

DEOMI News Highlights

DEOMI News Highlights is a weekly compilation of published items and commentary with focus on equal opportunity, equal employment opportunity, diversity, culture, and human relations issues. The DEOMI News Highlights is also a management tool intended to serve the informational needs of equity professionals and senior DOD officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs, and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions.

Gen.: U.S. military ready for open service [UPI, 22 July 2011]

- Ending "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" won't harm U.S. military readiness, the chief U.S. forces in Iraq spokesman said. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta and Joints Chiefs of Staff Chairman Adm. Mike Mullen were to meet with President Barack Obama at the White House Friday to announce that all branches of the military were ready to permit homosexual and bisexual men and women to serve openly.
- More than 17,000 service members were discharged under the "don't ask" policy since it was mandated by Congress in 1993. Once the law is repealed, gays and lesbians serving in military uniform will legally be able to reveal their sexual identity without fear of dismissal or official rebuke. Same-sex couples may be allowed to wed at military chapels or live together on military bases in states that recognize same-sex marriages.
- Federal law currently blocks the military from providing same-sex couples the full range of health, housing, education, and survivor benefits available to opposite-sex couples, officials say. The 1996 U.S. Defense of Marriage Act bars federal recognition of same-sex marriages.

[Gen.: U.S. military ready for open service](#)

Marines get a female commander at Parris Island [Russ Mitchell, CBS News, 17 July 2011]

- Brigadier General Loretta Reynolds is the first woman to lead the Marine recruiting depot on Parris Island, South Carolina. She is the first female Marine to hold a command position in a battle zone—which she did when she was stationed in Afghanistan.
- Reynolds is one of only two active female generals in the Marines.
- Parris Island graduates 20,000 Marines every year. Male recruits from east of the Mississippi and all female recruits come here to join the Corps.

[Marines get a female commander at Parris Island](#)

Navy's online bid to fight sexual assault sparks controversy [Geoff Ziezulewicz, Stars and Stripes, 15 July 2011]

- The Navy's reported incidents of sexual assault rose by 6 percent last year. The Navy is trying to change that, including through the use of social media. A post on the Navy's official Facebook page has sparked online controversy for its questionable approach.
- The post shows what appears to be a naked woman holding a sandwich-board size card in front of her torso that contains 10 tips for sexual assault prevention. Some people applauded the irreverent tone, while some were outraged and offended.
- Navy officials said the Navy takes sexual assault seriously and that this posting was an effort "to encourage discussion on a serious issue..." A comment below the picture stated that it is not a Navy-generated product, "but we extended it to get your attention."

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Discrimination

Favoritism & Personal bias Unfair but Legal

By Bob Gregg

DiversityInc., 14 July 2011

Bob Gregg, a partner in Boardman Law Firm, shares his roundup of diversity-related legal issues. He can be reached at rgregg@boardmanlawfirm.com.

[Read more Legal Issues.](#)

National-Origin Discrimination

Favoritism and personal animosity may be unfair but are not illegal. A Mexican-American employee filed a race and national-origin discrimination case due to denial of a promotion. He alleged that the supervisor had a bias against him and stacked the deck in favor of a non-Latino employee. The court did find evidence of favoritism toward the successful candidate. It also found that there was a poor working relationship between the plaintiff and the supervisor. However, it found no discrimination. There were three other rejected candidates who were not Latino and the deck was stacked against them too. The supervisor also had personal biases against at least one of the other people. So, the plaintiff was simply in the same situation as these others, and his race or national origin did not stand out as a factor. There are many sorts of unfairness that are not protected by law. *Villalpando v. Salazar* (10th Circuit, 2011).

Race Discrimination

Get it right the first time—shifting reasons are evidence of pretext. A Black employee made several verbal complaints to his supervisor about harassment by his Latino coworkers. He alleged that they engaged in racial taunts and epithets. When no action was taken, he made a written complaint to the supervisor. He was fired that day. He then filed a Title VII case on race, national origin and retaliation. The court found suspicious timing in the discharge. The main evidence for a decision against the employer was the shifting reasons given to defend the termination. The company first claimed the firing was because of violating policy against taking pictures of the workplace. This then changed to a layoff because of reduction in force. Finally, the company again changed its story and claimed the employee had agreed to resign. The court determined that the ever-changing reasons were evidence of pretext to cover up discrimination and retaliation. *Loudermilk v. Best Pattet Co.* (7th Circuit, 2011).

Read more about race-discrimination cases: ['I Didn't Get the Job Because I'm Black.'](#)

Disability Discrimination

Nurse could do job with wheeled scooter and support boot. A nurse had foot surgery and had ongoing effects. She needed to use a wheeled scooter and wear a rigid support boot. The hospital removed her from clinic duties because of "safety concerns." The nurse demonstrated that she could perform the essential functions of her job, but the hospital did not allow her to resume her duties and her employment was terminated. The court found sufficient grounds for a trial based on the evidence that the hospital refused to consider the accommodation of allowing her to work using the assistive devices. *Sydnor v. Fairfax County* (E.D., Virginia, 2011).

Employees without disabilities can challenge drug test as improper medical exam. The ADA prohibits medical examination of employees unless it is "job related and consistent with business necessity." The ADA specifies that testing for illegal drugs is not a covered medical exam. However, in *Bates, et al v. Dura Auto Systems* (M.D., Tennessee, 2011), a manufacturer's test also checked for a list of prescription medications it believed created safety concerns. Several

<http://diversityinc.com/article/8461/>

employees tested positive for these legal medications that had been prescribed to them. The company gave them time to change medications to something not on the list. Several presented repeated medical information from their doctors that the dosage of medication was not a safety concern and would not impair their work. However, the company insisted they either change medications or be terminated, and then it fired those who did not or could not change. None of those fired were considered to have a disability under the definition of the ADA. However, the court ruled that they could proceed with an ADA suit. The testing provision of the law protects *all* employees and applicants from improper medical inquiry, not just those who can prove a disability. In the trial, the company will still have the opportunity to prove that its test and list of problem medications were "consistent with business necessity."

Indefinite leave is not reasonable. A leave of absence is a form of accommodation under the ADA if it enables the employee to recuperate or receive treatment and then return to accomplish the job. A Federal Express courier was injured and unable to return to the job for a protracted period. He was unable to provide an estimated date of return or provide evidence that further leave would result in his reaching an ability to return to the job. He was terminated. The court granted summary judgment to the employer, holding that an indefinite, indeterminate leave is not reasonable under the ADA. *Verrocchio v. Federal Express Corp.* (N.D. NY, 2011).

Attorney's accommodation request to work irregular hours from home may have been reasonable—or maybe not. The problem is that the employer did not engage in the required "interactive process" to study the issue. When a Labor Department legal counsel with a disability made the accommodation request, the department stated that the ability to work a regular, predictable schedule was an essential function of the job and rejected the request. The employee sued under the Rehabilitation Act. The court ruled for the employee, allowing the case to proceed to trial. The court indicated that the department reversed the required decision process. There must first be an exploration of whether the accommodation that is sought can reasonably meet the employer's needs and the essential function requirements. A presumption about essential function should not preempt the interactive process. *Schmidt v. Solis* (D. D.C., 2011).

Read more about [disability-discrimination cases](#).

Diversity

http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/african-american-civil-war-museum-dedication-honors-black-soldiers/2011/07/17/gIQA5IAZKI_story.html

African American Civil War museum dedication honors black soldiers

By Courtland Milloy

Washington Post, July 17, 2011

Back in 1962, Frank Smith Jr. left Morehouse College in Atlanta and went to Mississippi as a civil rights activist with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. In Holly Springs, he met a man who turned out to be the descendant of an African American Civil War veteran.

“I found it ironic that a guy whose grandfather had fought to end slavery and preserve the Union was still being treated like a second-class citizen, not even allowed to vote,” Smith told me recently. “So I started reading about the soldiers.”

A seed was planted that would become the African American Civil War Museum and Memorial, which Smith founded in Washington in 1998. On Monday, nearly 50 years after that chance encounter in Mississippi, he’ll preside over the dedication of the museum’s expansion into a renovated school building at 1925 Vermont Ave. NW. It is the largest museum of its kind in the country and the only national memorial to black soldiers who fought in the Civil War.

