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„Is this Belonging? An examination of British Army recruitment media in historical perspective"

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Abstract

This thesis examines the British Army's most recent recruitment campaign, investigating how and why the message of recruitment media has changed over time, as well as what the implications of these changes are. While previous campaigns under the slogan 'Be The Best' focused on messages of self-improvement, skill development, and adventure, 'This Is Belonging' constitutes a marked shift in the representation of the military as an institution. First released in 2017, the new campaign has been a source of discussion and controversy, with some critics concerned that the Army is being forced down the road of 'political correctness,' while others argue that these adverts are misrepresentative of the realities of Army life. Beginning with an overview of the current campaign and its development in the context of dwindling application numbers, the following chapters then look at recruitment media from the First and Second World Wars, as well as appeals directed at colonial subjects. With the end of conscription and the transition to the All-Volunteer Force in 1960, ideas of patriotism, duty, and masculinity gave way to messages of self-improvement and skill development, but the most recent focus on 'belonging' appears to mark a turn in a new direction. The new posters and TV adverts depict the Army as an inclusive institution where anyone can 'belong' and be accepted, regardless of who they are and where they come from. According to 'This Is Belonging,' a career in the Army centres around forming friendships, self-expression, being appreciated for one's unique identity, and gaining confidence. While historical appeals linked the idea of 'belonging' to membership of the nation, the way in which it is wielded today is totally apolitical and disconnected from the construction of national identity. In light of continued reports of bullying and harassment, the thesis investigates the extent to which the image created in adverts corresponds to the reality of a career in the armed forces.

Abstract (Deutsch)

Diese Arbeit befasst sich mit der neuesten Rekrutierungskampagne der britischen Armee, und untersucht, warum sich die Message im Laufe der Zeit geändert hat, und welche Auswirkungen diese Änderungen haben. Während sich frühere Werbungen unter dem Motto „Be The Best" auf Themen wie Selbstverbesserung und Abenteuer konzentrierten, zeigt „This Is Belonging" eine deutliche Veränderung in der Darstellung des Militärs. Die neue Kampagne, die erstmals im Jahr 2017 veröffentlicht wurde, wurde in den Medien diskutiert und unter die Lupe genommen. Einige Kritiker waren besorgt, dass die Armee auf den Weg der „politischen Korrektheit" gedrängt wird, während andere argumentierten, dass diese Kampagne das Leben in der Armee falsch darstellt. Ausgehend von einem Überblick über die aktuelle Kampagne und ihre Entwicklung werden in den folgenden Kapiteln Rekrutierungsmedien aus dem Ersten und Zweiten Weltkrieg sowie Appelle an Kolonialisten behandelt. Mit dem Ende der Wehrpflicht und dem Übergang zur „All-Volunteer Force" im Jahr 1960 wichen Ideen von Patriotismus, Pflicht und Männlichkeit Botschaften der Selbstverbesserung, aber der jetzige Fokus auf „Zugehörigkeit" scheint eine ganz neue Richtung darzustellen. Die neuen Plakate und Fernsehwerbung zeigen die Armee als eine Institution, in die jeder „gehören" und akzeptiert werden kann, unabhängig davon, wer er ist und woher er kommt. Laut „This Is Belonging" dreht sich eine Karriere in der Armee darum, Freundschaften zu schließen, sich selbst auszudrücken, für seine einzigartige Identität geschätzt zu werden und Vertrauen zu gewinnen. Während vergangene Werbungen die Idee der „Zugehörigkeit" zur Mitgliedschaft in der Nation verbanden, ist die Art und Weise, wie sie heute gehandhabt wird, völlig unpolitisch und von der Konstruktion der nationalen Identität getrennt.

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Introduction

  In January 2017, the British Army launched a new recruitment campaign in partnership with Capita Business Services Ltd (Capita), the consultancy that has been responsible for recruitment since 2012, and Karmarama, the marketing agency behind the creative direction of the campaign. While previous campaigns under the slogan 'Be The Best' focused on messages of self-improvement, skill development, and adventure, 'This Is Belonging' constitutes a marked shift in the representation of the military as an institution. In contrast to historical appeals to patriotism and masculinity, the new posters and TV adverts depict the Army as an inclusive institution where anyone can 'belong' and be accepted, regardless of who they are and where they come from. According to 'This Is Belonging,' a career in the Army centres around forming friendships, self-expression, being appreciated for one's unique identity, and gaining confidence. Though the Army has failed to meet its annual recruitment targets since outsourcing the process to Capita in 2012, 2018 saw the first increase in applications, suggesting that the new campaign has been at least partly effective.[1] However, these posters and adverts have also provoked criticism, with some commentators going so far as to argue that these images fail to prepare newcomers for the realities of military life,[2] and others raising the concern that the army has been forced to bow to political correctness in order to attract recruits.[3] The British Army is far from the first organisation to be accused of 'woke-washing,' but as the UK is one of just 19 countries that still recruits 16-year-olds into the army, the messages portrayed in recruitment material deserve to be heavily scrutinised. A change in the outward-facing, public image of the army does not necessarily reflect a substantive change in military culture, and while women and minorities are increasingly being targeted to compensate for the recruitment gap, there is a plethora of literature that demonstrates how traditional 'military masculinity' is fundamentally at odds with the rhetoric of the 'This Is Belonging' campaign.

  The aim of this thesis is to put the current campaign into historical context, investigating how and why the message of British Army recruitment media has changed over time, as well as what the implications of these changes are. Beginning with an overview of the current campaign and its development, the following chapters look at recruitment material from the First and Second World Wars, as well as appeals directed at colonial subjects. With the end of conscription and the transition to the All-Volunteer Force in 1960, recruitment tactics changed drastically, as the military was required to

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[1] Matthew Waksman and Rob Fullerton-Batten, *Helping a new generation find where they belong in the British Army* (London: Institute of Practitioners in Advertising, 2018), 29.
[2] Amy Walker, "The new army advert: unrealistic or the time of your life?" *The Guardian*, February 4, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2017/feb/04/new-uk-army-advert.
[3] Matthew Weaver, "Army accused of political correctness in recruitment campaign," *The Guardian*, January 10, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/jan/10/army-accused-of-political-correctness-in-recruitment-campaign.

compete with other employers to attract recruits as 'employees.' This 'marketisation' and 'professionalisation' of the military gave rise to a message of self-improvement and an emphasis on the development of employable skills for life outside the army, but the most recent focus on 'belonging' appears to mark a turn in a new direction. The final chapter revisits the 'This Is Belonging' campaign, discussing whether the current appeal is similar to historical campaigns, or whether it marks an unprecedented shift. This bookended approach establishes points of comparison at the outset and allows for the investigation of similarities and differences between different historical periods and contexts. Rather than tracing a linear narrative of the historical roots of the Army's current recruitment campaign, the aim is to find thematic patterns and common practices that offer insight into the way the Army functions and engages with potential recruits and with society more broadly.

Literature review

'This Is Belonging' paints a picture of life in the British Army as one characterised by openness, inclusion, and tolerance, but this message runs counter to literature in the fields of critical military studies and feminist International Relations. Authors like Cynthia Enloe, Ann Tickner, and Laura Sjoberg have explored the ways in which gendered logics and practices govern the military as an institution, as well as the concept of 'military masculinity.'[4] While combat and killing are widely viewed as 'natural' aspects of masculinity, femininity is traditionally associated with peace and pacifism, and so, "when women attempt to enter the military […] they threaten to undermine the hegemonic masculinity of the organisation."[5] Even though all combat roles in the British Army have been open to women since 2018,[6] there are still frequent reports of discrimination and harassment, which suggests that the 'band of brothers' narrative is threatened by the integration of women into the military. As Meghan Mackenzie argues in the American case, military identity has long privileged the all-male combat unit, while "combat is envisaged as the single most important assertion of masculinity."[7] Thus, when women are integrated into the military, their presence is greeted with alarm, as women

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[4] Cynthia Enloe, *Manoeuvres: The International Politics of Militarising Women's Lives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Joshua Goldstein, *War and Gender: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); J. Ann Tickner, *Gendering World Politics: Issues and Approaches in the Post-Cold War Era* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001); Laura Sjoberg, *Gender, War, & Conflict* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014); Iris M. Young, "The Logic of Masculinist Protection: Reflections on the Current Security State," *Signs* 29, no. 1 (2003): 1-25, doi:10.1086/375708.
[5] Lucy Noakes, *Women in the British Army: War and the gentle sex, 1907-1948* (Oxon: Routledge, 2006), xi.
[6] Steven Morris, "All roles in UK military to be open to women, Williamson announces," *The Guardian*, October 25, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/oct/25/all-roles-in-uk-military-to-be-open-to-women-williamson-announces.
[7] Megan Mackenzie, *Beyond the Band of Brothers: The US Military and the Myth that Women Can't Fight* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 1.

are understood to be "'potential spoilers' who will feminise and weaken the military."[8] In discussions with British service personnel, Anthony King has identified a 'slut-bitch' binary that governs relations between male and female soldiers, and frequently manifests in the discrimination and harassment of women in the military.[9] Only when female soldiers abandoned their femininity and sexuality are they perceived as 'honorary men,' and consequently accorded full membership of their unit and regarded as competent professionals.[10] While this emphasis on professionalism and capability may have implications for women's integration into the British Army in the future, the concept of 'honorary man' ultimately affirms traditional gender norms, including the slut-bitch binary, because only a few select women are accorded this status at the expense of allowing male soldiers to disparage other less competent women in sexist ways.[11] Based on these accounts, it appears that, particularly in the past, cohesion in the military relied on the guiding logic of military masculinity, which is jeopardised by the presence of women, LGBT+ individuals, and minorities. The 'This Is Belonging' campaign paints an altogether different picture.

While there has been a great deal of academic work on the topic of British wartime propaganda in the 20th century, as well as literature dealing separately with recruitment practices after the introduction of the All-Volunteer Force in 1960, there has not been a cohesive historical analysis of visual recruitment material that also includes the present campaign. First and Second World War posters are widely known, and Kaushik Roy, David Killingray, and Tarak Barkawi have written extensively on the mobilisation of colonial subjects in the 20th century, but contemporary military recruitment encompasses a much broader range of media, as demonstrated by the integrated, multi-platform nature of the 'This Is Belonging' campaign.[12] Matthew Rech has explored the material culture of British military recruitment at public events like air shows, as well as the 'mobile ephemera,' such as lanyards, pens, and keyrings, that can be bought or taken home for free, arguing that these cases exemplify the rapidly diversifying nature of military-public relations.[13] Additionally, there has also been work done on the use of social media by private security companies, and the role of public agency communication

[8] Mackenzie, *Beyond*, 1.
[9] Anthony King, "Women, Gender, and Close Combat Roles in the UK: 'Sluts,' 'Bitches,' and 'Honorary Blokes,'" in *Women and Gender Perspectives in the Military: An International Comparison*, ed. Robert Egness and Mayesha Alam (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2019), 143.
[10] Ibid., 148.
[11] Ibid., 149.
[12] Tarak Barkawi, *Soldiers of Empire: Indian and British Armies in World War II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017); David Killingray and Martin Plaut, *Fighting for Britain: African Soldiers in the Second World War* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2010); Kaushik Roy, "Race and Recruitment in the Indian Army: 1880-1918," *Modern Asian Studies* 47, no. 4 (2013): 1310-1347, doi:10.1017/S0026749X12000431.
[13] Matthew F. Rech, "Ephemera(l) Geopolitics: The Material Cultures of British Military Recruitment," *Geopolitics*: 13, doi:10.1080/14650045.2019.1570920.

in military recruitment.[14] By examining recruitment material over an extended period, this thesis explores the similarities and differences in discourse and tactics used to mobilise different social groups, and investigates whether the new rhetoric of belonging is unique, or has been employed before. In particular, it is important to discuss *who* specifically is being targeted in these advertisements; while the various iterations of 'This Is Belonging' depict soldiers of different genders, ethnicities, and religions, the question arises whether the army is genuinely interested in a diverse pool of applicants, or if this appeal is driven purely by necessity and low recruitment numbers.

Disciplines and methodology

This thesis has a primarily historical focus, while also drawing on literature, concepts, and theories from political science and International Relations. Alongside a review of existing historical literature and historiographical debates on military recruitment, the analysis of documents and primary sources is supplemented by critical military studies and feminist IR literature. In particular, this process is influenced by Cynthia Enloe's "sceptically curious" approach to military analysis, which aims to go beyond the conventional understanding of "militaries as pawns and knights to be moved around by uniformed and civilian elites around a chessboard."[15] Enloe argues that "it is analytically risky to imagine that any military force simply exists,"[16] and though personnel recruitment is perhaps "one of the most mundane of all aspects of any military,"[17] it is imperative that questions are raised about how armies are raised and sustained, which incentives and threats are wielded, who is targeted and excluded, and under what circumstances recruitment rules are changed. Primary sources include posters, films, pamphlets, photographs, and other documents from the Imperial War Museum and National Army Museum, as well as press releases, creative briefs, and market research reports from Karmarama. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, visits to The National Archives in London were not possible, and so materials were restricted to those available online.

The thesis focuses exclusively on public visual sources, partly for ease of access, but also because visual media are ubiquitous and have remained prevalent in recruitment campaigns throughout the period under examination. Furthermore, this approach narrows the scope of analysis over a wide timespan. By identifying particular turning points in recruitment practices and the change in message over time, the thesis traces rhetorical

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[14] Jutta Joachim et al., "Twittering for talent: Private military and security companies between business and military branding," *Contemporary Security Policy* 39, no. 2 (2018): 298, doi:10.1080/13523260.2017.1420608.

[15] Cynthia Enloe, "The recruiter and the sceptic: a critical feminist approach to military studies," *Critical Military Studies* 1, no.1 (2015): 8, doi:10.1080/23337486.2014.961746.

[16] Ibid., 6.

[17] Ibid., 4.

trends in their historical context, and compares them to present-day practices. While propaganda and marketing material is not necessarily an accurate representation of substantive cultural changes within the military, it is important to examine and analyse how the British Army chooses to present itself, and to whom it is trying to appeal. Posters, TV adverts, and pamphlets are distributed widely and seen by a large number of people, particularly in the age of the Internet and social media marketing, and so their impact merits attention. Additionally, as Melissa Brown argues, the topic of recruitment can reveal a great deal about the interrelationship between society and military, as "recruiting images attempt to produce general support for military service and to build a positive image of the armed forces to domestic society at large."[18] Ultimately, recruitment involves overt image making and an attempt to sell particular pictures of military service that are meant to appeal to the self-image of potential recruits, and a military branch may even "choose to deploy images of itself that don't fully comport with the branch's self-understandings in order to appeal to potential recruits and get them in the door – those recruits can be socialised into the service during training."[19] On the other hand, recruiting materials must, at least to a certain degree, ring true to their audience, and Beth Bailey notes that "recruiting advertising also shapes the army."[20] Recruitment images must draw on existing preconceptions of military service, gender roles, and national identity to be effective, and thus recruitment practices exist in constant dialogue with broader social changes and dynamics.

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[18] Melissa Brown, "'A Woman in the Army Is Still a Woman': Representations of Women in US Military Recruiting Advertisements for the All-Volunteer Force," *Journal of Women, Politics, and Policy* 33, no. 2 (2012): 6, doi:10.1080/1554477X.2012.667737.
[19] Brown, "'A Woman in the Army,'" 7.
[20] Beth Bailey, "The Army in the Marketplace: Recruiting an All-Volunteer Force," *The Journal of American History* 94, no. 1 (2007): 73, doi:10.2307/25094776.

This Is Belonging: an introduction to the new British Army recruitment campaign

The need for change: origins of 'belonging'

In 2012, the British Army, together with Capita Business Services Ltd (Capita), launched the Recruiting Partnering Project, outsourcing recruitment management and marketing in order to "recruit more effectively and reduce costs."[21] According to a 2018 report by the National Audit Office, the Army initially forecast that, through the reduction of soldier participation in the recruitment process and their redeployment to other military tasks, the Project would achieve savings of £267 million by 2022.[22] However, despite the Army entering into a £495 million contract with Capita and committing £1.3 billion to the Project over ten years, "Capita has missed the Army's annual targets for recruiting regulars and reserves every year since 2013 – with a shortfall that ranged from 21% to 45% of the Army's recruitment requirement," and there are also significant skill shortages in specific trades.[23] In 2015, the government set the Army a target size of 82,000 regular soldiers and 30,000 reserve soldiers to be achieved by 2020, but in August 2019, the Army was still over 7,000 soldiers short of the target, with the largest shortfall for regular soldiers.[24] While Capita has performed better in the recruitment of regular officers, such a large deficit is detrimental, as it can result in the Army placing greater strain on existing personnel and limit its ability to develop the capabilities it needs in the future.[25] It was clear that a new strategy was required, but it was only in 2017, over four years into the partnership, that substantive changes were made. Through the creation of a new marketing campaign by agency Karmarama, as well as the implementation of other measures to streamline the application process, recruitment numbers have steadily increased in the last three years. Despite these improvements, however, the shift in tone in Army advertising has also provoked a backlash, both from conservative voices who lament the Army's 'march down the road of political correctness,' as well as critics who point out that the new campaign obscures the realities and responsibilities of a career in the armed forces.[26]

The Project's consistent failure to meet recruitment targets has been the subject of Parliamentary and media scrutiny. In a 2019 Parliament report, the partnership between the Army and Capita was described as "naïve" and its performance "abysmal," and the report argued that Capita greatly under-estimated the complexity of the Army's recruitment policies, which resulted in it entering into the contract without fully

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[21] Amyas Morse, *Investigation into the British Army Recruiting Partnering Project* (National Audit Office, 2018), 6, https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Investigation-into-the-British-Army-Recruiting-Partnering-Project.pdf.

[22] Ibid., 6.

[23] House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts, *Capita's Contracts with the Ministry of Defence* (London: House of Commons, 2019), 4.

[24] Morse, *Investigation*, 5.

[25] Ibid., 5.

[26] Walker, "The new army advert."

understanding what it was taking on.[27] Both parties entered into an over-specified and complex contract with 10,000 requirements, and later introduced a number of changes to centralise the recruitment process without trialling them beforehand, revealing a fundamental misunderstanding of the importance of face-to-face contact with potential recruits.[28] With Capita primarily focused on "chasing revenue" and the Army more concerned with the war in Afghanistan, the decision to outsource recruiting seemed unlikely to succeed.[29] Additionally, despite knowing about these problems for many years, it took a long time address under-performance, and even with the renegotiation of the contract in 2017, the Army was unable to secure additional benefits.[30] In 2018, over half of applications still took 321 days or more, the same as in 2014, but the Army and Capita failed to investigate why 47% of applicants dropped out of the process.[31]

Along with problems inherent in the Recruiting Partnering Project, the broader recruiting environment has also been challenging. Social, economic, geopolitical, and demographic factors have contributed to a shrinking recruitment pool and a highly competitive recruiting environment, as outlined in Karmarama's marketing research and the National Audit Office report. Due to low levels of unemployment, particularly among young people in areas that the Army had traditionally relied on, including the North East, North West, and Scotland, the conventional pool of recruits no longer yielded enough applicants; historically, higher levels of youth unemployment have corresponded with increased applications.[32] This was further compounded by a significant reduction in the number of 16-17-year olds in the general population, as well as the fact that, due to the shrinking of the Army since 1982, fewer people are likely to know or be related to someone in the Army, which is also a key driver of applications.[33] There was also no major conflict in the headlines, which shaped public perception of the Army as non-operational and less attractive to join,[34] particularly for so-called 'frontline action seekers' who are less motivated to enlist in peacetime; while the recruiting age group had lived through two high-profile wars, "their attitudes towards these wars were negative, especially the Iraq War."[35] Taken together, these trends meant that the Army could not rely on "classic Army types" as a sustainable source of applications, especially in the face of ambitious recruitment targets and reduced costs.[36] Finally, Karmarama identifies the way young people consume media as a challenge to recruitment, as getting a message out

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[27] House of Commons, *Capita's Contracts*, 3.
[28] Ibid., 3.
[29] Ibid., 5.
[30] Ibid., 5.
[31] Ibid., 5.
[32] Waksman and Fullerton-Batten, *Helping*, 4-5.
[33] Ibid., 5-6.
[34] Morse, *Investigation*, 5.
[35] Waksman and Fullerton-Batten, *Helping*, 3-4.
[36] Ibid., 6.

to a broad group is no longer as straightforward as "a simple big TV buy anymore," and reaching an audience has become a much more complex, fragmented task.[37]

Over four years into the partnership, a new online application system was finally introduced to streamline the recruitment process at a cost of £113 million, triple the original budget,[38] and with the creation of a new marketing campaign, headed by the agency Karmarama, applications have gradually increased. In the nine months following the launch of the first 'This Is Belonging' campaign in 2017, regular and Reserve soldier applications increased by 38% and 48% respectively, compared to the same period in the previous year.[39] While some combat regiments were still operating 40% under strength as of August 2019, applications in the 2018-19 recruitment year were at an all-time high, with an increase in the enlistment-to-conversion rate from one in 10 to one in eight.[40] Thus, while overall numbers have decreased as more soldiers leave the service than enlist, recruitment applications have steadily risen in the last few years, and in the 2019-20 recruiting year the intake of regular soldiers was 9,067, 96% of the end of year target.[41] Though it is difficult to ascertain to what extent the new advertising campaign can be isolated from other factors that improved recruitment results, including the new online application system and other external factors, econometric analysis and online surveys conducted by Karmarama to assess the effect of the recruitment campaign suggest that 'This Is Belonging' generated sustained interest independent of other factors.[42]

Weighed against other possible influences, including the reduction of Army events, negative economic impact, and stable competitor spending, 'This Is Belonging' had a net positive impact on recruitment, and was especially important in changing perceptions of the Army more broadly, especially for parents and other so-called 'gatekeepers.'[43] Due to the professionalised nature of the British Army, the wider discussion and debate generated by 'This Is Belonging' also served to raise the profile of the military for the general public, thus improving civil-military relations and establishing the Army as a constant presence in more people's lives. Rather than explicitly convincing people to apply to join the Army, then, the new campaign serves to generate interest and curiosity about a career in the armed forces for young people who otherwise might not be exposed to this possibility. Regardless of whether the public likes or agrees with the new

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[37] Waksman and Fullerton-Batten, *Helping*, 6-7.

[38] Morse, *Investigation*, 6.

[39] Waksman and Fullerton-Batten, *Helping*, 16-17.

[40] "Army Combat Units 'Up to 40% Under Strength' Due To Falling Recruitment, Data Shows," *Forces Network*, last modified August 10, 2019, https://www.forces.net/news/army-combat-units-40-under-strenght-due-falling-recruitment-data-shows.

[41] George Allison, "British Army recruitment hits 96% of target," *UK Defence Journal*, July 3, 2020, https://ukdefencejournal.org.uk/british-army-recruitment-hits-96-of-target/.

[42] Waksman and Fullerton-Batten, *Helping*, 20-28.

[43] Ibid.

marketing direction, the conversation around 'This Is Belonging' has generated publicity for the Army, thus reaching a wider audience and potentially attracting more recruits.

