IDENTITY CRISIS: THE ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IN DEFINING PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND ITS ROLES, MISSIONS, AND VALUE IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

A Thesis presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School

University of Missouri-Columbia

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

KIMBERLY S. LEONE

Dr. Glen T. Cameron, Thesis Supervisor

DECEMBER 2015
The undersigned, appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School, have examined the thesis entitled

IDENTITY CRISIS: THE ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IN DEFINING PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND ITS ROLES, MISSIONS, AND VALUE IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

presented by Kimberly Leone

a candidate for the degree of Master of Arts

and hereby certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

_______________________________
Professor Glen T. Cameron

_______________________________
Professor Mitchell McKinney

_______________________________
Assistant Professor Harsh Taneja

_______________________________
Professor Esther L. Thorson
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

So many thanks to Dr. Cameron for believing in me and this research even when I questioned its value and my ability to complete it. And thank you to Sarah who never gave up on me and endured lots of questions and special requests from where ever I was in the world. I also want to thank my smart, beautiful friend, Leandra, who went line by line through this paper solely because she is an amazing friend and wanted me to sound smart. And I must thank my son, Muggs, for making his way through this paper to check citations and punctuation and for giving up “mom time” so I could complete my work. And to my ever patient husband, thank you for knowing and accepting I will always overfill my plate because that’s just how I’m made.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of this Study</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationale</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Marine Corps</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard power, soft power, smart power</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Communication in the Marine Corps</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization Theory</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related Research</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 3</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Methodology</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyzing the Data</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 4</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Results</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission of public affairs from practitioners’ perspective. (RQ1 and RQ3)</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission of public affairs from non-practitioners’ perspective. (RQ2 and RQ4)</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission of public affairs per doctrine. (RQ5 and RQ6)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The truth and nothing but the truth, sorta. (RQ5 and RQ6)</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential causes of contradictions and ‘say do’ gaps. (RQ7)</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 5</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical Implications</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations and Future Research</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix (1) - Codebook</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IDENTITY CRISIS: THE ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IN DEFINING PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND ITS ROLES, MISSIONS, AND VALUE IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

Kimberly Leone

Dr. Glen T. Cameron, Thesis Supervisor

ABSTRACT

This study examined the valuation of soft power, specifically public affairs, and the understanding of public affairs missions within the U.S. Marine Corps from the perspective of public affairs practitioners and Marine Corps infantry officers. Marine Corps majors in the public affairs field and in infantry-related career fields were asked a series of questions via an anonymous, online focus group to ascertain their understanding of the role of public affairs across all types and phases of military operations. Their responses were compared to the doctrinally-defined missions of public affairs and the other Marine Corps information related capabilities (IRCs). Focus group participants were also asked how the Corps should prioritize or value soft power like public affairs in relation to hard power.
True, This! —
Beneath the rule of men entirely great
The pen is mightier than the sword. Behold
The arch-enchanters wand! — itself is nothing! —
But taking sorcery from the master-hand
To paralyse the Cæsars, and to strike
The loud earth breathless! — Take away the sword —
States can be saved without it!

- Edward Bulwer-Lytton, Richelieu, 1839

If it doesn’t break things or kill people, it doesn’t matter.
- Marine Corps Brigadier General at Marine Corps Combat
  Development Command during a budget prioritization
  meeting, 2014
CHAPTER 1

The U.S. Marine Corps is a war fighting organization built on a warrior ethos, steeped in tradition, and adept at use of both the literal and proverbial sword. Yet, as the nature of war and combat operations has changed and the variety, speed, and agility of information sharing ever-increases, the Marine Corps must figure out how to use capabilities that don’t break things or kill bad guys, but can be vital to mitigating conflict, saving lives, and building global stakeholder support. Public affairs, the Marine Corps equivalent to public relations, is one element of the Corps’ state-saving pen and yet, this research proposes the warriors do not know how, when, or why to pick up the pen and put down the sword.

The Marine Corps has a “pen,” its public affairs career field, comprised of Marines specifically trained to develop communication strategies; engage key publics via a multitude of communication methods aligned with said communication strategies; and then evaluate the effectiveness of communication actions. Public affairs represents part of the Corps’ non-lethal means of engagement. Lethal means of engagement being the conventional, military mechanisms represented by weapons systems and infantry forces – Marines on the ground with rifles in hand. Non-lethal means of engagement are more nebulous and varied and difficult to assign a quantifiable value in military operations. Commanders can count how many weapons caches are destroyed or how many enemies are killed, but how many terrorists put down their guns because of an information campaign or how many civilians were saved because of diplomacy or how much
congressional funding was achieved because of voter support for the Corps driven by community outreach efforts, well that’s harder to count.

If the Corps’ warrior ethos values the “sword” – conventional means of engagement – to the exclusion of non-lethal means, the Corps will create missed opportunities to effectively employ public affairs. Additionally, if public affairs practitioners within the Corps understand their role to be that of in-house journalists or merely information officers feeding raw information to the media and fail to redefine themselves as managers “of competition and conflict for the benefit of” the Corps, public affairs will be underfunded, undermanned, and continually marginalized (Cameron, Wilcox, Weber, & Shin, 2008, p. 7). As a result, the Corps will miss opportunities to engage and win battles in the information environment. At a minimum, this failure will distance the Corps from its lifeblood, the support of the American people. At its worst, this failure will necessitate use of the sword, conventional, lethal, military mechanisms and result in loss of life.

**Significance of this Study**

Understanding if and why Marine Corps public affairs is marginalized is an essential initial step toward far-reaching changes in how the Corps prioritizes and employs its information related capabilities. These changes could result in significant improvements in public engagement and reduce costly duplicative efforts. This initial qualitative research supports future quantitative research identifying causal relationships between organizational culture and successes and failures in application of public affairs and the information related capabilities. The findings of this qualitative research can identify say-do gaps between doctrine (say) and practice (do) as it relates to Marine
Corps public affairs. This data can help shape quantitative analysis looking at, for example, the success or failure of public engagements in a command with low prioritization of soft power, but demonstrated knowledge of the doctrinal definition and missions of public affairs. How does a Marine command in which the public affairs practitioners and the non-public affairs leadership demonstrate consistent understanding of the definition and missions of public affairs in the Marine Corps still manage to get it wrong? This research proposes the organizational culture prevents maximum, effective use of public affairs because Marines prefer hard power – rifles and fighter jets – over soft power like media relations and community outreach.

Despite the possible limitations, this research is of value to a variety of communities - the Marine Corps could gain insight into better aligning and employing public affairs and better training public affairs practitioners and non-public affairs Marine officers to reduce duplication in efforts and integrate communication actions. This would then benefit American taxpayers as there is the potential for gaining efficiencies and thus reducing operating costs and improving efficiency for the Corps. This also benefits the American public and international publics as the Corps would be better able to leverage public affairs in order to communicate with key publics. The media may benefit from improved internal understanding of the roles and missions of public affairs resulting in the Corps better synthesizing and expediting release of consistent information to media sources. Academia stands to benefit from the detailed discussion of the role of the organizational warrior culture in the conduct of Marine Corps communication missions. The Corps’ rigid hierarchy and warrior culture are iconic, however, they could also be the biggest
hindrance to truly integrated, strategic communication in the Marine Corps. Organization theory provides a way to look at if/how the organization is getting in its own way.

Rationale

This research compares and contrasts the doctrinal definition and missions of Marine Corps public affairs with the understanding of Marine public affairs practitioners and non-public affairs Marine officers. It looks at the say-do gap, the mismatch between the doctrinal definition and missions of Marine Corps public affairs and how Marines actually define and use public affairs. Do public affairs Marines and non-public affairs Marines agree on what public affairs is and does for the Corps? Does their understanding match the textbook answer detailed in organizational doctrine? And in the end, does the Corps use public affairs as a way to manage conflict and competition, recognizing sometimes the pen is in fact, mightier than the sword?

This study employs thematic analysis to establish a definition of Marine Corps public affairs based on authoritative, doctrinal publications then compares this definition with the understanding of Marine Corps public affairs as illustrated in narrative responses from public affairs practitioners and non-public affairs Marine Corps officers. When Marine Corps officers who are public affairs practitioners and non-public affairs officers are asked, “what is public affairs and what does it do for the Corps?” how close do they get to the doctrinal definition? Do any of these three perspectives align with Cameron’s definition of public relations as “the strategic management of competition and conflict for the benefit of one’s own organization” (Cameron, Wilcox, Weber, Shin, 2008. p. 7). If there is a say-do gap, why?

Research Questions
To determine the existence of say-do gaps related to Marine Corps public affairs and examine the causes of these gaps, if they exist, this study employs thematic analysis of narrative responses from study participants and Marine Corps and Department of Defense doctrine to answer these research questions (RQ):

RQ1 – How do Marine Corps public affairs practitioners define public affairs?
RQ2 – How do non-public affairs Marine Corps officers define public affairs?
RQ3 – What is the mission(s) of Marine Corps public affairs according to Marine Corps public affairs practitioners?
RQ4 – What is the mission(s) of Marine Corps public affairs according to non-public affairs Marine Corps officers?
RQ5 – What is the doctrinal definition and mission(s) of Marine Corps public affairs?
RQ6 – How does the doctrinal definition and mission(s) of Marine Corps public affairs differ from the definition and mission(s) identified by public affairs practitioners and non-public affairs Marine Corps officers?

This research then applies organization theory to examine RQ7 – If say-do gaps exist, what role does the organizational culture of the Corps play?
CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

This study compares and contrasts the doctrinal definition and role of Marine Corps public affairs with the definition and roles understood by Marine Corps public affairs practitioners and Marine leadership outside of the public affairs field. The research employs thematic analysis of doctrinal publications - the user’s manual for Marine Corps Public Affairs - to establish the definition and missions of Marine Corps public affairs. Military doctrine provides the accepted definition and missions of capability sets within the military. It’s a multi-volume user manual for the branch of the military. There is doctrine for all of the things military organizations do, all approved at the highest level of the branch of service, and evolved through an endless cycle of updating and revising as technology and the nature of military operations changes.

This was then compared to themes gleaned from narrative responses from public affairs practitioners with an average of 10 years of experience and non-public affairs Marine officers with an average of 10 years of experience as Marine Corps leaders. Through the lens of organization theory and using a case study methodology, this research then compared the definitions of public affairs based on doctrine, practitioners, and non-public affairs officers and examined the impact organizational culture may have on differences between what the doctrine says, the practitioners do, and the leadership expects.

To explore this relationship, this study first explicated several concepts specific to the organization, processes, and capabilities being researched – the U.S. Marine Corps;
soft versus hard power; conventional vs unconventional warfare; strategic communication within the Department of Defense (DoD); the information related capabilities; and Marine Corps public affairs.

The research also relied on the concepts of organizational theory and organizational learning theory as well as the paradigm of traditional warfare to explore how the culture, structure, and organization of the Marine Corps impact its ability to employ information related capabilities, specifically public affairs.

The Marine Corps

The Marine Corps is, as defined by its 35th commandant, General James Amos in his planning guidance and published in Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1-0 signed 9 August 2011, “America’s Expeditionary Force in Readiness—a balanced air-ground-logistics team” (MCDP 1-0, 2011, p. I-1). The commandant further asserted the Corps provides the United States with a means of creating options and decision space for U.S. leaders and, as operating “throughout the spectrum of threats—irregular, hybrid, conventional—or the shady areas where they overlap” (MCDP 1-0, 2011, p. I-1).

