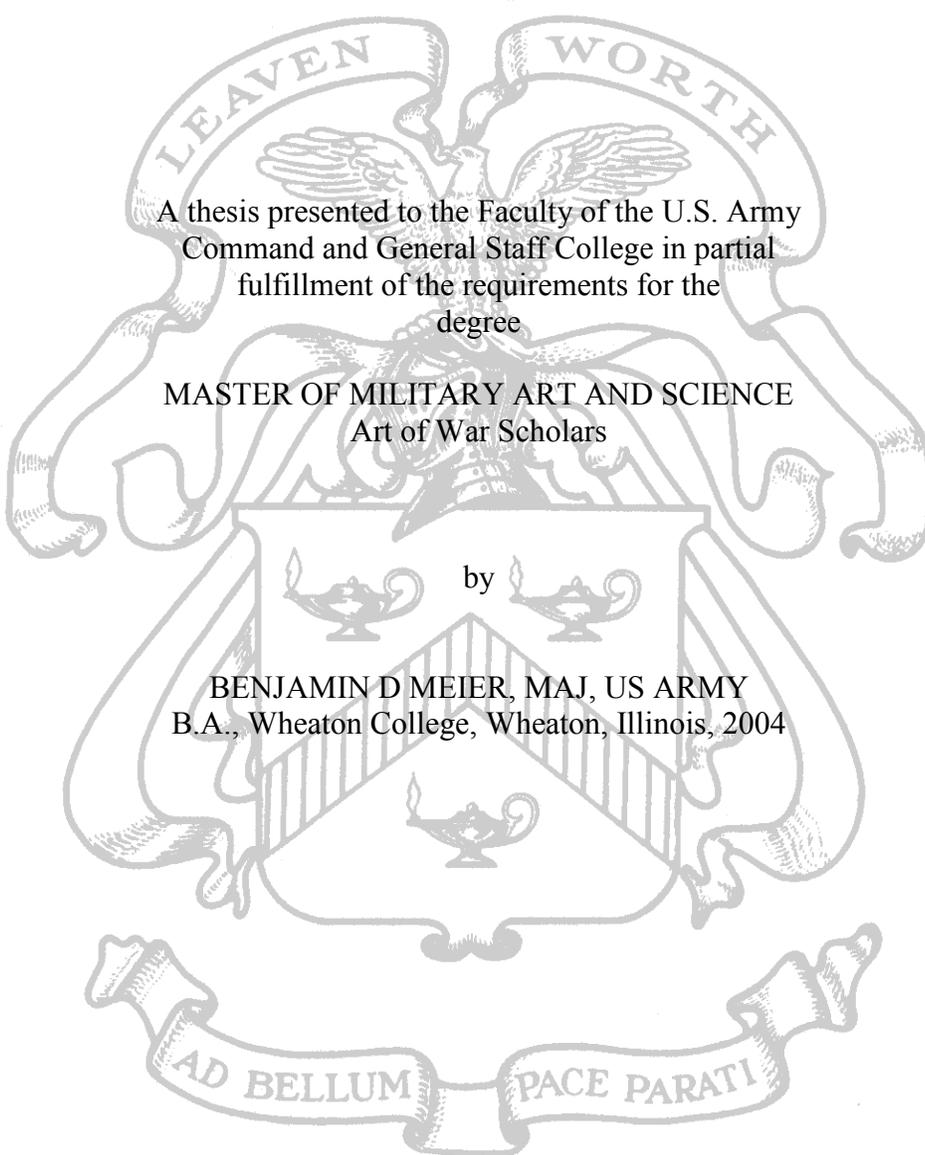


THE ARMY ETHIC—INCHOATE BUT SUFFICIENT



A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army  
Command and General Staff College in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE  
Art of War Scholars

by

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## ABSTRACT

THE ARMY ETHIC—INCHOATE BUT SUFFICIENT, by Major Benjamin D. Meier, 92 pages.

The Army's inchoate professional Ethic attempts to fill a significant gap in the Army's attempt to maintain professional status. It demonstrates the intentionality to address ethical failures by promulgating an aspirational Ethic focused on "The Trustworthy Army Profession" who has character, competence, and commitment. Is the Army Ethic sufficient for the Army profession? The Army Ethic passes screening criteria from an external literature review, which makes it a viable option as an Ethic. It also does better than the current, inaccessible Ethic with the evaluation criteria. Based on the research, the Army Ethic is sufficient for the Army profession. However, the Ethic could improve in several ways.

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## ACRONYMS

|      |  |
|------|--|
| ADP  | Army Doctrine Publication                |
| ADRP | Army Doctrine Reference Publication      |
| AE   | Army Ethic                               |
| AEWP | Army Ethic White Paper                   |
| CAPE | Center for the Army Profession and Ethic |
| UCMJ | Uniform Code of Military Justice         |
| U.S. | United States                            |

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

There is widespread feeling that the Army has generated an environment that rewards relatively insignificant, short-term indicators of success, and disregards or discourages the growth of the long-term qualities of moral and ethical strength on which the future of the Army depends.

— U.S. Army War College 1970 Study on Professionalism

#### Overview

The status of the U.S. Army as a profession hinges on the trust of the citizens of the United States. If the Army loses that trust, it loses its status as a professional army. The citizens of the United States lose trust in the profession if it demonstrates incompetence, poor character, and poor commitment. The most important of these is competence—getting the job done and in the right way (Snider 2010, 19). For the professional, the profession-unique functions define his service to society and where he primarily seeks to do things well. For the Army professional, whose unique functions include taking lives and giving up lives in the application of landpower, greater competence means greater autonomy and greater capacity to preserve American lives and interests. A professional ethic outlines the right way by describing aspirational behavior, prescribing right behaviors, and proscribing unacceptable behavior (Hartle 2004, 30).

Senior Army leaders identified a gap in their ability to communicate and equip the force to do the job the right way, and published the Army Ethic White Paper (AEWP) to set the conditions in the force to publish an Army Ethic (U.S. Army 2014a, 5). Is the Army Ethic (AE) sufficient for the U.S. Army to improve as a profession?

## Problem

There is no fully articulated, stand alone Army Ethic. Because of its dispersion in oaths, creeds, national documents, and in the law, the Army Ethic is inaccessible, misunderstood, and not universally applicable (U.S. Army 2014a, 2). This means that Soldiers cannot easily use it to guide them in ethical decisionmaking, leaders cannot easily adjudicate ethical violations that are not illegal, and the Army cannot easily cull the profession of ethical violators or develop the profession ethically.

American public opinion considers military officers one of the most trusted and ethical groups in the nation (Jones and Saad 2013, 3). The Army has maintained this high degree of trust in spite of recent ethical failures while deployed, in garrison, and in light of the evidence of ethical fading (Wong and Gerras 2015, 33). While deployed, the Army has dealt with egregious *jus in bello* violations at Abu Ghraib, Mahmudiyah, and Panjwai. The Department of Defense Office of General Council regularly updates the *Encyclopedia of Ethical Failure*, which includes numerous stories about Soldiers failing to do the right thing with government resources (2014). These ethical failures are not limited to regular Soldiers. The American public also has increasing concern about senior officer ethical violations (Shanker 2012). On one hand, because these deployment and garrison ethical violations illustrate offenses that were also illegal, a professional could easily explain them away as isolated, individual acts by people who knew better and should have done their duty.

On the other hand, some see the problem as an increasing normalization of deviance. A recent study shows that “untruthfulness is surprisingly common in the U.S. military even though members of the profession are loath to admit it” (Wong and Gerras

2015, ix). Wong and Gerras attribute it to “ethical fading,” the process of watering down the ethical implications of a moral decision to justify wrongdoing (2015, 17). The deceit they describe is not the problem of a few deviants; it is a persistent, ubiquitous problem.

If the Army can seemingly maintain its status of trust with the American people in light of both isolated illegal behaviors and an apparent profession-wide ethical fading, why does the Army need a fully articulated Ethic? First, the Army is dual-natured as both “a hierarchical bureaucracy *and*, if it qualifies, a profession of arms” (Snider 2010, 17). It is inherently and by default a bureaucracy, but it is only a profession based on the decision of the American people to allow autonomous professional activities and the intentional movement of the Army into the behavior of a profession (Snider 2010, 17). A professional Ethic will help propel the Army intentionally toward professional behavior. It shows the intentionality of the Army leadership to maintain a professional status by defining ideal behavior that maintains trust with the American people.

In addition, the Army needs a fully articulated Ethic because the aggregate effect of ethical failures and ethical fading on trust increase over time. Even though it may appear that public confidence has not been affected by recent ethical problems, failure to demonstrate intentionality to fix the problems will eventually result in lost trust, lost autonomy, and lost professional status. The Army needs a clearly articulated Ethic to maintain its professional status.

The Army’s current state, marked by ethical violations in the profession and a decrease its trust, is not acceptable to Army leaders. General Odierno describes the end state as performing “our *Duty* according to our Ethic. Doing so reinforces *Trust* within the profession and with the American people” (U.S. Army 2014a, i). The Army Ethic

White Paper describes the operational approach and provides the Army Ethic as the way to intentionally propel the Army toward professional behavior.

### Primary Research Question

Based on the Army's need for a clearly articulated Ethic, this thesis will answer this question: does the Army Ethic White Paper espouse an Army Ethic sufficient for the Army Profession? The Army seeks to improve its status as a profession by promulgating the Army Ethic. The key to improving this status is keeping trust with the American people.

### Secondary Research Questions

In order to answer the primary question, this thesis will identify the professional and structural requirements of an Ethic for the Army, specify the qualifications for "sufficient," determine the content of the AEWP, and evaluate how well the AEWP meets the requirements and specifications. These secondary questions provide the framework and the criteria for evaluating the Army Ethic. In other words, the Army as a profession of arms has professional and structural requirements for an Ethic that differ in varying degrees from bureaucratic, universal, and other professional Ethics. What are those unique requirements? The unique requirements will determine the structure of an Ethic for any profession of arms. Because this thesis focuses on the U.S. Army, the next question narrows the focus by determining the specific qualifications of "sufficient" for the U.S. Army. What is sufficient for an Army Ethic now may be different for a different country, sister service, or era. The third question temporarily leaves the question of sufficiency in general and examines the content of the AEWP to determine what it

actually posits. The last question compares the content of the AEWP to the current Ethic and determines whether it satisfies the professional and structural requirements as well as the qualifications for sufficiency. Several assumptions facilitate this thesis' brevity and clarity.

### Assumptions

First, the Army defines a professional and argues that Army professionals are in the Profession of Arms. This thesis assumes that the Army correctly defines the professional as “a member of the Army Profession who meets the Army’s certification criteria of competence, character, and commitment” (U.S. Army 2013a, v). It also assumes that the Army meets the criteria for a profession, “a trusted self-policing and relatively autonomous vocation whose members develop and apply expert knowledge as human expertise to render an essential service to society” (U.S. Army 2013a, 1-1). Finally, this thesis assumes that “maintenance of trust between the Army profession and the American people is critical to its legitimacy” (Allen and Braun 2013, 73). Even though there is a debate on whether junior Soldiers are professionals, this thesis stands with the Army’s current definition that the status was extended “through professional development to warrant officers, noncommissioned officers, and Army Civilians” (U.S. Army 2013a, 1-4).

Second, the Army has an Ethic. It is not accessible, commonly understood, and universally applicable because it is dispersed in numerous documents and implicit in the culture, traditions, and beliefs. An ethic is how an organization wants its members to act for the good of the institution. Even though it is not in a single document, there is an Army Ethic.

Third, universal moral truths may exist, but debating their existence is beyond the scope of this thesis. Aristotle recognizes that this absolute may exist, but “it evidently is something which cannot be realized in action or attained by man. But the good which we are now seeking must be attainable” (Aristotle 1989, 13). Because there is no agreement on the exact content of universal moral values and because the Army Ethic does not need to be universal in its scope, this paper avoids the question by looking at what virtues, values, or principles benefit the profession the most. The proposed values may make some lists of proposed universal moral values. This thesis’ primary concern is with the sufficiency, or utility, of the Army Ethic for the profession in achieving national interests (Cook 2000, 118). To that end, instead of aiming broadly on what everyone everywhere ought to do, it sharpens the focus on what U.S. Army professionals ought to do.

Finally, even though this thesis evaluates the AEWP on the “effectiveness” and “utility” for the profession, it does not presuppose a utilitarian approach to normative ethics. Every normative approach has utility toward some end. For duty ethics, “moral goodness endues man with an immediate, inner, absolute moral worth,” so that moral worth is the end of doing good (Kant 1969, 282). For virtue ethics, “Happiness, then, is something final and self-sufficient, and is the end of action” (Aristotle 1969, 58). Utilitarianism holds that “actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness” (Mill 1969, 347). Every normative ethic has utility for some end. The Army profession relies on trust, the primary currency of the profession, and its dependence upon competence, commitment, and character (U.S. Army 2013a, 2-1). The Army codifies the Army Ethic for its utility in maintaining a professional status, but the Ethic does not require utilitarianism.

## Definitions

Any inquiry into ethics requires extensive clarification of terms. MacIntyre describes the modern tradition in which “[the] heterogeneity of human goods is such that their pursuit cannot be reconciled in any single moral order” without that attempt turning into a totalitarian straitjacket (MacIntyre 2007, 142). This general disagreement about the nature of ethics and morality means that many terms have a broad range of possible meaning. This thesis uses the following stipulative definitions.

For this thesis, morals, morality, and moral behavior refer to the principles of right and wrong in reference to individual belief and behavior. Ethics, ethical, and ethical behavior refer to an institution, profession, or group understanding of what it expects from its members. For example, a Soldier may enter the Army with a personal morality based on a religious ethical system. The Army expects him to adopt the Army Ethic into his personal morality. When used as a proper noun, “Ethic” will refer to the Army’s Ethic (Barrett 2012, 4).

