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Through Her Eyes: Storytelling the Perspective of the American Female Veteran

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THROUGH HER EYES:
STORYTELLING THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE AMERICAN FEMALE VETERAN

By
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A Research Paper
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Master of Science

Department of Mass Communication & Media Arts
in the Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
May 2012

RESEARCH PAPER APPROVAL

THROUGH HER EYES: STORYTELLING THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE AMERICAN FEMALE VETERAN

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Approved by:

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Southern Illinois University Carbondale
April 11, 2012

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DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to the memory of two phenomenal individuals who had an great impact on my military career and my decision to become active in the veteran community after my release from active duty. Firstly, my grandfather, Jerry P. Posey, a Korean War Veteran who encouraged me throughout my military career until his death which occurred while I was serving the country during the war in Iraq. Also to the legacy of a dear friend, Kimberly Wilson-Driscoll, who was a woman that embodied what it meant to be an advocate for women veterans.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Women in America have been serving in the military for many years but despite their service, the media still presents military veterans in America to be very masculine. Men statistically represent the majority of personnel in the United States and this dynamic can arguably be considered why military women's service to the nation mostly goes unnoticed or unaccounted for. This is partially because of the media and the images of veterans being controlled by a very small, male dominated group of individuals.

The documentary project, "Through Her Eyes", challenges societal norms of storytelling from the perspective of a small, male dominated group and gives the control of storytelling to the persons represented in the film. Hence allowing a minority to tell her own story than through the perspective of an outsider or someone with no personal connection to the matter.

Through Her Eyes is a documentary about women who served in the military and how society does not recognize their service because of the masculine stereotypes in America of veterans typically being brawny men. It addresses a variety of issues that women who served in the military face such as gender discrimination, harassment, military sexual trauma, and homelessness. The key significant factors of this film are not just that there is a limited amount of documentaries that address women veterans' issues but that the filmmaker is also a woman who served in the military.

The majority of media in society is told by a very small, male dominated group of individuals and oftentimes minority groups do not have opportunities or platforms to voice their own stories. The dominant group has historically told the stories of the

minority groups hence creating ideas that often formulate into stereotypical representations or a lack of representation all together.

This documentary is important because of the lack of recognition for veteran women in the media. There are also even fewer women veteran filmmakers who are telling their own story. According to the Women in Military Service For America Memorial Foundation as of September 30, 2011 only 14.6 percent of the military are women. Because of the juxtaposition in the number of males versus females in the military, this same dynamic transfers to the veteran population. According to the National Center for Veterans and Analysis and Statistics in September of 2010 only 8.1 percent of the United States population are women veterans.

The main idea the film imparts to its audience is that women veterans are apart of our society and deserve the same acknowledgement that men veterans receive. In the creation of this film and meeting the different women involved, I found that there were many similar common factors including some that held true to life outside of the military such as gender discrimination or a woman feeling as though she needed to prove herself to her male counterparts.

This research report accompanies the documentary I created, *Through Her Eyes* and in it I will discuss the entire production process of the film including the foundational research of which this project is based upon.

CHAPTER 2: THE DOCUMENTARY AND METHODOLOGY

A Brief History of Women Veterans in America

Women have been a present force in the American military since it's beginning. During the Civil War, women acted as saboteurs, couriers, and spies; they also performed what would be termed combat support and combat service support functions today: cooking, laundering, supplying ammunition on the battlefield, and performing camp maintenance (Devilbiss, 1990). Women soldiers of the Civil War therefore assumed masculine names, disguised themselves as men, and hid the fact they were female. Because they passed as men, it is impossible to know with any certainty how many women soldiers served in the Civil War (Blanton, 1993). Hundreds of others served as nurses or supply personnel. But women were still limited in their roles; many men thought of women as property. Women were expected to keep the home fires burning (Cohn, 2003).

Women received an official place in the American military when Massachusetts Representative Edith Rodgers introduced a bill to create the Women's Army Corp in May of 1941 (Permaswarn, 2008). Although the bill was rejected when it was first introduced, the view of women being in the military changed once Pearl Harbor was attacked December 7, 1941. The Navy Women's Reserve was established in July 1942 and did not have a separate "women's corps" like the Army did. These women would later be known as WAVES, which is an acronym for Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (Devilbiss,1990). During World War II (1941-1945) more than 400,000 women served overseas, mainly in jobs away from the fighting (Cohn, 2003).

Women continued to have a presence in the military after World War II. During the Korean, conflict hundreds of female nurses served in combat zones and hospitals. Thousands of women filled desk jobs in Korea and at home (Cohn, 2003). In the Vietnam War (1964-1973), women served as administrators, aerial photographers, clerks, flight controllers, therapists and translators - jobs that were supposed to be behind the front lines. In Vietnam, women were not allowed to carry weapons of defense (Cohn, 2003). The Women's Army Corp continued beyond the Vietnam War but was disestablished in 1978 (Collins, 2009).

