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Military Professionalism and PTSD: On the Need for “Soldier-Artists”

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Abstract

In part one of this paper I discuss how issues of combatant misconduct and illegality have led military academies to become more focused on professionalism rather than on the tensions between military ethics and military training. In order to interrogate the relationships between training and ethics, between becoming a military professional and being a military professional, between military professionals and society, I turn to the work of Martin Cook, Anthony Hartle, and J. Glenn Gray. In part two I focus on Cook’s analysis of the conflict between the self-understanding and the expected behavior of military professionals. In part three I focus on Hartle’s analysis of how the experience of alienation by military professionals can help to create the culture of military professionals. In part four I introduce a new theory of professionalism based on the existential and phenomenological philosophy of J. Glenn Gray, which can help us to better understand the philosophical and psychological stakes of what it means to become a military professional. I conclude in part five by suggesting that the most pressing issue in the military is not a lack of professionalism, but a lack of trust.

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Introduction

Ethical and legal violations by military professionals—whether a “tragedy” (Wilson 2008, 33), “highly publicized allegations of unlawful acts” (Mileham 2008, 44), a “scandal” (Cook 2008, 58), a “critical event” (Desjardins 2008, 69), “serious operational incidents” (Cullens 2008, 79), or “military excesses” (Werdelis 2008, 103)—have created a fear that there is a *crisis of unprofessionalism* pervading the militaries of the Western world. To address this crisis, military academies have undertaken a process of self-examination in order to determine what is either missing or has gone wrong in the professionalization process such that these and other similar violations are occurring. The primary answer that has arisen is that ethics education needs to be improved, and improved by offering more courses and more training in military ethics and in just war theory (Hartle 1989; Cook 2004; Robinson, de Lee, and Carrick 2008).

Such an answer makes sense of course insofar as it is simply common sense that the way to resolve unethical behavior is by finding ways to better inculcate ethics into those who are misbehaving. The question that should concern us however is whether these violations are indeed due to a *lack* of ethics by military professionals or instead due to the *kind* of ethics being taught to military professionals. In other words, if these violations are a result of the ethical teaching and training already present in the military, then to *increase* rather than *question* this ethical teaching and training will not only do nothing to resolve these violations, but perpetuate them at worst or modify their expression at best.

It is this latter possibility that makes interrogating ethics so difficult. For if humans only responded to external pressure in one way—by, for example, committing ethical and legal violations—then we would need merely to count the incidences of such violations in order to determine which approaches work and which do not. However, humans have a variety of ways to “discharge” (Nietzsche 1989) our immoral instincts, “sublimate” (Freud 1989) our uncivilized desires, or, as we more often say, to “blow off steam.” Indeed, as has been argued recently under the heading of “moral injury” (Brock and Lettini 2012), not only ethical and legal violations, but even what is diagnosed as PTSD, could be seen as extreme versions of how members of the military respond to the conflicts experienced between the demands of military *ethics* and the demands of the military *profession*.

In other words, lack of professionalism in the military could be understood to be either an ethical issue or a psychological issue, to be resolved either by better training or by better treatment. In this paper I will propose a third way to understand this lack of professionalism by exploring these ethical and legal violations as an *existential* issue. By viewing what it means to be a professional, and in particular a military professional, as

an *identity*, as a *way of being in the world*, then we can begin to see these violations as resulting not from a lack of ethics, nor from a trauma, but from a conflict between who one has been *trained to become* and who one *is*. Whereas ethical approaches to military professionalism can exacerbate this conflict, and psychological approaches to military professionalism can retroactively help to manage this conflict, an existential approach can instead help us to better understand and perhaps even to proactively avoid this conflict.

