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The Warrior Ethos

By

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A project submitted to the faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Advanced Research Department. The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College, the Department of the Navy or the Department of the Army.

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The Warrior Ethos in the 21st Century defines the 'warrior ethos' and identifies five distinctive traits: discipline, sacrifice, cohesion, strength and authority, which the author contends are essential to success in combat but which are distinctive, to some degree, from the society we protect. This ethos is examined, in light of changing technology, changing roles and missions and changing social mores, to determine how, or if, the warrior ethos should change as we enter the 21st century.

The five essays on distinctive warrior traits provide background research, primarily anecdotal, to the capstone paper. Both individual and group discipline is identified as essential on the battlefield. Cohesion is defined not only as a result of mutual confidence but also as an intangible result of shared hardship. A warrior's sacrifice – characterized as a relatively high probability of injury or death – is distinctive from the less risky service of the broader military culture. Strength is essential in forms of both physical strength and moral strength. Authority, both the legitimate exercise of authority and the proper respect for positions of authority, is identified at the keystone trait of the entire ethos.

The project concludes that, despite tremendous changes in technology and migration of the Army's most visible roles and missions from war-fighting to peace-keeping, the warrior ethos will remain essential to success on the battlefield. Further, the project contends that military culture in general, and the warrior ethos in particular, must be defended from tinkering motivated purely by changes in broader American culture without regard for military effectiveness.

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The Warrior Ethos in the 21st Century

The Army, indeed all the military services, are struggling as military culture is rocked by tremendous technological, functional, and social changes[1]. Although it is trendy among elites to decry any "culture gap" between the military and the society we protect, the situation demands a more balanced analysis. In the early 1970's, during a similar period of elite demand that the "Army act like America", General Walter Kerwin wrote, "The values necessary to defend the society are often at odds with the values of the society itself. To be an effective servant of the people, the Army must concentrate not on the values of our liberal[2] society, but on the hard values of the battlefield."[3]

The purpose of this paper is to reassert in the debate the importance of those "hard values of the battlefield" and to examine their future in light of the dramatic technological, functional and social changes our society and military are experiencing. The virtues required for success on the battlefield shaped and defined the traditional warrior ethos. That ethos has been further shaped by the 20th century war fighting environment to produce our current professional military culture. Both a professional military culture and a warrior ethos exist and both are essential to the Army's success as we move into the 21st century.

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[1] "Functional changes" is used through this paper to describe the changing roles and missions of the Army as we adjust from the bi-polar cold war paradigm to the single superpower environment which includes and increased emphasis on "Military Operations Other than War." "Functional imperatives" refers to the reason the organization exists - the required tasks that have helped define it's culture.

[2] "Liberal" is used in this paper intending its original definition of "free, belonging to the people, or of democratic and republican reforms". The use of liberal is not intended to allude to politics or political parties.

[3] General Walter Kerwin, quoted in by John Hillen in "Must U.S. Military Culture Reform?", Orbis, Winter 1999, 55-56.

Some military leaders and thinkers suggest that there is only one "professional military culture". Such a statement ignores obviously differing sub-cultures and fails to understand the crucial relationship between an organization's culture and its functional imperatives. Current Army doctrine acknowledges a difference between Army and Navy culture.[4] But even within the Army there are significantly different cultures. In a recently published paper Don Snider argues compellingly that within the professional military culture, "identifiable sub-cultures and even sub-subcultures do exist and are reflective of the domain of war and applicable war-fighting doctrines for which their service, or branch, is responsible.[5] To suggest that Army culture and Navy culture are identical is unfounded. While there are certainly many parallels in their professional military cultures, both have evolved differently to most effectively address their functional requirements – the reason they exist. Likewise, there are identifiable sub-cultures within the Army. While each sub-group retains the precepts of the professional military culture, different units and branches develop a distinctive ethos tailored ideally to the tasks routinely assigned in combat. Today's warrior ethos is a traditional, ancient, military culture, which has evolved to excel in 20th century combat. Although this ethos is arguably essential in each of our Nation's military services, this paper focuses on the warrior ethos in the US Army.

The warrior ethos is essential to effectiveness in combat and must be preserved and passed on to the "Army After Next". This "who we are" and "how we fight" aura can, and will, evolve as the technological, functional, and social environment within which the Army operates changes. At issue is why and how changes occur. To answer why and how, the modern Army warrior, and his ethos, must be more clearly defined.

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[4] US Department of the Army, Army Leadership (FM22-100 Revised Final Draft) Washington, DC: August 1998, 3-16.
[5] Don M. Snider, "An Uninformed Debate on Military Culture," Orbis, Winter 1999, 21.

The Army's warriors must convincingly articulate the character, values, behaviors and attributes that are essential to preserve and pass on. Then, amidst the welter of change, we must allow warriors to adjust to the new environment, adapting and passing on an ethos that will remain dominant on the battlefields of the 21st century. This "bottom-up" enculturation has worked for thousands of years and the result is a strong and useful Army culture. We must preserve, however, a combat dominant ethos despite the forceful injection of change advocated by many elites, and even some of our own ranks, for whom effectiveness in combat may not be a primary motivation.

"What is the Warrior Ethos?"

To analyze the importance of a "warrior ethos", we must define both terms more precisely. A warrior is traditionally defined as "one engaged or experienced in battle." This definition identifies the warrior specifically with battle – direct combat. Thus, the warrior may not necessarily be identified with the broader concepts and actions of war-fighting that characterize military operations and the use of national power at the operational and strategic level. More relevantly, not every military position or specialty fits this definition of a warrior. In the current military lexicon, a warrior might be defined as one whose primary task is to "close with and destroy the enemy". This may be on the ground, in a vehicle or from the air.

The two key elements that characterize the warrior are his location on the battlefield and his tasks in combat. A warrior is expected to close physically with the enemy. Further, the warrior's explicit task is the destruction of that enemy. Soldiers assigned to positions that fulfill both the tests of proximity and purpose must be identified, and trained, as warriors. Some soldiers launch

missiles from a distance in order to destroy the enemy. Others close with the enemy in order to provide essential support. The majority of today's soldiers perform important functions neither physically close to the enemy or directly engaged in his destruction. Soldiers in each of these groups operate within the professional military culture and some exhibit the ethos of the warrior. There remains, however, a caste of men who are required to both close with and destroy the enemy. It is these men to whom the peculiar ethos of the warrior is essential.

Ethos is defined as "the character or values peculiar to a specific person, people, culture or movement." Further, sociologists tell us that ethos and culture are closely related. MIT organizational psychologist Edgar Schein states that "culture is what a group learns over a period of time as that group solves its problems of survival in an external environment and its problems of internal integration."[6] Considering these ideas, ethos represents the character, values, behaviors, and attributes that a group develops over time as it finds the best way to get along and get its job done. The warrior ethos may therefore be defined as the character, values, behaviors, and attributes developed within groups of warriors over centuries of armed combat which are essential to closing with and destroying an enemy.

This definition leaves out exactly which values, behaviors and attributes are essential. In their ongoing study on military culture, a working group at the Center for Strategic and International Studies has defined the warrior ethos as "a code that expects individuals to aggressively engage and defeat an armed enemy in battle, promoting and valuing traits of moral and physical courage, tactical skills, emotional and physical stamina, loyalty to comrades and determination to accomplish

[6] Edgar H Schein, "Organizational Culture", American Psychologist, Feb. 1990, p.111

the tactical mission regardless of personal risk."[7] In a review and synthesis of relevant military history and Army leadership doctrine, I selected five facets of the warrior ethos that I submit are essential to success on the battlefield but are distinctive from the society which we protect. These component traits of the warrior ethos - discipline, cohesion, sacrifice, strength and authority - are not exhaustive but should be useful for determining the facets of the warrior ethos that can not be changed without adversely affecting combat effectiveness.[8]

Warrior Traits

Warriors recognize the importance of both individual and unit discipline. Individual discipline is controlled behavior that results from training and is based on a known standard of conduct. Unit discipline is the state of order that results when each member of the group submits himself to the unit's common standards. Individual discipline requires that a unit have a known and understood standard of conduct. Unit discipline requires consistent accountability to the standard. Thus, to develop and preserve discipline, units of warriors must live by a clearly defined standard of conduct that is consistently applied to every member of the unit.

Cohesion is closely related to group discipline and indeed may be inseparable from it. Cohesion is essential to combat effectiveness. While those who lack military experience scoff at the importance of this intangible, experienced combat veterans almost universally assert that unit cohesion is essential to building combat-ready units and to survival on the battlefield. Cohesion, as an essential element of the warrior ethos, is the attraction between members of a unit that causes them to hold together despite extreme external pressure. Cohesion develops from mutual

[7] Proposed working definition of the traditional 'warrior ethos' in "Working Paper on The Warrior Ethos Issue," dated 20 October 1998, from the Center for Strategic and International Studies.
[8] This paper is part of a broader research project titled "The Warrior Ethos" conducted by the author at the Naval War College. A review and synthesis of applicable literature resulted in five separate essays, each addressing a single facet

confidence in the skill, physical ability and courage of the warriors with whom you fight. This mutual confidence then thickens through shared danger and hardship and transforms into a deep interpersonal bond that results in a battlefield world-view that places service and sacrifice, to both comrades and the small unit, over personal survival. Further, the importance of cohesion is directly proportional to proximity to combat. Cohesion among the military professionals who supply the army is desirable. Cohesion among the small units of warriors who physically draw near the enemy to kill him is crucial. Cohesion will deteriorate when double standards are injected into a unit or when unequal enforcement of a standard is allowed to persist. Thus, cohesion demands common standards and equal enforcement of those standards. As noted, strong unit cohesion motivates warriors to place sacrifice above survival.

Sacrifice is the trait that most clearly distinguishes the warrior ethos from the professional military culture at large. The willingness to die for something of greater value is essential to success in combat. This willingness to die is not unique to the warrior ethos – many military professionals, and civilians - state an honest willingness to make the ultimate sacrifice. However, the warrior alone faces the highest probability that he will be required, as a matter of course to give his life. This is the distinction between service and physical sacrifice. All military professionals make the decision to serve and this decision clearly involves many sacrifices. There are few, though, whose daily tasks in combat make physical sacrifice a probability. Preserving sacrifice in the warrior ethos requires not only strong unit cohesion, it requires that our warriors be given the greatest possibility for survival. To expect a man to fight and die for his country, he must be given the greatest possible opportunity to fight and live for his country. To preserve the willingness to

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of the warrior ethos in detail. This paper is the result of an introspective and prospective examination of the five ethos traits and their viability amidst current technological, functional and social changes.

sacrifice, we must consider all changes and activities which affect warrior units - whether organizational, training, equipment, personnel or cultural issues - with the question, "will this action fundamentally increase or decrease combat effectiveness?" Policies and activities that increase combat effectiveness should be pursued. Those that inhibit effectiveness, even if they herald other benefits, should be questioned, diligently researched, and often avoided.[9] The warrior's willingness to sacrifice will be strengthened when we give him the greatest potential to fight, win and survive.

