

## EXHIBIT D

### Statements from Women Marines

The following excerpted statements reflect the opinions of fifteen female Marines (NCOs, enlisted, and one officer, identified with pseudonyms) who were interviewed for an academic dissertation by **Beth-ann Vealey** for the Virginia **Commonwealth University School of Social Work**. Ms. Vealey's March, 2014, dissertation, titled [United States Women Marines' Experiences and Perspectives About Coping With Service Life: A Phenomenological Study](#) is even more compelling because it does not address or debate the question of whether women should serve in direct ground combat. The women's statements are a clear reminder that civilian activists and female officers with career ambitions do not speak for the majority of women in the military. They also contradict claims that ordering women into the combat arms is a pro-women policy. (Topic titles are from the dissertation, but page citations are omitted throughout.)

#### 1. Harder work to be a woman Marine — The superstar

Victoria explained, *“because you are a woman, you have to work harder just to be a Marine and you will never be at the same level as the men! They are always watching and we will always be below it!”* (p. 2, line 79-81). *“We are women trying to be them, we gotta do everything they do plus everything else! So it’s difficult”* (p. 70)

Maggie believed it is *“harder to try to meet the new standards.... [T]hey are trying to make them more equal to the men”* and wondered if *“maybe they are trying to get rid of us.”* (p. 71)

#### 2. Conflict being women while being Marines

Arlene struggled with the physical demands to be a woman and a Marine: *“[H]ow do I get my body to adjust and how come we have to be able to do what males do? Male Marines haven’t had to adapt to a lot of changes like us, we are constantly having changes to adjust.”*

Expressing concerns about her future if she cannot meet the new standards: *“[I]t seems like the Marine Corps is trying to push the women out.”* (p. 72)

Jessica felt similarly to Arlene, and stated, *“I do feel like the Marine Corps is trying to weed us out.... “[W]e are just not recognized for being women and it’s just hard to explain!”* (p. 72)

#### 3. Stereotyping women Marines — The object

More than half of the women participants described how they perceived or experienced negative stereotyping and labeling for being both a woman and a Marine. Jamie shared her perspective about why women Marines are stereotyped: *“[B]eing a female in the Marine Corps is hard because if you can’t do what the men can do or want you to do, then you’re viewed differently and in a negative way”* (p. 73)

Sophie explained how she was stereotyped upon arrival to her first command assignment:  
*"[W]hen I first checked in, you had three labels, you were either a bitch, a lesbian, or a whore, and you know as soon as you check in they will stereotype you...It was tough"* (p. 73.)

#### **4. Harassment: women Marines' perspectives – being hit on and violated**

Other participants detailed accounts of harassment, in the form of direct and indirect threats or fraternization, perpetrated by senior leadership. One participant (Marysol) described, *"this one Sergeant Major made it his mission to run as fast and as hard to drop any female Marines."* Footnote: *"Physical training for the unit often is comprised of running in formation. When those in front of the formation, such as the Sergeant Major, run very fast, those in the back have to run very, very fast to try to keep up. Many women, smaller and shorter, have a difficult time keeping up, especially if in the back of the formation."* (p. 77)

#### **5. Women Marines are inferior to men in the Marines – The quota filler**

Louisa reported that the male Marines question her, *"why aren't you as good as the rest of us? meaning male Marines"* and, she added, *"It's like we're not good enough to be here.... [T]hey yell at us like 'oh, just another female Marine not being able to do what we do' as Marines."* Maggie asked her fellow Marines to treat her the same as the men she worked with: *"[But when] it is time to pick up Corporal...my fellow Marines will think that I got it through favoritism... [A] lot of times when females pick up the next rank...they will say... 'oh, you know how she picked it up...[T]hat's what I don't want...I want to be respected."* (pp. 79-80)

#### **6. Women Marines are the variable for change — Because we are different?**

JoJo *"believes in equality for women, but . . . They keep trying to make me do things like them and look like them and I will never be able to do that. It feels isolating."* Jamie reported, *"[W]ith the uniform changes and the pull-ups and stuff like that, they are trying to make men and women equal, and in Marine life we are never gonna be equal."* To JoJo, women will never achieve equality with men in the Marines because *"We are not equal, we are a different species, men are different from women. To try and put us all on the same playing field, is not fair. Men have to do 20 pull-ups for 100 points and now women have to do 6 for 100 points. They see that as unfair..It will never be equal in their eyes."* (pp. 81-82)

#### **7. Role uncertainty experienced by women Marines – But I am a woman!**

*"You have to lose your womanhood to meet the male standard . . . [T]hat is not okay with me."* (Hayden)...*"To be a Marine I had to hide being a woman as much as possible" because as a woman, "when you take care of yourself...it is a sign of weakness."* (Autumn) *"It seems like the Marine Corps is trying to push the women out...because of the whole females in the infantry thing."* (Arlene) (pp. 84-85)

*"Listen, I am a woman and they are men and there is a difference...I don't want to be gender neutral!"* (Robin) Robin provided an example of how being a woman is not consistent with

uniform changes: "[T]hey are making the covers and the uniform look the same...absolutely stupid...trying to make this androgynous-looking uniform and I am sorry, I have womanly curves, I am a woman...and they are men." (p. 85)

#### **8. Against women in combat-designated billets – Who decided that?**

Several other women expressed their views and concerns about the changes to military policy allowing women into combat-designated billets. Autumn was concerned about women being combat-designated. *"Who decided that? I know me and other women I know are against it. But they are pushing forward and we don't know why or who is behind it."* *"Women in combat is a bad idea,"* said Valencia. JoJo agreed: *"I don't think females belong in the infantry..."* [S]aid Robin, *"there are jobs we [women] can do well in the Marine Corps.... I don't think we should be in infantry, period" . . . because "I am putting someone's life on the line."* Suzie wondered *"about the whole thing with putting women in the infantry... '[O]h, if you put women in the infantry they will be more respected.'... [N]o, they f---ing won't be! Because you are trying to make them be men...[W]e will be respected if we could be treated like the women that we are!"* (p. 86)

#### **9. Manage multiple roles to be women Marines — Being not just a Marine**

[Some women] made decisions to be a Marine first. *"If you are gonna be a good Marine, you gotta focus more on meeting the standards, not having kids and getting married. It's too hard to do both!"* (Arlene). One woman participant, who was also a wife and a mother, managed her roles *"by putting my career first.... [I] put my work before everything else, they [children] knew that [they] were second place and I think it bothered them, especially when they were teenagers."* (Robin) (p. 87-88)

Some of the women participants expressed the challenges of being pregnant while serving on active duty in the Marines. Autumn described her experience during her first pregnancy this way: *"[I]t was bad, my Staff NCO at the time was like 'we can't use her for anything' and always made a point of making me feel as though I was a burden."*

Valencia perceived that *"when I was pregnant, I feel like that is one of the biggest things that marked me as a woman because, yeah, you wear a uniform but you are just like any other pregnant woman, just because you wear a uniform doesn't make you any stronger.... [Y]ou are still in pain and they tell you 'take it like you are a Marine and suck it up.'* So to me, I was like, I never want to get pregnant again in the Marines. I can't and don't want to deal with it. It was too hard." Another participant tearfully reported that *"I was scrutinized for being pregnant...told that I did it on purpose to get out of [being deployed to] Iraq.... [T]hen when I didn't get selected [for promotion]...I hated being pregnant. I wanted an abortion. I felt like a failure as a Marine"* (Marysol) (p. 89)

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