Beyond the Band of Brothers: The US Military and the Myth that Women Can't Fight

Megan MacKenzie

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Women can't fight. This assumption lies at the heart of the combat exclusion, a policy that was fiercely defended as essential to national security, despite evidence that women have been contributing to hostile operations now and throughout history. This book examines the role of women in the US military and the key arguments used to justify the combat exclusion, in the light of the decision to reverse the policy in 2013. Megan MacKenzie considers the historic role of the combat exclusion in shaping American military identity and debunks claims that the recent policy change signals a new era for women in the military. MacKenzie shows how women's exclusion from combat reaffirms male supremacy in the military and sustains a key military myth, the myth of the band of brothers. This book will be welcomed by scholars and students of military studies, gender studies, social and military history, and foreign policy.

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