ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation:	"WE BAND OF BROTHERS"? A SOCIAL-IDENTITY-BASED STUDY OF MILITARY PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY, ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIALIZATION, AND COLLABORATION
	Julio J. Bermejo, Doctor of Philosophy, 2019
Dissertation directed by:	Brooke Fisher Liu, Ph.D. Associate Professor Department of Communication

Today, military public relations, or military public affairs (Levenshus, 2013), is drawing attention for the lessons it might have to offer to organizations more broadly. Yet, military public affairs has been neglected within the public relations scholarly field (Toledano, 2010). In the present study, I applied the "social identity approach" (Hornsey, 2008, pp. 204-205) as my conceptual framework to explore the development of military public affairs professional identity through socialization of public affairs managers in joint entry-level military public affairs training. Along with professional identity and organizational socialization, I explored the development and practice of collaboration as a public affairs competency. To complete the study, I conducted semi-structured interviews (27 initial interviews, three follow-up interviews) with 27 students, practitioners (i.e., former students), instructors, and

administrators of the U.S. Defense Department's entry-level Public Affairs Qualification Course.

Findings supported the scholarly understanding that public relations practice is a boundary spanning function, with internal boundary spanning an important aspect of the public affairs manager's work (Neill, 2014). Findings helped to extend understanding of organizational socialization by suggesting that the public affairs manager, as a nonprototypical member of the organization, must be accepted by the commanding officer and other leaders, often representing combat arms fields, to achieve inclusion in the organization (Wenzel, Mummendey, & Waldzus, 2007). Findings further helped to broaden understanding of public relations collaboration by drawing attention to vital collaboration partners that have been obscured through their agglomeration in the concept of the "dominant coalition" (Grunig, 2006, p. 160).

Findings suggested the new insight that public affairs managers are socialized for proactivity, an unexpected outcome given the priorities of military organizations as "high-reliability organizations" (Myers, 2005, p. 345). Additionally, findings suggested that ambiguity attends the public affairs function and that this ambiguity can constrain public affairs, but also create opportunities for collaboration, especially under conditions of contextual uncertainty (L. A. Grunig, 1992; Rast, Gaffney, Hogg, & Crisp, 2012). Findings additionally suggested that collaboration opportunities may increase for public affairs when those efforts are more visible to the organization and are seen to benefit it (Platow & van Knippenberg, 2001).

“WE BAND OF BROTHERS”? A SOCIAL-IDENTITY-BASED STUDY OF MILITARY PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY, ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIALIZATION, AND COLLABORATION

by

Julio J. Bermejo

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
University of Maryland, College Park in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Communication
2019

Advisory Committee:
Professor Brooke Fisher Liu, Ph.D., Chair
Professor Lindsey B. Anderson, Ph.D.
Professor Anita Atwell Seate, Ph.D.
Professor Sahar Mohamed Khamis, Ph.D.
Professor Sandra C. Quinn, Ph.D.

© Copyright by
Julio J. Bermejo
2019

Epigraph

This story shall the good man teach his son,

And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,

From this day to the ending of the world,

But we in it shall be remembered—

We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;

For he today that sheds his blood with me

Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile,

This day shall gentle his condition;

And gentlemen in England now abed

Shall think themselves accursed they were not here,

And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks

That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day.

— *Henry V*, by William Shakespeare

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to three people who were for me sources of kindness and models of engagement and wit: Dr. Rosemarie White; Guadalupe Charles “Uncle Charlie” Duran; and John “Jack” Brickett.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the members of my committee, past and present, for their insight, support, and friendship: Dr. Lindsey B. Anderson, Dr. Anita Atwell Seate, Dr. Janet Chernela, Dr. Sahar Mohamed Khamis, Dr. Sandra C. Quinn, Dr. Erich Sommerfeldt, and Dr. Elizabeth L. Toth.

I offer special thanks to my advisor, Dr. Brooke Liu. This journey has many times brought to mind an observation made by Donald W. Winnicott: "In the artist of all kinds I think one can detect an inherent dilemma, which belongs to the co-existence of two trends, the urgent need to communicate and the still more urgent need not to be found." Through her patience, guidance, good humor, and spirit of inquiry, Dr. Liu has been instrumental in my movement from prioritizing the latter trend to embracing the former.

I also would like to thank the many other people at the University of Maryland and in Southern California whose friendship and support have sustained me over this journey, especially Michael Fritzen, Dr. Carlton Green, Amanda Irions, Dr. Dean Kazoleas, Tomoko M. Nakajima, Kim Hannah-Prater, Dr. Jessica Lu, Dr. Lindsay Ma, Dr. Annie Laurie Nichols, Dr. Jade Olson, and Dr. Ning Xie.

Finally, I would also like to thank my family: my parents, Ruben and Imelda; my siblings, Gabriel, Andres, and Xochitl; and my nephews and nieces, Gabriel, Armando, Paola, and Aurora. I am grateful for their interest in and support of my work, this very long "book report." I am perhaps most grateful that they never once asked when I would finish it.

Table of Contents

Epigraph ii
Dedication iii
Acknowledgements iv
Table of Contents v
List of Tables vii

Chapter 1—Introduction 1
- Statement of the Problem 1
- Definitions 3
  - Boundary spanning 3
  - Collaboration 4
  - Group 5
  - Intergroup relations 6
  - Organization 7
  - Organizational socialization 7
  - Professional identity 8
- Purpose of the Study, Major Constructs, and Conceptual Framework 9
  - Professional identity 10
  - Organizational socialization 11
  - Collaboration 11
  - Conceptual framework. 12
- Research Questions 13

Chapter 2—Literature Review 15
- Open-Systems Thinking in Public Relations Theory 15
  - Open systems in strategic management and relationship management 16
  - Strategic management and relationship management dominance 19
- Military Public Affairs Professional Identity 21
  - Public relations research on professional identity 23
  - Public relations perspective on boundary spanning 25
  - Social identity and organizational perspectives on boundary spanning 28
  - Individual negative outcomes of public relations boundary spanning 31
- Military Public Affairs Organizational Socialization 34
  - Public relations research on organizational socialization 36
  - Three dimensions and six tactics of institutionalized socialization 39
  - The total institution and the high-reliability organization 42
  - Military organizational identity and occupational identities 44
  - Localized socialization of military public affairs 48
- Military Public Affairs Collaboration 50
  - Public relations research on collaboration 53
  - Common ingroup identity and collaboration 56
  - Intergroup relational identity model and collaboration 60

Chapter 3—Method 63
Case Study 63
Data collection 65
Data analysis 77
Research quality 84

Chapter 4—Findings 94
Research Question 1: Professional Identify 94
Building a shared identity 94
Translating the military for the public 98
Within, but transcending the organization 100
Preparing the "garrison PAO." 104
Operating in the gray 110
Research Question 2: Organizational Socialization 115
The importance of localized socialization 116
"Earning a seat at the table." 123
Gaining support 129
Preparation for early career success 134
Research Question 3: Collaboration 139
Because public affairs "does not own the information." 140
Contact and collaboration 150
Ambiguity as constraint and opportunity 159

Chapter 5—Discussion 168
Professional Identity 169
Organizational socialization 172
Collaboration 176
Suggestions for future research 180
Implications for practice 181
Limitations 183
Conclusion 184

Appendix: Codebook 186
Appendix: Interview Guide 196
References 202

List of Tables

Table 1: Public Affairs (PA) Participant Demographic Information…….. 74

Chapter 1—Introduction

Statement of the Problem

Military strategy, practice, and experience have for decades been perceived to offer a model of organizational management and success applicable far beyond the realm of armies and armed conflict. Beginning in the 1960s and through the 1980s, management thinkers turned to the writings of military strategists and tacticians in their search for lessons for success in an increasingly turbulent organizational environment (Freedman, 2013). Scholars, consultants, and managers turned to the theories and principles developed by figures including U.S. Air Force pilot John Boyd, British World War I officer Basil Liddell Hart, Prussian general Carl von Clausewitz, and Japanese swordsman Miyamoto Musashi (Freedman, 2013). Perhaps the most famous example of this phenomenon, Chinese general Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*, written more than 2,500 years ago, continues to influence management thinking through scholarly work (e.g., Pars, 2013), graduate business education (e.g., Weinland, 2013), and the popular business press (e.g., McNeilly, 2013).

Today, military public relations also is drawing attention for the lessons it might have to offer for organizational success. This is most visible in the publication of monographs that appear aimed predominantly at managers themselves (e.g., Eder, 2011; Morgenthaler, 2015; Oliver, 2009). The interest in military public relations, or military public affairs (Levenshus, 2013), appears to be part of a larger trend in which more contemporary and varied military contexts are mined for management lessons. Since the launch of the U.S. Global War on Terrorism in 2001, these contexts have included high-level command of coalition forces (e.g., McChrystal, Collins,

Silverman, & Fussell, 2015), command of warships and their crews (e.g., Abrashoff, 2008; Marquet, 2012), and leadership of special forces teams at various levels (e.g., Cannon & Cannon, 2003; Roy & Lawson, 2015; Willink & Babin, 2015). Yet, even with the apparent interest in military public affairs among those responsible for communication management and organizational success, military public affairs has been neglected within the public relations scholarly field (Toledano, 2010). Public relations is the organizational function that manages communication between top management and an organization's publics (Grunig, 2008). The goal of public relations is to build long-term, mutually beneficial relationships with the publics that are most likely to affect or be affected by the organization's behavior (Grunig, 2008), thus helping to promote organizational effectiveness (Toth, 2010).

Military public affairs is a distinct executive organizational function within military organizations (Paul, 2011), the core activities of which are organized under the rubrics of media relations, internal communication, and community relations (Heller & Persson, 2009; Levenshus, 2013). Military organizations use public affairs "to influence, inform, and build relationships with strategic publics in order to ensure successful military operations and objectives" (Levenshus, 2013, pp. 565-566).

Although military public affairs has been neglected in public relations research, it has made some contributions to public relations research and practice (Toledano, 2010). For example, extant research on military public affairs has contributed to understanding of military communication in wartime and to exploration of the tension between state imperatives and democratic values (Toledano, 2010). Additionally, civilian public relations practice has clear, long-

established affinities with military communication management. Modern public relations has its roots in military wartime communication (Cutlip, 1994; M. F. Smith, 2005), a relationship reflected in the former's continuing, industry-wide use of terms such as *campaign*, *strategy*, and *tactics* (Toledano, 2010). Even so, there is little public relations research focused on the practice of military public affairs (Toledano, 2010), a state reflective of the lack of research attention to government communication generally (see Sisco, Pressgrove, & Collins, 2013). Neglected along with public affairs practice in military contexts is the place and perspective of the public affairs practitioner in a military organization (Toledano, 2010).

I used a qualitative case study (Yin, 2014) built around semi-structured interviews to understand the development of military public affairs professional identity through socialization of public affairs managers in formal military public affairs training. Further, I studied the development and practice of collaboration as a public affairs and public relations competency in the same context.

Definitions

In this section I introduce terms, and their definitions, that were central to my study of military public affairs and its practitioners. As should be made clearer through my discussion of the purpose of the study and the study's major constructs in the next section, these terms together center on how public affairs and practitioners are fitted into the military organizations they serve.

Boundary spanning. In the context of public relations, boundary spanning refers to activity that moves information and influence across organizational lines (Springston & Leichty, 1994). Public relations facilitates communication between the

organization, generally equated with top management, and its external and internal stakeholders and publics (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). Boundary spanning also can occur internally, exclusive of management, moving information and influence across, for example, work groups, departments, or business units (Grunig & Hunt, 1984; Neill, 2014). The overall goal of public relations boundary spanning activity, within the systems theory-based strategic management paradigm, is the development and maintenance of mutual understanding between the organization and its publics (Fawkes, 2007).

Boundary spanners are members of groups "who have strong links and significant interactions" with members of other groups (Hogg, van Knippenberg, & Rast, 2012, p. 242). According to Grunig and Hunt (1984), the boundary spanner is an employee "who has as much contact outside the organization as inside" (p. 143). Successful boundary spanning requires the individual to be knowledgeable of those other groups and sensitive to their preferences, needs, attitudes, traits, etc. (Adams, 1976). Boundary spanning communication activity has been divided into two types. "Informational boundary spanning" collects and interprets information for the organization from its environment (Leichty & Springston, 1996, p. 468). "Representational boundary spanning" defines and represents the organization for stakeholders and publics (Leichty & Springston, 1996, p. 468).

Collaboration. Collaboration is the process of two or more people working and communicating across organizational lines to accomplish a common goal (Hogg et al., 2012; Martinez-Moyano, 2006). Collaboration in an organizational context can involve separate organizations or formal groups within a single organization (Hogg et

al., 2012). Collaboration in this context also can involve members of different sociodemographic groups or other social categories (Hogg et al., 2012).

Although collaboration is understood to occur across group lines, research within the intergroup tradition suggests that the perception that the participants share or do not share an identity influences their willingness to collaborate and the quality of their efforts (Greenaway, Wright, Willingham, Reynolds, & Haslam, 2015).

Group. From the perspective of social psychology, groups arise as products of what Turner (1985) terms "social categorization" (p. 77), which today is more commonly discussed as self-categorization. The term group refers to "a collection of individuals who perceive themselves to be members of the same social category, share some emotional involvement in this common definition of themselves, and achieve some degree of social consensus about the evaluation of their group and of their membership in it" (Tajfel & Turner, 1986, p. 15). Yet, Turner's (1985) discussion of social categorization implies that groups also are perceived by people who consider themselves to be outside said groups.

Categorization processes give rise to perceptions of and differentiation between the ingroup, i.e., a group to which the individual perceives himself to belong, and a pertinent outgroup or outgroups, i.e., those groups to which the individual does not perceive membership (Abrams & Hogg, 2010; Turner, 1985). A social category is a collection of social objects (i.e., people) that are perceived (a) to be equivalent and, thus, (b) to share important traits, including cognitions, emotions, behavioral intentions, behaviors, and worldviews (Tajfel, 1981).

The concepts of groups and publics map well onto each other. According to Grunig and Repper (1992), publics, or groups whose members share important traits, "organize around issues and seek out organizations that create those issues—to gain information, seek redress of grievances, pressure the organizations, or ask governments to regulate them" (p. 128). Thus, publics can be perceived by their members. The organizations that are the focus of those publics' attention and efforts also can perceive publics, for example, through segmentation (Grunig & Repper, 1992).

Intergroup relations. Intergroup relations refers to how people who perceive themselves to be members of a group "think, feel, and act toward others [they perceive] belong to a *different* group" (Levine & Hogg, 2010, p. xxxi). The term intergroup relations "can also apply to what happens within groups . . . *as long as* these responses are influenced by the broader context of intergroup relations" (p. xxxi).

Intergroup relations can influence and be influenced by intergroup contact, or interactions involving people perceived by one or more participants to be members of different groups (Cynthia Gallois, Cretchley, & Watson, 2012; Harwood, Giles, & Palomares, 2005; Harwood & Joyce, 2012). Although intergroup research has traditionally focused on face-to-face interactions, intergroup contact theory (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1998) recognizes that alternative forms of contact exist (e.g., mass-mediated contact, mediated interpersonal contact) and can have reciprocal effects with intergroup relations (Harwood, 2010).

Moments of intergroup contact are inherently communicative events, and communication thus a fundamental factor in intergroup relations (Harwood, 2010; Harwood & Joyce, 2012). Yet, the particular communicative aspects of intergroup contact are a neglected area of research, leaving the contact event "a black box" (Harwood, 2010, p. 164).

Organization. An organization is an internally structured group whose members to a greater or lesser extent share goals; reward systems; values, attitudes, and beliefs; rules and norms of behavior; and symbolic resources, such as logos, mottos, and mission statements (Hogg & Terry, 2000; Jordan, 2013). Because an organization is a social category that can be seen "to embody or even reify characteristics perceived to be prototypical of its members" (Ashforth & Mael, 1989, p. 22), people can identify with it as they would with other groups. Identification is the individual's sense of "oneness" with a group (Ashforth & Mael, 1989, p. 21).

Additionally, that groups are internally structured suggests, as Hogg and Terry (2000) noted, they are located in and affected by "complex networks of intergroup relations characterized by power, status, and prestige differentials" (p. 121). Thus, groups both formal and informal can exist, relate, and compete within organizations (e.g., departments), between organizations (e.g., industry competitors), or transcending organizations (e.g., professions, sociodemographic categories; Hogg & Terry, 2000).

Organizational socialization. According to Kramer (2010), organizational socialization is "the process by which an organization attempts to influence and change individuals to meet its needs" (p. 3). The goal of socialization, and its benefit

to the organization and its members, is the transition of individuals "from outsiders to fully-functioning and accepted members" (Woo & Myers, 2016, p. 230). Through socialization, people "learn about the requirements and expectations of fulfilling their roles and become familiar with rules and normative behaviors in the organization and their workgroups" (Woo & Myers, 2016, p. 230).

Although the emphasis in research appears to be on adaptation of the individual to the organization, socialization also includes efforts on the part of the individual to adapt the organization to her or his needs or preferences. Thus, socialization includes processes of "mutual adjustment" (Moreland & Levine, 2001, p. 69) intended to make the individual and the organization part of one another's "pattern of activities" (Ashforth, Sluss, & Harrison, 2007, p. 1). Socialization occurs via a variety of means, including communication among organizational members (Kramer, 2010; Woo & Myers, 2016).

Professional identity. Professional identity, a kind of social identity, is that aspect of an individual's self-concept derived from participation in a particular career field and the "attributes, beliefs, values, motives, and experiences" perceived to be prototypical of that field (Slay & Smith, 2011, p. 86). Additionally, professional identity includes the individual's evaluations of the profession and the emotional significance he attaches to it and to his membership in it (Abrams & Hogg, 2010; Jeffrey & Brunton, 2012; Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

Professional identity is shaped in large part through the socialization and communication processes by which "one is provided with information regarding the meanings associated with a profession" (Slay & Smith, 2011, p. 87).

Purpose of the Study, Major Constructs, and Conceptual Framework

The purpose of my study was to understand the development of military public affairs professional identity through socialization of public affairs managers in formal military public affairs training. Using a qualitative case study (Yin, 2014) built around the collection and analysis of data from semi-structured interviews, I studied the U.S. military's entry-level Public Affairs Qualification Course (PAQC), taught at the Defense Information School (DINFOS), located at Fort George G. Meade, Maryland. The PAQC is a joint course; it brings together personnel, both students and instructors, from all branches of the U.S. military and the U.S. Coast Guard. Additionally, the course enrolls civilian Defense Department employees and uniformed personnel of allied nations.

Along with professional identity and organizational socialization, I studied the development and practice of collaboration, identified by researchers as an important public relations competency. As discussed below and in chapter 2, these three phenomena are viewed by public relations scholars as matters of fundamental importance to the effectiveness of public relations practice. Likewise, they are perceived to be of fundamental importance to the success of organizations, including military organizations. Yet, even with the sometimes express importance placed on these phenomena by public relations scholars, they appear to be under-researched and, at least in some cases, underdeveloped.

Further, the three constructs of interest in my study have a clear nexus: They are all group-mediated phenomena. That is, the perception that people, including the self, are or are not part of the same group (e.g., military public affairs professionals)

underlies the development, practice, and outcomes of professional identity, organizational socialization, and collaboration. Thus, a theory that places groups and relations between groups at its center may provide an apt lens through which to study the phenomena in the context of joint entry-level military public affairs training. Therefore, I applied the "social identity approach" (Hornsey, 2008, pp. 204-205) as the conceptual framework for my study.

Professional identity. The professional identity of public relations, including public affairs, appears to be at the core of the practice's place within the organizations it serves. Yet professional identity may also be at the core of public relations' failure to be accepted as a strategic management function. Public relations scholarship suggests that the professional identity of public relations is rooted largely in the related, field-dominating paradigms of strategic management and relationship management, with their common focus on building mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics (see Bardhan & Weaver, 2011; L'Etang, 2005; Toth, 2010). Scholarship also suggests that effective and ethical public relations and, thus, the practice's contributions to organizational success arise from this professional identity (see Grunig, Grunig, & Dozier, 2006). However, scholarship additionally suggests that the continuing failure of the practice to gain widespread acceptance as a strategic management function also may stem from perceptions of and concerns about public relations professional identity (see Grunig, 2006, 2009; Hon & Grunig, 1999). Focused examinations of public relations professional identity as it is developed within a context widely viewed as synonymous with strategy (i.e., a

military organization) may help to identify actual and potential contributions of and constraints on public relations practice.

Organizational socialization. Socialization into the organization served by public relations powerfully shapes the practice, practitioner, and identity of the latter; yet organizational socialization has drawn little public relations research attention. The dominant paradigms of public relations suggest that practitioners contribute to organizational success by enacting their professional identity (e.g., Jeffrey & Brunton, 2012). But research indicates that the organizational context in which practitioners are embedded exerts perhaps the strongest influence shaping that identity (see Berkowitz & Hristodoulakis, 1999; Fawkes, 2015a; Jeffrey & Brunton, 2012; Meng, 2014; von Platen, 2016). Yet there appears to be little public relations research on how practitioners and the practice are fitted into the organizations they serve. In response, von Platen (2016) called for research on the construction and maintenance of public relations professional identity. Studying socialization of public affairs managers into military organizations, which are recognized as practicing "institutionalized socialization" (Jones, 1986, p. 266), "wherein the organization encourages lock-step integration into the organizational milieu" (Ashforth et al., 2007, p. 13), may help to make visible some of the forces and mechanisms that so powerfully shape the practice, practitioner, and professional identity of public relations.

Collaboration. Collaboration, although viewed as crucial to public relations effectiveness, appears to be little studied as a practice and poorly developed as a concept by public relations scholars. Public relations scholars view the ability to foster, lead, and participate in collaborative efforts as crucial to public relations'

effectiveness. According to Grunig (2000), collaboration, especially under turbulent conditions, should be viewed as a "core professional value" (p. 27). Important as collaboration appears to be to public relations, there has been little research focused on it. Survey research, for example, has tended to treat collaboration as one of six dimensions of public relations leadership. And while such research has captured the perception among practitioners and students that collaboration is essential to public relations effectiveness (see Meng, 2015; Meng & Berger, 2013), it has not captured how collaboration is fostered or practiced within a public relations context. Further, where research has focused on efforts to lead collaboration *within* public relations teams, it has revealed significant disagreement between leaders and staff regarding the effectiveness of the former's efforts (see Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations, n.d.). The within-team and leader–follower focus of public relations research on collaboration suggests that a group-based approach may be useful in advancing understanding. For example, research within the intergroup tradition suggests that the perception that the participants do or do not belong to the same group influences their willingness to collaborate and the quality of their efforts (e.g., Greenaway et al., 2015). Military organizations today are viewed and offered as models of collaboration for organizations beyond the military context (e.g., Carafano, 2006; Ulin, 2010). Studying collaboration as a public relations competency in a military context may help to reveal important processes and dynamics of collaboration, thus advancing its conceptualization in public relations.

Conceptual framework. The social identity approach, the conceptual framework for my study, comprises three main theories, which together focus on "the

nature and function of social identity, and the process and effects of categorizing oneself and other people" as members of groups (Abrams & Hogg, 2010, p. 179). Social identity theory (SIT) holds that social identities, or perceived group memberships are an important element of the individual's self-concept and this importance drives "essentially competitive" ingroup–outgroup comparisons intended to achieve superiority over an outgroup (Tajfel & Turner, 1986, p. 17). Self-categorization theory (SCT) explains processes of differentiation and holds that the social comparisons people make determine group prototypes, the generally stereotypical collections of attributes ascribed to groups (Abrams & Hogg, 2010). The depersonalization that people experience when social identities are salient underlies group phenomena, such as group cohesion, ethnocentrism, altruism, cooperation, and collective action (Turner, 1985). Finally, intergroup contact theory holds that contact between members of different groups with the following five conditions tends to improve intergroup attitudes: (a) the participants are of equal status, (b) they share common goals, (c) they work cooperatively, (d) the contact event has authority support, and (e) there is the possibility of friendship developing between the participants (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1998). To explore the three focal constructs of my study through the social identity approach, I asked the following research questions:

Research Questions

RQ1: What professional identity, if any, is developed for military public affairs managers through joint entry-level military public affairs training?

RQ2: How, if at all, are military public affairs managers socialized as members of their organizations and profession through joint entry-level military public affairs training?

RQ3: How, if at all, is collaboration developed and practiced as a public affairs competency through joint entry-level public affairs training for military public affairs managers?

Through my qualitative case study of military public affairs, in which I applied the social identity approach to the study of professional identity, organizational socialization, and collaboration in the context of joint entry-level public affairs training for military public affairs managers, I attempted to make four contributions to public relations theory and practice. First, I attempted to apply substantively a robust and proven set of theories that largely have been ignored by public relations research. Second, through that application I attempted to advance understanding of three group-mediated phenomena that, while perceived by scholars to be crucial to public relations practice, have been under-researched and, in some cases, underdeveloped. Third, I attempted to explore the role of those group-mediated social phenomena in influencing whether public relations is practiced strategically. Fourth, I attempted to help advance the case for institutionalization of public relations as a strategic management function—what de Bussy (2013) called a "formidable challenge" (p. 80)—ultimately to see whether public relations can deliver its promised benefits to organizations, publics, and society (Grunig, 2009).

Chapter 2—Literature Review

In this chapter, I discuss literature pertinent to understanding professional identity, organizational socialization, and collaboration in the context of military public affairs. Public relations research suggests that these are crucial elements in effective public relations practice. Yet, they also appear to be under-researched and, in some cases, under-developed conceptually. Further, all three are group-mediated phenomena. Therefore, in the discussion of each element, in addition to reviewing the pertinent public relations research, I bring in pertinent research applying the social identity approach, as well as organizational theory where it also helps to shed light.

As I discuss below, boundary spanning appears to be a central feature of public affairs and public relations professional identity. Because boundary spanning is a concept closely linked with systems theory, I begin this review with a discussion of the open-systems thinking underlying the two major paradigms that form the foundation of public relations and public affairs professional identity. The discussion of each major topic of this chapter (i.e., professional identity, organizational socialization, collaboration) is followed by a research question based on the reviewed literature.

Open-Systems Thinking in Public Relations Theory

The interrelated paradigms of strategic management and relationship management appear to dominate both public relations research and practice. Although focused research on the development, nature, and content of public relations professional identity is lacking, it stands to reason that these interrelated paradigms serve as the foundation for that identity, including in the case of military public

affairs. Although affinities between the paradigms have been observed (Fawkes, 2010), the through line of relationships binds them closely and links them clearly to the open-systems thinking underlying much mainstream public relations theory. In this section, I discuss the influence of systems theory, specifically open systems, on strategic management and relationship management before moving to the topic of professional identity and discussing the theory's clearest manifestation in public affairs and public relations: boundary spanning.

Open systems in strategic management and relationship management. Open-systems thinking underlies the strategic management paradigm. Strategic management is a paradigm comprising 11 conditions that when present in the public relations function and in its relationship to management should produce "excellent" public relations (Grunig et al., 2006). Grunig (2009) summarized the conditions and outcomes of the paradigm, saying that research had

> long provided evidence that public relations has greater value both for organisations and society when it is strategic, managerial, symmetrical, integrated but not sublimated, diverse, and ethical. . . . Public relations, when practiced according to this global theory, helps organisations to achieve their goals, cultivate relationships in society and globally, and reduce conflict. (pp. 15-16)

According to open-systems thinking, an organization is a system that relies on a continuing exchange of resources between itself and other systems with which it is linked, in order to maintain a stable relationship with its environment (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). In other words, organizations are *open* systems (Dozier, 1992). Within

an open-systems framework, public relations serves to "control conflict and negotiate between the demands of the environment and the need for the organization to survive and prosper" (Grunig & Hunt, 1984, p. 9). The influence of open-systems thinking is especially strong and clear in the two-way symmetrical communication model that forms the heart of the paradigm (Fawkes, 2007, 2010). Symmetry-based public relations uses "research and dialogue to bring about symbiotic change in the ideas, attitudes, and behaviors of both their organizations and publics" to balance their interests (Grunig, 2001, p. 12).

A clear manifestation of open-systems thinking is the strategic management paradigm's prioritization of relationships as a means of managing the organization's place in its environment. The cultivation and management of relationships has been a focal point of strategically managed public relations since Ferguson (1984) called for a turn to relationships as the *raison d'être* of public relations (Ledingham, 2006). The concern for relationships in the strategic management paradigm has been visible for at least a quarter century. For example, Grunig and Repper (1992) wrote: "Strategically managed public relations . . . is designed to build relationships with the most important stakeholders of an organization" (p. 123; see also Grunig et al., 2006). Through the development of "high-quality relationships," public relations helps the organization "manage its interdependence with the environment" (Grunig et al., 2006, p. 33). Indeed, Grunig (2006) and Hung (2007), leading scholars working within the strategic management paradigm, argued that relationship cultivation is the core task of public relations and its most significant contribution to organizational effectiveness.

Public relations' relationship management paradigm similarly reflects a strong open-systems influence and prioritizes organizational success within a larger social context. John A. Ledingham, a key figure in the development of the relational approach, articulated the paradigm in the following way: "Effectively managing organizational–public [sic] relationships around common interests and shared goals, over time, results in mutual understanding and benefit for interacting organizations and publics" (2003, p. 190). An organization–public relationship (OPR) exists when the actions of either an organization or its strategic public(s) can have some significant impact on the other party (Ledingham & Bruning, 1998). Further, Ledingham (2003) claimed that relationship management was compatible with open-systems thinking and two-way symmetrical communication. Additionally, relationship management also views participation in management processes as important to public relations' effectiveness and contribution (Ledingham, 2003). Grunig (2006) agreed that the paradigms were compatible, calling the developing focus on the cultivation of relationships the "heir" to strategic management's two-way symmetrical communication model (p. 168).

Not only does open-systems thinking form the foundation of the strategic management and relationship management paradigms, but also through them it forms the foundation of public relations and public affairs professional identity. Open-systems thinking does this because the two interrelated paradigms dominate public relations research and, through the research, public relations practice. I turn to their dominance next before turning to professional identity and the open-systems concept of boundary spanning.

Strategic management and relationship management dominance. The strategic management and relationship management paradigms appear to dominate both public relations research and practice. There is clear evidence that the interrelated paradigms are a dominant force in public relations research. Citations of seminal works within the two paradigms (e.g., J. E. Grunig, 1992; Ledingham, 2003; Ledingham & Bruning, 1998), as reported by Google Scholar, far exceed citations of works in the other five major public relations paradigms identified by Toth (2010). Further, public relations scholars running the gamut from functional to critical have noted or implied the dominance of the strategic management or relationship management paradigm (e.g., Bardhan & Weaver, 2011; Coombs & Holladay, 2015; Fawkes, 2015b; B. G. Smith, 2012).

Additionally, the dominance of these two paradigms has coalesced an identity, centered on relationships, for public relations within the scholarly community. Coombs and Holladay (2015), for example, argued that relationships have come to dominate public relations research through both paradigms and that this dominance has imbued public relations research with a "relationship identity" (p. 689; see also B. G. Smith, 2012). Toth (2010) observed that the trend was such that "the relationship worldview of public relations seems firmly established in scholarship, if not in practice" (p. 719).

Although the evidence is sparse, it appears that strategic management and relationships management also exert a heavy influence on public relations practice, including military public affairs. For example, Coombs and Holladay (2015) argued that "relationship has permeated the practitioner realm as well" as public relations

research (p. 689), citing the Public Relations Society of America's inclusion of "mutually beneficial relationships" as aim in the body's "crowdsourced" definition of public relations (pp. 689-690). Erzikova and Berger (2011, 2012), using quantitative surveys, found agreement among public relations educators (n = 159) and American public relations students (n = 196) that central principles of the paradigms (e.g., strong ethics, relationship cultivation) are important to effective public relations practice.

In research focused on military public affairs, Plowman (2013) interviewed nine high-level U.S. Army public affairs managers to explore the applicability of relationship management tools to the measurement of military public affairs effectiveness. He found that participants viewed relationship management principles as generally compatible with public affairs practice. Similarly, Lee Jenni, Peterson, Jameson, and Cubbage (2015) conducted 54 interviews with military personnel engaged in public affairs around environmental issues. The researchers found that the participants believed two-way symmetrical communication and relationship cultivation were effective means of conducting public affairs[1].

As the foregoing discussion indicates, both public relations scholars and practitioners appear generally to accept the strategic management and relationship management paradigms—and the open-systems logic underlying them—as appropriate, even ideal, bases for the practice of public relations. Indeed, Fawkes's (2010) work on public relations ethics suggests that the strategic management

[1] However, the participants reported practicing one-way communication, using public participation "to gain support for existing policy and decisions" (Lee Jenni et al., 2015, p. 359).

paradigm supplies the social identity of the field and, through its emphasis on "excellence," provides the identity's idealized prototype (Abrams & Hogg, 2010). Understanding that strategic management and relationship management likely supply the professional identity of public relations and public affairs is important because the identity becomes the basis for relations between the practice and other groups within the organization, including senior management, or the "dominant coalition" (Grunig, 2006, p. 160). Further, relations between public relations and the dominant coalition heavily influence or determine whether the function can enact its ideal role and make its biggest contributions to the organization (Meng, 2014).

In the next section, I begin by discussing the small body of public relations research on professional identity and what it suggests regarding the identity. Then I turn to boundary spanning, likely the central trait of public relations and public affairs professional identity, and public relations research's understanding of boundary spanning. I next discuss the insights regarding boundary spanning that the social identity perspective and organizational theory can provide. I close with an exploratory research question regarding the professional identity of public affairs managers developed through joint entry-level military public affairs training.

Military Public Affairs Professional Identity

Public relations research has looked at the professional identity of public relations and military public affairs only to a limited extent. Evidence of this state includes the fact that a database search on public relations or public affairs and professional identity returned only 15 total results and a Google Scholar search none. Yet, public relations professional identity is likely influenced by the myriad and

varying contexts in which it is developed, enacted, and challenged (Abrams & Hogg, 2010). To fail to investigate public relations professional identity more systematically and to a greater extent than it has been to date likely leaves many aspects of the identity and the practice taken for granted (Deuze, 2005). Additionally, without a strong understanding of public relations professional identity, public relations research may be severely hampered in its ability to contribute to the development, effectiveness, and success of the practice. As Deuze (2005) argued of journalism, studying how public relations practitioners "from all walks of their professional lives negotiate the core values" (p. 458) of their profession is critical to more fully understanding the practice of public relations.

Further, although there has been some degree of research attention on public relations professional identity (as indicated in chapter one and as will be discussed in the present chapter), public relations research has tended to neglect the fact that professional identity is a social, group-based phenomenon (Slay & Smith, 2011). When people perceive groups, as they often do, they (a) tend to associate those groups with certain values, attitudes, behaviors, etc. and (b) interact with other people based on the groups to which they perceive them to belong and the groups' prototypical traits (Hornsey, 2008; Kramer, 2010; Slay & Smith, 2011). Public relations research in the strategic management tradition has developed an incipient understanding of the group-based nature of organizational life and its impact on public relations practice. However, that research has tended to focus narrowly on the organization and neglect the dynamic interplay of identities that may be at the core of public relations' and public affairs' difficulty in gaining acceptance as a strategic

management function (e.g., Kim & Kim, 2016; Meng, 2014; Sriramesh, Grunig, & Dozier, 1996).

As noted above, understanding public relations and public affairs professional identity is important because the identity becomes the basis for relations between the practice and the dominant coalition. Through these relations, the function is either empowered to enact or disempowered from enacting its strategic management role and delivering the benefits predicted by strategic management and relationship management (Meng, 2014). In the present discussion of military public affairs professional identity, I will do the following. First, I will discuss public relations research on professional identity and show how public relations and public affairs professional identity appears to arise from the strategic management and relationship management paradigms and the open-systems thinking that underlies them. Second, I will discuss public relations' understanding of boundary spanning, which may be the core attribute of public relations and public affairs professional identity. Third, I will turn to the social identity approach and organizational theory to explore how the association with boundary spanning may explain marginalization of public relations and military public affairs and their rejection as strategic management functions. Fourth, I will discuss the related negative individual outcomes attendant on boundary spanning that public relations practitioners can experience, which public relations research has tended to miss. I close with an exploratory research question.

Public relations research on professional identity. As suggested by the earlier discussion of the influence of open-systems thinking on public relations theory and practice, research on public relations professional identity has tended to find that

practitioners identify with public relations as the strategic management function envisioned in excellence theory. In her discussion of public relations ethics, Fawkes (2015b) argued that the strategic management paradigm has furnished public relations practice (and research) with an idealized excellence identity. Like the paradigm from which it arises, she said, this professional identity emphasizes a practice based in strong ethical orientation and contributing to both organizational success and social well-being (see also Fawkes, 2007; Macnamara, 2016). Empirical evidence supports this identification. For example, Jeffrey and Brunton (2012), using a quantitative survey (n = 710), found that communication management practitioners identified with their profession more strongly when they and their peers fulfilled the expectations of the strategic management paradigm. Their professional identity appeared to be built around elements that included influencing strategic direction, contributing to enhanced organizational reputation, and practicing strong ethics (Jeffrey & Brunton, 2012).

