Accepting blacks and homosexuals into the military: Truman and Clinton argue for equal rights

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ACCEPTING BLACKS AND HOMOSEXUALS INTO THE MILITARY:
TRUMAN AND CLINTON ARGUE FOR EQUAL RIGHTS

by

JayDe Allen Leonard

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

Communication Studies

Greenspun School of Communication
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
December 1996
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University of Nevada, Las Vegas
December 1996
ABSTRACT

In this thesis, the rhetoric surrounding President Clinton's announcement will be compared to the rhetoric surrounding President Truman's order for racial integration of the armed services. These significant presidential announcements, while seemingly unrelated, changed the focus of national debate on two controversial issues. To determine what similarities and differences exist in the rhetoric surrounding the two events I will compare the events using analog criticism (a method of comparing and contrasting two rhetorical events) as the framework for the study. Government studies and newspaper accounts of both rhetorical events will be relied upon to contrast and compare the rhetorical events.
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In completing this thesis it would be irresponsible to not thank a few people that exhibited a firm belief that I would actually finish this project. That was no small task given it has taken me four years of picking it up, putting it down and starting all over - many times. A special thanks goes to my advisor, Dr. Richard Jensen who always believed me when I would go to his office and say that I was working on the paper and then not see him again for the rest of the semester. I want to thank my thesis committee, Dr. Barbara Cloud, Dr. Gage Chapel and Dr. Michael Bowers for consistently demonstrating confidence in my abilities.

I need thank all of the people that I work with on daily basis for putting up with my major mood swings during my inspirational times as well as my times of desperation. First let me thank Dr. Ted Cummings, Dr. Nasser Daneshvary, Dr. Ann Mayo and Dr. Liz Baldizan for providing leadership support. Next without the constant encouragement from Dr. Mary Macnabb, Robin Lewin, Judy Pugh, Barbara Dipaolo and Olivia Saab I wouldn’t have made it through some of the down times. And, lastly, I need to send a special thanks to Donna Evans who rescued me in the final stages of thesis completion when my home computer crashed.
CHAPTER 1

COMPARATIVE RHETORIC: TRUMAN AND CLINTON
ON BLACK AND GAY MILITARY INVOLVEMENT.

The capacity to get free is nothing; the capacity to be free,
that is the task.

Andre Gide
The Immoralist

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on
this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty, and
dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

President Abraham Lincoln
Gettysburg Address
November 19, 1863

Few words spoken by a United States President have carried the simplest, purist
most poignant beliefs of a nation better than those spoken by Lincoln. Yet those words
were spoken at the end of a war fought brother against brother to reaffirm the voice of
the American founders who sought to escape the tyranny of royal rule and place the
power of government in the hands of the people. Throughout the history of this country,
different groups have had to constantly remind the people that the United States is
based on inclusionary ideals, not exclusionary ones. Today another group has its ideas
dramatically placed before the people: homosexuals.¹

A few days after Bill Clinton took the oath of office as President of the United
States, he expressed his intention to end discrimination against homosexuals in the armed services (Appendix, current policy). This assertion brought cheers from the homosexual community and civil rights advocates and cries of moral outrage from many religious leaders, political conservatives, and, for the most part, members of the armed services. Even though Clinton's intention to end discrimination against homosexuals in the military marks a dramatic policy change, this is not the first time the armed services have served as a catalyst for national debate.

On January 6, 1947, President Harry S Truman issued Executive Order 9808 creating the President's Committee on Civil Rights "to study and report on the whole problem of federally-secured civil rights, with a view to making a recommendation to the Congress." One year later President Truman delivered a special message to Congress on civil rights in which he outlined a 10-point plan to strengthen the federal government's role in the protection of civil rights. Parts of the 10-point plan called for the elimination of poll taxes, the establishment of the Fair Employment Practice Commission, and federal protection against lynching. In President Truman's words, "The protection of civil rights begins with the mutual respect for the rights of others which all of us should practice in our daily lives."

The closing lines of President Truman's special address turned out to be the most controversial:

During the recent war and in the years since its close we have made much progress toward equality of opportunity in our armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin. I have instructed the Secretary of Defense to take steps to have the remaining instances of discrimination in the armed services eliminated as rapidly as possible.
That statement set the stage for a showdown between President Truman and Southern congressional leaders. The statement also helped draw the constitutional line between the powers of the federal government and states' rights.

In this thesis, the rhetoric surrounding Clinton's announcement will be compared to the rhetoric surrounding President Truman's order for racial integration of the armed services. These significant presidential announcements, while seemingly unrelated, changed the focus of national debate on two controversial issues. To determine what similarities and differences exist in the rhetoric surrounding the two events I will compare the events using analog criticism (a method of comparing and contrasting two rhetorical events) as the framework for the study. Government studies and newspaper accounts of both national debates will be relied upon to contrast and compare the rhetorical events.

While this paper is written about contemporary events the underlying theme is an ancient one: discrimination. One of the oldest expressions of discrimination is slavery. In the evolution of society the appearance of slavery over 10,000 years ago was seen as an improvement by some historians.

It might come as a shock to some readers to learn that a number of historians consider slavery a step forward in the development of civilization. From earliest times it was the practice of primitive people to kill the warriors they defeated in tribal battle. These were societies in which hunting was the way of life. Men were able to kill just enough game to feed themselves, and there was no surplus to feed captives.5

The development of agrarian economies and the taming of animals made it possible to provide enough food to keep the human spoils of battle alive and the increased work load that came with an agrarian economy made enslaving captives almost necessary.
Today, 10,000 years after slavery first appeared, we still live in a society where "most of us - no matter what our color or where in the world we came from - have ancestors who at one time or another were slaves..." Meyer Weinberg, in his compilation *World Racism and Related Inhumanities*, further explains; "It is artificial to treat racism in isolation from additional inhumanities...a glance at the subject index of this volume indicates the social, economic and political complexity of racism." Meyer identifies eight inhumanities: 1) Racism 2) Slavery 3) Class domination 4) Sexism 5) National oppression 6) Imperialism 7) Colonialism and 8) Antisemitism. These inhumanities point to a historical link between all forms of discrimination. Yet some still argue that the relationship between the experiences of black and gay members of the United States military is a convenient but invalid argument.

Much of the argument that has surfaced in the national debate surrounding President Clinton’s intention to lift the ban on homosexuals in the military quite often centered on determining what kind of relationship exists between the black and gay military experience. The relationship has been described from both sides: dissimilar to inseparable. General Colin Powell, as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, wrote about the relationship between the black and gay experience in a letter to Representative Pat Schroeder:

Skin color is a benign, nonbehavioral characteristic. Sexual orientation is perhaps the most profound of human behavioral characteristics. Comparison of the two is a convenient but invalid argument.

However Carol Moseley-Braun, a United States Senator from Illinois, states:

While the discrimination faced by African-Americans often takes different forms from that faced by gay and lesbian Americans, this much we can say with
absolute certainty: The military has no more of a rational basis for banning gays and lesbians in 1993 than it did for segregating African-Americans in 1943.9

Coretta Scott King, widow of Dr. Martin Luther King, remarked at her late husband's grave site:

The arguments that have been raised in favor of the ban against gay people in the military are the same arguments that were so often raised against racial integration in the past.10

Just as President Truman's integration order started an avalanche of debate, President Clinton's announcement to end discrimination against homosexual members of the military shaped national debate for a considerable amount of time. Since President Clinton's intention to lift the ban on homosexuals in the military was made clear in January 1993, much has been written and said. The Senate sponsored a debate on February 4, 1993 that spanned 88 pages of the Congressional Record and no fewer than 589 citations could be found in five of the nation's top national newspapers between January 26, 1993 and March 15, 1996: The Christian Science Monitor, the Los Angeles Times, The New York Times, the Wall Street Journal and the Washington Post. The initial articles focused on the national debate concerning President Clinton's intentions and the more recent articles have updated the public on how the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell, Don't Pursue" compromise is being interpreted in the courts.

The "don't ask, don't tell, don't pursue" compromise was written into law when it became clear that lifting the ban on homosexual military service was not going to be accepted by Congress or the military leadership. While the military will not be able to ask about a member's sexual orientation, much ambiguity still exists in the policy concerning when a commander will be allowed to investigate (pursue). "These [new
regulations] will be good for fair-minded commanders," Tanya Domi, legislative director for the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, said of the rules. "But someone who is prejudiced against gay people has been given wide latitude to investigate and discharge members for sexual conduct" For example, included with the detailed rules released by the Clinton administration,

...were such real world scenarios as a commander confronted with a young subordinate who acknowledges privately he may be gay (probably not grounds for investigation); an officer who observes two male enlisted men "holding hands while off duty" (definitely grounds for investigation); and a report of a service member "hanging around" a gay bar (not in itself grounds for action). For example, included with the detailed rules released by the Clinton administration,

The politicians spent almost a year hammering out this policy; now the federal courts are being asked to test the constitutionality of the compromise policy.

Both rhetorical events surrounding the actions of Truman and Clinton have been important in shaping national debate and should be studied to identify if any similarities and differences exist. As this nation struggles to come to terms with its past transgressions toward its peoples, it is important to identify when and if history is repeating itself so a remedy can be prescribed. To compare the rhetoric surrounding the national debates spawned by the presidential announcements I will use an analog criticism similar to the methodology used in, "A Case Study in Speech Criticism: The Truman Nixon Analog".

The first stage of an analog criticism requires a description of historical incidents and events surrounding the rhetorical events. To provide historical background, brief histories of the black and gay experiences in the military will be outlined. The black military experience has been well documented. One of the most thorough works written
about the black military experience is *Freedom to Serve: Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services*. *Freedom to Serve* is the report requested of the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services. This report chronicles the black experience in the military (all branches) before and shortly after non-discrimination policies were enacted. Other books will be helpful in recreating the black military experience: *Strength for the Fight: A History of Black Americans in the Military* by Bernard C. Nalty and *Integration of the Armed Forces 1940-1965* by Morris J. MacGregor.

The gay military experience has only recently been written about but two books will help recreate the gay military experience. The first book is *Conduct Unbecoming: Lesbians and Gays in the U.S. Military: Vietnam to the Persian Gulf* by Randy Shilts. Shilts' book chronicles the contributions and hardships of gay and lesbian service members. Shilts' also documents the tragic consequences of gay and lesbian expulsion not only to the individual but also to the combat readiness of the military itself. Another book, *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two* by Allan Berube gives a detailed accounting of the gay experience during World War II. Finally, an anecdotal book by Mary Ann Humphrey, *My Country, My Right to Serve: Expriences of Gay Men and Women in the Military, World War II to the Present*, tells the stories of many gay and lesbian service members.

