

Identifying Sociological Factors Affecting Female Integration into Combat Arms

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Abstract

When Secretary of Defense, Leon Panetta, rescinded the 1994 direct ground combat definition and assignment rule in January 2014 he set in motion changes that will have sociological impacts across the Army's combat arms. Therefore, Army leaders need to be aware of sociological theories commonly associated with individual / group acceptance as they integrate females into previously all-male units. Social Learning Theory explains how individuals learn as much, or more, from watching those around them as from their own actions. In-group Bias addresses internal biases groups develop to differentiate themselves from those not in the group and how the group dynamic works to maintain the homogeneity of the original group. Stereotype Threat describes the various ways minority individuals cope with the feeling of being judged by their minority status versus their actual skills and abilities. Each of these theories provide valuable insight to leaders concerning the changing group dynamics within combat arms units, enabling them to tailor their leadership to integrate females successfully.

Identifying Sociological Factors Affecting Female Integration into Combat Arms

If members of our military can meet the qualifications for a job - and let me be clear, I'm not talking about reducing the qualifications for the job - if they can meet the qualifications for the job, then they should have the right to serve...

—Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta¹

Mr. Panetta made this statement in 2013 when he directed the rescission of the 1994 Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule for women in the U.S. military. The 1994 ground combat exclusion rule stated:

Rule - Service members are eligible to be assigned to all positions for which they are qualified, except that women shall be excluded from assignments to units below the brigade level whose primary mission is to engage in direct combat on the ground, as defined below.

Definition - Direct combat is engaging an enemy on the ground with individual or crew served weapons, while being exposed to hostile fire and to a high probability of direct physical contact with the hostile force's personnel. Direct ground combat takes place well forward on the battlefield while locating and closing with the enemy to defeat them by fire, maneuver, or shock effect.²

Mr. Panetta then directed the military departments to determine how to implement his guidance as quickly as possible, "Even as we recognize the need to take time to institutionalize changes of this importance."³ Within the Army there have been varied responses as the institution complied with Mr. Panetta's guidance. Specifically within the Army's combat arms branches, reaction to the directed change has spanned the gamut from willingness, to hesitancy, to seeming hostility. On December 4, 2015, the Acting Secretary of the Army, the Army Chief of Staff; and the Command Sergeant Major of the Army implemented Mr. Panetta's guidance with a directive instituting the full integration of women in all military occupational specialties (MOS). The directive stated that, "Our best qualified, regardless of gender, will now be afforded the opportunity to serve in any MOS."⁴

The purpose of this paper is to analyze sociological theories that have tremendous explanatory power in assisting leaders to better understand the varied responses associated with integrating females into direct ground combat units, and to recommend leader actions to best account for and counter the negative impacts, and capitalize on the positive aspects of the sociological phenomena. In pursuit of this goal, this paper will concentrate on the effects of three sociological theories. The first theory is the *Social Learning Theory* which posits that learning in a social environment can take place merely through the observation of others' behaviors and the subsequent consequences.⁵ The second theory is the theory of *In-group Bias*, in which a group with apparent similarities bonds together as an in-group against outsiders, or out-groups.⁶ Finally, this paper will explore the effects of "*Stereotype Threat* – the expectation that one will be judged or perceived on the basis of social identity group membership rather than actual performance and potential, and or attitudes and behaviors."⁷

Each of these theories potentially illuminates and explains both conscious and subconscious responses to the integration of women into previously closed combat arms units. It is imperative that Army leaders in these units become aware of these theories and how responses to integration may manifest. This knowledge enables leaders to take action to overcome negative aspects, and capitalize on positive aspects of the theories to enable the successful integration of women into combat arms. Mr. Panetta clearly illustrated the need for the Army to make cultural and force structure changes when he stated, "Not everyone is going to be able to be a combat soldier. But everyone is entitled to a chance."⁸