Moral principles describe claims that a certain type of behavior is right or wrong. Moral principles can be either universal or contributory to the overall rightness of an action. The former claims that lying is always wrong. The latter claims that lying makes an action worse, but overall the action may be better given the contribution of other contributory principles, such as protecting human life or creating happiness (Rachels and Rachels 2011, 135). This thesis uses “principles” to refer to universal principles and “values” or “preferences” to refer to contributory principles. The exception is when the literature review cites an author’s use of “principle” that may differ. A value expresses preference or worth. A person or group of people can value something.

ADRP 1 describes competence as the “ability to perform his/her duties successfully and to accomplish the mission with discipline and to standard” (U.S. Army 2013a, Glossary-1). The “what” of competence requires mission accomplishment and successful performance of duties. Discipline, or adherence to a code of behavior, describes how competence looks ethically, while “to standard” recognizes the technical and ethical “how” of competence. In this way, competence describes a person or organization’s ability to achieve mission success by executing their functions well and in the right way.

### Limitations and Delimitations

Several limitations and delimitations apply. Limitations are unavoidable constraints. Limitations include timeliness and philosophical language. A key limitation is that this thesis evaluates the Army Ethic White Paper while the Army completes its revisions of the Army Ethic and prepares to publish the Army Ethic in doctrine. This thesis will not evaluate drafts of ADRP 1 or the publication of ADRP 1 after 1 February 2015. In that sense, this thesis will evaluate an Army Ethic that may look different in its final, official form. Another limitation is the use of language in philosophy. “The nature of an ethos precludes completely reducing it to words” (U.S. Army 2013a, 1-4). Even with carefully defined terms, the language of inductive logic evokes impressions and emotions toward the end of a probable conclusion. This contrasts the potential ease in arriving at solid, deductive conclusions through statistics. In other words, “True philosophy is too modest to hope to dissipate the mystery; it only hopes to encounter it fruitfully” (Maguire 1978, 36).

Delimitations are constraints imposed by this thesis. Delimitations include the scope, *jus ad bellum*, cultural relativism, descriptive ethics, and implementation of the Ethic. First, the scope of this thesis is the Army profession in the present day. Because the research and the researcher's background are in the Army, its culture, and its documents, this thesis will not artificially attribute to the broader military what follows from an analysis of the Army. Many or all of the conclusions may apply to the other services, but it is outside the scope of this thesis. For as difficult as it is to assess the current societal culture, it is even more difficult to anticipate how societal and professional cultures will change in the future. This thesis does not attempt to anticipate cultural trajectories outside the framework that history and current experience provide.

Second, reflections on ethics and the military usually center on warfare considerations. The two major categories, taken from Just War theory, look at the morality of war, *jus ad bellum*, and the morality in war, *jus in bello* (Wakin 1986, 220). The former looks at how the nation, through its politicians, decides to go to war. The latter looks at how the individual within the profession conducts himself in war. Even though senior military officials may advise politicians during the decision to go to war, this thesis does not examine the impact of the AE on *jus ad bellum* because the AE applies to the profession, not politicians.

Third, this thesis will not look in depth at cultural relativism and how changes in laws and society's philosophical and ethical preferences will affect the Army ethic in the future. Even though Sarkesian says, "the profession must set clear moral and ethical patterns linked with the best patterns in society," it is outside the scope of this thesis (1981, 2). Closely tied to cultural relativism is the contrast between individual morals,

societal ethics, and professional ethics. Even though this thesis briefly notes the effects of cognitive dissonance, it does not compare “the harmony of individual moral and ethical values, the values of the military profession, and the values of society” (Sarkesian 1981, 18).

Fourth, descriptive ethics, the study of morality expressed by individuals and cultures, sheds some light on the morality exhibited in military archetypes, military heritage, and the American citizen. While this approach provides background and examples, and could be an area for future study, it does not come to bear in this thesis.

Finally, this thesis will use the ends, ways, and means construct as a way to assess an Ethic. The primary means, or resources, by which the Army will implement the Ethic are education and personal example. Even though the Army should address how it will implement the Ethic, education does not inherently address the nature or content of the Ethic. This thesis will not significantly address the means of implementing the Ethic.

### Conclusion

The Army does not have a clear Ethic. Its implicit Ethic depends on rules, or a duty ethic. Army professionals hurt their professional status through aberrant war crimes, General Officer scandals, and its near universal ethical fading. The Army can overcome these breaches in trust through an intentional articulation of an Ethic. Does the Army Ethic White Paper espouse an Army Ethic sufficient for the Army Profession? The secondary questions provide the framework for answering that question. Chapter 2 will examine existing literature on the Army Ethic, which should provide insights into the secondary questions. Chapter 3 will explain the methodology. Chapter 4 will address the

secondary questions, evaluate the AE, and answer the primary question. Chapter 5 will provide recommendations for decision-makers and future researchers.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The prestige of the professions, their economic and political independence, derive not only from the special expertise of their members, and from their control over acquisition and application of this knowledge, but also from the group solidarity that is reinforced and expressed in special ethics and codes of behavior, set apart from the morality of the common person.

— Goldman, *The Moral Foundations of Professional Ethics*

#### Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to determine the sufficiency of the AEWPs proposed Ethic for the Army profession. First, this chapter will look at the history of the Army Ethic's development alongside the Army's professional identity. Then it will examine existing literature on professional differentiation, the purpose of an Ethic, the functions of an Ethic, and proposed structures for an Ethic. Each section examines professional ethics in general and then moves toward describing the structure of a professional military ethic.

#### History of the Development of the Profession and Ethic

Even though the Army never explicitly published an Ethic, the Army's implicit Ethic developed concurrent with the development of the country, and "its spirit is resident in a number of documents" (Moten 2010, 1). Pre-Revolutionary and Revolutionary military service was universal by the necessity of survival, but not professional due to the colonial fear of oppression and standing armies (Moten 2010, 3). The Constitution created the complex civil-military relationship between the military and the Legislative and Executive Branches. It also created a "natural reverence for the rule of law and not men" by requiring officers to swear an oath to the Constitution (Moten 2010, 4). Through

the oath, officers voluntarily subordinated themselves and their interests to the Constitution. By extension, they were committed to the interests of the people of the United States as expressed through elected officials.

Until the war of 1812, the country depended upon state militias. Its national officers served sporadically, which gave them little identification with the profession. These officers mimicked the European officers' social and honor-based customs that resulted in dueling and its professionalism-retarding effects for many years (Moten 2010, 4). This changed, along with the increasing influence of the United States Military Academy, with the post 1812 reforms, which included a long-service officer corps, a standing army, schools of practice, and military journals (Moten 2010, 5). Because of their increased focus on competence and excellence, officers considered themselves professional, apolitical servants.

The Mexican War provided the professionalizing army a chance to demonstrate its growing competence. The Civil War demonstrated the potential of a volunteer army led by professional officers. It also identified in the defection of a third of the officer corps to the South, the failure to produce pervasive loyalty to the Constitution and the government (Moten 2010, 6). As it increasingly demonstrated characteristics of total war, Lincoln approved the first set of codified ethical guidelines in General Order No. 100. In keeping with Constitutional values, this order explicitly acknowledged and protected "religion and morality; strictly private property; the persons of the inhabitants" (1899, 152). Even though it read like a list of rules, it highlighted the importance of right behavior, competence, commitment to the nation, and obedience to civil authority (Moten 2010, 7).

The professionalism and the Ethic continued to grow as the small post-Civil War army grew into a large volunteer army and then shrunk again through both World Wars. Army officers described the Army as a “Profession of Arms” as early as 1924 (Colby 1924, cover). Sociologists, however, did not begin categorizing and describing professions until the early 1930s (Finnerty 2013, 7). In 1948, the Army published the pamphlet “Leadership,” which elevated competence so highly that it states, “obviously, everything else in the military service, even the welfare of the men, must be subordinated to this” (U.S. Army 1948, 2). It also describes character, in terms of duty, honor, and country, as the primary prerequisite for leadership (U.S. Army 1948, 6). Finally, it gives ten qualities of leadership, which include the ethical values of manner, courage, dependability, justice, and enthusiasm (U.S. Army 1948, 27). A year after the publication of *Leadership*, President Truman approved the *Uniform Code of Military Justice* (UCMJ), which made parts of the Army Ethic into law (U.S. Department of Defense 1949).

Samuel Huntington’s 1957 *The Soldier and the State* propelled the debate on the Army profession and ethic into academic circles, where it continued to develop, especially after the Vietnam War, the advent of the all-volunteer force, and the increased number of women into the service (Brown and Collins 1980, x-xi). The civilian academic recognition of the Army as a potential profession indicated a growing trust by the American people and their willingness to recognize the Army as a profession. This recognition did not come quickly. A key expert on professions and the professional ethic, Alan Goldman, did not consider the military enough of a profession to include it in his 1980 analysis of professional ethics (300-305).

In 1970, Chief of Staff of the Army, General Westmoreland, ordered the U.S. Army War College to conduct a study on professionalism. As part of the study, the authors struggled with identifying a baseline for the profession's values. They identified from interviews two sets of values. One was pragmatic while the other was humanistic. The research showed that the Army focused on performance and duty above "ideal" values (U.S. Army War College 1970, B-6). They determined that "there is a need for a statement of professional values which will be at the same time both dignified and operable" (U.S. Army War College 1970, B-4).

General Westmoreland promulgated the Officer's Creed as the standard for ethical behavior in the profession (U.S. Army War College 1970, 41). He did not see it as a substitute for the UCMJ or regulations, but "to guide officers in exercising their authority and performing their duties" (U.S. Army War College 1970, 53). It was one page long, and focused on service to the country, duty, competence, commitment, and character characterized by several of Aristotle's virtues (U.S. Army War College 1970, 55). He attempted to bridge the gap between the Army as an exclusively duty and consequence-based ethic and the Army that included virtues in its Ethic.

The Ethic continued to grow with the update in 1990 of the Army's leadership doctrine, which gave courage, candor, competence, and commitment as "the four individual values that all soldiers (leaders and led) are expected to possess" (U.S. Army 1990, 23). In addition to adherence to the values, it also emphasized the importance of "courage, commitment, and competence" in a strong, honorable character (U.S. Army 1990, 25). Finally, it proposes loyalty, duty, selfless service, and integrity as the four elements of professional Army ethics, along with an ethical decisionmaking model (U.S.

Army 1990, 29-31). Even though the Army intended to publish an Army Ethic in FM 100-1, it did not (U.S. Army 1990, 29). Since 1990, there have been several updates to the Army's leadership doctrine, including several aspirational creeds and the seven Army values, but there is still no explicit Ethic (U.S. Army 2013, Appendix B).

This review of the events and historic documents that greatly affected the Army's development as a profession shows that though never promulgated clearly in one place, the Army does have an Ethic of commitment to the Constitution through subordination to civilian authorities, competence in everything it is supposed to do, and character expressed in adherence to law. It is de jure duty-focused, de facto consequence-focused, and ideally virtue-focused.

### Professional Differentiation

What makes a professional Ethic different from a normal Ethic? A normal, or universal, normative Ethic tries to explain how everyone ought to behave. A professional Ethic is fundamentally different from a normal Ethic in its scope and purpose. It attempts to describe what professionals within a profession ought to do and why. This section will look at the literature on whether and how a professional Ethic should be distinct from a normal Ethic. Several experts on professional Ethics, including Goldman and Hartle, use role differentiation to explain this distinction. Goldman examines non-military professions, while Hartle examines the military profession.

Role differentiation is a subcategory of role theory, which identifies a person's behavior, rights, and duties associated with a role in a given social situation (Theodorson and Theodorson 1969, 352). A person's many roles integrate to influence behavior, prioritize roles, and meet expectations (Theodorson and Theodorson 1969, 352-3).

Differentiation describes how a person's role sets him apart from one of the groups with which he interacts (Theodorson and Theodorson 1969, 387). If he is part of the group, he is not differentiated. If he is part of multiple groups, he prioritizes his roles and then interacts with each group accordingly. When his prioritized role affects his decisions in a different role, then he is differentiated to the degree that one role overrides considerations from the other role. If there is complete agreement, there is no differentiation. If one role completely overrides the considerations from the other role, there is full differentiation. If there is partial disagreement, there is partial differentiation.

For example, a citizen who knows about but does not report a murder can be convicted of being an accessory to murder. Citizens should turn in known murderers, but a lawyer representing a known murderer is not expected to provide information that could convict his client. In this case, the lawyer's role is differentiated in that he can do something in his role as a lawyer that he cannot do as a normal citizen. His purpose as a lawyer to protect the rights of his client overrides his function as a citizen to keep society safe. Lawyers are partially differentiated.

Alan Goldman examines the professions of law, law enforcement, politics, and medicine for the degree of differentiation, seeking "whether those in professional roles require special norms and principles to guide their well-intentioned conduct" (Goldman 1980, 1). He posits that though professions have partial differentiation, any Ethic should describe a profession's unique norms in a way that is consistent with the common moral framework (Goldman 1980, 291). In other words, professionals do have unique functions that differentiate them from society. However, the common moral framework should still inform any application of their special function.

What are the Army's unique functions? A mayor would never tell the members of a city to sacrifice themselves to get something done. This is inconceivable to someone outside the military, but a reality to those within (Hartle 2004, 36). Lewis Sorely notes, "the demands of professionalism include subordination of individual desires and even well-being when necessary to meet the needs of the overall enterprise" (1981, 51). The Army's unique functions are these: Soldiers must be prepared to kill and subordinate personal interests to the requirements of the profession as it protects society.

