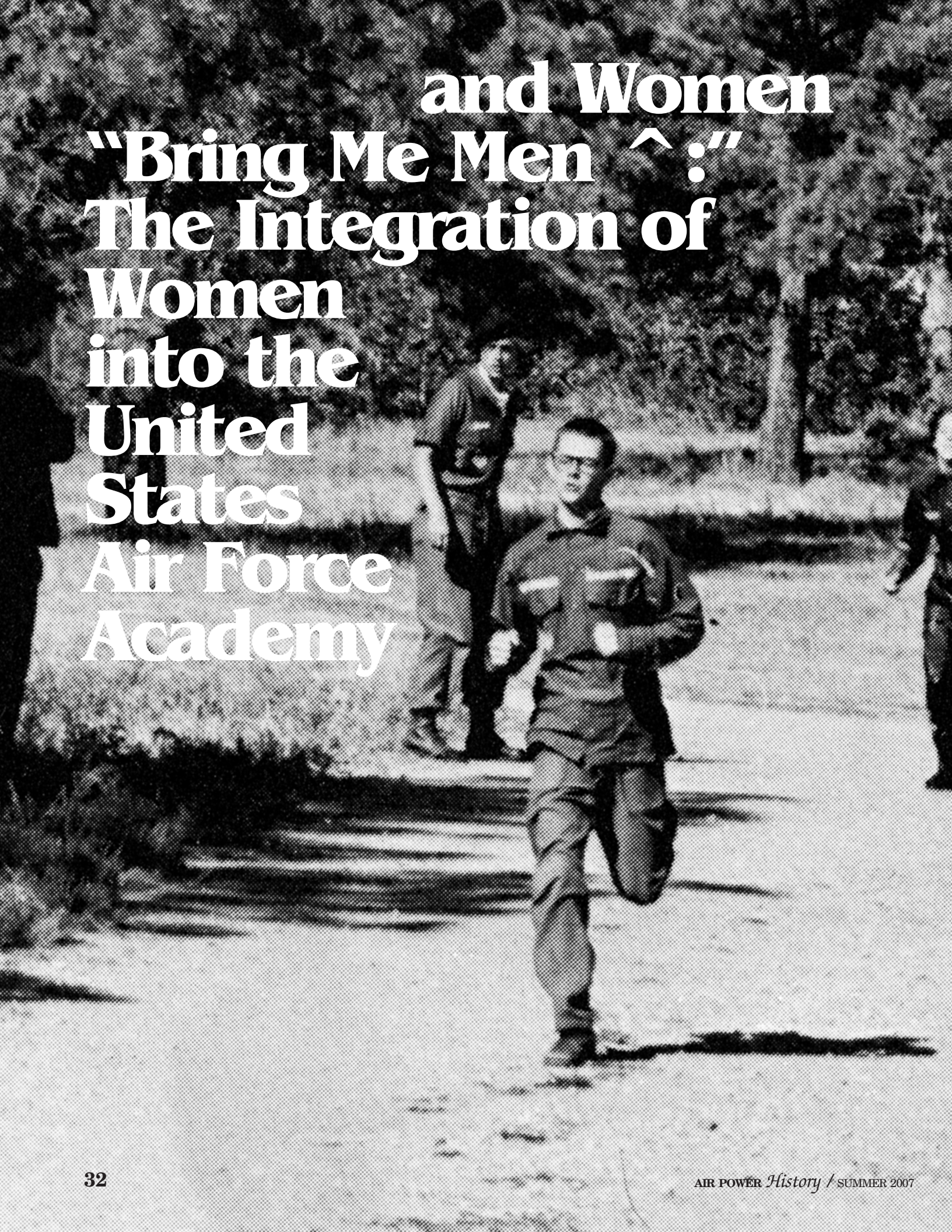
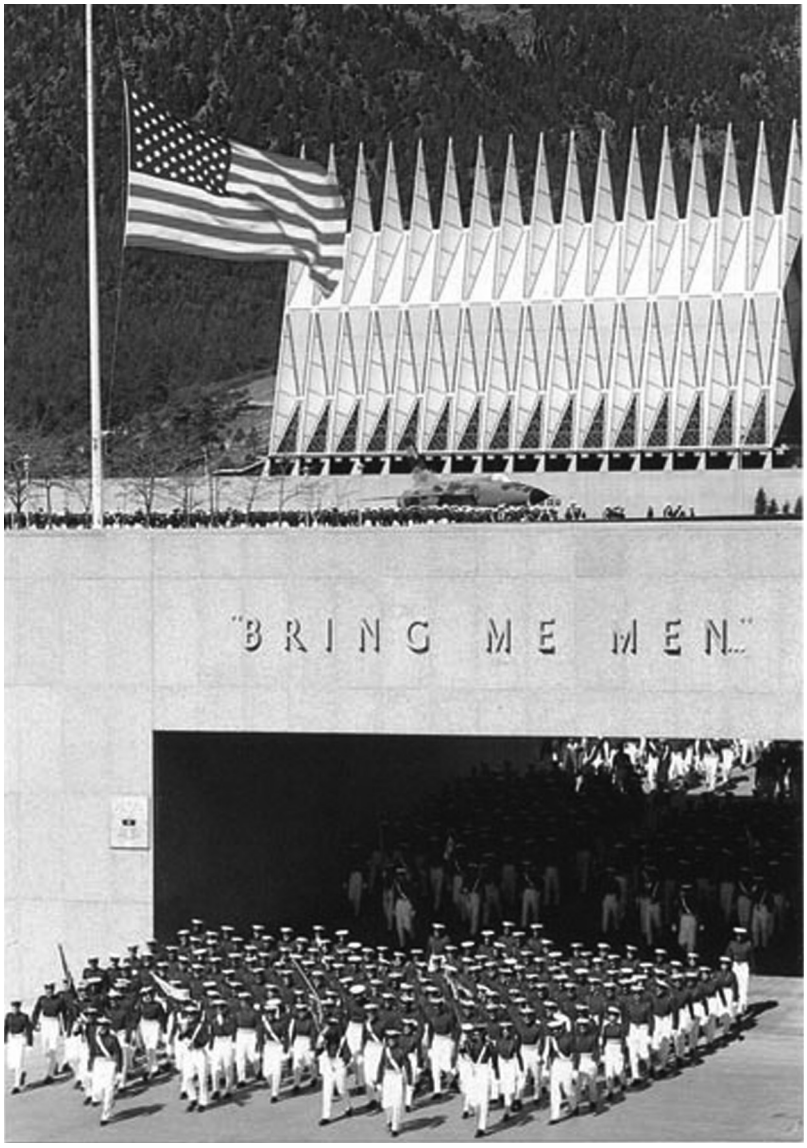


"Bring Me Men and Women ^:" The Integration of Women into the United States Air Force Academy



Allison Gawlinski



(Overleaf) Cadets racing to the end of the Assault Course. *(Photos courtesy of the author.)*

(Above) Cadets on parade.

