the cadettes/cadets. She proudly proclaims that “several of our Cadettes also joined the RCAF Regular Force and gave excellent account of themselves.”<sup>551</sup> Occasionally, the

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<sup>549</sup> Arthur MacDonald, Royal Canadian Air Cadets, *The Roundel* 1, no. 10 (Aug 1949): 20-22; and Dudley-Mathiesen, *Sweet ‘N’ Sour*, 131-3.

<sup>550</sup> “Organization of Wrenettes Is Year Old This January,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, January 18, 1947. The paragraph draws largely from and follows close to one in Dudley-Mathiesen, 133.

<sup>551</sup> Dudley-Mathiesen, *Sweet ‘N’ Sour*, 133.

bonds created between instructors and cadets remained even after the end of the involvement in the cadette organization. A bemused Dudley-Mathiesen recounts how a former cadette would salute her even after she told the cadet that her “unofficial rating as a Cadet Officer now meant nothing....”<sup>552</sup> While Dudley-Mathiesen passes the incident off as an amusing anecdote, the incident and her references to re-connecting with some former cadets in her later years draws attention to the multi-generational community of female veterans.

The fostering of the next generation of military personnel followed gender norms. Female cadet groups lacked the status of their male counterparts and were not officially part of the Air Cadet League of Canada, Royal Canadian Sea Cadets, and the Royal Army Cadets until 1975. In 1950, the Navy League of Canada created a separate formal program for girls aged 12 to 18, called the Navy League Wrenettes Corps. The differential status had material consequences. The Defence Department, the RCAF and later the Canadian Forces, have supported and supervised the Air Cadet League since its formation. In contrast, Cherie Hall had trouble getting official sanction. She gathered uniforms and fundraised money for the operating costs.<sup>553</sup> A similar state of affairs

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<sup>552</sup> Dudley-Mathiesen, *Sweet 'N' Sour*, 137.

<sup>553</sup> Dudley-Mathiesen, *Sweet 'N' Sour*, 132-3; Arthur MacDonald, “Royal Canadian Air Cadets,” *The Roundel* 1, no. 10 (August 1949): 20-2; Air Cadet League of Canada, “History,” Air Cadet League of Canada, 2016, accessed Jan 30, 2016, <http://aircadetleague.com/about-us/history/>; Air Cadet League of Canada, “Our Partners,” Air Cadet League of Canada, 2016, accessed Jan 30, 2016, <http://aircadetleague.com/about-us/our-partners/department-national-defence/>; Lynn A. Hawkeye, “Cadets in Manitoba,” Hubbell Awards Inc, accessed Jun 10, 2015, <http://hubbellawards.com/cadetsinmanitoba.html> ; The Navy League of Canada, “Our History,” The Navy League of Canada, 2016, accessed Jan 30, 2016, <http://www.navyleague.ca/en/about-us/our-history/>; and Army Cadet History, “General History of the Royal Army Cadets,” Army Cadet League of Canada, 2013, accessed May 10, 2015, [http://www.armycadethistory.com/Main\\_page.htm](http://www.armycadethistory.com/Main_page.htm). [Hawkeye's piece bears a lot of resemblance to the history presented by Army Cadet History. There are in fact, some identical paragraphs.](#)

existed for female army cadets. According to the Army Cadet History project, female army cadets “could never lawfully be trained, kitted, fed or transported and were not allowed to attend summer camp.”<sup>554</sup> The armed services and affiliate organizations remained masculine domains.

The idea that girls and boys had different roles to play influenced how cadet organizations trained male and female members. Cadet organizations had the dual aims of military preparedness and training future model citizens. The Wrenettes of Winnipeg gained clerical skills and experience through handling the support work for the local Sea Cadets. The *Winnipeg Tribune* reported in January 1947 that the Wrenettes planned to add sports and handicrafts to their list of activities, but did not mention any plans for additional naval training. Likewise, Arthur MacDonald, the Director of Publicity for the Air Cadet League of Canada, addressed potential worries over the fact that the Girl Auxiliary of No. 147 (Chilliwack) Squadron received training similar to male cadets by stressing that the female cadets also received ‘feminine’ training in hairdressing. MacDonald used women’s roles as morale boosters and civilizing agents to justify female cadettes. He claimed that the creation of the Girls Auxiliary to 147 Squadron allegedly improved male aviation knowledge, appearance and behaviour.<sup>555</sup> Cadet organizations simultaneously benefited from young female labour and enabled female participants to develop skills that conformed to the limited nature of women’s workforce participation.

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[It is not clear who copied from who.](#)

<sup>554</sup> Lynn A. Hawkeye, “Cadets in Manitoba”; and Army Cadet History, “General History of the Royal Army Cadets.” The same quotation appears in both.

<sup>555</sup> Arthur MacDonald, “Royal Canadian Air Cadets,” *The Roundel* 1, no. 10 (August 1949): 20-22; “Organization of Wrenettes Is Year Old This January,” *Winnipeg Tribune*, January 18, 1947; and Air Cadet League of Canada, “History.”

Civilians, veterans, and military officials tried broadening women's employment opportunities when they called upon the government to re-organize the women's services.

### **External Calls to Reform in the Interim Period**

Civilians with no obvious connection to the armed services weighed in on the future of women's services. Geoffrey Riddehough, an assistant professor of Classics at the University of British Columbia, wrote to the Secretary of the Department of National Defence (DND) in 1947 and proposed "VIRIS DAT FEMINA VIRES, 'Women gives strength to men,'" as a motto for the next women's army corps.<sup>556</sup> His suggestion continued the wartime division of labour and positioned women in supportive roles. Riddehough justified his unsolicited letter on the grounds that "it is more than probable that they [the Women's Army Corps] would be re-created in another national emergency."<sup>557</sup> The professor expressed a reoccurring assumption: like the authors of the 1946 reports, he expected that servicewomen would be mobilized in future crises.

Veterans actively also tried to shape the direction of the postwar armed services. They did so at the group level, by lobbying the government, and at the individual level, by asking to enlist. Formed in May 1948, the RCAF Association was a veterans' organization with strong political connections: Air Marshal W.L. Curtis, Chief of the Air

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<sup>556</sup> "George Riddehough Fonds Finding Aid," 2014, University of British Columbia Archives. According to the biographical sketch within the aid, Riddehough joined UBC in 1933 and taught there for 38 years. His PhD. focused on the medieval poet Joseph of Exeter, whose poem on the Trojan War provided the inspiration for the motto. Aside from some scrapbooks that include material on the Second World War, there does not seem to be an obvious connection to the Canadian armed services.

<sup>557</sup> Geoffrey B. Riddehough to The Secretary, Department of National Defence, March 11, 1947, LAC, RG 24, vol. 2255, file HQ 54-27-111-33, vol. 3.

Staff, and Defence Minister Brooke Claxton had supported its creation.<sup>558</sup> The first elected national president of the RCAF Association, retired Air-Vice Marshal A. L. Morfee, speculated during his May 1950 address at an RCAF (WD) reunion that the RCAF Association might successfully pressure the federal government to establish a “nucleus of a Women’s Division in the Air Force” or least a “reserve of the Women’s Division” if they passed resolutions to that effect. The No. 100 (Bluenose) Wing, a Halifax chapter of the RCAF Association, had sponsored the reunion and listened to his advice. On 18 July 1950, its members “resolved ‘[t]hat the Women’s Division again be accepted as part of the Permanent and Reserve Forces of the R.C.A.F. to include veterans of the World War II who might wish to re-enlist, as well as new recruits.’”<sup>559</sup> The resolution was forwarded to Air Force Headquarters in Ottawa, and appeared in a magazine designed to keep RCAF personnel informed of wider air force matters.<sup>560</sup>

Individual women lobbied for women’s return when they informed local military officials that they retained their desire to serve. A prominent feminist journalist, Lotta Dempsey, drew attention to these efforts in her 1 July 1950 column for *The Globe and Mail*. Dempsey reported that former Wrens visited *HMCS York* hoping to find out when they would be allowed to re-enlist. Air force officials told Dempsey that the recent outbreak of the Korean War prompted an increase in inquiries, noting that roughly a

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<sup>558</sup> *Air Force Association of Canada Handbook* (1962): 1-6 (online), Air Force Association of Canada, 2015, accessed May 10, 2015, <http://rcfassociation.ca/uploads/airforce/2008/07/afac-handbook-nov081.pdf>.

<sup>559</sup> “The Royal Canadian Air Force Association,” *The Roundel* 2, no. 10 (September 1950): 16.

<sup>560</sup> “The Royal Canadian Air Force Association,” *The Roundel* 2, no. 10 (September 1950): 16. Other veterans’ associations passed and sent on similar resolutions. For coverage of the resolution passed by the Dominion Council of Naval Officers’ Associations of Canada, see “W.R.C.N.S. Reserve,” *The Wren Newsletter* 1, no. 4 (1950): 18.

quarter were from women. Dempsey was not the only journalist to write about women's attempts to secure military employment. An August 1950 Canadian Press story was entitled, "Girls Want to Go: Ex-Servicewomen, Nurses Seek to Enlist in Canada's Korea Brigade." The Canadian Press reported that defence officials responded that there were no plans to reform the women's services.<sup>561</sup>

Dempsey encouraged women's political participation. She had written prominently on women's issues when she began her career in journalism in the 1920s. By the 1950s, she contributed regularly to *Chatelaine*, on top of her regular column and many front-page stories for the *Globe and Mail*. She used her position as editor-in-chief of *Chatelaine* in 1952 to expose the fact that Agnes MacPhail, the first female Member of Parliament, had no pension. Dempsey used her position to raise awareness that women still wished to serve.<sup>562</sup>

### **Government Defence Plans for Women in the Interim Period**

Defence officials told the press in the summer of 1950 that there were no plans to reform the women's service, but this was misleading: internal discussions about how to use servicewomen's labour had been underway since the late 1940s. In September 1948, the Naval Board approved the inclusion of Appendix N to the RCN Emergency

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<sup>561</sup> Lotta Dempsey, Person to Person, *Globe and Mail*, July 1, 1950; and Canadian Press, "Girls Want to Go: Ex-Servicewomen, Nurses Seek to Enlist in Canada's Korea Brigade," *Globe and Mail*, August 10, 1950.

<sup>562</sup> Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs*, 44-7, 265-6; Brookfield, *Cold War Comforts*, 82-6; W.H. Kesterton, *A History of Journalism in Canada* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1984), 86; Carolyn Davis Fisher, *Lotta Dempsey: The Lady Was a Star* (Toronto: Belsten Pub, 1995), 13-37; Andrew Burtch, *Give Me Shelter: The Failure of Canada's Cold War Civil Defence* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012), 37-40; and J. L. Granatstein, *Canada's Army: Waging War and Keeping the Piece*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), 316-42.

Mobilization Plan 1948. Appendix N covered how the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service would be part of short-range expansions.<sup>563</sup> The next month the Naval Board commissioned a report on how women could be best used to replace men under the existing manpower ceilings.<sup>564</sup> As the authors of the 1946 reports on the women's services had predicted, the possibility of future emergencies created and legitimized the employment of women in future military engagements.

Army documents from the late 1940s reveal that their manpower planning also entailed the engagement of uniformed women. Uncertainty existed over the exact number and nature of women's future contributions. Lieutenant-Colonel J.M. Delamere tentatively estimated in 1948 that, of the 275 579 personnel required by the Army's Emergency Plan, approximately 20 000, or roughly seven per cent, would be women. He qualified his predictions on the grounds that he was missing data and the question of what roles women would fill was still very much up in the air. Numbers dropped to 7 500 women in the plans drafted by Brigadier T.G. Gibson, the Vice-Adjutant-General, the following year. The reduced numbers stemmed from the army's decision to employ women in jobs with civilian counterparts in order to reduce the army's training load. Women were wanted, but only if they could be brought in without imposing a heavy training burden on the army.<sup>565</sup>

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<sup>563</sup> "Item 258-3 RCN Emergency Mobilization Plan 1948 Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service-Appendix 'N'," Minutes of the 258<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Naval Board, 8 September 1948, DHH, 81/520/1000-100/2, Naval Board-Minutes to Meetings, box 22, file 4.

<sup>564</sup> "Item 263-5 Institution of W.R.C.N.S. in the Peacetime Navy," Minutes of the 263<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Naval Board, 19 October 1948, DHH, 81/520/1000-100/2, Naval Board-Minutes to Meetings, box 22, file 4.

<sup>565</sup> Memorandum from Lieutenant-Colonel J.M. Delamere, A/Director of Organization to Vice Adjutant-

Gibson bemoaned the lack of arrangements “for CWAC in the post-war army” in August 1949, and drafted plans to ensure smooth mobilization in future wars. He proposed a series of steps focused on leadership, training, regulations, and stock-piling equipment. Repeating wartime explanations, Gibson blamed wartime disciplinary issues on “inadequate selection methods and the lack of properly trained female officers and nco’s [sic].” His solution was to offer his support for the creation of a female Canadian Officer Training Corps (COTC) plan. He claimed this would secure a supply of trained female leaders before a war broke out and avoid wartime deficiencies in the women’s services.<sup>566</sup>

Mobilization planning was geared towards overcoming what Gibson called “[t]he natural antipathy of the female to regimentation.” Planners, he explained, had to consider the “fact” that women were not inclined to accept military discipline and communal living. Welfare and counselling provisions run by “competent female officers” were further imperatives in Gibson’s opinion. He envisioned that these officers would be COTC graduates and carried on the Canadian Army’s Supplementary Reserve. Female officers would not be granted commission in army’s Regular forces, and, would not be permanent full-time employees but rather called for duty when needed. Most reservists

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General, 2 October 1948, DHH, 75/174, file 7; “Appendix A: Breakdown of Manpower Army Requirement Emergency Plan” attached to Memorandum from Lieutenant-Colonel J.M. Delamere, A/Director of Organization to Vice Adjutant-General, 2 October 1948, DHH, 75/174, file 7; and Memorandum from Brigadier T.G. Gibson, Vice Adjutant-General, to the Adjutant General, 19 August 1949, DHH 75/174, file 7.

<sup>566</sup> Memorandum from Brigadier T.G. Gibson, Vice Adjutant-General, to the Adjutant General, 19 August 1949. See Chapters 1 and 3 of this dissertation for discussion of wartime explanations.

held a full-time civilian job while Regular force troops were the career soldiers.<sup>567</sup> His discussion of defence planning for women differs from those written by female officers. Both wartime and female officers lobbied for expanded opportunities for servicewomen. As discussed in chapter three, wartime female officers made recommendations aimed at women's advancement through the ranks. Peacetime female officers continued to push for new career opportunities. Their efforts will be discussed later on in this and the next chapter. In contrast, Gibson's mobilization and women's army training centered on the apparent greater difficulty of indoctrinating women, and was not designed to provide them with new career paths.

Planners referred to Second World War experiences in setting out the carefully defined place for women. Lieutenant-Colonel Delamere based his 1948 estimate of 20 000 women for home defence on wartime numbers. Brigadier Gibson specifically referenced Lieutenant-Colonel Daisy Royal's final report. Gibson justified his recommendation that there was no need for separate CWAC Administrative Company Headquarters, because Royal had advised that there was no requirement for a "special administrative machinery" once the CWAC "are posted to units or establishments, provided such units and establishments include an appropriate number of female officers and nco's." Once they finished basic training, future CWAC servicewomen would fall under the administrative structures of the units and establishments which employed them. Although he did not credit Royal with the idea, Gibson repeated her advice that female

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<sup>567</sup> Memorandum from Brigadier T.G. Gibson, Vice Adjutant-General, to the Adjutant General, 19 August 1949; and Isabel Campbell, *Unlikely Diplomats: the Canadian Brigade in Germany, 1951-64* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2013), 120.

reserve officers should be brought in to help draft mobilization plans. Gibson recognized Royal's claim for female authority and he did not question her argument that both defence planning and servicewomen required female supervision.<sup>568</sup>

Defence officials considered bringing in female planners as early as October 1948. The Defence Council requested female assistance when it sought to update Canadian Second World War experience with British and American postwar experience with military women. Unlike Canada, both the United Kingdom and the United States had kept some of their women's services. The Defence Council asked the tri-service Personnel Members Committee (PMC) to have American and British officials describe the conditions in their women's services. For instance, the Defence Council wanted to know how many women left, where the women were employed, and the level of morale. The Defence Council also asked the three services through the PMC to "explore confidentially the possibility of obtaining the services of an outstanding woman who could be employed on organizational planning."<sup>569</sup> Top level defence officials recognized the need for female (military) expertise. The Defence Council reported to and counselled the Minister of National Defence and Cabinet Defence Committee on administrative policy.<sup>570</sup>

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<sup>568</sup> Memorandum from Lieutenant-Colonel J.M. Delamere, A/Director of Organization to Vice Adjutant-General, 2 October 1948; Memorandum from Brigadier T.G. Gibson, Vice Adjutant-General, to the Adjutant General, 19 August 1949; and Lieutenant-Colonel Daisy I. Royal, "Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," 29 August 1946, Section I, para 1 to 2 copy at DHH, 81/208.

<sup>569</sup> Memorandum from Captain Colin H. Graham, Secretary for the Personnel Members Committee, to the Adjutant General, Chief of Naval Personnel, Air Member for Personnel, 22 February 1949, LAC, RG 24, vol. 3374, file HQ 433-2-1, vol. 6.

<sup>570</sup> Douglas L. Bland, *The Administration of Defence Policy in Canada, 1947 to 1985* (Kingston, ON: R.P. Frye, 1987), 150-54 ; and Douglas L. Bland, *Chiefs of Defence : Government and the Unified Command of the Canadian Armed Services* (Toronto: s.n., 1995), 23, 31, 34, 36-41, 74.

The PMC's findings gave the stamp of approval to integrating the knowledge of wartime Canadian servicewomen. Captain C.H. Graham, the PMC Secretary, advised the Defence Council on 22 February 1949 that Canadian defence planners could reliably draw from Canadian wartime experience with the women's services. Graham explained that the American and British reports primarily discussed the war. A week later, Graham reported that the PMC had not yet finished investigating the possibility of "obtaining the services of a suitable woman" who could assist with planning. By January 1951, all three services employed a wartime female officer to help design uniforms for peacetime servicewomen. This act was a small but significant step and was a central recommendation in the 1946 reports.<sup>571</sup>

Meanwhile, officials considered how to best use the reserve pool of women's labour. The Naval Board discussed and sanctioned the Chief of Naval Personnel's (CNP) proposal to establish a WRCNS component of the RCN (Reserves) in September 1950. It concluded that the decision to have women as part of the navy's reserve forces was in line with the other two services. Approval was granted for the recruitment of a maximum of "50 officers and 450 women...under the RCN(R) ceiling."<sup>572</sup> Naval Board members agreed with the CNP's recommendation to start quickly working on the securing of

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<sup>571</sup> Memorandum from Captain Colin H. Graham, Secretary for the Personnel Members Committee to the Adjutant General, Chief of Naval Personnel, Air Member for Personnel, 22 February 1949; Memorandum from Captain Colin H. Graham, Secretary, Personnel Members Committee, to Secretary, Defence Council, 1 March 1949, LAC, RG 24, vol. 3374, file HQ 433-2-1, vol. 6; Minutes of Third Meeting of DID Working Party on Women's Clothing, 4 January 19, DHH, 72/940; Mary Ziegler, *We Serve That Men May Fly* (Hamilton, ON: R.C.A.F. (W.D.) Association, 1973), 160; Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War*, 217, 251, 314, 375-6, 379-80; and A.I. McPhee, "A Wren's Story," in *Salty Dips, Vol. II* (Ottawa: Ottawa Branch Naval Officers' Association of Canada, 1985), 125-33.

<sup>572</sup> "Item 331-9. WRCNS and WRCNS (Reserve)," Minutes of the 331<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Naval Board, 13 September 1950, DHH, 81/520/1000-100/2, Naval Board-Minutes to Meetings, box 23, file 1.

uniforms for the WRCNS (Reserve). While the Naval Board approved the return of women, the space was limited. The Board authorized the recruitment of a small number of women into its reserves and not into the regular forces.<sup>573</sup> Reservists typically served and trained part-time, while members of the Regular or Permanent Forces served full-time.<sup>574</sup> The Naval Board postponed having to make the contentious decision on whether or not to establish “a nucleus of permanent force WRCNS.”<sup>575</sup>

The inclusion of women in the reserves aligned with the defence priorities set by Brooke Claxton, the Minister of National Defence. Claxton favoured the Reserves. He envisioned having a well-trained, well-led, and well-equipped Reserves able assume operational roles after a mobilization period. Military analyst Douglas Bland concludes that Claxton’s policies were feasible as long Canada had stocks left from the wartime build-up of equipment.<sup>576</sup>

Resources quickly became strained because the armed services were not the Liberal government’s financial priority. The Minister of Finance, Douglas Abbott, cut defence spending in January 1947. A determined Claxton secured \$226 million in 1947, which was 26 million more than Abbott had allotted but a huge decrease from the earlier budget of \$326 million. The federal government had also imposed caps on enlistment at the same time it had cut spending. The army, navy, and air force had to make do with 75% of the ceilings set in October 1945. In 1949-1950, the Canadian army had fewer

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<sup>573</sup> “Item 331-9. WRCNS and WRCNS (Reserve),” Minutes of the 331<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Naval Board, 13 September 1950, DHH, 81/520/1000-100/2, Naval Board-Minutes to Meetings, box 23, file 1.

<sup>574</sup> Campbell, *Unlikely Diplomats*, 21-62, 120.

<sup>575</sup> Item 331-9. WRCNS and WRCNS (Reserve).”

<sup>576</sup> Bland, *The Administration of Defence Policy in Canada, 1947 to 1985*, 14-18.

than 20,000 permanent members and an additional 38,500 in the army reserves. The air force and navy had similar problems. Canada signed the NATO treaty in 1949 but did not substantially increase the defence budget until after the Korean War began.<sup>577</sup>

The Korean War exposed weaknesses in Canadian and NATO defence planning. As historian Isabel Campbell explains, the flaw in having a small permanent army and relying on mobilization of reserves was that mobilization took time. Canada lacked combat “‘ready’ forces,” which resulted in a rush to raise troops for Korea and defend Europe at the same time. Pressure from the United States led to the Cabinet’s decision in late December 1950 to commit a brigade and a fighter squadron to Europe.<sup>578</sup>

Cabinet used the ongoing negotiations over Canada’s NATO contributions to justify its decision to place the enlistment of women into the reserves temporarily on hold in October 1950. Time, the government said, was needed to figure out how the Reserve Forces fit into NATO commitments before deciding women’s roles in the reserves. Proponents of enlisting women in the reserves identified two strategic benefits of the employment of women. In the short term, women would fill roles that were unattractive to men. Recruiting women also had the long-term benefit of developing a core, which would in turn enable swifter, and more efficient, mobilization in future emergencies. Peacetime servicewomen would ensure that there were trained women already in place, ready to start immediately making arrangements for the enrollment of large numbers of women if the need arose. Concerns over the potential ramifications of the peacetime

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<sup>577</sup> Campbell, *Unlikely Diplomats*, 21- 62, 120, Granatstein, *Canada’s Army*, 316; and Bland, *The Administration of Defence Policy in Canada, 1947 to 1985*, 17-18.

<sup>578</sup> Campbell, *Unlikely Diplomats*, 46-88, 122-5.

recruitment of women contributed to the delay. The Minister of Agriculture worried that the public might advocate the extension of part-time engagement of women into full time employment. The fear was that the public might push the government beyond what it was ready to concede.<sup>579</sup>

Although Cabinet postponed the enlistment of women into the armed services, growing manpower shortages laid the groundwork for women's return. From 1949 to 1951, the Canadian armed services rose by 70 per cent as the government committed significant resources to the Korean War and to the NATO missions in Europe.<sup>580</sup> Cabinet acknowledged that the re-enlistment of women was inevitable at the same meeting it used NATO negotiations to justify the delay. In October 1950, Cabinet enabled the armed services to start initial preparations: it "authorized [the services] to stock pile material for uniforms for female personnel on the basis of 2,000 for the Navy, 13,800 for the Army, 5,000 for the RCAF." The numbers for the uniforms exceeded what Cabinet set as the initial maximums. The navy was allowed 500 women, the army 2,000, and the air force

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<sup>579</sup> Enlistment of women in the Reserve Forces, Cabinet Conclusions, 11 October 1950, LAC, RG2, Privy Council Office, Series A-5-a, vol. 2646, Microfilm reel T-2367, Item Number 10242, accessed June 13, 2015, <http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/politics-government/cabinet-conclusions/Pages/item.aspx?IdNumber=10242>

<sup>580</sup> Enlistment of Women, Cabinet Conclusions, 21 March 1951, LAC, RG2, Privy Council Office, Series A-5-a, vol. 2647, Microfilm reel T-2367, Item Number 10719, accessed June 13, 2015, <http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/politics-government/cabinet-conclusions/Pages/item.aspx?IdNumber=10719>; Davis, "Employment of women in Canada's Armed Forces, Past and Present," 4; Granatstein, *Canada's Army*, 321; Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 97; Brereton Greenhous and Hugh A. Halliday, *Canada's Air Forces, 1914-1999* (Montréal : Art global, 1999), 12; and Andrew Richter, *Avoiding Armageddon : Canadian Military Strategy and Nuclear Weapons, 1950-63* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2002), 166 n25. To give a sense of the numbers, the RCAF had 12, 200 members in 1947. By 1953, there were 46, 100 officers and other ranks. Of those, approximately 3, 100 were women. The numbers were taken from the sources cited in this note.

up to 1,500 women.<sup>581</sup> The decision to stockpile uniforms aligned with larger trends. Two months later, Cabinet significantly increased the defence budget. The government had allotted \$375 million to defence spending in 1949-1950 but in December 1950, the Cabinet approved \$1.45 billion for 1951-1952.<sup>582</sup>

Cabinet officially approved the re-entrance of women into the peacetime forces on 21 March 1951. In a 1966 internal defence report, Lieutenant-Colonel (retired) L. J. Davis attributed women's re-entrance to increased manpower demands and Canadian women's Second World War record. She presented a female military tradition, noting that the armed services had learned the value of "womanpower" during the war. She places women's wartime and peacetime service in a longer trajectory but her short report lacks detail. Davis does not mention that the armed services saw the value of having few experienced female military planners before March 1951.<sup>583</sup>

### **Turning to Female Military Experts**

There are signs that defence officials were in the process of developing female defence planning practices. Cabinet's October 1950 decision to gather uniforms aligned with the recommendations of the 1946 reports. The authors of the 1946 reports had all advised that uniforms should be on hand in large numbers before enlistment occurred. They also advised that armed services should employ female veterans, who would bring invaluable female expertise to uniform design. A tri-service committee was established

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<sup>581</sup> Enlistment of women in the Reserve Forces, 11 October 1950.

<sup>582</sup> Enlistment of Women, Cabinet Conclusions, 21 March 1951; Davis, "Employment of women in Canada's Armed Forces, Past and Present," 4; Granatstein, *Canada's Army*, 321; Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 97; Greenhouse and Halliday, *Canada's Air Forces, 1914-1999*, 12; Richter, *Avoiding Armageddon*, 166 n25.

<sup>583</sup> Davis, "Employment of women in Canada's Armed Forces, Past and Present," 4.

shortly after Cabinet temporarily postponed recruitment in October 1950. The purpose of the committee was to draft clothing requirements for future servicewomen and develop common guidelines as much as service requirements allowed. It was composed of male and female representatives of all three services.

All the female representatives were wartime officers who later rejoined the peacetime forces. The army's representative was CWAC veteran Marjorie Evis. Evis worked for the Chairman of the Defence Research Board and the Adjutant General Branch in the interim period. She became the senior staff officer of the peacetime CWAC until she left in 1969.<sup>584</sup> The female naval member was Agnes (Nan) I. McPhee. She was discharged from the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service (WRCNS) with the rank of Lieutenant-Commander in 1946, and worked as the CNP's Secretary in the interim period. McPhee explains that she took a leave from her civil service job after the CNP "insisted that I get back into uniform, along with Fanta Tait, and Jeannie Crawford-Smith to advise the powers-that-be on matters of dress, categories and trade."<sup>585</sup> The RCAF's female representative, M. L. Fraser, had served in the wartime RCAF (WD) as an

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<sup>584</sup> Davis, "Employment of women in Canada's Armed Forces, Past and Present," 4-6; Minutes of Meeting #1 of DID Working Party on Service Women's Clothing, 31 October and 1 November 1950, DHH, 72/940; Copy of Memorandum from Colonel D.G. Ketcheson, Director of Ordnance Services to DID, 2 March 1951; DHH, 72/940; Copy of Memorandum from Lieutenant-Colonel. A.A. Eakin, to D VIC, Director of Ordnance Services, Director of Procurement Aircraft, Adjutant General Branch (Attention Mrs. Evis), Director of Naval Personnel (Attention Miss McPhee); Biographical file for Evis, Marjorie DHH; Women in the Capital, (*The Women's*) *Globe and Mail*, March 22, 1956; Edna Blakey, "Women's Army Corps To Double Militia Strength," *Brandon Sun*, March 20, 1962; Canadian Press, "Women Number 2, 000 in Canadian Militia," *The Globe and Mail*, 6 December 1956; Wally Stewart, "Women Serve on the Home Front," *Ottawa Citizen*, 27 July 1964, newspaper clipping, DHH, 156.013 (D2); Biographical File Evis, Marjorie, DHH; Marjorie Evis-Obituary, *Ottawa Citizen*, Nov 14, 2015, online <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/ottawacitizen/obituary.aspx?pid=176502645> [accessed 4 January 2016]; and Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War*, 217, 251, 314, 375-6, 379-80.

<sup>585</sup> McPhee, "A Wren's Story," 132-3. The quotation is from page 132. For an example of press coverage on her return, see Canadian Press, "Armed services Agree Women Necessary," *The Globe and Mail*, July 6, 1951.

equipment officer. She was one of the first officers brought back when the RCAF reopened to women. Fraser was posted to Air Material Command Headquarters, where she helped with uniforms.<sup>586</sup>

Committee members began by examining wartime clothing from all three services and deciding what items could be standardized. The basis for standardization depended on the item in question. At times the committee recommended that old wartime patterns from one of the women's services be applied to the other two. The committee also suggested modification of male issue to suit female bodies and the development of new inter-service designs for women. For instance, the committee recommended that the "inter-Service stocking be developed – in black for Navy, beige for Army and Air Force and white for hospital use."<sup>587</sup> Coordination up to a point reflected larger trends in defence policy under Claxton. Claxton brought the services together through the position of Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff, and coordinated legal, medical, and dental services.<sup>588</sup>

The committee's clothing recommendations suggests the application of wartime lessons. It chose rayon stockings over lisle stockings. Wartime servicewomen despised lisle stockings, which were brought in because of wartime nylon shortages. Lieutenant-Colonel Daisy Royal and the author of the "RCAF (WD) Plan" had criticized wartime physical training outfits and raincoats. The committee placed raincoats and gym shorts into the category of items that required inter-service development. The author of the 1946

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<sup>586</sup> Ziegler, *We Serve That Men May Fly*, 160, "Historical Notes- Women in the RCAF-1941-1960," 2, DHH, 79/208, folder 2; and "Fraser," Parodie Archive: RCAF Personnel 1939-1945, August 1, 2016, accessed August 1, 2016, <http://www.aircrewremembered.com/ParodieArchiveDatabase/?q=Fraser>

<sup>587</sup> Minutes of Meeting #1 of DID Working Party on Service Women's Clothing, 31 October and Nov 1 1950, pg 2.

<sup>588</sup> Granatstein, *Canada's Army*, 316-7, 352-7.

reports had stressed that future service clothing should be functional and stylish.<sup>589</sup> The prototype for the servicewomen's smock had to be redesigned after members rejected the first one for being too tailored. They asked for the new prototype to have fuller sleeves, "cut straight like a laboratory coat," and no belt. The smock was a work garment, designed to be worn over top of the uniform. Nothing in the surviving meeting minutes directly indicates that the recommendations in the 1946 reports swayed the committee's decisions. Nevertheless, the presence of female veterans, combined with the fact that the committee addressed problems identified during the war, strongly suggests the emergence of an institutional memory of female defence planning.<sup>590</sup>

### **Re-entrance**

Cabinet imposed a series of restrictions in March 1951 that governed women's re-entrance. Servicewomen were not to take away jobs from civilian women and were to be placed in trades deemed suitable for women. Women continued to be excluded from combat roles. The numbers of women were to be kept small and the projected numbers kept quiet. Women were to be recruited under "the combined ceiling for men and women" and placed "into existing units without any increase in establishment."<sup>591</sup> Each service was permitted to have a specified maximum number of people, or total

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<sup>589</sup> Minutes of Fifth Meeting of DID Working Party on Women's Clothing, 6 Feb 1950 [sic], DHH, 72/940; Acting Captain Adelaide Sinclair, "Report on the W.R.C.N.S." 31 May 1946, Section X: Uniform, copy at DHH, 75/554; Royal, "Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women's Army Corps," Section VI (para 6-9); R.C.A.F (Women's Division) Plan for Organization and Suggestions Concerning Employment" [hereafter "RCAF (WD) Plan"], 30 October 1946, pg. 12 copy at DHH, 79/308; and Minutes of Meeting #1 of DID Working Party on Service Women's Clothing, 31 October and Nov 1 1950, 2-5.

<sup>590</sup> Minutes of Third Meeting of DID Working Party on Service Women's Clothing, 4 January 1951, 1, DHH, 72/940.

<sup>591</sup> Enlistment of Women, Cabinet Conclusions, 21 March 1951. For a discussion of the re-entrance of women into the armed services, see Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 94-5; and Davis, "Employment of women in Canada's Armed Forces, Past and Present," 4-5.

establishment, and had to decide whether to fill those spots with men or women. The Defence Council interpreted the latter two restrictions to mean that women would be employed in lieu of men and “there would be no special women’s units.”<sup>592</sup> The Council imposed an additional condition: servicewomen were not to be clerks at headquarters. Servicemen or civilians remained the preferred options.<sup>593</sup>

Military planners limited the numbers of servicewomen partly because they perceived servicewomen to be a costly solution to staffing issues. Colonel W.S. Murdoch, the Director of Staff Duties, reported on the findings of the Army Policy Committee in January 1952. The committee had reviewed the advantages and disadvantages of reducing labour shortages by hiring more civilians or servicewomen. Murdoch concluded that, though the army women “would release a greater number of male military personnel for employment in F[iel]d units,” it cost less to employ civilians. Aside from job-specific training, civilians assumed the cost of their own training. In addition, the army did not have to provide civilians with the reportedly specialized expensive “housing, clothing, and personnel administration” that servicewomen required. Murdoch stated that the army wanted servicewomen in home-based “static units” when it could not either secure enough civilians, or when there were jobs reserved for military personnel that were suitable for women. The Army Policy Committee recommended that servicewomen

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<sup>592</sup> Extract from Minutes of 53<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of Defence Council, 29 March 51, attached to Minute from PMC Meeting 25/323, Item Enlistment of Women, 12 April 1951, DHH, 80/193, box 11, file 236. For a discussion of the conditions which shaped re-entrance, see Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 94-5; Davis, “Employment of women in Canada’s Armed Forces, Past and Present,” 4-5.

<sup>593</sup> Extract from Minutes of 53<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of Defence Council, 29 March 51.

should only be employed when it was more practical and economical to do so.<sup>594</sup>

The numbers of women wearing air force, army, and navy uniforms between 1951 and 1955 fluctuated. Cabinet authorized the air force to enlist 5000 women into the regular force in 1951, the army to enlist 90 women into its regular component in 1954, and the navy 400 in 1955. The RCAF had a higher ceiling because it needed women to staff radar lines but never enrolled the maximum numbers allowed. The number of women peaked in July 1953, with just over 3,100 women serving in the 28 trades open to them. Air force women were recruited to work with radar units, clerical work, and other support roles. The Air Council placed the ceiling of 2,500 for women in 1955. The RCAF also recruited women into its reserve forces. The army obtained authorization to enlist 8,850 women (236 officers, and 8,614 other ranks) into its reserves. Army officers saw a place for women in reserve force anti-aircraft units, signal units, and in the clerical roles. By 1954, the female army reserve component had surpassed its initial strength with 1307 women. It started with roughly 1 000 women, but went down to 701 women between 1952 and 1953. The female component of the naval reserve enlisted 369 women in 1951-2. Women were eligible for employment in various clerical work, and technical jobs such as radio technicians. The total dropped to 299 women in 1953-4. As with the other services, naval women constituted a small fraction of the total strength. By 1954, the Royal Canadian Naval (Reserve) had 12, 000 members. It had 349 naval servicewomen

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<sup>594</sup> Copy of Memorandum from Colonel W.S. Murdoch, Director of Staff Duties to Deputy Chief of the General Staff, 31 January 1952, 1-4, DHH, 112.3S2.003 (D3). The quotation comes from page 4. For a discussion of the debate, see Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 95.

in 1954-5.<sup>595</sup>

Recruitment criteria created room for experienced women to enlist and for the services to benefit from their knowledge. Newspapers reported that veterans from the non-commissioned ranks would get the same rank as previously if they enlisted in the CWAC. The RCAF noted that though the maximum age was 29, veterans up to 40 years of age could qualify. Similarly, the navy set its maximum age of female enlistment at 25. The maximum age was extended to 29 for women “with technical experience,” and to 35 years of age for “former ‘Wrens.’” The different maximum ages of enlistment for former servicewomen illustrate that the armed services recognized and sought Canadian female military experts.<sup>596</sup>

While no separate female units were formed, the names of the former women’s services were maintained. Army correspondence from the 1950s and 1960s consistently referred to its servicewomen as CWAC personnel. Naval documents similarly referred to naval servicewomen by the wartime nickname of Wren.<sup>597</sup> According to a 1952 article in the RCAF’s magazine, *The Roundel*, the Chief of the Air Staff, W.A. Curtis “settled, for

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<sup>595</sup> National Defence, Enlistment of Women, Cabinet Conclusions, 21 March 1951; Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 96; Davis, “Employment of women in Canada’s Armed Forces, Past and Present,” 4-11; Copy of Lieutenant-General GS Simmonds, Chief of the General Staff, to the Minister of National Defence, 29 February 1952, DHH, 112.3S2.003 (D3); “A Limited Number of Women Will Be Accepted for Part-Time Service in the Women’s Royal Canadian Navy Reserve,” *The Globe and Mail*, September 14, 1951; and Marc Milner, *Canada’s Navy: The First Century* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 216.

<sup>596</sup> “CWAC Appeal Starts at once” *The Globe and Mail*, June 23, 1951; “A Limited Number of Women Will Be Accepted for Part-Time Service in the Women’s Royal Canadian Navy Reserve,” *Globe and Mail*, September 14, 1951; “Enlist Women Ages 19 to 29 For Air Force,” *Globe and Mail*, May 31, 1951, *Globe and Mail*, June 23, 1951; and Jack Dobson, “Shilo Visitors Surprised to see Feminine GS0-2,” *Globe and Mail*, July 13, 1952.

<sup>597</sup> For an example of army planning documents, see DHH 73-479. For example of naval planning documents, see LAC, R112-616-8-E, vol. 34266, file 4360-909/100, pt. 1.

the time being anyway, the problem that has bewildered the Service since the girls were brought back in – WHAT to call them.”<sup>598</sup> Curtis said that servicewomen should be called by the wartime nickname “WD.” His use of the term “girls” reinforced gender and military hierarchies. The peacetime services adopted the same rank structure and for the most part rank names. In the early 1950s, a RCAF Corporal “Jones” could have been male or female. Some of the lower ranks, such as, Leading Airwoman/ Leading Aircraftsman, identified the military person’s gender. The fact that military personnel felt the need to have a distinct way to refer to female personnel reveals the continuation of Second World War fears that the services created masculine women and disrupted gender norms.<sup>599</sup>

Some wartime female veterans disagreed. They contested peacetime servicewomen’s claim to the title of “WD.” Isabel Walcot, secretary of the RCAF (WD)/RAF (WAAF) 1985 reunion committee, insisted that only servicewomen who had seen wartime service qualified as members of the Women’s Division because the WD and the British Women’s Auxiliary Air Force “ceased to exist after 1947.” Those who enlisted from 1951 onward were not permitted to attend the reunion because they enlisted into the air force and not into a women’s service.<sup>600</sup>

There were other distinguishing features between the wartime and peacetime services. During the war, the preference was for single women, but married women

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<sup>598</sup> “Anniversary and Christening,” *The Roundel* 4, no. 9 (October 1952): 37.

<sup>599</sup> Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 96; “Sergeant Shatterproof Salutes the Sex,” *The Roundel* 3, no. 9 (September 1951): 1-3; and “Sergeant Shatterproof Concurr,” *The Roundel* 4, no. 3 (March 1952): 1-2.

<sup>600</sup> “War Reunion,” *Ottawa Citizen*, February 24, 1984, newspaper clipping, DHH, DWP Fonds, file 17.

without dependent children were enlisted. By contrast, a woman had to be single in order to enlist in the regular forces and WRCNS (R). However, allowances could be made for an exceptional recruit with no dependent children.<sup>601</sup> A wartime air force woman recalled, “The age limit and children prevented most of us originals from rejoining in 1951.”<sup>602</sup>

Racial discrimination excluded some women as well. The RCAF’s director of personnel management Group Captain J.G. Archambault “ordered in May 1954 that ‘coloured female applicants are not be considered for enrolment at this time.’”<sup>603</sup> Air force historian and Canadian Forces member Mathias Joost argues that Archambault’s directive lacked support because a junior officer withdrew Archambault’s order “less than two weeks later.” The policy reverted back to March 1942 standards, which dictated that recruiting centres direct the applications from Black Canadians to Air Force Headquarters.<sup>604</sup> Only the select “chosen” had access to peacetime service.

### **Continuities and Changes in Peacetime Service**

Pay regulations were celebrated in the media as evidence of increased integration and improved conditions in the peacetime services. Peacetime servicewomen were entitled to the same rates of pay as their single male counterparts. Defence officials noted that servicewomen’s pay increased during the war and reasoned that they would be hard

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<sup>601</sup> Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 96; and “A Limited Number of Women Will Be Accepted for Part-Time Service in the Women’s Royal Canadian Navy Reserve.”

<sup>602</sup> Quoted in Zeigler, *We Serve That Men May Fly*, 171.

<sup>603</sup> Mathias Joost, “Racism and Enlistment: The Second World War Policies of the Royal Canadian Air Force,” *Canadian Military History* 21, no. 1 (Winter 2012): 29, 34 n 92.

