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# NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

## THESIS

**TREATMENT OF FOURTH CLASS MIDSHIPMEN:  
HAZING AND ITS IMPACT ON ACADEMIC AND  
MILITARY PERFORMANCE; AND PSYCHOLOGICAL  
AND PHYSICAL HEALTH**

by

Joseph S. Groah

June 2005

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**TREATMENT OF FOURTH CLASS MIDSHIPMEN: HAZING AND ITS  
IMPACT ON ACADEMIC AND MILITARY PERFORMANCE; AND  
PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN LEADERSHIP AND HUMAN RESOURCES  
DEVELOPMENT**

from the

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## **ABSTRACT**

In 1992, the General Accounting Office conducted a study at our Nation's service academies to determine the prevalence of hazing and its impact on psychological and physical health; and academic and military performance. Based on the literature it is theorized that the prevalence of hazing has changed. Furthermore, it is hypothesized that hazing will negatively impact both academic and military performance; and psychological and physical health. These hypotheses were tested using a series of cross tabulation analyses, Pearson-correlation coefficients, and multiple hierarchical regressions on population data, classes 2005 through 2008. Cross tabulation analyses measured the prevalence of 23-hazing behaviors for the sample population. Correlation coefficients measured the relationship between hazing and several performance and health outcomes. Finally, multiple hierarchical regression analyses assessed the impact of hazing experiences on academic and military performance; and psychological and physical health. The study concludes that hazing has declined in the past 12-years. Furthermore, hazing is correlated as hypothesized to all of the outcomes examined except for academic and military performance. Finally, regression analyses determined that hazing impacts psychological and physical health, but only partially impacts academic and military performance.



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# I. INTRODUCTION

## A. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

This research explores whether the United States Naval Academy has been successful in reducing the frequency of hazing and unsanctioned initiation practices experienced by midshipmen participating in the Fourth Class Development System. Every incoming freshman participates in the development system upon reporting to the United States Naval Academy. The goal of the system is to “produce midshipmen who function effectively within the Brigade, are trained in drill, are physically fit, and practice those personal and professional traits which distinguish them as midshipmen of the United States Naval Academy.” (COMDTMIDNINST 3120.1) Furthermore, the development system provides Plebes (Fourth Class Midshipmen) an “opportunity to learn and perform duties in a demanding, challenging, and intense environment.”(COMDTMIDNINST 3120.1).

As in many instances where new members are indoctrinated into an established organization there exists an imbalance of power. Various definitions exist to describe behaviors such as hazing and bullying but most emphasize “the continuity of harassment over time and the imbalance of power between the bullies and the victims.” (Adams, 1992; Leyman, 1990) This imbalance of power has the potential to create opportunities for abuse. Frequently this abuse manifests itself in the form of hazing. The Department of Defense defines hazing as “any conduct whereby someone causes another to suffer or to be exposed to any activity that is cruel, abusive, humiliating, oppressive, demeaning, or harmful.”(Title 10 code) Too be certain hazing is not a new phenomenon. The relationship between hazing and indoctrination is a well documented and highly researched topic in both civilian and military sectors. The military, has used what some would consider hazing for years to simulate the stresses found in a combat environment. This is evident in indoctrination periods such as recruit training and officer candidate school (OCS), as well as training evolutions where simulated stress is used to produce a realistic combat environment. In the civilian sector, indoctrination and hazing have been a widely publicized issue in undergraduate fraternity/sorority initiations. A recent rash of hazing in American high schools has also enjoyed a degree of notoriety in the past

several years. “A 1999 survey of initiation rites in NCAA college teams, conducted by Alfred University, found that 42 percent of athletes hazed in college had also been hazed in high school.” (Myers, 2000, pg.11) The indoctrination/hazing relationship is not a new problem, but it remains a difficult issue to defeat. It was this difficult issue that led to Department of Defense interdiction in the early 1990’s.

Several serious hazing incidents at the U.S. Naval Academy in the early 1990’s forced the Department of Defense (DoD) to take action. The DoD commissioned the General Accounting Office (GAO) to conduct a study on hazing at the Naval Academy, Air Force Academy, and the Military Academy at West Point. After conducting the two-year study GAO published *More Changes Needed to Eliminate Hazing*. The report outlined the depth of the hazing issue and the physical and psychological effect of hazing on midshipmen and cadets. Furthermore, GAO provided the service academies with measures that they believed would reduce hazing and improve the indoctrination process. The report was published in 1992. No follow-up study has been conducted to date. This research will examine if the United States Naval Academy has been successful in reducing hazing. Specifically, has the Naval Academy reduced the frequency of hazing taking place within the Fourth Class Development System as compared to rates reported by the General Accounting Office (1992).

## **B. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The purpose of the proposed thesis is to examine the nature and prevalence of hazing at the U.S. Naval Academy compared to the original 1992 GAO findings. Specifically, this study will examine the incidence of hazing and its consequences for midshipmen. The following research questions will be examined:

1. What is the nature and prevalence of hazing at the U.S. Naval Academy?
2. How do these rates compare with those reported in the GAO study (1992)?
3. What is the relationship between hazing and academic and military performance?
4. What is the relationship between hazing and psychological and physical health.

### C. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The scope of this thesis includes: (1) a detailed literature review encompassing hazing related material and an introductory examination of the 4<sup>th</sup> Class Development System; (2) a Web-based survey administered to a stratified random sample of midshipmen; and (3) a two-pronged statistical analysis to include: descriptive comparisons of GAO data (1992) and current data, and an in-depth analysis of the relationship between hazing experiences and outcome measures. The intent of this thesis is to determine if rates of hazing, as operationalized by the GAO 21-item behavior inventory, have decreased, remained the same, or increased since the original findings in 1992. Furthermore this research will examine the psychological and physical effects of hazing on individuals subjected to hazing while participating in the Fourth Class Development System. The data used for this thesis was a result of participation from midshipmen classes 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008.

This research is not without limitations. The original intent of the study was to replicate the research completed by GAO in 1992. In order to implement the current study under similar conditions attempts were made to utilize the original GAO questionnaire. The original questionnaire could not be obtained. GAO destroyed the questionnaire seven-years after the study was completed in accordance with established policy. The survey used for the current research was developed to imitate the original GAO questionnaire. The survey's development was based on information gained from the GAO report *More Changes Needed to Eliminate Hazing*. Having been able to use the original questionnaire would have produced stronger evidence when comparing new results with those reported in 1992.

The research is also limited in the ability to distinguish which institutional policies and initiatives have been most influential in combating hazing within the Brigade of Midshipmen. The research model was designed to identify the frequency of which hazing behaviors occurred during the Fourth Class Development System. This focus does not lend itself to identifying institutional policies responsible for the decline, or increase in hazing rates. This direction would best be suited for additional research.

A final limitation worth mentioning is that of the 23-item behavior inventory. The original GAO survey consisted of 21-behaviors. These behaviors were selected after extensive research and review by both GAO and Naval Academy staff. A possibility exists, however that after 14-years the inventory may be dated and new forms of hazing may have come into existence. Additional items were selected by the researcher to be included in the inventory in an attempt to capture current hazing themes. These items were selected for use after an extensive literature review.

#### **D. ORGANIZATION OF THESIS**

This thesis is organized into five chapters. Chapter I is a general introduction to the research. Chapter II provides a review of the literature on hazing, the impact of hazing on academic and military performance and psychological and physical health, and the Fourth Class Development System. Chapter III describes the methodology of the study. A description of the participants is presented, followed by an overview of the variables and measures that were used in this thesis. The chapter concludes by exploring the instrument used to gather data and the procedures by which the study was implemented. Chapter IV presents the results of the study. This chapter is broken into several sections. The first section details the analytical strategy used for this thesis. The second section describes the incidence of hazing in regards to frequency. The third section discusses the impacts of hazing on the following outcome measures: Academic and military performance, psychological health, and physical health. The final chapter offers some conclusions drawn from the study and offers recommendations that are consistent with the findings.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The term “hazing” is often associated with a specific group or set of behaviors. Current perceptions of hazing are frequently shaped by one of several factors including information from the news media, anti-hazing organizations, and even personal experience. The danger of allowing any single group or element to form our own opinions on hazing is that we may unintentionally adopt that groups personal biases. For example, news media report hazing incidents that generate the most public interest but may not necessarily be representative of the prototypical forms of hazing; anti-hazing organizations focus exclusively on the negative consequences of hazing even though individuals subjected to hazing may have either positive or negative recollections of the events—individuals subjected to hazing may feel it was a worth while experience, while others may be emotionally and physically scarred for life. It is extremely difficult to sort through the multiple messages being sent concerning hazing and develop an educated working knowledge of the issue. Bersani, Nesci, and Pozzi, (1980) defines hazing as a set of “initiation rituals by which newcomers to an organization are harassed or humiliated as a test or preparation for acceptance into the group” (p.324). Other research also suggests that it is difficult to separate indoctrination, rites of passage, and initiation, from sanctioned and unsanctioned forms of hazing (GAO, 1992 p.16). Adding to the scope of these problems is research that suggests that hazing is pervasive and can be found in many different cultures and sub-groups throughout history (Winslow, 1999 p.441). However, hazing does not fit easily into a single definition or ideology that can be used across cultures (O’Neil, 2004). These limitations not withstanding, research suggests several characteristics of the hazing experience:

1. Transformation is a central theme for many groups that practice hazing during initiation. However, what one group calls hazing another may call socialization (Jones, 2000 p.116).
2. Groups administering hazing often view the activities as a legitimate and necessary facet of their indoctrination strategy.
3. The need for acceptance is an enabling force that encourages persons to tolerate physical and mental trials that they would otherwise not attempt nor participate in.



4. Persons subjected to hazing often minimize the negative consequences of the behavior and are reluctant to report the incident.
5. Hazing has the potential to escalate from mundane to tragic in rapid succession.

The themes that were uncovered in the literature are essential when attempting to develop a solid understanding of the hazing issue. Once educated, questions such as: where do these behaviors originate, what are the consequences, and why is hazing so difficult to control become more manageable. Though knowledge in the subject area may not provide the perfect solution for stopping hazing, it does provide a solid base from which to develop and improve upon future anti-hazing strategies.

### **1. Ritualistic Indoctrination from a Cultural Perspective**

Hazing can be explored through cultural practices where initiates undergo a rite of passage prior to gaining acceptance into the larger group. Rites of passage are understood in this context as “ceremonies that correspond and bring dramatization to major life events, such as birth, coming of age initiations, marriage and death, and they consist of a series of rituals that convey individuals from one social status or role to another.” (Markstrom & Boora, 2003 p.402) Furthermore, these rites of passage act as “formalized social interactions with a phasing which separates individuals from their previous identities, carries them through a period of transition to a new identity, and incorporates them into a new role or social status” (Dunham, Kidwell, & Wilson, 1986 p.140). Though many similarities can be drawn cross-culturally to describe these rites of passage there exists a great deal of disparity in each. These ceremonies include practices such as a “Vision Quest” used by Native Americans, or scarification and self mutilation as used by some African and Aborigine tribes. The criteria to meet the definition discussed earlier, “Initiation rituals by which newcomers to an organization are harassed and humiliated as a test or preparation for acceptance into the group”, are met when viewed from our own western ideology (Bersani et.al., 1980 p.324). The difficulty in drawing this parallel, however resides in the application of terms such as harassment and humiliation to cultural practices other than our own.

Harassment and humiliation are terms which are open for vast interpretation. What is considered humiliation or harassment in one culture may be completely acceptable in another. For example,

Many Native American societies publicly celebrated a girl's first menstruation. For instance, the parents of girls among the Luiseño Indians of Southern California proudly announced to the community that their daughters were becoming women. The girls were partly buried in heated sand. They were not permitted to scratch themselves or eat salt, and they were given instructions by older women about the physiological changes that were occurring and how to behave as a woman and wife. For most North American girls today, public announcements that they had begun menstruating would be considered humiliating. (O'Neil, 2002)

“Among the Barabaig of East Africa, the boys' heads are shaved and their foreheads are cut with three deep horizontal incisions that go down to the bone and extend from ear to ear. Sometimes, the incisions are deep enough to show up on the skulls of dead men.” (O'Neil, 2002) Initiation rites such as those practiced by the Barabaig of East Africa would outrage American citizens. Scarification, Clitoridectomy, and Infibulation, all practiced in various cultures to signify the transition from childhood to adulthood, have been condemned publicly by human rights activist around the world. In the cultures that practice rituals such as these, however; they are not considered harassment or a source of humiliation; they are looked at as an important aspect of socialization. Herein lie's the difficulty in labeling behaviors practiced by another culture as hazing. Some would consider passing this type of judgment on another culture's beliefs and practices cultural imperialism (O'Neil, 2004).

**a. *Aborigine Tribal Initiations***

Aborigines, like many tribal cultures, have customary “rites of passage” for adolescent boys entering manhood. Tribal aborigine's practice severe initiation rites among male members of the tribe, but due to their cultural origins these behaviors are not only accepted but held in high esteem for those who undergo the transformation process. One tribe initiates adolescent boys over a period of several grueling weeks, beginning with ceremonial circumcision. This procedure is performed by the tribal medicine man with a sharp piece of flint and no anesthetic. Once circumcised, the candidates must undergo several physical and mental trials. During this phase of the initiation, the candidates are treated with indifference by both male and female members of the tribe. The process culminates when the base of the boy's penis is punctured with a splinter of wood, as means of controlling the tribe's population. (Bjerre, 1956 p.211) The desire to be counted among the men, or warriors, of the tribe is the motivation that helps the

candidates overcome such difficult and painful circumstances. In American society, these practices would be labeled cruel and dehumanizing, but to an Aborigine they are simply an accepted part of Aboriginal culture, which we were never meant to understand or pass judgment on.

***b. Native American***

Native Americans' have a well documented history of initiation rites for members of their tribes. The Native American culture is steeped in ritual and tradition and celebrates phases of life and death with ancient practices that are imbedded in the tribe's religion. Puberty rites are very relevant when discussing indoctrination or initiation. Tribes such as the Apache, Cheyenne, Iroquois, and Choctaw celebrate the transition of adolescence to adulthood. The Apache initiation ritual is characteristic of the tribes mentioned.

When a boy reached puberty, he was often sent by himself, or in a group, to fast, pray and perform initiate ceremonies. During this time he would receive instruction from an elder to help them understand their guardian spirit. After seeing the spirit, the boy would make a small effigy to hang around his neck. He was also given a medicine bag to ward off sickness and bring luck. The ceremony would close with a feast and dance. The effigy is similar to the way Christians and many other religions hang a cross or other sacred symbol around their neck to remind them they are not alone, that a higher power is present. This prepared the boy for more critical thinking, and leaving him alone in a place to pray made him learn crucial survival instincts. (Gill. 1982)

Males were not the only ones expected to undergo an initiation prior to acceptance by the adult members of the tribe. In many instances a young girl's transformation to womanhood was also recognized as a rite of passage.

The most elaborate Apache ceremony was a female's puberty ritual. For four days there was feasting and masked dancers, and girls were dressed in yellow-stained buckskin, the color of sacred pollen. Some Apache tribes included a tipi-molding ritual in which the girl was massaged by a woman attendant to make her straight and have a good disposition. Sacred pollen was sprinkled around and a blanket was thrown in four directions to symbolize wealth. Food and behavior taboos were placed on the girl at this time. On the fourth day the tipi was taken down. Successful completion of this ceremony was taken to mean health, wealth and a long

life for the family of the girl. The pollen probably symbolized fertility and health to the Apache, since only a healthy flower has pollen to spread. (Gill, 1982)

The Native American initiation rituals varied in severity. All of the rituals researched, however; included a degree of discomfort. Discomfort ranged from having to endure a four-day fasting period to wandering the deserts of New Mexico alone and impaired on hallucinogenic drugs seeking the “Great Spirit”. Each of the rituals mentioned, however; contain the requisite criteria to be labeled as hazing when applied to our own western ideology.

Ritualistic indoctrination is neither an excuse nor a justification for hazing. Examination of these rituals does however illustrate several parallels between ritualistic indoctrination and hazing in modern society. Cultures throughout history have ritualized its members’ transformations from one life phase to the next. The ritual is normally characterized by some type of discomfort or pain that is used to test the mettle of the person undergoing the initiation. These rituals often act as screening tools to determine if the initiate is prepared for the hardships that accompany the next stage in their development. Finally, the initiate’s desire for acceptance encourages willing participation in the transformation process.

## **2. Hazing in Today’s Society**

Hazing in today’s society may or may not be linked to ancient, tribal, or religious practices, but common themes between the two are evident. Each of the initiations, rituals, or indoctrination practices studied was used to signify or celebrate the initiate’s transformation and new identity. The initiate who successfully completed the ritual was transformed and in turn gained acceptance into the group. Throughout the literature other themes surface which link current hazing practices with those of another culture or time. Many of the practices had religious or mythic undertones which defined the groups’ philosophy and values toward life. Moreover, completion of these difficult initiations proved that prospective members were prepared for the trials that they would face as full-fledged members of the established group. Finally, initiations acted as a screening tool for identifying those who were not yet ready to assume full-fledged membership. In the groups studied a great degree of importance was placed on keeping the group strong and

pure. In order to maintain the strength of the group a mechanism was needed to test prospective members. The test had to be sufficiently challenging as to not allow admittance to those unprepared for the difficulties that lie ahead.

*a. Collegiate Hazing*

College fraternities and sororities, much like the military, have received significant public attention in regards to the methods used to indoctrinate newly joined members. “Hazing, which is officially banned by all national Greek organizations, frequently comes to the public’s attention through the popular news media when the activities become fatal” (Drout & Corsoro, 2003 p. 535). This is not to say that all Greek initiations are excessively abusive and deadly. “Initiation rituals are a commonly accepted aspect of Greek and other group-oriented organizations. In the context of their organization, they can often be seen as an exaggeration of the prevailing subgroup norms. Initiation rituals, or pledging, are often ceremonial, even mundane. (Drout & Corsoro, 2003 p. 535) To simply say that the fraternity pledge system is nothing more than a vehicle for abusive behavior would be undermining those organizations that do not use abusive hazing as a part of their initiation process. Subgroups within the Greek system that do utilize abusive hazing, however; often receive the lion’s share of the public’s attention and in turn paint a violent and negative picture of the system as a whole.

Even though officially banned, fraternities and sororities still practice rituals that include abusive hazing. “Hazing typically involves risky behavior, such as intensive drinking, or potentially life-threatening activities.” (Drout & Corsoro, 2003 p. 535) Note the similarities between fraternity/sorority initiations and those occurring in the military. Hazing is officially banned, but is still practiced by sub-groups within the given organization. Not all initiation rituals are violent or abusive. Some initiation behaviors are exaggerations of the prevailing norms of the subgroup. Finally, the most violent or negative aspect of the process is the one most publicized. Much like any environment where room for hazing exists, the potential for escalation of these behaviors and the opportunity for things to go horribly wrong are greatly increased.

One specific group that has been highly scrutinized by the media for violent initiation practices have been Black Greek Fraternities (BGF’s) “Physical abuse is often encountered in the BGF initiation process and has led to the hospitalization or

death of a number of young black males. (Jones, 2000 p. 112) Furthermore, Jones believes that the violence in these groups is not an isolated incident. The near deaths of several students at the University of Louisville, University of Maryland—Baltimore County, Kansas State, Mississippi State and Georgia State provides support for the hypothesis that this is a problem of epidemic proportions (114).

Black Greek Fraternities may, or may not, represent the extreme end of fraternal violence. Further research would be needed to test this hypothesis. What is interesting, and pertinent to this research however, are the broader conclusions of Jones's research as they pertain to the Fraternity Pledge Process and its link to ancient cultural practices.

Modern fraternity initiation rituals are not different from ancient ones in that they also seek to maintain some form of stability within organizations. They are not unique, but synthesis of materials from a number of sources including: historical rituals from other civilizations (especially Africa, the Orient and Greece), Freemasonry, other adult lodge groups such as the Knights of Pythias, Knights of Columbus, Order of Odd Fellows, Templars and religious books and liturgies (Barnes, 1994; Carnes, 1989; McMinn, 1979).

Moreover, Jones posits that the methods involved in the pledge journey may be considered abhorrent to those outside of the fraternal culture. "But the methods endure because just as horribly sick to some—they are sacred to others." (Jones, 2000 p.118). Much like rituals practiced by the Aborigine or Cheyenne, fraternity/sorority initiations are viewed as deviant by those outside of the practicing culture. Members of the fraternity/sorority in question, however; often view these practices as acceptable forms of socialization. This condemnation by those outside of the practicing culture may be a result of the number of deaths and injuries caused by initiations that have spiraled out of control.

