

Assuming Rape: The Reproduction of Fear in American Military Female POWs

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Introduction

Your Mother Wears Combat Boots

“No, I was the soldier. No, I did not sleep with your husband. No, I am not a lesbian”

Jeri Chatterley (U.S. Army 1979-1982)

I began this project believing that I wanted to write about the image of the American military woman. My desire to further explore this image stemmed from an undergraduate class in which I had discounted the opinion of a young woman who was discussing the hardships of the soldier serving in the Iraq Theater. I believed that she was repeating what her husband or boyfriend had told her about life as a soldier. It was not until she said, “when I was in Iraq...” that I allowed myself to believe she was offering a valid opinion. I became extremely disappointed in and a bit angry with myself because I did not allow my mind to initially picture her as a soldier, and I began to question why. How could I, an army veteran of five years, who served his entire time alongside women, still believe that soldiering was a man’s profession? I began to question if social conditioning was stronger than my own life experiences in shaping my beliefs. I wondered if American society socialized all of us with corresponding images of these careers. For me, these questions demanded answers. Furthermore, the answers could not be simple ones explained by one academic discipline; the question was too complex. Military women perform a variety of tasks, across a variety of services, and at different times and in different locations. All of these variables worked against a thesis sized analysis. However, there was one group of women, who spanned all of the variables and who could serve as a richly document data set. These women were under studied. These women were former Prisoners of War (POWs). It is with this POW status that a whole new unique experience evolved, and with this experience came a unique image. This is an image of women who had been unquestionably raped by the enemy.

Overview

In order to discuss the assumption that United States female military Prisoners of War will be raped once captured or during captivity and the reproduction of this assumption, it is

necessary to discuss the construction of the vulnerable woman and the forces that reproduce that image. It is also necessary to discuss what the image of a vulnerable woman means to an American culture dominated by white men and the responsibilities that this vulnerability implies. These responsibilities reflect social norms that require men to protect white women, leaving the only options for white women as victims (Davis, 1983; Day, 2001; Stiehm, 1982). Once the image of the vulnerable woman has been established, it becomes essential for men to fill their social obligations as protectors. I then explore the interrelationship of the military (a protector) with the woman (the protected). I then present scholarly discussions of the representations of women when they move from protected to protector, by donning a military uniform. I conclude by discussing key scholarship on the construction of the POW. The image of the POW needs to be addressed in order to understand the image's fluidity and improbable standards.

The Vulnerable White Woman

In order to better understand the foundations of these images, it is important to remember that gender is a social construction (created to organize people into groups). Many prominent feminists and sociologists have focused on the specific traits that are attached to the female body, specifically, the white female body. Domosh (2001) and Davis (1983) argue that the cult of domesticity virtually confined women to a specific space: the home. According to Nakano-Glenn (2002) and Davis (1983), *proper* women are constructed as a mother, feminine, educated, married once, Protestant and probably White. In addition, Nakano - Glenn historically outlines how white women in the United States have been constructed as vulnerable republican women who are different from the socially constructed Black, Mexican and Asian women. Nakano - Glenn shows the constructed image of white women who needed protection from various others, and how this difference required white women to be protected from the men of other races. In

Building Diaspora (2005), Ignacio found that the definition of the Filipina was constructed in opposition to the white woman, making the socially constructed White woman the point of reference for the construction of other women. Regardless, Davis, Glenn and Ignacio further show that the image of the white woman has historically been constructed as vulnerable and in need of protection from men, and especially men of color. Ignacio's work is unique by showing how the Filipina's image must be protected vis-a-vis the white woman. Therefore, it becomes apparent that men are the protectors of the women inside of their borders, and that they must be protected from the racialized Other.

This need for protection becomes more problematic when women put on a military uniform and take an oath to defend the nation because wearing the uniform blurs the gendered obligations. The obligation for the defense of the nation and of the nation's women has historically fallen on the shoulders of its men. As evidence, one only has to look at the gender of the soldiers that have historically and presently occupy the world's armies. To provide evidence that the man is the protector of the woman, one can examine the contemporary work of Kristen Day (2001) and her research on the construction of the masculine identity. In "Constructing Masculinity and Women's Fear in Public Spaces in Irvine, California" (2001), Day explores the intersectionality of rape, fear and race on one university campus in Irvine, California. Day's work gives rich insight to the complex needs of both men and women to act in certain fashions in order to display what are considered proper gender role behaviors. Day also examines the complexity of how men act around one another in order to display a persona of a tough guy, or to downplay the tough image when a tough image may result in bodily harm or death. Day further examines the "vulnerable White woman" and her learned fear of men of color and the hypersexualized, criminal image they produce in the white woman's mind.

The Military and Women

Numerous articles, compilations, and books are currently being written, compiled and critiqued on the topic of women and the military. There are books about what harm the military does to women, both in peacetime and while engaged in war, as discussed by Davis in *Women Race and Class* (1983); similarly Enloe's *Bananas Beaches and Bases* (1990), focuses on how women's bodies are used by the military. Davis boldly discusses military policy that included the rape of Vietnamese women in order to crush the morale of the Vietnamese people and the effects that manifested in the United States after the war by such a policy. Enloe describes the movement of women to areas around military bases. Once near the military bases, these women's bodies become the items of pleasure for military men. This pleasure can come in the form of company, service person, or sexual object (Enloe, p. 49).

However, it is not just the bodies of women that are controlled by the military; Joni Seger in *Earth Follies: Coming to Feminist Terms with the Global Environmental Crisis* (1993), describes what the military does to the nation and spaces occupied by women. The military, Seger argues, defines their objective as national security and creates a definition that will protect male, thus protect military privilege at the expense of women and the spaces occupied or associated with women (p. 40). The works of Seger, Davis and Enloe provide evidence that women have no intention of remaining passive. It is this refusal to remain passive and in *their place* that will require men to construct other means to pacify women.

The Evolution of Gender and the Media

When the discussion includes gender and the media, it is a bit more difficult to deconstruct the image of the vulnerable woman, unless the scholar also analyzes the changes in

the hegemonic masculinity described by Kimberley Hutchings in her work “Making Sense of Masculinity and War”(2008). It becomes apparent that gender is fluid and that society defines masculine and feminine to meet its needs. Hutchings argues that hegemonic masculinity, after the loss of the Vietnam War, needed to move from the warrior to the first responder, or to an intellectual warrior who may never see combat, but who could destroy cities with the push of a button. Because of the loss of the Vietnam War, “masculine” could no longer be defined as a protector. Power and masculinity were redefined. Furthermore, Andrew Bacevich (2005) claims that a cultural climate shift in the Reagan years allowed Hollywood to produce films sympathetic to Reagan’s military buildup that helped seduce white males into the military, by hiding the gore of combat and glorifying white officer intellectualism. As evidence, Bacevich offers *An Officer and a Gentleman* (1982), *Rambo* (1982) and *Top Gun* (1986); Bacevich further claims that these films were nothing more than recruiting films for the all volunteer military. Bacevich concludes this strain of his argument by claiming that by glamorizing the military, Reagan was able to expand the defense budget, and that Hollywood redefined hegemonic masculinity by adding the warrior once again. Furthermore, according to *Men, Women and Chainsaws* (Clover, 1992), while Hollywood was expanding hegemonic masculinity for the male, Hollywood was also transforming the image of the female from victim to survivor.

With the addition of a new film genre the image of young women changed; the new genre was the “slasher film.” Building on the work of Clover, Linda Williams in her article “Film Bodies: Gender, Genre, and Excess” (1991), claims that one of the key components to the slasher film is the “final girl.” For Williams, the final girl is the sole survivor of the maniacal killer and this young woman survives by grabbing a phallic shaped weapon. That weapon may be an axe, knife or chainsaw, but whatever the weapon the woman changes from “gender victim to an

active power with bisexual components” (Williams, 1991, p.7). However, it is not just the slasher film that provides the male viewer with a sense of being superior, argues Williams. Williams draws on Mulvey’s (1975) work “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema” and supports the claim that most genres of film leave the male feeling dominant and the woman feeling passive and in need of protection (Mulvey, 1975). With the exception of *film noir*, Hollywood has done little to change the images of the women described by Davis (1983), Glenn (2002) and Ignacio (2005); however, one other key element in *film noir* is that the woman must be punished for her deviance. Williams further argues that it is the male that seemingly provides that protection, via a phallus, sexually, physically or emotionally, which reinforces Davis’ claim that women can only be the victim (Davis, 2005 p. 26).

Women in the Military

Historically, women have been constructed as passive. However, scholarship discusses and addresses that there are times when women are part of the military and are actually accomplices to the acts of violence attached to the military. Scholars and other authors are producing volumes of work on the activities of these women also, whether these activities are as protectors of their nation or the torturer of captives. Erin Solaro argues in *Women in the Line of Fire: What You Should Know About Women in the Military* (2006) that full citizenship will only be recognized once women are defending the nation at all times, not just at times of “utmost desperation.” Solaro acknowledges by quoting David Fraser the British military historian that “War can be a gruesome business....vicious cruelty at worst” (as cited in Solaro, 2006, p. 8).

However, it takes Barbara Ehrenreich’s introduction to *One of the Guys: Women as Aggressors and Torturers* (2007) to provide evidence that “What we have learned from Abu

Ghraib, once and for all, is that a uterus is not a substitute for a conscience” (p. 4). In other words, gender is less of a factor in the vicious cruelty of war than the absolute power of the captor or victor. Inside this anthology, McKelvey and other scholars deconstruct the statement by Angela Davis. “- that the only possible relationship between women and violence requires women to be the victims” (Davis, 2005, p 26). Furthermore, it is not just scholars discussing how the military changes an ordinary military woman. Kayla Williams in *Love My Rifle More Than You: Young and Female in the U.S. Army* (2005) argues that “It’s scary to think about how much being in the Army has changed me,” and it is these changes that Williams felt compelled to write about. Williams proudly claims that she can turn a man’s head, meaning she is still feminine and desirable. Yet she is physically strong and dangerous when she is armed with her M-4 (p. 15).

Furthermore, Williams argues that, in her opinion, former POW Jessica Lynch and former Abu Ghraib guard Lynndie England are not examples of “real women in the army” (p. 15) by providing untold examples in her book of both brave and cowardly *real women in the army*. Williams further argues that thousands of women are serving their country; however, Lynch and England, because of sensationalism by the media, become household names discounting the real sacrifices made by military women. Williams also addresses the social construction of the military woman as “a slut” or “a bitch.” Williams writes that “A slut will fuck anyone; a bitch will fuck anyone but you” (p.13) and how this social construction affects the soldier in uniform, both male and female. The social construction of the military woman has not evolved far from the description provided by Leisa D. Meyer in “Creating G.I. Jane: The Regulation of Sexuality and Sexual Behavior in the Women’s Army Corps during World War II” (1992). Meyer claims military women were constructed as camp followers (whores) or manly (dykes).

Tasker devotes an entire work to the normalization of these imagines in *Soldiers' Stories: Military Women in Cinema and Television since World War II*. In her work, Tasker discusses the power motion pictures and television possess as a tool to shift the cultural images of the female military body from deviant to a norm. Yet, the female as a protector of the nation opens a controversial debate on proper gender roles and role models for the viewer. Should women with phallic weapons serve as role models?

It is these women with bisexual components or masculine qualities who become the topic of Jeffrey A Brown's work, "Gender and the Action Heroine: Hardbodies and the 'Point of No Return' " (1996). When Brown discusses both of the main female characters in the film *Aliens* (1986), Vasquez and Ripley; the women are not compared to other women but are compared to men. Furthermore, according to Brown, Vasquez is so "butch" that when she first awakes from hypersleep she immediately begins doing pull ups, only to be asked by a fellow marine if she has ever been mistaken for a man. Her reply to the male marine is "no, have you" (p. 63). According to Brown, here lies one of the major problems: "If a female character seen as kicking ass must be read as masculine, then women are systematically denied as a gender capable of behaving in any way other than passive" (Brown, p. 63). Brown's quote provides further evidence that Davis is correct when she states that America is more comfortable when "the only possible relationship between women and violence requires the women to be victims" (Davis, 2005, p.26).

Brown further argues that there is a very fine line between masculine and feminine, and that women are allowed more leeway as long as they can connect their actions to their primary function. That function is producing and raising the next generation. The image, Brown further claims, of Ripley saving Newt (a young female child) is what frames Ripley as heterosexual and motherly therefore not butch. Brown continues his argument by claiming that it does not matter

to the American viewer that the media has labeled Ripley, “Fembo” and “Rambolina” (p. 57). Brown further reminds the reader that the media is not to blame for the comparisons; both Rambo and Ripley are often seen wearing muscle shirts with oversized weapons and tons of ammunition strapped across their bodies. They are both seen with sweaty hair matted to their heads and carrying a comrade to safety (Brown, p. 15).

POWs in General

While numerous volumes have been written and critiqued on Americans held as POWs, the vast majority of these pages concentrate on men. Yet, it is not only men who are captured and gender is not a deterrent when people are captured and it is this virtually random fate of the POW that Charles G. Roland addresses in his work “Massacre and Rape in Hong Kong: Two Case Studies Involving Medical Personnel and Patients” (1997). Roland argues that it is a series of factors that dictates whether a POW lives or dies. Some of these factors include timing of the battle, seriousness of the battle, and finally perception of the victor. Roland quotes Brownmiller and acknowledges that “rape may be viewed as part of a recognizable pattern of national terror and subjugation” (as cited in Roland, 1997, p. 57). However, Roland argues that a military uniform or a profession is not a factor in the rape of women and ultimately gender is not a factor in the taking of POWs.

Furthermore, H.H. Wubben argues in “American Prisoners of War in Korea: A Second Look at the ‘Something New in History’ Theme” (1970) that the initial social construction of POWs in each war actually dictates what the American public is willing to believe happens to POWs. In other words, this construction influences what the American public is willing to believe about the bravery of those POWs. Wubben provides historical evidence that shows that

Korean War POWs acted braver than previous POWs; however, with the loss of the Korean War, the POWs became a symbol of weakness, both mental and physical.

It is this symbol of weakness that Elliott Gruner addresses in his work. Gruner clearly argues in “What Code? Or, No Great Escapes: The Code of Conduct and Other Dreams of Resistance” (1993) that the American public acquires a set of values from Hollywood films such as *Rambo: First Blood Part II* (1985) and *The Great Escape* (1963), and constructs the ideal POW. According to Gruner, the ideal POW is constructed as a man who will never divulge anything except name, rank and serial number; no matter the amount of physical pain he must endure; all the while he is planning his escape. Gruner argues that this construct and Hollywood’s reproduction of it has put POWs in harm’s way by developing such super hero characters. Gruner further argues that even “Hogan’s Heroes” (1965) reproduces the construction of the POW into a superman. In his conclusion, Gruner argues that if this dangerous construction holds the only option for POWs in the future will be death or as he defines it “robbing the captor / torturer of his subject” (p. 6).

Women as POWs

Furthermore it is not just the male POW experience that is well documented; there are several books describing the accounts of American military women held as POWs, such as *We Band of Angels: The Untold Story of American Nurses Trapped on Bataan by the Japanese* by Norman (1999) and *I’m Still Standing: Memoirs of a Woman Soldier Held Captive* by Johnson (2010) – and the discourse continues to expand. These books illustrate the unique and often precarious role that women hold as both the protector of the nation and inhabitant of a body that needs to be protected. It is this dualism as described by Judith Hicks Stiehm in “The Protected,

The Protector, The Defender” (1982), that allows a patriarchal system to define the members of its society and define itself.

The protected are further broken down in Steihm’s article into categories of the young, the old, the highly valued (politicians), the despised (homosexuals), the distrusted (communists) and women. According to Steihm, women become problematic when they embody more than one role or category. Nonetheless, Stiehm distributes the blame for this dysfunction across all members of society and points out that motion pictures are often used to indoctrinate men and reinforce the artificial boundaries that define manhood and masculinity. Steihm also argues that women in uniform embarrass men that perform the same jobs as women, leaving these men questioning their masculinity and their role *vis-à-vis* the woman who he thought he needed to protect. Therefore, according to Stiehm, the fictitious images of women in motion picture should be analyzed in order to understand the social construction of real life women.

There is one film which solidly prepares the American viewer for the fate of American military women if they are captured, and that is *G.I. Jane* (1997). Linville claims in “The ‘Mother’ of All Battles’: ‘Courage under Fire’ and the Gender- Integrated Military” (2000) that “...war in general as a privileged area of masculine display” (p.104) requires that women take on masculine components as shown in the films *G.I. Jane* and *Courage Under Fire* (1996). However, feminist scholar Jacklyn Cock in her work “The Feminist Challenge to Militarism” (1997) claims that women can change this more masculine image and still be equals. Also using the film *G.I. Jane*, Cock claims that women’s incorporation into the military and the male identity legitimizes violence in the name of equality and little else. While both Linville and Cock quote in their essays the infamous line “suck my dick,” it is Cock who considers claiming a male part is buying into the hegemonic masculinity which dominates the military, while Linville

argues that the line “suck my dick” allowed a battered O’ Neill to enter the “privileged arena of masculine display” (p. 104).

Methods and General Findings

In the previous section, I provided the scholarship and academic texts that have been foundational in my thesis. As an interdisciplinary work, my thesis draws from the rich work of scholars in many fields: sociologists, feminists, and historians. This thesis builds on the work found in multiple disciplines: sociology, history, geography, women’s studies, media studies and military studies. By using an interdisciplinary approach, I provide a clearer explanation of how and why the assumption of rape is reproduced and why that reproduction is important to understand.

My thesis revolves around the narratives of women in the US military from WWII to the present. Early in my research, I encountered the narratives documenting the nurses of Bataan and Corregidor. This subject fascinated me. As I continued to read, I found myself focusing on American military women who had been held as POWs, I decided to add six more nurses to my research: Whittle; Rathbun-Nealy; Cornum; Johnson; Lynch and Piestewa. All in all, I read the narratives of all of the 90 American military women held as POWs that I could obtain.

First and foremost, I believed that the available narratives were told truthfully, and that the interviewees did not hold back any unpleasant experiences. I compared the narratives of the women held by the Japanese across one another, to see if they corroborated. The authors of the narratives held different points of view; however, the situations were described by the interviewees in a consistent manner. Similarly, the narratives of these POWs held by the Iraqis

are consistent with one another. I also analyzed the narratives of men held by the same captors, concentrating on specifics about my data set.

Once I presented my notes on each individual female POW, my thesis advisor and I coded the narratives and organized them into frequently occurring subjects. The least desirable subject in my mind was rape. Yet, all roads seemed headed in that direction.

The Importance of Analyzing the Discourse of Rape

Initially my assumption was that these women had been raped: I assumed this would be the fate of any captured American military woman. Her body would become a spoil of war. Yet early in my research, there was little mention of any sexual misconduct by enemy troops directed at these specific women. I believe that my assumption stemmed from images I had seen on the big screen, media clips on CNN, Fox and major networks. When I discussed my topic with people in general, they also assumed and passionately argued that any American woman held as a POW would have been raped by the enemy. Even when I had presented my preliminary findings, my work was usually discounted and the belief that American military women held as POWs were raped stood as *unquestionable fact*. I questioned why people had such passionate concrete opinions concerning the fate of American military women held as POWs, especially when the POWs stated otherwise. This led me to examine more broadly the prevalent images of female POWs that permeate U.S. society.

