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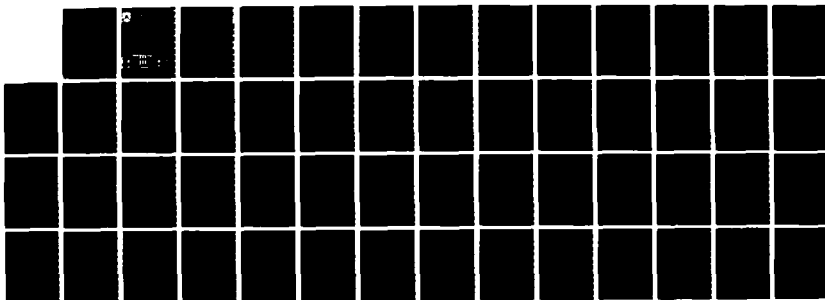
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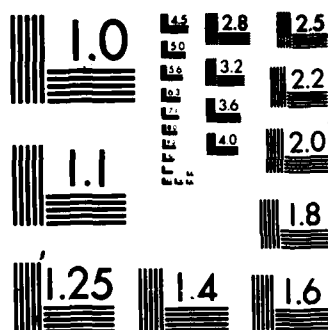
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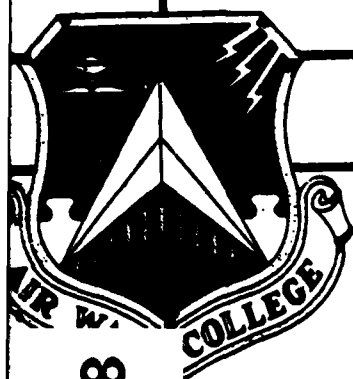


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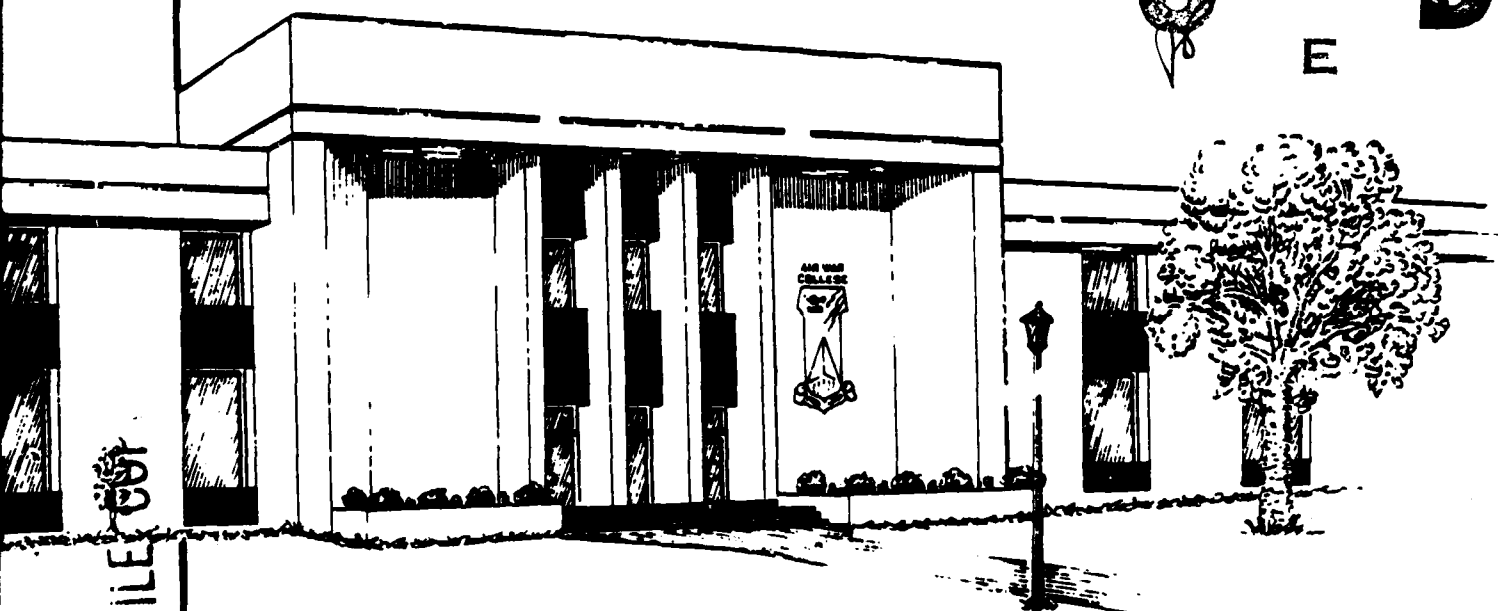
RESEARCH REPORT

No. AU-AWC-86-045

FRATERNIZATION AND THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

By COLONEL SHELBY N. CORDON

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AIR UNIVERSITY
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

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FRATERNIZATION AND THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

by

Shelby N. Cordon
Colonel, USAF

A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY

IN

FULFILLMENT OF THE RESEARCH

REQUIREMENT

Research Advisor: Colonel Walt Hines

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

March 1986

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AIR WAR COLLEGE RESEARCH REPORT ABSTRACT

TITLE: Fraternization and the United States Air Force

AUTHOR: Shelby N. Cordon, Colonel, USAF

→ The traditional custom of fraternization has been and is being violated in the Air Force today. While the problem has been recognized for several years and although many of our Air Force leaders have publicly addressed the situation and warned of the consequence of fraternization, specific actions to deter these unprofessional relationships have not been initiated.

The need for discipline in the service has long been recognized as the foundation on which a military force is built. Likewise, violation of the fraternization custom is recognized as eroding the principle of discipline and affecting the ability to lead and to accomplish our mission.

Several causes which have contributed to the rise in fraternization can be traced to history and cultural developments, while others are more a matter of deficiency in and/or misapplication of Air Force policy. Solving the fraternization problem will not be easy and the alternatives range from eliminating the custom to initiating new policies and regulations which could correct the situation, but perhaps with unacceptable consequences. Numerous recommendations are provided by the author.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Colonel Shelby N. Cordon received a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Management from Arizona State University and was a distinguished graduate from Officer Training School in 1965. He is a graduate of the Squadron Officer School (in residence), the Air Command and Staff College (in residence) and is currently attending the Air War College as a member of the Class of 1986.

