

SERVICE MEMBER  
EXPERIENCES ROUNDTABLE<sup>†</sup>

Hofstra University — *Don't Ask Don't Tell: 10 Years Later*  
Conference, Friday, September 19, 2003

*Participants:*

JAMES A. GARLAND, Moderator Lecturer Hofstra University School of Law	SHARRA GREER Director of Law and Policy Servicemembers Legal Defense Network
SHARON ALEXANDER U.S. Army (1993-2003)	Professor JAY HATHEWAY Edgewood College U.S. Army Special Forces (1972-1976)
MAJ. PATRICIA BAILLIE (RET.) U.S. Airforce	Professor WALTER HEIMER (RET.) Long Island University
COL. GRETHE CAMMERMEYER (RET.) U.S. Army, National Guard	C.W. Post Campus U.S. Naval Reserves
MAJ. JEFF CLEGHORN (RET.) U.S. Army (1984-1996)	LEONARD PEACOCK U.S. Army (1995-2001)
FORMER LT. MICHELLE DOUGLAS Cdn. Armed Forces (1986-1989) ( <i>Douglas v. Canada</i> )	LT. KEITH TAYLOR (RET.) Journalist, <i>Navy Times</i> U.S. Navy

**MODERATOR:** Good morning everyone. My name is James Garland, and this is the opening roundtable of Hofstra Law School and

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<sup>†</sup> The following are highlights from the *Service members Experiences Roundtable* discussion held in connection with the *Don't Ask, Don't Tell: 10 Years Later* Conference hosted by Hofstra University on September 18-20, 2003. The *Hofstra Labor & Employment Law Journal* would like to thank Michelle Tumsuden for her invaluable assistance with this piece.

Hofstra University's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell: Ten Years Later conference." We are opening this conference with a roundtable on service member experiences because the military policy that authorizes the separation of sexual minority service members from service is so much about the service members themselves—not only sexual minority service members, but also heterosexual service members who are presumed not to be able to live with and work with and bond with other service members who have a different sexual orientation. [After a brief introduction of each panelist, the moderator continued.] So I wanted to start this morning with a discussion of the very concept of "Don't Ask Don't Tell," since that is the moniker for the policy, because the name suggests even though we have gay service members here on this panel—we know that there are gay service members—the whole concept of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" seems to suggest that it is possible to be in service and pretend that there are not gay service members. . . . I wanted to explore that concept as our opening concept, so I just open it up to the panelists and to the roundtable: Is that a reality in service? Is it that service members go through service not knowing that there are other gay service members? And I guess I will start with Mr. Taylor- you have been in service for so long, why don't you start it off.

**LT. KEITH TAYLOR:** I was in service for 22 year and 9 months 11 days more or less. By the way thanks for the promotion, it's one notch higher then what I was, and that is not too high, to tell you the truth. But anyway I served all that time at various ranks and rates and saw the Navy from the different perspectives. I am sure that I served with gays at every duty station, every ship. The demographics would seem to indicate that it's almost a certainty, but it was only noticeable in small stations, isolated duty stations, or on board a ship. The first experience I had in actually associated with them or being with them or knowing they were there would have been on ADAC in 1948. Now this antedated Don't Ask Don't Tell, by a long time, and even antedated the current Uniform Code of Military Justice. I don't think at that time there was anything written that would prohibit homosexual activity, but it was there on ADAC, it was obvious and everybody knew about it—at least all the enlisted people, including the chief petty officers, and I would have to assume the officers. And nobody did anything about it. Nobody seemed to pay any particular attention to it. That was in 1948-49, it was not "socially acceptable"—the giggling and the nudging and, you know—all this was still there, but it wasn't officially hampered in any way that I could tell. Later, I was on a ship where an enlisted person and an officer, for separate circumstances, were transferred from the ship to

be processed for discharge or court marital. This was in the early 1960s. And later, in the mid 1960s, I had an officer in charge who was the guy who ran the station. He served 26 years and I have no idea exactly what the circumstances were but he was caught, involved in some sort of gay activity. The rumor that came back to us was that he was drunk out of his mind, but I don't know . . . but it was one incident, 26 years this gentleman had served, highly decorated—he'd even asked to be retired and the Navy told him, "No, you can't go, because you are too valuable." A few months later he wasn't even good enough to stay in the service, and they booted him out. That was probably my epiphany on the thing: Where is the justice to this, if an old friend of mine can be kicked out after 26 years for one incident? I sort of reshaped my thinking about gays in the military. And there were other incidents, of course, but those were the most poignant ones. So I did serve with them.

**MODERATOR:** Dr. Heimer, how about you? Did you know that you were serving with gay service members?

**DR. WALTER HEIMER:** Oh yeah. Oh yeah. The Navy—actually I enlisted in the winter of '44 and '45 and I was conned into the Navy medical corps, and I had visions of hospitals, Navy hospitals and Waikiki with the girls . . . Anyhow, when I got in finally, I discovered that I was cannon-fodder, "sharkbait," as we used to say. . . . [T]he Marines don't have their own corpsmen, [so] when they say a Marine corpsman it is a Navy corpsman, that's me. . . . Anyhow from the very beginning there were two branches in the Navy that had an appreciable gay population: the scribes, which was the secretarial staff, which I had very little to do with, but the corpsmen—I was a corpsman—and they had an appreciable gay presence—a helping profession. That is not uncommon even to this day. And from the very beginning I was very aware of gay corpsmen. And the important thing to note about this was the Marines with which they served, and I will come back to this later, were very aware of the gayness. And from the very beginning I would go out on liberty, and the Marines would pick up my tab, I never had to pay for beer or anything when the Marines were around. I was a Doc, but I'm schnook, I just got in, I didn't see any combat. . . . And they began to regale me with stories of their docs. The Marines and the Navy corpsmen have a special relationship, there was a love affair. They loved lady corpsmen because they served corpsmen, gave their lives. If you read anything about it you know this special relationship. But then they are going to protect me?! "What are you going to protect me from?" "You got to be protected, Doc, you got to be protected." And it turns out that what they are going to protect me from is gay-bashing, because I

was a corpsman. And the main point I want to leave you with at this point is that the U.S. fighting Marines, the combat Marines, were aware of a heavy gay presence in the Navy corpsmen, and kidded the hell out of the corpsmen, but would take care of them, respected them, it was a special relationship. It did not interfere with unit cohesion; it did not interfere with unit fighting ability. Quite the contrary to all the nonsense given out about the Don't Tell and Ask policy. . . . [F]ighting men when they are up front and dealing with their lives and each other, it is loyalty and courage and alliance to duty that counts. And the Marines honored this with straight corpsmen and gay corpsmen, it didn't matter.

**MODERATOR:** Col. Cammermeyer, last night you seemed to talk about a different experience, that when you were going through the process [of being discharged], maybe you had thought you were in a very isolated or unique situation at first. Did you know other lesbian or gay service members when you were in service?

**COL. GRETHE CAMMERMEYER:** Well, certainly, the first 25 years or so, I was totally oblivious to anyone's sexual orientation, and obviously even my own. But I think that once my gaydar was sort of charged that I began to recognize that there were gays and lesbians serving in the military. But it was still something that, at the time when I was trying to come to terms with my own sexuality, it was never spoken. There were some behaviors like groupings of people who had something in common, even though it was never said what that commonality was. And I remember that during the first Persian Gulf War that we were involved in, we were getting our hospital ready to be mobilized, if necessary, and some colleagues of mine were assigned to another hospital and were already over there. And when they came back, I was contacted. And what a couple of the nurses were really distraught about, if you will, was that they knew that among them there was a group that didn't have a husband and children to worry about, but they still had significant others or things going on at home, that they couldn't really give support to them, because to do that would essentially be to acknowledge that this was a group that was different, and that they were gay, and if you did that then that put them at risk for losing their careers. So that there is the natural gravitation, I think, that exists. And certainly, today, we have a young man living with us who happens to be gay and has a whole cadre of gay friends in the military. And they are much more social with one another in today's military than certainly that I was aware of, even after I was discharged, and then reinstated in the military. But my gaydar is much better now than it was earlier on.

**MODERATOR:** Just to follow up—and maybe Pat you can jump in here as well . . . how did gay service members find each other in the service? I mean, is it through gaydar? Is it through knowing each other—that special recognition of those extra special service members, how does that work? I mean, you are living under a policy that now requires service members not to identify themselves. How do you think that happens?

**MAJ. PATRICIA BAILLIE:** Well, for me, I was in basic training for 2 hours and my gaydar went off. My TI's were definitely there, and all the way through, it almost seemed like there was that silent recognition, you seem someone, you nod at them, you make a little more eye contact than you normally would . . . I know I found . . .

**MODERATOR:** Just like in the civilian world.

**MAJ. PATRICIA BAILLIE:** Just like in the civilian world, yeah, just like when you are walking down the streets. But . . . I would know that because there were more places to gather, such as the bars, even though there was concern about license plate numbers being picked up, or being seen there, there was still a place that you would find people there and talk to them. The other place I found that, for me, was that step to begin to connect with people, was inviting them over to the house and having dinner. Because no matter how much you try to “de-gay” your house, anybody who is looking for those signs knows those kind of things and picks them up

**MODERATOR:** And they are —?

**MAJ. PATRICIA BAILLIE:** (laughing). . . Well . . . and so that would usually be the kind of opening the door up. But yeah it was a very strong network. I know I played on the softball teams when I first came in.

**COL. GRETHE CAMMERMEYER:** That's the clue.

**MAJ. PATRICIA BAILLIE:** That's where you find them. But being an officer I never had any problems with investigations. But they would call me and we would talk about some strategies and some things. We will probably get into that a little bit more, but that ability to network and to know that you are not the only one, I mean, if nothing else SLDN's message of “don't sign, don't admit, don't do anything,” is the best message that you can get out there right away.

**MODERATOR:** Michelle, you were in the Canadian Armed Forces and is this resonate with you as the same kind of thing? I guess you were in [service] prior to Canada lifting its ban and are responsible—for those of you who don't know, Michelle Douglas's case is now widely hailed as being responsible for bringing the Canadian

government to its knees on its policy—but does any of this resonate with you?

