

4-F: THE FORGOTTEN UNFIT OF THE AMERICAN MILITARY
DURING WORLD WAR II

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Henry Brooks Adams, the deeply flawed but eloquent American historian once said, “a teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops.” Adams got a lot of things wrong in his life. Among the many things he left us which we might wish to alter, a minor one would be to correct his quote by adding that many teachers cannot tell where *her* influence ends. No student makes it to the end of the road without direction and mine came from the very best, Dr. Katherine Landdeck. This thesis would not exist in any form without the guidance and support of Dr. Landdeck throughout my five years at Texas Woman’s University. In addition to acting as the main advisor for this research, Dr. Landdeck has graciously and simultaneously served as a trusted mentor and friend in matters related to teaching, writing, academic development and life. Simply put, *I* cannot tell where Dr. Landdeck’s influence ends in myself, but I am confident that I am the better for it. While I know that gratitude expressed in print often falls short, I would be amiss if I did not wholeheartedly thank Dr. Landdeck for everything she has done for me in my time as her graduate student.

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ABSTRACT
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This research explores how different segments of American society understood, interpreted, and responded to militarily rejected men, classified as 4-F by the Selective Service System during the Second World War. The first area of this study explores the military's intent and meaning in the creation and use of a 4-F classification. The second section is dedicated to an in depth examination of African American rejection rates. As the only minority group in America kept statistically separate by the U.S. Armed Forces and the Selective Service System, special consideration is given to the circumstances and contributing factors influencing the higher rejection of black men. In contrast to official institutional understandings of 4-F, the third section discusses the social stigma and response to 4-F men on the American home front from the general public, business, and vocal politicians. The fourth section details the intimate implications of military rejection and its associative effects on dating and family life. The fifth and final section is dedicated to how and why some 4-F men sought military reclassification out of 4-F. This thesis seeks to broaden the space in the historical narrative for non-combatant men during WWII and re-examine the complex social dynamics of the U.S. home front.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

World War II is one of the most widely researched and publicly celebrated periods in American history, yet despite the sheer volume of print on page, many complicated aspects of this era remain unexplored by scholars who are recently seeking to challenge the already deeply embedded myths of the “good war” and the “greatest generation.”¹ One dominant aspect of this myth surrounds the image of a cohesive American populace who wholeheartedly embraced the voluntary militaristic exodus of its morally righteous and physically formidable young men. The acceptance of such leaves most imagining a home front where content and proud wives nurtured children in the absence of serving husbands and fathers while single Rosie's were left to rivet and wait for the boys to come home.² In truth, the American landscape was far from devoid of men. The Armed Forces

¹ Sylvie Murray, *Writing World War II: A Student's Guide* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2011), 42; Mary L. Dudziak, *War-Time: An Idea, Its History, Its Consequences* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 61; Tom Brokaw, *The Greatest Generation* (New York: Random House, 1998); Studs Terkel, *“The Good War”: An Oral History of World War Two* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984). While neither Brokaw nor Terkel are entirely original in the portrayal of the American WWII generation as exemplary or special, the popularity of these texts has made these books a starting point for scholars seeking to examine the growing mythology surrounding WWII. It should be noted that Terkel's compilation of oral histories is both broad and inclusive; however, it is important to note glorifying linguistics, particularly the use of them as titles, in the progression of works on WWII. Terkel addresses the title of his book by acknowledging it as a suggestion from Herbert Mitgang, a former army correspondent in WWII, saying in the forward matter that the term is, “frequently voiced by men of his and my generation.” It should be of interest to those examining WWII mythology that Terkel introduces his work as, “a memory book, rather than one of hard fact and precise statistic,” while Brokaw explains his evaluation that the American WWII generation, “is the greatest generation any society has produced,” is based primarily on memories and stories (Terkel, 3; Brokaw, xxx).

² Kenneth D. Rose, *Myth and the Greatest Generation: A Social History of Americans in World War II* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 1-2; David M. Kennedy, *The American People in World War II* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 335; John E. Bodnar, *The “Good War” in American Memory* (Baltimore: The John

consistently excluded men under eighteen and over forty-five years of age, preferring men under twenty-six. Other men found a major avenue for deferment available by working in essential industries which temporarily exempted certain specialized laborers

from military service altogether regardless of age or condition.³ In addition to these men there remained another, seemingly service bound, group of young men at home who have been seldom discussed in scholarly literature and seemingly forgotten in public memory, 4-F's. The draft classification 4-F, defined by General Lewis B. Hershey, the director of Selective Service, is a category of men found, "unfit for military service," due to physical, mental or moral reasons.⁴ This thesis explores how different segments of American society understood, interpreted and responded to militarily rejected men classified as 4-F by Selective Service during the intensely patriotic era of the Second World War.

This research will provide a necessary understanding of the Selective Service System's rapidly changing physical, mental, and moral classification standards. Further,

Hopkins University Press, 2010), 3.

³ Kennedy, *The American People in World War II*, 207; Eli Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions: The Ineffective Soldier, Lessons for Management and the Nation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), 33-34, 65-66; George Q. Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey: Mr. Selective Service* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 80. Flynn states that men between twenty-one and twenty-seven years of age account for seventy-seven percent of all inductees while men over thirty account for twelve percent of all rejections; General Lewis B. Hershey, *Selective Service in Wartime: Second Report of the Director of Selective Service, 1941-1942* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1943), 361.

⁴ General Lewis B. Hershey, *Selective Service in Peacetime: First Report of the Director of Selective Service, 1940-1941* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1942), 123; General Lewis B. Hershey, *Selective Service as the Tide of War Turns: The Third Report of the Director of Selective Service, 1943-1944*. (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1945), 63, 65.

this thesis will address the military meaning of a 4-F classification as a temporary deferment which intended little reflection on a man's ability or status in civilian life.⁵ For American government and military authorities, the identification of unfit men was less concerned with the needs of individual citizens than with economic concerns of wasting training and post-war veteran benefits on a serviceman who due to pre-existing issues was never likely to serve effectively. The need to rebuild the American military from its 1940 force of just under 460,000; nineteenth in size worldwide, to one large enough to meet the demands of a two front war, in which sixteen million men served; ten million of whom were obtained through conscription, presented constant pressure to procure men for military service. Despite this challenge, the Armed Forces maintained a policy of quality over quantity, seeking men, "particularly vocationally suited" to military life and unpredictable combat assignments.⁶

Through the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940, a measure lobbied through Congress by nine private citizens the Selective Service System initiative was born.⁷ Designed to fairly and democratically, "select men to meet the needs and standards of the Armed Forces [while screening] out the physically, mentally, educationally, and

⁵ V. R. Cardozier, *The Mobilization of the United States in World War II* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, 1995), 198; Hershey, *Selective Service in Peacetime*, 110; Hershey, *Selective Service as the Tide of War Turns*, 139, 141-142.

⁶ Cardozier, *The Mobilization of the United States in World War II*, 73; Henry E. Siu, "The Fiscal Role of Conscription in the U.S. World War II Effort," *Journal of Monetary Economics* 55 (2008): 1095; Christina S. Jarvis, *The Male Body at War: American Masculinity During World War II* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2004), 11; Rose, *Myth and the Greatest Generation*, 45; W. C. Porter, "The Military Psychiatrist at Work," *American Journal of Psychiatry* 98 (1941): 317; Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions*, 37.

⁷ J. Garry Clifford and Samuel R. Spencer, Jr., *The First Peacetime Draft* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1986), 5, 19. The original group which sought to pass compulsory military training in the United States included lawyer Philip A. Carroll, General Manager and Vice President of the New York Times Julius Ochs Adler, Langdon P. Marvin, Dr. Adolph L. Boyce and Alfred Roelker.

morally unfit. . .” via its 6,443 local boards, the Selective Service System was meant to be a civilian organization assisting the War Department and Armed Forces to control the manpower pool.⁸ However, considering the close tie of Henry Stimson's War Department and the substantial number of key positions within the department which were filled by Reserve officers while United States Army General Lewis B. Hershey acted as director, it is easy to understand how Selective Service has been commonly viewed as a civilian, military and government amalgamation.⁹

Eligible men called to be inspected by Selective Service boards faced rejection for military service on the primary basis of physical, mental, psychological, moral or criminal reasons. While standards from the Armed Forces consistently fell throughout the war there was widespread military, political and social concern about the magnitude of young men who, upon appearing for medical inspection, were found unfit between 1941 and 1945, a total of as many as 6.5 million men or 43% of the drafted American male population.¹⁰ It might seem that a mobilization issue of such scope would receive appropriate analysis in scholarly literature; however, few authors have given

⁸ Hershey, *Selective Service in Peacetime*, 3, 180.

⁹ Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 93, 150.

¹⁰This number varies according to different sources and historians and is complicated by the incident of multiple rejection and the acquisition of accurate numbers which can alter proportions. Jacob S. Potofsky, “The Poor State,” *Congressional Digest* 28 (1949): 92. Potofsky posits five million rejections with a thirty percent rejection rate. Hershey, *Selective Service in Peacetime*, 211. Hershey reports that early in conscription the rejection rate ran over forty percent due to high standards. Ginzberg, *The Lost Division*, 34. Ginzberg asserts that six million men were rejected while fourteen million served, which makes the rejection rate almost forty-three percent. Lt. Gen. Leonard D. Heaton, *Physical Standards in World War II* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1967, 16, 39. Heaton suggests that nearly thirty-nine percent of men were rejected during the war years; Ramy A. Mahmoud et al, “Evolution of Military Recruit Accession Standards,” in *Military Preventive Medicine: Mobilization and Deployment, Volume 1*, ed. Colonel Patrick Kelley (Washington D.C.: Office of the Surgeon General, 2003), 150. Mohmoud proposes nearly thirty-six percent of men in America were rejected for military service. Due to data utilized I have chosen to use Ginzberg's numbers as his sources are close to official sources while time had allowed numbers to be fully collected before analysis.

consideration to any aspect of military rejection. While those who have contribute valuable resources to the historical dialogue, all to date which include military rejection do so only as a minor aspect of a larger project not primarily dedicated to the issue of military rejection.¹¹

Most prominently, Eli Ginzberg's work *The Lost Divisions: The Ineffective Soldier; Lessons for Management and the Nation*, conducted with support from President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1950, examines the screening, utilization and subsequent early military separation of two million men from service.¹² Most valuable to this project is Ginzberg's analysis of the induction screening process and psychological testing parameters which, Ginzberg proposes, did not accurately predict who would and would not make effective soldiers. Though *The Lost Divisions* was originally meant to act as a military resource study, it remains invaluable to researchers seeking solid statistical analysis based on official government and military records and it is used heavily throughout this research.

It is especially significant to this study that Ginzberg estimates that both the Selective Service System and the military potentially classified able men inaccurately as 4-F through underdeveloped psychological evaluations which were often performed rapidly by numerically overwhelmed and only moderately experienced psychiatrists.¹³

Ginzberg's research, which expressly omits pre-induction 4-F men, focuses instead on the

¹¹ Ginzberg. *The Lost Divisions*; Allan Bérubé, *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two*. (New York: The Free Press, 1990); Jarvis. *The Male Body at War*.

¹² Ginzberg. *The Lost Divisions*, XIX.

¹³ Rose, *Myth and the Greatest Generation*, 30. Rose points out that in December 1941 the Army only had thirty-five psychiatrists; by the end of WWII the army would employ roughly twenty-four hundred; Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions*, 38.

waste of government resources on soldiers separated prematurely from service. While discharged servicemen did receive a draft status change to 4-F upon return to civilian life, the stigma surrounding discharged soldiers is too divergent to include in this study which will focus solely on men judged 4-F by local or military screening boards pre-induction.¹⁴ Despite the differing aims of this study and his 1950 work, Ginzberg's conclusions provide a cornerstone upon which one may build an argument about the value of the Selective Service classification system and its long term ramifications for those who received a 4-F classification.

Another notable author who has undertaken an in depth understanding of military selection is Allan Bérubé in his groundbreaking book *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two*.¹⁵ Bérubé's exceptional exploration of homosexual military exclusion leaves little room for further academic inquiry at this junction. His research is both timely and thorough; as such, while homosexual rejection in the military is an important discussion and is highly relevant to the discussion of 4-F men, much of this thesis' brief conversation concerning homosexual 4-F's will be based primarily upon the unparalleled work of Bérubé. Additionally, while homosexual men were unabashedly discriminated against during the war, only about one percent of men classified as 4-F were placed in this category expressly for homosexuality with many simply being classified as psychologically or morally deficient men.¹⁶ As such, because

¹⁴ Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions*, 4.

¹⁵ Bérubé. *Coming Out Under Fire*. Additionally, for a more modern discussion of homosexuality and the American military see Nathaniel Frank. *Unfriendly Fire: How the Gay Ban Undermines the Military and Weakens America* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2009).

¹⁶ Rose, *The Greatest Generation*, 149 Berube, *Coming Out Under Fire*, 11-12; Kennedy, *The American*

this research will rarely narrow the 4-F men under study by race or sexuality, homosexual men should be understood as implicitly included in the broader discussion of 4-F men. While homosexual men are not discussed specifically in relation to intimate matters this omission is simply due to a combination of exceptional recent scholarship on the subject and a lack of new, original sources on the subject from which to draw original conclusions.

A conversation of military physical standards and the impact of military rejection would be incomplete without including *The Male Body at War: American Masculinity During World War II* by Christina Jarvis. In this text, Jarvis explores the meanings which military service attaches to the concepts of the male body, masculinity, and the effects rejection has upon the perception of the unfit man's virility. Jarvis contends that the military and Selective Service simultaneously categorize, sexualize, and racially distinguish the male bodies which are subjected to inspection.¹⁷ While Jarvis' nuanced argument contains only partial concern of 4-F men, the few pages she devotes to their experience is particularly astute; especially her discussion of the examination process and the stigma 4-F men face in being found unacceptable for service.

Though Jarvis' argument runs parallel to that of this research in one section of her work, the emphasis remains upon the import of revealing the regard given to male bodies during different war eras. Due to Jarvis' only peripheral focus on mobilization and Selective Service classification some minor errors in her work concerning organization

People in World War II, 285; David Serlin, "Crippling Masculinity: Queerness and Disability in U.S. Military Culture," *Gay and Lesbian Quarterly* 9 (2003): 155.

¹⁷ Jarvis, *The Male Body at War*, 4-5.

and establishment of the Selective Service must be forgiven. The primary difference between this research and Jarvis' work is the singular focus this work commits to 4-F men and the classification; granting rejected men a voice of their own through the use of oral history, and the further development of the multifaceted ways 4-F men and their status were seen. While this research and that of Jarvis' connect only at select and limited junctures, her work remains integrally important to this research as the nearest historiographically.

While much of the experience of military rejection cut across economic, regional and racial barriers, African American men, the only racial group kept statistically separate by the military, is particularly nuanced and as such is handled in further depth in this work with a specially dedicated chapter. This research section seeks to further a historical conversation concerning the manifest ways African American men were subject to discrimination despite prohibitions against it in the Selective Service and Training Act of 1940 and whether local or military screening contributed to the disproportionate rejection rates of African Americans.¹⁸ While Selective Service limited African American military representation to between nine and ten percent throughout the war to reflect the proportion of African Americans in the general public, this prohibition alone cannot explain the much higher rejection rates of African Americans in contrast to other races.¹⁹

Ginzberg, in his 1950 *The Lost Divisions*, asserts that the higher rejection and discharge of African Americans was solely due to African American illiteracy, ineptness,

¹⁸ Hershey, *Selective Service and Peacetime*, 191, 251; Hershey, *Selective Service in Wartime*, 292.

¹⁹ Brokaw, *The Greatest Generation*, 193. Interestingly, Brokaw notes this maintained percentage yet makes no mention of the inherent discrimination in such practices. He does, however, condemn the military's lackluster use of African American servicemen.

and “feigned dumbness.”²⁰ Similarly, the American Teachers Association argues in their 1944 report, *The Black and White of Rejection for Military Service* that high African American rejection rates were not indicative of prejudices in testing but of poor and inequitable educational standards already in practice nationally.²¹ However, that the rejection of African American men was at least occasionally the product of blatant discriminatory practices is apparent in reports where black examinees, facing inquiry before local draft boards about their opinion of segregation, who answered negatively, were disqualified for service as mentally deficient and given 4-F draft statuses.²² Another curious issue is the official military disqualification rate of African Americans for mental deficiency which ranged between four and fifteen times higher than those for white candidates throughout the war. Interestingly, the disqualifying basis of mental deficiency, as defined by Selective Service, is not relative to either mental disease or minimum intelligence, both of which were separate, well-defined causes. Mental deficiency could be declared without information as to specific type or degree.²³

To understand how young African American men who felt dissatisfaction with inequitable military and social practices in America occasionally sought to evade military service as Malcolm X did, this research relies upon Luis Alvarez's book *The Power of the*

²⁰ Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions*, 13, 120-123.

²¹ Martin D. Jenkins, *The Black and White of Rejections for Military Service: A Study of Rejections of Selective Service Registrants, by Race, on Account of Educational and Mental Deficiencies* (Montgomery: The American Teachers Association Publications Office, 1944), 30.

²² “Draft Board Jim-Crow Seen in Heavy 4-F,” *The Pittsburgh Courier*, October 10, 1942, 5; “Jim Crow For? 4-F in Draft,” *Atlanta Daily World*, October 12, 1942, 6.

²³ Major C. H. Greve, *Physical Examinations of Selective Service Registrants in the Final Months of the War* (Washington D.C.: National Headquarters, Selective Service System, 1946), 15.

*Zoot: Youth Culture and Resistance During World War II.*²⁴ While this discussion is but a small portion of Alvarez's larger study concerning youth Zoot culture during World War II, his analysis of African American will to participate in WWII contributes to a better understanding of these unsettling military statistics of African American rejection. However, Alvarez treats only those involved in the Zoot movement, leaving much of the African American community, particularly southern African Americans, outside the scope of his research.

In contrast to Alvarez's theme of minority resistance, Kimberley L. Phillips argues in *War! What is it good for?: Black Freedom Struggles and the U.S. Military from World War II to Iraq*, that though some African Americans did seek to evade military service in defiance of an unjust system as Malcolm X did, many African Americans sought a place in the war and a relative elevation in American society through service.²⁵ While Phillips does discuss the dilemma of African American access to military service, her primary research focus in respect to WWII is to demonstrate the lack of respect African American servicemen were shown and their overwhelming assignment to menial, non-combat positions. Still, Phillips contends that African Americans were anxious to participate in the conflict and sought entry into the Armed Forces despite intense discrimination, which

²⁴ Luiz Alvarez, *The Power of the Zoot: Youth Culture and Resistance During World War II* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 17.

²⁵ Kimberley L. Phillips. *War! What is it Good For?: Black Freedom Struggles and the U.S. Military from World War II to Iraq* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 6-7, 14, 33-34, 58; John V. H. Dippel, *War and Sex: A Brief History of Men's Urge for Battle* (Amherst: Prometheus Books, 2010), 224; Allan M. Winkler, *Home Front U.S.A.: America During World War II* (Arlington Heights: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1986), 60.

escalated to include lynchings at military camps.²⁶ Indeed, primary source evidence from popular African American newspapers during WWII, including the *Afro-American* and the *New York Amsterdam News*, show African American military men held in high regard among their peers and little evidence that African Americans as a group sought to evade service or were less patriotic than any other racial group.

While American society underwent a period of intense war related patriotism, response to 4-F men, regardless of race, resembled reluctant sympathy at best and exploded into physical assault and organized legislative attack at worst. In the fashion of republican tradition, Americans consistently upheld the ideological juxtaposition of civic virtue and military service as the underpinnings of desirable male citizens.²⁷ In contrast to the social support of good citizen-soldiers, ridicule and suspicion for military rejection often followed 4-F men who were commonly assumed to be holistically inferior men. Vernacular based on Selective Service classifications swiftly slipped into common parlance, particularly A-1 and 4-F, which respectively signify service readiness and military rejection.²⁸ 4-F men were commonly subject to widespread, “teasing and discrimination,” described by psychiatrist Gilbert J. Rich as, “his lot as a 4-Fer.”²⁹

²⁶ Phillips, *War! What is it Good For?*, 9. Such attitudes were particularly encouraged by Langston Hughes who encouraged participation in the military while arguing against segregation of the armed forces in *The Chicago Defender*; Kennedy, *The American People in World War II*, 346.

²⁷ Ronald R. Krebs, “The Citizen-Soldier Tradition in the United States: Has its Demise Been Greatly Exaggerated?” *Armed Forces and Society* 36 (2009): 156; Linda K. Kerber, *No Constitutional Right to be Ladies: Women and the Obligations of Citizenship* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000).

²⁸ Jarvis, *The Male Body at War*, 59.

²⁹ Gilbert J. Rich, “Problems of the Rejected Man,” *Diseases of the Nervous System* (1945): 118; F.J. Curran, “Gilbert J. Rich, M.D. 1893-1963,” *Journal of the American Academy of Child Psychiatry* 2, (1963): 772-773. Dr. Rich received his PhD in clinical psychology from Cornell University in 1917. He served as faculty at Hobart College, Drake University and the University of Pittsburgh until 1924. Deciding he could contribute more to his field with medical knowledge, Rich entered Rush Medical School and

While secondary sources relative specifically to home front discrimination of 4-F men are limited, abundant primary research reveals that all races and classes of men at home were subject to discrimination and scrutiny while stigmatized as troublemakers, invalids or shirkers.³⁰ The reluctant drafting of fathers only intensified such sentiments towards 4-F men, many of whom appeared capable of service to wives and mothers who would inquire with Selective Service concerning the draft status of young men still at home while their own sons and husbands had been absorbed into the war effort.³¹ In response to negative public sentiment concerning 4-F men which made them, “victims of anti-social forces,” much literature was produced, primarily on academic fronts, concerning the need to rehabilitate the damaging civilian image of the 4-F classification.³² Despite these efforts, government officials sought to control 4-F's on the home front by dictating which jobs they could hold and legally complicating their ability to quit by threatening unfit men not in compliance with these measures with the intense service of non-military labor battalions. Additionally, discrimination in employment often produced further limitations and difficulties in procuring socially acceptable work and government mandated war essential work.³³ Primary sources which demonstrate

graduated with his M.D. in 1928. Rich later entered the field of juvenile research and studied the relationship between intelligence and body chemistry. Rich became Director of the Milwaukee Guidance Center and the Roanoke Guidance Center. He was particularly active and influential in child psychiatry.

³⁰ Henry A. Davidson, “Mental Hygiene in Our Armed Forces,” *The Military Surgeon* 86 (1940): 477; Karl M. Bowman, “Psychiatric Examination in the Armed Forces,” *War Medicine* 1 (1941): 214.

³¹ Rose, *Myth and the Greatest Generation*, 83; Kennedy, *The American People in World War II*, 209. In 1944 and 1945 nearly one million fathers were drafted into the armed forces.

³² C. M. Louttit, “Mental Hygiene Problems and Programs Related to Service in the Armed Forces,” *Review of Educational Research* 13 (1943): 479; Bowman, “Psychiatric Examination in the Armed Forces,” 216.

³³ Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 99; Harry Philip Edwards, “Service Rating a Handicap: Low Classification Interferes with Desire to Aid War Effort,” *New York Times*, July 16, 1942, 18; “Draft to List Plants that Reject 4-F Men,” *New York Times*, April 5, 1944, 1; C. P. Trussell, “War Chiefs Favor Induction of 4-F's

discrimination and spite on the home front include articles from the *New York Amsterdam News*, *The Chicago Defender*, *The New York Times*, *Life Magazine*, *The Afro-American*, *Yank Magazine*, *The Cleveland Call and Post*, *Newsweek*, *The Philadelphia Tribune* and a host of oral histories and select personal letters.³⁴

While social discussion of the relative value and use of rejected men would persist throughout the war, no rejection on the home front would be as intimate as that of family, friends and love interests. This thesis seeks to answer how the stigma of military rejection affected family dynamics, friendship ties and potential romantic relationships; and how the sexualization of soldiers affected 4-F romantic desirability. Within families, 4-F men would often suffer comparisons to brothers or cousins in the service and felt their inability to participate in the war effort as other men did made them inferior.³⁵

Certainly young women could show a sharp preference for relationships with military men.³⁶ Christopher E. Forth proposes in, “Manhood Incorporated: Diet and the

Not in Vital Jobs,” *New York Times*, May 5, 1944, 1; “Congress Gets Bill to Put 4-F's in Labor Units,” *Afro-American*, November 6, 1943, 1; “Young 4-F's Should Be Made Do War Work By Law or Social Pressure, Says Keesling,” *New York Times*, December 13, 1944, 17; “4-F's, Job-Jumpers Sought for Draft,” *New York Times*, January 9, 1945, 14.

³⁴ Personal letters from Robert Henry Watkins during the war years concerning 4-F men on the home front, private collection; Oral histories come from Rutgers, The Veterans History Project, The Nebraska State Historical Foundation, The Virginia Military Institute, and edited Oral History books including; Marilyn Mayer Culpepper, *We Will Never Forget: Oral Histories of World War II* (Westport: Praeger Security International, 2008); Louis Fairchild, *They Called it the War Effort: Oral Histories from World War II Orange Texas* (Austin: Eakin Press, 1993).

³⁵ Elenor Stevens, “Letters to the Editor,” *Life*, July 24, 1944, 2; “H. U. Student with 4-F Draft Status Takes His Own Life,” *Afro-American*, January 15, 1944, 20, Saul Rosenzweig, “Emotional Implications of Military Rejection and Discharge,” *Psychiatric Quarterly* (1945): 15.

³⁶ Sylvia Iwanski Chalupsky, Nebraska State Historical Foundation Survey: Children/Teenagers During the War, undated, 2. Chalupsky notes, “there were few men to date except those who had not passed their physicals. The man in uniform was greatly admired and when he came home, everyone put him on a pedestal.” Sylvia Iwanski Chalupsky, interviewed by Lori Cox, Documenting the American home front during World War II, Research Division of the Nebraska State Historical Society, Sept. 19, 1989, 2. Chalupsky comments, “Nobody wanted to date these boys that didn't pass their physicals and we called

Embodiment of 'Civilized' Masculinity,” that the body, the measure by which men were judged in WWII, is in such discussion, “just another synonym for sexuality.”³⁷ Similarly, Azar Gat suggests that while military scholarship rarely considers the motivation of sexuality in fighting it is deeply imbedded in the nature of combat and by extension rejection from combat.³⁸ Such logic helps to explain why 4-F men, in attempts to make themselves attractive to the opposite sex, were occasionally caught disguising themselves as servicemen, usually of high rank.³⁹ Referenced by leery servicemen as, “4-F wolves,” or “4-F bastards,” militarily unfit men were at once seen as impotent imbeciles and sexual predators.⁴⁰

The responsibility for military rejection of service age men was frequently identified as the result of undereducated mothers and dysfunctional families by both religious and secular publications. In this way, 4-F sons inadvertently posed social risks to families who might be seen by others as a troubled home unit. That whole families could suffer from the 4-F draft status of one member becomes apparent in the sort of literature which the media presented surrounding the dichotomy of good citizen soldiers

them 4-Fers . . . We all thought they were physically unfit to go and fight for our country; Wanda F. Mowry, Nebraska State Historical Foundation Survey: Children/Teenagers During the War, undated, 3. Mowry says, “During that first year [of college] several of the girls dated high school seniors because to us the boys on campus were '4-F.' They needed a good reason for not being in service to be respected by the girls.”

³⁷ Christopher E. Forth, “Manhood Incorporated: Diet and the Embodiment of ‘Civilized’ Masculinity,” *Men and Masculinities* 11 (2009): 581.

³⁸ Azar Gat, “So Why Do People Fight? Evolutionary Theory and the Causes of War,” *European Journal of International Relations* 15 (2009): 586-587.

³⁹ Ibid, 583; “4F in Draft, Father of 3 Is Held as Bigamist After Donning Uniform to Win a Show Girl,” *New York Times*, April 2, 1943, 23; “4-F Nabbed For Posing As Captain,” *The Chicago Defender*, October 2, 1943, 2.

⁴⁰ Studs Terkel, “*The Good War*,” 121; Thomas Childers. *Soldier from the War Returning: The Greatest Generation's Troubled Homecoming from World War II* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2009), 68-69; Joseph Furnas, “Why is he 4-F: Are You to Blame?” *The Ladies Home Journal*, September 1944, 79.

and maladjusted unfit 4-F's. In "The World War II Patriotic Mother: A Cultural Ideal in the U.S. Press," Ana C. Garner and Karen Slattery explain how patriotic mothers whose sons were in the service were often the object of celebration in newsprint as ideal women.⁴¹ In contrast to this, publications would present bad mothers, particularly those who had, through nutritional neglect or stifling overprotection, reared sons who were unacceptable for military service.⁴² The widely circulated *Ladies Home Journal* ran the article, "Why is he 4-F: Are You to Blame?" in which, "ignorant and under privileged" mothers shouldered the primary responsibility for the physical and emotional unfitnes which were seen as the common results of, "jangled and broken homes."⁴³ Further, young mothers were given instruction for the prevention of their young sons becoming similarly rejected in the future.⁴⁴ This thesis will look at the scope of discrimination which 4-F classification could bring to those closest to rejected men and help to portray a very different side of the home front than popular history often conveys.

None have attacked the myth of the "good war" with such accurate scholarly precision as Kenneth D. Rose in his book *Myth and the Greatest Generation: A Social History of Americans in World War II*. In his work, Rose reassesses the reality of home front racial conflict, the resentment of servicemen to civilians and the reality of home front strife. Rose's work is particularly useful in looking at why society and servicemen

⁴¹ Ana C. Garner and Karen Slattery. "The World War II Patriotic Mother: A Cultural Ideal in the US Press." *Journalism Studies*. 11 (2010): 148; Philip Wylie, *Generation of Vipers* (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1942).

⁴² Garner, "The World War II Patriotic Mother," 151.

⁴³ Furnas, "Why is he 4-F," 26, 78, 81.

⁴⁴ Catherine Mackenzie, "Work for Children," *New York Times*, August 8, 1943, SM23. Mackenzie provides instruction of how to prepare young boys for the strain of military service, saying that much of the inability of rejected and discharged men are related to "difficulties [which] go back to their childhood."

held 4-F men in such deep disdain. The high incidence of relations between wives and girlfriends on the home front and civilian men is emphasized by Rose who tells us that just in the Seventh Army alone five men per day were informed of their wives home front infidelity or intentions for divorce. Such news takes on particular importance since Rose suggests that motivators toward military service in WWII may have had more to do with feelings of protecting and defending wives, sweethearts and families than those of political principals or ideals. The reality that servicemen risked their lives for the protection of those at home remained a point of social endearment for servicemen which 4-F men, left on the home front to be defended by fit men, could not and did not approach.⁴⁵

The concept of fighting for family rather than fighting for fundamental liberties is echoed in Robert B. Westbrook's intriguing book *Why We Fought: Forging American Obligations in World War II*.⁴⁶ Westbrook proposes that American military propaganda and magazine journalism spoke of service as both a duty to the state and the place of men as protectors of the home.⁴⁷ However, what servicemen often interpreted this to mean was their right, through sacrifice for the nation, to first choice of American women; a contention which helps to explain both the fear and loathing which servicemen express toward 4-F men in regards to women at home.⁴⁸

Thomas Childers work *Soldier from the War Returning: The Greatest*

⁴⁵ Rose, *Myth and the Greatest Generation*, 76, 109.

⁴⁶ Robert B. Westbrook. *Why We Fought: Forging American Obligations in World War II* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Books, 2004).

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 40, 50; Sylvie, *Writing World War II*, 62-63.

⁴⁸ Westbrook, *Why we Fought*, 88.

