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ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND THE MILITARY

BY

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

Organizational Culture and the Military

by

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The views expressed in this academic research paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or any of its agencies.

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ABSTRACT

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This project reviews key concepts of organizational culture and examines how our military culture may change as a result of various social and environmental influences.

Military culture has always had a significant impact on operational effectiveness. But even military culture has a context and can be acted upon by other forces. Changes in our society will produce changes and strains inside the military, which could force new learning and adaptation of its culture.

For the Army's culture, change may pose dangers. On one hand, the Army's culture may evolve too far, causing the force to become "civilianized" and less ready for the demands of combat. On the other hand, an Army focused on its own norms and values could lose sight of the values of the society it is sworn to defend.

This study examined the military's organizational culture through the use of an organizational culture/climate survey that measured and compared the attitudes and perceptions of Army officers toward a wide range of culture-related issues. The results of the survey provided insights as to the need for change in our military culture due to internal and external influences. The study concludes by outlining implications for the Army.

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ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND THE ARMY

> "The bottom line for leaders is that if they do not become conscious of the cultures in which they are imbedded, those cultures will manage them. Cultural understanding is desirable for all of us, but is essential to leaders if they are to lead." (Schein, 1992, p. 15)

Since the end of the Cold War, many aspects of our military establishment have undergone extensive analysis. Service roles and missions, force structure, strategy and doctrine are all continuously debated among our nation's policy makers. Yet with all the changes that have taken place in our military, society and the international security environment in the last decade, there have been relatively few informed discussions of the adequacy of our current military culture. Today, however, the subject of reforming "military culture" is gaining greater prominence resulting from recent studies and anecdotal evidence that suggest a growing military-civilian "culture gap".

The perceived military-civilian "culture gap" is simple to define. In a democracy, military and civilian cultures share many values. But there are significant differences. Conflict may stem from the military's perceived need to maintain those values, philosophies and traditions that are fundamental to its functional war fighting imperatives required for success on the battlefield. These functional imperatives are often at odds with the social imperatives of the society a military serves. For example, our civilian culture values liberty and individualism which places society at odds with the classic military values of sacrifice, unity, self-discipline and considering the interests of the group before those of the individual. The many passionate civil-military debates surrounding issues of gender, race and sexual orientation define the gulf that exists in attitudes between the two cultures.

The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions and attitudes of two groups of officers (Army War College students and Company Grade officers) concerning important aspects of military culture. Agreements and differences in their perceptions may provide insights as to how social and environmental influences may be changing the military's culture. For the Army, these insights may be necessary to preserve and enhance an organizational culture that views itself as the "nation's obedient and loyal military servant...keeper of the essential skills of war that must be infused into the citizenry when they are called upon to fight." (Builder, 1989, p. 33)

I. WHY STUDY MILITARY CULTURE?

There are three essential reasons for studying military culture.

First, culture plays a crucial role in how an army thinks about and prepares for war. One need not look any further than the cultural changes in the German Army during the inter-war years to appreciate the impacts of a cultural change in an army's future battlefield performance. Some argue convincingly that the early German battlefield successes of World War II are traceable to the changes in the cultural patterns of the German officer corps in the 1920's (Murray, 1999). Forced to greatly reduce their numbers by the Treaty of Versailles, the German officer corps changed their cultural pattern from one steeped in the Junker aristocracy to a professional corps that emphasized performance in leadership

positions and intellectual attainments. Today, the U.S. Army's officer corps, much like the German Army between the world wars, is attempting to adapt to new missions, technologies and doctrine in ways that may affect its culture.

The second reason is based on a leader's responsibility to create and manage culture in military organizations. According to Edgar Schein, the eminent MIT psychologist turned organizational theorist, cultures begin with leaders who impose their own values and assumptions on a group. If an organization is successful, and its values and assumptions are taken for granted, a culture will develop that will define for later generations what kinds of leadership, norms and behaviors are acceptable. As the environment of a culture changes to the point where a culture's basic assumptions no longer hold true, it is a leadership responsibility to start evolutionary change processed to enable the culture to adapt. "The ability to perceive the limitations of one's own culture and to develop the culture adaptively is the essence and ultimate challenge of leadership."(Schein, 1992, p. 2) Given the changes in our society in the last decade, it could be argued that the military is facing its greatest challenge in assessing and adapting (if necessary) its current culture.

Lastly, the growing concern over a "culture gap" between the military and the society that it serves needs informed debate, as the issue is at the heart of civil-military relationships. To what degree must the military's culture reflect the society it is sworn to defend? This issue is hardly new as Harvard's Samuel P. Huntington addressed it in 1957 in his now classic *The Soldier and the State: the Theory and Politics of Civil Military Relations.* Huntington (1957, p.2) writes:

> The ordering of its civil-military relations...is basic to a nation's military policy. The objective of this policy on the institutional level is to develop a system of relations which will maximize security *at the least sacrifice of other social values.* (italics added)....Nations which fail to develop a balanced pattern of civil-military relations squander their resources and run uncalculated risks.

Huntington neatly summarizes the importance of understanding culture when he asks the question: "What pattern of civil-military relations will best maintain the security of the American nation?" (1957, p. 3)

A. Culture in Context

One cannot begin to discuss the significance and complexities of the military's culture without possessing a firm grasp of the many environmental influences that affect the values, norms and beliefs that define it. Even military culture has a context. Schein (1992, p.116) notes:

> Changes in the environment will produce stresses and strains inside the group, forcing new learning and adaptation. At the same time, new members coming into the group will bring new beliefs and assumptions that will influence currently held assumptions. To some degree...there is a constant pressure on any given culture to evolve and grow.

In the last decade, the changes in the military's environment are many. Today, wide ranges of diverse and powerful influences are at work in changing the Army's roles and missions, organizational structure and budget. The writings of two noted military affairs writers and scholars neatly frame the environment that is stressing the military's culture and war fighting ethos.

Dr. Joseph Collins, of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, places these environmental changes into two categories: international environment influences and societal influences.

As Collins (1992) points out, in *The Complex Context of American Military Culture: A Practitioner's View*, it is ironic that the United States has seldom been more secure yet its military has never been busier. The end of the Cold War brought about a new world of disorder characterized by ethnic conflicts, failed states and humanitarian disasters. To manage this new environment, the United States adopted a new national security strategy that tasked its armed forces not only to "deter and fight", but to shape the environment to prevent wars (Clinton, 1997). Peace operations and humanitarian assistance activities are now the military's common and (some would argue) legitimate missions. From 1993 to 1997, this new focus resulted in 40 largely successful military operations (other than war) resulting in an operations tempo three to four times that of the Cold War.

Secondly, according to Collins, the military's culture and climate are affected by a series of factors that have their origins in American society. The all volunteer, mostly married/family oriented Army is feeling pressure from a civil-military culture gap, the attraction of a growing economy and from the stress associated with the gender, race and ethnic issues that have migrated from civilian society. The widely publicized Triangle Institute for Security Studies (TISS) project on the gap between the military and civilian society (Feaver & Kohn, 1999) outlines many of the stark differences that exist between the elite policy makers of the military and civilian communities over politics and values. As the study highlights, points of strongest disagreement concern the issues of women in combat, homosexuals serving openly in the military, on whether enough has been done to stop sexual harassment and on the necessity for a traditional male "warrior culture" for military effectiveness.

Without providing substantiating studies, Dr. Collins asserts that the societal and environmental pressures exerted on the military are having two main effects on the military's culture.

First, Collins intimates that the "welter of missions" thrust on the military in the new post Cold War era is causing a degree of confusion in the minds of service members. The effects are clearly related to the question "what is the Army about?" A shift in values and perspectives may cause soldiers to question the primary role of a particular military service. Given the myriad of missions that span the spectrum of conflict, Collins believes that service members have difficulty separating what is important from what is essential in terms of the Army's core functions. As Dr. Collins states: "For some troops, the new emphasis on peace operations over clear-cut combat operations is unsettling and antithetical to the traditional American way of war." (Collins, 1998, p. 219)

His second concern lies with the more practical effects posed by societal and environmental pressures. Reduced budgets, recruiting and retention problems and material readiness concerns are capable of creating leadership problems that threaten the internal value structures that underpin the Army's culture. Pressed to do "more with less", anecdotal evidence suggests that far too many leaders are not measuring up in a culture that places great emphasis on the roles of leaders and unit commanders.

In a similar vein, John Hillen, an Olin Fellow for National Security Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, sees similar pressures placing demands on military cultures to evolve (Hillen, 1999). He views the imperatives for change in the military's culture as falling into three categories: functional (strategic focus, budgets, forces structure, technical orientation etc.), Legal (constitutional issues, statutes, Uniformed code of Military Justice, etc), and Social (race, gender, ethnic issues, values, etc). Hillen echoes Collin's concern that military culture may be influenced by the U.S. post cold War policy of preparing for Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW). According to Hillen, the values underpinning military culture evolved throughout history in response to the needs of men attempting to succeed in combat. The codes of conduct, values, methods and procedures that define a particular military culture are shaped by the unique requirements of its workplace. Therefore, Hillen is convinced that if you change the principle task for which a military prepares (war fighting to MOOTW), you are bound to change the culture.

