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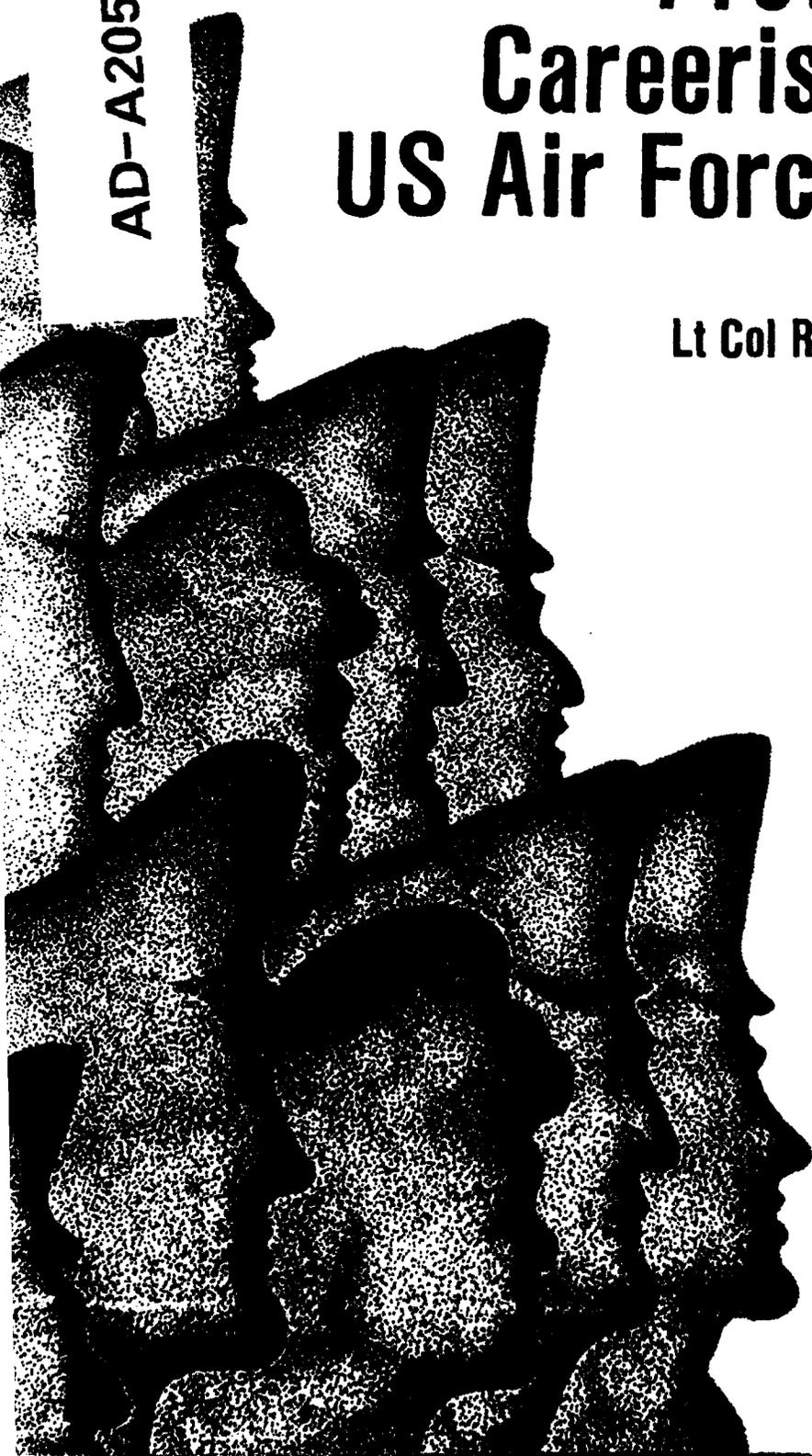
Prevalence of Careerism Among US Air Force Officers

Lt Col Roger W. Alford, USAF

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PREVALENCE OF CAREERISM AMONG US AIR FORCE OFFICERS

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PREVALENCE OF CAREERISM AMONG
US AIR FORCE OFFICERS

by

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Air University Press
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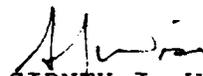
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FOREWORD

Careerism in the Air Force has recently attracted a lot of high-level attention. However, officers in all the military services have had to cope with and surmount this phenomenon. In fact, associated terms such as professionalism and officership have been subjects of continuing discussion for several decades. These discussions have revealed that many factors such as careerism impact on the effectiveness of the officer corps.

Lt Col Roger W. Alford's research goes one step further than most studies by providing quantitative evidence of careerism's existence. His rather novel approach to defining and conceptualizing this construct makes understanding the concept somewhat easier. Using two different sources of evidence (survey and demographic data) also provides credence to his conclusions.

The last chapter provides several suggestions for reducing the spread of careerism. An examination of recommendations from the Air Force Officer Professional Development Working Group reveals other actions to contain and perhaps diminish this problem. Obviously, many changes have already been made to the officer personnel management system, and the time has arrived to assess those changes. Whether careerism (or hypercareerism as Colonel Alford defines it) can be abated has not yet been ascertained.


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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lt Col Roger W. Alford completed this study while assigned to the Airpower Research Institute (ARI), Air University Center for Aerospace Doctrine, Research, and Education (AUCADRE) at Maxwell AFB, Alabama. In 1967 Colonel Alford graduated from Baylor University with a bachelor of arts degree in psychology. After completing Officer Training School, he was assigned as a weapons director at McGuire AFB, New Jersey; Luke AFB, Arizona; the DEW line, Canada; and performed instructor duties as a weapons controller at Tyndall AFB, Florida. From 1973 until 1977 he was active as a weapons controller in the Air National Guard (McGhee Tyson Air Base, Knoxville, Tennessee) and earned a doctoral degree in industrial psychology from the University of Tennessee. In 1980 Colonel Alford was recalled to active duty as a behavioral scientist and served tours at Headquarters Air Force Military Personnel Center (AFMPC), Randolph AFB, Texas, and the Pentagon. In 1987 the deputy chief of staff, Personnel, selected him to be a research fellow at ARI and concurrently attend Air War College. Colonel Alford is presently assigned to Headquarters AFMPC as the chief of the Personnel Measurement Division. He and his wife Jan have two daughters, Wendi and Casey.

PREFACE

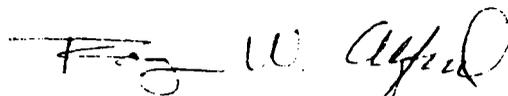
In June 1987 Lt Gen Thomas J. Hickey, deputy chief of staff, Personnel, tasked me to see what you can do on "careerism"--extent to which it exists and what policies the Air Force might consider to correct it (assuming it is a problem). The research effort here flowed from that tasking. Additionally, in August 1987 Gen Larry D. Welch, Air Force chief of staff, chartered an officer professional development (OPD) working group to conduct a thorough review of the entire Air Force personnel system. The objective of the working group was to recommend ways to reduce excessive careerism--defined as placing self above service.

Careerism is a tough problem that has existed for some time in the Air Force as well as in other military services. The purpose of this research was to go beyond "armchair theorizing" and to quantify the existence of careerism in the Air Force officer corps. Attitudinal evidence indicated that the younger officers (i.e., 6-10 years of commissioned service) had higher levels of careerism than the total group of officers. Being able to determine why this situation exists could lead to better corrective actions.

What is next? There has been a lot of energy and attention devoted to this topic, which has resulted in recommendations from the OPD working group and a new officer evaluation system. Many changes have been implemented, but the next step is to measure how well they work. Building an effective feedback system is imperative to this review.

I must thank many people for their contributions to this research effort. General Hickey supplied the challenge, and Maj Gen Larry Dillingham, Brig Gen Maralin Coffinger, and Col Marcus Hurley provided the research direction and guidance. Lt Col Bruce Ullman supplied a continuing assessment of the activities of the Air Force Officer Professional Development Working Group. Maj Rob Donohue and Capt Mike Fuller generated and helped decipher the survey data tapes, and Maj Ben Dilla and Chuck Finn built and delivered the officer cohort demographic data tapes. Bill Stacy furnished the results of a recent questionnaire about civilian workers that offered new insights into perceptions about civilian careerism. Jesse Barron spent countless hours programming the Air University computer system to output mounds of statistical products that formed the foundation of this research. Dr Thomas Renckly provided statistical assurance about selective

analyses. Dr David MacIsaac surfaced an armload of articles that started my research journey. Dr Bynum Weathers (research chair) and Dianne Parrish (research editor) counseled, encouraged, and labored intensely with me so that I could be proud of this product. Finally I would like to thank my wife, Jan, and two daughters, Wendi and Casey, who continue to provide the inspiration and support that make projects like this worthwhile.



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CHAPTER 1

CAREERISM AND STUDY OVERVIEW

One day at the Pentagon, I mentioned that the US Air Force needed to educate its officers about careerism. I happened to be standing in a large hallway and another officer overheard my comment. "What do you mean by that?" he asked. After I explained that the Air Force needed to communicate how it expected officers to act in pursuit of their careers, two more officers joined the conversation. Within 10 minutes there were eight more officers crowding around in animated conversation about what careerism meant to them. Each one had a story to tell about officers who had done this or that (usually onerous deeds) in order to get ahead in their careers. Meanwhile, the conversation grew intense. Finally, I pried myself loose from the group by using an excuse about an important telephone call. But as I walked back to my office, two officers followed me down the hallway asking more questions. A short while later, several articles on careerism mysteriously appeared in my mailbox. After that encounter, I promised never to mention careerism again without a ready exit.

Why did the officers react so strongly to this subject? The reason probably lies somewhere in a common definition of careerism: being concerned primarily about your career over all else. Although no one voluntarily admitted his own motivations, most officers probably have twinges of guilt now and then about their own careeristic tendencies. Should the Air Force assuage their concern? Certainly the Air Force can do a better job of communicating proper behaviors and attitudes about what it takes to be successful.

The Air Force as a corporate body began to be seriously concerned about careerism in 1985 when questions were raised about the timing of different levels of professional military education (PME) in an officer's career. In 1986 the officer effectiveness report (OER) came under close scrutiny as to its utility, and three task forces were formed to develop a new one. In 1987 the chief of staff formed an officer professional development working group to investigate the entire officer personnel management system and to identify ways to reduce careerism. Also in 1987 the deputy chief of staff, Personnel, tasked me to assess the existence of careerism within the officer corps.

> The purpose of this study, ~~then~~ is to determine the prevalence of careerism among officers in the US Air Force. Two basic sources of evidence are used to measure this

f. p. 1
prevalence. First, the attitudes and opinions about careerism from a worldwide sample of officers are analyzed. A questionnaire was used to gather the data. Second, a selected behavior (~~i.e., obtaining an advanced degree~~) is investigated to determine if careeristic tendencies are evident. Demographic data organized by officer cohort form the basis of this evidence. Both sources of evidence are developed in greater detail in chapters 5 and 6.

→ This study contains seven chapters. Chapter 2 provides some historical background (past 40 years) on topics and terms associated with the concept of careerism.

→ Chapter 3 introduces the reader to a new definition of careerism and shows how the concept is measured. Also, it presents a simplistic model that shows how careerism relates to attitudes, behaviors, and outcomes.

→ Chapter 4 explores the causes of careerism. Some of these causes are society, the military system, and the officer personnel system.

→ Chapter 5 examines some earlier studies on careerism. It also analyzes contemporary attitudes on careerism in the Air Force. Most of the evidence about the prevalence of careerism is provided in this chapter.

→ In chapter 6 an attempt is made to define and measure a behavior that is characteristic of careerism. The careeristic behavior discussed is an officer obtaining an advanced degree for the purpose of promotion. Chapter 7, the final chapter, provides an overall assessment of the problem. It discusses what the Air Force can do and should do to reduce careerism in the officer corps. (S.W.)

CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Careerism did not recently spring into the forefront of officer issues. In fact, strands of careerism are evident in the literature throughout the past 40-plus years in connection with such concepts as professionalism and officership. Probably the first definition of careerism included the phrase "unprofessional behavior." To better explain the evolution of careerism and where it fits in with these other concepts, I briefly discuss their development from the 1950s to the 1980s. The 1950s was chosen as a starting point because of the classical work on professionalism published by Samuel P. Huntington in 1959. Further, since the Air Force was founded as a separate service in 1947, the 1950s seemed a logical point of departure.

Before this discussion begins, a caveat is in order. The references used in this and all subsequent chapters are representative of articles and studies published on particular topics. However, the comprehensiveness of this literature review on careerism was limited by the military services' desire and willingness to publish in the open literature.

1950s

The concept of professionalism is used frequently when discussing careerism. Certainly one of the first recognized experts to discuss military officer professionalism was Samuel P. Huntington. In 1959 Huntington defined a professional as one having expertise (special skills and knowledge), responsibility (accountability to society), and corporateness (sense of unity or group cohesiveness).¹ Further, he discussed military officership as a profession, although he believed it was not an ideal example.²

In this same period, John W. Masland and Laurence I. Radway described the expanding role of military officers as caused by an emphasis on international events, technological growth, and the importance of support functions (e.g., finance, research, and supply).³ They based their logic on events occurring after World War II when officers had to administer restoration efforts of foreign governments and had to deal with the technology of a significant new weapon system (the atomic bomb).

1960s

The sixties reflected little activity in expanding the Huntington theme. In 1964, Maj Stuart E. Burt, an Air Command and Staff College student at Maxwell AFB, Alabama, examined whether an Air Force officer's career was a profession or a vocation.⁴ Major Burt described some officers as career professionals--those who combine a career with an equal desire to continue professional activities (e.g., education).⁵

In 1965 Bernard Barber described professional behavior as having four characteristics: (1) specialized behavior, (2) community rather than individual interests, (3) internalized codes of behavior controlled by members of the profession, and (4) a system of rewards that are ends in themselves (e.g., prestige and honors).⁶ Barber further posited that a focus on money has led to nonprofessional behavior (as he defined it).⁷

In 1965 Samuel Huntington wrote that not all military officers are professional military officers. Rather, the professionals are those with combat skills and commitment.⁸ Huntington developed this concept further by categorizing officers into four different types: (1) those with specialized combat skills but no commitment to career, (2) those with specialized noncombat skills and a commitment to career, (3) those with neither specialized combat skills nor a commitment to career, and (4) those with specialized combat skills and a commitment to career.⁹ Huntington felt that becoming increasingly specialized (in either combat or noncombat skills) could hinder advancement (promotion), which, at that time, required generalists.¹⁰ He further believed that the military academies played a critical role in the development of officers and that they generally produced highly qualified graduates for "professional military officership."¹¹

1970s

During the seventies an abundance of careerism-associated books and articles were published. Moving out of the Vietnam War and into an all-volunteer force created fertile ground for discussion of such subjects. Also, direct involvement in combat by military officers from all services moved discussions away from the theoretical realm and back to reality. The impact of this combat experience shifted their writing emphasis to revelations about careerism rather than associated concepts. A review of

these publications focusing specifically on careerism is reserved for the next chapter, where careerism is defined.

Some authors discussed professionalism by focusing on roles. G. Harries-Jenkins differentiated between what he called ascriptive professional officers (those trained in the military organization in military skills) and achievement professionals (specialists in skills with direct civilian counterparts--e.g., doctors, dentists, and lawyers).¹² In general, Brig Gen Robert N. Ginsburgh wrote, there are four determinants which shape the military professional's role: "American society, world environment, technology, and the profession itself" (i.e., leaders and organizations).¹³ General Ginsburgh used Huntington's definition of professionalism as his springboard for discussion.

In 1975 Col John J. Grace, US Marine Corps, provided another perspective on professionalism. He said that it is incorrect to discuss professional versus nonprofessional behavior. Rather, he felt that one should discuss professionalism as a matter of degree,¹⁴ and that military officers must increase their degree of professionalism by focusing on professional skills, knowledge, and ethics.¹⁵ Colonel Grace further believed that the military had not developed a proper body of professional knowledge because of the pursuit of civilian academics,¹⁶ and that "the opposite of professional idealism is careerism."¹⁷

Sam C. Sarkesian, in his 1975 book, discussed the professional Army officer. He speculated that the only place hard-core professionals are produced is in the military academy.¹⁸ Sarkesian also stated that officers become professionals when they decide to stay in the military beyond their service obligation.¹⁹ He further said that the modern military professional is not necessarily a military combat hero but has shifted toward being a "skilled technician or astute organization man."²⁰

In 1977 Charles C. Moskos, Jr., described professionalism in a different way. He asserted that the military is moving from an institutional organization to an occupational system²¹ in which the institution is more closely associated with professionalism (e.g., a purpose of self-sacrifice instead of self-interest) and an occupation is more closely linked with the marketplace and civilian jobs.²² However, Moskos believed that the military probably has elements of both systems.²³

Comdr Stephen B. Sloane, US Navy, provided a broader perspective of professionalism. He stated that the entire professional military personnel structure is impacted by political (domestic and foreign), strategic (meeting a threat), and technological factors.²⁴ Because the operating environment of military officers is always changing (e.g., personnel policy changes), officers function in professional-bureaucratic roles.²⁵ According to Commander Sloane, the roots of professionalism are begun by controlling entry into the profession and by directing training procedures, whereas the system of professional development is maintained by a career pattern that provides performance incentives and separate forms of specialization.²⁶

In 1978 Lt Col Thomas A. Fabyanic, US Air Force, offered his views on the military profession. He said that there are three components of the officer corps as a profession: cohesiveness or corporateness, professional theory and knowledge, and professional ethics (values and norms which govern behavior within the officer corps and between the officer corps and external society).²⁷ Along these same lines, Col William L. Hauser said that the essence of military professionalism lies in its sense of purpose. And that purpose, in a democratic government, is determined by the will of the people.²⁸

Also in 1978 Richard A. Gabriel and Paul L. Savage presented their views on professionalism. They equated professionalism to a "military ethic"²⁹ and discussed a shift in the Army from institution (traditional values) to occupation (entrepreneurial values).³⁰ Both authors appear to support the Moskos thesis.

1980s

In the literature of the eighties there seems to be an increasing interest in topics associated with careerism. The diverse subject matter of these articles includes individual professionalism, careerists, defective leadership, and officership.

In 1980 Maj Donald L. Stevlingson described professionalism as an official goal which satisfies institutional needs,³¹ but he said that both careerism and occupationalism are examples of unprofessional behavior.³² Major Stevlingson also asserted that a careerist's motivation is personal self-interest, whereas an occupationalist's motivation is economic self-interest.³³

This distinction is splitting hairs, at best. Obviously economic self-interest can be personal and vice versa.

In 1981 Dr John P. Lovell expounded a contemporary view of professionalism.

The professionalism of institutions can be identified most readily by structures, doctrine, procedures, and institutionalized standards, whereas the professionalism of individuals is most evident in attitudes and behavior (the former relevant to the degree that they permit inferences about the latter).³⁴

Dr Lovell's definition of individual professionalism formed the basis for the analysis of individual careerism as noted in the next chapter. Gen Donn A. Starry, US Army, also discussed values essential to the military profession: professional competence, commitment (not to one's self but to the larger unit), truthfulness, and courage.³⁵ For the first time, individual values such as courage and truthfulness were presented as necessary to the military profession (even though General Starry was speaking about the Army specifically).

What about professionalism in the Air Force? Capt James H. Slagle proposed the term situational professional to describe junior officers in the Air Force.³⁶ Basically, he believed that junior officers view themselves as professionals, but that they also exhibit several behavioral characteristics of occupationalism.³⁷ Maj C. Anne Bonen wrote about how the term occupationalist implies that self-interest comes first.³⁸ She surveyed officers in Squadron Officer School (SOS), Air Command and Staff College (ACSC), and Air War College (AWC) at Maxwell AFB, Alabama, on four different indicators of professionalism. Findings revealed that student officers were more institutional than occupational, had a high sense of duty, and identified themselves as specialists (versus generalists). The AWC class considered themselves as officers first and career-field members second, whereas the SOS and ACSC classes considered themselves career-field members first and officers second.³⁹ Clearly, the meaning of being professional differs among groups of officers.