Generation's Troubled Homecoming from World War II acknowledges the fear servicemen felt that their wives and girlfriends on the home front may be having sexual encounters with rejected men. As such, Childers helps to prove the duality which 4-F's encountered in relation to their potential as sexual mates. Though 4-F men often viewed themselves as a disadvantaged group, seeing the return of servicemen as the loss of all opportunity and relative social status, Childers contends that returning servicemen had far greater difficulty in finding employment after the good jobs had been long occupied in their absence and faced difficulty in relationships which had suffered for lack of time and intimacy.⁴⁹ While Childers never expressly contends that 4-F men posed the principle problem for returning veterans they are certainly discussed as a component of the difficulty returning men dealt with. The use of Childers analysis helps to complicate the arguments concerning the experience of men on the home front and helps to maintain a balance of perspective in regard to advantage and disadvantage.

“Sex Appeals and Wartime Messages in Beauty and Health Product Advertising: 1941-1946,” a thesis by Charles Jonathan Copeland, explains the sexualization of soldiers and the difficulty civilian men faced in being seen as desirable partners. In his thesis, Copeland seeks to understand the messages which advertisers sent to consumers during the war and analyze how these messages differed before and after the American entrance in war. The predominate theme which Copeland finds is the post-Pearl Harbor introduction of military men as desirable partners which women should seek to attract. This style of advertising proved consistent throughout several popular brands in which

⁴⁹ Childers, *Soldier from the War Returning*, 68-69, 167.

ads were widely published and viewed by the home front public during the war years and must have, through their sheer volume and reach, impacted female perceptions about who they should pursue.⁵⁰ Copeland's work helps us to understand how multiple factors in society shaped the experience of those on the home front and reminds us that while servicemen were celebrated, civilian men were conversely ignored in press print as desirable partners until the post war years.

John V. H. Dippel, likewise explores the stratification of men in war time in his book *War and Sex: A Brief History of Men's Urge for Battle*. In this text Dippel argues that servicemen, during war time, are often associated by the public, and particularly women, with ultra-masculine qualities of courage and virility. Thus, Dippel contends that young men stand to gain much by becoming soldiers, including a, “reproductive advantage” in which these men become desired romantic and sexual partners after having gone through the military passage into a socially celebrated manhood.⁵¹ In a WWII society in which unmarried young men outnumbered single young women by more than two to one, the effect of being seen as either desirable or unfit were paramount to dating prospects. Indeed, census data demonstrates that military men were more likely to marry than civilian men during the war years.⁵² Dippel's work is important to the fundamental argument of this research which seeks to demonstrate disadvantage and discrimination on the home front for 4-F men in varied aspects of society.

The final major question of this research asks how and why some, though not the

⁵⁰ Charles Jonathan Copeland, “Sex Appeals and Wartime Messages in Beauty and Health Product Advertising: 1941-1946” (Master’s Thesis, The University of Alabama, 2011), ii, 12-13, 19, 139.

⁵¹ Dippel, *War and Sex*, 9-11.

⁵² *Ibid*, 219-220. Data of male to female ratios and marriage rates are via the 1940 census.

majority of, 4-F men sought military reclassification to risk their lives in WWII. Current research indicates that 4-F men might have taken this risk for purely patriotic reasons, to be more attractive to women who idealized soldiers, to make their families proud, for adventure, or to escape what many 4-F's came to see as a life sentence of disadvantage and stigma with non-veteran status, especially apparent through their exclusion from substantive veterans only benefits such as the G.I. Bill of Rights.⁵³ Primary sources and oral histories evince that 4-F men sought multiple avenues of aid to overcome their draft status. Some joined educational classes to overcome low intelligence scores, others bought eye correction kits which promised passing scores, while still others found inventive ways to pass standards or underwent self or family funded surgeries to qualify for service.⁵⁴

That 4-F men may have been justified in their concern for post-war opportunity is shown in Elwood Carlson and Joel Andress' article "Military Service by Twentieth-century Generations of American Men," in which the authors discuss the long term economic premium of veteran status. And in Ronald R. Krebs work, "The Citizen-Soldier Tradition in the United States: Has its Demise Been Greatly Exaggerated," which describes the, "favorable citizenship bargain," afforded to veterans.⁵⁵ While this

⁵³ Ibid, 217; Cpl. Hyman Goldberg, "Why Ain't They in Uniform," *Yank: The Army Weekly*, April 8, 1945, 19; Ruth Jenkins, "Today 4-F's Swamp Draft Board to Join Army," *Afro-American*, January 20, 1945, 16.

⁵⁴ "Program to Cure 4F Defects Urged; Work-Fight Pushed," *New York Times*, January 6, 1945, 1; Rich, "Problems of the Rejected Man," 115-118; Krebs, "The Citizen-Soldier Tradition," 157; Dippel, *War and Sex*, 213, Culpepper, *We Will Never Forget*, 8-9; John G. Barrett, interviewed by Cadet Mark Parton, Documenting Military Experience, Virginia Military Institute, December 6, 2006, 7-8; Rosenzweig, "Emotional Implications of Military Rejection and Discharge," 13.

⁵⁵ Elwood Carlson and Joel Andress. "Military Service by Twentieth-century Generations of American Men." *Armed Forces and Society*. 35 (2008): 385-400; Krebs, "The Citizen-Soldier Tradition," 157; Ralph Matthews, "Watching the Big Parade," *Afro-American*, August 26, 1944, 4; "Schools Wary of 4F's," *New*

advantage may be explained by the ability of servicemen to pass physical and mental tests it is possible that the long term advantage relates more directly to military experience and post service benefits such as education, medical care, and financial services.⁵⁶ Additionally, research has shown that WWII veterans were more likely to finish high school and graduate college than were civilians, an opportunity which was clearly extended to veterans through the G.I. Bill.⁵⁷ Additionally both Ginzberg and Heaton suggest in their studies of standards and mobilization that many obviously healthy men were rejected due to poor screening by “legions[s]” of tests, false-positives or the over application of standards at induction stations which may have negatively affected the remainder of their lives.⁵⁸

In addition to these secondary sources, a discussion of military rejection factors would be impossible without the aid of primary sources including Reports from the Selective Service upon physical examination rejection rates, reports from the Surgeon General concerning physical standards during the war and several reports from Lewis B. Hershey, the Director of Selective Service, concerning the screening, usage, and rejection of men throughout the course of the war. All reports issued through government agencies are official government documents which were distributed both during and after the war and have remained easily obtainable to interested researchers. The most recent of these

York Times, April 22, 1947, 29.

⁵⁶ Kennedy, *The American People in World War II*, 361; Laura McEnaney, “Veterans' Welfare, the GI Bill and American Demobilization,” *Health Legacies: Militarization, Health and Society* 39 (2011): 41.

⁵⁷ Krebs, “The Citizen-Soldier Tradition,” 396.

⁵⁸ Heaton, *Physical Standards in World War II*, 36; William A. Hunt, “Psychological Testing in Military Clinical Psychology: II. Personality Testing,” *Psychological Review* 53 (1946), 107-108; Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions*, 184.

official sources is Heaton's *Physical Standards in World War II* which was published in 1967.⁵⁹ Such records, especially the four reports on Selective Service by Hershey, are particularly important as they reflect both statistical information and the attitudes of those charged with command positions within the Selective Service System and the Armed Forces.

Additional information concerning the psychological aspects of military screening is garnered through the use of articles written by participating psychologists who describe both the process and results of psychological screening.⁶⁰ These sources have been mined primarily from online archives and span from the peacetime draft to the immediate post-war years. Because psychology and psychiatry held a relatively new place in military procedures, doctors working within the system and researchers within these disciplines were constantly concerned with procedure, best practices, and results. These sources show the breadth of disparate procedures which doctors utilized in these years to evaluate and classify men. However, it should be constantly remembered that each doctor speaks solely for themselves; conflicting ideas and results were common.

Perhaps most importantly, voice is given to those who suffered rejection through select use of oral histories and letters to newspaper editorials. Keyword searches in newspaper archives have allowed researchers to search a multitude of newspapers, which has enabled this research to utilize many different newspapers which would have

⁵⁹ Heaton, *Physical Standards in WWI*, 350-370.

⁶⁰ Porter, "The Military Psychiatrist at Work;" Rich, "Problems of the Rejected Man;" Davidson, "Mental Hygiene in Our Armed Forces;" Bowman, "Psychiatric Examination in the Armed Forces;" Rosenzweig, "Emotional Implications of Military Rejection;" Hunt, "Psychological Testing in Military Clinical Psychology: II. Personality Testing."

appealed to different racial and regional groups throughout the war years. Southern newspapers are severely under-represented in this research, however, this is because those southern newspapers, such as the Dallas Morning News, which allow researchers to keyword search their archives, showed little appreciable print time surrounding 4-F men or classification though southern states had proportionally higher volunteer and rejection rates.⁶¹

All of the oral histories utilized for this research were taken several decades after the conclusion of the war and many of the oral histories have been conducted on men who eventually were able to enter the Armed Forces. While it would be ideal to use a combination of oral histories which included the experience of 4-F men who did not join the military, available sources make this difficult. Firstly, 4-F men who never served are rarely desirable candidates for oral histories which focus on the war years, and secondly, 4-F men who remained on the home front and who have engaged in oral history are notably taciturn on the war years. It has been possible to receive some idea of the long term impact of rejection from the oral histories of women who were married to 4-F men during the war. While oral history is an often debated source of scholarship, the use of several oral histories from many different sources including Rutgers, The Veterans History Project, The Nebraska State Historical Foundation, The Virginia Military Institute, and oral history books with edited and compiled accounts ameliorates the

⁶¹ Jenkins, *The Black and White of Rejections for Military Service*, 5.

inherent weaknesses of oral history and provides the strength of personal testimony to this research.⁶²

That so little attention has been afforded to such a substantial group of men during WWII must call into question who we as a nation include in the “greatest generation.” Are these men, rejected for military service and shunned in their own nation, part of that group so popularly exalted in Tom Brokaw's bestselling book *The Greatest Generation* or are they instead what Brokaw refers to as, “those who failed to measure up?”⁶³ Either way, why are rejected men so commonly absent from these sorts of popular texts? Have we as a nation selected these men for strategic removal from our national memory because they do not fit the myth of the good war? Susan Rubin Sulieman emphasizes in her work *Crises of Memory and the Second World War* the primacy of forgetting in the process of memory making, a crisis which often revolves around the issues of representation, interpretation and public understanding of individuals or groups through time. Thus the myth of WWII and the absence of rejected men from the wider popular story of the war are both part and parcel of the same process of forgetting and remembering, but why 4-F men have been so effectively forgotten remains unknown.⁶⁴ V. R. Cardozier suggests that memory tends to emphasize positive and exciting aspects of our pasts rather than the negative.⁶⁵ Yet, as Kenneth Rose reminds us in *Myth and the*

⁶² Culpepper, *We Will Never Forget*; Fairchild, *They Called it the War Effort*.

⁶³ Brokaw, *The Greatest Generation*, 12.

⁶⁴ Susan Rubin Sulieman, *Crises of Memory and the Second World War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 1,215.

⁶⁵ Cardozier, *The Mobilization of the U.S. In World War II*, 242.

Greatest Generation, “myth making always comes at a cost.”⁶⁶ The myth of WWII, which effectively eliminates 4-F men from the American home front, costs us an accurate understanding of what over forty percent of American men experienced during WWII and leaves us today with an undeveloped image of the American social body during this time period. This research seeks to reinsert rejected men into the memory of WWII by answering the complicated question of how different segments of American society understood, interpreted and responded to men classified as 4-F by Selective Service. While each section addresses the response of separate social groups, seen together, this research will help scholars to understand a vantage point of the home front which has to date gone undeveloped by historians. Additionally, this research seeks specifically, through oral histories and letters, to grant men who were rejected for service a place for their voices to be heard in the broader narrative of WWII. Significantly, the answers to these questions may help further diffuse the myth of the “good war” and broaden the focus of researchers and scholars to the diverse alternate perspectives and experiences of American citizens in war time.

⁶⁶ Rose, *War and the Greatest Generation*, 2.

CHAPTER II
THE 4-F CLASSIFICATION: AN OFFICIAL PERSPECTIVE ON MILITARY
REJECTION

In the still darkened morning of Friday September 1, 1939, Germany began its attack and invasion of Poland. Two days later, in response to German aggression, Great Britain and France declared war on Germany, setting into effect a series of war declarations which would, over the coming years, bring the world to war for the second time in the twentieth-century. At the outset of hostilities in September 1939 Germany possessed a trained and standing army of over three million men. In contrast to the early militaristic power of the Third Reich, in 1940 the United States of America only maintained a combined military strength in the Army, Navy and Marine Corps of under 460,000 men.⁶⁷ Eight months later, as German occupation expanded into Belgium, the Netherlands, and France, the U.S. Army stood at nineteenth in size worldwide.⁶⁸ In the turbulent years which followed, the United States, engaging in a two front war against Nazi Germany and Japan, would manage to procure, train and utilize sixteen million men and women for the war effort. However, while American mobilization has been championed as a primary component of allied victory in the second world war, little has been said of the six and a half million men, forty-three percent of those evaluated for military service, who were rejected and placed in Selective Service class 4-F, a

⁶⁷ Jarvis, *The Male Body at War*, 11.

⁶⁸ Cardozier, *The Mobilization of the United States in WWII*, 73.

classification denoting those found physically, mentally, or morally unfit for military service.

While the name Selective Service has become common in modern military history, details of its origins and exact position within the government are often lost in the larger conversation of American military buildup prior to the American entrance into WWII. With the Selective Service System playing such a pivotal role in the acquisition of viable manpower, it is fascinating that the Selective Service and Training Act of 1940 was actually a culmination of the concerted efforts of nine private citizens. Composing the Military Training Camps Association (MTCA) also known as the Plattsburg movement; led by Grenville Clark, the group, which included the General Manager and Vice President of the *New York Times*, Julius Ochs Adler, began creating a legislative bill for compulsory military training in the U.S.⁶⁹ On May 22, 1940 the MTCA campaign for conscription held a formal meeting with Henry Stimson in attendance.⁷⁰ Following initial meetings, the MTCA published a question and answer section covering their group's concept of compulsory manpower laws. In their article, the MTCA assured worried citizens that training would prove no difficulty to, "any American worthy of the name."⁷¹ Though Stimson had not yet been named Secretary of War his support behind the

⁶⁹ Clifford, *The First Peacetime Draft*, 5, 19. The original group which sought to pass compulsory military training in the United States included lawyer Philip A. Carroll, General Manager and Vice President of the New York Times Julius Ochs Adler, Langdon P. Marvin, Dr. Adolph L. Boyce and Alfred Roelker; John G. Clifford, "Grenville Clark and the Origins of Selective Service," *The Review of Books* 35 (1973): 17-40.

⁷⁰ "Backs NY Session – Wyles Denies May Meeting on Draft Plan was 'Secret'," *New York Times*, August 8, 1940, 2.

⁷¹ "Explains Reasons for Training Bill – Military Camp Group Gives Questions and Answers in its Support," *New York Times*, July 21, 1940, 9.

manpower measures Clark was promoting were vital in the future adoption of the Selective Service bill.⁷²

Written to provide flexible application whether in peace or war, the bill, initially known as the Burke-Wadsworth bill, garnered the support of the War Department through Stimson, who made his own acceptance of the Secretary of War position contingent upon federal and military support of the bill's passage, later known as the Selective Service and Training Act of 1940.⁷³ Like the Selective Service bill, Stimson's appointment to Secretary of War had much to do with Clark who, along with Felix Frankfurter, conspired to convince FDR to remove pacifist Secretary of War Harry Woodring and replace him with Stimson. Clark and Frankfurter's efforts paid off in June 1940 when Roosevelt did request Woodring's resignation and nominate Stimson as Secretary of War, who brought not only talent to his post but also bonds with Clark and the draft.⁷⁴ The Selective Service Act was deemed vital by many who, when watching the war unfurl in Europe, predicted that a necessary military buildup in America may be imminent. While voluntary enlistment was theoretically ideal, the MTCA anticipated that such a method would ultimately supply inadequate manpower while concurrently being socially uneven and wasteful in regard to production.⁷⁵ In the afternoon of September 16, 1940, President

⁷² "Plattsburg Group Asks Conscription: Training Camp Founders Urge Immediate Action by U.S." *New York Times*, May 23, 1940, 1; Clifford, *The First Peacetime Draft*, 4, 14, 23, 88-89. Stimson had predicted another World War in 1931 and shared his concerns with Clark; "Any Draft Delay is Attacked Here – Emergency Committee Issues Pamphlet Opposing Move to Postpone Conscription," *New York Times*, August, 28, 1940, 8.

⁷³ Clifford, *The First Peacetime Draft*, 77, 83, 93

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 63-66, Clark and Frankfurter also recommended Robert P. Patterson as Assistant Secretary of War who was accepted by both FDR and Stimson; Godfrey Hodgson, *The Colonel: The Life and Wars of Henry Stimson, 1867-1950* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990), 12.

⁷⁵ Clifford, *The First Peacetime Draft*, 104.

Franklin Roosevelt signed the Selective Service and Training Act. Early enlistment enthusiasm for the war, spurred on by Pearl Harbor and heavy military recruitment efforts, wrecked all Selective Service efforts to balance manpower distribution fairly between industry and military defense.⁷⁶ In response to business and government concern over the consistency of future production levels due to manpower distribution, on December 4, 1942, conscription through the Selective Service System draft became the only avenue to military service. Of the sixteen million who would serve in the Second World War, ten million were conscripted while many more were “draft-induced” toward enlistment.⁷⁷

The law which resulted from the Selective Service and Training Act required the immediate registration of all men between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-six. One month after FDR had affixed his signature to the bill; over sixteen million men had submitted their names and information for the draft. By mid-1942, the draft would reach even further into the manpower pool, requiring each man to register upon his eighteenth birthday. Indeed, Selective Service would prove an invaluable tool to effectively utilize a vast population and control a complicated array of manpower needs in production and military service. These difficulties were further compounded by the continuation of racial segregation in the Armed Forces and, by extension, Selective Service and discrimination in industry.⁷⁸ From a sizable population of one hundred thirty two million Americans, WWII would see the induction of three times as many men and women as World War I

⁷⁶ Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 95.

⁷⁷ Heaton, 12; Sui, “The Fiscal Role of Conscription,” 1095; Kennedy, *The American People in WWII*, 285.

⁷⁸ Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 73, 86, 94.

while simultaneously directing others to essential war work and maintaining those with particularly valuable production skills in civilian rather than military service.⁷⁹

United States Army General Lewis B. Hershey took great care to maintain a public sense of Selective Service as an extension of civilian society despite the disproportionate staffing of reserve officers and his own military rank while acting Director of Selective Service. Hershey was particularly sensitive to allegations that Selective Service was an Army organization, run remotely by the Armed Forces.⁸⁰ Hershey's sensitivity toward to public perception of Selective Service as a predominately civilian organization was not wholly on his own conceptualizations. Rather, the pressure to maintain such a public appearance originated with FDR and his hesitation to replace former civilian Selective Service Director Clarence A. Dykstra, the President of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, with a man so clearly military as Hershey. Only by the urging of newly appointed Secretary of War Stimson did Roosevelt relent and appoint Hershey to the position in July of 1941 and promoting him to the rank of General. Hershey, having been a primary participant in the drafting of the Selective Service bill due to his time working on a similar bill with the Joint Army Navy Selective Service Committee and holding the Assistant Director position in the Selective Service System, essentially running the system during Dykstra's tenure, quickly and efficiently took charge.⁸¹ "This organization," General Hershey assured the American public, "operates

⁷⁹ Winkler, *Home Front U.S.A.*, 14; Murray, *Writing World War II*, 95

⁸⁰ Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 93.

⁸¹ Clifford, *The First Peacetime Draft*, 86-92; "Dykstra Accepts Draft Head Position Wisconsin President Agrees as University Regents Grant him Leave of Absence," *New York Times*, October 13, 1940, 6; "Dykstra to Quit as Head of Draft," *The Bend Bulletin*, March 21, 1941, 1.

like a civilian organization. There is nothing military about it.”⁸² On the lower levels, this was true. Local boards would be staffed with civilians; however, there remained a deep military connection to the higher positions within Selective Service which was established early through the bill's connection, prior to passage, to the Armed Forces and the War Department, especially Secretary of War Henry Stimson.⁸³

The concept of identifying unfit men was important not only for military success but also to reduce post war disability claims among veterans which had soared to 642 million dollars for neuropsychiatric claims alone after the First World War, over a billion dollars if hospital treatment is considered, or \$35,000 per case on average.⁸⁴ At the outset of the Second World War, the Armed Forces and the federal government sought to prevent a similar fiscal drain by preventing men which appeared likely to have or develop disabilities from being inducted and becoming eligible for veteran benefits. *The Pittsburgh Press*, considering this issue in 1944, declared that the government and Armed Forces had, “good reason for not wanting to take 4-F’s into the Army or Navy. Once these men were inducted into the services, the government would be responsible for them for life, the same as any other veteran.”⁸⁵ Such reasoning was true; due to the duality of requiring large amounts of able men for military service while seeking to avoid those which could potentially drain time and resources, the armed services established rigorous pre-induction screening standards. Echoing similar logic, Colonel Charles C. Hillman of

⁸² Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 70.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions*, 11, 31; Jarvis, *The Male Body at War*, 59; Heaton, *Physical Standards* 36; Hershey, *Selective Service as the Tide of War Turns*, 193; C.L. Wittson, “Neuropsychiatric Examination of Recruits,” *War Medicine* 2 (1942): 944.

⁸⁵ “4-F’s May Save Manpower Day,” *The Pittsburgh Press*, March 28, 1944, 2.

the U.S. Army Medical Corps remarked succinctly that, “a superior army cannot be moulded from inferior individuals;” thus, great attention was paid to the selection processes.⁸⁶

While the Selective Service Act was broadly applicable to all men it was by no means meant to facilitate universal training. Selective Service provided the government and military the ability to *select*, through physical assessment, from the manpower pool those applicants best suited to serve in uniform, in production or by tending to family needs at home.⁸⁷ During the course of the war, twenty-two million men were examined over a five year period.⁸⁸ Of the sixteen million who served in the military, the majority did so in support positions; only approximately a million men saw true combat. Yet men were of necessity selected with the assumption that any and all may eventually see some form of direct combat⁸⁹ It became the primary objective of all examiners to procure men particularly well suited for the travails of military service including those who could learn to, “jump from planes without breaking ankles, drive tanks in one hundred thirty degree temperature, [and] swim ashore” with limited training.⁹⁰ Therefore, the major emphasis in selecting men was not based on the holistic performance of men in average conditions. Rather, since the military could offer, “no facilities in military service for pampering the

⁸⁶ Colonel Charles C. Hillman, “Medical Problems Encountered in Military Service,” *Annals of Internal Medicine* 13 (1940): 2206; E. Jones, K. C. Hyams and S. Wessely, “Screening for Vulnerability to Psychological Disorders in the Military: An Historical Survey,” *Journal of Medical Screening* 10 (2003): 40-46.

⁸⁷ Clifford, *The First Peacetime Draft*, 38.

⁸⁸ Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions*, 2; Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 96

⁸⁹ Rose, *Myth and the Greatest Generation*, 45; Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions*, 39; Heaton, *Physical Standards in WWII*, ix

⁹⁰ Porter, “Military Psychiatrist at Work,” 317; Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 86.

unstable individual,” the recommendation was based upon his inferred ability to withstand highly exacting scenarios.⁹¹

To affect the selection process, a system of initial recruitment or deferment was established at the local level. Hershey envisioned Selective Service as an “application of practical democracy” which drew its support from the “foundation [of] little groups of neighbors,” who staffed the 6,443 local boards, 280 of which were set in New York City alone.⁹² Most board members, nominated directly by their state governor, represented the elite members of their local community rather than a democratic cross-section and were usually drawn by organizations assisting the governor, from a professional pool of judges, bankers and well known merchants.⁹³ Each member of these local boards served voluntarily and was neither paid nor reimbursed throughout the course of the war for their work. “Never,” said Hershey, “perhaps in American history, has so large a group of individuals, over so long a period of time given such unselfish patriotic service as these members.”⁹⁴ Hershey envisioned that the integrity of such a system would be ensured by the close attention paid by relatives of draftees towards those who received deferments or rejections.⁹⁵ Not only did Hershey approve of the upstanding job performed by local draft boards, in a Gallup poll from May 22, 1941 which asked, “Do you think the draft has been

⁹¹ William B. Curtis and Frederick C. Thorne, “Methods for Rapid Personality Evaluation,” *Journal of Clinical Psychology* 1 (1946): 67; Heaton, *Physical Standards in WWII*, xiv.

⁹² Hershey, *Selective Service and Peacetime*, 3; W. Arrington, “Potential Functions of the Psychiatric Social Worker Under the Selective Service Act,” *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 12 (1942): 603; Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 77

⁹³ Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey* 71-72; Hershey, *Selective Service and Peacetime*, 60-62.

⁹⁴ Hershey, *Selective Service and Peacetime*, 15.

⁹⁵ Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 70.

handled fairly in your community,” ninety-three percent said yes.⁹⁶ While the public approval rating of Selective Service was at its height before its full enactment in 1940, such polls never revealed an approval rating below seventy-five percent.⁹⁷

Despite overwhelming public support, local draft boards struggled to interpret ever changing military regulations regarding who might be recommended for military service, much of which came down to the board members individual judgment.⁹⁸ In the early months of the war, the Army rejected nearly half of all those submitted for military examination due to unacceptable physical or educational condition based on these high military standards.⁹⁹ The divergence in local and military acceptance is best explained by inequitable measures used at each location with some standards being higher at one station than another, with particularly high standards at army induction offices.¹⁰⁰ While restrictions barring men from military service were lowered throughout the course of the war, there remained four primary areas in which men were examined for acceptance to the Armed Forces; physical fitness, psychological fitness, educational ability, and moral integrity.¹⁰¹ While the individual reasons for rejection were legion during the war, all of these fell neatly within one of these broad qualification areas.

Army efforts to efficiently examine eligible men necessitated extreme organization. Military estimates predicted that each board could examine twenty five men

⁹⁶ Ibid, 78-80,150; Hershey, *Selective Service and Peacetime*; 18.

⁹⁷ Hershey, *Selective Service and Victory*, 166.

⁹⁸ Cardozier, *The Mobilization of the U.S. in WWII*, 198; Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions*, 14; Heaton, *Physical Standards in WWII*, ix

⁹⁹ Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions*, 199; Hershey, *Selective Service and Peacetime*, 211.

¹⁰⁰ Heaton, *Physical Standards in WWII*, xvii.

¹⁰¹ Ibid, ix; Hershey, *Selective Service and Peacetime*, 180.

per hour in every eight hour work day. Thus, a man could be brought into the process once every two minutes. Such a schedule allowed physicians ten minutes in each hour for more careful examination of questionable cases. Predicated on this time scale, the Army estimated that eighty boards could process, examine, and classify around four hundred thousand men every twenty five days.¹⁰² Such math makes apparent that time was not available for physicians to carefully consider each candidate, rather relying on a factory like process of human inspection to qualify men. New York City examined three thousand men in nine hours with the entire psychological exam consisting of just three minutes per recruit.¹⁰³

Before entering into invasive physical examinations, male examinees would be questioned informally concerning their own evaluations of their physical health, especially recent illnesses, chronic issues, and any propensity they might have toward hypochondria.¹⁰⁴ It was hoped that certain answers to these standard questions might provide physicians and psychiatrists with pertinent information which would enable them to classify a candidate more efficiently. The Selective Service sought to immediately eliminate candidates with “obvious physical defects, such as missing limbs, or who were blind,” and place them in class 4-F. Eventually, examining physicians, with the help of medical, educational and employment records obtained by a medical field agent, would

¹⁰² Heaton, *Physical Standards in WWII*, 10.

¹⁰³ Ginzberg, *The lost Divisions*, 38. Psychiatrists asked a minimum of questions in such hectic scenarios including how the recruit felt, if they had been sick, if they were nervous and how they felt they might do in the military. One psychiatrist examined 512 men himself in one day.

¹⁰⁴ Curtis, “Methods for Rapid Evaluation,” 73, Forth, “Manhood Incorporated,” 584. It was concluded by examiners that hypochondria was a sign of effeminate behavior in men and thus should be seen as a warning.

inspect nearly every inch of a potential soldier's body from the standard eye examination to the invasive hemorrhoid check.¹⁰⁵ After examination, still more men were classified as 4-F for less detectable ailments while other border-line cases were sent to yet another examination by military doctors for a final classification on their physical condition.¹⁰⁶ Dual examination, while seemingly wasteful, was deemed valuable for its enhanced effectiveness and eventual thrift since only candidates who had passed the initial examination had to be transported. Overall, only around fifteen percent of registrants passed by their first examination were rejected by military physicians in their second screening.¹⁰⁷ While fifteen percent may seem a negligible amount, it represents thousands of young men who, having expected to be inducted into the military, quit their jobs and bid their farewells only to return home unexpectedly rejected.¹⁰⁸

While the vast majority of men submitted for physical examination would possess at least one health problem, the question which examiners sought to answer was the degree to which his issue or issues might interfere with the candidate's ability to serve effectively in the capacity the Armed Forces required.¹⁰⁹ These carefully recorded examinations not only aided the Selective Service and military in controlling manpower

¹⁰⁵ Greve, *Physical Examination of Selective Service Registrants in the Final Months*, 31; Hershey, *Report Selective Service and Wartime*, 344; Heaton, *Physical Standards in WWII*, 40; Henry A Davidson, "Mental Hygiene in the Armed Forces," 480; Joseph Pratt, "Psychiatric Factors in the Medical Examination," *War Medicine* 1 (1941): 362. Additionally, educational reports were considered important in determining the mental health of the individual since it was believed that, "very few epileptics and psychopaths graduate from high school."

¹⁰⁶ Hershey, *Selective Service and Peacetime*, 180-181.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.* 210.

¹⁰⁸ Heaton, *Physical Standards in WWII*, 11; "Dykstra makes Appeal for Rejected Draftees," *Reading Eagle*, Nov. 30, 1940, 1; "Dykstra makes plea for draftees turned down by Physicians in the Army," *Lawrence Journal – World*, Nov. 30, 1940, 1; "Rehiring of Rejected Draftees is Urged," *The Palm Beach Post*, Nov. 30, 1940, 9.

¹⁰⁹ Heaton, *Physical Standards in WWII*, 123.

by absorbing only those best able to serve militarily but also garnered the government a detailed record of each man's health prior to enlistment. It was hoped that thorough record keeping could potentially save the government from becoming economically responsible for pre-existing illnesses at the conclusion of the war by tracking what conditions became apparent at different stages of every man's military career.¹¹⁰ Registrants were then classified within four major divisions: Class I, eligible for immediate training and service; Class II, temporarily deferred for occupation; Class III, temporarily deferred for dependency; and class IV, temporarily deferred for other reasons.¹¹¹

While in 1941 and 1942 the Army desired men without any defects, rejection rates which upheld these standards soon reached alarming rates. Throughout the entire course of the war, two of every three men rejected for military service were rejected on grounds of physical disability.¹¹² Rejection rates for the first million men examined shocked Selective Service, the government, and American society at an astonishing forty percent; by October 1941 the rejection rate stood at exactly half. In response to the rejections, Hershey railed, "We are physically in a condition of which nationally we should be thoroughly ashamed."¹¹³ As such, the Army, as well as other military branches, were consistently forced to reduce standards in the face of shrinking available manpower, the most prominent reduction in standards taking place in the first two years.¹¹⁴ Selective

¹¹⁰ Ibid, 205.

¹¹¹ Hershey, *Selective Service as the Tide of War Turns*, 62.

¹¹² Ginzberg, 27, 35.

¹¹³ Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 96-97.

¹¹⁴ Heaton, *Physical standards in WWII*, 15.

