

**Wisconsin Veterans Museum
Research Center**

Transcript of an
Oral History Interview with
SEDORIA OUTLAW
Combat Medic, Army, Operation Iraqi Freedom
2012

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Outlaw, Sedoria, (b.1974). Oral History Interview, 2012.

Approximate length: 1 hour 7 minutes

Contact WVM Research Center for access to original recording.

Abstract:

In this oral history interview, Sedoria Outlaw, a Memphis, Tennessee native, discusses her Reserve initially as a Laundry and Bath Specialist, and then as a Combat Medic with the 452 Cache in the Army. She completed her basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. She was reassigned to Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, where she worked at the Center for Veteran's Issues. She discusses the effects that September 11th had on the attitudes and mentality that she and her fellow servicemen and women had. She explains that she was on a medical hold when her unit initially deployed to Afghanistan, due to a severe reaction to an anthrax vaccine. The interview concludes with Outlaw's reflections on her experiences in the military as a woman, and the specific nature of issues women face in the military.

Biographical Sketch:

Outlaw (b 1974) joined the Army Reserves in 1993. Her basic training was completed at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. At the time of the interview, she was a Lieutenant in the Army.

Archivist's Note:

Transcriptions are a reflection of the original oral history recording. Due to human and machine fallibility transcripts often contain small errors. Transcripts may not have been transcribed from the original recording medium. It is strongly suggested that researchers engage with the oral history recording as well as the transcript.

Interviewed by Molly Graham, 2012.

Transcribed by August Braun, 2016.

Reviewed by Robert Brito, 2017.

Abstract written by Robert Brito, 2017.

Interview Transcript

Graham: So this is an interview with Sedoria Outlaw who served with the US Army Reserve since 1993. This interview is being conducted at the Center for Veteran Issues at the following address: it's 315 W. Court St. in Milwaukee, Wisconsin on the following date: May 30, 2012 and the interviewer is me, Molly Graham. Sedoria, I think a good place to start would be to explain and say your name, maybe just introduce yourself like you would when you meet someone.

Outlaw: Sure. My name is Sedoria Outlaw.

Graham: Can you just tell me about your name, maybe what it means. I've enjoyed telling people I'm interviewing someone named Sedoria Outlaw.

Outlaw: Um, the name Sedoria is Italian and my last name, Outlaw, came from my grandfather who was Cherokee Indian and his relatives. Um, the Sedoria, the meaning of Sedoria, um I don't know the exact meaning 'cause I think my mom actually took it off of a movie and actually added to the name, so I can't find it anywhere else.

Graham: Yeah.

Outlaw: And Outlaw, I was looking at the history of it, um there were some Outlaws in England, so I don't know if it originated there or if it originated in Southeast Asia where a lot of the Cherokees initially started, but somewhere between those two.

Graham: Oh well, it's a pretty cool name.

Outlaw: Thanks. [laughing]

Graham: So you've never met another Sedoria?

Outlaw: Never met another Sedoria. I've met a Sedonya and a, it's another young lady, she answers the phone, I think it's Senderia? Senderia, so it's close, but.

Graham: And is your middle name, you know like Jen or something?

Outlaw: Yeah, Lynn. [laughing]

Graham: Um, and let's just, I'd like to start from the very beginning. When and where were you born?

Outlaw: I was born in Memphis, Tennessee on December 6th, 1974.

Graham: Okay and what was growing up like for you?

Outlaw: Uh, growing up was great. I was raised in Tennessee so I did a lot of playing outside in the dirt and I, at that time, had three siblings, so we did a lot of traveling. My mom was a model and she used to travel, so we would go to different places, Wisconsin, um not Wisconsin, California, Tennessee, um did a lot of traveling by car. My stepfather was actually a Vietnam veteran, so he was in

the military as well. And we just had a good time. And then when I was about ten years old, we moved to Wisconsin. Um, one of my mom's oldest sisters actually lived in Wis--in Milwaukee and so she came to visit, she liked it, and I-we ended up staying here. So, I went to elementary school here in Wisconsin. I also went to high school and middle school here as well as college.

Graham: Being from Tennessee, where you like--Wisconsin?

Outlaw: Uh, yes. [laughter] I really was. And I think um for one, the weather because it was very, very cold and down south in Tennessee is very warm, so we don't really experience the frigid cold here. Um, the other thing is when I lived down south, we actually walked to school and when I got up here, uh there was a lot of bussing so I had never been on a school bus. I actually was kind of nervous 'cause like I said we lived in a neighborhood where we just walked to our school and we knew everybody in the neighborhood and now we're getting on this bus and going far away, to where we didn't know where we were going. And sitting on the bus stop in the freezing cold so, it was quite a shock that way and it was interesting too, how people responded to us.

Um, I don't know if this had something to do with [inaudible] [laughter] but our, our tone of voice, we had a very southern accent and the kids loved to hear us talk so they would always say uh, "Say this word," and, "Say this word," and we would be like, "We sound just like you," and they would say, "No you don't." So um that part of it. And then we had really long hair and so they asked us were we mixed and where we grew up, I didn't see very many different races. I think part of the reason why my mom grew up uh the time that Dr. King was killed; she was actually marching with them.

Graham: Wow.

Outlaw: And she just experienced a lot of things which was fascinating just this past week we were on a trip back to Tennessee and she talked about not being able to go to school because of the Dr. King, um when he was marching, the black panthers didn't want them to go into the school and so she didn't go into the school, but she wanted to go. She went through some underground passage. It was just very fascinating. I'm like "Wow this is really awesome!" so I don't you know, know as much um that we had much interaction with other races when I was in Tennessee based on that. I don't know if that's totally true, but I know that is what she described so when I got to Wisconsin, it wasn't a culture shock, it was just different.

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That we experienced a lot of different races and uh 'cause we were fair skinned and people though we were mixed and we had this long hair, we didn't even know what that meant, so it was kind of weird.

Graham: Yeah. So how would you explain it 'em if--so if another middle schooler came up to you and was confused, how would you sort of set them straight?

Outlaw: Um, basically they asked me point blank "Is your mom, dad, and your uh, is your mom white and your dad black?" and I said, "No, they're both black from what I can tell." Um and so they would just go along with it after that. I think it was just, I think it was just socialization, the kids trying to get to know us and we're sounding different, looking different and you know, who are you? So um, but I had a great time in school. I really loved the school here. We did a lot more nature things like horseback riding and things of that nature 'cause we lived in the city 'til when I was in Tennessee and we didn't get to do a lot of that. And going on the different camps, and science world, and just a whole lot of different experience that I never had when I was in Tennessee. Maybe because I was too young when we left? Or because the different--it's more rugged than it is in Tennessee.

Graham: Um where are you in your sibling order?

