

FOR MORE INFORMATION (in alphabetical order):

- *American Friends Service Committee: Youth & Militarism*
<http://www.afsc.org/youthmil/default.htm>
- *Code Pink: Women for Peace*
<http://www.codepink4peace.org/article.php?id=3911>
- *Committee Opposed to Militarism and the Draft*
<http://www.comdsd.org/>
- *National Network Opposing Militarism In Our Schools*
<http://www.nnomy.org/joomla/index.php>
- *Project on Youth and Non-Military Opportunities*
<http://www.projectyano.org/>

OPT-OUT FORMS:

- **No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB):**

English: http://themmob.org/lmca/lmca_forms/Opt_Out_Form_Schools.pdf

Spanish: http://themmob.org/lmca/lmca_forms/lmca-e.pdf

- **The Joint Advertising and Marketing Research & Studies (JAMRS) Database:**

Note: "Opt-Out requests will be honored for ten years. However, because opt-out screening is based, in part, on the current address of the individual, any change in address will require the submission of a new opt-out request with the new address."

English: http://themmob.org/lmca/lmca_forms/JAMRS_OPT_OUT.pdf

Spanish: http://themmob.org/lmca/lmca_forms/lmca-pentagon-espanol.pdf

References for this pamphlet are available at:

<http://www.ringnebola.com/Oil/recruiting-children.htm>

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RECRUITING CHILDREN INTO THE US MILITARY *The Pentagon's Child Recruiting Strategy*

Gary Evans, MD June 2008

INTRODUCTION

As the post-9/11 wars continue, people have increasingly questioned the direction we appear to be heading while military recruiters have found they are unable to meet new-enlistment quotas. The Pentagon has addressed this problem by spending thousands of millions of dollars on increasingly deceptive recruitment programs.

Parents are seldom aware of how military planners commission and carefully study neuro-psychiatric literature as it pertains to adolescent behavior, and how that information is applied to recruitment efforts. Children are currently encouraged to play violent and psychologically damaging Pentagon created, or Pentagon sponsored video games, and they are exposed to a variety of Pentagon generated images and experiences specifically designed to play on teenage vulnerabilities. The negative details of war are uniformly suppressed, including the number of troops returning with traumatic brain injuries, post traumatic stress disorder, severe depression, and the like.

RECENT HISTORY OF US MILITARY RECRUITMENT

Recruitment Funding / Recruitment Standards

Pentagon spending on recruitment has increased dramatically over the past few years, approaching \$4 billion by 2003. Despite the enormous sums spent attempting to maintain an all volunteer military during these times of growing anti-war sentiment, the Pentagon has been unable to meet new recruit sign-up quotas. It has therefore turned to behavioral wavers, which allow new recruits with criminal backgrounds and/or with minimal qualifications to be enlisted. In addition, *Executive Order #12728* ("Stop Loss") has been invoked, allowing troops to be continued on active duty status *indefinitely*.

Teenagers Targeted and Tracked

Since 2002 the Pentagon has developed and utilized a massive database – JAMRS, the "Joint Advertising and Marketing Research & Studies" system. It now contains the records of over thirty million 16-25 year olds, including those obtained via the "No Child Left Behind Act." The giant Pentagon run, privately subcontracted (Equifax) system is used to study potential recruits and their families – constantly probing their vulnerabilities and attempting to break down resistance to enlistment.

HIGH SCHOOLS AS “MARKETS”

“No Child Left Behind” - Section 9528

The Bush Administration wrote and signed into law the “No Child Left Behind Act,” January 8, 2002, with subsequent reauthorization in 2007. As is now widely known, the 670 page act includes section 9528, a provision enabling military recruiters to access high school students’ records, and to access the students themselves as they attend high-school campuses throughout the country. Students and/or their parents are offered the choice to “opt-out” of this demand for information, but they must actively do so. As many parents and students are unaware of the law and their right to opt-out of its military recruitment provisions, students by and large “opt-in” by default. If school districts otherwise fail to provide military recruiters with the required information and access, millions of dollars in federal funding for that district can be cut.

Recruiters on high school campuses

Using public demographic information, recruiters target schools where students are less likely to go on to college and are more likely to sign up with the military. Then, school yearbooks, newspapers, and any other pertinent local informational sources are scrutinized, allowing recruiters to simulate familiarity and interest in a few of the more popular kids on campus. As those kids are approached and befriended, others are attracted to the social bait and, seeking approval, tend to approach. Once a student indicates interest, recruiters phone and otherwise contact them repeatedly, and offer visions of a virtual cornucopia of money, education, training, and adventure. All responses are tracked.

ASVAB “Realize your strengths. Realize your dreams.”

