

Professionalization in the Canadian Armed Forces: Bureaucracy, Inclusiveness and Independence

The old saw is that the military is one of the two oldest professions in the world. Yet the study of the military as a profession has been largely overlooked in the sociological study of the professions. In this time of massive changes within the Canadian Armed Forces it is important to review the professional status of the military and the implications some of these changes will have for professionalization. Lessons from the changing nature of other professions and the growth of the new knowledge occupations may provide useful foundations for consideration of the changing nature of the “Profession of Arms” in the Canadian context.

The Canadian Forces has experienced a number of changes over the past several decades that have impacted on the work setting and the occupational character of service in the Forces. This analysis is focused on changes with respect to the professional nature of the Canadian Forces; life as an employee within a new form of bureaucracy, the demand for the creation of a Force that is socially and occupationally inclusive, and the struggle for control of one’s work in the effort to maintain professional standards. This discussion begins with a general consideration of the nature and analysis of professions followed by a consideration of some of the characteristics that differentiate the military from other occupations, and concludes with a brief general analysis of professions, with an emphasis on the Canadian Forces, operating in a bureaucracy, struggling for professional independence and control, and dealing with the new demands for social and occupational inclusiveness.

The Sociology of Professions

The cluster of concepts related to ‘profession’ were developed in recognition of the emergence of a set of ‘knowledge’ based occupations that were integral to the development of the modern era, the period of industrialization. The roots of the professions extend well back in history but the modern forms of profession were a creation of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The standard definition and initial comprehensive analysis of ‘professions’, dates to Carr-Saunders’ groundbreaking analysis (Carr-Saunders, 1933). A lively analysis and discussion of professions has flourished since that time.

There are many descriptions of the traits that make up a profession. The following short form of the definition of a profession incorporates the essential traits commonly discussed. A profession is an occupation:

- whose members claim exclusive mastery of a socially necessary body of esoteric knowledge;
- that claims to provide an absolutely necessary service to the community and society;
- that claims to act, altruistically, in the interests of the people it serves;

- that claims that only its members can judge the qualifications necessary for practice; it is members only who establish and maintain the educational facilities necessary for training, certify individuals for practice, and judge the adequacy of their practice once they are fully certified and working;
- that develops a distinctive ‘occupational’ culture;
- that is successful in gaining recognition from the public of its claims to the above and successfully convinces the state that the above rights and privileges of the occupations must be enshrined in law.

The trait approach to analysis of ‘profession’ has been augmented by a power perspective. The most commonly used ‘power’ theory found in the articles reviewed for this paper is “control theory”, as it deals with the relationship between professionals and bureaucracies, an issue commonly addressed in the literature. Traditionally, ‘profession’ literature has viewed the relationship between professionals and bureaucracies as incompatible. This incompatibility was assumed by earlier theorists to be the result of the fundamental differences between the norms of bureaucracies and professions (Roach Anleu 1992: 24). More recently, sociologists have relied on ‘control’ theory to conceptualize the relationship between bureaucracies and professionals. First, it is assumed that professions and their claims to professional status must be placed in historical, economic, political and social context as they are fundamentally shaped by these conditions, rather than assuming that claims to professional status are objective, inevitable, and timeless (Roach Anleu 1992: 24; Hugman 1991: 201). Next, these claims to professional status (for example ‘autonomy,’ or ‘esoteric knowledge’) are conceived as strategies in exerting occupational control and autonomy vis-à-vis other groups, including bureaucratic managers (Roach Anleu 1992: 25; Hugman 1991: 201; Aldridge 1996: 184).

In this view, attention shifts from a focus on incompatibility of goals to a concentration on processes between the two groups, such as on the ways they interact and impinge on each other (Roach Anleu 1992: 25), how the competing demands of each group are managed, and what this can tell us about “the profession’s power in the market, derived from the demand for its expertise” (Aldridge 1996: 184). Similarly, Hugman asserts that this approach places questions of “power at the centre of its understanding of professionalization” (Hugman 1991: 201).” Finally, occupations such as social work, nursing and teaching are considered ‘mediated’ or ‘bureau-professions’, reflecting the reality that these professions developed mainly within bureaucracies (Hugman 1991: 201). In summary, this theoretical framework accounts for the struggles these occupations face, and the reality that members of these professions depend on organizations for their livelihood, yet provide an invaluable service to them as well.

