

The Influence of Political Orientation on Opinion of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” Policy

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Abstract

Prior to the repeal of the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy, many individuals questioned whether such a policy was appropriate for today’s military. As of 2005, 12 years after implementation, it is estimated that the United States Government had spent nearly 95 million dollars to replace the nearly 13,000 service men and women who were discharged under the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” (DADT) policy (Bender, 2005). While this policy was being debated, and the Obama administration was considering the repeal of this law, the authors of this study asked if support for this policy went beyond traditional political parties and relied more on the respondent’s views and beliefs in general. Using a survey methodology, this study examined student perceptions of the law and personal belief regarding lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender individuals. The results suggest that student views do make a difference in distinguishing whether someone supports the policy or not. On average, respondents with more conservative views do seem to have more support for the DADT policy, while, conversely, those with more liberal views appear to show less support overall.

Literature Review

Evolution of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” Policy

There is currently only one law in the United States today that allows for an employer to fire an employee based solely on the openness of one’s sexual orientation – “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell, Don’t Pursue.” In short, it has become to be known as the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy. In 1993, President Bill Clinton enacted the DADT policy which prohibits any gay, lesbian, or bisexual person to freely express their sexual orientation. If homosexual service members are exposed and reported, they are to be dishonorably discharged (SolomonsResponse.Org). DADT also prevents the military from asking about a service member’s sexual orientation. The three major rationales of banning homosexuals from the military were “health risks, lifestyle risks, and unit cohesion” (Prakash, 2009, p. 89). According to Prakash (2009), the “Army Surgeon General [suggested that according to recent findings], a homosexual lifestyle was associated with high rates of HIV/AIDS...promiscuity, alcoholism, and drug abuse”. Although these behaviors can be exhibited in any person aside of sexual orientation, the most compelling argument was the argument of unit cohesion. Allowing openly gay persons in the military would disrupt the “morale, good order, and discipline” often found in the military (Prakash, 2009, p. 89).

This policy, however, has been difficult to enforce because the military cannot discharge service members unless caught in a homosexual act, open expression, or discussion about any homosexual relationships. According to an article from CNN, *Army Chief: ‘Serious Concerns’ over ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell’ Repeal*, “more than 13,500 service members have been discharged [since the policy implementation], according to Rep. Jim Moran, D-Virginia. In 2009, there were 428 discharges under the policy...the highest year was 2001, with 1,227 discharges” (*Army Chief: ‘Serious concerns’ over ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell’ Repeal’*, 2010).

Research has also shown that since the late 1970s there has been a positive change in the public's opinion toward the acceptance of homosexuals in the military (Shapiro & Torres-Reyna, 2002, p.621). While the same research showed a positive shift in attitudes, it also created a gap in the explanation as to what influenced the increase in discharges of service members. The article states, "while change is noticeable, it is not clear whether this represents an increase in opposition to the policy or an increase in opposition toward permitting homosexuals to serve in the military" (Shapiro & Torres-Reyna, 2002, p.622). Our research is designed to distinguish the student's attitudes between the two.

Conservative and Liberal Views

Conservative and liberal views change over time as social issues and policies evolve. As a generation cohort ages, their political ideologies change over the course of their lifetime. What a person supports during adolescence may not be supported later in life. According to Fisher (2008) on age gaps in politics, people tend to lean towards a certain political orientation or affiliation depending on their age or stage of life. During different times of a person's life stages, his or her political views will likely change with personal socioeconomic changes. For example, the elderly may be substantially more conservative now because they are wealthier than compared to when they were a child, adolescent, or young adult. Growing up, they may have identified themselves as more liberal in thinking, wanting a more active government. Similarly, today, there is evidence to suggest that younger generations support "increased level of spending," for the poor and for other social policies regarding equality (Fisher, 2008, p.506). The shift in political views throughout the lifespan may be seen in social policies regarding sexual orientation and same-sex marriages.

