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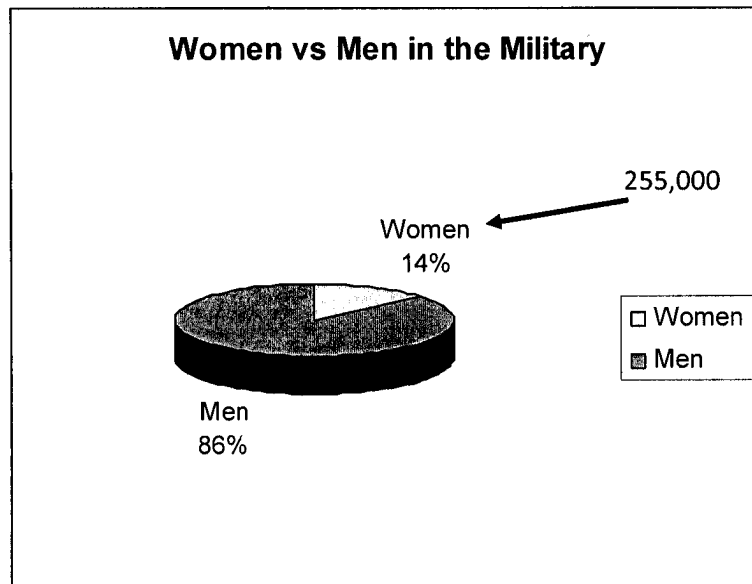
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Should Women Be Allowed in Combat Fields in the Military?

Women make up approximately fourteen percent of the armed services. This fourteen percent equates to the 255,000 of the military service members who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan (Women). This is shown in the chart below:



It is obvious most women are not open to joining the military, but would defend any other woman in an effort to fight for women's rights. These rights include the option to sign up for the military, the option to fight in combat, and the long term fight for equal rights among men and women. Among history many women have shown their strengths through every possible way. One of the more dramatic ways was earning their right to join the military. Since the American Revolution women have joined the Armed Forces and the Armed Force Reserves in defending our nation. Since then women have improved the image for their gender ("Womens Memorial).

Women, in general have proved themselves which is why women should be allowed the opportunity to train for and be assigned to ground combat fields, which would benefit both women and the military.

The military policy today do not restrict women from most enlisted jobs and career fields, except service in ground combat units. Along with denial to serve in combat units, women are restricted from training for combat missions as well. This is especially ineffective in today's combat situations in which there is no "front line." The enemy may attack at any given moment, or place, regardless of who is defending the other side. The policy also prohibits them from serving in roughly 10% of the Marine Corps and Army occupational specialties (Women). This means women, regardless of their opinions, cannot choose the jobs they may want.

A change in policy is ready to emerge according to journalists, newspaper writers and feminists. But what some people do not realize is the journalists are just writing their opinions on issues they think are interesting just to gain profit. Feminists are just thinking of the equality between men and women. In a 2011 article on FOXNews.com the author points out in this past year policy changes have allowed gays and lesbians to serve openly for the first time and allow Navy women on submarines (Women). But the question is not whether gays and lesbians are equal to people of the hetero-sexual orientation; it is how changes like this affect the military and unit cohesion just like how women will affect unit structure. It is not to say that judging a person by his or her sexual orientation or gender is not wrong, but people must also consider the fact that people have different opinions and judgments even if they are silent ones. Whether a soldier says it or not he or she may not feel comfortable around another soldier of a different sexual orientation or gender. Granted they should adjust to something like this, but just the fact that they know might not be the best solution. Women and information pertaining to sexual orientation

could affect unit cohesion and mission conflict. Information like sexual orientation should best be kept private, because this along with gender conflict will disturb mission completion.

