

## APPENDIX A: NOTE AND MEMORANDUMS TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD ON HUMAN TERRAIN SYSTEM/HUMAN TERRAIN TEAMS

We did not carefully study the HTS program or the Human Terrain Teams (HTTs) deployed in Afghanistan or Iraq, nor were they part of our basic mandate. However, we did have extensive conversations about forms of engagement that raised the most red flags for anthropologists. One of the riskiest forms of engagement is the performance of fieldwork on or behalf of a military or intelligence institution, for the purpose of supporting combat operations or intelligence data collection and/or operations. The HTS.HTT program emerged as we were compiling our report, so we only had time to discuss what we could find out about HTS and HTTs in relation to the conversations we had about fieldwork on behalf of the military or intelligence community. In doing so, we identified the following issues as red flags:

- The difficulty of voluntary consent in a war zone;
- The difficulty of informed consent on behalf of the military, including full disclosure of risks and benefits to subjects, when the anthropologist may not know how the information will be used or who will consume it;
- The collection of individual identifiers and other personal information, in a context where targeting is a very real possibility
- The explicit and open linkage of ‘anthropology’ to ‘the military,’ and the potential risks that this affiliation might pose to colleagues doing fieldwork

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### MEMORANDUM

**TO: Executive Board of the American Anthropological Association**

**FROM: Ad Hoc Commission for the Engagement of Anthropology with the Security & Intelligence Communities**

**RE: Key Points for Consideration in Evaluating AAA’s Response to the Military’s Human Terrain System Project**

**DATE: October 10, 2007**

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A brief summary of the Human Terrain System (hereafter HTS): This program involves the deployment of a five-person Human Terrain Team (HTT), including a social scientist (which might be an anthropologist), into conflict zones to support military commanders at the Army Brigade (Army) and Regimental (USMC) Combat Team level. These Teams are intended to gather information openly, locally, and from a variety of sources, such as the U.S. military, NGOs, contractors, as well as local populations. They are also expected to use social science concepts and methods to interpret this information both proactively and in answer to questions coming from a given U.S. commander.

We should note, too, that, insofar as we are aware, very few anthropologists are currently actively gathering data in the field on behalf of military and intelligence priorities. Those of whom we are aware, such as those involved in the Human Terrain System, represent an extremely small minority and do not conduct covert or clandestine work and are open with local communities about their affiliation. This does not, at the same time, mean that their work does not raise ethical concerns about the status of professional anthropologists in their many capacities.

We should also note that any response by the Executive Board of the AAA to the recent publicity generated around the status of the HTS (and similar programs) should not be driven by journalistic reporting, which has by and large not adequately conveyed a full and nuanced account of HTS. And nor should it simply have its hand forced in offering a response to this project by strongly expressed views among anthropologists until all the facts are in, including the work of the Ad Hoc Commission itself.

It is also important to recognize that the application of anthropological knowledge and expertise, as well as the work of particular anthropologists, can take a variety of forms in the military, security, and intelligence arenas, including but not limited to: policy work, organizational study, culture training, different kinds of analysis, and work or collection of data at the operational level. This work cannot be in any constructive way subsumed under an encompassing rubric of militarized anthropology along with HTS-type efforts. Throughout our discussion of these matters, we should strive to differentiate ethically defensible collaborations with these arenas from the ethically problematic, recognizing the potential harm that such activities pose for professional disciplinary practice as a whole, particularly insofar as ethnographic field research is concerned.

In general the Ad Hoc Commission has tended to analyze the ethical implications of working within military and national security contexts in terms of the relationships that particular practitioner tasks might have to data collection and to research populations. To this end, the use of anthropological knowledge (as made publicly available in published ethnographies) must be understood as distinct from the direct collection of information “in the field,” particularly when this field is also a “battlefield,” and/or in cases where anthropologists are operating “at the point of the spear.” The first raises a very different set of ethical issues than does the second.

Throughout our discussions, the Ad Hoc Commission has been particularly concerned about the status and application of anthropology at the operational level in military and intelligence contexts for a variety of interrelated reasons. Our ethical concerns regarding *specifically anthropological conduct* in these arenas, and prompted by the existence of the HTS project, include at least the following:

1. data collection in the field where research subjects are not easily distinguishable from targeted communities.
2. circumstances of work and research where the identity of a given anthropologist as a social scientist is hard to maintain in practice, or where it is impossible to keep clear what hat (e. g. intelligence gatherer, professional anthropologist) is being worn at any given moment.