Moral values and practices often stem from religious principles that run parallel with ethical treatment. Hence, it is not politically incorrect to say that those who do have a strong affiliation with their religion tend to support social policies that reflect their religious values. According to a study conducted by Smith-Osbourne and Rosenwald (2009) on religiosity and political ideology among social workers, researchers found that a social worker's religion did impact their attitude toward "specific social issues, such as equal rights for gays and lesbians"(p.401). Social issues, such as equal rights for gays and lesbians, are divided among those who strongly incorporate their religion and political ideology and those who do not. According to Fisher (2009), religion affects voter's decisions when focusing on "values as opposed to economic issues. As a result, the more religious an individual, the more likely he or she is to [be conservative]" (p. 508). Conservatives are more likely to incorporate their religious values into their political agenda when compared to liberals.

Theoretical Framework

This research study is based on the theoretical framework of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. This theory explains that "everything in a child and the child's environment affects how a child grows and develops" (Oswalt, 2008). This theory is ideal for our research because of the multiple layers that surround the individual. The innermost layer, the microsystem, consists of the individual's immediate surroundings – usually family. Next is the mesosystem, which is best described as the "different parts of a child's microsystem work[ing] together for the sake of the child", such as the parent-teacher relationship (Oswalt, 2008). Thirdly is the exosystem. The exosystem includes the role of the larger social setting where the individual is indirectly affected, such as a parent's work environment. And lastly, the fourth and

largest layer is the macrosystem. The macrosystem incorporates societal and cultural contexts such as laws and customs.

This research will focus primarily on the exosystem and macrosystem. Political figures and lawmakers make up the exosystem, and U.S. laws and societal norms or trends, the macrosystem. Each system, greatly influences how the sample may respond or react to questions on social issues regarding their support for LGBT rights/equality and same-sex marriage. Our hypothesis was formed on the basis that these two systems have the greatest effect when forming opinions.

Purpose of the Study

Smith-Osborne and Rosenwald (2009) found that under the issue of gay rights, “both religiosity and political ideology were significant predictors...suggesting that a more conservative political ideology was the most important predictor of agreement with the position that there is no need for equal rights laws” (p.399). But according to Fisher (2008), the younger generation as a whole, are generally less religious compared to older cohorts. For example, younger citizens “are more liberal on social issues” than the rest of the population (p.209). The purpose of the study is to examine this issue by surveying college students in our FMSC302 class their feelings toward equality of social issues and to investigate if political affiliation impacts support of policies such as DADT.

Research Question/Hypothesis

For this study we asked if an individual’s conservative or liberal views influence their support of the DADT policy. We also hypothesized that those who associate with a more conservative view will be more likely to support the DADT policy, while those who support more liberal views will be less likely to support this policy.

Methods

Sample

Our sample for this study consisted of $n=68$ students. Participants were from the Department of Family Science at the University of Maryland, College Park. More specifically, students enrolled in the fall 2010 Research Methods Course were recruited to participate. Data was collected from the sample by researchers on a designated day assigned by the project supervisor, Patricia Fanflik. A non-probability sampling was used for this study. The sample came from different ethnic backgrounds, however, were predominantly White/Caucasian (White/Caucasian: 50%, African American: 23%, Hispanic: 9%, Asian/Pacific Islander: 9%, Other: 2%). The sample was also primarily female (Female: 84%; Male: 16%). There were no participants under the age of 18, most in the 20-22 age range. This is a non-representative sample.

The research sample was limited to the Research Methods Class; therefore, anyone enrolled in any other section of the same class or any other Family Science class was not eligible to participate in the study. Our criteria for including participants for the study were that they must be enrolled in the same section of the Research Methods course. Students were also highly encouraged to be present on "Survey Day," one day designated to collect data. Participants were given incentive to participate. Specifically, students were given points (approx. 1-5 points) which were then added to their final grade. Participants' rights were fully protected through anonymity. Participants were not asked any identifying information and there was no deception used in the study. Additionally, there were no known short-term or lasting risks by participating in the study.

