

**Organizational Culture: Applying  
A Hybrid Model to the U.S. Army**

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# Organizational Culture: A Hybrid Model

## INTRODUCTION

Explanations for the success of militaries both in war and peace have traditionally focused on key factors such as technology,<sup>1</sup> leadership,<sup>2</sup> personnel,<sup>3</sup> training,<sup>4</sup> or a combination of all of the above.<sup>5</sup> A more recent addition to the list of possible variables contributing to the effectiveness of military organizations is the concept of culture. As expected, most applications of the concept of culture in a military context do so with the term *military* culture. While military culture is often used effectively as an overarching label for the military's personality, way of thinking, or values, there is little literature that defines the term military culture, categorizes or delineates the values that military culture claims to capture or, more importantly, provides methods or techniques to change the military culture.<sup>6</sup>

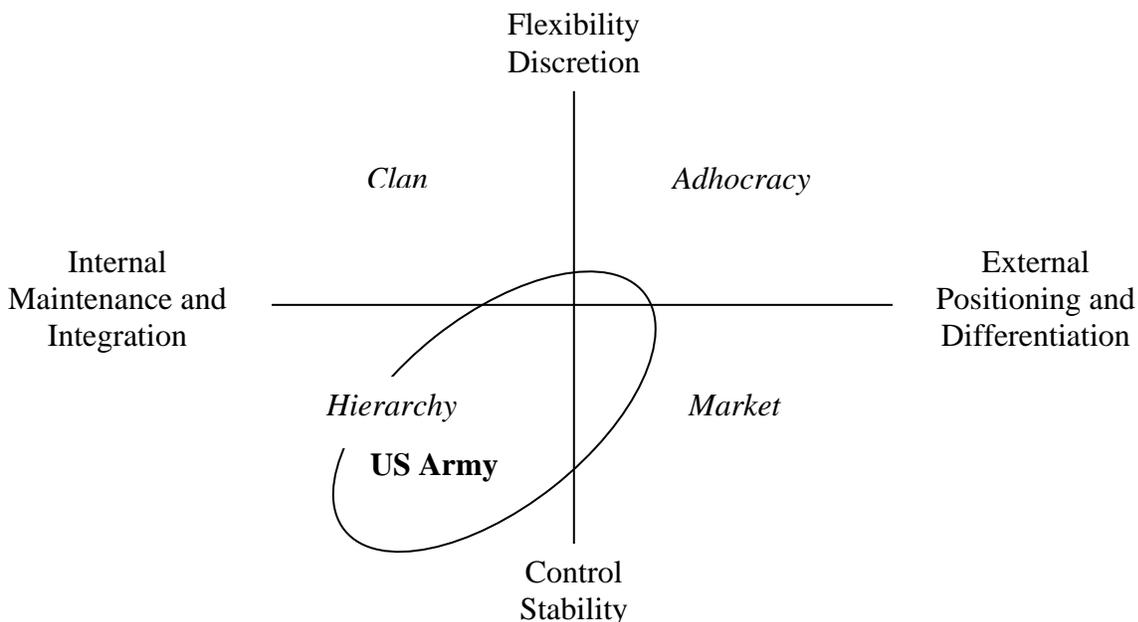
Turning to the literature of organizational behavior, *organizational* culture appears to be a context-free version of the context-specific military culture. The advantage of using the construct of organizational culture, however, is that there is a rich literature providing models for assessing, diagnosing, and aligning the organizational culture to environmental demands. Organizational culture refers to "the taken-for-granted values, underlying assumptions, expectations, collective memories, and definitions present in an organization."<sup>7</sup> These values and assumptions are learned as people in the organization deal successfully with problems of external adaptation and internal integration (i.e., how the organization responds to the environment and organizes internally to accomplish its goals). As new members enter the organization, the assumptions and values are taught as "the correct way to perceive, think, and feel"<sup>8</sup> in relation to problems the organization may face.

Studies that have explored the organizational culture concept in the military arena include applications such as the limited use of force in war,<sup>9</sup> causes for insubordination,<sup>10</sup> the effects on institutional growth of military units,<sup>11</sup> obstacles to military innovation,<sup>12</sup> the effects on doctrine,<sup>13</sup> the impact on the learning abilities of military organizations,<sup>14</sup> implications for leader development,<sup>15</sup> and the potential for conflict on provincial reconstruction teams.<sup>16</sup> Despite the extensive literature on organizational culture, however, most studies applying organizational culture to military situations fall short in fully exploiting the implications of the organizational culture concept. Part of the reason is that, like most complex theories, each conceptualization of organizational culture emphasizes certain facets while deemphasizing others. Thus, for instance, many studies persuasively argue that Army culture needs to change, yet very few systematically explain how to change the culture.<sup>17</sup>

This paper will focus on the U.S. Army and the alignment of the Army's culture to today's environment. We suggest using the best aspects of several theories to analyze U.S. Army culture and then align it to the demands characteristic of the future nature of war.

## CULTURE MODELS

In terms of assessing military cultures, the most common conceptualizations of organizational culture used in military contexts are the competing values framework designed by Kim Cameron and Robert Quinn<sup>18</sup> and the model offered by Edgar Schein.<sup>19</sup> Cameron and Quinn's framework is shown in Figure 1 and was derived from a list of thirty-nine indicators of effective organizations. In a statistical analysis, the indicators emerged in four clusters on two dimensions. The first dimension differentiates effectiveness criteria that emphasize flexibility and discretion from those that emphasize stability and control. The second dimension ranges from criteria that emphasize an internal focus and integration to those with an external focus and differentiation. These indicators of effectiveness represent what members value about an organization's performance. They define what is seen as good, right, and appropriate.<sup>20</sup> The resulting four quadrants represent four types of cultures: the Hierarchy, Clan, Market, and Adhocracy.



**Figure 1. The Competing Values Model**

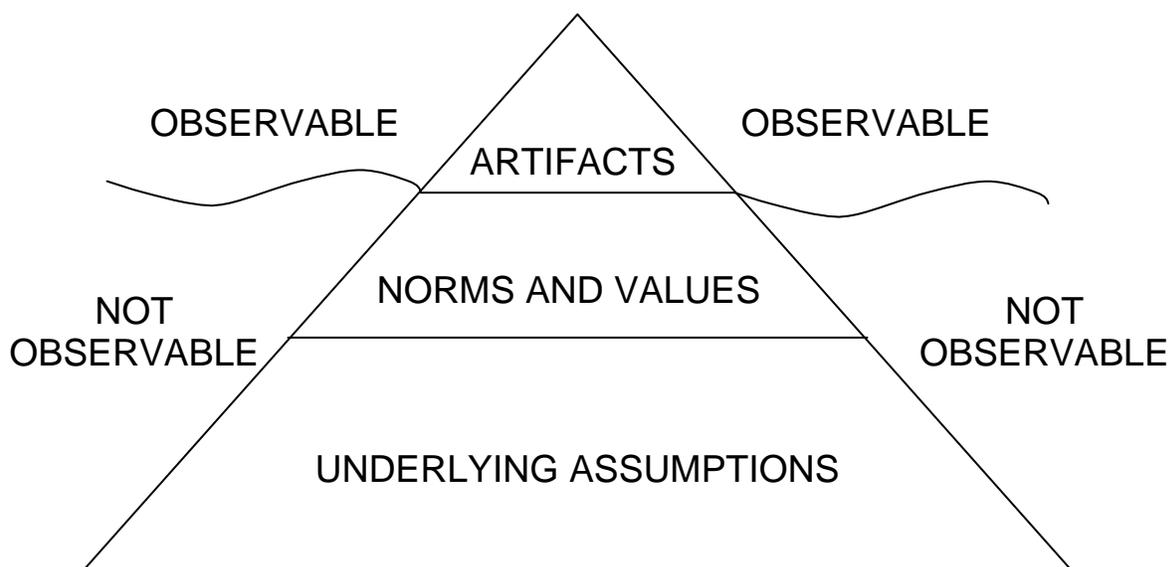
The *hierarchy* culture has a traditional approach to structure and control that flows from a strict chain of command as in Max Weber's original view of bureaucracy.<sup>21</sup> The traditional U.S. Army focus on a chain-of-command and well-defined policies, processes and procedures fits this type of organizational culture. The *clan* focuses less on structure and control and more on flexibility. Rather than strict rules and procedures, people are driven through vision, shared goals, outputs and outcomes. An example of a clan culture might be Southwest Airlines which uses its “University for People” to instill organizational identity and shared values in its employees.<sup>22</sup> Rules still exist but are often communicated socially in an effort to inculcate Southwest’s commitment to its people and to customer service. The *market* culture seeks control but does so by looking outward. Market cultures are driven by results and are often very competitive. General Electric is often cited as an example of an organization with a market culture as demonstrated by its aggressive growth strategy to fulfill shareholder expectations in the volatile markets of post 9-11.<sup>23</sup> Finally, the *adhocracy* culture is distinguished by large degrees of independence and flexibility which is, in turn, driven by a rapidly changing external climate. Relying on speed and adaptability, the adhocracy rapidly forms temporary teams to address new opportunities and challenges. An adhocracy culture is dynamic, entrepreneurial, and creative. Google would be an example of an organization whose culture would mostly align with this quadrant as evidenced by its Statement of Philosophy and Ten Golden Rules that clearly illustrate its unconventional approaches for managing innovation in a very unpredictable environment.<sup>24</sup>