Outlaw: I'm the oldest.

Graham: Okay.

Outlaw: And I'm the oldest of seven children. Is it seven or eight? I can't remember. [laughter] I'm the oldest of eight, I think it's eight. Uh, I have one set of twins, uh my sisters, they're twin sisters. And then I have two younger brothers. And then I have four other sisters in between.

Graham: Okay.

Outlaw: Yeah, I have to count on my hands. [laughter] Then my mom snuck one in on all of us lastly, so I have a brother that's--I'm actually thirty-seven and he is fourteen.

Graham: Okay.

Outlaw: [laughter] So.

Graham: That'll happen.

Outlaw: Yeah.

Graham: So are your parents still alive?

Outlaw: Mhm, both of my parents are still alive. My mom lives here, my dad lives in Missouri.

Graham: Okay. Um, growing up did you know that you would end up joining the military?

Outlaw: I actually didn't. I'm more of a girly-girl, so I don't really like guns, or bugs, or any of the things in nature so um it was not a initial thing that I wanted to do. And actually it's a funny story of how I even joined the military because I was in high school and--normal high school student--they said you could take the ASVAB test, which is the military Aptitude Service Vocational Battery test, and it took like three hours, so it got me out of this morning class. I was really excited so I took the test and afterwards I didn't realize that a recruiter would actually go

through the results with you. And so, my stepfather was very mechanically inclined and being the oldest--not a boy, but a girl--I would do a lot of stuff with him, so I knew a lot about cars, and batteries, and all of these different things and so the recruiter was very um interested in, you know, working with me because he was like "Wow, you're very mechanically inclined." So I'm like "Well that sounds great, but I'm not interested in doing that." So I really didn't follow through on anything from that with the recruiter. And I had a student that was in my advanced math class--one of my friends--she was very, very interested in the military and she asked me was I interested and I told her "No, I don't like bugs, and guns, and things like that." So she said--she asked a question about college funds--and she told me about how she was getting all this college money and it was basically coming from the military. And she talked about how it's a great career and someone in her family was a part of it--I don't know if it was a mother or her father, but someone was a part of it--and she was very excited and she said that she had spoken to the recruiter and if she could find a buddy, she could go with someone. And so every day that she did an event with the military, she would come back and tell me, "Today I did my physical, today I signed up and I'm getting twenty-thousand dollars for college." So I'm like, "Oh, okay, that's great." And then finally one day it just kind of hit me like man, this would really help my mom and my family, and especially me being the first to go to college, if I actually found some other means to pay for college too instead of making just making it all be on her. And so I said "Well, I think I can do it." so I told her that I would try it. My mom was very angry. [laughter] She did not want me to do it and so she called all of my relatives--my grandma, my grandad, my aunts--and she had a meeting with everybody and the recruiter came over and they were talking to 'em and they just had a thousand questions--"Oh what's going to happen to her? Is she going to be okay? Is she going to have to shoot a weapon?" And my mom is from Tennessee, so my grandfather taught them how to shoot shotguns and all of this stuff they were shooting--I don't know what at, but they were shooting these things and so she's like "And I shot a shotgun." And I was very, very thin and she's like "She's not going to be able to hold a weapon." And I don't know, with all of them saying that, it kind of made me want to do it even more, [laughter] so I'm like "I know I can do this." And the recruiter actually was really great, talking, letting them know what I would be doing and the jobs with everything. He was very good at coming over to the house, talking to my grandparents, my mom, anyone who had a question. And so, eventually, we decided that it was a good idea for me to go. And then, I left for basic training in August 19th.

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Graham: What year was that?

Outlaw: That was 1993. But prior to the basic training, I signed up and I went to the 452nd Combat Support Hospital that's here in Milwaukee. It's on Silver Spring Drive. And before you go to basic training, you could do a couple of sessions, and so I decided to do the sessions to go in and see how it was. And I went in and it was

good. I mean, I enjoyed it. Um, basically just sat in with the group that I would be working with, kind of did some pre-military training. And then, a lot of the soldiers that were already in talked to me and said "This is what you'll be doing." Kind of eased the stress a little bit. Then on the 19th I left and I went off to basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. I went there and it was really a great experience, actually. Um, I got there and I was put with a Company that actually--were doing a lot of sports. So, I'm quite tall, so I got to play basketball when I was at basic training and I got to play volleyball. So with those sports, that actually allowed me to leave and have extra privileges, which is really great in basic training, 'cause technically you really don't--other soldiers didn't get to leave. Like we had um extra time off 'cause we won, we were very good at the volleyball and at the basketball.

Graham: Who would you play?

Outlaw: We would play other soldiers, um like in different companies. I was in Delta Company and there were other soldier on the base that were playing. And the Drill Sergeants, they are, in some cases, kind of competitive against each other, and so, if they had a really good team, then they would be able to brag about it and say you know, "This is my team," and challenge each other, sort of like people do now with sports. So we were really good and we actually won the championship during our time that we were in basic training. It was only eight weeks there. And during that time, we learned a lot of stuff. It was just, I don't know, I thought the military would be really scary and kind of, I don't know, I couldn't handle it, but I actually excelled. I did well in the physical exercises, I picked up the running and all of these different things, and even the obstacle courses. It kind of builds confidence in you. You know, you think I'm this little, skinny little girl that went through high school that really wasn't, you know, anything spectacular. But to get there and to experience this whole new world of "oh, here's a big wall, can I get over it?" And then if I kept by myself not getting over it, someone comes up and helps me over it and then I stand there and do the same thing for them and it just builds. Or you're going through mud or you're down on the ground, and you think that it would be scary, but because everybody else is doing it with you and they're all like the same age, we're all like about seventeen or eighteen years old, it just made it better. Even when we had to do like physical exercise for not getting something right, which is pushups or whatever, everybody was doing it with you. You never did it by yourself. So I was like "Wow, this is really a team." No matter if you're in trouble or if you're doing something to build up, everybody's working together. It really has been, I think, a foundational piece for me in my entire life. Just joining the military, I think it was the best decision I could've done. But what's fascinating about the whole story is the young lady that I was going to go to the buddy program with, she actually didn't get in and so I ended up going by myself. [laughing]

Graham: I was going to ask what happened to her.

Outlaw: Because she had some physical ailment, I think it was either asthma or eczema or something, it was beyond the requirements for the military, and she had already

signed up and then they told her at the last minute. And I had already signed up and I couldn't get out of it 'cause I had already signed up, and so it was just really amazing. She's the one that lead me to go, and then she didn't even get to go in.

Graham: Whatever happened to her?

Outlaw: I don't know. We graduated, I went to basic training, and after that I just, I never saw her again. I don't know what happened to her.

