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**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEIVED
OFFENSE AND ACTUAL DISCIPLINE
RATES IN THE MILITARY •**

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ARI FIELD UNIT, PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

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Roland J. Hart

Submitted by:

Jack J. Sternberg, Chief
ARI Field Unit, Presidio of Monterey, California

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEIVED OFFENSE AND ACTUAL DISCIPLINE RATES IN THE MILITARY

TRAINING PROGRAMS

In response to the social climate of the times, the Army established in 1971 an extensive race relations training program. This program has continued, and at present most Army posts require that all enlisted men in a given company attend a race relations (RAP) seminar at least once a month in order to meet the objectives of this training program. The company, a basic unit of Army organization, consists of approximately 200 soldiers under a company commander and first sergeant. Currently, these company leaders are given the responsibility of implementing race relations training programs in their own companies. These leaders need training in race relations not only to be effective leaders in an increasingly multi-ethnic Army, but particularly because they are responsible for implementing the race relations training programs in their companies.

A three-day (24-hour) workshop was developed under contract to the Army Research Institute to help meet the needs of company commanders in this area (McNeill, et al., 1974). Topics of instruction in this workshop included: (1) ethnic minority history covering Black Americans, Chicanos, and Puerto Ricans; (2) interpersonal games played in an Army context; (3) institutional discrimination; (4) prejudice and stereotypes; (5) identification of racial tension in companies, and techniques for alleviating it; (6) techniques for leading small group discussions to assist commanders in handling RAP seminars in their own companies.

A different approach was used to assist first sergeants (paygrade-E8), who are the senior non-commissioned officers (NCOs) in their companies, to fulfill their race relations responsibilities in their companies. First sergeants were presented with the Chain of Command Action Plan (COCAP) in a one-day workshop. This plan was designed to increase confidence and trust in the chain of command as a problem-solving agency among enlisted soldiers by increasing upward communication in the chain of command. Although orders and direction are given from superiors to subordinates, superiors often do not receive feedback about the impact those orders have on enlisted soldiers. In order to increase two-way communication, first sergeants were asked to conduct seminars with the first-line supervisors (platoon sergeants, squad leaders) who have direct contact with troops, and then with enlisted soldiers. In these seminars, first-line supervisors were taught appropriate techniques of interviewing soldiers, to uncover problems, while enlisted soldiers were shown techniques for providing honest feedback to interviewers, even when it was apparent that supervisors did not want to do the interviewing. First sergeants were given instructional materials, including material on the negative impact of racial discrimination on the morale and effectiveness of their companies, for teaching the seminars to first-line supervisors and enlisted soldiers. Thus, first sergeants were asked to take the role

of model leaders, teaching others about the deleterious effects of discrimination. Any discrimination on the part of the leaders themselves was expected to be reduced by having them take this model leader role.

DESIGN OF EVALUATION EXPERIMENT

To evaluate the two programs--the unit commanders' three-day training program and the Chain-of-Command Action Plan for first sergeants--a major research effort was undertaken, which included an evaluation of the monthly RAP seminars.

The evaluation covered three types of race relations training programs: (1) the racial harmony training course for company commanders, (2) the COCAP action plan for first sergeants, and (3) the monthly company RAP seminars for enlisted soldiers. Fifty company-level units from two Army installations participated in the evaluation study. The training course for company commanders and the course for first sergeants were evaluated in a common 2x2 experimental design, with companies as the units of analysis. In this design, 11 randomly selected companies received an experimental treatment consisting of training company commanders and first sergeants in their respective courses. In 11 other randomly selected companies, the company commanders were trained but the first sergeants were not. The reverse was true in another 11 companies with first sergeants trained but not the commanders. In the final 11 companies neither the commander or first sergeant was trained. The remaining six companies were involved only in the evaluation of the RAP seminars. This experimental design allows us to determine whether each program by itself is effective, and also whether an interaction occurs between programs. For example, an interaction between programs would occur if the programs were effective only when both commanders and first sergeants received training.

