

**[OH2133.Hanson-Bailey\_access\_clip3.mp3]**  
**[01:18:43]**

Halaska: Thank you. In your opinion, I guess what changes have been most important in the past few years for—

Hanson-Bailey: Well, I think a friend of mine, a colonel, who was a lieutenant when I was in, who was able to keep her career and serve all the way through, she came home from Iraq and she was—her battalion, I believe it was battalion, when she got home from Iraq—or Afghanistan, I can't remember if it was Afghanistan or Iraq, but they were—every time you come home they sometimes will have a welcome for one soldier. A special welcome for one soldier. And so, she was coming home and she was retiring. And they made sure that on her coming home that her wife and children would be there to greet her. And that her wife and children would be the first ones to welcome her home. And so, for the first time ever her wife and her children were waiting to welcome her home. And to me, that was the biggest change was her wife and her children get to be the first ones to welcome their mother home. So, it's moments like that that are truly a changing military when someone gets to see their wife and their children, and be honored as if that's a family. And that is a family. That is a powerful moment. I wish I could have been there to see it.

**[01:20:18]**

And so that, to me, that's what I fought for. That's what I struggled for for years for gay rights. So, yeah, I mean times have changed. I think of people like my niece who are young. Well, she's in her thirties, so she's old now. But, you know, people who are younger. I think of—I can now look at a seventeen-year-old lesbian and say, go ahead and join the Army, it's a good career. I don't know if I'd say that right now the way things are. But, you know, I mean, it's an option now. I don't have to worry about you hiding and denying. You can join and be yourself. Can't say that for transgenders, cause that's gotten bad again. And there's even a little fear for gays with Pence in. But, you know, times, you know, are a little better. It would be better if Trump wasn't in. It would make you feel a little more secure. But it's better. At least we've got some protections. Luckily the generals are very clear that they don't want to change policy. They like it the way it is. Yeah. Times have changed. Times have changed.

Halaska: Why was it important for you to do an oral history interview that focused on your time in the military, and also your sexual orientation?

Hanson-Bailey: So, no one has to say Dorothy's particular friends anymore. I think it's important—there's not a whole lot of us left. A lot of the gays are dead of AIDS that were my generation. A lot of the lesbians that served are dead of alcoholism or drug addiction. A lot of the women my age, in their fifties and sixties, aren't

around anymore. And so, hearing our story before the Don't Ask Don't Tell—I'm a generation of before the Don't Ask Don't Tell. We were a generation that were kicked out, that didn't have options. We didn't even have the option of hiding. We were hunted like animals. We lost our careers, we lost our dreams. We lived in the shadows. And I think it's important to tell our story. And like so many of us, there was beauty and fun. I remember the T dances on Sundays, when we go to Frankfurt and dance in this beautiful Grecian dance party place in Oberursel in Frankfurt. And it was the most fun, and we were beautiful people, and we had the most gay time. And it was absolutely marvelous. Champagne flowed and we had fun. And we were fully alive. But then we had to walk back to the base and go back into hiding. But we were proud to serve, and we were good at what we did. We were good at our jobs. And we deserved the respect of being soldiers that were good at our jobs. But we had to do it in hiding. And yeah. I think it is cool that today soldiers don't have to be in hiding. I would do anything to step back fifty years and be able to be a soldier to proudly be gay and proudly serve. That would be cool. That would be a moment. And I can't ever have that. But that would be cool.