The Role of the Media

In order to better understand how the images of women are constructed and reproduced, one must remember that the agents of socialization are family, peers, media and other institutions

such as schools, churches and social organizations. My work focuses on just one powerful aspect of socialization - the media, particularly the role of motion pictures. One possible reason for the discrepancy between what I had found and the people's reactions to my preliminary findings is that the mass majority of Americans may not have read these POW's narratives and the only image they relate to the female POWs may be via the media, particularly Hollywood. When I analyzed Hollywood films that focused on female POWs, particularly during WWII, the prevalent image of POWs is one of a male soldier that is doing his duty to make life difficult for his captors while trying to escape at any cost. These images are captured in the films *The Bridge on the River Kwai* (1957) and *The Great Escape*. These films are exclusively about male POWs; however, there are films about women who were held captive. The story of Agnes Keith is told in *Three Came Home* (1950) and the story of women who escaped Singapore is told in *Paradise Road* (1997). However, these films are about *civilian* woman held by the Japanese army during WWII, and therefore, these women did not have the same obligations as military women to resist their captors. The difference between civilian and military POWs is what makes the image of the POW complex, and given the relative paucity of research and focus on female, military POWs, for most Americans, the closest they will get to an American female military POW is also the fictionalized one on the big screen, or a CNN / FOX news sound bite.

Summary of Chapters

In Chapter One, I give a historical recount of the events leading to the capture or surrender of the American military women held as POWs. In Chapter Two, I detail how the enemy is constructed into a hypersexual Other, and how the white American woman is constructed as vulnerable. I then describe the outcome of clashes between these two images. In Chapter Three, I discuss rape, how the rape narrative is constructed and how the rape narrative is

used to marginalize female service members. In Chapter Four, I provide historical evidence that American military women held as POWs have survived captivity, hampered the enemies' goals, and resisted as required by military regulations. In Chapter Five, I provide the reader with concluding remarks and questions for further research.

I begin by providing historical accounts of the 90 women who have been held as POWs. These accounts are framed by Roland's thesis on the capture of POWs.

Chapter One

Captured Women: A Historical Background of American Military Female POWs

“I wasn’t defeated, I was captured, I didn’t surrender; the army surrendered me”

2LT Eleanor Garen (Norman, 1999, p. 257).

Overview

Cataloguing and calculating the numbers, my analysis of the numerous narratives of American female military POWs shows that between December 1941 and December 2011, there were 90 American military women held as POWs. The breakdown of the wars in which these women were captured is as follows. World War II (1941-1945) saw the largest number of American military women held with a total of 85. Of this total, 84 women were held by the Japanese and the largest majority of them were held in the Philippines, with a total of 79. There was also a group of five Navy nurses captured on Guam and later moved to Japan. While women also served in the European and North African theaters (Fessler, 1996, pp. 123-197), the Nazis only captured one American military woman (Frank, 1990).

The next major wars, those in Korea and Vietnam, did not have any American military women captured. However, Rudy Bradley¹ found herself once again behind enemy lines, putting the wounded men's lives before her own life (Norman, 1999, p. 252). Yet, it was not until the first Gulf War (1991) that two more women were captured. This war gave the United States the first enlisted woman to be captured, Spec. Rathbun-Nealy. Rathbun-Nealy was also the first woman who was not in the medical field; therefore, she could be considered a combatant. Finally, in the Iraq War or Second Gulf War (2003- 2010), three women have been captured to date. In this War on Terror, the Iraqi theater provided the first time two women of color were captured and the first time a female military POW died in captivity. Again, all three women were in non-medical fields; therefore, they could be considered combatants, and they were carrying weapons. The image of an armed woman is different than the image of a healer in the eyes of a

¹ former POW of the Japanese, having been captured with Beatrice Chambers after the two unsuccessfully tried to join guerillas in the mountains found themselves and the others travelling with them in Japanese territory with nowhere to go

captor; therefore, the captors will have a different perception of this potential POW. It is this different perception that I discuss in the summaries of the wars after WWII, when the captured women's professions changed from medical (neutral forces) to other fields (fields that are in direct support of the aggressors).

While war may seem to be a wonton killing of people on the other side of the conflict, there are internationally recognized rules set forth on how armies are to behave, and furthermore, how they are to treat POWs. One of the internationally recognized works governing how POWs are to be treated is the Geneva Conventions.

The Geneva Conventions treat non-combatants differently than combat troops. The first Geneva Convention was held in 1864 and this convention established basic rules concerning protected person and objects during war ("Persons," 2010).

The First Convention concerned itself primarily with the care of the sick and wounded on the battlefield. The medical services helping them were to be protected from attack and respected as neutral personnel assisting the sick and wounded without discrimination. The convention established the red cross emblem to be used to identify and protect medical personnel from attack. States committed themselves to respect the emblem and those protected by it ("Persons," 2010).

In other words, medical personnel are to be treated as if they are not part of the war.

Furthermore, they are to be allowed to heal and care for the wounded, without being hampered by the conflict's belligerents. Medical personnel are also obligated to care for enemy troops and it is this unique obligation that allows for the neutrality of healers. In Kaminski's work *Prisoners in Paradise: American Women in the Wartime South Pacific* (2000), this neutrality is suggested: Geneva Jenkins always kept in her mind that her patients were civilian and that she was a POW. Jenkins also believed that the Japanese treated the nurses better than other POWs and internees

because of their extra training in nursing (Kaminski, 2000, p. 98). However, the military doctors were interned with the men in military POW camps suggesting that, in the case of the nurses captured in the Philippines, gender played a role in the Japanese view of medical personnel having neutrality, and their decision to intern the military nurses with civilians.

The foundation for this thesis is that male and female POWs have different issues and fears before, during and after captivity, and that primary issue / fear is rape. By analyzing the oral histories of the women who were captured, newspaper articles and various scholarly works, it becomes clearer that rape has not been a weapon of war used against captured American military women in mass. According to Charles Roland (1997), the fate of POWs is determined by many factors to include, timing of the battle, seriousness of the battle and finally the perception of the victor, and that rape may be used as a weapon of war (Roland, 1997, p. 58). In addition to Roland's analysis, Elaine Donnelly, President of the Center for Military Readiness (CMR) claims that "Experts say that the first 3-6 hours are the most perilous for the captives who are at the mercy of enraged thugs who never heard of the Geneva Convention" ("Unresolved," 2003). Donnelly uses carefully chosen language, such as "mercy of enraged thugs" ("Unresolved," 2003) to draw emotional responses from the reader. There are also times when Donnelly uses longer narratives to carve deeper into the emotional psyche, such as the following:

In the bed next to Lynch lies her best friend, Pfc. Piestewa, a Hopi Indian and single mother of two small children, whose ordeal may have been worse because she was conscious. Bandages frame her bruised and bloodied face, and she grimaces in pain when an Iraqi man roughly grabs her hair and twists her head so that the swollen features of her lips and face are more visible to the camera. ("Atrocities," 2004).

It is gendered remarks such as Donnelly's which were posted on the Center for Military Readiness website that are used for the purpose of persuading readers to her specific conservative point of view. As these CMR posts suggest, Donnelly argues, the conservative point of view, to continue the ban on women in combat, thus keeping women out of selected military career paths. However, Donnelly's emotionally charged rhetoric should not be dismissed, because Donnelly has sat on the Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Services in 1991 ("Did Col.," 2002) and Donnelly's testimony is cited by Cynthia Nantias and Martha F. Lee in their work examining POW Spec. Melissa Rathbun-Nealy, entitled *Women in the United States Military : Protector or protected? The case of prisoner of war Melissa Rathun-Nealy* (1999). Furthermore, according to The Center for Military Readiness website

Mrs. Donnelly has published articles on military personnel issues in many newspapers and magazines nationwide, including the Washington Post, USA Today, the Boston Globe, Congressional Quarterly Researcher, U.S. News & World Report, Human Events, National Review Online, the Washington Times, the American Thinker, and the Naval Institute's Proceedings. Mrs. Donnelly has appeared on most network and cable channel networks, and participated in a PBS 2-hour National Review "Firing Line" debate. ("Elaine," n.d.)

Therefore, applying both Donnelly's posts and Roland's theory of timing and perception, one can examine the circumstances that the women have been captured and use those circumstances to evaluate if timing and the victors' perceptions had more impact on the fate of the women than gender did. Donnelly focuses on gender and disregards the surrounding circumstances and the abilities of individual soldiers. The circumstances are varied; some of the women (such as 2LT Reba Whittle and Spec Shoshana Johnson) were captured as the only woman in a group consisting mostly of men or with just one man (such as Spec. Melissa Rathbun-Nealy and Maj.

Rhonda Cornum). Others were captured in a very large group such as the nurses on Corregidor; the Corregidor group had 57. Some surrendered after heated battles and others were recovered from shot down aircraft. The victors have been Japanese, Germans and Iraqis. In the cases of Spec. Johnson, Pvt. Jessica Lynch and Pfc. Lori Piestewa, they were captured by Fedayeen (i.e., para-military Iraqis). The actual capture of the women can be broken down into 10 incidents, and this chapter will provide the historical data for each of the events. I first describe the time and place of each event. This description is followed by a brief outline of the time prior to capture; then the actual capture of the women is discussed. I examined events by using various sources, print media, narratives and scholarly works. At the conclusion of each incident's description, a brief summary uncovers the significance of the event.

Guam: 10 December 1941

Three days into the American participation in the Pacific War and before the murder of medical personnel, the execution of bound, British soldiers and the rape and murder of nurses in Hong Kong, Guam had already fallen, and five American navy nurses were being held captive by the Japanese (Monahan, 2000, p. 22). In their book *All This Hell: U.S. Nurses Imprisoned by the Japanese* (2000), Evelyn M. Monahan and Rosemary Neidel-Greenlee report that 15 minutes after the bombs fell on Pearl Harbor they started to fall on Guam. The bombing continued for two days, and finally on 9 Dec at 330pm, a report was sent stating

Last attack centered at Agana. Civilians machined-gunned in streets. Two Native wards of hospital and hospital compound machine-gunned. Building in which Japanese nationals are confined bombed (Monahan, 2000, p. 22).

On 10 December at 10am, 5000 Japanese troops landed and combat ignited in the streets of Agana, where the naval hospital was located. By dawn the next morning, the nurses saw the Japanese flag raised at the hospital (Monahan, 2000, p. 22). Lt. (jg) Leona Jackson does not expand on the battle for Guam. In her account “I Was on Guam,” she claims “After two days of bombing, the Japanese occupied the island” (Jackson, 1942, p. 1245). Jackson, along with four other nurses, became America’s first female military POWs. Over a month later, in mid January 1942, Americans were well aware that five navy nurses had been captured on Guam; *The Los Angeles Times* reported on 16 January 1942 that “*Domei* said the prisoners included 142 marines, 8 of them officers and 41 non commissioned officers; 159 navy men, 4 of them officers; 5 nurses and a number of civilians” (“Guam,” 1942). These five navy nurses were the first American military women to be captured and held as POWs. Unlike the massacre described by Roland (1997) in Hong Kong less than two weeks later, in which Roland describes the rape and murder of British nurses, there is no mention of any abuse sustained by the five American navy nurses. Furthermore, there is little documentation on the treatment of these navy nurses, which suggests that nothing unexpected happened or that something so horrific happened that it could not be documented and preserved for future generations. Therefore, I will not speculate of events surrounding these nurses.

Near Baguio Philippines 28 December 1941

Furthermore, the attack on United States territories did not end with the attacks on Hawaii and Guam, but includes an attack on the Philippines, a U.S. possession since 1898. Just three weeks into World War II, the next pair of women to be captured was 2LT Beatrice Chambers and 2LT Ruby Bradley. These two nurses were stationed in the highlands at Camp John Hay in Baguio. Bradley could look down at Lingayen Gulf and see the 84 ships and the

Japanese ground troops landing, the two nurses were told to be ready to leave; that day they were fitted with combat boots (Monahan, 2000, p. 26). After about two weeks (Sarnecky, 1999, p. 187), the staff at Baguio decided to join Filipino guerillas in the mountains (Monahan, 2000, p. 26). At first, they traveled by vehicle until that became too cumbersome; then, they traveled by foot on narrow mountain trails. If they slipped they would fall to their death. When it came time to cross rivers and there were many, they had to take cover from Japanese planes (Monahan, 2000, p. 27). The two women were never reported as holding the men up or as anything but professional soldiers. A couple of soldiers sent a donkey back for Bradley and Chambers, but the nurses tied a wounded patient to the donkey and pulled the creature along (Monahan, 2000, p. 27).

It appears even at the moments when male troops tried to be chivalrous, Bradley and Chambers put wounded men before their own wants or needs. Bradley, Chambers and the others did not rendezvous with the guerillas; therefore, having been cut off from reaching the guerillas, the group turned around and headed back to Camp John Hay. The group was captured on the way and taken to Brent School in Baguio (Monahan, 2000, p. 32; Sarnecky, 1999, p. 187). Once captured, Chambers claimed that the Japanese had lined the allied personnel up and the Japanese were preparing to gun down the Americans when a Japanese Major decided he would use them as hostages (Monahan, 2000, p. 33). The last minute decision of the Japanese major to spare the lives of the soldiers who had fled to join the guerillas lends weight to Roland's (1997) argument that the perception of the victor is a key element on whether a POW lives past the first few hours of captivity. It is this Japanese major's random act that places the first two army women into the status of POW. This incident provides evidence that in the case of military women, the Japanese intended to use these women for political reasons and not for sexual pleasure.

Manila Philippines 03 January 1942

Beginning just hours after the bombs hit Pearl Harbor, the Japanese also began to bomb the Manila vicinity. Among the many women stationed around Manila were the 11 American navy nurses stationed at the United States Naval Hospital at Canacao. These women became the next set of military women to be captured when the army abandoned them and left Manila an open city (Norman, 1999, pp. 27-28) by General MacArthur. Stateside newspapers reported the following:

The United States naval base at Cavite was evacuated before the enemy entered Manila' the navy announced, 'All industrial and supply facilities, including fuel were destroyed. The personnel of the Naval Hospital remained at their posts at the Naval Hospital, Canacao to care for the wounded. All ships and naval personnel were removed from the Manila – Cavite area prior to enemy occupation ("US Fights," 1942).

However, in her book, *We Band of Angels: The Untold Story of American Nurses Trapped on Bataan by the Japanese* (1999), Elizabeth Norman claims that this was not the case; the navy nurses were not still at Canacao, they were in Manila proper.

No one can say for sure why the navy nurses were left behind. Perhaps in the haste and jumble of the evacuation they were an oversight, simply forgotten. Or maybe some myopic commander failed to calculate their value in the battle that was to come. Whatever the case, Josie Nesbit knew the navy women were there and years later, a bit abashed, said that these sisters in arms, her professional kin, had been abandoned, 'left' in her words, 'holding the bag'(Norman, 1999, p. 25).

The chief nurse among the navy women was Lt. (jg) Laura Cobb, and she told her nurses that they had no orders to leave the most critically ill and injured patients, so they would stay put in Manila to care for them (Norman, 1999, p. 25).

The next day (03 January 1942), uniformed Japanese officers arrived at Saint Scholastica and accepted the surrender of twenty-seven physicians and dentists, eleven American nurses, a Filipino nurse, a Red Cross director, a Catholic priest and several dozen enlisted men (Norman, 1999, pp. 27-28).

These 11 navy nurses abandoned by the army give weight to one argument in Leisa D. Meyer's article "Creating G.I. Jane" in which she discusses both the images of the American military woman in the public's mind, and also the image the female troop occupied in the army hierarchy's mind.² At least when it came to sexuality, the army wanted to treat male and female troops as equals (Meyer, 1992. p. 586). However, it appears the army expanded this vision of equality when it came time to choose who would retreat and or relocate. Gender does not seem to play a role in military strategy. The navy nurses were viewed as expendable and abandoned when the army and the army nurses were evacuated to Bataan. The "Battlin' Belles of Bataan," were the next group of women to be captured, and they provide further evidence that gender is not the military's concern when military readiness is the topic.

Corregidor Philippines 06 May 1942

This group of nurses, also known as the Battlin' Belles of Bataan, illustrates a good example of the realities of war; once a woman puts on a military uniform, she takes on the role of the protector and leaves the role of the protected. In other words, she becomes gender neutral in the eyes of military planners, because she her sex is no longer paramount; her battle functionality trumps everything.³ In other words, every soldier has a function and that function is the only concern of military planners. Therefore, by summarizing the movement of theses nurses, I hope

² See literature review for explanations on image

³ See literature review for explanations on becoming gender neutral

to provide evidence that when it comes to the military's needs, chivalry takes a backseat and the importance once placed on gender becomes blurred if not irrelevant, leaving the needs of the military as paramount.

Before Manila was declared an open city, the army nurses were evacuated to Bataan along with one navy nurse, Lt (jg) Ann Bernatitus. These women would be part of the Battle for Bataan and the evacuation to Corregidor. The army nurses were assigned to several different locations in the Philippines. The largest contingencies of female troops were concentrated in the Manila area; 13 were stationed at Ft. Mills, Corregidor; 23 were stationed at Sternberg and later in December, when the bombs began falling, these nurses were evacuated to Ft. Mills. The remaining army nurses were instructed to retreat to Bataan and set up two separate jungle hospitals. Hospital No. 1 Started with 25 nurses on 24 December, and a day or two later, another seven would join them. Stationed at Hospital No. 1 were the Jenkins sisters both second lieutenants, Geneva and Ressa, from Sevierville, Tennessee. Another notable nurse was LT. (jg) Ann Bernatitus, the only navy nurse evacuated from Manila. During this same time, 21 additional nurses set up Hospital No. 2. On 31 December 1941 2LT Floramund Fellmeth escorted badly wounded men on board the *Mactan* to Australia; she was the first nurse to escape (Monahan, 2000, pp. 181- 186). Meanwhile, the army women and one navy nurse began combat operations during the entire Battle of Bataan from late December until the surrender of troops on 09 April 1942. All of the women were chosen to retreat to Corregidor, not because they were women, but because they were nurses and the battle for Corregidor would need them (Monahan, 2000, pp. 53, 61). The nurses' skills trumped their gender.

As evidence that American women were not a priority for evacuation, Ethyle Mae Mercado, a civilian mother with children, was not evacuated (Norman, 1999, p. 95). In waves,

the nurses made the perilous journey across the shark infested bay while being strafed by Japanese aircraft (Monahan, 2000, p. 64). The retreat to Corregidor was pure chaos; the nurses made the crossing as they found space on boats or makeshift rafts. Munitions were being blown by American troops, so that they would not fall into Japanese hands. The Japanese were shelling the beach with heavy artillery and strafing the straights and beach from the air. If this was not enough, during the exodus, the area was hit by an earthquake. It should be noted that several nurses illegally made the crossings after the official surrender (Monahan, 2000, p. 64). Had the nurses not made the crossing illegally and stayed on Bataan after the official surrender, they would have been subject to the Bataan Death March. However, depending on the perception of the victor, the nurses could have been sent to Santo Tomas Internment Camp (STIC).

By the afternoon of 09 April 1942, the remaining 98 army nurses and one navy nurse were positioned on Corregidor for the final stance against the more powerful and better supplied Japanese. The American and Filipino troops and civilians would hold out on Corregidor until 06 May 1942 when they finally surrendered. However, all of the women were not captured; several were evacuated. While the number of women was disproportionate, the evacuation of the women was not a priority; the priority as shown in the following descriptions was the evacuation of key military leaders; nurses and civilians were secondary. On 29 April, 1942, two Navy PBYs took off from Corregidor headed to Mindanao and on to Australia. On PBY #1 was one brigadier general, one navy commander, two additional navy officers, three civilian women, 10 army nurses, three army officers, two Filipino officers and an unspecified number of additional passengers who are unidentified (Monahan, 2000, pp. 186-187). However, PBY#1 never made it to Australia; PBY #1 wrecked at Lake Lanao on 30 April 1942 and the passengers evaded capture until 10 May 1942 (Palmer, n.d.). PBY #7 (which was the other plane) evacuated two

United States army officers and one Philippine army officer just as far as Mindanao at which point they picked up four additional naval officers to take to Australia. The other passengers on the PBV included two naval commanders, two naval officers, three civilian women, four army officers, nine army nurses, one Catholic priest and one unidentified army soldier (Monahan, 2000, pp. 187-188).

