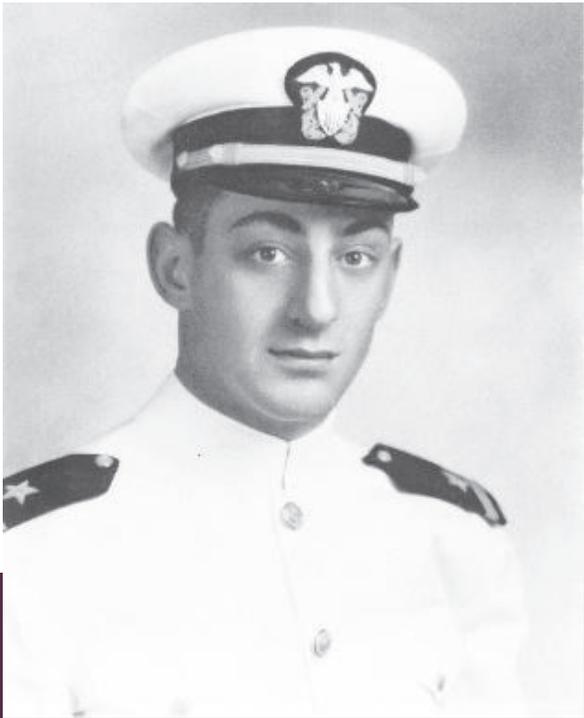


would be allowed to serve in the Navy and the Navy would no longer ask about a Sailor's sexual orientation, so long as the Sailor kept his orientation private.

Repeal of DADT

The movement for Sailors to be allowed to serve openly gained momentum after official studies concluded that the Department of Defense was spending tens of millions of dollars replacing qualified Service members. In response to such studies, in 2010, Congress passed the Don't Ask, Don't Tell Repeal Act. Today, each June, the Department of Defense and Naval units throughout the Fleet celebrate LGBT Pride Month. In 2016, the Navy named a fleet replenishment ship USNS *Harvey Milk* (T-AO-206) after the gay rights activist and Naval officer Harvey Milk.



2016-The Navy named a ship after Lieutenant (j.g.) and gay rights activist Harvey Milk in 2016.



NATIONAL MUSEUM *of the*
UNITED STATES NAVY

(Cover) 1946-Beginning in the 1940s, the Armed Forces issued "Undesirable Discharge" papers to Sailors and Soldiers found to be engaged in homosexual activity. Anyone receiving such a paper was removed from the Service immediately and denied post-service benefits such as the G.I. Bill.

U.S. NAVY EXPERIENCE

**LGBTQ
EXPERIENCE**
IN THE U.S. NAVY



UNDESIRABLE DISCHARGE

FROM THE ARMED FORCES OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT

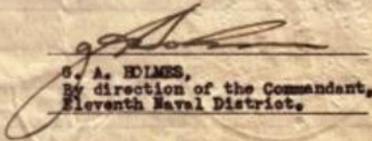
Carl KIMMER, 261 01 42, CSC, USN, Retired

WAS DISCHARGED FROM THE

UNITED STATES NAVY

ON THE 15TH DAY OF OCTOBER 1946

AS UNDESIRABLE


G. A. HOLMES,
By direction of the Commandant,
Eleventh Naval District.



2011 - President Barack Obama signs the certification to Congress officially repealing the 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' regulations in the U.S. Armed Forces.

On December 22, 2010 President Barack Obama signed into law the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell Repeal Act of 2010," allowing gays, lesbians, and bisexuals to openly serve in the United States armed forces. For the Navy, the path to the 2010 law has been a rocky one with deeply held beliefs on both sides of the issue.

Early Days

Ironically, for much of the first 100 years of the Navy, homosexuality was a non-issue. Many officers believed homosexuality was a grave sin and sodomy was technically illegal in common law. These same officers though found the topic so uncomfortable that when a Sailor was charged with being gay or with sodomy, officers either refused to convene a hearing on the subject or quickly found reasons to clear the Sailor of the charges. The attitude changed between 1876 and 1900, when the Navy criminalized sodomy in their own regulations

and became more aggressive in prosecuting the act.

