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WARRIOR ETHOS REVISITED: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

BY

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WARRIOR ETHOS REVISITED: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

by

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ABSTRACT

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The “Warrior Ethos” is the written manifestation of what individual Soldiers ascribe to be. It is a covenant which embodies how Soldiers serve the nation and expresses their dedication to accomplish their mission and their responsibilities to each other and the Army. It informs how they train and what expert knowledge they must master. As the Army seeks to define required future capabilities, what cultural changes if any will be needed to adapt and ensure success? This paper maintains that the “Warrior Ethos”, a subset of the Soldier’s Creed, reflects a Cold War mindset focused on application of kinetic force and is out of alignment with the changing character of warfare as experienced over the last ten years of persistent conflict. Future conflicts are likely to be dominated by low intensity conflict and stability operations where leaders at lower levels will routinely face difficult and ambiguous circumstances which will require a high degree of moral judgment in the reasoned application of force. Adapting Army culture to meet these challenges will require an Army that values and builds trust relationships and places high priority on the development of moral character.

WARRIOR ETHOS REVISITED: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

> "A warrior's honor is a slender hope, but it may be all there is to separate war from savagery. And a corollary hope is that men can be trained to fight with honor. Armies train people to kill, but they also teach restraint and discipline; they channel aggression into ritual. War is redeemed only by moral rules…"
>
> —Michael Ignatieff[1]

This paper seeks to contribute to a growing body of recent scholarly work re-examining the Army's collective sense of professionalism through a narrow examination of Army Culture and its Warrior Identity. It maintains that the "Warrior Ethos", a subset of the Soldier's Creed, reflects a Cold War mindset focused on application of kinetic force and is out of alignment with the changing character of warfare as experienced over the last ten years of persistent conflict. Future conflicts are likely to be dominated by low intensity conflict and stability operations where leaders at lower levels will routinely face difficult and ambiguous circumstances which will require a high degree of moral judgment in the reasoned application of force which may have strategic implications. Adapting Army culture to meet these challenges will require an Army that values and builds trust relationships and places high priority on the development of moral character.

The *Army Capstone Concept 2016-2028* argues that while the character of war has changed, and will continue to change into the future, the fundamental nature of war will persist.[2] We will be required to respond to a broad range of adaptive threats. In 2007, LTG Peter Chiarelli, recognizing a shift away from large-scale conventional land warfare and the increasing prevalence of stability operations urged the Army to "embrace the concept of nation-building" and stated that "a nation's ability to apply non-

kinetic elements of national power is as important to victory as the application of firepower."[3] *Joint Operating Environment 2010* provides a methodically developed and logical glimpse of that future environment.[4] It describes a world where the sources of potential conflict are numerous and varied. These sources include: demographic shifts, weak and failing states, emerging and re-emerging powers, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, globalization and competition for resources, disease and pandemics, urbanization, climate change, economic interdependence and lack of accessibility to markets and job opportunities.

This list is surely incomplete but it does describe a world which is increasingly volatile, unstable, complex and ambiguous; a descriptor set which, in fact, has earned its own acronym: "VUCA". U.S. forces will likely continue to be required to engage in the full spectrum of the range of military operations (ROMO) including regular and irregular wars, disaster relief, cooperative engagement, peace-keeping and reconstruction. The last ten years suggest that we will increasingly conflict with super-empowered non-state actors who do not share our values and do not operate under accepted norms of warfare. The future will likely require a new sense of "jointness" with emphasis on interaction with other government agencies where lines of responsibility are not clear and the predominance of any instrument of national power will shift as circumstances change. The future, in short guarantees surprises that will require strategic agility and will test the limits of U.S. national power.

A central theme of the Army's Capstone Concept is "operational adaptability" or "a quality that Army leaders and forces must exhibit based on critical thinking, comfort with ambiguity and decentralization, a willingness to accept prudent risk, and an ability

to make rapid adjustments based on a continuous assessment of the situation".[5] As the Army through its Capstone Concept seeks to define required future capabilities, what cultural changes if any will be needed to adapt and ensure our success? Will our Soldier's warrior identity serve the Army well into the future? To answer this question it is necessary to understand how the character of warfare as experienced over the last ten years of persistent conflict has shaped or changed our culture.