Service, facing constant opposition to the reduction in standards from the Armed Forces, encouraged those once rejected or nearing examination to, “make himself healthy to fight.”¹¹⁵ Such advice was particularly important in light of unsettling statistics which showed that one third of rejections were based on the effects of nutritional deficiencies.¹¹⁶

Had manpower demand been low or supply of men physically ideal, the military's high standards might have fulfilled its needs; however, the two front war's requirement for men was so vast that to obtain the necessary number of men, concessions on the part of the Armed Forces standards were to be expected. Still, the reduction in requirements by the Armed Forces had to be considered carefully so that previously rejected men could be shown to be potentially more beneficial to the military and government than a risk.¹¹⁷ The first qualifications which were lowered allowed men with dental defects and imperfect vision to enter service. Brigadier General Leigh C. Fairband, Director of the Dental Division of the Surgeon General's office, predicted a large number of men would require dental aid as a result of the malnutrition and widespread poverty of the depression years but felt this should not immediately disqualify them stating, “the safety of the nation should not be sacrificed just to maintain high dental standards.” 4-F men who longed to join the military heartily agreed, one such man reasoned to his local draft board who rejected him for dental defects, “I don't want to bite 'em, I want to fight 'em.”¹¹⁸ In response to lowered standards, twenty-five thousand army dentists pulled fifteen million teeth while others were considered dentally acceptable if they possessed adequate teeth

¹¹⁵ Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 96.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ Heaton, *Physical Standards in WWII*, 1.

¹¹⁸ Manley, *They Called it the War Effort*, 15.

to, “subsist on the Army ration” provided.¹¹⁹ Additionally, by 1945 almost twenty percent of all military personnel wore military issue glasses.¹²⁰ These two disqualifications, vision and dental alone had represented thirty percent of all rejected men through the first year of WWII.¹²¹

Indeed, the acceptance of men with minor flaws was favored far earlier in the general public which had from February to March 1941 answered eighty percent in favor of the army accepting and dentally aiding men with poor teeth rather than classify them as 4-F.¹²² With the passing of time and the increasing demand for manpower, the Armed Forces relented in the acceptance of soldiers for both full and limited service with imperfect eyesight and hearing, flat feet, those both below and above desired weight requirements, and men who had recovered from serious illness such as tuberculosis and infantile paralysis.¹²³ With induction quotas remaining unexpectedly high throughout the war, President Roosevelt gave encouragement for Selective Service to realign their grasp on the nations manpower in order to, “squeeze more men out of the nation.”¹²⁴

One method which Selective Service saw to enlarge the number of men eligible for enlistment by late 1943 was to apply new standards to previously rejected men, thus

¹¹⁹ Heaton, *Physical Standards in WWII*, 23. Standards were lowered by October 1942 wherein registrants were not required to have any teeth to enter the Army provided they could be fitted with dentures; Kennedy, *The American People in WWII*, 285.

¹²⁰ *Ibid*, 27.

¹²¹ Mahmoud, “Evolution of Military Recruit Accession Standards,” 150-151.

¹²² George Gallup, “Public for Camps to Cure Rejected Draftees’ Ills,” *Daily Boston Globe*, March 19, 1941, 2; George Gallup, “Public Favors Treatment of Rejected Conscripts,” *Racine Journal Times*, March 19, 1941, 20. “The Army has been rejecting volunteers and draftees who have not been able to pass the physical examination because they have bad teeth. Do you think the Army should accept these men for duty and fix their teeth before they begin training?” Yes=80%, No=13%, No Opinion=7%.

¹²³ Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions*, 36.

¹²⁴ Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 100.

“salvaging” them. This was however, not a particularly new concept to Selective Service who had always envisioned 4-F classification as a temporary deferment based on current armed service qualification standards. The routine procedure as outlined by Selective Service authorized re-examination, sometimes over eleven times, as manpower needs required a, “scraping [of] the bottoms of their particular barrels,” in order to find more soldiers.¹²⁵ In response, between September 1943 and March 1944, over three hundred thousand men were reclassified out of 4-F, though this could not guarantee their acceptance and induction by the Armed Forces. Hershey, when analyzing the practicality of envisioning reclassification as an important source of manpower, found that on average 1.6 percent of 4-F men were reclassified each month, while 16.2 percent of those were eventually inducted.¹²⁶ In effect, lowered standards did not salvage enough men from class 4-F to fill monthly requirements. Between June and December of 1945 only 21,995 men were brought to service through these means.¹²⁷ Hershey pointedly argued in relation to such issues that, “the acceptance of men in the armed services is not a selective service responsibility at all but a responsibility of the Armed Forces.” He continued that, “this is often misunderstood generally and frequently in public discussion in Washington.”¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Lawrence S. Kubie, “Technical and Organizational Problems in the Selection of Troops,” *Military Affairs* 8 (1944): 243-258

¹²⁶ Hershey, *Selective Service as the Tide of War Turns*, 80-81.

¹²⁷ General Lewis B. Hershey, *Selective Service and Victory: The Fourth Report of the Director of Selective Service, 1944-1945* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1948), 126-127; “800 Men in 4-F Who Passed First Test will be Re-examined,” *New York Times*, December 20, 1944, 7; “New Draft Tests Due: 55,000 Under 26 in 4-F, 2-AF, or 2-BF, to be Re-Examined,” *New York Times*, July 21, 1945, 13.

¹²⁸ Hershey, *Selective Service as the Tide of War Turns*, 140.

Age was often of utmost concern in the area of physical qualification. Older men faced great difficulty passing the physical examinations required to enter service. Those who did continue to service were found by the Army to be particularly difficult to train and limited by physical ability. Additionally, the induction of older men represented a far greater disturbance on the home front than that of younger men since older men often had established careers and potentially larger families.¹²⁹ Because of these ties on the home front, Selective Service appraised these men of better value to the war effort in industry rather than military service.¹³⁰ As such, at the end of 1942 the Armed Forces announced its decision to accept no more men over the age of thirty-seven and to release those of that age already in the Army. Interestingly, while older men often suffered greater physical difficulty, young men posed a separate but equally troubling problem for the American military through a seemingly unstable or underdeveloped psychology. The difference in emotional development was even apparent in small age increments between teenage years and men in their early twenties.¹³¹

Nearly forty percent of all 4-F men were under the age of twenty-six, precisely the age bracket which the military desired most to utilize.¹³² Rejection was seen by military psychologists as a delicate issue since these rejected men were at an impressionable age, not quite adults, and yet, due to their classification were subject to embarrassment and

¹²⁹ Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 80.

¹³⁰ Hershey, *Selective Service in Wartime*, 361.

¹³¹ Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions*, 34, 65-66, 106.

¹³² Hershey, *Selective Service as the Tide of War Turns*, 8, 80-81, Kennedy, *The American People in WWII*, 207; Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions*, 37.

stigma on the home front as “defective” men.¹³³ Regardless of social consequences, military psychiatrists maintained that the nature of modern warfare and the particular danger of total war which WWII presented required the submission of men both “physically and mentally dependable,” not the nation’s “weaklings” who could not endure the “punishment of modern war.”¹³⁴ Additionally, psychiatrists purported that exclusion of mentally unfit men served the dual purpose of protecting rejected men since true soldiers often perceived these men as, “a queer stick” or “a goof,” who were often, “the butt of pranksters,” and could find themselves, “the victim of sexual seductions.”¹³⁵

Despite the concern of military psychologists for the stigma assigned particularly to men rejected for mental reasons few saw an availability of resources or time to rehabilitate those deemed maladjusted. Navy psychiatrist C.L. Wittson, noted the difficulty inherent in a military physicians job wherein one had to work against the civilian convention of healing, rather prioritizing the military agenda to separate the unfit before they might do moral or physical damage to military property or personnel.¹³⁶ It was the Selective Services official policy that all classifications were meant to benefit the government not the individual.¹³⁷ Militarily, identifying potentially burdensome men before the cost of training had been wasted on them was particularly important to the modern military which, through its use of modernized weapons had made soldiers, “the

¹³³ John Sloan Brown, *Draftee and Division: The 88th Infantry Division in World War II* (New York: Presidio Press, 1998), 28; E. Hadley, “Military Psychiatry a Note on the Factor of Age,” *Psychiatry* 5 (1942): 548.

¹³⁴ William C. Porter, “Military Psychiatry and the Selective Service,” *War Medicine* 1 (1941): 364.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 369.

¹³⁶ Wittson, “Neuropsychiatric Examination of Recruits,” 945.

¹³⁷ Hershey, *Selective Service and Peacetime*, 110.

brain behind the machine,” rather than weapons themselves.¹³⁸ In hopes of avoiding post-war economic burdens from discharged soldiers suffering from war induced mental illness military psychiatrists proposed that pre-induction neuropsychiatric examinations could identify mentally unfit soldiers and thus dramatically reduce the number of discharged men.¹³⁹

The inclusion of broad psychological testing required the rapid expansion of mental health physicians working on staff; in December 1941, the Army had only thirty five psychiatrists total.¹⁴⁰ Due to a lack of personnel, early psychological evaluation depended almost entirely on volunteered information from examinees who filled out standardized pre-interview forms.¹⁴¹ Many men were psychologically analyzed by local draft board employees with no formal training in psychiatry.¹⁴² Psychological evaluation, which was the most experimental area of examination during WWII, took many forms as a plethora of military psychologists and psychiatrists worked to perfect rapid identification of men.¹⁴³ The Armed Forces recommended that examiners try to swiftly identify the, “lively, quick, and hardy,” since these men were especially seen as, “potential heroes.”¹⁴⁴ Some psychiatrists required men to be fully nude during their mental evaluation believing their state of undress prompted recruits to provide answers

¹³⁸ Pratt, “Psychiatric Factors in Medical Examination,” 363.

¹³⁹ Jones, “Screening for Vulnerability;” Davidson, “Mental Hygiene in the Armed Forces,” 479.

¹⁴⁰ Rose, *Myth and the Greatest Generation*, 30.

¹⁴¹ Jones, “Screening for Vulnerability to Psychological;” Alexander Simon and Margaret Hagan, “Social Data in Psychiatric Casualties in the Armed Services,” *American Journal of Psychiatry* 99 (1942): 348. Simon argues that based on the induction of men with a recorded history of psychological illness, some men were either not questioned about their psychiatric history or were simply untruthful in their responses.

¹⁴² Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions*, 38.

¹⁴³ Hunt, “Psychological Testing in Military Clinical Psychology, Personality Testing,” 107.

¹⁴⁴ Heaton, *Physical Standards in WWII*, xv.

quickly and shortened the time needed by about twenty five percent due to the recruits, “direct or 'naked' answers.”¹⁴⁵

Part of what psychological screening sought to identify was homosexuality or homosexual tendencies. Many men were evaluated psychologically based on only one question, if they liked girls.¹⁴⁶ As Kenneth D. Rose notes in his work *Myth and the Greatest Generation*, the perception that homosexuality was an illness or condition was widespread in the 1940's.¹⁴⁷ Militarily, homosexuality was seen as an indication of a poor soldier whose integration would erode morale and manipulate the Armed Forces into a social experiment rather than maintaining its focus as combat units.¹⁴⁸ While Selective Service rejected only one percent of recruits explicitly for suspected homosexuality throughout the war much attention was paid to the detection of homosexuals, especially by military psychiatrists. Concerning the identification of homosexual men, Navy psychiatrist C. L. Wittson noted that, “on the basis of the old saw of all being fair in love and war, the examiner may use any stratagem he can devise to trap a man into revealing some hidden defects.” Wittson continued by enumerating questions concerning masturbation which might trick a man into revealing his hidden sexuality such as

¹⁴⁵ Wittson, “Neuropsychiatric Examination of Recruits,” 945; Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions*, 38. One examiner's method of identifying healthy men was to hitting nude men in the abdomen and evaluating how high the man jumped.

¹⁴⁶ Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions*, 38.

¹⁴⁷ Rose, *Myth and the Greatest Generation*, 149; Berube, *Coming Out Under Fire*, 11-14.

¹⁴⁸ Berube, *Coming Out Under Fire*, 2.

inquiring about who taught the recruit to masturbate and who he currently masturbates with.¹⁴⁹

Homosexuality was considered an especially troubling mental disease since men in this “wastebasket” group were also seen as capable of infecting other men with their perversion.¹⁵⁰ Ultimately, homosexuals could be rejected for military service either for mental illness or moral degeneracy since moral rejection could be based on something as serious as rape, murder or kidnapping or as vague as sexual perversion.¹⁵¹ Selective Service recognized both categories, mental or moral, as valid rationale for rejection since the military was available for neither healing nor reform and each carried a potential for negatively effecting healthy troops.¹⁵² In regard to the acceptance of “morally deficient” men with criminal or homosexual tendencies, Dr. Joseph Pratt recommended that since, “delinquents in civil life usually make trouble in the military service and endanger the morale of their associates, they should be rigidly excluded,” and continue to be classified as 4-F.¹⁵³

Despite earnest efforts to prevent psychological trauma, the wartime military prematurely discharged over half a million men, representing fifty divisions, for

¹⁴⁹ Wittson, “Neuropsychiatric Examination of Recruits,” 947; W. Arrington, “Potential Function of the Psychiatrist,” 605. Other homosexual men volunteered information, sometimes bringing proof, concerning their sexuality. Some men volunteered such information out of a genuine concern that they would not be able to work successfully in the military due to their sexuality. Berube, *Coming Out Under Fire*, 16; Frank, *Unfriendly Fire*, 7.

¹⁵⁰ Berube, *Coming Out Under Fire*, 15.

¹⁵¹ Hershey, *Selective Service and Peacetime*, 182.

¹⁵² Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions*, 32.

¹⁵³ Pratt, “Psychiatric Factors in the Medical Examination,” 362. Dr. Joseph Pratt, 1872-1956 earned his M.D. in 1898 from John Hopkins University School of Medicine. From 1927, Pratt served as the chief of medicine at the Boston Dispensary and professor of Tufts University School of Medicine. The Pratt Diagnostic Clinic at Tufts Medical Center is named in his honor. Pratt specialized in group therapy and held special interests in the influence of psychosocial factors on physical and mental illness.

psychological reasons alone. Early discharge was particularly troubling to the Armed Forces who, after training a recruit, lost the soldier prior to the expected separation date. At times, the discharge rate from the Army outstripped efforts to induct new men.¹⁵⁴ In response, the Army, which maintained a belief that unsuitable men could be identified before military induction, made screening procedures tighter which caused even higher rejection rates.¹⁵⁵ Steep rejection rates for unapparent issues stirred doubt in Hershey who worried that Army psychiatrists were, “rejecting men no queerer than the rest of us.”¹⁵⁶ Hershey, who felt he had a deeper than novice understanding of military psychology suspected that rejections could be at least partially explained by miscommunication and misunderstandings between “yankee psychologists” and rural southerners.¹⁵⁷ Rejection rates for educational deficiency were particularly high in the south where there was a fifty percent average rejection rate despite the overwhelming number of volunteers which hailed from the southern United States.¹⁵⁸ In contrast, the Northwest, called the “health triangle” produced more acceptable men than any other area of the nation.¹⁵⁹

Of course, not all mental issues were related to illness. In all, almost two million men, over thirty percent of Selective Service rejections were based on mental and educational conditions.¹⁶⁰ The military sought to eliminate men whose educational

¹⁵⁴ Dave Grossman, *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1995), 43.

¹⁵⁵ Eli Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions*, 77.

¹⁵⁶ Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 97; Hunt, “Psychological Testing in Military Clinical Psychology, Personality Testing,” 108. Hunt warns other psychologists practicing survey method psychological profiling of the, “false-positive rate, or the number of fit individuals incorrectly labeled as unfit.”

¹⁵⁷ Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 98.

¹⁵⁸ Dippel, *War and Sex*, 212

¹⁵⁹ Jarvis, *The Male Body at War*, 20.

¹⁶⁰ Mahmoud, “Evolution of Military Recruit Accession Standards,” 151.

background would leave them unsuited to rapid learning and the ability to take instruction.¹⁶¹ The military continually sought to bar men whose intelligence was found below the standards of an average ten year old since training was impeded by an inability to read orders, instructions and signs.¹⁶² One military psychologist, Dr. W.C. Porter stated, in his evaluation of undereducated men that while, “there are places in every military organization, as there are in most non-military organizations, for hewers of wood and drawers of water, there is no assurance that a soldier of low intelligence will automatically find such a job.” Rather, Porter maintained that such men were more of a liability than help since their dim intelligence could potentially endanger the lives of others soldiers or damage valuable equipment.¹⁶³

The reliability of intelligence tests must be considered since, like psychological screenings, such examinations were subject to experimentation and were not uniformly administered. Some examiners claimed to have abbreviated intelligence tests which could be accurately administered in just ten minutes.¹⁶⁴ Such cursory testing methods became more common in late 1942 when literacy standards, along with other entry standards, were reduced to include anyone who could understand simple English for training purposes so long as such men were only inducted at ten percent of the total induction

¹⁶¹ Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions*, 28.

¹⁶² Porter, “The Military Psychiatrist at Work,” 320; Hershey, *Selective Service and Peacetime*, 173-174; Literacy for Army induction was, prior to Pearl Harbor, based on an education proficiency at the fourth grade level. “Educational Plan for 250,000,” *Journal of Education*, November 1942, 258. By late 1942, in response to high rejection rates for illiteracy the Army conducted literacy training courses designed to instruct men in four years of grade school literacy in preparation for reclassification. Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 96.

¹⁶³ WC Porter, “The Military Psychiatrist at Work,” 320.

¹⁶⁴ Wittson, “Neuropsychiatric Examination of Recruits,” 947.

rate.¹⁶⁵ While the Armed Forces granted standards reductions throughout the course of the war, the lowering of standards was based solely on the dwindling supply of eligible men and the unyielding demands of a two front, modern war rather than any relaxing of the Armed Forces concept of what predicted desirable soldiers.

While it is apparent that Selective Services and the American military during WWII did not understand or intend to imply that 4-F status meant indefinite rejection, it could hardly be avoided that certain social stigma's would emerge in relation to such a classification, particularly on young, apparently able men. American society often did not know what might make a young, seemingly healthy bachelor who managed well in his social life prior to military examination be “protected” by a 4-F classification while much older men and fathers were conscripted.¹⁶⁶ As Christina Jarvis discusses in her stellar book *The Male Body at War*, “the body itself has been important to definitions of masculinity” at least since the late nineteenth century, some might argue longer; thus, military rejection based on the soundness of a man's body, mind and morality did create an understanding of rejected men on the American home front as deficient or undesirable in a broader sense.¹⁶⁷ In an effort to protect young men, whose Selective Service records were available to potential employers, the Selective Service System encouraged that physicians take special care in rejection notations which might injure the 4-F man's

¹⁶⁵ Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 97; Hershey, *Selective Service and Victory*, 119-120. The reduction in educational standards was set forth in War Department circular No. 169 which made the new standards effective June 1, 1942.

¹⁶⁶ Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions*, 40; Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 98; Hershey, *Selective Service as the Tide of War Turns*, 139.

¹⁶⁷ Jarvis, *The Male Body at War*, 4.

potential acceptance on the home front, particularly in employment.¹⁶⁸ However, compounding this problem were the callous terms which were placed on rejected men from examiners and the media, some of which described rejected men as a dilemma of “social hygiene.”¹⁶⁹

Hershey, rarely one to set down in print sentimental concerns, was deeply bothered by the social effects of 4-F classification which were set forth in, “cartoons and jokes in the newspapers and magazines,” and in which military rejection became, “unfortunately, a kind of mark of opprobrium.”¹⁷⁰ Other, more compassionate doctors sought, through their professional writings, to clarify the status of 4-F men who they insisted were rarely feigning illness. Despite these earnest attempts at clarification, Dr. Henry A. Davidson worried such distinctions were often, “only on paper” while in everyday life 4-F men dealt with a public which made no such distinctions.¹⁷¹ It was generally understood that the military was not the place where men were made but where men served, thus, the conceptualization that “the man who is a good citizen is usually the best soldier,” bore the logical extension that, “the qualities that would make a poor citizen would make him a poor soldier.”¹⁷² Due to such trains of thought, men rejected for military service, no matter how apparently stable, were deeply marked by having been identified by the government as militarily unfit. Similar distinctions continue, even into academic analysis of military manpower. Columbia professor Eli Ginzberg, speaking to

¹⁶⁸ Heaton, *Physical Standards in WWII*, 40.

¹⁶⁹ Wittson, “Neuropsychiatric Examinations of Recruits,” 950.

¹⁷⁰ Hershey, *Selective Service as the Tide of War Turns*, 141-142.

¹⁷¹ Henry A. Davidson, “Mental Hygiene in the Armed Forces,” 477; Bowman, “Psychiatric Examinations in the Armed Forces,” 214.

¹⁷² Bowman, “Psychiatric Examinations in the Armed Forces,” 215.

the issue of a nation's ability to call its young men to arms said, "the measure of a man must be his ability to meet the test," adding, "it is not the only measure, but it must remain a crucial one."¹⁷³ Though Ginzberg's analysis of rejected men is startling, his conclusion of the times has been confirmed in contemporary WWII ideology by Christopher Forth who reminds readers that there has never been a guarantee that male bodies would be or will be perceived as masculine, rather "how one lived as a man was just as important as the possession of anatomical maleness."¹⁷⁴

With such massive efforts to procure an ideal military outfit it should cause only minimal surprise that the rejection rate for WWII was eighty percent higher than that of WWI. What is perhaps more intriguing is that rejections based on mental fitness were seven times higher than the previous world war. Thus one third of all rejections were for issues which were not physical in nature.¹⁷⁵ Despite efforts to prevent the induction of men which would ultimately become a post-war burden, close to 400,000 men were separated from the Army alone for neuropsychiatric difficulties representing forty-five percent of all wartime separations. In all military branches over seven hundred fifty thousand men were separated for non-physical ailments.¹⁷⁶ By the end of the war, rejection figures had become so high that officials refused to print the numbers for, "security reasons."¹⁷⁷ The difficulty in procuring healthy men for military service was

¹⁷³ Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions*, 3-4.

¹⁷⁴ Forth, "Manhood Incorporated," 583.

¹⁷⁵ Eli Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions*, 35, 143-144.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid*, 60; Heaton, *Physical Standards in WWII*, 37.

¹⁷⁷ Furnas, "Why is He 4-F? Are You to Blame?" 26.

succinctly portrayed in a brief poem written by a Selective Service employee and printed in General Hershey's first report on the Selective Service which read:

Ten little registrants standing in line
one joined the Navy, then there were nine.
Nine little registrants sitting on a gate
One broke a vertebra, then there were eight.
Eight Little registrants talking 'bout heaven
one went conscientious, then there were seven.
Seven little registrants, what a strange mix!
One became a pilot and then there were six.
Six little registrants very much alive,
One went and drowned and then there were five.
Five little registrants full of canny lore
One stole a pig and then there were four.
Four little registrants, sly as they can be
One became thirty-eight, then there were three.
Three little registrants, all alone and blue,
One fed his relatives, then there were two.
Two little registrants, what can be done!
One went to a psychiatrist, and then there was one.
One little registrant classified 1-A,
Physically, mentally, morally okay.
One little registrant to tote a big gun
He got married and then there were NONE!¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁸ Hershey, *Selective Service and Peacetime*, 129.

CHAPTER III

JIM CROW GOES TO WAR: AFRICAN AMERICANS AND 4-F CLASSIFICATION

Though the United States was still technically in a time of peace when the Selective Service and Training Act of 1940 was passed, race relations in America were anything but harmonious. The careful legislative language of the Selective Service and Training Act was purposefully refined through numerous House and Senate committees to be judicious and fair in an effort to reduce the possibility of race conflict as the United States began to contemplate entry into yet another modern European war. The Act not only included a call for African American men but through two specific provisions also expressly prohibited discriminatory practices in the selection of men.¹⁷⁹ President Franklin D. Roosevelt confirmed the law's equality, celebrating the spirit of inclusion with which the draft would be carried out saying, "the procurement and training of our manpower under proper administration, fairly and without fear or favor is undoubtedly the most important single factor in our entire program of national defense."¹⁸⁰ However, despite protection language prohibiting discrimination in the Selective Service and Training Act, the actuality of equality remained largely a false promise through quota restrictions limiting African American military inclusion to around nine percent of the entire military force; a number which was meant to reflect the percentage of African Americans in the nation and allow the continuation of a system of segregated training and

¹⁷⁹ Hershey, *Selective Service in Peacetime*, 251; Hershey, *Selective Service in Wartime*, 227.

¹⁸⁰ Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 71.

service. The absence of application only emphasizes the racial attitudes of high ranking officials within the war time government including newly appointed Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson and Selective Service Director General Lewis B. Hershey, both of whom felt racial equality an inappropriate issue to mingle with pressing military matters due to the social and military conflicts such matters would enflame.¹⁸¹

By 1942, the deeply racist policies in all military branches had become numerically apparent with 30,000 1-A African American men awaiting induction into the Armed Forces while monthly calls by the military steadily rose throughout the year. While African American men composed almost eleven percent of registrants, one year into the war, African American men comprised only six percent of the Army while the Marines Corps refused black men altogether and the Navy accepted only a few African Americans, placing them in lowly service jobs within its ranks. Time did not help matters; by 1943 African Americans represented under six percent of the entire American Armed Forces.¹⁸² In response to limitation and segregation, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People declared an official campaign for “double victory,” which anticipated the dual victories of global freedom from fascism and domestic freedom from Jim Crow racism.¹⁸³

¹⁸¹ Ibid, 119-125.

¹⁸² Ibid, 124.

¹⁸³ Phillips, *War! What is it Good For?*, 7; Alvarez, *The Power of the Zoot*, 17. The nine percent cap which the American government placed on African American service inductions ultimately translates into the service of over one million African American men but it took until the late second half of the war for such statistics to be true. Even with the induction of over a million African American men, a sizable number of these men were discharged early thus leaving the actual active African American forces far slighter than this number would suggest.

Due to African American objection to disproportionate rejection and fears within the government that the draft would be perceived as racist, President Roosevelt approved the appointment of reserve officer and former Howard College professor Campbell C. Johnson as head of the Racial Relations Division of the Selective Service to insure the interests of African Americans. Unfortunately this possibility for increasing equality failed before progress could even begin. Hershey's dissatisfaction with the scope and mission of Johnson's limited position was only one of many challenges which stanchied any significant progress on racial issues. In addition, Johnson's exposure to unsubtle stunts such as the toilets being painted black served to remind Johnson of the prevalent Selective Service staff view that he and his cause did not belong at Selective Service headquarters.¹⁸⁴ FDR further urged Hershey to appoint at least one African American to each board of appeal in areas with dense African American populations, a proposition which he denied outright with the justification that appeal boards were never meant to represent economic and social groupings evenly. The final numbers make apparent that all opposition to racial revisions stood. In all, only two hundred fifty African Americans ever served on local boards throughout the nation during the course of the war. In the south, only three states had an African American serve on any local boards.¹⁸⁵

With full knowledge and power over strikingly disproportionate Selective Service numbers, Hershey reported that the Selective Service System was nondiscriminatory and that African Americans, "continued to participate actively in the Selective Service

¹⁸⁴ Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 120; Hershey, *Selective Service in Wartime*, 278, 281

¹⁸⁵ Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 121.

administration as members of local boards, as government appeal agents, [and] as members of the boards of appeal.”¹⁸⁶ While their participation was unquestionably true, in his widely cited reports, Hershey left no clue as to how low African American numbers actually were. While it was obvious to the government, the military and interested citizens that discrimination had been part and parcel of the Selective Service process, General Hershey maintained that any prejudice which existed was owed to the policies of the Armed Forces, over which he had no control.¹⁸⁷ Indeed, Hershey could not force any branch of the Armed Forces to accept a number of African American recruits which they were not able or willing to induct since his job in Selective Services was only to assist the military by organizing and preparing recruits, not dictating directives to the military branches.

Such logic was true so far as enlistment was concerned; however, Selective Service was complicit with the Armed Forces in keeping monthly African American quota calls well below representative quantities, usually around five percent.¹⁸⁸ These low percentages of African Americans accepted for active duty is usually credited to inadequate reception and training facilities for the segregated soldiers, but as the American home front rapidly transformed to meet the massive war effort, the number of facilities needed, which were being “rushed” to meet the equality demanded by the

¹⁸⁶ Hershey, *Selective Service in Wartime*, 278.

¹⁸⁷ Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 71-72, 121. President Franklin D. Roosevelt had requested early in Hershey's appointment that southern draft board have African American participate but this was not insured by Hershey. Whether FDR was concerned with the actuality of his request or simply wanted to request noted for political reasons is unknown.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 124; Hershey, *Selective Service in Wartime*, 281.

Selective Service law never materialized.¹⁸⁹ Additionally, since Selective Service had no power to require the Armed Forces to accept 1-A African American men, Hershey claimed to see no way to reconcile the letter of the law with the actuality of Navy, Marine, and Coast Guard policies. Such a matter would, “require careful study;” presumably taking place in the post-war years.¹⁹⁰

Any examination of racism within the Selective Service System during World War II must be understood as existing in contrast, even at the highest levels, to the official policies set out by the Director of the Selective Service, General Lewis B. Hershey, in his *First Report of the Selective Service System*. In one portion which outlines rules of the Selective Service System Hershey sets forth the requirement that, “no discrimination for or against any person because of his race, creed, or color” would be acceptable, a creed which Hershey himself acted in opposition to.¹⁹¹ All men who fell within the currently called age range for military service were to be examined with equal stringency by their local draft board before a second unprejudiced examination by military doctors for acceptance and induction in the Armed Forces. Of course, such a system precluded that some men would not be found desirable to military service; however, it might be expected that in a democratic society such rejections would lead to racially equitable results in each region.

Throughout the war, a far higher percentage of African Americans were examined than any other race due to significantly higher African American classification of 4-F.

¹⁸⁹ Hershey, *Selective Service in Wartime*, 285-287.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 194.

¹⁹¹ Hershey, *Selective Service in Peacetime*, 110.

One reason for this divergence in rejection has been explained as the natural effect of an uneducated or undereducated African American populace in the 1940's. Eli Ginzberg, in his analysis of manpower usage in WWII notes that, "one third of all negroes were rejected *essentially* on educational grounds." He continues saying, "negroes were markedly overrepresented among the inept and among the undesirables." From such data, Ginzberg concludes that while African Americans, "saw military service as an opportunity to prove their individual worth and to help raise the prestige of their group, thereby striking a blow against segregation, many others failed to do their best," in the service of their nation and race.¹⁹²

While Ginzberg's remarks, printed in 1959, are certainly inflammatory, it is more important to recognize his shortcomings academically than to address his disappointing statements intrinsic veracity. The issue of cause for African American rejection is exceedingly important, especially in relation to the disqualifying category of mental deficiency since this term was used to describe the examiners perception of a "lack of normal understanding" in rejected men.¹⁹³ In fact, according the General Hershey's fourth and final report of the Selective Service, close to fifty-five percent of African American men were rejected for "Mental deficiency." In the last half of 1944 alone, African American rejection for mental defects swelled to almost seventy-two percent.¹⁹⁴

In analyzing high rejection rates, Ginzberg purported that African American men developed inabilities in wartime which they did not readily possess in times of peace;

¹⁹² Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions*, 15, 120-121. Emphasis not in the original text.

¹⁹³ Heaton, *Physical Standards in WWII*, xvi.

