Social Theory and Red Teaming: An integrative approach

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That which cannot be believed will not be seen (Dekker, 2011, p. 97).

Introduction

Red Teaming, or Alternative Analysis, is not a new or revolutionary concept to military planners and leaders. The process has been around for centuries, arguably dating back to the first game of chess (Syed, 2015). Red Teaming is a process that raises security awareness by challenging assumptions, vulnerabilities, and risks within a planning process (Masys, 2012). As a result there has been a significant amount of research done lately on the topic. The goal of the body of this research is to improve the Red Team itself, through its processes or perspective.

The recent research has demonstrated the need for expanding methodology from purely analytical processes to include psychological processes including Neutrosophic Cognitive Mapping (NCM), mental model framing with advanced scenario planning (Masys, 2012), and identity theory approaches for threatscaping activities of Red Team members (List, 2015; Matherly 2013). These approaches have been largely exploratory demonstrating the potential applicability of identity theory to Red Teaming methodology based on published Alternative Analysis guides (List, 2015; Matherly 2013; Rao 2010). The need to challenge current analytical techniques (Rao, 2010), define social identity’s role in threatscaping (List, 2015; Masys, 2012), and apply it in analysis (Matherly, 2013; Masys, 2012) has been noted as needed areas of further study.

Group formation and synergistic effects are the focus of considerable research in the business and organization leadership communities. Yet, a review of current Red Teaming literature finds no discussion on the subject. To address the gap in literature this paper will examine the unit’s Red Teaming efforts through the application of social motivational and development theories.
The basis of this research is found on the formation and execution of a Red Team during a major military event from a social psychological perspective. The Red Team served in an advising role to a component commander within their operational headquarters while assigned abroad. The unit in question is a very rank conscious, high tempo, command level unit. It consists of tens of thousands of troops whose rank range from General officers with decades of service down to Privates with only weeks in the military. There are generally 5 to 6 departments with specific titles that provide services that range from kinetic operations (G3, fires) to legal and humanitarian operations (Special Staff), each containing a diverse mix of individuals.

The exact tasks the team undertook and their products are immaterial to this research. What is critical are the social processes and events that occurred throughout the team’s formation and operation. For reasons involving security and confidentiality of those involved specifics that are not critical to the Team’s development and productivity, have been left out of the account or simplified. The goal of this research is to understand and improve the social processes that arose from the formation and execution of a Red Team in the unit described above.

The purpose of this research is to apply social theory to the Unit to better understand how group and intraindividual processes not only shapes the roles of Red Teaming, but also offer methodological practices that could aid in overcoming these limits. This research will address two specific questions. First, how do group and intraindividual processes shape the roles of Red Teaming in the observed military community? And conclude with, how can the same aid in overcoming these limits?

**Background**

The social stressors felt by members of a Red Team are many. Increased stress can negatively affect group formation and performance (Hunziker et al., 2011). This applies to
numerous individual ad group processes and how they interact with one another. As briefly discussed the diverseness of each of the Unit’s departments is extremely varied. This varied background compounded with differing understandings of operational requirements it is little wonder that the unit’s Red Team ran into developmental problems. But, was it the participant’s operational background or simple group dynamics that led to these problems?

The Unit received notification of a major event twenty four months prior to execution. This event was a major exercise that included multiple services and nations with the expressed goal of furthering international and joint relations amongst the agencies. All of the departments discussed above began working on processes, working groups, and information sharing methods no later than twenty months prior to the event. Upon execution of the event all the teams had significant amount of time working together. Through this extensive process of normalizing relationships each team had achieved a heightened level of cultural normalization amongst group members.

Normalization is not a single faceted realization. For groups to successfully achieve normalization individual members must balance self-esteem, identity, attitudinal functions, and emotions to match that of the group as a whole (Tekleab & Quigley 2014; Swann et al., 2012). It is theorized that the root of this conflict rests with individual social motives and normalization in intraindividual contexts. Social Identity Theory describes a foundational process in which teams evolve and form through social categorization (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). The Red Team was formed the week of the exercise, almost two years after all of the other teams began their group formation processes. It was comprised of members from each of the established teams who were instructed to attend meetings on a semi-regular basis.
This brief review of group based identity structure and associated theory offers insight into the precursors and psychological impacts that team formation has on individuals. In an operational military environment it may seem trivial to consider an individual’s perception or the greater influence of group dynamics and identity. But, as has been highlighted here there is a significant amount of insight into these motivators that is lacking. This paper will go on to expand on the application of Social Identity Theory to encompass the Unit’s collective judgement and problem solving abilities, how well information is handled – including hidden profiles, homogeneity amongst groups and how the majority of the unit responds to the minority input of the Red Team.

**Discussion**

This research will consider a variety of encompassing and interrelated attributes that surmise the application of group development as seen in with the Unit’s Red Team. The specific processes presented in this section evolve from processes involved in group formation and normalization into the effects of group formation on the individual. The discussion will close with a presentation of the integrative effects individuals play in intergroup relations. Presenting the research in this manner allows for a simultaneous review of the problems that arose during the Red Team’s formation while developing thematic root causes and solution sets.