Two aspects of the Cameron and Quinn organizational culture model are particularly appealing in analyzing the culture of the Army.<sup>25</sup> First, the competing values model addresses the paradoxes inherent in the military. For example, the need for command and control critical to moving large formations competes with the need for adaptability and innovation on the battlefield. The competing values model allows a cultural assessment to capture such a paradox (See Figure 1 for notional plot of the U.S. Army). Second, Cameron and Quinn offer the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) as a quantitative way of assessing the culture. While researchers with a qualitative bent may raise an eyebrow at the mere mention of quantitatively assessing a culture, the OCAI is a tool that allows even novices to make a cultural assessment. The OCAI permits researchers to produce insightful plots of an organization’s culture; however, most Army applications of the Cameron and Quinn competing values framework focus on diagnosing the culture, not changing it.<sup>26</sup> While each quadrant represents an archetype, practical experience tells us that although an organization may be predominately in one quadrant, it will have overlap into the others.

We also recognize that organizations will have subordinate activities that exhibit the characteristics of diverse organizational cultures.

Edgar Schein offers another perspective on organizational cultures that has been used in examining the culture of the military. Schein argues that there are three levels of culture: 1) **artifacts**, 2) **norms and values**, and 3) **underlying assumptions** (see Figure 2). Schein posits that assumptions of an organization's culture can be observed qualitatively through artifacts. Artifacts represent the first level of culture. They are visible, but often undecipherable physical, behavioral, and verbal manifestations of the culture. Artifacts can be observed by anyone; they represent the most accessible elements of culture. Dress and appearance (physical manifestations), ceremonies, reward, punishments (behavioral manifestations), and stories and jargon (verbal manifestations) are examples of artifacts. The way soldiers talk to each other in meetings, the structure of PowerPoint charts, and the condition of the conference room are artifacts of what an organization values.

Norms and values are the second deeper level of culture. Unlike artifacts, norms and values cannot typically be observed. Values are more conscious than basic assumptions but are not usually at the forefront of member's minds. Norms are closely associated with values and are the unwritten rules that allow members of a culture to know what is expected of them in a wide variety of situations. According to Schein, organizational members hold values and conform to norms because their underlying assumptions nurture and support the norms. The norms and values, in turn, encourage activities that produce surface-level artifacts. As an example, an organization might have an underlying assumption that "people are bad." This assumption would lead to a norm



**Figure 2. Schein's Organizational Culture Model**

that members don't leave the office building without permission. An artifact of this underlying assumption might be a sign-out board in each cubicle that requires workers to state their location, contact phone number, and expected return.

Schein argues that unless organizational researchers dig down to the deepest level of the basic assumptions, the artifacts, values, and norms cannot be properly deciphered. Unlike Cameron and Quinn's Competing Values Model, Schein argues that culture and cultural assumptions are a multidimensional and multifaceted phenomenon, not easily reduced to a few dimensions. Schein breaks down his cultural assumption analysis to look at internal integration and external adaptation for an organization and evolves his analysis to focus on some basic, deeper dimensions around which shared basic underlying assumptions form. These dimensions include topics such as the nature of reality and truth, time and space, human activity and relationships, and human nature itself.

Analyses of the Army using Schein's conceptualization of organizational culture have focused on the usefulness of identifying artifacts in pursuit of the underlying assumptions.<sup>27</sup> Unfortunately, few studies venture into Schein's basic assumptions simply because the assumptions tend to be difficult to assess in an Army context. For example, Schein states that a central assumption concerning the nature of human activity addresses one's basic orientation to life—what is the appropriate level of activity or passivity? At the organizational level, Schein offers that this assumption deals with questions such as “What is work and what is play?”<sup>28</sup> In the Army context, such assumptions become somewhat disconnected with the idiosyncrasies of the Army as an organization.

Although Schein's three levels of culture resonate well with military and civilian audiences, we believe the esoteric nature of his taxonomy of assumptions diminishes the understanding and use of the theory. The importance in understanding an organization's underlying assumptions in order to assess, and eventually change the culture led us to open a search for better models of comprehending this difficult foundational element in culture analysis. We argue that a better source of assumptions comes from the work of Geert Hofstede<sup>29</sup> and the follow-on Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness Research Program (GLOBE study).<sup>30</sup> Although focused mainly at societal levels, both the Hofstede and GLOBE research provide an empirically-supported assessment of the dimensions that distinguish organizations and societies. Hofstede examined employee responses to survey questionnaires from IBM employees in fifty countries. A statistical analysis of the country averages showed four dimensions. Dimensions are defined as an aspect of a culture that can be measured relative to other cultures. The dimensions were *power distance*, *collectivism* versus

*individualism, femininity versus masculinity, and uncertainty avoidance.* Hofstede later added a dimension that quantified *long-term versus short-term orientation*.<sup>31</sup>

During the 1990s, Robert House and a team of researchers extended Hofstede's work with the GLOBE project. GLOBE collected data from more than 17,000 middle managers in 951 organizations in telecommunications, food processing, and finance industries in sixty-two societies. The GLOBE project produced a more nuanced understanding of underlying organizational cultural assumptions by using questionnaire responses from the middle managers aggregated to the societal and organizational levels of analysis. Using multiple quantitative and qualitative techniques the derived scales were found to be statistically and conceptually sound.

The GLOBE detailed methodology resulted in the identification of nine major attributes of cultures which, when quantified, are referred to as dimensions.<sup>32</sup> We argue that these nine dimensions are a better taxonomy for interpreting and assessing organizational culture. The nine dimensions are now briefly described.<sup>33</sup> *Performance Orientation* reflects the extent to which a community encourages and rewards innovation, high standards, and performance improvement. It relates to the issues of both external adaptation and internal integration mentioned earlier in the discussion of Schein's assumptions. *Assertiveness* reflects the degree to which individuals are—and should be—assertive, confrontational, and aggressive in their relationship with others. The concept of assertiveness, as stated, originates in part from Hofstede's culture dimension of masculinity versus femininity. *Future Orientation* is the degree to which a collectivity encourages and rewards future-oriented behaviors such as planning, delaying gratification, and investing in the future. *Humane Orientation* is defined as the degree to which an organization or society encourages and rewards individuals for being fair, altruistic, friendly, generous, caring, and kind to others.

The dimension, *Institutional Collectivism*, is the degree to which organizational and societal institutional practices encourage and reward collective distribution of resources and collective action. Separate from the previous dimension, *In-Group Collectivism* reflects the degree to which individuals express pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their organizations or families. *Gender Egalitarianism* reflects the degree to which an organization minimizes gender inequality. It is related to a society or organization's beliefs about whether a members' biological sex should determine the roles that they play in their homes, business organizations, and communities. *Power Distance* captures the degree to which members of a collective expect power to be distributed equally. In organizational terms, it reflects the extent to which an organization accepts and endorses authority, power differences, and status privileges. Finally, *Uncertainty Avoidance* is the degree to which a society or organization

relies on social norms, rules, and procedures to alleviate unpredictability of future events. It involves the extent to which ambiguous situations are threatening to individuals, to which rules and order are preferred, and is related to a need to establish elaborate processes and procedures and a preference for formal, detailed strategies.

As noted earlier, previous studies of Army culture provide many insights, but tend to only go as far as each foundational theory of culture allows. Most studies on the culture of the Army refer to an “Army culture”, but limit analysis to recognizing that there is a collective set of values in the Army. A few studies use the Cameron and Quinn competing values model—mostly because of the quantitative approach and the acknowledgment that paradoxes do exist in cultures—but these studies are usually limited by a focus on a particular organization or unit (rather than the entire institution) or the lack of systematic recommendations to align the culture. Some other studies use the Schein model because of the usefulness of assessing a culture through its artifacts and Schein’s recommendations in aligning a culture. Studies using Schein’s model typically fall short, however, in the critical step of assessing the culture’s underlying assumptions because they are deemed too incompatible with the military context.