Several authors also discussed the term careerist. Maj Andrew M. Gessner said that a careerist considers military service an occupation, whereas a professional views military service as an institution.⁴⁰ Major Gessner essentially is following the Moskos thesis for his typology but further stated that the key difference between the two may be the

traditional careerists as career-oriented individuals who are motivated by the money, prestige, and status that result from promotions. Derr developed five new careerist orientations which focus on motivations of individuals for seeking promotions (getting ahead, getting secure, getting free, getting high, and getting balanced).⁴¹ As a typology, Derr's approach probably most nearly represents the different types of officers in the current peacetime military. In 1984, eight years after his first-referenced article, William L. Hauser reported that both executive development in private industry and career development of military officers are "careerist" in nature.⁴² He said that the pre-World War II concept of professionalism is out-dated and has been replaced by careerism,⁴³ and that this change is not good for the effectiveness of the military forces.⁴⁴ Hauser further proposed that careerism is useful for the current military and that most senior officers are supportive of careerist management of the officer corps.⁴⁵

Lt Col G. E. Secrist wrote forcefully about defective leadership in the military. He said that there are five manifestations of this defectiveness: careerism, an unwillingness to tolerate diversity and dissent, a replacement of principles with politics, a difference between what is said (rhetoric) and what is true (reality), and an obsessiveness with image.⁴⁶ All of these characterizations represent examples of unprofessional attitudes and behavior which Secrist believed drastically impact upon the national security of the United States.⁴⁷

In 1985 Maj Forrest E. Waller, Jr., questioned officer competency. He discussed the merits of the military reform movement's concern about deteriorating professionalism in the officer corps.⁴⁸ The primary complaint was that military officers have assumed the role of occupationalists and have emphasized managerial skills rather than combat skills. Reformers further argue that with the increasing managerial emphasis, officers believe that they can "manage" a good career--a phenomenon labeled careerism.⁴⁹ Major Waller felt that military reformers provide a positive impetus for understanding that the proper role of military officers is officership and that professionalism can be defined completely only by those outside the military.⁵⁰

In October 1987, Maj Gen Ralph E. Havens, then commander of the Air Force Military Personnel Center, said that the proper goal of Air Force officers is to move away from a "careerist" orientation and toward officership.⁵¹ The implication here is that professional development leads to the highest levels of officership. Thus, careerism is depicted as the antithesis of officership.

The central theme revealed from this review of the concepts associated with careerism is that of professionalism. There is ample evidence that most authors view military officers as professionals, but the exact definition of the term varies. Also, military officers feel that they are professionals but, again, interpretations differ. Terms used frequently to mean the opposite of professionalism are careerist, occupationalist, achievement professional, skilled technician, and situational professional. Today, the operative term for professionalism is officership. Thus, one can thank Samuel P. Huntington for understanding the notion that officers should have a commitment to officership as well as professionalism for a career.⁵²

Knowing that careerism is a relatively new phenomenon leads one to wonder if it will last. The answer most likely is yes. But how is careerism defined today? And how can the Air Force measure the prevalence of careerism? These questions are answered in the next chapter.

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52. Samuel P. Huntington, "Power, Expertise and the Military Profession," in The Professions in America, ed. Kenneth S. Lynn (Boston, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1965), 132.

Hypocareerism

There is very little information in the literature about this particular phenomenon. In 1969 Col Judson H. Bell and Lt Col Samuel M. Wilson discussed the need to pursue higher academic achievement in order to become a more professional Marine Corps officer.² The implication here is that Marine Corps officers must move from hypocareerism to acceptable careerism to be of greater value to the service. Additionally, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen Larry Welch remarked that an officer with no careerism is worse than one with too much careerism.³ The idea of having Air Force officers who are not concerned with advancement (hypocareerism) would create problems in filling high-level positions. In this regard, General Welch believes that hypocareerism is worse than hypercareerism.

The paucity of articles on hypocareerism seems to indicate that it is not a problem for the modern military. Obviously, very few officers would ever last beyond their initial service obligation if they were unconcerned about professional advancement.

Acceptable Careerism

Many articles have been written on acceptable careerism. Carl von Clausewitz, writing in the early 1800s, strongly believed that officers should be ambitious. His words reflect this position.

Other emotions may be more common and more venerated--patriotism, idealism, vengeance, enthusiasm of every kind--but they are no substitute for a thirst for fame and honor. They may, indeed, rouse the mass to action and inspire it, but they cannot give the commander the ambition to strive higher than the rest, as he must if he is to distinguish himself. They cannot give him, as can ambition, a personal, almost proprietary interest in every aspect of fighting, so that he turns each opportunity to best advantage--plowing with vigor, sowing with care, in the hope of reaping with abundance. It is primarily this spirit of endeavor on the part of commanders so at all levels, this inventiveness, energy, and competitive enthusiasm, which vitalizes an army and makes it victorious. And so far as the commander-in-chief is concerned, we may well ask whether history has ever known a great general who was not ambitious;

whether, indeed, such a figure is conceivable [emphasis added].⁴

In 1945 a Colonel Batson introduced the idea of career opportunities for nonrated officers in the Air Force.⁵ He not only advocated career development for these officers but further said:

Unless the Air Force gets down to the organization, classification, assignment and educational set-up that will provide a career objective, the effectiveness of the Air Forces in the future security of the Nation will be limited.⁶

Clearly, the direction was there. The Air Force, at the highest levels, felt it mandatory to develop career objectives (i.e., advancement opportunities). Letting officers know what it took to get ahead was important in the early years of the Air Force.

Over the past 35 years, the military services have described the necessary requirements for the advancement of military officers. In fact, specific steps were defined to increase an officer's chances for promotion.⁷ Such explicit guidelines for successful careers must have been accepted, even encouraged, or they would not have been so openly enunciated.

Another variant on the theme of career planning for advancement is career patterning. This concept advocates that officers pattern their careers after officers who have been successful (usually general officers).⁸ Patterning is defined as acceptable behavior.

In 1987 Gen Ralph E. Havens compared careerism with officership and admitted that moving away from a "careerist" attitude (toward officership) will be difficult but, "I'm not going to imply that we should throw the baby out with the bathwater."⁹ He further explained that certain squares (requirements) must be filled for officers to advance within the Air Force. The implication here, again, is that the how and when of meeting requirements (and not which requirements) are the important concepts. Thus, the premise of the careerism continuum is consistent with General Havens's characterization.

Some authors have written about the gray area (or boundary) that lies between acceptable careerism and hypercareerism. The Army's Study on Military Professionalism talks about striving for personal success within bounds as

acceptable behavior; however, "uninhibited and unethical adventurism for personal gain" is unacceptable behavior.¹⁰

Sam C. Sarkesian stated in 1975 that for officers to succeed they must capitalize on their relationships with their superiors. He advised that officers must "be politically astute and seek out the centers of power and manipulate them."¹¹ Sarkesian noted that the aim of the game for officers is to get promoted but admitted that "such a promotion system makes it difficult to distinguish healthy competition from cutthroat career-climbing."¹² In 1981 Chaplain (Col) Samuel D. Maloney stipulated that it is proper for military professionals to be concerned about their careers and, further, that achievement is highly valued by officers but "a fine line, however, separates valid concern of one's success in the military from excessive, unhealthy careerism."¹³

Hypercareerism

The last area of the careerism continuum is hypercareerism. Some concepts that have been associated with this area are "obsessive careerism," "extreme careerism," "ticket punching," and others. These concepts are described next.

Maj Edward K. Lawson called this hypercareerism phenomenon the "career syndrome," or the requirement for officers to do well at each successive level in order to get promoted.¹⁴ He said that Army officers have become victimized by the advancement (i.e., promotion) system which promotes this "career syndrome" instead of enhancing professionalism. Additionally, Richard A. Gabriel and Paul L. Savage reported that Army troops believed that one purpose of the rotation policy for officers in Vietnam was career advancement. Army officers needed to get their combat command time (ticket punched) in order to remain competitive for promotion.¹⁵ Gabriel and Savage also indicated that "obsessive careerism" still exists (in 1978) in the Army.¹⁶ The notion expressed here is careerism taken to an extreme.

Lt Comdr R. W. Atkins stated that careerism implies putting "personal promotion within an organization ahead of other values and moral responsibilities."¹⁷ Thus, another facet of hypercareerism is one placing promotion ahead of all other considerations.

James Fallows defined careerism as "the desire to have rank rather than to use it."¹⁸ Fallows described an

attitude which forms part of the hypercareerism mosaic-- seeking rank for the wrong reason.

Lt Col G. E. Secrist discussed defective leadership within the Air Force, which includes an attitude of "excessive concern for self-enhancement" and careerism so extreme that promotion has become the primary objective.¹⁹ Secrist's focus also is on the excesses of careerism within the Air Force officer corps.

Maj Andrew M. Gessner said that a careerist is an officer whose motivation is self over service.²⁰ Thus, being able to discern an officer's "true" motivation for given behaviors (e.g., seeking certain assignments) would enable one to place that behavior more accurately in (or out of) the hypercareerism area.

In a 1987 message Gen Duane H. Cassidy, commander in chief of Military Airlift Command, discussed the need for officers to be active in their careers (acceptable careerism) but not to place personal career goals ahead of the Air Force (hypercareerism).²¹ This statement reveals another differentiation between the two areas.

In summary, one would have to label hypocareerism as unprofessional behavior. When describing acceptable careerism, the terms professionalism, officership, and institutionalism come to mind. In the hypercareerism area, one thinks of excessive careerism, unprofessional behavior, obsessive careerism, and an extreme concern for one's career.

It is easy to say that careerism is bad and that officers should pursue officership or professionalism, but it is difficult to define those terms and to explain how they are different. The position of this study is that the kind of attitudes held by officers and the degree to which they are held are important. That is why the definitional task is so difficult. The Air Force not only wants officers who want to get ahead but also wants them to constrict their activities to certain acceptable bounds of behavior.

Measurement of Attitudes

The primary focus of this study is on the hypercareerism area of the careerism continuum. Thus the question is: How can one measure the prevalence of hypercareerism? It can be measured by considering two points. First, hypercareerism is defined as an attitude, opinion, or some cognitive state that officers have.

Second, given an attitude, one can assess the prevalence of hypercareerism by estimating the distribution of responses across the careerism continuum.

Figure 2 illustrates three possible distributions of an attitude across the continuum. Distribution A shows an equal (or flat) distribution across all areas with an equal number of officers in each area. Distribution B represents a normal distribution with most officers exhibiting attitudes reflective of acceptable careerism. Distribution C is skewed to the left with most officers exhibiting hypercareeristic attitudes. This last distribution would indicate that a high percentage of officers agree with hypercareeristic statements.

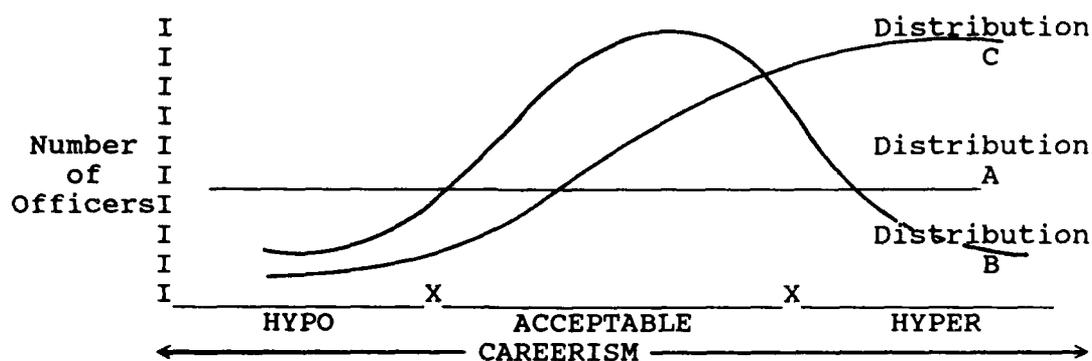


Figure 2. Attitude Distributions.

In 1987 a questionnaire was developed and administered to a representative sample of Air Force officers (see chapter 5 for a detailed explanation). It had several items that were constructed to elicit hypercareeristic responses. By measuring the percentage of officers who agree with the responses to these hypercareeristic items, one can estimate the shape of the distribution and determine the prevalence of hypercareerism among Air Force officers.

In addition to examining hypercareeristic attitudes, a behavioral variable, obtaining an advanced degree, is investigated. By using Air Force officer cohort data, one can determine when officers received their advanced degrees. If the majority of officers obtained their advanced degrees close to the primary promotion zone for major, an argument can be made that these degrees were primarily intended to enhance promotion. It is also readily acknowledged that there are several competing explanations for this behavior but, certainly, hypercareerism is a predominant one.

A Linking Model

Remember that hypercareerism is an attitude, opinion, or some cognitive state that officers have. This mental state or condition can be viewed as causing (or leading to) certain behaviors that can be classified as hyper-careeristic. Another interpretation of this condition is that attitudes and behaviors occur somewhat simultaneously and, therefore, the causal relationships are interrelated. A final possibility is that behaviors lead to a change in attitudes. Because of the numerous potential causative factors leading to a specific behavior, a hyper-careeristic attitude as a specific cause is very difficult to isolate and measure.

A third variable of interest is an outcome that usually occurs at some organizational level. These outcomes are interrelated with both attitudes and behaviors and are depicted in a heuristic (trial-and-error learning) model as shown in figure 3.

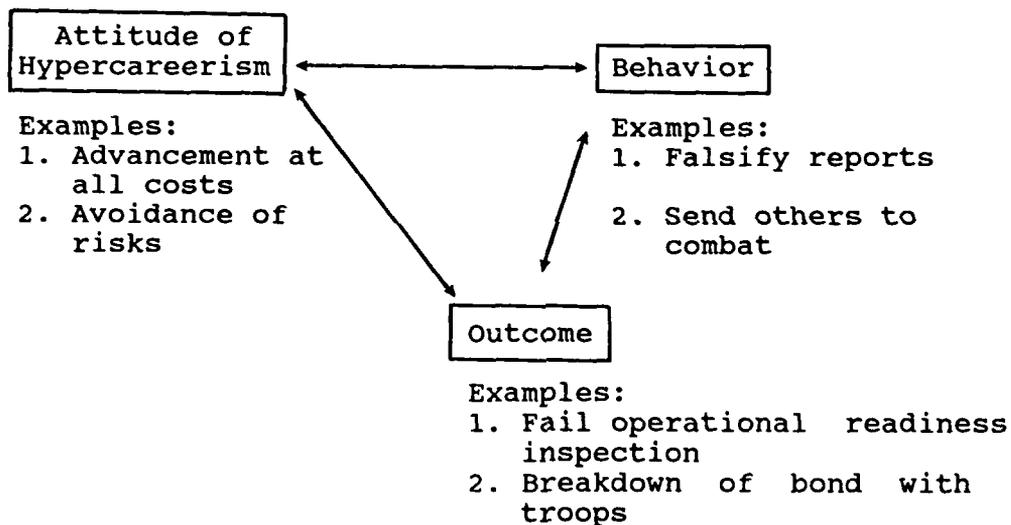


Figure 3. A Linking Model with Examples.

Some examples of behavioral and outcome variables associated with hypercareerism (as defined in this study) are provided above. As figure 3 illustrates, an attitude of hypercareerism (advancement at all costs) can lead to a hypercareeristic behavior (falsifying readiness reports) which, in turn, can lead to a negative outcome (failing--or even passing--an operational readiness inspection). One can

also see the relationship of these three variables to each other (the dual directionality between variable sets).

Several examples of negative behaviors and outcomes are presented from the literature to illustrate why hyper-careerism is bad for the military. In The War Managers, Douglas Kinnard revealed that careerism in the officer corps led to false reports on body counts of the Vietcong and to a lack of consideration for the enlisted troops.²² Additionally, Gabriel and Savage identified some hazards of (hyper)careerism among Army officers during the Vietnam War: officers destroyed their units' cohesion; officers "block[ed], dilute[d], distort[ed] almost any data that might affect personal performance ratings"; officers sought isolation from combat risks; officers failed to question policies and practices which they knew did not work; and officers failed to differ with superiors even when their bosses' positions might be wrong.²³ Also, James Fallows described the outcome of (hyper)careeristic behavior as the deterioration of the bond between officers and soldiers, relying on rank to command rather than building trust by example, and "ticket punching"--getting the right schooling and the right positions for promotion.²⁴

Hypercareerism also exists in private industry. Morgan W. McCall, Jr., and Michael M. Lombardo listed reasons for executive derailment (or moving off the "fast track") which include being overly ambitious, playing politics, thinking about the next job, and spending too much time trying to please upper management (and not enough time doing a good job).²⁵ Lombardo further said that corporate profiles are different, and the behaviors valued by the organization relate directly to the demands facing those organizations.²⁶ Similarly, this theme has some utility in understanding officer behaviors. Namely, the Air Force values careerism and rewards it, which further encourages hypercareerism (or pushes the officer into the area of unacceptability).

Lt Col Roger A. Wrolstad examined several effects of careerism (hypercareerism for this study). Four effects are specifically addressed. First, cronyism develops and is evidenced by networks, favoritism, sycophancy, and an unwillingness to alienate a potentially powerful person. Second, superficiality becomes the norm and is illustrated by knowing the right jargon and working primarily to please the boss. Personal aggrandizement is another manifestation. Initiatives are evaluated based on visibility and ceremonies become more garish. Selective accountability is a final effect mentioned by Wrolstad. Here, individuals collect "silver bullets" (which are instances of first aid or cover-ups for superiors or other cronies in the network) to

use when they need protection from their infractions.²⁷ Clearly, Wrolstad has identified ways many officers "play the game" instead of devoting their attention to duty.

Woody West, in a 1987 article about the "new" Marine Corps ethic (i.e., under Gen A. M. Gray), described certain behaviors as being associated with (hyper)careerism: obtaining advanced degrees, attending prestigious war colleges, being a Pentagon briefer, and having diplomatic poise and bureaucratic finesse.²⁸ West admitted that these behaviors could also be used to describe acceptable careerism. However, he said they should never be a substitute for combat capabilities but, rather, a possible addition. West's article exemplifies the difficulty (and potential danger) of focusing solely on behaviors to define hypercareerism.

In reexamining the linking model (fig. 3), one realizes that there are connections among the three variables. Obviously, if one knows the strength and direction of the linkages, one can get a better understanding of the effects of hypercareerism. Such an investigation is beyond the scope of this research, but some evidence shows that there are negative behaviors and outcomes associated with hypercareerism that are important to the military services.

Before determining the prevalence of hypercareerism within the officer corps of the Air Force, one must review its many possible causes. Certainly hypercareerism did not appear mysteriously among officers. There must be some reasons for its existence. The purpose of chapter 4 is to discuss these reasons.

Notes

1. Webster's II New Riverside University Dictionary, 1984 ed., s.v. "careerism."

2. Col Judson H. Bell and Lt Col Samuel M. Wilson, "Assignment: Study, Goal: Professionalism," Marine Corps Gazette 53 (March 1969): 34.

3. Gen Larry Welch, chief of staff, Headquarters USAF, remarks to assignment officers, Air Force Military Personnel Center, 13 August 1987. Minutes were compiled by Col Robert Casey (HQ USAF/DPXA), 1.

4. Carl von Clausewitz, On War, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984), 105. The idea to use this quote was provided by Lt Col Jeffrey C. Benton, AUCADRE/RID, Maxwell AFB, Ala.

5. Memorandum by Colonel Batson to chief of Air Staff, subject: A Career for Non-Rated Officers in the Air Forces Regular Establishment, 31 October 1945, 1.