Starting his career as a Supply Officer, Colonel Cordon has held a number of key squadron level and staff positions. From 1965 to 1968, he was the support officer at the 670th Radar Squadron, Ft. McArthur, CA. From 1968-1970, he served in supply positions at CCK AB, Taiwan, then as the Chief, Spares and Equipment Division, 13th Air Force, Clark AFB, Philippines. In 1970-1971, he again filled supply positions at Whiteman AFB, MO., then in 1972 Col. Cordon served as a supply advisor to the Vietnamese at Soc Trang and Binh Thuy Air Bases, Vietnam. In 1973-1974, he was the Chief, Plans, Program and Analysis Division, at the Defense Logistics Agency, Memphis, TN. In 1974-1975, while attending ACSC he obtained his masters degree from Troy State in Psychology and Counseling. From 1975-1977, Col. Cordon served on the USAFE Supply staff and was executive to the DCS/Logistics. His first command position was from 1977-1979 at Rimini AB,

(NATO) Italy. Then from 1979-1981 he was executive to the Center Commander, Lowry AFB, CO., followed by another command assignment from 1981-1983 over the 3320th Correction and Rehabilitation Squadron. From 1983-1985, Col. Cordon was commander of the 317th Supply Squadron, Pope AFB, NC.--where his squadron won the Daedalian Award as the best Supply Squadron in the Air Force. He has been awarded the Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, the Air Force Commendation Medal with an oak leaf cluster and the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award. He also has the Vietnam Service Medal, Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Device, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal and the Vietnam Service Honor Medal, 1st class.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
	DISCLAIMER-ABSTAINER	ii
	ABSTRACT	iii
	BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.	iv
	TABLE OF CONTENTS.	vi
I	INTRODUCTION	1
II	BACKGROUND	3
III	CAUSES	10
	Social-Evolution	10
	Women in the Air Force	12
	Lack of Definition, Policy and Guidance.	14
	Dichotomy in Policy.	19
IV	ALTERNATIVES	29
	Eliminate the Fraternization Custom.	29
	Selected Fraternization Restrictions	30
	Status Quo	32
	Bite the Bullet.	32
V	RECOMMENDATIONS.	36
	Education and Training	37
	General Policies	38
	Specific Policies.	40
	LIST OF REFERENCES	46

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

During the American Revolutionary War a situation arose which plagued General Washington's Continental Army, including both the structure and discipline of his troops. His men failed to observe the separation of social familiarity between officers and enlisted members. This unacceptable relationship affected and weakened the discipline of his troops and violated a custom or tradition that would be labeled today as "fraternization." (19:23)

The purpose of this paper is to review the fraternization problem in the Air Force, past and present causes of fraternization, and possible alternatives to correct this situation, and to present my recommendations. In chapter two, the background will describe what military fraternization is, why it is unacceptable, its link to discipline and the extent of fraternization. In chapter three, the causes of fraternization are discussed and divided into four categories. The first two include causes the military had little or no control over, which are social evolution and women in the Air Force. The third and fourth categories are causes which the Air Force does control, e.g., lack of definition, policy and guidance, and the dichotomy in the policies which govern fraternization. In chapter four, I will review the alternatives available and

chapter five will recommend actions necessary to correct the fraternization problem.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND

In order to review the fraternization problem, it is logical to first establish what fraternization is and then determine why the military views fraternization as a problem. To define fraternization is almost impossible. In fact, the term fraternization did not ever appear in an official Air Force publication until 1983. Today's official publications actually describe fraternization vs. trying to define it. Our recruits in basic military training are taught that fraternization is the "inappropriate relationship between service members/civilian service members that impedes the accomplishment of the mission." (17:iii) Air Force Regulation 30-1, Air Force Standards, discussing professional relationships, describes fraternization as:

A long standing and well recognized custom in the military service that officers shall not fraternize or associate with enlisted members under circumstances that prejudice the good order or discipline of the Armed Forces of the United States. (2:19)

Further guidance is provided as to the relationship between superior and subordinate that is acceptable, i.e. "social contact contributing to unit cohesiveness and effectiveness is encouraged." (2:19) However, AFR 30-1 recommends social contact be limited and, that:

. . . officers and NCO's must make sure their

personal relationships with members, for whom they exercise a supervisory responsibility or whose duties or assignments they are in a position to influence, do not give the appearance of favoritism, preferential treatment, or impropriety. (2:19)

AFR 30-1 goes on to describe the results of fraternization and cautions that:

. . . excessive socialization and undue familiarity, real or perceived, degrades (sic) leadership and interferes with command authority and mission effectiveness (sic). (2:19)

Our only official regulation concerning fraternization then points out that, while "social and personal relationships between Air Force members are normally matters of individual judgement," these relationships "become matters of official concern when such relationships adversely affect duty performance, discipline and morale." (2:20) Examples of unacceptable relationships are then provided to include dating, favoritism, preferential treatment and frequent association with a junior member, which could affect the individual's position of authority, job performance, or the loss of unit morale. (2:20)

So, our Air Force regulation really describes fraternization and its results vs. clearly defining the relationship. Defining fraternization is somewhat like trying to define love. It is easier to describe the process and results thereof than to offer a precise definition.

Therefore, for the purpose of this paper, I will describe fraternization, using AFR 30-1 as a guideline, as

an inappropriate relationship between a superior and subordinate which results in actual or perceived degrading of leadership and/or unit accomplishment and/or which adversely affects duty performance, discipline or morale of individuals. (2:19)

With this description, the next step is to determine why fraternization is unacceptable in the military. My description and AFR 30-1 allude to the basic problem, which is not fraternization in itself, but rather the results of fraternization, which allegedly degrade leadership and interfere with command authority and mission effectiveness and may adversely affect duty performance, discipline and morale.

Most would agree that discipline is absolutely necessary in the military, both during peace and war. If we do not have discipline during peace, the situation cannot be changed overnight to an absolute adherence to regulations and orders of superiors only after war breaks out. Discipline is required in peace so it will be accepted in war. George Washington stated that "discipline is the soul of the army. It makes small numbers formidable; procures success to the weak, and esteem to all." (5:460)

Any experienced military leader would agree that the principle of discipline is the foundation on which a military force is built. Also, when we discuss discipline, we have to include leadership, authority and a military rank

structure--all of which go hand in hand with the process of establishing and maintaining discipline and a military organization. Since the beginning of the military, there has been an acceptance of the need of discipline. The method used to achieve discipline has been authority in leaders which are placed in a vertical rank structure of some type.