“The Civil War ought to be one of the things that black people celebrate,” Smith said. “But we tend to think of Confederate flags instead of thinking about those 209,145 black people who fought for freedom and to preserve the union, 23 winning the Congressional Medal of Honor and coming out with three important amendments to the Constitution — the 13th, 14th and 15th — which ended slavery, gave blacks equal protection under the law and black men the right to vote. It was phenomenal.”

Smith, 68, is a native of Newnan, Ga. He moved to the District in January 1968, when he took a job as a researcher with the Institute for Policy Studies. That April, Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated, and riots erupted in the city.

“I started to move back to Mississippi,” Smith said. “These people were burning down their own neighborhoods. I recognized that there was a lot of anger and bitterness, but I don’t think those black Civil War soldiers made the ultimate sacrifices so we could destroy our own homes.”

In 1982, Smith, a Democrat, was elected to the D.C. Council on a platform of providing housing subsidies and tax incentives for businesses. He represented Ward 1, where the museum is located, until 1998. During that time, construction on the Metro subway system’s Green Line began. Many businesses were hurt when streets were torn up to make way for a tunnel.

“I began complaining to Metro: ‘You have to build something special to make up for the damage you have done,’ ” Smith recalled. He and his constituents agreed on a black Civil War memorial with open space for community gatherings, which Metro helped fund.

The museum was a mere 700 square feet. The new one is more than seven times that size, with 5,000 square feet.

A sculpture by Ed Hamilton honoring the soldiers and sailors was added, along with a “Wall of Honor” that includes the names of the black men who fought in the war. More than 36,000 died.

The museum’s reopening coincides with the nation’s commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War. Also, on July 18, 1863, the Union’s all-black 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry staged its legendary assault on the Confederate battery at Fort Wagner in South Carolina.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/african-american-civil-war-museum-dedication-honors-black-soldiers/2011/07/17/gIQA5IAZKI_story.html

That was the group featured in the 1989 movie “Glory,” starring Denzel Washington and Morgan Freeman, with Matthew Broderick portraying Col. Robert Gould Shaw, who led them into battle.

The museum is in the Shaw neighborhood, named for the colonel. It began as a freed-slave encampment in the 1800s and became a black cultural mecca before the riots.

“After people visit the museum and the monument, they walk out into the community and see Howard University, Vermont Avenue Baptist Church, the Masonic Temple — all historic places made possible because of the guys whose names are listed on that memorial,” Smith said.

The museum features military documents, letters from soldiers, uniforms, rifles, photographs and tools for tracing family history. Smith and the museum’s staff recently launched a four-year campaign to find and mark the gravesites of the veterans.

“America would have been a much different country if the Confederates had won the Civil War — a divided and weaker place,” Smith said. “I don’t think the nation realizes how much black soldiers did to help make America great. Our job is to get the story out.”

http://www.upi.com/Top_News/US/2011/07/22/Gen-US-military-ready-for-open-service/UPI-66591311321600/

Gen.: U.S. military ready for open service

United Press International, Inc., 22 July 2011

WASHINGTON, July 22 (UPI) -- Ending "don't ask, don't tell" won't harm U.S. military readiness, the chief U.S. forces in Iraq spokesman said as the Pentagon was about to certify the repeal.

"I don't think there's any issue with it whatsoever," Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Buchanan told The Washington Post as Defense Secretary Leon Panetta and Joints Chiefs of Staff Chairman Adm. Mike Mullen were to announce Friday all branches of the military were ready to permit homosexual and bisexual men and women to serve openly. "And if there are individual issues," Buchanan said, "then people will have to either conform or make a decision to leave when they can."

Once Panetta and Mullen -- who were to meet with President Barack Obama at the White House at 2:45 p.m. EDT Friday -- confirm the repeal's certification, Obama will then certify the repeal to Congress, based on the rules of the repeal he signed into law Dec. 22, 2010.

If he signs the certification in the next few days, the required 60-day waiting period before the law's repeal would end in late September. The White House plans no public event marking the end of the law until the waiting period's end, the Post reported.

Gay-rights advocates have advised service members not to reveal their sexual identity until the ban is formally repealed. Since 1993 the "don't ask" policy allowed gays to serve in the military, provided they kept their sexual orientation quiet. More than 17,000 service members were discharged since it was mandated by Congress.

Once the law -- which President Bill Clinton supported as a compromise measure -- is repealed, gays and lesbians serving in military uniform will legally be able to reveal their sexual identity without fear of dismissal or official rebuke. In addition, openly gay and bisexual men and women will be able to enlist and same-sex couples may be allowed to wed at military chapels or live together on military bases in states that recognize same-sex marriages.

Gay activists and top military officials caution it may take years for non-heterosexuals to feel completely comfortable revealing their sexual orientation to colleagues, even though troops have undergone training to prepare for open service since February, the Post said.

In addition, federal law currently blocks the military from providing same-sex couples the full range of health, housing, education and survivor benefits available to opposite-sex couples, officials say. And the 1996 U.S. Defense of Marriage Act bars federal recognition of same-sex marriages.

The White House said Tuesday Obama would endorse a repeal of DOMA, which also lets states refuse to recognize same-sex marriages granted in other states. "While DOMA remains the law, there will be a difference in the benefits afforded to legally married same-sex couples compared to legally married opposite-sex couples," a senior military officer told The Wall Street Journal.

Still, once U.S. military commanders "realize this inequity exists, [they] are going to be uncomfortable with troops under their command not receiving the same basic benefits," Army veteran Aubrey Sarvis, executive director of Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, which advocates for gay service members, told the Journal. "There must be equal treatment for equal risk, equal treatment for equal sacrifice," Sarvis said.

Miscellaneous

Alabamians still paying Confederate veteran tax

By Jay Reeves

Associated Press/Army Times, 20 July 2011

MOUNTAIN CREEK, Ala. (AP) -- The last of the more than 60,000 Confederate veterans who came home to Alabama after the Civil War died generations ago, yet residents are still paying a tax that supported the neediest among them.

Despite fire-and-brimstone opposition to taxes among many in a state that still has "Heart of Dixie" on its license plates, officials never stopped collecting a property tax that once funded the Alabama Confederate Soldiers' Home, which closed 72 years ago. The tax now pays for Confederate Memorial Park, which sits on the same 102-acre tract where elderly veterans used to stroll.

The tax once brought in millions for Confederate pensions, but lawmakers sliced up the levy and sent money elsewhere as the men and their wives died. No one has seriously challenged the continued use of the money for a memorial to the "Lost Cause," in part because few realize it exists; one long-serving black legislator who thought the tax had been done away with said he wants to eliminate state funding for the park.

These days, 150 years after the Civil War started, officials say the old tax typically brings in more than \$400,000 annually for the park, where Confederate flags flapped on a recent steamy afternoon. That's not much compared to Alabama's total operating budget of \$1.8 billion, but it's sufficient to give the park plenty of money to operate and even enough for investments, all at a time when other historic sites are struggling just to keep the grass cut for lack of state funding.

"It's a beautifully maintained park. It's one of the best because of the funding source," said Clara Nobles of the Alabama Historical Commission, which oversees Confederate Memorial Park.

Longtime park director Bill Rambo is more succinct.

"Everyone is jealous of us," he said.

Tax experts say they know of no other state that still collects a tax so directly connected to the Civil War, although some federal excise taxes on tobacco and alcohol first were enacted during the war to help fund the Union.

"Broadly speaking, almost all taxes have their start in a war of some sort," said Joseph J. Thorndike, director of a tax history project at Tax Analysts, a nonprofit organization that studies taxation.

Alabama's tax structure was enshrined in its 1901 Constitution, passed after Reconstruction at a time when historians say state legislators' main goal was to keep power in the hands of wealthy white landowners by disenfranchising blacks and poor whites.

The Constitution allowed a state property tax of up to 6.5 mills, which now amounts to \$39 annually on a home worth \$100,000. Of that tax, 3 mills went to schools; 2.5 mills went to the operating budget; and 1 mill went to pensions for Confederate veterans and widows.

The state used the pension tax to fund the veterans home once it assumed control of the operation in 1903. The last Confederate veteran living at the home died in 1934, and its hospital was converted into apartments for widows. It closed in 1939, and the five women who lived there were moved to Montgomery.

Legislators whittled away at the Confederate tax through the decades, and millions of dollars that once went to the home and pensions now go to fund veteran services, the state welfare agency and other needs. But the park still gets 1 percent of one mill, and its budget for this year came to \$542,469, which includes money carried over from previous years plus certificates of deposit.

