

opinion/editorial

Women can contribute to war effort

No one wants to go to war. The word conjures up images of past days, most notably the Vietnam era and its mandatory draft.

But President Carter shocked the nation Jan. 23 with a proposal to reinstate selective service registration. In the aftermath, the shock may turn into a quake if Carter's decision to be made by Saturday includes women.

Since the military became volunteer, the opportunities for women have extended to all sectors except armed combat. Even though that would leave a large sector of the services unopen to women during a war, in peacetime they have proven competent in non-combat jobs. This says much for the Equal Rights Amendment.

Some women have claimed they may get

pregnant to evade the draft. The threat of a baby boom would appear to be as much a problem as draft evasion itself.

Attitudes of students and other eligible draftees today, though, are different than in the days of massive evasion. There is resistance to any kind of draft, but most say they will back the United States in war because the threat is more direct than in Vietnam.

Women can support a war effort as well as men.

Admittedly, there are physical differences between the sexes. Most men are physically stronger than most women. Logically, a country will put its best physical offensive forward, and in the case of humans, that weapon is men.

However, other differences between the sexes

are not as clear, and there is much agreement that the two can serve equally in positions requiring intelligence and emotional stability.

To include women in registration almost would ensure the passage of ERA by its 1983 deadline. Women's equality would be proven in an area that affects the soul of a nation and its unity.

But Congress probably will not and should not go a step further and call on women to fight. That issue rises above women's rights and duties to the greater concern about building the strongest possible national defense.

Although none of us want a war, we must not be blind to its possibility. We must also make rational decisions about how to fight it. Women do have a voice.

Alice Hrnicek



Suicidal pair of seekers cleans up on ritual of life

It's a long way to Tipperary when you can't see straight. Another raucous evening on the wires, and I'm being reminded that it's a long, long way to Tipperary even when you can see straight. Standing in an alley with our hands jammed tightly into less than adequate coats, it occurs to me that this is not the time to discuss the metaphoric possibilities of melancholy World War I songs.

michael zangari

Jason is opposite me—and in more ways than one. More often than not he has played a stunning Neal Cassidy to my poor attempts at a Jack Kerouac. He is screamingly drunk, I am passively squished. He keeps yelling rude comments at the women passing by, and I am extremely embarrassed. He enjoys seeing me embarrassed, but I don't particularly like seeing him this drunk. We've both been terminal cases all month—moody, angry; standing off to the side taking everything in with a typically cynical eye.

Anyway, the wizard is dead. At least that's what Jason has been saying all night. Long live the wizard. The wizard is dead. It's his response to any inquiry about his health, wealth, or plans for the week.

It's as good an answer as any, but it doesn't quite answer the hour's pressing question, "What do we do now?"

Jason gets an evil glint in his eye. I'm all too familiar with those eyes, and I instinctively know that I have less than a minute to head home before I do something I'll regret in the morning.

"It's time we formed an all new Bushido code," he begins, "to clarify our purpose in this basketball town, and to confront our hereditary enemies head-on. Sancho Panza, my sword."

"I think you have your traditions a little mixed up..."

"This is no time to bicker about past perfects," he says, "behold." He points a shaking finger at a small, over-stuffed trash can against the far wall. "Unsheath your tool Partocio!"

"I'm really confused now."

"There lies the garbage that has despoiled your weekend. The filth that has made you a stranger among men. Don't forget what it did to your mother!" He lunges head long at the can, and with some effort manages to raise it above his head. Before I can stop him, he dashes it to the ground, and begins kicking the contents in every direction. Flushed and panting great clouds of condensed moisture, he looks like Puff the Magic Dragon.

"You look like Puff the Magic Dragon," I say. Suddenly concerned, I add, "You feeling a little better now?"

"Yep."

Who am I to question the healing qualities of destroying a trash can? I throw a feeble token kick at the trash, and feel much better. "Son of a gun," I say.

"The only problem is that it still stinks," he says.

"That is very true, Jason, but what is left to do?"

"Ritual suicide," he says.

"We've been committing ritual suicide all night," I say.

"All month," he sighs.

Together we pick up the garbage in the alley. We also pick up the smell, and unfortunately are unable to shake it.