Another long-accepted principle is that an inappropriate relationship between a superior and subordinate can undermine discipline. As early as 1910, there was written guidance concerning the relationships between the officer and enlisted personnel, as noted in Captain Andrew's Fundamentals of Military Service, where he states that "familiarity between officers and enlisted men, and between noncommissioned officers and privates, is inadmissible." (3:272) The 1917 Officer's Manual points out that "familiarity is most subversive to discipline" and "attempts to cultivate popularity will result in the loss of the men's esteem." (14:50-51) The 1921 Army Instruction Pamphlet clearly states that "undue familiarity between officers and enlisted men is forbidden . . . and this requirement . . . is founded solely upon the demands of discipline." It further states that "discipline requires an immediate, loyal, cheerful compliance with lawful orders of the superior . . . and these objectives cannot be readily attained when there is undue familiarity between the officer and those under his command. (15:14) And as previously

noted, our regulation 30-1, Air Force Standards, points out the need for good order and discipline and that "excessive socialization and undue familiarity, real or perceived, degrades(sic) leadership and interferes(sic) with command authority and mission effectiveness." (2:19)

So, long established and accepted military principles include: first, discipline in the military is a fundamental requirement; second, the means to obtain discipline is through authority and a rank structure; and finally, unacceptable relationships between the superior and subordinates can break down authority, leadership and the discipline needed to maintain the military structure.

So far we have established a description of fraternization, its effect on discipline and thus why military leaders have long accepted the tradition and custom which prohibit fraternization. Next, I'll briefly review the extent of fraternization in the military today. This is easier said than done simply because statistics are limited. Statistics concerning fraternization are available only for those cases which are prosecuted, e.g., administrative actions and courts-martial. Statistics are not available for the probable thousands of unprofessional relationships or situations that go unchallenged or are discontinued only after counseling and/or threats by the commander to take action if fraternization continues. Therefore, consider these statistics as only the "tip of the iceberg":

- In 1978, there were 658 officer-enlisted marriages in the Air Force. (10:112) That figure had increased over 100 percent by 1983 with 1325 officer-enlisted marriages. (16)
- In a five year period (1977-1981), 427 officers were separated "for cause" and 73 were court-martialed for fraternization or fraternization related offenses. (8:62)
- In one major command, punishable offenses of officers (article 15, promotion delay, removal from the promotion list, administrative discharge and court-martial) increased from 40 in 1977 to 89 in 1981. (8:62) (Note: this was in one command only.)

In 1984, Lt. Col. Carl W. Canter initiated a survey on fraternization. His sample consisted of officers from the Air War College (AWC), Squadron Officers School (SOS) and NCO's from the Senior NCO Academy (AFSNCOA). One of the survey questions asked respondents if violation of the fraternization policy normally resulted in administrative or disciplinary action taken? The overwhelming majority (AWC: 90%; SOS 63%; AFSNCOA: 71%) said "no," . . . "violation of policy did not result in an action being taken against the violators." (7:24) As noted earlier, the statistics available only show the tip of the iceberg if this is the perception of the majority.

Another of Lt. Col. Canter's survey questions asked respondents to indicate the number of non-professional relationships or cases of fraternization they had observed during their career. Over 85 percent answered they had observed some cases, with the senior officers understandably observing more. (7:19) An ideal question would have been

simply to ask if they felt fraternization was a problem in the Air Force, but it was not posed. However, based on the previous statistics, i.e. officer-enlisted marriages, the increase of administrative actions and courts-martial, and the survey responses noted, plus my own experience of over 20 years which includes three command positions, my perception is that the Air Force does have a fraternization problem. General B. L. Davis, former CINCSAC and Commander, Air Training Command, expressed his concern about fraternization in a 1982 address to the Air Force Academy cadets and advised that "if left unchecked, it can destroy the very core of our military structure." (9:2)

Thus, fraternization could be described as a disease which could prove fatal to officership, professionalism, leadership and discipline. Chapter three will look at the causes of this spreading disease to include those over which the military has had little or no control and those which the Air Force can control.

CHAPTER III

CAUSES

The causes of fraternization may be divided into four main categories, all of which have contributed to this problem, not only in the Air Force, but the entire military structure. These categories form the organization of this chapter. First, I will review social evolution and its impact on fraternization. Next, the effect of women in the service will be discussed and third, the lack of policy, definition and guidance will be addressed. Finally, I will review the dichotomy in policy, standards and guidance which adds to our fraternization problem in the military today.

Social-Evolution

History, or more precisely, social evolution itself, can be partly blamed for our fraternization problem. Ancient military forces were made up of officers from the noble or wealthy and an enlisted force recruited primarily from the peasants. Thus, a caste system initially established a social separation between the officer and the enlisted. Through social equality and evolution, however, backgrounds became less and less a factor in dictating a different station in life or the position one would have in the military. By the 20th century, officers and enlisted were being recruited from all walks of life, and society had decreed that positions in the military be based primarily on

skills, intelligence and education. Prior social barriers established by the family name, wealth or position were no longer the determinants of rank or separation in the military. Although society no longer tolerates a division between men based on background, the military still demands a separation between the superior and subordinate due to the long recognized need for discipline which is required to maintain an effective fighting organization. Thus, the reason for separation between officer and enlisted has evolved from social status to pure need for discipline in the military.

Social evolution also brought about a major change in how we view our rights vs. the needs of organizations. "For twenty years, American society has dramatically expanded the freedom of the individual and curtailed the authority of institutions." (10:112) Also through social evolution, we have seen the accepted norms of society and the practices, customs and traditions of the military grow farther apart, often confounding the need for a clear superior-subordinate relationship. Lt. Col. Canter's survey asked if the current Air Force fraternization policy reflected a realistic assessment of our society's morals and standards. The answer, by a clear majority, was "no." (7:26) Since in our democratic society, the military does not control outside norms, it is then an accepted fact that military standards do differ, and will continue to differ from those of

society. So today we acquire our airmen and soldiers from a society whose way of life and standards differ considerably from the military, to include the relationship between a superior and a subordinate. How the superior and subordinate interact and the relationship they have in civilian society may be completely unacceptable in the military. Society normally does not dictate, interfere or judge relationships as we do in the military. Of course, society does not have the need for authority and discipline nor the mission that we have in the military. While we cannot blame the social evolution for our fraternization problem, it is still a factor in its existence.

