

the United States zealously promotes the Protestant Deformation throughout the

world, it may be simultaneously promoting its own self-destruction.

Women at War?

“Feminism and the Exclusion of Army Women from Combat” by Laura L. Miller, in *Gender Issues* (Summer 1998), Transaction Periodicals Consortium, Rutgers Univ., 35 Berrue Cir., Piscataway, N.J. 08854-8042.

The perennial agitation to put women in U.S. Army combat positions has yet to convince a rather significant group: most army women.

“Enlisted women and women of color particularly are likely to *oppose* assigning women to combat military occupational specialties,” reports Miller, a military sociologist at the University of California, Los Angeles, who conducted interviews and surveys during 1992-94 at various locations here and abroad. “Many express resentment toward officers and civilian activists who are attempting to open combat roles to women.”

Some three-fourths of more than 960 army women surveyed said that women who wish to volunteer for the infantry or other combat arms should be allowed to do so, provided, many added, that they can meet the physical requirements. Nearly half would extend the voluntary option to men. Few of the women—only 11 percent of enlisted women, 13 percent of noncommissioned officers, and 14 percent of the officers—would volunteer themselves for combat roles, however. When a smaller sample of women were asked to choose between the status quo and requiring women to serve in the combat arms in the same way men do—the option the feminist activists prefer—65 percent stuck with the status quo, and 24 percent opted for the gender-blind assignment policy. (The

other 11 percent were neutral).

Female officers, who are college graduates, predominantly (70 percent) white, and career oriented, are more likely than enlisted women to favor a combat role for women—in part, no doubt, believing that exclusion from combat hinders their careers. Miller suggests that civilian feminists, who have a similar background, identify with the officers. But 84 percent of all the women in the army are enlisted soldiers, who typically enter with only a high school diploma, are mostly either black (48 percent) or other minority (11 percent), and are less likely to make the military a career. The enlisted women also would be more likely than the female officers to be killed in combat.

Miller suggests that feminist activists alter their strategy and adopt a compromise position. “Most Army women would support a policy that allows women to volunteer for the combat arms if they qualify [physically] but would not involuntarily assign them.” Instead of rejecting that policy because it would treat women and men differently, she says, feminists should accept it as an advance over the status quo. The subsequent performance of the exceptional women who were interested and qualified would probably dispel the myth that all women are unsuited for combat, she says. And the gap between the activists and the majority of women in uniform would be narrowed.

ECONOMICS, LABOR & BUSINESS

Chasing the Flat Tax Dream

A Survey of Recent Articles

As April 15th nears each year, many taxpayers struggling to find their way through the labyrinth of IRS definitions and dicta angrily conclude that there must be a better, simpler way. In recent years,

this recurrent dream has acquired a name: the flat tax.

The brainchild of Stanford University economist Robert Hall and political scientist Alvin Rabushka, the flat tax was strong-