

The Army Ethic: Its Foundation and What it Means

This paper represents a distillation of the salient portions of my MMAS thesis. This paper will conduct a comparative analysis of various ethical codes as well as an analysis of the US foundational documents to evaluate the CAPE proposed Army Ethic, as published in the July 2014 white paper entitled, “The Army Ethic.”

Problem Statement

The lack of a unifying codified Army Ethic stems from a fundamental question of a Soldiers’ identity as a member of the profession of arms. The inability to articulate clearly both who we are as professional Soldiers and how professional Soldiers should act has resulted in an inconsistent understanding among Army Professionals about how to apply our various underlying “oaths, creeds, values, and virtues.”¹ If the CAPE proposed Army Ethic fails to adhere to the fundamental principles of a professional ethic, then it will fail to become the document that we as military professionals need to articulate our identity, guide our actions, and instill trust in our profession.

Comparative Analysis of Professional Ethical Codes

In the course of this research, I compared ethical codes from a broad spectrum of professions and occupations. This comparison, in conjunction with the work from sociologists and ethicists Anthony Hartle, Nicholas Fotion, and Gerard Eflstrom,² allowed me to identify four principles to which all of the various ethical codes adhered.

1. A professional code of ethics must reemphasize the unique identity of the individuals within that professional field.

¹ CAPE, *The Army Ethic White Paper* (West Point, NY: Center for the Army Profession and Ethic, 2014), 2.

² Anthony Hartle, *Moral Issues in Military Decision Making*, 2nd ed. (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 2004), and Nicholas Fotion and Gerard Eflstrom, *Military Ethics* (Boston, MA: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986)

2. A professional code of ethics must espouse virtues to which those professionals are to develop within themselves and thus attain.
3. A professional code of ethics must offer guidelines for acceptable and unacceptable behavior for that profession.³
4. A professional code of ethics must establish the relationship between society and that profession in terms of informing society about said profession, as well as articulating how that profession serves the greater society as a whole.

As a subset of the first principle of ethical codes, four additional screening criteria are necessary to identify a unique professional identity. Any of the virtues cannot be a basis for a unified identity because virtues apply across the entire spectrum of professions. For a profession to define itself in terms of a single virtue is a misnomer. Certainly, physicians are expected to employ the same amount of personal integrity as journalists, counselors, educators, or even lawyers. Simply put, if the virtues apply across all professions, then they cannot provide a basis for a unique professional identity.

The four evaluation criteria for a unique professional identity are as follows:

- 1) Distinguishability – Is this identity unique from other professions?
- 2) Applicability – Does it apply to all members of the profession?
- 3) Feasibility – Is it achievable and supportable through professional training?
- 4) Clarity – Can it be clearly articulated?

³ Hartle, *Moral Issues*, 194. This is based on MacIntyre's own combination of his first and third purposes for an professional code of ethics.

