



Command and General Staff College (CGSC) students attend a class at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, circa 1960. The professional journal *Military Review* has provided a venue for CGSC students to share information and present ideas regarding the military since 1934. (Photo courtesy of the Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library)

Low Crawling toward Obscurity

The Army's Professional Journals

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Congress has cut the U.S. Army's personnel strength down to 452,000—the lowest since the end of World War II. The last time the

Army lived on starvation rations between wars, more than a dozen professional military journals prepared the profession for the challenges of that war.¹ Today,

the situation is bleaker. The Army's branch magazines publish fewer pages, less often, and more erratically to an audience who has migrated away from print to downloadable PDFs to web-first publications with active social media.

This article challenges the Army and Combined Arms Center to consider the state of professional military discourse today. There is a need to improve the current situation, so this article argues for two concrete steps toward renewal. First, the Army should modernize toward web-first platforms to reach soldiers where they are. Second, the Army should consider modest incentives for writing and editing professional military publications.

Rather than low crawling toward obscurity, the Army should renew its professional publications.

Empowered: A Renewed *Infantry*

By 1 April 1934, the audience for *Infantry Journal* had dwindled. Fewer than 4,000 subscribers read the "atrociously written articles," and the Great Depression made the \$3 subscription too much for many people to afford.² Fortunately, Maj. Gen. Edward Croft, the chief of infantry, appointed Maj. Edwin Harding as its editor. Fresh from his studies at the Army War College, Harding brought experience from editing the Infantry School's *Mailing List*.³

Harding sought tough critiques of the official line and promising new authors who challenged the status quo. Better articles, new features like book reviews and editorials, and a modernized look grew subscribers to more than 10,000 in just four years.⁴ The renewed *Infantry Journal* also resuscitated other military journals by showing them how to maximize their potential.

Today, as in previous interwar periods, the Army's branch magazines need renewal. Between 1982 and 2020, *Infantry*, *Armor*, *Engineer*, and *Field Artillery (Fires*

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before 2020) have published fewer issues with fewer pages more erratically. The average number of issues and pages per year dropped from 5.25 per branch and 1,821 pages total to 3.5 issues per branch and just 442 pages.

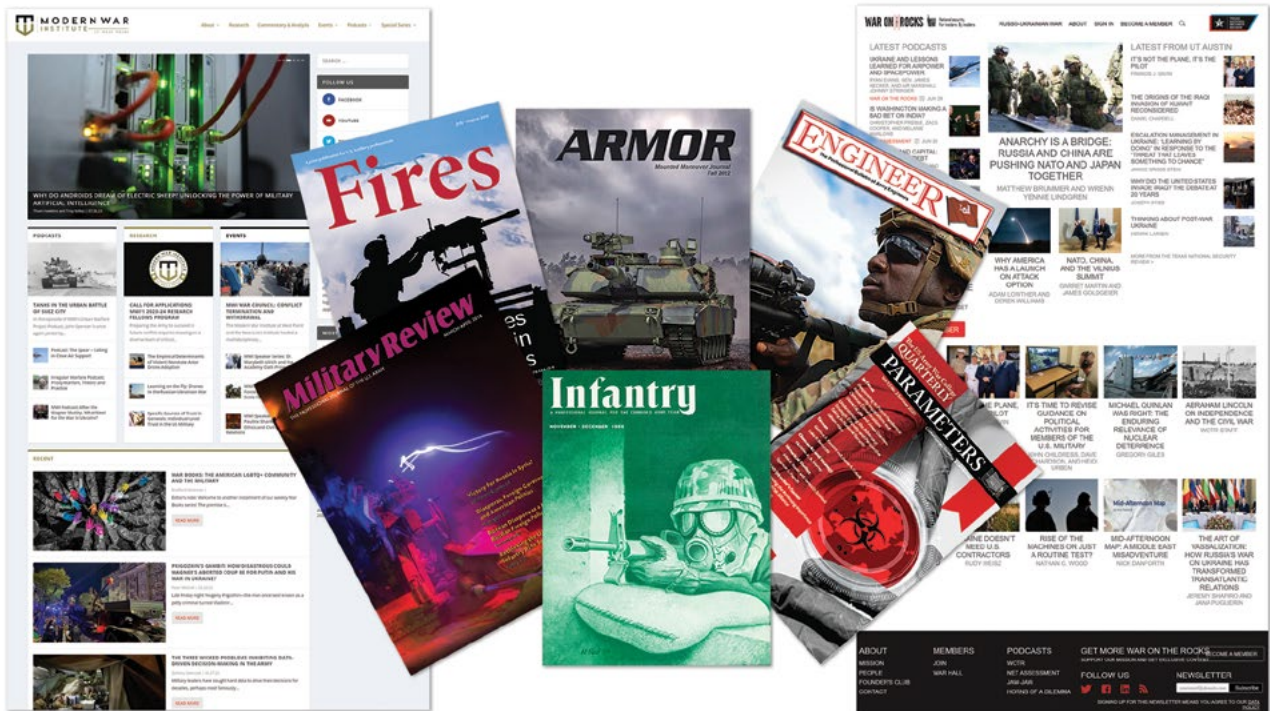


Gen. Edwin F. Harding, commanding general of the 32nd Infantry Division. As a major, Harding was appointed editor of *Infantry Journal*. His modernization of the journal more than doubled the number of subscribers. (Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons)