**Group Socialization**

There are five basic phases to group membership which discusses the processes an individual goes through when joining a group. These phases include investigation, socialization, maintenance, resocialization, and remembrance (Meeussen, Delvaux, & Phalet, 2014). There are five distinct actions that signal the transition from one phase to another. They include entry, acceptance, divergence, and exit.
When the Red Team was formed there were already a number of teams operating at the maintenance and resocialization loop of the process. When each of these teams contributed their member to the Red Team each came to the new group with the culture and socialized tasks that allowed them to operate within their original groups. The new group and its members were forced to exchange ideas and nuances relative to their personal values and expectations as they existed in their respective original groups (Meeussen, Delvaux, & Phalet, 2014). This exchange of attitudes caused a lengthy investigation and socialization period as the group attempted to feel out each participant and identify their role in the group.

The conflicts that began to arise came from conflicting individual membership roles between the original group and the Red Team. The culture each member had established with their current group was at odds with that of the Red Team. In one aspect of membership they were asked to contribute to and build a plan of action to advance the evolution of the Units involvement and command of the assigned mission. This is an interesting attribute to discuss, the members of the Red Team are being involuntarily placed a newly forming group whose goal is contradictory to their host groups (Ryan & Bogart, 1997). In this unique case the Red Team can be viewed as an out group in comparison to its membership, each still holding identity and affiliation to their original groups.

Red Teams are formed as a sub-cultural group with the expressed intent of questioning normalcy in the larger group. On the surface, and to any Red Teamer, this seems simple and appropriate enough. However, in practice this singular purpose of a Red Team can be its own downfall. There is a considerable amount of time and detail placed on intra-team formation, but little is placed on inter-team formation. Understanding how a team forms and the significant
importance communication and emotion plays in this development is critical to a well incorporated Red Team.

**Emotion of Group Formation**

As groups form and normalize they will encounter two consistent tasks that must be addressed; instrumental and expressive. These tasks are often initiated at an individual level, rising and (ideally) resolving themselves quickly. In general terms they are considered micro-tasks (Kelly & Barsade, 2001). Instrumental tasks are ones that concern themselves with the object or goal of the team itself (Kelly & Barsade, 2001). Expressive tasks are socio-emotional based. These tasks revolve around maintenance of the social and emotional stability of the group, all tasks related to the synergy of the group not related to the specific goal of the group (Kelly & Barsade, 2001). The equilibrium hypothesis manages the interaction of these two tasks by stating that when progress is made in one, the other generally suffers (Bales, 1973). In the military community it can be common place for leaders and other group members to ignore expressive tasks rather than working them out. If either of these general tasks are ignored the resulting conflict will only compound and lead to a stoppage of progress for the group (Kelly & Barsade, 2001). The instrumental and expressive tasks of a team are ongoing throughout the existence of the assembly and only cease once the group disbands.

Groups also go through phases of development, or macro tasks, in relation to each of the micro tasks. Instrumental phases include; orientation, evaluation, and control (Kelly & Barsade, 2001). This describes how a group will orient their perspective to a goal, evaluate the progress, and normalize towards an outcome. Expressive phases are more of a continuum ranging from unemotional to controversial (Kelly & Barsade, 2001). At the onset most group members will remain polite and gradually become more controversial in their emotional or social conflicts.
In Red Teaming the macro development of expressive phases can easily become counterproductive towards the teams goals. Leaders are often better suited to handle either instrumental or expressive conflicts within a group. The better a leader understands the differences and occurrences of each of these problem sets the better they can effectively manage a group when it becomes dysfunctional.

An important note on group development and emotion is emotional cognition. This is a process whereby emotional feelings are shared throughout a group. These emotions are mostly transferred by way of physical cues, most especially facial expressions (Moore & Oaksford, 2002). This is a form of socially induced affects and comes from another person’s affect. There is strong evidence to support a more prevalent sharing of concordant, rather than disconcordant, affects (Kelly & Barsade, 2001). As micro and macro expressive influences occur throughout the group they are likely to replicate amongst group members. This replication leads to a generalized state of homogeneity and increased proficiency. This homogeneity can be observed in individual’s emotional actions as well as physical actions.

Groups and Performance

Social Sharedness is a Theory that describes how individuals in a close group setting can share not only cognitive processes, but identity as well (Larson & Christensen, 1993). Social cognitive sharedness is developed over time. It is the summation of a gradual process in which an individual is exposed to cultural primers and environments that teach them what is acceptable and not. The development of this right versus wrong perception influences the individual’s cognitive decision making process. As more and more people in a group begin to share in similar experiences and develop similar perceptions their cognitive processes begin to show increasing signs of similarity (Larson & Christensen, 1993).
This process is not limited to active cognitive functions. Social sharedness processes also have significant impact on implicit attitudinal processes. Implicit attitudes form with little to no active cognitive input from the individual (Fiske et al., 2010). When a group of people are exposed to similar events over a period of time their sub conscious will formulate impressions and attitudinal dispositions towards those events, either favorable or unfavorable. In a social setting these developed dispositions will share a degree of similarity form person to person that reflect a deeper underlying mantra of social sharedness throughout the population (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995).