In the spring of 1972, Congress attempted to pass the Equal Rights Amendment. They expected it to gain ratification as the Twenty-Sixth Amendment to the Constitution. This amendment would guarantee that citizens not be deprived of a law-given right based on gender.[1] Members of Congress actively pursued ratification. Congress passed the statute for this amendment in March 1972, and law requires ratification within seven years of its proposal. By its deadline, only thirty-five of the necessary thirty-eight states had ratified the amendment. In an attempt to gain the remaining three ratifications, Congress extended the deadline to 1982. However to this day, despite this extension the amendment remains dormant.[2] Regardless of the exclusion of the equal rights amendment from the Constitution, women made strides towards equality with men.

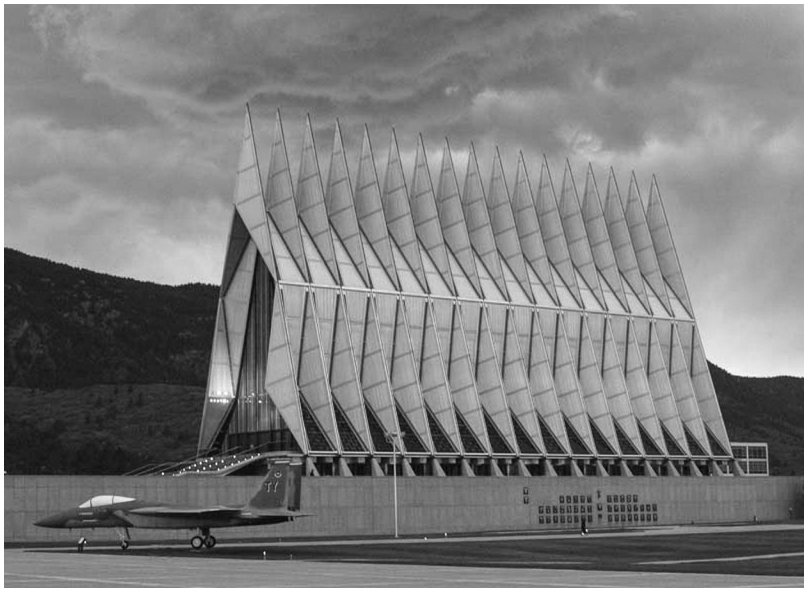
REGARDLESS OF THE EXCLUSION OF THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT … WOMEN MADE STRIDES TOWARDS EQUALITY WITH MEN

However, a very significant achievement towards gender equality occurred in the United States Service Academies. In 1974, the U.S. Air Force and Naval Academies rejected two women applicants, whose names remained anonymous in news reports. This started the litigation process that eventually made the service academies coeducational.[3] The academies used gender discrimination to deny them entrance. Frustrated, the women filed suit, challenging the single sex makeup of service academies. Each of the heads of the service academies, along with Deputy Secretary of Defense William P. Clements, Jr., filed affidavits encouraging a government motion to dismiss the suit.[4] The women won the assistance of their congressmen, who publicly supported them in this case. Together, these women and their representatives responded to the government's attempt to end the suit. Observers of this case predicted it would eventually go to the Supreme Court.[5]

At first, the plaintiffs suffered a major setback. The United States Circuit Court of Appeals denied their plea to enter with the Class of 1976. Judge Oliver C. Gasch of the United States District Court ruled against the two plaintiffs and their congressional sponsors. He refused to force the service academies to admit the women into the classes entering the next month.[6] Judge Gasch believed that his ruling represented a legitimate government interest, served by continuing the exclusion of women from the service academies. Because law forbade women from serving in combat, educating women at the service academies would waste government money.

Testimony given by an unnamed witness from the Air Force to the United States District Court said that enrolling a woman at the Academy would waste a leadership slot better suited for a male cadet, who was more likely to lead in combat.[7] In response to the government's attempt to end the suit, these women immediately filed an appeal with the circuit court, requesting an emergency hearing of their case. However, the court determined that the primary argument behind the plaintiffs' case countered the law prohibiting women from serving in combat. The court could not accept a topic such as this in a hurried hearing. However, they did agree to hear the case, in full, at their next session. Yet, this refusal removed the

Cadet Allison Gawlinski is a member of the United States Air Force Academy Class of 2007, where she majors in history. She grew up in Manchester, Connecticut. In the summer of 2000, she studied French at the Lycée Jean Piaget in Switzerland. She graduated as a scholar from Manchester High School in 2002. Ms. Gawlinski is an active member of the Civil Air Patrol, where she earned her Earhart Award as a cadet, and was cadet of the year for the Connecticut Wing in 2002. Prior to entering the United States Air Force Academy, she attended North Western Preparatory School on a Falcon Foundation Scholarship. Cadet Gawlinski participated in the Academy Exchange program in the spring of 2006, went to school at the United States Naval Academy for that semester, and interned in the Air Force Historical Office at Bolling AFB, in Washington, D.C.



The cadet Chapel at the Air Force Academy.

final chance for these hopeful applicants to enter the academies with the incoming class. The women hoped to take their case to the Supreme Court for an emergency hearing; however, it was not likely that the court would agree to hear the case at this point.[8] Additionally, it was even less likely that the Supreme Court would reach a ruling in time for the women to in-process with the incoming service Academy classes.

The delayed court discussion gave Congress an opening to debate the issue. At the time, they were considering legislation to change the service academies to coeducational institutions. If Congress passed a bill mandating female entrance to the service academies, the courts would not have to review the cases.[9]

NO VALUE EXISTED IN EDUCATING WOMEN AT THESE INSTITUTIONS UNTIL WOMEN COULD SERVE IN COMBAT

The government maintained that the academies rejected the two plaintiffs on legal grounds. Traditional laws excluded women from military roles. However, the plaintiffs argued that their rejection was based on gender discrimination and therefore unconstitutional.[10] Congress retained the power to put forth a bill proposing the admittance of women to enter the service academies. If congress chose not to act, or if they decided against integrating the service academies, the courts would have further reason to rule against the women and in favor of the service academies.[11]

The issue of gender integration at the service academies ran deeper than the composition of the schools. If the service academies existed to educate officers for combat— and they intended to maintain this role—no value existed in educating women at these institutions until women could serve in combat.[12] Women trained as officers, while prohibited from filling that function, would be purposeless. Additionally, the Air Force Academy traditionally served as a primary source of future pilots, and laws existed prohibiting women from serving as combat pilots.[13]

Although the official argument against integrating women into the service academies was the legal ban on women in combat, the Air Force Academy Superintendent, Lt. Gen. A. P. Clark, presented further arguments. He expressed concerns about integrating the dormitories, suggesting that this integration would lead to marriages, pregnancies, and abortions. He feared decrease in discipline and morale as a direct result of integrating women into the Academy.[14] Additionally, General Clark discussed the potentially negative impact on military training at the Academy: "I am vitally concerned that this proposed reorientation of Academy life to accommodate females would provide continuing disruptive and adverse influence on the discipline and morale which underlies the motivation of the cadet wing."[15] General Clark was not alone in his opposition.