Procedures

Data was collected on a day assigned by the research supervisor, Patricia Fanflik, called “Survey Day,” October 21, 2010. Data was collected using an 18-item self-report questionnaire. This self-report questionnaire was created by the researchers. The instrument was designed to measure political affiliation and its affect on the repeal of the, “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” (DADT) policy. All questions were close-ended using Likert Scale and “Yes/No/Unsure” answer-form. Examples of questions included: “How important is religion in your life?,” “How important is religion in classifying your political views?,” and “Should people in the military be given the freedom of expressing their sexual orientation?”. A portion of the questions measure political ideology (numbers 1-8; Appendix A/B) and a portion of the survey measured support for the repeal of the DADT (numbers 9-18, Appendix A/B). Those who scored lower on the questions affiliated with political view were seen as having a more conservative view and those who scored higher, a more liberal one. When measuring support for the repeal of DADT, those who scored lower were seen as not supporting the repeal of this policy, while those who scored higher are viewed as supporting this repeal.

After data was collected, data was entered into SPSS, a statistical software package used to analyze numerical data. During analysis, we discovered that some survey questions lacked reliability desired. As a result, responses to questions 1, 6, 7, and 17 were removed from the analysis. The remaining questions were scored by hand and manually entered into SPSS for analysis.

Measures

The independent variable was the political view, self identified by participants. Each participant identified him/herself with having a more conservative or a more liberal view. A

conservative view was defined as having a view against abortion and against affirmative action and supporting marriage as an act between a man and a woman. A liberal view was defined as being in support of women's choice in abortion, supporting affirmative action in companies and schools, and supporting gay marriage. Participants were asked to answer questions that encompassed such issues. Answers were ranked on a Likert scale with a score of "1" being very conservative or least supportive of the DADT repeal and a score of "5" being very liberal or more supportive of the DADT repeal. This is a discrete variable.

The dependent variable was the political view and support of the repeal of DADT. Support for DADT was defined as wanting the federal government to vote for the repeal of DADT. Support was also defined as believing service member's job performance would not be affected by the sexual orientation of a co-worker or the servicemen or women's sexual orientation affecting her/her own job performance. This variable was measured during the last portion of the questionnaire; this was measured as a discrete variable.

Data Analysis

A t-test was conducted using the data collected. Descriptive statistics were generated using SPSS and each of the variables measured. These methods were used to view how much of our sample identified themselves with each of the political views and whether the political views affected their support for the repeal of DADT. An average and median were generated for each variable.

Results

Demographic Characteristics

The sample consisted of 68 students, who were 16% male and 84% female. The racial/ethnic demographic consisted of 50% White/Caucasian, 23% African American, 9%

Hispanic, 9% Asian/Pacific Islander, 7% Bi-racial, and 2% other. Approximately 60.3% of the students surveyed said they are politically active; 52.9% identified as liberals, while 44.1% identified as conservatives. More information about how participants were grouped by political orientation is provided in the discussion section of this paper.

Independent Sample T-Test

To correctly identify if one's conservative or liberal views impact support for the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, an independent t-test was conducted. Our hypothesis was that those with a more conservative view would be more likely to support DADT whereas those who are more liberal would be less likely to support this policy. The t-test statistic was -3.734 (df=60). This was significant at the .000 level. Therefore, there was a significant difference between liberals and conservatives on their support of DADT. Scores ranged from 5 to 25. Those who scored in the range of 5-15 were identified as conservative; those who scored in the range of 16-25 were identified as liberal.

An examination of group means indicated that those who were more liberal were more likely to support the repeal of the DADT policy. Twenty-nine students identified themselves as conservative (with a mean $M=32.862$, $SD=6.54$). Thirty-three students identified themselves as liberal (with a mean $M=38.424$, $SD=5.178$). Six students did not answer on political affiliation.

