

2011

An exploratory study of the perceptions of U.S. military veterans that have served since the 1993 enactment of "Don't ask don't tell" (DADT) about the impact of the recent repeal of DADT on veterans

Jamie Robert Wright

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarworks.smith.edu/theses>

---

#### Recommended Citation

Wright, Jamie Robert, "An exploratory study of the perceptions of U.S. military veterans that have served since the 1993 enactment of "Don't ask don't tell" (DADT) about the impact of the recent repeal of DADT on veterans" (2011). *Theses, Dissertations, and Projects*. Paper 1032.

This Masters Thesis has been accepted for inclusion in Theses, Dissertations, and Projects by an authorized administrator of Smith ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact [elanzi@smith.edu](mailto:elanzi@smith.edu).

Jamie R. Wright

An exploratory study of the perceptions of U.S. Military Veterans that have served since the 1993 enactment of “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell” (DADT) about the impact of the recent repeal of DADT on Veterans

## ABSTRACT

This study was undertaken to explore what U.S. military veterans that have served under the Don’t Ask Don’t Tell (DADT) policy since 1993 think the potential impact might be regarding the repeal of DADT on LGBT veterans’ willingness to disclose their sexual orientation.

An online survey was designed and administrated on the website SurveyMonkey.com asking questions about the following issues: 1) Do Veterans think that Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals (LGB) Veterans are willing to disclose their sexual orientation under DADT and after the repeal? 2) Do Veterans think that a LGB Veterans military branch and occupation will have an impact on their willingness to disclose their sexual orientation?

The findings in this study found a significant difference in the willingness of service members to disclose their sexual orientation to their other service members and their chain of command between those serving under the DADT policy and since the repeal of DADT. There was no significant difference between those serving in all male units and mixed gender units acceptance of LBG service members and LGB veterans willingness to disclose their sexual orientation. Additionally, LGB service members need to be accepted and supported by the military and military family support groups. These two major findings supported two of the hypotheses in this study.

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF U.S. MILITARY VETERANS  
THAT HAVE SERVED SINCE THE 1993 ENACTMENT OF “DON’T ASK DON’T TELL”  
(DADT) ABOUT THE IMPACT OF THE RECENT REPEAL OF DADT ON VETERANS.

A project based upon an independent investigation, submitted in  
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of  
Social Work.

Jamie R. Wright

Smith College School for Social Work  
Northampton, Massachusetts 01063  
2011

## **Acknowledgements**

This thesis is dedicated to all the Men and Women who have served and sacrificed in the United States Armed Forces.

I could not have finished this thesis or my Masters degree without the continued support of my family, friends and those that guided me along the way. Thank You!

## Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	iv
CHAPTER	
I INTRODUCTION .....	1
II LITERATURE REVIEW .....	3
III METHODOLOGY .....	14
IV FINDINGS .....	19
V DISCUSSION.....	25
REFERENCES .....	31
APPENDICES	
Appendix A: Human Subjects Committee Approval Letter .....	35
Appendix B: Survey Questions.....	36
Appendix C: Referral List.....	39
Appendix D: Consent Form .....	40
Appendix E: Recruitment letter/ Flyer .....	41
Appendix F: Figure 1: Differences Between Combat and Non-Combat Soldiers' .....	42
Appendix G: Figure 2: Soldiers' Perceptions of LGB soldiers' Willingness .....	43
Appendix H: Figure 3: Soldiers' Acceptance of LGB Family Support Groups .....	44
Appendix I: Figure 4: Soldiers' Perceptions of Military allowed LGB Partnerships .....	45

## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

President Obama and Congress are reviewing the laws and policies that govern who can serve in the United States Armed Forces based on an individual's sexual identity. The U.S. military culture has always resisted the acceptance of LBGTQF individuals.

Don't Ask Don't Tell (DADT) was enacted by the U.S. Congress in 1992 to prohibit U.S. military from activity discriminating against and barring the enlistment of LGBT veterans. The DADT policy was an improvement on the military's former total ban of LGBT service members from the ranks of military service because it allowed LGBT individuals to serve in the U.S. armed forces as long as they did not openly disclose their sexual orientation or commit non-heterosexual acts. The policy protected LGBT veterans and recruits from being "asked" by the military what their sexual orientation is and excluded LGBT veterans and recruits from "telling" the military or their fellow service members their sexual orientation. It allowed LGBT individuals to serve their country in secret while protecting heterosexual male privilege (FORSCOM Commander's Handbook 2006). In 2010, President Obama signed a bill repealing DADT and is implementing new policies for the U.S. military that allow LGB service members to serve openly for the first time in U.S. military history.

This exploratory study looks at what U.S. military veterans that have served under the DADT policy since 1993 think the potential impact might be regarding the repeal of DADT on LGBT veterans' willingness to disclose their sexual orientation. This study may help build

awareness around this issue and the current policy changes that will be monumental shifts in policy and culture within the U.S. military community.

While there is research about the impact of banning LGBT veterans from the military with total bans and the recent policies of DADT on LGBT veterans, there is a limited amount of knowledge about the willingness of LGBT Veteran's disclosure of their sexual orientation and what the impact of repealing DADT could be on the U.S. military community.

## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

#### Historical

Many articles and books review the history of gay and lesbians in the U.S. military. Since the U.S. military's inception, there has always been a gay and lesbian service member in the U.S. military. Since its conception, but their sexual orientation has always been a secret. From the revolutionary war until World War I (WWI) homosexuality was not a crime or a reason for exclusion from serving in the U.S. military. During WWI the act of sodomy was made an illegal act and became the main reason for most gay and lesbian service members being discharged from the military. Few were charged with the act of sodomy and few gay and lesbian were affected by the regulation. This meant that being homosexual did not exclude an individual from serving.

During World War II (WWII) American psychiatry determined that homosexuality was a mental illness (Sinclair, 2009). The classification of individuals with a non heterosexual orientation as mentally ill had a direct impact on LGBT individual's ability to service in the U.S. military. The U.S. military determined that individuals diagnosed with the mental illness of homosexuality were not fit for military service. This was the turning point in U.S. military history for gays and lesbians, where just being homosexual prevented one from joining the U.S. military. Not only were gay and lesbian individuals excluded from the service, enlisted members were discharged based on their mental health and sexual orientation. Up until the creation of the all volunteer military after the Vietnam War the policy of excluding homosexuals from military



service fluctuated in terms of enforcement depending on the nation's necessity for military personnel. In 1982 the U.S. military wrote Department of Defense (DOD) directive 1332.14 (1982) which clearly stated that gay and lesbian service members were to be excluded from military service based on their sexual orientation. The DOD's reasons for excluding homosexuals were the maintaining of good discipline, order, trust, unit cohesion, morality, recruitment, and retention (Sinclair, 2009, 071 -718).

### **Don't Ask Don't Tell (DADT)**

Congressional law 1993 103-160, SECTION 654, TITLE 10, otherwise known as Don't Ask Don't Tell (DADT) is an act governing the U.S. military policy that was passed into law by the United States congress and was signed by President William Clinton in 1993. The DADT law was viewed as a compromise between the United States military's history of total exclusion of gay and lesbian service members or passing policies that would allow gays and lesbians to openly serve. The DADT law made it illegal for the military to ask about sexual orientation during recruitment or at any time during an individual's enlistment. It allowed gay and lesbians to serve as long as they did not disclose their sexual orientation. The law authorizes the United States military to discharge an individual if they attempt to have the propensity to engage in, or have the intent of committing a homosexual act. The military is also authorized discharge of a service member if they attempt to or have the propensity to marry an individual of the same biological sex (Congressional law, 1993). The DOD currently enforces the DADT law with Directive number 1304.26 (E1.2.8 – E1.2.8.4.2) which governs the policies and procedures for all branches of the United States Armed Forces. The directive clearly states that an individual's sexual orientation is a private matter and cannot prevent an individual from military service. The directive also states clearly that any homosexual conduct or intent is grounds for barring entry

into the armed forces and is a clear reason for discharge of an individual for being unfit for military service (FORSCOM Commander's Handbook, 2006, Directive # 1304.26). The DADT law effectively made it legal for gays and lesbians to serve, but not with the same equality as their fellow heterosexual service members. Since 1994 the DADT law has been the policy of the U.S. military regarding the sexual orientation of service members.

