

Female Gunnery Sergeant Has Hardcore Response to Rubio/Bush/Christie on Women in Combat

By Jessie Jane Duff

Posted on Allenbwest.com, February 9, 2016

I served 20 years on active duty in the U.S. Marine Corps, and retired as Gunnery Sergeant. Along with multiple overseas deployments and combat-related exercises, I provided logistics and training support to combat arms and wing units. Believe me, I've been there. Which is why what I heard at the last GOP debate absolutely shocked me.

At one point during the debate, I wondered if everyone had morphed into a liberal Democrat. Suddenly, **three candidates proclaimed they supported women signing up for selective service**, aka, the draft. I was extremely disappointed to hear Governor Christie say that women should not be discriminated against from selective service. Rubio felt selective service should be opened up for women and Bush agreed.

I was stunned – did any of these candidates understand the question and the reason behind it? The combat exclusion for women has been lifted. This means women can fight on the front lines now. Yes. That means they now can't be discriminated from hand-to-hand combat with male ISIS fighters who are high on methamphetamines or brutal combat against Taliban. This means extended field operations outside of the wire, vulnerable to the most violent fighting in the world.

The three Republican candidates apparently bought into the left's argument that this is an equal opportunity issue. **No, this is a combat readiness issue. Period.** Women in combat isn't a feel good argument about "if she wants to do it" or "it's her choice." We're talking about the difference between living or dying, and living means crushing an enemy whose only way to survive is by killing his opponent.

None of the candidates stated they researched the issue, or that they spoke to any of the military leaders who have requested exemption for infantry and commando units. So to me, many jumped on board the narrative to appeal to female voters. Before any candidate supports the draft, he or she needs to take a closer look to understand what it really means. It doesn't mean women will be assigned to desk jobs to "Free a man to fight" like during WWII. It means women can and will be involuntarily assigned to combat and infantry units.

Be straight to the voters. **Women in combat will cause women to die at a much higher rate than men in the next conflict.**

The primary mission of the military is to eliminate the enemy by the quickest and most powerful means possible. When the military experiences any change, it should be to make units more lethal. There is zero evidence women in the infantry, special forces, or combat arms can do this. The Marine Corps **conducted a year-long study** on women in integrated infantry units. The results clearly demonstrated women were not as effective as men in combat operations.

However, critics shouted that the study was flawed and claimed the strongest and best women weren't chosen for the study. The women in the study were stunned and insulted when Secretary Mabus "suggested the Marines' study was flawed due to the caliber and mindset of the volunteer participants." Several female Marines spoke out that Mabus dismissed their capabilities. Simply put, the Marines felt the Secretary of the Navy threw them under the bus. The Secretary's argument wasn't only insulting, it was highly flawed. Just to be a female Marine means you are already above average in fitness compared to most women. Apparently, even to the Secretary, that wasn't good enough for the study.

The critics of the Marine Corps study actually proved my point: you must be a super woman to do this, and anyone less shouldn't have been selected for the study. Isn't that a contradiction to what is already a high standard women meet even to be a Marine?

The military isn't being honest with women. All data shows that **women are injured at twice the rate of men**. Yes – TWICE the rate. In Army basic combat training women were injured 114 percent higher rate than men. These statistics are just in present combat support roles, not the combat/infantry units. Is the military disclosing this injury rate to women? Of course not, because it doesn't fit the narrative. Even as engineers and military police, women have 108 percent higher injury ratings.

Women are not as fast or strong as men. This is not a disputed fact, it's basic biology. If a woman is able to even get through the training, what are the long term physical hardships they'll face? Attrition rates are already higher for women than men – so what are the odds of a woman performing in the infantry for 20 years? Probably zero.

Sustained combat operations are physical. Even if a female can meet the standards men currently have in place, she will always be in the bottom percentile physically. Women have less muscle mass and less lung capacity – this is common knowledge. So even the most physically fit women are not going to be competitive with physically fit men. And after serving 20 years in the Marines, I can assure you, Marines are physically fit. One of the greatest areas emphasized by the Corps is physical fitness for the simple reason: to sustain long term combat operations, a Marine must be in top physical shape. Bodies break that can't maintain the immense stress and physical requirements carrying gear and weapons for long periods of time.

Few women serve in the infantry in any other nation and the reality is, those countries are experiencing difficulties making it work. Israel doesn't have women on the front lines. There are women in Kurdistan fighting – but much of their training and front line engagement is not revealed. Females in Israel only serve 2 years and don't serve in units on their front lines. The reality is that both Israel and Kurdistan require all hands on deck, so to speak. It's imperative for their survival. However, the U.S. is the tip of the spear fighting terrorism and evil dictators that have no hesitation to destroy America or her allies. We can't modify standards just to give everyone a chance to face ISIS in hand-to-hand combat. It's imperative we maintain standards and be the most lethal force on the planet.

Let's break this down very simply: a few of our greatest enemies today are North Korea, ISIS, al-Qaida, Syria, and Iran. None of them put women on the front lines. The U.S. has the second

largest Army in the world – second only to China. We have no combat readiness need to have women in offensive tactics against our enemies on the front lines. How can women defend themselves equally if they don't have an equal chance? This isn't about equality – it's about defeating an enemy. Of the top Armies in the world, none put women in the infantry. In sports, it's about winning. That's why women aren't integrated with men in everything from hockey to football. So why is the left winning the argument that women belong on the front lines?

This article was written by USMC Gunnery Sergeant (RET) Jessie Jane Duff, also a Senior Fellow with The London Center for Policy Research.

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