

# THE TRANSGENDER BAN ISN'T FAIR. NEITHER IS WAR

The military demands results, not diversity.

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The ban on transgender service that President Trump reaffirmed was there for eight years under Obama. It was there in his first term and his second term. And the media said nothing.

Only in the summer of last year did the ban technically end. And, in practice, it remained in force. All the while there was no angry clamor about the suffering of potential recruits who couldn't enlist. Those who are fuming with outrage now had hypocritically remained silent. Obama had done it. So it must be good.

Obama had kept the ban in place for almost his entire two terms in office. And he found a way to retain it throughout his final months. With a year's review, the transgender recruits could only be accepted after he was out of the White House. That way he could have his social justice cake and eat it too. He would get the credit for ending the transgender ban without dealing with any of the problems.

And there were plenty of problems (<https://cmrlink.org/data/sites/85/CMRDocuments>)

*/CMR\_TransgenderPolAnalysis.pdf*).

45% of transgender persons in the 18 to 44 age range (<https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/AFSP-Williams-Suicide-Report-Final.pdf>) are (<https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/AFSP-Williams-Suicide-Report-Final.pdf>) suicidal. This is a serious risk for personnel who are around weapons or operating machinery or aircraft. If this were the only issue, it would be enough to justify the medical ban.

Transgender operations and hormone therapy requires constant monitoring by a doctor. They carry serious health risks. Some of those risks require serious medications and ongoing management.

That is not what the military usually expects to deal with from recruits.

The Rand study being touted by transgender advocates who claim that medical expenses will only be in the millions relies on a statistical bait and switch (<http://downloads.frc.org/EF/EF17F52.pdf>). The actual cost is estimated to be in the billions.

The Army and Air Force wanted to delay implementation for another two years. That was on top of the original year review that was lapsing. The issue had become a heavy burden that we didn't need.

So President Trump got rid of it. His policy is the same one that existed for most of Obama's time in office. The televised outrage over it is shameless and cynical posturing by media hypocrites.

The transgender ban isn't a moral or religious policy. It's a medical one. The military doesn't have the resources and isn't equipped to deal with the complicated medical and social problems involved.

The Department of Defense fitness standards have an extensive list of disqualifiers. A "history of major abnormalities or defects of the genitalia such as change of sex" is there in between pelvic inflammatory disease and missing testicles. These medical issues are there alongside missing fingers, a history of gout and numerous other problems. They're there because the military wants healthy and able recruits.

It's that simple.

Military readiness demands personnel who can deploy on short notice without ongoing medical problems holding them back. It wants recruits in prime health who can give all they have. Medical issues don't just drive up costs so that hard choices have to be

made. They also cost lives.

Our armed forces run on teamwork. When members of the team can't perform, they put lives at risk.

A soldier patrolling around Taliban territory in Afghanistan who runs into medical issues has to be evacuated by helicopter. That puts the crew at risk. Helicopter crashes have made up a sizable chunk of the American death toll. Since medical personnel in Afghanistan won't be equipped to deal with transgender problems, he will have to be flown out to Germany. And then to America.

Meanwhile the leading medical challenge in Afghanistan is getting enough trained medics to prevent soldiers whose limbs have been blown off by an IED from dying of blood loss before getting to surgery.

Should resources be diverted from keeping dying soldiers alive to managing transgender issues?

That may not be nice. By the current mores, it may not be fair. But war isn't nice or fair. And the enemy, whether it's ISIS or Iran, doesn't offer special accommodations the way domestic companies do.

The fitness regulations aren't a matter of morals, but of survival.

Military fitness regulations are inherently discriminatory. They're discriminatory because life is. The left's attempts to socially engineer the military are reality denial. There are plenty of things that a 21-year-old Marine can do, that I can't. There are things that he can do, that a female counterpart can't.

But the left cares far more about identity politics than military readiness. That's why ROTC cadets are being made to march around in high heels. And why female soldiers were being trained to shower with "women with male genitalia". And who needs military readiness anyway?

The military is not a social experiment. It's the fine line between us and death.

The left is obsessed with identity politics. It breaks down every situation to the oppressed and the oppressor. It seeks to restore "justice" by overthrowing the oppressor. We can't afford to let these tantrums of childish self-righteousness tear apart the military the way they have torn apart our country.

Identity politics is egocentric and narcissistic. There is no room for that attitude on the battlefield. The political crusade for a transgender military is selfish and irresponsible. It

demands that the military put the lives of others at risk to cater to the emotional whims of their identity politics. And that is the exact opposite of the attitude with which thousands of our best and bravest have gone forth to war.

And where should the line be drawn?

If discriminating against any single medical issue is illegal, as leftist lawyers fresh from the judicial sabotage of the travel ban are preparing to argue, then the same must be true for every issue.

How can we allow in transgender recruits, yet keep out the morbidly obese? If enlistment guidelines must be turned upside down to fight transphobia, how can we tolerate fat shaming?

Who are we to exclude a 600lb Marine from the battlefield?

The Democrats demand diversity. They claim that diversity naturally leads to excellence. But while such theories merely wreck campuses and corporations, they are fatal in wartime. On the battlefield unit cohesion matters while all the social theories about the utility of diversity won't stop a single bullet.

In a crisis, theories mean nothing and competence means everything.

In times past, Americans learned important lessons from their military service. These days, the left expects the military to learn lessons from the dysfunctional grievance society that it has created.

But dysfunction in the military carries a much higher cost than it does in Los Angeles or New York. Our society can tolerate mistrust, hostility and even riots. And still go on running. Without cohesion, the military does not work. Soldiers under fire fight for each other. When they don't see themselves as part of a team, then they will no longer risk their lives for a bunch of rules and regulations.

Once upon a time we understood that we were part of something greater. And that we could not achieve greatness without each other. Identity politics has shredded that sense of aspirational community. It has replaced it with the conviction that we are oppressed by each other.

Instead of forcing the military to learn from the broken society that Obama created, there are valuable lessons about loyalty and excellence that the military could teach the United States of America.

Sometimes life isn't fair. Greatness comes from how we deal with that unfairness.

## **ABOUT DANIEL GREENFIELD**

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