Strength is a fourth essential facet of the warrior ethos. The power to resist strain and stress while continuing to act must be manifest both as physical strength and moral strength. Physically, it is important to be able to both surge and perform specific battlefield tasks, and to demonstrate the physical endurance required to continually perform those tasks through interminable periods of extreme strain, hardship and physical deprivation. Similarly, the tremendous stress, physical aggression and atmosphere of death common in battle tend to heighten the warrior's emotions and devalue his view of life. The soldiers who lack moral endurance will be the ones who commit, or allow, atrocity. Both physical and moral strength are developed and toughened through constant training in a crucible of unusual exertion.

Finally, authority is the keystone trait in the warrior ethos. Both the legitimate exercise and a proper respect for authority are essential to combat effectiveness. Authority, though, can be rather delicate. Failure to consistently enforce even minor standards or the failure to respect the legitimate authority of the leader may escalate quickly to insubordination that spreads through an entire

[9] There are clearly principled limits to this argument. We do not shoot prisoners although there are tactical situations in which holding prisoners does not "increase combat effectiveness". However, neither do we allow the physically disabled to serve in positions in which they are physically incapable of performing every required task. The integration

organization. To preserve the framework of authority essential to success on the battlefield, leaders must consistently enforce orders while soldiers maintain respect for the legitimate authority inherent in the position of the leader. If legitimate authority is not understood, recognized and exercised, it will crumble.[10]

Unfortunately, these facets of the warrior ethos are difficult, if not impossible, to measure empirically. How can you quantify how much cohesion a unit has and, with all the other variables on the battlefield, how important that cohesion was to success in combat? The fact that these are difficult to measure, however, does not make them any less essential. The warrior ethos is essential to combat effectiveness and must be preserved and passed on in the midst of tremendous technological, functional and social transformation.

Technological Change and the Warrior Ethos

Many experts agree that we are in the midst of a revolution in military affairs - a time of tremendous change that fundamentally alters the way we fight. Even those who disagree accept that the revolution in information technology will have a significant, if not revolutionary, effect on the use of national power to force our enemies, whether legitimate states, ethnic groups, or terror organizations, to bend to our national will. Even the most revolutionary thinkers, however, are limited by available, reliable technology. We are planning and making giant leaps in the precision of guided munitions, the effectiveness of unmanned aerial vehicles, and the equipment of the infantry soldier. But what effect will rapidly changing technology have on the warrior ethos?

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of blacks into the armed forces is a classic example in which principle rightfully prevailed over misguided arguments of effectiveness.

The Army's "Land Warrior" project envisions the future infantryman in a climate-controlled suit that provides ballistic protection. He is outfitted with a two-way radio to communicate both voice and data to his team leader, a Global Position System (GPS) receiver that plots his precise location and a personal computer that automatically updates his position and status report on the unit network. The heads-up display on his helmet visor gives him "perfect" situational awareness, plotting the location of all friendly troops in relation to suspected enemy against a back-plane of mapped terrain and operational graphics. His direct fire weapon with laser range finder has an all-weather thermal sight and is networked with the GPS and unit computers. When he aims at a target and activates the laser range finder, his computer queries the network, triangulates positions and determines if the target is friendly or enemy. Assuming all the circuits work and we can keep him re-supplied with batteries, among other technological, logistical and human endurance concerns, he is a daunting, technologically superior land warrior.

He remains however, a warrior. He is a human, outfitted impressively but still engaged in direct combat and required to close with and destroy the enemy. He must remain disciplined, possessing even greater attention to detail. His smaller, more isolated unit will require increased cohesion. His essential willingness to make the ultimate sacrifice remains unchanged, his required reserves of physical strength will increase and the environment he operates in will still be authoritarian in nature. The warrior ethos required of the land warrior in the "Army After Next" will not change radically - even as technology does. When, then will changing technology demand, or allow, a change in the warrior ethos?

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[10] Although nearly autocratic in combat, no military authority is absolute. The Uniform Code of Military Justice explicitly delineates between an order and a lawful order. No military leader maintains authority if he is not under

The warrior paradigm will change dramatically when the warrior is no longer essential to the exercise of national power - when no human is required to close with and destroy an enemy. This state of affairs will emerge either when technology allows the employment of the near-human robot soldier, or when the application of the broader elements of National power; diplomatic, economic, military, and "information power", totally negate the need to remain able to close with and destroy an enemy. The first course of action is possible, but distant. The second is like the Holy Grail - an unachievable goal, vainly talked of and sought for thousands of years.

Technology could, someday, remove the requirement for human soldiers to close with and destroy the enemy. Although difficult, we might imagine an army of robots, controlled from secure, networked work stations, deployed to a "hotspot" and actually able to seek out and destroy all conceivable resistance, allowing the direct introduction of an Army of aid workers and diplomats able to sort out the mess and declare victory. The problem of course, is that we are nowhere close. We have detailed plans to dramatically improve the human warrior. We can not, however, technologically or economically hope to deploy an army of robots anytime in the next quarter century, probably much, much longer. The future land warrior may be more efficient, and as such, can be employed in smaller units, but the ethos will remain significantly unchanged because the man in the suit is still a man. Even more distant is the dream of employing universally effective national power without deploying troops.

Overly optimistic thinkers have long advocated and predicted the time when technological advances would allow the application of decisive military power from the relative safety of

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authority and no order is legitimate unless it is legal.

airplanes, ships and missile silos. We were confidently and inaccurately instructed that strategic bombing would cause the collapse of the Third Reich without engaging the German Army. In 1960, Morris Janowitz, a thoughtful military sociologist, predicted in *The Professional Soldier*, despite the cold truth of recent combat in Korea, that the Nuclear Age had ushered in the era of the military manager and ushered out the warrior.[11] Within a few short years, however, Army and Marine warriors were reviving and relying on the old ethos, slugging it out and winning battles in the jungles of Vietnam while at home the "whiz kids" counted bodies but failed to compute a winning strategy.

Today, we see more of the same. Technophiles dream of avoiding ground combat while young Americans die in Grenada, Panama, Kuwait and Somalia. We deploy thousands of soldiers to Bosnia to keep the peace while still trying to win a "lasting peace" in Iraq with cruise missiles. The current crisis in Kosovo only underscores the assertion. The issue here is not foreign policy – we may be doing exactly the right thing on both fronts. The situation, however, reveals again that we do not yet possess decisive power without deploying soldiers into ground combat. As T.R. Feherenbach noted in his classic book focused on small-unit ground combat in Korea, "Americans in 1950 discovered something that since Hiroshima they had forgotten: you may fly over a land forever; you may bomb it, atomize it, pulverize it and wipe it clean of life – but if you desire to defend it, protect it, and keep it for civilization, you must do this on the ground, the way the Roman legions did, by putting your young men into the mud."[12]

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[11] Morris Janowitz, The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait (New York: Free Press, 1960) pp. 21-103
[12] T.R. Feherenbach, This Kind of War, (New York: Ballantine 1957), 426.

So what is the net effect of our rapidly developing technology on the warrior ethos? I contend that into the far distant future, we will continue to require flesh and blood men to close with and destroy the enemy. The future warrior will be equipped more effectively and will therefore be organized and deployed in smaller units, as the Army's current reorganization of its heavy forces precisely demonstrates.

In the civil war, 93.2% of all soldiers served in purely military occupational specialties. Following the Korean War, that number had shrunk to 28.8%. Today, an even smaller percentage serve in purely military specialties and not all of those are positions that close with and destroy the enemy. In his paper on military culture, Don Snider uses the idea of a spear to visualize the composition of the Army. In the civil war nearly the entire spear was composed of warriors - a big tip and a small shaft. By the mid-fifties, warriors comprised only the leading quarter of the spear while the majority at the throwing end represented the military professionals essential to supporting the warriors. Now as technology continues to change the nature of war fighting, the pointed end of the spear has grown smaller. This change is OK. The professional military culture and the warrior ethos have adapted to their roles. What has not changed, however, is the ethos essential to the men at point of the spear. While the percentage of the force they represent may continue to decrease (although not significantly in relation to the entire organization), the essential nature of the warrior ethos will not change significantly as long as men draw near to engage in personal combat. The point of the spear looks different for a reason. Tinker with the ethos and you unwittingly may degrade effectiveness.

Changing Roles and Missions and the Warrior Ethos

In this post-cold war, single super-power world, the most visible roles and missions of the US Army have changed dramatically. For over forty years, the Army was locked in a seemingly endless struggle with the Soviet Union. The majority of Americans, including the country's civilian leadership, elites and the military agreed on and generally supported the Army's primary missions: to contain the spread of communism and prevent the red hordes from streaming through the Fulda Gap. Air-Land battle doctrine was developed with this essential mission in mind. In recent years, however, the predominant use of the Army has been in what we officially term "Military Operations Other Than War" – whether peacekeeping, peacemaking, humanitarian relief or a Somalian blend that spills over into hot combat. Now, prominent politicians are advocating the increased use of the armed forces in the war on drugs, civil disturbance, patrolling the borders and disaster relief and the Army is actively participating.[13] The relevant question though is not the proper use of the Army in domestic and foreign policy but whether the Army's changing roles and missions will reduce the importance of the warrior ethos? Does the ethos need to change in light of the "new world order" and the Army's directed missions to help police than order? As we are currently organized, the answer is clearly no.

Our changing roles and missions should not have a significant affect on the warrior ethos. First, the Army has a legal imperative, defined in both the constitution and in US Statutes, that defines it as a war-fighting institution. Second, the Army has wisely determined to maintain its war-fighting organization and culture as it learns and refines its "Other than War" roles and missions. Both of these ideas deserve a brief exam.

The armed forces exist first and foremost to "provide for the common defense of the United States."[14] Its officers are sworn to "defend the constitution against all enemies"[15] and the Army, especially, has its roots sunk deeply in a tradition of war fighting. From Bunker Hill to Antietam through the Meuse-Argonne and Normandy and more recently at Chip-yong-ni, the Ia Drang Valley and at 73 Easting, the Army's tradition is combat and its culture has evolved in that crucible. The Army has a legal imperative and long tradition of preparedness to fight and win - whenever and wherever instructed by our civilian leaders. As long the imperative to fight and win wars remains, however engaged in other worthy uses of military forces, the Army must protect, preserve, and pass on its war-fighting culture in general and the warrior ethos in particular.

The second aspect of the relation of changing roles and missions to the warrior ethos must consider organization. Some experts are advocating wholesale reorganization of the Army as a constabulary force. Others have recently suggested re-organizing a segment of our force structure along constabulary or "Operations Other Than War" lines while retaining the majority of forces organized for combat. The relevant question here is not the wisdom of either recommendation, the first of which deserves a hearty laugh while the second, although posing significant force structure and funding problems, warrants study. The issue, again, is the warrior ethos. A constabulary force requires a law-enforcement ethos, not a warrior ethos. If the Army establishes a permanent constabulary branch, the ethos of that branch will evolve to exhibit and emphasize the behaviors and attributes that are most effective in constabulary operations. In the meantime, however, the

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[13] The Army's JTF-B supports counter-drug operations, regular troops from the now disbanded 7th Infantry Division conducted riot control operations during the LA Riots, JTF-6 actively supports the border patrol effort in the American Southwest and troops from several active duty divisions deployed to provide assistance following hurricane Andrew.
[14] Constitution of the United States.

warrior ethos must remain dominant. A unit of warriors will learn to be effective in Bosnia or helping out after a hurricane, a constabulary unit, however, won't live long enough in combat to learn what got them killed. "No More Task Force Smith's" was a good slogan. It must apply however, not only to equipment and training readiness, but also to the readiness of the ethos essential to success in combat.