With these functions in mind, Soldiers must weigh the practical and functional considerations of applying lethal effects to accomplish the mission against international law and societal values (Hartle 2004, 168). Even though professional considerations may change the equation of an otherwise easy moral decision, it is not the only consideration (Hartle 2004, 159). Because mission accomplishment cannot be the only consideration in decisionmaking, Soldiers are partially differentiated.

The Army professional is both a citizen and a Soldier. The country asks Soldiers to do things for the good of the country that citizens cannot normally do, which means the professional Soldier is partially differentiated. "Professional considerations alter the balance of moral judgments in ways that would be inappropriate for individuals outside the profession" (Hartle 2004, 229). Because professional Soldiers are differentiated, the Army should have a professional Ethic that is different from a general Ethic and explains how to fulfill its unique societal functions. Because professional Soldiers are partially differentiated, the Army's Ethic should align with societal values.

### ENDS: Purpose of a Professional Ethic

Martin Cook identifies the difference between “ethics *of* military service and ethics *in* military service” (2000, 117; emphasis original). The former is the moral basis of the profession, while the latter explains how an army ought to behave. The Ethic should cover both. The moral basis of the profession should provide the purpose of a professional ethic—what benefits the profession gets from it. The functions of a professional Ethic will describe the ethics in military service—how an ethic should change the profession to achieve the purposes. What is the purpose of a Professional Ethic? This section will look at the purpose of Ethics in general, for a profession in general, and for the Army.

Aristotle describes the highest good and the ultimate end of all activities in terms of an attainable goal (Aristotle 1989, 13). For Aristotle, it is happiness in relation to others (Aristotle 1989, 15). It resides in proper function, and is “an activity of the soul in conformity with excellence or virtue” (Aristotle 1989, 17). There are three components: the end, the function, and its context. The end is happiness. The function is doing the right, or virtuous, thing with excellence. The context is the gentleman of Greek society in Aristotle’s time. Aristotle’s community wants happiness. Given a person’s function and relationship with others, doing the right thing in context and doing it well results in an attainable end that everyone wants. An Ethic is a system that describes right behavior for a purpose.

For professions in general, the community’s end state is excellence in their service to society. A professional Ethic enhances the internal group cohesion and focuses the “pursuit of goals central to professional practice and service, goals with great social

value” (Goldman 1980, 291). Excellence means fulfilling the professional function within the bounds of societal values. Professions should have a moral code to build their prestige, maintain independence, enhance group solidarity, and fulfill their societal function (Goldman 1980, 290-1). Hartle agrees that the purposes of an Ethic are to protect members of the society, enhance the trustworthiness of the professional, and provide warrant for special norms (Hartle 2004, 31-32, 38).

Since the end state of a profession is excellence in its service to society, the other purposes of an Ethic support that end state, and fall out into service internal and service external categories. Internal purposes facilitate competence, and external purposes facilitate trust. Both work together toward the end state. Service internal purposes for an Ethic include enhancing group solidarity and excellence in function fulfillment. The external purposes include enhancing trustworthiness and providing warrant and limits for special norms. The internal purposes enhance the prestige, or trustworthiness of the profession, which maintains professional independence and ultimately lets the profession achieve greater excellence in its function.

The professional achieves greater excellence when his society gives him autonomy to do those special tasks. Society gives that autonomy, that professional label, when they trust the profession. When the profession conducts its functions with excellence, it maintains the trust of the society and allows the profession to continue to work autonomously. This allows the profession to achieve greater excellence. A profession can be justified by the degree to which its ethic guides the profession’s unique skills for society’s vital interests in such a way that the society it serves agrees (Hartle 2004, 27). The purposes of the Army professional Ethic are to enhance trust, provide

warrant for its special functions, maintain independence, and enhance group solidarity so that it can best serve society.

### WAYS: Functions of a Professional Army Ethic

The functions of the Army professional Ethic describe how the Ethic achieves its ends or purposes. If the purposes are the “so what”, the functions are the “how.” The functions describe the Ethic’s impact on professional behavior. What are the functions of the Army professional Ethic? The Ethic should guide behavior, enable competence, and facilitate ethical decisionmaking.

To preempt confusion, there is a difference between the unique functions of the profession and the functions of a professional Army Ethic. The unique functions of the profession were previously identified as killing and subordinating personal interests to meet the interests of the society. These unique functions describe the activities that set apart a professional from society. It does not describe how a profession achieves its ends. The functions of a professional Army Ethic describe the ways in which a profession achieves its purposes. Even though the unique functions are not a “way” of the Ethic, the “ways” describe how the unique functions are limited or warranted.

### Guide Behavior

The first and most fundamental function of a professional Army Ethic is to guide behavior (Imiola and Cazier 2010, 14). It should describe how the Army professionals ought to behave. The field of philosophy that studies this is normative ethics. Normative ethics describes a framework for how someone ought to behave. A normative system should describe what is good, what behaviors are moral, and why it is moral. The main

three systems of normative ethics are consequentialism, duty ethics, and virtue ethics.

This section describes the three systems and examines the literature on the systems within professions.

Consequentialism seeks the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people, and declares moral rightness on whether an action's consequences do better at achieving that happiness than the alternative. In short, consequentialism, also known as utilitarianism, weighs the probable consequences of each choice and promotes the choice that hurts the fewest or helps the most (Rachels and Rachels 2011, 100).

Consequentialism insists that the ends justify the means, which provides the benefit of immediate subjective justification, especially for organizations that demand results.

The key problem with this approach is determining who will receive the greatest happiness (Barrett 2012, 22). In the moment of making an ethical decision, a professional can too easily justify his happiness as more important than the other person can, whether a combatant or non-combatant. Another problem is looking at the number of people affected by second and third order effects. Torturing a prisoner now may be bad for the prisoner and the torturer, who will be sent to prison, but will be good for the battalion in the short term. In the long term, it may create hundreds of new insurgents who kill thousands of people. Who can accurately calculate this with a long-term perspective? The final problem is setting up a false dichotomy in which a "ticking time bomb" justifies any action (Barrett 2012, 23). Even though consequentialism seeks the best for as many as possible and can justify quick results for professions, it is not used as a normative basis for professional ethics.

Duty Ethics, or deontological ethics, explicitly identifies behaviors that are morally required, prohibited, or permitted. It guides people in what they ought to do in a given circumstance “because of their inherent rightness and regardless of their outcome” (Barrett 2012, 23). A decision is right if required or permitted, and it is wrong if prohibited. Duty ethics tends to hold to universal moral principles, and benefits people by providing a clear objective knowledge that they were right or wrong (Rachels and Rachels 2011, 128).

Immanuel Kant, the primary philosopher and strongest voice in duty ethics, differentiates between imperatives of prudence and morality (Kant 1969, 286). Imperatives of prudence are things that ought to be done in order to get a benefit out of it. If someone does the right thing for any other reason than its innate moral goodness, it is out of prudence. If someone does the right thing because it is right, then it is out of morality.

Kant admits that a good person with good motives, good will, and an aptitude for understanding ultimate happiness may do the right thing, but it requires a qualified, prudent person (Kant 1969, 287). Because people, motives, and understandings of happiness vary, the application of the imperatives of prudence will vary. Kant prefers a “moral law that states categorically what ought to be done, whether it pleases us or not” (1969, 287). Kant’s categorical imperative, which is concerned with what would be universally right in a given situation, does not mean that one must follow written laws. Though a written law might not be universally right in a given situation for Kant, doing what the law requires is considered adhering to duty ethics.

The correlation between duty ethics and fulfillment of the law came from the social contract theory, a form of duty ethics created by Thomas Hobbes. His social contract theory followed rules, but not without exception (Kem 2006, 29). Hobbes, with Kant, also followed the golden rule and proposed that people will voluntarily lay down some rights when they enter into covenants, or contracts with others (Hobbes 1969, 222-3). The laws that they agree to live under become an obligation, or a duty, which they must perform. Kem defines a simplified version of principle-based ethics as acting according to agreed-upon values and principles (2006, 28).

Regardless of the approach to duty ethics, a duty ethic considers the questions “what rules exist” and “what are my moral obligations” (Kem 2006, 30). MacIntyre identifies duty ethics as the primary ethical system of modern people. He believes that “rules become the primary concept of the [modern] moral life. Qualities of character then generally come to be prized only because they will lead us to follow the right set of rules” (MacIntyre 2012, 119). As noted in the history of the Ethic, the implicit Army professional Ethic emphasized duty ethics.

When duty ethics is understood as adherence to laws, critics point out two difficulties in creating an Ethic based on duty-ethics. First, the Ethic would become a long list of rules that invites interpretation and gaming (Imiola and Cazier 2010, 15). The motive for adherence would be avoiding punishment instead of doing right. The professional aspiration would be staying out of trouble. The second difficulty is that “rules do not educate. They say what one must or must not do, but they do not say why” (Imiola and Cazier 2010, 16). It would be a failure of mission command, focusing on micromanaging behavior instead of enabling a purposed-driven initiative.

Instead of focusing on consequences or adherence to law, virtue ethics combines proper motivation with habitual right action (Rachels and Rachels 2011, 159). With “good” as its end, virtue ethics evaluates the goodness of an action based on motivations, dispositions, and emotions. Instead of primarily asking what a person should do, it asks what a person should become. A virtue, then, is a specific, good character trait that is properly motivated, and is the mean between two corresponding vices, an excessive and deficient exemplification (Aristotle 1989, 43). For example, the virtue of courage has the vices of cowardice and recklessness (Aristotle 1989, 71). Virtue ethics requires an understanding of virtues and character.

As the virtue ethicist who revived the prominence of virtue ethics in moral philosophy, MacIntyre describes virtues as “those qualities the possession and exercise of which generally tends to success in this enterprise and vices likewise as qualities, which likewise tends to failure” (MacIntyre 2012, 144). For Aristotle, virtue ethics helps his community get what they want to attain—happiness. The virtues are those attributes which, if a person possesses them, will allow him to achieve the identified good. If lacking, it will frustrate his movement toward the good.

Virtue ethics finds its ends in character. “To act virtuously is not, as Kant was later to think, to act against inclination; it is to act from inclination formed by the cultivation of the virtues” (MacIntyre 2012, 149). MacIntyre joins Nietzsche and critiques modern moralities for their failure to address and answer the question: what sort of person am I to become? (MacIntyre 2012, 118). An ethical person should be a person of character. MacIntyre implicitly admits that the difficulties of a virtue ethic revolve around the individual capacity. Each person must judge and apply the virtues “according

to the right reason” (MacIntyre 2012, 152). There are people who are not capable of doing this. For goodness or excellence, a virtue requires the right reason. If it does not have the right reason, it is only a likeness, or “simulacrum” (MacIntyre 2012, 154).

Each system of normative ethics attempts to guide how a person ought to behave. Each has an explanation for what is good, what is right behavior, and why. The consequentialist focuses on results. The duty ethicist focuses on moral imperatives. The virtue ethicist focuses on character and virtues. The Army’s implicit Ethic is based on duty ethics in theory, but often degenerates into consequentialism in action (Bell 2011, 10). As a normative ethical system that seeks to guide behavior, the Army Ethic should explain what is good, what is right behavior, and why it is the right thing to do.

#### Facilitate Ethical Decisionmaking

Closely tied to guiding behavior is facilitating ethical decisionmaking. Moral systems do not just provide a guide for action, they provide “ultimate justifying reasons for action” when values seem to come into conflict (Goldman 1980, 8). Most of the time, an Ethic sufficiently guides behavior without values coming into conflict. Under those circumstances where there is a clear right and wrong, moral courage empowers the right decision (Kem 2006, 26). During ethical dilemmas, an Ethic should provide the basis from which the best ethical decisions can be made. Kem and Hartle provide the key examples of ethical decisionmaking processes for consideration.

Ethical dilemmas are unique ethical problems. Kem eliminates confusion on the application of an ethical decisionmaking model by clarifying an ethical dilemma (Kem 2006, 26). If the options only present one ethical answer, it is an issue of moral courage. An ethical dilemma requires at least two ethical “rights” among the options. In that case,

the “rights” must be weighed against each other and a choice made between competing values “which we cannot simultaneously honor” (Kem 2006, 26). He also provides four common categories of dilemmas: truth and loyalty, individual and community, short and long term, and justice and mercy (Kem 2006, 26). An ethical decisionmaking model helps differentiate between actual and apparent ethical dilemmas.

Kem proposes a model with principles, consequences, and virtue ethics as distinct filters (Kem 2006, 28). The first filter is a simplified version of principle-based ethics: people should act according to agreed-upon values and principles. This filter uses the questions “what rules exist” and “what are my moral obligations” (Kem 2006, 30).

The second filter is consequence-based ethics, which values a choice on the likely consequences of an action. Key considerations are the “greatest good for the greatest number,” and “who wins and loses” (Kem 2006, 32). This filter should be second to laws because in most cases, laws are written to reflect our culture’s decision on these consequential evaluations. For example, the international law directing ethical treatment of prisoners is prescribed by the U. S. Army because it has already been deemed better consequentially in the long run than killing all prisoners to save time and resources.

The third filter is virtue ethics, which is learned from others (Kem 2006, 33). While principles and consequences each generally have a single right and wrong answer, virtue ethics emphasizes the golden mean. Key questions are “what would my parents think” or “do I want my actions displayed on the front page of a newspaper” (Kem 2006, 34). Because of its discretionary nature, he sees this third filter as the integrating approach that applies judgment.

He proposes an ethical decisionmaking model with the following steps: define the ethical dilemma, identify courses of action, test the courses of action against the principles/consequences/virtues triangle, consider other possibilities, choose the course of action that best represents the Army values, and implement (Kem 2006, 34-35).