After I provide brief histories of the black and gay military experience I will contrast and compare the two experiences as played out in the national debate. Stages two, three, and four of an analog criticism require discovery and description of
differences and similarities of rhetorical context. Particular attention will be spent on how relevant the debate was to the actual experience. For example, when the subject of ability to perform is discussed, the question that needs to be answered is how close to the documented truth are the comments being written in the nation’s headlines. In order to illustrate how the integration of blacks into the military runs parallel to the acceptance of homosexuals, this paper will examine the issues of ability to perform duties, public sentiment, inconsistency of policy application, and reactions of civilian and military leadership. In the process of researching this topic I stumbled upon a few unexpected areas for comparison. One notable example would be the issue of sexually transmitted diseases. It seems that both black Americans and gay Americans have had to fight the stigma of having a higher incidence than their white heterosexual counterparts.

There also appear to be some notable differences in the military experiences of black and gay Americans. The issue of ability to perform duties has been publicly projected as mainly similar between the black and gay military experience but the educational oppoutunities afforded blacks and gays made the realities of military performance markedly different. The issue of morality affects the national debate much more when discussing gays in the military than when talking about racial integration of the military.

The final stage of an analog criticism requires a description of the implications of the analysis. The outcome of comparing these two rhetorical events is two-fold. First, an in-depth look at the national debate surrounding the two rhetorical events will
determine if the two events are comparable and if the United States as a nation is seeing history repeat itself. And secondly, if the rhetoric is comparable can a prediction be made about the outcome of the current debate of lifting the ban on homosexuals serving in the United States military?
1. For the purpose of this paper the terms homosexual and gay have been used interchangeably to keep in line with language of many of the publications cited that use the word 'gay' to also encompass lesbians.


CHAPTER 2

ONLY WHEN NECESSARY: BLACK MILITARY INVOLVEMENT
A TWO ACT PLAY

The art of our necessities is strange,
That can make vile things precious.

Shakespeare

Military service has long been an indication and obligation of full
citizenship, especially in European society. Extending citizenship to blacks was
not an option in early American history. If the nation were to allow full access to
military service by black slaves or black freemen then it could be questioned why
slavery continued to exist and full citizenship rights were not extended to black
members of society.

The military case suggests that the best atmosphere in which to
enact legal changes in black status is a crisis in which black reactions are
perceived by whites, especially governmental officials, as having a
significant bearing on the outcome.¹

Unfortunatly, blacks found that after fighting to secure rights for other
citizens of the world (ACT I), they were cruelly expected to return either to
slavery or to second class citizen status (ACT II). This two act play was repeated
many times in the history of the United States.
The citizens of the young colonies imported many intellectual and cultural
items from their native European countries. The Europeans viewed military
service as a responsibility as well as a badge of citizenship.² The military was of
little consequence to most of the colonial citizenry since it was the responsibility
of the British fleet and soldiers to protect them. And, since blacks were not asked
to serve in the colonial militia, society was given another indication that blacks
were not full citizens.

Slaves, as chattel personnel, incapable of legal marriage, property
ownership, or judicial testimony, subject to the will and authority of a
private or institutional owner, their labor and services totally at the
disposal of others, possessed none of the attributes of citizenship status...
Until the end of the seventeenth century there was the possibility that
blacks who were not slaves might possess the attributes of citizenship status
and be expected to discharge the obligation of military service.³

It was quite evident, even before the Declaration of Independence, that
this view of slaves and the subsequent view of all blacks (born free or into
slavery) was to cause a great many problems for a young government based on
such noble aspirations as "all men are created equal."

As the slave trade grew in the early 1700's, fears of slave uprisings became
a motivator for not allowing blacks to serve in the military. This inability to serve
aided in creating and defining the narrow roles blacks were allowed to play in the
early part of the nation's history.

As the slave trade to America intensified, the distinction between
bondage and freedom weakened, making black person synonymous with
slave, and theories of inferiority of blacks grew.⁴

A double standard was firmly entrenched in the laws by the 1700's. The
belief that blacks were inferior to whites was widely accepted yet some questioned why blacks were not required to perform military duty.

There was a recognition that requiring duty on an equal basis would contradict views concerning the inferiority of blacks and the danger of permitting them to possess arms. However, if blacks were exempted they could be argued to have the high social status of minister, public officials, and others in the exempted classes.5

A legislative compromise was reached by requiring blacks to perform civil duties such as road work and other public works projects and provided for the levying of fines if the services were not rendered.

Additionally, a statute was passed which required military service in the event of real necessity. In "case of alarm" all free blacks aged sixteen or over were ordered to report to the first commissioned officer of the town militia for whatever service might be required. Anyone who failed to report was subject to a fine of twenty shillings or eight days' labor.6

The theme of requiring or calling upon blacks, free or slave, to serve in the militia in times of desperate need, was repeated continuously in the militias of the colonies and later in the United States of America. This theme always came in two acts: Act One: the call to arms in emergencies, giving hope to the slaves and free blacks that by performing well in this time of need they will return to a better life; and then cruelly, Act Two: the realization that commendable service was rewarded by fear, mistrust, and business as usual.

By the 1770's the French, Spanish, and English had all been struggling with how to handle the large numbers of blacks that lived in this new world. Most refused to allow blacks to serve in the military but some recruited free blacks, especially in Louisiana, to help fight Indians. The issue was soon to become a
great concern for the American colonies. When the colonies broke from the British, 2.5 million people lived in the thirteen colonies. One-fifth of these 2.5 million were black. Ninety percent of those individuals lived in the southern colonies.

In Virginia blacks were 40 percent of the population, in South Carolina blacks were one-half of the population; but along the coast, in areas more vulnerable to attack, they outnumbered whites by as much as ten or twelve to one. In the first battles of the Revolutionary War were fought with the help of black soldiers, some free blacks and some released by their owners. When Congress, on June 30, 1775, enacted the first sixty-nine articles of war for the governance of the American Army the exclusion of blacks was never mentioned. Quotas or proportions for each colony would be determined according to the number of inhabitants of all ages, including blacks. Before adjourning, Congress recommended the formation into militia companies of all able-bodied males between the ages of sixteen and fifty years. The legislation made no mention of race or color.

The battles at Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill all were fought with the aid of black volunteers. As the initial crisis seemed to pass, the issue of blacks being pressed into service came to the forefront, "since they were regarded as property, a possibly disruptive force and incapable of citizenship." By July 10, 1775, the order came down to recruiting officers forbidding the enlistment of blacks. Congress entertained the idea of discharging all blacks from military service but the crisis was intensifying and the revolutionary army was threatened
with the expiration of the terms of service of many militiamen. The colonial army was experiencing some success early in the war which prompted some emergency actions by the British governors charged with maintaining order in the colonies. One of the first to take action was Governor John Murray, Earl of Dunmore. He caused a great deal of speculation and fear when he made the following proclamation enlisting the service of Negroes.

Issue as of November 7, 1775, on board the William in the harbor at Norfolk, the proclamation announced that in order to defeat "treasonable purposes" the Governor was declaring martial law. Colonists who refused "to resort to his Majesty's standard" were to be adjudged traitors..."and I do hereby further declare all indented servants, Negroes, or others, (appertaining to rebels) free, that are able and willing to bear arms, they joining His Majesty's Troops, as soon as may be, for the more speedily reducing the Colony to a proper sense of their duty, to His Majesty's crown and dignity."

Any slave that wanted to take his chances on the outcome of the war and the earnest intentions of the British could run away and join their forces. The perceived mass exodus of slaves to the British never happened but Lord Dunmore was able to "by the first of December outfit nearly 300 slaves in military garb, with the inscription, "Liberty to Slaves" emblazoned across the breast of each. The Governor officially designated them "Lord Dunmore's Ethiopian Regiment." If a smallpox epidemic had not broken out in Lord Dunmore's regiments he could have commanded a force of over two thousand Negro followers. The freedom Lord Dunmore offered never materialized for the runaway slaves, however.

The American military had much to be happy about in the summer of 1776 with the repulsion of the British from Charleston. Soon, however, the British
were to arrive with 34,000 men and a "startling array of warships." By the autumn of 1776 the British flexed their military muscle by running the American militiamen out of New York. To make matters worse the military reverses continued and when Washington was defeated at Brandywine on September 11, Congress was forced to flee to York. The winter at Valley Forge seemed to be the breaking point for the American military. The army was racked by desertions, disease, and funding shortages. By the end of 1778, Congress and the army were even more prepared to take any men they could get. Congress recommended to South Carolina and Georgia that they recruit and train three thousand able bodied slaves into battalions staffed by white officers to help those states meet their militia quotas. Even though Congress agreed to pay one thousand dollars for each slave the states resoundingly rejected the plan.

The New England state governments were not having the same difficulty meeting their quotas by drafting slaves into their regiments. Negro recruiting became prevalent after 1777 in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Connecticut.

Requested to furnish fifteen regiments for the Continental army, the [Massachusetts] legislature in 1777 passed two resolutions exempting none but the Quakers from military service. By implication Negroes were included among persons liable to be drafted. By April 1778 the state resolved any ambiguity by legally sanctioning the enlistment of Negroes.

The southern states survived the Revolutionary War without the widespread use of blacks in their military units. The northern states however, relied quite heavily on blacks to fill their quotas and defeat the British. Military
leaders of the North had discovered that "blacks, who had few options in civilian life, were more willing to serve for longer periods than whites and rarely deserted." This trend also translated into shorter enlistment periods for whites so they could remain at home for home defense. Again, this is only Act One of the two-act play.

Act Two was introduced many times during the war when Congress and the various state legislatures struggled with the use of blacks in the military. When insufficient numbers of whites were willing or able to serve, leaders would lean toward the recruitment and training of blacks for the military. Only the southern states that relied heavily on the institution of slavery for economic security did not use significant numbers of blacks to defend their borders. After the war, blacks, in most parts the newly formed United States of America found their distinguished military service was not going to lead to the freedom and economic prosperity they might have envisioned.

Negro poet, Jupiter Hammon, wrote of this hope after the war ended and the sense of disappointment that enveloped the black race during the years that immediately followed:

That liberty is a great thing we know from our own feelings, and we may likewise judge so from the conduct of the white people in the late war. How much money has been spent and how many lives have been lost to defend liberty! I must say that I have hoped that God would open their eyes, when they were so much engaged for liberty, to think of the state of the poor blacks, and to pity us.  

After the war the citizens of the southern states still held firmly to the view that military service was an "obligation of citizenship for white males and that
service in the officer corps was dignified occupation for gentlemen.\textsuperscript{24} Since blacks could not be considered gentlemen or citizens, southern blacks seemed to have gained nothing with the outcome of the war. Outside the South this view of military service was not as widely held but the view that the black race was inferior was still firmly entrenched in the public mind.

The view of white superiority, black inferiority, and the role that blacks were to play in the post-war society was written very quickly into the history books by delegates to the Constitutional Convention. One of the first constitutional compromises dealt with how to count slaves for purposes of federal representation. A settlement between the slave rich states of the South and the more abolitionist minded states of the North was called the federal ratio. The federal ratio, or Three-Fifths Clause as it was sometimes referred to, allowed slave states to count a slave as three-fifths of a free man for representation purposes.

