

Battlefield Politics

Is now the appropriate time to re-evaluate the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy?

by **John Climer**
Managing Editor

During his state of the union address last week, President Obama made a statement that left me perplexed. The President “vowed” to change the Army’s policy on sexuality; aka “Don’t ask, don’t tell.”

This left me wondering, why worry about such trivial issues pertaining to the armed forces when our country is currently engaged in the longest war we’ve ever fought?



Furthermore, what place do sexual politics have on the battlefield? The armed forces function through uniformity, hence the shaved heads, uniforms, so on and so forth.

Soldiers go through the same boot camp ordeal, which gives them all a common experience, thereby providing them with the knowledge that the soldier to the right and left of them on the battlefield is reliable, because they have all been through the same training.

Now, imagine that the soldier to the right or left of you, a person you thought you knew extremely well, suddenly tells you that their sexual preference differs

from yours. Regardless of how you feel about homosexuality or heterosexuality, a person you have fought beside and trusted has just shared a piece of information that has changed your perspective of them. Inevitably, you will begin to wonder what else about them differs from you, possibly leading toward a slippery slope of distrust, which is very dangerous on the battlefield.

Furthermore, why does it matter that soldiers be able to openly discuss their sexuality? “Don’t ask, don’t tell” doesn’t apply exclusively to homosexual individuals; rather, it is a blanket statement that means sexual preference is a matter not to be discussed. After all, our enemies place no real importance on our soldier’s sexual preference when they are laying IED’s and planning suicide attacks.

We at the Clarion are interested in your opinion on this matter. Please submit your responses as a Microsoft Word document to clarion@brevard.edu.

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