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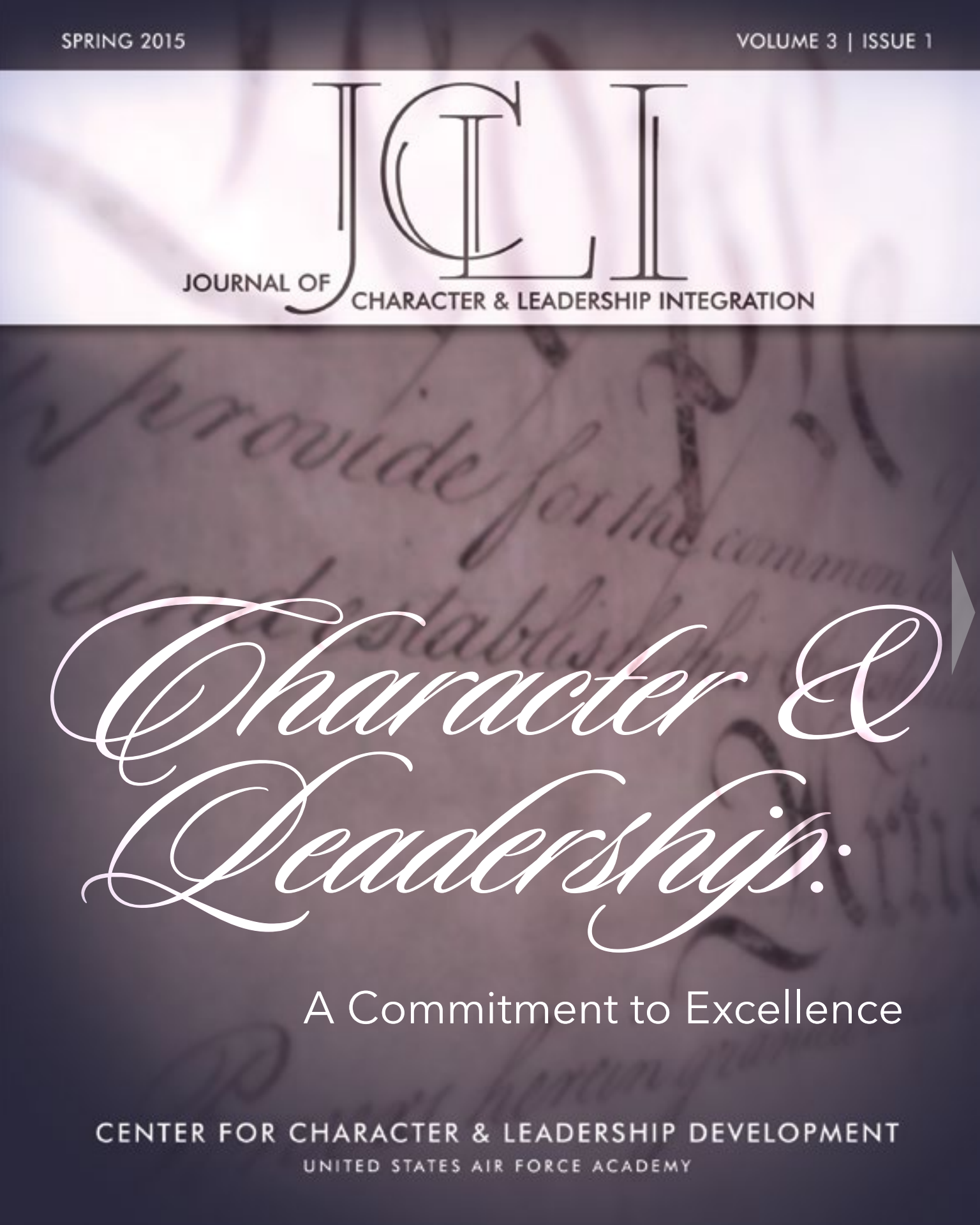

Character & Leadership:

A Commitment to Excellence

CENTER FOR CHARACTER & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY

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JCLI@usafa.edu

Phone: 719-333-4179

JCLI, Center for Character and Leadership Development
USAFA/CWC
2354 Fairchild Hall Suite 5A22
USAF Academy, Colorado 80840-6260

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Cover Image: Words from the Constitution echo the timeless virtues that serve as cornerstones of the American republic, and reflect the principles of strong moral character and selfless leadership this journal seeks to explore.

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JCLI / TABLE OF CONTENTS

FROM THE EDITOR

A "New" Journal

Lt Gen Christopher Miller, USAF (ret)
Center for Character & Leadership Development, U.S. Air Force Academy

Six years ago, an article published in the Journal of Character & Leader Scholarship unveiled a new approach to character and leadership development at the Air Force Academy and asked, "*Why This, Why Now?*" Those questions addressed issues particular to the Academy, and how it could best organize and enhance accomplishment of its central mission of graduating young officers as leaders of character. The answers demanded that the Academy deepen its commitment to scholarship, publication, and more tightly harmonize character and leadership development efforts across academic, military and athletic faculty and staff. This led to the creation of Center for Character and Leadership Development, and the publication of a character and leadership journal whose publication was temporarily suspended in 2012 as a result of defense budgetary austerity.

Today, this new publication—a revitalized ***Journal of Character and Leadership Integration***—issues its inaugural edition, even as a dramatic new Air Force character and leadership building at the Academy approaches completion. Both projects, made possible by the vision of successive Air Force and Academy senior leaders and sustained support of Academy graduates, speak convincingly to the importance of character and leadership to the Academy, the Air Force, and the nation. They represent an important step in an endless but important journey. JCLI employs a blind peer-review process for scholarly papers, and welcomes qualified scholars who would like to volunteer as reviewers. Future volumes of this publication will be expanded to include book reviews. Book suggestions, reviews, and reviewers will be gratefully accepted and considered.

Lieutenant General (Retired) Christopher D. Miller is the editor-in-chief of the Journal of Character & Leadership Integration. His 32-plus years of active service included leadership as the Air Force's deputy chief of staff for strategic plans and programs; directing plans, policy, and strategy for U.S. homeland and air defense; service as the senior USAF commander in Afghanistan; command of the B-2 bomber wing; and multiple operational flying and command assignments in the B-1. He was also a defense policy adviser to the U.S. ambassador to NATO, director of assignments for the USAF, and a military fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations in New York. Lt Gen Miller is a 1980 distinguished graduate of the Academy, and holds graduate degrees from the U.S. Naval War College and Oxford University.

And again, is time to ask: *"Why This, Why Now?"* Why does this or any other Academy, relevant academic communities of interest, or the world *benefit* from a Journal of Character and Leadership Integration? The answer is simple: not only is demand increasing for men and women of character who can lead effectively in military service, but universities across the country have an equally compelling need to produce good leaders for *all* sectors of society.

Today's young people are challenged by many pressures—cultural milieus, erosion of interpersonal respect, technological and societal complexities and volumes of intellectual and environmental stimuli—that make virtue more difficult to recognize, develop and exercise, and leadership far more daunting to practice well.

As a case in point: With regard to military service, the classical virtues—particularly valor—are almost universally venerated. Particular to this Academy, where the performance of our graduates may literally affect the survival of this nation, we increasingly face a world where our national destiny still depends on those who exhibit admirable courage in combat, but even more, demands competent leadership in complexity. Historically, the profession of arms has been considered to include those whose special competence was centered on the management of violence. Recent conflicts have increasingly lacked clearly identifiable protagonists, are faster-paced, potentially more lethal and infinitely more scrutinized, but some aspects of warfare remain as they have been for centuries. Tomorrow's profession of arms demands competence that fully includes, but goes well beyond, this historical conception. Tomorrow's warriors must be able to operate and sustain indispensable satellite constellations and immense electronic networks in the face of hostile actions that could dramatically affect our society. The profession of arms has changed, and the compelling need to adapt is one answer to "*why this, why now.*"

Similarly daunting—if strikingly different—challenges await college-age men and women in every nation and culture. Character is as important now as it has ever been, but its development remains challenging; leadership is more important than it has ever been because its practical, effective application is increasingly difficult in light of challenges in a global context that are more numerous and dynamic with each passing year. Both mastery of self and mastery of the external world have become more difficult. It is our belief that the character and leadership development needed to meet these challenges is *integrated*, and requires integrated study.

This Journal, then, is designed to be relevant *to* the military academies, but *not* focused solely on them. Rather, we hope to spark discourse among a wide range of *scholars* who focus on the development of character, as well as those expert in all aspects of leadership. It is especially intended to bring that range of scholars together in a complementary forum with *practitioners* of character-based leadership. For readers and contributors on both sides of civil-military boundary, it is intended to serve as a window into the concerns, perceptions and contexts of the other. It must serve to enlighten those in both spheres, since the relationship between citizens and the military that serves them is fundamental to the order of a society.

Character is as important now as it has ever been, but its development remains challenging; leadership is more important than it has ever been because its practical, effective application is increasingly difficult in light of challenges in a global context that are more numerous and dynamic with each passing year.

In This Issue

We open with a wide-ranging interview on character and leadership featuring the 20th Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General Mark A. Welsh III. His interviewers were Cadet First Class (senior) Will Burnett and Cadet Second Class (junior) JayP Fullam, who at the time of the discussion

were the leaders, for their respective classes, of the Air Force Academy's cadet honor system. General Welsh provides energetic, reflective and sometimes critical responses to a wide range of questions, drawing on his four years as a cadet from 1972 to 1976, and his 39 years of Air Force service since graduation. The interview touches on topics from core values, commitment, culture and credibility, to his perspective on the honor code as a cadet, commander and parent. General Welsh talks candidly about his experience—good and bad—as a cadet, and the importance of meeting and setting standards as a way to inspire pride and ensure performance. This is a "must read" conversation.

Dr. John Riley explores in "Contracted Leadership" how the proliferation of non-military contractors on the modern battlefield poses fundamentally new challenges for leaders. In examining some of the incentives, legal frameworks, perceptions and the nature of the relationships that have evolved between uniformed military and civilian partners, the author has given us a compelling survey of an area that demands attention from policy-makers, but also warrants study by those who are interested in the dynamics of leadership in stressful environments.

Dr. Laurie Milton addresses the need for leaders to validate and confirm their own, colleagues' and followers' identities, in order to strengthen their own behavioral integrity and embed it in the larger organizations they lead. In so doing, they create both the contexts and outcomes characteristic of healthy, high-performing organizations. Her writing examines facets of "walking the talk," suggests areas for further research in the science of identity and behavioral integrity, and aims to stimulate action based on science to help leaders, and their organizations, thrive and accomplish their aims.

In an analysis of the relationship of transformational leadership and character, Dr. William H. Hendrix, Dr. Dana H. Born and Dr. Scott Hopkins leverage a large dataset to validate the relationships between transformational leadership, character, and five distinct organizational outcomes. The research pays particular attention to the impact of character, above and beyond transformational leadership, on organizational outcomes. A second focus of the work investigates the existence and impact of a dark side of transformational leadership, and the strength of the relationship between character and transformational leadership.

In a concluding essay, Lt Col Ryan Guiberson, PhD looks critically at a compelling example of the interplay of character and leadership in action. Examining a recent incident involving widespread cheating among missile launch officers at Malmstrom Air Force Base, Dr Guiberson argues that setting a performance standard of perfection inevitably leads to widespread cynicism, inhibits development of subordinates by leaders, impedes a leader's ability to recognize and uncover problems in any organization, and most destructively, leads to compartmentalized notions of integrity. He makes a powerful cautionary argument that leaders and their organizations must be very careful in how they define and communicate "excellence" if they wish to actually achieve it.

Notes of Interest

We warmly welcome inquiries, critical comments, recommendations and manuscript submissions as this Journal seeks to strengthen the integrated study of character and leadership for a diverse community of scholars and practitioners.

A number of distinguished scholars contributed as Editorial Board members for the previous incarnation of JCLI, and have renewed their association, for which we are grateful. We warmly welcome those who have recently chosen to join the board and assist in ensuring the Journal's future quality and relevance.

The AF Academy's Center for Character & Leadership Development will transition this fall into an inspirational and iconic new building. In parallel with that transition, we look forward to extending the Journal's ability to host substantive, timely dialog and disseminate of scholarship through a more interactive electronic space. Subscribers

will receive notices of enhancements to the electronic JCLI as they become available. For those interested, USAFA currently posts cadet character- and leadership-related information through its main website at www.usafa.edu, on Twitter at @CCLDSocialMedia, and on Instagram at USAFACCLD.

Opening of the new CCLD building also marks a new phase of the Air Force Academy's focus on cadet and faculty development and support to a broader dialog on character and leadership issues. Part of this dialog is the Academy's annual National Character and Leadership Symposium (NCLS), which is described briefly elsewhere in this volume. The NCLS Scholars' Forum, which brings together highly qualified thinkers to address the annual Symposium theme, is expected to generate an occasional special issue of the JCLI. Scholars who wish to be included in this event should indicate interest by email to JCLI@usafa.edu, and will be kept informed on the upcoming NCLS topic and Scholars' Forum timeline.

What's Ahead

The Journal of Character and Leadership Integration is, first and foremost, designed to attract and empower both contributors and readers for one purpose: to share and increase wisdom. The challenges of developing character and leadership know no national boundaries and the results of leaders' development—good and bad--interact across such boundaries. Through the thoughts expressed in its pages over time, we firmly intend this Journal will play an increasingly global role in soliciting, encouraging, and facilitating this important dialog. We welcome you, our reader, to that journey.

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RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTERVIEW

Culture of Commitment, Climate of Respect

General Mark A. Welsh III, Chief of Staff, United States Air Force

Interviewed by:
Cadet First Class William Burnette, U.S. Air Force Academy
Cadet Second Class JayP Fullam, U.S. Air Force Academy

The following interview by two United States Air Force Academy cadet leaders, the Wing Honor Chairman and Wing Honor Non-Commissioned Officer, is a personal dialog with the United States Air Force Chief of Staff, General Mark Welsh. General Welsh, who graduated with the Academy's class of 1976, reflects on his early leadership and character formation, and shares his views on a wide range of issues important in the Profession of Arms. Their interaction is a journey that explores leadership, honor, competence, respect, values, pride, and military heritage. General Welsh emphasizes his view that, especially in an endeavor as large and complex as the Air Force, everyone matters—everyone has a story--and people want and need to know what leaders stand for. He describes his personal commitment to service and his own professional development, from being proud of being a pilot, to deep pride in being part of a distinctive Service. Speaking through his interviewers, he reminds all cadets: "You represent me, you represent the Air Force, you represent the nation every single day, even as a cadet."

General Welsh also speaks forcefully on the importance and meaning of the Air Force Core Values, the cadet Honor Code, and how the two are complementary. He reflects on the delicate relationship of personal faith to professional military leadership, and draws illuminating distinctions between tradition, culture, heritage and climate. He stresses that while values are immutable and define both individuals and organizations, innovation is critical to success in a dynamic world. Throughout the interview, General Welsh illuminates the meaning and importance of excellence, and why setting and upholding standards is essential to building trust and leading well.

Gen. Mark A. Welsh III is Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C. As Chief, he serves as the senior uniformed Air Force officer responsible for the organization, training and equipping of 690,000 active-duty, Guard, Reserve and civilian forces serving in the United States and overseas. As a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the general and other service chiefs function as military advisers to the Secretary of Defense, National Security Council and the President.

General Welsh was born in San Antonio, Texas. He entered the Air Force in June 1976 as a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy. He has been assigned to numerous operational, command and staff positions. Prior to his current position, he was Commander, U.S. Air Forces in Europe.

Cadet 1st Class Burnett: Good afternoon, I'm Cadet 1st Class Will Burnett. I'm the Wing Honor Chairman at the United States Air Force Academy.

Cadet 2nd Class Fullam: I'm Cadet 2nd Class Jay P. Fullam. I'm the Wing Honor NCO at the United States Air Force Academy.

Burnett: ***We're here at the Pentagon to discuss matters of leadership and character with the Chief of Staff of the Air Force General Mark Welsh.*** How are you, sir?

General Welsh: Good. It's good to see you guys.

Fullam: ***Sir, with the Air Force Academy being a place for leadership to really be taught and learned by cadets, what would you say was the single greatest leadership lesson you learned while you were at the Academy as a cadet?***

General Welsh: Let me give you two. The first one was that everybody matters. There were people I saw who were kind of ignored and as I got to know them I realized they were smarter than all the rest of us. They had more to offer and they had a better solution than any of us had. They just weren't cool. Which leads to the second lesson.

In the military, cool, however you define it, isn't. Just remember that when you come out the door. In the military people want to know what you stand for, they want you to show that you stand for it. They want you to take care of people who might not think exactly the way you do about things. So those are the two big things I took away from the Air Force Academy. I saw that there.

Burnett: ***Sir, how would you describe your personal commitment to service? In other words, what drives you?***

General Welsh: Pride. I've always been proud. I grew up very proud of my dad who was in the Air Force. I came into the Air Force because I was in love with the airplanes and I really wanted to fly them, but I was proud of flying them. I was proud of being part of the force that involved flying airplanes. Then I fell in love with the people and became just as proud of the group of people who serve this country.

I think pride underpins everything we do. If you recruit the best people, you train them and educate them like anybody else does, and you give them pride in what they do, who they stand beside, the job you do, the country they represent, amazing things happen. I think that's why our Air Force has been successful.

Fullam: ***Sir, what would you say would be the kind of culture of commitment you would like to see at the Air Force Academy?***

General Welsh: Be proud or be gone. I really don't have time for folks who aren't proud of what we do and proud of who we represent.

I think if every cadet at the Academy walked in the door as proud as they were when they found out they were going to be a cadet, and stay that same way through their whole experience and graduate, not only would the Academy be a better place, the Air Force would be a better place.

Somewhere in there you lose the pride in being different. When you left your high school and you were going to the Air Force Academy, that was something different and you were kind of proud of yourself for being selected. At the Academy you kind of become one of the herd and you lose the pride. You go to class together, you go to formation together, who are you trying to impress? And you lose the pride of being distinctive, of being something different, of being separate from the crowd because you kind of forget what you went there to do.

"You're not at the Academy training to be a member of the Air Force, you're not preparing to be a member of the Air Force, you're in it. You represent me, you represent the Air Force, you represent the nation every single day, even as a cadet."

If everybody just remembered the day you walked in the door and you took the oath that you became a member of the United States Air Force. You're not at the Academy training to be a member of the Air Force, you're not preparing to be a member of the Air Force, you're in it. You represent me, you represent the Air Force, you represent the nation every single day, even as a cadet. The difference is the job you'll do after you graduate. Your job right now is to follow the rules of the Academy, learn what they're trying to teach you, do your job in school, do your job in athletics, do your job in learning the things that will prepare you to do your next job. But you've got a job and we're actually paying you to do it. Be proud of that. Don't act like the rest of your friends who are having a great time wherever they're having a great time. There's nothing wrong with having fun, but when that becomes the focus, you've just lost something.

Burnett: ***Sir, you were at the Air Force Academy as a cadet, an air officer commanding, and the commandant. How has your view of our honor code evolved over the years?***

General Welsh: That's actually a really good question. As a cadet it was scary. I was excited about it, but it was a little scary. I remember thinking about all the different ways you could violate it. What if mom asked me what my girlfriend and I were up to? What if dad asked me if I'd ever had a beer? All these things are ways you could easily violate the honor code if you weren't willing to really live by it.

As an AOC [Air Officer Commanding] I started to realize how hard it was to follow the code, especially for people who came out of this huge range of environments and social cultures and ways of behavior and family backgrounds that our cadets come from. It started to be clear how hard it was really to follow that honor code.

As the commandant, I realized how complicated it was. Some of that's just life maturity, some of its watching my own kids grow up. The honor code is a very, very difficult thing to fully internalize and fully live and to commit yourself to, and I don't think you really understand it until you're much older. How many angles you have on this thing, which is probably a good thing. Because when you're younger, it will be simpler. You don't lie, you don't steal, you don't cheat, you don't put up with it. You just don't tolerate it. You don't accept it. It's not okay. You don't turn the other way. You don't ignore the problem. You do not tolerate it.

If you could teach everybody in this country those examples at the age of 18-22 we'd be in a pretty good place. I just realized how complicated it was, especially the administrative part of it as the commandant.

I also have another view of it and that's as a parent of a cadet. When I started looking at it as a parent, I went back to being scared because I knew how hard it was to live the honor code, and the challenges my son would face as he tried to. So I've kind of come full circle.

Burnett: ***You spoke about how we all come from different backgrounds and it's a huge Air Force with a lot of different backgrounds. It's very diverse. How do we train integrity, service, excellent as core values for our entire Air Force when they come from so many different backgrounds?***

General Welsh: That's a really interesting problem to have. If you look at it in terms of character and competence, when people come into the Air Force their competence is a funnel. Their competence funnel is about that wide [gestures indicating a small distance]. They really can't do much of anything that we want them to be able to do in the Air Force. They've got some personal skills, but that's about it. So we start by training and educating and training some more and giving them job experience and moving them around and giving them some breadth, and pretty soon, but soon being years down the road, we've got people who can perform at this incredible level, an incredibly wide spectrum of things they're capable of doing. So our competence funnel just keeps expanding.

On the character side, we draw people in from a huge funnel of character. A huge spectrum out here of how people behave, how they act, what their families think, what part of society they come from, all the things that drive people. So their character funnel's like this [gestures with arms outstretched] when they come in the door. Whether they're coming to the Academy or coming to basic training. Our job is to compress that into a character funnel that's about that wide [gestures indicating a small distance] -- the way we expect them to behave, the way we expect them to treat each other, the way we expect them to perform.

The problem we've got is you can't do that over years. You can't just train them, educate them, train them, and twenty years down the road you finally get them in the funnel. Basic military training we're trying to get to this in eight weeks. The Academy's got four years, really about a year before you expect them to follow all the rules and understand them. But then you're supposed to stay in that character funnel as you go forward. That's the goal, right? That's hard. It's really hard.

So the only way you can do it successfully is if institutionally you commit to everyone being part of the solution once you form the funnel. So if people are bouncing outside the funnel you can't ignore them. That's what happens to us today. There is behavior outside the character funnel. People know it, but right now in the Air Force, and probably at the Academy, it's still cooler to not rat them out than it is to not tolerate it.

I don't want to be in the Air Force with that kind of behavior, whether it's not treating each other with respect, whether it's not following the standards, whether it's not being proud of who we are and what we do. But where that character funnel defines who we are. Then people who go outside the edges, you don't want them to come back in. You just seal the hole and say see ya. You choose to play out there, you'll play somewhere else. If we get to that point, we've got the Air Force we want to live in. It's hard. It takes everybody being part of the solution and it takes a commitment to doing the right thing all the time. And not tolerating other people doing the wrong thing. If we can get there we can solve a lot of problems.

If I walked into your squadrons right now and I sat everybody down and I said "Okay, be honest with me. Tell me who the next person to get in trouble is going to be." You guys both would know who it is. You can narrow it to three, four or five people. You know exactly who they are. The ones who go out and binge drink on the weekends and slap some young lady on the rear end at a party, or they get in a fight downtown, or they just start screaming at somebody in the squadron, [because they] get in their face and threaten them if they ask them to clean a room again. You know these people. They've been behaving like this since you met them. [Too often] at the Academy, people don't stop them. It doesn't change in the Air Force, by the way. We have the same problem in other places.

The idea is, once we define the character funnel, we enforce it. We enforce it. It's not the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, the commander, the first sergeant, it's everybody's job. If we ever get to that point we're in good shape. That's where we're heading. That's where we want to go.

Fullam: ***Sir, earlier you mentioned fear of the honor code as a cadet. How do you instill that culture of commitment when there's an aspect of fear behind something? Because fear instills a sense of compliance because you're scared of getting in trouble by it instead of being committed to keep the code.***

General Welsh: Well, this is a small nuance but it's important. I didn't say fear, I said the Honor Code was scary. I don't think that's a bad thing. I don't think fear is a bad thing to get people into a habit of behaving in a way you want them to behave. I'm not talking about physical fear, but realizing that there is a real implication of breaking a rule or not following a code when you've never followed one before. It's not a bad way to get somebody into a mindset of I really have to pay attention to what I'm doing and thinking here, with the idea being you grow into understanding the necessity.

I'm not even close to naïve enough to believe that everybody who walks in the door at the Air Force Academy walks in and says oh, the honor code, this is what I want to live under my whole life. That's just not true. But it's something that you put there and you say this is the standard that you will meet here. This is how you will behave. Whether you embrace it or not, this is the standard we live by. And I think the people, that's a little bit scary because they're thinking about the white lies they told all through high school, or they think about sharing answers to tests in their home room, which a lot of people do. It's part of the culture in some places. It's not really seen as an evil, really bad thing, it just happens. We need to make sure they understand it doesn't happen here.

So a little bit of nervousness about that code, "is [asking oneself, is] it going to be tough for me to live up to, is not a bad thing to get you started.

Then I think the Academy does a good job of training people and teaching people about why. When you do your honor education, the intent is to explain to people, why is this important? Why does the code matter? How will it affect you the rest of your life? Why does it establish your personal credibility in the recognition you get from people? Why does it make you credible?

