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One Year Out: An Assessment of DADT Repeal's Impact on Military Readiness

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“Repeal... would undermine recruiting and retention, impact leadership at all levels, have adverse effects on the willingness of parents who lend their sons and daughters to military service, and eventually break the All-Volunteer Force.”

— *March 2009 statement signed by
1,167 retired admirals and generals¹*

“The flag and general officers for the military, 1,167 to date, 51 of them former four-stars, said that this law, if repealed, could indeed *break* the All-Volunteer Force. They chose that word very carefully. They have a lot of military experience... and they know what they’re talking about.”

— *Elaine Donnelly, Center for Military
Readiness, May 2010²*

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Executive Summary

Study Overview and Approach

Prior to the repeal of “don’t ask, don’t tell” (DADT) on September 20, 2011, many observers predicted that allowing lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) troops to serve openly would harm the military. This study is the first scholarly effort to assess the accuracy of such predictions about the impact of DADT repeal on military readiness. Our conclusions are based on a consideration of all of the evidence that was available to us at the time our research was conducted, the half-year period starting six months after repeal and concluding at the one-year mark.

We sought to maximize the likelihood of identifying evidence of damage caused by repeal by pursuing ten separate research strategies, each of which was designed to uncover data indicating that repeal has undermined the military. Our research strategies included outreach to 553 generals and admirals who predicted that repeal would undermine the military, to all major activists and expert opponents of DADT repeal and to 18 watchdog organizations, including opponents and advocates of repeal, who are known for their ability to monitor Pentagon operations. In addition, we conducted in-depth interviews with 18 scholars and practitioners and 62 active-duty heterosexual, lesbian, gay and bisexual troops from every service branch, as well as on-site field observations of four military units. We analyzed relevant media articles published during the research period, administered two surveys and conducted secondary source analysis of surveys independently administered by outside organizations. Our vigorous effort to collect data from opponents of DADT repeal, including anti-repeal generals and admirals, activists, academic experts, service members and watchdog organizations, should sustain confidence in the validity and impartiality of our findings.

Our study team includes distinguished scholars from the US Military Academy, US Air Force Academy, US Naval Academy and US Marine Corps War College, as well as scholars with internationally recognized expertise on the issue of gays in the military. Several members advised the Pentagon’s 2010 DADT working group, and one member led the team that drafted the Defense Department’s plan for implementing DADT repeal.

Findings

1. The repeal of DADT has had no overall negative impact on military readiness or its component dimensions, including cohesion, recruitment, retention, assaults, harassment or morale.
2. A comparison of 2011 pre-repeal and 2012 post-repeal survey data shows that service members reported the same level of military readiness after DADT repeal as before it.
3. Even in those units that included openly LGB service members, and that consequently should have been the most likely to experience a drop in cohesion as a result of repeal, cohesion did not decline after the new policy of open service was put into place. In fact, greater openness and honesty resulting from repeal seem to have promoted increased understanding, respect and acceptance.
4. Recruitment was unaffected by the repeal of DADT. In an era when enlistment standards are tightening, service-wide recruitment has remained robust.
5. Retention was unaffected by the repeal of DADT. There was no mass exodus of military members as a result of repeal, and there were only two verifiable resignations linked to the policy change, both military chaplains. Service members were as likely to say that they plan to re-enlist after DADT repeal as was the case pre-repeal.
6. DADT repeal has not been responsible for any new wave of violence or physical abuse among service members. The policy change appears to have enabled some LGB service members to resolve disputes around harassment and bias in ways that were not possible prior to repeal.
7. Service-wide data indicate that overall, force morale did not decrease as a result of the new policy, although repeal produced a decline in individual morale for some service members who personally opposed the policy change and boosted individual morale for others.
8. There was no wave of mass disclosures of sexual orientation after repeal, and a minority of heterosexual service members reported in an independent survey that, after repeal, someone in their unit disclosed being LGB or that an LGB service member joined their unit.
9. Some military members have complained of downsides that followed from the policy change, but others identified upsides, and in no case did negative consequences outweigh benefits. In balance, DADT repeal has enhanced the military's ability to pursue its mission.
10. The findings of this study are consistent with the reported assessments of repeal by military leadership including President Barack Obama, Secretary of Defense Leon

Panetta, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Martin Dempsey and Marine Corps Commandant James Amos.

11. The findings of this study are consistent with the extensive literature on foreign militaries, which shows uniformly that readiness did not decline after foreign armed forces allowed LGB troops to serve openly.
12. As positive reports about DADT repeal emerged in the media, repeal opponents who predicted that open service would compromise readiness have adjusted their forecasts by emphasizing the possibility of long-term damage that will only become apparent in the future rather than identifiable consequences in the short-term.

One-Year Impact of DADT Repeal

(SEPTEMBER 2011-SEPTEMBER 2012)

Category	Impact of DADT repeal	Comments
Readiness	No negative impact	None
Cohesion	No negative impact	None
Recruitment & Retention	No negative impact	None
Assaults & Harassment	No negative impact	None
Morale	No net negative impact, but individual variations	Morale rose for some, fell for others with no net, overall change

Introduction

On September 20, 2011, the US military allowed lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) service members to serve openly after a protracted political battle to lift the ban on open service known as “don’t ask, don’t tell” (DADT). Public opinion had changed in the decade leading up to the Congressional repeal of DADT, with polls showing most Americans in favor of ending the ban, but many observers suggested that open service would undermine military readiness. In March 2009, more than 1,000 retired generals and admirals released a statement claiming that DADT repeal “would undermine recruiting and retention, impact leadership at all levels, have adverse effects on the willingness of parents who lend their sons and daughters to military service, and eventually break the All-Volunteer Force.”³ Such forecasts, if true, would prove devastating to the armed forces, but they have not yet been subject to social scientific analysis. This study is the first scholarly effort to assess the accuracy of predictions about the impact of DADT repeal on military readiness.

To do so, our study team conducted research during a half-year period starting six months after repeal and concluding at the one-year mark. We sought to maximize the likelihood of identifying problematic evidence by pursuing ten research strategies, each of which was designed to uncover any data showing that repeal undermines the military. Those strategies include: (1) Requesting 553 of the retired generals and admirals who predicted that repeal would undermine the military to participate in semi-structured interviews; (2) Requesting semi-structured interviews with every activist and expert that we could identify—22 in total—who opposed repeal publicly; (3) Requesting semi-structured interviews with representatives of 18 watchdog organizations, including opponents and advocates of repeal, who are known for their ability to monitor Pentagon operations; (4) Survey analysis of active-duty service members including closed- and open-ended questions; (5) On-site field observations of four military units; (6) In-depth interviews with 18 scholars and practitioners; (7) In-depth interviews with 62 active-duty service members, heterosexual and LGB, from every service branch, and representing diverse occupational specialties; (8) Content analysis of 462 relevant media articles published during the first 11 months of the research period; (9) Longitudinal secondary source analysis of surveys conducted independently by *Military Times* and OutServe, and of recruitment and retention data released by the Department of Defense; and (10) Pre-test/post-test quasi-experimentation.

Our conclusion, based on all of the evidence available to us, is that DADT repeal has had no overall negative impact on military readiness or its component dimensions, including cohesion, recruitment, retention, assaults, harassment or morale. Although we identified a few downsides that followed from the policy change, we identified upsides as well, and in no case did negative consequences outweigh benefits. If anything, DADT repeal appears to have enhanced the military’s ability to pursue its mission.

In the discussion below, we describe our research methodology, offer a brief history of DADT repeal, explain our findings about military readiness and its component dimensions and comment on the validity of our findings. In the main body of the paper, we begin with a discussion of readiness broadly conceived, and then focus on components of readiness that have been central to the public conversation about DADT and whether open service would harm or help the military. While this study does not address service by transgender troops, we refer sometimes to LGB troops, but also occasionally to LGBT troops, depending on whether we mean to indicate

the entire LGBT community or only those lesbian, gay and bisexual service members who were directly identified in the DADT policy and law.

Methods

Our objective has been to conduct an impartial inquiry, based on social science research methods, that assesses the impact of DADT repeal on military readiness. Thus, we constructed our research design to maximize the likelihood of identifying any data suggesting that repeal has compromised the armed forces. We pursued ten different research strategies, all described in this section, and reached our conclusions by using a preponderance-of-evidence standard, meaning that we carefully weighed the quality and quantity of all data we collected, and then determined which findings were best supported by the evidence. Because we are most interested in data suggesting that repeal harmed the military, we include almost all such evidence in our report even if it is of low quality. By contrast, because most of the data we collected suggests that repeal did not harm the military, only a fraction of such evidence appears in the report. Throughout this study, we offer specific explanations for how we interpreted each set of relevant data. Additional commentary on our standards of evidence can be found in Appendix B.

We began our research by contacting 553 of the 1,167 retired generals and admirals who signed a 2009 statement claiming that DADT repeal would “break the All-Volunteer Force.” We sent a letter to the 553 signatories for whom we could locate contact information and received responses from 13 officers, including six brigadier generals, three major generals, three lieutenant generals and one general. We interviewed 11 of those who responded, and we received a written statement from two, both of whom declined our request for additional commentary. A copy of the initial letter is provided in Appendix C.

To supplement the perspectives of generals and admirals, we made a vigorous effort to contact known public opponents of DADT repeal, because we reasoned that they would be among the most likely to listen for, hear of and report problems if and when they occurred. We generated a list of known opponents who had spoken about or published their opposition to repeal during the last decade, 22 in total. We emailed each opponent at least twice, and, if needed, followed up with at least two phone calls when phone numbers were available. Out of the 22 opponents on our list, one agreed to an interview, three declined and 18 did not respond to our inquiries. While the response rate to our request for interviews was too low to allow us to draw inferences about the overall perspectives of public opponents or of retired generals and admirals, responses we did receive were consistent with one another and with data derived from our other research strategies. The list of public opponents we contacted is provided in Appendix D.

Participants in the nearly two-decade conversation about DADT included a number of non-profit and advocacy groups that are known for the vigilance with which they monitor and report on day-to-day operations in the US military. Such organizations maintain large formal and informal networks of active-duty personnel and have considerable experience in ferreting out and reporting incidents of abuse and other disciplinary breakdowns. We reasoned that anti-repeal watchdog organizations would be particularly motivated to collect evidence of problems so as to build the case for overturning repeal or to confirm their predictions of disruption. Pro-repeal groups, by contrast, might be less focused on uncovering problems resulting from repeal, but their longstanding interest in protecting LGB service members from harassment would serve as an incentive for collecting data and monitoring the post-repeal environment. Thus, we studied

the websites and contacted the senior staff of 18 watchdog organizations, listed in Appendix E, including the most prominent and influential pro- and anti-repeal groups.

Some academic scholars who have developed deep expertise about US military personnel policy have published well-regarded, peer-reviewed studies of DADT, and maintain networks of dozens, and in some cases hundreds, of active-duty contacts. Hence, our research includes in-depth interviews with 18 scholars and practitioners, listed in Appendix F. To identify them, we began with a Palm Center list and then used snowball sampling to find additional interview subjects. During each interview, we pressed repeatedly for evidence of negative consequences that followed from DADT repeal, and we asked subjects to suggest other scholars and practitioners whom we could contact for our inquiry.

No one is more qualified to comment on the impact of DADT repeal than active-duty service members, who live their lives and perform their duties in the context of the new policy of open service. Thus, we conducted in-depth interviews with 62 active-duty, reserve and National Guard service members from all branches of the US military, and representing a wide range of occupational specialties.⁴ These troops included both LGB as well as heterosexual personnel. We recruited LGB troops by disseminating calls for input through the Facebook network of OutServe, an organization representing more than 5,700 active-duty LGBT troops. Palm Center staff and study co-authors put out additional calls for input, and new interview subjects were identified via friends, acquaintances and peers of initial respondents. From these calls we identified and then conducted in-depth interviews with 37 LGB respondents.⁵ To identify heterosexual service members, we disseminated calls for participation to personal networks and then tapped friends, acquaintances and other peers of initial respondents. Calls for input were sent through various listservs and Facebook groups, including those of current and previous attendees of war colleges and service academies. From these calls we identified, and then conducted in-depth interviews with, 25 heterosexual respondents.⁶ A list of all respondents is provided in Appendix G.

To broaden the pool of active-duty participants in our study, we placed an advertisement on the website of *Military Times* six months after repeal. Our advertisement requested feedback from anyone willing to discuss the consequences of DADT repeal, and we ran it for 50,000 clicks/page views, which translated into three weeks of appearances on the websites of *Army Times*, *Navy Times*, *Air Force Times* and *Marine Corps Times*. On the survey page, we used question logic to make sure that respondents were at least 18 and were current or former members of the military. Anyone who attempted to take the survey who was younger than 18 or not a member of the military community was redirected to a disqualification page. Qualified subjects were directed to an online survey that included 12 demographic questions, seven closed-ended and matrix questions and six open-ended qualitative questions, primarily related to the impact of DADT repeal on military readiness and its component parts, cohesion, recruitment/retention, assaults/harassment and morale. Other questions tapped respondents' views about repeal and knowledge of disciplinary incidents that may have occurred since repeal was implemented. After three weeks of posting the advertisement, we obtained 14 completed surveys from active-duty respondents representing all four branches of the military. These included 10 heterosexual and four LGB troops. Although the results of our survey are consistent with other data, the low response rate undermines their validity and reliability, and we did not rely on them to reach our conclusions. That said, we do comment on responses to our open-

ended questions in the text below. The advertisement we posted on *Military Times* websites is provided in Appendix H.

While in-depth interviews and surveys can provide invaluable data, we wanted to observe and compare entire military units engaged in normal operational activities. Thus, we observed the actions of four units, two of which included openly LGB members, and two of which did not. Our aim was to compare the readiness, cohesion and morale of units with and without LGB members and to identify qualitative differences. The observations included regular unit training activities and events on a military base located in a semi-rural region of the United States and at a service academy. The first observations included a combination of enlisted personnel and officers, while the others focused on interactions among cadets. The observing researcher was not an active participant in unit activities and observed as an unobtrusive outsider, sitting on the sidelines and recording field notes. The researcher did not interfere with or interrupt training activities and did not interview or interact with individual participants during the observation time frame. All observations were conducted during regular unit activities, with other bystanders present.

Many journalists have followed DADT closely, and we augmented our in-depth interviews, surveys and on-site field observations with a content analysis of media stories about DADT repeal. To do so, we did a LexisNexis Academic database search for items containing the keywords “gay” and “don’t ask, don’t tell” in the 11 months following the date of repeal, between September 20, 2011, and August 20, 2012. The search returned 462 items, and we reviewed each item to identify evidence of the effects of DADT repeal on the US military.⁷

A number of organizations have gathered information related to repeal, and we analyzed data from three such sources, each of which collected evidence prior to and then after DADT repeal. Data include results from three comprehensive surveys administered by *Military Times* and from two OutServe surveys that focused on the experiences of LGBT troops, as well as recruitment and retention reports released by the Defense Department for all active-duty, reserve and National Guard components. In order to assess whether DADT repeal has had an impact over time, we performed a longitudinal analysis of these materials.

Finally, because self-reports about a unit’s effectiveness can be subjective and unreliable, we conducted what is known as a pre-test/post-test quasi-experiment of nonequivalent groups to provide an independent means for assessing DADT repeal’s impact. The rationale of this approach is to compare the level of an outcome before and after an intervention, so as to determine whether the intervention is associated with any observed change in the outcome. In the case at hand, our aim was to compare the level of readiness and cohesion before and after DADT repeal. To conduct our experiment, we administered a brief survey to LGB troops two months before repeal and then six months after repeal. Our survey instrument posed two demographic questions and then asked respondents to rate the readiness and cohesion of their units.⁸ None of the questions referred to DADT or sexual orientation. We received 80 responses to our pre-repeal survey and 120 responses to our post-repeal survey. Comparing average pre- and post-repeal reported levels of readiness and cohesion allowed us to assess whether the change to open service may have influenced either of these two factors. For both the pre- and post-repeal surveys, respondents included members from all branches of the US military who were recruited through the OutServe network.