In order to develop this existential approach to understanding the conflicts between military professionalization and the experience of being a military professional, I will examine the work of Martin Cook, Anthony Hartle, and J. Glenn Gray, as all three illuminate different aspects of these conflicts. I will begin with Cook (2004), who criticizes military professionalization from an Aristotelian perspective, focusing on the superficiality of the efforts of military academies to train military professionals to *act* ethically without also attempting to train military professionals to *reflect* on what it means to be ethical. While Cook points to a vital disparity between who a military professional is *supposed to be* and who a military professional *is*, in the next section I will turn to Hartle (1989), who deepens this disparity by describing what it is like to *be* a military professional. In particular Hartle helps to illuminate the dynamic of how the tensions between military professionals and the rest of society in part produces the culture of the military profession, a dynamic which creates the *identity* of a military professional. I will then turn to Gray (1968), who examines the military professional's identity from an existential-phenomenological perspective. Gray argues, like Cook, that military professionalization is too superficially focused on habit formation, but goes further than Cook by arguing that what is missing is not only Aristotle's concept of *phronesis*, but more importantly something resembling Aristotle's Doctrine of the Mean, what Gray calls "artistic morality" (Gray 1968, 100). In the concluding section of this paper I will attempt to develop this concept of "artistic morality" in order to show how it can help us to better understand what's missing from our current approaches to military professionalism.

Trust Us, We're Professionals

In *The Moral Warrior* (2004), Cook is concerned primarily with examining how the concept of "professionalism" has been deployed without its having been first "examined critically" (Cook 2004, 56), such that military professionals could be expected to be simultaneously obedient tools of the state, and yet also uniquely talented and skilled members of the state whose particular expertise is necessary for the state's continued existence. It is owing to this perspective towards the military that Cook believes that, on the one hand, members of the military have been wrongly accused of being "unpro-

professional” for being hesitant to blindly obey orders, and, on the other hand, members of the military have wrongly been resistant to adapt to changing circumstances because of their view of what it means to be “military professionals.”

Having in mind the failure of military professionals during the Vietnam War to make use of their expertise and knowledge to advise politicians to avoid disastrous military policies, Cook is trying to demarcate the important differences between obedience, hesitancy, and obstinacy. To do this, Cook argues against those (Snider, Nagl, and Pfaff 1999) who would compare the military profession to the service industry, with the idea that anything less than giving the client what he or she wants (e.g., “service with a smile”) is seen as acting “unprofessionally.” Instead, Cook advocates for comparing the military to the medical and legal professions, as it is understood that doctors and lawyers ought to use their skills as they think best because their unique training and experience enables them to have a better grasp of where their skills are best and least suited. Hence Cook wants us to move away from seeing the military’s recent emphasis on “force protection” (Cook 2004, 69) as an external question of the military’s professionalism or unprofessionalism, and instead as a question that must be asked from within the military’s self-understanding of what it means to be a “military professional.” In other words, the military’s “professionalism” cannot be properly judged in cases where orders are not simply and immediately carried out without first investigating how members of the military understand their roles and obligations so that we can properly see that “prudent disinclination, like intellectual independence, may be a manifestation of professional seriousness, not a lack of it” (Cook 2004, 65).

It is thus the apparent contradiction between the soldier’s traditional self-understanding, which requires that we respect the meaning of obedience for soldiers before passing judgment on their willingness to obey, and the recent trend of soldiers to be more concerned with “force protection” than completing the missions they have been assigned, that leads Cook to examine how this self-understanding can motivate both obedience and resistance. The key, according to Cook, for seeing through this tension is to recognize how developments in the world of political and military affairs—namely, the demise of the Soviet Union and of both the type of threat it represented and the consequent type of military it required to be constructed in response—has led to a conflict between what it means to *become* a military professional and what it means to *be* a military professional, a conflict that had not formerly existed. To become a military professional, much like becoming a professional in any field, is, as Cook describes, to “imbibe” a knowledge, language, set of customs and mannerisms that are both shared in the present and have a history behind them such that professionals can be recognized and distinguished from either non-professionals or “para-professionals” (Cook 2004, 67).

However, the “warrior ethos” that this way of being is aiming at and preparing the military professional for is at odds with the present demands placed on military professionals; demands that require the skills of a police officer or humanitarian aid worker far more than the skills of a warrior. The feeling of this conflict between who the military professional was *meant to be* (with regard to training) and who the military professional is *required to be* (with regard to the present geo-political situation) is captured for Cook in the oft-heard refrain of military professionals: “this isn’t what I signed up for” (Cook 2004, 69). It is this feeling of *not being able to be who one was meant to become* that has resulted in the current confusion between what is professional or unprofessional and between what is obedience, hesitancy, or obstinacy.