The company commanders and first sergeants were trained between 25 August and 3 September 1975. Two surveys were conducted, one at the end of October 1976 and the other at the end of January 1976, as part of the evaluation phase of the project. In the companies participating in the training, one commander and 15 first sergeants were Black. In addition to the company commanders and first sergeants, 14 enlisted men (six White, five Black, three Spanish) from each of the participating companies were randomly selected to take the October survey. The commanders and first sergeants took the survey again in January 1976, as did a different random sample of enlisted men selected in the same manner as in October. Enlisted men rated their company commanders and first sergeants in a variety of areas, including race relations; they rated the frequency and quality of the monthly RAP seminars; and they also rated their companies in a variety of areas including the level of morale, discipline, rule and law breaking, etc.

Record data for a six-month period--1 August 1975 through 1 January 1976--were also collected as part of the evaluation phase. Information on the frequency of administrative discharges and Articles 15 was included as part of the record data. (Articles 15 are punishments imposed by the company commander in informal judicial proceedings. Administrative discharges are used to dismiss a soldier from the service before the end of his/her normal enlistment term.) During this six-month period, Articles 15 outnumbered courts-martial 20 to one in the participating companies.

➤ Because research findings relating to the problem of minority discipline were few, particularly findings that relate perceptions of disciplinary offenses with actual punishment rates, the availability of record data prompted researchers to examine this problem first. Before examining the impact of the training programs in this area, it seemed desirable to clarify the nature and seriousness of some of the discipline problems.

1 Aug 75 thru 1 Jan 76

This report focuses on a particular problem area: punishment (Article 15) and discharge rates and perceived offense rates among different racial groups. The analyses reported here were made using Article 15 and discharge data from the six-month period, ~~mentioned earlier~~, and data from ~~the~~ a January 1976 survey.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

ARTICLE 15 AND ADMINISTRATIVE DISCHARGE RATES

If differences exist in the rates at which diverse groups (e.g., Blacks compared to Whites, low-ranking soldiers compared to high-ranking soldiers, men compared to women) receive Articles 15 and administrative discharges, these differences may be one factor in creating feelings of dissatisfaction, inequity, and a climate of polarization between groups. As a way of comparing these different rates, Representation Indexes were computed on the record data collected from the 50 participating companies. These Representation Indexes were then compared with Representation Indexes computed for the Army as a whole and for the other services, at different periods (see Tables 1 and 2). Representation Indexes indicate the extent to which a given group receives an administrative action at a higher or lower rate than the group would be expected to receive if group membership were not a factor in determining the action (Nordlie, Thomas and Sevilla, 1975). The formula used to compute the Representation Indexes is given below:

$$\text{Representation Indexes} = \left[\frac{\text{Actual Number}}{\text{Expected Number}} \times 100 \right] - 100$$

This formula compares actual with expected numbers of administrative actions for a given group. The "expected number" is the number that one would expect to find if group membership (e.g., race or sex) were not related to that situation; in other words, the number expected proportionate to their percentage of the total numbers. The indexes reported in Tables 1 and 2 reflect differences in what happened to Whites, Blacks, Spanish and men and women in the 50 participating companies, compared to what happened earlier to these same groups in the Army as a whole, and other services. A positive number indicates the group in question received Articles 15 or discharges at a higher rate than expected, and a negative number indicates the group received them at a lower rate than expected. As the indexes approach zero, this means the group received administrative actions at the expected rate (i.e., a frequency that is proportional to their numbers in the Army). The Representation Index is not symmetrical. The lowest possible score is -100; there is no upper limit on scores. For the sake of symmetry, the scores above 100 in Tables 1 and 2 have been left at 100.

The Article 15 data in Table 1 show that in 1972, in all services, Blacks and Spanish received a disproportionate number of Articles 15. The same is true for the 50 participating companies in 1975-76. The 1975-76 indexes for the participating companies are similar to the 1971 Army data. Women in the participating companies received Articles 15 at a lower rate than men. The Spanish category consists of a group in the participating companies that is approximately 60% Chicano and 24% Puerto Rican.