Doctrinal publications are used to define roles, missions, and concepts within various aspects of the branches of service. Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1-0 (2011) provides a broad stroke explanation of the unique capabilities of each branch of service:

The Navy, Air Force, and Army are optimized to dominate the sea, air, and land, respectively. Generally, the greater the capability and capacity required to dominate those portions of the sea, air, or land necessary to accomplishing the overall objective of the expedition, the longer it will
take to deploy the associated forces. Simply put, there is a tradeoff between size and speed whenever an expedition is put in motion. (p. I-1)

The Marine Corps is “optimized to be expeditionary—a strategically mobile middleweight force that can fill the gaps created by the size/speed tradeoff and usually task organized and employed as Marine air-ground task forces (MCDP 1-0, 2011, p. I-1-2). Marine air-ground task forces are made up of ground, air, and logistics elements led by one command element (MCDP 1-0, 2011, p. I-5). They are intentionally scalable and “tailorable” to the specific requirements of the mission to which assigned. Since WWII, the Corps has honed its structure and capabilities to support rapid crisis response with the intent of providing the U.S. with a rapidly deployable, highly scalable, self-sustaining force whose expeditiousness best suits immediate, short term response to a range of crises not exclusive to military conflict (MCDP 1-0, 2011, p. I-1-2). The Corps’ flexibility and expediency are what make it unique from the other branches of service. While the Air Force focuses on aviation, the Navy tends to the seaborne capability, and the Army brings ground forces en masse with the ability to stay for extending periods of time, the Corps borrows the Navy’s ships and brings just enough airplanes and troops to get the job done or prepare the environment for larger, follow on forces.

**Hard power, soft power, smart power.** The Corps is tasked with “responding rapidly to crisis” and projecting power as part of “a larger, ‘whole-of-government’ system of projecting ‘smart’ power across the range of military operations” (MCDP 1-10, 2011, p. 1-15). The idea of ‘smart power” applies to this research specifically as it:

… is the ability to selectively apply soft and hard power in combinations appropriate to a given situation to achieve national objectives. Soft power
is the use of persuasive means, such as cultural affinity, diplomacy, economic interaction, and foreign assistance, to establish legitimacy and influence or attract others to align their policies, interests, or objectives with one’s own. (p. 1-16)

In public relations terms, soft power includes all the components of public relations – media relations, marketing communications, multicultural and financial relations, publicity, et cetera (Cameron, Wilcox, Weber, & Shin, 2008. p. 10). It is the strategic, deliberate, planned collective performance of intentionally engaging audiences in the information environment. It typifies strategic management of competition and conflict. The competition includes the other branches of service seeking recruits, competing interests for taxpayer dollars in a finite federal budget, and the civilian workplace offering career opportunities that do not involve long deployments or lunch breaks shortened by rifle bearing insurgents.

The conflicts arise from misconduct by military members, misspent taxpayer dollars, and actual military conflicts in which the military enemy battles in both soft and hard power. However, this research proposes the doctrine, the practitioners and Marine Corps leadership will not equate public affairs to public relations and as a result, not fully realize the far-reaching strategic value of public affairs for the Corps, favoring hard power over soft.

Hard power is aligned with force, be it military or economic to coerce and influence the actions of other military forces and/or nations (MCDP 1-10, 2011, p. 1-16). Infantry forces, artillery units, armed aircraft, et cetera, represent hard power. Hard power is assumed to be potentially and intentionally lethal. It is rounds fired at the enemy. It is
bombs dropped from planes. It is cutting off economic resources to the extent that the enemy cannot sustain their hard power. This study proposes that soft power, specifically public affairs as the manager of strategic communication in the Marine Corps, is an essential supporting capability that can condition the environment prior to the use of hard power, potentially eliminating the need to apply hard power at all.

The spectrum of military operations, referred to as the range of military operations, is a continuum of operations broken down by military engagement, security cooperation and deterrence; crisis response and limited contingency operations; and major operations and campaigns (Joint Publication 3-0, Joint Operations, 2011, p. I-5,6).

The first level of the continuum - military engagement, security cooperation and deterrence - consists of "routine activities that establish, shape, maintain, and refine relations with other nations and domestic civil authorities" (Joint Publication 3-0, Joint Operations, 2011, p. I-5,6). Of note is the continuation of some activities from this level of the continuum across all other levels and across the phases of operations and the inclusion of day-to-day peacetime operations. Following this level are the "small scale, limited duration operations" that characterize crisis response and limited contingency operations (Joint Publication 3-0, Joint Operations, 2011, p. I-6). At the highest level of the range of military operations are the "extended-duration, large-scale" military operations involving combat and usually "a series of related tactical actions such as battles, engagements, and strikes (Joint Publication 3-0, Joint Operations, 2011, p. I-6). It is at this level that war resides.

Annual training exercises such as Foal Eagle with South Korea, Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) with the Philippines, and Native Fury with ally
nations in the Persian Gulf represent the first level of the continuum. These annual exercises are designed to build and sustain relationships between the U.S. military and ally militaries around the globe. For example, the CARAT training exercise familiarizes U.S. forces with the equipment, personnel, and capabilities of the Philippine military as well as the geography, weather, infrastructure, culture, et cetera, of the Philippines. This interaction and information is valuable when tragedy strikes as it did when Typhoon Haiyan struck the island nation in 2013. The Marine Corps sent personnel and equipment to help the Philippine people recover from the storm. They leveraged knowledge and relationships gained from routine security cooperation activities (CARAT) to better conduct crisis response operations.

Military operations are further broken down by phases: Phase 0 – Shape, Phase 1 – Deter, Phase 2 – Seize Initiative, Phase 3 – Dominate, Phase 4 – Stabilize, Phase 5 – Enable Civil Authority, and again, Phase 0 – Shape (Joint Publication 3-0, Joint Operations, 2011, p. II-2). The capability sets within a military organization, for the purposes of this research, a Marine Air Ground Task Force, have doctrinally-defined missions with discrete tasks to be conducted to achieve the defined mission. The task forces are manned and equipped to carry out these doctrinal tasks. The planning process is designed to ensure the requisite capabilities are identified and integrated into the overall mission plan. An element of this research seeks to reveal whether or not Marine Corps planners and leaders limit public affairs to specific phases of operations despite its universal applicability across all phases of operations.

Strategic communication and thus, public affairs, “affect every military operation and are essential when the focus is on gaining and maintaining the support of the relevant
population” be it the civilian population of a foreign nature, homeowners outside the gates of a Marine Corps air station in California, or congressional members with their fingers grasping the proverbial purse strings (Joint Publication 3-0, Joint Operations, 2011, p. III-15). Understanding the range of military operations and the phases of operations is significant in understanding the implications of inconsistent or even incompatible understanding of public affairs within the Corps. Although the Marine Corps could be tasked to conduct missions that do not require helicopters or rifles, it can be argued it will never face a mission that doesn’t involve communicating with some public (stakeholders) or at least planning to communicate with publics. Yet, during a 2012 joint irregular warfare planning war game, a team of Marine Corps planners adopted a staffing list for a hypothetical Marine unit that had two aviation officers and zero public affairs officers.
Strategic Communication in the Marine Corps. In a March 2010 Marine Corps Gazette article, Strategic Communication and the MAGTF (Marine Air Ground Task Force), the Strategic Communication Working Group acknowledged a rise in relevance of the term “strategic communication” followed by identifying a significant downside, “Its (term ‘strategic communication) use has outpaced the work necessary to truly define it, understand it, and apply it effectively” (Strategic Communication Working Group, 2010, p. 65). The risk in this situation, according to the working group, is “Misunderstood, strategic communication (not communications – referring to the mediums or means of communication; e.g. radio, television, Internet) can lose operational and tactical relevance” (Strategic Communication Working Group, 2010, p. 65).

In the Corps, loss of operational and tactical relevance means public affairs isn’t considered early in planning or isn’t considered at all. Operations are conducted without consideration of strategic communication or public engagement requirements. Tangible effects of marginalizing public affairs manifest in limiting media access to operations, delaying dissemination of information, or potentially disseminating information that doesn’t align with strategic communication objectives. This research proposes public affairs planners are not routinely considered part of essential planning staff and thus often do not have a seat at the table for planning Marine Corps operations. Furthermore, it has been the researcher’s experience, if there is a public affairs planner at the table, their insights and recommendations are marginalized in the interest of bringing more hard power to the operation.

As though the working group had the benefit of a crystal ball, just two short years later the Dept. of Defense and the Marine Corps has come full circle, working to take the
term strategic communication out of the military lexicon, not because they don’t see its value anymore, but because understanding and application of strategic communication is still so askew that it had to be renamed. Now known as “communication synchronization” within the Department of Defense (DoD Memo November 2012).

The Department of Defense, with the military branches following suit, set about detailing definitions, roles, and responsibilities of the information related capabilities in joint and branch-specific doctrine, going so far as to create a new military occupational specialty – information operations – to serve as the overarching synchronizer of communication. Joint doctrine identifies the information related capabilities as electronic warfare, cyberspace operations, military information support operations (formerly known as psychological operations), civil-military operations, military deception, intelligence, and public affairs (Joint Publication 3-13, 2012, p. II-4). Joint Publication 1-02, DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, explains the information related capabilities as the tools, techniques, or activities that are used within a “dimension of the information environment” to create effects and operationally desirable conditions (Joint Publication 1-02, amended 2012, p. 140).

This research will focus on the information related capability of public affairs and proposes that public affairs is already positioned to be the communication synchronizer for the Marine Corps. If there is a mismatch between the doctrinal definitions of public affairs and the operating definitions held by practitioners and non-public affairs Marine officers, the Corps creates costly, unnecessary redundancies among its information related capabilities all the while undermining strategic communication.
Information operations is defined as “the integrated employment, during military operations, of (information related capabilities) in concert with other lines of operation to influence, disrupt, corrupt, or usurp the decision making of adversaries and potential adversaries while protecting our own” in Joint Publication 3-13. (Joint Publication 3-13, 2012, p. I-1). This definition of information operations sounds very similar to some of the more than 500 recognized definitions of public relations with an emphasis on deliberate action “to influence, gain understanding, provide information, and obtain feedback (reaction from those affected by the activity) (Cameron, Wilcox, Weber, & Shin, 2008. p. 7).

DoD, joint doctrine identifies public affairs as the way the U.S. military facilitates “the responsive release of accurate information and imagery to domestic and international audiences” (Joint Publication 3-61, 2010, p. I-1). The publication continues, stating “(public affairs) puts operational actions in context, facilitates the development of informed perceptions (among internal and external audiences) about military operations, helps undermine adversarial propaganda efforts, and contributes to the achievement of national, strategic, and operational objectives” (Joint Publication 3-61, 2010, p. I-1).

Civil Affairs is “those military activities … to modify behaviors, to mitigate or defeat threats to civil society, and to assist in establishing the capacity for deterring or defeating future civil threats in support of civil-military operations or other U.S. objectives” (MCRP 3-33.1A p. glossary-8). Civil affairs units identify opportunities for the Marine Corps to assist in non-military ways and facilitate in-person public engagement. Examples of civil affairs activities include arranging for tribal leaders to meet Marine unit commanders in Afghanistan, surveying bridges and roads and leading
construction projects to improve transportation infrastructure in ally nations, and setting up medical engagements for preventative care and vaccination. Civil affairs personnel often engage one-on-one with non-combatants in foreign nations. Who is responsible for ensuring civil affairs personnel understand the broader strategic communication objectives? How does the Corps ensure these public engagements align with broader communication strategies and goals?