There are certain women in the military who live up to the name "soldier." These are the women who believe if a man and a woman are to receive punishment; it should be equal if the same offense is made. These women are the ones who will benefit the military. Training women in combat would be beneficial in this war today, the Afghanistan/Iraq War, where there is no front line. Any unit could be attacked at any place, placing women who are not trained for those kinds of attacks and surprises in grave danger. Training women for dangerous situations would ready them for anything. Patricia Schroeder, the author of an article in the Current Controversies Series, points out the contemporary battle doctrines call for striking first at the supply lines instead of the front lines. This is not to say every woman will fail, but the likelihood of her failing is much greater than a male's. This is the hard, honest truth. If women were prepared for something like this, then the likelihood of her and her unit members succeeding is much higher. Although women are not allowed in combat units they are very beneficial toward the completion of a mission and serve as great combat support in a war. Women have been involved in fights in Iraq and Afghanistan; by serving in combat support roles such as medics and logistics officers (Women). But they are not trained for direct combat. In today's modern warfare, there are not definite battle lines; soldiers are forced into combat no matter what their military specialty. Adam Wojack makes a generous point when saying, "Women are in close proximity to combat regardless of where they are on the battlefield, so they might as well be allowed to fight offensively". This solution would benefit America much more rather than women are not trained for combat situations. Another proven point is that the Army and Marine Corps came up with the term "attaching" which is the equivalent to temporarily assigning a soldier to a unit, which they

have been doing for the past nine years without conflict (Women). This method seems to be working just fine for the Marine Corps and Army. The Armed Forces should legitimize the method of attachment in documentation.

Many promotions in the military do not require combat experience, but positions like Commandant of the Marine Corps are best filled with soldiers who have ground combat experience. Since women are deterred from ground combat jobs, they are also less likely to receive promotions rather than command combat operations. For example, in October the first helicopter pilot became the Commandant of the Marine Corps. Changes like this will only happen when the military changes its paradigms and allows women to fully engage in all combat evolutions (Garnish). Putting women in combat with men will only happen if the military is willing to change their past regulations and prove women will either not make a difference in ground combat unit cohesion or benefit ground combat units. For example, this past March the Strike Eagles of Durette 07 completed an all female flight combat mission supporting their male counter-parts (Forer). This is one way women will break through and change their jobs in combat. In this case, it was an all-female mission, from the pilots to the flight crew; eliminating all gender related issues.

People who are not in the military also do not realize regular society and the military world are two very different things. In normal society men and woman *can* be viewed as equals. A man and woman can have the same job in a business corporation because of their work ethic, experience and education. In his article, Brian Mitchell makes a good argument with this quote from his article: "Greater opportunity for military women isn't really what the proponents of combat or women want. Instead they want to use military to create a brave, new, androgynous world in which differences between men and women are ignored and suppressed" (Mitchell).

This is where feminists who are not in the military and really do not know what they are fighting towards enter the debate. They are really just looking for a society and a military which proves women and men are equal, when in fact they are not. The military proves this point.

In military society, women and men can never be viewed as equals, specifically in combat. The sharing of tents and latrines are one way women and men cannot be viewed as equals. There is always going to be some guys who are resentful and don't think they should be there (Garnish). As much as a unit would like to avoid the fact when they shower together they are looking at each other and seeing everything, they can not. It is human nature to become uncomfortable around an exposed person of the opposite sex. The degrading feeling of standing next to a person of the opposite sex they fight along with everyday would be hard to avoid. Lieutenant Colonel Garnish has an idea of what women would be going through if she was allowed to work in a tank battalion. He says:

“When I worked in a tank battalion, that just wouldn't work, because there were times when you were just alone out in the desert, nowhere to hide so there were no facilities for anything and so it would be very, very difficult for people in our society to work together in that kind of environment.”(Garnish)

Along with the degrading feeling of humiliation, women will distract the very men they work with without even trying. When men are around women it is a natural thing to view those women as a sexual being. One must also remember if men are deprived of sexual intercourse for a long period of time when deployed; there is an increased likelihood of infidelity. It is just their nature to want to try to impress a woman and interest the woman. If all men in a unit are doing this, there will be a bigger chance of unit conflict because of those women, whether she encouraged

the problem or not. While women distract the men in their unit, men are also more likely to save those women before another man or put her before the unit's mission. It's the male instinct (Bond). This is another natural instinct of men which has been around for far too long to change. It will take a great deal of effort for men to change this impulse. Women, along with distracting some of their unit members, are also most likely to be distracted, especially mothers. Men are not the only sex with natural instincts. Women have maternal instincts. They will nonetheless think of their children before anyone else in the world. This is something a lot of women will have to give up. They lose "a lot of family time"(Woods) just as men do, but that maternal attachment makes it harder. People everywhere should know the societal and military worlds are two very different things. The comparison of promotions is much different. In the societal world, men and women can be viewed as equal because they do not have to live together all day, every day. Women and men in society get to go home. In the military, men and women are together most of the time when they are deployed, and must stay together. Many positions are not open to women because of the lack of ground combat experience.