6. Ibid., 2.

7. See, for example, "Career Management and Your Future, Rotation of Assignments," Combat Forces Journal 4 (October 1953): 47; "Career Planning Must Be Individual, Continual Process," Air Force Times, 19 January 1957, 9; Ed Gates, "You Must Play a Game According to the Rules," Air Force Times, 9 March 1963, 5; Ed Gates, "For the Fastest Route, Check the Timetables," Air Force Times, 20 March 1963, 5; Ed Gates, "Hike Boards No Mystery; This Is How They Operate," Air Force Times, 27 March 1963, 5; Ed Gates, "For Successful Careerists, Permanent Hikes a Must," Air Force Times, 3 April 1963, 5; Ed Gates, "In the Air Force It Pays to Reach for the Stars," Air Force Times, 10 April 1963, 5; Lt Col J. M. Lerond, "Your Career Formula, Part I," Marine Corps Gazette 48 (April 1964): 18-23; Lt Col J. M. Lerond, "Your Career Formula, Part II," Marine Corps Gazette 48 (May 1964): 45-49; Lt Col J. M. Lerond, "Your Career Formula, Conclusion," Marine Corps Gazette 48 (June 1964): 41-44.

8. See, for example, Capt John J. Beishke, Jr., and Capt James R. Lipsey, "Career Progression to General Officer in the United States Air Force" (Master's thesis, Air Force Institute of Technology, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, September 1977), 89; Lt Comdr Robert M. Ancell, "The Path to Four Stars," Proceedings 107 (January 1981): 47.

9. Maj Gen Ralph E. Havens, "Careerism vs Officership," USAF Officers' Newsletter 20, no. 2 (October 1987): 1.

10. US Army War College, Study on Military Professionalism, Carlisle Barracks, Pa., 1970, 23.

11. Sam C. Sarkesian, The Professional Army Officer in a Changing Society (Chicago: Nelson-Hall Publishers, 1975), 75.

12. Ibid., 76.

13. Chaplain (Col) Samuel D. Maloney, "Ethics Theory for the Military Professional," Air University Review 32, no. 3 (March-April 1981): 68.
14. Maj Edward K. Lawson III, "Careerism vs Professionalism in the U.S. Army Officer Corps" (Unpublished paper, Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Ala., May 1973), 4.
15. Richard A. Gabriel and Paul L. Savage, Crisis in Command (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978), 72.
16. Ibid., 140.
17. Lt Comdr R. W. Atkins, "Careerism--An End Unto Itself" (Unpublished paper, Ethics and Moral Philosophy Course, College of Naval Command and Staff, Naval War College, Newport, R.I., December 1978), 1.
18. James Fallows, National Defense (New York: Random House, 1981), 114.
19. Lt Col G. E. Secrist, "Defective Leadership: America's Greatest Peril," Air University Review 34, no. 6 (September-October 1983): 13.
20. Maj Andrew M. Gessner, "Career Planning for MAC Pilots--Fact or Fantasy?" Report 86-0980 (Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air Command and Staff College, 1986), 1.
21. SSgt Mark E. Johnson, "CINCMAC Tape Focuses on Officer Corps," News Service (Scott AFB, Ill.: Headquarters Military Airlift Command, Office of Public Affairs, 4 September 1987), 2.
22. Douglas Kinnard, The War Managers (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1977), 111.
23. Gabriel and Savage. Each negative behavior is found on pages 60, 61, 68, 115, and 141 respectively.
24. Fallows, 116.
25. Morgan W. McCall, Jr., and Michael M. Lombardo, "Off the Track: Why and How Successful Executives Get Derailed," Technical Report 21 (Greensboro, N.C.: Center for Creative Leadership, January 1983), 6-7.
26. Michael M. Lombardo, "Values in Action: The Meaning of Executive Vignettes," Technical Report 28 (Greensboro, N.C.: Center for Creative Leadership, November 1986), 17.

27. Lt Col Roger A. Wrolstad, "Careerism and Military Reforms," Marine Corps Gazette, August 1986. All of the effects were drawn from page 26.

28. Woody West, "The Marines Get Back to Basics," The Washington Times, 7 September 1987, 64.

CHAPTER 4

CAUSES OF HYPERCAREERISM

What causes hypercareerism? Because of the complex nature of this phenomenon, it is unlikely that it can be attributed to a single cause. Rather, there are probably several interacting causes that create hypercareerism. In addition, because the phenomenon occurs over time, there are likely to be changes in the importance of these causes within the officer corps and among year groups (or cohorts).

Nevertheless, some recurring themes or groups of causes are evident. In this chapter I discuss the following groups of causes: American society, the military system, characteristics of officers as individuals, and other contributing causes that do not quite fit a particular category. And in the summary I highlight the most prominent causal patterns.

American Society

The causative forces that emanate from American society are difficult to pinpoint. Thus, the link between those causes and hypercareerism is hard to establish. Whether this linkage problem and other factors (e.g., military socialization and performance requirements) confound our ability to "tease out" these societal determinants remains an unanswered question. However, three predominant factors emerge.

The first factor is the use of societal values for an external confirmation of an officer's worth. The Army's Study on Military Professionalism showed that the changing value system in society affects the military. Characteristics such as high levels of competition for promotion and being consumed with an image of personal success are frequently found within all sectors of our society.¹ However, the study implied that American society does not seem to be a primary cause of unprofessional behavior (i.e., hypercareerism). In his 1980 study on Air Force officers, Frank R. Wood reported that an indication of increasing acceptance of civilian values is the growing use of salary as a comparison of job importance.² Also, Col John J. Grace posited that the officer corps is accepting some of the civilian measures of success (e.g., advanced academic degrees) and cheapening the awards system (rewards become commensurate with rank).³ The point that Colonel Grace made is that civilianization of the military officer corps encourages hypercareerism. Lt Col Roger A. Wrolstad stated

that one of the causes of (hyper)careerism is today's "modern materialistic society [which] requires explicit evidence of success."⁴ Colonel Wrolstad believed that careerists value rank for the privileges and rewards it brings. In other words, success is measured by the materialistic trappings that are attained only through increased rank.

A second societal factor is the increasing role conflict between today's officer and spouse and the traditional officer and spouse. Capt James H. Slagle provided some insight into this problem. He said the increasing role of the working spouse counterbalances the traditional role of the military member.⁵ The thought here is that forces within society create a new and different milieu in which old behaviors may not fit. George C. Wilson quoted Army Chief of Staff Gen E. C. Meyer as saying, "The biggest change in the value system is the working wives. I really don't see the near-term solution to that."⁶ Again, the recurring idea is that societal changes (i.e., changing role of women) affect the values and behaviors of military officers.

Sam C. Sarkesian discussed the third societal factor. He argued that there is a divergence between military and civilian-values on military issues.⁷ Sarkesian said that military personnel perceive society as having a negative opinion of the military. His position was that if officers feel society frowns on warfighting skills, they will develop "civilian-style" skills and pursue careeristic behaviors to blunt society's negative reactions. However, because of the date of this article (1978)--when society's feelings toward the military were very negative--his argument now is much less powerful.

Military System

By far the greatest cause of hypercareerism is the military system. This situation is both bad and good. It is bad because the military itself is to blame for the existence of hypercareerism. On the positive side, because the system is largely under the control of the military, it can heal itself. Most certainly, this problem is easier to identify than to solve. In examining this cause of hypercareerism I discuss seven contributing factors; the recruiting process, socialization process, performance requirements, evaluation system, reward structure, force structure, and the total environment.

Recruiting Process

This factor involves the impact of the all-volunteer force on the military. Maj Gen Robert N. Ginsburgh wrote that the conflict between the ethic of the average citizen (society) and the military professional ethic has been perpetuated by the need to attract large numbers of people into a voluntary force.⁸ The essence of Ginsburgh's position was that there is a breakdown of the traditional military ethic due to a large influx of "uninitiated" members, or military members who are insufficiently socialized. Lt Col Donald R. Baucom commented that the all-volunteer force is destroying the military profession from the bottom, while budgetary pressures and governmental policies are wearing away the professional ethic from the top.⁹ He further stated that officers in the support services are the ones being rewarded (receiving promotions) rather than those with warrior talent. Therefore, to the extent that recruiting practices tend to seek individuals who are being internally rewarded, the system is perpetuated. Additionally, James Fallows reported that the volunteer Army has "civilianized" the soldier and has created an Army of the poor.¹⁰ He stated that the new soldier's duties are similar to those of workers in private industry. One could assume that this similarity was used in attracting Army candidates. However, it is difficult to speculate on the importance of social class (i.e., being poor) in contributing to hypercareeristic tendencies.

Roger A. Beaumont offered a minor point about recruiting practices and hypercareerism. Basically, he noted that the effects of (hyper)careerism stem from leadership selection of officer candidates at service entry points.¹¹ His argument contended that future leaders should be selected based on their potential combat effectiveness. However, the services need to ensure that proper selection criteria are used.

Socialization Process

The socialization process in the military is another factor contributing to hypercareerism. On this subject there are two main themes: what socialization needs to stress, and what socialization needs to diminish. The initial discussion focuses on what areas should be stressed to appropriately socialize military officers.

One primary socialization area to be stressed is a concern for others. An Army captain said it best: "Too many officers place the value of a high OER [officer

effectiveness report] over the welfare of their men."¹² Chief of Naval Operations Adm James D. Watkins, in an address to the 1984 graduating class of midshipmen at Annapolis, said that the challenge of leadership is to be concerned first for others and not for yourself.¹³ Although it is unclear whether Admiral Watkins believed that the Naval Academy was teaching this tenet, it is clear that he felt it was the challenge to new naval officers. In 1987 Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen Alfred M. Gray repeated Admiral Watkins's leadership theme: Think more about others than yourself.¹⁴ General Gray believed that more professionalism is needed and less (hyper)careerism. In fact, he advocated lifelong learning about the military profession. General Gray would probably support an adjunct: lifelong concern for socialization.

Another area that should be stressed is a concern for the needs of the services. In 1983 Maj Roger A. Jacobs reported about a bias in the initial assignment of officers in the Marine Corps Basic School.¹⁵ He said that the best and brightest officers go into the combat arms and the rest go into other occupational areas. Obviously, placement outside of the combat arms could cause many officers to display hypercareeristic behaviors to get ahead. The general problem here is that many occupation-oriented officers may feel the need to control their assignments because the combat arms officers have a head start. Also, General Gray implied that prior socialization of Marine Corps officers led them to seek posts (permanent changes of station) for career enhancement rather than for the good of the corps.¹⁶ To resolve this problem, General Gray declared that future Marine Corps officer assignments would be based on the needs of the service.

The last area of emphasis is on the need for officer comradeship. Edward N. Luttwak, in The Pentagon and the Art of War, proposed that officers regard themselves as members of an elite group.¹⁷ This thinking would then tend to create a bond or camaraderie that would reduce hypercareerism by moderating the me-first attitude. He said, "Where there is no elitism, only individual ambition remains, and corrosive careerism is the usual result."¹⁸ Luttwak believed that officer elitism builds group solidarity.

Some socialization characteristics should be diminished. One in particular is an emphasis on short-term goals. Richard A. Gabriel and Paul L. Savage wrote that (hyper)careerism seeds are planted early in an Army officer's indoctrination. For instance, they reported that the West Point curriculum stresses short-range goals.¹⁹

Test scores are curved so that there will be some failures.²⁰ Here competition is keen and a heavy personal investment is made for class standing. In effect, the up-or-out syndrome is taught and reinforced by cadet instructors.²¹ Additionally, in his review of Maureen Mylander's book The Generals, Maj William M. Dollar wrote that Mylander painted the professional Army officer as addicted to promotion.²² Like Gabriel and Savage, Mylander believed this character is instilled at West Point and reinforced by officer role models and by professional military education throughout an officer's career.²³ Mylander's portrayal of officers was a biting indictment of the Army's socialization process. James Fallows echoed these remarks by reporting that "careerism may be observed, in embryo, at the service academies."²⁴ In essence, these authors felt that ambition is ingrained as the only acceptable behavior and that the roots of hypercareerism are formed at the academies.

Another socialization characteristic that should be diminished is military publicity on the acceptability of "meism" and competitiveness. In 1970 Maj Nelson L. Marsh wrote, "Career branch [Army] helps those who help themselves."²⁵ This statement in Army magazine definitely encouraged meism (or hypercareerism) among Army officers. As a result, the printing of such material in service periodicals endorsed this behavior as acceptable. The 1970 Army study confirmed the presence of similar attitudes. In 1987 Maj Gen Ralph E. Havens, then commander of the Air Force Military Personnel Center, stated that there are many endemic factors which tend to emphasize (hyper)careeristic behavior. The current USAF Officers' Newsletter (formerly Officers' Career Newsletter) was touted as a prime example of the way official publications can reinforce unacceptable behavior (socialization).²⁶ In recognizing this problem, General Havens changed the emphasis of the newsletter to reflect appropriate attitudes and behavior.

On the subject of competitiveness, Col Russell V. Ritchey espoused that it is the role of the services to encourage competition among its members. After all, he wrote, the ultimate form of competition--war--requires that we win!²⁷ Basically, Colonel Ritchey was correct but one needs to add a rejoinder. Competition should build an effective team that will shoulder the responsibility of winning wars. Competition among members is acceptable within bounds. Thus, it is up to the military to design a socialization process to prescribe those bounds.

Performance Requirements

Four general characteristics of performance requirements lead to hypercareerism: an emphasis on management skills and short-term goals, a lack of emphasis on job performance, a concern for a perfect record, and the lack of freedom to fail. The up-or-out policy is discussed as a causative factor because of its emphasis on meism.

The first performance requirement characteristic contributing to hypercareerism is an emphasis on management skills and short-term performance goals. Maj Forrest E. Waller, Jr., asserted that the military reform advocates believe that military officers have placed so much emphasis on management skills that they consider their successful careers to be the result of good management.²⁸ Major Waller further defined (hyper)careerism as including a focus on short-term performance goals.²⁹ For example, when officers obtain a necessary credential for advancement, they begin pursuing the next credential.

David W. Moore and B. Thomas Trout developed a model that illustrated the decline in importance of performance for officer promotion. They wrote that as officers increase in rank, the importance of performance diminishes in relation to sponsorship, visibility, and service school connections.³⁰ Lt Col Roger A. Wrolstad (in 1986) felt that the prime cause of (hyper)careerism is the lack of a quantifiable measure of productivity in a peacetime environment.³¹ Colonel Wrolstad asserted that an officer's success is based mainly on subjective factors where an illusion of professional competence can be enough. The 1970 Army study reported that pressures to achieve perfection in performance lead to a strain on the ethical fiber of the Army.³² The point is that an officer is placed in a position where hypercareeristic behaviors may be necessary to obtain the perfect record.

Another performance characteristic related to hypercareerism is the lack of freedom to fail. Maj Edward K. Lawson III discussed this component of the (hyper)careerism syndrome.³³ He said that officers may exhibit a wide range of behaviors (some may even be hypercareeristic) so long as officers do not fail. Hence, officers become more motivated by failure avoidance than by performance excellence. Major Lawson also suggested that this same phenomenon exists in the ratings of performance on the OER.³⁴ That is, a bad mark (less than top evaluation) is worse than a good mark is good for an officer's career.

The up-or-out policy also affects performance and contributes to hypercareerism. Two main issues are described. The first main issue is that up or out emphasizes meism. Major Lawson posited that when the measure of an officer's success is a promotion list, there is a continual pressure for upward movement.³⁵ The idea is that up or out defines an officer's success and provides fertile ground for hypercareerism. Gabriel and Savage also believed that the up or out policy is very harmful. They felt that such a policy "requires that professionalism be subordinated to career imperatives."³⁶ Thus, the need to develop a long-term perspective is necessary in countering hypercareerism. Lt Comdr Nicholas J. Schmitt wrote that the up-or-out policy (which is linked to the cohort management system of the officer corps) creates a distorted value system and encourages ticket punching for promotion instead of meeting performance standards.³⁷ In fact, Schmitt asserted that the up-or-out system is harmful both to the officer and the military service.³⁸ Motivation can be diverted from trying to do a good job to trying to get promoted (or, rather, trying not to get passed over). In 1982 Maj Milton W. Price, Jr., directly linked meism (or hypercareerism) with the up-or-out policy.³⁹ Major Price explained that when officers are forced to choose between whether something is good for the Air Force or good for their career, the up-or-out threat pushes them to select their career in order to satisfy basic human needs (e.g., food and security).

The second main issue related to the up-or-out policy is an emphasis on transitoriness. Col Orin C. Patton believed the up-or-out policy could cause an officer to always be transient in the current job with little need to learn that position in depth.⁴⁰ In fact, an argument could be made that an officer's career may be a more stabilizing element than any of the several assignments that occur. This concept could explain why officers might think in terms of their career over their present assignment. James Fallows asserted that one of the most "propulsive forces behind careerism is the policy of 'up or out'."⁴¹ He further said that the emphasis on the up-or-out policy greatly increases the importance of holding the job over doing the job.

Lt Col Robert O. Heavner assessed the up-or-out policy as only one alternative to a strict seniority system for officers. Colonel Heavner suggested that such a costly development program should only apply to a certain number of line officers.⁴² He said that only a small number of command positions need youthful generalists while other

positions require experienced specialists. Thus, the up-or-out concept may not fit the modern military officer corps.

Evaluation System

The military evaluation system is another cause of hypercareerism. Most research in this area shows that hypercareerism is mainly associated with the superior/subordinate relationship. Other contributing factors are the drive for a perfect OER, the cohort rating system, and the lack of officer feedback on performance.

Hypercareerism is encouraged by the superior/subordinate relationship. The 1970 Army study revealed that some officers select getting promoted as their primary goal (are hypercareerists) and that they frequently fool their bosses to achieve that goal.⁴³ Maj Edward K. Lawson III argued that the OER system, which is based on the subordinate's perception of a need to defer to the superior, fosters (hyper)careerism. Officers are rated on how good they look to their superiors.⁴⁴

Within the evaluation context, David W. Moore and B. Thomas Trout discussed the importance of the military officer getting the attention of the superior.⁴⁵ They stated that this visibility is a primary reason officers get promoted. Moore and Trout postulated a visibility theory of promotion in which (without combat-related factors) subjective factors play a major role.⁴⁶ Obviously, the OER is the primary instrument for incorporating these subjective factors. Moore and Trout's characterization of this relationship was convincing evidence that the present evaluation system provides an inviting breeding ground for hypercareerism.

Gabriel and Savage wrote that one factor which reinforces (hyper)careerism is the need for an officer to please the rater.⁴⁷ Given that the OER system centers around subordinates pleasing their superiors, officers are reluctant to upset their bosses because a less than outstanding OER could result. This, of course, could shorten one's career.

Col Theodore Vander Els discussed another problem of the OER system. He criticized (hyper)careerists who tell their superiors what they want to hear (and not what they should hear).⁴⁸ This lack of frankness/openness is one of the main problems with the current OER system. The obvious answer lies in this old adage: "You can't fool all the

people all the time." However, hypercareerism can flourish if an officer fools his superiors most of the time.

Continuing our discussion on the superior/subordinate relationship, Lt Col R. A. Beeler suggested that (hyper)-careerists select their bosses carefully and then avoid making any mistakes.⁴⁹ Because, based on the inflated OER system, one mistake can seriously affect an officer's career.

The evaluation system encourages hypercareerism by placing the power of promotion with the supervisor. William L. Hauser said that the officer's superior has the power to deny future promotion.⁵⁰ This promotional influence is very apparent to all ambitious officers who are striving for success. And, of course, the superior exercises this power at least annually on the OER. The editors of a September 1987 article in the Marine Corps Gazette felt that (hyper)-careerism is probably a product of the merit promotion system which gives superiors control over the careers of their subordinates.⁵¹ They further believed that a group of Marine Corps officers had become very skillful in providing their superiors with what they like to see and hear.

Another hypercareeristic behavior relating to the evaluation system is that the officer allows the OER to become an obsession. Sam C. Sarkesian said, "The scramble for ticketpunching and high efficiency reports may take place at the expense of colleagues, family, and friends."⁵² Obviously, Sarkesian described officers who placed outstanding OERs above all else. Lt Col G. E. Secrist stated that the behaviors required to ensure an outstanding OER and to maintain a promotable image are illustrative of (hyper)-careerism.⁵³ Thus, obtaining that outstanding OER becomes a driving factor for the (hyper)careerist.