Hillen also argues that it is the social imperatives that are the most influential in changing a culture and for the military can be profoundly anti-functional because they are not derived from the nation's security needs. He strongly believes that the imposition of social imperatives can undermine the ability of the military to carry out the tasks that alone justifies its existence. He cites concerns that the military services might mistakenly compromise its standards and cultural values to accommodate social imperatives that call for the military to adopt contemporary values, patterns of behavior and social mores on race class, gender, and sexual orientation.

The ultimate danger according to Hillen, is the attempt to close the military-civilian "culture-gap" by requiring the military to abandon its "traditional" culture and surrender to the social imperatives of a more liberal society.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This study begins by asking a series of questions to develop a common language and understanding of the phenomena of culture. What is culture? How is it measured and what is its relationship to organizational climate?

A. CULTURE DEFINED.

The difficulty in addressing military culture in a scholarly fashion derives not only from the complexity of the subject, but also from the fact that culture changes over time in response to changes in society's culture, the advance of technology and the impact of leadership. Any understanding of military culture must start from the academic disciplines within which it is studied, including organizational science, anthropology, sociology, and political science. And yet there appears to be little agreement concerning a concise definition of culture. As Samuel Gilmore points out, "there is no current, widely accepted composite resolution of the definition of culture." (Gilmore, 1992, p.402)

Depending on one's viewpoint, the first comprehensive and integrative studies of organizational culture did not appear until 1984 or 1985. There are now few such studies (Ott, 1992). Edgar Schein's (1985) *Organizational Cultural Perspective and Leadership* is the most notable and his organizational constructs are commonly used as starting points for any discussion of organizational culture.

According to Schein (1992, p.12), culture is:

> A pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems.

Schein (1992, pp. 16-27.) provides a model of three levels of culture as a means for conducting an analysis of the levels at which a culture manifests itself. The levels range from the very tangible, overt manifestations that one can see and feel, to the deeply embedded, unconscious basic assumptions that he defines as the essence of culture.

Artifacts include all the phenomena that one sees, hears and feels when one encounters a new group with an unfamiliar culture. Such items as physical environment, technology, style (as embodied in clothing, emotional displays, ceremonies, observable rituals and so on.). *Artifacts* also include the visible behavior of the group and the processes into which such behavior is made routine.

Espoused values are what Schein describes as "someone's sense of what ought to be as distinct from what is." They consist of the strategies, goals and philosophies that serve to reduce uncertainty in critical areas of the group's function. They are those values that can serve as a guide to group members as a way of dealing with uncertainty of uncontrollable or difficult events.

The most important and final element of Schein's model consists of *basic assumptions. Basic assumptions* consist of those implicit assumptions that actually guide behavior, that tell group members how to perceive, think about and feel about things. Basic assumptions are likely to have moved out of members' conscious, for they yield successful results repeatedly over time. As Ott explains (1989, p.42)

> It is like applying the brakes while driving a car. After years of pushing the brake pedal and the car slowing, we quit thinking about pushing the brakes and braking: we just hit the brakes instinctively, *assuming* the car will slow down. If hitting the brakes works repeatedly, we cease thinking about braking. Our belief in the relationship between braking and slowing turns into a *basic assumption* (Italics added).

Two distinctions need to be made for distinguishing values, beliefs and basic assumptions. First, beliefs are conscious and thus can be identified through means such as diagnostic instruments (surveys for example). On the other hand, basic assumptions are likely to have dropped out of awareness. Secondly, beliefs are cognitions, whereas basic assumptions include not only beliefs, but also perceptions, values and feelings. According to Ott (1989, p.42), basic assumptions "can be thought of as a comprehensive, potent, but out of conscious system of beliefs, perceptions and values."

For this study, Schein's model provides a common frame of reference for an examination of military culture. His *values*, *artifacts* and *basic assumptions* provide a common language for measuring and assessing an organization's culture.

B. MEASURING CULTURE

The difficulty in assessing military culture in a scholarly fashion derives not only from the complexity of the subject, but also the fact that its influence is almost always the result of long term factors rarely measurable and often obscure. Additionally, military culture obviously changes over time in response to changes in a society's culture, the advance of technology and the impact of leadership.

A review of research on organizational culture shows that there is a lack of consensus on how culture is measured and studied. Scholars use different perspectives to study and analyze culture depending on how they define and conceptualize organizational culture. There is an ongoing debate among scholars regarding how to measure organizational culture and what methods are most appropriate. The debate rages between those who favor quantitative methodologies and those who favor qualitative methodologies (Ott, 1989).

Fetterman (1989) notes that methods for studying culture in organizations resemble a deductive mode of inquiry conducted from an "outsider's" perspective or to an inductive one conducted from an "insider's" perspective. These different approaches are based on a different understanding of culture in organizational settings. Inquiry from outside is based on positivistic science with the goal of generalizing from the data and establishing universal laws. Hypotheses are deducted from theory and tested. In this mode of inquiry, researchers introduce their concepts to the research site, which is relevant to them only in regard to their specific questions. Hence, researchers play the role of detached onlookers. In this approach, culture is treated as one of several organizational variables that can be controlled. In other words, culture is treated as something an organization has (not is).

In contrast, inquiry from the "inside" aims at gaining an understanding of life within a particular organization. This type of research is context specific and cannot be generalized. The researcher interacts with members of the research setting and becomes experientially involved. Concepts and hypotheses may emerge in this interactive process. Researchers who subscribe to this mode of inquiry consider culture as something an organization is, and they are interested in an understanding of this cultural context (Fetterman, 1989; Sackmann, 1991).

Along a continuum between these two different modes of inquiry, researchers use different methods to study culture. These methods include, but are not limited to, mailed questionnaires, participant observations, structured interviews, documentary analysis, group discussions and in-depth interviews.

Advocates of qualitative methods have taken several positions supporting qualitative research and countering the use of quantitative culture measures. Louis (1983) and Smircich (1983) have argued that culture reflects a social construction of reality unique to members of a social unit, and that this uniqueness makes it impossible for standard measures to tap cultural process. Schein (1984) argues that quantitative assessment conducted through surveys is unethical in that it reflects conceptual categories not the respondent's own, presuming unwarranted generalizability. Deal (1986) suggests that

traditional academic methods applied to studying organizational culture "sterilize" the construct and reflect a re-labeling of old approaches to studying organizations.

The rationale for the use of qualitative methods in culture research is largely predicated on the presumed inaccessibility, depth, or unconscious quality of culture. Assumptions can be so deeply embedded that they are difficult to bring to the surface and examine. Schein, (1984) argues that only a complex interactive process of joint inquiry between insiders and outsiders can uncover fundamental assumptions. Such assumptions, he argues tend to drop out of awareness and become implicit because unlike the situation with corporate ideology or slogans, there is no need to remind members of assumptions that are an integral part of their world-view.

Similarly, Smircich (1983) in discussing "root metaphors", treats culture as a frame of reference through which one perceives the world, a frame of reference that is difficult for an individual to be cognizant but accessible when insiders and outsiders interact to explore its meanings and working. Rousseau (1990) notes that fundamental assumptions involve active participation and probing by researchers. These researchers, in turn, must nonetheless set aside their own conceptions of organizing and meaning to probe those of others. Use of standardized surveys and/or interviews might require respondents to report more than they are really able to.

Another issue addressed by advocates of qualitative research is the possible uniqueness of an organization's values and beliefs such that an outsider cannot form a priori questions or measures (Schein, 1984). Moreover, the specific types of values and beliefs assessed might reflect ethnocentrism among organizational development practitioners or organizational behavior researchers. This type of ethnocentrism, Schein labels an "American optimism" that anything can be changed or bettered. Types designated as good or bad by researchers also become themselves value-laden.

Proponents of qualitative methods have sometimes linked the essential meaning and content of culture to qualitative methods on epistemological ground. Morgan and Simcich (1980) link the study of social constructions with the techniques of ethno-methodology. They argue that qualitative research stands for an approach rather than a set of techniques, and its appropriateness (like that of quantitative research) is contingent on the nature of the phenomena to be studied. In the study of socially constructed phenomena, they argue that quantitative assessment is unsatisfactory and inappropriate. When culture is viewed as fundamental assumptions invented by a social group to integrate itself and cope with its environment, it may be difficult for members to directly describe it. Epistemologically, a different way of knowing culture may be required.

Schein (1984) addressed the most controversial assertion. He notes that accessibility of information on culture raises certain ethical concerns. Researchers employing a survey or questionnaire to study organizations behave unethically, Schein argues, by purporting to speak for respondents through aggregated survey data rather than using the informant's own words. He argues that summary categories and aggregations of information misrepresent the respondents' views. Moreover, he adds that externally derived categories need not conform to the organization members' worldview.

In a review of the quantitative methods of research on organizational culture, Roussea (1991) noted the absence of published data on the consensual validity of the questionnaires that were examined. Furnham and Gunter (1993) also noted the generally poor psychometric properties of these instruments, particularly in terms of their reliability and construct validity. Hence, Ott (1989) concluded that questionnaire approaches to uncovering culture failed to identify the underlying assumptions, while serving to prime organizational members to view their organization along dimensions suggested in the questionnaires.

Luthans (1989) criticized quantitative approaches for limiting culture categories to the researcher's favorites, or biased towards particular styles of management thinking. He argues that quantitative approaches distort the culture being investigated which invalidates the study. Finally, these approaches are limited by their flexibility in handling the "meaning" of behaviors, and have a tendency to tap into diversity and variability rather than the uniformity of cultures.