From a social sharedness perspective both explicit and implicit cognitive influences can affect how both the individual and group respond to stimuli. The effect of social sharedness on group performances is directly related to how well information and/or cognitive processes are shared amongst group members (Tindale & Kameda, 2000). Such processes could have positive or negative effects on a population. As groups continue to further sub-define themselves into self-identified groups the potential for negative performance increases. The minimal group paradigm demonstrates that groups of people will divide themselves into competitive sub-groups regardless of resource or realistic threat (Otten & Wentura, 1999). Social Identity Theory explains that as these divisions occur group members will identify with common traits of their selected in-group. The deeper are more frequent (shared) the implicit and explicit attitudes of the group members are the more bound in a shared mental model groups will be. This can lead to not only increased performance of the specific in-group but, also increased conflict between the two. The Social Decision Scheme Theory discusses how various influences affect group decision making processes. Of all the various, and valid, influences one has demonstrated a consistent influence over groups; the majority rules (Tindale & Kameda, 2000).
Considering Social Identity Theory and how groups can form along shared social traits including both explicit and implicit cognitive attitudes it is little surprise to note the potential for homogeneity (sharedness) in group performances and outcomes. This can be expressed though a mathematical equation that evaluates the probability of information being shared within a group. The formula \( p(D) = 1 - [1 - p(M)]^n \) states that the probability of a group member discussing information is one minus the probability no one mentions the information (Stasser & Titus, 1987). Accordingly the more people who have the information the higher the probability it will be addressed and the less likely more remote knowledge will be deliberated.

Kolb and Swol (2016) surmised the problem set of data usage with one word “effective” (p. 1). This is echoed by the formula discussed above. If only one person holds valuable knowledge in a larger group then mathematically it likely won’t be discussed as groups will favor information held by the majority. This does not invalidate the value or potential effectiveness of the solitary knowledge. Kolb and Swol (2016) argue that groups who actively value novel or solitary inputs are more likely to see success over time than homogenous groups. These separatist groups reject synchronous orientations in favor of considering all information available to them. In a study that used a fictions murder mystery with a hidden profile separatist groups accurately selected the culprit 61% of the time, versus a 38% success rate for synchronous groups (Kolb & Swol, 2016). The hidden profile experiment consists of separating information on a subject into various profiles. Some of the profiles have redundant information and a minority of the profiles have key attributes that can, properly, point the group to success (Stasser & Titus, 2003). The study revealed that there can be significant social price to possession and advocating for unique information. If the individual in possession of the information felt the impact to their social standing was too costly they would drop it “like a hot
potato” (Stasser & Titus, 2003 p. 308). This could be overcome if the group knew different information was distributed to the members, the social status was high of the separatist individual, there was written media, or at least one other member advocated for the separatist (Stasser & Titus, 2003 p. 308). These actions aided in creating a separatist environment in which groups were more likely to correctly complete tasks as when compared to synchronous groups.

**Group Problem Solving**

Red Teaming in an organizational setting could include any organization, not just the military, from a new business trying to understand an emerging market, to a large company trying to outpace a competitor, and even a medical researcher trying to narrow potential sources of an epidemic. A Red Team’s entire goal is to enhance problem solving and avoid unknown-unknowns, alternatively referred to as black swans (Paté-Cornell, 2012).

Organizations cannot operate based on Red Team inputs alone, they need to operate within their areas of expertise and with resources available to them. This often creates an area of conflict between Red Teams and organizational planners who both perceive the world differently with distinct ways of achieving the same results. Problem solving is critical for any organization that employs a Red Team. Issues related to cognitive decision making, cultural climates, and collective judgement can all come together to negatively affect the success of a Red Team.

The Red Team finds itself at a crossroads between the two articles of cognitive decision making. Each of these areas lay on opposite ends of truth. Closer to the subjective end of the spectrum one will find selection versus rating tasks and at the other, objective, end there will be intellective versus judgmental tasks (Mohammed & Ringseis, 2001). Simply put the former comprises decisions that are based more on individual preferences and requires at least a degree of rating. This requires individuals to take stock of the options at hand and resolve one of them
based on a mutual conclusion. The latter process is one where there is a definable right and wrong answer. The latter of these, intellective versus judgmental, tasks is more grounded. These tasks have a right and wrong answer that can be demonstrated (Mohammed & Ringseis, 2001). The Red Team attempts to understand and articulate intellective versus judgmental type tasks - what will an adversary do – when there is no specific methodology to predict the future. Red Teams often find themselves attempting to employ selection versus rating methodology to address what are largely intellective versus judgmental questions.