When asked how likely they are to vote for a candidate with conservative views on social issues, such as gay marriage, those who identified as conservative were very likely to ($M=2.37$, $SD=1.129$), whereas those identifying as liberal were not likely to ($M=4.00$, $SD=.956$). However, when asked how likely they are to vote for a candidate with liberal views on social issues such as gay marriage, liberals are fairly likely to vote for such a candidate ($M=4.11$, $SD=.820$). Interestingly, however, conservatives were not very likely to somewhat likely to vote

for a candidate with liberal views on social issues ($M=2.57$, $SD=1.006$). The mean of 2.57 shows that conservative respondents answered “somewhat likely” to vote for a candidate with liberal views. It is interesting that although conservative students are more likely to for a conservative candidate, they also may vote for a liberal candidate that may oppose their political ideologies. Among the survey respondents, of those who voted in the last presidential election, more than half voted for Barack Obama (58.8%) and less than a quarter voted for John McCain (16.2%).

When surveyed on the importance of religion in one’s life, conservative respondents stated it is very important ($M=1.60$, $SD=.932$), while liberal respondents stated it is somewhat important in their life ($M=3.00$, $SD=1.171$). However, when asked how important religion is in classifying their own political views (conservative/liberal), conservative respondents stated it is fairly important ($M=2.10$, $SD=.960$) and liberal respondents stated it is somewhat or not very important ($M=3.83$, $SD=.910$). Survey participants do recognize that religion is important in their life as well as their political views and what they support. To amplify this question, we asked if they think the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) should be repealed. Interestingly, conservative participants said it is somewhat important to repeal DOMA ($M=3.17$, $SD=1.227$) and liberal participants said this repeal is fairly important ($M=4.23$, $SD=1.114$). Although conservative respondents stated religion is fairly important in classifying their political views, many believe DOMA should be repealed. This may show that conservatives may want more equality for others, despite their religious beliefs.

Of those who identified themselves as conservatives, they also had some support for the LGBT community. When asked to measure the strength of their support for LGBT rights, statistics showed that conservatives had somewhat strong support for LGBT rights ($M=3.07$,

SD=1.258), whereas liberals had a somewhat strong to strong support for these rights (M=3.92, SD=1.105). Again, despite their religious beliefs, the conservative respondents do have a support for the LGBT community. This may be due to their age range. The younger generation has a slightly different or modern view compared to the older generations, who grew up with more stringent ideals from society and their immediate environment.

Conservative and liberal participants in this sample are not as divided on the issue of whether one's sexual orientation will affect their job performance in the military. Conservative respondents stated it is somewhat likely (M=3.23, SD=1.35) and liberals stated it is not very likely (M=4.17, SD=1.056) that homosexual status will affect military job performance. On the other hand, when asked if one's sexual orientation will affect the job performance of *co-workers* in the military, conservative (M=3.33, SD=1.028) and liberal (M=3.64, SD=1.150) respondents both reported it is somewhat likely. Although conservatives and liberals may have differing opinions on whether one's sexual orientation will affect their own personal job performance; both agree it could affect another's job performance. Going more in depth, when asked how likely they believe one's sexual orientation will affect one's job performance in combat, conservative respondents stated it is somewhat to not very likely (M=3.77, SD=1.223) and liberal respondents stated it is not very likely or not at all likely (M=4.50, SD=.655).

Conservative and liberal respondents are divided on this issue. Despite their political views, they believe one's sexual orientation can affect another soldier's job performance during combat.

This goes beyond religious beliefs and shows that our respondents believe emotions will overtake their job responsibilities; also that opening up sexual orientation can alter these emotions in a consequential way. Similar results were reported when asked how one's sexual orientation will affect the job performance of others when in combat. Conservative respondents

believed this is somewhat likely ($M=3.53$, $SD=1.332$) and liberal respondents believed this is not very likely at all ($M=4.06$, $SD=.893$). Conservative participants are split on this issue. Their average score was the midpoint, with half stating they believe this would affect another's job performance during combat, while half did not believe so. Again, we see that this goes beyond religion. We see that the participants are thinking about the emotional ties the servicemen and women can bring into the battlefield and that these emotions will affect their combat performance due to another's sexual orientation.