While aiming for quarterly publication, these branch magazines published anywhere from one to six issues per year between 2018 and 2020.⁵

As branch content has wavered, so too has engagement. Branch magazines recently transitioned to the Defense Visual Information Distribution Service—a little-known and little-browsed data repository. "Hits" average in the hundreds or low thousands per issue with only single-digit downloads. Contrast this with an article I coauthored for West Point's Modern War Institute (MWI) that hit 38,627 pageviews on just the first day. Social media engagement by branch journals is similarly weak, with no dedicated social media and single digit mentions of their journals on branch-specific accounts.⁶

The distance between editorial staffs and their communities has also widened. For *Military Review*, the masthead has dropped from 100 percent military in 1955 to 18 percent in 2022 as the mean military staff member increased from a junior major to a lieutenant colonel. Magazines like *Infantry* no longer have Hardings, instead relying on retired military or civilian editors, which may distance themselves from the problems of the force.⁷ Branch journal content and connection with the force require renewal.



(Composite graphic by Michael Lopez, Army University Press)

To chart a path forward, this article recommends modernizing military publications to web-first formats and incentivizing authors and volunteer editors to write. These conclusions are based on a review of military journals, original research into the writing patterns of the Army's authors, and an original survey of those authors.

Understanding Military Journals and Authors

Military professional journals and magazines serve multiple important purposes for the Army. While manuals and policy provide authoritative guidance, professional journals provide a venue for leaders to inform the force of the reasons behind changes.⁸ Other articles build communities around shared challenges or present lessons for immediate incorporation by units and the field and ultimate adoption into doctrine.⁹ Writing also identifies solutions to problems felt in the field and facilitates lateral connections in the Army's hierarchy. Books like Leonard Wong and Stephen J. Gerras's *Lying to Ourselves: Dishonesty in the Army Profession* achieve several of these goals, identifying the shared burden of compliance and leading to

a mandatory training reduction.¹⁰ Writing also offers an outlet for perspectives that may not find a receptive audience within traditional command structures.

Additionally, the significance of improving writing skills cannot be overstated for military professionals. For example, the Commander's Assessment Program's inclusion of writing highlights the importance of this critical skill for issuing orders and communicating effectively.¹¹ Professional writing fosters the critical thinking skills that Army Doctrine Publication 6-22, *Leadership*, codifies as a necessary attribute of Army leaders.¹² High-quality military journals effectively convey command priorities and challenge orthodoxy, contributing to the overall health and professionalism of the military.

Military journals are full of articles encouraging officers to write, but fewer seek to understand military writers or their writing habits.¹³ The only authorship survey I could find was a survey of 392 Marine Corps authors in 1988. That study found intrinsic motivations for authors predominated and that a lack of time was the biggest barrier to writing.¹⁴

Two other studies have examined engagement with military journals and their content. One bright spot is a 2008 monograph by Kareem Montague on

Table 1. Army Professional Publication Landscape

Type	Characteristics	Examples
Web-first	Content easily viewable on either desktop or mobile websites with multimedia content like podcasts	War on the Rocks, West Point’s Modern War Institute, Task and Purpose
Army institutional	Official outlets of the United States Army focused on strategic or operational issues	<i>Parameters, Military Review</i>
Branch magazines	Official outlets of Army centers of excellence focused on branch issues	<i>Infantry, Armor, Engineer, Field Artillery Bulletin</i>

(Table by author)

military learning. In it, he found a decrease in reader engagement from January 1998 to December 2007 based on published letters to the editor in *Infantry*, *Armor*, *Fires Bulletin*, and *Army Logistician*, and a survey of students at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. About forty years earlier, Alonzo Coose Jr. critiqued *Military Review*’s satisfaction of its mission by publishing the results of a 1968 readership survey and reviewing 133 articles.¹⁵ Others have studied the content of military journals.¹⁶ Despite these writings on military writing, none explore *who* military authors are or how they could help renew military journals—a real gap in how we holistically understand “talent management.”

To help understand the Army’s authors, this article analyzes the publications of and surveys military professional authors who published in eight outlets between 1 January 2022 and 20 April 2023. In total, *Parameters*, *Military Review*, *Infantry*, *Armor*, *Field Artillery*, *Engineer*, MWI, and War on the Rocks published 992 articles from 1,376 authors. Of the 1,376 authors, I identified 457 individual authors in the U.S. Army.