During Operation Desert Storm, over 33,000 women served in the military and this was the highest number since World War II (Haas, 1993). The government also changed some of its policies and in 1992 The Defense Authorization Act said female pilots could no longer be kept from combat and the following year women were allowed to serve on ships (Cohn, 2003).

Since the tragedy of 9/11, over 230,000 women have served in Operation Iraqi Freedom in Iraq and Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. Women account for 15% of active duty military (Fitzpatrick, 2003). Among U.S. soldiers in Iraq 1 in 7 is a woman and though excluded from a third of the roles such as Special Forces, they man hospitals and supply battalions. They work as mechanics and lead troops (Cohn, 2003). Now men and women serve under each branch nearly equally.

Why this project?

This project initially was about homelessness amongst women veterans in America, but during the research and pre-production process, I found it to be very difficult to connect with homeless women veterans or even to identify who they are. There also were privacy issues in dealing with many of the shelters I visited and once I met women who were actually homeless, they declined being apart of the documentary.

It was also a very delicate task being I did not want the women to get the impression that I was trying to exploit their stories for the purposes of personal gain. I did however connect with one woman who was homeless and through interviewing her I learned that the issues of women veterans were very complex and could not be summed up in one blanket topic.

After realizing that it will take a greater amount of time to find homeless veteran women and create relationships with them, I decided to look at a more personal plight, being that I am also a woman who served in the military. Since I have been released from the active duty military in 2004 I have found that my military service was something that I could not hide as much as I tried to. I wanted to simply fit in and be accepted by society without the awkward questions or stereotypes that came along with people discovering that I spent time in the military. I told the Christian Science Monitor in 2006 about my frustrations saying that people tell you’re not a veteran, you’re young, you’re a girl (Paulson, 2006). As time went on, I met and befriended other women who experienced these same issues. Although we understood each other, society failed to understand us and from that moment of realization I decided to become more active in

the women veterans community. I would later join organizations such as National Women Veterans United, which advocates on behalf of women who served.

This documentary project was born on a premise of someone must take responsibility and speak on behalf of women veterans and tell our own story.

Research Technique

When I embarked on the journey of creating this film, I began by tapping into my direct connections with people who work closely with veterans. The Department of Veterans affairs proved to be very resourceful with statics from the website, personal emails and visits. For employment information concerning veterans, I also researched studies that have been conducted by the Illinois Department of Employment Security. Government resources proved to be an efficient source of information and quite plentiful.

I also spoke to Veterans Employment Representatives who worked for the Illinois Department of Employment Security to get a more in-depth look at veteran's issues as they work with the veteran population on a daily basis. From these connections, I was able to find out about a homeless veteran stand down that took place in August of 2011. There I was able to meet several different veterans and discuss with them the direction for my film as well as ask them to participate. Because the project began with intent tell the story of homeless female veterans, women

suggested to me that I should bring combs, brushes or make-up to make to allow the women to feel more comfortable on camera.

One of the major frustrations during this research process was that I would desperately try to reach out to people to get information and they would sometimes stand me up. I met a young veteran woman whose father was in a homeless shelter at the time of my primary research. I spoke to him by phone and we set up a time to meet up at a homeless shelter in Chicago called A Safe Haven. Through him, I was going to have an inside connection to meeting women in the shelter. I took off work by making arrangements with my summer employer in order to meet this man and when I got there he never showed and did not answer his phone.

Instead of leaving the shelter I stayed there to try to speak to some of the workers to get a connection with the director of the shelter. They were friendly to me and gave me a number to call to reach the director to set up an appointment to explain my project. When I went outside I immediately called the number to possibly reach the director and set up a time. However, the phone number rang the phone of the same people that I had just spoken too. I marched right back into the facility and asked them what was going on with the phone number and after giving me an embarrassed look; they finally gave me the correct number to the office of the director.

The director was not available when I called him so I ended up leaving a voicemail. He called me back and was delighted in the idea of what I was trying to do. Unfortunately, he said that there weren't any women veterans in the shelter at the time and referred me to contact the Jesse Brown Veteran Affairs Medical Center in Chicago. I later found one women veteran through a connection at the Illinois Department of

Veteran Affairs. who did in fact reside at A Safe Haven. To add to my surprise and further negate what the director told me, she said that there were at least two other homeless women in the shelter.