Comparative Analysis of the Principles of Various Professional Ethical Codes					
Profession	Principle 1: Professional Identity - What is the underlying purpose of our profession?	Principle 2: Professional Virtues* - Who are we trying to be?	Principle 3a: Professional Behavior* - Based on who we are, how do we act?	Principle 3b: Unprofessional Behavior* - Based on who we are, how do we protect society from abuses of our power and expertise?	Principle 4: Professional Societal Relationship - How do we inform about and serve society with our profession?
Journalism (1)	Public Enlightenment	- Accuracy - Independence - Integrity - Humility - Compassion	- Verify all reporting, take responsibility - Report with honesty, update information as it changes, print corrections - Courageously hold the powerful	- Deliberately inflammatory reporting - Out of context reporting - Selective reporting to promote an agenda - Conflicts of Interest (favored interest)	- Respond quickly to accusations of inaccuracy - Promote trust through faultless integrity - Expose unethical conduct in
Business (2)	Promote harmony and mutual prosperity	- Responsible - Trustworthy - Transparency / Integrity - Global Connection	- Respect the clients, business partners, and the environment - Contribute to society instead of just making a profit	- Illicit Activities (Terrorism, bribery, money laundering, etc.) - Avoids Wasteful use of resources	- Goes beyond letter of legal minimum, fulfills spirit of the law, Reports illegal activities - contributes to the economic, social
Counseling (3)	Respect the dignity and promote the welfare of clients by empowering individuals to achieve mental health goals	- Respectful of human dignity - Empathy - Transparency - Informed consent	- Maintains client confidentiality & privacy - Maintains professional education	- Avoids abuse of therapeutic relationship - Avoids imposing own values on clients - Counselors won't abandon or neglect	- Seeks consultation with other professionals - Publishes findings to contribute to greater body of professional and public
Law (4)	Promote justice and rule of law	- Respect for human dignity - Authority of Reason - Competence - Zealous Defense of client	- Maintains privileged information - Maintains competent practice - Acts in best interest of client within bounds of the law and principles of	- Avoid even the appearance of impropriety - Gatekeeper profession	- Assists in improving the legal system - Prevents the unauthorized practice of law - Avoid conflicts of interest
Medicine (5)	Bring physical and mental healing to the benefit of their patient	- Respectful of human dignity - Professional growth & learning - Competent - Places patients needs as	- Maintains Doctor-Patient confidentiality - Maintains professional education - Balances the legal requirements with potential benefits to their patient	- Must not use their medical knowledge to knowingly bring harm to their patient (non-maleficence) - Avoid the appearance of impropriety	- Publishes findings to contribute to greater body of professional and public knowledge - Obligated to report unethical and incompetent behavior

* These lists are not an exhaustive list of all the virtues and behaviors; they were selected to highlight each profession's unique practices. Many of these professions share similar traits, virtues, and behavioral guidelines.

References:

1) Society for Professional Journalism. *SPI Code of Ethics* (Nashville, TN: Society for Professional Journalism, 2014). Last modified September 6, 2014.
 2) Frederick Phillips. "Caux Round Table Principles for Business (2015)." Caux Round Table, last modified May 2010, accessed January 28, 2015. <http://www.cauxroundtable.org/index.cfm?menuid=8>.
 3) American Counseling Association. *2014 ACA Code of Ethics* (Alexandria, VA: ACA, 2014)
 4) American Bar Association. *ABA Model Code of Professional Responsibility*, (Chicago, IL: ABA, 1981)
 5) "AMA Code of Medical Ethics." American Medical Association, last modified June 2001, accessed February 8, 2015, <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/physician-resources/medical-ethics/code-medical-ethics.page>.

Chart 1 below lists the results of the comparative analysis.

For a further discussion and deeper comparison of the various professional ethical codes, I would refer you to my MMAS thesis.

US Constitutional Values and Moral Principles

The Declaration of Independence, unanimously ratified by delegates from all thirteen original colonies, is organized into three parts. The first section lists the logic and necessity of declaring independence; the second section lists specific grievances against the King of Britain, and the third section discusses the actions taken by the representative colonies to address those grievances in peaceful ways prior to declaring independence.

In the first section, two statements give insight into the underlying moral principles and values. "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created

equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”⁴ This statement clearly states four moral principles: equality, life, liberty and the right to pursue happiness. What is also important to note is that these rights are inalienable, endowed upon individuals by their Creator. This document promotes a moral justification for their action of secession based on fundamental principles that apply to all men by virtue of their Creation.

This idea profoundly impacts the formation of a military ethic, because if we logically accept the premise (as this founding document asserts) that our Creator is the responsible agent for our “inalienable” rights, then those selfsame rights apply to all people in all countries to whom this Creator presumably also given these “inalienable” rights. Thus, it logically follows, that those other people, having also been endowed their Creator, have the same rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

The preamble to the Constitution clearly delineates that the purpose of Constitution is to “form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and ensure the blessing of liberty.”⁵ These principles, in conjunction with the earlier principles of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness as outlined in the Declaration of Independence, form the basis of our national identity. These documents attempt to answer the question of who we want to be as a nation.

To give voice again to military ethicist Anthony Hartle, he asserts that the US Constitution promotes four fundamental American Values: Freedom, Equality,

⁴ “Declaration of Independence,” United States National Archives, accessed February 4, 2015, <http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration.html>.