<sup>604</sup> Letter S304-101 (DPM), 7 May 1954, LAC, RG 24, vol. 298, file 304-117, as quoted in Joost, “Racism and Enlistment: The Second World War Policies of the Royal Canadian Air Force,” 29.

pressed to justify unequal pay, because the intention was to use women in areas where they had skills comparable or superior to men. Government discussions portrayed equal pay as a logical extension of wartime trends. The decision regarding equal pay was part of larger conversations. The Ontario government approved equal pay legislation in 1951. The federal government and most of the provinces followed suit in the 1950s; Quebec and Newfoundland were the exceptions.<sup>605</sup>

However, inequities persisted. Female air force recruits had to be better educated than their male counterparts. Servicewomen's restriction from combat-related trades negatively influenced their chances at promotion and higher pay. Married men qualified for extra pay and allowances but marriage was a leading cause of women's discharge. Married women were also largely barred from enlisting. Social attitudes and policy prevented servicewomen from qualifying from maximum pay rates.<sup>606</sup>

Servicewomen report that Second World War stereotypes that the armed services attracted "deviant" women continued in peacetime. Billie informed historian Cameron Duder that her boyfriend ended their relationship because she chose to enlist in the air force in 1956. Billie's boyfriend told her that 'only whores join the armed services.'<sup>607</sup> Her boyfriend's accusation reflects the wartime narratives that servicewomen were

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<sup>605</sup> Copy of C.M.D. (initialled) to Mr. Sharpe, Chairman, PMC, 22 June 1951, DHH, 80/193, box 11, file 236; Research Branch of the Library of Parliament, *History of the RCAF (Women's Division) 1941-1971*, 12-3; *Today's Airwoman ...in the RCAF* (Ottawa: Edmond Cloutier, Queen's Printer, 1957): 4-14; Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 95-6; Patricia A Power, "'With Their Feet on the Ground': Women's Lives and Work in the Royal Canadian Air Force, 1951-1966" (master's thesis, Ottawa University, 1998), 28-41; and Alison Prentice, Paula Bourne, Gail Cuthbert Brandt, Beth Light, Wendy Mitchinson and Naomi Black, *Canadian Women: A History*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Toronto: Nelson, 2004), 353-4, 362-3.

<sup>606</sup> Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 95-6; and Patricia A Power, "'With Their Feet on the Ground': Women's Lives and Work in the Royal Canadian Air Force, 1951-1966," 28-41. For a discussion of how air force women were recruited and why they joined, see Power, 28-41.

<sup>607</sup> As quoted in Duder, *Awfully Devoted Women*, 258.

sexually promiscuous and that women enlisted to gain access to men. Historian Ruth Roach Pierson argues that definitions of women's sexual respectability rested on their chastity. She explains that a woman's decision to enlist raised concerns that women would take advantage of the fact that they had moved away from parental supervision into a male-dominated environment. Billie's boyfriend indicated that he thought a similar situation existed in the 1950s, strongly suggesting the possibility that he thought she joined to pursue other men. At the very least, he implied she was sexually loose. The persistence of the sexually promiscuous stereotype reveals a continued ambivalence towards servicewomen.<sup>608</sup>

Other servicewomen navigated the stereotype that the armed services attracted homosexual "deviants." As Leisa Meyer states in the American context, women's wartime decision to enlist prompted questions that they were gender deviant, which in turn fueled concerns that they were sexually deviant as well. Sue, who identifies as a lesbian and enlisted in the army reserves in the 1950s, was one of these women. She remembers that her father, who was an army sergeant, supported her enlistment but warned her to avoid lesbian women. Duder, Gary Kinsman and Patrizia Gentile argue that for lesbian women, the armed services represented an opportunity to find like-minded women and build a community.<sup>609</sup> Sue references this community as she

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<sup>608</sup> Ruth Roach Pierson, *"They're Still Women After All": The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986), 168-86. and Leisa D. Meyer, *Creating GI Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women's Army Corps During World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 6, 26-7, 43, 143, 150-166, 178.

<sup>609</sup> Leisa D. Meyer, *Creating GI Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women's Army Corps During World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 6, 26-7, 43, 143, 150-166, 178; Gary Kinsman and Patrizia Gentile, *The Canadian War on Queers: National Security as Sexual Regulation* (Vancouver: UBC

humorously recalls how she benefited from a conversation she had with her father:

He said to me, 'Now listen, when you go away to summer camp,' he said, 'I want you to know they are lesbians up there.' I said, 'Really, Dad!' He said, 'Yes, and I want you to be careful, they're in huts H and J. I said, 'H and J, Dad?' He said, 'Yes.' I said, 'Ok, I'll be careful' I go into check in [and], of course, one of my lesbian buddies is on the desk. She says, 'What huts do you want?' I said, 'Either H or J would be just fine.'<sup>610</sup>

As Sue tells the story, she used her father's well-intentioned cautioning for her own purposes. She resisted his attempts to steer her away from "immoral" women and instead, used his information to find her community of lesbian servicewomen. Still, the warning reveals that anxieties that the armed services recruited female "deviants" remained.

The armed services addressed worries over women's gender and sexual respectability with old tactics. Journalists offered reassurances that women retained their femininity in their descriptions of the newly improved uniforms as a selling feature. *The Standard*, a Montreal-based magazine, featured the airwomen's new uniform on the cover and a multipage article entitled "RCAF Fashions" on 23 June 1951. Robert McKeewan opened this article with "The initial group to enter the new RCAF's women's divisions will ... be outfitted with wardrobes modish enough to attract the airmen— and other girls into the services. The new uniforms are more streamlined and fitted than last time."<sup>611</sup> Uniform design also addressed potential anxieties over servicewomen's

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Press, 2010), 126, 15-16, 27-110, 119, 128-130, 191-3; and Duder, *Awfully Devoted Women*, 220-21, 250-9.

<sup>610</sup> As quoted in Kinsman and Gentile, *The Canadian War on Queers*, 128. For more on Sue, see 15-16, 191-4.

<sup>611</sup> Robert McKeewan, "RCAF Fashions," *The Standard*, June 23, 1951, clipping at DHH, 79-208, folder 2. For other examples of the focus on uniform, see "The New Duds," n.d., clipping, DHH, 79/208, folder 2; and *Today's Airwoman ...in the RCAF*, 4-14.

sexuality. McKeewan offered reassurances that airwomen would remain attractive to men. During the war, the armed services fought back against the whispering campaign and competed for recruits by claiming to have the most stylish uniform and emphasizing improved features. Peacetime reporting continued this trend, stressing the uniform's attractiveness in order to address potential anxieties over the masculinizing potential of the military uniform for women.<sup>612</sup>

The focus on appearance fit in with messages in women's magazines such as *Chatelaine*. Historians Valerie Korinek and Emily Spencer write that articles, fictional pieces, and advertisements provided female workers with fashion tips. Women workers were told that their chances of getting hired, fired, and married depended on maintaining their appearance. Femininity and marriageability were linked: societal expectations for women held that they desired to marry and start a family. While there was increasing acceptance of coverage of women who worked before marriage and working mothers, the gendered division of male breadwinner and female housewife remained very powerful in *Chatelaine* and other such places. Spencer concludes that articles like Mac Reynolds' March 1953 "The Air Force Puts Romance First" piece implied that women entered the armed services and the workforce to find a husband. Reynolds notes the various provisions for heterosexual romance, which ranged from teaching women to make their wedding dresses to lingerie allowances. The emphasis on heterosexual romance also serves to deflect charges of lesbianism. *Chatelaine* did create space for readers to

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<sup>612</sup> Deborah Cowen, *Military Workfare: The Soldier and Social Citizenship in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 89-102. For a discussion of wartime anxieties over female masculinity, see Donna B. Knaff, *Beyond Rosie the Riveter: Women of World War II in American Popular Graphic Art* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2012) and chapter six of this dissertation.

question gender stereotypes. Fictional stories featured discontented suburban housewives and feminist editors contributed pieces, such as Dempsey's story on MacPhail, cited above, that exposed systemic gender discrimination.<sup>613</sup>

Discussions of servicewomen's uniforms were about more than reinforcing stereotypes about women's obsession with their appearance. Servicewomen's uniforms were used to criticize defence policies. George Bain, in his 1952 *Globe and Mail* article entitled "Style Change May Be Costly: Armed Services Stockpile Uniforms for Women," provides a detailed accounting of the costs of outfitting servicewomen. He writes that the practice of stockpiling:

suggests (a) that the services expect they will need a lot more women before long, or (b) haven't reckoned on the possibility that the uniform a girl will wear today may be something her younger sister wouldn't be seen dead in tomorrow. The number of women now in the services—and the modest numbers the three services are trying—should not make much of a dent in some of the clothing stockpiles that have been built up.<sup>614</sup>

Bain warns readers that the Department of National Defence's (DND) excessive spending, and claims that there was something shady about the armed services' plan to recruit and outfit women.

It is revealing that the gender stereotype of women as being fashion conscious is something that Bain singles out as having the potential to cost Canadians a lot of money. Bain uses stockpiling to raise awareness that DND may have a hidden agenda. He speculates that despite targets of 5,000 air force women

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<sup>613</sup> Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs*, 177-85, 194-5, 198-207, 222-54, 296-7, 299-300, 308-9, 230-1; and Emily Spencer, *Lipstick and High Heels: War, Gender, and Popular Culture* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007), 100-6, 184-190.

<sup>614</sup> George Bain, "Style Change May Be Costly: Armed Services Stockpile Uniforms for Women," *Globe and Mail*, July 8, 1952.

and 1,500 army women, the stockpiling suggests that DND might be anticipating the need to build up to wartime numbers. He does not provide precise figures for the navy's projected enrolment of women. Months later, Bain wrote another article where he reported on costs of outfitting men and women, and used this once again to speculate on government's shadowy mobilization plans. Bain did not claim that men would refuse to wear their brother's uniforms, thereby revealing the continuation of the wartime female officers' argument that women are more fashion conscious than men. In addition, the fact Bain did not claim that men would reject their brother's uniforms also highlights doubts that military uniforms were proper feminine attire and exposing the ambivalent place of women in the peacetime armed services.<sup>615</sup>

Clothing also signalled membership and legacy of service. As RCAF veteran Vi Dudley-Mathiesen recalls, friction arose when the female corporal in charge of the supply room refused to add wartime ribbons to the uniforms of those undergoing re-entry training. Dudley-Mathiesen claims that the corporal lacked understanding because she "hadn't been in the service." The problem was solved when the wartime veterans went to the Administration Officer, who ordered the corporal to attach the ribbons.<sup>616</sup>

Despite the extensive planning, the armed services experienced clothing difficulties after women returned to the armed services. Shortages of clothing, changes in uniform design, and the general wartime upheaval resulted in some servicewomen having

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<sup>615</sup> George Bain "Would Recruit 100, 000 in Three Months: Stockpiling of \$37, 786, 000 Clothing Essential to Mobilization, Claxton says," *Globe and Mail*, November 28, 1952.

<sup>616</sup> Dudley-Mathiesen, *Sweet 'N' Sour*, 134-6. The quotation comes from page 136.

mismatching uniforms, or some uniforms having slightly different hues from one from another. Dudley-Mathiesen remembers being issued “summer khaki and STILL with tunics and skirts which seldom matched in shade-tone” during her refresher course.<sup>617</sup> Her description does not match journalist Robert McKeewan’s image of a stylish modern young woman uniform featured in press and recruiting material. In 1954 Flying Officer C.J. Foote described how shoddy material, “manufacturing problems,” and Tri-Service Clothing Committee alterations led to the provisioning of clothing as being a long-drawn out process in the first year.<sup>618</sup> Ill-fitting or inadequate clothing was not unique to servicewomen. Canadian troops sent to Korea had poorly constructed cold weather clothing.<sup>619</sup>

Private citizens took it upon themselves to address what they interpreted as gaps in the amenities provided for servicewomen. The Personal Members Committee rejected an offer from Mrs. Marion Trenholme Fraser of “beauty training for women in the Armed services” in May 1953.<sup>620</sup> Fraser’s offer was reportedly inspired by the decision of the United States’ Defense Department to bring in cosmetics industry professionals to teach

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<sup>617</sup> Dudley-Mathiesen, *Sweet ‘N’ Sour* 135. Emphasis in text. For a discussion of wartime clothing problems, see Sinclair, “Report on the W.R.C.N.S.,” Section X: Uniform; Royal, “Report and Recommendations on the Canadian Women’s Army Corps,” Section VI; and “RCAF (WD) Plan,” 12.

<sup>618</sup> Flying Officer C.J. Foote, “Short History of AW Development in the RCAF since July 1951,” 16 March 1954, 2, copy at DHH, DWP, file 104.

<sup>619</sup> Granatstein, *Canada’s Army*, 325, 341.

<sup>620</sup> Extract from Minutes of PMC Meeting 3/421, 21 May August 1953, Item Beauty Training- Women of the Armed Forces PMC Control Number PMC 43-2-1 HQ2-490-14, DHH, 80/193, box 11, file 236; Copy of Memorandum from Squadron Leader E.S. Annis for Brigadier H.L. Cameron, Defence Secretary, to Secretary for the Personnel Members Committee, 14 May 1953, attached to Extract from Minutes of PMC Meeting 3/421, 21 May August 1953, Item Beauty Training –Women of the Armed Forces PMC Control Number PMC 43-2-1 HQ2-490-14, DHH, 80/193, box 11, file 236; and copy of letter from Marion Trenholme Fraser to Brooke Claxton, 10 May 1953, attached to Extract from Minutes of PMC Meeting 3/421, 21 May August 1953, Item Beauty Training- Women of the Armed Forces PMC Control Number PMC 43-2-1 HQ2-490-14, DHH, 80/193, box 11, file 236.

American servicewomen “good grooming” in order to prevent them from feeling less attractive or feminine than their civilian sisters.<sup>621</sup> While Fraser’s offer was rejected, a recreational program known colloquially as the “charm course” was brought in during the late 1950s. “Grooming” was one item in this course billed as a “self-improvement” course for women. Other topics included money management, etiquette, and physical fitness. The “Charm Course” demonstrates that the RCAF believed women needed specialized activities in order to ensure they remained feminine.<sup>622</sup>

The course tapped into larger societal worries that the armed services were not a suitable environment for women. The author of an unsigned public relations piece explained the official rationale for the course. He/she stated that the course was designed “to assist airwomen in the realization that they have an essential role in the RCAF as women...” In addition, the course was introduced “because the pattern of service life may tend to destroy rather than enhance femininity, [and] a leisure-time activity designed for airwomen would enrich their time spent in the service...”<sup>623</sup> Tension between servicewomen’s military and gender identities continued.

## **Discharge**

Some servicewomen decided full or part-time military service was not for them.

Airwoman Margaret Isabel Burton was a well-publicized example of a woman who

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<sup>621</sup> Copy of “Cosmetics New Articles of War,” attached to copy of letter from Marion Trenholme Fraser to Brooke Claxton, 10 May 1953, DHH, 80/193, box 11, file 236.

<sup>622</sup> Untitled piece on Self Improvement Course at RCAF Station St. Hubert, Quebec,” December 1959, DHH, 79/208 folder 2. For publicity, see “New Recreational Course for Services,” *London Evening Free Press*, October 22, 1959, clipping at DHH, 79/208, Folder 2. For example of course details, see “Airwomen’s Recreation Series: Self Improvement Course- Women Personnel,” DHH, 79/208, folder 2.

<sup>623</sup> Untitled piece on Self Improvement Course at RCAF Station St. Hubert, Quebec, December 1959, DHH, 79/208 folder 2.

negotiated her own release. Much to the chagrin of air force officials, her return in November 1952 captured the attention of Canadian newspapers. The Directorate of Public Relations (Armed services) collected over twenty newspaper clippings on the subject from multiple Canadian newspapers. The clippings were stapled together under the handwritten title of “Booklet of Adverse Publicity: ‘The Burton Story.’”<sup>624</sup> Burton was sentenced to a relatively minor punishment after she deserted for roughly 19 months. She spent twenty-one days confined to barracks and was fined \$40. Air Force Headquarters authorized her “dismissal for ‘unsatisfactory conduct.’”<sup>625</sup> She had reportedly enlisted as a way to escape the confines of her life as a typist for the Department of Veteran Affairs. Burton allegedly left her post because she wanted to travel, and came back after she had accomplished that mission. Peacetime recruitment material promoted travel as a benefit of service. Based on the newspaper articles, it appears that Burton deserted when service life did not match her expectations.<sup>626</sup>

Although Burton was unusual, she was not the only woman who left before she finished her contract. During 1951-1954, female naval reservists could be called out for full-time service on what was called Continuous Naval Duty (CND). Roughly twenty per cent of naval servicewomen called out on CND opted to use the clause that allowed them

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<sup>624</sup> “Booklet of Adverse Publicity: ‘The Burton Story,’” DHH, 79/208, folder 2. Emphasis in text.

<sup>625</sup> RCAF Approves WD Dismissal,” *Sarnia Canadian Observer*, December 2, 1953, clipping included in “Booklet of Adverse Publicity: ‘The Burton Story,’”; and “Case of the Missing Fly Girl” She Quit the Air Force So Now It’s Firing Her,” *Vancouver Sun*, November 26, 1953, clipping included in “Booklet of Adverse Publicity: ‘The Burton Story.’”

<sup>626</sup> “Case of the Missing Fly Girl” She Quit the Air Force So Now It’s Firing Her,” *Vancouver Sun*, November 26, 1953, clipping in “Booklet of Adverse Publicity: ‘The Burton Story,’”; and Barry Broadfoot, “Airwoman Faces Trial as Deserter: Girl Missing for 19 Months Held by RCAF,” *Vancouver Sun*, November 24, 1953, clipping in “Booklet of Adverse Publicity: ‘The Burton Story,’”; *Today’s Airwoman ...in the RCAF*, 13-14.

to “give 30 days’ notice and terminate their service.”<sup>627</sup> Naval servicewomen’s decision to leave contributed to a policy shift. The Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) had discovered through experimenting with reserve Wrens on CND that it had difficulty regulating the movement of personnel because those on CND sometimes ended their contracts. A desire for increased control over where Wrens were posted contributed to the RCN’s decision to offer women a permanent career in its regular forces.<sup>628</sup>

The armed services had trouble holding onto personnel in general. Historian Isabel Campbell writes that, in 1951, “599 men left [the army] each month for every 1, 087 recruited.”<sup>629</sup> Men readily signed up for Korea, or through their militia (reserve) units for service in the first formation sent overseas to Germany. However, many of the troops sent to Germany left after their initial term of three years. Several factors led men to refuse a career in the armed services. Many members of the first battalion sent to Germany were attached to their individual companies and not the larger formation. Morale suffered when men were transferred into different companies and lost the signifiers, such as badges, of their old one. Francophones had to adjust to a largely Anglophone institution. The armed services had difficulties competing with the wages offered by civilian employers. From 1949 to 1964, the armed services started spending

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<sup>627</sup> Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 98; Commander (W) Isabel Macneill, “Report on Wren Organization and Administration,” September 1954, 3-8, Appendix “C” to “RCN Wren Policy and Planning August, 1954-July 1957, A Review,” copy at DHH, 75/533. The quotation comes from Dundas, 98. The data has been taken from page 8 of Macneill’s report. Macneill states on page 8 that 327 women were called out full time, under Continuous Naval Duty. Of those, 169 were “still serving” at the time of writing and 158 women had been discharged. Of those 158, 80 were discharged due to marriage, 46 deemed “unsuitable, and 32 for “personal reasons” (i.e. used “30 day notice clause”).

<sup>628</sup> Paper on WRCNS, submitted to Naval Board, 23 January 1961 attached to Minute Sheet from [illegible] ACNP (Plans), 8 February, 1961, 1-2, LAC, R112-616-8-E, vol. 34266, file 4360-909, pt. 1.

<sup>629</sup> Campbell, *Unlikely Diplomats*, 127. The paragraph draws heavily from and closely follows Campbell’s discussion on 126-31.

more money on military communities and allowing families to accompany deployed soldiers because well-trained servicemen refused to re-engage.<sup>630</sup>

Not all early releases were voluntary. In 1951 alone, the RCAF enrolled 2409 airwomen and 115 officers but discharged 184 airwomen and 25 officers. Some RCAF officials thought that the discharges and difficulty in meeting enlistment quotas at the end of the first year suggested a need to scale down the numbers of women in various air force trades.<sup>631</sup> Servicewomen's discharges were attributed to a variety of causes. The leading causes were marriage and the vague, catch-all classification of "unsuitability."<sup>632</sup>

The perception that married life was incompatible with service life was reflected in the way air force statistics were collected in the early 1950s. Marriage was included in the list of reasons for airwomen's release from 1951 to 1954. Until October 1952, air force women released because they married were included in the statistics for "Compulsory Retirement to Promote Economy of Efficiency," as the category related to "being considered unsuitable for reasons other than misconduct, inefficiency, or medical unfitness."<sup>633</sup> The statistics mirrored policy. From 1951 to 1953, marriage led to a discharge for enlisted airwomen. The rule did not apply to female officers. The policy for enlisted women shifted in the mid-1950s, allowing for enlisted servicemen and servicewomen to marry each other. Senior female officers reassured newspaper readers that peacetime servicewomen were heterosexual and feminine women by stressing that

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<sup>630</sup> Campbell, *Unlikely Diplomats*, 52-3, 126-31.

<sup>631</sup> Foote, "Short History of AW Development in the RCAF since July 1951," 1-3.

<sup>632</sup> Foote, "Short History of AW Development in the RCAF since July 1951," 1, 6 (a); Macneill, "Report on Wren Organization and Administration," 8.

<sup>633</sup> Foote, "Short History of AW Development in the RCAF since July 1951," 6 (a).

servicewomen were the marrying kind. For instance, Squadron Leader Sylvia Evans told an *Ottawa Citizen* reporter in April 1956 that the majority of airwomen entered when they were 18 or 19 and “take off to get married.” Patricia Power interviewed several air force women for who stated that they left because service life conflicted with married and family life. Several women interviewed for this dissertation made similar comments, stating that they left the RCAF in the 1950s and 1960s because of marriage and/or family reasons.<sup>634</sup>

Married women’s labour force participation rose after the Second World War. In Ontario, one out of ten married women worked in 1951. The 1950s saw the development of what Joan Sangster calls the “two phase’ life cycle of wage work.” Marriage or the first child drew women out of the first phase. They re-entered the labour force in their mid-thirties to early forties after they finished child-rearing, and/or their children were old enough to enter school. The labour market was largely segregated by gender. Most women worked in the burgeoning service sector, and clerical work became firmly established as female dominated job by the 1950s. Men tended to be the managers and have the more lucrative retail sales jobs. Women retail workers were often the lower paid cashiers. Racial hierarchies influenced the type of work that women performed.

Indigenous women were largely restricted to waitressing jobs in the prairies, and women

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<sup>634</sup> “Mountain Climbing is ‘Tops’ for RCAF’s Leading Airwoman,” *Ottawa Citizen*, April 4, 1956, clipping, DHH 79/208, Folder 2; Power, “‘With Their Feet on the Ground’: Women’s Lives and Work in the Royal Canadian Air Force, 1951-1966,” 62-3, 71-6 ; Sangster, *Transforming labor: Women and Work in Postwar Canada*, 191; Dawn Aleknvicus, interview by author, March 12, 2015; Jennifer Black, interview by author, March 12, 2015; Jean Olynk (Haché), interview by author, March 17, 2015; Darlene (Dee) Walmsley, interview by author, March 16, 2015; and Jacquie Williams, interview by author, March 13, 2015.

of colour filled many of the domestic service jobs in Toronto.<sup>635</sup>

It oversimplifies the situation to concentrate only on official attitudes and policies about marriage and motherhood. Individual servicewomen objected to the assumption that they were family-focused or husband obsessed. *Chatelaine* readers complained after “The Air Force Puts Romance First” appeared in the March 1953 issue. One reader grumbled, “The tommyrot you wrote may be true in rare cases, but the majority of us did not join up to rope a man, but to wear Her Majesty’s uniform with pride, and to find security, adventure, and most important, a career to be proud of.” The comments indicate that the reader was likely a servicewoman.<sup>636</sup>

Decades later, retired Petty Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Class Rosalee Auger van Stelten similarly rejected the implication that servicewomen placed their familial goals ahead of their careers. She fiercely rebutted a characterization in a mid-1950s newspaper article: “The column said, ‘One drawback to permanent service is the stipulation that a girl must finish her term before leaving the Wrens even though she marries. Rosalee wonders if she likes that.’ Rosalee didn’t wonder at all!” Auger van Stelten left in 1965 after 14 years of service in the reserve and regular forces of the navy. A self-declared feminist, Auger van Stelten’s response to the presumption that she worried about marriage mirrors 1960s and 1970s feminists’ harsh rejection of housewives and homemakers. She defended her reputation, feminist credentials, and service by stressing that she was career-focused.<sup>637</sup>

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<sup>635</sup> Joan Sangster, *Transforming Labour*, 16-53; and Joan Sangster, “Doing Two Jobs: The Wage-Earning Mother, 1945-1970,” in *A Diversity of Women: Ontario, 1945-1980*, ed. Joy Parr (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 98-127. The term comes from page 18 of *Transforming Labour*.

<sup>636</sup> D.L. Hayden, *Chatelaine*, May 1953, 3 as quoted in Spencer, *Lipstick and High Heels*, 188-9.

<sup>637</sup> Petty Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Class (retired) Rosalee Auger (van Stelten), “The Good, The Bad, and The Royal: The

Individual servicewomen entered and departed the armed services for a variety of reasons. Some Wren officers left when their contract finished and chose not to re-engage. Nan Mcphee explains that she did not re-engage in the navy because there was no job security. She states, “When my three years’ leave of absence from the Civil Service was up, there still hadn’t been a decision whether women would become members of the permanent force, so I had to return to Ottawa to maintain my seniority in the Civil Service.”<sup>638</sup>

RCAF discharge statistics included inefficiency as grounds for dismissal. Morale and public relations suffered because many air force stations were ill-equipped for women. Based on Flying Officer C.J. Foote’s 1954 assessment, the air force had not properly prepared for the return of airwomen. Foote cited poor accommodation, under-employment, and inadequate recreational and welfare provisions. Dismissals ensued when discontented women protested these conditions by misbehaving or performing poorly. According to Foote, women craved discipline, but the air force was not providing it. Foote presented under-employment and the lack of disciplinary measures as pressing issues because many women were coming to the end of their first contract. Foote claimed that, unless matters improved, the RCAF would lose many servicewomen, and with them

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Challenges and Opportunities of Being a Wren” in *Transforming Traditions: Women, Leadership and the Canadian Navy, 1942-2010*, ed. Stéphanie A.H. Bélanger and Karen D. Davis (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2010), 37-42;and Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs*, 324. Auger’s van Stelten’s quotation comes from page 38.

<sup>638</sup> Foote, “Short History of AW Development in the RCAF since July 1951,” 2-6(a); Power, ““With Their Feet on the Ground’: Women’s Lives and Work in the Royal Canadian Air Force, 1951-1966,” 62-3, 71-6; and Macneill, “Report on Wren Organization and Administration,” 8-9.

its investment.<sup>639</sup>

Commander Isabel Macneill repeated wartime explanations and solutions for personnel problems in her “Report on Wren Organization and Administration” (1954). Chapters one and three have shown that wartime officers blamed cases of “sex delinquency” and disciplinary issues on inadequate screening methods. Macneill was a decorated Second World War officer and the sole female wartime naval ship captain. In 1954, the Chief of Naval Personnel approached Macneill with a two-part task: she returned to review the employment of women over the last three years and “make recommendations” on the full-time engagement of women in the regular forces of the RCN. Her 1954 report concentrated on the first part of the task.<sup>640</sup>

The peacetime selection problem occurred, Macneill explained, because the navy simply applied the policy drafted for men without fully thinking through the consequences for women. She reported that from 1951 to 1954, the navy discharged 158 women. Marriage accounted for 80 discharges and 32 women on CND used the “30 day notice clause.” The remainder (46) were discharged because the navy deemed them “unsuitable.” Questioning the significance of the marriage statistics, she reasoned that “[a]lthough it is generally accepted that marriage is the main reason for discharge, these figures show that only 50% are discharged for this reasons.” She continued, “When over 25% of the total group is discharged as ‘unsuitable’, there is a definite indication of a

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<sup>639</sup> Foote, “Short History of AW Development in the RCAF since July 1951,” 1-10.

<sup>640</sup> “RCN Wren Policy and Planning, August, 1954- July, 1957, A Review,” 1; and LAC Archival Description for Isabel Janet MacNeill Fonds, Biography, accessed March 1, 2016, [http://collectionscanada.gc.ca/pam\\_archives/index.php?fuseaction=genitem.displayItem&lang=eng&rec\\_nbr=101945&rec\\_nbr\\_list=2909230,620989,101945,3576272,3587065,4587403,116936,1898671](http://collectionscanada.gc.ca/pam_archives/index.php?fuseaction=genitem.displayItem&lang=eng&rec_nbr=101945&rec_nbr_list=2909230,620989,101945,3576272,3587065,4587403,116936,1898671).

selection problem.” In her view, attrition rates would be lowered “with a more careful selection” of women.<sup>641</sup>

Like her wartime predecessor Acting Captain Adelaide Sinclair, Macneill took it as principle that not all regulations and policy for servicemen were suitable for servicewomen. She remarked that the push to recruit those between 19 and 25 years of age ignored the reality that this group was the most likely to get married. In addition, she concluded that the practice overlooked the fact that the consequences of marriage differed for servicemen and women. Marriage advanced men’s naval careers and ended women’s. While Macneill did not recommend changing the unequal marriage policy, she suggested that space for career military women could be created in two ways. First, she speculated that the navy could lower attrition rates if it offered women “a regular force contract.” Second, she advised that the RCN should focus on the recruitment of women “25 years and over,” but acknowledged that younger women would still be enlisted. Macneill implied the recruitment of older women would stabilize the service and avoid losing women to marriage. The suggestion carved out room for career-oriented professional female administrators like Macneill. Subsequent chapters will explore Macneill’s long-term connections with the navy.<sup>642</sup>

Throughout her 1954 review, Macneill repeatedly criticized the haphazard organization, administration and employment of peacetime Wrens. Organizers, in her mind, neglected to do their homework because they did not draft a coordinating

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<sup>641</sup> Macneill, “Report on Wren Organization and Administration,” 8-9. All quotations come from page 8.

<sup>642</sup> Macneill, “Report on Wren Organization and Administration,” 8-9. The term “regular force contract” comes from page 8.

framework to oversee the integration of women into the navy. Regulations designed for men were modified for women on a case-by-case basis and numbers were “approved ‘piecemeal’ without reference to any overall structure.”<sup>643</sup> She claimed that organizers also failed systematically to assess the number of women that could be “absorbed into the shore establishments without disrupting ship-shore rotation.”<sup>644</sup> As the name suggests, the ship-shore rotation referred to the system of moving personnel from serving on ships to serving in naval bases. The ship-shore rotation was gendered because wartime and peacetime naval servicewomen were not permitted to serve on ships. Accepting the gendered division of labour, Macneill advised that the numbers of women had to be carefully controlled so that the enlistment of women would not damage the navy’s rotation system.<sup>645</sup>

The RCN promotion system and trade structure centered on time spent and ability to serve at sea. Job classifications, or in the naval terminology trades specifications, determined how naval personnel were trained, where they employed, and the amount they were paid. A specified amount of time at sea was built into the advancement criteria for many trades. This adversely affected women’s job choices and chances to advance because the navy would not use resources training women “for duties which they will not be required to perform.” Instead of demanding access to sea duty, Macneill argued that the navy should draft and have the proper authorities approve female specific trade

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<sup>643</sup> Macneill, “Report on Wren Organization and Administration,” 2-5. The quotation comes from page 5.

<sup>644</sup> Macneill, “Report on Wren Organization and Administration,” 4.

<sup>645</sup> Macneill, “Report on Wren Organization and Administration,” 4-7.

specifications that aligned with women's support roles.<sup>646</sup>

The recommendations demonstrate Macneill's careful balancing of Cabinet's 1951 guidelines for the employment of servicewomen with her assigned task. Women had to be accommodated under the maximum ceilings and were to be employed in trades deemed suitable for women. She did not question the gendered division of trades. Although Macneill refused to discuss the advantages and disadvantages "of a peacetime regular force of wrens" in her 1954 report, she repeatedly indicated that she envisioned military career-women. She wrote that past experience proved that a peacetime nucleus would make future mobilization more efficient and, she advised enrolling older and younger women.<sup>647</sup>

The March 1955 proposal to establish the Wren component of the RCN reflected Macneill's advice. It included her recommendations for trade specifications and reveals consideration of her suggestion that recruitment policy should factor in women's age of marriage. The length of the first contract was set at two years for women between the ages of 19 and 22 but five years for women between the ages of 23 and 30.<sup>648</sup> On average, Canadian women were 23 years old when they entered into their first marriage in the 1950s.<sup>649</sup> Finally, the proposal left room for career military women. For example, the proposal stated that "[o]ne officer born [in] 1917 be enrolled in 1955; this officer

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<sup>646</sup> Macneill, "Report on Wren Organization and Administration," 4-7. The quoted phrase comes from page 5.

<sup>647</sup> Macneill, "Report on Wren Organization and Administration," 4-7.

<sup>648</sup> "Royal Canadian Navy (Wrens)," 1955, 1- 6, Appendix "B" to "RCN Wren Policy and Planning, August 1954- July, 1957, A Review."

<sup>649</sup> Statistics Canada, "Fertility: Fewer Children, Older Moms," *Canadian Megatrends*, last modified September 28, 2016, accessed February 10, 2017, <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-630-x/11-630-x2014002-eng.htm>.

would be released in 1967, age 50, served twelve years towards pension.” This reference to pension and retirement age indicates that defence presumed that at least a few women would have a lengthy naval career.<sup>650</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Canadian servicewomen did not simply vanish when they demobilized. From the late 1940s and to the mid-1950s, there were several different Canadian conversations about servicewomen. These conversations occurred in numerous venues and involved a range of participants. Journalists, at least one university professor, defence officials, veterans and servicewomen voiced their visions of women’s place in the military community. The press occasionally reported on the postwar lives of wartime servicewomen and their equipment. In addition, journalists like Lotta Dempsey supported women’s involvement in defence affairs.

Veterans simultaneously garnered press attention and expressed their long-term relationships with the armed forces when they formed veterans’ organizations. Servicewomen experienced a mixed reception in these groups. Some male veterans welcomed female members into pre-existing organizations like the Legion, while others expressed hostility. These groups publicized their various activities, such as reunions, which helped servicewomen maintain their sense of community as well as reminded the public that wartime servicewomen existed. In addition, veterans’ organizations attempted to exert political pressure on DND, passing resolutions that called for the return of

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<sup>650</sup> “Royal Canadian Navy (Wrens),” 1955, 1- 6, Appendix “B” to “RCN Wren Policy and Planning, August 1954- July, 1957, A Review.” The quotation comes from page 6.

women into the armed services.

Wartime servicewomen also kept involved in military affairs both inside and outside the armed services. A small group of female dieticians transferred from the RCAF (WD) into the medical services when the women's services disbanded in 1946. Like military nurses, these uniformed women performed work associated with women and brought together generations of servicewomen. Second World War veterans also created links between generations and nurtured the next generation of military personnel through cadet/cadette organizations. Some wartime veterans rejoined the armed services in the 1950s. Of course, not all veterans remained connected to the armed services. Some veterans were too busy rebuilding their postwar lives to participate in the various military-based organizations and others refused to speak about their wartime contributions.

Civilians, senior male military officers, and government officials all believed that servicewomen had a role to play in future national emergencies. Professor Geoffrey Riddehough implied that he assumed women would serve in support functions when he suggested an unsolicited motto for the future women's services. Meanwhile, bureaucrats and military officials periodically debated whether they should employ women as civilian or military defence employees. Defence planners also linked wartime and peacetime generations: they recruited wartime servicewomen to help organize women's re-entrance into the armed services.

Supporters of the employment of peacetime servicewomen repeated arguments used by those who wished to retain the wartime women's services, illustrating yet another

connection between the war and postwar forces. They claimed that women had proven themselves invaluable military employees. Supporters emphasized that enlisting a small number of women would ensure that the armed services had a trained group of women able to lead and oversee the large scale mobilization of women. Defence officials justified the recruitment of women for non-nursing roles by pointing to manpower shortages and wartime experiences with the women's services.

Peacetime servicewomen faced similar and different conditions to their wartime counterparts. Bringing in female military experts did not prevent wartime clothing problems from reoccurring in the peacetime services. Senior female officers agreed that combat remained a masculine domain and repeated wartime explanations of personnel problems. Yet senior officers also had to work within a different administrative structure because the women's services did not return. The federal cabinet insisted that servicewomen be integrated into their respective branch and be granted the same ranks and pay as their male counterparts. Although recruitment material celebrated equal pay, servicewomen were treated differently in this respect than their (married) male counterparts. Their career opportunities hinged on the premise that they did not take away opportunities from their male counterparts and stayed single.

Servicewomen's place in the armed services remained fragile. Military planners and individual servicewomen continuously negotiated women's roles. Government and military officials asked whether or not women belonged in the regular forces well into the mid-1960s. Were women worth the investment of money, time, and labour? And servicewomen for their part, kept questioning whether service life was worth their time

and labour. Defence planners and servicewomen's answers to these questions are recorded in a 1965 defence report on the "Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform-Regular Force." The next chapter analyzes the report and subsequent negotiations about women's place in the armed services.

## **Chapter Five – Becoming a Permanent Part of the Defence Forces of Canada: The Minister’s Manpower Study (Men) and Uniformed Women**

Rosalee Auger van Stelten and Mary Vallance chose different paths in the mid-1960s. Their decisions reflect defence officials’ frequent debates over the future of women in the armed services. Auger van Stelten left the Royal Canadian Navy in 1965. She had enlisted in 1952 in the Wren component of the naval reserves and served full-time as a reservist on continuous naval duty. She then moved into the navy’s Regular Force when it opened up to women. Auger van Stelten explained that the “social and geographic isolation of [her] postings at home” prompted her to leave in 1965. She was one of the few female petty officers, and was not supposed to socialize with women above and below her rank. The upcoming “tri-service integration” also influenced her decision. Over 26,000 military personnel willingly and unwillingly departed the armed forces between 1963 and 1965.<sup>651</sup>

Mary Vallance was among those who stayed. She switched from teaching to an air force career in 1954. Vallance moved up the officer ranks and was promoted to Colonel in 1974. Her approximately twenty-two year career saw her serve at various

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<sup>651</sup> Rosalee Auger van Stelten, *Wren: Memories of Navy Days from Royal Yacht to Quonset Hut* (Victoria: self-published, 2010), 75; Petty Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Class (retired) Rosalee Auger (van Stelten), “The Good, The Bad, and The Royal: The Challenges and Opportunities of Being a Wren,” in *Transforming Traditions: Women, Leadership and the Canadian Navy, 1942-2010*, ed. Stéphanie A.H. Bélanger and Karen D. Davis, (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2010), 37-42; and J. L. Granatstein, *Canada 1957-1967: The Years of Uncertainty and Innovation* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986), 228. All quotations come from *Wren*, 75.

postings within Canada and two tours in Germany. By 1972, she was the Director of Women Personnel. When she retired in 1975, Vallance publically thanked her “friends and associates, military and civilians, who have made these years so good and even to some who made them not so good, and thus more challenging!”<sup>652</sup> Both women acknowledged the difficulties of military service but came to different conclusions about their place in it.

From 1955 to 1965, defence officials had repeatedly considered whether or not servicewomen should remain in the armed services. This chapter explores these debates through a close analysis of a 1965 study entitled “Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force.” Drafted by the Minister’s Manpower Study (Men) [MMS (M)], it was part of series of manpower studies designed to streamline and reduce costs in the Canadian armed services. The MMS (M) was a committee of officers assigned the task of long-term planning for the non-commissioned ranks. The manpower studies were part of the preparation for unification, the transition of the three separate services, each with their own administrative apparatus, into an integrated single service. Military scholars, such as J.L. Granatstein, Douglas Bland, and Desmond Morton, have analyzed the re-structuring that occurred during this transition. While their work reveals much about Minister of National Defence Paul Hellyer’s battles with the military brass, Canadian civil-military relations, and the effect on servicemen, there is little gendered

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<sup>652</sup> Colonel M.G. Vallance, “Retire— Why Not?” *Attitudes* 1, no. 3 (1975): 1, copy at Directorate of History and Heritage, National Defence Headquarters, Ottawa, Canada [hereafter DHH], Directorate of Women Personnel Fonds, (hereafter DWP), 90/447, file 98; and untitled blurb about Vallance, *Attitudes* 1, no. 3 (1975): 1; “Biographical Sketch Lieutenant Colonel M.G. Vallance, CD,” DHH, DWP, 90/447, file 116.

analysis of the consequences for servicewomen.<sup>653</sup>

Historians, sociologists, and military personnel who study the integration of servicewomen in the Canadian Armed Services single out the MMS (M)'s study on women as an important document. Barbara Dundas provides an accessible discussion of the MMS (M)'s analysis and recommendations in her examination of how "external forces" led to expanded opportunities for women between 1965 and 1988. By focusing exclusively on the document, however, she only hints at the role of feminism in opening up new roles for women, glossing over the efforts of senior female officers to create more space for servicewomen. Dundas also largely ignores what the MMS (M) left out. By contrast, Second Lieutenant Marta Rzechowka, in her study of the integration of women in Canadian and American militaries, does not analyze the specific recommendations of the document but highlights the role of feminism and servicewomen in securing a place for women in the Canadian armed services. Her overview approach, however, means that she does not go into the particulars of women's lobbying.<sup>654</sup>

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<sup>653</sup> For a discussion of the guidelines and aims of the manpower studies, see Memorandum to Defence Council from Chief of Defence Staff, on Minister's Manpower Study-Men, 19 March 1965, DHH, Raymont Fonds, 73/1223, series 1, box 11, file 196. For a helpful overview on unification, see Granatstein, *Canada 1957-1967*, 218-242; Desmond Morton, *A Military History of Canada*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 2007), 247-254; Douglas L. Bland, *The Administration of Defence Policy in Canada, 1947 to 1985* (Kingston, Ont.: R.P. Frye, 1987) 21-55; and Douglas L. Bland, *Chiefs of Defence : Government and the Unified Command of the Canadian Armed Forces* (Toronto : s.n., 1995), 50-88. For Paul Hellyer's version of events, see *Damn the Torpedoes: My Fight to Unify Canada's Armed Forces* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1990).