That's what you do at the Academy, you're widening the competency funnel. And part of that is acting like a leader of character all the time.

I don't think we all walked in the door that way. I didn't. Maybe everybody else did.

So I wouldn't call it a fear, but I think that thing being a little scary to me was actually helpful. I paid attention to the honor code as a cadet. I listened when people started talking to me about it. I think that helped.

Everybody compares everybody else to themselves. I grew up with the most honorable man I've ever met, my father. He was unbelievable. [He] treated everybody exactly the same. He was brutally honest but he did it in a way that didn't make you feel bad, but he never shaded the truth. But even when I was at the Academy I thought oh, man, I don't know if I can meet that standard. I was worried about it. I think if we all just admit that and move on we're better off.

Burnett: ***Let's talk a little bit about respect. You talked a lot about our climate of respect in the Air Force Academy, and the Air Force as a whole. There's a certain historical tradition that comes along with a flying squadron, sort of a flying squadron mentality in the Air Force sometimes. How do we keep that morale, that persona of the flying squadron alongside the climate of respect?***

General Welsh: I go back to my dad. My dad had 9,000 fighter hours. He flew in three wars. He was a fighter pilot his whole career. I never ever heard him say something disrespectful to anyone, and certainly [never saw him] act disrespectfully to anybody.

Anybody who uses culture as an excuse for lack of respect is in the wrong place. The two are not related.

The things that we do that show lack of respect for people in our fighter squadron sometimes are reminiscent of a culture that's just old school. It's gone. But it wasn't always part of the culture.

I'll give you an example. I wanted to show my dad one of my squadron song books, the song books that the fighter squadron sang. My dad had never seen one before. When he looked at them he went, why would anybody sing this? He said it's just crude.

Now those things started in the Vietnam era. Not way back when fighter aviation started. And they were perpetuated for a while. It's time to change them. We thought we got rid of them ten to fifteen years ago but they were still drifting around. But that's a piece of culture. It's not part of our heritage. Heritage is what you celebrate, not culture. Heritage is different. Heritage is not those kinds of song books. Heritage is Dick Jonas songbooks about fighting and flying and taking care of your brothers and sisters in battle. Its different kinds of singing. Let's write those thoughts. We've been fighting for the last twenty-two years, let's write songs about that. We can all sing them.

We just have to get over this connecting of [any particular kind of] to respect. If you don't have a culture of respect you're going to fail. That's the bottom line. Everybody in this business, everybody, is critically important to what we do and they deserve to be treated that way. It's that simple. If you don't treat them that way they won't feel fully empowered, fully enabled, and feel like a full contributor to the team. And if they don't, we're not as good as we could be. If we're not as good as we could be, we're not doing our job. Our job is to fight and win the nation's wars. If you don't do that well, more people die than should die. Now you're back to an ethical dilemma. How can I face myself if we're doing that? Don't let people compare the culture with lack of respect. It's behavior that breeds lack of respect. And over time behavior can create a temporary, (hopefully), culture in our organization where everybody shows lack of respect, or fails to stop [disrespect] when they see it. We have that problem and we've got to fix it. But again, it's not an Air Force program that is going to fix it. Airmen are going to fix it.

Fullam: ***Speaking of doing our jobs well, how do you personally define excellence?***

General Welsh: I do my best. Excellence as a service comes about when you get the best people, you train them as well as you possibly can, you educate them to do their job, you give them the tools they need, the training they need, and you give them the people around them to get it done, then you give them the right tasks. If you do that, you should see that's excellence. If they do it and they fail, then you didn't do something excellent. But they did their best. I let them down.

So all we can do, I think, you do your best at your job every single day. You try and get better every day. You try and take care of people. If you do that, I think that's what we're talking about with excellence. Don't tolerate less than what you can do successfully. If you're accepting less than your best performance then you're not achieving this goal of excellence.

Excellence for you [may be] a much higher level of performance than is excellence for me. You're just more talented, better looking [and] more athletic. All the things that I really hate you for [chuckles]. But your excellence level is not the same as everybody else's, so don't hold other people to yours, it's just yours. And then

try and exceed them. That's how I see it. I just do my best. On the days I don't, I know. I know I didn't. And I kick myself and try again tomorrow.

Burnett: ***Sir, what do you think are the best ways to promote religious tolerance, appreciation for diversity, respect for human dignity as embodied in the U.S. Constitution, when there's such a divisive debate in the nation?***

General Welsh: Again, you do your best.

Here's what we need inside the military as far as -- There are two big areas inside the military. One is religious persecution and one is religious expression. They're two very different things in my mind. People bring them together [in discussion] all the time. But from a perspective of managing an environment and creating a climate, they're two different things.

Religious persecution to me implies that people are not free to practice the religion of their choice. Or not practice a religion at all, if that's what they choose. We actually in the Air Force do a pretty good job of not having religious persecution. Generally, I can't find examples of people who don't feel they can practice their own faith. We've talked to every Air Force chaplain. Our Air Force chaplains don't believe they're restricted from helping people practice the faith of their choice. I think we're doing fine there. So religious persecution is one thing.

Freedom of expression is a different thing. It's a much more obvious thing. When we have issues that come out in the press and in other places, it's typically from issues about freedom of expression. Is a Bible verse on a whiteboard okay or not? Is a picture of a crusader in an Air Force dining hall okay or not? Is a Bible on the POW/MIA table okay or not? Is a menorah on the CQ [Cadet in Charge of Quarters] desk at the Academy okay or not? Those are the questions that we tend to get into, and then there is a greater debate in the nation so we get in the middle of that debate with one group of people saying you're too religious and another group saying you're not religious enough.

So from a military perspective, from a commander's point of view, whatever required policy you have in place has to support the law of the land and it has to have enough clarity that you can actually implement it. It's got to be practically executable. So the real question for me is where do you draw the line? You can draw a very simple line and say if you're in a military organization you can write anything you want inside your room. So you can put a whiteboard in your room and write anything you want on it. Bible verses, Quranic verses, words from the Torah, whatever. But you can't put it in the hall because that's a government building and it's a public place. There are many many people who say that's restriction of religious freedom. Now the same people, if you put outside in the hall on the whiteboard and the guy across the hall drew a menorah on his door and the guy next door drew a wiccan prayer circle in the middle of the alcove, and the guy down the hall sings his morning Islamic prayers from the corner of the hallway, they wouldn't like that. That would go too far.

So the question is, where is too far? That's the problem. So right now everybody's trying to interpret what is okay and what isn't okay. How far down the spectrum can you go before you go okay, that's too much expression. In most cases the groups are looking at it from the perspective of their faith or their non-faith. So to some people, any religious expression is too much. To other people well, it's great, as long as it's this faith or that faith. But you really can't use symbols which are the words of some faiths. So where do you draw the line is the trick for us. And to me, it's just a matter of understanding the problem's hard, it's an emotional issue; and people have got to rise above this.

Along with our chaplains, lawyers, constitutional law experts, and others, my goal is to make sure that we have policy that is within the law for the Department of

Defense, and anything the Air Force puts on top of that is to simplify and make our policy practically executable. So that we don't have everybody in the Air Force, from an eighteen year old cadet to an almost eighty year old general trying to interpret these things and know the nuances of the law and the policy. That's never going to work. With everybody staring at you with binoculars waiting for mistakes so they can declare victory. No matter which side of the argument you're on. That's the problem.

Do I believe in freedom of religious expression? Absolutely. If somebody asks me about my faith I tell them everything. I'm proud of my faith. I always have been. But if they don't ask me when I'm acting as a commander, I don't assume they want or need to know because the answer usually is they don't want either.

The behavior is actually fairly straightforward in my mind. Wait until somebody asks and then tell them everything they want to know. If they don't ask, just celebrate it yourself. That's what you're free to do.

But that's the fine line. Everybody's faith requires them to do a different level of activity with others in expression, and, when they meet in the middle, it's tough for you guys to figure out what the rules are. So the question is, do we keep it really simple and keep it all in the public view or do we allow freedom of expression in the public domain and then figure out where too much is, which is hard. That's what we're in the process of doing. The Academy is going to have to do the same thing.

Fullam: ***Sir, with today's Airmen entering a service that's facing significant force reductions due to the economy and the withdrawal from the war, and knowing historically that there's a fluctuation with funding and personnel commitments and future conflicts, how do you go about encouraging commitment from the brand new lieutenants or the young Airmen?***

General Welsh: Relative to the reasons they come into the military, nothing's changed. My big comment to them is don't get distracted. Do your job. Be really good at it. You're going to have the resources to do that. The jobs we continue doing, we're going to be really good at. We may have to cut some jobs. We may have to not do as many things because we're not going to have as much horsepower, as much firepower, as many resources, but we'll be really good at what it is we do. So whatever job you're doing, commit yourself to it. The people are still going to be the best on the planet. You're still going to be doing cool stuff. You're still going to be doing stuff that's really important to the nation. So if you're worried about resources coming in affecting your commitment to the job, then I would start by questioning your commitment to the job. Don't' get distracted.

By the way, it's easier said than done. I understand that. When I visit Air Force bases right now, in the year and a half I've been in this job until two weeks ago no one had ever asked me at an All Call (including the hundreds, sometimes thousands of people in a room)--no one had ever asked me a question about the operational part of our Air Force. Nobody ever said, "when do I get a better radar, when are we going to get a new missile, when are we going to get new tools?" All they ask about are retirement plans, resources, force shaping, that's all I've been asked about.

That's not a good data point. It's about the mission. If everybody at the wing level and the squadron level are just focused on doing the job the way they're capable of doing it we'll figure out the resource stuff. I understand it's a big distraction, but the commitment has to be to the mission. It has to be to what you stand for. It's got to be the nation you held up your hand and swore to. That's why we come into the military. All the other stuff is going to be fine. They pay scales are good. The retirement plan's going to be good, no matter what it looks like. It's changed three times in my career. It's a great retirement plan. So why all of a sudden do we think it's going to change and be horrible? That's just not going to happen.

So trust the leadership of the Air Force a little bit to take care of you. We're not going to let bad things happen to you. It's not what we do. Despite what the blogs seem to think.

Burnett: ***Sir, you mentioned persecution versus expression. Sorry to go back in time, but you mentioned persecution versus expression in religious tolerance. I'll be a lieutenant in May. I will have people under me for the first time in my life. For me it's always been my faith that's upheld me through things. If an Airman comes to me who's having problems, mental problems, family problems, the best answer I have in my mind is my faith. Am I expressing it in the right way there? If I mention it?***

General Welsh: I understand what you're saying. As a commander, think about what's best for him. Is what's best for him your faith or his faith?

Burnett: His faith.

General Welsh: Okay, that's a completely different discussion than talking about your faith.

If an Airman comes to you and says, if an Airman came to me and said I'm really struggling, I just can't seem to get my bearings, I don't know how to get back on the right track. I would not even hesitate to say well just tell me what sustains you? We talk about pillars that we lean on. One of the pillars that we talk about all the time is the spiritual pillar. It's not faith specific, it just means there's something you kind of lean against when times are really tough. It may be religion, it may be your family, it may be your love of music, but there's something that gives you a spiritual foundation that supports you and the people who have that spiritual pillar, however they define it, are people who tend to be able to weather storms better, and there's all kinds of research in this area.

So I would try and figure out first, what is their pillar? Then enhance that. If in the conversation the individual says well, sir, what do you lean on? I'm not connected to my faith, I don't feel it. What do you do? I like the way you act, I like the way you treat people. Tell them.

The point is, you cannot transmit your values to them in the area of religion. That's what our restriction is. But if they ask you, tell them everything. Once you've told them, they then have a choice. They can choose to ignore it or they can choose to embrace it. They can choose whatever they prefer. You just can't try and influence that because that changes, that's proselytization. You can't do that as an officer in the Air Force, in uniform, with people in uniform. Some faiths believe that proselytization is part of the faith. Fantastic. Take off your uniform, walk out the gate, there's an entire world out there. Go convert. But not in uniform, not using your position as a lever, and not with other people in your unit. You just can't do that. That's where the line is drawn for us.

Make sense?

Burnett: ***Yes, sir. Thank you. When the Air Force Academy was founded we didn't have our core values of integrity, service and excellence. If they had been in place at that time how do you think that would have affected our honor code?***

General Welsh: I have no idea. I hope it wouldn't affect it at all. I don't see them as competing, I see them as complementary.

The Honor Code is something specific that you can set as an objective -- integrity, service and excellence to me are kind of these great goals. That's where you're working toward them your whole life. It's like the guidelines, you're kind of walking through life and in the distance there's these hedges. The integrity hedges and the excellence hedges and I'm going to stay there. I'll learn as I go. The hedge is a little closer to me some days than it is other days, but I'm going to stay in there, that's the goal. The Honor Code is much more specific than that. It just tells you you will not do this, this and this. I am committing that I am not going to do that. I'm signing up to this. I don't take an oath . I don't take an oath to the core values, I just try and live them. They're what I

stand for. The honor code is the way I behave. It sets the standard for me and everybody around me because I'm telling them right up front that I will not tolerate you not following it. And by the way, I'm raising my right hand and I'm swearing that I'm not going to tolerate you doing it. So to me the honor code is credibility.

One of the things in this business you've got to be is credible. When you say you're going to do something as an officer in our Air Force, you better do it. Everybody that works for you is watching. If you don't do it, you've just lost yours. You get one chance.

So in my mind, when you as a young person raise your hand and say I will not lie, I will not cheat, I will not tolerate it, your credibility is on the line from that second forward.

One of the reasons we have a probation program is because your credibility is now gone. You didn't live up to your word. You didn't follow the oath. So the question is, can we trust you to ever do that? And the decision was made a while back that we believe you're young enough, it is a little scary, people do come from different backgrounds, so we're going to give you a chance to see if you can self-reform. Essentially, is what the probationary period is. And embrace this code as a thing that you're going to live by, you're going to live up to. And the people who can convince the people, as you know, in the honor system that they do get themselves to that point then they'll be reinstated, they'll retake the oath essentially, and move forward. The ones that can't go home.

> *"I don't take an oath to the core values, I just try and live them. They're what I stand for. The honor code is the way I behave. It sets the standard for me and everybody around me because I'm telling them right up front that I will not tolerate you not following it."*

Fullam: ***Sir, what would you say the greatest obstacle in instilling this climate of excellence would be, both for us as cadets and Airmen in the Air Force?***

General Welsh: People. People complicate everything. They don't intentionally complicate this but they do because they're different. People add a thousand factors to every equation because they're not the same. Nobody's the same. Nobody has the same background, the same personal values, the same social values, the same moral values, the same experiences. Nobody does. They're all different. Everybody's got a unique story, and every Airman has a story. So I think the hardest part is for our commanders and supervisors in an organization to work hard at learning what all those stories are.

If you can learn the stories you can actually help the Airman get to a point where they are following the values and the behavior you expect of them. I completely believe that. If you don't take the time to know your Airmen well enough they will go in different directions because they care about different things than you care about. They just do. They're human. They've got different things driving them. Sometimes those things are distractions, sometimes they're motivations, sometimes they're bad habits, sometimes they're really, really honorable things that you aren't going to be able to live up to, but if you don't understand what they are, you really don't know exactly what's motivating or pulling that Airman in the right or the wrong direction so you've got to know that. You just have to understand that.

There are people around you for your whole career who are hurting, there are people around you who are frustrated, there are people around you who are mad at something or at somebody, there are people who feel unbelievably limited in what they're allowed to contribute because they don't think people recognize what they can offer. They're all around you. They're around you today. They're

in your squadrons at the Academy. You just don't really know that yet. Or I would argue that you probably sense it, you just haven't taken the time to figure out what it is about that person that you sense is not right. Talk to them. Sit down and ask them. Just every day check in and say how are you doing? You'd be surprised what they'll tell you after a while.

Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force [James A.] Cody has a great drill he runs at bases when we visit. We have this kind of conversation and he'll say you know, where's your best friend here in the audience? He'll be in a big room of people. They'll point usually to the person next to them. They'll say okay, great. This is your best buddy? I'll tell you what. In ninety seconds I bet I know more about him than you do. Then of course everybody's yeah, right. Then he'll just start asking questions. And it's really simple stuff. Do you have any pets? How many pets do you have? What was your favorite pet? Do you have brothers or sisters? What do they do? Are they famous for anything? Are they actors? What do they do? Are they really good musicians? How about your grandparents? Are they still alive? Any divorces in your family? Is the family split up or is it still pretty much a nuclear family? Where does everybody live? What do your mom and dad do? And about halfway into this, you are now looking at him and going I didn't know that. It just continues. It's really remarkable how little we know about each other even when we've been side by side for four years.

Every Airman has a story. If we can get everybody to just learn the story the world changes. It just does. People respond to that. They'll perform in ways that you can't even imagine. They will drag you through every challenge that you run into. They're really, really talented. You can't be an officer in our Air Force without understanding you're not as good as your people. They're much better than you are, and they will carry you over every hurdle. All they want to know is that you care.

> *"Every airman has a story. If we can get everybody to just learn the story the world changes. It just does."*

And to me that's the same thing with establishing a culture of commitment, a culture of caring, a culture of respect. If everybody cares, it's easy. It's just easy. The ones who don't care, you don't tolerate them. We don't have a code for that except the code of common sense. And the code of leadership.

Fullam: ***Sir, how do you make the balance between getting to know your people and remaining approachable as a commander by also holding them all accountable to that level and getting rid of the people that you don't necessarily want or need in your unit?***

General Welsh: The key to accountability is not the commander. The commander has to hold people accountable. The key is everybody else holds them accountable. If you can do it at every level, the organization is completely different than if you have a commander who keeps all the standards.

I tell every commander, squad commander, group commander, wing commander, everyone I've ever spoken to, I have a slide I actually use in presentations I show them. It's a light house in the middle of the surf that's crashing all around it, and I tell them you've got to have a buffer zone. You can be friendly with your people, you can be close with your people, you can be really well connected, but there's got to be a little bit of a buffer around that light house as the storm is crashing on it, because commanders have to make tough decisions and sometimes you've got to make them about people you consider your best people or who are closest to you. I've had to take action against vice wing commanders. As a wing commander I had to take action against command chiefs when I was a commander. People will surprise you with the things they do occasionally. So you've got to have

the ability to hold everybody in your organization to the same standard. But the key to getting accountability and performance at every level is by having every supervisor feel that way.

Your young staff sergeant/supervisor can't be best buddies with an airman first class that he is rating. It's a little tougher for him to understand that because he just was one not too long ago. Then he became a senior airman, and the next day he's now supervising three senior airmen and two A1Cs [airmen first class]. We've just got to teach that to our people and hold them accountable.

At the Air Force Academy it's really clear. You've got "Firsties" [First Class Cadets/Seniors] leading the squadrons, and then you've got two degrees [Juniors] trying to make things happen, but people kind of going off, and three degrees [sophomores] who don't know who they are yet. That's kind of how it works. Some squadrons are better at it than others. It depends on the climate in the squadron, and it changes as leadership changes. The same thing is true in the Air Force. It is all about leadership.

The more we get leaders to understand that at every level they have to hold this standard, the better off they are. At the Academy if all leaders were enforcing every standard, then being squadron commander would be a lot of fun. You could learn a lot. As it is, the squadron commander's trying to enforce every standard and everybody's fighting it. It's just the way it is, it's the way it's always been, which is why I would change the system. But that's the way it's been.

So I think we're getting cheated a little bit on the leadership training side of the house because we're not really doing peer leadership. We're doing peer influencing. Or not. Depending on how successful you are.

I think that's the key. The key is everybody's got to be accountable. Everybody at every level.

If you get a culture where people just expect to be held accountable, amazing things happen. I am a huge believer that people will perform to expectations. If you pick the right people they will perform to expectations. Those who don't are just obvious to everybody. But if you allow an expectation to be that you can get by without really performing well, then they won't.

I was not a good cadet for the Air Force Academy and I was because [being that way] was okay. I could have, I just didn't have to. It wasn't an expectation I felt I had to meet to be successful.

I got to my first squadron, [where] I was a T-37 instructor at Williams Air Force Base [formerly located in Mesa, Arizona, thirty miles southeast of Phoenix]. I finished the instructor program down at San Antonio, [and] did pretty good. I was top graduate down there so I

was God's gift to aviation. I got back to Williams Air Force Base and walked in the door expecting everybody to "Ooh, he's here. The world's looking better now." I walked into the office of my first squadron commander. I'd finally reached the real Air Force. His name was Duane G. Divich. I'll never forget his name. It's the only place I ever saw him, I never saw him again. His name was outside his door. Duane G. Divich, because I looked at it on the way out after he chewed my ass for not understanding what the personal appearance standards meant in the Air Force. He didn't care about my flying. He didn't care about how brilliant I was as a young instructor pilot. He didn't care about anything. I just looked like a slob. He didn't tolerate that in his squadron because "You can't influence students the right way if you look like a bum." Quote. I'll never forget it. My first day on the job and Duane G. Divich changed my life because he set an expectation very clearly about the way I was going to act. And it affected everything that happened to me -- Let me give you a brief rundown.

I became a recruiting poster kind of guy. I shined my boots. Nobody shined their boots every day back in those days. I spit shined my boots. It was obnoxious. I always had a flight suit that wasn't wrinkled. I just paid attention to it. He was going to beat me if I didn't. I knew that.

Along the way I got a couple of jobs because I looked sharp. Not because I was great at flying airplanes or instructing, but because somebody liked the way I looked.

I went to fly the A-10 after my days as a T-37 instructor and I got to Europe and all the people in my wing were leaving about a year after I got there because they stood up the A-10 wing in '79, I got there in '81, so a year after I got there, all the old guys were leaving and they needed somebody to upgrade to instructor pilot in my squadron. There were about four of us who were pretty new, but kind of in a queue. And no kidding, the squadron commander told me look, the 3rd Air Force Commander was coming in in about six months, and he's going to need an instructor pilot (IP). You shine your boots every day so I'm upgrading you to IP now. So I upgraded to IP so I could go be the 3rd Air Force Commander's instructor pilot. Was I the best pilot out of those four guys? Probably not. I like to think I was, but probably not. But the other guys were kind of like I used to be. About a year later all the flight commanders were leaving. They were all seven or eight years older than we were in age, because they were all F-4 guys that had gone to A-10, so they said well, we need a flight commander and the only requirement is you've got to be an IP to get flight commander and I was the only instructor in my squadron who wasn't a flight commander, so I was the flight commander. So I was the youngest flight commander in the wing, big wings -- 125 A-10s. And I was the youngest flight commander by seven years.

My next OPR [performance report] said "number one captain in the biggest fighter wing in the Air Force." That was endorsed by the USAFE [US Air Forces Europe] Commander. And I got promoted to major three years below the zone because I shined my boots. Because Duane Divich kicked me in the rear and told me what standards are about.

Guys, it's that simple. There's nothing magic that happens in the world. It's about telling people what you expect, then setting the standard and holding them to it. We can do it at the Air Force Academy, we can do it in the Air Force. People actually like it. They know what to expect. They know what the goal is. They know when they reach the standard they're proud. Now we're back to the pride thing.

Sorry, long answer.

"There's nothing magic that happens in the world. It's about telling people what you expect, then setting the standard and holding them to it."

Burnett: ***No, sir. That was a great answer. Speaking of holding people accountable, the recent issues at Malmstrom as well as in the Navy and Army, how do we react to those issues? How do we learn from it? What do we do as a result?***

General Welsh: The first thing you react to an issue like this by taking it head on. Don't duck it, don't fail to acknowledge it, don't minimize it. Find out the facts first. Once you have the facts, figure out what the solution is going to be.

We've done a lot of studies in the nuclear business over the last six or seven years. In fact we've done about twenty of them. We have over a thousand recommendations that came out of those twenty studies that we've already implemented completely. We're done with them. We made it better. But none of those studies mentioned the cheating as a problem.

So the first thing you do is figure out why. Where did it come from? How long has this been around? Is it pervasive? What's going on? That's part of the investigative process. That's all been done. And pointing to a number of things that were culture things that had changed inside the nuclear community over time, especially the community at Malmstrom.

Some of it was individuals who were just bad, who kind of took it to another level and brought it over the last couple of years to a really bad place. But there was also a culture of behavior that kind of came to be accepted. Sharing information on tests. Helping each other out. A deputy crew commander, before they turn in their answer sheet on Monday's test was showing it to a crew commander. The crew commander didn't tell him what the answers were, but they'd just say something like well, you might want to recheck number seven. That's not really cheating, is it? Then they'd go back and take a look at seven and they might change their answer. Or they might not. They didn't give them the answer, they just pointed out that you may want to look at that one again. Some people described it to me as "We're just sharing the 'gouge'." "Just taking care of my deputy." [or] "Getting our young guys through." Those are the phrases that kind of came to be normal, from the crew force. That to me sounds like cheating. A lot like cheating.

So where did we cross the line? Because these are not evil people. They're not bad people. They're young people who came into this culture that had kind of gone leaning that way and they just went with it. They were even told in training, you're going to see some things in the testing program at the base that you might feel a little uncomfortable with but just go along with it. They'll get you through this. That just became normal over time.