**b. *High School Hazing***

In recent years America's high schools have also been scrutinized in regards to the level of hazing occurring in high school activities. "If you think that hazing only happens on college campuses and in military barracks, think again. In recent years, high school students across the country have joined in these rituals—much to the dismay of educators, parents, police and peers." (Chmelynski, 1997 p.60) Again the

pattern is similar to other organizations or sub-groups that practice initiation rituals which include hazing. In high schools younger members of the student body and students seeking admission to activities, clubs, and groups within the school are required to endure an initiation process to gain full acceptance by the groups established members. In some cases these initiations are harmless and mundane; in others they are painfully dangerous. The dark side of high school hazing involves, “sexual assaults, alcohol overdoes, isolation, and degradation.” (Fine, 1999 p.3) These behaviors are very similar to those mentioned in college fraternity and sorority hazing. Some of the common tactics used in high school hazing include, “binding people with tape, beating them up, and smearing their bodies with foul concoctions made up of ingredients such as eggs and manure.” (Fine, 1999 p.3)

Hazing in high schools is not limited to athletic activities as many may believe. Initiation rituals and hazing occur in almost every group that high school students may seek membership in. In a study conducted by Alfred University in 2000, it was found that 1.5 million American high school students undergo some form of humiliating or dangerous activity when they join a high school group (Myers, 2000 p.11). Groups practicing initiation rituals, which may incorporate hazing, included “peer groups and gangs, cheerleading squads, vocational groups, music, art, and theatre organizations—even church groups. No one was immune.” (p.11) An alarming aspect of hazing in American high schools is the view that it may be even more dangerous than similar hazing taking place in college fraternity/sorority organizations. “It, (high school hazing), tends not to be as ritualized as it is on the college level, and because it’s haphazard, it can be dangerous” (StopHazing.org., 2005) With all of the dangers involved, one must wonder why hazing in high schools has been on the rise?

Norm Pollard, director of the Counseling and Student Development Center at Alfred University believes, that high school students’ willingness to place themselves in dangerous situations just to be part of the group combined with the desire to belong have exasperated the hazing problem and made young students prime targets for abuse. The need for acceptance, however; is only a portion of why hazing is prevalent in American high schools. Themes uncovered in other subgroup practices are also found in instances of high school initiation rituals. One of the major themes uncovered in the

literature is how participants view initiation and operationalize terms such as hazing, humiliation, and harassment. Half of the high school respondents to the 2000 Alfred University study participated in hazing activities because they thought it was “fun and exciting”. Furthermore, their perception of hazing varied greatly compared to high school administrators and faculty. Only a minority of students perceived even the most dangerous initiation activities as hazing. While only 15 percent said they’d been hazed, twice as many reported abusing substances or committing dangerous acts as part of an initiation (Myers, 2000 p.11)

*c. Sports*

Of all the cultures and subgroups researched sports groups were the most well documented in regards to hazing. The literature suggest that hazing among athletes is a common occurrence beginning as early as junior high, continuing through high school and college athletics and eventually manifesting itself in professional sports. For this discussion the focus will be on college and professional sports teams. According to Dr. Nadine Hoover, of Alfred University, the hazing issue is of huge concern for collegiate athletic administrators.

Over 325,000 athletes at more than 1,000 National Collegiate Athletic Association schools participated in intercollegiate sports during 1998-99. Of these athletes:

- More than a quarter of a million (250,000+) experienced some form of hazing to join a college athletic team.
- One in five was subjected to unacceptable and potentially illegal hazing. They were kidnapped, beaten or tied up and abandoned. They were also forced to commit crimes – destroying property, making prank phone calls or harassing others.
- Half were required to participate in drinking contests or alcohol-related hazing.
- Two in five consumed alcohol on recruitment visits even before enrolling.
- Two-thirds were subjected to humiliating hazing, such as being yelled or sworn at, forced to wear embarrassing clothing or forced to deprive oneself of sleep, food or personal hygiene.
- Only one in five participated exclusively in positive initiations, such as team trips or ropes courses.” (Hoover, 1999 p.6)



For the purposes of the Alfred University study hazing is defined as “Any activity expected of someone joining a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses or endangers, regardless of the person’s willingness to participate” (p.8) The “willingness to participate” facet of their definition was relatively uncommon in hazing related literature. The study identified four categories of hazing. The four categories were: acceptable, questionable, unacceptable, and alcohol related. Of the 2,000+ respondents to the university survey, 100 percent reported participating in one of the four categories. Of the responses, almost all college athletes reported participating in acceptable initiation rituals. Acceptable initiation rituals included activities such as pre-season training, maintaining a specific grade point average, and dressing up for official team functions. Of note however was the 80 percent reporting rate for participation in behaviors that were unacceptable, questionable or alcohol related.

**Table 1. Percent of Athletes Participating in Questionable, Alcohol Related, or Unacceptable Activities**

Percentage of Respondents Who Knew Of <i>Questionable/Unacceptable</i> Initiations				
	Athletes n=2027	Coaches n=1049	Ath.Dir n=338	Deans n=235
<b><i>Questionable</i> Initiation Activities</b>				
Yelling, cursing, or swearing	31%	12%	10%	16%
Wearing embarrassing clothing	29%	12%	11%	11%
Tattooing, piercing, head shaving, or branding	28%	15%	16%	16%
Participating in calisthenics not related to sport	13%	3%	3%	3%
Associating with specific people, not others	11%	2%	3%	6%
Acting as personal servant to players off the field, court	9%	3%	2%	3%
Depriving oneself of food, sleep, or hygiene	7%	1%	1%	2%
Consuming extremely spicy/disgusting concoctions	6%	0%	0%	1%
<b><i>Alcohol-related</i> Initiation Activities</b>				
Consuming alcohol on recruitment visits	42%	7%	5%	9%
Participating in a drinking contest	35%	4%	4%	8%
<b><i>Other Unacceptable</i> Initiation Activities</b>				
Making prank calls or harassing others	10%	0%	1%	3%
Destroying or stealing property	7%	2%	3%	3%
Engaging in or simulating sexual acts	6%	1%	0%	2%
Being tied up, taped, or confined in small space	5%	2%	1%	0%
Paddling, whipping, beating, kicking, beating others	3%	1%	1%	0%
Kidnapping or transporting and abandoning	3%	1%	1%	0%

National Survey: Initiation Rites and Athletics for NCAA Sports Teams, Alfred University, 1999

The initiation and hazing relationship continued for those athletes who successfully reached the professional level. “Hazing is not limited to amateur athletics. There is a long standing tradition of hazing rookies in professional teams.” (Crow & Rosner, 2002 p.87) Hazing in professional sports is a fairly traditional right of passage among its members. Hazing in this context was used for a number of reasons. In professional sports a degree of hazing was used to promote team bonding, keep rookies grounded, and teach respect for veteran players and the culture of the sport. In almost every professional sport rookie players are expected to perform such mundane tasks as carrying veteran’s bags on road trips and fetch meals for veteran players during training camp. (Crow & Rosner, 2002 p.101) Much of the hazing which occurs among professional athletes is good natured and accepted by rookies as a small price to pay. It

could be said that most rookies understand the dues which are required to become a part of the team. They are being transformed into next season's veteran player. Professional athletes, much like other subgroups that have been discussed can fall prey to excess, however and go beyond the accepted limits.

When hazing goes beyond acceptable limits in professional sports the behaviors which manifest themselves resemble those uncovered in college and even high school athletics. Professional athletes have been subjected to such abuses as, beatings, being taped to goal post, forced to wear humiliating clothing, head shaving and wrestling other team mates. In extreme cases such as an incident which occurred during the New Orleans Saints training camp, players were beaten so badly during a rookie initiation ritual called the "Gauntlet" that three of the five participants were hospitalized. Subsequently, one of the participants was injured so badly during the incident that he was released from his contract (Crow & Rosner, 2002 p.103).

Clearly hazing is embedded in athletics at every level. The question that baffles team administrators, faculty, and owners is the same question that we battle within the military. If behaviors are potentially dangerous, humiliating, and prohibited why do players concede and participate? Crow and Rosner posit that part of the problem is a definitional question as to what behaviors constitute hazing; "Actions that are considered hazing by some are not considered hazing by others" (p.87). Another theme that is relatively common among subgroups that practice initiation is that the majority of the behaviors are benign, only small percentages of the subgroup are subjected to abusive practices. Similarly those are the cases which receive the most attention by coaching staff, faculty, and the media. Finally, like other subgroups discussed there remains a deep desire to be accepted and integrated into the collective whole. Just because these persons are athletes does not relieve them of the desire to be accepted.

## **B. HAZING AND RITUALISTIC INDOCTRINATION IN THE MILITARY**

The armed forces have done an excellent job of creating the perception that hazing is endemic to military culture. "An interminable parade of appalling behavior by men and women in uniform has riveted public attention on traditional military values

such as duty, honor and integrity. The media zealously speculates whether the US military has lost its moral compass.” (Goldman, 1998 pg.62) It is understandable why American’s have begun to question the values of our armed forces when repeated examples of abusive behavior aimed at junior Sailors, Marines, and Soldiers flood the news media. Behaviors and rituals that were never intended for public scrutiny have become common events in the general news media.

### **1. The Military**

In response to the release of a Marine “Wing Pinning” video in 1997, then Defense Secretary, William Cohen said, “I am disgusted by the bloody Marine Corps hazing incident, but Marine leaders said the practice may still be occurring” (McIntyre, 1997). The “Wing Pinning” video was not unprecedented. Other examples of hazing had been brought into the public forum in similar fashion. In 1993 ABC’s Prime Time aired a story on the “Hell Night” initiation of Marines stationed with the Silent Drill Team. The broadcast included a video tape of naked Marines having their genitalia covered in edge dressing while being sprayed with urine (Hanson, 2005).

When the public receives large doses of its military dehumanizing one another it begs the question, is it an anomaly or simply an accepted product of military culture? Some believe,

The culture of the military is predicated on dehumanization and dominance. Although it sends troops to ‘trouble-spots’ around the world, policing other nations and races, protecting our vital interest, the real story of the military begins back here at home with the individual men and women who are systematically, violently transformed into a collective that inflicts suffering with impunity. (Rodriguez, 1997 p. 18).

Furthermore, “Traditionally, the military has recruited, trained, and rewarded soldiers that embody its combat, masculine-warrior ideology--- a homogeneous force comprised primarily of white, single, young men who view themselves as masculine warriors” (Dunivin, 1994 p.534). For those who subscribe to this type of ideology, the men and women of the military are simply following the established norms of the organization. With each scandalous act of hazing brought into the American spotlight, we strengthen their conviction that indeed, we are a violent and brutish sub-culture at odds with the accepted values of American society. Hazing and abusive initiations have

the propensity to be much more damaging to the military's collective reputation than those who administer the acts can reasonably fathom.

Our own military is not the only fighting force in the world that has been challenged by the hazing issue. Other nations have experienced unusual and sometimes inhumane initiation practices as well. Canada, for example, was recently shocked "by video taped scenes of humiliating and at times, disgusting initiation rites in One-Commando of the Canadian Airborne Regiment" (Winslow, 1999 p.429). In the video newly joined members participated in brutal initiation rites that included electric shock, beatings, and participation in mock homo-erotic behavior. A common theme among participants was that the "rites of passage" was not a big deal because "Hazing has been a part of not only the military but a lot of different social groups" (Winslow, 1999 pg. 441). As one participant puts it, "I can say that I am proud to have done it, to prove to myself and to others that as a member of the Airborne Regiment I will face and overpass any challenges or taskings given to me" (Winslow, 1999 p. 442). A study conducted on the Norwegian Army also found significant evidence that hazing and like behaviors are prevalent in their organization. Of the soldiers surveyed, 22 percent reported they had been hazed, whereas 19 percent reported that they had hazed others (Ostvik & Rudmin, 2001 p.24). In Russia a number of soldiers told Human Rights Watch of abuses including "theft of property, confiscation of money and food sent by their families, demands for cigarettes, money, and other goods; violent punishments; and incidents of sexual abuse committed by senior soldiers, called *dedy* in military slang." (Kovalev, 2004, p.N)

One of the unintended consequences of hazing in the military is that it fosters an environment of distrust between citizens and those who have been tasked with their defense. The enormity of this issue is evident in the multiple initiatives that have been implemented to bring hazing under control. Our own Department of Defense spoke for every branch of the US military when it banned any type of initiation that is dehumanizing, humiliating or abusive. Service members found guilty of administering such initiations have been separated from the military or incarcerated for their actions. How then does hazing continue to thrive in an environment that has zero-tolerance for its

practice and annual training for its identification? In order to answer this question one must stop thinking of hazing as nothing more than simple mistreatment and begin to consider the deeper roots of the issue.

Hazing in the military includes themes characteristic of hazing in other organizations and sub-groups. In many instances hazing is a method for recognizing an individual's transition from one social status to another. It is common for persons to willingly participate in questionable behaviors for the sake of acceptance. Furthermore, persons who have been subjected to hazing are commonly reluctant to report the incident. In this regard hazing in the military is no different than hazing in any other organization discussed. There are a couple of dimensions, however; that speak directly to hazing in a military environment.

One dimension involves the sanctioned use of hazing to simulate the stressful environment characteristic of combat operations. "Precisely what military hazing is, however, defies definition. One recruit's hazing is another recruit's "shape up" exercise." (Nuwer, 2004 p. 142) In the military a degree of hazing is not only accepted but expected. For example, in Marine Corps recruit training hazing is an instrumental and planned portion of initial training. Of course there is reasoning behind why newly enlisted Marines are subjected to such harsh treatment.

The Marines say that every small thing has a purpose, and so it does. When they forbid recruits to scratch the relentless bites from the islands sand fleas, there is a reason—any wrong move on the battlefield can give away a position. When they force recruits always to shout their responses, their faces often distorted with the effort, there is a reason—you need to be heard on the battlefield. When they constantly urge recruits to move faster there is a reason—commands have to be carried out with alacrity in dangerous situations. (Lowry, 2004 p.34)

Recruits are placed under incredible amounts of stress during their 12-week indoctrination all for the purposes of preparing them for combat. Hazing is used as a tool to simulate the stress and harsh environment that they may later encounter on the battlefield. Many would argue that hazing in this sense is a necessary step in preparing young men and women for what lies ahead. Even Charles Moskos, an expert in the study of hazing, believes that military rites of passage that cause neither injuries nor lasting

pain and aren't taken to dangerous extremes should be tolerated. He further states that, "You can't have a rite of passage without some hazing" (Nuwer, 2004 p. 144). Tom Hohan, a successful New Orleans businessman, stated that his hazing experiences in officer candidate school (OCS) taught him to react and function in the high stress combat environment of Vietnam and showed him that he could survive under the toughest of circumstances (Nuwer, 2004 p. 144).

The use of hazing in certain training evolutions within the armed forces is used for legitimate purposes and is implemented under conditions which are structured, controlled, and supervised. Like all hazing, however; events can easily spiral out of control and what was once sanctioned can turn deviant and malicious. Furthermore, the sanctioned use of hazing has the potential to create a confusing dichotomy for young men and women within the ranks. A former Marine drill instructor said this, "I've seen guys who were excellent Marines, combat veterans, guys who were extremely qualified, do something stupid to a recruit, before they knew it their career was ruined and they were wearing an orange jumpsuit and picking up trash on the side of the road" (Nuwer, 2004 p. 142). As a prior drill instructor myself, I witnessed multiple instances where outstanding Marines took hazing beyond the acceptable limits resulting in a shattered career and criminal record. Hazing in the military has also lead to deadly consequences, such as those encountered in 1956.

On April 8, 1956, drill instructor Matthew McKeon led Platoon 71 on a forced night march through the backwaters of the Parris Island recruit depot in an effort to restore flagging discipline. An unexpected and extraordinarily strong tidal current in Ribbon Creek swept over the recruits, and in the panic that followed six men drowned (Stevens, 1999 p. 120).

Another dimension that distinguishes hazing in military organizations and hazing in other environments (e.g., college athletics, fraternities, professional sports) is that hazing has the potential to be even more dangerous than similar behavior in a civilian environment. To begin with, once men and women join the military they cannot simply walk away from an abusive situation. They are truly in a position where they are forced to stay and deal with whatever issue they are facing. Secondly, many military organizations are remotely located. In instances such as these newly joined members are

separated from the social support mechanisms that they came to rely upon during their adolescence. Finally, military members are trained in the application of violence and have access to any number of weapons that most civilians do not. In a hazing study conducted on the Norwegian Army the researchers suggested that,

It is natural that military organizations, as social institutions, would also experience hazing and bullying. These behaviors in the military should be of serious concern because young men are isolated from moderating social norms and institutions, are being trained for violence, and have access to weapons and heavy equipment. Further aggravating the soldiers situation, they are not free to leave the organization if they feel abused. (Ostvik & Rudmin, 2001 p.19)

The military is in a particularly difficult situation regarding hazing. Themes that present themselves in other organizations are readily apparent, but are then complicated by factors which are specific to the military. Men and women are indoctrinated by a controlled use of hazing, and then severely punished if they haze others outside of the accepted institutional norms. They are trained in the application of violence and rewarded for aggressiveness. Finally, they are segregated to a large extent from the general public and the social support mechanisms that they had been accustomed to all of their lives. Military members live on installations, they shop at base exchanges, and go to Military hospitals. All of these factors could potentially play into why hazing has continued to thrive within the ranks, regardless of policy or condemnation by higher authority.

## **2. Service Academies**

Our nation's service academies do not fall neatly into any one of the organizations that we have discussed up to this point. On one hand they are institutions of higher learning, not unlike any other university. On the other hand, they are military organizations responsible for training the next generation of commissioned leaders. This dual role provides an interesting back drop from which to study hazing. Components of both university life and military service are combined in a single organization resulting in an interesting blend of hazing behavior.

Hazing at our nation's service academies is not a phenomenon that emerged in recent years. On the contrary, historians trace hazing at the service academies to around



the time of the Civil War when the term “devilizing” was used to describe the treatment of plebes (freshman). “Deviling”, mostly involved good natured pranks which often occurred during summer training and then disappeared prior to the start of the academic year. It was not until after the Civil War that hazing emerged in a much more virulent form. As hazing evolved, upper classmen developed an entire code of unwritten laws governing their relations with plebes (GAO, 1992 p. 11). As the hazing issue escalated Academy Superintendents began in earnest to gain control of the problem. Despite academy attempts to gain control, however; hazing continued to thrive through the 1800’s and by the early 1900’s over 100 methods for annoying underclassmen had been identified. The behaviors ranged from making plebes stand upside down, to making them drink tabasco sauce. If a plebe refused to participate they were made to fight a member of the upper class.

Academy Superintendents of the time generally condemned hazing and attempted to abolish the practices from their institutions. This condemnation may have been spurred by the deaths of two former West Point cadets and the congressional inquiry that followed. Congress also became involved with the United States Naval Academy in 1906, and then again in 1909 as reports of hazing surfaced. As a result of the Congressional inquiries and investigations, laws concerning hazing at the service academies, established as early as 1874, started to become more strictly enforced (GAO, 1992 p. 15). Hazing had been identified, it had been officially banned, and enforcement of anti-hazing laws was being strictly enforced by the senior officers in the service academy chains of command, but still it flourished. The question is why? One possible answer is that hazing was an institutional norm supported by academy faculty and graduates. Furthermore, plebes considered it a point of honor not to reveal the names of their tormentors.

The idea of hazing as an accepted institutional norm is clearly articulated in this excerpt from *The Corps is Going to Hell*. In 1919, when General Douglas MacArthur was named Superintendent of the Military Academy he was so displeased with the fourth class indoctrination system and its use of unwritten codes of conduct that he decided to standardize the entire system. This is not to say, however; that abuse was eliminated. It was not MacArthur’s intent to destroy the tough nature of academy life, instead,

The Fourth Class System was intended to serve as a guideline of how the superior/subordinate relationship should be conducted. The system was made less subjective and correspondingly more useful as a part of Academy life. The excessive practices of physical, sweat, and verbal hazing flourished as their usefulness or detriment was seldom questioned (Knudson, 1981, p.61)

The tough nature of life at a military university was not destroyed and practices that were occurring in the late 1800's were still being utilized during the indoctrination of under classmen. Even today, vestiges of traditional hazing can still be found at the Service Academies and other private military universities. At Norwich University, "A secret society known as the "Night Riders" was founded in 1819 for the purpose of chastising erring rooks (freshman)". As recently as 1988, a candidate at Norwich made official allegations of ritualistic beatings suffered by black robed members of this society (Rosenberg & Starr, 1991 p. 37). The Citadel came under national scrutiny in 1997 when two of their four female cadets resigned after having their mouths filled with cleanser and their clothes set on fire during a hazing incident orchestrated by upper class cadets (Wagner, 1997 p.16). At the Virginia Military Institute (VMI) superintendent Josiah Bunting had this to say about hazing in his organization,

The screaming, the push-ups, the sweat parties, the merciless quizzes on arcane institutional knowledge-none of it will change...We think things we did in 1890 and 1930 are still valid today (Chittum, 1998 p.3)

Though VMI, Norwich, and the Citadel are not national service academies they do mirror hazing related behaviors and problems faced by institutions such as the Naval Academy, Air Force Academy, and West Point. To say that these problems only exist in private military schools is to completely deny the rash of hazing related problems that have plagued national service academies.

Despite its (hazing) being outlawed, hazing has never completely disappeared from the academies. At all three academies, hazing-type treatment occurs more frequently than officially filed charges would imply...many of the traditional elements of the fourth class systems are subject to potential abuse by upper-class students. (GAO, 1992 p.2)

The hazing issue is further aggravated at military schools and the service academies by the extent of publicity that it receives through the news media. Some

believe our nation's service academies are at an even greater risk for promulgating this perception of military barbarism. According to John Miller of the National Review,

The service academies experience closer scrutiny than any other undergraduate institution in America partly because they fall under the jurisdiction of Congress, but also because each is near a major media market full of aggressive reporters... An allegation of sexual harassment at a service academy will earn a hundred times more attention than proof of the same thing else where. (pg.25)

So many recent examples of hazing are documented that it is difficult to describe the depth of the problem facing institutions that are tasked with developing our future military leaders. The stakes are high at service academies in regards to hazing and like behaviors. Midshipmen and Cadets participating in, or administering, cruel or inhumane initiation rituals could face dismissal, as well as, bring discredit to their institutions. With all of this at stake, however; hazing and ritualistic initiation continue, seemingly unfettered by policy, education, and training.

