

Military Operations and the Mind: War Ethics and Soldiers' Well-Being

by **Stéphanie A.H. Bélanger and Daniel Lagacé-Roy (eds.)**

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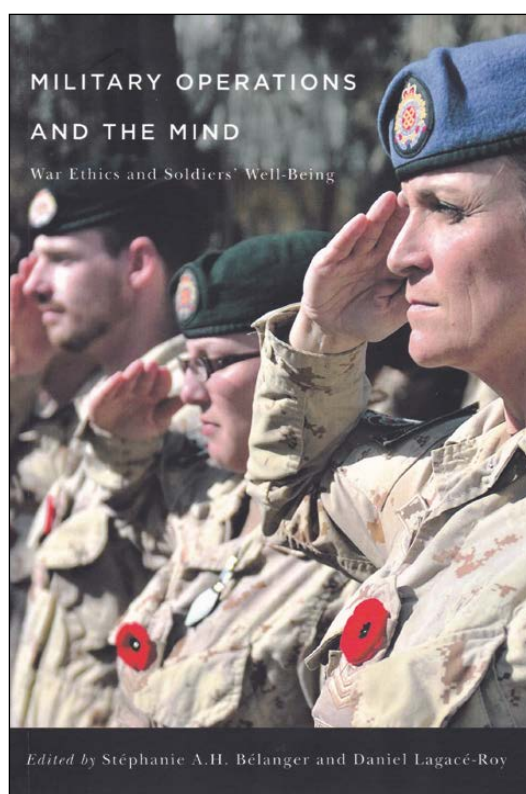
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**Reviewed by
Christopher Huffam**

This work is divided into four main sections and is composed of nine essays dealing with the thorny issue of the need for a distinction between ethical standards as understood and applied in contemporary Canadian society, and a separate set of ethical standards within Canada's Armed Forces. Thoughtfully laid out, the reader is provided with an understanding of the need for a clearly defined and communicated standard of ethical practice that is grounded in the common values of Canada, the rule of law, compassion, and the differences in orientation from that of the average Canadian that a member of the Canadian Armed Forces must have to ground his or her behavior. Through the language and example choices used in the individual essays, the reader is also permitted a glimpse into the past, and shown how public perception and government direction contributed, at various times, to the current situation.

Through the first three essays, written by Ethan Whitehead, Joe Sharpe and through the combined efforts of Peter Gizewski, Heather Hrychuk and Richard Dickson, we are reminded that operational and geographical environments play a part in setting the expectations for ethical behavior. These discussions are presented through a discussion of the evolution of current national policy - the DND /CAF Code of Values and Ethics, and include a thoughtful reflection on the conflict between legal obligation, personal and institutional morality, and the impact of this clash upon the execution of command responsibilities.

The second group of essays was written respectively by the teams of Peter Bradley and Shaun Tymchuk, and Damien O'Keefe, Victor M. Catano, E. Kevin Kelloway, Danielle Charbonneau, and Alister MacIntyre. Through these two essays, this section brings reflections from the first section to the managerial levels and defines the concept of ethical risk, discusses approaches to train leaders



to manage it in the decision making process, and discusses a three stage model for this process. This section also discusses the ethics of influence and how the perception of an individual can flavor the perspective of subordinates' views of leadership.

Part three includes two essays written by the team of Alister MacIntyre, Joseph Doty and Daphnie Xu, and by Howard G. Coombs. This section is oriented to the operational level, and proposes potential methods for the measurement of ethical sensibility. In it, we see the suggestion of integrating ethical considerations into the Operational Planning Process, a consideration that had been previously included informally, if at all.

The final section of the book deals with cultural clashes and decision-making. In his essay, Allen English discusses 100 years of conflict between operational necessities and commonly-held Canadian values within the Canadian military, drawing

examples from the medical services for each of the periods discussed. In discussing examples of ethical conflict, the author frames his discussion in the circumstances of the day, and describes the approaches taken to each. This is possibly the best essay in the book. In the final essay, Donna Messervey and Karen D. Davis discuss mitigating the ethical risk of sexual misconduct in organizations. This issue, unfortunately common to many large organizations, such as a nation's armed forces, can only be ameliorated through a process of cultural change at all levels, and cannot be expected to succeed if focused only upon the individuals, as the organizational culture is equally at fault.

This book is highly recommended reading.

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