Creative strategy and visual analysis

In the development of the new media campaign, Karmarama's main goal was "to motivate a harder-to-reach, broader group of young people who neither felt the Army was their immediate calling, nor saw it as a financial necessity."[44] Appealing to potential recruits beyond the conventional pool of 'core intenders' required an innovation of Army advertising, as people had developed a high degree of so-called 'khaki blindness' and apathy to predictable and expected methods of communication.[45] Drawing on the concept of 'tiers' of recruits developed by the Army (Fig. 1), Karmarama broadened their audience to include Tier 2, "who were open, but wouldn't join instinctively," in contrast to recruits in Tier 1, who "still had to hear [their] message and be nudged, but didn't need to be the primary target."[46] Rather than focus on those who already expressed a 'desire to defend their country' or wanted 'frontline action,' who are more likely to apply without much prompting, this new audience had to be explicitly motivated by reframing the Army in a new and surprising way to cater to a wide range of decision-making factors.[47] It was clear that a one-size-fits-all approach would not be effective, and so Karmarama engaged in 'social listening' to trace previously successful candidates' online interests and activity prior to their application, identifying twelve distinct drivers that motivated applications at the individual level (Fig. 2).[48] Beyond the patriotic motivations and family traditions that characterised the Tier 1 group, drivers for Tier 2 included skill development, adventure, and travel, but also a desire to make a difference, friendship, as well as practical considerations like salary and benefits.[49] Based on these factors, Karmarama would be able to tailor the Army's message at the individual level at each stage of the application journey, but what was missing was "something powerful, surprising, and universally appealing that could make [their] audience consider the Army in the first place."[50] In order to cast a career in the Army in a new light, the twelve individual drivers had to be expressed in one powerful, overarching message that would widen the pool of potential recruits, as well as change broader public perception of the Army. As of 2017, the driving force of British Army recruitment has been the concept of 'belonging.'

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[44] Waksman and Fullerton-Batten, *Helping*, 7.
[45] Ibid., 7.
[46] Ibid., 8.
[47] Ibid., 8.
[48] Ibid., 8.
[49] Ibid., 9.
[50] Ibid., 9.
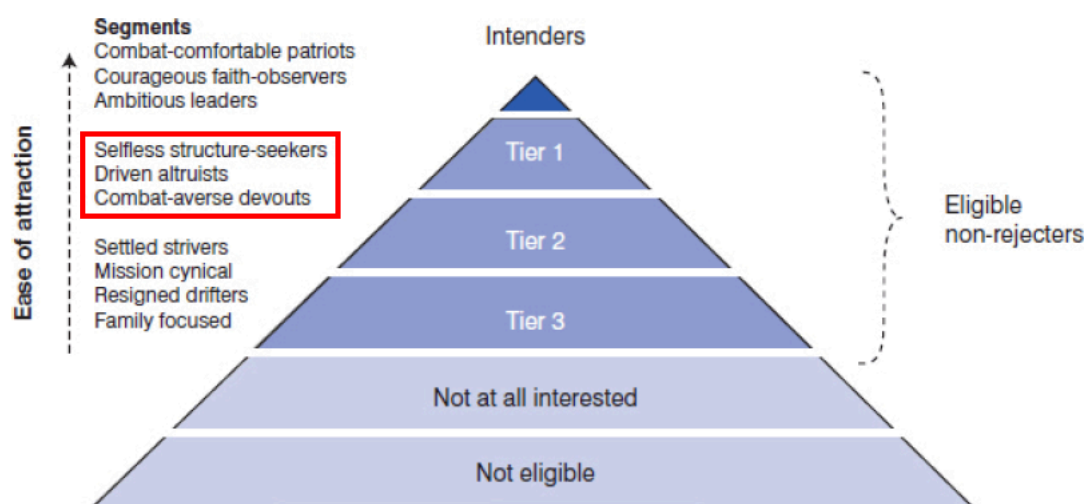
Figure 1: "Army recruitment segments." In Matthew Waksman and Rob Fullerton-Batten, *Helping a new generation find where they belong in the British Army* (London: Institute of Practitioners in Advertising, 2018), 8.

Figure 2: "Twelve drivers that motivate applicants." In Matthew Waksman and Rob Fullerton-Batten, *Helping a new generation find where they belong in the British Army* (London: Institute of Practitioners in Advertising, 2018), 9.

Based on interviews conducted with soldiers on bases, as well as with recruits in training, Karmarama argued that the main benefit of life in the Army in comparison with civilian life is not "a benefit they had expected, or been motivated by," or even one that "they'd seen in communications."[51] Rather, the benefit was "*each other*," and this notion of 'strong bonds' was further explored as the common denominator linking each of the twelve drivers.[52] For instance, it was argued that skills can be better developed through the support of strong bonds, and the salary and benefits earned in the Army can be better enjoyed if spent with friends. By maintaining a diverse focus on individual motivations that would appeal to Tier 2 applicants, while at the same time linking them under the umbrella of 'belonging,' Karmarama's campaign has humanised the Army as an institution and employer, portraying it as an entity that both recognises the distinctive needs and skills of each applicant, while also creating an environment in which each of these unique individuals can 'belong.' In contrast to historical appeals to belonging that centred on the idea of being part of Britain or the British Empire, the current campaign

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[51] Waksman and Fullerton-Batten, *Helping*, 10.
[52] Ibid., 10.

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does not draw on patriotic sentiments, but rather uses the idea of 'belonging' as a universal, apolitical sentiment that decontextualizes the reality of life in the military. As will be discussed in the final chapter, this new direction has provoked criticism, particularly because people as young as 15 are able to apply to join the Army, and this age group is especially vulnerable to such messages.[53]

Karmarama's focus on the notion of 'belonging' was also accompanied by a diversified media strategy. Recognising that young people consume media in a fragmented way meant that resources had to be spread across a variety of channels to get maximum exposure, particularly as the new campaign was designed to appeal to people who have less natural affinity with the Army. A combination of TV, cinema, video on demand (VOD), and AdSmart made up over 60% of the media buy, with radio alone also making up 12%.[54] Through the acquisition of VOD and AdSmart, it was possible to target advertising to "select which *belonging* moment [was] served to each audience."[55] In this way, the campaign appealed to individual applicants, highlighting factors such as pay, skills, and travel, while at the same time framing these decision-making factors in terms of "the bigger, more emotional idea, making it more persuasive and cohesive as a result."[56] However, beyond individualised online content, other media platforms are also used to target adverts for specific purposes. Different demographic groups consume media in different ways, and as much as 'This Is Belonging' was designed to appeal to prospective recruits, another vital decision-making group also needed to be persuaded, namely 'gatekeepers.' Authority figures, including parents, teachers, and guardians, also play an important role in encouraging or dissuading young people who want to join the armed forces, and Karmarama's decision to put a significant percentage of their media buy towards radio, as well as television, suggests that they recognise the role of these gatekeepers in recruitment; if parents and other authority figures view that Army as a viable career option for their children, or other young people in their care, they can be made an asset, rather than an obstacle, to recruitment.[57]

2017: 'This Is Belonging' Phase 1

The first iteration of Karmarama's marketing campaign, launched in February 2017, focused on moments of belonging "outside, or in-between the action."[58] Rather than thrilling scenes of action and adventure, the posters, photographs, and TV adverts aimed to depict real soldiers and their experiences, drawing on "human and surprising

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[53] Rhianna Louise and Emma Sangster, *Selling the Military: a critical analysis of contemporary recruitment marketing in the UK* (London: ForcesWatch and Medact, 2019), 13.
[54] Waksman and Fullerton-Batten, *Helping*, 15.
[55] Ibid., 15.
[56] Ibid., 14.
[57] Louise and Sangster, *Selling the Military*, 14-15.
[58] Waksman and Fullerton-Batten, *Helping*, 11.

moments" to sound "a new emotional call to action – find where you belong."[59] Instead of actors or models posing in uniform, or shots of combat and military equipment, there is a focus on "authentic human experiences"[60] drawn from interviews with soldiers and recruits-in-training, and the focal point of Army life appears to be the friendships and bonds that help young people "face tough challenges and grow."[61]

In a series of five 'out-of-home' (OOH) adverts, real soldiers are depicted in groups, relaxed and comfortable, in beautiful but ambiguous surroundings, and without many context clues to their profession other than the uniforms they wear (Fig. 3). On each of the posters, the slogan, "This Is Belonging," is centrally overlaid on the photographs, and the phrase, "Find where you belong," is situated at the bottom, next to the call to "Search Army jobs," reinforcing the link between the idea of belonging and a career in the Army. In a bid to highlight the importance of bonds formed in the Army, each of the posters depicts a *group* of soldiers, and many of the subjects are either framed in profile, photographed from behind or far away, or partially obscured in shadow, thus drawing attention away from distinct individuals and creating an ambiguous, anonymous community to which anyone could belong. Coupled with the indistinct landscapes in which these groups are situated, the posters drive home the idea that 'belonging' is universal and attainable, and the lack of clear individual focus easily allows the viewer to insert themselves into each scenario that is depicted, regardless of who they are and where they are from. However, even though there is an effort to obscure the individual identities of the soldiers depicted, it is also clear that women and non-white individuals are also part of the group, on an equal footing with the other soldiers; the Army is thus portrayed as inclusive, diverse, and accepting. Though this message is effectively communicated across the OOH advertisements, the fact remains that this emphasis on the bonds that underpin Army life also obscures the realities and responsibilities of a career in the military. As in Ian Roderick's discussion of the use of shadow and silhouette in U.S. military training advertisements, "the primary ideational function of the images is with the symbolic representation of the participants (the soldiers) rather than their actions (soldiering)."[62] Although there is one poster depicting a group of soldiers standing in front of an Army vehicle, there is virtually no indication of their role or the nature of their work, and ultimately the narrative focus on 'belonging' means that the job itself is being advertised as an afterthought.

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[59] Waksman and Fullerton-Batten, *Helping*, 11.
[60] Will Bright, *Karmarama 2017 Press Release*, January 6, 2017, received via Email on January 21, 2020.
[61] Ibid.,
[62] Ian Roderick, "Bare life of the virtuous shadow warrior: The use of silhouette in military training advertisements," *Continuum* 23, no. 1 (2009): 81, doi:10.1080/10304310802596325.
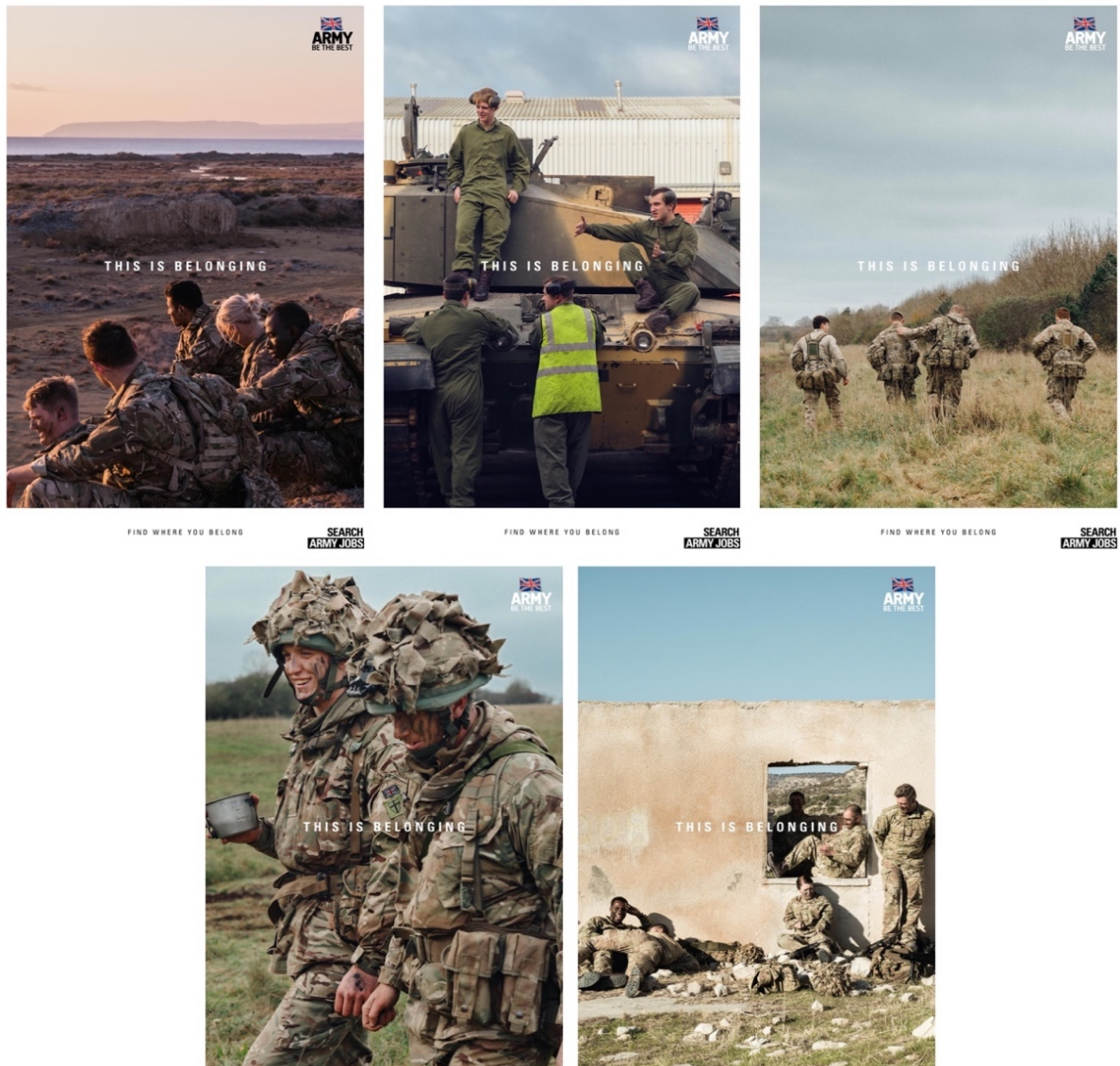
Figure 3: Posters designed by Karmarama, 2017. "This Is Belonging 1-5." Accessed at Ads of the World. https://www.adsoftheworld.com/campaign/army-karmarama-01-2017.

Along with the OOH images, a series of four television adverts were rolled out to "shine a light on authentic moments of real belonging in the army, sometimes extremely challenging, sometimes more relaxed."[63] In contrast to the posters and images discussed previously, the TV adverts allow more time to develop narrative depth and convey the message of 'belonging' in more complex ways. 'Part 1' of the series shows a soldier sitting alone and appearing to struggle to cope with a difficult situation that happened before filming began.[64] While no insight is given into the incident itself, as the camera zooms out from the soldier's face, he is surrounded by his colleagues and friends who come to sit beside him in support, with one soldier handing him a cup of tea from a

[63] Bright, *Karmarama 2017 Press Release*.
[64] ARMYjobs, "Army TV advert 2017 – This Is Belonging Part 1." *YouTube Video*, 0:21, January 7, 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lMd4RrT7SS4.

thermos, and another ruffling his hair. In 'Part 2,' the advert opens on soldiers walking across a snowy mountain scene.[65] When one of them slips and falls, they are helped up by one of their colleagues. When another starts whistling and singing, the other soldiers smile and make jokes together. In 'Part 3,' two soldiers are shown sitting in the window of a run-down building, with a helicopter flying overhead and sandbags piled around them; despite the potentially dangerous situation, they are having a discussion about cricket.[66] Finally, in 'Part 4,' when a tyre bursts on one of the trucks in a convoy in a desert, a soldier jumps out and starts to change the tyre, but every time he goes to get back into the truck it pulls away just out of reach. Laughing, his fellow soldiers encourage him to try and get on the truck, and when he finally makes it back into the vehicle, they all cheer, and 'This Is Belonging' appears on the screen.[67] In these television adverts, there are more clues given about the subjects' profession, with more time spent on the particular surroundings and situations they find themselves in. However, these scenes ultimately play out in an ambiguous and decontextualized way. The potential dangers and hardships that accompany a career in the Army are always tangential, situated just out of shot, or just before the filming begins, and thus the realities of the profession are glossed over in order to convey the most important benefit of joining the Army: making friends, forging bonds, and 'belonging.' Despite the fact that the target demographic has lived through two high-profile wars, the adverts do not give explicit context clues, appealing to the generic sentiment of 'belonging' that is, as a result, devoid of substance and meaning.

2018: 'This Is Belonging' Phase 2

      The second phase of Karmarama's campaign, rolled out in January 2018, built on the previous version of 'This Is Belonging,' and aimed to amplify the message "by making the Army feel more attainable – demonstrating how belonging supports you physically and emotionally, and how it's not only one type of person who belongs in the Army."[68] In contrast with the 2017 campaign, which emphasised the idea of 'belonging' in terms of group cohesion and forming bonds, the new series of five TV adverts focused on individual soldiers and their identities, as well as their specific concerns about whether or not they could 'belong' in the Army. Each of the videos was based on real soldiers' experiences, and viewers were also given the opportunity to further explore the soldiers' stories in more detail through long-form animations online, narrated in their own words.[69] In the clip, 'Expressing my Emotions,' a soldier receives a letter from a loved one, and

[65] ARMYjobs, "Army TV advert 2017 – This Is Belonging Part 2," *YouTube Video*, 0:20, January 7, 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_cpPzYFlJXI.

[66] ARMYjobs, "Army TV advert 2017 – This Is Belonging Part 3," *YouTube Video*, 0:30, February 2, 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WeuFCHIvutI.

[67] ARMYjobs, "Army TV advert 2017 – This Is Belonging Part 4," *YouTube Video*, 0:30, February 2, 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GSonVRzmDD8.

[68] Will Bright, *Karmarama 2019 Press Release*, 2019, received via Email on January 21, 2020.

[69] Will Bright, *Karmarama 2018 Press Release*, 2018, received via Email on January 21, 2020.

upon opening the envelope he finds a tea bag and a card, and he becomes emotional as he wipes tears from his face.[70] Another soldier approaches him with a mug of hot water to brew his tea, and the phrase, 'This Is Belonging' fades into the foreground of the video. In another clip, 'Keeping my Faith,' a Muslim soldier is shown washing his hands and face, removing his helmet and shoes, and donning a taqiyah before performing prayers during what appears to be a military training exercise.[71] His colleagues give him space and quiet in order to complete his prayers, and make sure not to disturb him during this ritual. The other TV adverts, 'Facing my Kryptonite,' 'Still Playing the Joker,' and 'Having my Voice Heard,' all deal with individuals achieving their goals and overcoming their fears, "whether it's conquering a pull-up or taking on a leadership role," while still accepting their unique identities and personalities; individuality is prized in the Army and allowed to flourish, as the Army is portrayed as a tolerant, flexible environment and safe haven for those who feel marginalised or different.[72]

These ideas are further expanded upon in the animated sequences, where real soldiers narrate their experiences and explicitly address their concerns about joining the Army, and whether they could 'belong.' First, the soldiers discuss their preconceptions and the worries they had about whether or not they would be suited to the Army due to their personalities, physical attributes, or identities, but in each clip it is revealed that they were proven wrong, and that they have found themselves accepted and supported. The female soldier found that she did, in fact, "have her voice heard" in the Army, and "all that mattered was that you were good at your job," in contrast to her previous career, where she felt like she "didn't have a voice."[73] Similarly, a soldier who was previously apprehensive about being openly gay in the Army discovers that, "within days, [he] was more than confident about being who [he] was,"[74] and a Muslim soldier states that the Army "embraces the fact that you come from a different faith."[75] Being emotional or unfit also did not prove to be obstacles to 'belonging,' as the animated videos show that the Army provides a safe and supportive environment, where people can rely on one another and help each other grow. While the 2018 rendition of 'This Is Belonging' had a much more individual focus than the 2017 version, both paint a picture of the Army as a place

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[70] ARMYjobs, "Expressing my Emotions – This is Belonging – Army Jobs," *YouTube Video*, 0:40, January 13, 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gTqqS5OrLGU.

[71] ARMYjobs, "Keeping my Faith – This is Belonging – Army Jobs." *YouTube Video*, 0:40, January 13, 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OQ4OoPNY_YM.

[72] ARMYjobs, "Facing my Kryptonite – This is Belonging – Army Jobs," *YouTube Video*, 0:40, January 13, 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YVf76dveKU4: ARMYjobs, "Having my Voice Heard – This is Belonging – Army Jobs," *YouTube Video*, 0:40, January 13, 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Jj2Fm8pRBI: ARMYjobs, "Still Playing the Joker – This is Belonging – Army Jobs," *YouTube Video*, 0:40, January 13, 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9RLHAWf6NKA.

[73] triuneself, "UK Army Ad: 'This Is Belonging 2018,'" *YouTube* video, 3:29, January 10, 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q1vCe3BAnws.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Ibid.

where anyone can fit in and 'belong,' regardless of race, gender, sexuality, religion, or background. In the 2017 campaign, there is more of an emphasis on the prospect of being part of a group and making friends, while the 2018 version highlights specific concerns and questions that new recruits may have. In many ways, though, both of these campaigns challenge ideas of how conventional soldiers look and act; in the past, the Army has relied on young, predominantly white men to fill the ranks, but due to manpower shortages, the recruitment appeal has been expanded to explicitly address women and minorities.

2019: 'Your Army Needs You'

The 2019 instalment of 'This Is Belonging' was perhaps the most controversial and widely discussed version of the campaign, garnering both popular and media attention for its distinctive imagery and message. A series of Kitchener-style posters and television adverts focus on how the Army sees beyond harmful stereotypes of young people and recognises their true potential.[76] On the six posters, the Army appeals to 'Me Me Me Millennials,' 'Class Clowns,' 'Binge Gamers,' 'Phone Zombies,' 'Snowflakes,' and 'Selfie Addicts,' arguing that 'Your Army Needs You' and welcomes those qualities and characteristics otherwise dismissed by society, repackaging those stereotypes in terms of 'self-belief,' 'spirit,' 'drive,' 'focus,' 'compassion,' and 'confidence,' respectively (Fig. 4). These images, with their bold, red typeface and striking portraits, are all the more powerful and memorable for drawing on distinctive historical imagery that is easily recognisable; as Susan Sontag notes, through 'quotation,' posters can convey a great deal of information quickly and economically.[77] The reference to the World War I posters of Lord Kitchener is unmistakable, with a single, central figure looking directly at the camera, drawing the gaze and establishing a visual dialogue between observer and subject, making the request to join the Army all the more direct and personal.