Just as Cook wants us to see this problem from within the perspective of the military, so too does Cook want us to see that the solution to this problem must be sought from the military itself as well. Here, in this earlier work, Cook provides little indication of how the military ought to resolve this tension other than by finding the “intellectual creativity” or “intellectual flexibility” necessary to move from having to “cling desperately” to an anachronistic self-understanding to instead “embrace[ing] fully the need to lead in its own adaptation to that environment” (Cook 2004, 76-77). However, in his more recent work, Cook helpfully provides an indication of how the military is meant to achieve this adaptability by being able to develop early on not only the habits necessary to serve in the military but also the ability to reflect on the meaning and purpose of those habits through “phronesis,” or “practical wisdom” (Cook 2008, 58).

Yet even if Cook were to succeed in expanding the definition of “military professionalism” to include not only *behaving like a professional* but also understanding why one *ought to behave like a professional*, the corresponding change in the curriculum of military academies would only appear to require offering more of the philosophy classes already available and offering them earlier rather than later:

So what can one realistically hope for at this stage? First, one can still work on the formation of habits. As Aristotle so well argued, if we can form strong habits and beliefs about what is right and wrong, even if the reasons are not well understood, that is an invaluable and necessary foundation for later development and more explicitly rational ethical analysis. Second, we can motivate cadets and inculcate high moral ideals by means of the non-rational appeals to emotion and role models to emulate which, at its best moments, the Character Development Center’s efforts provide. Lastly, we can begin laying the foundation in a core philosophy class which, if effective, at least demonstrates that a method of systematic and rational analysis of ethical matters exists, and perhaps motivate them to explore those questions further as they gain the experience of mature officers. (Cook 2008, 65)

While such changes might better enable military professionals to “adapt” to changing circumstances because they might be better able to understand the behavior that is expected of them, it is not at all clear that these changes would also enable an adaptation in the sense of being able to remove the aforementioned tension between this expected behavior and the military’s self-understanding. Instead it would appear that rather than the “multilateral negotiation” (Cook 2004, 66) for how to adapt that Cook recommends on the model of medical and legal professionals, we have not moved far from the unilateral “service with a smile” model (Snider, Nagl, and Pfaff 1999) Cook criticized. Though the “smile” may now be more self-imposed than simply demanded by the expectations of superiors, there still remains even under Cook’s model a disparity between the *behavior* and the *self-understanding* of a military professional.

We’re Professionals, But Please Trust Us

The reason for this disparity is that the problem encapsulated for Cook in the expression “this isn’t what I signed up for” cannot be resolved by merely getting military professionals to see for themselves the connection between their oath of service and the current nature of their service (e.g., that police work and humanitarian aid do contribute to the protection of the state and its citizens). Cook is right to point out that the questions surrounding military professionalism cannot be answered by only following the Aristotelian model of habit formation through pleasure and pain and through the use of role models, thereby forgetting that Aristotle also saw the need for practical wisdom for the proper implementation of those habits once they have been initially formed. However what appears to be missing from Cook’s account of professionalization is a focus on what distinguishes the military profession from the medical and legal professions, for, as Samuel P. Huntington described in his classic *The Soldier and the State*, “the application of violence is the peculiar skill of the officer” (Huntington 1957, 11). In other words, if Cook’s proposal is that military professionals are being trained through habit formation and role models but need to be better trained in ethics, then military professionals are being trained in *how to be violent*, but need to be better trained in raising questions like *whether it is right to be violent*. Consequently, ethical and legal violations by military professionals, the suffering of military professionals diagnosed as PTSD, might not be due to a *lack* of ethics, but to a conflict between *violence* and *ethics*, the conflict encapsulated by just war theory’s demand that military professionals *be violent in an ethical way* (Gertz 2014).

Given the gravity of the problems of “professional disillusionment, lowered morale, and diminished sense of commitment to the profession” (Cook 2004, 68) that Cook finds among current members of the military, it would seem that we should be wary of any possible reductive understandings of the meaning of *becoming* a military professional,

particularly understandings that reduce the role that violence plays in *being* a military professional. It is the tension between becoming and being a military professional, and the related tension between military professionals and the rest of the society, that we find in the work of Anthony Hartle and—as I will discuss in the next section—in the work of J. Glenn Gray.

