

CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS IN A TIME OF WAR

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By

Heidi A. Urben, M.A.

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Heidi A. Urben, M.A.

Thesis Advisor: Mark A. Rom, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

Past surveys of military elite partisanship portray an officer corps which has become increasingly conservative and Republican since the advent of the all-volunteer force, yet little research has focused on the tangible impacts party identification has on the institution itself or on critical interactions between senior military and civilian leaders during wartime. My study of military officers' partisanship cuts across political behavior and civil-military relations scholarship and examines the charge that the U.S. military's officer corps has become overly politicized in recent years. Through a large-scale, random sample survey of more than 4,000 active duty Army officers, this dissertation contributes to this debate by determining to what extent Army officers' partisanship has changed over the past thirty years, how it has been affected by the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and how it impacts civil-military relations during wartime.

In general, I find that while most officers serving today exhibit similar levels of affiliation with the Republican Party as they did a decade ago, most are also weak partisans, and I uncover little to suggest that Army officers possess different determinants that shape their political attitudes than the general public. Second, my empirical results reveal that the overwhelming majority of Army officers have highly stable political attitudes, unaffected by either service in the Army itself or by combat deployments to Iraq or Afghanistan. Finally, while I find that most Army officers' level of political activism is muted, I find that party identification does affect not only levels of political activism within the officer corps but also officers' views of senior civilian leaders and the

role senior military leaders should play in decisions on the use of force. In closing, while my findings do not suggest the officer corps has become dangerously politicized, they have uncovered several fault lines in the officer corps' nonpartisan ethic that are likely to attract the attention of both civil-military relations scholars and senior military and governmental leaders alike.

To my mom, a great teacher in her own right. She unfailingly read each draft chapter with the same enthusiasm that she did with my fourth grade masterpiece, “The Day There Was No Gravity.”

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Chapter 1

Introduction

This project was largely motivated by a singular quotation, attributed to a senior, unnamed officer on the Joint Staff. The quote, which leads off the third chapter of this dissertation suggested that some senior military officers might be rethinking their long-standing loyalty to the Republican Party, implying that the current state of civil-military relations was the impetus for their change of thinking. The quote intrigued me on two levels. First, it spoke to the durability of partisan attitudes and the types of political events that might cause individuals to adjust their political leanings. Second, it raised a host of contemporaneous questions for me on military officers' political attitudes today.

My study of military officers' partisanship cuts across political behavior and civil-military relations scholarship. At its core, this dissertation concerns the stability of partisan attitudes and the extent to which these attitudes evolve over time or respond to political events. In the 1960s, scholars from the University of Michigan argued that people's political attitudes and partisan identification remained relatively constant over time (Campbell et al. 1960). In the years since then, this view has been challenged by theories of retrospective voting and the idea that voters adjust their partisan preferences based on a continuous "running tally" or evaluations of party performance (Downs 1957, Key 1966, Fiorina 1981), or that partisanship responds to significant political events (Mackuen, Erikson and Stimson 1989). I hope to contribute to this debate by determining to what extent Army officers' partisanship has changed over the past thirty years and in particular how it has been affected by the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan serve as a useful backdrop in analyzing how people respond to political events – especially people who are intimately affected by those events. In this case, I am specifically interested to what extent military officers'

political attitudes may have changed in response to these two wars, especially among those who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan. If the two wars have indeed caused military officers to re-evaluate their own party identification and their assessment of party performance, this may be an indication of retrospective voting. However, a continued strong preference for the Republican Party among military elites may be evidence of the Republican Party's continued issue ownership of national defense (Petrocik 1996).

Past surveys of military elite partisanship portray an officer corps which has become increasingly conservative and Republican since the advent of the all-volunteer force (Holsti 1999, Feaver and Kohn 2001). Yet more recent surveys suggest that the Army is not as politically homogenous as previously thought, that officers and enlisted vary tremendously in their political views, and that perhaps the war in Iraq has caused some officers to revisit their longstanding support of the Republican Party (Dempsey 2010, *Military Times* 2003-2008). Much remains to be learned about military officers' political views, especially with regard to the determinants of officers' party affiliation and ideology, the stability of these attitudes, the level of political activism within the officer corps, and the implications of officers' politics for civil-military relations today.

I chose to focus my study on the political attitudes of active duty Army officers. As the largest branch of service and arguably the service bearing the largest share of the burden in fighting the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, I felt it offered the richest opportunity for an in-depth study of military officers' political views during wartime. Of the four most comprehensive surveys of U.S. military officers' political attitudes on record, less than 3,000 Army officers in total have been surveyed over the past thirty years. To add to our understanding of the military's partisanship and to focus in greater

depth on the attitudes of its officer corps, I conducted a large-scale, random sample survey of more than 4,000 active duty Army officers in the spring of 2009.¹ While I lack panel data, I am able to compare the views of Army officers serving today against previous cohorts from past surveys in order to gauge to what extent Army officers' political views have changed over time.

This dissertation proceeds as follows. In chapter 2, I begin by reviewing what we know of Army officers' partisanship and political views based on a handful of surveys conducted over the past thirty years. I then provide the results of my own survey of Army officers conducted from April-May 2009. Using a series of ordered logit regressions, I examine the determinants of officers' party affiliation and political ideology. I also compare the party identification and ideology of officers serving today against officers' views from surveys conducted over the past thirty years. Finally, I test the accuracy of recent popular characterizations that suggest military officers are overwhelmingly conservative Republicans. In general, I find that roughly two-thirds of Army officers today remain conservative in their political ideology and affiliated with the Republican Party, consistent with past surveys. Yet, I find most officers to be weak partisans and uncover little to suggest that Army officers possess different determinants that shape their political attitudes than the general public.

Chapter 3 explores the concept of partisan change. Based on data from my survey, I first examine whether officers have changed their party affiliation or political ideology since joining the Army. Then, I compare the party affiliation and political ideology of Army officers who have deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan against those who

¹ The survey instrument can be found in Appendix A, and an overview of the survey methodology is provided in Appendix B.

have not, and I conduct ordered logit regressions to determine whether combat deployments have an impact on officers' partisanship and political views. I find that the majority of officers either reported that their party affiliation had not changed since joining the Army or that they now felt less attached to either party. And while one in five reported they had become more politically conservative since joining the Army, most reported no change to their political ideology. Finally, I find that combat deployments to Iraq or Afghanistan have had virtually no effect on the party affiliation or political ideology of Army officers.

In chapters 4 and 5, I explore the meaning of party affiliation in greater depth to gauge what Army officers' politics really means for the state of civil-military relations today. In chapter 4, I report the findings from my survey of levels of political activism within the officer corps, focusing on the frequency in which Army officers vote and participate in politics and to what extent party affiliation may play in their level of political participation. Generally speaking, I find Army officers vote in large numbers, but other than that, their level of political participation is fairly muted. Moreover, despite the fact that more Army officers identify with the Republican Party, I find Republican officers to be slightly less politically active than Democratic officers. Finally, while I find most officers acknowledge there must be limits to the level of political activism for officers on active duty, I find much tolerance for a greater degree of political activism for officers once they have retired from the Army.

In chapter 5, I present the findings from my survey on how Army officers view civilian government leaders and their views on the proper role senior military leaders should take in discussions with civilian government leaders on the use of force.

Patterned after a battery of questions employed in Feaver and Kohn's TISS survey, I also compare the views of Army officers today against a similar cohort from a decade ago. My findings suggest that many Army officers still view civilian government leaders with a healthy degree of suspicion and feel it is incumbent upon senior military leaders to be insistent with the Commander-in-Chief and senior civilians when it comes to decisions relating to committing U.S. forces abroad. Notably, I find Republican officers to be more apt to be skeptical of senior civilian leaders and advocate that senior military leaders be insistent when offering military advice than Democrats or Independents.

In chapter 6, I conclude by reviewing the contributions this project makes towards our understanding of political behavior and civil-military relations, identifying areas of potential future research, and offering a few normative suggestions for the officer corps today as it continues to navigate politically charged waters while waging two protracted wars.

Chapter 2

Party Identification and Political Ideology of Army Officers

In the field of civil-military relations, one of the oft discussed topics today concerns the party affiliation and political views of the officer corps. It is a debate that is not confined to academic circles but resurfaces each election cycle as both parties not only try to vie for the military's vote but to be perceived as the party strong on national defense. Despite the increased attention this debate has garnered, our understanding of the factors that have shaped the political views of military officers over time is limited to a handful of surveys conducted over the past thirty years. Few comprehensive studies exist on the partisan and ideological identifications of Army officers, and this is not surprising. The Army as an institution can be remarkably introspective when confronting training, doctrine and a host of issues – even cultural ones – as they relate to its core, critical competency of warfighting. However, there is less appetite for examining the political attitudes of its members, especially among its elite. The reason for this likely has its roots in the normative debate on civil-military relations.

Substantial work in civil-military relations has been devoted to the idea of a gap between the military and civil society, whether it truly exists, and if it does, whether this gap is healthy for the republic (Feaver and Kohn 2001, Holsti 1998, Huntington 1957, Janowitz 1960). A long-standing norm within the military and among its civilian overseers has been the idea of a non-partisan military. A non-partisan military gives its best advice to its civilian counterparts, whether they happen to be Republicans or Democrats. This tradition goes back to George Marshall, who abstained from voting while on active duty in order to preserve at least the perception of his nonpartisanship. The prevalence of this norm throughout the armed forces is undoubtedly a contributing factor as to why there have been so few penetrating studies on the partisan and

ideological identifications of military officers. The downside to the paucity in survey data, however, is that the views of military officers have often been generalized to the point of becoming a stereotype.

In 1997, journalist Tom Ricks' book, *Making the Corps*, an in-depth profile of a Marine platoon in basic training, was one of the first popular accounts to suggest that a socio-political chasm had developed between American society and the Marine Corps, and all branches of the military for that matter. One of the defining characteristics of this gap, in Ricks' estimation, was the growing Republicanization of the officer corps. Among Ricks' more surprising assertions was that for *junior* officers "open identification with the Republican Party [had become] the norm" and cited informal surveys of West Point cadets to bolster his claims (Ricks 1997b, 280-281). While Huntington had long referred to the "military mind" as conservative, Ricks portrays an officer corps that had become unabashedly polarized to the far right of the political spectrum. In this chapter, I test how accurate Ricks' description of the officer corps is, nearly ten years and two wars later.

In May 2009, I conducted a large-scale, random-sample survey of active duty Army officers. My study, *Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War*, first establishes the party identification and political ideology of Army officers serving today on active duty amidst two ongoing wars. The relative dearth of existing comprehensive surveys on officers' political attitudes makes establishing a baseline critical, and by having a large sample of respondents (n=4,248), I can better explore some of the key demographic variables that impact officers' political views. I also sought to replicate several of the same questions asked in past surveys of military partisanship; while I lack true panel

data, I can compare the views of a cohort of Army officers serving today, to similar cohorts who served five, ten, and twenty years ago.

This chapter proceeds as follows: first, I establish the party identification and political ideology of Army officers serving today. Second, I examine the determining factors which shape officers' political identity. Third, I compare the political make-up of senior Army officers serving today against past surveys. Namely, do officers serving today think differently than officers did twenty years ago? Next, I dissect officers' perception – how do officers view the political makeup of their institution and how does this compare against reality? Finally, I assess the accuracy of Ricks' characterization that Army officers, especially its junior officers, are uniformly conservative Republicans.

Our Understanding of Military Partisanship and Political Attitudes

Social scientists wishing to study the political attitudes and beliefs of military officers since the advent of the all-volunteer force have traditionally focused on two landmark studies. First, on four-year intervals from 1976 to 1996, Ole R. Holsti and James Rosenau conducted a series of surveys entitled, the Foreign Policy Leadership Project (FPLP). Holsti and Rosenau did not confine their research solely to military elites, but also included civilian elites as well, drawing from key opinion leaders such as Foreign Service officers, the press, politicians, and religious leaders. Nor were Holsti and Rosenau's surveys restricted to probing the political attitudes of their respondents, but also to a host of national security and foreign policy-related issues. The military respondents in the FPLP surveys primarily consisted of senior officers (O-5s and O-6s) in attendance at the National War College or assigned to the Pentagon.²

² Of note, Holsti and Rosenau only asked military respondents to identify their branch of service in 1988 and 1992, therefore, we can only isolate active duty Army officer responses in these two particular datasets

Holsti (1998) found among senior military officers surveyed from 1976-1996 an increasing preference for the Republican Party and a decline in the percentage of officers who indicated they were Independents. For example, in 1976, 33% of respondents identified as Republicans, and by 1996, this figure had increased to 67%. Similarly, the percentage of respondents claiming to be Independents declined from 46% in 1976 to 22% in 1996. Holsti observed a similar trend with regard to political ideology. The percentage of officers who identified as somewhat or very conservative increased from 61% in 1976 to 73% in 1996, while the percentage of those describing themselves as somewhat or very liberal decreased from 16% to just 3%. In comparison to civilian elites, however, Holsti found that a gap had emerged. By 1996, while 67% of senior officers claimed affiliation with the Republican Party, only 34% of a comparable civilian elite did. Feaver and Kohn interpreted the decline in Independents among military elites (from 46% in 1976 to 22% in 1996) as the most instructive takeaway from Holsti's FPLP surveys (Feaver and Kohn 2001). While the FPLP surveys were immensely valuable in comparing attitudes over time, the military sample was quite small, limiting the extent to which conclusions could be drawn about the military's political attitudes.

The second key study comes from Peter D. Feaver and Richard H. Kohn's work in the Triangle Institute for Security Studies (TISS)³. While Feaver and Kohn's *Survey on the Military in the Post-Cold War Era* conducted during 1998-1999 was by design closely patterned after Holsti and Rosenau's prior work, intended to compare the attitudes of military and civilian elites, the TISS survey included a much larger military sample

(n=49 for both years). This will come into play later in the chapter when I compare officers' views today against past surveys.

³ The Triangle Institute for Security Studies is a consortium of faculty members interested in defense, national security, and civil-military relations at Duke University, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and North Carolina State University.

and was more comprehensive in scope (n=2,901).⁴ Feaver and Kohn's close approximation to Holsti and Rosenau's FPLP surveys reflects to some degree the limited nature of political and cultural surveys of the armed forces. Writing about the challenge of measuring military elite opinion as opposed to mass opinion, Holsti noted:

Although this is the age of polling, the mountains of available data about the opinions of the American general public vastly outstrip the far more limited evidence about the views of its leaders. There have been some surveys of military leaders, but these have often been onetime studies. The absence of standard questions that routinely appear in multiple surveys makes it even more difficult to undertake reliable analyses of trends (Holsti 1998, 9).

The 81-question TISS survey conducted over the fall of 1998 through the spring of 1999 was a landmark study for its breadth and depth.⁵ While it focused on far more than the political attitudes of military elites, the TISS survey, along with the FPLP study, is the most-widely cited in terms of partisan attitudes of military elites in the post-Vietnam era. Like the FPLP study, the TISS survey found similar rates of party affiliation and political ideology for military elites, with 64% of respondents identifying with the Republican Party, 8% with the Democratic Party, and 17% as Independents. Similarly, 67% of military elite respondents described themselves as conservative, while less than 5% claimed to be liberal, and 28% moderate. As the main thrust of the TISS study was oriented on better understanding the civil-military gap, among its notable conclusions was that while military respondents appeared more conservative than their

⁴ 214 respondents in the TISS survey were active duty Army officers (majors, lieutenant colonels, and colonels) in attendance at the Command and General Staff College, Army War College, and National Defense University.

⁵ Many of the TISS questions had subset or multi-part questions, and the entire survey included more than 200 questions in total. As a result, the TISS dataset has proven to be rich empirical treasure for students of civil-military relations.

civilian elite counterparts, they were no more conservative than the general public (Feaver and Kohn 2001, 459).

With the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan has come increased interest in probing the views of the military and revisiting the issue of servicemembers' political attitudes. Most of these surveys have sought to gauge the opinions of a broader sample of those serving in the military, beyond the elite samples measured in the FPLP and TISS surveys. Since 2003, the *Military Times* has conducted surveys of its readers, querying them on their party identification and political ideology, in addition to asking them a host of questions about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.⁶ These reports garnered significant attention in the lead up to the 2004 and 2008 presidential elections, yet a drawback was the surveys were not true random samples, drawing almost exclusively on readers who maintained subscription to the weekly newspaper and were likely to be military careerists. Nonetheless, the data is still quite useful, as it is the only poll that has surveyed members of the military on their political attitudes on an annual basis since the Iraq war began.

Unlike the FPLP and TISS surveys, the *Military Times* surveys sampled all ranks across each of the services and were not restricted solely to an elite sample. Of note, while their surveys from 2003-2005 reported similar levels of affiliation with the Republican Party (approximately 60% of respondents) as found in the FPLP and TISS surveys, from 2006-2008, the percentage of respondents affiliating with the Republican Party dropped by as much as ten percentage points, leading some observers to question whether the Bush Administration's conduct of the war in Iraq and Afghanistan was partly to blame (Brooks 2007).

⁶ The Military Times Media Group publishes four weekly newspapers, the *Army Times*, *Navy Times*, *Air Force Times*, and *Marine Times*.

In 2004, Jason Dempsey conducted two large-scale, random sample surveys focusing on the Army's political attitudes. His Citizenship & Service survey was administered to both enlisted and officers (n=1,188) serving on active duty in the Army, and arguably represents the greatest contribution to understanding how enlisted and officers' political attitudes vary.⁷ For example, he found that while 63% of commissioned officers described themselves as conservative, only 32% of enlisted Soldiers did (Dempsey 2010, 75). Moreover, while he did not explicitly query his respondents on party affiliation, he created a party affiliation algorithm to predict respondents party affiliation based on their responses to other questions in the survey. Under this algorithm, he predicted that while more than 64% of lieutenant colonels and colonels (the main focus of the FPLP and TISS samples) would affiliate with the Republican Party, only 18% of junior enlisted Soldiers, 21% of noncommissioned officers, and 36% of senior noncommissioned officers would. Dempsey's Citizenship & Service survey is the most comprehensive survey to suggest that the Army is not as politically homogenous as perhaps previously thought.

Dempsey also surveyed 885 cadets at the U.S. Military Academy on the eve of the 2004 election. As with his findings on the political views of Army officers, Dempsey found the majority of West Point cadets to identify with the Republican Party (61%) – a figure that exceeded his predicted Republican party affiliation for lieutenants (44%) in his Citizenship & Service survey. Most notably, Dempsey found that most West Point cadets view a conflation between officership in the Army and affiliation with the Republican Party.

⁷ Dempsey's sample included 535 active duty Army officers.

In a similar vein, in 2004 the *Washington Post* partnered with Harvard University and the Kaiser Family Foundation to conduct a survey of 1,053 family members of active duty members of the Army, both officer and enlisted. Consistent with the *Military Times* and Dempsey's findings which included enlisted members in its sample, approximately 41% of Army spouses identified as Republicans, while 20% claimed to be Democrats and another 20% were Independents. Interestingly, spouses who had family members on active duty who had deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan reported a higher rate of affiliation with the Republican Party (49%) than those who had not yet deployed (39%).

Past surveys have shown senior military officers to generally be conservative and identify with the Republican Party, a trend which has solidified with the advent and professionalism of the all-volunteer force. Meanwhile, recent surveys suggest that the officer corps is more likely to be conservative and Republican than most enlisted Soldiers, an important distinction to keep in mind, considering enlisted Soldiers outnumber officers by four to one in the Army. In the next section of this chapter, I highlight the results of my survey on Army officers' political attitudes – we are nowhere near in writing the final chapter on the military's political attitudes, let alone those of Army officers. In fact, counting the TISS, FPLP, *Military Times*, and Citizenship & Service studies, less than 3,000 Army officers have been surveyed on their political views over the past 33 years.⁸ There is much left to be learned about the determinants and implications of Army officers' partisanship, and I hope the findings of my survey contribute to our understanding of the broader study of civil-military relations.

⁸ A total of 2,523 Army officers were surveyed in the aforementioned studies. The FPLP surveys only asked the branch of its respondents in two of its six surveys, so it is likely that more Army officers were surveyed in the entire FPLP study. However, only 49 Army officers were surveyed in the two FPLP surveys in which branch of service was recorded, so it is unlikely the total number increased dramatically beyond the number I have reported here.

Findings: Party Identification and Political Ideology of Army Officers in 2009

My *Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War* survey was the first large-scale, random-sample survey (n=4,248) to explicitly ask Army officers their party affiliation since the TISS survey nearly a decade prior.⁹ It was also the first comprehensive survey of military officers to employ the seven-point partisan identification scale (strong Democrat to strong Republican) as opposed to a three-point scale (Democrat, Independent, Republican). The seven-point scale, used in the American National Election Studies (ANES) surveys since 1952, provides greater fidelity on partisan attitudes and allows us to not only gauge the strength of partisanship but further refine what it means to be an Independent. In order to compare against other surveys that employed the three-point scale however, I follow the same methodology used by the ANES and count “leaners” as partisans. Independents who lean Democrat or Republican are, as Keith et al. point out, “largely closet Democrats and Republicans” (Keith et al. 1992, 4).

Table 2.1 lists the party affiliation of Army officers I surveyed. Overall, approximately 60% of active duty Army officers expressed affiliation with the Republican Party, 15% claimed to be pure Independents, and 18% identified with the Democratic Party. Of those who expressed affiliation with either party, the overwhelming majority are considered weak partisans. This is important, as many civil-military relations scholars and senior military leaders alike have voiced concern over the

⁹ In 2004, Dempsey conducted a pre-election survey of 885 cadets at the U.S. Military Academy, which included questions explicit questions about their party identification. His comprehensive Citizenship & Service survey, conducted in the summer of 2004, surveyed both enlisted members and officers in the Army on a host of civic participation issues. While the survey queried respondents about their political ideology and asked if they affiliated with a major political party, it did not explicitly ask their party affiliation. The *Military Times*' surveys have asked military members party identification questions, but they were not true random samples.

past decade about the officer corps growing more politicized and more polarized (Mullen 2008). In fact, Army officers' strength of partisanship in 2009 was about on par with the overall American public's strength of partisanship, as measured in the 2004 ANES survey. Data from the 2004 ANES indicated that 66% of Americans were Independents, leaners, or weak partisans, and only 33% considered themselves to be strong partisans. My data similarly found 66% of Army officers to be Independents, leaners or weak partisans and only 27% to be strong partisans. While measuring an elite group against the mass public is by no means a perfect comparison, it nonetheless challenges the popular conception of an increasingly politicized and polarized officer corps.

Having said this, among those Army officers who identified themselves as strong partisans, the number affiliating with the Republican Party outnumber Democrats by more than four to one. And while officers who claimed identification with the Republican Party were more likely to be categorized as weak or leaning partisans than strong partisans, the trend is clear: today's active duty Army officer corps still prefers the Republican Party over the Democratic Party by a margin of more than three to one.

Four demographic variables – rank, specialty, gender, and race – stand out and are important to understanding the determinants of partisan affiliation in the officer corps. First, with regard to rank, the observable trend in table 2.1 is the increased tendency among senior officers to affiliate with the Republican Party compared to junior officers, a finding that stands in contrast to Ricks' conclusion from just over a decade ago. For example, 53% of lieutenants identified with the Republican Party, compared to 66% of colonels. Conversely, while 24% of lieutenants identified with the Democratic Party,

only 12% of colonels did¹⁰. While the percentage of Independents and weak Republicans remained generally constant among all ranks, the decline in the percentage of Democrats and increase in percentage of strong Republicans among senior officers compared to junior officers is noticeable. Several things could be going on here. First, this could be a generational phenomenon, and officers joining the Army today are less conservative than officers who joined twenty years ago. This will be difficult to prove with the survey data presented here alone, but it is worth noting that the ultra-conservative lieutenants Ricks' wrote about over a decade ago are now today's majors and lieutenant colonels. Second, this may be evidence of self-selection: officers who make the Army a career may be more likely to be conservative, and more-liberal leaning officers may leave the service after their initial three to five year obligation. I will address this latter aspect in greater depth towards the end of this chapter. Third, this may be that the longer officers stay in the Army, the more likely they are to affiliate with the Republican Party. While I will address the idea of partisan change and relabeling in greater depth in the next chapter, it should also be noted that rank may also be a proxy for age here. The greater propensity among more senior officers to affiliate with the Republican Party may be a reflection of growing conservatism as people age, a theme I will also touch upon when I explore the ideological self-classification of Army officers.

A second variable worth examining is career specialty. Upon commissioning, officers are typically assigned a specific branch within the Army, ranging from infantry to military intelligence to logistics. These branches have historically been grouped into four categories – combat arms, combat support, combat service support (primarily

¹⁰ Difference of proportions test for Republican party affiliation between lieutenants and colonels statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 3.92$). Difference of proportions test for Democratic party affiliation between lieutenants and colonels statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 4.85$).

logistics specialties), and special branches (medical, legal, chaplains, etc). While the differences among career specialties are more muted than the differences in rank, there are nonetheless nuances worth highlighting. First, officers serving in combat arms specialties, defined as infantry, armor, field artillery, engineers, aviation, and air defense artillery) have the greatest propensity to identify as Republicans – 66% compared to 55% of combat support officers and combat service support officers and 59% of specialty branch officers. Combat arms officers are also the least likely to identify with the Democratic Party – just 13% compared to 21% of combat support officers, 20% of combat support officers, and 22% of specialty branch officers¹¹.

While there may be socialization effects within each of the four specialties within the Army, it is also likely that race and gender may also be playing an important role. For example, among combat arms officers in my sample, 96% are male and 83% are white, so it may be that race and gender are more dominant determinants of party identification than career specialty in the Army. In fact, looking at table 2.1, the two variables that stand out the most are race and gender. The starkest contrast among demographic variables is the party affiliation of white officers and black officers. While 67% of whites affiliated with the Republican Party, less than 14% of blacks did. In fact, blacks were the only demographic in which the majority surveyed were found to affiliate with the Democratic Party (63%). Notably, 27% of black officers identified themselves as strong Democrats compared to just 3% of white officers. Gender proves to be an important discriminator as well. While not at the same rate as black officers, female officers

¹¹ Difference of proportions test for Republican party affiliation between combat arms and combat support officers statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 4.80$) and between combat arms and specialty branch officers statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 3.01$). Difference of proportions test for Democratic party affiliation between combat arms and combat support officers statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 4.71$) and between combat arms and specialty branch officers statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 4.86$).

indicated a stronger attachment to the Democratic Party than their male counterparts. Women were three times more likely to indicate an affinity for the Democratic Party than men, and 44% of women indicated they affiliated with the Republican Party compared to 67% of men¹². The fact that race and gender prove to be significant discriminators in party affiliation is not surprising and is in line with ANES and other survey data going back to the 1950s and 1960s.¹³

If indeed party identification is formed during one's childhood and solidified as one grows older, it makes sense that one of the most compelling predictors of party affiliation should be the party affiliation of one's parents (Campbell et al. 1960). Table 2.2 shows the partisan affiliation for Army officers' parents, as reported in the *Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War* survey. In this question, respondents had four options from which to choose – that their parents were Democrats, Independents, Republicans or split-affiliations (meaning that one parent was a Democrat and one parent was a Republican). The results paint a more complex picture than the findings of Army officers' partisan identification. Approximately one-quarter of respondents indicated their parents were independents or had split affiliations, while another quarter indicated their parents were Democrats. Slightly less than half of respondents reported that their parents were Republicans – still the largest block of respondents – but nearly fifteen percentage points fewer than the percentage of Army officers who indicated they were

¹² Difference of proportions test for Republican party affiliation between black and white officers statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 18.01$) and between male and female officers statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 8.32$). Difference of proportions test for Democratic party affiliation between black and white officers statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 23.31$) and between male and female officers statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 11.55$).

¹³ My findings on race, gender, and party affiliation are also quite similar to surveys of the general public. For example, a 2003 poll conducted by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press found 64% of blacks to identify with the Democratic Party compared to just 7% affiliating with the Republican Party. Likewise, in the same poll, 36% of women identified with the Democratic Party while 29% of women claimed affiliation with the Republican Party.

Republicans. Officers who claimed affiliation with either party reported a similar rate of consistency with their parents in party affiliation. Sixty percent of both Democrat-leaning officers and Republican leaning-officers reported having the same affiliation as both of their parents.

Table 2.3 shows the results of the ideological self-classification of Army officers, also oriented along a seven-point scale. Closely patterning the results of party identification, approximately 61% of Army officers described their political views as conservative, 26% as moderate, and 13% as liberal. Predictably, the correlation between ideology and partisan identification is strong and positive ($r = 0.61$). The correlation is strongest between Republicans and conservatives ($r = 0.60$), compared to the correlation between Democrats and liberals ($r = 0.55$) or between Independents and moderates ($r = 0.30$). This strong correlation likely reflects some of the partisan sorting which has occurred since the 1980s (Fiorina 2005). In other words, Army officers, much like the rest of the American public, may simply be identifying with the ideologically “correct” party more so today than in the past. As with party identification, the same demographic variables remain prominent. Senior officers are more likely to describe their political ideology as conservative (68%) than junior officers (52%); men (63%) are more likely to be conservative than women (46%); and whites (66%) are more likely to be conservative than blacks (27%).¹⁴

Determinants of Party Identification and Political Ideology

Table 2.4 displays the results of two ordered logit models which regress party identification and political ideology on a host of explanatory variables. Each of the

¹⁴ Difference of proportions test for conservative ideology between lieutenants and colonels is statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 4.89$); between men and women is statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 7.46$); and between whites and blacks is statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 12.99$)

dependent variables, party identification and political ideology, are arranged along seven-point scales. The explanatory variables include demographic variables (age, gender, race, education-level, region of origin, and religion), political variables (parents' party identification, political ideology, and party identification), and several service-specific variables (career specialty, commissioning source, years spent in the Army, and whether or not officers have immediate family members in the military).

In the first model, the strongest predictors of Army officers' party identification are their ideology ($z = 35.88$) and parents' party identification ($z = 15.92$). Both have a positive effect on party identification, or push party identification to the right along the seven-point scale. Four other demographic variables have statistically significant effects on party identification. Dummy variables for women ($z = -2.00$), blacks ($z = -8.85$) and officers with graduate degrees ($z = -2.35$) each negatively affect party identification, moving party identification scores to the left, while a dummy variable for Hispanics ($z = 2.00$) has a positive effect, moving party affiliation to the right. Service-specific variables, however, such as commissioning source, career specialty, years of service in the Army, and officers with immediate family members who served in the Army had no effect on party identification, suggesting that Army officers are not much different than the general public when it comes to the determinants of their party affiliation: ideology, parents' affiliation, gender, race, and education-level have the most bearing in shaping party identification.