**LT. MICHELLE DOUGLAS:** It absolutely does. In fact, I was astonished very early on to realize how big the community was particularly of lesbian serving members. I was an officer in the military, and it was a network that developed one person at a time. Once I ended up spending a lot of time with a woman who was in my basic training class. And I eventually fell in love with her. She had been in the military in another capacity for many years before that. And she started to introduce me to people. And it was really done one at a time but it went on for a long time. I realize what a network there was. In fact, there was almost a code within this group. Once you were in, once you kind of had established your bona fide credentials essentially to get in, you were really in a group that was deeply closeted, that had its own kind of form of “don’t ask, don’t tell” in the sense that you just didn’t betray the group, that was its predicated basis, I guess. Once you were in if you were going to get caught by the military authorities, you were going down by yourself. And that was often a current of conversation that we spoke about a lot. In fact, later I learned that five of the six women in my basic officers’ training course in the platoon I was in were lesbian. So those were the astonishing kind of statistical numbers that I was seeing and realizing how big the group was. In fact, it actually . . . it functioned beautifully in many ways because if you were posted to another base, they would often tell you where you should go and live to take over from so and so, who is moving, and that the landlord was very gay friendly and wouldn’t mind if you had other women come over or something like that, if you were living off base. Of course, it was a different situation if you were in the officers’ quarters or something. But I always remarked at how tightly-knit the group was, and how it would close ranks immediately if you were called in for an interrogation or something. That was it, the group closed ranks, and you were *persona non grata* as far as they were concerned.

**MODERATOR:** Jay, you were a Green Beret and served in the U.S. Army. What was your experience like? Because you were in, in the 1970’s—

**PROFESSOR JAY HATHEWAY:** My experience was, I think, somewhat of what I heard the panelists talk about. When I was in Special Forces, I was in Germany. . . and Germany was going through a bit of a sexual revolution at the time, to which many of the G.I.’s had tapped into. I was commissioned at the time. I was the youngest officer on post. I was only 21 years old, and the other officers were at that time

much older than I—41 to 50, 60. Some of these guys were World War II vets. So I ended up hanging around with my teammates, Special Forces has teammates. My teammates, many of them were gay as it turned out. They had tapped into the German gay underground, and so they would take me to gay bars where I got to meet German gays, and I got to meet a lot of GI's, some of whom were not Special Forces. So my experience was that this was part and parcel of what it was to be a Green Beret . . . Don't tell them that please. . . . Maybe they know, I don't know. . . . I think that the biggest surprise came to me though is when I was in defense languages in Monterey, California, for some 6 months or so and there was a gay bar in town, right off-post. It was like, "Whoa, this is really interesting." And so gays were part of my experience, literally from the day I walked into service until the day I was booted out.

**MODERATOR:** Sharon, you served as an officer under "Don't Ask Don't Tell" for most of your military career. Did you know there were gays under your command, did you know that?

**SHARON ALEXANDER:** There definitely were. I actually did lose a soldier to the policy at one point, which was . . . the first way I knew for sure that I had a fellow who was gay. It was amazing, I guess, in retrospect, I never thought about it at the time but there was a lot of diversity in terms of the different kinds of units that I served in, how this issue was handled and whether people were out or not, and how it was accepted. I spent a little bit of time in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division up in Germany for a while, and then was in an Army hospital for about a year and a half, I spent some time in the Airborne Brigade down in Vincenza, then spent a few years in the National Guard after that. And in each place there were different ways of dealing with this. In the Army hospital, we had people who were reasonably out, and everybody sort of knew, but no body minded at all. In the Airborne Infantry environment, I remember, I was always oblivious, but my fellows would tell me whenever we got a new person in the company, they would say "Hey ma'am, my gaydar went off, you know, that one's 'light in' the loafers,' ma'am." And I would say "Oh, don't ask, don't tell, be quiet, I don't want to hear about any of that."

**MODERATOR:** And these are straight service members with gaydar as well

**SHARON ALEXANDER:** I am a straight service member with no gaydar. I had no gaydar. My gaydar even after several years of working full time in the movement is not all that great. So you know it was one of those things, that the guys knew, even if I didn't necessarily know what was going on. But what is really stunning to me is that the vast majority

of gay service members that I have come in contact with, I have come in contact with after their service as veterans. And by being a part of the sort of core people working to sort of lift the ban you get to meet a lot of gay service members and some of them are just exceptional—I mean, *amazing* people who have done wonderful work. And to me that is sort of the biggest tragedy of “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell” for straight service members, is that straight service members don’t know that some of the best people they are serving with are gay, because “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell” makes them invisible, makes them have to keep that part of their life quiet. So I think to myself, of some of my old straight friends from my active duty days, if they knew which of their comrades who they respected and loved and thought the world of were gay, they probably would feel very differently about the policy.

**MODERATOR:** Well, let me turn specifically turn to the gay service members on the panel and just ask you more specifically in terms of the policy itself. Whenever you started to [identify]—you may have identified as gay or bisexual before you entered service or while you were in service—when that identity was in your mind and you were entering military service, how did you plan to live with military policy? Did you expect to keep your identity private? Or what were your feelings about that when you were in service? Jeff, how about you, why don’t you start with us?

**JEFF CLEGHORN:** Oh when I entered the Army as a 21-year-old second lieutenant, back in 1984, having just been commissioned from a Military school, North Georgia College, in Dahlonega, Georgia, what I identified as was someone who was not attracted to women in the way that the Army and my family and my friends presumed that I was, and presumed that I should be. At that point in my life having been raised in a very working class, rural, Southern Baptist family. I was probably as closeted as a person can get. And it was my expectation, to the sense that I had an understanding of my identity and my sexuality at that point, it was my expectation that that condition would remain forever. And I certainly went into the service with putting forward a good effort to make sure that no one found out, or that no one at any point suspected that I was gay. I remember my first assignment in officer training course at Fort Wauchula, Arizona, the Intelligence Officer training course, at one point, one of our instructors, our first lieutenant female became the target of a gay investigation. And it just coincidentally happened that she and I lived in the same apartment complex. And I didn’t know her nor did she know me, but I remember seeing her in the morning driving off on her motorcycle, that was my visual of her, and then when I learned



that she was believed to be a lesbian and was actually being investigated by the Army, I was shocked. I was frightened. And I am not sure why because it wasn't about me, but I was nonetheless in a circumstance that I was so paranoid about someone finding out, and carrying around so much internalized guilt and shame about who I was at that point as a young gay person. A week or two later this lieutenant disappeared from base, and I don't know what happened to her, although I can image that she was separated. I went on to Korea after that and several months later the same thing happened with an infantry lieutenant in a sister battalion of ours. I used to see the guy in the officers' club and then one day word came out that this guy—"Hey, he's gay and they are investigating him,"—and similarly, within a few weeks, he was gone. From there I went to Fort Jackson, South Carolina, where I commanded a basic training company. In the position of junior captain with command authority, I actually, on three separate occasions, remember having the responsibility of discharging some of the soldiers, three different soldiers, because they were gay. And I remember doing that—and again at this point being completely closeted and never having had a conversation with another human being about my sexuality or about my feelings, and trying as hard as I could keeping others from suspecting that—I remember seeing these three soldiers coming to my office and I had to present them with the paperwork, and sign the paperwork, and process the paperwork, and the conflict and the fear, the very genuine fear that I experienced in doing that. And then finally afterwards, in an assignment in Germany yet again another soldier, this time a non-commissioned officer who had been a drill sergeant, was highly regarded in the brigade, she became a target of an investigation. Everyone was talking about it and again the same feelings—eventually, she went to an administrative board and was successful in staying in the Army, and I never understood why or how that worked, but what these experiences helped me to understand over a period of several years was that I was not, surprisingly, the only gay person in the Army or for that matter the only gay person in the world. And it very much kind of began my journey of self realization and coming to have a clearer sense of confidence that who I was as a human being, and also as an officer, and as someone who very much wanted to serve in the military, and, if I may say, did it very well. And the identity process for me took a very long time, the coming out process, and actually saying "Yes, I am gay," and being able to communicate that in a healthy way is something that was complicated, a very long journey in my case, and I suspect that some other service members may have similar experiences. And certainly in

the age of “Will and Grace” I think that it is also true that some of our younger people today are actually coming into the service with a healthier sense of who they are as young gay and lesbian people, and not having to go through as much of the trauma, that internal trauma that I experienced.

**MODERATOR:** Pat, can I jump down to you—and we will come back to you Col. Cammermeyer—but Pat, you went into service with a bisexual identity, can you talk about that?

**MAJ. PATRICIA BAILLIE:** Yeah, it was interesting, because basically the reason I joined the military was I already had my masters, I was a teacher, I wanted to teach in college, and I had some students, women who were in the first Air Force Academy class. And basically they came back and said that we need to make sure that we get more women there and coaches. And I was a P.E. teacher—so there you are, right there, it is already set up. So when I went in my intention was to go to the Air Force Academy, and coach for four years, get that ability to teach in college, get back out go to the civilian world, and teach in colleges, story done. Well, the military didn’t quite see it that way. The advantage I had is, at that point, when I entered, the question they asked is “Are you a lesbian?” And at that point I could honestly say that I was a bisexual, so I could answer that question “no.” I met my partner of 12 years, actually, in basic training. Those intensive barrack situations just do something, I think, for people to make connections. But that was, I think, one of the things that saved me in my career. I am one of the few folks who retired. I was under investigation a couple times, but I retired without losing my benefits and all those kind of things and was very out my whole time. But part of it was because I had a stable relationship, and because she understood that I was “active duty,” and because she was in the military and the Guard, we understood how the military responded, and lived with that. Had I been just kind of on my own because I was out, and I was out looking for where the gays were in the military, and connecting in communities, I probably would have succumbed, if I was single, very quickly to investigations, and being subjected to that. But I also think that that relationship for me in terms of navigating through that, the reason it ended was because of the policy. We had a child when we had been together 7 years. I was a young captain, I was down at Johnson Space Center, a really prestigious position, working on the Space Shuttle. And we were having this child, and right after that, she had cancer. And the perception from all those that I worked with, because she came to meals and events and picnics and things like that, was I was just a very good friend who was taking

care of a poor single mother who had cancer. So my support in terms of having anybody to understand that my significant partner and my child and all this was going on was not there. We had some in the community, but again, I think, for a lot of military people you are in two mindsets. When I walk in the GLBT world, I am one way, and I don't let them know about the military, and when I walk in the military world, I don't let them know about the GLBT part. So that division didn't give me the support that I needed from the folks that I spent most of the time with.