Know Thyself: The Army's Professional Culture and Ethic

Understanding Army culture and identifying its unique traits is not easy. We as a military profession have a monopoly on the use of force and an obligation to our nation to master how we use it on their behalf. Our Army faces many challenges and strategic choices over the next 10-15 years. In order to make objective strategic decisions we must understand ourselves and our biases and tendencies. Dr. Don Snider, Paul Oh and Kevin toner offer a framework for examining Army's professional military ethic (PME).[6] The Army's Warrior Ethos is a component of this framework, but to understand how it may have evolved and determine the implications, we must understand the influences of the Army's entire system of beliefs and norms described within the larger framework over the last ten years.

As shown below in figure 1, the PME framework is divided into four quadrants separating institutional and individual ethics and their legal and moral foundations. Within these four quadrants (Legal-Institutional, Legal Individual, Moral Institutional, Moral Individual) we can describe the codified (legal) and moral norms for behavior and action as well as the beliefs and norms of the Army as an institution and as individual professional Soldiers. Collectively, this framework is an expression of who we are and how we do things. It describes our institutional "personality" and character. While

examination of the Army's warrior identity and ethos requires a focus on the Moral Individual domain, it would be incomplete without at least a cursory examination of the other domains of the Army Professional Military Ethic.

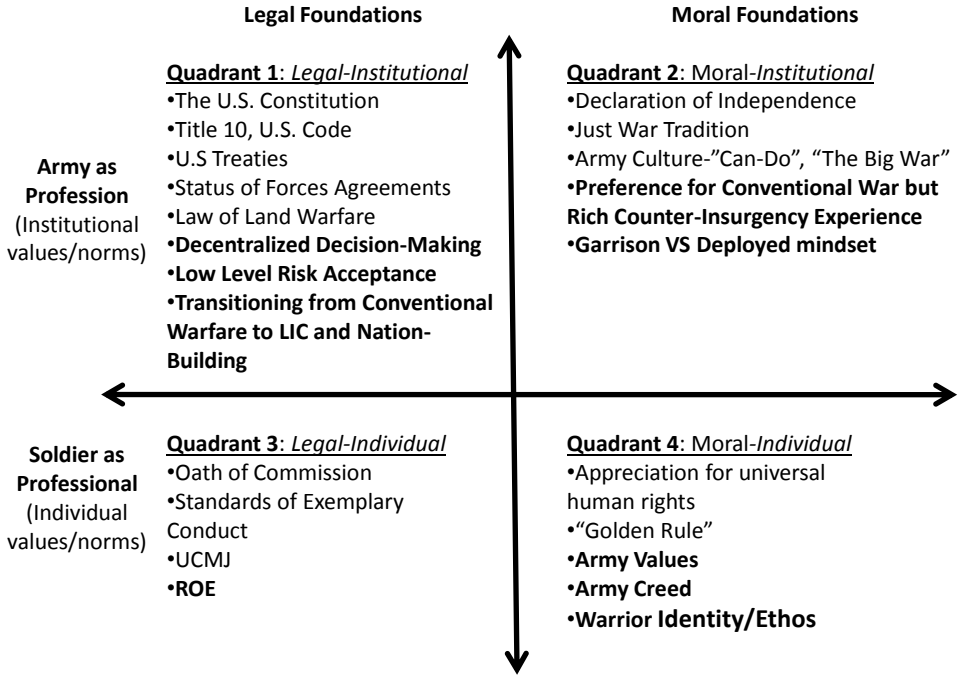

Figure 1: Army Professional Military Ethic Framework

Legal-Institutional Foundation

Within the legal-institutional quadrant, Snider, Oh and Toner include those things that make up the legal and codified foundation of our ethic that guides the behavior of the Army as a profession.[7] The U.S. Constitution, Title 10 of the U.S. Code, treaties, Status of Forces Agreements (SOFAs), and the Law of Land Warfare are all examples of agreed upon and binding instructions that justify the Army's (and other military service's) monopoly on the application of violence on behalf of the nation. The authors maintain that historically, the "emphasis on sustained land combat and prosecution of

war has over the years influenced Army culture towards large, conventional, army-on-army conflicts."[8] While the Army may have a preference for large-scale conventional combat, the Army's experience over the last ten years in Iraq and Afghanistan have been something quite different. U.S. adversaries by and large avoided direct military confrontation with U.S. forces and adopted asymmetric tactics to exploit weaknesses and preserve their ability to resist. Instead of force on force clashes with decisive outcomes, enemies chose to fight a more protracted conflict "among the people" often in urban settings. These tactics degraded traditional U.S. military strengths requiring adaptation of how the Army applied force. To generate the agility necessary to continually adapt to changing asymmetrical tactics, the Army institutionally has become less hierarchical pushing tactical-level decision making down to lower levels where it is more relevant and decisive. This phenomenon represents a shift away from an institutional trait favoring high level control and risk acceptance towards decentralized decision-making and a willingness to share responsibility as risk is pushed out and down. To maintain this successful adaptation will require great emphasis on trust relationships and a well developed collective sense of judgment and discernment on the part of junior leaders.