It should be noted that the Jenkins sisters where both evacuated and put on separate PBVs, because, here is a case like the Sullivan Brothers where a family may lose siblings in the same battle.⁴ Ressa made it to Australia and Geneva surrendered on Mindanao. The final group of people to escape Corregidor left on the submarine *Spearfish*, on 03 May 1942 (Monahan, 2000, p. 188). The *Spearfish* evacuated six army colonels, 11 army nurses. Three naval commanders, three additional naval officers, LT (jg) Ann Bernatitus, one civilian woman, a navy stowaway and a civilian man named Chester Judah, who was a second stowaway (Monahan, 2000, pp.188-189). The remaining women on Corregidor became the next set of women to be captured, and they are the largest group to date. A total of 57 military women were captured on 06 May 1942 when the U.S. Army decided to surrender the troops on Corregidor.

When discussing the newly surrendered troops on Corregidor as far as the Japanese were concerned, war was a test of manhood, and these women had no business here. The sight of women in uniform puzzled and confused the Japanese as they walked by the nurses who stood silently in fear (Norman, 1999, p. 133). 2LT Madeline Ullom felt that the Japanese were truly amazed to find women on Corregidor; this was just simply not part of their plan (Kaminski, 2000, p. 95). Therefore, these nurses had much to fear, since Japanese troops had a well

⁴ WWII history provides several examples of male siblings fighting in the same battle. The Jenkins sisters are an example of women sharing a similar experience.

documented taste for brutality; the reports of Nanking were well known among all the remaining Americans and Filipinos in Malinta Tunnel and outside on the topside of Corregidor (Monahan, 2000, pp. 59, 86; Norman, 1999, p. 131; Williams, 1985, p. 97). 2LT Edith Shacklette grasped that the Japanese did not have nurses like the American military did (Kaminski, 2000, p. 95). Shacklette actually believed that the Japanese thought these women were here for other reasons (Kaminski, 2000, p. 95).

2LT Sallie Durrett offers evidence that the Japanese thought the nurses were there for other reason by stating that the Japanese laughed when they walked by the nurse's lateral and read the sign "NURSES OF THE US ARMY" (Norman, 1999, p. 135). Therefore, there was no ideal image that the nurses could hold in the minds of the Japanese. Instead of manly (dyke) or camp follower (whore) as the American public saw them (Meyer, 1992, p. 581), the nurses were seen by the Japanese as whores or cowards.⁵ Neither of these views was true; these women were soldiers. Furthermore, 2LT Madeline Ullom and the other nurses knew that the Japanese did not treat soldiers who surrendered well (Kaminski, 2000, p. 95). The experience of these 57 nurses is unique because after months in combat, and after being ordered to retreat as far as possible, these 57 nurses were surrendered along with the male troops. However, for the women it means their bodies were also surrendered.⁶

Mindanao Philippines 10 May 1942

The final group of women captured by the Japanese was on the ill fated PBY that was damaged after hitting a rock while trying to take off from a lake on Mindanao. The narratives

⁵ If the Japanese viewed the nurses as civilians, they would be equated with comfort women. If they were viewed the nurses as soldiers, they were cowards for surrendering.

⁶ This is the focus of Chapters Two and Three.

describing the ordeal these women endured between 30 April and 10 May are scarce. However, 2LT Rita Palmer left an artifact chronicling the days (Palmer, n.d.). According to Palmer, the group took a bus to a hospital in northern Mindanao and surrendered seven days later (Palmer, n.d.). 2LTs Hogan, Palmer and Geneva Jenkins were among the 15 passengers, who evaded the Japanese for almost two weeks, and then on 11 May 1942 they were captured.⁷ Hogan remained as a prisoner in Davao until 9 September 1942, when she and the other women were transferred to STIC; the men had been transferred to a POW camp in Luzon upon capture (Wise, 2006, p. 171). The passengers on PBY1 spent one night at Cagayan, then the group was held in a hospital for three months and later moved to Davao for a month and finally to STIC (Kaminski, 2000, p. 97) in the hull of a vermin infested freighter (Monahan, 2000, pp. 107-08). This group, unlike the other women, was a group that was evacuated, which indicates that Davison thought these women to be more vulnerable. While Norman (1999) claims that there was no rhyme or reason to selection of nurses to be evacuated. This random selection seems suspect, and further analysis suggests that the wounded, the very ill, those who broke military regulations and married on Bataan, and finally the women at the fringes of age, both the oldest and the youngest took priority for evacuation. For various reasons, Davison, the head nurse felt that these women were the least likely to survive captivity.

Aachen Germany 27 September 1944

2LT Reba Z. Whittle was the only woman taken prisoner during WWII who was fortunate enough to be taken by signatories of the Geneva Conventions. Whittle also had a different experience when it came to battle. Whittle was stationed in England and flew into the battlefield to retrieve wounded soldiers and then flew back to the relative safety of England. In

⁷ Date discrepancy noted between Wise and Palmer

her diary as reported by LTC Mary E.V. Frank. in *The Forgotten POW: Second Lieutenant Reba Z. Whittle*, AN (1990) the following appears:

(I) was sleeping soundly in the back of our hospital plane until suddenly awakened by terrific sounds of guns and cracklings of the plane as if it had gone into bits ... Suddenly looked at my Surgical Tech opposite me with blood flowing from his left leg ... But to see the left engine blazing away – is simply more than I can express ... (Frank, 1990, p. 10)

Whittle is one of five of six crew members to have survived the crash. After crawling from the burning wreckage, Whittle and the others spotted what they believed to be British soldiers; they were in fact German soldiers. Whittle and the four men became POWs (Frank, 1990, p. 11).

Whittle's experience is unique in that she is the only woman held as a POW during WWII, who is treated as military and is held by a signatory of the Geneva Conventions. This recognition afforded her a different experience than the women in the Pacific Theater. At least at one point during her captivity Whittle was provided with an overcoat for warmth (Frank, 1990, p. 15), and according to Whittle "My room was very comfortable with a large down comforter, curtains and spotless..." (Frank, 1990, p. 20). This experience is very different than the one had by the women held by the Japanese.

The Interim Years 1946 – 1991

Between WWII and the next war in which female military personnel were taken captive, many changes took place. Some of the changes included the arming of women; after Vietnam, in June 1975, weapons training became mandatory for women ("A New Era", n.d.). The arming of women allowed the opening of most Military Occupational Specialties (MOS) to women. One of these occupations was military police (MP) in which women would be expected to have physical

confrontations with men. The military action in Panama against Noriega was the first time women MPs were used for combat operations and against foreign military (Wise, 2006, p. 1). Once women became armed and worked outside of medical or healing professions, the Geneva Conventions no longer considered them to be non-combatants ("Persons," 2010). Losing the label non-combatant left the women labeled as combatants; however, women were then and still are denied anything more than basic combat training. Only being provided basic combat training puts all military women and many men in support fields at a significant disadvantage when their positions are overrun. Nonetheless, during this same time that the United States was putting more women in harm's way, the collective memory of the existence of American women held as POWs, during WWII had faded from history. However, the narratives that these women provided can shape the experiences of future women who are captured and held as POWs, by detailing "all the terrible, and terribly true, stories" (Norman, 1999, p. 227), and reading the firsthand accounts of what really happened.

Kuwait Near the Border with Saudi Arabia 30 January 1991

The first Gulf War brought the American public a new type of war. This was a war fought by American troops who had volunteered to be soldiers, and a war in which women were taking an active role as aggressors. This was also a war in which the first enlisted woman was captured. Not only was she an enlisted woman, she was armed and driving a truck into enemy territory; seeing the Persian Gulf from the truck she was driving, Spec. Melissa Rathbun-Nealy tried to convince the men she was convoying with that they had made a wrong turn. The three men she was traveling with discounted her argument because this was her first mission (Nantais, 1999, p.185). Finding themselves in the midst of a raging battle, one of the trucks was able to escape. However, the truck driven by Rathbun-Nealy was stuck in the sand. Rathbun-Nealy and

the other soldier, David Lockett were captured. Lockett was wounded, and the Iraqis wanted to leave him behind; however, Rathbun-Nealy refused to leave without him (“bio, Rathbun-Nealy,” n.d.). Rathbun-Nealy was the first enlisted woman to be captured and the first woman who was not in the medical field. She was also the first woman carrying a weapon to be captured; therefore, Rathbun-Nealy could be considered a combatant. Rathbun-Nealy was the first woman to be captured who was armed and a potential killer of the troops who had captured her. She was not a healer. This armed status must have had an effect on the Iraqi troops who captured her, and this image of an armed soldier places Rathbun-Nealy, a woman, for the first time in the same category as a male aggressor.

Behind Enemy Lines 27 February 1991

Like Whittle in 1944, Maj. Rhonda Cornum was a member of a flight crew that was shot down behind enemy lines. As a member of a flight crew, Cornum could expect to fly into the danger zone, retrieve the wounded and fly back to a safe zone. However, unlike Whittle, Cornum was armed; she had made the decision to carry a fire arm (Cornum, 1992, p. 66); “I figured that if I was going on these kinds of missions, I had given up my protected status as a doctor” (Cornum, 1992, p. 47). However, the Geneva Conventions allow medical personnel to carry fire arms for their personal protection or to protect their patients (“Rule 25,” 2010). Being armed was not the only thing Cornum had to worry about. While recovering from the crash, Cornum was aware that she did not have the use of her arms, but she was able to free herself from the wreckage (Cornum, 1992, pp. 10-11). While attempting to free herself from the wreckage, Cornum found that she was surrounded by Iraqi Republican Guards and that she was their prisoner (Cornum, 1992, pp. 11-12). The case of Cornum will be further analyzed in using the

lens of the protector / protected relationships in the next chapter.⁸ This analysis will focus on her relationship with SGT Troy Dunlap; Dunlap took care of and stayed by the side of the wounded Cornum.

An Nasiriyah, Iraq 23 March 2003

The details concerning the Battle of An Nasiriyah may be the most controversial in this paper. This controversy remains for many reasons: The accounts of the captured women have been inconsistent; a maintenance / support unit was waved by marines into a hostile area (Johnson, 2010, p. 140); most of the troops had weapon malfunctions (Johnson, 2010, p.162) and finally, the fabricated tales told about the PFC Jessica Lynch's participation in the battle (NYT 4 Apr 2003) may have undermined any heroic action by the troops of the 507th Maintenance BN. Therefore, until more soldiers break their silence, the only accounts used in this paper for this battle will be from participants who have written books or book are written about, namely Lynch (2003), Edgar Hernandez (2008), Johnson (2010) and al-Rehaief (2003).

While al-Rahaief is not an American soldier in the battle, he has the unique perspective of being an Iraqi civilian who risked his life to save an American POW. Shoshana Johnson recalls "The thought of surrendering petrified me. Interrogations, beatings, torture, rape – all that flashed through my head" (Johnson, 2010, p. 5). Once Johnson was pulled from under the truck she and Hernandez had been using as cover, the mob began to beat them as well as other captured Americans. "The Americans were courageous. When beaten, they made no sound" (al-Rehaief, 2003, p. 12).

⁸ See literature review for further references on the protected / protector relationship

One of the few details that has been consistently reported is that the vehicle driven by Lori Piestewa and carrying Jessica Lynch as a passenger rammed into the back of Johnson and the Hernandez vehicle. Johnson and Hernandez believed that Piestewa could not have survived the crash. “Piestewa’s original status was updated only after she was shown alive and unconscious in an Iraqi TV shoot which did not air before the fall of Baghdad” (“Piestewa,” n.d.). “Abjabar claims another woman, she was fair skinned (Lynch), they did not shoot her. They took her from the backseat of the truck to the ground. They were stomping her with their rifles. Then they took her away” (al-Rehaief, 2003, p. 26). The last three women were not taken together. Lynch and Piestewa and possibly some male soldiers who were later killed were taken separate from Johnson and the men who survived.

Johnson and Piestewa were the first women of color to be captured; furthermore, Johnson spent almost a month as a POW, yet it is the name of the white woman Jessica Lynch that Americans remember. Lynch was held as a POW for approximately one third of the time as Johnson. Yet, the media latched onto the “American looking,” as described by Davis (1983), soldier. The beaten face of Lynch took priority over the beaten face of the dead Piestewa, the first American female military POW to die in captivity. Finally, in America’s eyes, Lynch became the short lived heroine, while Johnson and Piestewa were relegated to filler storylines.

The American media provided concrete evidence that race still plays a part in who is an American, and who can be an American Hero. The American media chose to create a heroine out of a white woman (Lynch) who never fired a shot, and was critically injured in a vehicle accident, while the Native American woman (Piestewa), wounded in the same vehicle accident, is given less attention. This same media chose to ignore a black woman (Johnson) who was in the thick of combat, fired her weapon until it jammed and finally was surrendered by her

superior. The media chose to cover Lynch and discount Johnson and Piastewa, even though the latter two women were bigger stories; the first American female military POW to die in captivity (Piastewa) and the woman (Johnson) held POW the longest in this war. The media could have evenly covered the stories of all three, however, that would then mean the POW has a different face and body than the vulnerable white woman⁹.

Conclusion

After reviewing the circumstances in which the women have become POWs, it becomes apparent that each of the incidents was different. Some women were abandoned by the military and left in an “open city,” while others fought for their lives in heated urban battles. That being said, the best indicator of whether a person becomes a POW would be the perception of the victor. In the next chapter, I discuss how the assumption of rape becomes a powerful part of the discourse surrounding American female military POWs.

⁹ See literature review for references on the vulnerable white woman

Chapter Two

The Vulnerable White Woman: The Media's Instilled Image of Rape and Fear.

“...which is one of the things one learns about war; tragedy and humor, the things you want to forget and the things you hope you’ll remember, are all inextricably mixed up together.” Lt. Juanita Redmond (Redmond, 1943, p.62)

“...ever think about what happens when you’re captured Lieutenant?”
“Oh yeah just like the men do” (GI Jane) ¹⁰

¹⁰ This scene is followed by Demi Moore’s Character being sodomized in front of male POWs during a training exercise. She is sodomized to break the men.

Introduction

In order to understand how the fear of rape is reproduced in the minds of the American public, it is necessary to examine the various agents of socialization that have bombarded society since the creation of the WAC, and how these agents carry the rape narrative into the American social conscious making the fear of rape a standard that helps define gender roles. Furthermore, it is this standard as stated in the literature review that is constructed and reproduced by the family, peers, media and other organizations such as schools, churches and clubs. Of these agents, this thesis focuses on the media, primarily motion pictures, and examines how the bombardment of imagery trumps the narratives of the women who actually lived the experiences. Not only does this imagery trump the actual experiences of the women, but it creates an artificial standard that dictates the future narratives. Furthermore, it becomes this trumping imagery and rape narrative that silences the women's stories of heroism and sacrifice by creating an artificial drama that the real life experiences of the American military female prisoners of war cannot compete with. Therefore, this chapter will explore how various forms of popular media reproduced the rape narrative, sometimes subtly and at times overtly. This chapter begins with the newspapers and other print media which retell the horrors the enemy troops have committed against women. It is this step that plants the specific seeds in the minds of the public that the enemy we are at war with is less than human or something evil. This step allows for our nation to commit itself to an all out war, which may or may not call for sacrifice on the home front. In several instances, women wrote timely narratives that told of first hand experiences. However, since these narratives could be considered a direct challenge to the patriarchy, they were discounted by an American society unwilling to challenge the status quo. Hollywood helped. The next section explores how the women's narratives became distorted and disseminated to the

mass public in the form of entertainment. While the narratives had been told in the form of news and real life experiences, it is the exciting larger-than-life fictional accounts created by Hollywood that shaped policy, practices and laws. Hollywood used the women's narratives as inspirational material to build storylines far more dramatic than what the women told. In other words, Hollywood creates a reality specifically for the big screen placing fictitious American women as the victims of unspeakable crimes. Finally, as a conclusion, this chapter explores how these fictitious and unspeakable crimes were overlaid onto the bodies of real women and the consequences of these creations.

Creating the Enemy

Newspapers and other mass print media are often used to shape the images the American people will have of their future enemies. Mass media is used to shape the image so that the American people will be more apt to back military use against the created enemy. Therefore, this section will build upon the works of Davis's "Rape, Racism and the Myth of the Black Rapist" (1983) and Meyer's "Creating G.I. Jane" (1992) and examine the media's use of mass print to demonize the enemy. In other words, this chapter will provide a link between domestic racism and how the fears of the domestic Other can be used to construct a fear of a racialized foreign enemy, and how the military has solidified those fears in its female troops. Therefore, this section will only examine the images of the Japanese and the Iraqis, and how they are demonized before the actual American engagement with them, and how the Japanese and Iraqis are portrayed during the wars. The Germans will be excluded because of the unique experience of Whittle, which appears to be statistically an outlier. Furthermore, the Germans will be excluded because Whittle is the sole American military female POW held by the Germans. This status of being the only one with this experience makes it difficult to cross reference similar experiences,

considering there are none. The Germans are also excluded because the referenced narratives used for this thesis that discuss Whittle are void of the rape topic. This void provides further evidence that the rape narrative requires a racialized Other. Nonetheless, the vilification of the Japanese was not difficult considering the attack on Pearl Harbor and the well documented Rape of Nanking. An example of how the Japanese are constructed appears in the *Los Angeles Times* on 09 December 1941. The article is entitled “Woman From Asia Describes Ability of Japanese Soldier” and in the article Agnes Smedley, an American newspaper woman, claims that “The step by step principle was not invented by the Germans but by the Japanese. The Nazis take prisoners. The Japanese do not. They engage in slaughter, loot, and rape, and they see nothing wrong with this” (*Woman*, 1941, p 19). Further in the article, Medley claims that the Japanese are “purely mechanical” and “obey mechanically.” By using the term mechanical to describe the Japanese, Smedley is able to create the image of a not fully human enemy, one made of cold steel and it is possible that the very cold steel the United States traded to Japan is returning to harm American troops. Therefore, this article lays a foundation that any trade with a racialized Other will harm us in the future.

To further describe the Japanese as less than human, three weeks later in the *Los Angeles Times* an article entitled “Japs Use Nazi Terrorism: Captured Americans Forced to be Running Targets for Enemies,” this article reinforced for the reader that the Japanese are cruel and that the Japanese have no intention of honoring human rights. The article claimed that American soldiers were stripped naked and used as target practice. As the article continued to describe the Japanese, the author Franz Weisblatt stated that “Evacuees from the town of Tuguegarao, in the northern Province of Cagayan, told me that ‘forced labor, rape and execution’ is the story of Japanese conquest” (Weisblatt, 1941, p. 1). From the *New York Times*, headlines alone paint a

picture of a less than humane enemy, “Japanese Curbing Nanking Excesses: Stern Measures Used by High Command to End Atrocities, Which are Still Going On” (Abend, 1937, p. 37), “All Captives Slain: Civilians Also Killed as the Japanese Spread Terror in Nanking” (Durdin, 1937, p. 1) and “Hong Kong Priest Heard Massacre: Maryknoll Missionaries, on Way Home, Tell of Slaughter of Britons and Canadians” (Hong, 1942, p. 5). The headlines alone paint a picture of an enemy army that is out of control. Once the articles are analyzed, the reader finds that the enemy is described as out of control because they cannot control their sexual appetites nor do they honor the rules of war. It is this trait of lacking control and the historical American racial views of Asians that help create a Japanese enemy. Two of the key elements are a lack of control, especially of a sexual nature and the subhuman racialization of the enemy. These two elements, no control and non-white, are then laid over the bodies of women, both white and non white, to further construct a hypersexual non white male who will commit unspeakable crimes against women and white women in particular.

