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Army Culture

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25 August 2009

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2nd Edition

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Seeking Balance: US Army Culture and Professionalism in the 21st Century

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Headquarters, United States Army Training and Doctrine Command

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34 **Contents**

	Page
35	
36 Contents	i
37	
38 Executive Summary.....	ii
39	
40 Introduction: Seeking a Balance in US Army Culture.....	1
41	
42 Modern Military Culture.....	2
43	
44 Pre-Existing Cultural Tensions.....	3
45	
46 Cultural Tensions Exacerbated by Eight Years of Combat	10
47	
48 Maintaining The Emergent Behaviors Of An Army At War.....	16
49	
50 Annex A: Towards Achieving Desired Outcomes.....	A-1
51	
52 Annex B: The Historical Context of Army Culture, 1973-2001	B-1
53	
54 Annex C: US Army Culture: A British Perspective	C-1
55	
56 Annex D: Recommended Reading List	D-1
57	
58 Annex E: Methodological Overview	E-1
59	
60 Annex F: To Change an Army (<i>Military Review</i> , March 1983).....	F-1
61	
62 Annex G: Bibliography and Endnotes	G-1
63	

64 **Executive Summary**

65

66 Any serious discussion of Army culture must consider not only its historical context but its
67 current one as well. For nearly eight years of war in Afghanistan and Iraq, the Army's
68 professional culture has served as a source of strength and resiliency. Despite this, recent history
69 and, in particular, the strain of war has revealed that Army decisions before and during the war
70 have positioned the generating force against the operating force during times of high stress.
71 These decisions, and the conditions surrounding them (i.e., a force that is over-committed and
72 under-resourced), have created tensions in Army culture. The paper examines those decisions
73 and conditions.

74 When an institution is under pressure for extended periods of time, protection of the
75 institution's centers of excellence sustains the professional culture (i.e., its ethos, integrity,
76 credibility, competence, and coherence) and allows the institution to bounce back. We argue that
77 these centers of excellence serve as the backbone to the operating force and therefore senior
78 Army leaders ought to *increase the percentage of officers and NCOs in the generating force.*

79 In the course of writing this paper about professional culture of the US Army, the authors
80 based their analysis on a series of interviews conducted with 250 officers, NCOs, and experts as
81 well as a review of relevant secondary literature. As such, the essay is organized into four
82 sections. The first section explores cultural tensions present in the Army prior to September 11,
83 2001. The second section discusses how the past eight years of war may have exacerbated those
84 cultural tensions. The Third section of the paper identifies emerging behaviors that offer a way
85 forward. In the fourth section, the essay concludes by offering eight recommendations as
86 catalysts for discussion, debate, and further inquiry among senior Army leaders and others
87 concerned about the health of Army culture. These are:

- 88 ○ continue Army-wide discussion about culture and incorporate initial findings into the
89 Army Capstone Concept;
- 90 ○ communicate clearly to the force the behaviors and practices that we want to reinforce
91 and those that we want to change;
- 92 ○ balance an inculcation of the warrior ethos with moral, ethical, and psychological
93 preparation for operations against hybrid threats in and amongst the population;
- 94 ○ encourage risk-taking and decentralization consistent with mission command. Ensure
95 that risk management does not create risk aversion;
- 96 ○ determine how to preserve unit cohesion and the chain of command during ARFORGEN
97 transitions;
- 98 ○ narrow the gap between the operating and generating forces with priority to organizations
99 where the Army does its *thinking, procuring, and leader development*;
- 100 ○ increase the intellectual rigor of leader development and education; and
- 101 ○ effect changes to the Army personnel system that provide more opportunities for and
102 reward education (e.g., *Leader Development Strategy*)

103 Finally, several annexes provide additional resources and contexts from which to consider
104 this complicated topic.

105 **Introduction: Seeking a Balance in US Army Culture**
106

107 *“The balance we are striving for is...[b]etween retaining those cultural traits that have*
108 *made the United States armed forces successful by inspiring and motivating the people*
109 *within them, and shedding those cultural elements that are barriers to doing what needs*
110 *to be done.”*

111 Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, Speech to the National
112 Defense University, September 2008

113 Secretary Gates’ remarks signify an important milestone for the Joint and Service
114 communities. As they seek to balance their institutional cultures in the years ahead, the Army
115 will undoubtedly do the same. This paper is part of that process and a response to senior Army
116 leader discussions which focused on the effects of recent and ongoing wartime experience on
117 Army culture. This experience suggests that the tensions in our professional culture—those that
118 pre-dated the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq—have been exacerbated by eight years of combat.
119 These tensions positioned the generating force against the operating force, and, as a result,
120 created a perceived gap in the Army’s culture that is among the most pressing issues facing
121 senior Army leaders today. This is our primary thesis of the study.

122 To apply a proper context for the paper, we begin by examining contemporary Army
123 culture. In doing so, we had to affix boundaries in order to scope the study. FM-1, *The Army*,
124 and FM 6-22 *Army Leadership*, provide those initial boundaries with a description and definition
125 of Army culture. Additionally, our culture does not exist in isolation and must be understood to
126 fall within the influences of American society at large and the Joint community. Finally, Army
127 culture, within the scope of this paper, is viewed from a recent historical context, roughly the
128 time period beginning with the All-Volunteer force.

129 Following a brief contextual examination of Army culture, we turn next to the tensions that
130 existed prior to the current wars. As early as 1989 and before Desert Storm, the Army’s culture
131 was coming under pressure from a variety of external sources: the mandatory drawdown of US
132 forces after the end of the Cold War, an environment of decreasing budgetary resources, and the
133 geo-strategic realities of the global environment were changing national policies and foreign
134 policy priorities. These external pressures were amplified by a number of internal pressures and
135 created the cultural tensions that would be exposed to war.

136 The second section examines these pre-existing tensions brought about by external and
137 internal pressures under the lens of war. The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are important because
138 they serve not only as a source to highlight pre-existing tensions, but also as a turning point in
139 Army culture. The interventions in the 1990s conducted on the basis of “Go Fast, Go First, Go
140 Home”¹ quickly gave way to protracted counterinsurgency operations. This turning point is
141 significant on many levels, but for the purposes of the paper it also affects how these pre-
142 existing tensions have been exacerbated by years of war.

143 The final section of the paper discusses pre-war and war time tensions with implications for
144 the future. Undoubtedly, there are areas where change is needed. However, the story of
145 contemporary Army culture *is* positive, random perceptions and pejorative remarks
146 notwithstanding. Certainly tensions exist, but tensions in and of themselves can serve as

147 instruments of positive change. For example, the ongoing wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have
148 created leaders and soldiers who are comfortable operating outside their units' missions and
149 organization demonstrating the tactical adaptability that is now a common cultural trait in the
150 operating force. Moreover, repeated combat missions in ambiguous environments have created
151 this culture of adaptability. These positive behaviors and traits show that the Army culture does
152 adapt to the changing uncertainties in the operating environment. The question becomes, Can
153 Army culture shed unwanted cultural traits it inherited during the pre-war years, and will it be in
154 a position to adapt quickly for the next conflict?

155 Several annexes are provided as additional resources and as context. Annex A, *Towards*
156 *Achieving Desired Outcomes*, highlights specific recommendations for senior Army leaders as a
157 starting point for discourse. Annex B, *The Historical Context of Army Culture, 1973-2001*,
158 examines how organizational culture shaped an All-Volunteer Army. Annex C, *US Army*
159 *Culture: A British Perspective*, gives an insightful and objective look at Army culture from a
160 strategic stakeholder perspective. Annex D, *Recommended Reading List*, provides the secondary
161 sources used in this study. Annex E, *Methodological Overview*, outlines the approach taken by
162 the paper to examine Army culture. And Annex F, *To Change an Army (Military Review, March*
163 *1983)*, provides a timeless examination of how reform in an institution as large as the Army is
164 problematic under the best of circumstances.

165 **Contemporary Army Culture**

166 The study's analysis rests on a variety of sources, including a wide-ranging review of
167 relevant literature, studies, and professional correspondence about culture. The information
168 garnered from this secondary literature is augmented by a series of interviews and sensing
169 sessions conducted with over 250 different officers, non-commissioned officers, scholars, and
170 military experts. In short, these in-depth discussions represent the evidentiary base of this study.
171 Of note, however, is the deliberate omission of broader civil-military (political) issues that the
172 Army is facing and will face in the near future: women in combat, gays, suicides, alcohol, post-
173 traumatic stress disorder, and other related mental health issues. We have also omitted the
174 examination of the how the Army fits into the broader defense culture, and how Army culture
175 compares, contrasts, or complements other armed forces' cultures, particularly from a strategic
176 alliance perspective.

177 Despite this extensive set of sources, any cultural study is, by definition, a complex topic and
178 a difficult analysis. When it comes to culture, there are no direct—and more importantly no
179 discrete—answers. Moreover, the Army's culture is far from monolithic, there are numerous
180 competing values and beliefs within the Army's organizational culture. For example, branch sub-
181 cultures also offer important cultural variations as do the differences between the generating
182 force and the operating force. The mere presence of subcultures—or even cultural paradoxes
183 and tension—is not necessarily bad. In fact, these subcultures and their diversity could very well
184 be a source of strength to the larger Army culture (such as the Ranger creed offering inspiration
185 to the Warrior's creed or the cavalry's élan and general attitude in the fight for information).² By
186 extension, diversity between the generating and operating forces can also be a source of strength
187 to Army culture.

188 Beginning with FM 6-22, *Army Leadership*, Army culture is defined as: “The set of long-
189 held values, beliefs, expectations, and practices (VBEP) shared by a group that signifies what is
190 important and influences how an organization operates.”³ The Army’s role in American society
191 is also an important source of our military culture. In FM-1, *The Army*, describes the history and
192 values that have shaped the enduring elements of Army culture. As the manual clearly states,
193 “The Army, a long-trusted institution, exists to serve the Nation. As part of the joint force, the
194 Army supports and defends America’s Constitution and way of life against all enemies, foreign
195 and domestic.”

196 There are additional sources that shape Army culture. First, Army culture is grounded in its
197 purpose and is based, in large measure, on a vision of how the Army fights wars—the kind of
198 war that the Army envisions has an impact on what it means to be a warrior. This is critically
199 important when placed within current and near-future contexts. Concern about “hybrid
200 threats”—the diverse and dynamic combinations of regular and irregular forces, both
201 conventional and unconventional, as well as criminal elements, all unified in purpose—dominate
202 current thinking about future armed conflict. This threat-based thinking as well as its associated
203 vision of future war must continue to be an important part of Army organizational culture. And
204 finally, US Army culture is also grounded in its identity as protector of the Nation. Although the
205 role of the US Army has obviously transformed over time, the Army’s basis of service to the
206 nation—manifest in everything from the Constitution to the Army Values—has remained
207 constant.

208 Pre-Existing Cultural Tensions

209 The cultural tensions within today’s Army did not develop in a vacuum—their roots reside in
210 the recent history of the All-Volunteer Force (See Annex B, *The Historical Context of Army
211 Culture, 1973-2001*).⁴ These tensions are at the heart of a nuanced understanding of current
212 Army culture. As social psychologist Edgar Schein highlighted, not all cultural “assumptions are
213 mutually compatible or consistent with each other.” He continued, “If we observe inconsistency
214 and lack of order, we can assume that we are . . . observing a conflict among several cultures or
215 subcultures.”⁵ Since cultural tension frequently results from conflicting behaviors that reflect
216 competing values or evolving cultural norms, such tension is often a fundamental cause of
217 change. As a result, cultural tension itself is neither bad nor good; it can, however, be creative or
218 destructive. The preliminary findings of this study—findings which should be studied further—
219 indicate that a tension between the generating force and the operating force existed prior to the
220 onset of hostilities marked by September 11, 2001.⁶

221 In a series of works originating in the late-1990s, Professor Don Snider asked a simple, yet
222 profound question: *Is the Army a profession or a bureaucracy?* Basing his research on a
223 number of studies and surveys, Snider artfully addressed the rhetorical question of a frustrated
224 field grade officer, “How can I be a professional if there is no profession?” The resulting
225 analysis posited that the Army (and in particular the officer corps) maintained a tension-filled
226 duality. This duality consisted of elements of professionalism as well as traces of bureaucracy.
227 The implications of this phenomenon were important—they affected issues such as the tendency
228 to value efficiency over effectiveness, to prioritize the centralization of an institutional hierarchy
229 and centralized bureaucracy over decentralized initiative and operations, as well as to elevate the
230 practices of management and process over leadership and action. Whether or not these trends

231 directly mirrored reality paled in comparison to the pervasive perceptions that this was the true
232 values, beliefs, expectations, and practices of the US Army.⁷ Importantly, Snider's work,
233 conducted in coordination with a collection of well-respected soldier-scholars, highlights that
234 these tensions were not a result of the war.⁸ In fact, this duality dates back to a break that began
235 to emerge in the early 1990s.

236 At the same time that the Army was wrestling with the duality of its professional identity, it
237 also experienced a disturbing series of developments concerning its conceptualization of war.
238 The product of these developments was likely due to *unchallenged assumptions about the*
239 *nature of future warfare*. Like the questions concerning the nature of the Army profession,
240 debates over the nature of future warfare would also affect the values, beliefs, expectations, and
241 practices of the US Army. In effect, these assumptions affected the Army's culture in the
242 turbulent period following Operation Desert Storm.⁹

243 Even before Desert Storm, the Army's organizational culture was coming under pressure as
244 Congress began the drawdown of US forces after the end of the Cold War. In this environment
245 of decreasing budgetary resources, the Army faced a dilemma. The Army had to maintain its
246 relevancy and it had to do so with significant resources savings and minimal casualties. In the
247 immediate wake of the operational success of Desert Storm, many defense intellectuals stressed
248 the importance of airpower, speed, and precision—concepts that could be increased in their
249 effect by an order of magnitude through the application of information technology. This shift in
250 thinking marked the emergence of a belief in an approaching information-based revolution in
251 military affairs (RMA).¹⁰

252 This significant shift occurred at the same time that the geo-strategic realities of the global
253 environment were also changing national policies and foreign policy priorities. Conceptually,
254 the generating force remained focused on fighting a series of Major Regional Conflicts against a
255 conventional force even as the operational Army confronted a series of stability operations in
256 complex environments. Even within the operational force, significant segments of junior, mid-
257 level, and senior officers actively disparaged the notion of stability operations, possibly because
258 they were not properly educated or trained. As a result, at a time of significant geo-strategic
259 change, the Army, already showing signs of imbalance, was slow to revise its Cold War 'aim
260 point' to reflect the technological predilections of the RMA.¹¹

261 As a result, the Army became beholden to a collection of ideas that offered the illusion that
262 technology offered a panacea to the problem of armed conflict. This was a fundamentally flawed
263 and ahistorical understanding of future conflict.¹² With all of its promises about the potential
264 power of "information," the concept failed to recognize the continuity of the political nature of
265 war and the limits of technology. The concept failed to account for the social and psychological
266 dimension of combat, the very dimension that historian John Keegan described was perhaps *the*
267 continuity in war.

268 What battles have in common is human: the behavior of men struggling to reconcile their instinct for self-
269 preservation, their sense of honour and the achievement of some aim over which other men are ready to kill the.,
270 The study of battle is therefore always a study of fear and usually of courage; always of leadership, usually of
271 obedience; always of compulsion, sometimes of insubordination; always of anxiety, sometimes of elation or
272 catharsis; always of uncertainty and doubt, misinformation and misapprehension, usually also of faith and
273 sometimes of vision; always of violence, sometimes also of cruelty, self-sacrifice, compassion; above all, it is

274 always a study of solidarity and usually also of disintegration—for it is toward the disintegration of human
275 groups that battle is directed.¹³

276 The beliefs associated with network-centric warfare—not to mention the revolutionary zeal that
277 many advocates of the RMA demonstrated—reflected a serious imbalance in a key part of Army
278 culture: how Officers and Soldiers conceptualized war. Moreover, these flawed assumptions
279 about the future of war manifested themselves in a very real way as they affected *materiel and*
280 *force structure development*. The most prominent material acquisition programs focused on
281 enhancing command and control. Meanwhile, soldier and fighting vehicle initiatives were
282 secondary. Such developments, occurring throughout the mid-1990s, stood in stark contrast with
283 the requirements and the experience of the operational force in Somalia, Bosnia, and Kosovo.
284 As a result, the notion of network-centric war, with its emphasis on material, information, and
285 technology, served to *dehumanize* both war and the Army culture.

286 The notion of the RMA brought with it the equally problematic belief that war could be
287 waged efficiently with a minimalist approach to the commitment of forces and other resources.
288 This idea of combat efficiency—and not combat effectiveness—mixed with similar bureaucratic
289 traits emerging throughout the remainder of the generating force. As a result, this type of
290 thinking interacted with the bureaucratized aspects of the generating force and treated war as a
291 “targeting process.” In addition to their numerous implications on the Army’s culture, these
292 developments served to separate the tactical and operational actions of war with the political
293 aims of strategy and policy.¹⁴

294 The emphasis on the “process” of network-centric warfare also had a significant effect on *how*
295 *the Army trained and educated leaders*. In short, as the historian Brian Linn points out in his
296 book *Echo of Battle*, both training and education suffered from rigidity of thought. Within
297 significant portions of the Army’s Professional Military Education (PME) system, the Army did
298 not balance its need to develop leaders capable of tactical success versus the needs of the
299 institution for leaders capable of operating in the strategic, or the civil-military environment of
300 policy and bureaucracy. In fact, the majority of the curricula’s emphasis focused almost
301 exclusively on the former. Likewise, the combat training centers focused on centralized staff
302 processes and battle management techniques, such as the Military Decision-Making Process
303 (MDMP), the targeting process, and synchronization matrices. Unfortunately, this emphasis
304 came at the expense of commander-centric training necessary for decentralized operations,
305 seizing the initiative in a variety of environments, taking prudent risks, and innovating with
306 tactical formations and techniques. Further, the length of intensive training rotations encouraged
307 officers to conceptualize conflict as one short, violent, technologically-infused battle against a
308 similarly rigid-thinking foe. The assumption—one directly associated with the notion of
309 RMA—that there was no near-term peer competitor to the military power of the United States
310 only served to stifle initiative and experimentation as well as to reinforce these emergent cultural
311 traits.¹⁵

312 Dissonance in the Army’s training and leadership development was matched by *dissonance in*
313 *the human dimension* of the Army’s organizational culture. Multiple Selective Early
314 Retirement Boards and Reduction in Force actions in the early 1990s were a tremendously
315 traumatic experience for the officer corps. Promotion rates were cut.¹⁶ The Army’s “up or out”
316 policies, enshrined in the Defense Officer Personnel management Act of 1980, and a strict

317 adherence to officer progression timelines aided in reducing the size of the officer corps as part
318 of the post-Cold War drawdown. Yet, these policies brought with them several significant
319 unintended consequences. Many officers perceived that the way to survive these drawdowns and
320 have a successful career was to follow a prescribed career timeline focused on their branch's
321 assessment of the best assignments for developing technical and tactical competence in that
322 branch. Surveys and interviews of service college students in the mid-1990s revealed that
323 careerism within the officer corps had increased along with growing concerns about negative
324 command climates and "zero defects" mentalities.¹⁷

325 By the late 1990s, the pains of the drawdown had been replaced by a growing retention
326 problem among junior officers, perhaps the most telling indicator of dissonance in the Army's
327 organizational culture.¹⁸ According to Leonard Wong, the Army's organizational culture caused
328 a significant portion of young officers to conclude that a career in the Army was unappealing and
329 incongruous with the lives of job-satisfaction, self-fulfillment, and balance that they desired.¹⁹
330 At the same time, market forces within the US economy placed a high value on managers that
331 possessed attributes present in many junior officers, making them highly desirable in the
332 corporate world. In fact, as the final report on the Army Training and Leadership Development
333 Panel emerged in 2001, a combination of both internal and external factors were placing the
334 officer corps and the Army's institutional culture under increasing strain.²⁰

335 Moreover, the retention problem became so acute that by the late-1990s, the promotion
336 rates began to increase dramatically.

337

Promotion to Rank of:	DOPMA Goal	FY02 % PZ Select	FY03 % PZ Select	FY04 % PZ Select	FY05 % PZ Select	FY06 % PZ Select	FY07 % PZ Select
CAPTAIN	90%	98.2%	98.9%	92.3%	98.4%	98.8%	98.8%
MAJOR	80%	89.5%	93.8%	96.9%	97.7%	98.0%	94.3%
LTC	70%	74.8%	78.2%	76.9%	86.2%	90.0%	90.0%
COL	50%	52.8%	52.6%	52.6%	58.5%	59.4%	61.0%

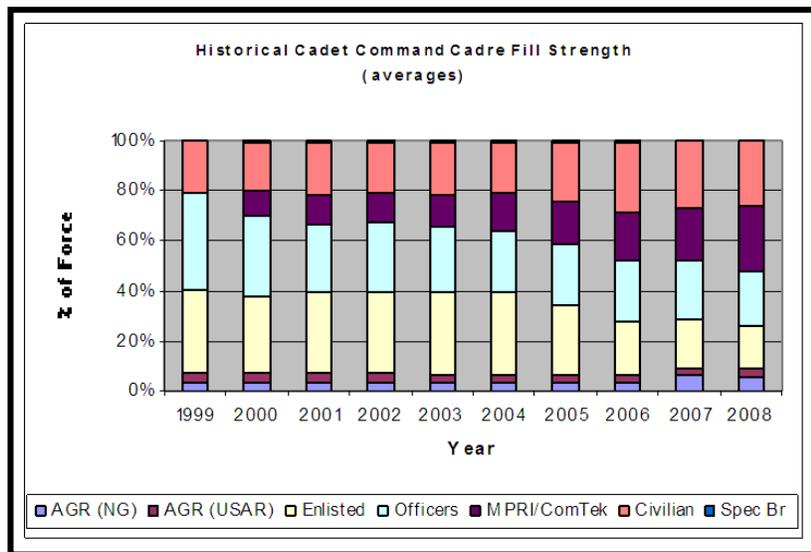
338

339 **Table 1. "If everyone is a superstar, how do you differentiate who should get ahead?" Promotion Rates of**
340 **the 21st Century and the Erosion of Meritocracy.** This table depicts the DOPMA promotion goals and actual
341 PZ selection rates from FY 02-FY 07. It is important to note that these high promotion rates, combined with
342 wartime strains, and the emphasis on manning deployable, modular units, have diluted the overall quality of
343 the Army Officer Corps. Sensing session remarks brought the point in stark relief. One officer remarked:
344 "How we treat officers comes too close to egalitarianism."²¹

345

346 The corresponding decline in officer quality associated with these inflated promotion rates was
347 not lost on significant segments of the officer corps.²² In short, the Army's personnel
348 management practices throughout the 1990s did not seem to match the Army's stated values
349 about the worth of people.

