

Comparison between two of the modern military legends: us armed forces and marine...

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The United States Armed Forces are the top elite fighting forces of the world. Two hundred and twenty-six years in existence, the Marine Corps, a sister branch of the Department of the Navy, upholds the highest standards and traditions of Americas military power. Being a Sergeant for the worlds greatest fighting force, I have extreme opinions on how these two branches of service differ. It is clear to distinguish the differences by taking into consideration the following: history, traditions, and leadership of both branches of service. Although the Marine Corps is categorized as the Department of the Navy, there are very strong distinctions, which allows each branch of service to stand on its own.

The Marine Corps was created on November 10, 1775, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, at Tun Tavern by a resolution of the Continental Congress, which raised two battalions of Marines (Marine Battle Skills Training Handbook 1-2-3). In 1834, the Marines came under the Department of the Navy. Captain Samuel Nicholas, who is traditionally considered the first Commandant of the Marine Corps, took charge of these battalions. Marines have been notorious for winning battles ever since the Revolutionary War in 1776, up to the current offensive attacks in Afghanistan. One month earlier, the history of the United States Navy began.

October 13, 1775, the Continental Congress authorized the outfitting of 10-gun warship for intercepting such transports as may be laden with stores for the enemy, (Blue Jacket Manual 132) the start of the United States Navy. The United States Navy was created to protect the countrys shoreline against pirates and other amphibious assaults. Currently the Navy is the second

largest branch of the armed forces and is growing each day. Three hundred and sixty-five days out of the year, the Navy has seventy-five percent of its naval fleet afloat. Unlike the Navy, the Marines get deployed whenever a conflict arises.

The Marine Corps is often called the Worlds 911 Force. Leatherneck, Devil Dog, and Jarhead, are among some titles carried by Marines today. Marines have earned their names from being the first on the scene of almost every major conflict. All Marines are trained as basic infantry riflemen, regardless of their military occupational specialty (M. O. S.). When ordinary men and woman attempt to earn the title of United States Marine, they endure the most demanding and challenging experience of their lives. Marines are known to uphold traditions hundreds of years old. The oldest weapon in the Marine Corps arsenal is the non-commissioned officer sword, which was used over a century and a half ago during the Mexican War. Each year on the Corps anniversary, Marines continue the tradition of reciting the 13th Commandants birthday message, and the recognition of the oldest and youngest Marines present. Two of the most recognized traditions, which the Corps holds true to its heart, are: the Marines emblem the Eagle, Globe, and Anchor, and the Marines motto, Semper Fidelis. The Eagle, Globe, and Anchor was derived in 1868. The globe displays the Western Hemisphere since the British Royal Marines had the Eastern Hemisphere on theirs. The eagle and the fouled anchor were added to leave no doubt that the Corps was both American and maritime. Semper Fidelis, a Latin term meaning Always Faithful, has been proven by the fact that there has never been a

mutiny among U. S. Marines. The U. S. Navy, a month older than the Corps, also has very unique but different traditions.

Similar to the Marines, the Navy is always near combat, however, they rarely come ashore, hence the nicknames: sailors, squids, and fish. Contrast to the Marines, all sailors come out of basic training as fundamental shipmates, not riflemen. Sailors are first trained on how to man a ship, and then move onto their military occupational specialties. The Navys traditions are among some of the oldest and most utilized by todays society. Naval terminology is the most common form of maritime communication, which is still spoken. Among the language, other traditions such as: ropes, cloths, and food came from yesterdays Navy. Distinct from the Marine Corps emblem, the Navys emblem is an anchor with the letters U. S. N in the middle to represent their maritime services. The Navy dose not claim a motto, however, the Navys song Anchors Aweigh speaks for itself. One of the Navys dearest traditions is the Shellback and Bluenose. These titles signify sailors experiences at sea. The title Shellback is earned when a sailor crosses the Equator on ship, and the title Bluenose is received after spending thirty days past the 38th parallel. The difference between the Corps and Navys traditions are slight compared to distinctions of their leadership traits.

Master Sergeant Harden (USMC E-8,) answered Lead, follow, or get the hell out of the way (Harden,) when asked his opinion on Marine Corps leadership. Marines are trained to accomplish the mission first, and troop welfare second. From the day a Marine graduates basic training he or she is more of a leader than any of his fellow servicemen counterparts. Marines have

always been taught to lead from the front no matter what the situation. As the rank increases so do the leadership responsibilities. A Corporal (E-4) is usually in command of an entire squad of Marines, in some cases he or she may be in charge of the whole platoon. Marines tend to mature with their rank and time in service. They teach the subordinates, and learn from their superiors. Leadership is a never-ending cycle in the Corps. From my prior experience with working along side the Navy, their leadership style is a night and day difference.

In a recent interview with Chief Petty Officer Henry (U. S. N. E-7,) he stated, There are two ranks in the Navy, Chief and Admiral, (Henry). Working with the Navy in several occasions, I have learned that Chief Henry is not far off. A majority of the Navy thinks of their job as a regular 9 to 5, on the other hand, Marines believe in the 24-7 concept. Unlike the Corps, the Navy believes that troop welfare should come before mission accomplishment. I have witnessed Petty Officers 3rd Class (equivalent to a Corporals, E-4,) treated and respected the same way as their subordinates. In some cases, Petty Officers 2nd and 1st class (E-5 and E-6,) show as much leadership traits as the Marine Corporal. Not until the rank of Chief, have I ever seen the leadership standout.

In conclusion, the Marine Corps and Navy are too different to be categorized in the same department. It is often said, the Navy is the womens department of the store. It is clear to see how much the Corps and the Navy differ by looking at the history, traditions and leadership. Taking into account the revelations, the Marine Corps and Navy unquestionably stand on their own.