However, while the layout and imagery of the posters is similar, it is also important to note some significant differences. While the 2019 recruitment posters argue that 'Your Army Needs You,' Lord Kitchener's call is more patriotic, stating instead that 'Your Country Needs You,' which suggests that the current campaign aims to uncouple the message of 'belonging' from the construction of national identity. Additionally, the 'Your Army Needs You' posters include photographs of serving soldiers, in contrast with the depiction of Lord Kitchener, who was Secretary of State for War at the time his picture was published, which further reinforces the idea that, by joining the Army, the viewer is joining an diverse group of equals, rather than being called on to serve in a hierarchy under the command of one symbolic figure. While the First World War poster

[76] Bright, *Karmarama 2019 Press Release*.
[77] Pearl James, "Introduction: Reading World War I Posters," in *Picture This: World War I Posters and Visual Culture*, ed. Pearl James (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 11.

represented a nation-wide call to action in a time of conflict, 'Your Army Needs You' is an *individual* appeal to the viewer to realise their true potential and find where they 'belong'; rather than demanding that the viewer volunteer their body and labour in service of a larger cause, the 'Your Army Needs You' is framed in terms of the benefits that the individual can gain by joining the Army. As recruitment in the UK operates on a voluntary basis, and has done so since 1960, the Army must attract recruits by communicating the benefits and advantages of a career in the armed forces. However, while previous campaigns have highlighted ideas of professional development, adventure, and travel, the concept of 'belonging' appears to be unique in its current form, particularly considering the way in which the military is humanised.

Figure 4: Posters designed by Karmarama, 2019. "Your Army Needs You." From Claire Sadler, "'Your Army Needs You': Army Unveils Latest Recruitment Campaign." *ForcesNet*. January 3, 2019. https://www.forces.net/news/army-recruitment-campaign-highlights-lasting-confidence-service-career.

In a similar manner, the TV adverts "tell the stories of individuals whose perceived weaknesses are seen as strengths by the Army."[78] Across these clips, potential recruits are shown at home or at work, with others calling out their stereotypes, before the scene changes to depict them in the Army, performing roles where their potential is recognised, such as humanitarian missions.[79] One advert shows a gamer up all night, which the Army sees as showing stamina and dedication, while in another scene, someone is shown slowly stowing supermarket trolleys, much to their annoyance of their colleagues, while the Army instead reads this as them being a slow and steady perfectionist with patience.[80] According to Major General Paul Nanson, the Army designed the campaign to show that it looks beyond stereotypes and "sees people differently," and recognises their "need for a bigger sense of purpose in a job where they can do something meaningful."[81] This approach appears to have been effective: according to Matthew Waksman, planning director at Karmarama, "on the day those posters went live [the Army] had the highest number of registrations that there had been in the past 12 months," with 16,000 applications in January, and a 78% increase in website visits, a two-fold increase on January 2018.[82] Despite this success, however, the campaign was also criticised by people on social media, who pointed out that the adverts were based on perceptions that may be held by older people, but are probably not recognised by the target audience itself.[83] Once again, however, concern that these adverts constitute a misrepresentation of life in the armed forces was voiced across the political spectrum, with some going so far as to argue that this campaign represents "another example of how the Army tries to exploit young people's emotional vulnerability to drive recruitment, instead of encouraging a fully informed, mature, and rational decision over a potentially life-changing commitment."[84]

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[78] Bright, *Karmarama 2019 Press Release*.
[79] Bright, *Karmarama 2019 Press Release*.
[80] Aamna Mohdin, "UK army recruitment ads target 'snowflake' millennials," *The Guardian*, January 3, 2019, https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/jan/03/uk-army-recruitment-ads-target-snowflake-millennials.
[81] Mohdin, "UK army recruitment."
[82] Rebecca Stewart, "Those British Army 'Snowflake' ads have encouraged the most new recruits in years," *The Drum*, March 20, 2019, https://www.thedrum.com/news/2019/03/20/those-british-army-snowflake-ads-have-encouraged-the-most-new-recruits-years.
[83] Maya Oppenheim, "Army recruitment applications 'almost double after snowflake millennial ad campaign," *The Independent*, February 9, 2019, https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/british-army-recruitment-snowflake-millennial-advertising-campaign-phone-zombies-a8771176.html.
[84] Steven Morris and Seth Jacobson, "Army ads accused of targeting youngsters during 'January blues,'" *The Guardian*, March 24, 2019, https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/mar/24/army-ads-accused-of-targeting-youngsters-during-january-blues-snowflake.

<u>2020: 'Confidence that lasts a lifetime'</u>

       The most recent reconceptualization of the Army 'brand' was launched in January of this year. Focusing specifically on the idea of 'confidence,' the campaign rolled out a new series of "bold outdoor posters," followed by a television advert, as well as radio and social media clips that "show how confidence can be acquired when joining the Army."[85] Building on the success of the previous year's campaign, which saw approximately 90,000 applications to join the Army between January 1 and November 30, the current campaign further capitalises on research that suggests that young people believe that a lack of self-confidence is holding them back.[86] In the posters, the "unique and lifelong confidence that an Army career offers" is contrasted with superficial, short-lived sources of confidence, including makeup, going to the gym, expensive clothes, alcohol, and social media attention and 'likes.' Each of the posters features a collage of fragmented photos and images, creating a Frankenstein-type amalgamation of 'ideal' body parts, facial features, clothing articles, Emojis, and alcoholic beverages, reinforcing the idea that confidence derived from such shallow sources is incomplete and inadequate, while 'real' confidence can only be found in the Army (Fig. 5). Similarly, in a striking TV advert, a soldier is shown walking through an arid desert landscape, where he is taunted by individuals who represent different aspects of civilian life: bodybuilding, brand-name trainers, social media, and recreational drug and alcohol use on a night out.[87] The soldier, however, ignores the distractions of short-term confidence boosts, and the advert ends as the soldier is surrounded by his comrades and presses on with his military duties, prompting the closing lines: "Lots of things can give you confidence for a little while. But confidence that lasts a lifetime? There's only one place you'll find that."[88]

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[85] Will Bright, *Karmarama 2020 Press Release*, January 2, 2020, received via Email on January 21, 2020.
[86] Bright, *Karmarama 2020 Press Release*.
[87] Nathalie Olah, "The British army is cynically using young people's insecurities as a recruiting tool," *The Guardian*, January 15, 2020, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/jan/15/british-army-insecurities-recruiting-ad.
[88] "British Army 'Army confidence lasts a lifetime' by Karmarama," *Campaign Live*, January 2, 2020, https://www.campaignlive.com/article/british-army-army-confidence-lasts-lifetime-karmarama/1669716.
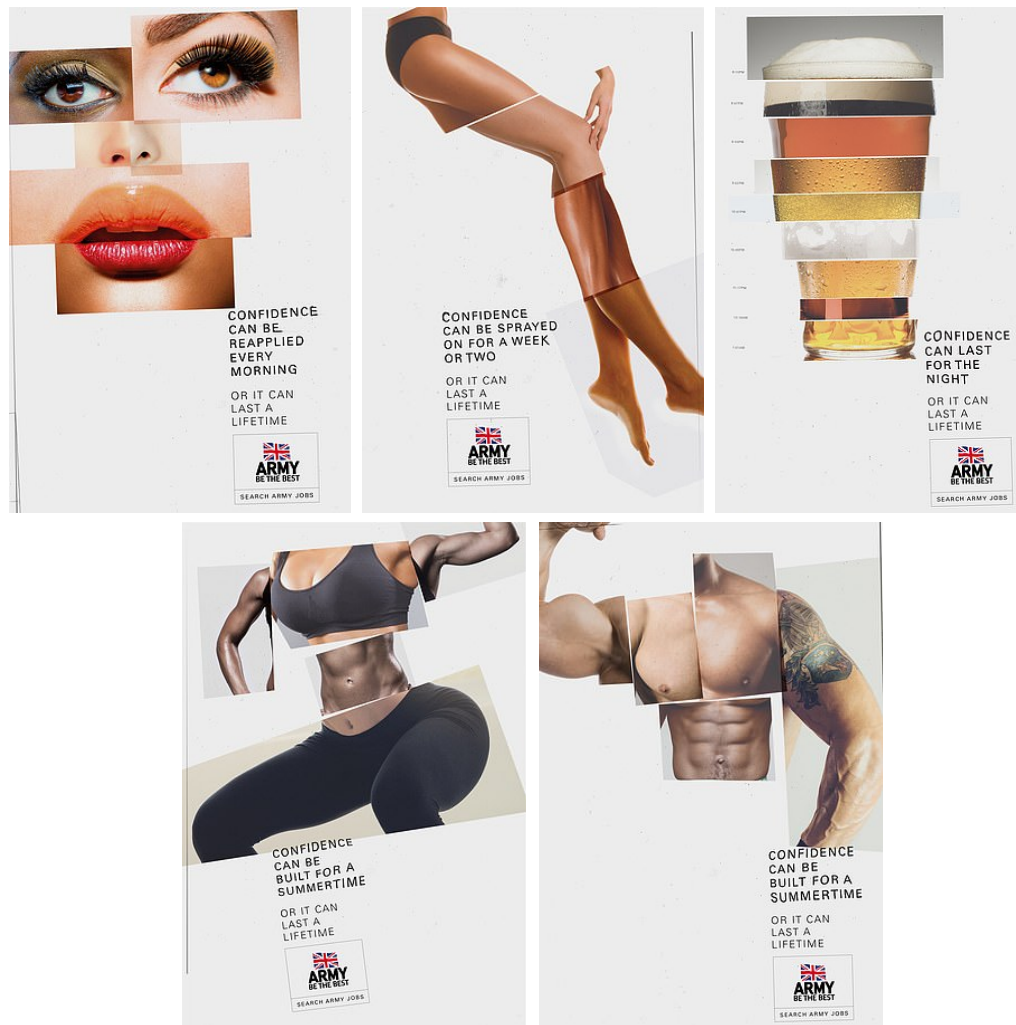
Figure 5: Posters designed by Karmarama. "Army confidence lasts a lifetime." Accessed at "British Army 'Army confidence lasts a lifetime' by Karmarama." *Campaign Live*. January 2, 2020. https://www.campaignlive.com/article/british-army-army-confidence-lasts-lifetime-karmarama/1669716.

Based on the examination of the different versions of 'This Is Belonging,' the question arises as to whether the rhetoric of 'belonging' has previously been used in British Army recruitment media. While variations of Karmarama's individual 'drivers,' including skill development and travel, have been part of recruitment campaigns throughout the twentieth century, their unification under the umbrella of 'belonging' is unique to the current campaign. As will be demonstrated in the subsequent chapters, although many of today's recruitment tactics bear similarities to historical examples, the way that Army recruitment operates today is unprecedented, not only given the redefinition of the idea of 'belonging,' but also because of the changing nature of warfare and wider socio-political developments of the twentieth century. In the next chapters, Army recruitment campaigns will be examined in their historical context, with the aim of uncovering patterns in the ways in which the armed forces engage with their audience and respond to changing social norms and attitudes, as well as the extent to which the images constructed correspond to the reality of a life and career in the armed forces.

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World War Propaganda: messages of 'patriotism' and 'masculinity'

Total war and the emergence of the recruitment poster

As Gary Messinger notes, "the period of 1914-18 is often portrayed as a time of twilight," representing both the end of the long nineteenth century and the true beginning of the twentieth.[89] This transition was sweeping, as the First World War brought many of the material conditions that had become important aspects of European life to a focal point, including "industrialisation, urbanisation, the rise of mass media, and the centralisation of national powers and identities."[90] In the face of these rapid changes, however, many cultural assumptions and traditions were slow to catch up, and because those who volunteered or were conscripted into Europe's armies had been born in a time of relative peace, their experience of war was largely limited to what was reported from imperial provinces. As a result, the First World War unfolded in an essentially nineteenth-century cultural landscape, and Pearl James argues that "mass-produced, full-colour, large-format war posters are at the crux of this contradiction" because, although they were signs and instruments of modern innovations in warfare, their subject matter also relied heavily on traditional imagery and prevailing social norms.[91]

In the creation of the 'home front,' posters "nationalised, mobilised, and modernised civilian populations," as agricultural and domestic work, the consumption and conservation of goods, and various leisure activities all became emblematic of one's national identity and one's place in the war effort.[92] Thus, the idea of 'belonging' became intimately connected to the idea of 'Britishness,' but this marker also had to be earned through one's contribution to the war effort. In this process, however, war posters also reflect the period's confusion of traditions and modernity, as national identities were simultaneously created around nostalgic visions of the past and the modern demands of war; women, for instance, were portrayed wearing traditional clothes as mothers, wives, and damsels in distress, but were also depicted as nurses, drivers, and munitions workers.[93] Through the study of posters, it is thus possible to observe various historical and social conventions, as well as the pressures impinging upon them. One prominent example, designed by Sir Robert Baden-Powell in 1916, showcases the many different ways that British subjects could contribute to the war effort, as soldiers, munitions workers, or nurses, among other things (Fig. 6). Both men and women, young and old, from different social and class backgrounds, all have a distinct place in the war effort, and even if they cannot serve directly at the front, their 'work,' situated at the bottom of the image, still supports the troops and the nation, located at the top of the poster.

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[89] Gary S. Messinger, *British propaganda and the state in the First World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 3.
[90] James, "Introduction," 1.
[91] Ibid., 2.
[92] Ibid., 2.
[93] Ibid., 3.

Figure 6: Poster designed by Sir Robert Baden-Powell, 1916. "Are YOU in this?" From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1977-06-81-29. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1977-06-81-29.

Historically, Britain has been reluctant to implement conscription, as its liberal political culture made it difficult for political leaders to give absolute priority to defence over all other goals.[94] Britain's Regular Army was smaller compared to the forces maintained by the continental great powers, and when the latter moved to introduce conscription in the late nineteenth century, the British did not follow their lead.[95] The main task of the Regular Army was to garrison the empire, a task for which conscripts, who would only have served for a few years, would have been of little use.[96] As a result, Britain relied on long-service professionals, and due to its island geography and small population made use of a combination of 'force-multipliers' to make up for these shortcomings. Strategies of appeasement and deterrence were likely to be "cheaper in human and economic terms than actually fighting wars," and while in peacetime they "shunned entangling continental allies," in wartime "they were quick to pursue burden-sharing arrangements to ensure that others did as much as possible of the heavy lifting of continental land fighting."[97] Relying on the navy to protect its trade, industry, and burgeoning empire, Britain also employed the latest military technologies wherever

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[94] David French, *Army, Empire, and Cold War: The British Army and Military Policy: 1945-1971* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 5.
[95] Ibid., 6.
[96] Ibid., 6.
[97] Ibid., 6.

possible, and so asking the electorate to pay more for defence was always "a policy of last resort."[98] It was only during the two world wars that Britain introduced conscription, largely because their allies were no longer prepared to allow the British to conserve their own human resources at the expense of French, Russian, or American lives. As David French argues, Britain's allies had to perceive that there was "a rough equality of sacrifice between them," and thus the introduction of conscription became essential to the British war effort.[99]

At the outbreak of the First World War, the Regular Army consisted of only 160,000 men, but conscription was not introduced until 1916.[100] In the interim, recruitment presented a major problem, and home-front propaganda was an integral tool for increasing the Army's numbers. Initially, a small group of MPs established recruitment committees in their respective constituencies, but these were later coordinated by the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee (PRC), set up by Prime Minister Herbert Asquith in August 1914.[101] The PRC was a cross-party committee, and operated on a quasi-official basis, utilising the existing infrastructure in parliamentary constituencies and consolidating both official efforts and those of unofficial groups.[102] The PRC was not the sole author of the recruitment message, which emerged naturally and arose from a multitude of sources; alongside large-scale national campaigns, local efforts also played a significant role, particularly in the appeal to Irish and Scottish recruits. In contrast to commercial advertisements, which had largely been aimed at urban consumers, war posters were much more widely distributed, "appearing not just on billboards or walls but also in shop windows, banks, schools, churches, libraries, town halls, factories, recruiting stations, offices, and homes; in cities, small towns, and rural settings."[103] As a result, James argues, posters redefined the boundaries of public space by bringing national imperatives into private settings, as many people hung posters in their home as part of their participation in and support of the war effort.[104]

In the analysis of posters, propaganda, and similar visual recruitment material, it is imperative to view images in their context, rather than simply letting them speak for themselves. Although a great number of posters from the early twentieth century have been preserved and reproduced, there is often less information available regarding their production, distribution, and reception, and the question remains as to whether such advertisements mirror consumers' actual values and behaviour, their fantasies and

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[98] French, *Army*, 6.
[99] Ibid., 6.
[100] Messinger, *British propaganda*, 208.
[101] Ibid., 208.
[102] National Army Museum, "Your King and Country Need You," *National Army Museum Online Collection*, NAM.1981-09-29-1, accessed April 27, 2020, https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1981-09-29-1.
[103] James, *Picture This*, 10.
[104] Ibid., 10.

aspirations, or they simply reflect advertisers' values. As the distinction between public and private advertising, propaganda, and other instruments of mass communication became increasingly blurred, their purpose and intended effect become difficult to disentangle from viewers' experiences and contemporary interpretations. It is clear that, by the end of the First World War in 1918, "a great historical divide had been passed in the development of opinion manipulation," as government, rather than the church and other institutions, became the major producer of propaganda, but the "sheer number of variables makes interpreting such objects daunting."[105] Even more so than today, isolating the role of posters in historical recruitment is difficult, but analysing the ideas communicated can still offer some insight into the values of the day, as well as the ways in which the Army reconciled the tension between wartime manpower demands and reigning social conventions. As discussed previously, "it is important to remember that posters and recruitment literature did not manufacture consent, but rather they appealed to pre-existing beliefs and attitudes."[106]

Duty and Britishness

First World War recruitment posters made use of a number of different rhetorical and visual strategies to persuade young men to enlist. The outbreak of war in 1914 was greeted with popular acclaim in both Britain and the rest of Europe, with approximately 30,000 men enlisting every day by the end of August.[107] This level of enthusiasm was unprecedented, and has not been matched by any conflict since, but as the war dragged on, the fervour waned, and this development is reflected in the shift in message communicated in visual recruitment media. Many of the first posters produced by the PRC between September and October of 1914 followed a traditional format for official government proclamations, and consisted of a concise, patriotic message beneath the Royal Monogram, and did not include images (Fig. 7). Posters like "Lord Kitchener's Appeal" simply stated that "100,000 Men [were] required for the War," and the use of red and blue text reinforced the poster's official status by implying the colours of the Union Flag (Fig. 8). As the war went on, however, and reports began to filter back home about life at the front, posters increasingly employed colourful, eye-catching images and expressive appeals to duty in an attempt convince a more reluctant population to enlist. A number of posters also capitalised on the idea that 'the war would be over by Christmas,' asking young men to "Join the Army until the war is over," arguing that more men would

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[105] James, *Picture This*, 17.
[106] National Army Museum, "Surely You Will Fight For Your King," *National Army Museum Online Collection*, NAM.1981-09-26-1, accessed March 23, 2020, https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1981-09-26-1.
[107] National Army Museum, "Fall In," *National Army Museum Online Collection*, NAM.1981-09-25-1, accessed March 23, 2020, https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1981-09-25-1.

help "shorten the Duration of the War"[108] and facilitate a "Quicker Peace" (Fig. 9). Here, an explicit link was drawn between the number of men that enlisted and the likelihood of victory, but the underlying implication is that, if the viewer decided *not* to enlist, they would be responsible for prolonging the conflict. The concept of duty was heavily mobilised across recruitment media, and by making service in the armed forces a condition of true 'Britishness,' these posters reinforced the idea that if people did not fulfil their role in the war effort, they could not 'belong' to Britain.

Figure 7: Poster published by the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, 1914. "Your King and Country Need You." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1981-09-29-1. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1981-09-29-1.

Figure 8: Poster, 1914. "Lord Kitchener's Appeal." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1996-01-10-1. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1996-01-10-1.

Figure 9: Poster issued by the Publicity Department, Central Recruiting Depot, Whitehall, 1914. "Men of London! Each Recruit means Quicker Peace." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1977-06-81-3. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1977-06-81-3.

One way in which the connection between 'duty' and 'Britishness' was established was through the portrayal of Britain as a place and idea to be defended. One poster contains images of rural life and pristine country landscapes, and asks whether "this [is] worth fighting for?" (Fig.10) and on another, a map of the British Isles is situated under a text that reads, "Is Your Home Here? Defend It!" (Fig. 11). Similarly, the British countryside, where "OUR Homes are secure, OUR Mothers & Wives safe, [and] OUR Children still play and fear no harm," is often compared to the destruction suffered by Belgium, thus encouraging British men to join the Army to prevent their home from suffering the same fate (Fig. 12, Fig. 13). In these cases, the recruitment posters rely heavily on the nostalgia of tradition associated with rural life, creating an idyllic fantasy

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[108] National Army Museum, "Men of London! Remember!" *National Army Museum*, accessed March 24, 2020, https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1977-06-81-2.

of Britain that must be preserved and protected from harm, and this was frequently contrasted with the 'culture' of the "German Barbarians" (Fig. 14). Images of women and children were also utilised to articulate this point, as they were depicted as helpless civilians that required saving, and the violation of such 'innocence' was treated as the ultimate expression of German ruthlessness. One 1915 poster shows a young girl carrying a baby, standing in front of a collapsed building, with a caption that reads, 'Men of Britain! Will you stand this?' (Fig. 15).The poster references the German naval raid on the town of Scarborough in December 1914, and the caption once again ascribes a level of personal responsibility to the viewer for not having prevented this tragedy.

Figure 10: Poster published by the PRC, 1915. "Your Country's Call." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1977-06-81-22.
https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1977-06-81-22.

Figure 11: Poster published by the PRC, 1915. "Is Your Home Here? Defend It!" From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 11946.
https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/30674.

Figure 12: Poster, 1914. "The Hun and the Home." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1977-06-81-25. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1977-06-81-25.

Figure 13: Poster published by the PRC. "Remember Belgium." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1977-06-81-5. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1977-06-81-5.

Figure 14: Poster published by the PRC, 1914. "Remember Scarborough." From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 5089. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/28394.

Figure 15: Poster published by the PRC, 1915. "Men of Britain! Will You Stand This?" From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1977-06-81-42. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1977-06-81-42.

Portraying Britain as weak and frail would not have served to foster confidence in potential recruits, however, and these images can also be juxtaposed against posters that emphasise the "Honour and Glory of the British Empire."[109] Here, the emphasis is on how enlistment would support the already "Strong Arm" of Britain that would "Carry Us Through," rather than the villages and citizens that cannot defend themselves (Fig. 16). In one striking image, the image of St George fighting the dragon makes for a particularly engaging call to arms, symbolising the ultimate triumph of good over evil (Fig. 17). Though the text states that "Britain Needs You At Once," it is not a portrayal of the weak and defenceless, but rather casts the viewer in the role of the knight, fighting for justice and honour. The depiction of armoured warrior was common in the propaganda literature of many combatant countries, including Germany and Austria, "where such images drew on a rich tradition of folklore and historical fact," demonstrating how these posters drew on the values of an imagined medieval past, as well as the romanticised notion of chivalry and nobility in combat.[110] Thus, while the use of idyllic landscapes and images of women and children reinforced the 'soldier-protector' narrative, other posters aimed to promote

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[109] National Army Museum, "Your King & Country Need You," *National Army Museum Online Collection*, NAM.1977-06-81-15, accessed March 23, 2020, https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1977-06-81-15.