Other changes over the last ten years have included repeal of the Department of Defense's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy. While this change is too new to make any real conclusions about its effect on Army Culture and its warrior identity, a pre-repeal Army study revealed that 70% of service members polled indicated that repeal would have either a positive, mixed or no effect on unit effectiveness.[9] For the purposes of this report the majority acceptance of this major policy change not only indicates a cultural

willingness to respect the purview of civilian over military authority, but may also indicate a more inclusive shift in Army culture and a willingness to realign beliefs and norms in accordance with the predominant social tendencies and tolerances of the population it represents. While this trend is a positive reinforcement of Army Values and evidence of cultural adaptation, other experiences relevant to the legal-institutional quadrant over the last ten years may have the effect of introducing ambiguity and competition to the Army's traditional role in land-warfare.

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have required the integration of contractors to perform roles and missions previously performed within the uniformed force. Tasks associated with nation-building traditionally seen within the realm of the State Department and other government agencies have been performed by the Army out of necessity. Since contracted employees and other government agencies may perform many of the same tasks and share some of the same risks as Soldiers on the ground, the blurring of roles may have the effect of confusing the Army's unique responsibility in managing violence and the unique code, ethic and identity derived from that responsibility.

Moral Institutional Foundation

The moral-institutional quadrant includes the moral, non-legal foundation of the Army Ethic as it applies to the Army as a profession. The PME model suggests that within this quadrant lies the spirit of the Declaration of Independence and the "Just War" tradition which is the basis for legitimate and ethical use of force to defend national vital interests and achieve critical national objectives. Snider, Oh and Toner also maintain that within this quadrant lies the Army's preference to fight the "Big War" and an institutionalized "Can-do" attitude.[10] The central idea of the future oriented Army

Operations Concept describes two distinct types of operations within the larger context of Combined Arms Operations; Combined Arms Maneuver and Wide Area Security.[11] The author would argue that Wide Area Security, a form of low intensity conflict, is closely aligned with the Army's predominant operational experience over the past ten years. The Army's rich experience in counter-insurgency operations has shown that this form of warfare requires a much greater degree of moral discernment due to the decentralized and distributed nature of operations it includes and the complex and often ambiguous nature of war "among the people". Given the Army's emphasis on sustained land combat and cultural tendency to prefer the "Big War", balancing our ability to conduct Combined Arms Maneuver and Wide Area Security and making appropriate decisions about force structure and doctrine to support them will be critical. More importantly, our Warrior Identity must embrace and support both types of operations equally. The Army's "Can-do" attitude is something that the institution touts with pride, however, emphasis on effectiveness and accomplishing the mission "no matter what" can lead to an institutionalized sense of putting the mission first even when that means putting aside ethical considerations.

Another moral-institutional social change has occurred related to the maintenance of sustained combat operations and the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) model. Repeated unit rotational cycles between garrison, training, and combat has induced a garrison versus deployed mind-set across the force which not only differentiates professional and moral obligations while deployed and at home-station, but at the individual level between on-duty and off-duty behavior. Maintaining the integrity of the Army profession will require countering situational ethics and moral

relativism institutionally with an unambiguous imperative to align ethical behavior with the Warrior Ethos and Army Values instilled in leaders of character who act consistently deployed or in garrison and on-duty or off.

Legal-Individual Foundation

The legal-individual quadrant contains the codified foundation of the Army PME that applies to the individual Soldier as a professional. The PME framework includes an officer's oath of commission, the Standards of Exemplary Conduct as defined in section 3583, Title 10 of the U.S. Code, the Uniformed Code of Military Justice (UCMJ), Rules of Engagement (ROE) and The Soldier's Rules as defined in Army Regulation 350-1 in this quadrant. Of the documents listed above, the Standards of Exemplary Conduct are particularly poignant as an individual legal obligation relevant to ethical conduct and therefore worth quoting in full.