Military information support operations (MISO), previously known as psychological operations, is “planned operations to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence their emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behavior of foreign” entities in order to gain an outcome favorable to originator’s objectives (Joint Publication 3-13.2, 2011, p. vii). Military information support operations are specifically intended to influence. Information campaigns developed and delivered by military information support operations align with overarching themes and messages designed to achieve specific organizational objectives. Sounds much like the British Institute of Public Relations definition of public relations as “influencing behavior to achieve objectives through the effective management of relationships and communications” (Cameron, Wilcox, Weber, & Shin, 2008. p. 6). Yet, military information support operations functions independent of public affairs with practitioners on both sides often quick to point out they don’t influence (public affairs) or they only influence (military information support operations).

Neither community can lie. Both communities must adhere to professional ethics, but unlike military information support operations, public affairs is authorized to engage domestic audiences. In a digital world, isolating messaging is challenging. There is no
way to guarantee information intended for a domestic audience isn’t received by international audiences. What happens when what the Corps says to U.S. citizens via public affairs doesn’t match what military information support operations say to an international audience? Or when the artist formerly known as psychological operations is discovered to be engaging U.S. citizens?
Organization Theory

This research leverages organization theory and thematic analysis of doctrine and responses from qualitative interviews to compare the doctrinal definitions and missions of public affairs with the practitioners’ definition and non-public affairs Marine officers’ definition. As the culture and organization of the Marine Corps is key to how it, as an organization, applies public affairs, modern organization theory provides an ideal theoretical framework for studying the relationship between leadership’s perception and knowledge of public affairs and the successful employment of Marine Corps public affairs. Through the lens of organization theory via qualitative methods, this research studies the effects of the Corps’ warrior culture – a preference for hard power over soft power – on the definition and understood missions of public affairs across the range of military operations.

Organization theory originated with the Industrial Revolution and the introduction of the machine into manufacturing as the “independent craftsman” was replaced by a group of workers with layers of management working together in mass production (Docherty, Surles, & Donovan, 2011, p.34). The study of a pin factory in 1776, documented in Wealth of Nations and referenced by Docherty et al (2011), provided the data behind Adam Smith’s “concept of a division of labor” (Docherty et al, 2011, p. 34). Early research of the structure and hierarchy of organizations and the role of individuals within organizations resulted in classical organization theory and the study of “hierarchy of authority, span of control, centralization versus decentralization, and specialization of function or task” (Docherty et al, 2001, p. 34).
These four pillars remain integral to the study of organizations and ever-evolving organization theory. “Hierarchy of authority is the system of rules and regulations that determine the line of communication and control” within an organization (Docherty et al, 2001, p. 34). The concept of hierarchy of authority is largely synonymous with the Marine Corps’ concept of chain of command. Both describe a “line of communication from the subordinates to supervisors” (Docherty et al, 2001, p. 34). The line or axis of communication from the lower levels of the hierarchy to the higher levels of the hierarchy helps identify the structure of the organization.

The Marine Corps is largely structured as a functional organization with specialties separated into departments and led by experts of that respective specialty. For example, a public affairs section within a Marine Corps unit is led by a public affairs officer. An infantry unit is led by an infantry officer. An administrative section is led by an administrative officer.

However, these specialized functional sections within the hierarchy of authority answer to the unit commander who reports to a still higher superior, and so on and so forth up to the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Dept. of Defense, congress, the president. This hierarchy results in the very situation Docherty says functional organization helps avoid - marketing expert leading the engineering department (Docherty et al, 2001, p. 35)

For Marine public affairs officers, it is not uncommon for the infantry officer to determine what information should be communicated to the public or the unit commander, who may have spent his career as a pilot or an infantry leader, deciding they don’t need to take a public affairs Marine on a mission or to a meeting. If at any level in
the hierarchy, superiors to the public affairs leader do not value or understand the
definition and missions of public affairs, the rigid hierarchy and organizational culture
render the public affairs officer largely powerless to remedy the problem. If, as this
research proposes, the organization values hard power over soft power, it will routinely
fail to fully employ its public affairs capability and as a result, miss opportunities to
engage the public and build stakeholder support and understanding of the organization.

From hierarchy of authority, Max Weber conceptualized bureaucracy. Bureaucracy is the Marine Corps. Weber’s bureaucracy was typified “by clear rules and
lines of authority in which all decisions were made and implemented through a chain of
command” (Docherty et al, 2001, p. 36). While the Corps has definitive rules and lines of
authority, the organizational culture influences how these rules and lines are followed.
This research proposes there is a pecking order in the Corps and a prioritization of
functional areas based on a warrior culture with a tendency to marginalize capabilities
that don’t obviously, as a focus group participant put it “… kill people and break things
or bring the threat of that violence to bear.”

The operations section, most closely aligned with hard power, and deploying and
managing ground forces during conflict, is routinely the highest priority and the most
credible voice at the table even if the activity is community outreach. In the Corps’
warrior culture, an operations officer opposed to community outreach or social media can
derail an entire information campaign or eliminate a unit Facebook page.

Frederick Taylor’s theory of scientific management, which contends the employee
is “an extension of the machine” (Docherty et al, 2001, p. 38), doesn’t leave much room
for the personal opinion of the operations officer who hates Facebook. Taylor’s theory
marginalized the human factor and emphasized efficiency in manufacturing through specialization. The goal of “Taylorism” is maximum prosperity for the organization and the individual employee (Taylor, 1911, ch. 1). Taylor’s maximum prosperity means more than making the most money. Maximum prosperity is “not only large dividends for the company or owner, but the development of every branch of the business to its highest state of excellence, so that the prosperity may be permanent” (Taylor, 1911, ch. 1). This idea extended to the individual employee as maximum earnings as well as and, “of more importance still, … the development of each man to his state of maximum efficiency, so that he may be able to do; generally speaking, the highest grade of work for which his natural abilities fit him” (Taylor, 1911, ch. 1). Taylor also called for a move away from “rule of thumb” processes and application of science to process. While Taylor focused on manufacturing and engineering, his theory applies to this research as it is proposed that “rule of thumb” and the human factor contribute to marginalizing public affairs and strategic communication in the Marine Corps. The information environment is ever-evolving, yet Marine leaders and public affairs practitioners may find themselves in a rut of doing business the way it has always been done.

Illustrative of this, the Marine Corps public affairs structure up to the summer of 2014 remained largely the same as it was in World War II. Changes occurred in media relations and policies and public engagement processes during and following Vietnam and Operation Desert Storm, while the actual organization and missions of the public affairs field remained mostly the same.

Taylor’s rule of thumb versus science also applies to this research as it provides a means of examining what level of knowledge public affairs practitioners and their non-
public affairs Marine brethren have of public affairs and how this knowledge is gained. The challenge may not be the organizational culture at all, but a simple absence of knowledge of the definition of public affairs and its missions in Marine Corps operations.

Or perhaps the Marine Corps lags in being a “learning organization” due to its organizational culture as explored by John Nagl (2005) in his book *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam*. The foreword to Nagl’s study of counterinsurgency and the learning process of the British Army echoes Taylor’s rule of thumb when foreword author, U.S. Army General Peter J. Schoomaker wrote, “… the U.S. Army, which to a disturbing extent attempted to continue business as usual even when the old techniques no longer applied to the kind of enemy it faced” (Nagl, 2002, foreword). Nagl’s research reveals “military organizations often demonstrate remarkable resistance to doctrinal change as a result of their organizational cultures,” (Nagl, 2002, p. 8). He presents a model of organization theory in which organizations “are created in order to accomplish certain missions” and some missions gain importance over others by virtue of what matters to “the dominant group in that organization” (Nagl, 2002, p. 4). Nagl, citing Morton Halperin succinctly explains why it may be the information related capabilities find their way to the bottom of budget prioritization in the Corps. The dominant group, the leaders “attach very high priority to controlling their own resources so that these can be used to support the essence of the organization” (Nagl, 2002, p. 5). Marines pride themselves on being warfighters. The essence of the Corps is combat. The priority is things that go boom.

Throw in a penchant for binning capabilities and stovepiping functional areas, and a pecking order is readily achieved. The resulting hierarchy in which ranking personnel
have strict control over subordinates aligns with Henri Fayol’s exploration of the structure of authority and its role in what is recognized as classical organization theory (Docherty et al, 2001). Classical organization theorists “embraced a vision of the organization in which managers or supervisors had tight control of subordinates in their charge” resulting in tall, narrow organizational structure (Docherty et al, 2001, p. 37).

The structure and processes employed by the Corps to conduct capabilities based assessments, which can play a significant role in budget prioritization, reflect Fayol’s stovepiping with tight control of resources held by capabilities portfolio managers.

Neoclassical organization theory arose from the work of Douglas McGregor, Rensis Likerty, Elton Mayo, and the results of the Hawthorne Studies (Docherty et al, 2001). The biggest differences between classical and neoclassical organization theory were a shift to trusting employees and a greater appreciation of the benefits of flatter, broader organizational structures. “Classical (organization) theory held that basic human nature was one of laziness, little desire to work, and low drive to accomplish more than the bare minimum necessary to survive” (Docherty et al, 2001, p. 37). The neoclassicists argued “that only through participation of employees in the decision-making process is it possible to substantially enhance the organization’s performance” (Docherty et al, 2001, p. 37). Arguably the Corps has not embraced the characteristics of neoclassical organization theory and yet, the overall organizational culture remains vibrant with organizational pride.

Study of specialization in organizations introduced the role of human factors that was expanded upon by Mayo’s human relations movement (Docherty et al., 2001). The human factor and decentralized decision-making of neoclassical organization theory is
opposite the humans-as-an-extension-of-the-machine and centralized decision-making of classical organization theory. Morrill’s 2008 article *Culture and Organization Theory* traced the emergence and increased significance of the role of culture in organization theory and in studying organizations. Morrill argued that organizational culture has been, although unacknowledged until the 1980s, an integral part of organization theory. Studies in the 1950s and 1960s revealed organizations contained cultures “with conflicting values and interests that both subverted and facilitated the achievement of formal goals” (Morrill, 2008, p.16). This research led to study of “the institutionalization of social values as well as the day-to-day negotiation of meaning by organizational members” (Morrill, 2008, p.16) within organizations. Follow-on research led to the development of organizational culture frameworks and analysis of organizations within a framework “organizational structures and practices” developed through cultural-cognitive construction (Morrill, 2008, p.16). It is perhaps the strength of the organizational culture that allows the Corps, an organization that still ascribes to the classic organization model of people as innately lazy and in need of strict management to realize some of the benefits associated with more neoclassical organization theory in which the individual matters and can be trusted.

Modern day organization theory is a continually evolving collection of theories drawing on the social sciences seeking to help organizations cope with an environment that has dramatically changed since Smith’s study of a pin factory in 1776 (Docherty et al., 2001). The Marine Corps, established just one year prior to Smith’s original study of the pin factory, must adjust organizational culture and function in an organization that was established before the invention of the telephone, but now operates in a world of
wireless Internet and social media. Part of this adjustment involves renegotiating the institutional value and meaning of the proverbial sword and pen.

Organization theory is not a single theory, but a collection of theories through which researchers can analyze organizations (Gortner, Nichols, & Ball, 2007). This is especially applicable to studying the valuation and integration of Marine Corps public affairs in an organization that values lethal military capabilities over non-lethal means of engagement. Morrill (2008) cites Fayol (1919/1984) as “recognizing the importance of building what he called an “esprit de corps” among “personnel,” which he extended to apply to “inter-organizational relations” (as cited in Morrill, 2008, p.18). Marines use this exact phrase, esprit de corps, to describe their sense of belonging and dedication to their unit and the Corps as a whole. This research looks at the possible existence of levels of “Marine-ness” within the Marine Corps. The existence of an organizational culture in which lethal capabilities, hard power (the warrior’s sword) is consistently more valued than non-lethal capabilities, soft power (the warrior’s pen) within a Marine command underpins the effective or ineffective integration of lethal and non-lethal capabilities into operational planning.

