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The Canadian Army: Warrior Culture and Combatives

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THE CANADIAN ARMY: WARRIOR CULTURE AND COMBATIVES

By Major Aaron Corey

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ABSTRACT

The Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) has long acknowledged that doctrine is the standardized building blocks upon which adaptation, creativity, and initiative are used to achieve mission success. There is one notable exception; the doctrine that covers, protects, and champions the CAF fundamental beliefs—Accepting Unlimited Liability, Fighting Spirit, Discipline, Teamwork, and Physical Fitness, as well as its core values—Duty, Loyalty, Integrity, and Courage. This doctrine must be stalwart and unflappable. It must be recognized within the CAF and subsequently within the Canadian Army (CA), that training without culture is tantamount to a checklist for the production of *soldiers*, not *warriors*. In order to create warriors, training must inculcate a culture that is espoused by all service members. Militaries focused on violence without culture are at worst gangs and bullies, at best a club of martial artists. Militaries without an ingrained combativeness are mere public servants. If the CA is to be successful in present and future conflicts, it must reinforce its doctrinally held beliefs and values while upholding its willingness and ability to conduct violence on behalf of the Government of Canada. The CA must acknowledge the individual, but remain true to the force. The CA must modernize and prioritize a combatives program throughout its ranks. It is imperative for the protection of Canada, its citizens, and its interests abroad that the CA returns to its roots as *fighters* and *warriors*.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AFS	Army Fitness Standard
BFT	Battle Fitness Test
BJJ	Brazilian Jiu Jitsu
BMQ	Basic Military Qualification
BMOQ	Basic Military Officer Qualification
BPM	Beats Per Minute
BTS	Battle Task Standards
CA	Canadian Army
CAF	Canadian Armed Forces
CF	Canadian Forces
CFOSP	Canadian Operational Shooting Programme
CQC	Close Quarter Combat
DND	Department of National Defence
FTX	Field Training Exercise
GBA+	Gender Based Analysis Plus
GoC	Government of Canada
HA/DR	Humanitarian Assistance Disaster Response
IBTS	Individual Battle Task Standard
MAC	Modern Army Combatives
MACP	Modern Army Combatives Program
MCMAP	Marine Corps Martial Arts Program
MMA	Mixed Martial Arts
NCM	Non Commissioned Member
NDA	National Defence Act
PME	Professional Military Education
PTSD	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
SNS	Sympathetic Nervous System

TOS	Terms of Service
TP	Training Plans
TTP	Tactics Techniques and Procedures
USMC	United States Marine Corps

INTRODUCTION

From the moment they take the Oath and put on the uniform, members of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) commit to defending the interests of Canada and Canadians at home and abroad. As Carl von Clausewitz noted “War is nothing but a continuation of political intercourse, with a mixture of other means.”¹ Distilled to its very essence, this for soldiers means: being prepared to conduct violence on behalf of the Government of Canada (GoC) at a moment’s notice and in accordance with national interests without hesitation. In 2021, is this the expectation of all recruits joining the Canadian Armed Forces, let alone those within the Canadian Army (CA)? Does the average 18-year-old Canadian applying as a cook, image technician, or any of a myriad of non-traditional combat arms trades at the recruiting centre understand that they could be called upon to conduct violence on behalf of the GoC?

After the turn of the century, Canada rebranded its military from the Canadian Forces to the Canadian *ARMED* Forces, returning to its formal name in the National Defence Act (NDA) and pairing its recruiting campaign with a similarly pointed series of recruiting videos and a slogan that unabashedly focused on the more aggressive concept of fighting. “Fight Fear, Fight Distress, Fight Chaos, Fight with the Canadian Forces,” was the recruiting slogan circa 2006. Since 2017, the recruitment campaign and branding has shifted to a friendlier “dare to be extraordinary” and “train for your true calling,”²

¹ Carl von Clausewitz and Joseph I. Greene, *The Essential Clausewitz: Selections from on War* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2003), 94.

² [Canadian Forces New Commercial - YouTube](#) accessed 08 April 2021; [Dare to be Extraordinary - YouTube](#) accessed 08 April 2021; [Train for your true calling - YouTube](#) accessed 08 April 2021.

which focuses on learning an individual technical trade and not on the ability to conduct violence for the GoC.

In a world that is in an increasing state of chaos and disarray, it is unlikely that the soldiers, sailors, and aviators³ of today's CAF will occupy trenches akin to those of The Great War (1914-1918). They will, however, be called upon to operate in areas of unrest and decreased permissiveness. Is the CAF being transparent in its branding and education to the Canadian populations, to its recruits, and its members as to the role of the Canadian Armed Forces? Is the CAF preparing them for the worst-case scenario? Are the present day service members of the CAF modern day warriors? Is the CAF being honest and transparent with the Canadian population that our soldiers, sailors, and aviators are must become modern day warriors?

This paper will look at the past and present state of mind of the Canadian soldier to determine their level of preparedness to commit violence and be exposed to the hazards, risks, and horrors of combat. In particular, it will examine how the CA distinguishes, prepares, and employs its soldiers, provides a baseline definition of a warrior, and examines historical warrior culture. It will then investigate the current culture in the CA and provide an option set for future training and socialization.

Current Situation in The Canadian Army

What is a warrior and in particular, how does it apply to the CA? As simple definition of the term warrior is, "a person engaged or experienced in warfare,"⁴ a term that has been documented in use since the 14th Century, and is derived from the "Middle

³ Unless otherwise specified soldier refers generically to all members of the CA, sailor to all members of the RCN, and aviator to all members of the RCAF.

⁴ *Merriam-Webster* (merriam-webster.com), "[Warrior | Definition of Warrior](#)" Accessed 08 April 2021

English werreour, from Anglo-French werreier, guerreier, from warreier, guerreier to wage war, from werre war.”⁵

From this simplest of definitions, one can draw linearly distinguished partitions of who *is*, and who *is not*, a warrior, lines that would separate the profession of arms along the archaic classifications of the *operator* (the traditional combat arms trades) and the *supporter* (the traditional combat service support trades). Only the *enabler*, or combat support arms trades, blur this series of delineations. As the Canadian Army continues to move forward in the 21st Century and adopts the doctrine of Close Engagement and Adaptive Dispersed Operation,⁶ where non-contiguous, non-linear battlespaces have become the norm and not the exception, these partitions crumble, leaving the expectation that all soldiers may be directly engaged in combat.

The CA has transitioned from mass deployments to large staging areas outside of the enemy’s reach (from which to train and resupply), to deployments directly into theaters that span the continuum of permissiveness. Regardless of the cap badge worn on a soldier’s beret, their predisposed chances of seeing combat has increased significantly.

Arguably, though CA doctrine is shifting, its attitudes and ideals of training are not evolving. As the CA continues to adapt to these new realities, society has shifted away from unquestioned support to two key principles that differentiate between uniformed and non-uniformed defence professionals; unlimited liability, and the requirement to conduct violence on behalf of the GoC.

⁵ Merriam-Webster, “Definition of Warrior.”

⁶ Canada, Department of National Defence, *Advancing with Purpose: The Army Strategy*, 4th ed. (Ottawa: National Defence and the Canadian Forces, 2020), 27.

This shift in attitude must be matched in a manner that removes the stigma that is unjustly applied to those who fight and those who support the fight. The CAF, much less the CA, is too small to make this delineation. As the CAF continues to fulfill its defence commitments at home and abroad with task-tailored groupings, the changing operational environment will force the CAF to acknowledge that all of its members are fighting soldiers; indeed, they all are warriors that must be trained with the skills to fight and survive the first battle of the next war.

This paper will demonstrate that the Canadian Army must reprioritize its use of combatives training to aid in the formation of warriors pan-service. As Canadian society evolves and the nature of conflict becomes more disaggregated, there is a requirement for all trades and ranks of the CA, from enrollment to retirement, to be inculcated to the warrior mindset and the application of violence under control.

Why Warrior Culture Is Important

Across the Western world, the term “warrior” is at the precipice of losing the elevated status it once held throughout the profession of arms. The actions of limited individuals and specific groups has caused the meaning and perception of what constitutes a warrior to become twisted, to become something lacking in honour, to become something shameful. At a time when warrior culture is prominent in the global media at regular intervals, it is more often associated either with war crimes (such as those committed by the Australian Special Air Service in Afghanistan),⁷ or in relation to ‘Toxic Masculinity,’ than to the high stature of honour and prestige that the term and its membership once enjoyed.

⁷ *The Canberra Times*, “Warrior culture' blamed for ADF killings,” Canberra, ACT, accessed 13 Jan 2021.

Warriors are the embodiment of more than just training and limited action. They represent “strength of body and soul, and of the two the soul is the more important. Anyone can become physically fit through exercise... But stamina is different. It is mental toughness which allows the warrior to go the extra distance.”⁸ They espouse the ethics and values of their tribe or clan; in this case the CAF.

This embodiment of ethics and values is a code that elevates a soldier, a sailor, or an aviator to the status of warrior. Akin to having a career rather than simply a job, the code espouses belonging to something greater, being held to a higher standard, and most importantly, accepting that you are held to that higher standard.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In an effort to understand the historical context that has led to the CA modifying its language with respect to violence and warrior culture, research was conducted across various genres of domestic and international literature. By reviewing the literature on the conduct of war, the training of soldiers, and the socialization of armies, the author has noted a trend in institutional level writing that has removed or reduced the frequency of discussion about the generation of ‘Warriors’. The exception seems to be in personal accounts of war where many authors are quick to declare themselves warriors.

Upon examination of the CAF’s capstone publications, although the term *warrior* is found in Canadian Army publications, it is scarce therein. In the few instances where it is mentioned, such as in *Training for Land Operations* where the term is used only twice in more than 230 pages, it is usually tied to ethics. “A healthy ethical climate is fundamental to the military ethos and an essential enabler to the imperative of force-

⁸ Christopher Coker, *The Warrior Ethos: Military Culture and the War on Terror* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 4.

generating ethical warriors.”⁹ This context is also found in the CA’s *Advancing With Purpose*, “To preserve the strong foundation of professionalism our soldiers exemplify in the most challenging circumstances...[i]n order to meet future demands, soldiers must be resilient and ethical warriors; they must be well-led, well-trained and well-equipped.”¹⁰

What is under-represented in contemporary literature is what it means to be a modern day warrior, ethical or not. Depicted in six sparse statements in a table of more than six hundred words, buried in an annex on the last page of the 3rd edition *Advancing with Purpose: The Army Strategy*, members of the CA are to extrapolate what it is that separates professionals in the art of war apart from our civilian counterparts. Those six statements are: “Nurture the Warrior. Culture. Sense of purpose. Resilience (mental, physical and spiritual (moral)). Ethics. Pride.”¹¹ Not since 1996 has the Canadian Armed Forces produced doctrine that references the formation of warriors. *Training For War*, Volume 2, Field Training Regulations, Supplement 5, *Warrior Program Handbook* was an encapsulation of what is now several publications on general military knowledge, battle task standards (BTS), weapons handling, and fieldcraft.¹² Despite its title, this 459-page manual amounts to little more than a check list for the production of *soldiers*, not *warriors*.

The United States Armed Forces has taken a more aggressive approach to their members’ transition from recruit to soldier to warrior by instilling a warrior mindset and

⁹ Canada, Department of National Defence, *Training for Land Operations* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2014), 223.

¹⁰ Canada, Department of National Defence, *Advancing with Purpose: The Army Strategy*, 3rd ed. (Ottawa: National Defence and the Canadian Forces, 2014), 16.

¹¹ DND, *Advancing with Purpose*, 3rd ed., 35.

¹² Canada, Department of National Defence, *Training For War. Volume 2, Field Training Regulations, Supplement 5, Warrior Program Handbook* (Ottawa, ON: National Defence and the Canadian Forces 1996).

a combativeness throughout their formation. This is demonstrated most predominantly through the successive refinement of their Army and Marine Corps training doctrine that is treated more as pan-service professional military education than specialist training.¹³ Additionally the integration of personalities such as Matt Larsen, who when serving in the 75th Ranger Regiment helped develop the Modern Army Combatives Program (MACP), was instrumental in the establishment of the United States Combatives School, and who is now the Director of Combatives at West Point,¹⁴ into US military academia has bolstered the preponderance for combatives and warrior mindset.

Additionally, this paper will serve to open dialogue and fill the literary gap relating to the question of what it is to be a CA warrior, and discuss how to best balance the requirement and propensity of the Army's responsibility to conduct violence, with the compassion required to conduct Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response (HA/DR) operations.

Road Map of Study

Following the Introduction, this essay is divided in five chapters, followed by a Conclusion.

Chapter 1 – *History of the Warrior* – Warrior culture has historically been exclusive by nature, limited to those willing to espouse a rigid code of values on behalf of society as a whole. This first chapter will explore historical lessons learned by the

¹³ In 2019 the Commandant of the United States Marine Corps issued a service wide order (MCO 1500.59A) on the application of the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program (MCMAP). The intent clearly stated that “MCMAP is to develop the moral, mental, and physical resiliency of individual Marines and ultimately the unit as a whole. (a) We will accomplish this mission by exposing Marines to physical hardship and interpersonal violence by placing emphasis on Professional Military Education (PME), study of warrior cultures, and frequent experience with combative techniques and environments. (b) The end-state of this program is to produce Marines and units that are more lethal, exhibit greater resiliency, and are equipped to handle the rigors of combat.”

¹⁴ [Mr. Matt Larsen \(westpoint.edu\)](https://www.westpoint.edu/military-affairs/combatives/director) accessed 29 April 2021

Spartans and Samurai that demonstrate the usefulness of inculcating lifelong training and commitment to “the warrior’s way” focusing on the impacts of culture and mindset on the transition from civilian to soldier, soldier to warrior.

Chapter 2 – *The CA Warrior* – Times of peace create a distinct set of challenges for all militaries. The CA is no different; as they look to transform civilians into soldiers and eventually into warriors, some may question the requirement for an exposure, an inoculation to violence. This transformation does not happen in mere weeks during recruit or basic training; it requires training for war while the government strives for peace. CA members are required to accept and internalize a core set of values and fundamental beliefs that are unwavering and universal to all soldiers, sailors, and aviators, in peacetime or in war. CA members need to be prepared to be exposed to, and commit, violence.

Chapter 3 – *Mental Health of the Warrior*– The horrors of combat can have long lasting effects on soldiers beyond their time in uniform. Modern warriors are a sum of their parts, their upbringing, their training, and their experience. Expectation management, coupled with trust and transparency in the chain of command, can provide service members with a basis upon which to gain understanding and resilience. This is impacted by the individual’s background and culture, which must then be supported and grounded through a military culture that is relatable and enduring. Training to reinforce both robust and rebound resilience is a continual imperative. Mental health awareness must be unfaltering, establish norms, and career long milestones that are enablers for soldiers when experiencing hardship and risk. Such support will help them through their

individual perceptions of trauma. The mental health of the warrior cannot be a simple, generic system that treats all individuals the same.

Chapter 4 – *Combatives Training Pan-Army* – In an effort to enhance both lethality and survivability, modern militaries are investing heavily in systems connecting personnel to vehicles, equipment, and munitions. As the CA prepares its soldiers to operate in the complex environment of today's operations, an element of modernization is being ignored; the creation of modern warriors, those who possess the willingness and the capability to move towards violence, not away from it. There is opportunity for modernization to occur through the professionalization of a widespread combatives program pan-CA, vice the niche technical qualification of close quarter combat.

Chapter 5 – *Beyond the Canadian Army* – As society evolves the CAF must remain relevant to the GoC, appealing to recruits, aptly decisive against its adversaries. With smaller more dispersed mission-sets, the CAF needs to adapt to the changes in force composition and the degradation of the roles of operator and supporter.

CHAPTER 1 – HISTORY OF THE WARRIOR

The concept of a *warrior* has taken a myriad of forms throughout history but it resonates deeply in the perception of the ultimate soldier, one who has committed fully to duty and devotion, not for personal gain but rather at the request of their government. Whether evolving from an aristocracy, a tribal or clan class system, or from the crucible of war, the warriors of today are more difficult to identify in society than in the past. Gone are the expectations and requirements to enter training as young children, dedicating one's self to lifelong training and mastery of skill geared at providing enlightenment. Modern "warriors don't only serve themselves; they are domesticated. They serve the state, which provides the moral framework within which to act legitimately."¹⁵ The overarching mindset and culture of warriors past remains, in many cases, extant despite progression in training, fitness, the evolution of doctrine, and the development of a more effective skillset. There is a wealth of knowledge and understanding regarding training, indoctrinating, and caring for warriors that can be gleaned from distinct historic cultures of the past. This chapter will draw upon critical lessons that demonstrate the usefulness of inculcating lifelong roots in warrior culture through the examination of the Spartans and Samurai.

Where culture is defined as "the set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterizes an institution or organization,"¹⁶ it is important to acknowledge that warrior culture is influenced by multiple intersecting cultures, including societal culture, strategic culture, and military culture, to create a distinct

¹⁵ Coker, *The Warrior Ethos*, 7.

