

APPLYING A CULTURAL DIVERSITY METRIC TO THE SELECTION OF ARMOR BRIGADE COMMAND SELECTEES

BY

COLONEL FLORENTINO "LOPEZ" CARTER
United States Army

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USAWC CLASS OF 2008

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U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013-5050

Report Documentation Page			Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188		
Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.					
1. REPORT DATE 15 MAR 2008		2. REPORT TYPE Strategy Research Project		3. DATES COVERED 00-00-2007 to 00-00-2008	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Applying a Cultural Diversity Metric to the Selection of Armor Brigade Command Selectees			5a. CONTRACT NUMBER		
			5b. GRANT NUMBER		
			5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER		
6. AUTHOR(S) Florentino Carter			5d. PROJECT NUMBER		
			5e. TASK NUMBER		
			5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER		
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army War College ,122 Forbes Ave.,Carlisle,PA,17013-5220			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER		
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)			10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)		
			11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)		
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT See attached					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT Same as Report (SAR)	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 28	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified			

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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BRIGADE COMMAND SELECTEES**

by

Colonel Florentino “Lopez” Carter
United States Army

Commander Carolyn Owens
Project Adviser

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U.S. Army War College
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013

ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Colonel Florentino "Lopez" Carter

TITLE: Applying a cultural diversity metric to the selection of Armor Brigade Command Selectees

FORMAT: Strategy Research Project

DATE: 17 March 2008 WORD COUNT: 5,767 PAGES: 22

KEY TERMS: Cultural Diversity

CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

There is a perception, whether real or perceived, that black Armor officers are marginally successful at gaining the opportunity to command at the tactical level, company through battalion, and unsuccessful at acquiring more senior level commands, brigade and higher. Almost sixty years ago on 26 July 1948, President Harry S. Truman issued Executive Order 9981, which was intended to bring about the end of racial segregation in the US Military. As the U.S. Armed Forces wrestled with the social challenges of integration after World War II it recognized integration was a "combat multiplier" and not a deterrent to unit cohesion and combat effectiveness. Department of Defense Directive 4120.36 (Equal Opportunity in the Armed Forces) put the military at the forefront of racial integration and how, through empowering commanders, sound integration policies could improve the strategic, organizational and tactical effectiveness of an institution. A paradigm that, arguably, served as a societal change template for the rest of America as it wrestled with the complex issues of racial integration during the 1960s. Now, a fully integrated force the Army should now make a more conscious effort to ensure cultural diversity within its senior ranks.

APPLYING A CULTURAL DIVERSITY METRIC TO THE SELECTION OF ARMOR BRIGADE COMMAND SELECTEES

Background

Almost sixty years ago on 26 July 1948, President Harry S. Truman issued Executive Order 9981, which was intended to bring about the end of racial segregation in the US Military. Specifically, Executive order 9981 declared it to be “the policy of the President that there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion or national origin. This policy shall be put into effect as rapidly as possible, having due regard to the time required to effectuate any necessary changes without impairing efficiency or morale.”¹ While it is certainly valid to ascribe the desegregation of the military to Truman and his issuance of Executive Order 9981 it would be another 15 years, with the publication of Defense Directive 5120.36 (Equal Opportunity in the Armed Forces) on 26 July 1963, before the complete goals and intent of Executive Order 9981 would be realized. This directive, issued by then Secretary of Defense Robert J. McNamara expanded the military’s responsibility to include the elimination of off-base discrimination detrimental to the military effectiveness of black servicemen.²

McNamara’s directive authorized the establishment of the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Civil Rights) and urged military commanders to place “off limits” any civilian or community establishment that discriminated against service members. The directive concluded: “Every military commander has the responsibility to oppose discriminatory practices affecting his men and their dependents and to foster equal opportunity for them, not only in areas under his immediate control but also in nearby communities where they may live or gather in off-duty hours.” Additionally, DoD

also implemented changes within the department through direct orders to cease segregation and threats to withhold federal funds, DoD convinced all the states to integrate their reserve and National Guard units by 1964; a discriminatory practice that was widespread in several southern states as late as 1962.³

Why did it take the armed forces 15 years to implement a Presidential Executive Order? It may certainly be attributable to the racially charged social climate that existed in the United States post World War II and infected every aspect of American life through the 1960s culminating with the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It was in this context that the armed forces felt that it should not be at the forefront of social change. The armed forces generally felt that until the American society at large implemented sweeping changes to segregationist policies within the broader American societal construct that it was under no obligation to do so.

