Twitter Thread by Paul M. Kearney



Paul M. Kearney
@GStrategerist

What if... stay with me here... we married standards with effectiveness?

A brief thread... (1/n)

> SCOOP: Army leaders are discussing making long-awaited changes to hair and grooming regulations in the name of inclusivity, including allowing some women to wear ponytails & removing offensive language from AR 670-1.
>
> Final changes are expected in January.https://t.co/iLrYMONloX
>
> — Haley Britzky (@halbritz) December 29, 2020

Hair standards for women have been awful. Just ask @gilltheamazon or @evo_kositz or @Accidental_E9 or like any woman in uniform. (/2)

But women's hair isn't the only generally arbitrary appearance standards.

A worthwhile natural experiment can be tattoo standards. (/3)

In the short time I've been in service, tattoo were:
-not allowed if exposed in Class B
-universally waived to include neck and hand tattoos
-allowed but photographed (all not just gang/racially suspect)
-acceptable for enlistees but not officer candidates (/4)

Did the Army's effectiveness drop when tattoo standards were relaxed?
Did we become more effective when they were tightened?

The easy answer is no. Arbitrary standards are, wait for it, arbitrary.
(/5)

The silliest example I saw? A high performing paralegal NCO had to delay her start at WOCS so she could get a quarter inch star tattoo laser-removed from behind her ear.

This begs the question, what impact did that have on the Army's mission or her performance? (/6)

But there are standards for a reason, so where there are standards, let’s articulate the reason.

So like beards. While this famous Norwegian officer can rock a beard (and ponytail), there is an articulated reason as to why American Soldiers cannot sport a beard (/7)