So the first thing you do is try and analyze exactly what you've got. Admit what you have. Then figure out how you change it.

We started by removing every leader in the operational chain in the wing. The wing commander retired. The wing commander, by the way is a great officer. He's a great officer, he's a great human being. If you haven't seen the note he left with his wing when he resigned, you should read it. It was an email, he sent it out to the whole wing. It was spectacular. But you read that piece of paper, you know Rob Stanley. That's who he is. But he'd been there for two and a half years. Nobody had picked up on this and he hadn't either.

We removed every squadron commander because about 40 percent of each squadron was involved. How do you not know that?

The group commander went, the deputy group commander went. How do you not know if 40 percent of your ops group is involved in doing these kinds of things?

And the question really is not "Are they bad people?" Because they're not bad people. The question is how did they get disconnected enough that they didn't know what was going on? Now we come back to leaders. What is the leader's role? What is the commander's job? Is it

to just be a person of integrity yourself? Is it to meet the standards yourself? Or is it to ensure your people are meeting the standards and your people are examples of integrity? In my view that's what commanders do. Until you can do that, you can't be a commander in our Air Force. You've got to figure out how to know what your people are doing, you've got to connect with them enough so you know what's driving them -- back to everyone has a story -- and you've got to let them know what your standard is and demand that they meet it.

If you say my standard is that we're going to score 100 percent on this test, do you guys understand that? How do you think they're going to interpret that? As opposed to saying I want everybody in this group doing the best that they possibly can. If I don't think you're performing to your best, we're going to talk. But if you're giving me everything you've got and your standard is 92 percent, I love you like a brother. It's about the standard you set, but commanders have to set them. That's the kind of thing you're supposed to be practicing when you're at the Air Force Academy.

Until we have a system that allows you to really do that, try, fail, adjust, then we're not quite right yet. I expect cadets to live up to standards too. Want to hear personal frustration? I hold Airmen in the Air Force to a higher standard than we hold the cadets at the Air Force Academy when it comes to behavior. I can give you a million examples. Unacceptable. Just unacceptable. How do we change that?

Fullam: ***Sir, how do we as an Air Force live with traditional military values while also being innovative in how we train and equip to fight and keep up with the challenges in the changing national security landscape that's out there right now?***

General Welsh: I don't think values and how we train and adjust the fight, I don't see it changing at all. The values don't change. The values are the bedrock. Whether it's the core values of the Air Force or your personal values and the way you approach a problem, they don't change.

The important thing I think is that -- First of all, the mission of the Air Force will constantly evolve. We've done the same mission since the day they set it up as an Air Force. They haven't changed at all. We added space superiority. Other than that it's air superiority, global strike, ISR [reconnaissance], airlift, command and control. That's what they've been since 1947. They're still those things today. We added space to the air part so we have air and space superiority. We're trying to figure out how to do all those missions in new domains now. We did them the air before. Now we're doing them in the space domain. And we're doing them in and through the cyber domain. But the mission's the same. We're just doing ISR through cyber, or ISR through space, or command and control through space, or command and control through cyber. It's still command and control. It's not some new cosmic mission we've come up with.

So the trick for us is figuring out how do we adjust the way we think about the mission so that we become more efficient over time and more effective over time. Even with limited resources. Can you take the strike mission out of the air domain and put more of it into the cyber domain so it's not non-kinetic strike, but it has at least equal if not greater effect particularly against targets you can't access easily, particularly through the air domain. If you can do that, there may be a way to balance this with lower resources where you're even better than you were before. But it requires a completely different way of thinking about things. So part of it's just training ourselves to look for opportunities. This is where our young folks are tremendous. They're not tied into the same ideas I'm tied into. So if we can give them general guidelines and say hey, operate with these lines, go figure out a better way to take out the water bottle, they will. They'll figure it out. But we've got to be willing to listen to them once they figure it out, and maybe try sometimes

the things that don't work and adjust until we find the things that do. That's where this innovation idea comes into the Air Force. It is essential for our success. I don't want people innovating with their values at all, ever. I want them walking in the door, understanding the core values, living by them their entire time in the military and afterwards, and I want them understanding that those values make us more committed to what we do and make us more trusting of who we do it with and tie us closer together. That's what values do.

Values are part of the fabric of an institution. They're not part of the task of an institution. They're much deeper than that. So I just see our core values as who we are. As soon as we quit meeting those core values we have got a major issue on our hands. So when you see something fairly significant happen like at Malmstrom, back to the question itself, you've got to worry about core values. At least in one area, we lost them. We just did not follow our core values. And I'm not naïve enough to believe that only the people at Malmstrom are capable of going there. So we've got to figure out what happened and make sure we kind of get that under control, change the leadership, change the environment there, and then re-spread the thing that's most important for keeping this from happening which is core values. So we're onto another core values campaign in the Air Force. We're just going to remind everybody what these things mean to us.

One of the things you have in big institutions is when you train people in training pipelines; you can throw a lot of stuff at them. It can be core values training, honor training, sexual assault, even respect and dignity training, diversity training, all the stuff you get. All that training actually brings up somebody out of a pipeline who pretty much understands how we're supposed to be doing things. But when they hit their first operational unit if they don't hear the same stuff and see the same behavior, they go right back into that huge funnel of behavior they came out of. So we just compress them down and then they do this again. That can't happen for us to be successful in this arena. It just can't.

I'll give you an Academy analogy. When I was the commandant I asked every class that came through while I was there the same question, and I asked at a couple of points. The first time I saw them was during the 4th of July fireworks. We'd bring them in to Arnold Hall [student union] to watch 4th of July fireworks off the deck there in the back of Arnold Hall. That was kind of what we did when I was there. I don't know if they do now. But I talked to them right before that in Arnold Hall Theater.

The first question was, how many of you came here because you saw the Academy as this shining place on the hill, some place that would make you better than you were before, that would kind of drive you to the live you really wanted to live, that made you part of something special? Every hand in the room went up. I said okay, you're here now, you've been here a couple of days. It's hard. How many of you still feel that way? Every hand in the room stayed up.

At the end of BCT [Basic Cadet Training] I talked to them again, Arnold Hall again, part of their closing ceremony, and I asked them the same two questions.

> *"This is where our young folks are tremendous. (...) But we've got to be willing to listen to them once they figure it out, and maybe try sometimes the things that don't work and adjust until we find the things that do. That's where this innovation idea comes into the Air Force. It is essential for our success."*

Every hand was still in the air.

I met with the Doolie cadets during the academic year the first time in the middle of September. I wanted to

meet with the four degrees [freshmen], to kind of talk to them about the academic year, what can we help with, those kind of things. I asked them the same two questions in the middle of September, so we're a month and a half later. Every hand was in the air when I asked the first question. When I said how many of you still feel that way, two-third, maybe three-quarters of the hands came down. Now only a quarter of them still feel proud to be there at this shining place on the hill.

Why is that? What happened to them during that time period? I went and asked a bunch of them. Do you think it was academics that did it? It was living in the squadron. It was other cadets that did it. All of a sudden they saw cadets the way cadets really behaved and talked. That wasn't what they saw with this shining place on the hill. How do we fix that?

Burnett: I was about to ask you.

General Welsh: You get back to setting the standard.

One of the things that I've seen in all my experiences at the Academy is that you've got a core group of cadets, two of them are sitting right here [referring to interviewers], who try to do the right thing all the time. You're there to learn. You want to be good at what you do. You're proud of being an Airman. You move forward and you want to be good in the Air Force. You're excited about the opportunity. You're trying to prepare yourself. You just do the best you can. Every now and then you're allowed to act twenty, but most of the time you don't. You act much older and you do much more than people like me ever thought possible at your age. You're just talented and you're aiming at all the right targets.

Then there's another group that, probably about the same number of people who really don't care that much and they're living in a parallel universe. They live in the alcove at the far end of the squadron as far away from the AOC's desk or the MTI's [Military Training Instructor, subsequently renamed Associate Military Trainer] desk as they can get. And they live there because nobody bothers them down there, and there's usually an alcove or two of them. They band together pretty quickly. Usually by the second cycle of rooms, they're together. They live on a different planet. They're not being governed by any of the rules of the squadrons. The chain of command kind of avoids going down there. They will tell you they'll kick your tail if they come in their room again. It's that group of people. I know about it. I was one of them. It's real. It's in every squadron and you know their names. So does the AOC. Why are they still there?

"Values are part of the fabric of an institution. They're not part of the task of an institution. They're much deeper than that. So I just see our core values as who we are."

And in between those two groups there's the great unwashed middle that doesn't really know which way to go. So that group in the middle just kind of rolls along. They get through, but they're not committed one way or the other. That's kind of how I see the cadet wing. Not a lot of people disagree with me, but that's how I see it. I've looked at it from lots of angles. My son will tell you he sees it the same way. I can tell you a lot of people who see it the same way.

So how do you change the behavior? Let me tell you an option, there are lots of options by the way. This isn't the only option. Let me just give you a couple of things you can do, and you tell me how they would change the game.

What if we started using aptitude probation as something completely different from conduct probation? And as somebody who started their three degree year, if you watch them their three degree year and you didn't think they really were interested in being an officer, they were just interested in having a good time in college, if they

were put on aptitude probation and by the end of the three degree year they hadn't proved they wanted to be there and were proud of what they were doing, and then in your three degree year there actually is a choice made not just by the cadet to come back for a commitment, by the Academy to commit to them. We don't owe any cadet anything. Nothing. We're paying for your education, for goodness sake, we're giving you incredible opportunity. We owe [you] nothing. So what if we just made that commitment a two way street. Would behavior change in the three degree year? Probably. What if once you committed and came back we wrote a performance report on you your junior and your senior year that stayed in your record until you made major, or not? Or captain? But you were rated, just like an officer performance report, and it went with you into the Air Force. Just that would change behavior. What if we quit having cadet squadron commanders and we had AOCs as the commander? I think that's how every other position except the senior enlisted position, was the MTI in the squadron. If they were the commander and the superintendent of the squadron and they drove activity in the chain of command so you saw how you were really going to have to act as a young lieutenant in a squadron, because they'll hold you accountable for it and then they write a report on you that would stick with you after graduation. That would change the game instantly. If you didn't live up to standards, they'd kick you out.

"One of the things that I've seen in all my experiences at the Academy is that you've got a core group of cadets, two of them are sitting right here, who try to do the right thing all the time."

We don't have to tolerate a graduate coming out of the Academy with [a bad] attitude. We don't and we shouldn't. That's my view.

We need [a] Duane Divich to be a second class flight NCO at the Air Force Academy, or a firstie element leader. And set the standard right then for 20 percent of the officer force that's coming into our Air Force. We would change the game. But we don't have to tolerate what we're living with today. I make it sound much more horrible than it is, but you know what I'm talking about. We've never changed it. We've known about it since I was a cadet. This is nothing new. But we haven't been willing to change the system that we hold up as being so great. It's not that great. It just isn't.

Cadet disciplinary system, on your third late to work, late to class, what do you get for punishment?

Fullum: Form Ten of some sort.

General Welsh: If my staff sergeant, my NCOIC [Noncommissioned Officer in Charge] of the admin office today is late for work three times in a row, it's a verbal counseling, a letter of counseling, a letter of reprimand. The fourth time, she's gone. Gone out of the Air Force. How is that compatible with how we're treating cadets? So what's the cadet learning? It's what I learned. "Okay I can live with five and five." [conduct punishments] I've got on my demerit total this month. Five demerits? Not a big deal. I don't start serving confinements until I get eight more, so I can live with this one. It's a different standard we're setting that creates a different behavior, creates a different mindset. It creates cynicism. And it's alive and well. I just don't think we have to tolerate it.

So be careful, because neither does [General] Michelle Johnson [current USAFA Superintendent].

Burnett: ***Sir, our Commandant talks about that. He calls them [the] transactional mindset. I can take five demerits so I'll take the risk. You are proof that a cadet like you can be one of our greatest officers in the Air Force. What do I say to a cadet like that?***

General Welsh: You don't want to learn the lessons the way I learned them. One of the lessons I've learned. I was lucky. Really lucky. Let me give you an example. I didn't do well in academics. I'd like to get a PhD someday. So what I've got to go do when I get out of the Air Force is I've got to go build academic credibility somewhere so they will accept me into an in-residence program. I've got to back up and I've got to go back and create academic credibility. So forget what I've done in the Air Force. That's not going to convince an academic institution I can handle their curriculum. I've got to go build credibility again because I didn't take the time to do what I was capable of doing as a cadet in class. I cheated myself out of information and experiences and learning that could have vaulted me ahead years ago. I just let myself down. That's what it is.

I've been extremely fortunate. But as I said, the only reason it changed for me is because I met Duane Divich. I'd have done the same thing as a young officer. I'd have put myself in the same hole and had a great time doing it and been out of the Air Force really, really early. Which is what my dad thought I was going to do. I was disappointing him the whole time. He just loved me too much to tell me.

So you've just got to tell people, don't cheat yourself. You are closing doors. Every time you don't do your best you are shutting a door in your face. To me it was academics. It was also, by the way, jobs out of pilot training. I wasn't at the top of my pilot training class. I flew as well as everybody else, but I wasn't at the top of the class, because I didn't want to study that hard for the tests. I knew I would get by. You've got to be kidding me.

My son was exactly the opposite. He worked his butt off in everything when it came to pilot training, and it showed. He came out of pilot training and he had options. I closed those doors. It affects you. It will affect you.

If you look at one guy and say well look, he was Chief of Staff of the Air Force. You don't want to learn what I learned the way I learned it, when you can learn it easily as a cadet at the Air Force Academy. Just do what the program asks you to do. It will make you a better person. It will make you a better performer. You can do everything you want to do. Take advantage of it. I can tell you a hundred stories of people I know who didn't end up as Chief of Staff of the Air Force who ran with me at the Academy. Great people, but they'd go back and do it different too.

Burnett: ***Sir, we're almost out of time. What kind of parting words can you give us?***

General Welsh: Life's good. The Air Force rocks. Be good at it. Just be good at it. Whatever you're doing, be good at it. Don't be afraid to be the best you can be. Nobody appreciates a half-ass anything. Pick a career field, do your best.

Ultimately the only person you're going to have to look in the mirror in the big assessment-- depending upon your faith belief--the only person you're going to have to really worry about assessing is you. You can't fool yourself. You just can't do it. So just keep asking yourself every day, am I giving this my best shot? If the answer is yes, you will die as a happy man. I don't care whether you're talking family life, personal life, professional life. You give it your best shot, you will be happy. I'm close enough to see that spot, so I'm telling you, you'll be happy, guys.

If you look back and you go oh, man, I wish I'd just tried harder. I wish I'd given that my best shot. You will regret it. You just will. Every now and then it's good when you're younger to listen to people who have screwed stuff up and learn from them.

By the way, the other thing you give up, I didn't mention this before, value relationships. Some of the things I gave up at the Academy, people I greatly respected later in life who I didn't really know or didn't want to know or didn't

want to know me because of the way I behaved at the Air Force Academy were people who I was cheated out of having as friends and mentors and advisors in the course of my career. They didn't want to be around me. Because they remember me from the Academy.

I thought I'd change, they didn't know that. There was this gulf, I was not able to cross that for a long time with some of them. With some of them, never. So to some extent I think I'm driven a little bit by trying to live up to their model still, their expectations still. I hope now that they will accept me. You don't want to do that. You just don't want to do it. You're cheating yourself. Life is good. The Air Force does rock. I promise you, you'll enjoy it.

But you're in the Air Force now. Don't forget that. The Academy's a great part of the Air Force. It's just a different part. Every part is different. It's different everywhere. But the real Air Force lives at USAFA. You just aren't recognizing it yet.

All of us who go back and see [the Academy], we go man, this is great. It's fantastic. What a great place. What a great opportunity. How do we get cadets to realize that after BCT. That's the trick.

Okay, guys, listen. Thanks for what you're doing. This is a fascinating subject.

[Discussion about post- graduation.]

Thanks for setting an example. Thanks for being excited about what you do. Clearly you are. Thanks for taking on this challenge. This is important stuff that we need to pay attention to.

Just one. Just get one to pay attention. Do the same thing when you get out in the Air Force, just fix it one day, one person at a time. It will work that way. It just takes a while, but it will work. The only way it doesn't work is when you give up. Don't get frustrated.

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RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS

SCHOLARSHIP

Contracted Leadership:

The Challenges of Military Command Within the Arena of Private Contractors

Dr. John Riley, Kutztown University

ABSTRACT

The military's dramatically increased reliance on private contractors is creating an unanticipated set of unique challenges to military leaders operating in contingency operations. No longer relegated to support activities, contractors provide tasks in areas that were traditionally considered essential governmental activities. This article reviews the evolving contractor-military partnership and takes up the issue of how effective leadership is achieved in a world of contracted men. The argument advanced here is that effective leadership will depend on the extent to which contractors can be more fully integrated into the military mission without creating a degree of reliance that endangers the military's ability to stay innovate or threatens the contactors' civilian status.

Consider a simple puzzle. An officer is given the task of commanding an overseas base in a high threat environment. Essential tasks to be completed include providing local security and construction of basic infrastructure. To accomplish this task the officer will have to rely on a hybrid of uniformed soldiers and contracted workers. The contributions of both mission elements are essential. The officer, however, has only a limited sense

Dr. John Riley is an associate professor at Kutztown University. He received his B.A. from Le Moyne College and his M.A. and Ph.D. in political science from The George Washington University. His ongoing research addresses issues surrounding the use of private security companies, international law, and development. Dr. Riley's work has been published in such venues as the *Journal of Third World Studies*, *Yale Journal of International Affairs,* and *Wisconsin Journal of International Law.*

of the contractors' prior background, training, and prior experiences. Command and control will be complicated by the Contracting Officer Representative (COR) management system that directly oversees the contracted services. At any given time, the officer may not know exactly how many contractors are operating at the base as the contractors' population constantly shifts. Moreover, composition of the contractors ranges from Americans to local to third party nationals who have varied sets of skills and motivations. How does the officer lead effectively?

To this point, most studies on the military-contractor relationship have sought to mitigate the unintended harmful effects of contracting, and research has focused on three categories of bad acts. First, the increased dependence on contracted services has been accompanied by concerns about fraud and waste (e.g. Commission on Wartime Contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan, 2011). Additionally, the presence of private security contractors (PSCs) on the battlefield has given rise to "blue on white" events, and incidents between contractors and military personal at check points are commonly reported (Dunigan, 2011, p. 59). Thirdly, uneven training and incongruent rules of engagement among PSCs has led many observers to worry that contractors pose a threat to local populations (e.g. Gómez del Prado, 2012).

Predictably there has been a call for better planning and management of contractors and some progress has been made (e.g. United States Government Accountability Office (GAO), 2012). For instance, even the briefest comparison of the *Army Field Manual 3-100.21* first published in 2003 that was titled "Contractors on the Battlfield [sic]" against the 2008 version "Operational Contract Support Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures" indicates a degree of maturation to the Army's approach to working with contractors. On the international level, best practices have been codified in the "International Management System for Quality of Private Security Company Operations Requirements with Guidance" or "PSC 1" (American Society for Industrial Security (ASIS), 2012) and numerous states, including the United States, China, and much of Europe have agreed to the Montreux Document that sets out the principle obligations governments have in regulating private security and military companies (International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 2008).

On one level, these are important developments and the U.S. government and the broader international community needs to continue to identify ways to better integrate private contractors into the overall battle plan. At a more fundamental level, however, successful leadership will only be possible if the public soldiers' mission is re-conceived as well. Effective leadership of contracted personnel is not simply a question of developing better command and control regimes. Rather, it requires the recognition that the private and public spheres have fundamentally changed. The dichotomy between the private and public realms has always been somewhat artificial, but what constitutes an "inherently governmental function" is no longer as obvious as it once was (LaPlaca, 2012). In this instance, America has opted to contract out part of the machinery—and therefore the cost--of war. The implications for the military are profound.

Testifying before the Committee of Armed Services, Alan Estevez, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Logistics and Material Readiness captured the resulting tension, "You know if you asked me where we are on operational contract support I would say...5 [sic] years ago we had a gaping wound, self-inflicted as it may be. We staunched the bleeding, we sutured it up, the scar tissue is healing, but what we haven't done is embedded it in the DNA and the muscle memory" (HASC, 2012, p. 26). Continuing with Estevez's analogy, this paper seeks to better understand what that new DNA looks like. How has the move towards privatization and the increasing reliance on private contractors changed

In this instance, America has opted to contract out part of the machinery—and therefore the cost—of war. The implications for the military are profound.

the battlefield? What new muscle memory does the modern military need to develop? That is, how does an officer lead among contractors?

The argument advanced here is that the military's reliance on contracted services has fundamentally changed the contractors' role on the battlefield. No longer relegated to support activities, contractors provide tasks in areas that were traditionally considered inherently governmental activities. Paradoxically, effective leadership will depend on the extent to which contractors can be more fully integrated into the military mission without creating a degree of reliance that endangers the military's ability to stay innovative, or threatens the contactors' civilian status under the laws of armed conflict.

The paper unfolds in the following steps. The next section reviews the growing role of contractors and their evolving relationship with the U.S. military. The third section examines three areas in which American military's reliance on contracting has created a new reality for the U.S. military. The paper concludes by examining how these new realities challenge a leader's ability to remain innovative and forward thinking.

The Rise of the Contractor

The United States' growing dependence on private contractors has been well documented (Baack & Ray, 1985; Ellington, 2011) and their work is generally categorized as theater, external, or systems contract support (U.S. Department of the Army, 2011, pp. 1-3). As the name suggests, theater support contracts are awarded to contractors who assist contingency operations and they are intended to meet the needs of operational forces. Systems contracts usually provide support for new weapons systems and are mostly filled by U.S. citizens. External support contracts provide the logistic and non-combat related services whose contracting authority does not derive directly from the theater support contracting head. Drawing upon the familiar analogy, these three contracting categories help support the tip of the spear and free the military to focus more on conducting military operations then providing logistical support.

Researchers have uncovered numerous factors contributing to the growth of the defense contracting industry. One of the most fundamental drivers of this growth is the *belief* that privatization can produce efficiency (Riley & Gambone, 2010). As Douglas (2004, p. 131) notes, the "downsizing occurred not because the military was no longer necessary, but as an attempt to economize." More pragmatically, the complexity of weapon systems has risen while the ability of the military to organically support them has diminished. Moreover, since the end of the Cold War, military commitments have dramatically increased while the overall force structure has correspondingly decreased by thirty seven percent (Rostkey, 2013, p. 13). As Blizzard (2004, p. 7) concludes, "Contractors have been used to fill the void created by the drawdown in troop strength." There were, of course, also political considerations driving this transformation.

The U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 did not culminate with the anticipated "explosion of joy and relief" (Wolfowitz, Interview with BBC World Service, 2003). The expectations of a rapid drawdown of U.S. military forces after the liberation of Iraq were met with the reality of the Herculean task of post-conflict reconstruction in a country ripped apart by ongoing sectarian violence. The initial gap between U.S. military capabilities and the desire to stabilize Iraq was filled by private contractors who not only provided logistical services but also performed much needed security operations (Dunigan, 2011, p. 52). Moreover, as American support for the war dwindled and American military forces drew down, the number of contractors continuously ramped up. A tipping point was reached in February 2008 when 161,000 contractors supported 155,000 U.S. troops stationed in Iraq (Dunigan, 2011, p. 52). At the same time President Obama declared in his State of the Union Address in 2014 that "all of our troops are out of Iraq", the Defense Department reported that it was employing 3,234 private contractors in Iraq (of which 820 are U.S. citizens) to

assist with security cooperation and military sales (Central Command (CENTCOM), 2014).

A similar story has unfolded in Afghanistan. As of February 2014, the U.S. had 33,600 troops stationed in Afghanistan (total ISAF force levels were 55,686) (International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), 2014). In comparison, the U.S. Defense Department employed 78,136 contractors to work in Afghanistan (Central Command (CENTCOM), 2014). At the time this article was written, U.S. forces were scheduled to draw down to 5,500 by the end of the year and to reach zero by early 2017; however, policymakers were still debating about the timeline and tempo of withdrawing U.S. forces (Whitlock, 2015). As NATO and American forces are drawn down, however, the "private security industry will grow...as the United States and others in Afghanistan will [rely] on these firms increasingly as troops exit the country, leaving a security vacuum" (Auner, 2013).

As polls indicate that the American public has become increasingly war weary and reluctant to use military force around the world (Kille , 2014), policymakers have increasingly turned to private contractors to meet their foreign policy objectives. Employing contractors has become an increasingly attractive option to policymakers who can use contractors as a tool to meet American overseas commitments without incurring the political costs associated with high levels of troop deployments.

Employing contractors to assist the American military and attempting to avoid the political costs associated with war is hardly a new phenomenon. From the days of George Washington who employed Prussian soldiers to assist with training to Brown & Root who built airports and bases during the Vietnam War, contractors have been a constant presence alongside U.S. military forces. Modern contracting, however, is discernibly different. Not only has the number of contractors supporting the military rapidly risen, their relationship with the military has changed in at least two interrelated ways.