Finally, when asked if they believe the federal government should repeal DADT, conservative respondents stated they do not have very strong beliefs that this policy should be repealed ($M=2.83$, $SD=1.167$), while liberal respondents state they have a fairly strong belief it should be repealed ($M=3.97$, $SD=1.159$). Conservative respondents lean toward the support of the DADT policy and the liberal respondents believe it should be repealed. Interestingly, conservative respondents believe it is somewhat likely ($M=3.03$, $SD=.865$) that the federal government will repeal the DADT, whereas liberal respondents believe this repeal is not very likely ($M=2.85$, $SD=.784$). Despite their beliefs on repealing the DADT policy, conservative respondents think it will most likely be repealed, while liberal respondents do not think this will be this case. This may be due to current events occurring during this research and what the media has portrayed the outcomes to be. Many political figures, as well as celebrities, are pushing for the repeal of DADT, which may have given our conservative participants the belief that it is somewhat likely to be overturned in the near future.

Discussion

This study looked at the political views of the students and how their conservative or liberal positions influenced their support for the DADT policy. Results indicated that political

orientation affected opinion of DADT, as hypothesized. Beneath the surface, we have also investigated the sample's general LGBT support and factors that may impact their stance on these social issues.

This survey was administered in FMSC302 (Research Methods) class to 68 students, asking questions about their degree of political involvement, if their religion is a factor in their life, as well as their political view for social and military issues concerning the LGBT community. Answers were ranked on a Likert scale with a score of "1" being very conservative or least supportive of the DADT repeal and a score of "5" being very liberal or more supportive of the DADT repeal.

Although we hypothesized that the younger Americans tend to be more liberal (Fisher, 2008) and Democratic, we thought religion could be an imperative component in their stance of social issues. "Overall, however, younger Americans as a group are less religious and less conservative on social issues" (Fisher, 2008, p.508). Their divide on religion and political issues may explain the differences in our questions regarding their importance of religion in their personal life and the incorporation of their religious beliefs in social policies.

Limitations

There were limitations that restrict our ability to generalize the results of our study. We could only sample those students in our FMSC302 class; as a result, our sample was skewed. Additionally, our study was conducted by four undergraduate students, who were attempting their first real research project. Survey participants were 84% female and only 16% male. The lack of male participants could have created a bias sample, skewing results that are more favorable to females. Our age range was 20-24 years of age so we were only able to obtain

information from a fairly young group of students. Our FMSC302 classroom does not have much variety and therefore cannot be generalized to represent the larger college population.

Historical events occurred during the course of our research. Before our surveys were conducted the U.S. California Federal Courts ruled that the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy was unconstitutional and unjust, making a motion to repeal this policy (Sherman, 2010). Soon after this significant event, the policy was again overturned. The Obama Administration halted the ruling, due to the Federal Court’s inability to overrule this policy, only Congress has that power. This change in events may have affected the views of our participants and may have given light to the LGBT supporters that DADT may, in fact, likely be overturned permanently (Sherman, 2010).

In addition, not only did the DADT policy controversy put the LGBT community in the spotlight, but other current events, such as the “increasing number of LGBT persons committing suicides” and those who were “bullying LGBT persons” may have put this issue more on the map (Katz, 2010). These current events may have given more awareness and increased controversial discussion amongst the general public and our sample. When asked how strongly they believe the DADT policy was likely to be repealed, many conservative respondents stated that it is somewhat likely, whereas the liberal respondents stated that it was not very likely. These current events may have made our sample more pessimistic thus changing their opinions regarding this controversial topic prior to taking the survey.

Also, the self-report questionnaire was limited to one page (front and back). Time was also a limitation when producing the instrument; approximately three weeks were allotted to construct the self-report questionnaire. There were also threats to validity which were apparent when scoring each of the surveys, mainly testing and mortality threats. Not all students in the

Research Methods class were present on the day this survey was given. Also, multiple surveys contained unanswered questions. It was difficult to test reliability of this instrument. This is due to an inability to test participants multiple times, in a test/retest scenario, or to administer more than one survey to the same group, measuring internal consistency.

Program and Policy Implications

This study could help college-aged students become more politically active. Becoming politically active can help others become more involved and aware of the social issues that not only impact military personnel, but also the future of peers and children. If the younger generation becomes more involved, they can urge more people to vote for/against social policies and legislation.

