

**An Ethical Problem Facing the Army Today**

by

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I. Introduction. The Army faces many incidents about ethics in today's fast operational tempo. One of the ethical problems facing the Army today is how commercialism affects commander's policy. Army leaders ought to act in response to ethical reasonable when producing policies. The Army values will consciously guide leaders to teach, mentor, and coach other Service Members to do the right things in most of situations.

According to Merriam-Webster dictionary online, "ethics is the discipline dealing with what is good, bad, and with moral duty and obligation; ethics is a principle of right or good behavior; the rules of standards of conduct governing the members of a profession."

II. Define the Problem. As the writer's thought and opinion, one of the Army ethical problems facing the Army today is commercialism in references of nudity and drinking age.

Many leaders condemn nudity, but the Army allows our principal stores on most installations to sell nudity and other excessive printed materials that expose carnal expression at low-cost prices and without any taxes. Most leaders prohibit the posting of nudity materials in public places in the foundation that affect the morals and morale of their Soldiers.

Nudity definition as derived from the Merriam-Webster dictionary online; "devoid of a natural or conventional covering; not covered by clothing or a drape."

Any visitor that comes to the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy can see commercialism as related to nudity. They can see the product of commercialism by nudity that affects our values and respect for others in the top shelf of the magazine rack at the AAFES book store.

Effective leaders are tolerant of beliefs different from their own. Leaders must think the same way when allowed stores to sell magazine that intent to show sexual notion by means of nudity.

The second thought of the writer is an alcohol related ethical predicament. The drinking age, at some Army installations, is different than in comparison to the cities and states drinking age where Soldiers live. Fort Bliss, Texas is a perfect example of the legal drinking age. The on-post drinking age is 18 years old, and the city of El Paso, Texas drinking age limit is 21 years old. The assumption and speculation that the Army set these rules of drinking age on-post is to compete against the demand of Soldiers that go over the country border to the city of Juarez, where the drinking age is the same or less as on-post. This policy set our less discipline Soldiers at risk of another city and state criminal charge by making the drinking age different than the city or state that they live.

Most professional Senior Noncommissioned Officers believe that Soldiers are responsible for their act and behavior whether 18 or 21 years old. Make them responsible for their behavior at the legal adult age.

### III. Relevant Rules.

First the relevant rule about commercialism in reference to nudity; Army Regulations 600-20 paragraph 5-9 and 360-1 paragraph 3-8 relates to the distribution of non-government printed materials. These regulations guide the commanders for restrictions on dissemination of non-government materials. If it appears that a publication presents a clear danger to the loyalty, discipline, or morale of Soldiers, the installation commander may, without prior approval of higher headquarters, delay distribution on property subject to his/her control. The commander will consider whether the act of restriction will in itself result in the publication in question achieving notoriety and increased circulation to military personnel through off-post sources.

Here is the relevant rule about commercialism in reference to drinking age; Department of Defense (DOD) Instruction 1015.10, which states: The minimum drinking age on a DOD

installation located in a State (including the District of Columbia) shall be consistent with the age established by the law of that State as the State minimum drinking age. Minimum drinking age means the minimum age established for persons who may purchase, possess, or consume alcoholic beverages. In the case of a DOD installation located in more than one State or in one State but within 50 miles of another State or Mexico or Canada, the minimum drinking age on that DOD installation shall be the lowest applicable age of the State in which the DOD installation is located or the State or jurisdiction of Mexico or Canada that is within 50 miles of such DOD installation.

IV. Courses of Actions that Best Represent Army Values. The premium course of action is for Army leaders to question themselves to set norms and rules as in developing and evaluating policies. They must ask these questions before the implementation of policies related to the writer's thoughts; Are magazines with nudity selling at stores inside the installations affect our principles? Are we setting alcohol drinking age policy because the Soldier's discipline or adult legal age responsibility? Are we setting the Soldier up for criminal acts as we differentiate the drinking age below with the civilian sector laws?

V. Conclusion. Most of the Army ethical problems derived from sex, alcohol or money. Commercialism in reference nudity and age drinking touch every aspect of sex, alcohol and money. Leaders must make policies in reference good order and discipline and not commercialize our principles.

The Army must implement ethical training more often at unit level. A great recommendation is to keep Soldiers aware of their ethical decisions by frequent unit level training. Commanders and leaders must review their intentions in selling magazines that affect the dignity and respect of others, and teach the Soldier be responsible for their actions at the legal adult age.