Modern organization theory with its application of the role of culture in researching and understanding organizations provides a means of examining this perspective, how it forms, and how it affects Marine Corps public affairs and strategic communication endeavors. Organization theory draws on the majority of social sciences with each having a loosely constructed set of questions of which organization theory supports study (Gortner et al., 2007). This research will rely on the social psychology application of organization theory with an emphasis on “attitudes, cognitions, and
behavior in social settings, and the interactions of people” (Gortner et al., 2007, p. 9).

Social psychology employs organization theory to answer questions such as “How are attitudes formed in organizations and how do they influence work behavior?” “How do cohesive groups form, how do members interact, and what are the implications for organizational functioning?” (Gortner et al., 2007, p. 9).

The social psychological lens of organization theory best suits this research as it allows for studying understanding and valuation of public affairs within the Marine Corps. This theoretical framework also allows for comparing the doctrinal definition of public affairs with the operating definition of public affairs practitioners and non-public affairs Marine Corps leaders. The level of understanding of public affairs missions, consistency or inconsistency of public affairs definitions, and the value given to public affairs by both practitioners and Marine leaders outside of the public affairs specialty can affect the organization’s ability to employ public affairs as a war fighting capability.

As this study focuses on a government, non-profit entity mandated to communicate outside of itself to various stakeholders including political leaders and in support of national security interests, the political science organization theory lens also has applicability. Political science looks through organization theory to answer questions related to “responsibilities of government organizations” (Gortner et al., 2007, p. 9). “How are power and influence exercised within government bureaus (nonprofit organizations) and in their relations with other actors, government bodies, and constituencies?” (Gortner et al., 2007, p. 9). This applies specifically to the study of Marine Corps IRCs as an operational philosophy as the IRCs are the connection between the Marine Corps and all key publics – foreign or domestic, adversarial or friendly.
Organization theory provides a way to “explain what happened in the past, as well as what may happen in the future, so we can manage organizations more effectively” (Daft 2010, p.6). It specifically supports answering questions such as “What strategic and structural changes are needed to help the organization attain effectiveness?” “How should internal conflict be managed?” and “What kind of corporate culture is needed to enhance rather than stifle innovation and change and how can that culture be shaped by managers?” (Daft 2010, p.6). These questions are at the heart of this study as it seeks to gain insight of the Marine Corps’ doctrinal definition and missions of public affairs in contrast to the definitions and missions of public affairs as understood by public affairs practitioners and non-public affairs Marine Corps leaders.

Organization theory introduces the idea of cultural control that “entails an attempt to influence what employees bring with them to their work” (Duberley, Johnson, McAuley, 2007, p.161). The “warrior culture” of the Marine Corps is a point of pride among Marines. Some Marines go so far as to claim their birthday as the day they graduated from bootcamp. Cultural control focuses on “the orchestration and transmission to employees of specific emotions, norms, and values that are congruent with what management perceives to be important for the tasks at hand” (Duberly at al., 2007, p.161-162). Non-public affairs Marine officers’ appreciation or dismissal of non-lethal capabilities, specifically public affairs, could perpetuate marginalization of public affairs. Public affairs practitioners’ narrow or outdated understanding of their own specialty could lend to dismissiveness toward public affairs.

Chafee proposes “individuals who do not know much about an issue are unlikely to seek information about it” (Chafee, 1996, p.2). Understanding the level of knowledge
non-public affairs Marine officers have of public affairs and strategic communication may provide insights to how, when and why or why not public affairs is incorporated into Marine Corps operations. Qualitative data may also reveal a relationship between the level of knowledge and the perceived value of public affairs within the Marine Corps. This research is valuable in shaping future endeavors to increase non-public affairs Marine officers’ knowledge and understanding of public affairs and building a strong foundation for application of public affairs across Marine Corps operations. This strong foundational knowledge supports an enduring fix for efficient, effective use of public affairs in the future as informed non-public affairs Marine officers are less likely to be persuaded to change how they perceive and value public affairs once a “backlog of knowledge” has been established (Chafee, 1996, p.2).

Stacks and Salwen’s (1997) idea of variable relations supports analysis of the causal relationship between low understanding/low valuation of public affairs and low employment/low integration and involvement of public affairs in planning and conducting Marine Corps operations (Salwen & Stacks, 1997). This research potentially reveals the pride of the warrior culture winning over knowledge of the roles and missions of public affairs even when it is counter to the strategic objectives passed down from higher headquarters. While either the practitioners or the non-public affairs leaders recognize the value of public affairs and strategic communication and even potentially deem it essential to the success of the organization, they will still give the last seat on a helicopter to an infantry Marine vice a public affairs Marine without regard for the nature of the mission or organizational objectives.
Related Research

Doctoral student Joel W. Iams examined the challenges the military faces in effectively applying the information related capabilities, of which public affairs is one, across the range of military operations in his 2009 doctoral study at Georgetown University, “Institutional Impedance: Why the post-war American military fails to adapt irregular warfare.” Iams proposed the military has “difficulty in constructing a flexible theory of victory” and is further hamstrung by “its preference for ignoring integration of non-military factors in campaign planning” (Iams, 2009, p. iii). Iams also proposed integration of the information related capabilities suffered under the military’s preference for focused planning on “overwhelmingly military mechanisms” (Iams, 2009, p. iii).

Iams employed organizational theory to explore the origin of the U.S. military’s inflexibilities and “reluctance to integrate non-military initiatives” (Iams, 2009, p. 2). This research pulls the thread of Iams’ idea that “organizations resist changes imposed from without and will restrict their own options for change to the range of collective experience” (Iams, 2009, p. 2). Today’s information environment demands the Corps change how it engages publics inside and outside of the organization even as the Corps is still led by Marines who remember a time before the Internet. Could the experience, the outdated “rule of thumb” of today’s Marine leaders in relation to public affairs be outweighing the influence of a changing and ever-more-powerful information environment? Is the warrior culture of the Marine Corps, the organization’s identity, so ingrained that changes in the operating environment are not enough to cause the organization to change?
Posen, as cited by Iams, in his study of organizational decision making, stated “To effect change in a military institution, a civilian leader would require the military leadership to recognize the imperative for change, posed by a threat to the existence of the institution itself” (Posen, 1984, cited in Iams, 2009, p.3). In evaluating any disconnects between public affairs practitioners’ and non-public affairs Marine officers’ understanding and valuation of the information related capabilities and the doctrinal definitions and missions of the information related capabilities, Posen’s point helps illuminate why the DoD telling the Marine Corps, via doctrine, these capabilities are important doesn’t necessarily equate to the Marine Corps treating them as important.

Iams, citing Feldman and Kanter, illustrates the requirement of “dissatisfaction with available options” in order for the military to seek alternatives and that even if an alternative is sought, this search will be limited by the “experience of the leadership” (Feldman and Kanter, 1965, cited by Iams, p. 12). Understanding the Marine Corps’ warrior culture and identifying the existence of a preference among Marine Corps leaders for lethal, conventional military means over non-lethal means could assist in revealing why the doctrine says one thing while Marine commands are doing another.

Iams discovered through his research that, facing the budget restrictions of the 1920’s and 1930’s, the American military focused on tactical military principles in an effort to maintain relevance and survive. The military doctrine centered “on tactical maxims such as the importance of massing forces and the role of offensive in war, and overlooked the Prussian’s strategic regarding the relationship between war and policy” (p.14). As the U.S. military faced sequestration and budget reductions beginning in 2013, could the Marine Corps be destined to repeat history? Iams’ (2009) case study of
Vietnam revealed the U.S. military’s failure to adapt in three key ways during the conflict, one of which was “systematically under-resourcing non-military initiatives and neglecting to integrate them into broader campaign plan(s),” summarized as “essentially the U.S. military as an institution failed to recognize that small war requires a different kind of military for a different kind of conflict” (p. 29).

The mistakes of the past echoed through budget prioritization meetings in the spring of 2014 when a key general officer at Marine Corps Combat Development Command told a room full of non-public affairs Marine leaders, “If it doesn’t break stuff or kill people, it doesn’t matter” and thus, the guiding principle for fiscal year 2016 Marine Corps Warfighting Program Execution Board budget was born. All specialties that don’t break stuff or kill people, report to the bottom of the priority list.

The 2004 Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication argued that today’s information environment does in fact present a different kind of conflict, one in which “effective strategic communication can prevent a crisis from developing and help diffuse a crisis after it has developed. To win a global battle of ideas, a global strategy for communicating those ideas is essential” (Defense Science Board Task Force, 2004, cover letter). The report called on the DoD to “think in terms of global networks” and build on in-depth knowledge of other cultures and factors that motivate human behavior” (Defense Science Board Task Force, 2004, p. 2). The report specifically called for coordinating and energizing public diplomacy, public affairs, and psychological operations (today known as military information support operations). The task force highlighted that “there are few closed societies” and the advent of satellite television, the Internet, and cell phones “mean political struggles are
about gaining attention and maintaining credibility” which in the end requires us to
dedicate as many resources and as much creativity to strategic communication as we do
to weaponry and intelligence (Defense Science Board Task Force, 2004, p. 84).

But while military leaders appear to readily embrace the need for weaponry and
intelligence capabilities, they continue to struggle with just naming strategic
communication and even if it has a name, what is it? A 2009 study by the Rand
suggests “in some sense, it makes little difference how exactly we define strategic
communication and public diplomacy (and perhaps it is fine if, like pornography, we
‘know it when we see it’)” and recommends using the broadest definition in order to
facilitate the most integration and synchronization across activities (Rand Corp, 2009, p.
2). Rand’s study pulled a small, but significant tidbit from a 2008 IOSphere article titled
“Strategic Communication: Distortion and White Noise,” (Gramaglia, as cited by Rand,
2008, p. 12). Gramaglia identified the need to, regardless of the definition, ensure
strategic communication was tied to the highest, national-level context as well as to lower
level activities and “what they communicate” (Gramaglia, as cited by Rand, 2008, p. 12).
The level of applicability and authority for strategic communication has been the cause of
much of the name game related to strategic communication. Simply by virtue of calling it
strategic, military minds often align strategic communication and thus, the prioritization
of public affairs with strategic, operational, and tactical levels of command. So strategic
communication and the majority of the public affairs mission is perceived to sit only at
the highest level, giving Marine leaders at the operational and tactical level the option of
marginalizing public affairs and strategic communication.
Rand’s (2009) study revealed four recurring themes of recommendations in the literature related to strategic communication – “a call for ‘leadership,’ demand for increased resources for strategic communication and public diplomacy, a call for a clear definition of an overall strategy, (and) the need for better coordination and organizational changes (or additions)” (Rand, 2009, p. 4). More than five years later, the Marine Corps’ information related capabilities continue to make essentially the same recommendations to the Commandant of the Marine Corps in an effort to achieve strategic communication synchronization. Manning and funding levels for these fields have remained largely unchanged despite the volume of reports saying more people and more money are needed to make communication synchronization a reality and truly participate in the information battlespace. This study opens the door to looking at how love of the sword gets in the way of using the pen.
CHAPTER 3

Research Methodology

This research leverages thematic analysis of Marine Corps and Dept. of Defense doctrine and narrative responses from public affairs practitioners and non-public affairs Marine leaders to compare and contrast definitions and missions of Marine Corps public affairs. The intent is to identify any say-do gaps between Marine Corps public affairs doctrine (say) and Marine Corps public affairs in practice (do) and identify a potential connection between any say-do gaps and the organizational culture.