Fight for women's rights has lost sight of 'equality'

As a long-time supporter of various "Women's Rights" movements, it pains me more than a little to find myself holding the view that the world is pushing on me. I am a near 27-year-old and, being a veteran of the upheavals of the 60s, and wondering whatever happened to those lovely goals of equality that my female friends used to espouse.

Note the word "equality". It has eight letters and comes from the root word "equal." Its idea is (or so I always thought) the same as that indicated by the "=" symbol in mathematical equations.

Believe it or not, the male of the species will not simply vanish because women bond together in various ways. The answer to a problem is not to ignore it (this is called 'suppression' in psychological parlance—a word right-wing female activists seem very fond of using and whose real meaning they might do well to ponder) but rather to deal with it. The devaluation of a human being because of sex is suppression, whichever gender happens to be performing it. In short, I and a growing number of males are

That many women are unhappy and unfulfilled is doubtless true. That many men find themselves equally unhappy and unfulfilled is equally true. And that no single group, male or female, sat down one day and plotted new and imaginative ways to ruin the other groups' lives should be obvious.

If you, the reader are at this point nodding your head and thinking, "I know, I know", congratulations. If however, you are mentally mouthing the words "...male chauvinist pig", "silly male" or some such gibberish, then it is to you, precisely, that I am addressing this letter.

Let me speak to you directly if you find all of what I have said obviously untrue. Please leave me alone. If your object is to create more of your "enemy", let me tell you that you're doing a fine job. You should remember that if you tell someone almost anything often enough, they'll begin to believe it. I only wish that you'd go off somewhere by yourselves and find that "Oh so perfect society without men" that you seem to believe in and leave the rest of us in peace.

If, however, you sincerely want to solve the problem of male-female relations and or women's social and economic status, I think you're blowing it. There is a very large, and very real, reaction to extremist women's rights movements hovering in the wings. Several men I know have given up sex almost entirely because of boredom with the "lib" rhetoric. Male homosexuality is on the increase, and there are people like myself who are quite heterosexual, but quite bored. We like intelligent women but don't need any more repetitious "lib" rhetoric.

If you happen to be a woman, and find yourself somewhat offended by this letter, GOOD. And if you don't enjoy this feeling, perhaps you now realize how little I enjoy my tax and tuition dollars being used to finance institutions and events whose purpose, it sometimes seems, is to spread the gospel of sexism of the female variety. Exactly why is the very concept so foreign?

There is a definite problem here which needs only to be looked at properly. That there is a difference between men and women is quite obvious. This however, is not necessarily a hindrance to communication. Quite the reverse is true. According to most systems of logic, objectivity is necessary if a problem is to be clearly defined. And once properly defined, the answer to a problem can be arrived at.

So how about using this difference between men and women, rather than squabbling about it? Being too closed, too subjective with problem-solving has been the cause of many a ridiculous mistake.

That women face problems in our society is self-evident. The question is, are these problems to be solved, or exploited?

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guest opinion

growing very sick of the title of 'chauvinist'.

To me, and to many other men, it is a self-evident fact that woman is man's equal in all ways, and that the reverse also holds true. If women's rights movements are to be, and stay, successful, it is about time to drop the catchword of 'chauvinist' (a word applied to any male who has the temerity to differ with female activists and in any way) as well as the boringly repetitive classification of all men as insensitive to the needs of women and incapable of understanding their problems.

Such statements seem to me to reflect the assumption that men have no problems and, since we all know women are not out to hurt men's feelings, that men have none to worry about. Well, surprise! We do. The word "equality," by its very nature, implies differences but sameness and, as Maurice Chevalier used to say, "Viva la difference!"

I think a bit of caution regarding the type and scope of coverage of the progress of women's rights groups is in order. Touting female sensitivity in the face of men's brutishness is not the best way to get our (men's) cooperation toward women's goals of equality. And such cooperation is necessary.

If the preceding statement seems an exaggeration to anyone reading this letter, think for a moment how many news stories on television, in magazines, newspapers, etc., you have seen in which men are represented, directly or indirectly, as evil gargoyles brandishing the whips and chains of the oppressor. And oh, the poor suffering housewives who, by definition, are so very unsatisfied both sexually and emotionally.