Women in the Air Force

A second factor which has expanded fraternization started in WWII and is even more prominent today is women in the military. World War II added a new dimension to the problem; fraternization was no longer restricted to a superior-subordinate or officer-enlisted situation, but included the male-female relationship in the equation.

Mattie Treadwell's The Women's Army Corps documented the different fraternization problems during WWII; i.e., "in addition to the WACs who married officers, there were a number of the theater's 4,000 nurses who had married enlisted men." (18:376) Even before 1940, social evolution had torn down any dating or marriage restrictions. So when war broke out and thousands of men and women entered

military service, they found a custom placing limits on relationships that was completely different from the individual social freedom they had known prior to putting on a uniform. As more than 90,000 women entered the military, the custom of fraternization was violated and problems increased. (20:9)

Today the choice has been made not only to have women in the military, but they shall also be integrated into almost every job in the service other than direct combat related positions. This change in Air Force composition and populace added the factor of sex into the fraternization problem. Sexual attraction is a fact of life--it always has been and always will be--and thus dramatically increases the potential for fraternization. As a recent general officer noted in his talk at the Air War College (AWC), with women in the Air Force, the potential for fraternization increases several times. He alluded to two facts that impact on the challenge to stop fraternization. First, with men and women working together you are dealing with forces of nature and second, in many cases these forces are beyond our control.

Lt. Col Canter asked in his survey what relationships between male to male, female to female, or male to female, are the most significant potential problem areas? Those surveyed felt that the male to male and female to female constituted less than ten percent of the problem, while the male to female relationship was considered as the

"predominant potential problem area for all groups both today and in the future." (7:22)

Thus, through social evolution we have standards, practices and accepted rules in today's society that directly contradict the military's custom banning fraternization. Then, when we change the composition of our military forces to include 16 to 20 percent women, the situation is compounded significantly. It should be noted, however, that these two causes of fraternization, the evolution of society and adding women to the military, cannot or probably will not be changed, nor should these two causes be blamed on the military. The military has not nor should not decide our societal norms and standards. Also, the additional need for manpower and equality has dictated the presence of women in the military. Therefore, one may blame history for only these two causes of fraternization. The next causes, however, have to be blamed on the military.

Lack of Definition, Policy and Guidance

There are causes of fraternization which might simply be stated as the "lack of." These are lack of a precise definition of fraternization, the lack of specific, standard DOD policies and the lack of adequate guidance for our servicemen and women. Inadequate guidance and/or no policies have resulted in confusion, misunderstanding, lack of enforcement, inconsistent and unequal prosecution, and the violation of our fraternization custom.

As previously discussed, there is no official Air Force definition of fraternization. From AFR 30-1 one could interpret fraternization as an inappropriate personal relationship between members of different ranks which can be reasonably expected to undermine discipline, authority or morale. (2:18-20) The problem with this description is that it leaves numerous, unresolved questions. What are inappropriate personal relationships and how does one judge if the relationship will undermine or has undermined discipline, authority or morale? Without specific guidance, the answer will be in the eyes of the beholder since each commander could view and judge a situation differently. One of Lt. Col. Canter's survey questions listed eight dating situations, all of which could be considered as violating AFR 30-1 guidance, i.e., inappropriate social relationships between different ranks. He asked the AWC, SOS and AFSNCOA participants to pick out the situations which they thought would be unprofessional or considered as fraternization. Not surprisingly, there was not one situation where everyone agreed, and there were only three of the eight situations where a majority considered the situation to be unprofessional or fraternization. (7:18) Obviously, there is confusion today in what constitutes fraternization among the troops and this confusion is not new. Mattie Treadwell noted in The Women's Army Corps that during WWII, not only was the custom of fraternization violated in the European

theater, but how the policy was interpreted and enforced varied, . . . "and each local commander was therefore entitled to interpret the custom, or ignore it, as he saw fit WAC company officers noted that they were obliged to punish their enlisted women while officer dates were not punished" (18:447,512) Then as now, inadequate guidance and policies led to confusion and misunderstanding, which leads to violation of the custom, which in turn leads to unequal enforcement and punishment by commanders who do not have enough guidance to handle the problem properly. In one squadron there may be a commander who ignores a relationship or does nothing to stop or punish violators, whereas in another squadron the same relationship could result in administrative or punitive actions.

Next, Air Force Regulation 30-1 states . . . "officers shall not fraternize or associate with enlisted members under circumstances that prejudice the good orders and discipline of the Armed Forces of the United States." (2:19) This brings up the problem of determining if and when a relationship affects discipline, or morale, or effectiveness. For example, another question asked by Lt. Col. Canter's survey was: "Have the cases observed resulted in lower morale and degraded mission effectiveness . . . ?" (7:20) Approximately 60 percent answered either yes or no, but almost 40 percent of those surveyed didn't know if the mission or morale had been affected.

The Air Force is no different from the Army, Navy or Marine Corps. Each service has a basic concept and custom against fraternization, but each tells its commanders how to recognize and deal with fraternization in a different way. (6:3,30) With the lack of an encompassing DOD definition, regulation and specific policy guidance, we have confusion and disagreement as to what constitutes fraternization--and when a relationship has undermined discipline and morale. The Air Force legal position doesn't help much in providing more specific guidance. In 1971, the Judge Advocate General (JAG) noted that "social contact between officers and enlisted men is limited only to the extent that the contact would undermine the mission and operational effectiveness of the Air Force." (11:C-70) In 1982, the JAG sent a memo to the Secretary of the Air Force stating the opinion that "officers shall not fraternize or associate with enlisted members under circumstances which prejudice the good order and discipline" (11:C-64) Again, how do you determine when a relationship undermines the mission and effectiveness, or prejudices the good order and discipline? The uniform code of Military Justice, Article 134, states that "the acts and circumstances must be such as to lead a reasonable person experienced in the problems of military leadership to conclude that good order and discipline of the armed forces has (sic) been prejudiced" (12:iv-127) While this provides additional guidance in determining who

might judge if a relationship is fraternization and if good order and discipline have been undermined, the guidance still leaves a broad area of possible disagreement. Without specific guidance, when a situation changes from an acceptable relationship to fraternization is still in the eyes of the beholder or the commander. Also, without specific parameters governing relationships, the individual can fraternize and then justify his/her actions on the lack of guidance. For the person who purposely wants to fraternize, the lack of specific policies and rules can give the individual "a licence to steal."