Lt Michael J. Reed discussed the officer ethic as he sees it. Lieutenant Reed said that for many officers the job is only a means to an end--advancement. For these (hyper)-careerists, upward mobility is defined in terms of the OER and how to fill it out to their advantage.⁵⁴ That is to say, getting an outstanding OER can greatly boost one's chances for promotion.

Maj Nelson L. Marsh wrote that another facet of the evaluation system is that officers are compared with each other and not necessarily to some standard of performance.⁵⁵ Hence, an understood objective of the hypercareerist is to look better than others in the same cohort.

Gen Larry D. Welch stated that the number one factor in promoting (hyper)careerism is the OER.⁵⁶ He said that since the OER does not provide performance feedback to an officer, the individual seeks other ways to excel (e.g., advanced degrees and professional military education), which can detract from daily job performance.

Reward Structure

The military reward structure is another cause of hypercareerism. Two main factors of the reward structure that contribute to hypercareerism are the system itself and publicity on behaviors that increase one's chances for promotion.

The first factor is that the military reward structure reinforces hypercareeristic behavior. Col Russell V. Ritchey identified many conditions that could cause military officers to deviate from professionalism. One of those 16 conditions is a preoccupation of officers with ways to enhance their opportunity for promotion. Colonel Ritchey said:

If opportunity seems to lie in areas which are not a part of the primary mission of the service, ambitious officers, their professional expertise notwithstanding, may devote themselves to such areas, not because it improves them as military leaders but because it is a means to higher rank.⁵⁷

Clearly, perceptions of what is required for promotion guide these (hyper)careeristic officers. The 1970 Army study showed that the Army reward system encourages uninhibited and unethical behavior in officers (i.e., hypercareerism) by focusing on the accomplishment of short-term, quantifiable, yet trivial tasks.⁵⁸ Additionally, Gabriel and Savage believed that most Army institutions reinforce officer (hyper)careeristic behaviors (e.g., using command positions to attain higher career goals).⁵⁹ That is, the Army's reward system is geared to support hypercareerists. Also, Maj Roger A. Jacobs described a perception that "getting the 'right job' at the right time to establish a highly visible . . . career pattern" increases an officer's chances for promotion.⁶⁰ Thus, rewards are based on maneuvering for the right assignment--another behavior of the hypercareeristic officer.

The second main factor of the reward structure which encourages hypercareerism is the publicity that associates

selected behaviors with rewards (promotions). For instance, Col John P. Lisack presented statistics that showed a strong relationship between higher education and Air Force officer rank.⁶¹ The issue is that attaining an advanced degree can increase an officer's chances for higher rank. And, with a highly competitive group of officers, individuals constantly seek that winning edge. John G. Kester described a recommended behavior for promotion: "In other words, past assignments as well as boards determine promotions, and an officer who can shape his career to contain the right mix of command and staff duties can improve his opportunities."⁶² One can argue that by proposing this type of career shaping, one encourages hypercareerism. Additionally, Lt Col R. A. Beeler emphasized that most officers seek goals which provide rewards. He felt there is little incentive to pursue warfighting skills when advanced degrees and day-to-day performance enhance promotability.⁶³ The point of these comments is that there have been numerous publications that explain and in some cases advocate behaviors other than job performance which can increase an officer's chances for promotion.

Lt Col G. E. Secrist discussed a minor point about the reward structure. He believed the military services reward those officers who display the greatest conformity.⁶⁴ This is another way of saying that hypercareeristic behaviors are rewarded by the system or they would not exist. Thus, the reward structure itself promotes hypercareerism.

Force Structure

The military force structure also advances hypercareerism. Two force structure factors that can lead to hypercareerism are the size of the officer force and the influence of the civilian force on officers.

The key force structure factor contributing to hypercareerism is having too many officers. Gabriel and Savage stated that an increase in officer strength tends to cause a decline in the quality of candidates.⁶⁵ One could further assume (following their logic) that hypercareeristic behavior could become more prevalent because lower quality officers may more often resort to unprofessional actions to be competitive. They also felt that this decline in quality candidates erodes the military system.⁶⁶ Edward N. Luttwak said that a military service with too many officers creates a situation in which more officers compete for fewer key positions.⁶⁷ He further related how turf battles ensue when officers in parallel departments have to compete with each other to advance. Although Luttwak's arguments were persua-

sive, little supporting evidence was presented. However, it is easy to see how hypercareerism might evolve under these conditions.

Another force structure issue is the degree of influence the civilian force has on military officers. The preliminary evidence shows that civilian/military relations could contribute to a climate which would encourage hypercareerism. In 1987 Bill Stacy conducted a survey of Air Force officers at Randolph AFB, Texas, to solicit their opinions of the civilian work force.⁶⁸ Results showed that commitment and dedication were important civilian characteristics, nearly 30 percent believed the civilian work force lacked these qualities. One could speculate that such an environment, in which several civilians are low in commitment and dedication, could influence officer performance and cause hypercareeristic tendencies (focusing upon promotion and not performance) to develop. Admittedly, this causal link is very tenuous.

Total Environment

The total military environment can also lead to hypercareerism. Research revealed that changes in the total environment and characteristics of the total environment both contribute to hypercareerism. The discussion begins with environmental changes occurring in the military.

The first environmental change is the gap between professional ideals and actual officer behavior. Sam C. Sarkesian said institutional demands encourage (hyper)careeristic behavior regardless of the effects on the individual or the institution.⁶⁹ The idea here is that because the institution has established certain reward expectations, officers are inclined to fulfill those expectations in order to advance.

A second environmental change is that the military services have shifted from a corporative to an entrepreneurial perspective and that it is not in an officer's self-interest to risk death for promotion.⁷⁰ Gabriel and Savage explained that (hyper)careerism supports individual rewards, while actions that benefit communal goals support a corporative officer corps.⁷¹

Another environmental change is in the importance of support services. Col Russell V. Ritchey wrote that the domination of specialized studies (e.g., business, communication, and public administration) has caused military officers to deviate from their basic purpose--the study of

war.⁷² Also, he said there has been a drift toward a similarity between civilian and military skills (e.g., manpower, law enforcement, and electrical engineering).⁷³ Roger A. Beaumont believed that since 1953 the large establishment of support services along with the technological requirements in research and development on weapon systems has created an erosion of professionalism within the military officer corps.⁷⁴ And Frank R. Wood showed that there has been a narrowing of professional prestige between occupations requiring warfighting skills (i.e., pilots) and those in support functions.⁷⁵ He reported that flying jobs require less skill than support jobs, which involve management talent. In addition, Wood said this situation is associated with a shift among Air Force officers from an internal to an external (i.e., society) orientation.⁷⁶

Yet another environmental change is erosion of command authority. Maj Gen Robert N. Ginsburgh discussed the progressive erosion over a 30-year period (1946-76) of the commander's authority, of military paternalism, and of an increase in individual rights.⁷⁷ General Ginsburgh said these trends have severely strained military ethics.

A further environmental change is the movement of the military toward specialization. Maj Roger A. Jacobs strongly stated that "the increase of (hyper)careerism in the Marine Corps has been caused by the inevitable and irreversible increase in specialization."⁷⁸ The thought here is that an officer learns a specific skill extremely well without an awareness of (or even concern for) its warfighting implications.

The last environmental change to be discussed is the tendency of officers to view their job as an occupation. Charles C. Moskos, Jr. (probably the "father" of this line of thought), described a trend toward occupationalism in the military services which can promote self-interest (i.e., hypercareerism).⁷⁹ James Fallows said that the most damaging effect of an emphasis on management by the officer corps has been that they view military service like any other occupation.⁸⁰ The implication of this thinking is that officers will devote themselves to career advancement (i.e., hypercareerism).

Two characteristics of the total military environment that cause hypercareerism are the career system and the nature of the job. Sam C. Sarkesian argued that the military system "tends to create a highly competitive profession in which only the most determined, aggressive, and politically astute officers manage to reach the top."⁸¹

Col William L. Hauser emphasized that the key to an officer's success is transitoriness, avoidance of specific expertise, and avoidance of responsibility.⁸² He also stated that the entire military career system creates an atmosphere for (hyper)careerism to flourish. To support his argument, he said that a lack of lateral entry gives no challenge to accepted systemic practices, that officers' careers are characterized by transitoriness (e.g., caused by up or out or early retirement opportunity), and that a tendency exists to rely on "revealed truth" (e.g., mobilization mentality) and to resist change.⁸³

Lt Col Roger A. Wrolstad discussed a second characteristic of the total military environment, the nature of the job. He said that the nature of soldiering provides an optimum environment for (hyper)careerism to thrive (e.g., closed system, resistant to change, and conservative).⁸⁴

Officer Personnel Characteristics

Little information has been written about how officer personnel characteristics contribute to hypercareerism. Two areas that have received some attention involve officer traits and officer values.

Several officer traits are associated with hypercareerism. Sam C. Sarkesian asserted that officers are advanced (i.e., promoted) when they conform to superiors' expectations.⁸⁵ Lt Col G. E. Secrist said a career-first orientation (hypercareerism) is associated with traits such as conformity, risk avoidance, and self-service.⁸⁶ And C. Brooklyn Derr wrote that people whose ego and feelings of success are linked to a promotion every few years will probably feel like failures when those promotions are not made.⁸⁷ Derr believed that there may be certain individuals predisposed to (hyper)careerism. However, the 1970 Army study implied that a climate of (hyper)careerism frustrates young, energetic, idealistic officers by discouraging initiative, innovation, and humility.⁸⁸

Officer values are also associated with hypercareerism. Gabriel and Savage believed that the officer value system is so distorted that careers are most important.⁸⁹ Hence, they stated that (hyper)careerism itself becomes a primary value.⁹⁰ Also, George C. Wilson said that the young military member has a drastically altered value system. Officers are refusing command positions to avoid changes in their wives' careers, to take better-paying civilian jobs, and to avoid dislocation problems associated with a permanent change of station.⁹¹ The point is that officers are

refusing command positions because of reasons associated with self-interest rather than for the good of the military service.

Other Causes

Some other causes of hypercareerism are Department of Defense (DOD) civilian leadership, peacetime environment, political influences on the military, and profiles of military leaders. They are reviewed briefly.

Gabriel and Savage talked about the impact of civilian leadership on the military within DOD. For example, when Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara instituted systems analysis within DOD, Army officers became concerned with career management. Gabriel and Savage asserted that Secretary McNamara "legitimized" management thinking in the early 1960s for the officer corps.⁹²

Another cause of hypercareerism is the peacetime environment. Roger A. Beaumont implied that, in peacetime, a sense of cost consciousness and an avoidance of risk are attributes that the successful careerist employs.⁹³ His logic was that, in peacetime, (hyper)careerist behaviors are emphasized more. Lt Gen Victor H. Krulak also discussed specific behavior that surfaces among officers in peacetime: conformity, risk avoidance, and timidity.⁹⁴ General Krulak further stated that a near perfect OER is required for promotion during peacetime. Clearly, this scenario paints a backdrop for hypercareerism.

Maj Gen Robert N. Ginsburgh depicted a third causal factor. He felt that the military has become increasingly aware of the subordination of military force to political objectives.⁹⁵ With this thinking has come an aura of officers overly concerned with analyzing the impact of military decisions (e.g., budget maneuvers) on potential political reactions. If this thinking should become prevalent, officers could develop a different set of expectations that could detract officers from a concentration on combat skills. Hence, politicalization of the military can contribute to a hypercareeristic atmosphere within the system.

Douglas Kinnard mentioned another causal factor. He said that (hyper)careerism originated in World War II when officers became four- and five-star generals. These leaders taught their subordinates that every square (e.g., staff job, command position, and professional military education requirement) must be filled to get ahead. They also

suggested that officers try to secure the next job up the ladder while in their present job.⁹⁶

Summary of Causes

The causes of hypercareerism fall into four major areas: American society, the military system, officer personnel characteristics, and other contributing causes. The literature supports two factors in American society which could lead to hypercareerism. First, officers may tend to seek an external confirmation of their value from society (e.g., materialistic possessions and the prestige of higher rank) which could create pressures for career advancement. Second, changing value systems and roles of military members (and their spouses) may affect traditional roles and values.

The military system itself, as a second major area, contained the largest number of articles. There were seven factors listed within this area as leading to hypercareerism. The first is that recruiting practices for an all-volunteer force tend to stress the similarities between military and civilian jobs to attract recruits. The second factor is that the socialization process is incorrectly focused. To correct that faulty focus, one should stress a concern for others (not self), a concern for service, and a focus on group solidarity. Additionally, the military should deemphasize short-term goals (taught at the service academies), eliminate the publicity about the acceptability of meism, and discourage unbounded competition. The third factor is that performance requirements can cause hypercareerism by an emphasis on short-term goals and management skills, by a decline in the importance of job performance with a concomitant stress on subjectivity, and by a search for the perfect record. The up-or-out policy also has an impact on hypercareerism by promoting meism and by emphasizing position changes. The fourth factor is the evaluation system. It focuses mainly on the superior/subordinate relationship (subordinate trying to please the superior to get ahead). Other contributive factors include the search for an outstanding OER, the cohort rating standard (relative), and the lack of feedback to officers on job performance. The fifth factor is the reward structure. The system itself reinforces hypercareerism by publishing information about behaviors (other than job performance) that are associated with rewards (i.e., promotions). The sixth factor is force structure. A force structure that includes more officers than positions causes a scramble for key positions, which are believed to be needed for promotion. The seventh factor is the total

environment. Environmental changes and characteristics tend to contribute to hypercareerism. These changes include a gap between ideal and actual behavior, a shift to an entrepreneurial perspective, the growth in importance of support services, the erosion of command authority, an increase in specialization, and a shift toward occupationalism.

The third major cause of hypercareerism is officer personnel characteristics. Officers prone to hypercareerism are usually conformists, risk avoiders, and self-serving individuals. Further, hypercareeristic individuals place their careers as the primary consideration in their lives, and their egos and feelings of success are tied directly to promotions. However, little evidence is available to support these statements.

The fourth major area of hypercareerism is other contributing causes. These other causes include the style of DOD leadership, the peacetime environment, the politicalization of the military, and the career profiles of high-ranking officers.

In reviewing the numerous causes of hypercareerism, one can see that these attitudes and behaviors are most likely the result of several interacting factors. Also, one would have to conclude that the most probable cause of hypercareerism is the military system. Thus, the next question to ask is: How prevalent is hypercareerism among Air Force officers? The answer to this question is the subject of the next chapter.

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CHAPTER 5

HYPERCAREERISTIC ATTITUDES

Many times we (as individuals) want to know how others feel about an issue. The attitudes and opinions of our bosses, peers, and subordinates are important to us. Typically, we perceive attitudes as the thoughts behind the actions. And, in the case of officers, the Air Force is concerned about attitudes that reflect hypercareerism.

In chapter 3 attitudes were described as an integral component of the linking model. I stated that attitudes affect behavior, which, in turn, affect outcomes. Thus, attitudes form the basis of an officer's reality.

This chapter provides some data on officer attitudes. It discusses early attitudinal studies, analyzes two Air Force surveys (1985 and 1987) with items on hypercareerism, and examines Air Force trends. The chapter also includes a summary and general implications section.

Early Studies

The 1970 Army Study on Military Professionalism was a landmark study in the arena of hypercareerism.¹ Although the study itself did not focus on the term hypercareerism, the essence of the findings lay at the core of hypercareerism (as is illustrated by some of the following findings). The study subjects were Army officers from selected professional military schools (including the Army War College). Data collection methods included interviews, seminars, and questionnaires. Most of the study findings were based on 415 questionnaires. A sampling of the findings revealed an unhealthy Army climate--officers placed personal success ahead of the good of the service and were preoccupied with short-term success.² Further, the 1970 study concluded that factors contributing to unethical behavior were an unrealistic demand for perfection, the superior/subordinate evaluation relationship, and the perceived need of officers to meet certain requirements (fill squares) to get ahead.³ The difference between actual standards and what officers considered to be ideal standards (or values) was being condoned by Army policies.

Anthony Wermuth critiqued the 1970 Army study.⁴ His principal criticisms were that the study was based on a small skewed sample, that certain officer traits were characteristic of all professions, and that the study rejected societal trends as a potential cause of officer

difficulties. As Wermuth indicated, the nonrandom, non-representative sample used and the resultant generalizations were probably deviations from good research methodology.

In 1977 Douglas Kinnard conducted a survey of 173 Army generals who had commanded in Vietnam.⁵ Questionnaires were returned by 111 (64-percent response rate), and in-depth interviews were conducted with selected generals from the 111. One of the items on the questionnaire was directed at careerism:

Careerism (i.e., ticket punching, rapid rotation in jobs, etc.) was:

No Problem	9%
Somewhat of a Problem	50%
A Serious Problem	37%
No Answer	4%

Most of the general officers surveyed believed careerism to be a problem.⁶ Kinnard also stated that careerism led to ineffective leadership because leaders put managing their careers ahead of leading their units in Vietnam.⁷

Richard A. Gabriel and Paul L. Savage discussed the Army's 1970 study and a 1971 follow-on study.⁸ The 1971 study, conducted by the Army War College, surveyed 100 West Point cadets, 721 enlisted members, 43 Department of the Army civilians, and 920 Army officers. This study essentially echoed the comments of the 1970 study but emphasized the widespread existence of ethical problems and nonprofessional behavior.

Most of the evidence for the existence of hyper-careerism is based on general statements from service members. In fact, Maj Forrest E. Waller, Jr., believed that military reform's case against the officer corps was mainly supported by anecdotal evidence.⁹ However, Major Waller did admit that (hyper)careerism exists in the officer corps and that senior officers are concerned about this phenomenon.¹⁰ Also, last year, Gen A. M. Gray, the new Marine Corps commandant, stated that (hyper)careerism is prevalent in the Marine officer corps.¹¹

One flaw in these studies and statements about (hyper)-careerism is that they lack appropriate generalizability to the services (or even DOD). Clearly, a more rigorous methodology would have corrected this shortcoming. Additionally, there was only one direct tie to (hyper)-

careerism per se (i.e., Kinnard). Hence, an attitudinal data base upon which to build trends in hypercareerism is lacking.

Nevertheless, the 1985 and 1987 articles imply that hypercareerism has reached a level of unacceptability among senior military leaders. The objective of the following two Air Force studies was to quantify the prevalence of hypercareerism among Air Force officers.

1985 Air Force Computer-Assisted Telephone Interview Prototype Study

The Air Force conducted its first computer-assisted telephone interview (CATI) study in August 1985 with the contract assistance of CONSAD Research Corporation.¹² Briefly, CATI is a technique that is used frequently in the private sector for political polling and market analysis. Structured interviews are displayed on a personal computer monitor so that when the telephone interviewee answers a question, the next one in sequence appears. The 1985 CATI prototype study was a success for the Air Force, and several more studies have been conducted.