<sup>654</sup> Barbara Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military* (Montréal : Art Global and the Dept. of National Defense in co-operation with the Dept. of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2000), 105-10; Second Lieutenant Marta Rzechowka, "Gender Integration and Modern Military Forces: A Comparative Analysis," *The Canadian Army Journal* 13, no. 2 (2010): 71-88; Danielle Hards, "'We are the Girls Behind the Boys Behind the Guns': Military Women and the Canadian Forces" (master's thesis, Carleton University, 1994); Patricia A Power, "'With Their Feet on the Ground': Women's Lives and Work in the Royal Canadian Air Force, 1951-1966" (master's thesis, Ottawa University, 1998). For sociological perspectives, see Mady Weschsler Segal, "Women's Military Roles Cross-Nationally: Past,

The approach adopted here combines Dundas' and Rzechowka's insights. Since the MMS (M) helped secure a place for women as full-time members of the defence forces of Canada, it is important to examine the MMS (M)'s report. Their principal recommendations were that servicewomen should be awarded permanent status and that doubts about female retention, that is whether women should remain, should be put to rest. On 20 June 1966, Hellyer and the Defence Council approved the MMS (M)'s central recommendations with a minor modification. Hellyer suspended the study of female retention for five years. An analysis of the MMS (M) case for the continued employment of servicewomen demonstrates that the MMS (M) repeated certain arguments used by female activists in their attempts secure to secure more positions and status for women.

Unlike past scholarship, the chapter uses servicewomen's accounts as a counterpoint to the MMS (M)'s study. Most of the accounts are briefs and reports written by senior female officers between 1955 and 1965. From 1955 to 1965, senior female officers had argued for wider opportunities for military women and opposed certain male colleagues who claimed servicewomen cost too much. Servicewomen's voices help place MMS (M)'s recommendations into a wider context. The interweaving of their report with servicewomen's voices exposes the points of agreement and departure between the MMS (M)'s vision of women's place in the armed services and servicewomen's. In a manner that is similar to the formation of the women's services, the MMS (M) built their case for

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Present, and Future," *Gender and Society* 9, no. 6 (December 1995): 755-75; and Donna Winslow and Jason Dunn, "Women in the Canadian Forces: Between Legal and Social Integration," *Current Sociology* 50, no. 5 (September 2002): 641-67. For analysis of changes gender issues in the Canadian forces, see Patricia Bowley and Kris Wright, "Canadian Enlisted Women: Gender Issues in the Canadian Armed Forces Before and After 1945," *Minerva* 15, no. 1 (March 1997): 9-26.

retention on a series of complex negotiations between the various parties with interests at stake.

The analysis starts with two contextual sections. The first section places the “Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force” within women’s labour trends and activism. Scholars have identified rising rates of women’s work force participation as one of the conditions that led to the second-wave feminist movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s. The MMS (M) drafted their report while the groundwork was being laid for second-wave feminism. The second contextual section situates the origins of the MMS (M)’s report on women in larger shifts in defence policy. The MMS (M) wrote as the armed services struggled to find their footing during a period of massive reorganization. Hellyer’s proposed plan to move from three separate services to one unified service involved personnel cuts. Some senior military officers saw servicewomen as expendable in accomplishing the massive personnel reductions. The MMS (M) had to navigate between female activists’ demands for greater opportunities for women and the priorities of senior male officers who headed male-dominated institutions.

The rest of the chapter loosely follows the organization of MMS (M)’s study as it analyzes their case for the retention of servicewomen. Their report begins with a summary of the changes to the defence policy that governed the employment of women in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. Since the previous chapters covered the policies up to 1955, the discussion here focuses on the 1955 to 1965 period. Like the MMS (M)’s report, the chapter then addresses the specific justifications for making women permanent full-time members of the Canadian armed services. The first argument was that biological

sex should not disqualify women from service, but the bulk of MMS (M)'s arguments addressed the financial aspects of retention. To counter the recurring objection that servicewomen drained valuable resources, the study team pointed to financial gains to be found in accommodation and women's higher attrition rates.

The MMS (M) reinforced gender roles for women even as they reframed servicewomen as cost-saving employees. Combat remained a male preserve. Although the MMS (M) created space for married servicewomen, it assumed that the average servicewoman was single, heterosexual, and a temporary visitor. The (male) authors upheld female domesticity as the norm for women when they failed to recognize women, such as Vallance, who chose a service career and failed to consider the complex causes of women's higher attrition rate. The MMS (M) did not discuss the possibility that social isolation drove Auger van Stelten and other female personnel to ask for their discharge. The tensions in the MMS (M)'s case for retention reflected the climate in which they crafted the report.

### **Women's Labour Force Trends and Activism**

The number of women working increased over the second-half of the twentieth century. Women constituted 20 per cent of the labour force in 1941. The percentage of female workers rose to almost 30 per cent by 1961, and grew to approximately 40 per cent by 1971. As stated in chapter four, married women became a larger part of the work force. Labour and women's historian Joan Sangster partly attributes the growth to increasing consumerism, which created jobs in the service industries. Many women found clerical work in the growing welfare state. They filled jobs in schools, public

service, hospitals, and social services. Female academics benefited from the hiring boom that accompanied the creation of new institutions and expansion of old ones. New universities, colleges, and Collèges d'enseignement general et professionnel (CÉGEPs) were built in order to accommodate the baby-boom generation in the 1960s. In addition, Sangster notes that a variety of “pink-and-white collar jobs” had opened up for women in the “community, business and personal services” by the 1960s.<sup>655</sup>

The labour force was largely segregated by gender. Women’s manufacturing jobs tended to be in textiles, garment industries, and food industries. Even within female dominated professions, such as teaching, men tended to have the higher status jobs, such as school principals. Women were concentrated in low-paying, precarious, and part-time employment. Under the male nuclear breadwinner ideal, women were classified as secondary earners and temporary employees, which, in turn, justified sex-segregation and lower earnings. Sex-segregation, Sangster argues, meant that “social observers” only occasionally criticized career women for replacing men in the work force.<sup>656</sup>

Women actively pursued better conditions. Some like Doris Anderson, the editor of *Chatelaine*, used their positions to create public awareness of the barriers faced by women. Under Anderson’s leadership, there were multiple feature articles on feminism.

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<sup>655</sup> Joan Sangster, *Transforming Labour: Women and Work in Post-war Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 17-21, Kindle; Wendy Robbins, Meg Luxton, Margrit Eichler, and Francine Descarries, “Challenging Times,” in *Minds of Our Own: Inventing Feminist Scholarship and Women Studies in Canada and Quebec, 1966-76*, ed. Wendy Robbins, Meg Luxton, Margrit Eichler, and Francine Descarries (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier Press, 2008), 2-27; and Alison Prentice, Paula Bourne, Gail Cuthbert Brandt, Beth Light, Wendy Mitchinson and Naomi Black, *Canadian Women: A History*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Toronto: Nelson, 2004), 396-7. The quotation comes from Sangster, 20

<sup>656</sup> Sangster, *Transforming Labour*, 19; and Christine Ensslen and June Corman, “Establishing Pathways for Woman in Education in Saskatchewan: Never-Married Women Career Teachers,” *Historical Studies in Education / Revue d’histoire de l’éducation* 25, no. 2 (Fall 2013): 25-8.

Anderson writes in her autobiography that when she assigned Jean Wright, her managing editor, the proofs for Betty Friedan's *The Feminist Mystique* (1963), Wright replied, "'We've run most of the stuff in *Chatelaine*.'"<sup>657</sup> Wright and Anderson were likely referring to articles such as those by Christina McCall, who wrote a feminist analysis of the criticisms of working wives, the limits of equal pay legislation, and the dismissal of married women's opinions in 1961 and 1962. McCall and Freidan both criticized the fact that women experienced social pressures to marry and start families young, noting that these pressures created bored and unfulfilled women.<sup>658</sup> A leading French Canadian journalist and future Governor General of Canada, Jeanne Sauvé voiced similar sentiments in a special section on French Canadian women in the 23 June 1961 issue of *Le Devoir*. She "wonder[ed] whether French Canadian women are as happy in their homes as everyone thinks."<sup>659</sup> The French Canadian *Châteline: La Revue Moderne*, which appeared in 1960 under the editorship of Fernande Saint-Martin, also encouraged female activism. *Châteline*, like its English counterpart, discussed female employment, birth control and other feminist issues.<sup>660</sup>

Other career-oriented women worked to improve women's positions through professional organizations. The period between the first and second-wave feminist movements is often seen as a lull in women's activism, but professional women pressed

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<sup>657</sup> Doris Anderson, *Rebel Daughter: An Autobiography* (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1996), 174-5. The quotation comes from 174.

<sup>658</sup> Valerie Korinek, *Roughing It in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 35, 310-40.

<sup>659</sup> As quoted in Micheline Dumont, *Feminism à la Québécoise*, trans. Nicole Kennedy (Ottawa: Feminist History Society, 2012), 91.

<sup>660</sup> Korinek, *Roughing It in the Suburbs*, 35, 310-40; and Dumont, *Feminism à la Québécoise*, 97.

for equal rights within organizations such as the Saskatchewan Teachers Federation (STF) as well as broad based women's federations like the Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women (BPW). They wrote letters and briefs to government officials advocating for equal pay legislation and the removal of job restrictions on the basis of sex. Career-oriented single women, for example, played a large role in the STF's "equal opportunities resolution" in 1954. The resolution supported the promotion of women with the necessary qualifications to principal and superintendent.<sup>661</sup> As scholar Gail Campbell argues in her article about BPW member Senator Muriel McQueen Fergusson (1953-1975), historians typically "overlook the significance and essentialize the feminism of these inter-wave feminists."<sup>662</sup> A trained lawyer, Fergusson had found herself disqualified for jobs strictly on her basis of her gender. Senator Fergusson championed women's issues and corresponded with female activists in other women's organizations like the International Federation of University Women. Campbell explains that the scholarly habit of "categorizing" feminists into types and waves of feminism fails to capture the sophistication and richness of women activists like Fergusson, whose "feminism defies easy classification."<sup>663</sup> Subsequent sections will show that military

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<sup>661</sup> Ensslen and Corman, "Establishing Pathways for Woman in Education in Saskatchewan: Never-Married Women Career Teachers," 34. See also, Mario Spagnuolo and Larry A. Glassford, "Feminism in Transition: The Margaret Tomen Membership Case and the Formation of the Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario," *Historical Studies in Education/Revue d'histoire de l'éducation* 20, no. 2 (Fall 2008): 56-60.

<sup>662</sup> Gail G. Campbell, "Are we going to do the most important things?" Senator Muriel McQueen Fergusson, Feminist Identities, and the Royal Commission on the Status of Women," *Acadiensis* XXXVIII, no. 2 (Summer/Autumn 2009): 52.

<sup>663</sup> Campbell, "Are we going to do the most important things?" Senator Muriel McQueen Fergusson, Feminist Identities, and the Royal Commission on the Status of Women," 52-77. The quotation comes from page 56. It is important to note that Fergusson repeatedly denied that she was a feminist, but Campbell

career women adopted similar tactics: they too worked inside their organizations to expand women's roles.

Campbell and other scholars of feminism identify the BPW as a precursor to the second-wave feminist movement.<sup>664</sup> The BPW is an example of what scholars Nancy Adamson, Linda Briskin, and Margaret McPhail call “institutionalized feminism,” which they describe as one of the driving impulses behind the second-wave feminist movement. More commonly known as liberal feminists, institutional feminists argued for the “equality of opportunity: each individual in society should have an equal chance to compete for the resources of that society in order to rise within as far as talents permit, unhindered by law and custom....”<sup>665</sup> Institutionalized feminism mobilized what Campbell calls an “old-girls network” – female editors like Anderson, politicians like Judy LaMarsh, and senators like Fergusson – to support the Royal Commission on the Status of Women (RCSW) in 1967. Authorized to “inquire into and report upon the status of women in Canada, and to recommend what steps might be taken by the federal government to ensure for women equal opportunities with men in all aspects of Canadian society,” the RCSW, travelled across the country collecting submissions of gender

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argues that Fergusson can be classified as a feminist for historical purposes because she repeatedly fought to improve the status of women.

<sup>664</sup> Campbell, “Are we going to do the most important things?” Senator Muriel McQueen Fergusson, *Feminist Identities*, and the Royal Commission on the Status of Women,” 52-77; Judy Rebick, *Ten Thousand Roses: The Making of a Feminist Revolution* (Toronto: Penguin Canada, 2004), 3-13; and Nancy Adamson, Linda Briskin, and Margaret McPhail, *Feminists Organizing For Change: The Contemporary Women's Movement in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1988), 7-11, 27-52.

The following discussion does not cover feminism in Quebec. For an analysis of the uniqueness of Quebec, see Micheline Dumont, “The Origins of the Women's Movement in Quebec,” in *Challenging Times: The Women's Movement in Canada and the United States*, ed. Constance Backhouse and David H. Flaherty (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), 72-89.

<sup>665</sup> Adamson, Briskin, and McPhail, *Feminists Organizing For Change*, 7-11, 27-52. The quotation comes from page 10.

discrimination from individual women and women's groups. The report of its findings on how to reduce barriers to women's equality in 1970 is widely seen as a turning point in Canadian feminism.<sup>666</sup>

Scholars also name peace activists, and in particular the Voice of Women (VOW), as another source of the feminist movement. Created in 1960, VOW introduced many women to feminism. VOW members mobilized maternal feminist rhetoric, arguing that women's roles as mothers or potential mothers justified their intervention into matters of national defence. Women journalists played a leading role in VOW, and the organization gave women valuable organizational skills and practice with public speaking. According to political scientist Jill Vickers, VOW "was a crucial link between generations of feminists."<sup>667</sup> A bilingual movement, with an active Quebec wing, VOW connected influential established feminists like Thérèse Casgrain, who led the Quebec suffrage movement, with students in the anti-war movement.

Many future second-wave feminists became radicalized at university. Canadian

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<sup>666</sup> Adamson, Briskin, and McPhail, *Feminists Organizing For Change*, 29, 37-52; Prentice, Bourne, Cuthbert Brandt, Light, Mitchinson and Black, *Canadian Women: A History*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Toronto: Nelson, 2004), 353-4, 416-7, 433-4 n24; Rebick, *Ten Thousand Roses*, 3-13; Monique Bégin, "The Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada: Twenty Years Later," in *Challenging Times: The Women's Movement in Canada and the United States*, 21-38; Cerise Morris, "'Determination and Thoroughness': The Movement for the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada," *Atlantis* 5, no.2 (Spring 1980): 1-21; Campbell, "'Are we going to do the most important things?' Senator Muriel McQueen Fergusson, Feminist Identities, and the Royal Commission on the Status of Women," 58; and Korinek, *Roughing It in the Suburbs*, 35, 65, 98-9, 310-49, 370; Status of Women Canada, "The Royal Commission on the Status of Women," Status of Women Canada website, June 1, 2016, accessed March 10, 2017, <http://swc-cfc.gc.ca/rc-cr/roycom/index-en.html>. The quotation comes from the Status of Women Canada website.

<sup>667</sup> Rebick, *Ten Thousand Roses*, 3-13; Tarah Brookfield, *Cold War Comforts: Canadian Women, Child Safety, and Global Insecurity* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2012), 70-97; and Jill Vickers, "The Intellectual Origins of the Women's Movements in Canada," in *Challenging Times*, 52-60. The quotation comes from Vickers, 53. For another comparison of Canadian and American feminism, see Naomi Black, "Ripples in the Second-Wave: Comparing the Contemporary Women's Movement in Canada and the United States," in *Challenging Times*, 94-109.

university students participated in the Aboriginal rights movement, anti-war protests, and the New Left organization of the 1960s. Tired of being silenced by male activists, women splintered off from these movements and associations. They created groups like Feminine Action League (FAL) at Simon Fraser University in 1965 and the Toronto Women's Liberation Movement (TWLM) in 1967.<sup>668</sup>

The MMS (M)'s manpower report on women slightly predates the second-wave feminist movement, but was influenced by many of the same emerging concerns that led to the movement. The MMS (M)'s principal recommendation reflects women's labour trends and recognized women's desire for an expanded presence in the Canadian work force. Yet this recognition occurred as the armed services were scaled down.

### **The MMS (M)'s Study on Women and Unification**

The MMS (M)'s report on women was written during a period of massive re-organization of the armed services. It originated when Air Marshal C.R. Dunlap, the Chief of the Air Staff (CAS), requested the government's permission to "phase out" women in the summer of 1964. Hellyer prevented the "phase out" and requested a review of the employment policy on women in July 1964. The newly organized office of the Chief of Personnel produced an interim report in February 1965 and the MMS (M)

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<sup>668</sup> Christabelle Sethna and Steve Hewitt, "Clandestine Operations: The Vancouver Women's Caucus, the Abortion Caravan, and the RCMP," in *Rethinking Canada: The Promise of Women's History*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed., ed. Lara Campbell, Tamara Myers and Adele Perry (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2016), 317; Robbins, Luxton, Eichler, and Descarries, "Challenging Times," 12-27; Adamson, "Feminists, Libbers, Lefties and Radicals: The Emergence of the Women's Liberation Movement," in *A Diversity of Women: Ontario, 1945-1980*, ed. Joy Parr (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 252-81; and Vickers, "The Intellectual Origins of the Women's Movements in Canada," 38-60; Adamson, Briskin, and McPhail, *Feminists Organizing For Change*, 7-11, 27-52.

continued the review.<sup>669</sup>

Dunlap made his request after Cabinet approved Hellyer's White Paper on Defence in March 1964. He explained that, with the lowered manpower ceilings, it had become too expensive to keep servicewomen. The White Paper contained plans for the restructuring of service headquarters. The three individual service headquarters were to merge into one, headed by a Chief of the Defence Staff. Parliament approved the merger on 16 July 1964. Historian Desmond Morton states that senior officials grasped the implications of "Hellyer's promise of a 'single unified defence force.'"<sup>670</sup> Many senior officers opposed integration because they knew they would lose some of their staff and feared losing too many personnel in general. The CAS wanted to close the air force to women in order to hold onto as many men as possible, a fact that has largely been ignored by Morton and other historians.<sup>671</sup>

The White Paper was the first step in the unification process. From 1964 to 1966, the army, navy and air force went from having their own recruiting offices to a single structure. The three public relations departments were also combined and defence officials worked out a single trade organization and pay scheme. Historian J.L.

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<sup>669</sup> Minister's Manpower Study (Men) [hereafter MMS (M)], "Employment of Women in the Regular Force," 1965, para 20-25, attached to Memorandum from Chief of the Defence Staff to Defence Council, Employment of Women in the Regular Force, 2 Sept 1965, attached to Memorandum from Chief of Personnel to the Chief of Defence Council for consideration at Chief of Defence Staff Meeting, 20 December 1965, copy at DHH, 73/1223, series 1, box 12, file 198; Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 103-5; and Memorandum from Vice-Admiral K.L. Dyer, Chief of Personnel, to the Minister (through CDS), Female Personnel, 15 February 1965, DHH, Raymond Fonds, 73/1223, series 1, box 11, file 196.

<sup>670</sup> Morton, *A Military History of Canada*, 250.

<sup>671</sup> Bland, *The Administration of Defence Policy in Canada*, 34-46; Morton, *A Military History of Canada*, 247-54; Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 102-4; and Granatstein, *Canada 1957-1967*, 223-27.

Granatstein writes that the next step entailed “a radical revamping of the field commands,” which saw “the eleven major commands for all three services in Canada reduced at a stroke to six: Mobile Command, Maritime Command, Air Defence Command, Air Transport Command, Training Command and Material Command.” Despite a concerted public opposition from senior officers such as Rear-Admiral W.H. Landymore, and the Tri-Service Identities Organization, Parliament passed Bill C-243 (the Canadian Forces Reorganization Bill) in April 1967. The Royal Canadian Air Force, the Royal Canadian Navy, and the Canadian Army officially ended and became the Canadian Armed Forces on 1 February 1968.<sup>672</sup>

The purpose of “Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force” was to determine whether or not there was a place for women in the unified armed services. The MMS (M) stated that women had a place. Like the authors of the reports examined in chapter three, the MMS (M) legitimized their vision with lessons gleaned from past experience with servicewomen. They “reviewed” over twenty years of employment policy, “with a view to recommending future policy.”<sup>673</sup> As the following section will show, the MMS (M) illustrated the precarious position of women in the armed services, and yet offered limited criticism of past policy.

### **The MMS (M)’s Discussion of Women’s Shifting Place**

The MMS (M) revealed that the policy that governed the parameters of women’s

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<sup>672</sup> Granatstein, *Canada 1957-1967*, 222-40. The quotation comes from page 227.

<sup>673</sup> MMS (M), “Employment of Women in the Regular Force,” 1965, para 1.

military service varied by service and by year.<sup>674</sup> The RCAF's story was one of a gradual decline in airwomen's place. In 1955, the Air Council restricted the number of women to 2,500, from a maximum enrolment in 1953-54 of 4,000 women. The MMS (M) did not question the Air Council's rationale that the 2,500 limit was "most compatible with recruiting capabilities." Historian Barbara Dundas challenges the explanation, noting that the RCAF had over three thousand women in July 1953. The reduction occurred as the air force expanded. The RCAF reached its maximum peacetime strength of 55,700 personnel and further limited women's job prospects in 1958. Senior officials claimed that women's "physical limitations" contributed to their decision to restrict women to trades that required at most sixteen weeks of training. They also had justified this decision on the grounds that women's higher attrition rate meant the air force lost a return on investment. The RCAF found that the average women served for thirty months, yet it took military personnel 18 months to become efficient radar technicians.<sup>675</sup>

Changing technology also resulted in cuts to the numbers of women. Patricia Power reports in her MA thesis that the RCAF had a "surplus" of personnel after it revised its radar lines in the late 1950s and early 1960s. For example, the RCAF had introduced the semi-automatic ground environment system (SAGE) by 1962. It then

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<sup>674</sup> This discussion borrows heavily from MMS (M) "Employment of Women in the Regular Force," para 2-25; Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 102-110; and Lieutenant-Colonel L.J Davis (retired), "Employment of Women in Canada's Armed Forces, Past and Present," 1966, 4-11, DHH, DWP, 90/447, file 90.

<sup>675</sup> MMS (M) "Employment of Women in the Regular Force," para 15-20; Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 102-4; Brereton Greenhous and Hugh A. Halliday, *Canada's Air Forces, 1914-1999* (Montréal : Art Global, 1999), 133; and Research Branch of the Library Parliament, *History of the RCAF (Women's Division) 1941-1971* (Ottawa: May 26, 1971), 11-15, copy at DHH, DWP, 90/447, file 104. The quotations come from MMS (M), paragraph 15 and 16.

needed fewer radar stations and fewer women to staff the radar units because SAGE involved the greater use of computers. SAGE thus removed a key manpower need for the RCAF, and a need which had justified women's re-entrance into the RCAF in 1951. Power states that, by the early 1960s, the RCAF "had surplus male personnel in other trades as well." She writes that the RCAF prioritized male personnel, and halted the recruitment of women so that it could transfer men into jobs previously filled by women. There were just over 1800 airwomen distributed across thirteen trades when Air Force headquarters stopped recruiting women in 1 January 1963. By contrast, in 1953 women had served in 28 trades.<sup>676</sup>

Air force officials again reviewed the position of women in 1963 and 1964. Although the 1963 review team proposed a role for approximately 1,000 women, it was hardly a ringing endorsement. The review team justified such a role because they predicted that it was "unlikely that there would be significant dollar savings if 1,000 airwomen were replaced by airmen."<sup>677</sup> The CAS declared that airwomen's days were numbered in June 1964.<sup>678</sup>

The MMS (M) had criticisms of RCAF policy. They indirectly critiqued the RCAF's treatment of surplus female personnel. Elsewhere in the document, the MMS

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<sup>676</sup> MMS (M) "Employment of Women in the Regular Force," 17, 47; Research Branch of the Library Parliament, *History of the RCAF (Women's Division) 1941-1971*, 11-15; and Power, "'With Their Feet on the Ground': Women's Lives and Work in the Royal Canadian Air Force, 1951-1966," 69-84. The quotation comes from Power, 80.

<sup>677</sup> MMS (M) "Employment of Women in the Regular Force," 17-20, 47; Research Branch of the Library Parliament, *History of the RCAF (Women's Division) 1941-1971*, 11-15; and Power, "'With Their Feet on the Ground': Women's Lives and Work in the Royal Canadian Air Force, 1951-1966," 69-84. The quotation comes from the MMS (M), paragraph 47.

<sup>678</sup> MMS (M) "Employment of Women in the Regular Force," 17-20, 47, 70

(M) wrote that it would be “ethically wrong to release those [women] who wish to serve just because sufficient men become available.” Forcing women out under those circumstances, the MMS (M) concluded, would be a dishonourable act that would damage public opinion. The CAS’s resolution to “phase out” women was directly challenged. The central recommendations rebutted this decision and the MMS (M) explicitly stated that they disagreed with the “phasing out” of women.<sup>679</sup>

Some evidence indicates that air force women had challenged air force policy, but their critiques were absent from the MMS (M)’s report. In a January 1963 briefing to senior male officers in the personnel branch, Squadron Leader Elizabeth Dalton, Assistant for Women Personnel (A/WP), pushed officers speak openly about the goals behind the decision to end recruiting. She informed the senior male officers of the personnel branch that “every airwomen and woman officer” was worried about their futures because they saw several of their colleagues retire and knew that the RCAF was not hiring female replacements.<sup>680</sup> An unapologetic Dalton repeatedly used the word “disbandment” in spite of it being, as she noted, a “dirty word.” She used it despite experiences of being denigrated with the phrase “don’t be emotional,” when she dared to utter the unavoidable conclusion. The criticism she described speaks to a need to contain female authority figures. Her critics had drawn upon an old stereotype of women as

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<sup>679</sup> MMS (M), “Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force,” para 52, 70; Morton, *Canada and War*, 178-185.

<sup>680</sup> Squadron Leader Elizabeth L. Dalton, A/WP, AMP Briefing, 22 January 1963, DHH, DWP, 90/447, file 19, 1-4; Mary Ziegler, *We Serve That Men May Fly* (Hamilton, ON: R.C.A.F. (W.D.) Association, 1973), 160-3; and Historical Notes- Women in the RCAF-1941-1960,” 2, DHH, 79/208, Folder 2. The phrase comes from Dalton, page 4. Dalton was a wartime officer who was recalled to work in the Personnel/Administration branch.

overly emotional in an attempt to minimize her authority and paint her as unreasonable in the early months of 1963.<sup>681</sup>

Dalton's briefing reflects larger trends. Female officers tried to defend their place in the armed service but the MMS (M) did not acknowledge their efforts in the study. The senior female naval staff officer in 1965, Lieutenant-Commander Constance Eileen Ogilvy, wrote "an aide-memoire" for the MMS (M). In it, she summarized the major policy decisions in the employment of women. Although the MMS (M) covered much of the same information, Ogilvy's text does not appear in the study's bibliography. The lack of acknowledgement of individual critiques is partly caused by the nature of the study and the military emphasis on the service rather than the individual. It was top-down review of policy and as such, individuals barely appeared in it. The few individuals who do appear in the study, such as the CAS, are referred to by their position and not by their name. Nevertheless, the MMS (M) reinforced the armed services as masculine institutions through the omission of Dalton's critiques and of Ogilvy's contributions. It ignored and erased the fact that female officers participated in the negotiations over women's place and status in the armed services.<sup>682</sup>

New opportunities opened for naval women as opportunities closed for their air

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<sup>681</sup> Dalton, A/WP, AMP Briefing, 22 January 1963, 1-4. Quotations come from page 2. For a discussion of stereotypes of women, feminism, and backlash, see Christabelle Sethna, "'Chastity Outmoded!'" The *Ubysey*, Sex, and the Single Girl, 1960-70," in *Creating Postwar Canada: Community, Diversity and Dissent, 1945-1975*, ed. Magda Fahrni and Robert Rutherford, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008), 300-6. For a discussion of how female military figures were undermined or carefully contained in popular culture, Yvonne Tasker, *Soldiers' Stories: Military Women in Cinema and Television Since World War II* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 139-71.

<sup>682</sup> MMS (M) "Employment of Women in the Regular Force," para 6-9, bibliography; and Lieutenant-Commander C.E. Ogilvy, Staff Officer (Wrens), Aide Memoire to Minister's Manpower Study Men, 14 July 1965, LAC, RG 112-616-8-E, vol. 34266, file 4360-909, pt. 2.

force counterparts, but women's status in the navy was continually contested. Women entered into the navy's Regular Force in 1955, and between 1955 and 1961, the numbers rose from 55 to 140. Senior naval officers debated whether to keep the Wrens in 1961. The Naval Board decided that there was a place for women of all ranks in communications, supply, medical and operations, but restricted women to the East Coast because it declared that there was insufficient demand on the West Coast. Then, in 1962, the navy opened more spots for women in order to address labour shortages in the communications trades. However, the navy created the communication jobs only after it investigated and then dismissed the question of whether women's involvement would harm naval men's employment rotations.<sup>683</sup>

The situation shifted again in 1964 when the navy re-examined personnel policies. Barbara Dundas insists that, though the 1964 review team concluded that women should be retained, the team effectively "reduce[d] RCN servicewomen to near auxiliary status, making them secondary to the men, rather than equal members of their own service."<sup>684</sup> The 1964 review team indeed reduced naval servicewomen's status when it suggested further restrictions on the employment of women. Naval servicewomen were to be used only for postings where the navy had difficulties finding men or civilians. In addition, the review team stated that women were to fill positions only until enough men could be found.<sup>685</sup>

According to the MMS (M), army policy had stayed fairly consistent. Most army

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<sup>683</sup> MMS (M) "Employment of Women in the Regular Force," para 6-9.

<sup>684</sup> Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 102-4. The quotation comes from page 103.

<sup>685</sup> MMS (M) "Employment of Women in the Regular Force," para 9-10, 14, 22-24; and Research Branch of the Library Parliament, *History of the RCAF (Women's Division) 1941-1971*, 11-15.

women were reservists. For women seeking a full time army career, the only reliable role was as a “Corps Advisor.” There were eleven of these officer positions. Army officials slightly modified their 1954 decision to employ only female officers in the Canadian Army (Regular) in 1955. The posting of men and their families to remote places such as Whitehorse generated jobs for non-commissioned women. The army hired female Nursing Assistants, but stopped recruiting them in August 1963 when the demand dropped.<sup>686</sup>

Very few women remained in the armed services by the time MMS (M) reported. There were forty female officers and 248 other ranks in the navy. The air force had sixty-four female officers and 502 other ranks by September 1965. The army had nine female officers and twenty-nine Nursing Assistants. The statistics reinforced the MMS (M) narrative of constant debate over the limited presence of women in the armed services. The statistics, like the MMS (M), do not tell the whole story. Although the MMS (M) did not tell a linear history of women’s military service, their top-down perspective omitted individual criticisms.

### **The Case for Retention**

The MMS (M) began their case by taking the moral high ground. They echoed, but did not directly refer to the *Canadian Bill of Rights* (1960), when they insisted biological sex by itself no longer constituted sufficient grounds for barring women from the armed services. The MMS (M) also adopted feminist arguments when they offered

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<sup>686</sup> MMS (M), “Employment of Women in the Regular Force,” para 11-14; Davis, “Employment of Women in Canada’s Armed Forces, Past and Present,” 8-9; and Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 103.

two reasons why women should have the opportunity to serve. First, in a democracy such as Canada, which had a voluntary force, the armed services must mirror the society it defends. The MMS (M) pointed to rising female labour rates within Canada. In addition, it drew comparisons with the military and civil labour force participation in the United States and United Kingdom to legitimize their recommendation.<sup>687</sup> The idea that the armed services should be a microcosm of civilian society is a persistent thought in the theorizing of civil-military relations. As Leisa Meyer writes in the American Second World War context, “the military is a critical bastion of state power and service within in it a determinant of rights of citizens....”<sup>688</sup> The role of the military as both an arbitrator of rights and powerful arm of the state helps explain why minority groups fight to join and why their attempts to enter this bastion of heterosexual, masculine, white, and ablest power produce deep anxiety.<sup>689</sup>

Second, the MMS (M) drew on Canadian women’s tradition of military service. Wartime and peacetime servicewomen had proven their usefulness and had won “the privilege of serving their country” for future generations.<sup>690</sup> But since privileges are not guaranteed in the same way rights are, the rhetoric of service as a privilege left room to take away servicewomen’s ability to serve.

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<sup>687</sup> MMS (M), “Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force,” para 26-32, 69a, 79a. For a helpful study of women’s labour force participation, see Joan Sangster, *Transforming Labour: Women and Work in Post-war Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), Kindle Version. For a discussion of military law and the *Canadian Bill of Rights*, see Chris Masden, *Another Kind of Justice: Canadian Military law from Confederation to Somalia* (Vancouver : UBC Press, 1999), 7, 114, 132.

<sup>688</sup> Leisa D Meyer, *Creating GI Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women’s Army Corps During World II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 1; and Lucy Noakes, *Women in the British Army: War and the Gentle Sex, 1907-1948* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 16.

<sup>689</sup> Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*, 1-5.

<sup>690</sup> MMS (M), “Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force,” para 31.

The MMS (M) reinforced the masculine nature of the armed services when the study team confirmed peacetime restrictions on women's service. Media during this period emphasized the combat barrier, even as it promoted the message that servicewomen had achieved equal status. For instance, a 1956 *Globe and Mail* article had stated that army women were "fully integrated into the militia." Readers would have had little time to worry that gendered integration disrupted gender norms because the next sentence assured them that "about the only thing CWAC's don't do is train in weapons drill or firearms."<sup>691</sup> The MMS (M) similarly shored up combat as a male prerogative. In fact, the MMS (M) framed women bearing arms as un-Canadian, claiming that it was socially unacceptable. They noted that, though uniformed women performed numerous roles in North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) services, only non-NATO countries went "to the extent of [women] bearing arms (something we feel is inappropriate to our society)." The implication was that those countries belonging to NATO were superior and more civilized—a testament to the patriarchal nature of Western ethnocentrism. Weaponized military women differentiated "us" from "them"; their existence symbolized the line between NATO and enemy forces.<sup>692</sup>

The fact that the MMS (M) considered it necessary to comment on the unseemliness of women bearing arms suggests that the possibility of female combatants existed. Anecdotal evidence indicates that some military personnel believed women should have weapons training. Donald Graves' history of the South Alberta Light Horse,

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<sup>691</sup> Canadian Press, "Women Number 2000 In Canadian Militia," *Globe and Mail*, December 6, 1956.

<sup>692</sup> MMS (M), "Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force," para 29- 32. The quotation comes from paragraph 29.

an army reserve regiment, has a 1960's photo of two unidentified CWAC women helping Squadron Sergeant-Major A. Arelis load ammunition for tanks. The caption implies that this scene happened more than once. It begins, "In the 1960s, it was strictly against regulations for women soldiers in the CWAC to participate in weapons training but, nonetheless, the Light Horse would smuggle them onto the range."<sup>693</sup> The photograph and caption portray a spirit of co-operation and a willingness to find ways around regulations created by top brass. This message fits in the celebratory tone of a book published for the South Alberta Light Horse Regiment Foundation. The photograph appears on a page where Graves describes how the regiment had strong morale because of the leadership of Lieutenant-Colonel N.R. Ray. It is placed in a chapter filled with examples of how the regiment, and Ray in particular, butted heads with military brass. Women's participation in weapons training comes across as another area of resistance.<sup>694</sup>

Tempting as it might be to see the Light Horse as trendsetters, CWAC servicewomen's participation in weapons training posed only a minimal challenge to gender norms. It took place in a reserve unit on a range within Canada and not in a combat zone. The photograph of Squadron Sergeant-Major Arelis and the two CWAC women, which was selected to represent women's participation, has the women holding ammunition, but does not feature women inside the tank pressing the firing button. Historian Gerard DeGroot argues that British women's participation in anti-aircraft batteries was carefully managed in order to avoid challenging the gender binary of

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<sup>693</sup> Donald E. Graves, *Century of Service: The History of the South Alberta Light Horse* (Toronto: Robin Brass Studio, 2005), 396.

<sup>694</sup> Graves, *Century of Service*, 375-96.

male/combat and female/non-combatant. British women were allowed to load, but not fire the guns in the Second World War.<sup>695</sup>

A more explicit challenge to the straightforward association of men with combat had emerged in the general Cold War climate of insecurity. The destructive ability of atomic weapons produced extensive fear. American intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM) became operational in the 1960s. Countries with ICBMs possessed the ability to attack by deploying weapon located within their countries instead of deploying conventional forces, or, in other words, (male) troops. Historians have shown how the adoption of the nuclear deterrence as the main defence strategy raised questions about the use of conventional forces. For instance, Tarah Brookfield argues that Cold War technological developments shifted the location of the front lines from overseas, as in the World Wars, to Canadian soil, which in turn questioned the traditional gendering of warfare. As Brookfield notes, these changes also spurred groups like VOW to question the exclusion of women from decisions about military engagement.<sup>696</sup> Joanna Bourke explains that technological advances weakened the argument that women's alleged physical limitations meant they were less effective combatants.<sup>697</sup> The author of a 1957 review of Wren policy and organization reflected this narrative. They presented women

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<sup>695</sup> Gerard. J. DeGroot, "Whose Finger on the Trigger? Mixed Anti-Aircraft Batteries and the Female Combat Taboo," *War in History* 4, no. 4 (1997): 434-53; and Graves, *Century of Service*, 375-90.

<sup>696</sup> Tarah Brookfield, *Cold War Comforts: Canadian Women, Child Safety, and Global Insecurity* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2012), 5; Isabel Campbell, *Unlikely Diplomats: The Canadian Brigade in Germany, 1951-64* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2013), 1-10, 144-180; and James G. Fergusson, *Canada and Ballistic Missile Defence, 1954-2009: Déjà Vu All Over Again* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 10, 15-65.

<sup>697</sup> Joanna Bourke, *An Intimate History of Killing: Face-to-Face Killing in Twentieth-Century Warfare* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 330-31.

as combatants in the not too distant future, exclaiming that “[i]nitial phases of war might be fought by high level strategists and button-pushing wrens!”<sup>698</sup> Given the MMS (M)’s anti-combat stance, it is not surprising that did not discuss this possibility. The study reinforced the gendered binary of male combatant and female non-combatant.

The MMS (M) presented their case for military women’s continued employment along traditional gender lines. Uniformed women should be retained indefinitely, they reasoned, because women’s “inherent” abilities made them better suited for certain jobs. Trades were sorted into three general occupation groups on the basis of the presumed desirability of uniformed female employees: “essential,” “preferred,” and “equally suitable” employees. Tellingly, only two trades (nursing assistant and flight attendant) fell into the first category, while the third category contained fourteen. Seven trades were placed in the second category.<sup>699</sup>

Senior servicewomen had previously envisioned different classification systems. Based on her script for a January 1963 briefing to personnel planners, Dalton implied that only archaic thinkers would restrict women to what she called “Florence Nightingale Trades.” Florence Nightingale Trades were defined as medical assistant, dental assistant and flight attendant. Dalton did not question women’s exclusion from combat. Nevertheless, she implied that, if the air force truly wanted to be a modern service, it should normalize women staffing radar scopes, typewriters, and adding machines. In other words, she reacted to the reducing numbers of female trades and advocated that

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<sup>698</sup> “RCN Wren Policy and Planning, August 1954- July, 1957, A review,” 13, DHH, 75/553.

<sup>699</sup> MMS (M), “Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force,” para 33-36.

these jobs should remain open to women. Under the MMS (M)'s system, women were the "preferred" fighter controller operator (radar) and communications-message center clerks, and "equally suitable" dental assistants, medical assistants, pay clerks, and administrative clerks.<sup>700</sup>

The MMS (M) acknowledged that their trade classification was limited, but insisted that economics must guide the trades open for future servicewomen. They stated that women could be trained to perform most service jobs. However, they agreed with Cabinet's 1951 employment planning principles, which are outlined in Chapter Four. These principles stated that servicewomen could not be employed in combat and that servicewomen could not take away jobs from civilians. The MMS (M) stressed that servicewomen should only be used when they were the more feasible or affordable option. Moral grounds gave way to costs considerations.<sup>701</sup>

### **"Profitability and usefully employed"**

"Profitability and usefully employed" and related phrases frequently appear within the report. These principles guide much of the MMS (M)'s discussion. These priorities make sense, given Defence Minister Paul Hellyer's emphasis on removing inefficiencies, cutting costs, and a public that was largely unconcerned with the armed services' wishes. Historian Desmond Morton argues that the Canadian public was largely uninterested in matters of defence and paid little attention to the advice of senior military officials. Although events such as the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis generated media

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<sup>700</sup> Dalton, A/WP, AMP Briefing, 22 January 1963, 6; and MMS (M), "Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force," para 33-6.

<sup>701</sup> MMS (M), "Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force," para 32-6.

coverage and momentarily turned Canadians' attention to defence policy, these were exceptions to the rule, in Morton's assessment. His analysis is limited by the fact he pays little attention to VOW and other peace activists.<sup>702</sup>

The MMS (M) legitimized servicewomen's retention by dismissing arguments that painted servicewomen as cumbersome employees. They directly confronted the widespread complaint that servicewomen "cause a heavy additional administrative burden and that they are more expensive than men."<sup>703</sup> Although the MMS (M) stated that military women's "peculiar and unique administrative requirements" warranted female officers and NCOs in the regular forces, they insisted there was an easy solution. Female officers and NCOs could perform this role "as a secondary duty."<sup>704</sup> The MMS (M) did not see women's need for female oversight as a serious problem.

In January 1963, however, Squadron Leader Dalton had informed male officers in personnel planning that female officers had a heavy work load. Female officers not only possessed the same trade qualifications and performed the same work as male colleagues within the trade, but also had to serve as "house mothers" to the airwomen. Policy dictated that a female officer must be assigned to every unit with airwomen. On rare occasions, female officers who worked in the administrative trades escaped these duties, which Dalton stated was a welcome break. Furthermore, Dalton complained that the policy harmed women's careers. Skilled female administrative officers had been

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<sup>702</sup> MMS (M), "Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force," para 33; Desmond Morton, *Canada and War: A Military and Political History* (Toronto: Butterworths, 1981), 173-86; and Morton, *A Military History of Canada*, 239-54.

<sup>703</sup> MMS (M), "Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force," para 37. See also Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 105-10.

