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Behavioral Ethics
The Missing Piece of an Integrative Approach to Military Ethics

David Todd and Paolo Tripodi

Abstract: This article explores the expanding field of behavioral ethics, summarizing its findings under the gap between the perceived versus actual ethical selves, intuitive versus rational decision making, and the susceptibility to internal, organizational, and situational factors. Research into these influences indicates behavioral ethics should be integrated into the military ethical training and education endeavor and is most impactful when it is taught experientially.

Keywords: military ethics, behavioral ethics, ethical leadership, leadership development

The last few decades have been extremely important for the development of military ethics as one of the core disciplines taught at military education institutions, both at the junior and senior level.[1] Today, all U.S. military educational institutions have some type of ethics program or department. Other nations' armed forces—including the United Kingdon, Australia, France, and Italy, just to mention a few—have adopted or are in the process of adopting military ethics as a component of the formation of their officers and NCOs. The process that led to such a development in the field of military ethics began at the end of the 1990s, but it received renewed emphasis during

David Todd is a U.S. Navy chaplain currently assigned to the Naval Leadership and Ethics Center, Newport, RI. The personal viewpoints expressed in this article are CDR Todd's alone and are not the viewpoint of the Department of Defense, Department of the Navy, or the Navy Chaplain Corps. Paolo Tripodi is the ethics branch head and a professor of ethics and leadership at the Lejeune Leadership Institute, Marine Corps University.

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the years when thousands of troops deployed in two demanding wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

High-profile incidents of unethical behavior during operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and the resulting impact on future operations demonstrated the importance of preparing servicemembers for the ethical challenges of combat. Yet, unethical and unprofessional behavior is not limited to the battlefield. During the last few years, the Department of Defense (DOD) Office of the Inspector General has received a growing number of allegations of unethical conduct against senior leaders. According to the DOD Inspector General's report, *Top DOD Management Challenges, Fiscal Year 2018*, "there was a 13 percent increase in complaints alleging misconduct by senior officials from [fiscal year] FY 2015 to FY 2017 (710 to 803)."[2] Such allegations were mainly about personal misconduct, improper relationships or personnel actions, misuse of government resources, and travel violations. A significant number of personal misconduct incidents were related to improper relationships and sexual behavior.[3]

In November 2012, then-Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta initiated a top-to-bottom review of ethics development, training, and education within the military. The review was vigorously continued by Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel who appointed, in 2014, U.S. Navy Rear Admiral Margaret Klein as the senior advisor for military professionalism. Admiral Klein took a holistic approach to understand the issues at hand and how to explain ethical misconduct. More important, she investigated how to develop and deliver better and more effective ethics instruction. A few months after she began her investigation, she stated, "After talking with psychologists, sociologists, neuroscientists and others, the simple answer that they were bad people [people engaging in unethical behavior] may not be complete." Klein noted how some behavioral research found that sleep deprivation, poor nutrition, and other physical strains can compromise an individuals' self-control. She also emphasized the value of sociological and psychological research to understand the development of the so-called hubris syndrome as a result of unconstrained power and a certain degree of success. Leaders who become affected by the hubris syndrome can adopt impulsive self-destructive behavior. Klein stressed that "one of the unique symptoms of this hubris syndrome is the belief by these individuals that they are only answerable to history for their actions," and she strongly emphasized how the scientific and business communities have a lot to teach to those leaders who make decisions.[4]

In this article, we suggest that behavioral ethics, a truly interdisciplinary area of social science research, is the missing piece in military ethics and education and that by integrating and applying the different approaches to ethical thinking—normative ethics, behavioral ethics, and applied ethics—we can de-

velop stronger, more ethically resilient leaders who are better equipped to nurture and grow their team's ability to make sound ethical choices in the crucible of operational challenge.