¹⁹⁴ Hershey, *The Selective Service and Victory*, 149-150.

what Ginzberg terms “feigned dumbness.”¹⁹⁵ In truth, what society saw of African American involvement in the war would reveal little of African American desire to participate. Even African American men who were reluctantly accepted into the Armed Forces were overwhelming subject to lowly positions, usually within labor units.¹⁹⁶ Despite African American volunteerism for direct combat, few black men were allowed into positions which might produce commendation and serve as examples of a system which maintained racial dominance but to the detriment of a stronger military which, as a study of the Army's Research Branch acknowledged, desperately needed able, willing African American men to fight while refusing to “fully integrate or fully accept,” them into its ranks.¹⁹⁷

That African American men were unjustly categorized as mentally deficient was well known among African American communities and publicized in newspapers such as *The Pittsburgh Courier* and the *Atlanta Daily World*. In October 1942 both papers ran articles which told of African American men who, when appearing for examination at local draft boards were questioned concerning their opinions on segregation. Those African American men which answered in opposition to segregation were prompted labeled mentally deficient and classified as 4-F.¹⁹⁸ How official military rejection could be based on such questions is explained by the Selective Service definition of the

¹⁹⁵ “4-F Cases Doubled Since Pearl Harbor,” *Afro-American*, June 10, 1944, 10. Rejections of African American men were reported to be partly blamed upon, “the desire to avoid service.” Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions*, 13.

¹⁹⁶ Pratt, “Psychiatric Factors in the Medical Examination,” 362.

¹⁹⁷ Philips, *War! What is it Good For?*, 7; Rose, *Myth and the Greatest Generation*, 134; Hershey, *Selective Service in Peacetime*, 256.

¹⁹⁸ “Draft Board Jim-Crow seen in Heavy '4-F,’” *The Pittsburgh Courier*, October 10, 1942, 5; “Jim Crow Foe? 4-F in Draft,” *Atlanta Daily World*, October 12, 1942, 6.

category “mental deficiency” as, “morons, imbeciles, or idiots . . . with the type or degree not specified;” a distinct classification from a failure to meet minimum intelligence standards.¹⁹⁹ Such loose terms for military rejection allowed strictly racist rejections to continue without authoritative reasoning while maintaining the appearance of formal classification policies.

The experimental nature of intelligence testing, which sought to identify men with at least a fourth grade level education, invited criticism over the standardized tests which meant to wring the mentally able from the mentally inept. Some testers felt confident that mental ability could be judged from the single question, “If your shadow points to the northeast, where is the sun?”²⁰⁰ Broad testing styles insured that no overall assessment of intelligence testing could be or can be seen as accurate today. Regardless of which means of testing were applied, one third of all African American rejections at induction stations were attributed to a failure to meet minimum intelligence standards. Such statistics are hardly surprising when three fourths of African Americans during WWII had not finished high school and one tenth had never attended school at all.²⁰¹ Particularly high rejections of this account fell to African American men whose occupations were designated as general and farm laborers, categories in which African American workers were highly concentrated.²⁰² The high rejection rate of men from the

¹⁹⁹ Greve, *Physical Examinations of Selective Service Registrants in the Final Months of the War*, 15.

²⁰⁰ William A Hunt, “Psychological Testing in Military Clinical Psychology: I, Intelligence Testing,” *Psychological Review* 53 (1946), 27-28.

²⁰¹ Kennedy, *The American People in WWII*, 340.

²⁰² Greve, *Physical Examination of Selective Service Registrants*, 17, 19; Todd J. Moyer, *Freedom Flyers: The Tuskegee Airmen of World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 18; Hershey, *Selective Service in Peacetime*, 259.

south, where the majority of African Americans lived as, “the poorest inhabitants of the nation's poorest region,” are especially concerning and revealing.²⁰³ Military psychologist William A. Hunt felt the vastly disproportionate racial results proved that some current tests were unsuitable for southern African American men who demonstrated ability in their everyday lives but scored astonishingly poorly on these tests, which in effect could test only educational proficiency rather than intellectual potential.²⁰⁴

Astonishingly high rejection among southern African American men was granted careful consideration by the American Teachers Association, an organization which declared a goal of “equality of educational opportunity for all children,” regardless of race. The association’s 1943 convention primarily concerned itself with the racial and educational implications of Selective Service results.²⁰⁵ Particularly concerning were the high rejection rates of southern African Americans, where fourteen of the leading fifteen states for African American rejection were southern states which practiced fully segregated education.²⁰⁶ Considering the heightened rejection of white men in these southern states and the lower rejection of African American men in northern states, the association proposed a connection between long term educational opportunity and resultant military rejection.²⁰⁷

Quality of education cannot be ignored as a major contributing factor. The annual average state cost per student ranged as dramatically as \$157 per white student in New

²⁰³ Moye, *Freedom Flyers*, 17; Kennedy, *The American People in WWII*, 339-340.

²⁰⁴ Hunt, “Psychological Testing in Military Clinical Psychology I: Intelligence Testing.” 30-31.

²⁰⁵ Jenkins, *The Black and White of Rejections for Military Service*, iv.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 1, 5; Hershey, *Selective Service in Wartime*, 289.

²⁰⁷ Martin, *The Black and White of Rejections for Military Service*, 11.

York to \$7.36 per African American child in Mississippi, the state with the largest proportion of African Americans registrants. The average rate for African American students in states which reported educational spending was only \$17 per year.²⁰⁸ Between the years 1931-1932, in the nine states reporting their per student cost, it was found that African American students were awarded educational funding equal to only 31% of that given to their white counterparts. While in states such as New York, California, Illinois and Massachusetts, where educational funding was considerably higher, rejection rates were markedly lower than in states such as Arkansas, Alabama, South Carolina, and Georgia, where rejection rates were at their highest. Interestingly, a survey conducted in Delaware found that of its militarily rejected African American men, “practically all,” had migrated from the south where, as demonstrated, educational opportunity and quality were slight. Washington D.C. similarly found that 93% of its 4-F blacks were southerners who had relocated to the nation’s capital.²⁰⁹

While such data helps to demonstrate less racism in intelligence testing for military service, it does point to long held systems of racial inequality which produced a large quantity of African American men unable to perform to intellectual standards in which they had never been allowed instruction.²¹⁰ General Hershey, acknowledging African American willingness to participate militarily, relented that African American rejection was the product not of educational avoidance but rather the outcome of a system

²⁰⁸ Ibid, 16-23; Hershey, *Selective Service in Wartime*, 279.

²⁰⁹ Martin, *The Black and White of Military Rejections for Military Service*, 30-31.

²¹⁰ Ibid, 31.

in which, “educational opportunities just are not available,” to African Americans.²¹¹

Despite such concessions on the part of Hershey, mental deficiency remained a major cause of rejection throughout WWII.

Though much emphasis has been placed on mental ability, African American men were also disproportionately rejected for sexually transmitted diseases, most notably syphilis. Of the first million men examined by Selective Service, less than two percent of white men tested positive for syphilis while twenty-four percent of African American men were diagnosed with the disease. These exams showed that syphilis of all varieties except neurosyphilis occurred in African Americans ten times more often than among white men.²¹² High venereal disease rates among African Americans were blamed at least partly on the prevalence of prostitution in African American neighborhoods. To combat this, local black committees were established to help police working girls and ultimately check the spread of infection to men eligible for military service.²¹³

With syphilis playing a major role in African American rejection rates, government experimentation by the United States Public Health Service which studied the long term effects of syphilis on African Americans in Macon County, Alabama may come to mind as a possible variable. This sad, unethical medical experiment, which is intricately explored in James H. Jones *Bad Blood: The Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment*, studied a relatively small number of infected men during and after WWII. As far as

²¹¹ Hershey, *Selective Service in Peacetime*, 259. Hershey noted that in response to the issues of African American inability to procure education the Works Progress Administration was working in “some states” to extend learning to African American registrants.

²¹² Heaton, *Physical Standards in WWII*, 28. Diagnosis was made by serological testing with no additional information provided regarding the stage of the disease.

²¹³ Hershey, *Selective Service in Wartime*, 290

sources currently demonstrate, the Tuskegee medical experiments cannot be blamed for the widespread nature of syphilis among African American men; however, it should be known that neither the military nor the United States Public Health Service actively sought to treat infected men early in the war. Generally, the military would accept a limited number of infected men for treatment provided they passed all other aspects of the pre-induction examinations.²¹⁴

Those African Americans who did eventually see combat were often distinguished fighters but the myth of African American avoidance, ineptitude and weakness persisted.²¹⁵ As David Serlin notes in his article, “Crippling Masculinities: Queerness and Disability in U.S. Military Culture, 1800-1945,” race was seized upon during WWII not simply to specify ethnicity but rather to stratify humans as innately inferior and superior.²¹⁶ Indeed, popular belief in such stratification is revealed in a 1942 poll in which the majority of white Americans believed that African Americans were comfortable with their social position and that their condition was the result of their own shortcomings rather than an imposed system. Reflections of public opinion extended deep into the government; particularly apparent in Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson whose view of African American inferiority brought him to advance that, “leadership is not embedded in the Negro race yet.”²¹⁷ Such notions were repeated by Hershey who

²¹⁴ Ibid, 291; James H. Jones, *Bad Blood: The Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment* (New York: The Free Press, 1981), 1. The United States Public Health Service studied 399 men with late stage syphilis and 201 who served as controls which were not treated and allowed to die from the known disease.

²¹⁵ Tom Brokaw, *The Greatest Generation*, 193.

²¹⁶ Serlin, “Crippling Masculinity,” 162-163.

²¹⁷ Winkler, *Home Front U.S.A.*, 58-59.

maintained that African American soldiers were improved by white officers but remained, “a soldier with limitations sharply defined” by race.²¹⁸

Despite these comments regarding the ability and potential use of African American soldiers, Hershey maintained the racial legitimacy of Selective Service practices arguing that that Selective Service was continually “animated” with a “sense of fair play and justice.”²¹⁹ Selective Service reports several studies which were conducted, “under the auspices of the Bureau of Intelligence [and] Office of War Information,” to gauge the general attitudes among African Americans toward “governmental agencies and programs,” including the Selective Service. In his second report on the Selective Service, Hershey records that all of these reports found that African Americans felt the Selective Service System was fair, with the majority of complaints surrounding the treatment of African Americans soldiers in the Army.²²⁰

That society suspected or implied avoidance as the primary impetus of African American rejection is partially supported by Kimberly L. Phillips who postulates that African Americans, faced with military service to defend quasi citizenship, participated in a “grassroots anti-draft movement,” wherein men sought rejection.²²¹ Just such an allusion is apparent in the printed farewell of one African American soldier who, writing a letter to *The Chicago Defender* sent his regards to his, “genuine 4-F friends.”²²² To avoid service some African Americans simply ignored draft notices, a tact recognized by

²¹⁸ Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 118.

²¹⁹ Hershey, *Selective Service in Wartime*, 278.

²²⁰ *Ibid*, 293.

²²¹ Phillips, *War! What is it Good For?*, 14.

²²² Ole Nosey, “Everybody Goes When the Wagon Comes,” *The Chicago Defender*, September 16, 1944, 10.

Selective Service but dismissed as the customary mobility of African Americans in large cities rather than any sort of organized resistance.²²³ Others, like Malcolm X, bolder in their defiance of military service to a nation which did not expressly desire their participation, appeared before draft boards dressed in dramatic zoot suits while feigning drug use. During his psychological evaluation Malcolm X proclaimed his desire to join the military so that he might organize African Americans servicemen from within to help him steal weapons and kill whites. Such behavior garnered Malcolm X the 4-F status he sought but whether this behavior was widespread is questionable.²²⁴

In truth, many African American men sought entry into the American military in hopes of proving their right to first class citizenship and to gain future political and economic freedoms in addition to personal desires and national pride.²²⁵ Persuaded by influential writers such as Langston Hughes and others, who published in African American newspapers such as the *Chicago Defender* and *The Crisis*, African Americans were urged to support the war effort and many attempted to participate equally within an unequal system with an understanding that, “this [was] no fight merely to wear a uniform. This [was] a struggle for status, a struggle to take democracy off of parchment and give it life.”²²⁶ While no editorial can demonstrate African American allegiance to their nation, the sheer number of African Americans who reported for Selective Service examinations, many several times, demonstrates at the very least compliance and at best the sort of American spirit which should continue to inspire admiration. Unfortunately, such an

²²³ Phillips, *War! What is it Good For?*, 33; Hershey, *Selective Service in Wartime*, 291.

²²⁴ Phillips, *War! What is it Good For?*, 58.

²²⁵ Dippel, *War and Sex*, 224.; Hershey, *Selective Service in Wartime*, 285.

²²⁶ Phillips, *War! What is it Good For?*, 9; Winkler, *Home Front U.S.A.*, 60.

outlook was unlikely during WWII and many African American men who, despite their own best efforts, were rejected from service faced heightened social discrimination due to military rejection.

With such large numbers of 4-F men and increasing dissatisfaction with the apparent inequity of only the fittest men fighting, government leaders sought ways to utilize 4-F men for the war effort without having to adjust the Armed Forces policies for acceptance. The *Afro-American* told its readers of congressional attempts to create a legislative bill which would allow the drafting of 4-F men into labor battalions. Such a plan, if passed, would require rejected men to supply menial labor without even the distinction of military uniforms or the aid of any military benefits.²²⁷ While such efforts never materialized into enforced legislation the numerous attempts and popularity of such measures demonstrates the discomfort and level of prejudice 4-F men in general and African American men in particular encountered during the war years.

The false ideological dichotomy which prompted much strife for rejected men on the American home front is perhaps best expressed by a French hero of the First World War, Marshal Foch, who once remarked, “the man who is a good citizen is usually the best soldier.” Such logic, when carried further, as military psychiatrist Dr. Karl M. Bowman extrapolated, implied that, “likewise, the qualities that would make him a poor

²²⁷ “Congress Gets Bill to Put 4-F's in Labor Units,” *Afro-American*, November 6, 1943, 1; “4-F's May be Put in Maintenance Corps: New Bill Would Draft 4-F Men,” *Atlanta Daily World*, November 18, 1943, 1; “Threat Seen in Plan to Draft 4-F's for Labor Unit,” *Afro-American*, April 8, 1944, 7; C.P. Trussell, “Army, Navy to Back Work-or-Fight,” *New York Times*, January 9, 1945, 1.

citizen would make him a poor soldier.”²²⁸ Such concepts of rejected men did more than damage a man’s social standing, the extension of the concept of unfitness to poor citizenry additionally put rejected men in danger of losing their jobs from employers who placed value on the military's evaluation of a man possessing undesirable qualities however unapparent they may be.²²⁹ Throughout the war, African American men struggled to procure war essential work partly because of low technical skill but primarily due to discriminatory hiring.²³⁰ When, due to the absence of the nation's twelve million “most productive men,” African Americans were employed in war industries they were often placed in jobs well below their skill level. Even when employers relented, paying African American workers on par with their ability, they were often kept in unskilled job titles.²³¹

On the home front rejected men, particularly unemployed or non-essential men, were often treated as unwanted reminders of a system which rejected single young men while sending married fathers to fight or kept one son at home while sending another to a distant war.²³² With three hundred thousand single 1-A African American men awaiting induction, the draft began to consume married men causing a rash of complains.²³³ The high African American rejection rate in the south prompted outcry from women who

²²⁸ Bowman, “Psychiatric Examination in the Armed Forces,” 215; Krebs, “The Citizen-Soldier Tradition,” 156.

²²⁹ “Draft Board Jim-Crow seen in Heavy '4-F',” *The Pittsburgh Courier*, October 10, 1942, 5; “Jim Crow Foe? 4-F in Draft,” *Atlanta Daily World*, October 12, 1942, 6.

²³⁰ Hershey, *Selective Service in Wartime*, 282.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 294; Hershey, *Selective Service and Victory*, 194.

²³² Rose, *Myth and the Greatest Generation*, 83; Kennedy, *The American People in WWII*, 209. From 1944 to 1945 almost one million fathers were drafted into military service.

²³³ Kennedy, *The American People in WWII*, 209.

complained that too many black men remained at home while their own white spouses were unfairly sent into harm's way.²³⁴ Communities across the country were "seriously disturbed" over racial disproportions which emerged from discriminatory social and military selection policies.²³⁵ In response, Congressman Hamilton Fish of New York declared that African American men who had not passed educational aptitude tests should be sent to action, though no such exceptions were enumerated concerning white 4-F men.²³⁶ Notably, Senator Theodore Bilbo of Mississippi complained directly to Hershey that the current administration of the Selective Service System had resulted in the Mississippi population becoming nearly evenly divided, "in [the] taking [of] all the whites to meet the draft quota. . .leaving the great majority of Negroes at home."²³⁷

Regardless of public opinion on the home front or attempts from the military to maintain stringent segregation, war inherently brought opportunities for integration. Douglas Briggs, speaking of the changes which the war brought in the small town of Orange, Texas was greatly impacted by the sight of, "black soldiers bringing white boys home with 'em on their leave, white boys bringing black. . . They had been through a lot together. So it made a change."²³⁸ However, with segregation shocking some northern African Americans, integration often proved as inflammatory as suspected producing

²³⁴ Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 124.

²³⁵ Hershey, *Selective Service in Wartime*, 294.

²³⁶ "Fish Holds 4-F Draftees Can Keep Fathers Home," *New Journal and Guide*, November 6, 1943, B1; William J. Butler, "A 4-F Labor Draft?" *New York Times*, April 7, 1944, 18.

²³⁷ Kennedy, *The American People in WWII*, 209.

²³⁸ Fairchild, *They Called it the War Effort*, 226.

some of the era's most intense racial clashes, escalating even to lynchings at military training centers.²³⁹

Despite all the difficulties which faced African American men in being admitted to the American military during the WWII, General Hershey proclaimed in his last report on the Selective Service System that, "Negroes were an important source of manpower for the Armed Forces in WWII," with over a million African American men serving.²⁴⁰ While ultimately African Americans did compose close to ten percent of all inductees, their inability to enlist, procure equal opportunities and avoid premature military discharge presented real challenges to the public perception of equality among the races in manpower management. Additionally, to procure the necessary percentage of men for induction the Selective Service System examined far more African American men than would have been necessary in other races due to their exceptionally high rate of rejection throughout the course of the war. The experience of African American men with the Selective Service System and the Armed Forces is one particularly neglected aspect of WWII military history yet the realities of it help to paint a more accurate picture of the African American experience in twentieth-century America. While the injustices of this era fall easily in line with the nation's history of African American suppression, the valiant service of those African Americans which were accepted and the uplifted voices of those who were wrongly rejected emphasize once again the incredible spirit and determination of African Americans in a time and place where they were marginalized

²³⁹ Kennedy, *The American People in WWII*, 346.

²⁴⁰ Hershey, *Selective Service and Victory*, 187, 191.

and unaccepted. Such courage demonstrates a soldier's heart, whether allowed or refused to prove such in active war.

CHAPTER IV

DISQUIET AT HOME: 4-F CLASSIFICATION AND THE AMERICAN HOME FRONT

With the publicly celebrated A-1 flying aces and combat infantry braving the tremendous battles for which WWII has become famous, remaining men on the home front quickly became limited to minors, men too old for military service, necessary war, civilian or agricultural workers, men with dependents, and militarily rejected men. Of all draft classifications, the swelling group of 4-F's became the most heavily stigmatized and publicly scorned. As Ronald Krebs explains in, "The Citizen-Soldier Tradition in the U.S.: Has its Demise Been Greatly Exaggerated," both government and society have long held that good citizens are willing to die in battle to maintain and defend their community and found such men identifiable by their swift participation in military action.²⁴¹ Of course, not all 4-F men refused a call to arms, but were themselves refused by the military as unsuitable for a call to arms. As patriotism soared and manpower moved from industry to military, remaining men whose justification was military rejection became a suspicious group to American society on the home front.

Assured by the assessment of military physicians, psychiatrists and planners that rejected men were somehow unsavory, the classification soon became a marker by which militarily rejected men became unfit in broader social and employment terms as well; a

²⁴¹ Krebs, "The Citizen Soldier Tradition," 156.

meaning which the U.S. Military and Selective Services never intended. The classification 4-F quickly became a sort of linguistic shorthand to identify more than just a man outside of service and became the focal point of both ridicule and condemnation in popular jokes, songs, magazines and cartoons.²⁴² Narratives about 4-F men also emphasize the mental undesirability of 4-F men through popular songs and jokes, one of which was published in the September issue of *New Journal and Guide* Titled, “Another 4-F Come Back Home,” which told the short narrative joke of a “blank looking draftee” who, when being examined was asked if he had experienced any intestinal trouble replied, “Don't know sir, it ain't been issued to me yet.” When further asked if he “was regular,” the, “silly selectee,” declared that he had volunteered. When the flustered doctor finally spat out, “Gad, son! Don't you know the King's English?” the boy blankly asked, “Is he?”²⁴³ A December 8, 1941 Fleischmann's ad vividly reminded readers that four out of ten American men, “at the peak of youth – aren't quite good enough for the Army.” Additionally, due to their nutritive states, the ad contends rejected men were responsible for making, “the whole nation limp.” While Jarvis analyzes this ad in context of rejection and its implications on national health; this ad simultaneously emphasizes the idea that militarily unfit men on the home front are also detrimental to the security of the nation.²⁴⁴

The social dichotomy of 4-F sons and 1-A sons who had lived their whole lives separated by only a few houses or even walls within one home could cause proud but anxious families with relatives in service to lash out against other families whose young

²⁴² Jarvis, *The Male Body at War*, 59.

²⁴³ John Jordan, “Rambling Rover: Another 4-F Come Back Home,” *New Journal and Guide*, September 18, 1943.

²⁴⁴ Jarvis, *The Male Body at War*, 62.

men remained safely at home. The tensions at home were poignantly expressed by one reader of *Life* who reminds others that while the draft absorbed millions of men into distant service, rejection simultaneously left many others at home, “alone with a slur on [their] manhood and the contempt of his neighbors.”²⁴⁵ Veteran Harry Galinsky remembered how people at home would respond to a 4-F status, telling an interviewer, “At least in blue collar towns. . . it was the mark of Zorro if you didn’t go in. Anybody who was a 4-F was really shunned . . . Oh, yes, tough time. The thing to do was to go.”²⁴⁶

Such local tensions were also felt intensely by Hershey's 6,443 celebrated local draft boards, where respected members of local communities were charged by Selective Service with separating those who stayed and those who went without compensation, though some members did accept bribes in exchange for changing draft classifications.²⁴⁷ What exactly qualified as essential work necessary for production and allegations of classism remained constant areas of public criticism over draft board decisions throughout the course of the war.²⁴⁸ Serving on these boards often became difficult work when member’s personal relationships were negatively affected by their inability to reverse undesirable draft board decisions for which members became ostracized and

²⁴⁵ Stevens, “Letters to the Editor,” 2.

²⁴⁶ Harry Galinsky, Interviewed by Kurt Piehler, Documenting Rutgers during WWII, Rutgers Oral History Archives, July 12, 1995, 21.

²⁴⁷ Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 72; Kennedy, *The American People in WWII*, 208. Within the local draft board system it is notable that only three southern states, Virginia, North Carolina and Kentucky allowed African Americans to serve of draft boards.

²⁴⁸ Rose, *Myth and the Greatest Generation*, 83; Cardozier, *The Mobilization of the US in WWII*, 195; Kennedy, *The American People in WWII*, 208-209. Particularly controversial was the November 1942 Tydings Amendment which exempted all agricultural workers from the draft; Arthur Krock, “In the Nation, Defining Services Essential to the War Program,” *New York Times*, March 31, 1944, 20.

shunned.²⁴⁹ Though local board members held no responsibility for the standards which Selective Services set, regulations often changed so rapidly that many board decisions often came down to personal judgments which left board members vulnerable to public scrutiny.²⁵⁰

Another question which puzzled society, lawmakers, and local board members was whether college students should receive deferments. While this question was primarily limited to the early months of the war, discussions over if certain studies should qualify as mandatory war work continued, particularly through the proposal of legislation to protect certain studies. Hershey's stance that college deferment would be, "undemocratic in that it would defer only those who could afford to go to college," became the rule while some exceptions continued for medical and dental students who were given deferments until the end of their studies at which time they were expected to enter the services and render medical aid for the war effort.²⁵¹ Despite the inclusion of college men in the draft law, true equality was not fully enacted since a disproportionately large amount of men with even moderate college experience were

²⁴⁹ Cardozier, *The Mobilization of the United States in WWII*, 201.

²⁵⁰ Sgt. Marvin Sleeper, "Draft Board 119," *Yank Magazine*, December 21, 1945, 16-17; Albert A. Blum, "Soldier or Worker: A Reevaluation of the Selective Service System", *Midwest Quarterly* 13 (1972): 147; Kubie, "Technical and Organizational Problems in the Selection of Troops," 243-258.

²⁵¹ Blum, "Soldier or Worker: A Reevaluation of the Selective Service System," 149. Generally, student deferments were applied by placing students in Class II – essential work. Of those receiving this designation 81% were dental students, 80% medical students, 72% veterinary students, 71% engineering, 69% chemistry, 66% pharmacy, 59% physics, 56% geology, and 46% biology. Other areas of study fell beneath these more significant percentages; Hershey, Report 1, 171-172. Hershey reports that in the early months of the war local boards did grant deferments for college students in all pursuits of study including agriculture, architecture, commerce law, liberal arts, social sciences, teaching, theology, biology, chemistry, geology, metallurgy, meteorology, physics, engineering, bacteriology, optometry, osteopathy, pharmacy, trades and veterinary medicine; Hershey, Report 2, 120-121, 234; "Asks Draft Omit Medical Students: National Professional Parley Cites," *New York Times*, February 16, 1941, 31.

submitted for officer training.²⁵² Regardless of the draining of men from United States universities, many termed the institutions, in which as much as fifty percent of male students were 4-F as, “havens for slackers,” and wrote letters into Selective Service to bring attention to the remainder of men in institutions of higher education.²⁵³ While young 4-F men did compose the great majority of men on campuses, the stigma against 4-F men gaining an educational or career advantage in the absence of servicemen led to the promotion of legislation which threatened men in non-essential industries with forced labor. In response to the labels and the legislation 4-F men withdrew from universities and slowly stopped entering college at all during the war years.²⁵⁴

Such conflict over service and deferment only exacerbated the social issues surrounding rejected men. Dr. Gilbert J. Rich noted in his psychological study of rejected men the, “teasing and discrimination that is his lot as a '4-F-er,” as a major factor in the shame rejected men felt. Rich found that rejection alone rarely led to psychological complications; rather these emotional difficulties surrounded the, “attitude of the community toward the young man not in uniform.” Rich concludes that rejected men often felt “out of place,” on the home front, especially when faced with the celebration of friends in service. Many 4-F men were so frightened of the public response to psychological rejection that they feigned physical disability to their friends. Both Dr. Rich and Dr. Saul Rosenzweig found that such lies, which would often entrap the rejected

²⁵² Cardozier, *The Mobilization of the United States in WWII*, 96.

²⁵³ Hershey, *Selective Service in Wartime*, 227.

²⁵⁴ Benjamin Fine, “Drain of 4-F Manpower Bill Stirs,” *New York Times*, February 15, 1943, 15.

man in a web of complicated falsifications, demonstrates the degree of shame which physicians had to help 4-F men navigate.²⁵⁵

In addition to the concern that rejection led to a social injustice in which some mothers had to watch their sons leave while others did not, the induction of close to a million husbands and fathers in 1944 and 1945 heightened tensions even further.²⁵⁶ The presence of seemingly healthy, single, eighteen year old men angered women who were deeply concerned that military standards would dictate that children would grow up fatherless and wives would lose their spouses.²⁵⁷ Indeed, it had been a, “special objective,” of the Selective Service System to maintain families as long as possible, however, manpower shortages continued at such a pace that deferment of all men with dependents could simply not be maintained even with the careful reconsideration of “the mental and physical unfits. . .the immoral and ex-criminals,” classified as 4-F.²⁵⁸ *Ladies Home Journal* only confirmed the common sentiment that, “If fewer younger, single men had been 4-F, it might never have been necessary to draft so many husbands.”²⁵⁹ The desire to place guilt upon rejected men was not lost upon 4-F men, one young man

²⁵⁵ Rich, “Problems of the Rejected Man,” 118; Morris D. Riemer, “Effects of 4-F Classification on Psychoneurotics Under Treatment,” *Mental Hygiene* 30 (1946): 453; Rosenzweig, “Emotional Implications of Military Rejection and Discharge,” 16.

²⁵⁶ Kennedy, *The American People in WWII*, 209.

²⁵⁷ Sharon Estill Taylor, “The Childhood Experience of Being a War Orphan: A Study of the Effects of Father Loss on Women Whose Fathers Were Killed in World War II,” *Journal of Loss and Trauma* 15 (2010): 229. The Department of Veterans Affairs estimates that 183,000 American children received benefits from their father's death in WWII while many others did not due to a lack of application or the decision that the child was illegitimate.

²⁵⁸ Hershey, *Selective Service in Peacetime*, 137; “Drafting of Fathers is Deferred Until Non-Parents are Used Up,” *New York Times*, September 14, 1943, 15; Flynn, *Lewis B Hershey*, 108; “Men for 1-A Classification will Re-examine all 4-F,” *New Journal and Guide*, September 5, 1942, A3; “Musicians Exempt from Work-Fight,” *New York Times*, February 9, 1943, 25.

²⁵⁹ Furnas, “Why is he 4-F? Are you to Blame?,” 26.

remarked in response, “a fellow my age doesn't feel right about staying out. Men older than myself have been called.”²⁶⁰

Certainly, some pressure on rejected men was only a reflection of what servicemen communicated to their own friends and family about 4-F men and their own suspicions concerning the validity and justice of select military exemptions. Such sentiments were expressed in private letters which expose resentment betray serviceman's bitterness. One serviceman, Cpl. Howard W. Nelms, writing to the *Chicago Defender*, asked the paper to, “give my genuine '4-F' friends my best regards,” noting that, “we who are making it safe for the ladies. . . will return SOME DAY.”²⁶¹ Dellie Hahne, in an interview for Studs Terkel's *The Good War*, discussed the resentment of servicemen over rejected men. Hahne explains, “most soldiers were resentful of guys who were not in uniform. There was a term, 4-F bastards. If two guys in cars were fighting it out, the uniformed guy stuck his head out the window, 'Oh, you 4-F bastard!’” The servicemen “didn't want to be handed a bill of goods that the men not in uniform were sorry, or the man in uniform was happy as a lark. He wasn't. He was sick of the whole damn thing.”²⁶² Bitterness persisted even between family members who were separated by classifications when one fighting brother desired to be home and his 4-F sibling longed to fight overseas.²⁶³

²⁶⁰ Cpl. Hyman Goldberg, “Why Ain’t they in Uniform,” *Yank Magazine*, April 6, 1945, 7; Rosenzweig, “Emotional Implications of Military Rejection and Discharge,” 14.

²⁶¹ Ole Nosey, “Everybody Goes When the Wagon Comes,” *The Chicago Defender* September 16, 1944, 10.

²⁶² Terkel, *The Good War*, 121.

²⁶³ Vincent Gorman, Interviewed by Kurt Piehler, documenting Rutgers during WWII, Rutgers Oral History Archive, July 19, 1995, 13.

Kenneth Rose in *Myth and the Greatest Generation* explains that, “servicemen harbored a seething resentment against what they considered to be the soft life of civilians.” Frustrations from servicemen, considered the salt of the nation, were especially amplified in relation to young men of their own age whom they thought, “every man back home a 4-F making easy and overlarge war profits.”²⁶⁴ Audie Murphy, author of the 1949 book *To Hell and Back* echoed such common sentiments when he wrote, “When I think of some of those 4-F , draft-dodging bastards I know back home, I want to spit nails.”²⁶⁵ Similar feelings inevitably worked their way through the letters and discussions of servicemen and into the ears and hearts of the broader American society. This sentiment was transformed into a man on the street piece by *Yank Magazine* which sought to answer for men in uniform the common question concerning what civilian men were doing on the home front. The *Yank* interviewer, standing on a busy street corner questioned young men out of uniform as they passed. The responses were revealing. One young man whose rejection hinged on a punctured eardrum defensively shot back, “Listen, you think its easy for a guy my age not to be in the Army? You think I'm having a good time? Every place I go people spit on me.” The 4-F man told of when he was rejected, saying that the military told him to go home and that he was no good to them. “That's a fine thing to tell a guy. I didn't even know I got a punctured eardrum. It don't

²⁶⁴ Rose, *Myth and the Greatest Generation*, 4, 126, 227, 231.