[110] National Army Museum, "Britain Needs You At Once," *National Army Museum Online Collection*, NAM.1977-06-81-21. accessed March 25, 2020 https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1977-06-81-21.

trust in Britain's government and military leadership, extolling the virtues of the British nation that made it superior to Germany. Some posters made reference to the idea that it was the duty and privilege of "Free Men" to "Fight for Freedom," arguing that the defence of the homeland was an unequivocal right of citizenship (Fig. 18, Fig. 19).

Figure 16: Poster published by the PRC, 1914. "Britain's strong Arm." From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 11470.
https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/30288.

Figure 17: Poster published by the PRC, 1915. "Britain Needs You At Once." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1977-06-81-21.
https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1977-06-81-21.

Figure 18: Poster published by the PRC, 1916. "Rights of Citizenship." From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 11998.
https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/30710.

Figure 19: Poster published by the PRC, 1915. "Fight For Freedom." From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 5103.
https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/28403.

A large number of posters made more explicit references to duty, calling upon young men to do their part and enlist in the armed forces. Many contained direct patriotic appeals to fight for "King and Country" (Fig. 21) and defend Britain in its "Hour of Need,"[111] or utilised national symbols, such as the Union flag and its colours, to create a

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[111] National Army Museum, "Fall In."

consistent visual language that would be easily recognisable across recruitment media (Fig. 22). These PRC posters addressed the viewers as dutiful citizens "unquestioningly loyal to king and country," and images of King George V and maps of the British Isles were frequently used to appeal to patriotic sentiments, as was the phrase, "Come along, boys," with its "paternalistic, slightly school-masterly, tone."[112] Another widely used rhetorical tactic was the idea that to enlist was to "Step Into Your Place," suggesting that, for young men, the life of a soldier was a natural, preordained role, and to deviate from this implied that they were insufficiently patriotic (Fig. 20). One poster shows a group of men from a variety of professional and class backgrounds walking towards a long line of soldiers stretching towards the horizon, gradually blending in as their clothes are replaced by uniforms. Here, the Army is portrayed as the great equaliser, accepting men from every background and allowing them to 'belong,' as long as they do their duty. Another poster depicts a group of soldiers standing to attention, with a gap between them with a sign that reads "This Place is Reserved for a Fit Man," and the text above proclaiming that "There is Still a Place in Line for You" (Fig. 23). The sign here serves as a placeholder, allowing the viewer to imagine themselves in line with the other soldiers, and in a similar manner, many posters made use of silhouettes to allow potential recruits to insert themselves into this idealised role (Fig. 24).[113] Yet another poster shows a line of soldiers marching across the centre of the image, with a crowd of onlookers below, demanding that the viewer not just "stand in the crowd and stare," but take their place in the ranks to fight "for King and Country" (Fig. 25). The crowd are situated physically below the line of soldiers, and are cast in shadow, creating an explicit contrast between the soldiers, who are valued, bathed in golden light, and those who have not done their duty.

Figure 20: Poster published by the PRC, 1916. "Step Into Your Place." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1977-06-81-31. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1977-06-81-31.

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[112] National Army Museum, "Surely."

[113] Imperial War Museum, "Don't Stand There Looking At This – Go And Help!" *Imperial War Museum Online Collection*, Art.IWM PST 5115, accessed April 2, 2020, https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/28412.

Figure 21: Poster published by the PRC, 1915. "King and Country." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1981-09-26-1. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1981-09-26-1.

Figure 22: Poster published by the PRC, 1915. "It's Our Flag." From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 5069. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/16820.

Figure 23: Poster published by the PRC, 1915. "There Is Still A Place In Line For You." From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 11509. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/30319.

Figure 24: Poster published by the PRC, 1915. "Halt! Who goes there?." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.2005-11-223-1. https://colleciton.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1005-11-223-1.

Figure 25: Poster published by the PRC, 1915. "Come into the ranks..." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1977-06-81-39. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1977-06-81-39.

Alongside the posters that encouraged viewers to insert themselves into their predetermined 'place,' others used figures of authority to speak directly to the viewer. As discussed previously, the most salient example of this is Lord Kitchener's appeal, but the portrayal of the king and other political figures also contributed to the narrative that young men had a specific duty to their country, their leaders, and those who came before

them. One poster featured Field Marshal Lord Roberts, who had been a soldier for over 50 years and was "probably Britain's most famous soldier when the war broke out in 1914."[114] On the poster, Roberts' portrait is surrounded by the Union Flag and accompanied by his sword and other military memorabilia, and the text reads "He did his duty. Will You do Yours?" (Fig. 26). Another image shows the figure of Admiral Horatio Nelson against a background of British warships silhouetted under an orange sky, stating that "England Expects," and asking whether "YOU [are] Doing YOUR Duty Today?" (Fig. 27). In addition to these famous military leaders, the figure of the veteran was used to communicate the idea that young people, who had grown up in a time of relative peace, owed this fortune to their predecessors, and now it was time for them to repay this debt and follow their example of service and loyalty. Posters like "The Veteran's Farewell" show images of young men being sent off to the front by their fathers and other retired servicemen, implying a symbolic 'changing of the guard' as new soldiers take up the mantle of duty (Fig. 28, Fig. 29). By drawing on such images, these posters reinforce the narrative that the armed forces is every man's predetermined place, linking service in the armed forces not just to the idea of duty, but also to the construction of masculinity.
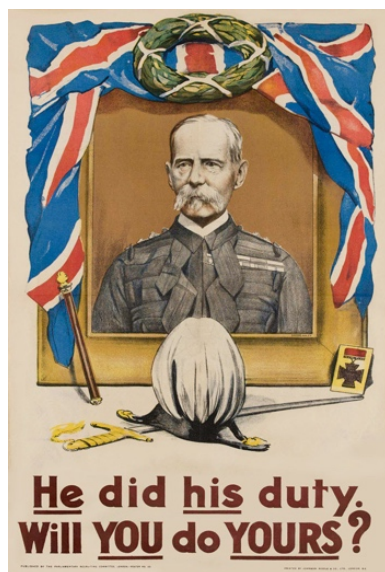
Figure 26: Poster published by the PRC, 1914. "He did his duty." From the Nation Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1977-06-81-11. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1977-06-81-11.

Figure 27: Poster published by the PRC, 1915. "England Expects." From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 5067. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/28379.

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[114] National Army Museum, "He did his duty. Will you do yours?" *National Army Museum Online Collection*, NAM.1977-06-81-11, accessed April 3, 2020, https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1977-06-81-11.

Figure 28: Poster published by the PRC, 1914. "The Veteran's Farewell." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1977-06-81-6. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1977-06-81-6.
Figure 29: Poster published by the PRC, 1914. "Your King & Country Need You." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1977-06-81-15. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1977-06-81-15.

Posters often showed images of women and children who needed protection, and their use as symbols of innocence and virtue contributed to the construction of masculinity that underlay recruitment appeals. While it was young men's patriotic duty to enlist and fight in the war, it was "the duty of British women to put aside selfish reasons and encourage their menfolk to enlist."[115] One poster, captioned, "Women of Britain say – Go!" illustrates the ways in which women were expected to contribute to the war effort and affirm their 'Britishness' (Fig. 30). The poster depicts an apparently well-off young woman watching a group of recruits marching to the front, accompanied by two refugees, "thereby implying a dual act of patriotism in both supporting the recruitment drive and offering her home to those escaping persecution on the Continent."[116] The image of vulnerable women stoically sending their loved ones off to war was intended to elicit a sense of shame in those who had not joined up, which was further reinforced by other recruitment literature which openly questioned the motivation and manliness of those who chose to stay behind.[117] In particular, recruitment appeals were directed at single men, who were seen as having less to lose than the men who were leaving their families behind (Fig. 31). This idea is further explored in a poster depicting a father and his children, with a caption that reads, "Daddy, what did YOU do in the Great War?" (Fig. 32). Here, the implication is that, if a man is unable to proudly tell his children of his

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[115] National Army Museum, "Women of Britain Say – Go!" *National Army Museum Online Collection*, NAM.1977-06-81-30, accessed April 14, 2020, https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1977-06-81-30.
[116] Ibid.
[117] Ibid.

contribution to the war effort, he would be a source of shame to his family, as he had not done his duty and thus did not deserve to 'belong' to Britain. Furthermore, the figure of woman was often used as a personification of the nation, or to symbolise virtues of peace and justice. On one poster with the caption, "Take Up The Sword Of Justice," an allegorical female figure holds out a sword towards the viewer, while behind her an ocean liner appears to be sinking (Fig. 33). Thus, the connection between women, innocence, and the nation was exploited to construct the narrative of the masculine soldier and protector.

Figure 30: Poster published by the PRC, 1915. "Women of Britain Say – Go!" From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1977-06-81-30. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1977-06-81-30.

Figure 31: Poster published by the PRC, 1915. "Single Men Show Your Appreciation." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1977-06-81-13. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1977-06-81-13.

Figure 32: Poster published by the PRC, 1915. "Daddy, what did YOU do in the Great War?" From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1977-06-81-16. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1977-06-81-16.

Figure 33: Poster published by the PRC, 1915. "Take Up the Sword of Justice." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1977-06-81-40. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1977-06-81-40.

Finally, another prominent tactic used in First World War recruitment was the appeal to solidarity, friendship, and to a lesser degree, adventure. One of the great successes of the initial recruitment drive was the formation of so-called 'Pal's Battalions,' which was based on the idea that "the established friendship of neighbours and workmates would make men more willing to enlist together."[118] Throughout recruitment media, the reference to young men as 'boys' and 'lads' mirrors the way in which school boys were addressed by their teachers, but also how they addressed each other. Posters often included captions that read, "Boys, Come over here, you're wanted," creating a sense of solidarity among young men and drawing parallels between life at school and life in the armed forces (Fig. 34). Some posters depicted smiling soldiers, calling for the viewer to "Come & Join This Happy Throng" and have an adventure with their friends and peers (Fig. 35). On the other hand, some posters also utilised this solidarity among young men to argue that, by not enlisting, the viewer was abandoning their friends to a terrible fate, when instead they should have helped. One poster asks the question, "Why are you stopping HERE when your pals are out THERE?" which, much like the images of women and children, elicit a sense of guilt and shame from those who have not yet enlisted for not doing the same duty as their friends (Fig. 36).

Figure 34: Poster published by the PRC, 1915. "Boys, Come over here you're wanted." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1977-06-81-43. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1977-06-81-43.

Figure 35: Poster published by the His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1915. "Come & Join This Happy Throng." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1977-06-38-1. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1977-06-38-1.

Figure 36: Poster published by the PRC, 1914. "Why are you stopping HERE…" From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 1576. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/27881.

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[118] National Army Museum, "'Come And Join This Happy Throng,' 1915," *National Army Museum Online Collection*, NAM.1977-06-81-26, accessed April 3, 2020, https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1977-06-81-26.

War and peace, 'duty' and 'adventure'

Though the production of recruitment posters dwindled with the introduction of conscription in 1916, volunteer-based recruitment was reintroduced in the interwar period from 1918 to 1939, and the Army once again came to rely on advertising to fill the ranks. However, as the focus of the armed forces returned to imperial defence and expansion, recruitment appeals changed drastically.[119] In the First World War, the existential threat posed by the Axis powers meant that the public could rally around patriotic calls to duty, but in times of peace it was difficult for both the Regular and the part-time Territorial Army "to recruit men on ideological grounds, and rare to find those motivated simply by the desire to serve King and country."[120] As a result, recruitment messages shifted away from ideas of 'duty' to instead focus on the opportunities that a career in the armed forces offered, including travel, physical fitness, and other material benefits. While some advertisements made reference to the "Great Tradition" and legacy of the armed forces (Fig. 37), many others highlighted how the Army had changed, asking viewers to "Join the Modern Army" or "The Army of [Today]" (Fig. 38, Fig. 39). While the former example evokes the image of military leaders and veterans 'passing the torch' to younger generations, the latter suggests that, in peacetime, the armed forces needed to find a way to create new ideas about what it meant to be a soldier, reshaping public opinion of the armed forces and their role in society.
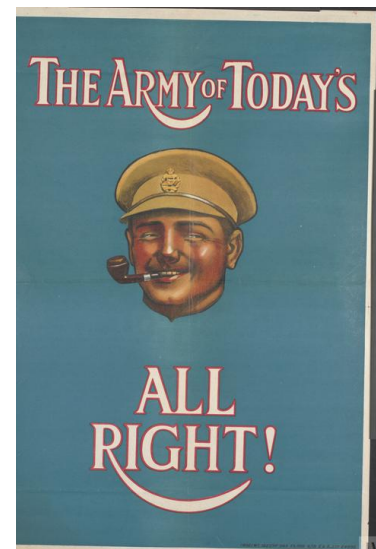
Figure 37: Poster, 1920. "Will You Help to Carry On the Great Tradition." From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 13515. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/31556.
Figure 38: Poster, 1937. "Will You Help to Carry On the Great Tradition." From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 14609. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/16879.
Figure 39: Poster, 1919. "The Army of Today's All Right!" From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 7660. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/28895.

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[119] Christopher Dandeker, "Recruiting the all-volunteer force: continuity and change in the British Army, 1963-2008," in *The New Citizen Armies*, ed. Stuart A. Cohen (Oxon: Routledge, 2010), 2.
[120] National Army Museum, "See the World and Get Paid for Doing It," *National Army Museum Online Collection*, NAM.1988-06-40-1, accessed Febrary 14, 2020, https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1988-06-40-1.

One of the most prominent recruitment tactics in the interwar years was the focus on travel and adventure. A large number of posters argue that a career in the Army was a way to "See the World," with images depicting exotic, far-away locations and smiling soldiers who are evidently enjoying themselves (Fig. 40). In these adverts, an Army career is effectively treated as a government-funded holiday, with posters claiming that the viewer would travel "And Get Paid For Doing It," or even "Travel Round The World For Nothing" (Fig. 42). Not only is it promised that "The Pay is Good," but that the very nature of the job is that it is almost like not working at all, which can be starkly contrasted with the nature of recruitment appeals in wartime (Fig. 41). In these images, soldiers are depicted at leisure, rather than in battle, creating a stark contrast between the hardship soldiers faced in the First World War and the new fantasy of Army life. At the same time, the emphasis on travel and adventure is also bound up in an attempt to reconstruct military masculinity, and a number of posters make references to the idea that joining the Army would make the viewer "A Man of the World." Similarly, viewers are called to respond to "The Call of the Open Air," and it is argued that a life in the Army is "A Man's Life" (Fig. 43). The image of the explorer and pioneer is characteristic of the kind of 'frontier masculinity' that began to supplement and replace the ideas that had governed recruitment appeals in the First World War. Peacetime demanded a reconfiguration of the 'soldier-protector' narrative, and the image of the soldier in far-off, exotic places evoked an ideal of masculinity based on "romanticised understandings of wilderness, rugged self-sufficiency, courage, masculine bodily strength, autonomous individualism, and active subordination of nature."[121] The financial independence, cultural superiority, and the mastery of technology in the 'modern' Army all contributed to the reconfigured masculinity of peacetime, and many of these elements can also be found in contemporary recruitment appeals.

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[121] Sine Anahita and Tamara L. Mix, "Retrofitting Frontier Masculinity for Alaska's War Against Wolves," *Gender and Society* 20, no. 3 (2006): 333-4, https://www.jstor.org/stable/27640894.
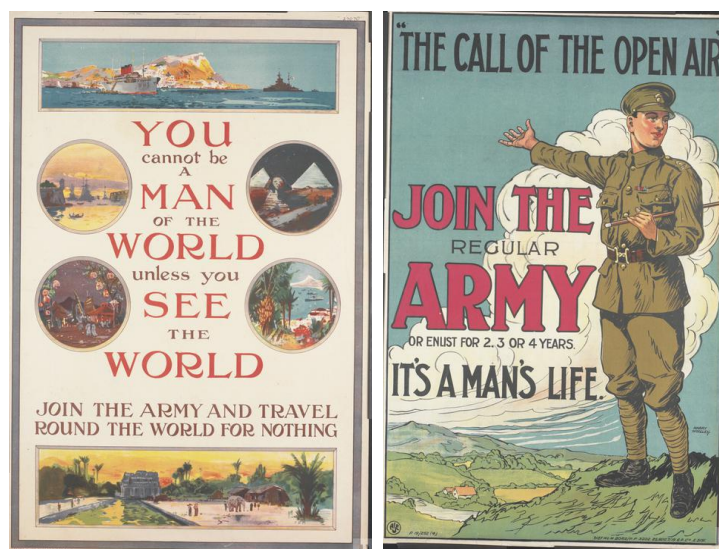
Figure 40: Poster, 1920. "See The World." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1988-06-40-1. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1988-06-40-1.

Figure 41: Poster, 1920. "Why Stay in England all your Life?" From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1989-03-11-1. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1989-03-11-1.

Figure 42: Poster, 1919. "You cannot be a Man of the World unless you See the World." From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 13504. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/8848.

Figure 43: Poster, 1919. "The Call of the Open Air." From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 13505. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/38692.

In addition to the opportunity of travel and adventure, interwar recruitment media also focused on sports, physical fitness, and games. Like the posters that advertised the Army as a chance to 'see the world,' these appeals also spent more time detailing the activities that soldiers could take up in their leisure time, with one poster even going so far as to argue that "The Army Isn't All Work" (Fig. 44). The poster depicts a central figure in a soldier's uniform, with two figures on either side wearing football and cricket kit. In contrast with wartime recruitment posters, where figures in uniform were often given visual precedence over figures in civilian clothes, who were depicted as bystanders and outsiders, in this image the figures in sports clothing are accorded equal visual importance, situated in the centre of the poster, suggesting that 'work' and 'play' are of equal value, at least in these advertisements. Both the Regular and Territorial Army appealed to viewers' love of sports, alongside the offer of "Free Holidays" and "Social Amusements" (Fig. 45), with a number of posters suggesting that joining the Army was a good way to "Keep Fit," in contrast with civilian life or a job at a desk (Fig. 46). While some posters made a connection between physical fitness and preparation for combat, arguing that skills like boxing would allow the viewer to "Learn To Defend Yourself And Your Country,"[122] these were overshadowed by appeals to fun, games, and adventure

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[122] National Army Museum, "Learn to defend yourself, 1920," *National Army Museum Online Collection*, NAM.1989-03-6-1, accessed April 15, 2020, https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1989-03-6-1.

(Fig. 47). Similarly, few posters made reference to professional opportunities, such as quick promotion and skill development,[123] instead focusing on "Comradeship" and the idea that, much like the Pal's Battalions of the First World War, joining the Army with friends could be enjoyable, more like a team sport than a demanding profession (Fig. 48).

Figure 44: Poster, 1919. "The Army Isn't All Work." From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 7686. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/24794.

Figure 45: Poster, 1920. "Coming In?" From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1989-03-7-1. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1989-03-7-1.

Figure 46: Poster, 1919. "The Army Isn't All Work." From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 13517. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/31558.

Figure 47: Poster, 1920. "Are You Fond of Games?" From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 7812. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/1553.

Figure 48: Poster by Albert Bailey, 1920. "Comradeship!" From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.2012-07-2-1. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=2012-07-2-1.

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[123] Imperial War Museum, "Join the Regular Army," *Imperial War Museum Online Collection*, Art.IWM PST 13503, accessed April 15, 2020, https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/25024.

The Home Front and civil defence

Conscription was introduced almost immediately at the beginning of the Second World War, and so recruitment appeals were primarily targeted at civilians, who were tasked with Home Defence and Air Raid Protection, as well as saving food and clothes. In the interwar years, "successive governments planned for a war that would involve the aerial bombardment of civilian populations," and this evolution of warfare meant that the boundaries of war, citizenship, and civic responsibility became increasingly blurred.[124] With the establishment of the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) in September 1938, the role of women was also expanded, as they were employed in administrative and clerical positions to 'free up' young men to be deployed to the front, and also served as drivers, cooks, postal workers, and ammunitions inspectors.[125] Unlike its predecessor, the Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps (QMAAC), "whose members were firmly labelled as volunteers, the ATS was granted full military status from April 1941."[126] While women were still not allowed to undertake combat roles, by 1943, approximately 56,000 women were serving with anti-aircraft units, and by the end of the Second World War, around 250,000 women had served in the ATS, proving themselves an invaluable resource to the British Army.[127] Despite their instrumental role in the war effort, however, recruitment media also demonstrates how this expansion of the role of women 'troubled' the gender roles upon which the armed forces had relied in the past, particularly in the realm of civilian defence.

Appeals for women to join the ATS took many different forms, with posters containing a wide variety of messages and imagery, demonstrating how the increased recruitment of women conflicted with previously held stereotypes and ideas about the role of women in war. The artist, Abram Games, produced over 100 posters for the British Army, many of them for the ATS. While his abstract style and distinctive use of colour was easily recognisable, his posters also attracted criticism for being too 'glamorous,' as they appeared to focus more on the beauty of their subjects rather than the demands of the job. One of the first posters Games designed was nicknamed 'the blonde bombshell,' and depicts officer Doreen Murphy wearing an ATS cap (Fig. 49). Her hair is fashionably styled, her eyebrows groomed, and she sports a striking red lipstick. Other than the portrait, the only piece of information on the poster is a caption that simply reads, "Join the ATS," with no details on the specifics of the job or what would be expected of the viewer. One Member of Parliament objected to the soldier's lipstick, arguing that "Our girls should be attracted into the Army through patriotism and

[124] Lucy Noakes, "'Serve to Save': Gender, Citizenship, and Civil Defence in Britain 1937-41," *Journal of Contemporary History* 47, no. 4 (2012): 734, doi:10.1177/0022009412451290.
[125] National Army Museum, "Auxiliary Territorial Service," *National Army Museum Online Collection*, accessed June 23, 2020, https://www.nam.ac.uk/explore/auxiliary-territorial-service.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Ibid.

not glamour. It is not the kind of poster to encourage mothers to send their girls into the Army."[128] While the poster was somewhat successful in attracting recruits, it was ultimately withdrawn, but it was far from the only poster of its kind. Abram Games produced a number of similar recruitment posters for the ATS, depicting a central portrait of a woman who, though wearing a uniform, was always fashionably groomed and styled (Fig. 50, Fig. 51). While the posters distributed in the First World War and interwar years communicated ideas of duty, patriotism, or adventure, the main draw of a career in the ATS appears to have been the idea that the women who join are sophisticated, glamorous, and attractive. With the expansion of the role of women, both during and after the Second World War, it was argued that their presence in the ranks would be a 'disruptive force' to male soldiers and units, but by keeping recruitment appeals broad and focusing on the femininity of the subjects, the threat could be minimised and the masculine identity of the armed forces preserved.[129]

Figure 49: Poster designed by Abram Games, 1941. "Join the ATS." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.2013-07-2-17. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=2013-07-2-17.

Figure 50: Poster designed by Abram Games, 1942. "ATS." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1993-11-1-97-1. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1993-11-1-97-1.

Figure 51: Poster designed by Abram Games, n.d. "ATS." From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 2954. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/10341.

