

MAKERS

WOMEN IN WAR

OVERVIEW:

MAKERS: Women In War looks at American women's increasing participation in war—from Vietnam to the present—as nurses, soldiers, journalists, diplomats and spies. Among those featured are Linda Bray, the first woman to lead troops into battle, and Valerie Plame Wilson, whose career was shattered after she was “outed” as a high-level spy. Viewers hear from war correspondents like Molly Moore about life on the battlefield. The film shares the stories of military leaders who have broken through gender barriers, like General Angela Salinas, at her retirement the highest ranking woman serving in the USMC, and Vice Admiral Michelle Howard, the highest-ranking woman in the history of the U.S. Navy. Produced and directed by Rachel Grady and Heidi Ewing. Narrated by Christiane Amanpour.

Expanding on the critically acclaimed PBS documentary **MAKERS: Women Who Make America**, which told the story of the modern American women's movement, each documentary in this six-part PBS series examines the impact of the women's movement on six fields once largely closed to women: business, space, Hollywood, comedy, war and politics. In each field, women have pried open, and profoundly reshaped, the central institutions of American life and culture. In the last half-century, women have fought their way into nearly every sphere of American life, from the battlefield to the comedy club, the soundstage to the Senate. Through intimate interviews with trailblazing women known and unknown, viewers are given a rare glimpse—sometimes funny, sometimes sad, and always candid—of what it was like to be pioneers in their fields. Directed by some of the country's leading independent filmmakers, **MAKERS** brings to life new and unforgettable stories that every woman, man, girl and boy should know. Other documentaries in this series include **Women in Comedy, Women in Business, Women in Space, Women in Hollywood, and Women in Politics**.

MAKERS is also a growing archive of women's stories. At makers.com you can meet over 250 Makers. For more MAKERS in War:

Madeline Albright: <http://www.makers.com/madeleine-albright>

Madeline Albright was the first woman to become the U.S. Secretary of State, serving from 1997-2001. Though retired, she continues to write and advises presidents and successors.

Anu Bhagwati: <http://www.makers.com/anu-bhagwati>

Anu Bhagwati, Executive Director of SWAN, was a former Captain and Company Commander in the Marine Corps, serving as a Marine officer from 1999-2004.

Pat Foote: <http://www.makers.com/pat-foote>

Brigadier General Evelyn “Pat” Foote was the first female Deputy Inspector General of the Army, the first female brigade commander in Europe, the first female faculty member of the U.S. Army War College, and the first female commander of Fort Belvoir, Virginia. Though retired, she is still a champion for women's advancement in the armed forces and extinguishing sexual assault and harassment within its ranks.

Condoleeza Rice: <http://www.makers.com/condoleeza-rice>

Condoleeza Rice was the first woman to hold the position of National Security Advisor, and later, Secretary of State, making her the first African American woman to serve in the post. Rice currently teaches at Stanford and runs an international consulting business.

Angela Salinas: <http://www.makers.com/angela-salinas>

Angela Salinas was the first Hispanic woman to become a US Marine Corps general officer and the sixth woman in the Marine Corps to reach the rank of brigadier general. Within 39 years of service, Salinas was awarded the Defense Superior Service Medal and was the highest-ranking female officer in the Marines when she retired in 2013.

Discussion Questions:

Traditionally, war is how men define themselves, whereas women have been defined more by their home lives. Can women embrace these hyper-masculine professions without sacrificing themselves?

Guns changed the terms of war, but they also changed our domestic lives—putting women in danger in the home and men in danger on the streets. Even when we aren't directly participating in war, what are other effects of war that we feel in our lives?

What is a 21st Century War? Assuming it to be less direct one-on-one combat will women fare better?

While many maintained that "defense of America was men's jobs" —what were women's responsibilities assumed to be when it came to protecting America?

Through the beginning of the Vietnam War (1964), laws kept women out of certain professions in the military: "never to rise above commander and no more than 2% of the military." When Johnson finally lifts the 2% cap and hints at a female chief of staff the audience laughs; recognition of how hard it was for women to be accepted in these positions. Given the resistance, why did some women want it?

The film notes that: Women have the same calling to protect our nation as men. This fact hasn't yet made it any easier for women to be in the military—and yet women are stereotyped as great protectors. Is the real obstacle that we don't want to be perceived to need women's protection?

As the feminist movement ratcheted up successes of integrating workforces previously shut off to women, the military was never a high priority. Many feminists were focused on preventing wars and arguing for peace, which posed a conflict for feminists when it came to integrating the military.

