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**MILITARY TIMES CALLS “UNFRIENDLY FIRE” A TOP BOOK OF THE DECADE
Military Newspaper Suggests Book is “Definitive” and “Separates Opinion from Fact”**

SANTA BARBARA, CA, January 12, 2010 - The Military Times has chosen a book criticizing the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy as one of its sixteen best military books of the decade. The book, “Unfriendly Fire: How the Gay Ban Undermines the Military and Weakens America,” by Palm Center’s senior research fellow, Dr. Nathaniel Frank, was selected this week by the paper’s lead book reviewer, J. Ford Huffman, for inclusion in a list of books that “excel in writing and reporting, that invite re-reading, that evoke emotion and offer enlightenment.”

In an article announcing the list of best books, Huffman wrote that “Unfriendly Fire” “separates opinion from fact, and a reader could suggest Congress and the Pentagon accept this engaging study as definitive.” He added that the stories of service members and the use of statistics “lend credibility” to the book’s argument that the current policy has failed and that it hurts, rather than helping, unit cohesion and military effectiveness. Huffman’s 2009 review of “Unfriendly Fire” praised the book for its “scholarly methodology,” its deep and extensive research, and its human and accessible voice.

Dr. Aaron Belkin, director of Palm and a professor of political science at University of California, Santa Barbara, said the selection is significant because the Military Times is the newspaper of record for the U.S. armed forces. “The selection of a book like this for recognition,” said Belkin, “a book that questions the rationale and impact of the military’s gay ban, reflects a substantial change in sentiment within the military.” Belkin said the newspaper is a major source of news for military members and their families, and that, while the paper enjoys independence from the military, it has historically shared the norms and outlooks of the military community. Each year the paper releases a subscriber poll that shows majority resistance to service by open gays, which regularly earns the paper criticism from the gay community, including researchers at the Palm Center.

Frank said he felt honored to have his book included on the list. “Most writers hope their voice will be heard, above all,” he said. “It’s heartening to know that the military community is now approaching this controversial subject with an open mind, and that many have a genuine interest in reviewing and recognizing what the facts are about gays in the military.” He said the recognition of his argument was consistent with what both research and personal military contacts increasingly show: that resistance to openly gay service has dropped dramatically and that there is genuine support for lifting “don’t ask, don’t tell” within the military, even while it’s not always made public.



Other picks on the list, which was arranged alphabetically, include many that chronicle the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, such as “Fiasco” by the Pulitzer-Prize winning journalist, Thomas Ricks; “The Forever War” by the Pulitzer-Prize winning New York Times journalist Dexter Filkins; the bestselling “Cobra II” co-written by New York Times journalist Michael Gordon and Bernard Trainor; the bestselling “The Unforgiving Minute” by Craig Mullaney; and “Jarhead” by Anthony Swofford which also became a film.

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The Palm Center is a think tank at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Since 1998, the Center has been a leader in commissioning and disseminating research in the areas of gender, sexuality, and the military. For more information visit www.palmcenter.ucsb.edu.