**MODERATOR:** Did that feel natural to you while you were in service, I mean, it was just something that fit, being in service as someone who is out to yourself and out other people, but in service, you felt like you didn't have to be out, or that people didn't just want to talk about it?

**MAJ. PATRICIA BAILLIE:** From all of my friends that it have talked to after I retired and the other people who have been in the military most of them all go, "Oh we knew." And it just didn't make any difference. I mean, again, I think—who is it, the Navy Admiral from the Pacific Fleet, who said you know, find your best and your brightest women and discharge them because they are your lesbians? I mean, I had a good career, and it didn't come up—you know, yes, I didn't necessarily change pronouns but I was careful about what I said, and what I didn't say. So people who were watching would have known it, but the majority of folks, you really don't spend a lot of time talking about your personal sexual life. You might talk about where you went and what you did, but surprisingly that was very normal to say, "Yeah we went out camping this weekend and we did all that." That seemed to be an okay way with the areas that I walked in, to do that. However, it does take that long hard toll on you. Essentially with my investigation I did "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" before it was a popular policy, because when they came and they asked me about, "We understand that your partner, etc."—later in my life, [she] was a pastor in a gay and lesbian church—I made the comment back that basically I believe that how I practice my religion is my business and not subject to a security investigation. They then asked me if I was a lesbian and I wouldn't tell them that. And then I went into a limbo land for 3 years with my security clearance. And just because of a fortuitous set of events of who I worked for and what I was doing at the time, they didn't know what to do, because I had already had two high level clearances and this was just a re-investigation. And finally when I got over to the Navy, and thanks to the Navy's pushes, I got my clearance back, no comment, no particular thing. But in that interim it had probably destroyed what potential I had

to get promoted, because obviously that investigation was in my files. I had missed a command position, because my clearance wasn't current, so when they offered the early-out retirement in the draw-downs in the early 90s, I took it. And the day I made the decision was the day that Clinton announced "Don't Ask Don't Tell." I was too far out, because I realized that I was not going to be able to probably make a career out of this, so I needed to get out as soon as I could.

**MODERATOR:** Now, Colonel, you had a very different experience when you were investigated during your promotion phase. You talked about that a little bit last night, did the question about your identity come as a surprise to you?

**COL. GRETHE CAMMERMEYER:** Well, the way it was worded was in such a way that I think I could have skirted. It was part of just a routine form that the guy went right down. There was a question having to do with homosexuality, and I said, "I am a lesbian." And then, of course, everything—the form—went out the window, and his gaydar went up, and it was five hours of an outrageous interrogation. And one where I was feeling very intimidated and thinking, "What sort of a colonel am I to be intimidated by this civilian?" But, you know, as I was thinking about answering the questions, realizing just intuitively that I needed to be careful, even though I didn't know exactly where it was heading, and six months later, I was told that based on my honest statement that the military was going to start discharge proceedings against me. It was a devastating time, and I think for people who have to live, not only live the lie but also always wonder whether disclosing just enough information to someone that may not may have some sort of an axe to grind at a later time, whether it is going to come back to haunt you, and in turn to ruin your career. And we have certainly seen that with a lot of the witch hunts that the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network had been involved in from the perspective of trying to protect service members, that they target individuals that may be identified, or named by someone at the expense of, "If you tell us who you know or who you suspect is gay, then we will save your career," or "we won't go to your parents," or "we won't intrude into your lives anymore." And then realizing that that's all a denial of your civil rights, essentially, because it's a threat, you are not mirandized, or anything along the way, because you realize you don't realize that you do have some rights even as a military person. It's a very intimidating situation to be in, because you are there alone and someone in some authority is there, and essentially holds your career in the palm of their hand. And you don't

know who is coming around to get you at a later time. It's not a good place to be.

**MODERATOR:** Michelle, you have an interesting perspective on this, I think, as being someone who also had to investigate other service members in Canada. Surely under those conditions you had to expect to keep your identity private. How did you feel you were going to navigate your lesbian identity around the military's policy in Canada?

**LT. MICHELLE DOUGLAS:** What he's alluding to there is among the ironies in my case is that in recognition of the fact that I graduated as the top candidate in my officers' training course and, in my career course as a security officer, which is the Canadian description of kind of the officer corps with in the military police, I was posted to an elite unit known as the Special Investigations Unit. They investigated very serious crimes, things of that nature, but they also were mandated to investigate allegations of homosexuality. I was only the second female officer ever to be posted there, by all rights that should have been incredibly prestigious. But when my friends heard that I was going to that unit, they immediately closed ranks, thought that I was, in fact, a plant and would be outing them, and they would lose their careers. So my group of closest friends immediately kind of closed ranks. So there I was in this unit but I realized then, having had this relationship with a woman and still trying to hold on to that, that it was so important and I spent so much energy on trying to be projecting an image that would throw them off me and not have them investigating me. I would wear skirts to work everyday—which was completely ridiculous, now that I think about it—earrings, lipstick that I still had from my graduation in high school. You know, it is not something that I regularly bought, but these were the extraordinary efforts I was going through, and it was really draining, at so many different levels. But, in fact, even though I was in this unit, I never did have to investigate anyone for being gay or lesbian, because I wasn't there for very long. My commander of the unit came to me one day and said, "We are flying to another city. Take your gear. We are going up to do an investigation." And they actually dropped me off in a hotel near the airport, where I spent the next several days being interrogated. So it as horrendous. I relate completely to the description offered up by Colonel Cammermeyer, her five hours were horrendous. And it is something for which Canadians have no distinction there, certainly, because it was also horrendous. But, yes, despite my efforts they evidently found me out and, in fact, it was an obligation in the military that if there was a suspicion that you had gay or lesbian colleague, that you were obliged under military regulation to call that to

the attention of your authorities, your military supervisor. So that is what happened to me. . . .

**MODERATOR:** I want to move to a question that touches on a very sensitive issue, which is in addition to trying to navigate your identity in service, the Uniform Code of Military justice also—at least on its face, and we see through discharges—prohibits sexual activity that would be identified as gay sexual activity. And in this day and age where we now have the Supreme Court saying that there is a right to privacy in the federal constitution it seems that it especially inappropriate to start probing into this area. But I wonder, if you feel comfortable—is it even an appropriate question to ask, or if you do feel that it is okay to ask in your own circumstance—what was it like to have to be subjected to the Code and to find that intrusion into your personal life? Jay, you had talked a little about what happened in your experience . . . .

**PROFESSOR JAY HATHEWAY:** Actually, it began in essence with the issue of expectation and outcomes, somewhat from the second question. When I joined the service I was closeted, and I expected to leave the service closeted. When I left the service six years later I was a raging queer and a very angry as well. I was court-martialed under Article 125, UCMJ, that's a sodomy statute. And my expectation was that I would just skate out of the service, without necessarily having anybody know that I was engaged in any sort of illicit activity. From time to time I would make liaisons with people I met throughout the service. I had mentioned earlier there were gay bars that we used to go to, and gay soldiers have a way of letting you know they are gay soldiers, and I was a gay soldier, and so linking up was the natural thing. But what happened in my instance is that obviously too many people found out that I was in fact a gay soldier seeing gay soldiers, and part of the irony was that I was battalion S2, in charge of investigating gay soldiers so how does this work? Well, I wasn't sure I couldn't exactly investigate myself so I went up to higher headquarters and, ultimately, what occurred is that I was about to be decommissioned, if you will, back in 1975, I was about to leave the service. I had sent all of my stuff back to the States, and four days before I was to be discharged as a civilian I was hauled into the commander's office, where I was read the riot act, and then I was told that I violated article 125 UCMJ. And that began a very lengthy and somewhat psychologically disturbing court-martial process that had its regular mix of violence and anger and vituperation and the like. And the government—and this is the point, I suppose—the government when I was on stage, if you will, in court, spent a lot of time in this sexual sodomy case describing the physical

details of what I was alleged to have done. And quite frankly it was luridly pornographic, and it was really not for my benefit, if I had done it, I would have known what I did, but obviously wanted to get to the jury—which were all the commanding general appointees, General Grossman was the commanding general. And so, to an extent they used the sodomy statue against me to embarrass me. They didn't have actually any proof that I had committed any act, which in fact, I didn't do, but the person who I allegedly had this act with was used as a patsy, and he was given immunity from prosecution to testify against me, even though he himself admitted under oath to the judges that he was a perpetual liar, was a drug user, and this kind of stuff like that. The act then, the sodomy statute, then became a vehicle to, in my opinion, a vehicle to warn gays and lesbians, "Don't go this way." Now the reason the sodomy statute was used in this lurid way to allow me to be embarrassed, it seems to me, is because Len Malovitch, who we were working with at the same time, was attempting to have the regulations banning gays and lesbians either overturned by legislative fiat, or perhaps by someone in the Armed Forces who could do those things. And so if we had won—we had a constitutional challenge for Article 125 ACLU—had we won on both instances, the military would have had no vehicle through which they could have discharged gays and lesbians, neither through the regulations nor through federal stature with is the UCMJ. So this is I suppose a long way saying that the statute was used against me primarily in a political way to send a message to those who would want to overturn the regulation. But what it did is it allowed me to form an identity as being a gay man in a way that I had not had when I joined the service. As I said when I joined the service I was closeted, at the end of the process when my court martial was finally over I was angry and I was loud and I was probably very obnoxious. And I was in the face of some of these people who did it, so in an ironic way, I have to thank the Army for allowing me to become an angry young gay man and that sent me on a very positive course the rest of my life, which brought me to this theater here today.

**MODERATOR:** Colonel, you have spoken quite passionately about how intrusive the Uniform Code of Military Justice is, and also how the invasion of your privacy has forced you to become a public figure. Do you want to say anything else about this question? Because it does seem like it is a question that is so intrusive. . . .

