

among military recruiters as reported by current and former recruiters. Exposes startling recruiting tactics that break the rules, putting recruits and the military in danger.

“AWOL in America: When Desertion is the Only Option” by Kathy Dobie
Harper’s Magazine, March 2005
www.harpers.org/AWOLInAmerica.html

The author spent time with several men who are AWOL and describes the harsh realities and philosophy behind Basic Training.

CHAT ROOMS

One way to find out what military service is like is to chat online with those who are currently in the armed forces. Here are three of the several sites available:

- Look for “Military Room” under “Government and Politics” at chat.yahoo.com
- forums.military.com/1/OpenTopic
- www.military-quotes.com/forum

MOVIES & MUSIC

***Army of One*. Available on DVD, plus info at www.redstorm.ca/armyofone**

This award-winning documentary film follows three recruits who join the military after 9/11, including one who feels his recruiter was not honest with him about the realities of service and another who finds herself thriving in the Army. There is an interesting “Where Are They Now?” feature on their Web site.

***Gunner Palace*. Available on DVD, plus info at www.gunnerpalace.com**

Praised for its objective view of the war, this documentary film follows a group of soldiers in Iraq who live in Saddam Hussein’s son’s palace and participate in raids in Baghdad.

***Live from Iraq*. Available on CD, plus info at 4th25.com**

This hip-hop CD recorded in Baghdad by soldiers claims to be “the only album ever produced, written, and recorded by soldiers at war—about war.” Available at some Oakland Public Library locations, or order from the Web site.

ONLINE RADIO

Listening equipment is not currently available at Oakland Public Library locations, but you may be able to access online radio from home or school.

Youth Radio. www.youthradio.org

Radio stories for youth by youth, based in Berkeley, California. Check their Web site for details. Several features on military service can be found at www.youthradio.org/politics/iraqindex.shtml.

The decision to join the military is perhaps the most important commitment you can make. Use these resources to make informed decisions about whether or not military service is right for you. If you need help locating one of these resources, ask a librarian for help.



From an article by Brian Boies, originally published in August 2005 on the Web site of ***Voice of Youth Advocates*** (VOYA) magazine (www.voya.com). Brian Boies is a Teen Services Librarian at the Dimond Branch. Reach him at bboies@oaklandlibrary.org.

www.oaklandlibrary.org



OAKLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY'S GUIDE TO

THE REALITIES OF MILITARY SERVICE:

RESOURCES FOR POTENTIAL RECRUITS



Have you been contacted by recruiters?

Want to learn more about military service?



The following books, articles, films, and Web sites offer a wide variety of perspectives and information on the realities of military service. Before making the important decision to join the military, gather as much information from as many different sources as possible, because all materials are biased. Consider these sources carefully, and be aware of the perspectives presented.

BOOKS

Guide to Joining the Military

by **Scott A. Ostrow**

A pro-military overview of the recruitment, enlistment, and basic-training processes. It can help you prepare to meet a recruiter, but this book ignores or minimizes many issues raised by other resources, such as homosexuality, the GI Bill and Veterans' benefits, soldiers' rights, rates of sexual harassment, etc.

America's Military Today: The Challenge of Militarism by **Tod Ensign, et al**

A critical perspective on military recruiting, basic training, women in the military, gays in the military, and the health effects of depleted uranium used on the battlefield. Also includes a discussion of the possible return of the draft, info on the recruitment process, and a section called "Words of Advice If You're Considering Enlistment." This book is geared to left-wing activists more than potential recruits, but you can use the index to find what you need.

MEMOIRS

Several soldiers from both conflicts in Iraq have written memoirs detailing their experiences in the military.

Jarhead: A Marine's Chronicle of the Gulf War and Other Battles by **Anthony Swofford**

Through the story of his service in the first Iraq war, the author regrets joining the Marines and powerfully describes the burden of Marine

culture that lasts long after one has left the service. Now a movie starring Jake Gyllenhaal and Jamie Foxx.

More recent military memoirs:

My War: Killing Time in Iraq by **Colby Buzzell**

The Last True Story I'll Ever Tell: An Accidental Soldier's Account of the War in Iraq by **John Crawford**

Love My Rifle More Than You: Young and Female in the U.S. Army by **Kayla Williams**

One Bullet Away: The Making of a Marine Officer by **Nathaniel C. Fick**

Just Another Soldier: A Year on the Ground in Iraq by **Jason Christopher Hartley**

PAMPHLETS AND WEB SITES

Flyers and pamphlets are available at any recruiter's office (check local yellow pages under "Recruiting-Armed Forces"). Also, each military service maintains its own Web site: www.1800goguard.com (National Guard)
www.afreserve.com (Air-Force Reserve)
www.airforce.com
www.goarmy.com
www.goarmyreserve.com
www.marforres.usmc.mil (Marines Reserve)
marines.com
www.navy.com
reserves.navy.mil
www.uscg.mil (Coast Guard)

Several anti-war political organizations run Web sites that contain information about military service. They raise several interesting points that disagree with standard military recruitment claims.

The Project on Youth and Non-Military Opportunities (Project YANO)

www.projectyano.org

This Web site offers pamphlets like "What You Should Know Before Joining the Military," with interesting statistics and questions you should ask yourself before enlisting, like "Do you enjoy being bossed around? Do you want someone constantly telling you what to do and how to do it?" It also offers alternative career options and funding for college. Some Spanish-language pamphlets are available here.

American Friends Service Committee-National Youth and Militarism Program

www.afsc.org/youthmil/

Contains the printable pamphlet, "Do You Know Enough to Enlist?"

G. I. Rights Hotline

(800) 394-9544 or girights.objector.org

This site and telephone hotline provides information to those already in the military about military discharges, grievance and complaint procedures, and other civil rights.

ARTICLES

"The Recruitment Minefield"

by **Bill Bigelow**

Rethinking Schools, Spring 2005

www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/19_03/recr193.shtml

Describes the experiences at one Portland, Oregon high school between senior students and military recruiters. Includes an analysis of an enlistment contract that shows the military can do almost anything without breaking the contract.

"The Recruiter's War"

by **Michael Bronner**

Vanity Fair, September 2005

Reveals shocking instances of corruption