While no single research strategy is perfect, the ten research strategies that we pursued provided independent means for assessing the impact of DADT repeal on military readiness, as each strategy allowed us to assess repeal's impact in the context of different types of data. Taken together, and given that the preponderance of evidence generated by each strategy pointed in the same direction, this comprehensive research design allows us to have a high degree of confidence in our conclusion that DADT repeal has had no overall negative impact on military readiness or its component parts, including unit cohesion, recruitment, retention, assaults, harassment or morale.

Historical Context

“Don’t ask, don’t tell” is the common term for the policy and federal statute created under President Bill Clinton in 1993. The policy allowed LGB troops to serve in the military, but only if they kept their sexual orientation secret and refrained from engaging in “homosexual conduct,” which was defined to include same-sex sexual activity, attempts to marry someone of the same sex and statements indicating that one was lesbian, gay or bisexual. DADT was the product of a political battle that began in 1992 when Bill Clinton, as a presidential candidate, promised to end the longstanding ban on LGB service but met stiff resistance from social conservatives, military leaders and members of Congress who succeeded in codifying the new version of the ban into statute, making it harder to reverse.⁹

In 2010, with the support of the top military leadership, Congress voted to repeal DADT, thus allowing the Pentagon to enact regulations that would permit LGB troops to serve without restriction. The legislation called for a delayed implementation of repeal, which would follow certification by the President, Secretary of Defense and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff that the military was prepared to lift the ban without harming military readiness. The plan called for repeal to occur 60 days after certification. Upon repeal, LGB service members would no longer be required to conceal their sexual orientation or abide by previous conduct restrictions. Additionally, new recruits would be welcome to apply without restrictions on conduct or speech related to sexuality, and previously-discharged LGB service members would be allowed to apply for re-admission to the military if sexual orientation was the sole reason for their dismissal. Repeal did not change the medical disqualification of transgender people and did not provide LGB troops with equal partner benefits, which are restricted by separate statutes and regulations. Repeal legislation did not contain a specific non-discrimination clause protecting LGB troops from unequal treatment, and it did not include sexual orientation or gender identity as protected statuses under the Defense Department’s equal opportunity policy.

On July 22, 2011, the President, Secretary of Defense and Chairman of the Joints Chiefs of Staff certified that the military was ready for repeal, and implementation occurred on September 20, 2011. Since then, LGB Americans have been allowed to serve openly. In the next section of this study, we assess whether DADT repeal has had an impact on military readiness and its component dimensions.

Military Readiness

Militaries use the term “readiness” to refer to the quality of their preparedness for engaging in combat, in particular whether they have the capacity to wage war immediately and without warning. More broadly, however, readiness can refer to whether a military force is able to

achieve its mission. In this broader understanding of the term, readiness refers to overall military effectiveness and the central question of whether a military organization is able to do its job of winning wars rather than the more narrow, operational aspect of preparedness. While the nearly two-decade public dialogue over DADT included debates over a wide variety of issues, military readiness—broadly conceived—was the central, underlying concern of almost every aspect of the discussion. At issue in debates over unit cohesion, recruitment, retention, assaults, harassment and morale was whether or not DADT repeal would undermine combat effectiveness and the military’s ability to fulfill its war-fighting mission.

Concern about readiness served as the most fundamental and significant rationale for barring LGB troops from serving openly. When former President Bill Clinton tried to compel the Pentagon to allow open service, opponents insisted that doing so would compromise readiness. According to an influential 1993 report by a Pentagon-appointed “Military Working Group” comprised of a general or admiral representing each service branch, “The presence in the military of individuals identified as homosexuals would have a significantly adverse effect on... the readiness of the force... If identified homosexuals are allowed to serve, they will compromise the high standards of combat effectiveness which must be maintained, impacting on the ability of the Armed Forces to perform its mission.” Such concerns dominated Congressional hearings, and when DADT was enacted into law, the statute’s authors emphasized the risk that they believed LGB troops would pose to combat effectiveness.¹⁰

More recently, when President Barack Obama advocated the repeal of DADT, opponents made the same claim. The 1,167 retired generals and admirals who predicted that repeal would “break the All-Volunteer Force” added that “Our past experience as military leaders leads us to be greatly concerned about the impact of repeal on... overall military readiness.”¹¹ Even the Obama Justice Department, in defending DADT’s constitutionality, suggested it could be difficult to “ensure that any repeal of DADT does not irreparably harm the government’s critical interests in military readiness.”¹²

Despite such concerns, the evidence suggests that DADT repeal has not undermined readiness. Indeed, none of the individual opponents or watchdog organizations we contacted identified any evidence suggesting that DADT repeal has undermined readiness. None of the heterosexual service members who opposed or who continue to oppose repeal and whom we interviewed or surveyed reported any evidence indicating that the new policy has compromised readiness. Even a well-known opponent of DADT repeal has acknowledged that the new policy has not compromised military readiness thus far. According to Elaine Donnelly, President of the Center for Military Readiness (CMR): “No one predicted anything would happen immediately, so that prediction is true.”¹³

Among the retired generals who signed the statement predicting that repeal would “break the All-Volunteer Force,” one said that, “I believe evidence is growing that substantiates my initial concerns,” but he declined to elaborate or provide details. None of the others reported any evidence suggesting that the new policy has compromised readiness. One retired lieutenant general told us that he “had not heard anything or received anything from anyone about having any problems.” A retired one-star general said that a friend’s son who is a company commander in Afghanistan told him “I don’t pay any attention to it. It’s not really an issue.” Another said that there was no indication of any major impact as of yet: “The general perception is that it seems to be working.” Yet another said that he remains opposed to repeal because “homosexual

behavior is abnormal,” but he is “not aware of anything positive or negative that has happened.”¹⁴

None of the heterosexual service members we interviewed or surveyed offered any evidence suggesting that repeal has undermined military readiness. An Army Ranger told us that repealing DADT “didn’t change anything... We’ve got a guy in the unit who is gay. We’ve been working together for years and everyone knew, but no one ever cared. For us it’s all about whether or not you’re good at your job... it’s all about quiet professionalism, not about your sexual orientation.” An Air Force pilot said he could scarcely assess the impact of repeal because “I know that it has been repealed, but it just hasn’t affected me in any way, shape or form... I guess I would have to say it is a success. I say that because I honestly haven’t noticed any difference at all from before the repeal to now.” A Navy pilot told us that he thought repeal “went very well.” An Army Sergeant First Class explained that “there’s been no real changes” since repeal. A heterosexual naval surface warfare commander said, “I kind of look at it like a non-event. It was like asking, ‘did the sun rise this morning?’ It went pretty smoothly, like driving over a flat road, you don’t even notice a ripple.” That sentiment was echoed by a submariner, who told us that “it was such a non-event, I don’t even remember it. Nothing noteworthy has happened.” He added that repeal, “is not a big deal; it’s going to be business as usual. Really we’ve been inclusive of these people, they’ve been serving with us forever, now they are going to be allowed to be more open about it. This doesn’t change anything with the crew.”¹⁵

Even heterosexual service members who oppose DADT repeal acknowledged to us that the new policy has not undermined readiness. According to one currently deployed Army National Guard sergeant who opposes open service, there “was not much of a transition, it’s not like people come in with rainbow flags or anything... the funny thing about the military is, people come in and do a job. That’s all there is to it.” A Navy SEAL who opposes repeal was nonetheless adamant that the military is a professional force, and that even those who do not agree with particular policies will follow them because that is what they are trained to do: “We’re professional; we do what we’ve done in the past, make the work environment professional.”¹⁶

None of the scholars we interviewed knew of any evidence suggesting that DADT repeal has harmed military readiness. Dr. Jay Goodwin, a principal author of the Pentagon’s 2010 report on DADT repeal, told us that, “In terms of negative impact, I have not heard of any.” As President of the Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society, John Allen Williams communicates regularly with numerous scholars and experts who study civil-military relations. Asked about the implementation of DADT repeal, he said that it “appeared to be very smooth and very well-done” and that he was not aware of any negative consequences. Todd Garth, an openly gay Naval Academy professor, said that before DADT repeal, the sense among his colleagues was that “the change would be a non-event for the most part and I get the sense that that’s what people think has happened.” Stephen J. Gerras, a retired Army colonel who teaches at the US Army War College, was surprised when a gay speaker he invited to address his class failed to spark any controversy, “but maybe that’s all part of the storyline, which is, thus far, it seems to be a non-event.” David Kaiser, a professor at the Naval War College, told us that “Today’s field-grade officers know the troops don’t care, for the most part.” He added that, “I haven’t seen any indication that anyone’s very worried about it. I haven’t seen any indication that things are going badly.” George Reed, a retired Army colonel who served as director of Command and Leadership Studies at the Army War College, told us that “there was a big resounding silence after repeal. There has been very limited if any impact.” David Levy, an Air

Force Academy professor, said that, “I knew this was not going to be an issue... but I was somewhat amazed about just how much of a non-issue it was. There was virtually no talk about it whatsoever.” He said it was “almost eerie” how little attention the change had garnered. “I just don’t see anyone talking about this, and I check with a lot of people about it, in classrooms, and elsewhere,” he said.¹⁷

Finally, political and military leaders have concluded that DADT repeal has not compromised readiness. In February 2012, President Obama referred to repeal as a non-event and said that while some warned that ending the policy would be a “huge, ugly issue,” the result was that “nothing’s happened.” Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said in May 2012, based on an unreleased Pentagon report that assessed the first months of the new policy, that repeal is “going very well... It’s not impacting on readiness.” Secretary Panetta added that, “Very frankly, the military has moved beyond.” General Martin Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told reporters in May 2012 that, “I have not found any negative effect on good order and discipline.” He asked, “What were we afraid of?” and answered that, “We didn’t know” how repeal would go, but ultimately “it worked out well.” Three months after the new policy of open service went into effect, the service chief who was most outspoken against repeal, Marine Corps Commandant James Amos, said he was “very pleased with how it has gone.” According to the *Washington Times*, Amos “said he heard little from Marines about serving with openly gay troops.” The Commandant noted that, “The Marine Corps faithfully and willingly carried out the intent of our commander-in-chief and civilian leadership in preparing for repeal. All Marines, sailors and civilian Marines, regardless of sexual orientation, are Marines first. Every Marine is a valued member of our war-fighting team.” In March 2012, Pentagon spokeswoman Eileen Lainez confirmed that the new policy is “proceeding smoothly across the Department of Defense.”¹⁸

Among all of the evidence we uncovered via our ten research strategies, we found only a handful of data points, all of which are addressed in the next few paragraphs, suggesting that DADT repeal has compromised any element of readiness or the military’s ability to pursue its mission. During his campaign for the Republican presidential nomination, former Senator Rick Santorum said that, “Gay soldiers cause problems for people living in close quarters.”¹⁹ And CMR President Elaine Donnelly told the *Washington Times* that the existence of OutServe, the network of LGBT troops, is “inherently divisive.”²⁰ Neither of these comments indicates that DADT repeal has undermined readiness. Senator Santorum did not provide supporting evidence, and his office did not respond to several requests for explanation. Donnelly also did not provide evidence of divisiveness and, as noted above, acknowledged elsewhere that repeal has not compromised readiness thus far.

We also question a report by CMR that implies that LGB public displays of affection and gay pride celebrations at service academies have undermined military readiness.²¹ Several public displays have in fact drawn widespread attention, such as a photograph of Marine Sergeant Brandon Morgan kissing his boyfriend that went viral, with more than 40,000 people clicking “like” and 10,000 offering comments.²² While such displays may have lowered the morale of some service members, as we discuss in a subsequent section of this study, they do not constitute evidence that DADT repeal undermined overall readiness. As retired Army Colonel and Army War College Professor Charles Allen explained, although some of the well-publicized homecomings among LGB personnel “raised eyebrows,” there was no impact on the “ability of the Army to perform its mission... I’ve heard nothing that said they were not able to do the

withdrawal from Iraq on schedule, nothing to indicate that performance of duty in Afghanistan in a very tough environment was impacted” by the end of DADT.²³

Likewise, we are not persuaded by the 4.5% of 733 active-duty troops and 59 reservists mobilized for active duty who said in response to a January 2012 *Military Times* survey that, after DADT repeal, their unit was negatively impacted when someone disclosed being gay or bisexual or when an openly gay or bisexual person joined their unit.²⁴ A comparison of 2011 pre-repeal and 2012 post-repeal *Military Times* survey data shows that service members reported approximately the same level of military readiness after DADT repeal as before it. On all four components of readiness measured by *Military Times* surveys (quality of training, officers and enlisted leaders, and whether today’s service members are the best ever) the 2012 post-repeal data indicate approximately the same levels as the 2011 pre-repeal data.²⁵ And, as we discuss below, the *Military Times* surveys also indicate that after repeal, service-wide morale remained stable, and service members were as likely to say that they would re-enlist as they were before repeal. If repeal had compromised overall readiness in any discernible way, it is hard to understand why every dimension of readiness assessed by *Military Times* survey respondents remained stable after the new policy of open service went into effect. Moreover, as discussed below, there is reason to believe that claims of unit harm may reflect disapproval of repeal, not actual evidence of a decline in readiness. Thus, even though 4.5% of service members indicated that DADT repeal had negatively impacted their units, the preponderance of evidence contradicts this contention and suggests that, overall, the policy change did not harm the military.

Contrary to expectations of a post-repeal decline in readiness, we uncovered considerable evidence in our open-ended interviews about ways in which the new policy has enhanced the military’s ability to pursue its mission. More specifically, both experts and service members told us that repeal had enhanced military readiness in the areas of discipline, command, family readiness and spirituality. Consider these illustrations:

- *Discipline:* A Navy pilot told us about two gay service members who broke a shipboard rule before DADT repeal. Commanders were not comfortable bringing charges for that low-level transgression because doing so would have required outing the service members as gay. The infraction of which they were guilty was minor and had a very slight penalty associated with it, but the penalty for their being labeled as gay was separation from the military. Because the commanders did not believe that the lower infraction was significant enough to warrant discharge, they declined to charge the pair with the lesser infraction. “This put the leadership in an awkward position,” explained the pilot, “and the repeal just takes away that extra hurdle and allows commanders to lead better.”²⁶
- *Command:* Another Naval officer told us that prior to repeal, commanders could not assist their sailors in the ways they would like because they could be obligated to discharge them if they knew too much. DADT repeal allowed this officer to better understand the sailors under her command so that she could counsel them and address and resolve their issues. She described a sailor who was having personal issues. “He was a very good sailor, but started having problems” including anxiety and sleeplessness. “Over time it became clear that the problem was possibly with a relationship, but because [the leadership] believed the relationship was with another man, they couldn’t talk with him about it.” She said that not being able to deal with the issue directly hindered her

ability to help the sailor under her command. With the change in policy, “everyone, from leadership down, were relieved that at least the sailor could come talk to them, whether or not they supported [homosexuality] themselves... There were too many service members who fit in the [LGB] category, which caused additional stress in already stressful situations. That is totally unacceptable. This was a very important change.”²⁷

- *Family readiness*: An Air Force non-commissioned officer told us about “an airman who had a partner who was gravely ill who he couldn’t take care of because we were being deployed. He couldn’t get a hardship waiver because he couldn’t tell anyone he was gay and that really affected his ability to serve.” The repeal of DADT “opened up more possibilities for [troops] to talk about their lives” when doing so was necessary for resolving personal issues so they could focus on their mission.²⁸
- *Spirituality*: A chaplain told us that, “The repeal will give me more opportunities to expand my ministry. I can help more people now because they can talk to me openly without fear.”²⁹

The evidence we uncovered from our ten research strategies indicates that DADT repeal has not undermined overall readiness, and even well-known opponents of repeal did not identify any persuasive evidence indicating that readiness has declined. We concur with West Point Chief of Staff Colonel Gus Stafford, who said that much of the military community “underestimated the adaptability and capability of our young people to adapt.”³⁰ With respect to military readiness, predictions of negative consequences have proven unfounded.