⁵ U.S. Constitution, preamble.

Individualism, and Democracy.⁶ This logical progression is evident in the entirety of the US Constitution. From the Preamble throughout Amendment (27) XXVII, this document highlights these values. The value of Freedom, as identified by Hartle, is clearly seen in the First Amendment, which highlights the freedoms of the press, religious exercise, freedom of speech, and freedom of assembly.⁷ These amendments assert the individual freedoms and rights of American citizens, addressing two of Hartle's American values.⁸

Individual rights are a fundamental American value as well. "The Constitution forbids the majority or even the entire House and Senate to pass laws that impair the fundamental rights of individuals."⁹ Hartle goes on to claim, "The powers granted the Supreme Court are primarily for the purpose of protecting individual rights."¹⁰ The United States, as a representative democracy, does attempt to bring about the greatest good for the greatest amount of people, but not at the expense of a higher cultural value – individuals and their rights. Since we all equally have rights, it follows then that we all have the equal right to exercise those rights insofar as they do not infringe on the rights of others, leading to the Hartle's fourth principle, Democracy.

The study of the national value of democracy lends itself to another related national value – teamwork. This contrasts somewhat with the value of individualism, but interestingly enough the very first word in the US Constitution is "we."¹¹ The idea of democracy is inextricably tied to the idea of teamwork; one cannot have an effective democracy without people willing to work together to solve problems.

⁶ Hartle, *Moral Issues*, 132.

⁷ US Constitution, Amendment I.

⁸ Hartle, *Moral Issues*, 13, 139.

⁹ Hartle, *Moral Issues*, 49.

¹⁰ Hartle, *Moral Issues*, 49.

¹¹ US Constitution, Preamble.

On the other hand, the check and balance system along with the severe limits on the executive branch promote a contrastingly pessimistic view of human nature, highlighting our culture's belief in the frailty and fallibility of humankind. One can see evidence of the perceived frailty of humanity by the numerous checks to prevent the concentration of power;¹² the Founding Fathers understood that humans are susceptible to the lure and abuse of power. Subsequently, the XXII Amendment further limits the power of the Executive branch by imposing the two-term limit on all future Presidents.¹³ Finally, the Constitution also shows a wariness in the existence of a standing Army, and clearly subjugates the military to civilian authority.¹⁴ Recognizing that a standing military offered multiple opportunities for abuses of power, the Constitution establishes the basis of federal service under the authority of America's elected civilian government.

Furthermore, the design of the US Constitution shows an inherent belief that humans are imperfect and fallible beings. Article V of the US Constitution describes the process for amending the Constitution and puts the power for amending the Constitution in the hands of the American People through their legislative representatives. Americans thus became responsible to correct their own legal shortcomings. Recognizing that people are imperfect, and thus no political system is perfect, the Constitutional framers understood the need to amend this political document so that the people could work out those imperfections. Egregious violations of the value of Equality, as seen in the form of the 3/5's compromise in Article II, Section 2, Clause 3¹⁵ are addressed and corrected later

¹² D. Lyons, "Constitutional Principles," *Boston University Law Review*, 92 (4), 1237-1243. Retrieved from <http://exprozy.ccu.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/132789051?accountid=10200>.

¹³ US Constitution, Amendment XXII.

¹⁴ US Constitution, Article II, Section 2, Clause 1.

¹⁵ Referencing the 3/5's compromise between the Northern and the Southern states with regard to the "personhood" of slaves in the South.

in the XIII and XIV Amendments.¹⁶ We are not perfect, and the US Constitution recognizes that imperfection.