### **3. Hazing at the USNA**

As early as 1870, Congress “condemned as hazing the assumption of authority on the part of the upperclassmen at the Naval Academy to physically abuse or verbally humiliate under classmen. “Despite congressional condemnation, physical abuse continued in the form of ritual paddling and demeaning practices like the game of Cuckoo Clock” (Burke, 1992 p.17) In the past 134 years since congress condemned hazing at the service academies, multiple examples of hazing and hazing like behaviors have appeared, been abolished, and then reappear. Even a “no touching policy” emplaced at the Naval Academy in regards to freshman indoctrination has not been successful in eradicating hazing during Plebe summer. Upperclassman known as “Flamers” still take delight in humiliating freshman known as “Shit-Screens” (Burke, 1992 p.17).

The General Accounting Office determined that indeed hazing still existed at the Naval Academy in the early 1990's. In fact it was a rash of hazing incidents at the Naval Academy that prompted the Department of Defense to commission GAO to conduct the study. Incidents such as a 19-year old female midshipman being handcuffed to a urinal and then photographed and ridiculed or a fourth class midshipmen who was forced to

stand on a chair in the dining hall bend over and squeal like a pig are examples of hazing behaviors which forced the issue (GAO, 1992 p. 18; Moniz, 1997, p.1). What GAO determined during its examination of the service academies goes beyond the existence of hazing. They uncovered information and formulated ideas that they believed if effectively implemented had the potential to decrease hazing all together.

GAO determined that though the Academy had placed a great deal of emphasis on curtailing hazing they had failed to clearly articulate the message to the members of the Brigade. What was acceptable and unacceptable fourth class development behaviors remained unclear to three-quarters of the midshipmen surveyed. Furthermore, GAO determined that if any anti-hazing strategy hoped to be effective it would have to gain the support of the Brigade. Midshipmen and cadets hold very traditional beliefs concerning how the 4<sup>th</sup> class system should be run and are potentially resistant to change. In order for anti-hazing strategies to achieve success support had to be gained from the bottom up (GAO, 1992 p.77). What GAO was suggesting is essentially a change or modification in the culture of the Academy, not an easy task. Finally, the Academy would have to ensure that midshipmen viewed the 4<sup>th</sup> Class Development System as a tool for development, not a process for weeding out what 1<sup>st</sup> Class midshipmen viewed as substandard performers. Screening out low performers is not an appropriate role for midshipmen in the development process.

### **C. IMPACTS OF HAZING ON HEALTH AND PERFORMANCE**

Arguments have been made that many of the behaviors that have been labeled as hazing by persons outside of the practicing culture are benign ways of blowing off steam and welcoming new members into the organization or subgroup. According to the General Accounting Office (GAO), in their 1992 study, these persons would be failing to recognize the potentially devastating consequences victims of abusive hazing behaviors are at risk for. Furthermore, GAO mentions the potential harmful effect that hazing can have on the physical and psychological well-being of midshipmen and cadets. The negative impacts that may result from hazing range from hospitalization, psychological trauma and even death. GAO's study concluded that students exposed to high degrees of hazing were also at risk of suffering high levels of psychological and physical stress.

Moreover, midshipmen and cadets experiencing high levels of stress were more likely to experience decreased academic and military performance and poorer physical and psychological health than those not exposed. In an organization such as the United States Naval Academy, where performance is not only encouraged, but expected, the effects of hazing can be devastating.

### **1. Impact of Hazing on Academic and Military Performance**

The arguments that have been made by supporters of hazing and its use in the military environment have been centered on improved performance and the bonding ability of shared hardship. Recall the discussion on hazing in the military, where persons subjected to hazing believed their experiences strengthened their personal resolve to accomplish difficult tasks and endure hard times. If this is an accurate presumption of how hazing improves one's ability to survive and thrive in taxing situations then a rational assumption would be that academic and military performance would benefit from this type of treatment. Contrary evidence was identified in the literature.

#### ***a. The Effects of Hazing on Academic Performance***

During the General Accounting Office (GAO) study of hazing at the service academies it was determined that the fourth class indoctrination system consumed so much of the Plebes' time that academic performance suffered as a result. As one plebe stated "we usually have to blow off homework so that we can shine shoes, etc. It is better to get a D-than to be hazed by upperclassmen." (GAO, 1992 p.59) Furthermore, findings also demonstrated that high-stress academy environments can hamper high-aptitude students from applying their intellectual abilities. "A study of two groups of US Coast Guard Academy cadets showed that stress generated by interactions with cadet and officer superiors reduced the relationship between academic ability (as measured by SAT scores) and grade point average" (GAO, 1992 p. 59). These findings are supported by the Alfred University study on high school hazing. The Alfred University study determined that 21 percent of the students polled experienced a negative impact on academic performance due to the effects of hazing. Other negative consequences resulting from hazing potentially hindered student's academic performance indirectly such as missing school or being convicted of a crime.

The data uncovered during the Alfred University Study is extremely telling. The negative consequences faced by victims of abusive hazing in high school have the potential to not only ruin academic performance but destroy self-esteem and interpersonal relationships as well. Victims of hazing were more likely to engage in deviant behaviors such as fighting (24 percent), hurting someone else (20 percent), or committing a crime (16 percent). Furthermore, victims were more likely to have interpersonal relationship and emotional difficulties such as fighting with parents (22 percent), alienation of friends (11 percent), and increased likelihood of suicide (15 percent). All of these consequences distract from the educational experience resulting in an increased potential for substandard academic and scholastic performance.

**Table 2. Negative Consequences of Hazing**

Percent of Students Hazed Who Suffered Negative Consequences			
Consequences	%	Consequences	%
Got into a fight	24	Committed a crime	16
Was injured	23	Considered suicide	15
Fought with my parents	22	Got sick	12
Did poorly in school work	21	Quit going out with friends	11
Missed school, practice, work, meeting	19	Got in trouble with police	10
Hurt someone else	20	Was convicted of a crime	4
Had difficulty eating, sleeping, concentrating	18	<b>One or more negative consequence</b>	<b>71</b>

Initiation Rites in American High Schools: A National Survey, Alfred University, 2000

***b. The Effects of Hazing on Military Performance***

Military performance at the United States Naval Academy is measured much like academic performance. Midshipmen are evaluated academically with an Academic Quality Performance Ranking (AQPR) which is similar to the Grade Point Average awarded to other university students. Military performance is quantified with the Military Quality Performance Ranking (MPQR). Both academic and military performances are set to a 4-point scale and used to calculate the cumulative grade point average for a given semester. With similar grading schemes, outcomes which negatively affect academic performance can be surmised to affect military performance in a similar fashion.

GAO further determined that exposure to hazing had the potential to increase attrition among midshipmen and cadets. Several studies have identified a relationship between hazing-type treatment and attrition.

In the early 1970's, an Air Force Academy committee responsible for reviewing the fourth class system concluded from its study of exit interviews that 25 percent of the 86 members of the class of 1972 who left before the end of the first semester left because of the fourth class system. In an extensive review of attrition of academy cadets and midshipmen in the mid-1970s we found that many of the factors contributing to attrition were part of the fourth class system. (GAO, 1992 p. 61)

When midshipmen attrite due to reasons such as an inability to cope with the stress of hazing and other forms of mistreatment the Academy loses significantly. The monetary concern is only a small part of the issue. Military performance is truly the much greater loss. Midshipmen who leave the Academy prior to graduation have relinquished an opportunity to perform as officers in the military; their ability to perform militarily is never realized. Furthermore, by leaving prior to graduation the total number of qualified officers provided to the fleet from the Academy for that year group has been reduced. This is the crux of the problem. By subjecting a midshipman to abusive hazing behaviors to the point of attrition we have cost the operating forces an otherwise qualified officer.

## **2. The Impact of Hazing on Physical and Psychological Health**

Trauma of any sort can potentially lead to lasting physical and psychological health problems. Abusive hazing behaviors, not unlike rape or sexual harassment, can be examined as a type of trauma with both physical and psychological consequences. Certainly a range of consequences exist. The continuum of consequences can range from superficial to death and any where in between. Recognizing that physical and psychological consequences can occur however, is often overlooked by groups who are actively engaged in the behaviors.

### ***a. The Effects of Hazing on Physical Health***

Hazing will not always result in physical injury. In many organizations physical abuse during the initiation of newcomers is not a culturally acceptable practice, so injuries are rare. When physical abuse does not align to cultural values or norms the more serious injuries are often avoided. In this sense it appears that cultural acceptance

weighs more heavily than official prohibition of abuse. In organizations that permit even a small degree physical abuse to exist, however; the potential for injury significantly increases. Injuries as a result of hazing range in severity from superficial trauma to death. Hazing related injuries cannot always be easily identified due to the reluctance of the injured person to admit the origin of their injuries. Doctor Michelle Finkel's compilation of hazing related injuries is extremely telling in regards to the consequences of participation in abusive hazing behaviors.

**Table 3. Summary List of Hazing Practices, Mechanisms, and Injuries**

<b>Hazing Practices</b>	<b>Mechanism</b>	<b>Injuries</b>
<b>Alcohol, binge drinking</b>	Acute alcohol intoxication	Aspiration, alcoholic coma, hematemesis, injuries associated with concomitant hazing practices
<b>Beating/paddling/whipping/striking</b>	Blunt trauma	Intra-cranial, -thoracic, abdominal; extremity
<b>Blood-pinning</b>	Penetrating trauma to chest	Superficial chest trauma
<b>Branding/ tattooing/ cigarette burning, burning</b>	Burns	1st-, 2nd-, 3rd-degree burns; oropharyngeal and esophageal burns
<b>Calisthenics</b>	Heat related & Cardiac	Syncope, vomiting, end-organ damage, including seizure and coma. Ischemia in patients with underlying heart disease
<b>Confinement in a restricted area</b>	Heat related & hypoxia	Syncope, vomiting, end-organ damage, Multi-organ system failure, hypoxic brain damage
<b>Consumption of nonfood substances</b>	Toxicity to GI tract	GI distress
<b>Drowning, near-drowning</b>	Hypoxia	Multi-organ system failure, hypoxic brain damage
<b>Falls</b>	Blunt trauma	Spinal cord/c-spine; intra-cranial, -thoracic, -abdominal; extremity
<b>Immersion in noxious substances</b>	Heat or cold related	Burns, cold-exposure, dermatitis
<b>Psychological abuse</b>	verbal humiliation, coercion into performing demeaning acts, forced sleep deprivation	Depression, post-traumatic stress, poor self-esteem
<b>Sexual assaults</b>	Blunt trauma to mouth, vagina, anus	Anal, oral, vaginal trauma; HIV, hepatitis C and other STDs; unwanted pregnancy

American Journal of Emergency Medicine, Dr. Michelle Finkel, 2004

***b. The Effects of Hazing on Psychological Health***

The General Accounting Office (1992) found that hazing experiences were linked to higher levels of physical and psychological stress. Psychological stress



can be expected among university students who are undergoing several life changes in rapid succession. For many, venturing out of their childhood home, rigorous academic schedules, and forming new friendships and social identities are all reasons for psychological stress. GAO did not intend to imply that hazing was the only stressor impacting midshipmen either. Their point was that hazing-type treatment is an inappropriate and unrealistic form of stress. Moreover the stress imposed on midshipmen by means of hazing bears little relationship to the types of stress they will encounter as junior officers in the operating forces. High stress can be expected, inappropriate stress however should not be tolerated. Furthermore, hazing has been shown to create levels of psychological stress that have the potential to negatively affect both physical and psychological well-being. Gary Wamsley, in an article entitled *Contrasting Institutions of Air Force Socialization: Happenstance or Bellwether*, examined the affect of hazing on flight school students undergoing initial training. “Those with low capacities for anxiety, inability to control or suppress anger, or those with latent neurosis or psychosis literally “cracked” under the stress. Attempted suicides and psychiatric referrals were not uncommon” (p. 406). In the most extreme cases high levels of psychological stress can lead to dire consequences.

This study measured midshipmen stress levels with a Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) scale. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder is most commonly associated with soldiers who were exposed to “imminent threat of death and injury, witness the harm to friends and enemy soldiers and participate in killing” (Neria & Koenen, 2002 p.227). This is not to say that combat veterans are the only category of individuals at risk for PTSD. The use of PTSD scales to measure traumatic experiences, such as sexual and physical assault, are fairly common. Some types of trauma associated with PTSD include experiencing combat; kidnapping; natural disasters (e.g., fire, tornado, earthquake); catastrophic accidents (e.g., auto, airplane, mining); violent sexual or physical assault; witnessing traumatic events (e.g., seeing another person violently killed or injured, unexpectedly seeing a dead body or body parts).

The most common symptomatology of PTSD is the negative psychological impact incurred due to exposure to trauma. Persons subjected to traumatic experiences have been shown to exhibit signs of psychological distress to include intrusions (e.g.,

dissociative states, flashbacks, intrusive emotions and memories, nightmares and night terrors); hyperarousal (e.g., exaggerated startle reaction, explosive outbursts, extreme vigilance, irritability, panic symptoms, sleep disturbance) and avoidance (avoiding emotions, relationships, responsibility for others and avoiding situations that are reminiscent of the traumatic event) (National Center for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, 2005)

What is often overlooked in regards to PTSD is the affect that high levels of stress have on physical health. PTSD is associated with more than psychological health. Research has shown a correlation between PTSD and physical health as well. Neria and Koenen (2002) found that PTSD was the main predictor of physical health almost two decades after the war.

Stress is an unavoidable aspect of everyday life. It would be impossible to uphold the high standards of any institution of higher learning in a completely stress free environment. Furthermore no-one is advocating for a stress free environment. What GAO determined is that high levels of stress resulting from hazing are detrimental to the mission of the Academy and the overall physical and psychological well-being of the young men and women of the Brigade. Enough stress exists in their lives without adding artificial and meaningless stress on top of what they are all ready experiencing. For artificial stress to be beneficial that stress should mirror the types of events that they will encounter as officers.

#### **D. USNA FOURTH CLASS DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM**

The Fourth Class Development System provided the setting from which GAO conducted their study of hazing at the service academies. The original GAO questionnaire was directed at behaviors which occurred during the respondent's fourth class year to include Plebe Summer. Plebe Summer is the indoctrination phase of the fourth class indoctrination system occurring prior to the start of the academic year. Each of the academies studied conducted a similar indoctrination program aimed at training incoming freshman on academy culture and military customs and courtesies. Likewise,

each of the academies relied upon upper class cadets or midshipmen to shoulder the majority of the responsibility for training the incoming class.

A key component of each academy's fourth class system involves a clear differentiation between the fourth class and the upper classes. In these systems, the upper classes take on a major responsibility for training and indoctrinating the fourth class cadets and midshipmen. It is within this capacity that some upperclassmen have sometimes overstepped the intended boundary between legitimate fourth class indoctrination and hazing (GAO, 1992 p.11)

Studying the development system in regards to hazing is a logical place to begin. The literature has provided several themes that are relevant to the fourth class indoctrination system and provide helpful insight as to why these behaviors exist and why they are so difficult to eradicate. The relevant themes are: Hazing is used as a way of recognizing the transition from one social status to the next, persons will willingly subject themselves to questionable practices for the sake of acceptance, persons are often reluctant to report being hazed, hazing has the potential to escalate out of control and result in negative if not deadly consequences, finally, midshipmen undergoing the fourth class indoctrination system are more likely to experience hazing behaviors due to their junior status. The purpose of this segment is to develop an understanding of how the Fourth Class Indoctrination System functions and what goals the system is trying to achieve.

### **1. Purpose of the Fourth Class Development System**

The end state of the development system is to successfully transition incoming midshipmen from civilian life and enlisted service to the demands and requirements of the Fourth Class Regiment. Moreover, the aim is to develop a fourth class midshipman who is trained in basic military skills and is prepared to assume a position within the Brigade. This development is accomplished in a number of ways but underlying the process is an emphasis on human factors of fatigue and emotional and physical crisis. Cadre, or detailers, assigned to assist in the transition oversee training which is designed to be physically challenging while fostering a sense of competition, leadership, teamwork and character development.

***a. Goals of Plebe Summer and the Fourth Class Development System***

Plebe Summer is designed to compliment the four-year professional development curriculum at the United States Naval Academy. It is the first step in developing officers who will eventually serve in the Navy and Marine Corps. With that goal in mind, the indoctrination system aligns to the Academy's goals of producing graduates who are:

- Prepared to lead in combat.
- Are courageous leaders who take responsibility for their personal and professional decisions and actions.
- Officers that are role models of ethical behavior and moral conduct.
- Exemplars of academic, technical, and tactical competence.
- Individuals with a passion and commitment to life long learning and physical fitness.
- Highly effective communicators.
- Leaders who recognize and value individual excellence regardless of gender or cultural and ethnic background.
- Able to understand and integrate geopolitical complexities in the decision making across the spectrum of military operations.
- Patriots who epitomize the rich heritage, honor, and traditions of the Navy and Marine Corps. (COMDTMIDNINST 3120.1)

The Fourth Class Year is a fundamental element in the professional education of midshipmen to prepare them for service as officers in the Navy or Marine Corps. The indoctrination system is not however designed to be an initiation into the service. Training cadre (detailers) are not trained to be recruit drill instructors and do not possess the requisite skills to conduct themselves as such. Training should be rigorous and demanding, both physically and mentally, but should never border on harassment in the name of military discipline. (COMDTMIDNINST 3120.1)

***b. Objectives of the Fourth Class Development System***

The scope of Plebe training encompasses progressive and demanding training designed to prepare fourth class midshipmen for the responsibilities they will face while members of the Brigade. The scope is fairly clear. Fourth class midshipmen

should be competent in drill, physically fit, and practice traits that distinguish them as midshipmen of the United States Naval Academy. The Objectives of Plebe Summer are:

- Transition from civilian or enlisted to officer candidate status.
- Indoctrinate and train midshipmen in proper military discipline, military courtesies, requirements and traits of special trust and confidence, teamwork, Navy core values, and personal accountability.
- Provide basic training in seamanship, marksmanship, military drill, watch standing, and customs and traditions of naval service.
- Instill the importance of physical training and well being in order to meet the highest standards of readiness.
- Achieve specific objectives for each training event.

Plebes, or 4<sup>th</sup> class midshipmen, are not the only members of the Brigade expected to reach objectives while involved with the indoctrination system. First class midshipmen who act as training cadre have their own set of objectives within the system. Objectives for training cadre include:

- Enhancing the leadership development of the First Class Midshipmen. Through proper example and interpersonal skills, midshipmen will develop:
  - Concern, respect, and interest in the development of their Plebes.
  - Techniques of effective leadership, instruction, and counseling that enhance professionalism while at the Naval Academy and throughout a naval career.
  - A sense of accomplishment gained through an active role in the development of the Plebes.

The indoctrination system is designed to create a solid base from which Plebes can develop and grow into upper class midshipmen and eventually military officers. As Plebes they learn how to be a follower while developing the bedrock traits of a military professional. The system benefits upper class by allowing them to take responsibility for the indoctrination and training of the newest members of the Brigade.

## **2. Phases of the Fourth Class Development System**

The Fourth Class Development System is divided into two main phases. Phase One is Plebe Summer which is considered the indoctrination phase. Phase Two, the Fourth Class Academic Year, focuses on training and education.

Plebe Summer is broken into a couple of smaller phases. The first phase of Plebe Summer is the Forming Phase which begins on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July with the swearing in of the Plebe class. The Forming Phase last until training day four. During the forming phase administrative matters are taken care of including room set up and gear issue. The focus is on basic military instruction, physical training, and initial academic placement exams. Secondary objectives of the forming phase include: a concentrated basic military indoctrination, instilling discipline, developing teamwork, and promoting a good sense of naval heritage. This is considered the foundation-building phase, targeted at imparting a base-level of knowledge and a military spirit. (COMDTMIDNINST 3120.1) The second portion of Plebe Summer is the training phase. The training phase begins around training day five and lasts until the return of the Brigade from summer training and leave around the middle of August. The main objective of this phase is the continued progressive development of the Plebes. This is accomplished through demanding training and follow-up to ensure that the Plebes meet the personal and professional standards expected of their fellow midshipmen as members of the Brigade. (COMDTMIDNINST 3120.1)

Upon the return of the Brigade from summer training and leave the Plebes transition into the academic year. The beginning of the academic year signals many changes for the Plebe Class. To begin with the companies that they were assigned during the summer are disbanded and the Plebes are sent to the companies that they will live and work with for the next several years. Instead of being in platoons and companies made up entirely of Plebes and cadre; they now live and work with all four classes of midshipmen. The persons that they had grown accustomed to disappear and a new set of midshipmen and officers take their place. The second significant change is the added stress of performing in an academic setting. Up to this point the focus of training had been entirely on military and Academy related subjects. With the onset of the Academic year the Plebes are now inundated with a rigorous academic schedule. The rigors of academic life are compounded by the continued education on military subjects that characterize Plebe year.

