



# A Few Favorite DADT Myths

May 27, 2010 By [Tim Horn](#)

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As efforts to repeal the Don't Ask, Don't Tell (DADT) policy reach a political crescendo, it's fascinating to take inventory of some of the truly... errr... "creative" falsehoods that have been bandied about in recent months. One in particular argues that DADT repeal would increase the risk of HIV infection among our military men and women.

But first, a classic don't-drop-the-soap screed from Peter Sprigg of Family Research Council (FRC), as highlighted by the folks at [Gawker](#):

*Senior Fellow for Policy Studies at the FRC, Peter Sprigg, told reporters that his study on "homosexual assault" in the military was based on analysis of public documents with the help of former US military officers. He said that in 2009, 8.2% of sexual assaults in the military were perpetrated by gays. The most common type of gay attack, according to Sprigg, is "one in which the offender fondles or performs oral sex on a sleeping victim."*

Read Sprigg's fascinatingly detailed erotica report [here](#).

Then there's [the claim](#) that repealing DADT would result in a surge of HIV infections among military personnel:

*On his January 7 broadcast, [Colorado's] Newsradio 850 KOA's "Gunny" Bob Newman asserted that allowing gays to serve openly in the U.S. military would increase the risk that members of the armed forces contract the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), develop AIDS, and then die "because [they] happened to get a transfusion from ... say, an openly gay person with a very active sexual, open lifestyle."*

✘ Not surprisingly, Newman decided to ever-so-conveniently omit some basic facts from his radio rant. At no point does he say that all applicants for U.S. military service are screened for HIV at enlistment and every two years afterward. Nor does he mention that HIV-positive applicants are excluded from service and that military personnel testing HIV-positive after enlistment may not serve overseas.

Also escaping his yarn of half-truths is the fact that donated blood is screened for HIV and other infectious diseases using highly sensitive technology.

Then there's the most basic truism of DADT -- that the policy has never been shown to have any impact on high-risk sexual behavior. If anything, DADT drives it further underground and, with it, an opportunity for military personnel to speak openly and candidly with their health care providers without fear of castigation.

If we've learned anything over the past 30 years in responding to the AIDS epidemic, perpetuating a culture of fear, shame and secrecy when it comes to sexuality is the exact opposite of what's needed to curb the spread of HIV.

DADT is institutional bigotry, plain and simple. Every argument -- including some of the more quasi-intelligent ones *not* discussed here -- defending this policy has been refuted repeatedly by the scientific community, military experts and the general public. Congress should repeal DADT without delay.