

# Military Trauma and the Conflicted Human Condition: Moral Injury as a Window into Violence, Human Nature and Military Ethics



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‘This man on his motorcycle keeps ignoring my warning shots. Should I now take aim and shoot at the risk of killing an innocent man?’ ‘Our local ally oppresses the people living in the districts that he governs. Should I say something about it, even though I am not allowed to?’ ‘These people are hostile to our presence. Why are we even here?’

Questions like these testify to the complexities of soldiering in a conflict zone. The past decades have seen military operations become increasingly complex, also in an ethical sense. Contemporary missions are no longer solely interventions in interstate conflicts where two regular armed forces oppose and fight each other, but operations in what has been called irregular warfare. Today’s soldiers are often confronted with internationalized intrastate conflicts and with unconventional fighters who use irregular tactics and are generally difficult to distinguish from civilians. Moreover, the roles and tasks of contemporary soldiers are often complex. They may have to fight, build relationships with local actors and develop humanitarian activities in one and the same mission (Baarda & Verweij, 2009; Molendijk, 2019). This complexity seems to be the reason why ‘moral injury’, which refers to the lasting psychological impact of morally critical situations such as tragic dilemmas and moral transgressions, has been called the ‘signature wound’ of contemporary missions (Pederson, 2021).

Different from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which is generally conceptualized as the result of a (life-)threatening event and is therefore predominantly associated with fear-related symptoms, moral injury is defined as psychological damage caused by ‘[p]erpetrating, failing to prevent, bearing witness to, or learning about acts that transgress deeply held moral beliefs and expectations’ (Litz et al., 2009, p. 700). While moral injury symptoms can overlap with the symptoms associated with PTSD (e.g. nightmares and a negative mood), central to moral injury are profound feelings of guilt, shame and anger (Frankfurt & Frazier, 2016; B. J. Griffin et al., 2019).

The majority of current research on moral injury is psychological research focused on the psychometric properties, diagnosis and clinical treatment of moral injury

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(Frankfurt & Frazier, 2016; B. J. Griffin et al., 2019; Williamson et al., 2018). At the same time, a growing body of literature points out that the specific potential of the concept lies in drawing attention to the often complicated ethical and social dimensions of military suffering, aspects which have received marginal attention in trauma literature (Kinghorn, 2012; Molendijk, 2021; Scandlyn & Hautzinger, 2014; Shay, 2014). Indeed, when veterans speak about feeling guilty, ashamed and angry about what they have done, failed to do, or had to witness, they speak about an experience of moral conflict engendered by, for instance, confrontations with tragic dilemmas in which they had to choose between two evils (Baarda & Verweij, 2006; Molendijk, 2021; Rietveld, 2009; Sherman, 2015). Moreover, they often speak about moral disorientation and existential confusion, both within themselves and in relation to the organization, political leadership or society, by which they feel betrayed, alienated, or both (Lifton, 1973; Molendijk, 2021; Shay, 1994).

In this chapter, I consider moral injury in this sense; that is, in terms of moral conflict at the psychological micro level in relation to structural tensions at the level of the organization, politics and society. In doing so, I draw on Verweij's work on moral conflict as inherent to being human and as something that can manifest itself in destructive ways in extreme contexts. First, I explain moral conflict as inherently part of human nature. Next, I discuss how veterans' stories of moral injury offer important insights into violence, human nature and military ethics, at the level of the individual soldier's psyche, the relationship between soldier and society, and society at large. Finally, I discuss the implications of these insights for military ethics.

## Moral Conflict as Inherent to Being Human

People are not made of one piece. As Verweij has convincingly argued throughout her work (Verweij, 1993, 2007, e.g. 2010a, 2010b; Verweij & Jespers, 2001), moral conflict is inherent to being human. These conflicts may include battles between good and evil, but more generally are struggles between constructive and destructive forces, where the destructive force is not even necessarily evil. The destructive force can be considered a necessary counterpart of the constructive force in the human psyche—and in society at large—which only produces evil when out of control. These are Verweij's words, as she traces back this insight to Ancient Greek philosophy:

Pre-Socratic philosopher Empedocles explicitly used the words Love and Hate with reference to these powers; Plato used the term 'Eros' (Love) and in order to explain the power of Eros and its negation in the human soul, he used the concepts logos, epithymia and thumos, of which thumos turns into destructive energy when it is not balanced by Logos (Plato 1999). Freud (1991) and Nietzsche (1988) respectively referred to these two *contraire* [sic], yet mutually dependant [sic] powers as 'Eros' and 'Thanatos' and the 'Apollonian' and the 'Dionysian'. Hate, as destructive energy, can thus be located in Plato's thumos, as well as in Freud's Thanatos and Nietzsche's Dionysian, all on both an individual and a political level. What the concepts thumos, the Dionysian, and Thanatos have in common is a penchant for violence and destruction when this inner drive or energy is not counterbalanced. In that sense, Plato as well as Nietzsche and Freud underline the importance of the inherent

coherence between the opposing forces that form the basis of human development both individually and collectively. (Verweij, 2018, p. 209)

This view of the human condition suffuses Verweij's approach to military practice and military ethics. War itself is 'violent and destructive' while it can also be 'justifiable and even morally necessary', she states, and human beings 'hurt and help other people and sometimes (...) do both things at the same time' (Verweij, 2007, pp. 44, 58). Thus, mankind is 'deinon' or dissonant, and while under normal, 'civilized' circumstances we are able to regulate our constructive and destructive forces, in war these latent forces may become manifest and produce evil. This is where the relevance of military ethics lies, according to Verweij: 'we need ethics in order to deal with our "deinon" character' (Verweij, 2007, p. 58).

Following this path, in this chapter I will consider psychological trauma, and moral trauma—'moral injury'—in particular, in relation to the dissonant character of human nature and the complexities following from this. War and violence can reveal and unleash dark forces in and between people. In turn, moral injury does something similar. Through psychiatric symptoms, the phenomenon of moral injury sheds light on tensions in and between people, showing how tensions that are otherwise manageable may in some circumstances (such as war and violence) grow into unbearable pressures causing a mental breakdown. To draw on Freud's crystal metaphor, '[i]f a crystal is thrown to the ground, it will break into pieces, not in a random way, but according to specific fault-lines which, although they are invisible, have been predetermined by the structure of the crystal' (Freud, cited in Corveleyn, 2009, p. 87). Among other things, the fault lines that moral injury makes manifest are people's moral beliefs and friction between them, as well as friction between people's moral beliefs and the social worlds in which they are embedded. Moreover, moral injury offers insight into tensions existing in society at large.

## **Moral Injury as a Window into Violence, Human Nature and Military Ethics**

I have identified three categories of moral tension, playing out on three levels, that manifest themselves in moral injury. Put differently, I found that veterans' stories of moral injury offer three important insights into violence, human nature and military ethics. First, morality's complexity and the dissonant human condition; second, the friction-inducing embeddedness of soldiers' experiences in various social contexts; and third, the uncomfortable tension existing in society at large with regard to military practice.

## *Tension as Part of Morality and the Human Condition*

The complexity of our moral beliefs and our condition as humans in general was painfully articulated by philosopher and World War II veteran Jesse Glenn Gray in his celebrated book *The Warriors: Reflections on Men in Battle* (Gray, 1959). The book's longest chapter, which is based on his experience as a soldier in what we think of as the 'Good War', is called *The Ache of Guilt*. Here he quotes his own wartime diary, describing several deaths for which he was directly or indirectly responsible, concluding: 'I hope it will not rest too hard on my conscience, and yet if it does not I shall be disturbed also' (Gray, 1959, p. 176).

Reflecting on what war brought out in him and his fellow soldiers, he writes:

The reflective soldier on both sides of the conflict will see no escape from political guilt as long as he remains a member of a state. If, in his disillusionment, he is tempted to renounce his nation and pledge his allegiance to the human race alone, this, too, will prove illusory, for mankind collectively is doubtless as predisposed to injustice as nations are. (...) Faced with this presumptuousness of the human creature, his closedness and dearth of love, the awakened soldier will be driven to say in his heart: 'I, too, belong to this species. I am ashamed not only of my own deeds, not only of my nation's deeds, but of human deeds as well. I am ashamed to be a man.' (...) How many soldiers have experienced in battle a profound distaste for the human creature! (Gray, 1959, pp. 205–207)

The moral turmoil Glenn Gray describes here is existential. As he writes, the violence he witnessed and participated in engendered 'a guilt that can only be called metaphysical, because it concerns man's very being and its relations to the rest of the cosmos' (Gray, 1959, p. 206).