Research has also found that practitioners, including military practitioners, identify with journalists, a traditional strategic public for organizations (Grunig, 2008) and historically a source of threat for the American military (Aukofer & Lawrence, 1995; Hibbert & Starr, 2004; Rid, 2007). For example, Mellado and Hanusch (2011), using a quantitative survey of Chilean public relations practitioners (n = 577) and journalists (n = 570), found that both groups perceived themselves to be part of the same profession. However, public relations practitioners had more favorable views toward journalists than vice versa. Stephens (1981) found similar perceptions among military practitioners. In a quantitative survey of military public

affairs personnel (n = 118), he found that, in addition to measuring their performance against the expectations of their supervisors and the public, one in three practitioners rated the perceptions of civilian journalists as important. Journalist perceptions were valued more highly than those of non-public affairs military peers and other public relations professionals (Stephens, 1981).

As noted above, the literature on public relations and public affairs professional identity is sparse. Yet what literature there is, along with pertinent other literature, indicates that this professional identity is strongly influenced by (a) open-systems thinking, (b) the strategic management and relationship management paradigms, and (c) the relationship between public relations and journalists. These influences further suggest that boundary spanning is a core attribute—perhaps *the* core attribute—of public relations and public affairs professional identity. I turn next to a discussion of boundary spanning within public relations contexts to provide further conceptual focus for my research question exploring what professional identity, if any, is developed for public affairs managers through joint entry-level military public affairs training.

Public relations perspective on boundary spanning Boundary spanning is likely a core attribute of the professional identity of public relations and military public affairs. Public relations understood as a boundary spanning function and the practitioner understood as a "boundary role person" (BRP; Adams, 1976, p. 1176), or boundary spanner, are features of the field's open-systems thinking. For example, Grunig and Hunt (1984) wrote that public relations is generally part of an organization's management subsystem and that practitioners perform "a 'boundary'

role" (p. 9). That is, they help facilitate communication across external and internal boundaries. Springston and Leichty (1994) wrote that, through boundary spanning communication, "practitioners represent the management philosophy to external publics and interpret the concerns of external publics to the organization's management team" (p. 697; see also Berger & Meng, 2014). According to Grunig et al. (2006), the value of public relations is tied directly to its boundary spanning activity, through which public relations helps the organization identify its strategic publics and build relationships with them. These relationships "help the organization manage its interdependence with the environment" (p. 33), thus contributing to organizational effectiveness.

Public relations scholars appear to have focused on the positive organizational outcomes of public relations boundary-spanning activity. Such outcomes appear to be predicted by organizational theory. According to Calvard (2014), the expected benefits of interorganizational boundary spanning include "better strategic decision making, large-scale innovations, better reputation, learning, adaptation, and achievement of cross-organizational goals" (p. 120). Working within the strategic management paradigm, Grunig (2009) argued that public relations boundary spanning helps organizations behave as strategic publics expect and prefer, helping deliver financial and other benefits to the organization (see also Grunig & Hunt, 1984). The excellence study appeared to confirm such expectations. According to Grunig et al. (2006), the study revealed that the relationships which are the aim of strategically managed public relations "save money by preventing costly issues, crises, regulation, litigation, and bad publicity" (p. 35).

There appears to have been little attention paid to the impact on public relations practice and practitioners when they engage in or are associated with boundary spanning. Yet the outcomes here also are expected to be largely positive. According to Marrone (2010), a network perspective suggests that boundary spanning activity should generate for the individual and team "substantial positive gains, such as enhanced influence, reputation, and ability to make valued contributions" (p. 935). Public relations research appears to have found such outcomes at least in the case of intra-organizational boundary spanning. For example, Neill (2014) interviewed 30 public relations executives to explore the impact on them from their participation in "multiple formal and informal [intra-organizational] executive coalitions" (p. 604). She found that such internal boundary spanning was central to the public relations executives' ability to influence strategic decisions at multiple levels, including at the top. In a similar vein, Kohring, Marcinkowski, Lindner, and Karis (2013) argued that by claiming the status of "expert boundary spanners" (p. 176) public relations practitioners in German universities could overcome their low status and exert greater influence over strategic decision making in a mediatized higher-education environment.

Yet, recent research within public relations, research on military public affairs, and research using the social identity approach and organizational theory suggest that public relations boundary spanning may not always produce positive outcomes. Public relations boundary spanning also may be perceived as a source of threat for the organization, lead to marginalization of public relations and public affairs, and generate dysphoric feelings for the practitioner. Public relations research

appears to place great emphasis on boundary spanning in the practice, yet it also appears to view boundary spanning through a narrowly restricted lens. This suggests the value of bringing in the perspectives of social identity and organizational theory and taking an exploratory approach to public affairs professional identity.

Social identity and organizational perspectives on boundary spanning. The influence of open-systems thinking on the strategic management and relationship management paradigms and the continuing rejection of public relations as a strategic management function suggest that a problem may reside in public relations' association with boundary spanning. The social identity approach and organizational theory offer a perspective largely missing from public relations research and addressing these public relations identity troubles.

The social identity approach and organizational theory suggest that the public relations function and public relations practitioners may be perceived as marginal elements of the organization and, thus, subject to processes of marginalization. As the terms "boundary spanning" and "boundary spanner" imply, public relations and its practitioners are envisioned operating at the margins of their organizations (see Fletcher & Soucy, 1983; Grunig & Hunt, 1984). Organizational theorist Adams (1976) argued that a BRP "is more distant, psychologically, organizationally, and often physically, from other members of his organization than they are from each other, and he is closer to the external environment and to the agents of outside organizations" (p. 1176). This relatively greater distance from other organizational members suggests that public relations practitioners also are more distant from the organizational prototype. As Abrams and Hogg (2010) suggested, the more

prototypical of the ingroup a person is perceived to be, the more the person is liked and trusted; conversely, the "prototypically marginal" individual is less liked, less trusted, uninfluential, and "especially vulnerable to social exclusion" (p. 185). Further, the boundary spanner's concomitantly greater proximity to external groups in the environment can be a source of suspicion (Adams, 1976).

This closeness to the external environment appears to be both a necessary condition for successful boundary spanning and a source of threat for the organization. BRP "routinely need to 'take the role of the other'" to understand external groups and communicate their beliefs, values, and priorities effectively to their own organizations (Kroeger & Bachmann, 2014, p. 262). Yet, the same behaviors that engender trust between the BRP and external groups likely raise suspicion within the incumbent organization of his commitment to it. Often, the organization seeks adherence to its norms and compliance with its policies from all its members (Adams, 1976); yet, such behavior may make it difficult for BRP to effectively carry out their boundary-spanning duties. For example, Bartel (2001) found through a mixed-method study that the more boundary spanners engaged in ingroup-favoring intergroup comparisons, the more highly they esteemed their organizational membership and identified with the organization. Yet, poorer intergroup attitudes may make it difficult for boundary spanners to carry out their duties effectively. Thus, boundary spanners are caught in a double bind. To act effectively on behalf of the organization, they may need to maintain an orientation different from that of the organizational prototype (Petronio, Ellemers, Giles, & Gallois, 1998). But, as Kroeger and Bachmann (2014) noted, "Doubt about their

loyalties is one of the 'classic' problems BRP are regularly confronted with" (p. 263). Such doubts about loyalty appear to affect public affairs' relationships within military organizations.

Military public affairs, boundary spanning, and marginalization. Because of its association with boundary spanning and its associated perceived low-prototypicality, public affairs appears to be marginalized in military organizations. For example, public affairs tends to be identified most strongly with its media relations function (e.g., Eder, 2011; Paul, 2011; Reid, 2002). This association with civilian journalists, an outgroup perceived as a threat at least since the American defeat in Vietnam (Rid, 2007; Robins & Webster, 1986; M. F. Smith, 2005), by an institution whose members are prone to perceptions of threat (Stephan, Ybarra, & Morrison, 2009) appears to disadvantage public affairs. For example, survey research into military commander assessments of their PAO's job performance revealed that commanders (n = 118) "identify their PAOs with their non-military professional counterparts in the media" (Hill & Cummings, 1981, p. 27). According to the authors, the identification "may breed distrust and restrict completely open communication about more sensitive matters" (p. 27). Similarly, Fletcher and Soucy (1983), using a quantitative survey of media professional and non-public affairs peer perceptions of Army PAOs, found that the latter group (infantry-officer trainees; n = 58) doubted that PAOs would protect the organization from media criticism.

Additionally, public affairs appears to be under-resourced, under-ranked, and the expertise it requires underappreciated in military organizations. According to Eder (2011), public affairs is "a small, historically marginalized career field" in the

military (p. 27). Evidence of its marginalization includes its chronic under-resourcing (Eder, 2011; Paul, 2012; Paul, Helmus, & Glenn, 2009). PAOs are generally of significantly lower rank than other officers on the commander's staff. This sends the message that "the communications function is significantly less important than the other command and staff functions" (Eder, 2011, p. 25). Marginalization is also suggested by commanders' habit of conducting public affairs activities with little-to-no input from their PAOs and with little training in communication management (Paul, 2012). It also includes the practice in at least two military branches of placing non-public affairs personnel with operational backgrounds in their top communication position (Eder, 2011).

In addition to neglecting the apparent downside of the association with boundary spanning for the public relations and public affairs function, public relations research has tended to neglect the downside for the individual practitioner. However, research indicates that scholars have begun to acknowledge the personal negative outcomes that the social identity approach and organizational theory have perceived for some time.

Individual negative outcomes of public relations boundary spanning. Finally, public relations research is beginning to look at boundary spanning from the practitioner's perspective and acknowledge its often negative psychological impacts. The social identity approach suggests that less prototypical group members are viewed less favorably because they tend to raise questions about the ingroup's values and norms (Marques, 2010). Indeed, the strategic management paradigm requires a psychological orientation sometimes at odds with the priorities of the organization,

even though practitioners are, of course, members of their incumbent organizations. For example, Grunig and White (1992) said practitioners have "mixed motives," or "divided loyalties" (p. 46). Berger and Meng (2014) argued practitioners possess a "divided consciousness" (p. 311). And Gregory and Willis (2013) argued that, rather than be partisan, public relations must remain "functionally neutral" (p. 11) to operate most effectively[2]. This suggests conditions for internal psychological conflict. According to Ashforth, Sluss, and Harrison (2007), people can identify with multiple groups simultaneously; and when they do, they are left to sort out any ensuing identity conflicts.

Although only recently acknowledged in public relations research, it appears that public relations practitioners are in fact sensitive to the forces pulling them in sometimes opposing directions, and this sensitivity produces the role conflict, ambiguity, and anxiety associated with boundary roles (see Adams, 1976; Kroeger & Bachmann, 2014; Marrone, 2010). Evidence of such dysphoric feelings in the experiences of public relations practitioners has been found by researchers. For example, Nande (2010) used 41 interviews to explore the workplace tensions and contradictions experienced by American public relations practitioners. His participants reported "a great deal of internal conflict on various fronts as they tried to balance the needs and interests of several parties simultaneously" (p. 173). He concluded that the underlying source of stress for the practitioners he studied was the

[2] As Grunig and White (1992) argued, all organizational members likely feel obligations to multiple entities (e.g., the organization and society). The pertinent point here is not that practitioners and their non-public relations peers and supervisors might be more alike than different. Rather, the point is that public relations practitioners are perceived to be different and that such perceptions influence attitudes and behaviors toward (and from) public relations.

challenge of straddling the expectations of rational, open-systems-based public relations and the systems they experienced firsthand, which "emphasized relationships, emotions, and irrational aspects of organizing" (p. 173). Powell and Pieczka's (2016) interview and focus-group study of public relations knowledge and learning at senior levels revealed that senior practitioners are not immune from the negative psychological impacts of boundary spanning. The researchers found that the senior practitioners they studied experienced boundary spanning as "individual deficit and a challenge to the legitimacy of seniority" (pp. 323-324).To sum up, it appears that public relations research on professional identity is limited and has generated a limited understanding of public relations and military public affairs professional identity. However, it also appears that (a) these professional identities arise from the strategic management and relationship management paradigms and their open-systems basis; (b) boundary spanning appears to be a core attribute, if not the core attribute, of these identities; (c) the association with boundary spanning, when viewed through the social identity approach and organizational theory, marginalizes public relations and public affairs; and (d) boundary spanning can produce negative individual psychological outcomes for public relations and public affairs personnel. Yet, given the importance of the professional identity in relations between the function and important groups within organizations, the limited research on public relations and public affairs professional identity, and the generally neglected complexity of boundary spanning as a key feature of that identity, exploratory research appears to be in order. Thus, I asked the following research question:

RQ1: What professional identity, if any, is developed for military public affairs managers through joint entry-level military public affairs training?

Military Public Affairs Organizational Socialization

As noted in chapter one of the present study, public relations research suggests that socialization into the organization that they serve powerfully shapes the practice, practitioner, and identity of public relations; yet organizational socialization has drawn scant public relations research attention. Scholars instead have tended to emphasize the importance of undergraduate public relations education programs as sites at which to inculcate normative public relations traits and practices (e.g., Bronstein & Fitzpatrick, 2015; Meng, 2015; Taylor & Kent, 2010). But research indicates that the organization in which the practitioner is embedded exerts perhaps the strongest influence shaping practice, practitioner, and identity (see Berkowitz & Hristodoulakis, 1999; Fawkes, 2015a; Jeffrey & Brunton, 2012; Meng, 2014; von Platen, 2016). Matters of organizational socialization thus merit greater attention in public relations research.

Additionally, investigation of socialization of public relations practitioners, particularly into military organizations, would benefit from application of the social identity approach. Although it has not been applied extensively in socialization research, the approach appears to hold great promise (Kramer, 2010). As Woo and Myers (2016) suggested, the concept of an individual's movement into an organization, i.e., from outsider to insider, points to social identity change. That is, through socialization, the individual is expected to undergo modification to her group affiliations, evaluations of the altered or new ingroup and pertinent outgroups, and her

linked self-concept (Tajfel, 1981; Woo & Myers, 2016). Research supports the position that socialization affects social identity and intergroup relations including in military organizations. For example, Guimond's (2000) quantitative study of intergroup-attitude change among Canadian military cadets (n = 182) found that as the identification of Anglophone cadets as "Canadian Forces Officer" increased, so did bias against outgroups, including Francophones and civilians. Additionally, Franke (2000), using a quantitative survey to study the effects of socialization on cadets (n = 594) at the U.S. Military Academy, found that increased identification with the military was associated with decreased support for U.S. participation in multinational peacekeeping operations.

Because public relations research has tended to neglect socialization *into* organizations while indicating that such socialization exerts a powerful effect on public relations practitioners, there is the need here to discuss pertinent, yet fundamental concepts from the socialization literature. Thus, in the remainder of this section, I do the following. First, I discuss the focus of the limited body of public relations research on organizational socialization. Second, I turn to Van Maanen and Schein's (1979) three dimensions of organizational socialization and the six tactics of institutionalized socialization to help draw attention to processes that may be pertinent to the study of the organizational socialization of public affairs managers. Third, I discuss two organizational models, the "total institution" (Goffman, 1961, p. xiii) and the "high-reliability organization" (Myers, 2005, p. 345), which may be useful in framing the study. Fourth, I turn to the matter of military organizational identity, subgroup identities, and the socialization implications of multiple coexisting

identities. And fifth, I discuss the importance of attending to socialization in localized contexts, which also may be pertinent to the study of the socialization of military public affairs managers through joint entry-level military public affairs training. I also note here my decision, when discussing concepts drawn from a source, sometimes to replace terms such as "culture" with "identity" or "prototype." I do this in those cases (e.g, Dunivin, 1994; Soeters, Winslow, & Weibull, 2006) where it is clear that the system the author(s) employed to demarcate groups has two features. First, it includes evaluation of the group by its members and the emotional importance the group has for them (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Second, it recognizes that relations between, as well as within, groups are based on and influenced by those perceptual demarcations (Harwood et al., 2005).

Public relations research on organizational socialization. Extant public relations research on organizational socialization suggests disagreement regarding the larger influence on public relations: processes by which would-be practitioners select and prepare for public relations careers or processes by which practitioners enter and become established members of organizations. Jablin (1987, 2001) developed a four-phase model of organizational socialization. *Role* and *organizational* anticipatory socialization concern the period and influences (e.g., family, education, media) experienced prior to taking a position (Kramer, 2010). Encounter is the phase during which an individual joins an organization and assumes an organizational role as a newcomer (Kramer, 2010). Metamorphosis is the phase when the individual perceives herself to be a full, established organizational member (Kramer, 2010). And exit concerns the process by which the individual's formal association with the

organization is ended (Jablin, 1987, 2001). The overall goal of socialization is "organizational assimilation," or "the processes by which individuals become integrated into the culture of an organization" (Jablin, 2001, p. 755).

One strain of public relations research on socialization has focused on role anticipatory socialization through public relations education programs. Socialization here is assumed to exert a strong influence on later practitioner values, attitudes, and behaviors. For example, Shamir, Reed, and Connell (1990) used a quantitative survey of American public relations practitioners (n = 198) to investigate the relationship between personal ethics and work experience, on the one hand, and professional ethics, on the other. They found that personal ethics were the best predictor of professional ethics. They argued that it was therefore important to emphasize ethics socialization in public relations education programs prior to students' entry into the profession. Taylor and Kent (2010) used a content analysis of messages in PRSA's *Public Relations Tactics* magazine (to which student members have a free subscription) concerning the potential of social media for public relations practice. They concluded that articles in the magazine were making unsubstantiated claims regarding social media's value and thus socializing students to accept uncritically their own need to develop their social media skills. Finally, Berkowitz and Hristodoulakis (1999) used a quantitative survey to explore how public relations education and work experience influence the roles practitioners perceive for themselves. They found that among their student sample (n = 48), public relations education produced a "management [vs. technician] orientation" (p. 100).

Another strain of public relations research on socialization has focused on the influence of the organization in shaping public relations practice and identity. Here the organization is assumed to exert the stronger influence. For example, where they observed agreement and a management orientation among their student sample, Berkowitz and Hristodoulakis (1999) found that practitioner (n = 42) views varied regarding "the role that public relations performs in an organization" (p. 100). This was due at least in part to the variety of organizational types in which public relations is practiced. Mellado and Hanusch (2011), in their quantitative survey study of Chilean journalist and public relations practitioner professional identity, found that, for both groups, professional experience exerted a stronger influence on their perceptions, attitudes, and identities than did educational experience. Finally, Lieber (2008) used a quantitative survey to study ethical development and reasoning of American public relations practitioners (n = 113). He found "significant differences in moral development among public relations practitioners based on job setting" (e.g., agency, corporate, government, academia; p. 248). The evidence from public relations research on organizational socialization suggests that greater research attention should be focused on the question of how public relations and its practitioners are fitted into the organizations they serve, where they learn "key principles of [public relations] professionalism" (Jeffrey & Brunton, 2012, p. 158).

Research indicates that the encounter phase is an especially important moment, significantly influencing or determining a newcomer's transition from outsider to full and contributing member of the organization (Kramer, 2010). In the following section, to focus attention on socialization processes at the encounter phase,

neglected by public relations research, I discuss the three dimensions, or boundary crossings, of organizational socialization. I also discuss the tactics of socialization that appear to characterize military entry-level training.

Three dimensions and six tactics of institutionalized socialization. As Jablin's (1987, 2001) four-phase model suggests, processes of organizational socialization can extend beyond the borders of the individual's tenure with a particular organization and even beyond the limits of an overall career. Socialization is, in the words of Van Maanen and Schein (1979), "ubiquitous, persistent, and forever problematic" (p. 213). Yet, it is also understood that (a) the socialization experience is often at its most intense at boundary crossings (Ashforth et al., 2007; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979) and (b) entering an organization as a newcomer is an especially stressful event in an individual's career (Kramer, 2010). Further, as Kramer (2010) noted, research looking at the encounter phase operates under the premise that the socialization tactics used by organizations produce important long-term consequences for the individual and her integration into the organization. In this section, I discuss the three boundary crossings of organizational encounter generally and the set of socialization tactics that appear to characterize military entry-level training programs specifically.

Van Maanen and Schein (1979) identified three important psychological boundaries that the newcomer must cross to successfully assimilate into an organization. Being aware of and understanding these should help the researcher make sense of encounter phase phenomena (Kramer, 2010). The *functional* dimension refers to the tasks that an individual is expected to perform once integrated into the

organization (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). This dimension, and the various task sets it captures, is generally organized around departmental or other territorial boundaries (Kramer, 2010). The *hierarchical* dimension concerns "issues like power and status and who reports to whom" (Kramer, 2010, p. 91). While traditional treatments appear to focus on interpersonal relations, such studies suggest that group-based distinctions also are important (e.g., Myers, 2005; Scott & Myers, 2005). Finally, the *inclusionary* dimension refers to a sense of belonging, a sense of being part of "the social fabric or interpersonal domain of organizational life" (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979, p. 221). Here again, one can imagine that group-based perceptions influence how individuals are integrated into organizations (see Harwood et al., 2005).

Van Maanen and Schein (1979) also provided a framework for understanding socialization at the encounter phase. They argued that organizations select one from each of six pairs of tactics to integrate newcomers. In a *collective (vs. individual)* process, new members are grouped together and trained simultaneously. In a *formal (vs. informal)* process, new members are trained in new skills, tasks, etc. separately from coworkers and prior to joining their work group. *Sequential (vs. random)* socialization requires new employees to learn tasks in a specific order. *Fixed (vs. variable)* socialization entails trainees having a set amount of time in which to learn each new skill. The *serial (vs. disjunctive)* tactic involves newcomers learning the job from an experienced employee who serves as a role model or mentor. And the *investiture (vs. divestiture)* tactic entails appreciation and confirmation of the

incoming identity of newcomers[3]. Jones (1986) argued that these choices collectively constitute "institutionalized socialization" (p. 266).

Research has identified important outcomes of institutionalized socialization with potential pertinence to the study of military public affairs managers. A meta-analysis by Saks, Uggerslev, and Fassina (2007) found that institutionalized socialization tactics were associated with reduced role ambiguity, role conflict, and turnover and with increased job performance, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and perceptions of person–organization fit (see also Ashforth & Saks, 1996). Additionally, Ashforth and Saks (1996), using a longitudinal quantitative study of new employees (n = 295) of a variety of organizations, found that institutionalized socialization was associated with the adoption of custodial roles. That is, new employees were more likely to adopt and maintain organizational norms, methods, and behaviors (see also Saks et al., 2007).

Research also suggests that the preference for institutionalized socialization stems from certain qualities of military organizations. Because research on public relations in military contexts is in short supply (Toledano, 2010), it becomes important to develop here an understanding of military organizations as a type of organization. In the next section, I discuss two organization models that may aid in the effort to research socialization of public affairs practitioners into military organizations.

---

[3] Jones (1986) reformulated the six tactics and replaced divestiture, or efforts to strip away a newcomer's existing identity and replace it with an identity prescribed by the organization, with investiture in institutionalized socialization; research has supported the change (Ashforth et al., 2007).

The total institution and the high-reliability organization. Two models of organizations that have been used in research on organizational socialization and which appear pertinent to the study of military public affairs managers are the "total institution" (Goffman, 1961, p. xiii) and the "high-reliability organization" (HRO; Myers, 2005, p. 345). Both models have the potential to help focus attention on salient features of the U.S. military context of my study and on the influence of that context on processes and outcomes of socialization of public affairs managers through entry-level public affairs training.

According to Goffman (1961), a total institution is an organization that comprises both residence and work "where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life" (p. xiii). Unlike in civil society, where the various activities of life generally occur in different locations, in a total institution people engage in all or most such activities "in one central place under a single authority" (Lucas, Kang, & Li, 2013, p. 4). A pertinent characteristic of total institutions is their antipathy toward autonomy, both within and beyond the work context (Lucas et al., 2013). Research also suggests that the total institution may be experienced as so powerful a force that organizationally prescribed identities crowd out alternatives or provoke dichotomous choices that do not reflect the actual complexity of identity (cf. Woo & Myers, 2016).

For example, Tracy (2000) concluded from her ethnographic study of employee life aboard a cruise ship that people in a total institution "coconstruct [sic] a single dominant discourse" that limits the accessibility of alternative identities and the

resources they might contain (p. 120). Soeters et al. (2006) argued that socialization into military organizations, which tend to share a common identity, explains why conflict is less common between national military contingents and more common between military personnel and civilians during peacekeeping operations. Alternatively, according to Tracy (2000), life in a total institution sets up a dichotomous, and alienating, choice between a "real" and a "fake" self (see also Tracy & Trethewey, 2005).

The HRO was another likely pertinent organizational model. Myers (2005) defined HROs as "danger-exposed organizations in which members must be relied upon to perform their duties in consistent, typically organizationally prescribed ways to ensure safety for themselves and others" (p. 346). She argued that the dangerous environments of HROs influence organizational socialization efforts and that, rather than emphasize productivity and efficiency, HROs socialize for reliability. Additionally, newcomers to HROs, such as military teams, police departments, and fire departments, "quickly develop an understanding of what it takes to integrate into these contexts" (p. 346). This literature appears to have focused on newcomer socialization in the work group.

For example, Harris, Simons, and Carden (2004) used a mixed-method design to study work-group socialization of post-academy probationary police officers in Australia. They found that successful socialization of the newcomers into their first assignments required acceptance both of the collaborative nature of police work and of the individual initiative required to develop and demonstrate fitness for that work. They also found that local factors, such as work-group culture and support and senior-

partner mentorship were critical to the newcomers' movement from peripheral to fully accepted members. Scott and Myers (2005) used participant observation and interviews to study the work-group socialization of probationary firefighters. They found an emphasis on integration into custodial roles. Veteran firefighters judged newcomer suitability against existing standards and expectations. Further, like Harris et al.'s (2004) probationary officers, the new firefighters actively participated in their own socialization. However, they also understood that their behavior had to be highly strategic, often including covert learning efforts, to demonstrate their conformity to organizational norms, including reliability.

As the work of Van Maanen and Schein (1979) and Hogg and Terry (2000) suggest, socialization processes can yield and, in the case of internally differentiated organizations, likely must yield multiple identities. Yet it appears that research on socialization into military or paramilitary organizations has tended to focus on organization-level phenomena and organization-level identities. Thus, there appears to be a need to understand basic levels or types of organizational identities as they pertain to military organizations and the implications of these for relations between public affairs and other groups within those organizations.

Military organizational identity and occupational identities. In large, complex, and internally differentiated organizations, such as the U.S. military, much newcomer socialization, as well as the ongoing socialization of most established members, likely occurs below the organizational level. According to Woo and Myers (2016), this situation requires that socialization processes produce identification both with the organization and at more proximal levels. Research supports that such

multiple and co-existing identifications are possible (Ashforth, Harrison, & Corley, 2008). Yet, while identification with various targets within organizations is necessary and desirable, it also can be the source of intergroup and intrapersonal conflict.

In this section, I first discuss what researchers have identified as an overall military identity and its implications for the socialization of newcomers. Then I discuss the concept of sub-organizational, specifically "occupational" (Soeters et al., 2006, p. 245), identities because the concept is likely pertinent to the study of socialization of military public affairs managers. I close by discussing the potential problems of multiple social identities occupying the same organizational space.

Although differences among national armed forces exist, there appears to be a shared general military identity that can bridge such differences among personnel. According to Soeters et al. (2006), this shared identity has three defining features. It is highly communal, with the institution and its values dominant in the lives of members. It is thoroughly bureaucratized and hierarchical, with extensive rules and regulations that structure and constrain life. And it carries an expectation of rigid compliance with rules, orders, and authority. Wilson and Chernichky (2016) identified additional features of the American military identity, which include "dedication to a larger mission, commitment to one's comrades . . . as well as personal sacrifice, strength, and self-discipline" (p. 266). Finally, Dunivin (1994) argued that U.S. military organizational identity centers on a "combat, masculine warrior" prototype (p. 533). That is, the identity is built around (a) combat, the *raison d'être* of military organizations, and (b) an aggressive masculinity, which society links with combat, war, and defense as "men's work" (p. 534).

An important implication for the socialization of newcomers is that the strong identity that appears to characterize some organizations, that is, "a widely shared and deeply held sense of the central, distinctive, and relatively enduring attributes of the organization" (Ashforth et al., 2007, p. 33), acts as both beacon and barrier. That is, a strong organizational identity attracts and eases the entry of some who already are socialized to the organization, while raising obstacles that make it difficult to divest and remake other newcomers (Ashforth et al., 2007). For example, Mael and Ashforth (1995) found through a quantitative survey of U.S. Army trainees (n = 2,535) in boot camp that certain behavioral and experiential antecedents (e.g., dependability, preference for group affiliations, participation in outdoor activities) predicted both organizational identification and attrition. Conversely, Anderson (2016), writing in her auto-ethnographic account of her socialization experiences in an explicitly evangelical Christian home-construction firm, reported that she found her own Christian identity and the one promoted within the organization at odds throughout her three-year tenure.

Although the overall organizational identity is crucially important, subgroup identities, such as occupational identities, are also important. Ashforth et al. (2008) argued that "occupations serve as major identity badges for situating individuals in the organization" (p. 350) and that people often define themselves based on their occupation. Soeters et al. (2006) distinguished between the more "institutional" identities of some subgroups (e.g., combat units; people at senior command levels) and the more "occupational" identities of those individuals engaged in, for example, administration, logistics, and information systems management. Occupational

identities, which likely include public affairs, tend to reflect civilian and corporate identities and prioritize the latter's attendant traits and behaviors (Soeters et al., 2006).

Although people "appear capable of simultaneously and even holistically defining themselves in terms of multiple identities" (Ashforth et al., 2008, p. 347), the existence of multiple identities within organizations, and within the individual organizational member, also can be a source of conflict. For example, Mottola, Bachman, Gaertner, and Dovidio (1997) found through a business merger simulation that when both pre-merger and post-merger organizational identities were made salient, bias toward the outgroup increased. Based on a literature review, Ashforth et al. (2008) said intergroup bias appears to increase when the ingroup and outgroup "are viewed as relatively distinct, task independent, and goal independent and if the ingroup culture does not discourage such bias" (p. 349). Finally, and as suggested by the earlier discussion of negative individual outcomes associated with boundary roles, the individual's efforts to maintain two (or more) identities when there is inconsistency between them may provoke "identity conflict" (p. 354). Identity conflict, in turn, "may ultimately impair identification with one or both loci" (p. 355).

The apparent need for identification at different levels of the organization for effective functioning and the studies of work-group socialization of firefighters and police officers suggest the value of investigating socialization processes as they occur in localized contexts to understand socialization of public affairs into military organizations. I turn to localized socialization in the next, and final, section.

Localized socialization of military public affairs. Finally, as suggested by the preceding discussion, research on organizational socialization of military public affairs managers would likely benefit from a focus on "localized socialization" (Ashforth et al., 2007, p. 35). As Ashforth et al. (2007) argued, "newcomers are socialized largely through specific interpersonal and group-based interactions . . . that are grounded in localized contexts and focus largely on that context" (p. 36). Much socialization into large, complex, internally differentiated organizations is accomplished at levels such as the work group (Ashforth et al., 2007; Moreland, Levine, & McGinn, 2001; Woo & Myers, 2016). Yet research has tended to focus on organization-level processes and outcomes (Ashforth et al., 2008; Woo & Myers, 2016).

Studying socialization in localized contexts is important for a number of reasons. Alone, the organization may be too distal and abstract a target for effective identification (Ashforth et al., 2007; Moreland et al., 2001). Rather, it is through the localized context, where much interaction occurs, that the individual experiences the organization more concretely (Ashforth et al., 2007; Woo & Myers, 2016). Additionally, Moreland et al. (2001) argued that commitment to and influence of the work group is stronger than that of the organization. For example, Horton, McClelland, and Griffin (2014) used a quantitative survey to study the identification and well-being of British Navy personnel (n = 789) at strategic (late-career), mid-level (mid-career), and operational (early-career) positions. They found that personnel identified with different identity targets (e.g., work group in the case of operational

personnel) based on their own hierarchical position. They also found that identification for all three groups was associated with emotional well-being.

Studying organizational socialization in localized contexts is important also because it allows a focus on the communicative dynamics that constitute the socialization process[4]. According to Woo and Myers (2016), the traditional focus on socialization as an organization-level phenomenon has tended to obscure the underlying "interpersonal and intergroup phenomena that occur through human interactions" (p. 238). Ashforth et al. (2007) drew attention to the primary role played by "peers, supervisors, and mentors" (p. 7) and the information they impart to facilitate successful socialization. And Kramer (2010) argued that a focus on localized socialization would reveal "the actual communication associated with the socialization strategies, which may have a greater impact than the strategies themselves" (p. 74). He argued further that a contextualized focus would facilitate study of newcomers as active participants in socialization (e.g., Harris et al., 2004; Scott & Myers, 2005).

My study may make an additional contribution by focusing on localized socialization in a professional training context. Where the trend in research appears to have been to focus on either organization-level or work-group-level socialization (Moreland & Levine, 2001; Moreland et al., 2001; Woo & Myers, 2016), public

---

[4] Communication during the encounter phase of socialization may present an important opportunity for participants to engage in "identity rhetoric" (Hogg et al., 2012, p. 242), or communication intended to activate social identities suited to the goals of the communicator or organization (Hogg & Terry, 2000). The epigraph to the present dissertation offers an example of identity rhetoric. In the scene, in order to prepare his troops for battle against a numerically superior French force, the English king bolsters their spirits by comparing them favorably to an outgroup. However, the outgroup is not the French enemy, but English noblemen safe on English soil.

relations scholars suggest that socialization happens through various means and in various contexts (e.g., Coombs & Holladay, 2015; Taylor & Kent, 2010). The U.S. Department of Defense has an extensive system of advanced technical and professional training programs that follow initial-entry training but precede initial job assignments (Bureau of Labor Statistics, n.d.). The PAQC is one such program.

Because public relations research has suggested the importance of organizational socialization in shaping public relations but largely neglected to investigate it, this review has taken a broad-brush approach. I discussed the focus of the limited body of public relations research on organizational socialization. I explored the three boundary crossings of socialization and the six tactics of institutionalized socialization. I discussed the "total institution" and the "high-reliability organization" as pertinent models for my study. I discussed military organizational and occupational identities. And I discussed the importance of attending to socialization in localized contexts. Because of the lack of research attention paid to military public affairs, to organizational socialization of public relations, and to socialization through professional training programs required at the organizational encounter phase, I asked the following exploratory research question:

RQ2: How, if at all, are military public affairs managers socialized as members of their organizations and profession through joint entry-level military public affairs training?

Military Public Affairs Collaboration

Collaboration as an organizational practice and competency is growing in importance and drawing increased interest, including in public relations contexts.

According to Schuman (2006), the growing interest in collaboration may be the result of adaptation to increased environmental complexity and turbulence, where "collaboration is seen as the way to address problems, add value, and achieve desired outcomes" (p. xxiii). Further, the growing emphasis on collaboration is visible in numerous sectors, including for-profit (e.g., Wang & Archer, 2007), nonprofit (e.g., Guo & Acar, 2005), government (e.g., Nylén, 2007), and military (e.g., Dechesne, Van Den Berg, & Soeters, 2007).

Within public relations research there is growing recognition of collaboration's contribution to effective public relations and, thus, to the practice's contributions to organizational success in various contexts. Scholars have highlighted collaboration as an important element in, for example, general public relations practice (e.g., McKie & Willis, 2012), government communication (e.g., Liu, Horsley, & Levenshus, 2010), and activist public relations (e.g., M. F. Smith & Ferguson, 2010). Public relations scholars appear to place such high value on the ability to foster, lead, and participate in collaborative efforts in the practice that Grunig (2000) argued collaboration should be viewed as a "core professional value" of public relations (p. 27).

Yet, the claim that collaboration is important, even crucial, to effective public relations practice has not been matched by a commensurate research effort. The present study, focused as it is on joint entry-level training for military public affairs managers, is well suited to begin to fill this gap. For example, military organizations today are offered as models of collaboration beyond the military context (e.g., Carafano, 2006; Ulin, 2010). Additionally, military organizations and personnel are

able to collaborate effectively in the field at least in part because of the joint and interagency nature of much military training (Ulin, 2010). Further, because it is a headquarters function, the need for public affairs to collaborate with other functions and, in multinational operations, with representatives of other nations is largely the rule (Soeters & Bos-Bakx, 2003).

The above discussion of the context for my study should suggest the utility of the social identity approach here. The approach holds that collaboration is a matter of social identity (Turner, 1985). That is, the perception that the participants do or do not belong to the same group influences their willingness to collaborate and the quality of their efforts (Greenaway et al., 2015). Approaching military public affairs from the perspective of social identity theory has the potential to shed significant light on an important, but under-researched aspect of public relations practice. As part of this move to introduce the social identity approach to research on public relations collaboration, it is important to understand social-identity-based models for collaboration as tools for analyzing data from my study.

In the remainder of this discussion of collaboration in public affairs and public relations, I do the following. First, I discuss extant research on collaboration in the practice of public relations. Second, I discuss the common ingroup identity model (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2009), the social identity-based model traditionally applied in efforts to improve collaboration. Third and finally, I will discuss the intergroup relational identity model (Hogg et al., 2012), a social identity-based tool designed specifically to encourage collaboration.