This mishmash only fuels intragroup conflict within an organization employing Red Teams for decision making. Another factor that influence collective decision making within an organization is culture. Organizational culture is a critical component in the success or failure of not only a Red Team, but the organization as a whole. In order to survive, adapt, and overcome the challenges presented in nearly all fields (including business, security, medical, etc.) an organization must have a collective culture that promotes and encourages adaption and change (Alvesson & Sveningsson 2015).

Collective judgement is a concept that can be surmised through the idea of schisms (Mohammed & Ringseis, 2001). This is the tendency for groups of people to strengthen general tendencies of opinions within the group. There are several conditions that can cause this polarization and when discussing Red Teams social comparison can be the primary motivator. In this context social comparison theory discusses how individuals’ perceptions in a group setting will gradually grow from relatively moderate to extreme, based on the viewpoints of other group members (Festinger, 1954). This alteration of an individual’s identity follows back to social identity theory which defines that individuals will form groups aligned with common desirable traits which is expressed as a collective identity that is further motivated by the core social need
to belong (Brewer & Gardner 1996). In other words the desire to belong and self-enhance ends up influencing individuals to take on opinions different from their own in order to maintain membership. This motivation can create tight intragroup bonds that cause conflict between groups with opposing views. Red Teams in an organizational environment often make proposals that are counter intuitive or directly challenge the findings of other groups. When one considers the cognitive processes discussed above it is of little surprise that such recommendations would be met with hostility. The findings of the Red Team are not received as constructive or an alternative analysis of facts, they are received as a direct attack on the individual identity of each group member in the other group.

In summation each of these individual factors amplify and cause increasing strain on intergroup relationships that negatively impact the ability of an organization to effectively employ a Red Team to problem solve. Not only does this alienate Red Team members from the rest of the organization it drains vital resources needed for the institution’s growth.

**Group Influence on Attitudes**

Groups influence how individuals perceive themselves and others. This process can be surmised by two specific functions of attitudes, social-adjutive and value-expressive. Social-adjutive attitudes are ones that are altered or re-defined through social interaction while value-expressive attitudes are ones that individuals use to express their values or membership in a social group (Greenwald, 2014). Personality type relating to high-self-monitoring and low-self-monitoring has been shown to determine how group influences affect individual attitude change (DeBono, 1987). These distinctions can be broadly drawn across individualistic versus collectivist cultures. Individuals from collectivist cultures exhibit a general tendency towards a
high-self-monitoring view, while individualistic cultures often have low-self-monitoring traits (Tyler, Kearns, & McIntyre, 2016).

The social group in which individuals find themselves plays a significant role in the formation and development of their own attitudes. Social groups will define salient behaviors and attitudes that then form the basis of that social group (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005). These norms provide the functioning dogma of a group and, according to social identity theory, individuals will then categorize themselves in accordance with the dogmatic practices they identify most with. A further implication of this process of social categorization and shared salient attitudes is the perception of threat to a group. The minimal group paradigm expands on social identity theory to describe that groups will perceive threat to one group based on differences in salient attitudes, regardless of their applicability to any real or perceived resources (Janneck, Bayerl, & Dietel, 2013). This shapes the overarching concept of intergroup threat and the negative attitudes associated with it. The identification of a threatening out-group can be established on something as simple as unshared information. The hidden profile test demonstrated how singular groups could rift into separate ones based simply on available information (Stasser & Titus, 2003). When a group collectively identifies another group as a threat, regardless of available facts or information, the attitude of the threatened group turns against the out-group. This attitude can become systemic and is eventually shared by members of the in-group who have had no interaction or exposure to the out-group.

This collective thinking and shared attitudes model has been demonstrated by the Asch-type line test (Bond & Smith, 1996). In this study a group of confederates all, intentionally, judge the comparative length of a line incorrectly to test the subject’s conclusion on the same task. This test demonstrated that individuals were more likely to go against their own assessments of a
scenario in favor of a collective group judgement (Asch, 1951). These findings describe how individual attitudes can be shaped by a social group. The judgement of a line length may see superficial when propped against possible immoral behavior. Yet, such behavior is not immune and has been documented in social experiments such as the Stanford Prison experiment and Milgram’s social obedience experiment (Zimbardo, 2007; Milgram, 1973). In both trials participants were asked to complete a task they normally wouldn’t do by an authoritative figure in which they identified, to a group they saw as the out-group. The fact that the in-group in Milgram’s experiment was small, the participant and an authoritative figure, demonstrates the strong effects of the in-group on an individual’s attitudes.

**Self-Concept and the Group**

Self-concept is the notion of how an individual views themselves. It is a mental summation of the things they stand for, against, believe in, and strive to accomplish. Violating these tenants will lead to dissonance and the possibility of a lower self-evaluation (Chang, Solomon, & Westerfield, 2016). Aside from self-evaluation maintain a self-concept has roots in social interaction and motivation. The social component will influence an individual’s perception, feelings, reactions and behavior (Morran, & Stockton, 1980).

