Helen Benedict, a professor of journalism at Columbia University, interviewed 40 soldiers and veterans about their experiences in the military, specifically in Iraq, for her new book, *The Lonely Soldier*. By following these women from their childhoods through enlistment, training, active duty in Iraq, and home again, she vividly brings to life their struggles and challenges. Between their stories she weaves in accounts from numerous other Iraq war veterans, illuminating the wrenching and private war of female soldiers.

Since March of 2003, more than 160,500 women have served in the war in Iraq. More women have fought and died during this war than in any other since WWII, yet they still only account for one in ten soldiers. Many find themselves in virtual isolation among men. This seclusion, combined with the military’s history of gender discrimination and the uniquely challenging conditions in Iraq, has resulted in a mounting epidemic of sexual abuse, physical degeneration, and emotional distress among many female soldiers.

Also speaking:
**Mickiela Montoya**, one of five women veterans of the Iraq War whose stories provide the focus of the book. Montoya is a Mexican-American woman who, at twenty-one years old, is just one year out of her tour in Iraq. Pregnant and living with her grandmother, she finds herself back in the same California town she was trying to escape when she first enlisted.

**Callie Wight**, a therapist who has been working with women veterans returning from Iraq.

Please join us on April 6, 2009 for this exciting free event!

**Monday, April 6, 2009**
**6:30-8:30pm**
AFSC Los Angeles
634 S. Spring St., Ground Floor Conference Room
Los Angeles, CA 90014

For more information, contact Maricela Guzman at: 213-489-1900 x116 or mguzman@afsc.org