Most of those who advocate qualitative methods believe that they provide a richer, more comprehensive view of organizational culture. Moreover, because culture is derived from its members and because each culture is unique, proponents of qualitative methods have argued that it is imperative that the culture of each organization should be explored, rather than taken as a given priori.

On the other hand, Siehl & Martin (1988) believe that the advantages of using qualitative methods in investigating organizational culture may be bought at a cost, as the data collected cannot be the basis for systematic comparisons. Fundamental theoretical aspects of the concept of organizational culture can be tested only by comparisons across organizations and/or organizational departments. Moreover, in order to examine if an organization has subcultures with distinctive values/practices, data can be collected from different departments of the same organization so that within-organization comparisons might provide information on the existence of subcultures. These two concerns, according to the authors, cannot be answered until culture can be measured with the same robust, reliable, sensitive and valid instrument that allows systematic comparisons. These systematic comparisons are exceedingly difficult to be made when only qualitative data are available.

Critics of qualitative methods center on the lack of objectivity and therefore, lack of reliability of data and validity of conclusions. Another criticism is the difficulty in comparing qualitative studies, and the tendency of cultures to be portrayed as consistent or uniform. They point to the benefits of quantitative methods as in the rigor of research, in their suitability for theoretical testing, in developing universal statements, and in facilitating intra and inter-unit comparisons (Luthans, 1989; Rousseau, 1990).

Finally, it should be noted that there is no consensus within the organizational culture literature about what the concept means, what constitutes it, and what organizational culture perspective can expect to accomplish. For all of these, it becomes very difficult to have agreement on its research methodologies. Debates continue between those who use qualitative methods and others who favor quantitative methods. As Rousseau (1990, 166) states:

> Starting at the point of greatest subjectivity, assumptions unconsciously held are difficult to assess without interactive probing. Member fears and defenses are elusive

psychodynamics difficult to elicit without interaction. In contrast, characteristic patterns of behavior (norms) regarding how members should (or should not) act are far more accessible. The method appropriate to assessing culture depends on those elements we choose to examine. As the elements of culture we are interested in become more conscious (values, behavioral norms) or observable (artifacts), these are accessible by both structural and non-standardized assessments.

Given the respective shortcomings of employing purely quantitative or qualitative methods, it becomes more useful to use a combination of methods that could give more valid measures of organizational culture.

C. CLIMATE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO CULTURE

Associated with an organization's culture is its climate. In contrast to culture, organizational climate refers to environmental stimuli rooted in the organization's value system, such as rewards and punishments, communications flow, and operations tempo, which determine individual and team perceptions about the quality of working conditions. It is essentially "members of the organization feel about the organization (Ulmer, Collins, Owens, 2000). Climate is often considered to be alterable in the near term and largely limited to those aspects of the organizational environment of which members are aware. (Denison, 1995).

In examining the differences between organizational culture and climate, Denison (1996) discovered a curious development in the literature with the appearance of articles that apply quantitative research methods to the study of culture (Denison & Misha 1995, Gordon & Dimotasso 1992). According to Denison, these authors have applied survey techniques and methods to study comparative "dimensions" of culture in a way that appears to contradict the epistemological foundations of culture research within organizational studies. Denison argues that the differences between the literatures that examine culture and climate do not represent substantive differences in the phenomena under investigation, but rather the differences represent differences in the *perspectives* taken on the phenomena. Denison rejects the long held assumption that culture and climate are fundamentally different and non-overlapping phenomena. By reviewing the climate and culture literature of the last three decades, Denison convincingly argues that there is significant convergence in the content and substance of culture and climate studies.

Denison's argument (1996, p. 645) has several implications. In his own words:

> ...this conclusion provides a strong rationale for the continued integration of quantitative and qualitative methods in the study of organizational culture and the continued borrowing of theoretical foundations, epistemological arguments, and research strategies from either tradition in order to serve future research. Different researchers will, of course, generate different forms of evidence and different ways of interpreting each other's results, sustaining a rich source of diversity. But the endless debate over what constitutes the "right" kind of data can be given a decent burial. The debate over whether rituals or regressions or surveys or semiotics constitute the best data can become subordinate to the debate over what these multiple data sources and strategies can reveal about social contexts and their influences on individuals and organizations. Perhaps this conclusion also will temper the temerity of reviewers or editors whose knee-

jerk reaction to uncovering quantitative data in a culture study is to ask, "but then isn't this really a climate study?

It is apparent that climate and culture are related in complex ways, climate arguably being an observable and measurable artifact of culture. More recent research indicates that other cultural traits such as involvement, consistency, adaptability and mission orientation are positively related not only to members' perceptions of organizational effectiveness, but also to objective measures of the same (Denison & Misha, 1995). Such definitions imply from the outset that those who tinker with the culture and climate of military organizations may be affecting the long-term effectiveness of an organization.

III. METHOD

A. DEFINING MILITARY CULTURE

By its very definition, military culture differs significantly from civilian cultures in democratic societies. While American civil culture celebrates individual freedom, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, the driving imperative behind U.S. military culture is the responsibility to fight and win wars. It is a culture that is rooted in the physical and psychological notions of killing others (Sarkesian, 1999). For the sake of good order and discipline, basic individual freedoms in the military are sometimes curtailed in ways that are both trivial and profound. At the individual level, this means personal responsibility, accountability, trust, loyalty, commitment and ultimate liability (Snider, 1999).

The totality of these concepts define the shape and form of military culture. In concise terms, military culture stresses honor and devotion to duty, unqualified service to the Nation and subordinating self to the greater good and absolute authority of those in command. This translates into a complex set of values often misunderstood by civil society. For the service member, their standards of behavior are expected to conform to these values, sometime in absolute terms (Sarkesian, 1999)

Applying Schein's construct, military culture may be said to refer to the deep structure of military organizations, rooted in prevailing assumptions, norms, values, customs and traditions which collectively, over time, have created shared individual expectations among the members. A shared sense of meaning is established through a socialization process that brings together a variety of groups that converge in operations of the military. Military culture includes both attitudes and behavior about what is right, what is good and what is important, and is often manifested in shared heroes, stories and rituals that promote bonding among the members.

B. ASSESSING MILITARY CULTURE

How then, is military culture affected by the social and environmental imperatives that continually stress the prevailing values, norms, philosophies, customs and traditions of the armed forces?

To address this question, this study employed the Ulmer-Campbell Military Culture/Climate Survey (MCCS) to capture perceptions of the military's organizational climate and culture. The MCCS collects comparative perceptions of organizational climates and culture among line units of the armed forces. The

survey assists in identifying organizational insights that could provide unique clues to underlying issues of military culture. The survey's ninety-nine questions relate to unit climate or linkages to military culture.

It was expected that the MCCS would find agreement and differences among Company Grade officers and War College students in their attitudes regarding the military's organizational culture and climate. These differences in perceptions provide a quantitative basis for further examination of the causes for the differences. The useful interpretation of data from the survey depended on as much on informed judgments about the collective responses as from any derived statistical inferences. As Ott (1989, p.101) states:

> All organizational research involves "judgement calls...decisions (some big, some small, but all necessary and consequential) that must be made without the benefit of a fixed "objective" rule that one can apply with precision.

C. VARIABLES

This study addresses the question of whether the differences outlined from the MCCS derive from social imperatives (values, leadership styles, traditions etc.) or environmental imperatives (distinctive mission requirements, Service roles, budgets, etc.). To attempt to identify and link social and environmental imperatives to effects on military culture, this study grouped selected questions drawn from the Military Culture/Climate Survey into thirteen indices. These indices or *variables* represent themes, attitudes or issues commonly related to military culture. The MCCS survey questions that comprise a particular variable are included in tables provided in the Results section of this paper.

The study assessed the following indices of military culture:

- Traditional Values
- Discipline/Authority Standards
- Organizational Honesty/Open Channels
- Commissioned Officer Leaders
- Climate/Teamwork/Morale
- Mutual Trust
- Evaluation/Promotion
- Resource/Personnel Availability
- Family Balance/Support
- Pay and Allowances
- Racial/Gender Issues
- Reaction to OOTW
- Societal Comparisons

Each officer evaluated all statements on a Likert Scale. [Strongly Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Slightly Disagree = 3, Slightly Agree = 4, Agree = 5, Strongly Agree = 6]. Conclusions concerning the effects of environmental or social imperatives on military culture were then drawn based on a comparison of the mean differences in the responses of the two officer groups.

D. SUBJECTS FOR STUDY

For the military, its officer corps is responsible for the culture of the organization.

As Schein explains (cited in Wren, 1995, p. 281):

> Culture and leadership are two sides of the same coin in that leaders first create cultures when they create groups and organizations. Once cultures exist, they determine the criteria for leadership and thus determine who will or will or will not be a leader. But if cultures become dysfunctional, it is the unique function of leadership to perceive the functional and dysfunctional elements of the existing culture and to manage cultural evolution and change in such a way that the group can survive in a changing environment.

Simply stated, it is the officer corps that conceptualizes, leads and facilitates innovations that lead to changes in culture. Officers are responsible for preserving and protecting what is best about their service culture and changing those aspects of a service culture that must change if the military is to successfully meet its future challenges.