Hartle also proposes a three step process for ethical decisionmaking (Hartle 2004, 230-231). First, a professional examines the requirements of the profession, or what most directly achieves mission success, which sounds like consequentialism. Next, he considers the principles of the laws of war, or extrapolates from *jus in bello* to other ethical situations just laws to be applied, which sounds like duty ethics. Finally, the professional considers the enduring values of American society, which Hartle identifies as freedom, equality, individualism, and democracy (Hartle 2004, 231). His process of describing the Army Ethic essentially uses the three normative ethics models to arrive at a well-thought out decision.

Barrett does not spend much time describing an ethical decisionmaking model. He gives examples of simple questions and the complex Joint Ethics Regulation Ethical-Decisionmaking Plan that help with decisionmaking, but only notes that the process should be simple. He posits that “Soldiers deserve a litmus test, a rule of thumb” for whether they understand and can apply the Army Ethic (Barrett 2012, 34). It may not be part of the Ethic, but the Army should provide the questions that “should be required of any knowledgeable member of the Army Profession, one who is endeavoring to live by the code” (Barrett 2012, 34). For Barrett, a specified model for ethical decisionmaking should support the Ethic.

Both Kem and Hartle propose models that ask questions borrowed from the three normative systems of ethics to identify the best decision in an ethical dilemma. Both emphasize the need to understanding the Ethic and the normative context and apply careful reasoning in choosing the best decision (Hartle 2004, 231). Most ethical problems result from a lack of ethical courage. If it is a real dilemma, there may not be a right answer. The decisionmaking process helps identify the better answer. The Army Ethic should be articulated clearly enough to provide understanding and a normative context for making decisions in ethical dilemmas, and should be supported by an ethical decisionmaking process.

#### Enable Competence and Unique Function

The last function of the Army Ethic is to enable competence and describe how the profession ethically applies its unique function of killing. This function is unique to professions. General, universal Ethics will guide behavior and facilitate ethical decisionmaking, but only in professions, due to their differentiated role from the rest of society, does competence become an imperative.

This function is different from the purpose of providing warrant for the unique function. The warrant describes why the profession should be able to kill and put Soldiers in harm's way—to protect the society. This function, or way, describes how the profession applies lethality and puts American lives at calculated risk. This unique function is the reason the profession's differentiation from the rest of society, and as a result, society measures the profession's competence by how well the Army can apply its lethal effects.

Even though application of lethal effects sets apart the military as a profession, everything else it does, from training, to deployments, to multi-national exercises,

requires the same values to prepare for that application of lethal effects. This function addresses *jus in bello* explicitly and competence in general. Lewis Sorely notes, “The nature of the military profession, and the responsibilities of the profession to the society it serves, are such as to elevate professional competence to the level of an ethical imperative” (1981, 39). He agrees with Army Doctrine, which states, “effectiveness is what counts most” (U.S. Army 2013a, 1). Allen and Braun note that loss of competence threatens the legitimacy of the entire organization, while character violations, if immediately dealt with, “can be attributed to the aberrant behavior of individuals” (Allen and Braun 2013, 82). The Ethic cannot cripple the profession’s competence. The Ethic must enable competence, especially in its unique function.

Hartle identifies humanitarian values and American values as descriptors of how to apply the unique function of the military (2004, 132). The humanitarian values of human dignity, intrinsic human worth, and freedom from suffering undergird the Laws of Armed Conflict, but only describe how any Soldier in the international arena should fight (2004, 132). Because the Army profession serves the American people, the professional Ethic should describe its application in terms of American societal values. America agrees with and has adopted the international humanitarian values as a part of its own value system. However, other values set America apart from the international community at large. Those American values are freedom, equality, individualism, and democracy, and are located in the Constitution (Hartle 2004, 132). The Ethic should acknowledge the humanitarian values and American values.

If the Ethic cripples the competence of the profession, the profession cannot provide services for its client, and will cease to exist. It is in this sense that “Ethical

behavior and technical competence are tightly interlaced” (U.S. Army War College 1970, 19). The Ethic must enable competence, describe how to execute its unique function, and do so in light of international humanitarian values and American values.

### Structure of a Professional Military Ethic

Several authors provide frameworks for professional ethics. This thesis will look at MacIntyre for a community nonspecific Ethic and at Barrett and Hartle for a military-specific Ethic. Even though others propose frameworks for a professional Ethic, MacIntyre, Hartle, and Barrett provide structures that are either identical or similar enough to other proposals to warrant their exclusive review in this thesis. This thesis did not evaluate proposals that did not have sufficient explanations, like Knapp’s proposal (2013, 111), or were too abstract, like Stadler’s practical, theoretical, and metaphysical framework (2001, 68).

MacIntyre describes a process that would allow community to come together for a common good under an Ethic. First, they must identify the good, or the objective or goal. Second, they must identify the virtues and devices, which would generate merit and honor, or dishonor. Third, the community must identify prohibitions or prescriptions which if violated would “render that doing or achieving of good impossible in some respect at least for some time” (MacIntyre 2012, 151). He sees this third category as actions that should be “regarded not simply as bad, but as intolerable” (MacIntyre 2012, 151). This violation should exclude the person from the community, if it does not want to fail as a community. Finally, he qualifies that there should be broad agreement on the gravity of the offenses as well as the nature and importance of the virtues (MacIntyre 2012, 151). A community’s Ethic should articulate the community’s goal, the things

which merit honor or dishonor, the intolerable actions that removes a person from the community, and broad agreement.

Hartle provides criteria and a framework for an Army Ethic. Hartle's criteria for a professional Ethic are internal consistency with itself and the profession, the necessity for the performance of the professional function, and consistency with the values of society (Hartle 2004, 28). In other words, a profession must examine and take into account the influences on an Ethic, including professional culture, professional function, and societal values. If the Ethic is not consistent with itself, it will cause unnecessary dilemmas. If it is not consistent with the culture, it will not be accepted or implemented. If it does not address the profession's unique function, it does not address the reason for the profession's existence. If it does not account for societal values, it will lose the trust of its client. Hartle proposes internal consistency, warrant for unique function, and consistency with societal values as criteria for evaluating the value of an Ethic.

Hartle also proposes a framework for the Ethic that is both aspirational and specific. He describes the professional ethic as "a code that consists of a set of rules and principles governing the conduct of members of a professional group" (Hartle 2004, 29). The keys here are rules, or proscriptions, and principles, or prescriptions. He believes a code should describe a model for aspiration and include rules that prohibit intolerable behavior.

After looking at other professional Ethics, he notes, "most professions recognize an ethic that is part formal and part informal" (Hartle 2004, 29). For example, engineers have fundamental ideals, interpretive operating principles, and specific rules (Hartle 2004, 30). The profession of law's Ethic is both aspirational in character and applicable

in specific situations. In both cases, the Ethic moves from broad, aspirational virtues to specific, explicit prohibitions.

Hartle gives an example by looking at professional exigencies. An army cannot function without loyalty and immediate obedience at every level of the hierarchy. In the absence of this loyalty or obedience, an army could not function (Hartle 2004, 33; Huntington 1957, 73). Loyalty and obedience are examples of aspirational virtues that should be in an Army Ethic. Disobeying a legal order is an example of a prohibition that affects the profession's ability to function. For Hartle, both aspirational virtues and explicit prohibitions should be part of the Army Ethic.

Barrett recommends that the Ethic should be a normative statement of desirable principles that allows for judgment, incorporates the existing Ethic, is applicable in every environment, is "short, simple, and understandable as possible," and does not tolerate ethical violators (Barrett 2012, 36). First, the Ethic should be aspirational, described with desirable principles. This avoids excessive legalism and allows room for judgment. Second, it should "encapsulate and improve upon the Soldier's Rules and the Army values . . . [integrating] all the other important ethical dictums" (Barrett 2012, 36). It should unify the implicit and dispersed explicit elements of the existing Ethic. Third, it should be applicable regardless of where the Soldier is and who the Soldier interacts with. An Ethic that does not apply in school, garrison, the field, and combat is not sufficient. An Ethic that does not account for interactions with other professionals, the enemy, noncombatants, and U.S. civilians is not sufficient (Barrett 2012, 36). Fourth, the Ethic should be short, simple, and understandable. If it is too long, the profession could not appreciate it.

Barrett's final recommendation is inclusion of a nontoleration clause. Barrett cites the USMA Honor System, Honor Code, and its nontoleration clause as valuable examples for the promulgation and enforcement of the Army Institutional Ethic. A non-toleration clause either prescribes reporting or proscribes overlooking and covering up mistakes. When everyone under the Ethic polices each other, the Ethic is reinforced by both formal, under UCMJ, and informal, through other professionals, means. If a Soldier's ethical failure could result in punishment under UCMJ, shame by his peers, and removal from the unit, the cost of ethical failure would be high enough to encourage greater ethical courage. That is why passionate intolerance is necessary for a functional Ethic (Barrett 2012, 32). For Barrett, an Ethic should be aspirational, incorporate the existing Ethic, apply in every environment, be simple and concise, and include a nontoleration clause.

### Conclusion

Throughout the Army's history, it has developed an implicit ethic of commitment to the constitution through subordination to civilian authorities, competence in everything it is supposed to do, and character expressed in adherence to law. The Ethic developed concurrent with the internal and external recognition of its capacity to be a profession. The profession currently has a "robust legal system that deals with crimes and atrocities after the fact," but lacks a system of deterrence that describes, implements, and enforces behavior (Barrett 2012, 4).

The Army profession is partially differentiated from the rest of society and requires an Ethic that explains how the profession should function within societal values. The ends of a profession are to enhance trust, provide warrant for its special functions, maintain independence, and enhance group solidarity so that it can best serve society.

The ways, or functions, of a professional Ethic are to guide behavior, facilitate ethical decisionmaking, and enable competence. A good Ethic should be aspirational, incorporate the existing ethic, be ubiquitous in application, include a nontoleration clause, and be simple and concise. These ideas are the foundation of the mental apparatus that helps determine the sufficiency of the proposed Army Ethic. The next chapter will explain the methodology used to make sense of the literature review and evaluate the Ethic.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The responsibilities of the military profession are such . . . that it simply must not fail to consider a purpose larger than itself, or abide rules or practices which do not serve that larger purpose.

— Lewis Sorely, *Military Ethics and Professionalism*

#### Overview

The loss of trust from egregious ethical violations and apparently ubiquitous ethical sliding seems to indicate a normalization of deviance in which ethical problems are a product of the Army's culture, not merely statistical abnormalities. These are not atypical problems; they are a typical representation of the professional culture that lacks an articulated Ethic. The history and literature review provided a small but representative sample of current thought on ethics, the professional Ethic, and the professional Army Ethic. The literature review will provide the necessary and sufficient qualities of an Ethic, while the rest of this thesis will provide a framework for evaluating the effectiveness of the AE.

#### Method

This thesis uses the qualitative approach to answer the primary research question: does the Army Ethic White Paper espouse an Army Ethic sufficient for the Army Profession? Chapter 4 will address the first two secondary questions of determining the professional and structural requirements and the qualifications of sufficient for the Army Ethic. It will do that by looking at the literature review, eliminating redundant ideas, evaluating its concepts for validity, and selecting the framework for evaluating the AE.

The discussion will categorize the framework into screening criteria and evaluation criteria based on external recommendations.

It will then explain how the first two questions provide a framework to examine the Ethic and address the last two secondary questions by examining the Ethic and evaluating it. The Army Ethic White Paper (AEWP) provides the data in the form of the Army Ethic (AE) and its explanation.

### Logic

The Army Ethic is sufficient for the Army Profession if it passes the screening criteria and meets evaluation criteria better than the alternative. The screening criteria determine whether a course of action is a viable option for comparison. Even if the proposed Ethic passes the screening criteria as a viable option, it may not be the best option readily available. The evaluation criteria determine whether it is the best option. In this case, if creating an Ethic puts the profession in a worse position than when the Ethic was implicit, it would not suffice. The AE must pass the screening criteria and prove based on the evaluation criteria that it is better than its unarticulated form.

First, it must meet the screening criteria, which ADRP 6-0 identifies as suitable, feasible, acceptable, distinguishable, and complete (U.S. Army 2014b, 4-4). This thesis only uses three of the criteria. One is obvious and one is beyond the scope of this thesis. Because the AE will fill a current gap where there is no Ethic, it is evidently distinguishable. The feasibility of the AE will depend on professionals' willingness to integrate it and the resources that the Army provides for implementation and oversight. President Obama expressed the importance of values and leadership in the National Security Strategy (2015, 2). The Secretary of the Army and Army Chief of Staff made

four of their five strategic priorities focused on Soldier ethics and morality (U.S. Army 2014c, 18). Based on this strategic guidance, the Army will be able to justify the resources to implement and oversee the Ethic. Assessing the willingness of the profession to integrate the Ethic at every level is beyond the scope of this thesis, so this thesis will not spend time evaluating the Ethic's feasibility.

This thesis will examine the suitability, acceptability, and completeness of the Ethic. It is suitable if it solves the problem. The problem is loss of trust due to ethical violations and the lack of an articulated Ethic. It is acceptable if the Ethic does not put the profession's competence, or ability to secure the nation, at risk. It is complete if it includes the minimum structural requirements for an Ethic. Most of the screening criteria will focus on content and purpose due to their essential nature. In other words, the absence of a screening criterion would severely detract from the Ethic. The screening criteria will help identify the Ethic's sufficiency as a professional Ethic in general. If it is not good enough to be a professional Ethic, it should not be considered as an option for the U.S. Army's Ethic. If it is sufficient as a professional Ethic, it must still do well on the evaluation criteria to be sufficient for the Army's Ethic.