<http://www.armytimes.com/news/2011/07/ap-alabama-confederate-veteran-tax-072011/>

All that money has created a manicured, modern park that's the envy of other Alabama historic sites, which are funded primarily by grants, donations and friends groups. Legislators created the park in 1964 during a period that marked both the 100th anniversary of the Civil War and the height of the civil rights movement in the Deep South.

Nothing is left of the veterans home but a few foundations and two cemeteries with 313 graves, but a museum with Civil War artifacts and modern displays opened at the park in 2007. Rebel flags fly all around the historic site, which Rambo said draws more than 10,000 visitors annually despite being hidden in the country nine miles and three turns off Interstate 65 in the central part of the state.

While the park flourishes quietly, other historic attractions around the state are fighting for survival.

Workers at Helen Keller's privately run home in northwest Alabama fear losing letters written by the famed activist because of a lack of state funding for preservation of artifacts. On the Gulf Coast at Dauphin Island, preservationists say the state-owned Fort Gaines is in danger of being undermined by waves after nearly 160 years standing guard at the entry to Mobile Bay.

The old Confederate pension tax that funds the park has never been seriously threatened, Rambo said. Backers were upset this year when Gov. Robert Bentley's budget plan eliminated state funding for historic sites because of tight revenues, he said, but the park's earmarked funding survived.

"Once I informed the public what was going on the support just rose up," said Rambo, the director since 1989. Two heritage groups, the Sons of Confederate Veterans and United Daughters of the Confederacy, led the charge, but ordinary citizens complained too, he said.

"Some were people who don't belong to those organizations who really like the park and come out here for picnics and all and were really upset," he said.

State Rep. Alvin Holmes, a black Democrat who's been in the Legislature since 1974, said he thought funding for the park had been slashed.

"We should not be spending one nickel for that," said Holmes, of Montgomery. "I'm going to try to get rid of it."

Holmes may have a hard time gaining support with Republicans in control of Legislature and the governor's office.

In the meantime, a contractor recently measured the museum for a new paint job, and plans calls for using invested money to construct replicas of some of the 22 buildings that stood on the site when it was home to hundreds of Confederate veterans and their wives.

Army Treats Brain Injuries In Field

By Kristin M. Hall, Associated Press

Military Times, July 14, 2011

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan--The traumatic brain injury that Army Staff Sgt. Isidoro Castillo suffered when a suicide bomber attacked his unit in Afghanistan could have meant the end of his deployment.

Instead, Castillo's doctors handled his injury without sending him back to the United States, part of a military effort to better treat and track brain injuries that have become a signature affliction of the war. Castillo, originally from Fayetteville, N.C., described the bombing days later while he was recovering in a new specialized housing unit for soldiers being treated for brain injuries.

"He was in my peripheral vision. I heard a pop and I hit the ground and the explosion went off," Castillo said. Five soldiers from his 18-member mentoring team were killed during an April meeting with Afghan soldiers at an outpost in the eastern province of Nangarhar.

The Army has had to rethink the way it deals with traumatic brain injury in Afghanistan and Iraq because U.S. soldiers often are targeted by roadside or suicide bombs. Not treating the sometimes hard-to-spot injury can lead to physical and emotional problems that linger long after the soldier returns home. But sending troops out of country for treatment can leave battle units short-handed.

Medical evacuations from combat zones for traumatic brain injury have been growing, from 194 in 2008 to 303 in 2010, according to statistics provided to The Associated Press from the Armed Forces Health Surveillance Center. Last year, the military implemented a strict new policy on treating and tracking soldiers with concussions right on the front lines of war.

Medical officers in Afghanistan say the new approach, which required opening seven new rehabilitation centers called Level II clinics throughout Afghanistan, is allowing more soldiers to go back to their units rather than be evacuated for treatment. Soldiers who are sent home for treatment generally don't come back.

Castillo was treated under the new guidelines. After diagnosis in the field, he was sent to the rehabilitation clinic the 101st Airborne Division set up at Bagram Air Field for about a week before returning to his unit.

On the hot and dusty military base, Castillo had his own room in a cool, quiet housing unit near the hospital, where he could watch movies on a flat-screen TV, play video games or toss a volleyball around on the sandy court outside. Medical crews use these leisure activities combined with military fitness tests, such as running with body armor or maneuvering around obstacles, to determine whether the soldier is fit to return to duty.

The clinics are also stocked with card games and Wii video games, which help occupational therapists look for memory loss or balance issues.

Castillo and other soldier patients meet daily with doctors and have dedicated occupational therapists who monitor symptoms like concentration, balance, headaches and dizziness. The care they are receiving in Afghanistan is similar to TBI rehabilitation programs at military hospitals in the U.S.

"It makes you feel like the stress is gone," Castillo said. "You have nothing to think about but how am I going to get better, what's my next appointment. They just let you breathe."

Clinics that opened last year in eastern Afghanistan returned about 1,000 soldiers to their units, said Maj. Kevin Ridderhoff, the pharmacist for the 101st Airborne Division who oversaw the

<http://www.militarytimes.com/news/2011/07/ap-army-treats-brain-injuries-in-field-071411/> program during the division's deployment. Ridderhoff said about 97 percent of soldiers who were referred to a Level II clinic were returned to duty after an average three-day stay.

"A big thing is eight hours of uninterrupted rest. Sleep is the goal," Ridderhoff explained. "With concussion, most of these guys get better. That's a good thing."

One of the final assessments is a military performance test. The soldiers don their body armor, go on a road march or a run, maneuver around obstacles, jump in and out of vehicles — all normal activities for active duty. If soldiers are able to complete them without problems or recurring symptoms, the occupational therapist can recommend return to their units.

The 101st Airborne Division, which sent 24,000 soldiers to Afghanistan over the past year, has been at the forefront of the new care regimen for what's called mild traumatic brain injury, often called concussion. It trained all unit medics on symptoms and brought the occupational therapists to Fort Campbell for additional training before opening the Afghanistan clinics.

The policy says soldiers are to be given at least 24 hours rest after the first concussion, seven days of rest after the second concussion and an in-depth neurological exam after the third. The policy also directs medics to check for signs of a concussion after key events, such as if a soldier is near a blast, is in a vehicle rollover accident or has a direct blow to the head.

The soldiers recovering at Bagram are separated from their units, but they could still bond with other injured troops over their near-death experiences.

Photos get passed around of a pile of charred, twisted metal — all that's left of the armored vehicle that Pfc. Kyle Kinmartin was in when it rolled over a pressure plate armed with homemade explosives. Kinmartin said he was still having trouble sleeping because he kept thinking about the explosion and fire that could have killed him or his buddies. "I don't feel like I got blown up, but my body feels it," he said. "I just want to get back and see the guys."

Capt. Barbara Drawbaugh, an occupational therapist who worked at the mTBI center at Forward Operating Base Fenty in Jalalabad, said they are not pushing injured soldiers back into the fight if they aren't ready. "It's not so much that we are trying to force them back out there. It's that we are providing a really good environment of care to allow them to heal," she said.

Soldiers are at risk of more severe and enduring symptoms if they are not allowed to heal after a concussion and suffer a second one too quickly, Drawbaugh said.

But not all soldiers return to their units after a brain injury if more specialized care is needed.

Spc. Matthew Wright, a military policeman, spent weeks at Bagram and watched other soldiers get better and return to their units, but his symptoms weren't improving. Wright had stepped on a hastily planted bomb and got the brunt of the force of the explosion, but the shrapnel went into the ground instead of his body.

Eventually he was medically evacuated back to Fort Knox, Ky., to get further treatment in a Warrior Transition Unit. He hopes he can return to his job soon. "It's nice to see they are taking this brain thing seriously," he said.

Feeling a sense of obligation to the mission, Castillo returned to the base where his unit was attacked. He still deals with symptoms, like headaches and feelings of anger. But the 40-year-old non-commissioned officer who has had three previous deployments said he's learned not to ignore the real consequences of a concussion.

"Don't fake the funk. If you're not real and let it out, then you're not going to heal properly and it will cost you in the future," Castillo said.

AP reporter Kristin Hall was embedded with the 101st Airborne Division in Afghanistan.