This social construction of the enemy was not isolated to the Japanese soldier; fifty years later, the Iraqis, the other group of soldiers to have captured American military women were also constructed as lacking sexual control and possessing a total lack of respect for women. As evidence to a lack of control the *Los Angeles Times* provided firm examples with headlines reading “Flight Attendants Raped by Iraqis, Witness Reports” (Flight, 1990) and “Witnesses Tell of Iraqi Atrocities in Kuwait: Congress: Members are shaken by what they hear. Kuwait’s ambassador warns that ‘time is running out’” (Christian, 1990). Therefore, the public only has to remember the Rape of Kuwait and the images of how Moslem women are treated. It does not matter that the *Los Angeles Times* two days later recanted the story with “Flight Attendants Deny Reported Iraqi Rape” (Flight Attendants, 1990). The image had been created and that image will

not be erased. Add these headlines to the images of incidents that include forced veiling, stoning, arranged marriages, honor killings, cloistering and clitoridectomy, and a demonized monolithic Islamic enemy was constructed. Each of these incidents is painted as a Moslem practice and not as a practice of people who happen to be Moslem. By framing the enemy as Moslem, Bush was able to move a war to a second front, from Afghanistan to Iraq by painting Moslems as the enemy. Moslems became a monolithic entity with one set of values. Those Moslem values have a centuries old negative relationship with Christianity. Therefore, once again American women were captured by an enemy who had a total lack of respect not only for her, but for human life and for the very heart or spiritual make up of the American people. Furthermore, this enemy used *Kamikaze* style tactics, also used by the last nation to attack us, Japan, which provided evidence that the enemy, believing martyrdom gave entrance to Paradise, was fundamentally different, while Christian beliefs are virtually solidly unified against taking one's own life. It is this difference that made the enemy less than human. As further evidence that the enemy was less than human, according to Jessica Lynch's parents, as reported by *The New York Times*, "She said she was not afraid of the dangers of war but more upset about the notion that young children in Iraq might be used as decoys in a war. She had gotten a briefing where they said not to stop for children..." (Yardley, 2003, p. A1). Therefore, the press has created a *new and improved enemy*,¹¹ and the press has constructed an enemy who does not even have compassion for their own children. It is by this enemy that five more women were held; they were Rathbun-Nealy, Cornum, Lynch, Piastewa and Johnson. It is while being held by this enemy that the United States lost its first female military POW, Piastewa. Against the second enemy, Iraq, the American military female POW had several other firsts: it was the first time

¹¹ New and improved enemies are required to gain public approval for increased budget expenditures for military purposes.

captured women were not nurses, these women were in a variety of positions; 80% were not officers, 40% were women of color, 80% were not in the medical field and 100% were armed and trained to use their weapons. It is the fact that they were armed and trained that makes these five women very different from the nurses in WWII, at the time of capture. According to Roland (1997) one of the factors that determine a POW's fate is the perception of the enemy. In the case of these five women, there was no ambiguity concerning the purpose they serve in the military. The Japanese may have thought that the American military nurses were there for other reasons (Norman 1999); however, it is hard to imagine the Iraqis having the same thoughts when they found the captive female soldier armed. It was under these circumstances as described by Cornum (1992) and Johnson (2010) that armed women are captured. However, the later narratives illustrated the similarities and the differences as described by Redmond (1943), and the other women captured during WWII. Once these female soldiers have told their stories and the patriarchy feels threatened, Hollywood comes to the rescue, not of the women, but of the patriarchy, in order to maintain the social order and status quo.

Hollywood Exaggerates and Creates the Impossible Roles

There are four distinctly different films from WWII that depict the nurses in the Philippines. Two are acknowledged as having nurses portrayed: *Corregidor* (1943) and *They Were Expendable* (1945) and two will be analyzed for content: *So Proudly We Hail* (1944) and *Cry Havoc* (1943). All of these films handle the topic of the nurses in very different manners, yet each of the films project the ideas of gender norms into the viewer's minds. These films also project into the minds of the viewers that the Japanese are very different than us; the Japanese do not abide by the rules of war and consider hospitals fair game for bombing. Not only do the Japanese bomb the hospital but they machine gun the open wards. The bombing of the hospital

is a common theme in all the films. By using the hospitals as key targets in the films and in real life, the Japanese have forced the women, the healers, into combat situations; the Japanese have also broken a rule of war and by breaking this rule it leaves the Americans questioning “how far will the Japanese go to secure a victory.”

While this thesis focuses on the topic of POWs and the power of the rape narrative, *Corregidor* and *Cry Havoc*, which portray some of the very women who will endure the longest captivity of American women, fail to mention the POW nurses being held while showing in theaters. It is possible that to mention the nurses as POWs would be a reminder to the American public that there was a horrific loss in the Philippines and as the films remind us “We had become arrogant.” It is also possible that the capture of female soldiers would have had a psychological effect on future recruits. Women would fear capture and rape, while men would fear an inability to protect American women. Nevertheless, this failure to mention and portray the women as soldiers becomes a source of anger directed at Lt Eunice Hatchitt (Norman 1999). Hatchitt is evacuated on PBY#7 and later becomes a consultant for the film *So Proudly We Hail*. According to Norman (1999), Hatchitt is angered by the storylines in *So Proudly We Hail*, but is ordered to continue working with the studios. Hatchitt is given credit at the beginning of the film, and as the story begins to unfold, the audience is advised that several nurses were “delivered from the holocaust” and that this film is “based on the records of the US Army Nursing Corps.” By recognizing that the US Army Nursing Corps was officially attached to the film *So Proudly We Hail*, Hollywood had announced that this film more than any other was as close to real life as possible.

After WWII, Hollywood continued to give female characters small parts in war films such as *M*A*S*H* (1970) and with the activation of the all volunteer army, Hollywood provided

the audience with *Private Benjamin* (1980). *Private Benjamin* allowed the viewing audience a light humored introduction to women in the modern all volunteer army. Furthermore *Private Benjamin* provides value as a film for analysis of the peace time military and as a film that emphasizes the importance of gender roles and expectations. The film's opening scenes depict Benjamin at her wedding; weddings are often used to confirm heterosexuality. To reinforce Benjamin's heterosexuality there are numerous sex and love scenes. Besides the question of sexual orientation, *Private Benjamin* light heartedly addresses several other issues that military women face. During a scene that depicts war games, a captured female is caught having sex with her captor. Adding this scene to the film reinforces the image of the female POW as a sexual object or a dehumanized piece of loot for the enemy. In another scene, Benjamin is harassed and avoids rape. Benjamin is later shown using the incident to blackmail her way into a better assignment. By creating this storyline, Hollywood reinforces the stereotype that women are only in military positions of prestige because they are handed those positions and that women are not awarded the position based on competency. This theme of women gaining position because of blackmail is the basis for the opening scenes of *G. I. Jane* (1997). However, in the end of *Private Benjamin*, once Benjamin has given up her military career for a man, the viewer is allowed to see a stronger Benjamin punch her would be husband for infidelity. *Private Benjamin*, one of the only films about women in the military, did nothing for the advancement of the image of female soldiers. *Private Benjamin* reinforces long established gender norms and doomed the image of the American female soldier until Hollywood opted to take a serious stance on women as protectors of the nation.

In the 1990's, Hollywood began to produce more realistic films and the portrayal of violent wartime acts becomes less shocking to the American viewers,¹² Hollywood began to include military women as focal points, with such films as *Courage Under Fire* (1996) and *G. I. Jane*. *Courage Under Fire* provides the viewing audience with several key challenges to gender norms and expectations. One of the unstated challenges is that LTC Serling (a male) has cost American men their lives while in combat (a friendly fire episode) while CPT Walden (a female) has saved American men their lives and sacrificed her own. From the film *G. I. Jane*, once the sailors are tested in combat it is predictably O'Neill, who saves the wounded sailor, the very sailor who was once her tormentor. This juxtaposition challenges the social norms provided by the work of Stiehm, and her work concerning the protected / protector dichotomy. Therefore, the next sections of this chapter will further breakdown gender specific elements depicted in the analyzed films.

Heteronormativity

Not only are the images of gender norms projected into the minds of the viewers, but the core values of heteronormativity that Oveta Culp Hobby¹³ desired were also projected into the minds of the viewers (Meyer 1992). This heteronormativity is portrayed in two manners. Romances, at times love triangles, flirtatious nurses and finally the star and her *traditional* one on one love affair which ends in marriage. Marriage is the ultimate outcome for *good* women (Welter, 1966), even if it is against military regulations for the women. Once a woman has become too old to be seen as romance material, the best way to guarantee her heterosexuality is by making her a mother. In *Cry Havoc*, other gender norms are re-established from Nydia's

¹² Such films as *Full Metal Jacket* (1987) and *Saving Private Ryan* (1998)

¹³ First commanding officer of the WAC

claim that where she comes from “women ain’t allowed to do a thing” to the unidentified marine who claims “nobody in the Marine’s lips;” lisping is alluded to as a sign of femininity or homosexuality. Women and homosexuals are both categorized, according to Steihm (1982) as part of the protected. Nevertheless, femininity and the need to keep the gender roles intact do not escape *So Proudly We Hail*; in an early scene the audience is shown one of the nurses trying to fit back into a 6A high heel after months in combat boots. Once she accomplishes this task, she declares “high heels, the things we do to trap men,” it is with this statement that she reasserts her heterosexuality, just as Hobby demanded. The heels are not the only piece of clothing used to reassure the audience that these nurses are exactly as Hobby and others are telling you. Joan, one of the nurses, has a black negligee. This nightgown will play a small but important role in the destruction of another nurse, Olivia. Olivia dies because Joan ran back for the nightgown allowing the Japanese to kill the men escorting the nurses. But it is the hat, received by Rosemary, that represents home. An Easter bonnet in the middle of war gave the troops, both male and female a sense of hope that someday things could be normal again. However, it is one scene that represents gender norms that angered the real life nurses, causing them to shun Hatchitt for decades (Norman, 1999). In one scene, when the frontline breaks, Davidson begs for the women to be evacuated. This could not be further from the truth as many of the nurses refused initial orders to evacuate and had to be reordered to leave. Furthermore, many of the nurses suffered until death from survivor’s guilt for leaving the men. Minnie Breese recalls that “those eyes just followed us” (as cited in Norman, 1999, p. 87; Monahan, 2000, p. 65). However, it is Frankie Lewey who summed up the nurses’ feelings. Lewey told a patient from Bataan, who survived the Bataan Death March, upon a meeting in San Francisco that she was a “fine angel” leaving him behind on Bataan in a body cast (Norman, 1999). This small exchange

between Lewey and her fellow soldier provides an example of different gender expectations. The male soldier elevated Lewey to “angel,” while Lewey does not hold herself at the same elevated level. Lewey expected more of herself.

Approximately 50 years later the roles of women have changed some; however, the attitudes have not. In *Courage Under Fire*, Serling states “it’s a woman” when he finally opens the file on the officer he is investigating for the Medal of Honor. It is this simple line that sets the tone for the entire film, the sex of Cpt. Walden becomes the topic. The role of Walden’s sex and gender expectations is played out in a series of interviews. It is gender expectations that are questioned in the first investigative interview conducted by Serling. The co-pilot of the helicopter that was shot down defends Walden. During this defense, there is a quick exchange between the copilot, the copilot’s civilian wife and Serling about Walden being “butch.” The men share a smile confirming that both thought Walden was “butch.” The problem with this scene is that Serling’s character has never met Walden nor does he have any information except the accounts of men rescued because of her actions. Serling’s acceptance of Walden being “butch” provides evidence that the perception of military women as described by Meyer (1992) and Williams (2005) remains valid. The film *G. I. Jane* also provides scenes that guarantee the audience that the heroine is heterosexual, but also allows for the question, *why would a woman disregard social gender norms?* From the bathtub scene and the point blank questioning of a senator, the audience knows that O’Neill is heterosexual. Therefore, any questioning of O’Neill’s sexual orientation is an obvious tool used to discredit her merit. Besides her merit, one of the other characteristics that made O’Neill the choice for SEAL training was her looks; she did not look butch. Once again, the feminine standard created by Hobby was utilized (Meyer 1992).

Romance

Another of the means that is used to assure the audience that the women who are serving overseas are heterosexual is the love triangle. The love triangle is utilized by both *Corregidor* and *Cry Havoc*. However, when the love triangle is not used, the films also use the flirtatious nurse. The flirtatious nurse is used in both *So Proudly We Hail* and *Cry Havoc*. The Love triangle will be discussed first since it appears on the big screen in *Cry Havoc*; the love triangle is between Lt Smith and Pat, a civilian, as they both vie for the eye of Lt. Holt, a man who appears in the far distance once in the film and his voice is heard from the other side of a wall. The character of Lt Smith is interesting, because of the dualisms portrayed on the screen; the character is both feminine and masculine. Lt. Smith is possibly based on the life of the real life nurse Denny Williams. Both were civilian women who joined or rejoined the military after Pearl Harbor and were married. Marriage was against army regulations if the soldier was a woman. However, since it was war, the regulations were overlooked based on the needs of the military (Williams, 1985), and a nation in “utmost desperation” (Solaro, 2006, p.8). Strangely enough, *Cry Havoc* used a secret marriage as part of the storyline, when in reality it was not necessary. One other interesting similarity is that both women ended up as widows; however, the writers of *Cry Havoc* had no way to know this would happen. *So Proudly We Hail* also uses the flirtatious nurse, a love triangle and a traditional romance to entertain the audience and it is these storylines that infuriated the real life nurses from Bataan (Norman 1999). The three characters played by Colbert (Janet Davidson), Goddard (Joan O’Doul) and Lake (Olivia D’Arcy) all have romance storylines, Olivia’s fiancé is killed during the attack on Pearl Harbor in a strafing raid that riddled his body with 60 bullets. This is the reason Olivia has become part of the convoy to head to the Philippines; she is after revenge as discussed later in this chapter. Joan is the flirtatious nurse who just can’t say no to a proposal. She is engaged to at least two men and is courting

Kansas (Sonny Tuft) at the same time. However, she teases Kansas with “officers are not allowed to fraternize with enlisted men.” Finally, it is the relationship between Davidson and Lt John Summers that creates a major storyline, one in which Davidson will marry and disobey orders, fully understanding that she will be dishonorably discharged from the army. Again, according to Norman (1999), it is this love affair between Davidson and Sommers that takes place in a foxhole that creates the most anger with the real life nurses. The nurses felt that romantic scenes discounted the actual horrors of war; the blood and guts, the starvation, the disease, the real sacrifices made by every woman on Bataan. Fifty some years later, *G.I. Jane* also uses a romance to guarantee to the audience that the female troop is heterosexual. However, this time a double standard is divulged. There is an assumption of lesbianism in *G. I. Jane*. When the men celebrate together, the celebration is bonding; when female sailors gather it is a cause for alarm. Not only is it a cause for alarm, but this gathering becomes evidence used against O’ Neill that she is lesbian.

Children

So Proudly We Hail is the first of the films reviewed for this thesis that utilizes the soldier as a mother so that her character is not read as butch. Capt. “Ma” McGregor, a rather masculine woman, has a son who is a pilot, but since the planes have been destroyed by the Japanese early in the war, he is serving in the infantry. Ma loses her son after he is wounded and has both legs amputated. However, it is the statement made by Ma that lends to further discussion. Ma claims that “he never saw his father; his son will never see him.” This leads the audience to believe that Ma was able to raise a masculine son on her own, that military families are resilient and finally, that Ma was masculine enough to provide a role model for her son. Ma provides one of the more complex characters to analyze. She is the embodiment of both the

masculine and the feminine. By being both masculine and feminine Ma illustrates an early example of Brown's (1996) work discussing masculine qualities neutralized by being a mother figure. However, it is not only older women who are insulated from the "butch" label by introducing children. Approximately 50 years later in *Courage Under Fire*, Walden labeled as "butch" becomes less manly when described as a mother. Walden is not only described several times by interviewees as a good mother, but there are short scenes depicting healthy, natural, and gender normal interactions between Walden and her daughter.

Sacrifice

While some of the real life nurses who served on Bataan and Corregidor give accounts of romances both on Bataan and on Corregidor, the majority discount the romances in favor of the heroism and endurance the nurses showed under fire, while functioning on minimal rations and battling malaria, dengue fever, jungle rot and several other ailments associated with jungle warfare. *Cry Havoc* shows the women with dirty faces and depicts the sacrifices made by the women in many different manners, from the willingness to die for the men to the refusal to leave the wounded soldiers. Examples of sacrifice are plenty in *Cry Havoc*. Lt Smith is willing to forego treatment for malignant malaria; the storyline is that she can be evacuated to Australia; however, she refuses, knowing that her life, militarily, is worth less than that of the 50 men she can save. The dietician tells the women they have plenty of variety horse meat, mule meat and monkey meat. At the end of the film after hearing that Gen Douglas McArthur has ordered them to "hold out at any cost, dig in." Lt Smith advises the other women and the audience that she is an officer and that she could not leave even if she wanted to, but she offers escape to the civilian nurses. The other women also know they will not leave alive "We will never get out of here alive we will starve or be killed," yet they all stay, knowing that the convoys will never make it, much

like the previous ones that did not make it. These women are on their own, hence the lack of male characters in the film. The women knew “we haven’t got a chance, but we are winning the war.” This means that Lt. Smith is not the only woman in *Cry Havoc* to refuse to leave the men, all the women stay and it is this sacrifice that leaves the audience with a powerful, yet ambiguous ending. While the first two films showed various degrees of hunger, filth and sacrifice, it is *So Proudly We Hail* that leaves little to the imagination. The audience knows that the medicine is running low, we are told and shown the effects. The nurses and the soldiers are often shown drenched in sweat, caused not only by the jungle temperatures, but also by the 104 and 105 degree temperatures caused by malaria. Yet, the nurses work on knowing that the soldiers are the patients. Joan reminds the audience when she tells the other nurses that “my oath to the Red Cross did not specify how many or how much” meaning that when she became a nurse she would do whatever it took to save her patients. It is not just Joan who took her oath seriously; *So Proudly We Hail* shows nurses collapsing from disease and exhaustion, the film shows other nurses covering wounded men with their bodies, when the Japanese strafe the open wards. Another nurse, Rosemary refuses to take cover during an operation and pays for it with her life as Japanese bullets pierce her body. *So Proudly We Hail* uses the attack on the hospital and the real life Hell of the Mariveles to Corregidor crossing to bring home to the stateside audience the sacrifices made by these women. Furthermore, Davidson reminds the audience that with MacArthur safe in Australia, the troops on Bataan and Corregidor are just pawns in a “delaying action.”

When it comes time for some of the nurses to be evacuated and others not, there is no tension shown on the screen. One nurse hands a letter for her mother to another nurse, providing evidence that she knew she would not get off of Corregidor in time. On the ship home after all is

said and done by the nurses in *So Proudly We Hail*, their anger at the term heroine and being referred to one is powerful. The nurses claimed that a hero is anyone who survived. Survival takes heroic acts. However, approximately 50 years later the storyline revolves around a dead heroine. *Courage Under Fire*'s storyline required that the hero be dead. It can also be questioned if Walden was using her body and life as a delaying action or if she believed her troops would return. Nevertheless, the sacrifices made by Walden are told during Serling's interviews with the survivors. In one scene reminiscent of both *Cry Havoc* and *So Proudly We Hail*, Walden covers a man to protect him from enemy fire. Nonetheless, in all three films the woman is in the medical field and may be covering her patient and not a comrade. However, in the film *G.I. Jane*, O'Neill is not in the medical field and it is obvious that O'Neill is using her body to cover her wounded comrade. This is not the only sacrifice O'Neill is willing to make. *G.I. Jane* is infamous for the beating and rape scene of O'Neill. O'Neill understood her sacrifices and voiced them "I expect a certain amount of pain" and "Do not let them use me against you, no matter what." Less than ten years later these very words flash inside of real life POW Shoshana Johnson's head (Johnson, 2010). Fictitious O'Neill also wants the same exact training as men; she wants the standards to be the same. This can also be said of Johnson, who trained at the firing range as much as possible, even though she was a cook, to insure she was prepared to fight.