This paper does something often thought sacrilegious by theorists, yet appropriate in analyzing an institution as complex and unique as the U.S. Army. The following paragraphs take the aspects of each theoretical approach and apply them to form a *hybrid model* of organizational culture to apply to the Army. Thus, the resulting analysis uses artifacts (a la Schein) to point to critical assumptions (taken from the GLOBE study, but only specific GLOBE assumptions to highlight our methodology) and then explores ways to shift those assumptions (using mechanisms suggested by Schein, yet bringing in competing values a la Cameron and Quinn). The result is an organizational culture assessment tailored to the idiosyncrasies of the Army. The focus here, however, is not on providing a comprehensive cultural analysis. Instead, the main point of this paper is to bring attention to the power of integrating aspects of multiple organizational culture models instead of the more common approach of either not using a theory or attempting to apply relatively weak single theories.

Organizational cultures are not good or bad, right or wrong; rather, they are either aligned or misaligned with the organization’s environment. In the case of the Army, the organization’s external environment is now typically referred to as the Joint Operating Environment (JOE)<sup>34</sup>. The JOE is the overall operational environment that exists today and in the near future (out to 2030, for example). The range of threats in this environment extend from smaller, lower-technology opponents using more adaptive, asymmetric methods to larger, modernized forces able to conduct conventional

combat. The JOE facing today's military requires military organizations at all echelons to prepare for a broader range of missions than ever before. The JOE mandates that U.S. military entities maintain flexibility and adaptability to ensure they can successfully operate across the increased spectrum of potential adversaries. As an example, the Army is discovering that within the operational environment of Iraq and Afghanistan, its leaders are increasingly responsible for building units in which individuals and organizations learn from their experiences and for establishing climates that tap the full ingenuity of subordinates. The Army's new counterinsurgency manual asserts:

Open channels of discussion and debate are needed to encourage growth of a learning environment in which experience is rapidly shared and lessons adapted for new challenges. The speed with which leaders adapt the organization must outpace insurgents' efforts to identify and exploit weaknesses or develop countermeasures.<sup>35</sup>

The Army's leaders need to be ever cognizant of the changing nature of the external environment and be just as vigilant in monitoring the Army's culture to ensure the culture is congruent with the demands of the external environment described above.

Four GLOBE dimensions: *Future Orientation*, *Uncertainty Avoidance*, *Gender Egalitarianism*, and *Humane Orientation* which, some might argue, mirror some of Schein's cultural assumptions (i.e., the nature of time and the nature of human nature) do not seem to receive the same level of consensus in our informal assessments of Army culture as the other five dimensions and, in the interest of parsimony, are therefore not used in this analysis. It is not that these dimensions are less important than those discussed below, or even less descriptive of the Army. Rather, as our intent is to demonstrate a useful application of culture theory as opposed to providing a comprehensive analysis of the U.S. Army, these dimensions are not discussed. It is also important to appreciate that these assumptions or dimensions are not mutually exclusive. There is some overlap and, as Cameron and Quinn would argue, there are cases where Army assumptions that tend to be strengths and aligned with the contemporary operating environment also are related to, or even lead to assumptions that limit the Army's ability to operate successfully in today's environment.

## A NOTE ON SUBCULTURES

Anyone who has spent time with any of the U.S. military services or any large organization probably recognizes the importance of subcultures. For example, while the Army has a distinct culture, subordinate units like a Ranger company and an Army hospital are clearly very different subcultures of the whole. Although the underlying assumptions of Army culture serve as the foundation of these subcultures, as we attempt to assess Army culture or the culture of any complex

organization, we face the requirement to untangle how the subcultures relate to each other and discover how they fit together to form the larger Army culture.

Why do subcultures form? Well, people tend to gravitate toward people like themselves; they also tend to become more cohesive with people they interact with more often. Organizational theorist Mary Jo Hatch asserts that task interdependence, reporting relationships, proximity, design of offices and work stations, and sharing equipment or facilities all bring members of the organization into contact with each other.<sup>36</sup> This dependence and interaction tends to serve as a catalyst to subgroup formation. The Army’s branch schooling system, unit structure, and mission requirements are just a few factors that facilitate the creation of subcultures in the Army. The Army is not unique in the existence of subcultures; looking at things such as task interdependence and proximity it is not hard to discern why the Navy is typically characterized as having three subcultures: aviation, surface, and submarine.

Are subcultures bad? Well, it depends. If the subculture enhances the dominant values of the overall culture, it is probably a good thing. If, however, the subculture denies the values of the overall culture, it is something that the organization’s leadership needs to address. Figure 3 is a graphic portrayal of the range of relationships of subcultures (the small circles) to the larger

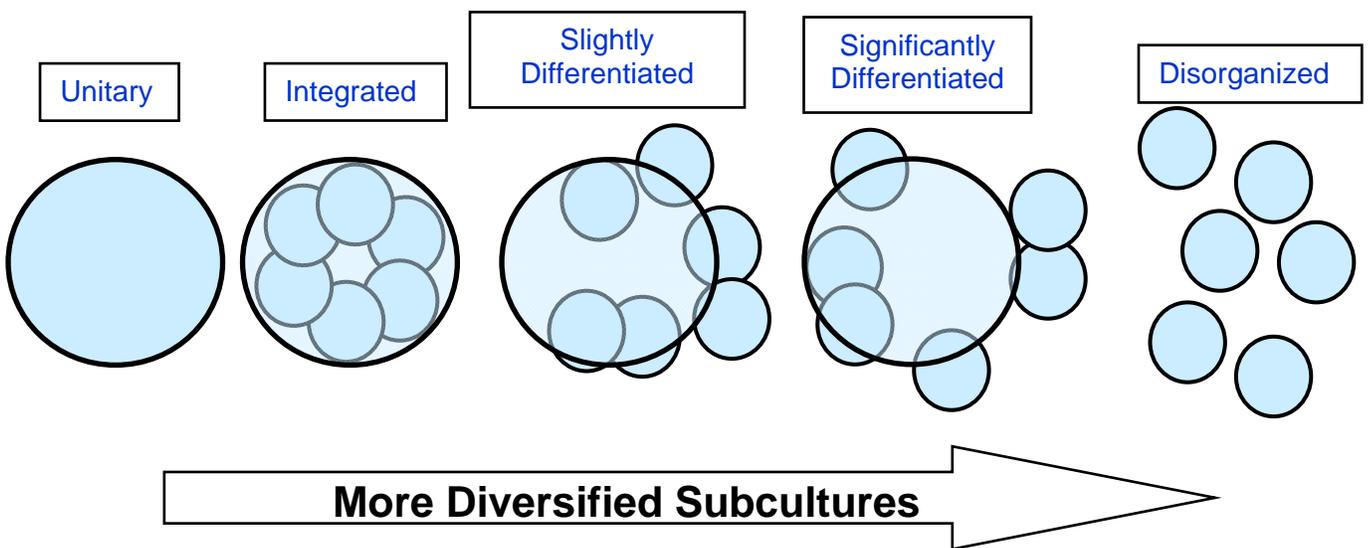


Figure 3. Subcultures<sup>37</sup>

organizational culture (the large circle). The more differentiated the subcultures, the less “coupled” they are with the larger organizational culture which implies a larger leadership challenge in terms of

aligning the organizational culture to the needs of the external environment (although it is possible there are times when the subcultures are more aligned with the external environment than the larger organizational culture). Some might argue that former Army Chief of Staff General Shinseki was attempting to address diverse subcultures by ordering the wearing of the beret for all Army Soldiers as a symbol of a transformed force unified in purpose for a changed environment. Even the choice of the date to formally institute the change, June 14, 2001, was symbolic—the Army’s first birthday in the new century. Was the black beret initiative an attempt to change Army culture? Many of us remember the resistance from many camps to adopting the beret. The black beret was a mark of distinction for the Rangers, the maroon beret was the symbol of the elite paratroop division, and the green beret was uniquely associated with the Special Forces. These three groups have very strong and well-defined subcultures that actively resisted the “big Army” encroachment on their cultural artifact.

## CULTURAL ANALYSIS

Using the GLOBE dimensions as a foundation we now do a brief assessment of some aspects of current Army culture and its alignment with the challenges of today’s joint operating environment (JOE) in an effort to demonstrate an application of this hybrid cultural framework. Following our assessment of Army culture we will use Schein’s theory to provide examples of ways to change the culture. As previously mentioned, in assessing Army culture we will only use five of the nine GLOBE dimensions: *High Performance Orientation, In-Group Collectivism, Institutional Collectivism, Power Distance, and Assertiveness.*

### *High Performance Orientation*

Opinion polls show that the military remains one of the most respected institutions in America.<sup>38</sup> A recent poll showed that Americans trust military commanders far more than the Bush administration or Congress to bring the war in Iraq to a successful end.<sup>39</sup> Part of the public’s perception is based on the notion that the military is a high performance oriented organization. As an underlying cultural assumption, organizations that value a high *Performance Orientation* can be described as having a “Can Do” attitude, an emphasis on results as opposed to people, and value a sense of urgency.<sup>40</sup> There are many artifacts that support this assertion. The Army inculcates this assumption with its Warrior Ethos that begins with the tenet, “I will always place the mission first.” Whether it is getting supplies to hurricane-ravaged New Orleans, creating a workable peacekeeping

strategy in the Balkans, or meeting the challenges of training the Iraqi and Afghan militaries, the Army's mission-first culture, which is rooted in an underlying assumption concerning performance orientation, is clearly a positive cultural assumption and very applicable to describing the Army. We would argue that the strength of *Performance Orientation* in the Army is unique across public and private institutions and is a main source of competitive advantage for the Army in the JOE.