First, the depth and degree of integration has altered the traditional contractor-military relationship. Traditionally, contractors worked in relatively defined areas and their relationship to their military counterparts was well understood. Contractors now work in all aspects of the combat zones, and as Ellington (2011, p. 137) puts it, their "roles now range from shooter to fry-cook." Moreover, commanders supervise contractors but do not command them. Conversely, the military is dependent upon contractors' services but "where contract terms specify" the military is also responsible for the contractors' safety (U.S. Department of the Defense, 2014, p. i). An Afghanistan-based commander observed that he "used to worry exactly what to do with the contractors living on his base [in the event of] a dire emergency...Do I arm them?"

The question of arming contractors illustrates the emerging complexity between the contractor and the military. Contractors, who are "civilians accompanying the armed forces" may be armed for self-protection if the combatant commander gives consent, the company under contract agrees, and the individual contractor and their COR agrees (Hornstein, 2006, p. 15). The decision to arm a contractor is only allowed if civilian contractors and the military agree that the decision to arm advances the mission. Hierarchy and relationships are then further blurred. For instance, situations arise whereby the commander and a contractor both feel that it is in the contractors' best interest to be armed but the contracting company refuses to give consent (Interview with Ado Machida, President of The International Stability Operations Association (ISOA), 2014). Consent may be denied because of the higher cost of insuring an armed contractor or because the company is concerned about negative publicity that might result if the armed contractor becomes involved in an incident. The traditional model of the military leading the war effort and the contractors operating in the rear, simply responding to the military needs, no longer neatly applies.

Second, the operational function of the contractor has changed. U.S. policy is clearly stated, "Core functions should not be outsourced (Chamberland, 2011, p. 18),"

but determining what constitutes a core function is highly problematic at best. For instance, Andrew Ilan (2013, p. 102) notes that commanders are increasingly relying on contractors for aerial reconnaissance images and situational analysis. Additionally, the provision of static or escort security in a high threat environment may not be the same as carrying out combat operations; however, the private security contractors who find their post under attack may fail to see the fine distinction. Stephen Blizzard (2004, p. 5) captures this dynamic when he notes "The impact of this [contractors'] expanding role has blurred the distinction between contractors performing as civilians accompanying the force and contractors engaging in hostilities."

This new level of integration moves the question past the issue of whether contractors are simply force multipliers, and asks where contractors fit into the overall architecture of the armed forces. Are contractors a civilian wing attached to the armed forces? The British approach to managing contractors explicitly recognizes this new dynamic. The Sponsored Reserve Program ("JSP 516," 2007) requires that British contractors hire a percentage of British reservists who can be activated during a contingency operation. In essence, soldiers can serve as private contractors but if necessary they can also be commanded by the British military as if they were soldiers. As U.S. policymakers consider how best to recalibrate the changing role of the contractor, they will need to consider how this new role plays out on evolving battlefield.

The Transformed Battlefield

The rapidly growing presence of contractors and their corresponding changing roles will continue to pose significant challenges to commanders and policymakers as they seek to identify better ways to integrate the contractors into overall mission accomplishment. The following section examines three different issues that will continually confront battlefield commanders as they adjust to the changing partnership with contractors on the battlefield.

"That Guy is a Patriot Too."

> In 1386 the forces of Padua and Venice clashed in the battle of Brentelle. The Doge of Venice, Antonio Vernier, had hoped that the battle would bring a decisive victory, but his *condottieri* troops had been bribed beforehand and retreated at the critical moment, leaving the field to the Paduans. (Murphy & Turner, 2007, p. 48)

It is easy to understand why some military personnel may have a certain sense of unease, distrust, or even resentment toward their contracted colleagues. Love of country is the primary motivator of the American military. In contrast, there are no illusions about the contractor's motivation, money. Relations become even more polarized with the introduction of PSCs on the battlefield. For some, the PSC evokes the image of the mercenary who may or may not hold his ground when his or her life is truly threatened. The PSC will follow the rules of force which may, or may not, differ significantly from the rules of engagement governing the American soldier (U.S. Joint Forces Command, 2010, p. II-5), and incidents, such as the 2007 Blackwater shooting in Nisour Square Iraq, have the potential to endanger the military's larger mission.

These are legitimate concerns. Although proper standards and codes of conduct for PSCs have been drafted (e.g. International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 2008, and American Society for Industrial Security (ASIS), 2012), regulation is still uneven at best. Additionally, tactically effective accomplishment of the narrow mission of a PSC, such as escort security, may undermine the larger goal of the operation. For example, it is difficult to win the hearts and minds of a local population, if PSCs are using aggressive tactics to keep their clients or convoys safe. PSCs co-deployed with the American military on counter-insurgency missions raise a number of concerns (Dunigan, 2011, p. 59).

Additionally, resentment between the military and contractor can easily arise. Rep. Austin Scott, R-G.A. raised the issue at the Committee on Armed Services hearing on Operational Contract Support:

> One of the things that sticks in my mind with a recent trip to Afghanistan is a young soldier who spoke to me. She was an air traffic control officer, and she spoke to me about what the contractor that sat literally next to her in the chair was paid versus her pay. And it was simple things like access to Internet anytime the contractor wanted it, when our soldiers didn't have some of those same conveniences (HASC, 2012, p. 26).

The fact that contractors are perceived to be motivated primarily by economic reasons needs to be recognized (and perhaps pay differences need to be reconciled), however, it should not be a source of derision. Many men and women serving across the armed forces do so for mixed motivations as well; love of country is more often than not intertwined with an appetite for adventure and the need for a steady salary. The economic motivation of the contractor does not necessarily diminish their patriotic credentials. Nor does it make them a lesser member of the mission element. What matters is the extent to which the contractor contributes to the success of the mission.

Regardless of motivation, the contractor operating in a combat theater is also risking their life to contribute to the mission. Contractor causalities are an issue that has been largely underreported and the levels are startlingly high. The U.S. Department of Labor tracks the number of contractor injuries and death claims made under the Defense Base Act (DBA). The DBA was initially passed by Congress in 1941 with the intent to ensure that civilians working overseas on government contracts received adequate insurance against injury and death that arise in the course of their employment. From 1 September 2001 through 30 September 2013, 102,190 new DBA cases involving a contractor injury were filed. Although almost half the cases did not involve loss in work time, 40,850 cases involved contractors reporting injuries that resulted in a loss of four or more days of work. An additional 3,430 cases involved contractor death (Department of Labor, 2014). As a means of comparison, as of 19 March 2014, 4,410 members of the U.S. military lost their lives in Operation Iraqi Freedom and 2,176 lost their lives in Operation Enduring Freedom (Department of Defense, 2014). In 2011, more contractors died in Afghanistan than U.S. military personnel (Norland, 2012, p. 1).

As ProPublica and RAND report, civilian contractors return home "with the same scars as soldiers, but without the support" ("Civilian Contractors: The Story So Far," 2010; Dunigan, Farmer, Burns, Hawks, & Setodji, 2013). There is no contractor equivalent to Wounded Warrior, and *The Washington Post* does not publish the Faces of the Fallen Contractors. Rather, most of the contractors who die do so "unheralded and uncounted — and in some cases, leave their survivors uncompensated" (Norland, 2012, p. 1).

Contractor causalities should be an obvious concern to policymakers. As America increasingly relies upon contractors in contingency operations, the hidden costs will continue to escalate. However, contractor causalities should also matter to the commander in the field who is often responsible for providing contractors with a safe work environment. Creating a productive work environment will depend, at least in part, on the ability of the commander to create a cultural of respect and appreciation among military personnel and contractors.

Contractors serve alongside the American military. More often than not, they are compensated at a much higher per diem rate than then their military counterpart. Moreover, contractors often enjoy amenities and a degree of freedom that their military brethren do not. However, resentment must be tempered against the realization that contractors sometimes make a comparable level of sacrifice and take on many of the same risks that face the military. The challenge for military leadership is to recognize the sacrifices that the

contractors are making. There should be no separation in the unity of effort among the contracted and military mission elements.

The Tooth Will Become the Tail.

Are contractors still simply force multipliers used to offset logistical burdens? Or have they become something more? Consider two ways in which the changing operational role of contractors is impacting the battlefield.

First, policymakers are increasingly using contractors as "substitution forces" for missions that might be too politically sensitive for the military to perform. Events during the early stages of the 2013 South Sudanese civil war provide a suggestive illustration. On 20 December 2013, a U.S. mission to evacuate American citizens was aborted. Three aircraft sustained damage and four U.S. servicemen were wounded as they attempted to evacuate American citizens from the South Sudanese city of Bor. Although the British and American governments continued to run emergency evacuation missions for their citizens, some of the most high threat missions were handled by the Veterans of South Sudan (VSS). VSS is a private security company operating in South Sudan and owned by Saladin Security, a British company based in London. As the word spread that VSS was providing emergency air evacuation services with a chartered Antonov 32, the demand for their services grew. "Eventually we took out three plane loads plus one light aircraft between 18 and 20 December amounting to some 250 people, mostly expats ("Interview with Simon Falkner, Managing Director Veterans of South Sudan Services Ltd," 2014)." VSS' long-term relationship with both the South Sudanese government and rebel groups allowed the company to operate in relative safety. None of the charted planes were fired upon and they suffered zero casualties as a result of the evacuation.

The challenge for military leadership is to recognize the sacrifices that the contractors are making. There should be no separation in the unity of effort among the contracted and military mission elements.

No one would suggest that the U.S. military lacked the capacity to carry out the evacuation missions. However, the sight of African rebels firing on U.S. forces quickly conjures up memories of Somalia and the infamous Blackhawk Down incident, and relying on contractors can be a more attractive option. In the South Sudanese case, not only were contractors more familiar with the area of operation, any contractor causalities would not generate the same level of American public scrutiny.

The contractor-military division is also becoming increased blurred as the two mission partners operate side-by-side. Contractors are generally prohibited from engaging in offensive military activities. However, the level, and changing type of contracted combat support is raising concerns over what constitutes an offensive activity. For instance, all the services have relied heavily on contractors to operate small unmanned aircraft systems (SUAS) (Clanahan, 2013, p. 70). SUAS have enhanced combat effectiveness by feeding information directly to combat troops. At what point would contractor coordination of the battlefield constitute participation in combat operations? For instance, should contractors operating SUAS be able to use laser targeting systems to paint the enemy so that the troops can more accurately fire at the enemy? The services appeared divided on the answer. The Army does not allow contractors to operate SUAS capable of painting targets but in Afghanistan, the Navy has permitted contractors to operate the GOCO Fire Scout, which has this capability (Clanahan, 2013, p. 70).

The logic behind prohibiting contractors from directly participating in combat activities is rooted in both international law and the American public expectation of what constitutes a governmental activity. As a matter of the Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC), contractors are neither civilians nor belligerents. Rather, they are civilians accompanying armed forces and they are afforded special rights and protections—most importantly—not to be deliberately targeted by the opposing armed forces. With

these rights come obligations, such as wearing clothes that are distinctive of the armed services and not participating directly in hostilities. Does a contractor wearing camouflage clothing similar to the Air Battle Uniform and operating a vital weapon system, such as Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System, forfeit these rights? By allowing contractors to participate in these roles, has America implicitly diminished the protections afforded to all civilians during times of war (Blizzard, 2004, p. 7)?

On the domestic front, there is an expectation that some activities should only be performed by the government, the so-called "inherently governmental functions." "The DoD recognizes that there are specific security functions that are inherently governmental and cannot be contracted" ("Federal Register Vol. 76 No. 155: Proposed Rules Thursday, August 11, 2011,"). What constitutes an inherently governmental function is governed by four separate government documents and it is an exceptionally thorny topic. James Hughes, former Air Force Deputy General Counsel for Acquisitions, suggests that "the best tactic is to start with a simple question: 'What does the average citizen expect the government to be doing" (Clanahan, 2013, p. 70)? That simple question, however, only starts a complex discussion.

The globalized workplace, where outsourcing has become a common activity, has merged with a larger expectation that the government will maximize the American citizens' tax dollars by relying on the private sector for commercial services (Executive Office of the President - Office of Budget and Management, 2003). A new and quickly changing reality is emerging where the classic distinction between the private and the public spheres are constantly being recast. As the U.S. Government Accountability Office (2011, p. 6) concluded, what constitutes an inherently governmental function is unclear and urgent reform of the use of contractors in warfare is needed.

In all probability the military will continue to lead the way in major combat operations. What Americans consider "major" and when they consider the mission to be "accomplished," however, is certainly changing. There is a danger that as America seeks to minimalize the cost of war on American troops, it will outsource the cost to contractors.

"You're My Bubba."

As part of the research conducted in support of this article, numerous officers who served with contractors in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other theaters were interviewed. During the course of one of those interviews, an Army LTC recalled that one of his first tasks upon arriving in Afghanistan was to identify who was contracted to support his mission. Walking around different bases, he would ask to see the various contractors' performance work statements (PWS) and once a contractor was determined to be part of his team, the LTC would grab the contractor by the arm and declare, "You're my bubba." Since December 2009, the bubbas have outnumbered the number of American military personnel in Afghanistan (Schwartz & Swain, 2011).

The ratio of contractors to troops in Afghanistan speaks to the degree of dependency that the U.S. military has on contractors, and it elevates the importance of the compatibility between the cultures. If there were only two cultures and each was relatively homogenous this would be a relatively tractable problem.

On the military side there is a defining ethos and a well understood chain of command. Operating procedures are embedded within larger doctrines that have been honed over centuries. Tremendous effort is put into transforming individuals into cohesive units, and troops are often as proud of being part of a particular unit or branch of military service, as they are of serving their country. In contrast, a contractor is an employee of a firm. This firm may be one of the largest employers in the world (e.g. G4S) or it may be a relatively new firm that has undergone numerous name and identity changes (e.g. Blackwater was renamed Xe and is now called Academi). Unlike American military personnel whom are recruited from a common population, contractors come from an amalgamation of cultures that color their view of the world and the mission at hand. Skill sets and prior training vary radically. For

instance, many contractors have considerable prior military experience and a select few hail from the most elite Special Forces. Others will arrive in theater after having undergone minimal survival training and cultural immersion courses. Most contractors, however, will have had only to pass a minimal health evaluation. For the contractor, the only common source of identity is the contract.

The data on military attitudes toward contractors is exceptionally sparse. The 2011 RAND report, "Hired Guns: Views About Armed Contractors in Operation Iraqi Freedom" (Cotton et al., 2010, p. xi) indicated that the U.S. military's attitude toward armed private security contractors operating in Iraq was mixed. There were signs that the military was jealous of the contractors' pay and more flexible schedule. However, the study rejects the thesis that the military saw the armed contractors as "running wild" in Iraq. Anecdotal evidence from interviews confirms this uneven perception. Interviewees would frequently laud the contractors' service. In particular, a common comment was that contractors who were former U.S. servicemen were particularly dedicated. "Some would break their back for you." Others saw contractors as a source of concern. Most alarmingly some asked, "Would contractors try to extend the conflict so that their profits would continue?" Numerous interviewees noted that contractors could be lazy and or "unreliable." In one case, the concern revolved around a contractor who endlessly hid out in his trailer to avoid work.

For a military that has become "dependent on contractors on all stages of the operation (Douglas, 2004, p. 132)," the challenge to the commander is getting to know their bubbas. They are a diverse group and some can be counted upon even in the thickest situations. Other contractors may be valued but present a constant source of concern. As one former commander in Afghanistan recalled:

> The Afghans accustomed to air conditioning. Even though they may have never experienced it prior to working with us, it became an absolute necessity. If the generators went down and the air conditioning went out, I woke everyone up. If we didn't get them fixed, they were going to riot.

The challenge for the military leader is to develop strategies to achieve the mission objective that not only factors in the capabilities, but the mixed motivations, of their public-private force. In January 2014, the Department of Defense employed 78,136 contractors to work in Afghanistan. 29,228 of the contractors were Afghans, 25,145 were third country nationals, and only 23,763 were U.S. citizens (Central Command (CENTCOM), 2014). The overwhelming number of contractors never met each other, let alone trained together, before coming to work for America, in Afghanistan.

Leading Contractors

> Ideally, Greek citizens were land-holding soldiers who provided their own equipment and defended their state and their land from attack. Mercenaries challenged that ideal, and in Classical Greek society mercenaries were prolific (Trundle, 2004, p. 1).

The mercenary came to prominence in Greek society only after the Greeks had begun to reconceive their collective understanding of the ideal citizen. The new ideal included a need for a specialized warrior class, the mercenary. This new class of warrior profoundly changed how Greece, and, eventually much of the world, would fight its wars. Eventually the mercenaries' greatest asset, success on the battlefield, became a liability. Over a thousand years after the introduction of the mercenary into the Greek military, the international community concluded that mercenaries were a threat to state sovereignty and democratic governance. The profession was outlawed.

Contractors, even the ones performing private security

details, are hardly mercenaries. Contractors are paid employees of the government attempting to earn a living. Their ubiquitous presence in American contingency operations, however, represents an important shift in the way America is defining the boundary between private and public activity; that is, whenever possible private companies should perform inherently non-government functions. For the American military, the increased presence of the contractor is creating temptations, dangers, and opportunities.

At a policy level there is a need to reconfigure the relationship between the contracted and uniformed military workforce. As it stands, military commanders cannot give orders to contractors. Consequently, commanders supervise, cajole, or perhaps suggest sets of instructions to contractors. This is nonsensical. As Douglas (2004, p. 136) asks, "How, then is a commander to protect civilian contractors in time of dire emergency if the contractors have no obligation to obey their orders?"

Leading contractors should not be an exercise in working with Contracting Officer Representatives (CORs) and Alternative Contracting Officer's Representatives (ACORs)and aligning performance work statements (PWS) with overall mission objectives. Rather, policymakers ought to rework the contractor management system so that the military commander has more freedom to exercise leadership over contractors. As described in the section above, the British Sponsored Reserve system suggests there are alternative models worthy of consideration. For instance, the military could create a system that retains the COR's authority to supervise contracts while giving the military the ability to command the contractor in inherently non-governmental activities. Commanders will offer greater leadership if they are given the authority to lead.

At the operational level, there is a danger in institutionalizing the cultural divide between contractors and the military. At the most basic level, the more effective leaders will listen to their contractors. As retired Master Sergeant Harris (2010) observed, "Much time, money, and manpower were wasted when military leaders refused to listen to their contractors [in Iraq]." That is, leadership is a characteristic that we ought to expect out of both the military and contractors. Retired Lt Col Paul Christopher's experiences as a contractor serving in Iraq in August 2004 speak directly to this dynamic (Christopher, 2010, p. 117).

As a PSC, Christopher's company was providing escort security for a convoy that was struck by an improvised explosive device. For days Christopher and his team traveled back and forth on a 500-kilometer stretch of highway in an attempt to locate the survivors and recover the remains of those killed. The breakdown between the military and the contractors trying to aid their fallen comrades was maddening. Rather, then being a source of support, as the contractors' mission was to the military, the military became

> *The challenge for the military leader is to develop strategies to achieve the mission objective that not only factors in the capabilities, but the mixed motivations, of their public-private force.*

a principal obstacle in the recovery mission. Five months after the ambush, Christopher was still trying to recover the remains of his employees.

As Christopher notes, his story is not told as an indictment of anyone—"it is a description of events from which we can extract lessons." One of the lessons is that leadership can come from the private sector. The fidelity and dedication that Christopher displays to his fallen colleagues and their families is inspiring. Money is clearly not the only thing that can motivate a contractor.

A running theme in Christopher's saga is a failure of the military to adapt to the contractor. In one instance, contractors were denied access to a base because they were in a non-military vehicle. They were denied access despite the fact that they were delivering requested ammunition, they displayed a military ID and they were taking on live mortar fire. Later contracts to guard oil pipelines were never filled because no one in Iraq could procure the three-ringed binders required for submission. There is a danger of

outsourcing flexibility and commonsense.

Ideally, the contractor-military relationship liberates the military so that it can better perform its core function, combat. Privatization, however, can easily lead to dependence and as the Commission on Wartime Contracting (2011, p. 19) warned, "Relying on contractors for so much professional and technical expertise eventually leads to the government losing much of its mission-essential organic capability."

As America increasingly turns to the private sector to perform traditional public sector tasks, overcoming the trap described by the Commission--overdependence leading to atrophy--will be increasingly difficult. At the policy level, this translates into policymakers drafting regulation that simultaneously clarifies what constitutes an inherently governmental function and empowering the military on the battlefield so that they have the ability to command contractors in accordance with the LOAC. In the field, an innovative leader will conservatively partner with contractors and resist the temptation to turn to a contractor to perform a task simply because a contractor is available to perform the task. The challenge will be for the commander to fold the contractors' idiosyncratic backgrounds into the unique American military culture so that both the private and public see each other as valued mission partners. In sum: As America increasingly looks to privatize tasks traditionally performed by the military, the military must consistently reevaluate—and evolve--its relationship with its newly contracted partners.

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RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS

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RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS

SCHOLARSHIP

Leadership Excellence in Interdependent Contexts:

Self-Validation and Identity Confirmation as Antecedents to and Co-requisites of Leader Effectiveness —Through and Beyond Behavioural Integrity—

Dr. Laurie Milton, MSc, MBA, PhD
Haskayne School of Business, University of Calgary

ABSTRACT

A leader's identity related to his or her behavioural integrity (the perceived alignment between one's words, values and actions) is critically important for creating healthy interpersonal and organizational outcomes, especially in contexts of high interdependence. To the extent that this identity can be validated and confirmed (by and for both the leader and subordinates), it can further reinforce and strengthen behavioural integrity in those individuals, their teams and the broader organization. Organizations where there is validated alignment between how leaders and individuals see themselves and each other can foster a culture that promotes behavioural integrity among all of these members. Cultural features (e.g., language, symbols,narratives, practices, etc.) can further enhance a context where identities are validated and confirmed, leading to positive organizational outcomes. Recommendations for future research are discussed.

Dr. Laurie P. Milton is an Associate Professor (Strategy and Organizations) at the University of Calgary (Canada). She earned her PhD (Organization Science and Strategy) at the University of Texas at Austin, her (thesis-based) MBA at the University of Calgary, and her MSc and BSc at the University of Alberta. She has served on faculty at the University of Calgary, the University of Western Ontario, the University of Alberta, and Mount Royal University (then College). Prior to joining academe, she served as a Senior Policy Advisor and as an Assistant Director within the Research and Planning Secretariat of the Alberta Ministry of Housing (now Municipal Affairs). She joined the ministry after a tour of duty as an advisor and ultimately coordinator of research with the Office of the Official Opposition in the Alberta Legislature. Within academe Dr. Milton was elected by her peers to contribute via a five year term (including one year as Division Chair) on the leadership team of the Management Education Division of the Academy of Management. The Social Sciences and Humanities Council, a Sir James Lougheed Award of Distinction, the Eugene & Dora Bonham Memorial Fund, an Elizabeth Russell MacEachran Scholarship, and the citizens of multiple countries have invested in her research and scholarly journey.

"May you live in the most interesting of times."

Leadership, interdependent thinking, and interdependent action occupy center stage in the world today. Each is arguably in a state of crisis. Citizens are holding political leaders and the inner circles of these leaders accountable for the social, economic, political, and environmental state of the world today (One World Trust [OWT], 2011). Investors, regulators and the public at large are demanding similar levels of accountability from industry leaders for the financial, social, and environmental state of industry (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2010, 2011; United Nations Global Compact [UNGC], 2010, 2011). Internal constituents within organizations have joined the chorus with calls for leadership accountability from the executive suite to the shop floor (National Association of Corporate Directors [NACD], 2009; Committee for Economic Development [CED], 2010). Cries for accountability thus trickle throughout broader systems like cancer cells heralding illness within otherwise healthy bodies.

Many believe that current leaders have been selling a defunct set of goods—arguing that leaders and the institutions they lead are behaving in ways that are inconsistent with the values and promises that these leaders have made (OWT, 2008). The behavioural integrity of these leaders, and arguably of the systems they lead, has thus been compromised. Even if the leaders themselves believe that their actions and promises are aligned, others do not.

The impact is consequential. In some societies the erosion of trust and hope appears to have become epidemic. News of perceived breaches is plastered across global headlines eroding the trust, hope and confidence that many have in leaders and in the future (International Risk Governance Council [IRGC], 2009; World Economic Forum [WEF], 2012). It follows that the capacity of societies and the organizations within them to think and act interdependently has been, and continues to be, eroded in today's relatively unstable, interdependent, and arguably fearful world.

Even when leaders themselves believe that their own actions and promises are aligned, others may not. The thinking and acting capacity of the systems they lead has been and will continue to be diminished as long as and wherever system leaders behave in ways that are not aligned with their values and promises and others perceive these discrepancies. Before the current state is accepted as it is and a period of suboptimal homeostasis kicks in, action is required.