Graham: If she hadn't come to you and said "Hey look, I'm joining the military, you should sign up too." what do you think you would've done, or what were you planning to do?

Outlaw: I was planning to go to college. I always wanted to be a lawyer, so that's the career path I was going to take. Just take out loans and go to be a lawyer, I mean however I could do that. That's what my goal was going to be and I had this image in my head to be this great lawyer, like some of the great lawyers on TV, Matlock and all these people. You know, you're a kid, you come up with all these thoughts that you're going to be great like that or uh Claire Huxtable on the Cosby Show, you know, it's like this is what I'm going to do. I just really had a knack for helping people that really couldn't really help themselves, being more of like a public defender, that kind of thing. So, that's what I would've done if I didn't go to the military.

Graham: And you got over bugs and guns and things like that?

Outlaw: Somewhat. I like guns now and I understand that uh the idea of it. And actually we don't call it guns, we call it weapons now. And when you get that understanding that it is there to protect you and as long as you are trained, you can use it in a good manner. And then just the respect of the weapon, 'cause that's a big piece of the military, just riflemanship. And actually, this past March, I actually got to um shoot the 9mm and I was a sharpshooter and that's the highest I think I've been, so I'm really excited about that. [laughing]

Graham: Well there you go.

[00:15:50]

[laughing]

Graham: I want to ask about the basketball games you played in. What I'm wondering, what position you played--was it center, or defense, or forward or?

Outlaw: Um it was point guard. So I played the position point guard for a couple of games, and then I think because I went in August, it was kind of the ending season, so we only played a couple of games of basketball. But what we really got a lot of rewards for was the volleyball because we played the other teams, and this was in between our--'cause when you're in basic training you really don't get downtime, you really don't get I should say just free time to do whatever you want, there's all

structure for the most part. So this would be on like a Saturday, a couple of hours or something, where other soldiers would be using the phone or doing something, we would be doing the voluntary--they didn't make us do it, we did it voluntarily--playing the volleyball. And so that's when we would get like extra time because we used our free time that we would be using to do laundry or anything like that to play the games.

Graham: Okay. Do any games stand out to you?

Outlaw: Um, no, that was a long time ago. And I--one basketball game stands out to me in my mind 'cause we're out on the court and I'm out there running and everybody's pointing at my arm. And so I'm looking around like "Is that some kind of sign or is it a code?" So, the team actually calls timeout 'cause I'm totally dumbfounded as to what they're talking about, but I had my watch on and you had to take all your jewelry off so that people wouldn't get scratched. And that's the only one that stands out in my head 'cause I'm totally like everybody's pointing and I'm like "What time is it or what?" You know, it's just the weirdest thing. So that's really the only one that actually stands out in my mind from that initial one 'cause I didn't know what they were talking about until the coach called timeout and she was quite angry that I still had my watch on.

Graham: I think when people who haven't gone through basic training think about basic training, they think about what they've seen in movies. So how is it different from what we see in the movies?

Outlaw: Um, I think in the movies, sometimes it's portrayed as more of a negative sense, like getting yelled at and everybody's really mean and the Drill Sergeants really don't care. For me, I thought it was the exact opposite. Yes, there was yelling and yes there were things going on, but the majority of it was related to just soldiers that were doing things that they shouldn't do. And I didn't characterize their yelling or them disciplining us in any way other than the way I would get yelled at by my parents or something if I was doing something wrong. And I think also, there is a lot of positive things. As a young woman or a young man, sometimes you can experience things at eighteen or nineteen that could really detriment your life forever. And I think with the military, looking at the skills that they taught, it was like, you know, I was very quiet, I was kind of, you know, shy towards people I didn't know, I really didn't--and I don't know if it's an inner strength you want to call it or resilience or what it is, but I didn't really know it was there until I actually got, you know, to do physical training tests or had to go through all of these different obstacle courses or taking the weapon apart and putting it back together. I also was a part of drill team, so I learned all the different uh facing movements, but we participated in different um, like ceremonies where we had to do the movements. And, um a lot of those things that I never would've tried. I mean, I've always been kind of wanting to do things, just trying them, but some of these things I probably never would've been exposed to. And travelling is unreal. Like traveling the places that I've been with the military, I would never have gone. So I think when you look at those things on the video, you kind of can see the negative part in some cases, but you don't really get to see the comradery

that's built with services members. I mean some of the soldiers that I actually went to basic training with nineteen years ago, I still know their names even though I don't talk to them very often.

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And one young lady that I went to um, uh AIT with--and that's our um, I can't remember what it stood for--but that is the actual training that we do after, it's our job training--Military Occupational Specialty training. So, I had met her and we were really good friends and I still remembered her whole name. And she found me on Facebook like a couple of months ago and what was really fascinating is she named her daughter something really similar to me--I think it's like, her name is like Sedorian or something like that. So it's interesting how those eight weeks or those four weeks impact you and you have people from high school, you can't remember their names. So just the comradery and the team building that is provided to you over the time, it's really unreal, you know. And the skills that you learn--like saying "yes ma'am, no ma'am"--it just goes with you. Even though I'm from Tennessee, the part of Tennessee we're from, we really didn't do "yes ma'am, no ma'am," unless it was "grandmother, grandfather." But even now, you know--discipline, walking, timeliness, punctuality, caring towards other people--all of those things that, you know, at eighteen or nineteen, they start to erode if you don't continue to build. But, with those things being put into you through the military, in some cases it actually helps you if you take away the positive parts. I mean there are parts that if you take away--the killing and all the different things like that--I mean that can erode you too. But um to me, I think the team part is something that I've noticed when I went to college or I'm experiencing other, um being around other people my age, it's different. There's a different type of team building. When someone says team to me, it's different than if I ask one of my friends what a team is. They just don't seem to get that. And I think that the military teaches you that the team is everyone. It's about sacrifice, and the ultimate payment is your life. You know, so when you're building on these things, you're really understanding that actually, your life could be on the line if someone on your team doesn't do what they're supposed to do, or their life could be on the line if you don't do what you're supposed to do. And I think at eighteen of course, that wasn't clear to me, it seemed like a whole lot of games--this is fun and this is great, and there's really cute guys here, and we're all getting a check so it was really exciting in that sense of it. [laughing] But, um, so that piece of it is good, but just over the last, what seven years since 2001, 2003, the whole understanding of sacrificial time, service and just giving your life has really become a lot to me.

Graham: Do you think 9-11 played a big role in that?