### *In-Group Collectivism*

The five year-old *Army of One* advertising campaign was recently replaced by *Army Strong*. Interestingly, *Army Strong* did not raise the ire of those within the profession anywhere near the level experienced with the *Army of One*. The reaction to the new recruiting slogan is an artifact that is best interpreted through the lens of the GLOBE dimension of *In-Group Collectivism*. In-group collectivism is associated with individuals being integrated into strong cohesive groups that express pride and loyalty to their team or organization.<sup>41</sup> The *Army of One* slogan, in the words of one interviewed soldier, "...just goes against everything they taught us."<sup>42</sup> The Army's enduring emphasis on teamwork, rather than on the individual, is a very positive underlying cultural assumption. The Army's assumptions concerning *In-Group Collectivism* are the foundation for the expectation of the relationship between the individual and the team.

*In-Group Collectivism* can become a detrimental assumption, however, if an organizational member's identity becomes aligned with the organization to the point of becoming close-minded. Recent observations of today's Army suggest that in-group collectivism can, at times, become a disadvantage. Noted U.S. military reformer Douglas MacGregor asserts, "Experience tells us that leaders should always be people with character, intelligence, and open minds – or, in the words of S.L.A. Marshall, soldiers with 'brains, breadth and stamina.'"<sup>43</sup> Andrew Garfield, from the Foreign Policy Research Institute argues that, "the U.S. soldiers' largely uncritical belief that they belong to the 'best military' from the 'best country in the world' seemed elitist toward all foreigners, not just Iraqis."<sup>44</sup> Garfield goes on to observe that, "Americans appeared disinclined to modify their own cultural behavior while in their (Iraq) country."<sup>45</sup> The military's recent focus on cross-cultural awareness seems to reflect a perception (and artifact) on the part of senior Department of Defense civilian and military leaders that the military, and the Army in particular, lacks a motivation and savvy for understanding other points of view and perspectives. These artifacts lead to an inference that the Army's strong cultural preference for in-group collectivism, or team focus, over the individual can lead to a close-mindedness that significantly limits the level of critical thinking in the organization. Thus, we think *In-Group Collectivism* as a dimension informs the cultural analysis of

the Army and describes an assumption that is aligned with the JOE in terms of the benefits of teamwork, but misaligned in terms of its correlation with closed-mindedness.

### *Institutional Collectivism*

Related to the previous assumption, but conceptually different, is the need for the Army to assess its notions of egalitarianism. This assertion centers around the Army's underlying assumptions concerning the GLOBE dimension of *Institutional Collectivism*. As discussed in the previous section, the Army's focus on teamwork is based on deep, underlying assumptions about the importance of collectivism over individualism. High levels of collectivism lead soldiers to subordinate their own desires to those of the unit. Service before self is a fundamental creed in the Army. Whereas *In-Group Collectivism* focuses on concepts like group cohesion and teamwork, *Institutional Collectivism* focuses on the collective distribution of rewards; compensation and promotions are based on what is good for the group, as opposed to the individual.

Unfortunately, there is a potential downside to this pattern of assumptions that manifests itself in the Army's emphasis on egalitarianism. In an individualistic organization equity, as opposed to equality, drives decisions. Promotions are based more on merit than on other factors such as seniority, tenure, and age.<sup>46</sup> In a collectivist organization, the opposite is often the case; the organization focuses more on seniority, age, and tenure. Because the long-term relationship between the individual and the organization is more important, group equity is more valued than individual equity.

In many cases the Army's egalitarian nature serves it very well. Egalitarianism can probably be associated with creating a climate that values teamwork because individuals do not feel the pressure to stand out to receive organizational benefits. It could also be reasonably argued that the Army's egalitarian assumptions provide for a more inclusive culture. For example, the Army has historically been cited as an exemplar institution in the area of Equal Opportunity. In contrast to these potential benefits it is pertinent to highlight that in egalitarian or collective organizations poor performance is more frequently tolerated.<sup>47</sup> Noted organizational researcher Jim Collins asserts:

Bureaucratic culture arises to compensate for incompetence and lack of discipline, which arises from having the wrong people on the bus in the first place. If you get the right people on the bus, and the wrong people off, you don't need stultifying bureaucracy.<sup>48</sup>

Compare this to a description made by Douglas MacGregor in his book, *Transformation Under Fire*:

Reexamining some of the assumptions that underpin junior officer recruitment and training must also figure prominently in transformation. The egalitarian army notion that with enough training anyone can become a leader keeps standards for admission to the profession

of arms too low. Successful completion of college without acquiring a criminal record in the process is simply not enough.<sup>49</sup>

Artifacts that support our assessment that the Army's egalitarian assumptions are present and misaligned with today's JOE focus on the Army's officer accession and promotion data. In the complex environment of the 21<sup>st</sup> century a reasonable human resource management assumption would be that more stringent requirements would be imposed on officer accession and promotion so that only those officers able to thrive in this complex environment would be sought and promoted. Unfortunately, existing data does not support this assumption. Artifacts such as Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores required for ROTC Army scholarships being 920 (more than a standard deviation below the national mean),<sup>50</sup> promotion rates to Major and Lieutenant Colonel in the Army well exceeding 90%,<sup>51</sup> and data from captains in the operational army criticizing egalitarian promotions do not support this assumption.<sup>52</sup> Secretary of Defense Robert Gates provided an artifact that informs Army cultural assumptions on the misalignment of this dimension when he asserted that changes need to be made in junior officer management so that "the best and brightest advance to the point that they can use their experience to shape the institution to which they have given so much. And this may mean reexamining assignments and promotion policies that in many cases are unchanged since the Cold War."<sup>53</sup>

### *Power Distance*

Many of the Army's challenges in the JOE stem from an outdated over-reliance on hierarchy or what the GLOBE study calls *Power Distance*. Power distance is the degree to which members of an organization expect power to be distributed equally.<sup>54</sup> If power distance is high, those in a position of authority expect, and receive, obedience—the organization is based on hierarchical decision-making processes with limited one-way participation and communication. Unfortunately, the Army's high power distance culture is not always conducive to the evolving nature of war.

For centuries successful military organizations have been built around a disciplined, hierarchical structure and pattern of interaction. Moving mass formations, directing soldiers—who in the past were not volunteers—into harm's way, and the frequent need to execute without the luxury of gaining consensus, have all reinforced high levels of power distance within the Army. Despite the advent of the All-Volunteer Force and a move away from large formations of the Cold War, this cultural underpinning is largely unchanged. Even as the information age emerged with an environment that can best be described as fast, complex, diverse, changing, and based on learning and

knowledge, this cultural assumption stubbornly remains. For example, an officer observing the leadership of an Army officer in Central Command during the Iraq War stated:

Central Command is two thousand indentured servants whose life is consumed by the whims of Tommy Franks...I am convinced that much of the information that came out of Central Command is unreliable because he [Franks] demands it instantly, so people pull it out of their hats...Also, everything has to be good news stuff...you would find out you can't tell the truth.<sup>55</sup>

Brigadier General David A. Fastabend and Robert H. Simpson summarize the paradoxical nature of power distance by observing that, "The Army's culture has an enduring, legitimate pull between essential centralized control and necessary, decentralized innovation."<sup>56</sup> In other words, in many parts of the Army there is a disconnect between an espoused goal to have an adaptive, learning environment to deal with the complexities of today's challenges and the creation of the corresponding culture and climate to enable this adaptation and learning. Army climate studies conducted in the last three decades reinforce this observation.<sup>57</sup> Interestingly, Schein argues that, "one finds higher power distance among unskilled and semiskilled workers than among professional and managerial workers, as would be expected."<sup>58</sup> The GLOBE study concluded that although some degree of power distance is implicit in the concept of hierarchy and may be essential for organizational coordination and control, substantial benefits can be realized by reducing the level of power distance within an organization.<sup>59</sup> As the Army has transitioned to a professional Army in a complex environment, the culture needs to change to be based on a more autonomy and learning-based model. With an alignment of power distance to the challenges facing the Army it will become the norm to see the best and most valued ideas in the room potentially coming from the junior person in the room who then has sufficient leeway to implement those ideas without unreasonable overbearance by superiors.