In this paper, I consider what leaders can do to create a sensible way forward, across contexts and challenges and over time, with focus on four crucial steps: (1) leading in (and creating) contexts which are consistent with and hence validate and possibly confirm their own identities; (2) validating and confirming the identities of colleagues, followers and others with whom they interact or for whom they are responsible, and (3) creating and maintaining work group and organization cultures and contexts within which their own and others' identities are validated and confirmed; and (4) being clear about behaviours that are required and those which are not tolerated in the organization (i.e. establishing, socializing people into, and policing codes of conduct for interpersonal interaction). Research suggests that in these ways leaders will strengthen their own behavioural integrity and embed behavioural integrity within the groups, organizations, and larger systems that they lead (Thomas, Schermerhorn & Dienhar, 2004). Those involved will be more apt to cooperate and engage in effective, timely task-focused interdependent debate than they otherwise would. Interpersonal conflict will be minimal or absent.

Leadership, in any context, can be demanding. Not everyone succeeds in leadership roles. Research suggests, however, that leaders who lead in and create contexts within which their own identities are validated and confirmed, and within which they validate and confirm the identities of others, will be better equipped and more likely to walk their talk and enable others to do the same. These leaders will be more personally able and socially positioned to: (a) keep

the promises they make; (b) act in ways that are consistent with their values; and (c) be perceived by others as doing so even when there are discrepancies among leader promises, values and actions. They will thus display behavioural integrity (Simons, 2002, 2008). Leaders who embed identity validation, identity confirmation, promise keeping, and acting in accordance with one's values into group and organization cultures will be more likely than others to incubate and increase the behavioural integrity of both themselves and others.

Going a step further, it follows that those whose identities are 'validated and valued' will experience a state of identity confirmation (that extends beyond identity validation) to form an even safer psychological and relational bedrock than the identity validation alone would offer. In this state, leaders can extend themselves to more strongly engage effectively in interdependent thinking and action and encourage others to also do so. While the impact occurs across contexts, results may be particularly apparent in difficult or tough circumstances (e.g., those that are described as complex, threatening, turbulent, and/or high speed) (cf. Davis, Eisenhardt, & Bingham, 2009).

This paper has three objectives. The first is to provide a base perspective that advances our understanding of the identity-based pre- and co-requisites to behavioural integrity and effective leadership in interdependent contexts—especially (but not exclusively) in demanding contexts that have the potential to undermine effective interdependent thinking and action. The second is to suggest directions for research that: (a) addresses important, arguably pivotal, questions and debates within the science of identity, behavioural integrity, interdependent thinking and action, and (b) thereby informs the practice of leadership, cooperation and conflict, and the reality of interdependent excellence. The third is to stimulate action based on informed science so that leaders can thrive and inspire those around them to revitalize their organizations and professional communities and position them to wisely address current and future challenges.

This work will first: (1) define behavioural integrity and link behavioural integrity to effective leadership; (2) define identity and identities; and (3) introduce self-verification and identity confirmation as antecedents to and co-requisites of behavioural integrity and effective leadership.

> *Research suggests, however, that leaders who lead in and create contexts within which their own identities are validated and confirmed, and within which they validate and confirm the identities of others, will be better equipped and more likely to walk their talk and enable others to do the same.*

It will then set out how leaders can incubate and strengthen their own and others' behavioural integrity by: (a) leading within and creating contexts within which their own identities are validated and ultimately confirmed (validated and valued); (b) confirming others' identities; and (c) embedding identity confirmation within the cultures of the groups and organizations they lead. In each of these ways, leaders can create the conditions that support and advance effective interdependent thinking and action.

This discussion pays particular, but not exclusive, attention to leadership in interdependent contexts that themselves undermine or have the potential to undermine effective thinking and action. Such contexts are common and, as noted previously, are relevant. Unique demands within these contexts can challenge even the best of leaders. While predictive across contexts, research suggests that identity-validation and identity confirmation are especially powerful predictors of success when the need for interdependent thinking and action is high. Success in these contexts hinges on the extent to which individuals think and act in tandem—collaboratively in a cooperative fashion, with candor and discipline—in circumstances that often undermine their willingness and ability to do so (Brown & Eisenhardt,1998; Huber, 2004). Success cannot

be taken for granted. Those involved need to collaborate in order to integrate their perspectives and actions in timely ways. This often involves sharing a point of view that others do not understand or engaging in timely pluralistic debate and problem solving or both. Some individuals, groups and organizations succeed; others fail—and sometimes when they fail, or even suboptimize, the consequences are catastrophic.

Integrity, Behavioural Integrity and Effective Leadership

> In its fullest sense, integrity is: "absolute wholeness, truthfulness, unblemished, undivided, without imperfection," with "sound moral principles, and trustworthiness" (Abel, 2008: 24).

Adopting a ***structural perspective*** (that reflects Abel's focus on wholeness), to say that a leader has ***integrity*** is to say that, as a person, this leader is unified or whole; the leader's identity, life, social world, actions and promises are aligned.

Narrowing the field of vision, to that of an ***action perspective***, a leader's ***integrity*** is defined by the extent to which his or her words and actions are in fact consistent (Palanski and Yammarino, 2007). Adopting an ethical lens, to say that a leader has ***ethical integrity*** is to say that he or she adheres, in thought and action, to moral and ethical principles (cf., Craig & Gustafson, 1998).

In contrast, ***behavioural integrity*** is a social perception. A leader has behavioural integrity to the extent that others perceive the leader's words, values, and actions to be consistent; regardless of the moral content of these or whether perceptions are accurate (Simons, 2002), and regardless of whether the leader agrees with others' perceptions of him or her. Behavioural integrity is thus subjective. It is influenced by the actor, the perceiver, the nature of their relationships, attributions, biases and a host of other factors (Basik, 2010).

Across circumstances and contingencies, questions about the integrity and behavioural integrity of leaders are crucial. Leader authenticity and behaviour and the quality of relations between leaders and those they lead profoundly affect the performance of those whom they lead (Gerstner & Day, 1997; Kuvaas, Buch, Dysvik & Harem, 2012; Leroy, Palanski, & Simons, 2012; Palanski & Yammarino, 2011) as well as their well-being and the health and effectiveness of their organizations. How individuals perceive their leaders affects how they relate to them, to one another, and to their work; what results they achieve and whether they are likely to stay (Gerstner & Day, 1997). Positive relationships and positive expectations increase the likelihood that positive outcomes will ensue.

Evidence suggests that a leader's reputation is reflected in the reputation of the organizations that he or she leads. To the degree that leaders have positive reputations, the organizations that they lead similarly do so (e.g., Dutton, Dukerich & Harquail, 1991), and capable people are more likely than they would be otherwise to join or partner with these organizations (Browning, Beyer, & Shelter, 1995; Hall, Blass, Ferris & Masssengale, 2004). Organizations with positive reputations are simultaneously more likely to announce positive surprises, reap greater market rewards, and receive smaller market penalties for negative surprises than other firms are (Pharrer, Pollock, & Rindova, 2010). It follows that leaders who display or are perceived to have behavioural integrity may very well develop strong and positive reputations that then spill over to positively affect the reputations of organizations they lead. Leaders with strong reputations for behavioural integrity may become noticed and accumulate high levels of public recognition for the quality of the firm's capabilities and outputs (King &Whetten, 2008). Positive emotional responses and an increase in the economic opportunities available to the firm may follow (Rindova, Pollock, & Hayward; 2006).

Consequences aside, for multiple reasons, others may perceive the words, values and actions of leaders to be inconsistent even when these words, values and actions are aligned in fact. For example, the context within which promises are made may change in ways that render

previously agreed courses of action suboptimal. Changes in resources levels may affect what a leader is able to promise and deliver. Organization values and images may shift and erode the extent to which leaders and others are attached to an organization (cf., Dutton, Dukerich & Harquail, 1994) and are thus willing and able to make and meet promises on the organization's behalf.

Followers themselves may be overcommitted, or otherwise occupied and/or their perceptions of leaders may be skewed by stereotypes and thus be less accurate than they normally would be [refer to Gilbert & Hixon (1991) for a related discussion of person perception]. Each of these and other factors may erode the leader's socially perceived behavioural integrity. Nonetheless, this behavioural integrity remains a crucial ingredient of effective leadership, and developing and maintaining this behavioural integrity remains a fundamental leadership challenge. Even if fate intervenes or circumstances change in ways that render leaders unable to deliver on their promises, it is important for followers to know that the leaders are people who would have done their very best to deliver on their promises even though they failed to do so. This knowledge would foster interpersonal interaction that is safer and more predictable than it would otherwise be. Thereby it would germinate higher levels of intra- and interpersonal effectiveness and more adept collaboration and timely improvisation than would otherwise be possible. [Refer to Golembiewski (1988) for a related discussion of regenerative interaction].

Research seeking to inform the challenge of developing and maintaining behavioural integrity has already demonstrated the criticality of both authentic leader behaviour and leader political skills in influencing perceptions that drive leader behavioural integrity (Basik, 2010; Leroy, Palanski, & Simons, 2012). Research on identity, self-verification, and identity confirmation suggests other antecedents to and co-requisites of behavioural integrity and effective leadership. Drawing on this latter research, I argue that to the extent that leaders work in contexts within which their identities are validated, they will be more likely than they would otherwise be to deliver on their promises and to be perceived as doing so (even when they do not). These leaders will be more resilient, have better and more cooperative relations with others and work more effectively. While this alignment is an important ingredient of effective leadership across situations, it can be especially so in situations or contexts that themselves undermine relationships between leaders and others who need to integrate their perspectives and cooperate in order to be successful. My aim is to magnify awareness of identity dynamics in general and identity confirmation in particular within the literature on leadership and to demonstrate the value of research that investigates the role of confirming self, role, social and other identities that extend beyond self-based attribute anchors.

Self-Verification, Self-Validation, and Identity Confirmation and the Behavioural Integrity of Leaders

Considered in its entirety, a person's ***identity*** is captured in this person's response to the question: "Who am I?" Broadly conceived, a complete response, would include all of the person's emotionally-laden thoughts about him- or herself (Rosenberg, 1979) as a physical, social and moral being (Gecas, 1982). Together, these thoughts and the emotions attached to them would include each and all of the person's 'identities' which together would comprise this person's all encompassing 'identity'. Considered in its totality as a gestalt [i.e., a unified whole that cannot be derived from the summation of its component parts [(Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language, 1989)], a person's broadly conceptualized 'identity' is thus defined as his or her emotionally-laden definition of self in terms of characteristics and abilities, roles, and group memberships (Rosenberg, 1979). Separate terms are used to differentiate specific identities that arise from each of these bases.

Whereas *personal identities* are based on self-defined characteristics and abilities (Rosenberg, 1979) (e.g., sociable, intelligent, moral, ethical); *role identities*, as the name

suggests, are based on the roles that a person internalizes within his or her self-definition (Ashforth, 2001) (e.g., leader, knowledge worker, coach, wife, husband, parent, daughter, son). In contrast, *social identities* are based on group memberships that a person internalizes within his or her self-conception (Tajfel & Turner, 1985) (e.g., member of a team or professional group; citizen of a specific country or of the world as a whole; member of a particular race, religion, or gender group). Specific identities vary in their importance, relevance and centrality within a person's conception of him- or herself. Individuals are more certain of some identities, be these personal, role or social or anchored otherwise, than they are of others. Validating and confirming those that are important, relevant and central to a leader's self-conception would have a particularly strong and positive impact on his or her behavioural integrity.

Self-Verification, Self-Validation and Identity Confirmation

Research finds that individuals prefer and seek situations, relationships, and experiences that are consistent with and otherwise supportive of their identities (see Lecky, 1945; Secord & Backman, 1965 for early work). Whether their identities are personal, social or role-based, people engage in a variety of behavioural and cognitive activities that create—within their minds and social environments—a reality that verifies, validates and sustains their self-definitions (cf. McCall & Simmons, 1966; Secord & Backman, 1965).

The **process** through which they seek consistency, even for their negative self-views, is labeled *self-verification* (Swann, 1983). The **end state** has been labeled *self-validation*. A person's self is said to be *verified to* the degree that, from this person's perspective, others define them as they define themselves.

In contrast to self-verification, a person's identities are confirmed to the extent that his or her mental, social, and physical environments verify, and value these as well as the person's identity considered in its totality. The end state is labeled *identity confirmation*.

While it is possible to imagine multiple reasons why people self-verify, early research that focused on attribute-based self-definitions found that they do so in order to: (1) meet their needs for psychological (epistemic) security, and (2) address practical issues like creating predictable relations and reliable interaction partners who meet previously negotiated agreements (Swann, Stein Seroussi, & Giesler, 1992). The motivation to verify self-views and, I would argue, identities that are core to one's self-definition and overarching identity, and that are contextually salient is particularly strong (refer to Markus & Kunda, 1986, for a related discussion).

The secure, predictable, and reliable base that validation affords provides a taken-for-granted foundation upon which individuals can act alone and in tandem with others—it thereby becomes a foundation that contributes to effective individual and interdependent work (Telford-Milton, 1996; Milton, 1998; Polzer, Milton & Swann, 2002, Milton & Westphal, 2005; Milton, 2008). Based on field research (e.g., Milton, 1998, 2003), I argue that similar motives underwrite the need for identity confirmation; but to the motives which drive self-verification, I add the *need to be valued—to be seen as a person who has worth—and possibly the need to belong*—to be part of a group or a community. Where the two perspectives of self-verification and identity confirmation part company are in the weightings they attach to a person's need to be valued—as a person who has worth and in the latter's specific inclusion of both self-based and social identities. These issues are discussed later in the research and practice commentary section of this paper.

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Sources of Identity Validation

A person's identity or identities may be validated or violated in multiple ways. Identity validation may arise from multiple sources within and beyond organizations. A person's identity may, for example, be either validated or violated via elements of their work (Pratt, Rockmann & Kaufmann, 2006); via their work groups' and organizations' reputations (Dutton, Dukerich, & Harquail, 1994, images (Dukerich, Golden & Shortell, 2002), or cultures (Telford-Milton, 1996; Milton, 1998, 2003); and via the character of relationships (Milton, 2009), social networks (Milton, 2003; Milton & Westphal, 2005), interpersonal interactions, and support systems. Identities may be also be validated by the extent to which others see the person the same way the person sees him- or herself (i.e., via interpersonal congruence) (Swann, 1983; Polzer, Milton & Swann, 2002; Milton & Westphal, 2005). It is thus clear that individuals may fit or not fit within their organizations on multiple and varied dimensions. While there are multiple sources of identity validation, in this paper I focus primarily on identity validation that stems from a leader's work and relations with others. Thereafter, I initiate discussion about ways in which leaders may influence identity validation via their impact on work group and organization cultures.

When Leaders Lead in Contexts within Which Their Identities are Validated

Practically speaking, when leaders work in contexts that are consistent with their identities, they will tend to invest themselves in their work and roles and be more successful than they would be in contexts that are inconsistent with, or even hostile to, their identities (Telford-Milton, 1996; Milton, 2003). They will tend to feel safer and be more psychologically centered. Their interactions with others will tend to be more predictable, reliable and cooperative, and they will develop identity validation-based social networks characterized by high levels of cooperation (cf., Milton & Westphal, 2005). Contexts within which a leader's work and work relationships validate his or her own identities thus provide a foundation for the leader's own behavioural integrity. They can be authentic and succeed.

Sustaining false identities may undermine behavioural integrity. While leaders often have to act on multiple stages, they are likely to be most effective when they can be authentic in their leadership role on every stage. When this is possible, they would be more likely than they would be otherwise to espouse their values, share information about their identities, make promises that are consistent with who they are and what they value, and keep the promises they make.

Their leader role becomes a natural extension of 'who' they are, and may even be a crucial identity that they value and enact. Leaders for whom this is true can 'be' and 'behave' authentically. The consistency between their actual and espoused values and those they make promises in terms of would likely: (a) be more aligned, because of the authenticity involved, and (b) be perceived by others as being more aligned than would be the case if the leaders were in contexts that were less consistent with their identities. To the extent the leader's interaction partners perceive this alignment, one would expect the leader's behavioural integrity to increase.

It would do so in part because the leaders themselves would tend to behave more predictably and function more effectively than they would in contexts within which their identities were not validated (cf., Zaharna, 1979). Leaders would also be more resilient (Caza and Milton, 2011). Increases in the perceived alignment between a leader`s actions, promises, and values would also reflect the ways in which people process information about others. Having once categorized a leader as a person with integrity, others may not notice minor (or at times, even major) behavioural integrity transgressions when the leader does not meet his or her promises or act according to his or her values. [A related discussion of person perception is shared in Gilbert & Hixon (1991).]

Pragmatically, beyond social perception, behaving in ways that are consistent with one's own identity requires the

least effort (Gilbert, Krull, & Pelham, 1988; Sutton, 1991). Again, leaders whose identities are validated are likely to also be more resilient, i.e. able to demonstrate competence during and professional growth after they experience adversity, than they otherwise would be (Caza & Milton, 2011). In so far as they not only rebound but are also authentic, they should behave in more predictable ways, and their resilience should be noticeable. Their identities and actions should be more closely aligned. The behavioural and cognitive inconsistencies that may accompany "faking" identities should be avoided or, at least, minimized. Leaders would thus be better equipped to act in ways that are consistent with their promises and values, and to be perceived as doing so. Followers and others may anchor themselves to the leader's stability and become more resilient themselves.

In as much as it is crucial for followers and colleagues to take leaders seriously, it may be particularly important for leaders to *enact* their authentic 'leader' identities. When leaders fake their identities, especially their leader identity, they may inadvertently undermine the extent to which others perceive them as behaving consistently and as meeting their promises. Such perceptions may erode the leader's ability to influence subordinates, peers, and superiors, and thereby erode the extent to which others would voluntarily cooperate with him or her. The leader's work may also become a form of emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983; Milton, 1992, Rafaeli & Sutton, 1997) that itself undermines leader performance.

Hampering a leader's ability to maintain his or her identities may also result in identity disintegration. Leaders who act in ways that are strongly misaligned with their values and identities may generate self-shock—a state that may accompany moments when one's self and one's actions are not aligned. When in the state of self-shock, leaders would generally be less able to maintain a consistent sense of themselves and to accurately read the reactions of others. As a result, they may experience a loss of self-confidence, feelings of self-doubt, discomfort, confusion, and anxiety (Zaharna, 1989). Each would erode their capacity to lead.

The benefits of being validated and being authentic may be especially strong and positive when leaders work in contexts that challenge them and others for whom they are responsible. In these contexts, as previously conveyed, these others may tend to anchor their expectations to leaders and to become more resilient themselves when they consider their leaders to have behavioural integrity.

Impact of Leaders Whose Own Identities are Validated on Others

Beyond improving their own performance, the performance of others with whom a leader works should also increase to the extent that the leader's identities are validated. As noted, leaders whose own identities are validated would tend to be more personally centered, socially adept, and effectively positioned in organizations than they would otherwise be. They would thus be able to lead more effectively and be able to embed identity validation more widely within the groups and organizations that they lead. They could, for example, create mechanisms through which group members would get to know one another and learn how to relate to one another in identity consistent ways. They would also be better able to set limits on behaviour and discourage or ban unacceptable group member behaviour that erodes the capacity of groups and organizations. [A related argument about the impact of 'bad' behaviour appears in Sutton (2007).] In these ways and others, leaders who are themselves centered and predictable will be more effective in creating organizations that are similarly so. In as much as their identities are effectively stabilized and concerns about validating identities recede, the group members and groups that these leaders lead should be able to work with one another and together more effectively than they otherwise would. To the extent that a leader's identities are not only validated but also valued (and thereby confirmed), the leader should be centered and resilient.

When Leaders Validate the Identities of Others and Encourage Others to Also Do So

By extending themselves and validating the identities of others (e.g., followers, colleagues, other leaders, stakeholders) and encouraging others to also do so, leaders may simultaneously strengthen their own and the others' behavioural integrity and effectiveness.

Groups within which members validate one another's identities tend to outperform other groups. While this is true across groups, the impact of validation on the performance of diverse groups and groups that depend on cooperation is particularly notable. The multiple perspectives and connections that members of diverse groups have are often an asset (e.g., Ely & Thomas, 2001) that is undermined as group members stereotype one another and relate suboptimally in other ways (Williams & O'Reilly, 1998). Diversity thus becomes a double-edged sword (e.g., Pelled, Eisenhardt, & Xin, 1999). Groups within which members get to know one another and validate one another's identities may be able to minimize or sidestep the negative effects of social categorization. Members of such groups may be able to simultaneously individuate and be contributing group members (see Brewer, 1991).

Milton and Westphal (2005) found identity confirmation based social networks to form via interpersonal congruence, and to predict high levels of cooperation and performance in diverse emergency response teams, within which high speed, heedful and reliable interdependent interaction is required; and in diverse construction crews, within which success is predicated on effective interdependent work. Members of both types of groups cooperated and worked effectively with others to the extent that these others saw them as they saw themselves, i.e., validated their identities by way of interpersonal congruence (Milton, 1998)..

In their longitudinal research on identity dynamics within diverse MBA study teams, Polzer, Milton, & Swann, 2002 found that interpersonal congruence moderated the relationship between diversity, based on sex, ethnicity, country of origin, job experience (including function and industry) and proposed functional concentration in the MBA program and group effectiveness. More specifically, diversity tended to improve creative task performance and social integration and to lower relationship conflict in groups that were characterized by high levels of interpersonal congruence. In contrast, diversity tended to undermine performance and social integration and to heighten relationship conflict in groups within which levels of interpersonal congruence were low.

When Leaders Embed Identity Validation and Identity Confirmation in Group and Organization Cultures

As evidenced by experiences at Semiconductor Manufacturing Technology (SEMATECH), a consortium of competitors (e.g., Motorola, Intel, IBM) that formed in order to revitalize the U.S. semiconductor industry, effective leadership is a critical component of effective interdependent work (Browning, Beyer & Shelter, 1995). SEMATECH succeeded in large part because leaders expected and created interpersonal relations and an organization culture that supported cooperation, which then became normalized. Key individuals at SEMATECH appeared to understand, respect and value one another.

Research suggests that to the extent that leaders create the conditions within which group members validate and value and thereby confirm one another's identities, relations in the group strengthen and become particularly cooperative. As discussed, congruence between how individual group members define themselves and how others in their immediate work group define them strengthens interpersonal relations and group dynamics and performance (Milton, 2008, 2009). Congruence has also been found to moderate relations between diversity and group performance on creative tasks (Polzer, Milton, & Swann, 2002). Mutual (or reciprocated) self- validation of positive and negative identities increases cooperation between members of work group dyads and results in the formation of identity -validation based networks within

which advantageous positions enhance performance through greater cooperation (Milton & Westphal, 2005).

Research finds also that not only actual, but anticipated identity validation and identity confirmation predict whether individuals join groups and organizations. High tech-workers are more likely to unionize when doing so, validates values and thereby confirms their identities, when they believe that unions will successfully resolve important issues efficiently, and when their opportunity structure supports collective action. They will not, however, volitionally join these or other collectives that are inconsistent with or even hostile to their self-defined identities even if they may benefit materially by doing so (Milton, 2003).

A leader whose own identities are confirmed may be particularly well poised to create the conditions within which their followers (and others): (a) See them as a leader who has behavioural integrity, and (b) Themselves act in accordance with their own values and promises. These leaders may, for example, be able to use their credibility and skill to create group and organization cultures within which group members behave authentically, come to know and confirm one another's identities, fulfill the promises they and the group make, and ensure that others perceive them to be doing so. From a cultural perspective, to the extent that ideology, symbols, language, narratives, and practices all support intelligent identity validation and foster identity confirmation, then effective interdependent work should follow (Milton, 1998).

Research suggests that to the extent that leaders create the conditions within which group members validate and value and thereby confirm one another's identities, relations in the group strengthen and become particularly cooperative.

Leaders must, however, keep in mind that a call for identity validation and confirmation is not a call for unfettered individualism. It is important to recruit and retain individuals whose identities are aligned with a group or organization's work and to encourage individuals to simultaneously be themselves as individuals and effective members of a group. Leaders are responsible for socializing those they lead. Some identities and the behaviours associated with these (e.g., abusive person) are not acceptable (Sutton, 1991) and should neither be validated nor confirmed. Leaders are responsible for ensuring that the identity agreements of the organizations and groups that they lead support ethical and effective behaviour.

Research and Practice Commentary

Research supports that behavioural integrity is an important ingredient of effective leadership. I believe it is crucial, however, to recognize two limits of this perspective. First, I question whether this view applies to situations in which leaders behave unethically. Second, I recommend that caution be exercised when assigning benefits to leaders who behave in ways that are not consistent with their values and promises and yet are being perceived as acting in accordance with these. The first is unacceptable and the second is an illusion.