Social Change and the Warrior Ethos

The greatest current threat to the soul of the warrior ethos, and therefore to the effectiveness of the Army in war, is externally mandated change based on continually fluctuating social "norms" that are at odds with the ethos essential to success in combat. In the words of one combat veteran, an expert in military culture and sociology, "those who tinker with the culture and climate of military organizations may well be, either unknowingly or without concern, modifying the long-tern effectiveness of America's armed forces."[16] We should not fear change. We should, however, resist the demand to blindly change the ethos of the warrior without diligently and dispassionately studying the effect of those changes on the warrior in combat. As noted by John Hillen, a veteran of the battle of "73 Easting" and now a noted student of military culture and effectiveness, "if the military socializes its culture at the expense of its functional imperatives, it can fail in the most critical way – in war."[17] Essential to our understanding, then, is to know as precisely as possible what effect proposed social or cultural changes will have on the warrior ethos and therefore on battlefield effectiveness. This paper does not pretend to be either a precise or comprehensive study of any specific issue that has, or has the potential, to significantly change the ethos in our units of warriors. The purpose of this section is to question the degree to which warrior units of the Army

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[15] Commissioning Oath for United States Army Officers.
[16] Don M. Snider, "An Uninformed Debate on Militasry Culture," Orbis, Winter 1999, 14.

must be re-cultured to precisely reflect American society – a course of action recently advocated or intimated by many influential leaders including Senators Trent Lott and John McCain.

I submit that the Nation is best served by an Army, and by a force of warriors, that generally looks like society but does not necessarily act like society. This statement is decidedly not a critique of American society. It is neither my interest nor my role to validate or question the values, beliefs or behaviors of citizens of our freethinking Nation. This statement categorically asserts, however, that some of the trendy values and behaviors growingmost visibly in our society, such as nihilism, anti-authoritarianism, universal tolerance and rampant individualism, are diametrically opposed to the ethos essential to success in combat and therefore to defend our country, preserve economic stability, provide for and maintain a favorable world order and to promote National values abroad. So, how should we strive to look like society and in what areas should we intelligently articulate the folly of acting precisely like society.

From one perspective we should cheer Senator McCain's assertion that "the armed services should be a reflection of society."[18] We should actively recruit our Senator's sons along with the sons of South Boston.[19] In activities, specialties and positions in which the assimilation of women increases the combat effectiveness of those units, women can be fully integrated. We should continue to actively recruit racial minorities and assign them to every branch. Infantry branch in particular does not access a proportional percentage of minority officers, especially from the Military Academy. For example, of West Point's 60 black graduates in 1987, only two percent

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[17] John Hillen, "Must U.S. Military Culture Reform?" Orbis, Winter 1999, 55.
[18] Senator John McCain, quoted by George Will, The Washington Post, 22 November 1998.
[19] Although from one perspective we are a volunteer army, we are also a recruited army. That's why we are having a "recruiting shortfall" and not a "volunteering shortfall".

were assigned to the infantry.[20] Once in the force, however, the absolute meritocracy of the battlefield should guide the promotion of all our officers and soldiers. As recently articulated by a senior officer in the Army Personnel Command, "the Army treats everybody fairly but not equally." These are just a few ways the Army should strive to look like the society we are called to defend. We should not, however, allow our combat proven culture to change merely to satisfy an unintelligible desire for the Army to act in accordance with the prevailing popular culture.

The Army must act like an Army and its warrior's ethos should not be sacrificed to sophistication. The discipline essential on the battlefield is incompatible with the tolerance commonly defined as "leeway for variation from a standard". Unit cohesion is degraded by double standards, whether in soldier skills, physical ability or personnel policies. Selfless sacrifice will wane when warriors are forced to accept changes motivated purely social agenda without consideration of combat effectiveness. The warrior's physical and moral strength will atrophy when not strained by the exertion which is foreign to many recruits. Finally, legitimate exercise and respect for authority is irreconcilable with the anti-authoritarian traits that characterize growing segments of our society. The Army culture and the ethos of its warriors must remain firmly rooted not in "traditional values" or in "liberal values" or any values save the virtues demanded by success on the battlefield. We can liberalize our culture on demand but we can not count on our future enemies to play by our newly defined rules. Again in Feherenbach's words, "The infantry battlefield can not be remade to the order of the prevailing opinion of American sociologists."[21]

Preserve, Strengthen and Pass On

[20] West Point graduates are allowed to choose their branch but the needs of the Army may dictate a more structured program help each branch look more like America.
[21] T.R. Feherenbach, This Kind of War, (New York: Ballantine 1957), 434.

Does the warrior ethos require significant change based on the expected technological, functional and social environment and requirements in the early 21st Century? No.

First, our fundamentally changing technology neither demands nor warrants any significant change in the ethos of the warrior. Even in our most advanced conceptions of the "Army After Next" and "network-centric warfare", the brutal realities of men fighting men in direct ground combat remain necessary and essentially unchanged.

Second, the Army's changing roles and missions neither demand, encourage, or allow for a retooling of the fundamental ethos of the warrior. As long as the Army retains the mission to fight and win our Nations wars, the ethos essential to the successful accomplishment of that primary mission remains the ethos of the warrior. While a sole focus on "Operations Other than War" would allow for a constabulary-oriented professional culture, the imperative to be capable and prepared to defend the country and project decisive combat power will endure. Warriors may continue to be directed to perform operations *other than* war but they must retain the ethos essential to successful operations *in* war.

Finally, tremendous changes in broader American culture offer no sound reason for tinkering with the warrior ethos in ways that will deteriorate effectiveness in combat. No one but experienced uniformed soldiers know better the military culture essential to preserve the freedoms of our society. On one level, we must actively work to look like the society we protect but to do what American society ultimately demands of us, we must keep the lodestar of combat effectiveness ahead of other admirable goals. The Nation can not allow the military to ingest the predominant

and trendy behaviors of the society we protect. Liberal values - many of which made our country great - not to mention current popular trends, will die on the battlefield along with the "warriors" who embody them. Tom Ricks, a sophisticated and liberal journalist, also comes to this conclusion in Making The Corps.[22]

The warrior ethos, characterized at minimum by discipline, cohesion, sacrifice, strength and authority, is alive in the Army today. With the tremendous technological, functional and social changes and pressures we face in the coming century, will we preserve, strengthen and pass the ethos on? Anton Myrer drew the title of his classic work Once an Eagle from Aeschylus:

> So in the Libyan fable it is told
> That once an eagle, stricken with a dart,
> Said, when he saw the fashion of the shaft,
> "With our own feathers, not by others' hands,
> Are we now smitten"[23]

We will serve our Nation best by concentrating on, and clearly articulating, the hard values of the battlefield and by defending the necessity that the warrior ethos be preserved.

[22] Thomas E. Ricks, Making the Corps, (New York: Scribner, 1998).
[23] Anton Myrer, Once an Eagle, (New York: Berkley, 1968), ii.

Distinctive Warrior Traits

A 'warrior distinctive' is a facet of character, value, attribute, behavior, belief or attitude that research demonstrates has been necessary for combat effectiveness but which is distinctive from the civilian society and culture we protect. To focus research, I have studied individuals and units in historic combat actions to identify and isolate a number of 'warrior distinctives'. To qualify as a distinctive, a trait must:

1) be essential to combat effectiveness - without this trait, the individual or unit would be measurably less effective.

2) be distinctive from American society at large - although some individuals or segments of society may exhibit this trait, it is not characteristic of the society as a whole.

Based on a review of literature and on personal experience, I identified the following five distinctive warrior traits:

- Discipline
- Cohesion
- Sacrifice
- Strength
- Authority

The following five essays address these warrior traits in detail. Each essay defines the trait from the warrior's perspective, examines why or how that trait is essential to combat effectiveness, addresses the degree to which the trait is distinctive and concludes by identifying policies, actions or procedures that deteriorate the effectiveness of the trait in question.

Discipline

"Discipline is the soul of an Army"
George Washington

Discipline is an imperative behavior in the Warrior Ethos, essential to battlefield effectiveness and different in breadth and depth from the discipline found in the broader American culture. The Warrior Ethos, therefore, must be protected from policies and practices that adversely affect discipline, deteriorating the Warrior's individual and unit combat effectiveness.

Discipline Defined

Before understanding the significance of discipline on the battlefield, it is essential to attempt to define the warrior's view of discipline. The American Heritage Dictionary defines discipline both as, "controlled behavior resulting from training" and "a state of order based on submission to rules and authority".

These definitions recognize both the individual and group nature of discipline. Disciplined individuals exhibit "controlled behavior" while a disciplined unit displays a "state of order". Further, while both sociology and experience demonstrate that individual discipline generally leads to group discipline, the reverse is also expected. Membership in a disciplined group often contributes positively to an individual's commitment to personal discipline.

This essay does not focus on the verb "to discipline" which from its Latin root is best translated 'to teach'. Nor are we addressing primarily the process of 'disciplining' as correction or punishment. At issue is the individuals 'controlled behavior' and the organizational 'state of

order' that results from good teaching and consistent correction. This state of discipline is what is referred to when we say, "Sergeant Hall is a disciplined soldier" or "Bravo Company is a disciplined unit". More importantly, why must SGT Hall be a disciplined soldier, why is Bravo Company more effective than a less disciplined unit, and finally what practices and policies have a negative effect on the development of both personal and unit discipline?

Individual Discipline

We was rotton 'fore we started – we was never disciplined;
We made it out a favour if an order was obeyed.
Yes, every little drummer had his rights and wrongs to mind,
So we had to pay for teachin' –and we paid![1]

Rudyard Kipling

Centuries of warriors have recognized personal discipline as an essential trait. Even those we commonly consider savage or unsophisticated, such as Ghengis Kahn's hordes, understood and demonstrated the effectiveness of personal discipline. The Kahn's warriors were held to a strict standard of personal conduct under which punishment for most violations was severe.[2] Similarly, the warriors among the tribes of American Indians are remembered for their soldierly discipline, at least viewed from within the code or culture under which they lived.

Personal discipline is often defined in the modern military lexicon as 'doing what you're supposed to be doing when no one is looking'. A good soldier 'does what he is supposed to do' - he follows orders. An excellent solder, one who displays a high degree of personal discipline, possesses the internal motivation to follow orders or 'do the right thing' even when his boss is not watching. Further, we understand that discipline in the "little things" is an indicator of discipline in "big things". Likewise, an individual's or unit's level of discipline in peacetime

[1] "That Day", Rudyard Kipling
[2] Ghengis Khan Book

activities and operations is the best predictor of expected discipline in the stress, confusion and less structured environment of combat.

The young soldier who goes to the gym on a day off to train his body to peak physical condition displays the controlled behavior we call discipline. Likewise, the young officer who follows unit standards and ensures his platoon is awake and alert before sunrise – prepared for "stand-to" – even though his commander is in another location demonstrates the individual discipline that affects the entire unit.