Profession is partly the nature of the occupation and partly the success of the practitioners in asserting their claim. Occupations are classified as professions partly on the basis of what they do and how they do it and partly as result of the power game they play.

It became clear with the first analyses of the social status and prestige, of occupations that those occupations initially identified as professions ranked high in the eyes of the general public. This social recognition of the professions coupled with the privileges granted

them by the state has led members of other occupations to seek recognition as professions. Generally, practitioners of an occupation become concerned with their 'professional' status due to:

- an interest in this social recognition accorded the professions;
- the implications that social recognition has its rewards in the market; or
- a desire to secure the special privileges accorded their professional association.

The analysis of the profession, over the years, has become entangled with the social value attributed to these occupations, both in the eyes of the public and of the sociologists who study them. This blurring can be ascribed in part to one of the very characteristics that was chosen to define the professions - the members' claim that they provide a highly valued and needed service to society. The idea that a particular occupation was a 'profession' on the basis that it provided some unique and valued service devalued other occupations; their exclusion implied that their services were not as significant. Concomitantly, academics have made personal value judgments regarding the worthiness of the service delivered to partially accept or reject an occupation's claim to professional status. One such case is the context of the military where judgments of the service performed has led to a rejection of the military as a profession. (Freidson, 1970; Carr-Saunders, 1933). The key to the classical definition of a 'profession' is not whether the service provided is or is not valuable and absolutely necessary, rather it is whether the occupation's claim to such value is accepted by the public and the state. Many modern nations operate with a proportionately smaller handful of lawyers than we have and their status, such as that found in Japan, is quite low whereas in North America, the claim has been made and accepted.

The classical professions such as medicine, law, and accounting emerged in the context of private practice operating on a fee for service basis. The Doctor had 'his' patients, and the Lawyer, 'his' clients. The professions were populated by males of the dominant class and ethnicity and were socially exclusive. The professions successfully defined themselves as providing a needed and highly-valued service to their communities and to society, a claim that has been accepted by the public and the State.

The majority of contemporary professionals now find themselves functioning as employees in growing organizations. The bureaucracy is the home of most of today's professionals where large-scale employers are increasingly concerned with short-term performance and less concerned than the practicing professionals with the maintenance of good practice and professional standards. The maintenance of professional independence and professional standards is therefore becoming increasingly problematic in this post-modern world.

Furthermore, the social exclusivity of the profession has been successfully challenged in some cases and increasingly open to males who had been previously excluded on the basis of social class, ethnicity, or race. The professions have also, in the past several decades, been forced to accept women into their ranks. The occupational exclusivity, the almost absolute protection of the boundaries of privilege in practice, is also being successfully challenged by occupations that were previously excluded from the domain

of the doctor, engineer, accountant, and lawyer. Nurse practitioners, midwives, para-legals and others have successfully challenged for the right to practice in previously guarded domains. One notable exception to this is dentistry where there has been no significant challenge from other associated occupations.

The position of the military is somewhat unique in the pantheon of occupations. The following section explores some of the characteristics that differentiate the military as a form of profession.

The Military as Profession

Although the military has been the subject of occupational analysis for a number of decades, the general literature on the professions makes surprisingly little reference to the armed forces. Given the nature of the occupation, the changes that it is undergoing, and the evolution of the concept of profession in the post modern age, it is past time for an investigation of the similarities and differences between the military and the traditional professions.

Several similarities exist between the military and classical professions:

- Each lay successful claim to the mastery of an esoteric body of knowledge not generally shared by the public at large;
- Each has gained control over the selection of individuals who will be allowed to enter the occupations, general conscription being the exception here;
- Each controls the training and education of the members of the occupations;
- Each is recognized as having the right to discipline members, the military having its own courts and rules of jurisprudence which are unique to the military;
- Each controls career advancement within their occupations;
- Each has control of the use of their name, who may call themselves a doctor or military officer;
- Each has developed a distinctive culture.