<sup>704</sup> MMS (M), "Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force," para 43.

prevented from assuming more senior administrative positions because they were needed at units.<sup>705</sup> Despite her critiques, Dalton had concurred with female and male officers that only women could efficiently administer other women. In July 1960 briefing to male officers in the personnel branch, she had stated that RCAF provided female NCOs with specialized training because there were “little problems best discussed with another woman.” Dalton also claimed that only servicewomen could teach other servicewomen how to become military personnel “without sacrificing their feminine identity...” A Second World War veteran, Dalton repeated wartime female officers’ arguments for female authority in the 1946 reports on the women’s services, but neither Dalton’s briefing nor the 1946 reports are referenced in the MMS (M)’s bibliography.<sup>706</sup>

The MMS (M) dismissed the argument that women cost more to house by pointing out quick solutions. For example, the MMS (M) conceded that, when servicewomen were first posted to places that lacked female accommodation, it cost money to renovate barracks designed for men. However, this was a “minor expense.” The MMS (M) advised that the problem could be easily avoided with the adoption of the RCAF’s current practice of mandating a “minimum number of women” per base. This

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<sup>705</sup> Dalton, AMP Briefing 22 Jan 1963, 4-5, 7.

<sup>706</sup> Dalton, Briefing for AMP Directors, 13, July 1960, 3. For other examples of senior servicewomen who carved out space for female officers by stressing that servicewomen were needed to supervise and discipline other women, see Memorandum from Commander(W) RCN (R), Isabel Macneill, Staff Officer (Wrens) to DCNP, 28 Jan 1955; Library and Archives Canada (Hereafter LAC), RG 112-616-8-E, vol. 34266, file 4360-909/100, pt. 1; Minute sheet by DCNP to SO (W) re RCN (W) Complement organization, 31 January 1955, attached to Memorandum from Macneill to DCNP, 28 Jan 1955, LAC, RG 112-616-8-E, vol. 34266, file 4360-909/100, pt. 1; RCN Wren Officers, May 1956; Executive Officers (W), LAC, RG 112-616-8-E, vol. 34266, file 4360-909/100, pt. 1; Memorandum to DP (O) from Commander (W) Isabel Macneill, SO (W), 30 April 1956, LAC, RG 112-616-8-E, vol. 34266, file 4360-909/100, pt. 1.

practice would stabilize the required number of renovations and thus costs.<sup>707</sup>

Furthermore, the MMS (M) emphatically declared that most defence officials were misinformed about women's housing costs. Most assessments, the study said, only compared the long-term accommodation costs of single men and single women. The MMS (M) asserted that these costs were roughly comparable. They referenced a reoccurring argument when they insisted that assessors typically failed to factor in the married male population, whose dependents generated additional costs, such as housing and education. Officers who supported the retention of servicewomen repeatedly compared the costs of single women versus married men, and updated a wartime narrative that servicewomen were a cheaper labour force.<sup>708</sup>

Once again, Dalton had predicted several of the points the MMS (M) used to rebut the objection that servicewomen cost more than men. In her January 1963 briefing to senior officers in the personnel branch, Dalton had urged colleagues to reconsider their quick judgements that airwomen posed a "financial burden to the RCAF." Through a series of rhetorical questions that stressed airwomen's insider knowledge, Dalton emphasized why it was so offensive to tell servicewomen they were expendable because they were too expensive. For instance, she queried, "Dare I tell an airwoman in the Supply Section it is costly to have one refrigerator and one stove in the AWs [Airwomen's] quarters for forty or more girls, when that same airwoman keeps stock records of the hundreds of frigs [sic] and stoves for PMQs?" Permanent married quarters

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<sup>707</sup> MMS (M), "Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force," para 38-9. The quoted phrase comes from paragraph 38.

<sup>708</sup> MMS (M), "Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force," para 38-9. The quoted phrase comes from paragraph 38.

(PMQs) housed married male soldiers and their dependents. Dalton further pressed her colleagues to treat air force women fairly because she claimed that it was the efforts of air force officials, and not a concerted lobbying from women, that had led to women's re-entrance.<sup>709</sup> Unlike Dalton, the MMS (M) rarely approached the issue from the women's perspective and devoted little space to the armed services' responsibilities to servicewomen. These differences reflect that Dalton's role was to mediate between the RCAF and the services, while the MMS (M)'s priority was to determine the armed services' female manpower needs.<sup>710</sup>

The claims that women had lower housing costs were predicated on the assumption that the typical servicewoman was single. Neither Dalton nor the MMS (M) had a corresponding discussion about the costs of housing married servicewomen's families. This demonstrates the belief that married women with dependents did not belong in the regular forces. Professional servicewomen and motherhood remained incompatible, though, as will be discussed below, an awareness existed that some part-time servicewomen combined military service with familial responsibilities.

The MMS (M)'s proposition that single servicewomen would offset some of the costs of married servicemen represents a twist on an old debate. Senior officials had quarrelled over the place of married men in the armed forces in the 1950s. For some officials, wives and families were liabilities because they caused additional costs, posed

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<sup>709</sup> MMS (M), "Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force," para 37; Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 106; and Dalton, AMP Briefing, 22 January 1963, 5-6. The phrase "financial burden to the RCAF" is found on Dalton, 6. The other quotation comes from Dalton, 5.

<sup>710</sup> MMS (M), "Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force," para 38-9. The quoted phrase comes from paragraph 38.

unnecessary distractions, and prevented men from being fully loyal to their units. Officers, especially those in the RCAF with its greater need for technical skills, insisted that personnel policies geared towards families kept valuable, trained, experienced personnel dedicated to a volunteer-based force. Married men became a larger part of the service population. Larger numbers of married men remained in the armed services because more resources were directed towards families. Personnel costs increased because marriage, additional training, time-served, and children entitled a serviceman to more pay and/or allowances. Military historian Isabel Campbell reports that “pay and allowances went from \$139, 110, 000 in the fiscal year 1955-56 to \$206, 365,883 in the fiscal year 1963-64.”<sup>711</sup> Supporting men’s families had become a significant expense. The MMS (M) proposed the retention of women as a way to ease this financial burden. They turned an argument used by opponents into a benefit that fit with the Minister’s budget cutting priorities.

### **Marriage and Sexuality**

By the 1960s, marriage did not automatically put an end to women’s military service, but restrictions remained. Married servicewomen had uneven benefits. Women who married while in uniform were classified as single for the purposes of pay and allowances.<sup>712</sup> Recruitment pamphlets from the late 1950s and 1960s offered mixed messages. For example, *Today’s Airwomen* insisted that an air force career provided women with pensions, but celebrated that most airwomen chose marriage as their career.

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<sup>711</sup> Campbell, *Unlikely Diplomats*, 120-43. The quotation comes from page 136.

<sup>712</sup> Lieutenant-Commander Constance Ogilvy, SO (Wrens), 25 October 1965, attached to Inter-Service Pay Committee, Supporting Data to Personnel Members Committee, Canadian Forces Superannuation Act-Disparity in Benefits, October 1963, DHH, DWP, 90/447, file 3.

This is not to suggest that all servicewomen were forced out. Some Canadian women embraced a temporary or permanent role outside the labour forces as wives and mothers. But others remained in the military after marriage and, as discussed in the previous chapter, air force regulations changed in the mid-1950s to permit the formation of service couples.<sup>713</sup>

The MMS (M) created a limited place for married women. They advised maintenance of the ban on the enlistment of married women but confirmed that uniformed woman who gets married should be allowed to “remain in the service if she so wishes, and if her retention does not interfere with her employment.” The MMS (M) alluded to the unique challenges of service couples when they briefly advised that service couples should be posted together whenever feasible. The armed services reserved the right, as it did with male personnel, to post single or married women where needed.<sup>714</sup>

These restrictions reflected the fact that some military officers had labelled married women difficult employees. Worth quoting at length, a 1961 message from Army Western Command in characteristic military language reflects some of the assumed challenges of engaging women in the Canadian Army (Regular) [CA (R)]:

Is it intent that CWAC Advisors be subject to inter command [sic] postings [?] If this is not the intent then suggest these appointments be restricted to single pers. In cases of married CWAC whose

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<sup>713</sup> Ogilvy, SO (Wrens), 25 October 1965, attached to Inter-Service Pay Committee, Supporting Data to Personnel Members Committee, Canadian Forces Superannuation Act- Disparity in Benefits; *Today's Airwomen...in the R.C.A.F.* (Ottawa: Queens Printer, 1957), DHH, 79/208, folder 2; Valerie J. Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs : Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 302-6, 324-36; Brookfield, *Cold War Comforts*, 11-12, 73-96, 131-159, and Power, “‘With Their Feet on the Ground’: Women’s Lives and Work in the Royal Canadian Air Force, 1951-1966,” 65-68, 71-80.

<sup>714</sup> MMS (M), “Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force,” para 66.

husbands arr[sic] moved in their civilian job, as very frequently occurs, then the problem of mov [sic] of CWAC Offr would arise. As a CA(R) Offr there would be no right to insist on a posting to be with husband and the alternative would appear to be an unhappy marriage or release with resultant administration and financial loss to the army.<sup>715</sup>

The advice reinforced the societal expectation that the husbands' career came first and the nuclear male breadwinner was the family ideal. Reserving certain positions for single women, Army Western Command implied, would avoid forcing women to choose between the male-dominated military and their husbands.

Military officers upheld male privilege even as they admitted that the married servicewomen existed. The Army Western Command supported male privilege when it suggested that marriage should exclude women from certain jobs. Yet, it explicitly admitted that the military half of a heterosexual couple could be female. Similarly, the MMS (M) stated that women must be single in order to gain access but at the same time, confirmed that marriage was not sufficient reason to discharge women.

Government and military officials had also reaffirmed heterosexual privilege. Officials argued that homosexual military personnel's sexual preferences made them a security risk. The armed services participated in the purging of sexual "deviants" in the Cold War.<sup>716</sup> Cheryl, who enlisted in the RCAF in 1959, relates that one day "the female officer... called us all together and vowed to us that if we wanted to be kicked out of the

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<sup>715</sup> Message from WesCom to RAEHC/CANARMY, 7 December 1961, DHH, 327.009 (D430).

<sup>716</sup> Gary Kinsman and Patrizia Gentile, *The Canadian War on Queers: National Security as Sexual Regulation* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 53-144.

RCAF, then all we had to do was tell them that we were homosexuals.”<sup>717</sup> Scholars Gary Kinsman, Patrizia Gentile and Cameron Duder have shown that queer military personnel see their service in the Cold War as a time of both pleasure and danger. They note that the armed services provided women economic independence, offered alternatives to heterosexual families, and allowed women to escape from abusive relationships. Officials enforced gender-segregated housing in an effort to prevent heterosexual “immorality,” which helped queer service folk find like-minded people.<sup>718</sup> As Duder argues, military service enabled some lesbian servicewomen to develop “long-lasting communit[ies].”<sup>719</sup> Yet, many women paid a personal price for being a lesbian in the armed services. Yvette described the difficulty and toll of having a secret relationship. She learned from a colleague that another servicewoman spread rumours that she was a lesbian, and eventually she was forced to see a psychiatrist after she expressed her frustration by smashing her coffee cup in the infirmary where she worked. The armed forces discharged Yvette on medical grounds in the late 1950s. Other women, like Cheryl, were pressured to accept a voluntary discharge. When the RCAF was unable to prove her homosexuality, they threatened that Cheryl, her partner, and her friends would be barred from promotion and would be posted to the “worst stations.”<sup>720</sup>

Although the armed services watched for homosexuality, the MMS (M) only

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<sup>717</sup> Cameron Duder, *Awfully Devoted Women: Lesbian Lives in Canada, 1900-65* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 255.

<sup>718</sup> Kinsman and Gentile, *The Canadian War on Queers*, 15-16, 27-110, 119, 128-130, 191-3; Power, “‘With Their Feet on the Ground’: Women’s Lives and Work in the Royal Canadian Air Force, 1951-1966,” 67-70; and Duder, *Awfully Devoted Women*, 220-21, 250-9.

<sup>719</sup> Duder, *Awfully Devoted Women*, 259.

<sup>720</sup> Kinsman and Gentile, *The Canadian War on Queers*, 129-30; and Duder, *Awfully Devoted Women*, 258.

discussed certain types of relationships in particular ways. There was no mention of non-heterosexual relationships. Similarly, there was no consideration of paying for servicewomen's dependents. The terms "service wives" and "service couple" appear in the MMS (M)'s report on women, but the term "service husband" does not. The MMS (M) revealed its priorities through its silences.

### **The Price of Pregnancy**

In 1960 Dalton had reported that military administrators faced the misplaced concern that there were "continuous problems of pregnancy, lesbianism, prostitution, and rape."<sup>721</sup> She quickly pointed out that though, such cases occurred, they were few in number and efficiently handled. In addition, she stated that the RCAF had kept its rates of pregnancy low in the last three years because it provided adequate health education to servicewomen. Although she identified four different welfare and medical issues, her discussion focused on pregnancy.

The MMS (M) narrowed the discussion even further. They insisted that, "of the various alleged welfare problems," only illegitimate pregnancy "was worthy of record." Perhaps the other issues that Dalton mentioned were too sensitive to risk writing them down in a policy setting document.<sup>722</sup> Reinforcing male privilege, the MMS (M) ignored the human costs of peacetime pregnancy policy and ignored the fact that women assumed most of these costs. In line with policies in the civilian work force, servicewomen who became pregnant had to leave the service. There was not an equivalent policy when men

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<sup>721</sup> Dalton, Briefing for AMP Directors, 13, July 1960, 6.

<sup>722</sup> MMS (M), "Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force," para 40.

fathered a child. Lieutenant-Commander (retired) Karen Davis writes that she interviewed a Wren who bitterly remembered being discharged in the 1950s when her pregnancy made her “medically unfit.” Her label of “medically unfit” disqualified this peacetime Wren from her naval job and from unemployment benefits. Pregnant women were only allowed to stay in after the RCSW. The MMS (M) failed to acknowledge that pregnancy policy might contributed to women’s higher attrition rate, which will be discussed below.<sup>723</sup>

Only the financial costs of “illegitimate” pregnancy appeared in the MMS (M)’s report. According to the MMS (M), the medical bills for unmarried pregnant servicewomen cost the RCAF “\$45 000 to \$50 000” per year from 1960 to 1962. Some cases had extra costs. Servicewomen who had served more than three years received Cash Termination Allowances. The MMS (M) did not specify how much the armed forces had paid out in Cash Termination Allowances.<sup>724</sup> A Cash Termination Allowance was “one month’s pay and allowances for each year of service.” In 1965, women initially enlisted in the RCAF for a period of three to five years.<sup>725</sup> The application of this allowance rewarded women who had proven their commitment but had become “unfit” for further service.

One would hardly know it from the MMS (M)’s paper, but unmarried pregnant

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<sup>723</sup> Sangster, *Transforming labor: Women and Work in Postwar Canada*, 189-197; Karen D. Davis, “Once a Wren, Always a Wren: The Experience and Contribution of Canada’s Wrens, 1942-2010,” in *Transforming Traditions*, 13; and Muriel Stanley Venue, ed., *Our Women in Uniform* (Calgary: Bunker to Bunker Publishing, 2004), 45.

<sup>724</sup> MMS (M), “Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force,” para 40.

<sup>725</sup> Inter-Service Pay Committee, Supporting Data to Personnel Members Committee, Committee re Canadian Forces Superannuation Act-Disparity in Benefits, October 1963, para 2; and MMS (M), “Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force,” para 67.

servicewomen's continued entitlement to Cash Termination Allowances was controversial. The Inter-Service Pay Committee (ISPC) had proposed changes in what they called a "disparity in benefits" in 1963. An annotated copy of their submission resides in the Directorate of Women Personnel Fonds at DND's Directorate of History and Heritage.<sup>726</sup> The Treasury Board had ruled in 1960 that a servicewoman discharged because of pregnancy was disqualified from Cash Termination Allowances. She was, however, entitled to her pension contributions, provided she had "more than 3 but less than 10 years Regular Force Service..." Why the ten year limit? What would have happened for those who served past the ten year benchmark? The ISPC admitted it had no answer for the second question and did not ask the first.<sup>727</sup>

An unmarried pregnant airwoman who had over ten years of service in the regular air force prompted the revisiting of the issue in 1962. She was awarded "an annuity" after parties such as the Treasury Board, the Service Pension Board, and the Chief of the Air Staff discussed the matter extensively. The Service Pension Board subsequently set policy. The ISPC wrote that the Service Pension Board followed "Service policy that no stigma be attached to this type of release" and declared that unmarried pregnant women would fall under the category of "compulsory retirement to promote economy and efficiency being considered unsuitable for reasons other than misconduct, inefficiency or medical unfitness." After this decision, servicewomen who had "more than 3 but less

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<sup>726</sup> This discussion closely follows the ISPC's submission.

<sup>727</sup> Inter-Service Pay Committee, Supporting Data to Personnel Members Committee, para 2.

than 10 years” received Cash Termination Allowances.<sup>728</sup>

The shifting policy about Cash Termination Allowances was part of larger changes in provincial and federal governmental assistance to unmarried mothers. Unwed mothers who had looked after their children for a minimum of two years became entitled to the Ontario Mother’s Allowance in 1956. Scholar Margaret Jane Hillyard Little states that the decision to grant unwed mothers access was controversial and came after a concerted lobby effort that started in 1943. The Ontario Department of Public Welfare justified the changes by arguing that it was in the best interests of the child who did not deserve to be penalized for his/her mother’s actions. In 1956, the Nova Scotian government added “common-law widows and deserted wives” to the category of unmarried women who qualified for provincial assistance. Historian Suzanne Morton writes that, by 1961, provincial bureaucrats had expanded the pool of qualified applicants. Provincial bureaucrats had come to support payments to single mothers who met the following criteria: over eighteen, headed their own respectable home, and had attempted to ask the father for support. The shift was not implemented until 1966, when the federal Canadian Assistance Plan was introduced. The Canada Assistance Plan had federal cost sharing measures that encouraged Nova Scotia to extend payments to women who met the criteria that Morton described. Federal politicians had political support for policies designed to reduce poverty. Canadians came to see poverty rates as a national crisis towards the second half of the 1960s. Single mothers were among those who were

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<sup>728</sup> Inter-Service Pay Committee, Supporting Data to Personnel Members Committee, para 3.

now viewed as the victims of poverty.<sup>729</sup>

Attitudes changed slowly. Bureaucrats continued to depict single women as problematic mothers. Little argues that “unwed mothers became the scapegoats for much of th[e] societal turmoil around moral standards,” premarital sex, and even higher taxes. Social workers, medical professionals, and the Ontario Children Aid’s Society agreed with the position taken by Dr. Marion Hilliard, the chief of gynecology and obstetrics at Toronto’s Women’s College Hospital. Hilliard saw adoption as a fit punishment for an unwed mother.<sup>730</sup>

The ISPC also had trouble with unmarried pregnant servicewomen. The ISPC held that it was unjust that only unmarried pregnant servicewomen received Cash Termination Allowances. Single women who left for marriage and married servicewomen who left when they became pregnant were classified as “voluntary retirements.” The Canadian Forces Superannuation Act (CFSA) stipulated that voluntary retirements were entitled only to what they had paid into the pension plan. The ISPC used the case of the airwomen released after ten years to demonstrate the financial consequences of the current policy. The ISPC noted that if she had been discharged for marriage, she would have been entitled to \$1,950. Instead, this woman qualified for an

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<sup>729</sup> Suzanne Morton, “Managing the Unmarried Mother ‘Problem’: Halifax Maternity Homes,” in *Mothers of the Municipality: Women, Work, and Social Policy in Post-1945 Halifax*, ed. Judith Fingard and Janet Guilford (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 110-115; Jeanne Fay, “The ‘Right Kind’ of Single Mothers: Nova Scotia’s Regulation of Women on Social Assistance, 1956-1977,” in *Mothers of the Municipality*, 141-53; Margaret Jane Hilliard Little, “No Car, No Radio, No Liquor Permit”: *The Moral Regulation of Single Mothers in Ontario, 1920-1997* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1998): 120-3; 135-149, and Lori Chambers, *Misconceptions: Unmarried Motherhood and the Ontario Children of Unmarried Parents Act, 1921-1969* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, on behalf of the Osgoode Society for Legal History, 2007), 85-111, 130-135, 160-6. The quotation comes from Fay, 143.

<sup>730</sup> Little, “No Car, No Radio, No Liquor Permit,” 135. Hilliard contributed to *Chatelaine*, see Korineck, *Roughing it in the Suburbs*, 76, 109, 268, 272-5, 295-300, 306, 333, 370.

“annual pension...[with] a capitalized value of \$12,015.” For the anonymous commentator, these were two distinct cases. The commentator thought it was appropriate that married women were entitled to less because “it is a husband’s responsibility to look after his wife.”<sup>731</sup> The commentator invoked the male breadwinner model: a married woman did not need a pension because her husband was supposed to provide for her, while the unmarried airwoman needed the financial help.

The ISPC presented two ways to amend the CFSA: either delete women released for marriage from the voluntary classification, or add pregnancy to the list of voluntary retirements under the CFSA. The ISPC supported the latter option to the utter dismay of an anonymous commentator. The commentator wrote “ABSOLUTELY NO!” beside the ISPC’s suggestion that the armed services should immediately introduce a policy that would see female pregnancy releases be placed into the voluntary category. “No” was underlined twice.<sup>732</sup>

The anonymous commentator was likely Lieutenant-Commander Constance Eileen Ogilvy, the Staff Officer (WRNS) [SO (W)]. Her opposition to the ISPC’s 1963 proposal resides in the same file. Ogilvy explicitly referenced the paragraph that had the “Absolutely No” written beside it in her statement. She concluded that the current system, “which differentiates between the female member released because of marriage as opposed to the female member released because of pregnancy is, in my opinion, just and fair and should be continued.” Unlike the ISPC, Ogilvy did not differentiate between

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<sup>731</sup> Inter-Service Pay Committee, Supporting Data to Personnel Members Committee, para 4.

<sup>732</sup> Inter-Service Pay Committee, Supporting Data to Personnel Members Committee, para 5-7. The “Absolutely No” is beside para 7. Emphasis in original.

types of pregnancy. She insisted that married and single women released for pregnancy should be treated in the same way. The reason was that, if the navy approved a servicewoman's application to remain in after she married, then the navy took on her possible pregnancy as an "accept[able]... risk." Furthermore, Ogilvy presented a different cost assessment. She explained that servicewomen released because of pregnancy only qualified for a "reduced annuity" if they had served in the regular forces for over ten but less than twenty years. This, she insisted, was an infrequent event. There had been one case in the last twelve years. She doubted that there would be many future cases because most women had short stays.<sup>733</sup>

While the MMS (M) acknowledged "illegitimate" pregnancy as a valid issue in 1965, it attempted to mitigate concerns. They did so when they asserted that servicewomen were well-behaved women with exceptional characters. Moreover, the financial loss was offset by what they portrayed as the real welfare factor: uniformed women's potential as civilizing and morale boosting agents. The MMS (M) argued that the entire Canadian armed services stood to benefit because some unit commanders had witnessed the "improved stability, morale and conduct of all personnel where women have been stationed." In addition, the armed services would benefit because military personnel typically married one another. Servicewomen who became service wives reportedly reduced marriage problems because made they made better wives than civilian women as they personally understood the demands of military service and eased their

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<sup>733</sup> Lieutenant-Commander Constance Ogilvy, SO (Wrens), 25 October 1965, attached to Inter-Service Pay Committee, Supporting Data to Personnel Members Committee.

husbands' transition from single service life to married service life. The report lacked a similar discussion for servicewomen. The uneven discussion reaffirmed heterosexual male privilege and male norms in the military.<sup>734</sup>

Also absent from the MMS (M)'s report on women was sustained dialogue on how financial considerations and protection of the services' reputation went hand-in-hand. The debate among naval officers over the urinalysis pregnancy tests offers a prime example of this interconnection. Initially, the urine test occurred in the final stages of the recruitment process. The navy wanted proof a female recruit was not pregnant before she was fully enrolled. In 1955, Commander Isabel Macneill had pressed for the introduction of pregnancy testing. In 1957, Lieutenant-Commander Jean Crawford-Smith, wartime veteran and Macneill's successor as SO (W), had urged delaying the test.<sup>735</sup> She proposed that the test be administered once the recruit reached Cornwallis, the naval training centre in Nova Scotia. Both Macneill and Crawford-Smith received the enthusiastic support of Surgeon Commodore E.H. Lee, who in his role as the navy's Medical Director General

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<sup>734</sup> MMS (M), "Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force," para 41.

<sup>735</sup> Lieutenant-Commander Jean Crawford-Smith served in all the versions of the Wrens from its inception in the Second World War to its re-entrance in the reserves and to the regular forces. Career highlights for Crawford-Smith include her being the first Lt-Commander in the regular force navy, and the first Canadian female naval officer to be appointed to the US Navy. During her time in the US, she served first at the United States Naval Training Center, Bainbridge, in Maryland and then at the Bureau for Naval Personnel in Washington. Crawford-Smith never married and retired from the navy in 1965. This account is drawn primarily from newspapers, see "New Positions for Officers," *Globe and Mail*, April 17, 1957; Canadian Press, "Organized RCN Wrens, Cmdr. Macneill to Retire," *Globe and Mail*, July 23, 1957; American Press, "U.S. Post to Canadian," *The Spokesman-Review*, August 18, 1961; Winzola McLendon, The Service Set "Dry Launchings for Army Chiefs: on the Calender," *Washington Post*, February 10, 1963; Jean Brunton, The Social World, *The Globe and Mail*, February 28, 1963; and Crawford-Smith, Jean Oswald, Lt. Com. (Ret.), obituary, *Toronto Star*, November 16, 1996.

(MDG) [1952-1958] oversaw the implementation and elimination of the test.<sup>736</sup>

Macneill applied wartime thinking when she presented pregnancy testing as an indispensable safeguard. She stated that Canadian society had an “illegitimate pregnancy” crisis, and the navy needed to take all necessary precautions. Male and female officers had blamed wartime illegitimate pregnancy on poor screening procedures. Pregnancy was viewed as proof of wartime servicewomen’s immorality and of the armed services’ failure to protect its charges. Testing all female applicants would protect the peacetime navy from single women with impure motives. She strongly advised the MDG that “the fact that single women who believe they may be pregnant might join the services to get away from home must be accepted.” Macneill compensated for the fact she had no records from the reserve Wrens called out for active duty over the last three years with the statement that there “several cases were discharged from Cornwallis....” Her desire to safeguard the navy’s reputation overcame her evidence.<sup>737</sup>

Macneill provided stronger support for her financial argument. She argued that it was cheaper to test all applicants than it was to pay the price of discovering that a recruit was pregnant. Macneill reported that Canadian taxpayers paid over \$2000 to train a female recruit. In contrast, the navy would pay five dollars per test. Since Macneill

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<sup>736</sup> “Canadian Military Medical Services, Senior Appointments, 1884-2012,” Royal Canadian Medical Service Association, accessed January 28, 2016, <http://www.royalcdnmedicalsvc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Military-Medical-Services-Senior-Appointments-1884-2012.pdf>; Memorandum from Lieutenant Commander (W), RCN, Jean Crawford-Smith, RCN, to Medical Director General, 13 December 1957, LAC, R112-616-8-E, vol. 34245; Memorandum from Surgeon Commodore E.H.Lee, Medical Director General, Royal Canadian Navy to Staff Officer (Wrens), 23 December 1957, LAC, R112-616-8-E, vol. 34245; Memorandum from Commander (W) RCN Isabel J. Macneill, Staff Officer (Wrens) to Medical Director General, 18 March 1955, LAC, R112-616-8-E, vol. 34245.

<sup>737</sup> Memorandum from Commander (W) RCN Isabel J. Macneill, Staff Officer (Wrens) to Medical Director General, 18 March 1955.

estimated that 80 women would need the test, the financial burden would have been significantly less at \$400. Macneill did not calculate the price of implementation. Nevertheless, the calculation was a simple one and her intended audience, the MDG, heard her spoken and unspoken messages. He wrote at the bottom of her proposal that “I think this is a good idea[.] Number is limited [and] cost negligible considering cost of one mistake....”<sup>738</sup> The MDG shared Macneill’s opinion of the test.

The test, however, ended up being the mistake. Crawford Smith noted several cases where false “positives” with the first test caused recruits and their parents emotional turmoil. A second test then showed that the women were not pregnant. False results created negative impressions, which would have been troubling in light of other sources that indicate that not all parents supported their daughters’ decision to join the navy. Recruitment advertisements from 1957 specified that a recruit had to be single and no more than 30 years old in order to access a naval career. False negatives generated problems too. Some female applicants had avoided detection because of false negatives. Crawford-Smith explained that two women had been discharged for pregnancy since women had been admitted into the regular navy. One of these women passed her first pregnancy test and was only found to be pregnant when she was tested again at Cornwallis. Crawford-Smith wanted the testing done at Cornwallis because the navy literally and figuratively paid when false results led to a second test. The navy lost money

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<sup>738</sup> Memorandum from Commander (W) RCN Isabel J. Macneill, to MDG, 19 March 1955; Staff Officer (Wrens) to Medical Director General, 18 March 1955; and Pierson, “*They’re Still Women After All*,” 177-80. Lee’s comments appear at the bottom of the memorandum as part of back and forth between him and the D/MDG.

when it paid twice, and the false test harmed the navy's public image.<sup>739</sup>

Unlike Macneill who insisted that one case was one too many, Crawford-Smith concluded that low numbers provided insufficient justification for an expensive program. She explained that the navy paid anywhere from \$5.00 to \$10.00 per test, and estimated it would administer 250 tests. Based on her figures, the navy would have spent anywhere from \$1, 250 to \$2, 500 dollars on pregnancy testing. Ultimately, her line of thinking won the day. In 1958, the Chief of Naval Personnel, Rear Admiral R.L. Dyer, submitted a request to the Naval Secretary to remove pregnancy testing from the screening process. Dyer justified the removal because the test was imperfect, embarrassed both the individual and the service, and slowed down the recruitment process. The Naval Secretary approved.<sup>740</sup>

The MMS (M) had a very limited discussion on the price of women's (im)morality. It acknowledged and then dismissed the question of "illegitimate" pregnancy. Even then, the MMS (M) did not cover all aspects of this complicated matter. There was no consideration given to how pregnancy policies affected individual women. There was no hint of any debate on how to handle pregnancy testing or the payment of Cash Termination Allowances. It is also hard to tell just how many women were released for pregnancy because the MMS (M) did not cover the reasons why women left in its

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<sup>739</sup>Memorandum from Lieutenant Commander (W) RCN Jean Crawford-Smith to Medical Director General, 13 December 1957; Auger (van Stelten), "The Good, The Bad, and The Royal: The Challenges and Opportunities of Being a Wren," 38; and "A Career for Women in Canada's Navy," *Globe and Mail*, May 9, 1957.

<sup>740</sup>Memorandum from Rear Admiral R.L. Dyer, Chief of Naval Personnel to the Naval Secretary requesting approval for promulgation of BRCN 502(51), Urinalysis for Detection of Pregnancy-Female Applicants re Pregnancy Tests, 6 January 1958, LAC, R112-616-8-E, vol. 34245; Memorandum from Lieutenant Commander (W), RCN Jean Crawford-Smith to Medical Director General, 13 December 1957.

discussion of the financial consequences of women's turnover rate.

### **The Cost-Analysis of Attrition**

Critics had alleged that servicewomen cost more to train. The MMS (M) reported that some defence officials had claimed that “women cost five times as much as men” because airwomen had a fivefold “high[er] rate of attrition...in certain trades in the RCAF...” The MMS (M) validated the training cost argument when they acknowledged attrition rates as the “single most impressive” objection to the employment of servicewomen. It took time for workers to become efficient at job-related tasks after they completed training.<sup>741</sup> Since women stayed in for shorter periods, they spent less time as productive members. That meant the armed services received a smaller return on their investment.

The MMS (M) tried to weaken the objection. They insisted that it was futile to calculate whether or not servicewomen cost more in trades where women were essential. In these trades, the armed services had little choice but to pay the price. In addition, they maintained that training costs constituted only a small fraction of the total “investment in the individual.” Accurate cost comparisons, they insisted, must also incorporate the fact that the average woman incurred fewer costs in her short stay than the average man. While an average man served longer, his service had a hefty price tag. Since the average man had more years of service, he was usually entitled to a higher pension. Many career servicemen were married, which produced associated dependents' expenses.<sup>742</sup>

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<sup>741</sup> MMS (M), “Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force,” para 44.

<sup>742</sup> MMS (M), “Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force,” para 44.

Nevertheless, the MMS (M) did not entirely dismiss attrition-related costs in their final assessment. They concluded that the air force's decision to exclude women from trades with lengthy training times was financially sound. The MMS (M) implied that they accepted that attrition was inevitable because they did not question why women left. There was no suggestion that women left because they were primarily restricted to low skill trades. There was no recommendation to change pregnancy as grounds for discharge, and no consideration of maternity leave provisions.<sup>743</sup> The lack of maternity leave provisions fit in with civilian labour force trends. Joan Sangster contends that unions in the postwar period rarely prioritized maternity leave provisions in contract negotiations. Unions secured wins when they adopted round-about approaches, such as manipulating leave clauses, to fight grievances on behalf of women dismissed because of pregnancy.<sup>744</sup> Furthermore, the MMS (M)'s analysis of attrition related costs did not factor in how some women faced a hostile workplace culture.

Peacetime servicewomen have described military service as a challenging time. One potential interview participant decided not to be interviewed when she realized it would be too hard to relive old memories: the implication was that these memories were disturbing.<sup>745</sup> Retired Petty Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Class Rosalee Auger van Stelten describes a range of receptions that speak to the prejudices faced by women. She states that she was treated as "one of the boys" in one posting but was told that she required a male escort of

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<sup>743</sup> MMS (M), "Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force," para 44. For a questioning of earlier reports of attrition, see Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 102-4.

<sup>744</sup> MMS (M), "Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force," para 44; Sangster, *Transforming Labour*, 190-7.

<sup>745</sup> Personal communication with author 12 March 2015.

equivalent rank to enjoy a drink in the petty officer's mess in another. The requirement of a male escort evoked wartime links between alcohol, unescorted women, and promiscuity. Her experiences at a third posting illustrated the continued associations of military service and mannish women. She recalls that a date (a Reserve petty officer) informed her that his colleagues were curious if her armpits were hairy, which made her feel "like the girl in the goldfish bowl and [she] retreated accordingly."<sup>746</sup> Beauty standards defined underarm hair as an undesirable for women. Scholar Christine Hope writes that American advertisers began promoting underarm hair removal as fashionably feminine as early as 1915 and notes that "the literature on hair removal regularly expounds the belief that hairiness signifies masculinity and the lack of hair signifies femininity." Auger van Stelten's memories reflect the personal price that individual women paid because of the prejudices, and the possibility many women withdrew from the armed services rather than be subjected to this type of treatment. As stated above, social isolation influenced her decision to leave the navy in 1965. Attitudes and policies such as those that governed pregnancy created a series of obstacles, which helps explain why only a minority of women had service careers.<sup>747</sup>

Other veterans have testified to harassment from male colleagues and a sense of isolation. While quick to reassure readers that she had friendly relationships with male colleagues and their wives, Sergeant Vi Dudley-Mathiesen relates that "a few male

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<sup>746</sup> Auger (van Stelten), "The Good, The Bad, and The Royal: The Challenges and Opportunities of Being a Wren" 39.

<sup>747</sup> Christine Hope, "Caucasian Female Body Hair and American Culture," *Journal of American Culture* 5, no. 1 (1982): 93-9, and Jane Nicholas, *The Modern Girl: Feminine Modernities, the Body, and Commodities in the 1920s* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), 50, 73, 75, 115. The quotation comes from Hope, 98

members of the Mess were absolute ‘bahstads’ [sic] who made no bones of hating having women in the Service.” She recalled that these colleagues created a toxic atmosphere through insinuations about airwomen’s sexual morality that were designed to provoke her. The RCAF defended her in one case. One male NCO was forced to apologize for talking negatively about airwomen. Still, the bullying stayed with her and she expressed her lingering resentment in her memoir. The harassment combined with loneliness. Dudley-Mathiesen was a wartime veteran and so was older than many of the airwomen stationed in Metz, France. The generation gap was compounded by the fact that she, like Auger van Stelten, was a senior NCO. There was a small number of NCOs and Dudley-Mathiesen writes that she “only female Senior NCO at Metz,” which meant that she was often the only women in the Mess. She experienced panic attacks that she attributed to the isolation and harassment.<sup>748</sup>

Servicewomen felt intense pressure to prove that they were competent. A peacetime veteran expressed the sentiment that “a woman had to be twice as good as a man.”<sup>749</sup> She may have paraphrasing novelist Fannie Hurst who said, “A woman has to be twice as good as a man to go half as far,” or Canadian social worker and politician Charlotte Whitton who stated, “Whatever women do they must do twice as well as men to be thought half as good. Luckily this is not difficult.”<sup>750</sup> Both voiced a sentiment

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<sup>748</sup> Vi Dudley-Mathiesen, *Sweet ‘N’ Sour* (Sidney, BC: Family Compact, 1985), 185-188. The quotation comes from page 187.

<sup>749</sup> Interview with Jean Olynk (Haché), conducted by author, March 17, 2015.

<sup>750</sup> Fannie Hurst as quoted in Cheri Jacobus, Opinion, “Michele Bachmann and the Glass Ceiling of American Politics,” *The Guardian*, January 4, 2012, accessed February 18, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/cifamerica/2012/jan/04/michele-bachmann-glass-ceiling->

shared by generations of servicewomen who were the first women in a certain trade or rank.<sup>751</sup> Outnumbered by men, peacetime servicewomen experienced intense scrutiny as they demonstrated that women belonged in the armed services.

Official publications reinforced the tenuous nature of servicewomen's place in the armed services. Despite being full members of the Officer Mess, Wren officers were instructed in the *Canadian Navy Handbook for Wren Officers* (1962) that they should know when to leave in order to allow their male colleagues to have male bonding time.<sup>752</sup> Donald Wright argues in his work on the professionalization of history in English Canada that the exclusion of women from historical clubs reinforced the masculinization of the profession. Exclusion had serious consequences for women's careers because participants learned the "informal rules of academic culture" and networked.<sup>753</sup> Wright concludes that the examples of gender segregation "should be read as more than examples of sexism" because they "communicated another message – only young men are capable of doing

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[american-politics](#); and Charlotte Whitton, as quoted in Patricia Rooke and Rudolph L. Schnell, *No Bleeding Heart: Charlotte Whitton, A Feminist on the Right* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1987), 23.

<sup>751</sup> Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 112-124 134-6; and Leading Seaman (retired) Rose Tanchyk, "On Board HMCS Nipigon, 1989-1992: Living a Dream?" *Transforming Traditions*, 47-51.

<sup>752</sup> *Royal Canadian Navy Handbook for Wren Officers* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1962) 1-4, 10-1 copy at DHH, Wren Association of Toronto Fonds, 92/74, file 10. There are the initials JCS on the inside cover, which suggests it was distributed.

<sup>753</sup> Donald Wright, *The Professionalization of History in English Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 101. For other useful work on women's entrance into teaching and other professions, see Alison Prentice, "Laying Siege to the History Professoriate," in *Creating Historical Memory: English-Canadian Women and the Work of History*, ed. Beverly Boutilier and Alison Prentice (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997), 197-232; Deborah Gorham, "Making History: Women's History in Canadian Universities in the 1970s" in *Creating Historical Memory: English-Canadian Women and the Work of History*, ed. Beverly Boutilier and Alison Prentice (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997), 273-97; Mary Kinnear, *In Subordination: Professional Women, 1870-1970* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995); Ensslen and Corman, "Establishing Pathways for Woman in Education in Saskatchewan: Never-Married Women Career Teachers," 21-43; and Campbell, "'Are we going to do the most important things?' Senator Muriel McQueen Fergusson, Feminist Identities, and the Royal Commission on the Status of Women," 52-77.

history.”<sup>754</sup> The Wren Officer’s handbook reinforced the message that female military personnel were there on sufferance and only men were capable of doing full military service. It was an attempt to shore up military service as a masculine profession at the same time as some women devoted themselves to a military career.

The MMS (M) upheld military service as predominantly masculine in their discussion of attrition. Once again, masculine privilege emerges in the topics they left out and the way they framed their analysis. For example, MMS (M) did not offer solutions for the female attrition problem but advised how to minimize housing costs. Instead of solving the attrition problem, the MMS (M) reframed it as a benefit. Uniformed women’s higher attrition rate provided an almost effortless way to cut back on personnel. Senior military officers had learned that they were to discharge 10, 000 military personnel who worked as support staff at a November 1964 meeting. Fewer men had to be “forc[ibly] release[d]” when women were permitted to serve, the MMS (M) argued, because women left of their own volition. Words such as “naturally,” “easily,” and “more smooth” are sprinkled through this narrative and transform women’s attrition rate into an almost magical solution for those assigned the unenviable task of manpower planning.<sup>755</sup>

### **“Force Flexibility”**

Women’s higher attrition rates contributed to another reason for their retention: women “enhance[d] the flexibility of the armed forces....”<sup>756</sup> Women represented a ready

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<sup>754</sup> Wright, *The Professionalization of History in English Canada*, 102.

<sup>755</sup> MMS (M), “Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force,” para 44-52; Granatstein, *Canada 1957-1967*, 228, 351 n35; and J. L. Granatstein, *Canada’s Army: Waging War and Keeping the Piece*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), 356.

<sup>756</sup> MMS (M), “Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force,” para 49.

mobile reserve pool of labour who freed up men for other roles. The MMS (M) was quick to highlight that the services had successfully tested this strategy multiple times and confidently predicted that the armed services would successfully do so in the future in part.<sup>757</sup> Since, as the MMS (M) explained, servicewomen predominantly were single, they were easier and less expensive to move than men with families.<sup>758</sup>

Archival evidences shows that the MMS (M) simplified their discussion of force flexibility. They neither mentioned that naval officers debated whether to use full-time or part-time servicewomen, nor that the SO (W) used the rationale that single women are cheaper to employ to justify expanding female career opportunities. To be fair, the MMS (M)'s mandate was to determine policy for the regular forces. Nevertheless the exchanges that occurred as naval officers argued part-time versus full-time servicewomen help expose the masculine bias that existed in the armed services and raise doubts about the MMS (M)'s conclusions regarding career-oriented women.