Methodology

The 1985 CATI study used a stratified random worldwide sample of Air Force line officers in the grades of second lieutenant to colonel. Table 1 displays the number of Air Force officers within each cell of completed interviews (e.g., 79, 136, 95, and so on). The total sample of completed interviews was 826. For those officers actually reached by telephone (995), the survey completion rate was 83 percent.¹³ Average time per completed interview was 35 minutes.¹⁴ The sample size of 826 is sufficient to support statements with a 95-percent confidence level and a maximum error rate of +2 percent.¹⁵

The nine sample cells were weighted by the actual population cell size so that the percentage of responses on each item scale could be directly generalized to Air Force line officers worldwide. Additionally, the subsample of officers with 6-10 years of commissioned service (YOCs) used weighted percentages to permit accurate generalization to all Air Force line officers worldwide with 6-10 years of commissioned service. This subsample of YOCs includes many officers who are making career decisions about remaining in the Air Force. Also, the 6-10 years of commissioned service criterion nearly matches the group of captains used for the

hypercareerism behavioral variable in chapter 5. The percentages for both groups are weighted percentages.¹⁶

TABLE 1

Sample Distribution for 1985 Air Force
Computer-Assisted Telephone Interview Prototype

<u>Career Grouping</u>	<u>Years of Commissioned Service</u>		
	<u>0-5</u>	<u>6-10</u>	<u>11+</u>
Rated	79	136	95
Nonrated Other	82	85	79
Nonrated Scientific/ Technical	92	89	89

Results

Two items on the 1985 CATI prototype study were selected as indicators of hypercareeristic attitudes because of content. These items were 20 and 25:

20. The Air Force is full of officers who will do whatever is expedient in order to get ahead.

25. There are too many officers who make decisions based on what is good for their personal careers, while it may not be good for the Air Force.¹⁷

Officers were asked to respond using the following scale:

1. Agree Strongly
2. Agree Somewhat
3. Disagree Somewhat
4. Disagree Strongly

Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5 present the item results. Tables 2 and 4 show the distribution of responses for the two items. Tables 3 and 5 display a goodness-of-fit test (chi-square) and an aggregate item response. Goodness-of-fit indicates how closely the actual distributions of data match the expected distributions of data (i.e., normal and even). Given a normal distribution of data as expressed in percentages, the four responses would be:

16%	34%	34%	16%
1	2	3	4
Agree	Agree	Disagree	Disagree
Strongly	Somewhat	Somewhat	Strongly

An even distribution, of course, would be:

25%	25%	25%	25%
1	2	3	4
Agree	Agree	Disagree	Disagree
Strongly	Somewhat	Somewhat	Strongly

Clearly, both the all-officer response set and the 6-10 YOCS set are not distributed evenly (table 2). In fact, the all-officer response set closely approximates the normal distribution, while the 6-10 YOCS officer group is not as close a fit. Inspection of the data in table 2 reveals that the 6-10 YOCS officers' responses are negatively skewed, with 58 percent agreeing that the Air Force is full of officers who will do whatever is expedient to get ahead.

TABLE 2

Item 20 and Percentage of Weighted Responses

<u>Response</u>	<u>All Officers</u>	<u>6-10 YOCS</u>
Agree Strongly	16%	24%
Agree Somewhat	37%	34%
Disagree Somewhat	36%	31%
Disagree Strongly	11%	11%

When testing for goodness-of-fit, a chi-square statistic is used with degrees of freedom (df) of three. If chi-square is equal to or greater than 7.81, the 0.05 level of significance is reached, while a chi-square of equal to or greater than 11.34 signifies a 0.01 level of significance. Therefore, table 3 reveals that item 20 results are not significantly different from the normal distribution for either group. However, responses from all officers and 6-10 YOCS officers are significantly different (at the 0.01 level) from an even distribution.

TABLE 3

Chi-square Test for Item 20

<u>Distribution</u>	<u>All Officers</u>	<u>6-10 YOCS</u>
Normal	1.94	5.82
Even	21.68	12.56

For both the all-officer and 6-10 YOCS groups, the even distribution is not characteristic of the data in item 25 (table 4). The two groups are negatively skewed (6-10 YOCS officers significantly so), with 64 percent of all officers and 69 percent of the 6-10 YOCS officers agreeing that there are too many officers who make decisions based on what is good for their personal careers.

TABLE 4

Item 25 and Percentage of Weighted Responses

<u>Response</u>	<u>All Officers</u>	<u>6-10 YOCS</u>
Agree Strongly	22%	30%
Agree Somewhat	42%	39%
Disagree Somewhat	29%	24%
Disagree Strongly	7%	7%

A review of table 5 results indicates that item 25 responses are significantly different from a normal distribution (at 0.05 level for all officers, 0.01 level for 6-10 YOCS officers). Also, the data distributions for item 25 are significantly different from an even distribution at the 0.01 level for both groups of officers.

TABLE 5

Chi-square Test for Item 25

<u>Distribution</u>	<u>All Officers</u>	<u>6-10 YOCS</u>
Normal	9.93	20.99
Even	25.52	21.84

Recalling the careerism continuum from chapter 3, the evidence from these two survey items supports (item 25 strongly and item 20 slightly) the existence of hyper-careerism. For the 6-10 YOCS group of officers, the prevalence of hypercareerism is higher than for the total group of line officers. Using 50-percent agreement as a normal distribution, 3 to 14 percent more total officers and 8 to 19 percent more 6-10 YOCS officers perceive the existence of hypercareerism. That is, hypercareerism is higher than one would expect it to be normally. The correlation (Pearson correlation coefficient) between items 20 and 25 is 0.44 for all officers and 0.47 for 6-10 YOCS officers. Both items are therefore measuring similar responses.

1987 Air Force Spouse/Leadership Computer-Assisted Telephone Interview Study

The 1987 CATI study also used the new computer-assisted telephone interview technology. It employed a complex sampling scheme to answer specific questions about Air Force members (both officers and enlisted) and their spouses. In addition, there were several questions regarding leadership issues that replicated the 1985 study. Because the 1987 study was approved and in the development stages, specific items were inserted to elicit hypercareeristic responses. The two survey items discussed in the last section were also repeated in the 1987 study.

The telephone interviews were conducted in September through October 1987 with the contractual assistance of Market Facts, Incorporated. Air Force organizations with primary interest in the data were the Analysis Division, Personnel Plans, deputy chief of staff, Personnel (HQ USAF/DPXA); the Human Resources Division, Personnel Programs, deputy chief of staff, Personnel (HQ USAF/DPPH); and Headquarters Military Airlift Command (HQ MAC).

Methodology

A stratified random worldwide sample of Air Force line officers in the grades of second lieutenant to colonel was used for the analysis. The number of Air Force officers within each cell of completed interviews is displayed at table 6. The total sample of completed interviews for officers was 1,414. For those officers reached by telephone, the completion rate was 90 percent with an average time per interview of 33 minutes.¹⁸ The sample size of 1,414 is sufficient to support statements with a 95-percent confidence level and with a maximum error rate of ± 2 percent.¹⁹

TABLE 6

Sample Distribution for 1987 Air Force Spouse/Leadership
Computer-Assisted Telephone Interview Study

<u>Career Grouping</u>	<u>Years of Commissioned Service</u>		
	<u>0-5</u>	<u>6-10</u>	<u>11+</u>
Rated	230	437	244
Nonrated Other	80	79	93
Nonrated Scientific/ Technical	80	80	91

Results

Nine items were used on the 1987 CATI study. The first seven were:

7.b. The Air Force is full of officers who will do whatever is appropriate in order to get ahead.

7.g. There are too many officers who make decisions based on what is good for their personal careers, while it may not be good for the Air Force.

7.n. The main reason most officers make sure that all the squares are filled is to get promoted.

7.o. The most important measure of an officer's success is getting promoted.

7.p. Performing the job is the most important thing an officer can do to get ahead in his/her career.

7.q. From the behaviors I see, most officers put country and service ahead of personal concerns.

7.r. Almost always, the mission can be accomplished within the system.²⁰

Officers were asked to respond using the following scale:

1. Agree Strongly
2. Agree Somewhat
3. Disagree Somewhat
4. Disagree Strongly

Two other related items were as follows:

Now consider the following dilemma. An officer must choose between completing an important project that has low visibility to meet a suspense (deadline) or giving an optional briefing to his boss's boss (two levels up the chain of command).

6.c. Which of the two assignments would you choose?

6.d. Which would most officers choose?²¹

Officers were then asked to respond:

1. Work to Meet Deadline.
2. Give Optional Briefing.

The nine sample cells (table 6) were weighted by the actual population cell size so that the percentage of responses on each item could be directly generalized to line officers worldwide. The subsample of officers with 6-10 YOCS in this study were similarly weighted. The percentages for both groups are therefore weighted percentages.

The chi-square tests for item responses 7b through 7r (table 7) used the same normal and even distribution of percentages as for the 1985 CATI study data. The 1987 response choices for these items were also identical to the 1985 study.

TABLE 7

Percentage of Weighted Responses
for Items 7b-7r

Item by Group	Response			
	Agree Strongly	Agree Somewhat	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Strongly
7b All Officers	20	43	28	8*, ##
7b 6-10 YOCS	23	45	23	8**, ##
7g All Officers	28	43	24	5**, ##
7g 6-10 YOCS	32	44	17	7**, ##
7n All Officers	77	19	3	1**, ##
7n 6-10 YOCS	78	19	2	1**, ##
7o All Officers	21	29	33	16
7o 6-10 YOCS	22	30	31	16
7p All Officers	40	33	20	7**, ##
7p 6-10 YOCS	42	37	14	6**, ##
7q All Officers	16	43	32	9 ##
7q 6-10 YOCS	12	42	36	9 ##
7r All Officers	34	47	15	2**, ##
7r 6-10 YOCS	33	51	13	2**, ##

(All tests use chi-square with 3 degrees of freedom.)

*Significantly different from normal distribution at 0.05 level.

**Significantly different from normal distribution at 0.01 level.

#Significantly different from even distribution at 0.05 level.

##Significantly different from even distribution at 0.01 level.

Table 8 shows the percentage of weighted responses for items 6c and 6d. These questions presented the officers with a scenario containing two choices from two different perspectives.

TABLE 8

Percentage of Weighted Responses
for Items 6c and 6d

<u>Item by Group</u>	<u>Chose Suspense</u>	<u>Response Chose Briefing</u>
6c All Officers	66	34
6c 6-10 YOCS	66	34
6d All Officers	38	62
6d 6-10 YOCS	37	60

The results of the 1987 study are discussed in more detail primarily because there are several more items to examine. In continuing my analysis I describe what the group responses (total officers and 6-10 YOCS officers) are revealing. Then I conduct a factor analysis of the nine items in a statistical attempt to identify patterns of item association using weighted-item responses. Finally, I describe the results of this factor analysis.

Description of Group Responses. Generally, the 6-10 YOCS officers had attitudes that were more extreme than the all-officer group on the seven series (7b-7r) items. Two of these items (7o and 7q), however, were not different from what one would expect from a normal distribution (table 7). Otherwise, officers agreed (63 percent of all officers, 68 percent of 6-10 YOCS officers) that the Air Force is full of officers who will do whatever is appropriate in order to get ahead, while more officers agreed (71 percent of all officers, 76 percent of 6-10 YOCS officers) that there are too many officers who make decisions based on what is good for their personal careers.

The item with the highest percentage of agreement (96 percent of all officers, 97 percent of 6-10 YOCS officers) was the one that stated, "The main reason most officers make sure that all the squares are filled is to get promoted." The item with the next highest level of agreement (81 percent of all officers, 84 percent of 6-10 YOCS officers) was the one that said, "Almost always, the mission can be accomplished within the system." The final item that met with higher than expected agreement was, "Performing the job is the most important thing an officer can do to get ahead in his/her career" (73 percent of all officers, 79 percent of 6-10 YOCS officers).

Results from table 8 revealed that the all-officer group and 6-10 YOCS group responses to items 6c and 6d were virtually identical. While only one-third of each group said that they would choose to brief their boss's boss (high-visibility task), the respondents felt that 60 percent of most officers would choose the briefing over meeting a low-visibility suspense. These officers believed that 60 to 62 percent of all officers would seek visibility over meeting suspenses.

A review of these results indicated some inconsistencies. For instance, how could approximately three-fourths of the officers agree that most officers put their careers ahead of the Air Force (item 7g) and also agree that performing the job is the most important thing in getting ahead? Further, do the two items with nearly normal distributions (7o and 7q) interact in some manner with the other items? Factor analysis can help in answering these questions.

Factor Analysis.* Factor analysis is a statistical technique that examines the correlations among a set of items to determine whether there is any underlying factor structure which explains the variance among those items. Additionally, rotation of those factors to maximize the explanatory power of the item structure is a commonly used technique to group like items.²² Using an eigenvalue of ≥ 0.90 to include factors and an item factor loading of ± 0.5 as a cutoff, the survey items were identified that loaded on the various factors for each group. The all-officer and the 6-10 YOCS groups were factor analyzed separately.

All-Officer Group. For the all-officer group, four factors were identified that explained 61.2 percent of the variance within the data set (consisting of the nine items). Factor 1 is "doing what's best for your career," which includes doing whatever is appropriate in order to get ahead (item 7b), putting personal careers ahead of the Air Force (item 7g), and not putting country and service ahead of personal concerns (item 7q). Factor 2 is "briefing/suspense scenario," which includes items 6c and 6d. Factor 3 is "job/mission performance," which includes performing the job in order to get ahead (item 7p) and accomplishing the mission within the system (item 7r). Factor 4 is "promotion

*This section contains terminology and data from sophisticated statistical techniques which may be foreign to the average reader. For those who wish to skip the technical presentation here, the results are briefly presented in this chapter summary.

issues," which includes the most important measure of success is getting promoted (item 7o). All of the survey items fit neatly within the factor structure except item 7n (table 9). Although item 7n has been associated with factor 4, a nearly equal loading was found on factor 1 (neither, however, was ≥ 0.5).

Basically, the factor structure for the all-officer group is fairly straightforward (except for item 7n, which loads less than the other items on both factors 1 and 4) with understandable item associations. An advantage of this statistical technique (factor analysis) is the examination of all items simultaneously rather than individually.

TABLE 9

Principal Components of Factor Analysis with Varimax
Rotation of Items 6c-7r for All Officers

<u>Item</u>	<u>Factor 1</u>	<u>Factor 2</u>	<u>Factor 3</u>	<u>Factor 4</u>
6c	.000	.847*	-.057	-.085
6d	-.155	.795*	.148	.027
7b	.714*	-.107	-.065	.177
7g	.784*	-.043	-.091	-.043
7n	.482	.025	.000	.460
7o	-.002	-.067	-.033	.896*
7p	-.356	.050	.554*	.091
7q	-.501*	.102	.416	.098
7r	.053	.017	.868*	-.139

Factor 1--doing what's best for your career.

Factor 2--briefing/suspense scenario.

Factor 3--job/mission performance.

Factor 4--promotion issues.

*Items which principally loaded on factor.

The utility of factor analysis is to develop indices of hypercareerism. For the all-officer group, there is support for using items 7b, 7g, -7q (question phrased to elicit a

negative response), 6c, and 6d. In other words, factors 1 and 2 because of their item content and loadings are indicators of hypercareerism.

6-10 Years of Commissioned Service Group. A review of the factor analysis for the 6-10 YOCS group (table 10) reveals an almost identical factor structure with slightly more variance (62.3 percent) being explained. Factor 1 is doing what's best for your career (items 7b, 7g, -7q), factor 2 is briefing/suspense scenario (items 6c and 6d), and factor 3 is job/mission performance (items 7p and 7r). Factor 4 can still be labeled promotion issues, which consists of "the most important measure of success is getting promoted" (7o) and "the main reason squares are filled is to get promoted" (7n).

TABLE 10

Principal Components of Factor Analysis with Varimax
Rotation of Items 6c-7r for Officers with
6-10 Years of Commissioned Service

<u>Item</u>	<u>Factor 1</u>	<u>Factor 2</u>	<u>Factor 3</u>	<u>Factor 4</u>
6c	.149	.834*	-.043	-.117
6d	-.226	.786*	.057	.097
7b	.690*	-.181	.010	.309
7g	.832*	-.006	.002	.068
7n	.254	-.076	-.295	.564*
7o	-.027	.040	.051	.857*
7p	.115	-.062	.727*	-.086
7q	-.683*	-.073	.253	.107
7r	-.020	.068	.754*	-.018

Factor 1--doing what's best for your career.

Factor 2--briefing/suspense scenario.

Factor 3--job/mission performance.

Factor 4--promotion issues.

*Items which principally loaded on factor.

The factor structure for the 6-10 YOCS group is "crisper" than the all-officer group, has higher factor loadings, and uses the complete set of items. However, for measuring hypercareerism, the same final set of items (7b, 7g, -7q, 6c, and 6d) is obtained.

Air Force Trends

A direct comparison of two survey items can be made from the 1985 and 1987 studies. This is because only two items were replicated in both CATI studies:

20 (1985), 7b (1987). The Air Force is full of officers who will do whatever is expedient (appropriate) in order to get ahead.

25 (1985), 7g (1987). There are too many officers who make decisions based on what is good for their personal careers, while it may not be good for the Air Force.²³

Purists in item construction might say that the alteration of the 1985 term expedient to the 1987 term appropriate in the first item makes them different. Technically, they are different. As a result, one could argue that being appropriate makes actions acceptable, while being expedient does not indicate acceptability. However, for the purposes of establishing a trend, they are considered comparable. The language problem is not present in the second item (#25) because the study versions are identical.

For the total group of officers, the percentage of agreement on both of these hypercareeristic items increased from 1985 to 1987. By examining table 11, one can see a 10-percent increase in agreement that the Air Force is full of officers who will do whatever is expedient (appropriate) in order to get ahead. One can also see a 7-percent increase in agreement that officers make decisions for personal careers and not for the good of the Air Force.

TABLE 11

Comparison of 1985 Data on Items 20 and 25
with 1987 Data on Items 7b and 7g for All Officers

<u>Year by Item</u>	<u>Percent Agreeing with Item</u>	<u>Arithmetic Mean*</u>
1985		
20	53	2.429
25	64	2.207
1987		
7b	63	2.278
7g	71	2.083

*Mean--arithmetic average in which survey item responses 1-4 are used for calculation.

If the response categories are transformed to a number system (where 1 = strongly agree, 2 = somewhat agree, 3 = somewhat disagree, and 4 = strongly disagree), the arithmetic mean can be calculated. Both of the means declined from 1985 to 1987 (table 11), which indicates an increasing number of officers who agree with the item statements. When the means are tested for differences (using t-tests), both 1987 item means are significantly different (at < .01 level) from their corresponding 1985 items.

For the 6-10 YOCS officers, the percentage of agreement with both items also increased from 1985 to 1987 (table 12). For the first item, doing whatever is expedient (appropriate) to get ahead, there was a 10-percent increase. The increase on the second item, making decisions primarily for personal careers, was 7 percent.

When the item means for the 6-10 years YOCS group were tested for significance, the 1985 items were not significantly different from their corresponding 1987 items. One explanation for this lack of significance is probably the smaller sample size of this 6-10 YOCS group.

Clearly, for both groups, the items indicate an increasing level of hypercareeristic responses. The increase in just two years was significantly higher for the total group of line officers in the Air Force.

TABLE 12

Comparison of 1985 Data on Items 20 and 25
with 1987 Data on Items 7b and 7g for Officers with
6-10 Years of Commissioned Service

<u>Year by Item</u>	<u>Percent Agreeing with Item</u>	<u>Arithmetic Mean*</u>
1985		
20	58	2.294
25	69	2.078
1987		
7b	68	2.187
7g	76	2.016

*Mean--arithmetic average in which survey item responses 1-4 are used for calculation.

Summary and Implications

Few quantitative studies about (hyper)careerism were available. The Army has probably studied this phenomenon more than any other military service, but the results were difficult to generalize due to sampling problems. Whether the Marine Corps has conducted any systematic examination of (hyper)careerism was not determined. But the senior Marine Corps leadership has stated that (hyper)careerism is a problem. Little information was found about (hyper)-careerism in the Navy literature, and the Air Force is currently studying the problem in depth.

Several statements can be made about hypercareeristic attitudes among Air Force officers. First, most officers agree with the hypercareeristic items, but there are differences between the all-officer group and the 6-10 YOCS group. More 6-10 YOCS officers (than the all-officer group) agree with the hypercareeristic items and their opinions are more extreme. Second, given that most officers do not self-incriminate (e.g., choose to brief the boss's boss) but agree with generalized statements (e.g., say others will brief the boss's boss), the scenario items indicate that most officers (60 percent) would choose high-visibility tasks over routine suspense items.