Women will disrupt unit cohesion if they are accepted to fight in ground combat. As said before, they are a distraction to men. Women require better hygiene needs than those generally met when with a combat unit. Women are very different from men when it comes to using the bathroom and cleaning oneself. Women also have a shorter urethra, making them more prone to a urinary tract infection from lack of care. Also, considering how men and women use the bathroom and how society works will add to the disruption. Most women are very uncomfortable with publicly using a bathroom, so it would be very difficult to get a woman to use the bathroom in front of her male unit members. Female soldiers are also mothers meaning they can disrupt unit deployment and combat readiness by getting pregnant. Women are undeployable while

pregnant. Many women use this as an excuse to skip out on deployment. This disrupts unit readiness because once the woman is pregnant their unit must find someone, who otherwise would be on leave with his family, to replace her. But women are notified when they will be deploying and once that happens women should be responsible enough not to get pregnant, says Lieutenant Colonel Woods who was a nurse in the Army for 20 years (Woods). Lieutenant Colonel Woods has enough experience to prove the point that not all military women will cheat their way through. A lot of women in the military do not do this, but it only takes a good few to mess it up for the rest of them (Woods). This is not to say things can not be ruined for men, as well but with the female reputation on the line it is critical to not ruin the female image.

Combat, artillery, and special force units are units with tough, hard training in which many men do not qualify for. Women will already disrupt training because they will most likely be trained by men, who, whether they like it or not, or even know it, may take it easier on a woman than a man. Some men may even look more at effort than they will look at quality for women, and if standards have been met by them. The lack of physical strength from some women compared to men will lead to this. Of course there are many exceptions for both genders; some men may not qualify while there may be some women who will. But a very good example, which was given by Patricia Schroeder about women, is about the distance in which a woman can throw a grenade or even carry a wounded soldier off the battlefield (Schroeder); Putting an emphasis on carrying a wounded soldier. If a member from a woman's unit is wounded to the point of unconsciousness some will wonder how far she will be able to carry her fellow comrade to safety. The issue is in how well those women will be trained if they will fight in combat. If women will fight in combat, they will have to be properly trained and pass every test at the same qualifications as the men.

Women will also be less open to combat, artillery and special force units because of family and personal reasons. Women get pregnant; it is a natural thing in life. But this makes women undeployable. Women will be less likely to want to leave for deployment. They do not want to leave regardless, but children add more to it. Single female soldier mothers will also think twice about giving up their lives, knowing their children depend on them alone (Mitchell). Women are not the only gender who loves their kids but men have an instinct to “block out” that feeling to protect their family and country as well. Even for married couples, dealing with children is difficult, especially dual military couples. These couples must think of and have a plan for their children when they deploy. They must also have a plan in case both parents die in action. This creates many consequences the parents will not have to deal with, but their children will.

Many people expect different things for the future. Many people see women being allowed in combat units within the next five years. This means they will be viewed as equals in the military. For these things to happen many things are to be overcome. If women are to be accepted by men they must demolish generations of being the protected rather than the protector (Wojack). This means that women will have to prove that they can save a life on the battlefield, (and take one when necessary) instead of giving life back home. Also, once women are accepted, the first women will have to set the bar high for future women. Setting the bar low just will not cut it in today's harsh military.

Although having women in the military proves many fine points, men and women will never be viewed as equals in the military. A woman will most likely never be Commandant of the Marine Corps (Garnish), and seeing a female president just does not look like a good idea for the near future. Women in the military tend to get things a little easier because of their gender

even if they want to be treated equally. Men will just naturally make that happen. We can not blame a woman for being a woman. But we can accept women and men in the military are not equal. Anna Simmons makes a good example of a man in an officer's position who points out:

“If a woman comes into my office I do physical assessment. Even if it's just 10 seconds. I go through a sexual scenario with that woman. Can I ignore it? I try to. In this culture, there are penalties for acting that out. But it's natural. There's nothing wrong with it. We have to be real about it.” (Simmons 46)

This officer gives a great example of a normal man, but it also shows men are even more likely to be more lenient with women than they would be with men.