¹⁶ *Merriam-Webster*, (merriam-webster.com), "Culture | Definition of Culture."

warrior culture. Further, there is perception bias, both internal and external, that play into the expectations and norms of a culture.¹⁷

Warrior culture, exclusive by nature, has historically garnered a modicum of respect that is derived from the willingness of an individual to sacrifice body and soul on behalf of the masses. By serving the state above their own person, warriors are formed primarily by the culture of their population, which instills core ethics and values as a foundation before they are elevated to the status of a legitimized warrior, a protector of that culture, those values and ethics. It is an important distinction that legitimate warrior culture is elevated above that of society. Specifically, warrior culture must “reach out, understand, embrace and embody the best”¹⁸ that the nation, tribe, or clan culture has to offer. To do anything less would be disrespectful to a warrior’s predecessors, and possibly create a toxic sub-culture that is akin to justifying the criminality and culture found within gangs or the Mafia.

During the formation of warriors and beyond their indoctrination into the culture, there is an obvious requirement to train the body, refine skills to the point that action is taken without thought, and importantly, train the mind. By training the mind warriors are prepared for the myriad of situations that they may face not only during battle, but also following the fight.

¹⁷ H. Christian Breede, *Culture and the Soldier: Identities, Values, and Norms in Military Engagements* (Vancouver and Toronto: UBC Press 2019), 14; Stéfanie von Hlatky, and H. Christian Breede, “The Cultural Variable in Foreign and Defence Policy,” *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal* 22, no. 2 (2016), 103-107.

¹⁸ Canada, Department of National Defence, *Designing Canada's Army of Tomorrow* (Ottawa: National Defence and the Canadian Forces, 2011), 25.

WARRIOR CULTURE

The idea of a profession of arms, meaning soldiers dedicated to lifelong learning and refinement of their skills rather than simply executing violence from time to time, has a direct correlation to the earliest warrior cultures. It does not negate the part-time soldiers or conscripts of the past, but differentiates between sacrifice and devotion to an ideal. This is not to say that those same part-time soldiers and conscripts did not, in some instances, evolve into warriors by fully adopting the culture; rather, the manner in which their journey progressed was simply less direct. They did however adopt the same code.

A common linkage between all warrior cultures is the presence and adherence to a code, one that is deeply rooted in honour that serves as a compass not only in battle but also in times of peace. “A warrior’s honour is a slender hope, but it may be all there is to separate war from savagery. And a corollary hope is that men can be trained to fight with honour. Armies train people to kill, but they also teach restraint and discipline.”¹⁹

Sparta

One does not need to look hard to find idealistic infatuation with Spartan culture. Mainstream entertainment has romanticized the image of fit, skilled, devoted warriors beating the odds and winning battles in which they are vastly outnumbered.²⁰ Fitness sub-culture sees athletes completing long distance obstacle courses that test mind, body, and soul, embracing terms like *Agoge*,²¹ and denoting distances as Beast and Death, all in the

¹⁹ Michael Ignatieff, *The Warrior’s Honour* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 1998), 157.

²⁰ The popular film “300” is just such an example, based on the graphic novel of the same name and written by Frank Miller

²¹ In popular culture a term adapted from the Spartans to now refer to a challenging training camp or regime that gains an individual membership in a collective. [Spartan Race FAQ: Everything You Need to Know | Spartan Race](#) accessed 08 April 2021.

quest to call themselves Spartan Warriors.²² Military units embrace the iconic Corinthian helmet as their logo while military exercise names incorporate the term Spartan in an endeavor to identify with something great from the past, hoping to demonstrate true warrior spirit.

The Spartan warriors were a prominent military society around the fifth century BC,²³ forged through lifelong commitment to training that lead to citizenship. Beginning in early childhood and continuing through adolescence between the ages of 7 and 29, warriors under formation attended *Agoge*²⁴ where they received intensive training in discipline, mental and physical resilience, and fighting skills. They were taught the importance of culture and society through an understanding of the arts, while enduring savage living conditions, a lack of food, clothing, and shelter exacerbated by brutal beatings that served to instill hardness and discipline.²⁵ Their lives were governed by a strict code of honour, and this immersed education within a hierarchical regime made them fierce fighters feared by other armies – soldiers who had earned the full rights of citizenship and who were recognized as warriors.

The training of Spartan warriors through the *Agoge* was designed to instill a sense of interdependence of those in battle. Within the formation of the phalanx, where soldiers interlocked their shields as protection for themselves and those fighting on either side, the individual was held to a strict code under which Spartans operated with a sense of calm. Reckless and rage filled actions were seen as dishonourable in battle. Deeply rooted in

²² [Spartan Race | Become Unbreakable](#) accessed 08 April 2021.

²³ *Encyclopædia Britannica Inc.*, “Sparta” (2020) accessed 03 April 2021.

²⁴ Stephen J. Hodkinson, ed., *Agōgē* 3rd rev. ed. (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2005); [Agōgē - Oxford Reference \(oclc.org\)](#) accessed 06 Apr 2021.

²⁵ Yuri T. Sepp, “Let Go of the Agoge,” *Marine Corps Gazette* 101, no. 8 (2017), 74-76.

the understanding of egalitarianism, actions resulting from individual feelings on the battlefield were contrary to their code. They rehearsed dance-like movements that were not about the preservation of oneself the pursuit of individual honour, for the only honour was to their warrior culture. This was embodied in their *hoplon*, the Spartan shield, used in battle to protect the soldier to their left while allowing freedom to wield their sword.²⁶

The fundamental sense of belonging, of the phalanx being stronger than the sum of its parts, of mutual support, of fighting not for self-preservation but to protect those to your left and right, is a common thread in modern day warrior culture. With the advent of new weapons, tactics have evolved to include the idea of mutual support as the nucleus of fighting formations. The phalanx and fighting shoulder to shoulder evolved into holding the line with bayonet drill during the advance, which then became interlocking and mutually supported arcs of fire.²⁷ “The interrelationship of the group and the individual is important in determining the soldier’s willingness to fight for the group, his resistance to psychiatric breakdown, and his relationship with the formal structure of the army.”²⁸ Adherence to this ideal, this code, drives soldiers forward in battle, evokes calm in times of chaos and allows forces to prevail against overwhelming odds. However, it is not simply taught, nor does it occur because soldiers are told that it is so. The elevation of military culture to warrior culture must be instilled by those who have come before, and be accepted by those who seek membership. What the Spartans inculcated over a period of 23 years, modern militaries try to achieve in 23 weeks.

²⁶ Victor Davis Hanson, Inc OverDrive, and OverDrive ebook, *A War Like no Other: How the Athenians and Spartans Fought the Peloponnesian War*, 1st ed. (New York: Random House. 2005), 154.

²⁷ Anthony Kellett, *Combat Motivation: The Behavior of Soldiers in Battle* (Hingham, MA; Boston: Kluwer-Nijhoff Pub., 1982), 41.

²⁸ Kellett, *Combat Motivation*, 41.

Bushido

Samurai were military nobility in Japan who gained prominence in the 12th Century. A prestigious status, it was permitted until its abolishment during the Meiji Restoration, sometime between 1868 and 1882.²⁹ This was a culture deeply rooted in the study of military thought, science, and strategy as well as religion and philosophy. This idea was ultimately professionalized over time through three key transitions; first to *budo*, the warrior's way, then to *shido*, the knight's way, before finally formalizing the concept of *bushido*, the way of the warrior-knight.³⁰ Samurai would begin their lifelong training at age five when families would conduct the *Hakama* ceremony where a male child would, for the first time, don the *hakama*; the pants worn over the kimono. This was the uniform of the warrior symbolizing honour and tradition.³¹

A strict code of ideals, tenants, and expectations for behavior provided the necessary guidelines to ensure that a warrior's actions adhered to an accepted level of conduct. As warriors operate amidst chaos with an expectation of executing violence, guidelines needed to be elevated above and beyond mere suggestions to that of a law-like understanding of requirement for membership. As a result, not only was this the basis for expectation, but as a whole it empowered members of the culture to enforce the code. Within *bushido*, Samurai warriors were expected to adhere to seven virtues throughout their lives. These guiding principles where self-control was demonstrated were: righteousness, courage, benevolence, respect, veracity, honour, and loyalty.³² These

²⁹ Harry D Harootunian, "The Progress of Japan and the Samurai Class, 1868-1882," *Pacific Historical Review* 28, no. 3 (1959), 255-266.

³⁰ Cleary, et al., *Training the Samurai Mind*, 8.

³¹ Inazo Nitobe, and Alexander Bennett, *Bushido: With an Extensive Introduction and Notes by Alexander Bennett* (La Vergne: Tuttle Publishing. 2019), 10.

³² Inazo Nitobe, *Bushido: The Samurai Code of Japan* (Tokyo, Japan.: Tuttle Publishing, 2019), 43.

virtues became the basis for all actions, as there was no perception of the *individual* in the Samurai's actions. The actions of one represented the whole, on and off the field of battle.

Instilling these virtues in young Samurai from the very outset of training and development ensured that before the title was granted, there was an assurance that membership espoused the culture's ideals. Non-adherence to the code of conduct became grounds for dishonor, disgrace, and disendowment of their position. An extreme example of this is discussed by Ted Preston, author of "The Stoic Samurai," "[F]or the samurai, seppuku [was] the obligatory response to any number of perceived failures to act honorably."³³ This is not to suggest that modern day warriors adhere to this extreme form of action. The Samurai understood from an early age that being Samurai was not simply a right, there was an expectation of sacrifice in order to maintain membership.

Prevalence of the Male Warrior

Historically, the fervent outlook of what a warrior is "has been strongly influenced by socio-cultural perspectives flowing from an exclusively male oriented warrior framework or at least the assumptions underlying it"³⁴ in that "the ideal military profile...a warrior who is physically strong, courageous, having emotional and physical stamina, having tactical skills, is stoic and masculine."³⁵ A historical review of female warriors tends to highlight the exploits of individual warriors and speaks little of female warrior tribes. A well-known exception is found within Greek history; the Amazons, a

³³ Ted M. Preston, "The Stoic Samurai," *Asian Philosophy* 13, no. 1 (2003), 49.

³⁴ Canadian Forces Leadership Institute and Canadian Defence Academy, *Challenge and Change in the Military: Gender and Diversity Issues* (Kingston, ON: Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, Canadian Defence Academy, 2005), 55.

³⁵ Valerie M. Wood, and Danielle Charbonneau, "Gender, Self-Efficacy, and Warrior Identification in Canadian Army Personnel." *Journal of Gender Studies* 27, no. 7 (2018), 747-758, 748.

nomadic tribe of women warriors existed circa 700 BC to AD 300.³⁶ Demonstrating great courage and skill in battle they evoked the same fear in their enemies as their male counterparts of the period.³⁷ The very existence of the Amazon warrior aids in debunking the “stereotypes propagated by both military personnel and civilians surrounding women’s suitability as combat soldiers.”³⁸

WARRIOR MINDSET

*For warriors in particular, if you calm your own mind and discern the inner minds of others, that may be called the foremost art of war.*³⁹

– Shiba Yoshimasa, a Samurai of the mid-fourteenth century

Historical Conditioning

Through inculcation, training, and study, culture sets a tone of expectations for warriors on and off the battlefield. There is also an expectation that warriors adopt a certain mindset conducive to understanding, practicing, and adhering to the expectations of the culture. The key difference between the two is that the collective owns the culture through shared attitudes,⁴⁰ whereas the mindset belongs to the individual through their personal mental attitude and inclinations.⁴¹

When studying conditioning the mind, both Samurai and the Spartan training regimes provided a similar methodology for inculcation. Congruent with their methods for instilling the importance of their unique warrior culture, they ensured the adaptation of a standardized way of thinking throughout the many years of understudy required to

³⁶ Adrienne Mayor, “The Real Amazons,” *The Los Angeles Times* (30 November 2014), A.29.

³⁷ Mayor, “The Real Amazons.”

³⁸ Wood and Charbonneau, “Gender, Self-Efficacy, and Warrior Identification,” 748.

³⁹ Thomas F. Cleary, Inc OverDrive, and OverDrive ebook, *Training the Samurai Mind: A Bushido Sourcebook*, 1st ed. (Boston, MA: Shambhala, 2008), 22.

⁴⁰ *Merriam-Webster*, “Culture.” accessed 08 April 2021.

⁴¹ *Merriam-Webster*, “Mindset.” accessed 08 April 2021.

earn the esteemed status of Samurai or Spartan. In terms of mindset, the two formidable warrior cultures of the Samurai and Spartan regimes were similar in praising and preaching calmness and understanding before action. As described by Nitobe and Bennett, “The spiritual aspect of valour is evidenced by composure – calm presence of mind. Tranquility is courage in repose. It is a statical manifestation of valour, as daring deeds are a dynamical.”⁴²

Calmness and composure were revered by allies and feared by enemies. This mindset was indoctrinated from youth, before preconceptions could be formed that could induce fear, remove composure on the battlefield, or cause individual needs to overcome that of the group. It was understood that the very essence of the warrior – valour, courage, honour – were not mere ideals, but were the very foundation of everything they espoused.⁴³ From their entry into the *Agoge* at age 7 or following the *Hakama* ceremony at age 5, the Spartan and Samurai respectively began to live these ideals in every aspect of their lives, espousing them throughout their individual mindset. By adulthood it was completely ingrained, because anything less would bring dishonour.

Violence during the time of Samurai, like that of the Spartan warrior, was not the exception but the rule. They lived in tumultuous times; for the samurai, the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries were rife with conflict, yet support for warriors in battle was also at its height.⁴⁴ This was a period where combat was the proving ground for skill and was seen as an opportunity to demonstrate honour. “Warriors painted and decorated their

⁴² Nitobe and Bennett, *Bushido*, 78.

⁴³ Nitobe and Bennett, *Bushido*, 77.

⁴⁴ Michael Wert, *Samurai: A Concise History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2019), 33.

armor not to intimidate but to be noticed as crowds gathered to watch battles unfold.”⁴⁵ Similarly, during the period of 800 BC until about 200 BC the practice of the *Agoge* exuded violence. In this environment, violence was not only demonstrated, it was expected to be validated and replicated.

The expectation of violence in each of these ancient warrior cultures does not mean they should be held as examples of uncontrollable barbarism; they simply accepted and conformed to a life where violence was the eventuality. Samurai, for example, were encouraged “to always be mindful of the potential for violence and to avoid getting into fights. Should a Samurai squander his life in exchanging blows in a frivolous affair of honour he would bring shame upon him.”⁴⁶ This expectation of honourable violence is arguably not universally held across all ranks and trades within the CA, let alone the CAF despite the fact that “the willingness to close with the enemy is a defining characteristic of a Warrior” as a US Army training circular note.⁴⁷

CONCLUSION

Today, similar to the Spartan and Samurai cultures, there are certain expectations of members of the CA. Their conduct both on and off duty reflects upon the organization as a whole. *Duty With Honour* outlines the values of the CAF that, in addition to Honour, include Duty, Loyalty, Integrity, and Courage.⁴⁸ Having explored two historical case studies from prominent historical warrior cultures this chapter sought to demonstrate the

⁴⁵ Wert, *Samurai*, 36.

⁴⁶ Nitobe and Bennett, *Bushido*, 37.

⁴⁷ Department of the Army Headquarters United States Army, *Training Circular* (TC) 3-25. (Washington, DC: United States Army, 2017), 3-1.

⁴⁸ Department of National Defence and Canada. *Duty with Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada* (Ottawa: Published under the auspices of the Chief of the Defence Staff by the Canadian Defence Academy - Canadian Forces Leadership Institute. 2009), 32-34.

usefulness of inculcating lifelong training and commitment to “the warrior’s way.” There is a seriousness to belonging to a warrior culture for both the tribe, clan, or in the case of the CA, the institution. Warrior culture should remain exclusive by nature in modern times. It should continue to garner respect given that an individual is willing to, and has accepted, the high ideals of the institution. This, however, is not a simple once and done process. As discussed above it has been reliant on time, exposure to, and required adherence to a code, a core set of unwavering values and fundamental beliefs.

Committed to serve the state above all, warriors are therefore products of their societal culture. They are elevated to the status of a legitimized warrior once they are prepared to protect that culture, prepared for and with an expectation to do violence to ensure the continuation of their societal core ethics and values. Modern warrior culture is therefore elevated above that of the general society, its warriors required to constantly espouse the cultural values of the institution in and out of uniform, from recruitment to retirement.

CHAPTER 2 – THE CANADIAN ARMY WARRIOR

In order to understand what a modern CA warrior is, one must comprehend more than the idealized perception of the CA warrior. There must be an acceptance by the institution and the population of the CAF view of its army's warriors, what they want to see in the persona of a warrior. Moreover, one must understand the expectations of Canadian society as a whole, as this will serve as the foundation for the warrior; their values, ethics, and their code.