Table 1

REPRESENTATION INDEXES FOR ARTICLE 15s

A. Service--Jun 72¹

	Group	
	<u>Black</u>	<u>Spanish</u> ²
Army	+42	+62
Navy	+100	--
Air Force	+100	+70
Marines	+96	+20
All Services	+62	+70

B. Fifty Participating Companies--Aug 75-Jan 76

<u>White Male</u>	<u>Black Male</u>	<u>Spanish Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
-8	+35	+100	-51

¹ Indexes were based on data found in "Article 15 Study," Report of the Task Force on the Administration of Military Justice in the Armed Forces, VOL III.

² Due to missing population data at some installations, the Spanish population was estimated by extrapolation based on figures from installations where data was available. This procedure probably resulted in conservative (small) estimates, particularly for the Marines.

Table 2

REPRESENTATION INDEXES FOR ADMINISTRATIVE DISCHARGES

A. Service--General and Undesirable Discharges, Fiscal Year 1971¹

	<u>White Male</u>	<u>Black Male</u>	<u>White Female</u>	<u>Black Female</u>
Army	-9	64	100	83
Navy	-5	67	-46	-14
Air Force	-31	100	100	100
Marines	-8	51	19	14
All Services	-9	71	29	50

B. Army Data - Black Discharges²

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>General Discharges</u>	<u>Undesirable Discharges</u>
1970	+44	+55
1971	+39	+55
1972	+52	+29
1973	+22	+13

C. Fifty Participating Companies; General and Undesirable Discharges, Aug 75-Jan 76

<u>White Male</u>	<u>Black Male</u>	<u>Spanish Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
16	0	-7	-68

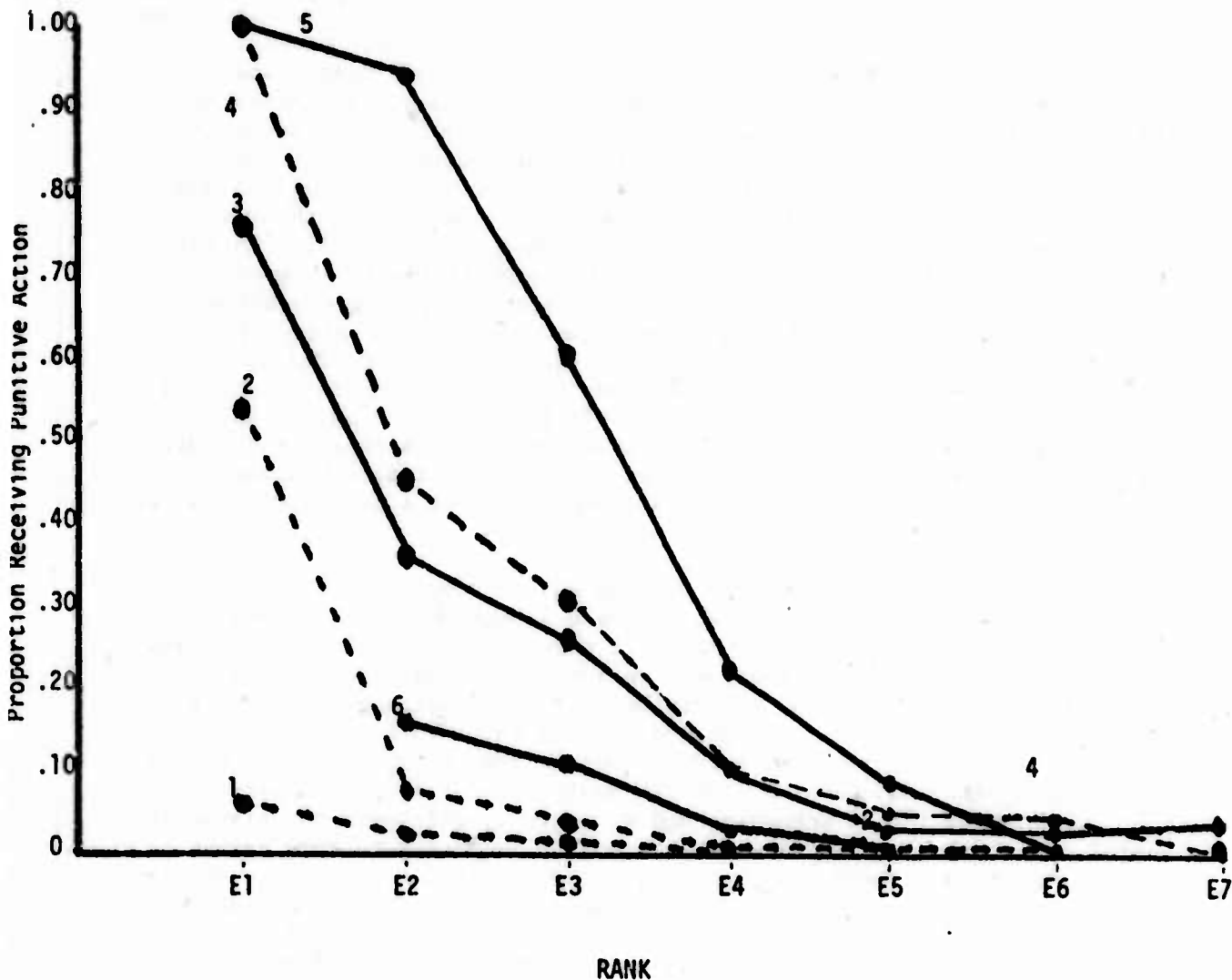
¹Indexes were based on data found in "Administrative Discharge Study," Report of the Task Force on the Administration of Military Justice in the Armed Forces, VOL IV.