In the second model, party identification ($z = 34.19$) is the strongest, positive predictor of political ideology, and the dummy variable for women is the strongest negative predictor ($z = -3.90$). And while being white had a positive effect on political

ideology ($z = 3.38$), pushing ideological scores further to the right, being black did not have the expected negative effect of moving scores to the left on the ideological spectrum. In fact, being black had a positive, albeit statistically insignificant effect on political ideology. Four additional variables that had no effect on partisan identification did have positive, statistically significant effects on political ideology. First, age pushes political ideology to the right ($z = 3.45$), an intuitive finding corroborated by the increasing conservative affiliation among senior officers vice junior officers. Second, the branch specialty of combat arms ($z = 2.39$) also had a positive effect on political ideology. Third, officers who reported their religious affiliation to be Catholic ($z = 4.22$) and officers who described themselves as evangelical or born again ($z = 11.63$) also had strong, positive effects on political ideology. Catholics comprised 29% of the Army officers I surveyed, the largest religious denomination for respondents, and approximately a quarter of officers surveyed described themselves as evangelical or born again.¹⁵ Despite the positive effect these two religious variables have on political ideology, there is little correlation between a conservative political ideology and Catholicism ($r = 0.02$) or evangelicalism ($r = 0.14$).

As interpreting coefficients from an ordered logit regression is not readily intuitive, I use Clarify software to run simulations of predicted party affiliation and political ideology (King, Tomz, and Wittenberg 2003). As a result, I can better interpret the effect some of these key variables have on party identification and political ideology.

¹⁵ Respondents were asked two religion questions. First, they were asked to write in their religious preference. I then coded their responses into one of nine categories (agnostic/atheist, Catholic, non-denominational Christian or Protestant unspecified, Evangelical Protestant, Mainline Protestant, Judaism, Other Christian, non-Judeo Christian, or none). I coded Protestants following the categorization employed by Green, Guth, Smidt, and Kellstedt (1996). See their appendix to Chapter 10 for a complete typology. Second, respondents were also asked if they described themselves as evangelical or born again.

For example, an officer whose political ideology is conservative has a 71% probability of affiliating with the Republican Party, and an officer whose parents are Republicans has an 80% chance of affiliating with the Republican Party. While not a perfect correlation, a conservative political ideology or having parents who are Republicans are the strongest predictors of affiliation with the Republican Party for Army officers.

Then and Now: A Comparison Against Past Surveys

How do the findings of the *Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War* survey compare against past surveys? Does today's officer corps think differently than similar cohorts from ten and twenty years ago? As stated earlier, few comprehensive surveys exist to chart the party identification and political ideology over time of members of the military, let alone active duty Army officers specifically. Table 2.5 shows the party affiliation of active duty Army officers in the ranks of lieutenant through colonel (O-1 through O-6) who were surveyed by the *Military Times* from 2003 to 2008. The results show a fluctuation in the percentage of officers identifying with the Republican Party, with an increasing percentage of Army officers shifting their loyalty away from the Republican Party from 2005-2008. Some interpreted the shift as signs of the military's discontent with the Bush Administration's conduct of the war in Iraq (Brooks 2007). Even if we assume this was the case, my survey data shows what then amounted to a ten percentage point increase in Army officers affiliating with the Republican Party from 2008 to 2009. One of two things is going on here: either the *Military Times* data is not fully representative of the officer corps' true attitudes and there really was no dip in Republican affiliation from 2005 to 2008, or something caused Army officers to re-evaluate their partisanship afterwards, with more than 60% of officers identifying with

the Republican Party in 2009, up from just under 50% a year prior. Whether it was the success of the surge in Iraq and improving conditions in the war there or the prospect of having a Democratic Commander-in-Chief, if we are to believe that the *Military Times* and *Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War* samples are both similar to one another and representative of the larger Army officer population, whatever dissatisfaction Army officers may have had for the Republican Party appears to have given way.

Another methodological concern in comparing my survey data against the *Military Times*' polls is the difference in wording when asking respondents about their party affiliation. The *Military Times* question allowed individuals to choose Libertarian as a response or to decline to answer the question altogether. In 2005 and 2006, for example, the years witnessing the most decline in Army officer's affiliation with the Republican Party in the *Military Times* polls, these two categories accounted for 15% of Army officers' responses. Coupled with fairly constant percentages for officers affiliating with the Democratic Party in the *Military Times* polls, makes me question the magnitude of the supposed decline in Republican affiliation and wonder how much of this can be attributed to some degree of survey response bias. At the very least, while the *Military Times* polls are interesting, observers should take some caution when trying to extrapolate meaningful conclusions about the nature, determinants, or stability of Army officers' partisan attitudes.

Because of these concerns, I also sought to compare the party affiliation of Army officers that I surveyed in the *Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War* study against the FPLP and TISS surveys. In doing so, I excluded lieutenants, captains, and majors, zeroing in solely on Army lieutenant colonels and colonels. While the TISS survey did

include a sample of majors, the FPLP surveys in 1988 and 1992 only queried attendees at the National War College (mainly senior lieutenant colonels and colonels). Therefore to ensure a consistent comparison across these studies, I also focus only on lieutenant colonels and colonels. Admittedly, this comparison does restrict my explanatory ability somewhat, as lieutenant colonels and colonels only make up 20% of the active duty Army officer corps and less than 5% of the entire active duty Army population. Nonetheless, it does provide a gauge of *senior* officers' viewpoints over time, which carries larger implications for the dialogue and interaction between the military and its civilian overseers than comparisons that focus on more junior officers.

Table 2.6 provides the breakdown of Army lieutenant colonels and colonels' party affiliation as measured in four comprehensive surveys going back to 1988. What stands out the most in table 2.6 is the remarkable consistency in the percentage of senior Army officers affiliating with the Republican Party over the past decade. Second, despite the small sample size for the FPLP surveys, today's cohort of lieutenant colonels and colonels display a greater propensity to identify with the Republican Party today than 20 years ago, with 66% of senior Army officers identifying with the Republican Party today compared to only 49% in 1988. Also notable, and perhaps counterintuitive in light of the previous finding, is the slight increase in the percentage of officers identifying with the Democratic Party in 2009, compared to previous years. While still a small fraction overall, the percentage of lieutenant colonels and colonels affiliating with the Democratic Party more than doubled over the past decade (from just over 5% in 1998-99 to 13% in 2009).

Several things could be driving this. First, I conducted my survey less than four months following the inauguration of President Obama. The slight increase noted among Army officers' affiliation with the Democratic Party could reflect the nation's overall mood at the time and have more to do with the popularity of the President Obama following an historic campaign season and presidential election than an increasing preference among Army officers for the Democratic Party per se. Equally, it could reflect dissatisfaction with the Bush Administration or its conduct of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; I will devote more attention to the effect of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan on officers' political views in chapter 4. Finally, it may simply be that today's cohort of lieutenant colonels and colonels are markedly different from the cohorts surveyed in 1988, 1992, and 1998-99. Each of these explanations is little more than speculation, however, and additional research is necessary to truly appreciate the determinants behind these shifts in opinions.

Another limitation in this comparison is the different scales used in measuring party identification in each survey, which may also explain some of the shifting attitudes over time. Both the FPLP and TISS surveys employed a three-point scale, whereas I used the seven-point scale, more common to the ANES surveys. When condensing my findings to a three-point scale, I categorized independent leaners as partisans, following the same ANES methodology. However, it should be noted that in 2009, 47% of Army lieutenant colonels and colonels self-identified as some form of Independent, whether pure or leaning towards one of the two parties. Not knowing whether the Independents from the FPLP or TISS surveys are pure or leaners makes it difficult to make broad generalizations about the trend of Independents among the officer corps over

time. For example, it could be that the percentage of Independents among senior Army officers has remained fairly constant over the past years (16%), after experiencing a slight decline from the late-1980s. Or an alternative explanation could be that the number of Independents has actually tripled over the past ten years. The near exact percentage of Independents for the TISS survey and pure Independents in my study however, leads me to believe that attitudes have remained generally constant, and counting leaners as partisans is probably both accurate and in line with the FPLP and TISS groupings.

When charting the political ideology of Army officers over the past two decades, I also call upon Dempsey's 2004 survey which queried Army officers on their ideological preferences. The consistent use of the seven-point ideological scale (very liberal to very conservative) across each of these surveys provides a greater level of fidelity in understanding the political views of senior Army officers. Table 2.7 shows the distribution of Army lieutenant colonels and colonels' political ideology from 1988 to 2009, using data from the FPLP, TISS, C&S, and my *Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War* survey. Where party identification appears to be quite constant among senior Army officers from 20 years ago to today, their ideology has undergone a nuanced, but noticeable shift.

This shift is perhaps better visualized in figure 2.1. The distribution curves for the surveys conducted in 1988, 1992, and 1998-99 show similar patterns – unimodal distributions, with the median ideological score for lieutenant colonels and colonels being slightly conservative and few officers reported being very liberal, liberal, or slightly liberal. 2004, however, marked a significant departure. First, the conservative element within the senior ranks of the officer corps skewed further to the right, yet at the same

time, a slight increase in the proportion of officers identifying themselves as liberal or slightly liberal began to emerge. This trend continued, and by 2009, an interesting pattern had materialized: a bimodal distribution with peaks at both the moderate and conservative ideological scores. This is a case where simply looking at the mean or median scores of political ideology can be deceiving. Each survey suggests the median score for political ideology is roughly at the slightly conservative mark. However, as the histogram curves for the 2004 and 2009 data show in figure 2.1, the mode is actually at the conservative mark. Over the past decade, the percentage of Army lieutenant colonels and colonels indicating they were slightly conservative has been cut in half. In turn, the percentage indicating they were conservative has tripled and the percentage indicating they were liberal has nearly doubled.

For more than twenty years, the majority of Army officers were categorized in the slightly conservative block, but evidence from Dempsey's 2004 survey along with mine points to an ideological rightward shift that is occurring, at least in the more senior ranks of the Army officer corps. While a slight increase in the percentage of senior officers describing themselves as liberal has also emerged, it still only accounts for 10% of senior officers and 13% of officers overall. This will be interesting to watch over the coming years and affirms the need for continued survey research, particularly panel data, on the military's political attitudes.

Perception vs. Reality

What about Army officers themselves? Where do they believe the officer corps stands in terms of party affiliation and political ideology? Comparing the perceptions of officers against their own reported self-classification not only allows us to gauge how

accurate their perceptions are but also see how different demographics within the officer corps vary in their relative assessments. In my *Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War* survey, respondents were asked to generally describe the officer corps' party affiliation and could choose one of four options: that most were Republicans, that some were Republicans and some were Democrats, that most were Democrats, or that they were not sure.

Table 2.8, which lists the findings, shows that approximately 60% of respondents felt most officers were Republicans, while less than 1% thought most were Democrats. The remainder reported that they were not sure or that they thought the officer corps was a mix of both Democrats and Republicans. The fact that so few respondents (18 out of nearly 4,000) thought the officer corps was comprised mostly of Democrats shows the accuracy in most officers' assessments – most Army officers today *are* Republicans and most Army officers recognized this. Officers who self-identified with the Democratic Party seemed particularly attuned to this (69%), as they were more likely than Republicans (62%) or Independents (54%) to suggest that most officers were Republicans¹⁶. This is not surprising; Democratic-affiliated officers may be more conscious of holding a minority viewpoint in the officer corps and more apt to describe the institution as preferring the Republican Party.

Equally telling are those officers who are unsure about the political make-up of the officer corps. Women and Hispanic officers had the highest percentages of respondents who were not sure of the officer corps' party affiliation. Similarly, Independents were far more likely to express uncertainty with regards to the officer

¹⁶ Difference of proportions test for Republican perception of the officer corps between Democrats and Republicans is statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 3.27$) and between Democrats and Independents is statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 5.14$).

corps' macropartisanship than Democrats or Republicans¹⁷. The latter finding makes sense: partisans generally spend more time thinking about politics, and partisan officers are probably more cognizant of the partisanship of their co-workers, peers, and the officer corps in general. This may apply for women and Hispanic officers as well – politics and partisanship may simply be less important to them than it is for men or white officers.

I also asked respondents how they would generally classify the officer corps' political views, using the same seven-point scale they used when self-classifying their ideology. Table 2.9 shows the breakdown of how respondents assessed the ideology of the officer corps overall, and figure 2.2 compares officers' perceptions of the officer corps' ideology against their actual self-reported values. A stronger majority of officers assessed the officer corps to be conservative than did those who expressed their own political ideology as conservative. For example, 60% of officers described themselves as slightly conservative, conservative, or very conservative, yet 81% of respondents categorized the officer corps in those terms. Additionally, both liberal and conservative officers overestimated the conservatism of the officer corps, with 85% of each categorizing the officer corps as right of center. Moderate officers were more on target with their assessment, with 71% assessing the officer corps along the conservative end of the scale.

While I address the notions of partisan peer pressure in greater depth in chapter 5, it could be that liberal and moderate officers keep their political views closer to their vest, while conservative officers feel less constrained in expressing their views at work. As a

¹⁷ Difference of proportions test for uncertainty of the officer corps' party affiliation between Independents and Democrats is statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 5.53$) and between Independents and Republicans is statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 4.93$).

result, officers may in turn assess the officer corps to be more conservative than it really is. Similarly, perception matters, and it may be that the post-Vietnam narrative of an overwhelmingly conservative and Republican officer corps has been cemented in liberal, moderate, and conservative officers alike, and slight changes in the political make-up of the officer corps may be difficult to discern, even among those serving today. Also, the fact that officers I surveyed displayed greater unanimity in assessing the officer corps' political ideology than its partisanship is noteworthy. It shows that while the Army officers almost universally acknowledge that the officer corps is politically conservative, they are less sure about its party affiliation – a sign that Army officers may not wear their party affiliation on their sleeve to the degree that some may currently think.

“The Grand Army of the Republicans”: Separating Fact from Fiction

In a 1997 article in *The New Republic*, civil-military relations scholars Andrew J. Bacevich and Richard H. Kohn, lamented the increasingly reciprocal relationship between the Republican Party and the armed forces' officer corps, with this play on the moniker for Union Army veterans, “Grand Army of the Republic.” Having established the party identification and political ideology of Army officers serving today, compared officers' political views against similar cohorts from ten and twenty years ago, and examined the perception of Army officers views versus reality when it comes to the politics of the officer corps, this section probes the nature of Army officers' affiliation with the Republican Party in an attempt to separate fact from fiction.

What are the factors that shape and determine so many Army officers' preference for the Republican Party? Table 2.10 reports the results of a logistic regression of affiliation with the Republican Party against demographic and political variables. As

expected, a conservative political ideology ($z = 19.06$) and having parents who are Republicans ($z = 7.59$) are the strongest predictors of Republican Party affiliation for Army officers. Notably, the service-specific variables such as commissioning source (Service Academy, Reserve Officer Training Corps, or Officer Candidate School) and specialty (combat arms, combat support, combat service support, or special branches) have no effect on Republican Party identification. This is important, as the alternative would imply some form of partisan segregation is occurring within the officer corps. Table 2.10 also lists the results of a logistic regression of Democratic Party affiliation against the same demographic, service, and political variables. As expected, being liberal ($z = 15.42$), having parents who are Democrats ($z = 9.63$), being female ($z = 4.04$), and being black ($z = 4.09$) are the strongest determinants of Democratic Party affiliation for Army officers. For both Republican and Democratic officers alike, little of this is earth-shattering: the politics officers inherit from their parents and demographics such as race and gender matter most in determining their party affiliation. In this regard, Army officers differ very little from their civilian counterparts.

In 2005, civil-military relations scholar Michael Desch noted that “the typical American military officer today is southern, white, conservative, likely to identify with the Republican Party, to be quite religious, and increasingly he’s likely to be an evangelical Protestant (Moran 2005).” While the portrait may be somewhat accurate, it is at the same time deceiving, as it suggests a conflation between affiliation with the Republican Party and these other demographic variables. Two of these demographic variables are worth highlighting, as they serve to debunk popular perceptions of the officer corps today.

Much has been written of the increase in the number of evangelical Christians serving in the officer corps today, including several well-publicized instances of senior military officers being investigated for promoting evangelical Christian tenets and organizations while in their official capacity in the military (Cooperman 2006, Goodstein 2005, Leiby 2003). Likewise, a strong correlation between evangelical or born again Christians and the Republican Party in the American public has been noted in the two most recent presidential elections. For example, according to the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, in 2004, 69% of white evangelicals supported George W. Bush, compared to 26% for John Kerry, and in 2008, 61% of white evangelicals favored John McCain, compared to 25% for Barack Obama (Pond 2008). It seems only natural that being an evangelical Christian would serve as a predictor for an Army officer's affiliation with the Republican Party. While it does, as table 2.10 suggests, the magnitude of the evangelical effect on Republican affiliation ($z = 2.99$) pales in comparison to the effect of having a conservative ideology or having parents who were Republicans. Being an evangelical Christian in the Army does predict affiliation with the Republican Party, but is by no means the strongest determinant.

The South has also become synonymous with the Republicanization of the officer corps, but as with evangelicals, this appears to be another instance of a compelling narrative taking hold that is built more on myth than fact. I asked respondents in the *Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War* survey to indicate which region they spent the most time growing up. The South ranked just behind the Midwest for the region with the most number of respondents (845 compared to 877 out of 3,901 total respondents). As

table 2.9 shows, growing up in the South has no effect whatsoever on Republican or Democratic Party identification for Army officers.

In my research, I found few service-specific variables that would indicate that something about the Army itself affects or shapes officers' partisanship, but rather the same demographic variables that affect most people's political identity holds true for Army officers as well. I was, however, concerned with the possibility that somehow the overall figure of 60% of officers affiliating with the Republican Party might mask the impact of junior officers who leave the Army. My data shows that senior Army officers are more conservative and Republican than junior officers, the opposite of what Tom Ricks argued was occurring in the late-1990s¹⁸. Nonetheless, could it be that officers who identify with the Democratic Party or as an Independent choose to leave the Army after their initial service obligation, and that those who choose to make the Army a career are generally Republicans?

In my survey, I asked respondents whether or not they were in the process of separating from the Army or would be within the next six months. Overall, 306 officers reported that they were planning on leaving the Army, 100 of which had completed less than ten years of service. As I was interested in capturing the views of junior officers (lieutenants, captains, and a handful of junior majors), I excluded the more senior officers who were preparing to retire after twenty years or more of service. Among the 100 junior officers preparing to separate from the Army, 37% described themselves as Democrats, 11% as Independents, and 44% as Republicans (see table 2.1). What is striking is the

¹⁸ It should be noted that the lieutenants that Tom Ricks wrote about in the mid-to-late 1990s are today's lieutenant colonels, whom I found to be generally more conservative than junior officers serving today. Therefore, my data does not necessarily disprove Ricks' thesis, but it does challenge the notion that today's junior officers are further to the political right than more senior officers. It may be that what Ricks found was a specific generational phenomenon.

majority of junior officers leaving the Army claimed to be Democrats or Independents – a marked difference from the figures for lieutenants and captains overall (22% Democrat, 15% Independent, and 55% Republican). Similarly, junior officers leaving the Army were also more likely to be centrist or left of center with 54% professing to be liberal or moderate, compared to 45% of lieutenants and captains overall. Finally, as table 2.10 indicates, being a junior officer separating from the Army has a significant, positive effect on affiliation with the Democratic Party.

This is an area that merits further research. While I found few, if any service-specific variables to have an effect on the party identification of Army officers, the fact that junior officer attrition is characterized by a much higher affiliation with the Democratic Party than for those who make the Army a career begs the obvious question: is the conservatism or preference for the Republican Party in the officer corps a contributing factor to junior officers' decision to leave the Army? From a normative standpoint, the officer corps' preference for the Republican Party is not by itself a significant concern for the profession, as others have pointed out (Collins 1999, Betros 2001, Hooker 2003-04). Nor is it fundamentally different from the fields of journalism or academia, which are characterized by a strong preference for the Democratic Party among its members. It is a concern, however, for an institution that claims partisan neutrality, especially if the officer corps' political leanings are somehow pushing officers with minority viewpoints out of the Army.

Conclusion

Data from my *Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War* survey helps further our understanding of the military's political views in several key areas. First, roughly two-

thirds of Army officers remain conservative in their political viewpoints and affiliated with the Republican Party, consistent with past surveys conducted ten and twenty years ago, but at odds with recent *Military Times* surveys which suggested a falling-out with the Republican Party had occurred within the ranks. If such a shift did occur from 2005-2008, there are little signs left today: the officer corps still prefers the Republican Party over the Democratic Party by a margin of three to one. This finding alone is noteworthy, as the Army is in its eighth year prosecuting the war in Afghanistan and seventh year in Iraq, and speaks to the durability of partisan identification, even during times of great upheaval.

Despite the continued trend towards conservatism and preference for the Republican Party in the officer corps, there are important nuances worth noting. Most officers are weak partisans, and nearly half described themselves as some type of Independent. I found little to suggest that Army officers possess different distinguishing characteristics that shape their party identification, but rather they mirror most Americans in that their parents' affiliation, their ideology, race, and gender are the strongest predictors of their party identification. Nor did I find any resemblance of the officer corps Tom Ricks described in the late-1990s: in fact, junior officers are *less* conservative and *weaker* Republicans than senior officers serving today.

From a normative view, if there is any cause for concern it may lie with the subtle shift further to the right on the political spectrum that has occurred within the officer corps and the possible connection between junior officer attrition and party politics. While comparing different cohorts is far from an exact science, it is the closest we can get without true panel data, and the comparisons I conducted show that today's senior

officers have moved further to the political right than similar cohorts who served ten and twenty years ago. What lies behind the shift from “slightly conservative” to “conservative” remains to be seen, and notably, this ideological shift has not been accompanied by a greater proportion of officers affiliating with the Republican Party. Similarly, the fact that a higher percentage of junior officers who leave Army service describe themselves as liberal and affiliate with the Democratic Party compared to officers who make the Army a career should make Army leaders inquire if there is something about the political make-up of the officer corps that is contributing to junior officer attrition.

Having now established the political make-up of today’s officer corps, in the ensuing chapters, I address the impact this has on broader civil-military relations issues. Or as Joseph Collins has aptly called for, I attempt to provide the “so what” behind the officer corps’ conservative and Republican leanings (Collins 2004, Collins 1999). Does something about service in the Army or deployments to Iraq or Afghanistan shape Army officers’ political attitudes? How politically active are Army officers, and does party affiliation play a role? Finally, what are the views of Army officers on critical, contemporary civil-military relations issues, and does party affiliation affect these views? Without answers to these questions, the party affiliation of Army officers may be interesting, but altogether insignificant in the study of civil-military relations.

Table 2.1 Party Identification of Army Officers

	Party Identification							
	<i>percent checking each option</i>							
	Strong Democrat	Weak Democrat	Lean Democrat	Independent	Lean Republican	Weak Republican	Strong Republican	Other
TOTAL (n = 3,907)	5.09	4.10	8.65	14.85	23.80	14.90	21.63	6.99
Lieutenants	5.88	5.88	11.92	14.86	20.28	15.48	17.18	8.51
Captains	5.98	5.12	10.34	14.52	22.58	14.14	19.17	8.16
Majors	4.84	3.33	7.77	13.52	26.14	16.65	20.59	7.16
Lieutenant Colonels	4.86	2.87	6.48	15.46	25.56	13.84	26.18	4.74
Colonels	2.70	3.23	5.12	17.79	24.26	13.21	28.30	5.39
Combat Arms	3.42	2.78	7.22	14.43	26.58	15.70	23.86	6.01
Combat Support	5.76	4.14	11.52	15.21	20.38	15.95	19.05	7.98
Combat Service Support	6.00	5.51	8.37	16.14	21.56	13.39	20.47	8.56
Special Branches	7.20	5.12	9.60	13.28	24.00	14.40	20.80	5.60
Male Officers	4.25	3.25	7.56	15.13	25.23	14.86	22.94	6.78
Female Officers	10.40	9.64	15.88	13.04	15.12	14.93	13.80	7.18
White Officers	2.98	2.79	7.33	14.36	26.66	16.08	24.27	5.54
Black Officers	27.12	16.27	19.32	16.61	6.44	3.05	4.07	7.12
Hispanic Officers	4.61	4.61	11.52	15.67	19.35	13.36	18.43	12.44
Asian-American Officers	2.26	8.27	15.04	17.29	20.30	17.29	15.04	4.51
Junior Officers Separating from the Army	6.06	8.08	23.23	11.11	20.20	15.15	9.09	7.07

Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009

Table 2.2 Parents' Party Identification

	Parents' Party Identification <i>percent checking each option</i>				
	Democrats	Independents	Split Affiliations	Republicans	Other
TOTAL (n = 3,900)	25.36	9.46	14.72	45.51	4.95
Lieutenants	24.65	8.99	15.35	44.34	6.67
Captains	22.74	9.51	15.51	46.53	5.71
Majors	26.55	11.55	14.18	44.07	3.65
Lieutenant Colonels	27.52	8.47	14.45	44.83	4.73
Colonels	26.49	7.03	12.97	49.19	4.32
Combat Arms	21.43	8.69	15.54	50.48	3.87
Combat Support	28.64	10.83	14.39	41.39	4.75
Combat Service Support	30.02	10.04	12.40	40.94	6.59
Special Branches	24.20	9.13	16.67	44.87	5.13
Male Officers	24.19	9.56	14.60	47.18	4.46
Female Officers	32.89	8.17	15.78	36.50	6.65
White Officers	19.95	9.06	15.67	51.94	3.39
Black Officers	78.91	7.48	6.12	2.04	5.44
Hispanic Officers	32.72	10.14	19.82	27.65	9.68
Asian-American Officers	21.97	16.67	7.58	44.70	9.09
Democrats	58.48	6.90	15.23	16.67	2.73
Independents	23.66	22.28	15.89	34.37	3.80
Republicans	16.96	7.78	14.46	59.06	1.74
Junior Officers Separating from the Army	26.53	12.24	18.37	38.78	4.08

Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009

Table 2.3 Ideological Self-Identification of Army Officers

	Ideological Self-Identification <i>percent checking each option</i>						
	Very Liberal	Liberal	Slightly Liberal	Moderate	Slightly Conservative	Conservative	Very Conservative
TOTAL (n = 3,895)	0.92	4.78	7.57	26.26	22.44	30.27	7.75
Lieutenants	1.40	7.49	9.36	29.64	19.50	26.21	6.40
Captains	0.95	5.99	8.27	28.61	21.39	27.47	7.32
Majors	0.81	3.34	7.80	25.43	25.23	29.79	7.60
Lieutenant Colonels	0.62	3.75	5.99	23.72	22.10	35.58	8.24
Colonels	1.08	2.97	5.95	21.08	24.05	34.32	10.54
Combat Arms	0.70	3.30	6.54	24.97	22.87	33.80	7.81
Combat Support	0.74	6.06	8.42	28.21	23.78	25.70	7.09
Combat Service Support	0.89	5.43	7.50	29.02	21.92	28.13	7.11
Special Branches	1.77	6.11	9.32	22.83	20.58	29.90	9.49
Male Officers	0.82	3.90	6.80	25.73	22.74	31.68	8.34
Female Officers	1.32	10.59	12.67	29.87	21.36	20.23	3.97
White Officers	0.73	4.05	7.07	22.59	24.02	32.78	8.76
Black Officers	0.34	12.24	12.59	47.96	14.29	9.86	2.72
Hispanic Officers	2.76	4.15	7.37	41.01	15.21	26.27	3.23
Asian-American Officers	2.26	6.77	12.78	31.58	21.80	21.80	3.01
Democrats	3.88	23.13	26.44	35.63	7.61	2.44	0.86
Independents	0.70	2.26	9.04	57.91	17.39	10.61	2.09
Republicans	0.08	0.30	1.70	13.81	29.11	44.24	10.75
Junior Officers Separating from the Army	3.03	14.14	11.11	25.25	18.18	25.25	3.03

Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009

Table 2.4 Determinants of Party Identification and Political Ideology

Dependent Variable = Party Identification (7pt scale)		Dependent Variable = Political Ideology (7pt scale)	
Ideology	1.07*** (0.03)	Party ID	0.82*** (0.02)
Parents' Party ID	0.40*** (0.03)	Parents' Party ID	0.01 (0.03)
Age	-0.01 (0.05)	Age	0.16*** (0.05)
Women	-0.18* (0.09)	Women	-0.36*** (0.09)
Whites	-0.09 (0.11)	Whites	0.37*** (0.11)
Blacks	-1.44*** (0.16)	Blacks	0.14 (0.16)
Hispanics	0.33* (0.16)	Hispanics	-0.25 (0.16)
College Graduate	-0.08 (0.10)	College Graduate	0.01 (0.10)
Graduate Degree	-0.22* (0.10)	Graduate Degree	0.06 (0.10)
Evangelicals/Born Again	0.10 (0.07)	Evangelicals/Born Again	0.88*** (0.08)
Catholics	0.04 (0.07)	Catholics	0.30*** (0.07)
South	-0.11 (0.07)	South	0.08 (0.08)
Combat Arms	-0.10 (0.07)	Combat Arms	0.17* (0.07)
Specialty Branches	-0.20 (0.10)	Specialty Branches	0.06 (0.11)
Service Academy	0.05 (0.13)	Service Academy	0.09 (0.14)
ROTC	0.05 (0.12)	ROTC	0.10 (0.12)
OCS	0.09 (0.13)	OCS	0.08 (0.14)
Years of Service	0.02 (0.01)	Years of Service	-0.02 (0.01)
Family Service	-0.02 (0.06)	Family Service	0.01 (0.06)
Pseudo R ²	0.17	Pseudo R ²	0.17
Log Likelihood	-6134.70	Log Likelihood	-5220.35
N	3835	N	3835

Entries are ordered logit coefficients in bold with standard errors in parenthesis. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001

Table 2.5 Party Identification of Army Officers: A Comparison Against the Military Times Surveys, 2003-2008

	Party Identification of Active Duty Army Officers*				
	<i>percent checking each option</i>				
	Democrats	Independents	Libertarians	Republicans	Other/Declined to Answer
Military Times Survey, 2003 (n=217)	12.44	20.28	1.84	56.68	8.76
Military Times Survey, 2004 (n=311)	12.30	20.06	1.29	60.52	5.82
Military Times Survey, 2005 (n=231)	13.85	18.18	1.30	58.01	8.66
Military Times Survey, 2006 (n=168)	12.50	23.21	3.57	49.40	11.31
Military Times Survey, 2007 (n=326)	13.19	25.46	3.37	46.63	11.35
Military Times Survey, 2008 (n=423)	11.35	27.19	2.60	49.65	9.21
Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009 (n=3907)	17.84	14.85	N/A	60.33	6.99

* Data reflects responses by Active Duty Army Lieutenants, Captains, Majors, Lieutenant Colonels, and Colonels

Military Times question, "In politics today do you consider yourself a Democrat, Independent, Libertarian, Republican, Other, or do you decline to answer?"

Civil-Military Relations In a Time of War Survey question, "Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a strong Democrat, a not very strong Democrat, an Independent who leans Democrat, an Independent, an Independent who leans Republican, a not very strong Republican, a strong Republican, or what?" For this table, Independent "leaners" are counted as Democrats or Republicans.