Two of Lt. Col. Canter's survey questions addressed the lack of Air Force policy and the results of the guidance that is provided. The first of these questions asked if respondents felt "Air Force Policy on fraternization is clearly discribed in Air Force Regulations?" Five to eight percent said yes, while 80 to 90 percent said no. (7:24) The second question asked how the "current policy on fraternization is applied in the Air Force?" Only four to eight percent said fairly, while 57 to 60 percent said unfairly and 35 to 37 percent said they didn't know. (7:25) Thus, lack of definition, plus the lack of specific policies and little or no guidance cause confusion, misunderstanding and violation of the fraternization custom. Then follows unequal enforcement and unequal justice by commanders who are left to interpret behavior and actions at the unit level

without adequate policy guidance.

Dichotomy in Policy

It is bad enough when we have inadequate and nonspecific policies governing our actions as with fraternization. But, when we have policies that result in a contradiction of guidance, then we can expect even more confusion, misunderstanding and violation of a custom.

I want good sense to govern such things. Social contact between sexes . . . that does not interfere with other officers or enlisted persons should have the rule of decency and deportment--not artificial barriers. (18:403)

The above quote is not from a civilian or an unknowing commander, but from an individual who was well aware of the custom banning fraternization, namely General Dwight D. Eisenhower. His above 1945 memo provided written guidance directly contrary to not only an established custom but also to prior written guidance, i.e., General Devers' directive "that the customs of the service (fraternization) would apply except to relatives and fiances (18:402) And while General Eisenhower established a policy of "good sense" to govern social contact, his policy on marriage was that "persons in the military service will not be permitted to establish homes and families in this active theater." (18:403) The theater chaplain protested that the policy was creating "a condition of concubinage," and the WAC Staff put it more directly in revealing that "military couples are living together, without marriage, in fear of being

separated." (18:403) General Eisenhower's policy in effect said it's okay to socialize, but don't get married--which is about the opposite in today's Air Force, that is, don't fraternize, but once you're married, it's okay! The mixed signals from headquarters continued. After WWII, General James H. Doolittle led a study on officer-enlisted relationships and recommended that when off duty all military be allowed to pursue normal social patterns and urged "the abolishment of all statutes, regulations, customs, and traditions which discourage or forbid social association of soldiers of similar likes and tastes because of military rank." (10:110) While these recommendations were never approved, they reflected stark differences of opinion in the Army leadership, and broadcasted mixed signals and confusion to service personnel. While the signals against fraternization are stronger today, I am not sure they are any clearer. In General Davis' speech in April 1982 at the USAF Academy, he stated: "the bottom line is clear--there is no place for fraternization within the Air Force. It affects both the officer and enlisted and is detrimental to the effective functioning of our vital mission." (9:16) This was a strong and clear signal from the then CINSAC, but the same guidance was not provided in a recent AWC lecture by a ranking three-star general as he voiced Air Force policy. When asked what should be done concerning an enlisted-officer marriage he said this type of

marriage in the Air Force is okay, but fraternization was not. If different forms of fraternization were listed by priority, would not marriage, especially among officers and enlisted have to be the ultimate form of fraternization? The Air Force Review Court has pointed out that "once it is acceptable to have officers married to enlisted (sic), it is logical to conclude that mere dating is also acceptable since that is nothing more than the socially accepted preliminary stage to marriage." (13:13) Thus, the Air Force has sanctified the ultimate form of fraternization--marriage, and perhaps dating--and is thereby continuing to send confusing and conflicting signals to our men and women.

There are other Air Force policies which further dichotomize AFR 30-1 guidance concerning fraternization. The current (1977) AFR 90-1, Assignment of Family Housing, allows officers who are married to enlisted personnel to live in either the officer or the enlisted housing area. (4:6-9) Also, AFR 215-11, Operation of Open Messes, allows officers and enlisted members to use each other's open mess as a guest and on some bases the officers' and NCO clubs are consolidated. (1:5) How can the Air Force not expect fraternization if enlisted personnel are living in the officer housing area or going to each other's clubs? Again, mixed and confusing signals abound.

Following are numerous other Air Force customs,

traditions, unwritten policies, actions and situations which, while not in themselves bad or constituting fraternization, may contribute to the breakdown of this custom. They appear in the form of decreased authority, leadership and discipline, and/or trends toward increased socialization and familiarity. All of these may lead to fraternization and the increased violation of the Air Force regulation governing professional relationships.

1. It is not unusual to see senior (E-8, E-9) NCO's treated with more respect and authority than most officers. This is normal, whether in a squadron, in staff meetings or on a TDY where the E-9 is provided a better room, more protocol and sometimes even a vehicle, while the officer is ignored or treated the same as enlisted personnel.
2. The custom of rank has its privileges (RHIP) has almost disappeared, other than for general officers and certain colonels, thus putting all other officers into the same category as enlisted. A Chief Master Sergeant is afforded more RHIP than most colonels.
3. Uniform changes over the years have made distinction between ranks almost impossible, e.g., the same uniform, shoulder boards and mess dress.
4. TDY officer and enlisted aircrews billeted together for (on-off base) convenience and ease

can foster dining and socializing together and could result in over familiarity and fraternization. Contract off base motels also combine ranks without regard to the fraternization custom.

5. Squadron teams including both officers and enlisted may lead to first names and after game socializing. The officer can become just "one of the boys."

6. Commanders "going around" the OIC for direct interaction with or advice from top NCOs can reduce respect for the officer and break down the chain of command.

7. There has been a gradual reduction of the officer's authority (actual and perceived) over the years, i.e., a captain had more direct authority in WWII than a colonel does today. This erosion of the officer's authority has helped change our officer from a leader to a manager in many situations.

8. The pay inversion over the years has senior NCO's making as much or more salary than junior officers, thus putting them on the same or higher economic and social scale as officers.