After spending four months simply looking for people to interview, I decided to take the film in the direction of being a snapshot in the lives of women veterans. This direction opened many doors for me, as I knew many women veterans from my life experiences. I contacted friends, posted flyers at Veterans Affairs hospitals and collected any information I could find.

I also used my personal experience as a woman veteran to collect information. When I would go to appointments at the Veteran Affairs Medical Centers, I would gather the information that I would find at these to investigate or research further online. This method also allowed for me to open my thinking in the way that I approached this project and it also allowed great leads in the topics that I would cover in the film.

The women that I interviewed were the most enterprising of all. Through their experiences I would learn a new topic of women's veterans issues that would develop into further research. Although I had a suggested outline of how I wanted the documentary to look, it was definitively created from the collective experiences of the women in the film.

Target Audience

The target audience of *Through Her Eyes* is primarily the women veteran community, veterans, civilian women and parts of the population who may want to learn more about women veterans. This would include the friends and families of women veterans in America. As I delved into the project more, I found that civilian women were a very prominent part of the target audience and could identify with many of the issues such as gender discrimination because of it being quite universal.

This film is also especially important to veteran's service providers, as it is a tool that will help with outreach to women veterans. Although many service providers may be veterans themselves, there are always opportunities to bridge the gap of understanding the plight of the women veteran community. This film may also be one that will speak to women veteran who are in need of help to let them that they are not alone and provide an outlet for them to receive resources that will be beneficial to them.

CHAPTER 3: PROJECT BREAK DOWN

Format

Through Her Eyes is presented through the voice over narration of the filmmaker, myself and through interviews of exclusively women who served in the United States military. Their stories are assisted visually through the use of personal photographs, personal home videos, World War II archive footage and footage from the Internet Archive or www.archive.org. More than ninety percent of the film is shot in high definition using a Canon EOS 7D and the rest is shot using a Sony Z7U. Most of the sound on tape audio of *Through Her Eyes* was recorded using a Zoom H4N and the rest through the Sony Z7U. The narration was recorded using the studios of Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

Project Analysis

Despite this project becoming something different from what it initially was when I first began the pre-production process, I am pleased with having an opportunity to create it. I feel that I covered many of the basic topics that women veterans face but the issues are never ending and each could stand alone as a documentary.

It was difficult at first to find women for the film, but towards the end I had more than enough. The toil of trying to get women to speak on such personal matters is what makes *Through Her Eyes* so compelling. I found that there is a greater void than what I originally imagined from when I first took on the task of creating this film. I had several

conversations with friends who were women veterans and they expressed to me how important this film was to our community. This film became greater than just simply a research project to complete a requirement for graduate school; it became something that was so powerful that I was at first terrified of creating it. I knew how badly women veterans lacked a voice to speak for them, but because of this pressure I wanted to create something that women veterans could appreciate and essentially be apart of our voice in the media. Throughout the process of this film, I found that I had to conquer my personal fears as a woman veteran in order to make the piece successful.

From this project, I learned that creating a documentary for social change is a tedious process that should be greeted with great ambition. Doing adequate research before even searching for interviewees would have created more thorough questions and would have made for a better structure in the early stages of the film. I had good background information but I learned new things from meeting women such as young boys not being allowed in women's shelters after a certain age.

I also learned that creating a documentary of this length is no easy task and I have an even greater respect for persons who commit their lives to this form of media. Tenacity is the key requirement for anyone who would decide to embark upon this type of production. Being told no, or misled the way I was when I began to seek people out to interview discouraged me at first, but I did not allow it to prevent me from seeking other avenues.

I spent a huge amount of time in constructing this project in every stage of production. I had numerous late nights and early mornings. I also had to make myself available to meet with people and take time out of my schedule on several different

occasions. Multitasking was another quality that I learned to refine while working on this film such as transferring digital video files while transcribing the audio from interviews. But despite the lengthy process, I am still quite delighted with the outcome of my hard work and I am eager to share it.

Pre-Production

The pre-production was not as easy as I had anticipated it to be. I took for granted that I was veteran and didn't identify myself as a veteran to the women that I met. I thought that I should first establish my identity as a filmmaker. This method proved to slow down the trust between the subjects and myself and after I revealed myself as a veteran to the women they had a better reception to me and had more of a willingness to be apart of the film. I reached out to friends, veteran's organizations and even posted flyers in order to get women to participate in the film. During this process, the most negative experience I had was when a woman inquired to be apart of the project and expected monetary compensation for telling her story.

This process was the most frustrating because of my research technique and the hard time that I had in acquiring women to participate in the film. Many of the people I spoke to were government employees and could not speak on camera because of it would directly conflict with their job.