²Data reported by Nordlie, P.G., Thomas, J.A. and Sevilla, E.R. Measuring Changes in Institutional Racial Discrimination, Army Research Institute Technical Paper 270, December 1975.

Table 2 reports data for less-than-honorable administrative discharges that occur through administrative actions other than courts martial. These less-than-honorable discharges include general and undesirable discharges only. Bad conduct and dishonorable discharges are given very infrequently, and can only be given through courts-martial proceedings. Courts-martial data are not covered in this particular report. Table 2 shows that Blacks received a disproportionate number of general and undesirable discharges in the Army as a whole, but the extent of this over-representation appears to have gone down between 1970 and 1973. In 1975-76 the Representation Index for Blacks for the participating companies was zero, indicating no over-representation for Blacks in these companies. The representation indexes for White and Spanish males are also very nearly 0. Although women were discharged (general and undesirable) at a disproportionately high rate in the Army in 1971, they were discharged at a disproportionately low rate in 1975-76 in participating companies. In summary, Tables 1 and 2 show that Blacks and Spanish received Articles 15 at a disproportionately high rate in the participating companies, but did not receive general and undesirable discharges at a disproportionately high rate.

A different approach was used in Figure 1 to compare rank, race, and sex differences in the rates at which these groups receive Articles 15 and administrative discharges. Figure 1 shows the proportion (percentage) of each rank, race, or sex group who received Articles 15 or discharges during the six-month period. To arrive at the proportions in Figure 1, the number of Article 15 or discharge actions received by a particular group was divided by the number of persons in that group as of the end of October 1975 (the mid-point of the six-month period).¹ The numbers in each subgroup in the 50 companies did not vary greatly over the six-month period, although the numbers in each subgroup increased to some extent during this time. These proportions are indexes that reflect the extent to which each group received each administrative action. These indexes overestimate the actual percentage of each group who received Articles 15, because some of the same individuals in each group received more than one Article 15. The proportion can be considered an estimate of the probability that someone within a given group (rank, race, sex) will receive an Article 15 or a discharge in a six-month period, assuming the person's rank does not change for six months. This is the probability that would be assigned if we knew nothing about an individual except the group that he belonged to.