This study examined the views and perceptions of 211 Army War College students. These subjects are successful former battalion commanders in the rank of colonel or lieutenant colonel who were responsible for developing and maintaining organizational climates in their last assignments. In today's Army, attendance at a War College is a virtual prerequisite for senior leadership positions in our military. Given recent trends, it can be reasonably assumed that War College students form the pool of candidates from which our Army's near-term (5-10 years) senior leadership will emerge.

The attitudes and perceptions of the Army War College students were then compared with those of 680 "Company Grade" officers (Captains and Lieutenants) serving in operational units. [Note: For the purpose of this project, the terms "Company Grade" officers and "junior" officers are used interchangeably.] The Center for Strategic and International Studies provided the data on the views and perceptions of junior officers from their recently completed study of military culture (Ulmer, et al., 2000).

The perceptions of company grade officers are important for two reasons.

First, at the level of the organization they serve, Company Grade Officers are responsible for executing the policies and adhering to the philosophies of the leadership that establishes local command climates. Many of those surveyed may have served in the units commanded by those officers currently attending the Army War College (Specific data not available, as unit anonymity was a precondition for allowing CSIS to conduct its study.) The views of these junior officers provide the basis for useful comparisons with those of the War College Students.

Secondly, the Company Grade officers obviously form the pool of officers from which our future senior leadership is drawn. Any significant changes or differences noted in their values, beliefs and perceptions concerning military institutions and the society they serve will have long term consequences for the military's culture.

The similarities and differences among the two officer groups formed the basis from which conclusions were drawn concerning the impact of social and environmental imperatives have on military culture. This project tested the following hypothesis: *There will be differences between the Army War College student responses and those of Company Grade Officers in the level of agreement and disagreement on one or more of the study's thirteen variables of military culture.* Statistically significant

differences (or agreement) between the two groups may call attention to culture issues such as values, philosophies, customs, and traditions that may deserve either reinforcement or revision.

IV. ADMINISTRATION

The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), provided the necessary survey booklets and answer sheets (compatible with optical scanners) to conduct the survey among War College students. The following survey techniques ensured a high response rate from the War College student body:

The informal student "chain of command" supported the distribution of the survey among War College Students. Two hundred sixty two students attend class grouped in seminars of approximately 15 students (Civilians and foreign students were excluded from participating in this study). Each seminar designates a chairperson responsible to the War College for a wide range of administrative/ social/academic issues. These "trusted agents" administered the survey in each of their seminars. An advocate in each seminar, stressing the importance of participating in the voluntary survey, ensured a high response rate.

Secondly, research indicated that the response rate would increase if the survey had incentives for subjects participating in voluntary research (Backstom & Hursh-Cesar, 1981). For this study, incentives included four dinners for two (all expenses) at a local upscale restaurant. Each subject who completed the survey submitted a 3x5 card identifying his or her War College distribution box number. A drawing of 3x5 cards selected the winners and gift certificates were placed in the appropriate distribution box. The process protected the anonymity of the participants in the survey.

V. RESULTS

Table 1 summarizes statistics for MCCS variable groupings for Army War College students and junior officers. Approximately 80% of the War College Class of 2000 elected to participate in the survey. An independent groups t-test compared the mean scores for each of the variables from each of the two groups of respondents (War College students vs. Company Grade Officers). Nine of the thirteen mean differences were statistically significant ($p < .05$). However four of the nine indices were judged not to be practically significant because their mean differences were less than .25.

What determined "practical" significance? Given the large sample sizes and the scale used to measure responses, any mean difference between the two officer groups of officers for any variable that approached .50 was considered a substantive difference in views. Those mean differences that fell in the range of .25 or greater were deemed significant to deserve further comment.

Subsequent paragraphs provide a more detailed examination of officer perceptions and attitudes. Each analysis begins with an explanation of the variable as a measure of culture and climate followed by a comparison of officer perceptions for individual statements that comprise a variable. Where appropriate, each analysis concludes with a statement describing implications for the Army's culture.

MCCS Variable Groupings	War College Student Mean	War College Student S.D.	Junior Officer Mean	Junior Officer S.D.	Significant P<.05
Traditional Values	5.09	0.439	4.86	0.561	Yes
Discipline/Authority/Standards	5.25	0.536	4.82	0.787	Yes
Organizational Honesty/Open Channels	4.52	0.741	4.19	0.903	Yes
Commissioned Officer Leaders	4.8	0.776	4.69	0.848	No
Climate/Teamwork/Morale	4.77	0.683	4.44	0.815	Yes
Mutual Trust	4.91	0.738	4.73	0.846	Yes
Evaluations/Promotions	4.88	0.881	4.72	0.878	Yes
Resource/Personnel Availability	4.11	0.818	3.51	1	Yes
Family Balance/Support	4.44	0.851	4.34	0.983	No
Pay and Allowances	3.57	0.904	3.44	1.07	No
Racial/Gender Issues	4.58	0.694	4.54	0.788	No
Roles and Missions (OOTW)	4.93	0.742	4.78	0.833	Yes
Societal Comparisons	4.68	0.561	4.52	0.714	Yes

TABLE 1 SUMMARY STATISTICS FOR MCCS VARIABLE GROUPINGS

A. TRADITIONAL VALUES

What are traditional military values? Samuel P. Huntington, in *The Soldier and the State,* views the military's traditional values as a subset of what he terms a professional military ethos. "A value or an attitude is part of the professional ethic if it is implied by or derived from the peculiar expertise, responsibility and organization of the military profession."(Huntington, 1957 p. 61) For the military, "the management of violence" on behalf of society is the principle determinant of the military ethos. Our values derive not only from the nature of conflict, but from the society that we serve and from international law. For the Army, its ethos is uniquely informed by the founding values of the republic, including liberty, equality, the dignity of the individual and commitment to unlimited personal liability on behalf of American society. Today, the Army lists its core values as Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage (Caldera, 2000, p. 46)

Additionally, an important element of the Army's culture is its ceremonial displays and etiquette that pervade its life. As Don Snider writes, "ceremonialism helps provide substance and motivation within a culture where ones self-selected and self-abnegating service to country can be sustained, can be deemed sufficiently worthy as to overcome the increasing degradation of the historic career incentives such as income, medical care and retirement benefits." (Snider, 1999 p.18)

MCCS Survey Statements	War College Students Mean	War College Students S.D.	Junior Officers Mean	Junior Officers S.D.	Significant P<.05
1. I am proud to serve...	5.81	0.42	5.71	0.58	Yes
7. Traditions and values mean a lot.	4.81	0.93	4.35	1.13	Yes
10. ...I am prepared to put my life on the line.	5.56	0.64	5.35	0.933	Yes
17. American military plays an important role in the world today	5.61	0.59	5.38	0.809	Yes
30. ...military ritual and tradition are essential parts of our culture	5.1	0.859	4.95	1.07	Yes
46. Maintaining wartime skills keeps me interested in a military career.	4.67	1.06	4.77	1.19	No
60. I have a deep personal commitment and a strong desire to serve...	5.58	0.608	5.32	0.902	Yes
64. Personal interests ...take second place to operational requirements.	4.57	1.01	4.35	1.19	Yes
72. New recruits come to us...with the standards and values of our service.	3.86	1.16	3.53	1.14	Yes

TABLE 2 COMPONENTS OF THE TRADITIONAL VALUES INDEX

Analysis

Army War College Students (Mean = 5.09) view traditional values more positively than Company Grade Officers (Mean = 4.86) (See Table 1). The difference was statistically significant [t (887) = 5.38, p< .05].

Although the differences are statistically significant between the two groups, there is little practical difference in the perceptions and attitudes of War College students and junior officers. As Table 2 indicates, three questions that focus on values drew very positive responses (means > 5.25) from those surveyed. For the Army's culture, this is a "good news" story that indicates that despite the pressures brought about by social imperatives, the majority of the officer corps continue to accept traditional military values such as selfless service, self sacrifice, discipline, loyalty and commitment etc.

However, the findings suggest that the officer corps is not completely satisfied with the military's efforts to inculcate traditional values in new recruits. Overall, the officer corps slightly disagrees with the statement "individuals coming to us from initial entry training come to us well indoctrinated with the standards and values of the service." Negative views held by junior officers may be attributed to the fact that, on the whole, they have greater daily contact with new arrivals than their battalion commanders.

B. DISCIPLINE/AUTHORITY/STANDARDS

Authority is the right to exercise a set level of organizational power to determine the resources which individuals or groups can draw upon to fulfill their responsibilities (Sentell, 1998, p. 150). Military leadership exercises its power through its abilities to promote, terminate, reward or discipline its members while exercising control over the resources, activities and focus of the organization.