To help me stay organized, I kept a binder to collect information and I also kept a journal to write down my experiences from the entire process. This journal proved to be

a great tool of release for the frustrations that I acquired during the early stages of this film. It was also handy as a go to device to jot down information when I would contact individuals for information for the film.

The things that I liked the most about this part of the production process was the way in which I documented everything with the use of the binder and journal. These items made it relatively easy to refer back to information throughout the process of the film. From these items, I learned that good foundational organization is essential to the process of making any film.

Production

The production process took me to several different cities. I visited Denver, Colorado, St. Louis, Missouri, Chicago and Carbondale, Illinois to interview and film women veterans. My main concerns during the interviews were audio and lighting. It was very challenging to get both of these elements to work well. I generally would ask the women the same interview questions unless there was something significant about her experience such as wartime or traumatic experiences. Most of the interviews would last from thirty to forty-five minutes long and I always would learn something new about the woman by the end of the interview.

When I first began the actual filming process in August of 2011, I was using the SonyZ7U that was provided by Southern Illinois University's equipment checkout room. Although this was a good quality camera, it was also quite large and I had concerns

about taking such a large camera with me when I traveled aboard airplanes. This led me to purchase my own personal camera, which was a Canon EOS 7D and an accompanying audio recorder, which was a Zoom H4N. The decision to purchase my own equipment was a very expensive one as these two devices, memory cards and external hard drives cost over $3,000, however it was invaluable to the project.

When I went to Denver, I carried my personal camera along with my subject and I everywhere we went and I was able to capture great moments that would have been awkward to capture with a larger camera. I would also argue that it made her feel more comfortable speaking on camera when I finally conducted the formal interview. The camera also worked very well with me when I filmed another subject in St. Louis inside of her police vehicle.

This part of the production process is where the majority of the money in my budget went because of traveling expenses. I spent around $1,000 in airfare, ground transportation, fuel for driving to St. Louis and Chicago, and staying overnight in a hotel in St. Louis.

Post-Production

This stage of the documentary was the most tedious as I spent several hours transcribing the interviews of the women to construct the topics that were discussed. Transcription however proved to a very useful tool in selecting the sound bites that would tell each section of the film. I used Final Cut Pro to edit the film and Photoshop to

clean up the photos that were used. I used music mostly royalty free music and one original instrumental from a musician in Chicago.

In the course of this part of the production process, I spent an incredible amount of time and energy. Several nights a week, I edited in the New Media Center of Southern Illinois University for at 6-8 hours, stopping only for bathroom breaks. These long sessions of editing would become frustrating at times because out of spending nearly 8 hours of editing a segment of the film, I would only have around only 2 minutes completed. Ironically, I felt extremely pleased when these small bits of the film would come together and this excitement would carry my energy over into continuing my edits.

The most unfortunate part of this process however, was even though I spent countless hours in editing the film, I still had weak elements in the film that required to put even more effort into such as audio hiss and extra unneeded frames of black in-between video clips.

The post-production process also was a very personal struggle for me as well. I have a passion for editing but towards the end of this stage, I was given footage from a friend who captured our unit's deployment to Kuwait and invasion to Iraq. The images that I saw in this footage from the war were ones that I hadn't seen since I was actually in theater. Because of the long hours of looking at this footage and in the editing process, I started to see mirages on the side of road when I drove that resembled the blown apart vehicles that I saw when I drove in Iraq. At this point I knew that I needed to take a break from the project, which I did. Once my head was clear, I was able to delve back into the film to fulfill my commitment to telling this story.

Conclusion

Through Her Eyes is now complete and I greatly appreciate the journey through which it has brought me. Being nearly thirty minutes in length, it is my longest video piece that I have created. This documentary took a lot of effort but it essentially makes me eager to create another piece spending a great deal of time in the pre-production process on research. I wanted to create something that women who served in the military could be proud of and identify with and I truly feel that women veterans can view this film and find a piece of themselves within it.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX: SCRIPT

Visual/Audio Cues	Audio/Narration
American Flag Waving with effect on it One image WAC poster multiplies in size	AS U.S. MILITARY FORCES INCREASE OVER THE NEXT 20 YEARS…THE WOMEN VETERAN POPULATION WILL NEARLY DOUBLE
Split screen of cars, agriculture & dinnertime	BUT AMERICA ISN'T READY FOR THEM
Not Be Ready Text over images	WAIT…THAT'S ABSURB…HOW CAN IT NOT BE READY?
Picture of Frances Clayton	WOMEN HAVE BEEN SERVING SINCE THE CIVIL WAR…DRESSING UP AS MEN TO HIDE IN THE RANKS.
Imagery of women in 1950's	FAST FORWARD NINETY YEARS AND WE WOMEN ARE HERE AND WE'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE…