Behavioral Ethics

Social science research in individual behavior provides evidence that people, even those who have a clear understanding of right and wrong and are committed to do right, make unethical choices. Training and education programs based on normative ethics stress a prescriptive approach and rely on the assumption that ethically reasoning individuals will make sound ethical choices. While normative ethics remain important in the formative stage and early development of an individual, it might not be as helpful when ethical choices are made in an environment and situations in which many factors and variables come into play. In many ways, the prescriptive nature of normative ethics provides the individuals with guidance on how they should behave in a sort of emotional and physical vacuum. The reality is that ethical choices are extremely personal and emotional, and they take place in an environment or decision frame that might be very intense. A reliance on normative ethics alone may indeed develop individuals that are extremely versatile at reasoning ethically, but they might fail to make the right ethical choice (and take the right ethical action) in the heat of the moment.

Behavioral ethics focuses on how and why individuals make the decisions they do in the ethical realm. Descriptive rather than prescriptive in nature, behavioral ethics is an interdisciplinary field that draws on behavioral psychology, cognitive science, and related social sciences to understand why people make the ethical decisions they do. Max Bazerman and Francesca Gino define behavioral ethics as "the study of the systematic and predictable ways in which individuals make ethical decisions and judge the ethical decisions of others, ways that are at odds with intuition and the benefits of broader society."[5] Thus, behavioral ethics does not investigate how we should behave in a given situation, but it rather provides an exploration of how we might actually behave in a given situation when facing an ethical decision. In simple terms, behavioral ethics is the exploration and comprehension of the circumstances under which we might engage in behavior contrary to our ethical values. Most findings are comprehended under three primary propositions.[6]

The Gap between Perceived versus Actual Ethical Selves

Dan Ariely's *The (Honest) Truth About Dishonesty: How We Lie to Everyone—Especially Ourselves* argues that we tend to believe we are more ethical than others while at the same time engaging in behavior we routinely judge as unethical

in others.[7] For Ariely, our need to see ourselves as honorable conflicts with our need to have things, so we "fudge" up to the level that allows us to retain our self-image as reasonably honest individuals. Ariely believes "that all of us continuously try to identify the line where we can benefit from dishonesty without damaging our own self-image."[8]

In *Blind Spots*, Max Bazerman and Ann Tenbrunsel make a serious and compelling case that, before being confronted with an ethical decision, we predict that we will make an ethical choice consistent with our moral self-identity—we are a good person and therefore we will do the right thing. The reality is that, in many cases when faced with a specific ethical choice in a complex decision frame where we are experiencing a myriad of affective stimuli, we might make a decision that is in clear conflict with our ethical values as long as that choice is what serves us better at that moment.[9] The ethical decision-making process is the outcome of many factors whose influence on us we have simply underestimated or not even considered. Having thought about the ethical choice in abstract terms might prove to be of little to no help.

Indeed, it is extremely important to recognize that a particular situation or a dysfunctional organizational system might create the conditions in which the lines between right and wrong become blurred. It is these types of environments in which individuals who think of themselves as extremely ethical and of strong character might engage in unethical conduct. Think of our near universal tendency to exceed speed limits. To survive all the poor drivers on the road today—of course, we are good drivers—we need to maintain the relative speed of the flow of the traffic, which is what everyone else is doing. We do not even consider our behavior as unethical—breaking a law—until we see the trooper over the next hill and slow down. Our cognitive flexibility enables us to keep our unethical behavior beyond our consciousness. Bazerman and Tenbrunsel introduce the term *bounded ethicality* to define the psychological processes that limit our ability to be aware of the ethical dimensions of a particular situation. While most anticipate behaving ethically, when faced with an ethical challenge, self-interest clouds ethical implications. In addition, after an unethical decision has been made, looking back on the situation, our desire to see ourselves as ethical biases our recollection of the event.[10]

In many ways, behavioral ethics takes for granted that we know the difference between ethical and unethical behavior and that we are committed to uphold ethical standards. Behavioral ethics and its body of research warn us that despite a clear understanding and a strong commitment to the ethical standard, we might, given the circumstances, make choices that are in serious conflict with our ethical principles. We might be very surprised by how little our character might support us when confronted with ethical choices in which we have conflicting interests and desires and for which we have not prepared adequately.