As discipline is the soul of an Army, so isolated indiscipline strains the fabric and widespread indiscipline wreaks havoc upon the Army. Examples are numerous of units surprised and overrun because of the sleepy indiscipline of a single soldier who failed to remain alert on guard duty. A further example of the results of uncontrolled behavior on the battlefield comes from the British parachute assault at Arnhem. As a matter of policy, British paratroopers were forbidden to carry maps marked with unit plans during either training exercises or combat. This excerpt from the war diary of a member of the German Panzer Grenadier force near Arnhem demonstrates the ramifications of one soldier's neglect.

> *"Sunday, 17 December 1944, Battalion HQ, From maps found on a captured British dispatch rider, we discovered that the enemy has two main lines of advance: one along the railway bed and one in the direction of the hotel on the north edge of Oosterbeek." The diary continues "To be forewarned is to be forearmed."*[3]

We can only speculate the cost in lives of one soldier's lack of personal discipline as his buddies in the 1st British Parachute Brigade fought, and failed, to reach the bridge at Arnhem. It

[3] RW

takes no speculation, however, to state that personal indiscipline in combat often results in loss of life and potentially in mission failure.

While personal indiscipline kills, soldiers who display personal discipline preserve both the soul and the body of the Army. Antidotes of personal discipline on the battlefield, however, are not essential because personal discipline is often ordinary, not extra-ordinary. Warriors across time have fought effectively with ordinary personal discipline - the controlled behavior that causes them to remain alert while alone on guard duty, to clean their weapons without being told and to check their personal equipment before departing on a mission. Personal discipline, however, is only half of the discipline that is essential to the warrior ethos. To be effective on the battlefield, units must be disciplined organizations.

Unit Discipline

Unit discipline can be defined as, 'a state of order based on submission to rules and authority'. The measurement, therefore, is the 'state of order'. What is being measured, however, is the units submissiveness to understood rules and legitimate authority[4]. Thus, the traditional measures of unit discipline such as uniformity or precision in close order drill are not ends in themselves but help assess the status of individual and corporate understanding of standards and obedience to these standards. A unit is not disciplined because every soldier maintains a regulation haircut, keeps himself within the physical weight standards and wears his uniform in exact accordance with stated proscriptions. A unit is disciplined because every soldier submits himself to the stated rules and authority and this submission can be measured in part, but only in part, by the appearance factors noted above. These external indicators are

visible manifestations, but not the essence, of unit discipline. Thus, the definition of unit discipline, in a speech by British Regimental Sergeant Major J.C. Lord to the Army Staff College in 1963, as "a moral, mental and physical state in which all ranks respond to the will of the commander whether he is there or not" is accurate.[5]

Colonel Joshua Chamberlain's Regiment of Maine Volunteers, the 20th Maine, at Gettysburg gives us a superb example of this state of order. Though depleted of powder and balls and having resisted three confederate assaults, Chamberlain's order to fix bayonets and charge was followed with instant obedience. As impressive as the controlled behavior of the individuals to immediately responded was the precision with which the 20th Maine executed the difficult 'pinwheel' turning movement that broke the rebel attack and preserved the Union line. Many other virtues contributed to the 20th Maine's success. Certainly the physical strength, moral courage, and the cohesion of the group were important. Primarily though, the unit's immediacy and precision in responding to orders was the essential element of their battlefield success.[6] Discipline is essential to unit effectiveness on the battlefield, not only to overcome the enemy without, but also to transcend the enemy within, especially the natural proclivity of groups to move towards disunity. The law of physics, which states in summary that, without the introduction of external forces, systems continually move from order toward a state of disorder, applies to groups of people as well. Without the injection of discipline a unit naturally moves toward disorder, disunity and therefore ineffectiveness. Further, this effect is compounded in periods of increased stress and confusion.

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[4] Clarify the issue of legitimate authority and address concerns of 'blind obedience', etc.
[5] From the text of a speech given by British Regimental Sergeant Major J.C. Lord to the Army Staff College on 23 July 1963

This critical role of group discipline, a corporate submission to authority, in overcoming the inherent anarchy of combat is demonstrated well by events in Stalag 11B in the closing months of WWII. The following extract from the Sunday Times of London dated 2 May 1945 describes the positive group effects of controlling individual behavior.

> *Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM) Lord spent just over six months at Stalag 11B. Taken prisoner at Arnhem, he arrived soon afterwards with several hundred fellow prisoners from the [British] 1st Airborne Division. He found the prisoners in conditions of chaos and misery. They tended to succumb to the lethargy that hunger boredom and squalor easily led to. They lived in decay and wretchedness, and when they died their bodies were taken almost unheeded to their graves on an old cart.*
>
> *That was what RSM Lord found and this is what Major Ralph Cobbold, Coldstream Guards, found when he paid the camp its first visit on the day of liberation.*
>
> *At the gate was an impressive guard in maroon beret. "We thought that the 6th Airborne Division must somehow have gotten there first", said Major Cobbold, "but when I asked the commander of the guard when he'd arrived his answer was, 'Just after Arnhem, Sir.' It was faultlessly turned out, that guard. It could have gone on duty at Buckingham Palace and done credit to the Corps."*
>
> *Then a majestic figure appeared, the RSM himself, with gleaming brass, immaculate webbing, razor-edged trouser creases, dazzling boots, a spectacular salute. As the officers walked with him to his office hundreds of prisoners, though wild with joy of liberation, saluted with precision. In the office he produced chairs and offered cups of tea. Asked for the numbers and particulars of prisoners in the Stalag, RSM Lord rang a bell. "Bring me the personnel files, Corporal" he ordered when the door opened, and the fullest details were handed to Major Cobbold.*
>
> *"Passing through the camp, the officers were able to judge the magnitude of the task performed by RSM Lord and his team of Warrant Officer and NCO's. In place of the lifeless confusion of six months earlier they saw everywhere evidence of the highest morale and discipline. A smoothly running organization had been worked out and maintained. Daily inspection guard mounting, most unpopular when introduced, had restored the prisoners self-respect and revived their military bearing, and all had been accomplished amid appalling conditions of over-crowding and undernourishment."*[7]

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[6] Killer Angels

Instructive is the fact that forcing the prisoners to perform a daily mounting of the guard, complete with all the seemingly foolish external checks like uniform inspections, proper drill and ceremony and the relative absurdity of British prisoners mounting a military guard within a German prison camp, was fundamental to reestablishing a state of order within the group. The true benefit, of course was not a spit and polished guard force but the restoration of self-respect, hope, compassion and inner strength among the hundreds of prisoners interned there.

Caution is warranted here to discern from the discipline that establishes an internal state of order and the rigidity that inhibits external initiative. For the American warrior, especially as combat continues to be more decentralized in it's execution, ideal discipline gives the individual the greatest latitude for freedom of thought and action while promoting his acceptance of responsibility toward both his unit and larger unit of which he is a part.[8] Discipline, therefore, will actually increase the initiative of individuals and their units. The discipline that is essential and distinctive in the warrior ethos, is not merely following rules but controlled individual and unit behavior in the absence of supervision and orders.

The Distinctiveness of Warrior Discipline

> *The essential difference between discipline in the military and any other free institution is this – if a man objects, he still does not have the privilege of quitting tomorrow, and if he resists or becomes indifferent and is not corrected, his bad example will be felt to the far end of the line.*[9]
>
> *Armed Forces Officer Guide*

Although similar in root, the discipline both required and essential in our Warrior's and their units is different in breadth and depth from the personal and group discipline found in broader

[7] Sunday Times of London, 2 May 1945

American society. In breadth, the discipline required of the warrior rightfully spans to every facet of his life and in depth, the warrior cannot quit. These qualities set military discipline apart from its cousins in the balance of society.

The reach of the controlled behavior required in our warriors is so broad it is nearly all-inclusive. This must be true, and must be protected since the warrior is never off-duty, his skills and behaviors cannot be developed overnight and since the price of failure is extreme.

By virtue of the requirement of his chosen profession, the warrior is never completely off duty. Even at night, on weekends or on vacation, our country's warriors may be immediately recalled to perform tasks that may be fundamental to support national policy or essential to national security. For this reason, we enforce a code of conduct that reaches past the working hours to control soldiers activities at all times. Standards of personal appearance and submission to public authority are enforced to maintain the bearing and obedience instantly required on the battlefield. This aspect of the breadth of warrior discipline differs significantly from the discipline required in society at large. Most civilian employers, especially those employing the majority of our warrior-aged citizens, have little interest in the off-duty conduct of their employees. Controlled behavior, especially immediate control, is not normally essential to profit. Generalizing, in the military a DUI charge is cause for nearly universal punishment and quick dismissal while in the civilian sector, as long as your buddy can drive you to work, what you did last night is of little concern, especially if you are skilled in your job. This is not an indictment of civilian societal practice but an example of the higher standard of discipline

[8] The Armed Forces Officer, (DOD Pamphlet 1-20), 29 December 1960, pp.159
[9] AFO

required for the warrior. The concept that a warrior is never off duty is complemented by the fact that his skills and behaviors can not be developed overnight.

Few 'entry-level' positions in the world require a training program as long or as rigorous as that of the basic combat infantryman. Even in war, we take months to individually and collectively train our citizen soldiers to produce soldiers who meet the minimum qualifications to enter combat. Since our aim, however, must be to continue to develop the best-trained, most capable warrior possible - for his own survival and that of his unit and the Nation - the training process continues ad infinitum. The citizen who develops certain skills, behaviors and capabilities eventually develops into a warrior. The ability to pull a trigger can be taught in minutes. The skill to calm the nerves in the midst of mortal combat, to select a specific target from a crowded street, to hit this moving target at great distance and to do so with greater and greater precision requires months, even years of training. Likewise, the behavior of instant obedience is learned over time. The obedience required in combat is only learned in situations closely resembling combat and this only through time and repetition. Further, controlled behavior without supervision is best taught by controlling behavior with minimal supervision. Thus, standards of off-duty conduct reinforce daily the controlled behavior essential when the call to battle comes. Finally, some of the warrior's capabilities are developed only over time. Just like the world class athlete trains for years to discipline his body for extraordinary effort, so the extraordinary physical effort required for combat effectiveness is developed only over months and years. In these respects also, civilian society is quite different. Most entry-level skills, although sometimes requiring great expertise, do not require the precision under phenomenal stress that a combat rifleman must attain. Further, business's price of a failure in discipline is lost profit while in combat it is lost life.

Thus, the breath of discipline required in our warriors is fundamentally different than that required in the majority of other occupations in our society. Also fundamentally different is the depth of the warrior's discipline.