According to Hartle, one becomes a professional, whether a doctor or a soldier, due to what has traditionally been referred to as a “calling” (Hartle 1989, 20), such that a doctor or soldier could say that he or she was *called to serve* either her society or humanity and can often even remember a specific event earlier in life that led her to feel so called. To feel called is to be both *connected* to others who have likewise been called and *disconnected* from others who have not. This connection and disconnection therefore create the grounds for a profession at the same time as they create a distance between the profession and the rest of society. Hence even though the profession is comprised of those who feel they have been called to serve society there is nevertheless a distance that separates the professionals and the rest of society such that the former can feel both morally superior to (Hartle 1989, 19) and alienated (Hartle 1989, 22) by the latter, while the latter can feel both a need for and distrust of the former.

The tensions experienced between profession and society serve to similarly distance and distinguish the unity, “corporateness” (Huntington 1957, 10), or “culture” (Hartle 1989, 19), belonging to both. In the same way that different societies set themselves apart by their cultural differences, so too do professions set themselves apart from both other professions and from the society they serve. However, whereas a society can often be set apart from other societies more by geography than by choice, with the resultant culture created more by accident and time than by a feeling of unity, a profession, as we have seen, is distinguished instead by unity, such that its culture is more concrete and recognizable. Indeed it could further be said that the stronger the unity experienced by members of the profession (and, correspondingly, the stronger the disunity with the rest of society), the more powerful and pervasive the culture of the profession.

For there to be such a correlation between identity and culture—as is found in the military profession far more than in the medical or legal professions (Hartle 1989, 20)—there must be something that the members of the profession receive from their cultural bonds to each other that they are not receiving otherwise because of their lack of social bonds to those outside the profession. A clue to what this something might be can be found if we return to Cook. According to Cook, one source of the current disillusionment experienced by military professionals can be found in their having lost their “jurisdiction” (Cook 2004, 59). Hence as we move from a state of affairs that calls for large-scale warfare to situations that require humanitarian interventions, the

military in turn becomes reduced not only in size and function but also in the nature of its mission and ability to determine how to carry out that mission. Cook likens this post-Westphalian situation that the military currently finds itself in to a situation where surgeons are no longer required. Thus, in the same way that surgeons, if they were confronted with irrelevancy or redundancy, could either adapt and find new ways to make use of their training and expertise or choose not to adapt and let others more willing to adapt take over their jurisdiction, Cook argues that the military has to similarly adapt or get out of the way. The disillusionment experienced by military professionals is thus seen by Cook as simply a natural consequence of finding oneself in such a time of transition and confusion.

I believe that this phenomenon of disillusionment operates at a much deeper, existential level than Cook describes. For if we return to the idea of a professional as someone whose identity is determined largely by the feeling of being called to serve, and who in turn feels united with others who have similarly been called while feeling separated from those who have not, then we can see that one's professional "jurisdiction" is far more meaningful than merely serving as the bounded region of one's authority. To be who one is, to live in accordance with the way of life that one feels is most appropriate for oneself, can and should be understood by the concept of freedom in both a positive and negative sense. Hence, as Rousseau and Kant argued, we are free insofar as we can live according to laws of our own making and without having to live in accordance with laws imposed on us by others. Where one can thus live freely, by one's own laws and not by the laws of those who would want to *live differently* (e.g., in accordance with the laws of those who are not defined by their being "peculiarly expert at directing the application of violence under certain prescribed conditions" (Huntington 1957, 12)), is more than to be within one's own jurisdiction, but to be *at home*, or, as Carl Schmitt (2003, 52) argued, to have jurisdiction is what it means to be at home.

I would argue therefore that what Cook is here referring to as "jurisdiction" can be more usefully understood as a manifestation of the need to *feel at home in the world*, and it is this feeling that one both loses (with regards to society) and gains (with regards to the profession) in becoming a military professional. Though by "home" we typically mean nothing more than a "place to hang one's hat," and thus can say that one's "need" for a home is nothing more than a need for a place to be free from the elements or protected from intruders, there is a more fundamental "need to feel at home in the world" that I am referring to here. This need manifests itself, for example, in the common rituals of decorating that we tend to engage in when we want to make a new space "feel like home," such as surrounding oneself with photographs of friends and family or with various keepsakes and knickknacks from memorable events in one's past, all of which can be used to try to hide, if not replace, the alien character of the unfamiliar.