As societal norms and values change, the Constitution is designed to change with and reflect that society. Women received the right to vote¹⁷ in 1917, showing a shift in cultural values and the recognition of their long overlooked equality and value as full members of the American society. In that same period, the nation banned the creation and consumption of alcohol,¹⁸ only to change their minds fourteen years later.¹⁹ This process of changing and amending the foundational legal document reflects society's changing values, and underlies the American attitude towards the fallibility of ourselves as a people. Americans realize they are not perfect, and, to paraphrase Dr. King, we have a responsibility to ensure we live out the true meanings of our creeds.²⁰

Finally, the US Constitution not only recognizes the value of human life. This document also recognizes the value of our property.²¹ An analysis of the third and fourth amendments within the bill of rights shows that the constitution values the property of individuals as a fundamental right. The Declaration of independence further supports this belief. That document posits the inalienable right to pursue happiness.²² While this pursuit might not be equitable with the acquisition of material goods, there are four specific complaints listed within the second section of the US Declaration of Independence, which speak to the violation of the protection of personal property.²³

¹⁶ US Constitution, Amendment XIII & XIV.

¹⁷ US Constitution, Amendment XIX.

¹⁸ US Constitution, Amendment XVIII.

¹⁹ US Constitution, Amendment XXI.

²⁰ Martin L. King, "I Have a Dream..." US Government Archives, accessed January 28, 2015, <http://www.archives.gov/press/exhibits/dream-speech.pdf>.

²¹ US Constitution, Amendments II, III, and IV speak to this issue.

²² US Declaration of Independence.

²³ US Declaration of Independence.

The implication of these values, in conjunction with the Geneva and Hague conventions, also informs the formation of a military ethic. By law and in support of our United States' cultural values, US military leaders must also respect and value individual possessions, in as much as it is militarily feasible. Nothing in the current rules of engagement infringes on the right for self-preservation, but military leader must consider the ethical implications of targeting protected cultural sites in the conduct of warfare.

That analysis identified eight values: Freedom, Equality, Individuality, Democracy, Teamwork, Frailty, Fallibility, and Respect for Property. Within the context of the comparative analysis of professional codes of ethics, these national values should be present throughout a US Army professional ethical code. For a further discussion on the national values, I would again refer you to my MMAS thesis.

Analysis of the CAPE Proposed Army Ethic & Recommendations

This section will evaluate the CAPE proposed Army Ethic and its adherence to the principles of ethical codes. As a sub-set to the second and fourth principles, this section will also evaluate the CAPE proposed Army Ethic in its ability to incorporate, address, or adhere to underlying moral principles and societal values as expressed through the United States' foundational documents.

Principle 1: Unique Identity

The CAPE proposed Army Ethic asserts that Army professionals aspire to attain the identity of “**Trustworthy Army Professionals**.”²⁴ Current doctrine defines the Army values of Honor as “live the Army values.” Quoting COL Mattox, “What good is a

²⁴ CAPE, *The Army Ethic*, 11.

“value” that merely tells one to “live the values?”²⁵ This offers a similar question with regard to CAPE’s proposed identity, namely, “what good is a professional ethic that tells us to be professional?” Are doctors identified as “professional doctors?” Similarly, the artificiality of the adjective “trustworthy” at the beginning of the identity seemingly serves no purpose in telling us what that identity *actually is*. Instead, the word “trustworthy” only adds another virtue to the already existing Army values, one that already corresponds with the Army value of integrity.

The simple fact that one can superimpose any professional occupation into that identity indicates that the proposed identity of “Trustworthy Army Professionals” is inadequate. One would not consider doctors as “trustworthy medical professionals,” journalists as “trustworthy news professionals,” or educators as “trustworthy teaching professionals.” Similarly, one should not consider members of the profession of arms as “trustworthy Army professionals.”

Conversely, a distinguishable unifying identity is clearly seen in comparison with one profession to another. It makes no sense for a doctor to be an agent that promotes harmony and mutual prosperity, as per the model of business ethics – they are first and foremost healers. Alternatively, consider the ridiculousness of imposing a legal identity on a psychotherapist. It makes no sense to tell a professional mental health counselor that they are to “promote justice and rule of law.” This is not to say that doctors do not promote harmony and mutual prosperity, nor that counselors should be ignorant of legal

²⁵ John Mattox, “Values Statements and the Profession of Arms: A Re-evaluation,” in *Fort Leavenworth Ethics Symposium Report*, ed. Mark H. Higgins & Chaplain (MAJ) Larry Dabeck, (Leavenworth, KS: CGSC Foundation Press, 2011), 65.

niceties, simply that their primary professional identities have a uniqueness that distinguishes it from other professions.