Thematic analysis, as defined by Marks and Yardley, “is similar to content analysis, but pays greater attention to the qualitative aspects of the material analyzed,” (Marks, & Yardley, L., 2004, p. 56). Thematic analysis is especially useful in examining the data of this research as it provides a means of identifying “theoretically derived themes,” allowing “the researcher to replicate, extend, or refute prior discoveries” (Boyatzis, 1998, as cited by Marks, D.F. and Yardley, L., 2004, p. 58). Prior studies, organizational theory, and researcher experience point to a connection between the low prioritization of public affairs in the Marine Corps and the Marine Corps organizational culture – a warrior culture. Thematic analysis provides a way of examining this phenomenon.

The doctrinal definitions, roles, and missions of public affairs gleaned via thematic analysis of current Marine Corps and Dept. of Defense public affairs doctrine and relevant information related capabilities doctrine. These documents comprise the
“user manual” for Marine Corps public affairs. They detail the doctrinal expectation of what public affairs is and does for the Corps.

Marine Corps-specific doctrinal and relevant related publications will be pulled from the official electronic Marine Corps doctrine library. It should be noted these sites are restricted to use by military identification card holders and the researcher is an enlisted reserve Marine. Additionally, the researcher was assigned to the Marine Corps Combat Development Command, Capabilities Development and Integration, Small Wars Center and Irregular Warfare Capabilities Development Division, with direct access to the doctrine developers currently working on doctrine related to Marine Corps public affairs and the other information related capabilities. In much simpler terms, the authors of much of the relevant doctrine sat in cubicles adjacent to the researcher. Proximity to the organization and the subject matter is a weakness of this study as Marks and Yardley state “no theme can be entirely deductive or data-driven since the researcher’s knowledge and preconceptions will inevitably influence identification of themes” (p. 59).

Examination and coding of doctrine provides a means of establishing a doctrinal definition of Marine Corps public affairs and identification of the tasks and missions of public affairs. While coding is generally associated with quantitative research methods, i.e., content analysis, for the purposes of this study coding refers to the identification of themes within the doctrine and the focus group participant responses. Some potential themes include domestic and foreign audiences, the components of public relations, preference for conventional military methods, and the levels of authority (strategic, operational, and tactical. The frequency or absence of elements of these themes will
reveal, for example, public affairs as doctrinally limited to domestic media relations or solely a strategic capability with limited relevance at the operational and tactical levels.

The analysis focuses on “description of verbal patterns” and the “nuances of high frequency themes,” (Marks & Yardley, 2004, p. 59). Thematic analysis is most adept for this study as it provides a way “to illustrate the existence of social representations,” (Joffe & Haarhoff, 2002, as cited by Marks, & Yardley, 2004, p. 63). This research is fueled by two primary ideas founded in the researcher’s experience in the Marine Corps - the Marine Corps prioritizes conventional military means (hard power) over soft power such as public affairs and a say-do gap exists between public affairs doctrine and public affairs in practice. Themes within doctrine and participant responses facilitate determining support or non-support of these foundational ideas and support identification of social representation tenets, themes widely shared within particular groups (Joffe and Haarhoff, 2002, as cited by Marks, D.F. and Yardley, L., 2002, p. 63).

This is largely a confirmatory study rooted in the researcher’s experience and understanding of a say-do gap existing between doctrine and practice for Marine Corps public affairs. By comparing focus group responses to the doctrinal definition of public affairs, this study explores the perspectives and understanding Marine public affairs practitioners and non-public affairs leaders have of public affairs and how those perspectives and understandings align with Marine Corps public affairs doctrine.

Participants in this research came from a stratified quota sampling of public affairs and non-public affairs Marine officers across the Corps. This population represents the Marine Corps’ managers with the authority and knowledge required to either dismiss public affairs or to fully integrate it as an operational philosophy. Their
attitudes toward and understanding of public affairs and strategic communication is
directly related to how these capabilities are employed across the range of military
operations. 14 Marine officers of the rank of major participated in the online focus group.
Of the 15 participants, 11 were from occupational fields other than public affairs while
the remaining four were public affairs officers.

Access to this population was facilitated by the Marine Corps Institutional
Review Board and the Headquarters Marine Corps Division of Public Affairs within the
Office of Marine Corps Communication. All participants were recruited via e-mail
correspondence employing a blind copy distribution list drawn from the global Outlook
address book. All focus group participants were provided a link via e-mail to the online
focus group environment. Identifying information throughout data collection was limited
to rank and staff section of the respondent. Respondents who chose to e-mail the
researcher directly were assigned a numeric identifier. No specific identification
information was maintained. No specific command identification, individual name, or
billet title was collected or published in the data analysis. Gender, age, and ethnicity are
irrelevant to the purposes of this study and will were not collected. Confidentiality was
essential to the success of this research as senior leaders may otherwise be unwilling to
identify any command or personal shortcomings.

The step-by-step process included:

1. Stratified quota sampling of 175 potential participants compiled via
   Marine Online database (15 total respondents).
2. Submission of request to conduct study to Marine Corps IRB.
3. Development of online focus group and participant e-mail.
4. E-mail correspondence to blind distribution list including link to online focus group.

5. Online focus group live (60 day duration)*

6. Consolidate and evaluate data.

7. Report study results.

* Some respondents opted to respond via e-mail due to inability to access the online focus group from government computer assets.

The focus group questions with rationales follow:

As it appeared on focusgroupit.com - About this focus group. What is the definition and mission of Marine Corps Public Affairs? What does Marine Corps Public Affairs do for the Corps? I am a graduate student and Marine veteran seeking input from Marine Corps officers for my master’s thesis examining Marine Corps Public Affairs. The data collected from this focus group is essential to the completion of relevant and credible research required for my master’s degree program at the University of Missouri - Columbia. By creating an anonymous participant profile and joining this group, you consent to participation in this study. It is estimated responding to the discussion questions will take 10-15 minutes. Follow-on responses to moderator comments and other participant’s insights will require some additional time commitment. A dialogue is encouraged. The data from this online focus group discussion will be aggregated and used in completion of my thesis. No identifying information will be gathered or included in the final report. Note: This is an anonymous focus group. None of your personal
information (e.g., e-mail, name, username and bio) is ever visible to anyone in this focus
group, including the focus group moderators and observers.

Q1) What is/are the roles and missions of Marine Corps public affairs across
the range of military operations?

R1) There is a doctrinal “right” answer to these questions. Responses to these
questions will reveal whether or not public affairs is seen as limited to certain levels of
authority. These responses will also help identify what public affairs is perceived to do at
the various levels of authority. It is proposed that both public affairs and non-public
affairs Marine officers, in contradiction to Marine Corps public affairs doctrine, will see
the broadest applicability of public affairs at the strategic level and reduced relevance of
public affairs at the operational and tactical levels. Themes derived from analysis of
responses to this question will help illustrate what missions and roles the respondents
align with public affairs. It is proposed respondents will limit public affairs capability and
value with responses such as “public affairs is important if the civilian media shows up”
or “public affairs is important before and after armed conflict.”

Q2) Which staff section or MOS is most responsible for developing and carrying
out strategic communication/communication strategy?

R2) Q2 offers a means of highlighting the understanding or lack thereof of public
affairs and related information related capabilities. It is proposed that both public affairs
and non-public affairs Marine officers will identify public affairs as being exclusively
responsible for media relations while information operations is responsible for
developing communication strategy and integrating the information related capabilities. It
is also proposed that some respondents will demonstrate a lack of understanding of
communication strategy and align integration of the information related capabilities with internal organizational processes such as knowledge management. These themes are relevant to this research as the respondents lacking a true understanding of strategic communication, have the authority within the organization to marginalize public affairs. There is more than one doctrinally “right” answer to this question. Doctrine states that information operations which belongs to the operations section of a Marine command, integrates all information related capabilities. However, it can be argued by analyzing doctrine that public affairs is well-positioned and trained to conduct integration of the information related capabilities. Responses to these questions reveal understanding of existing doctrine and potentially, a sense of the relevance or irrelevance public affairs has in the eyes of Marine officers. It is worth noting that all respondents are of a rank and time in the Corps they can reasonably be expected to identify the information related capabilities and understand the roles of the sections within a Marine command.

Q3) What is the value, if any, of public affairs to the Marine Air Ground Task Force commander?

R3) The themes derived from analysis of responses to this question will help illustrate what missions and roles the respondents align with public affairs. It is proposed respondents will limit public affairs capability and value with responses such as “public affairs is important if the civilian media shows up” or “public affairs is important before and after armed conflict.”

Q4) In what ways, if any, do the actions of operational forces (OPFOR) effect the supporting establishment (SE) and vice versa? Explain your answer
R4) Within the Corps there is a perceived level of Marine-ness differentiating the operational forces, traditional military elements, and the supporting establishment, administrators, maintenance personnel, public affairs, etc. This will be revealed in analysis of the organizational culture of the Corps. Responses to this question will illustrate an idea of there being several Marine Corps within the Marine Corps. As a result of this mindset, for example, the operating forces do not see their actions like urinating on corpses as impacting say, the Marine Corps’ recruiting mission.

Q5) In what ways, if any, is public affairs relevant to lethal engagement and/or “traditional” warfare?

R5) Public affairs can play a significant role in how incidents such as urinating on corpses plays out in the headlines, but it can also play a significant role in diffusing conflict, escalating conflict, and show of force – all of which are relevant to conventional warfare. Responses to this question will reveal awareness of the relevance of public affairs to traditional warfare.

Q6) Do you agree or disagree with the following statement “Public affairs, strategic communication, and the information related capabilities represent another ‘arm’ of combined arms tactics.” Why or why not?

R6) The Marine Air Ground Task Forces concept is built on the idea of integrating “different military arms to achieve mutually complementary effects.” It is “employing a combination (two or more) of arms together at the same time on the battlefield” (Reed, 1994, p. 17). The combat environment has changed considerably since combined arms concepts were formally introduced to the U.S. military and yet, it is proposed that Marine officers stick to a WWII mindset that understands the arms of
combined arms to be traditional military capabilities – hard power represented by infantry units, fighter jets, tank battalions. There are six doctrinal warfighting functions - movement and maneuver, fires, intelligence, sustainment, command and control, protection – and an ongoing argument to where public affairs and strategic communication actually reside. Responses to this question will reveal if Marine officers, public affairs or not, view public affairs as an element of combined arms.

Q7) In what military operation or what phase of military operations might public affairs be a better means of engagement than lethal means?

R7) Responses to this question illustrate understanding or lack of understanding of the roles and missions of the information related capabilities, specifically public affairs. Additionally, the respondents may reveal they understand there is a role for the information related capabilities, but not when or how to use which one. There is significant duplication in the doctrinal missions of public affairs and the proposed doctrine of military information support operations. Doctrinally public affairs is responsible for media engagement, for example, however military information support operations doctrine identifies media engagement as one of their missions in foreign nations. This question will further illuminate duplications and lack of understanding between the information related capabilities.

Q8) Do you believe the Marine Corps should value lethal (traditional) and non-lethal means of engagement equally?

R8) Responses to this question get at the heart of this research, does the Corps’ warrior culture deem lethal, conventional military capabilities (hard power) as always
more valuable to the Corps than soft powers such as public affairs. It is proposed the warriors will always prefer the sword to the pen.

Q9) What is your rank, military occupational specialty, and current billet/job description? (Do not include specific command)

R9) This question establishes the respondent has the requisite rank to be considered a leader/manager, whether the respondent is a public affairs or non-public affairs Marine officer, and in what capacity they would engage with public affairs or have influence over the employment of public affairs within their command.