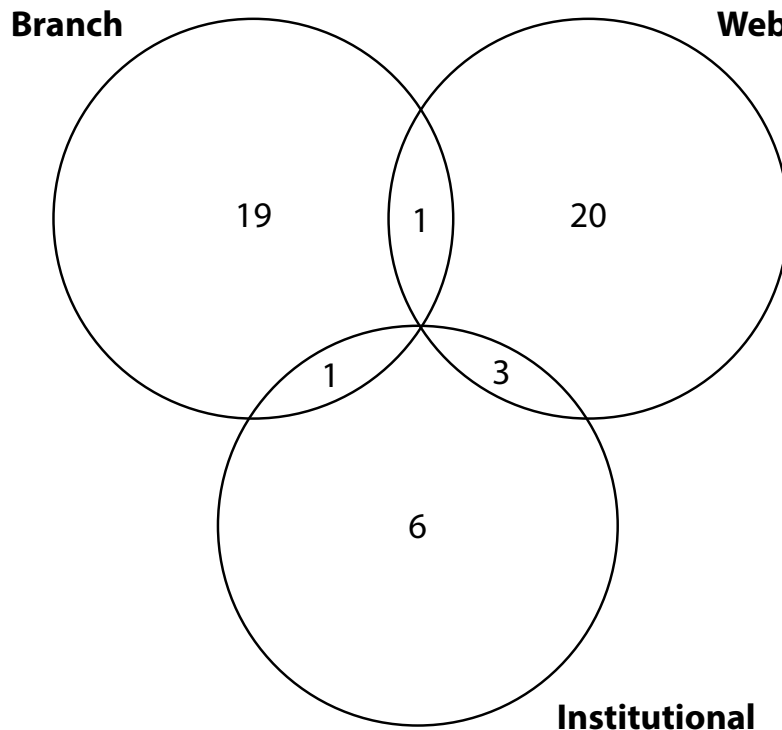
Patterns in Military Professional Publication

Web-first, Army institutional, and branch magazines confront authors as they decide where to publish (see table 1). They might aim for web-first outlets like War on the Rocks or MWI. These outlets publish 1,500-to-2,500-word articles quickly to large audiences.

To reach an Army institutional audience, authors may write 5,000-to-8,000-word articles with more extensive review for *Military Review* or *Parameters*. Finally, writers focusing on branch-specific issues may write for their branch magazines. Branch magazines publish with more erratic schedules and less editorial oversight, but they focus on issues relevant to a branch that might not be appropriate for other outlets.¹⁷

A variety of web-first outlets reach military audiences. These include War on the Rocks, MWI, From the Green Notebook, Task and Purpose, the Military Leader, and others.¹⁸ These outlets center around a webpage with written content that is easily viewable on either desktop computers or mobile devices—key information conduits that are more appropriate for today’s digital generation. They may have multiple “channels” such as MWI’s Irregular Warfare Initiative or Project 6633 with more niche content and podcasts. Web-first outlets may have an institutional affiliation as MWI does with West Point or be independent outlets like War on the Rocks or From the Green Notebook.

Web-first outlets publish a mix of military and nonmilitary authors. Together, War on the Rocks and MWI published 28 percent articles written by military authors. War on the Rocks published 78 military and 370 civilian authors, and MWI published 160 military and 256 civilians. On web-first outlets, 111 Army authors published 145 articles with a median of one article per author and a maximum of five. Of the authors, 105 were officers, two were noncommissioned



(Figure by author)

Figure 1. Stovepiped Publications by Authors of More than One Article

officers, three were cadets, and one was unknown based on the biography.

The Army's institutional journals speak to strategic and operational-level issues. *Parameters* is the journal of the Army War College. It publishes complete issues and individual articles as PDFs, which are not mobile friendly, though the Army War College produces podcasts like the *A Better Peace*, *Decisive Point*, *Conversations on Strategy*, and others. *Military Review* "provides an established and well-regarded Army forum to stimulate original thought and debate on topics related to the art and science of land warfare."¹⁹ Army University Press also publishes more specialized journals, such as two foreign language versions of *Military Review*, the *NCO Journal*, and the *Journal of Military Learning*. *Military Review* has best adapted to modern standards with content optimized for mobile, desktop, printed forms, and podcasts, but reach remains limited without a dedicated and significant social media presence.

Institutional outlets publish more than half military authors, primarily officers. Together, *Parameters* and *Military Review* published 61 percent articles by military authors, with *Parameters* publishing 33

military and 33 civilians and *Military Review* publishing 78 military and 39 civilian authored articles. In the institutional outlets, 84 Army authors published 92 articles with a median of one article per author and a maximum of three articles per author. Of the authors, 83 authors were officers and one was a warrant officer.

Branch centers of excellence publish professional bulletins or, less formally, branch magazines. These bulletins are specific to a particular functional area and act as a forum for explaining, digesting, or debating Army doctrine, policy, or other definitive information. Branch magazines may assist with specific training and professional development. However, according to Department of the Army Pamphlet 25-40, *Army Publishing Program Procedures*, branch magazines typically include "technological developments; strategy, tactics, techniques, and procedures; 'how-to' pieces; practical exercises; training methods; historical perspectives; monographs and summaries of research papers; views and opinions; and letters to the editor."²⁰ Branch magazines serve a crucial role in promoting lateral communication and sharing lessons across different units, but they have not appreciably modernized.

Branch magazines publish primarily military authors. Together, the four branch magazines under study published 89 percent of articles by military authors with *Infantry* and *Armor* publishing 96/110 and 94/107 military, respectively, and *Engineer* and *Fires* publishing 52/55 and 52/57 military, respectively. Of the 275 military authors, 268 are in the Army with 235 officers, 26 noncommissioned officers, nine warrant officers, three cadets, and two unknowns.