### **Unit cohesion is the main reason cited to supporting DADT**

The military gives many reasons for supporting bans against allowing gays and lesbians to serve openly in the U.S. military. "The military starts with the premise that U.S. policy must represent some balance or compromise between two competing ideals: guaranteeing civil rights and maintaining military effectiveness" (Kier E, 1998, p 7). Furthermore, it argues that it must maintain a balance between unit cohesion that is essential to combat effectiveness and allowing homosexuals to openly serve in Armed Forces. The military justifies excluding homosexuals based on the premise that the presence of openly gay and lesbian individuals will erode unit cohesion at the squad level. In 1993, Collin Powell the Joint Chief of staff of the U.S. military stated.

"Those who engage in conduct that is inconsistent with those of the group are not trusted or respected." He also stated, "In an atmosphere of distrust, orders may not be carried out and commonplace friendly gestures that promote camaraderie-everyday youthful horseplay and rough-housing, a pat on the back or an arm around the shoulder-become suspect, arouse fear or aversion, and destroy group cohesion." Powell explained that "to win wars, we create cohesive teams of warriors who will bond so tightly that they are prepared to go into battle and give their lives if necessary. We cannot allow anything to happen which would disrupt that feeling of cohesion within the force"(Kier E, 1998, p.7).

These arguments maintain that the U.S. military's effectiveness depends on unit cohesion and that cohesion would break down if openly homosexual service members were allowed to be present. Kier refutes that unit cohesion is key to combat effectiveness based on many empirical studies of military effectiveness. She also refutes, the U.S. military's premise that openly gays and lesbians would break down unit cohesion. She argues that no study has found that the U.S. military's argument has merit (Kier E, 1998, pp. 5-39) and that the DADT policy is not effective because homosexuals do not break down military discipline, order, trust, unit cohesion, morality, recruitment, and retention, which are the reasons for excluding them from military service (Sinclair, 2009, pp 701-718).

### **Hyper-masculinity in the U.S. Military**

The DADT law is currently supported by the U.S. military establishment and culture. The performance of gay and lesbian service members and their contributions to the military cannot be refuted by the military. Britton and Williams (1995) contend that "the military's resistance to full participation of both women and gays and lesbians is the institutional privileging of a certain type of soldier – the heterosexual male" (Britton, & Williams, 1995 p 2) The privileging of heterosexual male service members is maintained through exclusionary policies like DADT and the restrictions on where and how women can serve in the military. These exclusionary policies were founded and supported by male prejudice and discriminating arguments. These arguments are: individual and group discipline would decline; recruitment and retention would decrease because the military would be perceived as a gay organization,; and the introduction of openly homosexual service members would be too disruptive to those currently serving. The authors maintain that there is no empirical or historic evidence to support these arguments. The U.S. military also states that sexual privacy of service members could not be maintained if

homosexuals were allowed to openly serve in the military. This is also the military's reasoning for excluding women from serving in combat units in the Armed Forces.

Service members form close bonds in combat environments that are natural and necessary to complete any combat mission. These bonds are seen as masculine and, "...the presence of openly gay men in the military containments this bond, marring it with implied sexuality" (Britton, & Williams, 1995 p 13). The military is afraid that those bonds will go too far and damage an image of masculinity that is attached to heterosexuality. The image of ideal soldier masculinity is aggressive, macho, and blood thirsty. This image of the ideal service member is the height of male masculinity and dominance and anything that reduces this image reduces the image of the ideal masculine soldier. The ideal service member works in a combat role, and service members in combat roles hold the most privilege because they are closest to the ideal image of service and masculinity. The military prohibits women and openly gay man from serving in those roles to protect the hyper-masculine heterosexual male service member ideal. Supporting this ideal image of service members protects heterosexual males' exclusive access to too being the ideal service member and their cultural privileges. The U.S. military has many programs and that support male privilege, heterosexuality and traditional heterosexual marriages of its members. The U.S. military currently has policies that limit the combat roles and occupations woman can have in during their military careers. The U.S. military active and historic ban of LGBT service members in the military and its strict enforcement of only acknowledging heterosexual Veteran contributions toward serving; reinforce and maintain heterosexual privilege. The Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) prevents the U.S. military from recognizing and supporting LGBT Veterans marriages or partnerships. The U.S. military only has programs to directly support spouses of heterosexual marriages. These programs

institutionally support and maintain male heterosexuality. The current policy of DADT ensures that the accomplishments of Gay and lesbian service members will never be known and male heterosexual privilege will be maintained (Britton, & Williams, 1995, p 1-21).

### **Impact of DADT policies affecting the U.S. Military community**

In 2005, Bowling conducted a comprehensive study of 71, 570 U.S. military service members' views and perceptions of harassment policies and awareness. The sample included active duty service members from all branches of the Armed Forces stationed on 38 different installations around the world. Researchers found that the higher the rank, education, and training the less an individual was aware of harassment and vice versa. Most harassment was based on perceptions of sexual orientation rather than actual information about an individual's sexual orientation. The current DADT policies in the U.S. military hide actual gay service members and helps to maintain prejudices and stereotypes of the homosexual community by homophobic service members. This is because heterosexuals rarely know that they are interacting with homosexuals and lack contradictory information against preconceived stereotypes and prejudices. Thus, they continue to maintain their negative attitudes and stereotypes which contribute to harassment. Their data shows that this is a major factor in the military, especially in combat related fields. "The hyper-masculine ideal of a good soldier continues to be promoted as necessary to produce effective combat troops and reinforce the male bonding required to win the battle" (Bowling F. 2005, p 434). The mythology and ideal of who and what is a "soldier" is maintained and harassment of those that don't fit continues (Bowling F. 2005, 411-437).

### **Current impact of U.S. military's culture of heterosexism on LGBT Veterans**

The intimate work environment of the U.S. military has and is a heterosexist culture. The impact of direct heterosexism on LGBT veterans by U.S. military policies that punitively prevent LGBT Veterans from openly disclosing their sexual orientation with their fellow Veterans institutionally maintains an oppressive and traumatic environment for anyone with a sexual orientation other than what fits into the heterosexual hyper-masculine ideal (Brown S. 2008). Heterosexist work environments formally and informally contribute to the minority stress, stigmatization and oppression of LGBT Veterans that negatively impacts their social and psychological health (Waldo R. 1999).

Heterosexism in work and social environments can cause LGBT individuals to have higher rates of mental health issues. The process of internalized homophobia and stigma created by heterosexist environments increases the risk of mental health issues and social barriers toward achieving an individual's personal and professional goals (Dworkin H. 2000). Historical and present policies of the U.S. military create and enforce heterosexism and heterocentrism thus creating oppressive, stressful, and traumatic work and social environments for LGBT veterans that has long lasting internal mental health and career implications for LGBT veterans (Dworkin H. 2000; Pachankis E., & Goldfried R. 2004). The effects of minority stress and stigma on the mental health of an individual or group is well documented and even a part of the evidence presented to the U.S. Supreme Court preceding the 1954 school segregation decision. LGBT individuals are at a higher risk for feelings and thoughts of demoralization, guilt, shame, AIDS, and sex problems, than heterosexual individuals due to the impact of minority stress and stigma (Meyer H. 1995). LGBT Veterans work and live in a hyper masculine environment and may face

an even greater risk than non-LGBT Veterans of having their mental health negatively impacted by minority stress and stigma.