Women often wanted to go into the military for the same reasons that men wanted to – their fathers and family members had been in the military, they wanted help paying for their education, it seemed a good path to a good job, they wanted to defend their country. Why is there distrust about women's choices to pursue a military career?

Women faced direct and indirect harassment and hostility – many men simply didn't want them to be anywhere near the military. How can that hostility be diminished?

It was noted that "the average woman is the lowest common denominator." How and why has society tolerated that assumption?

Pat Foote consulted her mother after she had made the decision to enter the military; her mother responded that given the opportunity she would have done the same thing. This affirmation likely surprised Pat and perhaps revealed her mother's own tamped down ambitions. Think of all of the women who weren't even allowed to imagine a future career for themselves?

Women were given make-up and hair lessons; why were women expected to be groomed and not men? Similarly a news commentator remarks that 38 "pretty" Army Nurses arrived in Vietnam. Perhaps because women were entering this particularly masculine profession there is extra emphasis on their femininity.

The first women to enter the military were charting their own course. Because they were often the first, they didn't have a "standard" to keep up with. Did women reinvent these roles or just use males as their role models?

Of women's integration into the military, people have said the Naval Academy will never be the same again, and it was a big waste of money. What's your opinion?

The first hurdle was access, women simply weren't allowed in the military. Next was respect for their abilities. Today the struggles are around safety – now that women are there and aren't going away how do we keep them safe from harassment and rape? Those are realities of life beyond the military, but extra pronounced within the military. Living in close quarters has been listed as a contributing factor, what else accounts for the high rates of abuse?

Linda Grey was in command of 250 people in Panama, which was shorthanded as a "show of force." As she experienced, combat exclusion doesn't keep women out it keeps them from advancing. With President Obama's lift on the combat restriction how can we ensure that women reach the top ranks of the military?

Turning Points:

- 1964. President Johnson lifts “2% ban” – meaning that women could compose more than 2% of the military.
- 1992. Paula Coughlin exposes the rampant sexual assault occurring at the Tailhook Convention, the annual convention for “Top Gun” aviators. Ultimately 83 women and 7 men were later found to have been assaulted during the raucous party weekend in September 1991.
- 1992. President Clinton lifts restrictions on gays and lesbians in the military by implementing a Don’t Ask Don’t Tell policy, which would remain in effect for over 20 years eventually repealed by President Obama.
- 1995. Shannon Faulkner became the first female cadet at The Citadel, under the escort of U.S. marshals.
- 2013. President Obama eliminates the barrier to women in combat.

For more great moments for women in Military History, see: <http://www.womensmemorial.org/Education/timeline.html>

Key Women:

Diane Carlson Evans served as a nurse in the United States Army during the Vietnam War. During her time in Vietnam, she served in the burn unit of the 36th Evacuation Hospital in Vung Tau and at Pleiku in the 71st Evacuation Hospital. In 1984, Carlson Evans founded the Vietnam Women’s Memorial Project (now the Vietnam Women’s Memorial Foundation). She lobbied for seven years to gain permission to build a memorial to the military women who served in Vietnam. In 1993, the Vietnam Women’s Memorial was dedicated before a crowd of thousands. Carlson Evans continues her work with the Vietnam Women’s Foundation and speaks nationally about women and wartime.

Brigadier General Evelyn “Pat” Foote was born in 1930 in North Carolina. After graduating from Wake Forest, she worked at various jobs in Washington, D.C. Frustrated by the pay discrepancies and glass ceilings, she decided to join the Women’s Army Corps, enticed by the promise of equal pay for women. In 1967, she was sent to Vietnam and became the first female public relations officer in Saigon. By 1986, she was one of only four female generals in the Armed Forces. Though she retired in 1989, Foote remains an involved advisor and speaker and was even called back to service in 1996 to serve as the Vice Chair on the Army’s Senior Review Panel on Sexual Harassment. In 1998, she became the founding president, now President Emerita, of the Alliance for National Defense, a non-profit formed to be a reasoned voice for women serving in the armed forces.

The daughter of Mexican immigrants, **Major General Angela Salinas** was the first in her family to attend college. In 1974, she joined the U.S. Marine Corps and for three decades rose in the ranks. On August 2, 2006, Salinas became the first Hispanic woman to become a U.S. Marine Corps general officer, and the sixth woman in the Marine Corps to reach the rank of brigadier general. In 2010, she was promoted to major general.