Aggressive acts

In *Cry Havoc*, Smith is an army officer and her character is to be read as masculine; however, when she appears alone on screen talking to Lt Holt on the phone, her feminine side is revealed. Her character is read as masculine for various reasons to include; Holt is an army officer, therefore an authority figure, that being said, at the beginning of the film, the audience is

told by Pat that she does not take orders from dames. Taking orders from dames referring to Lt Smith will not be only one area in which Pat and Lt Smith clash. Lt Smith is read as so masculine that Pat has a hard time believing that Lt Holt could show any interest in Lt Smith; therefore, Pat tries to attract Lt Holt for her own romantic adventures, only to be shunned. Lt Smith is not the only woman to be read as masculine. Andra having watched a man she was interested in die, takes his place at an anti aircraft gun and shoots a Japanese plane out of the sky. Andra is the first to grab a phallic equalizer (Williams 1991). Flo could be read as masculine when she uses harsh language “We will get every mother, son of a...” While Flo may use rough (unlady-like language) and Andra may have grabbed an equalizer off camera, *So Proudly We Hail* takes the extra steps and shows the audience gender neutral characters. Davidson grabs a grenade and tosses it in a direction to mislead the Japanese. Shortly after in the same scene, this gender equalizing weapon is used to self sacrifice Olivia. Olivia makes the statement that “it is one of us or all of us,” and walks into a Japanese fire team with a grenade held to her breast and explodes! By walking into the fire team of Japanese soldiers, Olivia becomes the aggressor. Furthermore, Olivia has taken on the characteristics of the enemy and sacrificing her body becomes an extension of the weapon.¹⁴ However, this is not the first time the audience sees Olivia as an aggressive character. Olivia slaps two of the nurses causing a fight. She later makes the shocking statement “I am going to kill Japs, every blood stained one I can get my hands on.” Olivia then follows up these words later in the film by volunteering to *take care* of the Japanese prisoners in the hospital. Years later in *Courage Under Fire*, Hollywood has no problem showing a skilled killer in Cpt. Walden; she kills an Iraqi soldier without missing a beat during a conversation. Walden is depicted as a competent officer and soldier.

¹⁴ Like a *kamikaze*

Consequences

For the women in *Corregidor*, it appears that they all were evacuated. However, it appears that only certain women and only women were evacuated in *So Proudly We Hail*, but in the film *Cry Havoc*, no one escapes, as foretold in the beginning, “if one of us dies, we all die.” The end of *Cry Havoc* shows the women bravely walking out of their bunker / quarters into the hands of the Japanese who they have just listened to “machine gunning” and “mopping up” the hospital. The fate of these women is very ambiguous. One of the items that the audience is made aware of is that women who step out of line will be punished. Furthermore, in *Cry Havoc*, Lt Smith becomes a widow, when her secret husband Lt Holt is killed near the frontline. Pat, the other woman, interested in Lt Holt also transgressed social norms by making advances on Lt Holt, and it is for these transgressions she is shunned by Lt Holt and others. In the end, Pat also loses the man she desired. Also in *Cry Havoc*, Connie, a fashion reporter turned patriot nurse, is gunned down by a Japanese plane while swimming with two of the women whose characters have not transformed into gender neutral.

The women in *So Proudly We Hail* also pay for their transgressions into a gender neutral status. Olivia pays with her life, as she blows herself up. Joan will lose her love Kansas. Kansas will be killed; the film contains prophetic dialogue, when Kansas claims “Who me? I never get killed”, this repeated “Who me? I never get” leads both the audience and Joan to the conclusion that Kansas will be killed.

Once the films begin to depict current conflicts, women continue to die on screen. When describing Walden in *Courage Under Fire*, her co pilot claims “she gave her life for these men ... she was a soldier.” However what the viewer learns near the end of the film is that the men

did not trust Walden's judgment and mutinied, therefore they left her to die. In *G. I. Jane*, the competency of O'Neill is discounted when one of her subordinates claims "I had a busted watch once, it was right twice a day." This scene provides further evidence that competency in the military is attached to a penis. It did not matter that O'Neill was a military intelligence officer trained in topography and that she was right about a topographical matter. The only thing that mattered was O'Neill was a woman. Trusting the experience and competence of female soldiers was a key factor in the capture of real life POW Rathbun- Nealy as discussed in Chapter One. Art imitates life.

Rape

At one point in *Cry Havoc*, Nydia asks "what do the Japs do to you if they catch you?" Flo replies "I don't know, I have never been caught by a Jap" to which Nydia states "I have...." She is cut off; leaving the answer to the audience's imagination. The underlying storyline of possible rape becomes a probability in *So Proudly We Hail*. In the opening scene as the first nurses arrive in Australia and they hear of the others not making it out, one of the nurses claims "The rest of the girls are in the hands of those filthy..." and then later exclaims "then we should have stayed." Later in the film when the women are caught in a fire fight and are the sole survivors who have to take shelter in a shanty, one of the nurses claims

"I know what I am going to do if somebody doesn't come. We better kill ourselves. I was in Nanking, I saw what happened to the women there. When the Red Cross objected, the Japanese called it the privilege of serving his majesty's troops. They fought over a woman like dogs."

It is this powerful scene with its less than ambiguous dialogue that allows the audience to understand the potential consequences attached to the nurses who are being held as POWs in the

Philippines. Once WWII is over, women are forced to return in mass to domestic life; however, Hollywood films do not follow suit. Hollywood reminds women about the consequences of war, and the consequences of deviating from gender norms and expectations. Two key films stand out: *Three Came Home* (1950) and *Two Women* (1960). Both films are about civilian women; however, the message is quite clear: the racialized Other will rape white women. Once the all volunteer army is implemented, one film takes a humorous approach to the female POW. *Private Benjamin* contains one scene containing basic training war games. A female is captured during the games and is caught in a sexual situation with the enemy. It is not until *G.I. Jane* that the subject of the female POW rape and torture are dealt with and portrayed in a graphic manner.

Furthermore, it is not until *G.I. Jane* that it is ever admitted by a man that “her presence makes us all vulnerable” and “she is not the problem, we are.” These lines admit that women are not the weak link in combat; the weak link is the man who chooses to protect her because of her sex. As evidence that the men were the weak link, Norman (1999) offers the following, that after the war, surgeon John R. Bumgarner wrote that he was very impressed by the professionalism of the women during war. However, he worried that if they were overrun by the Japanese that the fate of the women may be like that of the women in Nanking; therefore, women have no place in war, because of the male soldiers’ inability to protect her. This need to protect women leads society to the complex and serious question asked by the fictitious O’Neill; why is a soldier a hero when he risks his life to rescue a male soldier, but that same soldier is considered weakened when he risks his life to rescue a female soldier? Furthermore, why is this soldier a hero if he risks his life to save a civilian woman, but he is burdened when saving a military woman? As evidence, the rescue of Pvt. Lynch became the fodder for discourse concerning the participation of women in war.

Does This Really Matter?

There are many consequences to the above double standards. However, when narrowing the focus to films' portrayal and the rumors that circulated, it becomes evident that motion pictures helped reinforce or create a narrative placed over the bodies of women held as POWs.

Hogan, disgusted by the letters and rumors claiming she had been mutilated and impregnated, wrote a letter of her own refuting that the Japs had chopped off her arms, cut out her tongue, impregnated her and chopped off her legs. This same nurse, sometimes not Rosemary, had been spotted all over the country (Norman, 1999). Fifty years later Rathbun-Nealy learned, after her release, that comrades had been told that she had been raped, gutted from crotch to neck and that parts of her body had been cut off (Nantais, 1999). Rathbun-Nealy continues to argue that she was not raped and that her treatment by the Iraqis was fine and probably better than the men's treatment. However, just over a decade later, Johnson, Lynch, and Piestewa do not receive better treatment. Like G.I. Jane, they received the same harsh beatings that the men did. They did this in fear and isolation from the men. All three women were beaten; stomped on, kicked, pulled, slapped, punched and struck with weapons, the same as the men. Bones were broken and / or shattered. Two out of three of the women lived, Piestewa died in an Iraqi hospital from a head injury that would be consistent with her Humvee accident. Nevertheless, the story that lives on is the one about Lynch being sodomized, an incident that Lynch denies.

Conclusion

The evolution of the enemy is easy to follow. The media creates and reports an enemy that is fundamentally different than Americans. Once the United States is at war with this enemy,

and women report that the enemy is not what the media is suggesting, the patriarchal norms are threatened. Hollywood then comes to the aid of the patriarchy and creates an enemy that is horrific, discounting any discourse in opposition to the patriarchy's position. However, Hollywood also creates a damsel in distress and clothes her in a military uniform. This damsel must be rescued by a knight in shining armor (the male soldier) in order for social norms to survive. Finally, for the female soldier once held as a POW, who may speak out about her first hand experiences in the military, there is the current urban legend waiting to be laid over her body.

Furthermore, the consequences of these creations also affect men, while the narratives are absent about any sexual abuse men may suffer (Twomey, 2005), the concerns of the women and many men are that women's bodies become weapons of war, battlefields or psychological battlefields, which cannot be controlled or protected by the nation, therefore the patriarchy.

Chapter Three

Rape: The Secret Weapon

“We had discussed the possibility of rape and it was just one of those things.” We kept nursing –
2LT Hattie Brantley (Monahan, 2000, p. 87)

“...so I had thought about the probability that I would be sexually abused if I were captured.” -
Maj. Rhonda Cornum (Cornum, 1992, p. 50)

“The thought of surrendering petrified me. Interrogations, beatings, torture, rape – all that
flashed through my head.” – Spec. Shoshana Johnson (Johnson, 2010, p. 5)

Previously, this thesis has built on the works of scholars from a variety of disciplines examining gender, the military, rape and the intersectionalities of these topics when applied to POWs. Furthermore, the literature review examined the complex evolution of the images of the American female from vulnerable white woman to competent warrior. By analyzing the work of Brown (1996) and others, it appears that the evolution took place both in the American social conscious and in the minds of women; providing these women with rediscovered freedoms. It is these freedoms that Hollywood offered to the American public with the visual reinforcements on the big screen. However, it is these very freedoms that created problems for the status quo and the patriarchy; gender roles and expectations were no longer fixed if women's roles and expectations evolved. If women are seen as the feminine and men are seen as the masculine, then in a society reliant on dichotomies, one cannot change without the other one also changing. Most of the changes challenged gender by redefining the spaces women could occupy. One of these spaces was the hyper masculine military. Furthermore, my Introduction and Chapter One examined the unique experience of becoming a POW, and the images conjured with the term Prisoner of War. The Introduction also briefly discussed the gendered differences of these images. After establishing the foundations for the thesis in the Introduction, Chapter One examined Roland's (1997) work "Massacre and Rape in Hong Kong: Two Case Studies Involving Medical Personnel and Patients," and applied his theories surrounding the POW with the 90 American military women who had become POWs, by discussing timing, intensity and perception. Chapter Two followed by examining the roles of Hollywood and other media outlets in reinforcing the rape narrative around the racialized bodies of Japanese and Iraqi men and the vulnerable white woman. Additionally, Chapter Two discussed how society reinforced the consequences of women who step out of their sphere and into the hyper masculine world of the

military. Building on these themes this chapter will discuss social attitudes and describe various incidents that surrounded the 90 American military female POWs. These 90 American military women had the difficult task of entering a male dominated sphere. By entering the sphere of the military as troops, these 90 women publically announced that they were capable of doing a job that universally had been labeled as masculine. As discussed in Chapter Two, the American public has been socialized to assume that once captured, the *only* fate for the American female soldier is that her body will become the object of sadistic sexual pleasure for the enemy.

However, admission to rape or assault would upset the protector / protected status because admissions would suggest that the men failed to protect them. In this chapter, I scrutinize closely various quotes and narratives of female POWs to illustrate the effects of this pervasive image on various decisions including the choice to keep silent about sexual assault that they or their fellow soldiers faced because

- Admission would upset the chain of command, if the women, who were officers, admitted that harm came to them, they would be showing a weakness at the top of the command chain
- Admission would mean that if it happened to Putnam,¹⁵ it could happen to them;
- Admission would mean that if Putnam was raped by a member of a race that was considered less than fully human, she would have to live with the shame associated with miscegenation, even if it was rape
- Admission would mean that if the women admitted that harm came to them, they would be admitting that they would be better protected under the watchful eye of their fathers until their fathers turned them over to the protection of their husbands.

¹⁵ Putnam will be discussed at greater length in this chapter.

In order to provide evidence to these claims, this chapter will provide examples, from the women's narratives, that directly address each of the bullet points above. As stated in Chapter Two, the public has created a monolithic image to represent these women and that image is a vulnerable white woman, an American woman, who is now at the total mercy of a hypersexual racialized enemy. As described in Chapter Two, this enemy has been socially constructed as a member of a nation that disrespects women and Western women in particular. Furthermore, the *American woman* is constructed as a vulnerable white woman, as described by Davis (1983), who will now be raped by the Other. Any heroic deed, any act of resistance and any feat of endurance was discounted; it did not matter that the majority of these women, 90 American military female POWs, had survived for approximately three years in POW camps in the Philippines, or that Lynch and Johnson had survived torturous beatings, the only thing that mattered was "*had they been raped?*" The experiences of these 90 American women boiled down to a single topic, *rape*.

Definition of Rape

While there is much discourse on the topic of rape connected to these specific 90 women, there is a void when it comes to the definition of rape. Therefore, it is paramount to frame this discussion in relation to the various definitions of rape that the U. S. soldier operates under. The international governing body on the rules of war is the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and they have established regulations pertaining to crimes of a sexual nature. *Rule 93. Rape and Other forms of Sexual Violence* clearly states that "rape is a form of aggression and that the central elements of the crime of rape cannot be captured in a mechanical description of objects and body parts" (Rule 93, 2010). In other words, the ICRC had no intention of defining rape in a specific manner which could later be circumvented. However, the ICRC did provide a

definition. The ICRC “defined rape as a physical invasion of a sexual nature, committed on a person under circumstances which are coercive’ (Rule 93, 2010). This definition was handed down after the *Akayesu* case in 1998.¹⁶ Therefore, only three of the 90 American military women held as POWs would qualify for analysis under this definition.¹⁷ By taking into consideration the limiting effect of this definition, I sought a variety of definitions: a socially constructed one; one as legally defined in a specific U.S. state; and finally the military definition. Further definitions became even more difficult to use as guidelines considering each state in the United States has its own definition of rape and laws governing such acts (Rape, n.d.). Finally a clear definition, while less authoritative, was provided on Law.com by Gerald and Kathleen Hill

the crime of sexual intercourse (with actual penetration of a woman's vagina with the man's penis) without consent and accomplished through force, threat of violence or intimidation (such as a threat to harm a woman's child, husband or boyfriend). What constitutes lack of consent usually includes saying "no" or being too drunk or drug-influenced for the woman to be able to either resist or consent, but a recent Pennsylvania case ruled that a woman must do more than say "no" on the bizarre theory that "no" does not always mean "don't," but a flirtatious come-on (Hill, n.d.)

While Hill’s definition is concrete, it does appear to be less than a legal definition, considering what appears to be personal opinion about the Pennsylvania ruling; however, it serves as an excellent example of a culturally accepted definition. It is this culturally accepted definition that most people probably visualize when they hear the term rape. Furthermore, the Hill definition is gendered, requiring the victim to be female and the perpetrator to be male. This definition is also limited to a very specific act requiring the penis and vagina. This specific act requires the woman to be the victim. Therefore, when sexual violence is discussed in public, the woman is

¹⁶ This case is connected to the Rwanda genocide

¹⁷ Johnson, Lynch and Piastewa

exclusively the victim (Davis, 2005. p. 26), and when the subject turns to the POW, the victim remains the same (Twomey, p. 177). The genderization of rape may be one of the many reasons American male POWs have remained silent about any sexual violence they may have experienced. However, the language of the ICRC is neutral, allowing for men to be victims and broadening the acts of a sexual nature that can constitute rape. Roger Williams University (RWU) in Bristol RI, defaults their definition to the state of Rhode Island's definition. Sexual assault is "any form of unwanted sexual activity" and rape is defined as "any forced, coerced, penetration of the vagina, anus or mouth, by any part of another's body or by an object..." (Sexual, n.d.) Not to further complicate matters the military covers rape under the larger umbrella of Military Sexual Trauma. Military sexual trauma (MST) is defined as "harassment, assault, rape and other violence." Military sexual assault (MSA) is defined as "any unwanted physical contact of a sexual nature." Finally, military rape is defined as "unwanted vaginal, anal or oral intercourse or penetration using fingers or other object, using force or the threat of force" (Fact, 2007). The interesting thing about the military's definition is its simplicity; it describes the act, the objects involved and under what circumstances. There is little room for discussion with the military's definition; furthermore, it is not gendered. By the military's own definition, male and female troops can be victimized and the perpetrator can be male or female. There is room for both heterosexual and homosexual rape. By the military's own definition rape is about power "using force or the threat of force".

Therefore, for further discussion, rape will be defined as any forced or unwanted insertion of any body part or foreign object into the vagina, anus or mouth. This does not imply that this definition is the only definition or the best one available. However, the definition used for this thesis plainly acknowledges that rape is about power and not sex. Furthermore, this

definition is a solid mixture of Rhode Island's and the military's definitions; I have constructed them into a reasonable definition and they will serve as a starting point and framework for the discussions that follow.

Statistics Concerning Sexual Misconduct

No matter how they are defined, sexual assault and rape are uncomfortable topics for most people and virtual taboos in social discourse. This taboo may be kept in place because men, the hegemonic forces, have failed to protect women. This failure to protect women may be seen by men as humiliating and a threat to their manhood and therefore must never be spoken about.

¹⁸ Yet, sexual assault and rape are common occurrences. According to a web post by RWU, here are some startling facts about sexual assault and rape:

- 1 out of 4 women is sexually assaulted at some point in her life.
- 1 out of 6 men is sexually assaulted at some point in his life.
- 82.8% of sexual assaults occur before the victim reaches the age of 25.
- 78% of sexual assault victims were assaulted by someone they knew.
- 1 in 8 college women is the victim of rape during her college years.
- 95% of these rape victims did not report the rape to officials.
- 25% percent of women were raped and/or physically assaulted by a current or former spouse, partner or date during their lifetime.
- 84% of the women knew the men who raped them; 57% were on dates.
(Sexual, n.d.)

These numbers become even more alarming when examined in the hyper masculine realm of the military.

- 25 % of men have experienced MST
- 60 % of women have experienced MST
- 3.5 % of men have experienced MSA
- 23 % of women have experienced MSA
- 11% of women have been raped
- 1.2 % of men have been raped
- More than half of the incidents took place at the work site during

¹⁸ Refer to Kristen Day (2001) and her work "Constructing Masculinity and Women's Fear in Public Space in Irvine, California".

duty hours and the offenders were military personnel.
(Fact, 2007)

Academics, feminists and social activists accept that for various reasons the vast majority of rapes go unreported (as cited in Kilpatrick, 2000). Therefore, the above statistics may be even more shocking. Considering the above statistics and the general acceptance that the enemy is a hypersexual male that disrespects women, one would expect American military female POWs to have experienced the worst case scenarios. However, not a single one of the 90 women held by the Japanese, Germans or Iraqis claimed to have been raped. In the cases of Johnson and Cornum, both claim they were not raped, yet in their autobiographies they describe sexual assault. This tells us that Johnson and Cornum have both bought into or acknowledge a definition of rape that requires certain criteria. When the author is a third party with little or no familial connection to the POWs, the narratives remain the same; these women claim they were not raped.

Loose Lips Sink Ships

One of the first and most powerful reasons was they just did not want to believe this could happen to them. The American forces had surrendered. Not only had the American forces surrendered, but they had surrendered to an army from a nation that was considered racially inferior. To add to their disbelief, the Americans had really abandoned them; *the Battling Bastards and Belles of Bataan* had been unconditionally surrendered. To add to this, if something had happened to Putnam, which is described in detail on page 73, it could happen to them. The Japanese had already violated the rules in Mina Aasen's mind. Aasen did not think the Japanese would bomb medical facilities (Williams, 1985. p.4). However, the Japanese had bombed the hospital at Cavite and a jungle hospital on Bataan. Therefore, what would stop the Japanese from raping, mutilating and murdering American nurses? These crimes had already

befallen Australian, British and Chinese nurses “and there were other reports about women; there were the dead Filipinas left in foxholes by the Japanese” (Redmond, 1943, p. 53). Brantley claims that the nurses had all heard the stories about China (Lopez, 1998, p. 26). Brantley specifically mentions Nanking (Norman, 1998, p. 131). Furthermore, it is Brantley, who claims that Putnam was screaming rape when she ran into the nurse’s lateral (Lopez, 1998, p. 28). However, it is not possible to know if when Brantley claimed to know about what happened in China meant the fall of Hong Kong or any of the other atrocities or was she referring just to Nanking. The atrocities at Nanking were well known; according to one postwar estimate, Japanese troops raped 20,000 women, young and old, killed 42,000 civilians, including women and children, within the city, and killed another 100,000 civilians and prisoners of war in the vicinity (Duus, 1998, p. 222). Therefore, it appears denial of the very things that were happening around these women appears to be a coping skill utilized for both maintaining sanity and survival.