However, as can be seen if we look to Dan Baum's *New Yorker* article "The Price of Valor" (2004), for a military professional such attempts to find or re-create a home away from home can manifest themselves in a radically different manner. Baum writes:

Debbie watched the waitress clear our plates, then she leaned forward to tell about a night in July, after Carl's return, when they went with some friends to the Afterhours Enlisted Club at Fort Benning. Carl had a few drinks, Debbie said, and started railing at the disk jockey, shouting, "I want to hear music about people blowing people's brains out, cutting people's throats!" Debbie continued, "I said, 'Carl. Shut up.' He said, 'No, I want to hear music about shit I've seen!'" Carl listened to Debbie's story with a loving smile, as though she were telling about him losing his car keys. "I don't remember that," he said, laughing. (Baum 2004, 44-45)

It is tempting to see in such an account a description of classic symptoms of PTSD—such as hyperarousal, intrusive memories, avoidance, and emotional numbing—however I believe it is more useful and more revelatory to see this instead as an instance of what Heidegger refers to as the feeling of "uncanniness" [*unheimlichkeit*], of literally "not-being-at-home" (Heidegger 1962, 233). While this suggestion would seem to contradict the *fact* that this episode occurred after Carl had returned home from Iraq, I would argue that his need to hear such music, music specifically about "people blowing people's brains out, cutting people's throats," points to the conclusion that Carl no longer experiences his home as *home*, but as *alien*, a place that urges him towards, paradoxically, the security and comfort of war (Baum 2004, 52).

It is precisely this apparent paradox, this experience of peace as alien and of war as home, that requires that we interrogate rather than take for granted the relationship between *training* and *ethics* in military professionalization. For example, in his paradigmatic just war theory text *Just and Unjust Wars*, Michael Walzer claims that there is a distinction between "ordinary soldiers" and "wholehearted soldiers" (Walzer 1977, 162), as the "ordinary" are *like us* and only want to return home, while the "wholehearted" are *not like us* and are instead obsessed with war. Walzer further claims that this distinction is rooted in "common morality" (Walzer 1977, xxii), and is thus not *his* perspective on soldiers, but rather the *common sense* perspective on soldiers, a perspective that belongs to society such that to *disagree* with this perspective is, as Walzer makes clear (Walzer 1977, xxii), to be seen as not only *immoral* but *inhuman*.

For someone like Carl, a military professional, this perspective reveals both how the military professional *ought* to experience war and how society *ought* to judge military professionals. It should not surprise us therefore that military professionals who do not identify with the "wholehearted soldier," but who recognize—from, for example, having taken ethics courses during their professionalization process—that society would iden-

tify them as a “wholehearted soldier,” would prefer silence to storytelling, the military to society, and war to peace. Yet this apparent paradox does surprise us, and indeed surprises us so much that we find this behavior of military professionals to be *pathological*, to be *symptomatic* of either immorality (e.g., Augustine’s “lust for war”) or of PTSD (e.g., hyperarousal, emotional numbing, and avoidance).

We can now see that something vital is missed when we either take for granted that there is one moral world such that we could simply *put ourselves in their shoes* in order to understand the experiences of military professionals (as Walzer does), or when we tell military professionals to expand their minds so as to better adapt to an ever-changing world (as Cook does). In order to find what is missing from such views of military professionalism, I will next turn to J. Glenn Gray, and his argument for an “artistic morality” (Gray 1968, 98). What Gray envisions is a new way of education based on a return to Aristotle’s ethics. However, unlike the so-called return to Aristotle of military academies or even of Cook, Gray would have us remember that Aristotle’s ethics included, along with habit formation and practical wisdom, a call for standards of the good that would *start from the individual* and move towards the communal, rather than communal conceptions of the good being *forced upon individuals*. In other words, what has been left out of the versions of Aristotelian ethics found in military academies, and even in Cook’s criticisms of those academies, is Aristotle’s Doctrine of the Mean.