**COL. GRETHE CAMMERMEYER:** Well, I find it rather intrusive to even talk about personal conduct. Actually the fact that an identity as a gay person—lesbian or gay—is one that doesn't deal with

the physical aspect of it, but rather the identity itself. And I think that in discussions about gays in the military you always end up going back to “conduct,” rather than a self-identity that individuals have. And I think that really does an injustice, if you will, to the very identity of someone in the gay-lesbian-bisexual-transgendered community, as though we were our sexual act. And I think that first, of course, that the Uniform Code of Military Justice really needs to be revamped into the social morays that are much more realistic with today’s behavior, today’s morays, and also with the belief of “Should the military be involved in individuals’ private lives and private conduct if it doesn’t interfere with the military mission?” But I also think that as a society we need to acknowledge that someone can have a gay identity without ever engaging in a physical act of the very things that people get labeled for, and then get thrown out of the military. And curiously, of course, “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” has made it so that your mere words are sufficient and are considered actions and, therefore, you are subject to being discharged.

**MODERATOR:** . . . . Sharra, I was wondering if you could address this topic . . . how prevalent is this today, the still intrusion into people’s sex lives, despite the premise of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell”?

**SHARRA GREER:** I think it has certainly changed since your circumstances, [Jay]. It is actually very rare these days that somebody is prosecuted under Article 125 for purely consensual activity. Usually people are prosecuted under Article 125 when there is an allegation that there was lack of consent or as a tacked-on charge. In fact, a lot of the military defense bar hates Article 125 because it is often seen to be used vindictively and arbitrarily, primarily against heterosexuals, which is interesting, not what you would expect. However, it is certainly used as one of the justifications for “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell”—being, of course, all gays and lesbians and bisexuals “must” be committing sodomy by the fact that they are gays lesbians and bisexuals, which is Col. Cammermeyer pointed out is not true, but it is what the military says, and uses to justify the exclusion. It is also often used occasionally—actually it is less now than before—used as a threat to somebody if they are considering fighting their discharge, the military will just say, “Well you should simply accept the administrative separation, because if you don’t, you know, of course we can prosecute you criminally under the sodomy provision, so you should just go quietly.” . . . Don’t Ask Don’t Tell has three bases that you can be separated under—“a statement,” which is very broad a statement to anyone, anytime, anywhere, if you tell your mother and the military finds out about it, that can be grounds



for your separation, an “act” is homosexual conduct . . . hand-holding, kissing, . . . which includes sodomy, and if you marry or attempt to marry somebody of the same gender. Ninety-plus percent of the separations under the policy which are nearly 10,000 now are for statements not for acts, not for conduct, and there are very few for acts and only a handful for attempted marriage . . . .

**MODERATOR:** . . . [So you say it’s] about 90% of discharge for statements or something to that effect . . . ?

**SHARRA GREER:** Yeah it is about 90% of the people are discharged for statements but that includes things like—and this gets back to the larger portion of intrusion and to privacy—that includes things like finding Valentine’s Day cards during a barracks search, that includes things like finding emails on people’s computers, when they are searched when people go through barracks rooms. That includes statements to your military psychologist, that includes all types of things that are invasive of privacy. You know, people tend to think of statements as people coming forward saying “I am gay, lesbian, or bisexual,” and that is not what the military means when it characterizes something as a statement, that is a very different thing. But the actual discharge for acts is much less common.

**MODERATOR:** I want to turn to a topic that probably often is not public enough. About 10 years ago Congress was investigating whether or not this ban should continue and we had military leadership openly talking about anti-gay violence in service. And we know from very high profile cases like the case of Allen Schindler, who was stomped to death back in 1992 when he was stalked by service members, and Barry Winchell, who was bludgeoned to death in 1999. . . . And we know from those cases that there are high profile cases of murder that go on in the military. But in 1993 this was talked about as a justification for why gays and lesbians should be excluded from service. And I just want to go back to what you talked about Professor Heimer, you had mentioned that there is this almost-celebration of gay bashing that existed back at the time you were there. Was it common back then . . . ?

**DR. WALTER HEIMER:** Now this was back in the 1940’s, 1945-47, when I was in. Yes, it was common, the gay-bashing was done around gay bars which we had been to, we had been very much to, so in our day and it was done, sometimes by civilians, a lot of time by civilians. And sometimes by other military personal but never by Marines. . . . And the Marines, would say, and they would tell me, “Yell, ‘Marine!’ Yell, ‘Corpsman!’” And we will come to you you don’t have a thing to worry about. And they were just related to us and they would

say. “Are you, Doc?” [And I’d say] “Are you one what?” “Are you a queer?” . . . . [But] one of the great success stories of the US military has been racial integration. As a matter of fact, my unit was being racially integrated even before Truman’s ‘48 executive order, which is a famous order, and it has been a famous story in US social history. It’s a level playing field, it’s Command-and-Demand. . . . What’s the delay with integrating sexual orientation? You have to raise that as a theoretical point.

. . . . And the answer is from a psychological point of view is homophobia. The homoerotic—you have to understand—that the homoerotic feelings are universal in all men and women, and those people who are not sure of their orientation are terrified. As my wife says, skin color doesn’t rub off, but this may rub off, that is the point. So people are threatened, and so this homophobia runs throughout the policy . . . This is your point . . . I want to give you one illustration of this, which occurred from 1941-45. It is a famous story—none of you know this I am sure—this was the navy the railroad bunk issue of fight. It was a two-ocean war, so you had to transport millions of men and women back and forth across the continent, and the War Management Board wanted to put two men in a bunk, and from 1941-1945, this was constant fighting in Washington, no television in those days, but . . . on the radio . . . everybody joked about it, two beds and this is what we are fighting for, one-man, one-bunk. The Navy never relinquished. . . . The Army said well we’ll let two men in the bottom bunk because it is a little bigger but the top bunk, no. . . . Listen, if you read the reports and the anecdotes of the terrible winter of ‘44 and ‘45, around become where the men would be two to a fox hole, holding themselves in each others’ arms, to keep from freezing to death. Where were these people then about keeping men separated? So what is the point I am trying to make? Oh yes- the point I am trying to make is that this homophobia is really the thing that you have to deal with which makes the battle so difficult, and the lag. And you have to understand this there is a very strong prevalent homophobic response in large numbers of people, if they are not secure. And this requires education and time and social change.

**MODERATOR:** Mr. Taylor, what do you want to add? . . .

**LT. KEITH TAYLOR:** I believe part of the Navy Seal training is for men—and it is exclusively a male organization—that the men are required to spend the night naked in very cold weather and, it can be rather chilly, even in San Diego, and their survival technique includes hugging one another while they are naked, which is one of the reasons they use for not integrating women into the Seals.

**MODERATOR:** . . . You were in service from 1947-1970, so rising through the ranks did you see violence when you were in service? . . . Did you see antigay violence very often? Did you know about it did you hear about service members being harassed or beaten?

**LT. KEITH TAYLOR:** Oh sure . . .

**MODERATOR:** How common was it?

**LT. KEITH TAYLOR:** Well there was always, other than the official harassment or the court-martial or the administrative discharges and so forth, there was always the case of the straights harassing the gays because they were queer, the notion that corpsmen were automatically gay, although there may have been more, I don't know that. Although there may have been more, the presumption was that the corpsmen were gay they were generally given the title "pecker-checker" . . . and there was a lot of harassment, . . . but the irony, and I wrote this—I write a column in the *Navy Times*—and I wrote that the homophobia was almost so great that even a person who used correct English was sometimes suspect because he was just not one of the regular guys. And I also had a case in where I was stationed as an instructor for young sailors and Marines, and these folks were talking about going to town and "rolling a queer," one of the things that I had heard when I was seaman. And I held a special lecture on it not because of a concern for the people who might be rolled, but for the concern of these sailors and Marines, this is violence, this is assault and battery, this robbery, this could very well be murder, and soon not long after I was known as the chief who gave "the queer lectures." So this idea spreads across the board. Yeah there is violence and there is discrimination. . . .

**MODERATOR:** Did you get the sense that military leadership tolerated it, or just didn't care about it? Or what do you think, how did leadership react to it, was it just common, was it accepted . . . ?

**LT. KEITH TAYLOR:** No I don't think that it has ever been accepted. I think that's the reason we have "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" is because it is not accepted. The military is divided into the straights and the gays, and it is not accepted, no, it isn't to this day.

**MODERATOR:** Does anyone else have experience did you know of other service members who were harassed? Sharon—

**SHARON ALEXANDER:** Yes, we had an interesting experience during my time in Vincenza, Italy. My husband and I both lost a soldier to the policy simultaneously. The two were found *in flagrante delicto* in the barracks, which they certainly shouldn't have been, but the ways in which the two men were treated were so entirely different, I think, that it really speaks to this issue. There was a lot of anti-gay rhetoric that goes

around in the Army, particularly in some of the infantry environments, that are sort of very . . . highly charged environments. That happens. But what is difficult to understand is why it is tolerated. You know, that sort of rhetoric is part of the lexicon, it is a part of the way people talk and think, sometimes, in that environment and people have to react accordingly. When my husband and I lost these soldiers, we both got a call in the middle of the night saying our fellows were in trouble. We were in different companies in the same brigade, my husband and I. His soldier was discharged and out of Italy within 72 hours, which at the time was very difficult to do administratively to out-process someone and get them back to the States in 72 hours. His command's feeling was that this was the right thing to do to protect the soldier. They felt that leaving him on post in a very "Hoorah," very highly-charged environment where everybody knew what had happened might put him in danger, and I think that may well have been true, and it probably was the best thing they could do was to get him out quickly, given the policy and given the circumstances. With my soldier, on the other hand, he was kept around for another month. He was taken out of my platoon. My platoon sergeant vehemently protested because we felt some loyalty to this soldier, he was our soldier, and, yes, he was in trouble but he was our guy and we were going to take care of him until the end. But the end came a month later after being hung around, threatened with court-martials, threatened with a lot of administrative and command threats, as well as having to put up, within the chow line, being harassed, being told—he was put on what we call KP, which means he had to serve food in the mess hall— and sort of being told "I don't want that faggot touching my food, who knows where he has been." Just really horrific harassment that he shouldn't have had to go through. And he was kept around another month before we finally saw him go back. And what is striking about this, like I said not that there is anything inherently about the military environment that makes people anti-gay, but there is something about "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" that justifies anti-gay sentiment and then, by extension, anti-gay violence. That is what most troubling. We don't worry about a Jewish soldier getting beat up because he is Jewish. We don't worry about a female soldier getting beat up because she is female. We do worry about gay soldiers being beat up, and that is because we have a policy that says "Being gay is wrong, being gay means you shouldn't be here, there is something shameful about it," and this buttresses antigay sentiment that may be preexisting.