Social Learning Theory

Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Jeffrey A. Rarig, 1-4 Infantry Regimental Commander, in Hohenfels Germany made the decision to grant a young female Engineer lieutenant such a chance in the late 1990s. Lieutenant Colonel Rarig made his decision, in part, based on the advice of Captain (CPT) Christopher P. Papaioannou, the 1-4 Regimental Engineer, who thought the gender of his Assistant Regimental Engineer was irrelevant as long as the individual was competent and willing to learn. Captain Papaioannou immediately tasked the lieutenant to build a 300 meter triple-standard concertina wire obstacle, with mines, to standard - by herself. He did not explain himself to the lieutenant; he simply gave her the mission and waited to see if she would and could accomplish it successfully. It took the lieutenant 18 hours over two rainy days to accomplish the mission, but she did it to standard and helped defeat three Infantry companies (in conjunction with artillery fires), during a situational training exercise (STX) mission.

During the STX after action review (AAR) LTC Rarig told the Regiment's soldiers that the obstacle they could not defeat was built by one soldier - a female Engineer lieutenant. In response to this feedback, many of the soldiers were dismissive of the idea of a female building a complex obstacle, while others demonstrated anger towards the young lieutenant. LTC Rarig quickly countered the soldiers' angry outburst by stating that the lieutenant had proven herself and he would not tolerate anyone treating her as less than an equal in the Regiment. The lieutenant then spent a year in 1-4, providing Engineer support to the Regiment, completing countless combat engineer missions during ten high intensity (combat) and two low intensity (stability operations) training exercises. She was soon accepted as part of the OpFor team, and earned such

a positive reputation that BluFor units often put a bounty out for her 'kill' or capture during rotations.⁹

Lieutenant Colonel Rarig and CPT Papaioannou offered the lieutenant this opportunity long before female integration was even a topic of discussion for most Army leaders. It is highly unlikely that either leader was familiar with the social learning theory, but their actions provide an excellent example of how the elements of Social Learning can guide an organization through a potentially contentious change. Both leaders led by and through example.

The Social Learning Theory posits that learning takes place in social environments through simply observing how others behave and interact with one another.¹⁰ Prior to 1971 the overwhelming conclusion about why people behave as they do was attributed to "inner forces in the form of needs, drives and impulses, often operating below the level of consciousness."¹¹ The thought was that people were inherently one way or another--for instance they were good vs. bad, or lazy vs. industrious--without much interference from outside stimuli. Albert Bandura, a social science professor at Stanford University, challenged this line of thinking when he proposed that external factors also played an important role in defining human behaviors. He further determined that one must not actually have to have the direct experience to learn from it.¹² Bandura stated,

In actuality, virtually all learning phenomena resulting from direct experiences can occur on a vicarious basis through observation of other peoples' behavior and its consequences for them. Man's capacity to learn by observation enables him to acquire large, integrated units of behavior by example without having to build up the patterns gradually by tedious trial and error.¹³

His theory was that peoples' behaviors were learned and influenced by both direct and indirect experiences. When people learn through direct experience it is generally at more rudimentary levels, governed primarily by rewards and punishments that function as reinforcement mechanisms.¹⁴ "Within the framework of social learning theory, reinforcement primarily serves informative and incentive functions."¹⁵ The informative function is based upon people watching and learning from the consequences of either their own actions or the actions of others.¹⁶ "On the basis of this informative feedback, they develop hypotheses about the types of behaviors most likely to succeed."¹⁷ The incentive feedback is based upon the ability to anticipate what will bring about positive consequences based upon their past experiences.¹⁸ "People come to expect that certain actions will [yield] outcomes they value, others will have no appreciable effects, and still others will produce undesired results."¹⁹ Both the informative and incentive functions rely heavily on direct learning, but can also result from the indirect learning resulting from watching others' painful and pleasurable experiences.