It gave Constitutional sanction to the fact that the United States was composed of some persons who were "free" and others who were not. And it established the principle...that a man who lived among slaves had a greater share in the election of representatives than the man who did not...It is a measure of their adjustment to slavery that Americans in the eighteenth century found this settlement natural and just.\textsuperscript{25}

A further setback for blacks occurred when Congress, in 1792, restricted enrollment in the military to white male citizens between the ages of eighteen and forty-five, each of whom would provide his own musket, freeloak, bayonet or other arms and equipment.\textsuperscript{26} The Constitution gave Congress the power to make rules and regulations for the militia, leaving to the states only the power to appoint the
officers and train the militia. States could legislate on the subject but only under the authority of Congress.27

This legislation did not completely stop the enlistment and use of blacks in the various armed forces, particularly in the Navy. "So unattractive was the combination of harsh discipline, dangerous work aloft, long cruises, wormy biscuit, and bad beef that the Navy had to accept almost anyone willing to serve, black or white."28 Historical records show that blacks fought in the undeclared naval war with France (1798-1800) and in the war of 1812.29 Again, when white males were unable or unwilling to serve, the use of undesirables, which included blacks, was generally accepted.

It would be fair to say that some blacks did gain their freedom by serving in the military, mainly in the northern states. "Since the war [Revolutionary War] had been fought in the name of liberty, many Americans were led to reflect seriously upon the impropriety of holding men in bondage."30 The war prompted some early American leaders to speak out against slavery and it saw the beginnings of the abolitionist movement.31 However, not much really changed for most blacks between the Revolutionary War and the Civil War. But when war again came, Act One was repeated.

The leaders of the southern states could foresee that the expansion of free western states coupled with the growth of abolitionist minded groups could devastate the slave-based agrarian economies.

In these circumstances, the states of the plantation South exercised what they considered their legal right to withdraw from the Union.
Confident of the world's need for their cotton and the military prowess of their white citizens, they formed a confederation and in the spring of 1861 attacked the federal installations on their territory, beginning with Fort Sumter in Charleston harbor.\textsuperscript{32}

President Lincoln immediately issued a call for 75,000 three-month volunteers (thinking the war was going to be short). After some early setbacks for the Union Army Congress authorized the induction of 500,000 state militiamen for service. The number of men in these first calls totaled over 700,000. The government lacked facilities for suppling and training on such a large scale and by December 1861 the Secretary of War began discouraging the acceptance of volunteers.\textsuperscript{33}

The ease by which the Army was initially able to fill its ranks with white soldiers and President Lincoln's steadfast proclamation that the war was for preservation of the Union led to the turning away of thousands of black volunteers.\textsuperscript{34} Only when war casualties and desertions threatened to deplete the ranks of the Union forces did the idea that the war was being fought for emancipation and the recruitment of black units begin to be accepted.\textsuperscript{35}

On 17 July 1862, Congress passed a new confiscation act, the first direct legislation that sought the blacks' military assistance. This act empowered the president to accept blacks to perform war service for which they were competent. Although the President signed it, he was still opposed to the employment of blacks as soldiers.\textsuperscript{36}

Regiments of black soldiers under white command were being organized in almost every free state and in some captured regions. By the end of the war 186,000 black troops had worn Union blue, most of them assigned to infantry regiments, though a few served as artillerymen or with the cavalry.\textsuperscript{37}
Keeping the great numbers of black troops organized, clothed, fed, and trained was found to be almost impossible under the current military system. So successful were...efforts in enlisting Negroes that a special bureau, under the adjutant general's office was set up in order to systematize work. On May 22, 1863, the War Department announced the establishing of a Bureau of Colored Troops whose functions embraced all matters pertaining to the recruitment, reorganization and service of black regiments and the officers thereof. Now for the first time all black troops were organized under the flag of the United States of America and were designated the "United States Colored Troops."

The establishment of the Bureau for Colored Troops was a milestone in the history of the Negro in the Civil War. For the balance of the war the organization of Negro regiments was on a uniform national basis whether those regiments were raised in New York, Maryland, Ohio, or Illinois or in Southern regions under Union control.

At the end of the war more than 25 percent of the Union's military rolls were made up of black troops and twenty-one black individuals received the Congressional Medal of Honor. The use of black troops to win the Civil War paved the way for continued use of blacks in the military and was a critical factor in changing the social status of blacks. The Emancipation Proclamation declared "all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a state, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, henceforward, and forever free."

Congress began debating a constitutional amendment abolishing slavery as well as various civil rights packages in March 1864. For the first time in
American military history, blacks seemed to have gained social status by serving in a time of great need. However, the possibility of returning to slavery was hotly debated in Congress when the constitutionality of the Emancipation Proclamation and various other congressional acts were challenged.

Willard Saulsbury, still embittered by the continued failure of the states' rightist argument against military use of blacks, argued that the modern doctrine of "military necessity" could not be extended to mean that in a state of war "whatever the Congress of the United States shall decree, is constitutionally decreed."

Willard Saulsbury's arguments didn't hold. The Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution eventually passed and Congress enacted the Civil Rights Act of 1866 and voting rights for blacks were established. However, old arguments of whites not willing to serve with blacks and old beliefs of black inferiority kept the black military men from gaining equal access to the benefits of full citizenship. In the late 1870's Congress voted down legislation opening every regiment to both races. The nation was soon to be introduced to the phrase "separate but equal".

Black regiments were still being led by white officers and "not until black cadets began graduating from the U.S. Military Academy would the soldiers of the four regiments be led by officers of their own race." It was not easy for blacks to be accepted into existing military academies. "Of twenty-five blacks appointed to the Military Academy during the 1870's and 1880's, twelve survived the entrance examination, but just three graduated and received commissions." Harassment by the cadets and faculty led to the demise of many black appointees. Many in the military establishment (and society as a whole) shared the views of West Point...
Commander, Major General John M. Schofield when he wrote to the Secretary of War:

To send to West Point for four years' competition a young man who was born in slavery is to assume that half a generation has been sufficient to raise a colored man to the social, moral, and intellectual level which the average white man has reached in several hundred years. As well might the common farm horse be entered in a four-mile race against the best blood inherited from a long line of English racers.®

It seemed as long as the racism of slavery was accepted, whites and blacks could co-exist almost peacefully because everyone supposedly knew his place in society. With the demise of slavery a more pronounced and often violent form of racism surfaced both in the military and in civilian life. Sometime racial incidents involved both the military and civilian communities.

... when one of his black sergeants was refused admittance to a civilian-run theater and responded with angry words, ... a bulletin was issued that placed blame for the incident not on the theater manager, but on the victim of the Jim Crow practices. According to the general, "the row should never have occurred and would not have occurred had the sergeant placed the general good above his personal pleasure and convenience."®

These same men who were told by the United States that it was acceptable to be denied admission into a movie theater because they were black were being prepared to be shipped to Europe to risk their lives. The first black regiments were assigned to assist the French who were forewarned on how to work with black military units by General Pershing.

"We must prevent any pronounced degree of intimacy between French officers and black officers. We may be courteous and amiable with these last, but we cannot deal with them on the same plane as with the white American officers without deeply wounding the latter." In addition, French officers were to moderate their praise of black troops, especially in the presence of white Americans, and prevent "the local cantonment
populations from 'spoiling' the Negroes."

Again, in Act Two of this terrible play, the black American found that after 750 deaths and 5,000 wounded the institutionalization of racial injustice flourished on the homefront. Black Americans fought bravely with the inadequate training and leadership afforded them only to find heightened racial tensions in the United States.

In the early 1900's a popular theme was soon found in the military's reasoning for the maintenance of separate facilities for whites and blacks and for the defense of other legalized forms of discrimination based on Jim Crow laws. "Segregation, conceded Major General George Van Horn Moseley, MacArthur's principal assistant, determined how the Army would use its manpower, and this was both legal and proper." Civil rights activists who challenged the segregationist policies were to hear many times that the military can only reflect the general population and was not a tool for social experimentation.

Interestingly, it was Adolf Hitler's racist propaganda that gave the American black his first chance at being integrated into the general military.

...despite warnings of the perils of mixing races, Congress voted to give blacks the opportunity for military service that [black leaders had demanded] ...[Congress] refused to alienate a large and increasingly vocal minority in time of national emergency, and they also sensed the danger of being tarred by provable accusations of racism when the likeliest enemy, Nazi Germany, preached a racism of its own.

World War I had taught black Americans the lesson that little was to be gained by risking their lives on foreign soil. By the time World War II came around, blacks had discovered the power of voting blocs and were able to
pressure President Franklin D Roosevelt and Congress to start making small concessions on existing segregationist policies. However, "throughout the war the Army clung to segregation as tenaciously as it could, only gradually yielding on such points as overseas duty, service in combat, and access to recreational facilities on military bases."  

The power of the voting bloc struck a huge blow to segregationist military policies when on July 26, 1948, President Truman, worried about re-election prospects, sought the black vote by issuing Executive Order 9981. Executive Order 9981 declared it to be "the policy of the President that there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin." The political, societal, and military effects of the policy change ordered by President Truman will be discussed in a later chapter.

Executive Order 9981 also provided for the creation of an advisory committee known as the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services. The Committee was charged with "examining the rules, procedure and practices of the armed services in order to determine in what respect such rules, procedures and practices may be altered or improved with a view to carrying out the policy of this order." The committee found that it did not take long for some significant changes to occur following President Truman's Executive Order. Less than 12 months after Truman's order, the Committee noted the following practices at the three branches of the military
existing at the time.

The Navy

All jobs and ratings in the naval general service now are open to all enlisted men without regard to race or color. Negroes are currently serving in every job classification in general service.

All courses in Navy technical schools are open to qualified personnel without regard to race or color and without racial quotas. Negroes are attending the most advanced technical schools and are serving in their ratings both in the fleet and at shore installations.

Negroes in general service are completely integrated with whites in basic training, technical schools, on the job, in messes and sleeping quarters, ashore and afloat.

Chief, first-, second-, and third-class stewards now have the rate of chief, first-, second-, and third-class petty officer. (Policy change adopted June 7, 1949.)

Stewards who qualify for general ratings now can transfer to general service.

The Marine Corps, which as part of the Navy is subject to Navy policy, has abolished its segregated Negro training units. (Policy change adopted June 7, 1949.) Marine Corps training is now integrated, although some Negro marines are still assigned to separate units for basic training. In this respect the effectuation of Navy policy in the Marine Corps is yet to be completed.

The Air Force

The Air Force announced its new racial policy on May 11, 1949. As a result of this policy, the all-Negro 332d Fighter Wing at Lockbourne Field, Ohio, has been broken up, and its personnel either sent to school for further training, transferred to white units in other commands, or separated under current regulations.

A majority of other Negro units has also been abolished. As of January 31, 1950, only 59 Negro units remained, and 1,301 units were racially integrated, as compared with 106 Negro units and only 167 mixed units on June 1, 1949, when the Air Force policy went into effect.

Approximately 74 percent of the 25,000 Negroes in the Air Force on January 31, 1950, were serving in integrated units; and 26 percent still were serving in Negro units. This integration process is continuing.

