

College of the Holy Cross

## CrossWorks

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Cross Current

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Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps, College of the Holy Cross

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# CROSS CURRENT

## The Garbage Man's Responsibility

I am sure that every student of Holy Cross has many unwritten opinions which are worth being written, and are worth being contemplated by the community. It matters very little whether you are an intellectual or an athlete, a Catholic or a non-believer, a member of the Officer Training Corps or otherwise blessed. If you have an idea and you honestly think it has worth, why not write it down and make a note of it. It doesn't have to be a long dissertation involving deep psychological motives. An honest opinion concerning the Navy, Holy Cross, Administration, Students, Reserve Officer Training Corps, Revolutionary Student Union or any topic of current interest is definitely needed and wanted by the Cross Current. If you are willing to write a small article please contact one of the staff, anytime. I'm sure that most of you people get rather tired of throwing out our paper every two weeks. Perhaps it tickles your satisfaction way down deep, but so does a back scratcher. Instead, why don't you use your wrist energy to write an article. Indeed, you have a responsibility.

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## New Hope

### For An All-Volunteer Army

New plans for changes in military regulations have revived hope for an all-volunteer army. Recently, the Army followed the Navy's example by announcing that "unnecessary, irritating and unreasonable demands" on soldiers would be eliminated. Both the Army and Navy plans call for changes in the life style of the men in the ranks. Hopefully these are changes which will increase enlistments and improve morale, and if successful, they could bring an end to the draft through the realization of an all-volunteer army.

On the surface, these plans involve longer hair and less "garbage hauling", but the new ideas go deeper than that. The military is trying to develop the "dignity and inherent value of every man," as Lieutenant General George Forsythe said when he announced the new army plans. General Forsythe was named special assistant to the Secretary of the Army, to work on an end to the draft through an all-volunteer army.

It is possible that these plans will bring an end to conscription, military service becoming a matter of choice. Millions of America's youth could be freed from the uncertainty of waiting out the draft call.

By Michael Sise

The Cross Current is published bi-weekly by the midshipmen of the Holy Cross Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps. The opinions expressed herein are personal and are not necessarily those of the Department of Naval Science or any other governmental agency.

## Professional Competence

In today's highly competitive world professional competence ranks as a primary objective for each and everyone. What do we mean by professional competence? First, it is the ability to perform the duties and tasks as required by one's position to a high degree of accuracy, confidence, and efficiency. Second, it is the knowledge not only of what must be done but why it is done. Third, it is the ability one has of maintaining rigidity in the performance of a position while exercising appropriate flexibility in the achievement of that performance. And fourth, it is the acceptance, mentally, physically and emotionally, of a professional goal and the culmination of it in a healthy and humane atmosphere.

Each and every day, we are confronted with opportunities that test our professional competence. Most of these are so seemingly insignificant that they are often overlooked or ignored. Since we are students our competence must be geared towards the learning process. Attendance at classes, conscientiousness with assignments, recitation in seminars; all these test our performances as "professional students". In extra-curriculars we are tested in the teamwork of sports, in the art of public debate, in the social endeavors of Worcester community associations, in general dealings with people.

For the Midshipmen, participation in the WROTC program affords a constant opportunity to develop one's talents of "professionalism" which must be used upon graduation.

Consider the three alternatives for receiving a Navy commission. The first is through the Naval Academy. Here, professionalism is drilled into the Midshipmen's heads and a certain pride is instilled through rigid discipline. Academy graduates learn backwards and forwards what it takes to be an officer. In addition, they are intimately accustomed to the Navy, its customs and traditions. Once more, they achieve a technical competence which is hard to match.

The second method is through Officer Candidate School (OCS) where recent college graduates go through a "speed course" and receive their commissions after a few months. These men must struggle to learn the ropes while out with the fleet. In many cases, their professional knowledge about the Navy is limited and requires time and effort to cultivate.

The third way to receive a commission is through the WROTC program. These students get to see and hear more about the complaints and criticisms of the military. They can experience, first hand, student dissent uncensored and unabridged. And also, WROTC students are given the freedom to pursue their own achievements of competency at their pace.

This last point warrants further consideration. With freedom there exists responsibility and in this case, the responsibility is to oneself and to the Navy. After all, several years will be spent exercising the skills developed during the training period at Holy Cross. But it is the obligation of each and everyone of us to see that these skills are formed properly. Leaders are not born, they are made. We have the facilities to cultivate skill in handling men, in management, in operations, in attaining professional competence.

What then should we be doing in the Holy Cross WROTC? We should be developing a desire to exert leadership and to express concern over men we will soon be commanding. We should cultivate confidence and not shy away from seemingly difficult tasks. We should question, yet seek the answers for why we do what we do. There are answers, but it takes professional competency ( and often enormous experience ) to come close to providing full and complete answers. We should be cooperating at all times with our partners by sharing the burdens of work and responsibility while providing good example at all times. We should take the time to read and appreciate professional essays and opinions published after much thought and research.

In short, we should be spending our four years at Holy Cross building up our professionalism as a student and, in addition, taking advantage of the vast, but often hidden, opportunities of the WROTC. Only then can we be proud to say we have accepted the challenge to achieve professional competence.

By Kenneth Narra