With respect to the first point, from my perspective, unethical leadership is by definition not effective. With respect to the second point, I would anticipate that to the extent that leader actions, promises and values are not actually aligned, the leader would exhibit some signs of the identity disintegration (e.g. be less certain, more tentative, make mistakes in processing information). I would also expect followers and other perceivers to, at least sometimes, be aware of the discrepancies and consequently become disillusioned with, untrusting of, or feel betrayed by the leader unless they themselves understand and can agree with or rationalize or for other reasons accept these discrepancies. Leadership involves actually behaving ethically and with integrity. Being seen as a leader whose actions, values and promises are positively aligned is clearly important but the reality of whether the leader actually does so cannot be ignored. Effective action is thus both real and socially perceived.

Recommendations for Future Research

This examination suggests there is a distinct need for more research that: (a) extends beyond self-verification/validation to consider identity confirmation; (b) considers the impact of verifying and confirming the identities of groups and other collective entities, including regulatory bodies and organizations; and (c) investigates other bases for identity validation and confirmation (e.g., via ideology, cultural forms, organization practices).

As noted previously, in contrast to self-verification/validation, a person's identities are confirmed to the extent that these identities are simultaneously validated and valued (Milton, 1998). It is important to note that the only two identity bases that did not pass the Edward's difference score constraints that Milton & Westphal (2005) employed in their analysis of self-validation and identity confirmation in emergency response groups and construction groups were those related to global self-esteem, specifically, "likeable in general" and "competent in most things". The authors noted that in separate models which included these dimensions of self, the results of their study were substantively unchanged. As they suggested, however, this observation may serve as a takeoff point for research that tests the boundaries between self-verification and self-enhancement theories. Those who pursue this could in so doing, test and specify the conditions under which self-verification, self-enhancement, and identity-confirmation are most and least predictive. Pitting the need for consistency and stability against the need for self-esteem may provide an interesting and useful takeoff point. Considering attribute-based, social, role and other identities in tandem may help to achieve an overarching understanding of when and where different motivations drive self-anchored feelings and behavior Contextualized research that investigates the impact of validating and of confirming value based individual and collective identities on interdependent relations may be especially timely. In some circumstances individuals and collectives (including societies) may perceive themselves to violate their own identities by confirming the identities of others who also feel this tension. Research on identity validation and confirmation and on identity enhancement--in these contexts requires attention.

I would argue that identity confirmation forms even safer psychological and relational bedrock than the identity validation alone offers. This bedrock is especially relevant in contexts that challenge individuals and groups—perhaps especially when they need to trust one another and one another's expertise. Effects may be particularly pronounced in situations within which individuals or groups need to share or develop contextualized or deep knowledge or to improvise or debate. In these challenging contexts, I suggest that "to be known and to be valued" trumps "to simply be known" as an antecedent and co-requisite of leader effectiveness. Research that investigates the identity dynamics within these and other tough contexts could be very helpful in our 'present' world.

I believe that there are advantages to expanding and contextualizing identity research even more finely than we do. It would be conceptually and practically helpful to simultaneously encompass personal, role and social identities in our research designs and conceptual arguments. Research that explores subtle differences between over- and underestimation of a person's identities and other ways identities may be confirmed in work groups (e.g., via organization culture, interpersonal behavior) seems timely.

Research examining verification, and confirmation effects associated with role and social identities has the potential to tease out the unique and common effects of self-validation and identity confirmation. Doing so may create bridges between social identity- and self-attribute-based research streams. Research that simultaneously considers outcomes associated with self-enhancement (e.g., defining people in more positive ways than they themselves do) would result in a more completely specified understanding of individual and interdependent excellence.

It seems to me that verification and enhancement perspectives on the self and identity have been at war for years. It is time to bury old hatchets and integrate these

points of view into an overarching perspective that applauds the strengths and recognizes the weakness of each and in so doing illuminates when and where each is most and least predictive of important positive and negative outcomes within and among individuals, groups, organizations, and other collectives. Research that investigates identity confirmation processes and states could provide a bridge to reconcile questions of when and where validating, valuing and confirming elements of an individual's emotionally laden definition of self (in terms of attribute, role and social identities) are activated and thereby affect interdependent thinking and action.

Contributions

As Pfarrer, Pollock and Rindova (2010) remark, "the intangible assets of firms have attracted considerable interest in organization and strategy research (e.g., Barney, 1991; Deephouse, 2000; Diericks & Cool, 1989; Fobrun, 1996; Greenwood, Li, Prakesh, & Deephouse, 2005; Itami & Roehl, 1987; Rindova, Pollock, & Hayward, 2006)", and the subclass of assets called "social approval assets," have received particular attention. They note that much of this research has concentrated on establishing general effects. To contribute to this general body of work that warrants more specificity, I have made a particular argument positing identity confirmation as a catalyst that unleashes the behavioural integrity of leaders and through these leaders unleashes the behavioural integrity of others and high performance within organizations. Although I would expect these effects to apply to other contexts, I have focused on those within which interdependent thinking and action is mission critical to performance and especially, but not exclusively, on contexts that tend to undermine interdependent excellence. Inasmuch as the behavioural integrity of leaders is positively affected by the extent to which their own identities are validated and confirmed and they validate and confirm the identities of those they lead and influence, the organizations they lead should excel.

While Davis, Eisenhardt, and Bigham (2009) specifically address turbulent, dynamic environments, they do not speak to the value of psychological safety in such environments. Building on the work of Rinova, Pollock and Hayward (2006) one could expect the organizations that these leaders lead to develop high reputations and consequently enjoy positive reactions to their positive surprises and less negative reactions to their negative surprises than firms devoid of such reputations.

I suggest that identity confirmation, then, is one element of the bedrock upon which psychological safety and risk taking emerge; it thereby enhances interdependent thinking and action especially, but not exclusively, in contexts that could undermine each.

Concluding Reflection

> The saying: "May you live in interesting times," is often referred to as the Chinese curse.
> The Chinese curse on steroids, however, may be: "May you *lead* in interesting times."

Jim Collins and Morten Hansen (2011) would argue that great leaders choose to be great. They distinguish themselves by being fanatically disciplined, productively paranoid, empirically creative and notable because they channel their energy into something larger than themselves. James March (2005) would argue that great leaders know who they are, understand the situations within which they are, and regularly ask the fundamental question of leadership: "What does a person such as me do in a situation such as this?"

Inasmuch as the behavioural integrity of leaders is positively affected by the extent to which their own identities are validated and confirmed and they validate and confirm the identities of those they lead and influence, the organizations they lead should excel.

Alone and together these perspectives are powerful. To each I would add the observation that leaders are most likely to chose to be great and to act in accordance with who they are, when they lead in contexts that are consistent with the person they see themselves as being, and within which their identity is validated and valued—hence confirmed.

It is clear that leadership is a deeply personal and relational engagement. As an illustrative counter-example, I recently stopped for petrol across the street from a restaurant that was a hive of police, media and personal activity. A person from the scene came over in a very excited state. When I inquired about what had happened, he told me that there was "a body" in front of the restaurant and asked whether I had been over to see "it." Details other than the fact that there was a body were not forthcoming. He excitedly kept focusing on it being worthwhile to see this "body."

I sometimes think that people enter leadership roles as people and over time often become bodies as they fulfill their task roles and deal with the stress and 'performance' accountabilities of leadership. A key lesson to take from this deliberately essay-style research paper is that leaders are people who must take care of themselves as people and who serve best when valuing others and relating to these others as people in individuated validating ways. When leaders begin to see the people they lead akin to 'bodies' or 'person years' or 'factors of production' or 'costs' or 'overtime,' they distance themselves from the people whom they lead. In so doing, they depersonalize their leadership roles and abandon the human side of leadership. In making that mental transition, they risk losing all that personal relationships mean and unleash.

Because leadership is a deeply personal and relational engagement, leaders themselves are people who tend to be engaged with others with whom they try to create or accomplish something that none of them could achieve alone. When as a leader "I" send a person into battle—I really do send "a person". When I send people rather than impersonal bodies into action, I assume (hope) that they will each and together think and act--figure out what to do, work collaboratively to fulfill their roles, improvise where necessary and optimize whatever realities they face. Their training and experience will help them to competently perform their work. Their relationships will serve as a catalyst. Embedding valued and individuated highly interdependent relations within teams and organizations is an act of enlightened leadership.

Hopefully intact and thriving people and functioning teams and organizations, rather than depersonalized bodies or emaciated entities, return. And hopefully as they lead in and across tough, deeply personal situations, leaders remain as persons. Leadership is demanding. Those whose identities are validated and confirmed and hence, who are more likely than others to be personally and socially centered and resilient, will be positioned to succeed. They will, as argued, be more likely than they otherwise would be to act in ways that are consistent with their values and promises and to be seen as doing so (even when they act inconsistently). They will thus behave with integrity and hopefully be perceived as people who do so, and in over time become and be more effective leaders than they would otherwise be.

Going a step farther, leaders are most likely to have behavioural integrity when they clearly communicate their values and promises, act in accordance with these, and ensure that others understand how their values, promises and actions are aligned. Leadership involves both 'being' and 'acting'. In order for a leader to have behavioural integrity others must perceive the leader's values, actions and promises to be aligned. Just as beauty is said to be in the eye of the beholder, so is behavioural integrity. Being an authentic leader is important but is not itself sufficient. Others' perceptions that leaders act in ways that are consistent with these leaders' values and promises become the foundation upon which these others can act.

Leaders must take charge of their reputations—of how people perceive them—of the stories about them on their street. When they lead in contexts , that is, on streets that are consistent with their identities and on which these identities are validated and confirmed—they themselves

will be more likely to succeed. When they embed identity confirmation and healthy identity relations within the organizations they lead, they position their organizations to succeed. The organizations that excel in today's world and that will excel in the world of tomorrow will be those within which people think, act and learn in real time (Huber, 2004) alone and interdependently in and across contexts. Identity confirmation (validating and valuing the identities of others), behavioural integrity and effective leadership provide a foundation for each.

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RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS

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RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS

SCHOLARSHIP

Relationship of Transformational Leadership and Character With Five Organizational Outcomes

Dr. William H. Hendrix, Clemson University
Dr. Dana H. Born, Harvard University
Dr. Scott Hopkins, CHRISTUS Health System

Dr. William H. Hendrix is Professor Emeritus of Management at Clemson University and served as Chair of its Emeritus College Advisory Board. He holds a B.A. in Psychology from East Carolina University, an M.S. in Human Factors Engineering, and a Ph.D. in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from Purdue University. He served on the faculty at Clemson University for 16 years, five of which were as Head, Department of Management. Between 1999 and 2005, Dr. Hendrix served in several capacities at the Air Force Academy, including as Ambassador Holland H. Coors Chair in Character Development, Director of the Leadership Development Assessment Office, and Distinguished Visiting Professor. He also had a career as an Air Force officer. His academic expertise is in leadership and character development, assessment, survey research, research methods, personnel and human resource management, organizational behavior, and industrial/organizational psychology. He has published more than 30 research articles in refereed journals and a series of book chapters, and consulted for private and public organizations.

Dr. Dana H. Born is Lecturer in Public Policy at Harvard University's Kennedy School, and a retired brigadier general with 30 years of military service. She was previously Dean of the Faculty at the U.S. Air Force Academy, and led the Behavioral Sciences and Leadership Department. Her Air Force career includes duty in the Secretary of Defense's Force Management Policy office and Air Force Headquarters; command of a key mission support squadron; exchange with the Royal Australian Air Force, and deployment to Afghanistan. She received the Air Force's Eugene M. Zuckert Award for Outstanding Management Achievement, an honorary doctorate from Simmons College, and numerous military decorations. She is also a Senior Consultant for the Authentic Leadership Institute, a member of the International Women's Forum, Peer Evaluator for the Higher Learning Commission; Falcon Foundation Trustee; and a Director of the Apollo Education Group. Dr. Born graduated with distinction from the Air Force Academy in 1983, holds two master's degrees (Trinity University and University of Melbourne), and a doctorate in industrial and organizational psychology from Penn State University.

ABSTRACT

Extensive research exists linking leadership to organizational outcomes. In particular transformational leadership has received a great deal of support for its effectiveness in producing desirable organizational outcomes across a variety of organizational settings. More recently due to well-publicized business scandals, leadership research has focused on the moral dimensions of leadership. It has been suggested that charismatic leadership and transformational leadership could have a dark-side with some leaders using their influence to exploit followers and use their position for self-serving goals. The purpose of this research is to investigate if a leader's character traits add in predicting organizational outcomes beyond that predicted by a leader's transformational leadership style and to see if some transformational leaders do display a dark side. The sample for this research consisted of 279,100 active-duty military and civilian United States Air Force personnel. Data were collected using a survey that included measures of transformational leadership, character, and five organizational outcomes. Results indicated leadership and character were significantly related to the five outcome measures, and character significantly contributed to prediction of the outcomes after accounting for the effects of transformational leadership. Additionally, high levels of character and transformational leadership yielded the greatest effects on the outcomes. A small percentage of participants displayed the dark side of leadership (i.e., scoring high on transformational leadership and low on character). This research adds support for measuring leaders' character in combination with transformational leadership assessment.

From early in the 20th century to the present there have been a significant number of leadership theoretical models presented. Each of these has resulted in a vast amount of research adding to our understanding of leadership in organizational settings. Early in the 20th century leadership focus was on traits required to be an effective leader. Later reviews by Mann (1959) and Stogdill (1948) questioned the validity of using traits for predicting leader effectiveness. This shifted the focus from leadership traits to leadership behaviors in predicting leader effectiveness. Research on leaders' traits received little additional attention until Kenny and Zaccaro (1983) reported that 48 to 82% of the variance accounting for leadership emergence was due to traits of the leader. Furthermore, over a 100-year period research has provided supporting evidence for the position that traits do matter when predicting leader performance (Avolio, Sosik, & Berson, 2012). Newer trait based models of leadership include those of charismatic leadership, transactional leadership, and transformational leadership (Robbins and Judge, 2007, chap. 13).

More recently, in part due to well-publicized business scandals (Boyd, 2012; Colvin, 2003), leadership research has focused on the moral dimensions of leadership. These include those focusing on the dark-side of leadership or unethical leadership, ethical leadership, and character of leaders (e.g., Barlow, Jordan, & Hendrix, 2003; Brown, Trevino, & Harrison, 2005; Conger and Kanungo, 1988, chap. 11; Sosik & Cameron, 2010). Conger and Kanungo (1988, chap. 11) and Leslie and Van Velsor (1996) felt that charismatic leadership could have a dark-side with some charismatic leaders using their influence to exploit followers and use their position for self-serving goals. Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) noted that others had also questioned the morality of transformational leadership in that it could lead to self-serving interests. Leslie and Van Velsor (1996) have suggested that managerial failures in organizations were very frequently a result of unethical leaders due to their dark-side personalities.

While these studies have dealt with the potential dark-side or unethical leadership others, Brown & Trevino,

2006; Sosik & Cameron, 2010; Walumbwa et al. (2011) have focused on ethical leadership and the resulting effects on organizational outcomes. Ethical leadership research has tended to be characterized by the behaviors of the leader but may include traits such as honesty. Brown, Trevino, and Harrison (2005) developed a 10-item instrument (i.e., Ethical Leadership Scale) to measure ethical leadership. It included items such as "Listens to what employees have to say", "Disciplines employees who violate ethical standards," "Discusses business ethics or values with employees," and "Can be trusted." Although there is overlap between ethical leadership and the construct of character the latter is to a large extent based on virtue ethics as outlined by Socrates and Aristotle. This is reflected in leaders' character-related traits and values. For example, Hendrix, Barlow, Luedtke, (2004) presented research with two instruments to measure the character traits and values of leaders. One instrument (Character Assessment Rating Scale) consisted of a 12-point scale for rating character traits of leaders. The other instrument (Behavioral Desirability Scale) consisted of 65 items to measure character related values held by anyone including a leader. Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) indicated that authentic transformational leadership has a moral basis as does character. Burns (1978) indicated that only if leaders' values were uplifting could they be considered transformational. A large body of research has investigated the relationship of transformational leadership on desirable organizational outcomes. However, as Sosik, Gentry, and Chun (2012) have noted, there has been a lack of research linking leaders' character to organizational outcomes. Even less research has investigated if the character of a leader adds to the predictive variance associated with transformational leadership and desirable organizational outcomes (e.g., Sosik & Cameron, 2010).

The purpose of this research is two-fold. The first is to investigate if leaders' character traits add to the prediction of organizational outcomes above and beyond that of transformational leadership. The organizational outcomes of interest in this study are: organizational commitment, job satisfaction, work group performance, organizational citizenship behavior, and intent to leave the organization. The second is to investigate the pattern or interaction of high and low scores on character and transformational leadership. This investigation is in part to see if the existence and impact of a dark side of leadership is supported by the data. It is also to investigate if those scoring high on both leadership and character have the strongest relationship to the five organizational outcomes. A high score on transformational leadership but low on character would demonstrate a leader's dark side. There have been some reviews of the dark side of leadership with regard to narcissism, authoritarianism, need for power, and Machiavellianism (Conger & Kanungo, 1998, chap. 7). However, we found no research investigating and supporting the existence of transformational leaders who demonstrated the dark side of leadership by scoring high on transformational leadership and low on character.

On the other hand, if including a measure of character to transformational leadership increases the prediction of organizational outcomes, then those who score high on both measures might be better described as Character-Based Transformational Leadership. Should we find character and transformational leadership to be highly and significantly correlated this would provide support for Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) proposal that transformational leadership has a moral basis.

Theoretical Foundation and Hypotheses

Burns (1978) originally developed a transformation(al) leadership theory that was subsequently refined by Bass (1985, 1998). The theoretical foundation for our research, which is consistent with Burns' theoretical transformational leadership foundation, borrows from social identity theory (Tajfel, 1981; Hogg, 2001) and leader-member exchange theory (Dansereau, F., Jr., Graen, G., & Haga, W. J. 1975). A major aspect of social identity theory is organizational identification that refers to an employee's feeling of oneness or belongingness with an institution or group (Walumbwa, Mayer, Wang, Wang, Workman,

& Christensen, 2011). Leader-member exchange refers to the quality of exchange between a supervisor or leader and an employee (Graen & Scandura, 1987). The quality of this exchange can range from a low-quality exchange of adhering to the basic employment contract to a high-quality level where the interaction is based on open communications, trust, and information sharing (Erdogan, Liden, & Kraimer, 2006; Walumbwa, Mayer, Wang, Wang, Workman, & Christensen, 2011). Therefore, leaders who create an environment where employees develop a sense of organizational identification and have a positive leader-member exchange relationship should be more committed to the organization, more satisfied, and more productive. The effectiveness of transformation(al) leadership leading to these desirable outcomes has been found in research across different countries, different occupations, and at different job levels (Robbins and Judge, 2007, chap. 13).

Simarily, Brown, Trevino, and Harrison (2005) suggested that ethical leadership has an important role in enhancing employees' attitudes and their behaviors. There has been some limited research linking ethical and character leadership measures to employee performance (Walumbwa, Mayer, Wang, Wang, Workman, & Christensen, 2011; Cameron, Bright, & Caza; 2004). However, Sosik, Gentry, and Chun (2012) observed that, in the main, research is lacking that examines character strengths on positive organizational outcomes. Furthermore, Sosik and Cameron (2010) pointed out that a framework doesn't exist for understanding the complexity of character and its role in determining outstanding leadership. A major issue in character research is that there is not a consistent definition of leader character. Thompson and Riggio (2010) in a special issue on leadership character provided an excellent review of the diversity of character definitions and constructs.

Transformational Leadership and Organizational Outcomes

As noted previously, research has provided evidence that leaders seen as transformational have employees who are high in job performance, organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behavior and satisfaction with their supervision (Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999; Koh, Steers, & Terborg, 1995; Pillai, Schriesheim, & Williams, 1999) and have less intention of quitting their jobs (Bycio, Hackett, & Allen, 1995).

Support for transformational leadership being positively related to organizational outcomes is found in the vast and varied amount of research on this relationship (Barling, Weber, & Kelloway, 1996; Boerner, Eisenbeiss, & Griesser, 2007; Givens, 2008; Hatter, & Bass, 1988; Howell & Avolio, 1993; Jorg & Schyns, 2004; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1996; Nguni, Sleegers, and Denessen, (2006); Zhu, Chew, & Spangler, 2005). Bass and Avolio (1993) suggested the reason for transformational leadership affecting organizational outcomes is due to these leaders motivating and inspiring subordinates to achieve organizational goals.

A wealth of research exists indicating that transformational leadership is positively related to organizational commitment across a variety of organizational settings (Bono & Judge, 2003; Dumdum, Lowe, & Avolio, 2002; Emery & Bateman, 2007; Koh, Steers, & Terborg, 1995; Lowe, & Kroeck, 1996; Walumbwa & Lawler, 2003). Other research has provided evidence that not only is transformational leadership positively related to organizational commitment but also has a large impact on it (Dee, Henkin, & Singleton, 2004; Koh et al., 1995; Nguni, Sleegers, & Denessen, 2006).

Research linking transformational leadership to job satisfaction is just as impressive. Transformational leadership research has consistently shown it to be positively related to job satisfaction (Emery & Bateman, 2007; Griffin & Bateman, 1986; Steers & Rhodes 1978; Maeroff, 1988; Walumbwa, Orwa, Wang, & Lawler; 2005). Givens (2008)

Therefore, leaders who create an environment where employees develop a sense of organizational identification and have a positive leader-member exchange relationship should be more committed to the organization, more satisfied, and more productive.

conducted a review of transformational leadership and its impact on organizational outcomes. Givens provided significant evidence for transformational leadership having a "massive and steady influence on employees' job satisfaction".

Nguni, Sleegers, and Denessen, (2006) noted that research has shown that transformational leadership affects a series of organizational outcomes including performance. Later, Avolio, Sosik, and Berson, (2012) in their summary of leadership research also found that transformational leadership has a positive effect on motivation and performance. Liao and Chuang (2007) investigated transformational leadership's relationship to employee service performance. Their results indicated that transformational leadership was positively related, not only to employee service performance but also, to customers' intent to keep a long-term relationship with the company. More specifically, transformational leadership has been found to be positively related to R&D team performance (Keller, 2006), team proactive performance (Williams, Parker, & Turner, 2010), Army unit performance (Bass, Avolio, 2003, Jung, & Berson, 2003; Lim & Ployhart, 2004) and financial services group performance (Schaubroeck, Lam, & Cha, 2007).

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) has been characterized by Organ (1988) as consisting of five general forms: altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy, and civic virtue. Williams and Nadin, (2012), outlined two OCB dimensions, "affiliative" and "challenging" which can take on the two forms, OCB toward individuals and OCB toward groups (Tse & Chiu, 2014). Our research's OCB measure focuses on OCB toward groups and can be characterized as being similar to Organ's altruism form and Williams and Nadin's affiliative dimension. The affiliative dimension has been described as having behaviors that promote group cohesion, maintaining existing working relationships and arrangements (Lopez-Domiquez, Enache, Sallan, & Simo, 2013). Empirical research has linked affiliative OCB with organizational leadership (Kwan, Lu, & Kim, 2011; Wang, Law, Hackett, Wang, & Chen, 2005). Transformational leadership has also been found to be directly and indirectly related to OCBs (Podsakoff, 1990; Tse, & Chiu, 2014; Walumbwa, Wang, Wang, Schaubroeck, & Avolio, 2010).

Intention to leave is an attitudinal disposition for employees to quit their job. Griffin, Hom, Gaertner (2000) in a meta-analysis found intention to leave one's job to be very predictive of actual employee turnover, and Lee and Liu (2006) concluded that intent to stay or leave an organization is the strongest predictor of voluntary turnover in organizations. Transformational leadership has been shown to have a significant negative relationship to intention to leave (Ali, 2009; Lyons, 1971; Pieterse-Landman, 2012; Scandura & Williams, 2004). This is important; for example, Overbey (2010) indicated that employee turnover is very expensive for organizations with the cost to replace a telecommuter employee ranging from 25% to 200% of their annual salary. In addition to financial impact, turnover drives other very harmful effects such as decreased morale, impact on efficiency, and customer relations (Abbasi & Hollman, 2000; Watrous, Huffman, & Pritchard, 2006).

Research on transformational leadership on organizational outcomes leads to our first hypothesis:

> Hypothesis 1: Transformational leadership will be positively related to organizational commitment, job satisfaction, work group performance, organizational citizenship behavior, and negatively related to intent to leave.

Character and Organizational Outcomes

Even though research has established relationships between transformational leadership and desirable outcomes, Sosik, Gentry, and Chun (2012) noted that there has been a lack of research linking leaders' character to organizational outcomes. Although limited, their research did provide evidence that leaders' character traits were related to

executive performance. Research by Cameron, Bright, and Caza (2004) found that members of organizations that had more character strengths had higher performance that those with fewer character-related strengths. Additional support was provided by Sosik, Gentry, and Chun, (2012) who found that character traits were positively related to ratings of executive performance. Furthermore, Sosik (2006) proposed that character was a distinguishing feature of outstanding leadership.