During her time as the SO (W) in the early to the mid-1960s, Lieutenant-Commander Constance Ogilvy had repeatedly fought with her male colleagues over the posting of female naval personnel to the West Coast. In 1962, she had rejected the Director of Naval Manning's proposal to solve labour shortages with female reservists on the grounds that full-time Wrens were not stationed on the West Coast. Ogilvy demonstrated her commitment to expanding opportunities for full-time career-oriented servicewomen when she emphasized that she would continue to reject the proposal for

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<sup>757</sup> MMS (M), "Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force," para 48-53.

<sup>758</sup> MMS (M), "Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force," para 49.

“as long as RCN Wrens’ career prospects are restricted to the East Coast only....” Her stance reflected her own dedication to a service career. Ogilvy returned to the navy shortly after women were admitted into the regular force. She served almost fourteen years as a member of both the wartime and peacetime Wrens.<sup>759</sup>

Senior naval officers had decided to restrict servicewomen to the Atlantic Coast in 1961 ““for reasons of economy.””<sup>760</sup> Servicewomen continued to negotiate the conditions of their employment with senior officers. Ogilvy requested a review of employment policy in 1963 after she heard reports that single naval servicewomen refused to renew their contracts because “of the limited sphere of their employment prospects....”<sup>761</sup> She was also prompted to act when two skilled long-serving Petty Officers threatened to leave for a similar reason. The Petty Officers allegedly stated they would only renew if the posting opportunities increased. Significantly, Ogilvy did not demonstrate the same level of concern for married women who chose not to re-engage. Losing women for marriage was an acceptable loss, but losing trained single women and senior non-commissioned officers was a different matter.

Ogilvy argued that women who had demonstrated their abilities in their first

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<sup>759</sup> Minute Sheet from Lieutenant-Commander C.E. Ogilvy, Staff Officer (Wrens) to Director of Naval Manning, 12 September, 1962, LAC, RG 112-616-8-E, vol. 34266, file 4360-909, pt 1; and Biographical file for Ogilvy, Constance Eileen, DHH; “Promoted High Post In Wrens,” *Globe and Mail*, March 27, 1961. Internal memoranda show that Ogilvy was the SO (W) in 1962 and was the SO (W) when the MMS (M) was written. She left the Royal Canadian Navy in 1966. See Memorandum from Lieutenant-Commander C.E. Ogilvy, Staff Officer (Wrens) to Chief of Naval Personnel 12 February, 1962, LAC, RG 112-616-8-E, vol. 34266, file 4360-909 pt. 1; Lieutenant-Commander C.E. Ogilvy, Staff Officer (Wrens), Aide Memoire to Minister’s Manpower Study Men, 14 July 1965, LAC, RG 112-616-8-E, vol. 34266, file 4360-909, pt. 2.

<sup>760</sup> Memorandum from Lieutenant Commander C.E. Ogilvy, Staff Officer (Wrens) to DCNP re Status and Employment of Wrens, 18 April, 1963, LAC, RG 112-616-8-E, vol. 34266, file 4360-909, pt 1.

<sup>761</sup> Lieutenant Commander C.E. Ogilvy, Staff Officer (Wrens) to DCNP re Status and Employment of Wrens, 18 April, 1963.

engagement on the Atlantic Coast and who had advanced in their trade qualifications deserved to “compete with men” on equal terms for coveted postings. In other words, servicewomen who stayed after their first engagement had demonstrated their commitment to the service. The offer of wider opportunities was a way for the navy to prove its commitment to a select number of servicewomen. She justified her proposal on the grounds that “diversified [female] employment” presented two strategic benefits: it would lower women’s attrition rate, and would be cheaper. Ogilvy explained that the navy would save money if it sent a single woman instead of a man because the navy would not have to cover the costs of a navy man’s dependents. Her proposal predated the MMS (M), and was submitted a few months after Dalton argued that women were not too expensive to keep.<sup>762</sup>

The Director of Naval Manning, Captain P. Cossette, advocated the preservation of the current program with the exception that Wrens could be occasionally sent to the West Coast to alleviate labour shortages. His opposition rested on one of the core organizational principles of the Wrens: their employment was not to impede men’s careers. Cossette questioned whether morale and retention problems existed among women. Furthermore, he contended that, even if women had morale and retention issues, the evidence proved that these were bigger problems for men. The navy could not, in his view, diversify female employment, because it needed the spots for men. He argued that navy men had a greater and more pressing claim on the limited overseas positions,

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<sup>762</sup> Lieutenant Commander C.E. Ogilvy, Staff Officer (Wrens) to DCNP re Status and Employment of Wrens, 18 April, 1963.

demonstrating women's secondary position.<sup>763</sup>

Ogilvy and other male naval officers disagreed with Cossette's assessment. Essentially they reasoned that men's careers would not be jeopardized because there would only be a limited pool of qualified Wrens. Their argument reinforced that notion that women's careers were less important and conformed to the naval planning principles covered in chapter four. Ogilvy fired back that Cossette misunderstood her original intentions. She was not "seek[ing] any preferential treatment for wrens" but rather sought "to establish the right of wrens to compete on an equal footing with men...."<sup>764</sup> Her language paralleled the arguments of liberal feminists, who advocated for equality in the workplace and social equality for women. For example, Senator Muriel Fergusson had made a similar comment during the Senate debate on the Female Employees' Equal Pay Bill (1956). Fergusson stated that "I simply believe that women should have the same opportunities of men," and that "the purpose of the bill is to give women equal rights with men which they do not have now, but certainly not to give them additional rights."<sup>765</sup> Ogilvy and Fergusson emphasized that they wanted women to have the same chances as men, and not extra privileges.

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<sup>763</sup> Memorandum Captain P Cossette, Director of Naval Manning, to Chief of Naval Personnel, re Employment of Senior Wrens Outside the Atlantic Command from Captain P Cossette, Director of Naval Manning, 24 April, 1963. LAC, RG 112-616-8-E, vol. 34266, file 4360-909, pt 1. The term "diversified female employment" is adapted from her response to critics of her proposal. See Memorandum from Lieutenant-Commander CE Ogilvy, Staff Officer (Wrens) to Chief of Naval Personnel, 8 May 1963, LAC, RG 112-616-8-E, vol. 34266, file 4360-909, pt. 1.

<sup>764</sup> Lieutenant-Commander CE Ogilvy, Staff Officer (Wrens) to Chief of Naval Personnel, 8 May 1963, LAC, RG 112-616-8-E, vol. 34266.

<sup>765</sup> *Senate Debates*, 10 August 1956, p. 1022 (Hon. Muriel Fergusson), as quoted in Campbell, "Are we going to do the most important things?" Senator Muriel McQueen Fergusson, *Feminist Identities*, and the Royal Commission on the Status of Women," 55. The author thanks Campbell for directing attention to the quote. Campbell cites a fuller version on page 55.

Ogilvy's style of argumentation is also very similar to Doris Anderson's editorial, "A Timid Defence of Feminists," in the March 1960 issue of *Chatelaine*. Anderson described herself as an "on again-off again feminist." Historian Valerie Korinek explains that Anderson defined an "on again-off again feminist" as one who want[ed] a 'better and fuller life for women' – and not, as she hastened to add, at the expense of men."<sup>766</sup> Scholar Gail Campbell suggests that Fergusson's comments were influenced by her political context. Fergusson was defending a bill that she "introduced ... on behalf of the government" in a senate controlled by men. She was one of five female senators, and there were 84 male senators. Ogilvy, Fergusson, Anderson were women in positions of power in male-dominated fields. Although they communicated to very different audiences, they all carefully packaged their assertions for equality.<sup>767</sup>

Emotions ran high as senior officials discussed Ogilvy's proposal to diversify Wren employment. Male and female officers accused others of sexism in their attempts to discredit opposing arguments. Ogilvy implied that Cossette supported gender discrimination when she attacked the policy in a document that he had signed. She voiced a liberal feminist rationale, explicitly writing, "It [the policy] discriminates against wrens solely on the basis that they are wrens and, it must therefore be assumed, not entitled to the same privileges or consideration as men."<sup>768</sup> The Deputy Chief of Naval Personnel (DCNP) offered a similar assessment when he told the Chief of Naval Personnel (CNP),

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<sup>766</sup> Doris Anderson, "A Timid Defence of Feminists," *Chatelaine* (March 1960): 1, as quoted in Korinek, *Roughing It in the Suburbs*, 312. For a biography of Anderson, see Korinek, 45-6.

<sup>767</sup> Campbell, "Are we going to do the most important things?' Senator Muriel McQueen Fergusson, *Feminist Identities, and the Royal Commission on the Status of Women*," 52-70. The quotation comes from page 59.

<sup>768</sup> Lieutenant-Commander CE Ogilvy, Staff Officer (Wrens) to Chief of Naval Personnel, 8 May 1963.

the head of the Navy, that,

DCNP is a feminist. DNM [Director of Naval Manning] obviously is a misogynist, and further, appears to be exaggerating the possible effects of SO (W)'s proposals on 'career prospects' of men. I cannot see that their practical application will effect [sic] any man's career significantly. I therefore support SO (W). You may wish to discuss with DNM and myself.<sup>769</sup>

It is rare to see such an explicit reference to feminism and misogyny in the official records. The accusations demonstrate that the Canadian armed services, and even each particular branch of it, were not monolithic entities. Servicewomen, and apparently even feminism, had their supporters in what Ruth Roach Pierson calls a "masculine institution *par excellence*...."<sup>770</sup>

Those accused of being misogynist complained to one another. A senior male naval officer exhibited a lack of understanding of institutional sexism, even as he denied being a misogynist. He grumbled,

I understand from SO (W) that CNP wishes DNM and SO(W) to present this to him orally following a 'thorough investigation of the practical aspects.' I am lost. I am not sure what is meant by 'practical' in this instance. We have already conceded a Wren is employable in these positions; we have, merely [?] contended that the man's need is greater than the woman's! ....[sic] and, on top of that, I protest being alluded to, even indirectly, as a misogynist!<sup>771</sup>

Angry and confused, the officer appears to be blind to why some senior officials would

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<sup>769</sup> Minute Sheet from DCNP to Chief of Naval Personnel, 8 May, 1963, attached to memorandum from Lieutenant Commander Ogilvy, Staff Officer (Wrens), to CNP re Employment of Senior Wrens Outside the Atlantic Command dated 8 May, 1963, LAC, RG 112-616-8-E, vol. 34266, file 4360-909, pt. 1. On same minute sheet are comments from Staff Officer (Wrens) [SO (W)] to DCNP, and from the CNP to DNM and SO (W).

<sup>770</sup> Pierson, "They're Still Women After All," 95.

<sup>771</sup> Minute Sheet from [illegible] to A/DNM(P), 7 July 1963, attached to memorandum to CNP re Employment of Senior Wrens Outside the Atlantic Command from Lieutenant Commander Ogilvy, Staff Officer (Wrens), 8 May, 1963, LAC, RG 112-616-8-E, vol. 34266, file 4360-909, pt. 1.

have problems with what he felt was an expression of a “common sense” manning principle. The officer explicitly commented that men’s service careers were more important, thereby sanctioning gender discrimination. Underneath the message, a second officer exclaimed, “I like girls too!”<sup>772</sup> His comment sexualized and patronized women. The defensive reactions provide a glimpse into the sexism that existed in the armed services.

The defensive messages illustrate the constraints that Ogilvy, and servicewomen in general, faced in implementing their vision of women’s place in the armed services. Prejudices and sexist attitudes existed up the rank structure. Previous work on women in the military has shown that servicewomen’s careers suffer when senior officers hold discriminatory attitudes.<sup>773</sup> In addition, Ogilvy was restricted by naval planning principles. She had to demonstrate that expanding the jobs open to naval women would not harm men’s careers. Her efforts had the same limits as liberal feminist approaches. Kimberly Speers writes that, because liberal feminists sought changes within the governmental system, they failed to see how the system itself operated as a barrier. In a similar fashion, Ogilvy left the structures that restricted women’s overall employment intact. She did not challenge naval planning principles but worked within the system to improve servicewomen’s careers.<sup>774</sup>

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<sup>772</sup> Underneath Minute Sheet to A/DNM(P), 19 July 1963. This line is written in a different coloured pen, different handwriting, and dated 2 days later. The comment, like the protest, is only initialed.

<sup>773</sup> Danielle Hards, “‘We are the Girls Behind the Boys Behind the Guns:’ Military Women and the Canadian Forces” (master’s thesis, Carleton University, 1994), 58-103, 107-46; and Bowley and Wright, “Canadian Enlisted Women: Gender Issues in the Canadian Armed Forces Before and After 1945,” 9-26.

<sup>774</sup> Lieutenant-Commander CE Ogilvy, Staff Officer (Wrens) to Chief of Naval Personnel, 8 May 1963; Kimberly Speers, “The Royal Commission on 1967-1970: Liberal Feminism and Its Radical Implications,”

Was it possible for servicewomen to “receive unbiased treatment in regard to career advancement on an integrated basis in an essentially male organization,” the MMS (M) asked in their report.<sup>775</sup> The consideration of how masculine bias might work against women can be taken as willingness to reform. It suggests a supportive attitude and a desire to treat servicewomen fairly. Despite the criticism, the MMS (M) repeatedly reaffirmed the fundamentally masculine nature of the armed services. For instance, the study team asserted that they had yet to determine the length of male contract (engagement), but “ha[d] concluded, however, that women are not career minded and that shorter initial engagement and re-engagement policies are likely to be more attractive to women.”<sup>776</sup> They juxtaposed the difficulty of deciding policy for men with the easy simplicity of decisions made for women. On the one hand, this can be read as proof that women did not constitute an administrative nightmare. On the other, the juxtaposition conveyed the impression that men had the permanent membership, and women were visitors.

Another way the MMS (M) confirmed the masculine nature of the armed forces

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in *Framing our Past: Canadian Women's History in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Sharon Anne Cook, Lorna R. McLean, and Kate O'Rourke (Montreal : McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), 252-6; and Nancy Adamson, “Feminists, Libbers, Lefties and Radicals: The Emergence of the Women’s Liberation Movement,” 252-81. For discussions of Canadian feminism during the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, see Jeri Dawn Wine and Janice L. Ristock, *Women and Social Change: Feminist Activism in Canada* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1991); Jaquetta Newman and Linda White, *Women, Politics, and Public Policy: The Political Struggles of Canadian Women* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2006); Janine Brodie, *Politics on the Margins: Restructuring and the Canadian Women’s Movement* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 1995); Joan Sangster, “Radical Ruptures: Feminism, Labor, and the Left in the Long Sixties in Canada,” *The American Review of Canadian Studies* 40, no. 1 (2010): 1-21; Jill Vickers, “Feminisms and Nationalism in English Canada,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 35, no. 2 (Summer 2000): 128-48; and Meg Luxton, “Feminism as a Class Act: Working-Class Feminism and the Women’s Movement in Canada,” *Labour/Le Travail* 48 (Fall 2001): 63-88.

<sup>775</sup> MMS (M), “Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force,” para 61.

<sup>776</sup> MMS (M), “Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force,” para 67.

was in its discussion of the “terms of service.” Terms of service are the criteria which governed the entrance and exit of military personnel. The MMS (M) stressed that no firm decisions on terms of service for women could be made until ones for men had been (re)established. Male standards remained unapologetically the norm. The MMS (M) provided some provisional guidance. They advised that servicewomen’s first contract should be a maximum of three years, and the five year term should only become available upon a servicewomen’s fifth contract. Eligibility for longer contracts came after a servicewoman had proven herself and her commitment to the armed services. The average age of marriage remained 23 years of age well into the 1970s. The contract lengths reflected the policies in the three services at the time of the study.<sup>777</sup> The assumption that servicewomen had short stays underlined the recommendation.

Ultimately, the MMS (M) concluded that women could compete on an equal basis within the armed services. The MMS (M) briefly considered and then dismissed the question of whether women’s exclusions from traditionally male tasks, such as that of security guard, would negatively affect their promotion. According to the MMS (M), exclusion was not a barrier for women’s promotion because within a trade it depended upon supervisory ability. Peacetime and future servicewomen disagreed. Auger van Stelten remarks that women “could not advance beyond trade group three because we did not serve at sea.” Canadian servicewomen and feminist groups later challenged the combat restriction in part because such experience was a prerequisite for promotion to the

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<sup>777</sup> MMS (M), “Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force,” para 67, para 71 g and h; and Statistics Canada, “Fertility: Fewer Children, Older Moms,” *Canadian Megatrends*, last modified September 28, 2016, accessed February 10, 2017, <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-630-x/11-630-x2014002-eng.htm>. The proposed re-engagement periods were 2, 2, 3, 5, and 5.

upper level officer ranks. As stated above, the MMS (M) upheld women's exclusion from combat and, as a result, did not recognize an obstacle for promotion.<sup>778</sup> The MMS (M) defended gender norms because they ignored institutional barriers and insisted that women were "not career-minded." They turned a major objection into a benefit, but force flexibility was premised on women's short stays.

### **Career-Minded Women**

Although MMS (M) claimed that women were not career-minded, the press reported on women with long-term attachments to the military. Newspapers such as *Stratford Beacon-Herald* covered the retirement of RCAF Corporal Annie Coutts in November 1961. Coutts was loudly proclaimed as Canada's First Airwoman to reach the mandatory retirement age of 50. She was released after 14 years of service in the wartime and peacetime air force.<sup>779</sup>

Squadron Leader Sylvia I. Evans was another celebrated veteran. She and the air force found a companion in one other. Prior to her military career, Evans had obtained her Bachelor of Arts and had worked as a principal of a private school. Patriotism, she

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<sup>778</sup> MMS (M), "Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force," para 61; "The Good, The Bad, and The Royal: The Challenges and Opportunities of Being a Wren," 38; Danielle Hards, "'We are the Girls Behind the Boys Behind the Guns:' Military Women and the Canadian Forces" 67-146; and Brian Keith, "Women in the Canadian Armed Forces," rough draft 1969, 14-17, DHH, DWP, 90/447, file 3.

<sup>779</sup> "First Airwoman to Retire in Canada: Cpl Annie Coutts Honored for War, Peacetime Career," October 27, 1961, clipping, DHH, 78/208, folder 2; "First Woman is Retired from RCAF," *Winnipeg Free Press*, undated clipping, 79/208, folder 2, "Fete Veteran Airwoman at Clinton," *London Free Press*, November 11, 1961, 78/208, folder 2; "First Airwoman," *Stratford-Beacon Herald*, October 25, 1961, 78/208, folder 2; "Canada's First Airwoman Released From Service," *Stratford-Beacon Herald*, October 25, 1961, 78/208, folder 2; and "Canadian Airwoman First to Reach Compulsory Age for Retirement," *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix*, November 23, 1961, clipping, DHH, 78/208, folder 2.

said, inspired her to enlist in 1941 and she served until April 1946.<sup>780</sup> The RCAF recalled Evans in April 1951 to help oversee the re-entrance of women as a policy advisor at Air Force Headquarters. Evans served as the senior female staff officer, called the Assistant for Women Personnel, for most of her peacetime service. She spent four years (1956-August 1960) as the personnel staff officer at the RCAF NATO Air Division Headquarters in Metz, France. In September 1962, Evans retired with over 16 years of service in the wartime and peacetime RCAF.

Evans received a lot of press attention as the senior officer and was presented as a role model of female military service. Based on the press coverage, she was an embodiment of physical fitness and devotion to the service. Not surprisingly, Evans' lengthy military career became a defining feature. The authors of peacetime press releases and newspaper articles typically referred to her by her military rank. On occasion, journalists revealed her status as a single woman when they called her "Miss Evans." Journalists and the writers of RCAF press releases typically summarized her pre-war civilian life in a sentence or two, further reinforcing her military identity. Press releases and newspaper articles do not state how Evans occupied herself between her military stints. Her story shows that some women were willing to sacrifice marriage and children for a (military) career. Christine Ensslen and June Corman's article on "never-married" Saskatchewan teachers and Mary Kinnear's work on professional women

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<sup>780</sup> Ziegler, *We Serve That Men May Fly*, 7-18; Biographical file for Evans, Sylvia I, DHH; Directorate of Public Relations (National Defence) Press Release No. H-1919, "Senior Woman Air Force Officer Retires;" DHH 79/208, folder 2; and Margaret King, "Mountain Climbing is 'Tops' for RCAF's Leading Airwoman," *Ottawa Citizen*, April 5, 1956, DHH 79-208, folder 2. For other clippings, see DHH, 79/208 Folder 2.

reveals that Evans was not the only woman to do so.<sup>781</sup>

Evans' authority was carefully packaged. Any worry that women threatened the masculine nature of the armed services would have been addressed by the repeated assertion that she was an advisor on matters pertaining to women. The press explained that this meant she fell under the authority of a senior male officer, the Chief of Personnel.<sup>782</sup> In addition, Evans was depicted as an exceptional woman, partly because she was a long-standing high-ranking officer. The author of the press release on her retirement announced that she was "one of the first women to complete a full career in the service." She was not the average uniformed women described in the MMS (M)'s 1965 report.<sup>783</sup>

The life of Major Marjorie Evis demonstrates that women could in fact combine motherhood and military service. She entered the wartime CWAC with her senior matriculation (Ontario), experience as a secretary, and as a Red Cross volunteer. A desire for a coveted overseas spot saw Evis accept a significant reduction in rank from Staff Sergeant to Private in late 1942. While in England, she obtained her commission to Second Lieutenant in 1943. Discharged in September 1946 with the rank of Major, Major Evis found work as Dr. O.M. Solandt's personal assistant. Solandt was the first chairman

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<sup>781</sup> Biographical file for Evans, Sylvia I, DHH; Directorate of Public Relations (National Defence) Press Release No. H-1919, Senior Woman Air Force Officer Retires; King, "Mountain Climbing is 'Tops' for RCAF's Leading Airwoman," "Airwomen's Dinner Marks Anniversary," *Winnipeg Tribune*, April 14 1961, newspaper clipping, DHH 79-208, folder 2; and Kinneer, *In Subordination*.

<sup>782</sup> Biographical file Evans, Sylvia I; Directorate of Public Relations (National Defence) Press Release No. H-1919, Senior Woman Air Force Officer Retires; Margaret King, "Mountain Climbing is 'Tops' for RCAF's Leading Airwoman," *Ottawa Citizen*, April 5 1956, newspaper clipping; DHH, 79/208, folder 2; "Airwomen's Dinner Marks Anniversary," *Winnipeg Tribune*, April 14 1961.

<sup>783</sup> Biographical File for Evans, Sylvia I, DHH; and Directorate of Public Relations (National Defence) Press Release No. H-1919, Senior Woman Air Force Officer Retires.

of the Defence Research Board, which was established in 1947. Evis eventually became the board's liaison secretary. Sometime in 1948, Evis had her son Richard. She was recalled in 1950 to serve as the CWAC (Reserve) adviser at army headquarters in Ottawa and eventually retired in 1969 with almost 25 years of service.<sup>784</sup>

The gaps in her public and archival record are telling. Her military career and enthusiasm for service attracted attention. Newspaper articles frequently referred to Evis "as one of the first nine women in Toronto" to enlist.<sup>785</sup> Readers were offered reassurances that she stayed feminine. Edna Blakey described Major Evis as a "tall, attractive woman who wears stylish clothes every day but Monday when she dons her uniform."<sup>786</sup> Blakey simultaneously reaffirmed Evis' beauty and cast doubt on the attractiveness of the uniform. Wearing a uniform was not viewed as fashionable. As with Evans, journalists carefully packaged Evis' authority and emphasized her role as an advisor. Some mentioned that she served on the adjutant general's staff. A self-professed avid reader, Evis ran her son's Cub Scout troop. Newspaper reporters portrayed Evis as service-oriented citizen and mother.<sup>787</sup>

Evis' home life seems in some ways atypical. While her son was mentioned in articles written during her peacetime service, her husband was not. Nor is there any

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<sup>784</sup> "Women in the Capital," (*The Women's*) *Globe and Mail*, March 22, 1956; Edna Blakey, "Women's Army Corps To Double Militia Strength," *Brandon Sun*, March 20 1962; Canadian Press, "Women Number 2, 000 in Canadian Militia," *Globe and Mail*, December 6, 1956; Wally Stewart, "Women Serve on the Home Front," *Ottawa Citizen*, July 27, 1964, newspaper clipping, DHH, 156.013 (D2); Biographical file for Evis, Marjorie, DHH; "Marjorie Evis," Obituary, *Ottawa Citizen*, November 14, 2015, accessed 4 January 2016, <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/ottawacitizen/obituary.aspx?pid=176502645>; and W. Hugh Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War: The Canadian Women's Army Corps, Their Story* (Dartmouth, N.S.: Writing and Editorial Services, 1983), 217, 251, 314, 375-6, 379-80.

<sup>785</sup> "Women in the Capital," (*The Women's*) *Globe and Mail*, March 22, 1956.

<sup>786</sup> Edna Blakey, "Women's Army Corps To Double Militia Strength," *Brandon Sun*, March 20, 1962.

<sup>787</sup> See sources cited in note 784.

mention of her husband in her obituary. Peacetime journalists occasionally marked her married status when they referred to her as “Major (Mrs.) Marjorie Evis.” The silence stands out. Newspaper articles on peacetime army women and internal army documents highlight the prominence of married women in the army reserves. For example, a 1962 article in the *Brandon Sun* reported that married women constituted roughly half of the CWAC militia. Women combining familial and military service appear more frequently in articles on army women compared to the other two services. The difference can be partly explained because most army women served part-time. Journalists noted that there were some mothers who served with their daughters in the CWAC militia. A message of feminine tradition of military serving was reinforced by articles that described the shifting composition of the CWAC servicewomen in the militia. The veterans who returned in the early years after reformation gave way to a new generation.<sup>788</sup>

## **Conclusion**

On 20 June 1966, Minister Paul Hellyer and the Defence Council determined that servicewomen should be considered a permanent part of the Regular Canadian Forces, ending over forty years of equivocation over the status of women in the forces. Hellyer raised the maximum enrolment of women in the Regular Force from the Chief of the Defence Staff’s proposed 1100 to 1500.<sup>789</sup> The maximum enrolment represented roughly

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<sup>788</sup> Canadian Press, “Women Number 2, 000 in Canadian Militia,” *The Globe and Mail*, December 6, 1956; Edna Blakey, “Women’s Army Corps To Double Militia Strength”; and Stewart, “Women Serve on the Home Front.” Stewart’s article has the Mrs. in bracket.

<sup>789</sup> Copy of Memorandum on Employment of Female Personnel from R. J. Sutherland, Secretary, Defence Council to the Chief of Defence Staff, 30 June, 1966, DHH, Raymont Fonds, 73/1223, series 3, box 73, file 1468; Memorandum From the Chief of Defence Council to Defence Council, Employment of Women in the Regular Force, 2 June, 1966, DHH, Raymont Fonds, 73/1223, series 3, box 73, file 1468.

“1% of the authorized strength of the Canadian forces”<sup>790</sup> and was considered a firm limit.<sup>791</sup> Servicewomen had an officially guaranteed yet limited place as full-time members of the Canadian armed services.

Between 1955 and 1965, military officials had frequently pondered retention versus release. Proponents of retention had argued that there was a need to have a permanent nucleus of uniformed women because they had proven useful as a mobile, flexible, reserve pool of labour. By contrast, proponents of release had emphasized that servicewomen were more costly and generated more administrative issues than servicemen. These debates occurred as defence planners grappled with technological shifts and a massive restructuring. The debates also happened as women became a larger proportion of the labour force and institutional/liberal feminists lobbied for greater career opportunities. The Minister’s Manpower Study (Men) drafted their study on women as the groundwork was being laid for the integration of the armed services and the second-wave feminist movement.

The Minister’s Manpower Study (Men)’s “Employment of Female Personnel in Uniform- Regular Force” was a key document in the decision to retain women. The MMS (M) dismissed arguments that women cost too much and posed administrative challenges but acknowledged pregnancy and attrition rates as more legitimate concerns.

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<sup>790</sup> Memorandum to Defence Council from Chief of the Defence Staff, Employment of Women in the Regular Force, 2. The 1% was based on the 1100 figure. Different reports put the proportion over or under 1%. For a statement that 1500 max established with unification represented 1.5 %, see “Women in the Armed Forces,” undated, para 17, DHH, DWP, 90/447, file 12. A figure of 0.8% is given in another document, see Colonel MG Vallance, Director of Women Personnel, Briefing to United Service Institute, Winnipeg, 6 Jun 1975, 2, DHH 90/447, file 21.

<sup>791</sup> Copy of Memorandum on Employment of Female Personnel from R. J. Sutherland, Secretary, Defence Council to the Chief of Defence Staff, 30 June, 1966.

Yet the authors attempted to mitigate these concerns by reframing the cost-benefit analysis. Servicewomen, the MMS (S) argued, saved the services money because they did not have expensive dependents.

The MMS (M) offered mixed benefits for women. They rejected the RCAF's decision to phase out women. Furthermore, they acknowledged that servicewomen who wanted to serve had the right to stay. However, the MMS (M) recommended the continued exclusion of women from combat. They reinforced female domesticity and explicitly stated that women were not career-oriented. The MMS (M) failed to reference well-publicized examples of women who had careers and who would have been present at headquarters. The study reinforced gender norms even as they argued for a permanent place for women. In addition, the MMS (M) omitted military women who lobbied for wider opportunities and the feminist movement, yet used a feminist argument when they stressed that biological sex should not prevent women from serving. Although the MMS (M) did not attribute these arguments to women, they repeated aspects of senior female officers' cost-analysis.

The 20 June 1966 Defence Council Meeting was neither the first nor the last attempt to clarify the conditions for women's military service. Previous chapters examined the negotiations around the failed attempt to establish the women's services during the First World War, the formation and disbandment of the women's services during the Second World War, and the postwar re-entrance of women. The study ends the chronological narrative in 1966s, turning in the next chapter to a discussion of how servicewomen negotiated their legacy and built lasting relationships with the armed

services. Other scholars have explored how Canadian servicewomen challenged the combat barrier from the late 1970s to the early 1990s.<sup>792</sup>

The Defence Council's 1966 decision did not end the debates over women's place in the armed services. However, it did resolve one issue that proponents and opponents had been debating since the First World War: women had a confirmed place in the defence forces of Canada. For Canadian women who desired it, a military career was now officially theirs to pursue.

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<sup>792</sup> Dundas, *A History of Women in the Canadian Military*, 110-53; Bowley and Wright, "Canadian Enlisted Women: Gender Issues in the Canadian Armed Forces Before and After 1945," 9-26; Second Lieutenant Marta Rzechowka, "Gender Integration and Modern Military Forces: A Comparative Analysis," 71-88.

## **Chapter Six – Constructing Female Military Tradition(s): Servicewomen’s Scrapbooks and Unofficial Histories**

Canadian Women’s Army Corps (CWAC) Lieutenant Beulah Rosen (née Jaenicke) held on to her scrapbook “for all those years, nearly 60 years,” before she donated it to the Canadian War Museum. Rosen reminisced that “each place I moved as a married woman with children and so on it wasn’t thrown out it was kept. I didn’t keep my uniform. I didn’t—I kept a few badges.”<sup>793</sup> Her scrapbook mattered to her. It was among her most prized wartime keepsakes and was filled with the clippings of the cartoons she had published in wartime army periodicals. She donated two albums: the one with the cartoons and another in a scrapbook that was marketed to military personnel. Like countless other veterans, she preserved her memories, and attempted to ensure that future generations had a record of her wartime contributions, experiences, and perceptions. Her scrapbooks illustrate a central argument of this chapter: servicewomen tried to shape their legacy and maintained their connection to the armed services for decades.

Servicewomen recorded their history in a variety of formats, and in the process, they provided their perspective on their service during war and peace as well as demonstrated their long-term and diverse identification with the military. They did so on

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<sup>793</sup> Irene Beulah Rosen, interview by Mai-yu Chan, Toronto, ON, March 29, 2008, interview 31D 8 Rosen transcript, tape two side one, transcribed by L. Stimson, Canadian War Museum Oral History Project, George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum’s Military History Research Centre, Ottawa, ON.

the individual level, creating scrapbooks, photograph albums, memoirs, and in one case, a novel. They did so at the group level too. Female veterans' associations hired authors to write the unofficial history of their service. Some histories circulated as published books, and others, more personal, ended up in archives.

Servicewomen's accounts provide insight into the ways women themselves understood their past service. Their accounts both confirm and challenge scholarly narratives. Women's military experience has often been understood in terms of a single war. Historian Ruth Roach Pierson's pioneering "*They're Still Women After All*" is a prominent case in point. Jennifer Stephen and Grace Poulin have expanded on Pierson's discussion of servicewomen's postwar rehabilitation, but the wartime focus remains because they assess how gendered and racial hierarchies dictated what servicewomen earned from their military service. A nod might be given to women's peacetime service, as Jeffrey Keshen does with *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers* and Barbara Winters does with her article on the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service (WRCNS), but Keshen's and Winter's analyses also center on the war years. A brief survey of the historiography of women's participation in North American militaries suggests that this periodization is widespread. Leisa Meyer sticks to the war years in her foundational *Creating GI Jane*. Melissa A. McEuen integrates military women into her exploration of how Americans were simultaneously "making war" and "making women" on the wartime home front. Even when scholars extend their work past the Second World War, their focus remains on the reverberations of those years. For example, the war remains central in Donna Knaff's examination of the postwar circulation of popular wartime images. She remarks

that wartime images of female masculinity gave Second Wave feminists a visual language and a sense of possibilities.<sup>794</sup>

Servicewomen themselves took a longer and more diverse view of their involvement with the military. For instance, when servicewomen narrated their military experience, they did not necessarily stop at war's end nor divide their experience into concrete periods. Their accounts also reveal that veterans did not necessarily cut ties with the armed services after they demobilized. Female veterans built, maintained, and preserved for posterity their long-term ties to the armed forces. Veterans negotiated new ties as peacetime servicewomen, renewed bonds as reunion organizers and attendees, and kept connected through relatives. Some veterans held multiple relationships simultaneously: accounts show that returning women attended reunions, and reunion participants had uniformed relatives. Servicewomen's accounts and unofficial histories reinforce the need to reframe how historians discuss women's military service. Instead of

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<sup>794</sup> Ruth Roach Pierson, *"They're Still Women After All": The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986), Jeffrey A. Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers: Canada's Second World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), 172-193; Barbara Winters, "The Wrens of the Second World War: Their Place in the History of Canadian Servicewomen," in *A Nation's Navy: In Quest of Canadian Naval Identity*, ed. Michael L. Hadley, Rob Huebert and Fred W. Crickard, (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), 280-296; Grace Poulin, "Invisible Women: Aboriginal Servicewomen in Canada's Second World War Military," in *Aboriginal Peoples and the Canadian Military: Historical Perspectives*, ed. P. Whitney Lackenbauer and Craig Leslie Mantle (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007), 137-162; Jennifer Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl: Employability, Domesticity, and the Gendering of Canada's Welfare State, 1939-1947* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007); Leisa D. Meyer, *Creating GI Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women's Army Corps During World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); Meghan K. Winchell, *Good Girls, Good Food, Good Fun: The Story of USO Hostesses During World War II* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008); Marilyn E. Hegarty, *Victory Girls, Khaki-Wackies, and Patriotutes: The Regulation of Female Sexuality during World War II* (New York: New York University Press, 2008); Melissa A. McEuen, *Making War, Making Women: Femininity and Duty on the American Home Front, 1941-1945* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2011); and Donna B. Knaff, *Beyond Rosie the Riveter: Women of World War II in American Popular Graphic Art* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2012).

isolating women's experiences to a single war, historians need to take a longer view.

This chapter is concerned with *how* military women have told their stories and analyzes the historiographical implications of their narratives. In particular, it focuses on how servicewomen and their representatives have repeatedly told stories that complicate the single war periodization. The chapter starts by situating servicewomen's published accounts and unpublished scrapbooks into the patterns of what historian Jonathan Vance calls "war-related publishing."<sup>795</sup> Servicewomen used both their published unofficial histories and their unpublished scrapbook histories to show that they were involved in the Second World War.<sup>796</sup> The rest of the chapter then proceeds through a series of case studies drawn from an examination of over twenty-five donated scrapbooks created by and/or about servicewomen who served in the Canadian armed forces during the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, and four published unofficial histories. The published histories are Rosemary "Fiddy" Greer's *The Girls of the King's Navy*; Ada Arney's *Here Come the Khaki Skirts...the Women Volunteers: A Pictorial Review of the Canadian Women's Army Corps during the Second World War*; W. Hugh Conrod's *Athene, Goddess of War: The Canadian Women's Army Corps, Their Story*, and Mary Ziegler's *We Serve that Men May Fly*.<sup>797</sup> Greer and Arney were veterans; Conrod and Ziegler were hired by female

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<sup>795</sup> Jonathan F. Vance, "An Open Door to a Better Future: The Memory of Canada's Second World War," in *Canada and the Second World War: Essays in Honour of Terry Copp*, ed. Geoffrey Hayes, Mike Bechthold, and Matt Symes (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2012), 472. On page 472, Vance uses the term "war-related publishing" to collectively refer to "memoirs, poetry collections, novels, biographies, popular histories, regimental chronicles...."

<sup>796</sup> W. Hugh Conrod *Athene, Goddess of War: The Canadian Women's Army Corps, Their Story* (Dartmouth, N.S: Writing and Editorial Services, 1983), 15.

<sup>797</sup> On page 9, Conrod labels his the "official history of the Canadian Women's Army Corps." His definition does not match the one used in this dissertation and the conventions of military history. As Martin Blumenson wrote in 1960, "Official history is authorized history, history sponsored by or with the

veterans' organizations.

Most of the case studies demonstrate that servicewomen and their representatives often employed timelines that flowed back and forth between Second World War and postwar years. Rosen's and Minnie Eleanor Gray's scrapbooks are the exception. They were chosen to demonstrate that even wartime-focused scrapbooks expose the limits of scholarly frameworks. Rosen left clear traces that she revisited her scrapbook and in the process renewed her connection to the armed services. Gray complicates the literature on wartime servicewomen's sexuality because she included a venereal disease (VD) pamphlet directed at men. Her scrapbook too reveals the gaps between scholarly and servicewomen's histories. Returning veterans, wartime women who rejoined the peacetime armed forces, are the subject of the next four case studies. One case illustrates that air force officials embraced the longer time frame in 1961. The album has multiple versions of history sanctioned by senior air officials, a history which narrated a female air force tradition. The other three cases explore individual women who linked the wartime and peacetime services through their return to the armed forces and participation in reunions.

The final case study assesses the published unofficial histories. Unofficial historians repackaged the individual narratives, borrowing from servicewomen's scrapbooks and photograph albums, both in terms of sources and styles. Although the unofficial histories have different formats, all the authors positioned their work as a

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support of an agency of government..." See Martin Blumenson, "Can Official History be Honest History?" *Military Affairs* 26, no. 4 (Winter 1962-1963): 153.

service-wide history and as a much needed corrective to the lack of women's voices in the historiography of the Second World War. Because these authors wrote on behalf of wartime servicewomen, it can be assumed that the writers told the stories that they thought wartime veterans would treasure and want heard. As a result, these writers often emphasized the service over individuals and guarded against stories that would damage the reputation of the women's services. The perspective of the individual is better captured in the scrapbooks by and/or about servicewomen. Before discussing how servicewomen and their representatives crafted the alternate timelines, it is useful to place servicewomen's scrapbooks within the history of Second World War-related publishing.

### **Servicewomen's Scrapbooks and War-related Publishing**

There are several indications that servicewomen's scrapbooks predate much of the published material. Many of the official, unofficial, and academic histories of the Second World War were produced starting in the late 1970s. Unofficial historians often borrowed from servicewomen's scrapbooks. Mary Ziegler thanked servicewomen for the use of their scrapbooks. W. Hugh Conrod modelled and named chapter sixteen after servicewomen's "memory book[s]." Like the scrapbooks, Conrod's chapter sixteen contained wartime letters, pages from periodicals, and photographs. One group photograph in a canteen had the names of two women printed above their heads, which suggests that the image came from a scrapbook.<sup>798</sup>

Individual scrapbook compilers have provided additional evidence. Rosen

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<sup>798</sup> Mary Ziegler, foreword to *We Serve that Men May Fly* (Hamilton, ON: R.C.A.F. (W.D.) Association, 1973); and Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War*, 10-13, 343-375. The photograph appears in Conrod, 355.

admitted that she could not precisely remember how she got her scrapbook but speculated that her father might have bought her the scrapbook she later filled with her wartime cartoons. The scrapbook made her more organized because it gave her a place to store material and encouraged her “to keep what [she] thought would be interesting in later years.”<sup>799</sup> CWAC Pipe Band member Beverly J. Hodgins (née Macdonald) discussed her scrapbooking arrangements in an explanatory note that she pasted on the inside of the front cover. The note was signed and dated in 1983. She wrote that “the news clippings, photos and mementos were mailed at intervals to [her] parents Mr. and Mrs. A.J. Donald Macdonald. Thanks to their thoughtfulness and care this scrapbook is a mini-history of the C.W.A.C. Pipe Band and of the 1943-1946 era.”<sup>800</sup> Hodgins likely created the scrapbook and was thanking her parents for the preservation of the material. Several captions provide the eye-witness testimony of a pipe band member. For example, the caption “The U.S.O. [United Service Organization] arranged accommodation here for us” appears underneath a pamphlet for a New York City Central Club for Nurses. Thus, it was likely that it was Hodgins who assembled the album sometime between 1946 and 1983.

Further insight into when the scrapbooks were constructed comes from the albums themselves. Veterans and other compilers chose a range of commercially produced albums to safeguard their war record. Some, such as Hodgins, assembled their narratives in a plain book with blank pages. The Canadian Women’s Training Corps

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<sup>799</sup> Irene Beulah Rosen, interview by Mai-yu Chan.