Table 2.6 Party Identification of Senior Army Officers Then and Now: A Comparison Against Past Surveys

	Party Identification Among Senior Army Officers*			
	<i>percent checking each option</i>			
	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Other/No Preference
Foreign Policy Leadership Program Survey, 1988 (n=49)	14.29	30.61	48.98	6.12
Foreign Policy Leadership Program Survey, 1992 (n=49)	8.16	24.49	59.18	8.16
Triangle Institute for Security Studies Survey, 1998-1999 (n=130)	5.38	16.15	66.15	12.31
Civil-Military Relations In a Time of War Survey, 2009 (n=1216)	13.16	16.20	65.63	5.02

* Data reflects responses by Army Lieutenant Colonels and Colonels only

FPLP Survey question, "Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, and Independent, or what?"

TISS Survey question, "Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, and Independent, or what?"

Civil-Military Relations In a Time of War Survey question, "Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a strong Democrat, a not very strong Democrat, an Independent who leans Democrat, an Independent, an Independent who leans Republican, a not very strong Republican, a strong Republican, or what?" For this table, Independent "leaners" are counted as Democrats or Republicans.

Table 2.7 Ideological Self-Identification of Senior Army Officers Then and Now: A Comparison Against Past Surveys

	Ideological Self-Identification for Senior Army Officers*						
	<i>percent checking each option</i>						
	Very Liberal	Liberal	Slightly Liberal	Moderate	Slightly Conservative	Conservative	Very Conservative
Foreign Policy Leadership Program Survey, 1988 (n=49)	0.00	0.00	4.08	26.53	57.14	12.24	0.00
Foreign Policy Leadership Program Survey, 1992 (n=49)	0.00	0.00	4.08	30.61	51.02	12.24	2.04
Triangle Institute for Security Studies Survey, 1998-1999 (n=130)	0.00	0.77	6.15	29.23	50.77	12.31	0.00
Citizenship & Service Survey, 2004 (n=125)	0.00	2.94	9.23	18.18	23.70	41.65	4.30
Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009 (n=1215)	0.74	3.46	5.84	23.13	22.63	35.23	8.97

* Data reflects responses by Army Lieutenant Colonels and Colonels only

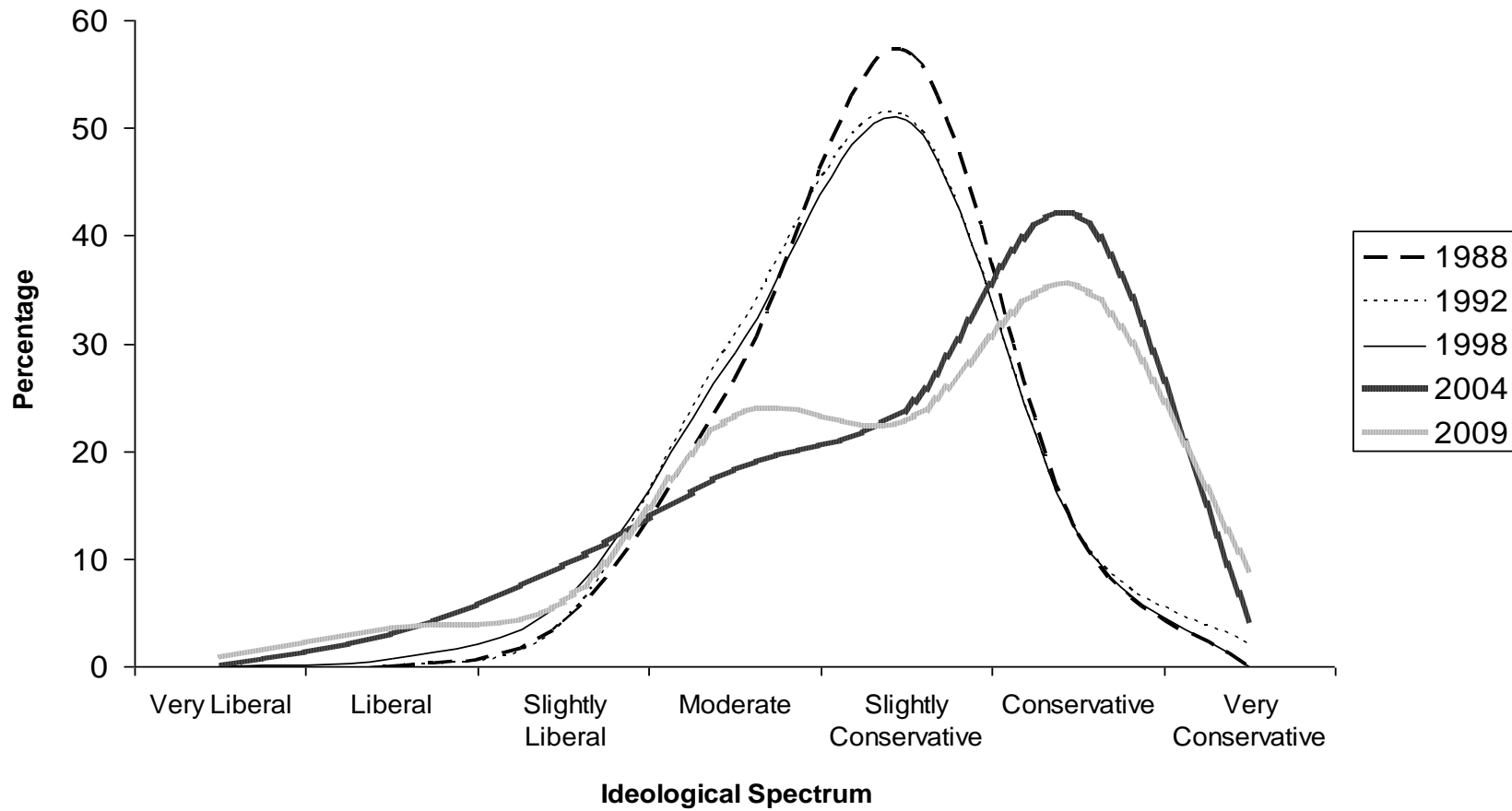
FPLP Survey question, "How would you describe your views on political matters?" 7 point scale, "far left" to "far right"

TISS Survey question, "How would you describe your political views on most matters?" 7 point scale, "far left" to "far right"

Citizenship & Service Survey question, "In terms of politics and political beliefs, where would you place yourself?" 7 point scale from "extremely liberal" to "extremely conservative"

Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey question, "Here is a 7-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from very liberal to very conservative. Where would you place yourself on this scale?"

Figure 2.1 Ideology of Senior Army Officers (1988-2009)



* Data reflects responses by Army Lieutenant Colonels and Colonels only
 1988 and 1992 data are from Holsti & Rosenau's FPLP surveys; 1998 data is from Feaver & Kohn's TISS survey; 2004 is from Dempsey's C&S Survey; 2009 data is from the Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War survey

Table 2.8 Perceived Party Identification of the Officer Corps

	Perceived Party Identification of the Officer Corps			
	<i>percent checking each option</i>			
	Most are Democrats	Some are Democrats and Some are Republicans	Most are Republicans	Not Sure
TOTAL (n = 3,912)	0.46	23.72	59.87	15.95
Lieutenants	0.62	28.15	53.03	18.20
Captains	0.57	24.83	58.14	16.46
Majors	0.30	22.23	64.99	12.47
Lieutenant Colonels	0.37	21.07	63.69	14.87
Colonels	0.54	22.85	55.91	20.70
Combat Arms	0.57	20.96	66.43	12.03
Combat Support	0.30	22.22	63.70	13.78
Combat Service Support	0.29	25.10	55.10	19.51
Special Branches	0.64	29.89	47.54	21.94
Male Officers	0.42	23.23	62.13	14.22
Female Officers	0.38	27.58	46.72	25.33
White Officers	0.36	24.25	61.86	13.52
Black Officers	0.00	21.36	58.98	19.66
Hispanic Officers	1.38	21.56	47.71	29.36
Asian-American Officers	0.76	21.97	56.06	21.21
Democrats	0.43	21.15	68.49	9.93
Independents	0.17	24.31	54.31	21.21
Republicans	0.38	25.01	61.59	13.02
Junior Officers Separating from the Army	0.00	24.49	63.27	12.24

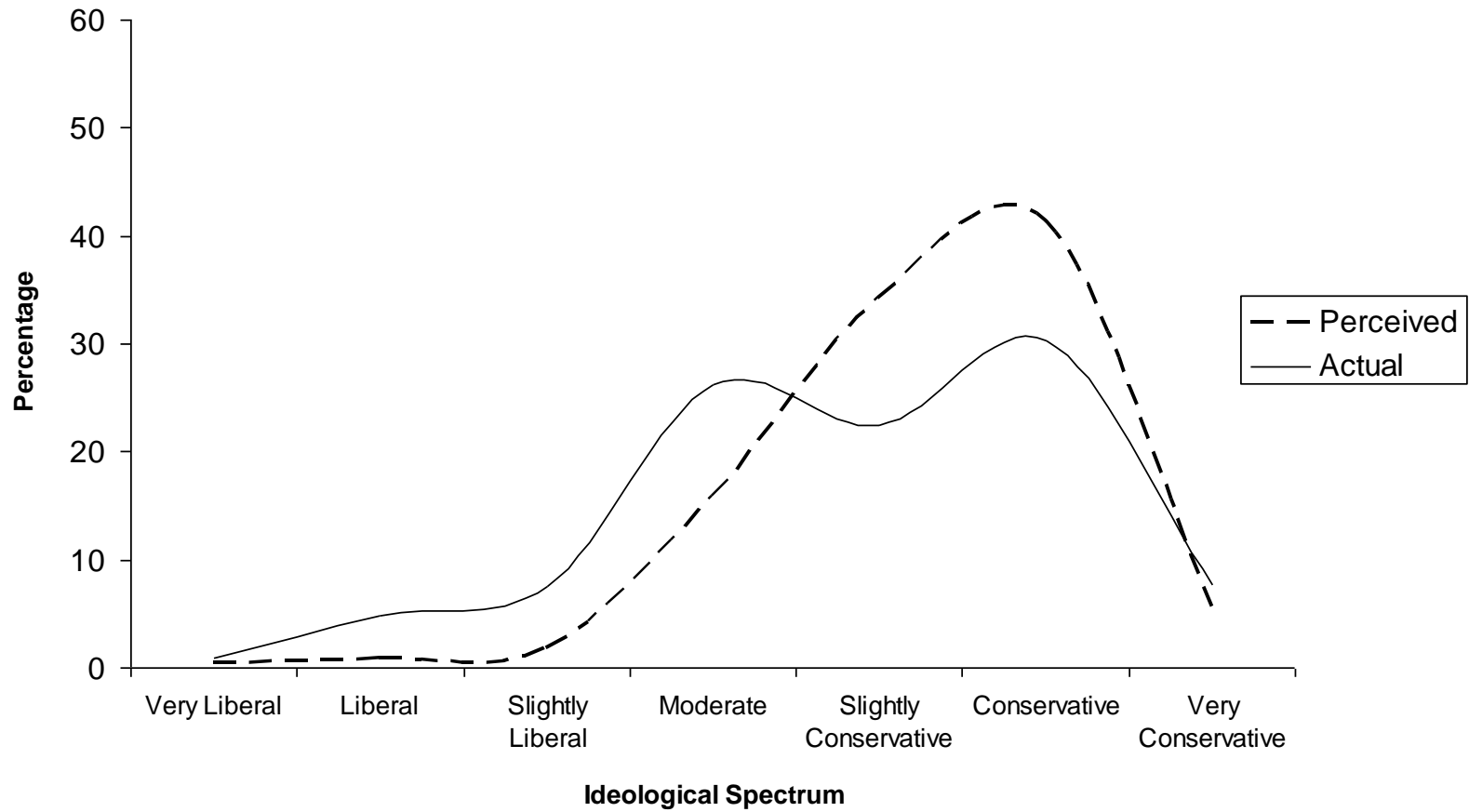
Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009

Table 2.9 Perceived Ideological Identification of the Officer Corps

	Perceived Ideological Identification of the Officer Corps						
	<i>percent checking each option</i>						
	Very Liberal	Liberal	Slightly Liberal	Moderate	Slightly Conservative	Conservative	Very Conservative
TOTAL (n = 3,870)	0.47	0.85	1.76	15.84	34.26	41.24	5.58
Actual Self-Identification	0.92	4.78	7.57	26.26	22.44	30.27	7.75
Lieutenants	0.47	1.56	2.81	20.63	36.72	34.06	3.75
Captains	0.48	1.15	1.92	20.89	34.26	36.28	5.00
Majors	0.31	0.61	2.04	12.76	34.18	42.65	7.45
Lieutenant Colonels	0.38	0.38	1.00	12.52	32.29	47.93	5.51
Colonels	0.81	0.00	0.54	8.94	34.96	48.51	6.23
Combat Arms	0.45	0.83	1.34	12.00	33.38	45.95	6.06
Combat Support	0.45	0.60	1.93	17.26	32.44	41.52	5.80
Combat Service Support	0.59	1.09	2.28	20.30	34.06	37.52	4.16
Special Branches	0.33	0.82	1.80	16.83	38.73	34.97	6.54
Male Officers	0.39	0.79	1.52	14.36	35.05	42.43	5.46
Female Officers	0.57	1.34	3.07	24.71	30.27	33.14	6.90
White Officers	0.10	0.43	1.30	14.39	35.95	42.72	5.11
Black Officers	2.05	3.41	4.44	19.11	21.16	38.91	10.92
Hispanic Officers	0.93	0.93	3.27	26.64	27.57	35.05	5.61
Asian-American Officers	0.00	2.26	3.01	19.55	38.35	30.83	6.02
Liberals	1.56	1.95	1.95	9.53	25.88	43.19	15.95
Moderates	0.40	1.09	2.67	24.80	32.81	33.00	5.24
Conservatives	0.26	0.47	1.33	13.29	36.86	44.36	3.43
Junior Officers Separating from the Army	0.00	0.00	1.02	14.29	34.69	38.78	11.22

Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009

Figure 2.2 Ideology of Army Officers: Actual vs. Perceived



Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009
Data reflects responses from active duty Army lieutenants, captains, majors, lieutenant colonels, and colonels

Table 2.10 Predicting Republican and Democratic Party Affiliation

Dependent Variable = Republican Party ID (dummy)		Dependent Variable = Democratic Party ID (dummy)	
Conservative	2.80*** (0.15)	Liberal	3.11*** (0.20)
Republican Parents	1.14*** (0.15)	Democratic Parents	1.85*** (0.19)
Age	-0.03 (0.11)	Age	0.00 (0.14)
Women	-0.08 (0.20)	Women	0.91*** (0.23)
Whites	0.39 (0.24)	Whites	-0.30 (0.28)
Blacks	-1.27** (0.44)	Blacks	1.67*** (0.41)
Hispanics	0.76* (0.35)	Hispanics	-0.24 (0.41)
College Graduate	-0.02 (0.21)	College Graduate	0.24 (0.26)
Graduate Degree	-0.14 (0.26)	Graduate Degree	0.33 (0.31)
Evangelicals/Born Again	0.47* (0.18)	Evangelicals/Born Again	-0.64** (0.24)
South	-0.10 (0.18)	South	0.05 (0.22)
Combat Arms	0.15 (0.17)	Combat Arms	0.16 (0.21)
Specialty Branches	0.50 (0.29)	Specialty Branches	-0.01 (0.35)
Service Academy	0.32 (0.36)	Service Academy	-0.05 (0.44)
ROTC	0.36 (0.33)	ROTC	-0.08 (0.40)
OCS	0.16 (0.34)	OCS	-0.03 (0.40)
Years of Service	0.01 (0.04)	Years of Service	0.00 (0.04)
Family Service	-0.05 (0.15)	Family Service	-0.26 (0.18)
Junior Officer Attrition	-0.38 (0.29)	Junior Officer Attrition	0.61* (0.31)
Pseudo R ²	0.38	Pseudo R ²	0.39
Log Likelihood	-619.57	Log Likelihood	-456.66
N	1455	N	1455

Entries are logit coefficients in bold with standard errors in parenthesis. * p <.05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001

Chapter 3

Changes in Attitudes: the Effects of Army Service and Combat on Party Affiliation and Political Ideology

In fact, one senior officer on the Joint Staff...said that what he had learned under [former Secretary of Defense Donald] Rumsfeld was that it's best to distrust Republicans as much as they had historically distrusted Democrats.
Thom Shanker (2007)

What causes partisan and ideological change? More specifically, what causes partisan and ideological change among elites who generally have stable and strong attitudes? This chapter explores change in partisan identification and political ideology among Army officers during wartime. In this section, I hope to answer two main questions. First, what effect does service in the Army have on the partisan and ideological identities of Army officers today? Second, what effect does combat have on these same political identities?

Perceptual Screens and Running Tallies

Substantial political science literature suggests that people's partisan attitudes and political ideology are highly stable. In their landmark analysis of partisan identification, *The American Voter*, Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes (1960) argue that partisanship is an enduring psychological attachment, learned at an early age, primarily through familial socialization, and solidifies as one grows older. They attribute much of the stability in partisan attitudes to the existence of a "perceptual screen through which the individual tends to see what is favorable to his partisan orientation. The stronger the party bond, the more exaggerated the process of selection and perceptual distortion will be (133)." This perceptual screen makes it difficult for people with strong partisan loyalties and well-developed political attitudes to process information that does not adhere to their preexisting partisan loyalties and thus unlikely that strong partisans will change their attitudes and partisan identification.

More recently, Green, Palmquist and Schickler (2002) have argued that party affiliation is akin to membership in a social group. It has an enduring quality and reflects part of one's *identity* – far more than just a political opinion and thus is resistant to fluctuations in political events. Green et al. take Campbell et al.'s perceptual screen one step further, concluding that political events have little impact on partisan identity and make an important distinction between short-term changes in political opinions and long-term changes in partisan identification:

Partisans neither shed their attachments when their party performs poorly nor maintain their attachments by shutting out bad news. On the contrary, the public does take notice of political events, and news tends to affect Democrats and Republicans in similar ways. Seldom, however, does the political or economic environment change in ways that would impel Democrats and Republicans to relabel themselves (111).

Alternative assessments of party affiliation and political ideology offer a more dynamic view, however. Most notable is Morris Fiorina's *Retrospective Voting* (1981), which argues that voters are constantly forming a “running tally” of party performance in their minds. Fiorina builds upon Anthony Downs and V.O. Key's earlier work on retrospective voting, but adds in a prospective element. While Downs (1957) viewed voters as making rational cost-benefit calculations, selecting candidates based on their past performance, Fiorina adds a forward-looking component. Voters are not simply assessing past performance, but rather are also making judgments as to how parties are likely to perform in the future, given their past track record. Fiorina challenges Campbell et al.'s assertion that partisanship is enduring and highly stable and instead offers a far more dynamic vision of party affiliation, one in which voters are continuously assessing and updating their evaluations of party performance. Using data from the Survey

Research Center's 1956-1960 panel study, Fiorina tests his model of party identification as a running tally of retrospective evaluations and finds that "retrospective evaluations can play a major role in moving individuals up and down the party identification scale" (96). Fiorina acknowledges some degree of durability in partisan identity and that when partisan change does occur, it may manifest itself in incremental changes along a spectrum as opposed to wholesale relabeling. He also concedes that strong partisans are less likely to be swayed by retrospective evaluations than weak partisans.

Conservatives, the Republican Party, and the All-Volunteer Force

Since the advent of the all-volunteer force in the 1970s, military officers have increasingly identified with the Republican Party and a conservative political ideology. Ole Holsti and James Rosenau's surveys in the Foreign Policy Leadership Project (FPLP) demonstrate this trend (see tables 3.1 and 3.2) over a twenty-year period. In 1976, one-third of senior military officers identified themselves as Republicans. Twenty years later, that figure had jumped to two-thirds. During the same timeframe, the percentage of military elites who self-identified as Independents was cut in half, from 46% to 22%. Similarly, senior military officers' political ideology moved further to the right. In 1976, 63% of military elites professed to have conservative political views; by 1996, the percentage increased to 73%. Meanwhile the percentage of senior military officers who described their political ideology as liberal dropped from 16% to just 3%.

A key underpinning to Holsti's research has been the notion of a civil-military gap, and his findings on partisan identification and political ideology among military and civilian elites give some credence that this gap has widened in the post-Vietnam era. In 1996, for example, 73% of military elites were said to have a conservative political

outlook compared to only 36% of their civilian elite counterparts. Party identification mirrored the ideological gap, with 67% of senior military officers expressing affiliation with the Republican Party, compared to only 34% of civilian elites.

This steady shift among military officers towards the political right and the ensuing gap that has emerged between military and civilian elites has raised a number of questions, many of which have not been sufficiently answered with past survey research. Does something about military service cause its officers to become more conservative and affiliated with the Republican Party? Or does the all-volunteer force simply attract individuals who happen to be politically conservative and Republican? While surveys of military officers over the past 30 years have included questions on political ideology and partisan identification, little attention has focused on ideological and partisanship change and the role the military as an institution may play in this. Should there be a connection, or worse, causation between service in the military and identification with the Republican Party, it would most certainly challenge Huntington's objective model of control, if not completely undermine the state of civil-military relations.

The Army's Effect on Officers' Party Identification and Political Ideology

My *Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War* survey conducted in 2009 is the first to explicitly ask Army officers questions about partisan and ideological change they have experienced since joining the Army (see tables 3.3 and 3.4). Of 3,902 respondents, 68% of Army officers indicated that their party affiliation had not changed much since joining the Army. Among officers who indicated their party affiliation *had* changed, 48% reported that they felt less attached to either party. Overall, 83% of total respondents indicated that their affiliation had not changed at all or that they had grown

less attached to either party since joining the Army, seeming to affirm the notion that party affiliation is not only stable but likely developed and solidified early in life.

As table 3.3 indicates, this stability in party identification is consistent across key demographic variables, with only a few exceptions. Predictably, junior officers were slightly less likely than more senior officers to report having experienced partisan change. Twenty-seven percent of lieutenants (officers usually with less than 3 years of service in the Army) indicated their party affiliation had changed compared to 31% of colonels (officers with usually 20 years or more of service).¹⁹ Nonetheless, even this variance is minor; upwards of two-thirds of officers, regardless of race, gender, specialty, or rank reported their partisan affiliation had remained generally constant since joining the Army.

A second variable worth highlighting is party identification itself. Officers who declared to be Independents (42%) were more likely than Democrats (36%) or Republicans (30%) to indicate their affiliation had changed somewhat since joining the Army.²⁰ Yet, these officers did not report now feeling closer to the Democratic or Republican Party but instead indicated they felt *less* attached to either party, continuing their independent stance. Similarly, while officers who identified with the Democratic Party were more likely to indicate their affiliation had changed (36%) than officers who identified with the Republican Party (30%), the direction of their party affiliation change may seem counterintuitive to some.²¹ Among these officers who felt attached to the

¹⁹ Difference of proportions test for party affiliation change between lieutenants and colonels statistically significant at $p < .05$ ($z = 1.87$).

²⁰ Difference of proportions test for party affiliation change between Independents and Democrats statistically significant at $p < .05$ ($z = 1.99$) and between Independents and Republicans statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 5.89$).

²¹ Difference of proportions test for party affiliation change between Democrats and Republicans statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 3.58$).

Democratic Party and reported that their affiliation had changed since joining the Army, 58% reported feeling *more* attached to the Democratic Party; less than 1% indicated they felt more attached to the Republican Party.

This theme of strengthening of existing partisan attitudes is further evident in a cross-tabulation of partisan change compared to officers' self-identification for party affiliation. Among officers who identified themselves as Republicans, 71% reported that their party affiliation had not changed, while 11% reported feeling a stronger tie to the Republican Party. Officers who identified with the Democratic Party reacted similarly, with 64% reporting no change to their party affiliation and 21% reporting a stronger tie to the Democratic Party. And 58% of Independents reported no change to their affiliation, with another 34% reporting that they felt less attached to either party. Together, these findings call into question the popular perception that service in the Army somehow pushes its officers to the political right. Rather, officers who identified with the Democratic Party showed no signs of relabeling, or even moderation for that matter, and Independents generally remained independent. Overall, the majority of officers reported that their party affiliation had not changed much since joining the Army, and for those who did indicate their affiliation had changed, their party attachments solidified; there is no evidence to support wholesale partisan relabeling, especially relabeling that has occurred as a result of service in the Army.

Political ideology for Army officers proved to be more dynamic than partisan identification, with approximately 50% of respondents indicating their political beliefs had changed since joining the Army (see table 3.4). Several demographic variables are worth highlighting. Men were more likely to report changes in their ideological views

than women, and white officers were also more apt to indicate a change in political viewpoints and than black officers. Furthermore, career specialty also highlights notable differences among Army officers. Officers whose specialty was in the combat arms, such as infantry, field artillery, armor, etc., were more likely to report that their views had changed since joining the Army than officers in specialty branches such as the medical and legal profession.²²

The direction of ideological change paints a different picture from that of party affiliation, however. Forty-four percent of officers who reported their political views had changed since joining the Army, or 22% of all officers surveyed, indicated they had grown more conservative. This constituted the largest single block of respondents who indicated their political views had changed at all and was nearly equal to the combined number of officers who reported either becoming more liberal or more moderate (23%). Surprisingly, 19% of blacks and 18% of females also reported growing more conservative, closely mirroring the overall percentage for Army officers (22%) who reported becoming more conservative. This is noteworthy, as both demographics are generally more liberal than their white male counterparts in the Army officer corps. Likewise, as officers grew in seniority, they were more likely to indicate they had become more conservative. For example, 16% of lieutenants acknowledged becoming more conservative, compared to 25% of colonels.²³

²² Difference of proportions test for ideological change between men and women statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 3.58$). Difference of proportions test for ideological change between whites and blacks statistically significant at $p < .05$ ($z = 2.11$). Difference of proportions test for ideological change between combat arms officers and special branch officers statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 3.03$).

²³ Difference of proportions test for increasing conservatism between lieutenants and colonels statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 2.99$).

While more of a trend towards the political right can be seen in ideology than party affiliation, political views in general remained generally stable. Although more officers reported becoming more conservative (22%) than more liberal (9%) or more moderate (14%), most of the ideological change reported by Army officers involved a strengthening of their existing ideological preferences. Thirty-six percent of self-proclaimed liberal officers reported feeling more liberal, and 42% of liberal officers reported no real change. For conservatives, 31% indicated they had grown more conservative with an additional 52% reporting no change in their political views.

These findings suggest that both party affiliation and political ideology for Army officers are highly durable over time and that service in the Army seems to have little impact on political attitudes over one's career. The longer an officer serves in the Army, the greater the probability of reporting attitudinal change, which may have less to do with the Army and more to do with aging, especially since most of the change that was observed related to a solidification of one's already formed attitudes. Few officers who claimed affiliation with a party – approximately 15% – indicated their political views had moderated since joining the Army. Most reported no change at all or a greater propensity to identify with the party and ideology they already espoused. And while approximately one-fifth of officers did report growing more conservative since joining the Army, there is no evidence to support a large-scale, rightward shift within the ranks of active duty Army officers. Moreover, this slight ideological shift to the right within the officer corps appears to have occurred without a corresponding shift towards greater affiliation with the Republican Party. This is noteworthy; if service in the Army does have an effect on

officers' political attitudes, it may be that officers' general worldview has become more conservative over time, not that officers look more favorably upon the Republican Party.

The Effect of Combat on Army Officers' Political Views

The previous section sought to examine whether service in the Army somehow pushed officers to the political right, given the officer corps' relatively consistent levels of affiliation with the Republican Party over the past thirty years. In this section, I seek to examine whether deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan may have done the opposite, and actually moderated Army officers' partisan affiliation. For eight years, the Army has been engaged in persistent conflict in both Afghanistan and Iraq – wars which have now lasted longer than our involvement in World War II and have resulted in more than 5,000 casualties.²⁴ Many critics from both within and outside the Army argue that both wars are having profound impacts on the internal make-up, constitution, and organizational culture of the institution, which has arguably borne the brunt of responsibility and burden in today's wars.²⁵

Several indicators of strain on the U.S. Army are evident today (Zoroya 2010). First, is simply the hardship associated with the amount of time Soldiers have spent deployed since the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan began. The Army typically deploys for 12 month tours, compared to the other services which usually deploy on four, six, or seven-month tours. And in order to achieve the surge in Iraq, the Army extended the length of its deployments to 15 months (Tyson and White 2007). Army studies have found that multiple deployments to Iraq have contributed to higher rates of post-traumatic

²⁴ For an accurate count of the casualties in both Iraq and Afghanistan, see icasualties.org.

²⁵ I do not mean to minimize the contributions or burden-sharing of the other services in Iraq and Afghanistan, especially the U.S. Marine Corps. However, in terms of length of deployments, total numbers of Soldiers deployed and numbers of casualties, the Army stands alone.

stress disorder for Soldiers (Tyson 2006), and divorce rates across all branches of the military have risen since September 11th (Jelinek 2009). In 2008, the Army witnessed its highest rate of suicides in three decades, surpassing the national average for the first time (Alvarez 2009). By late-2006 and into 2007, outside observers and senior Army leaders alike debated whether or not the Army was now “broken” (Thompson 2007).

Journalist Tom Ricks has spoken of “the-stabbed-in-the-back narrative” among military officers – their frustration with the planning, management, and execution of the Iraq War under a Republican Administration and their feeling that their civilian overseers have essentially escaped real accountability (Hoffman 2008, Kohn 2008, Williams et al. 2007). Others have alluded to the nadir in civil-military relations reached under Donald H. Rumsfeld’s six-year stewardship of the Department of Defense and the particular tension that existed between Rumsfeld and Army leaders (Moten 2009, Schlesinger 2003). Whether accurate or not, the perception still exists among many Army officers that sound military advice was repeatedly ignored in the lead-up to and early conduct of the Iraq War. For example, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz’s very public dismissal of U.S. Army Chief of Staff General Eric Shinseki following his assessment that an occupation of Iraq would require several hundred thousand U.S. troops remains fresh in the minds of many officers even seven years later. The popularly-referred-to “Revolt of the Generals” in the spring of 2006 in which several retired generals called for Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld’s resignation was an unprecedented violation of

the military's own norm of non-partisanship in the public sphere and further reflects this civil-military relations strain.²⁶

Several scholars of political parties have written of the concept of issue ownership – the idea that voters associate a particular party with a certain issue. John Petrocik has framed this idea as one party “handling” an issue better than the other (826). Polling data over the past 30-40 years indicates strong voter preference for Republicans to “handle” matters of national defense (Petrocik 832).²⁷ While I do not suggest that military officers are single-issue voters on national defense, Holsti's data from the FPLP surveys mirrors this polling data, noting a strong affinity for the Republican Party among Army officers over the same time period.