In a letter to Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr. (Republican, Mass) in 1940 Army Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall believed that “societal conditions made it necessary for the War Department to follow a policy of segregation, and the military should uphold the status quo without offering blacks any concessions beyond those they had in civilian life. Any change would have a destructive effect on military efficiency as the military was not the proper vehicle for critical social experiments. Segregation had been successful for a long time, and this success was interpreted from the perspective of white soldiers, who, he believed, performed better under this system. The following year he again maintained that experiments within the Army in the solution of social problems are “fraught with danger to efficiency, discipline, or morale.”⁴

On July 27 1948, the day after Truman issued Executive Order 9981, Army Chief of Staff General Omar N. Bradley stated “desegregation will come to the Army only when it becomes a fact in the rest of American society.”⁵ Truman, at a press conference the day following Bradley’s public comments on desegregation in the Army announced that it was indeed his intent, by issuing Executive Order 9981, to completely segregate the armed forces.⁶ These two diametrically opposite perspectives on the segregation of the armed forces between the uniformed leadership and the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces is demonstrative of the unwillingness of the armed forces to be a catalyst for societal change.

Further exacerbating Truman’s efforts to end segregation of the armed forces were efforts to misinterpret the meaning of Executive Order 9981. On September 18, 1948 Truman announced the names of the members that would form the President’s Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Service, the Fahy Committee. Named after its chairman, Charles H. Fahy, the first Solicitor General of the United States and later United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, the committee was composed of five members, two of whom were African American. This committee was authorized by the President to examine rules, procedures, and practices of the armed services to determine how the practices might be altered or improved to bring about equality of treatment and opportunity within the military.⁷

In a memo concerning the interpretation of the President’s order establishing the President’s Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services the Fahy Committee concluded the expression “equality of opportunity” has been used

by a number of people for a long time to preserve the structure of segregation while supposedly they work to eliminate discrimination. Those same persons suggest that because the President used the expression “equality of treatment and opportunity” he is not averse to the idea of separate but equal accommodations and opportunities in the armed services. This interpretation of the President’s order, according to the Fahy Committee memo, is wrong and the memo went on to highlight in exacting detail why the interpretation is wrong.⁸ The Fahy Committee exerted considerable effort through public hearings, testimony and interviews with senior leaders within the armed forces dispelling interpretation of Executive Order 9981 that were counter to Truman’s rather simply stated intent. The Fahy Committee’s efforts were “not to impose integration on the services, but to convince them of the merits of the President’s order and to agree with them (the services) on a plan to make it effective.”⁹

Consequently, it was the Korean War, not the political maneuverings of the Fahy Committee or other Washington policy makers that proved the greater impetus to spurring integration of the Army. With necessity being the mother of all inventions, two factors precipitated the Army’s willingness to integrate its ranks. First, as the Army began its build up for the Korean War it became economically infeasible to create separate training, housing, and other support facilities for segregated units. The same dynamics were occurring on the battlefield in Korea as sustaining segregated units was not possible. Secondly, the mounting casualty rates among the white Soldiers created replacement requirements that exceeded the Army’s ability to fill. “Blacks were available and in excess of those required as replacements in all black units, therefore they were often accidentally assigned to white units.”¹⁰ Eighth Army Commanders were

making battlefield decisions that were contrary to established Army policy but in the best interest of the fighting effectiveness of combat units in the Korean Theater of Operations. They were integrating units!

