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**Research Guide Series**

**Women in combat**

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## Women in combat

The combat role of women in conventional forces is a controversial topic. Women soldiers have played increasingly important roles in military conflicts through the years, but most countries have been reluctant to send women into life-threatening situations.

In the 1990s the Americans were the first to relax their ban allowing women to enlist for combat support roles in response to a decline in numbers in recruitment and growing demands by women's groups for greater equality between the sexes. The recent conflict in Iraq also acted as a turning point. Insurgency warfare, with its absence of front lines, means that combat can happen anywhere and at any time. As a consequence women have inevitably become involved in combat situations and have been able to demonstrate their abilities. They have now acquired a prominent role in the military and attitudes are changing with an increasing number of countries expanding their roles. However, the topic of women in combat is one that is likely to continue to be hotly debated and controversial.

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This bibliography has been designed to provide a guide as to where to find information on Women in Combat. Please note that the list of references below is a selection of the more relevant titles and information on the subject. The list is not intended to be exhaustive or definitive but is an introductory guide to some of the resources available.

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