Components of Military Readiness

Unit Cohesion

Having addressed repeal’s impact on the military’s overall capacity to pursue its mission, we now turn to an assessment of four components of readiness that have been emphasized frequently during the public dialogue about DADT: cohesion, recruitment/retention, assaults/harassment and morale. The first and most prominently discussed component of readiness, unit cohesion, refers to bonds of trust among members of a military unit.³¹ The Pentagon’s 1993 Military Working Group observed that “the essence of unit cohesion is the bonding between members of a unit which holds them together, sustains their will to support each other, and enables them to fight together under the stress and chaos of war. The MWG found that the presence of open homosexuals in a unit would, in general, polarize and fragment the unit and destroy the bonding and singleness of purpose required for effective military operations.”³² Vincent Pattavina, a retired Navy officer, said in 1993 that, “There are good reasons why the military does not want gays and lesbians in the military. One good reason is their presence destroys military cohesion. When you have to live, sleep and fight at close quarters [with gay people], heterosexuals do not have the team fighting ability (military cohesion) that is necessary to win battles. The units of our best soldiers, Marines and sailors in past wars have had excellent military cohesion, which would have been obviated [sic] by the presence of gays and lesbians.”³³ The statute that codified DADT into law reflected such concerns, in noting that, “The presence in the armed forces of persons who demonstrate a propensity or intent to engage in homosexual acts would create an unacceptable risk to the high standards of morale, good order and discipline, and unit cohesion that are the essence of military capability.”³⁴

More recently, concerns about unit cohesion played a prominent role in the debate over whether Congress should repeal DADT. Testifying before the House Armed Services Committee in 2008, retired Army officer Brian Jones said that, “As a US Army Ranger, I performed long-range patrols in severe cold weather conditions, in teams of 10, with only mission-essential items on our backs. No comfort items. The only way to keep from freezing at night was to get as close as possible for body heat—which means skin to skin. On several occasions, in the close quarters that a team lives, any attraction to same-sex teammates, real or perceived, would be known and would be a problem. The presence of openly gay men in these situations would elevate tensions and disrupt unit cohesion and morale.”³⁵ General James Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps, said in 2010 that, “There is nothing more intimate than young men and young women—and when you talk of infantry, we’re talking about our young men—laying out, sleeping alongside of one another and sharing death, fear and loss of brothers... I don’t know what the effect of [repeal] will be on cohesion. I mean, that’s what we’re looking at. It’s unit cohesion, it’s combat effectiveness.”³⁶

Despite such concerns, the preponderance of evidence suggests that DADT repeal has not undermined unit cohesion. With two exceptions discussed below, none of the heterosexual troops we interviewed and surveyed offered any evidence suggesting that DADT repeal undermined cohesion. A heterosexual chaplain explained that, during his prior service in the Special Forces, long before the repeal of DADT, he served in a combat unit “where everyone knew who was gay and no one cared. The soldiers figured these guys loved being men so much [that] they loved other men, and that was all there was to it.” A heterosexual Army Ranger told us that repealing DADT “didn’t affect cohesion... or how we interact, or force us to change any sort of accommodations for anyone.” A heterosexual Air Force captain and emergency room doctor said that civilians often have “ideas about narrow-mindedness of the members of the military, especially as regards religious or social issues. But that’s just not how it works. Individuals may have a problem, but there is no problem with the group opinion.”³⁷

None of the LGB service members we interviewed or surveyed reported any decline in unit cohesion following the repeal of DADT. A technical sergeant in the Air Force said that he came out to a handful of people after repeal. “All respected me for telling them and felt honored that I trusted them enough to tell them,” he said. “It was refreshing.” An Air Force combat crew evaluator revealed his sexual orientation on Facebook at midnight on the day of repeal, and said the reaction was “universally positive,” calling it “hands-down one of the most positive things that’s ever happened during my career.” He said he “had four people approach me around the building and congratulate me.” An Army mortuary affairs specialist was finally able to use honest pronouns in conversations with coworkers. When she did, “I met no surprise or even second glance from anyone,” she said, noting that the policy change for her was “relatively seamless. I have a pretty high level of respect from the people that I currently work with and I generally work with people that have enough experience in the military to know that homosexuality has nothing to do with job performance.” A Navy hospital corpsman added that, “There have been no issues regarding the repeal” in his unit and “no negative changes to unit cohesion” since the policy change. He said his commanding officer gave him strong support when he opted to speak as a representative for “Repeal Day.” When he revealed his sexual orientation, he said that too was mostly a “general non-event. There were some looks of surprise, but nobody made a big deal about it.” He said his peers “treated it as business as usual. Sure, there were malcontents, but they got over it rather quickly.”³⁸

Nor did any of the scholarly experts we interviewed know of any evidence suggesting that repeal has undermined cohesion. Martin Cook, who has served as a professor at the Naval War College, Air Force Academy and Army War College, summarized the apparent position of many of these scholars in noting that arguments stressing possible damage to unit cohesion “were really a smokescreen for other reasons; those were just the only publicly acceptable reasons they could put forward.”³⁹

Finally, top political and military leaders have indicated that DADT repeal did not prompt any decline in cohesion. In February 2012, President Obama said of DADT repeal that, “There hasn’t been any notion of erosion in unit cohesion.” Defense Secretary Panetta told the press in May 2012 that repeal is “not impacting on unit cohesion.” Aside from the one retired general who, as noted in the previous section, said that, “I believe evidence is growing that substantiates my initial concerns,” none of the opponents of DADT repeal, including activists, watchdog organizations or retired generals, identified any evidence contradicting senior leadership’s contention that repeal has not undermined unit cohesion.⁴⁰

While interviews and surveys that ask subjects to describe the impact of DADT repeal on cohesion can provide valuable information, both methods have limitations, specifically the fact that they require respondents to make an inference about causality. That is, when they report whether they believe that repeal has had an impact on cohesion, respondents must offer a causal interpretation of whether the new policy of open service has caused an increase or decrease in cohesion. As psychologists have demonstrated, however, causal inferences are subject to a host of potential distortions, and this is particularly likely when the wording of a survey or interview question provokes an emotional reaction.⁴¹ Thus, when a respondent reports that repeal has not undermined cohesion, his or her response may be more a reflection of the subject’s approval of DADT repeal than an appraisal and explanation of any changes or lack thereof in the level of cohesion. Conversely, when a respondent reports that repeal has undermined cohesion, the response may be reflective of a disapproval of repeal rather than constituting actual evidence of causal harm.

To overcome this limitation and provide an additional, independent means for assessing DADT repeal’s impact, we designed an experiment that is known as a pre-test/post-test quasi-experiment of nonequivalent groups. In the case at hand, a large group of service members (N=80) ranked their unit’s cohesion on a scale of one to ten two months before DADT repeal, and then another large group of service members (N=120) ranked their unit’s cohesion six months after repeal. By comparing the pre- and post-repeal average reported levels of cohesion, we were able to assess whether the new policy of open service was associated with any change. To avoid priming the subjects’ emotional feelings about DADT repeal, our survey simply asked each respondent to rank his or her unit’s level of cohesion and readiness, and did not mention DADT or sexual orientation.

To rigorously test the hypothesis that repeal has not undermined cohesion, we administered our survey exclusively to active-duty members of OutServe. While it would be unsurprising if units composed exclusively of heterosexual troops maintained a steady rate of cohesion after repeal, units including openly LGB troops should have been the most likely to suffer a drop in cohesion after the policy change. And of all LGB individuals serving in the military, members of OutServe should be among those most likely to reveal their sexual orientation, given their

willingness to affiliate with an LGBT organization. Hence, according to the logic of opponents of DADT repeal, units that include OutServe members should be the most likely to experience a decline in cohesion. What we found, however, is that LGB troops reported a slight increase in cohesion after DADT repeal: the average level of unit cohesion for the pre-repeal group was 7.18 while the average post-repeal ranking was 7.65, an increase of 6.5%.⁴²

Similar to all research methodologies, our quasi-experiment is not perfect. We would have preferred to measure each unit's cohesion by averaging scores of multiple members of that unit rather than relying on a single unit member to rate his or her unit's cohesion. In addition, any nonequivalent groups design is vulnerable to the criticism that observed differences are the result of the nonequivalence, not the intervention.⁴³ That said, the strength of the quasi-experiment is that it provided an independent means for overcoming limitations, described above, that are inherent in any effort to ask subjects to describe the impact of DADT repeal on cohesion. The results of our quasi-experiment are consistent with the preponderance of evidence we uncovered, and suggest that even in those units that should have been the most likely to experience a decline in cohesion as a result of repeal, cohesion did not decrease after the new policy of open service was put into place.⁴⁴

In addition to interviews, surveys, content analysis and quasi-experimentation, one study author observed daily operations of multiple military units, and found no major differences between units that included openly LGB troops and those that did not. All service members conducted themselves professionally and interacted with one another as professionals. Interestingly, there were observable differences in the way supervisors and subordinates interacted in the various units, but differences were not related to sexual orientation. In two units, the interactions were familiar and easy, while in the other two, interactions were more formal and rigid. These differences were not related to the presence of LGB troops in that one of the formal units included openly LGB members and the other did not, and one of the informal units included LGB troops while the other did not. The different styles of interaction and levels of formality were more reflective of command climate than the presence or absence of LGB troops. Likewise, cohesion, or how well the unit bonded and meshed, seemed most dependent on the compatibility of unit members' personalities, overall command climate and level of familiarity. The units that were the most cohesive had served together the longest and were the most familiar with one another. Units with a high proportion of new members or high turnover were less likely to be cohesive. The sexual orientation of members did not seem to play a role in the level of cohesion within the units observed.

The only data we collected linking open service to a possible impairment of cohesion were unpersuasive. Of 10 active-duty, heterosexual service members who responded to our *Military Times* advertisement requesting survey participants, two indicated that cohesion declined after the repeal of DADT.⁴⁵ In response to open-ended questions requesting elaboration, one said that LGB troops would want special treatment, explaining that, "The homosexual males will want to do the female scaled PT test." He added that, "[heterosexual] males will only shower with other straight males."⁴⁶ Another said that cohesion will suffer because, "by repealing DADT, a separate [entitlement] group has been created... [and] this reduces unit cohesion as sailors will not act freely, afraid that they will upset this new special group."⁴⁷ We question whether either of these claims indicates a decline in cohesion because neither respondent was aware of LGB troops serving in his unit. Both also used the future tense in responding to open-ended questions, suggesting that their concerns reflected fears of future deterioration rather than evidence of an

actual detriment to cohesion following the repeal of DADT. An article in the *Marine Corps Gazette* made similar predictions and expressed future concerns, but also did not provide evidence that cohesion has suffered.⁴⁸

Although the preponderance of evidence suggests that repeal has not undermined cohesion, we did identify survey as well as interview data indicating that the new policy of open service has promoted greater honesty which, in turn, has enabled the troops to develop tighter bonds of trust. Published and ongoing longitudinal research at West Point confirms that both military academy and ROTC cadets are increasingly tolerant of gays and lesbians in the military, even more so following repeal of DADT.⁴⁹

Alongside the longitudinal survey data obtained at West Point, our interview data suggest that DADT repeal has promoted greater trust. A heterosexual Marine sergeant told us that, “It’s been a lot better since we now know with whom we serve. It’s all out in the open and now there is no wondering or guessing. We know. And knowledge is power!” He went on to say that, “We now get along better and we accept our unit members as they are; we do not beat around the bush or sugarcoat anything. It’s a lot better now. [We’re all] very equal.”⁵⁰

A heterosexual Army sergeant said that DADT repeal has allowed straight troops to strengthen their relationships with LGB colleagues, in that it “finally allowed people to have the freedom to be who they are. They still don’t have the same rights available to everyone, but the freedom [is now] there.” He added that post-repeal, “People are more open with their previous experiences” and more likely to introduce LGB peers to same-sex partners. A heterosexual lieutenant commander in Naval meteorology believes the repeal will bring about positive changes in the overall military culture. “It removed a barrier that was neither necessary nor practical,” he said. “It will help facilitate the slow cultural change towards greater acceptance.”⁵¹

A gay Naval Academy midshipman reported that, after repeal, discussing his sexual orientation was no longer a career-ending offense, and in fact brought out the protective instincts of other midshipmen. The midshipman said that, “Pretty much everybody in my company knows now” about his sexual orientation and “they actually stand up for me” if they hear anti-gay comments. A gay Army social worker told us that he used to have to “avoid my unit like the plague,” but repeal changed that. “I kept everything to myself” in the past, he said. “I can be one person now,” no longer keeping his work life separate from his personal life. Previously, he said, “I went to painstaking lengths to keep them separate, and I don’t do that anymore. I go out with my co-workers. So for me it helps so I’m actually part of the unit where I don’t think I was before.”⁵²

A Navy commander said that during a course on current events, one of her classmates brought up “a story on NPR about a [male] Marine officer who was coming out, and taking a male to the Marine Corps ball that year.” Some of her classmates responded “by wondering, ‘why can’t they just keep that information to themselves?’ But then another classmate asked, ‘why should they have to hide?’” The commander said that the woman who spoke up went on to question why, given that heterosexual troops talk about their dates, she should have to hide who hers was going to be. The woman had not acknowledged her sexual orientation prior to this discussion, and many of her classmates were shocked. The commander said that, “It was a conversation stopper. Those guys hadn’t thought of it that way before. I also think they didn’t realize they knew someone who was actually gay.”⁵³

Professor Garth, the openly gay professor at the Naval Academy, explained that, “One of the things about the ban is that it had basically shut down discussion. There was discussion of homosexuality sometimes but it always had to be very impersonal.” Now that has changed, and the improvement appears to apply to the bond between midshipmen and faculty. “As strong as that bond was, this has only enhanced it,” he said, suggesting that the new level of openness has permeated relationships at the Naval Academy in general.⁵⁴ An Army captain in administrative law told us that repeal had “enhanced our unit cohesion” as he is more open and honest with peers, as are they with him.⁵⁵ And an Army signals analyst said that after repeal, “The unit’s cohesion was greatly increased... People were accepting of those who came out and those who were accepted found a whole new respect from those you had just come out to.”⁵⁶

Despite concerns that DADT repeal would undermine unit cohesion and prevent service members from forming bonds of trust, the preponderance of evidence suggests that the new policy of open service has not compromised cohesion, and that, if anything, greater openness and honesty have promoted increased understanding, respect and even acceptance.

Recruitment and Retention

Throughout the nearly two-decade conversation about DADT, Pentagon leaders as well as experts on US military personnel policy claimed that allowing gay men and lesbians to serve openly would compromise recruitment and retention. When former President Bill Clinton tried to compel the military to lift its ban in 1993, participants in the debate expressed concerns about the Pentagon’s ability to recruit and retain qualified service members. According to the influential 1993 Military Working Group report cited above, “Open homosexuality in the military would likely reduce the propensity of many young men and women to enlist due to parental concerns, peer pressure, and a military image that would be tarnished in the eyes of much of the population from which we recruit.”⁵⁷ Such claims were ubiquitous in the 1993 debate and appear to have played an influential role in Congress’s decision to enact DADT into law.

More recently, the 2009 statement signed by 1,167 retired generals and admirals predicted that repeal “would undermine recruiting and retention [and] have adverse effects on the willingness of parents who lend their sons and daughters to military service.” After Congress authorized DADT repeal in 2010, Frank Gaffney, Jr., of the Center for Security Policy, said that the new policy of open service could “prove decisive to the viability of the all-volunteer force. That viability may, in turn, determine our ability to avoid in the years ahead—as we have for the past four decades—a return to conscription to meet our requirements for warriors in those conflicts.”⁵⁸ Elaine Donnelly of CMR predicted a possible loss of 500,000 service members as a result of repeal.⁵⁹

By contrast, some scholars expected DADT repeal to enhance recruitment and retention. This expectation was premised on the estimate that each year, DADT caused approximately 4,000 LGB service members to separate from the armed forces earlier than would have been the case if they had been allowed to acknowledge their sexual orientation. In addition, scholars estimated that DADT repeal would expand the annual pool of potential recruits because approximately 41,000 LGB individuals would become eligible for service and because repeal would motivate some heterosexuals who had previously avoided an institution they associated with discrimination to join the armed forces.⁶⁰ Finally, some scholars predicted that DADT repeal

would encourage some universities to invite Reserve Officer Training Corps programs back to campus.

Although we uncovered some evidence supportive of both pessimistic and optimistic predictions, the preponderance of evidence suggests that DADT repeal has had no impact on recruitment or retention. Before addressing those data, however, we review the evidence that is consistent with pessimistic and optimistic forecasts. In response to a January 2012 *Military Times* survey completed after DADT repeal by 792 active-duty troops and mobilized reservists, 8.4% said that repeal made them less likely to remain in the military. Two out of the ten heterosexual troops whom we surveyed indicated that DADT repeal made them less likely to remain in the service beyond their minimum commitment. And in our in-depth interviews, two active-duty naval officers told us that they considered separating from the armed forces prematurely as a result of repeal. By contrast, 3.3% of *Military Times* respondents said that DADT repeal made them more likely to remain in the military. Moreover, the two naval officers who said that they had considered separating early told us that they decided to remain until retirement, and four heterosexual troops told us during interviews that repeal made them more likely to continue to serve beyond their minimum commitment.