<sup>800</sup> Beverly J Hodgins, CWAC Scrapbook, George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum’s Military History Research Centre, CWM Archives, Textual Records 58E 6 3.1, Control No. 19830184-001.

scrapbook mentioned in chapter one had a cover image (a girl and her dog), but was otherwise blank. Four compilers selected a scrapbook designed for male military personnel. Private Olga Munroe and Lieutenant Beulah Rosen chose *Snaps and Scraps: My Life in the Army* and two others, Wren Camilla Forbes (née Balcombe) and Sub-lieutenant Rosemary Pimental (née Robb), chose a variation on the theme, *Snaps and Scraps: My Life in the Navy*. Forbes helpfully left the publishers' foreword in her copy, which was copyrighted in 1942. The publishers suggested that servicemen were the targeted audience, noting in the foreword that servicemen could mail the scrapbook home to a "wife or sweetheart."<sup>801</sup> In January 1943, a Toronto jewellery store, Birks-Ellis-Ryrie, advertised that they sold *Snaps and Scraps* for a dollar. Since the lowest ranking servicewomen earned roughly a dollar a day, the book was affordable. The store had a broader audience in mind than the publishers. They stated the book was ideal "for the man or woman in the Service—or for their folks at home."<sup>802</sup>

In her history of American scrapbooks, Jessica Helfand analyzes *Snaps and Scraps* as an example of a subgenre of memory books. Memory books were a popular type of scrapbook in the world wars and interwar period. The act of saving personal

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<sup>801</sup> Camilla Annie Pearce Forbes (Nee Balcombe), *Snaps and Scraps: My Life in the Navy*, George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum's Military History Research Centre, CWM Archives, Textual Records 58E 1 4.6, Control No 20030212-002; Staff Sergeant Olga Munroe, *Snaps and Scraps: My Life in the Army*, George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum's Military History Research Centre, CWM Archives, Textual Records 58A 1 290.12, Control No. 20130024-013; Sub-Lieutenant Rosemary Gordon Robb Pimental, Second World War Naval Scrapbook George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum's Military History Research Centre, CWM Archives, Photo Archives 52C 4 71.2, Control No 20100026-007; and Lieutenant Beulah Irene Rosen (nee Jaenicke), *Snaps and Scraps: My Life in the Army*, George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum's Military History Research Centre, CWM Archives, Textual Records 58E 9 2.2, Control No 20060087-006.

<sup>802</sup> "Snaps and Scraps!," *Toronto Daily Star*, January 7, 1943; and *CWAC Digest: Facts about the C.W.A.C.* (n.d.), 32, copy at Directorate of History and Heritage, National Defence Headquarters, Ottawa, Canada [hereafter DHH], 153.063 (D1).

mementos aligned with wartime rationing. Second World War scrapbooks with preformatted pages promised a way to preserve an organized wartime record and the story of those who died in a chaotic time.<sup>803</sup>

Veterans and historians published a small number of accounts of the Second World War in the twenty years following the end of the Second World War.<sup>804</sup> Most of the texts published by veterans on their Second World War experiences did not appear until the mid to late 1970s. For example, CWAC veterans Kathleen Robson Roe and Phyllis Bowman both published in 1975. Roe reproduced wartime letters sent to relatives and friends, and released her memoir. Official and regimental historians produced only a handful of studies of the Second World War between the late 1940s and the 1960s. Historian Tim Cook states that only a few academic and popular historians published on the Second World War in the 1960s and early 1970s. For instance, University of Toronto professor James Eayrs wrote *In Defence of Canada, Vol. II: Appeasement and Rearmament* (1965), and Barry Broadfoot released his oral history *Six War Years, 1939-1945* (1974).<sup>805</sup>

The publication delay was caused by three interrelated factors. First, it took time for official defence records to become declassified. Official historians and their staffs

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<sup>803</sup> Jessica Helfand, *Scrapbooks: An American History* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), 11, 75-9, 92-5, 113-41. On page 113, Helfand defines memory books as products “whose pages were preformatted, designating where things should go....”

<sup>804</sup> Vance, “An Open Door to a Better Future: The Memory of Canada’s Second World War,” 472.

<sup>805</sup> Tim Cook, *Clio’s Warriors: Canadian Historians and the Writing of the World Wars* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006), 200-7, 210-46; Vance, “An Open Door to a Better Future: The Memory of Canada’s Second World War,” 472-5; Phyllis Bowman, *We Skirted the War* (self-published, 1975); Kathleen Robson Roe, *War Letters from the C.W.A.C.* (Toronto: Kakabeka, 1975); Robert Teigrob, *Living With War: Twentieth-Century Conflict in Canadian and American History and Memory* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), 59-79; and Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 9-10.

largely controlled access to the official records, and as a result, controlled the narrative for decades. Second, veterans had other concerns. In his chapter on the construction of Second World War memory, Jonathan Vance argues that, unlike in the aftermath of the First World War, it was very clear that Canada was a winner in the post-1945 era: Canada had defeated Nazi Germany and had kept inflation under control. He concludes that there was not the same compulsion to gain a sense of stability by (re)writing, justifying, and making the war stand for something.<sup>806</sup>

Third, Canadians were busy rebuilding their lives. Magda Fahrni and other historians have demonstrated that Canadians were preoccupied with postwar reconstruction. Doug Owrarn has observed that stability had been an elusive goal for the generations shaped by the Great Depression and war and that many veterans were more concerned with living their lives than reflecting on them. Retired Colonel Margaret Dunn (née Eaton) explained the large gap between the disbandment of the CWAC and the publication of the corps' history in her foreword to *Athene, Goddess of War* (1983). Dunn, who served as the senior CWAC officer, admitted that she did “not think it would have appealed in the late Fifties or perhaps even in the Sixties, we [CWAC veterans] were too busy starting new lives, bringing up young families or establishing careers.” The book's timing related to the flows of women's lives and the role of nostalgia that came as women aged. Veterans had the freedom to reflect once they had retired and their children

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<sup>806</sup> Cook, *Clio's Warriors*, 200-7, 210-46; Vance, “An Open Door to a Better Future: The Memory of Canada's Second World War,” 472-5; and Teigrob, *Living With War*, 59-79.

left home, and more incentive as they faced their mortality.<sup>807</sup>

Historians and female veterans also re-evaluated the World Wars in late 1970s and in the 1980s. Historians benefited from newly accessible material and new questions were inspired by the emergence of the “bottom up” approaches of social, labour, and women’s history. Women’s historians such as Pierson reassessed women’s wartime contributions and gains from a feminist perspective.<sup>808</sup> Ex-servicewomen participated in the re-evaluation of the Second World War and in the incorporation of the writing of women into the larger historical narratives. The Hamilton chapter of the RCAF (WD) Association hired Ziegler to write *We Serve that Men May Fly* (1973). The CWAC association employed Conrod. In *Athene, Goddess of War* (1983), Conrod named several women who collected material and had started research projects on their service. He explained that *Athene, Goddess of War* came out of veteran’s efforts to have a published record of their corps’ contributions and that he included anecdotes from servicewomen. Wren veteran Rosemary “Fiddy” Greer also published her *The Girls of the King’s Navy* in 1983. She asserted that her text was an individual’s “*memoir*,” but published it in “hope [that] it will be accepted as representative of all” and to ensure future generations

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<sup>807</sup> Margaret C. Dunn, foreword to *Athene, Goddess of War*, 7; Cook, *Clio's Warriors*, 200-7, 210-46; Magda Fahrni, *Household Politics :Montreal Families and Postwar Reconstruction* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005); Christopher Dummitt, *The Manly Modern: Masculinity in Postwar Canada* (Vancouver : UBC Press, 2007); and Doug Owram, “Canadian Domesticity in the Postwar Era,” in *The Veterans Charter and Post-World War II Canada* (Montreal : McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998), 205-23.

<sup>808</sup> Cook, *Clio's Warriors*, 200-7, 210-46; Vance, “An Open Door to a Better Future: The Memory of Canada’s Second World War,” 472-5; and Teigrob, *Living With War*, 59-79.

knew the Wrens' history.<sup>809</sup> CWAC veteran Ada Arney thanked her fellow veterans for submissions of photographs and their encouragement while she assembled *Here Come the Khaki Skirts...the Women Volunteers* (1988), which she called an "affectionate retrospect" and "the first pictorial review."<sup>810</sup> As will be discussed below, unlike Pierson, these unofficial historians told multigenerational stories. Historians and veterans addressed what was missing in the historical literature, but from different perspectives.

Female veterans filled these gaps by showing that they were repositories of military knowledge. They illustrated their knowledge when they educated readers on military terminology and slang. They did so in published unofficial histories and unpublished albums. Greer clarified various words and provided other background details in footnotes. Rosen defined the military acronym "G.D." in a note.<sup>811</sup> [See Figure 1.]

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<sup>809</sup> Ziegler, foreword to *We Serve that Men May Fly*; Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War*, 10-13; and Rosemary "Fiddy" Greer, *The Girls of the King's Navy* (Victoria: Sono Nis Press, 1983), 5. Emphasis in text. The quotation comes from Greer, 5.

<sup>810</sup> Ada Arney, *Here Come the Khaki Skirts...the women Volunteers: A Pictorial Review of the Canadian Women's Army Corps during the Second World War* (Cobalt, ON: Highway Book Shop, 1988), ix.

<sup>811</sup> Lieutenant Beulah Irene Rosen (nee Jaenicke), "The Dreams of Jenny G.D.," in Photographs, George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum's Military History Research Centre, CWM Archives, Textual Records 58E 9 2.2, Control No. 20060087-006; Greer, *The Girls of the King's Navy*, 94,101 n 1.

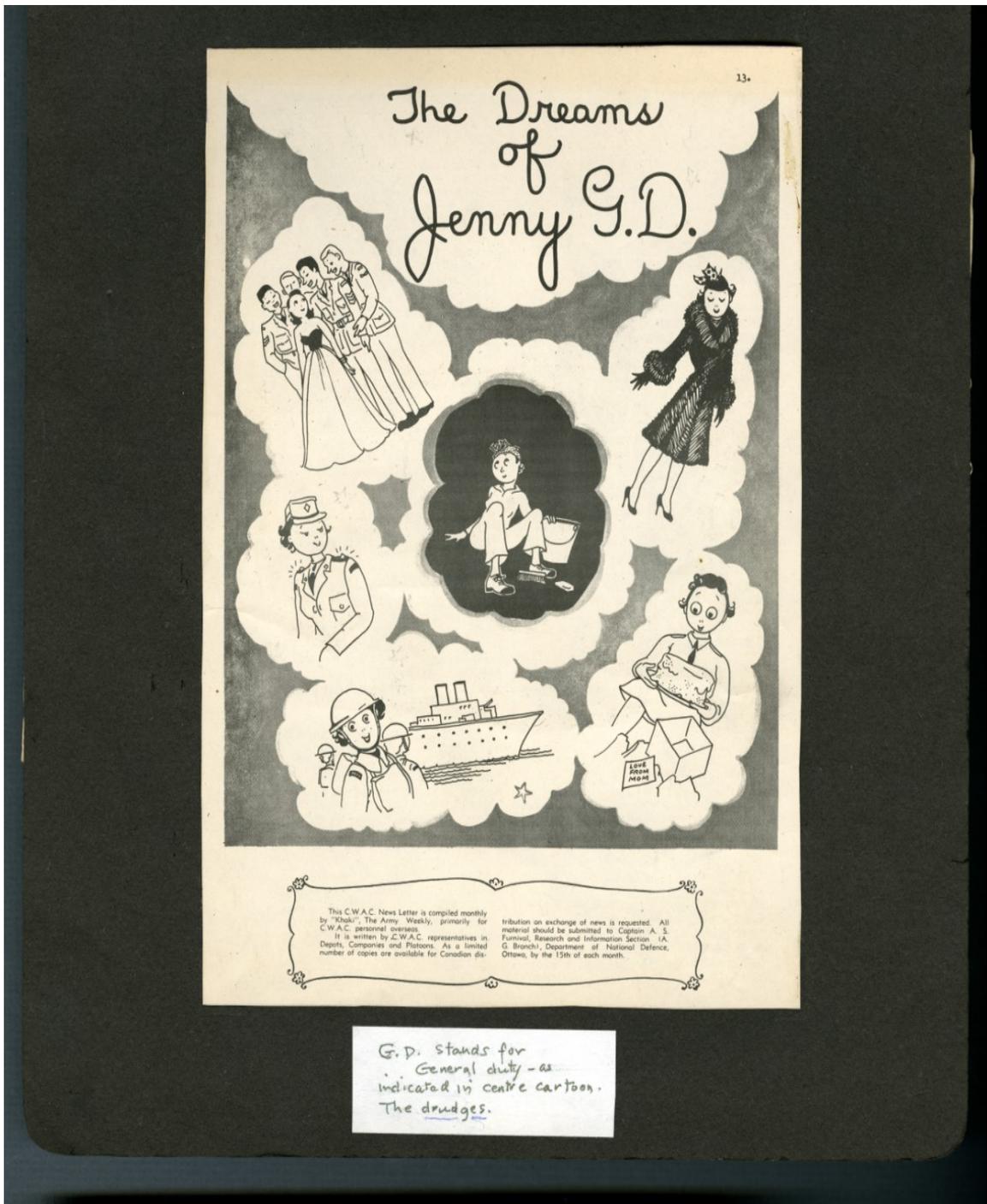


Figure 1: Scrapbook of Lieutenant Beulah Irene Rosen (nee Jaenicke), CWM 20060087-006\_p9, George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum. The note reads, "G.D. stands for - General duty - as indicated in the centre cartoon. The drudges."

Servicewomen also participated in the re-evaluation of their contributions by donating their scrapbooks. In 1983, the same year in which Greer published her unofficial history, Hodgins revisited her scrapbook, added her explanatory note, and donated her scrapbook. She placed herself into the story when she pasted her photograph at the start of the album and included personnel wartime mail on subsequent pages. She identified some of her fellow servicewomen left unnamed in the photos clipped from unattributed newspapers, thereby modifying the public record. Greer too placed a picture of herself in uniform and included some of her wartime mail.<sup>812</sup> Through publications and donations, servicewomen simultaneously participated in the larger project of writing their unit's and/or service's history and inserted themselves into this larger narrative.

The privileging of the male combat veteran in postwar commemorations might have contributed to women's reluctance to share their stories. Much has been written about commemoration's focus on the male combat veteran, on female mourners, and on marginalized veterans' push for more inclusive recognition through various redress campaigns. Even though female veterans had actively remembered the war, and marched in Remembrance Day parades, many women doubted that their stories mattered. Jean Bruce explained that she repeatedly had to convince women that their memories and souvenirs had historical value before they participated in her anecdotal history, *Back the Attack!: Canadian Women During the Second World War— at Home and Abroad* (1985). Bruce noted that many women wanted to be left anonymous. Other researchers have expressed similar sentiments. Pamela Wakewich and Helen Smith described the need to

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<sup>812</sup> Beverly J Hodgins, CWAC Scrapbook; and Greer, *The Girls of the King's Navy*, 5, 28.

redirect women industrial workers who veered off during interviews to discuss their husband's careers.<sup>813</sup>

Recent work continues to privilege the male veteran. Although Vance recognizes that servicewomen existed, he only mentions them briefly in his 2012 chapter on the construction of Second World War memory. For instance, he simply notes that “1.1 million men and women had served in uniform.” While he does quote from the poet Dorothy Dumbrille, most of the authors he cites are male. To be fair, Vance admits that his piece gives a “cursory glance” at the development of Second World War memory. Nonetheless, Vance analyzes only male Second World War memoirs, and consequently marginalizes women, even though female veterans have also published and donated their

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<sup>813</sup> Lou Marr – née Pound, “Lou Marr – née Pound,” in *Equal to the Challenge: An Anthology of Women's Experiences During World War II*, ed. Lisa Banister, (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2001), 268; Janet Gavin – née Watt, “Janet Gavin – née Watt,” in *Equal to the Challenge*, 293; Elizabeth Victoria ‘Vicki’ La Prairie— – née Wickam, “Elizabeth Victoria ‘Vicki’ La Prairie— – née Wickam,” in *Equal to the Challenge*, 401-3; Jean Bruce, *Back the Attack!: Canadian Women During the Second World War-at Home and Abroad* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1985), ix; Pamela Wakewich and Helen Smith, “The Politics of ‘Selective’ Memory: Re-visioning Canadian Women’s Wartime Work in the Public Record,” *Oral History* 34, no. 2 (2006): 56-68; Matthew Joseph Moore, “‘The Kiss of Death Bestowed with Gratitude’: The Postwar Treatment of Canada’s Second World War Merchant Navy, Redress, and the Negotiation of Veteran Identity (master’s thesis, Carleton University, 2015); Ian Radforth, “Ethnic Minorities and Wartime Injustices: Redress Campaigns and Historical Narratives in Late Twentieth-Century Canada,” in *Settling and Unsettling Memories: Essays in Canadian Public History*, ed. Nicole Neary and Peter Hodgins (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), 369-416; R. Scott Sheffield, “Canadian Aboriginal Veterans and the Veterans Charter after the Second World War,” in *Aboriginal Peoples and Military Participation: Canadian and International Perspectives*, ed. P. Whitney Lackenbauer, R. Scott Sheffield and Craig Leslie Mantle (Winnipeg: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007), 77, 91-4; and Lesley Ferris and Mary Tarantino, “Re-dressing Women’s History in the Special Operations Executive,” in *Working Memory: Women and Work in World War II*, ed. Marlene Kadar and Jeanne Perreault (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2015), 55. For examples of the work on war and memory, and gender and memory see: Martina Evans and Ken Lum, ed. *War and Memory in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); Lucy Noakes, *War and the British: Gender, Memory and National Identity* (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1998); Gill Abousnougga and David Machin, *The Language of War Monuments* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013); Jonathan F. Vance, *Death so Noble: Memory, Meaning, and the First World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997); and Sherrill Grace, Patrick Imbert and Tiffany Johnstone, ed. *Bearing Witness: Perspectives on War and Peace from the Arts and Humanities* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2012).

stories.<sup>814</sup>

### **Beulah Rosen: Scrapbooks as Deliberate Acts of Intervention**

Beulah Rosen' albums demonstrate that scrapbook makers purposefully constructed their narratives. She chose two different albums: a blank book entitled "Photographs" for her cartoons and a preformatted memory book, *Snaps and Scraps: My Life in the Army*, for wartime memorabilia. Most of the memorabilia are wartime periodicals on wartime artists. Rosen wrote "Beulah's Cartoons in Army [:] Mostly Reproductions" on the front cover of the blank book. It is not clear if Rosen modified *Snaps and Scraps* because the pages are unbound.

Jessica Helfand describes *Snaps and Scraps* as a blend of "market research" and "editorial intervention."<sup>815</sup> The publishers of *Snaps and Scraps* asserted that they listened to what servicemen wanted from a scrapbook. Servicemen apparently requested a storage pocket. It was placed at the back, and let the compiler collect material for the scrapbook. Forbes found the pocket useful. Her pocket contained photographs, souvenir postcards, correspondence and other mementos. The publishers of *Snaps and Scraps* instructed military personnel on what they should include. Although the foreword to *Snaps and Scraps* stated that "we have purposely omitted numerous sub-headings on the white sheets to enable you to enter your own data," an effort was made to guide what information was recorded. For example, the "Identification" page had a place for "my first photograph in uniform." *Snaps and Scraps* was one of several scrapbooks geared

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<sup>814</sup> Vance, "An Open Door to a Better Future: The Memory of Canada's Second World War," 461-75. The quotations come from page 462 and then page 472. See this dissertation's introduction for other examples of historians who privilege the male veteran.

<sup>815</sup> Helfand, *Scrapbooks: An American History*, 130.

towards military personnel; they differed slightly in format and what was recommended for inclusion. The American *My Buddy Book* had a designated place for a photograph and a chart which asked military personnel to fill in the officers' rank, name, outfit, address and obtain an autograph. The publishers of *My Buddy Book* provided more guidance than *Snaps and Scraps*, but both instructed scrapbook makers on what they should include in the album.<sup>816</sup>

The four Canadian servicewomen under consideration in this chapter who chose *Snaps and Scraps* added personal touches and resisted the publishers' direction. As Susan Tucker, Katherine Ott and Patricia Buckler state in their introduction to *The Scrapbook in American Life*, "Scrapbooks represent a mass-cultural form, but individually each is unique, authentic, and not easily reproducible."<sup>817</sup> Forbes left her preformatted pages blank. Rosen appears to have either cut out these pages or lost them. Munroe cut up some of the titled pages. Pimental filled in some sections and modified others. She did not take up the suggestion to name her officers. Pimental crossed off the subheading of "Officers" and replaced it with "Wrens." She also might have added in extra pages. Her scrapbook contains two "Identification" pages separated by pages of souvenirs. According to Helfand, American servicemen typically omitted or did not fill in all preformatted pages.<sup>818</sup> The differences between the servicewomen's response to the Identification

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<sup>816</sup> Forbes, *Snaps and Scraps: My Life in the Navy*; Helfand, *Scrapbooks: An American History*, 129-33. The quotation comes from Forbes' scrapbook.

<sup>817</sup> Susan Tucker, Katherine Ott, and Patricia Buckler, "Introduction," *The Scrapbook in American Life*, ed. Susan Tucker, Katherine Ott, and Patricia Buckler (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006), 12.

<sup>818</sup> Forbes, *Snaps and Scraps: My Life in the Navy*; Munroe, *Snaps and Scraps: My Life in the Army*; Pimental, *Second World War Naval Scrapbook*; Rosen, *Snaps and Scraps: My Life in the Army*; and Helfand, *Scrapbooks: An American History*, 129-33.

pages demonstrate that servicewomen purposely crafted their narratives. The differences also might suggest that once women had decided that their story was worth recording, it then seemed important to share it accurately, to correct misconceptions, and not be bound by guidelines as to what should be included and, by default, excluded from the scrapbooks.

Rosen also illustrates that some servicewomen invested significant time and energy in their scrapbooks and that they attempted to guide future researcher's interpretations. She pasted an explanatory note on the inside of the front cover in scrapbook with her cartoons [see Figure 2]. The white-out and use of two different colour pens in the note indicate a careful editing that possibly occurred at different times. In her note, Rosen summarized her wartime service and contextualized the material. She stated that she drew many of these cartoons in her "spare time" while she worked in army recruitment during war. The cartoons appeared in wartime periodicals that were produced at army headquarters and many were left unsigned in the publications. By identifying them as hers, she used her scrapbook to claim credit for her contributions to wartime morale.<sup>819</sup>

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<sup>819</sup> Rosen, Photographs. For a discussion of the newsletter, see Tina Davidson, "A Woman's Right to Charm and Beauty": Maintaining the Feminine Ideal in the Canadian Women's Army Corps." *Atlantis* 26, no. 1 (Fall/Winter 2001): 45-54. For example of her unsigned cartoons in the wartime periodicals see "The Dreams of Jenny G.D." *C.W.A.C. Newsletter* 2, no.1 (January 1945): 13. For an analysis of her artwork, see Laura Brandon, "Women Artists and the 1944 Canadian Army Exhibition," *Canadian Military History* 18, no. 1 (Winter 2008): 49-54.

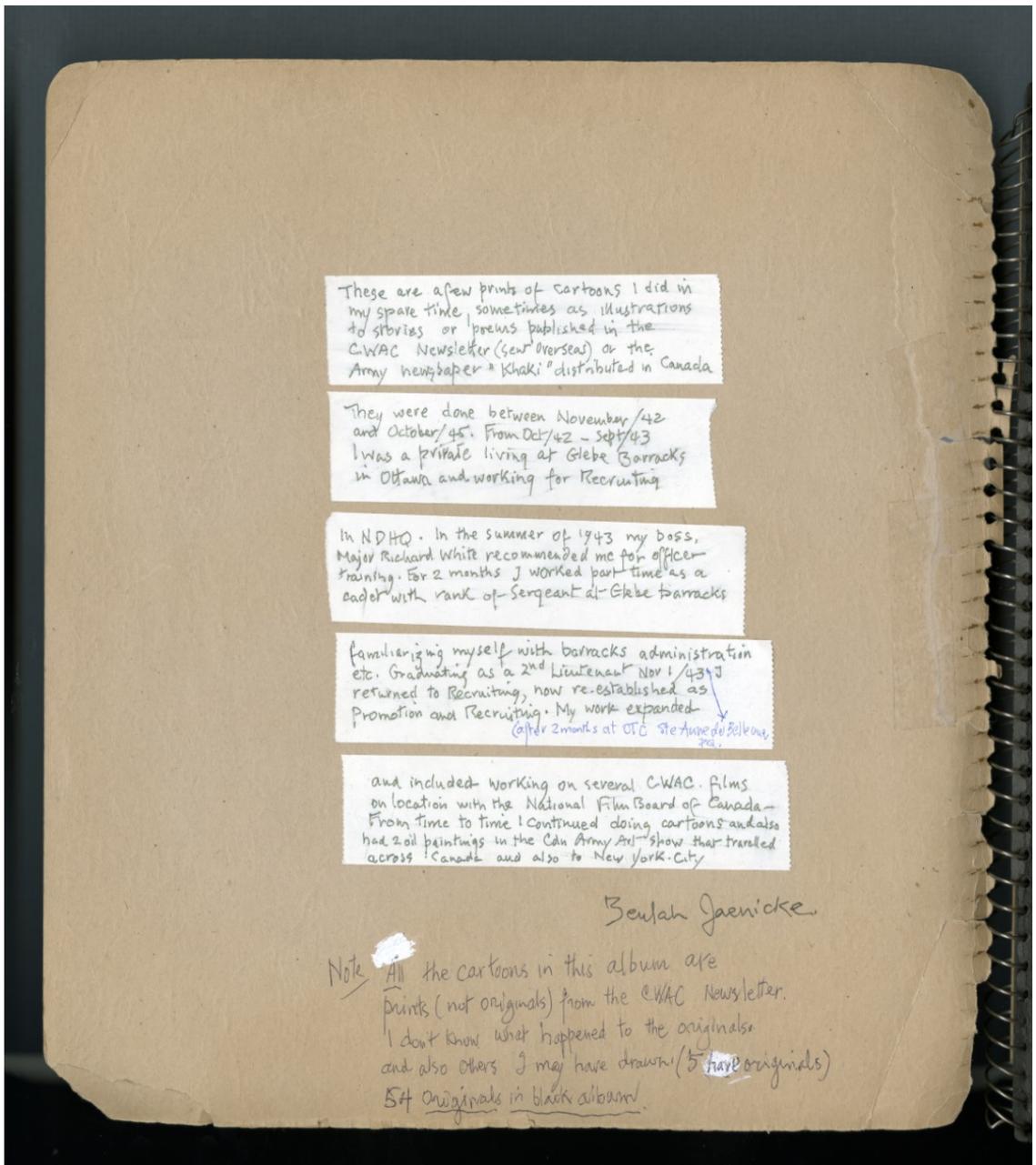


Figure 2: Scrapbook of Lieutenant Beulah Irene Rosen (nee Jaenicke), CWM 20060087-006\_inside cover, George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum. The section that starts with “Note” reads “All the cartoons in the album are prints (not originals) and also others I may have drawn (5 have originals) 54 originals in black album.”

Donna Knaff states that cartoons were very popular in wartime America and served multiple functions. Some Americans clipped cartoons from periodicals and preserved them in scrapbooks. American and Canadian government officials used cartoons to sell war bonds and support Victory Loan Campaigns. Cartoons also helped Americans and Canadians negotiate wartime anxieties over women's entrance into the work force. Rosen's fellow CWAC and artist, Lieutenant Molly Lamb Bobak participated into these negotiations through her illustrated war diary. Bobak was the only female official Canadian war artist. English scholar Tanya Schaap argues that Bobak's diary was a "subtle social commentary" and a "carefully crafted, contextually coherent work" on the public image of military women and wartime gender roles. Bobak's illustration of inept female recruits was not the glamorous vision of femininity described in media reports and recruitment literature.<sup>820</sup>

Rosen simultaneously continued wartime negotiations over femininity and attempted to guide her archival legacy in her scrapbook of cartoons. The annotations on some of her cartoons indicate her awareness that her audience might have little experience with wartime conditions and military service. For instance, she contextualized one cartoon which featured a mob of civilian women in a fuss over rayon hose, and two smiling CWAC servicewomen, who stood apart from the crowd [See Figure 3].

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<sup>820</sup> Rosen, Photographs; Knaff, *Beyond Rosie the Riveter*, 10-19; and Tanya Schaap, "'Girl Takes Drastic Step': Molly Lamb Bobak's W110278 — *The Diary of a CWAC*," in *Working Memory: Women and Work in World War II*, ed. Marlene Kadar and Jeanne Perreault (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2015), 171-190. The first quotation comes from Schaap, 172. The second comes from Schaap, 189.

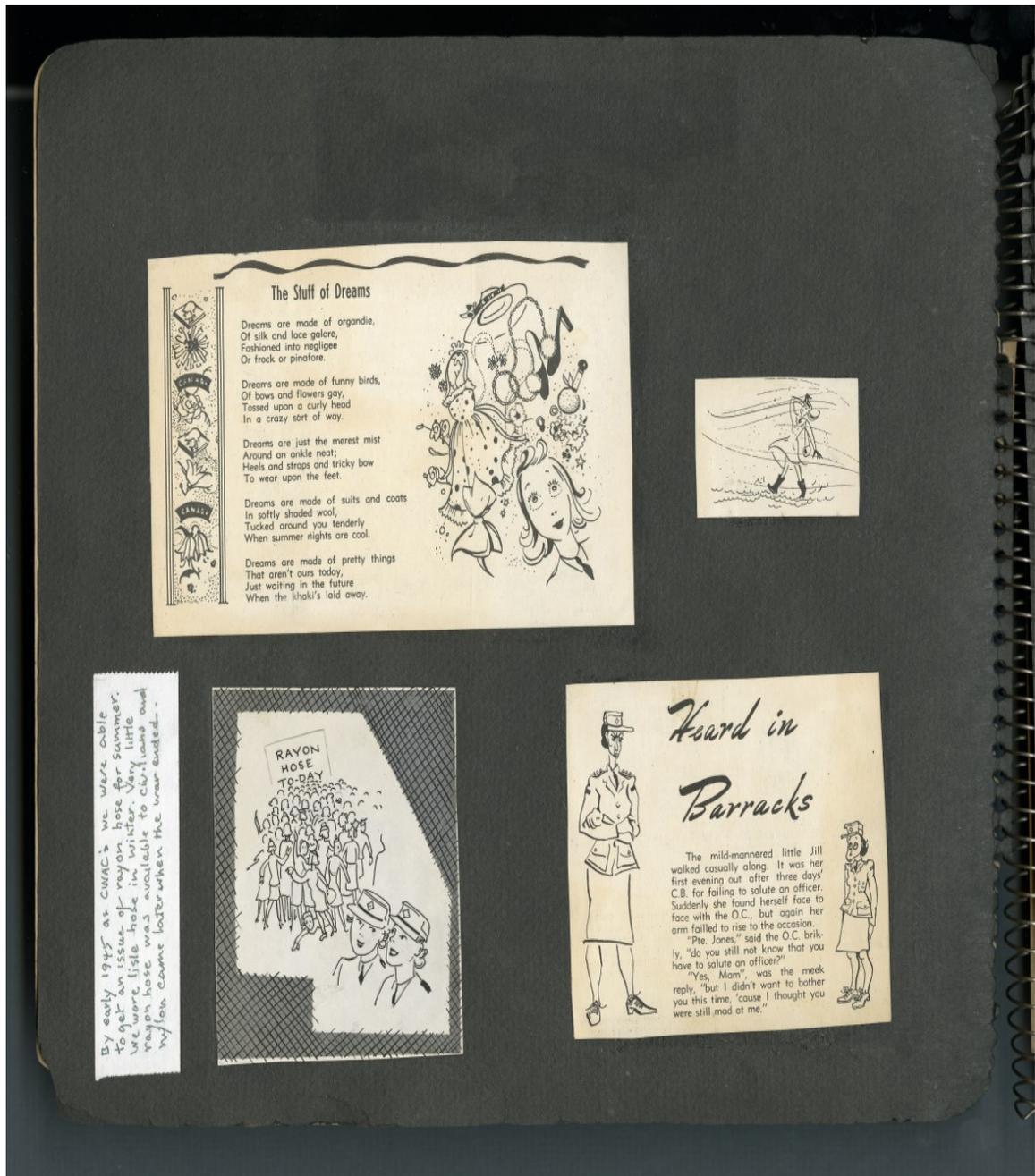


Figure 3: Scrapbook of Lieutenant Beulah Rosen (nee Jaenicke), CWM 20060087-006\_p2, George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum. The handwriting reads, “By early 1945, CWAC’s were able to get an issue of rayon hose for summer. We wore lisle hose in winter. Very little rayon hose was available to civilians and nylon came in later when the war ended.”

Rosen explained the different reactions. She remarked that, unlike civilian women, CWAC servicewomen had reliable access to rayon hose in 1945. Rosen showcased her firsthand knowledge and instructed researchers how servicewomen benefited from their service. During the war, Rosen worked in recruitment and the “Rayon Hose To-day” cartoon conformed to recruitment devices. Canadian and American recruitment material stressed that servicewomen retained their femininity, and highlighted clothing as a benefit of military service.

Yet Rosen also played, to some extent, with fears around female authority figures. To the right of the Rayon-Hose cartoon is an illustrated story of a tall female officer sternly lecturing a smaller shamefaced servicewoman for failing to salute. On the one hand, the story reinforced gender roles because it showed women’s unfamiliarity with military procedure. On the other hand, as Knaff discusses in the American context, the character of the “giant women army female officer” evoked anxieties around female masculinity. Together, Rosen’s cartoons and the text of the story illustrated that some women wanted power. Knaff describes cartoons where the giant officer loomed over a smaller emasculated man, but the smaller figure in Rosen’s cartoons was a servicewoman.<sup>821</sup> The annotations illustrate that scrapbooks, like published histories, are deliberate creations. Rosen’s careful editing and preservation of the cartoons demonstrate that wartime servicewomen crafted their place in the armed services and the historiography of the Second World War through their scrapbooks.

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<sup>821</sup> Rosen, “Rayon Hose-To-day,” Photographs; Rosen, “Heard in Barracks,” Photographs; Knaff, *Beyond Rosie the Riveter*, 20-47; 82-8, 111-32, 160-3; McEuen, *Making War, Making Women*, 142-9, 171-6; Pierson, “*They’re Still Women After All*,” 139-49; and Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 179-80.

## Revisiting Wartime Sexuality (Im)morality

At first, CWAC Private Minnie Eleanor Gray's album of her wartime overseas service appears to be a visual travel record. Gray, a Black Canadian, served as the nursing orderly and chaperone to the CWAC Pipe Band. She opened her album with photographs of the CWAC Pipe Band playing aboard the "Ile de France." Over the next few pages, Gray documented some of the sights she and the band saw in the Holland, France, and Belgium. She placed a photograph of a windmill on a page she entitled "Dutch Scenes" and she included an image of the Eiffel Tower. The viewer then sees images of military weddings, newspaper clippings on the pipe band, and memorabilia such as ticket stubs.<sup>822</sup>

The narrative changes half-way to two-thirds of the way through the album. Gray inserted the VD pamphlet entitled *Three Queens but I'll Pass* [See Figure 4].<sup>823</sup> The three queens are a potential female sexual partner (queen one), who was a carrier for syphilis (queen two), and gonorrhea (queen three). The pamphlet was placed on the same page as two Canadian Army Photographs of the CWAC Pipe Band and a series of souvenir postcards from Tir National, a gun range in Brussels, Belgium. The Germans executed First World War British nurse Edith Cavell outside Tir National. The narrative subsequently reverts back to visual travel record, with publicity material on the pipe

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<sup>822</sup> Private Minnie Eleanor Gray, Photograph Album of Minnie Eleanor Gray in Europe, George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum's Military History Research Centre, CWM Photo Archives, 52C 4 89.8, Control No. 20110057-021.

<sup>823</sup> An open source archive identifies the pamphlet as American. <https://archive.org/details/1944ThreeQueens>. However, Pierson's discussion and archival evidence indicates that it was distributed by the Canadian armed forces. The pamphlet creators advised military personnel who contacted VD to go to Early Prevention Treatment [EPT] station. Both Pierson and Keshen have documented that EPT were part of the Canadian armed forces VD-control strategy. See Pierson, "They're Still Women After All," 199-207, 285-7, n 50-90; and Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 137-8.

band, souvenirs such as mess dinner menus, and flowers and photographs from weddings.<sup>824</sup>

Gray's inclusion of the pamphlet was unusual and raises a series of questions. Out of the over twenty-five albums examined, hers was the only one to have a VD pamphlet. The pamphlet stands out because it marks a sharp departure from the items before and after it. The pamphlet prompts questions because it is unusual and because Gray did not explain her choice. Did Gray place the pamphlet on that page because it fit on the page and she did not know where else to put it? Was she implying something about the women in the army photo of the CWAC pipe band? As Susan Tucker, Katherine Ott and Patricia Buckler explain, scrapbooks "invite rereading" because they are ambiguous sources. Compilers do not always provide the contextual material needed to understand the compilers' choices. Scrapbook makers often tell a story through a series of fragments.<sup>825</sup> Gray's choice invites a rereading of scholarly analysis of servicewomen's sexual "immorality."

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<sup>824</sup> A. A. Hoehling, "The Story of Edith Cavell," *The American Journal of Nursing* 57, No. 10 (Oct., 1957): 1320-1322; Nic Rigby, "Nurse Edith Cavell and the British World War One Propaganda Campaign," *BBC News*, October 12, 2015, accessed March 15, 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-norfolk-34401643>; and Minnie Eleanor Gray, Diary, George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum's Military History Research Centre, Textual Records 58A 1 124.22, Control No. 20110057-018.

<sup>825</sup> Tucker, Ott, Buckler, "Introduction," 19- 24.

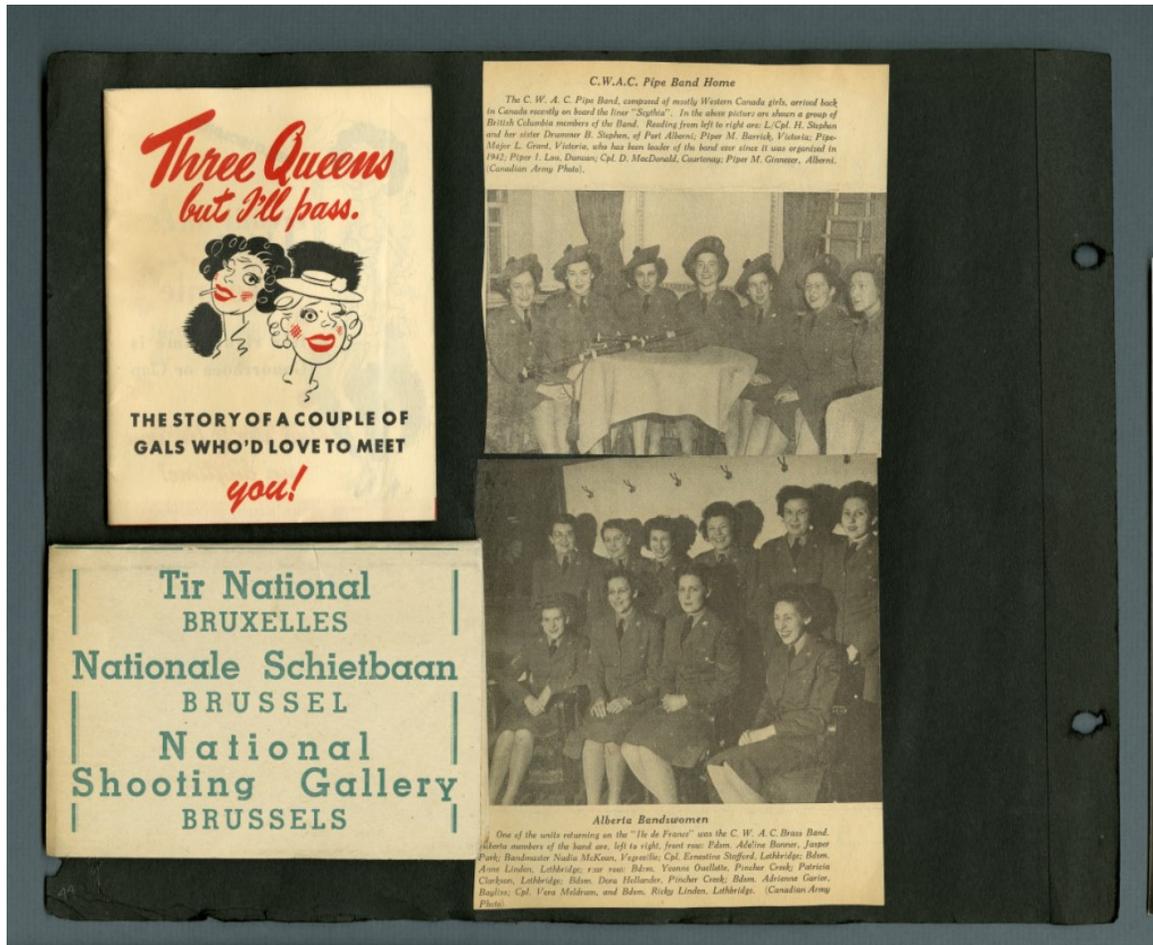


Figure 4: Photograph album of Minnie Eleanor Gray in Europe, CWM 20110057-021\_p44, George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum.

Ruth Roach Pierson analyzes the *Three Queens but I'll Pass* pamphlet as an “unrivalled” example of male anti-VD literature that depicted the “‘loose woman’ as a menace....” As Pierson argues, the pamphlet presented women as the carriers of VD, and “personified gonorrhea and syphilis as two adult females.” *Three Queens but I'll Pass* was, as Pierson’s says, “distributed generally.” She emphasizes that the lady/loose women binary shaped how military officials combatted VD. A “lady” was expected to be chaste and pure. Army officials assumed that “pure” servicewomen needed to be sheltered. Pierson states that, as a result of these assumptions, the material directed at servicewomen was less graphic than men’s anti-VD material.<sup>826</sup> A tone of outrage runs through her discussion. She stresses that a senior male officer “recommended cancellation of the printing of *Three Queens but I'll Pass*, not because it was degrading to women, but because it “could be interpreted as an undignified presentation of a serious problem.”<sup>827</sup> Pierson’s discussion presents servicewomen as victims, and as “scapegoats” of the patriarchal male military. She has since acknowledged that her anger at the armed services was informed by her personal marital situation, recalling that “[w]riting and then publishing an article in which the military and medical authorities of an earlier era were exposed for holding and acting on discriminatory and scapegoating attitudes towards women provided me with a public platform for my outrage....”<sup>828</sup>

Gray’s insertion of the pamphlet suggests that servicewomen were not as innocent

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<sup>826</sup> Pierson, “*They’re Still Women After All*,” 188-214, 286 n 85. The quotations come from page 206.

<sup>827</sup> Pierson, “*They’re Still Women After All*,” 206-7.