On 29 March 1951, the Operations Research Office of Johns Hopkins University was directed by the Army to “initiate a project to determine how to best utilize Negro personnel within the Army.”¹¹ Code named Project Clear the study highlighted that the desegregation process in Korea was working well and encouraged the Army to continue with integration. Project Clear’s general conclusion was that blacks fought better in integrated units and white performance was not adversely affected.¹² In 1952 the Army Chief of Staff ordered worldwide integration of all Army units as all the earlier fears of adverse affects on unit efficiency cited to support the continuation of a segregated Army proved groundless. According to the Project Clear study, there was no increase in racial incidents, no adverse affect on discipline, no uprising against integration by white soldiers or surrounding white communities, no backlash from segregationists in Congress, or major public denouncements of the new policy. Consequently, on 30 October 1954 Secretary of Defense Charles E. Wilson, announced that the last racially segregated unit in the military had been abolished.¹³

Political circumstance and the state of race relations had changed considerably during the 1960s under the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. With Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara at the helm, the Department of Defense set out to move the military ahead of society on racial matters as evidenced by McNamara’s belief that the military should be used to attack social problems and injustices, especially in civilian communities where black troops were “singularly defenseless against this bigotry.”¹⁴

Consequently, the President's Committee on Equal Opportunity in the Armed Forces, the Gesell Committee was formed. The initial report issued by the committee noted the following weaknesses in the military:

- Not enough black officers
- Not enough effort to recruit blacks
- Discrimination against blacks in promotions
- Nonresponsive chain of command reaction to on base problems and no satisfactory way of handling complaints.
- Off base discrimination in housing, schools, transportation, and churches, which was ignored by base commanders.

The committee's recommendations were:

- Directives from DoD as guidance to base commanders
- Monitoring, rating, and support for the commanders' performance
- Regular programs and manuals
- Biracial community committees
- Use of military sanctions as necessary for off base problems, especially in housing and recreational facilities
- Offices within each service to monitor the program.¹⁵

"As a result of the Gesell Committee Report, Secretary McNamara decided to act, and on 26 July 1963 (the anniversary of Executive Order 9981), he issued Defense Directive 4120.36 (Equal Opportunity in the Armed Forces) which stated that the military would no longer follow civilian society but take the lead; furthermore, the military would protect its members. His program was designed to combat discrimination against black servicemen in civilian communities adjacent to military installations. Post and Base Commanders would be responsible for the program and annual reports were required.

Strategic leaders were motivated by humanitarian impulses, pressure from inside its ranks and out, and, perhaps the driving catalyst for change, a concern for mission effectiveness.¹⁶ The armed forces had taken the lead on instituting societal change within its organization to improve its efficiency. The armed forces recognized that integration was a “combat multiplier” and not a deterrent to unit cohesion and combat effectiveness. This realization would put integration at the forefront of racial integration and how, through empowering commanders, sound integration policies could improve the strategic, organizational and tactical effectiveness of an institution. A paradigm that, arguably, served as a societal change template for the rest of America as it wrestled with the complex issues of racial integration during the 1960s. We witnessed a paradigm shift within the armed forces that proved to be a change agent for society at large; as stated by McNamara himself, “five more years as Secretary of Defense and I could have integrated the nation.”¹⁷

As a result of these efforts the Army has developed an Army that maximizes human potential and ensures fair treatment for all qualified Soldiers by offering educational/training programs, wide reaching job experiences, and career enhancing opportunities. According to FY06 statistics compiled by the Demographics Division of the Army Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (G-1), black enlisted Soldiers are more highly represented in today’s Army, 23%, than they are in the comparable U.S. population which is 16%. Within the Commissioned Officer ranks, blacks constituted 10% of the Army population. These numbers suggest the Army has done well to integrate its ranks over the past 60 years. The Army has been very successful at integrating minorities into the ranks.

However, for the Army to be truly representative of the society it represents it must make a greater effort to culturally diversify the demographics of its senior level ranks. Within the Maneuver, Fires and Effects division in general and within Armor branch specifically, there is still the proverbial “glass ceiling” that exists between Battalion and Brigade Command selection.