Analyzing the Data

This study compared the doctrinal definition and missions of Marine Corps public affairs with the definitions and missions of public affairs expressed by Marine Corps public affairs practitioners and non-public affairs officers. The 15 respondents were Marine officers of the rank of major. Six participants were from the public affairs career field. The remaining nine were from infantry occupational fields. The results are presented with themes and relevant codes and examples from responses and doctrine aligned with the original research questions.

As recommended by Creswell (2009), a coding process was employed in order to more quickly synthesize the data and identify major themes, “unique topics, and leftovers” (p. 186). This process was also useful in assisting the researcher in identifying potential areas of interest for further research. Coding themes culled from the data is integral to this process as it provides a way of revealing “perspectives held by subjects”
and “subjects’ ways of thinking about people and objects” (Bogdan & Biklen as cited in Creswell, 2009, p. 187).

The themes from the focus group responses were compared to the themes identified in the doctrine allowing for identification of say-do gaps and potential links to organizational culture. As an example, a theme within the doctrine, let’s call it PHASES, reveals application of public affairs across all phases of military operations, while responses to the online focus group reveal practitioners and non-public affairs Marines alike see public affairs as only being relevant to phases 0 and 1. This contradiction may imply an underlying misperception or a lack of knowledge of public affairs applicability across the phases of military operations.
CHAPTER 4

Study Results

The biggest takeaway from this study was the occurrence of contradictions between practitioners and doctrine and within the doctrine itself.

RQ1 – How do Marine Corps public affairs practitioners define public affairs?
RQ2 – How do non-public affairs Marine Corps officers define public affairs?
RQ3 – What is the mission(s) of Marine Corps public affairs according to Marine Corps public affairs practitioners?
RQ4 – What is the mission(s) of Marine Corps public affairs according to non-public affairs Marine Corps officers?
RQ5 – What is the doctrinal definition and mission(s) of Marine Corps public affairs?
RQ6 – How does the doctrinal definition and mission(s) of Marine Corps public affairs differ from the definition and mission(s) identified by public affairs practitioners and non-public affairs Marine Corps officers?
RQ7 – If say-do gaps exist, what role does the organizational culture of the Corps play?

Mission of public affairs from practitioners’ perspective. (RQ1 and RQ3) All of the questions in the focus group had the potential to illicit responses illustrating the participants’ understanding of the role of public affairs across the range of military operations. Question (1) – What is/are the roles and missions of Marine Corps Public Affairs across the range of military operations? – specifically addressed this research area and provided information useful in answering Thematic analysis identified two dominant themes among responses from public affairs practitioners – Public affairs is the integrator of the information related capabilities and public affairs is crucial across all types and
phases of military operations. All of the public affairs practitioner participants identified public affairs as the best suited to integrate the IRCs for the Marine Corps.

While recognizing public affairs should integrate, three public affairs practitioners acknowledged other sections within a command could serve as integrators with public affairs representing the public affairs capabilities as members of working groups and non-lethal fires coordination cells. Public affairs practitioner responses also revealed two themes that diverged from the researcher’s expected responses – public affairs practitioners lack credibility and the primary mission of public affairs is content development and dissemination. There was also some debate on the definition and nature of strategic communication with one participant referring to the process of strategic communication as “an excellent non-job for the no colonel left behind program.”

Responses also highlighted some disagreement in the understanding of which publics public affairs can engage. The expected response was “all of them,” but one public affairs practitioner sees a clear line between friendly public and enemy publics, saying “… some information related capabilities ‘target’ the enemy, public affairs and strategic communication should not. It is a fine but clear line.”

A few practitioners limited public affairs’ mission to the given manpower of the respective public affairs section. This undermines application of public affairs as a strategic integrator as the individual commander has final say over mission and prioritization of public affairs within the command. The hierarchal structure of the Corps and an organizational maxim to “follow the chain of command” allows for a commander who marginalizes public affairs to prevent the negative results of his actions from
bubbling up to higher levels of the organization and thus being addressed by strategic-level leadership.

One practitioner holds out hope for the Corps recognizing the equal value of hard and soft powers saying “Yes (they should be valued equally) and they (operating forces) are beginning to change our war fighting culture to see all effects as important to our success. Additionally, you really can’t say one effect is lethal vs. non-lethal because words can be just as deadly as bullets.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code(s) – PAST1, INTEGRATOR, CREDIBILITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Examples from Participant Responses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **RQ1** – How do Marine Corps public affairs practitioners define public affairs?
- **RQ3** – What is the mission(s) of Marine Corps public affairs according to Marine Corps public affairs practitioners.

- **Theme 1** – Public affairs is the integrator of the information related capabilities.
- **Theme 2** – Public affairs is crucial across all types and phases of military operations.
- **Theme 4** – Public affairs practitioners lack credibility.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples from Participant Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- Serve as a command advisor on communication (providing the commander options to navigate the information environment in order to reach operational and institutional goals and objectives) … disarm the enemy with truthful information (counter their misinformation and disinformation). - *Participant 15 Q1*

- Planning, execution and evaluation of communication strategies in support of combat operations, domestic and international training exercises, theater security cooperation engagements … - *Participant 13 Q1*

- Provide operational level public affairs – meaning PA needs to get away from press release distribution and passive, reactive, media involvement. Operational Art and Design is about addressing the so what of public affairs and the impact of tactical actions on the operational level of war. - *Participant 12 Q1*

- We increase knowledge in an effort to either change or reinforce attitudes, with the ultimate goal of behaviors that are conducive toward mission accomplishment. - *Participant 7 Q1*

- … the ability to conduct communication planning and evaluation is a varying capability across the Marine Corps PA field and needs to be improved drastically. Too many PA shops focus their efforts around developing print/video products instead of focusing their efforts on analyzing the public and media environment …” - *Participant 13 Q2*

- Most PA Marines do not have the MAGTF creditability, or any understanding of MCPP and how PA fits into the planning process. Most PA Marines use completely different terminology than the OPFOR, which further ostracizes us from our number one client; the G-3/J-3 and the Commander. - *Participant 10 Q3*

- Public Affairs. However, most PAOs have inadequate training when it comes to strategic communication …This deficiency often leaves the door open to other "experts," who are less qualified than the basic-trained PAO. - *Participant 10 Q3*

- … advises the commander … takes a holistic approach and determines how the collective efforts of each entity will shape the information and ultimately the operational environment. - *Participant 13 Q3*
Public Affairs is the ONLY specialty with the authority to talk to ANYONE! We don’t have the restrictions like the other MOS who operate at the operational and tactical level. We are the only MOS with the authority to interact with multiple publics and key publics. - Participant 12 Q3

PA absolutely delivers non-lethal effects for commanders and during many non-combat situations. PA dominates in this arena due to restrictions of using other IO related capabilities. With this said, PA is behind training its personnel in IO and this will only hurt our field if we do not gain a deeper understanding of how we influence the battlefield - Participant 13 Q4

One disturbing trend noted with some IO planners is to dismiss PA as simply a capability that uses 3rdParty media to share truthful information and that we are only here to “Inform”... that thought process undervalues our true capability set. - Participant 13 Q6

PA is a warfighting capability. If we don’t see ourselves as such we will continue to be marginalized and left out of the planning process. PA is a capability that can specifically target areas throughout the different mediums in an effort to educate, inform, and influence relevant publics and audiences. - Participant 12 Q6

**Mission of public affairs from non-practitioners’ perspective. (RQ2 and RQ4)**

Focus group Question (1) responses told a significant part of the story about the perspective non-public affairs Marine Corps officers have of public affairs. Several themes emerged in responses to question (1) that responses to later questions reinforced. Non-practitioners, unlike their public affairs counterparts, didn’t identify a lack of credibility among public affairs practitioners, but repeatedly communicated an understanding that public affairs cannot engage enemy audiences. Infantry participants routinely aligned public affairs with news media, domestic audiences, and early phases of operations with limited applicability once operations become kinetic in nature.

Insightful Participant 11 frequently identified public affairs and the IRCs as vital to successful kinetic and non-kinetic operations, but often marginalized due to falling out of the comfort zone of Marine officers. Public affairs “needs to be treated as such (arm of combined arms tactics) but it often falls off due to all the other ‘rocks’ a commander has to carry in his ruck during combat operations,” offered Participant 11.

Participant 11 and a few of his counterparts from the infantry and from public affairs suffered a bit of rose-colored-glasses-itis in their responses to whether or not the
Marine Corps should value lethal (conventional) military means equal to non-lethal military means such as public affairs. Five respondents in no uncertain terms pointed out “We kill people and break things or bring the threat of that violence to bear …” while two participants do not see any disparity in how the Corps values its lethal and non-lethal capabilities. Among the remaining participants, public affairs and infantry alike said these capabilities should be equally valued or they opted not to respond to question 8.

RQ2 – How do non-public affairs Marine Corps officers define public affairs?
RQ4 - What is the mission(s) of Marine Corps public affairs according to non-public affairs Marine Corps officers?

| Theme 4 – Public Affairs practitioners lack credibility. |
| Theme 5 – Public affairs is not applicable in combat (kinetic) operations. |
| Theme 6 – Public affairs is not the integrator and is prioritized and managed by the commander and/or the operations section. |
| Theme 7 – Public affairs mission is content creation and dissemination and media relations. |

| Code(s) – BOOM, NOTSTRATEGIC, INFORM, MISUSED, MISUNDERSTOOD |

Examples from Participant Responses

Shaping operations and damage control. - Participant 15 Q1

Marine Corps public affairs is responsible for creating a link between those who serve and everyone else outside of the organization. It is my belief that the Marine Corps has been more successful than the other branches with regards to journalists and media outlets because we maintain an open door policy and allow our story to be told. - Participant 11 Q1

To tell the Marine Corps story, good and bad, but it’s our story to tell. - Participant 9 Q1

To inform the public, the media, friendly & US Govt policy makers, and lastly Marines about the activities of the USMC. - Participant 6 Q1

The role and missions of Marine Corps public affairs across the range of military operations is to interact with media outlets worldwide to answer queries and inform them of Marine Corps initiatives and operations. - Participant 5 Q1

In garrison, to engage the public on behalf of the commander to ensure an accurate and institutionally informed message is conveyed. In combat I have never seen public affairs officer perform a similar public engagement and messaging function. - Participant 3 Q1

“ … the Public Affairs OccField is responsible for generating specific items of content (photos, video, artwork, copy,) but the Ops Staff-Section, the Admin Staff-Section, and sometimes a G9 Policy cell …” as the integrator - Participant 6 Q2

The Operations section should be the staff section most responsible for developing and carrying out strategic communication/communications strategy. - Participant 5 Q2

In a non-combat environment, the public affairs officer in concert with the SJA typically carries out this mission (IRC integration). In combat the MISO/PSYOPS units carry out strategic communication. - Participant 4 Q2

The operations section through its IO planner integrates public affairs and MISO. - Participant 1 Q2

The value of public affairs to the MAGTF commander is that it affords a mechanism by which to inform the public (domestic and foreign) of information that he/she deems important for the public to know. - Participant 5 Q3

Critical enabler to integrating the communications strategy across all functional areas. Also an important facilitator in keeping the commander/unit informed of informational and cultural considerations. - Participant 3 Q3
The MAGTF Commander needs PA in order to get info out about what is going on for morale, and welfare of the troops and dependents, within reason, so long as it does not have an operationally adverse effect. - Participant 2 Q3

PAO is a conduit of accountability … - Participant 15 Q5

War is politics by other means. All politics is local. Public affairs localizes information of military actions. Public affairs is one means of creating a link between some portion of a community to a military action - to inform, or generate support. - Participant 6 Q5

I have not personally seen PA be relevant to lethal engagement. - Participant 4 Q5

Marine Officers are trained to fight; our comfort zone is in the kinetic arena, so it is difficult for us to embrace the squishy nature of public affairs. A good officer will always make time and employ proper messaging at all times. – Participant 11 Q6

Public Affairs is not employed against enemy elements - PSYOPs and other information related capabilities are. - Participant 11 Q6

Figure 2: Thematic analysis RQ2 and RQ4.