### **Potential impact of repealing DADT on LGBT Veterans**

Twenty four NATO countries have integrated LGBT individuals into their militaries and none have reported any break downs of unit cohesion or troop morale. “Officials, military scholars, non-governmental and political leaders, and gay and lesbian soldiers all concur that the removal of the ban has had, to their knowledge, no perceptible negative effect on the military” (Belkin, & McNichol, 2000, p 87). Aaron Belkin reviewed the effects on military performance as a result of lifting the ban on gays in the Israeli military. The Israeli military found that lifting the ban had no negative effects on military effectiveness, performance, and unit cohesion. The Israeli military is seen as one of the world’s premiere fighting forces (Belkin, & Levitt, 2001). In his review of the effects of Canada’s repeal of its military’s “gay ban” Belkin (YEAR) found that the Canadian military had discovered no drop in its military’s performance, effectiveness, or unit cohesion since the repeal. Canada is a country of similar culture and history as the U.S. and has been able to maintain its military’s combat effectiveness with the inclusion of openly gay service members. The Canadian military not only allows gays and lesbians to serve but also recognizes gay partner relationships (Belkin, & McNichol, 2000).

Many LGB Veterans in both the Canadian and Israeli militaries maintain low profiles, and only share their sexual orientation with a limited number of individuals. Few combat and intelligence service members serve openly. LGB service members report, that they fear possible reprisal and unequal treatment by others in those units. In many cases individuals only disclose their sexual orientation if they feel that the benefits out way the cost and that their careers are safe from homophobic prejudices (Belkin, & McNichol, 2000; Belkin, & Levitt, 2001).

Another hyper-masculine professional culture in the United States is police culture. The police culture in the United States has its roots as a paramilitary and has been traditionally employed mostly by, white male heterosexuals. Discrimination based on sexual orientation has been banned from federal employment, 20 state governments, and countless local and regional governments across the country. Many police departments have had policies against sexual orientation based discrimination for the past 20 to 30 years. Reviewing how police department policies are affecting lesbian and gay officers in the United States can help reveal upcoming issues for the U.S. military after the repeal of DADT. Colvin 2009 reviewed in a quantitative survey representing 66 lesbian and gay police officers in the United States. The survey found that lesbian and gay officers report experiencing discrimination and harassment at the work place. All reported that they felt discrimination in assignments, evaluations, supervisory discretion, and promotions. Many saw that structural failures of leadership and oversight of policies as a major concern. Cultural deviation from police officer norms and culture was reported as a major factor of discrimination. LGB officers are perceived to contradict the ideal image of a police officer, which is -masculine heterosexual male (Colvin, 2009).

If LGBT service members feel that it is unsafe to disclose their sexuality, they will not likely disclose it and be exposed to harassment at the work place. LGBT individuals may be resistant to disclosing their sexual orientation if they feel that the “costs out way the benefits” of being openly nonheterosexual in the work place. All the articles concluded that LGBT individuals will be more reluctant to disclose their sexual orientation in work environments that are: traditionally male dominated, meet the ideal of hypermasculinity, and the closer they are to direct combat roles. (Belkin, & McNichol, 2000; Belkin, & Levitt, 2001; Colvin, 2009).



### **Recommended Policies for future integration of LGB service members**

The fact that lesbians and gays have always been a part of the U.S. military and will continue to be a part of the U.S. military is acknowledged by the U.S. military. (Brown, 2008; Estrada, & Laurence, 2009). The repeal of DADT was inevitable based on the mounting evidence of empirical evidence about lesbian and gay service members in other countries militaries and new cultural shifts within American culture. The recent repeal of DADT demands that the U.S. military needs to be prepared for the impact of repealing DADT on service members. The U.S. military has understood since the 1950s that sensitivity training will not end or prevent harassment (Brown, 2008; Estrada, & Laurence, 2009). Estrada wrote,

“They found that provision of training and resources had the least impact on the incidence of sexual harassment and the least impact on service members psychological and job related outcomes. However, implementation of policies and procedures had the greatest effect on the incidence of sexual harassment in the military” (Estrada, & Laurence, 2009, p77)

The U.S. military has a long history and experience dealing with harassment within its ranks and knows from experience that fair and equal policy enforcement all levels prevents harassment. U.S. Navy, Commander Brown recommended: sexual orientation policy changes that are clearly communicated from the top down, with specific operational guidelines and procedures; the new policies must be uniformly and quickly implemented; an emphasis on conduct, and not tolerance and sensitivity training; comprehensive training for military leadership; a monitoring process to insure equal enforcement of new policies by unit commanders; articles of UMCJ prohibiting homosexuality and sodomy must be revised. Only Brown directs the issue of homosexual marriages and partnerships to the United States Supreme Court as a constitutional concern outside of the U.S. military’s jurisdiction (Brown, 2008).

### **Cost vs. benefits of serving openly LGB service members in the U.S. military**

Many articles exploring paramilitary work places and cultures noted the need to have stricter policies of promoting higher discretion in areas of assignments, promotions, and evaluations (Colvin, 2009; Sklansky, 2007; Belkin, & McNichol, 2000; Colvin, 2009; Estrada, & Laurence, 2009) The articles also noted the need to vigorously reduce homophobic behavior and talk at the work place. "...that American gay and lesbian soldiers would disclose their sexual orientation to peers only when they believed it was safe to do so" (Belkin, & Levitt, 2001, p 558). If lesbian and gay service members feel that it is unsafe to disclose their sexuality, they will not likely disclose it and be harassed in the work place. These articles explored how gay and lesbian service members will be resistant to serving openly if they feel that the cost out way the benefits of being openly homosexual in their work places. All the articles concluded that it will be more difficult to come out in units that are traditionally male dominated and are closer to combat roles.

The benefits of repealing DADT will out way the costs for the U.S. military. "Officials military scholars, non-governmental and political leaders, and gay and lesbian soldiers all concur that the removal of the ban has had, to their knowledge, no perceptible negative effect on the military" (Belkin, & McNichol, 2000, p 87). All the articles concluded that there were no costs to any, militaries or police department's effectiveness or performance after they allowed gays and lesbians to join their ranks.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Methodology**

#### **Study Aims**

This study explored the perceptions of U.S. Military Veterans that have served since the 1993 enactment of “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell” (DADT) about the impact of the recent repeal DADT on Veterans. This research could benefit U.S. veterans, the LBGTQF community and social workers. The research question was: What do U.S. military Veterans who have served since the enactment of DADT think will be the potential impact of the recent repeal of DADT on Veterans willingness to disclose their sexual orientation?

To determine if the repeal of DADT will have any impact on the willingness of veterans to disclose their sexual orientation to their fellow Veterans and their chain of command this study collected data using an online survey asking questions about the following issues: 1) Do Veterans think that Lesbians, Gays and Bisexuals (LGB) Veterans are willing to disclose their sexual orientation? 2) Do Veterans think that a LGB Veterans military branch and occupation will have an impact on their willingness to disclose their sexual orientation? The data were then analyzed using SurveyMonkey and SSPS.

#### **Hypotheses**

The three hypotheses in this study were as follows: Hypothesis I: Participants in combat arms (all male) occupations will report a greater unwillingness of LGB disclosure and acceptance; Hypothesis II: Participants will report limited disclosure by LGB veterans under DADT and an increase of disclosure after the repeal; and Hypothesis III: Participants will report

that LGB partners need to be accepted by military support groups and the military does not need to recognize LGB marriages.