> All commanding officers and others in authority in the Army are required to *show in themselves a good example of virtue, honor, patriotism, and subordination;* to be vigilant in inspecting the conduct of all persons who are placed under their command; *to guard against and suppress all dissolute and immoral practices*, and to correct, according to the laws and regulations of the Army, all persons who are guilty of them; and to take all necessary and proper measures, under the laws, regulations, and customs of the Army, to promote and safeguard the morale, the physical well-being, and the general welfare of the officers and enlisted persons under their command or charge.[12]

Over the last ten years of combat operations, ROE have become ingrained as a daily component of Soldier's lives. Commanders on the ground use ROE to balance tension and reduce ambiguity associated with the volatile character of modern warfare. This rules based approach has promoted a "most force permissible" versus a "least force necessary" approach which does not always result in outcomes that favor U.S. interests and military strategy. As an example, at the height of the Iraqi insurgency from

July 2006 to July 2007, U.S. forces killed or wounded 429 Iraqi civilians at checkpoints or near patrols or convoys out of 3200 escalation of force incidents.[13] This statistic does not include instances where Soldiers killed Iraqi civilians during raids, arrests or while engaged in battle with armed groups. Understanding that the fog of war makes proper application of ROE a tremendously difficult task for a Soldier faced with an ambiguous decision during an extremely compressed timeframe, some tolerance for failure must be accepted. If however, the Army as a profession fosters a rule based culture where "most force permissible" is employed over the more difficult "least force necessary" disposition, the responsible, reasoned and disciplined application of force will always be less than what is expected by our nation and those we claim to protect. Ethical implications aside, from a pragmatic perspective improper application of ROE sub-optimizes and undermines military strategy. Acknowledging this point, LTG Peter Chiarelli, while Commander of Multi-national Corps Iraq said "we have people who are on the fence or supported us who in the last two or three years have in fact decided to strike out against us. And you have to ask: Why is that? And I would argue in many instances we are our own worst enemies."[14] The author would argue that the legal-individual foundation alone as represented in ROE is insufficient and that the responsible application of force by Soldiers as individual professionals can only be achieved with the combined application of well understood ROE and a strong individual moral foundation.

Moral Individual

The moral-individual quadrant of the framework for the Army PME represents the non-legal foundations that apply to a Soldier individually as a human being and as a professional.[15] Included within this domain are subtle notions that appeal to basic

respect for individual human rights and the “Golden Rule” which requires an individual to treat others as they would be expected to be treated. The U.S. Army expresses its expectations and sense of individual behavior through various mediums to include the Soldier, NCO and Officer Creeds and its refinement and definition of seven Army Values. Within the Soldier Creed resides the professed essence of the warrior; the Warrior Ethos. Induction into the military fraternity relies on a combination of the values imbued on a Soldier prior to entry into the profession, and those taught through indoctrination and example upon and after entry into the profession. The author would argue that this domain is most critical in shaping who a Soldier will become and what values they will represent, and act on, once entrusted with the responsibly associated with mediating reasoned violence on behalf of the nation and are therefore worthy of focused attention and consideration.

The Essence of Warrior Ethos

From the newest recruit to our most seasoned veterans, the Soldier’s Creed, with its embedded Warrior Ethos, is the written manifestation of what idealized individual Soldiers ascribe to be. It is their covenant with the American people. Not only does it embody how they serve our nation, it captures their dedication to accomplish their mission and their responsibilities to each other and the Army as an institution. It also provides direction for how they should train and what expert knowledge they must master. Many Soldiers across the Army can recite the Soldier Creed by heart and most at least are very familiar with it. It is posted in Headquarters and orderly rooms across the Army and used in recruiting posters. Noted organizational psychologist Edgar Schein would call the Warrior Ethos an “artifact” of Army culture.[16]

Artifacts are those things within an organization at surface level that can be seen and are recognizable to those outside as unique to a group. The “Iron Mike” statue at Fort Bragg or an image of a flag waving Soldier embracing his family after returning from combat might be others. Schein’s organizational culture model goes further by categorizing two other levels of espoused values and basic assumptions which are not as easily identified. Like an iceberg the artifacts and espoused values are the tip poking through the surface, and shared values and assumptions form a wide base to complete the picture of how an organization sees itself and define what makes it function.[17]

The Army’s espoused values are defined in our doctrine as loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity and personal courage.[18] Army values are conditions for membership in the profession. While all Soldiers may not enter the Army with these values and not all Soldiers within the Army always internalize and live up to these values, they are what the Army as an organization espouses as essential to building “Leaders of Character.” Deep understanding and acceptance of these values in the daily lives of Soldiers help bind them together and guide their decision making as they serve the nation and the Army. Derivatives of espoused values are norms or acknowledged standards widely accepted by an organization that drive behavior. From Army Standards for training, to unit Standard Operating Procedures and policies, they exist in every unit and permeate almost every aspect of military life. Ours is an Army of standards.

