



Women Don't Belong in Combat

Two years ago, the Obama administration announced plans to force the nation's military to place women in direct combat units beginning in January 2016. This would mean that women would be assigned to the Army Rangers, the Navy Seals, elite units of the Marine Corps, and even physically demanding assignments in the Air Force. Opponents of the plan believe that lowering physical standards in such units would unfavorably impact them. Lowered standards (for push-ups, pull-ups, endurance runs, etc.) have already shown that women can't do what a man can routinely perform.

The push for women in the military scored one of its first victories in 1976 when the service academies were forced to admit women in 1976. Forgotten was the very purpose of having military academies at West Point, Annapolis, and Colorado Springs. That purpose involved training leaders to meet the enemy on the field of battle — which is no place for women. As the various moves to overturn the 200-year-old practice of barring women from a military man's job continued, Retired Brigadier General Andrew Gatsis stated in 1987:

No woman, even as a volunteer, should have the right to go into combat simply because she desires to do so. It is not a question of what she wants or is her right. It is a matter of jeopardizing the soldiers who depend on all members of the team to do their full share, and the right of every American citizen to have the strongest national defense posture to protect his and her freedom.

As far back as 25 years ago, columnist Phyllis Schlafly agreed with many opponents of the near-suicidal policy of opening up all segments of the military to women. In 1989, she wrote: "Dying for your country isn't the purpose of the armed forces. Their mission is to make enemy troops die for their country. Men are demonstrably better at that task than women."

As has been their custom, high-level Obama administration personnel are blocking access to already compiled reports of female performance in simulated combat situations. What is already known must evidently be shielded from scrutiny to ensure the announced plan is implemented.

The Obama team has refused to produce copies of its plans even after receiving formal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. Thus, lawyers with the Michigan-based Thomas More Law Center have sued appropriate federal agencies to obtain such information. Among other documents, they are



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seeking results already known about the physical deficiencies of women in general. Military leaders already know the results of strength tests conducted on approximately 400 men and women Marines. These show 80 percent of males successfully lifted 115 pounds while only 8.7 percent of women succeeded. Other tests demonstrated that a significantly high proportion of females cannot load a tank, carry a comrade on a stretcher for a reasonable distance, and perform several other tasks expected of combat-ready warriors.

There's a lot at stake here. The well-being of females who might be sent into combat would be placed in jeopardy. And because we know how male prisoners have been treated by some adversaries, no woman should ever be made vulnerable to capture. The safety of males who would be forced to rely on physically deficient female comrades has to be considered. And, lastly, our nation itself would become more vulnerable if some who are sent to defend it are physically unable to do the job. Wearing a military uniform of our nation isn't a right; it's a privilege that should be made available only to those can be expected to perform at the highest level.

John F. McManus is president of [The John Birch Society](#) and publisher of The New American. This column appeared originally at the [insideJBS](#) blog and is reprinted here with permission.



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