Outlaw: Yes. I think 9-11 for me in particular was huge because I had been in the Army before that probably about ten years, uh nine years, and just going to regular military Reserve drills is like a weekend a month and two weeks a year, um so going to those every weekend. And it was okay, you know doing your regular job. When I first joined the military I was what's called a fifty-seven echo, and that is a Bath and Laundry Specialist. Um and it's quite interesting, I wanted to be a

lawyer. They do have lawyers in the military, but obviously at the time, I didn't take the time to study for the ASVAB. Like I said before, I just took the test, and my score wasn't high enough to go into the legal field. And at that time, just ignorant, didn't really know how to navigate or anything, so basically went into bath and laundry based on two factors. One, I wanted the shortest job I could get 'cause I didn't want to be away from home long. Two, I wanted a job with all the benefits for college money. And the Bath and Laundry Specialist had both of those and I couldn't use that even outside the world, I mean it wasn't something I was going to work on. It was, basically what it is, in the field environment, you have these big laundry machines that you would, the soldiers would take their clothes and you wash them and then you dry them. And then I would also, in the field environment like if you're going camping, you set up big showers for them to take showers outside. So it's basically very sanitary, it's very huge, it's big shower facilities where you can actually go and take a shower. So we learned all of that and it was only four weeks. And I got the Bonus, I got the GI Bill, I got everything, so I was happy, I was pleased, at eighteen, not really knowing the focus other than this is going to get me to college to become a lawyer. So, that's the way I looked at it. And that was the job I had when I first started with the 452nd Cache in 1993.

[00:24:35]

Graham: Okay. I know we're bouncing around a little bit, but I want to back up to what was going on in your life before Basic Training? Like what was high school like for you? And where were you at before you sort of changed in this particular direction?

Outlaw: Um, high school was good. I mean I was at Milwaukee Trade and Technical High School. I was taking--they didn't have law there, but the closest thing to law they had was business, so I was taking business and accounting. While I was in high school, I did cheerleading. I also did prose and some dramatic reading. I also wanted to do some modeling, so I used to do some fashion shows. And it was pretty average, I mean you had a good time, met people. During my senior and junior year, I, I gave my life to god, so a lot of things kind of went a different way and I kind of became more focused on just academics, so I wasn't really a party-goer or any of those things. I mean, before that, I kind of was, I don't know, what you would call a square I suppose. So I basically just went to school, did the work, and came home. And then from there, basically just had a average life coming home. I had a job working with kids--I love working with kids, so I was doing some child care work, working at the childcare. And actually, I'm very--I think the military enhanced the structure that I already have 'cause I'm the oldest and I younger siblings so I have to take care of them, so it was a natural fit to me. And then just basically you know, had friends; we would do different activities. And then my junior and senior year, it just became more church things that we did--more traveling with the church, more church picnics, more um, lots of youth groups. And I became the youth president, so there's a lot of activities around that for those two years. And then before that, just really experimenting. You know, in

high school, like I never wore makeup, my first time wearing makeup was in high school, my friend putting it on me. Haircuts--one of my friends was into hair. She cut, gave me my first haircut. So it was quite experimental that way, but nothing outrageous or outlandish.

Graham: When you were talking about how your family gathered together to sort of say "I don't know about the military," how did you convince them or how did you tell 'em "this is what I'm going to do anyway?"

Outlaw: Um, basically with the help of the recruiter, we kind of talked a lot about the benefits of it. And I grew up in the inner city of Milwaukee, so there was a lot of different negative avenues that kids could take. I mean teenage pregnancy, drugs, and all of this different stuff--not saying that in the inner city that's the only thing you have there, but it's always an option. So, in talking to the recruiter, one of the things that he was saying is that this would for sure give me a opportunity to have finances, money. And he said that this is a great path if I want to get out. I think I signed up for initial six years and I would only be going--it wasn't active duty, so I wasn't going to be leaving the state, only for training. Then we talked about the benefits of just having the money for college, we talked about being with other soldiers. My parents really liked the fact about the discipline and continuing to not be in an environment where you could, you know, have different risk or be. And he was talking a lot about the drill sergeants, "Make sure you're not doing negative stuff, you're not drinking, smoking, and they're watching you," and all of this kind of stuff. So those things made them feel better and then just, you know, my mom really, you know, seen that I really wanted to do it. And I said, you know, this is something I wanted to try. Even if I don't, you know, make it, I still wanted to try it. And, you know, we talked about it 'cause--I don't know, I was like very adventurous, I wanted to be a police officer too, so I think she actually took the military as a way of being a little less--cause in the nineties, there was a lot of police forces getting killed um with a lot of different, you know, stuff going on. So I said, well [inaudible]--he was explaining to her there's no wars, there's nothing going on, and she's gonna come back, you know, she'll be back in four weeks--twelve weeks, 'cause it's eight weeks for basic training and four weeks for the class, so twelve weeks she'll be back. You can call her, you can write her, she's not outside the state. So he really just made them feel comfortable, and I think my mom, and my stepdad, and my grandma, they just really saw that it was something I wanted to do and they will support you and will be here for you. And my stepdad was in the Army too, so you know, him being near, actually making everybody at ease too, was good.

Graham: How is it different, for those who don't know, being Active Duty versus in the Reserve Army?

Outlaw: Sure, for the Reserve Army you basically are what we call "citizen soldiers." So you have your regular full-time job or your regular outside the military jobs that you're doing or life, if you're not working, and you go to drill one weekend a month, two weeks in the year. If you're Active Duty, once you sign up, you basically, that is your full-time job, so you're doing that for whatever your

contract says. For most people, when they first start out it's either a two-year, four-year, or a six-year contract for active duty. Initially for the reserves you can also do like a one or two-year contract or you can do a six year--or it's called a "six by eight," so you do six year actively reserving, drilling is what we call it, and then you do two years--you can do inactive or can complete it and do your eight years.

[00:30:17]

With both of those, you have different sets of benefits, so if you do eight years active duty you get a certain benefit, if you do eight years reserve you get a certain benefit. And so, between the both of them, you have the same opportunities, the jobs are--some jobs are similar, like obviously you wouldn't have some jobs in the reserves that you may have active duty just because of the time frame and what you're doing every day. The only difference now since September 11th is most reservists are actually working more hours than they were because the reservists are taking a big role in this war, the Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Afr--Enduring Freedom for Afghanistan. And there has been a lot of changes of attitudes, because typically, the reservists were more the reserve force, so they weren't used as much, and so in some cases they were not as looked upon as the same as active duty--like the active duty were seen as soldiers, reservists were seen kinda as, not really soldiers 'cause you don't do it every day. It's very fascinating to see how much the level of competency and respect has changed over the last nine to ten years based on Operation Iraqi Freedom and September 11th.

Graham: So how do you think they've changed?