The ethos, embedded in the Soldier Creed, establishes Soldier’s identity as warriors. Samuel Huntington identified the application of violence as the primary function of the Army as an organization, and the management of violence as a peculiar

skill of Army officers.[19] If the application and management of violence is the essence of the profession, then it is appropriate that Soldiers identify themselves as warriors. In 2003 when the Soldier Creed and Ethos were approved by then Chief of Staff General Peter Schoomaker, the Army was only beginning to learn the hard lessons of modern warfare. In the wake of highly publicized incidents like the ambush on the 507th Maintenance Company in An Nasiriyah in March 2003, re-centering the Army around basic warfighting skills was not only prudent, but essential. [20]

The Warrior Ethos was one method of changing Army culture to value our ability to manage violence and protect ourselves above our ability to perform other diverse individual specialized tasks within our profession. The Warrior Identity enables a Soldier to overcome fear and anxiety during the heat of battle and take action, it nurtures cohesion within a small group whose fates depend on each other and it delivers a predictable outcome to neutralize threats. The Warrior Ethos rescues order from chaos and re-establishes military effectiveness. While our ability to close with and destroy an enemy is at the heart of our ethos, for many Soldiers, what they experienced while deployed has been something much more ambiguous. Our experience has truly spanned the range of military operations from highly kinetic close quarters combat to the more mundane and subtle tasks associated with nation-building where a smile, handshake or deep understanding of local culture and language are the instruments of choice.

In contemporary operational environments where influencing the indigenous population is a prominent line of operations, sometimes introduction of violence is not only inappropriate, but is counter- productive and can have strategic implications. As a

recent military ethics article most succinctly conveyed, “the talk of destroying the enemy, never accepting defeat, close combat and guarding the American way of life bear little relation to situations in which one is meant to be protecting somebody else’s way of life, using minimum force, and if necessary accepting losses in order to help others.”[21] Tony Pfaff argued that to deal with this tension we must better integrate “some of the practices, traditions, and identities more associated with law-enforcement in addition to those associated with war-fighting in a way that is complementary rather than conflicting.”[22]

British Brigadier Nigel Alywin-Foster, who served with U.S. forces in Iraq in 2004 and in 2005, published an Article in *Military Review* offering candid observations that stirred significant debate within the U.S. Army. Sometimes an outside view, while difficult to digest, can be deadly accurate and ultimately thought provoking and therefore helpful. When describing the extent to which U.S. performance had fueled the insurgency in Iraq he said:

> “The most striking feature of the U.S. Army’s approach during this period of OIF Phase 4 is that universally those consulted for these papers who were not from the U.S. considered that the Army was too ‘kinetic’. This is shorthand for saying U.S. Army personnel were too inclined to consider offensive operations and destruction of the insurgent as the key to a given situation, and conversely failed to understand its downside.”[23]

Linking this tendency to the individual Soldier and the doctrine and training that drove his actions, he said:

> “At its core…the Soldier’s Creed… enjoins the soldier to have just the one type of interaction with his enemy; ‘to engage and destroy him’, not defeat, which could permit a number of other politically attuned options, but destroy. According to TRADOC, ‘lessons learned from OIF re-validated the “need” and influenced the final language, which was officially released in 2003’. Yet it is very decidedly a war-fighting creed, which has no doubt served well to promote the much sought conventional warfighting ethos,

> but cannot be helping soldiers to understand that on many occasions in unconventional situations they have to be soldiers, not warriors."[24]

Peter Fromm maintains the Army has entangled the terms "Warrior" and "Soldier" within its creed and ethos and argues in fact that the two terms are "connotatively contradictory."[25] The term "Warrior", he says, is employed because of its heroic Homeric imagery. While it is understandable why the Army today would identify with the term, it ignores its literary and historical roots which connote an aggrandizement of war and a selfish love for the fight as an end in itself. In this sense, Achilles is probably the most revered of all warriors in history. Fromm describes the historical connotations associated with the term "Soldier" as one who is a product and servant to the state and shares a sacred trust with those he protects. Soldiers are characterized by service, submission to authority and discipline, rigor in teamwork and a commitment to a higher need than one's own.[26] In short, Warriors destroy, Soldiers defend and protect. While the connotations of ancient military and literary history would be lost on the vast majority of Soldiers today, Fromm's argument has some validity. The Warrior Ethos is widely embraced and internalized by Soldiers today and is ingrained in the Army Ethic and its doctrine but the Warrior-Guardian tension remains and must be rectified to eliminate any ambiguity.