Public relations research on collaboration. Both public relations researchers and practitioners appear to place a high value on collaboration within the practice. For example, Grunig (2000) argued that public relations would provide its greatest organizational and societal value if it were to take collaboration as "the core of its philosophy" (p. 25) and if researchers were to make collaboration the focus of public relations research. Further evidence of the value placed on collaboration by researchers includes the fact that Berger and Meng (2010) included collaboration as one of the six dimensions that are "crucial" to what they termed "excellent leadership in public relations" (p. 427). And M. F. Smith and Ferguson (2010) argued that activist organizations use collaboration, in the form of coalitions, to increase their power and influence relative to the targets of their social change efforts (see also Hon, 2017).

Collaboration appears long to have been valued by practitioners as well. For example, Springston and Leichty (1994) found through a quantitative survey of practitioners' (n = 137) boundary spanning activities that collaborative efforts formed a central category of public relations manager activities. More recently, Meng (2014) found through a quantitative survey of senior public relations executives (n = 222) that they believed collaboration contributed significantly to public relations' ability to shape the organization's culture and communication for greater effectiveness (see also Neill, 2014).

Public relations research highlights three venues in which collaboration is especially important for effective public relations practice. First, research indicates that collaboration within the public relations team itself is important. For example,

Meng and Berger (2013) included support of the public relations team (along with support of the organization) in their definition of collaboration. Further, both quantitative and qualitative research have supported the preference for collaboration and collaborative styles among public relations executives, non-executives, and students (e.g., Aldoory & Toth, 2004; Meng, 2015; Meng & Berger, 2013; Werder & Holtzhausen, 2009).

Second, research indicates that collaboration between public relations and other communication management functions internal to the organization also is important. Such collaboration appears to present a unique challenge in the case of military public affairs, however. McKie and Willis (2012) argued that public relations needs to engage in greater collaboration with functions such as marketing if it is to respond to contemporary environment uncertainty and turbulence and contribute to organizational effectiveness. The American military already has moved toward such greater integration, a trend signaled by the emphasis placed on overarching concepts of strategic communication and information operations (Eder, 2011; Paul, 2011; Van Dyke & Verčič, 2009). However, public affairs personnel appear hesitant to collaborate with communication functions (e.g., psychological operations, military information support operations) that more explicitly engage in persuasive efforts, which may include deception (Paul, 2011). They also appear hesitant to attempt to influence publics themselves (Plowman, 2013). According to Paul (2011), public affairs' refusal to "embrace the whole of the inform, influence, and persuade mission set" (p. 195) exclusive of deception, prevents it from making a critical contribution to organizational success (see also Heller & Persson, 2009).

Third and finally, research also indicates that it is important for public relations to collaborate with the communication management functions of other organizations. This type of collaboration may be especially important in government communication. For example, Liu and Horsley (2007) determined through a literature review that the system of distributed power characterizing relations among local, state, and federal agencies was a unique factor affecting communication. Liu et al. (2010) found through a quantitative survey of government and corporate communicators (n = 976) that government communicators more frequently interact with organizations and groups from multiple sectors than do business-sector communicators. The more frequent interaction created a need for greater collaboration among organizations (Liu et al., 2010).

Despite the importance attached to collaboration in public relations contexts, there are at least two significant shortcomings to extant research on the topic. First, there is little research expressly focused on collaboration. When collaboration does appear, it generally does so as one factor among many, e.g., as a dimension of leadership. Thus, collaboration, its contribution to public relations effectiveness, and its contribution to organizational success are likely inadequately explicated. Second, likely as a result of the omnibus treatment of collaboration and the dominance of quantitative surveys to investigate it as part of larger umbrella constructs, there is little research looking at how public relations collaboration is accomplished. Collaboration, in the form of multi-branch, multinational coalition, and multinational peacekeeping operations, is becoming the norm for the U.S military (Soeters & Manigart, 2008; Wong, Bliese, & McGurk, 2003). By taking a focused, qualitative

look at public relations collaboration in this context, I hope to address such critical gaps.

Further, by understanding the models for collaboration developed through the social identity approach, I believe I was better able to analyze evidence of collaboration, a group-based phenomenon, I found in the PAQC. Therefore, in the next section of this discussion I return to the conceptual framework I applied, and I draw attention to two models that have been used or proposed to promote collaboration: the common ingroup identity model and the intergroup relational identity model.

Common ingroup identity and collaboration. The common ingroup identity model (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2009), developed as a means of reducing intergroup bias and conflict, also has been applied as a means of facilitating collaboration. According to the model, when members of different groups are successfully encouraged to recategorize themselves and each other as members of a single, more inclusive, superordinate group, "attitudes toward former outgroup members will become more positive through processes involving pro-ingroup bias" (p. 494). Collaboration, as a group-mediated phenomenon, also should be facilitated through such processes (Turner, 1985).

Research on the impact of social identity, communication, and task accomplishment supports the position that shared identity, including a common ingroup identity, improves collaboration. For example, Greenaway et al. (2015) found through an experimental study looking at social identity and communication effectiveness that participants put more effort into crafting and comprehending

messages when they believed those messages to be for or from fellow ingroup members. In a second experiment, participants built models from instructions they were told had been written by either an ingroup or outgroup member, including under conditions of a common superordinate identity. Greenaway et al. (2015) found that more effective communication (i.e., through which objectively better models were built) was produced even under conditions of a common ingroup identity.

It appears that military organizations and military public affairs in collaborative contexts have tended to prefer approaches that prioritize a single, shared identity or a common superordinate identity. For example, Søderberg and Wedell-Wedellsborg (2008) argued that military organizations traditionally have been managed on the assumption that "a strong collective identity yields strong performance" (p. 180). They found through their qualitative case study of identity management practice at NATO's Joint Forces Training Center in Poland that managers there attempted to promote a single organizational identity and suppress national identities, "outlawing the pursuit of national interest and enforcing the corporate interest" (p. 193). Schoenberger-Orgad (2011) observed a similar preference in the media relations activity at NATO headquarters during the mutual-defense alliance's 1999 Kosovo air campaign. Using a critical discourse analysis of briefings and news releases, she concluded that NATO public affairs successfully invoked a common ingroup identity of a "constructed 'international community'" (p. 379) and positioned NATO as a "humanitarian military powerhouse" (p. 377) acting on its behalf and according to its values to maintain support for its first offensive operation.

Yet the preference for a single, exclusive organizational identity may run counter to the need for social identities at multiple levels of an organization. The need for multiple organizational identities identified in the discussion on organizational socialization suggests that an approach that develops, recognizes, and valorizes both superordinate and subgroup identities may make more sense in a context such as the PAQC. In the next section I discuss such an approach.

Dual identity within a common ingroup identity. Although a strong, shared identity for the organization and its pertinent internal and external publics may appeal as a management tool, the common ingroup identity model is not a panacea. As Dovidio and Gaertner (2010) argued, efforts to persuade people to accept a common identity may be met with resistance and potentially worsen intergroup relations. For example, Hornsey and Hogg (2000) found through an experimental study (n = 178) that when a common ingroup identity was emphasized to the exclusion of subgroup identities, intergroup bias increased. Efforts to invoke a common ingroup identity may generate resistance based on factors such as a high value placed on the original ingroup, perceptions of threat to ingroup distinctiveness, competitive intergroup relations, and status or power differentials (Hogg et al., 2012). Further, such attributes and conditions appear to characterize U.S. military personnel (Stephan et al., 2009). Finally, efforts to promote improved collaboration via a single identity or common identity might be likely to fail given broad contemporary environmental and organizational conditions of turbulence, uncertainty, complexity, and diversity (Morton, Wright, Peters, Reynolds, & Haslam, 2012; Peters, Morton, & Haslam,

2010), conditions which increasingly appear to characterize military organizations and activities.

In response to such challenges, Gaertner and Dovidio (2009) argued that a "dual identity" approach (p. 495), in which valued subgroup identities remain salient within the context of a common ingroup identity, can also improve relations. Evidence supports the utility of the approach for improving relations and collaboration. For example, in the same experiment cited above, Hornsey and Hogg (2000) found that bias was lowest in participants for whom both subordinate and superordinate identities were salient. Field studies of collaboration among troops and units in multinational military contexts add further support for the effectiveness of a dual identity approach. For example, Elron (2008), using an interview-based study of U.N. peacekeeping troops, managers, and instructors (n = 85) and experts (n not available), found that peacekeeping organizations and personnel used a combination of formal and informal "integrating mechanisms" to promote a common transnational peacekeeping identity "while simultaneously allowing and even emphasizing national identities and customs" (p. 47; see also Søderberg & Wedell-Wedellsborg, 2008; Tomforde, 2008).

Yet, the strong, deep, and enduring identities that military organizations appear to promote among their members (Ashforth et al., 2007) may create difficulties even for a dual-identity approach to collaboration. An approach that focuses on communicating and working *across* group lines rather than on *erasing or diminishing* those lines may provide a more suitable model of collaboration in the

context of joint military entry-level public affairs training. I explore such an approach in the next section.

Intergroup relational identity model and collaboration. There appear to be potential problems with the application of the dual identity approach to improve collaboration in organizational contexts. First, the dual identity approach and common ingroup identity model are tools primarily designed to effect change in intergroup attitudes, not intergroup behavior (Hogg, 2015). As Schellhaas and Dovidio (2016) noted, efforts aimed at improving attitudes may fail to produce concomitant improvements in behavior. Second, research shows that promoting a strong sense of dual identity can at times increase bias and conflict, including in organizational contexts (Gaertner, Bachman, Dovidio, & Banker, 2001). This appears to occur because members of groups may project their own ingroup identity as the standard for the superordinate group, thereby casting the other group as inferior or deviant and increasing bias toward it (Wenzel et al., 2007).

Research in public relations and military organizations reveals hampered or failed collaborative efforts where one might have expected success. For example, Jiang and Bowen (2011), using participant observation of and interviews with participants (n = 19) in a social justice coalition of 60 organizations, found that effective group decision making was difficult even under conditions of a common goal. Power differentials and competing priorities among the groups seemed to inhibit successful collaboration. Hedlund, Weibull, and Soeters (2008) conducted a qualitative case study of an Irish unit and Swedish unit assigned to work together in a peacekeeping mission in Liberia. Although the military contingents represented

countries very similar politically, there was virtually no collaboration between the units but a great deal of conflict based on differences in behaviors and values (see also Soeters & Bos-Bakx, 2003).

In response to the challenges of successfully invoking a common superordinate identity to promote collaboration in organizational contexts, Hogg et al. (2012) proposed the "intergroup relational identity" (p. 233), writing that it

> would entail a sense of identity that included or was even defined by the collaborative relationship existing with the other group; collaboration would be a key component of the internalized self-defining normative attributes of the specific intergroup relational identity. (p. 240)

Rather than focus on similarity, as the common ingroup identity does, the intergroup relational identity may incorporate "distinctive and unique roles" for the groups in the collaborative relationship (p. 240). Although the model is relatively new, evidence to support it is available. For example, Soeters, Resteigne, Moelker and Manigart (2008) interviewed 20 military and civilian employees participating in NATO's 25-country operation at Kabul (Afghanistan) International Airport. The researchers found an effective, largely conflict-free collaborative effort based on the kind of differentiation and high valuation among groups that seems to characterize the intergroup relational identity. And Cullen, Palus, Chrobot-Mason, and Appaneal (2012) reported on their facilitation work helping U.S. Defense Department and State Department officials in Iraq jointly prepare for the military's departure from the country in 2011. By defining the intergroup boundary, identifying relative strengths and weaknesses, and setting a

common goal and respective roles, the officials set the stage for the year-long collaborative effort that would follow (Cullen et al., 2012).

Public relations research has emphasized the importance of collaboration as a competency important, even crucial, to public relations success. Yet research has not explored collaboration or developed understanding of it to any great depth. Therefore, in the preceding discussion I explored two models, and the further elaboration of one of them, that have been used to study and promote collaboration using the social identity approach. Because the U.S. military has been held up as a model of collaboration, although apparently without commensurate attention to the processes of collaboration, I asked the following exploratory research question:

RQ3: How, if at all, is collaboration developed and practiced as a public affairs competency through joint entry-level public affairs training for military public affairs managers?

In this chapter, I discussed literature likely pertinent to studying and understanding professional identity, organizational socialization, and collaboration in military public affairs contexts. According to public relations research, these three phenomena are important factors in development of effective, strategic public relations practice. Further, these three group-mediated phenomena appear to be under-researched and, in some cases, underdeveloped in public relations. Therefore, I conducted a qualitative case study of joint military entry-level public affairs training to advance public relations research understanding of them. I turn to the methodological specifics of my study in the next chapter.

Chapter 3—Method

In this chapter I discuss the qualitative case study method and design (Yin, 2014) that I used in my dissertation research on military public affairs. According to Flyvbjerg (2006), "Good social science is problem driven," compelling the researcher to select those methods best suited to answering a given set of research questions (p. 242). I studied socialization of public affairs managers into military organizations and development of their professional identity through joint entry-level military public affairs training. I also studied development of collaboration as an important public affairs competency through the same entry-level training. The case study method is well suited to the study of complex social phenomena, including group-mediated phenomena (Yin, 2014), such as those I focused on in my study.

Here, I first discuss case study as a qualitative method, as well as its suitability to my study of military public affairs. Second, I turn to matters of data collection, including the data source for my study, semi-structured interviews. Third, I discuss my methods of data analysis: multi-cycle coding, memoing, creating diagrams, and journaling. Fourth, I turn to considerations of research quality, discussing protection of participants, reliability, validity, and reflexivity.

Case Study

The case study method is well suited to investigations of complex, contemporary social phenomena (Daymon & Holloway, 2011; Yin, 2014). Three qualities distinguish the method. First, a typical case study investigates the phenomenon of interest in its real-world context and to significant depth (Daymon & Holloway, 2011; Yin, 2014). Second, a case study generally aims for a more

complete picture of the case based on triangulation of data from multiple sources (Daymon & Holloway, 2011; Yin, 2014). Third, case studies can be strengthened through the application of existing theory at various stages of the research process (Daymon & Holloway, 2011; Yin, 2014).

One challenge faced by the researcher conducting a case study is to distinguish between the case and its context when the boundaries between the two may be unclear (Yin, 2014). A case may be a number of things, e.g., an organization or other group, an individual, or an event (Daymon & Holloway, 2011). Pinpointing the case involves defining it, usually in consultation with one's research questions, and bounding it in space and, often, in time (Yin, 2014). The aim of a case study focused on a given organizational phenomenon is to understand "the figure–ground interplay of actors, their environments, and the mutual influences of micro and macro levels of communication" ultimately to explicate organizational functioning (Doerfel & Gibbs, 2014, p. 233).

The above discussion should suggest the case study method's suitability when research is exploratory in nature (see Daymon & Holloway, 2011; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011; Yin, 2014), as was the case for my study. Military public affairs remains an under-researched area of public relations practice and the experiences and perspectives of military practitioners neglected along with it (Toledano, 2010). Further, the group-mediated phenomena at the center of my study have not been explored extensively or effectively in public relations from a social identity perspective, potentially limiting understanding and theory development. Organizational socialization and collaboration, although perceived as important

factors in the success of public relations practice, have been neglected in research. And public relations professional identity, although viewed as a central factor in the profession's contributions to organizational success (e.g., Jeffrey & Brunton, 2012), appears inadequately developed.

Daymon and Holloway (2011) offered the metaphor of an umbrella to describe case study research. That is, they viewed case study as an approach "under which can fit other approaches . . . depending on the aim of your research" (p. 114). In the following section I will discuss matters of data collection and the data source I used for my study—semi-structured interviews—as well as the rationale underlying these choices.

Data collection. I used a single method of data collection, semi-structured interviews. However, I conducted interviews with 27 individuals involved with the PAQC; they included students, public affairs practitioners (i.e., former students), instructors, and administrators. Thus, I believe I was able to take advantage of what Yin (2014) identified as the most important strength of the case study method and the use of multiple data sources: "the development of converging lines of evidence" (p. 120). The combination of two or more data sources, or *data triangulation*, is intended to improve the researcher's ability to interpret findings, thereby enhancing the quality of the research (Thurmond, 2001). The benefits of data triangulation can include an expanded amount and nature of data, a clearer and more comprehensive picture, an

enhanced possibility of making unique findings, and increased accuracy of and, thus, confidence in conclusions (Thurmond, 2001; Yin, 2014).

Tracy and Geist-Martin (2014) emphasized the "central role" (p. 246) played by context in qualitative research, from design to analysis. In the rest of this section I will discuss important elements of data collection, specifically sampling, site (or context), access, and interviews.

Sampling. Sampling decisions in qualitative research are driven by the goal of capturing "rich, in-depth information" (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 212) and "guided by the purpose of [the] study" (p. 212). The aim of the *purposive sampling* that characterizes much qualitative research—and which I used in my study—is "to gain an understanding about the experiences of specific groups of individuals, or of a particular phenomenon in its setting" (p. 213). Sampling decisions, then, are directed toward identifying, gaining access to, and studying the people, places, events, and/or artifacts possessing the "certain traits or qualities" that will help the researcher develop that understanding (Koerber & McMichael, 2008, p. 464).

The theoretical goals of my study suggested that joint entry-level military public affairs training for public affairs managers would provide a likely pertinent and fruitful context for investigation. Public relations scholars have suggested the importance of organizational socialization in the development of public relations professional identity and, thus, how public relations is practiced. They have also noted the importance of public relations collaboration to public relations effectiveness and to the profession's contributions to organizational success. Finally, the process of an individual's entry into an organization, "the outsider to insider [sic] passage," is

likely the most visible, intense, and important moment of socialization for organizational members (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979, p. 213). This suggests that entry-level military public affairs training may be the moment in the individual's career when her or his place in and relationship to the organization, as a public affairs manager, is most clearly and apparently communicated (Jablin, 1987).

The above analysis informed my decision to study the three constructs of interest in the context of joint entry-level military public affairs training for public affairs managers. More specifically, I studied the U.S. military's Public Affairs Qualification Course (PAQC), offered at the Defense Department's Defense Information School.

Description of the site. The Defense Information School (DINFOS) is a U.S. Defense Department training facility located at the U.S. Army's Fort George G. Meade, approximately 20 miles northeast of Washington, D.C., in the state of Maryland. The school's primary purpose is

> to train members of all branches of the United States military in the fields of broadcasting, journalism, public affairs, and visual information. . . . DINFOS trains approximately 3,200 students annually, and has trained more than 1,000 international students from over 75 countries. (Defense Information School, n.d., para. 1)

DINFOS is part of the Defense Media Activity (DMA) agency. DMA has five mission areas; DINFOS and the PAQC fall under the area, "Provide joint education and training for military and civilian personnel in the public affairs, broadcasting, and

visual information career fields to meet [department]-wide entry level [sic] skills and long-term career development requirements" (Defense Media Activity, n.d., para. 2).

Description of the course. According to the DINFOS curriculum document for the course, the PAQC is a nine-week, in-residence course[5] that

> provides entry-level public affairs training for mid- to senior-level non-commissioned officers and commissioned officers from all U.S. Armed Forces [sic] and select foreign nations, as well as U.S. government agency civilians selected for public affairs. (Downie, 2016, p. 3)

The course is offered through the school's Public Affairs Leadership Department and is intended to prepare commissioned officers, noncommissioned officers, and civilians to perform "the basic duties of Department of Defense military public affairs practitioners" (Downie, 2016, p. 3).

Although not explicitly articulated in the document, the Defense Department appears to distinguish between public affairs managers and technicians (see Dozier, 1992), and prepares managers through the PAQC. Courses such as the Basic Public Affairs Specialist Course prepare early-career enlisted personnel as technicians. Instruction in the PAQC focuses on

> the foundational elements of the communication planning process; principles and techniques associated with implementing effective communication strategies; and the processes involved in integrating communication into military planning and operations. (Downie, 2016, p. 3)

---

[5] The PAQC is also offered in a distance-learning format. However, my study looked only at the course offered in its "standard resident format" (Downie, 2016, p. 3).

PAQC class size ranges from a minimum of 15 students to a maximum of 75. The course has a maximum annual capacity of 300 students, or four classes per year.

Access. Consideration of the challenges of gaining access to an organization and its members for research shaped the data collection choices for my study. Doerfel and Gibbs (2014) noted that the researcher may have difficulty gaining access if he or she lacks a contact influential within the organization and/or when the organization is hostile toward outsiders. For example, Lee Jenni et al.'s (2015) initial requests for military participants in their study of public affairs practice in relation to environmental issues were met with resistance. "When e-mails were sent out requesting meetings to introduce and set up the interviews," they wrote, "many people responded by questioning our authorization to conduct research on installations" (p. 357). It was not until a high-ranking participant "informed his staff that we were authorized to be working at his installation" that interviews began to snowball "within and across installations as informants became comfortable with the study" (p. 357).

Cognizance of the challenge of gaining access shaped my data collection choices. I am a former military public affairs officer, a veteran of the Iraq War, and a former DINFOS student. Yet, having left the military more than a decade ago, I was aware that I had no guaranteed insider status and could have faced difficulties trying to gain entry into an organization primed for "defense" and wary of, or even hostile toward, outsiders (Doerfel & Gibbs, 2014; Stephan et al., 2009). Like Lee Jenni et al. (2015), I requested a meeting with pertinent DINFOS and PAQC personnel to introduce myself and my study and to recruit participants. To further recruit for

interviews, I approached friends, colleagues, and other close contacts who meet the criteria for participation, taking advantage of opportunities for *convenience sampling* (Daymon & Holloway, 2011). Additionally, I turned to the same individuals and to participants I was able to recruit to suggest other participants, thus using *snowball sampling* (Daymon & Holloway, 2011).

The possibility of a meeting with and/or briefing for DINFOS personnel to discuss my study arose unexpectedly. In the spring of 2017, I contacted DINFOS administrators responsible for the PAQC to discuss with them the study and what support and access the school might be able to provide. Although the initial conversations and email exchanges were promising, communication stopped without explanation. Based on the need to continue my work, yet faced with a lack of communication, in July 2017 I submitted a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for pertinent PAQC and DINFOS documents. Shortly thereafter, I received a phone call from the DINFOS commandant to learn more about my request and study. I learned from him that he is an Army public affairs officer by training and experience. I also learned that he earned his master's degree at the University of Maryland, studying under James E. and Larissa A. Grunig, two seminal figures of the strategic management paradigm.

The commandant followed up our conversation with an email opening the possibility of meeting with DINFOS personnel to introduce my study. Ultimately, I traveled to DINFOS on two separate occasions a few months apart. During each visit, I opened with a briefing on my study to PAQC students, instructors, and administrators. Each briefing then was followed by a few days of conducting

interviews for the study. While the turn of events that began with the FOIA request supports Doerfel and Gibbs's (2014) position that it is "the *right* contact" that helps secure access to organizations (p. 234), it also supports an appreciation for serendipity in the research process. As Fine and Deegan (1996) argued, qualitative researchers "need to embrace the chance component of research as being central to the collection and interpretation of data" (p. 445).

In the above discussion, I briefly touched on the data source I used in my study: semi-structured interviews. In the following section, I will discuss in greater detail interviews as a qualitative data source and my approach to their collection.

Interviews. Data for the study were collected through semi-structured interviews. Although qualitative interviews are often used in conjunction with other data collection methods (Warren & Karner, 2010), they are a major source of data in their own right (Daymon & Holloway, 2011). According to Daymon and Holloway (2011), "at its best interviewing involves participants and interviewers in a form of social interaction through which they collaborate to produce meaningful, situated accounts of participants' experiences" within the aims of the study (p. 221). The method allows for exploration of "the meanings, ideas, feelings, [and] intentions" of individuals and groups, including those involved in communication management, regarding social phenomena (p. 221).

According to Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011), the semi-structured interview (also discussed in the literature as the in-depth interview) is "*issue-oriented*" and is "useful when the researcher has a particular topic he or she wants to focus on and gain information about from individuals" (p. 95). In this type of interview, while the

researcher prepares an interview guide containing the questions to be asked, the focus is on "the issues or topic areas to be covered and the lines of inquiry to be followed" (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 225). The interview guide helps to ensure that similar types of data are collected from all participants while minimizing collection of material of little or no relevance (Daymon & Holloway, 2011). The interview guide used in this study is included as an appendix. Yet, because the goal of semi-structured interviewing is to capture the meanings with which participants imbue their life experiences, effective use of a guide "requires flexibility in using, adding to, deleting, expanding, or in other ways changing the substance or order" of the questions (Warren & Karner, 2010, p. 136). The guiding principle underlying my use of the interview guide was the focus on exploring and understanding organizational socialization, professional identity, and collaboration in the context of military public affairs as they are developed or occur in the PAQC.

Because of the "issue-oriented" nature of semi-structured interviewing, and of my study, the selection of participants was an important consideration. Criteria for participation depend on the research questions guiding a study (Warren & Karner, 2010). I sought participants who could address questions regarding the three group-mediated phenomena at the heart of my study within the context of the PAQC. Thus, I recruited from the populations of current and former PAQC students, instructors, and administrators.

According to Daymon and Holloway (2011), "Although there are no rigid rules or guidelines for sample size, generally qualitative sampling consists of small sampling units studied in depth" (p. 217). Qualitative researchers appear to find

samples of up to a few dozen people suitable for their purposes (Daymon & Holloway, 2011; Warren & Karner, 2010). However, my decisions regarding how many and whom to recruit ultimately were guided by, on the one hand, the use of theoretical sampling, a form of purposive sampling (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011) and, on the other, pragmatic concerns that led me also to use snowball sampling and convenience sampling.

Theoretical sampling is sampling for concepts derived from existing or developing theory rather than for people, events, artifacts, etc. (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011; Yin, 2014). According to Corbin and Strauss (2015),"when researchers sample theoretically, they go to places, persons, and situations that will provide information about the concepts they want to learn more about" (p. 135). In theoretical sampling, analysis begins after the earliest data are collected (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). Decisions regarding whom or what to sample next are based on preceding data collection and analysis (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). The researcher should seek multiple perspectives to challenge or confirm her developing understanding of the phenomenon of interest (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). Sampling should continue till theoretical saturation is reached, or the point at which no new concepts are emerging and those that have been developed are fully developed and integrated (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Daymon & Holloway, 2011; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011).

I ultimately interviewed 27 participants: 11 public affairs practitioners, eight students, five administrators, and three instructors. See Table 1 for participant demographic information. Participants represented all military services, including

Table 1

Public Affairs (PA) Participant Demographic Information

Participant	Role at time of study	Rank	Years of PA experience	Gender
Aaron	Practitioner	Junior officer	Intermediate	Male
Adam	Administrator	Civilian	Novice	Male
Brent	Instructor	Civilian	Expert	Male
Carl	Administrator	Civilian	Expert	Male
Donna	Student^	Junior officer	Novice	Female
Elizabeth	Practitioner	Civilian	Advanced	Female
Francis	Practitioner	Senior officer	Novice	Male
Gary	Practitioner	Senior officer	Intermediate	Male
Hugh	Practitioner	Civilian	Intermediate	Male
Ian	Practitioner	Junior officer	Intermediate	Male
Jacob	Practitioner	Junior officer	Advanced	Male
Kimberly	Administrator	Senior officer	Intermediate	Female
Lucy	Practitioner	Civilian	Advanced	Female
Margaret	Practitioner	Senior officer	Advanced	Female
Nicholas	Practitioner	Junior officer	Intermediate	Male
Oscar	Administrator	Civilian	Expert	Male
Philip	Student	NCO	Advanced	Male
Quentin	Student^	Senior officer	Novice	Male
Rachel	Student	Civilian	Novice	Female
Simon	Student	NCO	Advanced	Male
Travis	Student	Junior officer	Novice	Male
Una	Practitioner	Senior officer	Intermediate	Female
Victor	Student	Junior officer	Novice	Male
Wesley	Instructor	Civilian	Expert	Male
Xavier	Administrator	Senior officer	Expert	Male
Yvonne	Student	Senior officer	Novice	Female
Zoe	Instructor	Junior officer	Advanced	Female

Note. All participant names are pseudonyms. ^ indicates a participant who was a PAQC student at the time of the initial interview and a practitioner at the time of a follow-up interview. "NCO" indicates a noncommissioned officer. "Years of PA experience" includes related professional experience (e.g., advertising, marketing).

reserve organizations: Air Force, four participants; Army, 14 participants; Coast Guard, one participant; Marine Corps, four participants; and Navy, four participants. In order to better protect study participants and because multiple participants said that

public affairs is a "small community," I have used pseudonyms throughout this dissertation. Additionally, I excluded the military services of all participants from Table 1. In the findings, I included a participant's service only when it was pertinent to the findings and study and when I determined the detail's inclusion would not violate participant confidentiality.

Participants included civilians, junior officers (early career), senior officers (mid-career), and noncommissioned officers (subordinate officers promoted from among enlisted personnel). All have been involved in public affairs practice, instruction, and/or school/course administration. Because personnel can enter the PAQC at various points in their career, participants had levels of public affairs experience/proficiency that could vary from their formal position or rank. Experience/proficiency was divided into four bands of years: novice (0 - 4 years), intermediate (5 - 9 years), advanced (10 - 14 years), expert (15+ years). There were 18 men and nine women in my sample.

Two additional and important factors in preparing to conduct interviews were outreach to potential participants and consideration of the logistics of the actual interviews. I reached out to potential participants using two main methods: recruitment emails to individuals and the two DINFOS site visits, each beginning with a briefing to PAQC students, instructors, and administrators. I distributed a standardized and IRB-approved recruitment email to potential participants and also asked them to forward it to others they believed met the participation criteria. Additionally, during my site visits to DINFOS, I distributed print copies of the recruitment email to briefing attendees. As Warren and Karner (2010) suggest, such

moments of contact are more than mere *de rigueur* steps in the research process. Along with moments such as the discussion of consent immediately preceding the interview itself, they are opportunities to build trust and convey the importance of the study, thereby creating conditions for a more productive interview.

To increase the likelihood of a productive interview, I used a collaborative process with each participant to establish many of the interview conditions. I asked the participant to set aside 60 minutes for the interview (Daymon & Holloway, 2011); however, I was open to shorter (or longer) interviews depending on the likely value of data to be gathered from them and participants' availabilities. I asked the participants' permission to audio record the interviews. I also informed participants of my plans to use a transcription service.

Additionally, conditions such as location can influence the physical and psychological comfort of the participant, which can in turn influence participant–interviewer relations and the quality of the interview (Warren & Karner, 2010). Therefore, I consulted with the participant regarding preferred time, location, and/or method for the interview. Although my own preference is for face-to-face interviews, I was open to conducting the interviews using other means, e.g., telephone, Internet telephony (e.g., Skype), and email.

I conducted 27 initial interviews and three follow-up interviews for this study. Initial interviews ranged in length from 30 minutes to 100 minutes, with an average of 50.5 minutes. The three, brief follow-up interviews (average length: 17.5 minutes) were conducted to clarify and dig deeper into important emerging themes such as the impact of context on public affairs practice and the impact of PAQC participation on

the new practitioner and her or his work. Approximately half the interviews were conducted in person, with the majority of those taking place at DINFOS. The remaining interviews were conducted by telephone or via Internet telephony.

Although interviews are an important qualitative data-collection method, potential limitations to interviewing must be acknowledged. In addition to their time-consuming and labor-intensive nature (Daymon & Holloway, 2011), interviews are susceptible to problems arising from researcher subjectivity and/or lack of skill or experience (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011) and from the gap between what people say and what they actually do (Hodder, 1994). Daymon and Holloway (2011) argued that because their experiences, understandings, and priorities will differ, the interviewer may respond to and interpret responses differently than the participant intended. Yet, given the large amount of time a researcher will spend with qualitative data, he or she likely will develop a reasonable understanding of participant viewpoints and "therefore will be able to interpret [the] data sensitively" (p. 239). Additionally, Daymon and Holloway (2011) counseled that researchers must avoid taking participants' accounts at face value and instead should adopt a reflective and "analytical stance" (p. 238). The researcher should corroborate interview data by, for example, checking statements with other participants (Bowen, 2009; Daymon & Holloway, 2011).

Data analysis. I used a combined deductive–inductive approach to data analysis built around the intertwined procedures of multicycle coding and analytic

memo writing. Further, I supported these core analytic procedures through the use of two tools important in qualitative analysis: diagrams and a research journal.

According to Morse and Field (1996) research is the means by which society develops and increases its store of knowledge; however, no approach alone suffices. It is the role of qualitative research to "[enable] us to make sense of reality, to describe and explain the social world and to develop explanatory models and theories. It is the primary means by which the theoretical foundations of social sciences may be constructed or re-examined" (p. 1). Qualitative data analysis, as the means of qualitative research, is the "process of bringing order to [data] by organizing, structuring and construing meaning" from it (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 301). To construe or ascribe meaning to data is to interpret the data, the ultimate aim of which is to "transcend" the data (Daymon & Holloway, 2011; Saldaña, 2013). Transcending the data in one's study involves progressing toward "the thematic, conceptual, and theoretical" (Saldaña, 2013, p. 317) in relation to the body of knowledge in one's field (Daymon & Holloway, 2011).

Deductive–inductive approach. As noted above, I used a combined deductive–inductive approach to data analysis. I approached analysis from the perspectives of public relations theory and the social identity approach, which suggests a theory-driven or, at minimum, a theory-influenced analytic process (see Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011; MacFarlane & O'Reilly-de Brún, 2012; W. J. Wilson & Chaddha, 2009). However, qualitative research also seems especially well adapted to analytic approaches rooted in the data (e.g., Corbin & Strauss, 2015). A combined approach responds to the need for investigation of the under-researched field of

military public affairs, within the context of public relations. It also responds to the call within intergroup communication for research that strikes a balance "between general, universal principles underlying intergroup communication and an attention to specific intergroup settings, each shaped by distinct features, needs and temporal dynamics" (Giles & Maass, 2016, p. 13).

Following DeCuir-Gunby, Marshall, and McCulloch's (2011) example, I developed and used a starter codebook, or an *a priori* "set of codes, definitions, and examples" to begin and guide data analysis (p. 138; see also Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). Such a collection "comes from the conceptual framework, list of research questions, hypotheses, problem areas, and/or key variables that the researcher brings to the study" (Miles et al., 2014, p. 81). However, I was also open to the emergence of additional codes during data collection, preparation, and analysis and incorporated them into the codebook as they arose (DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2011; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). Such empirically grounded codes indicate the discovery of important local variables (Miles et al., 2014). The final codebook is included as an appendix to this dissertation.

Multicycle coding. My data analysis efforts centered on multicycle coding. Saldaña (2013) identified three stages in the qualitative coding process. Although he emphasized the first and third stages, which he referred to as "first cycle" and "second cycle" coding (p. 58), it is clear that the intermediate stage is critically important in the movement from initially coding data to ultimately developing theory.

First cycle coding focuses on assembling a set of labels that capture study-pertinent phenomena in the data (Saldaña, 2013). To code is to generate or select a

word or phrase "that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute" for a section of data (p. 3). Saldaña (2013) offered a number of coding methods, each bringing a different perspective. These methods can be combined based on the goals and needs of the study (e.g., coding for attributes to capture and manage demographic data). First cycle coding should link data to concepts, or terms that represent the more abstract, "interpreted meaning" (Corbin & Strauss, 2015, p. 57) the researcher has determined for phenomena. Because the constructs and phenomena I was interested in are matters of social identity, I emphasized coding for pertinent attributes and for values, attitudes, and beliefs (Saldaña, 2013). An important consideration during coding is to maintain "conceptual and structural unity" among codes (Miles et al., 2014, p. 82).

Saldaña's (2013) intermediate stage, which he labeled "eclectic coding" (p. 188), is a transitional stage intended to prepare the data, study, and researcher for the move into second cycle coding. Analysis here is based on "first impression" responses to and learning through the experience of first cycle coding (p. 188). As in the first cycle, coding methods can be combined and new methods introduced based on the goals and questions of the study (Saldaña, 2013). Analytic activity at this stage is directed toward condensing and refining codes and concepts into a more workable set (Saldaña, 2013). Activities can include or focus on developing models, to specify relationships and explain phenomena (Kerlinger, 1986), or identifying categories, each "denot[ing] the major theme that a group of basic-level concepts are pointing to" (Corbin & Strauss, 2015, p. 76). In this intermediate stage, analysis (or reanalysis) of

the "transformed work" (p. 88) from the first cycle helps to direct further activity, thus setting the stage for second cycle coding.

The goal of second cycle coding is "to develop a sense of categorical, thematic, conceptual, and/or theoretical organization" from the researcher's first cycle codes (Saldaña, 2013, p. 207). In the second cycle, the researcher further synthesizes the codes, concepts, and categories developed in the earlier stages of analysis to develop a list of broader and more central "categories, themes, concepts, and/or assertions" and achieve "a coherent metasynthesis of the data corpus" (p. 207). In second cycle coding, as in earlier stages, coding methods can be combined. Coding activity can include recoding of data, merging of codes, and dropping of codes (Saldaña, 2013). The aims of second cycle activity can include the elucidation of meaning, explanation of relationships and change, identification of central categories and primary themes, the modification of existing theory, and the elaboration of new theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Daymon & Holloway, 2011; Saldaña, 2013). The ultimate goal of the coding endeavor, then, is to "transcend" the data—"to find something else, something more" (Saldaña, 2013, p. 208).