Outlaw: Um I think they've changed because the reservists actually bring something that the active duty didn't think they would. And one of those things is dual expertise. So, some reservists may be a nurse in the real world and then she's a nurse in the Army, so in the Army there may be services that they may have never used, but because she's in the real world, she actually has more skills based on those two combined together. Or you could have a specialist who's a lawyer in the civilian world and a infantryman in the Army, so when he comes in he not only brings the infantryman with him, but he brings the lawyer skills too. And I think that those weren't taken into consideration initially. Also the ability of the community to support the reservists because they're coming from the workforce, they're coming from homes, mothers, daughters. And also just bringing in the whole different aspect as--different than the active duty. In active duty, you know, they do their job every day, they go and they're competent in it, and I think just looking at the reservist as also being competent, or in some ways having different levels of competency, but being just as much of a soldier as the active duty soldier.

Graham: How would you say you're different in the real world versus when you're called to action? You were saying in the real world some people are this and then they are called to action they're like this. So is there a difference? Or could you sort of describe--I don't even know if this question even makes sense.

Outlaw: Okay. [laughing] Sorry. I'm sorry.

Graham: But do you see where I'm trying to get at? Where--do you have to put on a different jacket, you know, or a different sort of mindset when you leave your civilian role to the other one?

Outlaw: Yes, you definitely do. For example, when you're in the civilian world, you may be a lieutenant colonel in the military, but you're obviously not a lieutenant colonel within the regular world. So for me, I'm a lieutenant, so when I'm in my role at the Army base, I have a lot more authority because I'm an officer. When I'm in the civilian world, I am a supervisor, but I don't have as much authority. I mean I have some because I'm a supervisor, but when I wasn't a supervisor, I really didn't have any. So, it's kind of like there is a respect level that is different. Also, of course, I wear a uniform when I'm in the Army versus wearing civilian clothes. And then, just your level of, just responsibility because when you're--now as a Lieutenant in the Army, I'm taking care of soldiers and my whole focus is making sure they're getting home safe, they're coming back, they're doing everything that they need to do, how can I help them get to where they're going, what is my role in making sure that these soldiers go to training and come back safe. When we were deployed, just the whole attitude was just totally--I mean, when you're going to the military and I thought we were going to Iraq, there was--I can't describe the emotion that I felt, not even understanding at first, because I still had a civilian mindset what I was even doing. Until--it was one soldier that we were doing weapons and he was a MP [military police] and we were trying to open a Meal Ready to Eat it's called, MRE, so we were trying to open that and I couldn't get it open so he pulls out this big knife and I'm like oh my god, I don't need a big knife like that to open this MRE.

[00:35:06]

So then, he pulls it out and it's in his boot or whatever and I'm like "god, that's a big knife" and I'm going through this whole motion of why you gotta have this big knife. And then he looked at me, he said "Do you know where you're going?" And I said "No." and he said "You are going to Iraq and the people there want to kill you." And it still hadn't dawned on me at all, any of this, I mean because every training that I ever went to, it was more of a mindset of peace time war. It was not somebody's going to kill you, you're gonna die, even though that's our role. But as a eighteen year-old you really don't think about that, you're thinking about these are my friends, we're together, they're challenging us, this is a game. And so, just listening to him, and then what really, really got me is--my background is I have a bachelor's degree in psychology and a master's degree in psychology, so I really look at behavior--his eyes meant, when, the way he was looking at me was like you could not come home. And I'm looking at him like I don't, you know, get it. And when he said to me, he said "Tomorrow I'm going to bring you a boot knife 'cause you don't have one." And I'm like "Okay" and he said "If I don't make it back, I want you to tell my son that I love him." And I'm like "What? You're going to make it back," you know. And it really dawned on me, all of the stuff that had actually transpired from 2001 up until 2003, looking

at the news, seeing the chemical warfare and all of this stuff that we could possibly die. That when I actually got on the bus after this event, I mean I was just bawling. I'm thinking to myself wow, I really could die. So, when you look at it from that sense, the mindset is as a civilian, you never come to work thinking that you could die, you know. But as a soldier, when you go into these trainings or you're going to the war, you could actually not come home so, the mindset has to be that you're going to make sure you come home and that everybody around you is going to come home. So you take on a whole different role versus just driving in my car coming into the Center for Veterans Issues and I'm going to do my desk work. When I drive to the Army base you know--and then just with all the rhetoric of what's going on around you and all of the people, you know like the soldiers that were killed when they were eating dinner, or breakfast and lunch, wherever it was in Oklahoma--you have these different ideologies now, it's totally different. Whereas wearing the uniform used to mean that you know, you just go and people stare at you and they're looking at you like "Wow, she's in the military." Now it's like people coming up to you either saying thank you or you being suspicious like "Okay, why is he looking at me or what's going on?" So your mindset has kind of changed over time just based on events that are going on in the country today and based on the more knowledge that we actually have of terrorists and of the events that people actually do want to hurt us. So it's kind of a totally different mindset. For me, I can speak for myself and just say that initially, it was like going to drill was fun 'cause I was meeting people and you have friends, and now it's more going this is a job making sure that we're protecting the country. So it's kind of been a whole change in my mindset based on the events that happened September 11th.

Graham: When and where were you when you were having this conversation with the guy with the knife in his boot?

[00:38:17]

Outlaw: I was actually at Fort McCoy, which is the base up in Fort McCoy, Wisconsin--in Sparta, Wisconsin--Tomah area. And we were on mobilization--so there's three levels. There's the first level is activation--when you're a reservist you get activated, so I got the call the night that we were getting alerted, meaning we were getting activated. And then once you get activated, you actually get mobilized so you get a order saying that you're no longer a citizen soldier, you're now federalized and you are gonna be active duty. So we got the order for one year to support Operation Iraqi Freedom. So once you get the order, you go up to their station to get trained up, and so we were actually getting trained. So we were up at Fort McCoy for about four months doing various training. It actually was in the winter, which Fort McCoy is very cold in the winter, and we were very cold.
[laughing]

Graham: And when was this?

Outlaw: This was February of 2003. And so, we were in Fort McCoy and going through train up. And like I said, initially I'm--I think I must've been like 27 or 26--so we

hadn't done a lot of rifle exercises so I wasn't the best at shooting so I actually had to go and do some training with the shooting. And what they did is combine units together and that's how I met the MP--military police, that's what that stands for.

[00:39:41]

Graham: Right, I knew that one. Maybe while we're here, you can talk to me about where you were when 9-11 took place.