Further discouragment came from Deputy Defense Secretary Clements and Jacqueline Cochran, the leader of the Women Air Service Pilots (WASP) in World War II, and the first woman to break the sound barrier. In an April 1974 memorandum to the service secretaries, Clements discouraged the integration of women into the service academies. He described other means for women to receive a college education and a commission in the armed forces, suggesting those paths as better alternatives for women. Clements stated that until the American people, through Congress, expressed interest in making the academies coeducational, they should continue to educate only men.[16] More surprisingly, considering her accomplishments and experiences, Jacqueline Cochran, in an appearance before the House of Representatives, testified against integrating women into the service academies. She determined, from her observations in working with the WASPs, that women are not as well suited for military service as men. Additionally, she noted that women have a biological urge toward marriage and child bearing, causing inordinate numbers of women to resign from their duties.[17]

Virginia Dondy, from the Center for Women Policy Studies, testified in opposition to Cochran's statements. She asserted that women are fully capable of succeeding at the service academies and should have the same physical and educational standards as male cadets. Dondy insisted that any alterations to the Academy curriculums and training would deny the rights of women. She expressed the importance of staffing the academies with more women and integrating women into the student bodies based on qualifications, not gender quotas. Dondy declared that a qualified woman could lead in combat as well as a qualified man. In support of this claim, Lt. Col. Grace King (USAR) presented results of a survey she conducted during the previous two years. The results showed 80 percent of surveyed civilian and military citizens favored the acceptance of women to the service academies. Additionally, 73 percent of those surveyed supported altering the law to allow women to volunteer to serve in combat.[18]

The bill that formally opened the service academies to female candidates, gained House approval on July 30, 1975. It passed by a vote of 348 to 60,



Jacqueline "Jackie" Cochran.

and went to the Senate for further authorization. This compromise bill was part of a $31.2 billion Weapons Authorization Bill and allowed women to enter all of the service academies, beginning in 1976. The bill specifically prohibited any alterations to training at the academies in order to accommodate females. Additionally, the law required academies to ensure equality for all cadets, regardless of gender, in admission, training, graduation, and commissioning.[19] After continued debate, the bill passed the senate and reached the President, where it awaited final approval. On October 7, 1975, President Gerald Ford signed the Military Procurement Bill into law, officially permitting women to enter the service academies as cadets and midshipmen.

ON OCTOBER 7, 1975, PRESIDENT GERALD FORD SIGNED THE MILITARY PROCUREMENT BILL … OFFICIALLY PERMITTING WOMEN TO ENTER THE SERVICE ACADEMIES

The same day this bill became law, the Air Force Academy released its plans for integrating female cadets into the incoming Class of 1980.[20] Colonel James P. McCarthy began his position as Vice Commandant of Cadets at the Air Force Academy in 1972. Upon his arrival, he recognized a lack of preparation for the possible admission of women into the Academy and voluntarily took on this task to begin preliminary planning.[21] Colonel McCarthy thoroughly researched the issue in order to develop a detailed plan for this integration. He had the Academy Library create a bibliography on women in the military. And he visited coeducational universities to observe how men and women learned together.[22] One concern was that women would have difficulty firing weapons, but McCarthy observed training of women ROTC cadets at Lackland AFB, and noted they did as well as the men.[23] Colonel McCarthy used his research and a team of Air Force Academy officers and NCOs to develop a plan.

Brig. Gen. Philip Caine, USAF (Ret.), who served as a history instructor at the Academy during the integration, remembered positively the preparations and research the Academy conducted to ready the Academy for this alteration. The information gathering teams traveled to various locations, analyzing previously all male institutions to gain perspectives on how those institutions integrated in order to implement those lessons into the Academy's own process. General Caine felt the thorough preparation greatly aided in the success of the integration.[24]

The Superintendent of the Air Force Academy, Lt. Gen. James R. Allen, stated that the Academy began planning to include women when Congress raised the issue in 1972. In September 1972, the Academy drafted its first contingency plan to include women. After the bill was signed, General Allen announced that the Academy was prepared to accept between 100 and 150 women into the next class.[25]

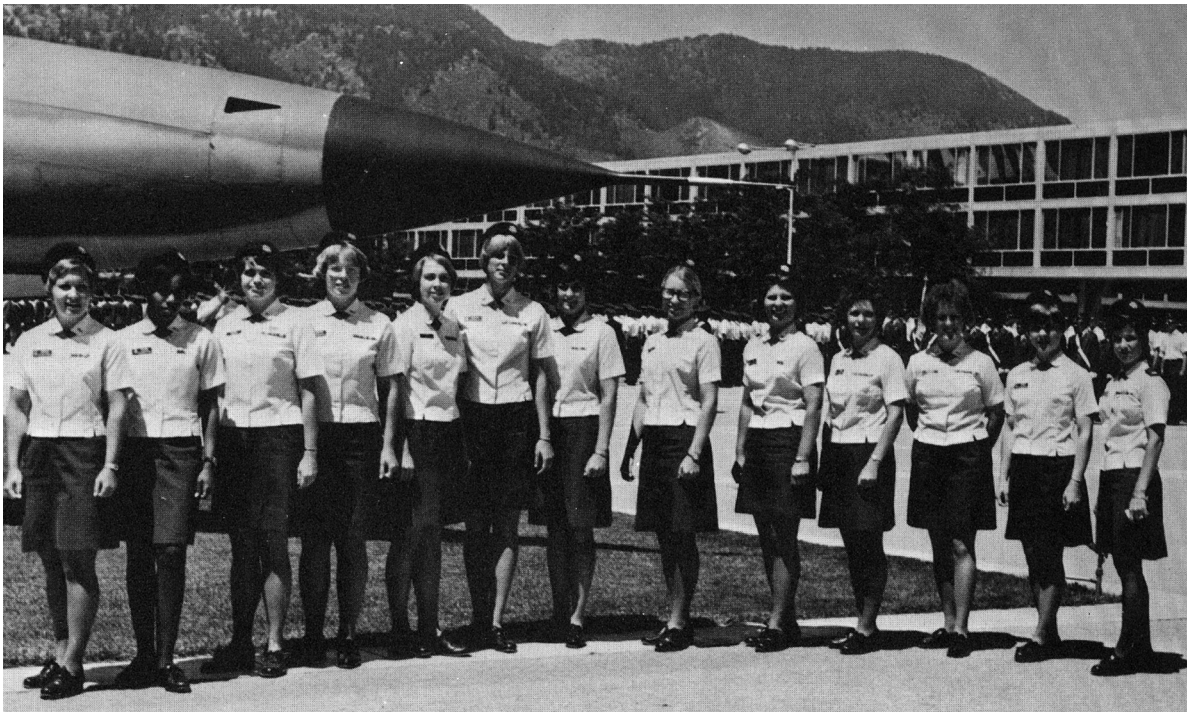
H. Minton Francis, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Equal Opportunity, praised the Air Force Academy's preparations for integrating women into the Academy, adding that it surpassed the preparations of the other academies. After analyzing the Academy's preparations, Mr. Francis determined they were nearly prepared to admit women.[26] Throughout the planning process, women maintained a positive view on integrating the Academy. General Allen explained that the goal was to determine the best way to train women once they arrived at the Academy.[27]