The next reason is more difficult to provide evidence for, considering most of the women have been interviewed after a time when racialized language became politically incorrect. In other words, very few people would admit that they believed a person of another race is inferior based on race. However, at the time, many of these women may have believed that Putnam was raped by a member of a race that was considered less than fully human; therefore, they would deny the incident to save her from the shame associated with miscegenation, even if it was rape. However, by examining newspaper articles from the time, subtle racism is obvious, “They [the Japanese] engage in slaughter, loot and rape and they see nothing wrong with this” (Woman, 1941, p 19). The same article goes on to describe the Japanese as “purely mechanical,” and “...in hand to hand combat they are inferior to the Chinese and are afraid of them” (Woman, 1941, p.

19). These short passages claim that there is something fundamentally different about the Japanese and that by seeing “nothing wrong with this,” they, at the very least, have a moral standard lower than the American one. The article goes on to explain that the Japanese are “purely mechanical”; these words indicate something other than human, as we know it. Less than three weeks later the Japanese have become “Japs.” In his *Los Angeles Times* article “Japs Use Nazi Terrorism,” dated 27 December 1941, Weisblatt describes the tactics used by the Japanese. Weisblatt concludes his article by repeating the Japanese intention to create an “Asia for Asiatics” (Weisblatt, 1941, p. 1).¹⁹

The final reason the women may have stayed silent was to protect the men. If the women admitted harm came to them, they admitted the men failed to protect them. As described by Davis (1983), Day (2001), Ignacio (2005) and Stiehm (1982), much of the social structure depends on the ability of men to protect *their* women. There is evidence that this attitude did not change at the time of surrender in Malinta Tunnel. Once Wainwright unconditionally surrendered the troops on Corregidor, he still thought he had control over the fate of the American military women. Earlyn Black claims that Wainwright told the Japanese that the women were part of the medical corps and not combatants (Kaminski, 2000, p. 95). This is a clear indication that Wainwright, after surrendering unconditionally, assumed that he could surrender some soldiers (female) with conditions. The attitude of the men who served with these women did not change years after when the men reflected back on the battle. John R Bumgarner claims that

one of the most remarkable things coming out of our experience
in Bataan was the presence and performance of the army nurses.

¹⁹ For more information on Historical Asian / American racial tension see Davis (1983), Domosh (2001), Glenn (2002) and Ignacio (2005).

In retrospect I believe that they were the greatest morale boost present in that unhappy little area of the jungle called Bataan. I was continually amazed that anyone living and working under such primitive conditions could remain as calm, pleasant, efficient and impeccable neat and clean as those remarkable nurses. In my mind, however, and in the minds of others, there lurked the fear that we would be unable to protect the nurses should the Japanese combat troops overrun the hospital. We had all heard the stories out of China about the atrocities committed against the female population of Nanking [the so-called Rape of Nanking]. Even today in spite of the efforts to maintain that women properly belong in combat situations, I must admit that the thought of placing women in the front lines in a situation such as existed in Bataan offends me. There is something ingrained and inbred in man, though he may laugh at the idea, which persuades him that he is the protector

(Norman, 1999, pp. 63-64).

Once again Stiehm's work is validated, this time by a man who acknowledged that the army women held up under the pressures of war. Yet, Bumgarner refuses to relinquish his imagined role of protector. This role of protector is still ingrained after military women are trained with weapons. During the first Gulf War, while Dunlap and Cornum were being transported to a new location, Cornum was sexually assaulted.²⁰ Cornum reports that the assault drove Dunlap "wild with rage" and that she feared he might do something stupid while trying to defend her and get himself shot (Cornum, 1992, p. 50).

The final reason is that women are better off in the home and if the women admitted that harm came to them they would be admitting that they would be better protected under the watchful eye of their fathers until their fathers turned them over to the protection of their husbands. Yet, Garen candidly claimed that what some considered protection was not always ideal for the woman. Having worked in her mother's boardinghouse, Garen saw the plights of

²⁰ "My scream made him stop for a second, but then he started fondling my breasts and kissing me" (Cornum, 1992, p. 49). Cornum does not elaborate any further on the extent of the assault; however, she claimed she was not raped.

working class women, children and abusive husbands. These things made her want independence (Norman 69). In January 1941, in debt and seeking adventure, Garen joined the army (Norman 69).²¹

Avoiding the Subject

In the several books pertaining to the POWs held by the Japanese, narrative after narrative, the authors claim that the women were not sexually harmed. Kuhn in *Angels of Mercy: The Army Nurses of World War II*, acknowledges the Japanese were known to have raped and murdered women, but then Kuhn further claims, “in fact, no harm came to the nurses” (Kuhn, 1999, p. 22). However, once we refer to Chapter Four and visit the sleeping arrangements of Menzie and Putnam, it becomes apparent that these two women, by removing themselves from the protection of the “Nurses of the U.S. Army sign” and by separating themselves from the other nurses, they have voluntarily changed their status in the eyes of the Japanese. Menzie and Putnam have left the status of protector and have become the protected; therefore these two women become the spoils of war. Other authors fail to make the same claim while simultaneously acknowledging *something* happened to Mary Brown Menzie in Malinta Tunnel. Each author describes the details of the incident in a different manner. Norman (1999) claims that a freshly awakened Menzie fought off a towel clad naked Japanese soldier who was preparing to “mount her” (p. 137). Kaminski (2000) then claims that Menzie immediately noticed the Japanese soldier screamed and ran from the room leaving Putnam. Kaminski further claims that Putnam led the Japanese soldier’s hand to her sanitary napkin, and he stopped (p. 96). However, while most accounts that include Corregidor mention this incident, it is Denny Williams who provides the most detailed account of what happened to Putnam. The entire

²¹ For more on the Cult of Domesticity see Davis (1983) and Domosh (2001).

section that Williams dedicated to the Putnam incident will be included, so that any reader can see that Williams dedicated sufficient space to the incident and that the authors that cited Williams are not overlooking a brief sentence. The authors who cite Williams have chosen to omit this event, or at least downplay it. Furthermore this incident is considered by Williams to be so delicate that Williams changes Beulah Putnam's name to Kate Clark (Williams, 1985, p. 109).

The Japanese officer turned toward her brandishing his dagger and indicating that she would do instead of Mary. He forced her back down on the bed from which she was attempting to rise, and despite her cries, he held her while lowering himself over her. She struggled and tried to kick him in the groin, moving her face from side to side to avoid his seeking lip. He was bigger than she was, and strong. Enraged and thwarted, he almost flattened her and hissed in Japanese; she could not understand but the tone further alarmed her. Unable to break his hold and helpless under his weight, she felt him tearing at her pajamas. A faint tearing sound and she felt his hand on her naked flesh. Her skin cringed, and she struggled more. A desperate heave shook him partially off her; she freed herself with phenomenal strength to roll away slightly from him. The Japanese was panting and sweating; his odor was revolting to her. She felt his bare thigh against her. Waves of disgust almost impaired her thinking. At last she remembered the Kotex pad. Thank God, she thought, maybe this will save me. As the Japanese once again fumble toward her in the semi-darkness, she took his hand – already a bare inch or so from her legs and moved it toward the Kotex, over her legs. A few tentative movements over her stomach and then nothing. Kate lay perfectly still, praying, “Lord Jesus help me, don’t abandon me.” After what seemed hours, but in reality was only minutes, he grunted something in Japanese and removed his hand and rolled away from her. Kate lay perfectly still, afraid to breathe. How long she lay, she did not know. At long last, exhausted and drained, she quit sobbing; she pulled herself together and got out of bed. She stumbled to her feet. Unaware of her appearance, and like a zombie, she staggered out of the room and into the nurses’ lateral. We had heard all the screaming, and knew too well what was probably happening ... Her hair was wild in disarray, her pajamas ripped on the top the trousers hung in shreds. Her legs were bleeding. Her breasts and stomach which were mostly uncovered, were bruised and scratched.

(Williams, 1985, pp. 110-111)

This name change from Beulah Putnam to Kate Clark indicates something more may have happened and Williams is being extra careful in her account here. This something more and the

extended time that this incident took can lead one to believe that Putnam was raped. Furthermore Williams does not change *any* other names in her account; Williams is candid in her rich account concerning the bravery and the uselessness of a couple of the women that she served with²². While the other authors, Kaminski (1999), Kuhn (1999), and Norman (2000) all cite Williams' book as a source, all three chose to omit the extended narrative Williams provides on pages 110-111 and the detailed account of "what was probably happening." All the narratives that deal with Corregidor hint at something happening in the tunnels, therefore the Williams narrative is less than suspect, not only because she changes the name to protect the innocent, but because she goes into specific detail about the incident and the conversation she had with Putnam after the fact. Furthermore, Kaminski claims that Putnam is the only female soldier to have admitted to an attempted rape (Kaminski, 2000, p. 143). Nonetheless, Williams is not silent about Putnam's ordeal and follows the narrative up with the conversation she had with Putnam later by recalling that Putnam said "I hope the men in POW camps never hear of this incident" (Williams, 1985, p. 111). Here lies some evidence that Putnam, much like Cornum 50 years later, felt an obligation to protect her comrade(s), by enduring sexual violence in silence. However, the omission of the Putnam narrative is not the only questionable part of the Kaminski (2000) book. Kaminski offers some hollow explanations for the majority of American women being unmolested. Kaminski, at one point, suggests then discounts that the Japanese did not find white women attractive, and it was their unattractiveness as the reason they were left unmolested. Kaminski further claims that the Japanese did not want to lower themselves into raping an inferior race; however, she dedicates the prior pages to the rape and murder of British and Australian women, and both groups of women were Caucasian (Kaminski, 2000, pp. 43-45). *If* race is a factor in rape and

²² Williams considers Earleen Allen as fairly useless (Norman, 2000, p. 106; Williams, 1985, p. 92, 150)

especially a factor in rapes attached to war then that would indicate that rape is not about power, but about physical attraction.²³ This is contrary to what Davis claims “because it was drummed into the heads of U.S. soldiers that they were fighting an inferior race, they could be taught that raping Vietnamese women was a necessary military duty;” furthermore, “they could even be instructed to ‘search’ the women with their penises” (Davis, 1983, p. 177). Kaminski does not take into consideration Davis’s account of American military policy in Vietnam which provides a firm example of the mindset of soldiers convinced they are fighting an inferior race. Kaminski also suggests that the American women were not raped because they were captured in larger numbers and populated areas (Kaminski, 2000, pp. 45). The term “larger numbers” is ambiguous at best. The 11 American navy nurses in Manila were captured in a small group that was abandoned, and they were not raped. However, with similar numbers and a similar setting, the nurses in Hong Kong were raped and murdered (Roland, 1997). In Hong Kong, the total number of nurses was 13; two nuns; six British volunteers and five Chinese nurses. The five Chinese nurses and at least three of the British nurses were raped, mutilated and murdered (Roland, 1997, p.53). While a few of the women survived, all of the women working at St. Stephens College as nurses that day had been raped and sexually mutilated. This type of behavior was also reported in the Philippines. As evidence, Ethyle Mae Mercado was captured when Hospital #2 was overrun by the Japanese and raped repeatedly (Norman, 1999, p. 95). Hospital #2 was a populated area; Hospital #2 had thousands of allied troops there at the time of surrender, 5600 Filipino and 1680 American (Norman, 1999, p. 94). The next reason Kaminski gives is that the American women had children with them. While this may have been true about many of the civilian women, it was not true about the military women. Not a single military woman had children and only a handful

²³ The topic of physical attraction versus power in cases of rape will not be addressed further in this paper.

had been married, against military regulations, on Bataan (Meyer, 1992; Norman 1999).

Williams was married and incorporated back into the military based on dire need (Williams, 1985). Not to mention that Mercado and Agnes Keith were both mothers and their children were nearby when the rape and attempted rape respectively occurred. Therefore, none of the explanations given by Kaminski holds up when examined using the army and navy women held by the Japanese in the Philippines or on Guam. Kaminski then provides explanations using military explanations. The first claim, by Kaminski, is that the Americans were captured by officers and the other allied women by ground troops. Kaminski offers some evidence that at least Earlyn Black in Malinta Tunnel also felt this way (Kaminski, 2000, p. 95). However, Brantley claims that she felt she was not “mistreated” because she “looked old and bedraggled” (Jackson, 2000, p. 31). Helen Nestor thought that her status just plain confused the Japanese; she had entered the military via the Red Cross (Kaminski, 2000, p. 95). Whatever the case the women may have personally believed, the fate of the surrendered was still in the hands of the Japanese. Finally, Kaminski offers that the Americans had declared Manila an open city and that saved the navy women from the fate of their British sisters in Hong Kong. The British troops in Hong Kong held out past the point of there being any chance of holding off the Japanese invasion. However, again this does not explain the fate of the army nurses. The army nurses were part of the Bataan and Corregidor campaigns. Both of these campaigns are well documented as costly to the Japanese. Therefore, there must be another factor that kept the majority of American military women in the Philippines and Guam safe from sexual assault. That something else kept Whittle safe in Germany and the five American military women in Iraq safe also. My explanation is the military uniform provided a symbolic shield for the body. Like any shield, the military uniform was not guaranteed safety from attack; however, the uniform provided the

women a comparable level of protection as it does male troops. Once the military uniform was donned in defense of the nation, the woman moved from the protected status, as defined by Stiehm (1982), to the status of protector. By applying the fluidity of masculinity as defined by Hutchings (2008) and the changing woman as described by Brown (1996), Cock (1997), Linville (2000), and Williams (2005), it becomes apparent that gender for the woman moves to the neutral when she dons a military uniform.²⁴ It is this move to the neutral (the uniform) that partially protects her body from sexual molestation from enemy troops. This pseudo protection from molestation is not a new concept; it has historical precedence dating back to the Middle Ages. Deborah Blatt (1992) provides this historical evidence and precedence in “Rape as a Method of Torture.” Blatt provides a historical narrative in the form of a timeline; furthermore, this timeline provides the framework for nations which went to war and how those nation’s armies were required to treat conquered women. As cited by Blatt (1992) “a woman was protected [against rape] if captured on a battlefield but was vulnerable if seized during an attack on a besieged town conquered by marauding forces” (p. 830). This may stem back to the type of woman found on these early battlefields, these women could have been queens or other royalty and therefore off limits to the common man. Furthermore, royal women would have held a special place in the hierarchy of the nation; a space of ultimate protector assigned by God.

Conclusion

Therefore, one conclusion is that once the woman has changed her status from protected to protector by donning the military uniform, she has also changed her status in the eyes of the enemy. The military woman changed from spoil of war to a physical enemy, who must be killed,

²⁴ This would only apply to occupational uniforms that historically have belonged to men. Men who don uniforms such as a nurse’s uniform may also move from what is accepted as masculine qualities to a more neutral one when they show compassion and nurturing for strangers.

or captured and tortured, just like the men. In the final chapter of this thesis, the heroic deeds and obligations, under military policy, are covered. These deeds have been discounted for the rape narrative to survive.

As a final note on this chapter's title "Rape: The Secret Weapon," rape is not a secret weapon used by the enemy. Rape is the secret weapon used by American society to control women by instilling fear. This fear is described as a consequence of woman's desire to move into spheres that do not belong to her and these spheres have defined borders. The borders can be her home, her gated community, her neighborhood or her nation. No matter the borders, American women can define them.

Chapter Four

The Geneva Conventions and The Military Code of Conduct:

Do they take the female soldiers into consideration?

Once loaded onto the flatbed trucks and heading in a direction opposite the men Ullom twice told the Japanese driver he was going the wrong way; she decided to shut up when she was tapped on the back with a bayonet (Norman 1999, Monahan 2000)

“I didn’t want them to beat me. My bones were broken ... I knew this officer was the one who had been hitting Troy, and I sensed he wouldn’t hesitate to do the same to me” - Maj Rhonda Cornum (Cornum, 1992, pp. 114-115)

“According to the Geneva Conventions, women prisoners are supposed to be kept separate from men, but it wasn’t comfortable for me to be kept away from them. I felt isolated and vulnerable in my separateness” – Spec. Shoshana Johnson (Johnson 2010, p. 169)

“I wasn’t going to get far if I took off. A wounded black woman in uniform wandering around Baghdad wasn’t going to last long...” – Spec. Shoshana Johnson (Johnson 2010, p. 73)

Overview

For the women who became POWs in WWII, the reality of their situation was dire. The vast majority of these women were surrendered by men. They were unarmed, and they were never trained by the military to defend themselves. It is under these circumstances that 84 unarmed and defenseless women were turned over to the Japanese. These women and their bodies were surrendered to the Japanese. After the interim years, the military provided the future female POWs with a weapon and basic combat training (BCT). BCT was not sufficient as five more women fell into the hands of the enemy, this time the Iraqis. Furthermore, in the case of three of these women, they were, like the women before them, surrendered by men. However, as discussed in the previous chapter, this time they were armed and could be considered combatants. Nonetheless, once a person becomes a POW, they are protected by the Geneva Conventions if their captors are signatories to the conventions and the captors choose to follow the rules set down by the Conventions. Furthermore, the United States also has a Military Code of Conduct (MCC) which was established by Executive Order 10631. This order was signed by President Eisenhower after the Korean War, in 1955. Therefore, only five of the 90 women needed to adhere to the MCC.

Nonetheless, in this chapter, I show that many of the POWs during WWII, who were held by the Japanese, also followed many of the six articles set down by the MCC, prior to its implementation. The MCC has been modified twice, the last time under Reagan (1980-1988), which made the language gender neutral. Since all five women who have been held as POWs were captured after the Reagan years, this paper will use the latest version for all discussions. According to a U. S. Army study guide (2005), the latest wording for the six articles of the MCC are as follows

I

I am an American, fighting in the forces which guard my country and our way of life. I am prepared to give my life in their defense.

II

I will never surrender of my own free will. If in command, I will never surrender the members of my command while they still have the means to resist.

III

If I am captured I will continue to resist by all means available. I will make every effort to escape and to aid others to escape. I will accept neither parole nor special favors from the enemy.

IV

If I become a prisoner of war, I will keep faith with my fellow prisoners. I will give no information or take part in any action which might be harmful to my comrades. If I am senior, I will take command. If not, I will obey the lawful orders of those appointed over me and will back them up in every way.

V

When questioned, should I become a prisoner of war, I am required to give name, rank, service number, and date of birth. I will evade answering further questions to the utmost of my ability. I will make no oral or written statements disloyal to my country and its allies or harmful to their cause.

VI

I will never forget that I am an American, fighting for freedom, responsible for my actions, and dedicated to the principles which made my country free. I will trust in my God and in the United States of America (The Code 2005).

While all six of these articles are important, this chapter will discuss Article III with a focus on resistance. Unlike the aspects of the other articles, Article III's resistance allows each POW to self-define their actions. The women held by the Japanese, because so few of them were wounded, were able to provide the most resistance. However, Rathbun-Nealy and Johnson, while wounded, also resisted their captors. While resistance comes in many forms, this paper will focus on six unique forms of resistance: the refusal to obey captors; small personal acts of defiance; smuggling food, documents and contraband in, out and between camps; all things pertaining to radios; documenting; maneuvers to protect from sexual harassment, abuse and rape. By examining samples of resistance, it will become clear that these women had no intention of

aiding the enemy by being obedient or complacent. Many of these women had full intentions of proving to the Japanese and themselves that while they may have been surrendered, they were not defeated.