Visual/Audio Cues	Audio/Narration
Zoom out still Image of Jennet Posey	EVEN DURING MY TIME IN THE IRAQ WAR
Home Video Footage of Jennet Posey driving through Baghdad	I SERVED…
Home video of group of women in Kuwait	ALONG WITH OTHER WOMEN…
Text of Why Isn't America Ready?	SO WHY ISN'T AMERICA READY?
Scattered Text of Issues with flag underneath	BECAUSE WOMEN WHO SERVED ARE STILL DEALING WITH THIS.
Film stock footage under tank footage with lower opacity	SO I DECIDED TO CREATE THIS FILM…
Tri-Image of marching ROTC and young girl	IN ORDER TO HELP FUTURE GENERATIONS OF WOMEN VETERANS…

Visual/Audio Cues	Audio/Narration
FILM TITLE GRAPHIC	BUT BEFORE THAT I NEED YOU TO UNDERSTAND THESE ISSUES LET ME SHOW YOU… THROUGH HER EYES…
Iraq footage of wrestling	I USED TO PLAY FIGHT GUYS A LOT TO TRY TO PROVE THAT I WAS AS TOUGH AS THEM…I OFTEN LOST
More wrestling footage	FUNNY THING IS IT SEEMS LIKE OTHER WOMEN FELT LIKE THEY HAD TO PROVE SOMETHING AS WELL
Text on screen “I have come far, but not far enough. It is still a man’s world.” Lesley Ann Warren Music- James Brown “This is a man’s world” B-Roll of Cop Car Voice Over Au’Drianne Schroder	NAT SOUND *“This is a man’s world, this is a man’s world…”* “I think the biggest challenge being in the military at times was just the fact that I was a female.”

Visual/Audio Cues	Audio/Narration
(FADES) SOT Au'Drianne Schroder Interview	"Basic training was um…you know typically I think um…men in general are the ones who enter into the military and uh so they gear everything towards men. And um…and they're not very women friendly I should say."
STILL IMAGE zooms out of Noelle Blake SOT Noelle Blake Interview	"It didn't feel like I was apart of a team it was like I had to go to work and prove something to these guys everyday not that you know um we equal cause we wearing the same uniform but you're doing the same job you may have a little more rank than me but we're the same team but it didn't feel like that for a long time."
SOT Lieutenant Colonel Monica Womack	"The Army is a male dominate profession. It's the Army by mere virtue of what its called it sort of denotes the fact that its going to be a male dominated profession."

Visual/Audio Cues	Audio/Narration
CUT STILL IMAGE Shaheen Shorish SOT Shaheen Shorish Interview	“Like girls can’t do that just a sentence like that that was definitely thought out that was said to my face for any number of things, girls can’t lift this, girls can’t arm wrestle stupid, like arm wrestling it has nothing to do with military proficiency but that’s was one of the arguments brought up.”
SOT Au’Drianne Schroder Interview B-Roll of Schroder and partner SOT Au’Drianne Schroder Interview	“You know and they might look at a guy whose twice my size and go-like my partner here- and go oh I…I don’t know he…I might have some issues with him because of this size but the fact of the matter is that both him and I have had the same training we both have had the same amount of academy training and uh…defensive tactics and that type of thing so I’m just as capable as anybody else but because of my size they would judge me and I would have to prove myself.”

Visual/Audio Cues	Audio/Narration
B-Roll of Maj. Gen Anderson speaking SOT Maj. Gen Anderson Interview	“ I found for the most part that the more I demonstrated my capability the less I had to worry about people who uh as I like to call it were knuckleheads who, who didn’t recognize that ability comes in all kinds of packages and its not about your gender your race its simply about your abilities. “
Text on screen “A sex symbol becomes a thing. I just hate to be a thing.” –Marilyn Monroe	*Music begins*
Group photo of Blake SOT Noelle Blake Interview Still image of Blake on a plane	“People didn’t look at me as a um…equal soldier. They just looked at me as breast and ass basically. You know and so it was they didn’t take me serious a lot of the guys and that pissed me off more than anything. You had different guys making sleazy gestures and innuendos comment unnecessary things”

Visual/Audio Cues	Audio/Narration
(Dissolve) Still Image of Griffin B-Roll of Griffin in tent in Kuwait SOT Trinada Griffin Interview	"As far as sexual harassment and things like that…I experienced it probably just one time by a staff sergeant from another company in Camp New York…um he had made passes at me and actually you know touched me and things like that, that I really didn't want to happen. And then when I'd go say something about it…well actually I was kind of afraid to say something about it because he out ranked me so I was afraid of other people's higher ranks and thinking that I would be kind of like um starting trouble for myself."
Still image of Belec with man Still image of Belec with on forklift SOT of Heidi Belec	"I think…I think just I'm not saying this as an excuse it doesn't excuse people from doing things or saying things at all but uh I think in certain environments