We therefore argue that the Army's assumptions on power distance are misaligned with today's environment. We don't suggest throwing the baby out with the bathwater or turning the asylum over to the patients; rather, we believe the post draft-era, post cold-war environment is sufficiently changed so as to raise questions about power distance assumptions. As an example, Army Special Forces have a reputation across the military community for being flexible, adaptive, and assertive. It is probably not a coincidence that there is a perception by many Army observers that power distance in the Special Forces community is significantly less than the regular Army.

Interestingly, and unfortunately, in terms of the Competing Values Model described at the start of this paper high power distance is more associated with the bottom two quadrants (i.e., hierarchical and market). Cameron and Quinn argue that if an organization's culture has gravitated to

the lower quadrants it is very difficult to enact culture change to move the culture toward the top two quadrants (i.e., quadrants with lower power distance).<sup>60</sup>

### *Assertiveness*

An assumption related to power distance is the GLOBE dimension of *Assertiveness*. *Assertiveness* reflects expectations people have about how forceful or timid they should be in relationships with others. The Army's core competency is to fight and win the nation's wars. To do that, it must dominate and be assertive on the battlefield. While the Army as an institution and its leaders are assertive in battle, it is ironic that in other venues, assertiveness emerges as an issue. Because of the well established chains of command, Army leaders find it difficult to be assertive in disagreeing with superiors—whether military or civilian. An artifact of this assumption is reflected in the following quote from Secretary of Defense Gates in a speech to West Point cadets, “More broadly, if as an officer – listen to me very carefully – if as an officer you don't tell blunt truths or create an environment where candor is encouraged, then you've done yourself and the institution a disservice.”<sup>61</sup>

Army adaptability expert Donald Vandergriff, asserts, “To succeed, Army leaders must stop regarding criticism (if it is based on sound principles and research) as disloyal, and must actively encourage critical thinking.”<sup>62</sup> The Army will struggle to be a high-performance organization in the twenty-first century if leaders fail to encourage thoughtful dissent. Noted organizational researcher Chris Argyris suggests that organizational learning is hard to achieve because there are often undiscussable issues that are not addressed because they may lead to embarrassment or make people uncomfortable.<sup>63</sup> One of the Army's undiscussable issues is knowing when to dissent. It is this assumption that is addressed by Lieutenant Colonel Paul Yingling in his recent controversial assessment of the general officers in the Army.<sup>64</sup> Can we logically infer that the general officers did not speak up for what they believed to be imprudent strategy because they grew up in a culture that punished assertiveness?

The purpose of the preceding section was to demonstrate how artifacts may lead to inferences about underlying cultural assumptions about the Army. It would be presumptive to assert that two individuals would pay attention to the same artifacts or infer the exact same underlying assumptions for the Army. Interestingly, the Army's current Vice Chief of Staff, General Peter Chiarelli, in his *Military Review* article on Modern Wars, made the following assertions that imply inferences he has made about problems with Army culture (italicized text are the authors' additions):

The military must...continually look at ways to flatten their organizational structures (*i.e., power distance*)...increase opportunities – and rewards – for leaders to serve in assignments outside the traditional military structure (*i.e., in-group collectivism*)...be very careful to recruit and then retain only those Americans who have the potential to succeed in today's and tomorrow's complex operating environments (*i.e., institutional collectivism*)...ensure all views are welcomed to the debate and that junior leaders have no fear of career retribution for freely stating their opinions (*i.e., assertiveness*).<sup>65</sup>

## CULTURE CHANGE

Culture change in a mature organization is extremely hard. In terms of being positioned for culture change, it can be said that the Army is a very mature, successful organization that fared well during the Cold War and post-Cold War eras, and that this success makes culture change more difficult. Schein warns that during attempts to change a culture, “even if the assumptions are brought to consciousness, the members of the organization are likely to want to hold on to them because they justify the past and are the source of their pride and self-esteem.”<sup>66</sup> Fortunately, Schein provides a model for systematically embedding and transmitting a culture.<sup>67</sup> Changing a culture requires the use of what Schein calls, *embedding* and *reinforcing* mechanisms. As the terms imply, embedding mechanisms enmesh the assumptions into an organization. Reinforcing mechanisms, while important, merely support the embedded assumptions. While many leaders tend to think they can change the culture by using the quicker, easier reinforcing mechanisms, real culture change comes from first ensuring that the embedding mechanisms are in place.

### *Embedding Mechanisms*

So what are embedding mechanisms, and how do they work? The first mechanism is *what leaders pay attention to, measure, and control on a regular basis*. The old adage is that units do best what the commander checks. While this is easily seen and understood at the battalion level and below, it can also be effective at higher levels within the institution. If every morning the Chief of Staff of the Army holds a twenty-minute meeting to review any safety accidents over the last twenty-four hours, over time this focus on safety will cascade down throughout the organization, especially if the Chief makes follow-up phone calls after the meeting to commanders of units that have had accidents. This attention would eventually shift the culture to one that focuses on safety as subordinates are held accountable for what the Chief thinks is important.

Another embedding mechanism is *how leaders react to critical incidents and organizational crises*. As an example, when former Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, General Richard Cody, responded quickly and decisively to fix criticisms of Walter Reed in early 2007 after some ambiguous messages from other Army leaders, it sent a message about underlying beliefs in the

Army about how wounded soldiers should be treated. It is in the chaotic times of a crisis that an organization will see what assumptions are really held by senior leaders.

*How leaders allocate resources* is another mechanism. If you think back to the drawdown in the early 1990s after the fall of the Soviet Union, many of the personnel cuts seemed to come from the institutional as opposed to the operational army. We must remember that the Army reduced its force structure from 18 to 10 active component divisions remaining in the force. However, to preserve war-fighting capability and avoid the “hollow Army” of post-World War II, the budget, personnel manning directives, and equipment programs focused on protecting field units at the expense of organizations whose missions were to educate, train, equip, and sustain the Army. In terms of cultural assumptions, this prioritization of resources could easily lead to the inference, and hence reinforcement, of the underlying assumption that the Army values operational units over school and doctrine writers. Any commander who served as a Forces Command (FORSCOM) unit commander on a Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) installation in the 1990s can attest to the “haves versus have-nots” climate that existed between these two major commands. This allocation of scarce resources had a clear effect on the Army’s culture.

The next mechanism focuses *on the leader’s use of deliberate role-modeling, teaching, and coaching*. If each time the Chief of Staff of the Army talks to groups of general officers, he discusses and teaches the benefits of creating a cost management culture and identifies enterprise management as an essential competency of Army leaders, over time this focus will send a signal about the importance of these concepts. Clearly, this example could also be interpreted as the use of the mechanism of what leaders pay attention to. This suggests that these embedding mechanisms are not mutually exclusive. What is important, however, is that the leader ensures an alignment among whatever mechanisms are used to make certain that a consistent message is sent to the organization.

Many would argue that the next mechanism, *how leaders allocate rewards and status*, is the most effective mechanism in terms of changing Army culture. This assertion is based on the impact of Officer Evaluation Reports (OER). As examples, a senior leader could talk about the importance of physical fitness and, in fact, review unit physical fitness data each week. However, as we’ve seen in the Army, mandating comments on the OER is probably the most effective way to change the culture to one that values physical fitness. With the Army’s focus on Physical Training (PT) in the 1980s, officer and enlisted evaluations required information on whether the soldier passed the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT) and met the standards for height and weight. An annotated “No” or “Fail” for either of these items was considered negatively for promotion or selection for key

schooling. This was a substantial cultural change from the 1970s, when PT was not emphasized. Similarly, many of us remember in the mid-1980s when the Chief of Staff of the Army directed that officers who received a Driving Under the Influence (DUI) charge would get a General Officer Memorandum of Reprimand (GOMOR) filed in their official military personnel record, which would significantly reduce their chance of subsequent promotion. The power of a mechanism that affects evaluations and promotions cannot be overstated.

Closely related to this rewards and status mechanism, and the last embedding mechanism we will discuss focuses *on how leaders recruit, select, promote, and attrit personnel*. As an example, in the late 1980s the Army Chief of Staff's guidance to promotion boards directed board members to emphasize "muddy boots" time—assignments with troops in operational units—over other positions. Over time this guidance had a significant effect on the career progression desires of the officer and noncommissioned officer corps. The Army struggled to find volunteers for assignments in the three R's—Reserve Component support to the Army National Guard, Recruiting duty, and Reserve Officer Training Course (ROTC) instructors—because the institution rewarded time with active duty Soldiers in war-fighting units. Given the importance of recruitment on Army culture, it would seem a viable argument to propose that the Army's current difficulties in recruiting ROTC cadets at the nation's colleges and universities, along with a perceived lowering of standards for enlisted recruits, could have a long-term effect on the Army's culture by changing the nature of the composition of the force.

