



Rosa del Duca

"I became a Truth in Recruitment speaker because I wish that someone had been there when I was 17 to tell me the full truth of my military contract. I didn't know every contract is eight years. I didn't know that it was subject to change by the military but not me. My recruiter made it sound easy to switch into the job I wanted to do versus the job I signed up for. And then there is the matter of conscience. I wish someone had been there to challenge me on whether I would serve in a war I thought was harmful and illegal. Would I be able to participate in the accidental killing of hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians? Would I be okay with signing over my rights to voice my own opinion, to say "no," to change my mind? In any other job, you can change your mind. You can quit. You can walk away without consequences. When you join the military, you sign an eight-year, legally binding contract that is very, very hard to get out of. I want young people to be as informed as possible when considering such a life-changing decision as joining the military."

Rosa del Duca is a writer, journalist, teacher and [musician](#). Her book about becoming a conscientious objector during the height of the “war on terror” won the NYC Big Book Award for Memoir in 2020.

[Breaking Cadence: One Woman's War Against the War](#) begins when Rosa is 17. When a recruiter tells Rosa that enlisting in the National Guard will cover most of her college tuition, it seems like the perfect opportunity to escape her small town. After all, during her six-year contract she will only be a soldier for one weekend a month and two weeks a summer—nine percent soldier, ninety-one percent civilian.

9/11 changes everything.

As U.S. involvement in the Middle East escalates, Rosa finds herself torn between her escalating moral disagreements with the military's actions and her oath to serve. To voice her opposition to the war would mean branding herself a traitor in the eyes of the peers she has come to consider a second family, but there comes a time when she can no longer stay silent. As Rosa begins the battle to be recognized as a conscientious objector, she finds a powerful voice for her beliefs and learns the importance of standing up, even when it means standing apart.

Today, Rosa is a member of About Face: Veterans Against the War and [Before Enlisting](#), a truth in recruitment group working to inform teens about realities military recruiters don't often mention. You can find more about Rosa at her website, rosadelduca.com.

[**Get the latest information on how to order Rosa's book here in all formats.**](#)

[**Watch a video of Rosa talking to college students.**](#)



[**Watch Rosa explain "What if you change your mind?"**](#)



[**Watch Rosa discuss "Rights you lose at boot camp."**](#)



[**Rosa speaks to college students in NYC.**](#)



See the latest videos of Rosa speaking to NYC college students in April 2025.

[Part 1: Rosa's military experience](#)

[Part 2: Rosa responds to student questions](#)