3. work in front line positions where the “field” is no longer clearly distinguished from the “battlefield.”
4. where the anthropologist may have competing or contradicting responsibilities to two groups of research subjects – the local community and the military s/he must also study in order to provide assistance.
5. cases where the results of the anthropologist’s particular activities are not made available for public dissemination.

What follow are some further elaborations of these and additional concerns, in particular about the HTT aspect of the HTS program, which we feel are important to make note of. These include the following observations:

1. While the basic outlines of the program are publicly known, the specific details of the day-to-day work are not. In part, this is because HTTs are designed to “address cultural awareness shortcomings at the operational and tactical levels,” which renders some of what they produce relevant to immediate operations and therefore sensitive and potentially classified.
2. Related to this is the likelihood that research subjects are unlikely to be able to differentiate between anthropologists working with military units and these units themselves, particularly if they are dressed in military fatigues and armed. The close working relationship of anthropologist and military personnel, and resulting likelihood of tacit or unintended coercion in the process of data collection, suggest a basic lack of “voluntary informed consent” on the part of potential research subjects. In this, we presume a definition of voluntary informed consent that does not solely rely on the intent of the researcher, but also rigorously considers possible unintended consequences of the research design or conditions of its execution. That some HTS anthropologists carry weapons or travel with a security convoy raises troubling questions about the voluntary nature of anyone interacting with these anthropologists.
3. The forward position of an anthropological consultant as part of a five-person team, with an anthropologist providing “cultural data research and analysis” while in the theater of conflict confounds any clear distinction between people who might fall into the category of “research subjects” or “those being studied” and “targeted communities, groups, or individuals.” This state-of-affairs runs a high risk of the breach of anthropological ethics even if it does not technically do so as part of any particular research effort. The lack of a possible distinction between “research subjects” and military “targets” suggests that such research activities cannot abide by the ethical injunction to “do no harm” with adequate confidence, no matter what the best intentions of the anthropologist.
4. It also is highly probable that the anthropologist will end up with two research communities with competing interests. S/he must manage interactions between the U. S. military presence, HTT itself and the local population (as well as potentially other groups), which requires an understanding of each of the interaction groups. This could lead to an impossible ethical situation where the anthropologist has ethical responsibilities to at least two groups in violent conflict with one another. While

anthropologists have sometimes found themselves in this situation in the past and have had to extricate themselves, this dual-hatted circumstance in a context of possible violence is known in advance with the HTTs.

5. Regardless of any efforts made to abide by the Code of Ethics, the status and identity of an anthropologist as a social science researcher is fundamentally unstable in this context, and potentially undermines the legitimate practice of the discipline, since the differences between researcher, tactician, and/or collector of intelligence would presumably be very hard to sharply distinguish in practice, and on the basis of perceptions formed by research subjects, colleagues, and others. We fail to see how it could be otherwise.

All of these issues suggest that an important distinction needs to be made here between the application of anthropological knowledge and practice in such projects as HTS and the work of professional anthropologists, as guided by a public framework of the AAA Code of Ethics. Whether we might agree or disagree with the potential benefits and virtues of HTS-type programs for the more “humane” work of the military, particularly in its many operations other than war, we might also need to conclude that this sort of work cannot credibly fall under the sanctioned conduct of what the AAA recognizes as professional anthropology. It is rather the application of anthropology to other ends and must be distinguished as such.

Furthermore the Executive Board, with the support of the Ad Hoc Commission, should actively seek out discussion with those responsible for HTS in order to inform ourselves of the uses of anthropology within them, and in order to communicate our concerns and our position, which might even result in a request of the signing of an MOA stating that the term “anthropology” should not be used in reference to such work as represented by HTS or any similar initiatives.

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## MEMORANDUM

**TO: AAA Executive Board**

**FROM: AAA Ad Hoc Commission on the Engagement of Anthropology with the Security & Intelligence Communities**

**RE: Possible Courses of Action Regarding Reports on the Role of Anthropologists in the Military’s Human Terrain System Project**

**DATE: October 19, 2007**

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The purpose of this memorandum is to set out basic ideas regarding possible courses of action the EB may wish to undertake in response to the increasingly public reporting and controversy surrounding the military’s Human Terrain System (hereafter HTS).

Given the likelihood of forthcoming action from the direction of the AAA membership and

elsewhere, the Commission suggests the value of a preemptive public statement to the end of helping to constructively frame further discussion of HTS and related issues, and to help lay the groundwork for the Commission's own forthcoming Report. Having said that, the Commission is also concerned with the possible unintended consequences of any such statement. In particular it is concerned with how a statement issued now may unintentionally undermine public reception of the Commission's own final report and perhaps make it more difficult for the Commission to get its points across when the report is filed.

