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Hanson-Bailey: There was a witch hunt. That's what they called gay—nets for gays. And I was—I found out from one of my friends, who was Auntie—that was his nickname, Auntie, he was in CID at the time. I can't even remember what CID [Criminal Investigation Division] stands for. I'm trying to think, counter—it was the investigative arm of the military. I can't remember what CID stands for, but it was the investigative arm of the military. He was in CID. And he called me up and he said, "Maria, you're part of the witch hunt. They've got pictures of you with another lieutenant." And we were joking at the time, but I had put my hand over her mouth and kissed her over a fountain. She was straight. Completely innocent. She was just on vacation with us, and we were joking around. She ended up getting kicked out too, as like a lesbian. Yeah. No innocent till proven guilty, huh? But we all got pulled into the web.

And so, I was afraid that Robin and Kimmy might get affected by it too. So, I decided to go to my commander at the time and just tell him. My captain. He was a decent guy, and he respected me. I had worked for him under him directly and we had a good relationship. And I thought he'll save me. He won't—he'll protect me. So, I went to him and I said, "Colonel Caldwell [sp??] I'm gay." And I said, "I've been a good soldier. I've won soldier of the year, I've been one of the youngest specialists you've ever had. I gained ranked quickly. I've got an Army accommodation medal, an Army achievement medal, PLDC ribbons [non-commissioned officer professional development ribbon]." I said, "I've done well by you." And he said, "Maria, step out the door, think about what you're about to say, and come back in and rethink it." What do you mean? You can protect me. So, I came back in and said it again. I said, "Honestly Sir, I'm gay." And he says, "I have to kick you out." And I thought fuck. Cause Reagan changed the rules and made it so that everyone who comes out has to be removed from service immediately. He goes, "I can give you—I will do my best to get you an honorable discharge. You at least deserve that." And I was devastated. Cause I had thought I was going to spend the rest of my life in the military. I had planned twenty years in the field. I was already planning—I had already gotten a letter to go to airborne school. I had a full future ahead of me, I was planning to go to West Point. You know, everything was bright and bushy tailed. I was good to go. So, yeah. Yeah, so, it was—it was devastating.