**MODERATOR:** Anybody else want to comment on this? Sharra, go ahead—

**SHARRA GREER:** Well, I just wanted to dovetail into what Sharon was saying. The Department of Defense had denied that there was a significant problem with anti-gay harassment within the military. After Barry Winchell's murder they decided to do a survey in 2000 of over 70,000 service members to try to get a sense of the levels of anti-gay harassment in the ranks, and I think they were stunned that the results came back that over 80% of the service members surveyed reported hearing anti-gay comments anti-gay epithets, that it was rampant and it was a significant problem. In that survey also there was nearly 40% of the 70,000 service members reported that not only did they hear anti-gay comments but they knew they had seen and witnessed incidents where individual service members had been targeted because they were perceived as gay, and had been specifically harassed and taunted, and in 5% of the instances physically assaulted because of their sexual orientation, which is just devastating. I mean that simply should not be happening in the military. For the reasons that Sharon was saying . . . . That level of violence should be taken seriously by the military, whatever commands think about gay-lesbian-bisexual service members, that simply shouldn't be happening in the military with the level of discipline that is supposed to be there. That simply shouldn't happen and it does come from commands not taking it seriously, from them not disciplining service members who violate the rules. . . . Post this survey, rules were put into place or were supposed to be put into place to have some accountability to stop this behavior, and they haven't been enforced and they haven't been fully implemented. And so we are still in a circumstance where if you pick on someone you think is gay in the military, if you push them, shove them, the chances of you getting disciplined for that are pretty slim. And that allows that to continue and to become worse. And it is particularly true, I just wanted to comment for a minute, we have heard from a lot of different perspectives of people experiences within the military and I think there is a huge variety of people's experiences being gay, lesbian and bisexual and even transgendered within the military. Both from our cases and as well as the survey, junior enlisted get the brunt of it. People like Sharon were saying sort of in the more "Hoorah" Airborne units, other types of combat units, harassment is worse, there is a lot more of a culture that that it is permissible and acceptable. In the medical healthcare sector, it's not. There are much more people willing to be out, being willing to talk to other people other people know they are gay. It's not an issue, there is much less harassment. Officers suffer a much deal less harassment then enlisted service members do. And it varies greatly from where you are.

But unfortunately the people who do get the brunt of it are the junior enlisted people and these are 18-23, 24-year-olds who don't have a lot of authority in the military, and they are not in a position to do a whole lot about it. And even if they report it, well if they report that someone is harassing them because they are gay, they are discharged—if they say because people think I am gay, the likelihood that the command will respond with investigating the harasser is very small, the likelihood that they will respond with “Well, *are* you gay?” is pretty high. So there is really no way for these service members to try and access assistance through the military channels, which is really a sad state of affairs.

**MODERATOR:** Jay, did you want to add something ?

**PROFESSOR JAY HATHEWAY:** I want to make just a quick comment about the anti-violence aspect. My court-martial again lasted for some several months, and I found myself the recipient of gay-bashing, basically, both physical and verbal, and official, if you will. The point I wanted to make is that the violence I was subjected to was actually condoned by the chain of command, from the colonel on down, all the way to the lowest second lieutenant. I was a first lieutenant at the time. Where I found it interesting is that the command in their minds relegated me to the status of a private first-class, so it was okay for the officer corps to trash me—and literally beat me up is what one guy did—and so the enlisted people on my post, who I didn't know too well, the younger ones all came rallying around me and it turned out that I would have many enlisted men and women, but mostly men at my end, and they would see me and they would literally cordon me off and protect me and walk me across my post like this circle. And they would end up getting . . . they were chewed out. I was in the snack bar once and I was talking with a couple of enlisted people and the Captain came in and told them to leave, that I had been shunned, and they were ordered not to talk to me, and they told this guy, they gave him the finger basically, and they did give him the finger . . . but I guess the point was that in the case of an officer, in my instance, I was relegated to a private, and as a private, . . . they allowed other officers to physically assault me, and then when we asked for a restraining order the adjutant said, “Well if you hadn't had these charges brought against you wouldn't need a restraining order.” and so I simply had to be separated from the rest of my officers, I moved into a special billets, and that was the end of that, I wasn't harmed so much anymore. In fact, I moved off-post because I was safer that way. So I supposed some ways this confirms your observations, only I guess the moral is, don't be an officer and be accused of sodomy.

**MODERATOR:** Can I pick up on something you talked about, this notion of these enlisted service members helping you, and Dr. Heimer, you mentioned Marines who were willing to help other service members . . . For those of you who are heterosexual on this panel, you are involved in this policy discussion here today because you are involved in it on a national level, where policymakers seem to want to, at least broadly, assume that heterosexual service members will have great difficulty living with, working with, and bonding with gay service members. And I just want to get a reaction, I will start with you Mr. Taylor, how do you react to that? Are you insulted by that? Or you do you think it is right, do you think it is true for some service members?

**LT. KEITH TAYLOR:** I would say that it is true of some, but it is not true of some, of any persuasion. But I served my commanding officer, officer-in-charge, faithfully, and all I thought of him was that he was kind of a bastard at times, but it had nothing to do with his sexual orientation. I would have no problems whatsoever, I don't think, of working for any person. It just doesn't make sense, because in the command-subordinate relationship there is not going to be any problems. I don't think that there would be any problem unless they step over the line and use coercion or something, but I see no problem there, I think that it is a bogus issue. I think it is a scary issue that is raised the same as a unit cohesion. We certainly did our job on ADAC even though there were several out of the closet gays running around and there was no particular problem.

**MODERATOR:** You have written these incredible columns where you talk about how in writing for the *Navy Times*, that you have written about the policy and you get feedback from heterosexual service members who talk about your columns, about the policy. Can you offer any thoughts, are they concerned about the policy? Do they want the policy to continue?

**LT. KEITH TAYLOR:** Frankly almost every letter that I get—and I put my email address on my column because I am an egotist—but almost every letter that I get comes down to one issue and that is the shower issue. That is the big thing, they don't want to take showers with gays, that's what they *say*. And then they add unit-cohesion, discipline, morale, and so forth without ever giving any examples. But it comes down to the shower thing; are they going to look at me in the shower?

**DR. WALTER HEIMER:** But the shower thing is really funny, it is a lousy joke but it is the prototypical navy joke about gays as a group of sailors in the water, in a line swimming holding each other and the captain leans over—I have heard this joke a thousand and ten times—the

captain leans over and says, “You men down there, form a circle—and give the guy at the end ‘a chance.’” Now that joke, as bad as it is, reflects an ongoing issue of gayness in the service, in the Navy—I don’t know about the Army but in the Navy, it is around you all the while—in fantasy, in talk, in jokes, and in actuality, it is somewhat like the civilian culture in that sense.

**MODERATOR:** But if it’s a joke—I guess that’s my question—if it’s a joke, among the other heterosexual service members that you know, is it serious that they think that they can’t shower and sleep and work with heterosexual service? Or is it just a joke?

**DR. WALTER HEIMER:** Well I mean it depends on the guy. I mean you have to be grown up. It is sort of experience, adaptiveness. You are naked half the time. I just came back from Iceland. And at my age when we went into the swimming pool we had to take our clothes off, and be showered down, by somebody before they would let you go into the pool. If you have any fear of other men, it can grab you when you are being upset, but you know, at my age who cares. It’s around and you deal with it. And the main point you want to know is that the racial integration was a horrific problem. You know these people said “It will never be done” . . . and we know how it was done it was command, demand. . . rigorous enforcement. This gets back to Sharra’s point and Michelle’s point and once the top brass on my base at Chelsea, we knew if you said anything against a black or any other guy that was different you are in front of a goddamn captain and you are going to the brig, that is all there is to it. . . . You can think whatever you want but you better keep your mouth shut.

**MODERATOR:** Mr. Taylor, did you want to add something?

**LT. KEITH TAYLOR:** Yes, just one quick comment. You had asked if it was just a joke, or if it is official. I would say it is about as official as—or as meaningful as it can be—as opposed to being a joke, because Congressman Duke Cunningham from San Diego actually used those terms in making a talk, talking on the floor of Congress, in support of “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell,” in a very anti-gay diatribe. He used those terms. And my friend Lionel Van Deerlin, who had also served in Congress for 18 years, and now is a columnist suggested that Cunningham had taken showers with gays without knowing it. And I did manage to get an article in the paper that probably Cunningham didn’t even take showers, because he was an officer . . . .

**MODERATOR:** Well, Sharon, let me just ask you: as a heterosexual service member, you talked about you and your husband both knowing gay service members, how do you react to this notion, I



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mean, that you can't live with, shower with, work with, bond with gay service members?

**SHARON ALEXANDER:** I think that it is an idea that is disproved in many many contexts. We act as though the shower issue and the close physical proximity issue is a purely military issue, and as though that doesn't happen anywhere else outside of the military. We know, we have seen though the studies done through the Center for Study of Sexual Minorities in the Military, and others, that in paramilitary organizations, in police forces, in groups like the CIA, the FBI, in fire departments . . .