I hypothesized that the strain on the Army caused by the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan may have had a slight moderating effect on Army officers' partisanship. If the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have caused Army officers to reevaluate their partisanship, it not only speaks to how individuals process political information and react to significant political events, but it also carries implications for the Republican Party's issue ownership of national security and military matters. When the party that maintains issue ownership suddenly fails to live up to the electorate's expectations and their performance worsens, issue ownership is in jeopardy. Petrocik has written of this concept, noting that “wars, failed international or domestic policies, unemployment and inflation, or official corruption can happen at any time and provide one party with a

²⁶ See generally Bob Woodward's *State of Denial*, Michael Gordon and Bernard Trainor's *Cobra II*, and Tom Ricks' *Fiasco* for several popular accounts of the tensions between military elites and civilian policymakers during initial planning for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

²⁷ Petrocik, for example, cites a 1991 ABC News/Washington Post survey which measured the perceived issue handling competence of the two parties. In every category related to national defense, Republicans maintained a 20-50 percentage point advantage over the Democrats in the minds of voters. This is consistent with most public opinion polling since the early-to-mid 1970s – voters have preferred Republicans to “handle” defense issues.

"lease" – short-term ownership-of a performance issue" (Petrocik 827). At the 2000 Republican National Convention, then-Vice-Presidential nominee Richard B. Cheney addressed the men and women of the U.S. armed forces by promising them that "help is on the way" – a clear reference to the Republican Party's issue ownership of national defense. Yet by the end of the Bush Administration and two wars later, the Republican Party's issue ownership had been increasingly called into question.

Returning to the quote by the senior officer on the Joint Staff at the beginning of this paper – this section seeks to understand what effect the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have had on partisan identity and political ideology of officers serving today. Do Army officers now distrust Republicans as much as they have always distrusted Democrats? Have the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan caused holes to develop in the perceptual screens of Army officers, who have historically identified with the Republican Party since the 1970s?

One way to measure the impact of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan is to compare the political views of Army officers who have served in both wars compared to those who have not. Prior to conducting my survey of Army officers, I hypothesized that the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have caused Army officers to revisit their partisanship, and while such introspection unlikely leads to relabeling, I expected to see some evidence of change – manifested as a slight decrease in how strongly Army officers identify with the Republican Party. Despite this, however, I also expected to see little to no change in the ideological self-classification of Army officers. In other words, I still expected most Army officers to describe their political views as conservative but felt they might be less

inclined to claim a strong affiliation with the Republican Party – an indicator that the Republican Party may have lost ground in its issue ownership of national defense.

Approximately three-quarters of the respondents surveyed in my *Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War* survey reported having deployed at least once to Iraq or Afghanistan. The mean for the total number of months deployed to Iraq was 14 months and the mean for months deployed to Afghanistan was 9 months. Of interest, approximately 13% of respondents reported having deployed to both Iraq and Afghanistan, and 9% indicated they had spent more than 25 cumulative months deployed. While both figures seem surprisingly low more than six years after the Iraq War began, they are on par with the larger Army officer population. While 75% of officers have deployed at least once, only a small segment of the officer corps has faced multiple, extended deployments.²⁸

Tables 3.5 and 3.6 compare party affiliation and political ideology of those who have deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan against those who have not. The results show remarkable consistency in political identification between combat veterans and non-veterans. Of the 1,055 officers who have not deployed, 58% claimed to identify with the Republican Party, compared to 62% of Iraq veterans and 61% of Afghanistan veterans. Additionally, those officers who have spent a significant amount of time deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan (25 or more cumulative months) reported strikingly similar percentages to officers who have not deployed at all, casting doubt on the hypothesis that those officers who have borne the largest burden in the war, at least measured in the amount of time

²⁸ In comparison, according to the head of the U.S. Army Human Resources Command, by the end of 2009, 379,000 Soldiers, or 69% of those currently on active had completed at least one deployment (Tice 2009).

deployed, are less likely to affiliate with the Republican Party than those who have not deployed at all.

The results of political ideology closely follow those of party affiliation. Sixty-four percent of officers who had deployed to both Iraq and Afghanistan identified themselves as conservative compared to 59% of officers who had not deployed to either conflict. Those officers who have deployed are slightly more likely to identify themselves as conservative, but officers with an extensive amount of time deployed to either conflict were not any more likely to describe their political views as conservative than those who had not deployed at all.

What can we take away from this? First, there is little difference between the political views of Army officers who have deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan and the views of those who have not deployed. The particular theater of operations, Iraq or Afghanistan, also is not a distinguishing factor, nor is the amount of time officers have spent deployed. In short, officers who have deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan are about as politically conservative and Republican as those who have not deployed. We cannot rule out that the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have had no effect on Army officers' political attitudes, but it does appear there are no appreciable differences in political views among those who have been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan and those who have not.

To further test these hypotheses about the effect combat deployments have on party affiliation, I run four separate ordered logit models analyzing the determinants of party identification among Army officers (see table 3.7). In all models, the dependent variable is party identification, scored along a seven-point scale from strong Democrat

(1) to strong Republican (7). Each model starts with the same six explanatory variables: Army officers' political ideology, also scored on a seven-point scale from very liberal (1) to very conservative (7); officers' parents' party identification, scored on a four-point scale (Democrats; Independents; split affiliations; and Republicans); age; a dummy variable for female officers; a dummy variable for black officers; and education, scored along a four-point scale (some college; college graduate; some graduate work; graduate degree). The strongest predictors of party identification are officers' political ideology, their parents' party identification, race, and gender, and to gauge the impact deployments have on party identification, I control for these variables in each model.

The second model seeks to measure the impact deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan have on Army officers' party identification. As I outlined earlier, I expected the dummy variables for deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan to have a negative impact on the dependent variable party identification, holding demographic and other political variables constant. In other words, I expected to see deployments move party identification scores to the left of the political spectrum, reflecting some degree of dissatisfaction with the Republican Administration's handling of the wars. However, I find in this model that deployments to Iraq have a positive effect on party identification, while deployments to Afghanistan have a slightly negative effect. Neither effect, however, is statistically significant.²⁹ The third model measures the impact of having not deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan on party identification. Here, I expected the effect to be positive; namely, those officers who have not deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan would be more likely to affiliate with the Republican Party. Yet, as the third model shows, having

²⁹ Without controlling for other demographic or political variables, the effect of deployments to Iraq on Army officers' party identification is positive and significant at $p < .05$.

no deployment experience turns out to have a slightly negative effect on party identification; but again, the effect is not statistically significant.

Finally, the fourth model tests for the effect numerous, extended deployments have on officers' party identification. Again, my intent is to focus on the segment of the Army that has borne a significant burden in these wars. Extended deployments are defined as an officer having spent more than 25 cumulative months deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan. I predicted that officers with extended deployments and the strain and hardships that result from them may be more apt to revisit their partisanship and thus display less of an affinity for the Republican Party. As the fourth model indicates, extended deployments do have a negative effect on party identification, but as with the deployment variables in the previous two models, they are statistically insignificant.

Table 3.8 shows the results for ordered logit regressions predicting political ideology. The findings parallel those in table 7, in which party identification was the dependent variable. None of the four deployment-related explanatory variables have a statistically significant effect on Army officers' political ideology.

The heart of this chapter concerns whether or not deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan have caused Army officers to revisit their partisanship, specifically, if deployments have had a moderating effect. Therefore, in addition to modeling the effect of deployments on partisan affiliation and political ideology, I also am interested in the effect deployments have on partisan change, regardless of the direction. Table 3.9 displays the findings for three ordinary least squares regression models in which the dependent variable is a dummy variable for officers who indicated they had experienced partisan change since joining the Army. By far, the greatest predictor of whether or not

an officer experiences partisan change is whether he or she experienced ideological change ($t = 27.82$). Deployments to Iraq or Afghanistan, even extended deployments, had no effect on officers' partisan change, nor did the lack of combat deployment experience.

In table 3.10, I take this model one step further by adjusting the dependent variable to be a dummy variable for moderated partisan change – officers experiencing a shift towards the political center. As table 3.10 shows, deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, or no deployments for that matter, have caused officers to moderate their party affiliation. As with the previous model, the greatest predictor of moderated partisan change is some form of ideological change ($t = 16.90$).

While the survey data did not support my hypothesis – deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan had little to no effect on Army officers' party identification and political ideology – this is one instance in which the null hypothesis may as insightful for students of civil-military relations and political behavior as had the original hypothesis proven to be correct. The fact that sustained deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan have had little to no effect on the party identification and political ideology of Army officers, and perhaps more importantly, have not caused much partisan change whatsoever, speaks volumes about the durability of political attitudes and suggests that even significant political events may have little impact on people's political views.

Conclusion

This chapter dealt with the stability of partisan and political attitudes and sought to determine the impacts service in the Army and deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan have had on the political views of Army officers. First, data from the *Civil-Military*

Relations in a Time of War Survey in 2009 showed that the majority of Army officers reported that their party affiliation had not changed since joining the Army or that they felt less attached to either party. Few officers reported partisan relabeling or moderation. Political ideology closely mirrored the findings on party identification, with most officers either reporting no ideological change or a strengthening of their existing political ideology. In any regard, few officers reported significant changes in their party affiliation or political ideology since joining the Army. This finding is significant, in light of some civil-military relations' scholars concern about military officers' consistent affiliation with the Republican Party over the past four decades. I found no evidence to suggest that service in the Army pushed officers to affiliate with the Republican Party. Some officers grew more conservative since joining the Army, which suggests that despite the strong correlation between political ideology and party affiliation, it is not a perfect correlation, and for Army officers, ideology may be more fluid and responsive than party affiliation.

This relative stability in political attitudes foreshadowed the findings on the effects of combat deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan on party identification and ideology. Holding demographic and other political variables constant, deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan had little to no effect on the party affiliation and political ideology of Army officers. In fact, officers who had deployed were slightly more likely to affiliate with the Republican Party or identify as conservative than those who had not deployed. A series of ordered logit regressions confirmed that deployments, even extended ones, had little no impact on officers' party identification or ideology. While the quote from the unnamed officer on the Joint Staff from the beginning of this chapter sounds

compelling, I found little evidence to suggest this was a trend among active duty Army officers serving today.

An alternative explanation for the consistency in attitudes among combat veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan and non-veterans may lie in the success of the Iraq surge. 2006 may prove to be the lowest point of the United States' involvement in Iraq. By 2009, the situation in Iraq had dramatically improved and casualties had been cut by two-thirds. Had the same questions been asked of Army officers in 2006 as they were in 2009, perhaps the findings would be different. However, in this case, the lack of an effect is just as noteworthy had service in the Army or combat deployments proved to have impacted Army officers' partisanship and ideology. The fact that they did not suggests that the Army does not shape party affiliation and ideology, let alone skew its officer corps to the right.

Table 3.1 Party Identification: Military and Civilian Leaders in the Foreign Policy Leadership Program (FPLP) Surveys, 1976-1996*percent checking each option*

	1976	1980	1984	1988	1992	1996
Democrats						
Military	12%	10%	12%	9%	6%	7%
Civilians	42	39	40	41	42	41
Independents						
Military	46	40	29	27	26	22
Civilians	31	30	27	27	24	22
Republicans						
Military	33	46	53	59	61	67
Civilians	25	28	30	29	30	34
Other and None						
Military	9	4	5	5	6	4
Civilians	2	4	3	2	3	3

Table 3.2 Ideological Self-Identification: Military & Civilian Leaders in Foreign Policy Leadership Program (FPLP) Surveys, 1976-1996

percent checking each option

	1976	1980	1984	1988	1992	1996
Very Liberal						
Military	2%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Civilians	12	7	8	9	9	9
Somewhat Liberal						
Military	14	4	7	4	4	3
Civilians	30	27	28	28	28	27
Moderate						
Military	23	24	17	20	24	25
Civilians	27	27	28	28	28	28
Somewhat Conservative						
Military	49	58	59	60	62	63
Civilians	26	31	29	27	29	27
Conservative						
Military	12	14	17	16	10	10
Civilians	4	7	6	8	5	9

Table 3.3 Party Affiliation Change in the Army Officer Corps

	Party Affiliation Change in the Army Officer Corps					
	<i>percent indicating their political views have changed since being in the Army</i>					
	Yes, I feel more attached to the Democratic Party	Yes, I feel less attached to the Democratic Party	Yes, I feel less attached to either party	Yes, I feel less attached to the Republican Party	Yes, I feel more attached to the Republican Party	No, my party affiliation has not changed much
TOTAL (n=3902)	4.51	0.90	15.30	4.54	6.61	68.14
Lieutenants	5.29	0.31	12.44	3.27	5.44	73.25
Captains	3.62	0.86	14.76	4.67	7.24	68.86
Majors	5.14	1.21	16.62	5.54	6.04	65.46
Lieutenant Colonels	4.99	1.37	15.61	4.99	6.87	66.17
Colonels	3.24	0.27	17.03	2.97	7.57	68.92
Combat Arms	3.69	0.64	16.97	5.53	5.47	67.71
Combat Support	6.06	0.89	15.51	3.69	8.27	65.58
Combat Service Support	3.83	1.28	14.65	3.34	7.67	69.22
Special Branches						
Male Officers	4.16	0.84	16.18	4.88	6.51	67.42
Female Officers	6.79	1.32	10.57	2.83	7.55	70.94
White Officers	4.21	0.76	15.62	5.37	6.76	67.27
Black Officers	7.80	2.37	14.58	1.02	3.73	70.51
Hispanic Officers	3.69	1.38	12.44	1.84	6.91	73.73
Asian-American Officers	6.72	1.49	14.93	1.49	9.70	65.67
Democrats	20.95	2.44	9.76	2.73	0.29	63.85
Independents	3.12	0.52	33.62	3.29	1.21	58.23
Republicans	0.51	0.55	11.83	5.49	10.56	71.05

Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009

Table 3.4 Ideological Change in the Army Officer Corps

	Ideological Change in the Army Officer Corps					
	<i>percent indicating their political views have changed since being in the Army</i>					
	Yes, I am more liberal	Yes, I am less liberal	Yes, I am more moderate	Yes, I am less conservative	Yes, I am more conservative	No, my political views have not changed much
TOTAL (n=3905)	8.76	1.92	14.16	3.10	21.56	50.50
Lieutenants	7.94	1.87	9.50	2.02	16.82	61.84
Captains	8.29	2.57	12.87	2.57	20.21	53.48
Majors	10.56	1.21	16.00	3.62	22.84	45.77
Lieutenant Colonels	9.08	1.49	15.92	4.10	23.76	45.65
Colonels	6.47	2.70	17.25	2.96	24.80	45.82
Combat Arms	8.74	2.03	16.02	3.17	20.84	49.21
Combat Support	9.78	2.22	14.22	2.81	24.15	46.81
Combat Service Support	7.18	1.77	13.37	3.15	23.01	51.52
Special Branches	10.24	1.28	10.72	2.88	18.40	56.48
Male Officers	8.71	1.81	14.86	3.22	22.15	49.25
Female Officers	9.21	2.44	10.53	2.07	18.05	57.71
White Officers	8.98	1.69	14.72	3.18	21.78	49.65
Black Officers	6.44	1.69	13.90	2.37	19.32	56.27
Hispanic Officers	10.60	2.30	14.29	2.30	20.28	50.23
Asian-American Officers	7.46	3.73	13.43	3.73	23.88	47.76
Liberals	36.05	5.62	9.50	2.33	4.84	41.67
Moderates	8.52	2.45	26.05	2.06	9.30	51.62
Conservatives	2.85	0.89	10.10	3.71	30.72	51.73

Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009

Table 3.5 Party Identification of Combat Veterans

	Party Identification							
	<i>percent checking each option</i>							
	Strong Democrat	Weak Democrat	Independent Democrat	Independent	Independent Republican	Weak Republican	Strong Republican	Other
TOTAL (n=3907)	5.09	4.10	8.65	14.85	23.80	14.90	21.63	6.99
Iraq War veterans (n=2816)	4.77	3.82	8.36	14.13	24.67	15.16	21.92	7.18
Afghanistan War veterans (n=871)	5.61	3.29	6.59	16.95	24.15	14.15	22.32	6.95
Iraq + Afghanistan War Veterans (n=547)	4.25	3.67	5.02	16.02	27.03	13.90	22.97	7.14
Officers with Extended Deployments (n=360)	4.49	3.53	9.62	14.10	26.28	13.78	19.87	8.33
Officers with no Iraq or Afghanistan experience (n=1055)	4.99	5.30	9.28	15.49	23.04	14.37	21.00	6.52
	Democrat		Independent		Republican		Other	
TOTAL (n=3907)	17.84		14.85		60.33		6.99	
Iraq War veterans (n=2816)	16.95		14.13		61.74		7.18	
Afghanistan War veterans (n=871)	15.49		16.95		60.61		6.95	
Iraq + Afghanistan War Veterans (n=547)	12.93		16.02		63.90		7.14	
Officers with Extended Deployments (n=360)	17.63		14.10		59.94		8.33	
Officers with no Iraq or Afghanistan experience (n=1055)	19.57		15.49		58.41		6.52	

Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009

Table 3.6 Ideological Self-Identification of Combat Veterans

	Ideological Self-Identification <i>percent checking each option</i>						
	Very Liberal	Liberal	Slightly Liberal	Moderate	Slightly Conservative	Conservative	Very Conservative
TOTAL (n=3895)	0.92	4.78	7.57	26.26	22.44	30.27	7.75
Iraq War veterans (n=2613)	0.77	4.67	6.93	26.33	22.96	30.77	7.58
Afghanistan War veterans (n=817)	0.73	3.43	7.59	26.56	22.28	32.07	7.34
Iraq + Afghanistan War Veterans (n=516)	0.78	2.91	6.59	25.97	23.06	33.53	7.17
Officers with Extended Deployments (n=311)	0.64	4.18	7.40	27.97	22.83	29.90	7.07
Officers with no Iraq or Afghanistan experience (n=976)	1.43	5.12	8.81	25.82	21.41	29.10	8.30
		Liberal		Moderate		Conservative	
TOTAL (n=3895)		13.27		26.26		60.46	
Iraq War veterans (n=2613)		12.36		26.33		61.31	
Afghanistan War veterans (n=817)		11.75		26.56		61.69	
Iraq + Afghanistan War Veterans (n=516)		10.27		25.97		63.76	
Officers with Extended Deployments (n=311)		12.22		27.97		59.81	
Officers with no Iraq or Afghanistan experience (n=976)		15.37		25.82		58.81	

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Table 3.7 Effect of Deployments on Army Officers' Party Identification

Predicting Party Identification				
Ideology	1.07*** (0.03)	1.07*** (0.03)	1.07*** (0.03)	1.07*** (0.03)
Parents' Party ID	0.38*** (0.02)	0.38*** (0.02)	0.38*** (0.02)	0.38*** (0.02)
Age	0.07** (0.02)	0.07** (0.02)	0.06** (0.02)	0.07** (0.02)
Women	-0.17* (0.09)	-0.17 (0.09)	-0.16 (0.09)	-0.18* (0.09)
Blacks	-1.34*** (0.13)	-1.37*** (0.13)	-1.35*** (0.13)	-1.34*** (0.13)
Education	-0.10* (0.04)	-0.10* (0.04)	-0.10* (0.04)	-0.10* (0.04)
Iraq Deployment		0.11 (0.06)		
Afghanistan Deployment		-0.02 (0.07)		
No Deployment			-0.08 (0.07)	
Extended Deployments				-0.04 (0.11)
Pseudo R ²	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16
Log Likelihood	-6163.22	-6142.52	-6162.51	-6163.14
N	3840	3830	3840	3840

Entries are ordered logit coefficients in bold with standard errors in parenthesis. * p <.05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001
 Dependent Variable is 7-scale party identification

Table 3.8 Effect of Deployments on Army Officers' Political Ideology

Predicting Political Ideology				
Party ID	0.84*** (0.02)	0.84*** (0.02)	0.84*** (0.02)	0.84*** (0.02)
Parents' Party ID	0.02 (0.03)	0.02 (0.03)	0.02 (0.03)	0.02 (0.03)
Age	0.10*** (0.02)	0.10*** (0.02)	0.10*** (0.02)	0.10*** (0.02)
Women	-0.41*** (0.09)	-0.42*** (0.09)	-0.42*** (0.09)	-0.41*** (0.09)
Blacks	0.23 (0.12)	0.25* (0.12)	0.23 (0.12)	0.23 (0.12)
Education	-0.01 (0.04)	-0.01 (0.04)	-0.12 (0.07)	-0.10* (0.04)
Iraq Deployment		-0.07 (0.06)		
Afghanistan Deployment		-0.01 (0.07)		
No Deployment			0.08 (0.07)	
Extended Deployments				-0.06 (0.11)
Pseudo R ²	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15
Log Likelihood	-5320.03	-5305.47	-5319.44	-5319.89
N	3840	3830	3840	3840

Entries are ordered logit coefficients in bold with standard errors in parenthesis. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001
 Dependent Variable is 7-scale political ideology

Table 3.9 Effect of Deployments on Partisan Change

Predicting Change in Army Officers' Party Identification			
Ideology	-0.03*** (0.01)	-0.03*** (0.01)	-0.03*** (0.01)
Ideological Change	0.38*** (0.01)	0.38*** (0.01)	0.38*** (0.01)
Parents' Party ID	-0.01* (0.01)	-0.01* (0.01)	-0.01* (0.01)
Age	-0.01** (0.01)	-0.01** (0.01)	-0.01** (0.01)
Women	-0.03 (0.02)	-0.03 (0.02)	-0.03 (0.02)
Blacks	-0.04 (0.03)	-0.04 (0.03)	-0.04 (0.03)
Education	0.03** (0.01)	0.03** (0.01)	0.03** (0.01)
Iraq Deployment	0.01 (0.01)		
Afghanistan Deployment	-0.02 (0.02)		
No Deployment		-0.01 (0.02)	
Extended Deployments			0.01 (0.03)
Adjusted R ²	0.19	0.19	0.19
Std Error of Regression	0.42	0.42	0.42
N	3824	3834	3834

Entries are OLS coefficients in bold with standard errors in parenthesis. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001
 Dependent Variable is dummy variable for officers experiencing a change in their party affiliation

Table 3.10 Effect of Deployments on Moderated Partisan Change

Predicting Moderated Change in Army Officers' Party Identification			
Ideology	-0.02*** (0.01)	-0.02*** (0.01)	-0.02*** (0.01)
Ideological Change	0.22*** (0.01)	0.22*** (0.01)	0.22*** (0.01)
Parents' Party ID	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)
Age	-0.01* (0.01)	-0.01* (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)
Women	-0.07*** (0.02)	-0.07*** (0.02)	-0.07*** (0.02)
Blacks	-0.01 (0.03)	-0.01 (0.03)	-0.01 (0.03)
Education	0.02 (0.01)	0.02 (0.01)	0.02 (0.01)
Iraq Deployment	0.01 (0.01)		
Afghanistan Deployment	0.00 (0.02)		
No Deployment		-0.02 (0.01)	
Extended Deployments			0.01 (0.02)
Adjusted R ²	0.08	0.08	0.08
Std Error of Regression	0.39	0.39	0.39
N	3824	3834	3834

Entries are OLS coefficients in bold with standard errors in parenthesis. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001
 Dependent Variable is dummy variable for officers becoming less attached to political parties

Chapter 4

A Politicized Force? Army Officers and Political Activism

Politics is beyond the scope of military competence, and the participation of military officers in politics undermines their professionalism...The military officer must remain neutral politically.
Samuel P. Huntington (1957)

Political opinions have no place in cockpit or camp or conference room.
Admiral Michael G. Mullen (2008)

In February 2008, the Department of Defense (DoD) reissued DoD Directive 1344.10, “Political Activities by Members of the Armed Forces on Active Duty,” a standing list of political behavior do’s and don’ts for members of the active duty military. Three months later, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Michael G. Mullen, took the extraordinary step of writing an open letter to members of the armed forces in *Joint Forces Quarterly*, warning them to keep their politics private, noting that “the only things we should be wearing on our sleeves are our military insignia” (Mullen 2008). Both measures, taken just months before the 2008 presidential election, are indicative of the growing concerns within the institution itself about the politicization of the military.

This chapter focuses on the charge that the military has become increasingly politicized in recent years. First, I seek to establish the level of political activism among Army officers serving today – what types of political activities do Army officers engage in, and how politically active are Army officers compared to the American public? Second, to what degree are Army officers really interested in politics, and how much does politics carry over into the workplace? Finally, how do Army officers view the military’s role in civilian society, and do they draw distinctions between active duty and retired officers when it comes to publicly expressing political views? Throughout all of this, I will measure the role party identification plays in Army officers’ political activity.

Breaking Down the “Politicization” Charge

Over fifty years ago, Samuel Huntington wrote that, “the area of military science is subordinate to, and yet independent of, the area of politics” (1957, 71). Since then, Huntington’s norm of objective control, in which a professionalized military remains politically neutral and subservient to its civilian overseers, has largely dominated civil-military relations theory. In recent years, however, a chorus of civil-military relations scholars has voiced concern over increasing partisan and political activity within the officer corps (Bacevich and Kohn 1997, Kohn 2008, Ricks 1997a, Ricks 1997b). From survey data which has shown the military to be overwhelmingly conservative and Republican to the issue of military absentee ballots in the 2000 presidential election which seemed to cement at least the perception of the conflation of military service with open identification with the Republican Party, much of the concern relates to the armed services’ increasingly open affiliation with one political party (Holsti 1998, Ricks 1997a, Ricks 1997b, Feaver and Kohn 2001).

Some scholars assert that open identification with any party is dangerous to the state of civil-military relations, because it essentially transforms the military into an interest group (Cohen 2002, Cohen 1997, Feaver and Kohn 2001). They also find fault with the argument that the military can segregate its personal politics from its official duties:

Soldiering is a “24/7” business, and such compartmentalizations are not normally accepted by military officers in other areas of their professional life. Officers have the right to vote, but those who go beyond the private exercise of that right need to be aware of the implications for civil-military relations (Feaver and Kohn 2001, 466).

Cohen (1997, 2002) not only laments the officer corps' identification with the Republican Party but also that since the Vietnam War, the military has purposefully sought to familiarize its officers in political matters. From serving as congressional liaisons to studying politics in war colleges, Cohen takes issue, not just with the military's partisanship, but the military's deliberate foray into bureaucratic politics. Both, in his view, represent a clear challenge to civilian control of the military.

A relatively recent phenomenon in civil-military relations is the political gray area into which many retired general and flag officers have wandered over the past two decades. As Richard Kohn (2000) has noted, the niche industry of political endorsements by retired generals and admirals seems to have started in 1992 when Admiral William Crowe threw his support behind Bill Clinton. Since then, high-profile campaign endorsements by well-known former military officers have increasingly become the norm, rather than the exception, and have crossed party lines. Retired General Tommy Franks who led U.S. Central Command during the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq endorsed George W. Bush and spoke at the Republican National Convention in 2004, while former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs General John M. Shalikashvili spoke in support of John Kerry at the 2004 Democratic National Convention (Russakoff 2004). In September 2008, John McCain announced that over 300 retired generals and admirals had endorsed his campaign for president, but the endorsement that attracted the most attention in military circles in 2008 was arguably retired General Colin Powell's endorsement of Barack Obama.

Campaign endorsements are not the only political activity retired officers have embraced in recent years. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have offered an

extraordinary platform for retired senior officers to voice their political opinions, on the conduct of the wars. Most notably was the now popularly- referred-to, “Revolt of the Generals” in April 2006, in which a chorus of recently retired generals called for the resignation of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, drawing attention for officers crossing the line of political neutrality and raising questions as to the appropriate level of public discourse for retired officers (Cloud, Schmitt and Shanker 2006). And in November 2007, retired Lieutenant General Ricardo Sanchez, who commanded all U.S. troops in Iraq from 2003-2004, delivered the Democrats weekly radio address in which he condemned the Bush Administration’s handling of the Iraq war. Each of these episodes raises the question of whether such political behavior is appropriate for retired officers.

Some scholars find retired generals’ political outspokenness to be antithetical to the ethic of military professionalism (Cohen 2006, Kohn 2000, Kohn 2002, Swain 2007). Richard Swain, professor of officership at the U.S. Military Academy finds no ambiguity in the U.S. Code or in Army regulations:

Still, it is at least a false proposition that upon retirement officers revert to full civilian status in so far as the obligations they undertook at their commissioning. Retirement is not resignation. It is a matter of fact, not interpretation, that retired officers remain members of the armed forces by law and regulation (2007, 19).

Likewise, Kohn argues from an organizational culture standpoint that retired generals continue to represent the U.S. Armed Forces once they have hung up their uniform, which is why their foray into the political arena matters so much:

Those in the know understand that four-stars never really “retire” but, like princes of the church, embody the core culture and collectively represent the military community as authoritatively as the active-duty leadership. The message to

serving officers--who, unlike generations past, now vote in overwhelming numbers--is clear: It's okay to think partisan (2000).

Furthermore, Kohn (2002) contends that as more and more retired generals make public political pronouncements, politicians will undoubtedly begin to question the loyalty of senior active duty military leaders.

Other scholars may be more tolerant of senior retired officers engaging in public political discourse, but note the real implications their continued involvement carries for civil-military relations and have cited the need for senior leaders within the military to more clearly articulate who truly represents the profession of arms (Brooks 2009, Cook 2008, Nielsen and Snider 2009, Snider 2008). The current Chairman of the Joint Chiefs seems to agree. In a speech delivered at a National Defense University graduation ceremony in June 2009, Admiral Michael Mullen remarked, "As I have said many times before, we must remain a neutral instrument of national power, apolitical in all that we do and mindful of the greater interests of the country even when, especially when, we take the uniform off at the end of a long career" (Mullen 2009). This is striking, as it may be the first instance in which a senior uniformed leader – the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, no less – has called for an extension of the non-partisan ethic for the military into retirement.

Despite these concerns, others contend the politicization charge is overblown. While most of the military affiliates with the Republican Party, this has not translated into a challenge to objective civilian control when Democrats were in power (Betts 2009). And as Collins (1999) has noted, "a disproportionate number of Republicans, or Catholics, or minorities in the military, however, does not in and of itself mean anything. There must be some practical effect of all of this quasi-political "bean counting" for it to

become a key factor in civil-military relations” (201). Finally, others have contended that voting does not by itself constitute politicization and note that despite a preference for the Republican Party within the military, most are weak partisans (Betros 2001, Hooker 2003-04).

Webster defines politicize as “to give a political tone or character to.” Having established that most Army officers serving today remain conservative and Republican, this chapter explores the charge that Army officers have become politicized, namely that the officer corps has become overtly involved in politics or has increasingly brought politics into the workplace. Naturally, I am interested in gauging the effect, if any, that party identification has on Army officers’ levels of political activity, as a connection between an officer’s party affiliation and a heightened level of political activism could warrant concern for the Army.