Thus the military does possess most of the distinctive characteristics associated with the professions. However, the specialized literature on the military points out several unique characteristics of the armed forces, and the Profession of Arms:

- The concept of unlimited liability is unique to the military. No other occupation carries with it the potential that might require its members to offer up their lives on command or to command others to do the same;
- The basic model of the modern military forces was designed around a population of single men, families being accommodated when necessary. This accommodation of family became more common through time as the requirement for recruits to remain single became more difficult to enforce. Kohen marks the change as occurring after WWII. Old models survive for a long time and the

present military reflects the struggle to accommodate families in the contemporary setting (Kohen, 1984);

- The occupation was built around the social isolation of practitioners from the population at large. This allowed for a more complete secondary socialization of recruits, the maintenance of stronger bonding, and a more comprehensive culture;
- Status structures were elaborated and included the spouses and children of those who were married, ideally in the context of isolated communities;
- The practice of the Profession of Arms cannot be carried out by a single individual working with an individual client, it is inherently organizational in its practice;
- Initiation of practice is not at the discretion of the individual practitioner; initiation of practice is either ordered by non-military personnel, politicians, or those in military command once an operation has been initiated. Unlike the military, doctors can treat patients when they present themselves for service; The Minister of Health Care does not initiate medical service. An accountant may refuse an offer of employment.

While the military possesses most of the characteristics that are evoked in the definition of profession, one of the major differences in Canada between the military and civilian professions is that the military does not have an arm's length relationship with the state. Thus the primary distinguishing characteristic between the military and the professions is the relationship of the military to the state. While traditional professions are given their authority by the state, the military is the arm of the state charged with the ultimate exercise of the power of that state. Operating as an agent of the state its actions are controlled by the political arm of the state in a manner that is unparalleled in the world of work. The state may regulate practice in other occupations but it rarely orders individual practitioners to engage at specific moments in time. The military also has no professional association or union that negotiates with the state for the benefit of its members. Furthermore, the military is restricted in the ways and the extent to which it may launch independent appeals to the public for support of its causes.

Several problems associated with professional practice are shared by the classical professions and the military in the contemporary scene:

- All are faced with the status of employee as the older professions shift from private practice to a bureaucratic setting;
- All are faced with changing work structures as increasing organizational complexity moves their work in the direction of team efforts and away from simple individual practice;
- All are struggling to maintain the professional privileges they have acquired and are working to extend those privileges in the face of state and employer opposition;
- All are faced with changing demographics, as previously excluded individuals are now entering the occupations; these include women, and racial and ethnic minorities

A final shared problem has to do with the effect of cost containment activities of organizations on professionalization initiatives. This issue is further exacerbated for the Canadian military by its close relationship to the state. The Canadian Forces face a problem shared by all modern military services, but aggravated here, that of financial support. Weapons systems and support technologies have increased in cost at a dramatic rate. The military budget has been shrinking for some time and the capacity of the Forces to maintain themselves, in terms of equipment and operations has been severely challenged.

In many cases, cost-containment strategies hinder the professionalization process. For example, the restructuring of work initiated by Registered Nurses (RNs) in the 1980's in an effort to professionalize would have been more successful if not for the trend of cost containment by management that occurred shortly afterward. Though RNs successfully laid claim to nursing work through total patient care (an assertion of their autonomy), thus enhancing their professional statusⁱ, simultaneous cost containment strategies by hospital administration restricted the total number of staff to improve efficiency (Brannon 1994: 165). This left a shortage of unskilled LPNs and NAs in the ward to do the "dirty work" or work not directly related to patient care, and increasingly left RNs to both organize and do *all* work on the ward (skilled and unskilled), ultimately leading to considerable strain on nurses (ibid).ⁱⁱ This is one example of how the cost containment strategy of organizations can diminish the efforts of its members to professionalize.

The Military as a Profession

The position of the military in relation to other occupations presents a picture of some considerable convergence while still leaving the military unique in several ways. These common challenges, including the cost containment issues, can be largely related back to issues arising from the increasing interaction of the professions within bureaucracies that are ever more inclusive in nature and the resulting issues of professional independence that these relationships spawn. The next section deals with similar problems facing all professions (bureaucracy, inclusiveness, professional independence). Particular attention is paid to both the similarities in the problems facing all professions and the differences in the situations faced by the military.

Addressing the issues of Bureaucracy, Inclusiveness and Independence

Both professions and occupations that struggle to develop or maintain a privileged status in today's organizational structures must address the implications of working within

bureaucratic structures with an inclusive workforce and increasing challenges to their independence. Each of these issues will be addressed below.

Bureaucracy

Civilian professions and the military are moving from opposite directions toward a similar form of bureaucratic control. The classical professionals are more likely to work within strong bureaucracies than ever before, while the organizational form of the military bureaucracy is also changing.