Analytic memos. In the process of qualitative analysis, the coding of data is incomplete without the accompanying writing of analytic memos. According to Saldaña (2013), a code should not be thought of simply as "a significant word or phrase you applied to a data, but as a prompt or trigger for written reflection on the deeper and complex meanings it evokes" (pp. 41-42). Without such reflection, the act

of coding is insufficient (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). Thus Corbin and Strauss's (2015) statement that "memoing *is* analysis" (p. 128).

An analytic memo is a "narrative that documents the researcher's reflections and thinking processes about the data" (Miles et al., 2014, p. 95). Memoing is a procedure to help "clarify, magnify, and generate" (Corbin & Strauss, 2015, p. 128). It is intended to facilitate and capture, for example, researcher reflexivity, coding choices and processes; the emergence of categories, concepts, and themes; and the cumulative analytic process (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Miles et al., 2014; Saldaña, 2013). The goal of memoing is synthesis, abstraction, and, ultimately, theory, where theory can include those propositions, suppositions, models, and so forth that help to explain the phenomena of interest (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Miles et al., 2014; Saldaña, 2013).

Because analytic memos are an important and integral part of the analytic process, their writing should be prioritized (Miles et al., 2014). I began writing memos with the earliest stages of data collection and analysis and continued writing them over the course of the study (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). I wrote memos both during analytic sessions and when thoughts occurred to me outside of those sessions, following Saldaña's (2013) practice: Capture the thought in a memo first, then determine the memo's place in the analysis (see also Corbin & Strauss, 2015).

Diagrams. According to Miles et al. (2014), "You know what you display" (p. 108), and one analytic tool I used was diagrams. Diagrams are "[v]isual devices that depict relationships between analytic concepts" (Corbin & Strauss, 2015, p. 106). They serve a number of purposes, aiding the researcher in a number of ways. For

example, diagrams enable the researcher to organize data and concepts and visualize the relationships, patterns, trends, etc. that unite them (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Miles et al., 2014). They can indicate directions for further data collection (Miles et al., 2014). They help integrate, refine, and raise "thinking beyond the level of description" (Corbin & Strauss, 2015, p. 123). They can aid in the drawing of reasonable and satisfying conclusions (Miles et al., 2014). They also can help researchers explain their findings (Corbin & Strauss, 2015).

Diagrams are useful throughout the research journey, and I created or modified diagrams at various points during the study as needed. Miles et al. (2014) noted that diagrams can be generated during and aid both data collection and analysis. They can "provide preliminary findings" and "supply the basic material for higher level explanations" (p. 112). They suggested the researcher produce rough diagrams early on and revise them as the study progresses.

Research journal. An additional tool I used was a research journal. A research journal is a both a record of activities and events in the study and a "running log . . . to record feelings, impressions, and responses during the research process" (Corbin & Strauss, 2015, p. 119). Research activities may reveal biases or assumptions, and the journal offers the researcher a space in which "to gain a little distance and to be more conscious of how and when biases and assumptions are influencing interpretations" (Corbin & Strauss, 2015, p. 119). The utility of a research journal extends beyond its use as a bias control tool, however. Where memos are predominantly a tool of analysis and act as a lens trained on the data, the journal acts as a lens trained on the researcher. The research journal is a tool to encourage self-

reflection and growth, important and sometimes daunting tasks for the researcher early in her or his career and engaged in a large project, such as the dissertation (Watt, 2007). According to Watt (2007), qualitative researchers "are expected to reflect on how they come to know what they know, and the chronicle of one's thinking contained in a research journal potentially facilitates such awareness" (p. 96).

I wrote journal entries occasionally as I engaged in data collection and data analysis. Corbin and Strauss (2015) emphasized the importance of the journal during data collection, saying the researcher should note problems encountered, how they were addressed, and both researcher and participant reactions, especially regarding sensitive topics. However, because the qualitative researcher is often enmeshed with the study, I wrote journal entries throughout the process.

According to Kvale (1994), in qualitative research, judgments of quality should rest on the existence of "defensible knowledge claims" (p. 168). In the next section I discuss four criteria that qualitative studies generally are expected to meet if they are to be judged rigorous, sound, and ethical.

Research quality. As Daymon and Holloway (2011) noted, "Readers of your work will judge it by its quality and integrity, which is indicated by the extent to which it conforms to relevant criteria for evaluating quality" (p. 77). Although such criteria can be elusive in the case of qualitative research (Corbin & Strauss, 2015), certain criteria appear to have become standard in the assessment of qualitative studies. For my study, I focused on four core criteria and related concerns: protection

of participants, reliability, validity, and reflexivity. I discuss these, and how I worked with these criteria to ensure a quality study, in this section.

Protection of participants. Ethical considerations must be an integral part of a study throughout the research process, and those considerations must include efforts to protect research participants. My efforts to protect the participants in my study centered on the following four steps: obtaining Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, securing informed consent from participants, providing anonymity, and providing confidentiality.

First, I submitted the study and the pertinent research instruments and other tools (e.g., interview guide, consent form) for review and approval by the University of Maryland IRB. An institution's IRB "is charged with reviewing and approving all human subjects research before such research can proceed" to guard against harm to participants (Yin, 2014, p. 78). Second, I secureed informed consent from all participants. I presented them with the consent form and discussed the purpose of the study and the process of their participation prior to each interview. I did this to help ensure they understood the nature of my research and consented to participate (Miles et al., 2014).

Anonymity and confidentiality are closely related and concern rights of privacy (Daymon & Holloway, 2011), yet they are distinct. Third, then, I took steps to maintain the anonymity of my participants. To maintain anonymity is to not divulge the identity of research participants or organizations (Daymon & Holloway, 2011), and it entails withholding from publication their names "or so many identifying details that they could in fact be identified" (Warren & Karner, 2010, p.

136). To provide for the anonymity of those participating, I used numbers rather than names to indicate participants on data files, transcripts, etc. I kept a master list matching codes and names in a secure file, to be destroyed once the study is complete (Warren & Karner, 2010). Additionally, I used pseudonyms for all participants in this dissertation and anonymized all organizational names and titles not critical to the integrity of the study. Finally, I minimized identifying details in the dissertation and plan to do the same in any future research reports developed from the study.

Fourth, I provided confidentiality, or avoided disclosure of any matters that participants did not want shared further or made public (Daymon & Holloway, 2011). With regard to this matter, I practiced discretion: I did not release confidential information during the study, nor will I release confidential information in the future, e.g., through future research reports. I have shared only information participants permitted me to share publicly. To help ensure such discretion, I conducted member checks, or conversations or other communication with participants in which the researcher checks her or his understanding "by summarizing, repeating, or paraphrasing their words and asking about their veracity and interpretation" (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 89). With regard to both anonymity and confidentiality, I did the following: not store data or other documents in the cloud; securely store media, data, analyses, and other physical records in a locked cabinet in my office; and securely store digital media on my password-protected computer.

Reliability. According to Yin (2014), "The goal of reliability is to minimize the errors and biases in a study" (p. 49). The objective is to conduct a study in such a way that another investigator could do the same study, using the same procedures,

and “arrive at the same findings and conclusions” (p. 48). I used five tools and practices to improve the reliability of my study. I conducted data analysis using computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS), used a case study protocol, developed a case study database, built an audit trail, and used member checks.

First, I used the ATLAS.ti (Version 8) CAQDAS package throughout the analysis process. Paulus and Lester (2016) argued that because ATLAS.ti allowed them to centralize procedures, data, and other materials in their language-centered research, their analytic process achieved a level of transparency not possible otherwise. They concluded that use of ATLAS.ti allowed them to document their “analytic decisions in a transparent, reflexive, rigorous, and systematic way” (p. 424). Second, I designed and used a case study protocol, which contains the research instruments and as well as the procedures to be followed in using the protocol (Yin, 2014). According to Yin (2014), “The protocol is a major way of increasing the *reliability* of case study research,” and its benefits include helping to keep the researcher focused on the research topic and guiding her or him to anticipate problems (p. 84).

Third, I created a case study database, “a separate and orderly compilation of all the data from a case study,” which includes both narrative and/or numeric information and data sources, such as documents and other materials (p. 123). The creation of a database that can then be viewed by others “markedly increases the *reliability* of your entire case study” (p. 124). Fourth, I built and maintained an audit trail, a “detailed record of the decisions made before and during the research and a

description of the research process," to allow others to evaluate the research (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 93; see also Yin, 2014). Beginning with the proposal stage, I kept documentation and a record of, for example, decisions "about the theoretical, methodological, and analytical choices of [my] study" as well as collection and analysis procedures (Daymon & Holloway, 2011, p. 93). Fifth and finally, I conducted member checks, which, in addition to being a tool for protecting participants, also are a means of verifying the researcher's analysis (Daymon & Holloway, 2011).

Validity. According to Daymon and Holloway (2011), validity "is about the soundness and rigour of the study" (p. 79). It is, Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011) said, the process by which researchers makes the case that "the knowledge they have produced is reflective of the social world and/or is compelling" (p. 56), that they have "gotten it right" (p. 48). Kvale (1994) identified three types of validity: validity as craftsmanship, or efforts made during the research process to arrive at "defensible knowledge claims" (p. 3); communicative validity, or "testing the validity of knowledge claims in a dialogue" among legitimate knowers (p. 7); and pragmatic validity, or judgments of validity based on the applications made of the research. I have responded in my study, or plan to respond, to the demands for all three forms of validity.

I responded to the expectation of validity as craftsmanship in the following four ways. First, I conducted my study working toward a dissertation built around "thick description" (Geertz, 1973, p. 6). That is, I aimed for a dissertation that meets the criterion that "the context under which [the author's] interpretations were made

must be richly and thickly described" (Ponterotto, 2006, p. 539). Second, I linked data, analysis, and conclusions to theory, both existing and emerging, through my review of the literature and through the writing of analytic memos (Daymon & Holloway, 2011; Miles et al., 2014). Third, I used data triangulation as a validity tool (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011; Miles et al., 2014; Yin, 2014). According to Yin (2014), "any case study finding or conclusion is likely to be more convincing and accurate if it is based on several different sources of information" (p. 120). Fourth and finally, I made efforts to falsify the emerging analysis and conclusions, seeking and considering, for example, rival explanations or negative evidence (Kvale, 1994; Miles et al., 2014; Yin, 2014).

I responded to the need for communicative validity in the following two ways. I conducted member checks, discussed above. I also have and will bring my research to audiences (e.g., my supervisor, colleagues, conference attendees, readers) at various stages aiming to arrive at a point where a range of audience members feel that the findings reflect their own experiences (Miles et al., 2014). Finally, I will respond to the call for pragmatic validity in the following two ways. First, I will work to make the results of my study broadly available through, for example, sharing the findings with administrators and others at DINFOS, presenting the research at conference, and working toward its publication. Second, I raised and discussed in the study ethical concerns raised by and/or during the research, because questions of benefit, harm, worth, and legitimacy attend upon qualitative research studies (Miles et al., 2014).

Reflexivity. The practice of researcher reflexivity is another element important to the pursuit of quality in qualitative research. According to Miles et al. (2014),

validity is threatened by the effects of researcher bias, or the inability of the researcher to collect data, analyze data, draw conclusions, and report findings in a trustworthy manner because of preconceived notions, personal agendas, or personal demons (see also Yin, 2014). Another threat to validity they noted is the possibility of the researcher losing his perspective and "being co-opted into the perceptions and explanations of local participants" (Miles et al., 2014, p. 294). To address such validity threats, I took steps to conduct my study reflexively, or conduct it with the awareness that knowledge and the pursuit of knowledge are subject to the influence of social conditions and social location (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011).

Sources of potential personal bias included my personal experiences with and views regarding DINFOS and the U.S. military. A former employee of the Air National Guard, I twice trained in public affairs at DINFOS, first as a noncommissioned officer and later as a commissioned officer. I recall my time and training at the school with great fondness. Although I came to the enlisted public affairs course, my first stint at DINFOS, with a bachelor's in English, I found it incredibly stimulating and the social aspects very satisfying. I had a similar experience a few years later when I returned for the officer course. I believe also that I am a highly identified military veteran, who served as a public affairs officer in Iraq in 2004. Another source of bias, although one that might run counter to those cited above, could be my position as a critic of American use of military force in recent decades. I believe that the United States has spent inordinately large amounts of the public's money and has turned to military force far too often and for far too long in its

international relations, with little good to show for it. Both my favorable and critical views related to the U.S. military pose validity threats.

During my prospectus defense, I was asked to address the underlying "why" of my study, the reason for my pursuit of understanding in the realm of military public affairs beyond the research problem I had articulated in the prospectus. As I told my committee, two moments from my military public affairs career stood out to me as being manifestations of processes at work that, at the time, I had few words for.

First, at lunch with some of my fellow public affairs manager trainees when I was a student at DINFOS, the conversation turned to news of the misogynistic environment that then existed at the U.S. Air Force Academy. A female classmate who was a recent graduate of the academy said in that conversation that she had valued her experiences there and seemed to deny the reports of misogyny. However, her body language — including downcast eyes, slumped shoulders — suggested an incongruence between her words and her experiences and feelings. Second, a few years later, early in my deployment to Iraq, at a meeting of the public affairs staff for the U.S.-led coalition, the public affairs chief, a female reservist without a combat arms background, was giving instructions to us, the public affairs staff. I recall thinking that her two highest-ranking subordinates, both tall, white men in the active-duty Army, with infantry backgrounds, seemed not to be taking her instructions seriously. While it could have been because the public affairs chief would be rotating back home a few weeks later, it also seemed possible that gender dynamics were at work.

Van der Kolk (2014) wrote, “Scientists study what puzzles them most, so that they often become experts in subjects that others take for granted” (p. 111). This, he suggested, is the origin of the concept of research as “me-search.” Setting aside questions of the morality of war or of defense spending for a moment, and setting aside my claim of identification as a military veteran, I believe the driving force behind the present study was my desire to explore experiences of non-belonging. I wanted to understand exclusion, actual and/or perceived, that can make people feel that they are not full members of groups. I wanted to understand situations in which people can and do achieve acceptance into groups; I also wanted to understand situations in which people decide that, no matter what they do, full membership in a group to which they want to belong is out of reach.

My own insider–outsider status as I collected data seemed to be an experience of inclusion and exclusion. As a civilian academic researcher, I encountered some skepticism from participants. I recall a few interviews in which the participant seemed to ask me, in essence, whether I had an anti-military agenda. I also believe, however, that my explanation, at times reiteration, of my study aims, coupled with my background as a military veteran and former public affairs officer, helped me to gain the trust of my participants. I believe that through their trust, the accounts that followed from it, and my own desire to understand experiences and processes of exclusion and belonging, I have arrived at an overall accurate picture of the social world I sought to explore and understand. But I leave the final judgments to the audiences that will receive the products of this study of military public affairs.

Additionally, to address the validity threats posed by my personal biases, I took the following three steps. First, I kept a journal and regularly reflected on my entries (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). According to Corbin and Strauss (2015), through the research journal the researcher can identify and explore her or his biases and consider how they might impact a particular study. I used the journal and its entries as the basis for reflection and for discussions with my supervisor about the study and the research process (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). Second, I used data triangulation to enhance the study's validity (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011; Miles et al., 2014; Yin, 2014). Third, I conducted member checks, again to enhance validity (Daymon & Holloway, 2011).

Chapter 4—Findings

In this chapter I present the results of the study. The results reflect the analysis of interviews with 27 current and former PAQC students, instructors and administrators. The chapter has three sections, each addressing one research question.

Research Question 1: Professional Identify

The first research question explores the development and nature of public affairs professional identity through the PAQC, joint entry-level training for military public affairs managers. Professional identity, a kind of social identity, is that aspect of an individual's self-concept derived from participation in a particular career field and the 'attributes, beliefs, values, motives, and experiences' perceived to be prototypical of that field (Slay & Smith, 2011, p. 86). Additionally, professional identity includes the individual's evaluations of the profession and the emotional significance he or she attaches to it and to his or her membership in it (Abrams & Hogg, 2010; Jeffrey & Brunton, 2012; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Themes that emerged in response to the research question were related to the existence of a public affairs professional identity; the work of "translating" the military for the public; the relationship between the identity and the overall organizational identity; the largely home-front orientation of public affairs professional identity; and the need for the public affairs manager to be comfortable "operating in the gray" of interpersonal relationships to serve the organization.

Building a shared identity. The responses from participants suggested that public affairs managers, whether students, practitioners (i.e., former students), instructors, or administrators, perceive themselves and their public affairs peers to be

members of the same group. They appear to have positive associations with the group and their own membership in it; they appear to want to see the group do well and act to benefit it; and they express a concern for the group and for its members.

For example, Brent, an expert civilian instructor, suggested that the PAQC contributes greatly to a public affairs professional identity and that students embrace that identity enthusiastically. Brent shared: "I don't think we can help but infuse an identity." He also said:

> But depending on the class I have—and every one's different, as you know, every group of students—after a few weeks, some really embrace this, and they're in. They love it, and they become "messaging machines"—which I'm not a fan of; I want you to give me substance too—but there comes a point in some of them where they think PA can cure world hunger. . . . If anything, perhaps we over-socialize and develop people's PA identity. But I don't know if that's a bad thing. I think there's some growing that has to happen, and I'm proud of supporting this course and watching people go from day one to day 46 . . . and seeing the enormous improvement, the confidence. I've had people who were in tears in front of cameras who graduate with honors. That's fun and exciting, and I'm very, very proud to have a part in that.

Carl, an expert civilian administrator, painted the fact that PAQC uniformed instructors are often pulled back into practitioner assignments early as a sign of the need, if not high regard, in which the services hold public affairs managers. The services are short-staffed in public affairs and, he said,

> they need these folks. They're good at what they do. They put them in critical positions. . . . So there's a definite need, and DINFOS is obviously meeting that need if the services need their people back so much that they put enough faith and trust in them to be able to send them to Afghanistan or Turkey or [U.S. European Command] or wherever it may be. So we've got to be doing something right.

Participants also indicated an appreciation for the support within the public affairs field, much of it apparently attributable to ties created by the common experience of the PAQC. They spoke both of drawing on and contributing to common resources.

For example, Lucy, an advanced civilian practitioner, said the ties between the course and the practitioner in the field are strong and mutually beneficial. She said:

> They have left us as a support system. I mean, here I am five, six years out of that, and they're still my mentors. They're still people I go back to. And I help them, too. They foster a community, which is the best way to have fun in the military and in [the Department of Defense], civilian and military. Not only have fun, but also succeed. And I think they shared that importance from the get-go.

Hugh, an intermediate civilian practitioner, similarly drew attention to the exchange and cooperation between the schoolhouse and the practice in the field. He said:

> From time to time I've reached back to DINFOS, both to give some feedback on what we were doing out here and what I thought would be valuable for

> students going through there to be seeing and, just in general, "These are the things we're seeing out here." And hopefully it helps the instructors there. But more than that, it's helped me here just to kind of get their take on different things that I send them. . . . And certainly the DINFOS instructors make themselves available too, which I think is very, very good.

Quentin, a senior officer and novice student/practitioner, offered a striking example of the cooperation and shared experience that can characterize group membership. Asked whether he had contacted the schoolhouse or classmates for assistance after graduation, he said that, in addition to using social media to do so, he had worked in the field with one of his former instructors as part of a military operation. Quentin said he would send the former instructor news releases that fell also within the latter's purview. "It was nice to be able to send it to him for review," he said. "And then he would send it back to me, and then I would send it up to my higher. So that was very beneficial."

Concern for the group's success appeared to extend to concern for the success of individual, if anonymous, members. Una, a senior officer and intermediate practitioner, discussed a public affairs assignment in which she was pulled into her previous operational role while simultaneously having to perform her public affairs duties. She worried about the precedent she might be setting for the next public affairs manager in that organization. She said:

> I wrote my parent command, saying, "Hey, I'm concerned that I'm setting up the next PAO for failure, because the odds that they will be able to do this"—

and I'm not bragging—"the odds that they will be able to do this are very, very slim. And if this is the metrics, I'm screwing them."

The concern for fellow public affairs managers suggests the high regard that they have for the public affairs function as a whole, which reflects upon its members. Quentin, for example, said he appreciated the opportunity to communicate facts and truth to the public. "There's a certain integrity that is within this field that gives us an opportunity to share with the public. So, being out here [on deployment] I think I've learned, and I'm very proud of being a public affairs officer and to have that ability to be able to share that with the public and what we're doing out here." Una placed her appreciation for her public affairs role within the context of the larger organization: "If I had known that there was a title like this, I would've wanted it from the very beginning. I'm third generation Navy, so I always thought what my parents and my grandparents did was super cool, and how to share that story."

Translating the military for the public. Responses from participants suggested that public affairs managers perceive themselves to be responsible for communication between military organizations and the public. This entails making military organizations and their activities intelligible to the public.

Participants indicated that public affairs has a special role and responsibility in military organizations: to communicate the value of those organizations and their activities to the public. According to participants, this requires an ability to "translate" between the organization and the publics to which it is responsible, an ability that is rare in military organizations.

For example, Zoe, a junior officer and advanced instructor, said:

> What makes our job different than others is that, because we constantly interact with—I hate to say the civilian population, but we are really a direct liaison between the military and the civilian community, the American public—our job is constantly to translate what I always say [is] "Marine speak" and then turn it into something that's digestible.

Translation, according to Zoe, involves meeting publics "where they're at." Trying to talk over them would alienate them, she said, but "putting what our operations are, our training are [sic], into perspective, it just creates a better understanding."

She offered the example of conducting community relations for an at-times busy air base adjacent to a bucolic retirement community. When noise complaints would come in, she said, she would try to put the training operations into a human perspective, telling civilians, for example, "There are one or two Marines flying a multimillion-dollar aircraft, and if they miss the ship, they could take out—they could kill hundreds of people on that ship," or saying of the noise:

> "Please keep in mind that that noise you hear, it's comforting to some because they know that now there's an aircraft that's coming to support them on the ground. But it also means something to those family members that are about to lose their loved one for a couple months, as they deploy."

Rachel, a novice civilian student, echoed the idea that public affairs translates the arcane world of military organizations for the general public. However, she added that the communication facilitated by public affairs serves also to hold military organizations accountable. She said:

> I think we help remind the military that they're accountable to the public—and not in a bad way, although sometimes people need to be reminded of that, of "Hey, we have a responsibility to explain what we're doing with this money. We have a responsibility to explain why this product wasn't safe." Or "Hey, why did it cost this much?" "It cost this much because we're trying to make it safe for our warfighters." So, not in a bad way, but in a way of, you know, other people don't know what we do, so we have to explain to them what we do.

Within, but transcending the organization. In conjunction with the responsibility of translating the military for the public, public affairs managers appear to perceive their group both to be within the organizations they serve and, simultaneously, to transcend those organizations. This "within, but transcending" relationship appears to offer public affairs managers important opportunities and resources beyond what is available solely from the larger organization. However, public affairs managers appear to believe that the same "within, but transcending" relationship requires them to engage in internal communication that signals their organizational *bona fides*. I discuss this finding as a subtheme.

For example, Hugh, an intermediate civilian practitioner, said that two of his PAQC instructors emphasized the development of public affairs as a profession and encouraged students to build their ties to the larger public relations profession. He said:

> It was more than just "Write your communications plan and make sure it is executed well." It was "Write your communications plan [and] add it to the

PA Portal, so that other officers, when they're developing their own, they can have something to look at." It was "Make sure that your name is attached on the PA Portal so you can socialize your plans with others, and so you can reach out to others and get feedback to grow the profession as a whole and grow the professional level of the profession."

One of those instructors, Hugh said, "had great things to say about the PRSA and encouraged us all to look into participating in the public affairs or the public relations professional community at large, outside the military, and earn the accreditation and be a part of that community." Hugh, who said he went on to earn his PRSA accreditation for military practitioners, said the encouragement "was pretty profound for a military school, because I hadn't been to a military school before that had the message of 'Make sure you are part of the larger community, including the non-military.' I thought it was really good."

Similarly, Quentin, a senior officer and novice student/practitioner, said he appreciated the portability of the career field from military to civilian contexts: "The nice thing about this position is it easily goes over to the civilian side as well. Again, based upon what I'm looking to do and what my goals are in life, maybe on the civilian sector, it may open some doors as well. I'm not counting on it, but it's something that I'm definitely—because being a public affairs officer, whether a civilian or a military, it's all kind of the same general functions that you have."

Communicating organizational competence. Finally, public affairs managers appear to engage in communication that signals their organizational qualifications and legitimacy to commanding officers and non-public affairs peers. Such communication

can take forms such as the wearing of certain uniform items or the adoption of communication styles suited to particular contexts.

For example, Nicholas, a junior officer and intermediate practitioner, cited both his prior operational experience and the evidence of that experience worn on a uniform as contributing to his ability to perform his public affairs duties effectively. His background as a surface warfare officer, helping to command ships and their crews, he said,

> gave me confidence. I think if I had come to my first command as an ensign[6], and just been assigned as a brand new PAO out of [Officer Candidate School], and I didn't have any military experience, I wouldn't have known where to start. I could barely figure out how to put my uniform the right way. To be able to advise my commander on public affairs would have been a very difficult thing. So, it gave me some confidence. I had some depth of knowledge on what the Navy was, and what the big mission was. Then, it sounds superficial, and it is in a way, but I had earned a surface warfare officer pin, which you wear on your uniform even after you become a PAO. So, when you come to the table, your commander, the senior officers have some respect. They know you have some level of knowledge and have been through some of the same things that they have. They know when they're explaining some deep operational concept, they don't have to use kid words.

[6] The most junior commissioned officer rank in the Navy or Coast Guard.

> They can really talk through a problem and have you understand it on day one.

Similarly, Una, a senior officer and intermediate practitioner, said she made a point of displaying evidence of her organizational qualifications when accepting a new public affairs assignment on short notice and meeting the commanding officer for the first time. She said her service's public affairs administrators warned her that the commanding officer was skeptical of public affairs managers, because her predecessor had been unprepared for the assignment. They told her, she said, "You're going to have to take some time to prove yourself." Una further shared:

> I said, "Oh, okay," you know. "I'll just work really hard." So, I showed up, and I wore all my ribbons. And it was like February, I was freezing. But I took my jacket off because I wanted him to see my ribbons, and I wanted him to see my [surface] warfare pin. And as soon as he saw my warfare pin, he kind of relaxed. Because he knew I drove ships.

Adopting the communication style of one's commanding officer and non-public affairs peers on the commanding officer's staff, which appears to be shaped by organizational context, also can be used to signal the public affairs manager's organizational qualifications and legitimacy.

For example, Gary, a senior officer and intermediate practitioner, said that, "if you're going to be an infantry or armor PAO, and you're going to be talking to an infantry or armor commander, you've got to be an extrovert. You got to be a type-A, hard-charging personality, or you're going to get eaten alive. That's just the way it is.

It's almost like knowing your audience. At least you've got to be able to turn that part of you on when the time is right."

Like Nicholas, Francis, a senior officer and novice practitioner, saw benefit in his service requiring public affairs managers to serve their early careers first in other combat or logistics specialties. His years in another specialty helped him as a public affairs manager, he said,

> Because I know how to speak Army. I know how to be on the staff. I know what's going on in an operation. So, I sort of have that innate understanding of where I can go and who I can talk to. I've got that sort of influence of being an officer, and I know how to work with soldiers and be in charge. I speak Army already.

Yet, Francis also perceived a lack of status for public affairs in his service because it lacks the recognition of other specialties that officers can enter immediately upon joining the service. He said he enjoyed his time in another specialty that, unlike public affairs, carries distinctive markings on the uniform, and which he continues to wear. But, he said, "I wish that I could represent public affairs in the same way and have that sort of message go out from the leadership that 'Yeah, public affairs is just as important to us as'" other communications specialties.

Preparing the "garrison PAO." Participants' responses suggested that, while the attention of the larger military organization(s) is focused outward for purposes of security and defense, the attention of public affairs managers is focused largely, but not exclusively, on publics on the "home front." This home-front orientation appears to contribute to a "garrison PAO" mindset in which public affairs managers

understand their most important contributions to their organizations to be helping them to maintain the support of important publics in the United States. However, responses also indicated that, within the home-front orientation, some public affairs managers link effective organization–public communication to the general effectiveness of military organizations in carrying out their mission. Rarer still was the response that closely linked public affairs activity with organizational effectiveness in military or combat operations. I discuss these latter two findings as a subtheme.

When asked what priorities, attitudes, values, etc. public affairs brings to military organizations or what benefit public affairs provides to those organizations, participants often spoke of helping their organizations to maintain the support of publics in the United States. For example, Donna, a junior officer and novice student/practitioner, said:

> One of the main things is they say, "Tell the [Department of Defense] story." And that's kind of cliché, but that's truly what it is. Many people, maybe they aren't knowledgeable about what it is that the military does. To many people, to many Americans, they might just portray us as these people who waste their taxpayer dollars. "Why are we investing so much money into these people who are just going off to kill people?" These are just some perceptions. I just feel like, as public affairs, it's our job to say, "Hey, no. That's not the case. We are here to defend the nation and make sure that you guys are safe."

As was suggested in the above theme, "translating the military for the public," public affairs managers appear to believe that maintaining public support requires that

military organizations be accountable to the American people. For example, Philip, a noncommissioned officer and advanced student, said that

> public affairs is about transparency for the American people. Since we are beholden to our taxpayers, it's important that they know what we're doing and that they have confidence that we have their best interests at hand. I think that's what public affairs is here for, to tell the American people that this is what we're doing, this is how it's benefiting you.

Aaron, a junior officer and intermediate practitioner, painted the relationship between the military and the people as a kind of investment by the latter. Public affairs, he said,

> brings that connection with the public. . . . In the United States the people own the Army, you know? It's not like a dictator owns the Army, and that's his Army. "This is your Army, as the public. So you need to know what we're doing in order to keep you safe. You need to know where we need help from you, where do we need money and stuff like that. Where should you pressure your Congressman. That kind of stuff."

Yet, the emphasis one student saw placed in the PAQC on communicating with American publics or on performing public affairs duties on a permanent military base (i.e., garrison public affairs) seemed incongruous with operational demands. Travis, a junior officer and novice student, said that in his public affairs assignment prior to the course, the base public affairs office handled garrison responsibilities while the public affairs offices of tenant units had a more operational focus. "So when

I came to PAQC, I was kind of surprised that that was so much the focus," he said. He continued:

> I suppose that other PA professionals that we're dealing with here really have to work that garrison side. For me, the focus is much more operational, at least at this assignment. So I think that there's a little bit of a disconnect there and room for growth.

Zeroing in on mission-critical contributions. Although the garrison and home-front orientations appear to predominate, they also appear to leave opportunities for public affairs managers to link effective organization–public communication, to a greater or lesser degree, to organizational effectiveness in core activities.

Participant responses linked public affairs activities and priorities to the general effectiveness of military organizations in carrying out their security and defense responsibilities. For example, Quentin, a senior officer and novice student/practitioner, said that, in the case of the long wars in Afghanistan and Iraq/Syria, "messaging in reference to what we are doing and what our goal and mission is" had helped to maintain public support. Communication with American publics, he said, as well as with coalition and host-nation publics, was crucial to the overall military effort because "without their support, we cannot be here."

Some participants said that public affairs' more global efforts could contribute to the organizational mission by engaging publics in the information domain. For example, Lucy, a civilian advanced practitioner, said that the ability of public affairs to provide "truth" in the battle for public opinion over military activities contributes

to operational goals. In the case of air strikes, she said, public affairs can provide information and rationale to the public. “We’re obviously not the operators making those strikes or making those calls,” she said, “but we’re able to lend that first voice of it there and actually show people what’s happening.” Similarly, Nicholas, a junior officer and advanced practitioner, said that public affairs plays a significant role in his service’s efforts to respond to “adversaries.” He said:

> How are they shaping the information battlespace? What are their governments putting out, in terms of certain issues, maritime issues? And how do we counter those publicly? . . . If the U.S. Navy doesn’t have public affairs officers to counter that narrative, then it may mean that no one is countering it.

Rare was the response that closely linked public affairs activity with organizational effectiveness in military or combat operations. More common was the view that public affairs could help set the proper conditions for successful operations.

According to Donna, a junior officer and novice student/practitioner, an inspector during a training exercise in which she participated told her, “PA is a weapon.” And, indeed, one participant, Aaron, shared a highlight from his career, in which the public affairs activity he directed appeared to have an immediate, unsettling impact on enemies in the area. He said:

> When we were in Afghanistan, my [noncommissioned officer] and I came up with a plan for every time the Taliban would kill civilians and stuff in our area, we would do a press release on it and release a statement, and push it out to the Afghan media. So what it did was negatively impact the public opinion of the Taliban, but increased our opinion, increased the opinion for us,

> because we were the ones trying to fight the guys. I thought that was very effective. They ended up sending death threats to us and stuff for that. And that was kind of one of my proudest moments as a PAO, and really one of the dumbest things the Taliban could have done.

When the enemy responded with threats within two weeks of the start of his team's campaign, Aaron said, "what they're telling me is I'm being effective. So now you double your efforts."

But it was more common to hear participants discuss the ways in which public affairs, as a support function, helps to set the conditions for successful operations or preclude the need for them entirely. For example, Margaret, a senior officer and advanced practitioner, said that, in addition to helping to maintain public support for her service and its activities, "'on the battlefield,' we also contribute by informing the local populace by providing our folks to support other aspects of the information environment." She added that its "production capability" allows public affairs to create products to support "things in the influence realm as well."

Adam, a civilian novice administrator, said that public affairs' storytelling capability allows it to affect the "center of gravity," i.e., the source of strength in various forms, of a public important in security and defense matters. "If you can crush the center of gravity of the enemy," he said, "then you can win that war." Public affairs activity, he said, could help to strengthen or maintain the center of gravity for the U.S. military, i.e., public support. "The military really needs the support of the people. Emotionally, monetarily, and just to be cheered on." Public affairs also could be used to attack the center of gravity of potential opponents, he said. "PA can also

say, ‘Hey, you know, we’re a strong America. We have a strong military. We are very bonded. And we are dedicated to supporting the United States.’ That can send a message to our enemies also. Like, ‘You know what? I really don’t want to play with those guys.’”

Victor, a junior officer and novice student, connected the role of public affairs with the possibility of parties in conflict achieving mutually beneficial outcomes through communication and without violence. While acknowledging that “being in the military is very serious business, you know, war is our job,” he discussed a white paper he said he had read that

> talked about how solutions to differences are solved by five percent at the barrel of a gun. The other 95 percent are solved through dialogue and having conversation, and working out how we can get to that end state without any life lost and with both parties walking away gaining something from that situation.

Operating in the gray. Participants’ responses also suggested that the successful public affairs manager is one who can function effectively in ambiguity, or who can “operate in the gray” of public affairs work. Participants also suggested that public affairs managers should be able to effectively navigate the ambiguity of the interpersonal relationships that form the basis of successful public affairs practice. Responses further suggested that the same or similar capabilities that help public

affairs managers function effectively in ambiguity allow them to bring innovative solutions to problems or other challenges faced by their organizations.

Participants suggested that successfully operating in the ambiguity of public affairs practice or in zones not covered by military policy marks effective public affairs managers. The ability also seems to mark them as distinct from their non-public affairs military peers. For example, Rachel, a civilian novice student, said of the PAQC:

> And I also like that they say that public affairs is, there's a lot of gray. I like that they acknowledge that, because a lot of the Army is not, it's black and white. So I think especially for people that are coming from a different part of the Army, I think it's really helpful for them to hear that, "Hey, there are [regulations] about this, but at the end of the day, the reg only covers this much, and the rest of it you have to figure out."

Similarly, Una, a senior officer and intermediate practitioner, said the expected response to ambiguity or uncertainty differed between public affairs and her prior operational world. In the advancement boards in her service's operational realm, she said, "If you don't know the [answer to the] question, you just say, 'I don't know.' You don't—You leave it at that." However, she said, "as a public affairs officer, I had to really break myself of that habit. You don't say, 'I don't know.' You say, 'Hold on, let me find out for you,' or 'Here's what I can tell you right now.' But as a warfare officer, that's—You just don't do that. I can truly say I learned that at PAQC."

Participants suggested that effective public affairs managers are those who can navigate the ambiguity of the interpersonal relationships that form the basis of successful public affairs practice. Public affairs managers should be able to move between and connect different worlds. For example, Quentin, a senior officer and novice student/practitioner, said "soft skills" are the primary thing that sets public affairs apart from other military functions. He continued:

> It's building a relationship with the media, with social media, and directly with the public. Because you have your feet in both worlds. In the fact that you're not a civilian, because you're working for the military, but you have to understand their perspective, what they're doing, and what is their end goal. You need them as much as they need you, and you're kind of that middle person in between balancing both of those things.

A more directive style of interaction would not work in a media relations context, Quentin said. "It is very much more, again, soft skills," he said. "It's building that relationship. It's interacting with people. And when you interact with people, people are different. Every person is different."

Similarly, Philip, a noncommissioned officer and advanced student, said the public affairs manager "definitely should be a people person, because probably 90 percent of the job is just networking." The successful public affairs managers he had met, he said, were personable, quick to network, and committed to truth and supporting the organization's larger efforts. "All our stuff isn't going to be what we can do," he said, "but it's going to be how we can better enable someone else to do their job and then put out the message about what they did."