¹ The number in each subgroup was based on data provided by SIDPERS.



- 1 Honorable administrative discharges
- 2 Less than honorable administrative discharges
- 3 White male Article 15s
- 4 Black male Article 15s
- 5 Spanish male Article 15s
- 6 Female (black, white, Spanish) Article 15s

Figure 1. Distribution of Article 15s and Administrative Discharges in Fifty Companies

In Figure 1, it is apparent that the rank differences in Article 15 rates and discharge rates are very large compared to the race and sex differences. The probability of receiving an Article 15 or discharge at pay grade E5 or above is very low, but this probability increases dramatically as rank or pay grade decreases to the E1 level. The chi square statistic was used to test whether the differences in proportions of persons in different groups who received Articles 15 and discharges was significant in a statistical sense (i.e., whether the differences in proportions were likely to have occurred by chance alone). The comparisons that were made and the chi square statistics are shown in Table 3. Race and sex differences for administrative discharges are not shown in Figure 1 because these differences were not statistically significant. Although women received fewer less-than-honorable administrative discharges than men, when these discharges were combined with the honorable discharges that women received, the discharge rate for women did not show a statistically reliable difference from that for men. Although all the differences shown in Figure 1 were statistically reliable, it is apparent that some differences were much larger than others. For example, the difference between ranks was much larger than the Black-White race difference.

PERCEIVED OFFENSE RATES

How fair the identified differences in Article 15 and discharge rates appear to be, depends not only on the punishment and discharge rates, but also on the extent to which the different groups appear to be breaking rules and laws. Equity theory proposes that people compare inputs and outcomes to determine the degree of fairness associated with a situation (Walster and Walster, 1975). Articles 15 and discharges are outcomes for enlisted soldiers, and rule and law breaking on the part of enlisted soldiers is seen in the Army as a primary input for these administrative actions. Self-report measures of rule and law breaking were taken in the October 1975 and January 1976 surveys, as well as questions asking respondents to compare the extent to which Whites and Blacks, and high and low-ranking individuals in their companies, were observed to be breaking rules and laws. Soldiers were also asked to respond to questions about how fairly they felt administrative actions were handled in their companies.

Table 4 lists the questions soldiers responded to from the anonymous January 1976 survey. Factor analysis was used to group the questions in Table 4 into the three groups shown according to how similar in meaning the questions were for the respondents. These three groups of questions have been labeled Self-Reported Law Breaking, Comparison of Black-White Law Breaking, and Feelings of Fairness.

Table 3

**STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES IN ARTICLE 15
AND ADMINISTRATIVE DISCHARGE RATES**

Type of Data	Comparison	Chi Square (χ^2)	df	Signifi- cance
Article 15	Rank (E1 to E8-06)	1222.0	7	$p < .001$ ¹
Article 15	Race (black, white Spanish)	138.5	2	$p < .001$
Article 15	Race (black, white)	76.2	1	$p < .001$
Article 15	Sex (male, female)	18.8	1	$p < .001$
Honorable Admin. Discharges	Rank (E1 to E6-9)	50.6	5	$p < .001$
General & Undesir- able Administrative Discharges	Rank (E1 to E6-9)	1150.6	5	$p < .001$
All Administrative Discharges	Race (black, white, Spanish)	1.4	2	n.s. ²
General & Undesir- able Administrative Discharges	Race (black, white, Spanish)	1.3	2	n.s.
All Administrative Discharges	Sex (male, female)	1.9	1	n.s.
General & Undesir- able Administrative Discharges	Sex (male, female)	6.1	1	$p < .02$

¹The p level indicates the probability that the observed differences between groups occurred by chance alone. Differences that are not significant are likely due to chance.

²The observed difference is not significant (i.e., it could have occurred by chance).