In addition to the embedding mechanisms, Schein highlights the importance of secondary or reinforcing mechanisms.<sup>68</sup> We posit that the use of these mechanisms alone won't change a culture (you need to use the embedding mechanisms); however, if the reinforcing mechanisms are not aligned with the embedding mechanisms, cultural change is much more difficult, if not impossible.

The first of these reinforcing mechanisms is *organizational design and structure*. Picture a senior leader who wants to change the culture of his organization to one that is agile and flexible (commonly desired attributes for turbulent environments). If, however, the leader creates or maintains an extremely hierarchical-, rank- or position-driven structure, it will be very difficult for subordinates in this organization to demonstrate the kind of agility espoused. As an example, at a recent lecture at the War College an Army staff officer described the large number of senior officers who had to approve strategic communications responses for situations clearly requiring immediate response. This requirement significantly slowed the Army's response to media sensitive issues; changing the process would add alacrity to the Army's strategic communications response while also reinforcing a perception of a culture change. It could be argued that our main enemy in the Global

War on Terror, Al Qaeda, has a decentralized structure and design that makes change and flexibility much easier to effect than the American military, which has two centuries of existence and a long tradition as a bureaucratic, hierarchical organization.

The next reinforcing mechanism focuses on *organizational systems and procedures*. Army officers on the War College faculty often discuss how ironic it is that for Army War College faculty to go on temporary duty to a conference focusing on Agile and Adaptive Leadership they need to get six permissions and spend two hours in the automated Defense Transportation System to get the conference attendance approved. This is not unique to the Army and has been frequently highlighted by the Dilbert cartoon strip that parodies corporate business practices. As another example, a memorandum from the senior leader detailing his expectations for the frequency, length, and content of email communication sent to him clearly reinforces organizational norms and assumptions for how people are expected to interact.

*The design of physical space, facades, and buildings* is the next mechanism. Anyone who has ever walked into the headquarters of a senior general officer was clearly impressed by the layers of secretaries, executive assistants, and deputies who serve as gatekeepers to the general, whose office is typically impressively decorated in mahogany, with walls covered in acknowledgement of military accomplishments. This design tends to reinforce the Army's assumption about the importance of command and the emphasis on position power. As an example of cultural change, you couldn't just move the general's office to a cubicle and think the unit would become a decentralized, agile entity. However, given the sensible use of several of the embedding mechanisms, you could probably see how this office repositioning could reinforce the embedding mechanisms.

The next mechanism relates to *the use of formal statements of organizational philosophy, creeds, and charters*. Placing posters around the unit area or attaching a plastic card on your dog tag (identification) chain listing the Army's values probably will not affect massive change; however, wearing the values card as a reinforcing tool to embedding mechanisms such as firing a senior officer who violates the Army's values or not allowing recruits to enter service who require moral waivers for egregious crimes (i.e., how leaders recruit and select) would clearly be important.

The last two reinforcing mechanisms, *rites and rituals of the organization along with stories about important events and people*, focus on the importance of symbols to organizational culture. Senior leaders often use anecdotes to communicate important concepts to members of their organization. These stories, along with the emphasis we place on events like change of command and retirement ceremonies, hail and farewells for incoming and departing personnel, and a sergeant's

promotion to the ranks of the Non-Commissioned Officer Corps, all serve as intentional, or unintentional, reinforcing mechanisms to our cultural assumptions and values.

## ARMY CULTURE CHANGE

Based on an assessment of Army culture using selected dimensions from the GLOBE project, several cultural misalignments emerge. These misalignments fall under the four assumptions of *Power Distance*, *In-Group Collectivism*, *Institutional Collectivism*, and *Assertiveness*. Although the GLOBE dimension *Performance Orientation* is pertinent to a discussion of Army culture, the “Can Do” attitude is aligned with the institution’s goals. This assumption becomes dysfunctional, however, when leaders are not assertive in raising challenges to mission requirements that they know are difficult to fulfill. This cultural misalignment, therefore, will be addressed under the GLOBE dimension of *Assertiveness*. Schein’s framework for embedding and reinforcing mechanisms provides the structure for the recommendations. Although some of these applications may be perceived as controversial, our real intent is just to provide examples of ways to use embedding and reinforcing mechanisms to address changes in underlying assumptions. You may not agree with our assessment of the alignment of the Army assumption with the JOE or our proposed change mechanisms, but do not get distracted from our main intent, which is to develop an understanding of how to apply the culture change mechanisms.

### *Power Distance*

Of all the Army’s underlying cultural assumptions, the one that is most misaligned with the contemporary operating environment is *Power Distance*. It will also be the most difficult to change. Schein’s mechanisms offer some ideas on how this might be done. First, the Army needs to acknowledge that one of the shortcomings of the centralized selection system and the current officer evaluation report (OER) is its impact on power distance. A rater (the immediate supervisor) or senior rater (the next level supervisor) has an inordinate amount of power because they are the only two individuals who matter when it comes to performance appraisal. Unlike many companies where promotions are local in nature, the centralized selection system leads to a situation in which the assessment on the evaluation, especially by the senior rater, is the only information that a promotion board uses to determine future potential. The impact of this is that if the subordinate officer displeases the rater or senior rater, his career is in jeopardy. Ultimately, a poor performance file can translate to unwanted assignments in unwanted locations. In other words, not only is the officer’s career in play, but where that officer’s family will live in the future is on the table. It is no wonder

that Army culture has led to a situation in which subordinates reinforce the existing power distance structure partially in fear of negative ramifications for disrupting the perceived status quo.

Using Schein's mechanism of how *leaders recruit, select, promote and attrit*, the Army needs additional inputs into the promotion system to reduce the perceived power of the senior rater and rater. An example might be 360 degree feedback results, individual assessments, or local boards consisting of officers familiar with the rated officer who make recommendations about the officer's performance to promotion boards separate from the current evaluation system. In the past, however, local boards were abolished because of the lack of standardization across the Army. The solution, obviously, is found in between the extremes of a central selection system and the parochialism of a local board. This type of change to the Officer Management System was also recommended by Lieutenant General Pete Chiarelli in a recent Military Review article.<sup>69</sup>

*Deliberate role modeling* by senior Army leaders in which they de-emphasize aspects of the culture that reinforce power distance is a prerequisite for culture change on this assumption. As an example, using Schein's reinforcing mechanism of *physical space design and organizational systems and procedures* senior leaders could reduce greatly the number of gatekeepers and offices that exist between the masses and the senior leader. As many corporate Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) already do, they could encourage email correspondence from all members of the organization. Increased access to senior leaders is a powerful way to reduce power distance. Finally, there is little, if any, discussion in an officer's professional military education about the negative effects of power distance. The Army could use Schein's mechanism of *what leaders pay attention to, measure, and control* to track the addition of periods of instruction on the potential negative impact of high power distance for a Army determined to change its culture to a learning, adaptable organization.

#### *Assertiveness*

A senior officer recently privately observed about Army officers, "I'm routinely amazed at how obnoxiously assertive officers can be with their subordinates and peers and then turn into complete invertebrates (i.e., no backbone) when they address their superiors." Part of the cultural assumption of assertiveness described earlier is clearly related to power distance, but changing power distance perceptions will not necessarily change perceptions about assertiveness. Schein's embedding mechanism of *deliberate role modeling* is critical in addressing this assumption. Senior leaders should develop the habit of rewarding officers in public (*how leaders allocate rewards*) when they voice contrary opinions, rather than cutting them off and putting them in the out-group. An example of this can be seen in Secretary Gates' speech to West Point cadets:

I encourage you to take on the mantle of fearless, thoughtful, but loyal dissent when the situation calls for it. And agree with the articles or not, senior officers should embrace such dissent as healthy dialogue and protect and advance those considerably more junior who are taking on that mantle.<sup>70</sup>

Moral courage is a quality of a good leader—a system that allows expressions of disagreements and outrage by officers to be squelched is not conducive to a military encouraging candor. Using Schein’s mechanism of *reacting to critical incidents*, senior leaders should consider relieving officers who create a command climate that punishes the assertive behavior of subordinates. Unfortunately, the relationship between toxic leadership and career progression (i.e., *how leaders select, promote, and attrit*) is often ambiguous; leaders that get results by being toxic can advance.<sup>71</sup> Finally, senior leaders should *relate stories about important events and people* in which they highlight how a senior leader received important advice from an assertive subordinate (e.g., in which the leader realized the emperor had no clothes because of the candid comments of a subordinate). As an example, General George C. Marshall often told the story about how in 1938, then Brigadier General Marshall surprisingly told President Roosevelt that he disagreed with the President’s idea to build airplanes in response to Nazi aggression. On the way out of the meeting the others at the meeting expressed sympathy to Marshall for ending his career (because of his disagreement with the President). Later, when it came time to pick an Army Chief of Staff, President Roosevelt selected Marshall over thirty-four officers his senior. This story highlights the value Roosevelt placed on candor, and from inference, the value Marshall also placed on this quality.<sup>72</sup>

### *In-Group Collectivism*

Changing assumptions about in-group collectivism revolves around increasing officer breadth and open-mindedness while retaining core assumptions about cohesion and unit loyalty. In terms of *how leaders allocate resources*, the Army has already taken some steps in this direction. The recent focus on sending junior officers to graduate school to open their minds to other ways of seeing issues is clearly a “Schein-based” method of countering the natural close-minded trend that arises from an organization that values *in-group collectivism*. In the future, the Army should consider committing more resources to provide officers opportunities such as three- month to one-year assignments that expose them to other cultures, regardless of whether these are separate ethnic cultures, or other organizational cultures within the federal government. Although this investment is expensive, the mind-broadening benefits will serve the officer and the Army well for the rest of the officer’s career.