All Air Force jobs and schools are open to qualified personnel without racial restriction or quotas. Six percent of the total personnel
attending technical training schools in January 1950 were Negro.
Negroes serving in mixed units and attending service schools are integrated with whites in living conditions.

The Army

All Army jobs now are open to Negroes. (Policy change adopted September 30, 1949.)
All Army school courses are open to Negroes without restriction of quota. (Policy change adopted September 30, 1949.)
For the first time Negroes no longer are limited in assignment to Negro and overhead (housekeeping) units, but are to be assigned according to their qualifications to any unit, including formerly white units. (Policy change adopted January 16, 1950.)
Negroes serving in mixed units will be integrated on the job, in barracks and messes. (Policy change adopted January 1, 1950.)
The 10 percent limitation on Negro strength in the Army has been abolished, and there no longer are Negro quotas for enlistment. (Policy change adopted March 27, 1950.)

One executive order and one calendar year did more to integrate the military than almost 200 years of brave military participation by black Americans. Act Two was finally getting a new ending. However, the policy changes initiated by President Truman's executive order set off a firestorm of national debate. The national debate surrounding the integration of blacks in the military plunged the United States into an era of civil strife whose effects, both positive and negative, can still be felt and seen today. Without this period of debate it would be hard to imagine that in 1996, an election year, the name of General Colin Powell, a black American, would be seriously bantered about for vice presidential and even presidential nominations, an unthinkable idea just a short time ago.

2. Berry, 1.

3. Berry, 1.

4. Berry, 3.

5. Berry, 4.


9. Berry, 10.


11. Berry, 11.

12. Quarles, 19.

13. Berry, 12.


15. Quarles, 29.

16. Berry, 12.

17. Berry, 13.


22. Berry, 15.
23. Quarles, 182.

24. Berry, 19.


27. Berry, 22.


30. Quarles, 185.


32. Nalty, 29.

33. Berry, 35.


36. Mays, 18.

37. Nalty, 43.


39. Berry, 56.


41. Berry, 84.

43. Berry, 86-87.
44. Nalty, 58.
45. Nalty, 59.
46. Nalty, 59.
47. Nalty, 59.
49. Nalty, 114.
51. Nalty, 129.
52. Nalty, 136.
55. *Freedom to Serve* p. xi.
56. *Freedom to Serve* p.5-7.
CHAPTER 3

DENIAL: THE HISTORY OF GAY AND LESBIAN INVOLVEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MILITARY

Your greatness is measured by your kindness - your education and intellect by your modesty - your ignorance is betrayed by your suspicions and prejudices - your real caliber is measured by the consideration and tolerance you have for others.

Wm. J.H. Boetcker

Tradition is not a tomb in which to hide from progress. It is rich ground well-tilled and warm with the sunshine of hope for an even greater future. Into it we drop the seeds of our aspirations for a better world and from it they grow strong and well-nourished and bear fruit and become new traditions to nourish others as time passes.

Philip Ogilvie

Randy Shilts wrote in his book *Conduct Unbecoming: Gays and Lesbians in the U.S. Military*, that "it is clear that the military is far less concerned with having no homosexuals in the service than with having people think there are no homosexuals in the service." In a sense the military, much like most homosexual servicemembers, is existing in a state of denial. This chapter will demonstrate that gays and lesbians have served in the military with distinction throughout history and are currently serving not only with honor, but in many cases, serving with the knowledge that a commanding officer is aware of their homosexuality.

In a military sense, the idea of homosexuals serving in the military is quite
ancient. Nearly 2400 years ago, Plato's dialogue on homoerotic love forwarded the following notion:

If there were some means by which a city or a military force could be composed of pederastic lovers and their boys...in fighting beside one another such men, few though they were, would conquer practically all mankind.²

The great armies of Greece brought such ideas out of the realm of philosophical conjecture and into a "world where all male citizens were warriors for most of their adult lives and where pederastic relations between older and younger men represented a culturally privileged form of homosexuality."³ The theory behind Plato's writing was that an army of lovers would fight fiercely to maintain the affections and respect of the partner. While Socrates debated the logic of Plato's theory, world military history teaches us that some of the greatest military strategists were homosexual.

Alexander the Great (356-323 B.C.) defeated the Persian King and took possession of his vast empire. His love for beautiful boys is well documented.⁴ Julius Caesar (100-44 B.C.) a political and military strategist, undertook the conquest of Italy and became dictator. Latin poet Catullus wrote of Caesar's ceaseless sexual appetite "husband to every woman and wife to every man."⁵ Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821), General and Emperor of France, has been ascribed as being homosexual although most historians disagree on this point. It is interesting to note, however, that at this incredibly homophobic time in history Napoleon selected a homosexual as his Arch-Chancellor and was responsible for the elimination from penal codes (throughout much of Europe) the crime of
sodomy. The American military experience illustrates what ancient history has repeatedly demonstrated. The United States may very well owe its nationhood to a homosexual.

After retiring from active duty in the Army, John M. Palmer devoted much of his time to researching the Revolutionary War. Mr. Palmer made the following statement in the first paragraph of his book:

In the course of my researches, I was soon convinced that the military services of two men, and of two men only, can be regarded as indispensable to the achievement of American independence. These two men were Washington and Steuben.7

One of the greatest ironies that the ban on homosexuals in the military has created is that as a young nation one of the two men most credited with winning the Revolutionary War was most likely a homosexual.

General George Washington, the hero of history, found that his lack of background in the art of military drills and training was of great detriment to the success of the colonial military campaign. In 1777, when the rebellion was going badly, Benjamin Franklin plotted to commission the one man he believed could save them: Baron Frederich Wilhelm Ludolf Gerhard Augustin von Steuben, one of Europe’s leading military prodigies.8

Steuben was of noble blood and had found great success in the Seven Years War, in which he was taken prisoner by the Russians. While imprisoned in Russia he found favor first with Czarina Catherine the Great, and later with her son King Frederick II of Prussia. King Frederick was regarded as the greatest military genius of his era and was widely known to be homosexual.9 Steuben’s
acceptance into Frederick's all-male court was the first historical suggestion of his homosexuality. After turning Benjamin Franklin down to accept another position a great irony occurred that catapulted Steuben into American history. The irony was that, at the time of Frederick's reign, the clergy made a threat to prosecute Steuben for homosexuality which made Steuben reconsider Benjamin Franklin's offer to train the American military and escape Europe.

Steuben arrived in America at his own expense, accompanied by a handsome young man. This young man was to serve as Steuben's translator but proved to be rather inept at the translation of military terms. General Washington then assigned Steuben two French speaking colonels from his own staff; twenty-year-old Alexander Hamilton and twenty-four-year old John Laurens. Hamilton and Laurens became great admirers and friends of Steuben. Hamilton and Laurens were also quite inseparable as a couple, which has led some later historians to believe they were lovers.

The suggestion that the acceptance of General Steuben and his contributions to the American military meant that homosexuality was met with approval would be false. Just a little over two weeks after Steuben arrived in America, Lieutenant Gottold Frederick Enslin became the first known soldier to be dismissed from the U.S. military for homosexuality. After the court martial, presided over by Lieutenant Colonel Aaron Burr, Enslin was drummed out of the army, never to return.

After the Revolution, General Steuben retired to a farm in upstate New
York but stayed active in the planning of the United States military. His proposals led to the creation of the United States Military Academy at West Point. Upon his death he left everything to two young captains who had served him. Steuben referred to them as his "adopted children". His reputation as a national hero led to the naming of Fort Steuben and a bronze plaque placed near his grave reads, "Indispensable to the Achievement of American Independence."

Regulations against homosexuality did not keep homosexuals out of the military. It was not until very recently that homosexuals have publicly challenged the exclusionary policy. For nearly two hundred years, service members accused or convicted of homosexuality quietly disappeared with a dishonorable discharge or worse. Thomas Jefferson, who appeared liberal at the time, suggested castration as a punishment for sodomy instead of death. Because no one challenged their discharges most early "evidence" of homosexuals serving in the military is in anecdotal form.

Two of the United States' earliest Naval heroes were Stephen Decatur and Richard Somers. Both were awarded the rank of captain, the highest rank existing in the Navy at the time. Decatur became the youngest to reach captain and Somers soon followed when rewarded for acts of heroism. The United States was battling the Barbary Pirates when Decatur and Somers, who were serving together, became part of a plot to blow up Tripoli harbor. Just before Somers sailed off on the disguised boat loaded with gun powder, he gave Decatur a gold ring with the inscription "R.S. to S.D. 1804." When the plan was foiled and the
disguised boat exploded, killing Somers and the other sailors, Decatur fell into an "inconsolable grief. "The issue of the two men's relationship has been treated gingerly by biographers, when it has been discussed at all."¹⁵

Decatur eventually married a woman he had never met, she had fallen love with his picture. They never had any children. After leaving the Navy, Decatur devoted much of his time to decorating the home he had built across the street from Lafayette Square in Washington D.C., just one block from the White House. The was convenient since he frequently dined with his friends, President James and Dolly Madison.¹⁶

The Civil War brought more documentation of homosexuals in the military. Walt Whitman recorded in his diaries that he had "slept with a soldier named Daniel Spencer, a somewhat feminine man from the Second New York Light Artillery as well as from two other regiments, one of whom he met at Fort Greene."¹⁷ This war also saw the first documented lesbians to have served in the U.S. military. Union General Philip Sheridan wrote in his memoirs of two women disguised as men who fought in the Fifteenth Missouri Regiment. They were discovered only after getting drunk on applejack and nearly drowning in the Stone River. Sheridan wrote "An intimacy had sprung up between the women". Both women were transported behind friendly lines.¹⁸

The Confederate army seemed to have a gay general in Major General Patrick Ronayne Cleburne. His daring attacks led to his nickname as the "Stonewall Jackson of the West". Cleburne's intimate relationship with his twenty-
two-year-old adjutant, Captain Irving Buck, drew the notice of the General's colleagues. Cleburne's biographer John Francis Maguire wrote that "for nearly two years of the war [Buck], shared Cleburne's labors during the day and his blankets at night."\(^{19}\)

After the Civil War the military shifted its focus to battling Indians. One of the oddest stories to come from the western fronts was of Mrs. Nash who lived with a "succession of soldier-husbands" between 1868 and 1878. After one soldier would leave the service Mrs. Nash would stay at the Army fort and marry another soldier. Her last husband was a corporal in General George Armstrong Custer's Seventh Cavalry. While her husband was away on a prolonged campaign Mrs. Nash died. When the other soldiers' wives were preparing her for burial they discovered Mrs. Nash was a man. When her husband returned and the story became public he shot himself with his Army revolver.\(^{20}\)

World War I brought the first codification into military law that sodomy was punishable as a felony. Through the 1920's and 1930's homosexuality was dealt with as a criminal act which led to large numbers of soldiers and sailors being imprisoned. The idea of excluding homosexuals from military service emerged in World War I and was promoted by practitioners in the new-born field of psychiatry. Dr. Albert Abrams wrote in September 1918 that while...