Outlaw: Actually this is quite a interesting story. So I worked in social services for a while and I was working with children that have mental illness. And I usually don't listen to the radio basically because I mostly listen to spiritual CDs and stuff like that, so I was driving on the street and I was actually changing the CD. So I pull the CD out and I hear on the radio, it says "Oh my god, then another one is going into the building." I'm thinking they're talking about baseball so I just pop the CD back in and keep driving, not paying attention to anything. So I get into work, I'm at my desk and we had had or battle assembly, our drill, the day--weekend before--where sometimes we would do what's called a MUTA 6 where there's a Friday-Saturday drill, so on your voicemail at work you would just put "I'm out on military training, leave a message." And so, I'm sitting at my desk, I keep getting these calls, you know ringing, but I'm busy doing something so I don't pay attention. And finally, my mom is calling me frantically and this message was still on my voicemail that I was gonna be going to military service. So, she actually calls in to the front desk--pressed zero or something--and is like "I need to speak to my daughter and what does she mean she's going to military duty?" She's thinking because this happened, I'm being activated. So I still didn't know what--I just call her and say "Calm down, I don't know what you're talking about." And so, then all of my coworkers--my supervisor calls everyone into his office. He said the president is getting ready to speak and he's like "Everybody should come in here and listen." I'm still like--I'm still dumbfounded to this whole thing. And I'm like "I don't want to come in your office and listen to the president speak, I have work to do." So I'm still sitting at my desk and finally he said "Everybody come in and listen." So we went in, I'm listening and I'm thinking "Wow, this is serious, huh? Something really happened" you know. So I still go through the whole day and it wasn't until I actually drove past our reserve unit that usually has the gate open and someone's at the gate, and they have this big tank. The tank was moved in front of the gate and it had like this light going all around it. And that is when it dawned on me like "Oh god, something really has happened." And I really didn't still, you know, know what it was, but I knew it was serious 'cause I'm like I have never seen this tank moved and why is this tank moved or in this area, or it was in a different position or something. It was just like "Are we really at war? I mean they moving the tank and different stuff." So after that, then I get home, my mom started talking about, you know--'cause they were talking about they need the people's teeth and they need some of their hair. She was just really freaking out, saying she needed my hair and do I have dental records. And I'm thinking like "Really, mom? Because I'm not going to give you all that because I don't know what you're really talking about." And so, it was probably months

later--'cause we didn't get activation call until February and this happened two years before--and so just going through regular. It was really starting to get a little nerve-racking looking at the news and everyone saying all these things like they need the generators and the JLIST suits and all--it was just really, really weird. So just from that time on, I kind of figured that something was gonna happen, but nobody really knew what was gonna happen. It was really weird that from 2001 when it happened--and what else was fascinating is me and my friend planned a trip to New York, so we had already bought our tickets and, you know, you don't think about stuff, so they're like "it's safe to go." So actually, I think it was 2000 or 2001, it was December after September 11th, we actually went. And we went for the ball dropping there and I don't think I've ever in my life seen that many police officers. I mean they were everywhere. And it was just such a celebratory event that the police officers didn't really take away from it, 'cause I wasn't sure if they were just there because it was, you know, the celebration or if it was added because of September 11th. So it was just really fascinating, the whole situation. I think, now looking back on it, it's very sad how you go through your day and you don't really even know that it's happening. I mean, I literally didn't know that it was happening until I got home.

Graham: You might have been the last person to know about 9-11. [laughing]

Outlaw: [inaudible] That's just how busy and focused--I really was paying attention and really--I don't know, you just move so quickly and I was just like "I don't know what is going on." My mom was the one that was really pressing the issue.

Graham: Yeah. So then what happened in the winter after your four-month training in the winter of 2003 you said it was?

Outlaw: Mhm. So what happened was because Turkey at some point backed out--we were gonna go through Turkey 'cause our hospital is about 550 personnel strong and that was like the hugest activation that they've seen in Wisconsin for a medical hospital, that I'm aware of at least. 'Cause I don't think we had ever been activated in that manner with all of the parts together. And so, they took us all up to Fort McCoy and then because Turkey at some--and the thing is they never told us where we were going. But we got all of this cold weather gear--like we got fur to go on our hats and all of this stuff--so we're like "We're going somewhere cold." We didn't get the desert uniforms though, so it's quite interesting. But, after the four months they said that it actually--we didn't have a mission and we didn't understand why, but after four months, they deactivated everyone. I actually had a bad reaction to anthrax on the second or third shot--that's one of the deployment immunizations. So I stayed on what we call medical hold for about nine months after that and just going through rehabilitation and just getting back up to speed from that 'cause I just had like a--I don't know if it was an allergic reaction. They really don't know what it came from or stemmed from. Then after that I was released back home.

[00:45:50]

Graham: Okay. So you didn't end up going overseas?

Outlaw: No, we didn't go to Iraq, we just got activated--mobilized. Like I said, there was 550 of us. About 120 or so went to Afghanistan. So they made a little sliver of the 550 go--let, allowed them to go to Afghanistan. One of our soldiers actually died at Fort McCoy.

Graham: What happened?

Outlaw: She had bad reaction to the immunizations as well and apparently from what they said--I didn't see any documentation of it or anything, so don't quote me on this--but they said she had Lupus that was laying dormant and when she took the immunizations that it brought it out and she got really ill over--very quickly and then she passed away. I think that was our commander's role is not to have her really die in vain and all of us go home without having a mission, so the mission that they gave us was only 450 people and so they went to somewhere in Afghanistan and they actually named the camp after her. So it was good.

Graham: How did they determine who were among those 450?

Outlaw: Basically you have a MTOE which is like a military roster and it tells you what the mission would need. And so they basically took a sliver of the hospital based on the medical needs at that time. They really didn't need a full combat support hospital; they only needed a sliver to replace soldiers that were already over and doing that mission in Afghanistan.

Graham: When 9-11 finally sunk in with you, how did it sort of affect you emotionally?

Outlaw: I think emotionally it was really, really sad. For me, I think the saddest part was the fact that it seemed like we were so vulnerable, that we could not know that this was happening. I mean it was like unbelievable. We have so much sophistication, we're a huge nation and to allow someone to come all the way here and then live among us and they just, you know, took all these people's lives. And then the other part was--I have friends that live in New York and one of the guys actually worked in the tower and just trying to call him, it was just like this dead silence. And the other part that's so emotional and sad for me too is the fact that I never knew if he died or lived because there's no way to--I mean unless I go to New York and look on the wall or. I didn't know his family, you just meet people--I met the guy on spring break and we talked all the time and now the World Trade Center is gone, there's no way to say "Hey, was he there"--you don't wanna like call somebody, family or anything. So that was scary. And then actually talking to my friend that lived in New York, he actually said that his sister--or he had an interview at the tower. And just listening to him talk about it was just very touching as well. And then to actually go to New York and it feels like you've been robbed because you can't see 'em. They're gone. All you can do is just see a picture. And it's like, to me, why? We didn't do anything--these people were innocent, they had nothing to do with war, they don't even have an idea of why they were even targeted. To watch the videos is really just the saddest situation I

think I've ever seen. Some people never even knew what hit 'em. And trying to figure out why it is--'cause for my unit now, I'm part of a program that works to build training for the soldiers in this area. And so, when you look at, we have to go through and read all these different scenarios that actually happened to be able to better, I guess a better plan. So when you look at that, it's, it's really--I don't know how you can just do that to someone. And even--I'm very spiritual and I have a very extensive, just religious base, and I still don't see how you could say that god, your god, is telling you to do that, to hurt people like that. I mean, I just don't understand it. And I know that that's the definition of a terrorist, but at the same time it still deeply saddens me to know that you would hurt innocent people. When you have war, that's one thing 'cause you're declaring it, you have an actual enemy, everybody's fighting, they all have weapons. But to hurt unarmed people that weren't even expecting it, it is to me, not any--I don't know, it's just really not. There's no excuse. There's no definition, there's no real reason why you would ever want to do that.