Factor analysis indicates that the attitudinal topography of hypercareerism is complex. The items which were related to each other could be identified as separate

factors. Factor 1 was doing what's best for your career and composed of items 7b (doing whatever is appropriate in order to get ahead), -7q (not putting country and service ahead of career), and 7g (putting personal career ahead of the Air Force). Factor 2 was briefing/suspense scenario and composed of items 6c and 6d. Factor 3 was job/mission performance and composed of items 7p (performing the job in order to get ahead) and 7r (accomplishing the mission within the system). Factor 4 was promotion issues and composed of items 7o (the most important measure of success is getting promoted) and 7n (the main reason squares are filled is to get promoted). Some items tended to cluster as expected (e.g., putting personal careers ahead of Air Force and country), but others (e.g., promotional issues) stood alone. Although further exploration of these complex attitudinal subtleties is warranted, factors 1 and 2 appear promising as an initial hypercareerism index.

Using 50 percent as the expected value (based on a normal distribution) for hypercareeristic attitudes, the current (1987) data prompt some observations. Eight to 19 percent more of the all-officer group and 18 to 26 percent more 6-10 YOCS officers agree with hypercareeristic statements about Air Force officers. Over the past two years, there has been an increase in hypercareeristic attitudes of 7 to 10 percent for both groups. Thus, not only is there a problem with the level of hypercareerism, but it is also increasing.

Several findings about the 6-10 YOCS group indicate that their attitudes about hypercareerism are greater and stronger than the all-officer group. This observation raises a series of possible causes that are largely speculative in nature. One such possibility is that hypercareerism is actually higher at the 6-10 year period and that the system suppresses these attitudes as the years of commissioned service increase. Or, the up-or-out pressure to get promoted to major abnormally increases the perception of the competitive atmosphere. Another explanation could be that the 6-10 YOCS officers are more cynical than the all-officer group and, therefore, rate the hypercareerism items higher. A final possibility is the group's perception that the system reinforces these attitudes by rewarding those who hold them.

An obvious interpretation of the data presented is that the survey items are accurately measuring the existence of hypercareerism and that the Air Force needs to correct the problem. When officers attend to personal careers at the

expense of service to the Air Force and to their country, destruction of unit teamwork and cohesiveness results, ultimately degrading our warfighting capabilities.

As indicated earlier, the presence of hypercareerism is revealed in officer attitudes and behaviors. In chapter 6 I discuss one behavioral aspect of hypercareerism, pursuing an advanced degree to get promoted.

Notes

1. US Army War College, Study on Military Professionalism, Carlisle Barracks, Pa., 1970.
2. Ibid., 13.
3. Ibid., 24-26.
4. Anthony L. Wermuth, "A Critique of Savage and Gabriel," Armed Forces and Society 3, no. 3 (May 1977): 482.
5. Douglas Kinnard, The War Managers (Hanover, N.J.: University Press of New England, 1977), ix.
6. Ibid., 110.
7. Ibid., 112.
8. Richard A. Gabriel and Paul L. Savage, Crisis in Command (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978), 94.
9. Maj Forrest E. Waller, Jr., "Are Officers Incompetent?" Air University Review 36, no. 6 (September-October 1985): 76.
10. Ibid., 79.
11. Gen A. M. Gray, "29th Commandant Speaks to Corps," Marine Corps Gazette, September 1987, 18.
12. "Development and Evaluation of a Distributed On-line Interviewing (DOLI) Prototype System Uniquely Designed for Air Force Personnel" (Unpublished final report, CONSAD Research Corporation, Pittsburgh, Pa., 20 December 1985).
13. Ibid., 12.
14. Ibid., 17.

15. Based on a standard error of proportion where:

N = population size = 91,834

n = sample size = 826

z = confidence = 1.96 for 95 percent

d = error rate

p = estimate of actual population proportion (set to 0.5 as a conservative estimate)

q = (1-p)

and

$$d = z \sqrt{\frac{pq}{n} \left(\frac{N-n}{N-1} \right)}$$

thus, for the all-officer group, d = 0.017 or error rate \pm 2 percent.

For the 1985 6-10 YOCS officers (where N = 16,639 and n = 310), d = 0.055 or error rate \pm 5.5 percent.

16. All statistical analyses used Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS X) software.

17. "Development and Evaluation of DOLI," appendix 2.

18. Maj Rob Donohue, Analysis Division, Personnel Plans, deputy chief of staff, Personnel (HQ USAF/DPXA), telephone interview with author on 22 February 1988.

19. Where:

N = 89,907

n = 1,414

z = 1.96

d = error rate

p = q = 0.5

and following the formula in note 15, d = 0.013 for the all-officer group.

For the 1987 6-10 YOCS officers (where N = 22,139 and n = 596), d = 0.04 or error rate \pm 4 percent.

20. 1987 Air Force Spouse/Leadership Questionnaire, Market Facts, Inc., 17 September 1987.

21. Ibid.

22. The current data were analyzed using a principal components analysis with a varimax rotation. Factor analysis is a multivariate analysis technique which is explained in most advanced statistics texts such as Joseph F. Hair, Jr., Rolph E. Anderson, Ronald L. Tatham, and Bernie J. Grabowsky, Multivariate Data Analysis (Tulsa, Okla.: Petroleum Publishing Co., 1979).

23. Questionnaire, 17 September 1987.

CHAPTER 6

HYPERCAREERISTIC BEHAVIORAL EXAMPLE--AN ADVANCED DEGREE

One of the rumored requirements or "square fillers" for promotion to field-grade officer in the Air Force is the advanced degree (master's degree). Senior-level leaders encourage officers to pursue an advanced degree because it increases their chances for promotion. The Air Force as an institution values education for officers. In fact, senior officers present arguments that support a direct linkage between education and professionalism.¹ A 1975 Air Force Times article reported that officers with master's degrees are selected for regular commissions almost twice as often as those with only bachelor's degrees.²

The intent of this chapter is to examine one example of hypercareeristic behavior, the pursuit of a master's degree solely for the purpose of increasing an officer's chances for promotion. In order to test this hypercareerism hypothesis, an officer cohort data tape was obtained from the Air Force Military Personnel Center in San Antonio, Texas. The specific hypothesis is that captains would have a higher tendency to obtain a master's degree the closer they got to the primary promotion zone for major.

There are many competing reasons for captains to pursue a master's degree (e.g., obtaining a skill for a job outside the Air Force, seeking increased status and prestige, or taking advantage of particular degree programs). However, if these other reasons were the predominant causes for obtaining a master's degree, one would expect the distribution of degrees across the years from captain to major to be level. A review of the data shows this is not the case. In the following section I explain the methodology used to gather and analyze the data.

Methodology

An officer cohort data tape provided the information used in the analysis. It contained selected data about officers in the Air Force from 1974 to 1987. Variables of interest for testing the stated hypothesis were officer identification number, current grade, date of rank, highest educational level, and educational specialty of highest degree held. The computer sorted the data into appropriate

categories by fiscal year. For example, if an officer completed a master's degree in October 1977, the degree year entered was 1978.

The first step in the analysis process was to create eight officer cohorts (or year groups). Cohorts were used as the basis for stratification because Air Force officers are managed for promotion using this method. The cohorts are listed at table 13. For example, the 1970 cohort became captains (pinned on their rank) from January 1973 through December 1974. Their selection board for major was held in March 1981.

TABLE 13

Air Force Officer Cohorts (1970-77)

<u>Year Group</u>	<u>Attained Captain Rank</u>	<u>Selection Board Date for Major</u>
1970	Jan 73-Dec 74	Mar 81
1971	Jan 75-Dec 75	Jun 82
1972	Jan 76-Dec 76	May 83
1973	Jan 77-Dec 77	May 84
1974	Jan 78-Dec 78	Feb 85
1975	Jan 79-Dec 79	Feb 86
1976	Jan 80-Dec 80	Dec 86
1977	Jan 81-Dec 81	Sep 87

Source: Capt Barbara Hunter, Headquarters USAF/DPXOP, telephone interview with author, 11 January 1988.

Several determinations can be made from the data. By reviewing the number of captains who obtained master's degrees each year (beginning when they became captains and ending when the selection board met), one can determine the proportion of those holding master's degrees. Further, one can determine the increase (or decrease) in the proportion of officers obtaining degrees by comparing changes in the proportions each year. Also, one can compare the educational specialty of those master's degrees by cohort.

Results

The results of the analysis are discussed in groups or clusters of officer cohorts. The data for forming these clusters are presented in tables 14 through 18. Each table provides separate data used for forming unique clusters as described in the following sections: the number of captains with master's degrees, the percentage of cohorts with master's degrees, the biennial percentage increases of captains with master's degrees, and the percentage of captains with master's degrees by cohort and by educational specialty.

Number of Master's Degrees

Table 14 provides the data for this analysis. All of the cohorts show that the number of master's degrees increased every year from six years before the captains were in the primary promotion zone (IPZ) for major until the selection board met. Another interesting finding is that the total number of master's degrees (IPZ column) range from 1,714 to 2,007, a close spread of 293 degrees. No observable data pattern is seen in the total number of degrees by cohort--they rise and fall without any discernible trend.

Two clusters of cohorts appear evident from the data. The first cluster includes the first four cohorts (1970 to 1973). All four of these cohorts have more than 1,000 captains with master's degrees at the six-year before the promotion zone (BPZ) point.³ By the time these cohorts were in the primary zone for promotion (IPZ column), the number of master's degrees had nearly doubled.

The second cluster consists of the last four cohorts (1974 to 1977). In this cluster the number of captains with master's degrees as their highest educational level is noticeably lower than the first cluster. And, although the total number of captains with master's degrees is not markedly higher in the IPZ column, the increase in number of degrees at the six-year BPZ point is much greater. In fact, the number of degrees more than doubles and in one case almost triples (1977 cohort) from the six-year BPZ point to IPZ. Clearly, the second cluster of cohorts got off to a much slower start than the first cluster.

TABLE 14

Number of Captains with Master's Degrees
as Their Highest Educational Level

<u>Cohort</u>	<u>6 Years BPZ</u>	<u>4 Years BPZ</u>	<u>2 Years BPZ</u>	<u>IPZ</u>
1970	1,124	1,302	1,712	1,939
1971	1,028	1,509	1,808	2,007
1972	1,014	1,399	1,660	1,892
1973	1,043	1,365	1,726	1,992
1974	861	1,189	1,638	1,984
1975	828	1,092	1,431	1,714
1976	775	1,131	1,447	1,811
1977	620	1,019	1,350	1,851

Percentage of Cohorts with Master's Degrees

No unique cohort clusters emerge when reviewing the percentages in table 15. In fact, the patterns among the cohorts are remarkably similar. At the six-year BPZ point, all eight cohorts are within 4.6 percentage points (range is 12.3 to 16.9), while, at IPZ, all eight cohorts are within 3.6 percentage points. The largest variation among cohorts is found at the four-year and two-year BPZ points.

The 1977 cohort differs markedly from the others. The percentage of captains in the 1977-year group with master's degrees is the lowest of all the cohorts at the six-year, four-year, and two-year BPZ points. Nevertheless, the percentage of captains with degrees at IPZ (47.0) is close to the average (arithmetic mean = 47.7).

TABLE 15

Percentage of Captains with Master's Degrees
as Their Highest Educational Level

<u>Cohort</u>	<u>6 Years BPZ</u>	<u>4 Years BPZ</u>	<u>2 Years BPZ</u>	<u>IPZ</u>
1970	14.7	23.4	37.7	46.7
1971	14.8	28.0	39.6	49.3
1972	16.9	29.6	38.5	49.1
1973	16.5	27.0	36.5	46.6
1974	13.9	22.5	33.7	45.7
1975	16.5	24.7	35.5	48.4
1976	14.6	23.5	33.8	48.8
1977	12.3	20.6	30.7	47.0

Biennial Percentage Increases in Master's Degrees

Table 16 provides the data for this section. It reveals, for example, that in the 1970 cohort 8.7 percent more captains obtained their master's degrees at the four-year BPZ point than at the six-year BPZ point, 14.3 percent more captains obtained master's degrees at the two-year BPZ point, and 9 percent more captains obtained master's degrees at IPZ.

The cohort data reveal several trends. The data patterns of the last four cohorts (1974 to 1977) appear to be quite similar. They show an increase of approximately 8 percent in the four-year BPZ column which grows until IPZ. The data also indicate that an increasing number of captains are obtaining master's degrees as they approach the primary promotion zone for major. This trend is especially strong for the last two cohorts (1976 and 1977).

TABLE 16

Biennial Percentage Increases of Captains
with Master's Degrees

<u>Cohort</u>	<u>4 Years BPZ</u>	<u>2 Years BPZ</u>	<u>IPZ</u>
1970	8.7	14.3	9.0
1971	13.2	11.6	9.7
1972	12.7	8.9	10.6
1973	10.5	9.5	10.1
1974	8.6	11.2	12.0
1975	8.2	10.8	12.9
1976	8.9	10.3	15.0
1977	8.3	10.1	16.3

The first four cohorts do not reflect any particular trend. The 1970 cohort looks like an inverted "U" with the largest increase in degrees at the two-year BPZ point. The 1971 cohort reflects a downward trend, the 1972 cohort has a "U"-shaped movement of increases, and the 1973 cohort is relatively flat.

The overall data pattern provides other observations. If one examines the cohorts in the IPZ column, one sees a general increase in captains obtaining degrees from 1970 to 1977. Also, more captains in the 1977 cohort waited to obtain their degrees at IPZ than in 1970.

Educational Specialty of Master's Degrees

In reviewing the distribution of master's degrees for the eight cohorts (table 17), one notices some similarities and differences. The four most popular academic specialties among the cohorts are management, business administration, systems management, and public administration. These four degree programs account for an average of 43.3 percent of all master's degrees for the eight cohorts. Other academic specialties (i.e., industrial management, personnel management, education/counseling and guidance, international relations, and human relations) are obtained rather

TABLE 17

Percentage of Captains with Master's Degrees at
Primary Promotion Zone by Cohort and by Specialty*

Academic Specialty Code	Cohort							
	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977
OYKY	8	7	7	6	8	8	8	7
1AJY	17	16	16	18	18	16	16	14
1AKY	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	3
1AMY	3	2	2					
1AOY	4	5	6	4	4	4	4	4
1AYY	11	12	13	12	13	16	12	14
2BCY	2	2	2	2	2	2		2
2BYY	2	2	2					
4VCY						2	3	2
7GCY							2	2
9ECY	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
9EYY							2	
9FBY	4	4	4	3	2			2
9FFB	2	4	3	4	3	3	2	2
9GY Y	6	7	7	7	6	7	6	6

OYKY--systems mgmt	4VCY--aviation technol
1AJY--management	7GCY--health care mgmt
1AKY--industrial mgmt	9ECY--intl relations
1AMY--logistics mgmt	9EYY--political science
1AOY--personnel mgmt	9FBY--psychology/counseling and guidance
1AYY--business admin	9FFB--human relations
2BCY--educ/counseling and guidance	9GY Y--public admin
2BYY--education	

*Only for specialties with $\geq 2\%$ (rounded to nearest whole number).

consistently among the cohorts, averaging 4 percent or less per specialty for any given cohort.

TABLE 18

Percentage Increase in Captains with Master's Degrees from Four Years Before Promotion Zone to Primary Promotion Zone by Cohort and by Specialty*

Academic Specialty Code	Cohort							
	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977
0YKY		2.2	1.8	2.1	1.0	1.6	1.7	3.2
1AJY	4.9	4.3	3.2	1.7			1.4	
1AOY	1.2	1.0				1.0		
1AYY					1.0			
4VCY						2.0	3.0	2.2
9ECY		1.0					1.3	
9GY Y	1.8	1.4					1.0	

0YKY--systems mgmt 4VCY--aviation technol
 1AJY--management 9ECY--intl relations
 1AOY--personnel mgmt 9GY Y--public admin
 1AYY--business admin

*Only for specialties with ≥ 1 percent increases.

What does table 17 tell us about cohort specialty trends? That logistics management and education specialties enjoyed minor popularity with the 1970 to 1972 cohorts but have received less attention by the later cohorts. Aviation technology and health care management specialties are growing in popularity among captains. Time will tell whether these trends will continue.

When focusing on the period from the four-year BPZ point to IPZ, several observations about specialties are evident (table 18). (Note: This is the period when captains have their last opportunity to obtain a master's degree before primary-zone consideration.) Systems management

appears to be the master's degree that is increasingly favored among cohorts as time approaches the IPZ. The master's degree increasingly sought near IPZ among the early cohorts (1970 to 1973) was in management. The newest master's degree program showing increased growth among the 1975 to 1977 cohorts was in aviation technology.

When the cohorts are viewed separately, more information is revealed. For example, the 1976 cohort (as depicted in table 18) had five different specialties of master's degrees which increased, whereas the 1977 cohort had only two. Apparently, the 1976 cohort increased its percentage of master's degrees across a larger variety of specialties than the 1977 cohort.

Inferences

Recently (1974 to 1977 cohorts), captains have shown a greater tendency to obtain master's degrees close to the primary promotion zone to major. This tendency has increased over time to where nearly twice as many captains are receiving master's degrees now at IPZ for major (1987) than in 1981.

The most popular master's degree programs are in business and administration. And the debate continues as to whether these degrees are needed for duty performance.

The advanced degree also creates some problems. Not only does obtaining the degree potentially distract from energies needed on the job, but business and administration areas of study can encourage a drift from military professionalism. This managerial emphasis was cited as a possible cause of hypercareerism in chapter 4.

During the four-year period before primary zone consideration for major, captains increasingly receive master's degrees in systems management and, lately, in aviation technology. Perhaps some reasons for the growth spurt in these two academic specialties are the availability (and ease) of on-base educational programs and perceived peer pressure to pursue an advanced degree.

The evidence presented here illustrates an increase in the level of hypercareeristic behavior among captains when defined as obtaining a master's degree primarily to enhance one's chances for promotion. Obviously, this behavior has been and continues to be reinforced by the military system because it is increasing. Thus, the Air Force must place some value on officers' having an advanced degree (one

could say almost any master's degree) for promotion to major.

Having presented attitudinal and behavioral evidence of the presence of hypercareerism among Air Force officers, the next chapter poses and answers some questions about this problem. It also compares Air Force efforts to combat hypercareerism with concepts for change.

Notes

1. Col John P. Lisack, "The More You Know the Higher You Go," The Airman, June 1963, 20.

2. "Advanced Degrees Top RegAF List," Air Force Times, 21 May 1975, 26.

3. The correct Air Force terminology for BPZ is below the promotion zone. However, for the purposes of this study, BPZ was used to mean before the promotion zone because it is more descriptive and easier to understand.

CHAPTER 7

HYPERCAREERISM: CONCERNS, ACTIONS, AND ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS

While the Air Force has matured over the past 40 years as an organization, new and different challenges have emerged. One of these challenges has been the existence of hypercareerism within the officer corps. An objective of this research was to determine if hypercareerism exists among Air Force officers and its degree of prevalence. Evidence from both attitudinal and behavioral variables indicates hypercareerism's existence. Therefore, the next question becomes whether there is a need for concern about hypercareerism. The remainder of the chapter discusses this need for concern about hypercareerism and the actions the Air Force could take and should take to reduce it.

Should the Air Force Be Concerned about Hypercareerism?

The Air Force Chief of Staff Gen Larry D. Welch recently said that "many professional officers have allowed themselves to become preoccupied with personal career advancement at the expense of performing one's primary Air Force job."¹ General Welch described this phenomenon as excessive careerism. Research, reported in earlier chapters, has shown that not only is hypercareerism present in today's officer corps but it appears to be increasing. Both hypercareeristic attitudes and behavior are growing. Clearly, there is a need for the Air Force to be concerned.

There are also many other reasons why the Air Force should be concerned about hypercareerism, but I will address only three. First, the situation is probably not self-correcting. As was noted in the 1970 Army study, the gap between ideal and actual behavior will not close by itself over time partly because senior leaders are products of the present system.² Second, hypercareerism can destroy leadership. Edward Luttwak, for instance, has cautioned that if (hyper)careerism becomes the general attitude of officers, the very basis of leadership will be destroyed.³ Third, the external (societal) environment may reinforce a "me-first" attitude. For example, the Conference Board has reported that company downsizing creates organizational stress which can cause managers to back away from company loyalty and to move toward professional loyalty.⁴ Similarly, military professionals in a highly competitive atmosphere may shun loyalty to the Air Force in favor of loyalty to their

civilian-oriented skills. Thus, concern about hyper-careerism emanates from inside as well as from outside the Air Force and raises a crucial question: What can the Air Force do about hypercareerism?