(recruiting the elements which make up our invincible army, we cannot ignore what is obvious and which will militate against the combative prowess of our forces in this war...From a military viewpoint, the homosexualist is not only dangerous, but an ineffective fighter...It is imperative that homosexualists be recognized by the military authorities.\(^{21}\)
In 1919 the first attempt to purge an installation of homosexuals occurred with the approval of Assistant Navy Secretary Franklin D. Roosevelt. The attempt consisted of seven enlisted men being persuaded to help entrap suspected homosexuals, mainly at the local YMCA. When the scheme snared the well known Reverend Samuel Neal Kent, public outrage about the scheme led to Senate subcommittee hearings. The hearings condemned the operation and called upon the Navy to end the imprisonment of homosexuals, referring to homosexuals as perverts. The senators' report stated: "Perversion is not a crime in one sense, but a disease that should properly be treated in a hospital." This report was the last time in over seventy years that the government condemned a purge of homosexuals from the military.

When the United States was faced with the prospect of entering World War II the armed forces were faced with the challenge of examining 18 million soldiers for military suitability. Congress authorized expanded defense budgets and passed a conscription act. The fledgling field of psychiatry led by Harry Stack Sullivan and Winfred Overholser convinced the Selective Service System to administer psychiatric as well as physical exams. Sullivan, a homosexual, and Winfred who held very progressive views on homosexuality, could not have anticipated that their attempt to keep people not psychologically able to handle military expectations from battle would be altered as a tool to single out homosexuals.

By May 1941, however, after the Army Surgeon General's Office had issued its own screening circular to induction station examiners and

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Selective Service revised Circular No. 1 to bring the two directives into line, both screening directives for the first time included "homosexual proclivities" in their lists of disqualifying "deviations." The Army circular also listed "any homosexual persons" among those to be rejected because of "psychopathic personality disorders."...


One of the most famous men to have ever served in the military was Dr. Thomas A. Dooley. His dedication to the Navy and the honor he brought to his country is evidenced by the immortality he achieved when President John F Kennedy cited Dooley as an inspiration when founding the Peace Corps. Tom Dooley could not have known the reason for an abrupt transfer from a military hospital in Japan to the Navy vessel Montague. The Montague was assigned to the United States Navy's Operation Passage to Freedom.

Operation Passage to Freedom came about when the division of Vietnam was announced, leaving two zones of political influence. The Communists controlled the North and the West held influence over the South. The Catholic Church, worried about the northerners taking up the colonizers' religion launched Operation Virgin Mary, a campaign coordinated by the Central Intelligence...
Agency. Priests were told to tell their congregations that the Virgin Mary was leaving the North to live in the South - to be saved they must move south. One million refugees were expected.

The Navy had only a handful of ships for the task, one of which was the Montague. When Dooley first witnessed the hundreds of refugees boarding his ship he was stunned to see how many were diseased. He was met with diseases such as smallpox, leprosy, and malaria, as well as malnutrition. To make matters worse, American sailors were being exposed to microbes to which they did not have immunity. In short, this was a medically explosive situation. After the first voyage he requested and was granted permission to conduct better medical screenings before boarding any ships.

The lack of medical supplies, basic sterilization, and cleaning supplies led Dooley to start a corporate campaign for donations. American companies, recognizing the publicity gains that helping the young doctor could garner, flooded him supplies. Dooley also employed the tactic of boating out to any ship that came into Haiphong harbor and demanded any soap, bandages, and medical supplies they had on board.

The Navy had intended for Dooley to operate only one medical processing station but Dooley soon had a network of clinics that treated between three and four hundred people a day. Dr. Dooley was soon a national hero in Vietnam and was simply known as Bac Sy My, "the American Doctor", to the Vietnamese. Time was running out for the young doctor and the American Navy, Haiphong
was only available for debarkation until 1955. It became clear when the close of Operation Passage to Freedom neared that the Navy had not garnered the publicity the U.S. government had expected. The Navy quickly discovered that a young doctor and his diary could give them a chance to realize real publicity gains.

Before his trip back to the United States, President Ngo Dinh Diem awarded Dooley the highest honor South Vietnam could bestow on a foreigner: Officier de l'Ordre National de Vietnam. When Dooley arrived in Honolulu he was awarded the Legion of Merit, the youngest doctor in Navy history to receive this medal. Navy Surgeon General Lamont Pugh wrote this about Dooley...

It is my earnest hope that some day you may become Surgeon General of the Navy, not merely because you say that is what you want to be, but because I will leave that office soon with a sense of contentment that it will be in the most worthy and 'can do' hands if it ever reaches yours.²⁸

Dooley returned to the United States a hero and soon became a much sought after speaker and author of a best selling book. He made the Gallup Poll's list of the most admired men and there seemed to be nothing that could stop this man of incredible talent and popularity. This popularity was soon to become a huge problem for the Navy brass. It seems the reason that Dr. Dooley had been transferred to the Montague was the rumor of his homosexuality.

It was not long after his return to the United States that the rumors surfaced again. The Navy wanted a quiet retirement but was uncertain how Dooley, the Navy's spokesman, would react to an interrogation about
homosexuality. The United States was gearing up for war and the military did not want any bad publicity. The Office of Naval Intelligence decided to gather information before confronting Dooley.

From that moment on no detail of Dooley's life was left unrecorded. His hotel rooms and private phones were tapped, his conversations taped and fully transcribed. Anyone he talked to was pulled aside and questioned. Agents followed him from airport to airport and routinely rifled through his baggage, reporting anything that was found. When an agent found himself in possession of Dooley's briefcase he dutifully photocopied fifty-three pages of documents, including excerpts from Dooley's diary.

Dooley was tailed at all times. Records of his lunches with Francis Cardinal Spellman were noted as well as his lunch with the young Senator from Massachusetts, John Kennedy. Agents would follow Dooley to the bars at night and then listen outside his hotel rooms if he took anyone home with him. They recorded everything. When the Navy believed it had enough information they planned the confrontation.

After a speaking engagement in New York Dooley abruptly announced his resignation from the Navy in order to return to Southeast Asia and continue to establish a network of hospitals. The Navy could not have foreseen the tremendous worldwide fame Dooley would soon gain.

Dooley soon founded MEDICO, authored two more bestselling books, and his foundation was adopted as a cause by the popular entertainer Arthur Godfrey.
In 1959 Dooley made number seven on the Gallup Poll's most admired men in America. Even with all of this fame, Dooley's main obsession remained having the "dishonorable discharge" removed from his records. Tom Dooley had always told his friends that he knew two things about himself: that he was meant to accomplish some great task and that he was going to die young. It seems both were true.

Tom Dooley had a rare and lethal form of cancer. In his final weeks he put on a brave face for all Americans who were reading daily reports on his health in the newspapers. Two days before his death the Surgeon General of the Navy came to his bedside and presented him with what he had sought for many years - his honorable discharge. After his death President Dwight D Eisenhower sent a message of condolence and the Pope authorized a special pontifical requiem mass. The saddest part of Tom Dooley's story is that as a nation we continue to discharge incredible talent from the military.

Her first military experience was when her mother used her baby carriage to smuggle guns past Nazi headquarters in Oslo to a rendezvous with Norwegian resistance fighters. After her family emigrated to the United States she enrolled at the University of Maryland as a pre-med major. Poor grades and a father unwilling to help with the cost of tuition led her to pursue the quicker route of obtaining a nursing degree. The Army Student Nurse Program offered the financial stability she needed to complete her degree.

This is how Margarethe Cammermeyer began her long and distinguished
career in the military. While on assignment in Germany, Cammermeyer met and married her husband. They had four sons. She volunteered for service in Vietnam hoping to be assigned there with her husband, but he was sent elsewhere. While serving as a nurse during some of the most intense fighting, her service won her the Bronze Star, a Meritorious Service Medal, and two Army Achievement medals. She left active duty but remained in the Army reserves still determined to reach her goal of being national chief nurse and a general. In 1989, Cammermeyer, now a full colonel, was contacted about a security clearance to attend the War College, the last step before reaching her goal.

During her security clearance interview she admitted being homosexual. Soon after this admission the Department of Defense started proceedings to withdraw recognition of her rank in the Washington National Guard, effectively ending her twenty-eight year military career. Pleadings from her commanding officers and even a letter from the governor of the state of Washington were ignored in the military’s singlemindedness to purge homosexuals from military ranks. Margarethe Cammermeyer’s story was recently told in a made-for-television movie. Cammermeyer was played by actress Glenn Close.29

Dooley and Cammermeyer had lost their military careers but their positions protected them from some of the Draconian techniques used by military investigators to flush out suspected homosexuals. Sergeant Rich McGuire, barely twenty years old was threatened with his parents losing their home because he couldn’t afford to pay the fine for being homosexual. McGuire was also
threatened with life imprisonment with hard labor for not furnishing names of other homosexuals.¹⁰

McGuire was unaware that imprisonment had been dropped as a punishment for homosexuality earlier this century. In 1941, a change in policy made it easier to discharge homosexuals which functionally ended imprisonment.

From 1941 to 1945, more than four thousand sailors and five thousand soldiers - mostly men were hospitalized, diagnosed as sexual psychopath, and discharged from the service with the label of homosexuality appearing on their military records. By contrast, the total population of men in both the Army and the Navy who had been convicted of sodomy from 1900 to the beginning of World War II had numbered only in the hundreds.³¹

There was not enough room in prison for all of the new discharges. The homosexual purges have continued relatively unchecked until recently when the military policy has come under fire for a couple of reasons.

One of the reasons the ban on homosexuals in the military is being questioned is the human toll this policy is taking both personally and financially. The United States General Accounting Office issued a report in 1992 on the military's ban on homosexual service members. The report questioned the logic of the ban when applied to exemplary service records. The report listed the following cases:

An Army sergeant, whose commanding officer said he was "one of our most respected and trusted soldiers," was expelled after 14 years of service including tours in Vietnam and Korea.

An Air Force sergeant, the recipient of a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart, was expelled after 12 years of service including a tour of duty in Vietnam.

A Naval Academy midshipman, ranked at the top of his class, was expelled 6 weeks prior to graduation.
The promotion of a captain with 15 years' service in the Army Reserve was suspended. She was subsequently expelled from the military.

A Navy petty officer who had served 9 years as a linguist and cryptographer with a top secret clearance was discharged.