In *Out of Character*, a telling title with an even more enlightening subtitle—*Surprising Truths About the Liar, Cheat, Sinner (and Saint) Lurking in All of Us*—David DeSteno and Piercarlo Valdesolo stress that "the tricky part of acting morally . . . doesn't center on if we can judge what's right or wrong and act accordingly—it centers on how we judge right and wrong and on how changeable these judgments, and thereby our character, can be." DeSteno and Valdesolo rightly note that recently "much research has begun to show that our morals are often shaped as much, or even more, by our emotional responses than by our so-called rational ones."[11] Thus, rather than engaging in a constant rational reflection and deliberation on what we should do when confronted with an ethical choice, it would be much more beneficial to us to understand how our decision-making process works and then explore and consider the role of the factors—for example, bias, emotions, and psyche—that make an impact on our decision-making process.

This growing body of research illuminates a natural tendency toward our ability to enter into a self-deception process. This bent toward self-deception is as natural as self-interest. Indeed, "to be is to be rooted in self-deception" and "to deny this reality is to practice self-deception."[12] Yet, how consciously active, and therefore, how culpable, one is in self-deception is an open question. According to Ariely, self-deception is something we do to ourselves—our personal "fudge factor" accepts what we might initially feel is possibly unethical.[13] For Messick and Bazerman, the very definition of self-deception is being unaware of the cognitive processes that reinforce our biases and color our judgment. Indeed, Tenbrunsel and Messick argue that self-deception "causes the moral implications of a decision to fade, allowing individuals to behave incomprehensibly and, at the same time, not realize that they are doing so."[14]

Technological advances in neurobiology and the ability to monitor and map the brain's activity has provided the neurosciences with evidence that suggests a biological rationale for self-deception. The instinctive response to maximize benefit and avoid or minimize danger is a basic physiological survival response. Neurobiological research now suggests the same brain networks for basic physiological survival are activated by certain social stimuli that elicits a similar instinctive motivation to see the stimuli as reward or threat. Dr. David Rock, author of *Your Brain at Work*, summarizes these domains using the SCARF model—status, certainty, autonomy, relatedness, and fairness. A perception of danger to any one of these domains could trigger a behavioral response motivated by the survival instinct.[15]

Intuitive versus Rational Decision Making

Traditional approaches to ethics lean heavily on the moral reasoning model: increasingly complex moral reasoning will lead to better moral decisions. In this

model, an individual arrives at the moral action through a rational application of moral ideals or principles to a certain situation. Conversely, the motivated moral reasoning model posits that affect—the subjective experience of feeling or emotion—and intuitive processes play just as an important and formative role in determining what we believe are moral and just actors and actions. In this view, we select evidence and evaluate moral arguments according to intuitive and affective moral outcome values already in place. Hence, "the primary sources of our moral evaluations are relatively automatic and affective as opposed to thoughtful and cognitive."[16]

Emerging empirical evidence suggests that individuals make most of their decisions intuitively and unconsciously rather than rationally. Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky's research reveals that people generally do not make decisions consistent with the rational actor model, but rather shortcuts and biases shape people's everyday ethical decision making in ways they often do not understand or even notice. Kahneman's *Thinking, Fast and Slow* popularizes the notion of two systems of thinking and summarizes much of the research on how these two systems drive the way we judge and choose. "System 1" is intuitive, fast, automatic, effortless, implicit, and emotional and more prevalent in separate, one-at-a-time decisions, while "System 2" is systematic, organized, slower, effortful, explicit, and logical and more prevalent in joint, multiple-option decisions. Most ethical decisions are first made intuitively by System 1 before System 2 engages.[17] Others, including Johnathan Haidt, go further than Kahneman in suggesting that ethical choices are made by System 1, and then System 2 provides justification for the choice.[18] As a result, our decisions can be impacted by cognitive heuristics (rules of thumb or shortcuts) or biases of which we are unaware.