9. The tremendous importance placed on the social actions programs, especially in the 70s, provided

a means whereby an individual could challenge a commander's or other officer's decision, his authority, leadership and in turn any disciplinary measures that might be imposed. If he/she didn't like the commander's decision, for example, the subordinate could turn to social actions channels, claim unfairness or discrimination and possibly get the decision overruled. The commander saw his authority and ability to lead eroded and his decisions evaluated and changed by a committee.

10. The adoption of and emphasis on civilian management techniques have deemphasized authority and partly replaced traditional military leadership.

11. The increased numbers of service personnel living off base often put the officer and senior NCO in the same neighborhood, which can easily result in familiarity and degeneration of the officer-enlisted professional relationship. This is especially possible when inter-socializing, as long as it's after duty hours and off base, is perceived as okay!

12. Today's society, whether actual or perceived, shows few if any barriers between the civilian superior and his subordinate. This is the basis, or the socially accepted norm, at which the

recruit, both officer and airman, starts with when entering the service.

13. The emphasis put on unit cohesion and camaraderie can lead to over familiarity and fraternization. A long accepted principle has been that familiarity breeds contempt. Yet, today we are encouraged to personally know our troops, develop a close working relationship and create an informal working environment. If limits are not placed on these actions, they can easily lead to fraternization.

14. Over socialization in the form of boss-employee nights at the club and squadron picnics/parties can breed a familiarity that, while increasing cohesion and unit morale, if done in excess, can be the start of fraternization.

15. The simple act of the officer calling the NCO or airman by his first name, a long accepted practice, may lead to the enlisted member calling the officer by his first name. Some officers even encourage an enlisted friend to address him/her by their first name, especially if off duty, socializing, or if they live in the same neighborhood.

16. Officers with prior enlisted experience sometimes have a problem in changing from "one of

the boys" to a leader who should no longer socialize as before.

17. Student-teacher relationships at ATC bases are extremely vulnerable to fraternization practices ranging from lending money to sexual favors.

18. It is often forgotten that the perception of fraternization can lead to the same consequences as the act of fraternization itself. A commander in a closed door counseling session with a young airman, especially of the opposite sex, and without the first sergeant, can cause rumors to spread overnight.

19. Favoritism can precede or be the result of fraternization and can easily be perceived through the actions of a superior. Such actions can be in the form of greetings, use of first names, touching, special duty assignments, selection for promotion, time spent with the individual officially or socially, and numerous other instances where objectivity and neutrality may be relaxed.

While these practices and actions may not break any law, rule or regulation, they can easily violate the spirit and intent of established custom and in many cases may be the start of an unprofessional relationship. Fraternization

normally doesn't happen overnight, but builds on an association which, before one realizes it, can develop into something that is unacceptable in the eyes of the military. As so aptly stated in an article in the Airman Magazine, "fraternization is a sneaky little devil that creeps into professional relationships and catches people by surprise." (21:8)

Lt. Col. Canter's survey asked the AWC, SOS and AFSNCOA participants to rate Air Force training programs which are aimed at understanding and communicating the fraternization issue and Air Force policy. Seventy-seven percent of the senior officers and 82 percent of the senior NCOs rated the training as unacceptable. Also, less than 10 percent of all surveyed rated the training as good or outstanding. (7:20)

A major problem of any socialization process is being able to judge when the objective of "esprit de corps" changes to or results in fraternization. At what point does an informal social relationship no longer build cohesiveness and enter into the realm of an unprofessional relationship, either actual or perceived?

How any relationship is perceived largely depends on the individuals involved. One party may consider the relationship as socializing with the objective to build morale, while the other, and those viewing the relationship, may consider the socializing as fraternization with personal objectives. Thus, the results of socializing, even though

it starts on a completely professional basis, can progress into the realm of an unprofessional relationship such as fraternization.

CHAPTER IV

ALTERNATIVES

A 1981 article on fraternization in The Reporter suggested three alternatives in dealing with this problem. The first was to forget the custom. The second alternative was to prohibit fraternization between a superior and subordinate only if they are in the same chain of command. The third alternative was to "restore the traditional restrictions," or in other words bite the bullet and take any and all necessary actions to eliminate fraternization in the military. (10:115,116) There is, of course, a fourth alternative and that is status quo, or continue as we stand today in recognizing and battling the fraternization problem.

Eliminate the Fraternization Custom

There may be some who would vote for the first alternative, i.e., to forget the fraternization custom. This option might be feasible if our mission were different, whereas tomorrow a commander would not have to order his men into combat. It might be acceptable if there were no need for order and discipline in our military forces. However, we do in fact have to be ready for combat at any time, and we do need the highest level of order and discipline. Discipline is the backbone of the military and a key factor along with leadership, authority and a rank

structure which make up the platform on which an effective military force is built and maintained. Lt. Col. Canter asked in his survey if the Air Force should abolish all rules restricting socialization of officers and enlisted personnel, which is a big part of the fraternization equation. The overwhelming majority said no: i.e., AWC-98%; SOS-84%; and AFSNCOA-90%. Obviously, the majority feel we cannot just throw out all rules and there is a "need for guidelines for interaction between officers and enlisted personnel." (7:28)

Selected Fraternization Restrictions

The second alternative, while having more merit, also has its flaws. Limiting the fraternization custom to only superior-subordinate actors in the same chain of command might be acceptable if our responsibilities, positions, relationships and influence were limited to a single chain of command. This is not the case however. Although our positions on a base may stay relatively stable, our relationships, influence and responsibilities are certainly not limited to a simple chain of command. This is especially the case for higher ranking NCOs and all officers. A senior officer dating a junior officer in a different squadron could influence the junior officer's supervisor. Also, the responsibilities of the officers could overlap or conflict, and their relationship could influence decisions affecting both squadrons. A more

dramatic problem would be an officer-enlisted relationship. While there may be no connection between the two chains of command, the perception factor still exists, especially if the officer has contact with or is a friend of the supervisor of the enlisted individual. Overall, the basic problem with accepting this alternative is that the rules, exceptions, and factors required to govern these relationships would be far more complex than what now governs today's fraternization custom. The opinions on this alternative as obtained through Lt. Col. Canter's survey were clearly divided. He asked if the Air Force should "permit social relationships between officers and enlisted personnel who have no command or supervisory relationship." Eighty percent of the senior officers (AWC) answered no, while only 43 percent and 38 percent of the SOS and AFSNCOA students said no to permitting social relationships with no command/supervisory connections. (7:27) Accepting the fraternization custom between officers and NCOs even though there is no command/supervisory relationship seems to depend on where one is located in the military rank structure. If fraternization were allowed for those who have no command/supervisory relationship, the perception of discrimination, plus the factors previously mentioned, would still apply and would compound this already complex and confusing situation.