Table 4

GROUPING SIMILAR QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS TOGETHER WITH FACTOR ANALYSIS

Item	Rotated Factor ¹ Loading
Self-Reported Law Breaking	
1. How often do you seriously violate the law?	.75
2. How often do you break laws you could reasonably be punished for?	.72
3. How often do you break Army regulations and company rules behind your unit leaders' backs?	.69
4. Do you try to break as many rules and regulations as you can without getting caught?	.61
5. Overall, do you show respect for the law?	.59
Comparison of Black-White Law Breaking	
6. Compared to the White enlisted men (E1-4) in your company how much respect for the law do the Black enlisted men show?	.73
7. In your company, how often have you observed Black enlisted men (E1-4) break the law compared to White enlisted men (E1-4)?	.73
8. Who breaks traffic laws the most in your company: White or Black enlisted men (E1-4)?	.54
9. Who smokes pot the most in your company: White or Black enlisted men (E1-4)?	.52
Feelings of Fairness	
10. In your company, do Black soldiers (as compared to White soldiers) receive an unfair number of Article 15s?	.68
11. In your company, do Black soldiers (as compared to White soldiers) receive an unfair number of administrative discharges from the Army?	.64
12. Are punishment and discipline handled unfairly in your company by the company commander and 1st sergeant?	.60
13. In your company, do enlisted men E1-4 (as compared to NCOs and officers) receive an unfair number of administrative discharges from the Army?	.59
14. In your company, do enlisted men E1-4 (as compared to NCOs and officers) receive an unfair number of Article 15s?	.53
15. Do White supervisors in your company apply the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) and military regulations differently to Blacks than to Whites?	.53

¹ Rotated loading on the one factor that the question is most closely associated with.

A principal factor solution with varimax rotation was used to group questions. At the right of the questions in Table 4 are the rotated factor loadings on the primary factor for each question. A soldier's responses to each group of questions (Questions 1-5, 6-9, 10-15) were combined by computing factor scores, so that a soldier's responses to 15 questions were reduced to 3 scores, representing Self-Reported Law Breaking, Comparison of Black-White Law Breaking, and Feelings of Fairness. The weight given each question in determining a subject's three scores was determined by the size of the factor loading, e.g., questions with higher rotated factor loadings (as shown in Table 4) were given more weight.

The next step was to compare the average responses of each race and rank group on each group's Self-Reported Law Breaking, Comparison of Black-White Law Breaking, and Feelings of Fairness. An unbalanced Race x Rank analysis of variance design was used to compare the average factor score responses of these groups. Factor scores are expressed in standard score units so that most individual scores fall within the range of +1.0 and -1.0. A difference between means approaching "1.0" is a substantial difference.

Table 5 shows the average responses of each race and rank group on each of the three factor score scales. Enlisted men (E1-E4) were the only ones to respond to all five questions in Table 5 in the Self-Reported Law Breaking Scale. Company commanders and first sergeants responded only to Questions 4 and 5. Table 5, column 2, is based on the responses of the enlisted men (E1-E4) and first sergeants and company commanders to questions 4 and 5 only. The F ratios and significance levels shown in the Statistics section of Table 5 indicate the probability that the observed differences between means shown in the upper half of Table 5 could have occurred by chance alone. The differences between means shown in Table 5 were not likely to have occurred by chance, but this still does not mean the differences between means are large. It is easier to identify small differences between means when sample sizes are large as they are in the present case. The explained variance statistics in Table 5 help identify how large and consistent the differences between means were: the larger levels of explained variance indicate larger and more consistent differences between means.