Refusal to Obey Captors

One of the easiest means to resist their enemies was simply not to obey them. By disobeying their captors, the women displayed that they may have been surrendered, but they were not defeated and that they had no intention of being obedient, complacent or aiding the enemy in any manner. Once the navy nurses in Manila were under the control of Japanese officers, the nurses were ordered to inventory all of the medical supplies; Laura Cobb had her nurses mislabel essential medicines so that the Japanese would not confiscate them (Kaminski, 2000, p. 91; Norman, 1999, p. 28; Monahan 2000, p.37). The consequences of Cobb's act are not further mentioned in the Kaminski (2000), Monahan (2000) or the Norman (1999) books. Therefore, there is no indication if the medicines saved the lives of sick and wounded Americans. However, it can be assumed that the mislabeling did not assist the enemy in any manner.

The Japanese captors on Corregidor were no less demanding of the nurses than the Japanese in Manila. The captors on Corregidor demanded that no one speak in the medical laterals unless it was about a medical condition. This was a rule Denny Williams broke every time she could (Williams, 1985, pp.99-100). It was this simple act of breaking an ordered silence that showed the men that the women were captured, not defeated and with this small act hope survived. Even talking about medical conditions was not always safe considering a nurse was cuffed (slapped with an open hand) for talking with a doctor (Norman, 1999, p. 137). Just

the fact that an American woman was there taking care of them (the men) was a great boost to the morale (Blassingame, 1967, p. 22).

The army nurses on Corregidor did not stop their resistance with just their voices. Once the women were moved to the topside of the island and out of Malinta Tunnel, Ann Mealor, having refused evacuation, once again showed incredible bravery by defying the Japanese and returning to Malinta Tunnel. Mealor snuck back into the tunnel to care for CPT White, who had a fractured pelvis, she promised to get him topside and she did (Monahan, 2000, p. 96). It was not long until the nurses and most of the male troops were moved to the mainland and put into separate camps. The separation angered many of the women. Brantley, at first, refused to get off the truck at Santo Tomas Internment Camp (STIC), the thought was humiliating. STIC was for civilians; however, a bayonet convinced Brantley (Kaminski, 2000, p. 96; Lopez, 1998, p 31; Monahan, 2000, p. 99). Once inside the camp, the nurses were given menial tasks around STIC, Davison went to the Japanese and insisted that nurses be allowed into the other POW camps to nurse the men. The Japanese told her this was not an option, and then Davison insisted they nurse in STIC (Monahan, 2000, pp. 102-103). The army nurses were granted Davison's request to nurse in STIC. However, the Japanese were still very much in control, and with this control they dictated the behaviors of the captives, both military and civilian.

One thing the Japanese could not control was the weather, and on the 14th of November 1943, a typhoon struck Manila and therefore STIC. After the typhoon, Davison had her nurses carry their uniforms over their heads, while wearing short shorts, against Japanese orders. However, no Japanese guard wanted to correct Davison's orders since the nurses had to cross a 25' x 25' depression that was waist deep in water to get to the hospital (Monahan, 2000, p. 121). Davison proved to be a competent leader, who would stand against the Japanese time and time

again. Part way through the internment at STIC, the control of the camp changed from civilian to military hands. With the change to military control, the rules at the camp became harsher. Filipino vendors were no longer allowed to bring in food to sell to the internees, money was confiscated and inspections became more rigid. However, Stoltz refused to turn over her money after she was ordered to do so; she hid it in yarn (Blassingame, 1967, p. 170). The military women continued to defy Japanese rule even when rescue was in sight. As the American and Japanese planes fought in the sky, Shacklette, Nesbit, Nash and Williams watched the action from their window until the loudspeaker announced anyone seen in windows would be shot; the nurses moved to the back of the room and stood on beds, but they continued to watch (Williams, 1985, p 195).

The act of defying the Japanese all the way until their end of captivity clearly displayed to the Japanese that while the women's lives were at the mercy of the Japanese, the Japanese could not control their every action. Needless to say, the POWs held during WWII were not the only female POWs to outright disobey the captors. During the first Gulf War, Rathbun-Nealy refused to leave the wounded David Lockett behind, forcing her captors to take him prisoner also (bio, n.d.) Rathbun-Nealy's actions and refusal to leave a wounded soldier behind may have saved Lockett's life. By disobeying orders, it is quite possible that these women not only saved lives, but that they also disrupted the enemy's plans. However, not every act of resistance was disobeying the commands of the captor. There were times that many of the POWs just acted out in ways that notified the captors that, indeed the POW still had a fight left in her and that she was not defeated.

Small Personal Acts of Defiance

There were times when the POWs found ways to disrupt the plans of the Japanese by either spontaneous acts or well planned choreographed acts. A difference in culture provided the nurses with many opportunities. The Japanese valued conformity, while the American valued independence, and it is this clash of cultures that provided the nurses with various means to resist the Japanese. Before the Japanese ever entered Manila, on 24 December 1941, Nash was advised by Col Duckworth that she should be prepared to be taken prisoner by the Japanese; between working on patients Nash burned anything she thought the Japanese might find useful (Monahan, 2000, p 30). Once the women were captured and they became POWs, acts of defiance took on many forms, from outright disobedience to impish manipulation of rules. These women still had fight left in them.

One of the initial annoyances that angered the women held by the Japanese was being forced to properly bow to their captors. It was the act of bowing that turned into a battle of wits in which the women could claim victory. Young and the other nurses were taught to properly bow to the Japanese. Once the nurses got to feeling a bit better they would space themselves just enough so that a guard would have to bow 30 times in a row to the nurses, the guards began to avoid the nurses (Norman, 1999, p. 167, Sarnecky, 1999, p. 193). Brantley also recalls that when reporting for duty on shift changes, the nurses started to space themselves so that guard would have to bow several times, instead of once (Lopez, 1998, p. 49). Ullom also tells the tale of spacing when passing a guard so that he would have to bow several times (Monahan, 2000, p. 131). While this may have been an insignificant victory in the war, it was a small victory for the captured women.

Bowing was not the only victory, some internees used language and plays on language to settle small scores. At the internment camp that Chambers and Bradley were held, the internees

taught the Belgian priest to reply “chicken shit” when the Japanese greeted him with *Ohayo*. Chambers told him to stop, that “chicken shit” was bad language for a priest. Chambers further claimed the Belgian was not in the gutter like the rest of them (Monahan, 2000, p. 136). In her oral history Brantley recalls once a Japanese captor said *Ohayo gozaimasu* to one of the nurses and she replied that she was from Cincinnati (Lopez, 1998, p. 49). While a play on words may not be as impressive an act of resistance as sabotage, there can be a personal and private satisfaction that the POW just won, at least in a battle of wits. These small victories emboldened the nurses to greater levels of *smart mouth replies*. Nash once told a Japanese soldier at STIC that there was medicine in the US for his bald spot; the doctor thought that comment would get them all killed since there was no such medicine; Nash didn’t care since she was fairly certain that the Japanese captor she told this to would never get to the United States (Monahan, 2000, p. 122).

While language is something that is hard to steal, personal belongings were not. Looting also was a problem for the POWs; the Japanese took personal belongings as they chose. However, some of the women took precautions against such acts by the Japanese. As an act of defiance Garen scratched the lens of her camera the day of the surrender, so that it would be useless to the Japanese (Norman, 1999, p. 132). While Garen’s act of scratching her camera lens is far from a major victory, it is something that was in her control at a time when she knew control was something the Japanese would soon have over her. Other women claim to have used their hair as a hiding place; Anna Williams knew the reputation of the Japanese, so she ratted her hair and hid her jewelry in it, she then taped her watch all over to make it look junky (Monahan, 2000, p. 87).

Another episode incorporating the nurses' hair, is rather suspect. Nash is the only woman to retell this story and yet, most of the nurses' oral histories give credence to key events; however, not in this case: Nash claims that she carried enough morphine out of Manila for each of the nurses to have a lethal dose; she further claims the women hid it in their hair until liberation (Monahan, 2000, p. 31). This tale is suspect for many reasons, besides the lack of this tale appearing in any other oral history. By just casually reading many of the narratives, it becomes apparent that Nash's personality is larger than life. There are times when Nash's narratives appear to be embellished stories. Nash tells the Japanese exactly what she thinks (Williams, 1985, pp, 120, 122), she curses and she seems to know insider secrets about the war (Williams, 1985, p. 90). As I explain in my methods section, certain narratives require more than one source to be considered as truths, either universal or personal. Therefore, it is quite possible Nash is just adding color, flavor and intrigue to a dark spot in her life. Furthermore, morphine was a scarce medicine in STIC, and the previous actions of the nurses proved that they put the lives and comfort of their patients before their own.²⁵

The lack of probable truth in the morphine story does not mean the nurses planned to die in STIC at the hands of the Japanese. For example, in another example of resistance Shacklette found enough pesos to buy 100 foot of rope that she tied to her bed. She planned to use this rope as an escape tool when the Japanese came into slaughter the internees; Shacklette was sure this would happen so that the American soldiers would not see what had happened to them (Williams, 1985, p. 162). There is reason to believe that the internees at STIC knew from their

²⁵ Blaine and other nurses never took cover during raids; some protected their patients with their own bodies. The nurses did not want to leave their patients on Bataan. (Kaminski, 2000, p. 94; Lopez, 1998, p. 25; Monahan, 2000, p 65; Norman 1999, p. 77)

hidden radio about the slaughter of American POWs at Palawan and various other captured allied troops and civilians at other locations.

Most of these personal acts of defiance did not include violent acts being perpetrated on the POWs. However, this changed with the current war in Iraq. Johnson, Lynch and Piastewa were beaten upon capture. It is the actions reported by al-Rahaief about the men and Johnson that stand above the other acts of defiance. When referring to Johnson and the men of the 507th, al-Rahaief claims that when beaten, they (the Americans) made no sound (al-Rehaief, 2003, p. 12). They refused to cry out in pain, robbing their captors of the pleasure of hearing their agony. Johnson also claims that it dawned on her that being a woman could complicate things for the guys. Johnson recalled the scene in the *G.I. Jane* where Demi Moore and her classmates are going through SERE training and were taken prisoner. The interrogators abused the woman to make her fellow squad members attempt to protect her, to prevent her beating. Johnson claimed that she did not want to be a tool, and she vowed to herself, that she would do her best not to put any of the guys in danger (Johnson, 2010, pp. 112-113).

While critics often discount the film *G. I. Jane* as a Hollywood creation with no substance, the film had adequate impact on Johnson. Johnson found herself in a unique situation; she had already been beaten by her captors simultaneously with the men. While Johnson does not mention if this had an impact on the men, it can be assumed that it did, considering the beating of any comrade, gendered or not, has an effect on the other troops. Finally, the resistance activities that took place inside of camps or inside of areas controlled by the enemy were not the only acts of resistance. There were times when the American military female POWs took their fight beyond the specified boundaries laid out by their captors. This refusal to be bound by repressive walls is in itself is a form of resistance.

Smuggling Food, Documents, Information and Contraband in, out and Between Camps

By being able to smuggle items in, out and between camps, the POWs proved that the camps were porous. Once it was determined that the camps were porous, the POWs needed to find out how porous, and furthermore, determine the types of things could be moved. Life sustaining food would be the most important. From the time the women were at Bataan, to Corregidor, in STIC and even at Los Banos, the lack of food was an issue. The nurses were starving. They had already eaten the cavalry's horses and mules, they had eaten water buffalo, snake, monkey and unidentified meats. Maggot laden rice became a staple. All the while, the Japanese were apathetic to captured foreigners.

As early as Corregidor, the nurses learned that in order to survive they would have to smuggle in food and hide it from the Japanese. In the laterals, the nurses found an old navy supply area. While foraging for food in this area, Nesbit laid open her scalp on the excursion (Norman 1999, p. 138); meanwhile, Breese watched for the Japanese while Nesbit entered the Navy lateral to smuggle back the food (Monahan, 2000. p. 94). The nurses would steal this food and hide it from the Japanese in their lockers (Norman, 1999, p. 138). Once in STIC, the internees and the POWs were allowed to buy food from the Filipino vendors. However, food was not the only thing carried by the vendors. Williams claimed that the camp vendors were often guerrillas, so when the vendors were allowed into STIC the news flowed better (Williams, 1985, p. 175).

It was this war news that kept hope alive. The internees were not forgotten and help was on the way. Young claimed that the *Manila Tribune* made it to camp and reported the invasion of France (Monahan, 2000, p. 139). With victories in Europe, the allies could then focus on the Pacific Theater. However, no matter how promising the news was pertaining to allied victories,

the number one priority was food. When it came to buying food, the army nurses had no money; they had been in combat with no pay for six months, therefore, many of the women signed IOUs with corporate representatives, such as General Electric in camp. Others, like Brantley started working with the underground to smuggle food into the camp, by using a rope ladder Brantley would climb down from the second floor of the hospital, get food from the fence area and tie it to a rope, and that another nurse (Helen Hennesy) (Lopez, 1998, pp. 38-39) would pull the food bundle up (Lopez, 1998, pp. 33-34). Once while searching Brantley's room the Japanese looked at her rope ladder; however, the Japanese did not make a connection. For this infraction Brantley feared she might be beheaded (Lopez, 1998, p. 36). Nonetheless, Brantley was prepared to die because of the rope ladder and the worse part of her fear was that someone would leak the information (Lopez, 1998, p. 45).

Food may not be universally thought of a means of resistance; however, having food meant that starvation was fought off for another day, hence robbing the captor of his satisfaction that he starved the captive. Furthermore, the nurses never forgot the men even while held in separate camps, they continued to help them. Williams (1985) provides a strong narrative detailing the lengths and risks she endured in order to provide her husband, held in Cabantuan with aid (Williams, 1985, p. 129 -160). For other nurses joining the resistance movement was not motivated by a spouse or love interest; for some of the nurses, the motivation was protecting and helping other American troops. Helen Cassiani was one such nurse. It was during her first year at STIC that Cassiani decided to join the underground resistance movement (Norman, 1999, p. 162). Early in 1943, Cassiani had a relapse of malaria; the camp doctors sent her to a hospital outside of the prison camp, as was protocol, in order to have her liver tested (Norman, 1999, p. 163).

The way the underground worked was Roman Catholic priests would bring items to Cassiani in the hospital and which point she would find sympathetic Filipinos that were willing to smuggle the items into the prisons that held the men (Norman, 1999, p. 163). Cassiani did not stop being part of the resistance once she returned to STIC (Norman, 1999, p. 163). These women knew that in order to live, they needed food and by living, they were robbing the captors of a victory. Furthermore, information and goods were not just smuggled in and between camps, in some instances, military intelligence was smuggled out. It is this strategic information about the camps smuggled via the guerillas to American troops that helped identify the layout of the camps. Furthermore this type of information helped to insure that the POW and captive casualties were kept at a minimum. In 1943, Anna Williams began to work for the underground; she smuggled information about the Japanese troop and guard size to the Filipino guerillas, and if she was caught it would mean her torture and death (Monahan, 2000, pp. 118-19).

When STIC became too overcrowded, the Japanese planned to relocate some internees to a camp further inland. Once the Japanese made the decision to move the men, Cobb decided to take the navy nurses to the new camp at Los Baños, along with 800 men being transferred. The Japanese agreed. Nevertheless, it was not just the nurses that would go to Los Baños, Cobb was determined to take all the navy records with them. Cobb wore the navy records inside her blouse, friends made leaf and flower leis for her to wear to disguise the bulges (Nelson, 1996, p. 144). Once at Los Baños, life did not become easier for the POWs. However, Cobb did her best to keep the navy nurses together. At Los Baños, Harrington recalls that a few men were shot for going through the fences but on the whole the internees kept their distance and the Japanese kept theirs (Nelson, 1996, p. 146).

When the topic changes to the more aggressive forms of resistance such as illicit excursions outside of the camp walls, the narratives from the Philippines only speak about men sneaking out of the camps; therefore, it is doubtful that women took this chance. Harrington reports that in early 1945 George Grey and Freddy Zervalskas snuck out of camp to collaborate with the guerillas. A few days later an ammunition dump about two miles from camp was bombed (Nelson, 1996, p. 147). The Japanese did not hesitate to shoot the men for infractions; Mr. Louis was shot for trying to bring forbidden fruit, from outside of the camp, to pregnant women in Los Baños. Louis was left to bleed to death in the camp. His death took over four hours in the midday heat. Todd recalls that they could not help him and that he never cried out (Monahan, 2000, p. 163), denying the Japanese the pleasure of mocking his agony. However, there were times when the Japanese showed a willingness, no matter how exploitative, to help the POWs. Peg Nash traded a 20 jeweled Elgin watch for 12 pounds of sugar, had the guard been caught, he would have been shot (Monahan, 2000, p. 114). While the camps may have had varying degrees of porousness, only certain items had the ability to move across the barriers. One item that could not be controlled, discontinued or shot was radio transmissions. It was because of this uncontrolled characteristic of radio broadcasts, that radios had the ultimate penalty.

Radios

Being shot was the only outcome for any internee or POW caught with a radio. However, those held captive took the chance. A radio meant a connection to the outside world, even if the connection was one way; information coming in but not going out. It was this information coming in that provided the internees with hope and warned them of unimaginable brutality.

Unimaginable brutality is the only way to explain the events that the POWs held at Cabanatuan heard on their radio. This account is being added solely because it is a documented narrative of

men held and what they heard via radio, meaning the radio broadcast could have been heard in STIC and Los Baños. Since the women's narrative do not specifically say they knew about Palawan does not mean that those who monitored the radio broadcasts did not shelter the masses from the radio broadcasts that reported such atrocities.

According to the documentary film *Bataan Rescue* (2003), former POWs, James Hildebrand and Robert Body recalled the new terror they felt, in December 1944, after learning about the Palawan massacre. At the camp on Palawan Island, the Japanese sounded the air raid siren and the POWs quickly followed protocol and headed to ditches. Upon reaching the ditches, the POWs, believing they were safe, were doused in gasoline and set on fire. 150 men were burned alive and those that tried to escape were mercifully shot (Axelrod, 2003). Yet, prior to December 1944, most of the broadcasts heard on the radio brought hope to the internees and the POWs. By examining the narrative of Denny Williams, it becomes apparent that the radio brought up to date information about the war.

Voices over the airways spoke about the victory at Guadalcanal and the losses at New Caledonia and New Hebrides. These accounts led the internees to believe that they would be free in six months (Williams, 1985, p. 166). March 1943, word made it about the Nazi losses to the Russians, this brought hope that the war in Europe would be over soon, so that more Americans could come to the aid of those in the Pacific (Williams, 1985, p. 172). This was about the same time Denny learned about the victory at in Bismarck Sea and on New Guinea. She also learned of the "can" (Williams, 1985, p. 173). Nash explained to Williams that the "can" was a five gallon gasoline drum with a radio in it (Williams, 1985, p. 173). In July 1943, the internees heard about the invasion of Italy and that the Americans were stalled in New Guinea (Williams, 1985, p. 177). It may have been the posting about one down and two to go (mentioned in the next

section) that tipped off the Japanese, because at the end of March 1944, the Japanese started searching the rooms on a regular basis at night for the radio; this caused fear in general (Williams, 1985, pp. 186-187). Early June the internees learned of the Normandy invasion, Truk, and Burma (Williams, 1985, p. 187). In July they heard about Saipan, Tojo's resignation and Marines on Guam (Williams, 1985, p. 189).

While the above radio reports may seem to be a lot of detailed information about something seemingly insignificant, the actual importance lies in the truth making it to the POWs. The radio brought forbidden news that rejected the Japanese propaganda machine. Then, the news suddenly stopped. Brantley's recalls that the men that had the radio were executed (Lopez, 1998, p.36), beheaded (Lopez, 1998, p. 38).