Lieutenant General William Caldwell, the commander of the Army’s combined arms center and former deputy chief of staff for strategic effects in Iraq, recently announced his intention to

implement such perspective broadening initiatives. One method would be to allow officers to spend a year working at a government agency or a think tank. Additionally, the Army would also encourage more officers to work for a year for a congressional member or committee to better understand the political process.<sup>73</sup>

In terms of *how leaders recruit, select, promote, and attrit* the Army's personnel command needs to promulgate briefings at the conclusion of promotion boards that identify how many officers promoted have culturally broadening experience (e.g., civilian graduate school, fellowships, foreign country experience), which is also the embedding mechanism *what leaders pay attention to, measure, and control*. In terms of *role modeling by senior leaders* and the *use of stories about important people*, senior leaders should communicate stories to their organization in which they highlight how a specific officer was selected for a critical position or rank based on his unique, career broadening experience (e.g., because they spoke Arabic or Chinese). Finally, and related to mechanisms to address assertiveness, senior leaders need to protect and reward (i.e., *how leaders allocate rewards*) mavericks and positive deviants who espouse thoughts outside the narrow mainstream of military normalcy.

#### *Institutional Collectivism*

If the Army desires to be competitive in the twenty-first century, it needs high and consistent officer entrance requirements that will probably necessitate enhanced compensation and benefits. It also needs to focus on a meritocracy based promotion system, so, at the end of the day, it recruits and retains the right people. It will almost be impossible to make the critical cultural change to reduce power distance perceptions without investing some resources to change the officer accession, promotion, and schooling model. Most importantly, the cultural change to a more individualistic culture needs to occur without compromising the benefits of collectivism in terms of teamwork described earlier.

To change underlying assumptions on institutional collectivism, the Army should shift its paradigm *for recruiting, selecting, promoting and attriting* officers. Although costly, this is a critical aspect of cultural change. First, the Army should make serving as an Army officer a desirable opportunity available to only the very best of America's youth. The Army should not have to beg college students to join ROTC or lower the SAT minimum required score to 920 to get a scholarship. As any first year business school student realizes, the lower the selection ratio (i.e., the number of people selected compared to the number of people who apply), the better the chance of picking high performers (assuming the selection instruments are valid). The Army should specify required

undergraduate majors (as the other services do) and substantially raise the amount of money paid to ROTC students. Pay tables across the officer corps will have to change to attract the very best and retain them. Incentives and bonuses will have to be used in the Army, much as they are in the other services (e.g., pilots, submarine officers) to attract and retain the talent.

Additionally, the Army should assess and retain enough officers to make the selection ratio for higher grades much lower than it currently is. It is difficult to change a culture and motivate people to do things they need to do, but do not want to, if the selection ratio approaches one (i.e., promotion rate of 98%). The current notion of egalitarianism (i.e., *institutional collectivism*) in terms of schooling and command opportunities soothes the emotions of the masses, but eventually leads to frustration as the best and brightest leaders realize that they are being treated no differently than their less capable peers. This recommendation does not imply that the Army needs to abandon dedicated, but less capable officers. *Organizational systems and procedures*, however, should be changed to allow these individuals to serve in their current capacity at their current grade and pay instead of enforcing a system that moves everyone up the career ladder without acknowledging differences in merit. Table 4 attempts to portray the suggestions for ‘culture-driven’ assumptions change in the Army and includes the sample embedding and reinforcing mechanisms discussed in this paper.

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this paper has been to bring attention to the power of integrating aspects of multiple organizational culture models in an effort to understand and change the culture of the U.S. Army. Numerous studies and statements by senior leaders have reiterated that Army culture needs to change, but that observation is only the initial identification of a problem. To change the culture, the Army needs to conduct the appropriate reflection to identify the deep underlying assumptions that require change. The culture dimensions of the GLOBE study provide an excellent framework with which to conduct that analysis. Additionally, Schein’s concepts of embedding and reinforcing mechanisms offer effective suggestions for how to eventually change these underlying assumptions. Viewing this assessment through the competing values framework of Cameron and Quinn helps to appreciate the paradoxical nature of assumptions like in-group collectivism, which is clearly desired when relating to cohesion, but often problematic if it leads to closed-mindedness—bordering, at times, on groupthink. This paper offers this methodology and assessment of Army culture as a means to stimulate discussion on practical ways to address organizational culture in a military environment.

GLOBE Dimension	Type of Change	Embedding Mechanism	Reinforcing Mechanism
Power Distance	Decrease	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>recruit, select, promote and attrit</i></li> <li>• <i>deliberate role modeling</i></li> <li>• <i>attention, measure, and control</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>physical space design</i></li> <li>• <i>organizational systems and procedures</i></li> </ul>
Assertiveness	Increase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>deliberate role modeling</i></li> <li>• <i>allocate rewards</i></li> <li>• <i>reacting to critical incidents</i></li> <li>• <i>recruit, select, promote and attrit</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>stories about important events and people</i></li> </ul>
In Group Collectivism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No change for Teamwork</li> <li>• Decrease for close-mindedness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>allocate resources</i></li> <li>• <i>recruit, select, promote, and attrit</i></li> <li>• <i>attention, measure, and control</i></li> <li>• <i>role modeling</i></li> <li>• <i>allocate rewards</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>stories about important people</i></li> </ul>
Institutional Collectivism	Decrease	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>recruiting, selecting, promoting and attriting</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>organizational systems and procedures</i></li> </ul>
Performance Orientation	No Change		

**Table 4. Culture Change for the U.S. Army**

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<sup>1</sup> For example, see William J. Perry, "Desert Storm and Deterrence," *Foreign Affairs*, 70, 4 (Fall 1991): 66-82.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Robert H. Scales, *Certain Victory* (Washington: Office of the Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, 1993): 359.

<sup>3</sup> For example, see John Mueller, "The Perfect Enemy: Assessing the Gulf War," *Security Studies*, 5, 1(Autumn 1995): 101.

<sup>4</sup> See Stephen Biddle, "Victory Misunderstood: What the Gulf War Tells Us about the Future of Conflict," *International Security*, 21, 2 (1996): 137 for a discussion of the role of skill (and technology) in affecting battle outcomes.

<sup>5</sup> For this approach, see Stephen Biddle. *Military Power: Explaining Victory and Defeat in Modern Battle* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004).

<sup>6</sup> For recent examples of using military culture as a collection of values, see Eloise F. Malone and Chie Matsuzawa Paik, "Value Priorities of Japanese and American Service Academy Students," *Armed Forces and Society*, 33, 2 (January 2007): 169-85; D. Harrison, "The Role Of Military Culture In Military Organizations' Responses To Woman Abuse In Military Families," *The Sociological Review*, 54, 3(August 2006): 546-74; Krista E. Wiegand and David L. Paletz, "The Elite Media And The Military-Civilian Culture Gap" *Armed Forces and Society*, 27, 2 (Winter 2001):183-204.

<sup>7</sup> Kim S. Cameron and Robert E. Quinn, *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture* (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1999):14.

<sup>8</sup> Edward H. Schein, *The Corporate Culture Survival Guide* (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1999): 12.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, Jeffrey W. Legro, *Cooperation Under Fire: Anglo-German Restraint During World War II* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press 1995).

<sup>10</sup> Terence C. Lee, "The Causes of Military Insubordination: Explaining Military Organizational Behavior in Thailand," Presented at the 46th Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association Honolulu, Hawaii, March 2005.

<sup>11</sup> Ioannis Koskinas, *Black Hats and White Hats: The Effect of Organizational Culture and Institutional Identity on the Twenty-third Air Force* (Air University Press, Maxwell AFB, Dec 2006).

<sup>12</sup> Terry Terriff, "Warriors and Innovators: Military Change and Organizational Culture in the US Marine Corps," *Defence Studies*, 6, 2(June 2006): 215–247.