Therefore, the Commission suggests that whatever course of action the EB chooses, it note ongoing consultation with the Commission, include reminders of the work and coming report of the Commission, the scheduled open forum at the meetings, and the Commission's desire to treat these exchanges as part of a longer-term and essential conversation among AAA members and between the AAA and other stakeholders.

Should the EB choose to make a statement, we suggest that it *focus narrowly on the specific ethical problems raised by the HTS program* and not more broadly on any or all forms of engagement. We provide below some wording that we hope might be helpful.

Our primary concern is the fact that the HTS program places anthropologists, and other social scientists, in the immediate or front-line settings of war in order to systematically gather cultural and other information on either occupied or enemy populations. Such an intimate working relationship between anthropologists (and ethnography) and the military (and military objectives), when presented as legitimate anthropological fieldwork, raises serious ethical issues for our discipline, including the following:

1. As military contractors it may not be possible for ethnographers to clearly identify themselves, or to unambiguously distinguish themselves from the military personnel with whom they work. This raises concerns about the ethical responsibilities of researchers to disclose who they are and what they are doing. It also complicates the ability of other members of the discipline to construct relations of trust with the people with whom they wish to work.
2. Because the anthropologists working in HTS teams are charged with the management of relations among a number of groups, including both local populations and the military units with which they are embedded, there is a major risk of divided loyalties between groups in violent conflict with each other, fundamentally compromising the integrity of any research relationship.
3. Theatres of war create inherent conditions of coercion in which simple requests for consent from individuals working for armed forces, and themselves possibly armed, are no longer simple questions that can be taken at face value or refused without perceived consequences. This jeopardizes the status of voluntary informed consent as described in the AAA Code of Ethics, section III, A, 4..
4. HTS personnel are supposed to inform the decision-making of field commanders. This poses an unavoidable risk that, even despite best intentions, HTS anthropologists are helping to target specific populations. Such a use of fieldwork-derived information runs directly counter to CoE admonitions that those studied not be harmed (see AAA Code of Ethics, section III A,1).

5. Since the details of the day-to-day work of HTS anthropologists is contingent upon the movements and activities of specific military units, and since these movements are frequently classified for security purposes, public dissemination of research results is inhibited. We believe such nondisclosure is a violation of the ethics of professional scholarship.

Primarily for these reasons, we conclude that HTS creates conditions in which it is impossible to conduct fieldwork in ways which are consistent with the AAA Code of Ethics, and its use of professional anthropologists is potentially damaging to the discipline and to its methods.

We append to this memorandum a draft for a possible Resolution to be forthcoming from the EB and the AAA, which would address the situation of HTS and anthropology's involvement with it.

The Commission also urges the value of undertaking ongoing dialogue with managers of the HTS project in order to: 1) inform the AAA better about the uses of anthropology in this project, 2) to communicate our concerns. Several members of the Commission would be able to facilitate such a dialogue. The Commission also encourages the pursuit of a possible Memorandum of Agreement with DOD about the status of "professional anthropologists" in its programs.

Proposed Resolution:

Whereas:

Relationships between anthropology and military/intelligence organizations may offer benefits but also pose risks, depending upon type and context of activity; and so they should neither be condemned nor condoned a priori or in principle without adequate analysis of type or context of activity; nonetheless, risks include endangering local communities and the reputation of the discipline of anthropology.

Therefore, the risks of such activities should be assessed, and anthropologists involved should publicly adhere to tenets of the AAA Code of Ethics, notably the admonitions to do no harm, to acquire voluntary informed consent and to honestly and transparently inform all involved of activities undertaken.

Because the current military's Human Terrain System project appears not to comply with AAA CoE standards, and given that the increasing public awareness of such a military use of anthropology stands to threaten the reputation, safety and research abilities of all anthropologists,

**BE IT RESOLVED**

The AAA Executive Board considers that since the work of anthropologists conducted as part of Human Terrain System undermines the conduct of anthropological research and the duties inherent in such work, it must repudiate these practices for violating basic tenets of ethical anthropological research.