This interplay of perception and evaluation is the basis for seeking membership in what are initially out-groups. The goal of seeking membership is to reinforce a positive self-evaluation. Only domains where a positive self-image is possible are sought out, while ones that will elicit a negative evaluation are avoided. Individual selves are created in the context of the individual’s social or cultural environment. This environment provides a plethora of values, morals, and norms on which a self-concept is devoted (Morran, & Stockton, 1980).
This approach is reflected by Swann’s self-verification theory. The theory describes how individuals are motivated to preserve a positive self-definition and will either seek out or create realities that reflect that (Swann, 1997). It provides the individual a predictability of how the world conducts itself and offers predictions on its continued evolution.

Besides being a social motivator rooted in self-evaluative processes, it is also a cognitive structure. As a cognitive structure self-concepts are based on experiences. These experiences not only shape, but are shaped by what is deemed important by the definition of the self (Morran, & Stockton, 1980). The meaning of these experiences are shaped by the image of the self-based on the positive evaluative criteria discussed above.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly to Red Team formation is the Social Identity of self-concept. This emphasizes categorization of other individuals and group traits by the observer. The observer then identifies what social grouping best represents the self in which they identify and strives to become a member of that group (Morran, & Stockton, 1980). An individual can identify membership in many social groups, as a result their self-concept is shaped by the categorical attributes of each group.

As was mentioned earlier, these teams are often hastily formed and the membership is comprised of random individuals from various departments that have worked together for a considerable amount of time. Applying the model of social identity to self-concept shows how individuals will harbor loyalty to their indigenous group. Loyalty is not particularly in defense of others any more than it is a defense of the self. The individual has come to identify a part of their self-concept as tied to the success or failure of their initial performance group.

The individual who works in the department known as ‘G5’, which is responsible for developing operational plans and contingencies, that is attached to the Red Team is likely to
consider any product from this department as a good or sound plan. If it were not viewed as such then their self-concept would be in conflict – especially if they had a hand in its initial development. This friction point can cause issues not just for the Red Team as a whole but, how the individual is accepted back in their original team. The individual’s self-concept which identifies with G5 is challenged when the Red Team analyses G5’s plan. Worse yet, the group’s perception of the individual’s membership as a trustworthy member is also challenged – by both teams. The individual now finds themselves in a dilemma where they no longer feel welcomed by their original group and betrayed by the Red Team.

**Self-Esteem and the Group**

Self-esteem is a process of self-evaluation (Brown, 2014). The evaluative judgements are inwardly directed at the self and occur in a manner that is faster than other assessments. When evaluations occur of the self they are generally more positively evaluated. This will apply to intergroup dynamics as well. Regardless of reasoning or arbitrary basis of groupings an individual will favor the in-group over the out-group. This is known as the ownership affect (Feys, 1991).

This is an important attribute for Red Teams to remember. The tendency for a team to favor the in-group is high, but that does not mean that members will favor their assigned group. An in-group is any group that the individual feels is their rightful group, regardless of membership. Being a member of what is perceived as an out-group can lead to negative self and group evaluations. Often Red Team members are chosen as representatives from various parts of a planning staff and only come together on occasion. The lack of consistent contact between members combined with principals of alternative analysis can further influence the occurrence of
minimal group paradigm placing the Red Team as an out-group by its own members. As a result social comparison will occur.

Social comparison is a process that individuals undertake where an evaluative assessment is made of another individual or group (Brown, 2014). The results of this assessment can raise or lower the observer’s self-esteem, especially if the observed party is a psychological peer. Of course if the assessment is made that the peer is outperforming the observer the self-assessment will be negative, thusly influencing self-esteem and individual motivation. The negative impact to these two attributes will also negatively influence performance and productivity.

When groups are formed in a hasty or ill-defined manner the likelihood that individuals will not positively identify with the group is high. As a consequence of this evaluation not only would the individual’s self-evaluation suffer, but motivation for success of the group would be negatively affected.

**Social Judgement**

Social Judgement theory is a knowledge based process where individuals consistently compare already known knowledge against new knowledge and assess an appropriate attitudinal approach (Suls, & Wheeler, 2012). An individual’s past experiences provide the context of the translation of new knowledge. But, how that knowledge is processed is based not just on past experiences but, much of the receptive nature towards knowledge is based on the information itself. Humans are naturally curious, we crave knowledge. This fact however, does not mean that people are curious about every topic available, nor do they hold all information in the same regards. With consideration to how the functions of attitudes are defined this study considers curiosity as also having ‘functions’.
The first of these functions is preference. Individuals have a preference in what knowledge sought out. Generally speaking people will prefer to learn new information on a topic in which they already know something about (Menon & Pfeffer, 2003). If the information is part of a subject or theme that the individual is not knowledgeable about their interest in learning it will be less. Another ‘function’ is applicability. Applicability refers to how applicable the information is to the individual, ‘will it have a direct impact or not?’ is the question asked when evaluating the information. If the information will have a direct impact on the observer then their interest and desire to learn will be higher, regardless of topic (Case et al., 2005). The last ‘function’ is self-improvement. Generally following a failure or other situation that negatively impacts an individual they seek out information to rectify the flaw (Case et al., 2005). Through this process individuals will take in and internalize information that could have led to the prevention of the problem.