Although a minority of service members report that DADT repeal has had an impact on their likelihood of re-enlisting, with some less likely and others more likely to remain, the preponderance of evidence suggests that repeal has not had any discernible impact, either positive or negative, on recruitment or retention. A comparison of 2011 pre-repeal and 2012 post-repeal *Military Times* surveys shows that after repeal, service members were just as likely to say that they would remain in the military as they were before repeal. In response to a question asking, “If you had to decide today, would you re-enlist or—if an officer—extend your commitment,” 70% of 2011 respondents answered yes (17% no, 14% undecided), but 72% of 2012 respondents indicated that they would re-enlist (15% no, 14% undecided).⁶¹ In response to the question, “Do you currently plan to remain in the military for at least 20 years and earn a full retirement package,” 84% of 2011 respondents answered yes (5% no, 11% undecided), but 85% of 2012 respondents indicated that they would remain (3% no, 12% undecided). Even though 8.4% of 2012 post-repeal *Military Times* survey respondents said that DADT repeal made them less likely to remain in the military, repeal appears to be a minor if not trivial factor in their decision-making. If repeal were a significant factor in re-enlistment decisions for 8.4% of the force, then it would be hard to understand why, post-repeal, troops were just as likely to say that they would re-enlist as was the case before repeal.

That said, the correlation between re-enlistment intentions and actual re-enlistment is generally low unless intention data are collected shortly before the expiration of terms of service, so it is important to consider actual retention rates. The military has successfully met its recruitment and retention targets in the wake of DADT repeal. According to recruitment and retention numbers released by the Department of Defense on June 29, 2012, more than nine months after DADT repeal went into effect, “All four active services met or exceeded their numerical accession goals for fiscal 2012, through May.” The Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force achieved 100% of their goals, while the Army exceeded its goal with an additional 253 recruits, thus reaching 101% of its target. In addition, “The Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force all exhibited strong retention through the eighth month of fiscal 2012.” On the reserve side, “five of the six reserve components met or exceeded their numerical accession goals for fiscal 2012, through May.” The Army Reserve exceeded its goal, reaching 104% of its target, and the Marine Corps Reserve also

exceeded its goal at 106% of its target. The Navy Reserve, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard all met their targets at 100%. According to the press release, “All reserve components are on target to achieve their fiscal year attrition goals.”⁶²

The Army National Guard (ANG) was the only reserve component that did not meet its recruitment target in 2012, reaching only 95% of its goal. However, trend data suggest that the shortfall had nothing to do with DADT repeal. The ANG’s post-repeal recruitment numbers mirrored its pre-repeal totals, indicating that repeal was not a likely factor in its performance. In FY 2011, the ANG was the only reserve component to fail to meet its goal, achieving 96% of its target. And, as was the case in 2012 after DADT repeal went into effect, the data from FY 2011 show that during the last period when DADT was still law, all four active-duty branches met or exceeded recruitment and retention numbers, five out of six reserve component branches met or exceeded recruitment goals and all six reserve component branches met or exceeded retention goals.⁶³

We contacted the National Guard Bureau to determine if DADT repeal caused the ANG to fail to meet its recruitment goals, and, if not, why it has not achieved its 2012 target. A Bureau spokesperson told us that DADT repeal had nothing to do with the shortfall, and pointed instead to “challenges associated with recruiting to specialized military occupational skills and a reduced available population who meet military requirements. The entrance standards for military service continue to increase in regard to aptitude, physical fitness, morale and particularly behavioral health.”⁶⁴ We confirmed that entrance standards for military recruitment have in fact increased over the course of the past year. In addition, the military is accepting fewer behavioral waivers from potential recruits who committed minor crimes. A final possible explanation for the ANG’s failure to meet its goals is that “the Army is also spending hundreds of thousands of dollars less in bonuses to attract recruits or entice soldiers to remain.”⁶⁵

Even among chaplains, the evidence suggests that DADT repeal has had no measurable impact on retention. Chaplains were thought to be among those most likely to leave the military after DADT repeal, in part because contracts allow them to resign more quickly than other military members, and many threatened to resign if LGB troops were allowed to serve openly.⁶⁶ Such concerns, however, have proven to be unwarranted. Lieutenant Colonel Lisa H. Tice, a chaplain who serves in the personnel, budget and readiness division of the Air Force Office of the Chief of Chaplains, told us that no Air Force chaplains left the military as a result of DADT repeal. Navy Chaplain Capt. John H. Lea III reported that one Navy chaplain separated because of repeal.⁶⁷ Lieutenant Colonel Carleton Birch, a spokesman for the Army Chief of Chaplains, said that in March 2011, one Army chaplain left the military over the pending repeal of DADT. But when we called the Army Chief of Chaplains office in June 2012, a spokesperson told us that, “We’ve had nobody else leave for that stated reason in the Army out of the 3,000 or so full-time and part-time chaplains” and that no endorsing denominations had withdrawn their endorsements as a result of DADT repeal.⁶⁸

Scholars have produced an extensive literature on why some young Americans decide to enlist in the armed forces, and why some service members decide to re-enlist when given the opportunity.⁶⁹ None of that literature mentions the presence or absence of a gay ban as a factor that influences enlistment and retention decisions, and the literature’s silence on this topic is consistent with data, discussed in a subsequent section of this study, that show that even among service members who oppose DADT repeal, only a small minority feel strongly about the issue.

The scholarly literature has found that enlistment and re-enlistment decisions are driven by a host of factors that have nothing to do with the presence or absence of openly-serving LGB colleagues, such as the strength of the economy, individual patriotism and the availability of college scholarships as well as enlistment and re-enlistment bonuses. A spokesperson for the National Guard confirmed that, “It is unlikely that any single policy will have a significant effect on recruitment or retention numbers.”⁷⁰

As discussed, a minority of service members reports that DADT repeal has influenced their likelihood of remaining in the military, with some indicating that repeal has made them less likely to re-enlist and others suggesting that they are more likely to remain. What the preponderance of evidence shows, however, is that DADT repeal has not had any measurable impact on recruitment or retention, even among chaplains. It is certainly true that the weak domestic economy and disengagement from two wars have made recruitment and retention easier. But in an era when enlistment standards have tightened, service members were just as likely to say that they plan to re-enlist after DADT repeal as was the case pre-repeal. Every active service branch has met its recruitment and retention goals, five out of six reserve components have reached their recruitment targets and every reserve component has achieved its retention objectives. The one reserve component that did not meet its recruitment target in the aftermath of DADT repeal, the ANG, also failed to meet its goal when DADT was still in effect, and an ANG spokesperson attributes the shortfall to factors that have nothing to do with repeal. DADT repeal, in short, has not impacted recruitment or retention.

Assaults and Harassment

Among all the predictions about the consequences of allowing open service, some of the most disturbing referred to violence that was expected to occur among service members. Military leaders and experts warned that allowing open service would prompt an increase in violence because LGB troops would attack their heterosexual peers. During 1993 Senate testimony, General Norman Schwarzkopf said that, “I am aware of instances where heterosexuals have been solicited to commit homosexual acts, and, even more traumatic emotionally, physically coerced to engage in such acts.”⁷¹ More recently, in May 2010, the Family Research Council released a report, *Homosexual Assault in the Military*, claiming that “homosexuals in the military are about three times as likely to commit sexual assaults than heterosexuals are, relative to their numbers... If the law is overturned and open homosexuals are welcomed into the military, the number of homosexuals in the armed forces can only increase—leading to a corresponding increase in same-sex sexual assaults.”⁷²

Parallel to concerns about LGB troops assaulting heterosexuals, observers have warned that heterosexuals would express disdain over the prospect of open service by attacking LGB peers. In 1993 Senate testimony, Colonel Fred Peck said that his gay son “would be at grave risk if he were to follow in my footsteps as an infantry platoon leader or a company commander. I would be very fearful that his life would be in jeopardy from his own troops.”⁷³ In 2012, an Army company commander who flew air assault missions in Iraq told us that, “At the unit level, I do expect to see a few situations of gay bashing or assaults, especially among the lower enlisted soldiers or at basic training. People from areas that are less tolerant and less diverse may be more apt to confronting a homosexual and trying to ‘correct the error of their ways’ through words or force.”⁷⁴

Despite warnings about an increase in assaults, we did not uncover any evidence suggesting that DADT repeal has led to a rise in violence among service members. With one exception discussed below, none of the service members, scholars or activists we interviewed or surveyed or the media articles that we reviewed reported any violent incidents among troops that resulted from repeal. For example, a cadet at one of the service academies said he was initially concerned about “blowback” that could include violence toward LGB service members, as he and his friends worried that LGB troops could be shunned or denigrated given the military’s tradition of “hyper masculinity.” When asked what happened after repeal, however, he said that, “It never came up... It turned out it was a non-issue.” He asked many of his lesbian and gay friends and they confirmed that, “It hasn’t been an issue for them.”⁷⁵ More broadly, a Pentagon spokesperson noted in April 2012 that, “Military officials say they’re unaware of any discipline issues relating to gays serving openly.”⁷⁶ *American Forces Press Service* reported in March 2012 that, according to Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Jonathan Greenert, “The U.S. Navy checks the status of the fleet constantly, but there has been no uptick in conduct incidents since the repeal went into effect.”⁷⁷ And in August 2012, a Pentagon spokesperson told us that she is “not aware of any” service-wide uptick in conduct incidents since DADT repeal went into effect, or of any violent incidents at all since repeal went into effect that can be attributed to repeal.⁷⁸

Gay rights groups that monitor Pentagon operations confirm the observations of Pentagon spokespersons as well as the experts, activists and service members we interviewed and surveyed. OutServe monitors the day-to-day implementation of DADT repeal perhaps more closely than any organization in the world. Lieutenant Josh Seefried, the organization’s Co-Director, communicates regularly with hundreds of OutServe members serving at home and abroad and frequently administers surveys to its membership. Seefried told us that he has heard of one attack since repeal that may have been an anti-gay bias incident, but that it remains unclear whether the victim was gay and whether the attacker believed that the victim was gay.⁷⁹ Servicemembers Legal Defense Network (SLDN), a well-regarded watchdog organization with nearly two decades of experience monitoring the status of LGBT troops, reported in March 2012 that since repeal, its staff has received only “a few minor complaints.” SLDN staff confirmed in subsequent correspondence that the complaints were about repeal implementation issues, not assaults.⁸⁰

In May 2012, the Center for Military Readiness (CMR) released a statement suggesting that DADT repeal has caused an increase in male-male rape among service members. The statement, titled, “Early Consequences of Military LGBT Law,” cited an April 2012 US Army study that reported an increase in male-male sexual assaults between fiscal year 2006 and fiscal year 2011. Yet the Army collected most of the data for its 2012 study prior to repeal, which occurred on September 20, 2011, just nine days before the end of fiscal year 2011.⁸¹ Indeed, a comparison of pre- and post-repeal *Military Times* surveys suggests that the rate of male-male sexual assault did not increase after DADT repeal went into effect. In response to a July/August 2011 pre-repeal *Military Times* survey, 1.4% of male respondents said that they had been a victim of sexual assault while in the military, compared to 1.1% of male service members who indicated on a January 2012 post-repeal survey that they had been victimized. The pre-repeal percent of men who reported having been sexually assaulted during their military service, in other words, was roughly equivalent to the post-repeal rate.⁸² These data call into question any assertion that repeal has led to an increase in assaults.

No other watchdog organization or individual opponent of DADT repeal has reported any case of violence attributable to the new policy of open service. Professor Mackubin Owens, who teaches at the Naval War College and opposes repeal, acknowledged to us that he is unaware of any violent or disciplinary incidents that can be attributed to repeal. A retired general who also opposes repeal told us that he has “friends in the military who are disappointed” that DADT is gone but who “have not reported any specific incidences of problems.”⁸³ With the exception of the spurious CMR statement as well as the unconfirmed incident conveyed by OutServe’s Co-Director, military leaders, opponents of DADT repeal, active-duty personnel, scholars and gay rights organizations all concur that repeal has not led to any increase in assaults. And, they agree that there has been no violence to date specifically associated with the new policy.

By contrast, some evidence suggests that, over time, repeal may lead to a decrease in violence, because DADT encouraged would-be perpetrators by dissuading some LGB victims from reporting assaults. A lesbian sailor who was raped by a fellow sailor prior to DADT repeal was smeared as someone who dressed “in four-inch heels and tight jeans who wanted it.” “If I’d said I don’t even sleep with men—I’m a lesbian—I’m the one who would have been out” of the military, the victim explained. Instead, the encounter was deemed consensual and the perpetrator went free.⁸⁴ Another service member reported that, “Back in the day 1997 I was harassed and threatened with stake knives [sic] stabbed in my rack. I could not do or say anything to keep my job. Now I would report it no matter what.”⁸⁵ To the extent that potential perpetrators realize that LGB victims may be more likely to report assaults now than would have been the case prior to repeal, the new policy could have a deterrent effect.

Despite the lack of violence associated with DADT repeal, we did find many instances in which service members expressed anti-LGB sentiment. In some cases, LGB troops took such expressions in stride. “Everyone gets bagged on for everything,” according to an Air Force Special Operations navigator. “I don’t take offense; I just shoot right back.” An Army company commander who flew air assault missions in Iraq and who now teaches at a service academy said that the “the only major change I see within the department is the nature of some jokes,” hastening to add that he does “not feel offended at all by any of them.”⁸⁶ Similarly, a lesbian Air Force Reserve squadron commander told us that she does not know of “anyone who has had really adverse reactions” to people coming out, though she was aware of some people making inappropriate, “vaguely homophobic comments under their breath.”⁸⁷ Colonel Gus Stafford, West Point’s Chief of Staff, reports that the Academy has seen “no separations” for unacceptable behavior and “no major disciplinary actions whatsoever.” Pressed on whether there had been any disciplinary actions at all, he said that there were some incidents, which he called “minor in nature,” involving insensitive behavior by cadets in the presence of gays or lesbians, “something like a cadet telling a gay joke in front of a gay or lesbian cadet.” Colonel Stafford said that these incidents were resolved at the lowest level, by asking Respect Program staff to initiate appropriate dialogue, or by leadership correcting the inappropriate remarks on the spot. “In most cases,” he said, “the cadet says, ‘jeez, I didn’t realize I was being insensitive.’”⁸⁸

In other cases, however, expressions of anti-LGB sentiment were more severe. In response to an open-ended question asking LGBT troops to identify and describe any experience of discrimination after DADT repeal, 11% of respondents mentioned disturbing incidents.⁸⁹ Some of the most serious included: “Every day, on every aspect of everything”; “Yes. Was told not to have any PDA with my partner at my promotion ceremony. A Lt. Col. refused to administer the oath of office at my promotion ceremony. My partner was not welcome at our unit’s spouse’s

club”; “Commander has shown greater distance and discomfort talking to me”; “I haven’t come out yet because they talk down about gays all day long... I’m certain that if I did come out my life would be a lot harder. There is little to no tolerance in my squadron”; “One person in the office called me a ‘faggot’ in a non-work environment. It made the office very uncomfortable to work in because everyone knew about it and that I was extremely mad about it. The situation has not yet been resolved for three months now”; and “My senior NCO (e-8) has made repeated discriminatory remarks about the LGBT community and at myself though I’m not out.”⁹⁰ In April 2012, a female officer was dancing with her girlfriend, another officer, at a military ball, when a squadron commander told the women to stop. The situation escalated and the Command Sergeant Major swore at the women, called them an “abomination,” and shoved one across the floor.⁹¹

Harassment, discrimination and bias remain problems in the wake of DADT repeal. That said, with the exception of isolated occurrences such as the April 2012 incident, we found no evidence suggesting that service-wide patterns of harassment are a consequence of repeal. Three points merit consideration. To begin, sexual orientation-based harassment long predated DADT repeal, so its mere existence cannot be attributed to the new policy of open service. In 2000, a Defense Department survey of 71,570 service members found that, during the previous year, 37% had “witnessed or experienced an event or behavior toward a Service member that they considered to be harassment based on perceived homosexuality.”⁹² More recently, on the eve of DADT repeal, a service member reported that, “Some of the senior enlisted leaders are extremely homophobic, and harass other gay people in the unit, and me to some extent.”⁹³ The question, therefore, is not whether repeal transformed a harassment-free environment into a hostile climate, but whether military culture became more or less hostile overall as a result of repeal. Post-repeal anti-gay harassment and other expressions of bias do not, in and of themselves, indicate that any service-wide patterns of hostility are the result of the new policy.

