# Pentagon criticises gay marine drama Boots as 'woke garbage'. Oh, we might watch it now...



Netflix’s new drama series Boots, which centres on the experiences of a young gay Marine navigating boot camp in the 1990s, has provoked sharp criticism from the Pentagon, igniting a wider debate about LGBTQ+ representation in the military.

The Pentagon’s rebuke came shortly after Boots debuted on Netflix on October 9, with Press Secretary Kingsley Wilson publicly dismissing the show as 'woke garbage.' In a pointed statement to Entertainment Weekly, Wilson asserted that under the previous administration of President Trump and Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth, the U.S. military was committed to 'restoring the warrior ethos,' - Pete Hegseth is a former television presenter, remember - maintaining standards that are 'elite, uniform, and sex-neutral.' He insisted that these standards — which he defined as applying equally regardless of gender or sexual orientation — would not be compromised to satisfy ideological agendas, directly contrasting Netflix’s approach to storytelling, which he accused of feeding 'woke content to their audience and children.'

Boots is adapted from Greg Cope White’s 2016 memoir The Pink Marine, which recounts his own struggles as a closeted gay recruit in the Marines during the 1990s. The eight-episode series stars Miles Heizer as Cameron Cope, a character whose journey explores the tension between military masculinity and LGBTQ+ identity. Vera Farmiga also stars in the series, underscoring the emotional and familial dimensions of Cameron’s story, including the strain it places on his relationship with his mother.

While the Pentagon’s criticism positions Boots as undermining military discipline and ethos, the series itself has received a nuanced response from TV critics and viewers. According to a review in The Washington Post, the show portrays Cameron’s internal battle with self-hatred and the rigours of boot camp with heartfelt humour and complexity. The series is praised for its candid depiction of military culture, although the ending leaves some questions unresolved, capturing the ongoing difficulties of reconciling identity with institutional expectations.

Similarly, The Seattle Times highlights the series’ exploration of the clash between aspiring to military ideals and the struggles implicit in being a gay man in that environment. The review points to a dual narrative within the show: the hope and resilience in overcoming adversity contrasted with the grim realities of assimilation into a traditionally hyper-masculine culture. This tension is presented as both the show’s strength and a source of narrative frustration, revealing the costs of conformity.

Miles Heizer, speaking to Variety, shared his personal connection to the role, describing his own coming out as fraught due to a 'super-conservative, religious family.' He related to his character’s isolation during this time but noted that support from his sister and friends was crucial in overcoming it. This real-life dimension adds depth to the series' portrayal of LGBTQ+ experiences within rigid institutions.

The controversy unfolds in the context of Secretary Pete Hegseth’s tenure, marked by his contentious stance on LGBTQ+ issues in the military. Hegseth previously ordered the removal of the name of gay rights icon Harvey Milk from a Navy ship and has actively rolled back diversity and inclusion initiatives. This background adds political weight to the Pentagon’s critique, which can be seen as part of a broader effort to assert a conservative vision of military culture. Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.comingsoon.net/pop-culture/news/2044424-pentagon-netflix-woke-garbage-boots> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.out.com/gay-tv-shows/boots-pentagon-woke> - The Pentagon has publicly criticised Netflix's new gay military drama 'Boots', labelling it 'woke garbage'. Pentagon Press Secretary Kingsley Wilson stated that under President Trump and Secretary Pete Hegseth, the U.S. military is focused on restoring the warrior ethos, with standards that are elite, uniform, and sex-neutral. He added that officials will not compromise these standards to satisfy an ideological agenda, unlike Netflix, whose leadership consistently produces and feeds woke content to their audience and children. The series, which premiered on October 9, stars Miles Heizer and Vera Farmiga and is based on former Marine Greg Cope White's memoir 'The Pink Marine'.
3. <https://www.attitude.co.uk/culture/film-tv/boots-netflix-first-trailer-2025-496189/> - Netflix has released the first trailer for 'Boots', an upcoming drama starring Miles Heizer, set to premiere on October 9. The series follows closeted gay teen Cameron, who enters the macho world of military boot camp. Adapted from the memoir 'The Pink Marine' by Greg Cope White, Heizer describes the programme as portraying the campy absurdity of boys doing an extremely masculine thing, joining the Marines, while simultaneously engaging in activities that are inherently gay. The show also stars former 'Emmerdale' actor Max Parker and Vera Farmiga.
4. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/tv/2025/10/09/boots-norman-lear-netflix-review/> - The Washington Post reviews Netflix's new series 'Boots', based on Greg Cope White's 2016 memoir 'The Pink Marine'. The show follows Cameron Cope, a closeted gay teenager who joins the Marines in the 1990s. The review highlights the series' focus on Cameron's struggle with self-hatred and the challenges of boot camp, noting the portrayal of military culture and the complexities of identity. The series is praised for its heart and humour, though the ending leaves some questions unresolved. 'Boots' is now streaming on Netflix.
5. <https://www.seattletimes.com/entertainment/tv/boots-review-netflixs-gay-coming-of-age-adaptation-sends-mixed-signals/> - The Seattle Times reviews Netflix's 'Boots', a coming-of-age adaptation that follows Cameron Cope, a closeted gay teenager who joins the Marines in the 1990s. The review discusses the series' portrayal of military life and the challenges of being gay in the military, noting the tension between the aspirational message of overcoming adversity and the realities of assimilation into Marine culture. The review highlights the show's treatment of sexuality and the cost of assimilation, suggesting a frustrating dichotomy in its narrative. 'Boots' is now streaming on Netflix.
6. <https://www.comingsoon.net/pop-culture/news/2044424-pentagon-netflix-woke-garbage-boots> - The Pentagon has publicly criticised Netflix's new gay military drama 'Boots', labelling it 'woke garbage'. Pentagon Press Secretary Kingsley Wilson stated that under President Trump and Secretary Pete Hegseth, the U.S. military is focused on restoring the warrior ethos, with standards that are elite, uniform, and sex-neutral. He added that officials will not compromise these standards to satisfy an ideological agenda, unlike Netflix, whose leadership consistently produces and feeds woke content to their audience and children. The series, which premiered on October 9, stars Miles Heizer and Vera Farmiga and is based on former Marine Greg Cope White's memoir 'The Pink Marine'.