### **Sample population**

The sample population (N= 79) in this study included Veterans of the U.S. military that have served in the U.S. Armed Forces after the 1993 enactment of DADT. The population of U.S. Veterans that have served in the U.S. Military since 1993 is in the millions. The online survey collected information only from individuals who met the following criteria: (1) participant must be a Veteran of the United States Military and (2) must have served in the United States military after 1993. Any participants that did not meet the inclusion criteria were excluded from the survey. These exclusion criteria were: 1) any non U.S. military Veterans and 2) U.S. military Veterans whose military service was prior to 1993.

This study collected data through an internet based survey website called SurveyMonkey. An online invitation was sent by email and sent by message through the social networking website Facebook. The invitation included a letter of recruitment/flyer about the study, and a web link to the online survey (see Appendix E). The invitation asked those receiving the invitation to forward the invitation to others they knew that meet the study inclusion criteria. SurveyMonkey was set up to ask rule out questions to limit the sample to include only participants who met the inclusion criteria. This study utilized availability sampling of convenience. In addition, snowball sampling was employed to increase the pool of possible participants for the study.

### **Ethics and Safeguards**

To maintain the anonymity and confidentiality of participants no personal identifiers were requested by the survey such as: exact unit or duty location, physical address, phone

numbers, postal addresses, names, social security or other personal identification numbers, birthdays, birth places. Participants' anonymity was reasonably maintained by the website (SurveyMonkey) by not saving any user's email address or IP address. Furthermore, all online information is protected by a Secure Sockets Layer (SSL). SSL is a protocol that works through a cryptographic system that secures a private connection between a client and a server.

Participation in the study was completely voluntary. Participants were allowed to withdraw from the study at any time while they were taking the survey and could refuse to answer any question. However, since the survey itself was anonymous, it was not possible to withdraw after the completion of the survey, since it was not connected to the participant. The informed consent procedure that was used for this study was in the form of a cover letter (Appendix D). This letter contained the following information: (1) researcher profile, (2) the purpose of the study, (3) why they are being asked to participate, and (4) how material will be recorded. There was no compensation for participating in this study.

This study could help further the knowledge and understanding of the effects of DADT policies on U.S. military Veterans and possible future implications of the recent repeal of DADT by Congress. This study may also help participants review their experiences in the military and the impact DADT may have had on them and their fellow Veterans. There is limited research on the impact of DADT on U.S. Veterans and the military community. This study may increase our understanding of the impact DADT has had on U.S. Veterans.

### **Data Collection**

All participants were invited by email to participate in this study. The online invitation had a brief description of the study and a web address link to connect them to the online survey administered by the website SurveyMonkey. All participants were greeted by a welcome page

that briefly thanked participants for their time, described the study and participant inclusion criteria. All participants were asked two rule out questions: *Are you a United States military Veteran or service member?*; *Did you serve in the United States military after 1993?* Those who met the criteria were asked to review consent form and some brief demographic data before answering the questions. The approximate time to complete the survey was between five and ten minutes.

Every effort had been made to protect the anonymity and confidentiality of participants taking the survey. All documents containing collected data are security encrypted and monitored according to federal guidelines. Questionnaire responses were entered in SPSS. All documents containing collected data are security encrypted and will be monitored for three years and then destroyed according to federal regulation guidelines. The SurveyMonkey does not have ownership of any data collected and maintains its own privacy policies to protect participants' anonymity and confidentiality.

This study explored a controversial topic and participants may have had strong feelings and views about the topic of LGB Veterans serving in the military. Also, some participants may get gotten upset reflecting on the topic or questions asked while they took the online survey for this study. A list of national based mental health resources was provided at the conclusion of the study to support those that may have felt uncomfortable or distress by reflecting on the topic of LGB Veterans in the military during the survey. This study researched an area with limited amount of previous research. I created an original survey to collect the data needed to answer the study question and hypothesis.

**Demographics collected**

Demographic data were collected in order to compare participants on numerous important variables. This study did not directly study any at risk populations within this research including: pregnant women, prisoners, and individuals under the age of 18. All participants are over 18 and able to read and write in English. The demographics collected were as follows: sexual orientation, gender, length of military service, current military status, branch of service, race or ethnicity, relationship status, highest level of education, region grow up in, highest rank held in, military occupation The questionnaire can be found in Appendix B.

**Data analysis**

Descriptive statistics presented the demographic characteristics of the sample. For Hypothesis I, paired t-tests were run to determine if there were differences within the sample of participants in combat arms (all male) occupations that report a greater unwillingness of LGB disclosure and acceptance than in non combat (mixed gender) occupations. To review Hypothesis II, an independent sample t-test was conducted to determine if there was difference between combat arms (all male units) and non-combat arms (mixed gender units) views of the repeal of DADT. To evaluate Hypothesis III, all participants were asked their views on the military's need to recognize and accept LGB partners in military family support groups.

## Chapter 4

### Results

Seventy nine individuals randomly volunteered to participate in this survey. Seventy one participants completed some or all of the questions and 32 of them completed the comment section of the survey. Prior to running inferential statistics, variables were tested for the assumptions of regression. These analyses found that the data exhibited acceptable levels of skewness and Cohen's effect (SPSS statistic within +/-1) and were free from outliers.

#### Demographic Data

**Age.** The majority of participants, 55.7%, were in the 26 -34 years of age group followed by the age group, 35-51 years of age, at 22.8%. Next were the 21-25 age group at 13.9%, and 51+ years of age representing 6.3% of the sample. Finally, the 18-20 years age group comprised 1.3% of the sample participants.

**Gender.** In terms of gender, the majority of participants were male. This group of 60 males represented 76.9% of the sample. On the other hand, there were 18 female participants, equivalent to 23.1% of the sample. Transgender were identified in the demographics collected and there were no participants that identified as transgender.

**Sexual orientation.** The largest group consisted of 71 (92.2%) heterosexuals. The second largest representative group identified as Lesbians, at 3.9%. Two Gay participants represented 2.6 represented 2.6% of the sample. One Bisexual participant represented 1.3% of the sample. Two other groups, Queer and Fluid, were identified on the Demographic Questionnaire but neither was represented in the sample.



**Race and Ethnicity.** The majority of the sample, 82.3% (N=65) identified as being White/Caucasian. The second major grouping was African American/Black and Spanish/Hispanic/Puerto Rican/Cuban/Mexican that both comprised 7.6% of the sample each (N=6). The third grouping, Ethnic Jew and Other, were each representative of 2.5% (N=2) of this sample. Pacific Islander/Asian was the smallest group representative 1.3% (N=1) in the sample. Two other groups were identified on the demographics; Ethnic Black and American Indian/Alaska Native, but neither group was represented in the sample.

**Years in the U.S. military.** Out of four identified groupings, the 1-2 years in of service group was the smallest and represented 2.6% (N=2) of the sample. Next, the 15 - 30+ service group represented 19.2% (N=15) of the sample, and the 7- 14 years of service w comprised 35.9% (N=28) of the sample. The largest identified representative age group were 3 -6 years of service 42.3% (N=33) of the sample.

**Branch of the military and current military status.** The largest indentified group was in the Army which comprised 53.8% of the sample. 37.2% of the sample served in the Navy. 9% of the sample indentified as Marines and 6.4% of the sample indentified that they served in the Air force. 1.3% of the sample were in the Coast Guard. Two other groups identified on the demographics but not represented in the sample were Merchant Marine and Public Health Service. Also, 48.7% indentified that they were currently on active duty, in the reserves, or a member the National Guard and 51.3% of the sample stated that they were no longer a member of the United States Armed Forces.