Without achieving the first quality, distinguishability, it may seem like a moot point to address the rest of the evaluation criteria. Still, a further evaluation across the other evaluation criteria shows further weaknesses. If we accept the CAPE proposed professional identity as **Trustworthy Army Professionals**, it prompts the question of how do we develop professional training in support of this identity? Do our current professional schools focus on developing trustworthiness? How exactly does one train trustworthiness? These questions indicate that this proposed identity also fails to meet the criteria of feasibility. The other two criteria, applicability and clarity, do fit the model in the CAPE proposed Army Ethic. One can apply the phrase “Trustworthy Army Professionals” to every member of the profession, and it clearly communicates the proposed idea to the profession and the society that it serves. Still, the indistinguishability and unfeasibility of this statement raise some troubling concerns.

The identity in the CAPE proposed Army Ethic is insufficient. Their proposed identity does not actually provide any guidance for action or a shared understanding of what it means to be a member of the profession of arms. While it does meet some of the evaluation criteria, as annotated in the chart above it fails in two criteria – the proposed identity is indistinguishable from other professions. Secondly, this identity is unfeasible because it is unsupported through professional training. Thus, it is in need of revision; the following chapter of this thesis will offer recommendations to improve this aspect of the CAPE proposed Army Ethic.

As an alternative, I would propose that US Army professionals are “Defenders of the American Way of Life.” The phrase “American way of life” encapsulates the ideas and values espoused by the US Constitution, tying the military’s identity to its Constitutional basis. Furthermore, the idea that member of the profession of arms are “defenders of the American Way of Life” highlights the unique nature of the profession of arms. Most people would hesitate to let someone cut them open and remove a body part, unless that person was a medical professional. Similarly, most people would find it unacceptable to have anyone outside of the profession of arms operate a M1 Abrams Main Battle Tank. Army Professionals have the authority and ability to apply massive combat power to achieve an objective, distinguishing it from other professions.

Principle 2: Espoused Values

The idea behind professional values is that they are built upon the previous unifying professional identity. Based on that identity, certain values are highlighted over others. Those desired virtues and values reinforce the identity, informing members of the profession the desired traits that they are to cultivate within themselves in order to better apply serve the greater public. No person denies the need for integrity and character across the venue of professions, but integrity is more highly valued in the professions of journalism and law. No one denies that doctors, journalists, and military leaders should be empathetic, but this virtue is more highly valued by professional counselors. Multiple professions value human dignity, but none place so high of a value on it as the medical field. Given the United States’ foundational values as espoused in its national foundational documents, this research indicates that the CAPE proposed Army Ethic only addresses some of the national and societal values.

Chart 2, below, shows gaps in the admission of, or adherence to previously identified national values. This research indicates that the CAPE proposed Army Ethic is lacking in its representation of the values of Freedom, Individuality, and Democracy. The CAPE proposed ethic neither directly or indirectly addresses these topics in its ethical statement. Furthermore, it only indirectly or moderately adheres to the principles of equality, teamwork, and respect for property.

CAPE Proposed Army Ethic Adherence to National Values				
Value	Freedom	Individuality	Fallibility	Respect for Property
Example			Continuously advance our expertise (3.1)	Obey the laws of the Nation... reject immoral orders (1.1)
Sufficient Adherence	No	No	Yes	Moderate
Value	Equality	Democracy	Teamwork	Frailty
Example	Intrinsic worth of all people (1.3)		accomplish the mission as a team. (2.1)	Subordinated to civilian authority. (1.1) Set the example for right conduct despite risk, uncertainty, and fear (1.4).
Sufficient Adherence	Moderate	No	Moderate	Yes

This conclusion belies one inherent question, however. Does the any codified Army Ethic need to adhere to all of the national values? After all, one can make the argument that by virtue of volunteering for military service, individuals willing abridge some national values as a part of military service. Individuals who volunteer for military service lose certain freedoms, like the ability to take vacation whenever they want, and

abridge others, like the freedom to freely speak your mind to your boss. While telling off your boss has consequences in the civilian world, the military prohibits insubordination.