The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) is a three hour test, offered to, and taken by nearly one million high school students every year. It is placed before them ostensibly as a helping hand – as a way to explore their career potentials, and to guide them toward appropriate life choices. The offer and the test are scams. Here is what the military tells the parents of teenage students in this confidence game:

“The ASVAB Career Exploration Program includes eight individual tests covering verbal and math skills, mechanical knowledge, electronics, and several other areas. It also produces three Career Exploration Scores for Verbal Skills, Math Skills, and Science and Technical Skills. These three scores serve as one of several pieces of information about your child that can aid in the exploration of a wide variety of career options.”

Recruiters, on the other hand, understand that the ASVAB is simply a recruitment tool:

army states that the game is for growing adults, but it is freely available on the Internet without age restriction and is widely distributed to children.

It has been argued that “America's Army” is blatant government propaganda pitched to those who are least able to understand the effects of exposure to its various subtle and not-so-subtle messages.

VIOLENT VIDEO / VIDEO GAMING IS HARMFUL TO CHILDREN

Despite the overwhelming raft of data documenting ill effects in children and adolescents exposed to violent video and video games, the military services continue to support delivery of those images and experiences to children, seen only as potential future recruits.

From the Committee on Public Education of the American Academy of Pediatrics:

“The American Academy of Pediatrics recognizes exposure to violence in media, including television, movies, music, and video games as a significant risk to the health of children and adolescents. Extensive research evidence indicates that media violence can contribute to aggressive behavior, desensitization to violence, nightmares, and fear of being harmed. Pediatricians should assess their patients' level of media exposure and intervene on media-related health risks. Pediatricians and other child health care providers can advocate for a safer media environment for children by encouraging media literacy, more thoughtful and proactive use of media by children and their parents, more responsible portrayal of violence by media producers, and more useful and effective media ratings.”

CONCLUSION

Military recruiters have been given legal authority to openly recruit adolescents on high school campuses, and tacit authority to recruit both adolescents and younger children through more subtle means. Techniques employed include those that are known to be harmful to children, including repeated exposure to violent games and images. Recruiters rely on the immature status of their prey to capture them with false promises, and subterfuge. Military recruitment of children must be understood for what it is: predatory.

The highest calling of any society is to protect its young from harm. Our society is failing to heed this call.

THINGS RECRUITS AND RECRUITERS PROMISE

Recruits and the Military Contract

The enlistment contract fine print clearly explains that after all is said and done, any recruiter promises made are invalid:

"Laws and regulations that govern military personnel may change without notice to me. Such changes may affect my status, pay, allowances, benefits, and responsibilities as a member of the Armed Forces REGARDLESS of the provisions of this enlistment/reenlistment document."

Any other statements, assurances, or promises written or otherwise, do not apply.

The Mirage of Jobs and College Funding

Young recruits are told that as much as \$70,000 is available for their future college education. The truth is, nearly all new enlistees pay \$1200 to join the Montgomery GI Bill, but only one in twenty qualify for the maximum benefits, and a full 30% of those joining the program receive nothing from it in the end. The rest nearly always receive only a fraction of the benefits promised.

- In order to be allowed entry into any of the college fund programs, recruits must first pay \$100 per month for the first twelve months of service. That \$1200 is fully non-refundable.
- A full honorable discharge from the military is required. One in four fail to achieve that condition.
- For those who do achieve full honorable discharges, the payout is tricky: it is made over a total of no more than 36 months of educational expenditure (9 month academic year x 4 years = 36 months). If, as is typical, a veteran is unable to take full course loads over each of those 36 months, the payout is less, and will still be terminated after a total of 36 months in any case. So, for example, if a war-traumatized veteran is able to maintain only a one-half coursework load, the total payout would be – at a maximum – only one-half of that originally promised. Most veterans (56%) using the Montgomery GI Bill begin by attending community colleges or vocational schools spread out over time, and therefore receive only a fraction of the maximum promised for full time, full coursework study.
- The cost of education has continually increased while educational benefits have increased less rapidly. As benefits lag further and further behind the inflation curve, the value of the original promise is equally degraded with time.

In summary, recruits rarely collect on the military's promise to provide significant educational funding.

RECRUITMENT TOOLBOX: *Movies, Toys, TV, & Computer Games*

Blackhawk Helicopters on High School Campuses



Photo Credit: Kent Porter / The Santa Rosa Press Democrat

Children as young as 6-8 years old are sometimes invited to these landing events, where they are rewarded with tiny black (hawk) footballs after they gather close around recruiters.

Fully *camo'ed* military recruiters now land Blackhawk helicopter warships on elementary, middle and high school campuses around the country, and issue promises of fun, excitement, and glory to the overwhelmed kids.

