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## Homosexual Activist Screening Applicants at Defense Department

BY TIMOTHY P. CARNEY  
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Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has hired a prominent homosexual rights activist—and "gays in the military" advocate—with a history of donating to liberal Democratic candidates to screen applicants for positions in the Bush Administration Defense Department.

Stephen E. Herbits has been "employed as a consultant" working as "a special assistant to the secretary," said Pentagon spokesman Lt. Col. Willette Carter. A source in Rumsfeld's office confirmed that Herbits is screening job applicants.

Prior to arriving at the Bush Defense Department, Herbits was a senior counselor at [Window Communications](#), a public relations firm. One of his partners there was [David Mixner](#), also a prominent homosexual activist, who was a close associate of President Clinton, and who first won notoriety for organizing the 1969 march on Washington in opposition to the Vietnam War. [William Waybourn](#) was also a partner of Herbits at Window Communications. (Waybourn is also president of Window Media, which owns the *Washington Blade* and *New York Blade News*.)

Herbits, according to a [biography](#) posted by Window Communication, was "an original member of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD)."

"Mr. Herbits," says the biography, "has worked behind the scenes on important public policy issues including gays in the military, creating an on-going dialogue among gay writers, and in raising funds for numerous gay and lesbian community organizations."

In a 1993 book review for the *New York Times* on the topic of homosexuals in the military, Herbits wrote: "No single issue more poignantly snaps our armed forces into the 21<sup>st</sup> century than the question of whether homosexuals should be permitted to serve openly in their ranks. Our military cannot afford to stray long from the society

it defends; the pressures for it to catch up are mounting within and without."

In the review, Herbits lauds author Randy Shilts' "overwhelming conclusion" that "barriers to open gay and lesbian service in the military will come down."

Herbits, a former executive vice president at Seagram's, worked in Rumsfeld's first Defense Department and recruited civilians for the department under Secretary Dick Cheney during the first Bush administration. A 1989 *Washington Post* article described Cheney and Herbits as "longtime friend[s]."

Federal Election Commission records posted by the [Center for Responsive Politics](#) indicate that Herbits has contributed over the years to Democratic candidates and the Democratic National Committee (DNC). In the 2000 election cycle, for example, he gave \$13,000 to the DNC and \$3,750 to Democratic candidates for House and Senate seats. He gave no reportable contributions to Republican candidates during the 2000 election cycle.

Herbits gave \$400 to the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund in 1994, and, in 1998, he contributed \$1,500 to the Democratic congressional campaign of Margarethe Cammermeyer. Cammermeyer was discharged from the Army after admitting her homosexuality in 1989.

In past elections, Herbits has also given to Republicans. In 1991, he contributed to President George H.W. Bush's reelection campaign. In 1995, he contributed to the presidential campaign of Lamar Alexander, and, in 1997, he contributed to then-Sen. Alfonse D'Amato (N.Y.).

In the late sixties, Herbits was a staffer for the Wednesday Group—a group of liberal Republican Representatives—and in the early seventies, he worked for liberal Sen. Robert Stafford (R.-Vt.).

Herbits did not take calls from Human Events placed to his Defense Department office.

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