

The Military

The average age of the military man is 19 years. He is a short haired, tight-muscled kid who, under normal circumstances is considered by society as half man, half boy. Not yet dry behind the ears, not old enough to buy a beer, but old enough to die for his country. He never really cared much for work and he would rather wax his own car than wash his father's; but he has never collected unemployment either.



He's a recent High School graduate;
he was probably an average student,
pursued some form of sport activities, drives a ten year old jalopy,
and has a steady girlfriend
that either broke up with him when he left,
or swears to be waiting when he returns from half a world away

He listens to rock and roll or hip-hop or rap or jazz or swing and 155mm
howitzer.

He is 10 or 15 pounds lighter now
than when he was at home
because he is working or fighting
from before dawn to well after dusk.

He has trouble spelling,
thus letter writing is a pain for him,
but he can field strip a rifle in 30 seconds
and reassemble it in less time in the dark.

He can recite to you the nomenclature
of a machine gun or grenade launcher
and use either one effectively if he must.

He digs foxholes and latrines
and can apply first aid like a professional.
He can march until he is told to stop
or stop until he is told to march.



He obeys orders instantly and without hesitation,
but he is not without spirit or individual dignity. He is self-sufficient ...

He has two sets of fatigues:
he washes one and wears the other.

He keeps his canteens full and his feet dry.

he sometimes forgets to brush his teeth,
but never to clean his rifle.

He can cook his own meals,
mend his own clothes, and fix his own hurts.

If you're thirsty, he'll share his water with you; if you are hungry, his
food.

He'll even split his ammunition with you
in the midst of battle when you run low.

He has learned to use his hands like weapons
and weapons like they were his hands.

He can save your life - or take it,
because that is his job.

He will often do twice the work of a civilian ,
draw half the pay
and still find ironic humor in it all.

He has seen more suffering
and death than he should have
in his short lifetime.



Jon Mills - Pool / AP

He has stood atop mountains of dead bodies,
and helped to create them.

He has wept in public and in private,
for friends who have fallen in combat
and is unashamed.

He feels every note of the National Anthem vibrate through his body

while at rigid attention,
while tempering the burning desire to

'square-away' those around him
who haven't bothered to stand,
remove their hat, or even stop talking.

In an odd twist, day in and day out,
far from home,
he defends their right to be disrespectful.

Just as did his Father, Grandfather,
and Great-grandfather,
he is paying the price for our freedom. Beardless or not, he is not a
boy.

**He is the American Fighting Man
that has kept this country free
for over 200 years.**



Joe Raedle / Getty Images

He has asked nothing in return,
except our friendship and understanding.

Remember him, always,
for he has earned our respect
and admiration with his blood.

And now we even have women over there in danger,
doing their part in this tradition of going to War
when our nation calls us to do so.

As you go to bed tonight,
remember this shot..

A short lull, a little shade
and a picture of loved ones in their helmets



Prayer wheel for our military... please don't break it. Please send this on
after a short prayer.

Prayer Wheel

"Lord, hold our troops in your loving hands. Protect them as they protect us.

**Bless them and their families
for the selfless acts they perform for us
in our time of need. Amen."**

Prayer :

**When you receive this,
please stop for a moment and say a prayer
for our ground troops in Afghanistan, sailors on ships, and airmen in
the air,
and for those in Iraq .**

There is nothing attached...

This can be very powerful.....

**Of all the gifts you could give a US Soldier, Sailor, Coastguardsman,
Marine or Airman, prayer is the very best one.**