**Highest rank held during military service.** Military ranks are broken into three groups: enlisted, warrant officer and officer. The enlisted groups were broken down into nine separate ranks by their pay grade. The number of participants that indentified as enlisted were: E-1

(N=0) 0.0%, E-2 (N=2) 2.6%, E-3 (N=5) 6.4%, E-4 (N=19) 24.4%, E-5 (N=23) 29.5%, E-6 (N=11) 14.1%, E-7 (N=1) 1.3%, E-8 (N=4) 5.1%, E-9 (N=2) 2.6% of the sample population. The Warrant officer groups were broken down into five separate ranks by their pay grade: W-1, W-2, W-3, W-4, W-5. None of the participants identified as a warrant officer in the sample. The officer groups were broken down into nine separate ranks by their pay grade. The number of participants that identified as officers were: O-2 (N=5) 5.4%, O-3 (N=4) 5.4%, O-4 (N=1) 1.3%, O-5 (N=2) 2.6% of the sample. None of the participants identified as O-1, O-6, O-7, O-8, O-9, O-10 grade officers in the sample population.

**Military occupation.** Military occupation was divided into two groups: all male occupations and mixed gender occupations. The all male occupations were separated as Combat Arms (all male units or ships) 30.8% (N=24) and Special Forces 1.3% (N=1) and when combined total 32.1% (N=25) of the sample. The mixed gender occupations were identified as: Aviation 6.4% (N=5), Chaplain services 0.0% (N=0), Combat support 11.5% (N=9), Legal services 2.6% (N=2), Logistical support 7.7% (N=6), Medical support 24.4% (N=19), Military intelligence 1.3% (N=1), Service support 10.3% (N=8), Special operations 3.8% (N=3) and combined total 67.9% (N=53) of the sample population.

**Education.** Participants were asked to indicate their highest level of education completed. In terms of academic degrees, those with at least some college represented 29.1% (N=23), the largest group in the sample. 20.3% (N=16) of participants held associates degree. Both representative groups of Master's degree and Bachelor's degree had 19% (N=15) of the sample. 11.4% (N=9) of participants had a high school diploma and 1.3% (N=1) of the sample had a GED of the sample. Doctorate level of education was identified in the Demographics, but was not represented in the sample.

**Geographic Location.** The largest representative group was from the East North Central which comprised 24.1% (N=19) of the sample. The second largest representative group was from the Pacific with 15.2% (N=12) of the sample. The third representative group was the Mid-Atlantic region with 12.7% (N=10). The fourth representative group were from the Northeast or New England with 11.4% (N=9). The sixth representative group was the West North Central at 10.1% (N=8). The seventh representative group was the South Atlantic 7.6% (N=6). The eighth representative group included those that grew up in more than one place at 6.3% (N=5). The ninth representative group was the West South Central which accounted for 3.8% (N=3). The tenth representative groups were both East South Central and Mountain groups representing 3.8% (N=3) of the sample population. The group identified as, growing up outside the United States was identified in the Demographics, but was not represented in the sample.

**Current relationship status.** The largest representative group in the sample was “Married” 50.6% (N=40). The second largest representative group, “Single,” comprised 22.8% (N= 18) of the sample. The third largest representative group was “Divorced,” with 11.4% (N=9) of the sample. The fourth group representative group was “Living with significant other, but not married” 8.9% (N=7) of the sample. The fifth representative group was in a “Monogamous relationship, but not cohabitating” 5.1% (N=4) of the sample. The smallest representative group was “Widowed” 1.3% (N= 1) of the sample. Those in a “Domestic partnership/Civil union” were identified on the demographics, but were not represented in the sample.

**Hypothesis I: Participants in combat arms (all male) occupations will report a greater unwillingness of LGB disclosure and acceptance**

Independent samples t-tests (see Appendix F) were conducted to test whether non-combat soldiers ( $n = 45$ , mixed gender occupations) and combat soldiers ( $n = 26$ , all male occupations) differed in their perceptions of LGB soldiers' willingness to disclose their sexual orientation following the repeal of DADT (Means = 1.38 and 1.55, respectively). Results indicated non-significant differences between groups. Moreover, results also suggested that there were no significant differences between non-combat and combat soldiers in terms of their perceptions of LGB soldiers willingness to disclose their sexual orientation to their chain of command (see Table 1; Means = - 0.36 and -.039, respectively), or their perceptions of how safe the military would be for LGB soldiers who disclose their sexual orientation (see Table 1; Means = 0.144 and 0.14, respectively).

**Hypothesis II: Participants will report limited disclosure by LGB veterans under DADT and an increase of disclosure after the repeal**

Dependent samples t-tests were run to determine if soldiers' perceptions of LGB soldiers' willingness to disclose their sexual orientation to other service members while under DADT differed from their perceptions following the repeal of DADT (see Appendix G). Results indicated that soldiers' perceived that LGB soldiers' willingness to disclose will increase (a moderate effect) following the repeal of DADT ( $t(70) = 4.66, p < 0.001, d = 0.69$ ). Moreover, results also indicated that soldiers' perceived that LGB soldiers' willingness to disclosure to their chain of command will increase (a moderate effect) following the repeal of DADT ( $t(70) = 6.41, p < 0.001, d = 0.63$ ).

### **Hypothesis III: Exploratory Investigation of Soldiers' Views on the Acceptance of LGB Veterans and Their Partners**

Descriptive statistics were reviewed to determine if there was an acceptance of military support groups and a view by participants of the willingness to have LGB marriages be accepted by the military. Out of five identified groupings, the very much agree was the most representative group of 60.9% (N=42). The slightly agree represented 8.7% (N=6) of the sample. The slightly disagree were representative of 7.2% (N=5) of the sample. The very much disagree group was representative of 42.3% (N=33) of the sample. The not sure group was representative of 10.1% (N=7) of the same. Results are presented in Appendix H.

Soldiers agreed above chance ( $\chi^2 (1) = 9.52, p < .005$ ) that the military should recognize LGB partnerships, civil unions and marriages, with 67.6% (N=48) participants endorsing this recognition and 32.4% (N=23) disputing this recognition. Results are presented in Appendix I.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Discussion**

The results of this study found a significant difference in the willingness of service members to disclose their sexual orientation to their other service members and their chain of command between those serving under the DADT policy and since the repeal of DADT. Additionally, LGB service members need to be accepted and supported by the military and military family support groups. These two major findings supported both of the hypotheses set forth at the beginning of the study. There was no significant difference between those serving in all male units and mixed gender units acceptance of LBG service members and LGB veterans willingness to disclose their sexual orientation.

This chapter will summarize and discuss the findings in terms of how they relate to the literature that was outlined in Chapter II. In many ways the findings support the literature as well as the original hypotheses. In addition to discussing the findings in light of the literature and the original hypothesis, this chapter will also outline the implications of practice and policy, examine the strengths and limitations of the study, and address areas for possible future research on this topic.

### **Summary of the Findings**

Participants in combat arms (all male) occupations reported no significant difference in their unwillingness to having LGB Veterans openly disclosure their sexual orientation and their overall acceptance of LGB individuals within the U.S. military. As predicted, participants reported limited disclosure by LGB veterans under DADT and predicted an increase of disclosure after the repeal of DADT policy. Also, as predicted, the participants in this study

reported that LGB partners need to be accepted by military family support groups, and that the military needs to recognize LGB marriages.

### **Findings Compared to the Literature**

The repeal of DADT was passed by the U.S. Congress and signed into law in January 2011. President Obama has given the U.S. military until 2012 to fully implement policies that will allow LGB service members to openly serve. Due to the fact that the repeal of DADT is so recent there is no current research on how the repeal will impact the U.S. military community. The findings are in line with the previous literature on the topic of repealing DADT. This study predicted that service members serving in all male units would be less accepting of openly serving LGB individuals based on the literature reviewed in Chapter II (Belkin, & McNichol, 2000; Belkin, & Levitt, 2001; Britton, & Williams, 1995; Colvin, 2009). The data did not find any significant difference between those serving in all male units compared to mixed gender units.