## APPENDIX B: REPORT OF THE INSTITUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

Prepared by  
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This report comes in two parts: 1. brief thumbnail sketches of organizational frames of reference composing representative working environments of anthropologists within the MIS context, 2. A set of fifteen conclusions about how best to approach the institutional arrangements of MIS from the standpoint of anthropological work. These conclusions are based upon limited observations, discussions, interviews, and direct work experience, with both non-anthropologist colleagues and anthropologists engaged in these arenas. As such they are not wholly comprehensive or complete representations of the institutional frames, priorities and work environments of the organizations profiled. **Nota Bene: Each of these contexts is subject to similar biases, as one part of the US government, the US military, the US in general, which should be presumed for each.**

### THUMBNAIL SKETCHES OF ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMES

This said we have chosen a range of illustrative institutional environments, which we hope indicate a range of environments, activities and priorities, as well as associated concerns raised by anthropologists working within them. These are: 1. Civilian or government intelligence agencies (Central Intelligence Agency), 2. Military intelligence organizations (Marine Corps Intelligence Activity), 3. Institutions of professional military education (Air University), and 4. a category of emerging arrangements (better explained below). Our brief descriptions of these representative institutional contexts, too, have been broken down into the more important features identified by the table of dimensions, which are: institutional bias, secrecy, sources of data, subjects, and type of work. This should give us, at least, a basis of comparison across the spectrum of institutional environments we need to consider for the purposes of our discussion.

#### **1. Central Intelligence Agency**

##### **Type of organization: Civilian/Government Intelligence**

The CIA is one of sixteen US intelligence organizations, which work both separately and cooperatively, and which together compose the US Intelligence Community. The CIA engages in research, development, and deployment of high-leverage technology for intelligence purposes. The main coordinating agency of US government intelligence, the CIA is an independent agency comparable to the Congressional Research Service that works outside of the departments of the executive branch. The CIA is composed of a total of nine directorates and/or autonomous offices within the organizational structure of the agency, and also houses a variety of topical and multidisciplinary research centers. Most generally, the CIA coordinates the intelligence activities of government departments and agencies; collects, correlates, and evaluates intelligence information relating to national security; and makes recommendations to the National Security Council within the Office of the President and to the Department of Defense. This usually includes information and analysis of foreign governments, corporations and persons, all in the interest of national security. As a secondary priority this can also include specific propaganda and public relations functions focused abroad. The CIA is a sizable federal bureaucracy with all the associated “iron cage” problems.

**Bias and Priorities:** The CIA uses both overt and covert methods of data collection (or espionage), at the discretion of the president and with congressional oversight. Distinct from normal diplomatic work, this work is focused on special activities with regard to nonproliferation, counterterrorism, counterintelligence, international organized crime and narcotics trafficking, environment, arms control intelligence, hostile foreign states or groups, or in support of friendly foreign states or groups, but also in support of national foreign policy interests. These data include social, economic, and cultural information about a country or threat scenario. One trend within the agency has been a move toward the use of “open-source” information, as reflected in the creation in 2005 of a new Open Source Center to collect information available from “the Internet, databases, press, radio, television, video, geospatial data, photos and commercial imagery.” The typical activities of a CIA employee credentialed at the M.A. or Ph.D. level are best summarized under the rubric of “analyst.” While there are a great many kinds of analysts at the agency (e. g. the “leadership analyst,” the “ profiler,” and many others), in general analysts are tasked with the synthesis of variegated sources of intelligence data on countries, people, or scenarios of interest, and specialize in the production of written reports and assessments. This task is often carried out with input from other experts in the field, who are often not agency employees. Outreach to academic, non-profit and corporate communities of expertise is also an agency priority.

As many critics of the agency have pointed out, analysts are subject to a wide variety of pressures to conform to the existing organizational culture of the CIA, which can have an influence on their work. Institutional pressures known to influence the conclusions and recommendations of CIA analysts include: group think (often embodied in the entrenched four-phase “intelligence process” or “intelligence cycle”), finding data to support already established policy priorities, risk-aversion in analysis, and an unwillingness to share data and results as part of the process of institutional advancement. Research conforms to the well-established institutionalized activities based on the work of “analysis” (see below), briefly, “an action that incorporates a variety of tools to solve a problem.” This would include the agency’s increased concern with explicitly cultural knowledge, the relevance of which is significantly recognized when couched in established institutional terms and priorities. Any research of anthropologists within the agency, for example, is subject to the institutional frames and requirements of being an “analyst.” These concerns, it should be point out, are similar to pressures and attitudes commonly found in the corporate world as well.