350 The combination of these events—and the Army’s reaction to them—led to increasing
351 *civilianization* of the generating force. One of the Army’s responses to the personnel resource
352 dilemma that was emerging in the mid-1990s was the privatization of generating force functions.
353 Importantly, an area heavily populated by civilian contractors was the very place where the
354 profession did its thinking and teaching. Thus, in the early 1990s the Army fully funded its
355 training, leader development, and doctrine formulation—all key elements of the generating
356 force—despite cutting personnel from these areas.²³ The result was that *by the mid-1990s more*
357 *and more key institutional functions were being assigned to private contractors rather than*
358 *military personnel*. Many ROTC instructor positions were filled with contractors, as were key
359 billets in concept, material, and doctrinal development. A similar pattern occurred at the
360 Command and General Staff College.²⁴ Even the construction of after-action reviews and
361 lessons learned products were increasingly filled by civilian contractors.²⁵ Many of these
362 measures were undertaken under the auspices the “Manning the Force” initiative of the late-
363 1990s, which had the goal of *supporting* the operational force by improving its manpower levels.
364 However, this initiative also reduced the number of operational Army officers that could bring
365 their recent experiences to the training base and made generating force positions appear less
366 attractive to officers in the operational Army.²⁶
367
368



369
370 **Figure 2. “How do you change the institutional Army when TRADOC is manned at 60%?” *Historical ROTC***
371 ***Instructor Fill Rates.*** Reports from interviews and sensing sessions suggest that there is a direct correlation
372 **between uniformed—and educated—officers and NCOs in instructor positions and the quality of education.**
373 **Much of this quality comes from the informal relationships and bonds that are as much a part of inspiring**
374 **student officers as they are in educating them. Role modeling and mentorship are still important**
375 **expectations, even though many participants in our sensing sessions remarked that they are becoming**
376 **increasingly rare opportunities in practice. As LTG (Ret) Richard Trefry remarked, “a big problem in**
377 **culture is officers fighting to stay away from institutions and education.” Another participant in a sensing**
378 **session put the same point in harsher terms: “We have contracted out the Army and because of that, we are**
379 **losing our culture.”²⁷**
380

381 These internal developments mixed with a broader phenomenon developing throughout
382 America that involved our society’s assumptions about the nature of risk. In short, by the mid-

383 1990s, an accurate description of the US Army's culture had to include the words *risk averse*.
384 The political scientist Christopher Coker has written persuasively about *War in the Age of Risk*.
385 In his book of that title, Coker highlights that risk is "the definitive theme of the age;" risk is our
386 society's Zeitgeist. More importantly, Coker argues that "war has become risk management in
387 all but name" and that "risk aversion is now so entrenched in the collective consciousness that
388 we tend to write off almost all risk-taking as abnormal, or pathological."²⁸ Our society's
389 preoccupation with risk and risk management is so pervasive that the topic is rarely discussed or
390 even noticed. Yet Coker's thesis was echoed by numerous participants in this study's sensing
391 sessions.²⁹ Moreover, Coker argues persuasively that the "risk society's" greatest threat is its
392 own fixation on safety.

393
394 The nature of the Army's own perceptions of operations throughout the 1990s also
395 contributed to the development of *risk aversion*. Repeated deployments to Somalia, Kuwait,
396 Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo dramatically increased the Army operational tempo throughout the
397 1990s. This added multiple points of strain on the institution and exacerbated the growing
398 tension between the generating force and the operating forces. Further, during these
399 deployments, military leaders of all ranks became increasingly *risk averse* due to demands by
400 their political authorities to avoid casualties and mistakes (i.e., fight and win but with no
401 casualties). Interestingly, this fear grew far beyond accidents or incidents that might occur
402 abroad. The fear of mistakes also included an uneasiness that spread across a whole host of
403 Army activities, whether it was command and staff issues or company DWIs. The nexus of risk
404 aversion and the communications technology that came with the suite of equipment to support
405 the on-going RMA only served to increase the perception of micro-management and "over-
406 control" by senior leaders.

407
408 The Army's cultural tensions also coincided with a downturn in *civil-military relations*
409 throughout the 1990s. Throughout the course of a distinguished public and academic career,
410 Richard H. Kohn has highlighted the tensions between military officers and their civilian
411 superiors.³⁰ According to Kohn, the officer corps' "understanding of its proper role in
412 government and society" is critical to effective policy making. In centuries past, the officer
413 corps understood the criticality of remaining "not only non-partisan but un-partisan" or existing
414 "completely outside party politics." As such, the military professional's role is to provide
415 civilian leaders his best advice, not to advocate for a particular policy or program. Moreover,
416 Kohn emphasizes that "partisanship is a cancer in the military." According to Kohn, what is
417 "even more disturbing than partisanship," are the calls "for the military to stand up to civilians
418 who are ignoring or deciding against military judgment—to the point of speaking out or
419 otherwise preventing a decision from going forward, or resigning to alert the public to a disaster
420 in the making."

421
422 Unfortunately, like so many other elements of the Army's professional culture in the 1990s, a
423 tension developed within civil-military relations over the increasing trend of senior military
424 officers to advocate for particular policies and programs. Although the roots of the problem
425 extend back to the memory of Vietnam—and of Robert Strange McNamara, in particular—the
426 archetypal incident of US Civil-military relations occurred with the "Don't ask, don't tell"
427 policy during the first weeks of the new administration over the topic of gays in the military.³¹
428

429 To a certain degree, Army leaders recognized these tensions and the requisite need for change.
430 As early as 2001, with the introduction of full spectrum operations in that year's version of FM
431 3-0, *Operations*, Army were seeking balance in their operational conceptualization of war. More
432 importantly, leaders began to initiate actions to resolve these issues. The results of this initial
433 flurry of reactive measures, however, were mixed. Flawed assumptions about network-centric
434 warfare, to include concepts such as "rapid decisive operations" and "effects based operations,"
435 found their way into doctrine.³² Further, although the pages of *Army* and *Military Review* found
436 themselves filled with official publications and articles about leadership and values, many in the
437 Army felt that the discourse on values and culture, although growing in volume, had become less
438 and less genuine and seemed more and more divorced from creating a warrior ethos.³³ By the
439 turn of the century a combination of factors and choices had, to some degree, *civilianized* and
440 *dehumanized* the Army's professional culture. This contributed to the Army's culture becoming
441 out of balance with itself (See Figure 3). A mismatch emerged between the beliefs and practices
442 of the Army's culture. More importantly, *tensions between the generating force and the*
443 *operating force* were clearly evident.
444



445
446
447 **Figure 3. "Trust is lacking." *Emerging cultural tensions at century's end.* Despite efforts to the contrary, on**
448 **September 10, 2001, numerous cultural tensions existed within the US Army. The following day—and the**
449 **weeks, months, and years of campaigning that would follow—would contribute even further to the cultural**
450 **imbalance of the US Army.**

451
452 This development was not without irony—many generating force agencies were attempting
453 to solve problems they perceived as germane to generating a future operational force. However,
454 the events of the 1990s reflected a generating force that was drifting due to a belief that the Army
455 was in an interregnum period in which it would face no peer competitor until 2020.³⁴ But before
456 Army leaders could fully assess what had happened and what might be done to rectify the
457 divergent tensions within the professional culture, a series of significant events played out in
458 New York City, Washington, D.C., and in rural Pennsylvania.
459

Cultural Tensions Exacerbated by Eight Years of Combat

This section departs from the discussion of pre-war cultural tensions and focuses on the tensions exacerbated by nearly eight years of combat. In doing so, there are six friction points specifically addressed: (1) abilities and limitations of technology, (2) need for “can-do” attitude versus problems associated with “do the best you can with what you have,” (3) centralization versus decentralization, (4) need to maintain warrior ethos versus need to operate among the population and safeguard non-combatants, (5) need for stoicism versus need to mitigate combat stress, and (6) how to educate the force in times of stress and high operations tempo (OPTEMPO). These first three tensions are pre-existing strains in Army culture that are now perceived to be exacerbated as a result of an Army at War. The last three tensions are endemic to war itself. Combined, these tensions provide insight to an Army culture at war, which will serve as the basis for future discussions and continued examinations.

The abilities and limitations of technology are the first tension that, as noted earlier, resulted from the premature reliance on the revolution in military affairs and the so-called “defense transformation” of the 1990s. Essentially, defense transformation was based on unchallenged assumptions about the nature of future war – that is, the belief that surveillance, communications, and information technologies would deliver dominant battlespace knowledge and permit US forces to achieve full spectrum dominance against any opponent mainly through the employment of precision-strike capabilities. This “mindset” emerged in TRADOC at the beginning of the decade and proceeded to capture the Army culture for several years into the Iraq war. For example, TRADOC’s annual Title 10 wargames (e.g., Army Transformation Wargame and Vigilant Warrior Wargame) echoed the 2003 Army Posture Statement claiming that the

“Army Knowledge Management (AKM) will accelerate the Detect-Decide-Deliver planning processes and enable warfighters to see the adversary first – before our force are detected; understand the Common Relevant Operating Picture (CROP) first; act against adversaries first; and finish the warfight with decisive victories – see first, understand first, act first, finish decisively.”³⁵

Additionally, Joint Vision documents (i.e., 2010 and 2020) idealized the characteristics of dominant battlespace knowledge and precision strike capabilities. Ironically, this posture statement and these vision documents were written while operating forces experienced lessons from Panama, Haiti, Somalia, Bosnia, and Kosovo. Despite this growing body of experience and evidence, however, senior military and political authorities were reluctant (or refused) to see the writing on the wall. Interestingly, during this time there was also a paradox. Didn’t the experiences of Desert Storm through the first year of the OEF provide evidence that technology and precision had value? In fact, the “Afghan Model” (i.e., US provided air and sea-based firepower combined with indigenous forces) was advertized to be the new standard for the conduct of war.

Several years before the “Afghan Model” surfaced, there were critics of technology and its associated effects on operational concepts; however, the number of critics were few (at first). General Donn Starry was prescient when he remarked in *Military Review*, ‘How to Change an Army’, that reformers, or those that challenge the prevailing thought, are typically outcasts and non-conformists.³⁶ In 2001, U.S. Joint Forces Command initiated, planned, and executed the

503 multi-million dollar wargame, *Millennium Challenge*. Lieutenant General (USMC ret.) Paul Van
504 Riper, acting as one of the adversarial commanders, introduced a thinking adversary that nearly
505 brought the technology-heavy, rapidly decisive operating friendly forces and the wargame to its
506 knees. Millennium Challenge was a harbinger for the failed promises of dominant battlespace
507 knowledge and precision fires. And General Van Riper was among a small contingent of senior
508 military leaders who challenged the prevailing concepts and technologies.

509 This example serves to highlight that there are limitations to technology. No doubt many
510 changes and initiatives are long overdue and the possibilities associated with emerging
511 technologies are significant. Initiatives to develop and field new sensor, communications, and
512 information management capabilities hold great promise for increasing the effectiveness of our
513 military forces. The dramatic advances in command and control technologies, especially abilities
514 to gain real-time access to imagery and maintain a clear picture of friendly forces have vastly
515 improved the agility and interoperability of units. There is even one instance where “green”
516 technologies are being used with impressive results; for example, a Forward Operating Base
517 (FOB) in Iraq employed state-of-the-art solar and wind technologies to cut its fuel consumption
518 by almost 70 percent (they even produced a surplus of electricity which they provided to a local
519 community).³⁷ Neuroscience and biotechnology are other areas where technology is making
520 significant gains. Brain scanning knowledge is providing insights into the development of new
521 models and simulations. Ray Kurzweil, the MIT futurist and entrepreneur, believes that by 2030,
522 machines will operate cognitively at human levels.³⁸ Neuroscientists are discovering that
523 “emotions” play an equally important role in human decision making, judgment, and problem
524 solving as does reasoning – an application which may provide insight into human societies and
525 cultures.

526 Despite the promises of future technologies, there is a caution: technologies have not
527 provided “the solution” to armed conflict despite some advocates’ promises to do so. Indeed,
528 there is abundant historical evidence to support this. Generally speaking, technology cannot yet
529 serve as a substitute for the human, psychological, and political dimensions in war. Furthermore,
530 new (commercial) technologies typically enter the marketplace quickly and any comparative
531 advantage they may have for military application are soon marginalized. Enemy forces in
532 Afghanistan and Iraq employ traditional countermeasures to coalition technological capabilities –
533 measures such as dispersion, concealment, deception and intermingling with civilian
534 populations.

535 In December 2004, a soldier in Kuwait preparing to deploy into Iraq with his unit asked
536 the visiting Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld why he and other soldiers had to search
537 Kuwaiti junkyards to find improvised armor for their vehicles to protect against bomb blasts and
538 small-arms attacks. Mr. Rumsfeld replied, “As you know, you go to war with the Army you
539 have.”³⁹ This brief anecdote introduces the second tension affecting Army culture – that is, *the*
540 *need for a “can-do” attitude versus problems associated with “do the best you can with what*
541 *you have.”*

542 That soldier’s question, however, marks a change in the established values and explicit
543 practices in Army culture. In essence, there was the paradigmatic shift and emergence of a
544 different kind of professional candor. Prior to OEF and OIF, issues of conformity and uncritical
545 compliance to senior military and civil leaders were beginning to contrast with a new behaviors:

546 open questioning, criticism, and dissent. By mid-2006, the quantity of disaffection appearing in
547 periodicals, op-eds, professional journals, and other on-line forums was beginning to increase.
548 The archetype, of course, was LTC Yingling's widely circulated article in the *Armed Force*
549 *Journal*, "A Failure in Generalship." Indeed, these articles began to question tactics, operational
550 methods, and equipping issues due, in part, to the fact that "Young captains, lieutenants, and
551 non-commissioned officers. . .had more combat experience than their peacetime-trained military
552 seniors. . ." ⁴⁰

553 Initially, this bottom-up challenge to the generating force had little effect. Not until
554 dissent from the top-down emerged did real change in the generating force started to occur. As
555 early as 2003, when Paul Wolfowitz openly dismissed the then-Army Chief of Staff's testimony
556 to Congress on troop strength, the military's trust in civilian leadership began to decline. And by
557 late 2005, the perceived strategic political-military relationships were becoming widely apparent
558 as the then-Secretary of Defense re-established civilian authority coupled with his intolerance for
559 dissent. Certainly there were other factors at work, e.g., the flawed assessments of the
560 counterinsurgency environment in Iraq and the mishandling of detainees (Abu Ghraib,
561 extraordinary renditions, etc.), but the die had already been cast.

562 In Army culture today, the "can-do" attitude is often at odds with the perceived
563 constraints of deference to senior civilian and military authority held over from the Cold War
564 institutional Army. The emergence of the freedom to question, criticize, and disagree are
565 indications that Army culture is, in fact, changing. To illustrate this, a British liaison team
566 stationed at TRADOC, Fort Monroe provided this insight: ". . . but the British do relish the
567 questioning subordinate who not only questions privately but openly without fear . . . Too many
568 American officers are unprepared to confront their seniors with unpalatable truths or contrary
569 views. There is much less of a challenging process in the formulation of plans and even doctrine
570 . . . Too many young staff officers are quick to comment 'that is a great idea, sir' rather than 'I
571 am not so sure.'" ⁴¹

572 The *centralization and decentralization* debate is the third tension affecting Army
573 culture. Clearly, the Army is a hierarchical and centralized institution and will likely remain that
574 way into the future. But given the changing nature of the strategic and operational environments,
575 and eight years of continuous combat, there is a concurrent need to change how the Army fulfills
576 its Title 10 USC roles and responsibilities.

577 How the Army and its culture became centralized is understandable when viewed in
578 context. Briefly, General DuPey, the first TRADOC commander had a personal leadership
579 philosophy that became the institutional culture of how to train. A product of his personal
580 experiences, he believed that draftees and volunteers had to be trained differently than
581 professional soldiers. This belief was due to the nature of conventional war in Central Europe
582 (i.e., forward-deployed forces fighting outnumbered while reserves in the U.S. went through
583 mobilization that transformed Guardsmen and reservists into combat-ready reinforcements), and
584 that there was insufficient time and capacity to develop civilians into professional soldiers. As a
585 result, the institution would have top-down and centralized hierarchies able to "tell them what to
586 do, tell them how to do it, and check that they did it right." ⁴² General DePuy's strategic
587 environment, the Warsaw Pact threat model within an Industrial Age tradition, served to chart an

588 Army culture that would function more like a well-tuned machine rather than a thinking
589 organization.

590 However, centralization within the operating force whether in physical terms (i.e., the
591 collocation of units) or conceptual in terms (i.e., echeloned command and control and
592 information requirements) is counterproductive for two principal reasons: One, it is extremely
593 difficult to manage large and complex operations and organizations from above – top-down
594 structures are slow to respond to local needs and they are not very adaptable. And top-down
595 structures do not provide junior leaders with the autonomy to creatively solve problems.

596 Work on the nature of hierarchies spans nearly half a century and many hypotheses have
597 been advanced to explain their existence. For example, within hierarchies people have two
598 bosses: their “boss” and their “real boss.” The former is a person nominally responsible for their
599 actions; the latter is the person from whom they could get a decision that mattered to their work.
600 Others hypothesized that “time” was the principal characteristic where longer time horizons
601 implied greater complexity; hence, the establishment of hierarchy.⁴³ Apply this last hypothesis to
602 military operations, for example, a Joint Force Commander naturally has a longer time horizon
603 than, say, a Company Commander. Michael Raynor notes in his book, *Strategic Paradox*, that “. . .
604 . a well functioning hierarchy is differentiated by the degree of strategic uncertainty addressed at
605 each level and integrated through a cascading series of strategic commitments as those
606 uncertainties are resolved.⁴⁴ In other words, in hierarchies the responsibilities at each level do not
607 necessarily imply more difficult decisions, but they definitely imply fundamentally different
608 ones.

609 The discussion of the tensions raised above (i.e., abilities and limitations of technology,
610 “can-do” attitude, and centralization and decentralization), provides a backdrop for other
611 tensions in Army culture that are emerging from nearly eight years of combat. In particular, they
612 are: the need to maintain its warrior ethos and combat prowess versus the need to operate in
613 among the population and apply firepower with discipline and discretion; the need for stoicism
614 versus the need to mitigate combat stress; and the need to educate a force in times of high stress
615 and operations tempo (OPTEMPO).

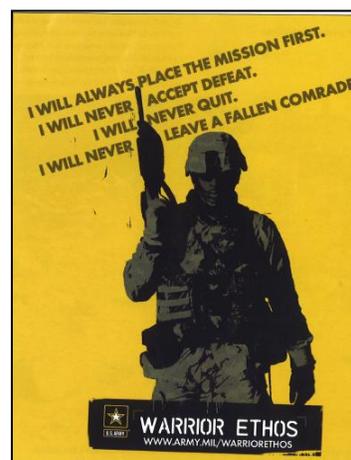
616 The fourth tension affecting Army culture is ***the need to maintain a warrior ethos and***
617 ***combat prowess versus the need to operate in and among the population.*** This tension has
618 received much attention in recent years. The warrior ethos is perhaps the most enduring element
619 of the Army culture; in fact, the warrior lineage dates back to 700 BCE. Fundamentally, this long
620 history permits contemporary soldiers to see themselves as part of a community that sustains
621 itself through “sacred trust” and binds them to one another and to the society they serve.⁴⁵
622 Essentially, without the warrior ethos the Army cannot be effective at what it does.

623 The Warrior Ethos was adopted into the U.S. Army Soldier’s Creed and first published in
624 the magazine *Infantry* on 22 December 2003. However, Paul Robinson, Professor of Public and
625 International Relations at the University of Ottawa, notes that the warrior ethos may not have
626 been designed with irregular warfare or stability operations in mind:

627 “The talk of destroying the enemy, never accepting defeat, close combat and
628 guarding the American way of life bear little relation to situations in which one is

629 meant to be protecting somebody else's way of life, using minimum force, and if
630 necessary accepting losses in order to help others."⁴⁶

631 Fortunately, Army leaders and units adapted to the demands of
632 counterinsurgency operations; they recognized that the
633 indiscriminate use of force ran counter to accomplishing the
634 mission, and undermined Army culture. As a result, realistic
635 training environments and scenarios were developed at Combat
636 Training Centers (CTCs) including the use of non-combatants
637 where soldiers and leaders were tested on their reactions to
638 events similar to those found in counterinsurgencies, i.e.,
639 protecting non-combatants, as well as the discriminate and
640 disciplined use of firepower. Beyond the warrior ethos and what
641 is written into the creed, however, is a tension and a trend that
642 pits the ethos against the society.



643 In *The Warrior Ethos*, Christopher Coker, Professor of International Relations at the
644 London School of Economics, reinforces Robinson's concern but concludes that the "western
645 warrior ethos is in trouble," due principally to the erosion of the warrior myth, the judgment of
646 civil society in which sacrifice is not in fashion and courage is not celebrated, and new
647 technologies that threaten to strip warriors of their sense of comradeship.⁴⁷ Bridging the gap
648 between the warrior ethos and society is not a new phenomenon. But the dangers are
649 consequential because if society is disconnected from the warrior, it becomes difficult to recruit
650 and retain soldiers, and governments are unappreciative of the fundamental requirements of
651 military effectiveness.

652 The fifth tension affecting Army culture is *the need for stoicism versus the need to*
653 *mitigate combat stress*. This friction is best summarized in Nancy Sherman's book, *Stoic*
654 *Warriors*, where she notes that ancient stoic philosophy is important because it balances the need
655 for soldiers to preserve their capacity for anger and rage over inhumanity while retaining the
656 ability to grieve the loss of comrades. Indeed, military leaders also benefit through a stoic
657 perspective by understanding that emotions are subject to cognitive control, and that a leader's
658 emotional demeanor matters because example is a powerful means to inspire courage as well as
659 respect and empathy among soldiers for fellow human beings. Essentially, Sherman views
660 respect and empathy as the principal safeguards against abuse and inhumane treatment in
661 combat.⁴⁸

662 The well-known ethical failures of the past, the 1968 My Lai massacre and the 2004 Abu
663 Ghraib prisoner-abuse scandal, could have been prevented, Sherman argues, if the soldiers who
664 committed those abuses were able to control their anger and conscious of their common
665 humanity with the prisoners. Similar to the previous discussions of tensions between warrior
666 ethos and civil society, ethical failures during times of war are not a new. To presume that ethical
667 failures will not occur in future conflicts is short-sighted. However, ethics in war (or, *jus in*
668 *bello*) is a monumental undertaking and outside the scope of this paper. Nonetheless, the
669 question becomes, how does the Army culture *better* prepare its leaders and soldiers today and
670 for the future so that these abuses remain, at the very least, remote anomalies?

671 At the onset to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, ethical training in preparation for
672 combat was centered around international war conventions and the Uniform Code of Military
673 Justice. There were various mediums employed to communicate these to leaders and soldiers –
674 typically through PowerPoint briefings. This medium of ethical awareness, education, and/or
675 training, however, typifies the top-down, event-driven training models reminiscent of the Cold
676 War era with “task, conditions, and standards.” Why this is problematic should be clear:
677 understanding and learning, especially about the ethical dilemmas in war, are best accomplished
678 through experience. Fortunately, this is why CTCs transformed their training environments to
679 reflect more realistic conditions like those found in counterinsurgencies, and why continued
680 innovations in training (tailored to the levels of responsibility) and education (e.g., The Iraq
681 Training Program, or ITP) are required.

