

CSSMM CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SEXUAL MINORITIES IN THE MILITARY

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA

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KEY SUPPORTERS OF MILITARY'S GAY BAN HAVE CHANGED THEIR POSITION

Several military and academic figures who were influential in the debate leading to the current ban on openly gay soldiers in the U.S. military recently reversed or softened their position on the matter. In light of mounting new evidence suggesting that lifting a gay ban does not undermine combat performance, scholars told CSSMM researchers that they now oppose the ban entirely, or believe it could be eliminated without harming the military.

Among the scholars who initially favored a ban on openly gay soldiers in the U.S. was Christopher Dandeker, Head of the Department of War Studies and Professor of Military Sociology at Kings College London. As recently as 1999, Dandeker wrote in the journal, *International Security*, that by allowing soldiers to serve openly, "cohesion and military effectiveness would be negatively affected." He called for deferring the open integration of gays in the services "until circumstances are more propitious."

But in comments offered this winter at the CSSMM's conference on gays in foreign militaries, Dandeker stated that after the British military successfully lifted its gay ban, his thinking had shifted "in the light of evidence and argument and discussion." In follow-up conversations, he told CSSMM researchers that "I think I underestimated the extent to which integration can proceed," though he added that he remained cautious about how quickly the process could proceed in the U.S.

Some people who long believed lifting the gay ban would disrupt the military recently changed their thinking. Laura Miller, Assistant Professor of Sociology at UCLA who has conducted research on the opinions of military personnel, had expressed concern that there might be significant disruptions if the ban were lifted. But after participating in the CSSMM's conference on foreign militaries that ended their bans, she believes the problems in the U.S. might not be prohibitive. "After the conference," she says, "I was

MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE CENTER'S WORK

The Center's work has been covered recently by newspapers throughout the United States including the *Providence Journal*, *Detroit News*, and *Denver Post*. You can see some of this coverage in the "Press room" section of our web page: www.gaymilitary.ucsb.edu.

VETERANS HONOR CSSMM

The Center is very proud to have been selected as a recipient of an annual award from the Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Veterans of America, a national organization with chapters located throughout the United States. During a presentation ceremony at its annual convention in Denver on March 31, GLBVA National President James Donovan said that "In just a few short years, the Center for the Study of Sexual Minorities in the Military has helped catapult the issue of gays in the military into the academic spotlight and has honored America's veterans and its military personnel."



Professor Christopher Dandeker is one of several experts who recently reversed or softened previous opposition to gays in the military.

persuaded that even for those who would come out in an unsupportive environment, there probably wouldn't be quite the level of open hostility I had thought."

Even the chief academic architect of "don't ask, don't tell," Northwestern University military sociologist Charles Moskos, distanced himself from the central rationale behind "don't ask, don't tell": the alleged threat of gays and lesbians to unit cohesion. In a Fall 2000 interview with *Lingua Franca* magazine, he dismissed the importance of unit cohesion, saying "I don't care about that." Although Moskos continues to believe that allowing gays to serve openly would compromise heterosexual privacy in the showers, his recent remarks seem to indicate a softening in his earlier belief that lifting the ban would jeopardize unit cohesion.

CSSMM TO RELEASE FOUR NEW STUDIES

Currently, the CSSMM research staff is working on four new studies that we plan to release over the next year. First, we are studying the San Diego police department to determine if its decision to lift its gay ban has undermined organizational performance. Next, we are preparing the first-ever study of the financial cost of the gay ban that will include not only the cost of lost training but also the cost of legal investigations.

Third, we are working on a study of the privacy rationale, the argument that lifting the gay ban would undermine heterosexual privacy in the shower. The thesis of that study is that lifting the ban will have no implications for privacy because, as was the case in foreign militaries that lifted their bans, very few additional service members will reveal their sexual orientation after the U.S. ban is lifted. Finally, we are working on an analysis of the U.S. military's long history of successfully integrating numerous racial, ethnic, and religious groups that displayed intense hostility to one another in the civilian world.

CENTER OFFERS THREE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS

In the past several months, CSSMM has offered fellowships to the following three scholars: Professor Carmen Poulin of the Department of Psychology at the University of New Brunswick received a grant for her project on "Closeted Military Wives: The Untold Story of Partners of Lesbians in the Canadian Military." Dr. Poulin's study investigates the impact of military regulations on the lives of the lesbian partners of service members.

Stacy E. Ross, a graduate student in the Department of History at the University of Iowa, received a fellowship for her study on "Breaking the Silence of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell.'" Her research examines how sexual difference was constructed in the Congressional Armed Services Committee hearings immediately prior to the formulation of the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy.

Jacque Harvey, an undergraduate at the University of New Brunswick, received a grant for her study on "Developing a Positive Sexual Identity as a Gay Woman in the Canadian Forces: An Oxymoron?" Harvey interviewed ten gay women in the Canadian military to study whether and how they developed positive self-images.



Professor Elizabeth Hillman from Rutgers Law School addressed an audience of about 75 students and community members at UCSB on May 1. In her talk, titled "Loathsome Crimes and Lesbian Ringleaders: Homosexuality at Court-Martial During the Cold War", Hillman argued that in the 1950's and 1960's, military judges often allowed prosecutors to use illegally-obtained evidence against homosexual defendants.

DEVELOPMENT NEWS

The Center is very grateful to the individuals and foundations that have contributed to our fiscal stability over the past several months. We are very thankful to the **Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund** for its generous grant of \$15,000, and to the **Lesbian Equity Foundation of Silicon Valley** and **Kathy Levinson** for their generous grant of \$5,000. In addition, we are very grateful for the gift of \$2,500 from **Honorable Coit Blacker** and the gift of \$1,500 from **David Jenks**. We are very grateful for the \$1,000 each we received **in memory of Thomas G. Martin**, and from **Clay Doherty, Paul Sliwka, and Dennis Winstead**. And we offer special thanks to **Paul Sliwka** for generously opening his Washington, DC home and for organizing a successful fundraising event for the Center.

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

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