Multiple Think Pieces

Student's Name

Institutional Affiliation

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**Misrepresentation of the WAC women**

I am furious, no; I am not furious, I am fuming with anger! I find the term 'furious' to be an inadequate adjective to describe the rage I have experienced after reading Herman's work and seeing the comic strips where he portrays the role of women in WAC through '*Winnie*.' In addition to being mad at Herman's portrayals, I am annoyed with how the women enrolled in the Women's Army Corps (WAC) enjoyed Herman's work because they perceived it as a correct illustration of their role in the war, hence, turning Herman' work into a success. Lita Bowman, one of the WAC women from San Diego, says, "*She made us laugh at ourselves; she did what we did, saw the world the way we did, and she was our hero*" (Harvey, 2015). Bowman's statement is annoying because she makes Herman's "*Bimbo*" image of the WAC women seem authentic. The Character 'Winnie' featured by Herman and accepted by the WAC women is a joke. It illustrates women as weak beings who were irresponsible and unable to keep up with war requirements because they reported in the office late, tolerated being disrespected by their subordinates, and always thirsted after the attention of their male colleagues. '*Winnie*' the woman cartoon illustrated by Herman is a joke because it portrays women in WAC as lazy and unprofessional ladies whose presence on the battlefield was primarily for men's entertainment.

The truth is that the WAC women were not "*Bimbos*" whose primary purpose in the war was to entertain men. On the contrary, the WAC women were recruited through rigorous procedures that required them to fill out applications. They provided information about their family background, level of schooling, and job history. The women applicants were examined through extremely patriotic lens to the mission and vision of the war. Hence, recruiters were strict in ensuring that all the women enrolled in WAC were qualifies at all levels as they had a duty to choose the women of the highest caliber. In addition to being passed through rigorous recruitment procedures, women enrolled into WAC were professionally trained and later on made an essential part of the army, which means they took up similar roles and responsibilities to their male counterparts. Notably, most of the women who increasingly demanded a place in the armed forces were already working in Anny Nurse Corps (ANC), and they desired to be enrolled into WAC so their skills could be helpful in war. I am not annoyed with Herman's "Winnie" cartoon and its response because I am a feminist or a sadist, but rather because it is a dire misrepresentation of facts that results in harming the societal image of the woman who served in the war during the 1940s. I would understand male soldiers for misrepresenting WAC women as they were against their presence in the army, but I do not know why women would allow themselves to be depicted negatively.

## The Place of Women in the Army During WWII

## Almost all the 150,000 women who made up the WAC felt that "*women could do just about anything that they could serve their country the same as men coul*d" (Women Veterans Historical Project, 1944). Even though the WAC women felt their roles in the war were equally important as men’s roles and that they could replace men, they were badly mistaken and utterly dismayed when most of them were not given male responsibilities. Unlike men, women served in non-combat positions where they engaged in roles and responsibilities that society regarded as ‘female work.’ For instance, most women were involved in knitting sweaters for the soldiers at warm, taking care of the wounded soldiers who could no longer fight, facilitating the operation of nursery schools, and serving as telephone operators. Moreover, most WAC engaged in entertaining male soldiers sexually, a role majority of them would never admit to undertaking. Also, women took up traditionally male jobs. For instance, they served as electricians, radio operators, and air traffic controllers. Even though the women were happy to relieve men of their jobs, they failed to note that they were still not equal to men since they did not relieve men from combat. Instead, they only took over roles that men initially undertook and were experts at. Therefore, since women did not relieve men of their combat roles, they remained unequal. No wonder they were neither given the same recognition as men nor paid the same salary as their male counterparts.

## Given the roles that women undertook in the war and their place in WWII, I can confidently state that women will never be equal to men as they can never carry out men’s responsibilities as well as men do. I know that my statement goes against feminists’ beliefs, and they would attack me for it, but I am willing to stand by my beliefs. Men are stronger than women in every aspect, be it socially, emotionally, spiritually, and even physically. At the battlefield, men, unlike women, could handle losing one of their own to the war and still carry on, something that women would find challenging to do because they tend to be too emotional. Moreover, the female anatomy makes a woman vulnerable to attack. Women are created with soft skin and delicate features. As such, because of their physique, women were created to be protected and not to protect. Hence, for me, the American public was correct to resist when it first resisted women’s participation in the army. Even though women insisted on participating in war, I feel that it did not go well for them as one has to see how Herman portrays women as ‘*bimbos*’ in his “Winnie the WAC strips” to understand what I am talking about. Although women’s place and role in the army during WWII was beneficial, essential, and utterly significant, it is still by no means compared to that of men.

**Private Snafu**

I am one of the people who are always inclined to think that everyone else is having better life experiences than me. Well, I always feel better when I know that everyone else is suffering just the way I am. Do not judge me. I am not a sadist or an advocate of human suffering; instead, I believe that peace and happiness are achieved when human beings suffer together. I am not sure other people will agree with me, but I am sure that Private Snafu will as we share some distinct similarities. While at the forefront of war, Private Snafu feels miserable. He contemplates how his girlfriend is probably cheating on him and whines about how and his entire family is having happy moments and good times back at home(Tashlin, 2016). However, he is shocked to realize that contrary to his imaginations, his family and girlfriend are doing everything possible to contribute positively to the war. For instance, his girlfriend joined WAC, and his father is spending much of his time building tanks (Tashlin, 2016). Private Snafu and I share several traits because, like him, I am always thinking about how people, especially in my social media pages, live lives that are significantly better than mine. In most of my social media pages, I closely follow most of my high school classmates. Honestly, most of the videos and the photos they post often leave me feeling devastated because their lives seem glamorous, and they always seem happy and enjoying life. The truth is, according to my social media. Most of my age mates, work colleagues, and former school mates have been married in fancy weddings, live in beautiful modern houses, drive the latest cars, own the cutest pets, and have gorgeous girlfriends or boyfriends. My social media truly makes me sad because, unlike my social media friends, I am single, and I feel lonely most of the time; my house is not old, and far from being fashionable, my dog's hair cannot stop growing, and therefore, it hardly looks cute, and my car can never seem to stop breaking down. Given how social media makes me feel miserable, I have refrained from opening my social media pages for three days.