The modern professionals, such as those in medicine, law, dentistry, and accounting originally worked on a fee-for-service basis in private practice. Over the past century these practitioners have moved, with the exception of dentistry, into larger practices and eventually to employee status with ever growing firms. In addition, the State has assumed an increasing role in monitoring and controlling their practice. The combined effect of the new employee model and the intervention of the State has created situations where the economic interests of the employer, or the will of the State, have jeopardized 'good practice' and sound professional judgment. For example, the intervention of HMO's (Health Maintenance Organizations), insurers and government health units that specify how different illnesses are to be treated wrest considerable power from physicians thus limiting their authority to make judgments on the best way to treat their patients. The exigencies of the larger organizations assume primacy when there is a conflict between 'professional autonomy' and the organization.

In the case of some of the new knowledge occupations - software developers, information systems professionals, and project managers - the situation is highly undefined and the problems of creating and maintaining professional standards are the subject of endless discussion and frustration. These occupations emerged at the end of the modern era, with practitioners serving as employees. The next decade or so will determine whether or not civilian bureaucracies can negotiate a reasonable accommodation between good practice and the needs of the organization.

Several efforts are underway to rectify these problems; efforts to deal with professionalization in the context of the bureaucracy have generally utilized a Human Resources model, an organizational perspective that is focused on the concept of qualifications, skill sets, and personal abilities. In each of these cases the emphasis has been on differentiating practitioners with respect to 'proven' abilities. This has assumed three basic forms;

- Voluntary certification programs administered by professional organizations such as the Canadian Information Processing Society, the Project Management Institute, and The Institute for Electronic and Electrical Engineering are all designed to provide individuals with credentials that give them privilege in their practice while establishing the accrediting association as the control center for the certification process;

- Voluntary certification programs administered by ‘vendor’ corporations such as Microsoft, Oracle, and Intel, are designed to provide clients with qualified practitioners, while the vendor retains control of the certification;
- Certification programs administered by employer organizations such as Nortel, or Departments of Defense are examples of instances where the employer not only dictates the primacy of goals, but the standards of practice for the individual professionals.

In each of these cases the relationships between the ‘professionals’ and the organization have been ignored. The great weakness of the Human Resources movement has been that it ignored the traditional and salient focus on relationships held by its predecessor, Human Relations. The difficulties experienced with the bureaucracy are only partially a function of the uncontrolled right to practice. Control of practice is important, as attested to by the professionalization of the medical profession in the late 19th century when untold numbers of unlicensed and unqualified quacks were driven from the marketplace by certification. Certification is important with respect to quality of practice but qualified personnel operating in an organizational context that is inimical to good practice cannot achieve their potential.

Efforts to deal with certification have met with varying degrees of success:

- Certification becomes most relevant as it shifts from purely voluntary toward required;
- Certification becomes more important as the controlling bodies develop some distance from the employers and are able to exercise some control over the standards of admission and practice, independent of the short-term interests of employers;
- Certification becomes more important to good practice as the practitioners commit themselves to the discipline of the certifying body in a joint effort to raise the standards of practice.

Certification can assist professionalization in four ways. First, the very process of certification lends credence to the claims made by professionals. Second, employer acceptance of the certification process moves them toward a serious consideration of the opinions of their professional employees. Third, definitions of liability provided by insurance companies or the courts can provide pressure on employers to recognize the need for professional judgment and autonomy. Fourth, certification can provide an organizational base of countervailing power through the successful professional associations that have gained formal recognition.

Certification has been a primary focus for the classical professions as it is keyed to the associational control of practice, as well as providing social justification for privilege by demonstrating concern for the quality of that service.

In any case, reports from the world of work suggest that the core of the problems with bureaucracy reside more within the organization than with the simpler questions associated with certification. The laments of Project Managers, Systems Professionals,

Software Developers and other new knowledge practitioners is focused on their inability to find their legitimate place in the decisional structure of the bureaucracies. Developing relationships with senior management and the executive level of the bureaucracies form the focus of concerns.

A few years ago the knowledge gap between senior management and specialists of one sort or another was relatively small. If they took the time, managers could learn enough about a technical specialization, to make intelligent decisions about the application of that technology. Today, the gap between the ability of the lay person, or someone once skilled in the technology to make decisions based on knowledge that has become the domain of currently technically competent is too great to cross alone. Management and executive decisions need to be made in conjunction with the new professional specialists. There is, however, no organizational tradition which links senior management to what used to be operational personnel. The belief that decisions should be divided by levels of the organization is dysfunctional in a technologically sophisticated organization. Furthermore, there are strong traditions which direct senior management away from association with 'lower level' personnel and into contact with others of their peers or their superiors. This 'status' separation exacerbates the knowledge gap between the top and lower levels of the organization and decreases the possibility that professional practitioners will be incorporated into the decisional system. Social status divisions are most appropriate in a community setting. Status divisions become increasingly dysfunctional in a contemporary formal organizational setting.