Glenn Gray's struggle testifies to something more complex than a realization that human beings are simply evil. The fundamental issue 'lies in human nature itself, in our failure as human beings to live in accordance with our potentialities and our vision of the good' (Gray, 1959, p. 206). The painful realization is that the notions of good and evil in the way they are usually understood are untenable. It is the realization that the world of war, the world of so-called 'inhumanity', is not a world distinct from the human universe but the very opposite. Only human beings are able to be inhumane—we would not call a lion killing an African buffalo calf such—and this is exactly why exposure to inhumanities, including people's own inhumanity, can wound them so profoundly.

The conflicts that define being human are therefore not so much about good versus evil—if only it were so clear cut. They are about constructive versus destructive forces. Moreover, the destructive forces are not necessarily evil. For instance, forces of indignation may also fuel a passion to courageously fight for what one believes is right. This is what Plato meant by *thumos*: the third part of the soul by virtue of which we feel righteous anger, the desire to combat perceived injustice and the duty to uphold our honour (Verweij & Jespers, 2001). To reiterate, the destructive forces may result in dark destruction only when they are out of control.

In a similar vein, a person's moral beliefs are not a clear systematic framework of morals that as long as rigidly followed protect the person against immoral behaviour. Moral beliefs are a 'messy', time and place-dependent constellation of values that

may conflict with other drives and with one another (Molendijk, 2021). This is not just a theoretical issue. There are practical implications. The critical situations that soldiers may face during deployment are usually not unambiguous moral transgressions, but confusing dilemmas where in order to respect one value they are forced to violate another, and where being a good soldier may feel like being a bad person. Also, soldiers may engage in acts of moral disengagement, where they transgress moral boundaries that they would not transgress under normal circumstances, because these boundaries are less clear cut at that moment. These types of experiences are more complex than an unambiguous feeling that the soldier has *undeniably* violated his or her moral code, or that soldiers undeniably deviated from their moral compass. Such experiences involve conflict (Molendijk et al., 2018; Verweij & Molendijk, 2019).

### *The Frictional Embeddedness of Soldiers in Various Social Contexts*

The experience of inner conflict is related to a second insight that stories of moral injury reveal concerning friction between soldiers and the various social contexts in which they are inextricably embedded. Philosopher and Vietnam veteran Camillo Mac Bica experienced this friction first hand on returning home from war, which he came to call a ‘moral identity confusion’. The confusion he describes involves a profound sense in soldiers of being in limbo between two worlds, ‘the world they recognized as their place of origin – though, now, quite foreign and inhabited by alien though recognizable individuals they had once loved – and the world of killing and destruction – of which they now feel a part’ (Bica, 1999, p. 89).

Some of the Dutch veterans I spoke with for my own research on moral injury described similar feelings, and ones that were even more complicated. Most had not turned against war and the military. Indeed, as they told me once a rapport had been established, many felt no shame whatsoever for having fought and killed opponents, but struggled with the fact that ‘people at home’ felt they should. Many Afghanistan veterans, for instance, told me that they got ‘a kick’ out of engaging in combat and often felt ‘homesick’ for their deployments when thinking about it.

This does not mean that the positive feelings soldiers may describe can simply be put down to ‘fun’. Rather, the veterans I spoke with used words such as ‘good’ and ‘unique’. They often described a confluence of antagonistic feelings, including fear, the effects of adrenaline and excitement, which is reminiscent of how Vietnam veteran and novelist Tim O’Brien describes war stories. As he writes:

war is mystery and terror and adventure and courage and discovery and holiness and pity and despair and longing and love. War is nasty; war is fun. War is thrilling; war is drudgery. War makes you a man; war makes you dead. (O’Brien, 1990, pp. 86–87)

In moral terms, this means, as O’Brien writes, that a ‘true war story does not instruct, nor encourage virtue, nor suggest models of proper human behaviour. (...) Send guys to war, they come home talking dirty’ (O’Brien, 1990, p. 76).

Yet, this is not something that ‘people at home like to hear’, as many veterans told me. Take what one former private told me about his deployment to Afghanistan. He commented that at the time, especially after he had lost a close colleague, he ‘really wished’ that he had been able to see the guys he had possibly ‘whacked’ up close. He never really spoke about his experience with civilians. When I asked why, he sketched the following scenario, in which ‘I’ is a civilian and ‘this guy’ is a military veteran.