The Need for “Soldier-Artists”

A thread that runs through the work of J. Glenn Gray, from *The Warriors* (1959) to *The Promise of Wisdom* (1968), is the tension between the individual and society. Gray opens *The Warriors* with precisely the worry that I presented at the end of the previous section: the worry that society misjudges military professionals, that there is a growing “dissociation in our lives between soldiering and civilian pursuits” such that society increasingly views the military professional as “a criminal, a murderer” (Gray 1959, *xvi*). In a vein similar to Hartle, Gray argues that military professionals can experience dimensions of conscience typically unknown to the rest of society. It is this idea that different individuals can experience different levels of conscientiousness due to having been exposed to different experiences that leads Gray to argue that individuals can only judge themselves, not others. Gray writes:

The greater the possibility of free action in the communal sphere, the greater the degree of guilt for evil deeds done in the name of everyone. Still, the degrees of guilt are impossible to assess for anyone else, and hardly any two people share an equal burden of communal guilt. [...] No citizen of a free land can justly accuse his neighbor, I believe, of political guilt, of not having done as much as he should to prevent the state of war or the commission of this or that state crime. But each can—and the man of conscience

will—accuse himself in proportion to the freedom he had to alter the course of events. (Gray 1959, 199)

Walzer adopts Gray’s criterion for determining responsibility by determining freedom of action, but rejects Gray’s caveat that we each must only judge ourselves and not each other. Walzer argues that Gray’s view is simply untenable, that “that kind of self-regard is not possible in politics and morality” (Walzer 1977, 298), for, as we have already seen, Walzer grounds just war theory in the presumed existence of a *common* morality.

And indeed it surely seems as though Walzer must be right here, that we cannot forego ethical judgment and simply trust each other to hold ourselves accountable. Yet Gray returns to this theme again in *The Promise of Wisdom*, for it is in this later text that Gray not only continues his advocacy for individual over social accountability, but provides an argument for how to rethink education in order to promote individual rather than merely social accountability. The reason Gray focuses on the individual is due to what he perceives to be a crisis in moral life, a crisis created by the shift from a religious to a secular society, not unlike the crisis Cook perceives in the shift in the military due to the transition from the Cold War to the War on Terror. With religious values continuing to lose their prominence in serving as the standard for judging what is appropriate, Gray worries that individuals are caught between the extreme of determining what is appropriate by egotistically pursuing pleasure and avoiding pain, and the opposite extreme of determining what is appropriate by blindly conforming to whatever society judges to be appropriate (Gray 1968, 101-102).

Gray locates the mean between these two extremes through a return to the Ancient Greek concept of “artistry,” not in the sense of painting and writing, but in the sense of “the art of good living” (Gray 1968, 98). Though Gray is here returning to an Aristotelian ethics of engagement, it is Socrates who serves as Gray’s model of ethical life. Gray focuses in particular on the Socrates of Plato’s *Symposium*, who was described by Alcibiades as not only a great teacher who could “think well and communicate his ideas in fascinating style,” but also as someone who was virtuous in war, in public, and in private, who could “act well in the trials of existence” (Gray 1968, 99). It is precisely this ability to determine for oneself what is appropriate in any given situation that Gray sees as the truest meaning of *aretē*, of virtue, of what Aristotle was ultimately advocating beyond simply having good habits and the ability to reflect on why such habits are good.

To achieve this artistic individuality, Gray argues that certain conditions are necessary, not only on an individual but also on a social level. Having distinguished artistic individuality from both *individualism* and *conventionalism*, the artistic individual needs, on the one hand, the ability to overcome the individual pressures of hedonism, and on the other hand, the ability to overcome the social pressures of conformity. In reference to

overcoming the pressures of hedonism, Gray argues, not unlike Aristotle and Mill, that *artistic individuality* rather than *egotistic individualism* can be achieved through exposure to a variety of experiences. In order not to ignore pleasure and pain, but to discover for oneself the most meaningful ways of experiencing pleasure and pain, Gray argues that individuals must be exposed to a variety of literature (Gray 1968, 100), to genuine rather than hypocritical role models (Gray 1968, 101), and to “the hazards of uncontrolled experience” as it is only through experiencing “the extremes of human conduct” that we can “discover dimensions of the self we never suspected” (Gray 1968, 105).