In Table 5 the following differences by racial/ethnic group can be observed. On the Self-Reported Law Breaking measure Whites reported breaking laws and rules more frequently than either Blacks or Spanish. Although this difference was not large, the direction of the difference was opposite to what might be expected on the basis of the punishment (Article 15) statistics. Blacks and Spanish received more Articles 15 than Whites, yet they reported breaking rules less frequently than Whites. It is not certain at this point that the self-reported measure of rule breaking reflects in some sense the "actual" or "true" level of rule breaking. Different groups may interpret rule breaking in different ways. However, the self-reported measures of rule breaking do reflect

Table 5

ANALYSIS OF SOLDIERS' RESPONSES TO SURVEY ITEMS

Group	N	Self-Report Law Breaking ¹	Self-Report Law Breaking ²	Comparison Black-White Law Breaking ³	Feelings of Fairness ⁴
Means					
Race					
Black	274	-.09	-.07	-.56	.39
White	359	.14	.08	.37	-.30
Spanish	117	-.17	-.07	.19	.00
Rank					
Enlisted E1	10	.56	.13	.22	.18
Enlisted E2	126	.10	.18	-.09	.07
Enlisted E3	298	.05	.16	-.02	.27
Enlisted E4	212	-.12	-.04	.15	.04
Enlisted E5	23	-.30	-.15	-.10	.08
First Sergeant	49		-.68	-.14	-1.16
Company Commander	44		-.54	-.13	-.94
Statistics					
Race					
F ratio		6.6	8.0	124.8	49.8
df		2/654	2/729	2/729	2/729
Significance		p < .002	p < .001	p < .001	p < .001
Explained Variance		.02	.01	.24	.12
Rank					
F ratio		3.1	14.7	3.2	33.4
df		4/654	6/729	6/729	6/729
Significance		p < .02	p < .001	p < .004	p < .001
Explained Variance		.02	.10	.01	.22

¹Based on enlisted (E1-5) men's responses to Questions 1-5, Table 4. Positive numbers reflect higher levels of self-reported law-breaking.

²Based on the responses of enlisted men (E1-5), and commanders and first sergeants, to Questions 4 and 5, Table 4. Positive numbers reflect higher levels of self-reported law-breaking.

³Positive numbers reflect the feeling that Blacks break laws more than Whites, and negative numbers reflect the reverse feeling.

⁴Positive numbers indicate greater feelings of unfairness.

what a soldier feels he puts into the offense-punishment equation. Soldiers who feel they have not been breaking rules will be unhappy if they are punished. Soldiers were also asked to compare the extent to which Whites and Blacks in their company broke laws. As shown in Table 5, column 3, Whites felt Blacks broke rules more often, whereas Blacks felt the reverse--that Whites broke rules more often than Blacks. The size of this difference is substantial. Both the self-reported measure of rule breaking and the comparison of Black-White rule breaking can be considered a measure of the extent to which each group feels culpable, or worthy of punishment. Blacks considered Whites to be the most culpable; Whites believed the reverse--that Blacks deserved the most punishment. Blacks did in fact receive the most punishment, consistent with the White perception of Black rule breaking. However, from the Black point of view, Whites broke the rules most often but Blacks received punishment. This relation between perceived offense rates and punishment should be associated with feelings of unfairness on the part of Black soldiers. Although the racial differences in punishment (Article 15) rates were not large, at least compared to the rank differences, the Black perception that Whites were breaking rules more often should accentuate Black feelings of unfairness associated with the different punishment rates. There were in fact substantial racial differences in feelings of fairness shown in Table 5, column 4, with Blacks expressing much stronger feelings of unfairness.

Although there were no overall racial differences in administrative discharge rates, Blacks still expressed the feeling that administrative discharge rates (Item 11, Table 4), as well as Article 15 rates (Item 10, Table 4), were unfair for Blacks; Whites expressed the opinion that both these rates were not particularly unfair for Blacks. These conclusions are based on individual analyses of variance for Items 10 and 11 in Table 4. These two items are related to other items that together seem to express a rather generalized feeling of fairness or unfairness. Soldiers may not have enough information to distinguish clearly between different types of administrative actions. Although Article 15 actions in a company are supposed to be posted, soldiers are probably not aware of overall statistical rates, basing their judgments of fairness on a few cases they are familiar with. These cases are probably filtered through the perception that persons belonging to one's own group are less culpable than those belonging to another group. For example, Blacks may feel the discharge of several Blacks in a company is unfair even though the actual Black rate of discharge is not different from the White rate, because Blacks who are discharged seem less culpable to other Blacks than Whites who are discharged. In contrast, Whites may see Blacks in a company receiving Articles 15 at a rate higher than Whites but may feel this is fair because Blacks seem more culpable than Whites. It may be useful to let soldiers know the actual rates of different administrative actions, to highlight areas of concern and help correct inaccurate perceptions by both Whites and blacks.