An Army Reserve sergeant who had enlisted for a 3-year term and who was the only female in her drill sergeant training course was acknowledged by her superiors as a fine candidate for drill sergeant school, a capable soldier, and an excellent instructor. She was subsequently discharged one year short of her initial enlistment period.32

The logic of discharging personnel with such distinguished records is confounded by the fiscal costs associated with the discharges. The General Accounting Office estimates each enlisted troop was discharged at an average cost of $28,226 and each officer at an average cost of $120,772.33 Between 1980 and 1990 "approximately 17,000 servicemen and women were separated from the services under the category of 'homosexuality.'"34 The Department of Defense countered the General Accounting Officer cost estimate by stating:

...for the past 4 years the DoD has been required to reduce the military force from 2.17 million in 1987 to 1.64 million by the end of FY 1995. Therefore, if the 1,000 personnel discharged annually during that period by reason of homosexuality had not been discharged, the DoD would have had to either discharge 1,000 other personnel or reduce accessions by 1,000. Thus, there was no replacement cost during that period and there will be none for some time in the future.35

The second reason the military policy has come under fire is that it suddenly became easy to recognize who was gay and easy to tell how many gays were serving in the military at all ranks. In the 1970's young gay activists would often say that "If every gay person turned purple, there wouldn't be any prejudice anymore."36 Little did these activists know that a decade later they would get their color purple, it was called AIDS.
As long as the threat of discharge existed homosexuals stayed quietly hidden in the closet, giving the military the ability to deny the existence of homosexuals. When AIDS started opening closet doors it quickly became evident that large numbers of homosexuals were serving in the military. "By late 1987, at least 3,336 military personnel were known to be HIV infected. These numbers did not include dependents, family members, and civilian Defense Department employees." Even the loss of so many military personnel at every rank did not sway the Department of Defense from its policy on homosexuality.

In its response to the General Accounting Office the Department of Defense stated the reason for not adjusting the policy on homosexuality.

The DoD is concerned the GAO statement that the professional military judgement underlying the exclusionary policy on homosexuals is "primarily anecdotal" in nature could be interpreted to imply professional military judgement is not a valid basis for military personnel policies. It is important to emphasize the DoD depends upon the professional judgement of government officials to make many and various important decisions that are not capable of being determined authoritatively by scientific means or proven by studies. The military homosexual exclusion policy is one of those types of decisions.

The Department of Defense policy on homosexuality has been defended as a policy that is "based solely on what contributes to overall combat effectiveness." In at least one instance this policy may have had the opposite effect.

Terry Ryder, one of the National Security Agency's leading Arabic linguists was being investigated and later discharged for homosexuality. This was a particularly bad time for the National Security Agency to be losing another Arabic linguist. The Agency had recently lost several Middle Eastern translators due to
investigations of homosexuality and was nervous about combat readiness in the event of a war in the Middle East. The reason for the nervousness was that the purges occurred just months before the United States launched Desert Storm in Iraq.

When President Clinton tried to make good on his campaign promise to lift the ban on homosexuals in the military the United States entered a period of intense national debate. This debate can be and should be compared to the national debate that surrounded President Truman's executive order to desegregate the military. Sociologists Wilbur J. Scott and Sandra C. Stanley state it best in their book *Gays and Lesbians in the Military: Issues, Concerns and Contrasts* when they write:

In discussions of whether or not the integration of homosexuals in military forces is a civil rights issue, no analyst has argued that the historical experiences of minority racial or ethnic groups, women, and homosexuals have been the same. Rather, the argument has been that there have been parallels in societal reactions to groups whose participation in military forces and other citizenship roles has been precluded or limited.


8. Shilts, 7.


10. Shilts, 8.

11. Shilts, 10.

12. Shilts, 12.


17. Shilts, 14.


23. Shilts, 16.


26. Berube, 12.

27. Shilts, 21-27, 517-521, 735-736. The following story about Dr. Thomas A. Dooley came from these pages.


30. Shilts, 125.

31. Berube, 147.


36. Shilts, 212.

37. Shilts, 548.


40. Shilts, 684.

CHAPTER 4

SEGREGATING AND SEPARATING: SAME SONG DIFFERENT VERSE

We must remember that any oppression, any injustice, any hatred, is a wedge designed to attack our civilization.
President Franklin D. Roosevelt

The previous two chapters have demonstrated the difficulty the military has had in tackling tough social issues. In any democratic society the actions of all major governmental functions such as the armed services, are open to public debate. As the military attempted to fashion policy for the regulation of acceptable personnel, rhetoric for change as well as for the defense of the status quo, played prominently in the national media. The rhetoric surrounding President Truman's and President Clinton's announcements not only changed the lives of political and civic leaders, but ultimately affected individual servicemembers.

This chapter will illustrate how the rhetoric surrounding the integration of blacks into the military runs parallel to the rhetoric surrounding the military utilization of homosexuals. I will examine the issues of ability to perform duties, public sentiment, inconsistency of policy application, and reactions of civilian and
military leadership, looking specifically for what similarities may exist between the two issues.

**Performance, Good Order, and Public Sentiment**

Executive Order 9981 of July 26, 1948, created and authorized the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services to "examine into the rules, procedures and practices of the armed services in order to determine in what respect such rules, procedures and practices may be altered or improved with a view to carrying out the policy of this order, [equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin]." The Committee identified two principal questions military planning staff considered when answering the question of Negro utilization:

1. Do Negroes have the mental and technical qualifications to be used in full range of military jobs?

2. Shall Negroes be utilized only in Negro units?

All three services had almost invariably adopted the position that (1) Negroes do not have the education and skills to perform efficiently in the more technical military occupations, and (2) Negroes must be utilized, with few exceptions, in segregated units. The rationale for the position is briefly summarized as follows:

1. Tests conducted by the military disclosed that the level of ability and technical skill of Negroes as a group is considerably below that of
whites as a group. The services realized that Negroes as a group have not enjoyed comparable educational advantages with whites, and have not had the same opportunity to learn skilled trades. But the services contended that, regardless of the causes of this differential in group ability and skill, they were confronted with a fact which bears upon military utilization, and in the interest of military efficiency they must recognize this fact. Therefore, it was maintained, Negroes could not be employed over the same range of military jobs as whites; they must be utilized in a limited number of jobs, the majority of them unskilled or semiskilled.

2. As for the question of racial segregation, the military services argued that they must be guided by precedent and custom. The services must keep abreast of civilian sentiment and practice; at the same time they must take care not to get ahead of the country. To do so might create difficulties which would be reflected in morale and military efficiency. Expediency then, and not racial prejudice, imposes on the military a policy of limiting the assignment of Negroes to Negro units.5

The position statements on black participation in the military do not necessarily ring true when applied to homosexuals. In a survey of 7500 gays and lesbians, Overlooked Opinions, a private marketing research company in Chicago, found the average homosexual to have completed almost 16 years of formalized education and that 31.5 percent hold advanced degrees.6 The second position statement of "they [armed services] must be guided by precedent and custom" is more complicated to address but a June 1992 report by the United States General Accounting Office found that:

1. recent polls suggest that the public has become more accepting of homosexuality and of homosexuals' serving in the military;

2. some U.S. allied nations have policies similar to that of the United States, and others have policies that permit homosexuals to be members; and

3. police and fire departments in several major U.S. cities have
removed employment restrictions without adverse effects on mission.³

The National Gallup Poll reported in a poll taken between March 25-27, 1991, that 69 percent of the public thought homosexuals should be admitted into the Armed Services. This number is up from a 1977 poll that showed only 51 percent of the public thought homosexuals should be admitted into the Armed Services. Penn and Schoen Associates, Inc. conducted a poll for the Human Rights Campaign Fund on "Public Attitudes Towards Homosexuals and Their Place in the Military" and found that 81 percent of Americans believed that homosexuals should not be discharged from military service solely because of their sexual orientation.⁸ These figures seem to indicate that dropping the ban on homosexuals in the military would bring the armed services "abreast of civilian sentiment and practice."⁹

When the Canadian armed services were ordered by the courts to end all barriers to the enlistment and promotion of homosexuals the action barely caused a stir. Capt. Brett Boudreau, a Defense Department spokesman said,

"Important indicators lead us to believe the policy is accepted." He added: "There are no known reports of incidents involving physical abuse, harassment or gay bashing. There have been no resignations as a result of the change in policy and no open declarations of sexual preference by any of our members."¹⁰

The Canadian example is one that has occurred relatively recently. There are other modern examples where homosexuality does not preclude participation in the armed services. Holland has an estimated 12,000 gay soldiers who are serving in a military that lifted its ban in 1974. One factor that may have helped the
Dutch military overcome any adversity to lifting the ban is a mandatory four-day course known as *Aeen Kwastie van Kyken* which roughly translates to "it's in the eye of the beholder." Rob Segaar, a 29-year old veteran of the navy, summed up the Dutch attitude this way: "Suppose you're on the beach in a skimpy bathing suit. The guy next to you might be gay. Does that harm your morale? Is that dangerous?"

The Danish army has outlawed discrimination and harassment on any basis since 1981. When asked what kinds of problems were encountered with gays among their ranks, Danish Brig. General Kristian Anderson responded, "Problems? No, should there be? I've been in the air force since 1954, and I can't remember one problem caused by someone being a homosexual." Opponents can argue that these countries, along with Sweden and France, do not offer legitimate examples of working militia with gay servicemen and women. Israel, however, is a country with a military that is battle tested and open to homosexuals.

A recently Americanized Israeli soldier recently said

"I had thought Israel was less tolerant than the United States, but when I enlisted, I never witnessed any morale problems caused by homosexuals and didn't really hear homophobic talk - nothing along the lines of 'He shouldn't be serving.' There were openly gay soldiers I encountered, but no one seemed to resent it. It's not even an issue. I don't know why it is in America."

The Israeli military does make one stipulation about security clearances for homosexuals. A soldier who reveals to a superior officer that he or she is homosexual but would like to remain "closeted" are limited in the level of security
clearance he or she can hold. Homosexuals who are "out" have no limitations on their security clearance. Since much of the intolerance of homosexuals seems to come from religious teachings, the acceptance of homosexuals in the Israeli military is remarkable considering three major religions have their roots in this region (Christianity, Judaism, Islam).

Precedent and custom will most likely remain a concern for the U.S. armed services even though public opinion polls and the military experiences of other nations seem to argue against continuing the ban. Another argument shared by Presidents Truman and Clinton is the inconsistency by which rules governing service by blacks and homosexuals have been applied in the military.

Inconsistency of Policy Enforcement

The U.S. Navy by 1943 was accepting its quota of up to 12,000 blacks every month for basic training. This action created several problems because of the policy of assigning Negroes only to shore installations and harbor craft. There simply were not enough land-based positions to meet the influx of black recruits. By late 1943 the Navy decided to outfit a destroyer escort and patrol craft with a predominantly black crew under white officers. This decision was based on the fear that assigning blacks to white crews would cause friction and affect ship efficiency. What the Navy found in their experiments that continued to sanction segregation was a negative relationship between segregation and good order, morale, and efficiency. In August 1944 the Navy integrated an experimental fleet with a 10 percent black quota for each ship. Concurrently with this experiment
the Navy issued a "Guide to the Command of Negro Naval Personnel," in which it stated that:

...the Navy accepts no theories of racial differences in inborn ability, but expects that every man wearing its uniform be trained and used in accordance with his maximum individual capacity determined on the basis of individual performance.\(^\text{16}\)

Statements like these and the success of the experimental fleet led the Navy to order in Circular Letter 48-46 dated February 27, 1946:

Effective immediately all restrictions governing types of assignments for which Negro naval personnel are eligible are hereby lifted. Henceforth, they shall be eligible for all types of assignments in all ratings in all activities and all ships of the naval service... In the utilization of housing, messing and other facilities, no special or unusual provisions will be made for the accommodation of Negroes.\(^\text{17}\)

Five years later when the President's Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services studied the gains made by the Navy in racial integration, it asked questions about morale and racial friction cited by the armed services as reasons to maintain segregation. The committee not only found racial animosity (violence) almost nonexistent but went on to state

...that respect created between individuals through competence on the job - the value which the workman sets upon workmanship - would translate itself over a period of time into personal respect and would facilitate the accommodation of the two races in their daily life, and thus act to break down artificial barriers.\(^\text{18}\)

The Navy's experience of successfully integrating the Negroes into many aspects of service proved to be one of the most compelling arguments to integrate all of the armed services. The inconsistency of enforcing segregationist policies between the various branches of the military can be paralleled with
inconsistencies of enforcement of the ban on homosexuals.