Visual/Audio Cues	Audio/Narration
SOT Heidi Belec	people are a lot more looser in what they say and think and do. . Um I take a lot of it with a grain of salt. Unless you're actually doing something physically to me…I will physically do something to you. Which usually would mean punch you in the face. But uh as far as sexual harassment yeah. I mean it happened I just give the shit right back."
B-Roll of trying to reach the VA by phone	WHEN YOU CALL THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AT ANY GIVEN BUSINESS HOUR THIS IS WHAT YOU'LL TYPICALLY HEAR *(Nat sound of phone recording)* THEY SOMETIMES HAVE TROUBLE MEETING THE NEEDS OF ALL VETERANS SO IT COMES AS NO SURPRISE THAT THEY HAVE TROUBLE MEETING THE NEEDS OF WOMEN VETERANS EITHER

Visual/Audio Cues	Audio/Narration
Marion VA sign pan to building Pan of Marion VA building SOT Noelle Blake	“ For the VA the only thing I do have a problem with they have one female doctor handling so many women in this area now there’s an abundance of doctors that can handle the men veterans but however, we’re restricted to one woman in one small clinic…”
SOT Rochelle Crump Interview Still image of lady getting mammogram SOT Rochelle Crump Interview	“ I think that the VA has still gaps of service for women veterans for example the mammograms which are not located in the medical centers. Um…there contracted out to University hospitals that are near the hospitals the VA hospitals but there not a direct service in the hospital. And I think that its mostly because the budget does not allow them to purchase that type of equipment when they don’t have the number of women veterans to serve and the they don’t serve them because they don’t

Visual/Audio Cues	Audio/Narration
SOT Rochelle Crump Interview	know that their entitled to come into the VA for services. ”
SOT Au’Drianne Schroeder Interview	“ I never knew about any benefits and here it is you know 20 years later now working for the VA they ask me about benefits and I’m like what kind of benefits so all of this has been available for me or at least available to me for many years and I never knew anything about it and its only because I work here that I know that.”
Image Department of Veterans Affairs Emblem	
SOT Shaheen Shorish Interview	“I was not aware of the VA’s existence. The VA existed to me as only the people that made sure I got my GI Bill they weren’t anything other than that.”

Visual/Audio Cues	Audio/Narration
Text on screen “In the United States of America, no one that served in our uniform should sleep on our streets. President Barack Obama”	Music fades in
B-Roll of Chicago Standdown	IN THE UNITED STATES LAST YEAR…OVER A HUNDRED THOUSAND PEOPLE THAT SERVED OUR COUNTRY DIDN’T HAVE A PLACE TO CALL HOME.
LeeAnn Summers walking in Hallway	A GOOD PERCENTAGE OF THEM WERE WOMEN WHO AT ONE TIME IN HER LIFE SERVED OUR COUNTRY WOMEN VETERANS ARE MORE THAN TWICE AS LIKELY TO BECOME HOMELESS AS CIVLIAN WOMEN.
B-roll of LeeAnn Summers in a computer lab	“The sheriff’s came out and me and my son were evicted. At the time my son

Visual/Audio Cues	Audio/Narration
B-roll of LeeAnn Summers in a computer lab SOT LeeAnn Summers Interview	was still in school so I ended up asking a neighbor if he could stay with them so I wouldn't have to pull him out of school and I didn't know like I said a lot of shelters they didn't take boys over a certain age he was 14 at the time so most of them don't take them over 8 or 9 so I felt as long as he had somewhere to stay then I'd…he'd be ok then I'd just have to worry about finding somewhere for me to stay."
B-Roll of LeeAnn Smoking B-Roll of LeeAnn SOT Interview LeeAnn Summers	*Music continues* "There are not enough facilities for women. Men can find somewhere to go 24 hours a day 7 days a week basically. Mostly everything is set up to accommodate men. There are not half as many, no where near that many facilities for women to go to.