The study's second hypothesis predicted that the repeal of DADT will have a positive impact on LGB Veterans' willingness to openly disclose their sexual orientation to their fellow service members and their chain of commands. The second hypothesis was based on research from other nations and paramilitary organizations that allow openly serving LGB service members (Belkin, & McNichol, 2000; Belkin, & Levitt, 2001; Brown, 2008). The study found a significant difference between the willingness of LGB service members disclosing their sexual orientation to other service members and their chain of command since the repeal of DADT. The study's findings add to the growing body of research that the U.S. military DADT policy is a major institutional barrier for LGB Veterans being fully acknowledged for their military service.

This study also found that the majority of the sample supported LGB partners attending military family support groups and the military recognizing LGB partnerships, civil unions or marriages. It is not clear at this time if the military will choose to allow LGB partners to attend family support groups or be authorized to recognize LGB partnerships, civil unions or marriages. The Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) prevents any federal agency from recognizing any type of legal LGB union including the military. The literature reviewed in Chapter II strongly suggests that the military acceptance of LGB partners is a necessary step for LGB service members to be more willing to serve openly in the military (Belkin, & McNichol, 2000; Belkin, & Levitt, 2001; Brown, 2008). This data shows that many Veterans in the military are supportive of LGB service members and their partners being supported by their military command.

### **Strengths and Limitations of the Study**

For this study, quantitative data was collected from an online survey. An online survey was used to protect and maintain the anonymity and confidentiality of the survey participants. The questionnaire also gathered demographic information and responses material from the participants. One advantage of using an online survey is the fact that it is the least expensive method for asking questions to larger groups of people (Anastas, 1999, p. 374). Thus, in addition to cost-effectiveness and a larger sampling pool, was the expediency with which the data collection occurred. This was critical to the study because of the limited time frame for data collection. Another advantage of using an online survey is the fact that people are more likely to respond honestly in a confidential and anonymous online survey than in a face to face interview, especially given the sensitive nature of the topic with Veterans.

Along with the advantages of using an online survey, there were also disadvantages to this method of data collection. The main disadvantage of this study was the small amount of



responses compared to the sample population. Since this study has a small sample of the U.S. Veteran population, which is in the millions it may not accurately reflect the views and perceptions of the Veteran population regarding the impact of the repeal of DADT. A large sample of the Veteran population could be conducted increase the power of this study. This study also lacked a sufficient representation of several groups: people of color, LGB, transgender, Queer, Fluid and civil union or partnership Veterans. A significantly larger sample size would be more likely to be representative of the U.S. military population and include greater numbers of subgroups.

Another disadvantage of using surveys is that the issue of accepting LGB Veterans within the military is both complex and controversial. The topic of LGBT Veterans serving in the U.S. military and how it impacts LGBT Veterans and the military community is a sensitive topic for the military and organizations that serve Veterans. As such, research in this area may confront or be blocked by many institutional barriers. The topic issue can be difficult to translate into appropriate and measurable questions. The refinement of questions in this way will emerge only as more research is conducted. To fully capture individual and group perceptions about the repeal of DADT a qualitative or mixed study will need to be conducted in the future.

### **Implications for Practice and Policy**

As the repeal of the long standing DADT policy is implemented throughout the U.S. military and commanders are required to implement more LGBT acceptance policies unforeseen issues around openly serving LGBT Veterans could develop. The impact of repealing DADT and a greater acceptance of LGBT service members in the U.S. military will impact a full range of military policies and clinical practices including: sexual harassment, family and treatment

support groups, housing, military pay/dependents, military clergy, and anti discrimination enforcement.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

More research needs to be done in order to better understand and evaluate the impact of the recent repeal of DADT on the U. S. military community. As the DADT policy is replaced by new military policies around LGBT service members future research will need to be conducted to evaluate and review the impact of DADT reform will be on the U.S. military and LGBT Veterans.

Future research could focus on recruiting and obtaining larger samples. Due to this study's small sample of 71 participants, the chance of generalizing its results to the greater population of U.S. military Veterans is very low. On the other hand, if study samples were larger the results could be applied to U. S military Veterans. In turn these studies' results may be able to provide greater insight into LGBT Veterans research and Veterans perceptions about the future impact of recent repeal of DADT.

It may be worthwhile to further explore certain demographics in order to determine what role they play on Veterans' perceptions on openly serving LGBT service members. For example, in my study I lacked sufficient representation for two groups: LGBT and people of Color. I believe that future research should explore whether or not a Veteran's (1) gender and/or (2) race/ethnicity affects their views on DADT and sexual orientation. This examination could be completed by conducting studies that have a sample consisting of: (1) all LGBT Veterans, (2) all Caucasian Veterans, (3) only Veterans of Color, or (4) Veterans of one race/ethnicity, i.e. only Hispanic participants.

**Conclusion**

This study clearly shows that the many Veterans that have served since the enactment of DADT are willing to serve with LGBT Veterans. The majority of participants in this study reported that the military family readiness groups and the military need to accept LGBT partners, yet the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) prevents any federal agency from recognizing LGBT partnerships and marriages. The path toward full acceptance of LGBT Veterans within the traditionally hyper masculine, heterosexual, male privileged culture of the U.S. military has not ended with the recent repeal of DADT. Many institutional and cultural obstacles still lie in front of LGBT service members between them and gaining the full recognition, honor and rewards individuals deserve for serving their country. It is our duty as a society to work toward fully recognizing and honoring those that have served our nation; no matter what their sexual orientation.

## REERFENCES

- American Psychological Association. (2010 ). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th Edition). Washington, D.C.: Author.
- Anastas, J. W. (1999). *Research design for social work and the human services*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Belkin, A., Bateman, G., & Gouliquer, L. (2003). *Don't ask, don't tell: Debating the gay ban in the military*
- Belkin, A., & Levitt, M. (2001). Homosexuality and the Israel defense forces: Did lifting the gay ban undermine military performance? *Armed Forces & Society* (0095327X), 27(4), 541-565.
- Belkin, A., & McNichol, J. (2000). Homosexual personnel policy in the Canadian forces. *International Journal*, 56(1), 73-88.
- Berkman, C. S., & Zinberg, G. (1997). Homophobia and heterosexism in social workers. *Social Work*, 42(4), 319-332.
- Biaggio, M., Orchard, S., Larson, J., Petrino, K., & Mihara, R. (2003). Guidelines for gay/lesbian/bisexual-affirmative educational practices in graduate psychology programs. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 34(5), 548-554. doi:10.1037/0735-7028.34.5.548
- Bowling, K. L., Firestone, J. M., & Harris, R. J. (2005). Analyzing questions that cannot be asked of respondents who cannot respond. *Armed Forces & Society* (0095327X), 31(3), 411-437.
- Britton, D. M., & Williams, C. L. (1995). 'Don't ask, don't tell, don't pursue': Military policy and the construction of heterosexual masculinity. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 30(1), 1-21.