Bandura allowed that while much behavior is shaped by direct learning; "Learning would be exceedingly laborious and hazardous if it proceeded solely on this basis."²⁰ His conclusions point not only to the likelihood of indirect learning, but to the sheer necessity for people to learn from one another, rather than learning purely by personal experience. Imagine attempting to learn something as complicated as language without someone to model inflections and speech patterns; it would be virtually impossible. Similarly, social constructs must be learned from others for a person to adapt within a culture. Usually social cues are learned as children, but when

adults enter new environments they must often relearn social cues to adapt to their new group in order to be effective and accepted.²¹

It is difficult to imagine a socialization process in which the language, mores, vocational activities, familial customs, and the educational, religious, and political practices of a culture are taught to each new member by selective reinforcement of fortuitous behaviors, without the benefit of models who exemplify the cultural patterns in their own behaviors.²²

Although Bandura included certain social aspects in his model, such as religious and political practices which do not explicitly align with Army cultural norms, the remaining elements he highlights transfer very closely to the Army. Much of the Army's traditional and cultural elements are learned by observing others. Newly enlisted soldiers begin learning how the Army works by watching their drill sergeants and continue learning by watching their noncommissioned officers (NCOs) and officers throughout their first formative years as soldiers. While drill sergeants, NCOs and officers certainly use direct teaching methods to train new enlistees and young soldiers how to perform their required skills, such as marching, shooting and conducting battle drills; some of the most important elements of being soldiers are taught silently. New enlistees watch their drill sergeants' every move to see how they carry themselves, how they wear their uniforms, and most particularly how they interact with seniors and subordinates. This indirect learning of social interaction continues as soldiers go to their first units and influences the young soldiers throughout the remainder of their time in the Army. The end result of this dynamic informs new members how to think, feel, and behave in response to virtually any social stimulus in the Army.

Social Darwinist, William Graham Sumner, also wrote about the elements of learned group behaviors, stating, "All at last adopted the same way for the same

purpose; hence the ways turned into customs and became mass phenomena. Instincts were developed in connection with them. The young learn them by tradition, imitation and authority.”²³ The Army’s culture and values have been adopted and turned into customs as generations of new soldiers learned “them by, tradition, imitation and authority.”²⁴ The Army now stands on the precipice of breaking down some of its exclusionary traditions and has the opportunity to establish new ones which should not only allow, but should welcome females into direct combat units. Army leaders need to understand and embrace the change and apply the social learning theory to lead future generations of soldiers by and through example.

Social learning is inherently neutral. What is taught through social learning can be either positive or negative in its nature. LTC Rarig, through his actions and acceptance of a female lieutenant in an Infantry Regiment demonstrated positive behaviors from which the younger officers and soldiers could learn. Had he chosen not to accept the female lieutenant into the unit he would have taught all of the soldiers and junior leaders that females were not welcome. Or, if he had simply not specifically stated that the lieutenant was to be treated as every other soldier in the unit he would have potentially risked allowing her treatment to be determined and influenced by the exclusionary traditions of the Infantry. Following his initial guidance that the lieutenant would be treated as an equal to other soldiers; he adhered to his own edicts and treated her like her male counterparts in the unit. The female lieutenant had to live up to the same expectations and standards of the unit and received correction and praise in accordance with her performance. Through his demonstrated acceptance, direct statements and follow-on actions, LTC Rarig began to form new traditions for 1-4

soldiers to emulate when he gave the lieutenant an opportunity to prove herself and to do her engineer mission.