Beyond specific types of outlets, Army writers appear to publish within a single outlet stovepipe. While 407/457 Army authors published only one article, only 10 percent (5/50) of authors who published more than one article in this period published in multiple outlet types (see figure 1, page 21). This stovepiping suggests that military authors either may not understand the writing landscape or they return to outlets where they have a relationship with a certain editorial team.

This review of eight military writing outlets revealed two authorship trends. First, the median author is an Army officer who published one article. Second, authors who published more than one article published overwhelmingly within the same outlet type. Only five authors published articles in more than one outlet type. But who are these officers and what motivates their writing? This article reports on the results of a survey of these Army authors in the following section.

Survey of Army Authors

Renewing military publications requires better understanding of who writers are and what motivates their writing. The surveyed writers overwhelmingly had advanced civilian education, cited intrinsic motivations for their writing, and reported a lack of time as their primary barrier to writing. When working with editors, they valued timely communication and feedback, and clear submission guidance. Writers also generally considered volunteer editorial teams a viable method to improve timeliness and content quality.

The survey of military professional authors collected 70 responses from 457 Army authors for a response rate of 15.3 percent.²¹ Of those 70 responses, two responses were discarded: one had not written an article in the period under study and one was recently retired, which manifests in varying response numbers for different questions.

The following sections report on writer demographics, what makes professional military outlets effective, cultivating writers, and the viability of volunteer editors.

Demographics. Authors are whiter and more male than the Army overall, perform well, and have advanced civilian education degrees. The median respondent was a white, non-Hispanic or non-Latino male, high-performing active-duty Army major between 30 and 39 years old with a master's degree who published two articles and has completed the Captains Career Course and one broadening opportunity. For race and ethnicity, 61 respondents identified as white, three identified as black, one as white and Asian, and one as American Indian or Alaska Native. Five identified as Hispanic or Latino, and only two respondents identified as women.

A range of ages and ranks responded. For ages, two identified as under 25, 19 between 24–30, 24 between 30–39, 19 between 40–50, and four over 50. Company and field-grade officers were most common with two noncommissioned officers, one warrant officer, 27 company-grade officers, 36 field-grade officers, and one general officer.

Writers also perform well and are highly educated. Forty-one of 66 respondents reported having “5 Most Qualified” or “4 of 5 Most Qualified” evaluations of their last five evaluations. For education, 49 of 68 respondents had advanced civilian education at the master's level or above and military education appropriate for their grade. Additionally, 45 had completed one or more broadening opportunities such as teaching or a fellowship. Military writers perform well across the Army's metrics but are overwhelmingly white and male.

The median Army writer differs than the median officer at least in terms of diversity. According to a 2008 snapshot from the Military Leadership Diversity Commission, 16.9 percent of Army officers between O-1 (second lieutenant) and O-6 (colonel) are female, while only 2.9 percent of writers were. Likewise, 22.6 percent of Army officers in the same grades are from a non-Hispanic minority, while only 7.4 percent of writers were.²² The author could not find similar data for ages, education, or performance.

Respondents reported a range of publication histories: 10 had written one article, 16 had written 2–3, 25 had written 4–10, 10 had written 10–30, and five had

Table 2. Engagement with Professional Content

Frequency	Website	Social Media	Podcast	Branch	<i>Military Review</i>	<i>Parameters</i>
Daily	23	30	10	0	0	0
Weekly	27	14	19	3	8	2
Monthly	14	8	17	17	27	12
Seasonal	2	2	5	32	18	22
Yearly	0	2	4	9	6	6
Never	1	12	12	7	9	26

(Table by author)

written more than 30. For those authors who published more than one article over the course of their careers, 54 of 58 had published at more than one outlet, with 25 publishing in two to three outlets and 26 publishing in four to 10 outlets.

Effective military outlets. Analysis indicates outlets succeed because they are online and publish quality content. Authors prefer online content twice as much as podcasts or print content, which were the next most preferred. These preferences were mirrored in their engagement habits and their perceptions of their peers.

Military authors overwhelmingly considered War on the Rocks, *Military Review*, and MWI the most influential outlets. Of 116 outlets cited, War on the Rocks garnered 28 mentions, *Military Review* 18, and MWI 17. Of Army publications, respondents found that *Military Review* generally succeeded in meeting its mission, though they were less confident in either branch magazines or *Parameters*.

Writers overwhelmingly engaged by reading articles online (65/237 responses), followed by discussion on social media or in chat groups (42) and by a three-way tie among listening to podcasts, reading print articles, and writing articles (34 each). When thinking about the habits of their peers, writers thought reading online articles was most common (60/167 responses), followed by discussion on social media or in chat groups (52) and listening to podcasts (37). Authors also pointed out that many service members engage with “meme” pages on Instagram and other platforms, which may offer a

method to drive engagement with more professional military content. Table 2 depicts consumption frequency by authors. Authors visit websites or social media daily or weekly, as opposed to monthly or seasonally for branch or institutional publications. Online engagement dominates, whether reading online articles, discussing professional issues with their peers, or listening to podcasts.