Visual/Audio Cues	Audio/Narration
Text "According to the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, there are over 106,000 homeless veterans in the U.S. and only about 14,000 beds available."	*Music continues*
SOT Interview Trinada Griffin	"I ended up homeless quite a few times. Not being able to really relate to people and being detached from people like my family and I wasn't really able to hold a job when I got back home."
B-Roll of Denver street B-Roll of Griffin Smoking	*Music continues*
Interview Trinada Griffin B-Roll Griffin on a train	"Its also kind of made me a person. I don't wanna stay in one spot I like to move around I can never really find my place I feel like um…Almost feel like I'm not at home no matter where I go. I don't feel like I belong anywhere."
SOT LeeAnn Summers Interview	"Even when you get out you're not really out. Yes you're out on paper but you know when you're out on the street and

Visual/Audio Cues	Audio/Narration
SOT LeeAnn Summers Interview	street and something happens that's just in our nature to respond and when people around and they know that's what you are a veteran they're going to expect for you to respond so we expect the same thing for people to respond to our needs when we ask or need something and we're not asking for anything special. We're just asking for what we are due as human beings."
	Music ends
	Music begins
B-Roll of Christian Science Monitor Article	IN 2006…I WAS APART OF AN ARTICLE FOR THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR ABOUT WOMEN BEING NEW VETERANS IN AMERICA…
	AT THE TIME I FELT HONORED BUT I DON'T THINK I QUITE UNDERSTAND THE DEPTH OF HOW THE MEDIA

Visual/Audio Cues	Audio/Narration
B Roll of Christian Science Monitor article	TO REPRESENT WOMEN WHO SERVED IN THE MILITARY.
SOT Noelle Blake Interview	"There is a ton of women in the military but when you look at the media you would never know that its so many women…"
Archive Footage "The American Veteran"	NAT SOUND "This time on The American Veteran, veterans of the strategic air command how they helped win the cold war and what they're doing now…"
Archive Footage "Link TV"	NAT SOUND "What's astounding from the film we just saw when we came home is you have a guy you have many guys the doctor at the VA says you're a hundred percent disabled…"

Visual/Audio Cues	Audio/Narration
B-Roll of Google search for Disabled American Veterans	EVEN ORGANIZATIONS WHO REPRESENT VETERANS HAVE FALLEN VICTIM TO THE MASCULINE MODEL OF THE AMERICAN VETERAN…
B-Roll of Google search for Veterans of Foreign Wars	"I always get this stuff in the mail because all these organizations VFW, DAV, they're good organizations and they sell…and they try to raise money um…but mailing out things like flyers what have you but I was always addressed as Mr. Shorish in all of them. Mr. Shorish, even when I joined the organization checked male and female and I checked female when there was an option and sometimes there wasn't um…I would still get thank you joining the VFW Mr. Shorish you know blah, blah, blah. And I'm like you gotta be kidding me."
B-Roll of selecting female	
SOT Shaheen Shorish Interview	
	Music ends

Visual/Audio Cues	Audio/Narration
B Roll of unit coin	I CONSIDER MY OLD UNIT 10TH ENGINEER BATTILION TO BE APART OF MY FAMILY. A VERY UNIQUE GROUP OF MEN AND WOMEN.
Still Image of Dawn and Jennet	I HAD ONE FRIEND IN PARTICULAR NAMED DAWN. SHE BROUGHT HER VIDEO CAMERA AND CAPTURED EVERYTHING.
Footage of Dawn Peay-Claridy	"….that's my camera everybody know me…"
Footage of Jennet Posey being promoted	…SHE FILMED THE DAY THAT I GOT PROMOTED "The Army has imposed special trust…" SHE FILMED SOME OF THE GUYS..
Footage of men in a lake	

Visual/Audio Cues	Audio/Narration
Footage of Janice Franklin Footage shot by Janice Franklin	EVEN SOMETIMES PASSED IT OFF TO ANOTHER WOMAN WHO WAS IN OUR VEHICLE…JANICE FRANKLIN.
Montage of various scenes in Iraq with a static transition.	(Nat Sound)
Footage of Trinada Griffin being promoted	TRINADA WAS IN OUR UNIT AS WELL…SHE TOOK MY OLD JOB AS THE FIRST SERGEANT'S HUMVEE DRIVER IN IRAQ.
Griffin and First Sergeant Yeatts	" I just experienced I guess different things than what other soldiers in our unit we experiencing. We got to um go to an Iraqi family's home and eat dinner with them quite a few times. I experienced my first belly dancer in Iraq with First Sergeant…umm we got to make friends with a really nice family over there and kind of see what their life was like what their real home life was like."