Of the twenty four officers currently serving in Armor Colonel Command Selection List (CSL) positions only one is black, that is less than one half of one percent. And, unfortunately, there will be little near term improvement to that dismal demographic representation. Of the 89 Lieutenant Colonels (Promotable) and Colonels considered for Armor Colonel CSL command by the Fiscal Year 2008 (FY08) Command Board eleven were black (12% of the total population). Fourteen Armor officers were selected as primaries for brigade command; none were black.

However, six black Armor officers were selected to the alternate list; which means if an officer selected as a primary declines or is otherwise unable to assume command a selectee from the alternate list is activated for that command. All six black officers on the alternate list commanded LTC CSL commands; four commanded battalions in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and one served in OIF as a Brigade Deputy Commanding Officer and Multi-National Divisional G3. How is that possible? Proponents of the Army’s command selection process would contend the Army’s selection process is fair, impartial and results in the very best and brightest selected for Brigade Command. Nevertheless, the question still remains. How can there be no black Armor officers qualified, based on the results of the FY08 Command Board, worthy of being a Brigade Commander? The answer to that question may personify

itself in unintended institutional biases within the Army's Officer Personnel Management (OPD) Model.

The Current Army Officer Professional Development (OPD)

Department of the Army Pamphlet 600-3 (DA PAM 600-3), Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Career Management, is the primary professional development guide for all officers. DA PAM 600-3 does not dictate a concise roadmap that will guarantee success in the Army however, it is rather prescriptive and detailed on the general requirements needed to guide commissioned officer professional development. According to DA PAM 600-3, leader development is the means for growing competent, confident, self-aware leaders who are prepared for the challenges of the future in combined arms Joint, interagency, inter-Governmental, and multinational (JIIM) operations. Future force leaders must be multifunctional, capable of supporting the range of military operations within the JIIM environment, comfortable with ambiguity, information systems literate, and capable of intuitive assessments of situations for rapid conceptualization of friendly courses of action. Through the leader development process, the Army develops leaders with character and competence for today and tomorrow to be trainers, role models, and standard bearers. Leader development through progressive, sequential, and continuous education and experience throughout one's career benefits the Army and the leader.¹⁸

The Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS), initiated in 1972 as a result of a U.S. Army War College (AWC) Study on military professionalism, has undergone numerous reviews and adjustments and continues to transform to modernize the Army's assignment and professional management systems to meet the Army's needs. Officer

Professional Development (OPD) is a combination of training, education, and experience. The program is designed to meet the needs of the Army and the individual officer and is managed by the individual officer, the commander, and the career manager. The objective of OPD is to maximize an officer's potential. The elements of OPD start with a thorough understanding of DP PAM 600-3. The other elements of OPD are individual development in the career field, Professional Military Education (PME), duty assignments, developmental counseling and mentorship.¹⁹

- Individual and duty assignment development in the chosen career field. In this domain leader development is gained through firsthand combat and contingency operational experience, from lessons learned, and from individual and collective training, assessment, and feedback; from superiors, peers, and subordinates.
- Professional Military Education (PME). The institutional domain provides standards based training and education that develop Army leaders who have a common doctrinal foundation, are innovative, self-aware, adaptive, and are capable of taking initiative and successfully operating as part of a team. Institutional leader development builds on leaders' operational experience and enables lifelong learning through resident and non-resident schooling at Army, Joint, and civilian schools.
- Developmental Counseling and Mentorship. Today's leaders have a critical responsibility to develop future leaders who are prepared to meet tomorrow's challenges. An essential component of this development is mentoring. The term mentorship refers to the voluntary, developmental relationship between a person of greater experience and a person of lesser experience that is characterized by mutual trust and respect.