A recent, major study focused on the question of how Project Managers could sell Project Management to senior management. (Thomas et al, 2002) The problem was accepted by all respondents as real and significant. A recent study in the area of information management indicated that the gap between executives and practitioners was increasing rather than decreasing. (CIO, Athabasca U, 2003) In each of these cases the question asked by the practitioners was what could they do to bridge the gap. The short answer to the question is that some very socially skilled practitioners who are working in amenable settings can get closer and be incorporated into the decisional structure. The real question, however, is how to get senior management to change from a socially distant, command and control structure, into a decisional form which is suited to the 21st century. This later question has not been answered. North American management is tied to the notion of 'managerial rights', decision-making as it has been practiced during the 20th century. The fundamental management ethos has not yet recognized the new age where decisional structures are used to achieve organizational ends rather than to satisfy status desires of senior managers.

The incorporation of professionals into bureaucracies requires that both management and practitioners become more knowledgeable about each other's work and find the means to solve organizational problems that serve as barriers to achievement of organizational goals.

The Military and Bureaucracy

The case of the military is slightly different from that of the other professions, as the modern military has always operated in a bureaucracy, the Prussian military and civil organizations providing the initial models for the definition and analysis of bureaucracies. Ideas of rational and efficient organization based on impersonal exercise of power according to rational rules plays a strong role in the backbone of military organization. The hierarchy of offices and channeling of communication through such levels, the need to know secrecy of files and clearly defined spheres of authority determined by general rules and governed by regulations are all clearly embedded in the normal operation of the military.

The Canadian Armed Forces, as well as the United States Forces, took bureaucracy an extra step, as did a number of early civilian industrial operations. The blending of community and bureaucracy was common in the first two-thirds of the twentieth century. The company town was a dominant social form in Canadian history and prominent in the United States. The classical military base and the isolated resource community shared a social form that provided a context for virtually all of the life of the residents. Friends and neighbours expressed dismay that a personal acquaintance of one of the authors chose to move out of the mining community of Flin Flon, Manitoba during the seventies; they were incredulous that he was moving his family out of the security of the total community and into the unknown of an individualized world. The bureaucracies of a company town encountered exercises near total control over the lives of the members of the community. However, the company town is dying in North America and the military equivalent is also fading away.

Embeddedness in a complete community creates a very dense communication milieu. Everybody knows everything in these communities. Communication between levels and across divisions is provided for by the intensity and totality of the interaction patterns. There is almost always a way to get a message through the system and if one tries hard enough an ear will be found. The informal networks are comprehensive and manage to compensate for poorly designed formal organizational systems.

In contrast, the occupational bureaucracy is notoriously inadequate for the facilitation of internal communication, relying instead on routinization, simple technologies, and relatively slow rates of economic and social change. A rigid control and command bureaucracy without the benefit of strong informal ties is weakened in its quest for commitment and loyalty. The point at issue here is the direction of movement and the introduction of compensating communication devices.

In the case of the Armed Forces, not only does membership entail an 'absolute' commitment to the work organization, this commitment was enhanced by the community in which it was created, one that was physically segregated from the larger community and that incorporated the spouses and children of the members of the force. The classical military community was more comprehensive than the normal resource-based community

in that it allowed for transfer of individuals between a network of communities and was more inclusive of the families. The military model was, then, an approximation of a total institution and a community. The community was built first around the single male members and secondly around the families. The range of control over the various sectors of members' lives was very extensive. Under these circumstances, 'absolute' obedience and total 'loyalty' could be approximated.

Today, both civilian and military 'towns' are being abandoned for the same reasons, cost and changing life styles. Communities are expensive to maintain and younger members of the population are much less likely than in the past to give up the freedom to choose to reside in the larger communities. It is cheaper to fly labour forces in and out of remote camps than to create communities at the site and similarly, the extraordinary financial constraints imposed on the Canadian Forces make it virtually impossible to maintain base communities intact.