682 The uncertainties and complexities of counterinsurgency generate combat stress to a
683 greater degree than conventional operations, where battle lines are clearly drawn, the enemy is
684 clearly identifiable, and aggression is channeled in a single direction.⁴⁹ To mitigate combat
685 stress, soldiers in contemporary military culture, are required to be (among other things)
686 physically fit. They are also required to have discipline and develop a sense loyalty and
687 comradeship with their units and other soldiers. These characteristics seem clear in connection
688 with the fortitude and resilience (stoicism) that combat requires. Preserving the professional
689 military ethic – and the psychological wellbeing of soldiers – in the Army culture also requires
690 leaders who help soldiers see how their risks and sacrifices are instrumental to the achievement
691 of objectives.

692 Finally, *the need to educate a force in times of high stress and operations tempo* is the
693 last tension discussed in this section. As recounted earlier, military education, training, and
694 doctrine along with the assumptions of “defense transformation” did very little to prepare the
695 military to fight the counterinsurgency wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. This realization came
696 slowly; the growing call for change had to come from the bottom-up. Eventually enough
697 pressure was put on the generating force to make the necessary changes.⁵⁰ Those changes
698 continue, a result of soldiers and officers with combat experience rotating through the generating
699 force, but at a pace slower than the generating force can capture in curricula. The implication is,
700 has the generating force learned how to institutionalize change – *quickly enough* – for the next
701 war? Recent surveys conducted with several schools and centers (e.g. Army War College –
702 Advanced Strategic Arts Seminar, Armed Forces Management College, the Sergeants Major
703 Academy, Intermediate Level Education, and the Captain’s Career Course – Forts Benning, Lee,
704 Leonard Wood) indicate that changes in curricula are still untimely.⁵¹

705 Much has been written on how unprepared the operating force was to fight in a
706 counterinsurgency environment; however, that writing and analysis are retrospective. While the
707 2006, Field Manual 3-24 updated an approach to counterinsurgency, there remains a handful of
708 critics.⁵² Nevertheless, how the military prepares to fight future armed conflicts will largely be
709 determined by how rapidly the military can incorporate its operational knowledge from the past.
710 Conditions will demand better understanding, new techniques and procedures – perhaps
711 significantly different counterinsurgency theories and methods will be needed. For instance, do
712 we ‘know’ that the Iraq war (today) is best described as a counterinsurgency? The essential point
713 remains that the Army cannot wait for transformation to occur during times of stress to be a
714 catalyst for change. On the other hand, caution is needed: predicting the future through

715 “education” alone is only part of the answer. The future is undoubtedly complex, uncertain, and
716 random; hence, training is great if it is the right training and experience is great if it is the right
717 experience. Education provides the bridge between them and allows you to tell the difference.⁵³

718 The above discussion has a direct bearing on the Army’s culture as the wars in
719 Afghanistan and Iraq have made educating and training difficult. Operations tempo
720 (OPTEMPO), the ARFORGEN cycle, dwell times, and the strains of time demand often-
721 deployed soldiers continue their education while concurrently making “down-time” with their
722 families nearly untenable. Equally important is the apparent lack of currency in the techniques
723 and procedures once these soldiers attend their required training. For example, current processes
724 for approving training courses and school curricula are cumbersome, bureaucratic, and untimely;
725 lessons learned by the operating force and institutionalized into the generating force are still
726 approved too slowly; collection and analysis of lessons learned, after action reports, and theater
727 visits by schools and training centers lack the necessary synthesis to provide relevant knowledge
728 to educators and trainers. Furthermore, dissemination of that distilled knowledge is a cultural
729 imperative.

730 In closing, then, much of change in the Army over the past eight years developed from
731 the bottom-up.⁵⁴ Undoubtedly, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have been the catalysts of that
732 change, which, in turn, have a direct effect on Army culture. If the Army needs to adjust its
733 balance between the generating and operating force, finding that balance requires an
734 identification of potential problems and a critical assessment of their underlying assumptions.
735 Balancing both the generating and operating forces across the spectrum of conflict and achieving
736 balance for “complex, dynamic and unanticipated challenges of the future”⁵⁵ is undeniably the
737 Army’s most pressing issue. During the 1980s, balance was achieved through a shared concept
738 of Army operations (i.e., AirLand Battle). By the 1990s, the Army lost this balance in a period of
739 strategic ambiguity; the Army vision of future war became corrupted as the institutional force
740 embraced much of the faith-based orthodoxy of technology and “defense transformation.”⁵⁶ As
741 the Army comes to terms with where it has been and where it is, we must take advantage of this
742 opportunity to begin to shape our culture for where we need to go. In the process of doing so,
743 however, we must remember that although culture might be nurtured and developed, it cannot be
744 engineered.

745 **Maintaining the Emergent Behaviors of an Army at War**

746
747 The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have created leaders and soldiers who are comfortable
748 operating outside their unit’s mission and organization demonstrating the *tactical adaptability*
749 that is now a common cultural trait in the operating force. Repetitive combat missions in
750 ambiguous environments have created this culture of adaptability. Soldiers and leaders recognize
751 that they must remain agile and adaptive in order to accomplish their missions—missions which
752 individuals and units are not institutionally educated for, trained for, or properly equipped to
753 execute.⁵⁷ Units consistently demonstrate flexibility within their organizations as they perform
754 missions not traditionally associated with their expertise or task lists.⁵⁸

755
756 Importantly, the years of war created a remarkable convergence of two “distinct but
757 interconnected dynamics, each of which was driven by a particular group within the US military:

758 a cadre of junior leaders who worked hard to solve immediate problems that the military
759 establishment had failed to foresee or adequately address in a timely manner, and a cadre of
760 senior institutional dissidents whose critique of the US military was drawn from their own
761 observations and the substance of the junior cadre's complaints." Significantly, the rate of
762 change of this learning was initially "rapid at the tactical level, much slower on the operational
763 level, and almost non-existent on the strategic level."⁵⁹ As one participant in the US Army War
764 College Advanced Strategic Arts Seminar Sensing Session commented, "there is a disconnect
765 between most senior leaders and a major today who has spent his whole career in war."
766 Importantly, a similar disconnect—as described earlier within this paper—exists between the
767 generating force and the operating force.⁶⁰

768
769 "Gone are the assumptions for units that 100 percent equipment fill is deployment ready,
770 because in many cases units require theater provided equipment that is not part of their force
771 design tables of equipment. Gone are the models of readiness that are primarily based on training
772 gates. In an environment where everything is accelerated faster than the model's design, it is a
773 real challenge for units to synchronize manning, organization, equipping and training their units
774 for their assigned mission set."⁶¹ Soldiers and leaders have mastered a broad range of tasks
775 necessary to accomplish a wide array of missions in the complex environment that characterizes
776 the current fight, this mastery comes from necessity and occurs in combat. The current
777 operational environment is "producing a cohort of innovative, confident, and adaptable leaders
778 and soldiers. Work is in progress to sustain this newly developed adaptability in our junior
779 leaders, a quality necessary for future leaders."⁶²

780
781 This agility needs to be reflected equally in the generating force, which has traditionally
782 been impeded by bureaucracy resulting in training courses and curricula that is slow to adapt.
783 The emphasis on adaptability in the combined arms fight that is common in the wars in Iraq and
784 Afghanistan has yet to be fully institutionalized. Importantly, "innovations in education and
785 training must be enveloped by a shift in the U.S. military's cultural disposition towards" future
786 warfare and full spectrum operations.⁶³ Particularly in the junior leaders PME, despite a common
787 core these courses tend to be rigid and branch centric, lacking the adaptability shown in the
788 operational force. The Army's educational curricula is still attempting to adapt its POI from
789 fundamentally flawed concepts that drove an over emphasis on network-centric warfare. The
790 perceived lack of relevance to the current operations leaves the operating force with the feeling it
791 must rely on Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTPs) learned in combat as opposed to the
792 doctrine learned from the generating force, resulting in a doctrine of TTPs.

793
794 TTPs that emerge from combat develop and change in response to the current
795 environment, to include enemy TTPs. This pace is critical to mission accomplishment and
796 survival in the fight, but cannot be matched by the generating force, in regards to integrating
797 into, changing, or writing new doctrine. This leads to a further widening of the cultural gap
798 between the operating force and the generating force. A learning organization acknowledges
799 "that tactical leaders in the field can spur innovation that, when accepted by higher commanders,
800 dramatically reshapes an army in combat."⁶⁴ We as an army are showing signs of this learning in
801 and reshaping in theater, but there is still a significant lag within the generating force. The
802 operating force still perceives the institution as a bureaucracy that is slow to react and change,
803 placing more trust in the TTPs handed off by the unit they are replacing. This cultural aspect

804 perpetuates itself as leaders and Soldiers continue to engage in a protracted war, and will until
805 the institution can relate doctrine to the current situation and incorporate lessons learned and
806 TTPs in a timely manner. However, tactical adaptability is linked to positive changes in the
807 training culture.

808
809 There has been a dramatic change in what constitutes effective training during the last
810 eight years of combat resulting in an *outcome-oriented training and an understanding-oriented*
811 *education culture*. Prior to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, force on force scenarios at the
812 Combat Training Centers (CTC) emphasized the concentration of combat power and the use of
813 overwhelming firepower, overly oriented on effects and targeting. The Army further remained
814 wedded to certain gate-training strategies designed before the war that quickly became dated as
815 enemy TTPs evolved and the Army grew a core group of combat tested veterans who recognized
816 the need for a different training paradigm.⁶⁵ As Army leaders and units adapted to the demands
817 of counterinsurgency operations, they recognized that the indiscriminant use of fires ran counter
818 to accomplishing the mission and strengthened the enemy. Recognizing this tension, CTCs now
819 evaluate units not only on their ability to overwhelm the enemy but also on their disciplined and
820 discriminating use of firepower and ability to protect non-combatants. Training at home station
821 and CTCs has now incorporated role players and cultural experts to accurately depict the
822 operational environment with scenarios that allow units to emphasize the importance of
823 appropriate actions as they apply the Warrior Ethos in a realistic scenario. Our training culture is
824 changing as a result of the ongoing wars, the experiences of our leaders at various levels, and the
825 lessons learned brought back from combat to the training centers. There is concern however that
826 “outcome oriented training and education is very tactical and loses its utility as one progresses in
827 a career.”⁶⁶

828 Moreover, these training developments need to occur at the same time that the Army
829 refines its professional military education. The educational system should capitalize on the
830 adaptability emerging from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.⁶⁷ Further, PME should seek to
831 provide the very cultural characteristics the Army will need against hybrid threats “while
832 remaining sensitive to the nuances of operating among the people in an era of persistent
833 conflict.”⁶⁸ David Ucko also speaks to this point, stating “Along with the initiative and
834 decision-making capabilities required for all military operations,” these characteristics should
835 include “civil-military skills geared toward interaction with nonmilitary personnel, as well as
836 politic-military awareness, a broad intellectual background, and an appreciation for history and
837 culture.”⁶⁹

838 The complex nature of the environment and the enemy’s brutality drive a need for an
839 effective strategy that emphasizes the need for moral and ethical education and training. The
840 shift in thinking about armed conflict and the judicious application of firepower only serves to
841 further emphasize this need for change in our training and PME because in today’s operational
842 areas “moral-ethical failures, even at the lowest levels, have strategic implications.”⁷⁰ In the past,
843 training in this area consisted of a JAG officer presenting a PowerPoint presentation on the Law
844 of War, which is inadequate for our current and future operational environment. As Christopher
845 Coker observed in *The Warrior Ethos*, however, individual and institutional values are more
846 important than legal constraints on immoral behavior; legal contracts are often observed only as
847 long as others honor them or as long as they are enforced.⁷¹ Focusing training on the legal
848 aspects of war does little to reinforce a common culture. The Counterinsurgency Manual focuses

849 on values, reinforcing the culture: “the Nation’s and the profession’s values are not negotiable
850 and that “violations of them are not just mistakes; they are failures in meeting fundamental
851 standards of the profession of arms.”⁷² Command emphasis on ethics and values within the
852 operational forces has much greater effect than the mandatory training gates of pre-deployment.
853 When these professional values are demonstrated throughout the command it becomes ingrained
854 in the culture of the organization. However, this becomes difficult when unit leaders are not in
855 place long enough to establish and reinforce these cultural norms.

856 The ethics training and leader development mentioned above is just one small piece of
857 the loss in depth of collective training due to unit manning issues during reset and train up for the
858 next combat tour. The requirement for units to deploy with only one year of training preparation
859 between combat tours has compressed the training cycle and placed considerable pressure on
860 units and leaders. Units must rely heavily on CTC Mission Readiness Exercises (MRX) to build
861 combat readiness, primarily because the ARFORGEN cycle is unable to replace leaders in time
862 to conduct collective training with the team that will actually deploy and fight.⁷³ As a result,
863 there is an emphasis on individual training to prepare for combat, which can provide individuals
864 with special skill sets that can be an asset to the unit, but does not bridge the gap in collective
865 training. The flaws in the ARFORGEN system also manifest themselves in unit cohesion and
866 discipline issues. Leaders must be present to ingrain the standards and ethical compass in their
867 subordinates and instill the discipline and confidence necessary for success in combat. This
868 failure of the ARFORGEN and life-cycle manning process is a source of great frustration among
869 leaders. Officers interviewed stated that that ARFORGEN (as it is being executed) “breaks units”
870 and creates a frustrating—and perhaps tragic—cycle where “units share suffering together,
871 increase their bonds and cohesion, and then we break them up.”⁷⁴ Many officers and NCOs felt
872 that the breakup of units, and in particular, the turbulence in NCOs and officers, was the
873 principle cause of increases in misconduct, the erosion of discipline, and the increase in suicides.
874 However it has been expressed that “issues with ARFORGEN are overstated. There are issues,
875 but... the outcome with our flawed system on the ground is pretty amazing.”⁷⁵

876 Unit cohesion—and the leadership, discipline, training, and education that produces it—
877 is particularly important in our current and future operating environments. The wars in Iraq and
878 Afghanistan have highlighted the need for decentralized operations, and therefore *decentralized*
879 *mission command*, in which junior leaders bear tremendous responsibility for ensuring mission
880 accomplishment. “Mission command is the conduct of military operations through decentralized
881 execution based on mission orders for effective mission accomplishment. Successful mission
882 command results from subordinate leaders at all echelons exercising disciplined initiative within
883 the commander’s intent to accomplish missions. It requires an environment of trust and mutual
884 understanding.”⁷⁶ Mission command requires operational commanders to *continually* assess the
885 situation, make necessary adjustments and ensure that all members of their team take initiative to
886 overcome obstacles in pursuit of mission accomplishment. The junior officers and mid grade
887 non-commissioned officers who operate in the mission command environment enforce standards
888 of moral conduct and make critical decisions in a stressful, ambiguous environment.

889 The culture that is evolving in combat, using decentralized mission command, places a
890 great deal of trust in junior leaders. These junior leaders, who embrace this responsibility and
891 trust in combat, perceive a lack of trust when returned to an institutional environment. It is felt
892 that the generating force contains outdated ideas held over from an interwar Army, where a “zero

893 defect mentality” leads to an environment of micro-management. Coming from an environment
894 of decentralized operations where junior leaders are given more latitude this can cause a culture
895 shock. Thus, further emphasizing the perceived lack of trust and reinforcing an emerging
896 generational gap.

897 This generational gap is a demonstration of cultural strain that is being exacerbated as
898 junior leaders move between combat and garrison. During sensing sessions at CGSC and the
899 Sergeants Major Academy, there was concern that non-commissioned officers achieving the rank
900 of SFC in seven years time doesn’t provide the leader or expert needed at that grade.⁷⁷ Junior
901 leaders, on the other hand, argue that these individuals usually have three or more years of
902 combat experience out of those seven years, which provides expertise and leader skills. Both
903 arguments have merit and show a divide in generational cultures between junior leaders and
904 senior officers, some of whom junior leaders refer to as being from “the black boot Army”. This
905 cultural gap can place a strain on the trust that is critical during combat.

906 In addition to the generational gap, there is a growing rift between officers and NCOs
907 within the operating forces and those perceived to be ‘hiding out’ in positions that are not
908 typically deployed. Again, several participants in our sensing sessions asked the question bluntly:
909 “Is the institutional Army at war?” In simple terms, there is a feeling that the hardships of
910 combat are not shared equitably.

911 Culture is important to forming the social and individual identity that is critical to the
912 environment of trust called for in the concept of mission command. The critical element of that
913 environment is trust, again the trust we put in junior leaders in combat, but don’t seem to
914 maintain in the institutional environment. Warfare will continue to—as it always has--require
915 decentralization and mission command to fight and win. In the future operating environment,
916 this will require inculcating this trust of junior leaders into the Army’s culture.

917 Experience gained in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan has honed elements of the Army’s
918 combined arms expertise. The wealth of combined arms and joint combat experience has resulted
919 in an **emphasis on combined arms**, reducing the cultural divide among branches. AC/RC units
920 have demonstrated their essential capabilities and contributed to the Army’s role in the ‘long
921 war’. Wartime TTPs have migrated rapidly across the operational forces despite branch or
922 specialty. The shared combat experiences and hardships have proven the conflict between the
923 Army’s sub-cultures is generally superficial. Through these shared experiences and the increased
924 emphasis on combined arms operations the operational forces have broken through barriers that
925 divided the Army’s sub-cultures in the past. Organizational changes under the modular Army
926 concept have led to the creation of functions, i.e. maneuver, maneuver support, fires, and
927 sustainment, reducing the emphasis on branch. This helps to reinforce the combined arms aspects
928 of our culture, however there are also negative aspects to modularity. The commander must build
929 a strong unit identity and esprit de corps at home station to counter the ‘plug and play’ aspects of
930 modularity on moral and discipline. The emphasis on functions has been identified by the
931 generating force, leading to the creation of Centers of Excellence. Despite the focus on functions
932 the institution still relies on basic branches for combat development. The institution needs to
933 adapt at a faster pace, this adaptation will be instrumental in reinforcing the combined arms
934 emphasis in our Army culture.

935 The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have caused the Army to balance an overemphasis on
936 technology, left over from the ideas of RMA and “Transformation Orthodoxy”, by ***focusing on***
937 ***the human dimension*** of the current wars. The Army has learned that “the network-
938 centric/systems analytical approach to war is inadequate for meeting twenty-first century security
939 challenges” because “war is about politics, and politics is about people.”⁷⁸ Until recently the
940 Army’s human dimension focus has been outward looking, focused on instilling cultural
941 awareness and sensitivity towards the indigenous populations among whom we are operating and
942 with whom we are interacting with.⁷⁹ There isn’t a balanced effort to instill an appreciation of the
943 human dimension as it relates to the Army’s culture. Steps have been taken in recognition of the
944 importance of the human dimension and culture, with the fielding of Human Terrain Teams and
945 the formation of the University of Foreign Military and Cultural Studies. The operating force
946 understands the human dimension as it relates to Soldiers and leaders executing their mission in
947 combat. When examining the human dimension and the complete Soldier one must also consider
948 the influences outside of the Army, particularly the impact of the family.

949 Soldiers are the strength of our nation and much of that strength comes from their
950 families.⁸⁰ The Army has come to the realization that they must ***focus on the family***. The
951 sacrifices of the families in the Army are unique from other occupations; war exacerbates these
952 sacrifices and challenges. These sacrifices range from the possibility of death or life changing
953 injuries and extended separation related to combat tours to the frequent relocation and long work
954 hours during ‘stabilization’. The Army Family Covenant shows the Army’s strides to balance
955 mission requirements and needs of the families and mitigating the strain on the force. The Army
956 Family Covenant reflects the value our culture places on the family, acknowledging the strong,
957 supportive environment provided by a partnership between the Army and our families resulting
958 in strength and resilience of our Soldiers during protracted war. There is still a perception,
959 particularly among our junior officers, that the Army still doesn’t adequately consider the effects
960 on families when developing policies that have great impact on them, such as PCS moves to
961 schools which cause multiple moves in a relatively short period of time.⁸¹

962 The past ten years has seen a change in the ***diversity*** of the Army. There have been
963 significant changes in demographics, which can drive changes in behavior and therefore changes
964 in culture. Of note is the change in the role of women in the Army, specifically related to
965 combat. During sensing sessions there was a shared belief among the men and women that at the
966 unit level there was a greater acceptance of women based on their proven abilities. This
967 represents a significant shift in cultural thinking. Policy still restricts women from serving in
968 units whose primary mission is direct ground combat. However, women are serving in combat
969 and the Army culture needs to acknowledge this fact, they are truck drivers, gunners, medics,
970 helicopter pilots and military police attached to combat units putting them in the same or similar
971 environments as the ‘gunfighters’. Additionally women are performing culturally sensitive duties
972 that men can’t do, such as searching indigenous women. The current wars, and those in the
973 foreseeable future, are non linear battlefields that blur the distinction between combat and non-
974 combat specialties. This shift in culture is also reflected in the civilian population, a 2007 USA
975 Today Gallop Poll says that 74 percent of Americans say that women should be able to hold
976 combat jobs, up from 36 percent that were asked that same question in 1981.⁸²

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980 **Annex A: Towards Achieving Desired Outcomes**

981

982 As mentioned earlier, cultural tension itself is neither bad nor good; it can, however, be
983 creative or destructive. This is an important point, because it emphasizes the fact that the current
984 state of Army culture—like the Army itself—is strained, but not broken. As many senior leaders
985 know, largely because they lived through the difficult days that followed Vietnam, things have
986 been worse. As a result, the Army needs to know that these cultural tensions are not the
987 harbingers of doom. But, as the All-Volunteer Army approaches its thirty-seventh year, the
988 current state of the Army’s culture does bring with it the opportunity for further change.

989 The Army should seek to evolve its professional culture. In doing so, *leaders must take a*
990 *series of specific actions to reinforce emerging positive behaviors while reducing the tensions*
991 *against the backdrop of protracted conflicts.* In short, *increasing the percentage of military*
992 *officers and NCOs* in the generating force will reinforce positive cultural change that Secretary
993 Gates alluded to.

