

Women on the front lines

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In recent years there has been much controversy over the decision to allow women to fight on the front lines of the American military. To not allow women the right to fight on the frontlines would be a disgrace to all progress made by women's rights activists since the nineteenth century.

Taking this once achieved right away from females would discard all previous crusades of working towards equality between men and women ("Allowing Women On The Front"). Those opposed to gender equality in the military have used examples to justify their opinion that would fall under the category of male/ female relations. They view women in the same positions as men may be distracting to the males that make up majority of the armed forces, simply because they are female and attraction at least to some degree is inevitable (McClam). In addition to physical attraction, men may also be jeopardizing their own lives and those around them because of the natural male human instinct to protect women, women being naturally the weaker and more fragile gender ("An Argument Against Women"). Men fighting in the war in Afghanistan have been trained on how to deny their nature given instincts, instructors have to unteach self-preservation.

So it only seems sensible that they would also unteach them the instinct to protect women, because it could endanger the mission of the group if a man tried to rescue a fellow woman soldier. As a result, worrying that women fighting alongside men would be a distraction to male soldiers is completely unnecessary because they are trained out of every instinct that could lead to trouble, such as protecting and individual and jeopardizing the whole.

Stereotypically women are seen as the weaker gender, and men more robust. While this is scientifically proven to some degree by the general

anatomical makeup of both genders, this is not always the case. Through intense training and exercise women can become just as, or close to being as physically capable as men while enrolled in the military.

Though the fact still remains that they are women, and fighting can get them into dangerous situations apart from being in the line of fire. If taken as Prisoners of War (POWs) they are at a high risk of being sexually assaulted by male captors (Howerton). This is a great fear of most women and if they are threatened with this they may be inclined to divulge information to the enemy or compromise the safety of the country in other ways. Contrary to this opinion however, is the fact that to be in the armed forces you must be of sound mind and body and it is assumed that in military training camps soldiers are not only trained physically, but mentally as well and will have been instructed on how to deal with these kinds of situations. The issue of women in the armed forces is defiantly influencing the country's view on the war in Afghanistan (" More Information About: The War in Afghanistan"), but it is not just a question on military effectiveness out of the country, it is also an issue back home in America. Much like the rights of homosexuals is an issue in today's politics and rights for blacks was a political issue in the twentieth century, women civil rights is an issue right now in today's culture.

Over the decades of American history the status of women has evolved to the point where they are now seen as equals to men in the eyes of everyday citizens, restricting how and where they can fight would be taking a step backwards in the timeline of equality progression. Laws have been made since the women's rights activists' period in the twentieth century to improve living standards of women, the justice of giving them a vote and <https://assignbuster.com/women-on-the-front-lines/>

also protection from harassment by males in the workplace were both examples of steps toward bettering women's living conditions. Both men and women that enter the military have to endure rigorous training and exercise to prepare for combat, anyone who can withstand that type of physically and mentally exhausting preparation should not be questioned on what they can accomplish (" Women In Combat, And The Price"). After undertaking such demanding courses like boot camps or other military training facilities, women especially should not have to contend with people doubting their abilities if they have endured the same practices as men and passed with flying colors even if they are not seen as being as " able-bodied". Women in today's culture have grown accustomed to being treated as equals by males, a luxury many women in other countries do not get to experience. In America we are free to speak out about what we desire and many women and men alike have been debating over whether women should be allowed on the front lines in the war in Afghanistan.

To let woman fight on the front lines would not be a privilege given by the government, it would be confirming a right they already possessed. Any debate taking place is over whether this right should be taken away. Taking away women's rights as American citizens is downright degrading to the female gender considering how far we have come over the decades in the movement of female/male equality.