Voter Turnout

The most basic form of political participation or expression is the act of voting, and for many officers, it is the only partisan act in which they regularly engage. In May 2009, I asked Army officers whether or not they voted in the 2008 presidential election. As shown in table 5.1, 81% of Army officers I surveyed reported that they had voted – an extraordinarily high percentage which bears further examination. By comparison, the Census Bureau’s Current Population Survey (CPS) from November 2008 reported that 64% of Americans surveyed said they voted in the 2008 presidential election.

According to time-series data from the 2008 American National Election Studies (ANES) survey, however, 76% of Americans surveyed reported that they voted in the 2008 presidential election. While this figure is more in-line with the percentage of Army

officers (81%) who reported voting in 2008, both figures undoubtedly reflect some degree of over-reporting. Vote over-reporting is common in election-related surveys, especially in the ANES surveys, as respondents often feel compelled to misrepresent their voting history, exhibiting a social-desirability response bias. Some scholars have also argued the ANES voter turnout levels have become even more inflated in recent years due to both declining response rates and measurement issues (Burden 2000, McDonald 2003). With my *Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War* survey, the high percentage of self-reported voter turnout may also reflect some sampling bias in that the respondents most likely to voluntarily take a survey on civil-military relations may also be the ones who are most interested in politics and vote in elections in the first place.

Even accepting that there may be some response bias and that an 81% voter turnout rate for Army officers may be slightly inflated, there appears to have been a significant, steady increase in Army officers' voter turnout from past presidential elections. According to the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP), voter turnout for the military in general was 73% in 2004, 56% in 2000, and 53% in 1996. Data from the FVAP surveys has also shown that since 1984, the military has consistently voted at a higher rate than the American public. Findings from my survey, however, suggest Army officers outvoted the American public by perhaps as much as 23 percentage points in 2008 – larger than any military-to-civilian election year gap measured by the FVAP.

Much of the increasing voter turnout within the military over the past twenty years can be attributed to the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act of 1986 and the command emphasis the military has placed on affording all service members the opportunity to vote. Each Army unit, for example, is required to appoint a

Voting Assistance Officer, and late in 2009, the Defense Department issued a new directive that will require all military installations to offer voter registration as part of a service member's in-processing at each new duty station (Dao 2009). And as table 4.1 shows, most Army officers have embraced the norm of affording all Soldiers the opportunity to vote. Approximately 93% of all officers surveyed agreed with the statement that members of the military should vote, and there is little variance among demographic groups. Independents were the group least likely to agree with the statement, but only relatively speaking; 87% of Independents still felt the military should vote. Put differently, there appears to be little support among today's officer corps for the truly apolitical stance, embodied by William Tecumseh Sherman, George Marshall, and now David Petraeus, in which the military abstains from voting altogether.

Part of the high voter turnout rate among Army officers in 2008 may also be explained by the uniqueness of the 2008 presidential election. Of note, nearly 90% of black officers reported that they voted, as did nearly 87% of officers who affiliated with the Democratic Party. In fact, Democratic-leaning officers reported voting at a higher rate than Republican officers.³⁰ The 2008 election may prove to be an anomaly in many regards, but especially in the case of Army officers' voter turnout.

Political Activism

DoD Directive 1344.10 provides guidelines on permissible political activity for members of the military serving on active duty. A clear theme runs through the fifteen page document: while members of the armed forces are allowed to participate in the political process as private citizens, they must avoid the appearance or suggestion that

³⁰ Difference of proportions test for voter turnout between Democrats and Republicans statistically significant at $p < .05$ ($z = 1.94$).

their actions are officially sanctioned by the Department of Defense. The directive goes on to provide a series of do's and don'ts, such as members of the military are allowed to vote and can express their personal opinions on political candidates as private citizens, but cannot speak in front of a partisan political gathering. Service members may put a bumper sticker on their car, but cannot put a political poster in their yard if they live on a military installation. One may write a letter to the editor expressing their personal political views, with the caveat that their views do not reflect those of the Department of the Defense, but cannot publish partisan articles soliciting votes for a particular candidate. The level of specificity throughout the document is telling: this is clearly something senior military and civilian leaders have spent time thinking about and took great lengths to distinguish between what is civic participation and what would be considered overt partisan political activity.

I queried Army officers on six different forms of political participation, each of which are allowable activities under DoDD 1344.10. I asked respondents whether they had ever, as private individuals, not representing the U.S. Army, donated money to a candidate or political party; worn a campaign button or put a bumper sticker on their car; ever encouraged other members of the military to vote; joined a partisan or nonpartisan club and attended meetings; expressed their personal opinion on political candidates or issues to others; or attended a partisan or nonpartisan political fundraiser, meeting, rally, debate, convention, or any other political activity as a non-uniformed spectator.

Table 4.2 displays the results for respondents who answered yes to the above six questions. The two activities recording the highest number of responses were also the two most benign types of political activity of the six: encouraging other members of the

military to vote and expressing their personal political opinions to others. Nearly 80% of Army officers surveyed indicated they had encouraged others in the military to vote during an election, a figure which increased as one grew more senior in rank (74% of lieutenants indicating so, compared to 90% of colonels), but otherwise was fairly consistent among all demographics with but a few exceptions. Officers serving in specialty branches, Asian-American officers, and officers who have not deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan were anywhere between five and ten percentage points less likely to indicate they had encouraged others to vote than the average for all officers surveyed.³¹

Approximately 74% of officers I surveyed also indicated they had at one point expressed their personal opinion on political candidates or issues to others during an election or campaign. As with the previous question, the results are generally consistent across most demographic and service variables, although blacks (68%), Hispanics (61%), and Asian-Americans (66%) were slightly less likely than whites (77%) to answer in the affirmative.³² This question also shows a slight variance depending upon officers' party affiliation, with nearly 80% of Republicans indicating they had expressed their political opinions to others, compared to 72% of Democrats and 67% of Independents.³³

The four remaining indicators of political participation show much lower levels of activism by Army officers. Less than 6% of respondents indicated they had ever joined a political club, and approximately 12% responded that they had attended a political fundraiser, rally, convention, debate, or meeting. Approximately 20% of Army

³¹ Difference of proportions test for encouraging others to vote between lieutenants and colonels statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 6.00$). Difference of proportions test for encouraging others to vote between the average for officers surveyed and specialty branch officers ($z = 3.53$), Asian-Americans ($z = 2.37$), and those who have not deployed ($z = 3.13$) statistically significant at $p < .001$.

³² Difference of proportions test for expressing personal political opinions between whites and blacks ($z = 3.54$), Hispanics ($z = 5.41$), and Asian-Americans ($z = 3.05$) statistically significant at $p < .001$.

³³ Difference of proportions test for expressing personal political opinions between Republicans and Democrats ($z = 4.24$) and Independents ($z = 6.39$) statistically significant at $p < .001$.

officers surveyed reported they had donated money to a candidate running for office or a political party and roughly 13% of officers reported they had ever worn a campaign button or put a bumper sticker on their car. Additionally, only 7% of Army officers reported both making a campaign donation and putting a bumper sticker on their car, and just 2% indicated they had participated in all six forms of political activity – hardly evidence of a politically active officer corps.

The statistics for financial donations and wearing campaign buttons or affixing bumper stickers closely mirror Dempsey’s findings from five years ago. In his survey, 18% of active duty Army officers reported having ever made campaign contributions, and 16% indicated they had worn a campaign button or put a bumper sticker on their car (Dempsey 2010). According to time-series data from the 2008 ANES, approximately 11% of Americans donated money to a candidate or political party (compared to 20% of Army officers) and 19% wore a campaign button or put a bumper sticker on their car during the 2008 election (compared to 13% of Army officers). With these two comparisons at least, Army officers appear to be on par with most American citizens in levels of political activity, although it appears that Army officers are more inclined to choose the relatively private act of donating money than the more public act of displaying a bumper sticker on their car.

As expected, in all six measures of political activity, Independents were less politically active than Democrats and Republicans. Yet, counterintuitively, Democratic officers were generally more active than Republican officers. For example, Democratic-leaning officers were more likely to donate to political candidates, put a bumper sticker on their car or wear a campaign button, and attend a political rally than Republican

officers.³⁴ This is noteworthy for two reasons. First, while the question asked if respondents had *ever* done any of these activities and was not simply restricted to the 2008 election (unlike similar ANES questions which are election-year specific), Democratic officers' higher levels of political activity may nonetheless reflect their recent support for the candidacy of Barack Obama in 2008. But the fact that Republican officers were not more politically active than Democrats in all categories is also instructive. As I outlined in chapter three, while some interested observers in civil-military relations worriedly point to the majority of officers affiliating with the Republican Party, the greater concern would be if these same officers were also the most politically active. I can find little evidence to suggest this is occurring.

I also found few differences in political activity among other demographic and service variables. For example, there were few differences between officers who have deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan and those who have not, although those who have not deployed were less likely to encourage others to vote than those who had deployed to both places.³⁵ When it came to financial contributions, colonels and officers in special branches were the ones most likely to make donations³⁶. This could be a reflection of income – colonels simply earn more than lieutenants – and professional specialty: lawyers and doctors may be more inclined to make political donations than infantrymen and tankers. Other notable findings include little evidence of a gender or racial gap. Men were slightly more likely to participate in political activities than women, but the

³⁴ Difference in proportions test between Democrats and Republicans for campaign donations statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 4.77$); for bumper stickers/campaign buttons statistically significant at $p < .01$ ($z = 2.46$); and for attending political meetings statistically significant at $p < .05$ ($z = 1.87$).

³⁵ Difference of proportions test for encouraging others to vote statistically significant between those who have deployed and those who have not at $p < .001$ ($z = 4.06$)

³⁶ Difference of proportions for campaign contributions statistically significant between colonels and the average for all officers surveyed at $p < .001$ ($z = 3.76$); and between special branch officers and the average for all officers at $p < .001$ ($z = 3.19$)

differences were slight. Whites and blacks did not differ greatly in their amount of political activism, with one exception: while 77% of white officers admitted to publicly expressing their political views, only 68% of blacks did.³⁷

Political Interest

Another way to measure Army officers' level of political engagement is to gauge their level of political interest, free from the constraints of military service. I asked Army officers whether they would consider engaging in certain political activities following their service in the Army. Specifically, I asked if they would consider becoming more involved in politics and campaigns, running for office, and joining or working for an interest group. The results are listed in table 4.3. Approximately 41% of Army officers surveyed indicated they would consider becoming more involved in politics and campaigns, 29% expressed interest in running for political office someday, and 28% indicated they might join or work for an interest group.

While there is no evidence of a racial gap when it comes to political interest among Army officers, the gender gap is clear: male officers display a greater interest in politics than female officers. For example, while 44% of male officers stated they would consider getting more involved in politics and campaigns after military service, only 30% of female officers did. Similarly, 30% of men would consider running for office someday, compared to only 14% of women.³⁸ As with the political activism measures, Independents remain much less interested in politics than Democrats and Republicans. And while a greater percentage of Republican officers indicated they would run for

³⁷ Difference of proportions test for expressing political views statistically significant between whites and blacks at $p < .001$ ($z = 3.55$).

³⁸ Difference of proportions test between men and women for getting more involved in politics and campaigns statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 5.82$); for running for office someday statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 7.89$).

political office than Democratic officers, a greater percentage of Democrats indicated they would consider becoming more involved in politics or consider working for an interest group than Republicans.³⁹ Again, scant evidence exists to support the idea that Republican-leaning officers are also the most politically active or engaged.

With regards to rank and specialty, there are few differences when it comes to political interest, with a couple notable exceptions. First, the prospect of running for office understandably decreases as officers get closer to retirement: what may sound like a good idea to a lieutenant (33%) may be less realistic for a colonel (26%). Conversely, senior ranking officers (35%) were more likely to indicate they would join an interest group than junior officers (24%).⁴⁰ Combat arms officers (33%) were more likely to consider running for political office than officers in special branches (22%), and officers who deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan displayed higher levels of political interest in all three categories than officers who had not deployed at all.⁴¹

To summarize, Army officers vote in high numbers and actively encourage others in the military to do so as well. Other levels of political activity are fairly muted, however, and it does not appear that Army officers are any more politically active than the general public. As expected, Independents are the least politically active or interested, but Democrats surprisingly are slightly more politically active than

³⁹ Difference of proportions test between Democrats and Republicans for becoming more involved in politics statistically significant at $p < .05$ ($z = 2.12$); and for joining an interest group statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 3.43$).

⁴⁰ Difference of proportions test between lieutenants and colonels for considering running for office statistically significant at $p < .01$ ($z = 2.42$); and for joining an interest group statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 3.84$).

⁴¹ Difference of proportions test between combat arms officers and special branch officers for running for office statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 5.09$). Difference of proportions test between officers who have deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan and officers who have not deployed for becoming more involved in politics at $p < .05$ ($z = 2.15$); for running for office at $p < .001$ ($z = 3.63$); and for joining an interest group at $p < .10$ ($z = 1.48$).

Republicans. While this could be a reflection of the 2008 election, it also goes to show that while most officers may affiliate with the Republican Party, it does not follow that these officers are also the most politically active.

Politics in the Workplace

While activism measures help paint the picture of the degree of politicization within the officer corps, they do not tell the whole story. First, all of the measures of political activity highlighted in the previous section are *allowable* activities under DoDD 1344.10. Second, while the political interest measures may give a sense of how politically engaged Army officers are and the degree to which they may choose to participate in politics after leaving the Army, they do not by themselves suggest an inappropriate amount of politics in the workplace. To gauge whether officers truly are bringing their politics into the cockpit, camp, or conference room I also queried them specifically about political activity and discourse at work.

Half of officers surveyed indicated that politics was something often talked about at work (see table 4.4). The variance among demographic groups also paints a telling picture, and is consistent with the earlier findings on political attitudes, party affiliation, and political participation within the officer corps. For example, while 53% of men agreed that politics was often discussed in the workplace, only 40% of women did. Similarly, 56% of combat arms officers indicated politics was often talked about at work compared to 40% of specialty branch officers. Officers who deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan (57%) were more likely to indicate that politics was discussed at work than officers who had never deployed (42%). And finally, Republicans (53%) were more

likely to indicate that political discussions in the workplace were commonplace compared to Democrats (47%) or Independents (47%).⁴²

I then asked officers how often they felt uncomfortable expressing their political views at work. The intent behind asking this question was to get a sense of to what degree officers either felt it was inappropriate to be discussing politics at work or were uncomfortable sharing their political views because they felt theirs was a minority position. As table 4.4 highlights, 27% of officers surveyed indicated that they “often” or “almost always” felt uncomfortable expressing their political views to co-workers. Blacks (33%) and Democrats (38%) were more likely to indicate discomfort expressing their political views at work compared to whites (26%) and Republicans (22%).⁴³ In fact, Democrats (38%) recorded the highest percentage of any demographic for their level of discomfort, while Republicans (22%) were the most comfortable expressing their political opinions at work. Notably, as officers increased in rank, they became more likely to indicate a degree of discomfort in expressing their political views with their co-workers (22% of lieutenants compared to 34% of colonels).⁴⁴ This could be evidence of the impact of professionalism over one’s career. The longer an officer serves in the Army and identifies with the profession, the more likely he or she is to embrace and value the ethic of non-partisanship.

⁴² Difference of proportions test for talking politics at work statistically significant between men and women at $p < .001$ ($z = 5.57$); between combat arms officers and specialty branch officers at $p < .001$ ($z = 6.87$); between officers who deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan and officers who have not deployed at $p < .001$ ($z = 5.29$); and between Republicans and Democrats at $p < .001$ ($z = 2.72$).

⁴³ Difference of proportions test for feeling uncomfortable talking politics at work statistically significant between whites and blacks at $p < .01$ ($z = 2.49$); and between Democrats and Republicans at $p < .001$ ($z = 8.01$)

⁴⁴ Difference of proportions test for feeling uncomfortable talking politics at work statistically significant between lieutenants and colonels at $p < .001$ ($z = 4.15$).

Lastly, I asked respondents if other Army officers had ever encouraged them to vote one way or the other since joining the Army in an attempt to measure outright attempts to influence the vote within the ranks (see table 4.5). Approximately 27% of officers responded in the affirmative, that at some point other officers had attempted to influence the way they were going to vote. Democrats recorded the highest percentage (38%), while only 23% of Republicans indicated others had tried to influence the way they were going to vote. Perhaps the most intriguing finding is how officers differed in their responses according to their rank. While 30-32% of lieutenants and captains reported being pressured to vote a particular way, only 16% of colonels indicated so. While this could be a case of senior officers attempting to influence younger officers, the low percentage of colonels indicating they themselves have been encouraged to vote a particular way may suggest a generational cohort effect is occurring here: perhaps the pressure junior officers are feeling is *peer* pressure. Of note, junior officers in the process of separating from the Army reported almost identical levels of pressure compared to the findings for lieutenants and captains overall. In other words, junior officers who chose to leave the Army felt about the same pressure to vote a particular way as their peers.

Active vs. Retired: A Distinction?

As the role of retired officers, especially retired general officers, is a relatively new debate in the field of civil-military relations, I sought the opinions of today's active duty Army officer corps and wanted to see if they view a distinction between active duty and retired officers when it comes to public political expression. As table 4.6 shows, I first queried them on their views of active duty officers' roles in civilian society.

Approximately 70% of active duty Army officers agreed that members of the active duty military should not publicly criticize senior members of the civilian branch of government, and only 36% of officers agreed with the statement that members of the active duty military should be allowed to publicly express their political views just like any other citizen.

With both questions, as officers advanced in rank, they were more likely to give the normatively “correct” answer. For example, while 82% of colonels agreed that active duty military should not criticize senior civilians in the government, only 61% of lieutenants did. Similarly, 38% of lieutenants felt it was appropriate for active duty military to publicly express their political views like anyone else, compared to 26% of colonels.⁴⁵ In both instances, it is likely that the longer an officer stays in the Army, the more likely they are to embrace the professional norms of the institution – in this case, the norm of non-partisanship and political neutrality. One anomaly stood out, however: a larger percentage of women and Hispanics gave the “incorrect” answers to both questions. Notably, both women and Hispanics also displayed the lowest levels of political activism and interest among all demographic groups measured here, so it may be that because both groups think less about politics in general, they also think less about the role of the military in the political arena.

In the late 1990s, the same two questions were posed to military officers as part of the Triangle Institute for Security Studies (TISS) *Surveys on the Military in the Post Cold War Era*. Table 4.7 shows a comparison of responses from active duty Army majors, lieutenant colonels, and colonels serving today against a similar cohort serving roughly a

⁴⁵ Difference of proportions test for not criticizing senior civilians statistically significant between lieutenants and colonels at $p > .001$ ($z = 7.21$); difference of proportions test for publicly expressing views like anyone else statistically significant between lieutenants and colonels at $p < .001$ ($z = 4.04$).

decade ago. Of note, officers serving today were less likely to give the normatively correct response to the question whether or not active duty military should publicly criticize senior civilians in the government.⁴⁶ Eighty-five percent of senior officers questioned under the TISS survey agreed with the statement that active duty military should not criticize senior members of the civilian branch of government, compared to 75% of respondents surveyed in my *Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War* survey in 2009. While the majority of officers still gave the normatively correct response, a decline of ten percentage points over the past decade is significant and may reflect the toll from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and an ensuing decline in Army officers' trust in government. Some have called this the "stab in the back narrative" – the idea that the military has done everything it could to win the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, but never received the full support or resources it should have from civilian leaders and politicians (Hoffman 2008, Kohn 2008, Williams et al. 2007).

Table 4.8 shows the results of how active duty active duty Army officers serving today view retired officers publicly expressing their political opinions. First, only 20% of officers felt it was inappropriate for retired officers to publicly criticize senior civilian members of government. In comparison, 70% felt it was inappropriate for active duty officers to do the same. Likewise, 81% of officers surveyed felt retired officers should be able to express their viewpoints like any other citizen, whereas only 36% felt active duty officers should. Today's active duty officers clearly see a demarcation line between active and retired service. While most officers recognize there are limits to what active

⁴⁶ Difference of proportions test for not criticizing senior civilians in government statistically significant between 2009 survey and 1998-99 survey at $p < .001$ ($z = 3.39$).

duty officers should say in the public square, they also feel those constraints should disappear once an officer retires.⁴⁷

There is a significant difference between a retired lieutenant colonel expressing his or her political views and a retired four-star general, however. Much of the consternation over retired officers engaging in high-profile political debates deals with this latter category – retired general and flag officers. To distinguish retired generals from all retired officers, I also asked respondents whether they thought it was proper for retired generals to publicly express their political views. As table 4.8 indicates, 68% of officers surveyed agreed that it was appropriate for retired generals to do so – slightly less than their tolerance for retired officers in general, but still a strong majority. Notably, only 12% of officers disagreed or strongly disagreed with this notion, and 20% of officers were neutral on the topic.

For all three questions on retired officers, Democrats displayed a greater tolerance for retired officers publicly engaging in political discussions than Republicans.⁴⁸ For the most part, however, Army officers appear to be of the same opinion – while active duty officers should play by a separate set of rules and generally keep their political opinions private, retired officers need not face the same constraints, even retired generals.

Conclusion

This chapter sought to break down the politicization charge and dissect Army officers' level of political participation and interest and to what extent politics is truly

⁴⁷ My findings are not dissimilar from what William Becker found in 2001. As part of his strategy research project at the U.S. Army War College, Becker surveyed students at the U.S. Army War College and active duty general and flag officers. According to his findings, 61% of Army War College students and 76% of Army generals felt it was appropriate for retired general officers to endorse political parties.

⁴⁸ Difference of proportions test between Democrats and Republicans for retired officers criticizing senior civilians statistically significant at $p < .01$ ($z = 2.63$); for retired officers being able to express views like anyone else statistically significant at $p < .01$ ($z = 2.33$); and for retired generals expressing their political opinions statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 4.70$).

brought into the workplace. My survey findings offer the following key takeaways. First, voting appears to have become almost a sacred obligation within the officer corps, with over 80% voting and actively encouraging others in uniform to do the same. Nine out of ten feel the military *should* vote, and there appears to be little to no appetite for having the military abstain from voting to preserve an image of nonpartisanship. On the contrary, as the government and the military constantly work to remove obstacles to registration and voting overseas, it is likely that the armed forces view voting as a *duty*. The military at all levels has placed command emphasis on affording all service members the opportunity to vote, and the example set by George Marshall, while noble, appears to be an artifact that holds little sway among officers serving today.

Other than voting, most other measures of political participation by Army officers are fairly muted. While one in five admit to having made a financial campaign contribution at some point in their life, only a handful of officers have participated in all six of the political activities that were measured here. Of note, I found no evidence to suggest that Republican-leaning officers were the most politically active; on the contrary, Democratic officers displayed slightly higher rates of political activism, which might reflect the 2008 election more than anything. And while Army officers appear to be no more politically active than the general public, they do display a healthy interest in politics. Two out of five officers expressed interest in becoming more involved in politics after leaving the Army, one-third expressed interest in running for office some day, and roughly one-half of all officers said politics was something often discussed at work.

The one area in which party affiliation came into play was the level of discomfort talking about politics at work and pressure within the Army to vote a particular way. In both cases, Democratic officers were more likely to report feeling uncomfortable expressing their political views with their work colleagues and having been pressured to vote a particular way by others in the Army. While this is undoubtedly a reflection of having the minority political viewpoint, and while it is unclear from the survey alone how much pressure or intimidation is real or perceived, normatively speaking, it is an area that senior Army leaders should devote attention, as it does point to an unhealthy degree of politicization within the officer corps. One positive note in this same vein is worth mentioning, however: junior officers who were in the process of separating from the Army, and were already more likely to affiliate with the Democratic Party, reported the same rates of discomfort and voting pressure as their lieutenant and captain peers overall. In other words, had they exhibited much higher levels of discomfort or pressure, this could have been a “canary in the mine” indicator – junior officers leaving the service because they felt uncomfortable about the degree of politics in the workplace. I found no such evidence to support this.

When it comes to assessing whether public political expression is appropriate for Army officers, three things stand out. First, with regards to active duty officers publicly expressing their political views, while the majority of officers surveyed felt active duty officers should be constrained in doing so, as officers grew more senior in rank, they were more likely to advocate restraint. This could be indicative of generational or cohort differences or that the longer an officer stays in the Army, the more likely they are to adopt the military’s professional norm of political neutrality. Second, while the majority

of Army officers feel it is inappropriate for active duty military to publicly criticize senior civilians in government, there has been a ten-percentage point decline from roughly a decade ago – perhaps an effect of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan or what some call the “stabbed in the back” narrative. Third, despite the fact that most officers recognized the need for active duty officers to refrain from public political pronouncements, they were far more tolerant of retired officers doing so – even retired generals. While active duty officers should generally refrain from publicly expressing their political views, retired officers apparently need not.

Is the Army politicized? Voting in large numbers, encouraging others to vote, and displaying an interest in politics does not translate into politicization. The lack of correlation between Republican Party affiliation and political activism among Army officers should also dispel notions that the Army is dangerously out-of-balance politically. But this does not mean there is no cause for concern. Junior officers may need mentoring in what is an acceptable level of political discourse for the active duty military, and the fact that a higher percentage of Democratic officers reported feeling uncomfortable expressing their political views or having been pressured to vote a particular way should cause senior Army leaders to take a closer look at the degree of political tolerance that currently exists in the foxhole. Finally, the final chapter has yet to be written on the role retired officers, especially retired generals, play in the public square. This much is certain: officers today certainly see a distinction between the active and retired ranks. The institution, however, may not, and therein may lie the problem.

Table 4.1 Voter Turnout & Views of Voting

	Voter Turnout in the 2008 Presidential Election	Members of the active duty military should vote
	<i>percent who reported they voted</i>	<i>percent checking “agree” or “agree strongly”</i>
TOTAL	81.27	92.50
Lieutenants	73.57	91.14
Captains	79.65	92.58
Majors	80.74	91.67
Lieutenant Colonels	87.14	93.93
Colonels	88.21	94.59
Combat Arms	79.11	91.11
Combat Support	81.74	93.01
Combat Service Support	80.95	93.14
Special Branches	87.08	94.42
Male Officers	81.34	92.22
Female Officers	81.72	94.76
White Officers	81.53	92.29
Black Officers	89.49	95.89
Hispanic Officers	74.89	93.09
Asian-American Officers	73.53	91.85
Iraq War veterans	80.90	92.77
Afghanistan War veterans	80.42	92.06
Iraq + Afghanistan War Veterans	82.93	92.37
Officers with no Iraq or Afghanistan experience	83.90	92.05
Democrats	86.64	93.65
Independents	71.97	86.87
Republicans	83.49	94.55

Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009

Table 4.2 Political Activism of Army Officers

	Level of Political Activism					
	<i>percent checking each option</i>					
	Gave money to an individual candidate running for public office or to a political party	Wore a campaign button or put a campaign sticker on your car	Encouraged other members of the military to vote	Joined a partisan or non-partisan political club and attended its meetings	Expressed your personal opinion on political candidates or issues to others	Attended a partisan or nonpartisan political fundraiser, meeting, rally, debate, convention, or any other political activity as a non-uniformed spectator
TOTAL	20.13	13.16	79.69	5.49	74.13	11.80
Lieutenants	14.12	14.83	74.04	7.40	71.39	13.65
Captains	16.86	13.42	77.56	5.95	73.24	12.65
Majors	20.08	12.42	80.23	5.44	77.26	12.48
Lieutenant Colonels	25.78	13.57	81.60	4.41	74.58	9.34
Colonels	28.24	10.20	89.54	2.81	73.72	9.44
Combat Arms	18.80	12.52	81.23	5.28	77.14	11.69
Combat Support	18.31	12.55	80.51	5.80	73.87	11.33
Combat Service Support	19.91	14.13	80.52	5.25	69.07	11.12
Special Branches	25.69	14.04	73.50	6.16	75.15	13.73
Male Officers	20.66	13.55	80.24	5.68	75.35	12.09
Female Officers	17.64	11.07	78.13	3.76	71.62	10.69
White Officers	20.99	13.16	80.91	5.46	77.40	12.15
Black Officers	24.41	17.29	80.07	3.75	68.03	11.90
Hispanic Officers	12.84	10.55	75.00	6.42	61.01	12.04
Asian-American Officers	8.96	8.21	70.90	3.76	65.67	7.46
Iraq War veterans	20.26	13.36	81.54	5.42	74.73	11.52
Afghanistan War veterans	19.93	12.50	82.05	5.56	73.44	10.65
Iraq + Afghanistan War Veterans	20.93	13.67	84.24	6.40	75.98	11.63
Officers with no Iraq or Afghanistan experience	20.10	13.30	75.17	6.03	74.10	13.28
Democrats	28.30	17.53	79.74	5.49	71.86	14.51
Independents	14.34	6.74	76.48	4.16	67.01	9.36
Republicans	19.73	13.69	81.73	6.66	79.57	11.75

Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009

Table 4.3 Political Interest of Army Officers

	Level of Political Interest		
	<i>percent checking "agree" or "agree strongly"</i>		
	Following my career in the military, I would consider the following:		
	Becoming more involved in politics and campaigns	Running for political office	Joining or working for an interest group
TOTAL	41.48	28.52	28.44
Lieutenants	41.06	33.19	24.18
Captains	41.39	29.38	26.80
Majors	41.55	28.81	26.87
Lieutenant Colonels	42.02	25.06	32.69
Colonels	42.31	25.90	35.38
Combat Arms	43.43	33.07	28.21
Combat Support	41.95	29.06	29.40
Combat Service Support	39.98	25.28	26.60
Special Branches	38.98	22.15	31.32
Male Officers	43.77	31.03	29.52
Female Officers	30.28	14.26	24.77
White Officers	42.63	30.00	29.75
Black Officers	42.07	27.43	27.72
Hispanic Officers	41.20	25.46	27.78
Asian-American Officers	25.93	9.63	17.65
Iraq War veterans	42.48	29.78	28.16
Afghanistan War veterans	43.40	32.31	31.59
Iraq + Afghanistan War Veterans	44.86	33.77	32.45
Officers with no Iraq or Afghanistan experience	39.07	24.93	28.67
Democrats	47.76	28.22	35.65
Independents	34.72	24.83	24.78
Republicans	43.12	30.75	28.89

Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009

Table 4.4 Politics in the Workplace

	Talking Politics at Work <i>percent checking “agree” or “agree strongly”</i>	Degree of Discomfort <i>percent checking “often” or “almost always”</i>
	Politics is something often talked about at work	How often do you feel uncomfortable about expressing your political views with your co-workers?
TOTAL	50.31	26.70
Lieutenants	42.27	22.14
Captains	50.64	22.31
Majors	57.51	26.62
Lieutenant Colonels	51.32	32.30
Colonels	43.93	33.93
Combat Arms	55.72	24.41
Combat Support	54.58	27.73
Combat Service Support	45.81	28.69
Special Branches	39.63	28.20
Male Officers	52.69	25.94
Female Officers	39.55	29.03
White Officers	51.86	25.66
Black Officers	50.51	32.54
Hispanic Officers	42.66	25.69
Asian-American Officers	45.19	27.21
Iraq War veterans	53.58	26.05
Afghanistan War veterans	54.10	27.18
Iraq + Afghanistan War veterans	56.63	27.85
Officers with no Iraq or Afghanistan experience	42.43	28.70
Junior Officers Separating	53.06	24.00
Democrats	47.45	37.61
Independents	46.94	27.93
Republicans	53.46	22.27

Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009

Table 4.5 Influencing the Vote

	Influencing the Vote <i>percent who answered yes</i>
	Since you have been in the Army, have other officers ever encouraged you to vote one way or another?
TOTAL (n = 4,079)	27.11
Lieutenants	31.52
Captains	30.45
Majors	26.63
Lieutenant Colonels	24.94
Colonels	15.86
Combat Arms	27.46
Combat Support	28.37
Combat Service Support	27.16
Special Branches	25.04
Male Officers	27.40
Female Officers	26.92
White Officers	26.21
Black Officers	31.53
Hispanic Officers	35.78
Asian-American Officers	23.31
Iraq War veterans	26.76
Afghanistan War veterans	28.27
Iraq + Afghanistan War Veterans	26.04
Officers with no Iraq or Afghanistan experience	26.63
Junior Officers Separating from the Army	30.00
Democrats	38.07
Independents	29.74
Republicans	23.16

Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009

Table 4.6 Military's Role in Civilian Society

	Military's Role in Civilian Society <i>percent checking "agree" or "agree strongly"</i>	
	Members of the active duty military should not publicly criticize senior members of the civilian branch of the government	Members of the active duty military should be allowed to publicly express their political views just like any other citizen
TOTAL	69.63	35.51
Lieutenants	60.85	38.38
Captains	64.57	38.31
Majors	71.20	35.09
Lieutenant Colonels	75.18	34.90
Colonels	82.47	25.90
Combat Arms	73.67	32.57
Combat Support	66.91	33.63
Combat Service Support	66.41	38.29
Special Branches	67.75	40.50
Male Officers	71.31	35.06
Female Officers	59.66	40.60
White Officers	70.76	35.81
Black Officers	69.39	35.84
Hispanic Officers	59.26	40.55
Asian-American Officers	67.41	30.37
Iraq War veterans	70.44	35.66
Afghanistan War veterans	74.31	32.53
Iraq + Afghanistan War Veterans	74.43	32.05
Officers with no Iraq or Afghanistan experience	66.21	35.58
Democrats	66.47	39.97
Independents	69.90	30.05
Republicans	71.03	36.11

Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009

Table 4.7 Military's Role in Civilian Society: A Comparison Against the TISS Survey*

	Military's Role in Civilian Society <i>percent checking "agree" or "agree strongly"</i>	
	Members of the active duty military should not publicly criticize senior members of the civilian branch of the government	Members of the active duty military should be allowed to publicly express their political views just like any other citizen
Triangle Institute for Security Studies Survey, 1998-1999 (n=212)	85.38	38.68
Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009 (n=2,220)	74.65	33.42

* Data reflects responses by Army majors, lieutenant colonels, and colonels only

Table 4.8 Retired Military Officers' Role in Civilian Society

	Retired Military Officers' Role in Civilian Society <i>percent checking "agree" or "agree strongly"</i>		
	Retired officers should not publicly criticize senior members of the civilian branch of the government.	Retired officers should be allowed to publicly express their political views just like any other citizen.	It is proper for retired generals to publicly express their political views.
TOTAL	19.75	80.95	68.01
Lieutenants	16.41	81.13	67.49
Captains	19.69	82.38	69.96
Majors	20.40	79.01	66.77
Lieutenant Colonels	19.88	82.93	68.49
Colonels	23.19	79.12	66.23
Combat Arms	19.43	80.65	67.45
Combat Support	18.14	81.57	67.06
Combat Service Support	21.21	80.39	66.54
Special Branches	20.22	81.84	72.94
Male Officers	19.32	81.61	68.78
Female Officers	24.01	77.94	63.72
White Officers	19.48	81.93	67.88
Black Officers	23.73	80.28	74.06
Hispanic Officers	17.51	77.78	66.20
Asian-American Officers	22.23	77.03	65.93
Iraq War veterans	20.08	80.72	68.78
Afghanistan War veterans	21.92	77.34	66.54
Iraq + Afghanistan War Veterans	21.53	76.15	65.14
Officers with no Iraq or Afghanistan experience	18.12	82.04	65.91
Democrats	16.53	84.93	76.25
Independents	18.56	80.14	65.97
Republicans	21.16	80.97	66.77

Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009

Chapter 5

Wartime Politics: Interactions between Military and Civilian Leaders

War is too important to be left to the generals.
Georges Clemenceau⁴⁹

The principle of civilian control is well-entrenched in the United States, but military officers we surveyed show some reluctance to accept one of its basic assumptions: that civilian leaders have a right to be wrong. (Feaver and Kohn 2001, 464)

This dissertation has focused primarily on the politics of Army officers serving today: the determinants of their party identification and political ideology, the effects of Army service and combat deployments on their political attitudes, and the level of political activism among the officer corps. This chapter builds upon the previous three and focuses on the views of Army officers on key civil-military relations issues, and throughout it, the politics of the officer corps remains a significant undercurrent. Normatively, it may be the most important chapter for students of civil-military relations and is unique in two ways. First, this chapter reflects the views of Army officers on critical wartime issues *in the midst of two ongoing wars*. For today's officer corps, these opinions are far from abstract concepts but rather are reflections of eight years of sustained combat. Second, I apply what I have learned of officers' partisan attitudes to contemporaneous civil-military relations issues today. Does party affiliation have an impact on how Army officers view critical wartime interactions between senior military and civilian leaders, and if it does not, does party affiliation really matter at all in civil-military relations?

I begin by assessing Army officers' views of civilian leaders and compare them to the views of officers roughly a decade ago. Next I examine how Army officers view the role of senior military commanders in seven key wartime scenarios. Patterned after the

⁴⁹ This quote by Georges Clemenceau has been used to summarize Eliot Cohen's thesis in *Supreme Command* (2002). See Barone (2002), Cohen (2002b), and Milbank (2002).

battery of questions asked in the Triangle for Security Studies' (TISS) *Survey on the Military in the Post-Cold War Era* from 1998-1999, I can again compare the views of Army officers serving today against those from roughly a decade ago. Throughout the chapter, I look at the role party identification plays to see if Democrats and Republicans have different views of the roles of civilian and senior uniformed leaders.

Contrasting Theories of Civil-Military Relations

This chapter deals with Army officers' views of senior leaders and the critical decisions they make during wartime – themes I often found playing out on the world stage as I was writing it. From President Bush overriding his field commander and implementing a surge of forces in Iraq, to three years later when the commander in Afghanistan was admonished for what some interpreted as publicly pressuring President Obama to increase troop levels there, the interaction between senior military commanders and civilian leaders, especially during wartime, can be prickly. This is not a particularly earth-shattering revelation, nor does it automatically follow that a crisis in civil-military relations is brewing. Increasingly, however, as these interactions are played out in the 24-hour news cycle, they do illustrate two competing views of civil-military relations and reignite the debate of what the proper role of senior military leaders is during wartime – especially when senior military leaders voice their dissent.

Huntington's model of objective control (1957) largely provides the foundation for one side of the debate – what Cohen (2002) calls “the normal theory” of civil-military relations and what Feaver has termed the “professional supremacist” (2010) school of thought or delegative control model (1995). Under Huntington's objective control, the military and its civilian overseers maintain distinct, separate spheres of responsibility.

The military is a professional force because it remains “politically sterile and neutral” (1957, 84). And because the military is a professional, apolitical force, and civilian control of the military should never be in doubt, this model suggests that considerable deference should be given to military leaders in their realm of expertise. Professional supremacist or normal theory adherents often include senior and retired military leaders, such as Colin Powell, and its tenets are largely borne out of the lessons learned from the Vietnam War. In Michael Desch’s words, this system works best as it “allows for substantial military autonomy in the military, technical, and tactical realms (how to fight wars) in return for complete subordination to civilian authority in the political realm (when and if to fight them)” (Myers et al. 2007).

Professional surpemacists also attribute civil-military friction and even wartime failures to violations of the normal theory model. For example, Desch (2007) has argued that many of the failures in the Iraq war were a result of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld’s abrasive approach and meddling into the military’s business. Key to the normal theory or professional supremacist view is the need to maintain Huntington’s separate spheres and preserve the military’s autonomy over military matters. Civilian interference into the military’s domain, they argue, will almost surely lead to dysfunction.

Many scholars and observers have found that Huntington’s model of distinct spheres is unrealistic, and insulating the military from all things political is nearly impossible (Betts 2009, Collins 2010, Gibson 2009, and Nielsen and Snider 2009). Therefore, variants of Huntington’s objective control model have emerged, all of which share in common the need to recognize the military’s autonomy in tactical and

operational matters.⁵⁰ One such variant, with obvious outgrowths from the Vietnam War (and no doubt solidified by the Iraq War) advocates that military leaders be more aggressive and vocal when offering their military advice:

During the Vietnam War, many military officers came to believe that their unquestioning obedience to civilian leaders had contributed to the debacle – and that, in the future, senior military leaders should not quietly acquiesce when the civilians in Washington start leading them into strategic blunders (Desch 2007).

Feaver terms this trend as “McMasterism,” named after H.R. McMaster’s popular book about the failure of leadership by the Joint Chiefs during the Vietnam War, *Dereliction of Duty: Lyndon Johnson, Robert McNamara, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Lies that Led to Vietnam*.⁵¹ McMasterism, Feaver argues, is marked by a “purported military obligation to speak out in public” (Feaver 2010). Desch has likewise noted that McMaster’s book has been embraced by today’s officer corps, which boldly interprets the book’s message as “unqualified allegiance to the Commander-in-Chief needs to be rethought” (Desch 2007).⁵²

On the other side of the debate is what Cohen (2002) calls the “unequal dialogue” and what Feaver has alternatively described as the “civilian supremacist” (2010) or

⁵⁰ Another variant includes Gibson’s (2008) Madisonian approach. Gibson argues for changes to the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 and proposes that a new position be established, Commanding General of the Armed Forces. This position would replace the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs (CJCS) and have command authority over combatant commands, something the CJCS currently lacks. By doing so, Gibson argues this will fundamentally change the way senior military leaders offer their advice to the President and Congress.

⁵¹ Feaver distinguishes between McMaster’s thesis and “McMasterism” which goes much further than what McMaster described in his book. McMasterism essentially argues that military advice is superior to civilian leaders’ and the military must take every step necessary to ensure their point of view is both heard and heeded (Feaver 2010, 9).

⁵² Several scholars, including Richard Kohn, who served on McMaster’s dissertation committee, argue this is a common misinterpretation of McMaster’s central tenet. According to Kohn, “in reality, the book argues and implies nothing other than this: during the Vietnam War, the Joint Chiefs should have spoken up forcefully in private to their superiors and candidly in testimony to Congress when asked specifically for their personal views, and they should have corrected misrepresentations of those views in private meetings with members of Congress” (Myers et al 2007). While Kohn is technically correct, Desch is also accurate in capturing how many, including military officers, have interpreted McMaster’s message.

assertive model (1995).⁵³ From his book *Supreme Command*, Cohen acknowledges the give-and-take discussions that must take place between commanders and civilian leaders, but notes that in the end, the military must always be subservient to civilian leaders, providing its best military advice and then executing the orders of its civilian overseers.⁵⁴ Using case studies of Lincoln, Clemenceau, Churchill, and Ben-Gurion, Cohen argues that the most successful statesmen in history were not the ones who deferred significant decisions of wartime strategy to their generals, but those who questioned, challenged, prodded, and sometimes overruled their commanders. Cohen concedes there must be a dialogue, but one that in the end is unequal, with civilian leaders ultimately responsible for making critical wartime decisions and the military responsible for executing them.

Proponents of the unequal dialogue or civilian supremacist model find trouble with the normal theory of civil-military relations, especially McMasterism. When military commanders effectively dig in their heels, they argue, it amounts to brinksmanship, and resignation as a means of protest should never be viewed as an honorable solution (Kohn 2009). The civilian supremacist or unequal dialogue school of thought also takes issue with the idea that military leaders can and should “go public” when they feel their best military advice is not being heard. While they acknowledge that it is military leaders’ duty to present their best, most candid advice to civilian

⁵³ Feaver’s principal-agent theory (2003) of civil-military relations applies a rational choice perspective to civilian oversight of the military and also stands in contrast to the normal theory of civil-military relations and Huntington’s objective control model. In Feaver’s agency model, “civilians choose the monitoring mechanisms, relatively intrusive or relatively nonintrusive, and the military chooses whether to work or shirk, based in part on expectations of an exogenously determined likelihood of punishment” (2003, 284). While his agency model is an explanatory one, seeking to understand and explain interactions between civilian and military leaders, it does have a slight normative bent, as he concludes, “let the military execute those orders faithfully. The republic would be better served even by foolish working than by enlightened shirking” (302).

⁵⁴ It was widely reported that President George W. Bush read *Supreme Command* in the summer of 2002, as the U.S. prepared for the invasion of Iraq. See Millbank (2002) and Kakutani (2003).

policymakers, through the chain of command and behind closed doors, it is never appropriate for them to engage in a public debate, especially once civilian policymakers have decided upon a particular course of action (Feaver 2010, Myers et al. 2007).

Civilian supremacists argue that the McMasterism trend has emboldened senior military leaders to the point that where they resent any civilian interference in military affairs:

Officers, their self-confidence strengthened by two decades of increasing prestige and by a generally accepted version of civil-military relations marked by the morality tales of the Vietnam and Gulf wars, had come to believe that civilians had little business in probing *their* business (Cohen 2002, 200).

Scholars such as Hoffman also take aim at the “blame the civilians” mantra that has become an outgrowth of McMasterism. Increasingly, a “stabbed-in-the-back” narrative has emerged from the Iraq War, in which military leaders lay responsibility for the early failures of Iraq at the hands of civilian leaders (Hoffman 2008, Kohn 2008, Williams et al. 2007). Such a tact is not only inaccurate, as it overlooks the military’s own tactical mistakes and errors in judgment in the war (Hoffman 2008, Garafano 2008, Ricks 2006), but it also breeds a convenient lack of accountability within the military and furthers distrust between the military and its civilian overseers. Another related reason why civilian supremacists argue it is imperative for civilian leaders to intercede and play a strong, active role in military affairs is the inevitable interservice rivalries and disagreements that arise, especially during wartime (Feaver 2010, Hoffman 2008). Civilian leaders must be assertive, if for no other reason to deconflict among competing military advice and ultimately decide upon a particular course of action.

This tension between civilian and military leaders has often occupied center stage during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. From Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul

Wolfowitz's dismissal of Army Chief of Staff General Eric Shinseki's estimate that an occupation of Iraq would require several hundred thousand troops, to the "Revolt of the Generals in 2006" in which several recently-retired general officers publicly called for Secretary Rumsfeld's resignation, the dialogue has been both public and heated at times, and the role of senior military leaders has come under increased scrutiny. Most recently, with General David Petraeus in Iraq and now General Stanley McChrystal in Afghanistan, the theater commanders charged with prosecuting today's wars have not shied away from making public pronouncements on the strategy and conduct of the wars.

I hope to further our understanding of this debate by soliciting the views of Army officers on these topics. For lieutenants and captains on active duty today, they do not know what it is like to serve in the Army in peacetime, and it is not an exaggeration to suggest that civil-military relations norms are changing with each major phase of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. What is unknown is where today's officers – certainly an expeditionary officer corps – stand on the debate. While I do not argue which model of civil-military relations is better or more effective, I do highlight which side Army officers tend to fall on in the debate, how their views have changed over the past decade, and whether party affiliation has an effect on their opinions.

Views of Civilian Leaders

What do Army officers think of civilian leaders in the context of oversight of the military? I asked Army officers serving today their views of civilian control of the military using three questions taken from the TISS survey. First, I asked if Army officers agreed or disagreed with the statement that when civilians tell the military what to do, domestic partisan politics rather than national security requirements are often the primary

motivation. Second, I asked whether they thought that during wartime civilian government leaders should let the military take over running the war. Finally, I asked whether Army officers thought that to be respected as Commander-in-Chief, the president should have served in uniform. As Kohn has written, how officers view their civilian leaders matters for civil-military relations:

A certain amount of caution, skepticism, and perhaps even mistrust is healthy. But contempt for clients destroys the professional relationship...Military officers who feel contempt for their elected or appointed supervisors, or the voters who placed them into office, are unlikely to advise them wisely or carry out their policies effectively (Kohn 2002, 35).

Table 5.1 summarizes the results of each of these three questions. Approximately 58% of respondents agreed with the statement that domestic partisan politics rather than national security requirements were often the motivator behind government leaders' decisions on military matters. Thirty-eight percent of Army officers felt that during wartime the military should take over running the war. And 37% of officers agreed with the statement that to be respected as Commander-in-Chief, the president should have served in the military.

The first question also doubles as a measure of Army officers' trust in government, and as with other normative questions that were highlighted in the previous chapter, as officers grew more senior in rank, they were also more likely to display a greater level of trust in government or provide the normatively "correct" answer. For example, 62% of lieutenants felt civilian leaders were mostly motivated by domestic partisan considerations compared to 49% of colonels.⁵⁵ In addition to reflecting a greater degree of professionalization as officers increase in rank, this is also likely explained by

⁵⁵ Difference of proportions test for domestic partisan politics as the motivation for decision-making statistically significant between lieutenants and colonels at $p < .001$ ($z = 4.06$).

the fact that more senior ranking officers have had assignments working in closer proximity to the policy-making process, whether in the Pentagon or in other joint tours. As a result, they may be less willing to ascribe partisanship as the main motivation behind civilian leaders' decisions. Junior officers – those with the least amount of interaction with senior civilian leaders – were most likely to respond cynically. Similar trends with regard to rank and seniority can be observed with the second two questions. While 46% of lieutenants felt civilian leaders should let the military run wars, only 26% of colonels did. And 45% of lieutenants felt that to be respected, the Commander-in-Chief should have served in the military, compared to just 19% of colonels.⁵⁶

The differences in viewpoints by party affiliation are striking. For each question, Republican-leaning officers were more likely to display lower trust levels in the government compared to Democrats. For example, 62% of Republicans felt that when civilians gave orders to the military, domestic partisan politics were the motivation compared to 53% of Democrats. Forty-one percent of Republicans believed that during wartime civilians should let the military run the war, compared to 31% of Democrats. And with regards to the question on respect for the Commander-in-Chief, 46% of Republicans felt the president should have served in the military, compared to just 18% of Democrats.⁵⁷ The low percentage of Democrats who felt the president should have served in the military, much like the low percentage of blacks (14%), undoubtedly reflects in large part their support for President Obama, a non-veteran.

⁵⁶ Difference of proportions test between lieutenants and colonels for believing the military should run wars statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 6.14$); for believing the president should have served in the military statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 8.47$).

⁵⁷ Difference of proportions test between Republicans and Democrats for domestic partisan politics as the motivation for decision-making statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 4.05$); for believing the military should run wars statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 4.64$); for believing the president should have served in the military statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 13.24$).

To control for the 2008 election and the “Obama-effect,” I also compare the views of Army officers serving today against Army officers surveyed in the TISS survey from 1998-1999. In other words, do officers serving today in the midst of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan view civilian control of the military differently than officers surveyed in the late-1990s? Table 5.2 summarizes the comparisons of Army majors, lieutenant colonels, and colonels from today compared to roughly a decade ago. While officers today responded very similarly to officers surveyed in the TISS study on the first question about civilian leaders’ motivations for decisions on military matters, there are notable differences in the responses to the second two questions. First, there has been a significant decrease in the percentage of officers who feel that during wartime, government leaders should let the military take over running the war. In the TISS survey, 57% of Army majors, lieutenant colonels, and colonels agreed with this sentiment, compared to just 33% in 2009. This is significant and perhaps to some, counterintuitive. The effects of two difficult, protracted, and often unpopular wars have not caused officers serving today to believe that the military should be in charge of all aspects of running a war, but rather the opposite.

This finding is also noteworthy because a portion of the TISS respondents were likely veterans of the Persian Gulf War, the conflicts in Somalia or Panama, or stability operations in Haiti or the Balkans. So, it may not be simply the experience of combat or deployments that makes Army officers disinclined to advocate the military taking over running wars, but the particular nature of combat today. Officers I surveyed who had deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan were also less likely to suggest that the military should

take over running wars than officers who had not deployed.⁵⁸ While the difference is small – five to six percentage points – it highlights that Army officers who have deployed today may have taken to heart one of the most prominent lessons from counterinsurgency warfare: military solutions alone rarely are the answer but rather must be integrated into a broader political framework (U.S. Department of the Army 2007).⁵⁹

Another deviation between Army officers serving today and those serving a decade ago is evident in their views on the Commander-in-Chief having prior military experience. In the TISS survey, 42% of Army majors, lieutenant colonels, and colonels felt that to be respected the president should have served in the military compared to just 31% of a similar cohort of officers that I surveyed in 2009. As I highlighted earlier, among the officers I surveyed, there is a significant disparity between the views of Democrats and Republicans, with only 14% of Democratic-leaning majors, lieutenant colonels, and colonels believing the president should have served in the armed forces. For the comparable subset in the TISS survey, 72% of Democrats responded felt that to be respected the president should have military experience.

It is difficult to draw a meaningful conclusion about the role party identification has, however, due to the small sample size for Army majors, lieutenant colonels, and

⁵⁸ Difference of proportions test for believing the military should run wars between those who have deployed to Iraq and those who have not statistically significant at $p < .01$ ($z = 2.42$); between those who have deployed to Afghanistan and those who have not statistically significant at $p < .01$ ($z = 2.67$); between those who have deployed to both Iraq and Afghanistan and those who have not deployed statistically significant at $p < .05$ ($z = 2.02$).

⁵⁹ The introduction by Sarah Sewall to the U.S. Army and Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual reflects the balance between military and civilian/political efforts and that most often in a counterinsurgency, solutions are non-military ones (xxxix-xxxii). She notes that the field manual itself “was written by the wrong people. Perhaps more accurately, it emerged – of necessity – from the wrong end of the COIN equation. Because counterinsurgency is predominantly political, military doctrine should flow from a broader strategic framework. But political leaders have failed to provide a compelling one. Since the armed forces are carrying almost the entire burden in Afghanistan and Iraq, it is unsurprising that they felt compelled to tackle the problem anyway. But the doctrine is a moon without a planet to orbit” (Sewall 2007).

colonels who were Democrats in the TISS survey (n = 11). Nonetheless, the responses for Republicans were fairly constant (42% in the TISS survey compared to 38% in my study), and it is likely that the low percentage for Democrats in my survey is indeed tied to their support for President Obama, and as a result, their belief that the president need not have served in the military to be respected as Commander-in-Chief. For respondents in the TISS survey, their frame of reference was President Clinton, the first non-veteran to occupy the White House since Franklin D. Roosevelt. And while scholars are correct to predict that future presidential elections may feature no candidates with military experience (Holsti 2001), we are not quite there yet. In fact, President Obama is the first major party presidential nominee since President Clinton to not have military experience. What remains to be seen, however, is how durable these attitudes are. While my findings may be indicative of Army officers serving today putting less stock in prior military service for the president, it may also simply be evidence of partisan rationalization. For example, if the Republican presidential nominee in 2012 lacks military experience, will Republican-leaning military officers still feel as strongly about prior military service being a necessary ingredient to be respected as Commander-in-Chief? Finally, the higher percentage of officers who felt military service was necessary to be respected as Commander-in-Chief in the TISS survey may simply reflect the generally poor state of civil-military relations under the Clinton Administration.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ Cohen (1997) describes the civil-military relations environment during the Clinton Administration well: “The first two years of the Clinton administration were marked by an extraordinary display of open disdain and hostility by the military for the new president. The ill-advised nature of his manpower policies (particularly his effort to lift the ban on homosexuals serving in uniform), the general disregard for things military that characterized junior staffers in the White House, a proclivity to see the military as a tool of domestic and international social work rather than strategic action, and the president's own evasion of the Vietnam-era draft explained this behavior on the part of officers but in no way made it acceptable (177). See also Kohn (2002).

In summary, while Army officers I surveyed displayed some indicators of distrusting civilian government leaders, their views have moderated somewhat over the past decade, in comparison to the findings of the TISS survey. Most notably, a smaller percentage of officers serving today feel that in wartime civilian leaders should let the military take over running the war, perhaps an effect of officers' personal experience in Iraq and Afghanistan. So, in this regard, there is less evidence for McMasterism among Army officers serving today than ten years ago. However, the stark contrast in views between Democrats and Republicans within the officer corps should not go unnoticed. Republicans' higher level of distrust than Democrats suggests that party affiliation does have a tangible impact in how Army officers view civil-military relations.

Role of Senior Military Leaders in Wartime: Advise, Advocate or Insist?

The previous section focused on how Army officers view senior civilian leaders in government. In this section, I highlight how Army officers view themselves – specifically, the role they believe senior military leaders should play in critical wartime decisions. I asked Army officers their views using a battery of seven questions first developed for the TISS survey. For seven different scenarios, officers were asked whether they thought the proper role of senior military leaders was to be neutral, to advise, to advocate, or to insist. The seven wartime scenarios were: deciding whether to intervene, setting rules of engagement, ensuring that clear political and military goals exist, deciding what the goals or policy should be, generating public support for the intervention, developing an exit strategy, and deciding what type of military units should be used to accomplish all tasks. In addition to comparing the views of officers serving today against those who were surveyed in the TISS study, I also concentrate on officers'

party affiliation. Much of this dissertation places party affiliation as the dependent variable. This chapter puts party identification as an independent variable and tries to measure whether or not it plays a role in Army officers' views of civil-military relations.

This battery of questions essentially tests what model of civil-military relations Army officers think is best, especially during wartime. Civilian supremacists or proponents of the unequal dialogue feel the only acceptable responses to these seven questions is for the military to either be neutral or to advise. Advocates of the normal theory of civil-military relations, or professional supremacists, would find it acceptable for the military to advocate and perhaps even insist in certain scenarios. And disciples of McMasterism feel senior military leaders should insist in several, if not all of the scenarios. To be clear, a strong preference among Army officers for the normal theory of civil-military relations should be expected, and evidence supporting this should not be considered especially controversial. In fact, evidence to the contrary, that Army officers support the civilian supremacist or unequal dialogue way of thinking would be surprising, especially considering the data from the TISS survey from a decade ago. Therefore, what I hope to illuminate are nuances – whether veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan respond differently from non-veterans, if party affiliation plays a role in officers' views, how strong the feeling of McMasterism is among Army officers serving today, and the extent to what change, if any, we can discern has occurred in officers' way of thinking over the past decade.

The results for each question are shown in tables 5.3 through 5.9. Generally speaking, Army officers I surveyed felt senior military leaders should be neutral when it comes to generating support for an intervention and should advise when deciding whether

to intervene and deciding what the goals or policy should be. Yet they felt senior military should insist when setting rules of engagement, ensuring clear political and military goals exist, developing an exit strategy, and deciding what type of military units should be used.

As table 5.3 indicates, when it came to deciding whether to intervene, 72% of Army officers felt the proper role for senior military leaders was to advise – the closest to a consensus reached among Army officers in all seven of the hypothetical questions. Rank was the main discriminator, with 63% of lieutenants compared to 79% of colonels responding that the proper role for senior military leaders was to advise. Lieutenants were more apt to prefer a more assertive role for military leaders, with 24% indicating the proper role was to advocate or insist, in comparison to just 16% of colonels.⁶¹ While party affiliation seems to have no bearing, with Democrats and Republicans responding almost identically, deployment experience was a factor. Those who had deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan (73%) were more likely to prefer an advisory role than those who had not deployed (68%).⁶²

Respondents showed less unanimity when it came to the question about setting rules of engagement (see table 5.4). Twenty-six percent of respondents felt the proper role of military leaders was to advise, while 31% felt it was to advocate, and 41% felt it should be to insist. And while service-specific variables such as rank, specialty, and deployment experience did not elicit different responses, party affiliation did play a role here. For example, Republican-leaning officers (44%) were more likely than Democrats

⁶¹ Difference of proportions test between lieutenants and colonels statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 5.42$).

⁶² Difference of proportions test between those who deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan and those who have not deployed statistically significant at $p < .05$ ($z = 1.88$).

(31%) to suggest that military leaders should insist when it comes to setting rules of engagement.⁶³

The question on ensuring clear political and military goals exist reflects one of the six tests for the use of military power advocated by the Weinberger doctrine of the 1980s (Weinberger 1984).⁶⁴ The majority of Army officers (56%) I surveyed felt military leaders should be assertive and insist that such conditions exist (see table 5.5). While it is likely Army officers' views reflected in part their continued support for the Weinberger Doctrine, which was largely borne out of the lessons of Vietnam, their belief that military leaders should insist that clear political and military goals exist also undoubtedly reflects their experiences with the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. For example, a greater percentage of veterans of both Iraq and Afghanistan (62%) felt military leaders should insist such goals exist than officers who had not deployed (52%).⁶⁵ As with the previous question, Republicans (57%) were also more likely to indicate that military leaders should insist clear goals exist than Democrats (50%).⁶⁶

While the majority of officers I surveyed felt that military leaders should insist clear goals exist, they were less emphatic when it came to deciding what those goals or policy should be. As table 5.6 indicates, 55% of respondents felt the proper role for senior military leaders was to advise, a figure that increased as officers grew in rank. Forty-eight percent of lieutenants supported this advisory role, compared to 63% of

⁶³ Difference of proportions test between Democrats and Republicans statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 5.95$).

⁶⁴ It is also closely related to the Powell Doctrine, as articulated by Colin L. Powell following the Persian Gulf War (Powell 1992).

⁶⁵ Difference of proportions test between those who have deployed to Afghanistan and those who have not statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 3.58$).

⁶⁶ Difference of proportions test between Democrats and Republicans statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 3.29$).

colonels. Lieutenants were also more inclined than colonels to suggest that military leaders should insist on deciding particular goals and policy.⁶⁷

With regard to generating public support for an intervention, most Army officers I surveyed felt senior military leaders should sit on the sideline. Approximately 56% felt military leaders should be neutral and 23% responded that the proper role was to advise. Only 5% thought military leaders should insist in this situation. As with the questions on deciding whether to intervene and deciding what the goals or policy should be, senior-ranking officers were more likely to provide the normatively correct answer: 46% of lieutenants advocated remaining neutral compared to 63% of colonels.⁶⁸

The sixth question, developing an exit strategy, was reminiscent of the Powell Doctrine. Closely related to the Weinberger Doctrine with its preconditions for the use of force, the Powell Doctrine was articulated by the then-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs soon after the Persian Gulf War (Powell 1992). As table 5.8 shows, 46% of respondents felt senior military leaders should insist when developing an exit strategy, while 26% felt they should advise and 25% thought the proper role was to advocate. Notably, there was little variance among demographic groups, service-specific variables, and political variables.

