

I joined the fight club

Put away your pepper spray. The newest craze in self-defense is Krav Maga (pronounced krahv mu-GAH, Hebrew for "contact combat"), a no-holds-barred workout where anything goes, including biting, hair pulling, groin kicks, elbow jabs, and eye gouging. The classes teach the fierce techniques of the Israeli defense force, and women, including glamazon Geena Davis, are beating back SWAT teams and FBI operatives to get

in. "Our L.A. membership is up to fourteen hundred," says Michael Margolin, vice president of Krav Maga Worldwide Enterprises. "And forty percent are women."

So, what's it like to kick and jab your way into shape? I took a course and sailed through the warm-up and basic instruction. But then the rough stuff started. Because Krav Maga is based on how a person instinctively responds in life-or-death situations, the last 10 minutes



The author throws a Krav Maga punch.

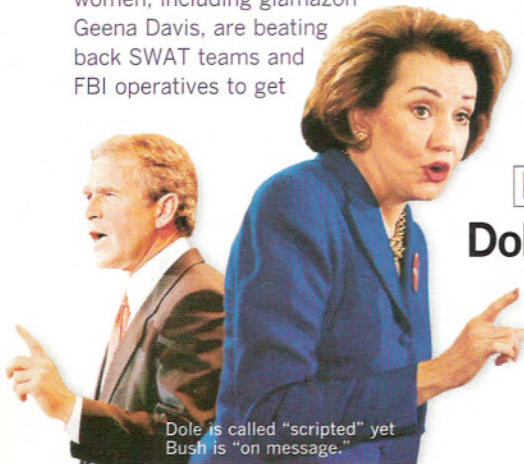
of class involved drills that mimic violent encounters. Standing with my eyes closed, I was slapped and strangled by five students. "There are no rules when it comes to surviving on the street," says Marni Levine, the world's highest-ranked female Krav Maga instructor. Accordingly, no one scolded me when, to my horror, my right hook nearly broke my attacker/partner's nose! (For the record, protective padding keeps the accident rate low.) Levine consoled me with a smile: "Hey, it made her tougher." For info, check out www.kravmaga.com. —Laura Schiff

D.C. Dispatch

Dole's "woman problem"

and Senator Phil Gramm. "They weren't tough? Didn't have people in tears? It is so outrageously sexist." Dole's former press secretary, Ari Fleischer, argues that because she's a woman, Dole's meticulously planned appearances are lampooned as "scripted," yet George W. Bush is described as "on message." It's a double standard, he says. "Traits that in men would be described as disciplined are now characterized as temperament, in a pejorative way. It raises legitimate issues about how men and women receive different coverage for doing the same things."

Is temperament a quality that *should* be scrutinized in candidates? Some say yes. "You can't go through a presidential campaign—or a presidency—without dealing with grenades lobbed from unexpected angles," says GOP consultant Whit Ayres. Temperament may be an issue, says the National Organization for Women's Patricia Ireland, "but I've never heard it ascribed to males—even though Bill Clinton goes off on his staff. To say women like Dole are temperamental is just an updated, more P.C. version of saying women are too emotional." —Jackie Calmes



Dole is called "scripted" yet Bush is "on message."

From the moment she entered the presidential race, Elizabeth Dole has been dogged by a criticism that none of her competitors have faced: the T word. *Temperament*. During her tenure as a two-time Republican cabinet secretary, Dole developed a reputation as a controlling perfectionist who's brutal on her staff. On the campaign trail, she travels with her own sound system and requests endless briefings before even private meetings. "There's no question she was the most difficult boss I've ever had," says one former top aide.

Dole's pollster Linda DiVall leaps to her defense. "Is she demanding and a perfectionist? Of course she is. Otherwise she wouldn't be in the position she's in." DiVall sees Dole as no different from other bosses she's had, including such alpha males as Newt Gingrich

Are men *this just in* getting a raw deal?

In October we asked you if the American male is suffering from an identity crisis after a wave of critical commentary from pundits, comedians, and feminists alike questioned men's value in society. Here's how you weighed in:

- 1. Is the world treating men unfairly?**
75% NO "Men who feel women are taking over should try thinking of us as equals rather than unfair competition."
25% YES "Men are routinely stripped of their children, their homes, and their paychecks simply because their wives don't want to be married to them anymore."
- 2. Do women expect too much from men?**
64% NO "Women have learned not to rely on men in the traditional sense because men no longer fulfill those roles."
36% YES "So many women have every opportunity to earn their own way, but they still expect a man to take care of them. No wonder guys are confused."
- 3. Have recent changes in women's roles robbed men of their identity?**
72% NO "If anyone has lost their identity it's women. We're expected to do more than ever with less support."
28% YES "Women are more independent today than they were 30 years ago, and don't need men in the same way."

take a side

Should a celebrity run for president?



Last year actor Warren Beatty starred in the movie *Bulworth* as a disillusioned senator

someone as wealthy, well-known, and telegenic as Beatty could stand a chance. Critics complain that Beatty is diverting support from the real candidates, and trying to transmute celeb appeal into political power. **WEIGH IN:**

- 1. Would you vote for Warren Beatty for president?** Y N
- 2. Do celebrities have too much political clout?** Y N
- 3. Have the policies of the Republican and Democratic candidates become too similar, as Beatty says?** Y N

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who gives up glad-handing to campaign with screw-the-system frankness. This year, life imitates art as we find the actor publicly musing about whether to run for president, on the grounds that Democrats Gore and Bradley are too centrist. "We don't need a third party—we need a second party," says the 62-year-old Beatty, who feels Democrats no longer represent "tax-and-spend, bleeding heart, die-hard liberals" like himself. And in a country that has already elected one actor president and a wrestler governor,