- Britton, D. M., & Williams, C. L. (1995). 'Don't ask, don't tell, don't pursue': Military policy and the construction of heterosexual masculinity. *Journal of Homosexuality, 30*(1), 1-21.
- Brotman, S., Ryan, B., Jalbert, Y., & Rowe, B. (2002). The impact of coming out on health and health care access: The experiences of gay, lesbian, bisexual and two-spirit people. *Journal of Health & Social Policy, 15*(1), 1.
- Brown, A. (2008). *Don't Ask Don't Tell Policy: Inevitable Repeal*. USACW Strategy Research Project Carlisle Barracks, PA.
- Brown, L. S. (2008). Trauma and sexual orientation. In L. S. Brown (Ed.), *Cultural competence in trauma therapy: Beyond the flashback*. (pp. 169-180). Washington, DC US: American Psychological Association. doi:10.1037/11752-008
- Colvin, R. (2009). Shared perceptions among lesbian and gay police officers: Barriers and opportunities in the law enforcement work environment. *Police Quarterly, 12*(1), 86-101. doi:10.1177/1098611108327308
- Dardick, L., & Grady, K. E. (1980). Openness between gay persons and health professionals. *Annals of Internal Medicine, 93*(1), 115.
- Dworkin, S. H. (2000). Individual therapy with lesbian, gay, and bisexual clients. In K. J. Bieschke (Ed.), *Handbook of counseling and psychotherapy with lesbian, gay, and bisexual clients*. (pp. 157-181). Washington, DC US: American Psychological Association. doi:10.1037/10339-007
- Estrada, A. X., & Laurence, J. H. (2009). Examining the impact of training on the homosexual conduct policy for military personnel. *Military Psychology, 21*(1), 62-80. doi:10.1080/08995600802565751

- Frank, N. (2003). Research shows no impact on combat capabilities of openly-gay soldiers. *Lesbian News*, 28(11), 63.
- Gusmano, B. (2008). Coming out or not? how nonheterosexual people manage their sexual identity at work. *Journal of Workplace Rights*, 13(4), 473-496. doi:10.2190/WR.13.4.g
- Herek, G. M. (1993). Sexual orientation and military service: A social science perspective. *American Psychologist*, 48(5), 538-549. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.48.5.538
- Johnson, W. B., & Kennedy, C. H. (2010). Preparing psychologists for high-risk jobs: Key ethical considerations for military clinical supervisors. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 41(4), 298-304. doi:10.1037/a0019899
- Johnson, W. B., & Wilson, K. (1993). The military internship: A retrospective analysis. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 24(3), 312-318. doi:10.1037/0735-7028.24.3.312
- Kier, E. (1998). Homosexuals in the U.S. military: Open integration and combat effectiveness. *International Security*, 23(2), 5-39.
- Lindhorst, T., Smith, J. D., & Mancoske, R. J. (1997). Lesbians and gay men in the country: Practice implications for rural social workers. *Rural Gays & Lesbians*, , 1-11.
- Moradi, B., & Miller, L. (2010). Attitudes of Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans toward gay and lesbian service members. *Armed Forces & Society (0095327X)*, 36(3), 397-419.
- Pachankis, J. E., & Goldfried, M. R. (2004). Clinical issues in working with lesbian, gay, and bisexual clients. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, Practice, Training*, 41(3), 227-246. doi:10.1037/0033-3204.41.3.227
- Rubin, A. & Babbie, E. (2010). *Essential Research Methods for Social Work* (Second Edition). CA: Brooks/Cole Cengage Learning.

Sinclair, G. D. (2009). Homosexuality and the military: A review of the literature. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 56(6), 701-718. doi:10.1080/00918360903054137

Sklansky, A. (2007). *Police Reform, Occupational Culture, and Cognitive Burn In*. Seeing Blue, pp 1-22.

Waldo, C. R. (1999). Working in a majority context: A structural model of heterosexism as minority stress in the workplace. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 46(2), 218-232. doi:10.1037/0022-0167.46.2.218

## Appendix A

### Human Subjects approval letter

March 22, 2011

Jamie Wright

Dear Jamie,

Your revised materials have been reviewed and they are fine. This should be a useful study and I am sorry the VA turned you down. I wonder why? Too controversial? It has made the whole process so much more difficult for you. I hope your recruitment goes well. It's a very interesting and important topic. I hear some of the Republicans want to start a move to reinstate DAD. I don't think they will get very far.

*Please note the following requirements:*

**Consent Forms:** All subjects should be given a copy of the consent form.

**Maintaining Data:** You must retain signed consent documents for at least three (3) years past completion of the research activity.

*In addition, these requirements may also be applicable:*

**Amendments:** If you wish to change any aspect of the study (such as design, procedures, consent forms or subject population), please submit these changes to the Committee.

**Renewal:** You are required to apply for renewal of approval every year for as long as the study is active.

**Completion:** You are required to notify the Chair of the Human Subjects Review Committee when your study is completed (data collection finished). This requirement is met by completion of the thesis project during the Third Summer.

Good luck with your project..

Sincerely,

Ann Hartman, D.S.W.  
Chair, Human Subjects Review Committee

CC: Barbara Lui, Research Advisor



## **Appendix B**

### Survey Questions

Are you a United States military Veteran or service member?

Did you serve in the United States military after 1993?

What is your age?

What is your race or ethnicity?

What is your gender?

What is your sexual orientation?

Current relationship status?

What is your highest level of education?

Where did you grow up?

How long have you served in the United States military?

What branch of the Armed Forces have you served in?

Are you currently on active duty, in the reserves, or a member the National Guard?

What was the highest rank that you held in the United States military?

What best describes your military occupation or duties you have mostly been assigned to during military career?

How would you describe your level of agreement with the current US Armed Forces, Don't Ask Don't Tell (DADT) policy?

What do you think was the impact of DADT on Veterans and the military?

How important was the repeal of DADT you?

Is religion a major factor in your life?

In your experience were Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Veterans negatively impacted by the U.S. military's past and present policies toward Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual serving in the military?

Do you think that race is a factor in a Veteran's willingness to disclose their sexual orientation?

Do you think that gender is a factor in a Veteran's willingness to disclose their sexual orientation?

Do you think that serving in an all male unit/ship (Combat Arms Unit) is a factor in a Veteran's willingness to disclose their sexual orientation?

Do you think that the branch (Army, Navy, Marine, Air Force) of the military a Veteran served in is a factor in a Veterans willingness to disclose their sexual orientation?

Have you ever witnessed an event of gender discrimination against a Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual Veteran?

How would you describe the level of safety for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Veterans in the military since 1993?

During your military service, did you personally know any Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual Veterans?

How willing were Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Veterans to disclose their sexual orientation to their fellow service members?

Did you know anyone who was willing to be openly Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual while serving in the United States military?

What was the willingness of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Veterans to have there sexual orientation known by their chain of command?

Was there ever a time that you wanted to disclose your sexual orientation while in the military?

How do you think Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Veterans will be willing to disclose their sexual orientation?

How do you think Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Veterans will be willing to have their sexual orientation known by their chain of command?

Do you think that Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Veterans willing be more willing to openly serve in the United States military?

How safe do you think the military will be after the repeal of DADT for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Veterans in the military?

Do you think that sexual harassmnet of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexuals will be a problem in the military?

Do you think that military leadership will fairly support Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Veterans?

To what extent do you agree with Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Veterans partners attending military sponsored unit family support groups?

Do you think that the military needs to accept Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual civil unions, partnerships or marriages to support lesbian, Gay and bisexual partners?">

Do you think that the repeal of DADT was a step closer to the legalization of gay marriage in the United States?

Is there anything that you would like add about the impact of the repeal of DADT on U.S. Veterans?

## Appendix C

### Referral List for Participants

If participants needed any additional support or someone to talk to after completing the survey they were provided this list of contacts:

Military one source

1-800-342- 9647 or <http://www.militaryonesource.com/MOS/About/CounselingServices.aspx>

Veteran Affairs mental health website

<http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/gethelp.asp>

Suicide prevention hotline for Veterans

1-800-273-TALK (8255) or <http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/Veterans/Default.aspx>

## Appendix D

### Informed Consent From

Dear Participant:

I am a Master's Student at the Smith College School for Social Work. The purpose of this study is to research the views of U.S. Military Veterans that have served since the 1993 enactment of "Don't Ask Don't Tell" (DADT) about the impact of the recent repeal DADT on Veterans and is for my thesis, possible presentation and publication. This is a exploratory quantitative study about the potential impact of the recent repeal of DADT on those serving in the military.