Early 20th Century

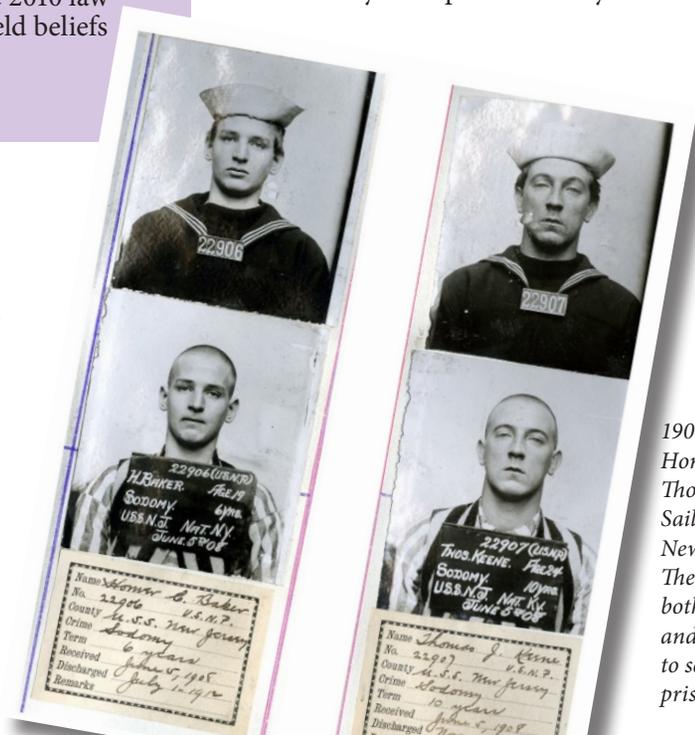
While Navy regulations criminalized homosexuality, there was no active movement to purge gay Sailors from the service. That changed in 1919 when Assistant Secretary of the Navy Franklin D. Roosevelt endorsed an investigation into homosexual activity at Naval Station Newport. Military courts convicted seventeen Sailors and sent them to prison.

World War II

After many years of imprisoning Sailors for their sexual orientation and conduct, the Armed Forces made a shift in its policy. In place of prison, the Navy issued "Undesirable Discharge" papers to several thousand men and women. Normally reserved for "undesirable habits or traits of character," a Sailor who accepted this paper was removed from the service with a less-than-honorable discharge, denying the veteran any post-career benefits.

Post War Policy

The general policy remained in place after the war. The newly adopted Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) declared that acts of sodomy were punishable by bad conduct



1908-Shown here are Homer Baker and Thomas Keene, both Sailors from USS New Jersey (BB-16). The Navy convicted both men of sodomy and sentenced them to several years in prison.

discharges. Navy regulations reinforced the UCMJ articles by stating that homosexuality was considered to be "incompatible with military service."

In 1956, the Navy convened a board under the direction of Captain C.H. Crittenden to study the issue of homosexuals serving with the Fleet. The



1993-Petty Officer Keith Meinhold holds up his honorable discharge after winning a court challenge to being dishonorably discharged. Meinhold was one of several Sailors that challenged the homosexual ban in court.

"Crittenden Report" concluded that there was "no factual data that homosexuals were a security risk." Many disagreed with the board's findings and the recommendations were tabled. The Navy thus continued to prosecute those found to be violating UCMJ rule. Navy prosecutors even took a retired rear admiral to court for acts of sodomy committed during his retirement.

After a review of policy in 1981, the Department of Defense reaffirmed that any Service member committing a homosexual act would face immediate discharge. Even this statement was flexible as regulations later stated that a homosexual would be allowed to continue to serve if his or her actions were not repeated and did not affect unit cohesion.

Don't Ask, Don't Tell

Several Service members challenged Department policy in court, which resulted in different judicial opinions. As a compromise to both sides of the issue, Congress wrote a law in 1993 popularly known as "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" (DADT). Homosexuals

2011-The "First Kiss"-Marissa Gaeta of USS Oak Hill (LSD-48) is shown here kissing her partner, Citlalic Snell after Oak Hill's deployment.