<http://www.stripes.com/news/former-marine-to-receive-medal-of-honor-for-controversial-2009-battle-1.149651>

Former Marine to receive Medal of Honor for controversial 2009 battle

By Leo Shane III
Stars and Stripes, 19 July 2011

WASHINGTON — A Marine who braved intense enemy gunfire in Afghanistan to recover the bodies of four fallen comrades will receive the Medal of Honor for his heroism, defense officials said Wednesday.

Dakota Meyer, who left the service last year, will be the third living recipient of the award for actions in Afghanistan and the tenth man recognized for exceptional bravery in the current wars. He'll also be the first living Marine to receive the honor since the Vietnam War.

White House and defense officials have not released details of the award or the timing of its presentation.

The 22-year-old's heroics came while serving with an embedded training team from the II Marine Expeditionary Force out of Okinawa, Japan. In September 2009, his team was ambushed in the controversial battle of Ganjgal, which claimed the lives of five Marines and nine Afghan allies.

A Defense Department investigation released five months later said that negligent leadership and a command refusal for artillery support directly contributed to the deaths of Meyer's fellow fighters, and reprimanded three Army officers.

Last month, two other Marines from that fight — Capt. Ademola Fabayo and Staff Sgt. Juan Rodriguez-Chavez — received the Navy Cross for their heroics evacuating wounded comrades and repelling the enemy ambush.

But Corps officials said Meyer's heroics went even further. He was wounded by shrapnel early in the battle, but when his unit lost contact with three Marines and a Navy corpsman pinned down by enemy fire, Meyer fought his way down a mountainside alone to their position.

When he found them all dead and in danger of being claimed as trophies by enemy fighters, he evacuated their bodies with the help of Afghan troops.

Just a few days after the attack, an angry Meyer told a reporter from McClatchy News Service that the off-site commanders' decisions not to order artillery support "basically screwed our guys over. They expect us to bring stuff to the fight, and [the commanders] didn't give it to us."

And in an interview with the Military Times late last year, Meyer said he felt praise for his heroics that day were unwarranted. "I feel like I let my guys down, because I didn't bring them home alive," he said.

Meyer retired last summer as a corporal. He could not be reached for comment.

Meyer had been rumored to be on the military's short list for the Medal of Honor since last fall. After years without any living medal recipients for the current wars, the White House has already awarded two living recipients with the highest military honor since last fall: former Army Staff Sgt. Sal Giunta, and Army Staff Sgt. Leroy Petry

<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2011/07/17/eveningnews/main20080203.shtml>

Marines get a female commander at Parris Island

By Russ Mitchell

CBS News, July 17, 2011

(CBS News) Remember the days when the Marine Corps advertised that it was "Looking for a few good men"?

How times have changed.

These days, the Marines are recruiting women as well, and there seems to be no limit to how high they can go.

CBS News weekend anchor Russ Mitchell visits with the new commanding officer of a legendary Marine Corps post.

At Parris Island, South Carolina, there is a sign on the way in that makes things clear: Here is where they make Marines.

Now, this Marine factory has a new foreman, or, more correctly, forewoman: Brigadier General Loretta Reynolds.

"There are times now that I wake up in the morning and I say, 'Am I really here? Am I really at Parris Island?'" says Reynolds.

General Reynolds took command of Parris Island on June 17th and she's already made history as the first woman to lead the Marine recruiting depot here. It's a distinction she acknowledges, but won't dwell on.

Reynolds is one of only two active female generals in the Marines.

At 6 feet tall, she cuts an impressive, and potentially imposing figure. But it's her stature as a leader that has earned her respect. A 1986 graduate and former basketball player at the Naval Academy, she is the first female Marine to hold a command position in a battle zone -- which she did when she was stationed in Afghanistan. Now she'll not just lead Marines, but create them.

"At the end of the day, we push them to be more than they ever thought they could be," Reynolds says.

This is a tough place. As the July sun baked Parris Island, CBS News joined General Reynolds as she observed her first "crucible" - a 54-hour test of strength, endurance, and teamwork that each recruit must pass before being called a United States Marine.

Reynolds says becoming a Marine is as hard as they can possibly make it.

"We have to make it hard because our nation expects the United States Marine Corps to be its 911 force, to always be ready to always do the right thing when the situation requires it," Reynolds says.

Parris Island graduates 20,000 Marines every year. Male recruits from east of the Mississippi, and all female recruits come here to join the Corps.

"It's an honor, it's a blessing, and I am going to work hard every day to take good care of this depot and the Marines here," Reynolds says.

<http://ebird.osd.mil/ebfiles/e20110718831950.html> or

<http://www.stripes.com/news/navy-women-see-slow-but-steady-rise-in-ranks-1.149447>

Navy women see slow-but-steady rise in ranks

By Geoff Ziezulewicz

Stars and Stripes, July 18, 2011

ABOARD THE USS GEORGE H.W. BUSH -- Nora Tyson didn't imagine herself in the Navy when she graduated from college in 1979, let alone that she would be a trailblazer for women in the service. But last year, Rear Adm. Nora Tyson became the first woman to command a carrier strike group.

For Navy women who have come before her, Tyson's command of the USS George H.W. Bush carrier strike group is a big deal, another step in a slow-yet-steady plod toward a more gender-neutral Navy. "This is really good for people as a whole," said Darlene Iskra, who in 1990 became the first Navy woman to command a commissioned vessel when she took charge of the USS Opportune. "This is progress."

Tyson herself is low-key about her role. During an interview aboard her strike group's flagship aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush last month, Tyson spoke more about her crew of roughly 6,000 sailors and the strike group's current deployment than about her role as the Navy's first woman commanding a carrier strike group at sea. "To me it's all about professionalism," she said, "doing your job to the best of your ability."

Whether in the innards of a destroyer or on the flight deck of a carrier, Navy women have steadily increased their presence and authority on board combatant ships over the past 20 years. Women make up about 14 percent of the military's commissioned and enlisted ranks overall, according to the Women's Research and Education Institute, a nonprofit that tracks women's issues. Within the Navy, they are about 16 percent of the active-duty force.

"Slow is the operative word, but it's been constant also," said retired Navy Capt. Lory Manning, a 25-year Navy veteran who now directs the Women's Research and Education Institute's Women in the Military Project. Progress for gender equality across the military has varied, Manning said, adding that she believes the Navy has been in the lead among the four services.

The Air Force has the highest percentage of women, 19.2 percent of the ranks, according to the Women's Memorial Foundation. But the service has some gaps in the number of women holding senior leadership positions, Manning said. The Marines and the Army have been slow to support the idea of giving women equal opportunity in combat-centric jobs, she said.

Despite Tyson's milestone, Navy women — and military women in general — still face social obstacles working in a culture that, despite the gains, is male-dominated. Institutional hurdles and gender preconceptions remain, Iskra said. "It's important to keep putting the word out that there are still things that women have not accomplished because of the structural impediments of society," she said.

Tailhook '91

Enlisted and commissioned women-at-sea, serving in a variety of jobs, might not be unusual to many young sailors in 2011. But retired officers like Manning recall tougher days. In 1993 and 1994, laws and regulations banning women from serving in combat aviation or aboard combat ships were lifted. The changes followed the Tailhook scandal of September 1991, which many view as a turning point in how the Navy handled gender.

In September 1991, the Las Vegas Hilton Hotel hosted the 35th annual gathering of about 4,000 Navy and Marine Corps aviators, 900 other active-duty and reserve officers and about 100 contractors, retirees and members of the public. Reports were rampant of misconduct, misbehavior and a hotel-corridor gauntlet of sexual harassment.

<http://ebird.osd.mil/ebfiles/e20110718831950.html> or

<http://www.stripes.com/news/navy-women-see-slow-but-steady-rise-in-ranks-1.149447>

A Defense Department Inspector General's report found that 83 women and seven men were sexually assaulted during the convention. Tailhook '91 affected the careers of 14 admirals and nearly 300 aviators, according to PBS' "Frontline."

Manning said women in the Navy endured numerous slights in the workplace after the scandal broke and the world got a glimpse of the boys' club side of the service. "It was a horrible time to be a Navy woman," Manning said. She recalled not being invited to a party by an aviator admiral she worked for. "He invited every other captain in his command and left me off the list because he was angry about what women had done to aviation," she said. "We got saddled with the sins of aviation leadership."

Two years later, the first women aviators made their way into aircraft carrier squadrons, enduring a rough start, she said. Men would give the newly arrived women the silent treatment, Manning said, refusing to coach or integrate them into the workings of the squadrons. "When something was new to women," Manning said, "the guys in it felt somehow that letting women in was a slur to their masculinity."