**Mission of public affairs per doctrine. (RQ5 and RQ6)** The stated mission of public affairs varied little across the doctrine analyzed for this study and universally it has been determined public affairs absolutely doesn’t influence. According to Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3-33.7 Combat Camera, the primary mission of public affairs is media relations. Any influence on perceptions or attitudes is an unwelcome, accidental byproduct of providing timely, truthful information. Information operations doctrine says “the PA challenge is to get information out effectively, efficiently, and honestly. Marine Corps PA policy is to tell the truth as quickly as possible … PA must be carefully separated from other informational efforts aimed at manipulating perceptions” (MCWP 3-40.4). And that’s just fine by Marine Corps Public Affairs doctrine, Marine Corps Warfighting Publication 3-33.3 Public Affairs. The Corps defines the PA mission as “to communicate and engage in order to build understanding, credibility, trust, and mutually beneficial relationships … provides timely, accurate information that informs and educates key publics …” (MCWP 3-33.3, p. 1-2). In other words, there will be none of that influencing here. Leave that to the military information support operations practitioners.
Public affairs doctrine contradicted itself when it came to integration of the information related capabilities (IRCs). The doctrine assigned both public affairs and information operations the role of integration, occasionally in the same doctrinal publication. Public affairs doctrine identified public affairs as primarily responsible for communication strategy development and implementation in addition to being largely responsible for all public engagement with the exception of military deception operations. However, information operations doctrine assigned information operations the discrete task of integrating the information related capabilities and developing communication strategy, but only at the operational level.

While public affairs doctrine aligned integration of the IRCs with information operations, practitioners demonstrated an understanding and an interest in public affairs meeting this need for the Corps across the range and phases of military operations. The infantry officers more frequently identified the commander or the operations section, the home of information operations, with integration of the IRCs. In this instance, the infantry officers’ responses more closely align with doctrinally defined missions and roles.

The truth and nothing but the truth, sorta. (RQ5 and RQ6) Throughout participant responses and the doctrine, PA is aligned with strict truth-telling even as words and phrases like shape, messaging, generate support, attitudes, and perceptions litter the descriptions of public affairs. Shaping perceptions, messaging to generate support, researching and analyzing stakeholder attitudes – none of this matters if the mission of public affairs is strictly informing. Communication planning would involve
identifying the logistics of developing and disseminating little more than fact sheets, which are themselves still a frame.

| RQ5 - What is the doctrinal definition and mission(s) of Marine Corps public affairs? |
| RQ6 – How does the doctrinal definition and mission(s) of Marine Corps public affairs differ from the definition and mission(s) identified by public affairs practitioners and non-public affairs Marine Corps officers? |

**Theme 1** – Public affairs is the integrator of the information related capabilities.
**Theme 2** - Public affairs is crucial across the range of military operations and phases of operations.
**Theme 6** – Public affairs is not the integrator and is prioritized and managed by the commander and/or the operations section.
**Theme 7** – Public affairs mission is content creation and dissemination and media relations.
**Theme 8** – Public affairs does not and cannot influence.

**Code(s)** – INTEGRATOR, PAST1, MISUSED, MISUNDERSTOOD, INFORM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Doctrine</strong></th>
<th><strong>Participants</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public affairs informs and educates the target audience whether it is within the Marine Corps or part of the general public. Public affairs influence is a by-product—the result or effects of people being informed—rather than the design or intent of the communication. - <em>MCWP3-33.7 Combat Camera pg. 4-8</em></td>
<td>Shaping operations and damage control. In Iraq in 2008-09 we had a radio station that we ran that we used to put out public service messages and OUR side of the news of things happening in our area of operations. It was a very useful tool used to leverage our operations. – <em>Participant 15 Q1</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Designates the IO staff as the combatant command focal point for IO and the IO cell as the planning element responsible for integration and synchronization of IRCs to achieve national or combatant commander objectives against adversaries or potential adversaries. - *Joint Publication 3-13 Information Operations pg.iii* | We increase knowledge in an effort to either change or reinforce attitudes, with the ultimate goal of behaviors that are conducive toward mission accomplishment. – *Participant 7 Q1*
Public Affairs (43XX) is the only MOS that is trained and tasked to plan and execute communication strategy. – *Participant 7 Q2*
In a non-combat environment the public affairs officer in concert with the SJA typically carries out this mission. In combat the MISO/PSYOPS units carry out strategic communication. – *Participant 4 Q2* |
| PA comprises public information, command information, and public engagement activities directed toward both the internal and external publics with interest in DOD. External publics include allies, neutrals, adversaries, and potential adversaries. When addressing external publics, opportunities for overlap exist between PA and IO. - *Joint Publication 3-13 Information Operations (pg. II-7)* | In garrison, to engage the public on behalf of the commander to ensure an accurate and institutionally informed message is conveyed. In combat I have never seen public affairs officer perform a similar public engagement and messaging function. – *Participant 4 Q1* |

Figure 3: Thematic analysis of contradictions between doctrine and respondents (RQ5 and RQ6)

**Potential causes of contradictions and ‘say do’ gaps. (RQ7)** Thematic analysis of responses and doctrine revealed four potential root causes for the existence of say-do gaps and a few say-say gaps in the doctrine itself.
From focus group responses, public affairs practitioners lack credibility. From focus group responses and supported by public affairs doctrine as well as other, potentially duplicative or competing IRCs, there is limited understanding of the public affairs mission and capabilities. Also from both doctrine and participant responses, public affairs must always tell the truth and without the intent of influencing audiences. Related to this truth theme was a penchant to align public affairs strictly to media engagement and content creation or missions involving engaging domestic publics only. And thirdly, from focus group responses and overarching capstone concepts like Expeditionary Force 21 and the Commandant’s Planning Guidance, the Marine Corps exists as a warfighting organization with a warrior ethos that places a higher value on hard power.

| RQ7 – If say-do gaps exist, what role does the organizational culture of the Corps play? |
| Theme 4 – Public Affairs practitioners lack credibility. |
| Theme 5 – Public affairs is not applicable in combat (kinetic) operations. |
| Theme 6 – Public affairs is not the integrator and is prioritized and managed by the commander and/or the operations section. |
| Theme 7 – Public affairs mission is content creation and dissemination and media relations. |
| Theme 8 – Public affairs does not and cannot influence. |
| Theme 9 – The Marine Corps exists as a conventional warfighting organization. |

| Code(s) – NOTSTRATEGIC, MISUSED, MISUNDERSTOOD, BOOM, INFORM |
| Participant Responses |
| No. We kill people and break things or bring the threat of that violence to bear (barring HA/DR missions). We are a fighting organization not a PR firm. If the department of state cannot manage a situation diplomatically, they call us and we kill and destroy until the problem is gone. - Participant 14, Q8 |
| No. The Marine Corps should value lethal means of engagement more than non-lethal means of engagement. The Marine Corps exists to fight and win our nation's battles; non-lethal means will have role in executing that mission, but it will overwhelmingly be accomplished by lethal means. - Participant 4, Q8 |
| However, credible ability to engage lethally is the prerequisite. At the end of the day, it’s what we’re for. - Participant 2 Q8 |
| We increase knowledge in an effort to either change or reinforce attitudes, with the ultimate goal of behaviors that are conducive toward mission accomplishment. - Participant 7, Q1 |
| Combined arms tactics refers to weapons employment against an enemy element. Public Affairs is not employed against enemy elements - PSYOPs and other information related capabilities are. Info Ops doctrine used to have a definite distinction between Public Affairs and the offensive elements of “strategic communications.” - Participant 5, Q6 |

Figure 4: Thematic analysis participant responses illustrating organizational culture (RQ7).
CHAPTER 5

Discussion

Contradictions resonate loudly throughout the results of this study. Practitioners saw themselves as integrators, empowered to engage all publics through all mediums in an effort to effect attitudes and behaviors while some of their counterparts relegated public affairs to media relations and truth telling without any intentional influencing. Then the doctrine, sometimes in the same publication, identified public affairs as reliant on strictly truth-telling, not allowed to influence, and one of the IRCs integrated via information operations but also charged with studying and shaping the information environment and conducting communication planning and strategy development.

There is evidence within this study that shows the idea public affairs practitioners have of public affairs does not match what their infantry brethren think of public affairs and varies yet again from Marine Corps public affairs-related doctrine. This study reveals the public affairs practitioners who participated in the focus group do not struggle with an idea of absolute truth-telling. Perhaps this group of public affairs officers can edge the Corps toward an understanding of public affairs as “the strategic management of competition in the best interests of one’s own organization, and when possible, also in the interests of key publics,” (Cameron, Wilcox, Weber, & Shin, 2008, p. 37). They face an uphill battle as current Marine Corps public affairs doctrine says, in no uncertain terms, “PA does not include marketing, public relations, or advertising,” (MCWP 3-33.3, 2010, p. 1-9). What is missing from this conversation is the understanding an organization can (and they routinely do) influence without lying and an understanding that mutually
beneficial relationships “don’t move any needles,” to quote Dr. Glen T. Cameron, Maxine Wilson Gregory Chair in Journalism Research at the Missouri School of Journalism, University of Missouri – Columbia. Furthermore, it is hard to argue public affairs brings any effects, lethal or otherwise, if its mission is strictly inform and educate. Of course public affairs influences. Even a mission limited to inform and educate will influence, but this isn’t evident in the doctrine or universally understood among Marine Corps majors.

Given the practitioners and their doctrine seem to struggle with a public affairs identity crisis, it is no surprise infantry officers participating in the focus group lacked a thorough understanding of public affairs beyond media relations. In actuality there is a relatively small say-do gap, but rather a gap between what the doctrine says public affairs does and what public affairs wants to do. In fairness, there are references in the doctrine to the roles of public affairs at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels and in developing understanding of and operating in the information environment and the doctrine reviewed is in line to reviewed and updated.

MCWP 3-33.3 states public affairs practitioners “prepare commanders to communicate with audiences through media and other methods of communication, as well as analyzing and interpreting the information environment, monitoring domestic and foreign public understanding, and providing lessons learned from the past” (MCWP 3-33.3, 2010, p. 3-10). While this expands the public affairs mission beyond media relations, this content drowns in the entire chapter of MCWP 3-33.3 dedicated to media relations and the associated Marine Corps reference publication’s entire chapter on journalism ethics. While public affairs doctrine points to de-conflicting the actions of the
IRCs, at no time does it identify public affairs as the integrator, despite the opinions of public affairs practitioners. Given the current public affairs user manual of doctrine, it should come as no surprise non-public affairs practitioners relegate public affairs to friendly audiences and media relations.

The Corps’ warrior culture deems lethal, conventional military capabilities (hard power) as more valuable to the Corps than soft powers such as public affairs. As evidenced by responses from infantry officers, the Corps identifies first and foremost as an organization designed to “kill people and break things,” and as “a fighting organization, not a PR firm.”