994 The Army can restructure its generating force through a number of measures. First, the
995 Army must develop and maintain a grounded, realistic idealized version of future conflict.
996 Second, the Army must ensure that its personnel assignment system brings the right balance of
997 DA civilians, contractor support, and *military officers and NCOs* into its generating force. More
998 specifically, Army leaders should prioritize efforts to increase the percentage of military officers
999 and NCOs in the parts of the Army where the institution conducts its thinking and its
1000 procuring—its schools, academies, and concept and doctrinal development centers.⁸³ The bottom
1001 line is that the Army must consider the effect on the Army and the intrinsic—and sometimes
1002 intangible—value that comes with having a experienced member of the operating force
1003 participating in key generating force functions. For example, at professional military education
1004 (PME) institutions such as Captain’s Career Courses (CCCs)—and perhaps more importantly at
1005 the Command and General Staff College (ILE-CGSC)—officers emerging from the operating
1006 force expect to and need to interact with other officers that are both fluent in the nature of current
1007 operations as well as fully prepared to educate peers, seniors and subordinates. Wholesale
1008 changes to aspects of the Army’s personnel management system, to include an objective
1009 reconsideration of the balance between “generalization” and “specialization” will be required to
1010 affect this transition. Finally, senior leaders can facilitate this important cultural change by
1011 considering the following actions:

- 1012 ○ continue Army-wide discussion about culture and incorporate initial findings into the
1013 Army Capstone Concept;
- 1014 ○ communicate clearly to the force the behaviors and practices that we want to reinforce
1015 and those that we want to change;
- 1016 ○ balance an inculcation of the warrior ethos with moral, ethical, and psychological
1017 preparation for operations against hybrid threats in and amongst the population;
- 1018 ○ encourage risk-taking and decentralization consistent with mission command. Ensure
1019 that risk management does not create risk aversion;
- 1020 ○ determine how to preserve unit cohesion and the chain of command during ARFORGEN
1021 transitions;

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- 1022 ○ narrow the gap between the operating and generating forces with priority to organizations
- 1023 where the Army does its *thinking, procuring, and leader development*;
- 1024 ○ increase the intellectual rigor of leader development and education; and
- 1025 ○ effect changes to the Army personnel system that provide more opportunities for and
- 1026 reward education (e.g., *Leader Development Strategy*)

1027 By examining how we talk about our culture and about war, as well as examining how we
1028 think, train, and learn about war, and how we assign personnel throughout the Army, we might
1029 very well discover how to achieve the cultural and operational balance that a full-spectrum force
1030 requires.

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Annex B: The Historical Context of Army Culture, 1973-2001

The cultural tensions within today's Army in 2009 did not develop in a vacuum – their roots are in the recent history of the modern All-Volunteer Army. Examining the organizational culture shaped during the first two eras has relevancy for two reasons. First, behaviors, practices, and beliefs developed between 1973-2001 shaped the Army's response to the GWOT and continue to shape U.S. Army behaviors, practices, and beliefs today, often in ways we might not fully realize. Second, understanding how and why these behaviors, practices, and beliefs formed informs our own investigation of how to shape today's organizational culture. When one thinks about the organizational culture of the modern All-Volunteer Army, it should be periodized into three eras: 1973-1991, 1991-2001, 2001-present. Each era presents continuities for us to consider as we examine the Army's culture today.

At the end of the Vietnam War, in a metaphorical sense, the U.S. Army was returning home after having fought a costly war that had divided American society and politics and had been concluded to an unsatisfactory end with the fall of Saigon in 1975. In the midst of its withdrawal from Vietnam, the U.S. Army also had the daunting task of transitioning from the draft to an All-Volunteer Army in an era when large segments of the country's youth was at best ambivalent, or at worst openly hostile to military service. It should not be underestimated that in the same era, the Army was accommodating the expanding role and status of women in the armed forces. The Army was also at the threshold of a wave of new technologies that would affect the scope and nature of work and combat routines down to the individual soldier level. Finally, the U.S. Army believed it was entering into a long era of scarce resources where every program and dollar would come under intense scrutiny from the Congressional and Executive branches.

The U.S. Army also faced significant external challenges. The revelations of the Yom Kippur War about modern warfare and a surging Soviet threat (in terms of weapons technology that was matching American technology, new Soviet operational doctrine, increased Soviet deployments in Europe and abroad) posed grave problems for the Army's doctrine and structure. Yet these problems also helped to focus the senior leaders of the U.S. Army on the direction of future change. These parallel external factors gave meaning and purpose to the Army officer corps, who embraced the challenge of understanding the nature of modern warfare with intellectual excitement and rigor as they sought to master first the tactical, and then the operational art. The Soviet threat, although not clearly perceived or accepted by the American public, gave purpose and urgency to the actions of the officer corps. When one reads the memoranda and papers of the officer corps in this era, one senses an urgency to solve problems quickly. This urgency was a product of a cultural sea change in the Army – the concept of “force readiness.” The Army's evaluation of the Soviet strategic threat, the operational characteristics of modern war, and the belief that American domestic public support was transitory meant that the Army had to “win the first battle” – which required soldiers, equipment, and units to be ready to fight “as you are” at all times.

1085 One of the Army's first responses to this strategic dilemma and era of scarce resources
1086 was the "Total Army" plan proposed by CSA, General Creighton Abrams. General Abrams
1087 proposed a force structure of 16 active-duty divisions, which would rely on Reserve and National
1088 Guard units to "round-out" their combat, CS, and CSS elements in time of war. Part of this plan
1089 was a commitment to a manpower level of 785,000 active-duty soldiers, which helped provide a
1090 measure of resource predictability. Part of the reason Congress was amenable to this design was
1091 due to the Army's demonstrated seriousness to reduce, streamline, and reorganize the Army's
1092 institutional bureaucracy with the STEADFAST reorganizations.¹

1093
1094 During this era, the institutional army led the Army in the development and
1095 implementation of a host of reforms to doctrine, organization, training, material, and personnel
1096 management. The creation of a single command, TRADOC, to manage and integrate training,
1097 doctrine, and material developments was significant. However, U.S. Army reforms did not flow
1098 from a grand campaign plan/vision at TRADOC or even at the green or civilian sides of the
1099 Department of the Army. Rather, the reforms were the result of a multitude of efforts throughout
1100 the Army. Some initial reforms proved to be counter-productive, and were later changed or
1101 eliminated. Yet, by the end of the 1980s, the U.S. Army looked much different from the Army
1102 of the early 1970s. It had a disciplined, well-trained, well-led, and well-equipped force that was
1103 extremely proficient in combined arms mechanized warfare. What gave these reforms unity,
1104 even in their flaws, was a clearly articulated aim point which was understood, and accepted,
1105 down to the lowest level.

1106
1107 The Army's organizational culture changed due to several reforms. First, the Army
1108 underwent a "doctrinal renaissance" and a "revolution in training."² This doctrinal renaissance
1109 was initiated by the leadership of the first TRADOC commander, General William DePuy and
1110 then advanced by an energetic debate within the both the operational and institutional sides of
1111 the officer corps. Eventually, Army doctrine writers at the Combined Arms Center developed
1112 AirLand Battle through close consultation with other TRADOC entities, the operational army
1113 (especially USAREUR), the Air Force, America's closest coalition partners, and even
1114 Congressional critics. This doctrine was simulated and tested by wargames conducted by Army
1115 agencies populated by officers with operational experience. The "training revolution" too
1116 resulted from critical study of the emerging social and behavioral science literature of the 1960s

¹ STEADFAST was a large-scale reorganization plan of the Army's bureaucracy. In 1969, the CSA, General Westmoreland, directed the Army staff to consider plans of how to reorganize an Army bureaucracy that was perceived as bloated, inefficient, and unresponsive to the needs of the operational force. The A/VICE (a position eliminated in 1973), then LTG DePuy, spent the next three years analyzing the functions of all the agencies of the institutional Army and then designed a major reorganization plan. A significant number of offices and agencies were consolidated, the Department of the Army staff was reduced, and a score of general officer positions were downgraded or eliminated. One of the key components of the plan was the dissolution of Continental Army Command (CONARC) into Forces Command (FORSCOM) and Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC). The creation of a single command (TRADOC) to manage training and doctrine, and ultimately influence equipment development, gave coherency to the myriad of programs, systems, and commands that existed prior to STEADFAST.

² For "doctrinal renaissance" see John Romjue, *From Active Defense to AirLand Battle: The Development of Army Doctrine, 1973-1982* (Ft. Monroe, VA: Historical Office, U.S. Army TRADOC, 1984).

For "training revolution," see Anne Chapman, *The Army's Training Revolution, 1973-1990: An Overview* (Ft. Monroe, VA: Office of the Command Historian, U.S. Army TRADOC, 1991).

1117 and 1970s.³ It was linked to a careful analysis of the tasks and functions the Army anticipated its
1118 soldiers, NCOs, and small units had to accomplish on the modern battlefield. From these
1119 analyses was borne the Skills Qualification Tests, “How to Fight” manuals, and the ARTEP
1120 program. The MILES system, weapon simulators, command post tactical simulations, and
1121 National Training Center were revolutionary developments that added unprecedented realism to
1122 battle-focused training, with commensurate improvements in training outcomes. While
1123 TRADOC led these developments, these changes gained traction within the broader
1124 organizational culture of the Army because of the collaborative relationships TRADOC fostered
1125 with both the operational force and close allies to draw from their knowledge and receive
1126 feedback.

1127
1128 Just as critical to changing the Army’s organizational culture were changes in the
1129 Army’s personnel culture. Undoubtedly, the personnel situation of the post-Vietnam Army was
1130 a nadir in the history of the U.S. Army. The 1970 Army War College Study on Military
1131 Professionalism revealed deep dissatisfaction with the Army’s ethical climate among the
1132 officer’s mid-grade leaders.⁴ The discord was even worse at the junior officer level.
1133 Additionally, the Vietnam War had decimated the ranks of the NCO Corps, through casualties,
1134 attrition from NCOs retiring after repeated tours, or loss to OCS commissioning. Instead of
1135 experience, many NCOs were products of the “shake and bake” system that produced NCOs
1136 from each draft call-up class. Indeed, in many ways the early 1970s NCO corps was openly
1137 resistant to change or urgent action. Finally, a disproportionate number of young soldiers were
1138 poorly educated, drug-users, or had criminal convictions. In many ways, the Army’s woes were
1139 a reflection of the sociological problems in American society during the 1970s.

1140
1141 The Army’s initial responses to these problems proved unsatisfactory. Centralized
1142 selection boards helped somewhat, but the new OER quickly became hopelessly inflated. The
1143 “dual track” system for officers would require revisions to make it more feasible. Moreover, by
1144 the mid-1970s the discussion on ethics within the officer corps was largely censured by senior
1145 officers who considered it insolent and too critical.⁵ Meanwhile, the ‘rap sessions’ and ‘soldiers
1146 councils’ adopted from the VOLAR program did not solve the fundamental problems of
1147 indiscipline and the weakness of the small-unit chain-of command. The Army’s recruiting woes
1148 limited the Army’s ability to discharge soldiers that were performing below standard.

1149
1150 In the late 1970s, senior Army leaders (in TRADOC, DCSPER, DCSOPS, and the
1151 MACOMs) came to recognize that the Army had to address the human dimension problem.⁶
1152 What drove them to this conclusion was a realization that advances in technology and doctrine
1153 were not enough to allow the U.S. Army’s scarce resources to close the gap with Soviet combat
1154 capabilities. The Army needed to do more with less, and the Army’s senior leaders perceived
1155 that the greatest leaps in combat capabilities were to be gained by improving leader development
1156 and organizational efficiency.⁷ Another driving factor was the ethical issues that the Army had

³ Both Army (U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences) and independent (Human Resources Research Organization) research institutions assisted TRADOC.

⁴ *Study on Military Professionalism* (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, 30 June 1970).

⁵ For example of stifled discussion of ethics, see John Cushman, *Fort Leavenworth—A Memoir* (Annapolis, MD: J. Cushman, 2001), 56-64.

⁶ General Starry (TRADOC cdr); General Rogers (CSA); General Meyer (CSA)

⁷ Starry memo.

1157 not forthrightly addressed in the early 1970s continued to be sources of dissatisfaction within the
1158 officer corps.⁸

1159
1160 Together, the generating force's components of TRADOC and DCSPER took actions to
1161 improve the human dimension of the Army's organizational culture. In the late 1970s,
1162 TRADOC, with DCSPER assistance, implemented major revisions of the Noncommissioned
1163 Officer Education System (NCOES).⁹ The Army took similar actions to revamp the officer
1164 development, although it shifted the overall balance in favor of training at the expense of
1165 education.¹⁰ The "Be All You Can Be" recruiting campaign launched in 1980 captured the
1166 Army's desire for individual excellence and proved to be a stunning success at raising the image
1167 of Army service and attracting higher quality recruits. Finally, other outside developments
1168 contributed to an improvement in the human dimension. The adoption of stringent disciplinary
1169 actions for drug use demonstrated to 'good' soldiers that the Army was serious about cleaning up
1170 its ranks. In the early 1980s, the fielding of a host of cutting-edge technological advances (new
1171 tanks, armored fighting vehicles, wheeled vehicles, communication equipment, and night vision
1172 devices) made the Army an exciting place to serve for the individual.

1173
1174 The Army also took concrete actions to improve the organizational culture of its
1175 operational units. During the late 1970s and early 1980s, the Army institutionalized processes
1176 aimed at improving and sustaining the organizational efficiency of its units – NTC and the use of
1177 the AAR are but a few examples.¹¹ This "systems" orientation also influenced the Army to
1178 adopt ways of improving cohesion. By the early 1980s, the Army was implementing the Unit
1179 Manning System across the operating force. The Unit Manning System sought to build cohesion
1180 and reduce personnel turbulence by using a battalion rotation model for some overseas
1181 deployments, the COHORT system (stabilizing first-term soldiers and an NCO and officer cadre
1182 for three years), and a regimental system for assigning officers and NCOs.¹² In the early 1980s,
1183 the Army would experiment with the Battalion Rotation Model for overseas deployments.

⁸ For surveys of continuing discontent with the Army's ethical climate in the late 1970s, see D.M. (Mike) Malone Papers, Box 29 – Professionalism, Military History Institute, Carlisle, PA.

⁹ The development of an NCO education system was multi-faceted. The Programs of Instruction for the Noncommissioned Officer Academy courses were revamped and standardized to focus on tactical tasks, small-unit leadership skills, and "how to train" instruction. The physical fitness test and training was standardized, with an accompanying manual. New manuals on leadership and counseling, and the 5"x7" NCO guide, spoke in a down-to-earth language about the roles and responsibilities of the Army small unit leader, and were well-received by the operational force.

¹⁰ The Review of Education and Training for Officers (RETO), informally known as the Harrison Board made many recommendations. It raised evaluation standards for the Army ROTC program and revamped the Officer Basic Course to give it a more tactical training focus, eliminating its more "education" oriented components. It also led to the creation of CAS3 as a school to train staff officers. Finally, as a result of RETO, TRADOC attempted to develop Military Qualification Standards (MQS) for officers. These MQS standards never had the same impact as the SQT standards for soldiers.

¹¹ In the late 1970s while drawing from a wide range of business and systems engineering literature, TRADOC began a slew of analyses that examined the Army as a "system of systems." These analyses focused on how to improve processes and communication within organizations from the crew-level, to battalion, to Corps, to Department of the Army activities. These analyses informed a host of innovations, from more logical weapon system development processes, to the Army 86 reorganization, to AirLand Battle Doctrine, to the development of NTC and its After-Action Review process.

¹²The regimental system designed by TRADOC with the enthusiastic support of the Chief of Staff of the Army (General Meyer) is the primary reason why regimental affiliations are scattered about the Army, i.e. 1-22 is in xxx

1184
1185 Finally, in the late 1970s, Army senior leaders initiated a discourse on Army values that
1186 had hardly existed before. Of course, the Army officer and NCO corps had spent almost a
1187 decade working through issues of ‘race relations’ and the integration of women into the Army.
1188 Often, these measures had been imposed upon and ambivalent to recalcitrant Army officer corps
1189 by the civilian leadership of the Department of Army or Congress. Many officers considered the
1190 emphasis on equal opportunity and race relations as huge distracters and actually counter-
1191 productive to better internal unit climates. Also, gender integration was considerably
1192 controversial in terms of its perceived threat to the Army’s culture. And, though the Army
1193 leadership frequently spoke of values, many Army officers believed that the officer corps was
1194 not living up to those values. The obvious ‘hollowness’ of the Army seemed to belie public
1195 statements of “readiness.” Additionally, Army officers perceived that the contemporary social
1196 climate (with its moral relativism, its ‘me’ centered narcissism, and its distrust of authority) of
1197 the 1970s and the heterogeneous background of incoming soldiers made the values of its
1198 incoming accessions ill-conducive to Army service. Faced with this turbulent ethical climate,
1199 the CSA and TRADOC sought for the first time in the Army’s history to explicitly define what
1200 constituted Army values.

1201
1202 The 1981 version of FM 100-1 (The Army) formally defined the Army’s professional
1203 ethic for the first time as: loyalty to the ideals of the nation, loyalty to the unit, personal
1204 responsibility, and selfless service. This professional ethic was augmented by four defined
1205 soldierly values, known as the four C’s: candor, commitment, competence and courage.¹³
1206 Moreover, Army doctrine in the 1982 version of FM 100-5 emphasized leader initiative and the
1207 principle of Auftragstaktik.¹⁴ This ethos well-embodied the direction desired by both the Army
1208 as an organization and its constituent soldiers and leaders.¹⁵ Truthfulness in readiness reports
1209 was emphasized; commanders ceased to be punished for less than perfect readiness. The clear
1210 standards of SQTs and ARTEPs encouraged truthful reporting. A values discourse accelerated
1211 during the mid-1980s in a variety of ways. As CSA, GEN Wickham directed a sea change in
1212 attitudes towards alcohol use, club activities, and smoking. The Army became increasingly
1213 family-focused as senior Army leaders emphasized in words and deeds that a partnership existed
1214 between the Army and Army families.¹⁶ By the time of Desert Storm, the Army’s diversity and
1215 advances in meritocracy (regardless of race or gender) would be perceived by the American
1216 public and touted by the Army’s leadership as one of the Army’s greatest strengths.

1217
1218 The summation of all these reforms was the production of an organizational culture that
1219 was focused, at times ruthlessly, on organizational improvement and judged its members on their

and 2-22 in Fort Drum, Washington. The idea was that soldiers and officers could rotate back and forth between these installations within a particular regiment. It quickly proved to be infeasible.

¹³ *FM 22-100, Military Leadership* (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, 1983).

¹⁴ *FM 100-5, Operations* (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, 1982).

¹⁵ Note, the officers who developed this first set of Army values specifically disdained the use of West Point’s “Duty, Honor, Country” as unrepresentative and too vague.

¹⁶ See GEN Wickham’s Chief of Staff of the Army White Paper, “The Army Family,” 1983. Senior Army leaders fought vociferously for improvements to family housing and SM benefits like the commissary and exchange system. The Army club system was redirected to focus on family-oriented activities. The Army institutionalized programs to gather and respond to the concerns of Army families, such as the Army Family Council and the Army Family Action Plan.

1220 competence. Organizations placed training and maintenance towards ‘force readiness’ as their
1221 central priority. Soldiers and leaders believed that their doctrine, training, and education had
1222 prepared them for their wartime mission – a mission that had the support of a wide consensus
1223 among American politicians, media, and public. To be sure, many of these reforms only gained
1224 traction in the 1980s, when resources became more available and a shift in cultural attitudes
1225 made military service attractive to a pool of better qualified individuals. However, some facets
1226 of this organizational culture would later become obstacles to change after Desert Storm.
1227

1228 Desert Storm itself was a singular event for the U.S. Army. It was the culmination of two
1229 decades of hard, preparatory work; it was the validation of Army Cold War doctrine and training
1230 systems; it was a stunning display of American Army competence that gained notice throughout
1231 the world. It seemed to erase all the flaws and negative images the Army had borne since the
1232 Vietnam War.

1233 Yet, the overwhelming U.S. victory against a foe that was technologically and
1234 organizationally inferior an exceptionally sterile battlefield masked some of the limitations
1235 inherent to the Army’s reforms. During the 1980s, professional self-development and excellence
1236 had become increasingly defined solely by tactical competence. The Army itself thought
1237 primarily about the tactical and operational art for one battlefield environment – Central Europe -
1238 - giving little consideration to the broader strategic-level transformations occurring to the nature
1239 of combat. When the Army did consider the challenges of “low intensity conflict”, its solutions
1240 were structural: creating light infantry divisions and making Special Forces its own branch.
1241 Mainstream Army tactical and operational thought was already becoming increasingly centered
1242 on “target servicing” of the various echelons of an enemy array—a misinterpretation of the
1243 lessons of Desert Storm. Army strategic thought inadequately considered how the Army might
1244 have to respond to the growing instability in the ‘Third World,’ the rise of violent extremist
1245 Islamic groups, and the general growth of militant sub-state groups (drug cartels, ethnic/sectarian
1246 groups) who used a mix of unconventional and conventional means on an increasingly urban and
1247 demographically diverse battlefield. Experiences in Lebanon, El Salvador, Columbia, and
1248 Afghanistan were neglected leading indicators of this future world. Already, unhealthy splits in
1249 the organizational culture were occurring, dividing the force between the “heavy” and “light”
1250 community. These divides were in many ways exacerbated by the assigned roles and
1251 responsibilities of the two types, the nature of the Combat Training Center scenarios, and the
1252 doctrine and force structure designed in this era. Additionally, the Army was never able to raise
1253 Reserve and National Guard readiness to their stated goals. Finally, the American public for the
1254 first time experienced a major war without its government asking them to volunteer or make any
1255 sacrifice. The media and American public indulged itself on images of smart bombs and a
1256 patriotic narrative provided by the military that deemphasized the gritty reality of combat and
1257 killing. The success of Desert Storm seemed to confirm the merits of this sundered connection
1258 between the Army and society.
1259

1260 Even before Desert Storm, the Army’s organizational culture was coming under
1261 substantial external pressures as Congress began the steep drawdown of U.S. forces after the
1262 collapse of Soviet communism. In this environment, Army resources faced a double challenge.
1263 Air power advocates viewed their contribution to Desert Storm as the decisive factor, and argued
1264 that the need for substantial land forces was unnecessary.¹⁷ This argument held great weight

¹⁷ McMaster, “Crack in the Foundation,” 17.

1265 with those who sought resource savings and minimal casualties. On the other hand, large
1266 segments of the Army officer corps and senior leadership resisted the idea that a dynamic global
1267 environment had changed American national policies and required the Army to rework its
1268 strategic employment concepts, mission sets, doctrine, training, organizational structure, and
1269 material acquisition. Conceptually the generating force remained focused on fighting a Major
1270 Regional Conflict against a conventional force, even as the operational Army confronted stability
1271 operations in complex human geographic environments.¹⁸ Only a few officers recommended
1272 revisiting the doctrine for fighting a counter-insurgency. Even within the operational force, there
1273 was an entire segment of junior, mid-level, and senior officers that actively avoided and
1274 disparaged the experience of stability operations. The Army did little more than revise its Cold
1275 War ‘aim point’ to reflect the technological predictions of ‘RMA.’

1276 Facets of the Army’s organizational culture, including implicit beliefs about what the
1277 Army “could” and “should” do, created obstacles to a realistic, critical assessment of the Army’s
1278 future landpower role and structure. The Army’s “transformation” initiatives of Force XXI and
1279 Army Warfighting Experiments helped the Army evaluate the impact of substantial changes
1280 occurring in the information age. However, early “transformation” initiatives reinforced facets
1281 of the Army’s organizational culture that would become problematic. Many “transformation”
1282 initiatives adopted the questionable presumptions of airpower advocates: future war would be
1283 against a largely conventional force or vulnerable network nodes and that decisive action could
1284 be attained through ever smaller Army forces delivering stand-off precision fires—all made
1285 possible by perfect situational awareness.¹⁹ This theoretical vision was in some ways antithetical
1286 to the traditional understanding of the Army’s landpower role, yet it was adopted as much as a
1287 survival strategy in an era of constrained resources as for its analytical saliency. Yet if these
1288 visions were meant to bring clarity, instead the taxonomy of buzzwords and concepts that
1289 sprung up around these “transformation” theories became increasingly opaque and
1290 incomprehensible to the average officer and soldier.