The organizational changes of the past century have weakened the community aspect of the Forces and restricted the range of behaviours the organization can control. The military is viewed by some observers as moving toward an 'occupational' model. <citation> If 'Service' is becoming an 'occupation' operating in an organizational setting that approximates that of the civilian professionals, then there is much to learn from the struggles of established and emerging civilian professions.

Most of what there is to learn is associated with the negative aspects of the bureaucracy. Sociologists are more likely to be drawn toward the study of the struggles to professionalize within the context of the bureaucracy, rather than an analysis of the benefits. In general, the recent literature frames these struggles in terms of the bureaucracy and its potential to impose a managerial agenda on professionalsⁱⁱⁱ; this approach falls in line with the shift toward conservative ideology occurring since the 1980's, as mentioned above. Aldridge nicely sums this up when she notes that while bureaucracies like the state, provide ample resources for professionals, "what [the bureaucracy] gives, it can take away or vary (1996: 185)."

One of the most serious sets of questions confronting the military will be those associated with career and rewards. The reward structure of the Forces is not competitive with the civilian world and the current structure does not provide for the kind of career movement likely to appeal to many of its most qualified members. The movement toward a standard form of work organization will tax the capacity of the Forces to compete in the open market and to recruit and retain the level of commitment necessary for successful operations. As the Forces loses more of the community element and members become less tolerant of the traditional 'total' control over their lives, the new demands for increasingly higher levels of technical and social competencies will challenge the leadership. The bureaucracy is designed to protect the individual from arbitrary authority and is also deliberately created to separate the personal and work lives of the employee. It will be at least as difficult to deal with professionalization and professional development in the military as it now is in the civilian world.

The management and political elements of the bureaucracy derived from a very traditional male dominated approach to management. These males represented a particular social status (usually the high status racial and ethnic groups in positions of authority in society). The use of closed communities, rigid hierarchical control and strong socialization practices allowed for the development of extreme loyalty and obedience to the rules of the organization. Decisions around closing military bases and restructuring the military on a professional bureaucratic model will have serious implications for the level of education and training required and for the nature of the socialization processes established to develop social control and informal communication mechanisms. Ultimately societal pressures and changing work norms demand a more inclusive professional and military model.

Inclusiveness has not been a hallmark of the traditional bureaucracy but the changes in western society arising from the new multiculturalism and feminism demonstrate that inclusiveness is an important element of organizational life that needs to be considered by all professions. The impact of inclusiveness on the professions and the military is discussed below.

Inclusiveness

The world of work is no longer neatly segregated along the lines of gender, race, ethnicity, and social class in Canada. This situation is particularly salient in a nation that is not reproducing itself and increasingly dependent upon immigrant labour. A significant percentage of all labour requirements will have to be met through immigration in the next 10-15 years. The conditions of the labour market make it impossible to categorically exclude any significant element of the population from access to all segments of the market. There will be differential distribution of genders across the labour market and other segments of the population will flow unevenly through the labour markets, but all will flow everywhere to one degree or another.

Organizations are no longer neatly divided into those who command, those who act, and those who support. The teams that are mobilized to perform work increasingly share the joint responsibilities of decision-making and productive activity. The concept of professional can no longer be confined to one sector or strata of a large organization. Many of the performance problems of large civilian organizations are related to an attempt to deny full professional participation by employees whose knowledge demands their inclusion. Many of the project failures in contemporary organizations are attributed to the failure to include qualified project managers or important stakeholders in the full decision making process. The notion of Officers as professionals in the “profession of arms” and non-commissioned personnel as non-professionals is not likely to serve the interests of the Forces. Reports from the field of Project Management and Software Development are replete with claims that civilian bureaucracies have not incorporated the new knowledge occupations into their decisional structures and have, as a consequence, encountered serious problems with respect to the production of goods and the delivery of services.

Dealing with social occupational inclusivity in the tradition of a command and control organization is not easy. The Forces further must deal with the fact that the military organization is not just a de facto masculine organization. Armies have always been defined in terms of the male protector and defender of women and children. Johnny marches off to war to protect the women, children, the elderly and the infirm left behind. But, there is no choice now with respect to general inclusivity. The modern industrial world is moving in that direction. No institution is capable of standing alone as a bastion of exclusivity. People who were previously excluded from full integration into the system will be entering it. The one exception to the notion of major inclusion in the Forces is that it is unlikely that women will make up a large percentage of combat troops in the foreseeable future. The experience of gender movement into the police forces and related endeavors suggests that there is no mass movement developing in this respect .