While the posters produced by Games attracted criticism for their focus on the attractiveness of their subjects, rather than their capability, other posters stand in contrast with this approach, advertising specific positions and responsibilities that women would have in the ATS. A number of posters focused on the idea that joining the ATS would "Release" men to fight, and it was women's responsibility to "Fill his place" in certain

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[128] National Army Museum, "'Join the ATS,' 1941," *National Army Museum Online Collection*, NAM.2013-07-2-17, accessed June 3, 2020, https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=2013-07-2-17.
[129] Mackenzie, *Beyond*, 1-2.; Noakes, *Women*, 1.

jobs (Fig. 52, Fig. 53). In these appeals, it is clear that women serve in a purely supportive capacity and on a temporary basis, and by restricting them to clerical positions, the masculine 'soldier' identity remained intact. As the war went on, however, recruitment posters reflected the growing demand for women to fill the ranks, depicting ATS officers on the job, operating equipment and driving motorbikes and ambulances. In contrast to Games' 'glamorous' posters, one image shows an ATS officer in the context of war, with airplanes flying overhead, and the figure is dressed in motorcycling gear, with her hair covered and without makeup (Fig. 54). On these posters, the captions describe the "skill and courage"[130] of ATS officers, as well as their "quick brains,"[131] indicating that, while previous appeals had suggested that women were temporary stand-ins for male soldiers, these posters argue for women's active participation in their own right. Some posters even go so far as to claim that women are "Wanted" and "Needed" for their skills and competences, both in the ATS and in civil defence (Fig. 55, Fig. 56, Fig. 57).

Figure 52: Poster, 1942. "Release him." From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 0684. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/27802.

Figure 53: Poster, n.d. "Fill his place." From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 14577. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/24014.

Figure 54: Poster, n.d. "ATS: Carry the Messages." From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 0126. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/21716.

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[130] Imperial War Museum, "Be Active – ATS – Be Useful," *Imperial War Museum Online Collection*, Art.IWM PST 14531, accessed April 23, 2020, https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/21719.

[131] Imperial War Museum, "Women of Britain – ATS – Come Forward Now," *Imperial War Museum Online Collection*, Art.IWM PST 14584, accessed April 23, 2020, https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/32154.

Figure 55: Poster, n.d. "Every woman not doing vital work is needed NOW." From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 0124. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/27714.

Figure 56: Poster, n.d. "Women Wanted as Ambulance Drivers." From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 13864. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/3639.

Figure 57: Poster, n.d. "YOU Are Wanted Too!" From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 8452. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/29132.

Though they were clearly indispensable, the recruitment of women required the Army to reconcile wartime manpower demands with social norms that had governed the armed forces earlier in the twentieth century. As argued by Iris Young, the gendered logic of the masculine role of protector in relation to women and children is necessary for the construction of "a security state that wages war abroad and expects obedience and loyalty at home."[132] Thus, the subordinate position of dependence and obedience of women in the household is mapped onto the relationship between citizens and their leaders.[133] In the Second World War, however, the demands and duties that constituted citizenship shifted, as the threat of violence encroached on previously untouched, civilian areas, and the responsibility to protect fell to everyone, not just soldiers at the front. Lucy Noakes argues that "the articulation of air raid precautions as an example of active citizenship had the potential to compromise the continuity of gendered identities in wartime,"[134] and while in the First World War women's primary duty was to the biological and cultural reproduction of the nation, the need to fully utilise women's labour outside the home in the Second World War "provided a profound challenge to gendered divisions of citizenship."[135] On the one hand, recruitment for civilian defence had to address 'every citizen,' men and women, as all were needed to create an efficient service that would

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[132] Iris M. Young, "The Logic of Masculinist Protection: Reflections on the Current Security State," *Signs* 29, no. 1 (2003): 2, doi:10.1086/375708.
[133] Ibid., 2.
[134] Noakes, "'Serve to Save,'" 734.
[135] Ibid., 736.

defend the home and nation, but on the other, it continued to function in highly gendered ways.[136] While women had to negotiate between models of femininity that emphasised duty in the home and models of citizenship that emphasised their duty to the wartime nation, men were often addressed in ways that accentuated masculinity and linked them to the armed forces.[137] One poster recruiting for the Air Raid Precaution (ARP) service states "here's a man's job!" and another advertising for the Civil Defence makes a similar claim that a job in the 'stretcher parties' was also "a real man's job" (Fig. 58, Fig. 59). Many of the men who remained at home were likely unfit for military service, but through the reinforcement of masculinity in the context of civil defence their role as protectors, men, and citizens could be upheld without disrupting the gendered divisions of war.

Figure 58: Poster, n.d. "ARP – here's a man's job!" From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 13851. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/3407.

Figure 59: Poster, n.d. "Men Wanted For Stretcher Parties" From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 13898. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/31817.

It is clear that, in the aftermath of the First World War, the Army sought to redefine itself and find a new way to present itself to a society dealing with the consequences of a brutal conflict. Young men who had been traumatised by their experiences at the front would be unlikely to re-enlist for the same reasons after the end of the war, and it is logical that the armed forces would focus on different aspects of military service to appeal to viewers. However, even though British forces were not engaged in a large-scale conflict like the one that had just ended, interwar recruitment not only glossed over the responsibilities of an Army career, but in some cases did not even portray it as a job. In an effort to rebuild public perception of the armed forces and to

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[136] Noakes, "'Serve to Save,'" 737-8.
[137] Ibid., 737-8.

maintain sufficient numbers to uphold the Empire, interwar recruitment appeals were ultimately very far removed from life in the military. Today, a large part of British society is sceptical of the Army and the recent conflicts it has been engaged in, and there are parallels to be drawn between 'This Is Belonging,' which focuses on camaraderie and friendship, and interwar recruitment appeals that highlight aspects of life in the Army outside the action. To some extent, interwar recruitment already set a precedent that would be followed later in the twentieth century, namely that Army advertising had to communicate what the viewer could gain personally from enlisting. Rather than mobilising patriotic sentiments and ideas of duty, peacetime recruitment tended to focus on opportunity, prestige, and adventure. However, while interwar recruitment did make mention of salary and other material benefits, an Army career was not yet conceived of as a job like any other. Rather, the armed forces retained their 'exceptional' status, and it was not until after the Second World War that the Army came to be treated as a 'profession.'

Mobilising the Empire: the recruitment of colonial subjects

Imperial context and policy

   Parallel to the Army's recruitment efforts in the metropole, the First and Second World Wars also saw the mobilisation of colonial subjects on a massive scale. Across the Empire, soldiers were called upon to support the British war effort, but there are important distinctions to be made between the Dominions, which largely directed and financed their own contributions, and the Colonies, which were subject to British policy and demands. While white men from settler colonies could take up the same roles as British men from the metropole, this was not the case for many 'indigenous' recruits from Africa and the Indian subcontinent. This so-called 'colour bar' meant that, even though colonial soldiers were essential to the war effort, they remained dependent upon and subordinate to metropolitan rule, and this dependence is reflected in recruitment media. The question of how the British Army recruited and mobilised these forces is an interesting one, as, in contrast to recruitment in the metropole, which relied on the rhetoric of patriotism and national unity, the relationship between the military, the state, the nation, and society had to be constructed differently in the colonial context. As Barkawi argues, the "notion that soldiers fight and die for a cause is the red thread of legitimation that ties together state and nation," but when this 'thread' is removed, the question of how soldiers are motivated and made becomes more complicated.[138] Thus, it is important to break away from Eurocentric categories of inquiry and examine colonial soldiers and imperial armies through alternative stories of coercion and legitimacy, where the value of military discipline "is that it can be relatively autonomous from politics, formally speaking."[139] While some recruitment appeals utilised the idea of 'belonging' to the British Empire, colonial soldiers could not be portrayed as completely equal to their metropolitan counterparts, as this would jeopardise the stability of Britain's colonial rule.

   The recruitment of local indigenous armies was standard practice for all colonial powers in Africa, and throughout Britain's imperial history these forces, though often small and lightly armed, were essential for "upholding the colonial order," first in extending and securing territory, and later to ensure internal security and guard frontiers.[140] Similarly, since the mid-nineteenth century, the Indian Army had been used as a so-called 'Imperial fire brigade,' with battalions regularly sent to other areas of Asia, as well as Africa.[141] However, due to pervasive sentiments of suspicion and hostility about the idea of arming colonial subjects in war against Europeans, before the turn of the twentieth century, these troops were intended exclusively for operations in the colonial context, and it was not until the First World War that manpower demands necessitated a

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[138] Barkawi, *Soldiers of Empire*, 5.
[139] Ibid., 6.
[140] Killingray and Plaut, *Fighting for Britain*, 5.
[141] Ibid., 6.

shift in recruitment policy. It should be noted, however, that despite efforts to uphold this distinction between so-called 'savage' and 'civilised' European warfare,[142] the role of colonial troops was rarely clear-cut. In the Second Boer War of 1899-1902, for instance, though the policy on both sides was to minimise the role of non-white combatants, it was far from being a "white man's war," as demonstrated by the fact that over 100,000 black and Coloured people served in a variety of roles with both the British and the Boer armies, as well as the approximately 20,000 Africans who died in British concentration camps over the course of the conflict.[143]

The First World War saw the first large-scale mobilisation of men to serve as porters and labourers in support of various military operations. Man for man, local soldiers were typically cheaper to employ than their European counterparts, less prone to disease, and just as effective in small campaigns, depending on their training.[144] As a result, both Britain and France had large standing colonial forces by the late nineteenth century, with the British Indian Army numbering half a million in the First World War, and two million in the Second,[145] and more than half a million African soldiers fighting for the British in foreign campaigns.[146] From 1940 onwards, soldiers from all parts of British colonial Africa, as well as South Africa, were deployed against Italian, German, and Vichy French forces in the campaigns in Abyssinia, North Africa, the Levant, Italy, and Madagascar, and eventually against Japanese forces in Burma.[147] The King's African Rifles, the West African Frontier Force, the Somaliland Camel Corps, and the Sudan Defence Force are just a few examples of African military units that were formed in the early twentieth century to support the colonial apparatus and the later British war effort. Additionally, as Tarak Barkawi argues, the British Indian Army was "perhaps the greatest and most long-lived of the many indigenously recruited forces that secured and expanded the Western colonial order."[148] By late 1914, Indian troops were facing Germans on the Western Front, and in World War Two, they also served abroad in defending the Indian subcontinent from the Japanese.[149]

Despite their mobilisation in large numbers, the contributions of black African and Indian soldiers in the twentieth century are often overlooked. As Roy points out, official documentation tended to treat them collectively, rather than as distinct individuals, and due to low levels of literacy, they left few memoirs and first-person descriptions of their war experiences.[150] As a result, the vast majority of primary sources

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[142] Killingray and Plaut, *Fighting for Britain*, 5.
[143] Ibid., 5.
[144] Barkawi, *Soldiers of Empire*, 7; Killingray and Plaut, *Fighting for Britain*, 6.
[145] Barkawi, *Soldiers of Empire*, 7.
[146] Killingray and Plaut, *Fighting for Britain*, 8.
[147] Ibid., 6.
[148] Barkawi, *Soldiers of Empire*, 7.
[149] Killingray and Plaut, *Fighting for Britain*, 6.
[150] Kaushik Roy and Gavin Rand, *Culture, Conflict, and the Military* (Oxon: Routledge, 2018), 3.

used to study these individuals were produced by the colonial administration, including staged photographs taken for wartime propaganda, as well as newspapers, journals, and magazines aimed at local troops, which provide only a limited account of this period. Additionally, in contrast to the wealth of recruitment material from the metropole, particularly from the First and Second World Wars, there are very few posters, photographs, and films from the Empire's periphery to be found in archives and online. Moreover, the materials that have been preserved are often untraceable, both in terms of origin and distribution, which makes it difficult to determine how widely they were circulated, by whom they were seen, and how effective they were in persuading colonial subjects to join the British Army. As a result, it is impossible to know if there really was less reliance on visual material for recruitment, or if these sources have simply not been preserved and documented to the same degree as those circulated in the metropole. Bearing these limitations in mind, there are still certain themes and motifs that can be traced through various posters, films, and photographs that offer insight into colonial recruitment practices, as well as provide context for the development of the rhetoric of 'belonging' that is being wielded today. In particular, the theory of 'martial races' played a prominent role in colonial military policy, but there were also some efforts to emphasise the unity and 'togetherness' of different parts of the Commonwealth in the war effort.

The theory and construction of 'martial races'

From the late nineteenth century, recruitment policy in both India and colonial Africa was shaped by the theory of 'martial races,' which remained in operation well into the twentieth century.[151] In essence, this theory assumed that only selected communities, "due to their biological and cultural superiority, were capable of bearing arms."[152] While there were minor modifications and expansions to the policy throughout its application, recruitment practices to this day still reflect the legacy of the regional and ethnic preferences that were institutionalised through the martial race doctrine, as evidenced by the continued employment of Nepalese Gurkha soldiers in the British Army today, as well as the large Sikh contingents in the contemporary armies of India and Pakistan.[153] As Roy notes, however, despite being portrayed as official, 'scientific' doctrine, the martial race theory was fraught with contradictions and inconsistencies,[154] and he argues that the theory was, above all else, a mechanism created for colonial control that allowed the British imperial administration to implement a 'divide and rule' strategy to prevent local populations from banding together in opposition against their rulers.[155] While certain

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[151] Roy, "Race and Recruitment," 1311.
[152] Ibid., 1311-1312.
[153] Roy and Rand, *Culture, Conflict, and the Military*, 2-3.
[154] Roy, "Race and Recruitment," 1311.
[155] Ibid., 1322.

aspects of the theory were drawn from British observations and interpretations of local traditions and customs, the belief that certain ethnic, caste, or regional groups had a strong 'martial heritage' was largely constructed by the colonial administration, as the ideas of 'honour' and 'shame' upon which this supposed heritage depended were "hybridised, reflecting the coproduction of new identities shaped by both pre-existing social, economic, and political forces and by the transformative effects of colonial expansion."[156] Thus, drawing on these essentialised traditions, the 'martial races' doctrine came to reflect the hybrid culture of colonial military service, rather than the social reality of colonial South Asia and Africa.

On the Indian subcontinent, it was initially believed that factors related to diet, geographical origin, and climate influenced the 'courage' and 'virtue' of indigenous populations, with peoples that resided in cold, mountainous regions considered better suited to warfare.[157] Due to this belief that climate exerted critical influence on the physical characteristics of local populations, distinctions were drawn between the western and southern regions of India on the one hand, and the northern regions, where the Sikhs, Gurkhas, Dogras, Rajputs, and Pathans resided, on the other.[158] In contrast to tropical areas, or the desert regions in the centre of the country, where "the heat of India result[ed] in the degeneration of martial capabilities," those regions with a temperate climate that "resembled that of Britain," were considered 'healthy' and constitutive to the generation of better warriors.[159] Within these distinctions, however, there were already contradictions and ambiguities to be found, as some officials pointed out that the operation of other factors, such as discipline, public spirit, and religion, meant that good warriors could also be found in the hotter regions, while the Kashmiris, though they hailed from a cold, mountainous region, were regarded as unmartial.[160] Thus, the extent to which colonial officials agreed with the relationship between climate and courage is ambiguous, and it becomes clear that the ostensibly scientific theory of martial races was, in reality, quite arbitrary.

Later, the reliance on topographical and environmental features gave way to a more 'biological' assessment of martial capabilities, which was influenced by the Aryan Invasion theory. It was believed that, in ancient times, the tall, slender, light-skinned Aryans invaded India and defeated "the dark and short uncultured Dravidians who were then pushed back down to south India."[161] Thus, the 'traditional' warriors of India were to be drawn from the *Kshatriya*, who had made up the second caste of the *chaturvarna* system of the Aryans, and these customs became embedded in the military infrastructure

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[156] Roy and Rand, ed. *Culture, Conflict, and the Military*, 2.
[157] Roy, "Race and Recruitment," 1312.
[158] Ibid., 1312.
[159] Ibid., 1312.
[160] Ibid., 1313.
[161] Ibid., 1314.

of the Raj.[162] Ultimately, though some martial traditions predated colonial recruiting, "the scale and duration of the Raj's demand for military labour helped to incentivise and also to concretise the martial identities of various South Asian communities, including the Sikhs, Gurkhas, and Pathans."[163] By the end of the nineteenth century, with the rise of comparative anatomy and racial essentialism, the term 'race' came to signify an immutable biological set of observable characteristics, and so recruitment was based on the physical measurement of head size, nose shape, skin colour, and other markers that were used to categorise people into racial hierarchies.[164] In contrast to definitions based on geographical origin and climate exposure, or those constructed around the categories of cast, community, and tribe, after the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 a biological understanding of race came to dominate recruitment patterns and policy, which created tension between intellectuals, bureaucrats, and military officers about the extent to which 'martiality' was a product of nature or nurture.[165] This shift in recruitment policy is illustrated in Figure 60, which depicts the 'types of the Indian Army.'

Figure 60: Photograph by F. Bremner, 1897. "Types of the Indian Army." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1965-04-76-19. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1965-04-76-19.

As the concept of martial races became codified in colonial policy and recruitment guidelines, military recruitment efforts and infrastructure were concentrated in certain regions of India, and even when manpower requirements of the First World War led to an intensification of recruitment and the entry of several new communities, by November 1918 the bulk of the Indian Army still came from the traditional martial races.[166] While

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[162] Roy and Rand, ed. *Culture, Conflict, and the Military*, 2.
[163] Ibid., 2.
[164] Roy, "Race and Recruitment," 1316.
[165] Ibid., 1319.
[166] Ibid., 1311.

war and conflict were major drivers of historical change across the subcontinent, the effects of military expenditure, recruiting patterns, and the legacies of military service cannot be overlooked. As Roy and Rand note, "military service helped to shape the social and cultural identities of recruits in South Asia where imperial institutions drew on – and in some cases transformed – identities rooted in region, tribe, caste, gender, and family."[167] Additionally, for many of the groups who enlisted for colonial service, military service gave shape to professional, regional, religious, as well as familial identities.[168] Thus, though military service drew on existing traditions, it also helped to construct such traditions; the concept of serving in the 'British' or 'Indian' Army, for instance, was constantly in dialogue with more localised identities, and these tensions had to be resolved and reflected in colonial recruitment media.

In British colonial Africa, the martial race doctrine operated in a similar way to create ethnic and regional hierarchies and distinctions between local populations based on their 'suitability' for warfare. Influenced by the Indian paradigm, British officers considered factors such as race, religion, terrain, climate, diet, and a pastoral lifestyle in the identification of particular African ethnic groups as 'martial races.' However, as David Killingray points out, subsequent judgments about loyalty, martial worth, and amenability to discipline were often "subjective and superficial."[169] For example, from the mid-19th century onwards the Hausa were identified as the archetypal martial race in West Africa, but by the early 20th century all of Britain's West African soldiers were collectively referred to as 'Hausas,' even though many of them were not, and the Hausa language even became the *lingua franca* of the West African Frontier Force.[170] Many of the recruits who were identified as belonging to one of the martial races actually came from peoples that did not have much of a martial history or tradition; in fact, "many of those peoples singled out as 'martial' in the 19th century for their resistance to the British did not provide sources for recruitment either because they were viewed with suspicion by the colonial authorities (so were not used), or because they were reluctant to join colonial military forces."[171] As a result, some of the populations that did provide recruits were those that had been conquered by their neighbours, rather than those that had stood up to British colonial rule. Additionally, Britain's peacetime colonial armies were often drawn from the peripheral areas of the colony, or even from neighbouring territories, creating a so-called 'reliable alien' who "became heavily dependent upon the military system he joined, and invariably was an outsider in the areas where he was stationed."[172] In this way, as on the Indian subcontinent, the British were able to maintain divisions

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[167] Roy and Rand, ed. *Culture, Conflict, and the Military*, 1-2.
[168] Ibid., 1-2.
[169] Killingray and Plaut, *Fighting for Britain*, 41.
[170] Ibid., 40.
[171] Ibid., 41.
[172] Ibid., 41.

within the colonial military, playing off different populations against each other and preventing the emergence of unified anti-British sentiment among the colonised.[173]

As illustrated by the narrative of the 'reliable alien,' the general belief of the British colonial administration was that "peasants make good soldiers," and there was a marked preference for recruits from rural areas over educated populations in urban areas.[174] In part, as Roy argues, this might be traced to the early Victorian 'muscular' Christianity which shaped the paternalistic ethos and psychology of British rulers.[175] However, in more practical terms, Killingray contends that "Europeans required recruits with a 'simplicity of character' who in a short time would transfer their loyalty from a chief to a white officer."[176] From this perspective, the best source of recruits were communities "untouched by modern ideas of government or commerce," consisting of non-literate populations "who would provide a clean slate upon which could be written new military codes of discipline."[177] As one officer of the King's African Rifles put it: "The blacker their face, the huskier their voice, the thicker their neck, the darker their skin and the more remote parts of Africa they come from – the better soldier they make."[178] Thus, beyond the identification of populations with a particular 'martial' heritage, the European colonial powers also believed that an origin of 'perceived simplicity' marked out the ideal soldier, and it was often the case that Africans who had come into contact with modern ideas and methods were rejected by the military, particularly in peacetime.[179]

As illustrated by the discussion above, colonial military history demands a 'co-constitutive' approach to army-society relations. Armed forces and society relate dynamically to each other, shaping one another, and military organisations "transform social and cultural fields to create soldiers, and encounter frictions and resistances in doing so."[180] As in the 'This Is Belonging' campaign, the armed forces play a significant role in the construction of national identity, and thus become a proxy battle ground for social and cultural debates. In the case of India, colonial discourse and military recruitment practices emphasised India's ethnic diversity in order to assert the idea that India was not a nation and, had it not been for the presence of the British, the martial races would have "gobbled up" the non-martial races.[181] The ethnic imbalances in Britain's imperial armed forces were the deliberate product of the policies of the colonial elite, but by "making military vocations an integral part of a group's sense of its own

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[173] Roy, "Race and Recruitment," 1310.
[174] Ibid., 1313.
[175] Ibid., 1313.
[176] Killingray and Plaut, *Fighting for Britain*, 42.
[177] Ibid., 42.
[178] Ibid., 42.
[179] Ibid., 42.
[180] Barkawi, *Soldiers of Empire*, 4.
[181] Roy, "Race and Recruitment,"1321.

ethnicity, the central state elite [hoped] not only to make the military recruiter's task easier, but to wed ethnicity to state allegiance."[182] As Cynthia Enloe argues, being distinguished as a 'martial race' often created an increased sense of ethnic cohesion, but at the expense of growing vulnerability to state manipulation.[183] The British constructed martial traditions for the designated martial races in order to ensure the loyalty of disciplined, brave soldiers, but beyond this the idea of the 'martial race' occupies a distinct territory at the periphery of the state, and was used against as a tool of control against dissident populations. Furthermore, as Heather Streets states, the martial race theory was not only an instrument of peripheral colonial control, but also operated in the metropole, as evidenced by the construction of martial Highland Scottish soldiers from the 1740s.[184] For Streets, the construction of martial races was a heavily gendered and racialised practice, as the British media popularised the 'savage' martiality of certain communities as a representation of an idealised version of masculinity, with significant classist overtones, as the uneducated, rural, impoverished populations were designated as more 'martial' than the educated, urban communities.[185]

In some ways, then, the theory of martial races did rely on the construction of a limited idea of 'belonging,' whereby local histories and traditions were merged with colonial administrative policy to create both ethnic group cohesion and state allegiance through military service, while also maintaining internal divisions and hierarchy. The next section will explore the extent to which colonial military policy based on the martial race doctrine overlapped with recruitment media and propaganda, as the rhetoric of 'belonging' in the British Empire may have been wielded to generate allegiance to the imperial metropole, particularly in the context of the First and Second World Wars. It should be noted, however, that it is unlikely that many colonial subjects joined the armed forces for patriotic reasons, though the prospect of regular pay, pensions, and gratuities did attract and retain recruits, and in many cases conditions of poverty and lack of employment prospects were also a significant driver of applicants. However, if the imperial administration made use of recruitment posters, films, and photographs, it is worth investigating where and how they were produced and disseminated, and whether they had even a marginal effect on recruitment, or if they were created for audiences in the metropole as a show of Britain's unity in war.