What Can the Air Force Do about Hypercareerism?

Many leaders have advocated changes in the military to counter (hyper)careerism. These changes have been organized into three areas: (1) altering the officer effectiveness report, (2) shifting the system for officer personnel management, and (3) modifying officer career development. In the next several sections I discuss these areas and the actions of a special working group to refocus officer professional development in the Air Force.

Alter the Officer Effectiveness Report

As noted in chapter 4, the OER is probably one of the main causes of hypercareerism and several authors have called for its revision.⁵ Lt Col G. E. Secrist, for instance, proposes a closer link between performance and promotion, with performance feedback provided to individual officers.⁶ Roger Beaumont describes another direction for OER development. He suggested a multiple-rating system for performance appraisals that would include peer ratings, subordinate evaluations, assessment center scores, and ratings by superiors. The aim of Beaumont's system is more equitable officer promotions.⁷

Lt Col R. A. Beeler emphasized the need for a totally new performance appraisal system that would promote the best officers within each career specialty.⁸ His system is similar to a corps concept in which each group of career specialties is managed separately. Thus, altering the OER is one way the Air Force could stem hypercareerism's existence.

General Welch recently described the new Air Force OER.⁹ Citing (hyper)careerism as a prime reason for rejection of the old OER, he explained the new officer performance report as having a feedback mechanism, a report on performance, and a recommendation for promotion to the next higher grade. His description of the new evaluation system, which is to be introduced during the fall of 1988, portends hypercareerism's demise.

Change the Officer Personnel Management System

Many components of the officer personnel management system could be modified to deter hypercareerism. Some examples are provided to illustrate this.

One model for changing military values (hence, hyper-careerism) was found that treats the entire bureaucratic system.¹⁰ Richard A. Gabriel describes the model as consisting of overt elite (i.e., senior leadership) support, elite conversion, indoctrination, peer support, perceptions of command interest, functional linking of behavior to career survival, external support, and time. Basically, this is a top-down approach that suggests rewards for those officers who support the new values and removal of those who do not.

Sam C. Sarkesian has said that the military profession has three options as it reassesses the future: (1) perpetuate the traditional concept of professionalism, (2) develop an occupational model, or (3) create a new system that allows for professional individuality and activity.¹¹ Sarkesian supports this last approach. He, unlike Gabriel, would not shift the entire system but would instead create a niche for mavericks and skeptics.

Two other ideas about systemic change conclude this section. First, Col William L. Hauser discusses a three-part transformation in the management system.¹² He feels that the primary objective of the system is to hold the organization together through change. Next, a major reform would be created in the officer career system. And, finally, a redefinition would be made of the organization's sense of purpose. All three parts of Hauser's approach would most likely be conducted simultaneously. Second, Maj Roger Jacobs wants to remove one of the pressures causing hypercareerism by eliminating the up-or-out policy and by asking Congress to lift the limitations on promotions.¹³ However, this major policy shift would be very difficult to accomplish.

Modify Officer Career Development

The career development component is one part of the officer personnel management system. As a result, many authors have also suggested changes in career development procedures to reduce hypercareerism. I describe some of these changes.

Patrick Shepherd suggested that the military increase its dissemination of career development information. He proposed a newsletter for development information, a new career guidebook, publishing information about selection board membership and results, career counseling, an on-line (computer-accessed) system for assignment possibilities, and a new assignment preference form.¹⁴ In Shepherd's opinion more information about careers would enhance officer professional development.

Other ideas for career development modification include the use of older (more experienced) assignment officers to counsel young officers about career fields¹⁵ and a better system of matching officer interests, attitudes, and aptitudes.¹⁶ Sarkesian wrote that some officers choose military careers which will help them in their second careers.¹⁷ In this case, if the skills of these 20-year career officers match the needs of the Air Force, the system could encourage and reward them.

The theme of this career development section is that changes in the way officers' careers are developed can ameliorate hypercareerism. Some recent actions by the Air Force in this area are discussed next.

Implement Actions of the Air Force Officer Professional Development Working Group

In August 1987 General Welch chartered an officer professional development (OPD) working group within the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff/Personnel to examine the entire officer personnel system with a goal toward reducing (hyper)careerism as well as redirecting officer professional development. In January 1988 the group presented 25 recommendations to General Welch. Some recommendations were approved (shown with an asterisk) while others are still under review. (The recommendations are paraphrased below.)¹⁸

1. Standardize precommissioning programs and focus on officership (i.e., curriculum and faculty training).*
2. Conduct a lieutenant-level professional development course at wing level which focuses on officership.
3. Conduct Squadron Officer School (SOS) seven times per year with a five- to seven-year eligibility window. The program should focus on leadership.*

4. Conduct Air Command and Staff College (ACSC) two times per year. The program should focus on command and staff.*

5. Consider all major selectees for ACSC with MAJCOM headquarters nominating attendees and a central board making final selections.*

6. Consider only colonel and colonel selectees for attendance at Air War College (AWC), with no maximum years of service restriction.

7. Remove advanced academic degrees on officer selection for promotion brief until the officer reaches field grade.

8. Educate the officer corps about officer professional development using top-down involvement, making the command chain the key, institutionalizing regulations, and emphasizing long-term sustainment.*

9. Change the focus of AFR 36-23, Officer Career Development, from career development to officer professional development.*

10. Change AF Form 90, Officer Career Objective Statement, to focus on the next assignment only instead of the next three assignments.*

11. Formalize how commanders are involved in OPD.*

12. Change the role of senior officer involvement in assignments from sponsor to counselor with a focus on job performance.*

13. Change the focus of Join Spouse programs from success rates to Air Force needs.*

14. Consider all qualified officers for special selection programs (e.g., education) instead of only volunteers.*

15. Cancel the Air Staff Training (ASTRA) Program.*

16. Enforce existing regulations governing the seven-day option to separate from the Air Force by emphasizing Air Force needs over individual desires.

17. Use deferred (from promotion) lieutenant colonels in meaningful jobs instead of viewing them as "failures."*

18. Establish a one-year active duty service commitment for promotion to captain.*

19. Delink regular commission consideration from the captain selection board.*

20. With indefinite reserve status (IRS), establish a date of separation only through second regular commission consideration, with Air Force needs used to determine those offered IRS to 20 years.*

21. Establish the earliest below the zone consideration for promotion to major at two years.*

22. Change the management of promotions from a year-group system to one based on requirements.

23. Change the Palace Chase program (placing officers separated early from active duty into the Guard or Reserve) to focus on Air Force needs instead of individual desires.*

24. Require separating officers to have a mandatory separation interview with their commander.*

25. Conduct an annual selective early retirement board (SERB).

After reviewing these recommendations, two questions arise. First, is the Air Force on the right track with these recommendations? The answer definitely is yes. The whole system of officer professional development needs to be treated. Second, what other actions should the Air Force take? The next section answers this question.

What Should the Air Force Do to Reduce Hypercareerism?

As mentioned earlier, the Air Force has already adopted many of the working group's recommendations to reduce (hyper)careerism, with other changes under review. To determine if other actions are necessary to combat this problem, I review several organizational concepts for change as a backdrop. Next, I assess how current Air Force efforts match these concepts for change. And, finally, I provide some additional thoughts on how the Air Force should cope with hypercareerism.

Concepts for Change

In this section six concepts for change are briefly reviewed. Basically, these concepts represent a composite from the literature about how organizations (mainly military) should counter hypercareerism. The first step, which has already been taken, is to acknowledge that the problem exists.¹⁹ The next step is to decide how the Air Force should confront the problem.

Controlled Change. When developing officers within the military, a continuous process of socialization (through education and information flow) is important so that they understand the organization's values and culture. The socialization should be continual with control over what and when information is imparted to officers. Karen Gaertner describes the need for career patterns to reflect the dominant values of an organization.²⁰ An ongoing process is necessary because, as Colonel Wrolstad states, (hyper)careerism cannot be cured, only treated.²¹ This is another reason for continuing to monitor how the Air Force changes over time.

Some authors endorse an evolutionary change. Franklin Pinch said the "military should undertake large social, structural, and organizational reforms to accommodate changing patterns . . . within society."²² And Sam Sarkesian wrote that relying on orthodox procedures fosters professional deterioration and that the military must be constantly aware of political and social change.²³ However, General Welch believed that the Air Force does not need revolutionary changes to fix (hyper)careerism.²⁴ (The main thought here is to control an evolutionary change within the Air Force rather than reacting to change.)

Better Communication Flow. It is especially important to cultivate and reinforce good communication between junior and senior officers.²⁵ In fact, some experts feel that the cure for (hyper)careerism (if it can be cured) lies in the complexity of the superior/subordinate relationship.²⁶ Another aspect of this open communication process should be to include standards (and procedures) for counseling subordinates²⁷ which encourage a thorough understanding of the strengths, weaknesses, and motivations of individuals.²⁸ Thus, superiors have a responsibility to engender a positive continuing flow of communication to properly develop subordinates.

Reward/Punishment System Restructuring. The essence of this concept is to ensure that appropriate attitudes, behaviors, and values are rewarded and those that support hypercareerism are punished.²⁹ The reward system should be structured (and officers counseled) so that personal ambitions are kept within acceptable bounds.³⁰ Essentially, rewards (getting promoted) and punishments (not getting promoted) are both part of the same system. Thus, the promotion system needs to reinforce movement away from hypercareerism.

More Than One Career Path. This concept states that more than one career path is needed to success because there is a diversity of skills and abilities among officers.³¹ In fact, Dr David Korten believed that providing multiple opportunities to excel (career paths) encourages risk-taking which is beneficial to the organization.³² Maj Roger Jacobs felt that there should be a two-track career pattern for officers which includes both a combat-related and service-support specialty.³³ The idea is that officers are provided with career opportunities that closely match the skills they bring to the military, reducing their need to "fill squares" to get ahead.

Diversity of Officer Personnel. Not only does the Air Force need to acquire officers with a wide variety of skills, but it also needs "to develop a doctrine of moral protest"³⁴ for use by officers. The diversity of personnel within the officer corps is necessary for individuality and creative thinking.³⁵ The core of this concept is the legitimization of the maverick. The Air Force should not build a system that stifles independent-minded individuals who have a different view of the world. Admittedly, this concept could be taken to the extreme, but a system of rewards and punishments should not arbitrarily discourage these individuals. Logically, they would be one of the first groups to tell the Air Force about hypercareerism's existence.

Research Process. Some experts have recommended an ongoing, programmed research effort on the officer professional value system.³⁶ Although this area is a prime target for budget cuts in times of constrained resources, it would provide an invaluable investment for the future. Also, investigations into organizational values and constructs such as hypercareerism could provide the requisite feedback mechanisms for organizational change. Thus, research is one way the Air Force could evaluate these changes.

How Do Air Force Efforts Compare with Concepts for Change?

As mentioned earlier, current Air Force officer professional development efforts to reduce (hyper)careerism are extensive and far-reaching. However, from a researcher's perspective another question surfaces: How do these efforts compare with what many authors have identified as concepts for change?

In comparing the OPD working group recommendations with the six concepts for change, one can see that their major thrusts are the same. Many of the group recommendations are oriented toward controlled change and a restructuring of the reward/punishment system. Also, some recommendations are aimed at better communication. However, the group did not address multiple career paths, diversity of officer personnel, or ongoing research.

Failure to focus on these last three concepts is problematic, but changes in the first three will provide positive outcomes. In fact, if one had only three choices to make to reduce hypercareerism, the most profitable choices would be in the areas chosen by the OPD working group (when including the new OER).

What can these changes do? Controlling change by a thorough and systematic process of socialization can educate the officer corps in ways of dampening hypercareerism. Restructuring the reward/punishment system with a new OER that emphasizes performance can shape the bounds of acceptable careerism. Commander involvement and counseling of subordinates can improve communication between junior and senior officers. And having more than one career path for success can provide all qualified officers the opportunity to be considered for special selection programs instead of only volunteers.

When all recent Air Force changes (and recommendations) are compared with concepts for change, one can see that three minor concepts were not covered. Nevertheless, these concepts can be addressed with some direct effort. For instance, many different paths can be defined that could lead to successful careers for all career-field specialties. Diversity of officer personnel can be enhanced by programs such as the Airpower Research Institute's Command-Sponsored Research Fellow Program which permits commanders of major commands and deputy chiefs of staff to nominate candidates for professional military education in residence. Ongoing

research can be supported by assigning appropriate Air Staff directors to monitor the prevalence of hypercareerism and to evaluate the effects of recent changes.

The main point of this comparison is to show that the Air Force has taken and can undertake corrective actions to curb hypercareerism. One of the biggest traps, however, is to become complacent after implementing these changes.

Additional Thoughts

From a review of the ideas presented, a few final thoughts are provided. These comments are briefly categorized into five areas: people, officer personnel system, goal of the Air Force, potential problems, and prognosis.

Two points about people need to be made. First, the Air Force as an institution must put concern for people at the top of its list of important issues. Subordinates must receive guidance, counseling, and leadership from their superiors. The reward structure (i.e., promotions) should support this concern for people over careers. Second, mavericks (independent thinkers) must be recognized and accepted within the system. The Air Force needs mavericks to identify new approaches in solving problems. Therefore, our thinking should be, "Every individual is valuable to the organization."

The officer personnel development system is undergoing tremendous change to counter the drift toward hypercareerism. In fairness to stated policy shifts, it appears that the Air Force is headed in the right direction, particularly with the increased emphasis on continuing officer socialization. However, there is always room for innovative personnel policy. For instance, the Air Force could allow certain officers a trial separation from active duty (e.g., women who wished to bear children, those who desired an educational sabbatical) with guaranteed return options at the discretion of the Air Force.

An important goal of the Air Force is to move the officer corps more toward the center of the careerism continuum. The Air Force wants ambitious, competitive officers who maintain an acceptable level of careerism. The aim of the socialization process is to define and teach acceptable career attitudes and behaviors. Given that at least 10 percent more of our officers are displaying hypercareeristic attitudes than normal (that is, 60 percent), a major change in attitudes and behavior is in order. In fact, behaviors are probably faster and easier to control

than attitudes. For example, removal of advanced academic degrees from junior officer promotion folders will most likely discourage captains from obtaining master's degrees in order to get promoted to major. The overall aim of attitudinal and behavioral changes is to emphasize officer performance and to reduce hypercareerism.

As the Air Force moves into a competitive period of constrained resources, the climate for hypercareerism becomes more dangerous. In fact, even if the Air Force is successful in moving toward acceptable careerism levels, a problem still exists in monitoring these levels. Therefore, the OPD working group should establish a monitoring system to evaluate officer attitudes and behavior. To avoid system complacency (i.e., inoculation effect), the OPD working group should establish an ongoing feedback mechanism to measure program effectiveness and to identify new ways to attack the problem. And research may be that proper mechanism. Another potential (though less likely) problem may be a shift to the left of the continuum and into the hypocareerism area. For example, the Pilot Monetary Bonus Program could cause an "airline-pilot syndrome" in which certain officers fly planes because of a concern for money and not the Air Force. Most assuredly, the Air Force will remain in a constant state of controlled tension because many factors affect careerism.

What is the prognosis? Because the most potent and largest number of causes of hypercareerism are found within the military system, the Air Force must heal itself. However, this healing process requires a dedicated effort over a long period of time. Attitude and behavior shifts which contribute to future crises may force our Air Force leadership to reexamine its thinking about careerism because such shifts may be hazardous to the system. Currently, I am only guardedly optimistic about our success in bringing officer attitudes and behaviors about careerism back to an acceptable level.

Notes

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A P P E N D I X

1987 Air Force Spouse/Leadership Questionnaire

AIR FORCE
OFFICER MEMBER VERSION

INTERVIEWER: _____

DATE: _____ TIME BEGAN: _____ AM/PM TIME ENDED: _____ AM/PM

Hello, I'm calling for Headquarters Air Force. May I speak with (TITLE)
(FULL NAME FROM SAMPLE)?

IF RESPONDENT NOT AVAILABLE, ARRANGE GOOD TIME TO CALL AGAIN. BE CAREFUL
ABOUT TIME DIFFERENCES. REASSURE THAT CALL IS "NOT URGENT."

WHEN SPEAKING TO RESPONDENT:

Hello, my name is _____. I'm calling for Headquarters
Air Force. My company, Market Facts, Incorporated, is under contract to
the Air Force to interview members of the Air Force about some important
issues related to leadership and the changing influence of the family on
institutions. Both public and private sector leaders have acknowledged the
changing influence of the family on our institutions. As an institution,
the Air Force is also interested in family issues, especially with respect
to the member's career. The survey control number is USAF SCN _____.

[Should you have any doubts about the official nature of this interview,
please contact your Customer Service Center at your local CBPO
(Consolidated Base Personnel Office), or you may contact Headquarters
United States Air Force at the Pentagon on Autovon 227-3208 or 225-6135.
Collect calls can be made during duty hours, if Autovon is unavailable, to
(202) 697-3208 or (202) 695-6185, the Air Force Personnel Analysis Center.]

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

You have been scientifically selected to participate in an important survey
for the Air Force. Under the Privacy Act, your participation is completely
voluntary and no adverse action can be taken against anyone who chooses not
to participate. The results of these interviews will be converted to
statistical data and no individual's responses will ever be identified.
Your responses are completely confidential.

(IF NOT CONVENIENT OR RESPONDENT WISHES AUTHORIZATION, ARRANGE CALLBACK.)

(IF RESPONDENT AGREES TO PARTICIPATE, GO DIRECTLY TO QUESTIONNAIRE. DO NOT
PAUSE.)

Source: Market Facts, Inc., 1010 Lake Street, Oak Park, Ill. 60301, Job
No. 6863, September 17 version.

1. Let's talk first about leadership in the Air Force . . .

Worst
Possible

Best
Possible

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| a. Please imagine a "ladder of leadership." Let's suppose the ladder has ten steps. The top of the ladder, which is the 10th step, represents the <u>best possible</u> leadership, and the bottom, the first step, represents the <u>worst possible</u> leadership. On which step of this ladder do you feel the Air Force senior leadership stands at the present time? | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| b. On which step would you say the senior leadership stood <u>five years ago</u> ? | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| c. Just as your best guess, on which step do you think the senior leadership will stand <u>five years from now</u> ? | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| d. Now, consider the local leadership at your <u>base or wing</u> . On which step of this ladder do you feel your <u>local leadership</u> stands at the present time? | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| e. And on which step of the ladder do you feel the <u>leadership of your unit</u> stands at the present time? | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |

2. What are the one or two things you believe could be done to improve leadership in the Air Force? (PROBE: What else? Is there anything else?)

3. Do you feel the organization in which you work favors or hinders the development of your own leadership skills?

Favors.....1

Hinders.....2

DO NOT READ No opinion.....3

4. How much opportunity do you have to be a leader in your current assignment--a great deal, quite a bit, some, or not much at all?

A great deal.....1

Quite a bit.....2

Some.....3

Not much at all.....4

5. How prepared do you feel you are to assume a greater leadership role in the Air Force--very prepared, somewhat prepared, not very prepared, or not prepared at all?

Very prepared.....1

Somewhat prepared.....2

Not very prepared.....3

Not prepared at all.....4

6. Now, I'd like to try something different. I'm going to describe two hypothetical officers--call them Smith and Jones. Both are having Officer Effectiveness Reports written. They are both considered solid performers and have accomplished their missions on time and within budget. After I read you both descriptions, please tell me which officer you think will get the better OER. (ROTATE DESCRIPTIONS)

Smith tends to be a risk taker. Smith has made several very significant contributions to the Air Force but occasionally makes mistakes.

Jones tends to play it pretty safe and goes by the book. Jones has never made a big mistake but has made few significant contributions to the Air Force.

a. Which officer do you think will get the better OER (ROTATE)--Smith or Jones?