Women should be allowed the opportunity to train for and be assigned to ground combat fields to eliminate feminist groups, but also accept women are not equal to men so that women can better benefit the military today. This would be best because the choice would be completely up to the woman. She would have to give up some things and be especially prepared for those missions and training which will test and push her to the limit. Women and men in the military will never be viewed as equals; therefore they should be given the option to fight in combat, if they are physically qualified, but not forcing it onto them. This way women would not have to find or make up excuses to avoid these situations. This solution will please men and women in the military and in society.

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Topic: Should Women Be Allowed in Combat Fields in the Military?

Thesis: Women should be allowed the opportunity to train for and be assigned to combat fields which would benefit both women and the military.

I. Women in the Military

A. Women Statistics

1. Women make up 14% of the armed services
2. Women make up 20% of reserves
3. Note card A9: "Of the roughly 2.2 million troops who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan more than 255,000 have been Women" – Pentagon Spokeswoman Eileen Lainez

B. Modern Policy in the Military

1. Excludes women from combat
2. Doesn't allow women to train for combat offense in a war where there is no "front line" & where the enemy goes for supply lines(where some women work)
3. Note card A5: Keeping women out of combat posts prohibits them from serving in roughly 10% of the Marine Corps and Army occupational specialties

C. Change in Policy

1. The time has come for change in today's policy
2. Note card A4: In the last year [2010] policy changes to allow gays and lesbians to serve openly for the first time and allow women on submarines

II. Why allowing women in combat field is beneficial

A. Iraq/Afghanistan has no "front line"

1. Striking at supply lines where women work. Note card M3: Contemporary Battle doctrine calls for striking first at the supply lines instead of the front lines.
2. Women only serve in Iraq as combat support. Note card A1: thousands of women have been involved in the fights in Iraq and Afghanistan; they have done so while serving in combat support roles such as medics and logistics officers
3. They are at close proximity to combat. Note card D3: Women are in close proximity to combat regardless of where they are on the battlefield, so they might as well be allowed to fight offensively.
4. Note card A14: They [Army and Marines] come up with the (term) “attaching” someone to a unit as opposed to assigning but they’ve been doing it for nine years now

B. Policy today holds a barrier for women to get promotions.

1. Women are rarely looked upon because the lack of non-combatant experience
2. Example: Commandant of the Marine Corps, First Pilot. Woman?

C. Women’s Advantages

1. Note card B2: women’s physical advantages are that they are less susceptible to altitude sickness and normally have a greater tolerance of cold temperature due to extra body fat
2. Men miss more time for recovery when injured for sports than women do for pregnancy
3. Some of the best soldiers may be women

4. Not card C7: Some military interviewees believed that addressing gender issues would prevent me from getting to the real issue that a female in the military is a soldier first. ~~The concept of a women soldier will get lost.~~

III. Why allowing women in combat field is inconvenient or ineffectual

A. In the Society World

1. Men and women can be viewed as equal
2. Note card N8: Greater opportunity for military women isn't really what the proponents of combat or women want. Instead they want to use the military to create a brave, new, androgynous world in which differences between men and women are ignored and suppressed.

B. In the Military World, Combat specifically

1. Women and men cannot be viewed as equal
2. Sharing of tents and latrines
3. It will become very difficult for men to view women as equal
 - a. They will be distracted from what is really important
 - b. Men are more likely to save a women
 - c. Women will distract a unit of men

C. The Military and Societal World are two very different things

1. Comparison of promotions
2. How men and women can be viewed

D. How women will disrupt Unit Cohesion

1. Distraction of men whether intentional or not
2. Women require better hygiene needs than is given when with a combat unit

3. Women will disrupt deployment of combat unit and readiness due to family and pregnancy
- E. The changing of qualifications and standards if women are assigned to combat units
1. Standards will change due to the addition of females
 2. Lack of physical strength will lead to this
 3. 3. Example: the throwing of grenades. Note card M4: There have been debates about how far women can throw a grenade or carry a wounded soldier or how fast they can run. ~~The real issue is training.~~
- F. Women will be less open to combat units because of Family and Personal Reasons
1. Pregnancy.
 2. Children, wanting to stay home with them
 - a. Note card N6: And they[women/single mom soldiers] are more likely to think twice about risking their lives, knowing that their children depend upon them alone
 - b. Married women and dual military couples

IV. The Future and Solutions

- A. What people expect
1. How both military and society expect women to be allowed to join in combat fields
 2. Women and men to be viewed as equals in the military
- B. What is to overcome to have this happen