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Review Article: Recent Research On the Military in Society

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"rebuild the arsenal": the fall of Czechoslovakia, the March 1948 Clay telegram, and the Berlin Blockade. By relying so heavily on an analysis of top policymakers, he misses such military factors as the connection between defense budgets and strategy. A national security state could not have developed under President Truman's \$14.4 billion budget. In 1948 there were few atomic weapons in the stockpile and even fewer planes modified to deliver them.

Yergin's study of the personalities of the top decisionmakers is important, but in limiting his study he has ignored the role that the bureaucracy played in the formation of cold war policy. In this case the keys to the origins of a national security state exist in the study of policy development, as opposed to per-

sonalities, and in a study of U.S. reaction to the first atomic test of 1949.

There are a number of annoying little mistakes which appear: there is no Bohlen interview at the Truman Library, Clay spoke to Secretary Royall in 1948 not 1945 (p. 366), and Leon Keyserling's oral history transcript does not support the position which Yergin tries to make (p. 404).

In spite of my disagreement with Mr. Yergin's interpretation, this is an enjoyable book to read. The vignettes he has pulled together will make it a valuable aid to the teacher of American foreign policy. As the definitive history of the cold war, however, it is sadly lacking.

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REVIEW ARTICLE

RECENT RESEARCH ON THE MILITARY IN SOCIETY

by

Ronald Cospser

A review of Nancy L. Goldman and David R. Segal, eds., *The Social Psychology of Military Service*; Sage Research Progress Series on War, Revolution, and Peacekeeping; Vol. VI (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage, 1976); Jerome Johnston and Jerald G. Bachman, *Young Men and Military Service*; Vol. V, *Youth in Transition* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Institute of Social Research, 1972); and Jacques Van Doorn, *The Soldier and Social Change; Comparative Studies in the History and Sociology of the Military* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage, 1975).

After a rather belated start, sociologists have turned their attention to the military as a social institution and since

World War II, social scientific studies on the armed forces have been appearing with increasing rapidity. It has been observed that sociologists tend to study institutions that are controversial or whose existence becomes threatened in some way. During World War II, sociological study of the armed forces appeared to result in part from the mobilization of large numbers of civilians into military service and the confrontation of lifestyles and social structures that this entailed. In broader terms, the current academic interest in the armed forces can be analyzed as being related to the "crisis of legitimacy," as Van Doorn calls it, that surrounds the military in the West. By "legitimacy" Van

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Doorn means "the capacity of a social or political system to develop and maintain a general belief that the existing social order and its main institutions are generally appropriate." In the case of the military this decline in legitimacy is said to refer to "the diminishing acceptance of military force, the increasing public criticism of the military," the "civilianization" of the military and the "concomitant loss of institutional identity."

The Soldier and Social Change is a broad-ranging work that describes and explains the structure of the military as a social institution in Western society. Van Doorn's work comes out of the European tradition of historical and comparative social investigation: Max Weber influenced him greatly, particularly in his study of the emergence of modern military organization. Curiously, Van Doorn seems to have been unaware of the other major work in comparative military organizations: that of Stanislaw Andreski. It is true that Andreski was more influenced by English and American work, and he relies to a considerable extent on non-Western and preindustrial societies for his typology of military structure. Nevertheless, many of Andreski's ideas are very relevant to Van Doorn's concerns. For example, in his treatment of reasons for the contemporary crisis in the legitimacy of the armed forces, Van Doorn stresses the relations between the polity and the military; Andreski, on the other hand, calls attention to the effects of the system of social stratification on "militancy" (following Spencer). It is certainly possible that the less extreme class differences characteristic of industrial societies, in contrast to the caste-like structure of agrarian societies, are less consistent with the military form of social organization. Van Doorn attributes the contemporary "high degree of civilianisation, isolation and alienation" of the armed forces to the current world nuclear stalemate, a decline in

traditional forms of patriotism, no universal military service, the changing "youth culture," the higher level of education in the population, strong pacifist and antimilitarist sentiments, and pressures on the military for such civilian features as democratization, unionization and politicization.