Status Quo

There is an old saying: "Give them an inch and they will take a mile." This describes my perception of the alternative of status quo, or just continuing to do what we are doing now. This consists of telling our commanders to honor and enforce the fraternization custom, but not providing the necessary tools for them to accomplish that job. Under the present system, I would predict more widespread fraternization as society continues to influence the military's standards and norms and more women join the services. These two factors alone dictate that we do more than we are doing now. The survey conducted by Lt. Col. Canter supports this position. He asked if the Air Force should continue its current policy on fraternization. The majority of all groups responded that the Air Force should not continue its current policy on fraternization, as is, with only nine percent of the AWC, 10 percent of AFSNCOA and 21 percent of the SOS students surveyed saying continue the status quo. (7:27) This brings us to the last alternative of restoring the traditional custom.

Bite the Bullet

Complete restoration of the fraternization restrictions could have unacceptable consequences. To restore the custom beyond any question would, for starters, require restricting all socialization of officers and enlisted personnel. I am

not sure this is even possible with today's standards and norms and with current living conditions (off-base housing, restaurants, shopping, etc.). Also in order to accomplish this alternative, several Air Force policies would require changing, e.g., consolidated clubs, enlisted and officer marriages, married officers and enlisted in base housing, guests in clubs, etc. Lt. Col. Canter addressed a survey question that gives an indication of what actions would be acceptable in restoring the fraternization restrictions.

Which of the following recommendations would you support to reduce unprofessional relationship/fraternization problems in the military? (you may circle more than one answer)

- a. Refuse joint assignment requests for officer/enlisted couples.
- b. Refuse on-base quarters to officer/enlisted couples.
- c. Replace consolidated clubs with separate clubs, for officers, NCO's and airmen.
- d. Prohibit sponsoring, as private guests, active duty military members who, by virtue of their grade, would not be eligible for membership in the member's club (except for officially sanctioned unit party/events).
- e. Require one member of an officer/enlisted couple to separate.
- f. None of the above.

	a.	b.	c.	d.	e.	f.	
AWC	47	81	100	76	66	0	
SOS	27	29	66	28	24	25	
AFSNCOA	23	29	66	39	30	19	(7:23)

While senior officers supported most of the recommendations, only the proposal to replace consolidated clubs with separate clubs for officer, NCO and enlisted was accepted by the majority. Opinions on the other recommendations would indicate a lack of support for implementation. If this response is representative of general Air Force thinking, then the support needed to restore the traditional custom is indeed questionable. This would especially be the case if we assume that support for these proposals would even be lower from our younger NCO's and airmen.

But, like any military service, the Air Force does not necessarily make decisions based on what is popular or on vote count. Therefore, while restoring the fraternization custom appears to run counter to opinions expressed, this does not exclude the alternative.

Looking at all of the alternatives, it seems there is no clear cut decision. Common sense alone would indicate that we are not going to do away with the fraternization custom and accept society's socialization norms--at least not tomorrow, but perhaps in a few decades. Banning fraternization only between officer-enlisted in the same chain of command could complicate the situation even more than the case today, and with 90 percent of the senior officers against this proposal, it would never sell. Nor is the alternative to continue the status quo acceptable. A clear majority basically said we should not continue the

current policies on fraternization. . On the other extreme, however, only the senior officers are willing to implement changes which would return the military to, or even close to, the traditional fraternization concept and custom.

Based on Lt. Col. Canter's survey and other factors presented throughout this paper, it seems the leaders, commanders, junior officers and senior NCOs are saying, "While we don't like or accept the present way of doing business, and we are not willing to liberalize the fraternization custom, we are also not willing to bite the bullet and initiate the necessary actions to completely restore the traditional fraternization custom."

Apparently the answer is somewhere between the status quo and restoring the traditional restrictions. My recommendations are based on this premise.

CHAPTER V

Recommendations

My recommendations will vary in degree ranging from easy and acceptable changes to new, complex policies and rules that could possibly cause some social unrest and even legal challenges. I have divided my recommendations into three categories. My education and training recommendations are primarily initiatives that I feel the Air Force should have implemented years ago. The general policies category centers on recommendations concerning the fraternization policy and the specific policies category will include recommendations on such subjects as dating, marriage, socializing, clubs, etc.

Some recommendations will obviously require time-phasing or some period of time to facilitate implementation. Other recommendations will require waivers or "grandfather clauses," because the situation (officer-enlisted marriages) was previously accepted by the Air Force. Many of my recommendations could and should be implemented as soon as possible, i.e., education and training programs. All of my recommendations, however, are based on the idea of gradually moving away from our present trend and over time initiate actions and programs which are designed to correct our fraternization problem. While I do not propose we return to the days of noblemen and peasants, my recommendations include policies that I feel are necessary to promote and

ensure the discipline required in our military does not further erode through current fraternization practices.

Education and Training

There are no reasons why recommendations in this category could not be implemented immediately! Also, even if none of my other recommendations were adopted, the Air Force should initiate these recommendations which would at least strengthen our current policies and AFR 30-1.

1. Initiate programs to educate all personnel on the fraternization custom, Air Force Regulation 30-1 and the UCMJ, Article 134. Specifics follow:
2. Require that all personnel be briefed annually on the fraternization custom, policies, standards, regulation, etc. The degree of treatment should be much more than just another check list, commanders' call, or cursory GMT. This annual inculcation should be an in-depth course aimed at teaching to include examples, role playing, case studies, legal consequences and questions and answers.
3. Initiate separate and special classes for commanders aimed at providing them a clear understanding of their responsibilities, defining what socializing is acceptable and when a relationship becomes unacceptable. The commander's authority to include legal and

administrative alternatives should be addressed.

4. Integrate the subject of fraternization into all non-resident PME programs, plus SOS, ACSC, AWC and all NCO academy resident courses.

