

YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT...

Rape, Harassment and Sexual Assault

Thousands of service women are harassed or sexually assaulted each year. Many don't report incidents for fear they will be ignored, exposed or punished.

One study concluded that sexual assault is three to ten times more prevalent for women serving in the armed forces than for women in the general population.

Nearly one-third of a nationwide sample of female veterans who sought health care through the VA said they experienced rape or attempted rape during their service. Of that group, 37 percent said they were raped multiple times, and 14 percent reported they were gang-raped.

Over the past 10 years, more than 700 army recruiters have been accused of sexual misconduct or rape.



Psychological Trauma

Women in the military are at high risk for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Many experience both the trauma of combat and the trauma of sexual assault.

More than 25 percent of soldiers and marines reported experiencing depression, anxiety, PTSD or alcohol misuse after deployment to Iraq.

More than one-third of the 23,635 women veterans who served in Iraq or Afghanistan and were evaluated at VA health facilities between 2002 and 2006 had a preliminary diagnosis of a mental disorder.

The Department of Defense and the Veterans Administration cannot provide adequate care for all those who need treatment for service-related mental health problems.

CONSIDER THE REALITIES...

Myths

By the time you join up, finish basic training and job training, you won't be deployed to Iraq.

Legally, women cannot be placed in combat positions.

You'll receive bonus money, free college education, and health care.

Military service will make you a strong, independent woman.

Realities

Over 155,000 women have been deployed to Iraq & Afghanistan since 2002.

Every position in Iraq is a combat position; women are in greater danger than ever before. Dozens of women have been killed. Hundreds return home wounded.

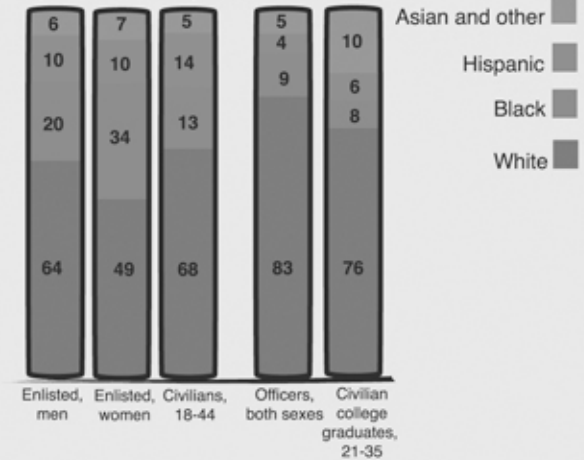
Military recruiters won't tell you how hard it is to access benefits.

The military takes away your voice as a woman and trains you to follow orders – no questions asked.

WHO SERVES?

American Indian, Latino, Asian-American and African-American youth are especially targeted for recruitment. Young women and men of color are over-represented in the armed forces and under-represented on college campuses.

Active Duty Military and Civilians by Race/Ethnicity, 2002



Source: DoD, Population Representation in the Military Services, FY2002 (2004): tables 4.5 and b-24, and page 4-9.

Sources:

"Task Force Report on Care for Victims of Sexual Assault," Department of Defense, April 2004, <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/May2004/d20040513SATFRreport.pdf>

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"Stresses of War Take Toll on Female Veterans," VFW Magazine, March 2007, http://www.vfw.org/resources/levelxmagazine/0703_Women%20Vets%20and%20Stress.pdf

"A Considerable Sacrifice: The Costs of Sexual Violence in the U.S. Military," September 2005, <http://www.law.buffalo.edu/baldycenter/pdfs/MilCult05Hansen.pdf>

"The Women's War," New York Times, March 18, 2007 <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/03/18/magazine/18cover.html?pagewanted=5&ei=5088&en=823808201240cefd&ex=1331870400&partner=rssnyt&emc=rss>