In addition, the majority of LGB service members report that they have been treated well since DADT repeal. In response to a December 2011 OutServe survey asking how, “Post-repeal, colleagues in your unit have treated gay, lesbian, and bisexual personnel,” 72.4% of LGBT troops indicated that they have been treated well.⁹⁴ It is difficult to imagine that such a large majority of LGB troops would report acceptance if DADT repeal had created a more hostile work environment.

Finally, we learned of incidents in which DADT repeal was associated with a leveling off or even a decline in harassment. In some cases LGB troops say that for the first time, they have been able to report and resolve problems openly with peers and commanders, while in other cases, the process of coming out has encouraged heterosexual service members to adjust their behavior toward greater tolerance.

An Army social worker taking a class in mental health said that one classmate used anti-gay language, but that after DADT repeal he saw “a huge difference. He went from not wanting to talk to me to partnering with me on projects. He’ll ask questions about what he doesn’t understand.”⁹⁵

Another soldier told us that in the initial period after repeal, he continued to hear derogatory language by some in his unit. Yet when he confronted them and spoke about their behavior in terms of leadership and professionalism, their conduct improved. “They don’t agree, but they

were willing to be professional about it,” he said, referring to moral opposition to homosexuality. He said that frank discussions, which are now far less risky because of repeal, helped disabuse them of preconceived notions about gay people and that ultimately, problems were “completely resolved” through discussion of the fact that he was respected before he was out, and that nothing had changed by his acknowledgement of his sexual orientation.⁹⁶

A cryptologic technician in the Navy described a scenario during training in which he was able to call someone out on his anti-gay banter, newly liberated by the policy change. “There was a new kid, a young sailor, kind of a loudmouth,” he said. “I walked into the auditorium and he was looking through the pamphlet and he made a joke about the DADT policy and he didn’t know I was gay so he thought it was okay to make that joke and I snapped at him. I called his name out, and said, ‘shut up’ and he just sunk down in his chair. I don’t think he was meaning to be homophobic, just trying to be funny.”⁹⁷

A Navy supply officer told us that, at her training on DADT repeal in Kuwait, there were “a few negative comments” that she summarized as reflecting “a fear that suddenly gay families would be all over the base.” She said she confronted one commenter telling him his remarks were rude, and he quickly backed down.⁹⁸

An enlisted soldier stationed at a military university shared a similar experience. When DADT was in effect, his unit mates often used degrading, anti-gay language, almost absent-mindedly and with little consequence. After repeal, he said, “it was kind of a big deal for two weeks,” with people wondering what it would mean for people to be openly gay. But after the transition occurred and the initial questions died down, “people’s consideration changed.” He said the new attitude seemed to be, “now that I know someone who is [gay], I’m talking about a real person. I’m not just using abstract insults [but words] that actually mean something.”⁹⁹

A chief warrant officer in the Navy said that initially she sensed “an increase of sneering jokes and stupid comments” in the aftermath of repeal, but “they faded away fairly quickly.” She described the reaction of her commanding officer when she came out to him by mentioning her partner. “Clearly, he didn’t want to know,” she said, “but in the end, he actually asked questions and talked to me about her.” She does not know how her acknowledgment will ultimately affect their working relationship, but despite some initial signals of minor discomfort, she saw no evidence of a negative impact on him “after he adjusted to the fact that I wasn’t going to give him pretend answers.”¹⁰⁰

In sum, we found no evidence suggesting that repeal has caused any increase in assaults among service members. With respect to non-violent harassment and other expressions of bias, conclusively determining whether DADT repeal has produced a change in their frequency would require comparing pre- and post-repeal incidence rates, a task which is not possible given available data. That said, a majority of surveyed LGB service members report that they have been well-treated since DADT repeal, and many of those we interviewed believe that repeal has enabled them to resolve problems in ways that were not possible while DADT was in effect. Lawyer and researcher Sharon Terman has argued that organizations that discriminate against particular minority groups cannot eliminate harassment of those groups as long as discriminatory laws and policies remain in effect.¹⁰¹ While anti-gay harassment and bias have not disappeared from military culture, DADT repeal provides an unprecedented opportunity for individual

service members as well as the Defense Department more broadly to take steps to minimize their occurrence and severity and to address those incidents that do occur in a serious way.

Morale

Morale is a catch-all term that can refer to esprit de corps, satisfaction, well-being and interpersonal adjustment, and that can be used to characterize an individual, a unit or an entire organization. The authors of a recent review of the literature on military morale define it as “motivation and enthusiasm for accomplishing mission objectives.”¹⁰² Throughout the public conversation about DADT, opponents of repeal have predicted that allowing open service would harm military morale. In 1993, as the Senate debated President Clinton’s proposal to allow LGB troops to serve openly, former Senator Sam Nunn said that, “In view of the unique conditions of military service, active and open homosexuality by members of the armed forces would have a very negative effect on military morale and discipline.”¹⁰³ Elaine Donnelly said during 2008 testimony before the House Armed Services Committee that, “Introducing erotic factors into that kind of a close combat unit... would be absolutely devastating to morale because people would have no recourse. They can’t leave.”¹⁰⁴ Retired Marine Corps General John Sheehan and Family Research Council President Tony Perkins wrote in a 2010 Politico.com opinion piece that, “Sexual attraction among members of the same sex—living, exercising, fighting and training alongside one another in the closest of quarters—could devastate morale, foster heightened interpersonal tension and lead to division among those who, more than virtually any other group in society, need to act as one.”¹⁰⁵

Despite such predictions, the preponderance of evidence indicates that DADT repeal produced no overall change in service-wide morale. All three measures of morale recorded on *Military Times* surveys indicate that, service-wide, morale remained constant from 2011 to 2012. Respondents to the January 2012 post-repeal survey reported approximately the same quality of life, job satisfaction and willingness to recommend a military career to someone else as respondents to the July/August 2011 pre-repeal survey.¹⁰⁶ And, as discussed earlier in this study, post-repeal respondents were as likely to say that they planned to remain in the military for 20 years and that they would re-enlist if offered the opportunity to do so today as were pre-repeal respondents. If DADT repeal compromised morale service-wide, it would be hard to explain why, in comparing pre- and post-repeal service-wide data, quality of life, job satisfaction and willingness to recommend a military career did not decline as the new policy of open service took effect.

Although repeal did not produce any net change in service-wide morale, the new policy did lead to a decrease in personal morale for some service members and an increase for others. According to the January 2012 *Military Times* survey of 751 heterosexual, active-duty and mobilized service members, 13.7% report that DADT repeal “had a negative impact on my morale,” while 5.8% of all troops (LGB and heterosexual) said that it had a positive impact.¹⁰⁷ A number of corroborating data points suggest that repeal decreased the individual morale of some service members. Data from the same *Military Times* survey indicate that 13.8% of heterosexual service members “continue to personally oppose the change despite my command’s adoption of the new policy,” and that 30.6% of all troops surveyed (32% of heterosexuals) disagree that “openly homosexual people should be allowed to serve in the military.”¹⁰⁸ Additionally, for reasons discussed above, we believe that the 8.4% of service members who told *Military Times* that repeal has made them less likely to remain in the military constitutes evidence of disapproval of

the new policy—in other words, a possible decline in morale—as opposed to concrete intentions to separate prematurely.

In our in-depth interviews, we uncovered additional evidence suggesting that DADT repeal has produced a decline in morale for some service members. According to a heterosexual Navy SEAL, “There was definitely disappointment... we’re a professional unit, we follow the Constitution and the officers appointed over us, but honestly I know that morale did go down. The way we were presented it, it was definitely disheartening. It’s difficult to engage.”¹⁰⁹ And a naval intelligence officer told us that DADT repeal was “not a unit morale issue, [but] more of a service morale issue. No one blamed or found fault with the leadership at [the unit level]; more found fault with the national-level leadership who made decisions and agreed with the repeal.”¹¹⁰

When service members report that they do not like or are morally opposed to the new policy, that they do not believe that LGB troops should serve openly, that they plan to leave the military early, that they experience discomfort as a result of the new policy, that they disapprove of public displays of affection among LGB troops or that they blame national leaders for imposing the policy shift on the armed forces, we interpret such claims as indications that repeal may have decreased their morale.

Although DADT repeal produced a decline in morale for some service members, it led to an increase for others, and the benefits of the policy shift were quite consequential for some troops, both gay and straight. An Army signals analyst told us that, “After the repeal, it was as if a huge weight was lifted off my shoulders. It was an invigorating feeling knowing that there was nothing left to hide.”¹¹¹ A gay enlisted soldier told us that “As far as morale goes, now nobody has to worry about getting kicked out for it, so my morale has gone way up in that aspect.”¹¹²

James Parco, who served in the Air Force for 20 years and taught leadership strategy at the US Air Force Academy and Air Command and Staff College, told us that, “The fact that we’ve actually instilled this new sense of integrity into the service by the repeal of the law has been the biggest impact, but it’s completely unobservable unless you actually talk to these individuals who were oppressed one on one. If you ask them, they’ll unequivocally tell you that, ‘Absolutely it has fundamentally changed my life, my view of the military, my existence; I just feel like a revived person, something is very, very different.’” Professor Parco added that many LGB troops were surprised about the difference repeal made to them: “Most of the people were shocked that it would actually impact them internally,” he said. “Very few realized the kind of internal impact it would have and how they would feel after” the change. “It fundamentally changed their view of how they saw themselves in terms of the organization.”¹¹³

Some heterosexual troops have experienced improvements to their morale as well, and in some cases the increases have been significant. Repeal brought one heterosexual Navy officer “a sense of relief” because remaining ignorant about a service member’s life “affects leadership in a big way.” A gay Navy linguist observed that the new openness was helpful to leaders, saying that, “I think my supervisor really appreciated the candor.” And a gay enlisted soldier explained how repeal lifted a burden off his heterosexual peers. Some of his friends told him that, had they known he was gay while DADT was still in place, they would have kept his secret but that doing so would have caused added stress. “If people had found out, they’d have tried to keep it on the down-low because they don’t want to see their buddy get kicked out for something stupid like

that,” he said. Now, “it’s not an issue anymore. I’m not worried about being open about it, so I think morale overall for everybody has gone up.”¹¹⁴

Although the 5.8% of LGB and heterosexual troops who told *Military Times* that repeal had a positive effect on their morale is less than the 13.7% of heterosexuals who reported a decline, evidence suggests that in most cases of decline, the decrease consisted of minor disappointment. As discussed in a subsequent section of this report, even among opponents of DADT repeal, the percent of service members who feel strongly about the issue is low. Among chaplains as well, evidence suggests that any decrease in morale that followed from DADT repeal was minor. Professor George Reed, the former director of Command and Leadership Studies at the Army War College, acknowledged a sense of “simmering out there by fundamentalist religious groups, Evangelical Christians perhaps, that are seeing [DADT repeal] as some sort of continuing moral collapse.” That said, when Professor Reed delivered a recent presentation to active-duty chaplains in San Diego, the issue of LGB service “just didn’t come up.”¹¹⁵ We found no evidence that service members suffered a significant decline in morale in any sustained way due to the policy change.

The new policy of open service produced a decrease in morale for a small minority of service members, and enhanced the morale of an even smaller minority. Yet few of those troops who experienced a decline in morale appear to have suffered any measurable consequences. This should come as no surprise, as the extensive scholarly literature on the determinants of military morale does not mention the presence or absence of LGB colleagues.¹¹⁶ By contrast, for some of those whose morale improved, a “huge weight was lifted off” their shoulders. And service-wide, time-series data discussed above indicate that morale did not decline as the new policy of open service took effect.¹¹⁷ Our conclusion is that repeal led to an increase in morale for some service members and a decrease for others, and that because the positive and negative consequences of the policy shift roughly balanced one another, no net service-wide change in morale resulted from repeal.

Discussion of Results

Our findings about DADT repeal are consistent with the extensive literature on the more than two dozen foreign militaries that have allowed LGB troops to serve openly.¹¹⁸ According to that literature, none of the foreign militaries that have enacted policies of open service has suffered a decline in overall readiness or any of its component dimensions including cohesion, recruitment, retention, assaults, harassment or morale. Studies have been conducted by a wide range of scholars and organizations including the Pentagon’s Comprehensive Review Working Group, the Government Accountability Office and the Rand Corporation. Since the Dutch military became the first to allow open service in 1974, no scholar has documented any decline in readiness or its component dimensions that could be attributable to the lifting of a ban on LGB troops by any foreign military.¹¹⁹

In the US case, the success of DADT repeal most likely should be attributed to the Pentagon’s carefully-designed implementation and training process, as well as four additional factors.¹²⁰ First, there was no wave of mass disclosures after repeal, and only 19.4% of 751 heterosexual service members surveyed by *Military Times* indicated that after repeal, someone in their unit disclosed being LGB or that an LGB service member joined their unit.¹²¹ While 51.2% of LGB troops surveyed by OutServe said that they have come out to more people in the military after

repeal, LGB service members constitute only 2% of all troops. And in the same survey, only 32.4% of LGB troops said that in the aftermath of repeal, they are now out to most or all of their unit.¹²²

Second, LGB as well as heterosexual troops have continued to emphasize professionalism. Among LGB service members, those who acknowledged their orientation before or after repeal have continued to behave professionally. A Navy supply officer who deployed on a submarine to Afghanistan said that, “Most gay people handled themselves very professionally. You didn’t have people running in the streets in tutus and there was no basewide fanfare. [Repeal] ended up being like any other day. Most people didn’t even realize it was going on that day, unless I told them.”¹²³ Among heterosexuals, even those service members who oppose repeal have conducted themselves in a professional manner. A heterosexual Army Reserve chaplain noted that “anyone who might have been inclined to have a negative reaction knew it would be bad to express publicly—bad for their career, so now it’s not part of their ‘official persona.’ They keep it professional.” And a gay Air Force combat crew evaluator confirmed that, “I don’t doubt that various people disapprove personally, but they don’t let it affect their interactions with me. I’ve been consistently overwhelmed by how little it’s affected peoples’ treatment of me.”¹²⁴

Third, prior to the enactment of the new policy, only a small minority of those who opposed repeal felt strongly about the issue. In 2003, retired General Wesley Clark explained that the “temperature of the issue has changed over the decade. People were much more irate about this issue in the early ‘90s than I found in the late ‘90s, for whatever reason, younger people coming in [to the military]. It just didn’t seem to be the same emotional hot button issue by ‘98, ‘99, that it had been in ‘92, ‘93.”¹²⁵ A 2006 Zogby poll of 545 troops who had fought in Iraq and Afghanistan found that 72 percent were personally comfortable interacting with gays, and that of the 20 percent who were uncomfortable, only five percent were “very” uncomfortable.¹²⁶ Many of the experts and service members we interviewed and surveyed confirmed that even among those active-duty personnel who oppose DADT repeal, few feel strongly about it. As one heterosexual cadet who had an LGB roommate observed, “People in our generation, when it comes down to the troop level, really don’t think it is that big of a deal.”¹²⁷

Fourth, some service members who strongly opposed DADT repeal prior to the enactment of the new policy had never knowingly served alongside LGB peers, and their concerns may have been based, in part, on expectations of what would occur after repeal rather than actual experiences of serving alongside LGB troops. Two of this study’s co-authors observed recently that, “For many straight people, the ability to truly get to know the gay men and lesbians in their units was stifled by the secrecy mandated by DADT.”¹²⁸ And the Pentagon’s 2010 report on DADT confirmed that those who believed that there were no LGB service members in their units were the most likely to believe that repeal would undermine readiness.¹²⁹ When those who opposed repeal and who did not know any LGB peers had a chance to interact knowingly with gays and lesbians after the policy transition, opposition may have weakened in some cases.¹³⁰

It is likely that these four factors, along with the Pentagon’s careful preparation for repeal, help explain why, according to our evidence, the new policy of open service has not compromised readiness or its component parts including cohesion, recruitment/retention, assaults/harassment or morale.