Reading fiction and poetry, rather than just STEM textbooks, can expand one’s moral imagination. Having role models who are committed to an artistic way of life, rather than role models who have merely been successful, can improve one’s morale and deepen one’s resolve. Being exposed to the chaos of the world and being trusted to responsibly navigate it, rather than being sheltered from reality and from responsibility, can awaken one’s conscience and reveal one’s humanity.

In reference to overcoming the pressures of conformity, Gray argues that, due to the nature of one’s community, it can be difficult to distinguish an individual who is rebellious from an individual who is repressed, much like how Cook argued that we need to try to distinguish disobedience due to a perceived lack of professionalism from hesitancy due to professionalism. Gray writes:

When a local community is reasonably tolerant and appreciative of diversity, it is usually possible for a youth seeking artistry in conduct to behave within the confines of the permissible. [...] But in a social order that has failed to change, where conformity has become a compulsive force and personal freedom is threatened, the individual has no choice but openly to oppose the ruling powers. His sense of the fitting would be in conscious opposition to conventional standards. In the last analysis, the interests of individual integrity always precede the claims of social order. Artistry in conduct cannot reconcile itself to dictation from without, whether it be religious, political, or simply the imagined requirements of a socially dominant majority. In short, the conventional and the appropriate may travel parallel roads and often intersect, but they rarely coincide for long. (Gray 1968, 103)

Individuals are capable, when given the space to experiment, to determine for themselves an appropriate way to live. But when not given such space, when forced instead to conform, individual attempts to determine how to be virtuous can appear to others to simply be attempts at disobedience. Given, as we have seen, both the lack of trust on the part of Walzer and just war theorists, and the drive to inculcate habits on the part of military academies and military ethicists, Gray would likely not be surprised that military professionals have been discovered committing ethical and legal violations or

diagnosed with PTSD. As Gray warns, we must “recognize the necessity for continuous evolution in the moral sphere, both in the individual and in society,” for the alternative is training individuals to become “a person who obeys rigid rules of conduct and attempts to apply them indiscriminately to the enormous variety of circumstances and personalities he confronts,” to become a person who is “moralistic rather than moral” (Gray 1968, 103-104).

While it may be argued that military professionals are being provided with opportunities to experience the “escape” that Gray advocates “from the security of wealth and comfort, fond guardians, and the protective environment of pedagogues and books” (Gray 1968, 105), they are not being provided with the other side of this education, the side that would allow these military professionals to properly learn from their experience. For along with the experience necessary to discover who and what one is, Gray likewise advocates for education to include learning how to reflect on their experience, as “unless one learns how to reflect on these experiences, the peculiar kind of self-knowledge required for moral skill will fail” (Gray 1968, 105).

It is important to clarify here though that by “reflection” Gray is not calling for military professionals to learn practical wisdom in the sense meant by Cook discussed earlier. What Gray argues for is neither learning the intellectual abilities of “logical sharpness” and “contemplation” (Gray 1968, 106) required of a “soldier-scholar” (Cook 2004, 73), nor learning the values of a “Stoic warrior” of “detachment” and “dissociation” (Sherman 2005, 166), nor learning to think of morality as a “burden...in opposition to all natural inclinations” (Gray 1968, 108) as would be expected of just war theory’s “soldier-ethicist” (Kilner 2011). Instead, what Gray believes is necessary to accompany a military professional’s experiences would be to learn to become a *soldier-artist*, to develop an “awareness” (Gray 1968, 106) of the relationship between the individual and the world; a “discipline of will” (Gray 1968, 107) for being actively responsible rather than idly waiting for events to occur; and a “style in living” and “imagination” in order to have the flexibility and “radical openness” (Gray 1969, 108) to respond to the spontaneous and novel nature of experience.