With all forms of knowledge seeking and internalization there are bound to be cognitive problems in processing the information. One such quandary is the presentation of conflicting information. When individuals are presented with information that conflicts with what they already know or expect they experience an expectancy violation (Menon & Pfeffer, 2003). Individuals will cope with such information by either dismissing it or attempting to rationalize the data in comparison to the knowledge the already hold. Another shift in how individuals process information happens when they believe they will be held accountable for their assessments of knowledge. Individuals become increasingly select with their knowledge formation and synthesis when their reputation or other assets are at stake. The result is generally a carefully articulated result that is more likely to be free of correspondence bias (Hopthrow et
al., 2016). However, individuals under this condition are prone to dissolution affect by placing too much emphasis or importance on less critical data.

The propensity to assimilate knowledge is directly related to an individual’s identified social grouping. Social Judgement plays an overarching role in what information an individual will already know, and believe, as well as what knowledge they will avoid, or not believe. This is underlined by social consistency where individuals act in a manner in which they believe is consistent (Dressler, 1988). Here knowledge plays the role of offering predictability and consistency to the individual not only in their own self-evaluation, but that of the greater social environment.

**Majority versus Minority Dynamics**

In nearly all social settings there are a distinguishable majority and minority. This divergence in statuses can come in nearly any combination and is situation dependent. Watching any of the mainstream news outlets several are immediately clear; race, gender, political alignment, sexual orientation, and even preference of news station. Social Identity theory describes how individuals will sub-divide into groups in which membership aligns with regards to individual identity. The minimal group paradigm goes on to show how these groups can be arbitrarily formed. It is important to note this interaction because, whenever groups are formed there will always be a majority and a minority. When discussing Red Teams a few of these categorical memberships can be easily identified.

Three main categorical distinctions that place the Red Team in the minority of all the other functional groups in our unit are; 1) longevity 2) favoritism and 3) unity. Each of these three place the Red Team as a minority population within the larger group. Longevity describes the length of time that the group has existed. Comparatively to all the other groups within the
unit (intelligence, plans, fires, CAMEL (civil and military logistics), etc.) which have functioned together as a group for up to a year prior, the Red Team has only come together at the beginning of an event. In these terms the Red Team is unrecognized by other teams as a legitimate organ that supports the overall unit. However, a perceived favoritism by leadership can be inferred. This new group receives special attention and time from leadership who values the conclusions of a relatively small team in contrast to the combine conclusion of a larger group. Both of these factors can feed into a lack of unity amongst the groups, but the Red Team specifically will be marginalized as a minority for its analyses alone. While the majority of the unit’s staffs work together to develop a common plan the Red Team is analyzing that plan for potential shortcomings including bias, assumptions, and a misunderstanding of enemy motivations.

Wooten (1995) used Self-attention theory to discuss how gender and ethnic minorities behave in relation to the majority. Self-attention Theory discusses how individuals act when they focus inward on their own salient traits in comparison to that of a majority (Schierer & Carver, 1983). This noted discrepancy in individual behavior and that of a larger group crates a cognitive dissonance that motivates individuals to project more group salient behaviors than individually salient ones (Mullen & Baumeister, 1987). Compared to other social motivation theories that pertain to intergroup dynamics, self-attention theory accurately describes processes occurring with the Red Team and the larger staff primarily because the Red Team members have not fully identified as a group. Its members still view other groups as their primary social group making the individuals actions on the Red Team a minority salient behavior. This theory offers an insightful look into how minorities conform to majority influence.
Collaboration and Conflict

Collaboration is the ability for a group or groups to share information and ideas in pursuit of common goals (Patel, Pettitt, & Wilson, 2012). As straightforward as this may sound, groups often encounter significant shortcomings that hinder productivity. Sadly when a group’s actual productivity is compared to that of an idealized state, they often fall short of even a reasonable productivity baseline (Kerr & Tindale, 2004). Several factors can affect a group’s collaboration. This can include group size, task difficulty, and even resource management. Group size and difficulty of a task is inversely proportional to effectivity and efficiently of the group (Bray, Kerr, & Atkin, 1978). One of the major failures of group productivity (performance) comes from a groups’ inability to identify and harness potential resources at their disposal (Kerr & Tindale, 2004).

As is in the case of the Unit’s particular Red Team there is a marked failure in their ability to not only use, but identify resources. One of the major resources the Red team had at its disposal was expertise. The team being constructed of representatives from each of the other staffs within the Unit had a sampling of expertise from across the Unit’s functioning disciplines. This resource, however went unrealized owing to individual interests and motives amongst the group members.