Behavioral ethics emphasizes how important it is to develop and prime intuition or System 1 for optimal decision making in complexity and ambiguity. Gary Klein argues that an overly negative view of heuristics and biases can lead to restrictive regulations and procedures rather than an "appreciative inquiry" to understand the thought-making processes and how to improve them. Both System 1 (intuition) and System 2 (rational, analytical) are essential for optimal decision making.[19] More than that, understanding how System 1 works can enable one to sharpen their intuitive system through education, experience, and reflection while learning how to identify and control fallible intuitive responses.[20] Finally, leaders with an understanding of how these heuristics and shortcuts influence behavior can utilize choice architecture to inspire and encourage ethical decision making within their command.[21]

The way our decision-making processes work clearly emphasizes the importance and value of learning from behavioral ethics. While normative ethics will feed mainly System 2, behavioral ethics will inform us about the potential

for fallacies of System 1 at crucial times. In a recent interview, Ariely provides clarity on how we behave: "People don't predict correctly what will drive our behavior and, as a consequence, we need to be more careful. What happens is you have intuitions and axioms about the world, and you assume they are perfectly correct. I think we should just start doubting our assumptions more regularly and submitting them to empirical tests."[22] Indeed, in Robert Kegan and Lisa Lahey's groundbreaking work, *Immunity to Change*, they argue that for real growth and change to occur, we must surface those assumptions—or otherwise remain captive (or subject) to them and continue to exhibit the suboptimal behaviors and resist real change.[23]

We have a strong tendency to believe that many of the choices and decisions we will make will be directed by the logic and rationality of System 2. That is where ideas of right and wrong, and concepts such as honor and integrity, have been stored. Many of us naively believe that, because we have reasoned and reflected through these important concepts, we will decide accordingly. The truth is, in the heat of the moment, System 1 will be the driving agent in the decision-making process while System 2 might be struggling and fail to influence System 1. Thus, despite the fact that we do have a clear, and yet abstract, understanding of right and wrong, when faced with the more practical and pragmatic aspects of a specific reality, System 1 might drive us to make decisions that are far from what we expected to do. The value of behavioral ethics is mainly experiential. We need to test ourselves empirically, rather than believing that we will make the right decision because we are people of strong character.

Susceptibility to Internal, Organizational, and Situational Factors

Behavioral ethics also has demonstrated that cognitive limitations, external societal and organizational pressures, and situational factors can make it difficult for even the most ethically intentioned individual to act morally, and in fact, the evidence suggests individual morality is contextually malleable rather than a stable trait. *Ethical fading* (or moral myopia) is the term often used to describe the psychological processes that cause the ethical properties of a decision to fade so that the decision appears to be void of moral implications. Self-deception is at the root of ethical fading because individuals tend to distance themselves from the moral implications of a decision to maintain a positive sense of their ethicality.[24]

Guido Palazzo, Franciska Krings, and Ulrich Hoffrage explore a similar situation they termed *ethical blindness*—"the decision maker's temporary inability to see the ethical dimension of a decision at stake." In their article, they provide an excellent exploration of how individuals and their organizations might create conditions (rigid framing) that can lead to ethical blindness. Their initial

assumption is that "often . . . (un)ethical decision making is less rational and deliberate but more intuitive and automatic. As a consequence, the ethical dimension of a decision is not necessarily visible to the decision maker. People may behave unethically without being aware of it—they may even be convinced that they are doing the right thing. It is only later that they realize the unethical dimension of their decisions."[25]

Cognitive Errors

Classical economic theory assumes that individuals seek to maximize their benefit from a particular course of action, and that they make decisions as rational actors. Nobel Prize economist Herbert Simon challenges such a view as he found that oftentimes individuals actually act against their best interests. Simon argues that rationality in decision-making is limited by available information, cognitive limitations of the individual, and the finite time available to make the decision. He coined this phenomena *bounded rationality*. Further development of Simon's ideas led to the understanding of cognitive constraints to rationality in the arena of ethics (*bounded ethicality*) as well as awareness (*bounded awareness*). Research by Bazerman and Chugh suggests that bounded awareness, "the phenomenon by which individuals do not 'see' and use accessible and perceivable information during the decision-making process, while 'seeing' and using other equally accessible and perceivable information," can also contribute to suboptimal decision making.[26]

Indeed, there are many cognitive factors that weigh significantly on our ability to deal properly with ethical choices, and those very factors might end up playing a major role in how we make decisions. One of the most dangerous biases is *positive illusion*. People have a tendency to believe that they are more ethical than they actually are, overestimate their own abilities and character, have an exaggerated sense of their control of an outcome, and as a result exhibit unrealistic optimism in regard to future behavior. We subjectively evaluate our behavior in terms of intent, while we judge others on their actions.