According to Hugh, a civilian intermediate practitioner, public affairs managers must maintain an expansiveness necessary to counsel leaders effectively, while being attentive and responsive to their audiences and to the larger context. "You can't have a public affairs officer who is going to be ramrod straight, stiffening up every time the general walks in the office," he said, "because that PAO needs to be able to tell the general, 'These are all the different ways of looking at this, and this is where I think you're going wrong, and on and on.'" Yet, he said, the informality of the relationship between the public affairs manager and the commanding officer should not become a model for subordinate members of the public affairs staff. "There's certainly a balancing line there to keep from getting in trouble," he said.

Finally, responses suggested that the same or similar capabilities that help public affairs managers operate in the gray of interpersonal relationships allow them also to bring innovative solutions to problems or other challenges faced by their organizations. For example, Ian, a junior officer and intermediate practitioner, said that "lateral thinking," the ability to generate multiple solutions to a problem and select the one most effective in the long run, is a desirable quality in public affairs managers. He offered as an example the Coast Guard's work communicating public safety information to a diverse population during Hurricane Katrina, when TV stations were down and power was out in many areas. "Some of the ways that they came up with to get information out was posting signs at marinas," he said, "and translating some of those signs into Vietnamese, because there's a huge Vietnamese fishing community. Those are not necessarily things that you would think of if you just thought, 'A to B. Get information out.'"

Similarly, Francis, a senior officer and novice practitioner, said all the public affairs practitioners he had met, as well as himself, "we're kind of cut from a different cloth. And we're able to bring an 'out of the box' perspective that isn't the normal military 'let's just get things done' mindset." He gave as an example a period in which his reserve unit was preparing for its monthly assembly and a formal military dinner even as the federal government headed toward a possible shutdown. Senior leaders were already gathered because of training the week prior, he said, and the attitude was "Hey, we need to move ahead and have this 'dining out.' It's going to be a great time. Everybody's going to be here." He shared his response:

> And I sort of had to raise my hand and say, "Hey, sir, if the government shuts down and this is the second month in a row that we can't have soldiers coming in and pay them and we start posting on Facebook all the pictures of us having a fun time and a ball in our dress uniforms, there's going to be a spouse out there that's going to say, 'My husband/My wife, hasn't been paid for the past two months and has been told that he can't come to battle assembly, yet all these senior leaders are yucking it up and drinking and having a good time.'" And it was that that sort of tipped them over and made them say, "Oh, you're right."

In the above discussion of public affairs professional identity, I discussed a number of phenomena suggested by participant responses. First, they suggested that military public affairs managers perceive themselves and their public affairs peers to be members of the same group. Second, they suggested that managers see themselves as responsible for communication between military organizations and the public,

which entails making those organizations and their activities intelligible to the public. Third, the findings suggested that public affairs managers perceive themselves to constitute a group "within, but transcending" the organization, which offers them important opportunities and resources even as it compels them to signal their organizational *bona fides* internally. Fourth, they suggested that managers generally possess a "home-front" orientation and "garrison PAO" mindset, distinct from their organizations' security and defense focus, which arise from a belief that the managers' most important organizational contributions relate to maintaining domestic public support. Fifth, they suggested that the successful public affairs manager is one who can function effectively in the ambiguity of interpersonal relationships and that this ability to "operate in the gray" allows them to bring innovative solutions to challenges faced by their organizations.

Research Question 2: Organizational Socialization

The second research question inquired how, if at all, military public affairs managers are socialized as members of their organizations and profession through joint entry-level military public affairs training. It sought to explore the processes and outcomes of organizational socialization through the PAQC. According to Kramer (2010), organizational socialization is "the process by which an organization attempts to influence and change individuals to meet its needs" (p. 3). The goal of socialization, and its benefit to the organization and its members, is the transition of individuals "from outsiders to fully-functioning and accepted members" (Woo & Myers, 2016, p. 230). Themes that emerged in response to the research question were related to an appreciation for the importance of localized socialization; socialization

of public affairs managers for proactivity; acceptance of public affairs managers by their organizations; and socialization for early career success.

The importance of localized socialization. The responses from participants suggested that public affairs managers place great value on the learning that occurs in the less formal or less scripted interactions between instructors and students that occur both inside and outside of the classroom. Responses also indicated a belief that the learning necessary to be an effective public affairs manager continues after the PAQC and can even precede enrollment in the course. Finally, responses also suggested that public affairs managers are active participants in their own early organizational and professional socialization.

The responses from participants suggested that public affairs managers see the learning that occurs in the less formal or less scripted interactions between instructors and students that occur both inside and outside of the classroom as crucial to the learning process. These moments can occur during class meetings, during breaks between them, or after the workday ends, and they appear to make important contributions to the preparation of the public affairs manager.

Participants seem to agree on the importance of such moments. For example, Yvonne, a senior officer and advanced student, said:

> By far the best classes that we have are when the instructors include personal stories, personal examples. Because the public affairs community, I mean, you can't determine what each person's going to be going into, because the job is different, and it depends on what's happening in the world. . . . So it's so incredibly useful when we're talking about a course and then the instructor's

like, “Actually, you don’t think this is going to happen? Let me tell you this: This is what happened to me.”

According to Oscar, a civilian expert administrator, instructors are invited in their “personal lesson plans” to provide “that motivational piece, that support piece,” and to create activities that enhance the learning process. He gave the example of an instructor who used his public affairs experience responding to a mass shooting at a military base to enhance the public affairs law class. The instructor, Oscar said, provided students the applicable laws and then said, “There you are, PAO. What would you do?” Zoe, a junior officer and advanced instructor, said the “anecdotal information” provided by instructors can help to communicate a difficult concept or regain student attention, and the students appreciate it. “The feedback that we consistently receive from our students at the end-of-course critique, they always say the stories were really what brought about these lessons.”

The less formal or less scripted moments could take a variety of forms and could be instructor or student initiated. For example, Lucy, a civilian advanced practitioner, said that one of her instructors had “made up a song with his drums and his guitar” to help teach a lesson on the relationship between the Defense Department and the State Department in foreign contexts. The lesson discussed “the different groups coming together for overseas messaging,” she said. “I constantly go back to that, the way he taught it, in terms of who I need to coordinate with overseas in the proper order.” The lesson, she said, gave students the tools “to start and actively make good decisions that are in alignment with what [Department of Defense] instructions say.”

Instructor-developed moments of localized socialization could be elaborate and involve the use of information and communications technology. In such moments, instructors appeared to take the initiative to adapt the curriculum and instruction to emphasize matters that, through their firsthand experience or that of peers in the field, they understood to be important. For example, Oscar discussed how he had used a video, voice and messaging application to more effectively communicate to students the utility of DVIDS, a military communication network used to distribute military multimedia content internally and externally. The traditional approach, he said, was a lecture that said, "This is what DVIDS can do for you," but which left students saying, "I don't know what use that was for me."

However, he said, by beginning with the desired "end state," the learning goal, and using the communication app to bring in a public affairs manager involved in a then-ongoing mission, he was able to show students how DVIDS could be used to facilitate media interviews every 15 minutes with the commanding officer. "All the PAO had to do was coordinate with the DVIDS person," Oscar said. "And it was like, 'Oh, my gosh!' The light bulb turned on. People were writing down stuff." Similarly, Zoe said she and a fellow instructor had begun contacting public affairs managers in the field and saying to them, "What is it that you all are doing that's innovative, and let's see if we can bring you in as a speaker." Then, using video conferencing applications, those managers are brought into the classroom, she said, "and then they're briefing the students from afar to say, 'Look, this is something that we found very effective. This is something that you should expect, that we just don't have as part of the curriculum.'"

Students, as well as instructors, could initiate the unscripted, but important moments that extend the learning process outside the classroom. As Simon, a noncommissioned officer and advanced student, said, discussions will extend beyond class "because there's always some extra thing you wanted to say to the person that had a question that you didn't get to say. Then we go out, and usually you're like, 'Hey, that thing you said. Well, this was my experience.' Or someone will say that to me. And we do that a lot." He gave as an example a discussion with a fellow student regarding "troop cards," a sheet of frequently asked questions to guide troops in their interactions with the public, usually when deploying. He said:

> Yesterday we were talking about troop cards, and I was like, "I don't—For having a troop card for home station, I can't see the value in that." But [Name of fellow student], who is Guard, told me that they do it, and it's incorporated, and they're constantly pounding it, and it works well. . . . I don't know if it's culturally different, or maybe that's something that I should revisit, or [be] considering at home station.

Participant responses also indicated a belief that the learning necessary to be an effective public affairs manager continues after graduation from the PAQC. Responses also indicated that the education of a public affairs manager could begin prior to course attendance.

Participants discussed the important role of on-the-job training in the formation of a public affairs manager. For example, Kimberly, a senior officer and intermediate administrator, said she was a "blank slate" and "very excited" when she went through the course, and it provided her a "very good baseline." Even so, the

public affairs staff she worked with in her first post-PAQC assignment was instrumental in shaping her understanding of public affairs. She said:

> I was fortunate enough to go and work in a section where I had a major, another O-4 senior officer, and some senior enlisted personnel to help shape my impression of what we should have been doing. I also went on a deployment to Afghanistan right after graduating from the course. So, we were really running full operations. We had lot of hands-on, extensive hands-on, experience right after finishing the course.

Zoe provided a striking example of learning what she called the "art" of public affairs practice that comes into play after learning the "science" in and graduating from the PAQC. On her first assignment, she said, at a recruit training base, only a week after her own graduation, the base public affairs officer was on leave, putting Zoe in charge. But the base PAO had told her, she said, "Don't worry, I'm just a phone call away." At 9 a.m. Zoe was called into what she assumed was a normal meeting, but there she learned that a recruit had died. It had been a pre-existing medical condition, she said, but "at this point we didn't know anything that had happened." Then her PAQC training kicked in. She continued:

> But learning here [in the PAQC], it was like "You have to send out a press release, and you have to do this. And we have to wait until 24 hours after next-of-kin notification in order to say the name." And so, I have all this stuff prepped, along those same lines that we learned here, and I call my boss to say, "Okay, I'm about to release!" And she said, "Are you crazy?" She said, "Do you know what kind of tizzy you're going to send half of the nation into

> when you release a statement saying a male recruit died, but we can't really say our name until 24 hours after next of kin?" She said, "Don't release anything right now. We will wait until after something, after we know, because otherwise we're going to have every parent in America calling to say 'Is it my son or daughter?'" And I didn't realize that, so that was not something that I learned here. So, it was like immediately within my first week, I learned "Oh, crap, there is a lot more to this game than just the science part of it. There are other considerations."

Some responses suggested that on-the-job-training prior to course attendance could be an important experience. For example, Oscar, the expert administrator, credited a public affairs noncommissioned officer with helping him to learn that "there is no mediocrity" before he attended the PAQC. The noncommissioned officer had assigned Oscar a feature to write and had him rewrite it eight times, "because I was atrocious at writing features . . . and on the eighth time he said, 'Wow, this is great.' He says, 'But you missed the deadline.'" The noncommissioned officer wrote a story in four hours, Oscar said, which "was better than mine that I had to rewrite eight times. But he was not going to let go until I had it done right."

Finally, responses also suggested that public affairs managers are active participants in their own early organizational and professional socialization. Again, important learning can at times occur prior to formal instruction. As the above example of the troop card discussion suggests, students can play active roles in their own learning in a formal setting as that learning pertains to actual practice. For example, Una, a senior officer and intermediate practitioner, said:

> I remember as a student getting, doing the assignment that was required for grading and then a [noncommissioned officer] saying, "Hey, so you know, ma'am, do it, get a good grade, but here's how you would do it," and she rearranged it as to how it had been effective for her in the fleet. And, you know, she's highly regarded in the community, so I trusted her that she was giving me sound advice.

Such learning can also occur outside of the workday, during off-hours. For example, Quentin, a senior officer and novice student/practitioner, said that after he and a classmate saw a movie, "obviously we talked about work." They discussed the shared career field they were leaving, he said, the features it shares with public affairs, "and how we're going to interact now as public affairs officers. A lot of it dealt with having interpersonal skills, being able to have the soft skills to be able to interact with civilians in a way in which this is different." He said they agreed that relationship building would be vital to the goal of amplifying "your commander's voice."

Again, important learning can at times occur prior to formal instruction, and it need not occur as an interpersonal interaction. Yvonne, discussing the time she spent as a public affairs manager prior to attending the PAQC, said she was "trying to take cues from other public affairs officers, learning from them." She said she didn't understand the importance of a strong working relationship with the organization's lawyers, the Judge Advocate General (JAG), until halfway through her tour when a new one arrived. "We got a new JAG," she said, "and he was just constantly coming to me, asking me questions. And I was like, 'Why is he asking me all these

questions?' And then it clicked, and I'm like, 'Oh, he should be my best friend.' Like, "We should be talking a lot more.'"

"Earning a seat at the table." Participant responses suggest that, while members of a group may not always talk about their group's marginalization, they still must deal with it in some way. "Earning a seat at the table" where influence is wielded and decisions are made appears to be an important goal that socialization processes set for the public affairs manager. Public affairs managers are admonished that to earn that seat at the table, they must "demonstrate value" to the organization. And an important means of demonstrating value, they learn, is by engaging in proactive behavior.

Public affairs managers appear to understand that they are viewed to some degree unfavorably within military organizations and that the disfavor marginalizes the public affairs function. As Travis, a junior officer and novice student, said,

> the fact that [instructors] emphasize the crucial mission of PA to get a seat at the commander's table makes me think that it's not always valued perhaps in the way it should be. I think that if it were properly recognized all the time, then there wouldn't be that push to be part of the conversations that go on with the different commanders.

Public affairs managers also appear to learn that engaging in proactive behavior is a means of responding to and overcoming those negative views and marginalization. For example, Yvonne, a senior officer and novice student, said, "I think a criticism of the public affairs community is that we are reactionary instead of looking ahead." Rachel, a civilian novice student, said that in her service, "they have this attitude of

‘Well, we’re just—we have a mission, and we’re getting stuff done,’ and PA is secondary. And you know that because the minute they start cutting [positions], then they cut PA.” And Victor, a junior officer and novice student, expressing a view shared by a number of participants, said that a common opinion among organizational leaders is that public affairs is focused on perceived low-value activities, such as managing social media accounts and taking photographs at military ceremonies.

Yet, participants also appeared to understand that engaging in proactive behavior is a means to address and overcome the negative opinions of leaders. For example, Victor said he could hear his organization’s senior enlisted manager saying of public affairs: “What do you bring to the fight? Get out of here. You bring nothing to the fight.” In such circumstances, Victor said, the public affairs manager’s task is

> to help educate our command what we bring to the fight, because they’re not being told. They don’t know how to utilize us. We have to take that initiative. We have to be able to show them what we bring to the fight. We have to give them things before we’re asked for them. . . . In public affairs, you very much have to take that initiative because if somebody doesn’t know what you’re supposed to be doing, they can’t task you out.

Rachel said that her public affairs office might be overtasked, at least in part because of the public affairs chief’s concerns about marginalization. Rachel said her office suffers from “mission creep,” the accretion of non-public affairs responsibilities, because “we’re always trying to prove that we’re value-added, and we do stuff really well.” The mission creep might result “because we’re mostly civilian and my boss

does, she does worry about staying relevant, she does worry about keeping us busy so that she can keep our jobs secure."

Finally, some participants said that an effective public affairs manager is one who is constantly trying to advance the mission of the organization. For example, Aaron, a junior officer and intermediate practitioner, said that while the pace of public affairs in garrison is slower than during an operation,

> you're still going to be working weekends and whatnot depending on what the unit's doing. . . . because you should be going to those chamber of commerce meetings, those mayor's luncheons. You should be organizing stuff with the commander. The commander should be having lunch with the mayor. The commander should be giving speeches for holidays and whatnot. You're very busy. Public affairs is a very busy job. And I think a lot of people don't understand all the work that goes into it.

As Aaron's statement suggests, public affairs managers also are admonished that their proactive efforts should "demonstrate value" to the organization. (This is a theme to which I will return in the section addressing public affairs collaboration.) Participant responses suggested that value could be demonstrated most clearly by contributions to the organization's mission or goals.

For example, Hugh, a civilian intermediate practitioner, said that in most organizations, the expectations on the public affairs manager are low: "Write my newsletter, take my pictures, keep the media off my back." On the other hand, public affairs managers could "bring value" by

> taking a look at the organization's goals in general, and analyzing it [sic], and saying, "Where can communications advance these goals?" and writing out a couple of ways, in the form of communications plans, taking those to the commander, and saying, "Here, sir. This is what I can do for you."

Adam, a civilian novice administrator, said that an opportunity to demonstrate value is built into the course lesson on communication planning. Students are encouraged to call their next unit, he said, find out whether it is experiencing a problem with a communications aspect, and, working with instructors, write a communications plan to address the problem. Upon reporting to the unit, the public affairs manager could present the plan and offer to implement it. "And so right off the bat," Adam said, "the [commanding officer] is like "Wow! That guy has initiative. He has taken the reins. He sees a problem that I had no idea was a problem."

Another way in which the public affairs manager can demonstrate value appears to be by contributing to the organization's many programs and projects as a staff officer, even when they might not have a significant public affairs component. For example, Xavier, a senior officer and expert practitioner, said he tells public affairs staff and young officers that they need to be a "part of the Rolodex" when the commanding officer is making a decision. He continued:

> I become value-added when the commander thinks that what I'm going to help the commander solve is of value. Not just the media engagement or the community engagement. That's easy. It's when I'm a valuable staff officer. That I understand what I'm going to help take off the commander's plate.

Finally, participants said that explicitly communicating public affairs' capabilities could help to establish its organizational value. For example, Aaron said that the newly arrived public affairs manager should introduce her- or himself to section heads and tell them what public affairs could do for them. Similarly, Travis, said that it could benefit public affairs to take time to "go out and do things like capabilities briefs to show how we can aid different communities."

Yet, it appears that even if engaging in proactive behavior and attempting to demonstrate value to the organization, the public affairs manager may still experience a lack of recognition, requiring that he or she be more explicit in communicating value or derive satisfaction in other ways. For example, Jacob, a junior officer and advanced practitioner said, "I've told a lot of people, 'If you're looking to get praised and stroked, then [public affairs] is not the job for you.' You have to find the validation through knowing and believing that what you're doing is important." Public affairs, he said, "is not necessarily going to draw equivalency" with infantry or logistics, examples of career fields with clearer value. The public affairs manager, he said, must more explicitly tie her or his efforts to the organization's priorities. Then, when public affairs efforts are successful, he said, the manager can turn to the commanding officer and say: "Hey, I changed these specific things with these specific intents. It's tied to your commander's intent of these three principles, which is what we orient all of our products on."

Participant responses suggested that "earning a seat at the table" where organizational influence is wielded and significant decisions are made, rather than simply enhancing the status of public affairs, is believed to give the public affairs

manager the opportunity to make important contributions to the organization. For example, Carl, a civilian expert administrator, said,

> The biggest thing we want them to come out of [the PAQC] with . . . is they need to understand they need to get a seat at the table. For many, many years, the PAO was something that was considered 'In emergency, break the glass. Out of sight, out of mind. Don't want to hear from you unless I've got a crisis.'

That reactive public affairs posture, he said, had hurt the military in the past. The goal of the course now, he said, is to provide public affairs managers with "enough knowledge and wherewithal to have their commanders, at whatever level, recognize that they are knowledgeable and useful and serve a purpose for that commander."

Other participants provided examples of the contributions that public affairs could make if participating in organizational decision making. For example, Nicholas, a junior officer and intermediate practitioner, said that, because public affairs generally lacks an operational role,

> it's even more important for me to put my foot in the door and make sure I have a seat at every meeting, so I can just kind of stay in the know of what's going on. Even if it doesn't become a public affairs concern, I need to at least have situational awareness of what might make it out in the news, or what might become an issue for me.

Oscar, a civilian expert administrator, said that his inclusion in the operational planning process during his participation in a military operation allowed him to better identify and protect sensitive information. By maintaining "operational security," he

said, “I knew what was and what was not releasable because we had thought through what physically would happen.” Through his understanding of security, he could both more effectively play what he called public affairs’ “sentry” role and more quickly release releasable information and images.

Similarly, Wesley, a civilian expert instructor, said that a commanding officer had moved him into their unit’s operations cell when he was a public affairs manager. The commanding officer “understood that public affairs had value,” he said, “and brought me into staff meetings and gave me time on training calendars” to train personnel at all levels of the organization. He attributed that support to his ability, developed under another public affairs manager, to plan and conduct public affairs activities based on a defined purpose and anticipated effect that “support what your boss is asking you to do.”

Gaining support. The concept of “earning a seat at the table” suggests that public affairs, although a staff (i.e., executive) function in military organizations, is not automatically accorded status and influence in them. It suggests also that gaining acceptance as an important function is a challenging, yet crucial task for the public affairs manager. Yet, this also prompts a question: “Acceptance of public affairs by whom?” The response of one participant offers a clue. According to Brent, a civilian expert instructor, the value placed on public affairs is in part based on the abilities and qualities of the particular public affairs manager. Yet, he said, the value placed on public affairs also is largely “a function of the attitude on the part of the command

leadership team and the command in general," a fact that "makes this a very complex environment. Very, very complex."

Participant responses suggest that it is important for public affairs managers to gain the acceptance and support of two particular and interrelated publics to effectively contribute to the organization and its work. First, public affairs must have the support of the commanding officer. Second, it must have the support of non-public affairs peers on the commanding officer's staff and of other organizational leaders. Additionally, responses suggest that important support could come from more distant sources, such as top military leaders and the regulatory and policy framework within which military organizations operate.

Participants appeared to agree that, for public affairs to have the opportunity to make its maximal contribution, the public affairs manager must have the support of the commanding officer. Gary, a senior officer and intermediate practitioner, painted a picture of the limitations if working without that support. As a staff officer, he said, the public affairs manager is "supposed to have direct access to the commander." But the public affairs manager can, he said,

> get stuck in the gatekeepers because the commander doesn't view you as enough value added to talk to him or her one on one when you feel [it is] important to do so. Then you get relegated. You don't become a strategic asset. Then that trickles down to the staff. And then when it comes to planning sessions, when you're a planner on the staff and you're talking about operational planning, then PAO just becomes an afterthought. So then they make decisions without you or they don't listen to your input.

Aaron, a junior officer and intermediate practitioner, discussed the effort it took to gain the confidence of his commanding officer during a military operation, as well as the payoff for his efforts. The commanding officer, Aaron said, "was a very hard man. So you really had to, you know, I had brief him on everything. And over the months he came to value my opinion." Through "interpersonal relationships" and by demonstrating his commitment to "protecting" the organization, he said, he was able to persuade the commanding officer of the importance of media relations and gained his support for embedding journalists and his participation in interviews with major media outlets. Elizabeth, a civilian advanced practitioner, had a similar experience, but in the garrison. She was able to advise the top general in her state regarding the need for a public response to a mishap, she said, because she had "built a rapport" with him "to the point where he knows that if I'm coming to him directly . . . going, 'Sir, I suggest this. I strongly suggest this,' he knows I mean business. But it took me time to build that."

A few participants offered as a sign of the appropriate level of support, the example, actual and hypothetical, of the executive meeting that would not begin without the presence of the public affairs manager. For example, Wesley, a civilian expert instructor, said that in one of his practitioner assignments, the commanding officer "wouldn't start a meeting until I showed up. That's where we got to inside of that relationship." To arrive at that point, he said, the public affairs manager must "get out of this mindset that says my job is to put out stories" and instead be able to speak, plan and execute based on "anticipated effects."

Responses also suggest that the support of non-public affairs peers on the commanding officer's staff and other organizational leaders is another important factor in the ability of the public affairs function to contribute maximally to the organization. For example, in response to the question of what allows public affairs to exercise influence within an organization, Margaret, a senior officer and advanced practitioner, said:

> Building relationships with the staff, ahead of time. It's not something that would be easy to do on day one on the job. Building relationships and your reputation with the staff, so that they know that you are intelligent, you are well informed, well educated, and you have the experience and background to be able to speak truth to the matter.

Influence also comes, she said, with being able to develop and communicate lessons learned "both when things go well and when things go poorly."

Similarly, participants said that public affairs managers, upon arriving at a new unit, should brief leaders regarding the services and resources that public affairs can provide to aid them in their missions. For example, Francis, a senior officer and novice practitioner, said: "You get to a new unit, you should set up a time with the leadership to give them a capabilities brief. And you tell them what you can do and what you can't do." Successful briefings should create demand for public affairs products or services, said Aaron, the intermediate practitioner. "And then you help them, they help you. You know, it's a circle," he said.

Finally, participant responses indicated that important support could come from top military leaders and the regulatory and policy framework within which

military organizations operate. “Public affairs is a program that the commander owns and is obligated to operate,” said Kimberly, a senior officer and intermediate administrator. The obligation to conduct public affairs could be experienced as the expectations of top military leaders, she said. For example, Kimberly said, if proactive media relations is set as a priority by Defense Department leaders, “if they’re pushing commanders, ‘Hey, we need you to get out there and talk about what you’re doing,’ then the PAO is going to be a friend at the table and somebody that they want to have.”

The legal and regulatory framework within which military organizations operate could be another source of support for the public affairs function. For example, Xavier, a senior officer and expert administrator, said he had traced the basis for military public affairs’ existence up from the United States Code, as it governs the military services, to the Constitution. “My job is to ensure the commander understands his or her roles and responsibilities outlined in [U.S. Code] Title 10,” he said. Xavier’s understanding of those obligations “shapes my discussions and engagements with commanders and leaders when they’re like, ‘Why do we have to do this?’”

Additionally, policies within individual services could also provide support for public affairs. For example, in 2017, the Marine Corps initiated a consolidation of public affairs and combat camera[7] into the “communications strategy and operations” career field. Included with the new career field, apparently, was an increase in the top

[7] Visual information function and career field.

rank available to the "commstrat" officer in Marine organizations. The change should put her or him on par with non-public affairs peers on the commanding officer's staff, said Margaret, the advanced practitioner. The public affairs officer is "typically the junior guy at the table," she said, but the change meant that her unit would have a communications strategies and operations chief at a rank making him "an equal to the rest of his peers. I'd say everywhere else I've been, we've been one rank lower than the majority of the staff."

Preparation for early career success. Participant views appeared to diverge on the question whether the PAQC adequately prepares and equips the student to perform the work of a military public affairs manager. It appeared that, in general, participants within the first few years of course completion (e.g., novices) believed it had prepared them to be effective managers. It also appeared, however, that participants beyond the first few years (e.g., advanced practitioners) believed the course failed to prepare "strategic" managers.

Participants within the first few years of course completion appeared to believe the PAQC had prepared them well to be effective public affairs managers. The course appears to equip managers with the skills, knowledge and other tools to perform their work successfully.

For example, Donna, a junior officer and novice practitioner, said that she had applied much of what she learned in the course both at her base and during an operational exercise. For example, regarding responding to media queries her public affairs office had received, she said of the course:

> It kind of gave me an idea of "Okay, we've received a media query. Who are we going to coordinate with? What kind of response are we going to come up with?" Then once that gets coordinated with the proper people, then we would push that out.

Similarly, during the exercise, the base faced various scenarios (e.g., a bomb threat, protesters at the main gate) that required a public affairs response or input. She and a fellow public affairs practitioner, she said, produced news releases, responses-to-query, developed Q&A documents, in the process coordinating with pertinent offices and individuals for accuracy, wording, and quotes. "A lot of that we did in PAQC," she said.

Hugh, an intermediate civilian practitioner, whom I interviewed four years after he completed the PAQC, said the course was instrumental in helping him develop an important daylong media event for his research center. "We ran the whole program from public affairs here," he said, "and we had set it all up and did the whole thing." He said he turned to his PAQC materials to develop the media briefing portion, prepare to moderate a Q&A, and develop his introductions for speakers. When the event was over, he said,

> One of our mid-level leaders came up, and he was like, "Wow! I had no idea that that was the sort of thing you guys would do. That was really cool." I said, "Yeah, thanks." And from that point on, every interaction with him was framed in a broader scope of what he thought public affairs could do. So, in that way I have definitely applied what I learned from PAQC.

Even an advanced practitioner a year out from the course could attribute her broadened understanding of the public affairs function, her increased public affairs management capabilities, and her success as a staff officer to the PAQC. Elizabeth, an advanced civilian practitioner with experience as an enlisted practitioner, said the course opened her eyes to the division of responsibilities between public affairs technicians and managers. She learned, she said, that officers are trained in writing public affairs annexes to operational orders, conducting analyses, and managing resources, whereas enlisted personnel usually are not. It was also an "eye-opener," she said, to better understand "how little [officers] learned about the enlisted side."

The course, she said, increased her public affairs management capabilities and contributed to her success as a staff officer. Elizabeth also is an enlisted public affairs manager in a reserve unit. Learning to write communications plans and annexes and perform other management duties in both her public affairs positions, she said,

> set me up for success in a staff position even in the enlisted side now, because I sit in a [staff officer slot]. That set me up for success there as well, because that's exactly what I was expected to do for my commander. He's like, "Yup, she's in a staff position. She needs to write the annex." I didn't have that on any of my enlisted courses. . . . I am writing annexes constantly. I am writing comm plans constantly on the . . . civilian side. And none of that is done on the enlisted side. So for an officer's position, it's definitely set me up.

While there appeared to be general agreement among participants within a few years of graduation that the course effectively prepared them for their work,

intermediate and advanced participants seemed to agree that the course fell short in one important way: It did not adequately prepare "strategic" public affairs managers.

Contrary to the views expressed by Elizabeth above regarding preparation in management responsibilities, other participants said the PAQC did not focus enough on planning and related processes. For example, Margaret, a senior officer and advanced practitioner, said the course "is just very practitioner focused." She elaborated:

> So not a lot of emphasis put on planning, research or evaluation. Really just kind of wave tops. I felt like it got me through my first couple of years as a PAO. But after that, it sort of peaked out on any of the benefit I was going to get out of DINFOS.

Similarly, Gary, a senior officer and intermediate practitioner, said the course emphasizes the public affairs manager being "very practical and pragmatic," an emphasis reflected in the focus on "copy editing, how to write news releases, writing messages, and talking points." The course, he said, lacks a focus on being "a more strategic public affairs officer. . . . There's not as much focus on communication theory and being a strategic asset for your commander when you get to your first unit."

When there is attention to matters of strategy, said Jacob, a junior officer and advanced practitioner, it doesn't delve deeply enough into the topic. While there is a heavy focus on content and media relations, he said,

> they're not teaching you "What is a branding guide? Why should you have brand consistency? What's the function of communicating regularly with the

> public? If you're building this comm plan out, how are you doing it? . . . What's your measure of success?" So even talking about comm plans, there's no measures of effect. Maybe they did have measures of effectiveness. But they glanced on it. They don't talk about it.

Finally, two participants offered alternative views on the relationship between preparation in the course and what the public affairs manager encounters in actual practice, at least in the first few years after course completion. Simon, a noncommissioned officer and advanced student, said that the on-the-job experiences of the newest military members in his service would give them a better picture of their day-to-day duties than the course does. The course, he said, appears "geared towards preparing you to be a lead PAO," which is an unlikely role for the most junior officers. He added:

> It's more prepping you for understanding where your boss is and then what the role is that you're going to fill within probably two years. Because you're going to do one assignment under a PAO, and then we're probably going to put you somewhere where you'll be a PAO. So you'll just kind of, you'll relearn all this stuff, [on the job] in the field.

In the view of Wesley, a civilian expert instructor, the relationship between public affairs training in the course and public affairs practice in the field is much closer. He said that in the classroom he emphasizes student understanding of the doctrinal basis for public affairs practice, but that he also welcomes former students bringing him unfamiliar and novel scenarios from their own experiences. Those scenarios have

helped to teach him, he said, that "most of learning happens in evaluation, not in presentation."

In the above discussion of organizational socialization of public affairs managers, I discussed a number of matters suggested by participant responses. First, they suggested that managers believe that important learning occurs through less formal or less scripted interactions during the course and that such learning can occur both prior to enrollment and after course completion. They also suggested that managers are active participants in their own socialization. Second, they suggested that "earning a seat at the table" where organizational influence is wielded and decisions are made is an important goal for managers, which they achieve by engaging in proactive behavior through which they "demonstrate value" to the organization. Third, the findings suggested that public affairs managers must gain the support of commanding officers, non-public affairs peers on the executive staff and other leaders. Important support can also come from more distant sources of authority higher in the organization. Fourth, they suggested that participant views diverge on the question whether the course adequately prepares the student to perform the work of a military public affairs manager. Those managers within a few years of course completion generally expressed greater confidence that the course had well prepared them, while those beyond their first few years believed that the course failed to prepare "strategic" managers.

Research Question 3: Collaboration

The third research question asked how, if at all, collaboration is developed and practiced as a public affairs competency through joint entry-level public affairs

training for military public affairs managers. It sought to explore collaboration as means and object of instruction in the PAQC and as an element of public affairs practice in military organizations. Collaboration is the process of two or more people working and communicating across organizational lines to accomplish a common goal (Hogg, van Knippenberg, & Rast, 2012; Martinez-Moyano, 2006). Collaboration in an organizational context can involve separate organizations or formal groups within a single organization (Hogg et al., 2012). Collaboration in this context also can involve members of different sociodemographic groups or other social categories (Hogg et al., 2012). Themes that emerged in response to the research question were related to the importance of collaboration for effective public affairs practice; important collaboration partners and the impact of previous contact on the willingness to collaborate with public affairs; and the opportunities for and constraints on collaboration created by the ambiguity surrounding public affairs.

Because public affairs "does not own the information." Participant responses suggest that effective collaboration is vital to the success of the public affairs manager and the public affairs function in contributing to the organization. Three reasons for the importance of collaboration highlighted by participants were the need for access to information to do their job, the importance of collaboration to minimizing risk, and the expectation of collaboration with outside organizations. Yet, given the importance placed on collaboration as an element of public affairs practice,

it appears that it is given little attention as an object of instruction in the PAQC; it is instead treated largely as a means of instruction.

Participants appeared to agree that the public affairs manager must collaborate because the information that public affairs needs to perform its communication responsibilities often is in the possession of other individuals or departments in the organization. For example, Yvonne, a senior officer and novice student, said that, regardless of the organizational context, public affairs must work with others to access information to do its job. She said:

> I think for public affairs you cannot do anything alone, because you don't own the information. You're responsible for putting the information out in helping to shape that message. But if there's a mishap, the information that you have is not yours. It's derived from that mishap. So, I think on a staff, operational or not, you have to collaborate.

Margaret, a senior officer and advanced practitioner, said that, for public affairs, collaboration "is a huge, huge factor." She continued: "We're kind of 'inch deep, mile wide' in terms of depth of knowledge, so we certainly have to work with various staff sections to get input from subject matter experts in other areas." Additionally, she said, collaboration is important because:

> We don't want to be the only ones speaking for the commands. People want to hear from the guys who actually fly the planes, etcetera. So, you have to have buy-in from the command, again building relationships, and working together ahead of time.

Further, building that support and participation across the organization means that public affairs is able to bring attention to, as Una, a senior officer and intermediate practitioner, said, "those who are actually doing" while not "surprising" their supervisors and other leaders and prompting "pushback." Collaboration means, she said, "you're working across the departments to inform and also to make sure that they have an idea that you're not communicating in a bubble, that you understand their concerns and that you're taking care of them."

Such comments suggest a second basis for the importance of public affairs collaboration: to minimize or reduce risk to the organization. Participants agreed that a failure to collaborate could increase risk, at least when the organization elects to communicate. For example, Lucy, a civilian advanced practitioner, said:

> I think everyone has to be in the know. If you skip anyone in your process before releasing information, that could be catastrophic. Especially at the level where I'm speaking at this point. You know, we get into lanes of some really, really sensitive material, and I think you have to have everyone's buy-off on it before you can publish.

Hugh, a civilian intermediate practitioner, related the need for collaboration in public affairs contexts to his previous experience in an operational role. He said:

> Back when I was an operations officer, we had a big poster on the wall that said, "Who else needs to know?" Who else needs to be tied in, who else needs to have an understanding of what's going on? Who else needs to have a say in the messaging? Because if you're working things in a vacuum, and you're not

> bringing all the key players in, you're probably going to be doing it all over again or you're risking a catastrophic failure in whatever you're doing.

According to participants, in addition to helping to protect the organization, collaboration helps to protect public affairs. For example, Aaron, a junior intermediate practitioner, said that, in case of the death of a military member,

> you need to be one of the first people [leaders] call so you can get in there and start getting the information, developing the press release, notifying the public 24 hours after next-of-kin notification. . . . You can't be the last person that finds out. Because then the media's going to be calling you, and you're going to look stupid.

Similarly, Lucy said that if the public affairs manager fails to take a collaborative approach when dealing with and releasing sensitive information, "you could get into some serious trouble."

Responses also suggest that collaboration is an important competency and practice because public affairs managers can expect to work with members of other organizations throughout their careers. Additionally, those collaboration partners can represent a variety of organization types, including other military services and federal civilian agencies, State Department entities and partners, and media and other industries.