The plan consisted of three phases. The Academy implemented the first phase, the preparation phase, on September 15, 1972.[28] The leadership determined the minimum number necessary for economic reasons so that women would have a conducive training environment.[29] The Air Force desired 16 percent of the female line officers to graduate from the Academy, requiring ninety-six to graduate and, assuming a traditional 35 percent attrition rate, 148 women should enter with the class of 1980.[30]

The first phase used various assumptions in its formulation. Included among these assumptions was that eventually the cadet wing would include women and that women would meet the commissioning standards specifically designed for them. Additionally, male and female cadets were to participate in a joint program where only necessary alterations, based on physiological differences, would be made. Taking into consideration the capabilities of women, the leadership tasked the athletic department with adjusting physical fitness requirements for women.[31]

The second phase of the plan outlined the tran-

Air Training Officers, 1976.



THE ACADEMY INVITED FIFTEEN FEMALE LIEUTENANTS AND CAPTAINS TO THE ACADEMY TO SERVE AS AIR TRAINING OFFICERS (ATOS)

sition from an all male institution to a coeducational institution. This required a competent authority to oversee the modifications made to the Academy programs and facilities, to ensure that the preparations made the Academy completely ready to accept female cadets.[32] The third phase was the execution phase, during which the plans made in the first two phases were implemented. The authors of the contingency plan anticipated further changes during this phase, as specific necessary modifications would become more apparent after the arrival of the first female cadets.[33] Additionally, throughout the planning process continued revisions were expected as the researchers gleaned more information from their studies.[34]

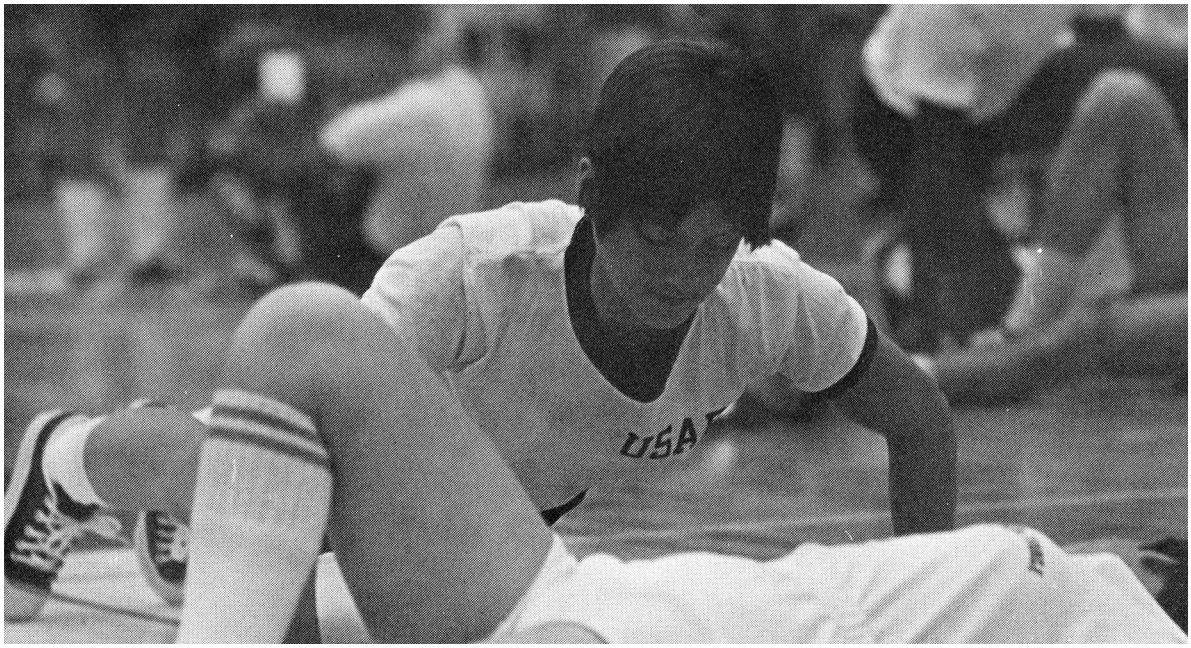
The American public was greatly interested in the process of integrating women into the Academy. As part of their necessary preparation, the Academy invited a female sociologist, Lois DeFleur, to work with its Department of Behavioral Sciences both to research and to instruct in the department. She served as the Academy's foremost advisor for 1976-1977.[35] She also worked to analyze different aspects of the gender integration at the Academy during the first four years. To gather this information, she administered surveys at least once a year. DeFleur placed the highest importance for data gathering on the first and last year of the study, so she distributed two questionnaires a year.[36]

In the deliberations of the proper way to integrate the service academies, a recurring issue was the need to maintain common training for men and women. Any attempts to make the Academy experience easier for women would serve only to degrade the entire program.[37] Neither the male nor the female cadets would benefit from a compromised program. Additionally, congressional litigation had specified the importance of not segregating the training of male and female cadets.[38] Despite the requirements for equal training, at a conference held on September 8-9, 1975 between the federal academies, there were discussions concerning whether women would have problems drilling with rifles, as well as about other physical abilities of women. This issue was resolved and it was determined that the physical aptitude exam would be the same for all the academies. Additionally, this conference determined the necessity for modifications to basic cadet training, but that training, as a whole, would remain coeducational. Standards also remained the same for female cadets, though a system would be developed to ensure equality in grading. All intramurals, with the exception of contact sports, were to be coeducational, and female intercollegiate programs would begin as soon as female athletes arrived. Finally, each of the academies agreed to begin actively recruiting female athletes to fill the future intercollegiate programs.[39]

The Air Force Academy held a practice run the spring before the Class of 1980 arrived. For this trial, the Academy invited fifteen female lieutenants and captains to the Academy to serve as Air Training Officers (ATOs). They arrived in January 1976 to undergo an intense six-month training program.[40] Of these fifteen ATOs, none left the program.[41] This program simulated in-processing, basic cadet training and the school year for fourth-class cadets. The ATOs experienced this training and indoctrination to prepare them to serve as surrogate upper-class cadets. They remained at the Academy as female role models in the cadet wing until the Class of 1980 entered its junior year. The Academy leadership modeled the ATO program after a similar program used in the establishment of the Air Force Academy, at Lowry AFB.[42]

When the female cadets arrived at the

Cadets practicing push-ups.