[00:50:35]

Graham: It's like they broke the rules.

Outlaw: Right.

Graham: When--this is not that related, but when you meet someone, where in meeting someone for the first time do you tell them that you're a lieutenant or a soldier?

Outlaw: I don't think that I usually do, unless it's a police officer that's pulling me over. [laughing] I tell them right away, but I don't know that it usually comes out unless it's in a setting where the military is relevant or where somebody asks. Other than that, I don't think I really volunteer it, specifically now 'cause it almost feels like you don't know people anymore. You like these people--when you look at the people that committed back on September 11th, they were normal people. I mean, they didn't look any different than anyone else, they weren't, you know, tagged, they were here, training. I mean, so it's kind of odd when you're in the military now, especially like with different regimes, they say different stuff. Like, at one point you could wear your uniform in the airport so it's fine, everybody's sayin thank you. The next thing comes out "no, you can't wear your uniform in the airport, don't wear your uniform." Then it comes out again "okay, wear your uniform." So it's kind of like "hey, are we the target of what? You know, are you gonna get killed if you say you're in the military?" So it's kind of like this undecisive point. I'm not ashamed of it, I'm not embarrassed, but at some points, just remembering what surroundings I'm in and not as free as you want it to be as saying--you know, you can walk around sayin it. But if someone asks me, I definitely would tell them. But if it's a veteran event or something like that, of course you would bring it up and say--especially when you're around other veterans 'cause it's what we do. We talk about what we did, our war stories, what happened, and all that stuff. So if I know that person's a veteran, we always mention it. Even with the guys I work with now in the prison, we always talk about different parts of it. You just have to be a little careful with that too. You

know, you're at work and you don't want people finding you, you know--like "Oh, you're--." Especially being a female too, you know. And so being able to know-- 'cause the military is public record for the most part and this is a job. This is a job that I do, I don't want somebody showing up to my house or my Army base sayin' "I know you were in the military too." It's not the appropriate place for me to be doing that, so. [laughing] I think that just for the most part, if it comes up, you tell 'em about it.

Graham: Right. Can you speak to being a woman in the military? This hasn't come up in our interview yet, [inaudible] but how do you think the experience is different being a woman?

Outlaw: I think like some roles in the military are seen as more female roles, so I think that that's a difference in being a woman in the military in the sense of women can't go be infantry, women can't be rangers in the Army. So I think in some instances that has been the role part of it, so you clearly know that you're a female because they're going to offer certain jobs to you that they wouldn't offer to the male. Also, with all of the standards for the physical training tests, there's female standards and there's male standards. And I think just the general idea of what women bring to the military is different than what men bring to the military. Obviously if you're there, you may not be the best person to do a lot of different rifle classes and rifle training because they think that some women don't know. But what's fascinating is that over the years, women have really evolved to be something that the men didn't expect. "Oh wow, she's an expert? Oh wow, she's into shooting rifles?" And you know really--and not in a negative sense, but in the sense of just sort of like the active duty and the reserve issue. That sometimes you may look at a person and say "Oh, she doesn't look like she could do this" or, you know, different pieces. And I think there is some--I don't know if it's categorizing or how you want to call it but--the medical field has a category, the combat arms has a category. We were combat support and there's combat arms, so when you're interacting with combat arms, they don't actually understand the medical part of it and the whole aspect of what it means to medically be a soldier in the military.

[00:55:08]

Where you're female or male and to actually--I don't understand like their side of it either. Most recently, last year in January, I had the privilege of going to Uganda in Africa to work with a medical planning mission. It was very fascinating to me to see that we're both in the Army, but we see things very differently. I mean, they're looking at it from the standpoint of the scouts, which are the soldiers, the foot soldiers that go out and do pieces--for my, this is my own recollection of them, this is not a real definition [laughing] --but they go out and do the footwork for the infantrymen and do a lot of other military pieces. You probably shouldn't quote that, they'll be like "No, she's lying." So basically, listening to their aspect and then I'm looking at it from the medical side. It was just quite fascinating from them looking at what we do and me trying to understand what they do even though we're both soldiers, we're both in the Army, and we both signed up the same way. So bringing that piece and then another part

of it was going to the Ugandan military--'cause I don't know if they have very many women. I didn't see any women for the Ugandan Army when we were there, but they actually came to me 'cause I was medical. Now I didn't tell them that I was a nurse or a doctor anything. They kept coming, asking me for medicine--like Tylenol or anything--and they were just thinking like I was going to diagnose 'em. So it was just interesting just because I said I was medical, they just assumed I was the doctor. Or there was a preventative maintenance guy there--they assumed he was a doctor because he was medical. So I think the women in the military--the nursing corps--is by far the oldest corps in the women's auxiliaries is the nursing corps so I think some of the roles that the nurses played are still there and nurses today are still huge in the military as far as the rank level and the leadership and a lot of pieces. So I think in some cases the men look at us as we may be fragile but then in other cases, the men look at us as equals. And I think over the last couple of years it's kind of evolved into that more, but you still have that balance--that obviously we're not the same, we're different. And in some cases, some of the younger generation, they say they don't see the difference--that we're the same--but, you know, anatomy wise, we're totally different and we need to have certain stuff that they may not need to have like Porta-Potties--which are bathrooms--and that's important to me and I don't know if that's 'cause I'm a woman and medical or if it's because I'm a woman. But, you know, men in some of the training experiences I've had didn't really need that, they just use a tree, or go over to the woods, or however they wanna do it. Sometimes I think those pieces are there as well as just being able to withstand some of the things that actually happen around you is different 'cause we receive trauma in a different way as well.