The modern military has spent an estimated $500 million over the last 10 years identifying homosexuals, discharging them, and replacing them. However the effort extended to discharge homosexuals over the last 10 years has not always been consistent. Defense Secretary Dick Cheney said "there have been occasions when it has not been administered in a fair fashion." Cheney admitted this fact in response to an article in *The Advocate*, a national gay magazine that "outed" or revealed in print that a senior Pentagon official was gay. Cheney went on to insist that "private lives should be just that: private." When asked if the senior Pentagon official would be asked to resign Cheney responded, "absolutely not, civilian Pentagon employees should be judged by how they did their jobs, not by their private lives." In defending his position in an interview, Cheney rejected the idea that homosexuality is a security risk, calling that theory "a bit of an old chestnut." The inconsistency not only exists between the civilian and military sides of the armed services but also within the armed services themselves. There are many examples of openly homosexual people serving in the armed services, often with distinction, for many years before they were discharged.

One of the most unusual examples of how the policy on homosexuals was inconsistently applied is the case of Perry Watkins. At age 21 Watkins was drafted but he was not too concerned about being inducted because he knew the military homosexual policy would exclude him from active duty. At the induction center Perry checked the box "homosexual tendencies" thinking he would be
rejected for service. After several psychiatric evaluations where he explicitly stated he was gay, the determination was made that he was suitable for military service even though the determination was also made that he was homosexual. Over his military career Perry made several attempts to get discharged by going to his commanding officer stating his sexual orientation. Each time the discharge was refused.

The strange circumstances surrounding Watkins' case surfaced after he did a tour in Korea which included time in the combat zone. After his first Korean tour, Watkins requested and received a honorable discharge and immediately went into performing in "drag" (female impersonator). After a year, he re-entered the service and was immediately sent to Korea where he continued to perform in drag. The unit he was assigned to in Korea was preparing for Organization Day and needed performers. Watkins' received international attention for his performance as a female impersonator at Organization Day when it was written about in the Army Times and carried to installations around the world.

Watkins' next station was in Germany where he met up with his agent who booked him as "Simone", his female character, into recreation centers, Officers' Clubs, and NCO Clubs all over Germany. As a joke Watkins entered an Oktoberfest beauty contest with eleven women - and won. He soon returned to the United States, was stationed at Fort Hood and continued to get paid by the Army for his performances in drag. Upon arriving at Fort Hood, Watkins' new commanding officer researched his file and decided to process him for discharge
for the fourth time in his military career. The hearing board found his actions, "not detrimental to the military, unit morale, or to mission accomplishment." The Army did, however, in October 1982, after 15 years of service, decide to deny reenlistment to Mr. Watkins because he said he was gay. "On May 3, 1989 the Ninth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals ruled 7-4 that the Army must allow Mr. Watkins to reenlist, because Army Officials had known throughout his fifteen years of service that he was gay and had continually praised his performance nonetheless."

On November 5, 1990, the United States Supreme Court upheld the ruling when it denied the appeal in a one sentence statement, "The petition for a writ of certiorari is denied." The Watkins story is taken from My Country, My Right to Serve by Mary Ann Humphrey. The Humphrey book documents hundreds of examples of the military's inconsistent enforcement of the ban on homosexual service, albeit most are not as exotic as the example of Mr. Watkins. As a side note to this issue, it has been argued that lifting the ban would increase the incidence of gay bashing in the military. This was also an argument for maintaining segregated units; but as stated earlier, racial violence in the armed services failed to materialize as expected. It would seem reasonable to expect similar results in this case. Sociologists offer one argument for why gay bashing may not materialize as feared.

There is a consensus that most homosexuals in the military do not come out, but rather keep their sexual orientation a private matter, even where policy and practice allow them to serve.
Sexually Transmitted Diseases

One issue that might not have been expected to be present in the arguments against integration of blacks is the issue of sexually transmitted diseases. The much stated link between homosexual males and AIDS has been prevalent in the arguments against lifting the ban, but the concern of sexually transmitted diseases was also an argument for maintaining segregationist military policy.

In April 1948 General Dwight D Eisenhower faced congressional questions about desegregation of the armed forces. Senator Richard Russell (D-Ga.), later a mentor to the young Sam Nunn, was asking the questions.

Russell: You are familiar with the reports that indicated the incidence of venereal diseases, were you not?
Eisenhower: Yes, sir.
Russell: I am sure you are familiar with the figures: that among the men examined for the draft, the incidence of venereal disease, gonorrhea and syphilis was 252 per thousand among the Negro race as compared to 17 per thousand for the white race.29

Forty five years later retired Lt. Col. William Gregor, who has done extensive work for the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the issue of gays in the military, gave graphic expression on CNN's "Crossfire" to his view of the problems caused by ending discrimination:

Gregor: I suggest you look at the studies of the attempts to induct active venereals during World War II.
Michael Kinsley: What does that have to do with homosexuals?
Gregor: Every tanker knows that on the battlefield, next to fire, the main cause of death is exsanguination. You bleed to death. The question is, if a penetrator courses through a turret and amputates a gunner's arm, will the tank commander...instantaneously and swiftly grab that bloody stump to save the life of his friend? Or will he hesitate and allow the life of buddy
to slip away? [due to fear of AIDS]^{30}

Representative Barney Frank (D-Mass.) advised Lt. Col. Gregor that by
1992 all applicants to the military are "tested for AIDS and if they carry the virus
they are not admitted. What the alarums [alarmists] indicated is merely that the
segregators and the discriminators have no intellectually respectable arguments on
their side."^{31} When referring to "their side" Representative Frank was speaking to
the political and military leadership that has come out opposed to lifting the ban.
This, too, is an aspect found in the debate to desegregate the military.

Civilian and Military Opposition

When President Truman issued his executive order to end discrimination in
the military, the battle lines were quickly drawn. General Dwight D. Eisenhower
told the Senate Armed Services Committee: "There is race prejudice in this
country. When you pass a law to get somebody to like someone, you have
trouble."^{32} Both the Republican and Democratic parties adopted a platform
supporting an end to military segregation, causing the Southern Democrats to bolt
the party in 1948. The Southern Democrats formed the Dixiecrat Party and
ominated the Governor of South Carolina, Strom Thurmond, as their
presidential candidate.^{33}

The Southern Congressional members were so incensed over the civil rights
package that included the repeal of poll taxes, federal prosecution of lynching,
and desegregation of the armed services that they formed the "Committee of 78"
to begin a filibuster that halted all action in Congress.^{34} Lieutenant General
Willard Paul, Director of Personnel for the Army, was quoted by the Associated Press as saying, "The Army is not out to make any social reforms. The Army will put men of different races in different companies. It will change that policy when the nation as a whole changes it." The governors of Arkansas and Mississippi blamed the federal government for being "blacklisted" by the Mexican government which cut off their supply of temporary farm workers. The governors cited their stand against President Truman's civil rights package as the reason for the "blacklisting." The position taken by some public and military leadership against the integration of blacks in the armed services should make the opposition Clinton is experiencing, expected.

Before Bill Clinton even took the oath of office, the Joint Chiefs of Staff threatened to resign if "the gay issue was forced upon them." Soon after Clinton took the oath and made his intentions clear, the Senate sponsored an extensive debate that spanned 88 pages in the Congressional Record. In that debate, Senator Bob Dole, Republican Minority Leader is quoted as saying:

...when I hear General [Colin] Powell, and service chiefs state that dropping the ban on gays will destroy unit cohesion and morale, it is time to listen.

When I hear General Norman Schwarzkopf say that gays in the barracks will cause a breakdown in order it is time to listen.

When the distinguished chairman of the Armed Services Committee says "slow down, let's have some hearings, President Clinton," It's time to listen.

"Slow down" is the message President Clinton is getting in his fight for change and "slow down" was the message President Truman was confronted with in his battle for change. "If it will be wrong in the future to exclude gays and
destroy the career of those in place, how can it possibly be right now? Will the question that Truman answered be ignored today? If, in fact, the black military involvement and the gay military utilization are following similar paths, what does that tell us about the future of gays in the military? The answer may be that the gay acceptance within military ranks has a long way to go before intolerance becomes the oddity, not the norm.

When pro-ban soldiers were asked what they would do if the ban was lifted, 59 percent of the men and 29 percent of the women said they would leave the military. Soldiers, both for and against the ban, were then asked to comment on seven arguments raised in the debate.

Anti-ban soldiers see the moral choice as obvious: Equal rights should be guaranteed to everyone regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. They see the issue here as discrimination and feel that personal judgments should have no place in the military's decision. To them homosexuality is an alternative that falls within the limits of individual freedom and arguments advanced to support the ban are too similar to those used to justify racism and sexism. Freedom, equality, and justice - indisputable American principles - are on their side.

For pro-ban soldiers, the only moral choice is one that upholds heterosexuality as the norm. To them, homosexuality is unacceptable behavior that violated biology, human nature, and God's will. They consider it a mental illness, a violation of criminal statutes, or both. The rights of homosexuals, therefore, are not an issue. God's will and morality - the American principles - are on their side.

The anti-ban soldiers would agree with Lucian K. Truscott IV, a West Point graduate and grandson of a four-star general, when he wrote:

I grew up in the integrated Army. One day, schools, housing - the Army itself - were segregated; the next day they weren't. Six years would pass before Thurgood Marshall successfully argued Brown v. Board of Education before the Supreme Court. Ten more years would be wasted before Congress found the courage to pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
It may take Congress, the national headquarters of risk aversion, years to pass the gay rights equivalent of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. But the principle is the very one Truman faced, and Bill Clinton knows this.²

The fight for equality did not stop with the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the fight is still going on today some 45 years after President Truman drew the line in the sand of American justice. Rarely does a day go by when vivid reminders are not communicated in the media, print and broadcast, that racial tension still exists in our society. The O.J. Simpson murder trials, the video taped beating of Rodney King, and the resultant riots are all contemporary symbols of how little our society has moved to become the inclusionary, tolerant society our founders envisioned in passing the Bill of Rights.

Some critics say the integration of homosexuals is a more difficult issue than the integration of blacks.