Visual/Audio Cues	Audio/Narration
Footage of inside of tent in Kuwait	But for me and my friends our day of infamy was when a missile bombed our headquarters
VO Dawn Peay-Claridy Iraq Footage a B Roll	“My self and one of the Sergeants that was riding with me SGT Franklin we tugged the water buffalo so we had to go and refill it we go to refill it and as soon as we go back under that underpass that we we’re first coming in on we heard this sound”
SOT Interview Trinada Griffin	“And then we could hear like a WHEEW WHEWW WHEEW sound we looked at each other and then we look up in the sky and we see like a cylinder shaped object some tumbling out of the sky kinda like that and it hit the building and it exploded”

Visual/Audio Cues	Audio/Narration
VO Dawn Peay-Claridy Iraq Footage a B Roll	“it kinda sounded like um you know how people do a show like the air force they do a air show and the planes they do a sound like this Wheeeewwwww and I’m looking like oh that’s us! Get em! Get them Iraqis! Get em!
SOT Trinada Griffin Interview	So we were just kinda hanging out of our HUMVEE looking at it and First Sergeant kinda snapped back to reality and said,” What are you doing Private? Get over there!”. So he hopped back in the HUMVEE and reluctantly I was like, “You mean go over there into the explosion?” Stuff like that He was like, “Start up the HUMVEE and drive over there!”
VO Dawn Peay-Claridy Iraq Footage a B Roll	And the truck shook and all of this shrapnel just started falling down all over the place and we’re looking around like what the hell is going on

Visual/Audio Cues	Audio/Narration
VO Dawn Peay-Claridy Iraq Footage a B Roll	"They must have blew up one of their homes or something over on the other side. But Lo and behold everybody's telling us to go back telling everybody get back to your positions go back. And we look and then 2nd Brigade Toc it got blown up."
B-Roll of plane *Fades*	I PERSONALY RMEMBER BEING TERRIED…AND TO THIS DAY THE SOUND OF A LOW FLYING PLANE SENDS MY HEART INTO A FRENZY.
B-roll of Griffin smoking	TRAUMA AND POST TRAMATIC STRESS DISORDER DON'T DISCRIMINATE BECAUSE OF GENDER LIKE MEN IT LEAVES US WOMEN SCARRED AS WELL.
SOT Trinada Griffin Interview	"I ended up in the VA hospital for depression um…anxiety so. Umm it's affected me…I'd say more good than

Visual/Audio Cues	Audio/Narration
SOT Trinada Griffin Interview	bad. I could have done without the bad things."
B Roll of Shorish	A TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE DOESN'T ALWAYS EQUATE TO BEING IN A WAR ZONE…US WOMEN ARE SOMETIMES THE TARGET OF A DIFFERENT TYPE OF TRAUMA.
SOT Shaheen Shorish Interview	"I was sexually assaulted in the military by another person in uniform. And uh that was the thing that kind of broke me um…my self esteem, my ability to do my job my ability to focus…um…walk with pride any sort of pride in myself and so when I got out the military I thought I had failed at the military."
B Roll of Shorish	FORTUNATELY…THERE IS HELP OUT THERE FOR US VETERANS AND THE VA HAS MADE STRIDES IN TACKLING THESE ISSUES

Visual/Audio Cues	Audio/Narration
SOT Shaheen Shorish Interview	"And a lot of that was just because of the uh honestly because of the excellent PTSD therapy that the VA has provided and now they've caught up in kind of outreach to women . That helped me you know those times that I tried community college and kept flunking out I wasn't in therapy. The day I started therapy I went back to school. The day I started therapy things started getting better."
Still Image of Shorish	
Fades	
Multiple images of B-roll of women veterans doing various things	AS FOR US WOMEN VETERAN WHILE WE WAIT FOR SOCIETY AND ITS PERCEPTIONS TO CATCH UP…LIFE GOES ON…
	WE'RE DOING THINGS LIKE
B-ROLL of color guard uniform B-roll of awards Footage of Shorish interview	VOLUNTEERING AS COLOR GUARD FOR VETERAN'S ORGANIZATIONS

Visual/Audio Cues	Audio/Narration
B-Roll of Schroder at Desk Inside VA truck	WE'RE POLICE OFFICERS
B Roll of Rochelle Crump and National Women Veteran's United	WE'RE ADVOCATING FOR OTHER WOMEN VETERANS…
SOT Rochelle Crump	"…There are still things that we are not doing"
B Roll of Veteran's Day Parade wreath	WE'RE GETTING THE STATE OF ILLINOIS TO ADOPT A LICENSE PLATE TO COMMEMORATE WOMEN WHO SERVED.
SOT Secretary of State Jesse White introducing license plate	"We have the pleasure of introducing the twenty-eighth license plate…it's the women veterans plate."
Still image of license plate	

Visual/Audio Cues	Audio/Narration
B-Roll of Griffin at Belly Dancing class	OR WE'RE TRAVELING AND LEARNING SOMETHING NEW…LIKE BELLY DANCING IN DENVER.
SOT Jennet Posey	OR BETTER YET MAKING A DOCUMENTARY ABOUT IT ALL IN HOPES THAT THE NEXT TIME YOU HEAR THE WORD VETERAN…YOU ALSO THINK OF SOMEONE WHO LOOKS LIKE ME…
Fades	

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