²⁶⁵ Audie Murphy, *To Hell and Back*, (New York: Gosset and Dunlap, 1949), 94-95.

bother me at all, I tell them, but they don't want to listen to me at all. They say that I should go home.”²⁶⁶

By 1943 local draft boards in New Jersey had become so burdened by phone calls and letters concerning suspicions of neighboring young men out of uniform that the draft board publicly released a list of one hundred twenty-three young deferred men to assuage the public anxiety about their draft status.²⁶⁷ Difficulties in responding to an, “irate mother or wife with a man in the service,” who demanded the induction of local boys became common for local draft boards throughout the nation and was discussed in publications especially aimed at servicemen such as *Yank Magazine*.²⁶⁸ The debate concerning the use of “sickly men who could not pass a satisfactory physical examination,” continued with few civilians noting the distinction between military fitness and civilian health.²⁶⁹ Regardless of industry desire, James F. Byrnes, Director of War Mobilization and Reconversion conceded that industry had to submit to utilize, “the means at hand – if we can't ride a horse, ride a mule,” urging industry to, in effect, hire the inferior 4-F until the preferred men came marching home.²⁷⁰

By 1944 the full force of disqualification struck the American public with both dismay and disappointment when General Hershey confirmed the actual number of 4-F men publicly. While reports had ranged between forty and fifty percent in the previous

²⁶⁶ Hyman, “Why Aint They in Uniform?” 7.

²⁶⁷ “Draft Board Lists 123 Deferred Men: New Jersey Group Posts Names of Younger Registrants,” *New York Times*, April 29, 1943, 23.

²⁶⁸ Sleeper, “Draft Board 119,” *Yank Magazine the Army Weekly*, December 21, 1945, 16-17; Fairchild, “They Called it the War Effort,” 177.

²⁶⁹ “Byrnes Stands Firm on Job Call to 4-F's,” *New York Times*, January 13, 1945, 7.

²⁷⁰ “Real Heat of the Manpower Push Turned on 4-F War Job Quitters,” *Newsweek*, January 1945, 62-68.

year, Hershey's official report confirmed that almost four million men under 38 years of age; a group equal to the size of the American overseas war force, a group larger than the entire American military force of the First World War, had been rejected. Of those rejections, only approximately ten percent were based on obviously disqualifying issues such as handicap or apparent physical impairment. In addition to this confirmation, Hershey reported that men currently classified as 4-F were to be re-examined in an effort to supply the military with its high manpower needs based on lower qualifications. Particularly of interest would be the 14.7% of men who had been rejected based on educational deficiency and mental disease. In an effort to reduce the social and political disturbance which the classification had wrought, any re-examined men found acceptable for service would be reclassified from 4-F to 2-A, B or C if they were working in essential industries or agriculture and appropriately if they had, since their last examination become too old for the draft.²⁷¹

An authentic understanding of what a 4-F classification meant was further confused by well-meaning columns such as "Service for Servicemen," which defined 4-F to curious readers as, "a man who has been classified physically and morally unfit."²⁷² Of course, many men were labeled 4-F for a much wider range of reasons, while others were labeled 4-F for either physical or moral unfitness rather than a necessary combination. Civilian difficulties understanding the vast basis of military rejections, many of which were unapparent in every day activity, often left many people on the home front

²⁷¹ "3, 836,000 X 4-F = ?", *Newsweek*, May 8, 1944, 76.

²⁷² Milas S. Stephens Sr., "Service for Servicemen," *The Chicago Defender*, December 19, 1942, 9.

suspicious of young men who were healthy enough to work or play sports but apparently unable to serve their nation. Such notions were widely voiced by politician such as Byrnes who claimed, “it was difficult to him and the public to understand how men can be physically unfit for military service and yet be able to compete with the greatest athletes of the nation in games demanding physical fitness.”²⁷³ While these remarks were aimed particularly at African American 4-F men in sports, such sentiments extended to men in many areas of entertainment and industry who were not readily impaired. Others used such scenarios as evidence that national health was not holistically as poor as some presented it to be, sarcastically reminding readers of the *New York Times* that, “physical fitness for peace is not quite the same as fitness for war.” While the substantial classifications of 4-F alarmed many, “among such 4-F's were many substandard young men who were compelled to restrict their physical exercise to football, hockey, basketball and baseball, played for money or for fun.”²⁷⁴ Though realistic caution concerning the application of military fitness to civilian fitness did occasionally make newsprint, such ideas were vastly less common than other, more alarming reports connecting the implications of 4-F and the quality of American citizenry. One example came from Haile Selassie writing to the *Cleveland Call and Post* who offered that the American draft laws should more resemble that of Ethiopia which states, “Every man able to carry a spear will

²⁷³ “Draft Tightening will Not Hurt Negro Baseball,” *Atlanta Daily World*, January 7, 1945, 7.

²⁷⁴ “Topics of the Times,” *New York Times*, December 28, 1944, 18.

come. . . the blind, the lame and those too young to carry a spear will not. . . those found at home will be hung.”²⁷⁵

With so many 4-F men remaining on the home front, crimes being committed by those within the group of rejects were unavoidable yet further developed the meaning of 4-F classification to include the implications of wholesale moral deficiency and criminal inclination. Draft evaders, though their numbers were few, were caught with fraudulent 4-F draft cards and small home arsenals.²⁷⁶ Newspapers ran sensational stories with overzealous headlines such as, “4-F Gangsters Are Running Rampant,” in response to four 4-F youths who had attempted to swindle five dollar donations from people and when rejected, had thrown a brick into a drug store window.²⁷⁷ A vilified 4-F man, who admitted to selling textiles at prices above those set by the Office of Price Administration was called, “a traitor to American fighting men,” by the cases judge Murray Hulbert who set a \$2,500 fine and a sentence of six months.²⁷⁸ Two other young 4-F's, not quite old enough to be seen as adults and not quite young enough to remain in high school, were blamed for instigating a fight between as few as fifteen and as many as one hundred “weak-minded” student “followers” at a local basketball game leading the *Cleveland Call and Post* to blame the two immoral 4-F's, “outside jitterbug elements,” for the clash.²⁷⁹

Additionally, media coverage assured that some problems which solely involved militarily eligible men adversely affected the broad perception of genuine 4-F men.

²⁷⁵ Haile Selassie, “What! - No 4-F's,” *Cleveland Call and Post*, May 27, 1944, 6B.

²⁷⁶ “Evader of Draft Long Sought Held,” *New York Times*, July 11, 1943, 26.

²⁷⁷ “4-F Gangsters are Running Rampant,” *New York Amsterdam*, November 18, 1944, 1B.

²⁷⁸ “4-F Cheat Called Traitor,” *New York Times*, April 27, 1945, 15.

²⁷⁹ Bob Williams, “Outside Jitterbug Elements Blamed for School Flare-Up,” *Cleveland Call and Post*, January 27, 1945, 1A.

Exposure of men such as Stephen Weinberg who held organized classes ranging in cost from two hundred to two thousand dollars, sought to aid 1-A draftees in feigning mental deficiency or deafness and the procurement of falsified medical reports which further validated their unfit condition cast doubt on legitimate 4-F's.²⁸⁰ Other common incidents included draft board bribery in exchange for 4-F classifications for otherwise healthy, eligible men. While such incidents, which kept potential 1-A men out of the service, should not have reflected so intensely on genuine 4-F men, any situation which buttressed suspicions concerning the validity of 4-F classifications affected already stigmatized rejected men in negative ways which referenced the inherent criminality of 4-F men.²⁸¹

When 4-F men were found to sell drugs and participate in crimes their stories served to further enforce public opinion that 4-F men, particularly those "cocky" 4-F's who endangered the home front, should be sent to the Pacific or European fronts.²⁸² Some wondered why men with, "a record of being quick on the draw or handy with a razor or switch-blade [should] be denied the opportunity to use his lust for blood in the defense of the country?" Such men, the social undesirables, it seemed, were, "for combat purposes, the kind of man the Army needs."²⁸³ While such conclusions may have seemed logical to many people, more likely, such thoughts only serve to demonstrate the general public's desire to retain its best men while sending what it deemed its worst, which came to

²⁸⁰ "Notorious Faker is Seized by FBI as Head of Draft Dodgers School," *New York Times*, August 5, 1943, 17.

²⁸¹ "Draft Fraud Barred by Trial," *New York Times*, September 21, 1944, 21.

²⁸² Ole Nosey, "Everybody Goes When the Wagon Comes," 10; Roger Butterfield, "Our Kids are in Trouble: The Phenomenal Rise in Juvenile Delinquency During the War is a Problem which Concerns Everyone in the U.S.," *Life Magazine*, December 20, 1943, 97-108.

²⁸³ Eustace Gay, "Fact and Fancies," January 15, 1944, 4; "Few Classified as 4F for Criminal Record," *New York Times*, July 20, 1944, 8. In truth, few men were rejected solely on minor criminal records.

encompass all 4-F men, to the front lines. This line of thinking, that the least of men should be sacrificed to a blood thirsty front line, was promptly rejected by the President's medical commission which warned that taking unfit men ultimately threatened to impede military efficiency and would prove a poor gamble for the unsavory chance of gaining, "the possible salvage of individuals of very doubtful future value to the services;" a game which would lead only to the swelling of post war benefits without any national benefit.²⁸⁴

The primary avenue available to 4-F men to aid in their social acceptability was participation in essential war industry work. However, securing any employment with a 4-F classification could prove a long term difficulty even with agencies specializing in aiding rejected men to procure jobs.²⁸⁵ Employment was a twofold problem for 4-F African American men who had the double stigma of color and military rejection working against them. Edward Lewis, writing in the *Afro-American* addressed the "serious problem," of 4-F men, saying, "War industries will not take them and private industries which have retirement funds refuse to employ them in spite of labor shortages."²⁸⁶ While rejected African American men faced intense discrimination in employment, rejected men of other races faced similar difficulties and frustrations while industry complained that draft policies had businesses with only, "infirm, unskilled, and

²⁸⁴ "Survey Bars Move to Take More 4-F's in Armed Services," *New York Times*, February 29, 1944.

²⁸⁵ "Bureau Aids Men Unfit for Service," *New York Times*, September 28, 1943, 18.

²⁸⁶ Edward Lewis, "Labor: Anti-Riot Programs Education Pamphlets," *Afro-American*, August 31, 1943, 4. Kennedy, *American People in WWII*, 340, 4-F or 1-A African American men faced serious prejudice in obtaining employment even in the face of serious labor shortages. North American Aviation blatantly refused to hire black workers.

inexperienced personnel,” to work with.²⁸⁷ The *New York Times* ran articles which discussed the release of industrial factory names which refused to hire 4-F's as a means of coercing industrial acceptance of militarily rejected men.²⁸⁸

Writing to the *New York Times* in July of 1942, Harry Phillip Edwards told readers, “Every day the papers tell with great detail of the exploits of American service men, of heroic conduct in half a hundred battles from Malta to Midway, from Australia to the Aleutians, or of exploits of American heroes of production that make Paul Bunyan look like an amateur by comparison.”²⁸⁹ Edwards continues, “All carry the connotation that unless the reader does likewise he (or she) is a shirker, and the stern warning that 'America has no room for shirkers now.'” On a more personal note, Edwards adds, “But how about those of us who have been classified by the Selective Service System as 4-F?” In regards to his own desire to join, Edwards told readers, “the services are permanently closed to me. For this statement I have the unconditional word of my draft-board chairman and the almost profane dismissals of dozens of Army, Navy, and Marine recruiting officers. Nor, apparently, does private industry want me. Even the lowly post of gasoline-station attendant is denied me by the curse of those two letters, 4-F.” “It hurts me,” Edwards told readers, of having lost three close friends to the war without being able to perform his, “honor bound,” obligation to “get into the scrap and do my bit.” In

²⁸⁷ Kubie, “Technical and Organizational Problems in the Selection of Troops,” 243-258

²⁸⁸ “Draft to List Plants that Reject 4-F Men,” *New York Times*, April 5, 1944, 1.

²⁸⁹ Harry Phillip Edwards, “Service Rating a Handicap,” *New York Times*, July 13, 1942, 18.

conclusion, Edwards left readers with the question, “Am I to waste my talents because of those damning letters, 4-F?”²⁹⁰

In response to “discriminatory” Congressional attempts and broad public support for the labor draft of 4-F men, William J. Butler writing in to the *New York Times*, told readers that such legislation was, “unfair. If there is any obligation to work in war industry it rests on every able-bodied person in this country.”²⁹¹ Butler continues, saying, “The obligation to fight is a separate, prior obligation, depending on special qualifications and resting, therefore, on certain persons only. The fact that a man has been found unfit to fight neither adds to nor subtracts from his obligation to work in war industry and certainly does not make his obligation to do such work any greater than the obligation of everyone else.” Speaking to the general idea that 4-F men could relax and enjoy a soft home front experience, Butler added, “The idea that 4-F's now enjoy any unique exemptions cannot be seriously entertained. The real point is that the authorities feel they have these unfortunates by the short hairs,” and on whose behalf, “no public outcry need be feared.”²⁹²

If 4-F men could play a vital part in the nation's security without serving in the Armed Forces became a secondary question of whether they should be made to. News reports, even those published in the same newspaper as is seen in the *New York Times*, reported conflicting analysis concerning 4-F men and their willingness to work in essential industry. While some 4-F men and their doctors sought to prove their rejection

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

²⁹¹ “Draft Board Seeks to Use 725,000 4-F's,” *Philadelphia Tribune*, May 13, 1944, 15.

²⁹² William J. Butler, “A 4-F Labor Draft?,” *New York Times*, April 7, 1944, 18.

meant they could not obtain work others, particularly in government positions, claimed that 4-F men were more prone to job hopping than other employees and as such should be forced to take and remain in jobs regardless of skill level, desire or locality.²⁹³

Regardless of widespread belief, surveys demonstrate that 4-F men did take legislative threats seriously and did attempt to gain war essential work, even if doing so took them from other jobs for which they were more qualified or from the pursuit of education.²⁹⁴

One 4-F working outside of essential industry wrote into the *New York Times* to express both his desire to aid the war effort and also his fear of increasingly tight government restrictions on war workers who he felt should have the freedom to move at least three times, “without getting his head in a sling.”²⁹⁵

In contrast to the defense that young 4-F men owed no more than any other citizen and should not be compelled to war work others felt it was “deception” to imply these unfortunate men could function in a normal job.²⁹⁶ Still others felt that whether motivation came from, “the pressure of community stigma or simple limited penalty legislation,” young, single 4-F men were exactly the group from which the most should be expected on the home front since 4-F peers, “are the ones who in greatest numbers than any other are dying on this fields of battle. For that reason,” the *New York Times*

²⁹³ C.P. Trussell, “War Chiefs Favor Induction of 4-F's Not in Vital Jobs,” *New York Times*, May 5, 1944, 1; “Program to Cure 4F Defects Urged,” *New York Times*, January 6, 1945, 1; Morris D. Riemer, “Effects of 4F Classification of Psychoneurotics Under Treatment,” 451

²⁹⁴ Charles E. Egan, “Agencies Survey 4-F's in War Jobs,” *New York Times*, April 16, 1944, 1; C.P. Trussell, “House Group Drops Proposal to Draft 4-F's for War Jobs,” *New York Times*, April 19, 1944, 1; “Rush to War Jobs on in Some Cities,” *New York Times*, January 6, 1945, 7.

²⁹⁵ P.J. Ryan, “Letters to the Times,” *New York Times*, March 6, 1945, 20.

²⁹⁶ “No Place for Deception,” *New Journal and Guide*, January 20, 1945, 8.

reported, “he [the 4-F] is vulnerable.”²⁹⁷ Gentile, a young 4-F man who was forced to switch to essential industry explained his own difficulties saying, “All right, so I'm not essential. So I go out and get a job in a war plant. I can make a pretty good martini and draw a neat glass of beer, but about other thing I don't know.” In the manufacturing plant, Gentile was hired as a floor man which turned out to entail, “pushing a wheelbarrow. Lemme tell you, a guy don't get the feeling he's killing Germans or Japs just pushing a wheelbarrow around. And every place you go, if you ain't wearing a uniform, they spit on you.” Gentile says that rather than continued in his 4-F state he did consistently try to enter the military, “I keep going back to my draft board asking them they should take me in, but they just laugh at me and say I should go home.”²⁹⁸

Flying Magazine ran ads encouraging 4-F men to begin training for careers in essential industry, further directing rejected men to comply with political and social pressure to enter into necessary jobs.²⁹⁹ That ads appeared in magazines related to aviation can be no surprise as many young men, both rejected and accepted for military service, were interested in becoming pilots and maintained an interest in flight. Playing on such interests, the Institute of Aviation Psychology based at the University of Tennessee held an “experiment,” using, “human guinea pigs,” to determine if 4-F men could learn to fly and to discover, “just what constitutes a physical handicap in flying.”³⁰⁰ Essential war work, no matter its inherent appeal, was also characterized as a rehabilitating therapy for rejected men, as was the case with the Jack and Heintz factory,

²⁹⁷ “Young 4-F's Should be Made to Do War Work by Law,” *New York Times*, December 13, 1944, 17.

²⁹⁸ Goldberg, “Why Aint They in Uniform?” 7.

²⁹⁹ “Will you Answer Aviation's Call for More Lincoln Trained Men?” *Flying Magazine*, January 1943, 139.

³⁰⁰ “4-F Men to Be Trained as Flyers in Experiment,” *Science News Letter*, February 1944, 134-135.

which employees described to be as rejuvenating as, “a trip to Lourdes.” Workers in the employ of Jack and Heintz professed “miraculous cures,” and some who had faced previous military rejection claimed that their job in some way aided them in becoming acceptable to the military. Certainly, the continually lower standards of their examination by a different, perhaps less critical doctor contributed more to the acceptance of these men than their factory work, however, it is significant that both workers and the press indicated the influence of apt employment in the transition of their acceptability.³⁰¹

Due to public backlash against 4-F men who did obtain gainful employment in private industry politicians, emboldened by the, “overwhelming support,” of their constituents, drafted legislation which sought to force 4-F men into critical defense jobs in the form of work battalions.³⁰² While the professed hope was that rejected men between eighteen and twenty-six years of age would find essential war work on their own, it was recommended that men who could not procure such work locally should submit themselves to their local draft board and relent to relocate anywhere such work

³⁰¹ Robert Caughlan, “Jack and Heintz: Cleveland War Plant is Paradise of Bonuses, Sunbaths, Wolf Calls and Free Florida Vacations.” *Life Magazine*, March 22, 1943, 75-81.

³⁰² Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 65, 99; Kennedy, *The American People in WWII*, 211. Some legislators also wrote “work or fight” legislation which threatened 4-F men who did not take mandated work with immediate induction. Such legislation was “virtually dead on arrival,” simply because the military refused to accept any men under standard and as the war progressed increasingly shied away from limited service military support. Additionally, Hershey refused any obligation on the part of Selective Service to aid in maintaining the employment levels of industry. A responsibility which Selective Service would assume if legislation; George Gallup, “4-F's in War Jobs Backed by Public,” *New York Times*, April 16, 1944, 29. In a survey asking, “Do you think that men who are turned down by the Army because they are not physically fit for fighting, but who are able to work in war plants, should be taken into the Army and given jobs in order to free young men in war plants for combat service,” 78% said yes, 15% said no and 7% was undecided.

was available, separating 4-F men from their home like military men had been theirs.³⁰³ Among the those attacked for being both unfit and non-essential were celebrities such as renowned crooner Frank Sinatra whose punctured ear drum had by 1945, made him eligible, like all other rejected men for mandated essential war work.³⁰⁴ The impressment of 4-F men into industry was of particular interest to psychiatrists, including Dr. E. Hadley, who felt, “the experiment in utilizing some of these handicapped [4-F] persons will contribute really worthwhile data on their problems in employment and the type of difficulty encountered in placing members of this group suitably” in the broader public sphere.³⁰⁵

While complaints concerning growing restriction and pressure may appear petty in relation to the blood sacrifices of servicemen, an example of the height of restriction sought can be seen in one Senate Bill meaning to curb worker movement, which recommended that agricultural workers who quit without permission be given a fine of \$10,000 and up to five years in prison.³⁰⁶ Robert P. Patterson, Assistant Secretary of War, Ralph A. Bard, Assistant Secretary of the Navy and J.A. Krug, Chairman of the War Production Board hoped that in drafting such legislation, “the penalties for those who

³⁰³ “Data on Using 4-F’s Sought,” *New York Times*, April 6, 1944, 11; Hershey, *Selective Service in Wartime*, 122. As time passed 4-F men who had experience in farm work were also notified that they should transition back to agriculture; Charles E. Egan, “4-F’s in Draft Told to Test Jobs and Assure War-Essential Work,” *New York Times*, April 8, 1944, 1.

³⁰⁴ “Sinatra Back in 4-F,” *New York Times*, March 6, 1945, 12; “Sinatra Called in Draft,” *New York Times*, January 30, 1945, 21.

³⁰⁵ Hadley, “Military Psychiatry: A Note on the Factor of Age,” 548.

³⁰⁶ C.P. Trussell, “Senate’s Job Bill Aims as Employer,” *New York Times*, February 23, 1945, 11; “4-F Job Jumpers Sought for Draft,” *New York Times*, January 9, 1945, 14. In 1945 a form of work-fight did pass which allowed for men who abandoned jobs without permission to be drafted in limited service military positions. However, by July the roughly 52,000 inductees proved as much a burden to the Armed Forces as they had protested they would be and moved to stop the measure. “Selective Service Ends Draft of 4-F’s Over 26,” *New York Times*, July 13, 1945, 13.

were recalcitrant be so thoroughly unattractive that no man able to work and unable to fight would want anything but an essential war job.” Such concepts, far more intense than the need for manpower would require, were proven to be in direct connection to the sentiments of servicemen since part of the justification for such measures was intended to curb that, “bitter resentment in the Armed Forces,” over civilian occupational freedoms and gains.³⁰⁷ Even President Roosevelt was open to the idea of controlling manpower outside of the military if such measures might aid in the heightened production needed to obtain a swift victory, saying in regard to rejected men outside of essential industries that, “everybody who could possibly do so should be working for the winning of the war,” adding that, “there should be some soul searching and if people could not search their own souls somebody ought to do it for them and talk out loud about it.” Such plans were seen as an opportunity to, “correct 'a basically wrong' situation whereby one man went into combat while another of the same age,” did nothing essential to bringing about the end of the war.³⁰⁸

The Bill, which Republican Congresswoman Clare B. Luce of Connecticut proposed in 1943, envisioned the labor groups as “semi-military” units which would draw Army pay grade (the extra pay which private industry paid would be absorbed by

³⁰⁷ C.P. Trussell, “Patterson, Bard, Krug,” *New York Times*, January 11, 1945, 1.

³⁰⁸ John D. Morris, “Army, Navy, Urge Bill for 4-F Draft for Essential Jobs,” *New York Times*, March 30, 1944, 1. Proponents of work-fight legislation claimed that roughly twenty-eight percent of 4-F men had not voluntarily obtained work in essential fields and factories; “4-F's May be Put in Maintenance Corps: New Bill would Draft 4-F Men,” *Atlanta Daily World*, November 18, 1943, 1.

the U.S. Treasury), but deny laborers any type of military uniform.³⁰⁹ While manpower control and financial equality were one matter, the denial of any type of uniform can be seen as no less than an intentional strike against 4-F men's social status as inferior laborers, even when theoretically placed within military control. While Hershey himself believed that all men should contribute, "materially and substantially to the war effort," his disinclination toward the expansion of the Selective Service into private industry and the refusal of the Armed Forces to find appropriate assignments for unfit men within their own ranks made the matter of work-fight legislation a moot point regardless of Roosevelt's encouragement that 4-F men should be used in, "whatever capacity is best for the war effort." Rather, Hershey relied upon local elements to convince and cajole 4-F men into socially acceptable work.³¹⁰

While much discrimination concerning 4-F men occurred regardless of race or class, legislators occasionally voiced highly racist opinions concerning 4-F African American men in particular. Hamilton Fish, the Republican Congressman from New York

³⁰⁹ "Congress get Bill to Put 4-F's in Labor Units," *Afro-American*, November 6, 1943, 1; "Look Out 4-F's You May Get in Maintenance Corps," *Cleveland Call and Post*, November 27, 1943, 5B; John D. Morris, "House Group Moves to Draw 4-F Law," *New York Times*, March 31, 1944, 13; "Jobs Sought for 725,000 4-F's," *The Chicago Defender*, May 13, 1944, 4; "Draft Boards Seek to Use 725,000 4-F's," *Philadelphia Tribune*, May 13, 1944, 15.

³¹⁰ John D. Morris, "Manpower Draft Splits Officials M'Nutt Opposes it," *New York Times*, March 29, 1944, 1. Both quotes from FDR and Hershey concerning work-fight are from the same article; John D. Morris, "Army, Navy, Urge Bill for 4-F Draft for Essential Jobs," *New York Times*, March 30, 1944, 1. While both Selective Service and the armed forces approved on the utilization of rejected men, neither group wished to assume responsibility to placing 4-F men. Essentially the armed forces approved of Selective Service enforcing 4-F employment in industry which Hershey refused while Hershey approved of 4-F men being utilized in labor battalions managed by the military, an idea with the services explicitly rejected; "Rep. Claire Luce Pushes Bill to Force 4-F's into the Army," *Philadelphia Tribune*, November 20, 1943, ; "Draft Legislation Called Adequate," *New York Times*, April 21, 1944, 10; "Hershey is Proposed as Labor Corps Head," *New York Times*, April 11, 1944, 13; Albert A Blum, "Soldier of Worker: A Reevaluation of the Selective Service System," 148; C.P. Trussell, "Army, Navy to Back Work-or-fight," *New York Times*, January 9, 1945, 1; Robert F. Whitney, "Congress Leaders Map Bills to Push Roosevelt Plans," *New York Times*, January 8, 1945, 1.

among them, proposed that African American men rejected from service solely on the basis of educational deficiency should be absorbed into the Armed Forces, claiming that, “it does not require educational qualifications or school or college. . . or the ability to read and write to shoot a rifle.” Fish felt that these, “physically strong,” men, primarily from southern farms would, “probably make good soldiers,” for the military.³¹¹ It is significant that Fish did not ask that all men rejected for educational deficiency be reclassified, rather only African Americans. Additionally, 4-F fears of being drafted into labor battalions was particularly acute in the African-American community where black men learned via many African American news sources that if assigned to labor units they went without any guarantee from the Armed Forces that, “colored men will be used on the basis of their qualifications and capabilities.”³¹² Despite the long series of social and political attacks on 4-F men, the mainstream persisted in the belief that 4-F men had perpetrated the greatest abuse possible in avoiding military service, somehow slighting those who were selected and those associated with them.

Rejected men were not the only group to face discrimination and aggression on the home front. Veterans returning home, many due to early discharge, also faced severe difficulties, particularly when such men were harassed based on the false assumption that they were 4-F men rather than returned soldiers. Famed author John Hersey wrote a revealing article for *Life Magazine* in 1944 titled, “Joe is Home Now: A Discharged

³¹¹ “Fish Holds 4-F Draftees Can Keep Fathers Home,” *New Journal and Guide*, November 6, 1943, B1.

³¹² “Threat Seen in Plan to Draft 4-F's for Labor Unit,” *Afro-American*, April 8, 1944, 7; “690,000 Negroes in 4-F Facing Draft Action,” *Atlanta Daily World*, April 8, 1944, 1; “Plans to Use 4-F's Raise Question of Race Status,” *New Journal and Guide*, April 8, 1944, 6; “Plans to Draft 4-F's Make No Provision to Use Negroes on Basis of Qualifications, Skills,” *Cleveland Call and Post*, April 8, 1944, 3B; “725,000 Negro 4-F's Facing Draft for Work,” *Atlanta Daily World*, May 6, 1944, 1.

Soldier, Having Fought Overseas, Finds that He Still Has to Fight to Make His Way in Civilian Life,” based on the cumulative stories of forty-three discharged soldiers.³¹³ In his article, Hershey details one particularly violent episode in which a veteran, mistaken for a rejected man by a Sergeant and two Privates in a bar was the subject of a biting comment, “Too many healthy looking guys around here in civilian clothes. They ought to be in uniform,” spoken loudly enough for all to hear.³¹⁴ The discharged man, seeming to have missed the remark inspired the Sergeant to continue, “Must be 4-F. Get into uniform, 4-F.” After a quick shoving match the soldiers growled, “Trying to dodge the draft?” breaking the scuffle into a full fight. Violent outbursts against discharged men were rare, however, tension between men out of uniform who were not identifiable as discharged servicemen were commonplace enough to encourage the distribution of lapel buttons to discharged men which could be worn to distinguish veterans from 4-F men.

Since servicemen were required to wear their uniform even when off duty or on furlough identifying non-military men, was as simple as glancing over a man’s attire.³¹⁵ Pins for honorably discharged men, just “a little gold-plated plastic eagle,” to be worn on the jacket, jokingly referred to by servicemen as the “ruptured duck,” were incredibly successful in reducing tension and eventually became very important to veterans as a social symbol.³¹⁶ The value of the “ruptured duck” pin is apparent in the sheer number of discharged veterans who responded to questions concerning their draft

³¹³ John Hershey, “Joe is Home Now: A Discharged Soldier, Having Fought Overseas, Finds that he still has to Fight to Make his Way in Civilian Life,” *Life Magazine* July 3, 1944, 68-80.

³¹⁴ *Ibid*, 74.

³¹⁵ Brown, *Draftee and Division*, 13.

³¹⁶ Hershey, 72; Marie Bennet Alsmeyer, “Those Unseen, Unheard Arkansas Women, WAC, WAVES, and women Marines of WWII,” *Minerva*, (1994): 30.

status simply by showing curious civilians their pin.³¹⁷ Pins for discharged men became so popular that some proposed the dispensation of similar badges for 4-F men rejected for physical reasons which might help to curb the inquiries of strangers and reduce the anxiety 4-F men felt in public. While such pins would relieve the burden of men with weak hearts or damaged joints, the proposal sought to leave men rejected for educational or psychological reasons open to continued or perhaps escalated harassment and discrimination.³¹⁸

Stories of the abuses which 4-F men wrought on servicemen and society were readily printed long past the conclusion of the war. One such story, seen in the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1950 told the tale of a young man, with a successful taxi business who, upon receiving his call to service, sold his profitable business to a 4-F man with the agreement that the man would resell the business to him when, “the war is at an end.”³¹⁹ After the serviceman returned, the 4-F man refused to resell the business to him until the warring governments entered into treaties of peace. The article asked readers to weigh in on whether the justice system should force the 4-F to sell the business back. Surely, such stories were meant less as subjects of debate than as a continued conversation concerning the position of veterans in society in relation to rejected men. Incidentally, beneath the article was a note which reported that Joe had won the right to buy back his business in 1946, four years prior to the publication of the story.

³¹⁷ Goldberg, “Why Ain't They in Uniform,” 7.

³¹⁸ “Pottsville Plans Badges for 4-F's,” *New York Times*, February 1, 1944, 23; Rosenzweig, “Emotional Implications of Military Rejection and Discharge,” 16.

³¹⁹ William Donaldson, “You Be the Judge,” *Saturday Evening Post*, 1950, 51; Cardozier, *The Mobilization of the United States In WWII*, 242.