Academy, they were trained by the ATOs. Cadet Karen Wilhelm, a member of the Class of 1980, believed that ATOs had one of the hardest jobs at the Academy. When the ATOs arrived at the Academy for orientation, they received treatment identical to that of fourth-class cadets. Then, when the Class of 1980 arrived, they became role models. ATOs served as both upperclassmen and lieutenants.[43] Virginia "Ginny" Caine (General Caine's daughter), Class of 1980, found it hard to view the ATOs as upperclassmen. They were lieutenants, and she could not see them as anything but officers. The male cadets more naturally filled this role, as they had the full cadet experience.[44]

THE CADET WING, AS A WHOLE, WAS NOT RECEPTIVE TO FEMALES ENTERING THE WING … THEY WERE EVEN LESS RECEPTIVE TO THE ATOs

Cadet Wilhelm observed that upperclassmen looked down on the ATOs, and perceived them as women, not as officers. She heard upperclassmen saying that the ATOs did not deserve respect because they did not act like officers.[45] Cadet Wilhelm did not like the ATOs at the Academy. As her previous experience was that of an enlisted airman, she did not feel a need for a role model. However, she admitted that perhaps some of the other female cadets might have needed one. Despite her beliefs against the necessity of these officers, when she heard cadets from the upper classes or even her own class, speaking against ATOs, she was willing to defend them. Cadet Wilhelm felt that the male cadets did not understand what the ATOs experienced in order to serve in their assigned positions.[46]

Cadet Paula Thornhill did not have a positive opinion of the ATOs. Her impression of these women was that they were poor examples. She also witnessed a negative reaction to the ATOs throughout the cadet wing. The cadet wing, as a whole, was not receptive to females entering the wing. However, they were even less receptive to the ATOs, who seemed to form a buffer between the cadet wing and the female cadets. No one seemed clear how the ATOs properly fit into the structure of the wing.[47] Cadet Thornhill, admitted that the pressure of being one of the first women at the Academy influenced her opinion of the ATOs. During training, her ATO was tough, tougher than the upperclassmen cadre. During basic cadet training, Cadet Thornhill hated her ATO. However, after training ended realized that the ATO had done her job correctly and respected the lieutenant.[48]

Cadet Janet C. Libby felt that the ATOs handled their jobs well militarily and professionally.[49] She saw the ATOs as both upper-class cadets and as officers. They filled the roles of upper-class cadets better than did most of the male cadets. They disciplined the fourth-class cadets as the upperclassmen did, but they were officers at the same time, filling both roles at once.[50]

A primary concern the Academy needed to address prior to integration was the physical education of the female cadets. In response to this issue, the Academy initiated Project Blue Eyes. This venture organized the physical development of women into the Academy into seven phases. The first phase began before the first female cadets arrived at the Academy and scheduled the final phase for completion in 1985, five years after the graduation of the first coeducational class.[51] The first phase was the physical training of the ATOs.[52] Prior to this research project, a limited amount of information existed concerning women's physical abilities. As the Academy needed this information to integrate women successfully, they concluded their own research. In this phase of the project, the researchers determined that women experienced injury twice as frequently as did men.[53]

Colonel McCarthy observed the physical training of ROTC cadets at Lackland AFB. He saw that the women did not perform well in physical training, displaying a surprising willingness to give up. He attributed this reaction to the separation of men and women during training, believing that the women would do better with additional competi-



Cadets supporting their classmates after a course.

THE REASON FOR THESE ALTERATIONS WAS THAT THE WOMEN'S PERFORMANCES EVALUATED IN PROJECT BLUE EYES FAR EXCEEDED THE EXPECTATIONS SET FOR THEM ON THE PHYSICAL FITNESS TESTS

tion and reinforcement from men.[54] ATO training revealed women's primary weaknesses as upper body strength, agility, and body control. In contrast to these weaknesses, the athletic department noted the ATOs appeared to push themselves harder.[55] Project Blue Eyes supplied the Academy with the knowledge required to implement physical training successfully for the first coeducational class.

The second phase of the project was the physical education during basic cadet training.[56] The purpose of this training was to condition the incoming cadets physically, for the strenuous academic, military and athletic programs at the Academy. It would also help them acclimatize to Colorado's high elevation. The physical conditioning begun during basic cadet training was not completed until the end of the fourth class year, however, the initial training during the first six weeks helped the new cadets adjust to the new lifestyle and conditions quickly.[57]

Project Blue Eyes scheduled the next three phases to occur at the conclusion of each academic year for the Class of 1980.[58] At the end of each year, the Academy's athletic department planned to evaluate the physical fitness of the female cadets. The athletic department also planned to use the information they gathered to readjust the female physical fitness requirements to ensure the program was challenging and fair. The final phase of this research project was a field report. This study and report on the women from the Class of 1980, five years after their graduation, maintained the goal of determining how the women met the physical training requirements of the Academy and of the Air Force.[59]

The Academy used the information from Project Blue Eyes to form their physical education program for women. The results of this project caused the athletic department to change the women's physical fitness test requirements from a flexed arm hang to pull-ups. Additionally, instead of evaluating modified pushups, the female pushup requirement mirrored the males' standard. The Academy implemented these changes in 1982. The reason for these alterations was that the women's performances evaluated in Project Blue Eyes far exceeded the expectations set for them on the physical fitness tests.[60]

In addition to devising a female physical fitness test, the Academy tasked its athletic department with revising the physical education classes and intramurals. The Academy also tasked the department to determine to what extent women could participate in intercollegiate athletics. As with Project Blue Eyes, the athletic department determined it would be in the Academy's best interest to implement a flexible physical education program for the first several years of integrated classes, permitting the Academy to adjust the requirements as necessary.[61]

The program at the Academy served to alter the requirements based on the physical differences between men and women. Women would take some of the same classes as the male cadets, such as swimming, physical fitness, judo, survival swimming, unarmed combat and self-defense. Instead of boxing, women would take fencing; in place of wrestling, women would take ice-skating. Badminton replaced handball and volleyball for women, and two women's events were added to

gymnastics.[62] In addition to curriculum alterations, the athletic department planned to hire female instructors, and implement restroom and locker room modifications to accommodate the female cadets and instructors.[63] By fall 1975, the Academy already had arranged for more female officers to serve as physical education instructors. These officers would also serve as members of the registrar's counseling staff, the commandant's staff, the commandant's operations staff, and other staffs important to female cadets.[64]