Ultimately, the CA warrior must be a reflection Canadian society's best, yet be a balance of necessities. The CA warrior must espouse the ethics and values of Canada, while being prepared to act across the full spectrum of operations. To be prepared to operate at home and abroad. To be prepared for the conduct of personal, intimate violence through human aggression while simultaneously being prepared to assist others in a time of crisis.

The CA is a human-centric organization that, regardless of technological advances, will be forever reliant on its greatest resource; its soldiers. Throughout chaos, distress, and conflict Canadian soldiers will be required to take and hold ground.⁴⁹ In doing so, there will remain a persistent requirement "to have a physical and psychological presence amongst the population, [which] will continue to be a strong signal of national commitment." To achieve credibility amongst populations at home and abroad, it is essential that CA soldiers be socialized to a common core set of values and ethics. This is the foundation of the CA warrior culture, which provides the force with a sense of purpose, mental / physical / spiritual resilience, a code of ethics from which to derive

⁴⁹ DND, *Advancing with Purpose*, 4th ed., 11; 14.

bearing and pride.⁵⁰ This foundation trains CA soldiers how to respond in any given situation regardless of stressors and provides senior leadership, and the Canadian population, assurance that CA soldiers will act accordingly both in the mundane and in moments of dire consequence. For this socialization to be effective, it must be applicable pan-service regardless of trade, rank, gender, or cultural background.

This chapter will discuss the challenges the CA faces as they look to transform civilians into soldiers, and warriors. This challenge is not one that can occur in a few weeks during recruit or basic training, but one that requires the CA membership and its potential membership to accept and internalize a core set of values and fundamental beliefs. Soldiers need to be prepared to exposed to violence and commit violence, otherwise there is nothing to distinguish a member of the CA from a public servant.

HOW THE CANADIAN ARMY TRAINS

The beginning of the transition from civilian to CAF member, through a process of inculcation, is in many ways the introduction of a modern day Spartan *Agoge* or the Samurai *Hakama* ceremony. At the outset of any military career, the initial principles and fundamentals taught, influence and become the basis of the formation of individual skillsets. The examples set out by the instructor cadre are formative and will remain a measure against which future experiences are measured. It is therefore imperative that the CA trains its soldiers commensurate to the tasks and expectations that are common to all trades and ranks to achieve a baseline soldier that is “based on [the] threats, [and] the character of future conflict and operations.”⁵¹ By this same logic, the Basic Military

⁵⁰ DND, *Advancing with Purpose*, 3rd ed., 28.

⁵¹ DND, *Advancing with Purpose*, 4th ed., 1.

Qualification (BMQ) and Basic Military Officer Qualification (BMOQ) must set the standard for the every CAF member's career to ensure that it is meeting the requirement of underpinning a warrior mindset and expectations of service.

The Requirements of a Warrior

The definition of a warrior is not explicitly outlined in CA doctrine; there is no checklist, no list of prerequisites. It is a term that is used in conjunction with other words such as “resilient...warriors,”⁵² “ethical warrior,”⁵³ “soldier-warrior,”⁵⁴ “warrior’s honour,” “adaptive warrior,”⁵⁵ or professional warrior.” One exception is a discussion of a CA warrior’s code, which is described in *Duty With Discernment: CCA Guidance on Ethics in Operations*. It states that it is the responsibility of CA leadership to provide soldiers with motivation and restraint through an all-encompassing warrior’s code. “That warrior’s code is reflected in the Army ethos of integrity, loyalty, courage, stewardship and excellence. It mirrors how we fight and it preserves our moral character.” It further describes CA soldiers as professionals with a mandatory, non-negotiable set of ethics and values. Finally, it highlights what is potentially the most critical factor, CA soldiers are “charged to live and sometimes die by a warrior code of honour reflected in our stringent obedience to the ethical code of restraint inherent in our Army ethos”

With a code of ethics and values that is held so dear as to live and die by, CA soldiers are presumably shown the model of a warrior. This is not, however, all that is required of a warrior. As previously defined, a warrior is “a person engaged or

⁵² DND, *Advancing with Purpose*, 3rd ed., 9.

⁵³ Department of National Defence. B-GL-347-001/FP-000, *Duty With Discernment: Commander Canadian Army Guidance on Ethics in Operations* (Ottawa: DND, 2009), 5.

⁵⁴ DND, *Duty with Honour*, 18; 34.

⁵⁵ DND, *Duty With Discernment*, 11; 13; 11; 11; 13; 13.

experienced in warfare.”⁵⁶ Based solely on this definition, there is little that relates to the CA in the current global context. We must therefore closely examine the requirements for admission to Canadian Army warrior culture. If a warrior is “a person engaged or experienced in warfare,”⁵⁷ then what is warfare? It is defined as, “military operations between enemies, an activity undertaken by a political unit (such as a nation) to weaken or destroy another,”⁵⁸ which amounts to war, “... a state of usually open and declared armed hostile conflict between states or nations, ... to be in active or vigorous conflict.”⁵⁹ By defining combat as “a fight or contest between individuals or groups, active fighting in a war”⁶⁰ and combatant as “one that is engaged in or ready to engage in combat,”⁶¹ an image of what is required to be a warrior begins to take shape. An image to be used as a standard for modern CA soldiers is paramount to the profession of arms, clearly defined for the CA and CAF as a whole within *Duty with Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada*. CA warriors are professionals: prepared, experienced, and committed to defending Canadian national interests at home and abroad. They are “distinguished by the concept of service before self, the lawful, ordered application of military force, and the acceptance of the concept of unlimited liability.”⁶² In effect, soldiers have accepted, internalized, and espoused a common set of core values, a code. This code is essential to the formation of trust between Canadian society and its military professionals.⁶³ The idea

⁵⁶ Merriam-Webster, (merriam-webster.com), “Warrior | Definition of Warrior,” [accessed 3 Mar 21.](#)

⁵⁷ Merriam-Webster, “[Warrior.](#)”

⁵⁸ Merriam-Webster, (merriam-webster.com), “[Warfare | Definition of Warfare,](#)” [accessed 3 Mar 21.](#)

⁵⁹ Merriam-Webster, (merriam-webster.com), “[War | Definition of War,](#)” [accessed 3 Mar 21.](#)

⁶⁰ Merriam-Webster, (merriam-webster.com), “[Combat | Definition of Combat,](#)” [accessed 3 Mar 21.](#)

⁶¹ Merriam-Webster, (merriam- webster.com), “[Combatant | Definition of Combatant,](#)” [accessed 3 Mar 21.](#)

⁶² DND, *Duty with Honour*, 10.

⁶³ DND, *Duty with Honour*, 10; 14; 32-33.

of a professional code is not dissimilar to that of the Samurai or the Spartan, and the differences lie in the time and methods used for its inculcation. A code alone does not create a warrior; it also requires an understanding of violence on behalf of the larger society, a commitment of self-sacrifice through responsibility, expertise, identity and military ethos. Further, the military values that must be internalized by CA warriors have been extracted from Canadian society's own value set. CA warriors must take with them the best of what Canada has to offer, then refine those values further, distilling, inculcating, espousing the clearly defined values of duty, loyalty, integrity, and courage.

Ideally, these core values would be institutionalized from the outset of training by socialization, indoctrinated through theory, practice, example, and absolute immersion. An examination of the Training Plans (TP) for the BMQ and BMOQ reveals some discussion of the core values; however at the most basic of levels of training there is a deviation in definitions and expectations. Arguably, if the core values of duty, loyalty, integrity, and courage are to form the basis, the foundation of the profession of arms, they should be inculcated to a similar degree for non-commissioned members (NCM) and officers alike. This is not presently the case. The aim of BMQ is described as being "designed to challenge...form the first building block necessary to prepare the [recruit] for both garrison and deployed operations in a joint or combined environment."⁶⁴ NCMs receive 200 minutes of instruction on the CAF core values over the course of 12 weeks.⁶⁵ Further, the successful soldier, sailor, or aviator is described as physically robust, operationally focused and "understanding their responsibilities within the Profession of

⁶⁴ Training Plan (TP) Basic Military Qualification (BMQ), 1-1

⁶⁵ TP BMQ, 4-3; 2-1; 1-1; 1-1; 4-21; 4-21.

Arms.” NCMs, in the initial training of their career, are expected to “demonstrate fighting spirit” for which the standard is “seeking and accepting challenges inherent in CAF service, to include: rappel tower, maritime crossing, obstacle courses, and rucksack marches.” A stark deviation from the definition of fighting spirit expressly communicated in *Duty with Honour*, where the requirement for CAF members is outlined. It states that members are to be prepared to “engage in or support combat operations. . .operate in conditions of extreme danger, to endure hardship...[act with] confidence, tenacity and the will to succeed...especially important [is] to act decisively including the use of lawful, lethal force.”⁶⁶

Officer candidates receive 160 minutes of classes that are designed to demonstrate the Canadian military ethos, that includes the code of values and ethics with an additional 520 minutes dedicated to sustaining the profession of arms.⁶⁷ Officer candidates are expected to adhere to the “officer fundamental attributes,” on which the candidates are continuously assessed throughout the duration of the 14 week course. These attributes are the four core military values as described in *Duty with Honour*. However, the definitions in the TP are simplified and less explicit, deviating from the specificity and clarity depicted in *Duty with Honour*. To be successful, BMOQ candidates, like NCMs, must demonstrate fighting spirit. Again, the definition of fighting spirit deviates between the two TPs. The BMOQ TP defines it by stating that “the candidates must approach their assigned tasks and missions with confidence, tenacity and will to succeed.”⁶⁸ It is important to note that this comparison concerns the quantifiable elements of the TPs,

⁶⁶ DND, *Duty with Honour*, 27.

⁶⁷ TP Basic Military Officer Qualification (BMOQ) 4-55 – 4-59; 3-1; 2-1; 3-1.

⁶⁸ TP BMOQ, 3-1.

accounting for the formal learning periods and excludes any informal learning that is observed by candidates of their instructor's actions. If these core values represent the foundation of the CAF, and subsequently CA service members, one must question the level of emphasis that is being placed on these values from the outset of training. The fact that the very essence of the CAF's institutionalized doctrine that covers its code of ethics, values, and fundamental beliefs is defined differently and therefore presented differently during basic training of NCMs and officers degrades their importance and exact meaning.

This is not to say that officers should not be held to a different, arguably higher standard. It is rather to note that there is comparatively little formal time dedicated to the instillation of the core set of military values and the expectation of violence from the outset of training at recruitment. It is imperative that the foundation of both the officer and NCM corps be rooted in the same values, beliefs and expectations in accordance with the CAF doctrine on the profession of arms, *Duty with Honour*. This is simply a matter of ensuring that in times of absolute hardship and risk, in the face of violence, in combat, that every service member is grounded by the same culture, and that pure rudimentary trust can be embraced. Additionally, if the intent is to prepare soldiers, sailors, and aviators for the hazards and risk that are in their core mandate moving forward in their career, there is a requirement to commence an inoculation to violence, and to prepare them mentally and physically for success in battle.

Marginalization of the Requirement to do Violence

The CAF has veered away from the fundamental expectation that, as all regular force CAF members are part of the profession of arms,⁶⁹ all service personnel are

⁶⁹ DND, *Duty with Honour*, 11; 14; 27.

expected to perform the primary duty of the CAF, the defence of Canada and her interests at home and abroad. This is the greatest differentiation between CAF members and the public service or any police force. The distinction is the acceptance of unlimited liability, a service member's "accept[tance] and understand[ing] that they are subject to being lawfully ordered into harm's way under conditions that could lead to the loss of their lives." This is the manifestation of the definitions above where there is a code, an acknowledgment of sacrifice, an expectation of violence on behalf of the state, on behalf of the Government of Canada. There can be no marginalization of these expectations and they must be met across the CAF membership regardless of rank, trade, service, years of service, or gender. The CAF code of values, beliefs, and expectations are universal.

HOW GENDER APPLIES

An examination of CA socialization and culture that ignores or negates gender-based analysis plus (GBA+)⁷⁰ factors has no merit in 2021. Similarly, using GBA+ considerations to negate the requirement for a common inculcation of values, ethics, and a common CA warrior code is inexcusable. There are many points of view in the GBA+ discussions, including the generalization of "I see green;" soldiers are soldiers regardless of race, sex, gender, ethnicity, or religion, perpetuated by the adage, "you joined us we did not join you." On the surface this seems to address the issue of gender, as it appears to treat everyone equally and fairly. This, however, is not the case and is an over-

⁷⁰ "GBA+ is an analytical process that provides a rigorous method for the assessment of systemic inequalities, as well as a means to assess how diverse groups of women, men, and gender diverse people may experience policies, programs and initiatives. The "plus" in GBA+ acknowledges that GBA+ is not just about differences between biological (sexes) and socio-cultural (genders). "[What is Gender-based Analysis Plus - Women and Gender Equality Canada](#)," accessed 18 Apr 2021.

simplified view of a complex issue. When examined holistically, diversity can bring richness to small teams and throughout the CA as a whole.

As previously discussed, the definition of a warrior is agnostic of gender, age, race or other qualifiers. However historically, because men have shaped the overall concept of culture within militaries, when socializing expected norms within the institution masculinity is reinforced from recruitment to retirement.⁷¹ These norms and restrictions have as such been wrongly imposed and limit membership into warrior culture predicated on “the existing global order, of which NATO [and most western militaries are] part, is gendered, racialized and classed.”⁷² Centuries of established, misinformed, socio-cultural perspectives have perpetuated a warrior framework based on masculinity.⁷³ This hegemonic masculinity, colloquially referred to as toxic masculinity, serves as “the real hurdle for women in participating fully in the military today.”⁷⁴

Military Socialization and the ‘Old White Man’

Reinforced by media and pop-culture, “the ideal military profile has been a warrior who is physically strong, courageous, having emotional and physical stamina, having tactical skills, is stoic and masculine.”⁷⁵ This ideal has endured despite efforts to adapt, and it continues to serve as a barrier to integration of females and non-white males

⁷¹ James J. Do, and Steven M. Samuels, “I Am a Warrior: An Analysis of the Military Masculine-Warrior Narrative among U.S. Air Force Officer Candidates,” *Armed Forces and Society* 47, no. 1 (2020), 25-47; 32.

⁷² Katharine A. M. Wright, Matthew M. Hurley, and Jesus Gil Ruiz, *NATO, Gender and the Military: Women Organising from Within* (Abingdon, Oxon and New York, NY: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2019), 16.

⁷³ Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, et al., *Challenge and Change in the Military*, 55.

⁷⁴ Wright, et al., *NATO, Gender and the Military*, 17; R. W. Connell, and James W. Messerschmidt, “Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept,” *Gender & Society* 19, no. 6 (2005), 829-859; Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, et al., *Challenge and Change in the Military*, 52.

⁷⁵ Wood and Charbonneau, “Gender, Self-Efficacy, and Warrior Identification,” 747-758.

across the CA. It would be simplest to view this as a problem within military culture, but there are many nations that have integrated gender much more easily, and as stated by Wood and Charbonneau, “these social attitudes do not seem to be a function of military cultures generally, but seem to be specific to North American military cultures.”⁷⁶

Admission into a warrior culture must be based not on stereotypes but rather on ability within the profession of arms. Warrior attributes should be “treated as an outcome of, or reflection of, one’s self-efficacy as a soldier”⁷⁷ and not the pre-requisite of enrollment. Just as with the Spartans and Samurai, there is an inculcation that must occur in order to transition from civilian, to soldier, to warrior. This inculcation must be tempered and measured in application; in training warriors there is a requirement for a balance of art and science. This is most critical when developing the attributes to deal with chaos and failure. Trainers need to reinforce success in order to build confidence, self-efficacy, and a pre-disposition to never give up in the fight. Trainers must imprint a warrior mindset in their trainees from the very beginning of training. This mindset must be one of never giving up, never conceding to the enemy. Trainees can experience a negative outcome such as mission or task failure, as long as they continue to move forward and close with the enemy, but to “kill” (to force a trainee to lay down and stop engaging in the fight both physically and mentally) them in training “begins to condition a risk aversion pathway in the brain to which they may turn during similar experiences in the future,”⁷⁸ by focusing on environments that instill successful outcomes for their candidates, promotes self-efficacy and fosters warrior identification. Qualification

⁷⁶ Wood and Charbonneau, “Gender, Self-Efficacy, and Warrior Identification,” 750.

⁷⁷ Wood and Charbonneau, “Gender, Self-Efficacy, and Warrior Identification,” 755.

⁷⁸ Dave Grossman and Loren W. Christensen, *On Combat: The Psychology and Physiology of Deadly Conflict in War and in Peace*, 2nd ed. (Illinois: PPCT Research Publications), 146.

standards and training plans must be constantly reviewed to ensure that modules are balanced and remain so for success across numerous factors including gender.⁷⁹ Success in this circumstance is the realization of institutional requirements while not alienating members due to gender. It must be acknowledged that CA training doctrine has been, for the most part, written from the perspective of the “Old White Man”⁸⁰ and therefore may not be representative of actual requirements, but rather in some cases, is a representation of biased preconceptions.