Linda Bray was born in North Carolina. Inspired by her father, a policeman and fireman, she went to Western Carolina University to study criminal justice. Bray signed on for the Military Police in the ROTC program. Bray served in Germany and the U.S. but is most known for her time commanding the 988th MP Company. During the invasion of Panama in 1989, Captain Linda Bray became the first female to lead U.S. troops in battle.

Rhonda Cornum graduated from Cornell University and is a board-certified surgeon and served in the U.S. army from 1978 until 2012. She commanded the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center and later became the command surgeon for the U.S. Army Forces Command. As a brigadier general, she was U.S. Army Assistant Surgeon General for Force Protection before working in the joint soldier fitness program. In 1991, while serving as a flight surgeon on a Black Hawk helicopter, her flight was shot down and became a POW, where she was subjected to mock execution, sexual assault and other forms of torture by her Iraqi captors. She received numerous medals and is one of only seven women in history to received the Distinguished Flying Cross. Brigadier General Cornum retired in 2012.

Heidi V. Brown joined the army in 1981. She was the first woman from El Paso, Texas, to graduate from West Point and went on to be the first woman to command a Patriot missile battalion. As the commander of the 31st Air Defense Artillery Brigade, she was the first woman to command an air defense artillery brigade and to lead that brigade into combat during the 2003 invasion of Iraq. In 2012, Army Brig. Gen. Brown was promoted to the rank of Major General.

Resources:

Organizations

Alliance for National Defense

<http://www.4militarywomen.org/>

AND provides a positive voice for military women. The organization provides nonpartisan, objective information.

American Women Veterans

<http://americanwomenveterans.org/home/>

American Women Veterans Foundation is working to develop a multi-pronged approach to help servicewomen, veterans and their families. Read Bras & Boots - a blog written by women in the military.

Center for Women's Veterans

<http://www.va.gov/womenvet/>

The Center for Women Veterans was established by Congress in November 1994. It monitors programs for women vets and advocates for a cultural transformation (both within VA and in the general public) in recognizing the service and contributions of women Veterans and women in the military.

[IAVA: Rapid Response Referral Program](#)

1-855-91-RAPID (917-2743) or transition@iava.org

Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America now offers a case management and referral services program. This new program connects our Member Veterans and their families with veteran-specific resources.

Protect Our Defenders

<http://www.protectourdefenders.com/>

Protect Our Defenders supports and gives a voice to women and men in the military who have been sexually assaulted by fellow service members. Get more information, find help if you are a survivor, and read survivor stories.

SWAN (Service Women's Action Network)

servicewomen.org/

SWAN is an organization that supports, defends, and empowers servicewomen and women veterans. Find out how to get involved on the issues or locate legal and therapy services that fit your needs.

Vietnam Women's Foundation

<http://www.vietnamwomensmemorial.org/index2.php>

The Vietnam Women's Foundation's goal is to promote the healing of Vietnam women veterans through the placement of the Vietnam Women's Memorial on the grounds of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.; to identify the military and civilian women who served during the Vietnam war; to educate the public about their role; and to facilitate research on the physiological, psychological, and sociological issues correlated to their service.

Women's Memorial Foundation

<http://www.womensmemorial.org/About/welcome.html>

The Women's Memorial is a unique, living memorial honoring all military women - past, present and future. Located in Arlington National Cemetery, it is the only major national memorial honoring women who have served in our nation's defense during all eras and in all services.

Films/documentaries

Lionness

<http://www.lionessthefilm.com/>

Told through intimate accounts, journal excerpts, archival footage, as well as interviews with military commanders, the film follows five Lionness women who served together for a year in Iraq. Together the women's candid narratives describing their experiences in Iraq and scenes from their lives back home form a portrait of the emotional and psychological effects of war from a female point of view.

The Invisible War

<http://invisiblewarmovie.com/>

The Invisible War is an award-winning documentary about sexual assault in the U.S. military.

Articles

Women in Combat: http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/09/opinion/women-in-combat-policy-catches-up-with-reality.html?_r=0

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/24/us/pentagon-says-it-is-lifting-ban-on-women-in-combat.html?pagewanted=all>

Tailhook: http://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/13/booming/revisiting-the-militarys-tailhook-scandal-video.html?_r=0

Mary Calvert's art project, *Missing in Action: Homeless Female Veterans*

<http://www.alexiafoundation.org/stories/marycalvert>

Mary F. Calvert is a photographer and has been awarded the 2014 Women's Initiative Grant. Watch the website for her final images.