As of fall 1975, the Air Force assigned more female officers and enlisted personnel to the Academy. The Academy attributed this change to the growing number of women in the Air Force.[65] Prior to the arrival of the Class of 1980, there were two women on the Dean of Faculty staff. [66]

A PRIMARY CONCERN IN INTEGRATING WOMEN WAS TO ENSURE CONSTRUCTION OF NECESSARY FACILITIES IN TIME FOR THE ARRIVAL OF THE CLASS OF 1980

After the intense effort succeeded in gaining admittance to the service academies for women, a concern developed that not enough women would apply. If too few women applied, the Class of 1980 would not experience a successful integration. This fear was rooted in the lack of publicity for this new opportunity.[67] The superintendent admitted the Academy was behind in contacting eligible women who had filed letters of inquiry. However, he stated that the Academy was focusing on catching up in this task. The Academy diversified the means through which information passed to gather as large a female candidate pool as possible. The Academy staff sent catalogs to interested and eligible women, and additionally sent information to high schools. The Academy also asked congressmen to encourage their constituents.[68]

The initial lack of publicity delayed the women's application process, and if they did not apply on time to the Academy and to their congressional representatives, they would not be eligible for consideration for the Class of 1980.[69] These concerns arose at the second meeting of the year for the Academy's Members of the Board. The purpose of this meeting was to share information about the Academy's plans to admit, educate, and train female cadets. The congressional representatives at this meeting expressed concern about the limited number of inquiries from women requesting information on how to win appointments to the Academy.[70] Senator Ted Stevens of Alaska stated that although the Academy was ready to accept women their preparations would be wasted if not enough women applied.[71] Representative J. Kenneth Robinson of Virginia noted that the Air Force Academy was still well ahead of the other service academies, and the board was pleased with the plans the Academy had made.[72]

General Caine reflected that a primary concern in integrating women was to ensure construction of necessary facilities in time for the arrival of the Class of 1980. The only female restrooms, prior to renovations, were located in Fairchild Hall.[73] The Academy planned to house the female cadets in Vandenberg Hall, separate from the male cadets.[74] Both the female cadets and the ATOs lived on the sixth floor of the east end of this dormitory. The purpose of separating the housing areas for the male and female cadets was to provide more privacy. Additionally, part of the barbershop in Vandenberg Hall was converted to a beauty shop for the female cadets. Construction in Fairchild Hall included two female restrooms on the fifth floor and three on the fourth floor and one on the second floor. In the lectinar [lecture room] area of the third floor, construction crews erected a moveable gate for access to a women's restroom.[75] Despite the construction of new restrooms, Cadet Caine recalled the challenges on in-processing day when male cadets did not know locations of any female restrooms. The only facility they knew of was in the mailroom, far from the majority of the in-processing locations.[76] The faculty and staff locker room in the cadet gymnasium was converted into a locker room for women. Additionally, restrooms and shower facilities were to be constructed at Jack's Valley to prepare for having women included in basic cadet training. The total estimated cost for all of the renovations to prepare the facilities to accommodate more women was $100,000.[77] The confidence course also had to be altered to accommodate women. Due to the significant physiological differences between the average male and the average female, the obstacles would be too high for women to accomplish the tasks successfully. Therefore, they required alteration prior to basic cadet training for the Class of 1980.

During the discussions of renovations to the Academy, there were concerns that women would have different needs than the male cadets. Mrs. Eleanor Foote, a representative for the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services, expressed concern that women at the Academy would require access to bathtubs and kitchens. However, women expressed indifference towards bathtubs. Additionally, male and female cadets expressed equal desire for more access to cooking facilities.[78]

According to Cadet Karen Wilhelm, segregating the female cadets from where the male cadets lived encouraged rumors. Several male cadets believed that the women's separate housing area included not only showers, but also bathtubs and feather beds. They also thought that the ATOs treated the female cadets like queens, not basics.[79] During the first three weeks of training, the female cadets only went to the male section of the dormitories once. On this visit, Cadet Wilhelm noticed that the males experienced a different situation than the female cadets. In the female dorms, upperclassmen were seldom present, and did not live nearby. However, cadre and the Air Officer Commanding constantly surrounded the male basics. In this situation, the male basics constantly had shouting cadre around, whereas, where the female cadets lived, it was always quiet and subdued.[80]

Cadet Thornhill stated that she would have preferred living in the squadron areas with the male cadets. The segregated living spaces allowed for isolation of the women. With women living apart from the male cadets, the males did not know



Haircuts on Inprocessing Day, 1976.

what the women did. During the fourth-class year, male cadets accused the female cadets of not experiencing as difficult training as they did. Separating the females from the upperclassmen made it difficult for classmates of different genders to understand each other.[81]

General Caine recalled the challenge cadets experienced in their segregated living relationships. As an instructor at the Academy and a father of one of the first female cadets, he heard mixed views of training in the women's area of Vandenberg.[82] The segregation of the women added difficulty in developing relationships between the fourth-classmen. Then, when they finally were getting to know each other well, the cadets shuffled to new squadrons. This squadron rotation made it difficult for the female cadets to develop ties with their male classmates, and their closest relationships were with other female cadets. Cadet Thornhill felt that the lack of relationship with her male classmates was a significant loss, which increased the difficulty of adjusting to the Academy. She stated that it would have been better not to have had the ATOs and instead to have focused on going through basic cadet training and the fourth-class year with their male classmates.[83] Colonel McCarthy recognized the differing perspectives on the female cadets in the integrated squadrons, compared to the all male squadrons. He corrected this by making sure all squadrons had women members.[84]