Physical Inculcation

*It is critical that Army leaders be agile, multiskilled pentathletes who have strong moral character, broad knowledge, and keen intellect. They must display these attributes and leader competencies bound by the concept of the Warrior Ethos.*⁸¹

– General Peter Schoomaker
Chief of Staff of the US Army in 2006

According to Clausewitz, “War is the realm of physical exertion and suffering. These will destroy us unless we can make ourselves indifferent to them, and for this birth or training must provide us with a certain strength of body and soul.”⁸² The requirement for military service members to be physically fit is paramount and will be discussed in detail in chapter four. The discussion, however, is about more than fitness, it is also about how the CA applies an attitude of physicality from recruitment to retirement. In relation to physical inculcation, physicality is not an absolute in admission, but rather an end

⁷⁹ Wood and Charbonneau, “Gender, Self-Efficacy, and Warrior Identification,” 755.

⁸⁰ Defined colloquially as “A politician or other wealthy person with influence. Called such because the vast majority of politicians and powerful people in the USA are old, white men.” It is used in this paper to similarly describe the predominance of white males in senior and influential positions across the CAF; [Urban Dictionary: Old White Man](#) accessed 08 April 2021.

⁸¹ Department of the Army, *Army Leadership. Competent, Confident, and Agile*, Foreword (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 2006).

⁸² Carl von Clausewitz, Michael Eliot Howard, Peter Paret, and Beatrice Heuser, *On War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 101.

state. Attributes of military physical fitness can be described as ‘functional fitness’ and can be related to elements of non-military sports and fitness activities; however there will always remain an unquantifiable aspect to its application. For example, in the CA, light infantry soldiers are similar to rugby players, mechanized infantry soldiers are similar to offensive football players, armour soldiers are similar to defensive football players, and gunners are similar to power lifters. These comparisons are, of course, generalities but demonstrate key physical attributes present in each trade. When training for and conducting operations, Canadian soldiers are similar to professional athletes in the stresses that their bodies are expected to endure. The comparisons above set the tone and provide an overly simplified analogy for how different the physical expectations can be between operational trades when they are conducting their specialized portion of combat but still fails to address the physical requirements of an actual fight. This is where soldiers are subject to the extremes of the ancient gladiator’s arena or the modern day mixed martial arts cage. Therefore the above mentioned ‘functional fitness’ must not only get the force to the fight but must provide them the abilities to be successful in the fight.

Soldiers within the CA must be capable of exhibiting many characteristics and transitions across a physical spectrum with one common attribute, endurance. During operations there frequently is little time for rest and or recovery. Therefore by understanding and acknowledging that the profession is a physical one with standards required to achieve self-efficacy, one must look at how standards are applied. Given that age can affect ability, it is, with little dissention, considered the norm for physical fitness standards to be divided by age. For example, the CAF FORCE test, which will be discussed in depth in chapter four, applies a baseline of Universality of Service against

fitness results that is not biased by age or gender. It then applies a fitness incentive level to a member's physicality that takes into account both gender and age, divided into 5-year increments.⁸³ Age is generally accepted as an aggravating or mitigating circumstance in physical ability; however gender is not as readily accepted as a factor when discussing physical attributes. "The thought behind this is that a man 62 years of age cannot run a mile in the same time as a man of 19 can."⁸⁴ Therefore, similar logic must be used when examining the physical differences that distinguish gender within the military environment.⁸⁵

If the purpose of testing physical fitness is a reliable indicator of physical health and lifestyle, and with the acceptance of incentive levels for males being negated simply by age (as long as they possess the ability to function under operational norms), then fitness testing, under the current construct, must be delinked from operational self-efficacy. Ultimately, "physical education testing may distinguish men with higher overall strength and endurance and with more positive attitudes from 'lesser' men, but the tests make little pretense of relating to professional needs."⁸⁶ Therefore, there needs to be social acceptance that that comparison only occurs between peer groups of age and gender. Warrior self-efficacy must instead be tied to imperative operational outcomes based on weight class and against a soldier's ability to fight. The warrior's fitness test should be one that looks more holistically at their willingness to engage in a fight, their

⁸³ [FORCE Fitness Profile - FAQs \(cfmws.com\)](#) accessed 14 March 2021 and [FORCE Evaluation FAQs \(cafconnection.ca\)](#) accessed 14 March 2021.

⁸⁴ Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, et al., *Challenge and Change in the Military*, 57.

⁸⁵ Canadian Forces Leadership Institute, et al., *Challenge and Change in the Military*, 57.

⁸⁶ Judith Stiehm, *Bring Me Men and Women: Mandated Change at the U.S. Air Force Academy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 152.

ability to endure the fatigue they will feel in a fight, and their resilience throughout the fight.

CONCLUSION

The CAF and the CA have doctrine that describes a code of conduct. Supported by fundamental beliefs, it is suited for both times of peace and war. The institution will stumble by trying to overcomplicate this doctrine or by deviating from it to accommodate every member of society. The core values of duty, loyalty, integrity, and courage coupled with the fundamental beliefs and expectations of unlimited liability, fighting spirit, discipline, teamwork, and physical fitness⁸⁷ must be taught, internalized, and espoused without deviation from their doctrinal definitions. This is the institutional foundation that, by its very nature, needs to be simple and firm and unflappable in its function while remaining agnostic of any personal qualifiers other than operational self-efficacy. As the CA transforms civilians into soldiers and eventually into warriors, there is the requirement for internalization of this code while clearly defining operational self-efficacy, a pillar of which should be exposure to, preparation for, and inoculation to, violence as this is the only attribute on the battlefield by which enemies will measure the CA.

⁸⁷ DND, *Duty with Honour*, 27-33.

CHAPTER 3 – MENTAL HEALTH OF THE WARRIOR

*War is the most brutal aspect of human existence. War encompasses all that is evil in the world—death, torture, excruciating pain, rape, dismemberment, and sorrow—in the name of an ideology, government, or religion. Its scars extend beyond the warfighter to family, friends, and colleagues. The act of going to war is often decided by those who do not go to fight and, perhaps, never donned a uniform. But for those who do go, the complexities and mistakes made during war can be widespread and last a lifetime.*⁸⁸

The Government of Canada relies on the CA to ensure its national interests at home and abroad, at times on short notice. The membership of the CA is willing to complete this task. Comparable to an astronaut spending an entire career preparing to go to space, and then finally getting the opportunity, soldiers are happiest when they can put their training to use. However this can come at a cost, one borne by those who, when called upon, endure risk and hardship. It is impossible to predict what CA-imposed stressors, or individual personal stressors will impact a member's life, therefore the CA must acknowledge, understand, and nurture not only the physical health, but the mental health of its soldiers. Noting that "people's mental characteristics and outlook change over time, so too does their psychological resilience," leading to the requirement for career long education, support and care.⁸⁹ While understanding that deep-rooted motives "such as patriotism, honor, sense of duty, and an overall true excitement about volunteering for service in a time of war"⁹⁰ lead many to join the military, other reasons

⁸⁸ Jaime B. Parent, Inc OverDrive, and OverDrive ebook, *Moving Past PTSD: Consciousness, Understanding, and Appreciation for Military Veterans and their Families* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2019), 47.

⁸⁹ David Fletcher, and Mustafa Sarkar, "Mental Fortitude Training: An Evidence-Based Approach to Developing Psychological Resilience for Sustained Success," *Journal of Sport Psychology in Action* 7, no. 3 (2016), 135-157; 136.

⁹⁰ Gino L. Collura, and Daniel H. Lende, "Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and Neuroanthropology: Stopping Ptsd before it Begins," *Annals of Anthropological Practice* 36, no.1 (2012), 131-148; 136.

may vary from person to person. Incentives for joining may be founded in economic, social, or familial motivators.⁹¹

The nature of global conflict and the various levels of response that the GoC has assigned the CA generate a constant ebb and flow of experience and acceptance of risk and of hardship. The nature of operations – combat, peacekeeping, humanitarian aid / disaster response, or security force capacity building, etc. – are based on the political climate of the day and will affect the political-military response. Each operation has its own unique challenges, rewards, and stressors. Complicating the balance of tempo is the requisite for readiness and career progression. Consequently, the CA lives in a constant cycle of individual training, collective training, and employment where the prioritization of tasks is essential and there is little time for operational soldiers to enjoy the benefits of lower tempo duties.

Expectation management of exposure to hardship and risk in relation to performance and conduct, coupled with trust and transparency in the chain of command, can provide service members with a basis upon which to gain understanding and resilience. The institution must take care to understand the individual's background and culture while still providing a military culture that is grounded, relatable and enduring. Deliberate engagement in inter-human aggression is not a natural state of being for society in general, and therefore the institution must prepare soldiers for violent engagements. Individual warriors become a sum of their parts, their upbringing, their training, and their experience.

⁹¹ Collura. and. Lende, "Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and Neuroanthropology," 131-148; 136.

The individual experiences of CA soldiers, and more importantly their personal perception of those experiences, have the greatest potential to create enduring challenges for those soldiers. Subsequently, the institution's care, training, and education cannot simply be a sporadic once and done execution. It must be unfaltering and establish norms and milestones that are enablers for soldiers who have experienced hardship and risk to help guide them through their individual perceptions of such trauma. One's "ability to 'make sense' of adversity, trauma, sufferance, and loss in combat [will] make a large difference in how a soldier is going to deal with the inevitable flashbacks and memories after returning from deployment."⁹² This cannot be a simple, generic system that treats all individuals the same.

Some issues experienced by soldiers have a far-reaching history, one being the well-documented struggle of soldiers to cope with the experiences of war.

The distress caused by exposure to extreme stress has been discussed for a long time as shell shock, battle fatigue, combat trauma, post-rape syndrome, and other names. Although some discussants of psychological casualties emphasized individual vulnerabilities others were more willing to look at the extraordinarily toxic circumstances of warfare. However, only in the second half of the 20th century did post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) come to be regarded as a genuine psychological disorder ensuing from the exposure to a traumatic event in which both predisposing factors and the psychological toxicity of war itself play important roles.⁹³

PREPARATIONS FOR VIOLENCE

Unexpressed emotions will never die. They are buried alive and will come forth later in uglier ways.

– Sigmund Freud⁹⁴

⁹² Collura and Lende, "Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and Neuroanthropology," 131-148; 139.

⁹³ Yulia Ustinova, and Etzel Cardeña. "Combat Stress Disorders and their Treatment in Ancient Greece." *Psychological Trauma* 6, no. 6 (2014), 739-748; 740.

⁹⁴ Parent, et al., *Moving Past PTSD*, 30.

Throughout the training process and integration into the operational force of the CA, recruits and junior leaders alike are taught that the first step of any operation is the setting of conditions, or the preliminary moves of equipment and personnel. Preparing warriors for the mental challenges and rigors that they will encounter throughout their careers should be no different. It is imperative that through honesty and transparency, soldiers of all ranks and trades understand and accept the CAF identity, including unlimited liability.⁹⁵ Having a solid grounded identity upon which to rely in times of adversity matters, and has an enduring impact on the ability to process the effects of PTSD.⁹⁶

Post Traumatic Disorder (PTSD) has become an overused, misused, term. It has developed into a catchall for issues surrounding military service personnel's response to the horrors of the battlefield.⁹⁷ Officially PTSD is a diagnosable condition listed in the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders in which there are 20 quantifiable symptoms including:

Memories, dreams, flashbacks, cued distress, cued physical reactions, avoiding internal reminders, avoiding external reminders, dissociative amnesia, negative beliefs, blame, negative feelings, loss of interest, detachment or estrangement, numbing, irritability or aggressive behavior, reckless behavior, hypervigilance, startle, concentration, and sleep issues.⁹⁸

⁹⁵ DND, *Duty with Honour*, 20.

⁹⁶ Collura and Lende, "Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and Neuroanthropology," 131-148; 137.

⁹⁷ Charles W. Hoge, *Once A Warrior Always A Warrior: Navigating the Transition from Combat to Home* (Guilford, CT: Globe Pequot Press, 2010), xii.

⁹⁸ Michelle J. Bovin, Brian P. Marx, Frank W. Weathers, Matthew W. Gallagher, Paola Rodriguez, Paula P. Schnurr, and Terence M. Keane, "Psychometric Properties of the PTSD Checklist for Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-Fifth Edition (PCL-5) in Veterans," *Psychological Assessment* 28, no. 11 (2016), 1379-1391; 1384.

While examining each of these symptoms is beyond the scope of this paper, PTSD as a medical condition is recognized by CA health services. Understanding the possible symptoms allows for a greater understanding of the preparations that must be established. What is missing in this medical definition is the relationship between PTSD and soldiers who have experienced combat. Soldiers are required to adapt to dangerous surroundings wherein many of the “symptoms” of PTSD become survival skills. Over time combat stress reaction, a condition that can be developed while deployed in areas of operation and which can be treated with rest and reassurance, often presents many of the same symptoms as PTSD.⁹⁹ Further complicating the ability for warriors to function on the battlefield is the repression of trauma, which can result in delayed on-set symptoms days, weeks, or even months following the trauma.¹⁰⁰

From the day of enrollment into the service, soldiers should be trained in and exposed to controlled violence that will allow them “to repeatedly practice problem solving and successfully resolve difficult, uncomfortable struggles [to] promote re-learning [of] how to be effective in adverse circumstances.”¹⁰¹ This can be most effectively achieved through Close Quarter Combat (CQC) training, or hand-to-hand fighting, allowing soldiers to be confronted by controlled violence in a safe and secure scenario free from danger, while being exposed to the shock and horror of another human trying to do them harm, and vice versa. This experiential learning forms neural pathways that rewire the brain. Through constant repetition of tasks and behaviours, the pathways

⁹⁹ Hoge, *Once A Warrior Always A Warrior*, 3.

¹⁰⁰ Hoge, *Once A Warrior Always A Warrior*, 2.

¹⁰¹ Alison E. Willing, Sue Ann Girling, Ryan Deichert, Rebecca Wood-Deichert, Jason Gonzalez, Diego Hernandez, Elspeth Foran, Paul R. Sanberg, and Kevin E. Kip, “Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Training for US Service Members and Veterans with Symptoms of PTSD,” *Military Medicine* 184, no. 11-12 (2019), e626-e631; e630.

get stronger until the behaviour becomes the norm. Members learn that under control and in the right circumstances, violence is legal and justified. Though overt human aggression and the horrors of combat may cause them temporary distress, service members who are prepared and/or conscious of the realities of war will be better prepared to deal with combat stress reaction and PTSD.¹⁰²

As mentioned previously, modern militaries look to instill cultural values and ethics in a matter of mere weeks, where historically warrior cultures took years for this type of formation. As training did not begin during the formative childhood years, “the cultural influences that young men and women have before going into the military help shape multiple facets to their identity.”¹⁰³ Recruits have a very personal cultural and introspective concept of military service before ever committing to join the CA, often based on pop-culture, recruiting media, and socio-cultural influences. In many instances these “influences of how ‘glorious’ military service is, [create]... a fantasy of military culture and the rewards that combat can bring,” as opposed to the horrors of conflict. For this reason CA inculcation of its core values must be relentless, in the instruction of duty, loyalty, integrity, and courage and their precise institutionally prescribed definitions.¹⁰⁴ It is also imperative that inculcation embraces the CAF fundamental beliefs and expectations of unlimited liability, fighting spirit, discipline, teamwork, and physical fitness, all of which can be demonstrated and reinforced through CQC training.¹⁰⁵ This is similar to, but less extreme than the training that was undertaken in ancient Greece where

¹⁰² Hoge, *Once A Warrior Always A Warrior*, 23-24.

¹⁰³ Collura and Lende, “Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and Neuroanthropology,” 131-148; 138, 138, 138.

¹⁰⁴ DND, *Duty with Honour*, 32-33.

¹⁰⁵ DND, *Duty with Honour*, 27-29.

“the fear of punishment was reinforced by [the] fear of shame and emulation of positive models, especially in Sparta, where the entire system of education aimed at molding fearless soldiers.”¹⁰⁶

Mental Inculcation

*Combat-related psychological distress in ancient Greece demonstrates that fear, panic, and ensuing short-term psychological consequences were well-known to military men who also tried to prevent them by some methods that are considered efficient today.*¹⁰⁷

Military leaders in ancient Greece faced challenges similar to those of modern day militaries in that they “had to deal with the psychological aftermath of warfare, and some of them even managed to prevent outbursts of ungrounded terror and panic attacks among their soldiers.” A review of ancient Greek writings reveals that the topic of mental stress was frequently addressed when discussing warfare, referring “mostly to disorders occurring on the battlefield or immediately after the combat, and describing conditions often during distress following combat trauma.”¹⁰⁸

In studying soldiers and the trauma caused by war, it is apparent that mental health challenges are not new. Soldiers must be reassured and helped to understand that there is normalcy in mental distress given the nature of their profession. The institution must recognize that some soldiers experience an identity crisis. If soldiers are “thought of as only a soldier with a specific function in combat [this] may serve the military mission at a critical moment, but the aftereffects of trauma can last a lifetime unless the soldier can make some sense of [their] combative actions and losses.”¹⁰⁹ The institution must

¹⁰⁶ Ustinova and Cardeña, “Combat Stress Disorders,” 739-748; 740, 746, 739, 746, 746.