The depth of discipline required is evident by the fact that a warrior can not quit. The warrior is on the team for the long haul. He has no latitude in determining how far he wants to go. In fact, he takes an oath that binds him by law to this commitment. It is the fact of commission or enlistment that gives special distinction to the man and in turn requires that the measure of devotion to the service of his country be distinctive, as compared with the charge laid upon the average citizen.[10] This oath and commission specifically mandates the warrior's allegiance to the Constitution and obedience to the orders of the President of the United States and the officers appointed over him.[11]

Enemies of Discipline

> *When the general is morally weak and his discipline not strict, when his instructions and guidance are not enlightened, when there are no consistent rules to guide the officers and men and when the formations are slovenly the Army is in disorder or self-induced chaos.*
>
> *Sun Tzu*

If discipline is a state of order that results from individually controlled behavior – what are the actions that deteriorate the level of discipline essential for battlefield effectiveness? To develop, discipline requires two essentials. First is a clearly defined standard of conduct. Second discipline develops and is strengthened when members of a unit are held fairly, equally

[10] The Armed Forces Officer, (DOD Pamphlet 1-20), 29 December 1960, pp. 1
[11] Commissioning Oath

and consistently accountable to that defined unit standard. The enemies of discipline, therefore, are the failure to establish a recognized standard of conduct and the failure to hold individuals consistently accountable to that standard.

The first essential in instilling discipline in both individuals and units is the existence of a clearly defined standard of conduct, the lack of which will naturally breed indiscipline. Since we have defined discipline as 'controlled behavior' and a 'state of order', there must be individual understanding of the behavior which is considered proper and understanding of the level of order to which the group must aspire. Medieval knights maintained the code of chivalry and ancient Japanese Samurais have held themselves to the code of Bushido. Similarly, the modern warrior must have a code by which to measure his conduct. In its vast breadth of regulations, the Army has defined a standard for much of the modern warrior's conduct, both personal and skill specific.[12] Further however, the most effective units develop additional written standards to emphasize the skills, behaviors and capabilities required for effectiveness in specific specialties.

In the Army's 75th Ranger Regiment, the Ranger Standards book refines or defines the standards of conduct that are most important to the unit. This code is both accessible to and understood by every member of the unit. Standards of personal appearance, physical conditioning, and on-duty and off-duty deportment are clearly defined. The existence, availability and constant teaching of the standards help make the Ranger regiment an extremely disciplined unit. The mere existence of clearly defined standards, however, is only the beginning.

[12] Not addressed directly in this essay is the issue of what specific standards for personal, off-duty conduct are essential to maintenance of the Warrior Ethos. The primary issue addressed is that existing standards must be clearly defined and consistently and fairly enforced. However, the related essays on Sacrifice, Strength, Authority and Cohesion help reveal some of the personal traits that must be integrated into a Warriors entire life, both on duty and off, in order to maintain the Ethos essential success in combat.

Discipline is instilled not merely by the presence of a standard but by the consistent, rigorous and thoughtful application of the standard to every member of the unit.[13] Thus, discipline is destroyed when the defined standard is not enforced. Every time an individual is held accountable to the established standard, individual and unit discipline are strengthened. Conversely, every time the violation of an established standard is not addressed directly, discipline is weakened and the importance of the particular standard in question is reduced. Consistent failure to enforce a specific standard eventually demonstrates to the entire organization that following that particular standard is optional. Further, the relativity of a single standard calls into question the importance of every other organizational standard.

Individual discipline is foundational to the Warrior Ethos and this individual behavior breeds the unit discipline that is essential to battlefield success. To remain effective in combat, our Warriors must maintain explicit standards of conduct, both personal and skill related, and must enforce these standards consistently.

[13] This essay focuses on the detrimental effect on unit discipline of a general failure to consistently hold individuals accountable to the established standard. The related essay on Cohesion focuses on the problems of an inconsistent application of discipline and on the effects on cohesion of establishing of double, or multiple standards.

Cohesion

We would not die in that man's company
That fears his fellowship to die with us . . .
We few, we happy few, we band of brothers
For he today that sheds his blood with me shall be my brother.
Shakespeare, Henry V

The essential nature of cohesion on the battlefield, and it's sources, continue to be questioned by elites. One constant, however, is that experienced combat veterans nearly unanimously assert that unit cohesion is essential to building combat-ready units, and to success in combat. This unit cohesion is different than the camaraderie found within groups of workers in other occupations. Further, since small unit cohesion is essential and distinctive to the Warrior Ethos, it must be protected from policies and practices that prevent it from developing or cause it to deteriorate.

Cohesion Defined

In physics, cohesion is defined as "the attraction by which the elements of a body are held together." The root "cohere", in general, means to "stick or hold together". Cohesion further refers both to the process of cohering and to the condition, or end-state, in which a body is held together. Cohesion then, as an essential element of the Warrior Ethos, is the attraction between the members of a military unit that causes them to hold together through extreme external pressure. A unit that develops a strong bond between individuals holds together, by mutual attraction, through the extraordinary stress of combat.

Cohesion in the Warrior's dimension of the battlefield is predicated by mutual confidence between members of a unit in each others skill, physical ability and courage. Technical skill,

whether in combat marksmanship or the ability to safely and effectively construct an explosive charge, is required for a soldier to do his job, which in turn allows his buddies to do their jobs. Physical ability is also essential. The warrior must be physically able to perform every task in his unit, not merely his primary assigned task, and he must be able to physically keep up with his buddies. Finally, personal courage is crucial to developing cohesion. A combat warrior must develop confidence in the courage of his buddies on the left and right. However, beyond this technical description of the basis of cohesion, there is bond that develops between warriors that remains difficult to understand outside of experience. The mutual confidence described thickens through shared danger, hardship and near total transparency in living relationships. This process transforms confidence into a deep interpersonal bond that results in a battlefield world-view that places service and sacrifice, to both comrades and to the small-unit, over survival. There is no way to empirically measure this bond and it is difficult to comprehend outside of experience. It is, however, real, essential, and at the heart of unit cohesion.

Effective Cohesion

Warriors recognize cohesion as an essential element of battlefield success because combat is never an individual effort. First, cohesion is essential in "routine" combat operations because nearly all tactical techniques are built on the concept of mutual support. Further, cohesion is essential when a unit faces difficult, sometimes dire odds, where the bond between individuals is often the only force that keeps a unit from total collapse and defeat.

Military operations, especially those which require ground troops to "close with and destroy the enemy", are founded on the principle of mutual support. From the lowest possible "group", a

2-man buddy team, to battalion and higher level operations, mutual support between elements is essential to success in ground combat. This principle is embedded in military doctrine because it has been proven over centuries of combat. For example, basic tactics for the smallest ground maneuver element, the infantry squad, teach that when the squad maneuvers against an objective, half the members are static and provide a "base-of-fire" to keep the enemy from moving or reorienting. This allows the other half of the squad to flank around and destroy the enemy. This principle is the basis of not only all infantry tactics but maneuver warfare in general. For these tactics to work on the battlefield, mutual confidence in the skill, physical ability and personal courage of each member of the unit is essential.

This is further illustrated by examining the doctrine for an infantry company in the attack. In a company attack, one platoon may serve as a base of fire element to suppress the enemy on the target, often by firing just a few feet ahead of the advancing maneuver element. The maneuver element, another platoon, is tasked with actually assaulting across the objective to kill the enemy. The third platoon may be tasked to secure the area to ensure no one is surprised by an unknown enemy while also prepared to assault the objective and continue the attack if the maneuver platoon requires assistance. In this common scenario, the mutual confidence required between members of the unit is clear. The maneuvering platoon, advancing just behind the direct fire provided from the base-of-fire element must have enormous confidence in the skill of their buddies to provide precision fire. One poor shot can easily result in fratricide. These same assaulting troops must also have confidence in the physical ability and courage of their buddies alongside to keep up with and continue the assault. When soldiers fall back, the troops at the

lead are exposed unnecessarily to the enemy their buddy was supposed to cover. Mutual confidence is fundamental to success in routine operations.

Cohesion, while essential in "routine" combat operations, is even more crucial when plans are falling apart, men are dying and the enemy is winning. The price in these cases is not only failure to accomplish the assigned mission but, quite possibly, the loss of the entire unit. The actions of the 1st Marine Division on Guadalcanal provide a classic example of the effect of the bond of cohesion. After months of shared hardship and intense combat, Colonel Chesty Puller's battalion of Marines had developed not only mutual confidence but the deep bond of cohesion that holds units together in the worst of times. On the night of October 24, 1942 that single battalion of marines held a 2-mile line against nine battalions of assaulting Japanese. There is no way to quantify the effect of cohesion in this or any military action, especially the strength of the attraction between warriors that goes beyond confidence in another man's skill, physical ability and courage. What can be remembered, and learned from however, is the tremendous exploit of the marines on that night. Defending against nine to one odds with only one marine for every fifteen feet of jungle, they were skilled, tough, courageous and they had an edge in firepower. What caused them to hold against incredible odds, however, probably saving the entire American position on Guadalcanal, can be attributed to the indestructible attraction that developed between the members of the battalion and caused them to refuse to give up. While difficult to quantify or specify the actual forces of that attraction, its effect is obvious to both the men that were there, to warriors of every other generation and to the student of history. The effect of cohesion on the battlefield, both in the mutual support required in routine operations, and the extra-ordinary

attraction that holds small units together through hardship, should be apparent. Is this bond, however, distinctive to the warrior ethos?

Distinctive Cohesion

Cohesion, as an essential trait in the Warrior Ethos, is distinctive from the cohesion found both in society and in the broader military culture. This distinctiveness, however, lies primarily in the intangible bond described above and felt by centuries of warriors who have lived, suffered and died together.

Shakespeare's words in Henry V - "For he that sheds his blood with me shall be my brother"[1] - identify the distinctive source of cohesion in the warrior ethos. Shared pain, suffering, hardship and death form a crucible in which the intangible and distinctive nature of cohesion is formed. Few civilian occupations, even on their most difficult days, compare the shared hardship experienced by the warrior units, even while in routine training. None compares to the suffering and death that is normal in combat. This bond is not unknown in civilian culture, merely unusual. The fire fighters in a single department, through shared danger, form a deeper bond than most. Even grown siblings often grow closer, sometimes permanently, through the long process of dealing with the death of a parent. These experiences of shared hardship which strengthen the intangible bond between people in civil society are tremendously magnified both in military training and in combat.

Even within the military services, however, the distinctiveness of cohesion varies. The importance of cohesion is directly proportional to the distance of a unit from the ugly reality of front-line, direct combat. Further, cohesion is more important between units that directly rely on

[1] Henry V, William Shakespeare,

each other at the lowest levels than between units whose mutual support is indirect and less pronounced. For example, the importance of cohesion within and between infantry squads, platoons and companies is huge. These small units operate together regularly at the edge of battle. However, within larger organizations such as divisions, corps and even the Army as a whole, the importance of cohesion to battlefield effectiveness diminishes. The frontline infantry company rarely relies directly on the work of a strategic level intelligence organization. Here again, the distinctiveness of cohesion to the warrior ethos is apparent. While some level of cohesion develops and is important most units, cohesion is essential both within and between the small, frontline units that close with and destroy the enemy. Here, in its depth and breadth, cohesion is distinctive to the warrior ethos. Therefore, because the cohesion essential in units of warriors is different from both society and the broader military culture, the actions and policies that deteriorate the bond must be identified and prevented from impacting the warrior sub-culture.

