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“Missionary Style” Only

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Abstract

Even though the Uniform Code of Military Justice is a code members of the military voluntarily live by; Article 125 UCMJ (Sodomy), is no longer relevant in the military or in civilian society in general. Should we still be pursuing those members who violate it? It is a moral standard that is commonly ignored and not very well known. Members of the military both, heterosexual and homosexual, violate this regulation on a regular basis. Article 125 should be abolished altogether and slanted more towards animals or rape victims. Most members of the military and civilian society ignore the regulation concerning oral sex between two consenting adults. As is shown in the following pages Sodomy is a moral standard that is not longer relevant in either military or civilian society between two consenting adults.

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Article (ART) 125 of the United States Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) states:

(a) Any person subject to this chapter who engages in unnatural carnal copulation with another person of the same, or opposite sex, or with an animal, is guilty of Sodomy.

Penetration, however slight, is sufficient to complete the offense.

(b) Any person found guilty of Sodomy shall be punished as a Court Marshal may direct (UCMJ, 2006).

What we all commonly refer to as the “Missionary Style” (MS) position during sexual intercourse is the only acceptable sexual copulation between a man and a woman in accordance with the Uniformed Code of Military Justice. The common definition of “Missionary Style” is straight man and woman sex, or better explained as, penis penetration into the vagina. Even though the Uniform Code of Military Justice is a code we voluntarily live by it is still punishable by law (even in some states) to perform oral copulation or cunnilingus for your partner. It is common knowledge that most members of the military have at some point in their adult sexual encounters violated ART 125 UCMJ (Sodomy). What’s more, their spouses or significant others, or not so significant others, knowingly allow them to violate this policy on a routine basis. In fact, I would venture to say in most sexual encounters it is highly encouraged. This easily places a military member in an ethical dilemma by pitting today’s modern society norms against the military society regulations.

Be that as it may; ART 125 UCMJ, is still a moral code that we as members of the military are obligated to adhere to. Rebecca Archer wrote: “In praise of the missionary position. I like being on bottom. I’m familiar with its ins and outs. The missionary position is like a “you

are here” marker and I know how to go straight to my happy place” (Archer 2002). Whether Rebecca’s view is considered exciting or boring it is still a crime to commit sodomy as long as we are an active member of the military services, even if it is between two consenting adults. When members of the military choose to ignore this article of the UCMJ we part from the moral high ground which we have volunteered to uphold. Military personnel have chosen to live by the UCMJ when they voluntarily enlist or take an oath to defend this nation.

As military members we don’t have the luxury to decide which orders, or codes, we will follow and which we will ignore. We are sworn to uphold all of them and to follow the orders of the officers appointed over us. But is ART 125 of the UCMJ truly relevant in today’s military? Should we still be pursuing those members who violate it? I do not advocate for the lowering of our military standards, however, only to change the ones that are no longer relevant. Without question it is a moral code that was long ago banished from our civilian society.

Members of the civilian society have long ago looked past oral copulation or cunnilingus as taboo. It is very much the norm that if you wish, and consent, to receive then you also must give. Society’s social, ethical and moral standards are in constant change. We as a military should be able to adjust, adapt and overcome our ethical fears and phobias to better match those of our society which we serve. Oral copulation and cunnilingus between two consenting adults is one of those that are not that far of a moral stretch. Most military members probably don’t give these acts a second thought. In 1992 we even adopted a military by law for things that happen between two consenting adults known as; “don’t ask, don’t tell, don’t pursue”.

Every military member who has been involved in a committed or casual relationship knows the adult desire to please our sexual partner. If that partner asks us for a simple act of pleasure how easy is it for a military member to deny his or her partner that act of intimacy

simply because the UCMJ forbids it? Of all the other ways we test our military families and loved ones should we deny them this simple pleasure as well? I venture to guess that we ask them to sacrifice enough as it is with endless deployments and field maneuvers, missed birthdays and anniversaries. It should be allowable for two consenting adults to make this decision without the help of the UCMJ and without feeling like a leper of the military community. We adopted the “don’t ask, don’t tell, don’t pursue” policy and it seems we could equally adopt a “what happens in the bedroom stays in the bedroom between two consenting adults” policy.

Civilian-Soldiers who are not on active duty status and perform or receive Sodomy are not subject to the UCMJ. Does this mean that a Soldier suddenly becomes more moral than the rest of society one weekend a month when on Drill Status? Certainly if we as consenting, intelligent adults can make this distinction then the commanders enforcing ART 125 of the UCMJ can as well. I venture to say that when the call to battle sounds and deployment orders are signed that a commander or the military as a whole could care less if you were engaged in an act of sodomy last night with your wife or husband. They would only be concerned if you could deploy and do your part for our nation at war. Once in theater, any type of sex is highly discouraged so what would it really matter any way? Since the UCMJ does not speak of, or regulate, self gratification one can only assume that masturbation is legal and moral for all military members. In some cases the act of masturbation could involve placing one’s own digits into openings on a member’s own body or placing hands on one’s genitalia to stimulate themselves for sexual pleasure. As far as the military is concerned that’s ok, as long as you don’t allow someone else to do it. Most members of civilian society find this an acceptable sex act; however, it took many Madonna and Prince Videos to bring it to the forefront as a topic of acceptable conversation. Question is; did society follow the military or did the military follow

society on the socially accepted act of masturbation? Either way it appears as both groups has moved beyond the moral acceptance level issue and simply enjoys masturbation, as much as sodomy, in both societies. So if it is acceptable for civilian-Soldiers to move between the two societies and not be any less moral or ethical then is it feasible to believe that we as a military society can adapt to realize Sodomy is an accepted sexual practice between two consenting adults in the military? For certain if we are intelligent enough to make the distinction three weekends out of a four weekend month then we are intelligent enough to do away with it all together.

Mill’s utilitarian principle states; “Those actions are moral which maximize happiness and minimize harm for the greatest number” (Mills 2007). If we follow his principle we have found our answer on whether we should still continue to pursue those members that violate ART 125 of the UCMJ (Sodomy). Life is short; enjoy it while you can, as an intelligent, consenting adult with another consenting adult. Hopefully, an intelligent one at that! I submit the maximum military members of our society feel the same as long as the minimum amount of society is not harmed.

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