**MODERATOR:** In college . . . in dorms

**SHARON ALEXANDER:** In college

**MODERATOR:** In many other situation where people are forced to share very close physical quarters and also are forced to have to bond together in a very very deep way, you know . . . perhaps more than you would just in a civilian office somewhere . . . but in life or death situations we know that gay people can be integrated absolutely fine in those environments. We have seen that there is no effect on morale, on unit cohesion, on people's ability to trust each other and work together, which is really the bottom line of this whole cohesion issue. We know those arguments to be false. Many many of the junior officers I served with would say over dinners, "You know, this is a ridiculous policy." It is just a matter of time before it goes and it should. There are some who will hang on to it as well, but I would argue that the main reason that there are still folks who would cling to the idea that there is some sort of incompatibility between military service and homosexuality in large part is because they've got this great elephant in the room of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," that still says it's the official government position, it is the policy of the United States, in fact, it is the law that you can't be gay and serve in the military, or at least if you are, you better not let anybody know about it because then you are out. There is an incompatibility that has been designated by the government, and people are affected by that, people believe that. Just to give you an example of why I think that "Don't Ask Don't Tell" is the single biggest barrier to people in the military inside the military coming to believe that it would be fine for gay people to serve. Imagine, think back to the integration of woman—and I know that a lot of people have problems with the analogies between blacks and women and they say that it is a very different thing—but *imagine* this: Women weren't always in, and for along time they were in the Women's Army Corps for the army, and I guess there were the WAVES and other organizations for the Air Force. There

wasn't integration. And the reason that there was no integration was that people said well you know white people won't take orders from black people, men won't take orders from women, men aren't going to bond with women etc. But the reason integration worked is because we had the successful experience of blacks and women integrating and doing just fine. People started to have women in their units and see that the world didn't fall apart and, in fact, they could bond very well with some of these women. They could do their jobs well, and it really didn't cause any problems. I can remember myself as a young female officer in an Airborne infantry environment. I had a lot of people who really didn't think that I should be there. Over the course of a couple of years of performing at a very high level, you gain respect and people say, "Okay well maybe there isn't such a bad thing about having women in the military. Captain Alexander is fairly squared away so maybe they aren't all bad." Imagine if—as a condition of being in the military as a woman you you had to hide it—you had to pass as a guy. So I have to dress up as a guy, cut my hair make sure that no body can tell I am a female, as a condition for me to serve. Would anybody I served with get the idea what women in the military was okay? Would they have that experience of knowing that "Oh, actually I do serve with some women and they are actually pretty good and its all okay"? No you wouldn't have that, because you don't know that I am a woman, so you can't learn from the experience of serving with me if I have to hide the fact that I am a woman as a condition of serving. That is exactly what "Don't Ask Don't Tell" does to gay serve members. It forces them to have to hide who they are, so although they may be serving at a very, very high level of competence, doing great work, bonding with people, etc., none of their straight counterparts are benefiting from that education, because they don't know their colleague is gay, because the colleague can't let it on if he or she does. She is at risk for discharge. So this is what "Don't Ask Don't Tell" does. It hides from heterosexual service members this possibility of education of learning, that it can be great to work with gay people, [that] gay people are no better or worse then straight people in uniform.

**MODERATOR:** Can I stay with this side of the table for just a bit? Because I think that the response might be, looking at Pat's case or Jeff's case, and even Colonel in your case, for a while, they could say for a while you served for so long without any problem, what is the harm in the policy? I mean you both managed to get out of service, Pat and Jeff, without being discharged, without being prosecuted. Why aren't you the role models to counter to this, that you could live under this policy and it

is something that is entirely successful. Why don't the three of you maybe address that? Jeff I can start with you.

**JEFF CLEGHORN:** I would just say very briefly and follow up to Sharon's thoughts, that the last six and half or so years I have had the privilege of working with the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, and counseling hundreds of young gay and lesbian Marines and sailors and soldiers, and I have heard from these young people time and again that they have been out of the closet to several of their peers and often times to many people within their platoons and within their squadrons, and have been well received and respected. And the working condition that they had with their peers, who they were out to were very positive and favorable. So I think that there is a dynamic that is present tense, that I hope will continue at the foxhole level within the military of people being able to—after they establish the trust and unit cohesion with their peers—to share this part of their life. And I think we do a disservice to the brave young men and women in uniform today to suggest that somehow they would not be able to handle this if more people were allowed to do it honestly. Or if we were allowed to do it honestly. But the practice is that from of the anecdotes that I have heard that it is happening here and there in the field—and there are some positive stories out there—unfortunately we can't promote these stories because to do so would risk outing the young service member and expose them to investigation and discharge, which we would never do.

**MODERATOR:** But yet in the military—I guess, coming back to my question, sorry—the military could say but okay so you experienced personal pain not sharing your identity or sharing those stories but you were able to serve without doing so why isn't that an acceptable—

**JEFF CLEGHORN:** Two responses. First of all, the military has in it an interest in the national security, to get the best out of its soldiers and its marines. And having a soldier and marine having to lie and conceal and evade and live a life of fear is not conducive to getting the best performance out of them, and it is also disruptive to trust. I mean the essence of unit cohesion is trust. The military's core values says that soldier and marines and sailors are supposed to live with honor and with dignity and lead with their integrity and their personal courage. But yet, this policy prohibits gay people from doing that, and so there is that rank hypocrisy that many general and major admirals embrace that I think discredits them and more importantly discredits their service, because they are creating conditions that are externally imposed, that are prohibiting the development of genuine trust amongst troops in all

conditions. And this is not good for readiness, and it directly undermines what the military says its values are.

**MODERATOR:** Pat, do you want to add anything to that?

**MAJ. PATRICIA BAILLIE:** Yes, I mean for me a lot of it was about that, yes, I got through the military and I retired and got my benefits, but the journey to get there, as you were saying, is there is a lot of cost that goes with that, trying to survive day to day. When I spent two years under investigation—in command of a unit because my commander had a heart attack—trying to do my job and be the best that I could, not knowing which phone call was going to come to my desk that was the investigators saying you need to come down to L.A., because we need to have another intensive discussion about things, or clear your desk out because you are done. That obviously has an impact. And you continue to have that pressure in your life to perform at your best, because if you are afraid that if you make a misstep, then everyone will know or say that is because you are. I mean you start to get that pressure, somehow I represent the entire GLBT world out here, and if I goof up, and if I get out there and get in a court case and I am not sterling, then the entire rest of the GLBT corps is going to be impacted by that. And although the “doing better” and achieving at that level is an excellent ability, where it comes from is soul-killing. I mean because you can not share the highs and the lows of your life that you would share with someone if you were that close, and that trusting and bonding with them. And I know as a woman—again kind of also being in a lot of combat-related kind of things—the Air Force actually does that, we have some of that. . . . I think the best compliment I ever got was from one of my sergeants who said you know, “I would follow you, ma’am into war.” And that told me that no matter what happened beyond the job was that I had made that place where they felt that they were comfortable to go with me. And . . . as I kind of keep looking at the policy, I talk to a lot of people. I spent a lot of time mentoring, being there, helping people connect, because that is what happened to me. When I came in within my first years of service those TI’s I was talking about had their gaydar go off too, and they took me to a gay bar—said I could leave, it was okay, if I didn’t like it there. But I had already been to the bar and I knew where it was and we had a good time. But they set up a meeting with about 10 other women, some retired, some of them still active-duty, high-ranking officers who sat down, and we spent an evening drinking beers and they told me how to survive in the military. They said this is what you need to do, this is how you need to do it. And I was much more out than them. They were a little afraid of me because I was involved in community

centers, and I was able to be out and visible in the community. But it is a matter of luck. I mean the only reason that I made through was because I was willing to stand up and stare into the eye of those investigators and say, I have a whole legal team back here who is ready to jump on if you are not willing to ask me those questions in writing. And we'll send you the answers, then we are going to go around in this and its going to get out and it is going to be public. But that was because they blinked. If they hadn't have blinked I would be sitting here as an officer who had gotten kicked out not retired.

**MODERATOR:** Colonel, do you want to add anything? I will come back to you Sharon.

**COL. GRETHE CAMMERMEYER:** Well, I think, the tragedy is, listening to all of our stories one way or another and our life experiences, is how can we recommend to anyone that they join the military? How can we say, "Put yourself in harm's way both against an enemy outside of the United States, as well as inside of the United States." And that's a tragedy. That is a tragedy because the very thing that we are trying to promote is the old cliché of "be all that you can be," and the fact that in the military you have these marvelous opportunities to excel in ways because of the challenges that the military offers and at the same time of being pushed beyond sort of your comfort zone. But when you put yourself in harm's way within the organization in which you are serving and the country that you are serving, that is a tragedy. And I think that no matter how we talk about it, from the perspective of "Don't Ask Don't Tell" as an existing law, it's also of looking at it from the other perspective from that of what are we doing to the heterosexual world, to allow them to persist in their homophobic behavior and tolerate the abuse of gay, lesbian, and bisexual service members? And nothing changes if we allow the status quo to remain. The only way that this policy will be overturned is as we continue the discussions about not just the impact on gay and lesbians service members, but the impact of it on the rest of the military. . . . Some years ago Corey Johnson was a captain of a football team and a quarterback, and after just not being able to tolerate it anymore he came out to his team members. Now, he's the quarterback—[his team has] a choice, let's get rid of the quarterback. And that is what we are doing in the military, we are getting rid of the quarterbacks and having these teams, these units that become totally without that single individual or group of individuals just because of a trait that has no bearing on their ability to perform. And that's outrageous. We should be outraged as taxpayers, if nothing else. I mean, even if nothing else, that we are losing monies, losing the humanity. And

the individuals—and we heard about it recently with the elimination of the linguists—it’s as though we don’t need linguists now? I mean, we need it all the way up the chain of command—also to be able to speak English, but that being an aside—that we also need it to be able to continue our war on terrorism, and to be able to understand what they are saying if nothing else. But, it’s like, where is the outrage? And I think that’s the frustrating part. . . . But it is the majority within the population and within the military that needs to say, “You know, we are losing good people. Let’s really look at this policy or this law and see about being able to retain people regardless of personal characteristics, and rather keep them based on their ability to serve this country.”