Directions of Future Research

Due to our limitations, future research should be expanded beyond the classroom. Perhaps extending this study online and distributing this to other classrooms beyond the Family Science Department could help to strengthen the results. In addition to expanding our sample, as researchers, we should learn more about the general background and influences of the younger generation.

In addition to bringing more participants to the research study, we could expand our research to the U.S. Naval Academy that sits only 28 miles north of the University of Maryland, College Park campus, as well as the numerous military installations within a 50 mile radius. These servicemen and women could strengthen our research and results, giving us more information about how they feel being part of the military. Although it may be biased to have military personnel participate in a study regarding military policy, these individuals could

provide researchers a more in-depth view of their thoughts in regards to their work and how this policy affects their family and social life.

Conclusion

Upon conclusion of this study, we noticed variances on the stance of LGBT support. The class appears to be divided on their support for LGBT rights and how those rights will affect servicemen and women serving in the military. Participants' religion was not necessarily a deciding factor in supporting social issues such as the DADT policy. Many conservative respondents did report that it will be somewhat or not very likely that those in the military will be affected by their own or other's sexual orientation. Both conservative and liberal respondents believe this policy should be repealed. However, conservative respondents believe it is more likely to be repealed than liberal respondents. This may be a question of whether LGBT activists, public opinion polls, and support from celebrities and political figures have impacted their beliefs. DADT is still intact during the current appeal process. Military troops are being surveyed as to their thoughts on combat effectiveness, unit cohesion, and general abilities when working with fellow troops who can freely express their sexual orientation, before final decisions about this policy are made.

Appendix A

“Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” is a federal policy that prohibits military service member from “coming out” as gay, lesbian, or bi-sexual. If they do so, they are dishonorably discharged. The following questions will ask your views on certain social issues and on your political views. Please answer each question to the best of your knowledge.

- 1. Are you politically active (keep up with local/national news, did you vote in 2008, are you generally aware of the current social issues affecting governmental policy – global warming, gay marriage, abortion rights, etc)?**

Yes

No

- 2. In a presidential election, how likely are you to vote for a candidate with conservative views on social issues such as gay marriage, gays in the military, abortion, civil rights, etc?**

Very likely Fairly likely Somewhat likely Not very likely Not at all likely

- 3. In a presidential election, how likely are you to vote for a candidate with liberal views on social issues such as gay marriage, gays in the military, abortion rights for women, civil rights, etc?**

Very likely Fairly likely Somewhat likely Not very likely Not at all likely

- 4. How important is religion in your life?**

Very important Fairly important Somewhat important Not very important Not at all important

- 5. How important is religion in classifying your political views (conservative/liberal)?**

Very important Fairly important Somewhat important Not very important Not at all important

- 6. How important to you is large funding for the U. S. Department of Defense?**

Very important Fairly important Somewhat important Not very important Not at all important

- 7. Should the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) be repealed? (DOMA was passed in 1996; it affirms the right of states not to recognize same-sex marriages licensed in other states)**

Very important Fairly important Somewhat important Not very important Not at all important

- 8. If you participated in the 2008 presidential election, which candidate did you vote for?**

Barack Obama

John McCain

Not applicable/Other

- 9. How strong is your support for LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender) rights?**

Very strong Fairly strong Somewhat strong Not very strong Not at all strong

10. How likely is it that one's sexual orientation will affect one's job performance in the military?

Very likely Fairly likely Somewhat likely Not very likely Not at all likely

11. How likely is it that one's sexual orientation will affect the job performance of co-workers in the military?

Very likely Fairly likely Somewhat likely Not very likely Not at all likely

12. Should people in the military be given the freedom of expressing their sexual orientation?

Yes No Unsure

13. How likely do you believe that one's sexual orientation will affect one's job performance when in combat?

Very likely Fairly likely Somewhat likely Not very likely Not at all likely

14. How likely do you believe that one's sexual orientation will affect the job performance of others when in combat?

Very likely Fairly likely Somewhat likely Not very likely Not at all likely

15. Should people that are not in the military (civilians) have the freedom of expressing their sexual orientation?

Yes No

16. Should an honest statement of a military serviceman/woman's sexual orientation be grounds for dishonorable discharge?

