



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on February 4, 2013

Women in Combat: Battling Nature, Battering Reality

Senseless advice and nothing nice; that's what little-girls-in-combat policy is made of.

The obvious has already been said about placing women in front-line combat positions. Their presence will reduce unit cohesiveness; male soldiers' natural instinct to protect women will influence battlefield decisions; there will be the problem of sexual impropriety within the ranks and of rape when women are captured; women will have more trouble measuring up to the physical and psychological demands of battle; special accommodations will no doubt be made so that women may tend to feminine concerns; and, as the high pregnancy rate aboard naval vessels has proven, having young men and women operate in close quarters is folly. Yet the truth is that it was just a matter of time before women were allowed in combat; it's a piece that fits seamlessly into the modern sex-role puzzle. And it's not surprising if a majority of Americans support the policy; they are sex-role puzzled.



When I worked with children years ago, one of my students, an 11-year-old boy, guessed that the women's world record for the mile would be faster than the men's when a question about the matter was put to him. In the same vein, a respondent to [one of my articles](#) mentioned a young man she knew who opined that women and men should compete together in sports. When she informed him that this would eliminate athletic opportunities for women — boys' American high school records surpass women's world records — he was surprised that the gap between the sexes was so great. You may be surprised at a knowledge gap so great. Don't be.

For a few decades now, children have been raised seeing women in combat. Movies and television shows have long featured masculinized female characters who talk, act, and fight like men — except when they're shown fighting even better and vanquishing men. If a show features a male hero, he almost invariably has to be balanced with a tough(er?) heroine. Professional wrestling will now occasionally even show women grappling with men (yes, it's fake, but not to a seven-year-old). Kids also have equality dogma drummed into them; equality this and equality that, and the only departure from it is when they're exposed to entertainment that makes men appear weak or to [specious science](#) indicating female superiority. It is another example of how the left presents the young with a distorted picture of reality.

It's thus no surprise that people make poor decisions on policy affecting the sexes. We better



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understand the different roles of horses and dogs because we perceive their characteristic strengths and weaknesses; likewise, how can we understand what roles are suggested by the sexes' characteristic qualities if we blind ourselves to them?

Ah, dare I speak of "roles"? Some will now accuse me of fostering sex stereotyping, the very thing the left has been combating with the agenda outlined earlier. (This, by the way, is one of the main reasons Hollywood mainstreamed masculinized female characters: they wanted to change how people think. It worked.) All right, let's discuss stereotypes.

One of these stereotype opponents would be Beck Laxton, a British mother who strives to raise "gender neutral" children and has [said](#), "Stereotypes seem fundamentally stupid. Why would you want to slot people into boxes?" Thus, Laxton believes in allowing her son to find his own sex-role path; as Shine's Piper Weiss [tells us](#), she is on a quest to "let her kid just be a kid." But this raises a question: if putting people in boxes is such an imposition, why put your kid in a kid box?

In other words, why impose species-oriented norms on a child and put him in a human box? After all, we instill ideas about identity and innumerable other things when we put children in clothing; cut their hair; teach them to wash and brush their teeth; teach them language, manners, a conception of virtue, and social norms; and laugh at some behaviors while frowning at others. But do we consider that, like [self-professed canine](#) "Wolfie Blackheart," the child may later decide that homo-sapiens status isn't for him?

The point is that it isn't a matter of whether we'll put children in boxes; that is unavoidable.

It's a matter of putting them in the correct boxes.

And we put a little human in a human box not because we've been brainwashed with some arbitrary social construct but because he was born in a human body, and it's better for everyone if he is socialized as a human than trained as a ferret. His human status involves unique abilities and relative physical weaknesses; thus do we apply "species stereotyping" when raising him. Of course, he may announce when he is 18 that he is a ferret, or something slightly larger, such as Robert Reich. That's what mental institutions are for.

The truth is that we hear complaints about stereotypes only when those stereotypes are out of fashion — or out of favor with the "fashionable" set. For example, it's now common to scoff at traditional female portrayals such as that of devoted housewife June Cleaver in *Leave it to Beaver*. But what of her husband, Ward? Do little boys dream of growing up, wearing a suit, and working 9 to 5 at a job that is probably drudgery? Yet what would have been better? Should Ward Cleaver have been cast as a layabout Beat Generation type who some nights never came home, drank like a fish, mainlined heroin, and frequented bathhouses? Would it have been healthy to destroy the Cleaver stereotype and institute a new one such as that reflected in the now cancelled *All My Babies' Mommas*? I think men should be pushed toward the box of gainfully employed, loving, responsible father — that's the only way civilization can survive. And women have their boxes, too.

This is where "sex stereotyping" (the term [gender is misused today](#)) comes into play. Sure, we've heard that it places children in a potential-stifling straitjacket. But there is another theory, one considered self-evident truth not long ago. It goes like this: at issue here isn't negatively connoted "stereotyping." Rather, just as we give humans a species-specific upbringing, we should give a boy a sex-specific upbringing; this is not because we've fallen victim to some arbitrary social construct but because he was born in a boy's body (that's called a clue). Is this stifling? On the contrary, just as you may provide



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art-specific opportunities to help a child with a proclivity for art exploit his potential, sex-specific child-rearing helps the sexes cultivate and augment their unique potential. That is how boys and girls come to full flower as men and women.

I haven't said much here about women in combat, and for good reason. It's just a branch on the feminist tree, a branch whose appearance was just a matter of time. And now I'll be the hatchet man.

Even science, which often eventually catches up with common sense, tells us that the sexes have different characteristic qualities and strengths. And since "male" and "female" are real and different statuses, also real are the adjectives that describe what is characteristic of each one, "masculine" and "feminine." It also then follows that the verbs "masculinize" and "feminize" describe actual changes that really can be effected.

Taking it further, the sexes' different proclivities imply different roles, which we call masculine and feminine roles. Two of these, "mother" and "father," are of inestimable importance because they constitute the nucleus of civilization's central building block: the family. Thus, anything that diminishes the chances of the sexes successfully performing those roles threatens to destroy the family — and, hence, civilization.

Given this, should we accept any social norm that discourages the cultivation of a sex's respective qualities or serves to masculinize women or feminize men? Does it behoove us to steer girls toward masculine endeavors? Those are the big questions — and they get at the big picture.

And this answers the little-picture question of women in combat. If warfare isn't a masculine endeavor, what is? And if putting women in military uniforms, giving them weaponry, and teaching them to be warriors doesn't masculinize them, what does? And what does it say about our society that the masculinization of women has reached this advanced stage?

It says that the feminist tree is deep-rooted and tall, with a canopy that blocks out the light of common sense. The sooner that tree is burnt to ashes with the world's fiercest accelerant, the better.

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