### **3. Staff Responsibilities and Duties**

Plebe summer is run by a mix of midshipmen and active duty officers/senior enlisted from throughout the Brigade and Commandant's staff. The organization of

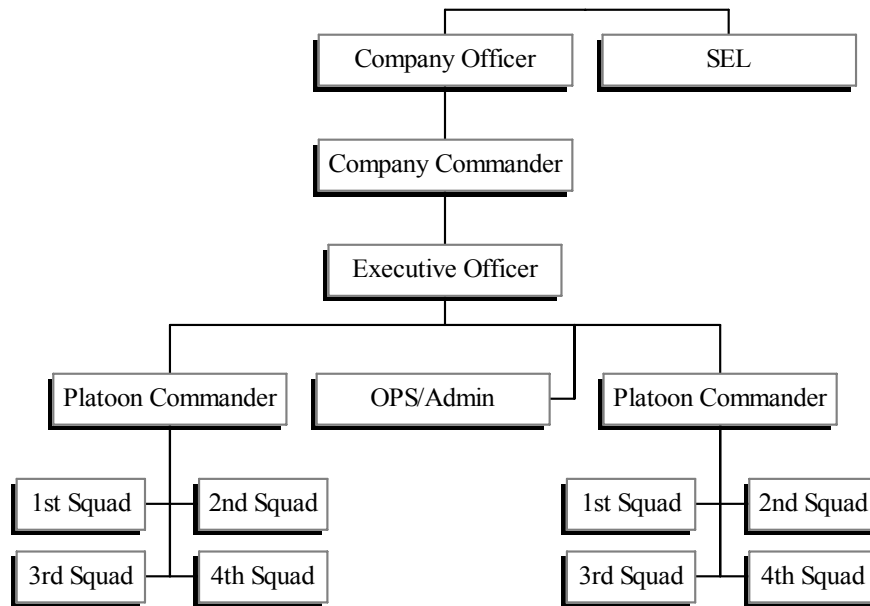
Plebe Summer is accomplished through a Regimental structure with active duty officers and midshipmen working side-by-side to accomplish the Commandant's goals. Midshipmen selected to perform as cadre for Plebe Summer are assigned leadership billets ranging from Regimental Commander to Squad Leader and anywhere in between. All midshipmen chosen for cadre duty receive training on the Commandant's instruction for the conduct of Plebe Summer. Multiple training events beginning in the spring prior to Plebe Summer are used to ensure the readiness and effectiveness of the Plebe Summer Cadre and active duty staff. The upper echelons of the midshipman chain of command during Plebe Summer are mostly concerned with the administrative operation of the program. The Regimental Staff is responsible for the coordination of events, liaison between faculty and staff, and that the objectives of the program are understood, exercised, and accomplished. Plebes will have more one-on-one interaction with upper class midshipmen filling leadership positions at the company level and below.

Company commanders are responsible for the safety, well-being, and efficiency of the Plebe companies. They are supported by a host of subordinate midshipmen. The midshipman executive officer is next in the chain of command and acts as the company commander in his/her absence. One of the main roles of the executive officer is the supervision of the company. He/she is responsible for ensuring safety is a consideration in all events, supervises all facets of the Plebes' training and daily life, and monitors the morale of the company. The company commander is also supported by two platoon commanders. These midshipmen officers are in constant contact with the Plebes and are the first officer within the Plebe chain of command. The duties of the platoon commanders include: supervision of all persons within the platoon to include other cadre members, inspections, maintaining standards of performance and conduct, making recommendations to the company commander and evaluation and counseling of members of his/her platoon.

Other leadership positions within the company structure are squad leaders. Squad leaders are an extremely important part of the Plebe Summer experience. Of all the other midshipmen leadership positions, squad leaders have the most direct impact and the most one-on-one time with the Plebes. Squad leaders are in charge of 12 Plebes. Their responsibility entails every portion of that Plebes life to include personal problems,

physical problems, accountability and training. Squad leaders are assumed to be the most knowledgeable in regards to the individual Plebe and are the first person in that Plebes chain of command. Figure 1 depicts the organizational relationships between entering Plebes and the training Cadre for a typical Midshipman Company.

### COMPANY ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



**Figure 1. Company Organizational Chart**

COMDTMIDNINST 3120.1, 2004

#### **4. Expectations of Plebes**

Becoming a part of the Naval Academy culture requires a serious commitment on the part of the individual seeking admittance. In less than eight weeks Plebes are expected to shed their civilian or enlisted identities and transform into proficient members of the Brigade. This task is not one to be taken lightly and demands an extreme amount of effort from each of the Plebes. In order to become an accepted part of the Brigade there are certain skills, attitudes, and military abilities that each of the Plebes must become proficient or knowledgeable in.

At the base of this transformation are a set of rules which are conveyed to the Plebes by their company commander directly following their induction into the Academy. The company commander is mandated to discuss the following topics: 1. definition of a midshipman, 2. expectations, 3. respect for human dignity, and 4. points of contact for



violating personal rights. These topics are covered in a speech prior to the introduction of the Plebes' training cadre. Furthermore, Plebes are instructed on the goals of the training cadre. The primary goal is the preparation of the Plebes to fulfill their role within the Brigade as 4<sup>th</sup> class midshipmen.

The introductory speech by the company commander is conveyed in a military tone which espouses the virtues of military discipline, chain of command and customs and courtesies. Guidance is also provided regarding how Plebes will be treated by the training cadre, with an emphasis on dignity and compassion. The following quote from the Commandant's Instruction on the conduct of Plebe Summer illustrates what is expected of each Plebe. In turn the quote also illustrates the type of treatment that Plebes can expect from those charged with leading them.

MY NAME IS MIDSHIPMAN FIRST CLASS \_\_\_\_\_. I AM YOUR COMPANY COMMANDER. ALONG WITH MIDSHIPMEN FIRST CLASS \_\_\_\_\_, OUR MISSION IS TO TRAIN EACH ONE OF YOU TO BECOME A MIDSHIPMAN AT THE UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY. A MIDSHIPMAN IS CHARACTERIZED AS ONE WHO POSSESSES THE HIGHEST IN MILITARY VIRTUES. HE/SHE OBEYS ORDERS, RESPECTS HIS/HER SENIORS, AND STRIVES CONSTANTLY TO BE THE BEST IN EVERYTHING HE/SHE DOES. DISCIPLINE, SPIRIT AND MORAL INTEGRITY ARE THE HALLMARKS OF A MIDSHIPMAN AND THESE QUALITIES ARE THE GOALS OF YOUR TRAINING HERE. EVERY PLEBE HERE CAN BECOME A MIDSHIPMAN IF THEY CAN DEVELOP SELF-DISCIPLINE, SPIRIT AND MORAL INTEGRITY. WE WILL PROVIDE EVERY EFFORT TO TRAIN YOU, EVEN AFTER SOME OF YOU HAVE GIVEN UP ON YOURSELVES. STARTING NOW, YOU WILL TREAT ME AND ALL OTHER MIDSHIPMEN AND OFFICERS WITH THE HIGHEST RESPECT AND YOU WILL OBEY ALL ORDERS INSTANTLY AND WITHOUT QUESTION. WE HAVE EARNED OUR PLACE AS MIDSHIPMEN AND WILL EXPECT NOTHING LESS THAN THAT FROM YOU. I WILL TREAT YOU JUST AS I DO MY FELLOW MIDSHIPMEN, WITH FIRMNESS, FAIRNESS, DIGNITY AND COMPASSION. AS SUCH, I AM NOT GOING TO THREATEN YOU WITH PHYSICAL HARM, ABUSE YOU, HARASS YOU, NOR WILL I TOLERATE SUCH BEHAVIOR FROM ANYONE ELSE, MIDSHIPMAN OR PLEBE. IF ANYONE SHOULD ABUSE OR MISTREAT YOU, I WILL EXPECT YOU TO REPORT SUCH INCIDENTS TO ME. FURTHER, IF YOU BELIEVE THAT I HAVE MISTREATED YOU, I EXPECT YOU TO REPORT IT TO THE COMPANY OFFICER, \_\_\_\_\_ OR SENIOR ENLISTED

LEADER \_\_\_\_\_. MY SQUAD LEADERS, PLATOON COMMANDERS AND I WILL BE WITH YOU EVERY DAY, EVERYWHERE YOU GO. I HAVE TOLD YOU WHAT MY STAFF AND I WILL DO. FOR YOUR PART, WE WILL EXPECT YOU TO GIVE 100 PERCENT OF YOURSELF AT ALL TIMES. NOW THIS IS SPECIFICALLY WHAT WE EXPECT YOU TO DO:

YOU MUST DO EVERYTHING YOU ARE TOLD TO DO, QUICKLY AND WILLINGLY.

YOU WILL TREAT ALL OFFICERS, ENLISTED, MIDSHIPMEN, AND PLEBES WITH COURTESY AND RESPECT.

YOU MUST BE COMPLETELY HONEST IN EVERYTHING YOU DO. A MIDSHIPMAN NEVER LIES, CHEATS, OR COMPROMISES HIS/HER INTEGRITY.

YOU MUST RESPECT THE RIGHTS AND PROPERTY OF ALL OTHER PERSONS. A MIDSHIPMAN NEVER STEALS.

YOU MUST BE PROUD OF YOURSELF AND THE UNIFORM YOU WEAR.

YOU MUST TRY YOUR BEST TO LEARN THE THINGS YOU WILL BE TAUGHT. EVERYTHING WE TEACH YOU IS IMPORTANT AND MUST BE REMEMBERED.

YOU MUST WORK HARD TO STRENGTHEN YOUR BODY.

ABOVE ALL ELSE, YOU MUST NEVER QUIT OR GIVE UP. WE OFFER YOU THE CHALLENGE OF PLEBE TRAINING - THE OPPORTUNITY TO EARN THE RIGHT TO BE A MIDSHIPMAN AT THE UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY. (COMDTMIDNINST 3120.1)

The quote is taken directly from a speech that is commonly used by midshipmen company commanders upon initial pick-up of their Plebes. The speech serves two purposes. The first purpose is to spell out in simplest terms what is expected of each Plebe. The second purpose is to inform each Plebe what is expected of their training cadre. The emphasis on human dignity and compassion is a large portion of what is being conveyed. Moreover, abuse, physical violence, and harassment are explicitly mentioned as behaviors that are not to be tolerated or endorsed.

These are the expectations that signal the beginning of the Plebe journey. As training progresses other expectations that are more specific in nature are introduced to the Plebe class. Examples of these expectations involve items such as: double timing (chopping) between events at all times, How to eat, how to address seniors, knowledge that must be memorized and recited on demand (Plebe Rates). The base set of expectations outlined in the company commander's speech however, are the guiding principles of how midshipmen are expected to conduct themselves.

#### **5. Policies on the Treatment of Fourth Class Midshipmen**

A significant disparity in power exists between Plebes and upper class midshipmen. This disparity in power can potentially lead to abuses such as hazing. The Academy cognizant of the potential for abuse has created policies within their operating procedures to address such problems. Within the Plebe Summer Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) attempts are made to clarify what is and what is not acceptable behavior. According to the commandant's instruction hazing is considered,

Any conduct whereby one military member, regardless of service or rank, causes another military member, regardless of service or rank, to suffer or be exposed to an activity, which is cruel, abusive, humiliating, or oppressive. Hazing includes, but is not limited to, any form of initiation or congratulatory act that involves physically striking another to inflict pain, piercing another's skin in any manner, verbally berating another, encouraging another to excessively consume alcohol or other liquids, or encouraging another to engage in illegal, harmful, demeaning or dangerous acts. Coercing or soliciting another to participate in any such activity is also considered hazing. Hazing need not involve physical contact between or among military members; it can be verbal or psychological in nature. Failure to ensure the safety and well-being of those entrusted to your care is a leadership failure. (COMDTMIDNINST 3120.1)

The definition provided within the instruction is extremely lengthy and attempts to address every conceivable facet of hazing. The definition identifies physical, verbal, and psychological abuse as hazing and places a degree of responsibility on the leadership chain of command. Hazing in this environment, however; is very difficult to operationalize by a single definition. Much like military organizations tasked with initial training, a degree of artificial stress is generated for the purposes of indoctrinating the incoming class. The sanctioned use of artificial stress is a slippery slope separating

acceptable and unacceptable behaviors and practices. In 1992 when GAO surveyed the Brigade of Midshipmen they included on their list of hazing behaviors several practices that were, and are still, condoned by the Academy. GAO considered behaviors such as “Bracing Up” (midshipman tucks his/her chin tightly to their neck while keeping their head in an upright position), Uniform races (plebes are ordered to change uniforms rapidly for inspection), and having to do multiple sets of exercises as hazing. The Academy uses all three of these practices and mentions them specifically in the training SOP for Plebe Summer. A difference in perception on these behaviors determines whether they are labeled hazing or training. Certainly both GAO and the Academy could agree that excess in any of these behaviors could be labeled as hazing.

The Academy has taken several steps to prevent these behaviors from falling prey to excess. Bracing up is only allowed in certain areas and at certain times. Physically strenuous braces and creative braces are strictly prohibited. Uniform races, used to instruct Plebes in familiarity with uniforms, time management, and attention to detail are tightly controlled and may only be conducted with the approval of the midshipman company commander. Plebes may be made to conduct multiple sets of exercises for consistent poor performance, but only as a group incentive. Individual Plebes who fail to meet satisfactory standards are dealt with through directive counseling.

Several other policies have been implemented to ensure that Plebes are treated with dignity and respect for example: Physical contact with Plebes is forbidden except for the purposes of correction or safety, profanity is strictly forbidden, Plebes are allowed to eat their entire meal, and the punishment of plebes is strictly supervised by the midshipmen chain of command. The operating procedure for how Plebes will be treated is fairly descriptive and concise. It is obvious that hazing is recognized as a potential issue and attempts are clearly made to address the problem before it manifests itself in training. This approach is very similar to the approach taken in recruit training. Plebes are afforded the basic human rights of dignity and respect, violations of these rights are considered unlawful and are dealt with accordingly.

## **E. CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The Fourth Class Development System exhibits several themes commonly associated with hazing as revealed in the literature. The development system is used as a mechanism to transform Plebes into responsible and capable fourth class midshipmen. Plebes desire acceptance and as a result may willingly participate in behaviors that they would otherwise refuse. Furthermore, the midshipmen subculture is extremely close knit and traditional. These traditions include behaviors and practices that when taken to excess have the potential to be considered hazing. Traditional views also inhibit or discourage midshipmen from reporting abuse as it is considered dishonorable to “Rat on” your fellow shipmates. Further complicating the hazing environment are the similarities shared by the Fourth Class Development System and active military units tasked with initial training. The Academy incorporates a degree of artificial stress during the 4<sup>th</sup> Class Development Program, namely during Plebe Summer, comparable to the stress found in enlisted basic training. This artificial stress taken beyond its intended limits becomes hazing. It is also difficult for those implementing approved stress, such as midshipmen cadre, to differentiate between what is and what is not acceptable. In turn, approved behaviors have the potential to mutate and spiral out of control.

Stating that hazing exists at the Naval Academy is not an accusation, it is simply a matter of fact. Hazing is a pervasive set of behaviors that can be found from sports teams to church quires and just about every where in between. The research demonstrates, however; that when compared to civilian universities, high schools, and even sports teams the types of hazing activities occurring at the Naval Academy are fairly benign and mundane. The pervasiveness of hazing, however; is compounded by the military environment that the Academy functions in. The military training environment uses a degree of hazing to simulate stresses found in the occupation of arms. In turn we expect those who have been hazed, for the sake of training, to be able to differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable behaviors. This is an extremely difficult task for experienced military members, let alone young midshipmen, to accomplish. GAO determined that “one-third of the midshipmen surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed that the distinction between allowable fourth class indoctrination and hazing was not clear to them” (GAO, 1992 p. 90). The fact that midshipmen have not engaged in more

severe forms of hazing even while operating in an environment that at times may be shadowed in ambiguity is testament to the high caliber of young men and women who attend this institution. More can be done, however; to protect and educate the Brigade, thus ensuring that serious hazing incidents are avoided in the future. Why this should be of importance to the Academy is made painfully clear in the literature.

The literature suggests that abusive hazing may lead to physical and psychological trauma. From a physical perspective, persons subjected to abusive hazing experience trauma that can range in severity from superficial bruising to death. Psychologically persons exposed to abusive hazing have a propensity for high-levels of stress. Moreover, those same hazing recipients may exhibit symptoms consistent with PTSD. The psychological and physical consequences of abusive hazing have the potential to destroy an otherwise well-adjusted young adult. Both of these consequences play havoc on what the Academy is attempting to accomplish both academically and militarily. Hazing has been shown to have a negative impact on academic performance, as demonstrated in the Alfred University study on hazing in American high schools. This negative impact is felt on two levels at the Academy. One is obviously the academic performance of midshipmen in a demanding curriculum. The second is military performance which is evaluated similarly to academics. Both are measured on a four point scale and both are used to determine important facets of a midshipman's career potential. The performance driven nature of the Naval Academy can be derailed if excessive and abusive hazing is not addressed, thus hazing becomes a topic of significant institutional interest.

Understanding that hazing exists and that to some degree is an expected result of culture and social norms clarifies why it is such a difficult practice to eradicate. I would propose that eradicating all forms of hazing is not a feasible or even necessary goal. Hazing can be both productive and destructive depending on the context which it is employed. When compared to other institutions of higher learning the Academy does an excellent job of controlling the degree of hazing which exist among members of the Brigade. Several deaths on university campuses throughout the United States have all ready been attributed to hazing this year. Likewise, American high schools have repeatedly made the evening news with reports of brutal hazing rituals among members

of their student bodies. The level of hazing which is occurring currently at the Academy is relatively benign and mundane in comparison. The literature does suggest, however; that even mundane hazing, left unchecked, can potentially lead to disaster.

This thesis examines hazing experiences of USNA midshipmen during the Fourth Class development process. This thesis explores the consequences of hazing and the types of hazing still actively occurring within the institution. Consistent with previous research it is expected that hazing will be negatively linked to academic and military performance. Further, hazing is expected to have a negative impact on both physical and psychological health outcomes. It is expected that the negative effects of hazing on these outcomes will remain even after controlling for the effects of general academic stress. It is also expected that rates of hazing and the frequency of which these behaviors occur will remain consistent with GAO findings from 1992.

### **III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter describes the methodology used in the study. The study was conducted in two phases. Phase I, included a pilot study designed to examine the research questionnaire for general comprehension by a convenience sample of midshipmen. The convenience sample included eight midshipmen, two from each year group (4/c, 3/c, 2/c, and 1/c). The gender make-up of the sample included six males and two females. Ethnicity of the sample included one African American female, one Asian American female, and six Caucasian males. Modifications to the questionnaire were made from suggestions gleaned from the pilot study in regards to comprehension only. Modifications did not affect the validity of the tools used within the questionnaire.

Phase II, the primary study consisted of a questionnaire administered to a stratified random sample of midshipmen. The data captured in the primary study was used to test the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1. It is expected that the frequency of midshipmen hazing experiences will have changed as compared to rates reported by GAO in 1992.

Hypothesis 2. It is expected that exposure to hazing will have a negative impact on academic and military performance.

Hypothesis 3. It is expected that exposure to hazing will have a negative impact on psychological and physical health.

#### **B. PARTICIPANTS**

A random representative sample of 739 participants was included in the study. Participants were members of the Brigade of Midshipmen, classes 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008. Both discrete and continuous variables were used during the research. Descriptive statistics for both discrete and continuous variables are displayed in Tables 4 and 5. With regards to continuous variables the sample population was comprised of midshipmen with the following characteristics. The mean age of participants was 20.7 years with a standard deviation of 1.5. The mean cumulative academic quality performance ranking



(CAQPR) and cumulative military quality performance ranking (CMQPR) were 2.96 and 3.16 respectively. Both CAQPR and CMQPR are measured on a four-point scale. The mean Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) score verbal was 652.7 with a 67.76 standard deviation; mean SAT math was 671.7 with a standard deviation of 65.14.

With regards to continuous variables the sample population was comprised of midshipmen with the following characteristics. The sample was 92 percent male and eight percent female. The ethnic make-up of the sample was comprised of 74 percent Caucasian, seven percent African American, seven percent Asian American, 10 percent Hispanic American, and two percent Native American midshipmen. The year groups represented in the sample included 22.5 percent 1<sup>st</sup> class midshipmen (Class 2005), 22.2 percent 2<sup>nd</sup> class midshipmen (Class 2006), 28.7 percent 3<sup>rd</sup> class midshipmen (Class 2007) and 26.7 percent 4<sup>th</sup> class midshipmen (Class 2008). Other demographic characteristics of the sample included: 36 percent varsity or junior varsity athlete representation; 11 percent of the sample was currently holding a striper billet within the Brigade; and eight percent of the sample had prior enlisted experience. Descriptive Statistics for Continuous Variables

**Table 4. Descriptive Statistics for Continuous Variables**

<b>Statistics</b>	<b>AGE</b>	<b>CAQPR</b>	<b>CMQPR</b>	<b>SAT Math</b>	<b>SAT Verbal</b>
N	739	739	739	739	739
Mean	20.73	2.96	3.16	671.75	652.65
Std. Deviation	1.50	0.56	0.40	65.14	67.76
Range	8.00	3.19	2.20	370	360
Minimum	18	0.81	1.80	430	440
Maximum	26	4.0	4.0	800	800

**Table 5. Descriptive Statistics for Discrete Variables**

<b>Discrete Variables</b>			
<b>Varsity/ Junior Varsity Athletics</b>	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Did not participate	474	64.1	64.1
Participated	265	35.9	100
Total	739	100	
<b>Gender</b>	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	562	76.0	76.0
Female	177	24.0	100
Total	739	100	
<b>Year Group</b>	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
2005	166	22.5	22.5
2006	164	22.2	44.7
2007	212	28.7	73.3
2008	197	26.7	100
Total	739	100	
<b>Prior Enlisted Experience</b>	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	1	0.1	0.1
No	679	91.9	92.0
Yes	59	8.0	100
Total	739	100	
<b>Billet Rank</b>	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	661	89.4	89.4
1st Sergeant	6	0.8	90.3
Lieutenant Commander	6	0.8	91.1
Lieutenant	14	1.9	93.0
Lieutenant Junior Grade	50	6.8	99.7
Sergeant Major	2	0.3	100
Total	739	100	
<b>Ethnicity</b>	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
African-American	48	6.5	6.5
Asian-American	51	6.9	13.4
Caucasian	544	73.6	87.0
Hispanic	75	10.1	97.2
Native American	21	2.8	100
Total	739	100	

**C. MEASURES**

The questionnaire included several measures used to examine midshipmen experiences at the United States Naval Academy. The measures included: background factors, hazing experiences, academic and military performance outcomes, psychological outcomes, and health outcomes.