While stories abound of socially burdensome 4-F men, a few people took the time to point out the kindness of rejected men and paint them as individuals rather than a mass of home based rejects. One letter from a *Rotarian* reader, Mrs. W. A. Terpenning, retold the brief story of a successful 4-F who, running into an old high school friend on furlough with the Marines, gave him his car for the length of his stay so he could get around to seeing all his friends.³²⁰ While stories of this nature are easily ameliorated by the large acts of self-sacrifice which have come to be associated with military participation, these small tokens of generosity show a thoughtful, grateful side of rejected men who sought to show their patriotism in ways available to them outside of uniform.

In the larger dialogue of the Second World War it becomes clear that with the forgetting of 4-F men we have additionally lost a major aspect of war time American society. While legislative attack could certainly frighten men into pursuing a different life than they had hoped for and the attack of strangers and servicemen could create deep deference in rejected men it is clear from their own responses that rejected men understood their own position as one of social debasement and long term disadvantage. No matter what actions 4-F men took on the American home front it is clear that these men were the constant social underdogs in a larger system of rejection, repudiation and restriction which sought to equalize the sacrifices of military men with those the Armed Forces would not accept while denying 4-F men the social honors and privileges attached to such suffering.

³²⁰ Mrs. W. A. Terpenning, "More Home Front Memos," *The Rotarian*, May 1945, 31.

CHAPTER V

INTIMATE INJURIES: IMPLICATIONS OF 4-F STATUS ON RELATIONSHIPS AND FAMILY

While discrimination on the home front was a central issue in the experience of 4-F men during WWII, no prejudice would strike with such critical intimacy as those which affected the personal relationships and status of the rejected man's family. While the issue of sexuality is rarely discussed as a primary motivation for fighting in World War II, in truth, its impact was and is significant. Military service, usually portrayed as a duty or an honor to protect the nation and democracy, is often kept theoretically separate from the male fighters perception of sexual preference on the home front and the deeper, "underlying links that connect the various elements of the human motivational system," which Azar Gat has described in "So Why Do People Fight?"³²¹ Likewise, both John Costello and Robert B. Westbrook have argued that motivations for engaging in military service during WWII were less related to abstract democratic ideals than an opportunity to prove ones worth to families, wives and potential sweethearts.³²² As such, rejected men are made, through their assignment as unfit men, beta males to the serviceman's sexual alpha male status. In the larger conversation of the perceptions of 4-F men, its impact upon the sexual desirability of these men must be seen in contrast and connection to the sexualization of American servicemen during WWII.

³²¹ Azar Gat, "So Why Do People Fight?," 580.

³²² Rose, *Myth and the Greatest Generation*, 76; Westbrook, *Why we Fight*, 40.

One major component of the male competition for female attention on the American home front stems from the interesting social statistics which John V. H. Dippel describes in his work, *War and Sex*. The 1940 census reveals a marked gender imbalance in society leaving only 2.7 unmarried women for every 4 unmarried men between the ages of twenty and twenty-four.³²³ Such statistics only emphasize the inherent social importance in wartime of the American serviceman as the emerging ideal romantic partner for marriage, an image particularly propagated by advertising markets which in essence, worked to shape cultural attitudes towards both enlisted men and rejected men.³²⁴ As such, soldiers, distinguished in print by their uniforms, became in the popular mind the example of a preferred love interest.³²⁵ As such, serving in the military could advance a man not only financially and socially but also might have provided an additional reproductive benefit.³²⁶

High military officials confirmed the inherent supremacy of military men when officials such as Colonel John Dallas Langston, writing to Hershey, warned that the drafting of men with dependents would leave the nation to the, “potential prey of the philanderers,” who might take advantage of the absence of men with higher moral fiber.³²⁷ Magazines communicated to war wives that, in the absence of their fighting husbands, they should take care since, “a war wife is considered fair game by the wolves

³²³ Dippel, *War and Sex*, 219.

³²⁴ Copeland, “Sex Appeals and Wartime Messages in Beauty and Health Product Advertisements, 1941-1946,” 13, 15.

³²⁵ *Ibid*, 42, 52. Copeland explains that as American involvement in WWII escalated, the men in advertisements increasingly appear as military men which demonstrate “the high sex appeal of men in the military during the time period.”

³²⁶ Gat, “So Why Do People Fight?,” 587.

³²⁷ Blum, “Soldier or Worker: A Reevaluation of the Selective Service System,” 149.

and that even an innocent date may lead to embarrassing situations,” if some curious passerby misinterpreted her intentions.³²⁸ Servicemen, who often inquired about their wives and girlfriends actions from their friends and family, betray their own suspicion not only of the remaining men on the home front but of their significant others response to those men as well.³²⁹

Such suspicions on the part of servicemen were confirmed, along with the relational advantages of military uniform, in a series of news stories which told of men impersonating military personnel and taking advantage of young women at home. One particular story told of a married, thirty-six year old house painter and father of three who, falling in love with a burlesque dancer who preferred military men, obtained an Army uniform to aid in his wooing of her. Not only did the 4-F man date the dancer, but he eventually married her, much to the surprise of his wife. The philandering man told authorities that he impersonated a serviceman because, “the girls paid attention only to men in uniform.”³³⁰ Another young 4-F man was arrested in the presence of his mother and two other women at a movie theater for illegally wearing an army uniform which denoted the rank of Captain. According to *The Chicago Defender*, when the young man spotted the Military Police he hid his hat and coat but was unable to avoid a confrontation with the Military Police.³³¹ While such efforts on the part of 4-F’s *might* have been meant in earnest, the appeal to lonely women did nothing to endear 4-F men to service men who

³²⁸ Childers, *Soldier from the War Returning*,” 68-69.

³²⁹ Rose, *Myth and the Greatest Generation*, 108-109.

³³⁰ “4-F in Draft, Father of 3 is Held as Bigamist After Donning Uniform to Win A Show Girl,” *New York Times*, April 2, 1943, 23.

³³¹ “4-F Nabbed for Posing as Captain,” *The Chicago Defender*, October 2, 1943, 2.

warned their female friends and family on the home front to “watch those 4F wolves,” reminding them that, “all of we good boy[s] are in the service.”³³² Further, some service men reacted poorly to the thought of their friends or sisters becoming entangled in affairs with 4-F men. One serviceman, Robert Watkins warned his sister, “If I come home and you are a sucker and wearing his ring like the other girls did I will break that dam[n] 4-F’s neck.”³³³ 4-F man, Ego Tist, writing in to *The Chicago Defender* explained that while he was a man, “made for excitement,” it was a good thing for the women at home that he had not been called to military service since, “I have such important work to do on the home front – regardless of what people may think. But, oh, these wonderful lucky women!”³³⁴

Regardless of such posturing, many associated large talk about their luck with women to the development of, “a defensive attitude – probably due to excessive embarrassing questions.” Speaking directly in reference to Tist’s letter, columnist Ruth Miller told her audience that the cocky 4-F’s words actually reveal, “an undertone of self-defense rather than the obvious carefree implication.” As a solution to aid young men who feel the need to overcompensate for their insecurities, Miller offered that her tip would be, “Don’t embarrass the boys by prying into their military secrets and status quo.”³³⁵ In his autobiography *A Stint with the U.S. Air Force*, Murrell Smith discusses his

³³² Robert Henry Watkins, Letter in private collection, January 25, 1944.

³³³ Robert Henry Watkins, Letter in private collection, February 3, 1944.

³³⁴ Ruth Miller, “Mapping Brooklyn: 523,” *The Chicago Defender*, May 26, 1945, 15.

³³⁵ Ibid; Riemer, “Effects of 4-F Classification of Psychoneurotics Under Treatment,” 451. Riemer discusses the negative psychological effects which 4-F men were subject to due to a combination of personal feelings of inadequacy based on their draft status and frequent question surrounding their status publicly.

interactions with women after finally being reclassified out of 4-F saying that even though women gave him their addresses, “I never wrote one letter. Seemed stupid of me. I had that old inferior complex,” in relation to women.³³⁶

That some 4-F men felt intimidated by the response of women on the home front is certainly validated by the testimony of women who have shared their own interactions with rejected men. Sylvia Iwanski Chalupsky lamented of the war years that since, “able bodied men went into the service,” it left very few men, “to date, except those who had not passed their physicals.”³³⁷ Chalupsky remembered that in Nebraska, “Nobody wanted to date these boys that didn't pass their physicals and we called them 4-Fers. Now that I think back, that was terrible. We all thought they were physically unfit to go and fight for our country.”³³⁸ It is important that Chalupsky seems to convey a dual meaning by saying that she and her friends saw these men as unfit to fight since she indicates that this is the primary reason they viewed these men as unfit to date. Another young woman who lived through the war admitted that they simply refused to date 4-F men, rather dating high school boys, “because to us the boys on campus were 4 F. They needed a good reason for not being in service to be respected by the girls.”³³⁹ Such sentiments help in understanding why some young 4-F men lied about their conditions or their status to gain favor or even tolerance from single women at home. During the war years, Chalupsky

³³⁶Murrell R. Smith, *A Stint with the U.S. Air Force: Experiences of a 4-F Sergeant in World War II* (Pittsburgh: Dorrance Publishing Co., 1995), 42.

³³⁷Sylvia Iwanski Chalupsky, Survey, 2.

³³⁸Sylvia Iwanski Chalupsky, Oral History, 2.

³³⁹Wanda Mowry, Survey, 30.

said, “The man in uniform was greatly admired and when he came home, everyone put him on a pedestal.”³⁴⁰

Complaints concerning the quality of men extended even to Hollywood's use of mediocre 4-F men, who were thought to have found luck in a combination of physical rejection and the absence of more typical leading men. Barbara Berch, writing for the *New York Times*, published an article titled, “Boy (Middle-Aged or 4-F) Meets Girl,” in which she laments what Hollywood could do about the, “lack of a commodity – handsome men.” Due to the military drain, Berch continued, studios were willing to sign any 4-F man with even, “a modicum of promise,” who ultimately have their poor health to thank. However, studio's assured concerned movie goers that, “the present nondescript assortment of leading men is far from Hollywood's choice,” and that due to the subpar men available they were, “praying they'll get by,” despite the onscreen, “weakness in men.”³⁴¹

Certainly, much confusion concerning the weakness of 4-F men came from an ignorance concerning medial issues. One example of such comes from Leonard Robinson's fictional story from *The New Yorker*, “Prelude in 4-F,” in which two young ladies meet a 4-F man in a diner and discover that his rejection was based on cardiovascular issues. After his confession and an ensuing awkward few minutes, the young man takes his leave, leading one of the girls to complain, “Imagine him. He was talking right into my face almost, with lung trouble. . . My God, what a nerve. I held my

³⁴⁰ Chalupsky, Survey, 2.

³⁴¹ Barbara Berch, “Boy (Middle-Aged or 4-F) Meets Girl,” *New York Times*, September 5, 1943, SM14.

breath so I wouldn't get any germs.” The woman working at the diner clarifies for the worried young lady that cardiovascular means heart problems which relieves the young lady but did nothing to endear the ill man to her.³⁴² Such stories, while fictional, reflect an authentic change in the acceptability of dating choices on the home front which women noticed came particularly from servicemen who unabashedly told women on the home front their opinions of the company they kept, especially in reference to 4-F men.³⁴³ Another story written by Richard English in 1944 and published in *American Magazine*, tells the tale of two men who, suspecting the romantic intentions of a 4-F toward one of the men’s girlfriend when the 4-F offers her a job in his theater show, conspire to have the rejected man drafted into the military to solve the problem. Upon discovering that the 4-F has been rejected for an intense fear of fighting the two men plot to bait the man into a public fight. When they succeed in this effort they flatly inform the 4-F man, “Local 246 will be delighted to hear of your complete recovery.” The lady in question, then realizing that her boyfriend's efforts prove, “he loved her so much he had tried to save her from a career not worth having,” forgets the fate of her 4-F boss.³⁴⁴ Additionally, women who did choose to associate romantically with rejected men became subject to ridicule as desperate women afraid to wait too long for better men to return. In the *New York Amsterdam Star* Column Dan Buckley's “Back Door Stuff,” women who were known to associate with 4-F and 6-B (Single with dependents) men were described as the, “Well,

³⁴² Leonard Robinson, “Prelude in 4-F,” *The New Yorker*, November 1942, 72-76.

³⁴³ Rose, *Myth and the Greatest Generation*, 235.

³⁴⁴ Richard English, “Fuss Kelly and the 4-F Ham,” *American Magazine*, June 1944, 22.

they're better none at all' thinking female barflies.”³⁴⁵ Such stories not only imply the lesser claim of rejected men on women but also inform women on the ultimate desirability and their own responsibility to select socially acceptable men.

The delicate situation 4-F men found themselves in, particularly within their personal relationships, was addressed by child psychiatrist Dr. Garry Cleveland Meyers, who later created the children’s publication “Highlights.” In the June 18, 1945 *Beaver County Times*, Meyers reminded readers that 4-F men of all kinds were too often, “dubbed as mental cases by gossiping neighbors,” for which the rejected youth may suffer, “considerably and needlessly.” In response to his perceptions of his own social role changing, the 4-F, “may avoid some of his former girlfriends and they in turn may act queerly toward him.” Meyers emphasized that such issues were not only prevalent in society, but that many could be attributed to, “the 4-F’s own family or other relatives.” Meyers continued that, “some parents grow panicky for selfish reasons rather than from concern over the future welfare of their rejected son. They will talk at length to him about the matter, lecture him on how he made himself that way and ‘didn’t listen.’” Meyers warned parents that, “the harm they can do him by such means may be tremendous.” Concluding, Meyers offered that, “Most of all the rejected youth needs to regain his morale and feel worthy in his family and community. His relatives and friends should stop their whispering and treat him as he deserves to be treated.”³⁴⁶

³⁴⁵ “Dan Burley's Back Door Stuff: And They'll Do It Every Doggone Time,” *New York Amsterdam Star News*, February 27, 1943, 11; “Dan Burley's Back Door Stuff: On the Weekly Back Door Clothesline,” *New York Amsterdam Star News*, November 6, 1943, 8B; “Dan Burley's Back Door Stuff: Portrait of a Columnist Cleaning out His Pockets,” *New York Amsterdam Star News*, January 8, 1944, A10.

³⁴⁶ Garry Cleveland Meyers, Ph.D, “Parent Problems,” *Beaver County Times*, June 18, 1945, 10.

In contrast to Meyers' careful approach to the familial struggles associated with a son's military rejection, *The Christian Century* assessed bluntly that, "the judgment [came] even closer to home," than many were comfortable exploring.³⁴⁷ Families were implicated by psychiatrists as the root source for 4-F unfitness, suggesting that a great percentage of 4-F men had difficulties which, "go back to childhood experiences," and had a family history which demonstrates familial, "unstable shock."³⁴⁸ Unfit men, it was supposed, were the consequences of, "the jangled behavior of unstable parents," whose lives in broken homes or whose isolated experiences as only children made them vulnerable to the emotional risks associated with such situations.³⁴⁹ Famed American cultural anthropologist, Margaret Mead lamented that modern American parents had failed to instill a sense of confidence and pride in their children which might have, "maimed," them to a point which endangered their ability to perform victoriously in battle.³⁵⁰ Similarly, mothers were identified as the main enemy of masculinity in Philip Wylie's bestselling collection of essays, *Generation of Vipers*, which urged young men to escape the emasculating control of their mothers as quickly as possible and find their manhood in traditionally manly activities such as hunting and warfare.³⁵¹ While such

³⁴⁷ "Four Million Men Label Society 4-F," *The Christian Century*, June, 1944, 717.

³⁴⁸ Bowman, "Psychiatric Examinations in the Armed Forces," 217; Mackenzie, "Work for Children," SM23.

³⁴⁹ J.C. Furnas, "Why is he 4-F? Are you to Blame?," 81.

³⁵⁰ Dippel, *War and Sex*, 216; Margaret Mead received her PhD from Columbia University in 1929. During WWII Mead acted as the executive secretary of the National Research Council's Committee on Food Habits. Mead held a long term interest in Mother-child relationships, especially in relation to the Jewish community.

³⁵¹ *Ibid*, 217; Philip Wylie, the prolific American author's bestselling *Generation of Vipers*, published in 1942 was popular throughout WWII and inspired the term, "momism." In 1945, Wylie was placed under house arrest by the American federal government for the description in his book *The Paradise Center of uranium 237 bombs* prior to the first successful atomic test at Alamogordo.

contemporary ideas were not particularly new, allegations against mothers took on a new importance as the nation struggled to identify the nucleus of its rejection dilemma.

Among those who identified women as responsible for the military issues associated with manpower problems was General Hershey who told ladies that, “women's destiny has always been the keeping of the home, and it is in the home that the solution of these problems must begin.”³⁵² The wartime era, as Ana C. Garner discusses in, “The WWII Patriotic Mother,” required that good patriotic mothers sacrifice their sons willingly to the war effort; obviously since mothers of 4-F sons could not participate in this process they were associatively perceived as less than ideal mothers. It was an expectation of the nation and the military that exemplary, republican mothers would raise their sons well, while the estimation by military doctors of a young man’s unfitness for service served as indicator against 4-F mother’s upholding their domestic responsibilities. To help distinguish their sacrifices, the mothers of servicemen who risked their lives in defense of the nation were given special praise in press narratives.³⁵³ One mother related her own sentiments that, “I should be sorry, indeed, if my husband and sons did not assume their obligations to defend their country against aggression.”³⁵⁴ The underlying implication is that she sacrificed not only the men, but her own efforts in making these men physically and emotionally capable of serving the nation in such a capacity. As the image of the ideal mother was created, so the counter image of the poor mother was also constructed. Through news media stories and widely read fiction the social construct of

³⁵² Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 117.

³⁵³ Garner, “The WWII Patriotic Mother,” 145-148; Kerber, *No Constitutional Right to be Ladies*.

³⁵⁴ Garner, “The WWII Patriotic Mother,” 150.

female hierarchy by military relation was both developed and transmitted to a broad reading audience.

Of the cardinal sins performed by mothers, the most widely discussed was the poor nutritive supply they provided their families through ignorance or laziness in food preparation through which some mothers, “failed in their duty to raise sons ready to serve the nation.”³⁵⁵ Of course, such accusations did not take into account the difficulties many families had faced during the depression years in acquiring sufficient food, much less maintaining scientific nutritive levels. Regardless of the previous decade’s widespread struggle with hunger, one author, J.C. Furnas declared in response to 4-F men who blamed their mothers for their inability to enter the service, “Chances are good he's right.”³⁵⁶ Furnas continued further that, “many 4-F's come from ignorant or underprivileged mothers,” who have ill prepared them to be the men they should have become.³⁵⁷ In response to the need based root of the 4-F problem, *The Christian Century* asked its readers to evaluate what had been, “done to keep homes intact, to calm the disturbed mind,” and to prevent young men from becoming 4-F on psychoneurotic grounds. The failure of close to four million American men in entering the military service stood, “in judgment on our American society, including its churches, classifying [the nation] 4-F.”³⁵⁸

³⁵⁵ Ibid, 151.

³⁵⁶ Furnas, “Why is he 4-F? Are you to Blame?,” 26; Joseph Chamberlain Furnas was an American freelance writer. Educated at Harvard University, Furnas served as a war correspondent but was himself kept from serving in war by his age, vision, and Quaker religion.

³⁵⁷ Ibid, 78.

³⁵⁸ “Four Million Men Label Society 4-F,” 717.

While authors wrote intricate opinion pieces blaming families for their son's inability to serve, authors simultaneously convicted rejected sons and husbands of an inability to protect their families. As such, these authors perhaps inadvertently described 4-F men as unworthy of familial institutions and their families as guilty for allowing them to become unworthy of the American dream.³⁵⁹

Since the war was described as the, "fight to keep our country a safe place for the wives we love, a place where our children can grow up free and unafraid," the duty to serve and protect these privileges became the primary obligation conveyed through war propaganda to motivate social and military participation.³⁶⁰ Certainly, many servicemen felt they were fighting for more than abstract conceptions of democracy and international safety; one such soldier remarked while stationed in New Guinea, "we are not only fighting for the Four Freedoms, we are fighting also for the priceless privilege of making love to American women."³⁶¹

Perhaps the most sinister rumor which affected 4-F men was that their classification spoke to the inclination of, "abnormal sex tendencies" or a complete disinterest in women.³⁶² Concern over the emergence of weak and, "emasculated," men was a common theme in many articles, stories and books which appeared throughout the war years.³⁶³ Such notions of sexual inferiority were only validated by popular songs such

³⁵⁹ Westbrook, *Why We Fight*, 50.

³⁶⁰ Murphy, *Writing World War II*, 62-63, 72. Murphy discusses a group of propaganda which emphasizes the protection of family as a primary motivation for the war effort and fighting.

³⁶¹ Westbrook, *Why we Fight*, 88.

³⁶² Furnas, "Why is he 4-F? Are you to Blame?," 79.

³⁶³ Dippel, *War and Sex*, 216.

as the, “true soldier and sailor song,” “Four-F Charlie.”³⁶⁴ Originally from 1941, “Four-F Charlie” mocks 4-F men by conveying the tale of a new 4-F who laments that due to his classification, “he’d never amount to anything.” In contrast to enlisted 1-A’s, “men won’t sing of his wild daring, girls won’t praise his martial bearing.” Rather, the songs says, “they’re all whispering, he is sick and always ailing and his health is always failing.” The song continues that military doctors have declared him, “a complete physical wreck . . . he is stout and always wheezing and his breath is quite unpleasing.” Most intimately the song states that the 4-F’s, “blood is thin as water, he can never be a father.”³⁶⁵ Four-F Charlie was so popular that *Life Magazine* mentioned it as the serviceman’s, “unprintable salute to the boys left behind,” which entails within its lyrics, “an anatomically complete catalog of Charlie’s physical deficiencies.”³⁶⁶ Such tunes were significant reminders to society, both civilian and military, of the appropriate sexual rank of 4-F men.

It is significant that in literacy rehabilitation courses which sought to reclaim educationally deficient 4-F men for service, they were taught to read a text entitled *Meet Private Pete*. Through the course of the text Private Pete moves from, “simple declarative sentences at the beginning of the book to a touching proposal of marriage at the end,” in which the young recruit finally gets the girl. The transition of Private Pete in relation to women suggests a well understood contemporary connection between military fitness and

³⁶⁴ Eric Posselt, *Give Out! Songs of, for and by the Men in Service* (New York: Arrowhead Press Publishers, 1944).

³⁶⁵ Edgar A. Palmer, *GI Songs: Written, Composed and/or Collected by the Men in Service* (Kingsport: Kingsport Press, 1944), 78-82.

³⁶⁶ Lilian Rixey, “Soldiers Still Sing,” *Life Magazine*, September 27, 1943, 48-54. The cover of the popular soldier song book *Give Out! Songs of, for and by the Men in Service* is reprinted within the article as a reference for civilians about military songs.

relational success and sought to use such as a motivational factor in making men fit to enter service.³⁶⁷ These themes of transformation, into fit, sexually adequate men worthy of marriage to American women, would have been strikingly important to 4-F men who often construed their own military rejection as evidence of sexual impotence and harbingers of life long disadvantage.³⁶⁸

The effects which 4-F classification wrought on the personal lives of single, young men provides a deeper understanding of the depths to which social stigma reached; in essence, negatively influencing every aspect of a rejected man's life. When discrimination over military rejection coincided with romance the rebuff could affect not only a deep sense of shame for being found emasculate, but also intensify embarrassment and fear concerning social positions. Rejected men could suffer authentic heartbreak by being themselves symbolic of lowly, unacceptable partners. As 4-F classification became more broadly identified with weakness and inferiority rejected men lived increasingly isolated lives, convinced of their own inferiority and separated from the American dream by narrowing opportunities in society and in relationships. In the face of multifaceted and seemingly lifelong disadvantage, many men began to seek avenues for military acceptance and a chance to escape the stigma of 4-F classification and the resultant deferential life.

³⁶⁷ Rose, *Myth and the Greatest Generation*, 85.

³⁶⁸ Rosenzweig, "Emotional Implications of Military Rejection and Discharge," 13-14. Rosenzweig notes the story of one young patient of his who began to connect his military rejection for kidney issues to sexual impotence.

CHAPTER VI

ESCAPING STIGMA, SEEKING BENEFITS: 4-F'S ATTEMPTING MILITARY RECLASSIFICATION

Despite popular opinion on the home front that all rejected men actively sought to maintain their deferment, many young men struggled to be classified out of 4-F and when initial efforts failed, used creative, though not always legal, means of passing their physical exams. 4-F men, not unlike the rest of American society, were deeply influenced by the national war state and the associated importance of patriotism, Americanism and the duties of righteous citizenship. What defined these men in their own time was, however, their alienation from the ideals of American manhood due to their military classification.³⁶⁹ The idea that rejection equated to a social burden was further enforced by thoughtless journalists who, speaking of 4-F men, harshly described the national manpower situation as just another episode in an unfortunate tradition, saying, “the United States always has had a reputation for waste.”³⁷⁰

While a desire to dodge military service exists in any war period it was anything but pervasive during WWII. Despite this, many notable doctors from the war era who dealt extensively with 4-F men note a substantial percentage of their own patients who felt relief from their deferred draft status even when rejection mixed with feelings of guilt and distain for the inherently inferior treatment on the home front. While some 4-F men

³⁶⁹ Westbrook, *Why We Fight*, 7.

³⁷⁰ Furnas, “Why is he 4-F? Are you to Blame?,” 26.

did seek to escape their classification, their actions are not representative of all 4-F men and, as Dr. Saul Rosenzweig explains in his 1945 evaluation, the “existence in significant numbers,” of happily 4-F men, “must be borne in mind if a dangerously sentimental approach . . . is to be avoided.”³⁷¹ However, Rosenzweig goes on to describe the many 4-F men he encountered in his own work who understood their draft status as evidence of a deep personal inferiority and sought, through military service, a chance for personal vindication.³⁷² After the attack on Pearl Harbor, men volunteered for military service in droves but of those willing and eager to serve a percentage were inevitably rejected due to current military standards.³⁷³ The pressure which young men felt to be physically and mentally acceptable at their examinations is conveyed by Winton Peterson who remembered being, “so nervous I was shaking. Not so much fear that I might be drafted but because I felt that they might find me physically unfit.”³⁷⁴ John G. Barrett likewise remembered that at the time of his own service in WWII, “95% of the eligible public, certainly young men in my age group, wanted to join the military. People felt sorry for anyone who could not serve.”³⁷⁵ W. J. Butler agreed saying, “I wanted to be in it. I felt like that anybody that wasn't in it was missing something.”³⁷⁶

³⁷¹ Rosenzweig, “Emotional Implications of Military Rejection and Discharge,” 12, 13.

³⁷² Ibid.

³⁷³ “3 Classified In 4-F Seek New Status: Rejected Registrants Want ‘Crack at Japs;’ Draw Praise from Draft Board,” *The Hartford Courant*, December 9, 1941, 24.

³⁷⁴ Winton Peterson, Interviewed by The Veterans History Project, Documenting World War II experiences, Veterans History Project, Undated; Fairchild, *They Called it the War Effort*, 15.

³⁷⁵ John G. Barrett, Interviewed by Cadet Mark Parton, Documenting World War II experiences, Virginia Military Institute: Center for Military History and Strategic Analysis, Military Oral History Project, Dec. 6, 2006, 7.

³⁷⁶ Fairchild, *They Called it the War Effort*, 45.

Publicly, the government acknowledged some responsibility in the necessary repair of the nation's broken men. Though very few programs for concentrated government sponsored rehabilitation were ever fully initiated those which were often had short lives due to funding issues or questions about responsibility to perform such actions under fiscal and manpower duress.³⁷⁷ One such young man, part of the *Yank Magazine* man on the street piece, "Why Ain't They in Uniform," took great pride in explaining that although he had been originally rejected for unacceptable dental standards, in his last examination he had been reclassified as 1-A, "I'm getting in in a couple of weeks," he told the reporter, "and I'm glad about it."³⁷⁸

Such stories of young men enthusiastically accepting and agitating for classification change were not only noticed but studied by psychological groups interested in rehabilitation and employment studies of 4-F men. Dr. Gilbert J. Rich, described the psychological trauma which many young men endured upon discovering, through their Selective Service examination, physical or mental impairments by which they were often confused and frightened. The young men whom were left on the home front, Rich observed, were often, "upset by what has happened," and needed, though rarely received, help and support during a, "difficult period in his life." Further, Rich found that many of his own patients, "were not satisfied with having been rejected;" roughly a quarter of rejected men which he encountered through his psychiatry practice who had been rejected actively sought aid to alter their draft classification and join the

³⁷⁷ "Program to Cure 4-F Defects Urged," *New York Times*, January 6, 1945, 1; Frances K. Wetmore, "Educational Rehabilitation Classes for 4-F's," *The Educational Digest*, April, 1944, 57-64.

³⁷⁸ Goldberg, "Why Ain't He in Uniform?," 7.

military services.³⁷⁹ As one doctor less sympathetically expressed it, “the brighter [4-F’s] are interested in knowing why they are as they are.”³⁸⁰

Psychologist, Dr. Morris D. Riemer found in his own therapeutic work with 4-F men that some developed deep feelings of inadequacy based on rejection which were only worsened by frequent public inquiry into their status and condition.³⁸¹ Indeed, Dr. Rosenzweig noticed his own patients had grief like symptoms at the, “loss of opportunity for service,” which was often understood as a personal rebuff and as an, “unmistakable confirmation of bitter self-doubt.” Frequently men would simply feign health, including epileptic men who, when their illness was at last discovered would, “protest with vehemence and attempt tenaciously to remain in service,” despite serious illness.³⁸² In response, such men went to varying lengths to adjust themselves to military standards of normality and health, undergoing therapy and surgeries, sometimes at their own expense to rectify physical issues for which the government was unwilling to provide medical care.

One newspaper author commented of 4-F men seeking military acceptance that, “a heartwarming number, refusing to take Uncle Sam’s no got repaired at their own expense to qualify for uniform.”³⁸³ In response to his rejection for severe oral disfiguration, one patient referred to only as “R.O.,” underwent serious oral surgery which so positively affected his self-esteem and his social relationships that he was found

³⁷⁹ Rich, “Problems of the Rejected Man,” 115.; Riemer, “Effects of 4-F Classification on Psychoneurotics Under Treatment,” 451; Rosenzweig, “Emotional Implications of Military Rejection and Discharge,” 16.

³⁸⁰ Edgar M. Stover, “Helping 4-F’s to Vocational Adjustment,” *Occupations* 21 (1943): 520.

³⁸¹ Riemer, “Effects of 4F Classification of Psychneurotics Under Treatment,” 451.

³⁸² Rosenzweig, “Emotional Implications of Military Rejection and Discharge,” 12.

³⁸³ Furnas, “Why is he 4-F? Are you to Blame?,” 26.

fully acceptable by the army. Another young patient, "R.K.," underwent long term psychotherapy to enable eventual acceptance on his third military examination. One patriotic young man, John G. Barrett told in his oral history that, "I paid good money to stay in uniform, or rather it cost mother several hundred dollars to keep me in the service after the Navy declared me 4F. I needed surgery, an expense the Navy would not cover."³⁸⁴ Another, Charles Fullers was rejected due to a deviated septum but, "could not live with it." One day he asked his father, "Dad, if I can find somebody who can operate on me will you pay for it?" His father agreed to pay for the forty-five dollar surgery. After several weeks of healing Fellers passed his second physical examination but had not received a bill from the doctor's office. When his father inquired, the doctor told him, "You know, Mr. Fellers, when I found out why your son wanted that operation there's no way in the world I could charge for it."³⁸⁵

While there is little conclusive evidence concerning consistent motivation factors from the contemporary psychologist's perspective, many doctors did weigh in on common motivational themes which they discovered in their patient groups, though each doctor pointed out that his observations were in no way full or complete. Dr. Saul Rosenzweig noted that, "though it is hazardous to generalize about the emotional implications in such a variety of conditions, certain typical reactions can be outlined," concerning specifically why rejected men went to such great lengths to attain military acceptance. Certainly patriotism was apparent, social acceptance was often notably

³⁸⁴ John G Barrett, Interviewed by Cadet Mark Parton, Virginia Military Institute, December 6, 2006, 8.