Today's combat arms leaders must follow in his footsteps and openly accept females into their ranks if the Army's newly approved female integration policy is to be successful. Leaders at all levels, tactical through strategic, must demonstrate through their actions that they will accept Mr. Panetta's original premise that, "If they can meet the qualifications for the job, then they should have the right to serve."²⁵ Soldiers in combat arms branches will be watching and listening for indirect learning cues from their leaders to determine the future path of the Army. Leaders have a great opportunity to eliminate one of the last artificial barriers to equality in the Army by enforcing the new gender-neutral standards and allowing anyone who meets them to excel. To do this, leaders must be both vocal supporters of the new policy and visual supporters. Soldiers will see if females are treated differently, either negatively or positively, and they will learn by "tradition, imitation and authority."²⁶

In-Group Bias

William Sumner defined in-groups as resulting when, "Groups may have some relation to each other (kin, neighborhood, alliance...) which draws them together and differentiates them from others. Thus a differentiation arises between ourselves, the we-group, or in-group, and everybody else, or the other groups or out-groups."²⁷ Therefore, in-group bias is the exclusion of out-groups in favor of those who "conceive of themselves in terms of the defining features of a common and distinctive in-group."²⁸ Often the defining features bringing an in-group together are related to an individual's social identity.²⁹

British social psychologist, Henri Tajfel, defined social identity as “that *part* of the individual’s self-concept which derives from their knowledge of their membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership.”³⁰ Importantly, acknowledging and embracing one’s social identity causes an individual to alter his or her individual identity through three interconnected cognitive processes. First, individuals place value judgments on themselves based on expectations associated with the defining traits and characteristics of the group they belong to (in-group prototype). Next, they cognitively and behaviorally assimilate themselves to these defining traits and characteristics and begin to develop stereotypic perceptions, attitudes and behaviors. Finally, they begin to view others, both in-group and out-group individuals, not as unique individuals, but through the lens of features that define relevant in-group and out-group membership.³¹ So, an individual’s perception of him/herself is closely tied to the groups with which he or she is affiliated. This close affiliation causes an individual to guard the power and exclusivity of the group and its distinctive identity as a way to protect his/her self-esteem.³² Tajfel further clarified, “Because groups only exist in relation to other groups, they derive their descriptive and evaluative properties, and thus their social meaning, in relation to these other groups.”³³

Within the Army there are many distinct in-groups; most of them are positive reflections of the proud traditions and heritage associated with each branch or unit. The Army’s esprit de corps is an integral part of its success and will remain as such in the future. As recruits complete basic combat training (BCT) and advanced individual training (AIT), learning their MOS, they will join their branches as full-fledged soldiers and be integrated into their MOS in-groups. Additionally, when soldiers join their first

units and learn the history and accomplishments associated with the unit they will become part of the in-group that consists of all soldiers past and present who have served in that unit. So, there are positive aspects of the in-group bias when the group is open to others to join and is inclusive of all. The Army must strive to maintain the positive elements of in-group within its structure, while eliminating the negative.

The negative elements of in-group bias result from groups that demonstrate exclusive tendencies. The previously acceptable all-male in-groups within the combat arms branches are now unacceptable due to their exclusion of females. If the Army's combat arms branches do not accept Mr. Panetta's rescission of the 1994 Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule for women in the U.S. military, and the recent full integration of women in the Army they run the risk of succumbing to the negative aspects of in-group bias. Sumner reflected on the unwillingness of groups to change and stated,

It is evident that the "ways" of the older and more experienced members of a society deserve great authority in any group. We find that this rational authority leads to customs of deference and to etiquette in favor of the old. The old in turn cling stubbornly to tradition and to the example of their predecessors. Thus tradition and custom become intertwined and are a strong coercion which directs the society upon fixed lines, and strangles liberty.³⁴

His reflection on both the desire of the older members to maintain the status quo, and on their strong influence in the group highlight the degree of influence leaders have on group norms and behaviors. As with the social learning theory, in-group bias relies heavily on senior people in the group to establish or change the norms within a group. If leaders, particularly senior officers and NCOs, within the combat arms branches, "Cling stubbornly to tradition and the example of their predecessors"³⁵ and are unwilling to

accept females, they will exacerbate the in-group dynamics already established in all-male combat arms organizations.

