

## Don't Ask, Don't Discriminate

The US Army has **dismissed** Sergeant Robert Stout for admitting that he is gay. We agree with **Andrew Sullivan** that this policy is unfairly discriminatory, and is especially ironic at a time of shortage of good soldiers.

But that is putting it too mildly. The "don't ask, don't tell" policy is a cruel and stupid outrage. If the US military fires a soldier because he admits that he's gay, they are effectively handing a free casualty to the enemy. And more: for every gay soldier that the Army fires, several more won't bother applying.

Even that is not the worst of it. This policy is a declaration that we are not fighting a war, we are playing a game. A game of rituals and taboos and arbitrary rules. But the only relevant rules for conduct in the armed forces in wartime are those connected to the performance of military operations. The US Army are worried that gay soldiers might fall in love and refuse to fight. Nonsense. The **IDF** and the **British armed forces** both have gay soldiers, and we have yet to see a report that any of them have become ineffective at fighting because they are in love. Men and **women** work together in those armies too, and in the US forces (including gay soldiers who 'don't tell'). Good soldiers of any sexual orientation are not stupid animals who follow their hormones regardless of morality or consequences. They are thinking beings who are capable of sticking to the hard and dangerous business of fighting to preserve freedom, under all sorts of pressures. We need them to do that, and to honour them for doing so. Shame on the authors and supporters of this immoral policy.

### Update:

Please take note, US armed forces, **this** is how it should be done.

Wed, 06/08/2005 - 14:25 | [digg](#) | [del.icio.us](#) | [permalink](#)

## Nothing new

During the civil war General Sherman asked that, and General Grant agreed to, dismiss all Jews from the Union army.

by a reader on Fri, 06/10/2005 - 00:40 | [reply](#)

## Re: Nothing New

A reader wrote:

During the civil war General Sherman asked that, and General Grant agreed to, dismiss all Jews from the Union army.

As far as I can tell, this idea **comes from** the pen of Thomas J. Di Lorenzo, who is apparently quoting another historian:

Sherman himself certainly did not believe that "each man is as good as another." For example, in 1862 Sherman was bothered that "the country" was "swarming with dishonest Jews" (see Michael Fellman, Citizen Sherman, p. 153). He got his close friend, General Grant, to expel all Jews from his army. As Fellman writes, "On December 17, 1862, Grant . . . , like a medieval monarch . . . expelled 'The Jews, as a class,' from his department."

In fact, Grant issued an **order** , General Order No.11, saying that:

The Jews, as a class violating every regulation of trade established by the Treasury Department and also department orders, are hereby expelled from the department [the "Department of the Tennessee," an administrative district of the Union Army of occupation composed of Kentucky, Tennessee and Mississippi] within twenty-four hours from the receipt of this order.

In other words, Grant's order said that the Jews were to be expelled from his department. Lincoln got General Halleck to order Grant to revoke this order and he did. Grant has the good grace to be **embarrassed** about it:

During the Presidential campaign in 1868, Wolf had a two hour meeting with Grant and specifically asked him about the charges of anti-Semitism. "I know General Grant and his motives," he wrote at the time, "and assert unhesitatingly that he never intended to insult any honorable Jew, that he never thought of their religion... the order never harmed anyone, not even in thought... He is fully aware of the noble deeds performed by thousands of Jewish privates, and hundreds of Jewish officers during the late war."

The Union army **had Jewish officers**.

The reader might also reflect that any historian who makes the charge that Grant ordered all Jews expelled from the entire army and contradicts this claim in the next sentence, as Di Lorenzo did, has not shown good judgement. In general, Di Lorenzo is an incompetent historian who makes **many errors** of fact and interpretation. I recommend **Battle Cry of Freedom** by James M. McPherson to anyone who wants to understand the American Civil War.

## Real reason

Running the risk of being branded a **conspiracy theorist** for attributing hidden motives, I submit that the real reason the army wants to ban gays has nothing to do with worries about falling in love. It simply has to do with many heterosexual men feeling uncomfortable in a 'man's world' around homosexuals. In other words, it's a simple case of homophobia (and in this light the 'don't ask, don't tell' policy suddenly makes sense). But no one likes to admit the problem lies with themselves, certainly not if such admission would also be politically incorrect, and so the problem is claimed to lie in the other party (just as Nazis would rather claim the jews poison the water and ruin the economy then admit they are simply jealous of their success).

### Henry Sturman

by **Henry Sturman** on Fri, 06/10/2005 - 10:56 | [reply](#)

### source please

"During the civil war General Sherman asked that, and General Grant agreed to, dismiss all Jews from the Union army."

Could you give a source?

-- Elliot Temple

<http://www.curi.us/>

by **Elliot Temple** on Fri, 06/10/2005 - 19:59 | [reply](#)

## Re: Real reason

Hidden motives are common. In our analysis of conspiracy theories, we give five attributes of (irrational) conspiracy theories. Your theory only has at most one and a half of them and is neither irrational nor a conspiracy theory.

by **Editor** on Fri, 06/10/2005 - 20:11 | [reply](#)

## Exactly why does a queer have

Exactly why does a queer have the right to serve? I can think of a number of things that disqualify someone from serving. I mean if you allow queers why would you descriminate a pedophile, rapist, felon, etc. The bottom line is unit effeciveness isn't what concerns the gay lobby. And as far as the effectiveness of woman and men serving together just ask any Navy personnel who has had to do extra duty because a last minute pregancy left a ship short handed how he feels.

This is so bogus. The people who push this clap trap haven't served and wouldn't if they could.

by TJ Jackson on Tue, 06/28/2005 - 03:23 | [reply](#)

**erm...**

This is so bogus. The people who push this clap trap haven't served and wouldn't if they could.

If this was true, then it would be a non-issue. If the only people who think queers should serve were unwilling to serve under any circumstances, then there would be no queers trying to enlist.

by **Woty** on Tue, 07/12/2005 - 17:59 | [reply](#)

---