



Junior Tony Donaldson, Navy ROTC pistol team member, takes aim on the pistol range ... of the seven to 14 team members, two members were female last year

arms, it is frustrating."

Wolf, however, said Congress's ruling was not a limitation for her. "The military is not democratic, but autocratic. By arguing this point, it causes more trouble than it's worth," she said. "Women have traditionally been in a support role in the military to free men for combat. I, personally, have no desire to go into combat."

Though women cadets and midshipmen are still a minority in the UNC ROTC programs, Wolf said it made no difference to her. "As a woman you're always going to have to prove yourself. If you are capable, you can do it. It is so challenging, it makes it worthwhile."

Kimberly Kleman is a contributor to **Spotlight**.

West Point cadets share their views on female plebes

By ELAINE McCLATCHEY

In 1976, the entrance of women into the U.S. Military Academy at West Point met with strong resistance. Army officers and West Point alumni said the traditionally all-male institution was too difficult for women and the women's presence would be detrimental to the military environment.

Nevertheless, by an act of Congress, the women came. Skirts and pants were designed to match the traditional West Point "grays," rifles were made that were smaller and lighter than the men's rifles, and the physical requirements were adjusted for the women. Everything else remained the same.

The first women cadets had a difficult time. The women were looked upon as neuters rather than women and resentment came from all sides—the officers, the professors and the cadets.

Most of the female cadets said they felt that the harassment had lessened since the first women entered the academy. Brenda Zachary Linnington grew up in the military. Her father was stationed at West Point and Fort Bragg before she became a member of the class of 1980 at West Point, the second class with women in it. She said she had seen the academy change substantially in her four years at West Point.

Linnington said the atmosphere had become more professional in the years that she attended West Point. When she first became a cadet in 1978, she saw the reaction from both cadets and officers as bad.

"The officer that was in charge before I came in, before the women came in, said to the class ahead of me, 'Well, I'm really glad to see that you don't have any women.'" Linnington said. "I saw things done by cadets but I know that some of the officers supported it."

Linnington mentioned several incidents that occurred when she was a plebe. During her orientation in the summer, an upper-classman ordered her to report to his room for a "talk."

"He reverted the subject into how much he really liked women. I was confused about what he was leading up to and the next thing I knew he just grabbed me," Linnington said. "I ducked my head and pushed as hard as I could and then froze. I was scared to death. I didn't know what to do."

Linnington said other incidents included when a cadet cornered her in the hall and tried to kiss her and when a drunken classmate came into her room at 2 in the morning and said he would not leave until she kissed him. When she reported these incidents to her squad leader, the squad leader told the platoon leader who told the cadets to leave her alone. No other action was taken. If the same event happened now, the cadet would be in serious trouble, Linnington said.

"Back then, classmates would cover up for something like that, which isn't really what leadership is, because a leader has got to take care of his subordinates," Linnington said. "Now a squad leader would make sure something is done. Back then, the importance was on covering your buddy's rear end."

Linnington said most of the officers are trying to be more professional about the women now. In the past, some officers liked the women and treated them better than the men and some officers disliked the women's presence and treated them worse. One instructor at West Point said there were still problems with officer resentment and grading techniques.

Captain Barbara Lee, a psychology instructor in the department of behavioral sciences and leadership development at West Point said she saw officer reaction to the women's entrance as varied. The official viewpoint calls for acceptance. "It is mandated. You will accept them. Anybody that can't accept them can just walk right out the front gate."

No one had been forced to leave despite the edict, she said.

Lee said she personally had some doubts about the fairness of grading the cadets on their military development. "Leadership grades can or cannot be attached to one's physique," she said.

The women that are more physically inclined are the ones that are most likely to be perceived as better leaders, Lee said. The focus on the leadership grade is on the physical aspect rather than the academic aspect, she added.

"If she doesn't have a low, deep voice, she is marked down," Lee said.

Another problem is that the Academy does not have any set idea of what they expect out of the women, Lee said. "The women in the class of 1980 were angry," she said. "For four years they were faulted when they were successful and faulted when they were not."

It is hard to say what the Army wants out of the female cadets. Although academy literature implies that it wants women who are strong and independent, yet feminine and attractive, the women are resented if they act feminine in the academy, Lee said.

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