For an in-group to develop, individuals within it must be able to distinguish themselves from others in some distinct and meaningful way, such as ethnicity, religion, beliefs or in the case of Army combat arms branches - gender.³⁶ Sumner described the need for in-groups to set themselves apart when he wrote, "Each group nourishes its own pride and vanity, boasts itself superior, exalts its own divinities, and looks with contempt upon outsiders."³⁷ Not only does the personal identification reinforce the like elements within the in-group and highlight the differences with out-groups, it also creates an inherent need for groups to resist change from within. In addition to the older group members clinging to tradition, the in-group also has an internal resistance to change.

The relation of comradeship and peace in the we-group and that of hostility and war towards other-groups are correlative to each other. The exigencies of war with outsiders are what make peace inside, lest internal discord should weaken the we-group for war. These exigencies also make government and law in the in-group, in order to prevent war and enforce discipline.³⁸

Essentially, individuals within an in-group will police themselves to avoid the possibility of creating differences within the in-group which might cause it to fracture internally. This self-policing makes change within an in-group very difficult to achieve and might actually result in the destruction of the original in-group into new in-groups. The newly formed in-groups would by their very nature have new values and distinctions that now make them out-groups to the former in-group from which they originated.³⁹ Therefore, it is probable that combat arms in-groups will resist the change to accept females as they consciously or subconsciously fight to maintain their former

in-group dynamics. As such, it is imperative for combat arms leaders to confront in-group bias within existing combat arms units. If leaders do not set the example in changing in-group biases, females will remain in the out-group and will not be able to fulfill their duties to the best of their abilities. Leaders must be vigilant and watch for any in-group / out-group behaviors and be willing to address any issues immediately. As previously discussed, when in-groups change their values new in-groups are formed. So, when fears of reduced or destroyed unit cohesion are brought forward, leaders should counter with the fact that a new, more inclusive, in-group is likely to form following the destruction of the old in-group.

In addition to changing norms within existing combat arms in-groups, Army leaders must also ensure cultural change begins in BCT and the basic officer leadership courses (BOLC). When new enlistees and officers join the Army, they are not members of any in-group and therefore it is possible to break the cycle of negative in-group bias through good leadership. University of Queensland psychology professor, Michael A. Hogg, defines leadership as, "A process of influence that enlists and mobilizes the involvement of others in the attainment of collective goals; it is not a coercive process in which power is exercised over others."⁴⁰ Basic Combat Training and BOLC drill sergeants and instructors are leaders, "And their suggestions are intrinsically persuasive because they embody the norms of the group; they have referent power, and therefore do not need to exercise personal power."⁴¹ Similar to the benefits of applying the social learning theory, new soldiers and officers will learn by example and will not learn previously accepted in-group biases against females in combat arms.

Stereotype Threat

The previous two sociological theories affecting the integration of females into combat arms units have dealt with external factors; stereotype threat addresses an internal element to female integration. "Stereotype threat is the expectation that one will be judged or perceived on the basis of social identity group membership rather than actual performance or potential"⁴² and affects both genders. Stereotype threat deals primarily with how women and other minorities, placed in a minority status, with possible negative assumptions about their minority group will react differently than in a situation of equal status. Additionally, Stereotype Threat also results in negative impacts among the majority population in the group. For example, a member of a dominant social identity group may demonstrate avoidance, and or distancing type behaviors in relation to a minority group individual to avoid being judged negatively on the basis on a negative stereotype.⁴³ Paradoxically, by doing so an individual may in fact perpetuate the very behavior they seek to avoid. Consider the idea of a male in a combat unit being reluctant or refusing to interact with a female for fear of being accused of inappropriate behavior. Similarly, that same male may also avoid interaction with females for fear of being labeled by other males as demonstrating favoritism towards females. In either case, as females observe this avoidance and distancing behavior, the negative stereotype about the majority group being opposed to the integration of females is actually confirmed.