Similarly, while the military overall might support the national value of democracy, the military is by necessity a hierarchical structure, and not a democratic institution. By virtue of the nature of military service, not everyone gets a vote. In the same vein, the national value of individuality is abridged by military service. This is not to deny the inherent worth of all individuals, whether or not they serve in the military, but it is to say that individuals serving in the profession of arms are by necessity part of a larger organization. In the due course of military operations, individuals might be ordered to place themselves in harm's way to allow for mission accomplishment. Such actions abridge their individual wellbeing for the sake of the greater whole, a necessary component of a functional military organization.

Additionally, the Army rarely acts alone. Current doctrine emphasizes the essential team fight across the services, US Governmental agencies, and our multi-national partners. The CAPE proposed Army Ethic mentions that the Army will “accomplish the mission as a team.”²⁶ However, nowhere in the document does it mention the need to interact with our joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multi-national (JIIM) partners. The Army's very own mission statement states that the Army will accomplish its mission as part of a joint team. Clearly, then, if it is important enough to be included in the organization's very own mission statement, then it is something that the Army's professional ethical code should address. This cross professional teamwork is evidenced in the Medical, Business, and Counseling ethical codes, which encourage

²⁶ CAPE, *The Army Ethic*, 11.

several professional fields to come together to solve complex problems with implications outside the narrow field of each individual profession.

Principle 3: Professional Behavior

The profession of arms, at its most basic sense, is the studied application of combat power to achieve a military objective. This is a partially differentiated role in society, wherein professional considerations are given additional weight in determining the morality of actions.²⁷ On the one hand, the military legal code acts as a backstop to prevent war atrocities and to ensure compliance with the laws of armed conflict. On the other hand, a professional code of ethics acts as a guide for professional behavior. Given the inherently violent nature of the profession of arms, military professionals must reinforce acceptable and unacceptable behavior in their code of ethics.

The CAPE proposed Army Ethic clearly lays out terms of acceptable behavior.²⁸ From the beginning, it clearly articulates that the US Army professional must first support and defend the US Constitution. From there, it posits that the intrinsic worth of all people. When militarily necessary, the proposed Ethic states that Army missions “may justly require taking the lives of others while courageously placing our own at risk.”²⁹ It goes on to discuss the responsibility of Army professionals to the people of the United States to effectively steward the resources given. It expresses those resources in terms of both people as well as financial and military equipment. These sentiments encapsulate acceptable behavior for the profession of arms.

This proposed ethic, however, is a little vague on unacceptable behavior in the profession of arms. This was intentionally done to prevent the juridification of the

²⁷ Hartle, *Moral Issues*, 35-36.

²⁸ CAPE, *The Army Ethic*, 11.

²⁹ *Ibid*, 11.

document, seeking to create a document that is aspirational in nature and not prohibitive. The CAPE proposed Army Ethic does contain prohibitive statements, namely that military professionals are to “reject and report illegal or immoral orders or actions.” While every profession is obligated to adhere to the legalities within society, this is particularly applicable in the military institution, where orders carry both moral and legal ramifications. Legal orders act as a backstop, a line that professionals must not cross. CAPE’s proposed Army Ethic includes this backstop but avoids the trap of juridification.

Despite this successful navigation of legalities and ethical codes, there remains one area where the CAPE proposed Army Ethic could improve: the inclusion of the laws of war, or law of armed conflict. These laws are unique to the profession of arms; military professionals must adhere not only to the laws of the nation, but also to these additional requirements. The CAPE proposed Army Ethic does not mention them and should do so in order to reemphasize the additional legal obligations to which military professionals must adhere.