With the final question, respondents were asked what role they thought military leaders should play in determining what types of military units should be used in a deployment. While the question was written years prior, for many officers serving today, it may have conjured up memories of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's personal

⁶⁷ Difference of proportions test between lieutenants and colonels statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 4.40$).

⁶⁸ Difference of proportions test between lieutenants and colonels statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 5.22$)

involvement with the Time Phased Force and Deployment Data (TPFDD) during the lead-up to the Iraq War. The TPFDD, which Rumsfeld famously called a “blunt, crude instrument” is a tool used to manage the deployment flow of military units into a theater of operations (Rumsfeld 2003). While Rumsfeld felt the TPFDD was a Cold War relic, others criticized him for micromanaging the process. Retired Army General Barry McCaffrey remarked that Rumsfeld

sat on each element for weeks and wanted an explanation for every unit called up out of the National Guard and Reserve, and argued about every 42-man maintenance detachment. Why would a businessman want to deal with the micromanagement of the force? The bottom line is, a lack of trust that these Army generals knew what they were doing (Loeb 2003).

Most Army officers I surveyed probably agreed with McCaffrey’s assessment, as 56% responded that the proper role for military leaders was to insist when it came to determining what types of units should be deployed. Party affiliation was a differentiating factor again, with Republicans (60%) more likely to insist than Democrats (48%).⁶⁹

It is clear from the responses that Army officers believe there are circumstances when it is appropriate for senior military officers to be insistent with their civilian superiors, including the President, but also recognize there are also political waters into which the military should not wade. Army officers I surveyed recognized that military leaders should be neutral when it comes to generating support for an intervention, as this is beyond the realm of expertise of providing military advice and could draw military professionals into a political debate. Likewise, most Army officers felt that on decisions whether to intervene and on what the goals or policy should be, the most appropriate role

⁶⁹ Difference of proportions test between Republicans and Democrats statistically significant at $p < .001$ ($z = 5.24$).

for senior military leaders was an advisory one. However, in four other instances in which Army officers thought senior military leaders should be insistent, they responded so because they felt this was well within their purview to insist – indications that support for professional supremacists, if not McMasterism, is alive and well within the officer corps.

Where scholars like Cohen take aim, however, is not so much with the scenarios themselves, but that officers find it acceptable to “insist” at all when providing their military advice to the Commander-in-Chief. Admittedly, there is a degree of artificiality with this battery of questions, as there is in almost every survey. What is unknown, for example, is how far respondents would go in insisting on their point of view. Should the president discard military advice, would respondents advocate that senior military leaders salute and execute the orders or resign in opposition?⁷⁰ While Cohen and others are troubled by the prospect of senior military leaders who feel justified insisting on their viewpoint in matters of committing U.S. forces abroad, the question does not address the manner in which such advice is offered (e.g., in private, candid discussions or in a public forum), which, depending on the circumstances, would carry very different implications for civil-military relations.

Party affiliation was a factor in the scenarios in which Army officers felt it was appropriate for military leaders to insist. Republicans were more likely than Democrats

⁷⁰ Of late, several civil-military relations scholars have given recent attention to the appropriateness of military dissent and its impact on the state of civil-military relations. Three notable works are worth mentioning. First, for a good overview of the alternatives military leaders may turn to, see Brooks (2009). Brooks addresses different tactics (public appeal, grandstanding, politicking, alliance building, and shoulder tapping) used by military leaders in pushing their agendas and assesses the appropriateness and implications for civil-military relations. Likewise, Lovelace and Wong (2008) develop a model of options for military officers when weighing dissent, based on the perceived threat to national security and extent to which civilian leaders seem to resist military expertise. Finally, Snider (2008) places the issue of dissent in within a broader discussion of the professional military ethic and outlines five factors that military leaders should weigh carefully when considering public dissent.

to suggest that military leaders should insist – from setting rules of engagement (44% to 32%), to ensuring clear political and military goals exist (57% to 50%), and deciding what kind of military units should be used to accomplish all tasks (60% to 48%). This is generally in line with Republican responses to the earlier normative questions I asked. Republicans were also more likely to attribute domestic party politics as the motivation behind civilian leaders’ decisions regarding military matters and to prefer civilians to let the military take control over running wars than Democrats. It is unclear whether Republicans’ higher level of distrust in government and civilian leadership reflects partisan rationalization and is a temporal reaction to having a Democrat in the White House or if they are simply more cynical and skeptical of their civilian superiors in general than Democrats. Moreover, while it did not manifest itself as partisan relabeling, Republican officers’ low trust levels in civilian government leaders may be a reflection of their dissatisfaction with the Bush Administration’s management of both wars. Regardless of the root cause, it is a troubling sign for those who feel that mutual trust and respect are necessary ingredients for healthy and functioning civil-military relations.

A compelling case could be made for asserting that Army officers serving today have grown more cynical, display higher levels of distrust in government, and be more apt to insist on particular courses of action in their dialogue with senior civilian leaders as a result of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. However, officers serving today are actually less inclined to insist than officers from a similar cohort who served a decade ago. Table 5.10 compares the responses of Army majors, lieutenant colonels, and colonels I surveyed against those surveyed in the TISS study a decade prior. While officers

generally responded in a similar fashion in both surveys, there are a few nuances worth mentioning.

First, in each of the four categories in which Army officers felt the appropriate role was to insist, a smaller majority of officers chose insist today than in the TISS survey. Second, a greater percentage of officers today suggested that military leaders should be neutral in generating support for the intervention (60% today compared to 48% in the TISS survey). These two findings suggest that a softening of the McMasterism evident in the late-1990s has taken place within today's officer corps. Officers today still feel it is within senior military leaders' purview to insist on certain operational matters, but not to the extent officers did a decade ago. Similarly, more officers today seem to draw a dividing line at issues that are clearly in the political or strategic realm. Their hesitancy to do anything but remain neutral or advise when it comes to generating public support for an intervention may reflect the military's evolution in thinking as a result of the Iraq War. Charged with executing a war plan and wanting it to succeed, it is inevitable that the military will conflate the two, which can result in overly-optimistic battlefield assessments, thereby damaging the military's credibility as an impartial institution.⁷¹ I cannot help but wonder if these findings suggest Army officers have

⁷¹ The need to maintain public support in a costly, at times unpopular war, especially a counterinsurgency, carries significant implications for the relationship between the military and the media. When conditions in the war deteriorate, the media naturally gravitates to covering stories with negative overtones, while the military feels the press tends to overemphasize bad news at the expense of positive developments (McCormick Tribune Foundation 2005). When conditions sour and military leaders wade into the public opinion pool, the tendency, whether accurate or not, is for the military to be perceived as cheerleaders. One reason why the military may have been susceptible in wanting to export good news from Iraq and sway public opinion at home is a cultural one: the military, by nature, is conditioned to be optimistic. Journalist James Kitfield has remarked that "U.S. Army officers are indoctrinated from birth to see the glass half-full; reporters are likewise indoctrinated by their professional ethos to see the glass half-empty" (Kitfield 2006). Finally, the military is not solely to blame for this conflation. As Collins (2010) points out, the Bush Administration was all too willing to make General Petraeus the Administration's "de facto spokesman" on the Iraq War. Despite General Petraeus's credibility, many would argue that such conflation endangers the military's neutrality and professional ethic.

become increasingly aware of the peril of being labeled cheerleaders and the need to leave the task of generating and maintaining public support for interventions to civilian political leaders.

Finally, a smaller percentage of officers serving today felt that military leaders should advise when deciding to intervene (77% today compared to 87% in the TISS survey) and when deciding what the goals or policy should be (59% today compared to 71% in the TISS survey). Put another way, officers I surveyed were more apt to favor senior military leaders taking a more active stance (advocating or insisting) in these two scenarios than officers surveyed under the TISS study a decade ago. It is highly likely this change in opinion is another effect of U.S. Army officers' experience in Iraq and Afghanistan, but without additional data, it is little more than speculation on my part. For example, the slight increase in percentage of senior officers (from 10% in the late 1990s to 17% in 2009) who feel senior military should advise or insist when it comes to deciding whether to intervene may be a result of Army officers re-assessing the Bush Administration's decision to invade Iraq in 2003.⁷² Likewise, the increase in senior Army officers' preference to advocate or insist (from 21% in the TISS study to 32% in 2009) in deciding what the goals or policy should be may also reflect the complexities of counterinsurgency warfare in Iraq and Afghanistan and the difficulty in formulating (and maintaining) clear goals and objectives.⁷³ On the other hand, reading too much into these figures may be counterproductive; with each of these two scenarios, despite the slight

⁷² Of note, in a *Military Times* poll conducted in December 2008, only 42% of active duty military respondents felt the U.S. should have invaded Iraq. Thirty-four percent felt the U.S. should not have invaded, and 23% either had no opinion or declined to answer.

⁷³ Observers noted that after completing his Afghanistan review, President Obama continued to use language such as "defeat al-Qaeda" but with regards to the Taliban, shifted to saying the Administration's goal was to "reverse the Taliban's momentum and deny it the ability to overthrow the government" (Beinart 2009).

change in opinion that has occurred since the TISS survey, the majority of Army officers still felt the proper role for senior uniformed leaders was an advisory one.

Conclusion

Overall, my findings on Army officers' views of civilian leaders and the role of senior military leadership during wartime are generally consistent with findings from the TISS survey a decade ago. Army officers display a good degree of suspicion with regard to views of their civilian leaders and feel it is well within their prerogative to be assertive when providing military advice. Despite this, their views have moderated some from the late-1990s, which may have been the high water mark for military cynicism under the Clinton Administration. The impact of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are also evident, as a smaller percentage of Army officers felt that civilians should turn over running the war to the military, and more felt military leaders should be neutral on generating support for an intervention. There are some signs of McMasterism, but to a lesser degree than we saw a decade ago.

The findings here also suggest that party affiliation does indeed play a role in how Army officers view interactions between senior civilian and military leaders. Officers who identify with the Republican Party display lower levels of trust for their civilian superiors and are more likely to advocate military leaders being assertive and insistent when offering military advice on the use of force. The implication, of course, is that officers identifying with the Republican Party are the ones most apt to embrace the McMasterism view of civil-military relations. What is unclear is whether their views are a reflection of being the out-party (which they had only been for less than four months at the time of my survey), or if Republican-leaning officers are less inclined to trust civilian

leaders, regardless of party, to make the right decisions on military matters. In either regard, it is not an encouraging sign and represents the clearest case of a challenge to Huntington's "objective control" since the advent of the all-volunteer force.

Table 5.1 Views of Civilian Leaders

	Views of Civilian Leaders		
	<i>Percent checking "agree" or "agree strongly"</i>		
	When civilians tell the military what to do, domestic partisan politics rather than national security requirements are often the primary motivation	In wartime, civilian government leaders should let the military take over running the war	To be respected as Commander-in-Chief, the president should have served in uniform
TOTAL	57.95	37.69	36.77
Lieutenants	62.42	45.72	45.33
Captains	61.47	42.75	43.05
Majors	57.38	34.49	35.84
Lieutenant Colonels	54.73	34.75	30.86
Colonels	49.35	26.36	19.12
Combat Arms	57.71	35.17	36.09
Combat Support	61.63	37.01	39.62
Combat Service Support	56.32	40.60	36.46
Special Branches	57.41	40.09	36.14
Male Officers	58.49	37.31	36.38
Female Officers	55.16	40.41	41.43
White Officers	59.46	37.08	38.44
Black Officers	47.23	34.79	13.61
Hispanic Officers	54.84	51.15	45.62
Asian-American Officers	57.14	33.08	39.55
Iraq War veterans	57.85	36.86	37.73
Afghanistan War veterans	60.96	35.09	34.61
Iraq + Afghanistan War Veterans	60.38	35.81	36.19
Officers with no Iraq or Afghanistan experience	57.17	41.28	35.79
Democrats	52.95	31.18	17.67
Independents	54.33	35.64	28.15
Republicans	61.62	41.02	45.66

Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009

Table 5.2 Views of Civilian Leaders: A Comparison Against the TISS Survey

	Views of Civilian Leaders		
	<i>Percent checking "agree" or "agree strongly"</i>		
	When civilians tell the military what to do, domestic partisan politics rather than national security requirements are often the primary motivation	In wartime, civilian government leaders should let the military take over running the war	To be respected as Commander-in-Chief, the president should have served in uniform
Triangle Institute for Security Studies Survey, 1998-1999 (n=211)	53.77	56.87	42.18
Democrats	54.54	63.63	72.72
Independents	45.71	55.88	32.35
Republicans	55.94	56.64	41.96
Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009 (n=2,220)	55.00	33.12	31.08
Democrats	51.92	27.80	14.42
Independents	52.16	30.25	20.06
Republicans	57.71	36.06	38.16

* Data reflects responses by Army Majors, Lieutenant Colonels and Colonels only

Table 5.3 The Proper Role of Senior Military Leadership: Deciding Whether to Intervene

This question asks you to specify the proper role of the senior military leadership in decisions to commit U.S. Armed Forces abroad. Please specify the proper role of the military for each element.

	<i>percent checking each option</i>				
	Be Neutral	Advise	Advocate	Insist	No Opinion
TOTAL (n = 3,983)	5.98	71.81	13.11	6.50	2.61
Lieutenants	6.91	62.83	15.21	8.76	6.30
Captains	6.85	66.89	15.20	7.79	3.28
Majors	6.06	74.68	12.51	5.56	1.19
Lieutenant Colonels	5.46	78.28	10.44	4.73	1.09
Colonels	3.35	79.12	10.82	5.41	1.29
Combat Arms	5.96	72.81	13.04	6.33	1.86
Combat Support	5.83	73.62	11.95	5.54	3.06
Combat Service Support	6.00	72.41	11.42	6.58	3.58
Special Branches	6.21	66.61	16.93	7.76	2.48
Male Officers	6.15	72.93	12.64	6.15	2.13
Female Officers	4.91	65.66	16.23	8.49	4.72
White Officers	5.79	72.30	13.93	6.15	1.82
Black Officers	5.42	76.27	8.81	5.76	3.73
Hispanic Officers	8.76	70.05	8.76	7.37	5.07
Asian-American Officers	9.09	64.39	10.61	9.09	6.82
Iraq War veterans	5.81	73.14	12.45	6.68	1.91
Afghanistan War veterans	6.11	72.34	12.57	7.19	1.80
Iraq + Afghanistan War Veterans	5.90	73.33	11.05	8.19	1.52
Officers with no Iraq or Afghanistan experience	6.29	68.56	14.27	6.29	4.59
Democrats	8.37	71.14	11.83	5.92	2.74
Independents	7.60	70.81	12.95	5.01	3.63
Republicans	4.85	72.65	13.78	6.98	1.74

Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009

Table 5.4 The Proper Role of Senior Military Leadership: Setting Rules of Engagement

This question asks you to specify the proper role of the senior military leadership in decisions to commit U.S. Armed Forces abroad. Please specify the proper role of the military for each element.

	<i>percent checking each option</i>				
	Be Neutral	Advise	Advocate	Insist	No Opinion
TOTAL	1.18	25.50	30.80	40.62	1.91
Lieutenants	2.30	26.84	26.53	39.57	4.75
Captains	1.32	26.32	28.95	40.98	2.44
Majors	0.69	25.20	32.54	40.77	0.79
Lieutenant Colonels	0.85	23.33	33.17	42.04	0.61
Colonels	1.03	25.52	33.76	38.66	1.03
Combat Arms	0.75	22.31	32.01	43.63	1.31
Combat Support	0.88	28.91	28.47	39.27	2.48
Combat Service Support	2.13	28.99	27.54	38.84	2.51
Special Branches	1.09	24.42	35.46	37.17	1.87
Male Officers	1.08	24.80	31.68	41.02	1.41
Female Officers	1.70	27.92	26.98	38.87	4.53
White Officers	0.99	22.21	32.94	42.40	1.46
Black Officers	2.04	44.56	21.09	29.59	2.72
Hispanic Officers	1.38	34.56	28.57	32.72	2.76
Asian-American Officers	2.27	31.06	25.00	37.12	4.55
Iraq War veterans	1.05	25.65	31.02	41.01	1.28
Afghanistan War veterans	1.08	25.57	32.17	40.10	1.08
Iraq + Afghanistan War Veterans	1.72	25.19	31.87	40.27	0.95
Officers with no Iraq or Afghanistan experience	1.89	24.90	29.58	39.84	3.78
Democrats	1.73	33.48	30.88	31.60	2.31
Independents	1.38	26.99	30.97	38.24	2.42
Republicans	0.77	22.52	31.20	44.36	1.15

Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009

Table 5.5 The Proper Role of Senior Military Leadership: Ensuring that Clear Political and Military Goals Exist

This question asks you to specify the proper role of the senior military leadership in decisions to commit U.S. Armed Forces abroad. Please specify the proper role of the military for each element.

	<i>percent checking each option</i>				
	Be Neutral	Advise	Advocate	Insist	No Opinion
TOTAL	1.56	20.12	20.77	55.52	2.03
Lieutenants	2.76	22.27	18.13	52.07	4.76
Captains	2.26	21.43	18.70	55.17	2.44
Majors	0.50	19.96	19.27	59.38	0.89
Lieutenant Colonels	1.09	17.09	24.48	56.36	0.97
Colonels	1.29	19.07	27.06	51.55	1.03
Combat Arms	1.00	17.24	20.22	60.42	1.12
Combat Support	1.60	21.83	18.63	55.02	2.91
Combat Service Support	1.83	23.26	20.46	51.64	2.80
Special Branches	2.49	20.53	24.57	50.23	2.18
Male Officers	1.44	19.50	20.55	57.01	1.50
Female Officers	2.44	23.12	21.43	48.31	4.70
White Officers	1.32	18.05	21.42	57.68	1.52
Black Officers	3.38	31.42	17.23	45.27	2.70
Hispanic Officers	2.30	29.95	17.51	46.54	3.69
Asian-American Officers	3.03	25.76	18.94	46.97	5.30
Iraq War veterans	1.20	20.48	20.29	56.67	1.35
Afghanistan War veterans	1.20	18.80	18.68	60.00	1.32
Iraq + Afghanistan War Veterans	1.14	18.29	17.71	61.71	1.14
Officers with no Iraq or Afghanistan experience	2.58	19.28	22.17	51.99	3.98
Democrats	2.17	24.28	21.10	50.29	2.17
Independents	1.38	20.90	17.62	57.51	2.59
Republicans	1.15	18.43	21.74	57.45	1.23

Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009

Table 5.6 The Proper Role of Senior Military Leadership: Deciding What the Goals or Policy Should Be

This question asks you to specify the proper role of the senior military leadership in decisions to commit U.S. Armed Forces abroad. Please specify the proper role of the military for each element.

	<i>percent checking each option</i>				
	Be Neutral	Advise	Advocate	Insist	No Opinion
TOTAL	8.93	54.94	23.13	10.59	2.41
Lieutenants	10.57	48.24	22.51	13.48	5.21
Captains	9.71	51.37	24.03	12.16	2.73
Majors	8.83	54.96	23.71	11.01	1.49
Lieutenant Colonels	7.53	61.60	22.48	7.17	1.22
Colonels	7.75	62.53	20.93	7.49	1.29
Combat Arms	8.08	57.40	22.39	10.45	1.68
Combat Support	7.71	57.64	21.83	9.61	3.20
Combat Service Support	9.78	52.57	23.33	11.42	2.90
Special Branches	11.08	49.77	26.05	10.45	2.65
Male Officers	9.25	55.53	22.90	10.49	1.83
Female Officers	7.01	51.89	25.19	10.61	5.30
White Officers	8.65	55.70	23.62	10.11	1.92
Black Officers	10.88	55.44	19.05	11.22	3.40
Hispanic Officers	10.65	56.02	18.06	11.57	3.70
Asian-American Officers	9.09	47.73	27.27	12.12	3.79
Iraq War veterans	8.23	56.14	23.00	10.67	1.95
Afghanistan War veterans	6.37	57.45	22.60	11.90	1.68
Iraq + Afghanistan War Veterans	6.49	56.87	22.14	12.79	1.72
Officers with no Iraq or Afghanistan experience	11.67	50.65	23.53	10.37	3.79
Democrats	9.84	57.31	20.69	9.12	3.04
Independents	11.05	54.92	21.59	9.50	2.94
Republicans	8.31	54.37	24.63	11.25	1.45

Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009

Table 5.7 The Proper Role of Senior Military Leadership: Generating Public Support for the Intervention

This question asks you to specify the proper role of the senior military leadership in decisions to commit U.S. Armed Forces abroad. Please specify the proper role of the military for each element.

	<i>percent checking each option</i>				
	Be Neutral	Advise	Advocate	Insist	No Opinion
TOTAL	55.76	23.35	11.07	5.08	4.73
Lieutenants	46.47	25.46	11.96	7.82	8.28
Captains	52.12	24.93	11.43	5.85	5.67
Majors	57.64	23.02	11.21	4.46	3.67
Lieutenant Colonels	62.61	21.19	9.99	3.65	2.56
Colonels	63.31	20.93	10.08	2.84	2.84
Combat Arms	57.16	22.29	11.64	4.61	4.30
Combat Support	57.52	24.82	9.05	3.94	4.67
Combat Service Support	52.37	24.69	11.13	5.91	5.91
Special Branches	56.01	22.46	11.70	5.93	3.90
Male Officers	57.85	22.53	10.83	4.84	3.94
Female Officers	45.37	28.36	11.72	5.86	8.70
White Officers	58.61	22.40	10.04	5.00	3.94
Black Officers	46.60	26.19	12.93	5.78	8.50
Hispanic Officers	43.32	34.10	12.44	5.53	4.61
Asian-American Officers	46.56	25.19	19.08	2.29	6.87
Iraq War veterans	55.78	24.09	10.73	5.12	4.29
Afghanistan War veterans	54.87	23.23	12.64	5.05	4.21
Iraq + Afghanistan War Veterans	54.02	23.37	13.22	5.56	3.83
Officers with no Iraq or Afghanistan experience	55.73	21.54	11.76	5.18	5.78
Democrats	56.07	24.13	10.40	4.62	4.77
Independents	58.16	22.22	9.38	3.99	6.25
Republicans	56.27	23.06	11.64	5.50	3.54

Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009

Table 5.8 The Proper Role of Senior Military Leadership: Developing an Exit Strategy

This question asks you to specify the proper role of the senior military leadership in decisions to commit U.S. Armed Forces abroad. Please specify the proper role of the military for each element.

	<i>percent checking each option</i>				
	Be Neutral	Advise	Advocate	Insist	No Opinion
TOTAL	1.21	26.41	24.52	45.59	2.27
Lieutenants	2.00	26.96	20.65	44.38	6.01
Captains	1.13	27.43	23.09	45.81	2.54
Majors	1.20	25.00	26.59	46.12	1.10
Lieutenant Colonels	0.85	24.73	28.26	45.31	0.85
Colonels	0.78	29.79	22.02	46.37	1.04
Combat Arms	1.12	25.86	25.36	45.85	1.81
Combat Support	1.32	26.75	25.88	43.42	2.63
Combat Service Support	1.55	28.32	21.14	46.17	2.81
Special Branches	0.78	24.57	26.44	46.03	2.18
Male Officers	1.17	26.30	24.70	46.02	1.81
Female Officers	1.70	26.33	23.30	44.13	4.55
White Officers	1.03	24.88	26.20	46.00	1.89
Black Officers	1.70	34.01	17.01	44.90	2.38
Hispanic Officers	2.31	32.87	18.52	43.52	2.78
Asian-American Officers	0.76	29.01	25.19	41.22	3.82
Iraq War veterans	1.06	26.56	24.79	45.86	1.73
Afghanistan War veterans	1.20	25.78	24.10	47.10	1.32
Iraq + Afghanistan War Veterans	1.15	25.19	23.66	48.66	1.34
Officers with no Iraq or Afghanistan experience	1.60	25.83	23.82	44.74	4.00
Democrats	1.74	28.99	22.32	44.78	2.17
Independents	0.69	24.57	23.70	48.27	2.77
Republicans	1.11	25.34	25.77	46.24	1.54

Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009

Table 5.9 The Proper Role of Senior Military Leadership: Deciding What Kinds of Military Units Will Be Used to Accomplish All Tasks

This question asks you to specify the proper role of the senior military leadership in decisions to commit U.S. Armed Forces abroad. Please specify the proper role of the military for each element.

	<i>percent checking each option</i>				
	Be Neutral	Advise	Advocate	Insist	No Opinion
TOTAL	1.26	21.02	20.11	55.58	2.04
Lieutenants	2.15	21.93	19.33	51.07	5.52
Captains	1.51	22.98	18.64	54.33	2.54
Majors	0.69	20.24	21.83	56.55	0.69
Lieutenant Colonels	1.09	18.49	19.71	60.10	0.61
Colonels	1.03	20.93	22.22	54.78	1.03
Combat Arms	0.68	18.79	21.53	57.56	1.43
Combat Support	1.60	22.74	17.49	55.83	2.33
Combat Service Support	1.84	23.89	19.05	52.32	2.90
Special Branches	1.40	20.25	21.34	55.14	1.87
Male Officers	1.14	20.34	20.55	56.40	1.56
Female Officers	2.08	24.76	17.96	50.85	4.35
White Officers	1.13	18.93	21.14	57.18	1.62
Black Officers	1.69	33.56	13.56	48.14	3.05
Hispanic Officers	1.84	29.95	18.89	46.08	3.23
Asian-American Officers	2.29	22.90	18.32	52.67	3.82
Iraq War veterans	1.13	21.35	20.86	55.24	1.43
Afghanistan War veterans	1.32	20.79	17.91	59.01	0.96
Iraq + Afghanistan War Veterans	1.34	19.31	19.89	58.51	0.96
Officers with no Iraq or Afghanistan experience	1.60	19.34	19.84	55.23	3.99
Democrats	2.02	27.02	20.52	48.41	2.02
Independents	1.04	21.45	21.45	53.46	2.60
Republicans	0.89	18.02	20.06	59.71	1.32

Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009

Table 5.10 The Proper Role of Senior Military Leadership: A Comparison Against the TISS Survey*

This question asks you to specify the proper role of the senior military leadership in decisions to commit U.S. Armed Forces abroad. The following are typical elements of the decisions the President must make. Please specify the proper role of the military for each element.

	<i>percent checking each option</i>									
	Be Neutral		Advise		Advocate		Insist		No Opinion	
	1998-99	2009	1998-99	2009	1998-99	2009	1998-99	2009	1998-99	2009
Deciding Whether to Intervene	3.33	5.30	86.67	76.70	6.67	11.52	3.33	5.25	0.00	1.24
Setting Rules of Engagement	0.00	0.79	18.48	24.72	36.02	32.89	45.50	40.75	0.00	0.84
Ensuring That Clear Political and Military Goals Exist	0.47	0.88	11.85	18.88	23.70	22.50	63.98	56.68	0.00	1.06
Deciding What the Goals or Policy Should Be	7.58	8.09	71.09	58.55	18.01	22.89	3.32	9.01	0.00	1.46
Generating Public Support for the Intervention	49.28	60.14	19.14	22.01	22.97	10.65	6.70	3.93	1.91	3.27
Developing an Exit Strategy	0.00	1.02	19.91	25.78	28.91	26.31	51.18	45.84	0.00	1.06
Deciding what kinds of military units (air vs. naval, heavy vs. light) will be used to accomplish all tasks.	0.00	0.88	10.90	19.83	23.22	21.02	65.88	57.46	0.00	0.80

Triangle Institute for Security Studies Survey, 1998-1999 (n=214)

Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009 (n=2,266)

*Data reflects responses by Army Majors, Lieutenant Colonels and Colonels only

Chapter 6

Conclusion

This project has its roots in both political behavior and civil-military relations scholarship and was motivated by two broad complementary research questions. First, I sought to examine the stability of partisan attitudes among an elite group of individuals, active duty Army officers, who since the advent of the all-volunteer force, have historically affiliated with the Republican Party. I began by questioning whether or not service in the Army contributes to pushing officers to the right of the political spectrum and whether or not significant political events such as the strain associated in fighting two wars have an effect on their long-standing affiliation with the Republican Party. Second, I wanted to better understand the nature of this elite group's affiliation with the Republican Party, exploring the determinants of Army officers' party identification, the level of their political activism and interest, and how party affiliation might impact operational decisions and the interplay between senior civilian and military leaders during wartime. In other words, I wanted to see if the officer corps' traditional preference for the Republican Party really mattered and carried implications for civil-military relations today. In this final brief chapter, I highlight the contributions this study makes towards our understanding of both political behavior and civil-military relations, identify areas for future research, and close with a few normative prescriptions for the officer corps.

This project contributes first to our understanding of political behavior and the stability of partisan attitudes by reaffirming what University of Michigan scholars first argued fifty years ago: that partisan attitudes are formed through socialization and by key demographic factors and are highly durable over one's lifetime. Despite the fact the Army has a strong, unique organizational culture, and despite survey research which has

found most Army officers to generally be conservative Republicans, I found little evidence to suggest that service in the Army causes its officers to increasingly affiliate with the Republican Party. I found virtually no evidence of any partisan relabeling, and while one out of five officers admitted to becoming more conservative since joining the Army, most officers reported no change to their party affiliation or that their pre-existing affiliation had grown stronger.

Similarly, I found that Army officers' political views remained intact and largely unaffected by combat deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. In chapter 3, I speculated that the strain on the Army caused by repeat deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, coupled with deteriorating civil-military relations surrounding the planning and conduct of the two wars might have caused Army officers to revisit their partisanship and perhaps question their longstanding allegiance to the Republican Party. Yet findings from my survey conducted in early 2009 suggested that deployments, even extended ones, had virtually no effect on party identification or partisan change. In sum, I found Army officers to exhibit tremendous stability in their partisan attitudes, as the results from my survey generally mirrored the findings from past surveys conducted over the last thirty years on military officer partisanship. Despite whatever hardships the Army has endured the past nine years, it appears that the Republican Party continues to maintain issue ownership over military matters and national defense, at least in the minds of most Army officers serving today.

Given the consistent rate of affiliation of Army officers with the Republican Party over the past four decades, and the concerns among civil-military relations scholars that the military's officer corps has become politicized of late, I wanted to examine Army

officers' affiliation with the Republican Party in much greater depth. In doing so, this study has helped fill a gap on the implications of military officers' preference for the Republican Party. For example, in chapter 2, I found little to suggest that service-specific variables affect officers' affiliation with the Republican Party, but rather that their political ideology and their parents' party identification are the strongest determinants of their partisan identification. I also found that the same demographic variables that help predict the general public's political views, such as age, race, and gender, do the same for Army officers. Finally, I found that the majority of Army officers I surveyed, regardless of their party preference, were weak partisans.