Stereotype threat has been found to occur when the following conditions are met: (a) the task an individual is performing is relevant to the stereotype about an individual's group, (b) the task is challenging, (c) the individual is performing in a domain with which he or she identifies, and (d) the context in which the task is being performed is likely to reinforce the stereotype.⁴⁴

Research has shown that being in a token minority status often exacerbates negative stereotypes for women and minorities. One key element to negative stereotyping of women is that they are often seen to be lacking in leadership skills, this is particularly alarming for women in the Army where leadership is an integral part of a soldier's job.⁴⁵

Caryn Block and her associates write about typical responses to stereotype threat in the workplace. Many individuals when faced with an environment which induces stereotype threat respond by, "Fending off the stereotype."⁴⁶ In the case of a female in a minority situation, she will often work very hard to prove that the stereotype does not actually apply to her, and that she is individually different from the group she is being associated with under the stereotype. While this can produce great productivity and likely personal accolades for the individual fending off the stereotype, it comes at a personal cost to the individual who is being forced to separate from her natural group.⁴⁷ There are many ways a minority female could "fend off" the stereotype. Some have apparent positive aspects, while others are clearly negative. However, whether visibly positive or negative, the internal results are often negative in the long term for the individual and the organization.

Among specific responses used to fend off the stereotype is *Invigoration*, which "occurs when individuals respond to stereotype threat by overcompensating and working harder to meet their goals."⁴⁸ Women in the Army often state they feel they need to work twice as hard to earn half the credit of their male counterparts. They feel as if their work must be impeccable to avoid being judged as a "female" and not simply as another soldier. This will likely increase for women who are accepted into previously

closed combat arms branches; as they will be assessed on their abilities to do what no other females have been permitted to do thus far.

Another fending mechanism relates to internal attributions. This response results when women, “Prefer to attribute negative outcomes to their own personal inadequacies rather than discrimination.”⁴⁹ By internalizing the failure it serves to provide “a self-protective measure. If negative outcomes are attributed to prejudice or stereotypes, individuals may feel helpless in the face of discrimination.”⁵⁰ A qualified female officer who is not selected for a prestigious position may prefer to accept the decision as being due to a shortcoming in her qualifications, rather than the decision having been based on her gender. This internal attribution assumption leaves future job selections within her grasp, she simply must work harder. Whereas, if she accepts the loss of position based on her gender, there is nothing she can do to help herself, which is unacceptable to many high performing individuals.

To avoid being helpless, some women will fend off the stereotype threat through, “Identity bifurcation, which occurs when individuals psychologically distance themselves from their negatively stereotyped group.”⁵¹ For instance women in the Army who want to distance themselves from negative female stereotypes, such as being flirtatious or manipulative, will downplay many of their feminine characteristics. Common forms of this may include eschewing any make-up, having very short hair, or refusing to wear dresses and other feminine clothing. These actions serve to help distance women from the negative aspects of feminine identity in the military.⁵²

Another way to fend off the negative aspects of a stereotype is through assimilation, as stereotyped individuals attempt to “assume the characteristics of a more

positively regarded social group.”⁵³ This is most commonly seen among different social or ethnic groups, but can be applied to women in the Army as well. Female soldiers may attempt to talk more coarsely, like their male counterparts, they may drink more heavily in mixed company to “be one of the guys” or they may simply choose to socialize more with groups of men than women. All of these assimilations are designed to camouflage the differences between the stereotyped individual and the majority group, denying the female an opportunity to express her true self within the group.

According to psychologist Caryn Block and her associates, “Even with all the physical, mental, and emotional effort expended in fending off the stereotype, individuals will still encounter situations where they are judged and evaluated based on the stereotype.”⁵⁴ When these situations arise they can result in negative responses to the stereotype threat. Disengagement is a common response and results in the individual simply removing her self-esteem and sense of self-worth from the environment. When this occurs productivity and morale go down as the individual no longer cares what happens in the work environment.⁵⁵ A disengaged female soldier may stop being a good performer and begin exerting only the minimum amount of effort required to stay out of trouble. This is because she has determined that she will not be treated fairly due to her negative stereotype.