More polite, nicer

Retired Navy Capt. Jan van Tol was halfway through his deployment in 1994 commanding the destroyer USS O'Brien when women first arrived on board combatant vessels. Four female officers and three chiefs came on board first to help the all-male crew get used to having women around, van Tol said. Soon after, 40 to 50 junior-enlisted female sailors joined them.

"It's not about the relative competence or ability of males or females," he said. "I certainly had private concerns, because what the Navy was doing as a policy was bringing young men and women together on warships at the prime of their natural sexual urges and yet, at the same time, insisting that training ... could mitigate that. And to some extent it can, but to some extent, you're always fighting human nature."

Van Tol said he noticed a change among the male crew members. The O'Brien was part of the Japan-based Forward Deployed Naval Forces, and van Tol said he encouraged a "professionally aggressive attitude in the Wardroom" because a call to fight could come at any time.

"It'd tell my crew, 'We're 48 hours from the gun line in North Korea,'" said van Tol, now an analyst with the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, a nonprofit that deals with national security strategy and defense planning. "When the women arrived, what I noticed, certainly in the Wardroom, was that everybody suddenly behaved more politely and nicely, and that took a certain edge off the 'offensive spirit' I thought important to foster in a front-line ship."

Despite the gains, Iskra said, military women in general are subjected to everyday slights, rumors and innuendo. There is also the constant specter of sexual harassment. "It's somewhat fostered by the military environment," Iskra said, in failure on the part of leadership to call people to task for inappropriate comments and actions.

Manning acknowledges the inevitable joking and teasing that comes with working in a male-dominated environment. "I grew up in a family with four brothers," she said. "Every woman has to decide in her own head when it's too much." Manning said harassment tends to be less of a problem in a unit that has some strong female chiefs: "It's frowned on in a way that it didn't used to be frowned on."

Gender politics

When women like Tyson hit such military command milestones, it inevitably leads some to grumble that more qualified male officers were passed over due to gender politics, Iskra said.

<http://ebird.osd.mil/ebfiles/e20110718831950.html> or

<http://www.stripes.com/news/navy-women-see-slow-but-steady-rise-in-ranks-1.149447>

“People get jealous because they think you have an edge” because of gender, she said. Some say that in its rush to equalize leadership, the Navy has at times promoted the wrong women.

Capt. Holly Graf was the first woman to command a cruiser before she was relieved in January 2010 for, among other things, fostering an abusive environment. Graf displayed similar behavior while commanding the USS Winston Churchill, according to a Navy Inspector General report.

“There were severe professional flaws there in terms of command climate and treatment of subordinates that should have been apparent to various superiors beforehand,” van Tol said. “There was a definite interest in pushing to have the first female cruiser captain. To me, that was the most egregious case of pushing an officer for political reasons.”

On board her flag ship last month, Tyson acknowledged the unique challenge that Navy women face. “Because it’s a historically male-dominated profession, I think most women are going to work pretty hard,” she said, noting that women will soon be serving on submarines for the first time. “They will be superb submarine officers, because they know they’ve got something to prove,” Tyson said. “If they’re motivated and professional, they’re going to give it all they’ve got.”

Iskra said she did feel some backlash during her career, but people were also supportive when she took command of the USS Opportune. “There was already a stack of congratulatory letters on my desk,” she said of her arrival on the ship. “Some of them were just addressed to the first woman commanding officer of a ship.”

While accomplishments like Tyson’s are a step forward, it’s hard for her to stop and publicly acknowledge such things when there’s a job to do, Iskra said. While focused on the mission of getting her strike group through this deployment, Tyson said her achievement can serve as an example to other women. “I hope I’m the first of many,” she said, acknowledging the increasing number of Navy women ascending the ranks. “There’s going to be plenty coming behind me.”

Shinseki: VA Task Force Improves Care of Women Vets

By Karen Parrish

American Forces Press Service, 19 July 2011

WASHINGTON, July 19, 2011 – The newly formed VA Task Force on Women Veterans will go a long way in addressing key benefits gaps to female veterans, according to Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric K. Shinseki.

While support for women veterans has improved, “it has not been enough,” Shinseki said during the 2011 National Training Summit on Women Veterans held here on July 16.

The task force’s “near-term mission,” he said, is to develop - in coordination with VA's Advisory Committee on Women Veterans, and in conjunction with the Defense Department - a comprehensive VA action plan that will focus on key issues facing women veterans and the specific actions needed to resolve them.

Those issues include obstetric and gynecological care, childcare, military sexual trauma, homelessness, aging and end-of-life issues, among others, the secretary said.

A draft of the plan is due to Shinseki on Jan. 1 and “will set our course for the next four years in everything we do, from planning to programming, to budgeting, to education and training,” he said.

The action plan will update and inform VA’s approach to women’s issues within its health care, benefits, and cemetery administrations, as well as the Women's Advisory Report to Congress, due next July, the secretary said.

“Other changes are in the pipeline, such as our pilot program to provide child care services,” he said.

Beginning this summer, Shinseki said, three new drop-in child care pilot programs for women veterans with VA appointments will open in Northport, N.Y., Buffalo, N.Y., and Tacoma, Wash.

Battlefield changes, such as increasingly blurred front lines, has increased VA’s attention on women veterans, Shinseki said.

Last month, a 20-year-old Army military policewoman, Spc. Devin Snyder, became the 28th female service member to die in Afghanistan when her convoy was attacked on a highway in eastern Laghman province, Shinseki said.

“Wars, with no clear front lines, put soldiers - all soldiers- at risk as never before, blurring the boundaries between combat and other than combat roles,” he said.

In recent years, VA has developed women's primary care programs at their health care facilities across the nation, and has hired program managers and coordinators to manage care for women veterans, the secretary said.

The department also has accelerated its women's health research in biomedical, clinical sciences, rehabilitation, and health services, he said.

Most recently, Shinseki said, the VA launched a women veterans call-in center to directly solicit input into ways the department can improve its services.

“I want women veterans and women serving in uniform ... to see and know that VA is committed to fulfilling [their] needs,” he said.

Related Articles:

[VA Creates Women Veterans Call Center](#)

<http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-vets-standdown-20110716,0,7067593.story>

Stand Down begins tailoring services for female veterans **The events offer job tips, legal advice, medical care and other services to homeless veterans. With the portion of homeless female vets rising, organizers are now offering separate events and amenities.**

By Alexandra Zavis and Tony Perry
Los Angeles Times, 16 July 2011

Lori Moss wasn't sure what to expect when she arrived early Friday at Rainbow Lagoon Park in Long Beach.

A veteran of the Army Reserves, Moss, 30, has been living in transitional housing for months because she can't find work. She hoped she might get job tips from some of the dozens of government agencies, nonprofits and veterans groups setting up booths for a relief effort known as Stand Down.

A few hours later, she was smiling as a stylist from the Career Academy of Beauty in Garden Grove primed and curled her hair. She thought she might stop by the USC School of Dentistry truck for a screening and check out some of the education programs represented at the event.

"Everything we need is right here," Moss said, delighted. "And it's free."

For more than two decades, Stand Down has been offering homeless veterans around the country a few days of respite and help getting back on their feet. But Friday's event was the first time a Stand Down has been organized in California specifically for women.

More women than ever are serving in the armed forces and a growing number of female veterans are ending up on the streets, in shelters or living out of their cars. Between 6,000 and 7,000 of them are homeless on any given night, a figure that has doubled in the last decade, according to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

In Los Angeles County — excluding the cities of Long Beach, Pasadena and Glendale — authorities counted 909 homeless female veterans earlier this year, a 51% increase from 2009. Women also make up a growing portion of the homeless veterans in San Diego, which is holding its 24th annual Stand Down this weekend.

"Women don't traditionally go to Stand Downs," said U.S. Labor Secretary Hilda Solis, whose department helped organize the women's event with the United States Veterans Initiative, a nonprofit that has been assisting homeless veterans since 1993. "We need a setting where they feel more comfortable."

Stephen Peck, president of the Veterans Initiative, said about 70% of the homeless women his organization works with have suffered sexual trauma — more than half of them while serving in the military.

"They are very uncomfortable going to a Stand Down where let's say 95% of veterans are going to be men," he said.

Some women don't even identify themselves as veterans if they did not experience combat, he said.