The Army's Developmental Counseling and Mentoring

It is in the last domain where the Army falls short. Black officers, particularly in the Armor community given the greater number of white officers, are far less likely to have effective mentoring that last the duration of the officer's career. According to DA PAM 600-3, "the goal of mentorship is to assist the lesser experienced person in reaching

his/her personal and professional potential. It is critical to understand that mentorship is not any one behavior or set of behaviors, but rather includes all of the leader development behaviors (counseling, teaching, coaching, and role modeling) that are displayed by a trusted advisor. Mentoring requires taking advantage of any opportunity to teach, counsel, or coach to build skills and confidence in the mentored. Mentoring is not limited to formal sessions but can include every event from quarterly training briefs to after action reviews to casual, recreational activities. One of the most important legacies that today's senior leaders can leave the Army is to mentor junior leaders to fight and win future conflicts. Mentoring develops great leaders to lead great Soldiers."²⁰

One of the most critical aspects of a good mentor relationship is the continued professional development guidance and counsel provided by the mentor to the subordinate officer after the official duty relationship has ended. This is lacking for black Armor officers. DA PAM 600-3 does not require, or for that matter encourage, career long mentoring relationships however, it should.

In lesson eight of the Strategic Leadership course required at the United States Army War College (USAWC) students discuss, opine and pontificate on the subject of leading in a multicultural environment. Particularly noteworthy during the lesson was a presentation on an article by Richard D. White, Jr., Ph.D. in which he discussed strategies for managing multicultural organizations. In the article White notes that people of different ethnic backgrounds possess different attitudes, values, and norms.²¹ He cites several studies whose "implications of their research are significant in building

a theoretical foundation for determining work group differences between culturally homogeneous and heterogeneous groups.”²²

The leaders in my chain of command were never without wise counsel and sound professional guidance when I worked for them. However, that may have been driven more by a sense of their own professional survival, “he does good, I look good,” than by a belief in my own personal and professional development. It may also be attributed to a lack of understanding of the differences in cultural norms and values among ethnic groups in different work related environments.²³

Within today’s complex cultures, various subgroups possess distinct identities. Identities include physical observable differences, or phenotypes, important factors regarding the acceptability of different groups within an organization. Persons of phenotypes different from the majority group tend to have less favorable work experiences and career outcomes than persons from the majority phenotype. Individuals from minority subgroups also face obstacles from ethnocentrism within an organization’s culture. Ethnocentricity is the inclination for majority group members to view their own group as the center of the universe, to interpret minority out groups from the perspective of the majority group and to evaluate beliefs, behaviors and values of one’s own majority group more positively than out groups. Ethnocentrism is widespread, universal and in many ways is a group level version of individual prejudice.²⁴

This suggests that there is not a conscious effort on the part of leaders to exclude minorities but rather a recognition that certain innate human tendencies affect how leaders are more apt to mentor member of his/her own phenotype. In my own career

development I have had a number of successful leaders in my chain of command which includes a two year assignment as a Battalion Commander in the First Cavalry Division at Fort Hood, Texas. I have no post-command relationship with either my Brigade or Division Commander from my assignment as a Battalion Commander. This isn't an overt, or for that matter covert, attempt to undermine the accomplishments of black officers in the Armor branch but rather, it may be argued, an inability to reach beyond one's own cultural boundaries to establish a professional mentoring relationship that DA PAM 600-3 promulgates.

The Officer Evaluation System (OES)

Within the Officer Personnel Management System the primary determinant for continued upward mobility within the officer corps is the Officer Evaluation Report (OER). The OER is the official by-product of the Officer Evaluation System (OES) and is used to identify those officers most qualified for advancement and assignment to positions of increased responsibility. The assessment of an officer's potential is a subjective judgment of the officer's capability to perform at a higher grade.²⁵ The OER is used by Department of the Army centralized selection boards to select officers for assignments, schooling and, most importantly, for selection for promotion and command. It is the performance appraisal of an officer prepared by his/her first line leader, the rater, and by his/her second tier leader, senior rater.

