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Obama and the Don't Ask Don't Tell Debate

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By [Heather Huntington](#) on October 20, 2009

Like much of the nation, to say I was relieved when [Barack Obama](#) was elected this year is an understatement. I cried when the election was called in his favor. I cried when he was inaugurated. I couldn't believe the the terrible reign of the last eight years was over and new horizons were finally in our sights. I was just so happy.

And then some months went by and...not much. Well, that's not entirely true. There's the health care debate and the peace prize and movement on things like Guantanamo and what all. But as far as the issue of gay rights was concerned: crickets.

While I am not gay, I have many friends who are. And to me, that our nation treats them in any way as second class citizens is a tremendous shame, to say the least. For whatever reason, this is one of the main touchstones of political debates that gets me the most fired up. Perhaps because for me there is a very clear face to this discrimination, and it simply breaks my heart.

When it was still a race between Obama and [Hillary](#), I quickly noticed that most of my gay friends were undisputed Clintonites. I asked why, and they cited Hillary's ample track record of supporting the gay community. 'Oh, come on, have some faith! Obama is a democrat, and more importantly a reasonable human being. He'll support you,' I said. They weren't so sure.

And as the months droned on, I began to worry. As some people said, Why hadn't he started in on ending Don't Ask, Don't Tell? What could be the reason he is waiting on dealing with that? I hoped there was a good reason.

Earlier this month, [Jon Stewart](#) called Obama out on [The Daily Show](#) on this very matter. Stewart said in a bigger form what I--and I'm sure so many others--was thinking: 'It's time to make good on these campaign promises.'

The Daily Show With Jon Stewart
The Gay After Tomorrow

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Days later in an address to the gay rights advocacy group the [Human Rights Campaign](#), President Obama reaffirmed that he would end Don't Ask, Don't Tell. He has yet to give a time line. Like many, I put my faith Obama's promises of hope and change. Who wouldn't want to? And I for one am hoping to see this change come very, very soon.

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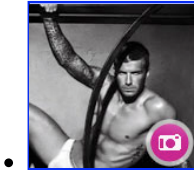
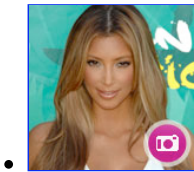
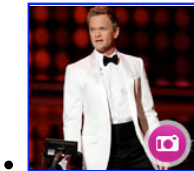
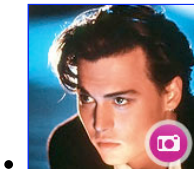







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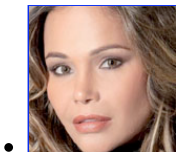
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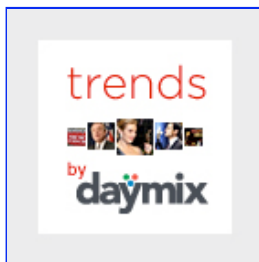
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