1291
1292 Training also suffered from the rigidity of thought. DESERT STORM had validated
1293 our doctrine and only seemed to require refinement of our procedures, so CTC experiences at the
1294 battalion and brigade levels became increasingly focused on staff processes and products like
1295 targeting and the ‘synch matrix.’ Furthermore, the typical four-week NTC experience and the
1296 brief lengths of OPERATION JUST CAUSE and OPERATION DESERT STORM encouraged
1297 officers to conceptualize war as one short, violent, decisive battle against a foe with a rigid task
1298 organization and doctrinal gameplan.

1299
1300 Material and force structure development also had an impact on the Army’s
1301 organizational culture. The most prominent material acquisition programs focused on enhancing
1302 command and control, and although they envisioned a free-flowing information-sharing
1303 environment, in execution commanders could use the systems to micromanage their subordinate
1304 units. Meanwhile soldier and fighting vehicle initiatives were secondary. Also, in the face of
1305 budget cuts, the Army sought to maintain as much of the old Cold War force structure as

¹⁸ *Victory Starts Here*, TRADOC history, 33

¹⁹ TRADOC Commander General Frederick Franks attempted to revise Army doctrine, such as FM 100-5 in 1993, to reflect these new realities. However, during the 1990s, American strategic employment concepts, doctrinal studies, and force structures remained divorced from these realities. See Frederick Kagan, *Finding the Target* (New York: Encounter Books, 2006).

1306 possible, with its division and corps-centered organization and support structures. The
1307 generating force's initiatives in force development were distinctly incongruous with the
1308 requirements of the operational Army in Somalia, Bosnia, and Kosovo. Eventually, the Army's
1309 experiences in Kosovo would force General Shinseki to introduce a revised "transformation"
1310 initiative in 1999 in order to attempt to correct the dissonance between the Army's material
1311 programs, doctrine, and organizational mindset with the reality that the Army would continue to
1312 be expected to deploy rapidly to contingency operations with a variety of force packages. The
1313 Stryker platform and Stryker organization was an example of this response. Interestingly, the
1314 generating force seemed to largely discount or ignore the innovation and adaptation that was now
1315 occurring in the deployed operational Army in Bosnia and Kosovo.

1316
1317 Dissonance in the Army's strategic thought was matched by dissonance in the human
1318 dimension of the Army's organizational culture. The multiple Selective Early Retirement
1319 Boards and Reduction In Force actions over a period of 4 years in the early 1990s were a
1320 tremendously traumatic experience for the officer corps. Officers who had given over a decade
1321 of service, and in some cases fought in Desert Storm, were forced into retirement. Promotion
1322 rates were dramatically cut, as the Army's "up or out" policies, enshrined in the Defense Officer
1323 Personnel Management Act of 1980, and adherence to officer timelines by personnel
1324 management made themselves felt with a vengeance. The officer corps perceived that the way to
1325 survive these drawdowns and have a successful career was to follow a prescribed career timeline
1326 focused primarily on their branch's assessment of the best assignments for developing technical
1327 and tactical competence in that branch. Surveys and interviews of service college students in the
1328 mid-1990s revealed that careerism within the officer corps had increased and as well as growing
1329 concerns about command climate and a return of 'zero-defect' standards.²⁰ By this time, the
1330 CTCs had become largely rote scenarios on familiar terrain that focused on the execution of the
1331 correct process of MDMP and battle management instead of initiative, risk-taking, and
1332 experimentation. Battalion command had become the signpost of a successful career and
1333 selection for command was achieved by serving in repeated troop assignments. The "dual track"
1334 OPMS concept was fundamentally compromised by these trends and would eventually be
1335 revised. In 1998, a new OER was introduced that included a centrally-tracked forced distribution
1336 rating for senior raters. While this action was laudable for its attempt to correct OER inflation, it
1337 also caused significant stress in the officer corps as many officers remained uncertain of the
1338 impact of "center of mass" ratings – not surprising for an officer corps that still vividly
1339 remembered the drawdowns.²¹ Finally, the Army repeatedly offered junior officers the option to
1340 leave the service early, before their initial obligation was complete. Officers succeeded by

²⁰ See Don M. Snider and Gayle L. Watkins, "The Future of Army Professionalism: A Need for Renewal and Redefinition," *Parameters*, Vol. 30, No. 3 (Autumn, 2000): 5-20. On fear of failure, see Walter F. Ulmer, "Military Leadership into the 21st Century: Another "Bridge Too Far?" (*Parameters*, Vol. 28, No. 1, Spring 1998): 4-25 and John C. Faith, "The Overcontrolling Leader: The Issue is Trust," *Army*, June 1997. LTG (ret.) Ulmer noted in his article, "The 1997 issues of *Army Times*, articles in *The Wall Street Journal*, an item in the 22 September 1997 *US News and World Report*, commentary in service journals, and other evidence would be unconvincing singularly. However, comments from the House National Security Committee as reported in the 14 July issue of *Army Times* and the findings from the recent large survey associated with sexual harassment, confirming other recent survey data, leave little doubt that there are more than superficial problems with elements of the climate of the Army." Ulmer, one of the two authors of the 1970 Army War College Study on Military Professionalism noted disconcerting similarities in the Army's ethical climate of the early 1970s and late 1990s.

²¹ On potential stress of forced distribution of OER rating, see Ulmer, "Military Leadership into the 21st Century," 1998.

1341 adjusting to the realities of this new organizational culture; yet many were disheartened. In
1342 short, generating force personnel management practices during the drawdown and the 1990s did
1343 not seem to match the Army's stated values about valuing people.

1344
1345 Additionally, the Army's deployments to Somalia, Kuwait, Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo
1346 dramatically increased the Army's deployment tempo into the late 1990s. The cycle of train-up
1347 on stability tasks, deployment, and then return and train-up on combat tasks exacerbated strains
1348 on soldiers, leaders, and Army Families.²² Moreover, many officers and soldiers accepted
1349 stability missions just as disdainfully as their senior leadership did. To many officers and
1350 soldiers, these stability missions were antithetical to the organizational culture of the Army.²³

1351
1352 During these deployments, rank-and-file military leaders became extremely risk averse
1353 due to both political and senior military leadership demands to avoid casualties and mistakes,
1354 and this attitude trickled down the force through extremely restrictive ROE and close supervision
1355 by commanders. Coupled with the pressures of the drawdown, a "zero-defect" mentality
1356 reemerged and influenced the execution of these missions and many other Army activities
1357 (whether it was command & staff issues or company DWIs). Communication and information
1358 technology such as e-mail, PowerPoint, and even FBCBT was coming online that facilitated
1359 increased micromanagement by senior leaders.

1360
1361 During this era, the Army seemed increasingly focused (at times almost primarily
1362 focused) on being a moralizing institution. The issue of homosexuals in the military was a flash
1363 point that revealed differences between the culture of segments of society and many Army
1364 members. However, the Army's senior leadership also directed much energy at addressing the
1365 *internal* moral climate of the Army. During the 1990s, Army senior reacted broadly to a few
1366 highly publicized moral lapses involving alcohol, sexual improprieties, or discrimination. Army
1367 leadership instituted new mandatory training, new oversight systems, and gimmicky pocket cards
1368 or dog tags, all of which were meant to encourage a teetotaling lifestyle but seemed to indicate a
1369 lack of trust in soldiers and a propensity to blame commanders. Army officers and soldiers
1370 perceived these measures as "cover your ass" actions from the generating force that were
1371 reaching the point of becoming training distracters and were counter-productive towards building
1372 a warfighting culture. Something bigger seemed amiss in the Army if the senior leaders felt
1373 compelled during the late 1990s to bombard the force with an excessive number of official
1374 publications and *Military Review* articles about leadership and values.²⁴

1375
1376 By the late 1990s, the pains of the drawdown had been replaced by a growing retention
1377 problem among its junior officers, perhaps the most demonstrable indicator of problems in the
1378 Army's organizational culture.²⁵ This retention problem continued unabated even after the

²² See Don M. Snider and Gayle L. Watkins, "The Future of Army Professionalism: A Need for Renewal and Redefinition," *Parameters*, Vol. 30, No. 3 (Autumn, 2000): 5-20. See also Carl A. Castro and Amy B. Adler, "OPTEMPO: Effects on Soldier and Unit Readiness," *Parameters*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (Autumn 1999): 86-95.

²³ For a critique of this organizational culture, see Ralph Peters, "Heavy Peace" (*Parameters*, Vol. 29, No. 2, Spring 1999): 71-69.

²⁴ See *Military Review* articles between 1996 and 1999. Several dozen articles and book reviews addressed various paradigms, teaching techniques, frameworks, pointers of leadership and values.

²⁵ Casey Wardynski, David S. Lyle, Michael J. Colarusso, "Towards a U.S. Army Officer Corps Strategy for Success: A Proposed Human Capital Model Focused Upon Talent," *Strategic Studies Institute*, April 2009.

1379 economic downturn of 2000. The organizational culture described above caused a significant
1380 portion of young officers to conclude that a career in the Army was unappealing and incongruous
1381 with the lives of job-satisfaction, self-fulfillment, and balance that they desired.²⁶ Additionally,
1382 fundamental changes in the U.S. economy from the industrial-age to the information-age placed
1383 high value on managers that could process information quickly, manage projects, and solve
1384 problems—attributes that made junior military officers highly desirable in the corporate world.²⁷
1385 Junior officers perceived senior officers (LTC and above) as insensitive to the pressures,
1386 demands, and stifling facets of service in the 1990s Army.²⁸ The Army’s organizational culture
1387 was becoming less attractive when compared to the changing organizational culture of
1388 businesses—which was moving to flatter organizations, with more individual autonomy, more
1389 opportunities for advanced education or ‘retooling’ one’s career, and greater possibilities of
1390 quick career advancement.

1391
1392 One response to the Army’s personnel resource dilemma was the privatization of
1393 generating force functions beginning in the mid-1990s—a development that had unrecognized
1394 implications for the Army’s organizational culture. This solution was abetted by a political
1395 culture that embraced the idea that the private market provided services better and more
1396 efficiently than the government. Many ROTC instructor positions were filled with contractors.
1397 The management of material development, writing of concept development and doctrine, and
1398 construction of after-action reviews and lessons learned products was increasingly filled by
1399 contractors.²⁹ Many of these measures were undertaken under the auspices of General Shinseki’s
1400 “Manning the Force,” which had the goal of *supporting* the operational force by improving its
1401 manpower levels. However, they also had the effect of reducing the number of operational army
1402 officers that would bring their experiences to the generating force and making generating force
1403 positions appear less attractive to the officers in the operational Army.³⁰

1404
1405 By the end of the 1990s, the Army’s culture already contained many tensions that would
1406 become exacerbated by the experiences in the 2000s. Stepping back, we can see continuities that
1407 can inform our examination of the Army’s culture today. Doctrine and force structure
1408 developed in the generating force’s transformation experiments seemed far removed from the
1409 dirty, gritty, uncertain nature of conflict the operational army observed on various contingency
1410 missions or in the news in places like Chechnya. The primary thrust of Army material
1411 innovation seemed to be to plug every soldier and leader into the network – a development many
1412 in the Army viewed with trepidation for its micromanagement potentialities and because it
1413 viewed technology as a means of achieving efficiencies in manpower and other elements of
1414 combat power.³¹ Personnel management seemed dogmatic in its standards of success and deaf to

²⁶ Leonard Wong, “Generations Apart: Xers and Boomers in the Officer Corps,” Strategic Studies Institute paper (October 2000), 4-17.

²⁷ Wardynski, “Towards a U.S. Army Officer Corps Strategy,” 11.

²⁸ Leonard Wong, “Generations Apart: Xers and Boomers in the Officer Corps,” Strategic Studies Institute paper, October 2000.

²⁹ Richard Kohn, “Tarnished Brass: Is the U.S. Military Profession in Decline” in *World Affairs* (Spring 2009).

³⁰ See John Mini, Dwight Phillips, Courtney Short, “Historical Effects of Personnel Reductions on the Institutional Army, 1973-2009,” USMA Department of History study, United States Military Academy, 15 May 2009.

³¹ See H.R. McMaster, “Crack in the Foundation: Defense Transformation and the Underlying Assumption of Dominant Knowledge in Future War,” Center for Strategic Leadership paper, November 2003. See also Kagan, *Finding the Target*, 2006.

1415 the concerns of its constituents.³² The optempo and requirements of garrison life was stifling to
1416 officers and NCOs – the Army was simply less and less fun. The values discourse in the Army
1417 had become less and less genuine and seemed disconnected from creating a warrior ethos. A
1418 distinct gap in perceptions was growing between young officers in the field and senior Army
1419 leaders.³³ Repeated ‘peacekeeping’ deployments coupled with an increasingly uninterested
1420 public expanded the disconnect between the Army and American society and their common
1421 understanding of the warrior ethos. It would not be fair to blame these tensions on any particular
1422 leader. In fact, many generating force agencies were attempting to solve the problems they
1423 perceived as germane to generating the future operational force. However, the events of the
1424 1990s reflected an generating force that was *drifting* due to a belief that the Army was in an
1425 interregnum period in which it would face no peer competitor until 2020 and because domestic
1426 political concerns of defending the Army’s relevance and ethics took precedence. During the
1427 1990s, the Army’s strategic employment concepts, doctrine and force structure development, and
1428 personnel management systems suffered from the lack of a clear, realistic articulation and vision
1429 of the Army’s warfighting purpose and means for the first decade of the 2000s.
1430

³² Wong, “Generations Apart.”

³³ Joseph Collins and Walter Ulmer, *American Military Culture in the Twenty-First Century* (Washington Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2000), xx, 62-76.

1431 **Annex C: US Army Culture: A British Perspective**

1432
1433 *“A virtue of having coalition partners with a legacy of shared sacrifice during difficult*
1434 *military campaigns is that they can also share candid observations. Such observations are*
1435 *understood to be professional exchanges among friends to promote constructive discussion*
1436 *that can improve the prospect of coalition successes for which all strive.”*

1437 Editor Military Review – Nov 2005.

1438
1439 **Introduction**

1440
1441 Currently there is a debate within the US Army about how the culture of the Army has changed
1442 since 1999. The purpose of this self examination is not known, but it is assessed that it is most
1443 probably linked to four key objectives:

- 1444
- 1445 1. Winning the current fight;
 - 1446
 - 1447 2. Preserving the All Volunteer Force;
 - 1448
 - 1449 3. Preserving, promoting and enhancing the positive aspects of US Army culture;
 - 1450
 - 1451 4. Identifying, minimizing and removing the negative aspects of US Army culture.

1452
1453 When discussing a subject like culture, there can clearly be no definitive right or wrong. Culture
1454 is highly subjective, more discursive by nature, and arguably less suited to a scientific
1455 assessment, systematic calculation or *powerpoint* chart. There will therefore, and inevitably
1456 must be, an acceptance in advance of a healthy amount of subjectivity. It is also important to
1457 record the assumption that this debate has been generated by the leadership of an organisation
1458 which is not only comfortable with, but positively encourages self examination.

1459
1460 In providing a distinctly British response, the aim has been to avoid both sycophancy and simple
1461 criticism for criticism’s sake, but to present constructive opinion which is intended to contribute
1462 to and stimulate the debate. The paper is as much about external confirmation of certain well
1463 known trends as it is about making earth shattering revelations. Disparate British opinion has
1464 been sought both informally and sensitively. What follows is almost exclusively the compilation
1465 and distillation of the opinions of a small but influential group of senior British officers, most of
1466 whom have operational experience with the US Army. All contributions have been made in
1467 good faith, in the spirit underpinning the American request and on an understanding of non-
1468 attribution.

1469
1470 **Definition**

1471
1472 A British military academic defines *Culture* as follows:

1473

1474 “*Culture* is that which mediates between human societies or organisations and the external
1475 world. It is the different ideas, myths, norms and symbols, as well as practices, routines and
1476 rituals, through which we order and interpret the world. In the military context, ‘culture’ is a
1477 distinct and lasting set of beliefs and values and preferences regarding the use of force, its role
1478 and effectiveness in political affairs. This includes an array of factors, such as prevailing
1479 attitudes, habits and values of the military and its parent society, geopolitical position, historical
1480 experience, political development, and received wisdom. Strategic culture theory typically
1481 assigns several characteristics to culture, which include continuity over time, an enduring set of
1482 values and behaviour, rooted in memories, ideas, particular conditions, and by features
1483 distinctive or peculiar to specific societies.”

1484
1485 In addition, several academics have highlighted the fact that *culture* does not sit in isolation from
1486 *context*, and that context will have both historical and current characteristics.

1487 1488 **Historical Context**

1489
1490 The time frame set for the debate on US Army culture was expressed as the last 10 years, which
1491 coincides approximately with the end of the Kosovo campaign. That said, any British
1492 perspective of US Army culture will always wish to emphasise the longer term historical context
1493 before committing to observations on the present. In particular, it is felt it is worth reviewing
1494 why, according to British opinion, the US Army was the way it was in 1999. This is surely
1495 justified as the ethos and culture of every army is the product of its history and experience.

1496
1497 The work of a previous British military attaché to the USA is useful in describing this historical
1498 context and has been drawn on here almost verbatim. He argues that there have been four
1499 dominant events in the development of the US Army ethos and culture: the Revolutionary War,
1500 the Civil War, the Second World War and Vietnam. From these came the four great underlying
1501 and enduring themes of American military culture:

- 1502
- 1503 • Liberty. The US Army was born, and remains in American iconography, a citizen army.
1504 For an American, the Army is the guardian of the people’s freedom, intimately linked with ideas
1505 of democracy and self determination.
 - 1506 • Will. The Civil War turned out to be an appalling trial of will, in which both sides were
1507 tested to the limit as they absorbed the financial, social and above all human cost of the conflict.
1508 This profound experience has affected the US Army ever since, where the ability to rise to a
1509 challenge and to prevail over difficulties by force of will and character is seen as one of the key
1510 elements of successful leadership.
 - 1511 • Operational Art. Both the Revolutionary and Civil Wars demonstrated the dominance of
1512 the operational over the tactical in large-scale operations, and the need for commanders to be
1513 empowered (and of course capable) to command effectively at the operational level. From this,
1514 and the question of will, comes the long-standing American tradition of the General as the semi-
1515 autonomous “big man”, personally setting the agenda of operations and leading his men by the
1516 force of his personality.
 - 1517 • Resources. From the Civil War onwards, but especially since the Second World War,
1518 American officers have been taught to think big in terms of resources, both manpower, materiel,
1519 technology and finance.

1520
1521 The former attaché believes that each of these themes were reinforced and validated by the
1522 Second World War, so that the war in Vietnam, where each was found wanting, came as a
1523 serious shock. The US Army found itself rejected by its own citizens, outmatched in will,
1524 outplayed operationally by the enemy, and unable to harness its overwhelming advantage in
1525 resources effectively. After Vietnam, the US Army made an almost subliminal, but nonetheless
1526 profound, assessment that the problem lay in the fact that the Army, and indeed the nation, was
1527 institutionally and culturally unsuited to fighting this sort of warfare. A number of factors played
1528 into this decision, above all the feeling that the US had been “suckered” into fighting the war on
1529 the enemy’s terms, where its materiel and technological advantages could be negated by the
1530 determination or fanaticism of the enemy. Allied to this was the belief that the US political
1531 system, driven by the need for quick, clean results, was constitutionally unable to sustain the
1532 long grinding commitment that a counter-insurgency operation required. The solution therefore
1533 lay, not in addressing specific organisational, doctrinal or training shortcomings of the force, but
1534 in making sure that the Army stayed out of the counterinsurgency business and concentrated on
1535 the type of conventional manoeuvre warfare in which it excelled. Events through the 1980s and
1536 90s seemed to confirm the wisdom of this approach. Short, violent, “technological” wars
1537 (notably the Falklands) seemed to be broadly successful, while protracted, low intensity
1538 operations (i.e the Russian attempts to subdue Afghanistan and the embarrassing Vietnam-like
1539 “reprise” in Mogadishu) seemed destined to failure. The representatives of the ever-powerful US
1540 military industrial complex were for their own reasons vocally reinforcing this message, with the
1541 call for ever more spending on military technology. Under these influences, the doctrine
1542 continued to be refined and increasingly narrowed until it reached its apogee with the
1543 development of the Air-Land Battle concept, the bloodless victory in the Cold War and its
1544 apparently triumphant vindication during Desert Storm.

1545
1546 There were some awkward counter-indicators, but these were mostly ignored. The political
1547 ambiguity of the US over the Northern Ireland issue made serious study of the uncertain and
1548 painstaking progress of the British Army there more difficult, and the almost totally ineffective
1549 bombing campaign in Kosovo/Serbia was brushed aside by the euphoria of the unexpectedly
1550 easy ground operation. So, by 2001, the US Army found itself almost totally configured, in
1551 terms of doctrine, ethos, organisation and equipment, to fight intensive manoeuvre warfare,
1552 organised around its traditional cultural themes of will, the operational art and resources. The
1553 conventional wisdom about future operations was based on four key assumptions:

- 1554
- 1555 • American society would not tolerate the loss of more than a handful of American soldiers
1556 in any operation, nor could the American political system sustain a protracted operation;
 - 1557
 - 1558 • Future operations would be short and violent, because US technological, materiel and
1559 information dominance was so overwhelming that it would quickly crush any likely near-term
1560 enemy with minimal losses;
 - 1561
 - 1562 • The Americans could rely on less well equipped (and, implicitly, less aggressive) allies to
1563 do peace support after the US had broken the back of the resistance;
 - 1564 • No serious threat to US military dominance was expected in the near term, until the
1565 Chinese, or possibly a resurgent Russia, started to challenge US technological hegemony.

1566
1567 In the event, all of these assumptions proved to be completely wrong, but they had two damaging
1568 side-effects:

- 1569
- 1570 • It encouraged a narrow-minded, aggressive military culture, with little concern for the
1571 longer-term consequences or more subtle social and societal considerations. If the role of the
1572 US military was to deliver the short, sharp knock-out blow, leaving the allies to manage the
1573 aftermath, there was little need to study the culture or doctrine of potential opponents – it was
1574 immaterial. These themes were much in evidence in the US military in the late 1990s, as
1575 exemplified by the ethos of force-on-force manoeuvre between evenly matched forces with
1576 minimal cultural context prevalent at the NTC at that time.
 - 1577 • It contributed to the unhealthy dominance of the DOD in the development of foreign and
1578 security policy, and allowed a small clique of neo-conservative Republicans, headed by the then
1579 Secretary for Defense, too much space to indulge some of their more extravagant strategic
1580 theories, notably Information Dominance, Network-centric (rather than enabled) Operations, and
1581 “Shock & Awe.”

1582
1583 **Current Context**

1584
1585 The current context in which this debate is being conducted is familiar to all. The Army sits in a
1586 climate of political conviction, relative resource freedom, a sense of being at war, enjoying wide
1587 popular support and having great confidence in itself – arguably in distinct contrast to other key
1588 allies. Within such an environment certain cultural traits, which might otherwise be stifled, are
1589 encouraged and allowed to develop. The current context has been epitomised by change.