Authors also most appreciate quality content. Seventy-four percent of respondents rated “quality of content” as their most important factor. Three factors vied for second place. Seventeen percent rated “senior leader engagement” as their second most important factor with regular publication schedule and having a balance of informative and argumentative articles at 14 percent. Likewise, when asked how to improve branch magazines, 38 percent of respondents prioritized content quality, 19 percent prioritized formatting for mobile viewing, and 16 percent prioritized publishing more frequently.

Given the dominant preferences for quality content optimized for online viewing, preferences for War on the Rocks, *Military Review*, and MWI make sense. This section then makes clear what other military outlets should do to improve their engagement. First, transition to web-first content. Branch magazines and *Parameters* should stop posting articles in PDF and publish in formats easily viewed on mobile devices or desktops without downloading. Second, military professional outlets must embrace social media. Formally published content may trigger debate,

Table 3. Publication Timeliness by Outlet

Wait	Web	Branch	<i>Military Review</i>	<i>Parameters</i>	Academic
Less than 1 week	7	1	0	0	0
1–4 weeks	19	7	3	2	1
1–6 months	13	32	13	4	5
7 months to 2 years	1	4	9	10	7
No experience	23	18	36	45	47

(Table by author)

but effective social media use can drive engagement with content and encourage further written discourse. Finally, outlets must publish quality content. Increasing quality means developing writers and editing their work effectively.

Developing writers and publishing writing.

Driving an idea to publication is tough but can be taught. Civilian education is an important component of writing professionally. Intrinsic factors motivate writing, while time and other commitments serve as barriers to writing more, and timely and clear feedback are key components of an editorial process.

Civilian education cultivates military writers. When asked to rank factors associated with when they started writing, 64 percent of respondents rated their civilian education as the most important. After civilian education, 22 percent rated self-teaching as the first or second most important factors, followed by on-the-job training at 21 percent and military education at 19 percent. In a free-response question on starting to write, education—especially civilian education—stood out as associated with starting to write professionally.

Free-response questions provide nuanced anecdotes that illustrate how they started writing; 29/65 mentions involved education, with 18 of those specifically mentioning civilian education. Other reasons included intrinsic motivation (8), mentorship (6), and desire to influence (6). Whether civilian education causes writing or those more likely to write pursue civilian education is not clear. Either way, civilian education may

develop the writing skills necessary but perhaps not sufficient for professional writing unless coupled with internal motivation.

Writers attribute their motivation to intrinsic factors. When asked to rank their reasons for writing, 63 percent of respondents ranked “having an idea to share” as their top reason. After “having an idea to share,” 23 percent ranked “contributing to the field” and 15 percent ranked “personal satisfaction” as their first or second motivation. Factors that might benefit an individual such as networking opportunities or career advancement were much lower. As these answers are self-reported, readers might consider this result with some skepticism. However, intrinsic motivation does accord with the limited recognition writers receive.

Generally, authors receive limited personal recognition for their writing. The most common recognition mentioned in a free-response question included notes from soldiers in the field (14), some sort of senior leader recognition in a star notes or emails (11), or a command writing award (9). Other responses included a professional military writing award such as the Red Quill (6), follow-on opportunities such as speaking in a class or at a conference (6), a small award such as an Army Achievement Medal or coin (5), public recognition at a formation or other event (4), or service on a commander’s initiatives group (1). Of note, eight respondents indicated they had never received any recognition. This lack of recognition is notable, as the barriers to writing are significant.

When asked about barriers to writing, time and other commitments dominated the responses. When asked to rank order barriers to writing, respondents rated “lack of time” as 28 percent more of a barrier than “other commitments” and 61 percent more of a barrier than the next barrier, limited access to resources. These answers accorded with their free-response answers. Of 32 responses, 23 explained why they did not write more as a lack of time (13) or other commitments (10). Other responses included burdensome editorial processes (3), skepticism by the chain of command (2), lack of impact (2), and insufficient motivation (2). Of note, writers generally felt free from censorship.²³

Editorial experiences can also impact whether and how often writers write. Of 348 responses, writers rated timely communication and feedback (63) as their top choice, followed by clear submission guidance (57), constructive criticism (48), and respect for the author’s idea and voice (46), and a collaborative editing process (41) as the most important factors. For those who reported they had a relationship with editors, 32 of 139 responses felt this relationship helped them better understand the outlet, followed by better communication and feedback during submissions, greater likelihood of acceptance, and increased confidence in the final product (27 each).

While authors did not cite timeliness of publication as a major factor, the wide variation in timeliness may impact author publication decisions. Table 3 (on page 24) shows web outlets to publish much more quickly than branch or other publications. Certainly, publications must find a balance between timeliness and quality, but neither branch outlets nor *Military Review* employ a peer-review process, suggesting they could speed their publication process with greater staff or emphasis on timeliness.²⁴

Motivated intrinsically and cultivated by civilian education, military writers overcome time barriers and other commitments and develop relationships with editors to publish quality content. The following section explores whether volunteer editors could spur a new wave of professional military discourse.