## **1. Background Factors**

Several variables were selected from the Naval Academy Institutional Research data dictionary for the purpose of capturing demographic information and testing the research hypotheses. The background factors are divided into two subcategories: demographic variables and academic background.

### ***a. Demographic Variables***

The following variables were selected for the purpose of describing the demographic characteristics of the sample population.

(1) Age. Age is represented as a numeric variable. The mean age of respondents was 20.7 years old with a standard deviation of 1.5. The youngest respondent was 18 years old and the oldest respondent was 26 years old.

(2) Gender. Gender identifies whether or not a respondent is male or female. The variable is dichotomous coded 1 for female and 0 for male. The ability to differentiate between male and female participants will allow the researcher to determine if hazing rates differ according to gender.

(3) Ethnicity. The following values comprise the variable ethnic\_c: CA-Caucasian, AA-African American, HA-Hispanic, AA-Asian American/Pacific Islander, and NA-Native American. For the purposes of this research ethnicity was coded as a dichotomous variable with the values of 0 for non-minorities and 1 for minorities. Including ethnicity as a variable is useful in determining if hazing rates vary according to ethnicity.

(4) Prior Service. The Naval Academy has a corps of prior enlisted midshipmen with a range of experience from a few months to several years, refer to Table 2. These prior enlisted midshipmen come from all branches of the armed forces and bring varying degrees of experience to the Brigade. Prior enlisted service was derived from the institutional research data base for midshipmen. Mil-stat-mid indicates the military status of the midshipmen applying to the Naval Academy from the Naval Fleet or Fleet Marine Force (FMF). Midshipmen with prior enlisted experience were coded as (1), and midshipmen without prior enlisted experience were coded as (0). Table

4 represents the total number of prior enlisted midshipmen currently within the Brigade. Prior enlisted representation within the study included 59 midshipmen totaling 8 percent of the sample.

**Table 6. USNA Prior Enlisted Midshipmen**

USNA Year Group	2005	2006	2007	2008
U. S. Navy (prior)	81	104	90	73
U. S. Navy Reserve (prior)	133	63	50	51
U. S. Marine Corps (prior)	21	21	18	10
U. S. Marine Corps Reserve (prior)	0	17	14	7
U. S. Army Reserve (prior)	0	0	0	1
Total Prior Enlisted by Year Group	235	205	172	142

US Naval Academy Intra-net Homepage, [www.usna.edu](http://www.usna.edu), 2005

***b. Academic Background***

Academic background factors included variables describing various academic characteristics including year group, major orientation, varsity athletic status, cumulative academic quality point rating (CAQPR), cumulative military quality point rating (CMPQR), SAT math, SAT verbal, and striper billets. Scores for each of these variables were obtained from the institutional research database for Naval Academy Midshipmen.

(1) Year Group. Year group is represented as a numeric variable labeled grad-year. The values for this variable include 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008. By including year group the researcher is able to distinguish the recollections of events from current fourth class midshipmen (class 2008) to those of first class midshipmen (class 2005), three-years removed from the fourth class indoctrination system. In theory current fourth class midshipmen will be able to provide the most vivid recollections of hazing related events. Furthermore by including class as a variable the researcher is capable of tracking trends over a four-year span.

ii. Varsity Athlete Status

Varsity athletic status is a dichotomous variable indicating whether the individual participated and lettered in one of the varsity sports. Midshipmen who participated and lettered in a varsity/junior varsity sport are coded 1 all others are coded 0.

iii. Cumulative Academic Quality Point Ranking (CAQPR)

Cumulative Academic Quality Point Ranking represents the cumulative academic grade point average for each midshipman. The mean CAQPR for the sample population was 2.96, with a standard deviation of .565.

iv. Cumulative Military Quality Point Ranking (CMPQR)

Cumulative Military Quality Point Ranking represents the cumulative military grade point average for each midshipman. The mean CMQPR for the sample population was 3.16, with a standard deviation of .395.

v. SAT Math

Scholastic Aptitude Test math scores (SAT Math) for each midshipman was obtained from the institutional research database. Actual scores based on the midshipman's academic record were used for analysis. The mean score was 671.7 with a standard deviation of 65.14.

vi. SAT Verbal

Scholastic Aptitude Test verbal scores (SAT Verbal) for each midshipman was obtained from the institutional research database. Actual scores based on the midshipman's academic record were used for analysis. The mean score was 652.7 with a standard deviation of 67.76.

vii. Striper Billet.

Striper Billet indicates whether the respondent has held a leadership position within the Naval Academy Brigade of Midshipmen. The definition of a striper for this study includes: midshipmen holding the rank of midshipmen lieutenant and above for 1<sup>st</sup> class midshipmen, midshipmen sergeant major or first sergeant for second class midshipmen, and all varsity and junior varsity team captains (Norton, 1994 pg 30). Midshipmen holding billets are often the direct link between junior midshipmen and Naval Academy faculty and staff.

## **2. Hazing Experiences**

Midshipmen hazing experiences were measured using a 23-item questionnaire adapted from an earlier study of hazing at the Military Academies (GAO, 1992, p.3). Respondents indicated how often they participated in specified hazing behaviors. Responses are recorded using a five-point frequency response scale, ranging from “never (0) to a couple of times per-month (5). The questionnaire includes the 21 hazing behaviors used during the previous GAO study plus an additional two items associated with contemporary hazing themes.

## **3. Psychological Outcome Measures**

Several measures of psychological outcomes were included to examine the impact of hazing on psychological health. The questionnaire included measures of general satisfaction with the Academy, commitment, self-esteem, psychological distress and a control measure of general stress.

### ***a. General Satisfaction***

Seven items were adapted from the Job Satisfaction scales used in Department of Defense surveys of military personnel (e.g., Bastian, Lancaster & Reyst, 1996) to assess general satisfaction with various dimensions of Naval Academy life. The seven items ask respondents to indicate their satisfaction with peers, supervisors, leadership opportunities, mentorship opportunities, academic, athletic and professional development opportunities, and overall experiences on a five-point response scale ranging from *very satisfied* (1) to *very dissatisfied* (5). Scales scores were computed by reversing and summing across the seven-items with higher scores indicating higher levels of satisfaction.

### ***b. Affective Commitment***

Affective commitment was measured with Meyer and Allen’s affective commitment (AC) subscale (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Meyer, Allen, & Gellatly, 1990). The AC subscale contains six items that measure participants’ affective attachment to the organization (e.g., I would be very happy to remain with this organization for the rest of my career). Items are presented to respondents in Likert format with a five-point response scale ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. Higher AC scores indicate greater levels of affective attachment to the organization.

*c. Self-Esteem*

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (SES; Rosenberg, 1965) was selected to assess participants' global feelings about their self worth. The SES includes 10 items that measure respondents' level of trait self-esteem. The items are presented to respondents in Likert format with four-point response scale ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. A sample item includes "I feel that I have a number of good qualities". The SES is the most widely used measure of trait self-esteem and is considered to be the "gold standard" among researchers in this area (see Blascovich & Tomaka, 1991 for a review).

*d. Psychological Distress*

The Crime-Related Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder scale (CR-PTSD, Saunders, Arata, & Kilpatrick, 1990) was selected to assess participant's levels of psychological distress. The CR-PTSD scale contains 10-items that assess participants' experiences with a variety of symptoms including trouble falling asleep, feelings of hopelessness, and guilt. Respondents are asked to indicate the amount of discomfort they have experienced with these symptoms using a five-point response scale ranging from *none* to *extreme*, with higher scores indicating greater psychological distress. The CR-PTSD scale has strong psychometric properties and is sensitive enough to capture psychological distress associated with milder traumatic events (e.g., hazing).

*e. General Stress*

Nine items were adapted from the Stress in General scale ([SIG]; Smith, Balzer, Ironson, Paul & Hayes, 1992) to control for academic stress. The SIG asks respondents to indicate the extent to which the adjective checklists described stress associated with their academic career (e.g., tense, stressful) using a *yes, no*, response format. Scales scores were computed by summing across the nine-items with higher scores indicating higher levels of academic stress.

**4. Health Outcome Measures**

Several measures of health outcomes were included to examine the impact of hazing on physical health. The questionnaire included measures of physical health status and physical health attitudes.

**a. Physical Health Status**

The 13-item Health Conditions Index (HCI; Brodman, Erdman, Lorge & Wolff, 1949) was selected to assess participants' general health status. The HCI presents respondents with a checklist of health and physical symptoms (e.g., severe headaches, shortness of breath, stomach aches) using a *yes, no, ?*, response format. Respondents indicate whether they have experienced any problems with any of the listed symptoms.

**b. Physical Health Attitudes**

A nine-item subscale from the Retirement Descriptive Index (RDI; Smith et al., 1969) was selected to assess participant's health attitudes. The RDI was selected to assess health attitudes because it has strong psychometric properties and because its adjective format made it ideal for adaptation in the present study. The nine-item measure asks participants to indicate the extent to which a series of adjectives (e.g., excellent, poor) characterize their health using a *yes, no, ?*, response format. Scales scores are computed by summing across the nine-items with higher scores indicating more positive attitudes toward one's health.

**D. PROCEDURES**

A nine-page questionnaire was developed for the purposes of this research. Questionnaires were distributed to a stratified random sample of midshipmen at the United States Naval Academy. The participants were members of the Brigade of Midshipmen classes 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008. The questionnaire was developed in a web-format and distributed electronically via the Naval Academy intra-net system. Participants were selected randomly by Institutional Research and notified via the Naval Academy intra-net system of their selection. Once notified, participants' logged on to the Naval Academy Intra-net and accessed the Institution Research home page which provided the instructions necessary to complete the questionnaire. A confidentiality notice preceded the questionnaire. Participants were informed of the nature of the study, their rights as participants, and that participation was completely voluntary. The questionnaire took 10-15 minutes to complete. Once completed, the questionnaire was submitted directly to the IR data warehouse.



The questionnaire remained active for a nine-day period. The questionnaire included four sections designed to assess participants' perceptions of the institution; participants' health and well-being; hazing experiences; and hazing related training and education. Part I included measures of satisfaction, organizational commitment, and unit cohesion. Part II included measures of commitment, self esteem, psychological distress, general stress, health status, and health attitudes. Part III included measures of hazing experiences of midshipmen, coping with hazing, reporting hazing, actions taken by victims, and reasons for not reporting hazing. Part IV included measures of knowledge and efficacy of hazing policies and organizational training pertaining to hazing.

## **IV. DATA ANALYSIS**

### **A. OVERVIEW OF RESULTS**

This study examines the prevalence of hazing at the United States Naval Academy. Specifically, it compares hazing prevalence rates with those reported in a previous study by the General Accounting Office (1992). In addition, it examines the impact of hazing on academic and military performance; and psychological and physical health outcomes. Based on previous research three hypotheses were proposed:

#### **1. Hypotheses**

Hypothesis 1. It is expected that the prevalence of hazing among USNA midshipmen will have changed as compared to rates reported by GAO in 1992.

Hypothesis 2. It is expected that exposure to hazing will have a negative impact on academic and military performance.

Hypothesis 3. It is expected that exposure to hazing will have a negative impact on psychological and physical health.

#### **2. Analytical Strategy**

To examine these hypotheses a multi-phase strategy was employed. In the first phase, the nature and extent of hazing among USNA midshipmen was examined. Frequency estimates for each of the 23-behaviors included in the survey were computed for the entire sample and by gender, ethnicity and class year. Next, we compared the frequency of hazing related behaviors in the current study with those reported in the study by the General Accounting Office (1992). Computation of figures for these analyses employed a similar approach used in the GAO study (1992). In their study, GAO calculated frequency rates based on responses which occurred “a couple of times per month or more”. In the second phase, we computed Pearson-correlation coefficients between hazing and each of the outcomes included in the study. In the final phase, we performed a series of hierarchical linear regression analyses to examine the unique impact of hazing on each of the outcome variables included in the study.

## **B. PREVALENCE OF HAZING**

### **1. Prevalence of Individual Hazing Behaviors**

Frequency estimates for each of the 23-hazing behaviors included in the survey were computed for the overall sample and by gender, ethnicity and class year. Table 7 shows the frequency distribution for each of the 23 hazing related behaviors for individuals reporting “never” and for those reporting experiencing the behavior at least once.<sup>1</sup> There was substantial variability in the experiences of these behaviors. However, a majority of respondents indicated that they experienced at least one hazing related behavior during the 4<sup>th</sup> class year. The most frequently reported experiences included having an upperclassman scream in face (92%); repeatedly changing uniforms (85%); having to use study hours for 4<sup>th</sup> class duties (84%); having to memorize or recite trivia (81%); using study hours for 4/c preparation (80%); having room or clothing messed up (75%). Bracing for extend periods of time (63%); verbally harassed, insulted or ridiculed (57%); participating in a prank (54%); and sprayed by water/hit with water balloons (51%) were also quite prevalent among the sample population.

A plurality of respondents indicated experiencing doing multiple sets of exercises (42%); being covered with shaving cream, food, etc. (41%); having to act in a demeaning way (39%); having to eat in a degrading way (38%); performing personal services or errands (28%); having to assume an unnatural position (27%); missing a meal reciting 4/c knowledge (26%); and being subjected to physical intimidation (25%).

A minority of individuals reported experiencing exercising during come-arounds (8%); being tied up, taped, or restrained (7%); being forced to consume alcohol (3%); participating in simulated sexual acts (3%); and having their head dunked in a toilet (2%).

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<sup>1</sup> For this analysis we collapsed across response alternatives across each item. Response alternatives included “Never”, “Maybe Once in 12 Months”, “2-3 Times in 12 Months”, “Every other month”, “About Once a Month”, “1-2 Times a Month”.

**Table 7. Prevalence of Individual Hazing Behaviors (2005)**

Hazing Related Behaviors	N	Never	At Least Once
Had an upperclassman scream in face?	720	18%	92%
Had to repeatedly change uniforms?	708	15%	85%
Had study hours preempted by 4th duties?	715	16%	84%
Had to memorize and recite trivia?	716	19%	81%
Had to use study hours for 4/c preparation?	719	20%	80%
Had room or clothing messed up?	724	25%	75%
Had to brace for an extended amount of time?	716	37%	63%
Verbally harassed, insulted, or ridiculed?	721	43%	57%
Had to participate in a prank?	714	46%	54%
Was sprayed by water/hit with water balloons?	723	49%	51%
Had to do multiple sets of exercises?	717	58%	42%
Was covered with shaving cream, food etc.?	723	59%	41%
Had to act in a demeaning way?	716	61%	39%
Had to eat in a degrading way?	711	62%	38%
Had to perform personal services or errands?	718	72%	28%
Had to assume an unnatural position?	713	73%	27%
Missed a meal reciting 4/c knowledge	725	74%	26%
Subjected to physical intimidation?	722	75%	25%
Had to exercise during come-arounds?	723	92%	8%
Was tied up, taped, or restrained?	723	93%	7%
Was forced to consume alcohol?	724	97%	3%
Participated in simulated sexual acts?	725	97%	3%
Had head dunked in toilet?	724	98%	2%

## 2. Prevalence of Hazing by Gender, Ethnicity and Year Group

Examination of the distribution of responses by gender, ethnicity and class year revealed substantial variation in hazing experiences.

### a. Frequency by Gender

Of the 23 behaviors examined; women reported higher incidence rates for 12 behaviors; men reported higher incidence rates for seven behaviors; and both genders experience four behaviors at comparable rates. Table 8 shows the frequency of the 23 behaviors by gender. Examination of gender differences for each of the 23 behaviors revealed significant differences in two behaviors: having one's room or clothing messed up and having one's study hours preempted for 4/C preparation. Women were more likely to report higher frequencies of having their room or clothing messed up as compared with men (80% vs. 73%;  $\chi^2 = 14.923, p < .05$ ). Women were also more likely to report higher frequencies of using study hours for 4/C preparation (88% vs. 77%;  $\chi^2 = 14.002, p < .05$ ). There were no significant differences in the other behaviors by gender.

**Table 8. Frequency of Experiencing Hazing Related Behaviors by Gender**

<b>Hazing Related Behavior</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>At Least Once</b>	<b><math>\chi^2</math></b>
<b>Subjected to physical intimidation?</b>			
Male	79%	21%	9.157
Female	69%	31%	
<b>Missed a meal for 4/c duties?</b>			
Male	78%	22%	9.806
Female	70%	30%	
<b>Had to repeatedly change uniforms?</b>			
Male	17%	83%	3.915
Female	12%	88%	
<b>Had to act in a demeaning way?</b>			
Male	64%	36%	3.092
Female	61%	39%	
<b>Had room or clothing messed up?</b>			
Male	27%	73%	14.923*
Female	20%	80%	
<b>Had to do multiple sets of exercises?</b>			
Male	61%	39%	6.336
Female	53%	47%	
<b>Had to brace for an extended time?</b>			
Male	40%	60%	5.810
Female	31%	69%	
<b>Study hours for 4/c prep?</b>			
Male	23%	77%	14.002*
Female	12%	88%	
<b>Memorize or recite trivia?</b>			
Male	22%	78%	8.333
Female	12%	88%	
<b>Upper class scream in face?</b>			
Male	19%	81%	2.960
Female	17%	83%	
<b>Verbally Harassed, insulted?</b>			
Male	47%	53%	10.039
Female	34%	66%	
<b>Forced to consume alcohol?</b>			
Male	99%	1%	5.873
Female	98%	2%	

**Table 8. Continued**

<b>Hazing Related Behaviors</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>At Least Once</b>	<b><math>\chi^2</math></b>
<b>Covered in shaving cream, food, etc?</b>			
Male	59%	41%	4.523
Female	65%	35%	
<b>Study hours preempted by 4/c duties?</b>			
Male	16%	84%	1.672
Female	18%	82%	
<b>Sprayed by water/hit by water balloons?</b>			
Male	50%	50%	1.265
Female	53%	47%	
<b>Excess exercise during come-arounds?</b>			
Male	94%	6%	3.458
Female	97%	3%	
<b>Had to perform personal services?</b>			
Male	74%	26%	.736
Female	75%	25%	
<b>Had to assume unnatural positions?</b>			
Male	75%	25%	2.672
Female	78%	22%	
<b>Was tied up, taped, or restrained?</b>			
Male	94%	6%	7.342
Female	98%	2%	
<b>Had to participate in a prank?</b>			
Male	48%	52%	8.765
Female	48%	52%	
<b>Participate in simulated sexual act?</b>			
Male	99%	1%	5.065
Female	99%	1%	
<b>Had head dunked in toilet?</b>			
Male	99%	1%	3.458
Female	99%	1%	
<b>Had to eat in a degrading way?</b>			
Male	64%	36%	7.095
Female	64%	36%	

Note. \* $p < .05$

**b. Frequency by Minority Status**

Of the 23 behaviors examined; non-minorities reported higher incidence rates for 14 behaviors; minorities reported higher incidence rates for seven behaviors; and both groups experienced two behaviors at comparable rates. Table 9 shows the frequency of the 23 behaviors by minority group status.<sup>2</sup> Examination of group differences for each of the 23 behaviors revealed significant differences in three behaviors: having to change uniforms repeatedly; bracing for extended periods of time; and having to

memorize or recite trivia. Non-minority group members were more likely to report higher frequencies of having to change their uniforms repeatedly as compared with minority group members (85% vs. 80%;  $\chi^2 = 15.076$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Non-minority group members were also more likely to report higher frequencies of bracing for extended periods of time (64% vs. 56%;  $\chi^2 = 14.228$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Finally, non-minority group members also reported higher frequencies of memorizing or reciting trivia (81% vs. 79%;  $\chi^2 = 14.691$ ,  $p < .05$ ). There were no significant differences in the other behaviors by group status

**Table 9. Hazing Behaviors Commonly Experienced by Midshipmen Group Status**

<b>Hazing Related Behavior</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>At least once</b>	<b><math>\chi^2</math></b>
<b>Study hours preempted by 4/c duties?</b>			
Non-minority	17%	83%	9.024
Minority	18%	82%	
<b>Had to eat in a degrading way?</b>			
Non-minority	63%	37%	6.162
Minority	68%	32%	
<b>Had to repeatedly change uniforms?</b>			
Non-minority	15%	85%	15.076*
Minority	20%	80%	
<b>Had to participate in a prank?</b>			
Non-minority	47%	53%	2.833
Minority	52%	48%	
<b>Had to act in a demeaning way?</b>			
Non-minority	60%	40%	9.547
Minority	71%	29%	
<b>Had to assume unnatural positions?</b>			
Non-minority	73%	27%	7.157
Minority	82%	18%	
<b>Had room or clothing messed up?</b>			
Non-minority	24%	76%	8.297
Minority	30%	70%	
<b>Had to do multiple sets of exercises?</b>			
Non-minority	59%	41%	4.135
Minority	60%	40%	
<b>Had to brace for an extended time?</b>			
Non-minority	36%	64%	14.228*
Minority	44%	56%	
<b>Study hours for 4/c prep?</b>			
Non-minority	19%	81%	6.922
Minority	24%	76%	
<b>Memorize or recite trivia?</b>			
Non-minority	19%	81%	14.691*
Minority	21%	79%	