Smith.....1

Jones.....2

DO NOT READ Can't say/not enough information...3
 No opinion.....4

b. If you were rating the officers, which one would you give the better OER (ROTATE)--Jones or Smith?

Smith.....1

Jones.....2

DO NOT READ Can't say/not enough information...3
 No opinion.....4

c. Now consider the following dilemma. An officer must choose between completing an important project that has low visibility to meet a suspense (deadline) or giving an optional briefing to his boss's boss (two levels up the chain of command). Which of the two assignments would you choose? (RECORD BELOW)

d. What would most officers choose?

	<u>Work to Meet Deadline</u>	<u>Give Optional Briefing</u>
You.....	1	2
Most officers.....	1	2

7. Now, I would like to read you several statements other officers have made. Please tell me, for each one, whether you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly. (RANDOMIZE ORDER OF STATEMENTS)

	<u>Agree Strongly</u>	<u>Agree Somewhat</u>	<u>Disagree Somewhat</u>	<u>Disagree Strongly</u>
a. My future in the Air Force is bright.....	1	2	3	4
b. The Air Force is full of officers who will do whatever is appropriate in order to get ahead.....	1	2	3	4

	<u>Agree</u> <u>Strongly</u>	<u>Agree</u> <u>Somewhat</u>	<u>Disagree</u> <u>Somewhat</u>	<u>Disagree</u> <u>Strongly</u>
c. I could do my job a lot better if those in headquarters would not tie my hands.....	1	2	3	4
d. Many officers in the Air Force fulfill the minimum requirements of their jobs but don't do much beyond that.....	1	2	3	4
e. I expect to be promoted to the next grade.....	1	2	3	4
f. The Air Force is too structured. It seems that I'm expected to act like a robot..	1	2	3	4
g. There are too many officers who make decisions based on what is good for their personal careers, while it may not be good for the Air Force.	1	2	3	4
h. My current job is an excellent step in achieving my full potential in the Air Force....	1	2	3	4
i. My commander doesn't seem to have enough authority to accomplish his/her job.....	1	2	3	4
j. Success in the Air Force can easily be achieved without taking advantage of people....	1	2	3	4
k. I would like more authority and responsibility in my current assignment.....	1	2	3	4
l. It is difficult to be successful in the Air Force without compromising moral principles.....	1	2	3	4
m. I am ready to leave my current job.....	1	2	3	4
n. The main reason most officers make sure that all the squares are filled is to get promoted.	1	2	3	4

	<u>Agree</u> <u>Strongly</u>	<u>Agree</u> <u>Somewhat</u>	<u>Disagree</u> <u>Somewhat</u>	<u>Disagree</u> <u>Strongly</u>
o. The most important measure of an officer's success is getting promoted.....	1	2	3	4
p. Performing the job is the most important thing an officer can do to get ahead in his/her career.....	1	2	3	4
q. From the behaviors I see, most officers put country and service ahead of personal concerns.....	1	2	3	4
r. Almost always, the mission can be accomplished within the system.....	1	2	3	4

8. Now, I'm going to read you some statements that other people have made. Each statement represents a commonly held opinion, and there are no right or wrong answers. You will probably disagree with some items and agree with others. We are interested in the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement. After I read each statement, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree. The scale ranges from one to ten. The more you agree, the higher the number. Of course, you may use any number between one and ten--whichever one best describes your own opinion.

	<u>Disagree</u> <u>Completely</u>					<u>Agree</u> <u>Completely</u>				
a. An insult to your honor should never be forgotten.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
b. People were better off in the old days when everyone knew just how one was expected to act.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
c. What is lacking in the world today is the old kind of friendship that lasted for a lifetime.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
d. Everything changes so quickly these days that I often have trouble deciding which are the right rules to follow.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

	<u>Disagree</u> <u>Completely</u>						<u>Agree</u> <u>Completely</u>			
e. What young people need most of all is strict discipline by their parents.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
f. I often feel that many things our parents stood for are just going to ruin before our very eyes.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
g. One should not depend on other persons or things--the center of life should be found in oneself.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
h. Most people who don't get ahead just don't have enough willpower.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
i. Obedience and respect for authority are the most important things children should learn.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
j. Do whatever you like that's fun, and worry about the future later.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
k. We should all admire a man who starts out bravely on his own.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
l. A group of people that are nearly equal will work a lot better than one where people have bosses and ranks over one another.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
m. Young people sometimes get rebellious ideas, but as they grow up they ought to get over them.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
n. Since no values last forever, the only real values are those that fit the needs of right now.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
o. A few good leaders could make this country better than all the laws and talk.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

	<u>Disagree</u> <u>Completely</u>	<u>Agree</u> <u>Completely</u>
p. Everybody should have what they need; the important things we have belong to all of us.....	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
q. In life a person should, for the most part, "go it alone," working on his own and trying to make his own life.....	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
r. Everyone should have an equal chance and an equal say in most things.....	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
s. You have to respect authority and when you stop respecting authority your life isn't worth much.....	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
t. The solution to almost any human problem should be based on the situation at the time, not on some general idea of right or wrong.....	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	

9. On a scale of 0 to 10, what do you consider your chances of being promoted to the next pay grade? Consider 0 to be no chance and 10 if you are certain you will be promoted.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

10. Also on the same scale of 0 to 10, what do you consider the chances that your next assignment will be to a desirable duty location. Let 0 indicate no chance and 10 indicate certainty that your next assignment will be at a desirable location.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

11. If you received notification that your next assignment was to an undesirable location and you had the option of separating, would you do so?

Yes.....1

No.....2

DON'T READ Don't know.....9

12. Would an assignment which caused frequent family separation due to TDYs cause you to separate?

Yes.....1

No.....2

DON'T READ Don't know.....9

13. Are you currently (READ LIST)

Married.....1

Widowed.....2

Divorced, separated, or.....3

Single (never married).....4

→ (SKIP TO "SUPPORT SYSTEMS" SECTION)

Now I'd like to ask some questions about your spouse.

14. How many years have you been married to your current spouse?

_____ years

15. During how many of your years in the Air Force have you been married to your current spouse?

_____ years

16. How many children under the age of eighteen currently reside with you?

_____ number of children

17. Is your spouse currently on active duty in one of the military Services, including the National Guard or Reserve forces?

Yes.....1 →

No.....2

(SKIP TO QU. 18)

a. Which Service is that?

Air Force.....1

Army.....2

Navy.....3

Marine Corps.....4

Coast Guard.....5

National Guard or Reserves.....6

→ (SKIP TO QU. 18)

b. Is your spouse currently on extended active duty for more than 90 days?

Yes.....1

No.....2

18. What is the highest level of education your spouse has completed?

Less than high school graduate.....1

High school graduate or GED.....2

Some college, but less than
4-year degree.....3

Completed 4-years of college
(BA, BS degree, etc.).....4

Post graduate work/degree.....5

19. Is your spouse currently in school or taking any vocational classes?

Yes.....1

No.....2

20. Is your spouse interested in pursuing a career outside the home?

Yes.....1 → a. Is pursuing a career very important
or only somewhat important to her?

Very important.....1

Somewhat important.....2

No.....2 → (SKIP TO QU. 20b)

b. How satisfied is your spouse with her current opportunities to further her career skills and experience? (READ RESPONSES)

Very satisfied.....1

Partly satisfied.....2

Very dissatisfied.....3

c. Do you favor or oppose spouses of military members being employed outside the home if they want to be?

- Favor.....1
- Oppose.....2
- DON'T READ Mixed/other/depends/don't know.....9

--IF SPOUSE IS ON ACTIVE DUTY IN MILITARY--SEE QU. 17-17c.--SKIP TO QU.24--

21. Is your spouse currently working for pay, self-employed, or neither?
- Working for pay.....1
 - Self-employed.....2
 - Neither.....3 → (SKIP TO QU. 24a)
22. Does your spouse work full-time or part-time?
- Full-time.....1
 - Part-time.....2
23. Which of the following descriptions best describes the work your spouse does? (READ LIST)
- Career position requiring an advanced degree (such as doctor or attorney).....1
 - Manager or administrator (including own business).....2
 - Teacher, registered nurse, technician, analyst (or other position usually requiring a bachelor's degree).....3
 - Craftsman (vocational skills) or artist.....4
 - Sales.....5
 - Clerical.....6
 - Laborer or service job.....7
 - DON'T READ Other.....X

24. What contribution does your spouse's income make to your total family income? (READ RESPONSES)

A major contribution.....1

A moderate contribution.....2

A minor contribution.....3

a. If you were a civilian, do you think your spouse would be working outside the home or not?

Yes.....1

No.....2

Don't know.....9

→ (SKIP TO QU. 24e)

b. If you were a civilian and your wife worked, do you think her income would make a major, moderate, or minor contribution to your total family income?

Major contribution.....1

Moderate contribution.....2

Minor contribution.....3

-----IF "NEITHER" WAS ANSWER TO QU. 21, SKIP TO QU. 24e-----

c. If you were a civilian, do you think your spouse would be (READ RESPONSES)

Earning more than she earns now....1

Earning less.....2

Earning about the same.....3

DON'T READ Don't know.....9

d. If you were a civilian, do you think your spouse would be doing work she enjoys less than her present job, enjoys more than her present job, or wouldn't it matter?

Doing work she enjoys less than her present job.....1

Enjoys more than her present job...2

Wouldn't matter.....3

e. Has your Air Force career affected your spouse's work or career plans positively, negatively, or not much either way?

Positively.....1

Negatively.....2

Not much either way.....3

DON'T READ No career plans.....4

IF SPOUSE NOT CURRENTLY WORKING AND NOT IN MILITARY, ASK QU. 25-27; OTHERS SKIP TO QU. 28

25. Has your spouse been employed at any time after your marriage?

Yes.....1

No.....2

26. What are the reasons why your spouse is not presently working? (MARK ALL THAT APPLY)

Cannot find a (suitable) job, no jobs available.....1

I don't want my spouse to work.....2

Just moved here - hasn't had a chance to look/between jobs.....3

Family or child care reasons.....4

Health reasons.....5

She did not like her last employer, job, work setting.....6

Cannot because of my job, duties as an Air Force officer.....7

Other.....X

27. Is your spouse currently seeking employment?

Yes.....1

No.....2

28. Three years from now, do you think your spouse will be working outside the home (including being self-employed or in the military) or not working?

Working.....1

Not working.....2

Don't know.....9

→ (SKIP TO "SUPPORT SYSTEMS" SECTION)

29. Do you think your spouse will be working full-time or part-time three years from now?

Full-time.....1

Part-time.....2

DON'T READ Don't know.....9

30. Compared to the not being employed, how will your spouse's employment affect your expected years of active military service? Will you stay fewer years, more years, or will your spouse's employment have no effect on your years of active service?

Stay fewer years.....1

Stay more years.....2

No effect.....3

[NOTE: THERE IS NO QU. 31-34 IN THIS VERSION.]

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Now I would like to ask some questions about Air Force member and spouse support systems. By "support systems" I mean both formal and informal activities that range from unit social activities to services such as the Family Services Centers, thrift shop, welcome groups, Red Cross, and wives' clubs. Many of these activities are run by spouses but are usually supported by commanders and supervisors. Do you understand what I mean by the term "support system?" (CLARIFY IF NECESSARY)

35. Have the Air Force member and spouse support systems which you are familiar with helped members, spouses, or the unit?

Yes.....1

No.....2

Don't know.....9

36. For Air Force members and their families, have the support systems...

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
a. Helped in the transitions to new assignment?..	1	2	9
b. Helped friendships develop?.....	1	2	9
c. Helped build morale?.....	1	2	9
d. Helped <u>you personally</u> in any way?.....	1	2	9

38. (ASK ONLY OF COMMANDERS:) Please estimate the percentage of spouses in your organization who are employed outside the home.

_____ %

As I described earlier, Air Force support systems include both formal and informal social and service activities of members and spouses.

39. Does base location or unit mission determine the kinds of support system activities which are provided, or are these activities pretty much the same on all bases?

Base/mission determine.....1

Same on all bases.....2

DON'T READ Don't know.....3

40. Should base location or unit mission determine the kinds of support system activities which are provided, or should they be pretty much the same on all bases?

Base/mission determine.....1

Same on all bases.....2

DON'T READ Don't know.....3

-----IF NOT MARRIED, SKIP TO QU. 44c-----

41. How much does your spouse participate in the following categories of support system activities? (READ ITEMS AND RECORD RESPONSES)

	<u>A great deal</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Not at all</u>
a. Officers' wives club social activities....	1	2	3
b. Officers' wives club service and charitable activities.....	1	2	3
c. Unit social activities.....	1	2	3
d. Formally organized installation programs for recreation.....	1	2	3
e. Formally organized installation programs for helping activities such as the chapel, family counseling, legal assistance, etc..	1	2	3
f. Informal social networks of military members.....	1	2	3
g. (ASK ONLY OF COMMANDERS:) Personal and off-duty assistance provided by the organization commander and his/her spouse.	1	2	3
h. (IF "NOT AT ALL" MARKED FOR QU. 41a-f, [QU. 41a-g FOR COMMANDERS], SKIP TO QU. 41i) Why does your wife participate in spouse support system activities? (MARK ALL THAT APPLY)			

- For personal reward (enjoyment, to help, to meet people, etc.).....1
- Because of pressure to participate (from spouse, other wives, other officers).....2
- To help me get promoted or get a better job.....3
- Other.....4

i. Does the role of the spouse in assisting the military member's career change as the military member takes on new jobs or rises in rank?

Yes.....1 → j. How does it change? (MARK ALL THAT APPLY)

No.....2

DON'T
READ →

Don't know.....9

More social activities
required.....1

More base volunteer work
required.....2

Reduced or no employment
permitted.....3

More personal sacrifices
required.....4

More devotion to member's
career required.....5

Other.....X

42. How important do you think your spouse's participation in spouse support activities is to your Air Force career? Would you say it is (READ RESPONSES)

Essential.....1

Probably helpful.....2

Possibly helpful.....3

or Not important.....4

DON'T READ Don't know.....9

43. What about the careers of other officers you know? Is the participation of their spouses in support activities essential, probably helpful, possibly helpful, or not important to their Air Force careers?

Essential.....1

Probably helpful.....2

Possibly helpful.....3

or Not important.....4

DON'T READ Don't know.....9

a. Should spouses working outside the home be expected to participate as much in support system activities as other spouses?

Yes.....1

No.....2

DON'T READ Depends/other/DK.....3

44. Does your unit or base have a policy about participation in spouse support activities?

Don't know.....1

No.....2

Yes.....3 → a. Is this policy Air Force wide or set by each individual unit or base command?

Air Force-wide.....1

Set by individual base/unit..2

DON'T READ → Don't know.....3

b. On a scale ranging from 1 to 10, to what extent is your spouse expected to participate in support system activities? 1 stands for no expectation that spouses participate, 10 stands for a firm and clear expectation that spouses participate.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Now let's talk a bit about your career plans.

c. What decision have you (and your spouse) made about continuing your Air Force Career? (READ RESPONSES)

Probably continue.....1

Probably not continue.....2

DON'T READ Haven't made decision yet.....3

d. Can you tell me the reasons why you (INSERT RESPONSE FROM QU. 44c)? (PROBE: Can you tell me anything more about that?)

45. If you had to guess, how many more years do you think you will serve in the Air Force before separating or retiring?

_____ years

Don't know.....X

46. What do you think your rank or pay grade will be when you leave?

- 0-1 (2d Lieutenant).....1
- 0-2 (1st Lieutenant).....2
- 0-3 (Captain).....3
- 0-4 (Major).....4
- 0-5 (Lieutenant Colonel).....5
- 0-6 (Colonel).....6
- 0-7 (Brigadier General).....7
- 0-8 (Major General).....8
- 0-9 (Lieutenant General).....9
- 0-10 (General).....0
- Other.....X
- Don't know.....R

-----IF NOT MARRIED, SKIP TO QU. 51-----

50. Who will probably have the most influence on the decision to separate or retire--you or your spouse?

- You.....1
- Your spouse.....2
- DON'T READ Both equally.....3

51. About how long before separating or retiring do you think the decision will be made? (PROBE, IF NECESSARY, BY READING RANGES)

- Less than 6 months.....1
- 6 months to less than 1 year.....2
- 1 year to less than 1-1/2 years....3
- 1-1/2 to less than 2 years.....4
- 2 to less than 3 years.....5
- 3 years or more.....6

HYPOTHETICAL SITUATIONS

Now I'd like to read several scenarios about your next assignments and ask what you think you would do if that situation applied to you. Try to imagine each situation as applying to you, even if it doesn't seem likely to happen. (Remember, your answers are fully confidential.)

54. If you were given a choice to accept a professionally enhancing Air Force position which meant being away from your spouse for one year, would your spouse...

Encourage you to take the position.....1

Encourage you to stay at your present position.....2

Encourage you to separate or retire.....3

Not try to influence the decision.....4

55. If you were given a choice to accept a professionally enhancing position which meant moving your family to an equally desirable location, would your spouse...

Encourage you to take the position.....1

Encourage you to stay at your present position.....2

Encourage you to separate or retire.....3

Not try to influence the decision.....4

56. If you were given a choice to accept a professionally enhancing position which meant moving your family to a less desirable location, would your spouse. . .

Encourage you to take the position.....1

Encourage you to stay at your present position.....2

Encourage you to separate or retire.....3

Not try to influence the decision.....4

57. If you were given a choice to accept a professionally enhancing position which meant your spouse had to participate significantly more in Air Force spouse support activities, would your spouse. . .

Encourage you to take the position.....1

Encourage you to stay at your present position.....2

Encourage you to separate or retire.....3

Not try to influence the decision.....4

58. If you were given a choice to accept a professionally enhancing position which meant your spouse had to quit her job or school to participate more in spouse support activities, would your spouse. . .

Encourage you to take the position.....1

Encourage you to stay at your present position.....2

Encourage you to separate or retire.....3

Not try to influence the decision.....4

Now, on a different topic...

59. Consider for a moment the overall quality of your life. I'd like you to think about a ladder. Let's suppose the top of the ladder, the 10th step, represents the best possible life, and the bottom, the first step, represents the worst possible life. On which step of that ladder do you feel you stand at the present time?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

60. Imagine for a moment that you were a civilian with a comparable job and similar pay. What step on the ladder do you think would represent your life in that situation?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

-----MARRIED RESPONDENTS SKIP TO QU. 70-----

62. Are you a single parent with children residing with you?

Yes.....1

No.....2

63. Have you ever been married?

Yes.....1

No.....2 → (SKIP TO QU. 66)

64. Have you ever been divorced since coming on active duty?

Yes.....1

No.....2 → (SKIP TO QU. 66)

65. To what extent do you feel your serving in the military contributed to your divorce? (READ RESPONSES)

Great extent.....1

Some extent.....2

Small extent.....3

Not at all.....4 → (SKIP TO QU. 66)

a. In what way did military service contribute to your divorce?

66. Does your military service affect your plans for marriage in any way?

Yes.....1

No.....2 → (SKIP TO QU. 67)

a. How does your military service affect your marriage plans?

67. Do you believe that the frequent mobility associated with the military way of life has prevented you from establishing the type of relationship that leads to marriage?

Yes.....1

No.....2

DON'T READ Don't know.....9

68. How do you feel your single status has impacted your assignment, job opportunities, and promotions?

69. Does being single affect your satisfaction with your Air Force job?

Yes.....1

No.....2 -- THANK AND TERMINATE

a. In what way has it affected your job satisfaction?

-----THANK AND TERMINATE-----

70. Would your spouse be willing to participate in a similar survey that deals with employment, support systems, and career decisions?

Don't know.....1]
Yes.....2] → a. May we have a phone number where
she can be reached? _____
No.....3] b. What is the best time to call?
_____]
c. Why not? _____

THANK AND END.

We may not call the spouses of all members in this survey, but please inform your spouse that you have talked with us and given us her phone number.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COOPERATION!