Enemy of Cohesion

Cohesion grows and is maintained through mutual confidence. Therefore, actions and policies that erode mutual confidence will either prevent a unit from developing cohesion or erode cohesion already matured. Two similar enemies conspire to inhibit this process. First, units that publish varying standards for members within that unit will not cohere significantly. Second, cohesion deteriorates within groups that fail to enforce a single standard equally.

Just as discipline will not form in groups which do not have a known standard of conduct and performance, cohesion will not develop between members of a group who are held to different

standards. In a small unit, such as a platoon, if one squad is required to run five miles in forty minutes while the other squads are required only to run four miles in forty minutes, mutual confidence based on physical ability will not develop. Similarly, between individuals, if soldiers with 20/20 sight are required to hit at least 36 of 40 targets during marksmanship training while soldiers with less than 20/20 eyesight are required to hit only 28 targets, the mutual confidence required for cohesion to develop based on skill will not form. While this failure to establish a single standard will naturally cause disintegration, not cohesion, a similar principle will deteriorate the cohesion already present in a group.

When standards are not enforced equally within a group, cohesion is the first casualty. Inequality undermines the mutual confidence required to maintain the attraction between individuals or sub-units. This holds true for standards of skill, physical ability and courage, as well as other standards of personal conduct. Most small combat units have a very practical standard which states that every member of the unit must be able to perform not only his own assigned tasks, but also, the tasks of his peers. For example, a rifleman must also be able to carry, operate and maintain the machinegun. Since a single bullet on the battlefield can turn a rifleman into a machine gunner, the utility of this standard is obvious. Therefore, if a new rifleman does not develop the physical ability to move a long distance carrying the heavier machine gun, can not learn to operate that more complex weapon and is not held to the unit's standard, cohesion will suffer. The other members of the unit must have confidence in both the physical ability and the skill of every member of the group to maintain the established standards.

As stated, this is true in matters of personal conduct as well. For example, the military maintains a code of conduct of that states that adultery is unprofessional and therefore is not

tolerated. The "rightness" or "wrongness" of the policy aside, if that regulation is not enforced equally within a small unit, or even an entire organization, mutual confidence will erode, taking cohesion down with it. Thus, to develop and maintain cohesion between the individuals and sub-units in an organization, the standards of both performance and conduct must be the same and must be equally enforced. Units that develop double standards fall apart, as do units that fail to enforce standards equally.

Cohesion is an essential element of the warrior ethos. Over time, mutual confidence based on skill, physical ability and courage develops into a deeper attraction that is the basis of mutual support in routine operations and which keeps units from collapsing under extreme pressure. This cohesion is different not only from the larger American culture but even distinctive from the broader military culture as well. Finally, cohesion is a comparatively fragile state, vulnerable during its development to the dangers of double standards and vulnerable in its maturity to an unequal enforcement of universal standards.

Sacrifice

What was not luck but the soul of the United States of America in action, was this willingness of the torpedo plane squadrons to go in against hopeless odds. This was the extra ounce of material weight that in a few decisive minutes tipped the balance of history. [1]

Warrior's sacrifice. This willingness to subordinate personal desires, rights and even life itself for a greater good is essential to effectiveness on the battlefield but incongruous with mans basic behaviors. This attribute should therefore be accepted as a distinctive warrior trait which must be nurtured and protected.

The Warrior's Sacrifice Defined

Sacrifice is defined as "the forfeiture of something highly valued for the sake of one considered to have a greater value." For the warrior, this 'something highly valued' includes some individual freedoms such as speech and association and must include the conscious willingness to die. While soldiers undoubtedly fight for their own survival, they must be willing to place the best interest of their unit, defense of their country and sometimes even the promulgation National values abroad ahead of what otherwise becomes a selfish interest in individual survival.

This definition recognizes that it is more than "merely" the possibility of combat death that a warrior accepts but that there is a daily sacrifice of personal freedom implicit in the idea of service. The warrior is not an individual who may someday, if called, have to give his life for his country. The warrior places the welfare of his men, his buddies, his unit and his country ahead of his own personal desires and ambitions everyday.

[1] War and Remembrance, pp. 310

Effective Battlefield Sacrifice

No battlefield success is attainable without sacrifice. Further, the most effective individuals and units are those who courageously lay down their own lives for those of their buddies and to complete an assigned mission

By definition, combat requires sacrifice. Whether plain or heroic, whether effective or a 'waste', the battlefield requires the lives of many who fight. War is violence and as long as there are those who are willing to die for what they believe, war will require death. Simply theoretically, we can be sure that success on the battlefield requires physical sacrifice. At issue is the question of effectiveness.

The actions of the three American torpedo plane squadrons in the Battle of Midway provide a stunning example "heroic" sacrifice that initially appeared to be "waste". With no fighter escort, these torpedo squadrons threw themselves at the Japanese Carrier Striking Force. The first wave of 15 planes from the USS Hornet, flying low, straight and slow on their torpedo runs, were decimated. Japanese Zeros and anti-aircraft fire dropped every American plane into the sea. Only one of the thirty pilots and gunners survived. Of the few torpedoes dropped, none hit.

Seconds later, the 14 torpedo planes from the USS Enterprise, again lacking fighter escort to protect from the Zeros, began their sacrificially slow torpedo runs at the Japanese, fully aware of the failure of the previous attack. Ten of fourteen planes were shot down. Eighteen of twenty-eight American Naval Aviators died. No Japanese carrier was damaged. Under these bleak odds, with apparently no possibility of effectiveness, twelve torpedo planes from the USS Yorktown followed precisely the same script. Twenty-one Americans died, three survived.

In total, sixty-one Americans paid the ultimate sacrifice and not a single Japanese ship was damaged. The odds for survival were hopeless and the sacrifice appeared to be a waste. The next few minutes however, changed history and demonstrated to the survivors, though not to the dead, that their sacrifice was not in vain.

With the Carrier Striking Force in mild confusion and their fighter cover down low, having just destroyed Torpedo Squadrons Three, Six and Eight, two squadrons of American dive-bombers attacked the Japanese. Two carriers were sunk almost immediately, one was mortally wounded and scuttled that night and the fourth was attacked later in the day and eventually sunk. The willingness of eighty-two Americans to sacrifice their lives against hopeless odds for an unknown outcome changed the entire course of WWII.

Sending the torpedo squadrons separately was not planned. Having the dive-bombers follow was not coordinated. The timing of the attack was luck. Herman Wouk's words from War and Remembrance capture the essence of these warrior's sacrifice.

> What was not luck but the soul of the United States of America in action, was this willingness of the torpedo plane squadrons to go in against hopeless odds. This was the extra ounce of material weight that in a few decisive minutes tipped the balance of history. [2]

General Charles Krulak, USMC, tells the poignant story of a young Marine Lance-Corporal in Vietnam, who, although literally ripped apart by .50 caliber machine gun fire, advanced alone against the weapon that was tearing his body to pieces in order to draw it's fire away from the

[2] War and Remembrance, pp. 310

other members of his Infantry platoon.[3] That Marine's willing sacrifice was essential to allow the remainder of his platoon relative freedom to maneuver on and destroy the entrenched enemy. Although our first instinct and reaction is for survival, the Warrior's decision and action must be to sacrifice.

This type of sacrifice made the US Fleet at Midway effective against a numerically superior Japanese force and gave the Marine Infantry platoon cited the ability to maneuver effectively against an enemy who had gained a marked advantage. The sacrifice made by these warriors undoubtedly made their units more effective. They were successful in their missions. This sacrifice, however, is not only essential to effectiveness but is distinctive to the Warrior Ethos.

Distinctive Sacrifice

A Warrior's sacrifice has two components that set it apart from the culture at large. First is the obvious understanding that what is sacrificed may be the life of the warrior. Second is a transcendent confidence in the "greater value" of the entire military endeavor. Further, a Warrior's sacrifice is not only distinctive from the society they protect but in some respects different from the preponderance of the professional military culture as a whole.

There is no civilian occupation that compares to the totality of physical sacrifice required of the warrior. Except for law enforcement, there are no occupations in which death is a routine result of regular, successful activity. In potentially dangerous occupations, such as commercial flight or difficult construction, death is not routine, it is exceptional – the result of an accident, not of a planned action. Similarly in fire-fighting, although there are many examples of heroic

[3] An Address by General Charles Krulak to the Naval War College, Newport , RI, 15 Dec 1998.

individuals sacrificing themselves to save a life, this sacrifice is not the result of routine activities but occur within an extraordinary set of circumstances. Even in law enforcement, there are few instances, if any, in which tens or hundreds of men are ordered to advance into withering fire against almost hopeless odds. Our law enforcement professionals are often courageous but their primary tasks are not to "close with and destroy the enemy" and rarely are they called on to do so in a premeditated fashion. Conversely, personal sacrifice – death – is a normal, even acceptable part of routine combat activities. For example, Army doctrine states that 10-30% casualties are acceptable losses for several routine combat missions. This possibility of death places the warrior's sacrifice in a category incomparable to any in the civilian sector.

Further, while the distinctiveness of the Warrior's sacrifice from civilian society is easily seen, less obvious is the difference in level of sacrifice within the military culture. Sacrifice is the essential element that sets the warrior ethos apart from a more general professional military culture. All military members are required to sacrifice some personal freedoms and many members from most specialties may be placed in danger. However, there is a relatively small group whose primary tasks require them to "close with and destroy the enemy", whether on the ground, from the air or on the sea.[4] This is the sub-culture of warriors. While this small caste is incapable of successful combat without the efforts of their brothers in supporting arms and services, there remains a clear distinction in the level of sacrifice routinely expected that separates the warrior from both the professional military culture and the civilian population in

[4] The percentage of Warriors who close with and destroy the enemy has been dramatically decreasing in the last 150 years. In the American Civil War, 93.2% of all soldiers served in purely military occupational specialties. Following the Korean War, that number had decreased to 28.8%. Today, less than ____% of all Army soldiers are assigned to one of the 5 combat arms.

general. Not only, though, is the extreme nature of a warrior's sacrifice distinctive, the purpose or motivation for his sacrifice is also set apart.

The definition of sacrifice noted above identified some "greater value" for which an individual is willing to give his life. In this, the Warrior is again distinctive. On no level is the warrior's sacrifice based on the foundation of personal gain.[5] Ironically, on the micro level, the warrior sacrifices himself for the physical survival of his buddies, and possibly himself, toward the completion of a particular tactical mission. On the macro level, he purposes to stay in the military partly because he has no option (he has sworn an oath for a set period of time) and in the largest sense because he believes that supporting and defending the United States, and it's policies abroad, is worthy of his service. There is an interesting balance here. The warrior chooses to serve - to be a warrior – because he believes the defense and policy of his country are worthy of his service. The warrior fights and sacrifices, however, motivated by intangible group forces such as peer pressure, struggling for survival, caring for his buddies, response to training – the effects of strong unit cohesion.

On both levels, the warrior is distinctive from his civilian counterparts. In the micro view, the motivation of a soldier to give his own life may come from a commitment to complete an assigned mission and further from the instantaneous conviction that his own survival and the survival of his buddies requires extraordinary sacrifice. Just as there are few civilian occupations in which "the ultimate sacrifice" is routine, there are few jobs outside the military in which a

[5] Ambition and personal honor clearly play a role in the warrior's motivation. However, the sacrifice involved in throwing your body on a live grenade to save you buddies or, as in the story noted above, to rush a machine gun to certain death obviously have nothing to do with personal gain. This motivation comes from something entirely separate from ambition, gain or even personal honor.

failure to sacrifice results in the death of those around you. In this case, law enforcement and fire fighting are notable exceptions. Also important to understanding the warrior ethos, however, is the higher motivation for joining and remaining in a professions in which total sacrifice may be routine.