The raters responsibility is to provide an assessment on how well the rated officer met duty requirements and adhered to the professional standards of the officer corps. Performance is evaluated by considering the results achieved, how they were achieved, and how well the officer complied with professional standards. Potential evaluations are

performance-based assessments of the rated officer's ability, compared with that of their contemporaries, which the senior rater rates or will rate to perform in positions of greater responsibilities in higher grades. Assessment of potential applies to all officers, regardless of their opportunity to be selected for higher positions or grades, and ignores such factors as impending release from active duty or retirement; this assessment is continually changing and is reserved for HQDA.²⁶

The senior rater is the most important influencer for DA centralized promotion and selection boards. The senior rater will make an assessment of the rated officer's potential in comparison with all officers of the same grade. This assessment should be based on officers the senior rater has senior rated or has currently in his/her senior rater population. This potential is evaluated in terms of the majority of officers in the population. If the potential assessment is consistent with the majority of officers in that grade, the senior rater will "x" the center of mass box. If the rated officer's potential exceeds that of the majority of officer's in the senior rater's population, the senior rater will "x" the above center of mass box. However, in order to maintain a credible profile, the senior rater must have less than 50 percent of the ratings of a grade in the top box.

If the rated officer's potential is below the majority of officers in the senior rater's population for that grade and the senior rater believes the rated officer should be retained for further development, the senior rater will "x" the below center of mass-retain box. If the rated officer's potential is below the majority of officers in the senior rater's population for that grade and the senior rater does not believe the rated officer should be retained on active duty, the senior rater will "x " the below center of mass-do not

retain box.²⁷ Figure 1, Part VIII b, shows the “back side” of the OER and the block check options available to the senior rater.

PART VII - SENIOR RATER	
a. EVALUATE THE RATED OFFICER'S PROMOTION POTENTIAL TO THE NEXT HIGHER GRADE ☒ BEST QUALIFIED FULLY QUALIFIED DO NOT PROMOTE OTHER (Explain below)	
f. currently senior rate: _____ A completed DA Form 57-9-1 was received with this report and considered in my evaluation and review	
16. officer(s) in this grade: _____ ☒ YES NO (Explain in c)	
b. POTENTIAL COMPARED WITH OFFICERS SENIOR RATED IN SAME GRADE (OVERPRINTED BY DA) ABOVE CENTER OF MASS (Less than 50% in top box, Center of Mass if 50% or more in top box) ☒ CENTER OF MASS BELOW CENTER OF MASS RETAIN BELOW CENTER OF MASS DO NOT RETAIN	c. COMMENT ON PERFORMANCE/POTENTIAL (SEE DA PAM 623-3, PARA 2-10) d. LIST THREE FUTURE ASSIGNMENTS FOR WHICH THIS OFFICER IS BEST SUITED. FOR ARMY COMPETITIVE CATEGORY CPT, ALSO INDICATE A POTENTIAL CAREER FIELD FOR FUTURE SERVICE. (SEE DA PAM 623-3, PARA 2-10) Would serve Army best in

Figure 1. Senior Rater portion of the OER

The single most important factor on the OER that assists the selection boards to choose officers for promotion and schooling (at the rank of Major through Colonel promotion and command selection) is the senior rater box check. Irrespective of the wording of the OER the senior rater box check is the primary determinant for selection for promotion and command. Officers who successfully complete Battalion Command with all above center of mass ratings are, generally, those who are selected for Brigade Command. The Army chooses those officers who will command our Army Brigades based on a rating on a piece of paper and give cursory attention to the wording of the OERs. The OER rating is the Army's process for giving the field commanders a deciding voice in the promotion and command selection process.

In general, the Army's OES is a well researched, systematic and fair process for selecting officers for advancement and command. However, as with the Army's

mentoring philosophy, its evaluation process is subject to the very same challenges. Raters and senior raters tend to evaluate based on their own cultural proclivities and biases that results in the lack of mentoring discussed in the previous section of this SRP and is a natural human factor, albeit unintentional, that exists. This may result in an unfair disadvantage to black officers who often come out of command with a mix of center of mass and above center of mass evaluation. This is enough to get the officer promoted to Colonel, which is the case of every black officer on the FY08 Alternate Command List, but may not be enough to get them the coveted title of Brigade Commander.