Principle 4: Relationship to Society

Finally, the US Army as a profession has a unique role in our society. As a subset of the overall military power of the United States, “America’s overwhelming military power in this new century makes ethical consideration and ethical constraint even more significant....With such dominance comes great responsibility.”³⁰ This is a unique responsibility also follows from the Fotion and Elfstrom’s concepts of ethics of scale.³¹ Physicians may have to make ethical decisions that primarily affect the life of a single individual, whereas military professionals routinely make decisions that “affect the lives

³⁰ Hartle, *Moral Issues*, 230.

³¹ Fotion and Elfstrom, *Military Ethics*, 68.

of scores, hundreds, or even thousands of people during war.”³² Furthermore, the exigencies of war may require that both professionals and non-professionals in the military do many things that have major ethical implications.³³ The statements have vast implications – improperly applied, United States Army can literally destroy cities, nations, and cultures. The scout platoon leader, with radio in hand, has the combat power to literally destroy entire Afghan villages. This overwhelming combat power, and its associated responsibility, requires a strong sense of ethical guidance.

The military is also unique among the other professions in that it is a sole-source provider for its professional services. If clients do not like or agree with their counselor, they can find another one. If patients do not like or trust their doctors or lawyers, they can seek medical or legal counsel elsewhere. If the American public or political leadership loses the trust of its military, there is no one else to whom they can turn for defense. Simply put, the unique role of the military profession requires a special repository of trust between the American people and its military.

This special repository of trust must be reinforced by military professional remaining non-partisan. Previous ethicists discussed the need for Army ethical codes to reinforce the idea of a non-partisan professional Army officer as a function of the constitutional principle of military subordination to civilian authority. Such non-partisan professional behavior is a pre-requisite for candid professional advice on how to best apply land power to achieve national objectives. The CAPE proposed Army Ethic makes no mention of the non-partisan nature of professional military service.

³² Ibid, 68.

³³ Ibid, 69.

In light of these criticisms, and after a careful comparative analysis of other proposed professional ethics, I offer the following statement as a revised ethical code.

The Army Ethic (Revised)

As a member of the Profession of Arms in the United States Army, I have sworn to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. This makes me a guardian of freedom and a protector of the American way of life. I stand firmly to protect our nation from those who reject our national values and oppress freedom, equality, democracy, and individual rights.

I acknowledge that all people have intrinsic worth and dignity. While my chosen profession may require me to justly take the lives of others, I do so in a manner that reflects their fundamental worth and dignity. If my enemies choose to surrender, I will treat them with respect. If they choose to fight, I will meet them on the field of battle. I will apply the appropriate amount of force to minimize casualties and collateral damage to achieve my military objective. I uniformly reject illegal orders and actions, and will conform to the Army Values, the laws of war, UCMJ, and the laws of the United States. I will never bring dishonor on myself, my unit, and the United States of America. I am a professional of integrity and character.

I am a trained professional in the application of military power to achieve tactical, operational, and strategic goals. This means I must continually strive to master the knowledge, skills, and abilities of my chosen profession. This also means that when called upon, I will offer candid professional advice to the appropriate civilian authorities on how to best apply military power. I will offer this professional judgment without regard to partisan domestic politics. I am a servant of the entire nation and professional expert at the application of combat power to achieve victory.

As an member of the Profession of Arms, I am responsible for all that happens and fails to happen under my watch. I am responsible to the represent our national values to the rest of the world, understanding that my actions and the actions of my Soldiers can have strategic implications. I am responsible respect to each Soldier under my care as individual persons, and to ensure they are fully trained, equipped, and prepared to meet the enemies of this nation in combat. I work as a part of a larger joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multi-national team to overcome adversity so that we can achieve victory. I will never accept defeat, and I will never quit. I am a committed professional.

Figure 1: The Army Ethic (Revised)

This revision represents a distillation of the salient portions of Hartle's Proposed Ethic and the CAPE proposed Ethic, as well as my own analysis based on the work in this thesis. As much as possible, this proposed revision synthesizes the best parts of the aforementioned proposed Army ethics. It is shorter than CAPE's proposed ethic. This

proposed revision discusses the Army values and the Warrior Ethos, as well as the Character, Competence, and Commitment framework as outlined in ADRP-1.³⁴

Research Implications

Based on this research, there are at least two implications for the greater US Army. First, a codified Army Ethic must become the central foundation for the Army to tell its story to the greater American public. Current recruiting campaigns focus on individuals and how they can benefit from joining the military.³⁵ While those benefits exist, by basing a recruiting campaign on that aspect, the US Army overtly reinforces the idea that people should join the Army to get what they can out of it. This mentality runs contrary to the Army Value of Selfless Service, as well as military professionalism.