Shaping Culture and the Military Ethic: Recommendations

As discussed above, Army culture is both a product of the Army's experiences and a conscious recognition and embrace of its core mission and values. Organizational culture, however, changes over time and must be periodically and objectively assessed and aligned against the core mission and values of the organization. When out of alignment, deliberate effort must be made to ensure the Army continues to meet the

nation's expectation of applying and managing violence ethically. How does the Army induce a cultural shift that retains the benefits of its warrior identity while embracing restraint, discernment and empathy as valued qualities of Soldiering? A partial answer already exists within the Soldier creed and is reinforced by Army values. It's a matter of emphasis, understanding and internalization.

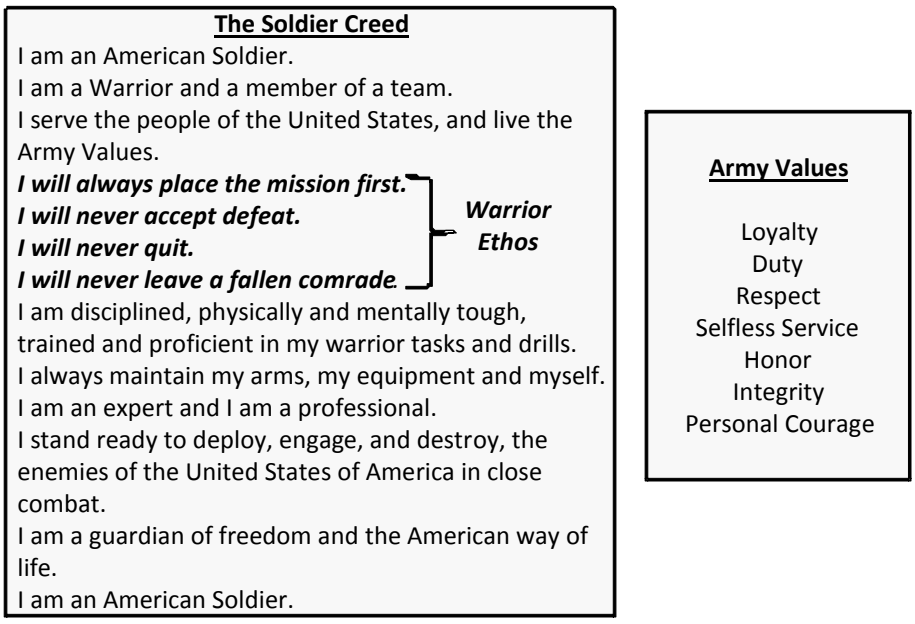

Figure 2: Soldier Creed and Army Values

Recommendation 1: Modify and repackage the "American Warrior Ethos."

The essence of the warrior identity is widely associated with the high-end, high intensity, kinetic character of combat operations. This nuance is a product of Army culture and is out of alignment with what the creed actually says and what it means. The creed accommodates and is applicable to all types of operations. Properly interpreted and emphasized, it is a necessary and sufficient guide for ethical decision

making and action at the tactical level with full appreciation of potential strategic implications as Soldiers accomplish whatever mission they are given.

Also captured in the Solider Creed, but less emphasized than the four lines that compartmentalize the “Warrior Ethos”, are the assertions that Soldiers are to “live the Army Values” and are “guardians of freedom”. These declarations are not situationally dependant and apply whether Soldiers are defending their own country’s freedom or that of agent state to which our nation has allied. What may be required, and it might take time to realize, is a redefinition of what an “American Warrior” is. A new understanding will expand the context of the environment in which a warrior operates to better template appropriate action under the morally complex situations typical of lower intensity operations like peace-keeping and nation-building. This expansion should also extend beyond the context of military operations and into a Soldier’s personal decision-making on and off duty as well.

This ethos would better link a warrior’s actions as a representative of the American people to a sacred trust that requires ethical decision-making not just for pragmatic operational reasons, but because his or her actions are aligned with the things we value as a nation. To reshape Army culture, we must better link what we espouse in our ethos with what we value as an American Army. Rather than robotically reciting the warrior ethos in bumper-sticker like bursts and wearing plastic dog tags (themselves artifacts and reinforcing mechanisms) listing Army Values, we must encourage and teach Soldiers to internalize Army values and better train leaders to instinctively make decisions in an all-pervasive ethical context.