Second, the Army Ethic must meet the evaluation criteria better than its alternative. While screening criteria are the essentials of an Ethic primarily focused on functions and purposes, the evaluation criteria are beneficial non-essentials focused on format and context. Their absence will not detract from the profession but their presence will improve the profession. Due to the non-essential nature of an Ethic's structure, or format, the evaluation criteria are mostly elements of structure. The alternative to the Army Ethic is the implicit, existing Ethic. At every point where the articulated Ethic

incorporates the implicit Ethic, the evaluation will be neutral. Only the points where the articulated Ethic adds to the implicit Ethic or varies from it will this thesis assess the value for the profession.

### Summary

This research will first define the screening criteria, determined by the suitability, acceptability, and distinguishability of the AE as an option, to identify whether the Ethic is a viable option. This research will then define the evaluation criteria. The evaluation criteria identify the Army Ethic's worth relative to the alternative. If the Army Ethic meets the minimum, necessary requirements for a professional ethic, and does a better job maintaining the trust of the American people than the current absence of a codified professional Ethic, it will be sufficient. The next chapter will present the evaluative framework and analyze the data to determine the Army Ethic's sufficiency.

## CHAPTER 4

### DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Unfortunately in philosophy we are not free to write the score from scratch, but must follow where the arguments take us.

— Goldman, *The Moral Foundations of Professional Ethics*

#### Overview

In light of the problem, the literature, and the logic, this chapter will address the secondary questions to determine whether the AEWPs provides an Ethic that is sufficient for the Army profession. The primary research question identifies whether the Ethic proposed in the AEWPs is sufficient for the Army profession. The literature review challenges potential Ethics to enable its purposes, fulfill its functions, conform to its historical and cultural context, and use structure with clarity. The evaluation of literature and framework construction will transpose the ideas from the literature review into a screening and evaluation framework that will be used to evaluate the Ethic.

#### Evaluation Construct

The literature provided several concepts that will facilitate the evaluation of the Army Ethic. The Army profession is partially differentiated and requires an Ethic that explains how the profession should function within its societal values. The purposes of a profession include enhancing trust, providing warrant for its special functions, maintaining independence, and enhancing group solidarity so that it can best serve society. The functions of a professional Ethic are to guide behavior, facilitate ethical decisionmaking, and enable competence. A good Ethic should be aspirational,

incorporate the existing ethic, be ubiquitous in application, include a nontoleration clause, and be simple and concise. Table 1 shows these major ideas and their supporting values as they came out in the literature review. There are a number of overlapping and redundant ideas. The remainder of this section will organize the major ideas into the screening criteria and the evaluation criteria.

Table 1. Literature Summary

| CATEGORIES     |                                       | PROPOSED QUALITIES IN AN ETHIC        |   |   |  |                                       |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| History        |                                       | Subordination to civil authority      | Competence  | Commitment to constitution                                      | Adherence to law                       |                                       |
| Differentiated |                                       | Guide unique functions                | Align with societal values  |   |  |                                       |
| Ends/Purposes  |                                       | Facilitate Service to society         | Enhance trust and prestige  | Provide warrant for special functions                           | Maintain independence                  | Enhance group solidarity              |
| Ways/Functions | Guide Behavior                        | Attainable End or good                | Regards Context and community   | Doing the right thing, doing it well (excellence)               | What is right behavior                 | why is it right (normative framework) |
|                | Facilitate Ethical Decisionmaking     | Clearly articulated Ethic             | Decisionmaking process can be separate from the Ethic                             | Ethic must provide normative context for Decisionmaking process |  |                                       |
|                | Enable Competence and Unique Function | Enable competence and unique function | Humanitarian values: human dignity, intrinsic human worth, freedom from suffering | American Values: freedom, equality, individualism, democracy    |  |                                       |
| Structure      | MacIntyre                             |                                       | Goal or good  | Virtues or vices (honor or dishonor)                            | Intolerable actions (removal criteria) | Broad agreement                       |
|                | Hartle                                | Framework                             | Aspirational  | Specific  |  |                                       |
|                |                                       | Criteria                              | Internal consistency  | Performance of the professional function                        | Consistent with society's values       |                                       |
|                | Barrett                               |                                       | Aspirational  | Incorporates existing ethic                                     | Applicable in any environment          | Concise, Simple                       |

Source: Created by author.

### Screening Criteria

The screening criteria determine whether the Ethic is sufficient as a professional ethic. The criteria include the suitability, acceptability, and completeness of the Ethic. It

is suitable if it solves the problem. The problem is loss of trust due to ethical violations compounded by the absence of an articulated Ethic that would demonstrate the Army's intention to fix the problem. The Army resolves the ethical violations by guiding behavior and facilitating ethical decisionmaking, two of the functions of an Ethic identified in the literature review. It also solves the problem if it fulfills the purposes of the Ethic, especially engendering trust to maintain the profession and its independence.

Guiding behavior and facilitating ethical decisionmaking help solve the problem by directly addressing the problem of ethics violations. The Ethic should guide behavior with a normative framework that explains why, specific principles or virtues that explain what that behavior looks like, and a general adherence to law. It facilitates ethical decisionmaking when it is specific enough to reference when making an ethical decision. It does not need a specific decisionmaking process in the Ethic itself, but should support a decisionmaking process.

Enhancing trust and maintaining independence help solve the problem if the Ethic demonstrates the Army's intention to fix the problem by articulating an Ethic and not tolerating those who do not align with the Ethic. By maintaining trust, the profession maintains its independence, which allows it greater responsiveness to violations. As the profession demonstrates its use of independence to pursue Ethical consistency in accordance with societal values, it further enhances trust and maintains independence.

It is acceptable if the Ethic does not put the profession's competence, or ability to secure the nation, at risk. The screening criteria incorporate the function of enabling competence and unique function as well as the purposes of facilitating service to society and providing warrant for special functions. The Ethic facilitates service to society if it

specifically includes commitment to the Constitution and subordination to civil authorities. The Ethic provides warrant for the Army's unique function if it addresses lethality and ultimate liability. Because it is difficult to positively assess the Ethic's ability to enable competence, this thesis will determine its ability based on whether the Ethic would *prima facie* prevent the Army's unique function and ability to provide service to society. The Ethic is acceptable if it enables competence and addresses subordination to civil authority, commitment to the constitution, lethality, and ultimate liability.

The Ethic is complete if it includes the minimum structural requirements for an Ethic. At a minimum, the Ethic should describe the good or goal, be aspirational, and specify what engenders honor and dishonor. The Ethic is not complete if it does not have the goal, good, or purpose of the profession. The goal of the profession is excellent service to society, trust, and autonomy. This should be explicit in the Ethic. Structurally, the Ethic should also be aspirational and specific. It is aspirational if it identifies virtues or values that professionals should aspire to demonstrate. It is specific if it describes what engenders honor and dishonor from the community. It can be stated as virtues or principles, but must include prescriptions, "be" or "dos", and proscriptions, "do not be" or "do not do."

The screening criteria outlined in table 2 will help identify the Ethic's sufficiency as a professional Ethic in general. It answers the secondary question by describing the sufficiency and structure of a professional Ethic. If it is not good enough to be a professional Ethic, it is not sufficient as an option for the U.S. Army's Ethic. It is

sufficient as a professional Ethic, but it must still do well on the evaluation criteria to be sufficient as the Army's Ethic.

Table 2. Screening Criteria

|  | Criteria                                  | Kind                  | Qualities  |
|--|---|-----------------------|--|
| Suitable:<br>"Does it solve the problem"         | Enhances Trust                            | Purpose               | Demonstrates intention and nontoleration   |
|  | Maintains independence                    | Purpose               | Nontoleration (self-policing), aligned with societal values                                    |
|  | Guides Behavior                           | Function              | Normative framework (why is it right), principles or virtues (what is right), adherence to law |
|  | Facilitates Ethical Decisionmaking        | Function              | Normative framework, referential   |
| Acceptable:<br>"Does it risk competence"         | Facilitates service to society            | Purpose               | Subordination to civil authority, commitment to constitution                                   |
|  | Provides warrant for unique function      | Purpose               | Addresses lethality and ultimate liability   |
|  | Enables competence and unique function    | Function              | Does not cripple ability to function   |
| Complete:<br>"Does it meet minimum requirements" | Goal or Good                              | Purpose and Structure | What is the goal or good?  |
|  | Aspirational                              | Structure             | Attainable model   |
|  | Specify what engenders honor and dishonor | Structure             | Dos, don'ts, honor. Can be virtues and vices, or principles                                    |

Source: Created by author.

### Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria determine whether the proposed Army Ethic is better than the incumbent Army Ethic, which is not explicit. Criteria of a good Ethic include the Army's historical and societal context, intolerable actions, a non-toleration clause, simplicity, applicable in any environment, broad agreement, and an explicit decisionmaking process. The evaluation criteria, summarized in table 3, are mostly structural, but include a function and the historical context.

First, a good Army Ethic should include its societal and historical context. It is sufficient for a professional Ethic to implicitly reflect its context, but it is better when it explicitly states it. The historical context includes subordination to civil authority, competence, commitment to the Constitution, and adherence to law. Each of these qualities overlaps with screening criteria. Because the screening criteria are more important and address these qualities first, this thesis will not reevaluate the historical context. The societal context includes both international and U.S.-specific values. The better Army Ethic will specifically include the historical and societal context.

Second, a good Army Ethic should include intolerable actions and describe formal enforcement. The screening criteria identified behaviors that generate honor or dishonor for the profession from its customers and for the professional from the profession. Intolerable actions are behaviors related to the Ethic that are so egregious that they justify removal from the profession. Many intolerable behaviors are already present in UCMJ and other laws. The Ethic should describe intolerable conduct that relates to the Ethic. According to Abbott, informal enforcement of ethically questionable practitioners is impossible (1983, 862). There must be formal enforcement of the Ethic. The Ethic will have little gravitas if existing laws already cover its jurisdiction. The Ethic will carry little weight as a document if it is not enforceable.

Next, a good Army Ethic should have a non-toleration clause and be simple. A non-toleration clause mandates professional self-policing and encourages informal enforcement. Whether by prescription or proscription, the clause should describe whether it is intolerable or just dishonorable to not report ethical violations. Even though this informal enforcement will not change ethically questionable practitioners, it will

reinforce the norms of highly compliant professionals (Abbott 1983, 862). An Ethic is simple if it meets the Army writing style standard of being “understood by the reader in a single rapid reading” (U.S. Army 2013b, 6). The idea of simplicity is also consistent with General Odierno’s description of an Ethic as understandable and accessible (U.S. Army 2014a, i). A non-toleration clause and simplicity make an Ethic better.

Next, a good Army Ethic should be applicable in any environment and have broad agreement. A professional is accountable for behavior both on and off duty. On duty, a professional may be in garrison, in the field, on temporary duty, or deployed. Off duty, a professional may be on or off a military installation. Regardless of the professional’s location or activity, the Ethic should be applicable. Also, the Ethic should have broad agreement within the profession. Because the Ethic reflects the profession, it should neither be a large cognitive leap from nor inconsistent with the underlying assumptions of the professional culture. It is not enough to agree on the nature of the problem, the profession should broadly agree on the nature of the solution as well.

Finally, a good Army Ethic should have an explicit decisionmaking process. Even though it is sufficient based on screening criteria for a professional Ethic to provide enough information to make Ethical decisions, it is better if it provides a simple, explicit process. The simple process should help professionals clarify whether a decision is an ethical dilemma and make decisions in ethical dilemmas.

First, the decisionmaking process should help clarify whether a decision is an ethical dilemma. Figure 1 illustrates the different ways of understanding the relationship between ethical and legal. Laws reflect a society’s decisions on what are unacceptable. Ideally, there is no distinction between what is illegal and what is unethical or what is

legal and unethical. If it is wrong or bad, it will also be illegal. If it is right or good, it will also be legal. In the Army, this is also ideal.

In reality, there are grey areas. It was legal for German soldiers to put gas in chambers full of Jews, but it was not ethical. It is ethical to prevent unnecessary civilian suffering, but illegal to disobey a legal order to destroy a military target where civilian collateral damage has been deemed acceptable. Because the inherent brevity and ambiguity of an Ethic makes identifying the grey areas hard, the decisionmaking process should help clarify whether a situation is an ethical dilemma.

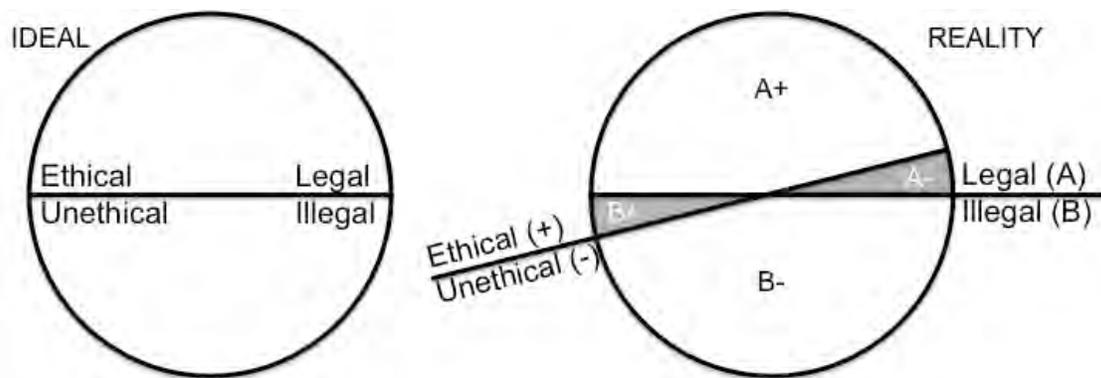


Figure 1. Ideal versus Reality

*Source:* Created by author.