Considering social identity of the Red Team members, each felt as if their interests rested with their original group. The core social motivators and Social Identity Theory has explained why their allegiance is aligned in this way. As a result the immediate loyalty felt to their original group out weights the possible benefits of the new group. Collaboration within a group can be observed from the Social Judgement Scheme model that governs consensus processes. This model considers individual preferences weighted in an exponential function amongst group
members (Demont et al., 2013). As a result the moderate consensus of the group becomes the predominate pathway of group interactions. Much like the majority of teams who reject a hidden profile in favor of group consensus, the Red Team follows the consensus of the members’ collective perspectives as out-group members (Lu, Yuan, & McLeod, 2012).

This divergence in group consensus is a vital attribute in the failure of the unit’s Red Team. It highlights a criticality in forming efficient and successful groups – resource management. In this case the resource is information or knowledge provided to the group in the form of a diversified membership. However, owing to each member’s own interest based on their social identities the potential for productive impact on the larger organization (the Unit) is lost.

**Results**

Three thematic practices have been identified by this research. First, formulae the Red Team as soon as is possible. Secondly, overcome the natural categorical factors influenced by social identity. And lastly, empower a leader who can manage the multitude of influences wrought by the conflicts from hybrid and dual identity memberships. The latter of these two are discussed in detail.

**Bridging Social Identity**

Self-identity and categorizational processes inform individual and group behaviors within organizations (Hogg & Terry, 2000). It is these processes that are paramount to bridging the social gap created by competing groups and identities that was with the Red Team.

Many group loyalties and identities are based on the prestige, status, and power as well as the benefits such attributes brings with membership. Groups within an organization thrive on these principals throughout intricate networks supported by the pattern organization either explicitly or implicitly. As has been discussed through this research Social Identity Theory rests
on the intergroup social comparisons and the categorical outcomes made by individuals within each of the competing groups (Hogg & Terry, 2000). This in-group/ out-group evaluative process is fueled by the need for positive self-esteem.

Self-Categorization theory is the vehicle in which individuals are able to cognitively represent attributes in a prescriptive and descriptive manner (Hogg & Terry, 2000). This process is specifically articulated through prototype development. Prototypes are contextually based dependent features centered on group membership. These context rich features are comprised of all the attributes that characterize salient group membership to the observer and include attributes, feelings, behaviors, and physical attributes of the out-group; just to name a few (Hogg & Terry, 2000). The critical qualities of prototypes is their propensity to maximize similarities amongst in-group members and differences of out-group members (Hogg & Terry 2000; Esses et al., 2001)

Differences between groups can easily be interpreted as threats to the in-group members (Esses et al., 2001). The in-group/ out-group distinctiveness promotes a positive in-group outlook often resulting in a negative or indifferent out-group perception. This dynamic is often seen with immigrants who do not fully integrate in to their host country’s culture. This outward representative of an out-group are regarded as potentially threatening (Esses et al., 2001). The same iterative processes is applicable for the members of the Red Team who viewed the Red Team itself as an entity (out-group) that threatened the success, prestige, power, and status of their originating group.

Numerous strategies for lessening intergroup bias have been explored, but one of the most effective methodologies targets the premise of out-group membership by reducing the salience of in-group exclusion (Esses et al., 2001). Participants with strongly based competitive
and zero-sum impressions of immigrants were given literature to read that discussed salient
group traits in a neutral, pro-in-group, or anti-out-group orientation. Individuals reading the
material with strong pro-in-group outlook were more likely to hold less discriminatory attitudes
towards immigrants than individuals in the other two conditions (Esses et al., 2001). The pro-in-
group material enhanced the salience of shared group attributes within the in- and out-groups.
Simply attempting to improve the perception of general attributes of the out-group generally
resulted in strengthened or increased negative perceptions. The emphasis of commonalities in
the pro-in-group articles directly manipulated the intergroup boundaries by increasing common
group identity attributes (Brewer, 1999; Esses et al., 2001). This approach is one that could be of
benefit to the Unit’s Red Team. Literature that articulates similarities of the Red Team to the
other divisions within the unit could proffer this hyphenated identity. This approach is a bit
artificial for an operational military headquarters and might prove to be too cumbersome.

In the grand consideration of the Team the theoretical failings and possible improvements
have to bridge academic recourse and make their way into practical application. It is the proposal
of this research is that the critical node who can offer this vital oversight is a leader from within
the group. A leader is not particularly an individual who has practical knowledge of the
integrative processes or psychological theory. A leader is one who can exercise the principals of
intergroup integration and recognize what constitutes motivation and integrative behavior.