The warrior's choice to serve is distinctive because it is founded on a fundamental belief that his country is worth defending and, more relevant today, that the foreign policies of his country are worthy of possibly sacrificing his life. This commitment is what sets the warrior apart from the mercenary. A warrior is motivated to continue in his profession because he believes that the culture (in the case of defense) and policies (in the case of military operations abroad) of his country are worthy of his sacrifice. This does not suggest that a warrior may quit anytime he disagrees with the way he is being used. He has sworn a commitment to serve for some specified length of time. It does, however, recognize that each time a warrior considers extending that commitment, he must also consider if he will continue to be used in a way that personally justifies the potential of extra-ordinary sacrifice. This decision is an individual one since it is based on the warrior's own values and his perception of the values and policies of his country. This point is crucial since, although a warrior's sacrifice on the battlefield may not be motivated by these lofty ideals, his decision to enter service and maintain the warrior ethos may well be affected by the value he places on national policy.

Both the totality of a warrior's sacrifice and his motivation, by both intense inter-personal forces in combat and by a commitment to some greater national good, are distinctive to the

warrior ethos. To maintain the essential behavior of personal sacrifice, the warrior ethos must be protected from the policies and actions that deteriorate the willingness to sacrifice.

The Enemies of Sacrifice

If the Warrior Ethos requires an individual willingness to purposefully lay down his life for a greater good, what will degrade the warrior's willingness to sacrifice? First, since the warrior must be willing to sacrifice his life, he must be given the greatest chance to survive up to the point that bodily sacrifice is required. Second, a warrior will choose not to continue to serve if he does not perceive a greater good worthy of his life.

Our warriors must be given the greatest possible chance of survival on the battlefield. Thus, every policy or action that may effect the warrior specialties must be approached from the question of, "Will this action fundamentally increase or decrease combat effectiveness?" Policies and activities that increase battlefield effectiveness, and therefore survival, may be pursued. Policies whose overall effect inhibits effectiveness, even they bring other benefits, must be avoided.

To preserve the warrior's willingness to sacrifice, this test should be used for weapons procurement activities, training considerations and personnel decisions. To suggest that policies or procedures that do not strengthen battlefield effectiveness must be accepted on the basis of equality or to protect some individual is incompatible with the warrior's fundamental understanding of sacrifice. By definition, our country's warriors have voluntarily laid down many of their own rights to accept the responsibility of defending American culture. In return,

the warrior is owed the public's commitment to provide the training, equipment and policies that fundamentally increase battlefield effectiveness. Increasing a warrior's chances of survival on the battlefield, however, is not the only factor affecting the willingness to sacrifice. Sacrifice is based on the perception of a greater good.

As defined above, sacrifice is made for the sake of someone or something of greater value and this is what sets the warrior apart from the mercenary. A warrior will, and should, choose to withdraw from the warrior caste if he determines that the policies of his country are not worthy of giving his life. A citizen must certainly accept the responsibility for contributing to the defense of his country even to the point to total sacrifice. However, as the use of our military force moves from defense of the homeland to promotion of economic stability, providing for and maintaining a favorable world order and to the active promotion of National values abroad, the citizen and the warrior must grapple with whether these are greater values worthy of his service. The world has rightfully shown disdain toward the soldiers of the Third Reich who considered Hitler's "values" worthy of personal sacrifice. Except for this statement, however, the further study of this potential problem lies outside the scope of this essay.

Sacrifice is an essential element of the Warrior Ethos. No military unit can be effective where there is an individual absorption with survival and no willingness to sacrifice. This willingness to sacrifice is distinctive from other professions and occupations because it requires a willingness to die as an accepted part of routine, successful operations. Further, the warrior's willingness to sacrifice is degraded if policies and procedures are not measured for their contribution to combat effectiveness. Finally, the current and future warrior's willingness to

serve will fade if the country fails to demonstrate in its foreign policy some greater value that motivates citizens to service.

Strength

You have to lead men in war by bringing them along to endure and display qualities of fortitude that are beyond the average man's thought of what he should do. You have to inspire them when they are hungry and exhausted and desperately uncomfortable and in great danger.

George C. Marshall

Warriors display an exceptional degree of strength, manifest both physically and morally. This strength is essential to effectiveness on the battlefield and differs from the type and depth of strength needed for success in society. The warrior ethos, therefore, should be protected from policies and actions that prevent physical and moral strength from developing.

Strength Defined

Strength is defined as the power to resist strain, stress or attack and is further defined as having the inherent capacity to act, or affect some action. These definitions capture both the defensive and offensive nature of strength. From one perspective, the warrior must have the ability to resist attack, either physical or moral. Further, however, his strength is demonstrated in an innate ability to take positive action, again both physical and moral, especially in the absence of orders and when under great strain or stress. These definitions are valid for both physical strength and moral strength. Both are essential.

Physical strength, as an essential warrior trait, is different from a purely athletic measure of performance. While many specialties in the military require specific physical capabilities, physical strength goes deeper than merely the ability to perform 80 pushups in 2 minutes, run 2 miles in 13 minutes or perform a specific physical task. The warrior must harbor an internal resolve that is manifest as enormous physical endurance under terrific strain, whether for

resistance or positive action. After days and weeks of intensive training or combat, this resistive endurance is the trait that keeps the warrior from quitting on yet another long, tiring, nighttime movement. Often more difficult, the warrior's physical strength must predispose him to getting up and taking positive physical action when already depleted of energy and mentally concluding that further action, either individual or group, is impossible.

Similarly, the warrior must have an inherent reserve of moral strength. Like physical strength, this moral reserve is important both defensively, to resist, and offensively, to act. The warrior must demonstrate, while under considerable stress, the ability to resist immoral actions, especially on the battlefield. The natural tendency in combat, due to the inherent chaos and atmosphere of physical aggressiveness, is for the line of morality to become clouded by the fog of war. It is therefore crucial for the warrior to maintain a reserve of moral strength that allows him to withdraw from the chaos and act in a manner consistent with both his personal values and the values of his country. Further, moral strength is essential not only in resisting immoral conduct but also in taking positive action to impose morality on the battlefield.

The Effectiveness of Physical Strength

Never, never, never give up.
Winston Churchill

Uncommon physical endurance is a fundamental characteristic of the warrior ethos. This inherent strength is a significant signal of military effectiveness, both in the ability to resist the temptation to physically cave and in the motivation to act when inertia tempts inaction.

The Long March of Mao's Chinese Communists provides an excellent example of the importance and benefit of inherent physical endurance. By the summer of 1934, Mao's Chinese Communists were surrounded by Chaing Kai Shek's nationalist Army. Although nearly beaten and physically emptied from years of struggle and a long summer of direct combat, a crucial remnant of Mao's soldiers displayed a remarkable degree of physical strength. In October 1934, Mao's army broke out of the nationalist encirclement and started a one-year retreat that covered 6,000 miles. Although critically short on food, hounded by nationalist troops, depleted by desertion and often moving through unfriendly territory, the communist soldiers demonstrated exceptional physical endurance. The Long March began with 100,000 Chinese communists and ended with less than 10,000. These 10,000 soldiers eventually reached sanctuary and formed the core of the Communist Army that eventually defeated Chaing Kai Shek and won control of all China. Had Mao's soldiers not evaded the Nationalists, the entire communist movement in China might well have collapsed. Their uncommon endurance, however, not only allowed them to escape but was the crucible that defined the army that surprised the entire world. This strength, essential on both the large-unit scale and in the small, is not only important to resist the temptation to give up but to find internally the will to take positive action when idleness appears easier.

General Grant's actions with the Union Army in the Vicksburg Campaign demonstrate the importance of physical strength and positive action. Through the winter of 1963, unable to take direct action against Vicksburg because the rains made anything but limited operations impossible, Grant purposed to preserve and improve the physical strength of his army for the approaching summer campaign. Although he was sure none of his winter activities would be

fruitful in military terms, Grant kept his troops busy making several attempts to reach the Vicksburg high-ground and digging canals attempting to bypass confederate defenses. As expected, none of the efforts were successful. However, by the time the summer sun dried the roads, Grant's Army had the reserves of physical strength required to conduct one of the most successful maneuver campaigns in military history. In Stephen Ambrose's words, "Their muscles were hard, they were used to life in the field instead of the soft life of a permanent camp, and they had learned to get along on short rations." Grant's Army, having developed the inherent endurance required for positive action went on to move further and faster and more agile than the southern defenders could comprehend. They sacked Jackson and seized Vicksburg, destroying southern resistance on the Mississippi and in the southwest. Grant's army developed and maintained the physical strength essential to overcome inertia and take positive action. Strength, however, comes in more than one form and the warrior's moral strength must equal his physical strength.

Moral Strength on the Battlefield

Overwhelming moral courage is the foundation of all great leadership.

Winston Churchill

Moral strength is also critical to effectiveness on the battlefield. As defined above, moral strength is manifest both in the warriors ability to resist immoral activities and to take positive action to infuse his morality into the chaos of combat.

The tremendous stress of combat requires the warrior to display an inherent and uncommon reserve of moral strength. This strength was missing at My Lai, Vietnam in 1968. There is no

doubt that Lieutenant Calley and the soldiers in his platoon were under tremendous strain and stress. Their buddies had been killed by mines, snipers and enemy soldiers dressed as civilians. They had experienced death up close and personally, but had rarely seen the enemy. Although they had shown isolated instances of morality, they had also demonstrated instances of morally questionable behavior. What they lacked was deep moral strength – uncommon endurance. The result is a well-known scar on the effort of US Armed Forces in Vietnam. This scar, however, represents the deaths of hundreds of non-combatant women and children who were killed because a small group of soldiers did not have the reserve of moral strength essential to the warrior ethos. The importance of both physical and moral strength in combat is clear. Not as apparent however is how this trait is distinctive to the warrior ethos.

Distinctive Strength

The warrior's required attributes of physical strength and moral strength are distinctive from similar attributes found across civilian society. While the distinctiveness of the physical strength required on the battlefield is readily apparent, the difference in moral strength required is subtler.

The inherent reserves of physical endurance required for success on the battlefield do not compare with any other occupation or enterprise. First, and most obvious, is the fact that the primary tasks required in the majority of civilian occupations and professions rely more on technical ability, intellectual capacity and salesmanship. Further, even of the tasks that do require physical ability, there are none in which a great reserve of physical endurance, under tremendous strain, is essential to success. A construction worker, for example, often performs tough physical labor but is able to take regular breaks, eat well, get adequate rest each night and

takes weekends off to recover and regenerate for the next weeks effort. Comparing these workers physical requirements however with the inherent strength required of Mao's troops through 370 days and 6,000 miles on the Long March is adequate to assert a distinction. Even the professional athlete, required to perform with uncommon effort over a long season relies on a set schedule of physical recovery, mental rest and nourishment that is almost always unavailable to the warrior. While the distinctiveness of physical strength required of the warrior is readily apparent, the difference in moral strength required is not as clear.