Here the military will need to address issues of diversity and multi-functional teams that have been a focus for research on team development and management. Rather than strong vertical lines of command or perhaps in concert with these, the new military will need to develop appropriate mechanisms for dealing with cross functional teams. Officers managing in this environment will need strong multi-level leadership skills and all personnel will need teamwork and followership skills. This becomes particularly important as a profession develops an increasing number of specializations that threatens the integrity of an occupational culture built around commonality of knowledge and function. The inclusion of a number of different professions, with each splintering into specializations, creates a greater demand for leadership to allow for the coordination of personnel who speak different professional languages and bring diverse perspectives to the table.

The growth in inclusiveness both in societal and professional groupings will have serious implications for all organizations the military included. The ‘professionals’ will appear everywhere in the Forces and they will come in all social and occupational forms. One of the big questions is how to accommodate the need for many different kinds of knowledge workers in such a way as to make use of their knowledge and skills and to allow them to function as professionals. The question of professional independence is of concern in all organizations and will have some interesting connotations in the military context.

Professional Independence

The question for any organization is how to utilize the talents of professional personnel in a manner that is consistent with the values and goals of the organization. The private sector has become so focused on short-term considerations that it has great difficulty dealing with long-term goals such as insuring the long-term welfare of the organization. This becomes particularly contentious when the short term goals of the organization come into conflict with generally accepted best practices for any of the professional groups that make up the organization. Issues such as those between Enron and Andersen and GAAP are inevitable in this environment.

The Forces does not have to deal with the question of survival, its appropriation is built into every federal budget. Thus, the military is in some ways shielded from the severity of some of these issues. Attention may be turned to the question of effective and efficient functioning within the values set of the Forces. The demands of the post- modern military organization are for successful integration of the talents and skills of the personnel across peacetime and combat scenarios. The greatest challenge for today's military may be the tension between the kinds of leadership and management required in peacetime and combat situations.

Traditionally, the rigid obedience to command and control necessary in combat situations has been used in all situations. Today's military engages in a number of activities other than combat. However, combat and activities such as peacekeeping require that the traditional authority structure and the intense commitment of members be retained. The military situation is complicated by the fact that many of the activities engaged in today are very similar to those found in other occupations. The Canadian Forces also must deal with the knowledge that the last 'war' that engaged the military ended about 50 years ago and that true combat experience in the last half century has been limited. The warrior icon, and the demand for absolute loyalty, has become mixed with an organization assuming a more civilian form of organization. Indeed, the civilian presence at all levels has grown significantly in the past several decades.

The 'Profession of Arms' was developed during a period when combat was the defining activity of the Forces and the level of occupational specialization was much simpler than it is now and the years have produced an organization that is full of traditions and rituals that stretch back centuries. The contemporary professional model is about 100 years old, only elaborated in the last 50 years and with total disregard for the past.

The new and old knowledge occupations are struggling to balance the need for professional judgment and standards with the need for the individual to accommodate the needs of the organization. Failure to accommodate true professional standards and activities costs the economy a great deal. Failure to come to grips with the provision for professional judgment and standards in the Forces will be costly. The challenge to the Canadian Military is formidable.

Conclusions

The professions, both traditional and contemporary, face a number of common issues as we move into the 21st century. Many of them come into play because of the move away from an industrial towards a knowledge based model of the nature of work. More of our work in all areas of society is knowledge based now. This means that the social prestige of knowledge work is being questioned. Traditional professions are no longer as prestigious or esoteric as they used to be. Societal knowledge and common reporting

means that their actions are called into question on a regular basis. Professions will need to adapt to maintain their place in the world of work.

The military is a time honored profession whose operation is also facing changes and questions originating from the changes in society and the nature of work. Many of the issues facing the military are common to other professions. A few are unique. This paper has examined these issues and drawn out some important questions that must be addressed by both the professions in general and the military in particular.

The pressures facing the traditional professions involve the move from an exclusionary, prestigious position in the world of work outside of large organizations and focused on a singular work culture and community, to the less prestigious and more cost conscious roles of quasi-professionals working within large bureaucracies. The main issue to be resolved here is the power and control relationship between the profession and the bureaucracy.

The changes facing the military are the move from a unitary “profession of arms” strongly rooted in a hierarchical bureaucracy particularly focused on the leadership of the military in combat to the management and leadership of a diverse group of occupations and professions within a less culturally cohesive community with much more varied roles to play in society. Here again, negotiating the relationships between the traditional “profession of arms” and the new professional groups growing within it will be a particular challenge.