When we observe another's behavior, we might explain a given action by placing a disproportionate amount of responsibility on the individual while underestimating the role of the situation. Typical of this approach is the *fundamental attribution error*, placing the entire responsibility for a given action on the proverbial "bad apples" with no consideration of the state of the barrel or situation. An extremely dangerous bias is incrementalism or "the slippery slope." Intuitively, we understand that engaging in unethical behavior—for example, lying—will make us more easily prone to lie more frequently and on a greater scale. Once one has crossed the line into unethical behavior, it is easier to fall into larger ethical lapses in the future. George Loewenstein identifies what he termed the *hot-cold empathy gap* bias: "When people are in an affec-

tively 'cold' state, they fail to fully appreciate how 'hot' states will affect their own preferences and behavior. When in 'hot' states, they underestimate the influence of those states and, as a result, overestimate the stability of their current preferences."[27] Other cognitive biases include the illusion of transparency, loss aversion, self-serving bias/confirmation bias, role morality, moral equilibrium, and framing.[28]

Social and Organizational Pressures

Social and organizational or system influences heavily impact an individual's ethical decision making. Behavioral ethics have validated the tendency to be overly obedient to authority and conform to the judgment and behavior of peers. The term *ethical infrastructure* refers to the organizational climates, informal systems, and formal systems relevant to ethics within an institution. It is difficult to identify all of the relevant factors, as the way things "really get done" is often not as clearly spelled out as the surface components, such as mission statements and codes of conduct.[29] The social structures by which an institution establishes its role expectations, organizational goals, and the means to achieve those goals can unwittingly facilitate or condone unethical practices. Organizational or group loyalty can become a legitimating justification for otherwise unethical actions. Utilizing organizational language to psychologically sanitize unethical practices can encourage moral muteness. The bureaucracy and anonymity of organizations can lead to minimizing personal responsibility for moral agency, while hierarchy can foster blind obedience to authority and diffusion of responsibility to superiors.[30]

According to Philip Zimbardo, the system has great potential to enable a fundamentally bad situation to become significantly worse. In Zimbardo's view, "systems provide the institutional support, authority, and resources that allow situations to operate as they do."[31] Guido Palazzo and others explain that the adoption on the part of the organization of a rigid frame makes us view the world from one particular and thus necessarily limited perspective, thereby creating blind spots. The more rigidly people apply specific frames when making decisions, the lower their ability to switch to another perspective, which increases the risk of ethical blindness.[32]

In military organizations, the command climate is probably the most important component to promote professional ethical behavior and to prevent unethical acts. A former U.S. Army brigade commander who served in Afghanistan stated, when asked about the importance of command climate to prevent ethical lapses, "Command climate has everything to do with it, but I would define it broadly to include discipline, leadership, training and understanding of the environment as well as values: courage, respect."[33] Indeed, command climate (the way the organization functions at all levels) is central to under-

standing why the members of a unit might believe that engaging in unethical behavior would be tolerated, and where even the command climate itself might unknowingly encourage unethical behavior.[34]

Behavioral ethics is essential to comprehending how a wrong understanding of obedience could result in a level of cohesion that becomes conformity. This type of group dynamics can seriously compromise command climate. Indeed, behavioral ethics has validated the tendency to be overly obedient to authority and conform to the judgment and behavior of peers. The Stanley Milgram experiment conducted over a number of years during the 1960s questioned whether his subjects would deliver ever more painful electric shocks up to a maximum dangerous level to another person who failed to answer questions correctly. More than 60 percent of his subjects obeyed the authority figure and administered the maximum shock, even when the other person screamed, complained of heart problems, or feigned unconsciousness.[35]

Conformity bias is the tendency to take cues for our behavior from those around us, suspending our own ethical judgment and deferring to our peers. Conformity in itself can be positive or negative as a well-led and cohesive unit demonstrates. New workers look to their coworkers to model acceptable performance; good conduct is contagious, but unethical conduct is even more so. Numerous studies validate that the pull to conform "is strong enough to make us give the wrong answers to questions . . . and strong enough to make us disregard the moral lessons we've learned and absorbed since childhood. The carrot of belonging and the stick of exclusion are powerful enough to blind us to the consequences of our actions."[36]