Vicki Early, 52, one of more than 100 women who attended the Long Beach Stand Down, said she has struggled around large groups of men since she was raped while serving in the Navy. Anxiety attacks have made it difficult for her to hold down a job, and she has been living in transitional housing for two years.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-vets-standdown-20110716,0,7067593.story>

"I wish there were more of these because some women do still have those scars," Early, who served in the Navy from 1976 to 1989, said as she looked through racks of free clothing. "Men need services too, but there are a lot more of them than us and we just kind of get left out."

The three-day event in San Diego, the country's oldest and largest Stand Down, serves some 1,000 veterans, spouses and partners, but primarily attracts men who served during the Vietnam war. But the number of women participants has been growing in recent years, and the event is evolving to accommodate them.

This year in San Diego, VA officials brought a vehicle in which women could meet privately with counselors if they did not want to stand in line with the men. Lawyers were on hand to help women resolve child-support and custody disputes. Stylists from Mary Kay cosmetics were offering free facials. And a tent sponsored by Audrey Geisel, widow of Dr. Seuss author Theodor Geisel, was stuffed with free toys for the children.

"With more women serving, and with the bad economy, we have to be prepared for more women veterans," said Darcy Pavich, a former Navy chaplain who helps coordinate the San Diego Stand Down. "It used to be that women could look to their families or friends for help, but now everybody is having a tough time."

Many of the veterans were spending the weekend in tents pitched by Marines in a grassy field behind San Diego High School. Meals and showers were offered, along with help with resolving myriad physical, psychological, spiritual and financial difficulties.

Deborah Kaylor, 51, on Friday was settling into a tent reserved for women. Her husband served in the Army and the couple spent time on the streets with their dog before moving into transitional housing.

"We've been at Stand Down before," she said. "But this year, the volunteers are coming up to the women, not just the men, and asking 'Can I help you?' I like that."

Yolanda Sidoti, healthcare coordinator for homeless veterans at the VA medical center in La Jolla, said it appears that veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are descending into homelessness at a faster rate than the Vietnam-era veterans did. The stress of multiple deployments and the nation's sour economy are factors, she said.

That is a major concern in San Diego County, which is home to 30,000 veterans of the two conflicts, more than any other county in the nation.

"We're finding people with no income or very little income," Sidoti said.

Misconduct

<http://www.cnn.com/2011/US/07/20/navy.commanders/>

Another Navy Commander relieved of duty to make it 15 this year

**By Barbara Starr, CNN Pentagon Correspondent
Associated Press/CNN.com, 20 July 2011**

The Navy said Wednesday that the commanding officer of one of its U.S. recruiting districts was relieved of duty "due to a loss of confidence in his ability to command" -- bringing to 15 the number of commanding officers removed their posts by the Navy so far this year.

During all of last year, 17 Navy commanding officers were relieved of duty for various reasons. The highest number was in 2003 when 26 commanding officers were relieved of duty.

CNN obtained a copy of a recent memo from the chief of naval operations to all potential commanders reminding them of their responsibilities.

The memo provided to CNN heavily emphasized professional ethics and personal accountability.

"Included as part of your responsibilities is the charge that you will be held accountable to the highest standards of conduct," said Adm. Gary Roughead in a memo sent out last month.

Reasons for commanders being relieved of duty have ranged from "loss of confidence in ability to command" to allegations of drunk driving, inappropriate personal relationships, mistreating sailors, and even failing to properly handle a loaded weapon.

In the latest dismissal, the Navy alleged the officer "was found to have acted in an unprofessional manner while on liberty in the presence of subordinate Navy personnel, and also, while in uniform while acting in an official capacity." The officer was reassigned to a Naval operation support center, the Navy said.

The Navy calculates there are more than 1,500 commanding officer jobs in the Navy and that less than 1% of the officers in those jobs have been relieved of command since 2005.

Racism

Military records reveal subversion suspicions of black soldier

By Jim McElhatton

The Washington times, 18 July 2011

In the spring of 1944, a secret military probe targeted a 33-year-old black [Army](#) private named [W. Robert Ming Jr.](#)

Before his career as a civil rights lawyer ended in the early 1970s, [Ming](#) worked alongside Thurgood Marshall on some of the country's most important civil rights cases. In 1960, he persuaded an all-white jury in Alabama to acquit [Martin Luther King Jr.](#) in a criminal trial. For years, he maintained a reputation as one of the top legal minds in the country.

But newly released records from the [FBI](#) and the [U.S. Army](#) reveal a previously undisclosed chapter in the civil rights struggle, detailing for the first time how [Ming](#) fought to change the military's segregationist policies not as a lawyer, but as an [Army](#) private.



W. Robert Ming Jr.

The records, obtained by The Washington Times through the Freedom of Information Act, shed light on a decision that subjected [Ming](#) to a military investigation that could have derailed his legal career before his most important civil rights work was accomplished.

On Oct. 13, 1943, [Ming](#) and a group of other black soldiers attending a theater at Camp Lee, Va., were told by an usher that they had to sit on the side aisles because of the color of their skin. Some in the group left. One man went to the side aisle. [Ming](#) quietly demanded his money back.

Already a practicing lawyer when he enlisted, [Ming](#) didn't buy the explanation by one theater worker who said state law was to blame. [Ming](#) pointed out that state law didn't apply on a military installation.

Three or four other soldiers joined [Ming](#) in asking for their money back. After they were reimbursed and returned to the barracks, they reported the incident to a commanding officer.

It wouldn't be the first time [Ming](#) questioned the military's segregationist policies. During [Christmas](#) leave, he and other black soldiers were waiting for a northbound train on a crowded platform. When the train pulled up, they were told they couldn't board because the "Jim Crow" car was full. The soldiers waited for hours, and military police drove the men off the platform with clubs.

"I might add that what had caused the whole difficulty was that as the train pulled out, several of the coaches that were reserved for whites were not filled," [Ming](#) later told an investigator, according to [Army](#) files. "As to what I did during that incident, the answer is nothing."

But [Ming](#)'s insistence at the theater that he get his money back didn't go unnoticed by his military superiors. They ordered an investigation to find out whether [Ming](#) was a subversive.

'Enemy agents'

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/jul/18/quiet-protest-secret-army-probe/?page=1>
Months later, [Ming](#), by then a corporal, was called to answer charges in front of a military investigator. The accusations were serious. First, [Ming](#) was charged with knowing that demanding the return of his ticket money would “create dissatisfaction” among other soldiers. He also was suspected of “lacking loyalty or affection for the government of the United States.”

[Ming](#) didn’t apologize for asking for his money back, and he denied being disloyal to his country even as he openly discussed how he opposed separating soldiers based on the color of their skin.

“Did you realize that the action you took might be utilized as a starting point by enemy agents to stir up animosity among the soldiers stationed at Camp Lee?” the investigator asked.

“No, sir” [Ming](#) replied. “If I had been intending to create a demonstration, I could have done a much better job of arousing people’s attention than simply demanding my money back quietly.

“So far as to the use by enemy agents of any such occurrence, I am definitely of the opinion that the mere existence of the seating arrangement furnished the enemy agents with all the fuel they needed.”

‘Fearless’

Investigators interviewed more than dozen other people - including major Chicago figures such as [William Dawson](#), a longtime congressman from Illinois; William H. Hastie, a future federal appeals judge; and Truman K. Gibson Jr., a civil rights activist and later boxing promoter.

“People are prone nowadays to confuse race consciousness with subversiveness, which is unfair,” one former law professor of [Ming](#)’s told the investigators. “Take [Ming](#), for example. He is extremely race-minded, but is just as loyal and patriotic as anyone could be.”

Taken together, the interviews paint a portrait of a man both devoted to his country and fiercely determined to change it. “He has been a fighter for his race,” [Dawson](#) told investigators, “but by no means would I term him a radical.”

[Leon A. Ransom](#), a law professor at Howard, called [Ming](#) “bold, outspoken and fearless.”

“[Ming](#) is race conscious, it is true,” [Ransom](#) said. “But he has never advanced the theory that our government should be overthrown. When he knew he had to go into the [Army](#), he was willing to fight for democracy on the battlefield as well as in the courts.”

Unable to turn up any evidence against [Ming](#), investigators closed their case, concluding that [Ming](#) “is very race minded, but does not possess subversive tendencies.”

Legacy

If the military’s investigation of whether [Ming](#) was un-American in the first place reflected the state of race relations in 1944, the decision to close the case and promote [Ming](#) perhaps foreshadowed the progress that [Ming](#) helped forge decades later.