Graham: Sometimes when I go to ask a question I don't always know where I'm gonna end up and this one of those scenarios. I've interviewed a few World War II women--people in WAVES, an Army Corps nurse--and when I ask her about the dynamic between her and the male soldiers, she said there was a kind of comradery like brother and sister--you know that they just treated them like kid sisters and there was that sort of attitude. And so, what I want to try to understand more is even though there are more and more women in the military--much more than there were during World War II--I feel like the treatment of women hasn't gotten better. I've talked to lots of women who have experienced sexual assault, sexual harassment in the military. So even though there are more women participating, I feel like there's a change in how they're being treated while they serve and I don't know if you can speak to that or how that's a question. But do you-

[00:59:21]

Outlaw: Sure. Um, I think that the treatment has changed and from my experience over the last nineteen years, I've experienced both. I mean, I've experienced where there's soldiers--I've never been sexually assaulted or anything of that nature. I mean you've have some interesting interactions with men and women that I guess to me were borderline sexual harassment, but you don't really know because you're young and you really don't understand that that's what's going on. But the thing

that I've noticed--like I had once incident that occurred--but what was very profound that I think has very much changed than the World War II is that the other men around saw it. And I was a young soldier and I didn't really know what to do to tell you the truth, and the other soldier came to me--it was a older sergeant and this was a sergeant too, and I think I was like a PFC [Private First Class] or Specialist--and he came to me, he said "Are you okay, is something going on?" And I don't know how he knew, or what it was. And for whatever reason, I just told him and within seconds the guy was gone.

Also, when I was in basic training--the second phase which is the MOS school--one of the young ladies that was in class with me, she actually toward the end was being--I don't know if she was sexually assaulted or harassed, or something was going on--and she didn't wanna really talk about it. And it was another male soldier that actually told on the drill sergeants because she wouldn't say it and then he was gone, so he wasn't even there during our time. And I've also experienced some, you know, drill sergeants or soldiers that were in charge of us saying things that were inappropriate towards women and then within hours or days they would come back and apologize. So I think that there is a change in the military now since World War II and I think that the tolerance level to do any sexual assault, sexual harassment is really not as great as it used to be. And I think that even though we have a long way to go, there's still maltreatment and there's still issues there. But even like the way that they train us for like equal opportunity is very different. And I think when I was a young Private or a young Specialist, I remember just feeling helpless and not really knowing what to do. I mean this guy actually showed up at my house and everything, so. And he knew where I lived because I didn't have a car and he dropped me off and it was--and I still--I mean nothing drastically happened, but it still was just the idea that is a violation I didn't actually [inaudible]. Because you know, my parents don't understand that he actually is a soldier so people respect the uniform, and she just opened the door like "He wants to see you" and I'm like "What are you doing here? I don't know what you're doing here." And this other sergeant, he took care of me. So I think that--I don't know if it's more of that your age has something to do with it too, where there's like a Big Brother Army or whatever, they're watching to make sure you're okay.

Also, with policy changes, the laws, and just the training because I know when I was in my most recent--I was an enlisted soldier first, which means E-1 up to E-9 which is sergeants and different things of that nature--now I became an officer in 2009 and there was quite a few incidences where there was some very derogatory comments being made based on, and I think--like I said, there's combat arms and there's combat support. They train differently. We don't train together. Most combat arms don't have a lot of females and combat support is probably filled with more females than the other area. But, the way the Army is now, I didn't feel embarrassed to say that that is against the regulation. I did not bite my tongue. When they didn't bite theirs, I didn't bite mine either, I don't care how big I am or whatever. I feel like the changes that have occurred, if you're gonna talk like that, you're representing the Army and you don't have the ability to do that. And what

was fascinating is their response to me like "Uh my god, you're blahduhduhduh." I don't care. I'm a soldier and I'm right beside you and I don't wanna hear that so I don't think you should be talking' about your blank blank while I'm trying to eat my food. If you wanna talk about that, you can go over to the side or whatever. And I think that that young lady is different than the one young lady I was when I first started out because, and I think it's because of the acceptance of a lot of the enlisted--uh not enlisted, I meant to say leadership--that they really do appreciate the laws and the changes, and they do follow them because it is a regulation and you will get in trouble if it is found that you are harassing male or female, race, religion, whatever it is. And a lot of our commanders and the higher people, I think that they are supporting it more versus, you know, like looking at some of the feelings that they show where they didn't really support--they were on a different role.

And I think the other thing that helps, a lot of women are actually getting into leadership roles and they are able to speak out and advocate. And I think women are also able to--because the community and the reservists and all of these you know, because when you're a reservist you're not just a part of the Army, you're a part of the community. And when you go home and you say that this happened to you, it's not just the Army that's alarmed, it's the whole community like "What happened in the military?" And then you are a part of that, so it bring about a different change. Now have we gotten to where we want to be or where it's great, where you don't see discrimination? No. But, are we in a better place? Yes, 'cause if I felt as intimidated as I did when I was a Specialist, I don't think I would've stayed this long. But now it's more of--I see that the things that you put into place, they actually work. And you know, I remember one drill sergeant that was out there and we were talking about--uh he said a negative comment and everybody in the room, we all kind of fringed and you kind of didn't know what to do 'cause you was like--you're not going to say anything back to him because he's a drill sergeant. Um, but I don't know who told or what happened, but within like a couple of hours, he came back and apologized.

[01:05:24]

So, you know, and then you have a whole different triad of women too. I mean I've had some soldiers come to me and say when I was younger, a Specialist "Oh I'm gonna get the drill sergeant to do this and this and that." And I'm like "Really? Wow, 'cause I don't know what you're talking about and I don't think you should be telling me that before I go and tell somebody." So, I mean people have different motives and it's really fascinating to see both sides--the side where they're the victim, someone's the victim or they're the perpetrator, or bringing it about. And I think because of some of the women that do that, it sometimes men try to--not men, but just soldiers or whatever--try to make it seem like that's why she got it and the whole philosophy now is it doesn't matter. She's a soldier; you're a soldier so if you decide to violate each other in any way, both of you can be prosecuted. And I think the military has gotten better at prosecuting and being

much more up front about the training and not as being in the background about those kind of things.

Graham: Yeah, part of me wondered if there was harassment in the 1940s, but because sixty years have passed we're just not remembering those parts.

Outlaw: Right and I think it could be. I think that it's just sometimes when I--I just had to speak at the day of honor, so I had this, I did a lot of research on these different statistics, and one thing that was fascinating about that time is that a lot of the women went with the soldiers so, when they went with their soldiers. So that's different if you know that this is Jenny's husband or this is Jenny's wife, you're not gonna be as avid to do something to her if you know who she is, especially if you have that marital bond and that's your friend and blah, blah, blah. Or, if you--and some women disguised themselves as men to go into the military as well, so it's different, interesting.

Graham: Yeah. So, maybe before I end for today, is there anything else you wanted to add?

[Interview ends abruptly]