¹⁰⁷ Ustinova and Cardeña, “Combat Stress Disorders,” 739-748; 746.

¹⁰⁸ Ustinova and Cardeña, “Combat Stress Disorders,” 739-748; 739; 746.

¹⁰⁹ Collura and Lende, “Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and Neuroanthropology,” 131-148; 136.

embrace the individual and their personal culture while the individual must accept and internalize the profession of arms.

It is this meshing, internalization, acceptance and espousing of culture and values that insulates soldiers from mental trauma. It is this understanding and emulation of what is lawful and unlawful, what is good and bad, right and wrong, that will allow them to move forward through moments of *crise de conscience*.¹¹⁰ Through the understanding and training of mental resilience, formation of neural pathways or mental fortitude, the CA can better prepare its soldiers to proactively and reactively deal with challenges “before, during, and after stressful or adverse encounters.” This provides a venue for two forms of mental conditioning, robust resilience (proactive) and rebound resilience (reactive). Robust resilience is the “protective quality reflected in a person maintaining their well-being and performance when under pressure,” whereas rebound resilience is the “bounce back quality reflected in minor or temporary disruptions to a person’s well-being and performance when under pressure and the quick return to normal functioning.”¹¹¹ Building and fostering resilience is significant enough that continuation training throughout CA soldier’s careers, from recruitment to retirement, should be prioritized managing a balance between both exposure to practical and theoretical learning.

Experiential learning and theoretical learning each play key roles throughout the formation and careers of CA soldiers. It is important that soldiers understand the technical capabilities of their equipment and the theories and history behind their tactics,

¹¹⁰ Collura and Lende, “Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and Neuroanthropology,” 131-148; 136.

¹¹¹ Fletcher and Sarkar, “Mental Fortitude Training,” 135-157; 136.

techniques, and procedures (TTPs). It is just as important that they have experience in the application of these technical capabilities and the employment of their TTPs. From the moment an individual enrolls in the CAF and begins training, they are bombarded with and entirely immersed in the “Army Way” – forcing them to relearn how to do many basic life skills. This inculcation is both physically and mentally intense and, given the relatively short timeline of basic training, it is abrupt. It leaves some questioning their past and current identities as there may be significant contradictions between the two that the individual must now reconcile.¹¹²

There is a moment of metamorphosis in an individual’s career where the tools, comradery, and mentorship of the CA give rise to one of two outcomes. Either an individual’s culture changes and adapts to the institution, or they reject the values and fundamental beliefs of the CA, constituting a dichotomy of thought. Often, this can be rectified through the use of positive language towards the institution, the team, the culture of those entrusted to mentor them. Conversely, negative language from those same mentors can drastically undermine the process of inculcation. Equating to there being “a challenge culture where individuals view pressure as an opportunity to perform, [vice] a threatening culture where pressure evokes a fear of failure.”¹¹³

These lessons are intense and long-lasting. Twenty years after recruitment, if an experienced soldier is asked why they do certain things a specific way, they will usually respond “because that is how I was taught in basic training.” Basic training is the critical time in a soldier’s career to infix the requisite skills to be mentally resilient, and begin

¹¹² Collura and Lende, “Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and Neuroanthropology,” 131-148; 138.

¹¹³ Fletcher and Sarkar, “Mental Fortitude Training,” 135-157; 149.

acclimatizing them to violence. This is an opportunity for recruits to be introduced to the theory behind the warrior mindset and begin to internalize the experiential aspects that will define, protect, and enable them throughout their careers. This period of internalization is essential whether individuals have previous exposure to violence through combat sports or activities such where firearms are used. This is because the use of firearms and combatives is no longer a matter of sport but rather the reality of legally killing or being killed.

Understanding There Is No Normal

Soldiers are individuals, and their perception of events is as crucial as the reality. Perceptions change as challenges and stressors fluctuate. This “is another important reason why a lack of resilience should not be confused with weakness.”¹¹⁴ The ability to both cope and succumb reside in every soldier. The breaking point is what must be managed, and more importantly acknowledged, by both the individual and the institution.¹¹⁵ A career in the CA will expose its membership to extreme adversity and hardship with which they may struggle:

It should be emphasized that feeling vulnerable to stress or struggling to cope with adversity should not be perceived as weakness. Rather, open discussion about this topic is a sign of strength and the potential beginning of positive change that will hopefully lead to individuals withstanding—and potentially thriving on—pressure.¹¹⁶

Despite that fact that soldiers have suffered throughout history from the experience of war, it is “only in the second half of the 20th century [that] PTSD came to be regarded as a genuine psychological disorder ensuing from the exposure to a traumatic

¹¹⁴ Fletcher and Sarkar, “Mental Fortitude Training,” 135-157; 150.

¹¹⁵ Fletcher and Sarkar, “Mental Fortitude Training,” 135-157; 150.

¹¹⁶ Fletcher and Sarkar, “Mental Fortitude Training,” 135-157; 148.

event.”¹¹⁷ The stereotype of the stoic warrior has hindered the acceptance of struggle and perpetuated a reluctance to seek assistance in times of consternation. Militaries did, and in many cases still do, expect soldiers to be able to process extremes. Complete assimilation of the expectations of a warrior no longer occurs from early childhood immersion in the warrior culture as it did in the days of the *Agoge*. Modern warriors are a composite of their past, present, and the institutional model. Collura and Lende state that, “cultural models and interpretations acquired in childhood and adolescence frame the ways that individual soldiers interpret combat and adversity.”¹¹⁸

The CA, then, needs to prioritize and establish a training system that exposes soldiers to stress that is positive and reinforces success. Acknowledging that all soldiers are unique and while risk and hardships may be similar, soldiers do not perceive them identically. “What needs to be focused on within future resiliency training paradigms is the balance of cultural identities within the service member population.”¹¹⁹ The CA’s expectations must be clear and transparent from the institution to its recruits, not simply written in doctrine, but be over-communicated from enrollment to retirement. The ultimate *raison d’être* of the CA is to do violence on behalf of the Government of Canada.

In an age where pop culture constantly bombards the population with violence, it would be reasonable to assume that desensitization to violence has occurred through digital means, and continues to occur with younger generations. In reality, a dissonance is occurring due to the glorification of violence. Human aggression, when experienced

¹¹⁷ Ustinova and Cardeña, “Combat Stress Disorders,” 739-748; 740.

¹¹⁸ Collura and Lende, “Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and Neuroanthropology,” 131-148; 136, 138.

¹¹⁹ Collura and Lende, “Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and Neuroanthropology,” 131-148; 138.

personally in its horror, can create increased mental trauma regardless of digital exposure.¹²⁰ The hard truth is that unlike digital desensitization, there are lasting finite effects to combat. Death and dismemberment cannot simply be reset. “Video games and mottos do not accurately depict the true nature of the combative military experience. Resources that might be drawn on to make sense of these experiences are often limited,” exemplifying the requirement to inculcate and inoculate CA soldiers to violence throughout their careers.¹²¹

AFTER THE VIOLENCE – THE LIFELONG WARRIOR

All individuals respond to stressors in different ways and often, based on stimuli and stress load, reactions to a previously experienced or similar stressor will vary. Additionally, the commitment and sacrifice that soldiers make to the profession of arms alters their perception of specific stressors, not only for the time they are deployed or for the duration of their career, but throughout their life. Resilience education and training that soldiers receive at enrollment must take into consideration, where possible, not only the combat and military aspects of stress, but should “consider the broader environment within which individuals operate.”¹²²

If the desire of the CA is to create a default of soldiers that maintain an open and resilient mindset, then soldiers need to understand how their bodies react to a range of emotions and situations, such as discomfort, fear, and panic. The reaction to the environment and/or stressor must become secondary to the perception of, and reaction to, the hardship. A study conducted by the Association of Military Surgeons of the United

¹²⁰ Collura and Lende, “Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and Neuroanthropology,” 131-148; 138-139.

¹²¹ Collura and Lende, “Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and Neuroanthropology,” 131-148; 138.

¹²² Fletcher and Sarkar, “Mental Fortitude Training,” 135-157; 140, 140, 144.

States on mental health and PTSD in combat-experienced veterans, noted that after exposure to trauma, Brazilian Jiu Jitsu (BJJ), a martial art that is similar to elements of and incorporated into CQC, provided “beneficial complementary approach for the treatment of PTSD.”¹²³ Theoretically, “BJJ can be viewed as a problem solving opportunity for the practitioner [it] may instill a resilience that translates to life outside the gym.”¹²⁴ If CA soldiers are habituated to and skilled in CQC, they build resilience and strategies that apply during and after the fight, and in and out of uniform.

The journey of professional soldiers, warriors, is one that spans their lives from cradle to grave. Though the individual endures periods of hardship and risk, the sense of team membership fosters an environment of *shared* hardship, risk, and the feeling of solidarity. This was highlighted by the study by the Association of Military Surgeons of the United States when it noted that “its practitioners [continued] to engage in social interaction; the only way to practice and learn is to have training partners to grapple with. In addition to social interaction, the training paradigm in this study could also provide a degree of social support, since the participants were interacting with others who shared similar life experiences.”¹²⁵

CONCLUSION

To achieve mental harmony there is a requirement for balance. For soldiers, the balance resides between living in peace and training for war. It is difficult for soldiers raised in a time of peace to understand the requirement for war: being maintained at high readiness, and prepared for the sheer violence that will be required to win the first battle

¹²³ Willing, et al., “Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Training,” e626-e631; e630.

¹²⁴ Willing, et al., “Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Training,” e626-e631; e629.

¹²⁵ Willing, et al., “Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Training,” e626-e631; e630.

of the next war. Therefore, as the required inoculation and preparation for violence cannot be achieved overnight when geo-political situations change dramatically, the CA must focus on the extreme right hand edge of the spectrum of conflict in order to have soldiers capable of surviving physically and enduring mentally.

“The cornerstone of this resilience...is, not surprisingly, an individual’s personal qualities.”¹²⁶ As the expectations of CA soldiers are ultimately to go where others do not want to go, to endure hardships that others would not be expected to endure, to accept risk that others will not readily accept, these expectations invariably take a toll on soldiers mentally and physically. Stress reaction of some degree will exist in all soldiers from time to time and not all soldiers will experience it at the same time and in the same way. Most, in the moment, will shake it off or repress the feelings and symptoms. They will eventually need to reconcile their experiences, emotions, and understandings of the events that rocked them to the core of their beliefs, and reconcile the horrors and terrors of combat. It is in this moment that they will fall back on their culture, their beliefs, and their upbringing. If in this moment their inculcation and inoculation to the necessity, justness, and legality of their actions, the actions of those to their left and right, the actions of the institution wavers, then it is at this moment that they are at the greatest risk of faltering themselves. Finally, and most importantly, this reconciliation is not a once and done; soldiers may be required to undergo this mental appeasement time and again as their perceptions of their actions change, or as if they perceive a variance in the culture or incentives of the institution.

¹²⁶ Fletcher and Sarkar, “Mental Fortitude Training,” 135-157; 137.

The care of soldiers' well-being from enrollment to retirement must be a priority for the CA. This is not to say that soldiers should be coddled, in fact just the opposite. They need to experience violence, hardship, and risk in a controlled setting, instilling the foundation that they can then lean on when reconciliation is required. CA training and the language that is used in its doctrine and training institutions becomes critical, words have meaning, meaning that soldiers will hold onto and internalize for the rest of their lives.

CHAPTER 4 – COMBATIVES TRAINING PAN-CANADIAN ARMY¹²⁷¹²⁸

Until technology enables me to handcuff you from afar, I will need to arrest you, face-to-face, man-to-man. This means that, when we fight, when I call upon those elements of the warrior within, I will be close enough to smell you, to touch you, to strike you, to cut you, to hear you, to plead with you, to touch you, to wrestle with you, to shoot you, to handcuff you, to bleed on you and you on me, to tend to your wounds, to hear your last words. Our meeting may be brief, but I will have had a more intense contact with you, my unwanted adversary, than with most of my loved ones.¹²⁹

Chief Deputy Scott Mattison,
Swift County Sheriff's Dept, Benson, MN

Ground combat at any range is an intensely personal affair. It is physical, emotional, and lingering. When engaged in a fight, it is often said that soldiers will rise to the challenge. The reality is that soldiers revert to their training, relying on the foundations and fundamentals that they have practiced repetitively and relentlessly. So then, what is it that prepares a Canadian Army soldier for the fight? What time and effort is expended to prepare them for violence, to prepare them for this intensely personal affair, to prepare them for combat? What is done to bolster their confidence, their courage, their resilience?

This chapter will explore the manner in which the CA prepares its soldiers to operate in the complex environment of today's operations. It will examine the challenges faced in the creation of warriors, and consider opportunities for modernization, institutionalization, and professionalization of the close quarter combat (CQC). Further, it

¹²⁷ Elements of this thesis are representative of informal conversations between the author and LCol Steven Burgess, the CAF Senior Military Combatives Instructor, between January 2019 and present.

¹²⁸ Some thoughts expressed in this chapter are extracted from a Service Paper written by the author titled CLOSE QUARTER COMBAT–EXCELLENCE? Which discussed the production of CQC Instructors in the CAF.

¹²⁹ Grossman and Christensen, *On Combat*, 15.

will contrast the approach of the US Army and the United States Marine Corps with the pan-CA inculcation of a warrior mindset from recruitment to retirement.

Combatives training within the CAF, and more specifically within the CA, could be described as a niche skillset rather than reinforced as foundational military knowledge. It is regularly practiced by a small cross-section of the force and predominately in their personal time outside of the work environment. Despite being a lifesaving skillset that increases survivability on the battlefield, it has not been prioritized in the same manner as other elements regular training. Almost understandable – though not excusable – that when leadership is faced with an excess of demands on time, personnel, and resources, prioritization must occur. When prioritizing training, preconceptions play a significant role in the weighting of an activity. A training iteration that is perceived as dangerous, with a risk of injury, and is not mandatory will receive less attention than activities that are mandatory or deemed as less risky. This is a definite blind spot for the CA, and represents a pan-CA leadership challenge. It is the responsibility of leadership to train soldiers to fight and survive in the first battle of the next war. If leaders have never been exposed to combatives in their individual training, or if they deem it of little importance as a result of a personal experience, then entire units will allow the skillset to atrophy.

Within the CAF, combatives training is contained under the CQC doctrine. The CAF defines CQC as “the physical confrontation between two or more opponents. It involves armed, unarmed, lethal, and non-lethal fighting techniques that range from enforced compliance to deadly force.”¹³⁰ This function is not limited to the infantry or the combat arms. With CQC being defined as a physical confrontation, it is agnostic to trade,

¹³⁰ Canada, Department of National Defence. B-GL-382-004/FP-001, *Close Quarter Combat* (Ottawa: DND, 2007), 1.

rank, and service, yet is rarely trained or practiced, and is often overlooked by the majority of the officer corps as it is not part of their mandated formation.

Train As You Fight

As previously discussed the role of CAF is to conduct violence in support of national interest when called upon by the GoC. Regardless of trade, this can be distilled down to a simple mantra – close with and destroy the enemy. Examining this from a philosophical as opposed to a literal point of view provides a very clear function of the CAF; close with—have the mindset and willingness to move towards danger, the fight response; and destroy the enemy—have the capacity, ability, and resolve to engage in a fight and win. This creates an imperative, a responsibility for CAF and, more particularly CA leadership, to prepare its soldiers for the challenges they may face both at home and during international deployment. Given constraints and restraints on time and resources, the most valuable training must be prioritized to ensure that when confronted with a fight, soldiers are prepared and familiar with fighting techniques.

Preparation for The 1%

The majority of the work conducted by the CA in a peacetime army is relatively mundane compared to the full right-hand edge of the spectrum of conflict.¹³¹ This does not downplay the requirement for the men and women of the CA to be prepared, on short notice, to fight in and win the first battle of the next war, to what simply amounts to the one percent of a modern CA soldier's career. Essentially, this requires CA soldiers to be trained and confident in the application of a broad range of skillsets, including trade specific skills and competencies that allow for the combined arms teams and the brigade

¹³¹ Canada, Department of National Defence. B-GL-300-001/FP-001, *Land Operations* (Ottawa: DND, 2008) 3-9.

group to function. It also requires the mastery of many individual skills that form the foundation of soldiering. These include, but are not limited to, fieldcraft, marksmanship, and physical fitness. CQC is frequently omitted from the list of critical skillsets, severely impacting the ability of soldiers to be successful in their mission.