MCCS Survey Statements	War College Students Mean	War College Students S.D.	Junior Officers Mean	Junior Officers S.D.	Significant P<.05
2. We have high standards of discipline in this unit.	5.15	0.756	4.46	1.17	Yes
9. Leaders...have have the authority to carry out their responsibilities.	5.12	0.818	4.65	1.16	Yes
38. The armed forces have a right to expect high standards of me...	5.49	0.652	5.38	0.889	Yes

TABLE 3 COMPONENTS OF THE DISCIPLINE / AUTHORITY / STANDARDS INDEX

Analysis

Army War college Students (Mean = 5.25) view discipline and authority issues more positively than junior officers (Mean = 4.82) (See Table 1). The differences are statistically significant. [t (503.61) = 8.85, $p < .05$]

The data unfortunately suggests that the phenomena of "micro-management" is "alive and well" in the military. Despite having served in key and influential leadership positions (Battalion Commanders or equivalent level Project Managers), the average War College student only "agreed" with the assertion that they had enough authority to carry out their responsibilities. It is not unreasonable to have anticipated a stronger response from former (and "successful") battalion commanders. More telling, however, is the response of the junior grade officers. Not only is there a statistical difference between their responses and those of the War College class, there is a significant practical difference in the perception of their authority. Company Grade Officers held a much more negative view of their ability to carry out their responsibilities. Apparently, perceptions of "zero defect" command climates that drive members in the chain of command to provide an abundance of guidance to accomplish specific tasks. Anecdotal evidence provided by War College students suggests the proliferation of advanced technology (e-mail) greatly exacerbates the willingness of leadership to provide unnecessary guidance and oversight. The additional guidance stifles initiative and promotes perceptions among junior officers that they are not trusted to accomplish tasks as they see fit. War College students (Mean 4.36) and junior officers (Mean 4.16) only marginally agreed with the survey statement "In this unit we are encourage to take reasonable risks in an effort to improve performance. (We do not have a "Zero defects" mentality)." War College students also responded somewhat negatively to the assertion that "people in my service can make an

honest mistake without it ruining their career"(Mean 3.95). This leads to one final conclusion in regards to authority issues.

Most disconcerting is the possibility that War College students are a likely source of the "zero defect" mentality. Most, if not all War College students were serving in command positions when CSIS conducted surveys of the attitudes of company Grade Officer perceptions. Their negative perceptions may in large part reflect a certain degree of dissatisfaction of the command climates established by War College students while they were in command. The implication is that this climate will be perpetuated as War College students ascend to more senior positions with the concomitant effects on the Army's culture.

C. ORGANIZATIONAL HONESTY/OPEN CHANNELS

The highest standards of ethical climate and conduct are essential to maintaining a healthy military service and for attracting and retaining the best and most talented of each new generation of Americans. Ethical behaviors are especially noticeable to members of an organization that espouses honor, integrity and personal courage as cornerstone values of the institution (Caldera, p. 46). The visible behavior of a leader communicates assumptions and values rapidly to other members of an organization. Soldiers expect their leadership to "tell it like it is" by providing complete information and full disclosure.

Command climates are often a function of the value a commander places on communicating effectively with subordinates. The freedom to express opinions and viewpoints without fear of reprisal strengthens the credibility of a unit's/institutions leadership and contributes to a climate that promotes initiative and a sense of belonging in an organization.

MCCS Survey Statements	War College Students Mean	War College Students S.D.	Junior Officers Mean	Junior Officers S.D.	Significant P<.05
5. ...we are rarely surprised by unexpected missions...	3.54	1.59	3.28	1.69	No
18. Our organization is serious about honesty and integrity.	5.24	0.847	4.79	1.08	Yes
41. You can "tell it like it is" in our unit...	4.61	1.15	4.29	1.25	Yes
63. If I make a request...somebody will listen...	4.15	1.09	3.81	1.29	Yes
77. Leaders in this unit do not tolerate dishones or unethical behavior...	5.03	0.916	4.79	1.13	Yes

TABLE 4 COMPONENTS OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL HONESTY / OPEN CHANNELS INDEX

Analysis

Army War College Students (Mean = 4.52) view organizational honesty and open communication in units more positively than Company Grade Officers (Mean = 4.19) (See Table 1). The differences are statistically significant [$t(411.68) = 5.30$, $p < .05$].

The data suggest that the ethical climates in our units are under stress. Some officers are clearly disappointed in senior leadership. On the whole, both War College students and junior officers did not express strong agreement with statements regarding honesty and integrity within units and the military as an institution. Again junior officers significantly felt more negatively toward the ethical climate in their units. One could attribute part of their attitudes to the healthy skepticism that tends to reside in junior officers, but the negative responses suggest a greater degree of dissatisfaction than one would normally expect.

The degree of trust in senior leadership as reflected in the responses was surprisingly low. Again it is not unreasonable to have expected that a group as vested in the institution as War College students would have expressed a much more positive view of the trust they place in their senior leadership.

Just as disconcerting was the significant gap in perceptions between the former battalion commanders and their former subordinates for each of the statements that comprise this variable. The mean differences range from .24 to .45. This may indicate that perhaps War College students are more likely to tolerate ethical/integrity lapses in their organizations or that they failed to communicate effectively which in turn fostered perceptions of ethical/integrity lapses.

What contributes to this erosion of trust among the officer corps? As responses to the survey indicate (Statement 5), the turbulence within the force brought on by the myriad of competing missions and priorities may lie at the root of the trust issue. Again, anecdotal evidence from seminar discussions suggest that senior leadership fails to "tell it like it is" due to a flawed sense of loyalty to political and military authorities. Their "can do" attitudes and sense of mission accomplishment over-rides their better judgment in instances where some may argue it was more appropriate to simply state that the institution/unit is not provided for in terms of time, training, equipment or personnel for assigned missions. This perceived unwillingness to speak forthrightly erodes the trust and confidence the officer corps has in its senior leadership.

D. COMMISSIONED OFFICER LEADERS

In the context of organizational culture, leadership has three complementary aspects.

First there is the formal leadership that flows from the shared paradigms, structures and traditions of the organization. It is the mechanism necessary for perpetuating the status quo on an organization.

Secondly, in circumstances similar to where the Army finds itself today in which its roles and missions are vague to some, leadership becomes the vehicle through which an organization may change and adapt.

Finally, leaders provide the images and actions that members see and experience. This aspect of leadership directly impacts patterns of organizational behavior and the organization's shared perceptions and attitudes.

Analysis

Army War College Students (Mean = 4.80) view commissioned officer leadership more positively than Company Grade Officers (Mean = 4.68) (See Table 1). The difference is not statistically significant [t(886) = 1.70, p> .05].

MCCS Survey Statements	War College Student Mean	War College Student S.D.	Junior Officer Mean	Junior Officer S.D.	Significant P<.05
14. Senior officers...set a positive example...	5.01	1.06	4.63	1.23	Yes
19. My immediate supervisor does not "play favorites."	4.58	1.35	4.88	1.22	Yes
31. My immediate supervisor lets me know how I'm doing...	4.16	1.34	4.39	1.26	Yes
33. Commissioned officers...set a good example...	5.08	0.769	4.76	0.996	Yes
34. Commissioned officers...put mission and people ahead of ambition.	4.68	1.07	4.49	1.13	Yes
48. My immediate supervisor sets a good example...	4.99	1.16	4.9	1.1	No
55. Senior officers ...are tactically and technically proficient.	4.85	0.921	4.67	1.12	Yes
70. Commissioned officers... take care of their people.	4.99	0.762	4.77	1	Yes

TABLE 5 COMPONENTS OF THE OFFICER LEADERSHIP INDEX

In assessing commissioned officer leadership, the data suggests that the office corps have leadership issues that require attention if the institution is to retain its core values. Survey responses indicate that the concept of selfless service is beginning to wane in the officer corps. Ambition is no longer viewed as taking a "back seat" to mission accomplishment and care of subordinates. The "lukewarm" response towards survey statements addressing professional conduct, tactical and technical proficiency, ability/willingness to communicate and the care and concern of their soldiers indicates that "Courtney Massengale" is making a comeback in the officer corps (Myrer, 1968). The more negative views are especially prevalent among the company grade officers.

Nearly all of the War College students have spent their careers in a culture of "downsizing" in which it was perceived that promotion opportunities decreased as the size of the force decreased throughout the 1990's. This may have led some to sacrifice core service values (loyalty, duty, selfless service, honor and integrity) to maintain a competitive edge in advancing their careers. Tied to this experience is the perception held by many Army officers that the institution promoted those officers who exhibited a "can do" spirit, always maintaining they could accomplish "more with less" in a period of reduced resources and increasing operations tempo.

E. CLIMATE/TEAMWORK/MORALE

An organization's climate is closely associated with its culture. Applying Schein's construct of organizational culture, climate may be considered one of many measurable artifacts of culture. In contrast to culture, organizational climate refers to the organization's environment as viewed through the organization's value system (Denison, 624). An organization's values may be reflected in perceptions of communications flow, rewards and punishment systems, quality of working conditions, operations tempo and morale. These values, collectively viewed form perceptions of how soldiers "feel about this organization." (Ulmer, quoted in Snider, 1999, p. 14)

Why assess climate? In a military organization, climate is one of the major determinants of organizational effectiveness. It is long recognized that motivation, spirit, mutual trust, pride and morale have a direct bearing on a unit's battlefield performance. Comparing the perceptions of unit climates may provide insights as to how social and environmental imperatives may be affecting the Army's culture.