1590
1591 First, the US Army structure has been reconfigured to sustain a long, open-ended operational
1592 commitment:

- 1593
- 1594 • The Brigade Combat Team replaced the division as the principle formation for training
1595 and deployment;
 - 1596
 - 1597 • Formations became more standardised, in order to facilitate a roulement programme;
 - 1598
 - 1599 • A system of sequential readiness (ARFORGEN), tied to operational commitments,
1600 replaced the structure of echeloned formation readiness that is more appropriate for more
1601 conventional strategic scenarios.

1602
1603 Second, operational and tactical doctrine was rewritten and training amended accordingly. Out
1604 went force-on-force manoeuvre, in came patrolling, cultural awareness training, counter-IED,
1605 counter-ambush, languages etc. Much of this change was driven by lessons learned in the field,
1606 the so-called “learning from the edge”, but to an impressive degree, the Americans went back to
1607 first principles. General Petraeus, the key architect of the new US Army counterinsurgency
1608 doctrine, actively studied, and directly drew on, the lessons from classic counterinsurgency
1609 history – especially British history such as Malaya and Northern Ireland. Indeed, it is arguable
1610 that the Americans now are more purist followers of Templar and Kitson than the British are.

1611

1612 However, from the beginning, it was clear that there was a third and more radical area of change
1613 at the core of this programme - the culture and ethos of leadership in the Army. The Army was
1614 arguably looking for a completely new paradigm, based on genuine delegation of initiative,
1615 intellectual flexibility and curiosity, and a rebirth of the understanding that warfare is
1616 fundamentally a human endeavour, where actions must be judged by their strategic effect, not
1617 their tactical impact. This is exemplified by initiatives such as the Human Dimension concept,
1618 the central role of the commander as emphasized in FM 3-0 and the soldier at the centre of the
1619 equipment programme. This process continues today with the current Commanding General
1620 Training and Doctrine Command significantly stating that his number one priority for change
1621 within his command is Leader Development. In addition, General Schoomaker repeatedly
1622 insisted that the US Army must be a “learning organisation”, and ordered all his senior officers
1623 to read selected articles and studies that were overtly and sometimes unwarrantedly critical of the
1624 US military.

1625
1626 A British military academic supports the belief that there is a cultural development happening
1627 around the renaissance in counterinsurgency technique and study within the US Army. First, this
1628 re-education, where the Army is now reforming itself around the experiences of Iraq and
1629 Afghanistan, is driven ‘from below,’ in particular mid-level officers, who have been dissatisfied
1630 with the traditional approach of the US Army and its failures in dealing with insurgency. This
1631 marks a generational element of Army Culture. In Linda Robinson’s study of the Petraeus
1632 Revolution (*Tell me How this Ends*), she speaks of Cold War Generals, Bosnia Colonels and Iraq
1633 Majors. So this is a new ‘layer’ within the subcultural differences of the Army.

1634 1635 **Strengths**

1636
1637 The British perceive the following areas to be the strengths in current US Army culture.

1638
1639 **1. Strength of the Nation.** The US Army prides itself on being the Strength of the Nation. This
1640 is not something created by McCann Erickson in their swanky Manhattan offices - this is a fact.
1641 We currently witness a leading edge brand and a strong image, which is fully supported by the
1642 people. To underline this, an eminent British military historian assesses that what is very
1643 important is the fact that the US Army is “pervasively national” in a sense that the British Army
1644 is not. The British people support our servicemen but have absolutely no idea about what they
1645 are or what they do. We are arguably a post-military society, that does not know the difference
1646 between a brigadier and a bombardier. Conversely, the Americans have their armed forces
1647 genuinely to heart. The same military historian recalls being spat at when in uniform in the USA
1648 in 1969 (he served with the 1/129 Infantry, Illinois National Guard). One contrasts that
1649 experience with the genuine care for serving personnel and for veterans now so clearly visible in
1650 the USA, the applause in airports etc . The Army cultivates this strong brand and self image
1651 internally and externally. They have continued the drive established under the post-Vietnam
1652 “Army of Excellence”. “Army Strong” has terrific resonance, as does “Family Strong.”
1653 Significantly, under current arrangements, the US government is backing these strap lines with
1654 cash and perhaps it is fair to contrast this state of affairs with previous eras when the US Army
1655 had other compelling slogans which accorded less well with reality on post.

1656

1657 2. **A Strong Sense of Purpose.** All external observers commented on the strong sense of
1658 purpose visible in the US Army, just one signature indicator of a motivated and determined
1659 force. American officers, soldiers, families and arguably civilians demonstrate an indomitable
1660 belief in what is being fought for and the inevitability of success. The tragic events of 9/11
1661 clearly played a pivotal role in the forging of this purpose but there is certainly a renewed or
1662 reinforced culture of duty and commitment across all components, Active, Reserve and National
1663 Guard. The work ethic is powerful as is the “Can-do” approach. Some have attributed this to
1664 the manifestation of a wider US attitude that reflects concepts of Manifest Destiny³⁴ and City on
1665 a Hill³⁵ etc. Whilst the British commentators acknowledge the strength of this approach, they
1666 also note the potential weakness. There is little understanding that the aspects of Western
1667 society, and particularly America, that we hold dear (individualism, democracy, privacy, equality
1668 etc) are not viewed as unqualified virtues in the Middle East. They attract and repel in equal
1669 measure, and unthinking application plays into the hands of ideologues manipulating
1670 conservative societies. Some balance their comments about the US Army as an effective
1671 learning organisation (see next paragraph) with criticism verging on regret that the US Army is
1672 remarkably lacking in its curiosity about the wider world, either in its capacity to teach the
1673 Americans, or in analysing its characteristics so as to apply the right responses. All of that said,
1674 the Strong Sense of Purpose is deemed to be a considerable strength.

1675
1676 3. **A Learning³⁶ Organisation.** Although most British Army officers marvel at the size,
1677 resources and effectiveness of the US Army in the Fight, the area which attracts most positive
1678 comment is the growth of the US Army into a considerable and thriving Learning Organisation.
1679 General Schoemaker would surely approve of how far they have come. Americans and British
1680 alike would probably agree that becoming a true Learning Organisation is the only means of
1681 ensuring rapid and swift adaptation in the Contemporary Operating Environment. British
1682 observers identify the following attributes of such an organisation within the modern day US
1683 Army:

- 1684
1685 a. Being able to transform adeptly or quickly enough to meet the current security
1686 challenges;
- 1687
1688 b. Ensuring that adaptation and innovation at the tactical level has been matched by
1689 institutional and organizational change at the top, although they would also observe that change
1690 has been much quicker in the Operating Force than in the Generating Force;

1691

³⁴ Ideology of *Manifest Destiny* reflected both the burgeoning pride that characterized American nationalism in the mid-nineteenth century and the idealistic vision of social perfection that fueled so much of the reform energy of the time. It rested on the idea that America was destined – by God and by history – to expand its boundaries over a vast area. (Brinkly in *The Unfinished Nation*).

³⁵ *City upon a Hill* is a phrase derived from the Sermon on the Mount in the Gospel of Matthew: "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden." This phrase entered the American lexicon with John Winthrop's sermon "A Model of Christian Charity" (1630). JF Kennedy: "We must always consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill—the eyes of all people are upon us."

³⁶ A process by which an organization uses new knowledge or understanding gained from experience or study to adjust institutional norms, doctrine and procedures in ways designed to minimize previous gaps in performance and maximize future successes (Richard Downie).

1692 c. Being able to establish an organisational culture that in turn shapes the ability of an
1693 organisation to learn.

1694
1695 Many in the British Army have commented upon the appetite to learn, the tangible desire and the
1696 ability to adapt currently discernible in the US Army. Over recent years British officers on
1697 operations have witnessed an American ability to accept failure and learn from it.
1698 Unprecedented times and challenges have forced the development of new and existing
1699 procedures and processes, which have resulted in an enviable reputation as an agile and
1700 responsive learning organisation. Amongst a British audience, in comparison, there is a concern
1701 as to whether the British Army has matched American success. It could be argued that the
1702 British Army has simply refined its existing "learning" processes, often with sound but perhaps
1703 sub-optimal results. In contrast, the American cousins have enjoyed an almost revolutionary
1704 approach to learning. Certain departments are easily identifiable as "jewels in the crown" of this
1705 learning process (i.e. The Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL)), but, perhaps most
1706 significantly, the whole US Army, clearly with an Operating Force lead, appears to have taken a
1707 step change in approach and has created an impressive learning culture across the commands.
1708 Operating and generating forces alike understand the need to learn and adapt quickly. The
1709 change is evident on an almost daily basis, for example, in the approach to new and existing
1710 doctrine and concepts, the accelerated capabilities initiatives, the outcomes-based approach to
1711 Initial Military Training, and the refinement of leadership development. Of course, the
1712 imperative for a country at war for seven years is clear to all and there is little complacency.
1713 Currently, there is much focus on operationalising the Generating Force, most conspicuously at
1714 Training and Doctrine Command, and a casual observer quickly realizes that this on-going
1715 learning and adaptation process is far from over, if it will ever be.

1716
1717 Some British observers have been keen to stress the historical precedent for this ability to learn
1718 and argue that it is not a new phenomenon. They would claim, and with justification, that
1719 historically the US have been trained and equipped for past wars and have not always been well
1720 poised or flexible enough for the future. This was true in the First World War, the Second World
1721 War, Vietnam, arguably Somalia and obviously the recent conflicts. That is probably not
1722 surprising, when the Army is in industrial style training and equipping. What is an absolute
1723 truth, is that the US Army learns very quickly from their mistakes and surprise everyone with the
1724 speed that they can turn around the huge machine. What has been witnessed since 2004/5 to
1725 today is truly impressive and has left the remainder of the first world armies in their wake. And,
1726 of course, it is interesting for the outsider to muse how this change in learning culture came
1727 about – was it an incremental process which "just happened" as a result of operational
1728 circumstance, and subsequently filtered throughout the Army, or was this a top-down policy shift
1729 with a clear vision and direction from above? Its significance for success is clear to all. But, as
1730 we proceed through an *Era of Persistent Conflict*, the astute commander will be keen to evaluate
1731 how to maintain this cultural characteristic, when the operational tempo reduces and to ensure
1732 the Army does not have to experience a couple of unnecessarily painful years at the start of the
1733 next conflict.

1734
1735 Finally on this subject, some commentators view the infectious enthusiasm for operational
1736 learning in the context of the US Army's reverence for advanced academic learning. There is a
1737 firm application of high academic standards for new entrants and across the institution the

1738 respect for formal academic advancement, often through self improvement, is very strong.
1739 Throughout a career, the individual is presented with abundant opportunities and encouragement
1740 to develop his own personal education. Formal learning is increasingly an essential element of
1741 every leader's development and the theme of education pervades much of the modern Army's
1742 attractiveness to new recruits. This "energy for education" clearly benefits the Army but it is the
1743 wider American society which is the ultimate benefactor.

1744
1745 4. **Non-Kinetic versus Kinetic.** Over the last decade it is abundantly clear that the US Army
1746 has had to adapt its war-fighting methodology due to the experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan,
1747 and it has done so most effectively. In particular, they have adapted their focus of high
1748 technology dependency with a kinetic focus to a more non-kinetic or full spectrum approach to
1749 ensure success in the hybrid environment or the so-called "war among the people". The British
1750 believe that this has required a significant paradigm shift across the board and constitutes a major
1751 change in US Army culture. The "mechanical baggage" of precision, certainty, technological
1752 supremacy, fast action, impatience and "shock and awe" has been replaced by the essential
1753 ingredients of the human endeavour that is counterinsurgency, namely patience, emotional
1754 understanding, introspection and enquiry, an explicit lack of certainty, an ability to live with
1755 ambiguity, subtlety and nuance, and a deep and genuine respect for others. The Americans have
1756 identified the fact that 'Phase 4' operations are critical and must be correctly resourced and
1757 planned, and that kinetic operations, whilst remaining important, are not necessarily the key to
1758 long term success.

1759
1760 One senior officer currently in theatre remembers Lieutenant General Dave Barno stating that
1761 "*The American soldier is genetically programmed to kill,*" and going on to explain why it was
1762 difficult to change that cultural norm, which was a key point in his approach in Afghanistan.
1763 The same British Officer assesses that the US Army have gone a long way in doing just that. In
1764 his recent tour in Iraq, he saw "huge signs at all levels that the understanding of non-kinetic
1765 operations was deeply rooted" – he added that some commanders grasped this better than others,
1766 but that is a human factor that applies everywhere, not a US Army failing. Others describe the
1767 shift as the USS Yorktown moment: "The Americans stared failure in the face, recognised where
1768 their 'culture' was wrong and took the big decisions and the big risks needed to put things right.
1769 From the senior echelons down the Americans worked out why they were losing and they did the
1770 big things at incredible tempo to reverse that trend - amazing for a huge organisation. They
1771 replaced failing leaders and failed ideas with men who were up for the challenge and who could
1772 think of new ways of doing things. The sense of urgency was incredibly energising." But the
1773 process will take years to complete and one senior officer, a huge admirer of achievements to
1774 date in this area, believes it is incumbent on the Army's leadership "to keep their foot on the
1775 pedal" if the necessary COIN mindset is to become "genuinely second nature." Even such
1776 matters as the *Soldier's Creed* may increasingly appear incompatible with the subtlety required
1777 in "War amongst the People," perhaps no longer needing to promise to "**destroy** the enemies of
1778 the United States in close combat".

1779
1780 Interestingly, these views are reinforced by Britain's premier military historian. He classes it as
1781 "a profound and significant paradigm shift" and that the British have not seen anything quite like
1782 it. He expands by stating that the US Army has embraced counterinsurgency in a remarkably
1783 thoroughgoing way, with everyone from stars to stripes embracing the new doctrine: "Americans

1784 sing from the same sheet of FM 3-0; the British have regimental sheets!” Another officer
1785 reinforces the pivotal significance of embracing doctrine but questions whether this is *change* or
1786 merely reinforcing traditional strengths and a belief in the efficacy of doctrine? On balance, he
1787 believes that it is a cultural change in approach because it had led to a more de-centralized and
1788 flexible way of thinking at all levels. Brigade, Battalion and company commanders have really
1789 applied the doctrine and adopted it to fit the circumstances.

1790
1791 Of course, whilst many in the US Army will be keen to applaud a “job well done”, the aware
1792 military commander will grapple with the challenges of how to be able to incorporate the
1793 benefits and capability requirements of kinetic and non-kinetic in a balanced and measured way.
1794 He will not want to be an “either or” merchant, so keenly desirable to the bean counters in the
1795 Pentagon. The Army will therefore work hard at the difficult and unattractive task of
1796 determining an appropriate *aimpoint*, in order to achieve the appropriate strategic balance. It will
1797 do this in the knowledge that it may have to change that *aimpoint* over time and, that it may not
1798 get it exactly right – but at least it will have avoided missing the mark completely and
1799 consequently the Army will be better prepared. In so doing, the Army may also have progressed
1800 from a reputation for being the most kinetic and destructive organisation on the planet to one
1801 which is universally recognised as a force for good.

1802
1803 **5. Aware versus Arrogant.** The US Army today is certainly a more reflective, more
1804 circumspect and less arrogant Army than it was before 2001. Most British commentators would
1805 probably classify Cultural Awareness as a strength with caveats, rather than the reverse. Ten
1806 years ago, most British would have been justified in branding the US Army as overly confident
1807 at best and arrogant at worse - of course, when it comes to Arrogance, the British Army remains
1808 the world leader! The US Army has not been helped by their perception of the world, or
1809 themselves, albeit this has been changed dramatically in the school of hard knocks. Maps of Iraq
1810 and Afghanistan with surrounding countries in white, as if these places sit as islands in
1811 geographical isolation, do not help. General Fastabend’s line that the US wanted to view the
1812 Iraqis as brown mid-Western Lutherans had an element of truth in it. This, combined with a
1813 frankly dismissive attitude to the Arabs and the Middle East in general, helps explain many of
1814 the US attitudes that proved so counter-productive. But the importance of Cultural Awareness
1815 had been firmly acknowledged with significant changes to pre-deployment training and the
1816 imminent release of a by historical standards revolutionary Army Culture and Foreign Language
1817 Strategy (ACFLS). But this work-in-progress will remain a major challenge for a country which,
1818 due to its size and nature, is not naturally cognisant of other countries and cultures. The
1819 challenge is conceivably a national one and not just a matter of turning a newly recruited 20 year
1820 old into a culturally aware warrior during an intense period of Initial Military Training.

1821
1822 **6. Courage.** Few outsiders would dare to challenge the courage of the modern US soldier as
1823 witnessed repeatedly around the world. The stories of personal valour abound, yet it is now
1824 sometimes hard to remember that only a decade ago US forces were perceived as “risk averse”.
1825 One serving officer recalls newspaper articles criticising the heavily protected Camp Bondsteel
1826 in Bosnia and also President Clinton’s famous public announcement that he would not in any
1827 circumstances introduce ground forces into Kosovo. Of course, the events of 9/11 changed much
1828 of that. Initially in Afghanistan the US was able to defeat the *Taliban* with minimum losses and
1829 a few may even have begun to believe that the Rumsfeld ‘doctrine’ of invasion and victory ‘on

1830 the cheap' was indeed possible, but this was essentially a political view, which a predominantly
1831 loyal military establishment played along with even if their history taught them differently. The
1832 readily discernible levels of personal courage are a clear strength of the culture.

1833
1834 **7. Quality of the Soldier.** Although improvements in the quality of the soldier joining the US
1835 Army were evident before the decade under consideration³⁷, it is important to note the continued
1836 change in the quality of the individual American soldier. Effective recruiting and retention tools,
1837 consistently high results in both areas and an impressive desire among the nation's youth to
1838 serve, with supply outstripping demand, have ensured that the modern American soldier is much
1839 better educated and more mature (average age is 22.5 years old) than many of his/her
1840 counterparts in other countries. This results in a soldier who is easier to train and better equipped
1841 to understand the purpose behind his training. There is also a compelling argument that
1842 Counterinsurgency demands cleverer, more mature soldiers who can operate effectively and
1843 "think on their feet" in the complex environment "among the people."

1844
1845 **8. Approach to Training.** British observers believe that the US Army is now better trained
1846 than they used to be in many different ways. The MRX approach is wide-ranging, flexible and
1847 demanding. The superficiality of National Training Center tests has been replaced with
1848 operational experience and reality. The Warrior Tasks and Battle Drills approach ensures
1849 relevance in initial training and Outcomes Based Training has proved remarkably effective.

1850
1851 **9. Uniformity.** Most British observers mention the growth over time in the uniformity of the
1852 US Army, which adds to an impression of discipline and professionalism. Notwithstanding
1853 reputation-negative episodes such as Abu Graib, which occur in all armies, US soldiers of all
1854 components are uniformly dressed, equipped and trained. They look smart, fit, motivated and
1855 disciplined, in a way that speaks of mutual respect and frankness between officers and men.
1856 They have 'fighting spirit' and a thinking 'warrior ethos'. When squads of American soldiers
1857 move cautiously down a street, whether in Mosul or Kandahar, they look, are equipped and
1858 operate in a uniformed, disciplined and professional manner – a key strength for any fighting
1859 force on the world stage.

1860 1861 **Weaknesses**

1862
1863 The British perceive the following areas to be the potential weaknesses in current US Army
1864 culture.

1865
1866 **1. Sustainability.** Some British commentators have observed that the US Army has never been
1867 in better shape and yet never been more fragile. They observe that the stress of multiple tours
1868 has come at a cost. They wonder how sustainable the current tempo is, even with a drawdown in
1869 Iraq and whilst much time and effort is focused on realising an effective ARFORGEN and
1870 achieving the elusive nirvana of "balance". Recent commitments to higher troop levels in
1871 Afghanistan and capping the active component at 45 BCTs will not make this quest any easier.
1872 In the absence of an underpinning intellectual narrative, there is a danger that the current fight
1873 will be allowed to be the only "demand regulator". An American audience will of course point
1874 to the truly remarkable recruiting and retention figures consistently achieved over recent times

³⁷ ASVAB scores increased considerably in 1993 and were consistently maintained thereafter.

1875 and applauded previously in this paper as a sign that the system is not under pressure. Others,
1876 however, will be less complacent and mindful of other less encouraging indicators, such as
1877 PTSD and suicide figures above the societal norms. Some British also identify a more bleak
1878 development: for the first time in decades, the US Army has to cope with the reality of tens of
1879 thousands of wounded, maimed and psychologically damaged or distressed troops. They
1880 question whether the Americans have sufficient infrastructure, expertise or personnel to deal
1881 with the volume of non-fatal casualties and how this will impact on sustainability. At the far end
1882 of the spectrum, some senior British figures fear that the Fight has taken “the stuffing” out of the
1883 US military. The intensity of the fight and frequency and length of operational deployments
1884 means that the Americans are “burning themselves out”. They are consuming capability at a
1885 faster rate than they are generating or regenerating it. The British compare the long tour culture
1886 of the Army with that of the USMC. There is a view that too many officers and soldiers look
1887 ‘shot away’ – not a universal opinion, it must be stressed, but an informed one nonetheless.
1888 Others also note that traditionally the US Army is not naturally patient – more naturally
1889 committed to an explosive game, like American football, and keen on quick results. The *Era of*
1890 *Persistent Conflict* and “war among the people” will require greater strategic patience and
1891 therefore considerable endurance.

1892
1893 **2. Hierarchical.** It is almost universally felt among the British that the US Army continues to be
1894 overly hierarchical, too centralized and too conformist. Most of the current senior officers in the
1895 US Army are now post the Vietnam generation but were undoubtedly coloured by that very
1896 painful experience. In dealing with the lessons from that period an undesirable blame culture
1897 sprung up which still pervades the force. There are some very notable exceptions to this but
1898 there is little doubt that there are a great number of officers who are content to do what they are
1899 told, right or wrong, because they cannot be held to account if things go wrong. It is felt by
1900 some that there are a group who are entirely happy with this situation but in the end, of course, it
1901 stifles initiative. It will undoubtedly change as younger and more junior people gain command
1902 experience in counterinsurgency operations but every time there is an incident, the Army appears
1903 to revert to the default hierarchical setting.

1904
1905 The hierarchical culture has significant benefits (no British style “consent and evade” culture
1906 here) but the British do relish the questioning subordinate who not only questions privately but
1907 also openly and without fear. This criticism of being overly hierarchical has at its heart a
1908 deference to command, which always rather surprises the British. Too many American officers
1909 are unprepared to confront their seniors with unpalatable truths or contrary views. There is much
1910 less of a challenging process in the formulation of plans and even doctrine. Too many decisions
1911 are taken at the highest level and some consider it almost “Soviet” in approach. This leads to a
1912 very iterative staffing process and little happens until the top of the shop has signed it off. Too
1913 many young staff officers are quick to comment “that is a great idea, sir” rather than “I am not so
1914 sure”. Of course the Americans like to establish Red Teams who are overtly there to challenge
1915 the logic of a plan or course of action, but the culture does not encourage intuitive challenging
1916 across the staff across the disciplines. Some would say that the very best US officers do not have
1917 this problem, but that the vast majority do! Any casual *blogger* in military circles will testify to
1918 how much “challenge” is out there, but it is not so conspicuous in US headquarters. Finally, one
1919 would question the power of senior officers to overrule an objective Human Resources process.
1920 Should senior officers be allowed to influence the selection process of their staff and

1921 subordinates quite so much? Should there not be more trust in a system which would bring
1922 complementary capability to a commander rather than trusted agents who might only reinforce
1923 *groupthink*?