In addition to disengaging, attributing poor performance to external attributions is another common negative response to stereotype threat. In this situation an individual will attribute any negative feedback about her performance to the negative stereotype, and not to anything she has done or failed to do. In fact, “Stigmatized group members who make external attributions of discrimination may be more likely to hold positive

perceptions of their performance....”⁵⁶ This is because they discount the perceptions of those around them perceived as being discriminatory.

Anger and withdrawal are the final two negative responses to negative stereotyping. The anger will often be directed not only at the person perceived as being discriminatory, but also at the individual being stereotyped. This happens when the female soldier becomes frustrated for not achieving her work goals or for not standing up for herself.⁵⁷ Withdrawal “reflects holding negative attitudes toward one’s job or organization and includes a decreased level of involvement, commitment, and satisfaction”⁵⁸ with one’s work. Withdrawal differs from disengagement because it often manifests itself through actual physical absence from the workplace, such as a female soldier going repeatedly on sick call or being routinely late for duty.

While stereotype threat is primarily an individual response to perceived or actual stereotyping and discrimination it can affect the entire organization. Whether the negative impact is due to males refusing to interact with female soldiers or female soldiers simply perceiving the refusal, both situations damage unit cohesion. Therefore, it is essential that current and future combat arms leaders know and can recognize the common responses to stereotype threat so they can address the underlying causes. Female soldiers and leaders also have an obligation to know and understand stereotype threat so they can identify the possible unconscious behaviors they may be exhibiting themselves.

Conclusion

When Mr. Panetta directed military leadership to determine how to implement his guidance as quickly as possible he never implied it would be an easy task to accomplish. Following his direction, the leadership within the Army’s combat arms

branches has taken positive steps to reevaluate the previously held standards and requirements to establish gender neutral standards. The Army has incrementally eliminated the traditional barriers for female soldiers in the past year, culminating with the full integration announcement in December 2015. Three female officers have graduated from the Infantry Ranger School and now proudly wear the vaunted Ranger Tab. The first female combat engineer soldier has graduated from BCT and AIT and has entered uncharted territory as she became the first female in her new unit. And, the first female combat crew members have enlisted in the Field Artillery and will begin training soon. These are simply the most visible signs of the changes initiated by Mr. Panetta's rescission of the 1994 direct ground combat definition and assignment rule for women in the U.S. military. There have been untold smaller changes in both force structure and in individual attitudes throughout the Army. With the announcement of the full integration of women in the Army these positive changes will continue at an even greater pace.

It is now absolutely imperative that Army leaders become aware of these and other sociological theories and their associated impacts within combat arms units. Leaders must take action to overcome any negative aspects, and be prepared to capitalize on all possible positive aspects of the theories to enable the successful integration of women into combat arms. The development of the first elements in this learning process belongs to the Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC). The Army Training and Doctrine Command must take the lead in developing programs of instruction (POI) that encompass the sociological theories associated with integrating females into combat arms. The POIs should be focused on captain career courses

(CCC), the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) and the Army War College. Training senior leaders will be imperative to the successful integration process.

As Army War College professors, Stephen J. Gerras and Leonard Wong identified, “Changing one’s mind remains a critical, and often times elusive, skill for even the best Army strategic leaders.”⁵⁹ Therefore, it is essential that TRADOC develop and distribute POIs explaining these sociological theories to enable Army leaders to change their minds to accept females into combat arms. The young captains entering the CCCs will be the first line of acceptance and integration when they take command of their companies and lead soldiers at the tactical level. Gerras and Wong emphasize the importance of this level of leadership, stating, “Because individuals are more susceptible to career imprints when they are young . . . imprints experienced at the company grade level can be expected to be deeper and longer lasting.”⁶⁰ Company commanders are therefore a crucial element in effecting the integration change in combat arms. The field grade officers attending CGSC will be the primary mentors of the company commanders and must also be familiar with the sociological dynamics that will affect female integration. Ultimately, however, it will be the senior leadership within the Army, the colonels, who will serve as the most important examples and standard bearers as they command and lead their brigades. Thus they must not only understand social learning theory, In-group bias and stereotype threat; they must be able to counter the negative aspects and capitalize on the positive aspects as they lead the Army into the future. Because as Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter stated on December 2, 2015, “To succeed in our mission of national defense, we cannot afford to cut ourselves