**MODERATOR:** Sharon, you had something you wanted to add.

**SHARON ALEXANDER:** I did want to add, back to your original question, which was why aren’t Col. Cammermeyer and Maj. Baillie and Maj. Cleghorn shining examples of “Look keep to yourself get through your time and retire and be done with it.” It sort of takes me back to 1993 when Col. Cammeremeyer was asked so poignantly by Senator Warner, “Why can’t you just keep quiet? Why is keeping quiet such a high cost for you to pay in order to be able to serve?” And I think that that question—I mean anybody who has served understands why being quiet, keeping that part of yourself quiet is such a difficult thing. When I was commissioned in 1993, I didn’t just become an officer, I brought my family into the Army, you know? I had an Army spouse. I was also an Army spouse myself, as I was married to a service member. When my husband would deploy, whether it was on training or when he went to Bosnia, for example, there was an entire cadre of people back there that I was a part of as an Army wife, that all the children and all the wives were a part of, to take care of each other, to look after each other, you join a family. And that is not just because the Army is a bunch of nice people—though there are a lot of nice people in the Army—it’s because you need to have the peace of mind knowing that everything is taken care of back home while you are trying to focus on deployment, while you are trying to focus on your job. Imagine having an entire life—a family, a partner, children—and not having access to any of those resources when you deploy, or when something is going on. Imagine your kid comes home sick, from work, and you can’t even really accept the phone call at your office in case your first sergeant picks it up and then the next thing you know you are outed. I mean it is there is not a lot of distinction between home life and work life, many times when you are in the military it’s just not possible because of the hours you work, and because of the culture of the military, which brings your family with

you. If you have to, in order to keep quiet, to not let on who you are hide an entire part of your life that is your family, should you be lucky enough to have one, it is incredibly distracting, it's incredibly difficult to have to worry about those sorts of things and try to work, too. Military work is not easy work, and part of the deal is you know that you are going to be able to take care of the family, there is a support network there. Imagine the stress of not having that support network and, in fact, having to actively hide the fact that you have people in your family to look after.

**MODERATOR:** Sharra, . . . one of the reasons we asked you to join this table, as I said at the beginning, was that there are service members who cannot be here, who cannot talk about what it is like to currently live under the policy. So I just wondered if you wanted to add anything about that aspect to this discussion.

**SHARRA GREER:** Yes, and I am also going to take the liberty to touch up on other things other panelists have said. And I think and this really goes to what Jeff and Sharon were saying that on the ground there is a little bit of progress in terms of we have people who contact us who are out to their friends and their unit, not everybody, but their friends in their unit, so the heterosexual friends that they have, who they are out to, know that they are gay know that they are good soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines—and they don't care. There have been some small studies done of officers, enlisted people in the Navy. A significant percentage of them know someone gay in the military, and don't really care. We have had experiences where service members have been outed, where the commands have decided because this is a soldier, sailor, or airman they respect, that they will keep them and they will retain them. It is just that these are the stories we can never publicize, because we can't jeopardize their careers, because while this command looked the other way, because they respected the service of the individual, it is a matter of luck. If they were in a different command, if they were in a different unit, if somebody else found out, their careers could be ended, and it leaves them in this enormously precarious position, where, in one unit, life is fine, in the next unit, it's not. And they live with the constant fear of being outed. And if they are, the chances that they will be separated are pretty high. But I do hope that, since more and more service members are knowing gay service members, heterosexual service members know that there are gay service members, and respect them. That will hopefully help to change the culture, because, as we know, there are gay service members, and the world doesn't end, and they are not scary, and they are not grabbing each other in the shower. It's not scary. I think that

gay soldiers and lesbians soldiers are only scary in the abstract, and not when you know them and work with them and respect them. Unfortunately, it is such a limited thing because it is still such a precarious thing to be out to anybody within the military, and we see that with the discharge numbers. But I have to acknowledge that the number of gays and lesbians serving in the military is so much larger than the number of gays and lesbians being discharged. It's been around a thousand service members a year—dropped a little bit as we went into Afghanistan—that have been discharged under the policy. Estimates are that there are tens of thousands of gay, lesbian, and bisexual service members in the military. The Urban Institute recently reported that there are over one million gay and lesbian veterans that have served this country. So this is not a small population of people. So there is this much larger group that is out there, serving in silence, and living with “Is this going to be the unit that I end up being separated from, because somebody finds out that I am gay?” Or if they are not kicked out—and one of the things we see quite often is people's careers end early, or they decide to leave early and not pursue a military career because they find it too difficult to continue to serve under the circumstances where they are forced to be in the closet, and that's very typical, and even in circumstances where commands are willing to allow the service member to continue to serve—often times they will, in essence, suggest that this be their last term of enlistment that they not continue their military career.

And I wanted to tell one story just because it was so poignant to me and I think describes this experience—and I have to be very very general . . . to protect the service members—but it was a circumstance where one service member had been in the military for 23 years, his partner of several years had been in the military for 12 years. The partner, who had been in for 12 years, was in a very prestigious Special Ops position, was shooting through the ranks, was top-walks on all of his recommendations and evaluations. And the service member who had been in for 12 years made the mistake one day of leaving a voicemail message on his partner's work phone where he said, “I love you, I will see you tonight.” And this was his partner's private voicemail at work. The partner's supervisor broke into the 23-year service member's voicemail, listened to the voicemail, and instantly began separation procedures against both of them. And that's how precarious it is. Now we were able to save the 23-year service member's retirement—he, of course, had to retire immediately. They were trying to take away his retirement. Then they tried to reduce—give him retirement of a lesser



rank—and it took a great deal to make sure he retired an appropriate rank. And the superstar 12-year service member, his command decided, “Well, we are not going to actually kick you out, but your term of enlistment is up in about six months, and we are going to take you out of your unit and make you be a teacher, and then when the six months is up, you’re not gonna reenlist.” And that’s the life of being a service member. And these are people who did serve honorably, who had great careers, who spent a lifetime trying to hide and be under the rules, and that one mistake on that one voicemail ended their careers. And that’s tragic. And that’s happening all of the time. And those are not the stories that come out in the discharge numbers. Those are not the stories that are reflected in the media. Those are the stories of people who, eventually, their luck ran out, and that’s really, I think, part of the harm. I think part of the harm is, too, we are losing these people. These were great service members who were recognized by their peers as fabulous service members. I mean, it is the Arabic linguists, the doctors, the pilots, the marine drill instructors—these are the people we are losing from our military because of this law. And I think it is a harm not just to the service members. The harm to the service members is just devastating. But there is a harm to our nation and a harm to our military.

**DR. WALTER HEIMER:** . . . You know, every American should have the right to serve this country free and unencumbered by demeaning restrictions, and, in that sense, the famous case before the Supreme Court desegregating American schools was established to some degree by social psychologists who said that you can’t have separate and equal. You can’t have a healthy corps, and I, here, speak of mental health issues as a psychologist—you can’t have people serving under the conditions described around this roundtable today, which are horrendous, which can only lead to all kinds of mental disturbances and pressures and disabilities. And that type of legal approach, I suggest, to those people in touch with Washington—which I am not at this point—or who have political clout, that type of mental-health/legal approach, could ultimately, if taken properly to the higher levels, could ultimately force the military to do with sexual orientation what they so reluctantly did with racial integration.

**MODERATOR:** Well, can I use that point to jump off and ask people, I am going to ask everyone to make one final comment. And I am going to start with Michelle, as coming from a country where there is no longer a ban, and I just want to get your reaction to what is going on here, or what you see, if you think there is something problematic about American policy, what you think is the most problematic thing . . . and I

will go back to this end of the table and move forward and ask everyone to make their own comment in a similar fashion.

**FORMER LT. MICHELLE DOUGLAS:** Yes, you know, I guess it is just lost opportunity, and the kind of real sadness about this, and I am listening to that story that Sharra just told, and, I mean, it's really incredible, and the Canadian military has ended its ban officially in 1992, so we have been about 11 years without a policy now, and it's been a really good thing. Ending discrimination by policy is the kick-start to a huge cultural change in the military that says it's not okay to discriminate against gays and lesbians. The order goes out and it changes lives in very real ways immediately. People don't have to fear what I think Pat talked about, you know, the knock on the door, "Am I going to be interrogated today?" Ending the discrimination by policy is an enormous thing, and in the 11 years now that we have not had such a policy, people have gotten on with it, it's not the most topical thing in the military, it wasn't even 3 weeks after, you couldn't find an article in the paper about it in Canada. And now we talk about things like making sure that serving gay and lesbian members can have full benefits for their married same-sex partners, I mean, it is incredible. And I just think that's why I say "lost opportunity," where I feel like we are just dealing with other issues that are kind of the nuanced points. So . . . it's at once discouraging, but it is something that we feel, at least activists in Canada feel, a real responsibility to participating in this debate, to talk about how harmful this policy is, when we ourselves can say nothing happened, the predictions—"the sky will fall"—this simply didn't happen. And their discomfort with gay or lesbian service members isn't enough to sustain discriminatory policy. . . .

**MODERATOR:** So let me come back to Sharon . . . what you think that you would like to leave people with about the policy?

**SHARON ALEXANDER:** I just want to leave people with this idea: That it is the "Don't Ask Don't Tell" policy itself that is the greatest barrier to service members' accepting gay and lesbian service members. It's not that big a deal. Heterosexual service members are going to be perfectly capable of accepting this. The single biggest reason they are having a hard time, some of them, accepting this right now is that they don't know gay and lesbian service members, they don't have a face on this. They know that there is this "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy that says it's wrong. Well if DoD says it's wrong, it must be wrong. Increasingly, as Jeff and Sharra, have pointed out, people are coming out quietly, carefully, and that is helping to change the tide, and helping people to understand that they're going to be able to serve, and serve

well, with lesbian and gay service members. Eliminating the ban is going to do the rest of the job. It's a red herring. It's not going to be an issue, I truly believe that. There are no finer people in this world than the members of our U.S. Armed Forces, and I have served with some of the best people I have ever known. They are not bigots. They have an idea, they have a policy, they know the rule. And that is how they respond, . . . they play by the rules. The rule says you can't be gay—people don't necessarily question that. Eliminate the ban and you are going to see a lot of this antigay sentiment washing away fairly quickly. The other thing that I wanted to do, because so many service members don't take that risk of sharing with any of their colleagues that they are gay, and for very good reasons, because they can lose their careers, it is often easier for [LGBT] veterans to get out there and tell their stories. We haven't mentioned on the panel, but I want folks to know so that they can write this down, there is a project called the Documenting Courage Project that is co-sponsored by the Human Rights Campaign, American Veterans for Equal Rights, and the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network. It can be found on [www.hrc.org](http://www.hrc.org). at the bottom of the homepage there is an American flag, if you click on there you can read the stories of people who have served, and who are finished serving now, so they can tell their stories safely. You will be stunned at the level of courage, the level of commitment, the level of professionalism you will see in the people highlighted in that project. So if you want to know what gay service members look like and you haven't seen enough today, go to HRC's website. It's a fantastic resource for helping people understand that you can serve as a lesbian or gay American.