In addition to rethinking how we as an institution teach and embrace in our culture ethical decision making as an imperative of our profession, we must reinforce and reward those who best exhibit restraint and good judgment in the face of danger or ambiguous circumstances. We must hold them up as images of the redefined and idealized American warrior. One of the most powerful methods of expanding our warrior identity is through consistent demonstration of service from leaders with highly developed character; we must better leverage leadership and influence by example. Because decisions with strategic implications are increasingly made at lower and lower levels, it is essential that leaders at all levels recognize the dangers of this misalignment and take action to reshape our culture.

I suggest the Army modify the Warrior Ethos as shown in figure 3 by including "I am an expert and a professional *and I adhere to the highest ethical standards*". The Warrior Ethos is a well ingrained artifact of our culture; the inclusion of this statement (most of which is already part of the Creed) ties the application of force to our responsibility to exercise ethical discernment. The Army's "*Soldier Blue Book*" is spot on and appropriate for indoctrination of an initial entry Soldier, however, in the blue book's discussion of the Warrior Ethos it describes a warrior as "prepared, trained and fully equipped for war. Soldiers destroy the enemy in close combat, resolve conflict, and then restore the peace. They are also part of a team, bound to each other by integrity and trust."[27] By not putting a warrior's actions to both enemies and non-combatants in an ethical context it is ambiguous. The "Soldiers Rules" that follow this discussion clearly place a high value on ethical behavior which is good but the Warrior Ethos currently doesn't reinforce this.

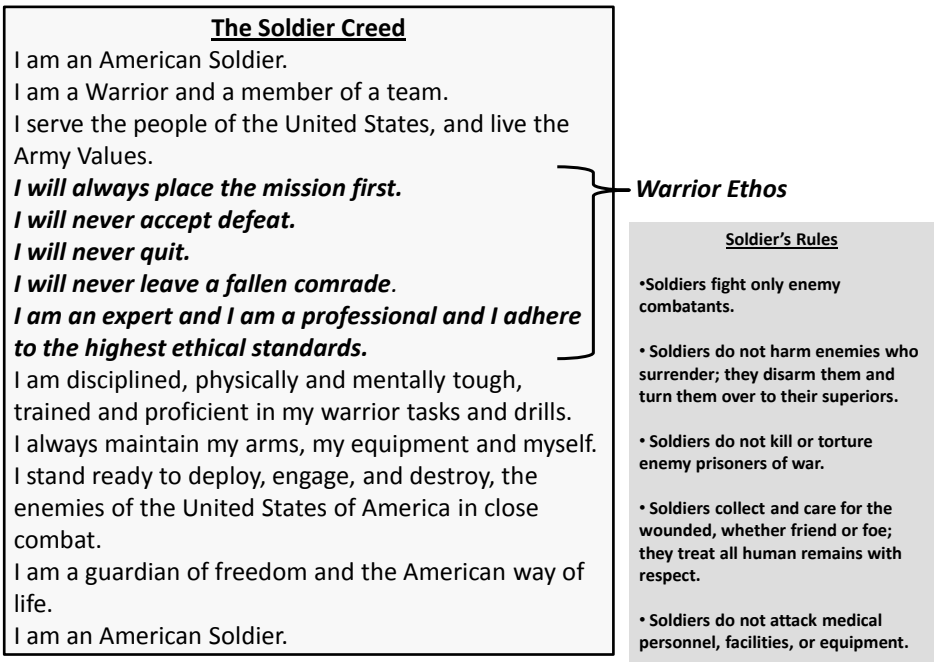

Figure 3: Soldier Creed and Army Values

Recommendation 2: Re-evaluate and reinforce ethical training as an imperative of the profession of arms.

I also recommend Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) review Army Values and Army Culture training programs of instruction at all institutional training schools for content and frequency throughout each course. TRADOC currently has a well developed program for initial entry Soldiers but is it consistent and appropriate for each level of instruction within the institutional training domain? Does it take into account the types of ethical decisions likely to come with increased responsibility? Is it a one-time block of instruction or a true running theme throughout the course? Professional military education within the Operational Domain at unit level is likely to be the most essential and effective since is it conducted by a unit's own leaders within the

culture, climate and context of a specific unit with a defined mission. Chapter four of *FM 6-22: Army Leadership* is a sound basis for discussion of ethical leadership, character development and understanding the importance of trust relationships. Open discussion about what Soldiers think the Warrior Ethos means and presenting examples of tensions associated with the "Warrior-Guardian" paradigm will reinforce the importance of ethical conduct as part of the Army's unique warrior identity.