RIGHT HAND EDGE - COMBAT

The spectrum of conflict is representative of the environment in which operations are conducted. On the extreme left hand edge there is absolute peace. On the extreme right hand edge is absolute war. Between the absolutes are the various states of conflict that can bleed into each other.¹³² Modern militaries can be subject to a myriad of operations across the spectrum, simultaneously requiring its members to responsively modify their actions to adapt to the sliver of the spectrum into which their operation falls. They must have the ability to react to changing situations and, while reverting to their baseline training, be prepared for their *raison d'être*.¹³³ Their “primary mission—to be trained, ready to fight and win wars.”¹³⁴

¹³² DND, *Land Operations*, 3-9.

¹³³ DND, *Advancing with Purpose*. 15.

¹³⁴ Radu Adrian Mandache, and Laviniu Bojor, “Land Forces Officers Training between Full Spectrum Combat and Irregular Conflict.” *International Scientific Conference “Strategies XXI”* 3 (2014), 168.

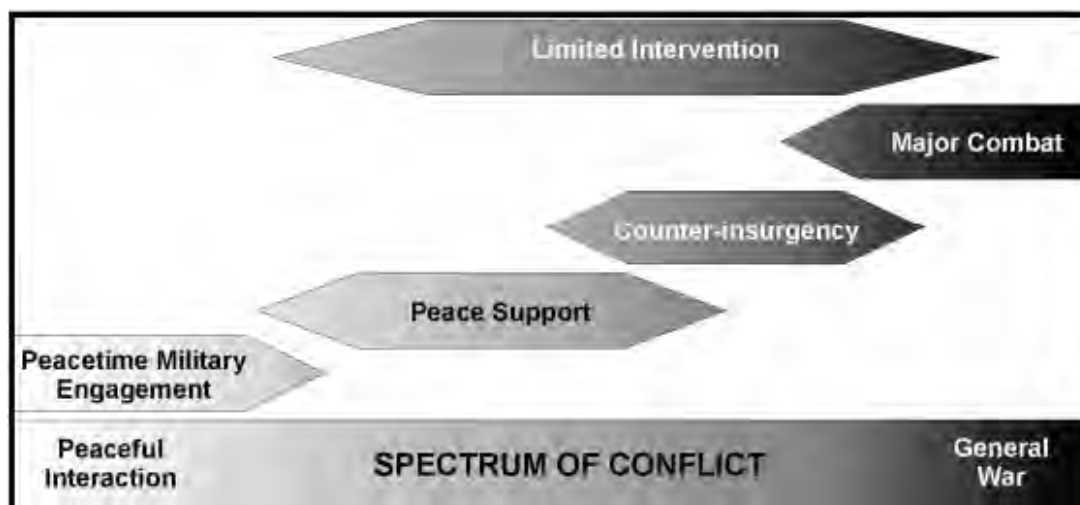


Figure 4.1 Spectrum of Conflict ¹³⁵

It is critical that across the spectrum all members of the CA be confident and capable, with capacity and ability. Modern combatives programs give soldiers options throughout the spectrum of conflict. It allows them to escalate and deescalate skillfully across the spectrum of force without relying solely on the use of their firearm while moderating the physiological and psychological reactions to the stressors involved in combat.

Stress Reaction

Lieutenant-Colonel Dave Grossman, an expert in human aggression and combat psychology, has surmised that interpersonal human aggression is the “universal human phobia.”¹³⁶ Noting that only two percent of the population fail to exhibit a debilitating fear response at interpersonal human aggression, it is critical for those in a profession of violence to understand this reaction and set the tone for training and understanding.¹³⁷ The physiological arousal in response to a threat, commonly referred to as fear, can

¹³⁵ Source: DND, B-GL-300-001/FP-001, *Land Operations DND, Land Operations*, 3-11.

¹³⁶ Grossman and Christensen, *On Combat*, 22.

¹³⁷ Grossman and Christensen, *On Combat*, 22.

debilitate or stimulate.¹³⁸ If a warrior learns to use this arousal to stimulate their understanding of the environment, not only are they better prepared to deal with the situation at hand but are less likely to endure lasting effects from the situation.

When faced with life or death situations, such as combat, those who are not trained can endure “extreme effects of the [sympathetic nervous system] (SNS) [which] will cause catastrophic failure of the visual, cognitive, and motor control systems.”¹³⁹ Combat is an extremely physical activity – it drains a soldier’s physical and mental abilities. Physical conditioning, simulated realistic training, and training in a state of exhaustion, are essential tools in preparing for combat stress and “improved performance under stress, mental resiliency, and confidence.”¹⁴⁰ Repetitive training allows stress to become an enabler as opposed to a disabler. It allows individuals to counteract physiological effects such as the response from the SNS, known as the “fight or flight” response, in reaction to an apparent threat. The body and mind automatically respond, thus minimizing the impact.¹⁴¹ This amounts to “operant conditioning where training prepares an organism to react to a specific stimulus with a specific voluntary motor response.”¹⁴²

Repetition in training establishes familiarity to many situations that can reduce the shock and surprise associated with combat. The application of various forms of stress inoculation training increases confidence and decreases stress when engaged in

¹³⁸ Bruce Siddle, and Dave Grossman, “Psychological Effects of Combat,” *Encyclopedia of Violence, Peace and Conflict* 3 (2008), 1796.

¹³⁹ Siddle and Grossman. “Psychological Effects of Combat,” 1801.

¹⁴⁰ United States Marine Corps, *MARINE CORPS ORDER* 1500.59A, 23 Sep 2019.

¹⁴¹ Grossman and Christensen, *On Combat*, 33.

¹⁴² Siddle and Grossman. “Psychological Effects of Combat,” 1796.

interpersonal human aggression.¹⁴³ As a result, if soldiers are properly trained in, and have experience with the variables prior to a live combat situation, they will have the ability to mitigate the initial, if not the overall effects of the activation.¹⁴⁴ The five variables are:

1. The “perceived level of threat,” based on the individual’s own assessment and experience. For example, is the situation life or death or are they the express target of the threat?
2. The “time needed to respond” to the threat; is contact imminent, has the individual lost the initiative, or are they limited in their options for response to the threat?
3. The “level of confidence and personal skill,” dictated primarily by technical competence and abilities in relation to the situation in which the individual is immersed or engaged.
4. The “level of experience in dealing with the specific threat,” mitigated most easily through training. When individuals have successfully dealt with something similar in the past, the initial reaction can be reduced.
5. The state of “physical stress (fatigue, sleep deprivation, malnutrition) in combination with survival stress.”¹⁴⁵

A cumulative effect can act as an aggravating or a mitigating factor.

Knowing that humans have extreme reactions to situations where there is a perceived threat, soldiers must be inoculated to violence and stressful situations in order to counter the negative effects. Given the demands on time and training, there must be an understanding, a prioritization of aggressive, violent training that bolsters confidence in the CQC skillset to reinforce and internalize the individual ability of members. They must be trained to believe that they have the ability to respond to a myriad of situations effectively and without hesitation.¹⁴⁶ This type of repetitive training allows soldiers to

¹⁴³ Grossman and Christensen, *On Combat*, 53.

¹⁴⁴ DND, *Close Quarter Combat*, 9.

¹⁴⁵ DND, *Close Quarter Combat*, 9.

¹⁴⁶ Jensen and Goodman, “Combat Feedback,” 16.

remain in a fighting mindset, a warrior mindset. This inoculation allows them to achieve and maintain the ideal physiological response “zone that exists, generally between 115 and 145 beats per minute (bpm) where you are at your optimal survival and combat performance level.”¹⁴⁷

Ultimately, experience breeds confidence. Although there is no true replacement for realistic scenario-based training where the overall outcome is successful,¹⁴⁸ there are other means that can aid in stress reduction and bolstering of confidence, such as visualization.¹⁴⁹ Real-time movie-like visualization of successfully accomplished tasks can produce a similar positive reinforcement to an individual without physically conducting the activity. This is not to say that someone with no technical experience or training can simply think and therefore do. Rather, it provides an opportunity space for those who have received training to augment their skills and prevent skill atrophy while maintaining a mindset predisposed to success and inoculated to some element of stress. The more realistic the visualization the more effective the technique can be, even producing similar physiological responses for the skilled practitioner.

REALISM OF THE TRAINING

Within the CA, the threshold for readiness is mandated within the Individual Battle Task Standard (IBTS). The IBTS manual denotes the requisite standards that individual members must maintain to ensure that the CA can deploy balanced, effective forces in support of joint and coalition operations.¹⁵⁰ It further states that the skills and

¹⁴⁷ Grossman and Christensen, *On Combat*, 49.

¹⁴⁸ Grossman and Christensen, *On Combat*, 145-146.

¹⁴⁹ Mustafa Sarkar, and David Fletcher, “Psychological Resilience in Sport Performers: A Review of Stressors and Protective Factors,” *Journal of Sports Sciences* 32, no. 15 (2014), 1427.

¹⁵⁰ Canada, Department of National Defence. B-GL-383-003/FP-001, *Individual Battle Task Standards For Land Operations* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2008), (Ch 1 2012), 1-1.

coinciding standards are vital, not only to the success of the CA on operations domestically and abroad, but to the CAF as a whole. IBTS “refresher training will ensure our member’s individual skills and knowledge are able to meet our operational needs in order to fight and win on a battlefield.”¹⁵¹ Beyond the individual skillsets mandated by the CA, the defined core competencies are a combination of close combat and close engagement. “Close combat comprises those operations conducted within range of direct fire weapon systems; it is essential for success in the operating environment and underpins all other activities.” Comparatively, “Close engagement is the ability to conduct both lethal and non-lethal activities at the tactical level to create effects across the physical, moral, and cognitive planes within the operating environment.”¹⁵² While both the IBTS manual and *Advancing With Purpose* discuss the requirement for CA soldiers to be able to fight and win on the modern battlefield, neither detail exactly how the soldier is expected to fight and survive in the most rudimentary of situations, that being CQC.

The Marching Myth

A universal concept in militaries around the world is an emphasis on physical fitness. What is not universal is the methods used to instill the mandated requisite of fitness. In 2005 the CA published the *Army Fitness Manual* which detailed the Army Fitness Standard (AFS). This standard includes the battle fitness test (BFT), a 13km weight loaded march, a casualty evacuation, and a trench dig.¹⁵³ In the manual’s directions for use, it states, “This manual provides the information you need to bring your

¹⁵¹ DND, *Individual Battle Task Standards*, 1-1.

¹⁵² DND, *Advancing with Purpose*, 15.

¹⁵³ Department of National Defence. B-GL-382-003/PT-001, *Army Fitness Manual* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2005), 3.

personal fitness level up to the AFS... It will prepare you for your annual assessment, for field exercises, for operational assignments... It will get you fit to fight! [sic]”¹⁵⁴ Move forward to 2017 where the CA adopted the FORCE Combat test as the IBTS fitness objective for readiness and deployment on operations. The FORCE Combat focuses on the ability to: complete a loadbearing march, rushes, sandbag lift, intermittent loaded shuffle, and a loaded drag.¹⁵⁵ The design of the FORCE test “more accurately reflected the current demands of combat operations” and served as a resource to enable CA soldiers to be prepared to conduct modern urban combat.¹⁵⁶

Whether intentional or not, in its physical standards of being fit for battle, fit for the fight, the CA has negated the actual ability of its soldiers to engage in, and more importantly be successful in a physical fight. During periods of less intense operations, armies routinely focus on the less aggressive skillsets such as forced marches. While these are critical, demonstrable functions that must be maintained, they fail to establish a sense of combativeness in soldiers. Administrative marching may close the distance to the enemy but it does not instill the warrior mindset of conducting the final physical engagement. During The Great War, the United States (US) Army leadership was taken aback by the physicality of fighting in the trenches.¹⁵⁷ As a result they “introduced boxing and grappling to ready soldiers with close-combat fighting skills but also to wake the fighting spirit in each soldier.”¹⁵⁸ The modern urban fight is not dissimilar to that of the close, personal fight experienced by soldiers in The Great War. After action reviews

¹⁵⁴ DND, *Army Fitness Manual*, iii.

¹⁵⁵ [FORCE Combat \(cafconnection.ca\)](https://cafconnection.ca) accessed 11 February 2021

¹⁵⁶ [FORCE Combat \(cafconnection.ca\)](https://cafconnection.ca) accessed 11 February 2021

¹⁵⁷ Peter R. Jensen, and Andy Riise, “Lethal Weapon: Combatives and Mental Skills Training to Ensure Overmatch in the Close-Combat Fight.” *Military Review* 100, no. 4 (2020), 16.

¹⁵⁸ Jensen and Riise, “Lethal Weapon,” 16.

from the US Army indicate that “nearly a quarter (189 out of 876) of Soldiers from an infantry brigade in the 3rd Infantry Division reported engaging in hand-to-hand combat during an eight-month deployment to Iraq.”¹⁵⁹

Despite the introduction of the FORCE and FORCE Combat testing as part of IBTS, only the six common military tasks are addressed, and the ability to fight is not included as common military task. The designated list of common military tasks is: escape to cover, pickets and wire carry, sandbag fortification, picking and digging, vehicle extrication, and stretcher carry.¹⁶⁰ This leaves a gap in CA preparation for battle and doctrinal expectations to “fight and win on the battlefield.”¹⁶¹ Training to instill a warrior mindset, a combativeness in soldiers, and the drive to move forward and close with the enemy must be predicated from the outset of military training. As foundational training, soldiers and officer alike are taught to march, carry a large burden, and arrive on the battlefield. However, the training iteration ultimately ends there. In some units following the annual BFT, the unit would be dismissed for the remainder of the day in order to recover, completely missing the opportunity to instill a warrior mindset, a willingness to close with the enemy. Soldiers must be imbued with the potential to conduct violence on behalf of the GoC, even when exhausted, sore, bored, and at their lowest. This is when the real fight often begins. The willingness of leadership to accept marching as a critical indicator of battle readiness fitness is further exacerbated by the fact that only a small percentage of CAF members are formally trained in CQC. For example, CQC is mandated training for infantry non-commissioned members (NCMs)

¹⁵⁹ Peter Jensen and Susan Goodman, “Combat Feedback from US Army Combatives Instructors,” *Infantry* (Online) 106, no. 3 (2017), 14.

¹⁶⁰ [Common Military Task Fitness Evaluation \(cafconnection.ca\)](http://cafconnection.ca) accessed 12 February 2021

¹⁶¹ DND, *Individual Battle Task Standards*, 1-1.

but not infantry officers, resulting in a lack of familiarity with the program, its benefits, and its application to other types of training.

Failure to recognize the benefits of CQC has created a lost opportunity and fostered a mindset that hinders such training. All IBTS fitness criteria are activities that are completed through brute force and ignorance. There is little or no application of technique, and zero requirement to maintain situational awareness, maintaining a currency or the ability to fight, and is not integrated into training. Junior officers are taught to design training plans based on the requirements mandated in doctrine, and this is a stark oversight by the institution. The CA does not teach or maintain a proficiency in the literal function of the fight.

In contrast, both the United States Marine Corps (USMC) and the US Army have adopted programs that ensure that fitness standards are intertwined with combativeness. The USMC and their Marine Corps Martial Arts Program (MCMAP) have “encompass[ed] aspects of the three disciplines: mental, character, and physical”¹⁶² throughout the training of their Marines. US Army leadership espouses the benefits of their Modern Army Combatives Program (MACP), as explained by the Commanding General of Fort Benning, Georgia, when he published his intent for training CQC in his garrison post periodical. “A Soldier competent in combatives techniques is better equipped to approach a situation with confidence and appropriate aggressiveness, and to thus surprise an adversary unprepared for the shock of sudden, violent confrontation.”¹⁶³

¹⁶² United States Marine Corps, *MARINE CORPS ORDER* 1500.59A, 23 SEP 2019.

¹⁶³ Walter Wojdakowski, “Combatives and Conditioning: Winning the Close Fight,” *Infantry* 96, no. 3 (2007), 1.

Shoot to ~~Kill~~ Live

Similar to the misconception that marching creates warriors, there is also a mistaken belief that range time instills combativeness. While the technical ability to engage targets with a weapon at all ranges is a critical skillset, particularly while under stress, it does not provide the same level of stimulus as a fight. Examining the mantra—close with and destroy the enemy, one should note that musketry training only enables the second portion of the statement, destroy the enemy—have the capacity and ability. It does not address the elements of resolve; to engage in a fight, and win the fight. Nor does it promote the ‘close with’ portion of the statement—having the mindset and willingness to move towards danger, the fight response. The lack of ‘close with’ training is exacerbated by the institutionally published shift in mindset away from killing the enemy.

Regardless of trade or rank, a hallmark of basic training is learning to operate an assault rifle. Early in training recruits are issued their C7 rifle. Carrying, maintaining, and shooting it promotes familiarity and contributes to a sense of normalcy. Aside from chaplains, every member of the CA becomes comfortable with the functionality of this firearm. They achieve a minimum level of proficiency and 12 month currency, mandated and maintained throughout their careers by the IBTS Manual and the Canadian Operational Shooting Programme (CFOSP).¹⁶⁴ The terminology, intent, and explicit expectations behind the CAF musketry training has changed drastically since 1945. This speaks directly to the CAF change in training methodology and individual expectations throughout the spectrum of conflict.

