



# THE MICHAEL D. PALM CENTER

BLUEPRINTS FOR SOUND PUBLIC POLICY

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## DR. JEANNE SCHEPER TO SERVE AS RESEARCH DIRECTOR

The Palm Center welcomes its first full-time staff person this July, with Dr. Jeanne Scheper as Research Director. The Research Director will coordinate research activities of the Center's affiliated scholars, including conceiving of new studies, identifying authors, and working with scholars throughout the design, editing, and publication process. In addition, Dr. Scheper will work closely with the Director and Assistant Director to develop and implement the Palm Center vision of using rigorous social science to inform public discussions of controversial social issues.

Dr. Scheper has a strong interdisciplinary background. In addition to a PhD in English, she holds an interdisciplinary certificate in women's studies, and a certificate from Cornell University's School of Criticism and Theory. She has been a visiting researcher at the Berkley Research Institute on Sexuality, taught Women's Studies at the University of Houston, and was Managing Editor at *Camera Obscura*, a distinguished journal. Dr. Scheper will be joining Women's Studies at UCSB as an affiliated research scholar.

## PALM CENTER STUDY FINDS INCREASE IN MORAL WAIVERS

The number of convicted felons who enlisted in the U.S. military almost doubled in the past three years, rising from 824 felons in fiscal year 2004 to 1,605 in fiscal year 2006, according to a new study commissioned by the Palm Center. Titled "Balancing Your Strengths against Your Felonies: Considerations for Military Recruitment of Ex-Offenders," the study is forthcoming in the *University of Miami Law Review* and was written and researched by Michael Boucai. An advance copy was provided to the *Associated Press* and the *New York Times*, both of which published stories based on the data. The Palm Center obtained data for the study from the Pentagon via Freedom of Information Act requests as well assistance from Congressman Marty Meehan. The data indicate that from 2003 through 2006, the military allowed 4,230 convicted felons to enlist under the "moral waivers" program, which enables otherwise unqualified candidates to serve. In addition, 43,977 individuals convicted of serious misdemeanors such as assault were permitted to enlist under the moral waivers program during that period, as were 58,561 illegal drug abusers. In the Army, allowable offenses include making terrorist threats, murder, and kidnapping. In the study, Boucai argues that a more forthright, well-informed, and humane public engagement with the question of ex-offender enlistment could help promote the development of policies and programs for more effectively integrating ex-offenders into the Armed Forces. According to Boucai, "The problem is not that the Armed Forces are letting in ex-offenders--most of these recruits become fine service members, and military service often has a strong rehabilitative effect. The real problem is that, increasingly, the military fails to also recruit the best and the brightest."

## NEW POLL OF U.S. TROOPS RELEASED BY PALM CENTER

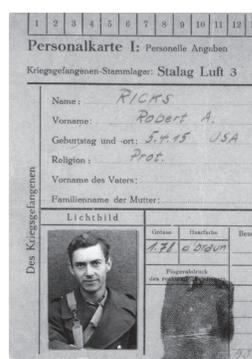
The Palm Center has written and commissioned a survey of 545 troops who served in Iraq and Afghanistan. The questionnaire was administered by Zogby Oct. 24-26, 2006. According to the survey results, nearly three-quarters (73%) say that they are personally comfortable interacting with gay and lesbian peers. Of those who say that they are uncomfortable around gays and lesbians, five percent say that they are "very uncomfortable" and fifteen percent say that they are "somewhat uncomfortable." Eight percent were unsure. Nearly one in four U.S. troops (23%) say they know for sure that someone in their unit is gay or lesbian, and of those 59% said they learned about the person's sexual orientation directly from the individual. More than half (55%) of the troops who know a gay peer said the presence of gays or lesbians in their unit is well known by others. According to the "don't ask, don't tell" policy, service members are not allowed to say that they are gay.

## GENERAL SHALIKASHVILI CALLS FOR THE END OF DADT

General John Shalikashvili, who served as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff from 1993 through 1997, published an op-ed in the *New York Times* on January 2, 2007 calling for the end of "don't ask, don't tell." According to Aaron Belkin, Director of the Palm Center, General Shalikashvili's op-ed reflects a broad shift in military attitudes towards gays and lesbians since the current policy was devised in 1993. "General Shalikashvili is the latest in a string of seasoned military leaders who have looked hard at the issue and determined it's time for change," Belkin said. The Palm Center will convene a study group of Generals and Admirals to look into the issue this year.

## NEW EXHIBIT ON GLBT MILITARY SERVICE OPEN IN SAN FRANCISCO

"To you who answered the call of your country and served in its Armed Forces," President Harry Truman wrote to Lt. Robert Ricks in 1945, "I extend the heartfelt thanks of a grateful nation." Ricks was an Air Force navigator who survived several months in Dachau as a prisoner of war, and he had certainly earned the nation's gratitude. The note from Truman was mailed to millions of American GIs at the end of World War II. Hundreds of thousands of them, like Ricks, were gay.



With *Out Ranks: GLBT Military Service from World War II to the Iraq War*, the GLBT Historical Society in San Francisco is honoring the historic service of veterans like Robert Ricks. This exhibit, the first in the country to focus on the history of gays in the military, will run from

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The Michael D. Palm Center is an official unit of the Institute for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Research at the University of California, Santa Barbara; [www.isber.ucsb.edu](http://www.isber.ucsb.edu). You can reach the Center at (805) 893-5664; (805) 893-3309 (fax); [belkin@polsci.ucsb.edu](mailto:belkin@polsci.ucsb.edu); or <http://www.palmcenter.org>

(cont. from front) June 14, 2007 to May 26, 2008. Along with support from the Palm Center, Out Ranks is made possible by funds from the California Council for the Humanities, the Bob Ross Foundation, the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, and Small Change.

Dr. Steve Estes, author of *Ask & Tell: Gay and Lesbian Veterans Speak Out*, is curating *Out Ranks* with assistance from several volunteers. Based on his own research as well as the pioneering work of Allan Bérubé, Randy Shilts, and others, Dr. Estes hopes “that this exhibit will give visitors an appreciation of the long history of gay and lesbian military service and a deeper understanding of the evolution of military policy on homosexuality.” For more information on the exhibit, go to [www.globthistory.org/](http://www.globthistory.org/)

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## FELLOWSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT NEWS

The Palm Center is proud to announce the following fellowships: **Dr. Chris Madsen** of the Canadian Forces College in Toronto, is writing a book titled *The Canadian Soldier and the Law*; **Monica Ayhens** of East Carolina University is writing a Master's Thesis on sodomy in the Royal Navy during the Napoleonic War; **John O'Donnell Rosales** is studying Loretta Janeta Velasquez, a Cuban born woman who fought in the Confederate Army; **Ann Marie Nicolosi** of the College of New Jersey is creating a syllabus which includes materials on gays in the military; **Dr. Joan K. F. Heggie** of the School of Social Science and Law at the University of Teesside is studying lesbians in the British Armed Forces since January 2000; **Emerald M. Archer** of the UCSB Political Science Department is doing research on women who become suicide bombers.

The Center is honored to have received the following gifts: \$55,272 from the **Wells Fargo Foundation**, \$50,000 from the **Gill Foundation**, \$40,000 from the **R. Gwin Follis Foundation**, \$25,000 from the **David Bohnett Foundation**, \$15,000 from **Henry van Ameringen**, \$10,000 from **Bruce Presley**, \$10,000 from an anonymous donor, \$5,000 from **Paul Boskind**, \$2,000 from **Jeff Cleghorn**, \$500 from the **Lewy Gay Values Fund of the Horizons Foundation**, and \$500 from **Steve B. Colman**.

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