<sup>828</sup> Ruth Roach Pierson, “Archival Research as Refuge, Penance, and Revenge,” *Queen's Quarterly* 114, no. 4 (Winter 2007): 490-99. The quotation comes from page 498. Pierson bravely and openly writes about her personal situation when researching this chapter.

as military officials assumed. It complicates Pierson's description of a gender-segregated VD program, in which women were informed that they should abstain from sex and only men were offered condoms. At the very least, it implies that some women had access to the men's anti-VD literature. Her inclusion of the pamphlet shows that some women found alternatives to the limited sexual education that they received from the military. Gray was not alone in her access to male anti-VD material. CWAC veteran Ruth Tierney describes a company sergeant who showed them the sexual educational material designed for men. Gray served as a nursing orderly and may have obtained the pamphlet in the course of the duties.<sup>829</sup>

Since Gray inserted the pamphlet without commentary, the reasons why Gray chose to include that pamphlet will remain a matter of speculation. Nevertheless, the fact that she pasted the pamphlet into her "war record" and that it remained there when it was donated to the Canadian War Museum are suggestive. Her album demonstrates how the examination of scrapbooks offers new insights and raises questions about previous scholarly interpretations. Our discussion now turns to how scrapbooks expose a limitation of previous scholarship: the inadequacy of the single war focus.

**CWAC Staff Sergeant Olga Munroe: "I thought this very good indeed, stripes & all"**

The Canadian War Museum's Military Research Centre houses four albums and other documents attributed to CWAC Staff Sergeant Olga Munroe. The first album,

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<sup>829</sup> Gray, Photograph album of Minnie Eleanor Gray in Europe; Ruth Tierney, *Petticoat Warfare* (Belleville, ON: Mika Publishing Company, 1984), 47-9.

“Snaps and Scraps,” focuses on her experiences as a private from 1943 to 1946. The second, a photograph album, spans a similar period. The third “photo collection” has a longer time span. It contains photos of her military service in the 1950s, ribbons from CWAC veterans’ reunions in the 2000s, and documents from the Second World War. One of the Second World War documents is her wartime driver’s licence and it comes after the ribbons, blending the two periods. Newspaper clippings on reunions and peacetime army women fill most of the pages of the fourth scrapbook. Many of the newspaper clippings are undated. Based on the dates that are provided, most of them are from the 1950s onward. Munroe also placed reunion ribbons, obituaries for Second World War veterans, and other tributes to military personnel in the fourth scrapbook. The scope of the collection is a testament to Munroe’s dedication to and investment in the armed services.<sup>830</sup>

Munroe told stories of public acknowledgement in her fourth album. Her scrapbook includes official government invitations to events honouring military personnel, some of which focused on female veterans. In addition, she preserved press coverage of events celebrating multi-generational bonds. For example, Munroe covered a page with a newspaper article entitled “Peacetime Role for Women Outlined at CWAC reunion,” hand-dated “Sunday 22/1953.” Past and current military women attended and

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<sup>830</sup> Album 1: Munroe, *Snaps and Scraps: My Life in the Army*; Album 2: Staff Sergeant Olga Munroe, Second World War Photograph Album, George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum’s Military History Research Centre, CWM Photo Archives, Photo Archives 52C 4 100.1, Control No. 20130024-011; Album 3: Staff Sergeant Olga Munroe, Photograph Album, George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum’s Military History Research Centre, CWM Photo Archives, 52C 6 45.2, Control No. 20130024-010; and Album 4: Staff Sergeant Olga Munroe, Scrapbook of Olga Munroe, George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum’s Military History Research Centre, CWM Archives, 58A 1 290.12, Control No. 20130024-012.

mingled at the reunion. The peacetime group of female staff officers sat at the head table. The unnamed journalist recognized women as sources of military knowledge, and reported that veterans remembered the parade square and technique. A group of “80 reservists and veterans” marched in a parade on Parliament Hill. Recognition mattered to Munroe: she held onto material that acknowledged her service, the service of veterans in general, and a female military tradition.<sup>831</sup>

Munroe further documented her military affiliations through an extensive collection of membership cards. She had membership cards that spanned the years from 1955 to 2004: 106 Manning Depot Sergeants Mess (Reserve Force) in Toronto (1955 to 1957), the Canadian Corps Association (1960s to 2004), the CWAC Association of Toronto and District (late 1960), the Composite Sergeants’ Mess at the College St. Armoury (mid-1950s to the mid-1960s), and the Toronto & District Garrison Sergeant’s Association from the early 1960s.<sup>832</sup> These membership cards help trace the trajectory of her career, providing information about her postings and ranks. The sheer scope and number of the cards indicates that Munroe valued being an army woman and veteran. Military membership and credentials were important to her.

A photograph suggests that Munroe shared details of military accomplishments with her family. Historians have written how service folk maintained relationships with letters and photographs; they packaged their military service in order to not worry loved ones. Munroe carefully presented herself as a skilled military woman. There is a loose

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<sup>831</sup> Album 4: Munroe, Scrapbook of Olga Munroe.

<sup>832</sup> Membership Cards of Olga Munroe, George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum’s Military History Research Centre, CWM Archives, 58A 1 290.12, Control No. 20130024-015.

photograph of Munroe with two other military personnel. On the back of the photograph, Munroe inscribed, “Yours truly, Malcolm Weir & friend Rosemarie Sawchuk taken in our mess after our last mess dinner in Dec. I thought this very good indeed, stripes & all so its [sic] for you Mom.”<sup>833</sup> She drew her mother’s attention to her stripes. Stripes signify military rank and accomplishment. It is unclear what Munroe thought was “very good.” The phrase could have referred to the mess dinner or the photograph. The phrase indicated Munroe was proud of her military service and wanted her mother to know her achievements. Her comments also reveal that Munroe expected that her mother would take pride in her military achievements. It is unknown whether Munroe actually sent her mother the photograph. The photograph’s preservations indicate that Munroe and possibly her mother considered it worth preserving a record of Munroe’s military triumphs.

Munroe retained other records of her accomplishments. She kept a partially completed Canadian Forces’ Decoration (CD) application. The CD is given to military personnel who have served honorably for twelve years.<sup>834</sup> Munroe had accumulated eleven years, eleven months and thirty days when the application was filled out.

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<sup>833</sup> Photographs of Olga Munroe in Uniform, George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum’s Military History Research Centre, CWM Photo Archives 52A 4 62.16, Control No. 20130024-008, Photographs of Olga Munroe in Uniform; For example, see Tim Cook, “Wet Canteens and Worrying Mothers: Alcohol, Soldiers and Temperance Groups in the Great War,” *Social History/Histoire Sociale* 35 no. 70 (2003): 312; Tim Cook, “‘My Whole Heart and Soul is in this War’: The Letters and War Service of Sergeant G.L. Ormsby,” *Canadian Military History* 15, no. 1 (Winter 2006): 51-63; Jody Perrun, *The Patriotic Consensus: Unity, Morale, and the Second World War in Winnipeg* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2014), 184-214.

<sup>834</sup> Directorate of Honours and Recognition, “Canadian Honours Chart- Canadian Forces’ Decoration (CD),” accessed 3 April 2016, <http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/dhr-ddhr/chc-tdh/chart-tableau-eng.asp?ref=CD>. For a history of the award, see Christopher McCreery, *The Canadian Forces’ Decoration* (Ottawa: Directorate of Honours and Recognition, 2011).

According to the form, she served from 25 October 1943 to 12 April 1946, and again from 10 September 1951 to 23 April 1961.<sup>835</sup> Evidence that she was awarded a CD is buried in the fourth album. The reader sees the top portion of her invitation to a “Tri Service Investiture Ceremony” at first glance. The rest of it is initially blocked by an envelope addressed to a “Staff Sergeant O. M. G. Munroe.” Handwriting on the back reveals that Olga Munroe, another CWAC, and a nursing sister, “Rec’d CD [on] 16 Sep 1961.” The preservation method illustrates the interactive and performative elements of scrapbooks. She kept her invitation fully intact because she only glued down the envelope and slid the invitation inside. The viewer must take the invitation out in order to access Munroe’s entire performance of an acknowledged female military expert.<sup>836</sup> When read together, Munroe’s collection provides evidence of a woman with a lasting association with the armed services. Her relationship ranged from re-enlistment to the retention of membership cards to attendance at commemorations.

### **Isabel Macneill: “A woman in complete control”**

The records preserved in the fonds of Isabel Janet Macneill at Library and Archives Canada (LAC) are more impersonal, but still demonstrate her long-term identifications with the armed services. There is a telegram dated 1945 from her sister and brother-in-law, but most of the records are published documents from the 1940s and 1950s. There are folders of newspaper clippings, photocopies of those clippings, a

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<sup>835</sup> Application for the Award of the Canadian Forces' Decoration, George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum’s Military History Research Centre, CWM Archives, 58A 1 290.12, Control No. 20130024-021; and Album 4, Munroe, Scrapbook of Olga Munroe.

<sup>836</sup> Album 4, Munroe, Scrapbook of Olga Munroe; and Tucker, Ott and Buckler, “Introduction,” 2-25, 281 n6.

booklet about a WRCNS reunion in August 1958, a wartime Wren regulation book, and an unbound scrapbook. Macneill's archival record at LAC conveys her continued investment in her public persona of an experienced decorated military officer.

Nothing in the scrapbook or archival description explicitly identifies Macneill as the author of the scrapbook, although there are hints that she compiled or at least edited it before donating the items in 1980. It would have been out of character for Macneill to have donated the documents without first subjecting them to a careful review. She was an experienced administrator, working as the Superintendent of the Ontario Girls Training School (a reform school) before she returned to naval service. She served for approximately three years in the peacetime forces. Furthermore, Macneill took pride in and repeatedly told stories that showcased official recognition of her administrative skills. In the 1980s, Macneill told journalist Don Lawson that the Minister of Reform Institutions personally phoned her after the Second World War ended and asked her to "run the Ontario Training School for Girls in Coburg." When she objected on the grounds that she was "not a social worker," the Minister replied that "they wanted an administrator, not a social worker. He wanted someone to run the place." Lawson characterizes Macneill as "a woman in complete control" of herself and others.<sup>837</sup> It is likely that Macneill, a military-trained female authority figure, would have deliberately formed her archival legacy.

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<sup>837</sup> Biographical File for MacNeill, Isabel Janet at DHH; Don Lawson, "She Commands Respect," *The Nova Scotian* 5, no 27 (July 1986), 4, Library and Archives Canada (Hereafter LAC), Vancouver Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service Association Fonds, MG28 I 471, vol. 4; LAC, Biography in archival description for LAC, Isabel Janet Macneill Fonds, MG30 E 373 1; Kelly Hannah-Moffat, *Punishment in Disguise: Penal Governance and Federal Imprisonment of Women in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 99-100; and Greer, *The Girls of the King's Navy*, 39-46.

The scrapbook maker, presumably Macneill, repeatedly moved beyond the war years. She chose articles that push the narrative into peacetime. For example, the scrapbook includes an article that explained why Lieutenant Alexis Alvey “Believe[d] Wrens Should Have Permanent Place” in the peacetime navy. There were also articles on Macneill’s postwar job. The author of one clipping identified Macneill as the Superintendent of the Ontario Girls Training School and reported on Macneill’s speech on juvenile delinquency, which she delivered at a banquet at Port Hope United Church. The articles are undated, but textual clues make it possible to date them to the postwar period. Another article discussed how the girls’ school relocated from Galt to Coburg “during the war,” because the Wrens needed a training school.

The articles on Macneill’s work as the Superintendent of the Ontario Girls Training School act as a postscript to her wartime service. She had commanded the wartime Wrens naval training school at Galt, the HMCS *Conestoga*, from October 1942 to 1945. Not surprisingly, then, *Conestoga* frequently appeared throughout the album. The compiler filled several pages with a wartime *Mayfair* photo-essay on the training ship. There are multiple pieces on the decommissioning of *Conestoga*. Macneill was identified as the ship’s senior officer in articles on the ship, and in profiles of her. Her recurring ties to Galt are not immediately obvious. The viewer has to read the texts and not simply flip the page in order to spot the link between her wartime service and her postwar job. In addition, the coverage of her postwar connections does not stand out because it seems a logical choice in a scrapbook that concentrates on Macneill’s career. Still, it is the unobtrusiveness that makes the extension into the postwar years remarkable.

Instead of ending with the decommissioning of the ship, the compiler extended past the demobilization of the wartime Wrens into the peacetime. Her repeated connection to the training school at Galt was another layer, another nod to the peace. The scrapbook maker connected the postwar and peacetime periods with the preservation of Macneill's continued ties to *Conestoga*/Ontario Girls Training School at Galt.<sup>838</sup>

The compiler revised some wartime periodicals, and, in the process, further extended the time coverage. Someone, presumably Macneill, edited the material pasted into the scrapbook. She modified the public record with extra information. For instance, someone added that Rear Admiral Desmond William Piers "retired from active service [in the] RCN in Sept[ember] 1966," and had served as the "Chief Canadian [member of the] Joint Staff, Washington, D.C." The information was placed beside a wartime article on a Wren graduation parade. Macneill and her brother-in-law, Piers, performed ceremonial functions at this event. The compiler of this "mini-history" reviewed more than the war years.

Like Rosen, Macneill showed her continued ties to the navy when she ensured that future researchers had accurate information. Someone, presumably Macneill, crossed out information about her pre-war background on three separate articles that were placed on separate pages several pages apart. For example, someone edited "'Yes Ma'am,'

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<sup>838</sup> All the clippings cited in this note, come from LAC, Isabel Janet Macneill Fonds, MG30 E 373 1, Scrapbook; "Believes Wrens Should Have Permanent Place," unattributed, undated clipping; "Girls School Moving To Galt, Boys Will Train Here," undated, unattributed clipping; "Banquet Honours Girls' Group Leaders," undated, unattributed clipping, "A Wren's Life Abroad HMCS Conestoga," *Mayfair*, July 1943, 22, 23; Iris Smallwood, "Wren Training School At Galt Will Close," undated, unattributed clipping; Rev. T.T. Faichney, RCN, "On H.M.C.S. Conestoga," *The United Church Observer*, undated clipping; and Iris Smallwood, "Wren Training School at Galt Will Close," undated, unattributed newspaper clipping.

Ratings Say to Navy Ship Commander” with two different writing utensils. The editor scribbled over the fact Macneill had attended the University of London, England, with blue ink, and deleted Macneill’s job as assistant director at Mountain Playhouse in Jannerstown, Pennsylvania, with blue ink and black permanent marker. The Mountain Playhouse information struck a nerve. “NO!” was written underneath the crossed out lines.<sup>839</sup> The “No” suggests that the information was incorrect. The (mis)information was deleted from an article that the compiler omitted from the album. Someone crossed out the Mountain Playhouse on the second copy of an article that appeared in the scrapbook. Once again, the exclamation “NO!” was placed under the excised information. Blue ink splotches mar the duplicate, which possibly accounts for why the chronicler used a different copy in the scrapbook. It is located in a folder of loose unused clippings.<sup>840</sup> The thoroughness of the corrections illustrate that Macneill curated her military legacy and tried to guide how researchers interpreted her background.

The folder of loose newspaper clippings represents an unfinished scrapbook of sorts that document, among other things, her return and the reformation of the Wrens in the 1950’s. Macneill, or her compiler, relied heavily on newspapers for the scrapbook and Macneill donated duplicates of texts that were pasted into her scrapbook. She gave LAC

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<sup>839</sup> “‘Yes Ma’am,’ Ratings Say to Navy Ship Commander,” unattributed, undated clipping, LAC, Isabel Janet Macneill Fonds, MG30 E 373 1, scrapbook. For the other examples, see “Lt.-Cmdr. Isabel Macneill: First Women Captain in British Navy Heads WRCNS Training Ship,” undated clipping; and Florence Elliott, Personalities Unlimited, “She’s Captain of the Only R.C.N. Ship Commanded by a Woman,” *Saturday Night*, March 4, 1944.

<sup>840</sup> “Halifax Girl Heads Wrens Establishment,” undated clipping, LAC, Isabel Janet Macneill Fonds, MG30 E 373 1, Folder, I.J. Macneill, Newspapers, (originals), n.d, 1942-1946; and Florence Elliott, Personalities Unlimited, “She’s Captain of the Only R.C.N. Ship Commanded by a Woman,” *Saturday Night*, March 4, 1944,” LAC, Isabel Janet Macneill Fonds, MG30 E 373 1, Folder, I.J. Macneill, Newspapers, (originals), n.d, 1942-1946.

a *Vancouver Herald* article by Janet Caple. Caple asserted that “the plans [for the employment of regular force Wrens] are in the capable hands of Comm[ander] Isabel Janet Macneill, OBE [Officer of the Order of the British Empire], the first and only Canadian woman to command a ship in the navy.”<sup>841</sup> The reference to Macneill’s decorated wartime service legitimized her appointment to oversee women’s entrance into the navy’s regular forces. It positioned Macneill as a female military expert with the right credentials. In addition, the reiteration of her wartime background hinted at a female military tradition because Caple revealed that Macneill linked the two periods. The decision to keep and later donate Caple’s article illustrates Macneill’s commitment to a public persona of an experienced, military woman.

Similarly, Macneill’s decision to keep and donate a souvenir booklet from a WRCNS reunion in August 1958 reveals that she maintained a lengthy relationship with the navy and the naval community. Macneill sat at the head table, toasted the wartime and peacetime navy, and spoke during the association meeting at the 1958 reunion. She took pride in her active role: Macneill donated a souvenir booklet put out by *The Wren Newsletter*.<sup>842</sup>

When examined in full, Macneill’s fonds tell the story of a woman who maintained multiple relationships with the navy and was recognized for her contributions.

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<sup>841</sup> Janet Caple, “Off the Ocean Wave: New Career Open to Women,” *Vancouver Herald*, March 30, 1955; LAC, Isabel Janet Macneill Fonds, MG30 E 373 1, Folder I.J. Macneill, Press Clippings (Photocopies), nd. 1955. See also “Women’s Navy Career has Many Facets Short of Sea Service, Commander Says,” undated, unattributed clipping, LAC, Isabel Janet Macneill Fonds, MG30 E 373 1, Folder I.J. Macneill, Press Clippings (Photocopies), nd. 1955.

<sup>842</sup> Vancouver Reunion August 1958 Souvenir Edition of *The Wren Newsletter* (Wingham, ON: n.d.), 5-7, 26, 31-3, LAC, Isabel Janet Macneill Fonds, MG30 E 373 1, Folder Memorabilia., n.d. 1943-1958.

Macneill's large archival collection reveals that she moved between different types of connection to the navy. She transitioned from active service to veteran status during the Second World War and again in peace. Some of the connections overlapped. Her familial connection through her brother-in-law's lengthy peacetime career existed when she resumed her naval service and when she participated at reunions.<sup>843</sup> These relationships spanned several decades and entailed re-enlistment, reunions, a familial connection, and a determined editing of her archival legacy.

### **The Anniversary Album**

Past and current generations of airwomen mingle in an album at the Department of National Defence's Directorate of History and Heritage. A handwritten note paper-clipped to the anonymous album declares it to be a "Souvenir Book of the Twentieth Anniversary of the enlistment of airwomen into the RCAF during World War II—and—the Tenth Anniversary of airwomen enrolled in the RCAF Regular and Reserve Force."<sup>844</sup> It has been retained in a collection of material on women in the RCAF that contains RCAF press releases, brief histories of women in the RCAF, loose newspapers clippings, recruiting pamphlets, and RCAF photos from the 1940s to 1960s. Like the fonds as the whole, the album positions servicewomen as having a lengthy, almost continuous, presence in the air force for twenty plus years. The album also makes clear that senior air

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<sup>843</sup> For a summary of his career, see "PIERS, Desmond William ("Debbie"), Acting Lieutenant-Commander (CM) - Distinguished Service Cross (DSC)," Awards to the Royal Canadian Navy, accessed Marc 3, 2016, <http://www.rcnvr.com/P%20-%20RCN%20-%20WW2.php>; Dan van der Vat, "Obituary: Rear Admiral Desmond Piers," *The Guardian*, November 22, 2005, accessed March 3, 2016, <http://www.theguardian.com/news/2005/nov/22/guardianobituaries.secondworldwar>.

<sup>844</sup> "Souvenir Book of the Twentieth Anniversary of the enlistment of airwomen into the RCAF during World War II – and – the Tenth Anniversary of airwomen enrolled in the RCAF Regular and Reserve Force," (hereafter Souvenir Book), DHH, 79/208, folder 3.

force officials sanctioned and disseminated this storyline as part of the 1961 anniversary festivities.

The compiler of the anniversary album crafted the narrative of a female air force tradition and showed officials' commitment to the "almost continuous presence" storyline in three ways.<sup>845</sup> First, the compiler of the album recorded the senior official's suggestion that stations should host events which brought wartime and peacetime women together. The album offers photographic hints that some stations followed through on the advice. Most of this section pays attention to the second method: the compiler pasted in multiple iterations of a three-page historical backgrounder, called "Historical Notes—Women in the RCAF—1941-1960." Third, career military women were celebrated in the album.

The compiler of the album is unknown, but the contents of the album provide some clues. It was likely created by someone working in Air Force Headquarters (AFHQ). The maker included a program from a 1961 reunion that had a hand-printed S.I. Evans on the front page. Squadron Leader Sylvia Evans, the Assistant for Women Personnel (A/WP), was the reunion's luncheon speaker. In addition, the compiler had access to military correspondence. The chronicler glued in a signed memorandum on anniversary celebrations. This memorandum was sent on Evan's behalf.<sup>846</sup>

Air Vice-Marshal W.A. Orr, the Air Member for Personnel, explained AFHQ's vision for the anniversary celebrations in a February 1961 missive to the Air Officers

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<sup>845</sup> It is not known if there was more than one compiler. The chapter uses "compiler" to improve the narrative flow.

<sup>846</sup> Souvenir Book, Ex-Airwomen's Reunion Booklet, Toronto, Ontario, November 4, 1961 in Souvenir Book; and Memorandum From (unclear) on behalf of Squadron Leader Sylvia Evans, for Chief of the Air Staff to AOC/ADC, AOC/ATC, AOC/TC, AOC/NAC, AOC/ANC, AOC/1 Air Division, 7 March 1961, in Souvenir Book.

Commanding. Orr's text, which outlined the ideal time to hold celebrations, possible event ideas, and station newspaper topics, explicitly extended the historical timeline and the categories of who should be included in, not just invited to, the celebrations. Senior air officers were aware that women moved between and had different types of continued ties with the armed services. The anniversary celebrations were designed to build links between groups of women. Orr recommended that stations could hold "receptions to which the airwomen could invite servicemen's wives who have been in the Air Force."<sup>847</sup> He recognized the familial connection, drawing attention to female veterans who had transitioned into service wives. Stations that followed the advice would have brought together military wives and servicewomen, as well as veterans and current servicewomen.

The album's photographs hint that some stations acted on Orr's reception recommendations. Several photographs captured the interaction between former and current women personnel. Captioned "Ex-servicewomen's 'At Home', RCAF Station Bagotville," one photograph shows a uniformed woman standing with five women in civilian dress with drinks in hand. Another image, this time from RCAF Station Lac Saint Denis, has Flight Lieutenant "Kae" Frew posing for the camera alongside Squadron Leader Sylvia Evans and three female veterans. Evans, dressed in her uniform, and veterans, who are in civilian apparel, were the guests. It is not known whether these veterans were married to air force men. The photos display deliberate attempts to foster

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<sup>847</sup> Copy of Memorandum from Air Vice- Marshal W.A. Orr, Air Member for Personnel, on behalf of Chief of Air Staff to AOC/ADC, AOC/ATC, AOC/TC, AOC/NAC, AOC/ANC, AOC/1 Air Division, 23 Feb 1961, in Souvenir Book. The quotation comes from Paragraph 1 b vi of the memorandum.

bonds between women in different stages of their relationships with the RCAF.<sup>848</sup>

While they left room for local input, senior officials made their priorities of connecting generations of airwomen clear. Air Vice-Marshal Orr advised that “special attention might be given to women personnel on the station who served in the Force during World War II [,] or who have been in the RCAF since 1951.”<sup>849</sup> Here Orr asked stations to highlight women who found a home in the RCAF. Orr identified station periodicals as another site of commemoration. Senior brass provided the material for the articles on air force women. Orr promised, and Squadron Leader Evans later oversaw, the distribution of the “Historical Notes–Women in the RCAF–1941-1960.” Female military personnel whose service spanned the two periods received special attention in this backgrounder.<sup>850</sup>

Senior officers and the author of the three-page “Historical Notes –Women in the RCAF–1941-1960” were strongly invested in the construction of a female military tradition. Limited space, according to the author, justified only a three sentence history of nursing sisters. The authors(s) revealed their priorities because they narrated four distinct crossovers between servicewomen’s wartime and peacetime service in three separate paragraphs. The author acknowledged that women possessed military knowledge and

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<sup>848</sup> “Ex-servicewomen’s ‘At Home’, RCAF Station Bagotville,” photograph in Souvenir Book; “F/L ‘Kae’ Frew, RCAF Station Lac Saint Denis, with guests S/L SI Evans and three ex-servicewomen,” photograph, in Souvenir Book.

<sup>849</sup> Copy of Memorandum from Orr, Air Member for Personnel, on behalf of Chief of Air Staff to AOC/ADC, AOC/ATC, AOC/TC, AOC/NAC, AOC/ANC, AOC/1 Air Division, 23 Feb 1961, in Souvenir Book. See, Para 1 (d) for the quotation.

<sup>850</sup> Copy of Memorandum from Orr, Air Member for Personnel, on behalf of Chief of Air Staff to AOC/ADC, AOC/ATC, AOC/TC, AOC/NAC, AOC/ANC, AOC/1 Air Division, 23 Feb 1961, in Souvenir Book. See the call for material in paragraph 3.

recognized the officers' as female military authority figures.

The first link between wartime and peacetime servicewomen comes from the paragraph on demobilization. One sentence painted the retention of a few female wartime Messing Officers as the exceptions to the general demobilization of women. As mentioned in chapter four, some RCAF (WD) Messing Officers transferred into the Medical branch in 1946. Unlike the Messing Officers, who remained anonymous, the author singled out M.L Fraser and Sylvia Evans as two of the veterans who were recalled as advisors. Fraser and Evans were named in a paragraph on women's return to the peacetime RCAF. In the same paragraph, the author stated that "a 'nucleus group' of six women officers and 26 airwomen was sent to the Manning Depot at St. Johns, PQ to take a refresher course and prepare for the arrival of recruits."<sup>851</sup> Only the names and ranks of the female regular officers were provided. As a result, the author partially established the credentials for its female administrators. The author embedded the final link into a paragraph on female reservists: "in 1951, a few women officers, who had been carried on Reserve lists from the wartime, were called out on continuous duty from the Sup[plimentary] Res[erves], to help with the recruiting of women."<sup>852</sup> The brevity of the text and its origins in headquarters are two possible reasons why the author named only the officers. While the author provided limited detail, they repeatedly celebrated veterans who transferred their knowledge to the next generation.

The multiple connections between wartime and peacetime air force women are

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<sup>851</sup>"Historical Notes- Women in the RCAF- 1941-1960" para 4-5, in Souvenir Book. The quotation comes from para 5.

<sup>852</sup>"Historical Notes- Women in the RCAF- 1941-1960," para 9.

not immediately present the first time that the historical notes on women appears in the album. The reader first encounters a March 1961 memorandum that operated as a cover letter for the three-page history. Since the compiler stacked and staggered the four pages, all four pages are accessible. Still, the viewer must pause and flip multiple pages in order to find the entire history.

The compiler might have had the lazy viewer in mind because the brief history was presented in a variety of formats. Several pages later, the compiler put in a two-page article from *The Roundel*, called “Double Anniversary: Airwomen on Active Service.” *The Roundel* was the official air force magazine. Each page was pasted separately into the album. The unnamed writer repeated word-for-word entire paragraphs from the historical backgrounder. And just in case the viewer missed that presentation, the same material was displayed a third time with a more eye-catching format. The historical backgrounder was repackaged in a printed program from one of the anniversary celebrations. The program’s front cover catches the viewer’s attention because it was one of the few uses of colour in the album. The text and the air force badge were printed in blue ink. The compiler might have included the different versions to be as complete as possible.<sup>853</sup>

There were textual variations between the different versions of the brief history pasted into the anniversary album. For instance, Wing Commander Margaret Clark was profiled in the printed program’s “Biographical Sketches.” Clark was discharged in 1945

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<sup>853</sup> “Double Anniversary: Airwomen on Active Service,” *The Roundel* (March 1961), 10-11, in Souvenir Book; *Airwomen’s Anniversary 1941-1961*, in Souvenir Book.

and “returned [in 1947] to make a career in the Food Services Branch.”<sup>854</sup> She does not appear in the historical backgrounder. The minor variations make the consistencies that much more striking. The author of the *Roundel* article and program’s “Historical Notes” kept the references to the Messing Officers, the “nucleus,” and the re-enlistment of veterans in the regular and reserves.<sup>855</sup> Whether the compiler deliberately chose these items because they highlighted those connections is unknown. Nevertheless, it seems as if the compiler of the album hedged their bets. By presenting the same information packaged in multiple formats, they increased the likelihood, deliberately or accidentally, that some attention would be paid to veterans who embodied the female military tradition.

Wartime and peacetime servicewomen were again joined together in yet another version of the historical backgrounder. Generations of airwomen co-mingled in a compilation of official RCAF press photographs, even as the caption fluctuated between linking and distinguishing between the two periods. The scrapbook-maker pasted in a collage of wartime servicewomen, peacetime servicewomen, and anniversary celebration. Four of the six photographs date to the peacetime period. The two wartime photos feature an airwoman who worked in “aircraft refinishing and repainting” and an airwoman who “servic[ed] heavy transports.” The wartime images were placed in the top left and right corners respectively. They are separated by a group shot of airwomen at a celebration and

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<sup>854</sup> “Biographical Sketches. . . .” *Airwomen’s Anniversary 1941-1961*. The other biographical sketches were of Squadron Leader Sylvia Evans, Squadron Leader Murial McArthur (the current Matron-in-chief of the Nursing sisters), Wing Officer W.M Taylor, and Wing Officer K.O. Walker. All of the profiled women had wartime service. Clark, Evans, and McArthur also served in the peace forces.

<sup>855</sup> “Double Anniversary: Airwomen on Active Service” *The Roundel* (March 1961): 10-11; and *Airwomen’s Anniversary, 1941-1961*.

a headshot of an unnamed peacetime airwoman. The peacetime images slightly overlap the two wartime photos. The two remaining peacetime images— found in the bottom left and right corners— are of a fighter control operator and a machine accountant operator respectively.<sup>856</sup>

Together the photo and the accompanying caption provide a “snapshot history.” They can be read as an abridged version of the historical backgrounder. With phrases such as “called out of retirement,” the caption reinforced the visual presentation of the generational link. The second sentence spoke of a shift in duties. It reads, “The duties of Canada’s 3, 000 airwomen of today...contrast sharply with those of their wartime counterparts.” Peacetime airwomen were shown either watching computer-like screens or operating more computer-like machines than their wartime counterparts, who were depicted performing more mechanical work. According to the caption, 17,000 women served in the war. While there was no explicit contrast drawn between the wartime and peacetime strengths in the caption, the reduced peacetime numbers are easily grasped, and function as an additional marker of difference.<sup>857</sup> Contrary to what the caption writer claimed, the highlighted duties share similarities. All work shots displayed women with machines. This persistent use of technology captured the air force’s peacetime depiction of itself as modern.<sup>858</sup>

The snapshot history circulated in civilian and military media. RCAF Station Comox station’s periodical, *Totem Times*, replicated the image and caption, which

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<sup>856</sup> RCAF Photo PL 138826, in Souvenir Book.

<sup>857</sup> RCAF Photo PL 138826.

<sup>858</sup> “Historical Notes- Women in the RCAF- 1941-1960,” para 6-7. See for example, *Today’s Airwomen ...In the RCAF* (Canada: October 1961), RCAF Brochure 250E, DHH, 79/208, folder 2.

became the text of the article. Called “They Serve that Men May Fly: Duties Change in Women’s Division,” the title reflected the emphasis on continuity and change. It repeated the wartime motto, even as the writers emphasized new jobs.<sup>859</sup> The compiler pasted in a French version that someone clipped from the 16 November 1961 edition of *Le Nouvelliste*, a paper from Trois-Rivières, Quebec. The image remained the same but the caption was translated into French.<sup>860</sup> This was the only French material in the anniversary album. Although the compiler only provided one French example, the presence of a snapshot history in two languages presents yet another repackaging of the historical backgrounder and shares the extended version of women’s participation in the wartime and peacetime service with Francophone readers. The RCAF’s story of the multi-generational female military tradition took different forms that were captured by the maker of the anniversary album.

In addition, the anniversary album celebrated women who had and/or currently pursued a military career. Wing Commander Clark’s brief biographical sketch was one example. Squadron Leader Sylvia Evans asserted her military identity from the first sentence of her “Recollection of an Original Airwoman.” It originally appeared in *The Roundel*. She claimed, “I figure my military career definitely started at ground level.” Evans balanced her straightforward assertion with her careful choice of words. While an alternative explanation is described in the next paragraph, ground level could refer to her being literally on the ground and brings to mind the wartime motto “We Serve So Men

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<sup>859</sup> “They Serve That Men May Fly: Duties Change in Women’s Division,” *Totem Times* 2, no. 22 (November 30, 1961): front page, DHH 79/208, folder 2.

<sup>860</sup> “Pour que les hommes puissent voler,” *Le Nouvelliste*, November 16, 1961, in *Souvenir Book*.

May Fly.” The motto and word choice reinforced gendered roles. Women supported the men who fought.<sup>861</sup>

Ground level could also refer to working through the ranks. Evans’ introductory paragraph covered her volunteer work as a child during the First World War, and her wartime involvement with the Alberta Women’s Service Corps. Over the rest of the article, Evans traced how she moved into the air force and through the ranks. Evans carefully surrounded her achievements with self-deprecating humour. She minimized her presence in the “Canadian contingent” at Queen Elizabeth II’s coronation parade when she explained that she was simply selected because she was a mountain climber and could easily walk long distances. Evans demanded recognition for her decades-long desire for and commitment to a military career, but did so in a way that presented a safe narrative of militarized femininity. Her article was the only first-hand account in the album, contributing to the top-down narration of airwomen’s history.<sup>862</sup>

The voices of female non-commissioned members were more heavily mediated. For example, Sergeant J.N.D. “Jessie” Easdon reportedly told Leading Aircraftsman GT Naugle that she rejoined the RCAF because she “enjoyed the service so much during the war...that I wanted to join up again.” Naugle worked in Station Comox’s Public Relations section. The compiler might have selected Naugle’s article because Naugle listened to Air Force Headquarters’ suggestions. He used the historical backgrounder to write the first part of his article, which covered the anniversary and charted the history of

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<sup>861</sup> Squadron Leader Sylvia Evans, “Recollection of an Original Airwoman,” *Roundel* (May 1961): 14-15, clipping, in Souvenir Book. The quotation comes from page 14.

<sup>862</sup> Evans, “Recollection of an Original Airwoman,” 14-15.

air force women. For instance, the author of the backgrounder wrote, “The Women’s Division was part of the Special Reserve recruited for wartime service. Some of the men in this component were absorbed but most were released, along with all women personnel except for a few Messing Officers...” Naugle wrote, “Because the Women’s Division had been a part of this Special Reserve and had only been recruited for wartime service all women personnel were released. The only exceptions were a few messing officers...” In the second part, he profiled Easdon. He chronicled Easdon’s wartime service, demobilization, re-entrance, peacetime service, and future plans.<sup>863</sup> Album viewers are only able to access her story second-hand. Naugle’s summary of Easdon’s career was incorporated in yet another recirculation of the historical backgrounder.

The compiler looked to the future. Several of the articles on non-commissioned women described how the RCAF prepared military (career) women for civilian jobs. Easdon reportedly remarked that she planned to retire within five years and would use the skills she acquired during her military career in the civilian workforce. Naugle indicated that he thought she would be a success as she was “ably equipped” for a civilian career. The compiler also inserted multiple texts on the first airwoman to face mandatory retirement, Corporal Annie Coutts. She apparently wished to work as a civilian nurse. Coutts retired after fourteen years of service.<sup>864</sup>

Sociologist Morris Janowitz reveals that American military personnel had similar

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<sup>863</sup>, “Historical Notes- Women in the RCAF- 1941-1960,” para 4; and GT Naugle, “Anniversary Honours Airwomen,” in Souvenir Book.

<sup>864</sup> Naugle, “Anniversary Honours Airwomen”; Directorate of Public Relations, RCAF Press Release No 9130, “RCAF Retires First Airwoman,” in Souvenir Book; and “Airwoman Retires After 14 Years,” *Kingston Whig-Standard*, undated clipping, in Souvenir Book.

expectations. He asserts in *The Professional Soldier* (1960) that the American Army “no longer speaks of retirement, but of a ‘second’ career.” Factors such as a lower retirement age, the increased overlap between military and civilian occupations, and a common perception that civilian society offered higher standards of living contributed to the shift from retirement to second career. Janowitz’s study focused on the male officer corps. By contrast, the narrative of a ‘second career’ emerges more strongly in the air force anniversary album among non-commissioned servicewomen.<sup>865</sup>

The occasion of the double anniversary lent itself to the construction of a female military tradition. It created the need for the historical backgrounder. Senior officers crafted their vision for the anniversary and deliberately drew attention to the returning veteran, as did unofficial historians and scrapbook compilers. Senior officials shared their vision in the historical backgrounder that circulated in a variety of formats. The makers of the album documented the anniversary celebrations, and in the process captured the circulation of the approved narrative of female military tradition.

**Phyllis “Phyl” Bayley: “The epitomy [sic] of a Wren Chief Petty Officer in the R.C.N.”<sup>866</sup>**

The Vancouver Women’s Royal Canadian Naval Service Association [Vancouver WRCNS Association] recorded the activities of their organization and donated their records to LAC. The collection has folders of correspondence, copies of the *Wren Newsletter*, local newspaper announcements of their events, newspaper clippings on

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<sup>865</sup> Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Statistical Portrait* (London: The Free Press, 1960), 181-86, 372-92. The quotation comes from page 185.

<sup>866</sup> Item No 6. (9), Scrapbook, LAC, Vancouver Women’s Royal Canadian Naval Service Association Fonds, MG28 I 471, vol. 2.

servicewomen's peacetime activities, wartime memorabilia such as concert programs, and six scrapbook albums. The albums range from ones that chart the substantial work the Vancouver WRCNS Association put into organizing national reunions, to albums on the work performed by wartime WRCNS, and to ones that paid tribute to veterans who had passed away. One of the tribute albums has funeral service documents for WRCNS veteran Sheila Maxwell, photocopies of wartime photographs of Wrens, association correspondence, and a section devoted to Phyllis "Phyl" Bayley. Based on the presence of Vancouver WRCNS Association documents from the years after Bayley's death, a Vancouver WRCN Association member apparently created it. Bayley's bound and printed 1966 résumé was tucked into the album. Bayley and the Vancouver WRCNS Association compiler had different purposes that influenced the presentation of Bayley's naval service. Bayley celebrated her strengths and minimized her weaknesses in her résumé because she wanted a job. The Vancouver WRCNS Association created Bayley's album as a memorial and though committed to honouring Bayley's memory, the compiler had more freedom. The Vancouver WRCNS Association's record thus offers a chance to compare two narratives of one woman's naval career.

Both Bayley and the Vancouver WRCNS Association compiler portrayed Bayley as a capable and experienced servicewoman. Bayley crafted this image by showing that the navy recognized her value. In her description of her civilian work history, Bayley wrote that "[i]n February 1954, I was persuaded by two senior Wren officers to return to the Navy ...." She made a similar comment in her naval work history, stating this time

that the officers “approached” her.<sup>867</sup> Bayley demonstrated that she was a link between wartime and peacetime service because she repeatedly told potential employers that her former employers had invited her back. The Vancouver WRCNS Association shared Bayley’s self-assessment. The compiler inserted a page with six undated performance assessments. One reviewer portrayed Bayley as a role model, describing her as “the epitomy [sic] of a Wren Chief Petty Officer in the R.C.N.”<sup>868</sup> Other assessors used descriptors such as “loyal,” “highest degree,” “excellent,” “high-standards.” A reviewer stated, “Chief BAYLEY possesses a tremendous knowledge with regard to human understanding and relations.... She enjoys an excellent working relationship with her male contemporaries and is highly respected by them as well as senior and junior officers.”<sup>869</sup> Bayley and the album compiler presented her as a skilled leader, a team player, and a military professional.

This shared message was presented through different formats. Bayley opened with a photograph of herself in civilian clothes. She then covered her educational background, her civilian employment, and her naval history. After summarizing her three years of wartime service and twelve years of peacetime service in both the naval reserves and regular forces, Bayley translated her naval training to her potential civilian employer. She explained that the navy sharpened her administrative, organizational and inter-personnel skills. Bayley finished her résumé with a character reference. The reference

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<sup>867</sup> Phyllis Laurel Bayley, Résumé, 19 September 1966, in scrapbook, LAC, Vancouver Women’s Royal Canadian Naval Service Association Fonds, MG28 I 471, vol. 2

<sup>868</sup>; Item No 6 (10), Scrapbook, LAC, Vancouver Women’s Royal Canadian Naval Service Association Fonds, MG28 I 471, vol. 2.

<sup>869</sup> Item No 6 (10), Item No 4. (10), Scrapbook, LAC, Vancouver Women’s Royal Canadian Naval Service Association Fonds, MG28 I 471, vol. 2.

appeared in a section she called “Personnel Selection Report,” which was written by unnamed Command Personnel Section Officer at Canadian Force Base Esquimalt. The officer supported her goal of “obtaining employment in social service work or in work closely related to this area” and concluded that “if so employed, she should be extremely successful and give very good results.”<sup>870</sup> Bayley left readers with the impression that the Canadian Armed Forces recognized that her military training would be readily transferable to civilian career goals.