Validity

While no single research strategy is perfect, our use of multiple methods including in-depth interviews, on-site field observations, surveys, content analysis and quasi-experimentation is comprehensive and is consistent with social scientific best practices. Nevertheless, observers have raised two points about the absence of evidence suggesting that repeal has compromised military readiness.

Elaine Donnelly has attributed positive reports about DADT repeal to a gag rule imposed by the Obama administration. She said that many troops oppose working with gay peers “but fear speaking out about it” because of a “zero tolerance” policy “against persons who are not enthusiastic supporters of [the] LGBT law.”¹³¹ To the extent that such a gag rule exists, either formally or informally, our results would be biased, according to this critique, by subjects’ unwillingness to provide and discuss data indicating that DADT repeal has been problematic. We were not, however, able to find any evidence that such a zero tolerance policy was imposed by the White House, Pentagon or any other government office or official, either formally or informally. To the contrary, service members who opposed repeal or who were disappointed that the change had not gone further in extending equal treatment to LGB troops expressed those sentiments openly on *Military Times* surveys and during our interviews.

Some experts have claimed that insufficient time has passed to assess the impact of DADT repeal. Naval War College Professor Mackubin Owens told us that, “It will take some time before we really know what’s going on.” He added that, “We’re not even talking about a year here, and that’s just the change in the law. The implementation is going to take much longer, and I think that there is going to be some adjustment period. For better or worse it is going to take some time to see whether the worst-case situation predicted by people like myself, or the less problematic situation is going to be the outcome. We just won’t know for a while.”¹³² When asked when he thought the effects of repeal might manifest themselves, he stated, “I think at least a year, but more likely two years. I think especially for male homosexuals they will likely keep it where it is, the same as it was with ‘don’t ask, don’t tell.’” Several other experts expressed similar points of view.¹³³

We agree that it is not yet possible to tell the complete story of DADT repeal, as some important issues remain unresolved. If and when the Defense Department allows same-sex partners or spouses to live in on-base housing, for example, some worry that this could incite resentment among heterosexual families.¹³⁴ Yet there is little merit to the claim that insufficient time has passed to assess the impact of DADT repeal. Opponents who predicted that DADT repeal would undermine the military rarely said that time would have to pass before negative consequences would emerge, and usually implied that the onset of at least some dire consequences would be immediate. Now that Pentagon leaders have indicated an absence of difficulties, however, opponents are starting to emphasize the possibility of future, long-term problems that will only emerge in the distant wake of repeal.

If repeal were going to cause adjustment problems, at least some of those problems—or indications of their imminence—should have emerged in the immediate wake of the policy transition, when a culture shock was still possible. With respect to retention, for example, some individuals may plan to leave the military at some future date as a result of DADT repeal, as Donnelly suggests. But if DADT repeal posed a serious threat to retention, the exodus should

already be at least somewhat apparent in retention data, as it is unlikely that a retention problem resulting from a policy change would go from negligible to full-throttled overnight, at some point well past the implementation of the change.¹³⁵

As the new, post-repeal policy continues to settle, the logic sustaining concerns about future problems becomes increasingly tenuous. Predictions of immediate problems have not been borne out in the US experience, and readiness was not compromised either in the short term or the long term in foreign militaries that have allowed LGB troops to serve openly. While ongoing monitoring may be warranted, there is no reason to believe that DADT repeal will lead to any future decline in readiness.

Conclusion

Based on the substantial evidence we gathered in our research, we conclude that, during the one-year period following implementation of the policy change, DADT repeal has had no negative impact on overall military readiness or its component parts: unit cohesion, recruitment, retention, assaults, harassment or morale. While repeal produced a few downsides for some military members—mostly those who personally opposed the policy change—we identified important upsides as well, and in no case did negative consequences outweigh advantages. On balance, DADT repeal appears to have slightly enhanced the military's ability to do its job by clearing away unnecessary obstacles to the development of trust and bonding.

We base our conclusions on data we uncovered via ten research strategies that we designed to maximize the likelihood of uncovering any evidence suggesting that DADT repeal has compromised military readiness. While no single research strategy is perfect, our reliance on multiple methods including surveys, in-depth interviews, on-site field observations, content analysis, secondary source analysis and quasi-experimentation is both comprehensive and consistent with social scientific best practices, lending confidence to the validity of our conclusions. Our vigorous effort to collect data from opponents of DADT repeal, including anti-repeal generals and admirals, activists, academic experts, service members and watchdog organizations, should further sustain confidence in the validity and impartiality of our findings.

Although the story of DADT repeal will continue to unfold over time, available evidence indicates that in its first year, DADT repeal has not had any overall negative effect on the armed forces, and that predictions of dire consequences were incorrect.

Appendix A - Author biographies

Dr. Aaron Belkin is Director of the Palm Center and Professor of Political Science at San Francisco State University. His most recent book is *Bring Me Men: Military Masculinity and the Benign Façade of American Empire, 1898-2001* (Columbia University Press, 2012), and he advised the Pentagon's 2010 DADT working group.

Dr. Morten Ender is Professor of Sociology in the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Leadership at the US Military Academy at West Point. His most recent book is *The Routledge Handbook of War and Society: Iraq and Afghanistan* (Routledge, 2010).

Dr. Nathaniel Frank is a Visiting Scholar at Columbia Law School's Center for Gender and Sexuality Law and former senior research fellow at the Palm Center. He is the author of *Unfriendly Fire: How the Gay Ban Undermines the Military and Weakens America* (St. Martins Press, 2009), and he consulted with the Pentagon's 2010 DADT working group.

Dr. Stacie R. Furia is Adjunct Professor at the Presidio Graduate School and a research sociologist at the Palm Center. Her research and publications explore women's experiences in the armed forces, and how the military maintains its masculine identity in the face of changing values.

Dr. George R. Lucas is Distinguished Chair in Ethics in the Vice Admiral James B. Stockdale Center for Ethical Leadership at the US Naval Academy, and Professor of Ethics and Public Policy at the Naval Postgraduate School. He is the author of five books, including *Anthropologists in Arms: the Ethics of Military Anthropology* (AltaMira Press, 2009), and he advised the Pentagon's 2010 DADT working group.

Colonel Gary Packard, Jr., Ph.D, is the Permanent Professor and Head of the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Leadership at the US Air Force Academy. He led the team that drafted the Department of Defense Comprehensive Review Working Group's Support Plan for Implementation for the repeal of DADT.

Dr. Steven M. Samuels is Professor of Psychology in the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Leadership at the US Air Force Academy. His publications focus on ethical behavior, leadership and diversity, and he advised the Pentagon's 2010 DADT working group.

Dr. Tammy S. Schultz is Director of the National Security and Joint Warfare Department and Professor of Strategic Studies at the US Marine Corps War College and teaches security studies at Georgetown University. In 2010, she won the Marine's Dr. Elihu Rose Award for teaching excellence.

Dr. David R. Segal is Director of the Center for Research on Military Organization and Professor of Sociology at the University of Maryland. He has been awarded two Army medals for outstanding civilian service, and he advised the Pentagon's 2010 DADT working group.

Appendix B – Standards of evidence

We used 11 standards to evaluate the relevance and quality of each piece of data we found, and to decide how much weight (or value) to give it in informing our conclusions. Because we are most interested in data suggesting that repeal has harmed the military, we included almost all such evidence in our report even if it was of low quality. By contrast, because most of the data we collected suggests that repeal did not harm the military, only a fraction of such evidence appears in the report. Because our evidentiary standards are not absolute, they should be thought of as guidelines that help determine how much credibility to attach to each data point, not as strict rules. To arrive at our overall findings, we used a preponderance-of-evidence standard, meaning that we weighed the quality and quantity of evidence sustaining each hypothesis before reaching a conclusion.

- 1) Clarity. We assigned less weight to data whose meaning was unclear, such as results of a *Military Times* survey that asked respondents to indicate whether repeal had an impact on their unit, but did not allow them to say whether the impact was positive or negative.
- 2) Specificity. We assigned less weight to data whose meaning was vague, such as responses to a *Military Times* survey question that asked whether repeal had a negative impact on respondents, but did not allow them to indicate whether the impact referred to cohesion, morale or other factors.
- 3) Relevance. We assigned less weight to data whose relevance could not be established, such as the stabbing of a Marine by another Marine, because it was unclear whether the perpetrator perceived the victim to be gay, and if so, if he was motivated by DADT repeal.
- 4) Source bias. We assigned more weight to assessments of scholarly experts such as Naval War College professor Mackubin Owens than to activists or elected officials.
- 5) Representativeness. We assigned less weight to data that were unrepresentative of underlying populations, such as responses to a Palm Center survey administered to a sample that had a higher proportion of LGB troops than there are in the overall military population.
- 6) Logical consistency. We assigned less weight to claims that were logically implausible, such as a Center for Military Readiness suggestion that a reported increase in male-male rape between 2006 and 2011 shows that DADT repeal caused a rise in violence, because the report was based on data collected through September 29, 2011, just nine days after DADT repeal.
- 7) Temporal consistency. We assigned less weight to claims that were temporally inconsistent, such as reports of a post-repeal decline in cohesion by some service members who, when asked for clarification, referred to the possibility of future problems.
- 8) Evidentiary consistency. We assigned more weight to evidence that was consistent with a range of other data points than to outliers.
- 9) Methodological consistency. We assigned more weight to data derived from multiple methodological approaches, such as interviews, surveys and field observations, than to data emerging from just one approach.
- 10) Base-rate sensitivity. We assigned more weight to data whose value could be measured and compared before and after DADT repeal.
- 11) Observer proximity. We assigned more weight to interpretations provided by participants in events than by observers who formed their conclusions on the basis of second-hand information.

Appendix C – Letter to 553 retired generals and admirals

PALM CENTER

BLUEPRINTS FOR SOUND PUBLIC POLICY

[Date]

Dear [Title/Name],

As members of a research team with the Palm Center, a research center at the University of California, Los Angeles, we are writing to you because we have identified you as a retired US military officer who may have input to offer about the repeal of the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy.

As you may know, that repeal took effect on September 20, 2011. The Palm Center is now conducting a major study of the impact of the repeal. In order to conduct as broad and as thorough a study as possible on the impact of repeal, we are seeking input from a wide variety of experts and interested parties, and would appreciate your help. We plan to incorporate into our conclusions any verifiable evidence of any impact of repeal on military readiness. We’re hoping you might agree to share your thoughts on this matter with our researchers, including knowledge you may have or stories you may have heard that may speak to this issue.

It would be very helpful to us to be able to speak with you, whether or not you are directly aware of evidence about the impact of repeal. If you are willing to talk with our researchers, please **contact Dr. Stacie R. Furia** using any of the contact information listed below. She will set up a brief interview with a member of our research team, which you can expect will take about ten to fifteen minutes.

Thank you for your consideration on this important matter. We are sure you will agree that assessing this significant change in personnel regulations is a worthy subject for academic research, and we sincerely hope you are able to add your voice to this study.

Sincerely,

The “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” Repeal Impact Research Team
Palm Center, UCLA School of Law

Appendix D – DADT repeal opponents contacted

Mr. James Bowman, Resident Scholar, Ethics and Public Policy Center

Capt. Chad C. Carter, US Air Force

Lt. Col. Daniel L. Davis, US Army

Elaine Donnelly, President, Center for Military Readiness

Frank J. Gaffney, Jr., President, Center for Security Policy

Representative Duncan Hunter (R-CA)

Representative Darrell Issa (R-CA)

Maj. Antony Barone Kolenc, US Air Force

Lt. Col. Brian Maue, US Air Force

SFC Brandon Johnson, US Army

SGM Brian Jones, US Army (ret.)

Andrea Lafferty, Executive Director, Traditional Values Coalition

Lt. Col. Robert Maginnis, US Army (ret.), Senior Fellow, Family Research Council

Senator John McCain (R-AZ)

Professor Eugene Milhizer, Ave Maria School of Law

Professor Mackubin Thomas Owens, Naval War College

Tony Perkins, President, Family Research Council

Col. Ronald Ray, US Army (ret.), former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense

Peter Sprigg, Senior Fellow, Family Research Council

Maj. Melissa Wells-Petry, US Army (ret.)

Capt. Tierney A. Williams, Department of Military Science, Central Michigan University

Professor William A. Woodruff, Campbell University

Appendix E – Watchdog organizations contacted

Anti-repeal groups

Center for Military Readiness

Center for Security Policy

Family Research Council

Traditional Values Coalition

Veterans service organizations

American Legion

AMVETS

Military Officers Association of America

Reserve Officers Association

Veterans of Foreign Wars

Pro-repeal groups

American Military Partners Association

American Veterans for Equal Rights

Blue Alliance

Knights Out

Military Partners and Families Coalition

OutServe

Servicemembers Legal Defense Network

Servicemembers United

USNA Out

Appendix F – Scholars and practitioners interviewed

Col. Charles D. Allen, USA (ret.), US Army War College

Professor John Beckman, US Naval Academy

Dr. Nora Bensahel, Center for a New American Security

Professor Allyson Booth, US Naval Academy

Lt. Col David Boxwell, USAF (ret.)

Dr. Martin L. Cook, US Naval War College

Colonel Martin France, US Air Force Academy

Professor Todd S. Garth, US Naval Academy

Col. Stephen J. Gerras, USA (ret.), US Army War College

Dr. Jay Goodwin, US Army Research Institute

Professor David Kaiser, US Naval War College

Dr. Lawrence Korb, Center for American Progress

Professor David Levy, US Air Force Academy

Lt. Col. James Parco, USAF (ret.), Colorado College

Col. George Reed, USA (ret.), University of San Diego

Col. Charles Stafford, US Military Academy

Professor John Allen Williams, Loyola University Chicago

Professor Erik Wingrove-Haugland, US Coast Guard Academy

Appendix G – Service member interviews

	Branch	Rank	Occupation	Sexual Orientation
1	Navy	Petty Officer 1st Class	nuclear technician	LGB
2	Army	Specialist	line medic	LGB
3	Air Force	Technical Sergeant	nuclear weapons	LGB
4	Marines	Captain	logistics officer	LGB
5	Air Force	Captain	navigator	LGB
6	Army	Lieutenant Colonel	public affairs	LGB
7	Navy	Sergeant First Class	linguist/cryptologic	LGB
8	Air Force	Major	political-military affairs	LGB
9	Army	Second Lieutenant	nuclear counterproliferation	LGB
10	Army	Staff Sergeant	nurse	LGB
11	Air Force	Major	force support officer	LGB
12	Navy	Lieutenant	supply officer	LGB
13	Army	Captain	signal officer	LGB
14	Navy	Petty Officer 1st Class	public affairs	LGB
15	Navy	Captain	judge advocate	LGB
16	Navy	Lieutenant Commander	aviator	LGB
17	Army	Captain	administrative law	LGB
18	Air Force	Chief Master Sergeant	medical logistics	LGB
19	Army	Second Lieutenant	military police	LGB
20	Army	Cadet Corporal	cadet	LGB
21	Navy	Captain	aviator	LGB
22	Army	Sergeant First Class	small group instructor	LGB
23	Navy	CW02	special evaluator	LGB
24	Air Force	Technical Sergeant	resource coordinator	LGB
25	Army	Major	social worker	LGB
26	Navy	Sergeant	hospital corpsman	LGB
27	Air Force	First Lieutenant	combat deputy evaluator	LGB
28	Army	Specialist	signals analyst	LGB
29	Army	Staff Sergeant	mortuary affairs	LGB
30	Air Force	Sergeant First Class	none given	LGB
31	Navy	Lieutenant	intelligence officer	LGB
32	Air Force	Technical Sergeant	intelligence analyst	LGB
33	Air Force	Captain	aerospace engineer	LGB
34	Air Force	Staff Sergeant	aerospace craftsman	LGB
35	Army	Specialist	mechanic	LGB
36	Army	Staff Sergeant	cavalry scout	LGB
37	Air Force	Senior Airman	military police	LGB
38	Army	Sergeant First Class	motor sergeant	Heterosexual
39	Air Force	Captain	doctor	Heterosexual
40	Army	Lieutenant	military police	Heterosexual
41	Army	Second Lieutenant	chemical corps	Heterosexual
42	Air Force	Major	pilot	Heterosexual
43	Army	Major	chaplain	Heterosexual

44	Army	Captain	chaplain	Heterosexual
45	Army	Captain	chaplain	Heterosexual
46	Army	Sergeant/Cadet	military police	Heterosexual
47	Air Force	Captain	none given	Heterosexual
48	Navy	Lieutenant Commander	meteorology/oceanography	Heterosexual
49	Navy	Lieutenant	submariner	Heterosexual
50	Navy	Lieutenant Commander	SEAL	Heterosexual
51	Navy	Commander	surface warfare	Heterosexual
52	Navy	Lieutenant Commander	intelligence	Heterosexual
53	Navy	Lieutenant Commander	surface warfare	Heterosexual
54	Army	Sergeant	Ranger	Heterosexual
55	Navy	Commander	pilot	Heterosexual
56	Navy	Lieutenant Commander	flight officer	Heterosexual
57	Army	Second Lieutenant	social worker	Heterosexual
58	Army	Cadet	field artillery	Heterosexual
59	Army	Cadet	military police	Heterosexual
60	Army	Cadet	engineer	Heterosexual
61	Marines	Sergeant	none given	Heterosexual
62	Air Force	Chief Master Sergeant	none given	Heterosexual

Appendix H - *Military Times* advertisement

Research on the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell

Researchers from the Palm Center at University of California are studying unit **Readiness, Cohesion and Morale** since the repeal. **CLICK HERE** to take our anonymous, confidential survey.