¹⁶⁴ Canada, Department of National Defence, B-GL-382-001/FP-001, *Canadian Forces Operational Shooting Programme* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2007), 16, and DND, *Individual Battle Task Standards*, A-1.

The modern shooting publication *CFOSP* clearly acknowledges, “Every Canadian Forces (CF) member must be skilled in the use of weapons.”¹⁶⁵ This is consistent throughout history and across militaries around the world. What has not been consistent is the express reason members of the CAF must be skilled. In the 1945 *CA Shoot to Live* publication, it is expressly stated that “[soldiers] want to be able to kill the enemy and then get back to...home.”¹⁶⁶ The requirement to kill the enemy is augmented by highlighting the point that musketry within the CA is not about hunting for food or for recognition of skill through points on a range. Rather, “good musketry resolves itself into shooting and killing the enemy.”¹⁶⁷ The position of the CA at the time was that onus was not solely on the soldier to internalize the fundamentals of musketry, but that those training them must consider themselves ultimately responsible for their fate on deployed operations.

The boys you train are going to fight while you give instruction at home. If one of your candidate’s names appears on a casualty list, blame yourself—don’t curse the enemy. That boy would probably not have been a casualty had he properly been taught to shoot accurately. Remember, one bullet, perfectly fired and confidently delivered, can beat any foe.¹⁶⁸

In the 2003 *Shoot to Live* publication there is a noticeable decrease in verbiage surrounding the reason for learning musketry. Killing the enemy is de-emphasized, although there are still several references to the ultimate purpose behind the skillset. For example, in the description of snap shooting (instinctive aimed shots at an enemy that is only exposed in fleeting moments), the publication states that, “In combat, the enemy

¹⁶⁵ DND, *Canadian Forces Operational Shooting Programme*, 1.

¹⁶⁶ Canada, Department of National Defence, *Shoot to Live Presenting the Johnson Method of Musketry Coaching as Adopted by the Canadian Army* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 1945), 9.

¹⁶⁷ DND, *Shoot to Live Presenting the Johnson Method*, 10.

¹⁶⁸ DND, *Shoot to Live Presenting the Johnson Method*, 9.

becomes the target and he is seeking concealment from you while getting into a position to kill you. The soldier must therefore be trained to shoot with deadly accuracy on the spur of the moment.”¹⁶⁹ By 2007 the terminology in the publication was amended to describe snap shooting as “the application of deliberate fire where there is only an intermittent opportunity to shoot at a target that exposes itself for a short period of time.”¹⁷⁰ Though subtle, this illustrates an important gross shift in the mindset of the application of military musketry, demonstrating a minimization of the actual expectation for CA soldiers to conduct violence in the performance of their duties. This is not to say that CAF musketry training has become fully benign, but the current description of doctrine sees the engagement of the enemy as an advanced application of the skillset as opposed to the baseline. This is expressed through the addition of battle shot and quick aim shooting, holdovers from the gun fighter program that came out of the early years of Afghanistan.

A good battle shot is a fit and trained soldier who can apply musketry skills using ground or cover, manmade or not, for fire and movement, keep his personal weapon in action, detect the enemy, and shoot quickly and accurately under the full spectrum of operations.¹⁷¹

The aim of quick aim shooting practices is to train the firer to be able to survive the close quarter battle by effectively engaging the enemy before that enemy could effectively engage the firer.¹⁷²

With the changes in verbiage, the most recent shooting doctrine under CFOSP now considers a soldier’s ability to deal with an empty magazine as an advanced skill and

¹⁶⁹ Canada, Department of National Defence. B-GL-382-001/PT-001, *Shoot to Live* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2003), 3-111.

¹⁷⁰ Department of National Defence. B-GL-382-001/FP-001, *Canadian Forces Operational Shooting Programme* (Ottawa: DND, 2007) 8.

¹⁷¹ DND, *Canadian Forces Operational Shooting Programme*, 3.

¹⁷² DND, *Canadian Forces Operational Shooting Programme*, 10.

illustrates that the CAF as a force is not focused on training a baseline competency for right-hand conflict—combat.¹⁷³ It also contradicts the statement that,

Canadian experiences have demonstrated that at any moment personnel must be prepared to face all types of threats. Highly developed marksmanship skills give personnel the confidence to use their weapons safely, precisely and effectively in operations.¹⁷⁴

This represents a simplification of the statement from the 2003 iteration of the *Shoot to Live* publication, where a similar statement focused on why the CAF trains in musketry.

Every soldier must be skilled in the use of weapons. Canadian experiences have demonstrated that, at any moment, all personnel must be prepared to face all types of threats. The possession of weapon and shooting skills have given personnel the confidence to use their weapons safely and effectively in situations such as naval boarding parties, airfield defence, vehicle convoys and dismounted patrolling.¹⁷⁵

Regardless of the rationale, these simplified, over-generalizations diverge from the expectation that when called upon by the GoC, the CAF and especially the CA are prepared to conduct violence. For soldiers to be prepared to win the first battle of the next war they must be inoculated to violence, they must be prepared to fight. Beyond the necessary technical skills of load-bearing marches and musketry proficiency, fighting, actual fighting builds confidence, awareness, physicality, and ability.

Modern Army Combatives

The evolution of combat has driven technology and tactics on the battlefield, leading to increases in both lethality and standoff. It has not, however, negated the requirement for human interactions in operations less than war, or in the final taking and holding of ground. In each scenario, soldiers must possess a skillset that increases their

¹⁷³ DND, *Canadian Forces Operational Shooting Programme*, 10.

¹⁷⁴ DND, *Canadian Forces Operational Shooting Programme*, 1.

¹⁷⁵ DND, *Shoot to Live*, 1-1.

lethality and their survivability. Modern army combatives training is not simply the training and execution of a myriad of styles of martial arts. Combatives training, using the mental and physical benefits of training,¹⁷⁶ is designed to increase survivability of soldiers and focuses primarily on the individual's actual fighting ability.

The CA, US Army, and USMC have all conducted reviews of their CQC doctrine over the last few decades. CA doctrine updated techniques whereas MACP and MCMAP respectively were designed as whole force responses, recognizing that individual fighting skills on the battlefield were lagging behind those of potential adversaries.

Notably, the US Army Rangers began revitalizing their hand-to-hand combat skills in the mid-1990s, around the same time the Russian military was demonstrating success with the institutionalization of Sambo, a combination of judo and Greco-Roman wrestling.¹⁷⁷ The Rangers observed that Sambo was basic, simple to learn, and with a competitive sport rule set designed to fuel the intrinsic desire to become better.¹⁷⁸

Concurrently, a form of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu (BJJ) attracted the attention of the US Army Rangers for much the same reasons that Sambo interested the Russian military. Gracie Jiu-Jitsu became more prevalent in the United States while being validated in Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) arenas.¹⁷⁹ Like technology, fighting styles have evolved. For example, modern militaries find their soldiers clad in armour and equipment very different from those when Spartans entered into physical combat.

¹⁷⁶ Department of the Army Headquarters United States Army Training Circular (TC) 3-25. Washington, DC: US Army, 2017,1-1.

¹⁷⁷ "The Modern Army Combatives Program," *Armor* 116, no. 4 (2007), 53.

¹⁷⁸ "The Modern Army Combatives Program," 53.

¹⁷⁹ James F. Blanton, and Army Command and General Staff College, *Hand to Hand Combatives in the US Army* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: US Army Command and General Staff College), 5.

Modern day opponents on the battlefield can be likened to the armour-clad warriors with whom the Samurai engaged. As opponents adopted elements akin to body armour to protect the vulnerable striking services of the body, the Samurai adapted. They discovered that while body armour limited the effectiveness the direct application of strikes it did offer new opportunities.¹⁸⁰ As a result they developed tactics that evolved into Japanese Jiu-Jitsu, a martial art that uses an opponent's energy against him.¹⁸¹

The US Army Rangers also turned their focus away from striking techniques, acknowledging the lessons learned by historical armour wearing warriors. Using the basics of BJJ (an offshoot of Japanese Jiu-Jitsu), Judo, wrestling, and Muay Thai, shown to be successful in MMA competitions, they adapted these martial arts into a systematic training and fighting style suited to their own needs.¹⁸² They removed safeguards and rules that had no place in combat and then focused on simple techniques that were easy to teach and resulted in a high percentage of success against opponents. The prevailing MACP style "combined with weapons training, resulted in a totally integrated system of close quarters combat, which enabled Rangers to transition smoothly between ranges of combat, with or without weapons, individually or as a group."¹⁸³

Following a similar need for modernization, the USMC implemented a holistic system focusing on the mental, character, and physical disciplines in 2002.¹⁸⁴ The USMC adoption of MCMAP set the conditions to increase the lethality and survivability of all Marines regardless of rank or trade. Using a common system throughout the service,

¹⁸⁰ Blanton, et al., *Hand to Hand Combatives*, 32.

¹⁸¹ Blanton, et al., *Hand to Hand Combatives*, 32.

¹⁸² "The Modern Army Combatives Program," 53.

¹⁸³ "The Modern Army Combatives Program," 53.

¹⁸⁴ United States Marine Corps, *MARINE CORPS ORDER* 1500.54A, 16 SEP 2002, 3.

MCMAP focuses on the inculcation of the Corps values, while being institutionalized as a key pillar of Professional Military Education (PME).¹⁸⁵ The crucial divergence between MCMAP and MACP is, while the later is based on closing the distance to capitalize on the clinch and grapple, the former teaches weapons based engagement at diminishing range bands.¹⁸⁶ In essence the USMC created its own martial art that is “a weapons-based Martial Art...[focused on] stance, posture, movement, striking, cutting, thrusting, grappling, restraints, joint manipulations and weapons integration, and unarmed techniques versus handheld.”¹⁸⁷ MCMAP enables “Marines to develop a combat mindset. [That] will serve them well as they will be able to think more clearly, act faster, and perform more effectively,”¹⁸⁸ having been trained repetitively and consistently throughout their careers. This is espoused through their mantra, *One Mind, Any Weapon*.¹⁸⁹

Modern militaries have invested enormous amounts of time, money, and research into the survivability of soldiers on the battlefield. Much of this effort has been expended in technologies and equipment to increase standoff, interconnect individuals and units, or shield soldiers from weapons effects. There has been an ebb and flow of focus on ensuring that soldiers can care for themselves on and off the battlefield. This is the origin of continued development and refinement of modern combatives, selecting techniques, fundamentals, and understandings from ancient arts, adapting, and applying them to increase functionality on the modern battlefield despite the amount of equipment and

¹⁸⁵ United States Marine Corps, *MARINE CORPS ORDER* 1500.59A, 23 SEP 2019.

¹⁸⁶ Blanton, et al., *Hand to Hand Combatives*, 44-45.

¹⁸⁷ United States Marine Corps, *MARINE CORPS ORDER* 1500.59A, 23 SEP 2019.

¹⁸⁸ United States Marine Corps, *MARINE CORPS ORDER* 1500.59A, 23 SEP 2019, encl 1-2

¹⁸⁹ Blanton, et al., *Hand to Hand Combatives*, 44-45.

body armour each soldier must carry. Following the initial lessons learned during The Great War, “Leaders believed that a soldier who could manage fear and remain aware during the competitive aspects of hand-to-hand combat training was likely able to do the same in the close combat of trench warfare.”¹⁹⁰ Similarly, modern training is most successful when conducted as progressive training. This not only sees soldiers attired in various combinations of dress, but teaches soldiers to apply techniques across the spectrum of conflict in realistic scenario based training. The resultant stressors reinforce calmness, situational awareness, and force problem solving and ethical decision making.¹⁹¹ Still, CA CQC remains relatively obscure, taught formally to a small percentage of soldiers and without any mandate for refresher or continuation training.

Unlike most martial arts and combat sports from which CQC is derived, a fight is not about points, it is about survival during a high stress event. The US Army developed the ‘basic fight strategy,’ which goes beyond the ‘universal fight plan’ where two untrained opponents “pummel each other with their fists until one of them receives enough damage that they cannot fight back effectively” (also the basis of most combat sports).¹⁹² The ‘basic fight strategy’ seeks to control the altercation and enables escalation and de-escalation throughout the continuum of force. It trains a soldier, first and foremost and where possible, to create and maintain space allowing for the use of verbal control or the use of weapons systems. When these options fail, soldiers are then trained to close the distance, removing their opponent’s options by gaining a dominant position. Finally the individual must finish the fight. They must be physically, technically, and mentally

¹⁹⁰ Jensen and Riise, “Lethal Weapon,” 16.

¹⁹¹ United States Marine Corps, *MARINE CORPS ORDER* 1500.59A, 23 SEP 2019.

¹⁹² Department of the Army Headquarters United States Army Training Circular (TC) 3-25. Washington, DC: U.S., 2017.3-1.

prepared to use either lethal or non-lethal force.¹⁹³ Close, Dominate, Finish,¹⁹⁴ is a common mantra, understanding, and approach among many of the modern CQC curriculums. The Canadian curriculum has not made the leap to become an overarching fight system, as it is more a collection of techniques. It delineates the three range bands in which a fight occurs; long range (weapons based and kicks), mid-range (small handheld weapons and strikes), and close range (knees, elbows, hand strikes, and grappling)¹⁹⁵ but does not tie them together in an overarching fight plan. This method is similar to a self-defence plan, reinforcing the maintenance of distance, avoiding the clinch. “When close quarter combat is probable the soldier should always try to maintain a reactionary gap of 2 to 3 meters from his opponent.”¹⁹⁶ Relying on this collection of techniques while failing to include a fight plan, the Canadian CQC training curriculum is limited in efficacy to the fighting force.

Injuries in Training

Regardless of the cause, injuries during training are not to be dismissed, however avoiding training to remove the risk of injury is unacceptable. Given that the role of the CA is to “fight, and win across the full spectrum of operations,”¹⁹⁷ it is necessary not only to experience a fight, but to be comfortable with fighting. Injuries must simply be mitigated. The rationale here is the same argument applied to the use of simunition¹⁹⁸ in

¹⁹³ United States of America. Department of the Army Headquarters United States Army Training Circular (TC) 3-25. Washington, DC: U.S., 2017.3-1.

¹⁹⁴ [Life in the Forces | Canadian Armed Forces](#) accessed 18 April 2021, [Combatives: close, dominate, finish | Article | The United States Army](#) accessed 28 February 2021.

¹⁹⁵ DND, *Close Quarter Combat*, 11.


¹⁹⁶ DND, *Close Quarter Combat*, 11.

¹⁹⁷ DND, *Advancing with Purpose*, 15.

¹⁹⁸ Simunition is a training aid used by the CA and produced by General Dynamics Ordnance and Tactical Systems Canada Inc. (GD-OTS Canada) “The FX® system is comprised of FX® marking cartridges, weapon conversion kits and personal protective equipment. The patented, reduced-energy, non-

field training exercises (FTX). Until a soldier has experienced the feeling of incoming or returned fire, until they have been hit and understand the “impact penalty”¹⁹⁹ of a two-way range, they are not fully prepared for the situation. Simunition is used in place of live rounds for the obvious reason as they hurt but do not kill while enabling similar conditions to an actual firefight. This same level of simulation can be achieved through controlled sparring and grappling matches. Though they create discomfort, they do not catastrophically injure soldiers, thus preparing them for the rigors, challenges, and emotions of combat; direct human aggression.

A health and lifestyle survey conducted by the Directorate of Force Health Protection noted that throughout 2013/2014 the most common activity in which regular force CAF members were participating when they sustained injury, representing approximately one third of all acute injuries, was a supervised sports program.²⁰⁰ Breaking down the generic sports classification, the report established that “the physical activities associated with the highest rates of injury (i.e., number of injuries sustained per 1,000 hours) were: (1) ice hockey; (2) rucksack marching; and (3) jogging or running.”²⁰¹ These common physical activities are touted by the chain of command as activities that promote fitness and bolster the warrior mindset. As discussed previously, the mandated fitness activities and inter/intra unit sports that account for such a large percentage of injuries do not instill a combativeness or warrior mindset, a willingness to fight. Yet the

lethal cartridges leave a detergent-based, water-soluble color-marking compound. The visible impacts allow accurate assessment of simulated lethality.” [Simunition - Products – FX Training System Marking Cartridges](#)  [Non-Lethal Reduced Energy Cartridges](#) accessed 03 Mar 21.

¹⁹⁹ Term commonly used for being hit by the hard plastic, paint filled, projectile fired from a rifle during simunition training.

²⁰⁰ Canada, Department of National Defence, *Health and Lifestyle Information Survey of Canadian Forces Personnel 2013/2014– Regular Force Report* (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 2016), 60.

²⁰¹ DND, *Health and Lifestyle Information Survey*, 132.

CQC training that does inculcate this life saving skillset is often avoided out of an overabundance of caution to limit injuries.