**Practical Implications**

This research could support the examination of the inconsistencies in the doctrine and the overarching definition of public affairs. It could kickstart development of new doctrine that may in turn help the Corps better resource and put to use its information related capabilities across the range of military operations. Understanding the Corps’ organizational culture and penchant for hard power as it relates to impeding use of the information related capabilities could help shape changes to the Marine Corps Planning Process, doctrine, and training program curriculums. The Corps could gain better understanding of the information related capabilities and more importantly, better integrate and employ them as enabling capabilities across the phases of operations. This research also has potentially significant implications in the competitive Dept. of Defense budget process. The IRCs are routinely underfunded and understaffed. Their low lifecycle cost, reliance on commercially available equipment, and overall lack of
understanding of what capabilities the IRCs give the Corps make them easy targets for budget and manning reductions.

A first step may be to get key players at the table and look at the capabilities the IRCs bring – information environment research and analysis, imagery acquisition and dissemination, communication planning, public engagement, etc. – and examine them not as discrete occupational specialties, but as capabilities the Marine Corps needs to succeed in the information battlespace. Then analyze these capabilities against inflexible laws and regulations. Next take a look at related industries in the civilian sector and then reconsider the definitions and roles of the IRCs.

**Limitations and Future Research**

While this research can start a conversation about refining a definition and assigned mission for public affairs and the effects of organizational culture on the application of public affairs across the types and phases of military operations, there are limits to its applicability. The study does not identify or study successful or failed communication campaigns due to lack of comprehensive data and limited research capabilities. Also, as this is a qualitative study, it does not contribute to establishing quantifiable metrics for evaluating what constitutes success or failure for Marine Corps communication campaigns – a topic begging future research.

Organization theory facilitates research of the role of organizational culture and inter-organizational communication, but cannot address knowledge gaps that may exist in training and education received by Marines. Nor does this research address changes in perception and valuation of public affairs based on length of military career, age at the
Further, detailed research may discern differences that are generational, or related to military occupational specialty, or even gender.

Schulman (2011) argues an overarching weakness in organization theory is “its failure to achieve useful research-based prescriptions for organizational design and practice in the face of challenges posed by new technology and evolving social problems” (p. 43) and that the root of this problem is a lack of detailed examination of the concepts of complexity, interdependence, and scale as they relate to organization theory. The overall applicability of the results of this research could be limited by the theoretical lens itself as it lacks standardized terminology and lends to the discovery of non-falsifiable metaphors (Schulman, 2011).

The small sample size; limiting the study to just Marine majors; and some participants not responding to all questions reduces the generalizability of this study. Expanded studies that evaluate the knowledge and opinions of Marines of varied ranks and occupational specialties would open the door to examining the impact of rank and time in the Corps on perspectives of the IRCs. Younger generations of Marines who have grown up immersed in a connected society may value the technology and rapid data transfer found in the information environment more than their older counterparts.

Another potentially limiting factor of this study is researcher bias. As an active-duty public affairs Marine, I spent five years managing the equipment acquisition program and developing doctrine for public affairs. I saw firsthand the dismissive treatment of the IRCs, battled the underfunding of the acquisition programs, and was in the room when general officers declared things that “don’t go boom” as irrelevant. While
this personal experience supports the outcomes of this study, it is one person’s experience and thus, does not necessarily transfer to the Marine Corps as an organization.

I could also inadvertently introduce gender bias, inserting my experiences as a female Marine into the study. A running joke evolved for me during my time on active duty - I walked into executive-level planning sessions, war games, and exercises with three strikes against me – I am enlisted. I represent public affairs. And I am a woman. I couldn’t be any less relevant to the male infantry officers in the room. It was often only in being more assertive, more informed, more bottomline and absolute driven, generally more masculine and a tiny bit belligerent, that I was able to gain ground for public affairs. Again, just one person’s experience, but it does beg further study of the “gendering of capabilities.” Perhaps part of the challenge for public affairs and the IRCs is they are perceived as too feminine. Future research could look at public affairs through a lens of feminist theory and potentially make recommendations to make public affairs more muscular and perhaps, better understood and more valued in the warrior culture of the Corps.
REFERENCES


## Appendix (1) - Codebook

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Focus Group Question(s)</th>
<th>Code Name</th>
<th>Definitions &amp; Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Affairs Mission</td>
<td>Question #1, Question #2, Question #5, Question #7</td>
<td>PAST1</td>
<td><strong>Brief definition:</strong> The mission of public affairs across the phases of operations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Full definition:</strong> Participant responses and doctrinal content describing the mission of public affairs across the range of military operations. Specifically looking for the public affairs mission acknowledged beyond Phase 0 – Shape and Phase 1 – Deter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>When to use:</strong> Use to identify any focus group responses and doctrine text that describes the public affairs mission across the phases of operations, specifically responses or doctrinal content supportive of public affairs missions beyond Phase 1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>When not to use:</strong> Applicable across all focus group responses and doctrine as described above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Focus Group Question(s)</td>
<td>Code Name</td>
<td>Definitions &amp; Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duplicative missions</td>
<td></td>
<td>DUPLICATIVE</td>
<td><strong>Brief definition:</strong> Duplication in missions across IRCs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>across IRCs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Full definition:</strong> Participant responses and doctrinal content describing the mission of IRCs other than public affairs as responsible for missions also aligned with public affairs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>When to use:</strong> Use to identify any focus group responses and doctrine text that describe the mission of the other IRCs as being the same as the mission of public affairs. Specifically looking for communication planning, integration, and public engagement via news and social media.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>When not to use:</strong> Applicable across all focus group responses and doctrine as described above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Focus Group Question(s)</td>
<td>Code Name</td>
<td>Definitions &amp; Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrator of the IRCs</td>
<td>Question #2</td>
<td>INTEGRATOR</td>
<td><strong>Brief definition:</strong> Identify the integrator of the IRCs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Full definition:</strong> Participant responses and doctrine content that identifies the occupational specialty or staff section deemed responsible for integrating the IRCs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>When to use:</strong> Use to identify responses and doctrine text identifying which occupational specialty or staff section is deemed responsible for integrating the IRCs. Include responses and text both for and against public affairs as the integrator of IRCs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>When not to use:</strong> Applicable across all focus group responses and doctrine as described above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Focus Group Question(s)</td>
<td>Code Name</td>
<td>Definitions &amp; Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of Public Affairs</td>
<td>Question #7, Question #8</td>
<td>SOFTPOWER</td>
<td><strong>Brief definition:</strong> The perceived value of public affairs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Full definition:</strong> Focus group responses and doctrine content that demonstrate or compare the value of public affairs to conventional military means (hard power). In addition, responses and doctrine that compares the perceived value of public affairs compared to the other IRCs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>When to use:</strong> Use to code any participant responses and doctrine that provides a comparative value or prioritization of public affairs in relation to conventional military means and the other IRCs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>When not to use:</strong> Applicable across all focus group responses and doctrine as described above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Focus Group Question(s)</td>
<td>Code Name</td>
<td>Definitions &amp; Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commanders asset</td>
<td>Question #7 Question #8</td>
<td>NOTSTRATEGIC</td>
<td><strong>Brief definition:</strong> Public affairs as a commander’s asset (local) vice strategic or operational capability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Full definition:</strong> Focus group responses and doctrine content that link public affairs to the local commander vice as a strategic or operational capability. Often these responses link the overarching strategic communication process to another section in the command such as the operations section.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>When to use:</strong> Use to code any participant responses and doctrine that place public affairs under the authority of the local commander, limiting strategic applicability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>When not to use:</strong> Applicable across all focus group responses and doctrine as described above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Focus Group Question(s)</td>
<td>Code Name</td>
<td>Definitions &amp; Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content development and dissemination</td>
<td>Question #1 Question #3</td>
<td>MISUSED</td>
<td><strong>Brief definition:</strong> Public affairs as content developer and disseminator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Full definition:</strong> Doctrinal definitions and participant perceptions aligning public affairs with content development and dissemination as a priority or in absence of roles in research, planning, implementation, and evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>When to use:</strong> Use to code any participant responses and doctrine that identify public affairs as a generator of content with tone marginalizing communication research, planning, or evaluation of communication strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>When not to use:</strong> Do not use for portions of doctrine or responses that acknowledge content development and dissemination as part of a broader strategic communication process or that identify the limited value of simple content dissemination without a strategic communication process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Focus Group Question(s)</td>
<td>Code Name</td>
<td>Definitions &amp; Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media relations</td>
<td>Question #7 Question #8</td>
<td>MISUNDERSTOOD</td>
<td><strong>Brief definition:</strong> Public affairs as strictly media relations facilitator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Full definition:</strong> Doctrinal definitions and participant perceptions aligning public affairs with facilitating media relations as a priority or in absence of roles in research, planning, implementation, and evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>When to use:</strong> Use to code any participant responses and doctrine that identify public affairs as facilitator of media relations with tone marginalizing communication research, planning, or evaluation of communication strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>When not to use:</strong> Do not use for portions of doctrine or responses that acknowledge media relations as part of a broader strategic communication process or that identify the limited value of media relations without integration into a strategic communication process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Focus Group Question(s)</td>
<td>Code Name</td>
<td>Definitions &amp; Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only inform</td>
<td>Question #7</td>
<td>INFORM</td>
<td><strong>Brief definition:</strong> Public affairs as an information source.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Question #8</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Full definition:</strong> Doctrinal definitions and participant perceptions aligning public affairs telling the Marine Corps story and informing key publics while marginalizing public affairs’ role in research, planning, implementation, and evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>When to use:</strong> Use to code any participant responses and doctrine that identify public affairs as the Marine Corps’ “storytellers,” tasked with informing key publics and little else.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>When not to use:</strong> Do not use for portions of doctrine or responses that acknowledge engaging/informing key publics relations as part of a broader strategic communication process or that identify the limited value of just informing without integration into a strategic communication process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Focus Group Question(s)</td>
<td>Code Name</td>
<td>Definitions &amp; Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Credibility of public affairs practitioners | Question #7 Question #8 | CREDIBILITY | **Brief definition:** Public affairs practitioners not viewed as Marine Corps “experts”  
**Full definition:** Doctrinal definitions and participant perceptions identifying deficiencies in Marine Corps public affairs practitioners’ knowledge of Marine Corps planning processes, operations, and communication planning and evaluation.  
**When to use:** Use to code any participant responses and doctrine that identify public affairs practitioners as lacking in the training, experience, or knowledge necessary to participate in strategic and operational planning; the ability to speak the language of Marine Corps operations; and to serve as credible communication planners and integrators.  
**When not to use:** Applicable across all focus group responses and doctrine as described above. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Focus Group Question(s)</th>
<th>Code Name</th>
<th>Definitions &amp; Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value hard power over soft power</td>
<td>Question #7, Question #8</td>
<td>BOOM</td>
<td><strong>Brief definition:</strong> Responses illustrate preferences for hard power or conventional military means. <strong>Full definition:</strong> Responses identifying the essence of the Marine Corps as leveraging hard power or conventional military means and marginalizing or demonstrating a willingness to marginalize soft power. <strong>When to use:</strong> Use to code any participant response or doctrinal text that demonstrates prioritization of hard power that also demonstrates a willingness to marginalize soft power. <strong>When not to use:</strong> Do not use for portions of doctrine or responses that acknowledge the need to maintain both hard and soft power capabilities equally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Focus Group Question(s)</td>
<td>Code Name</td>
<td>Definitions &amp; Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missions of IRCs other than public affairs</td>
<td></td>
<td>OTHERIRC</td>
<td><strong>Brief definition:</strong> Responses or content from doctrine describing the mission of IRCs other than public affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Full definition:</strong> Responses or content from doctrine that describes the mission of the other information related capabilities and the supporting imager acquisition capability (combat camera).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>When to use:</strong> Use to code any participant response or doctrinal text that describes the missions of IRCs other than public affairs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>When not to use:</strong> Do not use to identify content or responses describing public affairs missions within other IRCs, specifically public engagement via news and social media.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>