Participant responses suggested that collaboration between or among services and with civilian government agencies is common and important. For example, Philip, a noncommissioned officer and advanced student, said:

> Being in the Navy, I have not only worked with Navy my whole career. And I don't really know any service member who has just worked with people from their service or people in their specific [career field] for their whole career. It's inherent to being in the military. You need to learn how to work with people who are different from you.

Military operations or deployments (e.g., for humanitarian assistance) create conditions for collaboration involving public affairs. For example, Xavier, a senior officer and expert administrator, said that in deployments early in his career, he worked for the Navy, a service other than his own. He also said that working alongside Navy personnel in the course and being able to turn to those Navy public affairs classmates afterward helped him to understand how the Navy commanding officer "perceives public affairs" and views the "problem set" he and the Navy leader might be dealing with. Similarly, Kimberly, a senior officer and intermediate administrator, said that both of her deployments for military operations were "joint environments." The deployments, she said, also involved working with host-nation military and police forces.

Collaboration with civilian government agencies appears also to be important, especially in the case of Coast Guard public affairs. For example, Ian, a junior officer and intermediate practitioner, said, "One of the things I think the Coast Guard does well is build relationships with federal and state and civilian partners." For public affairs, he said,

> collaboration plays a huge role because we are a storytelling apparatus, but we are not the story. And so it requires a lot of internal collaboration, both with

> other Coast Guard units and with our partner organizations to make sure that we are kind of all on the same page, all speaking toward the same shared goal. Then, in [disaster] response environments, obviously, everything is multiplied by a couple times and a dose of stress added in.

Participants also discussed the need for collaboration with the U.S. Department of State and organizations it collaborates with in international work. For example, Lucy, a civilian advanced practitioner working abroad, said that in her organization, public affairs works closely with the local U.S. embassy:

> Say we're writing a press release or a product or a speech, I need to have review from a country desk officer, the specialist who is responsible for the material in it, from the embassy. And it requires that chop from everyone before I can publish it. Everyone offers something different, they offer a different perspective.

Similarly, Brent, a civilian expert instructor, also said his previous work brought him into regular contact with the State Department and created the need for internal and external collaboration. In addition to working with communication functions at multiple levels of the Defense Department, he said, he worked with the State Department and its partners. "I'm working sometimes directly with State Department proper," he said. "Not an embassy, but State Department reps calling me on things." His organization's collaborative efforts could extend to the State Department's nongovernmental and intergovernmental partners. "And depending on the job now, you're still collaborating, but it's on a significantly more grand scale,"

he said. “And frankly, that’s tough. That’s really tough, and it happens more than people realize.”

Responses also suggest that collaboration with mass media and, at least in the case of research centers, private industry is important. As the theme “preparing the ‘garrison PAO’” and the concepts of public affairs’ “home-front orientation” and “telling the military story” suggest, public affairs managers appear to believe that strong working relationships with the civilian mass media are vital to their work. For example, Ian, the Coast Guard intermediate practitioner, said that collaboration with the mass media entails “providing them access, providing them resources, providing them information, providing them pre-written and formatted content in exchange for their help in broadcasting our story and our messaging on our timeline and with our angle.” Travis, a junior officer and novice student, provided an example of the role media collaboration can play in strengthening community relations. When a nonprofit organization decided to build a memorial to the World War II service of a unit on his base, the public affairs office helped to organize a community event, he said. Working with local media, the office brought attention to the story and raised awareness of the unit’s history. The effort, which was to culminate in the community event on Memorial Day, helped the public affairs office bring positive attention to the unit and strengthen relationships internally and externally, Travis said.

Finally, at least in the case of military research centers, collaboration with private industry appears to be important. As another example, Hugh, the civilian intermediate practitioner, said that his public affairs office engages in a great deal of collaboration “with our counterparts in industry,” public relations firms representing

for-profit organizations involved in the same industries and technologies as his research center. Additionally, Xavier, the expert administrator, spoke of participating in a 10-month career development program sponsored by his service that embeds military personnel with civilian organizations to understand how common issues are addressed by industry. Being situated in a for-profit company, Xavier said, helped him understand how an organization with "multiple lines of business . . . how do they operate and what are their communication challenges, and how do they get after it?" More importantly, he said, he learned "the business side of communication. And those are things that we aren't comfortable with in the U.S. military."

Yet, given the importance ascribed to collaboration and its prevalence as observed by participants in their own careers, responses suggested that collaboration is not given attention as an object of instruction in the PAQC. Instead, it appears to be largely a means of instruction.

For example, when asked how collaboration shows up in the course, Wesley, a civilian expert instructor, responded, "weakly." While group assignments help students understand that collaboration must occur within the public affairs function, he said, the course has a more difficult time communicating "how the [executive] staff works and who does what for who . . . particularly with our newer service members." The difficulty arises, he said, because "they're supposed to already come with that knowledge by that point. But what you find is they don't."

Oscar, a civilian expert administrator, said that collaboration was vital to his work as the public affairs officer for a military unit engaged in combat operations. For example, he said, it served him well in helping to plan "key leader engagements"

for the unit, including the security aspects. Having the access to participate in such work, he said, "only comes through relationship building. But I will ask you the question, 'Where in PAQC do we teach them how to build relationships, except through stories? Where do we challenge them?'"

Participant responses indicated that the emphasis placed on collaboration in the course appears most clearly in the use of small groups for some assignments. The work to encourage collaborative relationships occurs both explicitly and behind the scenes. According to Carl, a civilian expert administrator, the instruction team encourages students to work together during the course. Typically, on the first day of the course, he said,

> I have the people stand up that have no experience, and then I have the people stand up that have more experience. And sometimes we'll go how many years experience, or whatever, and then we'll kind of build that bridge for them: "These folks have been there, done that. Rely on them. Rely on your senior enlisted."

Behind the scenes, Carl said, the class is divided into teams, which are then further divided into small groups of four or five students. He said:

> We take a look at how we separate them into teams by their rank, the seniority aspect of it, their gender, their service, and anything that may come up that we might see as a benefit or somebody that might need some help. We'll put them with somebody that's stronger, or we would assume that would be stronger.

The goal is, Carl said, to encourage encounters with cultural difference "so [students] can see things from a different perspective" and "hopefully come out with one

mindset." A second goal, he said, is to get students accustomed to working in a joint environment. "PAOs, most times," he said, "will one way, shape, or form, work in that joint environment."

Participant responses suggested that students appreciated and benefited from the joint nature of the course and the use of small groups. For example, Donna, a junior officer and novice student/practitioner, said that, although she had occasionally interacted with other services while in the Reserve Officers' Training Corps in college, she was "taken aback" by the diversity she saw on the first day of the PAQC. She said:

> I think it was just awesome to be sitting in a room with all these people with all these different uniforms on. It was just kind of cool. You're not used to that. That's the main difference. Just the fact that it's joint. We're in this active learning environment, where we can hear these different perspectives, hear these different experiences, and kind of reflect on what we know. . . .

Elizabeth, a civilian advanced practitioner, while acknowledging that the small-group dynamics could vary from group to group, offered her three-person PAQC group as an example of one that functioned well and achieved the collaboration and learning goals set for the course. She said she and the other experienced member considered the needs of the third member in planning work:

> The three of us worked very well. . . . We made sure that, "This might be the challenging part. Let's give the newbie her opportunity. What does she want to try first?" And then, "What does she feel more comfortable with? What does she want to be challenged with?" And let her pick first. You know,

> "She's new. Let her try it. . . . " And then we helped. And she took constructive criticism well, and she had some great ideas, too. . . . We pumped her up. She's teaching us some stuff, too.

Contact and collaboration. Evidence was presented and discussed above indicating that gaining influence within the organization and participating in the making of decisions affecting the organization are important goals for the public affairs manager. (See the previous theme "earning a seat at the table.") That evidence and additional participant responses suggest, on the one hand, the importance of collaboration with certain key individuals and functions within the military organization and, on the other, the importance of preconditions conducive to collaboration with public affairs. In this section, I first discuss the individuals and functions that participant responses suggest are especially important for public affairs to collaborate with. I then discuss how contact with public affairs appears to influence the willingness of such individuals and functions to collaborate with public affairs.

Participant responses suggest that public affairs must collaborate effectively and regularly with certain individuals and functions within the organization if it is to make important contributions to the organization. Responses indicated that those key collaboration partners are the commanding officer; key leaders on the executive staff; the legal office; and peer communication functions within the organization. Responses also indicated that collaboration within the public affairs team is important.

Responses indicated that the commanding officer is a vital collaboration partner for public affairs. For example, Xavier, a senior officer and expert

administrator, said that in communication planning, “I have to figure out, does my communication strategy involve resources that I don’t own. Invariably almost everything [does]. I own nothing. The commander does. Now it becomes relationships.” In addition to helping secure resources for public affairs efforts, collaboration with the commanding officer can help to protect the organization from threats. For example, Una, a senior officer and intermediate practitioner, worked closely with her commanding officer when they were under pressure to promote a new ship and its untested technologies. However, she said, the commanding officer, a former test pilot, “was adamant that we not talk about how great the technology was until such time as it actually worked.” She agreed with the commanding officer, she said, because “there could’ve been a lot of blowback if we had said, ‘This is the best thing ever. This is the way we’re going,’ and none of it worked.”

Responses also indicated that collaboration with key leaders on the executive staff is important for public affairs. Participants drew attention to the importance of collaboration with the leadership of subordinate units and with personnel responsible for the day-to-day management of the organization, such as the chief of staff or the unit’s executive officer. For example, Simon, a noncommissioned officer and advanced student, said that public affairs must work closely with the commanding officers and senior enlisted personnel of subordinate units within an organization, with similar relationships being important at all levels of his service. He said:

> It’s intensely important to have those relationships, because you can’t get anything done without those other people. We’re not here for the purpose of PA. We’re here to support everything else that’s happening and further those

> goals. So if they're not working with you, then I don't know what you're doing all day.

Figures such as the chief of staff, the unit's executive officer, and the unit's operations officer, i.e., individuals responsible for the day-to-day operation and leadership of the organization, also were indicated as important collaboration partners. For example, Philip, a noncommissioned officer and advanced student, said that public affairs has "regular, near-daily contact" with them and that they must understand "what you can bring to help them complete the mission."

Participant responses also indicated public affairs must collaborate with the legal office to contribute effectively. Responses suggest that working closely with the organization's lawyers helps public affairs protect the organization. For example, Travis, a junior officer and novice student, said: "It seems like the answer to most 'Can we do this?' questions are [sic] instantly routed to the judge advocates [i.e., lawyers]. So, I'd say JAG is a crucial player in anything public affairs-related." Collaboration also appears to help public affairs influence the organization's public response in cases of alleged wrongdoing. "The lawyer's another important person to know," said Nicholas, a junior officer and intermediate practitioner. He continued:

> A lot of times public affairs officers are called upon when something goes wrong. Let's say one of our sailors gets in trouble. What disciplinary action will he or she face, and how do we respond publicly to the media? What can we say? What privacy concerns are there? We have a regular relationship with the lawyer too, to make sure that we stay clear of any problems.

Responses also suggest that collaboration with peer communication functions in the organization and within the public affairs team are important to public affairs' contribution to the organization. Responses suggested that integration with the other strategic communication functions (vs. tactical, field communications) helps public affairs advance the mission of the organization. For example, Gary, a senior officer and intermediate practitioner, said that, while different communication functions might operate under different regulations,

> We're all essentially trying to achieve the same communication objectives. So, you have to be able to collaborate well with different information-related capabilities. . . . We all have to collaborate in order to effectively work towards the same communication objectives in support of what the commander's operational objectives are.

Oscar, a civilian expert administrator, said he had experienced such integration during a deployment to a combat zone. At the direction of the commanding officer, he said, the unit's communication functions were assembled into a "joint effects cell," which was part of the planning cell. Before missions were approved, Oscar said, the planners "went through us, and they said, 'Okay, what's the PA part of this mission? What's the [information operations] part of this mission?'" That collaboration allowed him to do "proactive PA," he said. Because he knew the missions and understood their goals, he could prepare the public affairs response and have statements "to the international media within 30 minutes," he said.

Participant responses also suggest that collaboration among the public affairs staff is an important factor in the function's effectiveness. For example, Carl, a

civilian expert administrator, said that the PAQC, which had been restricted to officers and civilians, was opened up to noncommissioned officers in part because

> We need to have the enlisted and the officer side be able to work in unison and understand what the other does. Even still to this day, the officers don't necessarily know what the enlisted folks do. . . . Likewise, the enlisted don't understand the strategic mindset from the officer side. . . . [The decision to open the course] was to make the transition a little smoother so that way everybody understands what's going on with each other and they can work as a team.

In the same vein, Jacob, a junior officer and advanced practitioner, said his experience as an enlisted public affairs specialist, combined with the strategic focus of the PAQC, allowed him to manage his staff for greater organizational impact. He said he had observed a lack of "cross-pollination" between the public affairs manager engaged in planning and the public affairs specialist sent into the field to generate a product. But by understanding the two sides of the public affairs manager–specialist relationship, he said, he could both help his staff work toward organizationally-important communication goals and deliver on those goals for the commanding officer. "Now you're creating relevancy to your [commanding officer] too," Jacob said. "Because he understands that you understand what he's doing, and you're not just telling stories to tell stories."

Non-contact, negative contact, and positive contact. In addition to identifying key collaboration partners, participant responses suggest that the willingness to collaborate with public affairs is influenced by an important precondition: the

existence and quality of contact between public affairs and its potential partners. In this section, I discuss the apparent impact of different contact conditions on the willingness to work with the public affairs function and staff, discussing the absence of contact, negative contact, and positive contact.

Responses suggest that a lack of contact with public affairs, an apparently common condition among non-public affairs personnel in the early years of their careers, can contribute to negative perceptions of the public affairs function. The early-career experiences of Yvonne, a senior officer and novice student, appeared to reflect the general lack of contact between public affairs and the typical organizational member. In the first 10 years of her military career, in an operational role, she said, "I had zero exposure to public affairs officers." During that time, she served as a "collateral duty public affairs officer," an additional, untrained duty assigned to personnel with primary responsibilities in other areas. She wrote a few articles for the base newspaper, she said, but still interacted only to a limited degree with public affairs staff. Had she remained in an operational career, she said, she might be "going up for department head or commanding officer" at the late-mid-career point. That leadership position, she said, would likely have provided her first extensive exposure to public affairs had she not transferred to public affairs.

Quentin, a senior officer and novice student/practitioner, summed up the attitude he said such commanding officers, being assigned a public affairs manager for the first time so late in their careers, tend to adopt. They've been in command at lower levels, he said, and

> they've never had to deal with a public affairs officer. So when they get to that brigade level, and now they are like, "Hey, you have this individual." [They respond:] "I don't know him or her. Why do I need this person? I've been doing great this whole time."

Responses also suggest that interactions that paint public affairs in a negative light also can contribute to a wariness among non-public affairs peers to work with the function. Adam, a civilian novice administrator who had served as an instructor in an operations school, said that when a well-liked and respected peer was designated the collateral PAO, the attitude among the staff became "Stay away from him." Additionally, he said, when the commanding officer asked for updates from the staff during a particular meeting and the PAO responded, "We have three Facebook likes, and we have five positive comments on Twitter," many on the staffed giggled:

> All the shops, the admin, intel, ops, the chaplain even, kind of giggles a little bit, like, "What is this guy doing? That's what he does for a job, for a living? He just counts Facebook likes, and he just posts on Twitter and Facebook all day long? And says 'Hi' to people and greets people when they come for a visit? That's what he does?" And these are not junior folks. These are O-6s, O-5s, O-4s, E-7s, E-6s. And this is, for some of them, their first encounter with a PAO. Whatever images they've had or biases they've had towards a PAO are now either reinforced or changed to this wrong aspect of what a PAO does. So that was unfortunate for [Name], because now he becomes an outcast.

Contact with public affairs staff performing non-strategic activities also may contribute to the view that public affairs is a low-value function. For example, participant responses suggested that being tasked to photograph ceremonies is a form of marginalization that can reinforce negative perceptions. Such activities are common for collateral PAOs, said Nicholas, a junior officer and intermediate practitioner, and the collateral PAO is how lower-level commanding officers encounter public affairs. These "happy snaps" at ceremonies that organizational members expect the public affairs staff to take, according to Gary, a senior officer and intermediate practitioner, are products that "have no news value or no strategic-level value or communication value for the command, that accomplish nothing."

If negative contact or the lack of contact can lead to public affairs being marginalized, positive contact appears to improve the status of public affairs and increase the willingness of organizational members to collaborate with the function. For example, and as discussed earlier, after a mid-level leader in his organization witnessed the high-profile media event that Hugh, a civilian intermediate practitioner, led, "every interaction with him was framed in a broader scope of what he thought public affairs could do." Similarly, Wesley, a civilian expert instructor, said that "one of the best moments of my career" occurred when a peer who was transferring out of the unit and had observed Wesley's work told him: "I had never realized you guys, what you did. I have a completely new appreciation for what this could do for us."

Participant responses suggest that senior leaders, because they likely have participated in activities such as media interviews, value the public affairs function more than do lower-level leaders. For example, Lucy, a civilian advanced

practitioner, said that, where junior officers (and junior enlisted personnel) think of public affairs as "someone snapping pictures and taking pictures of award ceremonies," late-mid-career and senior leaders better appreciate the public affairs function and staff. By the time they rise to such positions, she said,

> They've experienced the benefits of having a public affairs officer, because they've probably had to talk to the media at that point and learned that we're safeguarding them, if we're doing our job right. We're preparing them and taking a lot of the stress of what is an extremely stressful situation and an extremely important situation off of their backs.

Yet, there also appeared to be the belief among participants that the organic process that produced generally later-career contact with public affairs was inadequate to meet the needs of the organization, as well as the belief that earlier, more structured contact would be more effective. For example, Wesley, the expert instructor, said he joked that

> the first time a general officer truly got public affairs training was when they became a general officer. Which is exactly the wrong time for it to happen, because now you're frightened of it and, oh, by the way, you realize, "I'm at a level where I can do some real damage. So, if I'm given a choice, I don't want to talk to anybody."

Instead, he said, the services should be exposing junior officers systematically to public affairs as part of their professional development. Additionally, he said, "If I could create one course at this schoolhouse, it wouldn't be for public affairs people. It would be for mid-grade officers who are getting ready to take command." Such a

course, he said, could help to resolve the negative views of public affairs because it would begin to help commanding officers understand "Here's what [public affairs] is supposed to do for you."

Finally, contact among public affairs managers appears to improve conditions for collaboration within public affairs. For example, Ian, a junior officer and intermediate practitioner in the Coast Guard, said that, while he had worked with other services prior to the PAQC, he had not trained with them. "The chance to actually sit down next to other services and just hear where they're coming from was helpful," he said. After completion of the course, he said, he worked with other services on two disaster response missions. "Being able to see how all the other services operate and know that we have this shared grounding was incredibly helpful" in those environments, he said. Being able to speak the language of his counterparts in the other services and "come from a place of common understanding was useful," Ian said.

Ambiguity as constraint and opportunity. Responses suggest that ambiguity characterizes the public affairs function in military organizations and that this ambiguity affects the willingness of non-public affairs organizational members to collaborate with public affairs staff and efforts. Those responses suggest that commanding officers and non-public affairs peers have a vague or incomplete understanding of the public affairs function. Responses also suggest that the ambiguity around public affairs can act as a constraint on the function and a barrier to collaboration. However, responses suggest that public affairs ambiguity and

contextual uncertainty can create opportunities for collaboration, especially when public affairs benefits are more clearly visible to the organization.

Responses suggest that participants perceived that the commanding officers and non-public affairs peers with whom public affairs must collaborate to serve the organization effectively have only a vague or incomplete understanding of the public affairs function. For example, according to Francis, a senior officer and novice practitioner, commanding officers generally have a significantly clearer understanding of other functions than they do of public affairs. That lack of understanding affects the expectations on public affairs. Francis said:

> You go to a meeting, and the boss, whatever flavor of boss you've got, he or she knows what a lot of people's jobs are. So when they're asking the signal guy, like, "Hey, why don't we have this, that, or the other," they may know the answer, or 50 percent of the answer, and now they just need some more information. When they ask the public affairs guy what they're doing, if they even ask that, they probably have no clue other than themes and messages. Or if they've had a good public affairs guy in the past, maybe they expect some of that stuff to happen. But there's no expectation about what we need to do.

Jacob, a junior officer and advanced practitioner, argued that, because public affairs processes and products can be difficult to assess, the function's contributions to the organization hinge on the quality and effort of the public affairs manager. Yet, ambiguity affects the public affairs manager too. The manager can make little effort, Jacob said, "and you can just kind of fly along in obscurity, and never actually accomplish anything. But no one's going to know any better because you're working

in intangibles." Similarly, Yvonne, a senior officer and novice student who had served in public affairs for two years prior to attending the PAQC, said that public affairs appears to be underappreciated because much of the work occurs "behind the scenes." She illustrated her view that "not everyone knows what it is that we do" with an anecdote:

> One of my mentors, he made a comment once. He said, "The commander has no idea how much I save his butt every day." Because he's constantly talking to reporters. And he doesn't go to the commanding officer and say, "I had two phone calls with so-and-so reporters, and I talked them off the ledge, because they wanted to write this report, blah, blah, blah." He just does all that stuff behind the scenes. And people don't always realize the connections and the communication, all the efforts that are going on behind the scenes to ensure that the right message is getting out there.

Finally, the lack of understanding of public affairs' contributions may be a factor prompting a focus among public affairs managers on "educating" the organization regarding what public affairs "brings to the fight" (also discussed under the theme "earning a seat at the table"). For example, Victor, a junior officer and novice student, said that he sees a lack of understanding regarding what public affairs "brings to the table." That lack of understanding prompts instructors to "keep telling us that it is our job to educate our commanders." Similarly, Donna, a junior officer and novice student/practitioner, said that education was important in the effort to conserve resources for application to organizational priorities. Public affairs, she said,

should “communicate messages that align with the commander’s priorities.” Yet, sometimes:

> We find ourselves overwhelmed because we do end up supporting let’s, for example, say an awards ceremony, taking photos, or a promotion. That’s not what we’re supposed to be taking photos of. I feel like we’re slowly starting to educate the base on how they can actually utilize us and that we can do more than just take photos at these ceremonies.

The problem identified by Donna, that the public affairs staff commonly finds itself tasked to take photos of ceremonies and events when such activities are not officially a public affairs responsibility, was cited by a number of participants. That problem may be related to a larger problem indicated by participant responses: The ambiguity around public affairs can act as a constraint on the function and a barrier to collaboration with non-public affairs personnel.

Responses suggested non-public affairs organizational members sometimes resolve the ambiguity surrounding public affairs by identifying it with the civilian mass media. This identification appears largely to work against the public affairs function. For example, Wesley, a civilian expert instructor, said non-public affairs peers will look at public affairs “and go ‘I equate you to what’s going on with the civilian press. And I don’t trust the civilian press, therefore I’m not going to trust you.’” Overcoming the fear and bias of others, he said, requires building relationships and persuading peers that:

> I’m not putting out information that’s going to get you in trouble. I’m asking you for assistance because I want to get to the same point you’re getting to. In

> fact, before I put out some information, I'm going to come find you to make sure that there's nothing out of bounds here.

Similarly, Oscar, a civilian expert administrator, said that public affairs is at times viewed as a security threat because "a lot of people think we're the military media. We're not. I'm here to keep things off camera and off the computer just as much as on there." Too few commanding officers, he said, understand "that I'm a sentry as much as I am a publisher."

Simon, a noncommissioned officer and advanced student, shared a story illustrating the caution exercised around the public affairs function in matters of operational security (OPSEC). Although there should be a "balance" between withholding and releasing information, he said,

> Working with fighter pilots is always a unique situation. . . . I was deployed with fighter pilots. The [reserve fighter unit], they had their OPSEC person escort me when I was taking photos on the flight line. I was like, "I own the flight line more than you guys, because I work for the commander. You guys are a contingent squadron here."

Another means by which military organizations appear to resolve the ambiguity surrounding public affairs is by requiring the public affairs manager to conform heavily to the dominant organizational identity. This appears to have been what occurred to Una, a senior officer and intermediate practitioner, at the start of a new assignment (discussed in the theme "building a shared identity" above). In that assignment, she was pulled into her previous operational role while simultaneously having to perform her public affairs duties. In response to the question of the value

placed on public affairs by the organization, Una said: “We’re trained to be whatever the commanding officer wants us to be. In this case, what he wanted was a warfighter PAO.”

Oscar, the civilian expert administrator, found himself similarly having to conform to the dominant organizational identity to earn the confidence and support of the commanding officer and organization during a combat deployment. Assigned to be the public affairs manager for a special operations unit, at times his duties required that he travel with the unit, he said. On one occasion early in his tenure, the commanding officer told him: “Well, if you want to go out with me, you need to learn how to fire your weapon system. You need to be an asset on the convoy.” The “tactical proficiency” he had to demonstrate went beyond simply firing the standard issue rifle. He had to learn to fire the rifle used by special operations personnel, and he had to learn combat tactics to serve as the unit’s “rear guard.” On a mission in which his task was to perform “forensic photography” after an enemy roadside bomb attack, he said he understood that “I had to add to the unit, not take away, because really I’m taking a seat from somebody else.” He summed up his experience gaining support and access within the organization: “I proved myself slowly over time, and I garnered the trust.”

Oscar’s contribution of forensic photography to the investigation of the attack suggests a very different outcome of the ambiguity around public affairs. At times, rather than impose constraints on the public affairs function, ambiguity can create opportunities for collaboration. Such opportunities appear to improve or increase at moments of situational uncertainty.

For example, Donna, the novice student/practitioner, said that when a particular model of aircraft on her base was having mechanical issues with the landing gear, public affairs recorded video that was used to solve the problem. “They were able to resolve the issue because of the coverage that we were able to provide,” she said. “Obviously, if the plane doesn’t fly, the mission doesn’t happen. So, I think in that way we helped operationally.” Public affairs’ contribution in that instance and in another in which public affairs documented a “first” for the same aircraft suggest, Donna said, that “people are starting to recognize that we are capable of providing support other than” for military ceremonies.

Rachel, a civilian novice student, provided another example in which uncertainty created an opportunity for public affairs to make a valuable contribution. One of the bases within her organization experienced environmental problems that drew negative attention from the media and environmental organizations, she said. Combined with leadership instability at both bases, the environmental issues created a situation in which the attitude was, she said, “Anybody have any solutions?” The public affairs chief, she said, was “able to step up and be like, ‘Hey, I’ve got solutions.’ And everyone else is like, ‘If you can take this off my plate, great.’” The chief’s plan, including community outreach and the release of environmental data via the organization’s website, improved community relations, Rachel said, and appeared to create an opportunity for public affairs to play a larger role in addressing the environmental problems.

Disasters and disaster response also appear to create conditions for novel and visible public affairs contributions to the organization. For example, Ian, a junior

officer and intermediate practitioner, said that the PAQC stresses accuracy and timeliness, "and every public affairs graduate comes out knowing that you need to have those two things or else you're failing." That dual emphasis, he said, on occasion has allowed Coast Guard public affairs practitioners to provide information to leaders more quickly than operational responders could. He would have operational leaders approaching him for information, he said, which was

> An unintended side effect. It's not like public affairs people got trained to provide that internal data, necessarily, combat camera excepted. But I would say that's had a pretty noteworthy impact.

The above examples of conditions of ambiguity and uncertainty creating opportunities for public affairs to make significant, novel, and visible contributions to military organizations suggest at least one additional possibility. It is possible that public affairs capabilities, efforts, and contributions are more easily perceived and better appreciated when they are "internally facing." The explanation offered by Margaret, a senior officer and advanced practitioner, of the Marine Corps' consolidation of public affairs and combat camera into the "communications strategy and operations" career field suggests a reorientation from external to internal publics. The move to "commstrat," Margaret said, "changes the perspective for us here. It's not all just sort of externally facing. We don't think of it in terms of the legacy three pillars of public affairs: internal, external, and community relations." While commstrat can still collaborate effectively with the public affairs function in other services, she said, "we're Marines. We're focused on warfighting. So this is 'How do

we help the warfighter? How do we make information readily available and meaningful to a commander, as sort of our customer base?'"

In the above discussion of collaboration as a public affairs competency, I discussed a number of phenomena suggested by participant responses. First, they suggested that effective collaboration, both intra-organizational and interorganizational, is vital to the success of the public affairs manager and the public affairs function. Yet, given its importance, it appears that collaboration is treated more as a means than an object of instruction in the course. Second, the findings suggested that collaboration with certain individuals and functions (e.g., the commanding officer, the legal office, peer communication functions) is especially important to public affairs effectiveness. They also suggest that contact, or lack thereof, with public affairs and the quality of contact influence the willingness of such figures to collaborate with public affairs. Third, they suggested that ambiguity characterizes the public affairs function in military organizations and that this ambiguity affects the willingness of non-public affairs organizational members to collaborate with public affairs staff and efforts. Ambiguity can act as a constraint on the function and a barrier to collaboration. However, ambiguity and contextual uncertainty also can create opportunities for collaboration, especially when the benefits of public affairs efforts are more clearly visible to the organization.

Chapter 5—Discussion

My purpose in conducting this study was to explore the development of military public affairs professional identity through socialization of public affairs managers in joint (i.e., involving multiple military branches) entry-level military public affairs training. Along with professional identity and organizational socialization, I explored the development and practice of collaboration as a public affairs competency. To answer the research questions, I conducted in-depth interviews with 27 students, practitioners (i.e., former students), instructors, and administrators with strong roles or contacts with the Defense Department's Public Affairs Qualification Course (PAQC). Additionally, I conducted three follow-up interviews to clarify and further explore important emerging themes that addressed the research questions.

In this chapter, I discuss the study's findings, placing my discussion in the context of past research on public relations and military public affairs, the social identity approach, and organizational theory. The discussion is organized by findings, first those related to professional identity, then those related to organizational socialization, and finally those related to collaboration. Within each area, I summarize the study's findings, then discuss how those findings support, extend, and/or challenge past research. Finally, I discuss implications for public affairs and public relations practice, offer suggestions for future research, address limitations of the study, and offer some concluding thoughts. Please note that, in the following discussion, except where a greater distinction seems appropriate, I use the term public relations to refer to both public relations and military public affairs.

Professional Identity

The study findings suggest a number of phenomena related to public affairs professional identity. First, they suggest that military public affairs managers perceive themselves and their public affairs peers to be members of the same group. Second, they suggest that managers see themselves as responsible for communication between military organizations and the public, which entails making those organizations and their activities intelligible to the public. Third, the findings suggest that public affairs managers perceive themselves to constitute a group "within, but transcending" the organization, which offers them important opportunities and resources even as it compels them to signal their organizational *bona fides* internally. Fourth, they suggest that managers generally possess a "home-front" orientation and "garrison PAO" mindset, distinct from their organizations' security and defense focus, which arise from a belief that the managers' most important organizational contributions relate to maintaining domestic public support. Fifth, they suggest that the successful public affairs manager is one who can function effectively in the ambiguity of interpersonal relationships and that this ability to "operate in the gray" allows them to bring innovative solutions to challenges faced by their organizations.

It is my belief that this study provides important insight regarding public relations professional identity, confirming and extending some traditional understandings, while revealing complexity that has been neglected in scholarly treatments of the subject. First, the study appears to support the continuing scholarly understanding that public relations practice is a boundary spanning function and that the public relations manager is a boundary spanner (e.g., Allen & Dozier, 2012; Men

& Bowen, 2016). The emphasis that participants placed on, for example, communicating with home-front publics, "translating the military" for those publics, and maintaining their support, fits squarely within the strategic management and relationship management paradigms (see Grunig, 2009; Ledingham, 2003). Further, that participants appeared to see themselves and their peers as members of a group "within, but transcending" the organizations they serve, with distinct interests, challenges, and contributions supports the scholarly position that public relations possesses a professional identity (Fawkes, 2015b). It also supports the choice to apply the social identity approach to further understand that identity (see Hogg & Terry, 2000).

Second, the study appears to support the importance of internal boundary spanning to the ability of the public relations manager to exercise influence within the organization and participate in its strategic decision making. Themes, including "communicating organizational competence," "gaining support," and "contact and collaboration" suggest that developing and maintaining relationships within the organization are crucial tasks for the public relations manager because those relationships empower public relations to make important contributions to the organization (Neill, 2014).

If internal boundary spanning is viewed as a form of collaboration, and collaboration viewed as a form of intergroup contact, then based on the evidence collected in this study, a picture begins to develop regarding the social psychological processes that facilitate internal boundary spanning. Based on public relations' perceived nonprototypicality, effective internal boundary spanning may require that

non-public relations figures and departments believe that working with public relations is in the interest of their own subgroup or the organization (Morton et al., 2012). Such moments of contact, if positive, should encourage members of those subgroups to view public relations either as a valued, but distinct partner (Hogg et al., 2012) or as a full, authentic member of the organization (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2010).

Further, I argue that the theme "communicating organizational competence" suggests the utility of convergent communication for the public relations manager during intra-organizational interactions. According to Gallois and Giles (2015), convergence, i.e., making one's speech more like an interlocutor's, is understood generally to signal qualities such as liking and admiration. Public relations managers appear to understand that they must show their organizational competence (and not simply their public relations competence) to win the support of supervisors and important non-public relations peers. In the present case, for example, some public affairs managers spoke of wearing surface warfare officer pins or of being able to "speak military" as a means of building their credibility with organizational leaders.

Third, the importance placed by participants on communication and relationships between public affairs and the commanding officer, other leaders, and non-public affairs peers on the executive staff suggests public relations scholarship must pay greater attention to internal relations beyond the traditional focus on "internal communication." Public relations scholarship appears to have lost the distinction between representational boundary spanning, which defines and represents the organization for stakeholders and publics (Leichty & Springston, 1996), and informational boundary spanning, which collects and interprets information for the

organization from its environment (Leichty & Springston, 1996). Work by Tushman and Scanlan (1981a, 1981b) suggests that informational boundary spanning is the more valuable type for the organization. However, their work also indicates that it is also the more complex form. Informational boundary spanning appears to be more effective when the boundary spanning individual is strongly linked to others within the organization, a condition which appears to be aided by the perception that he or she is prototypical of the organization (see Tushman & Scanlan, 1981b). Although some recent scholarship has drawn attention to the need for public relations professionals to increase their business acumen and improve their ability to "speak business," thereby building their links within and value to the organization (e.g., Ragas & Culp, 2014), the development and impact of such abilities appears to be a largely neglected area of research.

Organizational socialization

The study's findings suggest a number of phenomena related to the organizational socialization of military public affairs managers. First, they suggest that managers believe that important learning occurs through less formal or less scripted interactions during the course and that such learning can occur both prior to enrollment and after course completion. They also suggest that managers are active participants in their own socialization. Second, they suggest that "earning a seat at the table" where organizational influence is wielded and decisions are made is an important goal for managers, which they achieve by engaging in proactive behavior through which they "demonstrate value" to the organization. Third, the findings suggest that public affairs managers must gain the support of commanding officers,

other leaders, and non-public affairs peers on the executive staff. Important support can also come from more distant sources of authority higher in the organization. Fourth, they suggest that participant views diverge on the question whether the course adequately prepares the student to perform the work of a military public affairs manager. Those managers within a few years of course completion generally expressed greater confidence that the course had well prepared them, while those beyond their first few years believed the course fails to prepare "strategic" managers.

I believe this study provides valuable insight regarding the socialization of public relations managers into their organizations and professions, confirming and extending some conventional views, as well as providing new insights. First, the study appears to support the view that processes of localized socialization are an important element of socialization of newcomers into organizations (Ashforth et al., 2007). Based on the evidence collected in the present study, it appears that localized socialization also is important in the case of organizational members changing career fields and people entering public relations management. Asking participants to discuss moments of what I termed "actual communication" or moments when the instructor "dropped the façade" revealed that many of them seemed to view such interactions as the moments of greatest impact during the course. This finding supports Kramer's (2010) argument that a focus on localized socialization would reveal "the actual communication associated with the socialization strategies, which may have a greater impact than the strategies themselves" (p. 74). Their responses also provided evidence bolstering the view that trainees and novices in organizations are active participants in socialization processes (Kramer, 2010). Such moments may

derive at least some of their impact from the perception of interacting with a prototypical ingroup member at a moment of high group salience, which appears to increase the potential for friendship, an important facilitative contact condition (Ma, Atwell Seate, & Joyce, 2019; Pettigrew, 1998). In a similar vein, instructor disclosure of personal information, such as past experiences, including mistakes, appears to positively impact student learning (Johnson & LaBelle, 2017).

Second, the study appears to extend understanding of the operation of the three psychological boundaries newcomers must cross to successfully assimilate into an organization: functional, hierarchical, and inclusionary (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Viewing the large, complex, internally-differentiated organizations that today make up western militaries through the lens of the high reliability organization (HRO), reveals an element of the inclusionary dimension that appears to have been obscured by the traditional focus of HRO research on small, largely homogeneous military and paramilitary organizations (e.g., Harris et al., 2004; Scott & Myers, 2005). Because public affairs is an executive function and reports directly to the commanding officer, and because it appears to be perceived as a nonprototypical organizational function (by non-public affairs personnel, as well as by public affairs managers) its full inclusion appears to depend on its acceptance by the more prototypical leadership of the organization. In essence, I argue that the military organization can be thought of as a common ingroup (i.e., a more inclusive superordinate identity), but one which is dominated by a particular subgroup, often one in a combat arms field (e.g., infantry; Wenzel et al., 2007).