This is the primary reason why there were no black Armor officers selected for Brigade Command by the FY08 Command Selection Board; a propensity to evaluate them as good enough to be Colonels but not quite good enough to command Brigades. A solution for this inbred, although unintended, cultural exclusion may rest in how the Army executes its Organizational Cultural Diversity Program. While DoD was the change agent on integration policy and implementation, it arguably lags behind corporate America in the development of its Cultural Diversity programs.

Organizational Cultural Diversity

Corporate organizations have already increased their understanding of the changing global environment. With the rise of the global marketplace "corporations acknowledge cultural diversity is necessary to compete in the multinational business environment. For the first time, corporate America sees diversity having significant influence on performance and profitability."²⁸ Corporate America understands that to succeed in the growing global environment it must embrace cultural diversity and

develop culturally savvy leaders and managers to maintain the competitive edge; it has instituted cultural change to do this. Likewise, the Army should endeavor to embrace the notion that as it operates in this global environment it must be able to operate within diverse cultures efficiently, effectively and impartially.

Given these new internal and external strategic environments, the Army must acknowledge and emphasize awareness of the benefits of cultural diversity within its officers and leaders. It can accomplish this by following the lead of organizations which have demonstrated success in managing diversity. Admittedly, further research is needed to identify the direct linkage between diversity and organizational design. There is, nonetheless, a great deal of available research. For instance, in his article White cites several authors (*Fernandez, 1993; Copeland, 1988a; Gummer, 1994; Carnevale & Stone, 1994*) who have studied organizations that have successfully managed diversity. In general, these authors find several similarities in successful, multicultural organizations:

1. Top management plays a crucial and leading role in making diversity a success.
2. Diversity must be a part of an organization's strategic business objective.
3. Managers must be held accountable for meeting diversity goals.
4. A multi-culturally successful organization must improve its supply of diverse workers through aggressive recruiting.
5. A diverse workforce requires efficient communication.
6. A multi-culturally successful organization must value diversity.²⁹

COL Anthony D. Reyes, Chief of the Army Diversity Office, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel G-1, U.S. Army, while a Fellow at the Joint Center for

Political and Economic Studies in Washington D.C., authored a Military Fellow Research Report (MFRP) entitled *Strategic Options for Managing Diversity in the U.S. Army*. In the MFRP he cited a study by the U.S. Department of Commerce and former Vice President Al Gore's National Partnership for Reinventing Government entitled *Best Practices in Achieving Workforce Diversity*. This study used what Reyes termed "critical success factors" to identify 65 public and business organizations whose achievements in workforce diversity were considered to be "world class."³⁰ Those factors were:

1. Leadership and management commitment
2. Employee involvement
3. Strategic planning
4. Sustained investment
5. Diversity indicators
6. Accountability, measurement, and evaluation
7. Linkage to organizational goals and objectives

According to the studies cited by both White and Reyes, there can be little argument organizations who have successful workforce diversity programs share very common success factors. The research is there to prove it; the Army simply needs to study the templates of these successful organizations and apply them judiciously to its organizational culture.

Fortunately, the Army has taken steps to do that. On October 28 2004, the Army approved a recommendation from the Commission on Officer Diversity and Advancement to establish the Army Diversity Office (ADO). In establishing the ADO, the Army acknowledges the need to increase awareness and cultural diversity within its

ranks. This is certainly a step in the right direction and, as the Chief of the Army Diversity Office, COL Reyes leads the Army effort; he has incorporated several factors from several workforce diversity studies to formulate the Army's strategy for managing cultural diversity. According to Reyes, the ADO has developed a five- pillar strategy to manage cultural diversity:³¹