<sup>2</sup>For this analysis we collapsed across ethnic group categories to compare between minority and majority respondents

**Table 9. Continued**

<b>Hazing Related Behavior</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>At least Once</b>	<b><math>\chi^2</math></b>
<b>Upper class scream in face?</b>			
Non-minority	17%	83%	6.596
Minority	22%	78%	
<b>Verbally Harassed, insulted?</b>			
Non-minority	44%	66%	3.941
Minority	45%	65%	
<b>Sprayed by water/hit by water balloons?</b>			
Non-minority	50%	50%	4.818
Minority	51%	49%	
<b>Covered in shaving cream, food, etc?</b>			
Non-minority	61%	39%	4.328
Minority	59%	41%	
<b>Excess exercise during come-arounds?</b>			
Non-minority	95%	5%	7.243
Minority	93%	7%	
<b>Subjected to physical intimidation?</b>			
Non-minority	77%	23%	2.641
Minority	74%	26%	
<b>Missed a meal for 4/c duties?</b>			
Non-minority	76%	24%	4.701
Minority	74%	26%	
<b>Had to perform personal services?</b>			
Non-minority	75%	25%	9.884
Minority	71%	29%	
<b>Forced to consume alcohol?</b>			
Non-minority	99%	1%	10.144
Minority	97%	3%	
<b>Had head dunked in toilet?</b>			
Non-minority	100%	0%	3.133
Minority	99%	1%	
<b>Participate in simulated sexual act?</b>			
Non-minority	99%	1%	3.086
Minority	99%	1%	
<b>Was tied up, taped, or restrained?</b>			
Non-minority	95%	5%	8.533
Minority	95%	5%	

Note. \* $p < .05$

**c. Frequency by Year Group**

Examination of hazing related behaviors by class year (i.e., Senior [2005], Junior [2006], Sophomore [2007], Freshmen [2008]) showed minor changes in reporting incidence rates by year group. Table 10 shows the frequency distribution of reported incidence rates for each of the 23 behaviors by year group. Examination of year group differences for each of the 23 behaviors revealed significant differences in 6 behaviors: covered in shaving cream, food, etc.; eating in a degrading way; excessive exercise during come-arounds; having to perform personal services; having room or clothing



messed up; and doing multiple sets of exercises. Year group 2005 members were more likely to report higher frequencies of being covered in shaving cream (53%;  $\chi^2 = 36.756$ ,  $p < .05$ ); exercising during come-arounds (13%;  $\chi^2 = 31.492$ ,  $p < .05$ ); performing personal services (29%;  $\chi^2 = 31.554$ ,  $p < .05$ ); and having to do multiple sets of exercises (58%;  $\chi^2 = 65.558$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Year group 2008 members were more likely to have to eat in a degrading way (47%;  $\chi^2 = 27.259$ ,  $p < .05$ ); and have rooms or clothing messed up (85%;  $\chi^2 = 28.555$ ,  $p < .05$ ). There were no significant differences in the remaining behaviors by year group.

**Table 10. Frequency of Hazing Behaviors by Year Group**

BEHAVIORS	Year Group								$\chi^2$
	2005		2006		2007		2008		
	Never	At least once	Never	At least once	Never	At least once	Never	At least once	
Covered in shaving cream?	47%	53%	70%	30%	66%	44%	58%	42%	36.756*
Study hours preempted by 4/c duties?	22%	78%	22%	78%	14%	86%	12%	88%	22.001
Eat in a degrading way?	73%	27%	68%	32%	66%	34%	53%	47%	27.259*
Sprayed by water, hit with balloons?	44%	56%	54%	46%	52%	48%	51%	49%	12.624
Exercise during come-arounds?	87%	13%	95%	5%	97%	3%	97%	3%	31.492*
Subjected to physical intimidation?	73%	27%	81%	19%	75%	25%	77%	23%	8.182
Missed a meal for 4/c duties?	79%	21%	74%	26%	77%	23%	74%	26%	12.549
Personal services or errands?	71%	29%	75%	25%	75%	25%	74%	26%	31.554*
Repeatedly change uniforms?	20%	80%	14%	86%	17%	83%	13%	87%	14.697
Had to participate in a prank?	46%	54%	49%	51%	50%	50%	47%	53%	17.283
Had to act in a demeaning way?	71%	29%	65%	35%	61%	39%	58%	42%	21.223
Assumed an unnatural position?	77%	23%	79%	21%	79%	21%	68%	32%	20.771
Room or clothing messed up?	31%	69%	29%	71%	29%	71%	15%	85%	28.555*
Multiple sets of exercises?	42%	58%	74%	26%	69%	31%	51%	49%	65.558*
Brace for an extended amount of time?	37%	63%	39%	61%	43%	57%	34%	66%	11.530
Study hours for 4/c preparation?	30%	70%	23%	77%	17%	83%	15%	85%	21.041
Memorize and recite trivia?	21%	79%	21%	79%	16%	84%	21%	79%	10.046
Upperclassmen scream in face?	18%	82%	19%	81%	20%	80%	16%	84%	24.231

**Table 10. Continued**

BEHAVIORS	Year Group								$\chi^2$
	2005		2006		2007		2008		
	Never	At least once	Never	At least once	Never	At least once	Never	At least once	
Verbally harassed, insulted, or ridiculed?	53%	47%	50%	50%	41%	59%	35%	65%	17.902
Was forced to consume alcohol?	99%	1%	99%	1%	98%	2%	99%	1%	10.196
Participated in simulated sexual acts?	99%	1%	99%	1%	99%	1%	99%	1%	2.790
Had head dunked in toilet?	100%	0%	100%	0%	99%	1%	100%	0%	4.975
Tied up, taped, or restrained?	91%	9%	97%	3%	96%	4%	96%	4%	13.928

Note. \* $p < .05$ .

### 3. Comparison of Data from GAO (1992)

To further examine these results we compared hazing experiences of the current sample to those reported in the GAO study (1992). GAO computed hazing incidence rates using the same Likert format as the current study with values ranging from “never” to “a couple of times per month or more”. In the GAO report *More Changes Needed to Eliminate Hazing* only data representing frequencies of “a couple of times per month or more” were disclosed. Their findings were displayed in bar-graph format broken down by year group (4/c, 3/c, 2/c, 1/c). An additional response column for company officers was included in the GAO study, which was not pursued, in the current research. Exact percentages for each behavior were not included in the report. Current data representing “A couple of times per month or more” is depicted in Table 11. Data are also presented graphically on Figures 2 and 4 along with the original figures from the GAO study (See Figures 1 and 3).

Data were collapsed across categories to compare with data from the GAO study. Figures 3 and 5 show the distribution of responses for each of the hazing related behaviors obtained in the current study for those reporting having experienced the behavior “1-2 times per month”. Figures 1 and 3 show the results reported by GAO (1992). As can be seen from these figures, there is a substantial decrease in the reporting

of hazing related behaviors. Of the 21-behaviors examined by GAO only two increased in frequency. The two hazing behaviors that increased were having study hours preempted by 4/c duties (37%); and having to repeatedly change uniforms (37%). The remaining 19-behaviors showed a marked decrease in the past 12-years. The behaviors that most interested the researcher are behaviors that are more commonly associated with hazing as demonstrated in the literature. These are the behaviors that appear to have absolutely no value and are designed to demean, humiliate, or otherwise harm the participants.

The General Accounting Office found that midshipmen respondents were being verbally harassed, insulted and ridiculed (>40%); were having upper class scream in their face (>60%); had to assume unnatural positions (>25%); and had to act in a demeaning way (>20%). The percentages represent the minimum reported rate by class for behaviors measured at “a couple of times per month or more”. No class reported less than the above listed percentage for the behaviors. The current study demonstrated a marked decrease in these behaviors. Verbal harassment was reported at (13%), upper class screaming in face (28%); assuming unnatural positions (6%); and acting in a demeaning way (5%) respectively. Moreover, many of the behaviors, which were occurring in the 5-20% range, are nearly non-existent in the current study. Percentages for the current research findings represent the exact rate of which the above listed behaviors occurring “a couple of times per month”.

**Table 11. Hazing Experiences “Couple of Times Per Month” (2005)**

<b>Hazing Behavior</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>1-2 times a month</b>
Was covered with shaving cream, food etc.?	723	<1%
Had study hours preempted by 4th duties?	715	37%
Had to eat in a degrading way?	711	7%
Was sprayed by water/hit with water balloons?	723	1%
Had to exercise during come-arounds?	723	1%
Subjected to physical intimidation?	722	3%
Missed a meal reciting 4/c knowledge	725	4%
Had to perform personal services or errands?	718	4%
Had to repeatedly change uniforms?	708	37%
Had to participate in a prank?	714	4%
Had to act in a demeaning way?	716	5%
Had to assume an unnatural position?	713	6%
Had room or clothing messed up?	724	9%
Had to do multiple sets of exercises?	717	10%
Had to brace for an extended amount of time?	716	15%
Had to use study hours for 4/c preparation?	719	40%
Had to memorize and recite trivia?	716	37%
Had an upperclassman scream in face?	720	28%
Verbally harassed, insulted, or ridiculed?	721	13%
Was forced to consume alcohol?	724	<1%
Participated in simulated sexual acts?	725	0%
Had head dunked in toilet?	724	0%
Was tied up, taped, or restrained?	723	<1%

Figure 2. GAO Findings (1992)

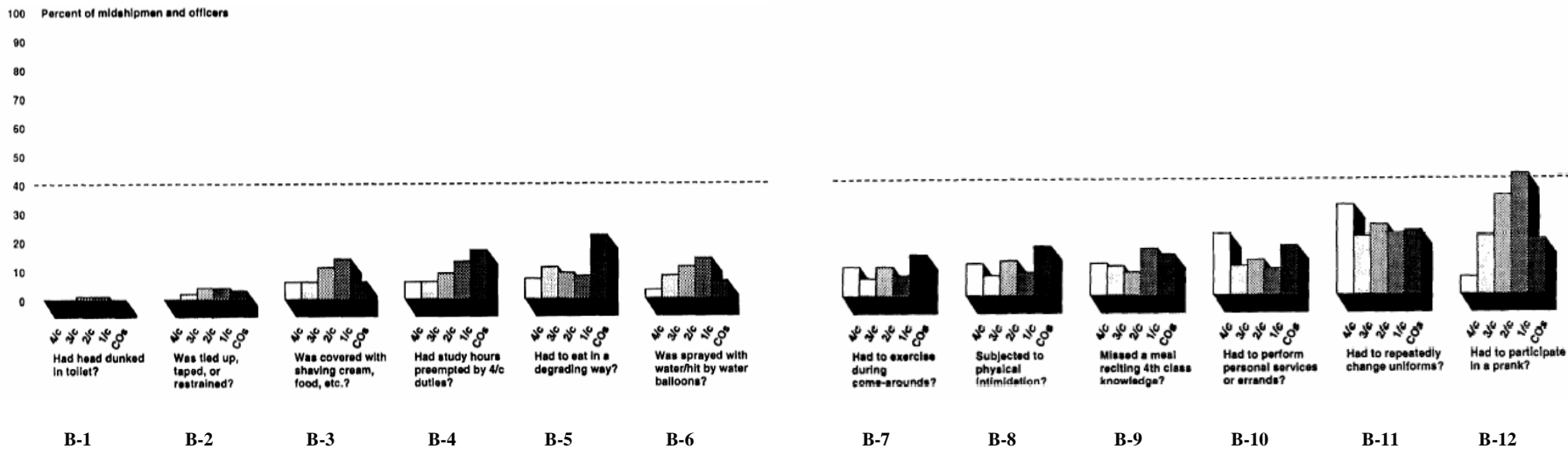


Figure 3. Current Findings (2005)

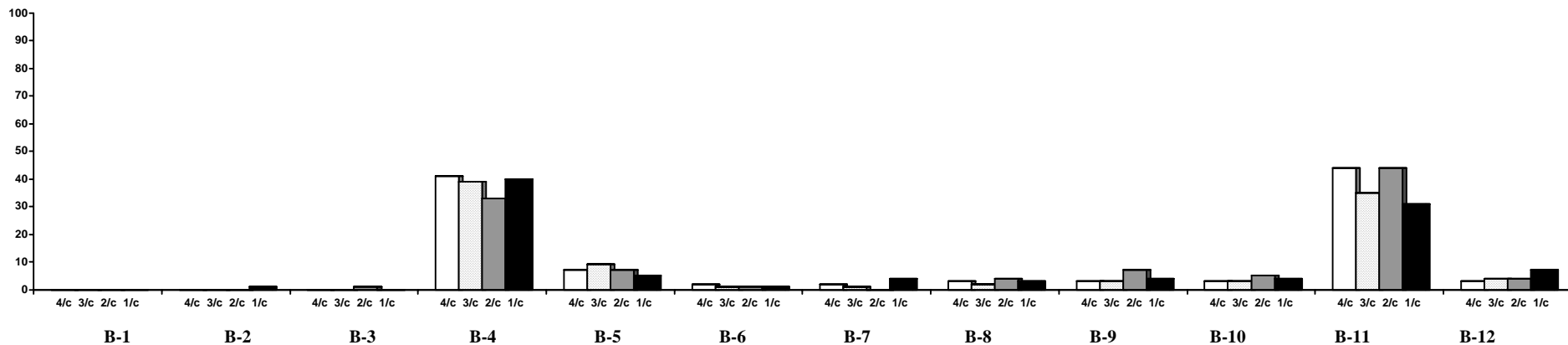


Figure 4. GAO Findings (1992)

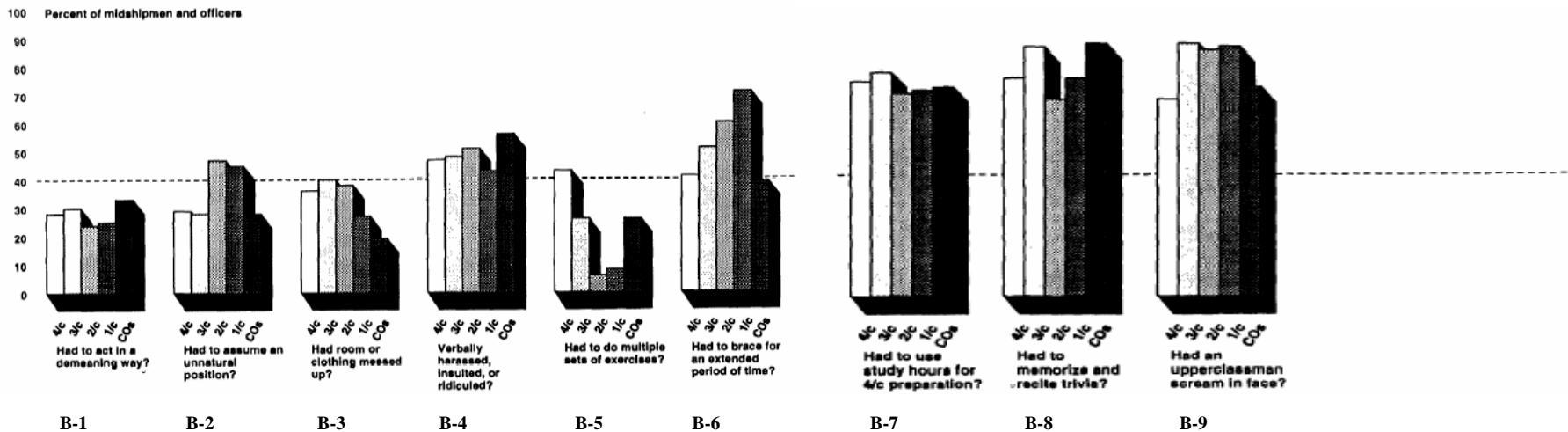
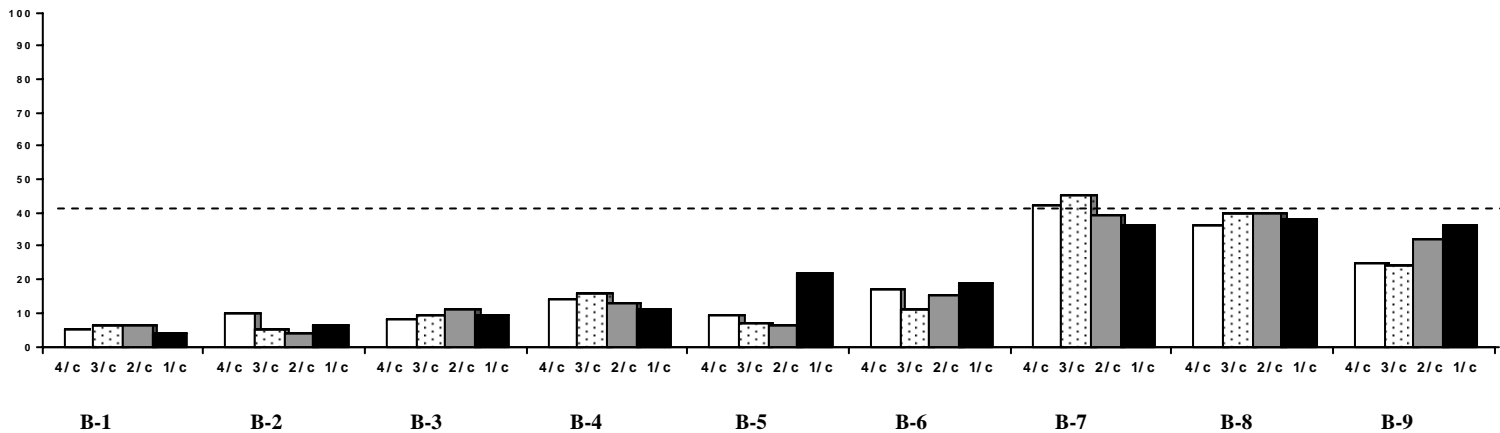


Figure 5. Current findings (2005)



## **C. CORRELATION AND REGRESSION ANALYSES**

### **1. Correlation Analysis**

Pearson-correlation coefficients were computed between hazing and each of the outcomes examined in the study. As displayed in Table 12, Hazing experiences did not exhibit a significant correlation with academic and military performance as hypothesized. These results indicate that no significant correlation exists between the hazing experiences of midshipman and how those midshipmen perform academically or militarily at the Naval Academy. Intentions to quit, however demonstrated a positive correlation with hazing experiences. This relationship suggests that as a midshipman's hazing experiences increase the likelihood of considering resignation also increases.

Psychological and physical health outcomes demonstrated varying degrees of correlation with hazing experiences. Hazing experiences were inversely correlated with satisfaction, commitment, cohesion, self-esteem, and psychological distress. Pearson correlation coefficients were -.13 for satisfaction, -.11 for commitment, -.10 for cohesion, -.11 for self esteem, -.16 for psychological distress, .18 for health condition status (where increased scores indicated worse health), and -.13 for health attitudes (higher scores indicate more positive attitudes). These results indicate that increase experiences of hazing related behaviors are associated with decrease levels of satisfaction, commitment and perceived cohesion. Increased experience with hazing related behaviors are also associated with decreased levels of self esteem and increased psychological distress. Finally, increased experience with hazing related behaviors is also associated with increased reporting of physical health conditions (i.e., worse health), and decreased satisfaction with one's health.

**Table 12. Correlation Matrix**

<b>Behavior</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std.</b>	<b>(1)</b>	<b>(2)</b>	<b>(3)</b>	<b>(4)</b>	<b>(5)</b>	<b>(6)</b>	<b>(7)</b>	<b>(8)</b>	<b>(9)</b>	<b>(10)</b>	<b>(11)</b>
Hazing (1)	2.23	.74	1										
CAQPR (2)	2.96	.56	.06	1									
CMQPR (3)	3.16	.40	.02	.60**	1								
Intentions to quit (4)	2.25	1.45	.16**	-.14**	-.20**	1							
Satisfaction (5)	3.60	.56	-.13**	.08*	.22**	-.31**	1						
Commitment (6)	3.62	.74	-.11**	.02	.14**	-.30**	.54**	1					
Cohesion (7)	3.56	.70	-.10**	.03	.16**	-.14**	.50**	.43	1				
Self-esteem (8)	3.20	.47	-.11**	.15**	.17**	-.35**	.30**	.22	.14**	1			
Psych. Distress (9)	5.13	.85	-.16**	.07*	.10**	-.26**	.27**	.16	.16**	.35**	1		
Health Conditions (10)	1.21	.29	.18**	-.07	-.12**	.18**	-.24**	-.13	-.19**	-.25**	-.53**	1	
General Health (11)	1.47	.31	-.13**	.08*	.17**	-.20**	.20**	.12	.15**	.31**	.33**	-.39**	1

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Note: CAQPR = Cumulative Academic Quality Point Ranking (GPA); CMPQR = Cumulative Military Quality Point Ranking (GPA). Scales 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 11 are scored such that higher scores indicate greater number of hazing experiences; higher academic and military performance grades (GPA); increased intentions to resign from the USNA; greater levels of satisfaction, commitment, cohesion, self-esteem; and higher reported rates of superior health. Items 9 and 10 are scored as such that higher scores indicate less Psychological distress and greater reported number of adverse health conditions.