Yes No

17. How likely is it that the federal government will repeal the DADT policy?

Very likely Fairly likely Somewhat likely Not very likely Not at all likely

18. How strong is your belief that the federal government should repeal the DADT policy?

Very strong Fairly strong Somewhat strong Not very strong Not at all strong

Appendix B

“Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” is a federal policy that prohibits military service member from “coming out” as gay, lesbian, or bi-sexual. If they do so, they are dishonorably discharged. The following questions will ask your views on certain social issues and on your political views. Please answer each question to the best of your knowledge.

- 1. Are you politically active (keep up with local/national news, did you vote in 2008, are you generally aware of the current social issues affecting governmental policy – global warming, gay marriage, abortion rights, etc)?**

Yes (1)

No (5)

- 2. In a presidential election, how likely are you to vote for a candidate with conservative views on social issues such as gay marriage, gays in the military, abortion, civil rights, etc?**

Very likely (1) Fairly likely (2) Somewhat likely (3) Not very likely (4) Not at all likely (5)

- 3. In a presidential election, how likely are you to vote for a candidate with liberal views on social issues such as gay marriage, gays in the military, abortion rights for women, civil rights, etc?**

Very likely (5) Fairly likely (4) Somewhat likely (3) Not very likely (2) Not at all likely (1)

- 4. How important is religion in your life?**

Very important (1) Fairly important (2) Somewhat important (3) Not very important (4) Not at all important (5)

- 5. How important is religion in classifying your political views (conservative/liberal)?**

Very important (1) Fairly important (2) Somewhat important (3) Not very important (4) Not at all important (5)

- 6. How important to you is large funding for the U. S. Department of Defense?**

Very important (1) Fairly important (2) Somewhat important (3) Not very important (4) Not at all important (5)

- 7. Should the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) be repealed? (DOMA was passed in 1996; it affirms the right of states not to recognize same-sex marriages licensed in other states)**

Very important (5) Fairly important (4) Somewhat important (3) Not very important (2) Not at all important (1)

8. If you participated in the 2008 presidential election, which candidate did you vote for?

Barack Obama (5)	John McCain (1)	Not applicable/Other (3)
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9. How strong is your support for LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender) rights?

Very strong (5)	Fairly strong (4)	Somewhat strong (3)	Not very strong (2)	Not at all strong (1)
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10. How likely is it that one's sexual orientation will affect one's job performance in the military?

Very likely (1)	Fairly likely (2)	Somewhat likely (3)	Not very likely (4)	Not at all likely (5)
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11. How likely is it that one's sexual orientation will affect the job performance of co-workers in the military?

Very likely (1)	Fairly likely (2)	Somewhat likely (3)	Not very likely (4)	Not at all likely (5)
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12. Should people in the military be given the freedom of expressing their sexual orientation?

Yes (5)	No (1)	Unsure (3)
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13. How likely do you believe that one's sexual orientation will affect one's job performance when in combat?

Very likely (1)	Fairly likely (2)	Somewhat likely (3)	Not very likely (4)	Not at all likely (5)
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14. How likely do you believe that one's sexual orientation will affect the job performance of others when in combat?

Very likely (1)	Fairly likely (2)	Somewhat likely (3)	Not very likely (4)	Not at all likely (5)
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15. Should people that are not in the military (civilians) have the freedom of expressing their sexual orientation?

Yes (5)	No (1)
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16. Should an honest statement of a military serviceman/woman's sexual orientation be grounds for dishonorable discharge?

Yes (1)	No (5)
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17. How likely is it that the federal government will repeal the DADT policy?

Very likely (5)	Fairly likely (4)	Somewhat likely (3)	Not very likely (2)	Not at all likely (1)
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18. How strong is your belief that the federal government should repeal the DADT policy?

Very strong (5)	Fairly strong (4)	Somewhat strong (3)	Not very strong (2)	Not at all strong (1)
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