18-Wheeler "Recruiting Vans," on high school campuses



The US Army, in a well-funded effort to recruit children, has decked out recruiting vans with multiple slide projectors, viewing screens, helicopter simulators, an M-1 Tank simulator, and an M16 Machine-gun simulator, which allows high school kids to practice and to visualize cutting

enemies to pieces. Kids are offered a vision of military life as being sexy and exciting. The reality of post-traumatic stress disorder, major depression, and traumatic brain injury suffered by over one-third of a million troops returning from the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan is ignored.

Recruitment via Television



As of March 2008, over 11,000 schools have contracted with "Channel One," an organization which promises to provide schools with free television equipment and wiring in exchange for a mandatory daily viewing of the programs produced, edited, and broadcast by them.

The twelve minute programs, aired daily, are interspersed with two minutes of "corporate sponsorship" messages, half of which are paid for by

US taxpayers c/o the Department of Defense, and in the form of military recruitment pitches to the captive children who are required to watch.

From the *Channel One Network* website: “Nearly 30 percent of all American teens are in classrooms that show Channel One News.” In other words, over six million middle and high school students are presently forced to receive daily military recruiter pitches during classroom time.

Recruitment via Hollywood Movies

“We may think that the content of American movies is free from government interference, but in fact, the Pentagon has been telling filmmakers what to say – and what not to say --- for decades. It’s Hollywood’s dirtiest little secret.”

It is now widely known that the Pentagon has influenced film producers and studios for years – trading access to military resources for censorship rights. Under authority of the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, the Pentagon’s film liaison office trades script changes with access to otherwise impossibly expensive military material, locations, and expertise.

In the end, we the taxpayers pay for our own propagandizing. Recent movies that



were given a hand by the Pentagon include: "Stripes," "Black Hawk Down," "Pearl Harbor," "Top Gun," "The Great Santini," "The Right Stuff", "Apollo 13," and many others. From David Robb’s book “Operation Hollywood: “... the Pentagon is quite candid about why it provides this assistance to Hollywood. According to

the army’s own handbook, *A Producer’s guide to U.S. Army Cooperation with the Entertainment Industry*, this collaboration must ‘aid in the recruiting and retention of personnel.’”

Recruitment via Video Gaming

The Pentagon has vigorously supported development of PC war game software after discovering their use as both recruitment and as military training vehicles. Take, for example, the Microsoft X-Box game “Close Combat: First to Fight” – created by and for the military, but soon ported directly to “T” for Teens.

Another "success" story, in terms of the number of teens and young adults participating, is the US Army's video game project "America's Army," accessed by several million “players” as of 2007. "America's Army" is a highly graphic, fast paced and graphically violent battle simulation for youthful players. The

“The ASVAB is used by the Armed Forces for recruiting purposes... The ASVAB’s ability for determining civilian job skills has not yet been proven.”

Because the ASVAB is exempt from the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, students are given the test and information acquired is released to the military without parental consent. Furthermore, military recruiters are free, at the option of school administrators, to contact test takers – even if the student, or their parents opted-out of Section 9528 of the No Child Left Behind Act. Exam information is then forwarded to the DoD JAMRS database for further analysis.

The JAMRS Database:

In 2002, the Pentagon joined forces with the corporate database industry and began gathering, organizing and analyzing personal information on the military’s “market” of teens and their families. The Joint Advertising and Marketing Research & Studies (JAMRS) database now includes the records of over thirty million US 16 - 25 year olds. Effective January, 2007, families have the power to opt-out of the database, but as both the database and the option to opt-out of it is known to only a handful of families, opt-in remains the rule.

The Pentagon has become aware that currently most parents do not wish to have their children join the military. The Pentagon has therefore tasked JAMRS with studying “influencers,” – parents, teachers, clergy, and the like – in the hope of minimizing and/or neutralizing their negative interference.

JROTC:

The “Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps” offers high schools federal subsidies in the form of funding, equipment, and supplies, which appear to be a good deal for cash-strapped school districts. In fact, this too good to be true deal turns out to be – just that. After a short time, schools discover they actually end up paying out more than they receive. Hidden costs include additional insurance coverage, new facilities construction and maintenance, a portion of JROTC instructors’ salaries, benefits, taxes, etc.

School districts are required to allow retired accredited or non-accredited military personnel to act as instructors, and they must allow instructors to offer courses authorized by the military, as opposed to local school boards. Reading and study materials have been found to include racist versions of history, and which stress a military approach to social and political change.

Former United States Secretary of Defense William Cohen described the JROTC program as: “one of the best recruitment programs we could have.” And, true enough, forty percent of those entering the program go on to enlist.