**MAJ. PATRICIA BAILLIE:** And I think whether the policy is there or not, the military is still a viable economic option for people. I mean where we are in this country, if you have an opportunity to get three squares, a place to sleep, a career, and education, you are going to go into that situation no matter what harm you get put into, because it is a good option. This policy and the administrative concepts of GLBTs in the military are probably the biggest barriers we have to overcome, because, yes, I agree, as soon as you drop the policy, as soon as you say the commands are not going to accept violence, then it is going to start changing. My concern is that at some point—because I believe that just like the sodomy law fell, that this law and this policy will fall, because we can't look at other militaries around the world doing it, the numbers are coming out, we are getting statistics saying that it works, it happens, we can do this—is that we will suddenly think that we have reached Nirvana and everything is fine, and gay members come out and there is

not protection for them, because those attitudes are not going to change, as long as the commanders give their tacit approval that these kind of behaviors, to harass either physically, emotionally, or just talking around the water cooler, is acceptable behavior. So we have to continue to make sure that we stay vigilant once the policy falls, because I am going to say that it is going to be that way, because it will fall, that we have to make sure we protect those individuals and we continue to give voice and tell our stories.

**COL. GRETHE CAMMERMEYER:** Another aspect of it, I think, is what is happening in society as a whole. Sometimes the military gets blamed for changing a policy and being a social experiment. Sometimes it also lags behind, which it certainly has in this regard, the treatment of gay and lesbian service members, and allowing them to serve, without a fear of reprisal should their sexual orientation be known. But part of, I think, the social changes that will take place are also as we see on television, more and more gay characters, more and more individuals that are coming out at a younger and younger time, that the newer, the younger generations are also ones that work and play and go to school with gays and lesbians at a much earlier age than they did when we were growing up and coming to our own realization, and I don't think that they are going to tolerate it, tolerate the discrimination in the same way. And that it is through us being out there as spokespeople, lobbying, working with our congressional representatives to change the policies, having legal assistance and making those cases for overturning the ban eventually that will also make a difference. And as I mentioned last night, part of what we can do as gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered service members is be in those uncomfortable places. If we were in an uncomfortable place to talk about this issue it is probably where we can make the biggest difference. And for us to continue to speak out on behalf of those who can't speak for themselves will be the greatest gift we can give to the next generation.

**JEFF CLEGHORN:** Military service is a noble calling, and I am very proud to have had the opportunity to serve for several years, and what I think is telling today is that young gay and lesbian Americans continue to enlist in the Armed Forces, as we always have, despite knowing the extra hardships that they will have to face. They are willing to make the sacrifice. They are willing to be deployed overseas for prolonged periods of time, and to be away from friends and families, and perhaps put themselves in harm's way, and sometimes shed their blood on the battlefields. But they are also willing to make the extra sacrifice of keeping this terribly important part of their lives secret, and I think

that just goes to the patriotism and the courage of so many tens of thousands of gay and lesbian service members today. They are there, they are serving, they are doing their jobs, and they are doing it quietly, and I think that we all owe a debt of gratitude to them, and I think military leaders, if they were honest, would acknowledge that

**SHARRA GREER:** . . . “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” is a unique statute. It is a federal law that says you shall be separated from the military if you state that you are gay lesbian or bisexual. I would hope that we, as a country, are embarrassed by that. I would hope that having a law a federal law—that we are all Americans, that this is a statute that our Congress-people have voted for and our President signed—that we would be embarrassed by that, and that we would see that that is such a huge barrier for all gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered individuals, to have that statute on the books. And that it is part of a larger movement to end discrimination. And the progress that we have made in ending other types of discrimination has been significant. It is not perfect but we have made progress. But this statute is such an impediment, in so many ways, toward further progress in ending discrimination in the United States from my perspective, that I would hope that people would be outraged. And I hope that people would see that, regardless of your thoughts about the military. And I am, you know, not a service member but the child of a Vietnam veteran and very proud of my father’s service, and my work, my part at SLDN on behalf of the veterans community. But regardless of your own opinions about the military, acknowledge that having this there is such a detriment to our larger movement towards a society that does not tolerate discrimination, and to acknowledge—this point had been raised a little bit—but the military is the nation’s largest provider of educational benefits, it is the nation’s largest single-entity employer. We have closed the doors to all of that opportunity, we have—unless gay, lesbian, and bisexual service members are willing to pay that extra price. You have to give more, you have to not only be willing to die for your country, you must give that extra bit more. And that’s just fundamentally wrong and unfair. And I do think that not only is it shameful for our country but it does hurt our military. We are losing some of the best and brightest people who could be there in our military and they are not because of the statute. And I am hopeful that that will change, but I am also hopeful that people start to think and talk about the damage caused by “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell.” . . . .

**PROFESSOR JAY HATHEWAY:** I would like you to think along perhaps a macro-level, whose interest does a policy like this serve? The policy, of course, has negative impact, and perhaps one day it

will be changed. But in my opinion the policy actually is part of a much broader ideological position that the United States has taken, at least from perhaps Members of Congress, the White House, even the courts. Now “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell, was only the recent reinvention of an antigay sensibility in the Armed Forces, and I won’t go through the history, for example, the McCarthy period, but there was a time there where McCarthy and his people would call gays in the service part of what was called the homintern—Homosexual International—and I see a head-shaking, this is not exactly a secret. It seems to me that the antigay—and you can use other anti’s if you will—but I can only address the antigay/lesbian, is caught up in the notion of what power means in America. What does it mean to be a powerful state? What does it mean to be a powerful empire? Now I think there were many personal reasons why people may not like gays and lesbians, and homophobia is clearly one of these issues to be sure but power has a lot to do with it. So also does the issue of recruitment—could you imagine what Ma and Pa would have said 50 years ago if Son and Daughter were going into an Armed Forces full of fags? And this is the point that it want to make, is that the United States has patrolled the world since World War II,—during the Cold War, post-Cold War, and now we are in a War on Terrorism. When I was in the Armed Forces, I was Battalion S2, and got into arguments with generals and others who would say “Who wants to have the image of the United States as limp-wristed fags?” Now this may not seem like it is going to have much of an impact directly, but when you are raising war propaganda against the enemy, you want to present the image of a hardened soldier, not what some others may feel if homosexuality. . . . American could be conceived as a laughing stock. . . I grew up in the Middle East. I was fortunate, I grew up in Persia, my father was an oil man. I got to know Iraqis, I got to know Persians, I got to know Saudis, and in spite of what the popular notion is, it is a death penalty if you are gay in the Middle East. Islam isn’t too kind, and just recently in Egypt, we had a number of people who were hauled up, if you will, on Islamic charges. And one of the arguments that I am projecting is that the United States, even though it may not be at war with Islam, currently nevertheless has this propaganda image it must give forward, that if we have troops overseas protecting America and they are perceived by the Mujadeen and Al-Quaeda as being fairies, I think that is going to have a negative impact on how American power is received overseas. So I will leave you with this one final conclusion that while I accept the majority of comments being made here, I never want you to lose sight of the fact that this is, I believe, a fundamentally

ideological issue that has to deal with power, it has to do with projection of power and that also is on the personal level dealing with personal powers between commanders, and their men, between males and female, and if you begin to dissect it, I think you will find where all these various things begin to come together in a way that I believe anyway will answers the question, whose interests are being served by this policy?

**LT. KEITH TAYLOR:** You stir me. Col. Cammeremeyer said much the same thing. This is much more than an impact on the gays themselves. It's the impact on the country it is the impact on the world. And the world that we live in—and we are not handling it well apparently, because we don't even know what we're doing. The most poignant example, the most recent one of them, kicking out nine aspiring linguists at a time when we had to have more linguists. I had read where the National Security Agency—and I only read this, it is not from personal experience, I don't want to upset people with my knowledge – but I read where they are processing 3 billion message per day, that is one per every 2 people on Earth, and the backlog of unread messages was tremendous at a time when we had to know if intelligence is going to work, it has got to work before something happens. And we kicked out nine people who could have alleviated that. Earlier—and probably one of the more ridiculous things I ever saw—was when senior chief petty officer Timothy McVeigh, he with an unfortunate name—was processed out for [an America Online] screen name. I think Sharra talked about someone who the proceedings started against her because of a phone message. In senior Chief McVeigh's case, he was processed out for a profile which he had let out erroneously, and then the Navy on this little tiny thread took a man who had been described by his Commanding Officer as “the best sailor I ever saw.” A man who served brilliantly for 17 years . . . . And the Navy started what Judge Stanely Sporkin later called a witch hunt. I mean, nobody in the military put any impediments to this, and it took a conservative federal judge to intervene and throw out the Navy's decision. But as I said, they don't seem to know what they are doing—at the same time they are trying to throw this brilliant sailor out, and he was almost ready to retire, but at the time they were trying to throw him, out the selection board chose him for Master Chief Petty Officer—in other words, they promoted him. On one hand they promoted him and on the other hand they were trying to throw him out of the same service, different office. I think we have to go back to what I wrote in *Navy Times*: We better study this, and I mentioned the study done by Aaron Belkin and Melissa Emser-Herbert. That is as far

as I know one of the few studies that really went into this in depth. We better look at it and find out what we are doing, so that we can use our policy, not just to affect the impact on gays, but to affect it on the nation and the world.

**DR. WALTER HEIMER:** I sit between Jay and Keith with different positions. I would like to look at a somewhat broad perspective. This thing is an American journey. America is a process of continuously expanding the availability of what our promise is, in the Declaration of Independence, and in the Constitution, and we have been, to some degree successful. And this is another part of the process going in that direction. I come from a background where we were locked up in a ghetto a century or two ago. I am very aware of this process. We should honor those gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and their heterosexual allies who do the battle on the front lines. I mean, that is a very important issue which was raised, and I do want to call out attention to this honor we owe them.

**MODERATOR:** Well I want to thank you all for coming. Col. Cammermeyer mentioned last night that when the [Congressional] hearings were held in 1993, a panel like this was put at the end of those hearings and not given much attention. And I know we can't match the level of Congressional attention here, but with the help of C-Span and people like this audience, hopefully we have done a little bit to reverse that by bringing this panel up front. So I want to thank you all for coming. And please, the audience, thank them for coming as well. . . .