Second, the decisionmaking process should help make decisions in the midst of an ethical dilemma. According to the Department of Defense, 40 percent of the Army is 25 years old or younger (Department of Defense 2013, 33). If every Soldier is a professional, many practitioners of the Ethic will be young and cognitively immature and have little time to fully internalize an Ethic. This immaturity, lack of experience, lack of

time, and focus on learning the technical parts of the profession make it difficult for many Soldiers to prospectively reflect on Ethic in preparation for potential ethical situations. Many within the profession require a simple, explicit process to help make decisions until maturity and experience develop over time. An Ethic that neither recognizes the “grey” areas where conduct can be illegal and ethical or legal and unethical nor helps the majority of professionals make decisions in those grey areas is not beneficial to the profession.

The literature review examined sources external to the Army for the preceding evaluation criteria. The U.S. Army provides its own criteria in ADRP 1 and the AEWP. ADRP 1 acknowledges the importance of trust, self-policing, autonomy, competence in expert knowledge, historical and societal context, effectiveness, and the providing a unique and vital service to society (U.S. Army 2013a, 1-1). It also acknowledges the need for the Ethic to regulate behavior and effectiveness by guiding appropriate conduct toward a common purpose (U.S. Army 2013a, 1-3). The AEWP includes a need in an Ethic for the ability to develop and certify character, the “explicit inclusion of moral and ethical reasoning” (U.S. Army 2014a, 3), and movement away from legalistic, rules-based, and consequential reasoning. It also should be “accessible, commonly understood, and universally applicable” (U.S. Army 2014a, 2). For the most part the Army’s criteria agree with the external sources. The only real difference is that the Army intends not only to certify character, or confer professional status on those who meet the criteria, but to develop it as well. The Ethic is sufficient if it can be used to certify and develop character.

The summarized external evaluation criteria in table 3 help identify whether the Ethic is good enough for the U.S. Army. This answers the secondary question by outlining the sufficiency and structure of an Army Ethic. If the Army Ethic passes the screening criteria and does better than the current absence of an Ethic, it will be sufficient for the U.S. Army.

Table 3. Evaluation Criteria

|           | Criteria                         | Kind       | Qualities   |
|-----------|----------------------------------|------------|---|
| Structure | Context                          | Historical | Includes subordination to civil authority, competence, commitment to constitution, adherence to law                             |
|           |                                  | Societal   | International values: human dignity and worth, freedom from suffering, U.S. values: Freedom, equality, individualism, democracy |
|           | Intolerable actions (separation) | Structure  | Specific intolerable actions that go beyond dishonor to removal from the profession   |
|           | Non-toleration (self-policing)   | Structure  | Does not tolerate ethical violators   |
|           | Simple                           | Structure  | Accessible, understandable  |
|           | Applicable in any environment    | Structure  | Has no exceptions   |
|           | Broad Agreement                  | Structure  | Does most of the profession agree?  |
|           | Decisionmaking process           | Function   | Explicit Decisionmaking process   |

Source: Created by author.

### The Proposed Army Ethic

The Center for Army Profession and Ethic (CAPE) published the AEWP in preparation for the Army Ethic’s inclusion into doctrine. Most of the twelve-page white paper explains the historical and philosophical background for their proposed Army Ethic, which is only one page long. Even though the proposed Ethic is short, this thesis examines both the Ethic and its background because the background elaborates on and

clarifies the meaning of the proposed Ethic. This section will examine the proposed Ethic in light of the background and then look at the background for additional insights that will assist evaluation. It will answer the secondary question by describing the content of the Army Ethic.

## Introduction

The proposed Army Ethic, called “the Heart of the Army,” includes an introduction and a description of trustworthy Army professionals. The Ethic’s introduction describes the foundation, function, and purpose of the Ethic. The foundation of the Ethic is found, or “reflected in law, Army Values, creeds, oaths, ethos, and shared beliefs” (U.S. Army 2014a, 11). The Army Ethic explicitly describes the Army’s Ethic as it already implicitly exists (U.S. Army 2014a, 6). The Army’s cultural artifacts and embedded beliefs are the foundation of the Army Ethic.

According to the Ethic’s introduction, the Ethic’s function is to guide action by defining moral principles and an aspirational professional identity. Moral principles guide “the conduct of our missions, performance of duty, and all aspects of life” (U.S. Army 2014a, 6). This does not refer to deontological principles, or laws. Instead of using principle in terms of a law or rule, the Ethic explicitly uses Imiola and Cazier’s definition of principle, which is “less vague than values and less specific than rules” (Imiola and Cazier 2010, 16). As a result, the Ethic acknowledges a level of ambiguity to the principles that will require judgment in application.

In addition to defining moral principles, the Ethic’s introduction defines the aspirational identity as “Trustworthy Army Professionals.” This identity describes how professionals fulfill their “distinctive roles as honorable servants, military experts, and

stewards of our profession” (U.S. Army 2014a, 11). The three roles become the subheadings for the rest of the Army Ethic, which describes the Trustworthy Army Professional. According to the background, this model identity is a better way than legalistic and consequential reasoning to develop character, increase motivation, and remove dissonance between belief and practice (U.S. Army 2014a, 3). The Army Ethic guides ethical behavior by defining moral principles and describing an aspirational identity.

The introduction also implicitly gives the Army Ethic’s primary purpose for inspiring and motivating professionals to make right decisions as maintaining “our sacred bond of trust with each other and with those whom we serve” (U.S. Army 2014a, 11). The Ethic’s purposes are, “to inspire and strengthen our shared *identity* as Trustworthy Army Professionals, drive *Character Development*, and reinforce *Trust*” (U.S. Army 2014a, 6). Of those, it cites *The Army Profession* on the primary importance of trust for the profession and concludes, “*Trust* is based on adherence to the Army Ethic in the performance on *Duty* and in all aspects of life” (U.S. Army 2014a, 2). It guides conduct in all aspects of life and at all times. Maintaining trust, the bedrock of the Army profession and its internal organizing principle, depends on ethical behavior, and is the primary purpose for articulating the ethic (U.S. Army 2013a, 2-1).

### Trustworthy Army Professional

The second section of the proposed Army Ethic describes the Trustworthy Army Professional as an honorable servant of the nation, a military expert, and a steward of the Army profession. This three-part description of the Trustworthy Army Professional aligns with the certification criteria for professionals of character, competence, and

commitment (U.S. Army 2013a, 2-1). For the Army Profession to maintain trust, each of its members, or professionals, must continue to meet the certification criteria of competence, commitment, and character (U.S. Army 2013a, 2-1). By aligning the roles and the certification criteria, the Ethic explicitly connects the Ethic's model of excellence with the Ethic's purpose of maintaining trust.

The honorable servant of the nation section describes the professional of character in terms of subordination to civilian authority, nontolerance of immoral behavior, and most of the Army Values. The Ethic begins with subordination because the Army professional gives up some rights as an American citizen, which "includes the right to make decision or take actions that conflict with the Army Ethic" (U.S. Army 2014a, 6). Voluntary subordination gives greater weight to nontolerance, which prescribes taking action against ethical violations. It also accounts for the international societal values by recognizing "the intrinsic dignity and worth of all people, treating them with respect and compassion" (U.S. Army 2014a, 11). The section explicitly describes honor, integrity, respect, and courage, while implicitly describing duty and loyalty (U.S. Army 2014a, 11). Honorable servants of the nation are professionals of character.

The military expert section describes how the competent professional executes the unique functions of the military profession, serves selflessly, and develops professionally. The unique functions of the military profession are taking lives and risking lives, which require selfless service "to do our duty" (U.S. Army 2014a, 11). The military expert also continuously develops professional knowledge, skills, and abilities throughout his life. Military experts are competent professionals.

The steward of the profession section describes how the committed professional addresses moral accountability, resource discipline, and organizational resilience. Stewards lead by example and hold everyone in the profession accountable for behaviors. Stewards manage the national resources of money and blood through training, leading, and caring. Finally, stewards prepare organizations to “persevere, adapt, and overcome adversity, challenges, and setbacks” by developing esprit de corps (U.S. Army 2014a, 11). Stewards of the profession are committed professionals.

### Background

A careful examination of the Army Ethic’s background exposes four key underlying assumptions that will be useful during evaluation. The Ethic assume objective values exist, that virtue ethics is the preferable system of normative ethics, and that an ethical decisionmaking model should evaluate effectiveness, ethicality, and efficiency.

First, the Ethic assumes that values are objective. The adjective “objective” usually refers to something outside both individual and group constructs (Bell 2014, 1). In its explicit assumptions, the Ethic affirms the existence of the Army Ethic and explains that it only describes what already exists (U.S. Army 2014a, 6). If the Ethic already exists, then the Army did not create it, which means that the Ethic’s foundation is objective.

The Ethic confirms this by citing Ewing’s work on the objective nature of values (U.S. Army 2014a, 4). Ewing agrees with the common usage of “objective” in that objective values are irrespective of individual opinions, but claims that within the military context objective values come from national values and military functions. Because national values and military functions are specific to groups, the Ethic

effectively uses “objective” the same way that Bell uses “relative” to describe a community construct (Bell 2014, 1). It is not clear whether the Ethic used a relative understanding of “objective” or the common usage of “objective.” Regardless of whether universality or American values are the source of objectivity, the Ethic is objective at least in the sense that it originates outside the profession.

The Ethic also indicates a predilection for objectivity by describing the Ethic as composed of “enduring principles,” which implies that it is not relative to time (U.S. Army 2014a, 6,11). The Ethic includes a change to the foundation of the Army Ethic by omitting “evolving” from its quote of ADRP 1, which actually says, “evolving set of laws, values, and beliefs” (U.S. Army 2013a, 1-3). This omission marks an attempt to move away from the relative values implied in ADRP 1 to objective values.

Second, the Ethic assumes a preference for virtue ethics over other systems of normative ethics. It elevates the importance of moral identity and character over rote right action so that “the Army Ethic explains *Character* and how this quality is reflected in decisions and actions” (U.S. Army 2014a, 6). A strong moral character shaped by an articulated ethical identity will choose right actions. Though the focus on identity and character are implicit expressions of preference, the Ethic also explicitly identifies “legalistic, rules-based, and consequential reasoning” as a risk when it dominates Soldiers’ decisionmaking and actions (U.S. Army 2014a, 3). Virtue ethics is the primary normative ethical system used by the Army Ethic.

Third, the Ethic implicitly proposes the ethical decisionmaking criteria of effectiveness, ethicality, and efficiency (U.S. Army 2014a, 7, 9). These criteria for right behavior loosely align with the competence, character, and committed criteria for

professional certification and roles of the Trustworthy Army Professional. In this way, it ties certification, professional roles, and ethical decisionmaking together. Because the decisionmaking process only exists in the background, it is neither explicit nor clear on how to use the process.

Finally, the Ethic struggles with whether the world is “Ideal” or “Reality” from figure 1. On one hand, it proposes that commanders should make “right” decisions, not “difficult” decisions (U.S. Army 2014a, 9). That seems to indicate that every decision a commander makes has one right answer, which means that every decision is either legal and ethical or illegal and unethical. Even though most decisions have at least one right answer, the Ethic does not seem to account for genuine ethical dilemmas, which have “better” answers, not “right” answers.

On the other hand, the Ethic defines “right” in terms of ethical, effective, and efficient, which means that some judgment should be applied (U.S. Army 2014a, 9). Of those criteria, the absence of an explicit decisionmaking process makes it difficult to distinguish what is “ethical” in a dilemma. It is also not clear whether an ethical decision vetoes any consideration of effective and efficient. The rest of the Ethic implies objectivity and that an ethical decision is the effective decision (U.S. Army 2014a, 9). If an objective ethical fact trumps the other criteria, should effectiveness and efficiency even be considered? This ambiguity in the Army Ethic does not help commanders make difficult decisions.

To summarize, the Army Ethic uses moral principles and the aspirational identity of Trustworthy Army Professional to propose a normative ethic. This Ethic is a page long, emphasizes virtue ethics, and implicitly provides a decisionmaking process. This

answers the secondary question by describing the content of the AE in the AEWP. It is sufficient as a professional ethic if it passes the screening criteria.

### Screening the Army Ethic

The AE is sufficient as a professional ethic if it passes the screening criteria. Because the screening criteria determine whether it is a possible option, it must pass the criteria on face value. The evaluation criteria will determine the quality of the option.

First, the AE is suitable if it solves the problem by meeting the four suitable criteria. It enhances trust by demonstrating intention through publishing the Ethic and by including a statement of nontoleration. It maintains independence by aligning with societal values and emphasizing self-policing. It guides conduct with an implicit virtue ethics normative framework, a description of principles and virtues, and an emphasis on adherence to law. It facilitates ethical decisionmaking through an implicit virtue ethics normative framework and enough details that professionals can reference the Ethic during decisionmaking. The AE is suitable.

Second, the AE is acceptable if it does not risk competence by meeting the three acceptable criteria. It facilitates service to society by acknowledging subordination to civil authority and commitment to the constitution. It provides warrant for the unique function by addressing lethality and ultimate liability. Even though it is not clear how competence and character work together in ethical dilemmas, it does not *prima facie* cripple the Army's ability to function, which enables competence. The AE is acceptable.

Finally, the AE is complete if it meets the three minimum requirements. It explains the purpose of the AE as enhancing trust and the goal as honor through right decisions. It uses a simple to understand aspirational model. It provides a positive picture

of what generates honor and explains vices as a, “failure to live by and uphold the Army Ethic” which then “brings dishonor on us all” (U.S. Army 2014a, 11). Though the vices are not explicit, they are present as a contrast to the virtues. The AE is complete. The AE sufficiently meets the screening criteria at face value and is an option for the Army as a professional ethic. The evaluation criteria will determine whether the AE is a good option as the Army’s Ethic.

### Evaluating the Army Ethic

The AE is sufficient for the Army as an Ethic if it does a better job than its alternative meeting the external evaluation criteria and it meets the Army’s unique criteria. The alternative is the implicit Ethic found in the law, the Army Values, oaths, and shared beliefs.