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[182] Cynthia Enloe, *Ethnic Soldiers: State Security in Divided Societies* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980), 25.
[183] Enloe, *Ethnic Soldiers*, 25.
[184] Heather Streets, *Martial races: The military, race, and masculinity in British imperial culture, 1857-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 12.
[185] Ibid., 12.

Divided to be united: visual analysis

In some ways, colonial recruitment propaganda mirrored the administration's struggle to construct both ethnic identity and state allegiance, and there is visible tension between the rhetoric of solidarity and 'belonging' to the British Empire on the one hand, and the practical need to maintain hierarchy and stability in order to prevent colonial subjects rising up against the imperial elite on the other. A majority of colonial soldiers were recruited with the help of local chiefs and pushed into military service by conditions of poverty and limited employment opportunities, both on the Indian subcontinent and in Africa, but examining recruitment propaganda still sheds light on the Army's struggle to communicate and shape its institutional identity in the face of manpower shortages under total war. Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, much of Britain's colonial wartime propaganda made use of tropes created in Europe for consumption by a metropolitan audience, but later these images were also exported and reinterpreted in the colonies, where a more decentralised propaganda machine created a wide variety of media intended to entice colonial populations to support Britain's war efforts via enlistment and donations to war funds.

In Barkawi's analysis, what distinguished colonial armies from their metropolitan counterparts was their cosmopolitan character. In asking the question of how soldiers are made and why they fight, a traditionally Eurocentric framework of inquiry is limiting, as in the study of Western armies, "soldiers appear as modern citizen-agents who make war and history in distinctive national ways," and battle is seen as "a product of the contest of nations, manifesting in the contestants' natures."[186] In the colonial context, however, these concepts of citizenship and nation became more problematic, as soldiers were constituted from diverse populations, in different times and places, and subject to a constant making and remaking of local, ethnic, and national identities. On the Indian subcontinent, for instance, posters were often produced in multiple languages, or even left a blank space for the creation of local versions of recruitment propaganda. On one poster from the First World War, the caption reads, in both Hindi and Urdu, 'This Soldier is Defending India,' with a full-length depiction of an Indian soldier set against a map of India, coloured in red (Fig. 61, Fig. 62, Fig. 63). In these posters, the tension between upholding ethnic and linguistic divisions is at odds with the rhetoric of national unity and solidarity; the soldier is depicted 'defending India,' though no major battles in World War I were fought on Indian soil. Here, India is made rhetorically equivalent to Britain, and the poster aims to convince viewers that the troops deployed to the Western Front and East Africa are, by fighting for Britain, fighting for India. On another poster, an Indian soldier is depicted crouching in a trench, and the text reads, 'Look at that man. He is

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[186] Barkawi, *Soldiers of Empire*, 4.

doing his duty to his King.[187] He is demonstrating his bravery and making his family proud as well as earning more money than before.' Once again, a Hindi and an Urdu version of the poster were produced, and the remaining text details payment and benefits that a recruit would receive upon signing up.[188] Multiple themes emerge here, many consistent with recruitment efforts in the metropole, including appeals to masculinity, duty, and pride, as well as allegiance to the King. Some posters even depict George V and state that 'His Majesty the Emperor Needs Soldiers for the Indian Army,' along with promises of payment and benefits upon signing up.[189] Despite these similarities to metropolitan recruitment tactics, however, the mention of material benefits is distinctive in the colonial wartime context, as these appeals were more prominent in *peacetime* appeals in Britain. This suggests that, much like in the interwar recruitment media discussed above, appeals to patriotism and duty were not sufficient to motivate viewers to enlist, and so the material benefits of enlistment were advertised as additional incentive.

Figure 61: Poster, n.d. "This Soldier is Defending India (Hindi)." From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 12594. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/31136.

Figure 62: Poster, n.d. "This Soldier is Defending India (Urdu)." From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 12580. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/31129.

Figure 63: Poster, n.d. "This Soldier is Defending India (Blank)." From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 12540. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/31095.

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[187] Imperial War Museum, "Look at That Man (Urdu)," *Imperial War Museum Online Collection*, Art.IWM PST 12576, accessed February 13, 2020, https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/31125.
[188] Imperial War Museum, "Look at That Man (Hindi)," *Imperial War Museum Online Collection*, Art.IWM PST 12582, accessed February 13, 2020, https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/31130.
[189] Imperial War Museum, "Hindi Text Poster Featuring Depiction of King George V," *Imperial War Museum Online Collection*, Art.IWM PST 12571, accessed February 13, 2020, https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/31120; Imperial War Museum, "Urdu Text Poster Featuring Depiction of King George V," *Imperial War Museum Online Collection*, Art.IWM PST 12552, accessed February 13, 2020, https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/31104.

Through the figure of King George, the Empire is personified, and in making such a direct appeal to colonial subjects, it is implied that they are equal to recruits in the metropole, at least in terms of their necessity to the war effort. There were numerous attempts to appeal to a sense of solidarity and 'togetherness' in recruitment media, with films, posters, and photographs broadcast to show how vital the contributions of colonial soldiers were in the British war effort, but these were also fraught with contradictions, as a rhetoric of unity and equality also risked sparking sentiments of resistance. One poster, printed in 1915, states that 'The Empire Needs Men!' and that, 'Helped by the Young Lions, the Old Lion Defeats his Foes' (Fig. 64). The British metropole is depicted as an adult, male lion, while other parts of the Commonwealth, including Australia, Canada, India, and New Zealand, are pictured as 'cubs' called on to assist their maker in a time of need. The implication is that, though the metropole is calling on other members of the Commonwealth, they are only to 'help' fight Britain's battles, to support their leader; they are not equals, but are young and inexperienced, incapable of fighting without the 'old lion' to guide them. Notably, the request only extends to older, established parts of the Empire, while Britain's African colonies are not called upon in the same way. Similarly, in a series of posters produced during the Second World War, there are individual appeals to 'Our Allies the Colonies,' depicting different colonial regiments, but in referring to these units as 'allies,' the metropole is able to keep them at arm's length while still appealing to a sense of camaraderie and solidarity.

Figure 64: Poster published by the PRC, 1915. "The Empire Needs Men!" From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.2005-11-219-1. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=2005-11-219-1.

Another poster, which reads, 'The British Commonwealth of Nations, Together,' depicts seven representatives of the Commonwealth armed forces marching in front of a Union Jack flag; they are soldiers from India, East Africa, South Africa, New Zealand,

Australia, a Canadian airman, and a Royal Navy sailor (Fig. 65). This is perhaps the most explicit depiction of unity and solidarity in recruitment propaganda, colourful and eye-catching, and though relatively few printed posters were distributed in colonial Africa, the Ministry of Information set out to display them in such a way that they would have maximum effect. In an official, likely staged, photograph taken by Lt H. J. Clements, a junior British officer, young boys in Accra are pictured looking at this very poster, showing "the transformation that could occur when African peasants and workers – the onlookers – joined up and became smart, modern soldiers."[190] As Killingray notes, the purpose of such an image would have been to indicate the progress that could be made by becoming a soldier: "gaining a uniform, smartness, a weapon in hand, and proven loyalty to the ruling system."[191] While this poster depicted colonial soldiers and their counterparts in the metropole on a more equal footing as part of one unit, it is important to note that the Indian and East African soldiers are marching at the back of the group, led by the white servicemen of the Commonwealth. 'Belonging' was conditional, as it rested upon joining the armed forces, but even though colonial subjects were required to risk their lives in war, they were still not accorded the same status as the other figures depicted, and were instead rendered dependent and reliant on the guidance and leadership of the metropole. Here, the contradictions outlined above are evident: though the martial race doctrine meant that recruitment efforts were concentrated in specific areas and targeted at particular communities, the visual representation of life in the armed forces intimately tied these ethnic and regional identities to the profession of soldiering, and thus to national identity and 'Britishness.'

Figure 65: Poster, n.d. "The British Commonwealth of Nations, Together." From the Imperial War Museum Online Collection. Art.IWM PST 8457. https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/17043.

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[190] Killingray and Plaut, *Fighting for Britain*, 48.
[191] Ibid., 48.

This link also made it possible for the British to wield so-called 'atrocity propaganda,' portraying the enemy as inhumane, whilst linking their own participation in the war effort to a defence of the weak.[192] In both the First and Second World Wars, pamphlets were circulated detailing alleged atrocities by German forces, as well as their racist ideology and practices; the most infamous example was the 'Report of the Committee on Alleged German Outrages,' also known as the Bryce Report, which discussed supposed atrocities committed by German forces in Belgium, such as raping nuns, killing children, and the use of forced labour.[193] Later, these stories also expanded to include allegations of barbarity and exploitative nature of German colonial policies on the African continent, in contrast with the Britain, who were 'partners,' as one pamphlet put it. The pamphlet, produced in 1942, argues that 'Victory is Vital!' as the 'Germans would Rob West Africans of their Produce' and make them 'Slaves Under Hitler.' While Britain 'is your friend and believes in progress for all,' Germany 'is your enemy and believes in slavery for all non-Germans.'[194] The assertion that Britain is a 'partner' to West Africans once again suggests a degree of equality, but also implies a degree of independence; rather than claim that West African subjects are British, they are partners of the British, while Germany would see them reduced to slaves and robbed of their freedoms. Making such claims about the enemy involved striking a delicate balance, however, as making negative statements about German colonial policy might be extended to British rule as well.

In addition to print media, the British also made use of film to sway public opinion. In this endeavour, the Colonial Film Unit (CFU), formed in 1939, was a highly influential organisation, producing well over 200 films and helping to foreground cinema as a pedagogical device for colonial administration, as well as establishing a network for the distribution and exhibition of film throughout Africa, primarily through mobile cinema vans.[195] From its formation until it was disbanded in 1955, the narratives and techniques developed by the CFU underwent many changes, reflecting the broader shifts in British colonial policy during this period.[196] While it was initially established under the Ministry of Information to produce propaganda films, encouraging African support for the war effort, after the War, the CFU's focus shifted to the production of 'instructional films' for African audiences.[197] These later films promoted community development and welfare programmes, and as the Colonial Office began supporting and sponsoring the

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[192] Tom Rice, "Colonial Film Unit," *Colonial Film: Moving Images of the British Empire*, last modified August, 2010, http://www.colonialfilm.org.uk/production-company/colonial-film-unit.
[193] Ibid.
[194] The National Archives, "Convincing the Colonies," *The National Archives*, accessed February 28, 2020, https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/convincing-the-colonies/.
[195] Rice, "Colonial Film Unit."
[196] Tom Rice, *Films for the Colonies: Cinema and the Preservation of the British Empire* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2019), 2.
[197] Rice, "Colonial Film Unit."

establishment of local film units and training schools, film production by the CFU largely ceased, mirroring broader moves towards 'gradual' self-governance. While a majority of the films were intended for African audiences, some, including the widely circulated 'Africa's Fighting Men,' were also shown in the metropole, encouraging domestic shifts in attitude towards the colonial subjects who were valiantly fighting for the British homeland.[198]

'Africa's Fighting Men' illustrated the role of African servicemen in the Second World War. The completed film, approximately thirteen minutes in length, consisted of items that had previously appeared in the first eight issues of the Colonial Film Unit's fortnightly 16mm silent newsreel, titled 'The British Empire at War.'[199] The film includes clips of the King's African Rifles and the Royal West African Frontier Force on manoeuvres in Ceylon, as well as the Gold Coast regiment building a ship and the Nigerian Artillery Regiment carrying and assembling their weapons.[200] Additionally, anti-aircraft crews in Freetown, Sierra Leone, are shown practise firing their weapons, sailors are shown receiving their preliminary training, and special attention is given to Pilot Officer Peter Thomas, who was the first African pilot in the Royal Air Force.[201] After its release in 1943, the film received a great deal of praise for presenting "a most creditable record of the contribution the African colonies are making to the fighting forces in Europe," and it was reportedly in greater demand for universal circulation than any other of the CFU's productions.[202] According to Tom Rice, 'Africa's Fighting Men' was primarily intended for African audiences, but it was also circulated in the metropole as part of the touring 'Colonies Exhibition,' where it drew an unexpectedly large audience in cities across Britain.

As it was intended for African audiences, the film "sought to recognise the African war effort, encourage further African support for the War, and promote a message of continuing imperial interdependency."[203] This message was reinforced by the narration, which stated that "the people of Africa are doing excellent work to help the Allied cause," and that African regiments were "known the world over" and widely recognised for their contributions.[204] They are hailed as "brave, loyal men who are ready for any sacrifice," but they are also repeatedly located in the imperial context, dependent upon the training and support of their British superiors.[205] Additionally, as Rice notes, the

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[198] Tom Rice, "Africa's Fighting Men," *Colonial Film: Moving Imaages of the British Empire*, last modified October, 2009, http://www.colonialfilm.org.uk/node/180.
[199] Ibid.
[200] Ibid.
[201] Ibid.
[202] Ibid.
[203] Ibid.
[204] ekenedilichukwu, "Africa's Fighting Men," *YouTube video*, 13:33, January 17, 2013, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XdZdwlAWddQ.
[205] Ibid.

commentary highlights specific racial characteristics to African soldiers, arguing that "they are at their best when fighting in the bush," and that their "great strength and endurance […] is an invaluable asset." Thus, though colonial soldiers are portrayed as a crucial element in the British war effort, they are also framed in terms of the martial race doctrine, and the images serve to reinforce these messages. Most of the clips depict Africans as a collective unit, training and working together, but they are never shown in action, which was a source of criticism among African audiences.[206] The final clip, however, stands apart from the rest, as the focus here is on an individual African man "who excels in his work and is presented within a British context."[207] Pilot Officer Peter Thomas is shown shaking hands with a European and is framed as his equal, presenting a role model to viewers.

'Belonging' in the Empire, 'belonging' in the Army?

British recruitment media in the metropole relied heavily on the idea that 'Britishness' and 'belonging' to the nation was conditional upon participation in the war effort, but this connection was more tenuous in colonial recruitment. While recruitment media did, to a limited extent, employ a rhetoric of unity in the face of the enemy, to accord colonial subjects the same status and equality as their metropolitan counterparts would jeopardise practical strategies to divide and rule the Empire. As argued by Richard S. Fogarty in the French context, "war posters were instrumental in consolidating ties of solidarity between citizens of hexagonal France and French colonies," as they sought to reassure the French public that France had overseas support, but they also "reflect the 'ambiguous status' of colonial troops, who were fighting for the nation but were not recognised as full members of it."[208] In a similar manner, British colonial films were shown to the British public to raise awareness of colonial contributions to the war effort and instil confidence at home, but a delicate balance had to be struck between expressing gratitude and solidarity to colonial troops, and giving in to demands for independence and self-governance. As a result, the gap between rhetorical tactics in recruitment media and practical recruitment strategies is wide, and fraught with contradictions.

As Killingray points out, "throughout the colonial period the majority of recruits to colonial armies were drawn from those areas that had been identified as traditional recruiting grounds."[209] Based on the martial race doctrine, certain areas provided large numbers of soldiers, creating 'soldier villages' in peripheral areas of the colonies that were "for the most part poor and remote from any modern economic development,"

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[206] Rice, "Colonial Film Unit
[207] Ibid.
[208] James, *Picture This*, 27.
[209] Killingray and Plaut, *Fighting for Britain*, 39.

subject to frequent droughts and food shortages.[210] While British peacetime recruiting operated on an official voluntary basis, the influence of chiefs cannot be neglected, as they became the most common method of recruiting. This generally worked well, though as war increased the demand for soldiers, a growing number of chiefs started refusing to help, or were slow in supplying men, in an effort to retain the loyalty and support of their communities. Under the system of indirect rule, which was steadily introduced in the interwar years, chiefs were paid salaries, which compromised their position as they "acted, and were often seen by their people as acting, as servants of the colonial state."[211] Thus, while recruitment media conveyed ideas of solidarity and made clear how necessary the support of the colonial troops was, the reality was that recruitment efforts were concentrated in marginalised, impoverished communities, where young men had few options other than to enlist. Even in media that allude to the importance of the role of colonial troops, such as in the 'Old Lion' and 'Together!' posters, they are never presented as truly equal to their metropolitan counterparts. Instead, they are essential to the war effort, but always operating in a subservient, supportive capacity to help their rulers defeat their enemies.

Alongside contributions by India and Britain's African colonies, the other Dominions of the Empire also supported the British war effort, but the way in which non-white soldiers were recruited poses interesting questions about how far manpower demands can challenge dominant social customs and attitudes. As seen with the inclusion of women and the expansion of their roles in the armed forces, the appeal to non-white colonial subjects had to navigate the fact that, up until the First World War, the British armed forces were predominantly made up of white soldiers, whose task it had been to extend and maintain control over the Empire's non-white populations. The need for more men meant the recruitment pool had to be expanded to include a population that had been previously restricted from fighting in 'white man's wars,' while also ensuring that they did not take advantage of their new role to rise up against their British rulers. In contrast, Dominions like Australia, Canada, and New Zealand, who contributed predominantly white soldiers, were able to mobilise 'population' and 'nation' as interchangeable terms, without this rhetorical equivalence posing the same threat to order and stability as it would in the colonies.[212] In this respect, South Africa presented an exception, as soldiers were drawn from white, black, as well as Afrikaner populations, and black soldiers outnumbered white soldiers in the United Democratic Front by 1939, in spite of poor treatment and poor rates of pay.[213] By comparison, although India enjoyed substantial

[210] Killingray and Plaut, *Fighting for*, 39.
[211] Ibid., 40.
[212] Iain E. Johnston-White, *The British Commonwealth and Victory in the Second World War* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 224.
[213] Ibid., 224.

self-governance, it was still officially a colony, and the Indian Army's mutinous past contributed to how London employed Indian manpower; as Iain Johnston-White notes, "the Dominions were fighting *for* the UK; India was fighting *because of* the UK."[214]

[214] Johnston-White, *The British Commonwealth*, 20.

The 'All-Volunteer Force' and the marketisation of the military

From conscription to the 'All-Volunteer Force'

After the First World War, British military policy reverted to the historical norm, with a small Regular Army garrisoning the empire, a Territorial (reserve) Army waiting to support it, "and a population willing to cheer its soldiers from a distance, but rarely willing to serve in person."[215] After the Second World War, however, the polarisation of the world into East and West demanded a degree of military readiness that would have been unthinkable in the past, and so the demobilisation of 1945 was short-lived. The Soviet threat to Western Europe prompted the establishment of NATO and created a perceived need for large-scale forces to defend northwest Europe, to which the British Army was to be a significant contributor.[216] Thus, conscription in the form of National Service was reintroduced in 1948, and all males at the age of 18 were required to serve for a period of 18 months, which was later extended to two years due to the demands of the Korean War.[217] In addition to the defence of north Germany, National Servicemen were also deployed in the 1956 Suez imbroglio, as well as in Palestine, Malaya, Kenya, and a number of other operations throughout the 1950s. According to Christopher Dandeker, during this period, "about half of the personnel of the British armed forces were conscripts and most accounts agree that the system performed well."[218]

By 1957, however, with approximately 9% of GDP devoted to defence, the continuing pressure on public expenditure gave rise to the argument that nuclear deterrence and greater reliance on technological armed forces effectively rendered conscription redundant.[219] Driving this commitment to an 'All-Volunteer Force' (AVF) was the idea that, rather than investing in the time-consuming training of conscripts, resources could be more efficiently devoted to "professionalism and technological sophistication."[220] At the same time, concerns arose about how the military, especially the British Army, would be able to recruit and retain sufficient numbers of the right quality, and whether this transition would mean that the armed forces would become more isolated from the wider society.[221] These apprehensions have an eerily contemporary ring, and many of the difficulties that voluntary recruitment brings are not unique to the British armed forces, but can be observed in other liberal democracies. While conscription built on duty and national cohesion has traditionally been legitimated by external threats, the transition by many states of the global North to AVFs "seems to have changed the

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[215] French, *Army*, 6-7.
[216] Dandeker, "Recruiting," 2.
[217] Ibid., 2.
[218] Ibid., 2.
[219] Ibid., 2.
[220] Ibid., 3.
[221] Ibid., 3.

discursive association between military service and the state or the nation."[222] Additionally, although Indian independence in 1947 meant that British units that had been stationed there were available for other duties, "it actually reduced Britain's global military capability, as it no longer had the huge Indian Army at its disposal."[223] The last National Serviceman left the British armed forces in 1963, but many of the questions that arose in the early days of the AVF persist to this day, and are also reflected in recruitment advertising.

In the study of the transition from conscription to voluntary recruitment, a great deal of work has been done on the United States, where widespread protests against the Vietnam War contributed to the abandonment of the draft.[224] While the social and historical context in which this transformation took place is very different from the British process, a number of important questions and insights can be gained from the literature, particularly regarding the concept of 'marketisation' of the armed forces. In the US case, Bailey argues that, while public discontent and the claims of youthful protestors provided the political impetus to abolish the draft, the move was fundamentally shaped by free-market economists who had gained influence in Nixon's presidential campaign and administration.[225] Ultimately, they took advantage of opposition from the Left to promote a major shift to the right, and "instead of framing the transition in terms of citizenship and obligation or shared service and social equality, they offered services based on doctrines of free-market economics."[226] It was argued that the draft could be replaced by the free market, and any inequities could be avoided by creating an arena within which individuals made 'rational' decisions.[227] Paradoxically, the question of motivation was not as simple as economists made it out to be; in the quest to compete for young Americans, the military officers who managed the transition understood that, in the wake of the Vietnam War, free market rationality would not be sufficient to entice eighteen-year-olds to join the military. Thus, "[they] moved from models of free-market rationality to models of consumer capitalism," a process which entailed the reframing of recruits as 'customers' and the army itself as a 'product.'[228]

In this so-called 'marketisation' of the military, advertising played a crucial role, particularly as the shift necessitated an expansion of the pool from which potential recruits were to be drawn, and appeals had to be made directly to women and people of

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[222] Sanna Strand and Joakim Berndtsson, "Recruiting the 'enterprising soldier': military recruitment discourses in Sweden and the United Kingdom," *Critical Military Studies* 1, no. 3 (2015): 233, doi:10.1080/23337486.2015.1090676.