Situational Factors

Good people who wish to do the right thing can be heavily affected by the situation in which they find themselves. Individuals who find themselves in an unethical organization will likely begin to parrot unethical behavior. Similarly, those who feel isolated, ostracized, or mistreated by the unit are more likely to engage in unethical behavior.[37] Time pressure, anonymity or lack of transparency, fatigue, and the cleanliness of the working space are other situational factors that increase the probability of unethical behavior.[38]

Robert Lifton coined the term *atrocity-producing situation*, which describes an "environment so structured, militarily and psychologically, that an average person entering it, no better or worse than you or me, could be capable of committing atrocities."[39] In 1971, Dr. Philip Zimbardo's Stanford Prison Experiment (SPE) demonstrated the power of the situation to induce good people to engage in deeply unethical behavior. The study was scheduled to take place during a two-week period with the participants, all screened by Zimbardo and his research team, role-playing a group of inmates and prison guards. No

training was provided to any participants as to their roles and the setting was designed to mimic a functional prison.

The situational forces quickly impacted the participants. Guards demonstrated more abrasive and humiliating treatment of the prisoners. Some prisoners became emotionally overwrought and five had to be removed due to stress disorders. Others found a way to survive by mindlessly following orders, submitting to the degrading treatment. Dr. Zimbardo's noninterference to the unethical conduct around him gave tacit approval to the escalating level of brutality by the guards. Zimbardo lost the ability to see that what was taking place at the SPE was not only unacceptable but also extremely unethical. It was only after the intervention of Christina Maslach, a research assistant not associated with the experiment, that Zimbardo became aware of the situation; his focus on the experiment made him blind to what was taking place in the "prison." The two-week experiment had to be terminated after only six days. Subsequent experiments and real-life situations have demonstrated that proximity, length of exposure, and leadership involvement are all key situational factors in determining unethical behavior.[40]

Teaching Behavioral Ethics

Traditional ethics pedagogy presupposes that ethical decision making is a cognitive and deliberate process governed by rational thought.[41] Research in behavioral ethics indicates that at the moment of choice, it is more often than not the intuitive, affective System 1 thinking that most influences the choice. Therefore, the behavioral ethics approach emphasizes helping students understand their own behavior and how and why they make the decisions that they do as they discover the limitations, pressures, and factors that impact their ability to be the ethical person they desire to be. For this reason, it is essential that they are able to personally experience the phenomena to recognize its valence in critical decision-making situations. Because behavioral ethics focuses on the forces that impact their decision making, it complements, rather than conflicts, with normative and virtue ethics. The Socratic method of instruction works best, with a small class size and a discussion and participation-friendly set up. As the behavioral approach posits that decisions are made intuitively, it is important for the students to experience the phenomena themselves as much as possible. The use of audience response systems such as Turning Point to make real-time ethical decisions demonstrates the validity of the empirical evidence presented. Likewise, video clips demonstrate important points, provide emotional proximity or distancing to and from intense topics, and set the stage for meaningful discussion. There are many online videos that can be used to develop and present the findings of behavioral ethics.[42]

When engaging in behavioral ethics discussion, participants should

be encouraged to consider and reflect upon their behavior in three areas: as individuals; as individuals immersed in a specific situation; and, as a key component—often in a position of leadership—of the system (how they contribute to create and maintain a healthy command climate). When discussing the individual, participants need to be challenged, and therefore they will be given a chance to truly explore and test their own sense of ethicality. Unsurprisingly, the large majority of the participants in behavioral ethics instruction ethically position themselves above average and significantly above average in relation to their peers. A significant component among them show evidence of the positive illusion bias. Then, exposure to the biases discussed in this article can demonstrate how easy it is to engage in unethical behavior, despite the strong belief that we are individuals of character. The goal should be for the individuals to identify their own biases and mental heuristics and learn how to deal with these biases and heuristics in ethically challenging situations. Finally, it is important to emphasize the positives and drawbacks of each of the thinking systems (analytical and intuitive) and the potential for ethical lapses when the brain relies only on one of those systems.