Inclusion of public affairs and the public affairs manager as full partners within the organization becomes also a matter of intergroup contact, as I discussed above, regarding professional identity. Thus, we observe participants drawing attention to factors that could improve contact conditions, e.g., authority support in various forms and enhanced, more equal status when public affairs becomes a more "strategic" function (Allport, 1954). Such moves can be understood as examples of a "social competition" strategy, one in which members of the lower-status group compare their group to the higher-status group on accepted dimensions within the existing social structure (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). But participant responses also suggested some use of "social creativity" strategies, in which the lower-status group "redefines or alters the elements of the comparative situation" (Tajfel & Turner, 1986, pp. 19-20). Public affairs students being encouraged by their instructors to join PRSA and to work in such a way that they connect with and help to enhance both public affairs and the larger profession takes advantage of public affairs' status as an "occupational" identity (Soeters et al., 2006). That status allows the practitioner avenues of escape from marginalization within the organization by finding "positive distinctiveness" for the group in other contexts (Tajfel & Turner, 1986, p. 19).

Third, this study offers new insights regarding organizational socialization of military public affairs managers because it reveals that managers are socialized for proactivity. Although not discussed in the findings, it appears that the PAQC employs most or all of the tactics that characterize "institutionalized socialization" (Jones, 1986, p. 266). Institutionalized socialization, research shows, is associated with the adoption of custodial roles, or those in which new employees are more likely to adopt

and maintain organizational norms, methods, and behaviors (Ashforth & Saks, 1996). Socialization for custodial roles makes sense in the context of the high reliability organization, which, because it is exposed to danger, requires members "to perform their duties in consistent, typically organizationally prescribed ways" to reduce risk (Myers, 2005, p. 346). Yet, proactive behavior, or "anticipatory action that employees take to impact themselves and/or their environments" (Grant & Ashford, 2008, p. 8), carries risks for the organization, as well as for the proactive individual (Bateman & Crant, 1999). As participant responses indicated, public affairs already is perceived to be a source of risk (e.g., through its association with civilian mass media); it remains to be seen what effect engaging in additional risk-generating behavior has on the status of the public affairs manager.

Collaboration

The study findings suggest a number of phenomena related to collaboration as a public affairs competency. First, they suggest that effective collaboration, both intra-organizational and interorganizational, is vital to the success of the public affairs manager and the public affairs function. Yet, given its importance, it appears that collaboration is treated more as a means than an object of instruction in the PAQC. Second, the findings suggest that collaboration with certain individuals and functions (e.g., the commanding officer, the legal office, peer communication functions) is especially important to public affairs effectiveness. They also suggest that contact, or lack thereof, with public affairs and the quality of that contact influence the willingness of such figures to collaborate with public affairs. Third, they suggest that ambiguity characterizes the public affairs function in military organizations and that

this ambiguity affects the willingness of non-public affairs organizational members to collaborate with public affairs staff and efforts. Ambiguity can act as a constraint on the function and a barrier to collaboration. However, ambiguity and contextual uncertainty also can create opportunities for collaboration, especially when the benefits of public affairs efforts are more clearly visible to the organization.

I believe this study shines a light on collaboration as a public relations competency and confirms and extends certain conventional views on the topic while providing new insight regarding the operation of collaboration, at least in the context of military public affairs. First, the study supports the view that collaboration is a crucial element of effective public relations practice (Grunig, 2000). However, the rationale given for the value of collaboration, i.e., that it provides access to vital information, helps to minimize risk to the organization, and, at least in the case of military public affairs, is expected to occur often and extend beyond the organization, appear to provide important dimensionality to the concept as discussed in the public relations literature. Further, it appears that military public affairs managers are able to collaborate effectively at least in part because of the diversity, along multiple dimensions, they encounter during the PAQC. This finding supports the position that the joint and interagency nature of much military training contributes to the ability of military organizations and personnel to collaborate effectively in the field (Ulin, 2010).

Second, the study supports research indicating the importance of positive contact for successful collaborative relationships, as well as the costs of negative contact or a lack of contact. Participants shared stories in which non-public affairs

peers and leaders expressed a new appreciation for the function after observing the public affairs manager engage in activity benefiting the organization. Participants also expressed the view that senior leaders, because they have had occasion to engage in public affairs activity and be advised by public affairs managers, are more willing to collaborate with the public affairs function. This evidence supports previous research finding that positive contact tends to improve attitudes toward outgroups (Pettigrew, 1998).

However, anecdotes regarding the lack of contact between public affairs and other organizational members and, especially, negative contact should be concerning to public affairs managers and to leaders who want to better integrate strategic communication into organizational practice. If military services are signaling to leaders and other organizational members that public affairs is not a valued function, e.g., by assigning personnel with primary responsibilities in other areas and no, or minimal, public affairs training to serve as collateral duty public affairs officers, they may be contributing to conditions of negative contact (see Ashforth et al., 2008). Research has shown that, while contact generally has positive effects on intergroup relations (Pettigrew, 1998) and positive contact is more common generally, negative contact is more influential in shaping intergroup attitudes (Graf, Paolini, & Rubin, 2014).

Third, while the study supports the importance of collaboration with partners previously highlighted in the research (i.e., among members of the public relations team; with peer communication management functions internal to the organization, and with the communication management functions of other organizations), it draws

attention to collaboration partners largely neglected in the public relations literature. In their responses, participants highlighted as important collaborators a number of individuals and functions (e.g., the commanding officer, non-public affairs peers on the executive staff, the legal office) that the public relations literature likely would discuss simply as the "dominant coalition" (Grunig, 2006, p. 160). I argue that, by agglomerating a number of important and distinct organizational functions and then largely neglecting to explore the relationship between the public relations function and that agglomeration or any of its component parts, public relations research has failed to address a potentially key element of public relations marginalization (de Bussy, 2013). This study has initiated or contributed to the effort to address that shortcoming.

Fourth, this study offers new insights regarding the variable role of ambiguity in the willingness of non-public relations organizational members to collaborate with public relations. In the present case, it appears that when ambiguity attends the public affairs function, other organizational members can supply their own understandings of what public affairs is and does (e.g., identifying it with civilian mass media or with low-value activities, such as documenting ceremonies). Those understandings can constrain the function and act as a barrier to collaboration, apparently even regarding matters that research indicates are strengths of public relations, e.g., leading community relations efforts to address environmental problems. However, it appears that this same ambiguity can create opportunities for collaboration, especially under conditions of contextual uncertainty, such as crises (L. A. Grunig, 1992; Rast et al., 2012). Further, it appears that opportunities for collaboration may be more available

to public affairs, and the efforts of public affairs better appreciated by non-public affairs peers, when those efforts and their benefits are more visible to the organization and are seen to benefit it (Platow & van Knippenberg, 2001). I believe these processes are applicable to public relations as well, because the same largely "informal process" (Tushman & Scanlan, 1981b, p. 86), i.e., boundary spanning, appears to be at the core of both public affairs and public relations professional identity and may contribute to their ambiguity. As Cutlip (1994) has said, public relations tends to be "the unseen power." It may be that the contributions and value of public relations are as difficult to perceive from inside the organization as they are from the outside.

Suggestions for future research

This study's findings suggest a number of avenues for future research. Here I outline three. First, the views that military commanding officers, non-public affairs members of the executive staff, and managers of peer communication management functions have toward public affairs should be studied. The present study has highlighted these figures as important public affairs collaboration partners and/or sources of authority support for the public affairs function and its efforts. Future studies could explore their experiences of contact with public affairs, their understanding of the role and responsibilities of public affairs, and their support, or lack thereof, for the public affairs function and manager.

Second, the impact of proactive behavior on the part of the public affairs manager, as well as other members of the public affairs staff, should be studied. The present study revealed that public affairs managers are socialized to engage in

proactive behavior to demonstrate public affairs' value to the organization (thereby earning a seat at the decision-making table). However, as discussed above, proactive behavior carries risks for an organization, which in the case of the high reliability organization, appears intent on minimizing undue risk. As this study and previous research have shown, public affairs already is viewed as a source of risk. Future research could explore the effect that engaging in additional risk-generating behavior has on the status of the public affairs manager and function.

Third, the impact of ambiguity on the acceptance or marginalization of public affairs in military organizations should be studied further. The present study's findings suggest that the ambiguity that appears to surround the public affairs function can constrain or empower public affairs and the public affairs manager. It may be that ambiguity, combined with situational uncertainty, creates opportunities for organizational innovation involving public affairs (Eisenberg, 1984). However, it may also be the case that such windows of opportunity for public affairs are brief and, after they close, leave public affairs once again marginalized (Wakefield, Plowman, & Curry, 2013). Future studies could explore the conditions that allow ambiguity to improve the standing of public affairs (or, alternatively, to work against the function), as well as the conditions that make public affairs' increased status more or less secure.

Implications for practice

In addition to its theoretical implications, the study's findings have implications for the practice of military public affairs. These implications may transfer to similar organizational contexts. They may also transfer to public relations

practice more broadly. First, because of the high value placed on collaboration by participants, greater attention should be paid to it as a tool and topic of instruction in the PAQC and other courses for public affairs managers. To do so, administrators and instructors could enhance their use of teams and small groups by assembling them, coaching them, and structuring their work based on current research on effective collaboration. Additionally, lessons could be developed to expose students explicitly to general principles of collaboration and to help them understand the individuals and departments with which they must collaborate to be effective in their work.

Second, if at lower levels of their organizations the military services continue to make use of public affairs managers whose primary responsibilities are in other areas and whose public affairs training is minimal, the public affairs leadership should attempt to help build the understanding and capabilities of such individuals. Because these collateral duty public affairs officers appear to provide some of the earliest contact between public affairs and commanding officers and other organizational leaders, they play an important part in setting the expectations that the organization has of the public affairs function. To potentially help the long-term standing of public affairs and the public affairs manager, the Public Affairs Leadership Department at the Defense Information School could develop an online course or a brief, in-person workshop to provide instruction to collateral PAOs regarding the foundational knowledge, skills, and abilities of the entry-level public affairs manager.

Third, to help generate positive contact between public affairs and commanding officers and other organizational leaders beginning from the latter's

earliest years in the military and continuing throughout their careers, the public affairs leadership should pursue opportunities for positive contact through the services' extensive professional development programs. Public affairs leaders could advocate for inclusion of mandatory lessons or blocks of instruction in the "professional military education" (PME) courses that officers and enlisted personnel must complete to be considered for promotion. Lessons could cover the commanding officer's public affairs responsibilities, the role of the public affairs manager, and best practices in important areas, such as community relations, internal communications, and media relations. Additionally, if such instruction were included in PME and participation made mandatory, it could signal "authority support" for public affairs, an important contact condition (Pettigrew, 1998), as signaled by this study.

Limitations

Although this study, I believe, has made valuable contributions to an understanding of public relations and military public affairs, it has some limitations. First, as a qualitative, interview-based study, while it has provided rich data regarding the experiences, perceptions, and feelings of the study participants (Daymon & Holloway, 2011), it would be inappropriate to attempt to generalize directly from the study to a larger population (Yin, 2014). A more appropriate approach would be to pursue analytic generalization, in other words, to conduct additional research to understand where concepts found in the context under study here transfer to other contexts (Daymon & Holloway, 2011).

Second, it is possible that the accounts provided by my participants may not have reflected actual experience or accurately reflected phenomena of interest. As

Daymon and Holloway (2011) argued, interview participants "may fabricate or elaborate in order to enhance their self-esteem or cover up discreditable actions" (p. 238). Additionally, because they were members of an organization that values security and secrecy, they may have been less forthcoming with accurate information and frank accounts. The inclusion of additional data sources (e.g., documents, participant observation) in future related research could enhance the picture developed of military public affairs practice and management (Yin, 2014).

Third, as a "snapshot in time," the present study is limited in its ability to provide insight into pertinent processes that unfold over time. For example, findings suggest that opinions regarding whether the PAQC adequately prepares the individual to serve as a military public affairs manager change as the individual progresses through her or his career. A longitudinal study of public affairs managers from course completion to mid-career or a later point could help researchers and practitioners understand how such attitudes change, if at all, as well as the factors contributing to such changes (Saldaña, 2003).

Conclusion

In the present study, I explored the development of military public affairs professional identity through socialization of public affairs managers in joint entry-level military public affairs training. Along with professional identity and organizational socialization, I explored the development and practice of collaboration as a public affairs competency. When I proposed this study, I said that I hoped to "advance the case, in both research and practice, for institutionalization of public relations as a strategic management function, ultimately to see whether public

relations can deliver its promised benefits to organizations, publics, and society." To pursue that overarching goal, I focused my attention on the public affairs manager, as a figure representing the public affairs function, among other organizational figures and functions. This study provides support for the traditional scholarly understanding of the public affairs manager as a boundary spanner.

However, this study also has provided evidence, through the application of the social identity approach and organizational theory, that the public affairs manager often is, in the eyes of organizational supervisors and peers, an ambiguous figure and a source of risk. Based on previous research and this study's findings, such perceptions appear in large part responsible for the marginalization of public relations and for its failure to achieve institutionalization as a strategic management function (de Bussy, 2013). A number of public relations research streams treat boundary spanning as the core of public relations and the basis of much of its value (e.g., strategic management, relationship management, social networks). I argue that if public relations research is to help the practice deliver its promised benefits to organizations, publics, and society, scholars working in those and other streams must take seriously the complexities of boundary spanning and the group-based dynamics at play in organizations that constrain or free the public relations function in its work.

Appendix: Codebook

Code	Description/definition	Example
Ambiguity	In the context of military public affairs, characterized by obscurity or indistinctness regarding role, responsibilities, and/or value. (Deductive)	"So, you go to a meeting -- and I imagine you experienced this in the Air Force as well -- you go to a meeting, and the boss, whatever flavor of boss you've got, he or she knows what a lot of people's jobs are. So when they're asking the signal guy, like, "Hey, why don't we have this, that, or the other?" they may know the answer, or 50 percent of the answer, and now they just need some more information. When they ask the public affairs guy what they're doing, if they even ask that, they probably have no clue other than themes and messages. Or if they've had a good public affairs guy in the past, maybe they expect some of that stuff to happen. But there's no expectation about what we need to do."
Anticipatory socialization	*Role* and *organizational* anticipatory socialization concern the period and influences (e.g., family, education, media) experienced prior to taking a position (Kramer, 2010).	"Current work, I was a broadcast journalism major in college. I feel like that kind of goes hand in hand with public affairs. I did a lot of interviews with people. I wrote stories. I also participated in TV newscasts for my classes. So I have experience with writing stories both in narrative style and also broadcast writing."
Authority support	"With explicit social sanction, intergroup contact is more readily accepted and has more positive effects. Authority	"I went from that to [military unit] and took over as the public affairs officer, and I got lucky again because the

	support establishes norms of acceptance" (Pettigrew, 1998, p. 67).	brigade commander understood that public affairs had value and brought me into staff meetings and gave me time on training calendars so that I could train down to the platoon level of everybody in her brigade. They eventually moved me out of my office and into their operations cell, which was a good thing for me professionally."
Boundary spanning	In the context of public relations, boundary spanning refers to activity that moves information and influence across organizational lines (Springston & Leichty, 1994). Public relations facilitates communication between the organization, generally equated with top management, and its external and internal stakeholders and publics (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). Boundary spanning also can occur internally, exclusive of management (Grunig & Hunt, 1984; Neill, 2014).	"I think public affairs is about transparency for the American people and getting out the right information as soon as possible. Since we are beholden to our taxpayers, it's important that they know what we're doing and that they have confidence that we have their best interests at hand. I think that's what public affairs is here for, to tell the American people that this is what we're doing, this is how it's benefiting you. If we weren't doing that, I don't think the U.S. military would be as trusted by the American people as it is. While we may not be operational at all times, I think that we're still extremely valuable to the DoD."
Collaboration	Collaboration is the process of two or more people working and communicating across organizational lines to accomplish a common goal (Hogg et al., 2012; Martinez-Moyano, 2006). Collaboration in an organizational context can involve separate	"I was at a command that had a series of alcohol-related incidents. Our CO was very angry about it. He wanted it squashed. And his idea was to restrict liberty, when we went into other ports not let people off the boat. Just things that--It would have been very painful

	organizations or formal groups within a single organization (Hogg et al., 2012). Collaboration in this context also can involve members of different sociodemographic groups or other social categories (Hogg et al., 2012).	for the crew and dropped morale a lot. And if morale's not high, then the work output's not going to be high. PA stepped in, working with training. We had a social media campaign. . . . So, we went from having several alcohol-related incidents in a very short timeframe to going over a year without having any alcohol-related incidents. That was the PAO's doing. He worked with other people, but some people in the PA shop suggested it, he took it up to the commanding officer."
Common ingroup identity	A single, superordinate group that includes members of (formerly) different groups (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2009). When members of different groups are successfully encouraged to recategorize themselves and each other as members of a common ingroup, attitudes toward former outgroup members are expected to improve through processes involving pro-ingroup bias (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2009).	"We still do a lot of the same functions that were evident in the legacy public affairs community. I would say we just do more now. So, we can still integrate seamlessly with other services. I'd say our focus is just different. We're Marines. We're focused on warfighting. So this is 'How do we help the warfighter? How do we make information readily available and meaningful to a commander, as sort of our customer base?'"
Dual identity (subcode)	An approach to the common ingroup identity model in which valued subgroup identities remain salient within the context of a single, shared, superordinate identity (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2009).	"And actually, a little less than a year ago I finished my APRM accreditation. And it's one of those things that you don't realize that a lot of the stuff you learn in PAQC is, I mean these are standards across the profession, inside the military, outside the military. And going through that process and seeing how

		that's standard all across really gives you a sense of being part of something even larger than just military public affairs. It's a larger community out there. Which, I mean, I don't know any other part of any other discipline in the military that can really say the same thing."
Dimension of socialization, functional	The tasks that an individual is expected to perform once integrated into the organization (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). This dimension, and the various task sets it captures, is generally organized around departmental or other territorial boundaries (Kramer, 2010).	"But in terms of how we prepare . . . every single one of them will have learned more than they could have imagined. Learning how to literally and figuratively shape public communication. Not everybody is going to leave here at the expert level. It's an eight-week course. . . . [F]or the vast majority, they'll know that a message is a command's position on something, and a talking point is information. And there's a difference, and you should deconstruct those to then construct an effective response. The vast majority of them are going to know how to put together an effective response with a message and information. The vast majority know how to shape public communication. They will have written a speech. They will have done a lot of journalism work. They will have looked to a level of attention to detail they previously had not considered."
Dimension of socialization, hierarchical	Concerns "issues like power and status and who reports to whom" (Kramer, 2010, p. 91). While traditional treatments	"I mean, you have guys literally putting their lives in harm's way. And I know there's some enlisted public

	appear to focus on interpersonal relations, such studies suggest that group-based distinctions also are important (e.g., Myers, 2005; Scott & Myers, 2005).	affairs Marines who will go out and go be on a patrol and get shot at. But infantry guys that is what they do. Or a logistics guy says, 'Hey, I moved 13 million dollars worth of equipment for you. All of your guys had bad, defective flak jackets. I replaced all of them for you.' Or the aviation community says, 'Hey, we've had zero incidents, and we've managed to moved 150 thousand tons of cargo. And we've also moved a hundred thousand personnel over X number of hours. We provided this support.' And then what do you say as a public affairs person? You're not necessarily going to draw equivalency with any of those occupations."
Dimension of socialization, inclusionary	Refers to a sense of belonging, a sense of being part of "the social fabric or interpersonal domain of organizational life" (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979, p. 221). It is possible that group-based perceptions influence how individuals are integrated into organizations (see Harwood et al., 2005).	"Then, it sounds superficial, and it is in a way, but I had earned a surface warfare officer pin, which you wear on your uniform even after you become a PAO. So, when you come to the table, your commander, the senior officers have some respect. They know you have some level of knowledge and have been through some of the same things that they have. They know when they're explaining some deep operational concept, they don't have to use kid words. They can really talk through a problem and have you understand it on day one."
Intergroup contact	Interactions involving people perceived by one or more	"And the PAO, non-school trained, was well respected,

	participants to be members of different groups (Cynthia Gallois et al., 2012; Harwood et al., 2005; Harwood & Joyce, 2012).	then he goes, 'Sir' -- I don't remember the exact numbers, but, "we have three Facebook likes, and we have five positive comments on Twitter.' And then everyone in their chair kind of giggles. Everyone being, not the CO, but the XO kind of giggles a little bit. All the shops, the admin, intel, ops, the chaplain even kind of giggles a little bit, like, 'What is this guy doing? That's what he does for a job, for a living? He just counts Facebook likes, and he just posts on Twitter and Facebook all day long? And says 'hi' to people and greets people when they come for a visit? That's what he does?'"
Localized socialization	Ashforth et al. (2007) argued that "newcomers are socialized largely through specific interpersonal and group-based interactions . . . that are grounded in localized contexts and focus largely on that context" (p. 36). Much socialization into large, complex, internally differentiated organizations is accomplished at levels such as the work group (Ashforth et al., 2007; Moreland et al., 2001; Woo & Myers, 2016).	"By far the best classes that we have are when the instructors include personal stories, personal examples. Because the public affairs community, I mean, you can't determine what each person's going to be going into, because the job is different, and it depends on what's happening in the world. . . . So it's so incredibly useful when we're talking about a course and then the instructor's like, 'Actually, you don't think this is going to happen? Let me tell you this: This is what happened to me.'"
Marginalization	Social exclusion; relegation to the fringes of a group. The targeted individual or (sub)groups are prevented from full participation in the larger group and its	"You're supposed to be a personal staff or special staff officer to the commander, which means you're supposed to have direct access to the commander. So when you get

	normatively prescribed activities, relations and institutions (Silver, 2007).	relegated to 'Hey, you need through chief of staff' or 'You need to go through my aide de camp' or whatever -- when you get stuck in the gatekeepers because the commander doesn't view you as enough value added to talk to him or her one on one when you feel important to do so, then you get relegated. You don't become a strategic asset."
Proactivity	"Anticipatory action that employees take to impact themselves and/or their environments" (Grant & Ashford, 2008, p. 8). "When employees choose to behave proactively, they are focused on the goal of meaningfully altering the self, others, or the contexts in which they are situated" (Grant & Ashford, 2008, p. 9). (Deductive)	"It's not as bad when you're back home, but you're still going to be working weekends and whatnot depending on what the unit's doing, like, there's parades, there's speeches or whatever. And then you're going to be working late sometimes 'cause you should be going to those chamber of commerce meetings, those mayor's luncheons. You should be organizing stuff with the commander. The commander should be having lunch with the mayor. The commander should, you know, be giving speeches for holidays and whatnot. You're very busy. Public affairs is a very busy job. And I think a lot of people don't understand all the work that goes into it."
Demonstrate value (subcode)	To provide evidence of worth to the organization. The public affairs manager can demonstrate value through public affairs work and through work as an	But the value you can really bring to the organization is going beyond just those specified tasks and taking a look at the organization's goals in general, and analyzing it, and saying, 'Where can

	organizational executive. (Deductive)	communications advance these goals?' and writing out a couple of ways, in the forms of communications plans, taking those to the commander and say, 'Here, sir. This is what I can do for you.' And that's really the value."
Seat at the table (subcode)	To be accepted as a full and equal member of the organization's leadership team. To wield influence in the organization and participate in executive-level decision making to make important contributions to the organization. (Deductive)	"The biggest thing we want them to come out of here with, whether they can write a story in an excellent way or not--hopefully we do--but is they need to understand they need to get a seat at the table. For many, many years, the PAO was something that was considered 'In emergency, break the glass. Out of sight, out of mind. Don't want to hear from you unless I've got a crisis.' And that cost in many situations. . . . So what we try to do is to get them enough knowledge and wherewithal to have their commanders, at whatever level, recognize that they are knowledgeable and useful and serve a purpose for that commander. If we can do that, I think we're a success, regardless of whether they can write the best story. Pulitzer Prize or not, they understand that they have to be there to advise."
Prototype	The generally stereotypical collection of attributes ascribed to a group and seen as best representing the group (Abrams & Hogg, 2010; Kalbfleisch, 2010). Prototypes can be composed of various types of attributes, e.g.,	"So, something that stands out to me that they brought up was the truthfulness. Not that that's not instilled in us. But in general sometimes you have--I've often said you need to know how to work within the box, but you also need to know

	attitudes, beliefs, linguistic markers, and physical appearance (Kalbfleisch, 2010). They are fuzzy sets of attributes, the salience of which can vary based on factors such context and the basis for intergroup comparison (Kalbfleisch, 2010).	when you need to step outside of it. So, you'll have a regulation and it clearly states that, but then there is that gray area or that interpretation of it. So, they've--something that I didn't understand--they've been very poignant to say those relationships, being transparent and being a hundred-percent truthful, with your external client being the media mostly, is so vitally important. Your job is not propaganda."
Social context	Social contexts, discussed by Barnett Casper (2001) as social environments, "encompass the immediate physical surroundings, social relationships, and cultural milieus within which defined groups of people function and interact" (p. 465).	"I do work for a special operations joint task force. And my area of coverage is Operation Inherent Resolve. In my situation, as an assignment, this is probably not the most ideal situation for public affairs, just because within these special operations environments, we don't really disclose a lot of information. So we've had to create new ways to make sure that we're still able to get our messaging out regarding public affairs."
Great quote	Saldaña (2013) suggested early coding of "rich or significant participant quotes or passages that strike you—those 'codable moments' worthy of attention" (p. 19).	"Definitely the legal, without a doubt. I mean, they should be, they should both be attached at the hip. Sometimes—Most of the time ops, too. So, you want to just be able to bounce things off of them. Legal, ops . . . those are the two biggest ones I would see. I mean, just about everything that I've put together, I always had the legal team review, just to make sure we could add or delete or it was supported. Because it's

		easier to go in and have the CO support something when you have other staff members that said, 'Sir/Ma'am, we already looked at this, and we concur.'"
Other	Researchers working from theory should be open to the emergence of additional codes during data collection, preparation, and analysis and incorporate them into the codebook as they arise (DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2011; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011). Such empirically grounded codes indicate the discovery of important local variables (Miles et al., 2014).	Note: Deductive codes, including "demonstrate value" and "seat at the table," are examples of "other" codes.

Appendix: Interview Guide

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this study. This interview is part of my dissertation research project at the University of Maryland Department of Communication. The study focuses on the Public Affairs Qualification Course. It explores development of military public affairs professional identity and socialization of public affairs managers as members of military organizations and the public affairs profession through the course. I also hope to explore the development and practice of collaboration as a public affairs competency through PAQC. Your insights will help me understand more about the course and public affairs.

Before we begin, I would like to cover a few matters. First, there are no right or wrong answers. I only want to know your thoughts, views, and experiences. Whatever you can share will be of value. Second, your participation in this interview is completely voluntary. You may choose to skip a question or stop the interview at any time and for any reason without penalty. Third, it is my priority to ensure that your information is secure. I will not share your personal information, including your name, with anyone else. Unless you prefer otherwise, your name will not be linked to the information that you provide during the interview except in my own secure records.

The interview will last 45 to 60 minutes and will focus on military public affairs, your experiences in the Public Affairs Qualification Course, and your experiences practicing public affairs, if any. I am conducting this study under the supervision of Dr. Brooke Fisher Liu. If you have questions, concerns, or complaints related to the research, please contact either her or me, the principal investigator: Dr.

Brooke Fisher Liu at 301-405-6524 or bfliu@umd.edu or me at 240-581-0007 or jbermejo@umd.edu.

Thank you for consenting to participate in this study. Finally, I would also like to ask your permission to record this interview for accuracy. While I may have the recording transcribed by a professional service, your name will not be linked to that recording except in my own secure records. Further, your identity will not be revealed in any report. If your words are included in the results, any identifying information will be removed. Do you have any questions before we begin?

May I record this interview? [If permission given, start the recorder.]

Let's start with some demographic questions.

1. What is your branch of service?
2. What is your rank?
3. What is your sex or gender?

Now I'd like to find out about your experience with public affairs and the military.

1. Please tell me about why you decided to pursue a career in military public affairs.
2. Could you tell me about your most recent work or educational background, whether military or civilian?
3. If you have public affairs or related experience, could you tell me about that?

Now I'd like to move on to questions about professional identity.

RQ1: What professional identity, if any, is developed for military public affairs managers through joint entry-level military public affairs training?

1. What, if any, particular priorities, attitudes, values, or behaviors does public affairs bring to the U.S. military or to your particular branch?
2. What benefit does public affairs bring to military organizations or activities?
3. What kind of person would you say succeeds best as a military PAO or public affairs manager?
4. What groups or individuals either inside or outside of the military is it important for military organizations to communicate with?
5. What role does public affairs play in facilitating that communication or in managing those relationships?
6. Can you give me an example of an instance in which public affairs helped to shape communication or a relationship for the better? What do you think allowed PA to exert that influence?
7. Can you give me an example of an instance in which public affairs was unable to shape communication or a relationship in that way? What stood in the way?
8. Do you find / Do you expect working between the military and its various publics to pose any particular challenges? If so, can you tell me about some of those challenges?
9. A term I recall from my own time as a DINFOS student and then as a PA specialist and later PAO is "DINFOS-trained killer." What does the term "DINFOS-trained killer" mean to you?

RQ2: How, if at all, are military public affairs managers socialized as members of their organizations and profession through joint entry-level military public affairs training?

1. How is PAQC similar to or different than the initial-entry training program (e.g., boot camp, ROTC, service academy) you went through upon joining the military?
2. How does PAQC prepare the student to effectively serve as a public affairs manager in a military organization?
3. What role does PAQC play between an initial-entry training program and the on-the-job training and experience a public affairs manager will receive at his or her first public affairs duty assignment?
4. I'd like to revisit the topic of prior experience with public affairs or public relations. What was your understanding of public affairs before PAQC or before entering the career field? How did you develop that understanding?
5. Based on your experience to this point, how would you say practicing public affairs for the military differs from practicing public affairs in a civilian agency or public relations in a business setting? How are they similar?
6. What role has PAQC in particular played in your understanding of public affairs or public relations?
7. If you've worked in public affairs since PAQC, how has working as a PAO or public affairs manager changed your views since the course?

8. What influence, if any, has participation in PAQC or the public affairs field had on your understanding of your role as a member of the U.S. military or your particular branch of service?
9. Do you perceive any points of friction or conflict between public affairs priorities or the public affairs mission and the military mission or priorities?
10. Has PAQC posed any particular challenges for you? Could you tell me about those challenges?

RQ3: How, if at all, is collaboration developed and practiced as a public affairs competency through joint entry-level public affairs training for military public affairs managers?

1. How would you define collaboration?
2. What role does collaboration play in the success of military public affairs?
3. What value, if any, do you see placed on collaboration in PAQC?
4. What functions or individuals is it important for public affairs to collaborate with?
5. Are there any functions with which collaboration is an especially difficult or delicate matter? If so, which functions, and why do you think that is?
6. What makes for a successful collaborative effort led by or involving public affairs?
7. Can you give me an example of a successful public affairs collaboration?
8. What hinders collaboration involving public affairs?
9. Can you give me an example of a public affairs collaboration that didn't turn out well?

10. What makes people more or less inclined to work with public affairs?

Closing

- Those are all the questions I have. Is there anything about PAQC, public affairs professional identity, socialization, or collaboration that I may have missed or you'd like to add?
- Is there anyone else you'd recommend I talk to about these topics?
- Finally, may I contact you in the future if I have any follow-up questions?

Thank you for your time and for sharing your thoughts and experiences. I really appreciate it.

References

Abrams, D., & Hogg, M. A. (2010). Social identity and self-categorization. In J. F. Dovidio, M. Hewstone, P. Glick, & V. M. Esses (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination* (pp. 179-193). London: Sage.

Abrashoff, D. M. (2008). *It's our ship: The no-nonsense guide to leadership*. New York: Business Plus.

Adams, J. S. (1976). The structure and dynamics of behavior in organizational boundary roles. In M. D. Dunnette (Ed.), *Handbook of industrial and organizational psychology* (pp. 1175-1199). Chicago: Rand McNally College Publishing.

Aldoory, L., & Toth, E. (2004). Leadership and gender in public relations: Perceived effectiveness of transformational and transactional leadership styles. *Journal of Public Relations Research, 16*(2), 157-183. doi:10.1207/s1532754xjprr1602_2

Allen, M. R., & Dozier, D. M. (2012). When cultures collide: Theoretical issues in global public relations. In K. Sriramesh & D. Verčič (Eds.), *Culture and public relations: Links and implications* (pp. 182-201). New York: Routledge.

Allport, G. W. (1954). *The nature of prejudice*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Anderson, L. B. (2016). When the Lord builds the house: An autoethnographic account of working in an evangelical for-profit organizational culture. *Culture and Organization*, 1-20. doi:10.1080/14759551.2016.1174934

Ashforth, B. E., Harrison, S. H., & Corley, K. G. (2008). Identification in organizations: An examination of four fundamental questions. *Journal of Management, 34*(3), 325-374. doi:10.1177/0149206308316059

Ashforth, B. E., & Mael, F. (1989). Social identity theory and the organization. *Academy of Management Review, 14*(1), 20-39. doi:10.5465/AMR.1989.4278999

Ashforth, B. E., & Saks, A. M. (1996). Socialization tactics: Longitudinal effects on newcomer adjustment. *Academy of Management Journal, 39*(1), 149-178. doi:10.2307/256634

Ashforth, B. E., Sluss, D. M., & Harrison, S. H. (2007). Socialization in organizational contexts. *International Review of Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 22*, 1-70.

Aukofer, F., & Lawrence, W. P. (1995). *America's team, the odd couple: A report on the relationship between the media and the military*. Nashville, TN: Freedom Forum First Amendment Center.

Bardhan, N., & Weaver, C. K. (2011). Public relations in global cultural contexts. In N. Bardhan & C. K. Weaver (Eds.), *Public relations in global cultural contexts: Multi-paradigmatic perspectives* (pp. 1-28). New York: Routledge.

Barnett, E., & Casper, M. (2001). A definition of "social environment". *American Journal of Public Health, 91*(3), 465. doi:10.2105/AJPH.91.3.465a

Bartel, C. A. (2001). Social comparisons in boundary-spanning work: Effects of community outreach on members' organizational identity and identification. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 46*(3), 379-413. doi:10.2307/3094869

Bateman, T. S., & Crant, J. M. (1999). Proactive behavior: Meaning, impact, recommendations. *Business Horizons, 42*(3), 63-70.

Berger, B. K., & Meng, J. (2010). Public relations practitioners and the leadership challenge. In R. L. Heath (Ed.), *The Sage handbook of public relations* (pp. 421-434). Los Angeles: Sage.

Berger, B. K., & Meng, J. (2014). The global study and leadership in the future. In B. K. Berger & J. Meng (Eds.), *Public relations leaders as sensemakers: A global study of leadership in public relations and communication management* (pp. 297-313). New York: Routledge.

Berkowitz, D., & Hristodoulakis, I. (1999). Practitioner roles, public relations education, and professional socialization: An exploratory study. *Journal of Public Relations Research, 11*(1), 91-103. doi:10.1207/s1532754xjprr1101_04

Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative Research Journal, 9*(2), 27-40. doi:10.3316/QRJ0902027

Bronstein, C., & Fitzpatrick, K. R. (2015). Preparing tomorrow's leaders: Integrating leadership development in journalism and mass communication education. *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator, 70*(1), 75-88. doi:10.1177/1077695814566199

Bureau of Labor Statistics. (n.d.). Military careers. Retrieved from https://www.bls.gov/ooh/military/military-careers.htm

Calvard, T. S. (2014). Difficulties in organizing boundary-spanning activities of inter-organizational teams. In J. Langan-Fox & C. L. Cooper (Eds.), *Boundary-*

spanning in organizations: Network, influence, and conflict (pp. 116-142). New York: Routledge.

Cannon, J., & Cannon, J. (2003). *Leadership lessons of the Navy SEALs: Battle-tested strategies for creating successful organizations and inspiring extraordinary results* (Vol. New York): McGraw-Hill.

Carafano, J. (2006). *Herding cats: Understanding why government agencies don't cooperate and how to fix the problem*. Retrieved from http://www.heritage.org/defense/report/herding-cats-understanding-why-government-agencies-dont-cooperate-and-how-fix-the

Coombs, W. T., & Holladay, S. J. (2015). Public relations' "Relationship Identity" in research: Enlightenment or illusion. *41*(5), 689–695. doi:10.1016/j.pubrev.2013.12.008

Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2015). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (4th ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.

Cullen, K. L., Palus, C. J., Chrobot-Mason, D., & Appaneal, C. (2012). Getting to "we": Collective leadership development. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 5*(4), 428-432. doi:10.1111/j.1754-9434.2012.01475.x

Cutlip, S. M. (1994). *The unseen power: Public relations, a history*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Daymon, C., & Holloway, I. (2011). *Qualitative research methods in public relations and marketing communications* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.

de Bussy, N. M. (2013). Refurnishing the Grunig edifice: Strategic public relations management, strategic communication and organizational leadership. In K.