MCCS Survey Statements	War College Student Mean	War College Student S.D.	Junior Officer Mean	Junior Officer S.D.	Significant P<.05
4. We have a lot of teamwork going on in this unit.	5.09	0.863	4.67	1.06	Yes
6. People are treated fairly in this unit.	5.13	0.887	4.66	1.14	Yes
11. My job is important in accomplishing the mission of this unit.	5.46	0.76	5.35	0.886	No
12. Excellence in this unit is properly acknowledged and rewarded.	4.85	0.965	4.38	1.17	Yes
25. People in this unit are not "stressed out."	3.51	1.28	3.52	1.35	No
27. We have high morale in this unit.	4.59	1.01	4.05	1.25	Yes

TABLE 6 COMPONENTS OF THE CLIMATE / TEAMWORK / MORALE INDEX

Analysis

Army War College students (Mean = 4.77) take a more positive view of unit organizational climates than do Company Grade Officers (Mean = 4.44) (See Table 1). The difference in views is statistically significant [$t(403.24) = 5.82$, $p < .05$].

The data reflects significant levels of dissatisfaction within military units. War College students and junior officers agree that their units are "stressed out." Although this variable did not test for specific reasons why, it does suggest that when reviewed in the context of this study, a combination of factors are significantly degrading the command climates in operational units. A high operations tempo, combined with degraded resources (funds, training time, personnel, etc.) and instances of poor leadership may be contributing to significant morale problems within the force.

Most striking however, is the disparity in how War College students and junior officers view the severity of the problems within units. Junior officers take a much dimmer view of climate issues such as

teamwork, fairness, morale and reward systems. Given the large sample size and the scale used to measure responses, a difference of .40 is significant in practical terms. Does this suggest that the former battalion commanders are out of touch with the conditions within their units? Or is this additional evidence that senior leadership is viewed as "not telling it like it is"?

A third plausible theory exists to explain the disparity in the views of the two officer groups. The War college students have experience career "success" (defined as Lieutenant Colonel Battalion Command selection) in the 1990's culture of "downsizing". For this group, "doing more with less" is a way of life having spent half their careers in an organization that spent the decade of the 1990's restructuring and "downsizing" due to force structure reductions. War College students may be immunized by this culture from recognizing trends that may be harmful in the long term to unit morale and effectiveness. In after action comments following the deployment of Task Force Hawk to Albania, Brigadier General Dick Cody (Deputy Task Force Commander) publicly criticized his aviation battalion commanders stating that they "do not know what right looks like." Although BG Cody's comments were a specific reference to the lack of experience in aviation operations, an argument could be made that the "culture of downsizing" gives BG Cody's comments applicability to a wide range if issues in today's Army including those that affect command climates.

Junior officers, on the other hand, are less vested in the system/culture and may be more sensitized to the issues at hand and therefore more willing to express their dissatisfaction. This may account for their generally more negative view of organizational climates.

F. MUTUAL TRUST

The cohesion of any effective military organization rests on the individual' having faith in the professional competence and intent of their colleagues. This is of particular importance where leadership routinely makes "life and death" decisions on the battlefield. Less obvious but perhaps just as important, is the need for leadership to develop a climate in which the initiative of subordinates is not stifled through excessive supervision or direction. An effective military organization is one win which supervisors are willing to underwrite honest mistakes and continue to support the initiative of their subordinates in the

MCCS Survey Statements	War College Student Mean	War College Student S.D.	Junior Officer Mean	Junior Officer S.D.	Significant P<.05
15. I am confident that my unit commander trusts me.	5.22	0.874	4.97	1.13	Yes
20. I can trust other members of my team ... in war or in other operations.	5.18	0.822	4.84	0.965	Yes
71. If I took a prudent risk and failed, my supervisors would support me.	4.32	1.16	4.37	1.16	No

TABLE 7 COMPONENTS OF THE MUTUAL TRUST INDEX

discharge of their responsibilities. Trust is the bond that "glues" an organization together as it works towards common goals.

Analysis

Army War College students (Mean = 4.91) view trust in units in a more positive light than Company Grade Officers (Mean = 4.73) (See Table 1). The difference is statistically significant [$t(387.99) = 3.01$, $p < .05$].

The results of the survey support the contention by many that a "zero defect" climate exists in many units and that a careerist attitudes may supplant Army core values. Both groups express less confidence than expected in their superior's willingness to underwrite honest mistakes. Apparently some officers expressed only moderate confidence that their commanders trusted them.

The lack of trust expressed by junior officers in the abilities of the other members of their team may be more of an expression of a lack of resources (training opportunities/time/funds/personnel) to adequately prepare their subordinates for the rigors of warfare. Additional research is required to define and clarify their specific concerns.

G. EVALUATION/PROMOTIONS

Soldiers value an organizational culture that values an aspect of egalitarianism, in the sense that all members of the organization have equal opportunities to succeed on their own merit. They value promotion systems that are viewed as impartial and providing equal access to information needed to control their careers.

MCCS Survey Statements	War College Student Mean	War College Student S.D.	Junior Officer Mean	Junior Officer S.D.	Significant P<.05
8. Promotions in the junior enlisted grades...are done fairly.	5.22	0.822	4.77	1.04	Yes
47. My leaders evaluate my performance ...competently and fairly.	4.63	1.22	4.68	1.02	No

TABLE 8 COMPONENTS OF THE EVALUATIONS / PROMOTIONS INDEX

Analysis

Army War College Students (Mean = 4.88) view evaluation and promotion systems more favorably than Company Grade Officers (Mean = 4.72) (See Table 1). The difference is statistically significant [$t(878) = 2.32$, $p < .05$].

The results indicate a certain level of dissatisfaction in the current evaluation/promotion systems. This is also somewhat surprising coming from a group of officers (War College students) who have experienced "success" under the recent systems.

Two factors may be influencing the response.

First, The majority of the War College students serve in the Army. With the implementation of the new Officer Professional Management System (OPMS) and implementation of the new Officer Evaluation Reporting System (OERs), many War College students who are accustomed to "one block" ratings may be expressing anxiety over the effects of the new rating system. It is yet to be established that an officer's expectations of continued success can be met with "two block" center of mass ratings.

Secondly, officers may be expressing dissatisfaction with the personnel conducting their ratings. In 1979, the introduction of a new OER gave greater weight to the observations of an officer's senior rater than to those of their immediate supervisor. Anecdotal evidence suggests that few officers receive routine mentoring on their performance and relatively few feel that they have adequate exposure to their senior raters. Given the operations tempo in many units and the proliferation of e-mail accounts, many officers are finding fewer social and professional opportunities to interact with their rating chain. Some contend that there is a tendency within the officer corps to spend more time and energy attempting to impress senior rating officials rather than leading their troops.

Should this perception have any substance, the implication for the Army is that its leadership may not be selecting the officers that reflect the best aspects of its culture/values. It may be time to incorporate some form of peer and subordinate evaluations of officers to insure the "right" officers are selected for advancement in the organization. (Ulmer, 1998),

H. RESOURCE/PERSONNEL AVAILABILITY

Soldiers expect support from their organization's leadership and view support as a critical value and desirable quality in their culture. Support implies that the organization supplies the necessary resources, tools, equipment, training and know-how to get the mission completed. Soldiers value leadership that obtain what they need and while providing the encouragement to accomplish the mission.

Analysis

Army War College students (Mean = 4.11) view the ability of resources and personnel more favorably than Company Grade Officers (Mean = 3.51) (See Table 1). The difference is statistically significant [$t(417.08) = 8.80$, $p < .05$].

The consensus of opinion in the officer corps is that the military is not provided the resources to effectively accomplish all its assigned missions. The dissatisfaction is especially pronounced among junior officers.

Equally disturbing is the consensus among officers that the service is not attracting and retaining motivated and committed soldiers. Both findings can be tied to a number of plausible causes.

MCCS Survey Statements	War College Student Mean	War College Student S.D.	Junior Officer Mean	Junior Officer S.D.	Significant P<.05
16. This unit has sufficient personnel to do our job effectively.	3.66	1.46	3.14	1.53	Yes
22. Our service is attracting high quality, motivated recruits.	4.24	1.09	3.69	1.22	Yes
54. The people we ar retaining in service have the skills...to sustain unit excellence.	4.64	0.85	4.18	1.14	Yes
62. This unit...is provided adequate resources...needed to accomplish the mission.	3.86	1.35	3	1.52	Yes

TABLE 9 COMPONENTS OF THE RESOURCES / PERSONNEL INDEX

In the "downsizing" culture of the 1990's, budget constraints consistently frustrated attempts to maintain unrealistic standards of readiness in a force not structured to support a myriad of Operations Other Than War (OOTW). The high operations tempo, combined with force reductions and restructuring required to keep pace with technological change, diverted funding from critical home-station training. "Do more with less" became a common and cynical expression in many operational commands. Service members, feeling over-committed supporting ill-defined missions, poorly compensated (in comparison to civilian counterparts enjoying the benefits of an expanding economy) and under resourced, appear frustrated at what is perceived as a lack of support from senior leadership. Anecdotal evidence indicates that senior leaders are not perceived as acting and speaking forcefully on behalf of the military in obtaining resources, setting priorities and articulating degraded readiness in some first-to-fight units.

The issues of resources is clearly stressing soldiers and certainly does not serve as a career incentive for those currently serving or those considering the military as a career choice.

For the Army, the consequences are clear. If this trend continues, not only will organizational climates continue to deteriorate, but also the Army's underlying culture will evolve as traditional values lose their relevance as soldiers adapt to the leadership vacuum.

I. FAMILY BALANCE / SUPPORT

Military culture also shapes military lifestyles and the family environment. The closeness between the family and the military is basic to military culture (Sarkasian, 1999, p. 60). In the military profession, as perhaps no other, lifestyle and responsibility extend to an individual's family. The military profession becomes a total way of life, not only for the professional, but also for his or her family.