“The situation was emblematic of what people during that time faced if you didn’t conform,” Kim M. Keenan, general counsel for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, said in an interview. “A number of Americans who dared to think in a different way were thought to be subversive. What’s even more surprising is that in this era that the investigation came out the way it did.”

Cleared by the military, [Ming](#) was accepted into the judge advocate general program, one of the first blacks to join, and worked as a military lawyer. Promoted to the rank of captain, he left the military to work mostly on civil rights cases for the rest of his career. He worked closely with Marshall on numerous cases, including Brown v. Board of Education. In 1960, he represented [King](#), who had been charged with perjury in Alabama relating to his taxes.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/jul/18/quiet-protest-secret-army-probe/?page=1>
[Ming](#) never mentioned his client's race during the trial, and the all-white jury acquitted [King](#) after about four hours of deliberations. [King](#) later recalled the verdict as a "turning point" in his life, according to a foreword he wrote in the book "Deep in My Heart" by William M. Kunstler.

"Defeat seemed certain, and we in the freedom struggle braced ourselves for the inevitable. There were two men among us who persevered with the conviction that it was possible, in this context, to marshal facts and law and thus win vindication," he wrote, citing [Ming](#) and another attorney in the case.

Although [King](#), Marshall and other contemporaries of [Ming](#)'s have lasting monuments to mark their contributions, [Ming](#) remains largely forgotten.

After the death of his accountant, [Ming](#) failed to file tax returns from 1963 to 1966. Although he had filed returns and paid taxes by the time authorities investigated years later, it was too late. He was sentenced to four months in federal prison for each of his four tax counts, reporting to prison in January 1973. Months later, [Ming](#), whose poor health was a concern to friends and family, slipped in the shower and hit his head. He died June 30 of that year at age 62 in a veterans hospital in Chicago.

"He was in that Thurgood Marshall category of very brilliant lawyers who in today's world might be the partner in some big corporate firm, but they made their choice to try civil rights cases and sacrifice," the Rev. Jesse Jackson, who knew [Ming](#), said in a telephone interview.

"All of the guys who fit into that category had a bounty on their heads and we accepted that, but the good he did was never lost."

Religion

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/jul/18/romneys-religion-a-barrier-to-republican-nod-cain-/?page=1>

Cain: Romney's religion a bar to GOP nod

By **Ralph Z. Hallow**

Washington Times, 18 July 2011

Republican presidential primary candidate [Herman Cain](#) says front-runner [Mitt Romney](#) cannot win the party's [White House](#) nomination next year because of his religion.

"[Romney](#) would be a good choice, but I don't believe he can win," [Mr. Cain](#) told editors and reporters of The Washington Times.

[Mr. Cain](#) on Monday became the first of [Mr. Romney](#)'s nine declared and potential nomination rivals to say publicly and explicitly something long whispered: namely, that the former Massachusetts governor's Mormonism is an obstacle too big to overcome in the most solidly Republican region in the country. The South has a high concentration of evangelical Protestants, many of whom doubt the legitimacy of the Church of [Jesus Christ](#) of Latter-day Saints.

"I know the South, and you have to win the South. [Mitt Romney](#) did not win it when he ran against [John McCain](#)" in the 2008 primaries, said [Mr. Cain](#). "The reason he will have a difficult time winning the South this time is because when he ran the first time, he did not do a good job of communicating his religion. It doesn't bother me, but I know it is an issue with a lot of Southerners."

[Mr. Cain](#), a retired corporate executive who made a career out of rescuing dying companies, including the faltering Godfather's pizza chain, argued that a Republican candidate needs to win Southern states.

"If you don't win South Carolina, Georgia and Florida, you can't win the nomination. And then you can't win the presidency," he said.

However, [Mr. Romney](#) is polling well in the South, according to the latest round of surveys.

A just-released [American Research Group](#) poll in South Carolina, one of the first four states on the official primary calendar, has [Mr. Romney](#) leading, with support from 25 percent of the sample of 600 likely Republican primary voters.

[Mr. Cain](#) is fourth in the poll at 10 percent, behind [Rep. Michele Bachmann](#) of Minnesota, who has 13 percent. [Mr. Cain](#) and [Mrs. Bachmann](#) turn out relatively large numbers of tea party activists for their get-acquainted events. Former Alaska [Gov. Sarah Palin](#) placed second with 16 percent, even though the 2008 Republican vice-presidential nominee has remained mum about whether she will run.

In 2008, [Mr. Cain](#) supported [Mr. Romney](#), himself a hugely successful businessman with a "turn-it-around" reputation. [Mr. Romney](#) took over management of the 2002 Salt Lake City Olympics when it looked as if it would run out of money before it even got started.

"I like [Mitt](#). I supported him in the last presidential election," said [Mr. Cain](#), who softened his often booming baritone voice almost to a whisper. "I don't think he is going to be any stronger this time around against Barack Obama, even though Obama has a terrible record."

The South is heavily populated with evangelicals, fundamentalists and other traditionalist-leaning Christians who widely consider [Mr. Romney](#)'s church not to be a Christian sect. They claim it either denies or unrecognizably redefines such Christian doctrines as the Trinity, original sin, the atonement, the continuity of the [church](#) and the canon of Scripture. Denouncing Mormonism is a staple of some Christian TV and radio programs and networks.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/jul/18/romneys-religion-a-barrier-to-republican-nod-cain-/?page=1>

[Mr. Cain](#), who has been polling in the high single digits among Republican voters in national polls, raised \$2.6 million in the April-to-June reporting period, compared with \$18 million raised by [Mr. Romney](#).

But [Mr. Cain](#) said comparing the second-quarter sums isn't important because he will raise enough, along with his "common-sense" appeal to rank-and-file voters, to win in the end, even if his fundraising is below the top two in the field.

The Georgian also said he is happy to get 6 percent to 10 percent in national polls at this point, given that a few months ago he wasn't even on any polls because his candidacy wasn't taken seriously.

He said he has been winning straw polls among tea party and other conservative activists, more even than [Mrs. Bachmann](#), his principal rival among declared candidates for tea party support, including in The Washington Times/Conservative Leadership Conference poll in Nevada on July 9.

"She said she doesn't have an exclusive franchise on their love," he said. "I think they love both of us equally. Some of them haven't decided which one they are going to cast their vote for, but they love us both equally."

[Mr. Cain](#) mentioned a Lincoln Day dinner in the Deep South, where he was greeted with an outpouring of enthusiasm from the 350 people in attendance, about 60 of whom were black.

"I was surprised there are that many black conservatives in Birmingham, Alabama," [Mr. Cain](#) said with a smile and a twinkle in his eye.

He also touted his oft-praised manner as part of the reason he would be the ideal candidate to confront Mr. Obama, reputed to be an eloquent speaker, but whom [Mr. Cain](#) said only once persuaded the public of anything - to go along with his health care bill.

The difference is, he said, "I have charisma with substance."

Sexual Assault / Harassment

<http://www.stripes.com/news/europe/navy-s-online-bid-to-fight-sexual-assault-sparks-controversy-1.149301>

Navy's online bid to fight sexual assault sparks controversy

By Geoff Ziezulewicz
Stars and Stripes, 15 July 2011

NAPLES, Italy – The Navy's reported incidents of sexual assault rose by 6 percent last year, and Navy officials say they are trying to change that. One way appears to be through the use of social media, but a post on the Navy's official Facebook page has sparked online controversy for its questionable approach.



To view Poster enlarge picture at this web site:

<http://www.stripes.com/news/europe/navy-s-online-bid-to-fight-sexual-assault-sparks-controversy-1.149301>

A posting on the page from June 22 shows what appears to be a naked woman holding a sandwich-board size card in front of her torso that contains 10 tips for sexual assault prevention. The poster, which is prevalent on blogs across the Internet, is credited to a blog called, “tumblinfeminist.”

Among the tips:

- “Don’t put drugs in people’s drinks in order to control their behavior.”
- “If you pull over to help someone with car problems, remember not to assault them!”
- “Always be honest with people! Don’t pretend to be a caring friend in order to gain the trust of someone you want to assault. Consider telling them you plan to assault them. If you don’t communicate your intentions, the other person may take that as a sign that you do not plan to rape them.”