A US Army study conducted by physicians of the Department of Orthopedic Surgery and Rehabilitation, San Antonio Military Medical Center, Fort Sam Houston, Texas, looked at *Musculoskeletal Injuries Sustained in Modern Army Combatives* between 1 June 2004 and 1 January 2009.²⁰² The study, conducted on an installation of less than 10,000 personnel, found that mandatory MACP training for all members of the US Army throughout their careers resulted in 1,025 injuries over the duration of the five year study.²⁰³ Despite the number of injuries they treated they noted that “MAC is an inherently dangerous activity, but so are wars, field exercises, airborne training, and live fire exercises.”²⁰⁴ They remarked that the intent of the study was to “identify injury patterns, educate the practitioner and the medical team, prevent injuries, and optimize treatment,”²⁰⁵ with a view to minimizing lost productivity.

Accordingly, when training CQC there must be a sequential, phased learning to ensure that techniques are properly taught before progressing to aggressive supervised sparring matches against a resistant opponent. Although aggressiveness is the desired outcome, it must be executed under strict control and with calmness, as there is a difference between executing a technique correctly at 100% vice reacting in a spasm of aggression. This is where leaders must understand the risks/benefits associated with training combatives. When armoured vehicles have not been used over extended periods

²⁰² Daniel R. Possley, and Anthony E. Johnson, “Musculoskeletal Injuries Sustained in Modern Army Combatives,” *Military Medicine* 177, no. 1 (2012), 61.

²⁰³ Possley and Johnson, “Musculoskeletal Injuries,” 63; 61.

²⁰⁴ Possley and Johnson, “Musculoskeletal Injuries,” 62-63.

²⁰⁵ Possley and Johnson, “Musculoskeletal Injuries,” 62-63.

of times there is a spike in maintenance; similarly, CQC skillsets, if not maintained over time through repetition and continuation training, can cause a spike in injuries. This is not a reason to avoid training but rather an argument to be more regimented in training.

CONCLUSION

Although foot marches are physically trying and live-fire exercises or stress shoots contain an element of elevated stress, these events fail to match the fear, challenge, and consequences associated with facing a willful opponent in an immediate visceral contest—when failure and defeat are very possible outcomes.²⁰⁶

The requirement for soldiers to be prepared to, on a moment's notice, conduct violence in line with Canadian national interests means that soldiers need to be technically proficient to win a fight and mentally prepared for the exposures to violence. The use of combatives offers modern military forces the ability to bridge individual techniques with TTPs that amount to a basic start state strategy for execution of a hand-to-hand fight. Additionally, this enables soldiers the opportunity to conduct the internalization and evaluation of a warrior mindset. As CA service members, the focus of physical training should not concentrate solely on activities that are tantamount to civilian sports. Running, hiking, and target shooting may have some elements of applicability to soldiers in the CA, but the benefits pale in comparison to those of combatives. The emphasis must focus on providing “high-quality, demanding, motivating, and relevant training,”²⁰⁷ that over time and throughout careers will provide positive effects across every aspect of military life, from physical fitness to mental resilience. Preparing soldiers

²⁰⁶ Jensen and Riise, “Lethal Weapon,” 17.

²⁰⁷ DND, *Advancing with Purpose*, 3rd ed., 9.

for the one percent, the unexpected, the horrors of war, during which the CA will demand their best.

CHAPTER 5 – BEYOND THE CANADIAN ARMY

*The nation that will insist upon drawing a broad line of demarcation between the fighting man and the thinking man is liable to find its fighting done by fools and its thinking by cowards.*²⁰⁸

– Maj. Gen. Sir Charles George Gordon

This paper has examined the potential benefits that could be realized with the application of a professionalized, institutionalized combatives program not specific to narrow rank bands or trades. A pan-CA approach that is consistent and continual throughout all service members’ careers, instills core institutional values, teaches reliable, highly effective techniques, builds both physical and mental resilience, and instills a common mindset among members of the CA, is required. Such a program would prepare all soldiers to function amid the horrors of combat, to thrive in chaos, while continuing to prosper long after the fight is over. This chapter will extrapolate potential broader applications and commonalities pan-CAF.

APPLICATIONS PAN-CAF

Societal Expectation

Pop-culture has devised and reinforced a very specific western stereotype of a soldier. When a Canadian sees a CAF member at the gas station or walking home from work in uniform what are their expectations? Presumably, they expect a confident, professional “soldier” who will instinctively move towards violence, and not simply a public servant in a prescribed order of dress.

Since the average civilian cannot quickly distinguish the colour and meaning of all CAF uniforms or decipher the plethora of images adorning that uniform, one can

²⁰⁸ “On the Need for Thinking Soldiers,” *Military Review* 95, no 4 (July-August 2015); 129.

assume it would be difficult for most civilians to know if a “soldier” is in fact a soldier, sailor, aviator, a tradesperson or an operator. Their expectation is however, the same: in times of chaos, distress, and fear that that “soldier” will be front and center standing tall and moving towards the fight, ready to defend.

Training for CAF members therefore must be capable of fulfilling the expectations of the society that it is sworn to protect. Establishing and maintaining a baseline mindset that focuses on the overall function of the CAF, to close with and destroy the enemy. Since the CAF is governed by the fundamental principle of unlimited liability, its entire membership is liable to exposure and, with no notice, to hardship and risk. Regardless of whether the enemy is a state, a non-state actor, or a natural disaster to close with, the critical task remains – having the mindset and willingness to move towards danger. While destroying the enemy is the paramount concern, soldiers, sailors, and aviators must have the capacity, ability, and resolve to win.

Strengthening the Force for Small Mission Sets

The current CAF trend is centered around small missions dispersed across the globe. The safety and security of mission personnel and equipment is no longer the responsibility of a dedicated defence and security unit, more often it falls upon the shoulders of all of those who are deployed. This blurs, if not completely erases, the historical lines of operator and supporter and the responsibility for kinetic protection. For this reason all soldiers, sailors, and aviators must display self-efficacy with regards to their personal defence at all ranges but most specifically in the close quarters range.

With the degradation of training expectations to the point where a simple magazine change in musketry is considered an advanced skillset, the CAF is on the

precipice of losing its ability to defend its personnel *and* Canadian national interests. The time required to create – or recreate – combative skillsets is greater than that required to maintain them through continuation training.

EVOLUTION OF POLICY

At this moment of crisis for CAF culture, there is a requirement for the institution to recognize that society as a whole is changing and evolving. While all cultures are changing, there is a need to understand and reinforce what CAF culture is. It is professed to not only be a reflection of Canadian culture, but a reflection of the absolute best of what Canada has to offer. The current issues in the CAF surrounding harmful and inappropriate sexual behavior is beyond the scope of this paper; however if all members of the CAF were to be immersed in a code that is unwavering in the understanding and expectation of duty, loyalty, integrity, and courage as defined by *Duty with Honour*, the culture would not allow for the acceptance of such behaviour.

Upon enrollment, there is an expectation that CAF members automatically belong to the profession of arms. Initial contracts, or terms of service (TOS) are issued for three to nine years, dependent on the enrollment plan.²⁰⁹ The expectation is that within the initial TOS, a member of the CAF will be able to complete basic training as well as their trades training and be employed within their specialization. This does not, however, allow for recruits to assess whether the CAF is right for them, or the CAF to assess if the individual is right for the CAF. For the institution to thrive it must evolve to a point where it unapologetically espouses its doctrinal beliefs and values,²¹⁰ and demanding

²⁰⁹ [Help Centre | Canadian Armed Forces](#) accessed 28 March 2021.

²¹⁰ DND, *Duty with Honour*, 27-33.

their internalization by its membership as a whole. Reinforced, grounded, and elevated by a PME combatives program:

1. *Accepting Unlimited Liability* requires “all members accept and understand that they are subject to being lawfully ordered into harm’s way under conditions that could lead to the loss of their lives.” This can be augmented through the inoculation to the stress, discomfort, and fear of overt human aggression of an institutionalized combatives program that requires continuation training throughout ones career.
2. *Fighting Spirit* “is especially important to act decisively — including the use of lawful, lethal force against an adversary — during combat operations.” Critical or not, this does not mandate every engagement to result in a “win” for the individual, it is instead a demonstration of willingness to engage in a fight. This is particularly important for leaders to be prepared to move forward and with their subordinates toward the chaos, distress, and fear. This is demonstrated by every interaction in a modern combatives program.
3. *Discipline*, “fundamentally self-discipline ...while strengthening individuals to cope with the demands and stresses of operations. It instills self-assurance and resiliency in the face of adversity and builds self-control.” The application of violence is a burden that must, when required, be acted upon without hesitation while demonstrating control and the ability to deescalate a chaotic situation. This can be trained, reinforced, and tested through the integration of scenario based combatives training.
4. *Teamwork* “Teamwork is needed to leverage knowledge while permitting military members and organizations to prevail in the most complex and dangerous situations.” Simply put, without the participation of a training partner, individuals are unsuccessful. Additionally, lacking the trust and support of teammates, those who do not exhibit positive attributes when training will be easily identified and will require remedial training in the expectations of the values to be espoused by the institution.
5. *Physical Fitness* “Physical fitness contributes directly to the overall health and welfare of subordinates. All training benefits from fitness, and some of the most important and difficult training cannot be done without it.” Since the maintenance of a functional fitness is very different than the specialization of fitness for many sports, the integration of combatives training sets the required standards for all service members to be successful in increasing their survivability in the first battle of the next war.

6. *Duty* “motivates personnel both individually and collectively to strive for the highest standards of performance.” As soldiers, sailors, and aviators employed within the CA, it is expected that they are experts in their domain. This means the execution of, or support to, combat operations which requires not only their specific trades-technical ability, but the personal readiness to execute their function to the highest standards, with confidence, and through the highest levels of self-efficacy. This can be garnered and built through the institutional application of modern, all-encompassing combatives program.
7. *Loyalty* “Loyalty must be reciprocal and based on mutual trust.” In a profession where unlimited liability is a fundamental tenet, the concept of trust is critical. Trust that the institution will take every possible opportunity to increase and ensure the survivability of its membership in the successful completion of any required mission. This begins with the preparation for the fight, and care after the fact.
8. *Integrity* “To have integrity is to have unconditional and steadfast commitment to a principled approach to meeting your obligations while being responsible and accountable for your actions.” This also requires an open and transparent discussion on the requirements and expectations of the service, its *raison d’être*; the protection of Canadian national interest at home and abroad, including the application of violence. The importance of this standard can be demonstrated by the prioritization of a combatives program.
9. *Courage* “Courage requires constant nurturing and is not suddenly developed during operations.” In order to be prepared for the first battle of the next war, CA service members must, without exception be inoculated to, acceptant of, and prepared to enter into the fight, period. Soldiers must accept the primary role of violence and the effect is to create safety and security, to protect and serve Canadians.

Why The CAF Trains

The reason the CAF trains must be strongly conveyed to the general population.

The reasons armed forces must train for war in times of peace may not be entirely obvious; the skills required to survive the first battle of the next war are not acquired instantaneously. Professional militaries are built over time, through repetition and inoculation – mindsets rooted in values and ethics need to be inculcated.

Regardless of technological advances, the human factor will invariably play a critical role in future operations, whether in all-out war, below the threshold of state on state conflict, or simply in times of natural disaster. As “the security environment continues to be fraught with unpredictability, fog, friction, chance, irrationality, fear, and bloodshed...it remains a contest of human will.”²¹¹ Therefore CAF members need to possess the courage to face those challenges in an unwavering manner in order to protect all Canadians. This ideal was endorsed by Theodore Roosevelt during his speech in Paris on 23 April 1910 titled “Citizenship in a Republic,” and the words remain just as relevant today as they were a century ago:

It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.²¹²

When called upon, members of the CAF do not have the luxury of time to think about the situation. Their instinct must be to enter the arena, engage in the fight, and move towards the chaos. For this reason they must train in conditions that are as realistic and as stress inducing as possible, situations that require as much courage to engage in as real events. This is where mandated combatives training for all units must be implemented. Through integration into physical fitness and scenario driven field

²¹¹ DND, *Advancing with Purpose*, 4th ed., 2.

²¹² [TR Center - Man in the Arena \(theodorerooseveltcenter.org\)](http://theodorerooseveltcenter.org) accessed 11 April 2021

training, and with a minimum monthly/annual threshold of continuation training, career long learning, prioritization, and inoculation to stress, chaos, and overt human aggression will be established.

CONCLUSION

Combatives is about courage and the willingness to enter into a fight; courage to do what others shy away from or outright avoid. Applied to the core CAF values of duty, loyalty, integrity, and courage, combatives training not only allows the institution a realistic, quantifiable, and relatable manner in which to adjust and apply professional military education, but provides a natural arena for the inoculation of combat stress. Further, the baseline technical ability realized pan-CAF through combatives training would serve to instill a confidence and ability in all soldiers, sailors, and aviators that would be in line with Canadian societal expectations of CAF members.

CONCLUSION

The CAF, and therefore the CA, is at a precipice, a point in time where as an institution, perceptions have a realistic chance of overshadowing the requirements of an armed force. While human aggression becomes increasingly taboo in society, and those versed in it become stereotyped as archaic, there remains the necessity for militaries to maintain a combative proficiency that will ensure national interests at home and abroad. This is not, should not, and cannot be a free-for-all of aggression and combativeness, it needs to be a highly regulated prescribed culture of duty, loyalty, integrity, and courage that is displayed on behalf of society as a whole. It is therefore essential that the CA develop a culture that takes into consideration the formative experiences of its membership, while requiring its soldiers to internalize and elevate their values and fundamental beliefs to a level that espouses the absolute best of Canadian society. This code must not only dictate the actions of individuals while in uniform and on duty, but off duty actions as well.

The profession of arms, that is, professionals required to execute legal violence on behalf of Canadian society, cannot afford to be implemented by those who do not abide by the CA's values. A soldier, a consummate professional, a *warrior*, is at all times accountable to the society for whom they serve. Correspondingly, there are several institutional responsibilities to the individual who dedicates their adult life to a profession that demands exposure to hardship and risk under the terms of unlimited liability. The institution has a duty to prepare, train, inoculate, and inculcate its recruits, while supporting and maintaining a threshold of mental and physical reliance and ensuring a standard of care that continues after the fight.

This paper has demonstrated that the Canadian Army must reprioritize and institutionalize its use of combatives training to aid in the formation of warriors, pan-service. As Canadian society evolves and the nature of conflict becomes more disaggregated, there is a requirement for all trades and ranks of the CA, from enrollment to retirement, to be inculcated to the warrior mindset and the application of violence under control. It is unknown when, or if, Canada will become engaged in a full-scale war again, but preparation is key to a successful outcome for Canada.

Given the enormous resource constraints within which the CA operates, functionality in accordance with a proper selection and maintenance of the aim is paramount, despite the discomfort society feels about preparations for violence. The CA needs to refocus itself on the service-wide imperative regardless of rank, trade, or years of service; it is every member's responsibility to be prepared to conduct violence on behalf of the Government of Canada. Without hesitation, the soldiers, sailors, and aviators employed within the CA must have the resolve to close with and destroy the enemy.

Institutional dedication to an evolutionary leap commensurate with those the CA is pursuing with regards to equipment, vehicles, and TTPs is a necessity. It is the modernization of our soldier's abilities and survivability. Fundamentally, there are many benefits for all trades and ranks to be inculcated to the warrior mindset (primarily using combatives) from enrollment to retirement, while also providing an opportunity to simultaneously inoculate personnel to the stressors of violence. Through prioritization and emphasis placed on a modern combatives program, the chain of command will demonstrate, communicate, and indoctrinate a culture that is honest and transparent with

its membership. This culture will orientate soldier's expectations towards chaos, distress, and fear.

Why?

With acceptance of a consistent, common, and modernized combatives program, the institution will be capable of demonstrating and demanding the embodiment of its core values and fundamental beliefs while bolstering individual self-efficacy and technical ability. By refocusing on the foundational building blocks, as defined by CAF doctrine *Duty with Honour*, and layering a professional military education combatives program, the CA can easily reinforce and nurture a positive honour-bound culture. Such culture will fulfill the expectations of the nation while bolstering the mental health of the force through focused enhancement of rebound and robust resilience capacity.

Training without culture is paramount to a checklist for the production of *soldiers*, not *warriors*. Training must inculcate a culture that is willingly espoused by all service members in order to create warriors. Militaries focused on violence without culture are at worst gangs and bullies, at best a club of martial artists. Militaries without an ingrained combativeness are mere public servants. Therefore, if the CA is to be successful in present and future conflicts, it must reinforce its doctrinally held beliefs and values while upholding its willingness and ability to conduct violence on behalf of the GoC. The CA must acknowledge the individual, but remain true to the force. The CA must modernize and prioritize a combatives program throughout its ranks. It is imperative for the protection of Canada, its citizens, and its interests abroad that the CA returns to its roots as *fighters* and *warriors*.

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