Okay, so imagine, I don’t know this guy and suddenly I ask, ‘Did you ever kill someone?’ And he says ‘Yes’, without blinking. Later, I go to a mate of mine. ‘Listen to this’, I say. ‘There’s a guy and he says without blinking that he’s killed someone. He’s fucking sick in the head man.’ It’s just a nice story, so people have something to tell each other, they don’t really care about it in any way other than that.

Negative experiences like these led many soldiers to stop telling people that they were in the military.

The soldiers I spoke with often tied people’s perceptions of military practice to societal double standards regarding the military. One was a soldier who had served in Afghanistan as section commander. Although he had been against the political motives for sending troops to Afghanistan, he had been in favour of the mission. But back home, he said, ‘You have to come up with an excuse for why you are in the military’. According to him, many Dutch civilians like to see violence ‘as something sad and horrible’, because it is ‘nice and easy’ to see it that way, while also enjoying the privilege of having armed forces. He elaborated on this point as follows:

We don’t want to know about the price we pay for it. It’s like we want to eat meat, but don’t want to know how the cows were butchered. (...) We only want to eat meat that was obtained without violence, but that’s of course impossible, to get meat without violence.

Note that he said ‘we’ rather than ‘they don’t want to know’. When I mentioned this to him, he replied it was not a mistake, and that ‘I also know that, if we’d really follow our moral compass, we’d be in Africa or somewhere else right now, where the really serious conflicts and genocides are, but that’s not where our interests lie’. Many veterans, while lamenting civilians’ lack of understanding, also admitted having mixed feelings about their profession. They experienced a duality in civilians, in themselves, and in themselves vis-à-vis civilians.

The more general insight offered by stories like these is that the duality within people also manifests itself in the relationship between soldiers and society. Moreover, the stories reveal that these two dualities should not be understood in binary terms, as the sum of inner tension within people plus social tension between people and their social environment. People are *always* socially embedded, from birth, and their inner lives are thus always socially embedded and shaped as well. People live and act on a daily basis within a range of social levels (e.g. group, organization, nation) and a range of social contexts (e.g. different ethnic cultures and professional cultures). In doing so, they develop assumptions and meanings through which they understand their experience and make judgements about what is acceptable and unacceptable conduct, creating a moral compass that guides their actions (Bandura, 1991; Haidt & Joseph, 2004; Hitlin & Vaisey, 2013). Yet, as the world is not a coherent,

harmonious system, this moral compass is not a simple one-needle device guiding the way but a messy constellation of commitments that do not always align.

It is therefore not only because people have dual drives, but also because soldiers are embedded in various social worlds that they embody multiple commitments that at times make conflicting demands, thereby creating tensions that they need to manage. When these tensions turn out to be unmanageable, the result may be a profound existential crisis, both within soldiers and between them and the people around them. They may feel deeply disillusioned, disoriented and alienated, from both themselves and the world (Molendijk, 2021).

### *Tensions in Audiences of Stories of War and Moral Injury*

A final field of tension coming to the surface in stories of moral injury lies in the audiences of these stories. As the duality within people also manifests itself in society at large, this has implications not only for how soldiers relate to civilians, but also for how civilian audiences, each with their own values and assumptions, hear and retell soldiers' stories.

Again, let me offer an illustration. In 2020, Dutch newspaper *Trouw* published an interview with a Dutch veteran about an incident he experienced in Afghanistan in 2007. The veteran recounted that he had shot at civilians at the order of his commander and killed them, while in hindsight he was sure that they had not shown any hostile behaviour (Ziel, 2020). The incident had never stopped haunting the veteran, and as he felt the military would not take his story seriously, he decided to confess in public. The Netherlands Ministry of Defence responded by asserting that no After Action Report or other document could be found in the archives about the incident described by the veteran. However, an investigation was launched, which is still ongoing at the time of writing.

I know the veteran through my research. While his confession of a possible war crime was new, he had spoken before about civilian casualties. After returning home from his deployment, he had developed a great sense of sadness, which had soon changed into anger and paranoia. He had suspected his loved ones of trying to do something to him. After eventually seeking help, he was diagnosed with PTSD and was given a psychiatric assistance dog, which now wakes him up before he wakes himself up with his own screams, dreaming of the events in Afghanistan. In his nightmares, dead Afghan civilians still approach him, asking, 'Why did this happen?'.