Although ethical leadership and the construct of character are not identical, it seems logical that they should be significantly related. Walumbwa, Mayer, Wang, Wang, Workman, & Christensen (2011) found that ethical leadership was positively related to ratings of employee performance. Kim and Brymer (2011), in addition, found that ethical leadership was positively related to job satisfaction and organizational commitment of middle level managers. There is also some evidence linking ethical leadership to OCB (Toor & Ofori, 2009; Trevino, Brown, & Hartman, 2003). Furthermore, there has been some additional limited research linking ethical decision making to organizational performance (Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, & Wright, 1997; Wu, 2002) and to corporate survival and growth (Sirgy, 2002). Noe et al. (1997) also found that businesses feel sound business ethics are related to positive perceptions by customers, government agencies, and vendors.

This leads us to our next hypothesis:

> Hypothesis 2: Character will be positively related to organizational commitment, job satisfaction, work group performance, organizational citizenship behavior, and negatively related to intent to leave.

Character and Transformational Leadership

Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) suggested that authentic transformational leaders should be committed to moral excellence. Conger and Hollenbeck (2010) in their review of character research suggested that character had been "hijacked" by the integration of character as an additional dimension of transformational leadership. Avolio, Sosik, and Berson (2012) noted that authentic leadership has been shown to be empirically and theoretically differentiated from ethical and transformational leadership with authentic and ethical leadership being the higher order constructs. Therefore, we investigated an additional hypothesis:

> Hypothesis 3: Character will contribute unique variance beyond that accounted for by transformational leadership in predicting organizational commitment, job satisfaction, work group performance, organizational citizenship behavior, and intent to leave.

Since Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) indicated that authentic transformational leadership has a moral foundation then we would expect those who score high on transformational leadership but low on character would be those suggested by Leslie & Van Velsor, (1996) as displaying the dark side of transformational leadership. We would also expect those who score high on both character and transformational leadership to have the strongest relationship with organizational outcomes. Logically, those scoring low on both should have the weakest relationship with organizational outcomes. This leads to the hypotheses 4 through 7 that propose interactions between leadership levels and character levels:

> Hypothesis 4: High scores on both leader character and transformational leadership will have the strongest predictive relationship with the five organizational outcomes (organizational commitment, job satisfaction, work group performance, organizational citizenship behavior, and intent to leave).

> Hypothesis 5: Low scores on both character and transformational leadership will have the weakest predictive relationship with the five organizational outcomes.

Hypothesis 6: High scores on transformational leadership but low scores on character, reflecting the dark side of transformational leadership, will have lower predictive relationship than authentic transformational leadership (i.e., high on character and leadership) with the five organizational outcomes.

Hypothesis 7: Low scores on transformational leadership but high scores on character, will a have lower predictive relationship than authentic transformational leadership (i.e., high on character and leadership) with the five organizational outcomes.

Method

Participants

Participants consisted of 279,100 active-duty military and civilian United States Air Force personnel, approximately 64% of the Air Force population. The military-civilian composition was: 62% enlisted personnel, 16% officer personnel, and 23% civilian personnel (Air Force population: 58% enlisted, 14% officers, 28% civilians), 76% males and 24% females. Of these 61.1% were married, 8.3% divorced, 20.2% single, 0.5% widowed, 9.9% did not provide their marital status. Participants' highest educational level was: (a) 0.2% some high school, (b) 13.7% high school, (c) 30.0% less than two years of college, (d) 4.1% associate's degree, (e) 13.6% less than four years of college, (f) 11.9% bachelor's degree, (g) 3.8% some graduate education but no graduate degree, (h) 11.1% master's degree, (i) 1.1% doctorate degree, (k) 10.5% other or did not provide their educational level. The sample demographics are approximately the same as in the Air Force population.

Procedure

The United States Air Force administers annually an online organizational climate survey, the Chief of Staff Air Force (CSAF) Climate Survey. This survey, made available to all personnel, serves to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement in Air Force organizational climate and effectiveness. The survey is divided into three major sections: jobs, leadership, and culture and climate. The transformational leadership and character scales and outcome measures used in this research were embedded within the CSAF Climate Survey. Participants were asked to rate their supervisors on items designed to measure transformational leadership and the character of their supervisor.

Measures

Transformational Leadership. The transformational leadership scale used was based on the transformational components of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), but included only 14 items on a six-point Likert agree-disagree scale with an option for *don't know or not applicable*. This scale was developed by U.S. Air Force survey specialists for an Air Force population. The items measure intellectual stimulation (e.g., communicating high expectations), inspiration (e.g., promotes problem solving), and individualized consideration (e.g., personal attention). Scale items are provided in the Appendix.

Character. Character or moral excellence was measured by adapting the Character Assessment Rating Scale from Hendrix & Hopkins (2003). Participants were asked to rate their supervisor on 11 dimensions of character using a five-point frequency scale (e.g., 1 = *Never*, 5 = *Always*). Scale items are provided in the Appendix.

Outcome Variables. The five outcome variables used to measure the effects of transformational leadership and character were organizational commitment, job satisfaction, work group performance, organizational citizenship behavior, and intent to leave the organization. Four of these, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, work group performance, and organizational citizenship behavior, were assessed using a six-point Likert scale. The fifth outcome variable, intent to leave the organization, utilized a six-point likelihood scale (e.g., 1 = *Highly Unlikely*, 6 = *Highly Likely*). Scale items are provided in the Appendix.

Results

The means, standard deviations, correlations, and coefficient alpha scale reliability indices for transformational leadership, character, and each organizational outcome are provided in Table 1. Hypotheses 1 and 2, *transformational leadership (H1) and character (H2) will be positively related to organizational commitment, job satisfaction, work group performance, and organizational citizenship behavior and negatively related to intent to leave*, were tested with correlational analysis. Transformational leadership and character were both significant ($p < .001$) in predicting each outcome variable. Furthermore, transformational leadership and character were highly correlated (r=.81).

The third hypothesis, *character will contribute unique variance beyond that accounted for by transformational leadership in predicting organizational commitment, job satisfaction, work group performance, organizational citizenship behavior, and intent to leave*, was tested using multiple regression analyses. Table 2 contains raw score and standardized regression coefficients, raw score standard error, and each equation's R^2. The hypothesis was supported with character adding significantly ($p < .001$) to the variance accounted for by transformational leadership in predicting each outcome variable.

To test hypotheses 4, 5, 6, and 7, the character and transformational leadership scales were cut into approximately equal high and low groups and then recoded as a single factor with four levels. The transformational leadership distribution cuts were: (upper 34%) and (lower 35%). The character distribution cut was: (upper 34%) and (lower 34%). The rationale for this split was suggested by Lawshe and Balma (1966, p. 331) as a good way to assure that two groups adequately measure the characteristic of interest (e.g, high and low leadership and character). This splitting process is based on item analysis concept of item discrimination (D). The task is to keep a large portion of the sample to provide stability while splitting the groups so as to make them as different as possible. Wiersma and Jurs (1990) suggested a 27% split (p. 145) of participant scores into two groups: upper 27% and lower 27%. Since we have four groups (i.e., two leadership and two character) we decided to make the split at approximately the upper and lower third of the participants scores.

When referring to high-low groupings, transformational leadership will be reported first followed by character; therefore, "High(L)/Low(C)" would be the upper or high transformational leadership group and low character group.

A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed, since we had five criterion variables, to test hypotheses 4, 5, 6 and 7. These compared the effect of transformational leadership and character high-low groups on: (a) organizational commitment, (b) job satisfaction, (c) work group performance, (d) organizational citizenship behavior, and (e) intent to leave.

For the combined criterion variables, there were statistically significant differences between leadership groups, F (5, 137197) = 1813.37, p = .05; Wilks' Lambda = .94; the character groups, F (5, 137197) = 575.84, p = .021; Wilks' Lambda = .98; and the leadership by character interaction F (5, 137197) = 35.38, p = .001; Wilks' Lambda = .999.

When the criterion variables were considered separately all were found to be statistically significant for the leadership group, the character group, and for the leadership by character interaction. The results are provided in Table 3.

> *Although ethical leadership and the construct of character are not identical, it seems logical that they should be significantly related.*

As a result of all criterion variables being statistically significant when considered separately, post hoc analyses were conducted on all pairwise contrasts of the four high/

low leadership and character groups using the Scheffe multiple comparison tests. There was a significant ($p<.05$) difference of the four transformational leadership-character groups on all of the outcome factors with one exception. The High(L)/Low(C) and Low(L)/High(C) groups were not significant for the outcome of Intent to leave. As hypothesized (hypothesis 4) high scores on both leader character and transformational leadership had the strongest predictive relationship with the five organizational outcomes (organizational commitment, job satisfaction, work group performance, organizational citizenship behavior, and intent to leave) while low scores on both character and transformational leadership had the weakest predictive relationship with the five organizational outcomes (hypothesis 5). Hypothesis 6, that *high scores on transformational leadership but low scores on character, reflecting the dark side of transformational leadership, will have lower predictive relationship than authentic transformational leadership (i.e., high on character and leadership) with the five organizational outcomes*, was partially supported. The High(L)/Low(C) group was significantly lower than authentic transformational leadership (High(L)/High(C) group. Even though the high High(L)/Low(C) group was significantly lower than authentic transformational leadership, across the five organizational outcomes, it only included approximately 3.5% of the sample, which was approximately the same for the Low(L)/High(C) group. Hypothesis 7, *low scores on transformational leadership but high scores on character, will have lower predictive relationship than authentic transformational leadership (i.e., high on character and leadership) with the five organizational outcomes*, was supported. Still it only included approximately 3.5% of the sample in that group, across the five organizational outcomes, so it was of little practical significance.

The means, standard deviations, number of participants, and percent of participants for each of the High(L)/Low(C) transformational leadership and character groups with the five organizational outcome factors are provided in Table 4.

There is always concern of common method variance (CMV) when measures come from a single source. One method for estimating CMV has been proposed by Lindell and Whitney (2001). They proposed the extent of common method variance can be estimated by including as a covariate a marker variable that is theoretically unrelated with one or more of the variables under investigation. Any observed relationship between the marker variable and those under investigation could be assumed to be due to CMV. They also concluded that partialling out the average correlation between the marker variable and those under investigation should allow researcher to control for possible CMV. In regression analysis the marker variable would be entered as a covariate and standardized regression weights (beta weights) for the variables under investigation would be reduced to the extent that common method variance is present when the covariate is included in the analysis.

We repeated the regression analyses provided in Table 2 but included this time a covariate that theoretically shouldn't be correlated with the variables under investigation. The item dealt with the A-76 program the Department of Defense (DOD) used to hire civilian contractors for government positions. In some cases individuals hired under the A-76 program replaced government employees. The covariate item was rated on a six-point agree-disagree scale. It asked raters to indicate extent they agreed with the statement "The A-76 competitive sourcing program increases my desire to seek employment outside the Air Force." The A-76 program was administered at the DOD level and therefore had no relationship to leadership of the raters 'supervisors.

The R^2 values of the regression analyses with the covariate included were the same as the regression analyses without the covariate. In addition, the beta weights for transformational leadership and character for the five outcomes were also the same. The beta weights for the A-76 covariate were: commitment .075 , satisfaction .066, performance .013, OCB .035, Intent to leave -.020. The

results suggest there was little common method variance present.

Discussion

The data of this research supports our hypotheses on the relationship of transformational leadership and character being predictive of five important organizational outcomes. Both transformational leadership and character were significantly and positively related to the five outcomes of organizational commitment, job satisfaction, work group performance, organizational citizenship behavior, and negatively related to intent to leave the organization (see Table 1). Furthermore, transformational leadership and character were significantly and highly correlated supporting Bass and Steidlmeier's (1999) assertion that transformational leadership has a moral basis, as does character. As hypothesized, high scores on both leader character and transformational leadership had the strongest predictive relationship with the five organizational outcomes, while low scores on both character and transformational leadership had the weakest predictive relationship with these same outcomes. This provides additional support that transformational leadership has a moral basis (Bass and Steidlmeier, 1999). The other two groups [i.e., High(L)/Low(C) and low(L)/High(C)] provided little practical significance since each only included approximately 3.5% of the sample in each group, across the five organizational outcomes. Therefore, the data provided little support for transformational leadership having a dark side which would be reflected in a large percentage of participants in the High(L)/Low(C) group.

This research is significant in investigating an area that Sosik, Gentry, and Chun (2012) noted lacked research--that of linking leaders' character to organizational outcomes. Sosik and Cameron (2010) indicated that little research had investigated if the character of a leader adds to the predictive variance associated with transformational leadership and desirable organizational outcomes; this research is also significant in addressing this research deficiency. The results provide support for character contributing unique variance beyond that accounted for by transformational leadership in predicting organizational outcomes. Thus, although transformational leadership provided the best prediction of the five organizational outcomes, leader character increased the predictive variance.

The present research is consistent with three primary theoretical foundations: Burns (1978) on transformational leadership, social identity theory (Tajfel, 1981; Hogg, 2001) and leader-member exchange theory (Dansereau, F., Jr., Graen, G., & Haga, W. J. 1975). These theoretical foundations suggest that leaders who create an environment conducive to organizational identification by employees and have a positive leader-member exchange relationship should be more committed to the organization, more satisfied, and more productive. The data of our present research is consistent with these theoretical foundations.

The results of our research is also consistent with the vast and varied amount of research on transformational leadership being positively related to organizational outcomes including job performance, organizational commitment, OCB, job satisfaction, and intent to leave (Barling, Weber, & Kelloway, 1996; Boerner, Eisenbeiss, & Griesser, 2007; Givens, 2008; Hatter, & Bass, 1988; Howell & Avolio, 1993; Jorg & Schyns, 2004; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1996; Nguni, Sleegers, and Denessen, (2006); Zhu, Chew, & Spangler, 2005).

Investigation of the impact of leaders' character on organizational outcomes has had little attention in comparison to that of transformational leadership. There has been some research linking character traits to executive performance (Sosik, Gentry, and Chun, 2012) and higher performance for employees with more character strengths that those with fewer ones (Cameron, Bright, and Caza, 2004). Other relevant research has focused on ethical leadership. This research has found ethical leadership positively related to rated employee performance (Walumbwa, Mayer, Wang, Wang,

Workman, & Christensen (2011), and to job satisfaction and organizational commitment of middle level managers (Kim and Brymer, 2011), as well as to OCB (Toor & Ofori, 2009; Trevino, Brown, & Hartman, 2003). Our findings are consistent with these character and ethical leadership research results. In addition, our research expands the investigation to include work group performance and intent to leave.

One of the strengths of this research is that the sample mirrors the population. Another strength is the sample size, which is approximately 64% of the population; and with this large sample size only small differences are needed to be statistically significant. This raises the issue of practical importance. Even though the High(L)/Low(C) and Low(L) High(C) groups were statistically significant from the other groups, they were of little practical significance. Additional strengths include the wide range of occupations or job types within the sample (e.g., medical, dental, administrative, mechanical, electronic, flight operations and maintenance, research and development, academic, technical training, financial, legal), and measures at all organizational levels within installations in the United States and worldwide. Furthermore, the measures of transformational leadership and character consisted of ratings by participants of their supervisors not self-ratings. Therefore, for each organizational unit we have multiple employee ratings of each unit's supervisor.

The data of this research supports our hypotheses on the relationship of transformational leadership and character being predictive of five important organizational outcomes.

A potential limitation of this research is common method bias (CMB) due to the data collected being from a single source (i.e., single source bias) and common method variance (CMV). Common method bias refers to the extent that correlations are inflated due to a methods effect (Meade, Watson, & Kroustalis, 2007). CMV implies that variance in scores is, in part, due to a methods effect. There has been a large body of research on the extent that CMB and CMV inflate correlations (e.g., Avolio, Yamarino, & Bass, 1991; Malhotra, Kim & Patil, 2006; Meade, Watson, & Kroustalis, 2007; Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). Meade, Watson, & Kroustalis, (2007) investigated the extent of CMB in organizational research by applying confirmatory factor analysis models to 24 multitrait-multimethod correlation matrices. They concluded that the effect of CMB while not trivial tended to be minor in magnitude. Malhotra et. al. (2006) corrected correlations for CMV and found that they were not statistically different from the uncorrected correlations.

Another limitation of the study the degree to which it can be generalized to other organizations. Since the sample comes from a military population, it is less likely to be generalizable to non-union private organizations. Even though a union does not represent the military, a government union represents the civilians in the sample. Therefore, the results of this research are more likely to be usefully generalized to traditional, hierarchical organizations.

To assess the extent that the results are generalizable, future research should attempt to replicate these results in different organizational types (eg., medical, finance, military operations), levels, and locations (e.g., Western and non-Western cultures). Future research could also improve our understanding of transformational leadership and character relationships to organizational outcomes by investigating if intervening variables better describe the dynamics associated with these relationships. Investigating if the civilian sample fraction differed from the military sample fraction would also provide additional understanding of the generalizability of the results to similar types of subgroups. One additional area for future research would involve measuring the impact of the organizations' culture on the leader/character relationship.

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RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS

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Appendix

Transformational Leadership, Character, & Organizational Outcome measures

Transformational Leadership

1. My unit commander (or commander equivalent) *sets challenging unit goals*.
2. My unit commander (or commander equivalent) *provides a clear unit vision*.
3. My unit commander (or commander equivalent) *makes us proud to be associated with him/her*.
4. My unit commander (or commander equivalent) *is consistent in his/her words and actions*.
5. My unit commander (or commander equivalent) *is inspirational (promotes esprit de corps)*.
6. My unit commander (or commander equivalent) *motivates us to achieve our goals*.
7. My unit commander (or commander equivalent) *is passionate about our mission*.
8. My unit commander (or commander equivalent) *challenges us to solve problems on our own*.
9. My unit commander (or commander equivalent*) encourages us to find new ways of doing business.*
10. My unit commander (or commander equivalent) *asks us to think through problems before we act*.
11. My unit commander (or commander equivalent) *encourages us to find innovative approaches to problems*.
12. My unit commander (or commander equivalent) *listens to our ideas*.
13. My unit commander (or commander equivalent) *treats us with respect*.
14. My unit commander (or commander equivalent) *is concerned about our personal welfare*.

Character

1. Integrity. Consistently adhering to a moral or ethical code or standard. A person who considers the "right thing" when faced with alternate choices.
2. Organizational Loyalty. Being devoted and committed to one's organization.
3. Employee Loyalty. Being devoted and committed to one's coworkers and subordinates.
4. Selflessness. Genuinely concerned about the welfare of others and willing to sacrifice one's personal interest for others and their organization.
5. Compassion. Concern for the suffering or welfare of others and provides aid or shows mercy for others.
6. Competency. Capable of executing responsibilities assigned in a superior fashion and excels in all task assignments. Is effective and efficient.
7. Respectfulness. Shows esteem for, and consideration and appreciation of other people.
8. Fairness. Treats people in an equitable, impartial, and just manner.
9. Self-Discipline. Can be depended upon to make rational and logical decisions (in the interest of the unit).
10. Spiritual Diversity Appreciation.*Values the spiritual diversity among individuals with different backgrounds and cultures and respects all individuals' rights to differ from others in their beliefs.
11. Cooperativeness. Willingness to work or act together with others in accomplishing a task or some common end or purpose.

Note: *Item was dropped from 2003 CSAF Climate Survey.

Organizational Commitment

1. I am really willing to exert considerable effort on the job for my organization.88
2. The goals and values of my organization are very compatible with my goals and values.

Job Satisfaction

1. In general, I am satisfied with my job.
2. I have a sense of fulfillment at the end of the day.
3. The tasks I perform provide me with a sense of accomplishment.
4. I am a valued member of my unit.
5. I would recommend an assignment in my unit to a friend.
6. Morale is high in my unit.

Work Group Performance

1. The quality of work in my unit is high.
2. The quantity of work in my unit is high.
3. My unit is known as one that gets the job done well.
4. My unit is successfully accomplishing its mission.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior8

1. In my unit, people help each other out when they have heavy workloads.
2. In my unit, people make innovative suggestions for improvement.
3. In my unit, people willingly give of their time to help members who have work-related problems.
4. In my unit, people willingly share their expertise with each other.

Intent to Leave

1. If you were released from all of your service obligations and you could separate from the Air Force within the year, what is the likelihood that you would leave the Air Force?

Table 1

Variable Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations, & Scale Reliability Measures from 2002 CSAF Climate Survey

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Leadership[a]	4.72	1.06	(.98)						
2. Character[b]	4.32	.81	.83*	(.97)					
3. Commitment[c]	5.05	.93	.47*	.44*	(.69)				
4. Satisfaction[d]	4.23	1.24	.53*	.46*	.62*	(.92)			
5. Performance[e]	4.97	.88	.48*	.42*	.48*	.57*	(.89)		
6. Altruism[f]	4.52	1.03	.46*	.41*	.48*	.61*	.58*	(.89)	
7. Intent to leave[g]	3.34	2.04	-.25*	-.24*	-.34*	-.40*	-.23*	-.25*	-

Note. Coefficient Alpha Reliabilities in parentheses.

[a]*N* = 255,675. [b]*N* = 249,059. [c]*N* = 251,434. [d]*N* = 266,936. [e]*N* = 265,053. [f]*N* = 365,545. [g]*N* = 252,653, Single item.

*$p < .01$ 6

Table 2

Regression of Organizational Outcomes on Transformational Leadership and Character of Leader

	B	SE B	β	R^2
Commitment[a]				.23**
Transformational Leadership	.30	.003	.34	
Character	.17	.004	.15	
Satisfaction[b]				.28**
Transformational Leadership	.55	.004	.47	
Character	.10	.005	.07	
Performance[c]				.23**
Transformational Leadership	.36	.003	.43	
Character	.07	.003	.06	
OCB[d]				.22**
Transformational Leadership	.38	.003	.39	
Character	.11	.004	.08	
Intent to Leave[e]				.07**
Transformational Leadership	-.32	.003	-.17	
Character	-.25	.003	-.10	

[a]N = 239,828. [b]N = 245,231. [c]N = 244,544. [d]N = 244682. [e]N = 240,530.

**p < .001.

Table 3

Criterion variables between subjects effects (leadership and character groups)

Source	df	MS	F	p
Leadership				
Commitment	1	3122.44	3950.84	.001
Satisfaction	1	8984.75	7098.84	.001
Performance	1	3994.94	5501.59	.001
OCB	1	4703.97	4874.78	.001
Intent to leave	1	4046.10	1046.10	.001
Character				
Commitment	1	1733.02	2192.79	.001
Satisfaction	1	1918.44	1515.76	.001
Performance	1	749.09	1227.48	.001
OCB	1	1251.70	1297.15	.001
Intent to leave	1	3318.76	858.05	.001
Leadership x Character				
Commitment	1	41.95	53.08	.001
Satisfaction	1	120.98	95.58	.001
Performance	1	31.12	42.85	.001
OCB	1	121.99	126.42	.001
Intent to leave	1	275.50	71.23	.001
Error				
Commitment	137201			
Satisfaction	137201			
Performance	137201			
OCB	137201			
Intent to leave	137201			

Table 4

Means and Standard Deviations: Transformational Leadership and Character

Leadership/Character	M	SD	n	%
Commitment				
High(L)/High(C)	5.58	.63	61,166	44.21
High(L)/Low(C)	5.06	.84	4896	3.55
Low(L)/High(C)	4.90	.96	4406	3.37
Low(L)/Low(C)	4.53	1.07	66,737	48.87
Satisfaction				
High(L)/High(C)	4.96	1.05	61,166	44.13
High(L)/Low(C)	4.37	1.14	4896	3.54
Low(L)/High(C)	3.83	1.20	4406	3.43
Low(L)/Low(C)	3.47	1.22	66,737	48.90
Performance				
High(L)/High(C)	5.45	.64	61,166	40.00
High(L)/Low(C)	5.10	.75	4896	3.81
Low(L)/High(C)	4.72	.91	4406	3.67
Low(L)/Low(C)	4.48	1.01	66,737	52.52
OCB				
High(L)/High(C)	5.07	.85	61,166	44.18
High(L)8/Low(C)	4.57	.96	4896	3.53
Low(L)/High(C)	4.22	1.01	4406	3.43
Low(L)/Low(C)	3.96	1.09	66,737	48.86
Intent to Leave				
High(L)/High(C)	2.68	1.97	61,166	44.16
High(L)/Low(C)	3.48	1.99	4896	3.55
Low(L)/High(C)	3.55	2.07	4406	3.37
Low(L)/Low(C)	3.99	1.96	66,737	48.92

Note: Percent scores total 100% within each outcome grouping

RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS

ESSAY

Spiraling Down to Perfection?

Lt Col Ryan Guiberson, PhD
Department of Political Science, United States Air Force Academy

Leaders who attempt to hold their subordinates to the standard of "perfection" as a performance norm plant the seed for significant ethical failures within their organizations. The 2013 cheating scandal among missile launch officers at Malmstrom Air Force Base is a case-in-point. Rather than elevating professional competency and proficiency, the unrealistic and unattainable performance expectations communicated to Malmstrom's nuclear missile personnel resulted in widespread ethical improprieties and undermined unit effectiveness within a critical component of U.S. national security. The ethical lapses unearthed in the Malmstrom incident should encourage those responsible for educating, training, and leading airmen to reject the seemingly noble, yet counterproductive temptation to proclaim perfection as a performance "norm". As the Malmstrom episode reinforces, perfection can easily and insidiously become the enemy of the good, and undermine possibilities to attain organizational excellence.