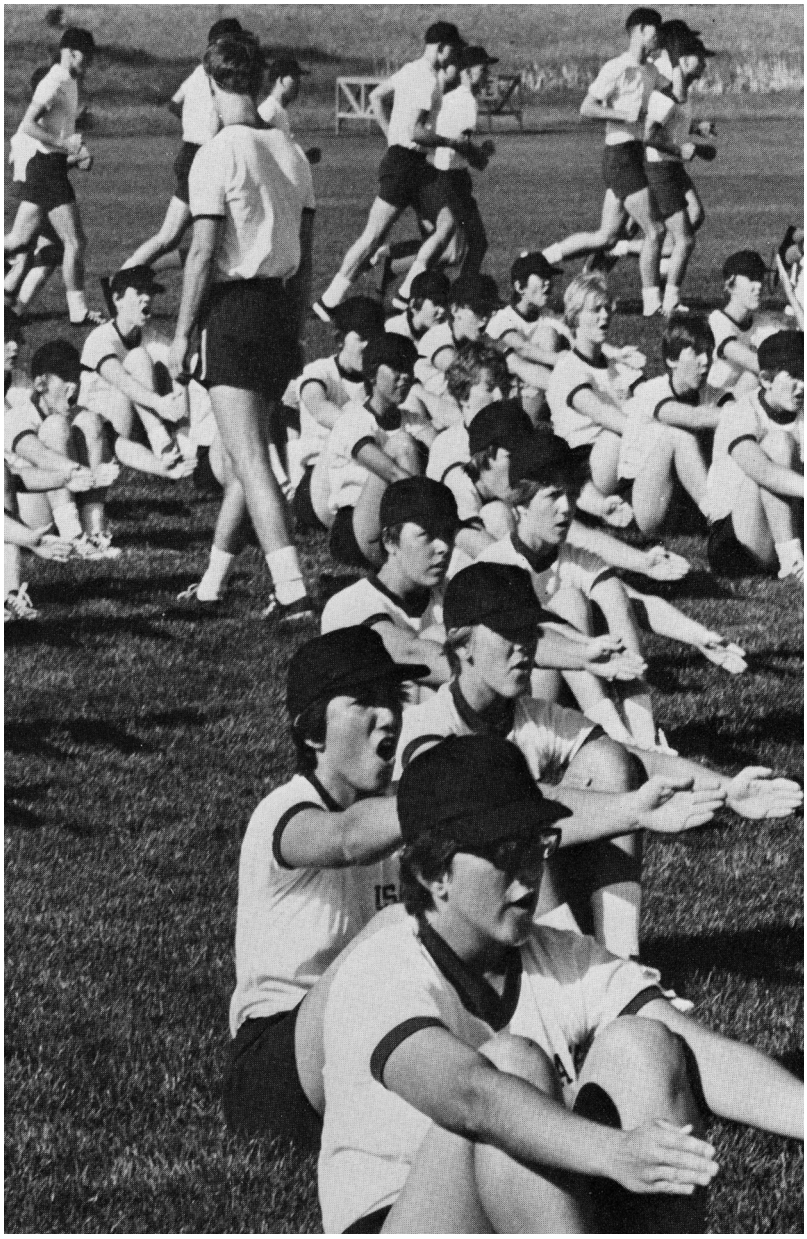
NOT ONLY DID THE FEMALE CADETS HAVE AN INCREDIBLY LOW ATTRITION RATE, BUT THEY ALSO EARNED, OVERALL, HIGHER GPAs THAN DID THE MALE CADETS

By the time the Academy was prepared for the entrance of the first coeducational class, the greatest concern still facing the Academy was that the media might invade the in-processing of the new cadets. As the scheduled in-processing date for the Coast Guard Academy and the Air Force Academy occurred a week in advance of the other academies, the permanent party at the other academies requested the first two share information about any problems they encountered so that the later academies could learn from any potential mistakes or difficulties.[85] By in-processing day for the Class of 1980, June 28, 1976, the Academy had prepared so well for the monumental change that the only difference between in-processing a female cadet and a male cadet was that the women had a choice of four different hairstyles when they received their haircut, whereas all men had their heads shaved. The haircuts available for the women to choose from were only slightly shorter than Air Force standards.[86]

Cadet Thornhill could not understand the intense interest the reporters showed in the female cadets. She noticed them everywhere on in-processing day, following female cadets everywhere they went. Reporters recorded haircuts, shoe issue, and all the other in-processing requirements. It did not make sense to her that they would be so interested in her pursuit of her ordinary career goals.[87]

Prior to the Class of 1980 in-processing, General James Allen, predicted that the attrition rate for women would be lower than the historical average attrition rate for men. He acknowledged that the women in this first integrated class would constantly be under the spotlight, inspiring them to perform at a higher level.[88] This prediction proved correct. In October 1976, the Academy reported the attrition rate among women was indeed lower than it was for men. Only ten women of the original 157 women out-processed. The percentage of women who attrited from the Academy by this time was 6.37 percent, compared to 10.24 percent of men.[89] The Class of 1980 posted the lowest attrition rate in the Academy's history. General Allen stated that women's entrance into the Academy had a positive affect on the attrition rate, and the board of trustees recognized that the success of the women at the Academy reduced the number of males who left the Academy after completing basic cadet training. Not only did the female cadets have an incredibly low attrition rate, but they also earned, overall, higher GPAs than did the male cadets.[90] Colonel McCarthy attributed the successful integration of women largely to General Allen's attitude.[91]

A report to the Board of Trustees stated that the cadet wing, the Academy personnel, and the upper-class cadets accepted women into the Academy, though some male cadets continued to be opposed.[92] Cadet Caine noted that when the Academy encountered an issue during the integration, they were quick to fix it. One example of this eagerness for improvement was integration throughout the entire wing. She recognized that when the Academy saw a rift in the cadet wing between the integrated squadrons and the all male squadrons, the leadership quickly altered their plans and integrated the entire wing, just halfway through the year.[93]



Cadets practicing sit-ups.

Cadet Thornhill also noticed that because the cadet wing initially integrated only the first twenty squadrons, the second twenty, in general, maintained stronger anti-women attitudes. During the move, when the females integrated throughout the wing at the end of the first semester, the males in their new squadrons assisted in the move. This assistance was in part by order and in part by choice.[94]

BOTH MALE AND FEMALE CADETS EXPRESSED A DESIRE FOR IDENTICAL TRAINING

When some of the female cadets moved to Sijan Hall, not all of the women lived in the same area together anymore. However, segregation between them and the male areas in the different buildings continued. The female cadets had to leave their area to do their fourth class details in the male living areas. They felt very isolated from their classmates and from the upperclassmen. Restrictions existed limiting the times the male cadets could go to the female area, and if males were in the female area, the doors had to be open.[95]

Cadet Libby observed that despite the segregation of male and female cadets, upperclassmen did not neglect the women. She stated that the females spent much of their time with the males in the squadron areas. Then, after training with the male cadets, they returned to the female area. Additionally, ATOs were always in the female area and upperclassmen frequently came to the female area to ensure the females followed the rules.[96] During the times the female cadets were with the male cadets, the fourth-classmen received equal attention. However, Cadet Libby felt that having segregated living areas caused the female cadets to miss developing camaraderie with their classmates. Living on the sixth floor also isolated the women from some of the training the male cadets experienced. She felt that it was not necessary to segregate the women into a separate living area. A benefit to segregation was that it forced the women to develop relationships with each other, and they were able to rely on these relationships throughout the first year.[97]