Among the many values that soldiers desire in an organization is a work environment that allows them to maintain the appropriate concerns for the needs of the service, society and the individual without discounting any of the three. Particularly important is their concern that the organization recognizes the importance of their families and the soldier's concern for their health and well-being

Analysis

Army War College Students (Mean = 4.44) view their ability to balance family and professional responsibilities more favorably than Company Grade Officers (Mean = 4.34) (See Table 1). The difference in views is not statistically different [t(887) = 1.39, p > .05].

MCCS Survey Statements	War College Student Mean	War College Student S.D.	Junior Officer Mean	Junior Officer S.D.	Significant P<.05
24. I can do well in this unit and still devote sufficient time to family life.	3.74	1.38	3.97	1.38	Yes
51. When we are deployed, families have access to a support system...	4.62	1	4.35	1.21	Yes
57. My family would support my making the armed forces a career.	5.1	0.949	4.76	1.33	Yes

TABLE 10 COMPONENTS OF THE FAMILY BALANCE / SUPPORT INDEX

Again, the results are hardly surprising. Both groups register significant dissatisfaction with their ability to balance the demands of their careers and family life. Even a cursory literature review provides sufficient evidence that current operations tempo experienced by most units leaves little time for family priorities. Interestingly enough, War College students have a more negative view of the time available to devote to family and personal life. This finding reinforces emerging beliefs that many junior officers are leaving the military because they are dissatisfied with military life, specifically the operations tempo that keeps them deployed in operational or training environments for extended periods. Officers are forced to make a choice between loyalty to the institution or to their family. In the end, the military loses with either the officer departing the Service or providing a lesser degree of commitment to mission accomplishment. If this trend continues, it may well impact on the Army's underlying culture of loyal and selfless service.

J. PAY AND ALLOWANCES

"Pay and Allowances" generally refers to a soldier's quality of life and may in large measure color the perceptions of the soldier towards the institution. It is an important aspect the Army's organizational climate. The issue directly affects morale and retention issues within the Service. Soldiers have a reasonable expectation that their leadership will provide for a reasonable quality of life in exchange for the sacrifices that they make in serving the nation.

Analysis

Army War College Students (Mean = 3.57) view pay and allowance issues more favorably than Company Grade Officers (Mean = 3.44) (See Table 1). The difference in views of the two groups is not statistically significant [t(403.85) = 1.73, p > .05].

MCCS Survey Statements	War College Student Mean	War College Student S.D.	Junior Officer Mean	Junior Officer S.D.	Significant P<.05
49. Military income allows me to provide adequately for my family.	4.4	1.13	3.86	1.48	Yes
65. Married and single personnel ...have similar qualities of life.	4.03	1.15	3.84	1.31	No
66. I receive pay, allowances...comparable to civilians with my skills...	2.61	1.37	2.54	1.51	No
69. My standard of living is as good as...others my age not in the armed forces.	3.25	1.31	3.58	1.52	Yes

TABLE 11 COMPONENTS OF THE PAY AND ALLOWANCES INDEX

Of the issues examined in the study, this variable drew the most negative responses from both groups. The officer corps perceives that its pay and benefits and overall quality of life are not comparable to equivalent groups in civilian life. In short, it is believed that reasonable quality of life issues are not being met. If this perception is not addressed, in the long term the Army will continue to have significant difficulties not only recruiting new members, but also retaining those who have met their initial or subsequent service obligations.

K. RACIAL/GENDER ISSUES

Soldiers reflect the diversity of American society. The nature of the Army's mission demands mechanisms for harnessing diversity to forge cohesive organizations based on a common understanding of the institution's core values.

The Army is a diverse institution. As of FY 1999, the Army was 59.2% white, 26.5% African American, 7.6% Hispanic and 6.7% other ethnic groups (Caldera, p. 44.). Fifty-five percent of the active Army, approximately 263,000 soldiers are married. Approximately 36,500 more are single parents (Caldera, p. 48.)

Racial diversity and gender integration are complex and controversial issues. This study takes a very superficial examination of the general attitudes and perceptions of a specific selection of the officer corps to gain some insights as to how these issues may be affecting unit cohesion, effectiveness and ultimately Service cultures.

Analysis

Army War College Students (Mean = 4.58) share the same views of race and gender issues as Company Grade Officers (Mean = 4.54) (See Table 1). The differences are not statistically significant [$t(883) = .70$, $p > .05$].

MCCS Survey Statements	War College Student Mean	War College Student S.D.	Junior Officer Mean	Junior Officer S.D.	Significant P<.05
35. Male members of units...would carry their share of the load in wartime...	5.25	0.717	4.98	0.864	Yes
37. Female members of units...would carry their share of the load in wartime...	4.67	1.11	4.24	1.26	Yes
73. Single parents are able to carry their share of duties...	3.54	1.18	3.68	1.33	No
75. This unit does not have a problem with racial discrimination.	4.79	0.966	4.78	1.06	No
76. This unit does not have problems with sexual misbehavior/discrimination.	4.62	1.03	4.67	1.21	No

TABLE 12 COMPONENTS OF THE RACE GENDER INDEX

In general, both groups hold similar positive views of racial and gender issues. The one issue that registered a negative response concerned the ability of single parents to care for their children and still pull their fare share of duties and deployments. The consensus of both groups appears to be that single soldiers cannot balance the demands of single parenthood and a military career. Unit cohesion may be affected in that single and married soldiers pull a disproportionate share to compensate for the soldiers that cannot perform their duty due to their parenting responsibilities. For the Army, its good intentions of accommodating single parents in the force may actually erode unit cohesion and may actually reduce unit effectiveness.

Officers generally have a positive view of racial integration in the Services. Although the response was less positive than would expect, one may conclude that the officer corps remains sensitive to the issues and recognizes their importance. Overall, complacent attitudes in regards to racial issues are not an issue for the Officer Corps .

In terms of gender integration, the War College students have a more positive view of women serving in the military.

L. OPERATIONS OTHER THAN WAR (OOTW)

Military organizations are not the rigid, hierarchical and unchanging bureaucracies they are often portrayed as. Militaries have adapted well or poorly to their changing environments in peace and war.

In their essay, *The Post Modern Military*, Charles Moskos and James Burk (1994) trace the development of the American military from the "modern" mass army (associated with universal male conscription, masculine virtues and national patriotism), to a "high tech", smaller professional armed force that relies on its reserves to accomplish its missions. They argue that warfare fundamentally changed its character in the Post-Cold War era. According to the authors, wars in the post-modern era between nations will be replaced by intra-state warfare, in which national boundaries will no longer hold a central

place. Terrorism and ethnic violence will be the post-modern mode of war involving tasks for which the conventional military is ill prepared to cope. During the Cold War, a large military provided a measure of deterrence, yet deterrence loses its meaning with post-modern threats and what constitutes the military's mission is now subject to revision. To support their argument, they cite the myriad of peacekeeping, and humanitarian relief operations the military has engaged in since 1991. What these missions share in common is an emphasis on non-war fighting military missions. Burk and Moskos believe that non-war fighting missions are now and will continue to be the role of the Armed Forces.

If their analysis is correct, what are the implications for the military culture? Do the elements of military culture change if the purpose for which societies raise, support and maintain armies change? Does war fighting still determine the "central beliefs, values and complex symbolic formations that define military culture?" If one accepts the assumption that war fighting functionally defines the military's culture, what are the implications for the Army's culture? Will a change in focus produce a significant change in the "warrior spirit" or ethos in the Officer Corps? Has the Officer Corps accepted the emerging non-traditional roles and missions?

A review of the perceptions and attitudes of serving officers may provide insights as to how the military culture may be evolving due to new roles and missions.

MCCS Survey Statements	War College Student Mean	War College Student S.D.	Junior Officer Mean	Junior Officer S.D.	Significant P<.05
28. ...it is appropriate for us to be involved in a variety of operations...	4.25	1.15	4.26	1.21	No
43. The essential mission ...is to be prepared to win in combat.	5.49	0.774	5.29	1.03	Yes

TABLE 13 COMPONENTS OF MILITARY OPERATIONS OTHER THAN WAR INDEX

Analysis

Army war College Students (Mean = 4.25) take a slightly more negative view of Military Operations Other Than War than Company Grade Officers (Mean = 4.26) (See Table 1). The difference in views is not statistically significant [$t(845) = -.80$, $p > .05$].

Officers indicate that they strongly agree with Samuel Huntington's assertion that the "function of a military force is armed combat." (1957, p. 11) On the whole, the officers only "slightly" agree with the assertion that the United States military should be involved in other operations that span the continuum of conflict.

There are two ways of viewing these results.

First, one could interpret these results as an indication that the traditional "warrior ethic" remains imbued in the officer corps, despite the continued participation in Operations Other Than War. Those that would support this interpretation would argue that the primary duties of a military officer include organizing, equipping and training the force and directing operations in and out of combat. Peace, humanitarian and domestic support operations are best left to those organizations more culturally suited to those efforts.

A second interpretation would view the findings as a problem for our military. In short, the current military ethic, steeped in war fighting, is not in line with the view that war has fundamentally changed its character. One could argue that the traditional "warrior ethic" (or culture) ill equips the officer corps with the skills and competencies to manage the challenges they face in non-war fighting environments. In short the findings may be interpreted as demonstrating the officer corps reluctance to adopt and change with the evolving international security environment.