First, the AE provides some context for the Ethic. It faithfully describes the historical context as subordination to civil authority, competence, commitment to constitution, and adherence to law. This is consistent with the implicit Ethic. It explicitly covers the international context by recognizing the “dignity and worth of all people, treating them with respect and compassion” (U.S. Army 2014a, 11). It implicitly acknowledges the societal values by emphasizing support for the Constitution, which contains many of the societal values. By not specifying freedom, equality, individualism, and democracy, the Ethic assumes that Professionals are already aware of their societal context. Even though this seems like a risky assumption, it is no less explicit than the alternative, so the AE is beneficial in that it summarizes many of the laws of armed conflict in a single sentence.

Second, the AE does not identify intolerable actions that would result in removal from the profession. Even though most offenses that would result in separation are already captured in law, the AE does not provide the weight of intolerable actions to support itself. If a professional can operate in the legal but unethical grey area, or “A-” on figure 1, that person will at most generate “dishonor” (U.S. Army 2014a, 11). For example, the AE affirms rejecting and reporting immoral actions. If a professional does not report the immoral action, there is no obvious penalty. The AE should include a statement that allows egregious unethical offenders to be removed from service, even if there is no explicit law in UCMJ. This is not an attempt to create a zero defects environment. Commanders should execute judgment in whether the dishonorable conduct was a result of the forgivable causes of inexperience, excessive zeal, and initiative, or the inexcusable causes of repeated folly or malice. If the conduct is a result of the latter, the offender should be removed to avoid further or irreparable dishonor for the profession. In this case, the AE is no different from the implicit Ethic, but lacks gravity in the absence of intolerable actions.

Third, the AE does describe a need to self-police. It includes two nontoleration clauses that highlight the need to demonstrate character by rejecting and reporting “illegal or immoral orders or actions,” and the need to steward the profession by holding “ourselves and others accountable for decisions and actions” (U.S. Army 2014a, 11). By including a nontoleration clause, the AE is better than the implicit ethic.

Fourth, the AE is simple. It is one page long and uses the three parts of the aspirational identity “Trustworthy Army Professional” to aid recall. The statements are simple and easy to understand. The problem is that they may not be specific enough to be

accessible for professionals while making decisions. The AE is simple, but needs an explanation

Fifth, the AE has no exceptions. It “guides us in the conduct of our missions, performance of duty, and all aspects of life. . . . and motivates us to make right decisions and to take right actions at all times” (U.S. Army 2014a, 11). It applies in all environments and at all times. There are no exceptions. This improves upon the implicit Ethic, which does not clarify how professionals ought to conduct themselves when it does not obviously or directly affect the profession.

Sixth, the AE does not have broad agreement in the profession. Even though CAPE has done a lot of work to get feedback and generate agreement both on the nature of the problem and the nature of the solution, most of the feedback is from senior Army officials. Until the Ethic has a few years as official doctrine, it will be difficult to evaluate the breadth of agreement across the profession.

Finally, the AE does not have an explicit decisionmaking process. The background provides an implicit decisionmaking process that evaluates ethical, effective, and efficient. It is not clear how to use those criteria for making a decision. There are three ways to address this deficiency. First, the Army can change the definition of a professional to reflect ethical and cognitive maturity. This would not require a decisionmaking process since the professional has demonstrated the maturity and ability to apply the Ethic without a decisionmaking process. Second, the Ethic can include a better explanation on how the Ethic can affect conduct across the profession without a decisionmaking process. Finally, the Ethic or its background can provide an explicit

ethical decisionmaking process. Until the Ethic addresses this deficiency, it will lack ease of application and understanding.

According to the evaluation framework generated by sources outside the Army, the Army Ethic does well meeting the needs of the U.S. Army. Because of the incredible overlap between the Army's explicit needs and the externally provided framework, the explicit needs of the Army are almost entirely met by the AE. However, the external framework does not address the AE's ability to certify and develop professionals. While the Ethic meets the criteria of simple and concise, it is not clear how the Army can use the Ethic to certify or develop professionals in their ethical conduct.

First, the Army must have a plan to develop professionals that includes corrective measures for dishonorable conduct and rewards for honorable conduct. This is in addition to the rewards associated with esprit des corps. According to the U.S. Army War College's study on professionalism, changing ethical behavior will not occur simply through promulgation. "Admonition is not enough. The implementation of corrective measures must be comprehensive, and the system of rewards . . . must in fact support adherence to traditional ethical behavior" (U.S. Army War College 1970, vi). Without consequences and rewards, there is no immediate reason to change behavior. Apart from blatant legal violations, the Ethic does not have the ability to motivate or to separate.

In addition, the Army must have a plan to certify professionals in their ethical conduct. Based on the AE, the professional should habitually do what is right based on the ideal, the Trustworthy Army Professional. In order to certify a professional, the Army must evaluate the professional's motives to make sure that the conduct was properly thought through.

On one hand, a Soldier's individual character, perhaps shaped by poor morality or the absence of one or immaturity, may not align with the Army's ideal character. The emphasis on character requires the decision to emanate from the cognitive process and nature of the person. The person may recognize that a decision falls within the Army's values, but an immature or non-existent character prefers something else. If the Soldier does the right thing, it cannot be by virtue of character. Instead of the moral action being a habitual behavior of character, the Soldier relies on consequences or duty to make a decision. The Soldier chooses to do the "right" thing because it avoids prison.

On the other hand, a Soldier may accidentally make the right decision. There was no thought process. It just happened to be the right thing. MacIntyre differentiates between exercising virtues and exercising qualities which are simulacra of virtues. Professionals may do the right thing because they fear superiors or care about comrades. "The exercise of the virtues requires therefore a capacity to judge and to do the right thing the right place at the right time in the right way" (MacIntyre 2012, 150). Either way, evaluating an action apart from its thought process and a person's nature will not help the Army certify professionals.

Not having a plan for certification could be a problem for the Army. According to the AE, the Army really cares why a Soldier does the right thing and whether the decision came from compulsion or fear or by accident. An aspirational ethic must emphasize the good and not the principle. Concerning motivations and virtues, MacIntyre states, "It does not of course follow that in the absence of the relevant virtue a right action may not be done" (MacIntyre 2012, 149). A person can do the right thing without commitment to the aspirational nature of the virtue. If the AE becomes a basis for remaining in the

profession, the Army must now evaluate why the Soldier made the right decision. Even though it was the right decision, the Army must retrain, recertify, or remove the Soldier for having an immature or non-existent character.

Even though it lacks some detail in application, Barrett offers a solution in figure 2. By combining Bloom's Taxonomy and Kohlberg's Moral Stages, he proposes a moral floor and a moral ceiling for the profession (Barrett 2012, 25-8). The Army certifies a professional who can at least apply analysis toward obligations to keep law and order. After certification, the Army should always strive "to guide Soldiers along the path toward higher moral attainment" (Barrett 2012, 26). Ideally, professionals aspire toward "supererogatory" behavior, or behavior that is above and beyond the call of duty, applying universal ethical principles through cognitive judgment and evaluation (Barrett 2012, 26). It is still not clear how to certify and develop professionals in ethical conduct, but the Army should consider including something like this framework in future adjustments to the Ethic.

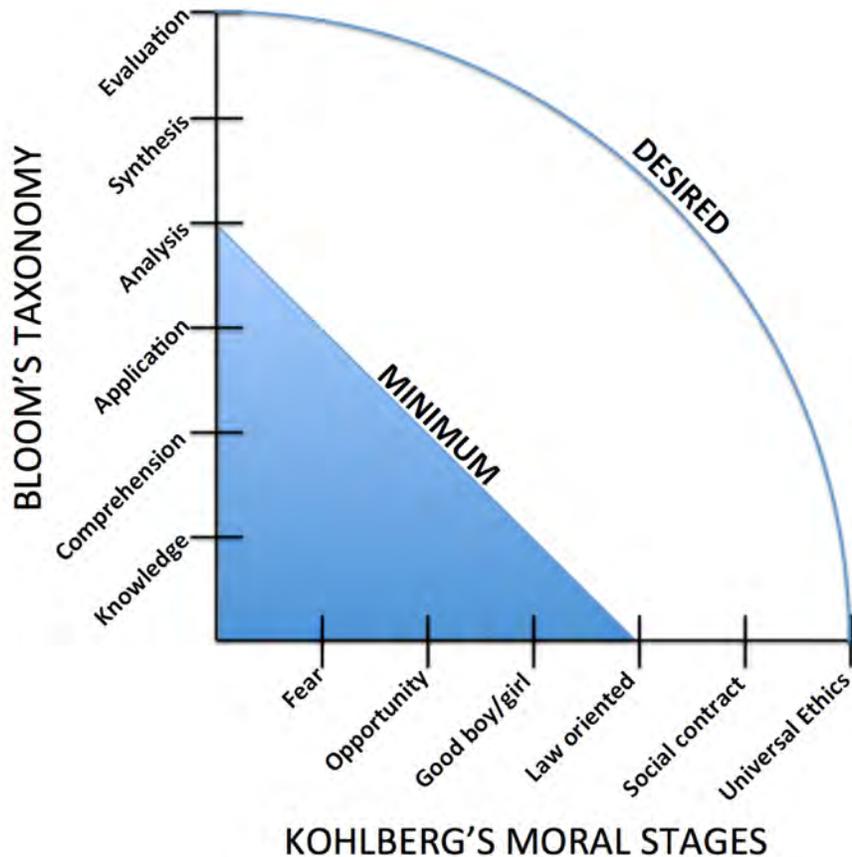


Figure 2. Bloom's Taxonomy and Kohlberg's Moral Stages

*Source:* Recreated by author from Clark Barrett, "Finding 'The Right Way' Toward an Army Institutional Ethic" (Strategic Studies Institute, Carlisle, PA, 2012), figure 5.

Even though there are a few areas where it can improve, the AE meets most of the external evaluation criteria, demonstrating that it is a good option compared with the alternative. It does not do a good job meeting the Army's unique evaluation criteria of developing and certifying professionals in ethical conduct.

### Conclusion

In light of the problem, the literature, and the logic, this chapter addressed the secondary questions to determine whether the AEW provides an Ethic that is sufficient

for the Army profession. After transposing the ideas from literature review into an evaluation framework that included screening and evaluation criteria, this chapter evaluated the AE. The AE met the screening criteria at face value, and did a better job than the alternative with the evaluation criteria. The primary question was, “does the Army Ethic White Paper espouse an Army Ethic sufficient for the Army Profession?” The answer is yes; the Army Ethic is sufficient for the Army profession. However, there are ways that the Ethic can improve from its current inchoate form. The next chapter will provide conclusions, recommendations for decisionmakers, and recommendations for future research.

## CHAPTER 5

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The ability of a practice to retain its integrity will depend on the way in which the virtues can be and are exercised in sustaining the institutional forms which are the social bearers of the practice.

— MacIntyre, *After Virtue*

#### Summary

This thesis primarily answers this question: does the AEWP provide an Ethic that is sufficient for the Army profession? The problem is that the Army is losing trust because of ethical failures and because its current Ethic is inaccessible due to its dispersion among several documents, codes, and creeds. Maywand, Mahmudiyah, and Abu Ghraib are examples of recent illegal *jus in bello* ethical failures. Several General Officer scandals exemplify some of the illegal peacetime ethical failures. Wong and Gerras's recent study exposes the apparent ubiquitous ethical fading in the Army. Over time, these ethical failures aggregate to undermine trust in the profession, which is the basis for professional status. The Army Ethic (AE) demonstrates the Army's intent to minimize future ethical failures and maintain its professional status. Even though the researcher's original hypothesis was that the AE would be insufficient, the answer is that the AE is sufficient, but with room for improvement.

This thesis arrived at the conclusion by examining literature on military and professional ethics, creating an evaluative framework, and evaluating the ethic. The literature review examined external sources and Army guidance to identify key elements of a professional ethic and an Army ethic. The key elements included the historical and

differentiated context, the purposes, the functions, and the structures of a professional Ethic. The screening criteria used purposes and functions as the elements essential for the content of an Ethic. Without these essential elements, the Ethic would not meet the minimum requirements of an Ethic, and not even be an option. The evaluation criteria used the structure and the context as beneficial non-essentials to an Ethic to compare it with the current Ethic. Doing well with the evaluation criteria elevates a viable option into the best available option. The evaluation framework used screening criteria to confirm that the AE qualified as a viable option and evaluation criteria to determine that the AE did a better job than the current Ethic.

Even though the AE fills a significant gap by addressing the absence of a clearly articulated Ethic, this thesis identified several smaller, remaining gaps. The rest of this chapter will consolidate and briefly expand on those gaps by making recommendations for decisionmakers and recommendations for further research.

### Recommendations to Decisionmakers

In its inchoate form, the AE is a sufficient option for the Army's Ethic. Even though CAPE asked the Army for feedback on the AEWP, it will get most of its feedback on the AE in the first few years after it is published. As it looks to make improvements, the Army should improve the AE's clarity and depth, increase its relevance and potency, measure its progress, and be patient.

#### Clarity and Depth

First, the AE could be both clearer and deeper. To be clearer, the AE should provide stipulative definitions for many of its terms. Doctrine writers prefer to use words

that retain their common English usage. The AE uses terms that are confusing because they may have several possible common usage definitions with many more possible definitions in philosophy. If each person has a different understanding of principles, dishonor, immoral, integrity, and character, the AE will be more divisive than unifying. In order to keep the Ethic's simplicity these terms need not be added to the Ethic directly. However, the terms should at least be specified in any introduction to the Ethic. This brings greater clarity to the AE, keeps it "accessible" and makes it "commonly understood" (U.S. Army 2014, 2).