**Secrecy:** In its original 1948 operating instructions, the CIA’s covert activities included: activities related to: “propaganda; economic warfare; preventive direct action, including sabotage, anti-sabotage, demolition, and evacuation measures; subversion against hostile states, including assistance to underground resistance movements, guerrillas and refugee liberation groups, and support of indigenous anti-Communist elements in threatened countries of the free world.” These activities have changed in relation to the perceived changes of external threats (e. g. the end of the Cold War, the War on Terror, etc). The CIA can also use confidential fiscal and administrative procedures, and is exempted from most of the standard limitations on the use of Federal funds. The CIA is exempted from having to disclose its “organization, functions, officials, titles, salaries, or numbers of personnel employed.” Most notoriously, during the Watergate era, covert activities that included assassinations and attempted assassinations of

foreign leaders, illegal domestic spying on US citizens, were brought to light. During the Iraq War, it has been widely reported that the CIA operates secret detention and interrogation facilities. Much covert and classified data collection has the explicit goal of revealing “the plans, intentions and capabilities of our adversaries” and providing “the basis for decision and action.” Unlike a college campus, the headquarters of the CIA is a secure facility. Phone and email data are not made available for employees. Access is restricted to scheduled “appointments” for all not-employees, who must wear badges identifying them as such and cannot move through the facility unaccompanied by a handler. Many critics – internal and external – have pointed to the “pathology of secrecy” at the CIA as something that increasingly hinders organizational effectiveness in all areas.

**Sources of Data and Research Subjects:** As with most intelligence agencies, civilian and military, the CIA takes an all-source approach. This includes overt and covert, public and classified information. This can include the use of technology, such as surveillance aircraft and satellites, or signal interception technologies. It also includes heavy reliance upon internal analysts, as well as analysts at the State Dept and DOE. And it also includes diplomats abroad, close cooperation with foreign and allied intelligence services, private enterprises, academic experts and academic trade journals, as well as Google. Finally, it can include other “human sources,” such as paramilitary, manned spying operations, the use of key informants (often also members of the international intelligence community) and interrogation techniques. The majority of the information used by the CIA to develop its analyses is open source intelligence (OSINT), including information from the media (such as newspapers, magazines, radio, TV, and the internet), other public data (such as government reports, public surveys, official data, legislative debates, press conferences, etc), observation and reporting (e. g. satellite observers, airplane spotters, Google Earth), professional and academic (e. g. conferences, peer-reviewed journals), public geospatial information (the use of Geographic Information System), among other sources, tailored to support specific policy goals, and all integrated in the work of the typical analyst. The collecting and analysis of OSINT is comparable to the everyday work of traditional investigative journalism, in its use of searches, databases, primary interviews, sources, and leaks. The CIA also compiles a wide range of country data and indicators of political and other trends, much of which is public domain and available in the form of country profiles through the CIA’s *World Factbook* (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>).

**Types of Work:** Most relevant for our purposes is the Directorate of Intelligence, which is the analytical branch of the CIA, responsible for the production and dissemination of all-source intelligence analysis on key issues of foreign policy. Of potential relevance is the National Clandestine Service (NCS), which is a semi-independent service responsible for the clandestine collection of foreign intelligence and covert action. The latter includes human intelligence (HUMISNT) services, which are often coordinated with other agencies (including the military). Most of the ethical concerns about CIA activities have focused on the work of the NCS. Much agency work (that is, the work of particular analysts) is focused on provisioning specific, tailored, information to policy, military and intelligence decision-makers, as a product of a process of data collection and analysis known as the “process of intelligence” or the “intelligence cycle.”

The process of intelligence is traditionally broken down into four phases, which include: collection, analysis, processing and dissemination (also called packaging). Collection can involve a wide range of information sources, from photo interpretation, intercepted cell phone or radar emissions, to diplomatic attachés. The work of analysts, too, is subject to a particular analytic process that is organizationally and bureaucratically reinforced. This process expects results in the form of mapping exercises, risk assessments, personality profiles, and the like. Continuously updated, these might be strategic intelligence about scientific, tactical, technical or diplomatic matters. They tend to be analytically limited to conclusions about the capabilities, vulnerabilities, intentions, threats, and opportunities for intervention, with regard to subjects of intelligence (people and countries). Finally, these are packaged in ways available for indexing, that are easily accessible to advisors, and that foreground lists of critical threats and opportunities. The intelligence cycle is a way of integrating the multiple sources of data into actionable intelligence available to decision-makers, and tends to privilege part-whole relations in problem-solving, where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts (also called a “systems approach”). That is, rather than the specter of “spy,” the more accurate representation of work typical for a CIA employee is “analyst.” Even so, the everyday work of analysts at the CIA is heavily shaped – in terms of method and outcome – by institutional conventions and priorities of the agency and not by independent research agendas. This includes an instrumentalism, for example, in the analysis of threat scenarios: Rather than “understanding” the problem the goal is more directly “solving” the problem and “deliverables” (one justification, for example, for the use of modeling). Though, there is less predictive work at the agency and much more descriptive or explanatory work. It is also important to note that analysts typically have no contact with “collectors” of information.