If military professionals self-identify as defenders or servants of the nation, and if their professional ethic supports this, then that notion should serve as the foundation for the Army to tell its message. Rather than basing a recruiting message around graphic designers, imagine what a recruiting campaign would look like based on the notion of defending America and her values against those who would do them harm? If the US Army wants to maintain a consistent message about what it means to be a professional Soldier, a codified Army Ethic must provide that unifying basis across the entire Army.

A second implication of this research shows the need for a unified and standardized ethical training at all Officer Education System (OES) and Non-Commissioned Officer Education System (NCOES) schools. This is especially true

³⁴ U.S. Army, *The Army Profession*, ADRP 1 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2013), 3-3 to 3-4.

³⁵ Johnny Alexander, "US Army Commercial - Graphic Artist Vs. Drill Sergeant - World's Greatest Army," Youtube, accessed April 14, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=auhsCXXKnEg>.

because each branch teaches ethical instruction with a different level of emphasis.³⁶ How can one expect to instill a sense of professionalism and ethical conduct across the entire military profession with multiple standards?

The theme of professionalism, associated with the Army Ethic, must be woven into the fabric of every member of the Army team. If we accept the premise that all Soldiers and DA Civilians are members of the profession of arms, then there needs to be a uniform method of instruction into professionalism and ethical conduct across all the branches of the Army team. Furthermore, as those professionals are promoted and receive further professional development and education, the themes of professionalism and ethical behavior must continually be reinforced throughout the professional training at all OES and NCOES schools.

Furthermore, in keeping with the Virtue Ethics philosophy that the US Army has adopted, wherein habituation to a virtue leads to virtuous behavior, then it logically follows that vignette training is the most appropriate method of ethical instruction. One might suggest posing a series of ethical dilemmas for discussion in small groups tiered to the appropriate level of NCOES and OES education.

Conclusion

This paper examined the CAPE proposed Army Ethic, and determined areas in which it could improve, chief among which was the identification of a unique professional identity. Additionally, the CAPE proposed Army Ethic could be improved by mentioning the Law of Land Warfare and reinforcing the non-partisan nature of military service in America.

³⁶ Sean Wead, "Ethics in Combat" (DMin diss., Virginia Theological Seminary, 2010), 63.

Why are military ethics important? Everything we do as military professionals should be in support of that 18-year-old private climbing the hills of some third world country. I remember as a platoon leader the look of my Soldiers as they had to deal with the personal ramifications of close combat. I explicitly remember their far off stares as I sat and talked with them on many a midnight guard shift at the OP. Whereas last summer they were chasing girls and speeding throughout the Wisconsin byways, ten months later they were driving up-armored HMMWVs and dodging RPGs in southern Afghanistan. They had trouble sleeping because of their nightmares. I might not have had the right words to say to them then, but as I reflect on what it means to be a member of the profession of arms, I write these words for them.

The responsibilities of leadership and command should not weigh lightly on the back of any military professional. The responsibility for ethical leadership and ethical conduct in war directly correspond to instilling the trust of the American people. We as military professionals owe it to that 18-year-old private on that unknown hilltop in a dusty, third-world country. We must prepare them as much as possible beforehand to resolve any potential ethical dilemmas that combat might present. That private needs to know that their actions are just, and that they can trust their professional military leaders to make the right ethical decision when it comes time to pull the trigger.

What we do as military professionals is an outgrowth of who we are as people. I do not do what I do for the money – I serve because I believe in America and because I believe in the US Army. I believe in what we do, and I believe in what it means to be a Soldier. I stand on the wall and protect the American people from those who would do them harm. I support and defend the US Constitution, and I fight to win America's wars.