At this point it may be argued against Gray, much as Walzer did, that he is advocating for a moral education that is simply too abstract and too subjective to be put into practice. And yet Gray would indeed agree with this assessment, as his point is precisely that morality, a morality that is not merely a robotic moralism, *cannot be taught*. As Gray writes, “There is widespread agreement that these virtues, of which we have been speaking, are incapable of being taught in the manner that traditional subject matter is capable of being taught. Still, many things which are not teachable are nevertheless able to be learned” (Gray 1968, 113). It is this distinction between *what can*

be taught and *what can be learned* that Gray is advocating above all else, for it is only by allowing individuals the necessary freedom and opportunity to grow—a freedom and opportunity that must include the ability to fail and to learn from one’s mistakes (Gray 1968, 193)—that an individual can truly become virtuous. Gray nevertheless suggests, as we have seen, practical methods for providing individuals with the opportunity to grow, such as through exposure to a greater variety of literature, a greater variety of role models, and a greater variety of experiences than is typically found in education, let alone in military academies. Yet above all Gray is challenging us to do precisely what Walzer asserts is impossible, to trust individuals to be capable of judging themselves rather than training individuals to associate morality with a fear of being judged by others, a fear that, as I have argued, can produce ethical and legal violations in some instances, and PTSD (or, as I have argued elsewhere (Gertz 2014), what is diagnosed as PTSD could instead be seen as the existential experience of *exile*) in others.

Conclusion

In the first section of this paper I argued that what has been seen as a crisis in military professionalism, a crisis due to ethical and legal violations committed by military professionals, required that we interrogate rather than take for granted the relationship between training and ethics in the professionalization process. This interrogation was motivated by a concern that there is a tension between ethics and training in the military, a tension between how military professionals are expected to behave and how military professionals do behave, a tension that has led to not only these ethical and legal violations, but also to what has been diagnosed as PTSD. In order to carry out this interrogation, I turned to the works of Martin Cook, Anthony Hartle, and J. Glenn Gray, as all three have previously investigated these tensions.

Cook’s focus on the confusion between how outsiders judge military professionals and how military professionals judge themselves revealed a need for military academies to help military professionals not only be able to behave as required, but to understand why such behavior was required in order to better adapt to changing circumstances. However, Hartle’s focus on the tensions between those who have been called to serve in the military and the rest of society helped to reveal that being a military professional is not only a matter of behavior and of self-understanding, but also of identity. By connecting Cook’s discussion of the oft-heard complaint among military professionals that “this isn’t what I signed up for” to Hartle’s discussion of how alienation helps to create the culture of the military profession, I attempted to deepen this concept of identity to show how we could understand identity in an existential sense: in the sense of trying to find one’s place in the world, of trying to be at home in the world.

Using the example of Carl Cranston, I further attempted to show how what is typically diagnosed as symptoms of PTSD could instead be understood as a result of the existential crisis of not being at home in the world; an existential crisis created in part precisely by being judged by others in accordance with standards of behavior with which military professionals do not identify. Yet, because these standards are—according to the just war theory of Michael Walzer, to the theory of ethical warfare taught in military academies—derived from “common morality,” then to not identify with these standards is to risk not only being seen as immoral, but as inhuman.

Turning finally to the work of J. Glenn Gray, and in particular the conflict between Gray and Walzer on self- vs. social-judgment, we were able to better understand both the dangers of holding military professionals to such externally-imposed standards, and why we should instead strive for internally-imposed, individually-realized standards of behavior. However, Gray’s advocacy for an individualistic morality that harkens back to the Ancient Greek concept of “artistry,” of becoming virtuous through the “art of living well,” requires a level of trust and a degree of freedom that Walzer, and likely many others, would argue is simply too impractical to implement in any educational setting, let alone in a military academy.

While Gray nevertheless does provide us with practical suggestions for promoting artistry through literature, role models, and through exposure to dangerous situations, what Gray ultimately provides us with is an ultimatum. Either we can promote genuine morality, a morality that requires a seemingly impractical level of trust but which can produce a deep and all-encompassing level of responsibility, or we can continue to promote a morality of judgment, a morality that requires obedience rather than trust but which can produce a fear of judgment that can lead to ethical and legal violations as well as to diagnoses of PTSD. Preferring obedience to trust and accountability to responsibility, may make us feel more comfortable, but it may also create a vicious cycle of trying to solve crises created by the solutions of more ethics and more treatment that we continue to apply to these crises.

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