## 2. Regression Analyses

A series of hierarchical linear regression analyses were performed to examine the impact of hazing on academic and military outcomes; and psychological and physical outcomes. A four step hierarchical linear regression was performed. For each of the regression models described, demographic variables were entered in the first step, academic variables were entered in the second step, stress was entered in the third step and hazing experiences were entered in the fourth step. Demographic variables included age, gender, ethnicity, and year group. Academic variables included Scholastic Aptitude Test Scores for Math and Verbal Ability. Stress and Hazing experiences were entered separately in the remaining steps. The sections below represent the results of these regressions for each of the outcome variables included in the study.

### *a. Hierarchical Regression of Variables Predicting Academic and Military Performance Outcomes*

(1) ACQPR. Hierarchical linear regression analysis of demographic characteristics, academic background, stress and hazing experiences on academic performance was significant  $F(8,721) = 39.52$  ( $p < .001$ ). Examination of Beta coefficients indicated that while the results of these analyses were significant, hazing did not have a significant impact on academic performance (See Table 13). As can be seen in Table 13, Ethnicity, SAT Math and Verbal Scores, and Stress were significant predictors of cumulative academic quality point rating (i.e., GPA)-hazing was not statistically significant.

**Table 13. Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting CAQPR (N=730)**

Variable	B	SE B	$\beta$	
Step 1 Demographic Variables				
Age	-0.07477E-02	0.020	-0.198	*
Gender	-1.797E-02	0.047	-0.014	
Ethnicity	-.307	0.046	-0.240	*
Year Group	.116	0.028	0.227	*
Step 2 Academic Variables				
Age	2.364E-02	0.019	0.063	
Gender	1.516E-02	0.042	0.011	
Ethnicity	-.117	0.042	-0.091	*
Year Group	3.453E-02	0.025	0.067	
SAT Math Scores	3.458E-03	0.000	0.399	*
SAT Verbal Scores	1.552E-03	0.000	0.185	*
Step 3 Stress				
Age	2.028E-02	0.019	0.054	
Gender	1.162E-02	0.042	0.009	
Ethnicity	-.121	0.042	-0.094	*
Year Group	3.235E-02	0.025	0.063	
SAT Math Scores	3.416E-03	0.000	0.394	*
SAT Verbal Scores	1.532E-03	0.000	0.183	*
General Stress Levels	-6.393E-02	0.030	-0.067	*
Step 4 Hazing Experiences				
Age	2.046E-02	0.019	0.054	
Gender	9.122E-03	0.042	0.007	
Ethnicity	-.120	0.042	-0.093	*
Year Group	3.208E-02	0.025	0.063	
SAT Math Scores	3.405E-03	0.000	0.393	*
SAT Verbal Scores	1.511E-03	0.000	0.180	*
General Stress Levels	-7.109E-02	0.031	-0.074	*
Hazing Experiences	2.447E-02	0.025	0.032	

Note.  $R^2 = .082$  for Step 1;  $\Delta R^2 = .218$  for Step 2 ( $p < .001$ );  $\Delta R^2 = .004$  for Step 3 ( $p < .034$ );  $\Delta R^2 = .001$  for Step 4 (ns). \*  $p < .05$

(2) CMQPR. Hierarchical linear regression analysis of demographic characteristics, academic background, stress and hazing experiences on military performance was significant  $F(8,721) = 39.52$  ( $p < .001$ ). Examination of Beta coefficients indicated that while the results of these analyses were significant, hazing did not have a significant impact on military performance (See Table 14). As can be seen in

Table 14, Ethnicity, SAT Math and Verbal Scores were significant predictors of cumulative Military quality point ranking—stress and hazing were not statistically significant.

**Table 14. Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting CMQPR (N=730)**

Variable	B	SE B	$\beta$
Step 1 Demographic Variables			
Age	-2.575E-02	0.014	-0.098
Gender	1.299E-02	0.034	0.014
Ethnicity	-.196	0.032	-0.219 *
Year Group	8.283E-03	0.020	0.023
Step 2 Academic Variables			
Age	4.607E-03	0.015	0.018
Gender	1.992E-02	0.033	0.022
Ethnicity	-.138	0.033	-0.154 *
Year Group	-1.688E-02	0.020	-0.047
SAT Math Scores	9.367E-04	0.000	0.155 *
SAT Verbal Scores	6.042E-04	0.000	0.103 *
Step 3 Stress			
Age	3.460E-03	0.015	0.013
Gender	1.871E-02	0.033	0.020
Ethnicity	-.139	0.033	-0.155 *
Year Group	-1.763E-02	0.020	-0.049
SAT Math Scores	9.221E-04	0.000	0.153 *
SAT Verbal Scores	5.974E-04	0.000	0.102 *
General Stress Levels	-2.187E-02	0.024	-0.033
Step 4 Hazing Experiences			
Age	3.452E-03	0.015	0.013
Gender	1.881E-02	0.033	0.020
Ethnicity	-.139	0.033	-0.156 *
Year Group	-1.762E-02	0.020	-0.049
SAT Math Scores	9.226E-04	0.000	0.153 *
SAT Verbal Scores	5.983E-04	0.000	0.102 *
General Stress Levels	-2.159E-02	0.025	-0.032
Hazing Experiences	-9.788E-04	0.020	-0.002

Note.  $R^2 = .055$  for Step 1;  $\Delta R^2 = .041$  for Step 2 ( $p < .001$ );  $\Delta R^2 = .001$  for Step 3(ns);  $\Delta R^2 = .000$  for Step 4(ns). \*  $p < .05$

(3) Intentions to Quit. Hierarchical linear regression analysis of demographic characteristics, academic background, stress and hazing experiences on intentions to quit was significant  $F(8,720) = 8.605$  ( $p < .001$ ). Examination of Beta coefficients indicated that hazing had a significant impact on intentions to quit ( $\beta = .113$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The magnitude of this effect was relatively small, it is worth noting, however; that the impact of hazing on intentions to quit was still significant after controlling for demographic and academic characteristics of the participants and experiences with general academic stress. The model accounted for 7.7% of the variance in a midshipman's intention to quit ( $\Delta R^2 = .077$ ). As can be seen in Table 15, general stress was also predictive of a midshipman's intention to quit ( $p < .05$ ).

**Table 15. Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Intentions to Quit (N=730)**

Variable	B	SE B	$\beta$	
Step 1 Demographic Variables				
Age	-5.314E-02	0.054	-0.055	
Gender	.145	0.125	0.043	
Ethnicity	-1.988E-02	0.120	-0.006	
Year Group	-.157	0.073	-0.120	*
Step 2 Academic Variables				
Age	-6539E-02	0.058	-0.068	
Gender	.166	0.127	0.049	
Ethnicity	-3.972E-02	0.127	-0.012	
Year Group	-.147	0.075	-0.112	*
SAT Math Scores	5.448E-04	0.001	0.024	
SAT Verbal Scores	-1.127E-03	0.001	-0.053	
Step 3 Stress				
Age	-3.893E-02	0.057	-0.040	
Gender	.193	0.124	0.057	
Ethnicity	-4.149E-03	0.124	-0.001	
Year Group	-.129	0.073	-0.099	
SAT Math Scores	9.172E-04	0.001	0.041	
SAT Verbal Scores	-9.792E-04	0.001	-0.046	
General Stress Levels	.516	0.089	0.211	*
Step 4 Hazing Experiences				
Age	-3.713E-02	0.056	-0.038	
Gender	.171	0.123	0.051	
Ethnicity	3.131E-03	0.123	0.001	
Year Group	-.132	0.073	-0.101	
SAT Math Scores	8.111E-04	0.001	0.036	
SAT Verbal Scores	-1.163E-03	0.001	-0.054	
General Stress Levels	.451	0.091	0.185	*
Hazing Experiences	.220	0.072	0.113	*

Note.  $R^2 = .031$  for Step 1;  $\Delta R^2 = .002$  for Step 2 (ns);  $\Delta R^2 = .043$  for Step 3 ( $p < .001$ );  $\Delta R^2 = .012$  for Step 4 ( $p < .001$ ). \*  $p < .05$

**b. Hierarchical Regression of Variables Predicting Psychological and Physical Health Outcomes**

(1) Satisfaction. Hierarchical linear regression analysis of demographic characteristics, stress, and hazing experiences on satisfaction was significant  $F(6,722) = 14.488$  ( $p < .001$ ). Examination of Beta coefficients indicated that hazing had a significant impact on satisfaction ( $\beta = -.087$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Even though the magnitude of this effect was relatively small ( $\beta = -.087$ ), it is worth noting that the impact of hazing on satisfaction was still significant after controlling for such variables as general stress and demographic information. The model accounted for 10% of the variance in a midshipman's intention to quit ( $\Delta R^2 = .10$ ). As can be seen in Table 16, age, gender, and general stress were also predictive of a midshipman's general satisfaction ( $p < .05$ ).

**Table 16. Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Satisfaction (N=729)**

Variable	B	SE B	$\beta$
Step 1 Demographic Variables			
Age	-4.018E-02	0.021	-0.108
Gender	.129	0.049	0.098 *
Ethnicity	-1.527E-02	0.047	-0.012
Year Group	1.684E-02	0.028	-0.033
Step 2 Academic Variables			
Age	-4.940E-02	0.020	-0.132 *
Gender	.115	0.047	0.088 *
Ethnicity	-2.272E-02	0.045	-0.018
Year Group	3.392E-03	0.027	0.007
General Stress Levels	-.274	0.034	-0.290 *
Step 3 Hazing Experiences			
Age	-5.165E-02	0.020	-0.138 *
Gender	.121	0.046	0.093 *
Ethnicity	-2.848E-02	0.045	-0.022
Year Group	5.560E-03	0.027	0.011
General Stress Levels	-.255	0.035	-0.270 *
Hazing Experiences	-6.576E-02	0.027	-0.087 *

Note.  $R^2 = .019$  for Step 1;  $\Delta R^2 = .081$  for Step 2 ( $p < .001$ );  $\Delta R^2 = .007$  for Step 3 ( $p < .05$ ). \*  $p < .05$

(2) Commitment. Hierarchical linear regression analysis of demographic characteristics, stress, and hazing experiences on organizational commitment was significant  $F(6,723) = 9.815$  ( $p < .001$ ). Examination of Beta coefficients indicated that hazing had a significant impact on organizational commitment ( $\beta = -.088$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Even though the magnitude of this effect was relatively small ( $\beta = -.088$ ), it is worth noting that the impact of hazing on organizational commitment was still significant after controlling for such variables as general stress and demographic information. The model accounted for 6.8% of the variance in a midshipman's intention to quit ( $\Delta R^2 = .068$ ). As can be seen in Table 17, age, gender and general stress were also predictive of a midshipman's general satisfaction ( $p < .05$ ).

**Table 17. Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Organizational Commitment (N=730)**

Variable	B	SE B	$\beta$	
Step 1 Demographic Variables				
Age	-5.399E-02	0.027	-0.110	*
Gender	.131	0.063	0.076	*
Ethnicity	6.339E-02	0.061	0.038	
Year Group	-3.223E-02	0.037	0.048	
Step 2 Academic Variables				
Age	-6.193E-02	0.027	-0.126	*
Gender	.119	0.062	0.069	
Ethnicity	5.723E-02	0.060	0.034	
Year Group	-4.417E-02	0.036	0.066	
General Stress Levels	-.239	0.045	-0.192	*
Step 3 Hazing Experiences				
Age	-6.487E-02	0.027	-0.132	*
Gender	.128	0.062	0.074	*
Ethnicity	4.970E-02	0.060	0.030	
Year Group	-4.137E-02	0.036	0.062	
General Stress Levels	-.214	0.046	-0.172	*
Hazing Experiences	-8.779E-02	0.037	-0.088	*

Note.  $R^2 = .032$  for Step 1;  $\Delta R^2 = .036$  for Step 2 ( $p < .001$ );  $\Delta R^2 = .007$  for Step 3 ( $p < .05$ ). \*  $p < .05$

(3) Cohesion. Hierarchical linear regression analysis of demographic characteristics, stress, and hazing experiences on cohesion was significant  $F(6,722) = 9.404$  ( $p < .001$ ). Examination of Beta coefficients indicated that while the results of these analyses were significant, hazing did not have a significant impact on cohesion (See Table 18). As can be seen in Table 18, age and general stress were significant predictors of cohesion ( $p < .05$ ), while hazing was not statistically significant.

**Table 18. Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Cohesion (N=730)**

Variable	B	SE B	$\beta$	
Step 1 Demographic Variables				
Age	-7.179E-02	0.026	-0.156	*
Gender	-2.743E-02	0.060	-0.017	
Ethnicity	2.135E-02	0.058	0.014	
Year Group	4.282E-04	0.035	0.001	
Step 2 Academic Variables				
Age	-7.999E-02	0.025	-0.173	*
Gender	-3.938E-02	0.058	-0.024	
Ethnicity	1.535E-02	0.056	0.010	
Year Group	-1.275E-02	0.034	-0.020	
General Stress Levels	-.251	0.043	-0.215	*
Step 3 Hazing Experiences				
Age	-8.202E-02	0.025	-0.178	*
Gender	-3.327E-02	0.058	-0.021	
Ethnicity	1.011E-02	0.056	0.006	
Year Group	-1.063E-02	0.034	-0.017	
General Stress Levels	-.234	0.044	-0.200	*
Hazing Experiences	-5.946E-02	0.035	-0.064	

Note.  $R^2 = .024$  for Step 1;  $\Delta R^2 = .045$  for Step 2 ( $p < .001$ );  $\Delta R^2 = .004$  for Step 3 (ns). \*  $p < .05$

(4) Self-esteem. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis of demographic characteristics, stress, and hazing experiences on self-esteem was significant  $F(6,719) = 12.119$  ( $p < .001$ ). Examination of Beta coefficients indicated that while the results of these analyses were significant, hazing did not have a significant



impact on self-esteem (See Table 19). As can be seen in Table 19, gender and general stress were significant predictors of self-esteem ( $p < .05$ ), while hazing was not statistically significant.

**Table 19. Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Self-esteem (N=726)**

Variable	B	SE B	$\beta$	
Step 1 Demographic Variables				
Age	-1.048E-02	0.018	-0.033	
Gender	-.171	0.041	-0.155	*
Ethnicity	-2.149E-02	0.039	-0.020	
Year Group	5.064E-02	0.024	0.119	*
Step 2 Academic Variables				
Age	-1.657E-02	0.017	-0.053	
Gender	-.180	0.040	-0.163	*
Ethnicity	-2.610E-02	0.038	-0.024	
Year Group	4.088E-02	0.023	0.096	
General Stress Levels	-.188	0.029	-0.236	*
Step 3 Hazing Experiences				
Age	-1.768E-02	0.017	-0.056	
Gender	-.177	0.040	-0.160	*
Ethnicity	-2.866E-02	0.038	-0.027	
Year Group	4.201E-02	0.023	0.098	
General Stress Levels	-.180	0.030	-0.225	*
Hazing Experiences	-2.985E-02	0.024	-0.046	

Note.  $R^2 = .036$  for Step 1;  $\Delta R^2 = .054$  for Step 2 ( $p < .001$ );  $\Delta R^2 = .002$  for Step 3 (ns). \*  $p < .05$

(5) Psychological Distress. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis of demographic characteristics, stress, and hazing experiences on psychological distress was significant  $F(6,712) = 16.735$  ( $p < .001$ ). Examination of Beta coefficients indicated that hazing had a significant impact on psychological distress. Even though the magnitude of this effect was relatively small (beta= -.099), it is worth noting that the impact of hazing on psychological distress was still significant after controlling for such

variables as general stress and demographic information. The model accounted for 11.6% of the variance in a midshipman's level of psychological distress ( $\Delta R^2=.116$ ). As can be seen in Table 20, gender and general stress were also predictive of psychological distress among the sample population ( $p<.05$ ).

**Table 20. Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Psychological Distress**

Variable	B	SE B	$\beta$
Step 1 Demographic Variables			
Age	-3.198E-02	0.032	-0.057
Gender	-.148	0.074	-0.075 *
Ethnicity	-1.750E-02	0.071	-0.009
Year Group	5.606E-02	0.043	0.074
Step 2 Academic Variables			
Age	-4.410E-02	0.030	-0.078
Gender	-.170	0.070	-0.087 *
Ethnicity	-3.596E-02	0.068	-0.019
Year Group	3.058E-02	0.041	0.040
General Stress Levels	-.473	0.051	-0.330 *
Step 3 Hazing Experiences			
Age	-4.755E-02	0.030	-0.084
Gender	-.159	0.070	-0.081 *
Ethnicity	-4.722E-02	0.067	-0.025
Year Group	3.402E-02	0.041	-0.045
General Stress Levels	-.422	0.052	0.308 *
Hazing Experiences	-.113	0.041	-0.099 *

Note.  $R^2 = .008$  for Step 1;  $\Delta R^2 = .106$  for Step 2 ( $p<.001$ );  $\Delta R^2 = .009$  for Step 3 ( $p<.05$ ). \*  $p < .05$

(6) Physical Health Conditions. Hierarchical linear regression analysis of demographic characteristics, stress, and hazing experiences on physical health conditions was significant  $F(6,723) = 20.033$  ( $p < .001$ ). Examination of Beta coefficients indicated that hazing had a significant impact on physical health conditions

( $\beta = .12$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Even though the magnitude of this effect was relatively small ( $\beta = .120$ ), it is worth noting that the impact of hazing on physical health conditions was still significant after controlling for such variables as general stress and demographic information. The model accounted for 13.5% of the variance in health conditions among midshipmen ( $\Delta R^2 = .135$ ). As can be seen in Table 21, gender, ethnicity and general stress were also predictive of poor health conditions among the sample population ( $p < .05$ ).

**Table 21. Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Health Conditions (N=730)**

Variable	B	SE B	$\beta$
Step 1 Demographic Variables			
Age	1.015E-02	0.010	0.056
Gender	.123	0.023	0.193 *
Ethnicity	6.347E-02	0.022	0.103 *
Year Group	-9.553E-03	0.014	-0.039
Step 2 Academic Variables			
Age	1.452E-02	0.010	0.080
Gender	.129	0.022	0.203 *
Ethnicity	6.686E-02	0.021	0.108 *
Year Group	-2.977E-03	0.013	-0.012
General Stress Levels	.131	0.016	0.286 *
Step 3 Hazing Experiences			
Age	1.601E-02	0.010	0.088
Gender	.125	0.022	0.196 *
Ethnicity	7.066E-02	0.021	0.114 *
Year Group	-4.394E-03	0.013	-0.018
General Stress Levels	.119	0.016	0.259 *
Hazing Experiences	4.429E-02	0.013	0.120 *

Note.  $R^2 = .049$  for Step 1;  $\Delta R^2 = .080$  for Step 2 ( $p < .001$ );  $\Delta R^2 = .014$  for Step 3 ( $p < .05$ ). \*  $p < .05$

(7) Physical Health Attitudes. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis of demographic characteristics, stress, and hazing experiences on physical health attitudes was significant  $F(6,722) = 13.620$  ( $p < .001$ ). Examination of Beta coefficients indicated that hazing had a significant impact on physical health attitudes ( $\beta = -.074$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Even though the magnitude of this effect was relatively small ( $\beta = -.074$ ), it is worth

noting that the impact of hazing on physical health attitudes was still significant after controlling for such variables as general stress and demographic information. The model accounted for 10.2% of the variance in general health attitudes among the respondents ( $\Delta R^2=.102$ ). As can be seen in Table 22, age, gender, year group and general stress were also predictive of physical health attitudes among the sample population ( $p<.05$ ).

**Table 22. Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Attitudes Toward Health (N=729)**

Variable	B	SE B	$\beta$	
Step 1 Demographic Variables				
Age	-2.167E-02	0.012	-0.104	
Gender	-.122	0.027	-0.167	*
Ethnicity	-3.198E-02	0.026	-0.045	
Year Group	4.811E-02	0.016	0.170	*
Step 2 Academic Variables				
Age	-2.580E-02	0.011	-0.123	*
Gender	-.128	0.026	-0.175	*
Ethnicity	-3.532E-02	0.025	-0.050	
Year Group	4.208E-02	0.015	0.149	*
General Stress Levels	-.123	0.019	-0.232	*
Step 3 Hazing Experiences				
Age	-2.685E-02	0.011	-0.129	*
Gender	-.125	0.026	-0.171	*
Ethnicity	-3.800E-02	0.025	-0.054	
Year Group	4.308E-02	0.015	0.152	*
General Stress Levels	-.114	0.019	-0.215	*
Hazing Experiences	-3.145E-02	0.015	-0.074	*

Note.  $R^2 = .044$  for Step 1;  $\Delta R^2 = .052$  for Step 2 ( $p<.001$ );  $\Delta R^2 = .005$  for Step 3 ( $p<.05$ ). \*  $p < .05$

#### **D. SUMMARY**

This chapter examined the prevalence of hazing among the Brigade of Midshipmen; classes 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008. The prevalence of hazing was explored from two viewpoints. First, it was examined to determine the current prevalence of

hazing among the sample population. Prevalence rates were then compared to data collected by the General Accounting Office (1992). Further analyses were conducted to explore the relationship between gender, ethnicity and year group as related to frequencies of hazing experiences. In the second phase of the research, we computed Pearson-correlation coefficients for the 23-hazing related behaviors to explore their relationship with academic and military performance; and physical and psychological outcomes. Finally, a series of hierarchical linear regression analyses was conducted to examine the unique impact of hazing on each of the outcome variables included in the study.