PALM CENTER
BLUEPRINTS FOR SOUND PUBLIC POLICY

To recruit subjects for our survey, we ran this advertisement for three weeks and 50,000 clicks/page views on the websites of *Army Times*, *Navy Times*, *Air Force Times* and *Marine Corps Times*.

Appendix I – Statement by 41 current and former faculty at military universities

We write to endorse the quality of research that informs the new study, “One Year Out: An Assessment of DADT Repeal’s Impact on Military Readiness.” The study concludes that the repeal of “don’t ask, don’t tell” has had no overall negative impact on military readiness or its component dimensions, including cohesion, recruitment, retention, assaults, harassment or morale. We believe that the scholars who completed this study used social scientific best practices, that their research methodologies were sound, and that their conclusions are based on a reasonable assessment of available evidence.

Dr. Frank J. Barrett, professor, Naval Postgraduate School
Dr. Carlos E. Bertha, associate professor, US Air Force Academy
LTC Allen B. Bishop, USA (ret.), former assistant professor, US Military Academy
LTC Fred R. Blass, USAF (ret.), former instructor, US Air Force Academy
Dr. Donald Campbell, professor, US Military Academy
Dr. Kathleen Campbell, associate professor, US Military Academy
CAPT Ebony Cook, USAF, instructor, US Air Force Academy
LTC Richard Cooney, USAF, former assistant professor, US Air Force Academy
Dr. Kate Coronges, assistant professor, US Military Academy
LTC Edith A. Disler, Ph.D., USAF (ret.), former professor, US Air Force Academy
MAJ James Do, former assistant professor, US Air Force Academy
LCDR Jeff Dyche, USNR (sep.), PhD, former associate professor, US Air Force Academy
Dr. Mark J. Eitelberg, professor, Naval Postgraduate School
Dr. Barry S. Fagin, professor, US Air Force Academy
Dr. Gregory D. Foster, professor, National Defense University
Dr. Clementine Fujimura, professor, US Naval Academy
LTC Paula M. Grant, JD, former assistant professor, US Air Force Academy
Dr. Amit Gupta, associate professor, Air War College
Dr. Elizabeth L. Hillman, former instructor, US Air Force Academy
Dr. Michael Jasperson, professor emeritus, US Naval Academy
Dr. Ryan Keltly, former assistant professor, US Military Academy
BG Tom Kolditz, Ph.D., USA (ret.), former Department Head, US Military Academy
Dr. Janice H. Laurence, former professor, Naval Postgraduate School
MAJ Charlie Law, USAF (sep.), former assistant professor, US Air Force Academy
Dr. Lisa L. Massi Lindsey, associate professor, Naval Postgraduate School
MAJ Stuart Lloyd, USAF, former assistant professor, US Air Force Academy
Dr. David R McCone, professor, US Air Force Academy
CAPT Robert N. Mishev, USAF (sep.), instructor, US Air Force Academy
LTC Melinda Moreau, instructor, Air University
LTC Craig D. Morrow, Ph.D., USA, assistant professor, US Military Academy
Dr. Michael P. Parker, professor, US Naval Academy
Dr. David L. Perry, former professor, US Army War College
Dr. Benjamin Roberts, senior lecturer, Naval Postgraduate School
Dr. David H. Sacko, professor, US Air Force Academy
LTC Lisa Sayegh, USAF (ret.), former assistant professor, US Air Force Academy
Dr. Richard Schoonhoven, associate professor, US Military Academy

CDR David Smith, Ph.D, USN, Permanent Military Professor and Chair, US Naval Academy
Dr. Molly Best Tinsley, professor emerita, US Naval Academy
CAPT Noel Trew, USAF, instructor, US Air Force Academy
Dr. Marc J. Ventresca, research associate professor, Naval Postgraduate School
Dr. Judith A. Youngman, professor, US Coast Guard Academy

The views expressed in this statement by current and former faculty at US Government Agencies are those of the individuals and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of their respective university, their Service, the Department of Defense or the US Government.

The authors thank Indra Lusero, Jeremy Johnson, Lenny Francioni, Corinne Vandagriff and Meridith Murray for their outstanding assistance in the preparation of this study.

¹ The statement was released in March 2009, with 1,050 retired generals and admirals listed as signatories. Elaine Donnelly reported that by May 2010, 1,167 had signed. See “Flag & General Officers for the Military,” <http://www.cmrlink.org/HMilitary.asp?docID=350>, accessed July 10, 2012.

² See “Elaine Donnelly and Aaron Belkin Debate DADT at Maxwell Air Force Base,” http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v4s_kkmWEJY&feature=youtu.be, at 26:52, accessed July 10, 2012; emphasis in original.

³ “Flag & General Officers for the Military.” <http://www.flagandgeneralofficersforthemilitary.com/>, accessed July 10, 2012.

⁴ To protect respondents’ identities and to ensure confidentiality, we do not identify demographic or professional details of any service member.

⁵ The thirty-seven active-duty LGB respondents included six women and thirty-one men, two of whom identify as transgender. Respondents represented diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds including four Latino/as, one African-American, two Asian-Americans and thirty Caucasians, and their ages ranged from 20 to 54. Within the sample there were nineteen officers and eighteen enlisted personnel. Twenty-eight of the thirty-seven respondents were currently or had previously been deployed. The sample included personnel representing all branches and components of the US military, including four reservists, one member of the National Guard and thirty-two active-duty service members.

⁶ We interviewed six women and nineteen men, including six Latino/as, one Asian-American, three African-Americans and fifteen Caucasians whose ages ranged from 21 to 50, and who had spent between 4 and 22 years in the military. They represented all branches and components of the US military and included five reservists, two members of the National Guard, three service academy attendees and fifteen active-duty personnel.

⁷ We searched major world publications in LexisNexis Academic.

⁸ We asked the post-repeal cohort to rank their units’ morale, but neglected to ask the pre-repeal cohort to do so.

⁹ For a complete history of “don’t ask, don’t tell,” see Nathaniel Frank, *Unfriendly Fire: How the Gay Ban Undermines the Military and Weakens America* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2009).

¹⁰ US Department of Defense, Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Summary Report of the Military Working Group*, July 1, 1993, 12.

¹¹ “Flag & General Officers for the Military.” <http://www.flagandgeneralofficersforthemilitary.com/>, accessed July 10, 2012.

¹² Paul Young, “Government Asks Judge to Stay Injunction Against ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,’” City News Service, October 14, 2010.

¹³ Cid Standifer, “Survey: DADT repeal has less impact than expected,” *Military Times*, March 12, 2012.

¹⁴ Statement by General (ret.), May 1, 2012; Interview with Lieutenant General (ret.), May 4, 2012; Interview with Brigadier General (ret.) May 15, 2012; Interview with Brigadier General (ret.), May 1, 2012; Interview with Major General (ret.), May 4, 2012.

¹⁵ Interview #54, April 11, 2012; Interview #42, March 27, 2012; Interview #55, April 13, 2012; Interview #38, March 2, 2012; Interview #51, April 9, 2012; Interview #49, April 13, 2012.

¹⁶ Interview #38, March 2, 2012; Interview #50, April 11, 2012.

¹⁷ Interview with Dr. Jay Goodwin, April 2, 2012; Interview with Professor John Allen Williams, April 3, 2012; Interview with Professor Todd Garth, March 22, 2012; Interview with Professor Steve Gerras, February 19, 2012; Interview with Professor David Kaiser, March 29, 2012; Interview with Professor George Reed, March 19, 2012; Interview with Professor David Levy, March 22, 2012. The 2010 Pentagon report on DADT is US Department of Defense, *Report of the Comprehensive Review of the Issues Associated with a Repeal of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,”* November 30, 2010.

¹⁸ Dave Boyer, “Public ‘Readily Accepts’ Rights for Gays, Obama Tells Donors,” *Washington Times*, February 10, 2012. Matthew Hay Brown, “A Smooth Turn from ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,’” *Baltimore Sun*, May 20, 2012; Anna Mulrine, “Panetta: No Hitches in Military’s Repeal of ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,’” *Christian Science Monitor*, May 10, 2012; Michael K. Lavers, “Top U.S. Marine: Openly Gay Servicemembers Not an Issue,” *Washington Blade*, August 28, 2012; “‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell’ Repeal Going Well,” *UPI*, March 20, 2012.

¹⁹ Michael Goldman, “Everything’s Quite Right with Santorum,” *Lowell Sun*, February 26, 2012.

²⁰ Rowan Scarborough, “Military Gay Group Growing; Aiming for More Rights,” *Washington Times*, February 20, 2012. Following Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta’s recognition of gay pride month, Donnelly added that “Gay pride events are

divisive and entirely inappropriate in the military.” Rowan Scarborough, “No Order from Top Brass for Gay Pride; Observance at Pentagon,” *Washington Times*, June 25, 2012.

²¹ “Early Consequences of Military LGBT Law,” May 16, 2012, <http://cmrlink.org/HMilitary.asp?docID=417>, accessed July 10, 2012.

²² Audrey McAvoy, “Homecoming Marine Wanted to Show Partner His Love,” *Associated Press*, March 2, 2012.

²³ Interview with Professor Charles Allen, March 19, 2012.

²⁴ Of 792 active-duty service members and mobilized reservists who completed the survey, 150 (18.9%) indicated that since DADT was repealed, someone in their units disclosed being gay or bisexual. Of those, 32 (21.3%) said that the disclosure had a negative impact on their units. In addition, 36 (4.5%) reported that since DADT was repealed, an openly gay or bisexual person joined their units. Of those, 12 (33.3%) said that the newcomer had a negative impact on their units. There was some overlap in that eight respondents reported a negative impact from a disclosure as well as from an LGB newcomer. Therefore, a total of 36 (32+12-8) discrete service members reported a negative impact from either a disclosure or from an LGB newcomer. Thus, 36/792 = 4.5% of respondents indicated that after DADT repeal, their units were negatively impacted when someone disclosed being gay or bisexual or when an openly gay or bisexual person joined their units. *Military Times* also asked what impact DADT repeal had on respondents’ units, and 2.4% indicated a major impact, 9.6% reported some impact, 13.7% said there was a minor impact and 74.3% responded that there was no impact. As explained in our appendix on standards of evidence, we did not focus on these data because the question did not allow respondents to specify whether the impact of DADT repeal was negative or positive. For results of annual *Military Times* polls, see “Military Times Poll,” <http://militarytimes.com/projects/polls/>, accessed July 12, 2012. We thank *Military Times* for sharing raw survey data.

²⁵ In response to a question asking, “How would you rate your unit’s level of training for its wartime mission?” 57% of 2011 respondents answered that they were very well trained or well trained (29% adequate, 10% poor or very poor, 4% not sure), but 62% of 2012 respondents said that they were very well trained or well trained (27% adequate, 7% poor or very poor, 4% not sure). In response to a question about the overall quality of military officers, 60% of 2011 respondents answered that they were excellent or good (26% average, 14% fair or poor), but 63% of 2012 respondents said that they were excellent or good (24% average, 13% fair or poor). In response to a question about the overall quality of enlisted leaders in the military, 62% of 2011 respondents answered that they were excellent or good (25% average, 13% fair or poor), but 64% of 2012 respondents said that they were excellent or good (24% average, 12% fair or poor). In response to a question asking if “today’s service members are better than they have ever been,” 61% of 2011 respondents agreed or strongly agreed (28% neutral, 21% disagree or strongly disagree), but 52% of 2012 respondents agreed or strongly agreed (27% neutral, 21% disagree or strongly disagree). For complete 2011 and 2012 survey results, see “Military Times Poll.”

²⁶ Interview #55, April 13, 2012.

²⁷ Interview #56, May 7, 2012.

²⁸ Interview #47, May 4, 2012.

²⁹ Interview #44, March 28, 2012.

³⁰ Interview with Colonel Gus Stafford, April 2, 2012.

³¹ Scholars distinguish between two types of cohesion: social cohesion, which refers to the degree of bonding and trust, and task cohesion, which refers to the extent to which group members are committed to a common mission. Although a number of studies indicate that of the two, only task cohesion is related to group effectiveness, we focus exclusively on social cohesion because that was a central focus of the debate over DADT. For the distinction between task and social cohesion, see “Does Social Cohesion Determine Motivation In Combat? An Old Question with an Old Answer,” by Robert MacCoun, Elizabeth Kier and Aaron Belkin, *Armed Forces & Society* 32, 4, 2006, 646-654.

³² US Department of Defense, Office of the Secretary of Defense, “Summary Report of the Military Working Group,” July 1, 1993, 5.

³³ Vincent Pattavina, “Retired Navy Officer Opposes Gays in Military,” *Patriot Ledger*, December 30, 2003.

³⁴ 10 USC 654, Policy Concerning Homosexuality in the Armed Forces.

³⁵ “Statement of Brian Jones,” House Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on Personnel, July 23, 2008, cmrlink.org/fileuploads/HASCO72308JonesTestimony.pdf, accessed July 10, 2012.

³⁶ Elliot Spagat, “Amos: Wrong Time to Overturn DADT,” *Associated Press*, November 6, 2010.

³⁷ Interview #45, April 2, 2012; Interview #54, April 11, 2012; Interview #39, March 2, 2012.

³⁸ Interview #24, April 26, 2012; Interview #27, May 12, 2012; Interview #29, March 20, 2012; Interview #26, May 2, 2012.

³⁹ Boyer, “Public ‘Readily Accepts’ Rights for Gays, Obama Tells Donors”; Brown, “A Smooth Turn from ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,’” May 20, 2012; Interview with Professor Martin Cook, March 22, 2012.

⁴⁰ Chris Johnson, "Obama Raises \$1.4 Million at D.C. LGBT Fundraiser," *Washington Blade*, February 9, 2012; Karen Parrish, "Report Shows Success of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' Repeal," *American Forces Press Service*, May 10, 2012.

⁴¹ For a review of cognitive and emotional biases, see Philip E. Tetlock and Ariel Levi, "Attribution bias: On the Inconclusiveness of the Cognition-Motivation Debate," *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 18, 1, January, 1982, 68-88.

⁴² Significance: $p < .01$

⁴³ While this is always a possibility, one advantage of our use of the nonequivalent design is that the post-repeal group had no knowledge of the pre-repeal group's rating of cohesion or readiness, and the pre-repeal group had no knowledge of our plan to collect data post-repeal. While there may have been some overlap among members of the pre- and post-repeal groups, there was little if any opportunity to coordinate any effort to create biased results by underestimating cohesion and readiness pre-repeal and then over-estimating them post-repeal.

⁴⁴ These results were replicated when we controlled for service branch, as there was a slight increase in cohesion in all four main branches. We also asked respondents to rank their units' readiness, and we found that average readiness remained unchanged, with a score of 8.10 in the pre-repeal group and 8.11 in the post-repeal group. We asked the post-repeal cohort to rank their units' morale, but neglected to ask the pre-repeal cohort to do so.