As I watch the private Snafu comic and realize that it was used to encourage soldiers to continue participating wholeheartedly in the war, I feel that my situation reflects Private Snafu's circumstances. The reality behind private Snafu's ungrounded assumptions makes me wonder whether the life that most of my friends display on social media is fake. As I ponder over the cartoon's depiction, I cannot help but realize that whoever said that cartoons were for children could not be more wrong as cartoon films were instrumental in training and orienting the US military in World War II. Cartoons conveyed technical information and clearly that everyone could understand.

**No Exception**

## I cannot say I like following rules; instead, I can provide that I am a believer that there is an exception to every rule. Therefore, the video "*No Exceptions: 1943 Home front Propaganda"* does not speak to me. I do not feel that I need to sacrifice time to make my hair to do some Red Cross work or see the need to sacrifice attending a party with my friends to serve at a canteen. Moreover, I do not have to participate in a war job if I find it dirty, and I do not have to sacrifice buying the things I want because they are expensive. I am not a '*lacker*,' I am '*the exception*' in a world that feels that there is '*no exception.*' If I were living during the World War II period, I would be what the film refers to as 'miss-exception.' I choose to be the exception to the rule because sometimes following every rule and acting good so that society accepts you is not beneficial. For instance, everyone (both the people who served others religiously and the people who chose their happiness over service) in the video met the same fate. Everyone suffered when the town was bombed, and therefore the statement "don’t act like an ass, and your town won’t be bombed (Webb, 2013)” communicated by the video is not accurate.

## I am not the type of person to do things because society says I should do them. I am the kind of person who believes that everyone has a choice to make every step of the way. I am also aware that every choice has consequences. Therefore, I do not mind when society refers to women who roll bandages, host O.I.O. dances, and aid the operation of nursery schools as ‘*community-minded women*’. However, I feel it is not right for society to label me as ‘*selfish*’ simply because I refuse to assist the war effort. Not everyone was created to serve; some people were made to be happy joyriders while others were created to clean after the joyriders, and such is life. Fate happens to subscribe to my line of thought because when the city was bombed, the ‘*community-minded women*’ and the ‘*selfish women*’ were affected equally. Everyone has a choice, and since I am ‘miss exception,’ all I do is discover the rules by examining the fact patterns, then I look for exceptions for which the restrictions do not apply. For instance, authorities indicate that killing another human being is wrong. However, it allows for exceptions when the killing is done in self-defense. I know that it is crucial to know all the rules and principles of life, but I believe that knowing exceptions to the big broad rules is more important since I am ‘*miss exception*.' For me, studying the extensive societal rules and principles enables one to live an acceptable life; however, learning exceptions to the rules enables one to live a happy and fulfilling life.

**Masculinity**

Amari Saul indicated that a man’s strength is measured not by how well he controls other people but rather by how well he controls himself. On the other hand, Martin Luther King Jr. provided that a man’s strength is measured not by where he stands during moments of comfort but when faced with controversy and challenge. I believe a man’s strength is seen in his integrity, how he upholds his words, and in the manner, he treats the people inferior to him. The men living in the 1930s and 1940s experienced significant problems. For instance, their bodies that were supposed to be qualified for war were overshadowed by the 1930s sculptors and murals, and they were required to do heavy work to prove their strength(Jarvis n.d.). During the period, society’s expectation of men presented a masculinity crisis, where men had to prove that they had working-class masculinity to serve in combat. Moreover, men had to prove their strength by adhering to the Hitler racial hygiene program, having the ability to remain as their families’ heads during the great depression, and maintain their pride during trying moments when they had to receive relief food.

Even though the period of the great depression extensively tested men’s strength, most men swallowed their pride and did everything possible to feed their families. That is why I believe that a man’s strength is determined by his ability to keep his word and treat his juniors fairly. Since the army officers were mean to the juniors, for example, by providing them direct food instead of offering them money, which seemed humiliating, they were weaker. The disadvantaged men who struggled to provide for their families stood out as the strong men because they fulfilled their promises to their families. I find it laughable how army officers used conversations started by murals to determine the criteria for measuring the strength of men they need to participate in the army. What is even funnier is how the recruiters focused on the physical and ignored every other aspect of life used to measure a man’s strength. For me, strength is not in the physical, which is seen by the broadness of shoulders and the weight of muscles, but rather, it is inscribed in the mind. The men who did not die on the battlefield survived not because of the strength of their bodies but rather because of the power of their brains. Instead of emphasizing and glorifying body strength, the army ought to have recruited men with strong minds and personalities. Anyway, I do not blame the army recruiters because the way the elephant is mistaken for being the strongest wild animal because of its size is the same way heavily built men were mistaken to be the strongest because of their body sizes. The truth, however, is that the strength of a man does not lie in the size of his body but rather in the size of what is in between his ears.

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