## **V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter uses the analyses conducted in Chapter IV to draw conclusions related to the three hypotheses examined in this study. Next, several recommendations for reducing hazing at the Naval Academy are offered for review and implementation. Finally, opportunities for further research in this field are outlined for future consideration.

### **B. CONCLUSIONS ON RESEARCH HYPOTHESES**

Based on previous research three hypotheses were proposed:

Hypothesis 1. It is expected that the prevalence of hazing among USNA midshipmen will have changed as compared to rates reported by GAO in 1992.

Hypothesis 2. It is expected that exposure to hazing will have a negative impact on academic and military performance.

Hypothesis 3. It is expected that exposure to hazing will have a negative impact on psychological and physical health.

The analytical strategy employed to examine the nature of hazing at the Naval Academy tested these hypotheses with data from a stratified random sample from the USNA population. The analyses provided support for two hypotheses: that the prevalence of hazing at the U.S. Naval Academy had changed since the GAO study (1992) (Hypothesis 1); and that hazing would have a negative impact on psychological and physical health (Hypothesis 3). Hypothesis 2, that hazing would have a negative impact on academic and military performance received partial support. The sections below discuss the findings with regard to each of these hypotheses.

#### **1. Hypothesis 1**

The analyses showed that the prevalence of hazing had changed at the Naval Academy since the original GAO study (1992). This finding is not altogether surprising since the Academy was in the process of revamping the Fourth Class Development System at the time of the original study. In fact, many of the policy changes being implemented in the early 1990's were all ready starting to impact the prevalence of

hazing prior to the reports completion (GAO, 1992 p. 21). Perhaps, the publication of the GAO (1992) study may have contributed to the decline in hazing observed in this study. The report may have served as a catalyst for change by highlighting systemic problems within the Brigade and bringing them to public attention for DoD scrutiny. As a result the Academy was placed in a position where hazing became a high profile and top priority issue.

Of the original 21-behaviors explored by GAO (1992), 19 demonstrated a marked decrease in frequency in the current study. Two behaviors demonstrated an increase in frequency as compared with rates reported in 1992. The two behaviors that increased in frequency included having study hours preempted by 4/c duties, and repeatedly having to change uniforms. Both of these behaviors are questionable in terms of their validity as hazing experiences. Having study hours preempted by 4/c duties is a consequence of the duality of the midshipman's role within the Brigade. Young men and women who accept an appointment to the Naval Academy are expected to develop a balance between their military and student roles. This balancing act requires effective use of time, prioritization of tasks, and considerable maturity and responsibility of ones personal choices. Fourth class midshipmen, unfamiliar with the nuances of the Naval Academy will often feel overwhelmed by the responsibilities of being both student and future officer. As a result one role or the other may suffer while the new midshipman strives to develop the sense of balance required to be both a successful academic and officer candidate.

Repeatedly having to change uniforms was the second behavior, which increased in frequency. The practice of repeatedly changing uniforms, also known as *uniform races*, is an approved teaching tool used to familiarize Plebes with the proper components and proper wear of all issued items. This is a controlled evolution, which must be approved by the midshipmen chain of command prior to execution. Furthermore, uniform races are expressly mentioned in the Commandant's Instruction for Plebe Summer complete with specific guidelines for implementation. Under the controlled conditions intended for this event to occur it does not resemble a behavior, which would be considered humiliating, demeaning, or harmful.

## **2. Hypothesis 2**

As discussed earlier it was hypothesized that hazing would negatively impact academic and military performance. The results provided partial support for this hypothesis. Analysis indicates that hazing did not impact academic or military performance. One possible explanation for the lack of impact on academic and military performance may be the homogeneity of the sample population. Naval Academy midshipmen are among the brightest high-school students in America. With an average combined SAT math/verbal score of over 1300, these men and women have displayed exceptional intelligence. The midshipmen being subjected to hazing have spent 12+ years learning how to study and perform in an academic environment and have done so extremely well. The type of hazing which is occurring at the Academy may not be enough to derail such an ingrained performance measure.

The third measure examined in the performance outcomes was intentions to quit. Intentions to quit, unlike academic and military performance, were impacted by midshipman hazing experiences. Midshipmen exposed to greater levels of hazing are more likely to consider resignation. This finding is particularly important given the cost associated with attendance to the Academy. Cost for attending the Naval Academy are estimated to be \$250,000 (Shuger, 1994, p.20). Should a midshipman resign from the Academy as a result of being hazed academic and military performance are inadvertently impacted.

## **3. Hypothesis 3**

Hazing experiences did impact the majority of psychological measures and both of the physical health measures as hypothesized. Of the five psychological health outcomes, three were consistent with the research hypothesis that hazing would negatively impact psychological health. The three psychological health outcomes significantly impacted by hazing experiences were satisfaction, commitment, and psychological distress. Midshipmen with greater exposure to hazing reported lower levels of satisfaction and commitment; and higher levels of psychological distress. Hazing did not have a significant impact on either cohesion or self-esteem.

It was hypothesized that hazing experiences would negatively impact cohesion among the Brigade of Midshipmen. Analyses indicate that this was not the case. One



explanation for this finding could be the military training model that the Fourth Class Development System attempts to emulate. As discussed in the literature review the U.S. military creates a degree of artificial stress in initial training such as recruit indoctrination. One purpose for this artificial stress is to immerse inductees into a stressful and chaotic environment as part of a team. It is believed that as a result of these shared hardships the inductees will develop into a stronger, tighter and more cohesive team. This is one possible explanation for why hazing seemingly has no impact on cohesion among members of the Brigade.

The second psychological outcome that was not in agreement with the researcher's hypotheses was that hazing would negatively impact self-esteem. Given the unique circumstances of Naval Academy life this determination should not have been a surprising discovery. The vast majority of 4/c midshipmen survive their fourth class year and continue on with their Academy experience. Along the way they will experience multiple esteem building events while developing close bonds with their fellow midshipmen. By the time midshipmen surface from the fourth class year they will have accomplished a great deal. They have become trained members of the Brigade, they have gained familiarity with Naval Academy life, and they have survived a full year of academics. All of these accomplishments in such a short span of time may tend to minimize the difficulties associated with their Plebe experience. As a result they emerge more confident, more assured than when they entered.

Physical health was impacted by hazing experiences from two standpoints. The first was reported number of adverse medical conditions. Persons subjected to higher rates of hazing were more likely to report a greater number of adverse medical conditions, such as heart or stomach ailments. The second standpoint was concerned with physical health attitudes (i.e. how respondents felt about their personal health). Persons subjected to greater degrees of hazing felt more negative about their personal health.

### **C. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

In a day and age where hazing is escalating in multiple venues (i.e. colleges , high schools, sports teams) the Naval Academy has broken the trend and demonstrated a

significant decline in hazing related behaviors. This is a remarkable accomplishment when considering how pervasive and embedded hazing has become for the demographic profile of the sample population. Furthermore, with a federal hazing law currently being pursued in Washington this accomplishment could not have come at a better time.

The significant decline in hazing related behaviors does not mean, however; that the Naval Academy is completely void of hazing. Hazing still occurs within the Brigade. As demonstrated in Table 7 midshipmen still report experiencing hazing related behaviors. The Academy has achieved significant success in eradicating hazing but it cannot afford to rest on these accomplishments. It is imperative that the institution continues to push forward on eliminating any form of mistreatment that midshipmen may be subjected to. We owe this effort to the Naval Service, the Brigade of Midshipmen, and the families from which they came. Our midshipmen will never enjoy the luxury of being anonymous; they are recognizable where ever they go and are held accountable to a different set of standards than their civilian counterparts. The public's expectations are that the service academies will not only exceed the societal norm, but stand as pillars of ethical and moral behavior for others to emulate. "In the American imagination, the service academies are mythic places that have produced a long roster of heroes, from Ulysses S. Grant to Douglas MacAuthur" (Miller, 2003). Who better to champion the American ideals of morality and ethical behavior than the brightest crop of young men and women the nation has to offer.

The responsibility of exemplifying the utmost in ethical and moral behavior is a weighty one. It is a responsibility that in part comes from the public scrutiny that accompanies wearing a uniform in the service of one's country; and in part from attending a prestigious institution renowned for producing our nation's future leaders. As an institution we need for the public to believe in our mission, our midshipmen, and the methods by which we make both. Thus the need for further emphasis on policies aimed at reducing hazing and others forms of mistreatment.

The Naval Academy has several mechanisms in place designed to increase and protect the overall well-being of midshipmen. These systems and mechanisms are

working as demonstrated by the research findings; room for improvement, however; always exists. Recommendations derived from the literature are discussed in two categories; short and long term.

### **1. Short Term Recommendations**

Hazing, as demonstrated in the literature review, does not lend itself to simple solutions. The Naval Academy's successes are a result of support by critical members of the chain of command who made it a clear and consistent priority for several years. This is the type of strategy and commitment necessary to change the culture of an organization, discussed in further detail in the section addressing long term recommendations. This does not mean, however; that we are powerless to make minor adjustments to current policy while waiting for the culture of the organization to the respond. Two, modifications to current policy that may help to further reduce hazing are decrease the ambiguity surrounding questionable 4/c indoctrination practices; and modify the Naval Academy's hazing definition.

#### ***a. Conceptualizing and Monitoring Hazing***

In order to increase the effectiveness of the Academy's anti-hazing strategy it is essential to eliminate the ambiguity surrounding what is and what is not considered hazing. The original GAO findings demonstrated that 33 percent of Naval Academy respondents felt that the distinction between allowable fourth class indoctrination and hazing was unclear (GAO, 1992 p.16). Furthermore, 81 percent of the current sample did not consider any of the 23-behaviors examined to be hazing. Confusion exists among members of the Brigade in regards to acceptable fourth class indoctrination practices. This confusion may be exasperated by other elements of Academy life such as spirit related activities and Army/Navy week where outrageous behavior is not only condoned but praised. Midshipmen may be receiving mixed signals in regards to what is acceptable conduct.

One short term recommendation that may be effective is to develop a system for identifying hazing related activities similar to that used during the Alfred University study (1999) on hazing in NCAA sports. The Alfred University survey placed hazing related activities into a table with the following categories: acceptable, questionable, alcohol related, and other unacceptable ( 1). The categories were made up

of behaviors that were pervasive within NCAA sports. A similar table could be developed for hazing behaviors prevalent within the Brigade. In order to make this effective and have the Brigade buy into the program it would be necessary to place the onus of identifying hazing behaviors back in the hands of the midshipmen. The Honor Chair and his/her staff could be responsible for the development of the table/matrix and for its revision on a semester basis. Input could be gathered through personal experience, class honor representatives, Brigade surveys, or other data collection methods. Another useful purpose of identifying behaviors and placing them into categories is that hazing related incidents can then be adjudicated more equitably. Hazing exists on a continuum and not all hazing related incidents should result in dismissal or severe reprimand. Dissemination of the table/matrix could be achieved during Saturday training events and prior to major events such as Plebe Summer or Army/Navy week. Examples of acceptable hazing related behaviors will also provide members of the Brigade with avenues for achieving the same means but without the negative consequences associated with abusive hazing

***b. Modify the Current USNA Hazing Definition***

The Naval Academy's current definition of hazing is "any unauthorized assumption of authority by a midshipman whereby another midshipman suffers or is exposed to any cruelty, indignity, humiliation, hardship or oppression, or the deprivation or abridgement of any right" (GAO, 1992 p.13). This definition is similar to the DoD definition of hazing that is currently used throughout the United States Armed Forces. The definition is intended for those who would be considered the perpetrators of the hazing behavior. The literature suggests that hazing is really an issue that requires two parties, those who would haze and those who willingly submit to the hazing activity. In order to make hazing even less of an appealing option both parties, the perpetrator and the willing participant should suffer negative consequences. In cases where persons do not willingly submit the activity more closely resembles assault, battery, or harassment and should be adjudicated accordingly. The definition that I would propose would identify both parties and the responsibility that each holds in regards to the hazing issue. For example,

Hazing is any unauthorized assumption of authority by a midshipman whereby another midshipman suffers or is exposed to any cruelty, indignity, humiliation, hardship or oppression, or the deprivation or abridgement of any right. Furthermore hazing identifies any midshipman who willingly participates in unsanctioned rituals, ceremonies, or practices that may be considered humiliating, degrading, dangerous, or unbecoming of a midshipman in violation of the good order and discipline of the United States Naval Academy.

The function of this definition is not simply to inform its readers, the proposed definition acts as a deterrent. Prior definitions failed to identify those who would willingly endanger their lives and well-being in order to gain the acceptance of those superior to them. By including them as perpetrators and holding those accountable for their part in the hazing issue two significant things are accomplished. First, persons who are eager to participate are now in danger of punitive or administrative action for their role in the incident. Second, persons who have no real desire to participate, but are being pressured by their peers to conform, have an avenue of escape. They can easily fall back on fear of reprimand, administrative action, or even dismissal as their excuse for not participating. Identifying whether an individual participated in a hazing activity willingly would be a matter of inquiry conducted by a member of the Commandant's staff. After all, not every person who participates in a hazing activity does so willingly. Determining who participated with reckless disregard for the Academy's hazing policies and their own personal well-being would be subject to the same elements of proof as any other major offense.

## **2. Long Term Recommendations**

The short term recommendations presented are policy changes that can be rapidly employed hopefully resulting in some positive short term wins. As mentioned earlier, however; it is not the immediate changes that have the greatest impact. In order to control hazing within the Brigade it will be necessary to not only create policy but change the organizational culture of the Academy. This is not to say that the Academy endorses abusive hazing; on the contrary the Academy is very dedicated to achieving an abuse free environment. What it does suggest, however; is that over time behaviors which were once legitimately used during the training of 4<sup>th</sup> class midshipmen have mutated to behaviors which have the potential to be labeled as hazing. These behaviors go well beyond what

can be clearly articulated in orders and regulations. The Brigade is only partly defined by written orders; an equal part of the Brigade is defined by tradition and sub-culture norms that have evolved over the span of the institution's life. Changing the culture of an organization is not an easy undertaking. It is an undertaking that requires time, patience, and effort.

A great deal of literature exists that specifically examines organizational change. This type of emphasis is exactly the approach that is needed for implementing deep rooted change within the Brigade. An easy way to conceptualize a change strategy is by using an eight-step process authored by John Kotter. Kotter published his eight-stage process in an article entitled "The Eight-Stage Process for Creating Major Change" in *Leading Change*. The first step is to create a sense of urgency within the Brigade.

Without creating a sense of urgency prior to policy implementation it simply becomes just one more regulation or policy letter. It lacks the weight needed to gain the commitment of the executors (midshipmen). There are multiple ways to create this sense of urgency. One way is to wait for the next embarrassing hazing incident that the midshipmen are involved in to hit the news media and then use that as a jump off point for new policy. This is a reactive approach that is costly in regards to the professional reputation of the Academy. A more proactive approach would be to use examples of hazing that are currently happening everyday outside of the Academy's walls. To go along with examples of hazing is the growing trend in anti-hazing legislation currently making its way through the US Senate. State anti-hazing laws are becoming fairly common and a federal anti-hazing law is currently being examined by our government. Making the Brigade aware of the epidemic nature of hazing may very well act as the impetus for creating a sense of urgency.

The next phase in Kotter's process is to develop a guiding coalition. The coalition is ideally a group of people who possess enough sway within the organization to garner support for the change and who are capable of working well as a team. I believe in the past coalitions have been primarily faculty and staff. In an "us versus them" environment this may not necessarily be the best approach. A coalition made of influential midshipmen may provide a better option for gathering support for the change.

Selecting a group of influential midshipmen is relatively easy. Varsity team captains, members of the stripper community, class president, leaders of extra curricular activities, and student groups all offer members, who like it or not, possess more sway within the brigade than even the most well liked commissioned officer or professor. These are the type of team members needed to gather support and participation from the Brigade.

The third step is to develop a vision and a strategy. Vision and strategy development can easily be assigned to the members of the guiding coalition with direction from the commandant and his staff. Furthermore all classes should be represented in the vision and strategy formulation in order to achieve a four-year buy in from the Brigade. Policies created by 1/c midshipmen may work well for a year or two, but when those midshipmen leave the Academy policies that they created often go with them. The idea is to create a sense of ownership within the Brigade for policies which they are required to abide by. By creating the policies themselves they then feel obliged to make them work. Final approval of the vision and strategy prior to implementation would come from the Superintendent via the commandant and his staff.

Communicating the change vision is the fourth step. In this phase of the strategy it is completely acceptable to “beat a dead horse”. The Brigade should be inundated with multiple forms of media stating the vision and the strategy. Written policy is only one way to get this accomplished. E-mails, class lectures, articles in proceedings and the Academy newspaper, a short video taped message by the guiding coalition, and commercials are all ways to hammer the message home. In this instance the message should be so enveloping that it becomes muscle memory for members of the Brigade.

The next phase is to empower broad based action. This phase requires that structures, practices, and sub-cultures that act as road blocks to the strategy be eliminated or changed. If hazing is the focus of our change then any group, policy, or structure that allows for, encourages, or otherwise turns a blind eye to hazing activities needs to be identified and dismantled. Examples of roadblocks may at first be difficult to identify. A good starting point is to examine any hazing, mistreatment, or abuse regulations currently

on the books and see if they themselves leave room for ambiguity or misinterpretation. Other obstacles may present themselves as change evolves as people are often reluctant to accept change out of hand.

If the change strategy is to successfully continue it is paramount to generate a few victories along the way. Small wins are extremely motivating for people who are charged with a task as large as changing the culture of an organization. This is truly the responsibility of the faculty and staff. The staff needs to guide the midshipmen in the direction of short term victories. When one of these victories is accomplished take time to celebrate and disseminate the word.

Once change begins to evolve and small victories begin to accumulate credibility is earned for the vision. This new found credibility creates a tangible commodity; it creates an opportunity to drive toward more change. Once the Brigade begins to witness the positive results of their hard work, they become more susceptible to change. At this point the faculty and staff may choose to reexamine other closely related issues and create new approaches to those problems as well. Examples of other types of issues that could benefit from this credibility are sexual harassment, sexual assault, and equal opportunity. The tempo for change is there, it can be used for broader purposes than the initial issue.

The final phase is to anchor the new approaches in the culture. This is really the crux of organizational change. Many of the behaviors that have been labeled as hazing have evolved over decades or even the life of the institution. These behaviors will not go quietly into the night. If we want or expect any change to be long lasting the vision must be ingrained in the culture of the Brigade. Verbally berating 4/c midshipmen during Plebe Summer is something that has been going on for over a century. With this amount of life span it has gained considerable credibility as a tool for upper class midshipmen to correct erring Plebes, it is anchored in the culture. Current policy is completely against the use of verbal or physical abuse, but due to the relative newness of the policy it lacks the cultural credibility that is enjoyed by the latter. To truly anchor a set of behaviors into a culture we must show beyond a doubt why the new methods are more beneficial,



we must back this up with tangible proof, and then we must continue to spread the gospel using multiple methods. This part of the change strategy will be measured in years not weeks or months.

The eight-phase process is a good starting point for creating a culture that is non-tolerant of hazing and abusive behaviors. It is by no means an easy solution, but then altering the norms of a culture does not lend themselves to easy solutions. It is time consuming and at times it will be awkward, but the goal is a worthy one to pursue and worth the effort.

### **3. Recommendations for Future Research**

The research conducted examined the prevalence of hazing compared to rates reported 12-years prior; the impact of hazing on academic and military performance; and the impact of hazing on psychological and physical well-being. Given the breadth of the subject matter it is likely that the surface of each area of interest was barely scratched. The research uncovered several areas that would benefit from further examination.

The first recommendation for future research would be an examination of the evolution of the Fourth Class Development System. As discussed in the current study, much was accomplished in the past 12-years to decrease hazing among members of the Brigade. This change was a product of multiple factors to include such things as policy reconfiguration, media scrutiny, government intervention, demographics, and a host of other variables resulting in a significant decrease in the mistreatment of 4/c midshipmen. Hazing however, is not a problem which surfaced 12-years ago. Hazing has been recorded at the Naval Academy as early as the Civil War. What evolutionary tract did the Fourth Class Development System follow prior to the early 1990's? Moreover, what variables influenced the evolution of the Fourth Class Development System along the way? This research could potentially identify the influences of earlier hazing strategies and their impacts on the successes currently enjoyed at the Naval Academy.

The second recommendation for future research is to examine the relationship between hazing and sexual harassment among female midshipmen. Current research identified that female midshipmen were subjected to hazing more frequently than their male counterparts. The behaviors examined however, were closely aligned, or could be

misconstrued as, sexual harassment. Research designed to differentiate hazing experiences from sexual harassment experiences of female midshipman may reach a different conclusion than the current study. It may be that female midshipmen are hazed less than males, but are unable to draw a distinction between the two experiences.

The final recommendation for future research is to examine the impact of hazing related training on frequency of hazing behaviors. Currently, training on hazing is fairly limited. Data was gathered in the current study on the level of training received by midshipman regarding Naval Academy and DoD hazing related policy and education. The results were not explored as a part of the current research. Research conducted in this area could identify inadequacies in current training strategies as well as the impact that training and education has on the willingness of midshipmen to participate in hazing related activities. Education is a common battle cry for eradicating negative aspects of an organization; we need to determine if our level of education is meeting the needs of the population.

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