5. Include complete orientation on fraternization in all accession and basic training courses, e.g., OTS, ROTC, Academy, medical, chaplain and law orientation, and BMT.

Even if there were no changes in our fraternization policy, implementing my education and training recommendations could reduce the misunderstanding and confusion that surround the fraternization custom in the Air Force today.

General Policies

The Air Force needs to make some basic decisions concerning fraternization with the objectives of clarifying its position on this custom and providing better guidance to our commanders and personnel. Following are my recommendations which are necessary if we are going to make more progress beyond fundamental education and training.

1. The Air Force fraternization policy should be more clearly defined and described. This would require the Air Force leadership to decide exactly what relationships are acceptable vs. those that encourage fraternization and thus are not acceptable.

2. Include, in the description of fraternization, examples, do's and don'ts, specific social limitations and implications. The importance of perception and its role and impact on fraternization should also be covered.

3. The commander's responsibility should be more clearly defined to include authority, administrative, disciplinary and legal options available and enforcement criteria. Or in other words, what should the commander know and do, how to do it, and what should be done if and when fraternization occurs? My recommendation to have special training for commanders should be integrated with this proposal. These two combined initiatives could very easily be the key that will determine whether all of the recommendations fail or succeed since it is the commander who has the responsibility to set the climate, train the personnel, and enforce Air Force policies and customs.

4. The fraternization policy should embody a broad overall statement (plus the previous recommendations), which would address the spirit,

intent and objectives of the policy.

This would cover those unique incidents that are not considered by previous specific language, rules or examples.

As with my education and training initiatives, these general policy recommendations should be initiated as soon as possible. The only lead time needed is that required for the Air Force to further clarify its position on the fraternization custom. But, based on our past record and actions, this could take years. The education and training recommendations, however, should not be delayed awaiting these recommended policy changes.

Specific Policies

The following recommendations will cover areas that encourage or promote fraternization and where specific changes are needed if we are going to do more than just provide "lip service" to the fraternization problem. Contrary to the other categories, some of these recommendations will require time-phasing in order to be accepted and also be fair to our personnel.

1. First, the Air Force needs to decide what functions are acceptable and which are not, i.e., which functions create unit morale and cohesiveness vs. those which may create a fraternization environment and encourage unprofessional relationships. For example,

squadron picnics, dining-ins, and even informal squadron luncheons if properly organized and controlled may be acceptable, while beer busts, nights out with the boss, holiday parties and functions which involve the pairing of officers and enlisted personnel, i.e., luncheons, are not. The spirit and intent of the function would have to be determined and approval at a specific (higher than squadron) level would be required.

2. Much more complex and challenging are the rules and standards governing off-base socializing. Obviously, the Air Force cannot dictate where people live off-base, whom they invite into their homes, or what restaurants they use, etc. But, guidelines are recommended which clearly point out that fraternization is not limited to base boundaries and that Air Force policies and regulations also apply off-base.

3. Our club policies must be changed to discontinue the use of any consolidated clubs. This type of situation is usually found on a small base, in a remote or semi-remote location, or where the small number of personnel assigned will not allow separate and profitable clubs. This is very possibly the situation, however, where fraternization is even more likely to occur.

Implementing this recommendation would obviously require time, since additional dollars and facilities may be required at many locations.

a. Active duty military members should not be allowed to visit other clubs where they are not eligible for membership.

b. A waiver for a base or squadron function, e.g., dining-in, could be approved. This should be limited to formal functions, however, and after duty socializing and visiting another individual's club would be prohibited.

4. Dating is the next step up the socialization ladder and is unquestionably fraternization, depending on the parties involved. Since love wears no rank, this aspect of fraternization will be the hardest to control and therefore I recommend exact and specific policies be developed to clearly address exactly who can date whom, and should the regulation be violated, what actions the commander can take. A detailed description of dating would be necessary to include specific examples and guidelines, do's and don'ts, plus language to stipulate clearly the spirit and intent of this operative policy. My recommendations involving dating may require time-phasing, or perhaps more precise a warning as

to the date these policies would be initiated and enforced.

a. Dating between officers and enlisted personnel should be absolutely prohibited!

b. Dating between two officers or two enlisted personnel in the same chain of command or squadron should be prohibited.

c. Dating rules would apply to both on and off base and should be legally enforceable if the regulation specifically addresses this situation.

5. The Air Force should change its present policy and consider marriage between officer and enlisted as "the ultimate form of fraternization." Until this position is accepted and marriage between officer and enlisted personnel is not allowed and becomes career suicide, fraternization will still be a problem in the Air Force. These suggestions involving marriage are militarily, politically and socially volatile, but must be addressed if the problem of fraternization in the Air Force is to be solved.

a. For those current officer-enlisted marriages, a "grandfather clause" or a waiver for the marriage is recommended. After all, due to the Air Force's indecisiveness, they married and then

were allowed to continue their careers in the Air Force.

b. For future mixed (officer-enlisted) marriages, I recommend that one member of the marriage be required to separate from the Air Force. For two enlisted personnel who are married and one has been chosen and attends Officer Training School (OTS), the other (enlisted) would be required to separate from the service.

c. For those current mixed (officer-enlisted) marriages, future special joint spouse assignments should not be provided. Also, when a mixed couple is reassigned, they should not be allowed to live on base. In conjunction with this action, a future date (3 years) could be set whereby officer-enlisted marrieds will no longer be allowed in base housing.

d. Enlisted personnel should not be allowed to marry someone in the same chain of command or squadron. A waiver is also recommended for current marriages of this type; however, efforts should be made to assign them to different squadrons. Time would be required to properly implement this recommendation.

6. The use of first names for all ranks should be

eliminated, e.g., the colonel would address the sergeant by rank and no longer by first name.

7. As soon as provisions could be made, billeting officer and enlisted air crews and TDY teams together for convenience purposes should be discontinued.

8. Squadron sport teams should be limited to either enlisted or officer only. There should be no mixed teams.

If some or all of these recommendations are implemented, will fraternization cease to exist? No, since there is not a regulation or set of rules written that can or will completely govern human relationships. But, effective education and training and clearer policies, with specific rules and examples which address the causes of fraternization, are a start in reducing or eliminating unprofessional relationships. The obvious question then, is the Air Force willing to change the present situation? If so, this paper may be of some use.

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