⁴⁵ One reported that cohesion increased after DADT repeal, and seven said that there were no changes.

⁴⁶ Respondent #15, Palm Center survey. Army National Guard Specialist, MOS: none listed.

⁴⁷ Respondent #6, Palm Center survey. Navy Reserve Petty Officer First Class, MOS: Intelligence.

⁴⁸ Alan Will, "DADT and Military Effectiveness: Moving Forward," *Marine Corps Gazette*, February 2012, 32-37.

⁴⁹ Morten G. Ender, David E. Rohall, Andrew J. Brennan, Michael D. Matthews and Irving Smith, "Civilian, ROTC, and Military Academy Undergraduate Attitudes toward Homosexuals in the U.S. Military," *Armed Forces & Society*, 38, 1, January 2012, 164-172. Although this paper was completed before repeal, Ender and his colleagues have collected additional data in 2012, and those data confirm that post-repeal, academy as well as ROTC cadets have become more tolerant of LGB peers.

⁵⁰ Respondent #4, Palm Center survey. Active Duty Marine Sergeant, MOS: Light Attack Helicopter Squadron.

⁵¹ Interview #46, April 10, 2012; Interview #48, April 6, 2012.

⁵² Brown, "A Smooth Turn from 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell,'" May 20, 2012; Interview #9, April 19, 2012.

⁵³ Interview #56, May 7, 2012.

⁵⁴ Interview with Professor Todd Garth, March 22, 2012.

⁵⁵ Interview #17, April 27, 2012.

⁵⁶ Interview #28, April 30, 2012.

⁵⁷ "Summary Report of the Military Working Group," 7.

⁵⁸ Frank J. Gaffney, Jr., "Gates' Choice: Defense Secretary Should Not Certify Military Readiness for Homosexuals," *Washington Times*, June 13, 2011.

⁵⁹ Elaine Donnelly, "Military Times Poll: Troops Oppose Gay Agenda for the Military," *National Review Online*, January 2, 2009.

⁶⁰ Gary J. Gates, "Retention among Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Military Personnel," March 2007, <http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Gates-EffectsOfDontAskDontTellOnRetention-Mar-2007.pdf>; and "Testimony on 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' by Gary J. Gates," Submitted to US House of Representatives, Armed Services Committee, Military Personnel Subcommittee, July 18, 2008, <http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Gates-DADT-Testimony-Jul-2008.pdf>, accessed July 10, 2012; Aaron Belkin, "'Don't Ask, Don't Tell': Does the Gay Ban Undermine the Military's Reputation?" *Armed Forces & Society* 34, 2 2008, 276-291.

⁶¹ Percentages do not add up to 100 due to rounding.

⁶² US Department of Defense, "DoD Announces Recruiting and Retention Numbers for Fiscal 2012, Through May," June 29, 2012, <http://www.defense.gov/releases/release.aspx?releaseid=15418>, accessed on July 6, 2012.

⁶³ "DoD Announces Recruiting and Retention Numbers for Fiscal 2012, Through May."

⁶⁴ Rose M. Richeson, National Guard Bureau, Media Relations, May 3, 2012. We contacted Ms Richeson after the release of the March recruiting and retention data, which also indicated that ANG was the only component to miss its accession goals, reaching 95% of its target, as would subsequently be the case in May.

⁶⁵ Lolita Baldor, "US Army More Selective on Recruits, Re-enlistments," *Associated Press*, May 22, 2012.

⁶⁶ David Crary, "Chaplains Adjust to Lifting of Ban on Gays," *Associated Press*, July 5, 2012.

⁶⁷ Stephanie Samuel, "Military Chaplains: We've Been Counseling Gay Soldiers," *Christian Post Reporter*, February 17, 2011.

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- ⁶⁸ Adelle Banks, "Army Readies Chaplains Before 'Don't Ask' Repeal," *USA Today*, March 25, 2011. Phone conversation with Army Chief of Chaplains Office, June 20, 2012. A Chaplaincy Corps training slide indicated that chaplains "who are unable to reconcile repeal of DADT may request voluntary separation per AR 600-8-20."
- ⁶⁹ For reviews of the literature on recruitment and retention, see John T. Warner and Beth J. Asch, "The Economics of Military Manpower," in Keith Hartley and Todd Sandler, eds., *Handbook of Defense Economics*, 1 (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1995), 348-398; and Bruce R. Orvis and Beth J. Asch, *Military Recruiting: Trends, Outlook, and Implications* (Santa Monica: RAND, 2001).
- ⁷⁰ Phone interview with Army National Guard Recruitment office. May 2, 2012.
- ⁷¹ General Norman Schwarzkopf, testimony before the Senate Committee on the Armed Services, in *Policy Concerning Homosexuality in the Armed Forces*, Hearing Held by Senate Armed Services Committee. 103^d Congress, 2^d Session. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1993), 598; and General Accounting Office, *Homosexuals in the Military: Policies and Practices of Foreign Countries* (Washington: General Accounting Office, 1993).
- ⁷² Peter Sprigg, "Homosexual Assault in the Military," *Insight*, May, 2010.
- ⁷³ Fred Peck, testimony before the Senate Committee on the Armed Services, in *Policy Concerning Homosexuality in the Armed Forces*, Hearing Held by Senate Armed Services Committee. 103^d Congress, 2^d Session. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1993).
- ⁷⁴ Interview #25, May 11, 2012.
- ⁷⁵ Interview #58, May 7, 2012.
- ⁷⁶ Matthew Schofield, "Impact of Ending Military's 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' Law Negligible," *McClatchy Newspapers*, April 3, 2012.
- ⁷⁷ Jim Garamone, "Navy Leader Calls 'Don't Ask' Repeal 'Non-story'," *American Forces Press Service*, March 16, 2012.
- ⁷⁸ E-mail from Eileen Lainez, August 20, 2012.
- ⁷⁹ Keith Alexander, "Prosecutor Says Marine Fatal Stabbing Was a Hate Crime," *Washington Post*, May 16, 2012.
- ⁸⁰ "'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' Repeal Going Well," *UPI*, March 20, 2012; Correspondence with Aubrey Sarvis, Executive Director, SLDN, July 2 and 9, 2012.
- ⁸¹ Headquarters, Department of the Army, *2020 Generating Health & Discipline in the Force Ahead of the Strategic Reset; Report 2012*, 2012, 122. The report notes that "victims may be more likely to report sexual offenses in the absence of the former Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy."
- ⁸² On the 2009/2010 *Military Times* survey, 38 out of 1,680 heterosexual males (2.3%) reported that they were victims of sexual assault at some point during their military careers. On the 2011 survey, 14 of 984 heterosexual men (1.4%) reported victimization, and on the 2012 survey, eight out of 704 (1.1%) reported victimization. We derived these results from raw data provided by *Military Times*.
- ⁸³ Interview with Lieutenant General (ret.), May 7, 2012.
- ⁸⁴ Melinda Henneberger, "Military Assault Victims Find their Voice," *Washington Post*, May 9, 2012.
- ⁸⁵ OutServe Survey, September 2011, anonymous respondent.
- ⁸⁶ Interview #5, March 22, 2012; Interview #25, May 11, 2012.
- ⁸⁷ Interview #12, April 21, 2012.
- ⁸⁸ Interview with Colonel Gus Stafford, April 2, 2012.
- ⁸⁹ The question asked, "Since DADT has been repealed, have you experienced, from your commander or other service member, any forms of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation? Please explain." OutServe administered the survey in December, 2011 and 327 respondents answered the question about discrimination. Approximately 89% said they had not experienced discrimination, declined to answer or indicated that any incidents were minor. The percentages are approximate due to subjectivity in coding. For example, the response "No, one incident of minor taunting but that's it" was counted as a "no."
- ⁹⁰ Anonymous respondents, OutServe Survey, December 2011. Quotes have been left intact with no changes to grammar or spelling.
- ⁹¹ Reportedly the squadron commander apologized the next day and expressed support for the women's right to express themselves on equal terms with straight officers. A.J. Walkley, "Command Sergeant Major Allegedly Assaults Lesbian Captain at Military Ball," *Huffington Post*, April 20, 2012.
- ⁹² Office of the Inspector General, US Department of Defense, *Military Environment with Respect to the Homosexual Conduct Policy*, March 16, 2000, 4.
- ⁹³ Anonymous respondent, OutServe Survey, September, 2011.
- ⁹⁴ Out of 327 respondents, 29% indicated "universally with respect and without discrimination," 43.4% reported "generally free from discrimination with some minor exceptions," 17.4% responded "very mixed," 4% said "mostly negatively" and 6.1% did not provide an answer.

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- ⁹⁵ Interview #9, April 19, 2012.
- ⁹⁶ Interview #2, April 19, 2012.
- ⁹⁷ Interview #7, April 20, 2012.
- ⁹⁸ Interview #12, April 21, 2012.
- ⁹⁹ Interview #2, April 19, 2012.
- ¹⁰⁰ Interview #23, May 1, 2012.
- ¹⁰¹ Sharon Terman, "The Practical and Conceptual Problems with Regulating Harassment in a Discriminatory Institution," Palm Center, May, 2004, http://www.palmcenter.org/files/active/0/200405_Terman.pdf, accessed July 10, 2012.
- ¹⁰² For a recent review of the literature on the determinants of military morale, see Thomas W. Britt and James M. Dickinson, "Morale during Military Operations: A Positive Psychology Approach." In Thomas W. Britt, Carl Castro and Amy B. Adler, eds., *Military Life: The Psychology of Serving in Peace and Combat*, 1 (Westport: Praeger, 2006), 162.
- ¹⁰³ Melissa Healy and Karen Tumulty, "Aides Say Clinton to End Prosecution of Military's Gays," *Los Angeles Times*, January 28, 1993.
- ¹⁰⁴ "Don't Ask, Don't Tell Review," Hearing before the Military Personnel Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services, House of Representative, July 23, 2008 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 2009).
- ¹⁰⁵ Tony Perkins and John Sheehan, "A Charade with Consequences," *Politico*, June 15, 2010.
- ¹⁰⁶ In response to a question about their overall quality of life, 68% of 2011 respondents answered that it was excellent or good (22% average, 11% fair or poor), but 71% of 2012 respondents said that it was excellent or good (20% average, 9% fair or poor). In response to a question about job satisfaction, 79% of 2011 respondents answered that they were completely or somewhat satisfied (20% completely or somewhat dissatisfied), but 87% of 2012 respondents said that they were completely or somewhat satisfied (13% completely or somewhat dissatisfied, 1% no opinion). In response to a question asking whether they would recommend a military career to others, 76% of 2011 respondents said yes (13% no, 10% undecided), but 88% of 2012 respondents said yes (8% no, 4% undecided). For complete 2011 and 2012 survey results, see "Military Times Poll."
- ¹⁰⁷ "Military Times Poll." We derived the percent of heterosexual troops who reported a decrease in morale as well as those who oppose the new policy of open service from raw data provided by *Military Times*.
- ¹⁰⁸ Note: this percentage is lower than in 2011 when 45.2 % of all troops surveyed disagreed with the statement.
- ¹⁰⁹ Interview #50, April 11, 2012.
- ¹¹⁰ Interview #52, April 24, 2012.
- ¹¹¹ Interview #28, April 30, 2012.
- ¹¹² Interview #2, April 19, 2012.
- ¹¹³ Interview with Professor James Parco, March 13, 2012.
- ¹¹⁴ Interview #56, May 7, 2012; Interview #7, April 20, 2012; Interview #2, April 19, 2012.
- ¹¹⁵ Interview with Professor George Reed, March 19, 2012.
- ¹¹⁶ Britt and Dickinson, "Morale during Military Operations," 164-173.
- ¹¹⁷ In contrast to some media reports during the Iraq War, perceptions of organizational morale were exceptionally high among soldiers in Iraq. See Morten G. Ender, *American Soldiers in Iraq: McSoldiers or Innovative Professionals?* (New York: Routledge, 2009).
- ¹¹⁸ According to the Palm Center, 25 foreign militaries allow LGB service members to serve openly. See <http://www.unfriendlyfire.org/research/foreign.php>, accessed August 6, 2012. According to the Pentagon's 2010 report on DADT, however, 35 foreign militaries allow LGB service members to serve openly. See *Report of the Comprehensive Review*, 89-92.
- ¹¹⁹ *Report of the Comprehensive Review*, 89-92; National Defense Research Institute, *Sexual Orientation and U.S. Military Personnel Policy: An Update of RAND's 1993 Study* (Santa Monica: RAND, 1993), 275-320; National Defense Research Institute, *Sexual Orientation and U.S. Military Personnel Policy: Options and Assessment* (Santa Monica: RAND, 1993), 65-105; Nathaniel Frank, "Gays in foreign militaries 2010: A global primer," Palm Center, 2010, <http://bit.ly/f5JyAb>, accessed July 27, 2012; Aaron Belkin, "Don't Ask, Don't Tell: Is the Gay Ban Based on Military Necessity?" *Parameters* 33, 2, Summer, 2003, 108-119; Danny Kaplan and Amir Rosenmann, "Unit Social Cohesion in the Israeli Military as a Case Study of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell,'" *Political Psychology* 33, 4, 2012, 419-436.
- ¹²⁰ For details on the implementation and training process, see US Department of Defense, *Support Plan for Implementation; Report of the Comprehensive Review of the Issues Associated with a Repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell,"* November 30, 2010
- ¹²¹ We derived these results from raw data provided by *Military Times*. For *Military Times* survey results more generally, see "Military Times Poll."

¹²² OutServe on-line survey, December 2011. We are grateful to OutServe for sharing survey results. For the estimate that 2% of troops are lesbian, gay or bisexual, see Gary J. Gates, “Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Men and Women in the US Military: Updated Estimates,” May 2010, <http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Gates-GLBmilitaryUpdate-May-20101.pdf>, accessed July 10, 2012.

¹²³ Interview #12, April 21, 2012.

¹²⁴ Interview #45, April 2, 2012; Interview #27, May 12, 2012.

¹²⁵ “Meet the Press,” *NBC* television broadcast, June 15, 2003.

¹²⁶ Sam Rodgers, “Opinions of Military Personnel on Sexual Minorities in the Military,” *Zogby International*, December 2006, <http://www.palmcenter.org/files/active/1/ZogbyReport.pdf>, accessed July 10, 2012.

¹²⁷ Interview #60, May 17, 2012.

¹²⁸ Steven M. Samuels and Col. Gary A. Packard, “Repeal of DADT Makes the Military Stronger,” *Air Force Times*, February 6, 2012, 24.

¹²⁹ *Report of the Comprehensive Review*, 73.

¹³⁰ Herek and Belkin note that, “Knowing an openly gay person is predictive of supportive attitudes even in demographic groups where hostility is the norm... Thus, negative attitudes toward gay men and lesbians are likely to be reduced to the extent that working relationships develop between heterosexual and gay personnel.” Gregory M. Herek and Aaron Belkin, “Sexual Orientation and Military Service: Prospects for Organizational and Individual Change in the United States.” In Thomas W. Britt, Carl Castro and Amy B. Adler, eds., *Military Life: The Psychology of Serving in Peace and Combat*, 4 (Westport: Praeger, 2006), 134.

¹³¹ “‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell’ Repeal Going Well,” *UPI*, March 20, 2012.

¹³² Interview with Mackubin Owens, April 24, 2012.

¹³³ “Early Consequences of Military LGBT Law.”

¹³⁴ In previous instances of minority integration, problems have emerged long after initial policy transitions. Two decades after President Harry Truman’s 1948 order that led the military to change from a separate-and-unequal to separate-but-equal standard, the armed forces were plagued by violent racial tension during the Vietnam War. Yet two factors distinguish racial integration in previous generations from LGB service today: (1) US troops were already serving alongside LGB colleagues before repeal; (2) comfort levels with LGB people as well as support for openly gay service are far higher today than were comfort levels and support for racial integration during the period from World War II through the Vietnam War. These differences make it highly unlikely that tensions associated with racial integration are the correct model for predicting long-term consequences of DADT repeal.

¹³⁵ Donnelly, “Military Times Poll: Troops Oppose Gay Agenda for the Military.”