Another example of a radio in camp is at Los Baños. Harrington claims that Los Baños also had a radio and if the internees were caught with it they would be executed (Nelson, 1996, p. 146). According to Dorothy Still, she and the others knew about the war from a clandestine handmade radio (Fessler, 1996, p. 86). Unlike at STIC, the radio at Los Baños moved around and never stayed in one place. One time when the radio was on the move, a fellow POW asked Edwina Todd to hide the radio, before Todd had a chance to hide it very well the Japanese arrived for inspection. With quick thinking Todd put the radio under her blanket leaving a lump and when the guard asked if she had a radio she replied "see for yourself."²⁶ The guard left without checking the lump under the blanket (Fessler, 1996. pp. 85-86). The hospital was another good place to hide things since the Japanese went easy on the hospital (Nelson, 1996, p. 147).

²⁶ Edwina Todd's religious upbringing would not allow her to hate the Japanese or lie, (Fessler, 1996. pp. 85-86).

Like at Cabanatuan, the captives at Los Baños s knew about Palawan, and the Japanese executive order to eliminate the POWs. On Christmas 1944, the Bishop told the captives of Los Baños that this would be their last Christmas in captivity; Peg Nash understood the meaning, freedom or death (Fessler, 1996, p. 83). News alluding to freedom or death was only part of the news the radio transmitted. The radio provided proof to those held captive that, in fact, they still had a country and that country's troops were coming to free them robbing the Japanese captors of their subjects.

Documenting

Just in case freedom came too late, the internees wanted to leave evidence that they had existed, from the beginning, the women documented their existence. The Japanese could keep track of the captives by counting them each day, sometimes several times a day. When taken into account that the Japanese had an accurate count of the number of POWs and internees, they could make them disappear, or as the radio broadcast concerning Palawan warned them burned alive. However, if the Japanese did not know about hidden written records, there would be some form of documentation to provide evidence that the women had in fact existed past the battle on Corregidor. Therefore, while in Malinta Tunnel, Cassiani and 68 other women, both military and civilian signed a torn bed sheet documenting their names; the names of the women at the time of the Corregidor's surrender, just in case they disappeared at the hands of the Japanese (Norman, 1999, p. 132). The women's narratives are silent about any women disappearing; therefore, there is a high probability that none of the women disappeared.

Once inside the walls of STIC several of the nurses kept written records. Garen kept a notebook; Norman (1999) claims it was not a diary. Garen logged in her notebook, which she kept as a safety valve for her sanity, her thoughts and activities on her birthday; she preferred the

jungle and warfare to STIC (Norman, 1999, pp. 177-178). Unlike Garen, Young kept a diary. Young, against all regulations, kept a diary while in camp and recorded the activities for history (Monahan, 2000, p. 113). 09 November 1943, Young noted in her diary that now would be a good time to be rescued, lots of things were getting on her nerves to include the snooty civilians (Monahan, 2000, p. 120). This type of entry would allow the future discoverer of the record to understand the demographics of the camps population. There was a mixture of military and civilians in STIC.

The searches were stepped up in February 1944 and Young put her diary away (Monahan, 2000, pp. 127-28). However, in January 1945, Young claims people just fall over and that she is too weak to write (Monahan, 2000, p. 152). This entry would indicate that the internees were not fed well and that starvation was near. Starvation is also documented by Bruentta Kuehlthau, who also writes about the lack of food and what happens to people who are starving; “everytime [sic] there was an American victory in the Pacific area, the Japs would cut our rations again” (Tomblin, 1996, p. 34). The Japanese obviously did not want the world to know about the starvation of internees, since according to Kuehlthau that when the doctor wrote malnutrition and starvation on a death certificate he was punished (Tomblin, 1996, p. 34).

Finally on the topic of food, Nash destroyed her diary about February 1944, she was tired of burying it after each entry, and furthermore, the lack of vitamins was affecting her eyesight (Monahan, 2000, p. 128). Other women discussed in the narratives, how they documented allied victories, this would allow the reader to know they were still alive at the time of the victory. The notation in Shacklette’s diary was “glorious” referring to the Allied raid on 21 September 1944 (Norman, 1999, p. 190). At other times, it was not a diary entry that documented a victory. It was

a note on the bulletin board that read “one down, two to go” Williams knew it meant Italy had surrendered, the internees told the Japanese it was a ball game score (Williams, 1985, p. 178).

Documenting gave life to pieces of history. Even with the documentation, these pieces of history were almost lost since the women were silenced by the United States Military. Once the female military POWs of WWII returned to the United States, they were ordered to keep silent about their experiences (Lopez, 1998, p. 61; Monahan, 2000, p. 177). It was not until the Reagan administration that the few remaining women were allowed to speak. This piece of history was almost lost. One important question is “Why were these women silenced for so many years?” Was it because men failed to protect them, or that, military leaders had actually surrendered their bodies? No matter the answers to these questions. The women had their own plans. Those plans included protecting their lives, their bodies and the lives of their fellow soldiers. The next acts of resistance were gendered. This is unique because gender was not in the war plans.

Maneuvers to Protect from Sexual Harassment, Abuse and Rape

Much like the MCC articles, the previous acts of resistance were gender free. However, as clearly stated by Twomey (2005), scholarship, literature and references to the rape of male American POWs are close to nonexistent (Twomey, 2005, p. 177), yet the actual rape, the threat of rape or the public discussions of rape were part of every female POWs experience. As previously stated the American nurses were well aware of the “Rape of Nanking” and the brutality associated with Japanese. Approximately 50 years later, women in two separate wars were aware of the crimes committed against women at the hands of Iraqi soldiers. In all the wars in which American military women have been captured, not only were the women aware, but the American public was aware. Fellow troops were also aware, to include the men serving alongside of these women and the men militarily in control of these women. It is the decision

made by these men in military control to surrender their troops and possibly the bodies of their female troops that forces these women to offer forms of resistance against captors, a form of resistance against a specific abuse that male troops have immunity.

Male troops are virtually anxiety free when it comes to sexual harassment, sexual abuses and rape. In general, the topic of rape is gendered: men rape; women are raped. The discourse on rape is only beginning to include the topic of any other scenario other than the woman as the victim. To add to the complexity of the topic, the Japanese and the Iraqis were racialized as hostile to women, not only hostile but hypersexual with a deviant appetite for brutality connected to sex. It is under these circumstances that the Japanese marched into the open city of Manila and found the abandoned navy nurses. Laura Cobb, the head navy nurse, had her nurses work 7am to 9 pm and then had corpsmen take over, so that the women would not be alone near the Japanese at night (Norman, 1999, p. 28). Cobb is not the only nurse to believe that safety could be found in numbers. On Corregidor, as the Japanese entered the tunnels to take control, Nesbit gathered the Filipina nurses around her to protect them (Norman, 1999, p. 133). Davison ordered her nurses to continue working and never to wander off alone (Monahan, 2000, p. 90); furthermore, her orders include that her nurses were to remain in uniform with the Red Cross armband displayed at all times hoping the Japanese would respect their non combatant status (Norman, 1999, p. 131).

When not on duty in Malinta Tunnel, the nurses were to remain in their sleeping lateral, while on duty they were to remain on the ward lateral (Norman, 1999, p. 131). In an act that could have meant her beating or death, Davison halted a group of Japanese officers and refused to allow them in the nurses' lateral until all the nurses were fully dressed (Monahan, 2000, p. 92). Davison was not about to let anything happen to the troops under her command. Therefore,

when the nurses were moved to a new lateral, Davison took the bunk closest to the entrance (Monahan, 2000, p. 94). If Davison was not able to pull guard duty, Mealor remembers that a nurse would be posted with a bell all night long and as soon as a Japanese soldier appeared, the nurse would ring the bell and all the fully uniformed nurses would jump out of bed (Monahan, 2000, p. 92; Norman 1999, p. 135).

The significance of the sleeping arrangements is important when discussing the incident that involved Menzie and Putnam. Menzie was newly married on Corregidor and was sharing a private space with her husband in Malinta Tunnel until the Japanese took control. Once the Japanese took control, the Menzie couple was split up; Mary remained in the tunnel, while her husband was forced topside. Alone in the space the couple had occupied Menzie invites Putnam to share the space. The results of this arrangement are further discussed in this chapter and Chapter Three. The remaining women in Malinta Tunnel used strength in numbers as a form of resistance against attacks on their bodies. Depending on the narrative read, this tactic seemed to work. Yet, there is the case of Putnam and Menzie: On 09 May 1942, Menzie fought off a rape attempt and endured a cut wrist in the melee. Menzie woke to a Japanese officer standing above her with a dagger, she screamed jumped out of bed and ran to the nurses' lateral (Williams, 1985, p. 109). Once this was reported to the Japanese in command, it was decided that it must have been an American or a Filipino that attempted to rape her (Norman, 1999, p. 137; Williams, 1985, p. 111); Menzie and her roommate moved in with the other nurses (Norman, 1999, p. 137). However, this story also takes on another narrative: While bunking with Menzie in the Malinta Tunnels, Putnam was able to avoid a rape by leading the Japanese rapist's hand to her sanitary napkin (Kaminski, 2000, p. 96). Finally, the narrative takes on a totally different theme.

Williams' (1985) report on the incident is different. In fact, it is so different that Williams changes Beulah Putnam's name to Kate Clark²⁷ (Williams, 1985, p. 109). This name change is the only name change made in any narrative except the book written by Dorothy Still Danner, *What a Way to Spend a War: Navy Nurse POWs in the Philippines* (1995). Danner changes the names of all the nurses; furthermore, Danner was in Manila at the time of the Putnam incident. Nonetheless, Putnam's name is the only name change in all the other narratives. This name change indicates that something more happened. This something more was the focus of Chapter Three. There are other incidents that have different narratives such as the G string incident. Norman (1999) offers one scenario claiming that after the incident with Menzie and Putnam, the Japanese soldiers paraded by the nurse's lateral in their G strings (Norman, 1999, p. 137). However, Monahan offers a less deviant scenario. Monahan claims that after a Japanese officer had his appendix removed his guard was prancing around in his G string; this angered Mealor and she gave some khaki to an officer who spoke Japanese and told him to tell the half naked man to make some pants if he didn't have any (Monahan, 2000, p. 94).

Much like the Putnam incident, the narratives on this incident do not agree. This can only mean that there were different truths for different women all in reflection of the same disturbing experiences. Once the nurses were moved to STIC, privacy and space became a luxury, a luxury that the POWs did not have. The Japanese would watch the women shower, so Brantley would put a wash rag over her face, if she could not see them they could not see her (Lopez, 1998, p. 43). Brantley claims that if a woman asked for privacy, guards would tell them to close their eyes (Jackson, 2000, p. 31). According to Henshaw, at STIC people showered in groups, so there was

²⁷ Beulah Putnam is the focus of Chapter Three

no privacy, you close your eyes and just shut them out; next you just continued the practice until you just shut down (Norman, 1999, p. 167).

Shutting down became a personal type of privacy; a privacy created by each woman who chose to build walls to protect her psyche. However, privacy was not an issue for the women in the Iraq wars. According to the Geneva Conventions, to which Iraq was a signatory, women POWs are to be separated from male POWs. This meant that for the most part the women did not have strength in numbers. The women were isolated, kept separate from the men and in this isolation, fear grew. At one point when Johnson was separated from the men, she claimed that she was left wearing only her brown T-shirt and bra, they had taken her outer shirt. However, Johnson felt relief that she had decided to wear a sports bra when the Americans left on convoy, knowing it would be harder for them to get that off her if this was something they were planning to do (Johnson, 2010, p. 16). While being transported in a vehicle to her first holding place, the scene turned more violent when the backseat man grabbed Johnson's breast.

It was a vicious, mean grab, his entire hand taking what he could in one go. I screamed and tried to cover up, my arms wrapped around my chest. My heart and soul went into that scream. I screamed with indignation, with all the fear and anger that I could muster. His eyes got huge and he cringed away from me, as if surprised that I would actually object to the manhandling. (Johnson, 2010, p. 17).

Johnson continued to be the recipient of unwanted advances.

Several times he even tried to hold my hand. I would snatch my hand away, appalled by his audacity. I was his prisoner. I didn't want him to get any ideas, and worried that he might let himself into my cell sometime when no one else was around to stop him. It always made me nervous when my door was opened, and it was him, the flirt, standing there waiting to take me to the WC. He made it obvious that he knew I had little control over the situation. Once, he stroked my cheek and ran his hand down the back of my

neck as if in a caress. I pulled away from him, but it didn't seem to deter him. On one trip he took me to the WC and attempted to hold my hand as I shuffled along, but just as he reached for me, another guard came around the corner and he quickly moved his hand awayIt eased my fears but it didn't stop him from flirting (Johnson, 2010 p. 142).

While this close call may not have stopped the unwanted advances from “the flirt” Johnson was certain that his actions were not approved of by his superiors and that she could, if she had to, use it against him at a later date. The later date never came; this was about the same time that Johnson was roomed with the male troops and the Iraqis started to move the POWs more often. Nevertheless, Johnson was not the only female POW to have to fight off an Iraqi's aggressive behavior. A decade earlier, Cornum reports in her book that she also had to fight off the inappropriate advances of an Iraqi captor. “My scream made him stop for a second, but then he started fondling my breasts and kissing me” (Cornum, 1992, p. 49). In both cases, Cornum and Johnson, the Iraqi stopped because he was afraid of being caught. “I realized then that he stopped not because of my pain, but because he was doing something he was not supposed to do, and he was afraid his comrades in the cab would hear me scream (Cornum, 1992, p. 50). Cornum was not alone when the Iraqi was fondling her; Dunlap was also in the cab of the truck. Dunlap's presence and the consequences that could have arisen because of his presence are also discussed by Cornum.

Conclusion

While this chapter has provided ample evidence that American military female POWs are capable and willing to abide by the MCC and provide resistance to the enemy, the focus of discussion about American military female POWs remains to be the topic of rape. It does not

matter that these women risked their lives in combat and rescue missions, nor that they continued to resist the enemy once captured. These forms of resistance became inconsequential when the public discussed these women's roles in the military and the war. The only narrative the public wants is a rape narrative, because this rape narrative reinforces the patriarchal status quo.

Chapter Five

So Proudly We Fail to Recognize Courage Under Fire

...and the former POW's had signed statements agreeing not to speak of the atrocities they had seen (Monahan 177).

"Hell, it'll have to be a surrender or the worst massacre in history. Do you realize we now have 7000 casualties here? And there aren't any front lines. We haven't anything to fight with except coconuts and bamboo sticks" 8 April 1942, a US Army Major (Williams pg. 76).

"There was no rear area – this was it, everyone fought to the last ditch"
Lucy Wilson – (Jopling, pg. 42)

"You get her out of this. We can't have that happen to her again" As her evacuation plane taxied down the runway, Bradley could hear the sound of [North Korean] sniper fire just outside the aircraft door (Norman, pg. 252)

"There they learned that Jessica Lynch had been rescued. 'We were all excited because we believed she was dead,'" Hernandez remembered (Martinez 113).

As I have mentioned previously, the American military female POWs from WWII were forced to sign agreements never to discuss their experiences. This ban was lifted by President Reagan. By keeping a silence order on the 85 women held as POWs during WWII, a significant portion of American History was almost erased. I wrote this thesis to help preserve these histories and explain further how society functioned during these significant times and around these specific events.

Specifically, I wished to continue a conversation about women in the military and furthermore begin one about the image of American military female POWs. In my literature review, I provided the reader with a systematic analysis of women, from vulnerable white woman to competent soldier. Then, keeping these theories in mind, I analyzed the narratives the 90 American military female POWs. In Chapter One, I applied Roland's (1997) work "Massacre and Rape in Hong Kong: Two Case Studies Involving Medical Personnel and Patients." to better understand the circumstances under which these 90 American women became POWs. In Chapter Two, I described and analyzed the socio-historical evolution of the American military female POW's image. I also built on what Bacevich (2005) defined as a utilization of Hollywood to reinforce the military's image, and carefully selected films with themes specific to female soldiers. I then analyzed these films and further applied the works of Brown (1996) and Williams (1991) and built upon the ideas of gender neutrality and the final girl. By synthesizing the works of scholars from different disciplines, I found that a very complex woman was constructed; a woman whose gender was fluid. This woman was able to move from what Stiehm (1982) labeled as protected to protector. However, this complex woman was still framed by American society as a whore or a dyke (Meyer, 1992; Williams, 2005; Scott, 1997; Zwick, 1996).

Nevertheless, in Chapter Two, I also addressed the female moving from a designated victim (Davis, 2005) role to one of aggressor (Linville, 2000; Cock, 1997). After discussing how Hollywood contributed to the image of the American military female, in Chapter Three, I explored the often taboo subject of rape (Williams, 1985; Kaminski, 1999; Kuhn, 1999; Norman 1999). I continued to work with Stiehm's (1982) concept of protected and protector and synthesized these roles with the works of Davis (1985), Day (2001), Ignacio (2005), and Hutchings (2008) and with the intersectionalities of gender and race, the reasons behind the rape narrative become clearer. I provided further evidence that in order for society to function in a status quo, orderly manner, gender roles and expectations cannot be fluid and any deviance of gender expectations will result in violence, and my discussion of the films showed that this violence had become more extreme.

Finally, my thesis ends with what the narratives of POWs could look like if gender expectations and roles were only partially modified. In Chapter Four, I provide ample evidence that American women are capable of functioning as competent soldiers in the hypermasculine military and furthermore, that they are capable of surviving captivity at the hands of the enemy. The vast majority of these women returned to civilian life and raised families; society did not collapse. Returning to civilian life was not the only option; some of the women such as Bradley, Ullom, Cornum and others made and are making the military a career. Therefore, gender roles and expectations are at best artificial expectations attached to genitalia and have no validity when discussing the defense of the nation.

My thesis had time and monetary constraints, as do most projects. Therefore, I acknowledge that there are areas that could and should be explored further by a variety of

scholars in diverse disciplines. There are additional areas that should be researched in the future, such as the silence of male POW rape. Another area that I believe should be researched more thoroughly is regarding the depiction of Jessica Lynch's experience; what was the purpose of building an "Amazon image" only to destroy it later? In addition why did they attach that image to an Appalachian troop?

Further research and work should also focus on the numerous fake POWs that I ran across in my research. In my opinion, Juanita Smith was the most interesting case because she clearly based the story of her military / POW life on the scripts of *So Proudly We Hail* and *Women of Valor* (1986), and the public believed her. I believe this adds evidence to the power film has over the viewing audience because the event specifics that Smith retold were historically false: new nurses did *not* arrive in the Philippines for the battle of Bataan after Pearl Harbor and there were *no* American women on the Bataan Death March.

Finally, further research should focus on the permeability of POW camps and how information, people and money gets in and out of POW camps. Of particular interest is how General Electric executives inside STIC loaned the nurses money to buy food for survival (Norman 1999), but did not subtract from the bill any medical care they received from the nurses. The nurses paid for their food, but their labor was expected to be an act of love. In other words, the expectations of the Cult of Domesticity survived inside of the POW camps and continued to function as a social norm in a place that was anything but normal. I have shown, however, that these nurses' labor was performed due to a sense of duty to their nation and their profession; furthermore, it gave the women a reason to survive where countless died.

In conclusion, I have shown that the Cult of Domesticity and especially the fear and threat of rape has been and continues to be used to hamper the upward mobility of women in the hypermasculine world of the military. Women soldiers are limited to basic combat training, and these soldiers, because they are female, are denied combat training on the assumption that if captured, they will put men at risk. I have shown, though, that these fears and artificial gender roles and expectations severely limit the training that could help prevent the loss of lives and protect our nation. Furthermore, the lack of total integration into all military roles isolates female troops, leaving them relegated to a secondary role that they may not be subject to in the civilian world. I have suggested that military women are *protected* from the risk of enemy rape. If the rape of Putnam happened, and I suggest that it did, then the rape on one woman in 90 is not sufficient reason to block thousands of women who desire to make the military a career from doing so, anymore than the rape of one woman who happens to be a night shift nurse at a city hospital should ban women from nursing, night shifts or hospital work.

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