It is extremely beneficial to educate about the power of the command climate/system and encourage individuals to take a professional approach to the system they are part of, and contribute to—their unit command climate. Those in a position of leadership not only have the ability but also the responsibility to shape the culture, discipline, obedience, trust, and cohesion of the organization. They will be agents in promoting the adoption of proper training, education, and best practices at the operational level. As Milgram's study on obedience and the Asch experiments on conformity demonstrate, the power of the system can influence even the most ethical to unethical behavior. Case studies like the Vietnam-era My Lai massacre, when a company of U.S. Army soldiers slaughtered more than 300 civilians, show how unethical behavior, in this case a mass atrocity, is the outcome of failures at many different levels. Clearly, the My Lai massacre can be explained by analyzing the situation and the individuals involved, yet the greatest failure was in the system—the command climate—and within that, such a failure was caused by poor and detrimental leadership. Lieutenant General William R. Peers, the senior U.S. Army officer who conducted a thorough investigation of the My Lai massacre, wrote in the opening pages of *The My Lai Inquiry*: "The My Lai incident was a black mark in the annals of American military history. In analyzing the entire episode, we found that the principal breakdown was in leadership. Failures occurred at every level within the chain of command, from individual noncommissioned-officer squad leaders to the command group of the division."[43]

Finally, the overwhelming power of the situation must be addressed. Here, Zimbardo's research on the power of the situation is particularly helpful to raise

awareness about the impact that situational forces might have on individuals and how we might be surprised by how much our behavior could change as a result of such power and forces. The intent is to try to mitigate the "cold-hot empathy gaps" for leaders who will operate in difficult, highly demanding, emotionally charged situations. Zimbardo rightly cautions us that "creating the myth of invulnerability to situational forces . . . set[s] ourselves up for a fall by not being sufficiently vigilant to situational forces."[44]

Conclusion

Recent incorporation of behavioral ethics into the curricula of Service war colleges indicates a growing acceptance of the findings garnered from this emerging field of study. Popularized by the work of Dr. Leonard Wong and Stephen Gerras's *Lying to Ourselves: Dishonesty in the Army Profession*, the insights of behavioral ethics are being introduced to a wider audience within the military profession of arms.[45] The growing familiarity with the neurosciences and their influence on battlefield behavior popularized in such works as Dave Grossman's "On Combat" has stimulated research on how to best equip leaders to understand the dynamics of cognitive functioning in combat.[46]

However, this material is often presented largely utilizing lectures and limited only to those attending one of these Service schools. One promising initiative is the development and utilization of behavioral ethics insights into high-intensity military field exercises.[47] Because behavioral ethics focuses on behavior, it is vital that these insights are learned through actual experience in a controlled environment, followed by an opportunity for self-reflection to nurture greater self-awareness. By experiencing the effect of environmental stimuli on individual biases and heuristics, the power of the system and the detrimental impact of "atrocity producing" situations, students will be more apt to reflect and recognize these factors in real-life situations.

A third promising approach is evolving through focus on continual leader development. Because of the multidisciplinary nature of behavioral ethics, developmental courses on emotional intelligence encourage greater self- and other-awareness in identifying the specific way an individual responds to stress and the heuristics and biases that lead to unwanted behavior. Feedback tools such as multiraters assessments (360s) and leader practices or personality inventories, such as the Leadership Practices Inventory, EQ-i 2.0, Myer-Briggs Type Indicator, or the Hogan assessment, provide rich opportunities for better identifying potential problem areas. The utilization of Immunity to Change workshops provide opportunities to reflect on personal challenges, surface unexamined assumptions, and consider how they impact our ability to change suboptimal behavior or growth.

Incorporating behavioral ethics into training, education, and development

programs suited to servicemembers of all ranks provides a holistic perspective on ethics that equips individuals with the behavioral tools necessary to live out their commitment to core values. Only a comprehensive ethical culture that understands and embraces the ideal embodiment of those virtues (normative ethics), is realistic about the ethical quandaries inherent in the profession of arms (applied ethics), and is self-aware of the ways in which the self or system can be blinded to the ethical realm and how to counteract those tendencies (with the use of behavioral ethics) will be able to thrive and persevere in the ethically complex environment of the twenty-first century.

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