Unfortunately, these interpretations of Van Doorn, though insightful, are based on but slender evidence. Verification of such suggestions will have to be based on subsequent more systematic empirical research. This reviewer, in fact, believes that it is questionable that armed forces personnel (presumably officers) feel particularly alienated. Isolation from civilian society has always been a feature of military life, and, if anything, it is decreasing at the present time as part of the process of civilianization. Civilianization, which can be defined as the declining distinctiveness of the armed forces from the rest of society in culture and social organization and increasing interaction of military personnel with civilians, has been taking place for a variety of reasons, such as less use of military housing, greater employment of civilians on military bases, more female personnel, and an increasing reliance on technology in military planning and operations. This greater use of technology has meant that the skills necessary to accomplish civilian and military work have become more similar, the social base of recruitment of officers has become less elitist, and contact with civilians has increased. In a broad social and historical sense, however, many of these changes can be attributed to the increasing *rationalization* of society, which refers to the increasing tendency to consciously plan activity so that the means employed are suitable for the ends desired. Thus, the armed forces are presumed to be organized in order to carry out the goals they believe they have. Innovation comes to be valued, even for its own sake, and tradition

comes to be seen as unworthy of serious consideration.

In another essay in *The Soldier and Social Change* ("The Genesis of Military and Industrial Organisation"), Van Doorn points out that, just as the rationalization of economic production that resulted in capitalism was influenced by the Protestant Reformation, so did the rationalization of military organization (exemplified by the planning of Maurice of Orange) first occur in the Protestant countries of Europe (England, Holland and later in Prussia). Moreover, the rationalization of military organization preceded the modernization of economic production by some 200 years and served as its model. (Even the accommodations made with traditional feudal guild organization are analogous in the armed forces and the factory, e.g., the roles of foreman and noncommissioned officer.) However, despite the earlier rationalization in organization of the armed forces, later steps in the rationalization process, such as the technical revolution, occurred first in the economic sector, and the military has to this day been borrowing innovations heavily from industry. That is to say, after an initial period of rapid change, beginning around 1600, the armed forces became rather stable until recent times. One could speculate that a reason that leadership in change passed from the military to industry was the change in the social organization in European society from a class system dominated by the nobility to one dominated by the bourgeoisie. That is, the social structure of the armed forces was modernized to conform to the political needs of the nobility, whereas the production of goods was reorganized to meet the economic needs of the new capitalist class.

Of course, these changes in religious, economic and military organizations in recent centuries occurred as part of the great changes in European culture and society that followed the medieval

period. The 16th and especially the 17th centuries saw a major change in modes of thinking from an Aristotelian and theological outlook to an epistemology based on scientific empiricism. The major impact of science on the military was not felt until the 20th century, however, by which time science had become organized on a large scale, professionalized, and regarded as the ultimate authority by large segments of society.

In the 20th century, then, scientific knowledge is being widely used by the military. The advice and opinions of experts are sought and relied upon, not only the physical and biological sciences for such applications as transportation and weapons research, but also the medical and social sciences for the human and organizational problems of the armed forces. In some cases these "experts" work for the military and in other cases for civilian organizations, but in all cases a major or primary portion of the expert's loyalty is to his scientific discipline rather than to the armed forces. However, military tradition is of less and less importance in decisionmaking and "cultural" civilianization proceeds apace. Technology, with all its civilianizing consequences, is thus not only adopted for pragmatic reasons, but because of its rationality and its legitimation in science.

Like many historically based typologies, the foregoing characterization of changes in military organization is an "ideal type"; that is, differences between types are emphasized and similarities ignored. In fact, of course, today's military organization retains many traditional features, and military organization has always been, to some extent at least, rational, as it must have been to insure successful attainment of military objectives. Moreover, medieval society, although overtly legitimated by traditional and religious values, covertly had many rational aspects. In particular, one could cite the Church, itself, as a

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model for subsequent bureaucratization in other institutions.

Van Doorn's work is well-worth reading. A variety of additional topics are treated, including the professionalization of the officer corps, the decline of the mass army, the political control of the military during revolutions, ideological justification of military action, and excessive use of violence in counterinsurgency actions. The author's methodological strategy is the development of analytical concepts on the basis of historical analysis, and their testing on comparative historical materials. The strength of *The Soldier and Social Change*, as with other sociological work in this sort of European tradition, is that concepts are developed on the basis of analysis of historical materials, and thus are of some demonstrated utility. The source of sociological concepts in the American tradition, until recently, was not seriously questioned. The disadvantage of the method Van Doorn used, however, is that hypotheses are not systematically and quantitatively tested out on a sample of societies. Hence, one is left with considerable uncertainty about the extent to which the analysis is based on selective reporting, subjective factors, and so on (as well as the integrity of the writer, which is unquestionably high). The last two chapters, in particular, rely almost entirely on data from the Dutch experience in Indonesia. These two chapters are badly in need of summaries and of some speculation as to the applicability of the concept and theories to other societies and situations.