<sup>13</sup> David T. Darrah, "Does Organizational Culture Affect Doctrine?" *Marine Corps Gazette*. Quantico: 81, 5 (1997): 30-33.

<sup>14</sup> John A. Nagl, "Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: British and American Army Counterinsurgency Learning during the Malayan Emergency and the Vietnam War," *World Affairs*, 161, 4 (1999): 193-199.

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- <sup>15</sup> Craig Bullis, "Developing the Professional Army officer: Implications for Organizational Leaders," *Military Review*. 83, 3 (2003): 56.
- <sup>16</sup> Touko Piiparinen, "A Clash of Mindsets? An Insider's Account of Provincial Reconstruction Teams," *International Peacekeeping*, 14, 1 (2007):143–157.
- <sup>17</sup> Michael F. Pfenning, "Strategies for Imbedding Leader Meta-Competencies in the Army Culture," Army War College Strategy Research Project, 2002.
- <sup>18</sup> Kim S. Cameron and Robert E. Quinn, *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture* (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1999).
- <sup>19</sup> See Edward H. Schein, *The Corporate Culture Survival Guide* (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1999).
- <sup>20</sup> Cameron and Quinn, 35.
- <sup>21</sup> See W. Richard Scott, *Organizations: Rational, Natural, And Open Systems* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1987): 24.
- <sup>22</sup> Sandra Jeanquart Miles and W. Glynn Mangold, "Positioning Southwest Airlines through Employee Branding," *Business Horizons* (2005), 540.
- <sup>23</sup> Barlett, Christopher, "GE's Growth Strategy: The Immelt Initiative," Case Study 9-306-087, Harvard Business School Publishing (November 3, 2006), 1-2.
- <sup>24</sup> See Thomas S. Eisenmann and Kerry Herman, "Google, Inc.," Case Study 9-806-105, Harvard Business School Publishing (November 9, 2006), 20-24.
- <sup>25</sup> See Ivan Yardley and Derrick J. Neal, *Defence Studies*, 7, 1 (March 2007): 21–41 for a recent example of using the competing values framework to analyze the military.
- <sup>26</sup> For example, see Christopher R. Paparone, "Applying The Competing Values Framework To Study Organizational Subcultures And System-Wide Planning Efforts In A Military University," doctoral dissertation, The Graduate School, Pennsylvania State University, 2003.
- <sup>27</sup> Bullis, 57–62.
- <sup>28</sup> Schein, 96.
- <sup>29</sup> Geert Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Values* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1980).
- <sup>30</sup> Robert J. House, Paul J. Hanges, Mansour Javidan, Peter W. Dorfman, and Vipin Gupta, *Culture, Leadership, and Organizations* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2004).
- <sup>31</sup> An updated version of Hofstede's five dimensions can be found in Hofstede, G., & Hofstede G.J. *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- <sup>32</sup> See House, et. al, xvi.

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- <sup>33</sup> A concise article that offers more usable definitions of the GLOBE dimensions is Mansour Javidan, Peter W. Dorfman, Mary Sully de Luque, and Robert J. House, “ In the Eye of the Beholder: Cross Cultural Lessons in Leadership from Project GLOBE,” *Academy of Management Perspective* (February 2006): 69.
- <sup>34</sup> See United States Joint Force Command, *Joint Operating Environment*, December 2007.
- <sup>35</sup> See the Army’s Counterinsurgency Field Manual, FM 3-24, December 2006: 7-9.
- <sup>36</sup> Mary Jo Hatch, “Organizational Culture,” in *Organization Theory* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1997): 229.
- <sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, 226.
- <sup>38</sup> See the Gallup Organization Home Page, available from <http://www.gallupoll.com/content/default.aspx?ci=1597>; Internet; accessed 25 July 2007.
- <sup>39</sup> Steven Lee Myers and Megan Thee, “Americans Feel Military Is Best at Ending the War,” *New York Times*, September 10, 2007: 1.
- <sup>40</sup> House, et. al, 239.
- <sup>41</sup> House, et. al, 446.
- <sup>42</sup> Gina Cavallaro and Michelle Tan, “Strong Reaction,” *Army Times*, October 23, 2006, <http://www.armytimes.com/legacy/new/0-ARMYPAPER-2166068.php>.
- <sup>43</sup> Douglas MacGregor, *Transformation Under Fire: Revolutionizing How America Fights* (Westport: Praeger, 2003): 191.
- <sup>44</sup> Andrew Garfield, “Succeeding in Phase IV: British Perspectives on the U.S. Effort To Stabilize and Reconstruct Iraq,” 8 September, 2006; available from <http://www.fpri.org/enotes/20060908.military.garfield.britishperspectiveiraq.html>; Internet; accessed 16 July 2007, 4.
- <sup>45</sup> *Ibid*, 4.
- <sup>46</sup> House et. al., 453.
- <sup>47</sup> D.P. Bhawuk, D.J. Bechtold and W. Jones, W, “Bridging Theory and Practice: Application of Individualism and Collectivism in Human Resource Management,” Paper presented at the Management of Human Resources Conference, Honolulu, Hawaii, 1998.
- <sup>48</sup> Jim Collins, *Good to Great* (New York: Harper Collins, 2001): 142.
- <sup>49</sup> MacGregor, 215.

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<sup>50</sup> The ROTC SAT score reduction information is based on a conversation with an ROTC Commander and verified by checking the ROTC scholarship requirements of several colleges. The 920 minimum score is lower than that required of the Air Force and Navy for 4-year ROTC scholarships.

<sup>51</sup> See the *Army Times* web site at <http://www.armytimes.com/legacy/new/0-ARMYPAPER-1977405.php>. Most interestingly, the promotion rates to Major, typically the “tenured” grade in the Army have approached 98% in recent years.

<sup>52</sup> This assertion is based on a letter from a brigade commander in Iraq to his Division Commander in which the brigade commander asserted that his junior officers, “want recognition for their performance and want a competitive OPMS system that rewards top performers.” Although the letter was heavily circulated in the Army, the authors prefer to protect the identity of the brigade commander.

<sup>53</sup> Fred Kaplan, “Secretary Gates Declares War on the Army Brass,” SLATE, October 12, 2007; available from <http://www.slate.com/id/2175738/nav/navoa/>; internet; accessed 17 November 2007.

<sup>54</sup> House, et. al, 513.

<sup>55</sup> See Thomas E. Ricks, *FIASCO: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*, (Penguin Press: New York, 2006): 33.

<sup>56</sup> BG David A. Fastabend and Robert H. Simpson, “Adapt or Die: The Imperative for a Culture of Innovation in the United States Army,” *Army Magazine* (February 2004): 22.

<sup>57</sup> See the following documents: Department of the Army, “*Study on Military Professionalism*,” Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, June 1970; Department of the Army, “The Army Training and Leader Development Panel Officer Study Report to the Army,” Washington, DC: Department of the Army, May 2001: ES-8 to ES-9; and Ulmer, W.F., et. al., “Division Commander Study – 2004. Executive Summary.” US Army War College.

<sup>58</sup> Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition* (San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 2004): 182.

<sup>59</sup> House, et. al, 534.

<sup>60</sup> Cameron and Quinn, 79.

<sup>61</sup> Robert M. Gates, “Evening Lecture at the U.S. Military Academy,” lecture, United States Military Academy at West Point, 21 April, 2008.

<sup>62</sup> Donald E. Vandergriff, *Raising the Bar: Creating and Nurturing Adaptability to Deal with the Changing Face of War* (Washington D.C.: World Security Institute’s Center for Defense Information, 2006): 75.

<sup>63</sup> Chris Argyris, *Overcoming Organizational Defenses* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1990): 32.

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<sup>64</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Paul Yingling, “A failure in generalship,” *Armed Forces Journal* (May 2007), <http://www.armedforcesjournal.com/2007/05/2635198>.

<sup>65</sup> Peter W. Chiarelli and Stephen M. Smith, “Learning From Our Modern Wars: The Imperatives of Preparing for a Dangerous Future,” *Military Review* (September-October 2007): 7-14.

<sup>66</sup> Schein, 312.

<sup>67</sup> See Schein, chapter 13.

<sup>68</sup> Schein, 246.

<sup>69</sup> Chiarelli and Smith, 13.

<sup>70</sup> Gates, 21 April, 2008.

<sup>71</sup> See George Reed, “Toxic Leadership,” *Military Review*, July-August 2004: 67-71.

<sup>72</sup> Eric Larrabee, *Commander in Chief: Franklin Delano Roosevelt, His Lieutenants, and Their War* (New York: Simon and Schuster Inc, 1987): 96.

<sup>73</sup> Fawzia Sheikh, “Caldwell Aims To Shake Up Army Educational Hub At Ft. Leavenworth,” *Inside The Pentagon*, September 20, 2007: 1.