

IDF Empowers Females to Succeed

When Michelle and Robert King—creators, executive producers, and writers of the hit series *The Good Wife*—wanted to create a new series about the experience of being a female soldier, one military stood out as the ideal choice for a setting. Because of the uniquely egalitarian character of the IDF, the Kings decided to set their next show, *Girls with Guns*, in Israel.

Recently, in the midst of a whirlwind research visit to Israel, they sat down for an exclusive interview with the IDF Website, in which they discussed *Girls with Guns*, their reasons for setting the show in Israel, and their impressions of female IDF soldiers.

Although *Girls with Guns* is set to take place in Israel, its focus is more on the experience of female soldiers than on the realities of Israeli life. The show, Robert explained, will be an hour-long drama series focusing on an American family of three that has moved to Israel. The two daughters, ages 18 and 20, serve in the IDF, while their father works as a political consultant.

Girls with Guns is currently in its research phase. After concluding their research, the Kings said they plan to write the series over a period of two or three months, and then create a pilot of 13 episodes.

As for their overarching objective with the new series, the Kings expressed hope that *Girls with Guns* would accurately portray the reality of military service for women.

“We really want this to be a show that looks objectively at women in the military,” Robert said. “It just happens to be in such an interesting place.”

Michelle explained that they chose to set the series in Israel because “it’s the only place where women are drafted. In the United States, of course, there are women in the army—but they enlist, so they’re a self-selecting group. You don’t see the average woman and how she might cope with an unusual situation, and that’s what you get by focusing on Israel.”

“The other thing is that there’s a melting pot aspect to Israel,” Robert added. “It’s very much an ensemble.”

With their setting determined, the series creators set off to get a first-hand look at the soldiers, setting, and society featured in the new show. They flew to Israel for a 10-day visit, including stops in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Eilat. In addition, the IDF has hosted the writers and welcomed them onto a number of its bases.

“Everyone has been wonderful and taken us to various military bases to meet people, speak to female soldiers and some male soldiers, and it’s been invaluable to us,” Michelle said.

As the Kings have watched and interacted with female IDF soldiers, they have come face-to-face with the reality of “women being put in the same position as men and not treating it as that different,” Robert said. “So that’s what attracted us: seeing women’s empowerment, but not treating it as anything unusual, just treating it as the new status quo.”

“To me, what was most impressive was a level of quiet confidence,” Michelle said. “It’s like (female soldiers) don’t need to make a show of how good they are at anything, but they don’t fall back on self-deprecation either. They know what their job is, they know how to do it, and that’s just that. It’s very impressive.”

Look for *Girls with Guns* on the Showtime network soon.

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