The other two works, by Goldman and Segal, and Johnston and Bachman, are very different in theoretical questions and method from Van Doorn's. These works are very much in the "American" sociological tradition (or at least one American tradition). Their strengths, in general, are quantitative precision, large samples and the consequent ability to make precise statistical

inferences from samples to populations. The writer, having been trained in this tradition himself, is very familiar, also, with the faults of this type of analysis. For one thing, questionnaire responses are often uncritically and almost naively accepted and interpreted. For another, in terms of analysis of data, the individual is treated as the unit of analysis in most of these studies: yet the "interpretations," which, with a few exceptions tend to be inadequate, are mostly expressed in terms of concepts applicable to the institutional or societal level of analysis. Therefore, although large "samples" provide the opportunity to verify hypotheses, the inappropriate level of interpretive concepts employed means that the studies end up being basically descriptive case studies. The studies are of American society, and for this reason, should be of practical interest, if nothing else. However, the inadequacies on the theoretical level of most of this work severely limits its usefulness, even practically. In general, the studies are so time and culture bound, and so little consideration has been given to the social and cultural parameters that limit the applicability of the findings, that in 5 to 10 years, most of these studies will be of little applied interest, either.

The reasons for this state of affairs relate partly to internal considerations of the development of sociology as a discipline in the United States. Also, and I suspect more importantly, the reasons have to do with the ready availability of money for research and with the fact that many of these projects are done on a contract basis for various organizations with practical concerns. Most of these studies are so descriptive, in fact, that they appear to have a built-in obsolescence factor which requires that the research be repeated after a short interval, thus guaranteeing continued employment and income for sociologists and their employing organizations for a pro-

tracted period. In making these criticisms, I am not only speaking to "professional" sociologists but to their clients, as well. Ultimately, the most useful sociology is theoretically accurate and predictive, and not merely precise.

Having made the foregoing observations about the genre of research that is exemplified in *The Social Psychology of Military Service* and *Young Men and Military Service*, some examples of the particular strengths and weaknesses of these studies should be given. The first criticism, that questionnaire data is sometimes misinterpreted, is illustrated by Gunderson's paper "Health and Adjustment of Men at Sea" in Goldman and Segal. Gunderson assumes that ships differ in reported rates of psychiatric disturbance because of differences in levels of environmental stress experienced on the ships. He measures this stress by asking crew members aboard 20 ships to rate them on a five-point scale according to such criteria as cleanliness, safety, pleasantness, lighting and noise levels. Gunderson assumes that the responses of his "subjects" reflect an internal nervous state of stress when it would seem more direct to interpret the statements of the crewmembers as merely communications about their objective conditions; i.e., since "responses on most ships were heavily skewed toward 'dirty,' 'hazardous,' 'unpleasant,' and 'too dim,'" it seems more reasonable to interpret these responses as complaints. (These complaints may or may not correspond to external conditions; certainly "griping" is very much the norm in most total institutions.) Gunderson finds that enlisted personnel with blue-collar type jobs have higher rates of psychiatric symptoms than those with "white collar" jobs and attributes this to the greater environmental stresses of these types of jobs. However, he also reports that other differences exist in psychiatric symptomatology: female more than males, 17 and 18 year olds versus those 21 to 35,

enlisted more than officers. What all four variables have in common is a distinction in status. It has been shown that even in monkeys, subordinate animals develop psychiatric symptoms as a result of inwardly turned aggression. Another theoretical inadequacy is the assumption that differences between ships reflect necessarily environmental factors, even though ships of the same type frequently differed in rates of psychiatric illness. A more probable explanation of these intership differences would seem to be that diagnostic procedures differ from ship to ship; that is, rather than reflecting differences in actual rates of occurrence of "disease," these differences are the result of different labeling practices. This interpretation is supported by facts that the highest reported psychiatric incidence rates were found on hospital ships and among personnel with medically related job specialties. The foregoing alternative interpretations may or may not be correct. Nevertheless, these types of alternative explanation should have been considered by the analyst and evaluated.

An interesting convergence in the research results of several studies (Borus, "The Re-entry Transition of the Vietnam Veteran"; Jennings and Markus, "Political Participation and Vietnam War Veterans: A Longitudinal Study"; Segal and Segal, "The Impact of Military Service on Trust in Government, International Attitudes, and Social Status") was that, contrary to some popular beliefs, the Vietnam veteran is no more alienated than other veterans. This is not really a surprising finding, and its theoretical significance is obscure, but it is interesting that several researchers started with this hypothesis. The hypothesis is basically one of some transient policy significance, but it is certainly not framed in any sociologically interesting or valuable way. All three studies involved large and expensive research samples, and illus-

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trate the lack of theoretical sophistication behind much American military research. Borus, for example, notes that the myth of the disturbed and maladjusted Vietnam veteran is laid to rest, but fails to go on and ask why the myth is there in the first place. That is, this type of research generally operates on the individual level and does not try hard enough to comprehend the *social* level of reality. One could do an analysis of the myth of the disturbed Vietnam veteran, find examples of the myth in the mass media, and study the functions of the myth (such as possibly to support a political position, make the war a matter of individual morality, and so on). Borus also seems disappointed that the military did not act on his recommendations after they had requested that he do the research. He apparently did not realize that one function of an organization's getting research done is to give the *appearance* of doing something about a problem. Actually *doing* something about a problem is altogether a different matter.