You are invited to participate in this research by filling out an anonymous and confidential online survey. Participation in this study requires you to be a Veteran or service member of the United States military and have served in the military since 1993.

The demographic section asks about your: age range, gender/sexual orientation, race, relationship status, highest education achieved, region of country you grow up in, range of time in military service, branch of service, military occupation by general category, current military status. The second section asks questions about your military experience around DADT policies and views about the potential impact of the recent repeal of DADT on Veterans serving in the military. This should take about five to ten minutes.

The anonymous information that you provide will be kept completely confidential. Only this researcher and his supervisor will have access to the data. Every effort has been made to reduce identifiable information. This survey is anonymous and confidential and no IP address will be collected and all online information is protected by a Secure Sockets Layer (SSL). SSL is a protocol that works through a cryptographic system that secures a connection between a client and a server. Every effort has been made to protect the anonymity and confidentiality of participants taking this survey. By Federal guidelines, all data will be kept locked for a period of three years, after which time, all data will be destroyed.

Again, participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may withdraw from the study at any time while you are taking the survey and may refuse to answer any question. However, since the survey itself is anonymous, it will not be possible to withdraw after the completion of the survey, since it will not be connected to you in any way.

Thank you again for your help. If you have further questions please contact me:

Jamie Wright:

[jrwright@email.smith.edu](mailto:jrwright@email.smith.edu)

or

Jamie Wright

Smith College School for Social Work

Lilly Hall,

Northampton Ma 01064

BY CLICKING ON THE "I AGREE" BUTTON BELOW INDICATES THAT YOU HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE INFORMATION AND THAT YOU UNDERSTAND YOUR RIGHTS AND THAT YOU AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY.

## Appendix E

### Recruitment letter/Flyer

My name is Jamie Wright and I am an OIF Veteran and a graduate student of Smith College School for Social Work.



This is an exploratory study on the perceptions of U.S. Veterans on the impact of the recent repeal of Don't Ask Don't Tell (DADT) on the U.S. military community.

This is a confidential and anonymous survey. The length of time to take the survey is between five and ten minutes.

To participate, you must meet the following criteria:

- Be at least 18 years of age or older;
- Be able to read and write in English;
- Be a Veteran of the United States Armed Forces;
- Have served in the United States military since 1993.

If you are interested in participating in this survey follow the link

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/V9RKV93>

Data gathered through this on-line survey will support my Master's thesis research on this important and understudied topic.

Please forward this invitation on to anyone you know who meets the requirements to complete this study.

## Appendix F

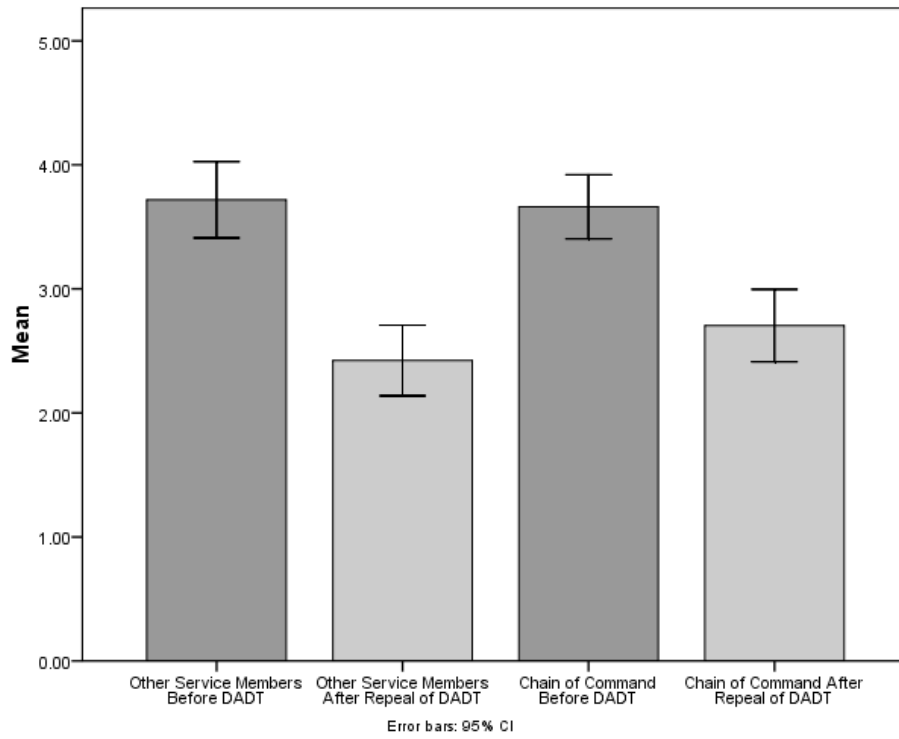
*Figure 1.* Differences between Combat and Non-Combat Soldiers' Perspectives on the Repeal of the Don't Ask Don't Tell (DADT) Provision.

	<i>t</i> (70)	<i>p</i>
Following the repeal of DADT, how willing do you think soldiers will be to disclose their sexual orientation to other soldiers?	1.39	.17
Following the repeal of DADT, how willing do you think soldiers will be to disclose their sexual orientation to their chain of command?	-.36	.72
Following the repeal of DADT, how safe do you think the military will be for LGBT soldiers?	.14	.89

*Note.* *t* = t-test for independent samples.

## Appendix G

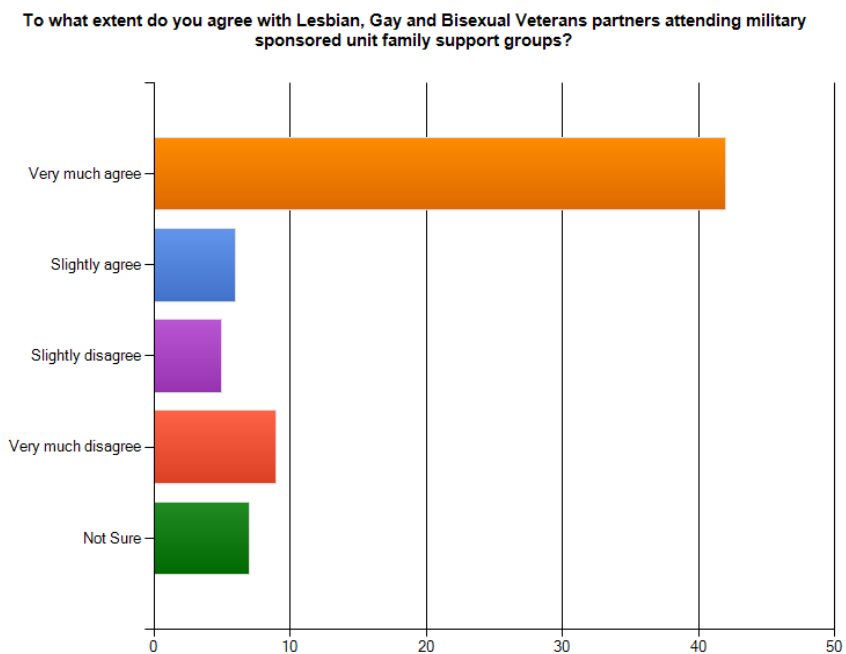
*Figure 2.* Soldiers' perceptions of LGB soldiers' willingness to disclose their sexual orientation before and after the repeal of the Don't Ask Don't Tell (DADT) provision.





## Appendix H

Figure 3. Soldiers' willingness to allow family members of LGB soldiers into military sponsored family support groups (shown as percentage of soldiers endorsing items).



## Appendix I

*Figure 4.* Soldiers' perceptions on whether or not military should recognize LGB domestic partnerships and support LGB soldiers' partners (shown as percentage of soldiers endorsing items).

