

How Sex in the Army
Effects discipline and Leaders
Ethical Decision making process

By

MSG Charles Wells

L564, Apply the Ethical Reasoning Process

PE2 – Ethics Thought Paper

SGM Juan Ortiz

FA, L-01

16 November 2005

I feel that intestinal fortitude and moral courage to do what is right is not always the clear answer. The ethical decision-making process for complex dilemmas can haunt leaders when no clear best choice is evident. My definitions of ethics are principles we follow that lead us to do the right thing. As ethical leaders we do the right thing for the right reasons even when no one is watching. However, doing the right thing is not always easy, in order to fulfill your duty, maintain your integrity and serve honorably, you must be able to apply ethical reasoning. Since discipline is essential in the military and sex is seen as a threat to the good order of discipline. The military leaders find itself in the strange position of having to either ban sex or to regulate it with complex, sometimes contradictory rules and regulations. Its rules prohibit fraternization, meaning superiors and subordinates may not have romantic or sexual relationships. Sex is allowed among unmarried troops of equal rank. The Navy banned sex aboard ship and the Army and Air Force banned sex on overseas deployments, but these rules are not really observed. According to a 1992 survey of 272 I read many year ago stated that mans from the Gulf War found that more than half the men and three-quarters of the women said that troops in their unit had sex in Saudi Arabia as much or more than at home. I remember my unit leaders had a hard time enforcing the No Sex policy. Out of 33 females assigned to our unit, 19 went home early due to pregnancy, despite the threat of UCMJ action. I learned early in my army career, that if soldiers want to have sex, no rules, no threat is going to stop them.

When I became a Drill Sergeant the Army had rules expressly forbid drill sergeants to have intimate relationships with their recruits. Young female soldiers both stated they feared for their careers and their safety if they rejected their Drill Sergeants' advances.

However, some female soldiers made advances toward their Drill Sergeants. As ethical leaders we Drill Sergeants must do the right thing and stay focus and train soldiers to fight our Nation Wars. I know that Drill Sergeants, in the recruit's world, are the masters of the universe, however limited that universe is.

Sparks fly when the military tries to graft modern standards of sexual behavior to the age-old values of its warrior culture. Although morals and virtues will remain fairly constant, society's values will consistently change. I do not advocate a lower standard, only one that is relevant. One example that comes to mind is the proposed Department of Defense Fraternalization Policy. This policy, which forbids any relationship between an officer and an enlisted person, is a perfect example of the caste system, where a person could not associate with another outside their own caste or social group. I just recently learned about the caste system in our group discussion and decided to research it more. I feel this policy is taking the Army backwards instead of unifying the ranks. Professional leaders know how to interact and behave without big brother setting policy and rules. As in any organization, you are going to have a few bad apples. Leaders who do not apply the ethical decision making process, or those who just totally disregard it. This one the reason that I feel that Sexual harassment is widespread in the military. This misconduct and abuse of power is in all ranks across all the services. Recently I read about a case of misconduct involved BG Hale in the Washington Post. BG Hale took advantage of his rank and position by engaging in numerous sexual acts with the spouses of several of his immediate subordinates. BG Hale was recalled to active duty, tried and found guilty on several counts including sexual harassment and adultery. He was subsequently sentenced to a reduction in grade for retirement pay, and fined. Another ethical misconduct case

was SMA McKinney being accused of making improper sexual advances toward six current and former female members of the military. During the two-month hearing, the women testified about unwanted hugs, suggestive remarks and outright requests for sex. Occurring almost simultaneously BG Hale and SMA McKinney was the largest two sex scandal investigation of misconduct ever in the history of the Army.

I will continue to do and to teach my soldiers to do the right thing. We must remain connected in establishing our standards and once established, we must not compromise those standards. As we strive for a higher standard, we must accept the fact that amongst us are some bad apples. We should be careful not to over react, as in the case of fraternization. Instead, we must find these misfits, weed them out and then drive on. Our professional standards should be derived from those traditional standards that have proudly made us who we are today.

In summary, everyone faces some type of ethical dilemma in life. Using the decision-making process in ethical situations can help identify the course of action that will result in the greatest moral good. Interpret the situation and all factors and forces that relate to the dilemma. Choose the course of action that best serve, the nation, and implement the course of action that will lead you to the right path.

Works Cited

Schmitt, Eric, "America's military and the consequences of sex" New York Times, 3 September 2002, 23-26.

Sidiot, Liz, "Military Survey: 302 Sexual Assaults" Washington Post, 18 March 2005, 45.