1. Development of a Strategic Plan: Cultural diversity will be successful only if incorporated as a part of the Army's strategic mission objective. It will have limited success if treated as a separate strategy such as Affirmative Action/EEO programs, which serve mostly to meet certain legal objectives.
2. Development of a Strategic Communications Plan: A successful strategic diversity plan requires effective communication to highlight the corporate emphasis on cultural diversity and provides a process for Soldiers and Army civilians to communicate new or different issues and/or to provide feedback.
3. Business Case: To buttress the argument for the necessity of cultural diversity, the Army will demonstrate with empirical data and research the added value the awareness of cultural diversity will bring to the Army's ability to accomplish its mission.
4. Development of an Action Plan: Using contractors, the Army's Diversity Office initiated a three-tiered assessment to determine its diversity climate. First, the Army will initiate a command climate assessment. It will identify the attitudes and practices within subordinate commands that impact on diversity. Second, the Army will conduct a policy assessment to examine how Army policies impact diversity attitudes. Finally, the Army will conduct a

statistical assessment which will examine professional development in the career paths of Soldiers and civilians and then attempt to identify at what point along the professional development continuum members of various demographic groups are leaving the Army.

5. Development of an Outreach program: The ADO is developing an outreach cell to serve as an umbrella effort across the Army to manage the disparate existing minority outreach initiatives.

Reyes' five pillar strategy clearly indicates the Army has taken a well-researched approach to enhance its cultural diversity. However, his efforts, and those who follow him in the position of Army Diversity Officer, may encounter seemingly insurmountable challenges as they attempt to implement this strategy within the bureaucracy of the U.S. Army.

The Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) must demonstrate a strong commitment to cultural diversity. The CSA demonstrated a need for a strategic level focus on cultural diversity when with the establishment of the ADO. The CSA must now take this initiative a step further and establish the ADO as a direct reporting organization to the Office of the Chief of Staff of the Army (OCSA). This elevates the status of the ADO to the level that clearly demonstrates the Army's emphasis on cultural diversity.

Furthermore, it eliminates the bureaucratic entanglements which currently hinder the ADO's execution of the Army diversity strategy. Currently, ADO strategic initiatives are rarely reviewed by the G-1 of the Army, so there is little chance they will ever be briefed to or approved by the CSA. This does not demonstrate a serious commitment to cultural diversity; it serves as little more than lip service.

If elevated to a direct reporting office to the CSA, the ADO's diversity strategy may be implemented throughout the Army. But as a subordinate division within the G-1, it exerts little influence outside the purview of the G-1. Elevated to CSA level, the ADO may effectively infuse cultural diversity awareness in all the Army does, to include the development of doctrine, training, and as a part of pre-deployment training criteria.

Furthermore, by applying a cultural diversity template the Army may alleviate the challenges it faces with ensuring its senior ranks are represented by a more diverse population of officers. A conscious attempt by the Army to provide a comprehensive review of promotion and command statistics would demonstrate a concerted effort at cultural diversity. The ADO could be used to provide additional instructions to selection boards to ensure that happens and to ensure board results are screened and that they represent a conscious attempt by the board to select black officers for brigade command. This should include a conscious decision to displace a white officer who is a principal selectee and replace him with an equally qualified black officer who is an alternate selectee. After all, the only difference in the suitability of these two officers to command is a Senior Rater Box Check on the backside of an OER.

Currently, FM 6-22, Army Leadership, advocates little in the way of cultural awareness for our leaders. Yet, the jointly published Marine and Army FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5 Counter Insurgency (COIN) manual cites a requirement for small unit leaders who are culturally savvy. This doctrinal disconnect will not be addressed as long as the ADO is relegated to a G-1 directorate, which reveals it as just another Army program to be managed, not as a strategic imperative germane to the Army's core mission.

The changing dynamics of the demographics of the Army and our nation's increased deployment and forward-stationing commitment demands increased cultural awareness and savvy within our officers and leaders. However, until the Army makes a commitment at the strategic level to cultural diversity, the officers and leaders who manage our diverse workforce of Soldiers and civilians and who lead our Soldiers deployed to nearly 80 countries overseas will not be inclined to embrace cultural diversity as a critical leader skill. They will play lip service to cultural diversity, just as the Army now does at the strategic level.

Endnotes

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³⁰ Lieutenant Colonel Anthony D. Reyes, *Strategic Options for Managing Diversity in the U.S. Army*, Military Fellow Research Report (Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, June 2006), 19.

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