1924

1925 **3. Staff-led versus Commander-driven and Mission Command.** From a British perspective
1926 it is clear that the US Army remains a staff-led not a command-led organisation. It is observed
1927 that there appears to be either a sub-optimal understanding or a sub-optimal application of the
1928 philosophy of Mission Command³⁸ within the US Army. Current US COIN doctrine is
1929 commander-centric and requires significant decentralisation and a high degree of delegation to
1930 junior commanders. These individuals are not yet used to that level of responsibility due to rank
1931 and experience and this acts counter to the COIN principles. It must be said, however, that
1932 young officers operating in isolated bases in theatre, appear to be learning and applying Mission
1933 Command “on the job”. But overall, plodding staff process gets in the way of the tempo their
1934 own higher commanders are demanding.

1935

1936 **4. Working Practices.** There is a widespread belief among the British that American working
1937 practices could benefit from some of the change evident in other areas. Overall, it is felt that you
1938 can only achieve balance and diversity in people’s outlooks if they lead a balanced and diverse
1939 life. “Warrior Monks” are not noted for their worldliness and cultural agility and the Army
1940 appears to be full of them. There is absolutely no question about their levels of deep
1941 commitment and punishing hours, but to what end? Is it guilt at not being on operations or is it
1942 that the hierarchy tacitly encourages such an approach? It is ventured that that the long hours
1943 work ethic is actually reducing overall efficiency, as does the unwillingness of General Officers
1944 to take leave, which naturally then permeates down the chain of command. Fun and laughter are
1945 not conspicuous players in most US Headquarters. By contrast, the British deem that it is
1946 important to retain a sense of humour and a lightheartedness, particularly when the business
1947 soldiers are in can be so very serious and dire. They also rather balk at the relentless, iterative
1948 *PowerPoint* planning process that drives almost industrial and always overtly optimistic (“Great,
1949 Sir!”) activity, and a demanding, high intensity email culture that seems to handicap the force by
1950 stymieing human interaction. Reports up the chain are invariably delivered as a presentation and
1951 decisions are taken as a result of those presentations. As this work on culture was first discussed,
1952 for example, certain staff officers were visibly cringing at the challenge of condensing US Army
1953 culture into 4 star level *PowerPoint* charts! One British officer with significant time in the US
1954 Corps HQ in Iraq also believes that the Americans are no longer great listeners because they are
1955 so focused on output. The standard bottom-up-approach answer to a question is ‘working it, Sir’
1956 i.e. to appear unsure (or even unclear what was actually being asked for) was to let the side
1957 down. The ‘process’ drives ahead remorselessly. The work ethic is so honed that no-one sits
1958 and talks a problem through. The young staff officers thrash themselves to the point of
1959 exhaustion, and not always to good effect. In addition, the VTC culture is excellent but often
1960 cuts right across the chain of command. The British often question whether this is fully
1961 understood. Reinforcing the chain of command and thereby insulating junior commanders from

³⁸ A philosophy of decentralised command intended for situations which are complex, dynamic and adversarial. The underlying requirement is the fundamental responsibility to act, or in certain circumstances, to decide not to act, within the framework of the commander’s intent. This approach requires a style of command which promotes decentralised command, trust, freedom and speed of action, and initiative (UK ADP Land Operations, P.115).

1962 the long screwdriver is essential if these young commanders are not to be distracted from their
1963 essential tasks.

1964
1965 **5. Impatience with Allies.** On the subject of allies, a British officer of considerable experience
1966 with the Americans reflected that the US Army benchmarks other Armed Forces against how it
1967 fights. At the lower level they judge others on their combat delivery; at the higher level they
1968 judge others on their commitment and willingness to bear the burden. The US Army tends to
1969 judge its coalition partners on what they do with little understanding of the domestic or political
1970 constraints put on those forces, the results of which are seen as military weakness or
1971 indifference. Another senior officer in theatre senses that the Americans are starting to lose
1972 patience with NATO. He feels the Americans recognise the political value of a 41 nation
1973 NATO+ alliance, but are irritated by its mechanisms – too often it is seen as another nation state
1974 rather than a consensus-based alliance. The American solution, which caused him considerable
1975 concern, is often to work around it, and if necessary to ignore it. He witnesses an increased US
1976 assertiveness, this time more military than political. He concludes with the summary ‘Follow me
1977 or get out of the way,’ which, he admits, would probably be overstating the case, but not by
1978 much.

1979
1980 **So What?**

1981
1982 It is not for this paper to attempt to second guess the “So What?” of the observations above.
1983 That will be done better and with greater passion by the custodians of this great Army and its
1984 culture. As an American commented recently however: “There is a real sense of where we have
1985 been – the challenge is determining where we are going.” It is therefore hoped that the
1986 observations might assist in the process of determining what are the Opportunities and the
1987 Threats latent in current US Army culture, classic SWOT Analysis *stuff!* The most senior and
1988 the younger elements will understand change, but there is usually a large middle-management in
1989 any organisation that are quicker to see threats rather than opportunities. Therefore, returning to
1990 the original aim of this paper, namely to provide additional stimulus to the debate, the following
1991 deductions and emerging perspectives may have utility.

1992
1993 1. The Weinberg-Powell theory of overwhelming force has been overturned with overwhelming
1994 humility and competence, and operational experience is the measure of people and units. The
1995 US Army listens more, talks less and recognises that it does not have all the answers. There is an
1996 increase in the thoughtful and considered application of the military instrument and a strong hint
1997 of moral purpose in how the Army does its business.

1998
1999 2. The US Army is today more independent and self-confident. It was always the military
2000 power but not necessarily the military authority. The Germans during the Cold War were the
2001 operational manoeuvre and grand tactical experts and the British were the counter-insurgency,
2002 internal security experts. Both of those perceived positions have been overtaken by a singularly
2003 more confident US Army.

2004
2005 3. The US Army is currently COIN-centric but will adapt to a Hybrid/21st Century focus quicker
2006 than other Armies, including the British, can shift from their current balance of conventional and

2007 COIN to Hybrid. The conventional institutional anchor will prevent or at least resist European
2008 armies from moving swiftly onto a 21st Century footing.

2009
2010 4. A new sub-culture of missionaries is evolving in the US Army. The current Army contains a
2011 range of subcultures, identified broadly by Brian Linn as *Heroes, Guardians and Managers*.
2012 Heroes believe that warfighting is the core task of the military, that it is a fundamentally human
2013 activity not reducible to scientific control, inherently chaotic and volatile (Patton). Guardians
2014 have a background in a preoccupation with continental self-defence, are highly technocratic,
2015 approach war as science to be mastered, advocate a narrow concept of defence of the national
2016 interest, and believe in a strictly limited scope for military activity; they urge clear exit strategies
2017 (Colin Powell, Gian Gentile). Managers approach war as a systemic, organisational
2018 phenomenon, historically stressed the importance of American mass mobilisation, and place
2019 great value on the ‘management’ of military power (Eisenhower). An eminent British Academic
2020 argues that a fourth ‘type’ is emerging. He quotes Andrew Bacevic, the American military
2021 historian, who calls them ‘Crusaders,’ but the British academic prefers the term ‘Missionaries.’
2022 ‘Crusaders’, in line with the analogy, are oriented around fighting, whereas ‘Missionaries’ build
2023 and convert as their main mission. This, he argues, is the class of cerebral, soldier-intellectual
2024 types who have emerged from the war in Iraq particularly under the iconic leadership of General
2025 Petraeus. They include some of the most prolific writers and advocates of military change, such
2026 as Nagl, McMaster, Mattis and Mansoor. Missionaries approach what some call ‘post-modern’
2027 military activity as an exercise in nation-building, instead primarily of war-fighting. While he
2028 cautions that we should not overly schematise this, and clearly both words, “crusaders” and
2029 “missionaries,” are loaded terms in the current environment, he reminds us that these
2030 “missionaries” are also skilled fighters themselves and they extrapolate from the Long War to
2031 see a future where the military will be continuously engaged in ‘armed social work.’
2032 Accordingly, they emphasise the need for the Army to overhaul itself around the increasing
2033 complexity of the nation-building environment: interagency coordination, intellectual re-
2034 education, stressing cultural awareness, language, governance and security sector reform as a
2035 more pressing priority than conventional combat skills. This is not absolute, but their argument
2036 is quickly grasped and they have influential supporters in the United Kingdom.

2037
2038 **Conclusion**

2039
2040 The aim of this paper was, as a solid friend of the United States of America over many, many
2041 years, to attempt to contribute to the ongoing debate on recent changes in US Army culture. The
2042 aim was not to arrive at some earth shattering or revelatory conclusions. Some Americans may
2043 even be disappointed with the observations in the paper, anticipating or hoping for a blunter and
2044 more aggressive critique, a kind of 2009 sequel to Brigadier Aylwin-Foster’s article³⁹ in 2005!
2045 But in so doing, they will have revealed their personal ignorance or misappreciation of the truly
2046 spectacular journey this Army has travelled in a short period. In addition, it is a statement of fact
2047 that the mood, opinion and affection among British military observers for the US Army at
2048 present is particularly high. No American would expect the British to be sycophantic but it is
2049 accurate to state, without exception, that our senior leadership is full of admiration for the clearly
2050 articulated vision, impressive momentum at all levels and concrete achievements of today’s US

³⁹ “Changing the Army for Counterinsurgency Operations” by Brigadier NRF Aylwin-Foster, *Military Review* November-December 2005.

2051 Army. Some actual quotations from the British Army's most capable and influential 3 and 4 star
2052 officers might serve to illuminate this assertion:

2053

2054 "They (The Americans) remain the most impressive military organisation in the World."

2055

2056 "I can think of no country better placed to lead the Western world, even the British! The US
2057 Army culture has come an immeasurably long way since the Balkans, and its attitudes,
2058 organisation and thinking have been honed through the cauldron of long, complex, demanding
2059 and damaging operations."

2060

2061 "Successive Chiefs have understood the depth of latent goodwill, determination and energy that
2062 they could draw on to transform the Army, and in General Petraeus, they found a master of the
2063 operational art, who was able to apply the traditional cultural themes of the US Army to a new
2064 context. It has been an extraordinary achievement."

2065

2066 "One of the great American Armies in terms of thinking, command, equipment, doctrine and
2067 application."

2068 **Annex D: Recommended Reading List**

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- 2074 *Rootledge Press*.
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- 2076 *Culture of innovation in the US Army*. *Army Magazine*.
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- 2078 *International Publishing*.
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- 2080 *third edition*.
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- 2084 9. Linn, Brian. (2007). *The Echos of Battle: The Army’s Way of War*. *Harvard University*
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- 2100 16. Sherman, Nancy (2005). Stoic Warriors: The Ancient Philosophy behind the Military
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- 2102 17. Von Clausewitz, Carl. (1976) On War. Edited and Translated Howard and Paret, Princeton
2103 University Press.
2104
2105
2106

2107 **Annex E: Methodological Overview**

2108

2109 This essay is based on a wide-ranging review of relevant literature, studies, articles and
2110 correspondence about the culture. Research included interviews and sensing sessions conducted
2111 with a variety of groups and individuals. The trends identified in the literature were mainly
2112 confirmed in interviews and sensing sessions suggesting a broad consensus on the nature of the
2113 cultural imbalances identified in the paper.

2114

2115 • Literature – See bibliography

2116 • Interviews

2117 ▪ Montgomery McFate, Human Terrain Team Program

2118 ▪ LTG (R) Richard Trefry, Armed Forces Management School

2119 ▪ BG Rhonda Cornum, Army Comprehensive Soldier Fitness

2120 ▪ BG Ed Cardon, Deputy Commandant, Command and General Staff College

2121 ▪ Dr. Michelle Sams, Army Research Institute

2122 ▪ James Wade, Martin Hoffman, and Louis Michael, Defense Group international

2123 ▪ LTG (R) William M. Steele

2124 ▪ MG (R) David Fastabend

2125

2126 • Sensing Sessions

2127 ▪ A classroom of ~30 uniformed students, Armed Forces Management School

2128 ▪ The Advanced Strategic Arts Program seminar at the US Army War College

2129 ▪ A Seminar each of Captains Career Course students from Fort Lee, Fort Benning,
2130 and Fort Leonard Wood

2131 ▪ Two ILE seminars from Command and General Staff College

2132 ▪ A discussion with senior NCO's attending the Sergeant's Major academy

2133 ▪ A informal meeting with seven professional staff members from the House and
2134 Senate Armed Services Committees

2135

2136 • Think Tank engagements

2137 ▪ Senior Fellow Maren Leed, Center for Strategic and International Studies

2138 ▪ Center for New American Security, Discussion Panels on Officership hosted by
2139 John Nagl

2140

2141

2142 The following document was sent to interview and sensing session participants in advance of
2143 their meetings.

2144

2145 **“Army Culture” Discussion Read-a-Head**

2146

2147 In response to Army Senior Leader discussions, we are writing a paper that examines the effect
2148 of recent and ongoing wartime experience on the Army's culture. The paper will be a synthesis
2149 of academic writings, previous studies, interviews, group discussion/sensing sessions and data
2150 collection. It will serve as a basis for further discussion among senior leaders and, where
2151 appropriate, recommend actions to reinforce positive cultural traits and mitigate negative ones.
2152 The paper will be completed early this summer.

2153

2154 We have begun with the description of the Army's institutional culture contained in FM 1, The
2155 Army. The paper will include the perspectives of external stakeholders and its own micro-
2156 cultures. It will identify strengths and weaknesses aiming to answer two fundamental questions:
2157 **What behaviors or practices are incongruent with our values, beliefs, and expectations?**
2158 **What values, beliefs or expectations are being challenged by our experiences, the changing**
2159 **environment and the demands placed upon us?**

2160

2161 As part of the writing plan we are engaging a broad spectrum of officers and senior NCO's in
2162 discussions to gain their insights and shape the direction of the paper. We are interested in your
2163 perceptions of our institutional culture, observations concerning the strategic context within
2164 which the Army culture operates, and your recommendations about what aspects of the Army's
2165 culture should be sustained or changed. These engagements are 'non-attribution' venues.

2166

2167 The intent of the sensing session is to gain your insights concerning Army culture. To assist you
2168 in preparing for the session, we recommend you read *FM 1 The Army* which establishes the
2169 cultural baseline of the Army. We want to go where you want to take the discussion as long as it
2170 pertains to cultural issues and not, for example, TTP or process problems. We are interested in
2171 how your education, training and operational experiences affect the answers to the two
2172 overarching questions highlighted above.

2173

2174 The following additional questions may be used to help initiate discussion.

2175

- 2176 • **As an Army leader, what frustrates you most about the Army?**
- 2177 • **What satisfies you the most?**
- 2178 • **How has the Army culture changed since 2001?**
- 2179 • **What changes would you sustain?**
- 2180 • **What changes would you work to mitigate?**
- 2181 • **Within the rubric of DOTMLPF – Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel,**
2182 **Leader Development and Education, Personnel and Facilities – where are the**
2183 **cultural foundations firm and where are they soft?**

2184

2185 We will record the session on butcher paper/white board and finish with a review that identifies
2186 the threads and confirms the issues you identify.

2187

TO CHANGE AN ARMY

General Donn A. Starry, US Army

Change is a constant for today's armed forces. With frequently shifting requirements as well as advancing technology, it is imperative that any reforms contribute to a force's ability to operate on the battlefield. The author reviews some changes that have occurred in the past, points out certain requirements associated with change and calls for creative solutions to future needs.

This article is adapted from an address made by General Starry, 10 June 1982, to the US Army War College Committee on a Theory of Combat, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

TO CHANGE AN ARMY

REFORM of an institution as large as our Army is problematic under the best of circumstances. The recent history of change in military systems of the world is instructive. Let us examine the story of Sir Ernest D. Swinton's invention—the tank—as well as the history of the development of concepts for mobile all-arms warfare to illustrate the challenges that would-be reformers face in trying to introduce new ideas.

In the British army, where the idea had its genesis and was the subject of much early development and experimentation, a succession of single-minded tank and mobility enthusiasts persisted in developing the concept of mobile all-arms warfare built around the tank striking force. They did so in the face of persistent opposition by most of their less imaginative peers and superiors. Most of these reformers were "loners." For the most part, they were argumentative, assertive and hardly ever in agreement—even with one another.

Despite support from Winston Churchill, they were forced to work around an organizational system which abhorred change. In frustration, many went public with their arguments and, by doing so, incurred enmity among their superiors sufficient either to bring on their early retirement from the active ranks or to relegate them to some inconsequential posting.

Although field trials were held to demonstrate the new concepts, those who benefited most from the trials were the Germans. They spawned the blitzkrieg based largely on their own study as well as their study of the writings of the British reformers, J. F. C. Fuller and B. H. Liddell Hart, and the record of the trials on the Salisbury Plain.

As war came to Europe in 1939, the British army found itself with an imperfectly developed concept of all-arms combat

based on the tank, to include inadequate tactics, organizations, equipment and training to implement a state of warfare they themselves had invented.¹

In the US Army, the pioneers were fewer in number, and the institution proved considerably more resistant to change than even the British army. Therefore, the development of a concept of mobile warfare fared even less well. A succession of Army chiefs of staff rejected the idea out of hand. Even such future practitioners of maneuver warfare as General of the Army Douglas MacArthur testified before the Congress that one should not buy too many tanks for they were terribly expensive and quickly became obsolete. Strongest among the opposition was that bastion of mobile thinking—the US cavalry. Its last chief, Major General John K. Herr, was the most strident, outspoken opponent of the idea of all-arms warfare which was built around the tank.

There were really only two heroes of this drama in our Army, Major General Adna Chaffee and Lieutenant General Daniel Van Voorhis. Without Chaffee, the US Army quite likely would have had no tanks at all in 1940. And, without Van Voorhis, there would not have been an operational concept for armored formations in World War II. As Edward Katzenbach concludes in his fascinating paper, "The Horse Cavalry in the 20th Century," the Army of the most mechanized nation on earth came to the threshold of World War II firmly wedded to strategy, operational art and tactics deeply rooted in the 19th century.

On the other hand, the Germans seemed to have developed, in what retired Colonel Trevor N. Dupuy calls their "genius for war," a much more impressive willingness and ability to adapt to change. Captain Timothy T. Lupfer describes well the German army's ability to change operational

MILITARY REVIEW

Swinton

concepts and tactical schemes in a matter of months in World War I.²

Heinz Guderian, reading reports of the armored force trials on the Salisbury Plain, demonstrated the concept with a small force for Adolf Hitler at Kummersdorf in 1934.³ Kenneth Macksey describes well how the German tank pioneers seized on and matured the preliminary British work on all-arms warfare built around the tank.

With Hitler's blessing of the concept, Guderian, in 18 short months, produced an all-arms panzer division. The division operated within a fairly well-spelled-out doctrinal framework. It included the strategy for mobile warfare; a general operational scheme for how the larger forces would fight; and the organization, tactics and at least a preliminary array of the type of equipment needed to bring the concept from theory to reality. In his new book, *The German Army, 1933-45*, Albert Saxon describes the German army's remarkable ability to adapt to change in those very turbulent years.

How did they do it? How were the Germans different from the British or the Americans? Several facts stand out which frame the answer and outline a set of requirements necessary to effect change.

First, the Germans had a general staff element whose primary function was to examine the need for change and, when change was decided on, to draw up the necessary programs to make it happen. True, this capability became diffused as Hitler fragmented his army command into the OKW (Armed Forces High Command) and the OKH (Army High Command), an overshadowed army headquarters. Indeed,



some of the bitter antagonisms that arose between those two organizations in World War II survived until recently even in the *Bundeswehr*. Nonetheless, for the critical developmental years, there existed an institutionalized framework for examining the need for changing doctrine—strategy, operational art, tactics, describing the equipment, organizational training and other changes needed; and producing the impetus for change through the office of the *inspekteur*.

Second, the German mavericks were all products of the enormously demanding and rigorous officer selection and training system characteristic of the German army to this day. Mavericks they may have been, but all had been taught to think logically about tough problems. They were all taught in the same way, in the same schools. Compelling logic to one was, therefore, equally compelling to all. This made arriving at a consensus much easier. And change simply cannot be effected

TO CHANGE AN ARMY



Liddell Hart

without a consensus by some means.

Third, the principal instigators of reform remained for years in positions related to implementation of the changes they espoused. For example, follow Guderian through the evolution of the blitzkrieg in Macksey's book on Guderian. Change was further facilitated because the senior leadership, to include most importantly Hitler himself, was quick to seize on the strategic advantages Germany could gain over its potential foes by changing the basic ingredients of its military system.

Finally, trials had been conducted—by the Germans in Russia, by the British on the Salisbury Plain and by the Germans and the Russians in the Spanish Civil War. And these closely observed lessons were fed back into the system for the further refinement of their mobile striking forces. Recounting, then, we have a set of generalized requirements for effecting change.

- There must be an institution or mechanism to identify the need for change, to draw up parameters for change and to describe clearly what is to be done and how that differs from what has been done before.

- The educational background of the principal staff and command personalities responsible for change must be sufficiently rigorous, demanding and relevant to bring a common cultural bias to the solution of problems.

- There must be a spokesman for change. The spokesman can be a person, one of the mavericks; an institution such as a staff college; or a staff agency.

- Whoever or whatever it may be, the spokesman must build a consensus that will give the new ideas, and the need to adopt them, a wider audience of converts and believers.

- There must be continuity among the architects of change so that consistency of effort is brought to bear on the process.

- Someone at or near the top of the institution must be willing to hear out arguments for change, agree to the need, embrace the new operational concepts and become at least a supporter, if not a champion, of the cause for change.

- Changes proposed must be subjected to trials. Their relevance must be convincingly demonstrated to a wide audience by experiment and experience, and necessary modifications must be made as a result of such trial outcomes.

This framework is necessary to bring to bear clearly focused intellectual activity in the matter of any change, whether in concepts for fighting, equipment, training or manning the force. Such a framework

MILITARY REVIEW

Chaffee

was recently institutionalized in the US Army. Let us briefly describe how this came about.

The Army reorganization of 1973 was aimed, in part at least, at the institutional side of the problem we are examining. In those years, the Army needed many changes. Some were purely managerial, reflecting our apprehension of a lot of structure and too little manpower. More importantly, however, the Army realized it needed to change its concepts of war-fighting. It addressed the strategic problems of fighting outnumbered and winning, the matter of the operations of larger units, which units perforce would be fewer in number; and the revision of tactics, organizations, equipment and training to bring the Army out of the Vietnam trauma and to make it an effective fighting force in the last quarter of this century.