Borus also found that the well-adjusted veterans, in contrast to the legally or emotionally maladjusted, were better educated, held higher rank, were older and were more frequently drafted into service. He tries to explain the operation of these factors one by one but, again, all these factors (at least the first three) have in common an indication of higher status and power in the military. (The draftees too, may have come from higher class backgrounds than the enlistees, or this variable may be an independent influence on adjustment). This finding is similar to the one in Gunderson's study, but with an added twist: in this case legal maladjustment can be as much created by the authorities as by the soldiers. That is, studies of sentencing of persons of different class and ethnic backgrounds in the United States have shown that courts are more likely to label the *unpowerful as deviant because they*

encounter less opposition. In a social organization such as the armed forces, where discipline is important and conformity to a new system difficult to maintain, occasional scapegoating is a great help.

The best article in the Goldman and Segal collection is Stoddard and Cabanillas' "The Army Officer's Wife: Social Stresses in a Complementary Role." The authors display a good knowledge of the literature in military sociology as well as in other relevant areas. The problem is well posed in terms of the occupational literature. It was hypothesized that as the age of the officer and his wife increase, role conflict and role stress should increase for the wife. The army wife is referred as the "complementary wife" who is felt to be similar to the ambassador's wife because of the way her activities complement her husband's career. The research methods were suitable for the problem and involved the indepth interviewing of 50 officers' wives. It was found that stresses and conflicts mounted until midcareer, when they began to decline. By mid-career most officers realized they were going to retire after 20 years, and further efforts by the wife to obtain promotion for the husband were not likely to be fruitful. Role stresses were low at the beginning of their marriage, because the career-building phase had not yet begun. The authors hypothesize that, for officers who go on to advance after 20 years to top leadership positions, the strains will not abate. In addition to the test of the main hypothesis, there are many useful insights as to the functions of the wife's role and on the informal social structural patterns among officers' wives. The only real criticism that could be made of Stoddard and Cabanillas' piece is that the "role stress" framework is not very productive. It is more or less a dead end sociologically, with principally applied implications. There are also serious measurement problems with the

concept "stress." On the whole, though, the article was analytical and yielded new insights.

"Young Men and Military Service," by Johnston and Bachman, comes off rather better than most of the articles in the Goldman and Segal volume, although the book-length nature of the former provided a greater opportunity for elaboration and development. Like most of these studies, it is technically of high quality, particularly in sampling, and research design has marked advantages. The problem posed by the authors is to "search for the reasons why some young men choose to enlist after high school rather than take a civilian job or continue their education." A nationwide sample of tenth graders in high school was studied at three successive times, the final one during the students' first year out of high school. The authors theorize, on the basis of the psychological literature, that self-concept is an important determinant of choice behavior. Their findings indicate that having a self-concept as a "military-type" person does seem to predict enlisting instead of going to college or taking a job, but that the desire to avoid the draft is a stronger predictor. The authors also looked at "conditioning factors" beyond the immediate choice situation. They report that certain job and political attitudes are related to attempted enlistment, in particular, "tolerance for hard work" and support for the Vietnam War. However, the authors' use of a particular statistic (η) in these and other examples is inappropriate because η does not take into account the order of the classes of a variable. (Γ , and partial and multiple γ s, would have been better statistics in these instances.) When the order of the categories is examined, youth's attitude toward the Vietnam War appears to be a rather strong (not a "weak") determinant of enlistment, and it appears to be not so much their tolerance for hard work but

their acceptance of an occupation that involves a different style of life and work from that pursued by their civilian counterparts. Looking at the two attitudinal items together, it appears that those who enlist do so, not out of a desire for the material rewards of a civilian and middle-class society, but out of a commitment to a distinctive pattern of work and ideology. It seems that, even though civilianization is proceeding in many areas of the armed forces, a certain proportion of youth perceive life in the military as distinctive and worth pursuing. This finding has some implication for military recruiting policy, which has been oriented to a considerable extent to assuring volunteers that they will be able to pursue a civilian style life even though they are in the armed forces. This policy may be misguided, in that the military can never hope to do as good a job replicating civilian conditions as civilian jobs themselves do, and enlistment appeals addressed to the distinctive features of the armed forces may meet with more success.