...homosexuals are different, because sexuality is different [than skin color]. It can sometimes be a more deeply emotional part of identity than race - and a more ambiguous one. Most people identify with one race, while sexuality can be more complex.⁴³

The complexities of this issue may be the determining factor in how long this drama will play out. How long will the military leadership be allowed to officially denunciate but unofficially accept gay military personnel? President Truman may have given us a clue when he answered the question of a reporter:

**Question:** What would you say is the reason for all the race discrimination - discrimination between Jew and gentiles? How could you overcome that?

**The President:** It's lack of education and association.⁴⁴

The relationship between events in history, the catalysts that provide bookmarks in the pages of history and the rhetoric on those pages, should give us
guidance in the study of modern rhetoric. Winston Churchill is quoted as saying:

Want of foresight, unwillingness to act when action would be simple and effective, lack of clear thinking, confusion of counsel until the emergency comes, until self-preservation strikes its jarring gong - these are the features which constitute the endless repetition of history.48

Whether civil rights history repeats itself is yet to be seen, but it is evident that at least the rhetoric surrounding these two historical events is repeating.

2. Negro was the widely used term of Truman’s era and is used in this paper when citing documents from this time.


16. *Freedom to Serve* 19-20. All information preceding this quote pertaining to the Navy experience leading to this quote was also taken from these pages.


22. Shilts.

23. Gellman.


27. *Freedom to Serve* 23.


30. Cockburn.

31. Cockburn.


33. Sullivan.


40.Scott and Stanley, 80.

41.Scott and Stanley, 83.

42.Lucian K. Truscott IV, "Truman's Legacy to Clinton," *New York Times* 1 Feb. 1993, late ed.: A19. Lucian K. Truscott IV, a West Point graduate, is author of *Dress Gray*. His two grandfathers (a four-star general and a colonel) and father (a colonel) were career soldiers.


44.*Public Papers of the President, Harry S. Truman*, 6 Apr. 1946: 184.


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CHAPTER 5

THE EQUAL RIGHTS ARGUMENT:
WHAT ELSE CAN WE LEARN?

Our early years are spent in learning our elders' prejudices - and our later years in trying to overcome them.

Author Unknown

The word prejudice originally was neutral. It meant judgment formed beforehand, which might be favorable or unfavorable. Yet so predominantly do men form harsh judgments before knowledge, that prejudice came to mean injurious.

Marshal Wingfield

How far back in history would we have to go to determine if the rhetoric surrounding fear of the unknown has changed over time? I remember as a small child attending Sunday school and learning about how the lepers were shunned by society. I also remember feeling a great sense of sadness for these people who were already suffering from a physical disease. The suffering caused by social isolation only added to their plight. Later Sunday school lessons taught me about slavery and the perils of judging my fellow man. I also learned of Jesus, one of the best known advocates for tolerance and change. The Bible, as a historical text, tells many stories of fear and prejudice.

The story of the lepers, and the way society has historically kept an arm's
length distance from the diseased is repeated often, even in contemporary times. We do not have to look any farther than when cancer was first diagnosed. People with cancer found themselves jobless, homeless and many times without anywhere to turn for help. Education had finally defeated the stigma surrounding cancer when AIDS reared its ugly head. The same hysteria returned, but this time health leaders had learned to attack it more vigorously with education. But change does not come easy. Bishop G. Bromley once said, "Change is inevitable. The great question of our time is whether the change will be by consent or coercion."

This paper focused on the similarities and differences in the rhetoric surrounding the integration of blacks into the military, and the separation of gays from the military. After examining the issues of ability to perform duties, public sentiment, inconsistency of policy application and reactions of civilian and military leadership, I conclude the rhetoric in both instances is nearly identical. The only way for the rhetoric to match more precisely would entail dusting off the speeches from Truman's period and replacing the word 'black' with 'gay'. If the arguments are the same, can outcomes be predicted?

Both the black and gay relationships with the military caused, on a national level, a great deal of cognitive dissonance. Agreeing that changes, pertaining to blacks and gays, need to be made in military personnel policies most likely meant admitting that beliefs and sometimes lifelong teachings are wrong. Blacks could no longer be the inferior beings they were believed to be and gays could no longer be inferior beings as much of society has been led to believe for centuries.
If you believe, as many do, that change is directly related to cognitive dissonance then Truman and Clinton have both set the stage for change. Are there any other tools for determining when rhetorical survey leads to change? From my research I believe that James Darsey’s social movement theory provides such a tool.

In his writings, Darsey identifies eight phases of Gay Liberation. The first five phases are derived from an earlier study by Darsey published in the 1981 book, Gayspeak. Darsey titles these phases: (1) establishing groundwork, (2) educating and encouraging, (3) toward strength and independence, (4) aggressive self-identity, and (5) uncertain maturity. The Communication Studies Spring 1991 issue carries Darsey’s follow up study where he adds the next three Rhetorical Phases.

Rhetorical phase six, Defending Fragile Achievements, is triggered by the emergence of Anita Bryant and the Save Our Children campaign. The debate on how the homosexual community should respond to highly visible conservative backlash from Bryant and the Save Our Children movement highlighted this rhetorical phase. In each rhetorical phase Darsey identified value appeals derived from the coding of discourse samples. Each time the primary value appeals of the rhetoric shifted a new rhetorical phase was signalled. The primary value appeal for phase six is unity, followed by the value cluster work, determination, and strength.

The next phase, Fortifying Against a Conservative Tide, found Ronald
Reagan elected president with the Moral Majority publicly claiming a great deal of responsibility for his election victory. Conservatism seemed to be sweeping the country. This phase finds unity tied as the primary value appeal with the value cluster work, determination, and strength.\textsuperscript{5}

The catalytic event that signalled the beginning of Rhetorical Stage VIII according to Darsey is the discovery and naming of AIDS between 1981 and 1983.\textsuperscript{6} The recency of the President Clinton's announcement precludes any definitive determination of a rhetorical shift in the available materials but historical parallels may make the argument clearer. While AIDS is still rhetorically central to gay liberation, the fight for equal protection under the Constitution (civil rights) is the guiding principle of the contemporary gay movement just as it was (is) for the black movement.

Rhetorical criticism and social movement theory can forewarn a leader who is preparing to challenge tradition. Challenges to traditions have garnered certain types of responses in the past which can be anticipated in the future. For example, President Clinton should have known that his intent to open the military ranks to homosexuals would be fought on the issues of military tradition, military expertise, and unacceptable social experimentation. These were the same issues that faced President Truman in similar circumstances. Anticipating the rhetoric of the opposition gives the purveyor of change the upper hand in framing the argument.

While rhetorical criticism and social movement theory are two areas that
are constantly needing updated research there is one other research area that was brought to my attention. A retired military friend reviewed chapter four of this thesis and one of the questions he forwarded in his comments pertained to the military enforcement of personnel policies. It was quite obvious in the black military experience that the military was willing to ignore enlistment practices of banning blacks during times of need. What might not have been as obvious is the inconsistency of policy enforcement on the gay issue.

As recently as the Gulf War, homosexuals were allowed to serve openly during conflict but discharged in times of peace. On September 1, 1990, the Secretary of the Army ordered that the service suspend discharges of active-duty personnel who had "skills in short supply in the Army." Army Reservist Donna Lynn Jackson vowed that if she were going to war she would do so openly, she did not want a casket to be her final closet. Before the war when Jackson admitted to her commanding officer that she was a lesbian, he assured her it was not a big deal. The Army lawyer later explained that it meant she would be allowed to serve in Operation Desert Shield but would be discharged when she returned. Jackson sought the help of the press to challenge this policy resulting in her termination before the war started. As long as she stayed quiet she would have been allowed to serve, only when she spoke up did the military act to separate her. Why does the military, during periods when unit cohesion and combat readiness should be at its peak, suspend policies it claims are necessary during times of peace?
Another issue I briefly mentioned was that of the difficulties of integrating the military with black service personnel was that traditional roles or "knowing your place" changed. This change led to a more overt racism because people were struggling to redefine their place in society. There is a corresponding issue with accepting gay service personnel and changing societal roles.

For centuries, white male heterosexuality was at the top of the social ladder. Recently however, the women's movement and more social acceptance of homosexuality have made male heterosexual roles less definable. For example, male heterosexuals have from the beginning of time sexually harassed females. Only recently have women been able to protect themselves from harassment. Changing sexual roles can be very difficult to accept. Interestingly, when researching the lifting of the ban on homosexuals in the military, sociologists Scott and Stanley found that

...soldiers expect that gay men will behave toward them as straight men sometimes act toward women, i.e., they will use force or the suggestion of force to pursue their sexual interest. Realizing that they - servicemen - could be on the receiving end of such attention, several said that they now understand more fully why unwanted stares, comments, and flirtation from men bother women.9

There is another contemporary issue not covered in this thesis that could offer a researcher a chance to duplicate this study. The advances women have been able to make in the military have been met with similar statements of resistance from military leadership. The rhetoric surrounding women's attempt for equal access to all military personnel levels, even combat positions, could contain similarities to the rhetoric surrounding the black and gay military
experience.

I would like to close with a couple of questions that have continuously surfaced during the researching and writing of this thesis. The first question pertains to the governing concept of separation of church and state. I did not bring up the moral issues surrounding homosexuality for two reasons. The first reason is I am not convinced the military is the proper institution for making moral arguments. And the second reason is that if you take religious teachings completely out of the argument there would not be an argument.

The second question pertains to the topic of discrimination. I am not a historian, nor do I claim that the history courses I have taken were unbiased interpretations of history. It does, however, seem to me that no matter how far back we look in history there is not a single example of discrimination that has stood the test of time. Never have we looked back on history and said, "in this instance it was wise to create second class citizenship." Why do we believe our contemporary discriminatory beliefs will be viewed any differently? On the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, in 1963, Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke with eloquence and hope about discrimination and its place in our nation.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal..." I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today.


3. Value analysis, a content-analytic coding scheme developed in the late 1940's by Ralph White, was used as method of quantifying significant characteristics of the discourse. (Darsey 64.)

4. Darsey 49.

5. Darsey 51.

6. Darsey 55.


8. Shilts, 731.

APPENDIX

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE CURRENT POLICY ON HOMOSEXUALITY
FORMALIZED IN 1982

Homosexuality is incompatible with military service. The presence in the military environment of persons who engage in homosexual conduct or who, by their statements demonstrate a propensity to engage in homosexual conduct, seriously impairs the accomplishment of the military mission. The presence of such members adversely affects the ability of the Military Services to maintain discipline, good order, and morale; to foster mutual trust and confidence among servicemembers; to ensure the integrity of the system of rank and command; to facilitate assignment and worldwide deployment of servicemembers who frequently must live and work under close conditions affording minimal privacy; to recruit and retain members of the Military Services; to maintain public acceptability of military service; and to prevent breaches of security.

The Department of Defense defines a homosexual as "a person, regardless of sex, who engages in, desires to engage in, or intends to engage in homosexual acts."


Carla T. Savalli, "Now We're a Gay Community," Las Vegas Sun, 22 Mar. 1992, 1C.

Corretta Scott King, "We Cannot Stand for Freedom for Blacks and Deny It to Gays," Los Angeles Times 11 July 1993: pM5


Public Papers of the Presidents, Harry S. Truman