To be deeper, the AE should provide justification for its format, its normative ethics framework, and its content. While the simplicity of the AE makes the Ethic more accessible and providing stipulative definitions makes it commonly understood, justification will help expedite broad professional agreement. Many professionals will adhere to the AE because they must. They care enough about their job to check another box for the Army, but they will invest little effort to understand or own the Ethic personally. Some professionals will initially adhere to the Ethic out of duty. Over time, however, they will examine the Ethic to understand it and better incorporate it into their lives, organizations, and profession. Justification makes it easier for professionals to understand and own the Ethic. Because the Army wrote it, there was great intentionality in the process. Let the profession see the justification for the Ethic.

What should the Army justify about the Ethic? The format is different from other professions and other professional armies. Explain why the AE uses this format. Each system of normative ethics has different assumptions and goals. The AE appears to be heavy on virtue ethics while only briefly acknowledging duty ethics and

consequentialism. The Army's previous attempt to incorporate a character or virtues-based Ethic through the Character Guidance Program did not work (U.S. Army 1968). Explain why the AE uses this ethical framework. Why does the AE not contain prohibitions or a decisionmaking process? Clausewitz noted, "Only those general principles and attitudes that result from clear and deep understanding can provide a comprehensive guide to action" (Clausewitz 1976, 54). Though a concise Ethic has great utility, it cannot be well-understood and owned without clear terms and depth through justification. Keep the AE simple, but be explicit in the explanation with terms and justification.

#### Relevance and Potency

Second, the AE could be more relevant and potent. To be more relevant, the Army should provide an Ethical decisionmaking model and describe how it will implement the Ethic. An ethical decisionmaking model makes the AE more relevant by helping more professionals apply it. An ethical decisionmaking model helps professionals clarify whether a decision is an ethical dilemma and make better decisions in ethical dilemmas. The AE does not have such a process. The AE expects all professionals to already be mature Trustworthy Army Professionals. Given the young age of over 40 percent of the profession, many professionals will have the cognitive and ethical immaturity tied to young age. For senior and retired officers to assume that all younger members of the profession can make decisions solely based on the description of a professional's identity demonstrates the curse of knowledge bias, which makes it difficult for well-informed people to think about problems from the perspective of someone who is less informed. On one hand, even though mature professionals may not need this

process, it gives them a way to articulate their ethical decisions to their organizations. On the other hand, immature professionals can use the process until they mature to the later stages of Bloom's Taxonomy or Kohlberg's moral stages in figure 2.

There are three ways to address this deficiency. First, the Army could change the definition of a professional to reflect ethical and cognitive maturity. This would affect accessions, evaluations, promotions, and separations. It would not require a decisionmaking process since the professional was certified to apply the Ethic without a decisionmaking process. Second, the Army could explain how the Ethic affects conduct across the profession without a decisionmaking process. Finally, the background to the Ethic could offer an explicit decisionmaking process. Until the Ethic addresses this deficiency, it will not be "universally applicable" (U.S. Army 2014, 2).

The other way to make the AE more relevant is to describe how the Army will implement it. Any implementation plan should address professional certification and development. If the Ethic guides all aspects of conduct, performance, and life, then it will determine who can join and make it through the gate of certification. This affects accessions, initial training, and a host of doctrine. The Army should describe where professionals and leaders ought to be at each stage of their career in reference to ethical maturity in figure 2, and then work toward a system of training and evaluation.

Once certified, how will professionals be developed? With its emphasis on character, the AE should set "A long-range goal for qualitative refinement of moral and ethical patterns . . . [through] teaching, study, and example" (Sarkesian 1981, 18). It should provide vignettes to illustrate the Trustworthy Army Professional, and to prepare professionals for ethical dilemmas. It should also provide guidance on how to implement

the changes with a reference similar to the 1968 Character Guidance Manual (U.S. Army 1968). Most of all, the Ethic should be implemented by immediate manifestation at the senior leader levels. Kluckhohn identified that the professional Soldier “seems to resent direct ideological indoctrination. He would prefer to see his ideology manifested in military life than to get it by precept” (1951, 5). If Soldiers see senior leaders living by the Ethic, they may follow. A careless approach to implementation will lead to careless implementation. The Army should specify the AE’s relevance to professional certification and development.

To be more potent, the AE should identify rewards, consequences, and intolerable conduct. Informal enforcement of the Ethic will not change the organization unless there is competition (Abbott 1983, 858). There is no competition with the Army for applying lethal effects for the country, so the AE must be formally enforced or be rendered impotent. The Army can formally enforce the AE by rewarding honorable conduct through assessments and awards, penalizing dishonorable conduct through punishment and assessments, and separating intolerable offenders. Tying rewards to honorable conduct demonstrates the value of honorable conduct to the Army. Even though compliance with a professional code relates positively to status within the profession, status will not change those who tend to create the Army’s problem (Abbott 1983, 858). The reward of positive evaluations can help. Specifying punishment and separation criteria demonstrates the cost of dishonorable conduct to the Army. Those who were already highly compliant would continue to behave in accordance with the Ethic while those who are not compliant will adjust enough to avoid punishment. If there is no reward and punishment, there will be no adjustment.

Will the Army retrain, recertify, or remove the Soldier for having an immature or incompatible character? At a minimum, violating obligations that secure the trust of society and affect the entire profession should be radically sanctioned (Abbott 1983, 863). Again, this is not an attempt to create a zero defects environment. Commanders will execute judgment in whether the dishonorable conduct came from the forgivable causes of inexperience, excessive zeal, and initiative, or the inexcusable causes of repeated folly or malice. Train the immature professional, but remove the incompatible professional to avoid irreparable dishonor for the profession. The Army must be clear on how it intends to formally enforce the Ethic, or it will have little impact on the profession. Increase the potency of the AE by identifying rewards, consequences, and intolerable conduct.

#### Progress and Patience

Third, the Army should measure progress of the Ethic's influence on the American people and the profession. Gallop polls will continue to monitor the profession's level of trust with the American people. Monitor it and encourage civilian institutions to conduct similar research. Create a way to monitor and assess the AE's impact on the profession. At a minimum, the study or survey should be conducted every two years and should measure progress in understanding the AE, applying the AE, generating consensus, and closing gaps in the AE. If the Army does not measure progress toward these ends, the AE will be another unapplied page in an Army publication.

Finally, be patient. It will take time to inculcate and see results from the introduction of a virtue-ethics-based Ethic to the profession. Laws can be taught quickly, but developing judgment and character takes time and experience. "For a professional to alter his mode of practice and its central norms is for him to change his personality"

(Goldman 1980, 292). This takes time, especially for “One long in practice, who is already an admired member of his profession, [he] cannot be expected to do this readily” (Goldman 1980, 292). Professionals will learn and practice these virtues until through experience they are second nature. Aristotle notes, “The virtues we get by first exercising them. . . we learn by doing them” (1969, 62). Given short assignments and short careers, impatient senior professionals may try to expedite the process of change. If the Army is overly dogmatic in an attempt to expedite the process, it could alienate parts of the profession and delay the process. American prisoners of war in Korea resisted communist indoctrination due to “the traditional American negativism toward dogma” (Janowitz 1965, 113). If the Army is dogmatic in its approach, Soldiers will respond negatively. It takes time to introduce, train, and see the profession buy in to something new, especially an ethical model. Gaps in clarity, depth, relevance, and potency will delay problem resolution. Fix the gaps and be patient.

### Recommendations for Further Research

Many of the recommendations to decisionmakers are challenges that require further research. Whether the challenge is practical, philosophical, historical, or sociological in nature, civilian and military researchers can help by conducting further research. This thesis recommends further research into the AE’s context, impact, and sustainability.

### Context

First, more research should be done on the historical and societal context of the AE. The historical context of the Army Ethic is rich, present in accounts of wars,

conflicts, civil-military relations, and in the institutional development. Historians can find hints of the informal Ethic both from accounts in primary sources and in the evolution of doctrine, organizations, training, and equipment. This thesis provides only a brief overview of the historical development of the implicit Army Ethic coincidental with the development of the profession. Further research could look across the broad spectrum or only at a small piece, like civil-military relations. Either way, an expanded understanding of the AE's historical context can provide depth to the identity of a Trustworthy Army Professional. It can also practically provide the Army with vignettes, character studies, and case studies for inclusion in training and implementation.

The societal context for the AE is another area that would benefit from further research. Should the AE align with the changing cultural values or with universal values? This thesis assumed that a look at universal and societal values were outside the scope of this research, based on the difficulty of identifying an agreed upon set. Bell agrees that “a relativistic culture presents a challenge to forming Soldiers who do not merely comply with the military's moral vision but actually own it, internalize it, and are committed to it” (Bell 2014, 2). However, the Army Ethic must remain somewhat aligned with its civilian counterpart to continue building trust and with universal values to eliminate cognitive dissonance.

What is the actual ethic of the people of the United States and how close should the AE align with it? In their 1951 study on American culture and character, Kluckhohn posits that a Soldier “will fight best when the military organisation (sic) is made as fully compatible as possible with his central values” (1951, 5). Huntington expressed skepticism about trying to compare the specificity of the military mind to the civilian

mind, which is so broad that it cannot be contrasted. Any two individual civilian Ethics can be more different than either one to the military Ethic (Huntington 1957, 89-90). Even though it may be difficult to measure, an attempt should be made to identify the differences between societal and military values and either justify the gaps or close the gaps.

What values are universal and how closely should the AE align with it? In addition to aligning with societal values, the Army Ethic ought to align with universal values in order to provide greater appellate authority and motivation. An objector with the Army Ethic could appeal to a universal moral value that may conflict with the Army Ethic. If the Army Ethic aligns with universal moral values, fewer professionals could claim cognitive dissonance, which is better for the profession.

At the end of the day, professionals voluntarily submit themselves to the Army Ethic when they become a part of the profession. It seems unlikely that a professional would choose to join the Army if his belief system irreconcilably contradicted the Army Ethic. However, alignment with societal values may boost Soldier competence and societal trust. Consistency between the Army Ethic and universal moral truths may be beneficial because the AE could reduce appeals to a greater ethical authority and provide marginal motivation for some professionals. The Army is capable of change, and bears the burden to make required changes to the AE. Civilian institutions have the capability and resources to conduct the sociological and philosophical research needed to identify those gaps. This thesis recommends working together on this problem.

## Impact

Second, it is not clear how the AE will affect the Army's certification, implementation, and assessments. Because these processes involve money, time, regulation, doctrine, and organizations, more research could be done to determine the AE's impact on these areas. For certification, what should the criteria be? Barrett proposed a minimum and maximum based on figure 2. Should it be based on age, cognitive maturity, ethical maturity, rank, or time in service? Will there be tiered levels of expectations, or a single expectation? For implementation, where will AE training take place and how will the Army incorporate it into every aspect of Army Life? For assessments, how does the AE affect evaluation reports, duty assignments, promotions, and separations? The answers to these questions will create significant requirements for money, time, and organizational change. Further research can anticipate the impact of the answers and provide Army decisionmakers with enough data to make a well-informed decision.

## Sustainability

Finally, the sustainability of the AE will depend on its capacity to anticipate and address future ethical issues. According to retired Army Colonel Patrick Toffler, a principal contributor on the Army Ethic Project at CAPE, the AE should be both retrospective, helping evaluate past conduct, and also prospective, anticipating how the Ethic will inform and affect conduct in future operations (2015, phone interview by author). To that end, this thesis recommends something like a pre-mortem analysis of the AE's impact on competence across the range of military operations and military life. In other words, start with the assumption that the AE will cause failure in a future operation

or event, and then determine why will it fail. Such an inquiry will provide insights into the applicability of the ethic, and identify improvements for the AE.

For example, with possible exception to the Cold War, the United States has not fought a war of survival since the French and Indian War. Would the Ethic allow the Army to succeed if the United States were invaded by a stronger, dirty-fighting adversary and the Army was forced to fight guerilla warfare? Examining historical unethical winners and ethical losers might provide insights into how the AE might fail the Army. How will the AE cripple the Army's ability to conduct Defense Support of Civil Authorities, peacekeeping operations, hybrid warfare, expeditionary warfare, or forcible entry operations? How will the AE cause failure in civil-military relations, multinational operations, or interagency operations? Even though this research would involve the hypothetical, analyzing historic conflicts and identifying the conditions behind failures in competence and ethical conduct will help the Army anticipate future difficult ethical situations and adjust the AE. Whether the AE passes the pre-mortem analysis or requires adjustment, it will be more sustainable for the profession.

### Conclusion

The inchoate Army Ethic is sufficient, but can be improved. Codification of the AE provides a baseline for future adjustment. In a call for fire, the first round is "adjust fire" and identifies a starting point from which adjustments can be made. The "fire for effect" follows the adjustment to complete the mission. The Army needs to complete the AE by adding clarity and depth, increasing relevance and potency, measuring progress, and patiently inculcating. Further research into the AE's context, impact, and sustainability will help decisionmakers and strengthen a sufficient Ethic. Is the AE

sufficient for the Army profession? Yes. The AE fills a gap in the profession and demonstrates the Army's intention to maintain trust and its professional status. Is it as good as it could be? No. According to Cook, "the highest standards of ethical climate and conduct are essential to maintaining a healthy military service" (Cook 2000, 129). It is time to steward the profession by moving beyond sufficient.

Only when the military articulates and lives up to its highest values can it retain the nobility of the profession of arms. Only when it retains a proper sense of its role in American democratic life does it retain the trust and respect Marshall spoke of. Only a military that daily lives out its values and feels its connection to the citizens is a military that engenders the respect and loyalty of the nation and keeps it from being feared. Such respect and trust are the real foundations of morale, retention, and voluntary service. (Cook 2010, 128)

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