³⁸⁵ Charles Fellers, Interviewed by Phil Lynch, Documenting Wartime Experiences, The R.W. Norton Art Foundation Oral History Project, May 5, 2005, 16.

found, and concern over future possibilities was not infrequently mentioned in the decision to actively be allowed to risk one's life and join the military.³⁸⁶

Many 4-F men enlisted to, "prove to their families and friends that they are he-men;" not the emasculated, inferior men which their classification had previously indicated.³⁸⁷ Other young men, not deeply bothered by discrimination felt compelled to join due simply to their own personal commitments to patriotism. Brent Manley recalled of this era, "people felt a lot differently then than they do now, about patriotism and what their obligation is to country, and I decided regardless of the fact that I didn't have to that I ought to go."³⁸⁸ An area which Dr. Rich could specify as an especially common motivation for the young men he interviewed was the overarching issue of shame related to the, "teasing which they receive as '4-F-ers.'" Such treatment could inspire deep shame which, "stemmed primarily from the attitude of the community toward the young man not in uniform," and provide a deep determination to overcome their classification.³⁸⁹

Likewise, Rosenzweig found that name calling surrounding 4-F's, whether in society, print or the medical community, exacerbated the psychological trauma of rejection which inspired Rosenzweig to make conscious attempts to, "avoid certain current unfortunate terms," rather using the general and neutral language of militarily unfit. Rosenzweig felt that the consistent use of military before the term unfit had the, "advantage of emphasizing the specific kind of activity for which the individual is

³⁸⁶ Rosenzweig, "Emotional Implications of Military Rejection and Discharge," 11.

³⁸⁷ Simon, "Social Data in Psychiatric Casualties," 348.

³⁸⁸ Manley, *They Called it the War Effort*, 14.

³⁸⁹ Rich, "Problems of the Rejected Man," 115-118.

unfitted and thus removes the stigma of any universal disqualification,” adding, “There is considerable room for public education in this matter that has till now been comparatively neglected.”³⁹⁰ In conclusion, Rosenzweig found that the way young men adjusted to an undesirable service status would, “depend in large measure on the way in which others adjust to him.”³⁹¹ Additionally, intense emotional reactions were often observed by medical professionals to be closely related to the age of the rejected man since younger recruits were more deeply impressed by romantic ideas of war, travel and danger.³⁹² Rich theorized that intense feelings of isolation affected young men more acutely. For developing men, the sense of being out of place and stigmatized as outcast cowards in their home land while their friends led publicly celebrated lives as brave heroes could leave permanent emotional scars.³⁹³ Eddie Morris told of his own experiences as a 4-F who had been rejected three times despite his protests. The rejection made him feel badly, “all my friends had gone,” he explained, “it bothered me a lot. I've been called a draft dodger and everything else, and me trying to go all the time.” Despite his attempts to enter, Morris explained that hostility on the home front was high in response to 4-F men; such tensions could often lead to fights, “with sailors mostly,” he remembered.³⁹⁴

Though many military psychologists, including Rosenzweig, recommended that the, “chief practical measure to be recommended for the rehabilitation of the military

³⁹⁰ Rosenzweig, “Emotional Implications of Military Rejection and Discharge,” 11, 16.

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 17.

³⁹² *Ibid.*, 13.

³⁹³ *Ibid.*, 16; Rich, “Problems of the Rejected Man,” 116, 118.

³⁹⁴ Fairchild, *They Called it the War Effort*, 302.

unfit concerns vocational adjustment,” not all men were satisfied with an, “opportunity to demonstrate their fitness in civilian life.” Many rejected men therefore sought to demonstrate their fitness to themselves and the world through their acceptance into military service, thereby overcoming the issues which had previously rendered them unacceptable. This deeply ingrained desire to fix one’s own self-perception was termed by doctor Rosenzweig as the, “rehabilitation drive,” in which, “every individual who has suffered frustration through military unfitness can be counted on from this point of view to seek new self-respect and social dignity.”³⁹⁵ Of course, what this meant for each had to be defined by each individual and as such would produce a unique decision as to what life goals would allow the rejected man to perceive himself as a fit, complete and worthy man. Lanier D. Nantz, speaking of her late husband during the war years recalled that he, “felt bad 'cause he wasn't in the service,” despite holding a job in essential industry. “He was so conscientious,” Nantz remembered, “and he worried so much about people thinking he was a draft dodger. You know, that was an affront to his masculinity.”³⁹⁶

Everett Cooper, a young man who did find purpose in his job, was able to demonstrate his physical fitness and patriotic devotion when, during a snow storm which disrupted local bus services, he hiked eighteen miles in deep snows for five and a half hours to be on hand at his work the next morning despite his military rejection for, “poor legs.”³⁹⁷ Such stories of triumph served to redefine rejected men by publicizing those who had overcome their disability which helped to prove that policies of rejection were

³⁹⁵ Rosenzweig, “Emotional Implications of Military Rejection and Discharge,” 18.

³⁹⁶ Fairchild, *They Called it the War Effort*, 251.

³⁹⁷ “Barred by Army as 4-F, Hikes 18 Miles,” *New York Times*, February 6, 1945, 21.

often inaccurate. Especially popular were short stories which told the exploits of military men, sometimes of high rank, who had only later discovered that their draft boards had classified them 4-F despite their outstanding and courageous military careers.³⁹⁸ When John C. Angier, a platoon sergeant, received word that his local draft board had classified him 4-F he remembered that, “All the guys got a big kick out of knowing that their platoon sergeant was a 4-Fer, but they knew better.”³⁹⁹

Stories of 4-F men making their way into the military against great odds often made their way into the paper as a celebration of the ability of some young men to escape their rejection. One particularly dramatic case was William Sheppard, a twenty-nine year old man who had been rejected from military service for blindness in both eyes. Sheppard then underwent a cornea graft operation which gradually brought back his vision. After his second eye healed, *The New York Times* described how Sheppard planned to drive himself with his newly attained license to his local draft board to request to revocation of his 4-F classification.⁴⁰⁰

The impression that participation in military service and war served as a liminal state for young men between adolescence and manhood acted as another indicator for worried 4-F's that rejection would produce lifelong damages.⁴⁰¹ Dr. Riemer noted that in his own practice roughly half of the men he interviewed felt that the military would, “make a man,” of them regardless of their desire to actively obtain entry into the

³⁹⁸ “Sidelights,” *New York Times*, June 6, 1943, E2.

³⁹⁹ John C. Angier III, *A 4-F Goes to War with the 100th Infantry Division* (Bennington: Merriam Press, 2008), 21-22, 83.

⁴⁰⁰ “Regains Sight, Scorns 4-F,” *New York Times*, May 3, 1945, 10.

⁴⁰¹ Dippel, *War and Sex*, 213, Riemer, “Effects of 4-F Classification on Psychneurotics Under Treatment,” 451.

services.⁴⁰² Dr. Rosenzweig found similarly that young men reported their impression of military service to be a harbinger of prestige, independence and, “manly adventure.” The inability to participate in such a universal opportunity posed an intense, “threat to the sense of virility,” and deep feelings of dejection.⁴⁰³

Others, rejected for irreparable impairments took a more criminal path, hoping to gain public attention and perhaps receive a punishment of military service. Some young men simply became local pests, performing acts which they hoped might inspire their draft board to overlook their deficiencies and ship them off to a system of correctional regimentation.⁴⁰⁴ When three rejected youths in Boston were arrested for disturbing the peace, they explained themselves to authorities, saying, “We thought maybe you’d make us fight if we stirred up enough trouble.”⁴⁰⁵

Murrell Smith wrote in his autobiography that in his own physical examination he found the military stringently seeking “sound men,” and was “disappointed,” when his own military examination declared him unfit.⁴⁰⁶ However, Smith found his entry when, after being rejected once again, an induction officer announced to the room, “Gentlemen, I’m in a bind; do not have enough qualified men today to meet my quota. Just how many

⁴⁰² Simon, “Social Data in Psychiatric Casualties,” 348; Riemer, “Effects of 4F Classification of Psychoneurotics Under Treatment,” 452-454. Riemer found in his own practice that the majority of young men with serious psychological trauma, about two-third of them, were satisfied with their rejection. While Riemer takes his own study to be conclusive of the effects on rejected men and their response to rejection it should be remembered that Riemer’s work deals exclusively with severe cases of psychological trouble and a scope of only thirty-seven participants. Riemer’s analysis is consistently self contradictory. One particular area of issue is his conclusion that his patients did not note any stigma based on their status while he reports that the majority of psychological damage done by rejection stems not from the military rejection but rather, “primarily from the attitude of the community toward the young man not in uniform.”

⁴⁰³ Rosenzweig, “Emotional Implications of Military Rejection and Discharge,” 13, 16.

⁴⁰⁴ “No Short Cut to Service,” *New York Times*, May 30, 1944, 34.

⁴⁰⁵ Sleeper, “Draft Board 119,” 16-17.

⁴⁰⁶ Smith, *Stint with the US Air Force*, 8.

of you want to become soldiers? Need five volunteers, please.” Smith was able to volunteer and though he “was so very pleased to honor that request,” Smith was later separated into limited service due to the poor feet which had originally caused his rejection. Despite this, Smith evaluated his time in the service as evidence that a, “4-Fer had made good.”⁴⁰⁷

Other young men simply found creative ways to trick a busy system of rapid examination. One young man, knowing his extreme near sightedness would be the cause of his military rejection memorized the eye test chart and upon his examination recited the contents of a chart he could not read with perfect accuracy, leading examiners to pronounce him fully acceptable. Other young men, below weight qualifications, who failed to reach the required weight through eating, drinking water and filling their wallets with silver dollars found they were able to trade places in the extraordinarily busy examination areas with other men being examined and pass each other’s areas of difficulty whether those areas were for weight or vision.⁴⁰⁸

Minor disqualifying factors such as poor teeth accounted for the majority of rejections from local draft boards at 17.7% of all military rejections while eye defects, the second leading rejection cause, accounted for another 12.2% of rejections.⁴⁰⁹ Eligible men attempted to overcome these common rejections by purchasing twenty dollar kits to aid in passing colorblindness or other vision tests which promised a ninety percent

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid, 17, 34, 226.

⁴⁰⁸ Culpepper, *Never Will We Forget,* ” 8-9; Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions,* 65.

⁴⁰⁹ Mahmoud, “Evolution of Military Recruit Accession Standards” 150-151; For a definitive work on Selective Service standards, their alterations and examinations see *Physical Standards in World War II,* prepared by Leonard D. Heaton (Office of the Surgeon General: Washington D.C.) 1967.

chance of self-correction and the assurance that one could “pass Govt. Tests O.K.” with their aid. Such groups answered initial requests from interested customers with form letters in response to such heavy inquiry. In addition to eye test charts these forms furnished information to color blind men about which tests were trick tests, meaning “only color blind people can see these,” telling them, “you must look dumb when you [c]ome to these.”⁴¹⁰

While the actual value of such kits in correcting colorblindness is questionable, one young system user, Robert Watkins, upon passing his military physical said, “I don't know how I passed the color-blind test but I did.” Holding such impairment as an optional escape Watkins continued, “Don't you all tell any body but if I find out that I don't like it I can get out on color-blindness.”⁴¹¹ In response to “both unscrupulous and to the well-meaning [who seek] to help the color cripple over the bars,” literature circulated among draft boards and military examiners upon how best to safeguard the integrity of such tests and discussed the validity of correction kits which aided potential 4-F's into service.⁴¹² Upon passing military screens by circumventing vision tests, some joined the Armed Forces at a dangerous disadvantage when lying about their vision abilities since combat situations and special weaponry might require either acute vision or the ability to distinguish between meaningful colors.⁴¹³

⁴¹⁰ Letters from Dr. J.H. Lepper to Robert Watkins, November 19- December 15, 1943, Personal collection.

⁴¹¹ Robert Henry Watkins, Letter in private collection, January 14, 1944.

⁴¹² Elsie Murray, “Mass-Testing of Color Vision: A Simplified and Accelerated Technique,” *The American Journal of Psychology* 61 (1948): 370.

⁴¹³ “Munger Passes Eye Test,” *New York Times*, February 5, 1944, 18.

Such dangers become especially apparent when 4-F men were celebrated for overcoming their classification posthumously as was Lieutenant Paul Dana of Long Island who had once been rejected for poor eyesight. However, rather than accept his classification, the senior from Harvard, through, “determination, character and personality,” made his way into the Navy. While Dana’s means of entrance into the military is undisclosed, his death as a pilot helping to overtake a Japanese airbase in Saipan is remembered. The author, Arthur Krock tell readers that Dana’s honorary degree and, “Navy awards testify to his refusal to accept the handicap which put him in 4-F.”⁴¹⁴ However, the connection between his initial rejected for eyesight and his untimely death as a pilot stand as further testament to the dangers which falsified testing could produce.

Some men who were unable to achieve reclassification were so disturbed by sentiments of isolation and rejection that they turned to suicide. In the small Arkansas town of Lepanto where the entire high school football team registered for service together, the one young man rejected attempted suicide for fear that his team mates and friends would judge him a coward.⁴¹⁵ Another young man was hospitalized after being badgered by his employer for the exact medical reason given for his disqualification.⁴¹⁶ Further, evidence that vocational placement could not always take the place of service for young men on the home front comes from the tragic suicide of a twenty-four year old Howard University law student, and former Pentagon postal clerk, Nathaniel Owns who

⁴¹⁴ Arthur Krock, “Letters to the Times: The End of a 4-F,” *New York Times*, August 1, 1944, 14,

⁴¹⁵ Dippel, *War and Sex*, 212.

⁴¹⁶ Rosenzweig, “Emotional Implications of Military Rejection and Discharge,” 15-16.

hung himself after an intense period of grief over his rejection and inability to join his two brothers in the military.⁴¹⁷

One reason 4-F men might have internalized rejection in such damaging ways is connected to the prevalent suspicion among rejected men that their wartime classification would harbor lifelong negative ramifications on their social mobility, particularly in regard to the anticipated lack employment 4-F's would face when applying against veterans. With newspapers warning that, "the 4-F's on the home front are having what they think is a ten-strike in box office gold and popularity. . . few will be able to compete with our victorious doughboys when they come marching home," many 4-F men felt their situations would only worsen with time.⁴¹⁸ Indeed, many 4-F men who were gainfully employed during the war feared that when the war ended, and manpower strains evaporated with the returned veterans they would be unjustly rejected for jobs in favor of war heroes. Draft board clerk and veteran Eugene W. Polley who was awarded the Purple Heart sympathized with young 4-F men in Baltimore who, "realize that they'll be out of luck after the war, while the veteran soldier will get many benefits."⁴¹⁹ Such fears were validated by many, including Dr. Rich who noticed more significant fears for the future in older men who "realize more fully the preference that will be given to veterans after the war."⁴²⁰

⁴¹⁷ "H.U. Student with 4-F Draft Status Takes His Own Life," *Afro-American*, January 15, 1944, 20; Stover, "Helping 4-F's to Vocational Adjustment," 519.

⁴¹⁸ "Confidentially Yours, GI's Have Team to Watch Over in Italy," September 2, 1944, 6B.

⁴¹⁹ Jenkins, "Today 4-F's Swamp Draft Board to Join Army," *Afro-American*, January 20, 1945, 16.

⁴²⁰ Rich, "Problems of the Rejected Man," 116.

Another article published in August of 1944 agreed with other nihilistic versions of post-war America for 4-F men saying, “if there is to be a forgotten man after this war it looks like the 4-F is it. Already before the shooting stops he is being badly maligned and held up to ridicule and scorn and unless somebody comes forward to champion his cause he will be in a bad way. ” The root cause of this rising tension was aptly expressed by the same author who said, “it is a policy built on the fallacy that all the boys in uniform went prancing off to battle of their own free will and accord and all the stay-at-homes deliberately with malice aforethought shirked their duty to the country. . .the 4F was vilified and subjected to humiliation, suspected of being a wolf and a roué on the one hand, preying upon the natural longings of lonesome women and accused of being a physical incompetent on the other”⁴²¹ Malice or not, the passing of the GI Bill of Rights assured veterans the reality of long term benefits and non-veterans of long term disadvantage. 4-F fears of post-war employment struggles were not simply paranoia. Many Civil Service jobs in the post-war years gave preference points to veterans in hiring evaluations.

It would be simple naivety to assume that American soldiers were entirely disinterested in the benefits which military service afforded. The Research Branch on the Army, when interviewing half a million soldiers found no broad acceptance or rationalization for fighting based on any national principles.⁴²² The benefits of allotment pay, health care, life insurance and living expenses were substantial enticements for a

⁴²¹ Ralph Matthews, “Watching the Big Parade,” *Afro-American*, August 26, 1944, 4.

⁴²² Rose, *Myth and the Greatest Generation*, 62.

depression worn society and for which men in the service would be, “permanently better off” because of the provisions.⁴²³ Despite FDR's prior claim that, “no person, because he wore a uniform must thereafter be placed in a special class of beneficiaries over and above other citizens,” by 1944 he endorsed exactly such measures.⁴²⁴ The Veterans Bill of Rights, signed by FDR in June of 1944, guaranteed long term housing, medical, educational, pension and hiring benefits, particularly for government and civil service jobs.⁴²⁵ Ronald B. Krebs explains in, “The Citizen-Soldier Tradition,” that when the government requires a massive mobilization of manpower, “Americans have often exploited the occasion to wring a more favorable citizenship bargain,” in exchange for their services.⁴²⁶

In response, worried and rebuffed 4-F men took offense to the plans they heard of for post-war readjustment. Ralph Matthews, writing to the *Afro-American* aptly announced that, “In all the plans I have heard about for parceling out jobs and other benefits to the returning conquerors, the 4F’s are given no credit whatsoever for the flat feet, deficient eyes, fluttering hearts and unreliable livers which kept them out of the service. . . all who fell in this category must step aside and give the right of way to the returning heroes many of who were not only dragged bawling and kicking to the induction centers, but carried a beef the size of a prize bull throughout the war.” “For his pains,” Matthews continued, “it seems he is to be punished morally, physically and

⁴²³ Furnas, “Why is he 4-F? Are you to Blame?,” 26.

⁴²⁴ McEnaney, “Veterans Welfare: The GI Bill and American Demobilization,” *The Journal of Law, Medicine and Ethics* 39 (2011): 41-47.

⁴²⁵ Ibid, 41; Kennedy, *The American People in WWII*, 36.

⁴²⁶ Krebs, “The Citizen-Soldier Tradition,” 157; Childers, *Soldier from the War Returning*, 119.

economically for the rest of his natural life. First it appears he is not to be permitted to hold any job which a veteran might want. Elaborate plans for education, home purchases, rehabilitation and other blessings stewed up by a grateful government for the GI Joes. . .but poor 4F Sam will have to shift for himself.”⁴²⁷ Even the War Production Board, in a confidential report, wondered who should be awarded jobs, veterans or stay at homes; “whose job is it?” their report asked. As Laura McEnaney observes in her article, “Veterans Welfare,” “If the New Deal's legislative agenda advanced the notion of a noble citizen-worker, then the GI Bill solidified the notion that it was the citizen-soldier who should earn a society's first class treatment.”⁴²⁸

While the actuality of veterans absorbing opportunity from others is debated, certainly some stigma remained in the immediate post-war years concerning 4-F men.⁴²⁹ One article, published in the *New York Times* reveals the long term discrimination which persisted against 4-F men. Titled, “Schools Wary of 4-F's,” the article explains how applications from previously rejected men for educator positions would be, “scrutinize[d] carefully,” by district personnel who specifically sought to find evidence of psychoneuroses and homosexuality in the men's military examination records.⁴³⁰

Regardless of the veracity of conclusions which gave an edge to the long term social benefits of veterans, economists and demographers researching long term benefits of military service have found a veteran, “premium,” which is increasingly apparent with age. While the reasons for economic discrepancies are unknown, the most likely cause is

⁴²⁷ Matthews, “Watching the Big Parade,” *Afro-American*, August 26, 1944, 4.

⁴²⁸ McEnaney, “Veterans Welfare: The GI Bill and American Demobilization,” 41- 44.

⁴²⁹ Childers, *Soldier from the War Returning*, 167, 222-223.

⁴³⁰ “Schools Wary of 4-F's,” *New York Times*, April 22, 1947, 29.

the gaining of skills and experience in the military and the extension of special advantages to veterans after they depart the service.⁴³¹ Particularly, WWII veterans were more likely to graduate from high school and college than were non-military men of their same age group, such advantages in relation to college can almost certainly be attributed to financial possibilities associated with the GI Bill.⁴³²

While men who were unable to overcome their 4-F classification received nothing in post-war government or military benefits the Secretary of the Army, Kenneth Royall and Secretary of the Air Force, Stuart Symington did find a way of their own to acknowledge men who had volunteered but were rejected. In 1948, the Army and Air Force announced intentions to begin mailing cards carrying, “official Army and Air Force seals as tokens of appreciation,” for their intent to serve. These cards not only thanked registrants for their willingness to serve but also invited each to reapply if regulations should later change regarding their individual conditions.⁴³³ While such tokens would do little to dull the pain rejected men felt in the face of G.I. benefits, these official notes affirm the appreciation of these military forces for rejected men who were denied entry regardless of their desire to serve.

Regardless of the motivating factors which inspired 4-F men to seek reclassification, it is clear that many, unhappy with the immediate and long term ramifications of rejection, did attempt and sometimes succeed in joining the American military. Whether these men utilized minor schemes to avoid detection or underwent

⁴³¹ Elwood Carlson and Joel Andress, “Military Service by Twentieth Century Generations of American Men” *Armed Forces and Society* 39 (2013), 394.

⁴³² *Ibid.*, 396.

⁴³³ “4-F’s to Receive Tokens of Thanks,” *The Evening Independent*, August 26, 1948, 23.

major surgical procedures to bring themselves to military and Selective Service regulatory standards, it is clear that a desire to serve their nation and avoid stigmatization factored into the decisions of rejected man. Neither did discrimination based on military service end with the war. 4-F men who were never able to serve were ineligible for any benefits extended to servicemen regardless of their own service for the war effort in essential industry. Rather than gauge the impact of rejection on any analysis of 4-F men, perhaps the most accurate way to remember the 4-F experience is through the words of a man who, writing into *The New Yorker* in 1945, poetically expressed his own perspectives on the classification and its effects as follows.

Collared in untidy suit,
The civil man performed his chore,
Fawned on the beat of a soldier's boot,
Incidental prisoner of war.

No gala stripes or ribboned chest,
Will annotate his lowly bit;
He was the clown of coat and vest,
Weak of knee and weak of wit.

Tubercular, with puncture ears,
Hobbling through the broken rubble -
Oh pity for his sickly fears,
And fancies, his domestic trouble.

Scrawled on collapsed prophetic wall
He reads of postwar ruin and wreck,
And feels the arch of triumph fall
Horse-collarwise around his neck.⁴³⁴

⁴³⁴ William Walker Gibson Jr., "4-F," *The New Yorker*, September 1945, 25.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION: THE GREATEST GENERATION?

With such an overwhelming array of history surrounding the Second World War it is significant that though approximately forty percent of military age men, nearly five million by April 1945, faced military rejection few words have appeared concerning 4-F men in the massive historical dialogue. With so many aspects of American government, military and civilian machinery engaged to detect and separate undesirable men, the importance of military rejection in understanding American wartime mobilization is clear. Certainly, the immense implications of such high rejection rates were acknowledged during and after the war; however, a further consideration of these men and their place in the narrative of the Second World War provides scholars new insight into the dynamics of the American home front. By identifying the many ways each sub sect of American society understood, interpreted and responded to military rejection, readers further understand the many messages being sent to rejected individuals about their worth to the nation, American society, and the war effort.

The divergence of understanding between American society and the American military is especially apparent when considering the creation, implementation, and frequent alteration of military entry standards created, of which the Selective Service System, the Armed Forces and the American government were continuously aware. That the line between acceptance and rejection was ever changing rather than a fixed mark

contributes to the official understanding of 4-F classification as nothing more than a deference which intended little to no personal insult on a man's self-image. Rather, for the Armed Forces, which required a large number of rapidly prepared fighting men, the waste of training on a man who could not perform in action was of utmost concern. For the American government rejection was more closely related to concerns over post-war economic veteran benefits and pensions which might burden the economy in an uncertain age.

While all men were subject to the same system of selection, African American men faced a blatantly separate experience in military evaluation. As the only racial group to be segregated and kept statistically separate, African American men were not only inducted under a quota system which ensured minority representation but were also exposed to racist practices conducted by examiners, and condoned, at least through acceptance, by leaders within the Selective Service System and Armed Forces. Partially due to unfair treatment and evaluation, African Americans received significantly higher rejection rates throughout the course of the war. While preexisting educational factors were the cause of many failures based on educational testing standards, rejections for mental deficiency without specific type of degree provided were between four and fifteen times higher for African Americans in WWII. Additionally, blatant discriminatory practices in evaluation, such as the use of as little as one question concerning segregation, evince that a system which allowed the nation to procure the necessary manpower to win the war also allowed for the perpetuation of military and social discrimination.

In general, 4-F men of all races and classes experienced a stigmatized existence

on the home front while being constantly held against the standard of heroic servicemen. 4-F's faced further hardships in procuring work in war essential industries due to discriminatory hiring practices wherein employers sought men who had been deferred rather than rejected. Additionally, 4-F men became an easy target for elected officials who attacked their group as derelicts and shirkers who should lose their civilian freedoms as inducted men had. While legislation which sought to place rejected men into labor battalions failed, the popularity of such movements highlights the social and political isolation rejected men faced at home. However, most harmful to impressionable and sensitive young men was the deeply insensitive ridicule concerning their sexuality and intellect which was which was widely expressed in songs, jokes, and articles. Entertainment at the expense of 4-F men propelled social absorption of derogatory language about 4-F men into common parlance and underscored a non-official understanding of the meaning and intent of military rejection throughout civilians at home.

Military rejection also impacted the 4-F man's personal life. The altered family and peer dynamics rejection wrought could seriously injure 4-F men, particularly very young men who felt isolated and inferior to friends and siblings serving abroad. Rejection of a child was often a hardship on a family who was assumed responsible for their child's inability to serve. Mothers in particular absorbed the majority of public criticism in regards to their personal responsibility for improperly rearing their sons. Additionally, 4-F men could suffer romantically due to female shunning of rejected men in a time when the sexualization and idolization of servicemen made enlisted men the ideal female

partner. Servicemen also responded to rejected men bitterly, especially to suspicions that 4-F men might be entertaining ladies at home while they were risking their lives overseas.

In response to chronic discrimination and an equal patriotic desire to provide their nation with service, many 4-F men sought to overcome their military classification and become a soldier themselves. While not all 4-F men sought reclassification, most men did not seek military rejection and many utilized rehabilitation services or personally funded surgeries to qualify for military acceptance. Some 4-F men became so distraught by remaining at home while friends and family sought abroad that they resorted to suicide. Such intense internalization of military rejection likely stemmed from a combination of present discrimination suffered and fears that non-veteran status in the post-war years would leave them at a long term economic disadvantage. The passing of the G.I. Bill of Rights, which provided assistance with house and business loans, medical care, educational expenses and hiring benefits for government and civil service jobs only validated 4-F concerns for their comparative status after the war. Regardless of motivations, it is clear that 4-F men of all races, backgrounds and classes did seek reclassification in order to serve their nation.

What remains unclear is the accuracy and subsequent value of WWII military evaluation. As Lawrence Kubie discusses in his 1944 article, "Technical and Organizational Problems in the Selection of Troops," despite high pre-induction rejection rates, premature military discharge for physical and psychological reasons continued with unabated speed. Indeed, whether the induction station was known for lax or stringent

application of military draft standards, rejection rates were relatively equal.⁴³⁵ Because examination standards at local boards varied so greatly from physician to physician, the Army took over the medical aspect of examination almost wholesale, however, because the Army had a limited number of military doctors available for examination the military relented to hiring many civilian physicians who had been the very doctors whose flexible standards had brought on the military medical takeover and so reliability of military examinations was never made drastically more consistent or accurate. As such, Kubie condemned the examination system saying, “men are inducted into the Army through a sequence of inadequate medical surveys,” which neither proves 4-F unfitness nor the fitness of the men in service.⁴³⁶

Post-war evaluations have found discouraging results in any system seeking to identify militarily apt men despite the intense work which was spent attempting to detect them. Heaton discusses in *Physical Standards of WWII* that many of the standards, “were inadequate and ineffectively administered,” leaving men who might have served with no issue rejected and other men who were never suspected of psychological weakness to drain the post-war economy with benefits from psychological discharges. Of one hundred seventy-four Navy personnel who had been rejected at least once before their acceptance into the service only 11.5 percent were eventually discharged for the reasons they were originally rejected. Additionally, a Selective Service System study concluded that of

⁴³⁵ Kubie, “Technical and Organizational Problems in the Selection of Troops,” 243-258.

⁴³⁶ Ibid.

2,054 men rejected for psychological reasons but later inducted nearly 80 percent rendered satisfactory service; many proving to be superior soldiers.⁴³⁷

Such numbers are particularly disturbing when one considers that while mental defects were the primary reason for rejections, they were also the main cause for premature military separation.⁴³⁸ Though the government and medical professionals hoped they might prevent another World War I through intricate screening processes, the overall rejection rate of WWII was six times higher than the previous World War while discharges similarly surpassed WWI standards. Aita, concluded from such statistics that prediction of success in military service was a near impossibility since such tests relied on a man's adjustment to normal situations rather than the wholly unfamiliar and unpredictable scenarios of war.⁴³⁹ In other words, "screening out every man who will crack emotionally under some conditions would mean screening out every man in the Army."⁴⁴⁰ Such analysis implies that nearly two million men may have been unnecessarily and wrongfully rejected for military service on psychological grounds alone.⁴⁴¹

Hershey himself harbored long term regrets concerning the poor administration of examination and the loss of probably effective manpower during World War II but never

⁴³⁷ Heaton, *Physical Standards in WWII*, 42; Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions*, 187; John A. Aita, "Efficacy of the Brief Clinical Interview Method in Predicting Adjustments," *Archives of Neurology and Psychiatry* 61 (1949): 172.

⁴³⁸ Heaton, *Physical Standards in WWII*, 42.

⁴³⁹ Jones, "Screening for Vulnerability to Psychological," 42; Dippel, *War and Sex*, 233; Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions*, 184; Aita, "Efficacy of the Brief Clinical Interview Method in Predicting Adjustments," 170.

⁴⁴⁰ Furnas, "Why is he 4-F? Are you to Blame?," 79.

⁴⁴¹ Jones, "Screening for Vulnerability to Psychological," 42; David R. Segal and James Burk, *Military Sociology* Volume I (Los Angeles: Sage, 2012) 45.

relinquished his own assumptions that the nation was, “a sick society,” and that such illnesses were rooted in childhood care. Ironically, Hershey would himself eventually be classified 4-F due to age related health problems; a verdict he fought until he was recalled to active duty.⁴⁴² In the face of such evidence and the successful rejection of military disqualification by the man who directed Selective Service for decades, the value of rapid prediction military evaluation remains questionable at best.

Other important questions remain too. Why have the experiences of 4-F men remained unexamined for so many decades? What place do rejected men hold in the memory of their own generation? Are 4-F men part of “The Greatest Generation?” In Tom Brokaw's acclaimed, best-selling book *The Greatest Generation*, the journalist tells readers that, “there were those who failed to measure up, but taken as a whole this generation did have a 'rendezvous with destiny.’⁴⁴³ There are several implications in such a statement which should be addressed. What is “measuring up” in terms of warfare? Are the physically unwell, educationally deficient, or those, often incorrectly, deemed mentally unfit, “measuring up” to other men who, may or may not have desired to enter the service and may have been part of the three million early discharges for the same pre-existing “defects” other men were excluded for entirely? Additionally, the phrase, “taken as a whole,” implies that some people of this generation are explicitly not part of the greatest generation.