The two narratives of Bayley’s career diverge in one important respect. While Bayley admitted to a couple of setbacks, she generally presented an upward trajectory. From supervising five women in her pre-war civilian job, Bayley charted her way to supervision of six hundred and fifty Wrens stationed at HMCS *Cornwallis* by the end of the war. Peacetime saw her responsibilities expand: she oversaw the “discipline and welfare of all Wrens serving in the Atlantic Coast.” Bayley explained that she operated her own children and women’s clothing store in the interim period. She sold the business in the 1960s, but insisted the sale was not because she mismanaged her store. A friend of hers managed the store while Bayley served but her friend’s “poor health” halted the arrangement in February 1960. Bayley was stationed on the Atlantic Coast and her store was in Vancouver, and so the location of her military service likely contributed to the sale. Bayley tried to minimize the sale by attributing it to circumstances beyond her control and by overwhelming this apparent setback with her successes. The Command Personnel Section Officer’s prediction that she would do well in the field of social work

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<sup>870</sup> Bayley, Résumé.

was the final sentence of Bayley's résumé.

Fellow military personnel and the Vancouver WRCNS Association compiler recorded stories that disrupted the upwardly mobile narrative that Bayley presented in her résumé. Résumés or CVs are not straightforward accounts of women's work lives. Rather, as Liz Stanley cautions, they are products of hierarchal power relations around race, class, gender, and age. Women who temporarily leave the (civilian) workforce for familial responsibilities must carefully package employment gaps when they return. Applicants whose lives do not conform to the ideal candidate must find ways to frame their lives into a specified narrative format. Resistance is possible to a degree. Job applicants can twist, leave out, or potentially falsify the information they give.<sup>871</sup> The compiler included, and Bayley excluded, some of her supervisor's descriptions of her faults. One of the six evaluators wrote that she risked her health with her extreme dedication, which can be read as her commitment or a potential liability. Another commented on "one most difficult situation" when Bayley "was criticized by a senior Wren Officer for possessing too high standards but this did not shake her loyalty although a severe blow to herself and principles."<sup>872</sup> The reviewer stated that Bayley overcame this difficult situation but the story raises questions about Bayley's narrative. The criticisms hint that military women held different viewpoints on what constituted proper conduct. There is no indication of when this review was conducted. Although the criticisms leave

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<sup>871</sup> Liz Stanley, "From 'Self-made Women' to 'Women's Made-selves': Audit selves, Simulation and Surveillance in the Rise of Public Women," in *Feminism and Autobiography: Texts, Theories, Methods*, ed. Tess Coslett, Celia Lury and Penny Summerfield (London: Routledge, 2000), 40-58.

<sup>872</sup> 1 (10), Scrapbook, LAC, MG28 I 471, vol. 2; Item No. 5. (10), Scrapbook, LAC, Vancouver Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service Association Fonds, MG28 I 471, vol. 2. The quotation is from Item No. 5.

more questions than answers, it is clear that not everyone was happy with Bayley's performance.

The Vancouver WRCNS Association compiler revealed another set of criticisms of Bayley with the inclusion of the eulogy for Bayley. Marilyn Peers testified in her eulogy that Bayley faced her share of rejection. Peers (née Tackaberry) was a friend and one of the many women trained by Bayley. Peers movingly remarked that Bayley "was a woman who knew what hurt was – and the times that were the hardest were those rare occasions when she was shunned for her appearance. It was not easy for her to relate those times, but that was how we experienced Phyl – always honest with her feelings – and with no pretense."<sup>873</sup> Peers did not explain why exactly Bayley was shunned for her appearance, but the Vancouver WRCNS Association compiler and historical literature offer hints as discussed below.

The Vancouver WRCNS Association album reveals information that might explain why Bayley was criticized for her looks. According to her official military records, Bayley was five foot six and weighed 180 pounds in 1954. Pictures of Bayley show a woman with short cropped hair. Bayley exceeded the 1957 age and weight standards for new female regular force recruits. The 1957 age and weight standards must be used, because, according to senior medical officers, earlier recruitment standards had failed to list a "weight for height and age scale." The 1957 weight for height and age scale is applicable because the navy based this scale on national averages, which in turn,

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<sup>873</sup> Eulogy Memorial Service for Phyllis L. Bayley, March 1, 1988, LAC, Vancouver Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service Association Fonds, MG28 I 471, vol. 2, Scrapbook,

came from a 1953 Department of National Health and Welfare survey. A medical officer had the authority to enrol otherwise healthy recruits who fell outside the specified weight range. A female recruit was allowed to be ten pounds over or under the average. The table listed the average weight by height up to thirty-four years of age. Women of Bayley's height between thirty and thirty-four years of age weighed on average 138 pounds. The acceptable weight range for the thirty to thirty-four age range was roughly 124 to 152 pounds. A 1961 advertisement for a diet beverage defined a slim woman as five foot five and 109 pounds. Bayley might have been shunned because she did not meet the 1960s beauty culture of thinness.<sup>874</sup>

The literature on female masculinity offers another explanation. Bayley was a woman in a position of power in a male-dominated institution. As cited above, one reviewer stated that she had the respect of her male colleagues and superiors. She wore a military uniform for many years, a symbol often linked with masculinity. As Judith Halberstam has argued, women who adopt masculine attributes or present an "ambiguous gender" are policed because "[ma]sculinity in this society inevitably conjures up notions of power and legitimacy and privilege."<sup>875</sup> The criticisms of Bayley's appearance might have been a way to undermine her authority.

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<sup>874</sup> Scrapbook on Bayley, LAC, Vancouver Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service Association Fonds, MG28 I 471, vol. 2, Scrapbook; Item 2 (b) Special Problems in Recruit Physical Standards, Extract of Minutes of Third Annual Senior RCN Medical Officers Conference, 13 and 14 October 1955, LAC, R112-616-8-E, vol. 34245; Article 3.03 Height and Weight, Draft Amendment to BRCN 502 (51), 7 January 1957, LAC, R112-616-8-E, vol. 34245; Article 3.03 (Table 2) Women: Average Height and Weight per Age, attached to Article 3.03 Height and Weight, Draft Amendment to BRCN 502 (51), 7 January 1957; and Valerie J. Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs : Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000, 147-151, 198-207, 404 n 71.

<sup>875</sup> Judith Halberstam, *Female Masculinity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), 1-38. The quotation comes from page 2.

Stereotypes associated with homosexual women might have contributed as well. Leisa Meyer has shown how these assumptions linking the mannish women to the butch lesbian played out in the American military during the war. As previously discussed in this dissertation, Meyer explains that women raised questions that they were gender “deviant” with the very act of enlistment and their gender “deviance” raised questions that they might also be sexually “deviant.” Americans and Canadians worried that the services recruited or produced “deviant” female sexualities. Donna Knaff cautions that not all American military officials associated female masculinity with gender deviance and in fact, female masculinity was sometimes presented as an attribute. She notes that “[t]he military specifically needed women who could perform traditionally male work, and military examiners were sometimes counselled that ‘women showing a masculine manner may be perfectly normal sexually and excellent military material.’”<sup>876</sup> Yet the assumption that military examiners needed the reminder that masculine women might have had normal sexualities illustrates that gender and sexual “deviance” were sometimes linked.

The fears around masculine women persisted into the peace. The Canadian armed services took steps to prevent “unfeminine” attire. Scholar Deborah Cowen argues that servicewomen’s uniforms were used as a regulatory tactic to reinforce women’s heterosexual femininity.<sup>877</sup> Sue, who served in the militia in the 1950s and 1960s,

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<sup>876</sup> Leisa D. Meyer, *Creating GI Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women’s Army Corps During World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 6, 26-7, 43, 143, 150-166, 178; and Knaff, *Beyond Rosie the Riveter*, 4, 17-19. The quotation comes from Knaff, 4.

<sup>877</sup> Deborah Cowen, *Military Workfare: The Soldier and Social Citizenship in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 89-102.

recalled that “in order to get wine, women, and song you had to leave the base. So you had to go out, but you weren’t allowed to wear butchy clothing. So what we used to do was pull up our pant legs and hide them with our skirts.” Sue also remembered getting in trouble “for improper attire” when her group returned to base with their pant legs down. Servicewomen were discharged if officials discovered that they were lesbian. Some police and other Canadians attacked women who identified as or appeared butch.<sup>878</sup>

This discussion is not intended to suggest anything in regards to Bayley’s sexual or romantic inclinations. There is no evidence of her sexual or romantic preferences. Bayley listed herself as single, which conformed to the general pattern for regular force career military women. Rather, the point is that women who presented as masculine experienced discrimination because they were *viewed* as falling outside of gender and/or sexual norms. Not surprisingly, Bayley omitted the fact she was occasionally rejected for her appearance.

Bayley and the Vancouver WRCNS Association album compiler constructed two slightly different stories of Bayley’s naval career. In her resume, Bayley emphasized the positive; after all, she wished to convince employers to hire her. In contrast, the Vancouver WRCNS Association compiler acknowledged a few criticisms of Bayley. Despite these differences, Bayley and the Vancouver WRCNS Association compiler framed Bayley as a female military expert, and a role model. Both versions demonstrated multiple roles and relationships that women had with the military over several decades.

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<sup>878</sup> As quoted in Kinsman and Gentile, *The Canadian War on Queers*, 192. See also LAC, MG28 I 471, vol. 2, Vancouver Women’s Royal Canadian Naval Service Association Fonds., Résumé: Phyllis Laurel Bayley, 19 September 1966; Cameron Duder, *Awfully devoted women : lesbian lives in Canada, 1900-65* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 232-51.

## **A Multi-Generational Story: Building Female Military Tradition(s)**

Unofficial historians searched, found and created female military role models. Some unofficial historians had served in the Second World War. Others were hired by female veterans' organizations to write a history of their service. WRCNS veteran Rosemary Greer found her role model in the British Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS). Greer began her prologue with the WRNS' formation in the First World War. She then wrote how British Wren officers came to Canada and helped establish the wartime Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service (WRCNS). Like Greer, W. Hugh Conrod started the history he wrote on behalf of CWAC veterans in the First World War. He discusses the 1918 proposal for the creation a Canadian women's army auxiliary. While Greer only briefly mentions Canadian women' paramilitary organizations, all four unofficial historians (Greer, Conrod, Arney and Ziegler) attribute the origins of the wartime women's services to paramilitary women's activism and labour shortages.<sup>879</sup>

Unofficial historians also looked forward: they positioned the wartime generation as the founders of a female military line. They also adapted narrative devices from war-related publishing. Second World War poets adopted the trope of familial military tradition. Poets described First World War veterans who raised male Second World War combatants. Servicewomen modified the trope and discussed how they raised the next generation. Ada Arney's *Here Come the Khaki Skirts...the Women Volunteers* ends with a brief summary of women's roles in the contemporary Canadian Armed Forces. Arney

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<sup>879</sup> Greer, *The Girls of the King's Navy*, 11-14; Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War*, 15-25, Arney, *Here Come the Khaki Skirts...the women Volunteers*, 1; and Ziegler, *We Serve that Men May Fly*, 4-6.

remarks that women then had access to the combat trades. Her final photograph, which is located in this summary, is of her step-granddaughter Shannon (Arney) Dumont in a Canadian Forces uniform. With her last line, Arney triumphantly proclaims, “So stand tall you wartime CWAC – you were the pathbreakers!”<sup>880</sup> Arney proudly declares a personal and general female tradition of military service. As a result, she exposes her title as incorrect: her work reviews more than the wartime CWACs. Similarly, Greer traces contemporary military women to her wartime group. She quickly reviews the peacetime return of the Wrens, their entrance into the regular forces of the navy, and unification of the armed forces. Reflecting on the unification of the armed forces, Greer writes, “Gone are Army ‘CWACs’ in their khaki uniforms; Air Force ‘W.D.s’ in steel blue’ and ‘Wrens’ in navy blue. Now all are called ‘Servicewomen’; their uniforms are olive green; they are recognized as a permanent and integral part of Canada’s defence programs; and they carry on the traditions and standards set by those of us who served before them.”<sup>881</sup>

The unofficial historians hired by women’s veterans presented similar messages and covered more than the wartime women’s services. Their histories attempted to foster ties between the generations of servicewomen when they covered women’s peacetime re-entrance into the armed services. Hired by the RCAF (WD) Association of Hamilton to write the RCAF (WD)’s history, Mary Ziegler thought that the RCAF (WD) Association and other readers would be interested in a brief history of peacetime air service for women. While Ziegler notes several different conditions such as peacetime airwomen’s

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<sup>880</sup> Arney, *Here Come the Khaki Skirts...the women Volunteers*, 167; and Vance, “An Open Door to a Better Future: The Memory of Canada’s Second World War,” 465-9. The quotation comes from Arney, 167.

<sup>881</sup> Greer, *The Girls of the King’s Navy*, 149.

“improved pay and privileges,” she situates peacetime women as the inheritors of wartime traditions with phrases such as “once again,” and “as in wartime.”<sup>882</sup> Ziegler wants readers to know that wartime servicewomen had left an important legacy. Conrod observes that the “[p]ride of Corps still prevailed” among the “new CWAC[s]....”<sup>883</sup> Wartime women, unofficial historians argued, laid the foundations for future military women. These chroniclers assumed that wartime women would care about the women who had inherited the traditions that they had helped establish.

All four of the unofficial historians document the variety of women’s lengthy associations with the armed services. For Arney, this involves inserting her experiences into a group story. She devotes one page to “The Militia CWAC.” In it, Arney reveals that she, Major Majorie Evis, and other women signed up with the army reserves. Arney explains that she and other reservists “were ‘Called Out’ for [full-time] duty with the Canadian Army (Regular Force).” There is a photograph of Arney showing her children her CD medal, which appears several pages after the brief history of the militia CWAC. The caption writer mentioned that Arney was “on Call-Out” when the picture was taken. Arney thus reveals that she balanced full-time military service and motherhood. The other unofficial historians and the compilers of the albums on returning veterans do not mention that women with children actively served in the peacetime forces. The photograph and description of her peacetime service implies that Arney saw herself as a

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<sup>882</sup> Greer, *The Girls of the King’s Navy*, 149; Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War*, 375-385; and Ziegler, *We Serve that Men May Fly*, forward, 160-172. The phrases come from Ziegler, 161, 161, and 162.

<sup>883</sup> Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War*, 379.

dedicated, disciplined servicewoman.<sup>884</sup>

The unofficial historians presented women as military experts and discussed returning veterans. The level of detail varies. Greer only states that Isabel Macneill was brought back in 1954 to organize women's entrance into the navy's regular forces and she became a civilian again in 1957. There was no mention or description of women like Phyllis Bayley. Ziegler and Conrod provide short paragraphs on certain women. Ziegler uses Fran Richardson to illustrate that some wartime servicewomen were promoted when they rejoined. She devotes a paragraph to Richardson and emphasizes her expertise. The RCAF held on to Richardson even after she retired in 1959. "From 1960-68," Zeigler remarks, Richardson "served as a Manning Support Officer which was tantamount to being on reserve"<sup>885</sup> Richardson's story suggests that individual women and the armed services both fostered long-term relationships. Arney has a one-page biography of her long-time friend Major Evis. Evis endorsed and wrote the introduction to the book. The biography of Evis was yet another way Arney reviews more than the wartime CWAC. Although the level of detail varied, multiple chroniclers carry the narrative into peacetime when they describe veteran's postwar achievements.

The unofficial historians also discuss how some ex-servicewomen maintained their bonds through veterans' organizations. Arney reports that she transitioned into a different type of long-term connection after she finished her almost five years on "Call Out" in Toronto. She and her family moved to Huntsville, where she and her husband

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<sup>884</sup> Arney, *Here Come the Khaki Skirts*, 142, 149, 159, 167.

<sup>885</sup> Ziegler, *We Serve that Men May Fly*, 163; and Greer, *The Girls of the King's Navy*, 149.

joined the Huntsville Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion. Greer mentions that the presentation of memorial to the WRCNS was part of the WRCNS's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary reunion. Conrod briefly comments that the Canadian Women's Army Association awarded membership to peacetime female army reservists, revealing that some veterans' associations were multi-generational. Reunions helped participants relive their military service and retain group membership. For example, Ziegler concludes that the "most successful part of the activities [at a Tri-Service Women's Reunion in 1972 ] was the coming together of old friends and the sense of once again enjoying the special feeling of kinship that developed among all girls who served together in the Services."<sup>886</sup> The reunions fostered and maintained a community of military women. Veterans also took steps to ensure that there was a record of their contributions at reunions. The 1976 CWAC reunion formed a History Advisory Committee that participated in the publication of *Athene, Goddess of War*. Unofficial historians made this community-building part of their story and preserved this long-term relationship to the armed forces.

The reader can easily miss some of the examples of women's long-term connections to the armed forces in the unofficial histories. Only a reader familiar with military honours and the history of the women's services would know from the front cover that Arney served in the peacetime forces. The byline lists her military credentials. It reads, "Ada Arney/ ex/Sgt A.C. Wilson CD."<sup>887</sup> A wartime army woman could have accumulated, at most, just over five years of service. Arney makes the reader aware of the

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<sup>886</sup> Ziegler, *We Serve that Men May Fly*, 168; Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War*, 378; Arney, *Here Come the Khaki Skirts*, 142; and Greer, *The Girls of the King's Navy*, 6.

<sup>887</sup> Arney, *Here Come the Khaki Skirts*, front cover.

significance of the CD by the end of her work. She includes the previously-mentioned photograph of her displaying the CD medal to her children. In other cases, the connection is easily missed because the author only devoted a sentence or two to the links between wartime and peacetime servicewomen. These sentences are overwhelmed by the war-related material but can reveal much. For example, Conrod slips a two-sentence synopsis of Kay Trusdale's peacetime service into a chapter that describes women's off-duty experiences during and after the war. He writes, "One ex-CWAC Kay Trusdale of Kelowna, B.C. had a military career which spanned some 25 years. She returned to the service in 1951 and served until 1970."<sup>888</sup> These two sentences are a straightforward, if brief, declaration of a woman who had found a home in the army. The brevity means that the reader might fail to spot her return. These brief mentions reinforce and help highlight the more overt documentation of women's long-term connections to the armed forces.

Other connections are much more obvious. Conrod places more weight on Olive Cassidy (Vicary)'s military service. It was longer, and he devotes an entire paragraph to Cassidy. He frequently laments that space restrictions necessitated leaving women out. Therefore, the amount of space he awarded to Cassidy demonstrates that Conrod wanted her story to be heard. Conrod writes, "As a post-script [to her wartime service], her most fortunate CWAC experience was in 1956, as a widow, when she joined the CWAC Militia and took 25 girls from the Army Service Corps in Hamilton to Niagara Summer Camp where she met Major General George Cassidy (now retired) and they were married

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<sup>888</sup> Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War*, 314.

three months later.”<sup>889</sup> Conrod perpetuates the gendered assumption that marriage represented the pinnacle in a woman’s life. He defines the time she met her future husband as “her most fortunate CWAC experience.” The word “post-script” portrays the peacetime service as an afterthought. Yet, the postscript also draws attention to Cassidy’s account and how she moved through her diverse connections to the armed forces. The reader learns that widowhood freed Cassidy to enlist, that she was a returning veteran, and a service wife. Cassidy’s story illustrates women’s sometimes had multiple lengthy relationships with the military.

The unofficial historians of the wartime women’s services narrate a story that included several generations of servicewomen. They place wartime women as the founders of the Canadian female military traditions and establish links between wartime and peacetime servicewomen. Although the unofficial historians provide little information on certain returning veterans, they demonstrate that women negotiated various kinds of lasting connections to the armed services. Thus, these unofficial histories reinforce the themes present in servicewomen’s scrapbooks and other albums. Scrapbook compilers also narrated the diversity of women’s continued ties to the armed services. Indeed, the frequency with which these assorted connections appear builds the case for a longer time frame.

## **Conclusion**

Servicewomen’s unpublished and published unofficial histories are one more example of how some women have voiced their vision of women’s place in the Canadian

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<sup>889</sup> Conrod, *Athene, Goddess of War*, 350. For an example of the lament about space, see page 369.

armed services. In the late 1930s and 1940s, Canadian women expressed their vision with the formation and participation in women's paramilitary corps. Decades later, wartime women intervened again, this time to correct a problem in the historical literature.

Wartime women addressed the lack of work on the wartime contributions of individual servicewomen and the women's services. Individual veterans such as Rosemary "Fiddy" Greer and Ada Arney offered their assessments of wartime contributions. Greer wrote and Arney assembled a visual history of their respective services. Groups of veterans hired Mary Ziegler and W. Hugh Conrod to produce the histories of their women's services. Servicewomen supplied the unofficial historians with materials from their personal collections, which included their scrapbooks and other albums. Some servicewomen made their personal histories available for future generations by donating them to various archives.

Academic historians conducted their own interventions in the history of the Second World War. Ruth Roach Pierson researched and then published her work in the same period as servicewomen supported, wrote, and donated their histories. Unlike the scrapbook compilers and unofficial historians highlighted in this chapter, Pierson isolated women's experiences to a single war. Canadian historians have mostly left Pierson's periodization unchallenged, a periodization also found in North American historiography on military women. Even when historians have analyzed servicewomen's postwar experiences, they usually explore these experiences through the lens of what women gained and/or lost from their wartime service. The emphasis on the war years is a product of the centrality of what Joan Scott has called the "watershed theme" in the

historiography of the Second World War: in this case, whether or not women's wartime work changed their rights and status.

Yet, as the case studies have shown, servicewomen did not necessarily see their service as a discrete event. This applies both to women who never returned to military service and women who re-enlisted in the peacetime services. Beulah Rosen extended wartime conversations over servicewomen's femininity in her scrapbook because she attempted to ensure that readers "properly" understood cartoons such as "Rayon Hose To-day." Through her annotations and the donation of her scrapbooks, she attempted to ensure that future researchers grasped her cartoons and the significance of her wartime contributions. Although the materials in her scrapbooks date to the war, Rosen's scrapbooks tell more than a wartime story. Isabel Macneill's scrapbook also tells more than a war story. Like Rosen, Macneill invested time and energy in her shaping of her archival legacy. Macneill's careful editing included the removal of (mis)information from newspaper clippings and the addition of information about her brother-in-law's lengthy naval career. Unlike Rosen, Macneill served in the peacetime armed forces and preserved this connection for future researchers. She gave Library and Archives Canada newspaper clippings on her peacetime naval service. In addition, Macneill donated evidence of her active participation at postwar reunions. Macneill carefully and consistently presented herself as an acknowledged female military expert. For some servicewomen, their actual years of military service were only a part of their long-term identification with the armed forces, which was manifested in reunions and remembrances.

Some acknowledged female military experts had lengthy service careers.

Scrapbook compilers and unofficial historians have shown that some women found and created a home for themselves in the armed forces. There were women — Phyllis Bayley, Jessie Easdon, Sylvia Evans, Annie Coutts, Olga Munroe, and Kay Trusdale — who had ten or more years of military service. Phyllis Bayley's story hints at some of the difficulties that women faced when they pursued a career in the armed services. The scrapbooks on other returning veterans and the unofficial histories provide more evidence that contradict the Minister's Manpower Study (Men)'s statement that women were not career-minded, which was discussed in chapter five. The Minister's Manpower Study (Men) have not been the only ones who have ignored career-minded military women. Historians have largely ignored these women as well.

    Servicewomen's published and unpublished unofficial histories are not the only place where links have been drawn between wartime and peacetime women. The links have been drawn in official sources as well. Active servicewomen mobilized wartime lessons and made recommendations for future defence planners. Defence officials have also circulated historical backgrounders with the storyline of female military tradition(s). These case studies of servicewomen who shared their perspective on their service during war and peace demonstrate servicewomen's long-term and diverse identification with the military and the ways that servicewomen have made their legacy.

## Conclusion

Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) Sergeant J.N.D. “Jessie” Easdon, a Second World War veteran, said that she returned to the RCAF in 1951 because ““I enjoyed the service so much during the war...that I wanted to join up again.”” When asked what she thought about air force life, Easdon replied, ““It’s very interesting. You get to go places and see things that you only dreamed about before, especially if you get an overseas tour.””<sup>890</sup> Easdon had served for roughly 14 years when she was interviewed for her station’s newspaper as part of an article on the history of women in the RCAF. Her story captures the main arguments in this thesis.

Easdon lived through both the widening and contracting of options for servicewomen. She enlisted in 1942, and like the majority of the approximately 46,000 servicewomen who participated the wartime women’s services of the army, navy and air force, Easdon remained within the borders of present-day Canada. Wartime servicewomen like Easdon served in a non-combat role.<sup>891</sup> She was discharged in 1946, an experience she shared with the vast majority of wartime servicewomen. After the war, Easdon worked as a department store sales clerk. Many other Second World War veterans pursued their goal of starting a family, which made them ineligible when the armed services re-opened its ranks to women in 1951. Some combined family, work, and

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<sup>890</sup> G.T. Naugle, “Anniversary Honours Airwomen,” in Souvenir Book of the Twentieth Anniversary of the enlistment of airwomen into the RCAF during World War II – and – the Tenth Anniversary of airwomen enrolled in the RCAF Regular and Reserve Force,” Directorate of History and Heritage, National Defence Headquarters, Ottawa, Canada [hereafter DHH], 79/208, folder 3.

<sup>891</sup> Easdon was stationed at Gander, Newfoundland, from December 1943 to August, 1945. This was technically an “overseas” posting, since Newfoundland only became a Canadian province after the war.

participation in military-related organizations, such as veteran's group and cadets/cadettes. When the services re-opened to women, Easdon applied. Her previous service enabled her to enlist in a higher rank than someone without experience. Yet, like many returning female and male veterans, she accepted a demotion from her wartime rank. From 1951 to 1961, Easdon was promoted through the ranks to Sergeant, spent two years in Germany (1953-1955), and was transferred to RCAF Station Comox from RCAF Station Sea Island in 1959 when air force officials determined that her former "Station no longer required the services of airwomen...."<sup>892</sup> In 1964, the RCAF decided that it did not need airwomen and tried to "phase" them out. Instead, after careful review, defence officials decided to retain servicewomen as full-time members of the defence forces of Canada.

Responding to Cynthia Enloe's call to "pay[...] close attention to women *inside* militaries," this dissertation has demonstrated that listening to servicewomen like Jessie Easdon results in a new approach to Canadian women's military history. The framework placed servicewomen's plans for and accounts of their military service at the center of the narrative, which demanded an extensive time frame and a tri-service analysis. Unlike almost all histories of Canadian military women, the history presented here covers several decades.

Taking servicewomen's voices seriously thus made this thesis more than a study of the war years. Past scholarship has largely overlooked the fact that female officers, unofficial historians and individual chroniclers drew links between wartime

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<sup>892</sup> Naugle, "Anniversary Honours Airwomen."

servicewomen and subsequent generations of Canadian military women. The historical literature does not capture the entirety of Easdon's career because it divides women's military service into discrete periods. Most work engages in the debate over whether the Second World War was a pivotal moment, a watershed, in the development of Canada and, in particular, the advancement of women. The question of whether or not military service emancipated Canadian women inspired Ruth Roach Pierson's *"They're Still Women After All": The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood* and Jeffrey Keshen's *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers: Canada's Second World War*. Historians who side with Pierson argue that the war did not improve women's rights and status. Those who side with Keshen argue that the war contributed to future gains. Both sides mostly restrict themselves to the war years and have little discussion of what changed or did not change in the postwar period. Both sides all but omit the voices and experiences of women like Easdon whose relationship to the armed services continued past the war years.<sup>893</sup>

Taking women's voices seriously demonstrates that focusing on war as a watershed, on the concept that intense pressure of war remakes or reinforces existing social structures and norms, is a mistake. This argument builds on historian Joan Scott's claim that debates over war as watershed are unresolvable and supports Laurel Halladay's criticism that such an emphasis on war as a watershed has "distorted" Canadian military

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<sup>893</sup> Cynthia Enloe, *Globalization & Militarism: Feminists Make the Link* (Lanham: Rowam & Littlefield Publishers, 2007), 63; Ruth Roach Pierson, *"They're Still Women After All": The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986); and Jeffrey A. Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers: Canada's Second World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004).

history.<sup>894</sup> The dissertation has extended the timeframe beyond the watershed moment, exploring how women expressed and negotiated their membership in the Canadian armed services from 1938 to 1966. This study argues that women have wanted to serve in both war and peace, that women crafted long-term plans which bridged wartime and peacetime services, and that many servicewomen developed lasting identifications with the armed services. The argument also inspired by the literature on disobedience in the armed services, which has shown that the parameters which govern military service are the result of a continuous cycle of negotiations between “the leaders” and “the led.”<sup>895</sup> The establishment of military service as a female career was the result of almost three decades of ongoing negotiations between individual servicewomen, military officers, and civilian authorities.

Individual (service)women played a critical role in pressing for women’s participation in the Second World War and shaping their roles in the armed services. They engaged with defence officials to determine which women belonged in the armed forces and in what capacity. During the 1930s and early 1940s, women saw a need for their services in non-combat support positions in the defence forces of Canada. They responded to a lack of government policy by setting up paramilitary groups, training women in military drill and organization, and pressuring the government to form official

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<sup>894</sup> Joan W. Scott, “Rewriting History,” in *Behind the Lines: Gender and the Two World Wars*, ed. Margaret Randolph Higonnet, Jane Jenson, Sonya Michel and Margaret Collins Weitz (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 25-30; and Laurel Halladay, “Renegotiating National Boundaries: Canadian Military Historians and Thematic Analysis,” *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies* 8, no. 2 (Winter 2005-2006): 1-16. The quoted word comes from Halladay, page 2.

<sup>895</sup> Craig Leslie Mantle, “Introduction,” in *The Unwilling and The Reluctant: Theoretical Perspectives on Disobedience in the Military*, ed. Craig Leslie Mantle (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2006), 1-10.

women's services. Their activism combined with wartime labour shortages lead to the formation of the RCAF (Women's Division), the Canadian Women's Army Corps (CWAC), and the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service (WRCNS). Once the services formed, servicewomen and defence officials navigated a wide range of issues, such as recruitment, alcohol consumption, and discharge.

Senior female officers laid the foundations for women's peacetime return. Acting Captain Adelaide Sinclair, a wartime Director of the WRCNS, her army colleague Lieutenant-Colonel Daisy Royal, and an anonymous RCAF official set down their plans for the future employment of servicewomen in reports that they wrote in 1946. These officers mobilized several tactics that repeatedly appear in defence planning and in servicewomen's narratives. They made recommendations for the organization and administration of future servicewomen based on individual and the collective past experiences. Defence officials and their staffs subsequently drew on these reports in post-Second World War manpower planning and in early histories of the wartime services. The recall of wartime female officers to assist with the organization of women's return reveals that defence officials agreed with the 1946 reports' claims of female military expertise.

Sinclair, Royal, and the RCAF official justified the re-entrance of women, and peacetime senior female officers expanded service women's career opportunities by asserting female authority. They all mobilized an argument used by previous female activists and insisted that women must be supervised by other women. Peacetime officers, such as Squadron Leader Elizabeth Dalton, supported the need for female

oversight. The claim was enshrined in the Minister's Manpower Study (Men)'s [MMS (M)] report on women in 1965. The MMS (M) disagreed with military officers who argued that servicewomen's need for female oversight made them a greater financial and administrative burden than men.

Sinclair, Royal, and the RCAF official also carved out space for female defence planners by arguing that wartime servicewomen, and in particular female officers, were important sources of military knowledge. Only female veterans, they insisted, had the expertise to navigate between servicewomen's gender and military identities. They argued that civilian women had insight into women's special needs as women. Servicemen knew the male military requirements but, in the words of Sinclair, the authors of the 1946 reports argued that only female officers knew how to "decide where the line is to be drawn between treating Wrens as naval ratings and as women."<sup>896</sup>

Combat was one place where wartime and peacetime officials decided to treat servicewomen like civilians. Only servicemen were permitted to serve in combat roles. In 1951, the federal Cabinet made women's exclusion from combat one of its restrictions on the employment of women. Senior female officers accepted the combat decision even as they fought to preserve servicewomen's career opportunities. The author of a 1957 review of policy for naval women signalled that some military personnel had reconsidered servicemen's monopoly on combat.<sup>897</sup> Changing technology of warfare had led some military personnel to envision the possibility of the female combatant, however,

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<sup>896</sup> Acting Captain Adelaide Sinclair, "Report on the W.R.C.N.S.," 31 May 1946, Section II: Conditions of Service, copy at DHH, 75/554.

<sup>897</sup> "RCN Wren Policy and Planning, August 1954- July, 1957, A review," 13, DHH, 75/553.

the MMS (M) did not include combat in their vision of a permanent future for women in the armed services.

The perceived tension between servicewomen's gender and military identities influenced the negotiations of their place in the male-dominated armed services. Sinclair accepted male standards as the military norm, but used her position within the navy to create opportunities to serve for future women. She captured the opinion of some Second World War military personnel when she wrote that military service "is not a natural life for women in peacetime."<sup>898</sup> Other wartime veterans clearly disagreed. They communicated their position when they accepted a demotion in rank in order to return to the armed services in the 1950s.

Lines continued to be drawn between servicewomen's gender and military identities in the 1950s and 1960s. Although Lieutenant-Commander Constance Ogilvy was among the women who pursued a military career then, she held to the naval planning principle that servicewomen's employment must not harm men's careers. The conflict between servicewomen's gender and military identities explains the contradictions embedded in the 1965 MMS (M)'s manpower study on the employment of women in the armed services. The MMS (M) adopted a liberal feminist argument, insisting that biological sex should not prevent women from having the opportunity to serve in the Canadian armed services. Yet they disqualified women from all but a few trades on the grounds that the average woman was considered to be a short-term temporary employee.

While many servicewomen served only for a few years, they maintained a variety

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<sup>898</sup> Sinclair, "Report on the W.R.C.N.S.," Section XIX: Peace Time.

of lengthy relationships with the Canadian armed services. Some remained involved in military-based organizations, such as cadet/cadettes and veterans' groups. Countless servicewomen communicated their ties through individual and group efforts to insert women into the historiography of the Second World War. They constructed scrapbooks and donated them to museums and archives. Female veterans' groups hired authors to write the unofficial histories of the services. A minority of women followed a path similar to Easdon and expressed their lasting identification through a military career.

Alcohol is a window into servicewomen's negotiations of their place in the armed services, and into the moral regulation of military and civilian women. Chapter two drew upon the work of military historians whose analyses of wartime debates over servicemen's alcohol consumption reveal much about civil-military relations. It also added to past literature on the history of servicewomen's (im)morality by exploring how wartime authorities blamed alcohol for cases of "illegitimate" pregnancy and venereal disease in the women's services.<sup>899</sup> In wartime Canada, alcohol was simultaneously a source of moral corruption, a deserved reward for responsible citizens, a pleasurable leisure activity, and a marker of belonging. Critics of drinking by servicewomen argued that alcohol loosened the self-control of women and so had the potential to destroy Canadian society. Some supporters thought that servicewomen had every right to drink

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<sup>899</sup> For example, Tim Cook, "Wet Canteens and Worrying Mothers: Alcohol, Soldiers and Temperance Groups in the Great War," *Histoire sociale/Social History* 35, no. 70 (2002):311-30; Tim Cook, "'More a medicine than a beverage' 'Demon Rum' and the Canadian Trench Soldier of the First War," *Canadian Military History* 9, no 1. (2000): 6-22; Dean Oliver, "'My Darlin' Clementine?' Wooing Zombies for \$6.50 a Night: General Service-NRMA Relations in Wartime Calgary," *Canadian Military History* 7, no. 3 (Summer 1998): 46-54; Pierson, "*They're Still Women After All*," 169-214; and Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 186-8.

but wanted servicewomen to do so in military controlled spaces that were away from the public's gaze. The wartime debates over servicewomen's alcohol consumption provide an entry point into the policing of gender roles in the armed services. The examination of servicewomen provides insight into civilian society more generally.

This study expands on the work of women's and gender historians, such as Valerie Korinek, Joy Parr, Joan Sangster, and Magda Fahrni, who emphasize the diversity of women's experiences in their re-evaluation of the postwar reconstruction of domesticity and femininity. This work adds military service as another path. Similarly, it adds senior female officers as another example of what Gail Campbell calls "inter-wave activists." As with many inter-wave activists, senior female officers worked within their institutions, pushing and prodding for new roles within the organization. Chapter five illustrated that feminism existed in the armed services. Many wartime and peacetime servicewomen served for short periods. Their military service was a job that they did as young women before they started their families. Building on the work of Gary Kinsman, Patrizia Gentile and Cameron Duder, chapters one, four, five and six have shown that military service also offered women an alternative to the heterosexual family. Military service provided servicewomen an income, and especially for those women who served a number of years, a sense of community.<sup>900</sup>

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<sup>900</sup> Valerie Korinek, *Roughing It in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000); Joy Parr, ed., *A Diversity of Women: Ontario, 1945-1980* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995); Joan Sangster, *Transforming Labour: Women and Work in Post-war Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), Kindle Version; Magda Fahrni, *Household Politics: Montreal Families and Postwar Reconstruction* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005); Gail G. Campbell, "Are we going to do the most important things?" Senator Muriel McQueen Fergusson, Feminist Identities, and the Royal Commission on the Status of Women," *Acadiensis* XXXVIII, no. 2

The long periodization necessitated concentration on particular moments or voices. In listening, some women's voices came through more clearly than others. Women such as Beulah Rosen and Isabel Macneill curated their own military legacies. Other women's stories were more heavily mediated. Jessie Easdon's vision of her service career emerged from the material that Leading Aircraftsman G.T. Naugle selected for his article on her military service. Countless servicewomen still remain nameless. Traces of what they communicated about women's roles in the armed services can be found in the defence studies that listed the reasons why women left the armed services.

The clearest voices in this dissertation were women who were drawn to military service. Servicewomen with a strong sense of connection with the armed services produced many of the sources examined here. Senior female officers wrote many of the official texts. Most of them in the years from 1951 to 1966 were career women, while the majority of servicewomen served for short periods. The senior female officers' views were constrained within the hierarchy of the armed services and shaped by their own career goals.

Although there were female veterans such as Vi Dudley-Mathieson who were motivated by a sense of injustice, most veterans protected the reputation of the armed services and their legacy. What most veterans addressed was the absence of their history — they wrote to ensure that their contributions and those of their peers were recorded. Although many servicewomen created their chronicles decades after their years of

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(Summer/Autumn 2009): 52-77; and Gary Kinsman and Patrizia Gentile. *The Canadian War on Queers: National Security as Sexual Regulation*. (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010).

service, their accounts were motivated by an awareness that they represented the organization whose uniform they had worn. In the words of one wartime WRCN, servicewomen had been taught to “*never disgrace your uniform.*”<sup>901</sup> Gender, sexual, and racial bias and discrimination appear, but are overwhelmed for most veterans by stories of comradery, the absurdities of military bureaucracy, and women’s contributions to the armed services.

This dissertation moves quickly over a long time period, and opens the door to further study into the history of Canadian women’s military service will benefit from further study. There is more work to be done on peacetime women in general. A statistical analysis of the women attracted to military service would answer questions such as: how many Second World veterans returned in the peace, what was the percentage of racial minorities in the peacetime services, and what was servicewomen’s class background? The literature also suffers from a lack of peacetime women’s voices. There needs to be more research and interviews with peacetime veterans, especially women who served in the army and navy. Little attention has been paid in this dissertation to servicewomen’s on and off-duty lives on military stations and bases.

In addition, there are numerous understudied topics that would be applicable to both the war years and postwar years. An in-depth examination on servicewomen and discrimination is needed. Future research should explore both servicewomen who experienced gender and sexual discrimination, and servicewomen who discriminated

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<sup>901</sup> WRCN member, “Doing it in Uniform!,” in Jean Bruce, *Back the Attack!: Canadian Women During the Second World War-at Home and Abroad* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1985), 99. Emphasis in text.

against others. More research is needed on servicewomen who rejected the armed services and did not develop a long-term relationship with the armed forces. There is little work on what happened to wartime and peacetime servicewomen once they left the armed services. Chapter four addressed this topic, but only for women who remained connected with the armed services. It described how some wartime women became involved in cadettes and veterans' organizations, but the inner workings of these groups fell outside the scope of the project, and are another topic for future research. Finally, servicewomen's relationships with civilians are largely unexplored in this dissertation. Chapters one and four touched on the ways that family members reacted to servicewomen's decision to enlist into the armed services. What it was like to build romantic and platonic friendships while in uniform? How did civilian women in Canada and overseas view Canadian servicewomen? It would be revealing to know what servicemen's wives and women at home and overseas thought of servicewomen.

From 1938 to 1966, Canadian (service)women envisioned, voiced, promoted, and pursued a place for themselves and other women in the armed services. In the years and decades after their service ended, servicewomen negotiated their legacy and crafted stories of female military tradition(s). They declared themselves to be repositories of military knowledge. It is time that historians listened.

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# Appendix One – Ethics Clearance Form



Carleton University  
Research Ethics Office  
Research Ethics Board  
511 Tory, 1125 Colonel By Drive  
Ottawa, ON K1S 5B6 Canada  
Tel: 613-520-2517, ethics@carleton.ca

## Ethics Clearance Form – Clearance Renewal

This is to certify that the Carleton University Research Ethics Board has examined the application for ethical clearance. The REB found the research project to meet appropriate ethical standards as outlined in the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Human, 2nd edition*, and the *Carleton University Policies and Procedures for the Ethical Conduct of Research*.

**Original Date of Clearance:** May 1, 2014

**Renewal Date of Clearance:** May 07, 2015

**Researcher:** Sarah Hogenbirk (Student Research: Ph.D. Student)

**Department:** Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences\History (Department of)

**University:** Carleton University

**Research Supervisor (if applicable):** Norman Hillmer and Joanna Dean

**Project Number:** 12992

**Alternate File Number (if applicable):** 13-1348

**Project Title:** Canadian Women's Military Service: Gender, Sexuality and Citizenship, 1939-1965  
(working title)

**Funder (if applicable):**

**Clearance Expires:** May 31, 2016

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### All researchers are governed by the following conditions:

**Annual Status Report:** You are required to submit an Annual Status Report to either renew clearance or close the file. Failure to submit the Annual Status Report will result in the immediate suspension of the project. Funded projects will have accounts suspended until the report is submitted and approved.

**Changes to the project:** Any changes to the project must be submitted to the Carleton University Research Ethics Board for approval. All changes must be approved prior to the continuance of the research.

**Adverse events:** Should a participant suffer adversely from their participation in the project you are required to report the matter to the Carleton University Research Ethics Board. You must submit a written record of the event and indicate what steps you have taken to resolve the situation.

**Suspension or termination of clearance:** Failure to conduct the research in accordance with the principles of the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans, 2nd edition* and the *Carleton University Policies and Procedures for the Ethical Conduct of Research* may result in the suspension or termination of the research project.



**Louise Heslop**

Chair, Carleton University Research Ethics Board



**Andy Adler**

Vice-Chair, Carleton University Research Ethics Board

