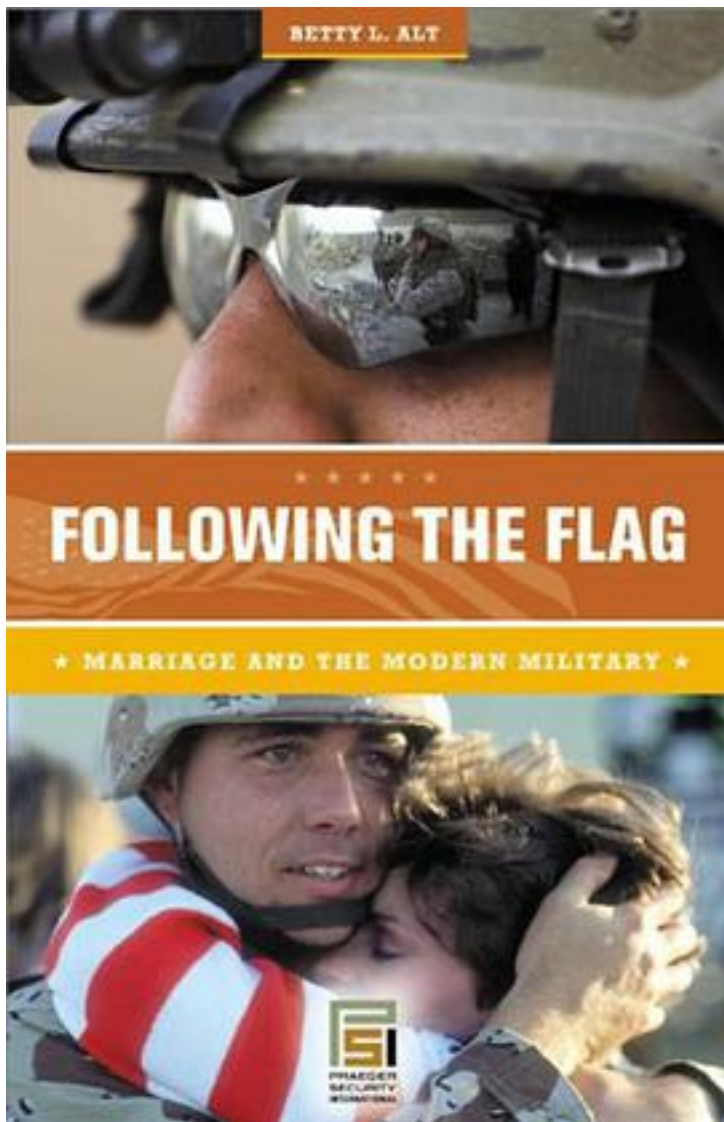


Following the Flag



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Many changes have occurred in the American armed forces over the past three decades. An all-volunteer military came into being after the end of the draft in 1973; women have joined the force in ever increasing numbers; service personnel today are again involved in combat situations around the world; reserve and guard units (jokingly known as "weekend warriors" by some) have been called to active duty. Consequently, the role of military families has also changed. Nevertheless, the needs of the service always take precedence, making the needs of the family secondary to the needs of Uncle Sam. Based on personal interviews with military spouses, and recent books, articles, and statistics, the work provides an objective look at America's military family in the 21st century and explains how the military is attempting to improve family life. "Following the Flag" is not simply a book of "gripes" about military life. It discusses both the problems and perks that go along with being a family in today's armed forces. It particularly takes a look at the military family in recent years, since America has become involved in "peace-keeping missions" in Africa and combat in Afghanistan and Iraq. Studies on family stress connected with deployment are presented. There is a special focus on the families of the National Guard and Reserves who were unprepared both emotionally and financially for family members to be called to duty and who seem to be unreconciled to this fact. The book also looks at non-traditional military families, such as those where a female in the military is married to a civilian male, and families where both spouses are military personnel.

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