⁴⁴² Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey*, 151.

⁴⁴³ Brokaw, *The Greatest Generation*, 12; Potofsky, “The Poor State,” 92; Mahmoud, “Evolution of Military Recruit Accession Standards,” 151; Rose, *Myth and the Greatest Generation*, 2.

“Mythmaking,” Kenneth Rose reminds us, “always comes at a price.”⁴⁴⁴ By under representing the experiences of rejected men in the United States during WWII, historians validate the idea that military service is a sacred issue which should not be investigated for motive too deeply lest we seem ungrateful through honest inquiry. Or that America, by sheer percentage of rejection was not destined to win WWII and that the wartime generation was not innately different than any other American generation called by legislation and patriotism to meet a world threat.

In regard to the significance of the 4-F experience for African American’s, we keep silent the government and military continuation of a system which promoted the unchallengeable inferiority of black Americans during WWII. In truth, the uncauterized wounds of widespread American racism still wept the poisons of segregation, exclusion, and second class citizenship while the war was simultaneously promoted as bringing together the melting pot of American society. In fact; however, people were separated and literally classified according to race, health, intelligence, and physical or mental abilities.

Such myths, that military service is an unquestionable duty, that the American war time generation was intrinsically different than other generations of Americans or that America, by its superior citizenry was meant to win the world war, only ameliorate the true greatness that the World War II victory represents. By molding the American WWII populace into a mythical group later generations of Americans have been awe inspired by them; not seeing themselves as able to meet the needs of their nation equally. An additional sadness is that by glorifying a generation we lose an authentic understanding

⁴⁴⁴ Rose, *Myth and the Greatest Generation*, 2.

of who these people were, faults and failings included with the bravery. By re-considering and revising concepts such as the “greatest generation,” and the “good war,” perhaps historians can scratch, pen in hand, at the grit of time and the guilt of myth to reveal the truth of an era, of a generation, which has contributed so much to the definition of America. The inclusion of 4-F men into the dialogue of the Second World War serves as an important effort to this end.

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APPENDIX A
FIGURES

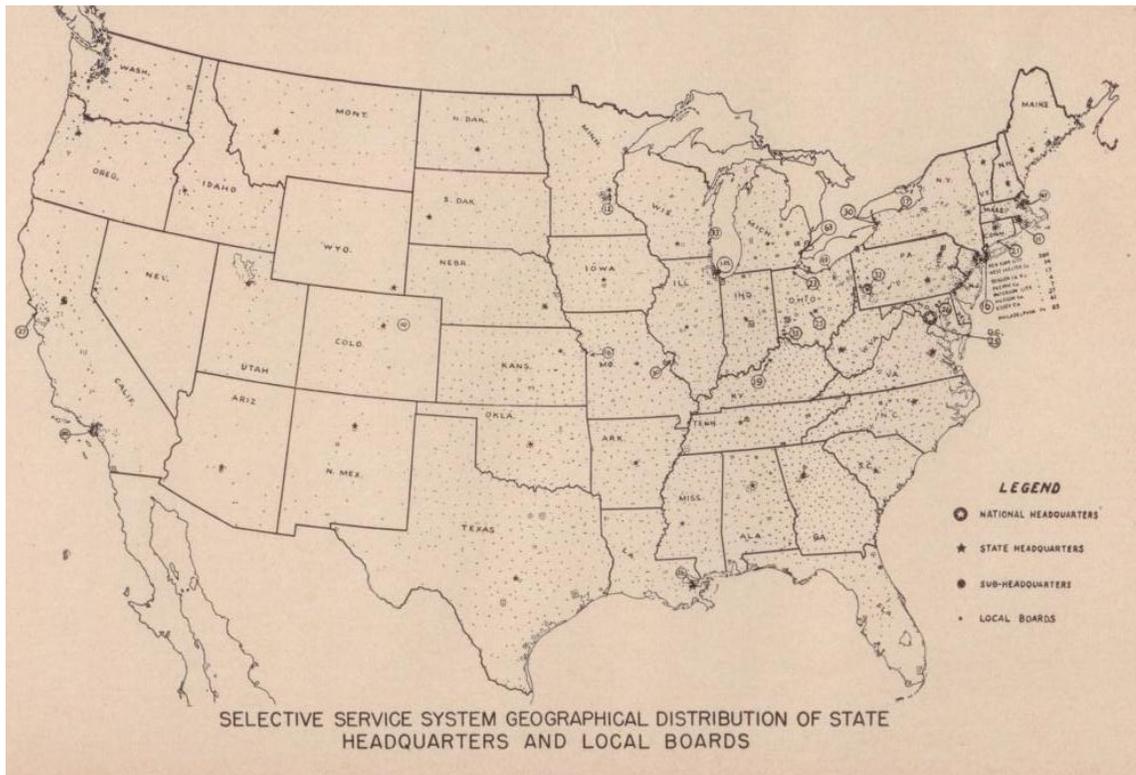
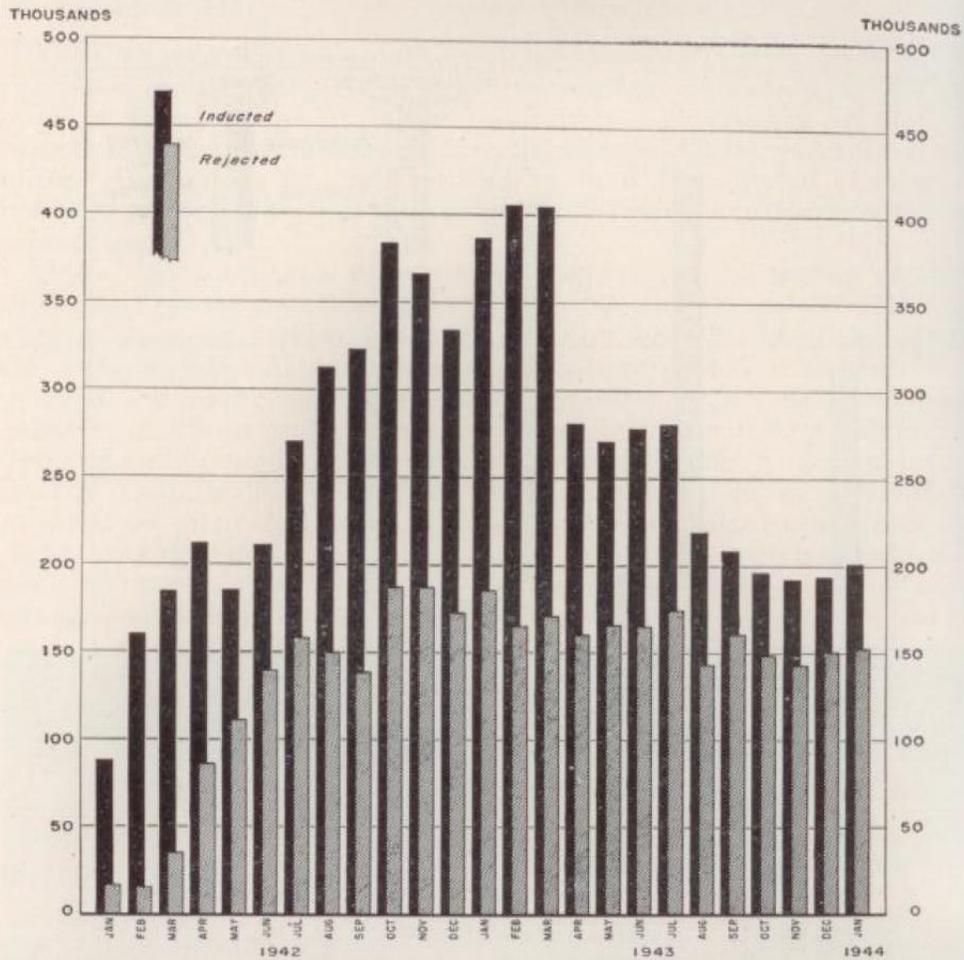


FIGURE 1 – “The Selective Service Geographical Distribution of State Headquarters and Local Boards.” Hershey, *Selective Service in Peacetime*, 10. “The Selective Service System Geographical Distribution of State Headquarters and Local Boards” illustrates the placement of National, State, and Sub Headquarters along with local board locations across the United States.

THE NUMBER OF REGISTRANTS
INDUCTED AND REJECTED BY ARMED FORCES

JANUARY 1942 THROUGH JANUARY 1944



THE NUMBER OF REGISTRANTS INDUCTED AND REJECTED BY ARMED FORCES, JANUARY 1942—JANUARY 1944. This chart shows the monthly totals of men inducted and rejected by the armed forces each month before the system of preinduction physical examination was begun. These figures do not include rejections by local boards of registrants with manifestly disqualifying physical defects.

FIGURE 2- “The Number of Registrants Inducted and Rejected by Armed Forces, January 1941 through January 1944.” Hershey, *Selective Service and Victory*, shows cumulative acceptance and rejection rates for all races for January 1942-January 1944. The lower rejection rates in early 1942 reflect a relaxing of standards by the Armed Forces including allowances for vision and dental issues which had previously contributed significantly to rejection rates.

APPENDIX B

TABLES

Military Classifications: All Classifications Used by the Selective Service System Throughout the Course of WWII	
I-A	Registrants available for general military service.
I-A (B)	Acceptable for service under reduced physical standards but not qualified for general service
I-A (H)	Over 38 and under 45 years of age, available for military service
I-A (L)	Qualified for limited military service only
I-A-O	Registrants who are conscientious objectors available for noncombatant military service when found acceptable to the land and naval forces.
I-A-O (B)	Available for noncombatant military service under reduced physical standards; conscientious objector
I-A-O (H)	Over 38 and under 45 years of age, available for noncombatant military service; conscientious objector.
I-A-O (L)	Qualified for limited noncombatant military service; conscientious objector.
I-B	Registrants available for limited military service
I-B-O	Registrants available for noncombatant limited military service
I-C	Registrants who have been inducted into, enlisted in, or appointed to the armed forces
I-C	Separated from land or naval forces by death
I-C	Separated from land or naval forces by Honorable Discharge or Under Honorable Conditions
I-D	Registrants who are students and who are fit for general military service, available not later than July 1, 1941
I-E	Registrants who are students and who are fit only for limited military service; available not later than July 1, 1941
I-G	Registrants who are members of or are honorably separated from the land and naval forces of cobelligerent nations. Including those who on or after November 15, 1945 had completed a substantial continuous service in the Merchant Marine
I-H	Registrants who are deferred by reason of age (over 28)
II-A	Registrants who are necessary or essential in their civilian activity
II-A (F)	Deferred in support of war effort (rejected for military service)
II-A (H)	Deferred in support of war effort, over 38 and under 45 years of age
II-A (L)	Deferred in support of war effort (qualified for limited service only)
II-B	Registrants who are necessary or essential to the war production program, excluding agriculture
II-B (F)	Deferred in war production (rejected for military service)
II-B (H)	Deferred in war production, over 38 and under 45 years of age
II-B (L)	Deferred in war production (qualified for limited service only)

II-C	Registrants who are necessary or essential men in agriculture
II-C (F)	Deferred in agriculture (rejected for military service)
II-C (H)	Deferred in agriculture, over 38 and under 45 years of age
II-C (L)	Deferred in agriculture (qualified for limited service only)
III-A	Registrants with dependents, engaged in nonessential industry or nonessential agriculture
III-B	Registrants with dependents, engaged in an activity necessary to the war production program
III-C	Registrants with dependents engaged in essential agriculture
III-C (H)	Deferred both by reason of dependency and agricultural occupation or endeavor, over 38 and under 45 years of age
III-D	Dependency, extreme hardship
III-D (H)	Dependency, extreme hardship, over 38 and under 45 years of age.
IV-A	Registrants who have become 45 years of age, since they registered, and have not been inducted
	Registrants who had completed certain specified services in the armed forces (A peacetime classification only)
IV-B	Registrants who are deferred specifically, or relieved of liability, by the law itself
IV-B (H)	Official deferred by law, over 38 and under 45 years of age
IV-C	Registrants who are aliens not acceptable to the armed forces because of nationality or ancestry, and aliens, who are citizens or subjects of neutral countries, who request relief from training and service.
IV-C (H)	Alien not acceptable, over 38 and under 45 years of age.
IV-D	Registrants who are ministers of religion or students in theological or divinity schools
IV-D (H)	Ministers and divinity students over 38 and under 45 years of age
IV-E	Registrants who are conscientious objectors to both combatant and non-combatant service
IV-E	Conscientious objector deceased
IV-E	Conscientious objector -separated or discharged from work of national importance
IV-EH	Registrants (conscientious objectors) who were formerly available for limited service in work of national importance
IV-E (H)	Conscientious objector-available for work of national importance, over 38 and under 45 years of age
IV-E (L)	Conscientious objector- available for limited service only
IV-E-L-S	Registrants (conscientious objectors) who were formerly available for limited service in work of national importance
IV-ES	Registrants (conscientious objectors) who were students formerly available for work of national importance, available not later than July 1, 1941.
IV-F	Registrants who are mentally, morally, or physically unacceptable to the armed

	forces
IV-F (H)	Rejected for military service; physical, mental, or moral reasons, over 38 and under 45 years of age
IV-H	Registrants who are over 37 years of age and under 45 and who have not been inducted into the armed forces, or who have been discharged from the armed services because they are over 37.

Table 1 – “Military Classification: All Classifications Used by the Selective Service System Throughout the Course of the War.” Classifications based on those provided in Hershey, *Selective Service in Peacetime*, 107-110; Hershey, *Selective Service in Wartime*, 34-36; Hershey, *Selective Service as the Tide of War Turns*, 63-67; Hershey, *Selective Service and Victory*, 62-64. Many of these classifications came into use for only short periods of time during the war, being replaced or removed from the system as standards and manpower needs shifted. This is a complete listing of all classification which the Selective Service used during the course of the war.

WWII Pre-Induction Examination Disqualifying Conditions

Mental Disorders	History of Hypochondrial preoccupations, "sexual neurosis," sexual anxiety attacks, or other recurrent functional illness
	Hysteria; hysterical conditions, chronic invalidism
	Functional gastrointestinal syndrome, including spasticity, recurrent diarrhea, colitis
	Primarily cardiovascular syndromes, including neurocirculatory asthenia, "effort syndrome," paroxysmal tachycardia, soldiers heart
	Functional disorders of expressive movements; tics, stuttering, stammering
	Psychoneurosis unspecified, neurotic or nervousness
	Schizoid, pre- or post-psychotic state
	History of institutional treatment for schizophrenic psychosis
	Chronic hebephrenic states (deteriorated dementia praecox); manneristic, fantastic, or "silly" hobos, wanderers and other ineffectuals
	Chronic "paranoia," paranoid or paranoiac conditions schizophrenic states
	Psychosis, "insanity," unspecified
	Constitutional inferiority, unspecified
	Schizoid, asocial, etc., not specified
	Chronic alcoholism
	Advanced addiction; narcotix, habit-forming drugs, marijuana, cocaine
Inebriety, alcoholism, addiction unspecified	
Deaf Mute	
Neurological	Muscular tremors or local paralysis, residuals of poliomyelitis
	History of chronic, recurrent, or progressive neurological conditions
	Brain tumor; brain abscess, subdural hematoma
	Post-traumatic cerebral syndrome; post-traumatic encephalopathy
	Old depressed fractures of skull; Jacksonian syndrome
	Residuals of peripheral nerve injury or disease
	Chronic, recurring nerves; optic atrophy, nerve deafness, Mentiere's syndrome, ophthalmoplegia, Bell's palsy
	Migraine
	Epilepsy, including epileptic equivalents
	Post-encephalitic syndrome; paralysis agitans; athetosis; chorea, spasmodic torticollis
	Multiple Sclerosis
	Diffuse, progressive muscular atrophy or dystrophia
	Subacute combined degeneration of the cord, syringomyelia
	Cerebral - arteriosclerosis; vascular accidents and their residuals, other chronic degenerative diseases, nonsyphilitic
	Enuresis
Neurological disease or disorder, unspecified	
Musculo-skeletal	Loss of arm
	Loss of hand
	Loss of fingers
	Loss of Leg
	Loss of foot and ankle
	loss of toes, great and others
	Loss of toe, great

Musculo-skeletal	Loss of toes, other than great toe
Continued	Ankylosis- Shoulder, Elbow and arm, wrist, fingers, spine, hip, knee and leg, ankle and foot, toes, unspecified
	Atrophy of muscles- Arms and shoulders, hands, fingers, legs, feet, unspecified
	Deformity- shoulder, arm, elbow, hand, fingers, spine, hips, leg, knees, ankles, feet, toes, unspecified
	Fracture- old, with malunion, non-union or fibrous union
	Fracture- recent, not healed, unspecified
	Injury- Head, spine, upper extremities, lower extremities
	Wounds - gun shot
	Injury- unspecified
	Scoliosis
	Lordosis
	Kyphosis - Osteomyelitis, or result of dislocations
	Dislocations - fingers or toes, supernumerary, joint, sacroiliac, disorders of
	Ganglion - Genu varum, Genu valgum, Genu recurvatum
	Birth injuries, residuals of
	Muscle, contracture
	Shortening of one extremity
	Torticollis
	Musculo-skeletal defects, other
Feet	Callosities or corns, painful and extensive
	Hallux Valgus or bunions
	Pes Cavus
	Pes Planus, First degree, second degree, third degree, with rotation or eversion, unspecified
	Metatarsalgia
	Pododynia
	Rigid Foot
	Weak foot, cause not specified
	Talipes
	Feet, other conditions or diseases of (except deformities)
Endocrine Disturbances	Frolich's syndrome of other dyscrasia, mild
	Hyperthyroidism, Acromedgaly; chromophobe or basophile adenoma of the hypophysis; gigantism
	Diabetes
	Hypothyroidism, myxedema, cretinism
	Endocrine diseases or disorder, other or unspecified
Tumors	Carcinoma
	Cyst
	Keloid
	Lipoma
	Pilonidal cyst and sinus
	Tumors - nonmalignant, others
	Malignancy not specified
Infectious, Parasitic and Epidemic Disease Ankylostomiasis	
	Influenza
	Pneumonia

Other	Lymphadenitis
	Avitaminosis
	Malnutrition
	Debility, general
	Unfitness, general
	Operation, recovering, unspecified
	Chest Measurements, deficient
	Underheight
	Underweight
	Overheight
Overweight	
Eyes	Blindness, Total
	Eye, enucleation of
	Vision, defective or insufficient
	Astigmatism
	Hyperopia
	Myopia
	Errors of refraction, others and unspecified
	Trachoma
	Conjunctivitis
	Pterygium
	Ptosis
	Synechia
	Entropion and ectropion
	Strabismus
	Cataract
	Choroiditis
	Retina, detached
	Retinitis
	Color-blind
	Iritis
	Keratitis
	Cornea, opacity of
	Cornea, ulcer of
	Exophthalmos
	Nystagmus
	Eye or eyelids, injury to
	Eye, congenital anomalies
Eye or eyelids, deformity of	
Pupillary abnormalities	
Eye or eyelids, other diseases of	
Ears	Deafness, total
	Hearing, defective
	Mastoiditis
	Mastoid operation, result of
	Otitis externa
	Otitis media

Ears	Tympanic membrane, perforated
Continued	Ears, deformity of
	Cerumen, impacted, and foreign body
	Ear, other conditions of
Teeth	Caries-mild, severe or extensive, unspecified
	Dental infection
	Serviceable incising teeth, insufficient number of
	Serviceable masticating teeth, insufficient number of
	Serviceable, masticating and incising teeth, insufficient number of
	Teeth - serviceable, unspecified insufficient number of
	Loose, unspecified cause
	Malocclusion
	Teeth, obviously impacted, unerupted or supernumerary
	Dental conditions, other
	Teeth, no natural
	Without artificial dentures
	With satisfactory artificial dentures
	No natural upper or lower teeth without satisfactory denture
	Denture- Full, artificial satisfactory, upper, lower or unspecified
	Full, artificial, unsatisfactory upper, lower, or unspecified
	Partial, artificial, satisfactory, upper, lower, or unspecified
	Partial, artificial, unsatisfactory, upper and lower, unspecified
Mouth and Gums	Gingivitis
	Trench Mouth (Vincent's infection)
	Gums, other diseases of
	Periodontoclasia
	Stomatitis
	Prognathism
	Deformities, congenital, lips and palate
	Oral cavity and annexa (except teeth), other diseases of
Nose	Nasal septum- deviated, complete obstruction
	Deviated, moderated obstruction
	Deviated, unspecified
	Perforation of
	Turbinate, Hypertrophy of
	Nasal Polypi
	Vasomotor rhinitis
	Rhinitis, chronic
	Sinusitis
	Accessory sinuses, other diseases of
	Nasal fossa, other diseases of
Throat	Adenoids
	Tonsils, hypertrophy of
	Tonsillitis
	Nasopharyngitis and pharyngitis
	Pharynx, other diseases of
	Laryngitis

Thorax	Larynx, other diseases of
Continued	Vincent's angina of throat
	Throat, congenital anomalies of
Lungs	Bronchitis
	Bronchiectasis
	Asthma
	Pleurisy
	Empyema
	Empyema, pulmonary
	Pneumothorax
	Lung, collapsed
	Rales, persistent
	Pathology, pulmonary, type unspecified
	Lungs, congenital anomalies
	Respiratory disease, acute
	Lungs, other diseases of
Tuberculosis	Pulmonary-
	Active, far advanced
	Active, moderately far advanced
	Minimal
	Arrested, quiescent
	Unspecified
	Suspected
	Genito-urinary system
	Bones and Joints
	Other
Cardiovascular System	Valvular heart disease
	Mitral regurgitation
	Mitral Stenosis
	Mitral, unspecified
	Aortic and mitral lesions combined
	Aortic regurgitation
	Aortic stenosis
	Aortic, unspecified
	Type unspecified
	Endocarditis, unspecified
	Rheumatic heart disease
	Pericarditis
	Cardio hypertrophy
	Vascular disease, cardiorenal
	Coronary disease
	Myocardial insufficiency
	Heart block
	Bradycardia
	Tachycardia
	Arrhythmia, cardiac
	Sinus arrhythmia

Cardiovascular System	other and unspecified
Continued	Heart Murmur, functional-
	Apex systolic
	Cardio-respiratory
	others
	Dextrocardia
	Heart, other diseases of
	Arteriosclerosis
	Hypertension, arterial
	hypotension, arterial
	Aortitis
	Aorta, aneurysm of
	Aneurysm, other than aorta
	Raynaud's disease
	Thrombo-angitis obliterans
	Circulatory system, other diseased of
Blood and Blood Forming Organs	Anemia
	Pernicious
	Other than pernicious
	Hodgkin's disease
	Spleen, enlargement of
	Blood and blood-forming organs,
	other diseases of
Hernia	Hernia
	Inguinal, direct
	Inguinal, indirect
	Inguinal, unspecified
	Femoral
	Umbilical
	Ventral
	Unspecified
	Abdominal scar, weak wall
	Inguinal ring, relaxed
Kidneys and Urinary System	Nephritis
	Albuminuria
	Nephrosis
	Pyelonephrosis
	Pyelitis
	Pyuria
	Hematuria
	Nephrolithiasis
	Kidney-
	Floating, movable
	Absece of
	Cystitis
	Glycosuria, transient
	Kidney and urinary system, other diseases of

Abdominal Viscera	Gastritis
	Ulcer, peptic
	Colitis, ulcerative
	Gall Bladder diseases
	Liver-
	Cirrhosis of
	Enlargement of
	Peritoneal adhesions
	Splanchnoptosis
	Gastrointestinal system, other diseases of
Abdomen, other defects of	
Genitalia	Testicle-
	Absence of
	Atrophy of muscles- Arms and shoulders, hands, fingers, legs, feet, unspecified
	Undescended, intra-abdominal
	Undescended, in inguinal canal
	Undescended, unspecified
	Hypospadias and epispadias
	Epididymitis and orchitis, non-venereal
	Hydrocele
	Varicocele
	Phimosis
	Balanitis and balanoposthitis, nonvenereal
	Penile sore, not defined as venereal
	Urethra, stricture of
	Urethra, unspecified
	Fistula, urinary
	Prostatitis
	Genitalia-
Other congenital anomalies of	
other conditions of	
Venereal	Neurosyphilis
	Paresis
	Tabes dorsalis
	Taboparesis
	Syphilis
	Late, other forms
	Congenital
	Early
	Serology positive, with no other findings
	Unspecified form
	suspected
	Genococcus infection
	Genito-urinary system, including unspecified
	Of joint
	Other forms
	Chancroid
Venereal disease, type not specified	

Skin	Acne Vulgaris
	Furunculosis
	Cellulitis and erysipelas
	Ulcer, other than varicose
	Nails, defects and diseases of
	Impetigo
	Scabies
	Pediculosis
	Eczema
	Hyperhidrosis
	Psoriasis
	Alopecia
	Skin conditions, fungus, parasitic
	Dematitis, others and unspecified
	Wound, including lacerations
	Nevi or moles, warts, other than venereal extensive scar
	painful
	disfiguring face
	with contracture and deformity
	unspecified
tattooing	
skin, other diseases of	
Hemorrhoids and rectal defects	Hemorrhoids
	external
	internal
	internal and external
	type unspecified
	anal fissure
	Fistula, anus or rectum
	Ischiorectal abscess
Pruritis ani	
Anus and rectum, other conditions	
Varicose Veins	Lower Extremities
	Lower Extremities with ulcerations
	except lower extremities
	Phlebitis and thrombophlebitis
Veins, other diseases of	
Mental and educational deficiency and illiteracy	Borderline intellect (moron)
	Mental deficiency (imbecile and idiot)
	History of institutional training for mental deficiency
	Mental defect with emotional instability; sexual or other mental disorder
	Illiterate or ignorant, mental defect undetermined
	Illiteracy without mental defect, educational deficiency
Mental deficiencies, unspecified	

Mental Disorders	Psychopathic history, unspecified
	Psychopathic personality;
	Characteristic employment record, criminalism, etc.
	including malingering
	Shown in sexual, social or material fields
	With psychosis, prison psychosis, etc.
	Not specified
	Cyclothymic personality
	History of treatment for excitement or depression, or of attempted suicide
	Manic-depressive psychosis
	Psychoneurotic tendencies

Table 2 – “WWII Pre-Induction Examination Disqualifying Conditions.” These disqualifying Conditions which could lead to 4-F classification are based on those listed in, Hershey, “Incidence of Defects Found in 19,923 Registrants Examined by Selective Service Local Boards,” *Selective Service in Peacetime*, 413.

Quota and Induction Numbers for White and Black Registrants, November 1940-December 1943							
YEAR	MONTH	WAR DEPARTMENT QUOTA	TOTAL INDUCTED	WHITE QUOTA	BLACK QUOTA	WHITE INDUCTEES	BLACK INDUCTEES
1940	November	157,212	13,806	151,231	5,981	12,936	870
1940	December		5,521			4,538	983
1941	January	170,513	73,633	164,961	5,552	69,699	3,934
1941	February	72,275	90,238	48,074	24,201	84,814	5,424
1941	March	175,608	153,437	159,931	15,677	137,544	15,893
1941	April	53,295	124,982	48,705	4,590	109,944	15,038
1941	May	10,395	62,982	9,308	1,087	50,535	11,921
1941	June	110,682	105,200	98,104	12,578	97,253	7,947
1941	July	49,940	62,158	46,860	3,080	55,706	6,452
1941	August	37,840	53,439	32,780	5,060	46,464	6,975
1941	September	41,800	40,340	36,960	4,840	35,375	4,965
1941	October	88,880	87,359	81,180	7,700	79,650	7,709
1941	November	39,390	49,153	36,530	2,860	44,689	4,464
1941	December	21,737	28,964	19,827	1,910	25,737	3,227
1942	January	99,929	87,837	88,457	11,472	77,754	10,083
1942	February	217,005	159,797	197,013	19,992	144,045	15,752
1942	March	195,000	184,489	195,000	N/A	177,624	6,865
1942	April	217,500	211,983	200,000	17,500	198,381	13,602
1942	May	193,000	185,333	175,000	18,000	168,383	16,950
1942	June	221,500	211,343	200,500	21,500	194,467	16,876
1942	July	347,000	270,291	297,000	50,000	236,944	33,347
1942	August	345,000	312,968	300,000	45,000	276,922	35,596
1942	September	325,000	323,337	285,000	40,000	284,094	39,693
1942	October	400,000	384,693	352,500	47,500	340,043	44,650
1942	November	450,000	366,634	400,000	50,000	320,883	45,751
1942	December	450,000	334,656	400,000	50,000	289,315	45,341
1943	January	315,000	387,485	280,000	35,000	349,965	37,520
1943	February	382,200	406,175	345,550	36,650	370,888	35,287
1943	March	381,700	405,737	345,100	36,600	367,420	38,317
1943	April	334,093	281,576	302,106	31,987	255,422	26,154
1943	May	305,250	270,888	270,400	34,850	240,291	30,597
1943	June	319,800	278,635	270,700	49,100	243,936	34,609
1943	July	354,800	281,871	305,600	49,200	246,159	35,712
1943	August	298,600	219,510	259,400	39,200	190,806	28,704
1943	September	313,700	208,988	271,300	42,400	181,388	27,600
1943	October	307,300	196,703	265,100	42,200	169,394	27,309
1943	November	300,300	192,423	260,900	39,400	164,109	28,314
1943	December	314,413	193,979	267,581	46,832	160,955	33,024

Table 3- “Quota and Induction Numbers for White and Black Registrants, November 1940-December 1943.” This graph is a compilation of graphs produced for the official Selective Service Reports including, “Net Calls and Number of Registrants Forwarded, Inducted and Rejected By the Armed Forces By Race and Month, November 1940-December 1943” *Selective Service and Victory*, 591-592; “Monthly Calls for Induction, and Number of Registrants Examined, Inducted, and Rejected by the Armed Forces in the Continental United States, by Months,” *Selective Service as the Tide of War Turns*, 173; “War Department Quotas, Corp Area Requisitions and Inductions, by Months” *Selective Service in Peacetime*, 247.

Monthly Rejection Rates per 100 Registrants, June 1944-December 1945			
Month and Year of Examination	All Races	White	Black
June 1944	39.6	36.2	57.3
July 1944	43.4	40.1	61.5
August 1944	45.1	41.8	63.5
September 1944	47.8	45.6	66.9
October 1944	51.5	49.4	70.5
November 1944	53.2	50.8	74.9
December 1944	50	48.1	66.8
January 1945	43.8	41.9	61.3
February 1945	42.3	39.6	54.9
March 1945	40.9	38.6	61.8
April 1945	41.8	39.9	61.4
May 1945	42.2	40.5	57.8
June 1945	49.4	48.4	56.7
July 1945	54.1	53.8	57.1
August 1945	58.6	58.7	57.8
September 1945	60.7	61.3	56.5
October 1945	60.8	58.2	76.3
November 1945	58.6	56.2	73.3
December 1945	54.6	50.8	72.1

Table 4 - “Monthly Rejection Rates per 100 Registrants Examined by the Armed Forces, June 1944-December 1945.” Hershey, *Selective Service and Victory*, 144. This chart shows an increasing trend toward rejection by the end of 1944 and throughout 1945. Men classified as 4-F were subject to multiple re-examination in these years which is one contributing factor of the heightened rejection trend in these years despite relaxed induction standards. It is also significant to note that the category “White” includes all races other than African American men, the only racial group kept statistically separate throughout the war.