In a survey conducted both at the conclusion of basic cadet training and again in October, both male and female cadets expressed a desire for identical training.[98] The first survey questioned cadets from each of the classes, where as the second survey only questioned the cadets of the Class of 1980.[99] These surveys provide valuable insight to the experience of the new cadets. The responses from the female cadets about basic cadet training showed that the mental and physical training they encountered were slightly more difficult than anticipated. The male cadets, however, responded that the physical training was slightly less difficult than anticipated, while the mental demands were slightly more difficult than expected.[100] This slight differentiation in perspective is reasonable, as the women were the first females to go through this training and had less information to base their preparation on than the male cadets did. In the second survey, cadets of both genders positively reflected on their experiences in basic cadet training. They stated that their experiences had increased their confidence in their physical and mental abilities. Additionally, they felt their training had prepared them for their futures as officers.[101]

After women arrived at the Academy, a key concern was the fear of loss of femininity. This issue appeared in several news articles and as a topic in climate surveys at the Academy. The female cadets strongly disagreed when asked if they felt they were at risk of losing their femininity during their fourth-class year. They also disagreed that they had lost femininity from their experience of basic cadet training.[102] The male cadets, however, felt that the women had lost some femininity during basic cadet training. Yet, they were unresolved on whether the female cadets would continue to lose femininity throughout their cadet careers.[103]

In contrast to the social climate surveys, Mrs. Eleanor Foote interviewed several women at the Academy and reported her discoveries. Women favored equality between the male and female cadets; though, the female cadets expressed concern

that the men did not view them as women. Although the women realized they were filling traditionally male roles, they still wanted to be women.[104] In an interview with *The Sun*, Mrs. Foote reported that some female cadets interpreted their treatment as masculine. Although female cadets desired equal treatment, they missed feeling like women, and felt as though they had lost something. Mrs. Foote also wrote that some of the men she interviewed felt that the women's treatment was too similar to the men's as well.[105] Although Mrs. Foote admitted she did not know how common this concern was in the cadet wing, several cadets had expressed this concern to her.

Lt. Col. Gene Galluscio, an associate professor for Behavioral Sciences and Leadership analyzed the response of the male cadets. He attributed the males' reaction to the fact that the female cadets experienced training identical to the men. Therefore, the traditional views of women conflicted with the female cadets' success the males witnessed in basic cadet training.[106] Men were not used to seeing women pressured in training. It was difficult for them to continue to view these women the same way they had been accustomed to viewing women when they acted and received training identical to their own.

When, as part of this survey, the cadets were questioned about whether women were capable of meeting the same challenges as men, the women responded that they were capable, whereas the men responded that the women were not.[107] Colonel Galluscio interpreted the differing response to this question as the women responding liberally, while the men responded literally. The women admitted to physiological differences that prevented them from being as fast or as strong as the male cadets.[108] However, as the women successfully completed the same basic training as the men did, they interpreted their success as making them the equals of the men.

CADETS ADJUSTED TO THE IDEA OF WOMEN BEING A PART OF THE WING, AND THIS GROWING FAMILIARITY REDUCED OPPOSITION TO WOMEN

Cadet Wilhelm entered the Academy after spending nearly two years in the enlisted force. Because of her previous service, she did not experience a culture shock entering into the Academy. As she was not greatly affected by the confusion associated with this process, Cadet Wilhelm was able to gain perspective on the Academy, the officers, and the upper-class cadets.[109] After the first week of basic cadet training, the environment changed into a more physical training environment. She grew to hate running with her rifle.[110] Yet, the most difficult part of basic cadet training for her was learning that there were individuals at the Academy who did not want women there. Cadet Wilhelm had no warning that women might not be welcome and that was her greatest surprise. This surprise then developed into anger.

When questioned whether the cadet wing accepted her as a person, Cadet Wilhelm answered that acceptance came in stages. At first, many of the male cadets did not believe women belonged at the Academy. Then, during basic cadet training, women earned acceptance from their cadre members. When the wing returned after the summer, the Class of 1979 would take over training for the fourth class cadets during the academic year. They would need to gain acceptance again.[111]

Cadet Thornhill believed that female cadets, as a whole, received abuse. However, she expected this as they were the first coeducational class. Women entering the Academy as the first integrated class, should not have expected an easy transition. As an individual, however, Cadet Thornhill felt accepted.[112] Her experience of joining a man's world, being issued men's clothing, combat boots, and an M-1 rifle made her feel very strange and felt her problem was more with herself than it was with the male cadets. However, she overcame her self-doubt by the end of basic cadet training.[113] She also believed that female cadets received special attention during basic cadet training, and that the upperclassmen singled out the female cadets more than they singled out the male cadets.[114]

Cadet Libby stated that initially, when the Class of 1980 entered the Academy the Class of 1977 did not want the women there. She felt as though the upperclassmen were trying to prove a point that the decision to allow women to come to the Academy was wrong. She admitted that not all of the upperclassmen felt this way.[115]

Dr. DeFleur's study showed that women had more desire than men to improve the relationships between male and female cadets. However, as the male cadets grew more accustomed to the integrated Academy, the concern for better relationships between the genders equalized.[116] Cadets adjusted to the idea of women being a part of the wing, and this growing familiarity reduced opposition to women at the Academy. The closer cadets came to graduation, they focused more on their careers, and as good working relationships between the genders became more prevalent, and cadets altered their attitudes accordingly.[117] The cadets realized that the Air Force integrated before the Academy did, and therefore, the expectation was for male and female officers to work together successfully.

Statistics show that women's interest in attending the Academy dwindled after the first integrated class entered. In 1976, 1,236 women applied for the Class of 1980. However, only 855 women applied for entrance into the Class of 1981.[118]

The Academy successfully integrated women into the institution. Although many displayed opposition to the alteration during congressional litigation on the topic, the Academy diligently planned for the integration. Cadet Caine greatly appreciated the Air Force Academy's methods of integration. Her experiences were positive; she viewed the Academy's efforts as highly proactive and the leadership eager for success in the process. The only issues she recalled were minor, and even minor issues were resolved immediately. A specific example she recalled was that the work gloves were far too large to fit the women's hands.[119]

Although criticisms still exist about various aspects of the integration, overall it was a great

Displaying confidence on the Confidence Course.



THE MORE SUCCESSFUL THE WOMEN PROVED THEMSELVES TO BE, THE MORE UNIFORM THEIR ACCEPTANCE BY THE CADET WING

success. A perfect integration would have been impossible to achieve. However, with the ATO program, as well as the in depth research conducted prior to the arrival of the Class of 1980, the Academy ensured as successful an integration as possible. General Caine stated that his opinion is that the Air Force Academy's integration of women into a previously all male institution was the most successful integration of its kind.[120] The most important aspect of integrating the Academy was the complete integration of the training. It was important for the male cadets to witness the success of the female cadets to display their capabilities within the environment. The more successful the women proved themselves to be, the more uniform their acceptance by the cadet wing. ■

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