off from half the country's talents and skills. We have to take full advantage of every individual who can meet our standards.”⁶¹

Endnotes

¹ Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta, “Statement on Women in Service, January 24, 2013, <http://archive.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1746> (accessed 10 November 2015).

² Secretary of Defense Les Aspin, “direct Ground combat Definition and Assignment Rule.” January 13, 1994, <http://www.govexec.com/pdfs/031910d1.pdf> (accessed 24 November 2015).

³ Panetta, “Statement on women in Service.”

⁴ Acting Secretary of the Army, Eric K. Fanning; Army Chief of Staff, General Mark A. Milley; Command Sergeant Major of the Army, CSM Daniel A. Dailey, “Full Integration of Women in the Army,” memorandum for the Army, Washington DC, December 04, 2015.

⁵ Albert Bandura, *Social Learning Theory* (New York: General Learning Press, 1971), 2.

⁶ William Graham Sumner, *Folkways: A Study of the Social Importance of Usages, Manners, Customs, Mores, and Morals* (Boston: Ginn, 1906), 12.

⁷ Caryn J. Block, Sandy M. Koch, Benjamin E. Liberman, Tarani J. Merriweather, and Loriann Roberson, “Contending with Stereotype Threat at Work: A Model of Long-Term Responses,” *The Counseling Psychologist* 39, no. 4 (2011): 570.

⁸ Panetta, “Statement on women in Service.”

⁹ This leadership example is a personal life experience of the author. LTC(R) Rarig and LTC (R) Papaioannou both agreed to the use of their names in this paper.

¹⁰ Bandura, *Social Learning Theory*, 2.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 1.

¹² *Ibid.*, 2.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid., 5.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Sumner, *Folkways: A Study of the Social Importance*, 2.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Panetta, "Statement on women in Service."

²⁶ Sumner, *Folkways: A Study of the Social Importance*, 2.

²⁷ Ibid., 12.

²⁸ Michael A. Hogg, "A Social Identity Theory of Leadership," *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 5, no. 3, (2001), 186.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Henri Tajfel, *Social Identity and Intergroup Relations* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 3.

³¹ Hogg, "A Social Identity Theory of Leadership," 184.

³² Ibid., 187.

³³ Ibid., 186.

³⁴ Sumner, *Folkways: A Study of the Social Importance*, 11.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Hogg, "A Social Identity Theory of Leadership," 186.

³⁷ Sumner, *Folkways: A Study of the Social Importance*, 13.

³⁸ Ibid., 12.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Hogg, "A Social Identity Theory of Leadership," 194.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Caryn J. Block, Sandy M. Koch, Benjamin E. Liberman, Tarani J. Merriweather, and Loriann Roberson, "Contending with Stereotype Threat at Work: A Model of Long-Term Responses," *The Counseling Psychologist* 39, no. 4 (2011), 570.

⁴³ Sumner, *Folkways: A Study of the Social Importance*, 12.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 572.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 575.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 576.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *Ibid.*, 577.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 579.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 580.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 581.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ Stephen J. Gerras, and Leonard Wong, *Changing Minds in the Army: Why it is so Difficult and what to do about it* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College Press, 2013), 4.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁶¹ Secretary of Defense, Ashton Carter, "Remarks on Women-in-Service Review," Washington, DC: Pentagon Briefing Room, December 3, 2015.