Significant cheating came to light during a 2013 Air Force Office of Special Investigations (OSI) investigation of illegal drug use among a number of junior officers, including two missile combat crew members at Malmstrom. Text-messaging data retrieved from the suspects' phones in the drug investigation indicated widespread and unauthorized sharing of test material by nuclear missile officers. Following the OSI discovery, the Commander of the Air Force Global Strike Command, Lieutenant General Stephen Wilson, initiated a Commander's Directed Investigation

Lt Col Ryan Guiberson is a 1992 graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy and is currently assigned to the Academy as an assistant professor in the Department of Political Science. Lt Col Guiberson is an Air Force pilot and flew the majority of his time in the C-130 and T-1 aircraft. He received a Master of Arts degree in Political Science from the University of Florida in 1994 and earned his PhD in Government from the University of Virginia in 2013. His research interests include American Political Thought, Civil-Military Relations, and Military Ethics. Lt Col Guiberson is currently serving an extendeddeployment in Southwest Asia as a Wing Chief of Safety.

(CDI) to examine the depth of the cheating allegations and the underlying factors that contributed to it. The AFOSI investigation uncovered evidence that implicated 98 officers at Malmstrom, one-fifth of the entire nuclear launch officer force. The implicated officers allegedly distributed, received, or solicited compromised test material amongst themselves, primarily via a text-messaging network. The junior officers disseminated answers to multiple-choice questions, including classified answers for the mandatory periodic exams that purportedly measured their technical knowledge to carry out nuclear duties. In addition, ten other more senior officers eventually resigned voluntarily or were relieved of command at Malmstrom. These included the wing commander, operations group commander, and a squadron commander, although none of these more senior leaders were directly implicated in the cheating investigation (Everstine, 2014).

Discovery of cheating at Malmstrom followed on the heels of a host of other embarrassing ethical transgressions by military officers and prompted Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel to admit that he was "deeply troubled" and "... generally concerned that there could be, at least at some level, a breakdown in ethical behavior and in the demonstration of moral courage." (Tilghiman, 2014). Addressing such concerns, however, is a difficult matter. Attempts to isolate root causes for rashes of ethical breakdowns in organizations as large and as diverse as the Department of Defense typically yield inconclusive or ambiguous results. When such episodes occur in rapid succession, organizational leaders are understandably tempted to look for explanatory "nodes" or a single causal factor, one that can be "fixed" with the least possible disruption of the organization. The reality, of course, is that numerous organizational and leadership failures are usually involved. Ultimately, the breakdown lies in the choices made by individual human beings.

When examining ethical failures in organizations, one potential factor--the setting of unrealistic performance norms--typically does not garner appropriate consideration, particularly in military organizations. Institutional culture or unit leaders that fixate on conveying a particular organizational self-image often impede rigorous analysis of this factor. In his post-CDI comments, however, Lieutenant General Wilson acknowledged that demands for "perfection" may indeed warrant closer scrutiny as a causal factor and noted, "[t]hese were all bright officers....[n]one of these officers needed the information to pass the test. They felt compelled to cheat to get a perfect score." (Everstine, 2014). Wilson's comments reflect a critical assessment of military supervisors within the nuclear hierarchy that had allowed disproportionate pressures to be placed on their subordinates to achieve perfect scores on the exams. Over time, norms evolved that led supervisors to perceive the exam results as defining indicators of unit readiness and the technical and procedural competence of their personnel (Holmes, 2014). Published guidance already established high standards for passing the periodic tests, i.e., 90%, but CDI interviews conducted after the cheating incident revealed that missile launch officers strongly perceived that anything less than 100% would likely carry career impacting consequences.

The CDI specifically highlighted the potential perils associated with organizational slogans that proclaim, "Perfection is the Standard" (Holmes, 2014, pp. D-13). The final report noted, "[T]his ideal [perfection] would require the complete elimination of human error in America's nuclear enterprise...[S}ince human errors are unavoidable, even in the nuclear enterprise, the goal of the nuclear enterprise should be to construct a system that ensures human errors are mitigated and captured." (Holmes, 2014, pp. D-13) The report continued, "[A]n unrealistic emphasis on perfection drives commanders at all levels to attempt to meet the zero-defect standard by personally monitoring and directing daily operations and imposing an unrelenting testing and evaluation regimen on wings, groups, squadrons, and missile crew members in an attempt to eliminate all human error." (Holmes, 2014). In an interview with the *New York Times*, Secretary of the Air Force Deborah James shared similar concerns: "I heard

repeatedly from teammates that the need for perfection has created a climate of undue stress and fear. Fear about the future. Fear about promotions. Fear about what will happen to them in their careers. The irony is that they didn't cheat to pass, they cheated to get 100 percent. This is not a healthy environment." (Cooper, 2014).

The unhealthy environment noted by Secretary James results from a failure to delineate clearly between *aspirations* and *expectations* when setting performance standards. A lack of awareness of this vital distinction, or the conscious unwillingness to acknowledge it, nourishes a perception among unit personnel that a dichotomous choice must be made between unit "perfection" or the acceptance of a complacent mediocrity. The existence of such a false dichotomy impedes the thoughtful consideration of alternative and more realistic ways to frame unit and individual success and enhance long-term organizational effectiveness. A narrow focus on perfection actually distracts leaders from pursuing and inculcating a commitment to the virtue of excellence in their personnel and future leaders, a developmental process that inevitably and routinely will witness less than perfect performance. Pursuit of "perfection" is a manifestation of extremism, a characteristic incongruous with the effectiveness and professional demands of military leadership, whereas "excellence" acknowledges the innate fallibility in human nature. Developing the virtue of excellence rather than imposing a standard of perfection entails much more than a simple happy-to-glad linguistic distinction. It reflects a core difference in how we understand and accept human nature and develop ethical habits.

A narrow focus on perfection actually distracts leaders from pursuing and inculcating a commitment to the virtue of excellence in their personnel and future leaders, a developmental process that inevitably and routinely will witness less than perfect performance.

A leadership focus on perfection invites at least four main damaging consequences. First, expectations of perfection breed cynicism. Secondly, the focus on perfection distracts leaders from their responsibilities to develop their personnel. Third, such expectations impede a leader's ability to recognize and uncover the inevitable problems that percolate in any human organization. And finally, a narrow focus on perfection can lead to compartmentalized notions of integrity. In addressing each consequence in turn, it is important to keep in mind that it is their combination that produces the dysfunctional Environments that profess ideals of perfection incubate cynicism. Human beings innately recognize that perfection is impossible and therefore cast a cynical eye toward assertions of such claims. The implicated missile officers no doubt recognized that perfect test scores on routine exams correlated little with their actual level of professional competence or their overall mission readiness. Despite the tenuous connection with technical competency, they nevertheless clearly recognized the direct relationship between the tests and future career opportunities. Perhaps more significantly, the officers recognized that their own leaders viewed the same perfection standards as little more than a flimsy empirical measure that bolstered their perceived levels of operational readiness. In such an environment where leaders knowingly perpetuate an illusion of perfection, the relationship of reciprocal trust and loyalty between organizational leaders and subordinates evaporates.

The Malmstrom investigation clearly revealed a tacit acceptance of the perfection illusion. The CDI noted that "Senior leaders valued extremely high test scores as a measure of their units' preparedness for external inspections and applied significant pressure on units to achieve them, while tacitly condoning the actions of crew commanders and proctors who 'take care of' junior crew members." (Holmes, 2014, pp. D-17). Perfection fits with metaphysics, but insisting on it in a human organization necessarily drives a wedge of cynicism between those who expound

such notions and those who are ultimately responsible for attempting to realize them.

The second main consequence of a focus on perfection is that it insidiously creates an atmosphere that encourages leaders to excuse themselves from perhaps their most critical leadership responsibilities—developing their subordinates and future leaders. They also deprive themselves of information critical to addressing their responsibilities as leaders. Commanders that profess perfection as a benchmark for measuring subordinates' performance will inevitably perceive that developmental responsibilities rarely demand their immediate attention. This is because subordinates operating under the weight of perfection as the performance norm will consistently find a way to meet the narrow *technical* requirements of this binary standard. This is especially true when the consequences of not doing so are so high. Personnel development responsibilities appear less pressing when empirical data ostensibly demonstrates that subordinates are *objectively* performing at the highest level possible. Due to the competing demands placed upon them, unit commanders put their focus on those problems that appear as most acute. Since perfection by definition cannot be improved upon, the illusion of competency gleaned from perfect test scores propels commanders to place their attentions elsewhere.

The concern mentioned in the last paragraph leads directly to a third consequence that flows from expectations of perfection. When a unit's professed *aspirational* goals become synonymous with *descriptive* expectations, i.e., performance norms, underlying problems in an organization become increasingly difficult to detect. Unit deficiencies insidiously fester until they eventually explode into ethical quagmires like witnessed at Malmstrom. If leaders use such standards of perfection as an indicator of their unit's health and readiness, they essentially cede their ability to accurately monitor and detect problems in their infancy. The façade of perfection masks these problems.

Perhaps more importantly, the use of such standards significantly hinders the commander's ability to differentiate the true top performers from the "bottom feeders" in their organization. To the degree all personnel invariably achieve "perfection" on the objective standards, like test scores, organizational leaders increasingly find themselves in a position where they must rely on other, more subjective and less tangible measures for distinguishing top officers from their peers. Admittedly, leaders must rely in part on *subjective* measures for evaluating officer potential. In an environment where standards of perfection receive undue focus and influence, however, the increased need to rely on subjective measures increases the possibility that subordinates will perceive favoritism in performance comparisons, promotions, and developmental opportunities. An individual that achieves the same objective standard of perfection as his fellow officers will likely find it difficult to perceive a commander's advancement of one subordinate over another as anything other than favoritism.

A final consequence that flows from setting perfection as a standard is that such standards insidiously promote situational or "compartmentalized" notions of integrity. Certain unethical behaviors become tolerable and accepted when individuals view them as necessary to achieve the advertised, and ostensibly "higher" aim of perfection. The interview data collected in the Malmstrom case provided strong support for the existence of compartmentalized integrity. Missile officers acknowledged that they viewed collaborating on the tests as cheating, but they concomitantly professed that "there are different levels of cheating," and "integrity is subject to the environment created by leadership." (Holmes, 2014, pp. G-24). The officers perceived that their ethical obligations with respect

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to test taking were conditional and had to be viewed in context with other aims such as unit prestige, mission ready status, inspection requirements, and their own performance evaluations and career aspirations. The interviews also revealed a cultural norm among the missile officers where stronger performing test takers felt obligated to help weaker members improve their scores. The interviewees claimed that this cultural norm weighed heavily on organizational members. According to the respondents, "[t]his cultural emphasis on helping weaker teammates improve their scores blurred the line between acceptable help and unacceptable cheating." (Holmes, 2014, pp. D-16). In essence, the notion of integrity lost its status as something intertwined and absorbed into every part of one's moral fiber, but instead became viewed as "compartmentalized" and conditional based on other unit goals, aspirations, and leadership priorities.

The leaders of any organization, but especially an organization entrusted with tools of unimaginable destruction, must foster a culture that vehemently resists any such notion of a "compartmentalized" integrity. Leaders that profess and demand adherence to standards of perfection create an environment where compartmentalizing integrity provides the only means to reconcile the contradictions produced between descriptive expectations and unachievable performance standards. When conceptions of ethical behavior become compartmentalized or viewed as situational, personnel do not develop the tools for ethical decision making in the vast space that resides *between* compartments. As a result, supervisors may inadvertently suppress the development and expression of the more encompassing and interconnected conceptions of integrity, honor, and ethical standards that our Air Force desperately needs.

The human attraction to standards of perfection is understandable and this attraction is arguably even more powerful in military organizations. In a profession where defeat in battle may mean destruction of the nation, or where errors in the management of the particular tools of war can produce catastrophic consequences for the life and treasure of the many, aiming at anything less than perfection easily excites allegations of defeatism and/or immoral complacency. Stepping back from professing perfection as the standard can also incite fears that such a move represents the initial slide toward a destructive ethical relativism. The fundamental assumption that underlies such concerns, however, falsely implies that human actors can meet standards of perfection and that such standards can motivate personnel toward ethical behavior over the long-term. In truth, as the Malmstrom incident shows, demanding performance standards of perfection actually *encourages* individuals to accept relativistic behavior and impedes the development of a deeper understanding of honorable behavior.

The Air Forces adoption of "Excellence in All We Do" as a core value suggests that upper-echelon leaders acknowledge the important distinction between excellence and perfection.

In short, perfection impedes true "excellence," a more reasonable and sustainable aim for human actors and one that acknowledges the central importance of ethical development. The Air Forces adoption of "Excellence in All We Do" as a core value suggests that upper-echelon leaders acknowledge the important distinction between excellence and perfection. Unfortunately, however, the distinction often seems to get murky at the operational level, especially in those operational areas like nuclear weapons where errors can produce catastrophic results.

How then do we reconcile the abandonment of perfection with the potentially grave consequences associated with some kinds of military error? First, commanders at all levels must acknowledge the unrealistic nature of such standards and recognize that, despite some potentially short-term boosts in effectiveness, notions of perfection

actually undermine unit effectiveness in the long term. Second, when organizations dismiss notions of perfection as the expected *individual* performance standard, they begin to develop a healthy humility that allows them to recognize and accept the necessary redundancies that should accompany all human endeavors and which can result in practically perfect *group* performance. For example, two-man missile crews, "no-lone" zones, Personnel Reliability Programs, multiple layers of launch authorization, extensive training, redundant mechanical and computer systems, professional pre-screening, etc., all acknowledge the infrequent, yet inevitable failures of human operators. Leaders must resist pressures that tempt them to accept that their rigid insistence on perfection can justify a reduction in redundancies in the name of improved efficiency. Finally, and arguably most importantly, deposing the tyrannical myth of perfection will enable leaders at all levels to instill a more meaningful understanding of integrity among their personnel. In the place of stove-piped and situational understandings of integrity, which leaves unaddressed the broad swath of ethical territory that exists between respective "compartments", a more encompassing understanding of honorable behavior can develop.

Organizational leaders, and particularly those in command of military units, routinely profess that their human capital represents the most important asset of their organization. Human beings, however, are inherently imperfect and therefore setting descriptive expectations of perfection only serves to ensure failure. Leaders that sincerely view human actors as their organization's most critical component must accept their all-too-human characteristics, as well as their noble ones, and must be diligent in factoring both into institutional structures and practices.

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RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS

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Serving Our Nation:

Our Calling, Core Values and Commitments

OF INTEREST

National Character & Leadership Symposium

Dr. Robert Wettemann

Max F. James Distinguished Researcher in Character & Leadership Development

The goals of U.S. Air Force Academy National Character and Leadership Symposium are "*to orient leaders to see themselves and their world differently, to see opportunities for character and leadership development, [and] to emerge from being great people to being great leaders whose decisions and actions will shape a better future.*"

In this inaugural issue of the revitalized *Journal of Character and Leadership Integration*, the editors thought it fitting to offer a brief history of the National Character and Leadership Symposium, the flagship character and leadership-focused event held each year at the Academy's campus in Colorado Springs. Since NCLS began in 1993, the Academy has hosted students and faculty from over 500 different schools, including civilian colleges and universities, other service academies, Reserve Officer Training Corps detachments, as well as international delegations to join the 4,000-plus cadets who attend each year. Attendees share in presentations and dialog with speakers from the military, business, athletics, entertainment, and humanitarian organizations. By engaging with these exceptional leaders—some older, some younger--NCLS participants have the opportunity to enhance their own personal understanding and motivation across the breadth of character and leadership topics.

The National Character and Leadership Symposium had its roots in a time of trial and tribulation that challenged the U.S. Air Force Academy. In the wake of a series of sexual assault and cheating incidents at the U.S. Air Force Academy in the early 1990s, Lieutenant General Bradley C. Hosmer, the first USAFA graduate to return as Superintendent, created the Center for Character Development on August 1, 1993. Beginning that year, the CCD began offering the Cadet Development Symposium, a one day program that would selectively emphasize one of the Academy's then-eight character development outcomes -- integrity, selfless service, excellence, human dignity, decisiveness, taking responsibility, self-discipline, and spirituality.

By 1997, these day-long events evolved into the National Character and Leadership Symposium, with the inaugural NCLS in 1998 embracing the theme, "Excellence in All We Do." In addition to distinguished speakers and events, a special student consortium brought over thirty students from selected civilian and military institutions to USAFA. Paired with Academy cadets, the invited students attended symposium sessions, engaged in small group discussions, and presented position papers at the conclusion of the event, helping to broaden the experience by making it more than simply a cadet-centric event.

Under the new model, NCLS continued to grow, attracting more and more students from outside the Academy to join in dialogue and exchange ideas about nurturing a social climate that fosters and promotes integrity, service, and excellence in all walks of life. By 2000, all four thousand-plus cadets and more than one hundred college students from all around the country were participating in each symposium, benefiting from the words and wisdom of more than thirty nationally recognized speakers who brought their experiences and expertise to bear on character and leadership issues. In addition to attending the symposium events themselves, students continued to offer their own thoughts on personal, character, leadership, ethical conduct and professionalism, contributing papers and original artwork to the NCLS Proceedings published as part of the event. Visiting faculty joined with students and colleagues from other institutions to share and discuss

the best character education practices currently in use at their home institutions.

Each year, NCLS organizers strive to invite a distinguished and diverse group of speakers from a variety of backgrounds to expound on the importance of being a leader of character who lives honorably, lifts others, and elevates the performance of their organization and its people. The result has provided symposium participants the opportunity to hear and interact with a wide range of distinctive and accomplished people such as the most senior leaders from all U.S. and some international military services; Heather Wilson, the first Air Force Academy graduate to have served in the U.S. Congress, outspoken social activist and actor Mike Farrell, F-16 pilot and founder of the Folds of Honor Foundation Major Dan Rooney, and former Enron Corporation Vice President Sherron Watkins who had the courage to alert leadership to accounting irregularities that precipitated the company's collapse. These and many other distinguished speakers--leaders in society, politics, the military, sports, entertainment, education, and humanitarianism--continue to form the core of the annual NCLS speaker panoply.

The NCLS also benefits from the generosity of those who support the further development of character and leadership among the nation's youth through a series of sponsored events. Each year, the John and Lyn Muse Lecture is supported by John and Lyn Muse Education Foundation and the USAFA Class of 1973, whose energy in part is derived from the large number of Air Force general officers that graduated as members of that class. The Class of 1959—the first to graduate from the Academy--invites Air Force leaders to discuss their path to command in their Leadership Lecture. The Falcon Foundation sponsors the Major General William "Bud" Breckner Lecture, honoring a former fighter pilot, prisoner of war, and friend of the USAFA Cadet Wing who passed away in 2008. NCLS also benefits from the generosity of the Anschutz Foundation, which sponsors the annual Character and Leadership Award; the 2015 selectee was U.S. Veterans Affairs Under Secretary for Benefits Allison Hickey, USAFA Class of 1980. In addition to this award, the Anschutz Foundation also sponsors an annual Scholars' Forum,

which brings together prominent scholars from across the United States and beyond each year just before NCLS to exchange their thoughts and research on the critical character and leadership elements that impact individual and organizational development.

The net result of these collective efforts is a multi-day event that seeks to inform and inspire future generations by challenging them to engage with the world as leaders of character. Through this experience, the Academy and its Center for Character and Leadership Development advance the understanding, practice, and integration of character and leadership development in preparation for service in the profession of arms. Importantly, they also seek to familiarize others with these ideas and concepts through broad and growing participation—beyond military students and faculty—in the National Character and Leadership Symposium. The opening of the Academy's new character and leadership development building in late 2015 will bring new possibilities and inspiration to NCLS venues, but the fundamental purpose remains: fruitful exchange between generations of military and civilian thinkers and leaders, benefitting all who participate in this flagship event.

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RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS

Call for Papers

New Constructs on Established Foundations: Developing Character in the 21st Century

For every person and community, and from time to time, an event can take on significance beyond its practical impact. The upcoming opening and dedication of United States Air Force Academy's new Character and Leadership Development building is such an event. Beyond marking the completion of an inspiring and iconic building dedicated to character and leadership development, the building will serve as a dramatic and modern incarnation of an ancient concept– that of a moral compass, pointed squarely at the North Star, Polaris.

For scholars of character and leadership development, the beginning of this era at the Air Force Academy can serve as a metaphor for the challenge of modeling, teaching, and understanding character and leadership development in our complex times. Thus, for the Fall 2015 Journal of Character and Leadership Integration, *we solicit manuscripts that illuminate how timeless principles, methods, and ideas for development of character and leadership either continue to work, or must be adapted, to effectively respond to the needs and demands of the current generation.*

This call for papers specifically seeks exposition of how particular character or leadership development approaches have stood the test of time, as well as exposure of those evolving methods that have more recently been judged to have merit or which are undergoing examination for their promise in achieving desirable outcomes. Subthemes of particular interest are the development of *commitment* as a component of enhancing character and leadership; character development in the presence of evolving environmental factors such as social media and collegiate athletic competitive pressures; and the definition and impact of *defining moments* on leaders' character.

This focus area does *not* restrict scholars' freedom to submit manuscripts for consideration on other topics of interest; rather, it seeks to enable the Fall 2015 issue to appropriately inspire the foundational conversations that will begin and take flight from the Academy's new Character & Leadership Development building.

We welcome all inquiries and submissions from authors.

JCLI@usafa.edu

Phone: 719-333-4179

Center for Character & Leadership Development
USAFA/CWC
2354 Fairchild Hall Suite 5A22
USAF Academy, Colorado 80840-6260

JCLI Submission Guidelines

The Journal of Character and Leadership Integration intentionally juxtaposes scholarly and applied understanding of the integration of character and leadership. Its purpose is to illuminate character and leadership development as interdependent areas of study whose *integrated* understanding is directly relevant to the profession of arms. Consequently, JCLI applies the highest standards to guide publication of scholarly work–to include blind-peer review by recognized experts across the character and leadership development spectrum–while also welcoming thoughtful, practical and well-articulated perspectives relevant to that same continuum.

Manuscripts should normally align with one or more of the following categories: Educational Methods & Techniques, Theory Development, Individual Development, Organizational Development and Culture, Empirical Research, Student Perspectives, or Senior Leader Perspectives. Manuscripts outside these categories will be considered if relevant to the broad purposes of the Journal. Submissions are welcome from military and non-military contributors alike. Articles may be submitted to JCLI in two categories: **scholarly contributions** intended for peer review, and **applied leadership and integration articles/essays** which provide a complementary, practical perspective on JCLI-relevant scholarly topics.

Scholarly articles should comply with the following standards:

- Manuscripts should be electronically submitted in standard American Psychological Association format (APA, 6th edition) to include proper headings, subtitles, and citations in 12 point Times New Roman font, double spaced, with page numbers and running headers.
- Manuscripts should not exceed 25 pages in length to include attachments, charts, and other supporting materials.
- Author(s) guarantee manuscripts submitted to the JCLI for consideration are exclusive to the submission and is not currently submitted to other peer-review journals simultaneously.
- Abstracts should be 12 point Times New Roman font, double spaced and should not exceed two pages.
- All submissions must include an abstract submission.
- Primary investigator(s) should be listed on a title page first with other researchers following and all contact information for each author should be included in the submission.
- Primary Investigator(s) should include a short biography not to exceed 125 words along with a high-resolution color photo (head and shoulders only) for inclusion if submission is selected for publication.

"Applied leadership and integration" articles should comply with the following guidelines:

- Manuscripts should be submitted electronically in standard Associated Press format (AP) in 12 point Times New Roman font, double spaced, with page numbers and running headers.
- Manuscripts should not exceed 25 pages in length to include attachments, charts, and other supporting materials.
- Primary Author(s) should include a short biography not to exceed 125 words along with a high-resolution color photo (head and shoulders only) for inclusion if submission is selected for publication.

For all submissions selected for publication, authors must agree to make edits as needed for space and clarity. The editorial staff can be contacted at JCLI@usafa.edu for submissions, questions or clarifications.

Artist Conception
Center for Character & Leadership Development

About the JOURNAL OF CHARACTER & LEADERSHIP INTEGRATION

The Journal of Character & Leadership Integration (JCLI) is unique in bringing together the expert views of scholars and leaders who care about character and leadership, and the integration of these concepts. It is designed to bridge theory and practice and generate insights for both.

JCLI is produced by the US Air Force Academy. It is motivated by, but not exclusively concerned with, preparation of cadets to lead as officers of character in service to our Nation.

Combining quality, peer-reviewed scholarship and the experiential perspectives of leaders at all levels, JCLI aims to enhance intellectual understanding and empower real-world development of the effective, character-based leadership that both individuals and organizations need to succeed in a complex and demanding world.

CENTER FOR CHARACTER & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY

JCLI can be found on the Social Science Research Network at SSRN.com
JCLI@usafa.edu

@CCLDSocialMedia

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