Quality content and volunteer editors. Volunteer editorial teams could renew military journals. In fact, about one-quarter of authors would voluntarily edit military journals, especially if provided modest incentives or recognition (see figure 2, page 26). Twenty-four of 68 were either “very likely” or “likely” to proofread or

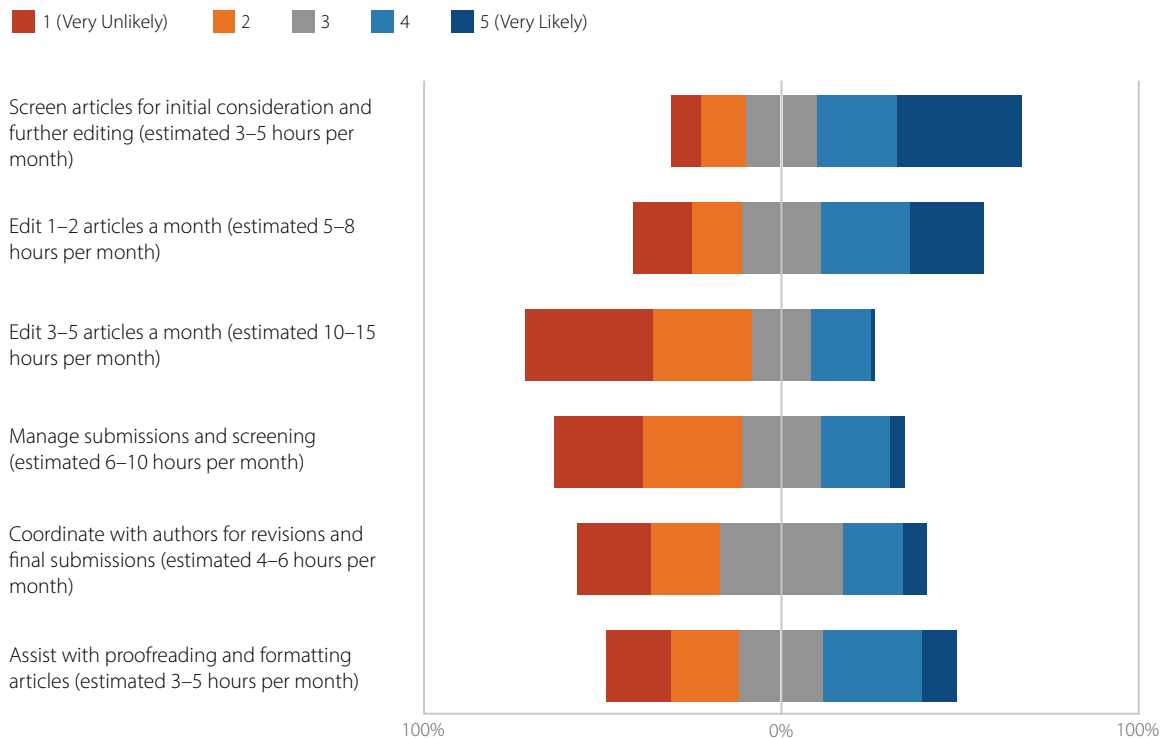
format articles (3–5 hours per month), 16 were likely to coordinate with authors (4–6 hours per month), 16 were likely to screen submissions (6–10 hours per month), and 13 were likely to edit articles (10–15 hours per month). Additionally, writers willing to volunteer in one category would consider others as well. The mean correlation between those four categories is 0.696. This means that a volunteer for any of these activities would likely consent to related volunteer tasks. About one-quarter of surveyed authors would edit, suggesting the Army may have a pool of more than 100 potential editors.

However, an outlet seeking volunteers may need to cast a wide web. No individual characteristics such as rank, age, or education was correlated with propensity to volunteer. This suggests volunteerism is an individual attribute and not common to particular groups. To draw on this potential editorial augmentation, the Army should ask them—and consider modest incentives.

Modest changes to annual evaluations or record briefs could stimulate volunteerism. Of the 98 responses to multiple-choice and free-response questions about incentives, 40 and 46 indicated that adding publications and volunteer editorial activities to the record brief or evaluation would encourage them. Of the remaining 12, three stated no incentive was required, seven thought other forms of command or board recognition would be necessary to stimulate volunteerism, and two had other comments.

Finally, when asked in a free-response question whether they had other thoughts on a volunteer model, the primary issues related to time and the editorial team. Nine authors were skeptical of the time burden associated with editing, while eight sought to make sure the editorial team avoided cliquishness or overly stringent standards for publication. The Army could harness volunteerism to renew branch magazines by asking individuals if they would like to volunteer and providing them modest recognition for their work.

The survey of Army authors delved into writer attributes, the characteristics of effective military outlets, developing and encouraging writers, and the viability of volunteer editors to help renew military publications. Authors considered outlets like War on the Rocks, *Military Review*, and MWI to be the most influential, emphasizing the importance of quality content optimized for online viewing. The survey also revealed the impact of civilian education on starting to write,



(Figure by author)

Figure 2. Volunteerism and Editorial Tasks

the intrinsic motivation of writers, and the challenge of time constraints on publication. Authors identified timely communication, feedback, and clear submission guidance as essential elements in the editorial process. As an augmentation to professional editorial teams, volunteer editors offer a way to improve timeliness and content quality—the aspects authors identified as most important to effective outlets. To renew military publications, the Army should transition to web-first content, embrace social media, and provide modest incentives for editorial volunteers.