The Leader

Leadership is a critical attribute for any successful team. It can be noted as one of the few
guaranteed lynchpins for either success or failure of any team. Of all the theoretical
underpinnings discussed the leader is the sole individual who can sway a group either towards or
away from these pitfalls. Owing to the nature of a Red Team, one that challenges accepted
assumptions or perceptions, a synergistic effect amongst team members is critical. The members must have a shared social identity that holds value in the goals of the Red Team. Otherwise the team will continue down a divided path in favor of the assumptions and biases of their parent teams within the organization. The problem set for the leader is unique and requires a particular mix of attributes from both the leader and the team itself. However, despite these intricacies the leader offers the most practical solution in bridging the Social Identity gap.

It can be easy to view a leader as a unifying or motivational force that was responsible for any success or failure that befell a team. This however, is only half of the equation and by implication a team consists of more than one person. A leader/follower relationship is a reciprocal one were a leader is granted influential opportunity of a group (Barker, 1997). As such leaders can be chosen or appointed, in a military setting leaders are often appointed based on rank, as was the case with the Red Team. A senior Officer of the rank of Colonel was appointed to lead the Red Team, who was senior to all other members by at least one grade, in a few cases it was as many as ten.

Perception of a leader is paramount. The team must be able to view the leader as an individual worthy of following, who transforms a goal into something worthwhile (Barker, 1997). A successful navigation of this process can be viewed through a connectionist model. This approach involves a moldable schema of interconnected attributes and behaviors that all combine under the influence of a given set of contextual constraints (Hanges, Lord, & Dickson, 2000). The interaction of the leader’s schema and the context will determine how successful, or not, the leader is. The context is defined by environmental factors surrounding the team. These can include culture, perceptions, values, and norms. As these contexts changes successful leaders can adapt their behaviors to match the demands of the environment (Pech, 2003).
As an appointed leader in a military environment it is easy to force productivity from a group with direct orders and control. Such an approach will only create the artificially of effectiveness and lower the quality of any product produced by the team members (Bar-El, 2009). The problem faced with this form of leadership is a shared identity amongst group members that includes value in the assigned or needed task. This is the problem set the Red Team’s leader needed to address, a non-existent team identity. By understanding of both the reciprocal nature of his influence over the team and the contextual issue of a fractured social identity the appointed leader has the opportunity to create the shared social identity is needed to realize the full potential of a Red Team. To be successful the Colonel had to effectively establish and deliver a vision, exert positive influence, manage resources, mentor, and be accountable to the team members and organizational leaders (Small, 2011). Chief amongst these attributes is the ability to establish and deliver a vision for the organization. If the leader doesn’t embrace the value of the team, no one else will either, to include the Team itself. This is the crossroads that Social Identity of the team members had brought the team to. It was now the responsibility of the Teams leader to contend with and overcome this shortfall.

**Conclusion**

If at all possible the Red Team should be formed as early in the planning phase as it practically possible. The longer other teams are able to function and normalize operations the further behind the team will be in their eventual startup. Little discussion is offered on how to achieve this point owing to its straight forwardness. However, if this task is either impractical or impossible the latter approaches will aid in Red Team production through an expedited assumption of individual group identity. Just as Social Identity has framed the basis of the group dysfunction it also allows for insight into harmonizing the multi group identity dilemma.
encountered by the team members. These underlying solutions involve an exploitation of in-group preferences through targeting of zero-sum beliefs and in-group boundaries (Esses et al., 2001). These steps combined with an exploration of self-categorization theory form the theoretical basis of intergroup inclusion.

As a result of the potential for a delayed formation the Red Team leader needs to be keenly aware of the emotional processes that are ongoing during a group’s formation. If expressive or instrumental tasks are misidentified and handled inappropriately the productivity of the entire team is at risk. Conflict will happen at both the emotional and functional level of the group as it analyses scenarios. The biggest influences a military environment will have on the individual is the expectation of a ‘military bearing’. This is an unmotional state where the individual executes orders given from an organizational leader. When conducting Red Team analysis this state should be avoided as it unnaturally deflects both macro and micro expressive group development and will result in a frozen instrumental process rendering the Red Team ineffective.

Many of the members had formed alliances and shared identities with the groups in which they originally belonged. Their contributions to the larger organization were internalized though these individual groups. Each forming its own culture of norms and expectations where the members knew their role and what contributions were expected of them. Being placed on an additional team with others who held conflicting organizational goals and being asked to expressly identify and challenge these norms, biases, and assumptions created not only a multitude of organizational issues for the team members. It also formed the ground work for an ineffective team. Social Identity Theory has demonstrated the theoretical basis and fixes for this
dilemma and the leader as the key in bridging this shortfall in perception and integration amongst the team members.

This research has discussed a theoretical framework of applied social psychology to an observed team formation. The recommendations given are based purely on this analysis. Future research can offer definitive articulation on their applicability and effectiveness. Measures of effectiveness can be drawn on how quickly and accurately team members recognize the resources at their disposal as well as number of and frequency of inter and intra group altercations. With no ethical concerns identified the findings could also be tested in a laboratory setting designed to test social categorization of defined groups.
References


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