The Army found itself confronted by principle antagonists, who were almost always sure to outnumber it, and by a growing militarization and modernization of conflict in the Third World. The Soviets, impelled by their obsession with numbers, were obviously in possession of a maturing operational concept embracing mass, momentum and continuous land combat in a nuclear, chemical or conventional environment. Convinced by the realities of our then and impending resource constraints, we could not afford a like concept. We set about to look for ways to win even though fighting outnumbered. This was a crucial first step. (Russell F. Weigley might argue that that was more of a radical departure from our antecedents than others might agree.)

However, some analysts suggested his-



tory clearly endorsed the idea, and the 1973 Arab-Israeli War provided a fortuitous field trial of useful concepts. The lessons drawn from this conflict, as well as other analytical study, led to the Army's conclusion about the requisite strategy, operational concepts, tactics, organizations, equipment and training. The outcome of this intellectual activity and theoretical study was set forth in what became the 1976 edition of Field Manual (FM) 100-5, *Operations*. Its primary emphasis, at least as viewed by its critics, was on an operational concept the Army called the "active defense."

However well or not so well that work may have been done, it met with considerable criticism from within the Army and without. Some of this simply reflected institutional resistance to the notion of change. Some of the criticism, however, reflected unresolved intellectual and theoretical concerns. But the experience dem-

TO CHANGE AN ARMY



Guderian

the Corps Battle, the Central Battle, the Integrated Battle, the Extended Battle, and, finally, the AirLand Battle.

One lesson of that experience was that we had imperfectly designed the institutional framework to accomplish change. In 1973, the US Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) absorbed the old US Army Combat Developments Command. There were several good reasons for that amalgamation—some related to resources and others related to perceived shortcomings with the output of that command. In any event, while strong on equipment development and organizational matters, the new combat developments directorate of the TRADOC staff was weak on conceptual work. Therefore, the bulk of the concept work reflected in the 1976 edition of FM 100-5 was done by a handful of people, none of whom was assigned to the combat development staff at TRADOC Headquarters itself or in the schools.

The realization of this omission in our original concept of how TRADOC was to do its business caused us to create a principal doctrinal development staff element at TRADOC—a deputy chief of staff for doctrine. This officer was responsible for identifying the need for change and for describing the conceptual framework of the change itself. Without that orderly process at the beginning and without one agency directly responsible for it, the need for change would always be ill-defined, and the conceptual direction of change would be cloudy at best.

Now, back to the beginning. The post-1973 reforms were presented to then Chief of Staff of the Army General Creighton W. Abrams. He made many amendments but

onstrated that all too little consensus building had been done and that the concepts set forth in the 1976 edition of FM 100-5 needed additional maturing. The results of that realization were several-fold.

First, the Army re-examined and revised its principles of war and published them in a new book, FM 100-1, *The Army*. An early criticism of the 1976 edition of FM 100-5 was that it was not firmly founded on enduring principles and did not even recount our principles of war. This new book began to build that theoretical foundation. The principles of war, as set forth in FM 100-1, spell out fundamental principles on which we must base our military strategy, operations and tactics in order to be successful today and to meet tomorrow's needs.

While that development was under way, the Army's operational concepts evolved through a succession of changes known as

MILITARY REVIEW

supported the general direction of the changes. After Abrams' untimely death in 1974, General Frederick C. Weyand gave his support. That support from the top has continued with both of their successors, General Bernard W. Rogers and General Edward C. Meyer.

The reformers then set about designing tactics, organizations, equipment and training systems to support the new concept. This resulted in, among other things, the division restructuring study and field trials of resulting organizations and tactics at Fort Hood, Texas. Because the concept was not yet mature, and because, in the trials, an attempt was made to measure performance differentials at the margin with an instrumentation system and a test scheme not adequate to that degree of precision, the trial outcomes were much too ambiguous to gain widespread acceptance.

At this point, it was apparent that the reformers had to begin anew. It became apparent that considerable internal consensus building would be necessary as organizational development proceeded. So, for two and one-half years, school commandants, representatives of the Army staff, major command, supporting organizations and other services were gathered at frequent intervals, and what we now know as Division 86 was hammered out at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

Consensus building in the Army was difficult for several reasons. In the process of bringing about change, there must first be a conceptual notion of what must be done to fight successfully in the battle environments of today and tomorrow. That conceptual thinking can only result from close, detailed and reflective study of a wide spectrum of technology, threat, history, world setting and trends. That kind of thinking can only be done by imaginative people who have trained themselves

or have been trained to think logically about tough problems. That kind of intellectual development is one of the most important functions of our Army school systems, especially at the staff college level.

It is perhaps here that we have not yet fully equipped ourselves with the requisite means to achieve change. The US Army lacked that great strength of the German system—the intellectual prowess and staff brilliance of its general staff officer corps. US Army officers lacked the cultural commonality that was brought to bear through the process of the German General Staff system, and that was the most impressive, if not the most effective, catalyst in making it possible for them to change quickly—even under the pressures of wartime.

Even though our Army has begun working on this dimension of the problem at the US Army Command and General Staff College (USACGSC), in both the long course and the course now styled as CAS (Combined Arms and Services Staff School), some years will be required before the results of this effort bear fruit. The question has been raised as to whether we should consider a second year at Fort Leavenworth for selected officers to learn more about how we should prepare and plan for war and to hone the military judgment necessary to fight and win.

The USACGSC was a two-year course from 1929 to 1936 during which time some of our most brilliant staff officers and commanders in World War II were produced. The need to train more officers more quickly caused us to reduce the course to one year. Since then, subject matter related to fighting has been reduced to fill the many demands of our increasingly complex world environment. The time to logically think through tough military problems and to develop logical thought

TO CHANGE AN ARMY

patterns was greatly reduced. But the complexities of war have increased greatly, and it is time to give the matter a new bearing.

While much remains to be done, the US Army does have in place today most of the ingredients which history suggests are necessary to effect orderly change. And we are in the throes of changes produced by that system—changes designed to move us into the last two decades of this century. We would be well served in the future if that process could include more sound thinkers in uniform and fewer academic and amateur military strategic gadflies.

We would be better served as the process matures if we could somehow focus the intellectual prowess of the operations analysis community on our fundamental rather than our peripheral needs. We would be much better served, in the long run, if we could learn how to change our institutions from within instead of creating the circumstances in which change is forced on us by civilian secretaries of war, defense or whatever.

We would be much better served, in the end, if we could develop and refine, in our institution, the cultural communalities of intellectual endeavor and the ability to think logically about tough problems. These are necessary to develop new ideas, mature them quickly and chart relevant

action programs which effect change in an efficient, orderly way.

In short, we need institutional leadership as well as individual leadership. Without a requisite combination of both, history instructs us that the need for change is difficult to define. What is to be done—the goalset of change—is virtually impossible to circumscribe, and the whole process takes so long that not much ever happens. In today's and tomorrow's worlds, we simply cannot afford the luxury of that kind of inefficiency.

The need to change will ever be with us. We may have analyzed the process, framed in its essential parameters, and made some considerable progress toward arming ourselves with systemic mechanisms to permit change to take place. But that in no way ensures either that change will occur or that it will be an easy, orderly process. And so the intellectual search, the exchange of ideas and the conceptual maturation must continue and be ever in motion.

NOTES

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² Comments provided by RADM (Ret) David Nichols.

³ FM 6-22, *Army Leadership*, October 2006. See also Stephen Gerras, Leonard Wong, and Charles Allen, “Organizational Culture: Applying a Hybrid Model to the US Army,” US Army War College, June 2008. Gerras, Wong, and Allen argue that leaders should use a “hybrid” approach to understand US Army culture. This includes using several aspects of different techniques developed by scholars. Specifically, they posit that leaders should consider cultural tension (and paradoxes), the importance of the assumptions that are associated with practices and values, and that both “embedding” and “reinforcing” mechanisms are necessary in the very difficult task of changing and adapting a culture. Finally, the historian Peter H. Wilson outlines that military culture is best defined as a function of a military organization’s mission, its relationship to the state (and other institutions), its relationship to society, and its internal structure. Peter H. Wilson, “Defining Military Culture” *The Journal of Military History* (January 2008).

⁴ See Annex B, “The Context of Army Culture, 1973-2001.”

⁵ Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 140.

⁶ Interestingly, some of Don Snider’s research and interviews conducted in the early 1990s reflect similar complaints as interviews conducted in this study. Compare Snider’s conclusions with the remarks of one participant interview as a part of this study. A participant in a small group sensing session at the US Army War College explicitly asked: “Is the institutional Army at war?” Another student remarked that the disconnect that most concerned him was the gap between many senior leaders and “a major today who has spent his whole career in war.” Interview and small group sensing session with the US Army War College Advanced Strategic Arts Seminar. For example,

⁷ Snider.

⁸ Some of those scholars include: Gayle Watkins, John Nagl, Paul Yingling, Lloyd Matthews, Lance Betros, and Matthew Moten.

⁹ See H.R. McMaster, “Crack in the Foundation,” Williamson Murray, “Clausewitz Out, Computer In, Military Culture and Technological Hubris,” *The National Interest*, Summer 1997, and Fred Kagan, *Finding the Target*.

¹⁰ Fred Kagan, *Finding the Target*.

¹¹ Kagan.

¹² Kagan.

¹³ John Keegan, *The Face of Battle*. To refer back to Williamson Murray and his discussion of Wehrmacht’s tactical excellence and long duration to develop the culture of auftragstaktik, cultural change takes much time and constant attention. Changes in military culture are usually evolutionary by nature, difficult to control, and require conscious attention.

¹⁴ Kagan.

¹⁵ See Brian Linn, *The Echo of Battle*. This assumption may also have diluted soldiers’ identity as warriors, as some leaders declared that the United States would have no “peer competitor” until 2020.

¹⁶ USMA White Paper.

¹⁷ See Don M. Snider and Gayle L. Watkins, “The Future of Army Professionalism: A Need for Renewal and Redefinition,” *Parameters*, Vol. 30, (Autumn, 2000), 5-20. On fear of failure, see Walter F. Ulmer, “Military Leadership into the 21st Century: Another ‘Bridge Too Far?’” *Parameters*, Vol. 28 (Spring 1998): 4-25 and John C. Faith, “The Overcontrolling Leader: The Issue is Trust,” *Army*, June 1997. LTG (ret) Ulmer noted in his article, “The 1997 issues of *Army Times*, articles in the *Wall Street Journal*, an item in the 22 September 1997 *US News and World Report*, comments from the House National Security Committee as reported in the 14 July issue of the *Army Times*, and findings from the recent large survey associated with sexual harassment, confirming other recent survey data, leave little doubt that there are more than superficial problems with elements of the climate of the Army.” Ulmer, one of the two authors of the 1970 Army War College Study on Military Professionalism, noted disconcerting similarities in the Army’s ethical climate of the early 1970s and the late 1990s.

¹⁸ Casey Wardynski, David Lyle, and Michael J. Colarusso, "Towards a US Army Officer Corps Strategy for Success: A Proposed Human Capital Model Focused Upon Talent," Strategic Studies Institute, April 2009.

¹⁹ Leonard Wong, "Generations Apart: Xers and Boomers in the Officer Corps," Strategic Studies Institute Paper (October 2000), 4-17.

²⁰ "A perceived lack of commitment from the Army." *Retention Issues of the 1990s*. The 2000-2001 Army Training and Leader Development Panel (ATLDP) identified retention as a critical aspect of Army culture. The study concluded that in the late 1990s, there was "a perceived lack of commitment from the Army" towards its officers. This included "limitations on spouse employment, a perceived imbalance between Army expectations and the family, the lack of work predictability, and only limited control over assignments." An excessive OPTEMPO and "unmet" leader development opportunities and expectations also contributed to an uneasy sentiment throughout the officer corps.

²¹ Information within the table is from the DMPM, Army G1 Career Systems Analysis and Studies Branch, April 2008. Comments originate from a Sensing Session held at the Armed Forces Management School.

²² ATLDP.

²³ United States, Congress, Senate. *Hearings Before a Subcommittee on Appropriations, United States Senate, One-Hundred Second Congress, Second Session* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. GPO, 1992), 253-255. The posture statement cited the Army's performance in the "100 Hour War" in the Gulf as proof that its leader-development system worked, 258-259, 297.

²⁴ USMA White Paper.

²⁵ Richard H. Kohn, "Tarnished Brass: Is the US Military Profession in Decline?" *World Affairs* (Spring 2009).

²⁶ Department of History, USMA, "Historical Effects of Personnel Reductions on the Institutional Army, 1973-2009," USMA Department of History Study, US Military Academy, West Point, May 2009.

²⁷ Information within the table is from the DMPM, Army G1 Career Systems Analysis and Studies Branch, April 2008. Comments originate from a Sensing Session held at the Armed Forces Management School, a conversation with LTG (Ret) Richard Trefry, sensing sessions at Fort Leavenworth.

²⁸ Christopher Coker, *War in an Age of Risk* (2009), 1-28.

²⁹ Sensing Session with BG Cornum. "In Bosnia in 2001, our behavior was not related to the actual threat."

³⁰ For an example of his latest—and very relevant work—see Richard H. Kohn, "Tarnished Brass: Is the US Military Profession in Decline?" *World Affairs* (Spring 2009).

³¹ Richard H. Kohn, "Out of Control: The Crisis in Civil-Military Relations," *The National Interest* (Spring 1994).

³² See FM 1, *The Army* (2001). According to the 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), the purpose of defense transformation was "to maintain or improve US Military pre-eminence" through "the evolution and deployment of combat capabilities that provide revolutionary or asymmetric advantages to US Forces." The QDR stated that current transformation efforts would have succeeded when "we divest ourselves of legacy forces and they move off the stage and resources move into new concepts, capabilities and organizations that maximize our warfighting effectiveness and the combat potential of our men and women in uniform." Successful transformation would allow the United States to "dominate future military competitions." For a discussion of Defense Transformation, see H.R. McMaster, "Crack in the Foundation: Defense Transformation and the Underlying Assumption of Dominant Knowledge in Future War," U.S. Army War College Center for Strategic Leadership, Nov. 2003. Available at www.carlisle.army.mil/usacsl/Publications/S03-03.pdf.

³² The American experience in Somalia between December 1992 and early 1994 might have exposed the folly of assuming dominant battlespace knowledge. Technological sources of intelligence were of little value in Somalia. Commanders relied on human intelligence as the primary source of information. Strategic and operational uncertainties were amplified at the tactical level. Soldiers and Marines operated in a populous, congested urban area in which almost everyone was armed; it was difficult to distinguish between friendly forces, neutrals, and those opposed to the humanitarian effort. For Marines and Soldiers, the complex social, political, and geographical environment blurred distinctions between peacekeeping operations and combat operations. The inherent uncertainties of the Somalia operation were revealed and amplified on October 3, 1993 as U.S. Army Rangers began what they thought would be a mission of short duration to apprehend two of General Aidid's principal deputies. The interactions that occurred between Somali militia and the Rangers defied situational understanding. NATO's Kosovo experience in 1999 also demonstrated that the causes of uncertainty in the conduct of war lie mainly outside

technology's reach: war's political nature, its human dimension, its complexity, and interaction with the enemy. NATO enjoyed air supremacy and faced antiquated air defenses. The Serbs had no ability to disrupt NATO communications or information systems. Near-certainty combined with long range precision fires was supposed to vitiate the need for ground forces and make possible a fast, low-cost, low-casualty war. The campaign was supposed to last five days; it lasted eleven weeks and ended after 40,000 aircraft sorties and the threat of a ground invasion. The way in which the war was conducted increased the suffering of both Kosovar Albanians and Serbian civilians and made air power much less effective than it would have been if it had been employed as part of air-land operations. NATO achieved dominance of the air, but that achievement did not translate into dominance on the ground. The absence of a ground force to compel the Serbs to desist from their campaign of terror and to render ineffective the countermeasures taken against air forces allowed Serbia to terrorize the ethnic Albanians and work to turn world public opinion against NATO. The problems experienced during Operation Allied Force were not failures of air power; they were failures based on unrealistic expectations that elevated a military capability to the level of strategy. Once the effects of Operation Allied Force were combined with other elements such as increased diplomatic pressure (especially from Russia), a Kosovo Liberation Army offensive, and the threat of a NATO ground offensive, NATO succeeded and Milosevic acquiesced.

³³ See Military review articles between 1996 and 1999. Several dozen articles and book reviews addressed various paradigms, teaching techniques, frameworks, leadership tips, and values.

³⁴ An example of the belief in American dominance is found in Harlan K. Ullman, James P. Wade, L.A. "Bud" Edney, et. al., *Shock & Awe: Achieving Rapid Dominance* (Washington, D.C.: NDU Press, Dec. 1996). The book is available on-line at <<http://www.dodccrp.org/shockIndex.html>>. The authors state, "The military posture and capability of the United States of America are, today, dominant. Simply put, there is no external adversary in the world that can successfully challenge the extraordinary power of the American military in either regional conflict or in "conventional" war as we know it once the United States makes the commitment to take whatever action may be needed." See the following on the 1990s as the ideal time for experimentation and the lack of a "peer competitor." James R. Blaker, "The American RMA Force: An Alternative to the QDR," *Strategic Review*, vol. 25, no. 3 (Summer 1997), pp. 21-30; See also Richard K. Betts, *Military Readiness Concepts, Choices, Consequences* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1995), pp. 35-84. John Arquilla, "The 'Velvet' Revolution in Military Affairs," *World Policy Journal* (Winter 1997/98), p. 42.

³⁵ United States Army Posture Statement, *The Army At War and Transforming*, 2003, p.24

³⁶ General Starry, Donn A. "How to Change an Army," *Military Review*, March 1983.

³⁷ Friedman, Thomas L. *Hot, Flat, and Crowded: Why We Need a Green Revolution, and How It Can Renew America*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008. p. 586-593

³⁸ Kurzweil, Ray. *In Depth with Ray Kurzweil*. W. Lafayette, IN: C-SPAN, 2006. Retrieved from http://www.c-spanarchives.org/library/index.php?main_page=product_video_info&products_id=194500-1, accessed on 27 Jan 09.

³⁹ Philipp Rotmann, David Tohn, and Jaron Wharton, "Learning Under Fire: Progress and Dissent in the US Military" *Survival* (August-September 2009): 31-48, p.31-2

⁴⁰ Philipp Rotmann, David Tohn, and Jaron Wharton, p. 40

⁴¹ See Annex C: US Army Culture: A British Perspective, p. 11

⁴² Major Paul Herbert, "Deciding What Has to Be Done: General DePuy and the Creation of FM 100-5, Operations," *The Leavenworth Papers* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Command and General Staff College, July 1988)

⁴³ Raynor, Michael E. *The Strategy Paradox: Why Committing to Success Leads to Failure, and What to Do About It*. New York: Currency Doubleday, 2007. p. 112-3

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p. 123

⁴⁵ Coker, Christopher. *The Warrior Ethos: Military Culture and the War on Terror*. LSE international studies series. London: Routledge, 2007.

⁴⁶ Carrick, Don, James Connelly, and Paul Robinson. *Ethics Education for Irregular Warfare*. Farnham, England: Ashgate Pub, 2009. p83.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p.

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- ⁴⁸ Sherman, Nancy. *Stoic Warriors: The Ancient Philosophy Behind the Military Mind*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- ⁴⁹ Chaudhury, S., Goel, D.S. and Singh, H. (2006), "Psychological Effects of Low Intensity Conflict (LIC) Operations", *Indian Journal of Psychiatry* 48:4, 223-31.
- ⁵⁰ Rotmann, Tohn, and Wharton. p.
- ⁵¹ Participants from USAWC (Advanced Strategic Arts Seminar), Armed Forces Staff College, Sergeants Major Academy, Intermediate Level Education, Captain's Career Course, 2009.
- ⁵² "Review of The New U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual". *Perspectives on Politics*. 2008. 6, no. 2: 347-350. Principal criticisms were
- ⁵³ BG Cardon, Edward C. Deputy Commandant, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC), and Deputy Commanding General, Combined Arms Center (CAC), Fort Leavenworth, KS
- ⁵⁴ Rotmann, Tohn, and Wharton. p.
- ⁵⁵ Army Chief of Staff's (draft) White Paper: *The Army of the 21st Century: A Balanced Army for a Balanced Strategy*.
- ⁵⁶ United States. *The U.S. Army Field Manual - 1*.
- ⁵⁷ Career Course Sensing Sessions
- ⁵⁸ Of course, this degree of adaptability brings with it risks. See Sean MacFarland, Michal Shields, and Jeffrey Snow's "The King and I: The Impending Crisis in Field Artillery's Ability to Provide Fire Support to Maneuver Commanders." The answer, again, is establishing balance. Also, a theme to emerge from some of the sensing sessions—most notably the War College Advanced Strategic Arts Seminar—was an emerging attitude that simple because "this is combat" that standard processes (and standards!) no longer apply. Again, the answer is a combination of leadership, training, discipline, and balance.
- ⁵⁹ Philipp Rotmann, David Tohn, and Jaron Wharton, "Learning Under Fire: Progress and Dissent in the US Military" *Survival* (August-September 2009):31-48.
- ⁶⁰ This second point was a major topic of discussion at the ILE sessions. One participant remarked, "the educational process is counter-intellectual. There are no standards." Another major simply stated that "there is a growing gap between the institution and the operating force caused by the institution's longer cycle of adaptation." A third officer in a separate session firmly stated that "the education at CGSC does not change fast enough. Eliminate the 14-week blended course and instead send officers to civilian schools."
- ⁶¹ Recognizing the Army's Cultural Changes, Army, Jul 2007 by Cardon, Edward L.
- ⁶² Leonard Wong, *Developing Adaptive Leaders: The Crucible Experience Of Operation Iraqi Freedom*, (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, July 2004).
- ⁶³ Ucko, David H., *The New Counterinsurgency Era, Transforming the U.S. Military for Modern Wars*, p. 21.
- ⁶⁴ Nagl, John A., *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife*, p. XV.
- ⁶⁵ Cardon
- ⁶⁶ Cardon
- ⁶⁷ Rotmann, Tohn, and Wharton. p .
- ⁶⁸ Casey, *Advancing the Army Professional Military Ethic*, JFQ issue 54, 3d quarter 2009, p. 15.
- ⁶⁹ Ucko, p. 21.
- ⁷⁰ Casey, JFQ, p. 14.
- ⁷¹ Christopher Coker, *The Warrior Ethos: Military Culture and the War on Terror* (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 135-138.
- ⁷² COIN Manual, p. 7-1.
- ⁷³ CGSC Sensing Sessions
- ⁷⁴ Comments are from the Armed Forces Service College and the ILE Sensing Sessions, respectively.
- ⁷⁵ Cardon
- ⁷⁶ FM 6-0, Mission Command, August 2003

⁷⁷ CGSC and Sergeant's Major Academy Sensing Sessions

⁷⁸ Harris, Brice, *American, Technology and Strategic Culture*, p. 153.

⁷⁹ An example of this outward looking focus is the TRADOC Culture Center located at the U.S. Army Intelligence Center, opened in February 2006, which has been a useful driver of cultural training and education.

⁸⁰ CSA

⁸¹ This was a widely discussed topic at our sensing sessions at the Captains Career Courses

⁸² NPR, Roles of Women in US Army Expand, 1 OCT 2007, COL T Burnes, USAR SEP 2008.

⁸³ William R. Richardson, SOOHP, USAWC.