[223] National Army Museum, "National Service Acts, 1948-1955," *National Army Museum Online Collection*, NAM.2002-09-5-1, accessed July 13, 2020, https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=2002-09-5-1.

[224] Bailey, "The Army," 48.

[225] Ibid., 49.

[226] Ibid., 49.

[227] Ibid., 49.

[228] Ibid., 50.

colour to fill the ranks. As Melissa Brown argues, in the early 1970s, when the US military was making the transition to an AVF, masculinity was widely considered to be in crisis, with challenges to men's roles and privileges emerging from the women's movement.[229] Historically, military service has strong ties to masculinity and the transformation of boys into men, but "at the very moment when the military needed to begin finding ways to entice young people, and mainly young *men*, into military service, a key ideological component of the concept of military service, masculinity, was in a state of flux."[230] Brown then asks whether, in the age of AVF, masculinity remains the underlying basis for appeals for military service, and argues that when traditional masculinities have been discredited, a military institution faces a choice: "it can move away from masculinity in its attempts to recruit, it can re-forge the link between the military and masculinity but in ways that exploit and develop new masculine forms, or it can emphasise a traditional masculinity, establishing the military as a refuge for a traditional idea of manhood that is being challenged in other parts of society."[231] Through the analysis of US military advertising, she concludes that, while masculinity is still a foundation of many of the appeals made by the armed forces, each branch deploys *different* constructions that serve its particular needs. While the Marine Corps, for instance, does rely on a traditional, warrior form of masculinity, the Army utilises ideas of "adventure and challenge, […] economic independence and breadwinner status, dominance and mastery through technology, and hybrid masculinity, which combines egalitarianism and compassion with strength and power."[232]

The Army as a 'good career'

Although conscription was reintroduced in Britain in 1948, recruitment in the 1950s still included posters and other visual media. However, as military service was compulsory, it appears that advertising was not necessarily employed to *convince* people to enlist, but rather served as an opportunity to 'rebrand' the armed forces and construct a new message about their purpose in light of Britain's new post-war role, not only for prospective recruits but also for the general population. By the end of the 1950s, however, with the decision to end National Service, the Army introduced a campaign that declared that a life in the Regular Army was "A Real Man's Life!" In a series of posters produced between 1959 and 1960, soldiers were depicted in a number of different capacities, such as engineers, tank commanders, and handling hazardous materials, as well as regular soldiers (Fig. 66, Fig 67, Fig. 68). In contrast with recruitment in times of conflict and crisis, where appeals were much broader, referring to ideas of duty and patriotic unity,

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[229] Brown, "A Woman in the Army," 3.
[230] Ibid., 3-4.
[231] Ibid., 4.
[232] Ibid., 5.

these images highlight specific career opportunities open to potential recruits. It is evident that the focus shifted to showcase the new, 'modern' army, equipped with the latest technology and weapons, and manned by 'professional' soldiers serving in a rapid deployment force.[233] In the context of the Cold War, the emphasis on technological progress mirrors similar global efforts to innovate, but it is also important to note that, by equating the 'modern' status of the Army with the call to enlist and pursue "A Real Man's Life," these posters also serve to reconstruct military masculinity. As argued by Brown, the Army appears to shift the rhetoric of masculinity away from ideas of duty and patriotism, or the identity of the 'warrior,' and instead highlights the relationship between professional and financial independence, mastery of technology, and a career in the Army as the ultimate expression of masculinity.

Figure 66: Poster published by Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1959. "Join the New Regular Army: A Real Man's Life!" From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.2011-11-4-1. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=2011-11-4-1.

Figure 67: Poster published by Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1960. "It's A Real Man's Life: join the Regular Army." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1986-11-60-7. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1985-11-60-7.

Figure 68: Poster published by Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1960. "It's A Real Man's Life: join the Regular Army." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1985-11-60-6. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1985-11-60-6.

In the 1960s, this renegotiation of military masculinity continued, as Army recruitment continued to explore themes of professionalism and technological progress, as demonstrated in a series of posters depicting soldiers operating technical equipment, stating that the Army was "One of Today's Great Careers."[234] In these colourful, eye-

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[233] National Army Museum, "Soldier of the Queen," *National Army Museum Online Collection*, NAM.1985-11-60-5, accessed July 12, 2020, https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1985-11-60-5.
[234] King's Own Royal Regiment Museum Lancaster, "Recruiting Posters 1960s," last modified 2011, http://www.kingsownmuseum.com/recrutingposters04.htm.

catching posters, artistic renderings of various jobs in the Regular Army are accompanied by captions that claim that a life in the Army is not only "a real man's life," but also "a skilled trade" and "a worth-while life" (Fig. 69, Fig. 70, Fig. 71). These posters communicate the range of jobs and responsibilities available to recruits, including in the Life Guards, as tank commanders, and despatch riders on motorbikes, but also as cooks and technicians. What is striking is that those images that most obviously depict soldiers in uniform are those that refer explicitly to masculinity, while those showcasing an Army career outside the stereotypical 'soldiering' profession are those that invoke concepts of skill, usefulness, and purpose. This suggests that recruitment media were intended to appeal to viewers who might not have thought that an Army career was for them, reassuring potential recruits that their work can still be worthwhile even if they do not imagine themselves as soldiers in the conventional sense. These images do not break the link between the military and masculinity, but instead reframe and widen the definition of masculinity to include concepts of professionalism and independence. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that these posters depict individual figures, set against plain, monochromatic backgrounds. This not only allows the central figure to stand out, but it also demonstrates the shift from recruitment based on 'doing your bit' and being part of a larger entity, to the individual benefits that can be gained from a career in the Army.

Figure 69: Poster published by Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1960. "It's a real man's life: join the Regular Army." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1985-11-60-11. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1985-11-60-11.

Figure 70: Poster published by Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1960. "It's a skilled trade: join the Regular Army." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1985-11-60-59. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1985-11-60-59.

Figure 71: Poster published by Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1960. "It's a worthwhile life: join the Regular Army." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1985-11-60-10. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1985-11-60-10.

By the end of the 1960s, the Army had devised a new slogan to further enforce the break in the idea of a conscript army and convey a sense of skill and purpose.[235] Across recruitment media, the Army were referred to as "The Professionals," with posters showcasing the various roles available to recruits. Two posters display the slogan, "Join the Professionals," each depicting five soldiers from different regiments and branches, including one figure in scuba diving gear, one in winterwear holding skis, and another in a martial arts uniform (Fig. 72). Although the soldiers are depicted in a group, each individual's gaze is towards the camera, establishing a visual relationship with the viewer, and the subjects are further individualised by their differentiated clothing. Once again, the focus is on individual opportunity, rather than group cohesion or 'belonging,' as it is now, and instead the viewer is invited to imagine themselves in these different positions, mentally 'trying them on' to see which one fits. With the shift to the AVF, a career in the Army had to be able to compete with civilian careers, and through advertising the armed forces could also showcase new roles and tasks that would have been enabled by the development of technology. Without conscription, fewer civilians had a direct, familial connection to the armed forces, and these posters would have allowed the general public to discover how the Army was changing in the post-war era. Another way in which the Army was portrayed as a career like any other was through the emphasis on pay and other material benefits. One poster, produced in 1972, shows mechanised infantry mounted on an armoured vehicle on exercise, with a caption that reads, "Take a 3-year job with the Professionals,"[236] followed by the information that pay starts at £19.53 per week. On another, it is stated that a career with the Professionals offers "Good jobs. Good money. Good times,"[237] further highlighting the idea that, despite the technology and equipment depicted in the posters, the factors that might help viewers decide to enlist are the same that would influence any other job decision.

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[235] i Team, "Charting the army's recruitment battle for hearts and minds throughout history," *iNews*, January 12, 2018, https://inews.co.uk/news/long-reads/british-army-recruitment-posters-video-history-116804.

[236] National Army Museum, "Take a 3-year job with the Professionals," *National Army Museum Online Collection*, NAM.1985-11-60-46, accessed July 14, 2020, https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1985-11-60-46.

[237] National Army Museum, "Good jobs. Good. Money. Good times," *National Army Museum Online Collection*, NAM.1985-11-60-40, accessed July 14, 2020, https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1985-11-60-40.

Figure 72: Posters, n.d. "Join the Professionals." Accessed at i Team, "Charting the army's recruitment battle for hearts and minds throughout history," *iNews*, January 12, 2018, https://inews.co.uk/news/long-reads/british-army-recruitment-posters-video-history-116804.

In the early years of the AVF, recruitment media communicated the idea that the roles open to potential recruits were diverse and fulfilling, while also highlighting the material benefits of an Army career. Much like in the interwar period, collective values of patriotism and duty were no longer sufficient to attract recruits, and these posters aimed to demonstrate that there was more to a military career than simply soldiering. However, while there are some similarities between the interwar and early AVF periods, the 'marketisation' of the military created a distinctive rhetoric around skill development and enrichment that was not utilised in the interwar years. After the First World War, the Army sought to distance itself from the conflict by focusing on adventure, travel, and fun; more than anything else, the goal was to differentiate peacetime and wartime recruitment as much as possible. However, the professionalisation of the Army in the post-WWII era demanded a more permanent shift in how the military represented itself, drawing a distinction between joining the Army as a 'calling' or 'duty,' and instead presenting it as a 'career.'

Making up the shortfall: expanding the role of women

With the move to an All-Volunteer Force, the Army also had to widen its recruitment pool, expanding the role of women and appealing to them directly in order to fill the ranks. While there were still restrictions on the jobs that women were allowed to perform in the armed forces, their performance of administrative and supportive tasks was vital in order to free up the dwindling number of male volunteers to serve in other

capacities.[238] The Women's Royal Army Corps (WRAC) was formed in 1949 as the successor to the Auxiliary Territorial Service, and many of the contradictions and complications that the ATS faced in the recruitment of women for Home Defence in the Second World War can also be found in the recruitment literature of the WRAC. [239] As discussed previously, while the recruitment of women was essential to sustain the numbers required by the armed forces, their entrance into military service, even in a supportive capacity, was also seen by many as a 'disruptive' force to the established order and to military masculinity as an organisational concept.[240] In the post-war transition to the AVF, this paradox had to be reconciled once again, and throughout recruitment media, there is evident tension between advertising a career in the armed forces as a chance at women's financial independence and success on the one hand, and the need to preserve the subjects' 'femininity' on the other. To some extent, this also mirrors the colonial case, where manpower demands necessitated an expansion of the recruitment pool and the integration of colonial subjects into the Army but needed to do so without undermining the existing imperial hierarchy. Both women and colonial subjects were indispensable in maintaining adequate numbers in the Army, but they faced severe restrictions in roles and responsibilities to keep them 'separate,' at least to a degree.

One poster, depicting a WRAC officer operating a piece of equipment under the supervision of a male superior, argues that "a girl can be independent and not be alone," adding that "You'll be happy in the WRAC" (Fig. 73). On the one hand, this poster is addressing stereotypes about working women in the 1960s, who might have been perceived as 'too independent' or uninterested in relationships or marriage, thus arguing that a career in the armed forces did not mean that potential recruits would compromise their future. On the other hand, this statement further reinforces the supportive capacity in which women worked, which is also illustrated by the image, where the female officer is shown deferring to her male superior for guidance. On another poster, this one from 1970, the slogan reads, "She chose the WRAC," which appears to fall in line with the broader rhetoric of individuals making choices according to free-market principles (Fig. 74). However, this appeal to women's independence only goes so far, as on the same poster the chief benefits of joining the WRAC also include "attractive new uniforms." Thus, while the armed forces made use of appeals to skill development, professionalism, and independence in the new landscape of voluntary recruitment, applying the same rhetoric to women would undermine efforts to reconstruct military masculinity, as outlined above. As a result, the use of such rhetoric in WRAC recruitment is limited, or is often

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[238] National Army Museum, "Woman's Royal Army Corps," *National Army Museum*, accessed July 12, 2020, https://www.nam.ac.uk/explore/womens-royal-army-corps.
[239] Ibid.
[240] Ibid.

contradicted by, the emphasis on feminine qualities and the idea that the importance of the job was to be derived from its supportive capacity in relation to men.

Figure 73: Poster published by the War Office, 1960. "You'll be Happy in the WRAC." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1993-11-1-133-1. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1993-11-1-133-1.

Figure 74: Poster published by the Ministry of Defence, 1970. "She Chose the WRAC." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.2011-11-16-1. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=2011-11-16-1.

As demonstrated in the poster described above, another notable element of WRAC recruitment advertising is the focus on being happy, enjoying life, and having fun. Across recruitment media, women in the WRAC are shown smiling, both on and off duty, in uniform and in civilian clothes, including swimwear. One poster proclaims that "The girls in lovat green enjoy a colourful life," promising "an interesting job working alongside men, long leave, good pay, and travel" (Fig. 75). The reference to recruits as 'girls' and the emphasis on the colour of the uniforms, as well as the photos showing WRAC members working with children, in secretarial positions, as well as in swimwear, trivialise the work of the WRAC and undermine just how necessary female recruits were in the age of the AVF. Women were confined to traditionally 'feminine' roles in the armed forces, and while there is mention of 'good pay,' the most important part of working in the WRAC appears to be enjoying oneself and having fun, in contrast with the 'skilled' and 'worthwhile' work that awaited men in the Regular Army. One poster depicts two members of the WRAC, "Off duty. At the end of an afternoon spent sailing," promoting the recreational activities that women in the WRAC could take part in, rather than their professional responsibilities (Fig. 76). While many of the posters recruiting for the Regular Army showed soldiers in action, manning military vehicles and operating

equipment, a great deal of the recruitment media for the WRAC aims to depict women as attractive, rather than capable.

Figure 75: Poster published by the Ministry of Defence, 1968. "The girls in lovat green enjoy a colourful life." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1983-11-65-1. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1983-11-65-1.

Figure 76: Poster published by the Ministry of Defence, 1978. "Off Duty. At the end of an afternoon spent sailing." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1993-11-1-200-1. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1993-11-1-200-1.

In the 1970s, however, with the rise of the feminist movement and changing attitudes towards women's capabilities and role in society, there was also a shift in the marketing of the WRAC. One poster shows two photographs side by side, one a portrait of a woman in civilian clothing, and the other of the same women in WRAC uniform, with the text underneath reading, "Smart," and "Smarter," respectively (Fig. 77). On a similar poster, the 'before and after' format is recreated, while the central text reads, "Same girl, different woman" (Fig. 78). Here, a distinction is made between civilian women and those who choose to work in the armed forces, and the implication is that the decision to join the WRAC would make the viewer more mature, responsible, and was a mark of intelligence. This is further reinforced by the rhetorical shift from 'girl' to 'woman,' and while previous posters portrayed 'girls' having fun, the implication here is that women in the Army are taken seriously due to their position and responsibilities. In contrast to the previous focus on enjoyment and recreational activities, this shift in rhetoric demonstrates, to a certain extent, the increasing independence that women were craving and achieving in wider society. However, it is also important to note that, in both photographs, the subjects are shown wearing makeup, suggesting, once again, that a career in the armed forces does not mean that the viewer would have to compromise their

femininity. In this period, recruitment media had to reconcile the paradox of portraying a career in the WRAC as a viable option for women, with a rigorous interview and training process and the opportunity to earn qualifications, while also taking into consideration the fact that the roles available were still confined to traditional 'feminine' jobs.[241]

Figure 77: Poster published by the Ministry of Defence, 1978. "Smart. Smarter. WRAC Officer." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1984-01-74-17. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1984-01-74-17.

Figure 78: Poster published by the Ministry of Defence, 1979. "Same Girl. Different Woman." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1984-01-74-18. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1984-01-74-18.

While women in the WRAC worked in over 40 trades, including as clerks, chefs, communications operators, and drivers, there were some areas of Army service where progression was slower. It was not until the 1980s that women were allowed to carry and use firearms, and only in 1984 were women allowed to undergo their officer training at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst.[242] The WRAC was disbanded in 1992, with officers already being transferred to the corps they served with as early as October 1990. As these opportunities expanded, the way in which the Army appealed to women also changed. A poster from 1990 shows female soldiers preparing rations over a fire, cleaning a rifle, and setting up a satellite dish, with the text above stating that "As a woman in the army, you'll be expected to cook, clean, and do the dishes" (Fig. 79). In contrast to the advertisements produced earlier, this poster mocks outdated stereotypes of women's roles in the armed forces. In flipping these assumptions on their head, there was an attempt to

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[241] National Army Museum, "A Girl who wants to be an Army officer…" *National Army Museum*, NAM.1993-11-1-108-1, accessed July 12, 2020, https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1993-11-1-108-1.

[242] National Army Museum, Woman's Royal Army Corps."

attract more women to join by showing them the reality of what they could do in the Army and the new opportunities they had. Though this advertisement aimed to undermine the idea that women were confined to 'feminine' roles, it was not until July 2016 that the ban on women serving in close-combat units was lifted, and in October 2018 it was announced that all roles in the military are open to women.[243] Nevertheless, after the dissolution of the WRAC, there were gradually fewer attempts to explicitly attract women to join the Army, as the message of professionalism and skill development came to include all prospective recruits, not only men.
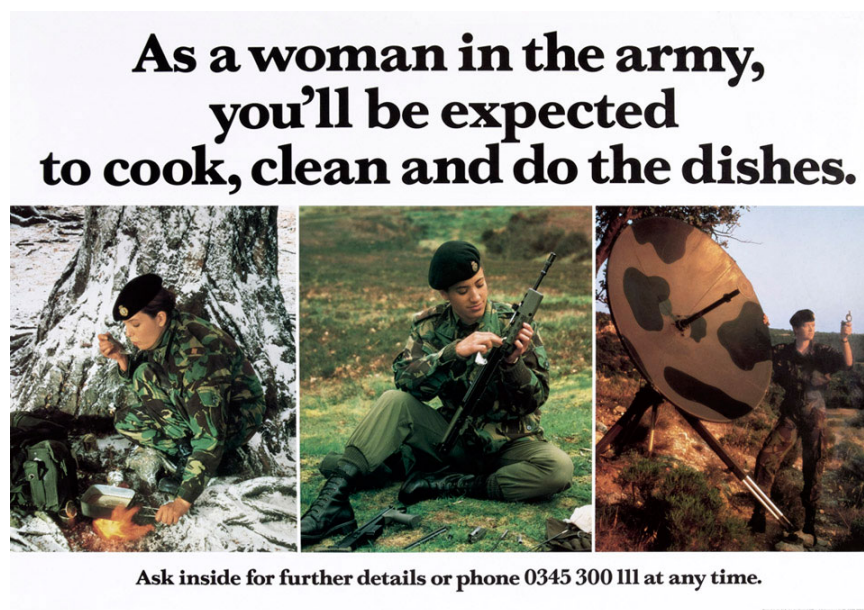

Figure 79: Poster printed for the Central Office of Information, 1990. "As a woman in the army, you'll be expected to cook, clean, and do the dishes." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.2009-02-52-1. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=2009-02-52-1.

The changing nature of warfare and the 'postmodern' military

Since the end of the Cold War, the nature of warfare and the role of the armed forces have changed substantially. During the twentieth century, an effective military organisation was generally defined by its capability to fight and win conventional wars, thereby defending the nation.[244] As Robert Egnell argues, "national armed forces have historically been organised, been trained, been equipped, and developed a certain professional culture and ethos with the intention of maximising their effectiveness in performing precisely that fundamental duty."[245] Ultimately, because this so-called 'functional imperative' is so extreme, it also means that military organisations are entitled

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[243] British Army, "All British Armed Forces roles now open to women," last modified October 25, 2018, https://www.army.mod.uk/news-and-events/news/2018/10/women-in-ground-close-combat-roles/.

[244] Robert Egnell and Mayesha Alam, "Introduction: Gender and Women in the Military—Setting the Stage," in *Women and Gender Perspectives in the Military: An International Comparison*, ed. Robert Egness and Mayesha Alam (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2019), 6.

[245] Ibid., 6.

to be different from broader society, and so developments in civil society, such as increased individualism and the integration of racial, religious, and sexual minorities, are slow to be adopted, and are often bound up in questions about military effectiveness.[246] However, it is clear that "the types of wars and the nature of war fighting have also changed significantly since the turn of the century," and while conventional interstate warfare is not completely irrelevant, "it is nevertheless fair to say that in the contemporary context, different forms of small wars, counterinsurgency, low-intensity conflict, and complex stability and peace support operations are the most common military missions."[247] With the development of more advanced weapons, the redefinition of the global security arena, and the development of new types of military missions, soldiers in Western liberal democracies are increasingly deployed on 'expeditionary' operations as part of so-called 'wars of choice.'[248] According to Charles Moskos, we have moved "away from the 'modern' mass army, characteristic of the age of nationalism, to a 'postmodern' military, adapted to a newly forming world-system in which nationalism is constrained by the rise of global social organisations."[249] Surveys have shown that the British public substantially disagrees with contemporary military operations such as the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and so post-Cold War recruitment appeals are rarely based on the idea of fighting and defeating an enemy.[250]

The end of the Cold War also saw the Army attempting to renegotiate public perception of its 'brand' in the context of a changing international landscape and shifting responsibilities. One manner in which the Army sought to refocus public opinion was by communicating Britain's role as a peacekeeping force. On one 1993 poster, a soldier is shown wearing a blue United Nations helmet cover, and the caption focuses on the Army's role in "Protecting Britain's future," while also stating that the Army is "Attuned to society," "Modern and motivated," as well as "A caring employer" (Fig. 80). The poster aims to convince the viewer that the Army is still a "Vital national asset" and that the British public are getting their "Value for money," while at the same time showcasing the Army as a progressive, forward-thinking institution. By focusing on the new role of the armed forces in the post-Cold War world, the poster aims to generate interest in new opportunities and keep the Army relevant in a less militarised society. Themes of professionalism and skill development still remained prominent, but other messages were also employed to make a career in the Army seem exciting and thrilling in comparison to civilian life. In a well-known television advert from 1992, two friends are shown sitting in silence, drinking tea and wondering what has become of their friend, 'Frank,' who

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[246] Egnell and Alam, "Introduction," 6.
[247] Ibid., 7.
[248] Strand and Berndtsson, "Recruiting," 234.
[249] Charles C. Moskos, John Allen Williams, and David R. Segal, *The Postmodern Military: Armed Forces after the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 164.
[250] Strand and Berndtsson, "Recruiting," 235.

recently joined the Army. While the two subjects cannot fathom why their friend decided to join the armed forces, the video cuts to exciting scenes of Frank on various adventures, skiing, windsurfing, and running across a landscape with helicopters flying overhead and tanks driving past. The message is clear: staying at home is a slow, boring life, while life in the Army is an action-packed adventure. Alongside scenes of training exercises and leisure activities, there is even a shot of 'Frank' walking along a beach with a woman, suggesting that a life in the armed forces brings both professional and personal opportunities and success.[251]

Figure 80: Poster published by the Ministry of Defence, 1993. "ARMY: Protecting Britain's Future." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1994-12-258-1. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1994-12-258-1.

