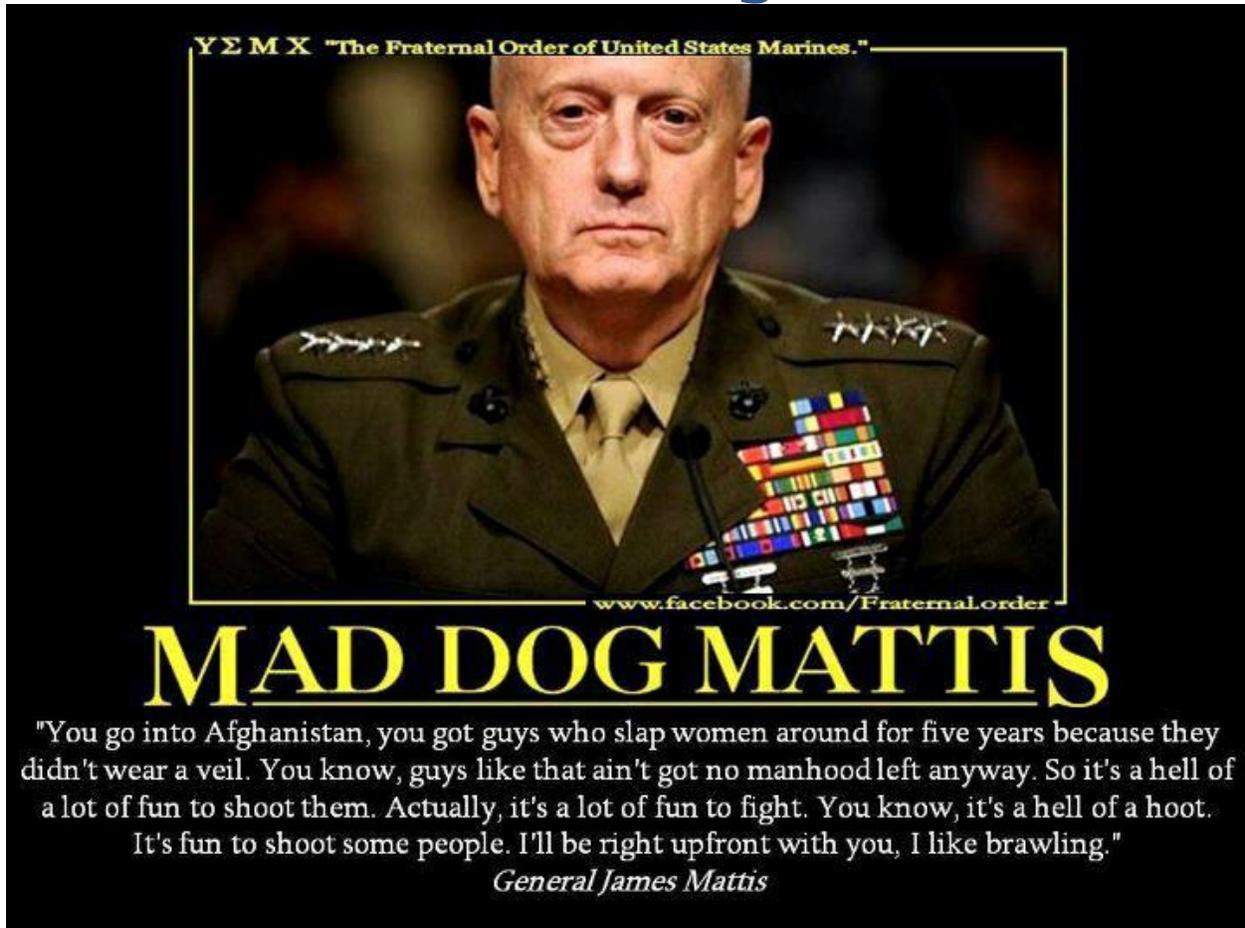


How Trump's secretary of defense pick earned his 'Mad Dog' nickname



When Donald Trump announced he would be selecting James Mattis to fill the secretary of defense position in his cabinet, he referred to the retired general only as "Mad Dog Mattis."

Though the president-elect is infamous for his personalized epithets like "Lying Ted" or "Crooked Hillary," it turns out Mattis has been going by "Mad Dog" long before Trump.

According to the [Washington Post](#), Mattis' troops dubbed him "Mad Dog" after Mattis led the Iraq War's second battle of Fallujah.

A [Los Angeles Times](#) article from 2004 described the nickname as "high praise in Marine culture."

Mattis is also informally known as a "warrior monk," a nod to his intellect and expertise as well as his marital status: 66-year-old Mattis has never wed.

The "Mad Dog" moniker, bringing to mind the image of a rabid attack dog or something of the sort, seems fitting given some of the retired general's attitudes toward war — which some might call crass or, at the least, controversial.

At a 2005 panel in San Diego, recently reported on by [NBC News](#), Mattis talked candidly about the "fun" of killing enemies. "It's a hell of a hoot," Mattis said at the time. "It's fun to shoot some people. I'll be right up there with you. I like brawling."

He went on to specifically mention the joy of killing Afghan men, adding, "You go into Afghanistan, you got guys who slap women around for five years because they didn't wear a veil. You know, guys like that ain't got no manhood left anyway. So it's a hell of a lot of fun to shoot them."

Still, Mattis' seemingly unforgiving stances may not be harsh enough for Trump.

"General Mattis is a strong, highly dignified man," Trump told the [New York Times](#) in late November. "I met with him at length and I asked him that question. I said, 'What do you think of waterboarding?' He said — I was surprised — he said, 'I've never found it to be useful.'"

Mattis insisted he has his own tactics. "He said, 'I've always found, give me a pack of cigarettes and a couple of beers and I do better with that than I do with torture,'" Trump said.



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