Although Johnston and Bachman's data can be interpreted as indicating that enlistment appeals to the more committed or motivated young men an equally important finding was that those enlisting were largely from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and were less successful academically. (If γ , rather than η had been used to test the relationship between social class and enlistment, the relationship would have been even stronger.) This is not to say that military service selects positively for working and lower-class men. What happens is apparently that college education is a positive attraction for middle-class youth and for better students. Those not going to college, then, either find jobs or go into the armed forces, and there is little class or ability difference between those selecting enlistment, as opposed to employment in other occupations. These findings are

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also consistent with the respondents' own perceptions of the reasons for the choices they made. Nearly two-thirds said they had never even considered enlisting and when asked why indicated either that schooling was more important or that military life just didn't appeal to them.

A few criticisms could be made of *Young Men and Military Service*. The original theory is social psychological; this is appropriate for a design that explores individual differences. However, most of the interpretation of data is on the sociocultural level, and most of the interpretations are consequently rather speculative and exploratory. Moreover, the authors introduce little new literature throughout the work, (other than methodological notes or references to their own work), and the sociological and explanatory value of the study is thus greatly limited. Missing is any substantial reference to other sociological research or theory on the military and society, recruitment into occupations, social class structure, and so on. Liska (1977) has referred to this as the tendency toward the "dissipation" of social psychology, and notes the damaging consequences for any development of systematic theory.

It should come as no surprise that enlistees in the U.S. military service are mostly working-class men. The armed forces in all Western countries are highly stratified, with a great deal of difference between officers and the ranks in terms of responsibility, nature of duties, prestige, authority, and freedom. Officers in the past came from the nobility and in the United States, as recently as 1950 (Janowitz, 1964) were overwhelmingly from upper classes. There has been some trend recently, especially in the more technologically and less traditional ser-

vices, toward more middle-class recruitment of officers. It appears, however, that enlisted personnel are still mostly of lower and working-class background (Moskos, 1970). Thus, despite the contemporary "crisis of legitimacy," and the trend toward civilianization, the military remains, in Western society, a distinctive occupation, with its own culture and traditions, social organization and sense of community. It probably is a functional necessity for the military to have a rather authoritarian structure, and, in societies committed ideologically to democracy, such patterns will lead to some conflict, distinctiveness, separation and "crises of legitimacy."

One final suggestion—social scientific research into the military could be much improved. We very much need studies other than the two rather extreme types discussed here. Social psychological research should be based on, elucidate and expand on existing social psychological theory. In particular, parallels need to be drawn between the military and other institutions, both from an organizational and a social-psychological perspective. Comparative research on the military in different societies and times is also needed, and ultimately, these comparisons should be systematic and quantitative, as well as historical and exploratory. Expensive, large-scale interview surveys are only as good as the theoretical knowledge they produce. Military sociology requires more studies based on other techniques, such as indepth interviews, comparative and historical work, observation, content analysis, and all the theoretical sophistication and insight that can be brought to bear. Only in this way can progress in scientific understanding be achieved and knowledge useful for society be produced.

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RECENT BOOKS

Selected Accessions of the Naval War College Library

Annotated by

Ann Hardy, with Kathleen Ashook
Doris Baginski and Mary Ann Varoutsos

Alcoholism: Interdisciplinary Approaches to an Enduring Problem. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1976. 857pp. \$27.50; paper \$13.50

Of interest to all those working in the field of drug abuse, this volume brings together up-to-date information on the causes, processes, and treatment of alcoholism. While varying levels of analysis and theoretical orientation are presented, the dominant view is that "alcoholism is not simply a disease but an array of disorders of similar topography."

Aluko, Olajide. *Ghana and Nigeria, 1957-1970*. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1976. 275pp. \$17.50

At the time they achieved independence in 1957, Ghana and Nigeria declared their mutual desire to work together in close cooperation. This is a study of why the two nations have, from 1957 to 1970, become more caught up in discord than the cooperation they both seek.

Booth, Ken. *Navies and Foreign Policy*. New York: Crane, Russak, 1977. 294pp. \$18.75

Professor Booth of University College of Wales describes his volume as a guidebook for the delver into naval matters. In Part One he surveys navies as instruments and influences in statecraft, while in Part Two he explores the fundamental domestic and international factors controlling and affecting the formulation of naval policy.