Recommendation 3: Maintain vigilance against garrison versus deployed mindset.

The garrison versus deployed mindset discussed above has led many to call for the "rediscovery of the lost art of garrison command". Many Soldiers returning from a combat tour are exposed to hazards more lethal than they faced in combat both physical and moral. It is essential that they maintain discipline and the same sense of purpose and duty to their unit that sustained them while deployed. Failure to maintain this posture leads to a sense of living in two different worlds. In addition to training conditions that replicate combat and maintain professional skills, Army traditions like drill and ceremony, dining-Ins, right arm nights, NCO induction ceremonies, organizational days and professional development seminars are important as bonding rituals that strengthen a sense of community within the profession and build a network of personal trust. Leaders must reinforce the "Duty Concept" as part of Army Values in a way that requires going beyond "Doing your Job" to invoking a Soldier's responsibility to emulate professional behavior and ethical conduct on and off duty and while deployed or in garrison.

Recommendation 3: Better employ Command Climate Surveys as an indicator of ethical behavior.

Command climate is a shared feeling or perception within a small unit and is a function of culture and directly tied to ethical behavior. In a highly publicized case involving the 5th Stryker Brigade of the 2nd Infantry Division's tour in Afghanistan in 2009, four Soldiers, allegedly part of a self organized "kill team" were charged with murdering several unarmed Afghanis and subsequently covering the deaths up. Seven other Soldiers from the same platoon were charged with drug use.[28] Many attribute the crimes committed by these Soldiers to the command climate established and fostered by the unit's particularly aggressive Brigade Commander. An unnamed senior military member from the brigade said:

> "When you feel violent intent coming down from the command and into the culture of the brigade, that's when you end up with things like the rogue platoon. He established a culture that allowed that kind of mindset to percolate. And there are second and third-order effects that come with that. Clearly, the guys who were pulling the trigger are the proximate cause of the crime, but the culture itself is the enabler."[29]

At battalion and below level units, where often distinct subcultures reside, command climate establishes the environment in which ethical decisions are made to the good or detriment of a unit. A healthy command climate fosters good trust relationships throughout an organization. Currently, Army Regulation 600-20 requires these surveys be conducted at company level within the first 90 days of command. While these surveys are useful at company level, assessing climate across a battalion is problematic because it is often based on infrequent and mis-timed company level assessments. The author recommends that ODSPER and TRADOC update DA PAM 600-69, *Survey Guide for Commanders,* to suggest methods for employing surveys to assess climate at battalion and brigade levels. At battalion level, one method might be to select a cross-section from the battalion and use the same methods applied a

company level. Another method might be to conduct company level command climate assessments more frequently than required and timed within a specific window. From this, a battalion commander could make a general assessment of the entire battalion at a given point. At brigade level, one method of assessing climate could be to conduct quarterly command climate readiness assessment meetings to review incidents of indiscipline, urinalysis, Army Substance Abuse Program referrals, AWOLs, Suicide attempts or ideations or other indicators of the ethical health of the unit. Commanders in the field need all the help they can get to shape the ethical climate within their units but may be under-utilizing command climate surveys as a tool if they are only employing them at company level. In fiscal year 2009, 239 Soldiers took their own lives and over 1713 others attempted to.[30] In the same year, Soldiers committed 74,646 criminal offenses including 16,997 drug and alcohol related offenses. On and off the battlefield, the Army is losing Soldiers at an alarming rate. Deaths attributed to bad choices and unethical behaviors are particularly tragic because they are often preventable. Command climate assessments conducted at battalion and brigade level may help commanders better focus their attention and resources where they are most needed.

Conclusion

While future battlefields will require that the U.S. Army continue to maintain its ability to close with and defeat its enemies, the environment in which it does that will be more varied, ambiguous and politically volatile than even recent history suggests. While combat will remain an essential activity, individual Soldiers will be required to employ force and influence populations in more varied, measured and discriminate ways than ever before. Because of this, the Army must be precise in how it describes and instills the American Warrior Ethos and consistent in linking the application and management

of force with ethical decision making. Ultimately, Commanders and Senior Non-Commissioned officers are best positioned to define and shape the Army's Warrior Ethos. Their challenge is to present ethical discernment as the preeminent and most valued trait of the American Warrior.

Endnotes

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