The crucial difference between the moral reasoning important to every citizen and the moral strength essential in the warrior is the role, or rule, of law. In society, there is a well-developed and complex system of law enforcement, courts and public opinion that act to regulate the moral behavior of the population. The warrior, however, is often a law unto himself on the battlefield. It is true, as evidenced by the publicity and repercussions of My Lai, Wounded Knee, and Nazi concentration camps that the truth is usually revealed over time. This does nothing, however, to right the wrongs committed. The stress, aggression and death common in battle tend to heighten the warrior's emotions and cheapen his perspective of the value of life. Both the victorious soldier and the soon-to-be-defeated soldier hold the powers of life and death, over both captives and over civilian lives and property. Whether they do so lightly or with grave control is the crucial question. There is precious little on the battlefield, save the warrior's inner reserve of moral strength, to prevent excessive carnage or atrocity.

The Enemy of Strength.

All military forces remain relatively weak until physically toughened and mentally conditioned through unusual exertion.
SLA Marshall

The opposite of strength is weakness and the chief proponent of weakness is laziness. While the development and maintenance of physical and moral strength requires exercise, the truest measurement of this strength requires assessment while under unusual exertion. Policies and decisions that encourage physical or moral laziness, or which prevent the development of strength through unusual exertion, will erode the strength necessary for combat effectiveness.

That physical laziness will not lead to physical strength is obvious. Less apparent, more destructive and of greater current concern is the potential for moral laziness to erode moral strength. Like physical strength, moral strength is a learned skill, one that is developed and maintained through training and constant attentiveness. Idleness or laziness in maintaining moral strength will certainly destroy it. This is true for both the civilian and the soldier.

This idleness is revealed in an unwillingness to face and make difficult moral decisions. Like skipping a physical workout makes future idleness more likely, so the skipped moral workout increases the likelihood of future immoral action. My Lai was not the first moral lapse for the LT Calley and his platoon. Both individually and corporately, they had indiscriminately destroyed private property, dehumanized both enemy and civilians and taken lives at the fringes of just cause. The leader's failure to take positive action at the first sign of moral laxness led ultimately to the atrocity at My Lai. Moral laziness in small things leads to moral laziness in the extreme.

While laziness weakens both physical and moral strength, the most effective method for building and assessing strength is through unusual exertion. Therefore, the physical and moral strength essential on the battlefield are best developed and tested under the exertion that is common in combat. It is impossible to predict strength without testing it under these conditions. Therefore, failure to provide unusual exertion in training will cause the true strength of a man and his unit to remain in doubt.

Unfortunately, failure is common in combat. No unit individuals and no units are perfect. Even if the grand objective is secured, there will be failures along the way and sub-units will fail to attain their specified objectives. The fall of the Phillipines, the defeat at Kasserine Pass and Arnhem's "bridge too far" all demonstrate that failure is a regular occurrence in combat, whether on the defensive fighting for survival or on the offensive, ending the war. At the smaller level as well, platoons, companies and battalions fail to take assigned objectives. Training, therefore, must regularly push warriors, both physically and morally, to the point of failure. The lessons learned at the fringes of failure build the strength, physically and morally, that lead to future success. The survivors of the Long March who learned this by experience now rule China. The enemies of strength train and live softly, confident but unsure of the real depth of their endurance.

Physical and moral strength is a critical component of the warrior ethos. It is essential on the battlefield to resist the temptation to quit and to overcome the natural inertia that inhibits action. This strength differs physically from the population at large due to the extreme conditions common on the battlefield and is distinctive morally due to the absence of many civil restraints

and the presence of heightened states of emotion and stress. Finally, strength can neither develop or be sustained in an atmosphere of idleness and the true strength of an individual or unit remains unknown until tested in the crucible of uncommon exertion.

Authority

To bring men to the proper degree of subordination
is not the work of a day, a month or a year.
George Washington

A proper understanding and respect for authority is a fundamental facet of the Warrior Ethos. Authority in the Warrior Ethos, is distinctive from that found in society based not only on the breadth of authority a leader has over his soldiers lives but also in the depth of authority that may determine life and death. To maintain the degree of authority essential for combat effectiveness, leaders must be consistent in addressing relatively minor breaches of authority while subordinates must maintain respect for the position of authority under which they serve.

Authority Defined

Authority is defined as the power or right to give commands, enforce obedience or take action. Within the Warrior sub-culture, leaders at every level exercise a grave degree of authority. In combat, this Authority extends to the probability of ordering individuals and units into actions that will result in injury and death. The Warrior must exercise authority that is both legal and moral. The essential understanding of authority in the Warrior Ethos, however, is not only toward the exercise of authority but in proper submission to the authority under which the warrior serves. Proper submission requires not only the Warrior's respect for both the authority figures and structure but also a clear understanding of the intent and limits, of the authority under which he serves.

Effective Authority

Authority is the capstone facet of the Warrior Ethos, without which the elements of Discipline, Sacrifice, Cohesion and Strength can not stand. As defined above, the idea of authority in the Warrior Ethos comprehends not only the proper exercise of authority but the proper submission to authority as well.

The exercise of legal and moral authority is the basis for action in a military organization. Every non-commissioned officer and officer in the military holds an implicit degree of authority. Further, nearly every position or job has a specified degree of additional authority that is given to the holder of that position. This authority is conferred, by regulation, to enable individuals and units to perform the tasks and missions that they are assigned.

The importance of authority in combat can hardly be questioned. Getting soldiers to leave the safety of a covered position and "charge the hill" is never a democratic proposition – the leaders give the order and the men obey. Authority on the battlefield is decidedly autocratic. One man makes the final decision, he bears the weight of nearly unlimited power, and he is responsible to his superiors, and ultimately to his country, for that decision. In combat, there is no other way.

Authority is conferred for a specific purpose. Leaders of units are given specific tasks and missions to perform and are therefore given the legal authority to accomplish those missions.

Generally, orders, which are given to administer, train and lead a unit to perform their assigned missions, are legal orders.[1]

Not only, however, must authority be exercised properly, is must also be respectfully submitted to. Every uniformed serviceman serves under several layers of authority. First, he is responsible to the authority of his oath. Second, he is under the general authority of the uniformed code military justice. Third, he serves under the direct authority of his chain of command.

American soldiers swear an oath that includes, "I will obey the orders of the president and the officers appointed over me according to the regulations and the uniform code of military justice"[2]. From their first day of service, American soldiers publicly state their willing submission the authorities appointed over them, specifically the Uniform Code of Military Justice and their chain of command.

Distinctive Authority

Orders in combat – the orders that kill men or get men killed –
are not given by Generals or even majors,
They are given by lieutenants and sergeants and sometimes even PFC's.
T.R. Feherenbach, This Kind of War

Authority, as a facet of the Warrior Ethos, is distinctive from the authority present in most civilian institutions. As stated above, the authority required for combat effectiveness is almost total in its breadth and, further, it reaches to decisions of life and death.

[1] A detailed treatment of legal vs illegal orders is not within the scope of this essay. This subject is addressed briefly and generally to state that while military authority is almost absolute, there are vital limits to it.

When a leader observes one of his subordinates off-duty at a ball-game who is visibly drunk and improperly dressed, he has both the responsibility and the authority to correct the soldier in question. Servicemen are members of a profession dedicated to public service in which public confidence in the discipline, leadership and capabilities of the institution is essential. Therefore, military personnel have the responsibility to maintain that public confidence and their authority to regulate behavior spans both on-duty and off-duty time. Few other occupations or professions require a similar breadth of authority and fewer still routinely hold life and death in the span of their authority.

The depth of authority in the Warrior sub-culture is distinctive from not only most civilian occupations but also from the majority of the professional military culture. There is no comparable civilian occupations or military specialties in which ordering men the gravest personal risk is routine. This is not to demean either similar civilian professions such as law enforcement or fire fighting, or to question the dedication of the supporting branches in the military. The fact remains. However, that only in a few military specialties – those that compose the warrior sub-culture - are fighters routinely ordered to "charge the hill" or "hold at all costs". Therefore, the depth of authority required in the Warrior Ethos is distinctive.

Enemies of Authority

The most contagious of all moral diseases is insubordination,
and it has no more respect for rank than the plague.
S.L.A. Marshall

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[2] Reenlistment Oath for Army Enlisted Personnel.

Since the character of authority within the Warrior Ethos is contingent upon both the right exercise of authority and proper submission to authority, the enemies of authority should also be identified from both perspectives. Therefore, both a leader's tolerance of insubordination and a subordinate's failure to respect the authority under which he serves are both actions that will deteriorate the authority structure essential to combat effectiveness.

While "insubordinate" is normally reserved for significant acts of obvious disrespect, the word is actually defined merely as "not submissive to authority".[3] This is important since the seeds of significant disobedience and disrespect, such as "No, I won't charge the hill" are normally watered and tended by a leader's tolerance of "minor" instances when a soldier is not submissive to authority. The tolerant leader who allows a soldier to improperly wear the uniform will soon find that his entire command is wearing the uniform incorrectly and that a few members are now disregarding his orders for the safe handling explosives. Being tolerant in the small things, the leader has learned to be tolerant in other things and soon few of his orders are followed at all, much less with the precision required on the battlefield. The leader that fails to assert his authority and allows tolerance of individual desire to reign will find that his orders for an assault to begin at precisely 2200 hours are treated with similar insubordination. The obvious result is an individualistic chaos that results in failure in combat.

A similar enemy to authority is a lack of respect for the authority under which a soldier serves. A soldier demonstrates his respect for the authority over him through loyal obedience. This respect, however, must not be based primarily on the personality or techniques of the leader.

[3] American Heritage Dictionary

The warrior recognizes and respects not primarily the person in authority but the position the leader holds.[4] Thus, actions that denude authority from positions of leadership will cause soldiers to begin to lose respect for both the position and the person. Thus, soldiers lose respect for the positional authority under which they serve when decisions from the leader in that position are routinely overturned. When a soldier see that his direct supervisor does not have the power to punish for failure to follow legal orders, his respect for the position deteriorates and the authority structure begins to collapse. Similarly, soldiers begin to lose respect when the decision of their supervisor are regularly changed or "second-guessed" by a higher authority. In this case, soldiers will look directly to the higher authority for direction as the relevance of their immediate supervisor is marginalized. Authority must be nurtured to be preserved. Minor acts of insubordination must be addressed or they will grow to major acts of disobedience. Further, leaders must be given the authority to discipline and make decisions without undue interference or respect for the position they hold will erode.

Authority is the capstone imperative in the Warrior Ethos, requires both just exercise and respectful submission and differs in breadth and depth from the degree of individual authority found in most of society. Because authority is essential to combat effectiveness, military leaders must guard against tolerance action not submissive to their authority while encouraging and reinforcing the authority delegated to their subordinate leaders.

[4] It is understood that the most effective and respectied leaders are those who command personal respect. The essay, however, focuses primarily not the the leadership techniques that build respect but on the essential nature of respect for authority as part of the warrior ethos.

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