The weeks following the publication of the interview in the newspaper, both civilians and veterans reached out to me, because in the interview the veteran in question had mentioned that he might be suffering from 'moral injury' (which they knew was a topic I focused on). Some people, mostly soldiers and veterans, angrily called the veteran a 'traitor'. They did not believe his story and thought that he had added fuel to the fire regarding the already negative image many Dutch civilians have of the Dutch military. Others, mostly civilians, expressed shock and dismay at the

incident and sympathized with the veteran in question, sometimes adding statements along the lines of ‘this is why we should not send people on immoral missions like these’. Yet others, mostly soldiers and veterans again, lamented such responses from civilians as wrong and detrimental to veterans, but also stated that ‘this is why we should appreciate our veterans more and give traumatized buddies the psychological help they need’. On social media, I read many messages similar to those I received.

These kinds of responses can be observed in relation to the concept of moral injury more generally. The concept has been embraced by both supporters and opponents of the military, and usurped by some to direct attention towards a broader ideological issue. For instance, I have observed advocates for veterans, researchers and professionals put forward moral injury as an indication that veterans need to be appreciated more and society needs to have a more positive image of what soldiers do (see also Morris, 2015). Conversely, others interpret moral injury as the result of war’s inherent immorality (Meagher, 2014) and, in this light, see the morally injured veteran as a ‘prophet’ (Antal et al., 2019) who can see ‘deeply and radically into the truth of the present and how one’s country is actually affecting others throughout the world’ (Wiinikka-Lydon, 2017, p. 228). Importantly, these two interpretations have something in common. In both cases, veterans’ stories of moral injury are retold as testimonies of wisdom about wider processes in politics and society, in ways that tend to say more about the beliefs of the advocates, researchers and professionals retelling the stories than of the beliefs of the morally injured veterans.

Indeed, research among both Dutch and US veterans indicates that many veterans actually feel alienated by societal pro-veteran praise, especially when they struggle with what they have done or have not been able to prevent (Bica, 1999; Lifton, 1973; Molendijk, 2021). Veterans told me, for instance, that they felt ‘weird’ and ‘extremely guilty’ when people spoke about them as heroes. At the same time, as stated, only a minority become anti-war. Their criticism is often directed towards the particular mandate and rules of engagement of a mission, not towards the mission or military intervention in itself (Drescher et al., 2013; Molendijk, 2021). So, without wanting to invalidate the above-mentioned ideological claims, they can have counterproductive consequences, because moral injury is understood in ways that are not so much directed towards the needs of the veterans as towards the views of the advocates, researchers and professionals voicing these claims.

In any case, these responses reveal that the concept of moral injury not only refers to morally significant experiences, but has great moral significance *as a concept*, carrying, and being charged with, normative claims about the nature and causes of moral conflict-coloured suffering. More broadly speaking, these responses show that not just veterans struggle with the moral significance of military intervention, but society does as well. Perhaps part of this discomfort lies in that it reveals a glimpse of the truth that we all have destructive drives within us (cf. Pellón, 1988). Whatever the reason, military intervention and the violence that is inevitably part of it causes discomfort in all of us.

Historically, this discomfort has been expelled by moving violence to the margins of society. Violence has been outsourced to the armed forces, which have to operate out of sight of society while, at the same time, their actions are closely monitored



with a degree of suspicion (Bredow, 2006; De Swaan, 2015; Pellón, 1988). In terms of representation, too, the destructive dimension of military practice is carefully kept out of the frame (M. Griffin, 2010). What is in the frame is either ‘sanitized’ with romantic, heroic imagery in order to accept it back into the realm of the normal and justifiable or condemned as immoral, whereby the destructive dimension of military practice is either completely externalized to the soldiers, who are made the perpetrators doing the dirty work, or internalized to soldiers racked with guilt as a sinfulness that we all share (cf. Bredow, 2006; Pellón, 1988; Whitehead, 2004). The pro-veteran and anti-war interpretations of moral injury discussed above can also be understood as such. By reducing the complicated, dual, ambivalent experiences of veterans to binaries of ‘wrong’ and ‘right’, both interpretations resolve any tension related to military intervention.