M. SOCIETAL COMPARISONS

Much is written concerning the perceived military-civilian "culture gap." The question often asked is there a need to reconcile the military's distinctive culture and mission with America's democratic ideals and practices? One of the most influential studies conducted by the Triangle Institute for Security Studies (TISS), examined whether there is a gap between civilian society and the military, and if so, whether differing values, opinions, perspectives and experiences harm military effectiveness and civil-military cooperation. (Feaver & Kohn, 1999)

This study surveyed the attitudes and perceptions of military "elites" (defined as officers selected for the courses in residence at staff and war colleges and new flag officers) and compared their responses to those of the civilian elite (selected from names drawn from Who's Who and other names drawn from similar works). "Elite" military officers were chosen as it is generally recognized in organizational cultural studies that senior leadership is the custodian and shaper of organizational culture.

The TISS study concluded that concerns about a growing gap between military and civilian worlds are justified but should not be exaggerated. Some differences are natural and even functional deriving from the special missions of the military to prevail on the battlefield. Other gaps simply indicate that the values, perspectives and opinions of people in uniform differ from this in the elite and general civilian public. The study concludes "not all attitude gaps are dangerous, nor are all convergences between two cultures functional."

Analysis

Army War College Students (Mean = 4.68) view societal comparisons more favorably than Company Grade Officers (Mean = 4.52) (See Table 1). The differences are statistically significant [$t(430.73) = 3.25$, $p < .05$].

MCCS Survey Statements	War College Student Mean	War College Student S.D.	Junior Officer Mean	Junior Officer S.D.	Significant P<.05
94. Most civilians have a great deal of respect for the armed forces.	4.13	1.27	4.09	1.19	No
95. Society would be better off if it adopted military values...	4.65	0.997	4.61	1.16	No
96. Most members of the armed forces respect civilian society.	4.79	0.906	4.32	1.05	Yes
97. People in my hometown have a high regard for America's armed forces.	4.61	0.916	4.62	1.07	No
98. ...I socialize with civilians as well as with military friends.	4.88	0.951	5.04	0.94	Yes
99. Public service...should be required of all American citizens	5.03	1.06	4.49	1.67	Yes

TABLE 14 COMPONENTS OF THE SOCIETAL COMPARISONS INDEX

War College students and company grade officers appear to reinforce aspects of the Triangle Institute study that raised the issue of a growing military - civilian culture gap. Both groups' moderate responses appear to support concerns that differing opinions, perspectives and values could harm civil - military cooperation and potentially military effectiveness. The TISS study concluded that military "elites" expressed great pessimism about the moral health of civilian society and that the military "elites" believed that civilian society would be better off if it adopted more of the military's values and behaviors (Feaver &, Kohn, 1999). Although the officers in this study expressed agreement with this concept, agreement was not total nor was it strongly expressed.

War College students and company grade officers hold divergent views towards the idea of universal public service. War College students favor the concept while junior officers expressed slight agreement. This may be attributable to the fact that the value of selfless service may be more imbued in the War College population that on average has approximately ten additional years of public service experience.

Overall, the responses indicate that officer corps does respect civilian society. However, the fact remains that responses to many components of this index were not strongly expressed. Additional research is required to determine if a trend is developing in officer attitudes that may contribute to a genuine military-civil culture gap.

VI. SUMMARY

This study began with the hypothesis that War College students and Company Grade officers would hold differing views concerning various aspects of military culture. The perceptions expressed paint a picture of a military culture that is clearly stressed by changes in the post Cold War strategic environment, changes in technology, demographics and significantly reduced resources.

Despite significant differences in age, experience and education, the study found that War College students and junior officers share similar views on a wide range of issues. Both groups expressed positive views for certain indices of military culture. War College students and Company Grade officers revealed a strong commitment to traditional military values such as pride in military service and a willingness to sacrifice self for accomplishment of the mission. Both groups expressed respect for civilian society (though not strongly) and still firmly support and value race and gender initiatives in the military Services. Both believe that war fighting remains the core function of the military.

War College students and junior officers also shared similar negative views towards certain indices of military culture. Both expressed strong disappointment in the military's support of quality of life issues such as pay and allowances. The officer corps clearly articulated concerns about an inability to balance the demands of a military career and family life.

Most troubling are the negative views concerning the current state of officer leadership in units and the level of trust exhibited military members. Officers indicate that many of the problems associated with poor leadership and levels of trust may be traced to poor morale stemming from too many unexpected and poorly defined missions, perceptions of a substandard quality of life for military families and chronic shortages of personnel and resources to accomplish the mission.

However, War College students and Company Grade officers also disagreed on a number of important indices. Junior officers consistently held more negative views of those issues that impact organizational climates. Perceptions of "zero defect" climates pervade their responses. In particular, the level of distrust expressed in senior leadership was more pronounced in Company Grade officers. Finally, junior officers were significantly more dissatisfied with the level of resources (training opportunities, equipment, funds and personnel) than their former battalion commanders. The implication is that senior leadership may be "out of touch" with conditions in their units.

VII. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ARMY

Given the enormous demographic and technological changes in American society, and the Army's participation in countless non-traditional missions in the last decade, it should not come as a surprise to anyone to find that the Army is also stressed by the changes in its environment; many of which are highlighted in this study. Although the data contained in the study is not Service specific, the issues addressed have relevance to the institution. An army, after all, is a reflection of the society it serves.

If the Army is to adapt to an environment that experienced significant change in the last decade, then the Army must rely on *cultural factors* to determine whether changes are in agreement with the essence and purpose of the institution. "During periods of significant external change, public

organizations simply cannot proceed with the learning and adaptation that is necessary for effectiveness without a very clear *vision* (italics added) of organizational essence and purpose." (Snider, Nagel, & Pfaff, 1999, p.17)

Visions are most important when people are ready to pay attention, when they are "consciously or unconsciously hurting." (Schein, 1992, p. 301) This study hints that the officer corps is troubled and the need for a credible Army vision is acute. Many of the issues highlighted in this project are in many ways associated to a *missions-resources mismatch.*

The current Army Vision is "Soldiers on point for the Nation...Persuasive in Peace, Invincible in War." (Caldera, xiii). The Army's goal is to ensure that it fulfills its Title X responsibilities in meeting the requirements of the National Military Strategy. To make this vision a reality, the Army intends to transform itself into a full spectrum force capable of demonstrating dominance at every point of the spectrum of operations.

This vision perpetuates the current mission –resource mismatch on a number of counts.

To begin with, the current Army vision emphasizes a force dominant "at every point on the spectrum of operations." (Caldera, xiii) Yet the data in this study suggests that the Officer Corps still believes that war fighting still defines the essence of a military organization. Although the study indicates that the officers accept Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW), it is not prepared to have these missions define the purpose and essence of an army or as its vision of the future.

Secondly, the resources, both financial and human, are not sufficient to place traditional war fighting and MOOTW within the core purpose of the Army. The Army simply cannot continue on its present course of placing equal priority on all anticipated missions without its culture eroding. The growing gap in trust and confidence between junior officers and senior leadership is but one of many examples of the effects of the "do more with less" philosophy adopted by senior leadership to cope with the "welter of missions" it is expected to support. The multiplicity of missions caused by changes in the Army's environment and the paucity of resources available to train to unrealistic readiness standards in the source of much dissatisfaction in the officer corps. The current operations tempo, coupled with the Army's failure to adequately address quality of life issues (particularly pay and benefits), adds to the erosion of the confidence soldiers have in their leadership.

Additionally, the Army current vision takes a "band-aid" approach to address some of its resource problems. As the Army attempts to transform itself into a strategically responsive force that is dominant across the full spectrum of operations, it will begin to man its war fighting organizations at 100% of their personnel authorizations in order to address chronic personnel shortage issues. But as the Army's personnel strength is fixed, this effort will come at the cost of personnel strengths in support units. These units are precisely those units best organized and positioned to conduct MOOTW. Given the current MOOTW focus of the Army, the net result is that those units most likely to deploy will do so at a reduced state of readiness. The conditions that are causing much of the dissatisfaction among officer will continue to be perpetuated under the current Army vision.

The implications for the Army are clear. As stated earlier, it is the officer corps that conceptualizes, leads and facilitates innovations that lead to changes in culture. The Army's leadership must create a vision and organizational climate that maintains its war fighting focus, while training and adapting to future regional wars. But for this to occur, Army leaders must resolve the resource-missions gap in ways that are credible to its officer corps. As much of the Army still reflects its Cold War posture, there are a number of ways to effect change. These options include:

- Obtaining additional resources
- Gaining relief from the National Military Strategy's guidance requiring the Army to be prepared for two Major Regional Contingencies (MRC's)
- Reducing force structure
- Reducing unneeded infrastructure
- Specializing roles within active and reserve components
- Prioritizing resources (Tiered Readiness)

A credible vision, realistic in its premises and coherent in its forces, missions and resources will remedy the conditions that have contributed to the low morale and diminishing trust of senior leadership documented in this project. Army leadership is responsible for preserving and protecting what is best about their service culture and changing those aspects of the Army's culture that must change if the Service is to successfully meet its future challenges.

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