Conclusion

In the 1930s, Harding’s hard work renewed the *Infantry Journal*. He modernized the format, sought out and cultivated writers who wrote well, and empowered a talented team. Then Lt. Col. Dwight Eisenhower appreciated the “extraordinary transformation [Harding] effected in [their] journal” while Gen. George C. Marshall described the *Infantry Journal* as “far ahead of any other military publication.”²⁵ Effective written discourse certainly helped set the Army on a path toward success in World War II.

Today, the Army has another opportunity to renew. The following three steps offer a path to transform the Army’s publication portfolio.

1. The Army must modernize branch magazines and invest in social media presences. Rather than publishing magazines as only PDFs, outlets should optimize for mobile or desktop viewing to reflect the evolution of modern media. To encourage further debate, articles should be easily shareable and have metadata compatible with citation tools like Zotero. As an interim or final step, branch magazines could tap into established brands, social media presence, and channels for niche content by partnering with outlets like MWI. Costs associated with modernizing will be modest, perhaps a few thousand dollars per outlet, and could be less if branches partner with existing outlets.

Moving or assimilating branch content into such platforms would break down the existing publication stovepipes, building relationships between authors and editorial teams who publish quality content. Writers engage with professional content on websites and social media each day. They must find the Army’s writing there.

2. The Army should stimulate quality writing and editing with modest talent management incentives.

Survey respondents overwhelmingly agreed that adding publications and volunteer editorial activities to record briefs or annual evaluations would motivate them to volunteer as an editor. Annotation of writing would also help boards identify those who communicate well.

These changes might also diversify writing. The Army's current authors are worryingly homogeneous: the median author was a white male with an advanced civilian degree. Women represented just 3 percent (2/68) of the writers, while 16 percent (10/61) are a racial or ethnic minority—far below the Army's averages of 16.9 percent and 22.6 percent, respectively. Small policy changes would both encourage volunteer editing and more diverse voices.

3. The Army should encourage introspection on four points:

- First, all outlets should periodically survey readers, authors, and senior leaders to assess their success.²⁶
- Second, the Army should consider why *civilian* education is the most-cited factor associated with professional writing. The Command and General Staff College requires written work from

all resident programs and faculty emphasize the writing rigor there, but authors reported military education as the fourth of fifth influences on learning to write professionally.²⁷

- Third, others could investigate how often and under what conditions student monographs transition into published work at *Military Review* or other outlets. These monographs are typically published online, but ideally, they also spur continued written professional engagement.
- And fourth, commands and schools should assess their writing awards programs. Assuming even one person reviews articles submitted for these awards, the return on awards programs for encouraging professional writing appears to be surprisingly small. Thoughtful consideration of these points would certainly benefit the Army generally and professional discourse more specifically.

Renewal of the Army's publications is a simple task: *modernize* the format and *incentivize* authors and volunteer editors. Leadership at the Combined Arms Center can empower the next generation of the Army's professional discourse—just like the chief of infantry did almost one hundred years ago. ■

Notes

1. Joseph Ingham Greene, ed., *The Infantry Journal Reader* (New York: Doubleday, Doran, 1943), v.

2. Leslie Anders, "The Watershed: Forrest Harding's *Infantry Journal*, 1934–1938," *Military Affairs* 40, no. 1 (1976): 12, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1986843>.

3. *Ibid.* Readers should note that *Infantry Journal* is a predecessor of *ARMY*, while *Mailing List* is the predecessor of today's *Infantry*.

4. *Ibid.*, 15.

5. While page numbers may be a crude metric, branch journals remain roughly consistent over time. They have no advertisements and simple page layouts, making the number of pages published a rough measure for content.

6. Zachary Griffiths, "Bring Back Branch Magazines," Modern War Institute at West Point, 27 April 2023, accessed 20 June 2023, <https://mwi.usma.edu/bring-back-branch-magazines/>; "Twitter Search: from: fortbenning Infantry Magazine," Twitter, accessed 20 June 2023, https://twitter.com/search?src=typed_query&q=from%3Afortbenning%20infantry%20magazine.

7. *Armor* magazine retained a military editor until 2009, while the other branches transitioned to fully civilian staffs more than a decade prior.

8. See Stephen J. Townsend, "Accelerating Multi-Domain Operations: Evolution of an Idea," *Military Review* 98,

no. 1 (September–October 2018): 4–7, accessed 20 June 2023, <https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Journals/Military-Review/English-Edition-Archives/September-October-2018/Townsend-Multi-Domain-Operations/>.

9. See Donni Reed and Zachary Griffiths, "Making Tactical Innovation Happen: Five Tips for Leveraging Creativity and Experimentation in Your Unit," Modern War Institute at West Point, 18 September 2020, accessed 20 June 2023, <https://mwi.usma.edu/making-tactical-innovation-happen-five-tips-for-leveraging-creativity-and-experimentation-in-your-unit/>.