My greatest contributions to our understanding of the implications for Army officers' preference for the Republican Party arguably come in chapters 4 and 5. In chapter 4, I examined the level of political activism and interest among Army officers, seeking to understand the role party affiliation plays. My findings were nuanced, to say the least. For example, while I found that most Army officers voted at a rate greater than the general public, I also found other measures of political activity to be generally muted for Army officers. And despite the fact that most Army officers were Republicans, I found Democratic-affiliated officers to be slightly more politically active. Yet at the same time, officers who affiliated with the Democratic Party were more likely to express discomfort talking about politics in the workplace. Similarly, I found that junior officers who were leaving Army service affiliated with the Democratic Party at a higher rate than the rest of their junior officer peers, calling into question whether having a minority political viewpoint was a contributing factor to junior officer attrition.

Needless to say, my findings painted a complex picture of political activism. In general, I have to disagree with the claim that Army officers have become politicized. For most Army officers, the only overt act of partisanship that they participate in is voting, an altogether private act. And the fact that Republican officers were actually less politically active than Democrats questions whether we can truly say that Army officers, who generally prefer the Republican Party, are politicized. Nonetheless, I uncovered indicators that do suggest politics has been brought into the workplace, and for some – mainly officers who feel aligned to the Democratic Party – this has been an uncomfortable proposition.

In chapter 5, I continued my efforts to examine the impact of party affiliation in the officer corps, this time applying party identification to a series of scenarios regarding senior military leaders' role in the decision to commit U.S. troops abroad. Replicating a battery of questions first used in Feaver and Kohn's TISS survey from the late-1990s, I asked Army officers whether they thought the proper role of senior military leaders was to remain neutral, advise, advocate, or insist in seven different scenarios regarding the use of force. Generally speaking, my findings mirrored the results of the TISS survey, with a majority of officers believing it was incumbent upon senior military leaders to insist in four of the seven scenarios. At the same time, I found Republican officers to be more likely to respond that senior military leaders should be insistent and more likely to display lower levels of trust for their civilian superiors than Democratic officers. As with my findings on partisanship and political activism, this may carry the most significant implications for students of civil-military relations, as it suggests that party affiliation does indeed translate into different policy recommendations and outcomes and may

substantively alter the trajectory of military advice during wartime. For practitioners and theorists alike, this is likely far more important than the simple observation that most Army officers tend to be Republican.

Future Opportunities for Research

Continued opportunities for further studies of the military's political attitudes abound. First, as past studies have likewise called for, one of the main takeaways from this project is the need for panel data when trying to chart the political attitudes of the military over time. What is presented here is the next best attempt: replicated questions and comparisons of like-minded samples over time. Panel data of military members on their political attitudes will be difficult to achieve, as the military is typically resistant to surveying its members on their political views, let alone surveying the same cohort again and again over a period of time. For social scientists and civil-military scholars wishing to better understand the dynamics of the military's political attitudes and how they evolve over time, it is necessary, and the military should commit to endorsing such studies.

A similar question worth examining with future research is whether the different branches of the military vary in terms of their party affiliation. While I found no real difference in party affiliation among those who have deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan and those who have not, I would be interested to know whether officers in the Army and Marine Corps may vary in their political views from officers in the Air Force and Navy, two branches that while certainly not untouched by the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, have had a qualitatively different experience than the Army and Marine Corps in terms of deployments, casualties, and stress on the force.

Politics and the Professional Military Ethic

Findings from my *Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War* survey have unearthed several themes that should interest and maybe even concern senior leaders in the Army and civil-military relations scholars. I close this project now by offering a few normative prescriptions for Army leaders based on the empirical observations from my survey research on Army officers' political attitudes. Crisis is a word often overused in civil-military relations studies, but throughout this project I looked for areas where the officer corps might be slightly out of balance – indicators of potential alarm for the profession. None of these areas meet the crisis threshold in my estimation, but left unchecked, they threaten to weaken the professionalism of the officer corps over time.

First is a concern about political discourse in the workplace. Army officers I surveyed displayed some degree of interest in politics, with half indicating that politics was often discussed at work. This is no crime or professional ethic violation, and during wartime, it should be expected that topics of national security, international affairs, and even domestic politics to some degree would often be talked about at work or in the foxhole. However, follow-on questions which asked officers the level of discomfort they felt about talking about politics at work revealed that officers who were Independents or Democrats were more likely to feel uncomfortable than Republicans. This suggests that Republican officers may have the loudest voices, perhaps stifling those with minority viewpoints. Similarly, senior officers were more likely than junior officers to express discomfort, so this could also be that some officers are simply more attuned to the professional ethic of nonpartisanship than others. Certain officers' discomfort may have

less to do with party politics and more to do with the fact politics is discussed at work at all.

A second point of concern is the potential connection between junior officer attrition and higher rates of affiliation with the Democratic Party. Approximately 37% of junior officers in the process of separating from the Army identified with the Democratic Party, compared to just 24% of junior officers overall, and in logistic regressions, I found junior officer attrition to be a good predictor of affiliation with the Democratic Party.

What I cannot say for sure, however, is if affiliating with the Democratic Party is a contributing factor to junior officers deciding to leave the service. If it is, at best, it may just be evidence of self-selection; at its worst, it could be evidence of political pressure within the ranks.

The third area worth examining closer is the professional norms surrounding the political activism of retired officers, especially retired generals. Officers I surveyed drew a real distinction between being on active duty and being retired when it came to expressing political views and voicing criticism of senior government leaders. In general they were very supportive of retired officers having little or no constraints in expressing their political views in a public fashion. The trouble with this view, however, is that it either presumes that officers no longer fall under the same professional ethic once retired or that when retired officers speak out, they no longer speak for the U.S. Army. That may be the case for most retired lieutenant colonels and colonels, but since September 11th, dozens of retired general officers have made a second career as military analysts for cable television networks, and a defining characteristic of the “Revolt of the Generals” in

2006 was that these recently retired generals were tacitly speaking on behalf of their active duty brethren (Moten 2010).

Each of these three concerns is indicative of a larger issue: now in its eighth year of sustained combat operations, outside of the standard calls by senior leaders to remain neutral during campaign and election season, the Army officer corps has largely dedicated little attention to the nonpartisan ethic and the impacts that violations have on the professionalism of the institution. Understandably, the stress on the force, the persistent conflict in which the Army is engaged, and the learning and adaptation required to fight protracted counterinsurgency campaigns has occupied center stage for Army officers today. Yet, at a recent event dedicated to revitalizing the officer corps at the Center for New American Security, Marine General James N. Mattis spoke to this, commenting, “I believe the single primary deficiency among senior U.S. officers today is the lack of opportunity for reflective thought” (Kruzel 2010). While the frenetic pace at which the officer corps has been operating has offered precious little opportunities to examine professional ethic issues, I argue it is even more important that these themes be addressed in the midst of protracted wars.

Re-examining the call to nonpartisanship has less to do with how Army officers vote or with which political party they identify. As my research has shown, officers’ politics carry real implications for the fabric of the officer corps, the manner in which senior military leaders provide their military advice to senior leaders during wartime, levels of trust between the military and its civilian overseers, and the impact retired officers have on the active force when they interject themselves in political realm. It is in this regard that party affiliation really matters for the officer corps, not whether the

officer corps is red or blue. In fact, the Army and civil-military relations scholars might be better served spending less time worrying that most of its officers are Republican and more time engaging in frank discussions within the officer corps about the boundaries of political discourse. Simply put, it is not a problem that most officers are Republican; it is a problem if they act as if all officers should be.

Despite these concerns, there are signs of hope. The U.S. Military Academy and the Strategic Studies Institute at the U.S. Army War College are two notable centers that devote great energy to the professional military ethic.⁷⁴ Army Colonel Matthew Moten (2010) has written convincingly of the need for a clear articulation of a professional ethic for the officer corps and argues it is needed now more than ever as the Army remains engaged in two wars.⁷⁵ In his proposed statement of a professional ethic, he includes the following line:

[I] conform strictly to the constitutional principle of military subordination to civilian authority; render candid professional advice when appropriate, and I faithfully execute the policies of the United States Government to the best of my ability; and I am non-partisan—I do not involve myself or my subordinates in domestic politics” (Moten 2010, 22).

These are good initiatives, and it is unsurprising that these themes are being addressed at West Point and in classrooms at the Army War College. But these are notable exceptions, and officers should think critically about the implications politics has on the officer corps’ professional ethic long before they reach the rank of colonel. In my research, I found repeated evidence that junior officers were less likely to acknowledge

⁷⁴ The U.S. Military Academy (USMA) hosts the Simon Center for the Professional Military Ethic. Its mission statement is to “supervise the cadet honor code and respect programs, and develop, coordinate, and integrate curriculum and other activities within USMA on the professional military ethic to promote an understanding of officership and the development of a professional self-concept within all graduates.”

⁷⁵ See also Snider, Oh and Toner (2009) for their assessment of Army doctrine’s limitations in addressing the professional military ethic.

these professional norms, were more likely to display cynicism or lack of trust in civilian leaders, and less likely to provide the normatively correct answer to questions of political expression – all reasons why the Army should engage junior officers in this dialogue at an earlier point in their professional development.

In this regard, Army Vice Chief of Staff General Peter Chiarelli should be applauded for his initiative in establishing a virtual conference with officers of all ranks across the Army titled, “The Future of the U.S. Army Officer Corps.” Hosted by the Strategic Studies Institute and using a combination of journal articles, video interviews with senior leaders, and blog entries, the conference has invited officers to engage in timely discussions on identifying, retaining, and developing talent within the officer corps. Engaging in frank dialogue on the implications politics has on the officer corps would be a natural fit for future conference topics and would reach a larger target audience, especially junior officers who likely have given little thought to these implications. The more reflective thought and candid dialogue the Army can encourage on the ethic of nonpartisanship, the healthier the officer corps will remain.

Appendix A

Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey Instrument

About Your Military Service

1. How would you best describe your specialty/branch?
 - a. Combat Arms (air defense artillery, armor, aviation, engineers, field artillery, infantry)
 - b. Combat Support (chemical, military intelligence, military police, signal)
 - c. Combat Service Support (adjutant general, finance, logistics, medical service)
 - d. Special Branches (chaplains, judge advocate general, medical/dental/veterinary, nursing)

2. What was your source of commissioning?
 - a. Service Academy
 - b. ROTC
 - c. OCS
 - d. Other

3. Approximately how many years of service do you currently have? _____

4. What is your current rank?
 - a. O-1/O-2
 - b. O-3
 - c. O-4
 - d. O-5
 - e. O-6

5. Are you currently in the process of separating from the Army or do you plan on separating from the Army in the next six months?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

6. Has a member of your immediate family (parent, spouse, sibling, child) served, or do they currently serve on active duty in the military?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

7. Have you deployed to Iraq?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

8. How many cumulative months have you spent deployed to Iraq? _____

9. Have you deployed to Afghanistan?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

10. How many cumulative months have you spent deployed to Afghanistan? _____

Civic Participation

11. Do you agree or disagree with this statement: "Politics is something often talked about at work."

- a. Strongly Disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Neutral
- d. Agree
- e. Strongly Agree

12. How often do you feel uncomfortable about expressing your political views with your co-workers?

- a. Hardly ever
- b. Sometimes
- c. Often
- d. Almost always

13. Did you vote in the 2008 presidential election?

- a. Yes
- b. No

14. Following my career in the military, I would consider the following:

A. Becoming more involved in politics and campaigns

B. Running for political office

C. Joining or working for an interest group

- 1. Strongly Disagree
- 2. Disagree
- 3. Neutral
- 4. Agree
- 5. Strongly Agree

15. The following questions all relate to permissible political activities by uniformed members of the military as outlined in Department of Defense Directive 1344.10. As a private individual (not representing the U.S. Army), have you ever done any of the following during an election or campaign?

A. Given money to an individual candidate running for public office or to a political party?

B. Worn a campaign button or put a campaign sticker on your car?

C. Encouraged other members in the military to vote?

D. Joined a partisan or nonpartisan political club and attend its meetings when not in uniform?

E. Expressed your personal opinion on political candidates or issues to others?

F. Attended a partisan or nonpartisan political fundraiser, meeting, rally, debate, convention, or any other political activity as a non-uniformed spectator?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

16. Since you have been in the Army, have other officers ever encouraged you to vote one way or another?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Civil-Military Relations

17. This question asks for your opinion on a number of statements concerning the military's role in civilian society.

A. Members of the active duty military should not publicly criticize senior members of the civilian branch of the government.

B. Members of the active duty military should be allowed to publicly express their political views just like any other citizen.

C. Members of the active duty military should vote.

- 1. Strongly Disagree
- 2. Disagree
- 3. Neutral
- 4. Agree
- 5. Strongly Agree

18. This question asks for your opinion on the role of retired officers' roles in civilian society.

A. Retired officers should not publicly criticize senior members of the civilian branch of the government.

B. Retired officers should be allowed to publicly express their political views just like any other citizen.

C. It is proper for retired generals to publicly express their political views.

- 1. Strongly Disagree
- 2. Disagree
- 3. Neutral
- 4. Agree
- 5. Strongly Agree

19. This question asks you to specify the proper role of the senior military leadership in decisions to commit U.S. Armed Forces abroad. The following are typical elements of the decisions the President must make. Please specify the proper role of the military for each element.

A. Deciding whether to intervene

B. Setting rules of engagement

C. Ensuring that clear political and military goals exist

D. Deciding what the goals or policy should be

E. Generating public support for the intervention

F. Developing an exit strategy

G. Deciding what kinds of military units (air vs. naval, heavy vs. light) will be used to accomplish all tasks

1. Be Neutral
2. Advise
3. Advocate
4. Insist
5. No Opinion

20. This question asks for your opinion on a number of statements concerning relations between the military and senior civilian leaders.

A. When civilians tell the military what to do, domestic partisan politics rather than national security requirements are often the primary motivation.

B. In wartime, civilian government leaders should let the military take over running the war.

C. To be respected as Commander-in-Chief, the President should have served in uniform.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

Your Personal Beliefs

21. Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a strong Democrat, a not very strong Democrat, an Independent who leans Democrat, an Independent, an Independent who leans Republican, a not very strong Republican, a strong Republican, or what?

- A. Strong Democrat
- B. Not very strong Democrat
- C. Independent who leans Democrat
- D. Independent
- E. Independent who leans Republican
- F. Not very strong Republican
- G. Strong Republican
- H. Other

22. Generally speaking, would you call your parents (or guardians) Democrats, Republicans, Independents, or what?

- A. Democrats
- B. Independents
- C. Split Affiliations (one is a Democrat and one is a Republican, etc.)
- D. Republicans
- E. Other

23. Generally speaking, how would you describe the officer corps in general?

- A. Most are Democrats
- B. Some are Democrats and some are Republicans
- C. Most are Republicans
- D. Not Sure

24. Here is a 7-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from very liberal to very conservative. Where would you place yourself on this scale?

- A. Very liberal
- B. Liberal
- C. Somewhat liberal
- D. Moderate
- E. Somewhat conservative
- F. Conservative
- G. Very conservative

25. Where would you place the officer corps in general on this scale?

- A. Very liberal
- B. Liberal
- C. Somewhat liberal
- D. Moderate
- E. Somewhat conservative
- F. Conservative
- G. Very conservative

26. Since joining the Army, would you say your political views have changed?

- A. Yes, I am more liberal
- B. Yes, I am less conservative
- C. Yes, I am more moderate
- D. Yes, I am less liberal
- E. Yes, I am more conservative
- F. No, my political views have not changed much

27. Since joining the Army, has your party affiliation changed?

- A. Yes, I feel more attached to the Democratic Party
- B. Yes, I feel less attached to the Democratic Party
- C. Yes, I feel less attached to either party
- D. Yes, I feel less attached to the Republican Party
- E. Yes, I feel more attached to the Republican Party
- F. No, my party affiliation has not changed much

Your Background

28. Are you male or female?

- A. Male
- B. Female

29. What is your age?

- A. 20-24 years old
- B. 25-29 years old

- C. 30-34 years old
 - D. 35-39 years old
 - E. 40-44 years old
 - F. 45-49 years old
 - G. 50 or older
30. What is the highest level of education you obtained?
- A. Some college
 - B. College graduate
 - C. Some graduate work
 - D. Graduate degree
31. Where did you live most of the time growing up?
- A. Northeast
 - B. South
 - C. Mountain states
 - D. Pacific coast
 - E. Mid-atlantic
 - F. Midwest
 - G. Southwest
 - H. Moved around a lot
 - I. Other
32. What is your religious affiliation? _____
33. Would you call yourself Evangelical or Born Again?
- A. Yes
 - B. No
 - C. Not Sure
34. What is your racial or ethnic identity?
- A. White or Caucasian, not Hispanic
 - B. Hispanic
 - C. Asian-American
 - D. Black or African-American, not Hispanic
 - E. American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut
 - F. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
 - G. Other

Appendix B

Survey Methodology and Additional Tables

This dissertation is about the party affiliation and political views of Army officers. By design, my survey instrument replicated many of the same questions of military officers in past surveys in order to be able to compare the views of Army officers over time. Where my survey instrument differs from past studies, however, is I did not query officers on their views on domestic or foreign policy issues, as I wanted to keep the survey focused almost exclusively on party identification and ideology. The closest I came to a policy discussion was the battery of questions on the proper role of senior military leaders on the use of force, taken from the Triangle Institute for Security Studies (TISS) *Survey on the Military in the Post Cold War Era*. While I was tempted to broaden the focus to include Army officers' views on critical defense and foreign policy matters, I wanted the survey to be narrowly focused and to keep it to a manageable size – one that officers could complete in five to ten minutes.

Another point of deviation between my survey and past surveys is the composition of my sample. Earlier surveys of military partisanship and political attitudes sought to compare military elite opinion against a comparable civilian elite sample. Holsti and Rosenau's Foreign Policy Leadership Program (FPLP) surveys and Feaver and Kohn's TISS survey sampled military elites – officers in attendance at professional military education settings such as the services' staff colleges and the war colleges. More recently, the *Military Times* surveys and Dempsey's Citizenship and Service (C&S) survey sampled Soldiers in all ranks, both enlisted and officers. I chose to conduct a large-scale, random sample of active duty Army officers for several reasons. First, I wanted to exclusively focus on the active duty officer corps, as I feel their party affiliation and political attitudes carries larger implications for civil-military relations.

Second, I wanted to examine in-depth the attitudes of *Army* officers. While past studies have included Army officers as smaller subsets within their surveys, my survey exclusively focuses on Army officers' attitudes and has yielded a large n ($n=4248$) that allows for in-depth analysis across a host of explanatory variables. Furthermore, the Army has borne a large share of fighting two wars, and I was eager to see if and how political attitudes are shaped by combat deployments; the Army arguably offers the richest sample from which to test this. Third, I wanted to explore differences in attitudes within the officer corps and be able to compare junior officer attitudes against those of more senior ranking officers. Finally, I was less interested in comparing attitudes of Army officers serving today to the broader civilian populace and more interested in comparing their responses today against the views of a similar cohort of Army officers who served 10 and 20 years ago. Without true panel data, this is the closest I can come with survey data in measuring attitudinal change within the officer corps over time. Scoping my survey accordingly and targeting a large, random sample of active duty Army officers has enabled me to begin to answer some of these broad questions.

Survey Deployment

From April 24, 2009 through May 11, 2009, I conducted the *Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War* survey over the internet, administering the survey to a random sample of Army officers via their official "Army Knowledge On-Line" (AKO) email addresses⁷⁶. The internet-based survey was created using SelectSurvey.net and hosted via servers in the Office of Economic and Manpower Analysis (OEMA) at the United

⁷⁶ All Soldiers in the Army are required to maintain an AKO email account, which is their primary work email address.

States Military Academy (USMA).⁷⁷ OEMA generated a random sample of 21,811 Army officers, amounting to 30% of the total active duty Army officer population (N=72,702), and provided me the AKO email addresses for this sample. The random sample provided by OEMA included second and first lieutenants, captains, majors, lieutenant colonels, and colonels (O1-O6s) and was representative of the larger Army population in terms of the breakdown by gender, race, education-level, specialty, rank, source of commission, years of service, and age. Of note, I excluded general officers from my random sample to preserve their anonymity; there are only approximately 300 general officers on active duty in the Army at any given time. Finally, by design, the random sample did not filter out officers who were deployed at the time, although deployed officers are generally less likely to complete internet-based surveys due to both the operational tempo of being deployed and the lack of uniform access to computers to complete the survey.

With regard to the timing of the survey, I was mindful of the 2008 presidential election and the unique effect any election, but certainly the 2008 election, can have on surveys of people's political attitudes. I chose to launch my survey in April-May 2009 in order to let any temporal responses to the election and inauguration stabilize. In administering the survey, I followed the general principles of internet-based survey research designed to maximize the response rate (Dillman 2007). I first began with an introductory email on April 24, 2009, sent to all of the officers in my random sample. In this first email, I informed officers that they had been randomly selected to participate in a survey designed to assess the impact the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were having on

⁷⁷ OEMA is a research organization at the U.S. Military Academy which provides policy analysis to the Department of the Army.

the state of civil-military relations and that the survey had been approved for release by the Deputy Undersecretary of the Army. In a few days, they were told, they would receive an email with a link to the survey. I informed the officers that their responses would be anonymous, and their participation was completely voluntary.

On April 28, 2009, I again emailed officers in the sample, this time providing the link to the survey. I informed them that they would be asked to answer several questions about their military service and their views regarding civil-military relations and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. I reiterated that their anonymity would be preserved and their participation was strictly voluntary. Finally, I informed them that the survey was being hosted by the Office of Economic and Manpower Analysis at the U.S. Military Academy, and I included my contact information (including my own AKO email address) in case officers had questions about the survey.

On May 6, 2009, I sent a reminder email to officers in the random sample. Because I maintained the anonymity of respondents, I could not track who had completed the survey and who had not, so in the follow-up email I sent, I reminded officers that I had sent a questionnaire to them the week prior, seeking their views on civil-military relations. If they had already completed the survey, I thanked them, and for those that had yet to complete the survey, I asked them to please do so today. I provided the link again to the internet-based survey, along with my contact information.

Response Rate

I received an overall response rate of 19.48% for my survey with a total of 4,248 respondents (see table B.1). Senior officers (majors, lieutenant colonels, and colonels) had a slightly higher response rate than lieutenants and captains, which could reflect one

of two things. It could be that lieutenants and captains are more likely to be deployed and less likely to take the survey or that more senior officers who have decided to make the Army a career are the ones most likely to complete a survey about the state of the profession. White officers (19.08%) had a higher response rate than black officers (10.78%), and men (18.5%) had a higher rate than women (14.34%), but for the most part, other demographic variables had similar response rates.

All things considered, I was satisfied with a response rate of nearly 20%. Several things make surveys of military personnel challenging, especially in the midst of fighting two wars. First, the military is a highly-transient population, with people routinely moving between duty stations, in schooling or in a training status – and in all cases, often away from their official Army email accounts. The added challenge of deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan makes this even more daunting. While many Army officers maintain access to their AKO email accounts while deployed, access to computers varies by each forward operating base, and many officers simply do not have the time to complete surveys or any other extracurricular activities for that matter. Another unique dynamic, although I lack real empirical data on this, is a sense of survey fatigue across the Army. The Army is a learning institution, and nothing has arguably caused more in-stride learning and adaptation in the past twenty years than the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Survey research has played an integral role in this, and more than one officer I surveyed responded to my survey emails with a bit of exasperation, mentioning that my survey was one of many they had received in the past several weeks. While not scientific, I expect survey fatigue is a real factor affecting many surveys of military personnel today.

Representativeness

Table B.2 compares how representative my respondents were compared against the larger Army population.⁷⁸ For the most part, respondents in my survey were representative of the larger Army officer corps population in terms of key demographic variables, and because of this, I chose not to weight any of the variables. With regard to gender, race, and source of commissioning, survey respondents closely mirrored the overall Army officer population, with less than a five-percentage point difference between the sample and population by each category. Age was also very close, with the only real variance for officers between the ages of 25-29. Respondents in this age group accounted for 16% of my sample, whereas in the larger Army officer population, this age group comprises 24% of the officer corps. Age is correlated with rank, and as expected, my sample is slightly underrepresented with lieutenants and captains, and slightly overrepresented with lieutenant colonels. This is likely due to deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan and the fact that junior officers typically bear a larger share of deployments than more senior-ranking officers. Another possible explanation is the professionalism factor, whereby senior officers who have made the Army a career may also be the ones most likely to take the time to complete a survey on civil-military relations.

The largest discrepancy between respondents and the larger Army officer population appears to be education level, but this may also be explained by a difference in measurement. In my sample, 32% of respondents were college graduates and 54% had graduate degrees, compared to the Army officer population in which 57% were college graduates and 39% had graduate degrees. In asking officers about their education level, I

⁷⁸ Army population data and breakdown by demographic variables provided by the Office of Economic and Manpower Analysis at the U.S. Military Academy.

also queried officers whether they had completed any graduate work; OEMA's Army population statistics lacked comparable data in this regard. Officers completing some graduate work, but not a graduate degree, accounted for another 13% of respondents in my survey, and when added to the number of college graduates in my sample, the total figure of officers with at least a college degree amounted to 45% of my sample – slightly closer to the figure of 57% for Army officers overall. Additionally, officers who have completed graduate school are more likely to appreciate the importance of surveys to scientific research, thus explaining the slight overrepresentation of officers with graduate degrees in my sample.

Table B.1 Response Rate by Subsamples

	# Surveyed	# Responded	Response Rate %
Overall	21811	4248	19.48
Lieutenants	4347	704	16.20
Captains	8358	1133	13.56
Majors	4623	1060	22.92
Lieutenant Colonels	2995	870	29.05
Colonels	1488	408	27.41
Combat Arms	8655	1706	19.71
Combat Support	4035	732	18.14
Combat Service Support	3792	1107	29.19
Specialty Branches	5329	671	12.59
Male Officers	18067	3342	18.50
Female Officers	3744	537	14.34
White Officers	15877	3030	19.08
Black Officers	2746	296	10.78
Service Academy Grads	3150	715	22.70
ROTC Grads	11472	2258	19.68
OCS Grads	3553	681	19.17
Other Commissioning	3636	564	15.51
Source			

Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009

Table B.2 Survey Sample Comparison Against Active Duty Army Officer Corps Population

	Survey Sample		Active Duty Army Officer Corps	
	n	%	N	%
Lieutenants	704	16.86	14175	19.50
Captains	1133	27.14	27886	38.36
Majors	1060	25.39	15886	21.85
Lieutenant Colonels	870	20.84	9728	13.38
Colonels	408	9.77	5027	6.91
TOTAL	4175	100.00	72702	100.00
Combat Arms	1706	40.46	28738	39.53
Combat Support	732	17.36	13435	18.48
Combat Service Support	1107	26.26	12446	17.12
Specialty Branches	671	15.92	18076	24.86
TOTAL	4216	100.00	72702	100.00
Male Officers	3342	86.15	60244	82.86
Female Officers	537	13.84	12458	17.14
TOTAL	3879	100.00	72702	100.00
White Officers	3030	78.62	53050	72.97
Black Officers	296	7.68	9199	12.65
Hispanic Officers	219	5.68	4057	5.58
Asian-American Officers	136	3.53	3005	4.13
American Indian, Eskimo or Aleut	29	0.75	363	0.50
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	28	0.73	845	1.16
Other/refused	116	3.01	2183	3.00
TOTAL	3854	100.00	72702	100.00
Service Academy Grads	715	16.95	10442	14.36
ROTC Grads	2258	53.53	37996	52.26
OCS Grads	681	16.15	11837	16.28
Other Commissioning Source	564	13.37	12427	17.09
TOTAL	4218	100.00	72702	100.00
Some college	13	0.33	2166	2.98
College Graduate	1241	31.80	41435	56.99
Some Graduate Work	510	13.07	N/A	N/A
Graduate Degree	2139	54.80	28562	39.29
TOTAL	3903	100.00	72702	100.00
20-24 age group	250	6.41	5771	7.94
25-29 age group	636	16.30	17275	23.76
30-34 age group	675	17.29	14129	19.43
35-39 age group	799	20.47	14407	19.82
40-44 age group	806	20.65	11536	15.87
45-49 age group	464	11.89	6210	8.54
Over 50 age group	273	6.99	3372	4.64
TOTAL	3903	100.00	72702	100.00

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Army population data provided by the Office of Economic and Manpower Analysis at the U.S. Military Academy

Table B.3 Respondents by Region of Origin

	n	% of sample
Northeast	746	19.12
South	845	21.66
Mountain States	158	4.05
Pacific Coast	319	8.18
Mid-Atlantic	203	5.20
Midwest	877	22.48
Southwest	198	5.08
Other	411	10.54
Moved around	144	3.69
TOTAL	3901	100.00

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Table B.4 Religious Affiliation of Respondents⁷⁹

	n	% of sample
Catholic	1057	28.82
Mainline Protestant	667	18.19
Non-denominational/ Protestant/Christian unspecified	649	17.70
Evangelical Protestant	646	17.62
Other Christian	124	3.38
Judaism	32	0.87
Non Judeo-Christian	42	1.15
Agnostic/Atheist	67	1.83
None	383	10.44
TOTAL	3667	100.00

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⁷⁹ In the survey, respondents were allowed to write in their religious affiliation. I then grouped them into the above nine categories. I followed the coding employed by Green, Guth, Smidt and Kellstedt (1996) to group evangelical Protestants and mainline Protestants.

Table B.5 Evangelicals in the Army Officer Corps

	n	% of sample
Yes	912	23.69
No	2702	70.20
Not sure	235	6.11
TOTAL	3849	100.00

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Table B.6 Army Officers with Other Family Members in the Service

	n	% of sample
Yes	2292	54.33
No	1921	45.53
Not Sure	6	0.14
TOTAL	4219	100.00

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Table B.7 Deployment Experience of Respondents

	Cumulative Time Deployed (Operation Iraqi Freedom)				
	<i>percent checking each option</i>				
	None	12 months or less	13 to 24 months	25 to 36 months	More than 36 months
Lieutenants	55.56	24.36	18.38	1.57	0.14
Captains	24.78	26.20	35.61	12.52	0.89
Majors	23.29	38.40	28.90	8.74	0.67
Lieutenant Colonels	34.73	36.47	23.34	4.18	1.28
Colonels	40.29	38.82	18.18	2.46	0.25

	Cumulative Time Deployed (Operation Enduring Freedom)				
	<i>percent checking each option</i>				
	None	12 months or less	13 to 24 months	25 to 36 months	More than 36 months
Lieutenants	89.73	8.39	1.74	0.00	0.14
Captains	80.63	12.56	6.37	4.48	0.00
Majors	75.62	19.71	4.57	0.00	0.00
Lieutenant Colonels	74.01	19.00	6.76	0.23	0.00
Colonels	78.08	17.24	4.43	0.25	0.00

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