By 1996, the idea that life in the Army was superior to civilian life became the focal point of recruitment advertising with the introduction of the slogan, 'Be The Best,' which remains in use to this day. Beyond professional skill development and worthwhile employment opportunities, this slogan suggests that joining the Army facilitates personal growth in all aspects of life, which Strand argues is part of a broader cultural shift towards 'enterprise culture.' Contemporary neoliberalism, in contrast with classic liberalism, "not only holds essential the belief that free individuals and markets should work and exist beyond the influence of the state, but also suggests that liberal authorities should actively promote an 'enterprise culture' among its citizens."[252] This cultural shift is reflected in recruitment media through the promise that recruits "will grow as

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[251] Max Hastings, "Yes, society has changed. But we still need hard men (and women) in the British Army to defend us," *Daily Mail*, January 11, 2018, https://www.dailymail.co.uk/video/news/video-1605704/Want-job-adventure-Frank-join-army.html.

[252] Strand and Berndtsson, "Recruiting," 236.

individuals and thereby become employable and attractive in private labour markets."[253] Thus, the Army becomes a career 'stepping stone' and a personal investment, reinforcing neoliberal norms about the importance of striving for constant personal development and improvement. Much like in the earlier days of the AVF, the focus is on what the individual can gain for themselves and their future, but the Army is no longer sold as a career for life; instead, it is portrayed as just one of many opportunities for self-fulfilment and personal growth. Concepts of employability and transferable skills are constantly present in British recruitment products and rhetoric, and ultimately, "job assignments seem secondary to what the individual can gain from an army job in terms of self-fulfilment, development, and personal growth."[254]

The concept of the 'enterprising soldier' is evident across Army recruitment media from the mid-1990s up until the introduction of the 'This Is Belonging' campaign in 2017. With the introduction of the 'Be The Best' slogan, posters continued to advertise the material and personal benefits of a career in the Army, but there was more of a focus on what these skills would add to life beyond the armed forces. One 1996 poster depicts airborne troops in the interior of a transport aircraft, and asks whether the viewer feels "Boxed In," arguing that "The Army can open the door to a different career outlook" (Fig. 81). The caption implies that joining the Army is not necessarily a job for life, but offers a variety of opportunities and alternative career paths, especially for those who may feel like they have limited options in life. Another poster, titled "Infan|try," shows a soldier in combat dress holding a rifle, and the caption reads, "If you are looking for a worthwhile job with good pay, adventure, travel, sport, and a training for life – try the Infantry" (Fig. 82). Once again, although material benefits and new experiences are part of the recruitment appeal, there is also a focus on the idea that joining the Army provides skills for life, and the emphasis on the word 'try' suggests that the viewer is not expected to make a lifelong commitment, but instead should take advantage of opportunities that benefit them the most. More recent recruitment posters follow this trend, with posters from 2014 claiming that "There's more than one way to be the best," and that the Army "can train you for hundreds of different roles and [has] thousands of jobs available now," including nurse, driver, infantry soldier, plumber, IT technician, and electrician (Fig. 83). While these posters depict soldiers in combat dress, the captions highlight the values of the 'enterprising soldier,' offering diverse professional and personal opportunities to the viewer. In contrast to past recruitment appeals, where joining the Army meant fitting in to

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[253] Strand and Berndtsson, "Recruiting," 234.
[254] Ibid., 241.

a predetermined mould, these advertisements give the viewer more control and choice over what their life and career in the armed forces might look like.

Figure 81: Poster published by the Armed Forces Careers Office, 1996. "Feel Boxed In?" From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1996-08-290-1. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1996-08-290-1.

Figure 82: Poster published by the Armed Forces Careers Office, 1996. "Infantry." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1996-08-288-1. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1996-08-288-1.

Figure 83: Poster, 2014. "There's More Than One Way To Be The Best." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.2015-01-4-8. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=2015-01-4-8.

The 'Be The Best' slogan was not only wielded in conjunction with the idea of the 'enterprising soldier,' but also featured in recruitment adverts that highlighted the excitement and thrill of life in the Army. Much like the 'Frank' advert, the idea of being the 'best' extended beyond professional development to argue that the physical challenge and action-packed lifestyle of an Army career made it superior to civilian life. One 1996 poster shows two soldiers in combat dress aiming rifles, with a caption that reads, "Or perhaps you find a night in front of the telly more exciting" (Fig. 84). This image plays on an 'action hero' stereotype of masculinity, defined by thrill-seeking, physical fitness, and sexual prowess, which is contrasted with the quiet, comfortable reality of civilian life. While the transition to the AVF demanded a renegotiation of military masculinity to encompass the 'breadwinner' model, adverts like this one argue that an Army career offers something more than financial independence. Paradoxically, though the Army wants to be perceived as a career like any other, these adverts still portray it as superior to many civilian jobs through the retention of elements of traditional military masculinity. In a series of TV adverts for the Armoured Infantry and Infantry Air Assault from 2006, this incongruity is clear, as shots of tanks, helicopters, and soldiers in action are interspersed with clips of off-duty servicemen in a club and at the beach, surrounded by women. The narration for both adverts promises similar benefits, arguing that the viewer should enlist "for the rush, for the challenge, for the action; to help, to protect, to serve; for the places,

for the people, for the laughs; with compassion, with courage, with confidence; as a unit, as a team; through it all, together."[255] The Infantry Air Assault advert also mentions "professionalism" and "honour,"[256] and this appeal to multiple 'drivers' mirrors the current approach to recruitment. In a 2014 TV advert, action-packed scenes of soldiers driving armoured vehicles and tanks, firing weapons, and flying in military airplanes, are overlaid with captions pointing out that the uniformed individuals in these scenes are also qualified electricians, plumbers, chefs, truck drivers, and HR specialists.[257] The final narration suggest that "there's more than one way to be the best," pointing out the fact that, in the Army, it is possible to 'have it all.'
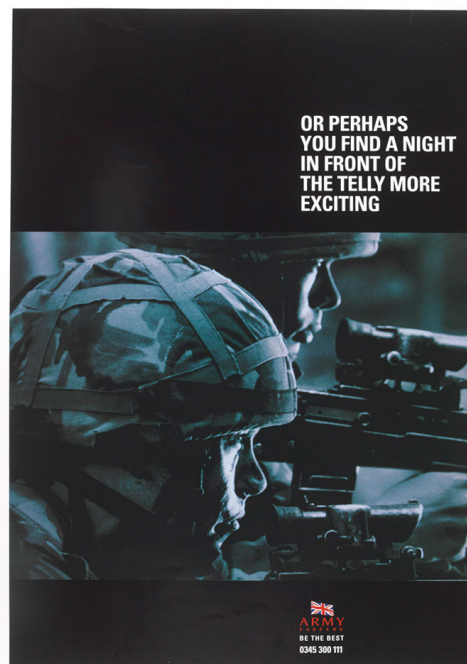

Figure 84: Poster published by the Armed Forces Careers Office, 1996. "Or Perhaps You Find A Night In Front Of The Telly More Exciting." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1996-08-291-1. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1996-08-291-1.

Despite the fact that post-Cold War recruitment targets were significantly lower than they had been in the mid- to late-1980s, recruitment problems still persisted.[258] Much like today, demographic and economic factors threatened to age the military, overstretching existing personnel and sapping morale, and Dandeker notes that, although there may have been a public perception that downsizing the armed forces lessened the need for recruits, there existed "a continuing need to recruit and maintain the flow in what is a quintessentially young people's organisation with a relatively fast turnover, especially

[255] strongmike, "British Army Advert – Armoured Infantry," *YouTube video*, 0:40, July 8, 2006, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lfp-jqJB81U.

[256] strongmike, "British Army Advert – Air Assault Infantry," *YouTube video*, 0:31, July 8, 2006 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=weudbL9tXCQ.

[257] ARMYjobs, "British Army Recruitment TV ad 2014 – Army Life – Army Jobs," *YouTube video*, January 10, 2014, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sOhvjBwuix4.

[258] Dandeker, "Recruiting," 3.

for soldiers."[259] Once again, it was argued that a good strategy for dealing with recruitment problems was to widen the recruitment pool, in particular by expanding employment opportunities for women.[260] Unlike the early days of the AVF, few women appeared or were explicitly targeted in recruitment media until 2012, and appeals to professionalism and skill development were intended to be universally applicable. There was, however, a new focus on 'people issues' and initiatives to address problems of racism and bullying in the Army, which were seen as having a deterrent impact on potential recruits.[261] In response to a damning report from the Office of Public Management, the Ministry of Defence launched its first-ever campaign aimed specifically at recruiting ethnic minority officers. This included the issuing of two posters based on the well-known poster of Lord Kitchener from the First World War, overlaid with the faces of Officer Ashok Kumar Chauhan and Captain Fedelix Datson of the Royal Artillery (Fig. 85, Fig. 86). As argued by Egnell, with the end of the Cold War and the renegotiation of the Army's 'functional imperative,' the extent to which the armed forces are entitled to be 'different' from the rest of the society is called into question, particularly as a volunteer-based recruitment system must rely on all sections of society to fill the ranks.

Figure 85: Poster published by the Ministry of Defence, 1998. "Your Country Needs You." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1998-10-243-1. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1998-10-243-1.

Figure 86: Poster published by the Ministry of Defence, 1998. "Your Country Needs You." From the National Army Museum Online Collection. NAM.1998-10-244-1. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1998-10-244-1..

[259] Dandeker, "Recruiting," 3.
[260] Ibid., 4.
[261] Ibid., 4.

To some extent, the recruitment adverts of the post-Cold War period already indicate a shift towards the rhetoric of 'belonging' that can be seen today. The 1997 appeals aimed to reassure minority recruits that they, too, could 'belong' in the Army, much like the 2018 adverts that addressed the concerns of women and minorities. In the 2006 TV adverts, the narration includes the phrase, "through it all, together," as well as appealing to a broad combination of 'drivers.' However, the narration is spoken over images of military vehicles and soldiers in action, and it appears that the appeal is less about finding a place where each individual can 'belong,' and more about feeding into the 'band of brothers' narrative. In many ways, 'This Is Belonging' aims to challenge exactly this kind of imagery, and while there are parallels to be drawn between the different campaigns, it fundamentally breaks away from many of the traditions and expected images that have been commonly used in military advertising.

Is this belonging? A critical re-examination of British Army recruitment today

A key question raised at the beginning of this thesis was whether the rhetoric of 'belonging' is unique to the current recruitment campaign, or if the concept has also appeared in historical appeals. While the idea of 'belonging' was wielded in campaigns throughout the twentieth century, it has taken on new meaning in its current iteration, bringing with it new questions and implications. Historically, military service was intimately bound up in membership of the British nation, but in just a century, the Army has gone from claiming that 'Your Country Needs You' to foregoing any mention of state, country, or nation in its advertising altogether. During the First and Second World Wars, the duty to serve was clearly constructed as a condition of 'Britishness.' In the face of an enemy, the creation of an in- and outgroup was incredibly powerful, and anyone unwilling to fulfil their duty was portrayed as an enemy, actively working to undermine the success of the British war effort. In the metropole, the link between military service and 'belonging' to the nation was explicit, but in the colonial context, this connection was more tenuous and complicated. While some media implied a link between enlistment and membership of the British Empire, there was also a significant gap between visual and practical recruitment methods, and it is clear that colonial subjects were kept dependent and divided to prevent unrest. Nevertheless, even these limited references to 'belonging' always made reference to national identity and state membership, and after the transition to the AVF the armed forces remained essential in the construction of 'Britishness.' In this period, however, with the further expansion of the role of women and reports of racism and harassment in the ranks, the recruitment project included efforts to widen the definition of 'belonging' by explicitly targeting those who had not traditionally been seen as part of the military, and by extension, the nation. Today, the concept of 'belonging' is decoupled from patriotic sentiments, and is instead treated as universal and apolitical; the military is a place where individual self-fulfilment can be pursued without concern for the wider political purpose of military institutions.[262] In light of the UK's changing and diminishing international role in the context of leaving the European Union, the shift away from nation-based rhetoric makes sense, as the 2016 Brexit referendum exposed and exacerbated divisions within the United Kingdom that might have undermined more conventional recruitment appeals.

While the concept of 'belonging' is wielded in new ways, the current recruitment campaign also partly echoes appeals made throughout the twentieth century. The 'quotation' of imagery and symbols from First World War media makes 2019's 'Your Army Needs You' all the more striking and memorable, and there are many other similarities between peacetime recruitment rhetoric and today's techniques. Appeals based on adventure and travel have been made since the interwar period, and the

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[262] Louise and Sangster, *Selling the Military*, 13.

transition to an AVF saw an increased emphasis on financial independence and the personal benefits of an Army career. Many of these drivers, identified as the basis of 'This Is Belonging,' are part of long-standing military recruitment traditions. Moreover, throughout the period under discussion, most adverts only offered limited impressions of what a career in the Army entailed, while the socio-political context dictated which aspects would be focused on at any given time. One of the main criticisms levelled against 'This Is Belonging' is that it misrepresents life in the armed forces,[263] but given the limitations of the visual medium, it could be argued that this 'gap' between image and reality is to be expected. Historically, in the context of conflict, the Army had a clearly defined purpose that was well known to the public and potential recruits, but when reports of conditions at the front reached audiences at home, rates of enlistment dropped dramatically. After the end of the First World War, the Army needed to change tactics to appeal to a disillusioned audience, but although there was no ongoing conflict of similar scale, adverts were also not clear on the duties and responsibilities of a military career, instead effectively depicting it as a holiday. The Second World War saw the armed forces straddling the line between persuading civilians to help in Home Defence and maintaining the status quo, particularly regarding the involvement of women. In the colonial context, the gap between image and reality is especially striking, as much of the media produced also served to reassure home audiences of colonial support in the war effort. Even after the transition to the AVF, when recruitment media depicted specific jobs and benefits available to prospective recruits, the focus on individual opportunities and transferable skills overlooked the collective organisational framework and purpose of the armed forces.

In spite of these similarities, however, the way in which the purpose of the armed forces is depoliticised and decontextualised in 'This Is Belonging' is unique, and as a result the 'gap' between image and reality is wider than it has been in the past. A report by ForcesWatch argues that the current campaign is particularly problematic because "the armed forces and the marketing agencies who work on the campaigns employ an understanding of adolescent psychology that works to embed positive ideas about military life, exploiting developmental vulnerabilities and social inequality."[264] Aside from glossing over the potential risks and moral complexities of a military career, "emphasising camaraderie exploits adolescent vulnerability and feelings of isolation within the armed forces."[265] By capitalising on the idea that individuals will be accepted into the armed forces regardless of background or identity, 'This Is Belonging' ignores the fact that the organisational framework of the Army demands obedience and

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[263] Walker, "The new army advert."
[264] Louise and Sangster, *Selling the Military*, 4.
[265] Ibid., 5.

conformity, which can lead people to hide aspects of their personal identity.[266] This is a particularly salient issue because the UK is the only country in Europe to recruit soldiers as young as 16, and recruitment applications can be started at 15 years and 7 months. In 2018, the Army was heavily criticised for using social media to target recruitment material towards stressed 16-year-olds around GCSE results day, with a Facebook post that read, "Whatever happens on results day, we'll help you learn, earn, and stand on your own two feet."[267] In response, the director of programmes at Child Soldiers International stated that "these adverts prove once again that the MoD is deliberately targeting children at the lowest limit of the legal recruitment age to fill the lowest qualified, least popular, and hardest-to-recruit army roles."[268] The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child has expressed concern about the vulnerability of the youngest recruits, and recommended that the UK reconsider the policy of recruiting children into the armed forces.[269] Although the decision to enlist in the armed forces has life-changing consequences, "there is little debate about whether or not it is appropriate to target audiences on the basis of their youth and other vulnerabilities, including socioeconomic status."[270]

The Army is selling a dream of self-development, adventure, and comradeship, and this journey toward stability and status is attractive to many young people. Yet although 'This Is Belonging' purports to seek people from all backgrounds, the reality is that recruitment is still concentrated in low-income regions of the UK and relies heavily on applicants from former colonies to fill the ranks.[271] According to ForcesWatch, the target audience of 'This Is Belonging' is described as aged between 16 and 24, with an average household income of £10,000.[272] The Army briefing refers to the 'C2DE' group, which includes the lowest socioeconomic groups, covering those in skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled manual occupations, as well as the unemployed.[273] Target cities include Leeds, Cardiff, Belfast, Nottingham, Cleveland, Nottingham, Manchester, Doncaster, Sheffield, Birmingham, Newcastle, and Liverpool, most of which were identified as having relatively high levels of deprivation.[274] Similarly to historical practices in the colonial context, although recruitment media promote a particular image of the armed forces to the general public, practical strategies of recruitment remain largely unchanged, relying on socioeconomically vulnerable groups to make up the bulk of recruits. This gap

[266] Louise and Sangster, *Selling the Military*, 5.
[267] Steven Morris, "British army ads targeting 'stressed and vulnerable' teenagers," *The Guardian*, June 8, 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/jun/08/british-army-criticised-for-exam-results-day-recruitment-ads.
[268] Morris, "British army ads."
[269] Louise and Sangster, *Selling the Military*, 5.
[270] Ibid., 5.
[271] Morris, "British army ads."
[272] Louise and Sangster, *Selling the Military*, 13.
[273] Ibid., 13
[274] Ibid., 13.

between the new Army 'brand' and the experiences of recruits is further demonstrated by the fact that, according to a statement made by the Service Complaints Ombudsman in December 2019, "incidents of racism are occurring with increasing and depressing frequency."[275] The cohort from which the Army recruits is more ethnically diverse than the population as a whole, with Black and minority ethnic (BME) troops making up 8.8% of the armed forces, and this includes "3,760 Gurkhas, around 1,300 Fijians and other non-white troops recruited from Britain's former colonies."[276] The Army needs to improve its image among potential BME recruits to maintain its numbers, but while the views of senior staff are becoming increasingly liberal, it appears that there is "a growing division in attitudes between commissioned officers, who see liberal reforms as necessary, and squaddies, who think political correctness is destroying the army's *esprit de corps* and undermining its professionalism."[277]

According to Karmarama's 2020 press briefing, as of November 30, 2019, applications to join all streams of the Army were up 4% on the previous year, and "the recruitment pipeline is the most flexible it has ever been."[278] Aside from the innovative marketing campaign, other changes to the recruitment process have also had a positive impact on application numbers, including speeding up application times through a more efficient online system, a less rigid approach to applicants with minor ailments such as asthma and eczema, as well as new 'soldier development' courses to help those who might struggle to meet the standard entry requirements for fitness and literacy.[279] The 2019 recruitment campaign resulted in a record number of applications, with 1,500 new recruits starting basic training in September, the highest monthly total since 2009, which also accounted for 16% of the 2019/20 Recruiting Year's overall target.[280] Between April 2019 and January 2020, more than 100,000 people applied to join the Army, an increase of 5% compared to the same timeframe in recent years.[281] Of these, more than 9,000 applicants have started or agreed to begin their basic training, a significant improvement on the 2018/19 Recruiting Year, where less than two-thirds of the required amount were signed up.[282] With the 2019/20 recruitment target almost met, it appears that the changes introduced to the Army recruitment process and marketing strategy have been effective, but it is also worth noting that only about 10% of those applying make it through basic

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[275] "Black Lives Matter and the British army's culture war," *The Economist*, July 18, 2020, https://www.economist.com/britain/2020/07/18/black-lives-matter-and-the-british-armys-culture-war.
[276] Ibid.
[277] Ibid.
[278] Bright, *Karmarama 2020 Press Release*.
[279] Johnathan Beale, "Army urges young people lacking confidence to join," *BBC*, January 2, 2020, https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-50966542.
[280] Bright, *Karmarama 2020 Press Release.*
[281] James Hirst, "Army Set To Meet Recruitment Target For First Time Since Capita Deal," *Forces Net*, February 13, 2020, https://www.forces.net/news/army-set-meet-recruitment-target-first-time-capita-deal.
[282] Ibid.

training.[283] Beyond application requirements, then, the Army clearly has a retention problem, as is further demonstrated by the MoD's continuous attitudes surveys, which show "worrying levels of dissatisfaction and frustration with service life."[284] While application requirements are being met, the bottom line is that the service remains 10% below strength, as approximately one in five recruits leave before their Phase 2 training, and more soldiers either leave or retire than enter the armed forces.[285]

From a marketing standpoint, and based on recruitment results, 'This Is Belonging' has been effective in driving applications, but the question remains as to whether or not it is misleading, or whether these efforts reflect a genuine aspiration of the Army to be a better version of itself. Fundamentally, answering this question depends on whether or not a job in the Army can be considered a product like any other, or whether the potential risks of the profession demand special consideration and attention in recruitment practices. Advertising is ubiquitous, and it might be argued that military marketing is simply a normal part of consumer capitalism. The nature of advertising is to appeal to consumers, and currently, the best way to raise the profile of the Army is to portray it as a progressive, liberal organisation. However, an emphasis on the idea of 'belonging' in the Army as the main tenet and benefit of a military career risks obscuring the realities and responsibilities of the job; throughout 'This Is Belonging' in its various forms, the impression is given that life in the Army centres around forming friendships, self-expression, being appreciated for one's unique identity, and gaining confidence. While there are a variety of roles in the Army that require different skills and commitments, the fact is that being asked to risk one's life is a part of many jobs in the armed forces, which sets them apart from most aspects of civilian life. Beyond this, the fact that recruitment has been outsourced and subcontracted means that Army stakeholders are further removed from decisions about how its image is constructed and perceived.

In both war- and peacetime, the Army's manpower needs often required a widening of the recruitment pool and a reconciliation of changing social norms with the structural role and organisational culture of the armed forces. Recruitment, as an exercise in image-making, was often the site where these changes and perceptions were negotiated, as they are today. On the one hand, advertising requires persuading an audience and saying what is most effective in motivating it. However, if these statements and images do not ring true, they cannot be effective, and so recruitment appeals must rely on pre-existing attitudes and ideas. Thus, the armed forces gradually come to reflect society through the construction of a 'brand' and image, as demonstrated by the expansion of the role of women and the neoliberal turn to 'enterprise culture' in

[283] Beale, "Army."
[284] Ibid.; Louise and Sangster, *Selling the Military*, 4.
[285] Ibid.

recruitment. At the same time, recruitment media also serve to change public perception and opinion of the role of the armed forces, creating a reciprocal and co-constitutive relationship between the armed forces and the society in which they are embedded. It is important to note, however, that these changes often cannot be completely decoupled from the framework of traditional governing concepts of military culture, including military masculinity and organisational hierarchy. The 'functional imperative' of the armed forces and their role in the construction of the national imaginary has meant that the Army is entitled to operate differently than society more broadly in the name of military effectiveness. As a result, though recruitment practices and social norms interact to shape institutional culture, the gap between image and reality is arguably now wider than it has been at any time in the past century.

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Pledge of Honesty

On my honour as a student of the Diplomatische Akademie Wien, I submit this work in good faith and pledge that I have neither given nor received unauthorised assistance on it.