10. See Leonard Wong and Stephen J. Gerras, *Lying to Ourselves: Dishonesty in the Army Profession* (Carlisle, PA: Army War College Press, 2015), accessed 20 June 2023, <https://press.army-warcollege.edu/monographs/466/>; Meghann Myers, "The Army Just Dumped a Bunch of Mandatory Training to Free Up Soldiers' Time," *Army Times* (website), 24 April 2018, accessed 20 June 2023, <https://www.armytimes.com/news/your-army/2018/04/24/the-army-just-dumped-a-bunch-of-mandatory-training-to-free-up-soldiers-time/>.

11. Everett Spain, "Reinventing the Leader-Selection Process: The U.S. Army's New Approach to Managing Talent," *Harvard Business Review*, November–December 2020, accessed 20 June 2023, <https://hbr.org/2020/11/reinventing-the-leader-selection-process>.

12. Steve Ferenzi, "The Death of Critical Thinking in the Military? Here's How to Fix It," Real Clear Defense, 14 January

2021, accessed 20 June 2023, https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2021/01/14/the_death_of_critical_thinking_in_the_military_heres_how_to_fix_it_656486.html; Army Doctrine Publication 6-22, *Leadership* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Publishing Office [GPO], 2019).

13. See Todd A Schmidt, "Where Have All the Warrior-Scholars Gone? A Challenge to All Military Professionals," *Military Review* 103, no. 1 (January-February 2023): 3-4, accessed 20 June 2023, <https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Journals/Military-Review/English-Edition-Archives/January-February-2023/Letter-from-the-Editor/>; Donald A. Zoll, "The Decline of Military Literature," *Parameters* 2, no. 1 (1972), accessed 20 June 2023, <https://press.armywarcollege.edu/parameters/vol2/iss1/20/>; Kenneth E. Lay, "Military Writing," *Military Review* 44, no. 7 (July 1964): 53-60, accessed 20 June 2023, <https://cgsc.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p124201coll1/id/657/>; and many others.

14. Drew Allen Bennett, "Characteristics of Successful and Unsuccessful Writers for a Military Journal" (PhD diss., Texas A&M, 1991), 8; Kareem P. Montague, *The Army and Team Learning* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: School of Advanced Military Studies, 2008), 41-51, accessed 20 June 2023, <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA485558.pdf>.

15. Alonzo L. Coose Jr., *A Critical Evaluation of Military Review* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1970), accessed 20 June 2023, <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/AD0713374.pdf>.

16. John R. Combs, "Management versus Leadership as Reflected in Selected Military Journals (1970-1985)" (master's thesis, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1986), accessed 20 June 2023, <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/citations/ADA172831>.

17. Outlets exist that are beyond the scope of this article. Authors may write for Army, the magazine of the Association of the United States Army, branch association magazines like *Army Engineer*, or other service journals, for example.

18. These websites can be found at War on the Rocks, <https://www.warontherocks.com>; Modern War Institute at West Point, <https://mwi.usma.edu>; From the Green Notebook, <https://www.fromthegreennotebook.com>; Task and Purpose, <https://www.taskandpurpose.com>; and The Military Leader, <https://www.themilitaryleader.com>.

19. "About," Army University Press, accessed 20 June 2023, <https://www.armyupress.army.mil/About/>.

20. Army Pamphlet 25-40, *Army Publishing Program Procedures* (Washington, DC: U.S. GPO, 2021), 54.

21. This survey used the Microsoft Forms application as part of the Army's Office 365 cloud. Note that this platform had significant drawbacks. More than twenty-five authors wrote me emails indicating they could not access the survey. The Combined Arms Center appeared to be completely blocked, removing at least twenty-one authors from the pool. Respondents could choose whether to answer questions, so not all questions have sixty-eight responses.

22. Military Leadership Diversity Commission, "Demographic Profile of the Active-Duty Officer Corps," Issue Paper No. 13 (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, September 2008), 2-3, accessed 20 June 2023, <https://diversity.defense.gov/Portals/51/Documents/Resources/Commission/docs/Issue%20Papers/Paper%2013%20-%20Demographic%20Profile%20of%20Active%20Duty%20Officer%20Corps.pdf>.

23. Questions about freedom to write, the influence of the chain of command, and the influence of public affairs produced mean and median agreement that writers were generally free to write what they wanted. However, for all questions at least one writer felt very restricted.

24. Anders, "The Watershed," 15.

25. Readers should note that *Military Review* developed Online Exclusives to more rapidly publish articles independent of or ahead of publication in the journal. This is a laudable effort that could be improved with greater social media reach to increase awareness.

26. The last survey occurred in 1991. See "Reader Survey," *Military Review* 71, no. 5 (May 1991): 95-96, <https://cgsc.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p124201coll1/id/488/rec/4>; Coose, *A Critical Evaluation of Military Review*.

27. "Degree Programs," U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, last updated 19 April 2023, accessed 20 June 2023, <https://armyuniversity.edu/cgsc/degreeprograms>; Trent J. Lythgoe, "Some Modest Advice for the Command and General Staff Officer's Course Class of 2020," *The Field Grade Leader*, 19 January 2019, accessed 20 June 2023, <https://fieldgradeleader.themilitaryleader.com/cgsc-advice/>.

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