The posting on the Navy page garnered 706 Facebook “likes” and 260 comments as of Friday, divided between people applauding the irreverent tone and those who were outraged and offended. Some claimed to have been sexually assaulted.

“Since when did sexual assault become a joke?” one commenter asked. “I must Have (sic) missed that symposium.”

“Considering it was the Navy that stood this post up, I would say it had command approval, and it’s just stating the obvious,” another commenter wrote.

“My daughter enlisted in the Navy,” another person wrote. “She leaves in October. How worried should I be?”

Navy officials would not make the officers in charge of Navy Facebook administration available for an interview, but said the Navy takes sexual assault seriously and that this posting was an effort “to encourage discussion on a serious issue in our Navy.”

Navy spokeswoman Lt. Alana Garas, the service’s public affairs officer for sexual assault and prevention, told Stars and Stripes on Thursday that the poster was posted with “insufficient context.” A comment posted by Navy Facebook administrators later that day explained its purpose, she said.

<http://www.stripes.com/news/europe/navy-s-online-bid-to-fight-sexual-assault-sparks-controversy-1.149301>

That context came in the form of a comment below the picture, which stated that it is not a Navy-generated product, "but we extended it to get your attention."

"As sad as it is, you'd be surprised how many people need to be told seemingly basic things," the official Navy comment reads.

Some agreed with the official Navy rationale.

"Unfortunately, this is how you have to 'talk down' to the new recruits so that they 'get it,'" one person wrote. "Years, heck DECADES, of being uber serious hasn't worked. Way to go Navy :)."

Garas said she did not know how many comments had been removed by Navy Facebook administrators, and that the service doesn't track such things.

"As a practice we're reluctant to delete posts," Garas said.

On Thursday and Friday, Garas repeatedly refused to say whether the initial picture in question will be taken down by Navy Facebook administrators.

Under the Navy Facebook page's information section, it states that obscene, defamatory or abusive comments or submissions are banned. There is also military boilerplate about not posting sensitive, mission-related matters.

Critics say the post is in bad taste and insults the intelligence of rank-and-file sailors.

A retired Navy officer who blogs Navy issues under the pseudonym "Cdr Salamander" at cdrsalamander.blogspot.com, took issue with the posting on the U.S. Naval Institute's blog this week.

"I am still at a loss what to do with this cancer of advice," Salamander wrote. "There are ways to address sexual assault, and there is good advice to provide to our Sailors. This fails on all accounts, and is actually counter-productive on many levels. Not only is the advice worthless for Sailors -- it makes the Navy seem idiotic for having it on their wall -- messaging fail of epic proportions."

Responding to that Naval Institute blog, Lt. Lesley Lykins, the director of Emerging Media Integration for the Navy Office of Information and an administrator of the Facebook page, said about half of those who commented on the post "vehemently" disliked it.

"Of course ... the other half were just as vocal in their support of the poster," Lykins wrote. "The 700+ 'likes' are a whole other nut to crack. The challenge is getting people's attention on an issue that demands serious scrutiny. We could have certainly done a better job of providing more context at the onset."

ODMEO Interest Items

City of Men

The numbers are in, and they show a staggering absence of women in Washington's foreign-policy community.

By **Micah Zenko**

Foreign Policy, 14 July 2011

Anyone who has sat through a meeting in Foggy Bottom or attended a foreign-policy think-tank luncheon near Dupont Circle has been struck by one obvious fact: Washington is a city of men. But rarely are these anecdotal impressions supplemented with any actual data.

To get a sense of the scope of this problem, I looked at the gender breakdown at 10 prominent think tanks with a substantial foreign-policy focus. After crunching the numbers, which were culled from their publicly available rosters, I found that women constituted only 21 percent of the policy-related positions (154 of 723) and only 29 percent of the total leadership staff (250 of 874). [The Center for Strategic and International Studies](#) and [Center for American Progress](#) boasted the highest percentages of women in policy-related roles (28 percent), and the [Stimson Center](#) had the highest total percentage of women in all positions (50 percent).

A note on methodology: "Policy-related" positions are classified as leadership roles (directors, presidents, and fellows) within departments such as foreign policy and economic policy -- the latter is included because many fellows contribute equally to domestic as well as international economic policy. "Total leadership staff" includes people in senior positions in non-policy roles such as human resources, development, and communications, which play an essential role in developing and implementing think tanks' programs.

But the numbers aren't just skewed against women in think tanks. This gender imbalance is consistent with percentages of women working in other foreign policy and national security-related professions. In the academy, data collected in 2006 [found](#) that, of the 13,000 political science professors in the United States, 26 percent were women -- up from 19 percent in 1991. Only [23 percent](#) of international relations professors are women, while among comparative politics specialists the figure was 29 percent.

Given this disparity, it should come as no surprise that women are also underrepresented in the halls of power. The Pentagon's "Senior Defense Officials" [website](#) lists 129 positions, of which 21 (16 percent) are filled by women. John M. Robinson, the State Department's chief diversity officer, recently [wrote](#) that "Twenty-two percent of senior leaders at the Department of State are women." Of the 171 chiefs of mission at U.S. embassies, [50 are women](#) (29 percent). Data for top staffers at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is less readily available, but a Women in International Security (WIIS) [study](#) found that, in 2007 "women only held 29% of the Senior Foreign Service positions [at USAID]."

Jolynn Shoemaker, director of WIIS, noted that there were real costs to this absence of women. "The lack of participation of women in influential policy roles ultimately limits the capabilities of these organizations to develop new ideas and innovative foreign-policy approaches," she said.

The figures for the U.S. military are, if anything, more dismal. The latest data (March 2010) regarding the composition of the active-duty officer corps [revealed](#) the following percentages of female officers: 17 percent in the Army, 16 percent in the Navy, 19 percent in the Air Force, 6 percent in the Marines, and 18 percent in the Coast Guard. For each service, the percentage of female officers is comparable to the percentage of enlisted women.

http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/07/14/city_of_men

OK, it's clear that the numbers aren't good. But what might explain why less than three in 10 senior positions at think tanks, in the academy, in government, and in the military are filled by women?

Over the past dozen years, I've worked at three think tanks, at four universities, and in two government positions, during which time I've asked many female colleagues and friends with different levels of seniority in the U.S. foreign-policy community for their views. From these discussions, I gathered three reasons that could explain this gender gap.

First, my female colleagues suggested that women are less interested in researching and writing about "hard power," defined as the use of military power or economic coercion to alter the behavior of state or nonstate actors. While competing approaches -- such as "soft power" or "smart power" -- receive media attention, within academia, think tanks, and certainly national politics, hard-power approaches retain a predominant role. This limits women's potential jobs in the foreign-policy apparatus.

Second, due to a preponderance of men in senior positions at think tanks, they engage in an unconscious cronyism in hiring other men as research fellows or selecting them as participants at workshops. The disproportionate gender balance is compounded by women who describe being at times uncomfortable in almost exclusively male settings or where they perceive they are the "token female" hired or invited.

Third, a successful think-tank fellow requires constant travel to attend workshops, give presentations, and conduct research -- sacrifices that women, who often bear the greater burden for raising a family, may be less able to make "Think-tank work is much like any other demanding job: It's not 9 to 5. There are breakfast and dinner meetings, speaking engagements on weekends, and extensive travel abroad for research for books and articles," my Council on Foreign Relations colleague and the senior fellow and director for Asia studies, Elizabeth Economy, told me. "Trying not only to keep the trains running on time at home but also to make it to the top of your field is a real challenge."

None of these hurdles for why women are underrepresented are determinative -- and certainly all three can be overcome. Indeed, the women I've spoken with were not deterred from pursuing careers in foreign policy or national security; almost all found female role models to emulate or learn from, as well as mentors among more senior women (and men). Indeed, as shown by the troika of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Susan Rice, and National Security Council senior official Samantha Power in Barack Obama's administration, the presence of women in some foreign-policy leadership roles has become the norm.

"My granddaughter asked a while ago what the big deal was that Grandma Maddie was secretary of state," former Secretary of State **Madeleine Albright recalled recently**. "Her entire lifetime it's been women."

These success stories aside, however, women still remain proportionally underrepresented in the realms of foreign-policy research, academic scholarship, and practice. This imbalance, which deprives the foreign-policy community of much-needed expertise, is detrimental to the U.S. role in world affairs. At the next conference or luncheon, Washington's think-tank mavens should look around the room and realize who's not present -- and take immediate steps to remedy this problem.