In contrast to race differences, rank differences in self-reported rule breaking indicate agreement between enlisted men (E1-E4) and their leaders on who most frequently breaks rules. In column 2, commanders and first sergeants report breaking rules considerably less frequently than enlisted men E1-E5. Figure 1 indicates that none of the leaders received Articles 15. In addition to the self-reported rule breaking questions, soldiers responded to the following question: "In your company, how often do you think enlisted men (E1-E4) break the law compared to NCOs and officers?" The average responses of both the enlisted men and the leaders indicated that both groups agreed enlisted men broke rules more than NCOs and officers did (enlisted mean = 3.7, commander-first sergeant mean = 4.2). Responses were made on a five-point scale with 3.0 defined as equal rule breaking by both parties. The difference between the responses of the enlisted men and their leaders was, however, statistically significant: $F(1,728) = 22.4, p < .001$, with enlisted men saying the offense rates were more nearly equal than the leaders. The responses to the self-reported rule breaking questions, and the question comparing the rule breaking of enlisted men and their leaders, indicate that both enlisted men and their leaders agreed to some extent that enlisted men were more culpable than their leaders. Feelings of unfairness among lower rank soldiers--about the dramatic differences that exist between high and low rank soldiers in Article 15 and discharge rates--may be attenuated to some degree with the recognition by lower rank personnel that they are more culpable than their leaders. The different perceptions of rule breaking held by Blacks and Whites may serve to accentuate racial differences in feelings of fairness; the perceptions of rule breaking that enlisted men and their leaders share may somewhat reduce rank differences in feelings of fairness. (This hypothesis can be tested more rigorously with a correlational approach, using companies as the units of analysis.) However, there are still substantial differences between enlisted men and their leaders in feelings of fairness about Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) actions, as indicated in Table 5, column 4. Enlisted men feel these actions are considerably less fair than do their leaders.

There were large differences in Article 15 rates and less-than-honorable discharge rates within the E1 to E5 pay grades, but only small differences in self-reported rule breaking within these pay grades. Using the five item scale (see column 1, Table 5), the level of self-reported rule breaking does diminish somewhat from the E1 to E5 pay grades, but seemingly not enough to account for the large reduction in punishment and discharge rates shown in Table 1. Although soldiers may not recognize large differences in Article 15 and discharge rates between the E1 and E5 pay grades, they are almost certainly aware that anyone above the rank of E5 is not likely to receive an Article 15 or a discharge. Soldiers in the lower pay grades, E1-E4, associate with each other constantly and probably identify with each other; thus, what happens to one low-ranking enlisted man in a company affects the perceptions of other low-ranking enlisted men. This is illustrated by the fact that the feelings of fairness did not change much in the E1 to E5 range, but changed dramatically at the leader level, indicating that lower-ranking enlisted men did indeed identify with each other.

In summary, using the reported feelings of fairness as a measure, there appears to be a substantial level of polarization between both Blacks and Whites, and between low-ranking enlisted men and their leaders. Racial polarization existed despite the fact that administrative discharge rates did not differ between Blacks and Whites, and that the differences in Article 15 rates for Blacks and Whites were not exceptionally large compared to the rank differences. Racial polarization may be accentuated by each group's differing perceptions of who is breaking the rules most frequently, in that each group felt the other was most culpable. The punishment rates were consistent with the White perception of offense rates, and thus, Whites felt these rates were fair. Concurrently, the punishment rates were inconsistent with the Black perception of offense rates and therefore blacks felt these rates were unfair.

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