Sriramesh, A. Zerfass, & J.-N. Kim (Eds.), *Public relations and communication management: Current trends and emerging topics* (pp. 79-92). New York: Routledge.

Dechesne, M., Van Den Berg, C., & Soeters, J. (2007). International collaboration under threat: A field study in Kabul. *Conflict Management and Peace Science, 24*(1), 25-36. doi:10.1080/07388940601102811

DeCuir-Gunby, J. T., Marshall, P. L., & McCulloch, A. W. (2011). Developing and using a codebook for the analysis of interview data: An example from a professional development research project. *Field Methods, 23*(2), 136-155. doi:10.1177/1525822X10388468

Defense Information School. (n.d.). About DINFOS. Retrieved from http://www.dinfos.dma.mil/About/

Defense Media Activity. (n.d.). Mission & vision. Retrieved from http://www.dma.mil/About-DMA/Mission-Vision/

Deuze, M. (2005). What is journalism? Professional identity and ideology of journalists reconsidered. *Journalism, 6*(4), 442-464. doi:10.1177/1464884905056815

Doerfel, M. L., & Gibbs, J. L. (2014). Field research. In L. L. Putnam & D. K. Mumby (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of organizational communication: Advances in theory, research, and methods* (pp. 223-244). Los Angeles: Sage.

Dovidio, J. F., & Gaertner, S. L. (2010). Intergroup bias. In S. T. Fiske, D. T. Gilbert, & G. Lindzey (Eds.), *Handbook of social psychology* (Vol. 2, pp. 1084-1121). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Downie, M. (2016). *Training program of instruction (TPI) for Defense Information School (DINFOS) Public Affairs Qualification Course (PAQC)*. Fort George G. Meade, MD: U.S. Department of Defense.

Dozier, D. M. (1992). The organizational roles of communications and public relations practitioners. In J. E. Grunig (Ed.), *Excellence in public relations and communication management* (pp. 327-356). New York: Routledge.

Dunivin, K. O. (1994). Military culture: Change and continuity. *Armed Forces & Society, 20*(4), 531-547. doi:10.1177/0095327X9402000403

Eder, M. K. (2011). *Leading the narrative: The case for strategic communication*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press.

Eisenberg, E. M. (1984). Ambiguity as strategy in organizational communication. *Communication Monographs, 51*(3), 227-242. doi:10.1080/03637758409390197

Elron, E. (2008). The interplay between the transnational and multinational: Intercultural integrating mechanisms in UN peace operations. In J. Soeters & P. Manigart (Eds.), *Military cooperation in multinational peace operations: Managing cultural diversity and crisis response* (pp. 28-48). London: Routledge.

Erzikova, E., & Berger, B. K. (2011). Creativity vs. ethics: Russian and U.S. public relations students' perceptions of professional leadership and leaders. *Public Relations Journal, 5*(3), 1-24.

Erzikova, E., & Berger, B. K. (2012). Leadership education in the public relations curriculum: Reality, opportunities, and benefit. *Public Relations Journal, 6*(3), 2-30.

Fawkes, J. (2007). Public relations models and persuasion ethics: A new approach. *Journal of Communication Management, 11*(4), 313-331. doi:10.1108/13632540710843922

Fawkes, J. (2010). The shadow of excellence: A jungian approach to public-relations ethics. *Review of Communication, 10*(3), 211-227. doi:10.1080/15358593.2010.486867

Fawkes, J. (2015a). Performance and persona: Goffman and Jung's approaches to professional identity applied to public relations. *41*(5), 675–680. doi:10.1016/j.pubrev.2014.02.011

Fawkes, J. (2015b). *Public relations ethics and professionalism: The shadow of excellence*. London: Routledge.

Fereday, J., & Muir-Cochrane, E. (2006). Demonstrating rigor using thematic analysis: A hybrid approach of inductive and deductive coding and theme development. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 5*(1), 80-92. doi:10.1177/160940690600500107

Ferguson, M. A. (1984). *Building theory in public relations: Interorganizational relationships*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Gainesville, FL.

Fine, G. A., & Deegan, J. G. (1996). Three principles of serendip: Insight, chance, and discovery in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 9*(4), 434-447. doi:10.1080/0951839960090405

Fletcher, J. E., & Soucy, P. E. (1983). Army public affairs officer as perceived by press and by military colleagues. *Journalism Quarterly, 60*, 93-97, 204 doi:10.1177/107769908306000115

Flyvbjerg, B. (2006). Five misunderstandings about case-study research. *Qualitative Inquiry, 12*(2), 219-245. doi:10.1177/1077800405284363

Franke, V. C. (2000). Duty, honor, country: The social identity of West Point cadets. *Armed Forces & Society, 26*(2), 175-202. doi:10.1177/0095327X0002600202

Freedman, L. (2013). *Strategy: A history*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gaertner, S. L., Bachman, B. A., Dovidio, J., & Banker, B. S. (2001). Corporate mergers and stepfamily marriages: Identity, harmony, and commitment. In M. A. Hogg & D. J. Terry (Eds.), *Social identity processes in organizational contexts* (pp. 265-282). Philadelphia, PA: Psychology Press.

Gaertner, S. L., & Dovidio, J. F. (2009). A common ingroup identity: A categorization-based approach for reducing intergroup bias. In T. D. Nelson (Ed.), *Handbook of prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination* (pp. 489-505). New York, NY: Taylor & Francis.

Gallois, C., Cretchley, J., & Watson, B. M. (2012). Approaches and methods in intergroup communication. In H. Giles (Ed.), *The handbook of intergroup communication* (pp. 31-43). New York: Routledge.

Gallois, C., & Giles, H. (2015). Communication accommodation theory. In K. Tracy, C. Ilie, & T. Sandel (Eds.), *The international encyclopedia of language and social interaction* (pp. 1-18). doi:10.1002/9781118611463/wbielsi066

Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation Of cultures*. New York: Basic Books.

Giles, H., & Maass, A. (2016). Advances in and prospects for intergroup communication: Prologue. In H. Giles & A. Maass (Eds.), *Advances in intergroup communication* (pp. 1-15). New York: Peter Lang.

Goffman, E. (1961). *Asylums: Essays on the social situation of mental patients and other inmates* Garden City, NY: Anchor Books.

Graf, S., Paolini, S., & Rubin, M. (2014). Negative intergroup contact is more influential, but positive intergroup contact is more common: Assessing contact prominence and contact prevalence in five Central European countries. *44*(6), 536-547. doi:10.1002/ejsp.2052

Grant, A. M., & Ashford, S. J. (2008). The dynamics of proactivity at work *Research in Organizational Behavior, 28*, 3-34. doi:10.1016/j.riob.2008.04.002

Greenaway, K. H., Wright, R. G., Willingham, J., Reynolds, K. J., & Haslam, S. A. (2015). Shared identity is key to effective communication *Personality and Social*

Psychology Bulletin, 41(2), 171–182. doi:10.1177/0146167214559709

Gregory, A., & Willis, P. (2013). *Strategic public relations leadership* (1st ed.): Routledge.

Grunig, J. E. (2000). Collectivism, collaboration, and societal corporatism as core professional values in public relations. *Journal of Public Relations Research, 12*(1), 23–48. doi:10.1207/S1532754XJPRR1201_3

Grunig, J. E. (2001). Two-way symmetrical public relations: Past, present, and future. In R. L. Heath (Ed.), *Handbook of public relations* (pp. 11-30). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Grunig, J. E. (2006). Furnishing the edifice: Ongoing research on public relations as a strategic management function. *Journal of Public Relations Research, 18*(2), 151-176. doi:10.1207/s1532754xjprr1802_5

Grunig, J. E. (2008). Conceptualizing quantitative research in public relations. In B. Van Ruler, A. T. Verčič, & D. Verčič (Eds.), *Public relations metrics: Research and evaulation* (pp. 88-119). New York, NY: Routledge.

Grunig, J. E. (2009). Paradigms of global public relations in an age of digitalisation. *PRism, 6*(2), 1-19.

Grunig, J. E. (Ed.) (1992). *Excellence in public relations and communication management*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Grunig, J. E., Grunig, L. A., & Dozier, D. M. (2006). The excellence theory. In C. H. Botan & V. Hazleton (Eds.), *Public relations theory II* (pp. 21-62). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Grunig, J. E., & Hunt, T. (1984). *Managing public relations*. New York: Holt, Reinhart and Winston.

Grunig, J. E., & Repper, F. C. (1992). Strategic management, publics, and issues. In J. E. Grunig (Ed.), *Excellence in public relations and communication management* (pp. 117-157). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Grunig, J. E., & White, J. (1992). The effect of worldviews on public relation theory and practice. In J. E. Grunig (Ed.), *Excellence in public relations and communication management* (pp. 31-64). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Grunig, L. A. (1992). Activism: How it limits the effectiveness of organizations and how excellent public relations departments respond. In J. E. Grunig (Ed.), *Excellence in public relations and communication management* (pp. 503-530). Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Guimond, S. (2000). Group socialization and prejudice: the social transmission of intergroup attitudes and beliefs. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 30*(3), 335-354. doi:10.1002/(SICI)1099-0992(200005/06)30:3<335::AID-EJSP994>3.0.CO;2-V

Guo, C., & Acar, M. (2005). Understanding collaboration among nonprofit organizations: Combining resource dependency, institutional, and network perspectives. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 34*(3), 340-361. doi:10.1177/0899764005275411

Harris, R., Simons, M., & Carden, P. (2004). Peripheral journeys: Learning and acceptance of probationary constables. *Journal of Workplace Learning, 16*(4), 205-218. doi:10.1108/13665620410536291

Harwood, J. (2010). The contact space: A novel framework for intergroup contact research. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology, 29*, 147-177. doi:10.1177/0261927X09359520

Harwood, J., Giles, H., & Palomares, N. A. (2005). Intergroup theory and communication processes. In J. Harwood & H. Giles (Eds.), *Intergroup communication: Multiple perspectives* (pp. 1-17). New York, NY: Peter Lang.

Harwood, J., & Joyce, N. (2012). Intergroup contact and communication. In H. Giles (Ed.), *The handbook of intergroup communication* (pp. 167-180). New York: Routledge.

Hedlund, E., Weibull, L., & Soeters, J. (2008). Swedish–Irish cooperation in Liberia. In J. Soeters & P. Manigart (Eds.), *Military cooperation in multinational peace operations: Managing cultural diversity and crisis response* (pp. 153-165). London: Routledge.

Heller, K. S., & Persson, L. M. (2009). The distinction between public affairs and public diplomacy. In N. Snow & P. M. Taylor (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of public diplomacy* (pp. 225-232). New York, NY: Routledge.

Hesse-Biber, S. N., & Leavy, P. (2011). *The practice of qualitative research*. Los Angeles: Sage.

Hibbert, Z., & Starr, A. (2004). Conflict communication management: Why Australians didn't see their troops in Iraq. *Media International Australia, Incorporating Culture & Policy*(113), 66-74.

Hill, L. B., & Cummings, H. W. (1981). Job performance assessment for public affairs officers in the U.S. Air Force. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 9*(1), 16-29. doi:10.1080/00909888109360285

Hodder, I. (1994). The interpretation of documents and material culture. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 393-402). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Hogg, M. A. (2015). *Constructive leadership across groups: How leaders can combat prejudice and conflict between subgroups*: Emerald Group Publishing.

Hogg, M. A., & Terry, D. I. (2000). Social identity and self-categorization processes in organizational contexts. *Academy of Management Review, 25*(1), 121-140. doi:10.5465/AMR.2000.2791606

Hogg, M. A., van Knippenberg, D., & Rast, D. E., III. (2012). Intergroup leadership in organizations: Leading across group and organizational boundaries. *Academy of Management Journal, 37*(2), 232-255. doi:10.5465/amr.2010.0221

Hon, L. (2017). Digital social advocacy and public communication. In B. R. Brunner (Ed.), *The moral compass of public relations* (pp. 194-205). New York: Routledge.

Hon, L., & Grunig, J. E. (1999). *Guidelines for measuring relationships in public relations*. Retrieved from http://www.instituteforpr.org/wp-content/uploads/Guidelines_Measuring_Relationships.pdf

Hornsey, M. J. (2008). Social identity theory and self-categorization theory: A historical review. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass, 2*(1), 204-222. doi:10.1111/j.1751-9004.2007.00066.x

Hornsey, M. J., & Hogg, M. A. (2000). Subgroup relations: A comparison of mutual intergroup differentiation and common ingroup identity models of prejudice reduction. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 26*(2), 242-256. doi:10.1177/0146167200264010

Horton, K. E., McClelland, C. R., & Griffin, M. A. (2014). Defined by our hierarchy? How hierarchical positions shape our identifications and well-being at work. *Human Relations, 67*(10), 1167-1188. doi:10.1177/0018726713516374

Hung, C.-J. F. (2007). Toward the theory of relationship management in public relations: *How* to cultivate quality relationships? In E. L. Toth (Ed.), *The future of excellence in public relations and communication management: Challenges for the next generation* (pp. 443-476). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Jablin, F. M. (1987). Organizational entry, assimilation, and exit. In F. M. Jablin, L. L. Putnam, K. H. Roberts, & L. W. Porter (Eds.), *Handbook of organizational communication: An interdisciplinary perspective* (pp. 679-740). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Jablin, F. M. (2001). Organizational entry, assimilation, and disengagement/exit. In F. M. Jablin & L. L. Putnam (Eds.), *The new handbook of organizational communication: Advances in theory, research, and methods* (pp. 732-818). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Jeffrey, L., & Brunton, M. (2012). Professional identity: How communication management practitioners identify with their industry. *Public Relations Review, 38*(1), 156–158. doi:10.1016/j.pubrev.2011.09.005

Jiang, H., & Bowen, S. A. (2011). Ethical decision making in issues management in activist groups. *Public Relations Journal, 5*(1), 1-21.

Johnson, Z. D., & LaBelle, S. (2017). An examination of teacher authenticity in the college classroom. *Communication Education, 66*(4), 423-439. doi:10.1080/03634523.2017.1324167

Jones, G. R. (1986). Socialization tactics, self-efficacy, and newcomers' adjustments to organizations. *Academy of Management Journal, 29*(2), 262-279. doi:10.2307/256188

Jordan, A. T. (2013). *Business anthropology* (2nd ed.). Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press.

Kalbfleisch, P. (2010). Gendered language as a dynamic intergroup process. In H. Giles, S. Reid, & J. Harwood (Eds.), *The dynamics of intergroup communication* (pp. 29-39). New York: Peter Lang.

Kerlinger, F. N. (1986). *Foundations of behavioral research* (3rd ed.). New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Kim, S., & Kim, J.-N. (2016). Bridge or buffer: Two ideas of effective corporate governance and public engagement. *Journal of Public Affairs, 16*(2), 118-127. doi:10.1002/pa.1555

Koerber, A., & McMichael, L. (2008). Qualitative sampling methods: A primer for technical communicators. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication, 22*(4), 454-473. doi:10.1177/1050651908320362

Kohring, M., Marcinkowski, F., Lindner, C., & Karis, S. (2013). Media orientation of German university decision makers and the executive influence of public relations. *Public Relations Review, 39*(3), 171-177. doi:10.1016/j.pubrev.2013.01.002

Kramer, M. (2010). *Organizational socialization: Joining and leaving organizations*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.

Kroeger, F., & Bachmann, R. (2014). Trusting across boundaries. In J. Langan-Fox & C. L. Cooper (Eds.), *Boundary-spanning in organizations: Network, influence, and conflict* (pp. 253-284). New York: Routledge.

Kvale, S. (1994). *Validation as communication and action: On the social construction of validity*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.

L'Etang, J. (2005). Critical public relations: Some reflections. *Public Relations Review, 31*(4), 521-526. doi:10.1016/j.pubrev.2005.08.011

Ledingham, J. A. (2003). Explicating relationship management as a general theory of public relations. *Journal of Public Relations Research, 15*(2). doi:10.1207/S1532754XJPRR1502_4

Ledingham, J. A. (2006). Relationship management: A general theory of public relations. In C. H. Botan & V. Hazleton (Eds.), *Public relations theory II* (pp. 465-484). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Ledingham, J. A., & Bruning, S. D. (1998). Relationship management in public relations: dimensions of an organization-public relationship. *Public Relations Review, 24*(1), 55-65. doi:10.1016/S0363-8111(98)80020-9

Lee Jenni, G. D., Nils Peterson, M., Jameson, J. K., & Cubbage, F. W. (2015). Military perspectives on public relations related to environmental issues. *Journal of Public Relations Research, 27*(4), 353-369. doi:10.1080/1062726X.2015.1027770

Leichty, G., & Springston, J. (1996). Elaborating public relations roles. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly, 73*(2), 467-477. doi:10.1177/107769909607300215

Levenshus, A. (2013). Military public relations. In R. L. Heath (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Public Relations* (2nd ed., Vol. 2, pp. 565-567). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Levine, J. M., & Hogg, M. A. (2010). Introduction. In J. M. Levine & M. A. Hogg (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of group processes and intergroup relations* (Vol. 1, pp. xxxi-xxxiii). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Lieber, P. S. (2008). Moral development in public relations: Measuring duty to society in strategic communication. *Public Relations Review, 34*(3), 244-251. doi:10.1016/j.pubrev.2008.03.028

Liu, B. F., & Horsley, J. S. (2007). The government communication decision wheel: Toward a public relations model for the public sector. *Journal of Public Relations Research, 19*(4), 377-393. doi:10.1080/10627260701402473

Liu, B. F., Horsley, J. S., & Levenshus, A. B. (2010). Government and corporate communication practices: Do the Differences Matter? *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 38*(2), 189-213. doi:10.1080/00909881003639528

Lucas, K., Kang, D., & Li, Z. (2013). Workplace dignity in a total institution: Examining the experiences of Foxconn's migrant workforce. *Journal of Business Ethics, 114*(1), 91-106. doi:10.1007/s10551-012-1328-0

Ma, R., Atwell Seate, A., & Joyce, N. (2019). The effects of prototypicality and gender salience on liking and friendship potential of a female interlocutor. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 36*(1), 269-288. doi:10.1177/0265407517726395

MacFarlane, A., & O'Reilly-de Brún, M. (2012). Using a theory-driven conceptual framework in qualitative health research. *Qualitative Health Research, 22*(5), 607-618. doi:10.1177/1049732311431898

Macnamara, J. (2016). The continuing convergence of journalism and PR: New insights for ethical practice from a three-country study of senior practitioners. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly, 93*(1), 118-141. doi:10.1177/1077699015605803

Mael, F. A., & Ashforth, B. E. (1995). Loyal from day one: Biodata, organizational identification, and turnover among newcomers. *Personnel Psychology, 48*(2), 309-333. doi:10.1111/j.1744-6570.1995.tb01759.x

Marques, J. M. (2010). Black Sheep Effect. In J. M. Levine & M. A. Hogg (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of group processes and intergroup relations* (Vol. 1, pp. 55-57). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Marquet, L. D. (2012). *Turn the ship around! A true story of turning followers into leaders*. New York: Portfolio/Penguin.

Marrone, J. A. (2010). Team boundary spanning: A multilevel review of past research and proposals for the future. *Journal of Management, 36*(4), 911-940. doi:10.1177/0149206309353945

Martinez-Moyano, I. J. (2006). Exploring the dynamics of collaboration in interorganizational settings. In S. Schuman (Ed.), *Creating a culture of collaboration: The International Association of Facilitators handbook* (pp. 69-86). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

McChrystal, S., Collins, T., Silverman, D., & Fussell, C. (2015). *Team of teams: New rules of engagement for a complex world*. New York: Portfolio/Penguin.

McKie, D., & Willis, P. (2012). Renegotiating the terms of engagement: Public relations, marketing, and contemporary challenges. *Public Relations Review, 38*(5), 846-852. doi:10.1016/j.pubrev.2012.03.008

McNeilly, M. R. (2013). *Sun Tzu and the art of business: Six strategic principles for managers* (Rev. ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mellado, C., & Hanusch, F. (2011). Comparing professional identities, attitudes, and views in public communication: A study of Chilean journalists and public relations practitioners. *37*(4), 384–391. doi:10.1016/j.pubrev.2011.08.014

Men, R. L., & Bowen, S. A. (2016). *Excellence in internal relations management*. New York: Business Expert Press.

Meng, J. (2014). Unpacking the relationship between organizational culture and excellent leadership in public relations: An empirical investigation. *Journal of*

Communication Management, 18(4), 363-385. doi:10.1108/JCOM-06-2012-0050

Meng, J. (2015). Integrating leadership in public relations education to develop future leaders. *Journal of Public Relations Education, 1*(1), 31-37.

Meng, J., & Berger, B. (2013). An integrated model of excellent leadership in public relations: Dimensions, measurement, and validation. *Journal of Public Relations Research, 25*(2), 141-167. doi:10.1080/1062726X.2013.758583

Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook*. Los Angeles: Sage.

Moreland, R. L., & Levine, J. M. (2001). Socialization in organizations and work groups. In M. E. Turner (Ed.), *Groups at work: Theory and research* (pp. 69-112). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Moreland, R. L., Levine, J. M., & McGinn, J. G. (2001). Self-categorization and work-group socialization. In M. A. Hogg & D. J. Terry (Eds.), *Social identity processes in organizational contexts* (pp. 87-100). Philadelphia: Psychology Press.

Morgenthaler, J. (2015). The courage to take command: Leadership lessons from a military trailblazer. In. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Morse, J. M., & Field, P. A. (1996). *Nursing research: The application of qualitative approaches* (2nd ed.). London: Chapman & Hall.

Morton, T. A., Wright, R. G., Peters, K., Reynolds, K. J., & Haslam, S. A. (2012). Social identity and the dynamics of organizational communication. In H. Giles

(Ed.), *The handbook of intergroup communication* (pp. 319-330). New York: Routledge.

Mottola, G. R., Bachman, B. A., Gaertner, S. L., & Dovidio, J. F. (1997). How groups merge: The effects of merger integration patterns on anticipated commitment to the merged organization. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 27*(15), 1335-1358. doi:10.1111/j.1559-1816.1997.tb01809.x

Myers, K. K. (2005). A burning desire: Assimilation into a fire department. *Management Communication Quarterly, 18*(3), 344-384. doi:10.1177/0893318904270742

Nande, K. S. (2010). *Boundary spanning work: An interpretive analysis of tensions in public relations workplaces.* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from https://etd.ohiolink.edu/

Neill, M. S. (2014). Building buy-in: The need for internal relationships and informal coalitions. *Public Relations Review, 40*(3), 598-605. doi:10.1016/j.pubrev.2014.02.017

Nylén, U. (2007). Interagency collaboration in human services: Impact of formalization and intensity on effectiveness. *Public Administration, 85*(1), 143-166. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9299.2007.00638.x

Oliver, K. (2009). *Command attention: Promoting your organization the Marine Corps way*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press.

Pars, M. (2013). Six strategy lessons from Clausewitz and Sun Tzu. *Journal of Public Affairs, 13*(3), 329-334. doi:10.1002/pa.1460

Paul, C. (2011). *Strategic communication: Origins, concepts, and current debates*. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger.

Paul, C. (2012). Challenges facing U.S. government and Department of Defense efforts in strategic communication. *Public Relations Review, 38*(2), 188-194. doi:10.1016/j.pubrev.2011.12.005

Paul, C., Helmus, T. C., & Glenn, R. W. (2009). Challenges to shaping civilian attitudes and behaviors in a theater of operations. In J. J. F. Forest (Ed.), *Influence warfare: How terrorists and governments fight to shape perceptions in a war of ideas* (pp. 173-194). Westport, CT: Praeger.

Paulus, T. M., & Lester, J. N. (2016). ATLAS.ti for conversation and discourse analysis studies. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 19*(4), 405-428. doi:10.1080/13645579.2015.1021949

Peters, K., Morton, T., & Haslam, S. A. (2010). Communication silos and social identity complexity in organizations. In H. Giles, S. Reid, & J. Harwood (Eds.), *The dynamics of intergroup communication* (pp. 221-233). New York: Peter Lang.

Petronio, S., Ellemers, N., Giles, H., & Gallois, C. (1998). (Mis)communicating across boundaries: Interpersonal and intergroup considerations. *Communication Research, 25*(6), 571-595. doi:10.1177/009365098025006001

Pettigrew, T. F. (1998). Intergroup contact theory. *Annual Review of Psychology, 49*, 65-85. doi:10.1146/annurev.psych.49.1.65

Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations. (n.d.). *Plank Center report card reveals wide gap between performance grades of PR leaders and their*

employees. Retrieved from http://plankcenter.ua.edu/resources/research/plank-center-report-card-reveals-wide-gap-between-performance-grades-of-pr-leaders-and-their-employees/

Platow, M. J., & van Knippenberg, D. (2001). A social identity analysis of leadership endorsement: The effects of leader ingroup prototypicality and distributive intergroup fairness:. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 27*(11), 1508-1519. doi:10.1177/01461672012711011

Plowman, K. D. (2013). Creating a model to measure relationships: U.S. Army strategic communication. *Public Relations Review, 39*, 549-557. doi:10.1016/j.pubrev.2013.07.001

Ponterotto, J. G. (2006). Brief note on the origins, evolution, and meaning of the qualitative research concept thick description. *The Qualitative Report, 11*(3), 538-549.

Powell, M., & Pieczka, M. (2016). Understanding learning in senior public relations practices: From boundary spanning to boundary dwelling. *Journal of Communication Management, 20*(4), 312-327. doi:10.1108/JCOM-11-2015-0093

Ragas, M. W., & Culp, R. (2014). *Business essentials for strategic communicators: Creating shared value for the organization and its stakeholders*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Rast, D. E., III, Gaffney, A. M., Hogg, M. A., & Crisp, R. J. (2012). Leadership under uncertainty: When leaders who are non-prototypical group members can gain

support. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 48*(3), 646-653. doi:10.1016/j.jesp.2011.12.013

Reid, R. P. (2002). Waging public relations: A cornerstone of fourth-generation warfare. *Journal of Information Warfare, 1*(3), 51-64.

Rid, T. (2007). *War and media operations: The US military and the press from Vietnam to Iraq*. London: Routledge.

Robins, K., & Webster, F. (1986). The media, the military and censorship. *Screen, 27*(2), 57-63.

Roy, R., & Lawson, C. (2015). *The Navy SEAL art of war: Leadership lessons from the world's most elite fighting force*. New York: Crown Business.

Saks, A. M., Uggerslev, K. L., & Fassina, N. E. (2007). Socialization tactics and newcomer adjustment: A meta-analytic review and test of a model. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 70*(3), 413-446. doi:10.1016/j.jvb.2006.12.004

Saldaña, J. (2003). *Longitudinal qualitative research: Analyzing change through time*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.

Saldaña, J. (2013). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (2nd ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.

Schellhaas, F. M. H., & Dovidio, J. F. (2016). Improving intergroup relations. *Current Opinion in Psychology, 11*, 10-14. doi:10.1016/j.copsyc.2016.04.002

Schoenberger-Orgad, M. (2011). NATO's strategic communication as international public relations: The PR practitioner and the challenge of culture in the case of Kosovo. *Public Relations Review, 37*, 376-383. doi:10.1016/j.pubrev.2011.06.003

Schuman, S. (2006). Preface. In S. Schuman (Ed.), *Creating a culture of collaboration: The International Association of Facilitators handbook* (pp. xxiii-xxxiv). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Scott, C., & Myers, K. K. (2005). The socialization of emotion: Learning emotion management at the fire station. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 33*(1), 67-92. doi:10.1080/0090988042000318521

Shamir, J., Reed, B. S., & Connell, S. (1990). Individual differences in ethical values of public relations practitioners. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly, 67*(4), 956-963. doi:10.1177/107769909006700451

Silver, H. (2007). *Social exclusion: Comparative analysis of Europe and Middle East youth*. Retrieved from Middle East Youth Initiative website: https://www.meyi.org/publication-social-exclusion-comparative-analysis-of-europe-and-middle-east-youth.html

Sisco, H. F., Pressgrove, G., & Collins, E. L. (2013). Paralleling the practice: An analysis of the scholarly literature in nonprofit public relations. *Journal of Public Relations Research, 25*(4), 282-306. doi:10.1080/1062726X.2013.806869

Slay, H. S., & Smith, D. A. (2011). Professional identity construction: Using narrative to understand the negotiation of professional and stigmatized cultural identities. *Human Relations, 64*(1), 85-107. doi:10.1177/0018726710384290

Smith, B. G. (2012). Public relations identity and the stakeholder–organization relationship: A revised theoretical position for public relations scholarship. *Public Relations Review, 38*(5), 838-845. doi:10.1016/j.pubrev.2012.06.011

Smith, M. F. (2005). Warfare and public relations. In R. L. Heath (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of public relations* (Vol. 2, pp. 893-897). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Smith, M. F., & Ferguson, D. P. (2010). Activism 2.0. In R. L. Heath (Ed.), *The Sage handbook of public relations* (pp. 395-408). Los Angeles: Sage.

Soeters, J., & Bos-Bakx, M. (2003). Cross-cultural issues in peacekeeping operations. In T. W. Britt & A. B. Adler (Eds.), *The psychology of the peacekeeper: Lessons from the field* (pp. 283-298). Westport, CT: Praeger.

Soeters, J., & Manigart, P. (2008). Introduction. In J. Soeters & P. Manigart (Eds.), *Military cooperation in multinational peace operations: Managing cultural diversity and crisis response* (pp. 1-10). London: Routledge.

Soeters, J., Resteigne, D., Moelker, R., & Manigart, P. (2008). Smooth and strained international military cooperation: Three cases in Kabul. In J. Soeters & P. Manigart (Eds.), *Military cooperation in multinational peace operations: Managing cultural diversity and crisis response* (pp. 198-220). London: Routledge.

Soeters, J., Winslow, D. J., & Weibull, A. (2006). Military culture. In G. Caforio (Ed.), *Handbook of the sociology of the military* (pp. 237-254). New York: Springer.

Springston, J. K., & Leichty, G. (1994). Boundary spanning activities in public relations. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly, 71*(3), 697-708. doi:10.1177/107769909407100320

Sriramesh, K., Grunig, J. E., & Dozier, D. M. (1996). Observation and measurement of two dimensions of organizational culture and their relationship to public

relations. *Journal of Public Relations Research, 8*(4), 229-261. doi:10.1207/s1532754xjprr0804_02

Stephan, W. G., Ybarra, O., & Morrison, K. R. (2009). Intergroup threat theory. In T. D. Nelson (Ed.), *Handbook of prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination* (pp. 43-59). New York, NY: Taylor & Francis.

Stephens, L. F. (1981). Professionalism of Army public affairs personnel. *Public Relations Review, 7*(2), 43-56. doi:10.1016/S0363-8111(81)80081-1

Søderberg, A.-M., & Wedell-Wedellsborg, M. (2008). The formation of the global soldier: Managing identities in multinational military units. In J. Soeters & P. Manigart (Eds.), *Military cooperation in multinational peace operations: Managing cultural diversity and crisis response* (pp. 180-197). London: Routledge.

Tajfel, H. (1981). *Human groups and social categories: Studies in social psychology*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1986). The social identity theory of intergroup behavior. In S. Worchel & W. G. Austin (Eds.), *Psychology of intergroup relations* (2nd ed., pp. 7-24). Chicago, IL: Nelson-Hall.

Taylor, M., & Kent, M. L. (2010). Anticipatory socialization in the use of social media in public relations: A content analysis of PRSA's *Public Relations Tactics*. *Public Relations Review, 36*(3), 207-214. doi:10.1016/j.pubrev.2010.04.012

Thurmond, V. A. (2001). The point of triangulation. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship, 33*(3), 253-258. doi:10.1111/j.1547-5069.2001.00253.x

Toledano, M. (2010). Military spokespeople and democracy: Perspectives from two Israeli wars. In R. L. Heath (Ed.), *The Sage handbook of public relations* (2nd ed., pp. 585-598). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Tomforde, M. (2008). Towards transnational identities in the armed forces? German–Italian military cooperation in Kosovo. In J. Soeters & P. Manigart (Eds.), *Military cooperation in multinational peace operations: Managing cultural diversity and crisis response* (pp. 129-140). London: Routledge.

Toth, E. L. (2010). Reflections on the field. In R. L. Heath (Ed.), *The Sage handbook of public relations* (pp. 711-722). Los Angeles: Sage.

Tracy, S. J. (2000). Becoming a character for commerce: Emotion labor, self-subordination, and discursive construction of identity in a total institution. *Management Communication quarterly, 14*(1), 90-128. doi:10.1177/0893318900141004

Tracy, S. J., & Geist-Martin, P. (2014). Organizing ethnography and qualitative approaches. In L. L. Putnam & D. K. Mumby (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of organizational communication: Advances in theory, research, and methods* (3rd ed., pp. 245-270). Los Angeles: Sage.

Tracy, S. J., & Trethewey, A. (2005). Fracturing the real-self↔fake-self dichotomy: Moving toward "crystallized" organizational discourses and identities *Communication Theory, 15*(2), 168-195. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2885.2005.tb00331.x

Turner, J. C. (1985). Social categorization and the self-concept: A social cognitive theory of group behavior. In E. J. Lawler (Ed.), *Advances in group processes: Theory and research* (pp. 77-122). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Tushman, M. L., & Scanlan, T. J. (1981a). Boundary spanning individuals: Their role in information transfer and their antecedents. *Academy of Management Journal, 24*(2), 289-305. doi:10.5465/255842

Tushman, M. L., & Scanlan, T. J. (1981b). Characteristics and external orientations of boundary spanning individuals. *Academy of Management Journal, 24*(1), 83-98. doi:10.5465/255825

Ulin, B. (2010). *About interagency cooperation*. Retrieved from Arthur D. Simons Center for Interagency Cooperation website: http://thesimonscenter.org/about-interagency-cooperation/

van der Kolk, B. (2014). *The body keeps the score: Brain, mind, and body in the healing of trauma*. New York: Penguin Books.

Van Dyke, M. A., & Verčič, D. (2009). Public relations, public diplomacy, and strategic communication: An international model of conceptual convergence. In K. Sriramesh & D. Verčič (Eds.), *The global public relations handbook: Theory, research, and practice* (Revised ed., pp. 822-842). New York: Routledge.

Van Maanen, J., & Schein, E. H. (1979). Toward a theory of organizational socialization. In B. M. Straw (Ed.), *Research in organizational behavior* (Vol. 1, pp. 209-264). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

von Platen, S. (2016). Struggling with new media and old expertise: Reconstructing the professional role of communication consultancy. *International Journal of Strategic Communication, 10*(5), 353-367. doi:10.1080/1553118X.2016.1204612

Wakefield, R. I., Plowman, K. D., & Curry, A. (2013). Institutionalizing public relations: An international multiple-case study. *Journal of Public Relations Research, 25*(3), 207-224. doi:10.1080/1062726X.2013.758584

Wang, S., & Archer, N. (2007). Business-to-business collaboration through electronic marketplaces: An exploratory study. *Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management, 13*(2), 113-126. doi:10.1016/j.pursup.2007.05.004

Warren, C. A. B., & Karner, T. X. (2010). *Discovering qualitative methods: Field research, interviews, and analysis* (2nd ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.

Watt, D. (2007). On becoming a qualitative researcher: The value of reflexivity. *The Qualitative Report, 12*(1), 82-101.

Weinland, D. (2013, April 29). Business on the battlefield: Sun Tzu's The Art of War. *CKGSB Knowledge*. Retrieved from http://knowledge.ckgsb.edu.cn/2013/04/29/china/business-on-the-battlefield-sun-tzus-the-art-of-war/

Wenzel, M., Mummendey, A., & Waldzus, S. (2007). Superordinate identities and intergroup conflict: The ingroup projection model. *European Review of Social Psychology, 18*(1), 331-372. doi:10.1080/10463280701728302

Werder, K. P., & Holtzhausen, D. (2009). An analysis of the influence of public relations department leadership style on public relations strategy use and effectiveness. *Journal of Public Relations Research, 21*(4), 404-427. doi:10.1080/10627260902966391

Willink, J., & Babin, L. (2015). *Extreme ownership: How U.S. Navy SEALs lead and win*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Wilson, S. R., & Chernichky, S. M. (2016). Intergroup communication perspectives on military families and the military–civilian divide. In H. Giles & A. Maass (Eds.), *Advances in intergroup communication* (pp. 265-282). New York: Peter Lang.

Wilson, W. J., & Chaddha, A. (2009). The role of theory in ethnographic research. *Ethnography, 10*(4), 549-564. doi:10.1177/1466138109347009

Wong, L., Bliese, P., & McGurk, D. (2003). Military leadership: A context specific review ☆. *The Leadership Quarterly, 14*(6), 657–692. doi:10.1016/j.leaqua.2003.08.001

Woo, D., & Myers, K. K. (2016). Organizational socialization and intergroup dynamics. In H. Giles & A. Maass (Eds.), *Advances in intergroup communication* (pp. 227-245). New York: Peter Lang.

Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and methods* (5th ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.