

CSSMM CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SEXUAL MINORITIES IN THE MILITARY

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA STUDY FINDS GAYS DO NOT UNDERMINE AUSTRALIAN MILITARY

A new University of California study of gays and lesbians in the Australian military has found that after Australia's 1992 decision to allow homosexuals to serve openly in its armed forces, military performance did not decline. Furthermore, evidence suggests that lifting the ban has contributed to improvements in the working environment. The release of the study was covered by Reuters and CBS News radio as well as four major daily newspapers in Australia.

Prior to the lifting of the ban, military leaders argued that allowing homosexuals to serve openly would jeopardize recruitment, troop cohesion, and combat effectiveness while also spreading AIDS and encouraging predatory behavior.

A copy of the study was sent to the Pentagon's Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs and the study is available on the world wide web at www.gaymilitary.ucsb.edu. This peer-reviewed study reflects an exhaustive inventory of research including in-depth interviews with 18 soldiers, academics, and Ministry representatives as well as reviews of all published

material on the topic. Its title is *The Effects of Including Gay and Lesbian Soldiers in the Australian Defense Forces: Appraising the Evidence*.

Key findings are as follows: First, senior officials, commanders, and military scholars within the Australian Defense Forces consistently appraise the lifting of the ban as a successful policy change that has contributed to greater equity and effective working relationships within the ranks. Gay soldiers and commanders have successfully served in recent active deployments in East Timor. Second, senior officials, commanders and scholars report that there has been no overall pattern of disruption to the military. However, some individual units have reported disruptions that were resolved successfully through normal management procedures. Third, recruitment and retention rates have not suffered as a result of the policy change. As Commodore R. W. Gates of the Royal Australian Navy states in the report, "There was no great peak...where people walked out, and there was no great dip in recruiting. It really was a non-event."

CONFERENCE ON DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL

A conference on Don't Ask, Don't Tell will be held on December 9, 2000 in San Francisco. Co-sponsored by the Center and the Commonwealth Club of California, the conference will feature four scholarly debates on the following topics: (1) Does the gay ban preserve soldiers' privacy? (2) Does the gay ban preserve unit cohesion? (3) Are foreign military experiences relevant to the U.S. case? (4) What does the gay ban cost? In addition, the event will include a public town meeting involving members of foreign militaries and Representative Steve May. The conference is being funded by the University of California, the R. Gwin Follis Foundation, the Palm foundation, and private donors.

Participants in the conference will include Michelle Benecke of the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, Professor Christopher Dandeker of Kings College London, Professor Michael C. Desch of the University of Kentucky, Paul Gade of the Army Research Institute, Professor Timothy J. Haggerty of Middle Tennessee State University, Professor Melissa S. Embser-Herbert of Hamline University, Professor Elizabeth Kier of the University of Washington, Honorable Lawrence J. Korb of the Council on Foreign Relations, Professor Rob MacCoun of the University of California, Berkeley, Professor Diane H. Mazur of the University of California, Hastings, Professor Laura Miller of the University of California, Los Angeles. Professor Charles Moskos of Northwestern University, C. Dixon Osburn of the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, Professors David Segal and Mady Segal of the University of Maryland, and Professor John Allen Williams of Loyola University Chicago.



Marc Wolf, Aaron Belkin, Zoe Dunning, and Kate Dyer

CENTER ORGANIZES PANEL DISCUSSION

Marc Wolf, Aaron Belkin, Zoe Dunning, and Kate Dyer participated in a panel discussion following the August 6, 2000 performance of the play *Another American: Asking and Telling* at the New Conservatory Theatre Center in San Francisco. The play, written and performed by Marc Wolf, is based on transcripts of interviews that Wolf conducted over a three year period with several hundred veterans. Wolf will perform his play at UC Santa Barbara in the Winter of 2001. Zoe Dunning is a board member of the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network and Kate Dyer played an instrumental role in obtaining an internal Pentagon study known as the PERSEREC report that showed that gay and lesbian soldiers do not undermine military performance.

DEVELOPMENT NEWS (FALL, 2000)

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In addition the Center is very grateful to **Arthur Collingsworth** for his gift of \$1,000 and ongoing support and to **Dr. James S. Eaton**, **Bob Fulghum**, and **Bob Witeck** for their generous help.

Director: Aaron Belkin
Research Assistant: Andrea Ebreck
Web Page Designer: Jeff Cerie
Newsletter Designer: Karla Milosevich

The Center for the Study of Sexual Minorities is a formal research unit of the University of California, Santa Barbara.

You can reach the Center at (805) 893-5664;
(805) 893-3309 (fax); belkin@sscf.ucsb.edu;
or <http://www.gaymilitary.ucsb.edu>.

WEB SITE ON SEXUALITY AND THE MILITARY

Visit the Center's web page at:

WWW.GAYMILITARY.UCSB.EDU

Improvements and additions to the site will be forthcoming throughout the year. Designed by Stanford Ph.D. Jeff Cerie, the web page includes information on the CSSMM as well as resources for scholars and veterans.

FELLOWSHIPS

The Center has awarded a research fellowship to Dr. Aeyal M. Gross of the Tel-Aviv University Faculty of Law to support his study on gays in the military in comparative and international law. Following a recent decision of the European Court of Human Rights on the British gay ban, Gross is comparing legal aspects of the debates in the U.S., Israel, and Europe.

Scholars who wish to apply a fellowship should note that this is rolling program with no deadline. Sexuality and the armed forces can be defined broadly for the purposes of the fellowship. Hence, projects that address the topic from historical, literary, political, cultural, and other perspectives are invited and welcomed. One-page proposals can be submitted on-line through the Center's web site at www.gaymilitary.ucsb.edu.

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
SANTA BARBARA, CA 93106-9420