## Implications for Military Ethics

Thus, at the level of the soldiers’ psyche, the soldier in relation to society and society at large, some fundamental moral tensions exist which are not easily resolved. This has particular implications for the question of how to approach military ethics. Verweij’s work is again insightful here. According to her, the focus of military ethics should extend beyond rules and regulations, which ‘only form a necessary, albeit insufficient, condition for moral competence’ (Verweij, 2007, p. 59). Given the conflicts that are inherent to human nature and morality, approaching military ethics solely in terms of rule-following and impeccable conduct is unrealistic and even undesirable. Such an approach, moreover, can easily become a form of window dressing in the shape of what Nietzsche (an important inspirational source for Verweij) called *Aushange-Tugenden*, or signboard values (Verweij, 2010b).

Moral competence, as Verweij therefore argues, is not so much about abiding by ethical rules and codes of conduct. Rather, it is about being able to identify and deal responsibly with conflicting values in, for instance, moral dilemmas (Baarda & Verweij, 2006). It is, in line with how Cox and Calhoun conceptualize integrity, not about exhibiting legally and morally impeccable conduct but, rather, about ‘the ability to constructively deal with conflicts within yourself and with others’ (Verweij, 2010b, p. 16, translation TM). It is ‘an ability based on critical reflection, which also implies critical self-reflection’ and ‘the ability to recognize and constructively deal with the doubts, conflicts and inner tension associated with this reflection’ (Verweij, 2010b, p. 20, translation TM).

Besides acknowledging the dual human condition and the paradoxes of military practice, military ethics should go beyond the individual level (Verweij & Molendijk, 2019). If only dealt with by training and educating soldiers in ethics in order to strengthen their moral competence, military ethics loses sight of all the other factors and actors involved in the development of morally critical situations, if this is the case, military ethics may even contribute to feelings of alienation and betrayal among

soldiers confronted with morally critical situations rather than help them in dealing with such situations (Molendijk, 2021).

It would be both appropriate and helpful to acknowledge that morally responsible military intervention is only partly within soldiers' own control. Military practice is a collective affair. The missions on which military personnel are to be deployed, and what they should and should not do in the area of operations, are determined at the political level, and debates about whether or not a mission was justified and useful are held at a wider social level. This is not just an issue that must be acknowledged with respect to soldiers. It must also be acknowledged at organizational, political and societal levels. Take ethical principles such as those of the just war tradition, which (despite what the name suggests) acknowledge rather than obscure that 'war' and 'justice' exist in fundamental tension with one another. These ethical principles are already embedded in, for instance, international humanitarian law (including the Geneva Conventions and the Charter of the United Nations), but in practice they are often ticked off as if they are part of a checklist rather than genuinely taken into account as ethical principles (Verweij & Molendijk, 2019). Such a checklist approach renders these principles almost meaningless, as it brushes over their complexities, not to mention that it looks more like 'sanitizing' window dressing than ethical decision-making. Instead, a sincere, careful consideration of the purposely complicated and even paradoxical notion of 'just war' may help decision-makers and society in general acknowledge and manage the tensions and discomfort of military practice.

This brings me to a final point, namely the issue of us hearing and retelling stories of moral injury in ways that actually distort these stories and say more about us than the affected individuals who told us the stories in the first place. As a society, we are simultaneously fascinated and uncomfortable when it comes to military intervention, and we tend to resolve this discomfort with unequivocal interpretations of such an event. Therefore, as researchers, professionals and others interested in moral injury, we should be particularly aware of potential tendencies in ourselves to impose our own moral beliefs on the stories we hear and to readily approach tensions and conflicts as 'kinks' that need to be ironed out. When acknowledging tension and discomfort in others and ourselves, it becomes possible to illuminate aspects of soldiers' experience that might otherwise be obscured.

## Conclusion

This chapter argues that stories of moral injuries—and trauma more generally—not only shed light on the injuries themselves, but also bring to the surface several broader tensions and vulnerabilities underlying these injuries, which normally remain hidden. To again use Freud's crystal metaphor, this chapter's investigation of the crystal pieces of moral injury offers insight into the fault lines of the human psyche and into organizational and sociopolitical fault lines. It makes manifest moral tensions that military practice and its contextual aspects generate in soldiers in general, whether

or not they develop psychological distress as a result of these tensions, and reveals basic vulnerabilities of which it is vital that they are addressed in military ethics.

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