Both will require careful management of the cultural changes necessary for these professional groups to work in the new environment. Leadership skills will change dramatically for both groups. Command and control leadership functions much better in a commonly held cultural environment. Incorporating the new professionals into the military (or sharing the role of the professional in the case of the traditional professions) will require a much broader and more inclusive form of leadership that acknowledges all the pieces of the leadership system including the command and control functions and incorporates them into a more fluid and shared leadership style conducive to the effective functioning of cross functional teams and military battalions. Teaming and followership skills must be modified to include the role of professional judgment and the necessity to share leadership based on the skills necessary for the decision at hand.

In the traditional professions and those occupational groups attempting to gain that status, education and certification are clearly important tactics. In the military, education and certification have long played a role in determining rankings within the “profession of arms”. Both groups will need to revisit the role education and certification will have on a go forward basis. Amongst the professions (and those occupations that want to be), the biggest question focuses on ‘who gets to say what counts as education and who gets to grant certification’. Within the military, this may also be an issue particularly around the multi-occupational groups in the military. At the same time, education and certification are likely to become much more varied across skill groups. How will this differentiation be managed? What sort of education will lead to officer ranks?

The socialization and control of the profession is at issue for both groups. It is far easier to socialize people when they come from common social and economic backgrounds and are then removed from their comfort zones and put through common training and experiences. This was much easier when the professions of all types were largely drawn from single males of a certain class (in the case of the officers). Today's professions must pay attention to the socialization process and take into account the diversity of the backgrounds of those coming into it and the need for continued socialization that will not be provided by the former common living and working arrangements.

In addition, the military faces the supreme challenge of attracting and retaining talented individuals with skills that are in demand both within and without the military organization at a time when the military is under funded and requires of its membership the unlimited liability of potential loss of life. The traditional socialization and loyalty it engendered will be more difficult to generate in a more bureaucratic and organizational military. In addition, the control exerted by the State plays a significant role in the future prestige and funding of the profession. These are serious issues that require careful attention over and above the common problems facing the other professions.

Several suggestions that could facilitate coordination of professionalization within the forces with the demands of the organization are:

- Develop certification standards and requirements that are coordinated with external professional certification bodies, specifically for the new knowledge occupations. This has already been done in the case of the traditional professions such as medicine, accounting, law, etc.
- Increase the strength of the ties between the professionals in the forces and external professional associations. Attendance at professional meetings and full participation in external association should be encouraged and supported (financially and with time off to participate).
- Develop professional associations within the forces to give voice to the concerns of professional practice. Encourage the various professionals within the forces to meet and exchange ideas relevant to their work within the forces (e.g. build this into their occupational requirements).
- Develop programs that bring line command into association with various professional groups to allow for discussion and consensus building within the forces. Workshops and symposiums should be developed that are focussed on the constructive inclusion of professionals. If this becomes a regular part of the work-life of line commanders and professionals, it will create a more positive climate within which the questions associated with professionalism and the organization and can explored.
- Build an appreciation of the needs for accommodating both professional practices and organizational requirements into the basic and continuing educational systems.

This paper set out to examine the Canadian military as a “profession of arms” in light of the challenges facing professions in today’s post modern organizational context. We explored the sociological discussion of professions and situated the “profession of arms” within this framework. We next identified the common challenges facing professions and discussed how these challenges impact the military. We also highlighted some clear differences in the military situation and identified the challenges that need to be addressed. This paper both highlights and raises questions for discussion.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss these issues further please contact:

Dr. Bill Zwerman

Or

Dr. Janice Thomas

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ⁱ Ironically, Brannon notes that RNs' reclamation of nursing work as something to be done exclusively by RNs was implemented by management because it "converged with managerial interests in increasing labor productivity (1994:165)."

ⁱⁱ As well, under total patient care, nurses find themselves more accountable for their care work, to both doctors and management. Under the team nursing scheme, it was LPNs and NAs who were accountable to nurses. Some professional status is lost in total patient care, as doctors focus on the RNs' accountability of care work, but ignore RNs' efforts to express their professional opinions and suggestions regarding patient care (Brannon 1994:173).

ⁱⁱⁱ While relations with other groups of professionals and non-professionals within the context of a bureaucracy is also discussed, much of the emphasis is on the relationship between bureaucratic managers and a given group of professionals, which is why this aspect is stressed in this review.