

Women in War?

By

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Why Women Should Not Participate in Combat

Imagine an army filled with men and women engaged in ground combat. In the heat of battle, a small group of servicewomen get separated from the rest of the army and are just about to be captured by enemy forces that are known for raping and torturing female captives; however, their fellow male soldiers realize what is going on and rush to protect the women from the advancing enemy. In the course of this action, several men fall down, wounded, near where the female soldiers are now hiding behind a mound of dirt; however, the women are not able to bring the fallen men near to them so that the wounded heroes might obtain some safety amidst the fray. Many of those who are wounded nearby are shot to death in front of the women's eyes. The women mourn, guilt-stricken, that they were not able to help their chivalrous comrades; that they just were not strong enough. In the midst of the effort to save the women from capture, the mission's overall purpose is abandoned because of insufficient living personnel. Women do not belong in combat because they are physically disadvantaged and upset unit cohesion.

In *Feminist Fantasies*, Phyllis Schlafly historically recounts that Israelis and Soviets have tried putting women into combat and have since changed their stance because of problems (161-162, 175). The Soviets had a female army in World War II, but have since changed their stance to only allowing women in office and medical roles, and the Israelis don't allow women to have fighting roles on land and sea ("Feminist and War"). John Luddy, from the Heritage Foundation, points out that in Israel, because many men naturally want to protect women, if a woman is in their unit and in danger of capture, the male soldiers will become distracted trying to defend her (qtd. in "Debunking the Israeli 'women in combat' myth"). Luddy continues to mention a study in which "unit morale was damaged when men saw women killed and maimed on the battlefield (qtd. in "Debunking the Israeli 'women in combat' myth")," these adverse affects lead only to the weakening of a military, not its strengthening.

Besides the historical evidence, women in a military unit cause cohesion problems. Men just don't bond like they do with a unit made entirely of men when women are present. Instead, they battle with trying to impress the women or from growing too close to them. Because of this, sexual immorality arises and it can be a

particularly bigger problem than one thinks since such physical relationships cause a male soldier to strive to protect his significant other instead of doing his duty and mission. A Navy Special Warfare commander, whose name is unmentioned, tells *The New American* that “Even if some women are strong enough to handle the physical demands of combat, the introduction of factors such as sexual entanglements and jealousies...would make the forward commander’s job more difficult (qtd. in “Feminizing America’s Fighting Force”).” In addition, a *Center for Military Readiness*, or CMR, report recounts that military leaders bear witness that “because of unparalleled physical demands and forced intimacy, even in training, women would degrade the readiness, cohesion, and effectiveness of their units (qtd. in “Feminizing America’s Fighting Force”).”

Amidst all the problems with unit cohesion, sexual problems are the most dangerous of consequence of placing women in the military. The “USS Enterprise Video Scandal: Navy Commander Revealed as Mastermind Behind Raunchy Videos” relates that in 2006 and 2007 sexually perverse videos were made by servicemen and women for entertainment. This incident is just one of case of sexual problems among a military unit. Another instance of sexual problems is when 20 women got off the *Yellowstone* pregnant and 36 on off the *Acadia* (Schlafly 171). Additionally, Jack Anderson, a journalist, testifies that when interviewing Saudia Arabian physicians that “their most frequent visitors where women [soldiers] asking for pregnancy tests” (qtd. in Schlafly 171). Pregnancy results in the inability to participate in military operations, thus a resignation or temporary leave is given (Schlafly 170-171).

In another case, U.S. Airman Gayla Zigo said that “Less than a week after we arrived on the base, Kelly [Flinn] was in bed with my husband having sex” (qtd. in Schlafly 183). These examples clearly show that women in the military are causing cohesion problems among service members. All this could be avoided if women were simply prohibited from the military. And even though women are allowed on ships and in the air force, these roles should also be prohibited. The Kelly Flinn mentioned above was the U.S. Air Force’s poster girl (Schlafly 182) and the pregnant women that got off the *Yellowstone* and *Arcadia* undoubtedly prove that servicewomen in the air and sea forces are causing problems.

In addition to sexual problems, there are physical differences between men and women that can make all the difference on the battlefield. Also, in modern warfare there is still a huge demand on the body and its capacities: soldiers have to carry heavy gear and protective equipment, in addition to having to be able to fight in hand to hand or close encounters at a moment's notice. Colonel Ron Ray, a veteran of Vietnam, tells *The New American* that "Men and women are profoundly different and those differences have military significance" (qtd. in "Feminizing America's Fighting Force"). He continues to relate how women and men are split up in athletics while they grow up, the reason only being based of the physical differences between the genders (qtd. in "Feminizing America's Fighting Force"). It has been estimated that women have much lower body strength than men. The CMR, states that women have "45-50% less upper body strength" than men ("Center for Military Readiness: Women in Combat"). In addition, women are more susceptible to injuries and generally cannot carry a fallen male soldier to safety whereas most men can ("Feminizing America's Fighting Force"). This inability will cost lives and can keep valuable military resources from protecting the people or fulfilling the military mission at hand. For example, women are generally not strong enough for military tests. *The New American*, referencing the CMR, says,

- 1) 'Women are shorter, have less muscle mass and weigh less than men';
- 2) 'Female aerobic capacity is approximately 70-75 percent that of males';
- 3) women are at twice the risk for injures to their lower extremities and at nearly five times the risk for stress fractures, according to a 1988 Army study (qtd. in "Feminizing America's Fighting Force").

In another instance, the CMR states that "Of the 103 women recruited for infantry training after Canada repealed its combat rules in 1989, only one woman succeeded in meeting the physical requirements necessary to complete the training (qtd. in "Feminizing America's Fighting Force")." Although, the United States military does not allow women to fight on the ground at this time ("GI Jane, Again"), they are allowed to fight in aircraft, boats, and submarines.

However, because of the physical demands of ground combat, it is prohibited for the women in the United States. The CMR states "The ground combatant relies heavily on his physical strength and stamina to survive, fight, and win ("Feminizing

America's Fighting Force")," because of these demands, women should continue to be barred from combat.

Not everyone agrees with this evidence though. For example, the feminist push for equality has spread to combat issues. Colonel Ron Ray states that

This [push for women in war] is really the culmination of a 60-year effort to promote the...equal opportunity for women, so that it predominates of the vital traditional and uncompromising American military effectiveness. And the ultimate consequences of this campaign will be the uncompromising of America's historic ability to defend her vital national interests in peace and war (qtd. in "Feminizing America's Fighting Force").

In light of the evidence against women being in combat, it is reasonable to conclude that female presence in combat only weakens a military, not strengthen it. Opponents claim that women can do just as well as men in combat and that they have just as much ability to fight, however the evidence aforementioned shows that women are at serious physical disadvantages in hand to hand combat. Another argument is that women have a right to serve in combat if they want; however, some of the women currently serving in the United States Navy and Air Force have gotten pregnant on board a vessel or engaged in adulterous acts when not in the cockpit. Because servicewomen have done these things, what assurance can be found in letting them fight and live next to their male soldiers in war? The stakes are too high, and even if women did have the right, few can pass the military requirements set for men, as mentioned in the CMR report on Canada.

In light of the facts, people must conclude that women are not designed for war physically, while men are created for such purposes. The historic role of men as defender and warrior is actually factually based and will protect us the best.

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