An agency development of relevance to anthropology has been the CIA’s increased study of itself through the Center for the Study of Intelligence and elsewhere. Currently employing at least one anthropologist, CSI is at once a “reference and resource center for scholars and others studying the history and practice of intelligence disciplines.” It can be thought of as one part the agency’s internal “think tank,” one part “lessons learned” shop and one part forum for the reassessment and advancement and emergent needs of more integrated approaches to the analysis of intelligence. This involves more attention to the CIA’s own “organizational culture,” and to improving “organizational effectiveness,” but includes, for example, new intelligence strategies directed toward public diplomacy. The majority of this work is classified. A significant proportion of such research is published by CSI via an in-house journal called *Studies in Intelligence*, addressing historical, operational, doctrinal, and theoretical aspects of the intelligence profession. It also creates classified and unclassified monographs.

## **2. Marine Corps Intelligence Activity**

### **Type of organization: military intelligence (MI)**

MCIA perceives its mission as providing intelligence and intelligence-related services to support Marine Corps operations. They employ approximately 30-40 intelligence analysts who work closely with Marine Corps personnel such as FAOs (military officers who specialize in area studies and foreign cultures). Their activities also feed into other processes like policy

development, training or education. MCIA has the DOD lead for developing something called “cultural intelligence,” which is an all-source approach to intelligence that emphasizes the impact of culture on issues traditionally of interest to intelligence agencies. This involves special training for analysts and some open field research, such as focus groups in other countries (note that this is distinguished from “collections,” which would be what most of us would think of – covert data collection), and the production of reports and other materials that highlight cultural information. The staffing is mixed between civilian and military personnel.

**Bias and Priorities:** As above and potential framing biases related to USMC missions and areas (littoral etc) may make certain types of products and results more or less palatable to senior leadership. Framing biases are also expressed in terms of the precedent of established Marine Corps (and military) doctrine, which provides a lexicon for how to frame emergent problems and concerns (e. g. “cultural knowledge” can quickly become a concern for the “cultural terrain” or “behavior” can serve as the institutional default for “culture” in ways very different from currents in anthropology). The current operational tempo of USMC may lead to a bias away from complex solutions and explanations and toward problems/solutions with immediate operational relevance as opposed to longer-term concerns about the impact of US actions, etc. It is also possible that MCIA’s status as a member of the intelligence community could lead to biases in favor of work that it perceives needs to be classified, believing that open source work could be done by unspecified others. We also have to be aware of the differences among culture shops in the Marine Corps (comparing MCIA to the Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning and its “culture training” responsibilities).

**Secrecy:** Although some employees are located in separately for technical reasons, most activities take place in a “secure facility” on the Quantico military reservation. No cell phones are allowed inside (even for high level employees), escorts are required for most non-employees, and, when an “uncleared” person is on a floor a red light on the ceiling flashes to alert all personnel. Nevertheless, while many (though not all) of its data sources and products are classified, MCIA emphasizes transparency in how it carries out its work. All presentations and publications that are related to specific missions or areas of analysis must be cleared by command staff and public affairs. As a rule, this would prohibit or at least severely hamper the sharing of information and theory through the normal academic channels. Research related to the organization itself or to outside interests is not controlled by the organization. Some data used by analysts is collected covertly. The uses to which some of the analysis is put are kept from the public and, sometimes, from the analysts themselves.

**Sources of Data and Research Subjects:** MCIA is an “all source” agency meaning it uses publicly available information, conducts open library and field research of its own, and uses information collected through covert means. Traditionally, the subjects of MCIA social scientists (as with all intelligence agencies) are people and organizations believed to have some potential impact on US policy, as adversaries, allies, or by-standers. However, as with many US military and intelligence organizations, MCIA also is starting to want to use social scientists to understand itself and USMC more broadly to learn how internal frames and predispositions affect its products and the interactions of Marines abroad.

**Types of Work:** Social scientists may be employed as analysts, in research positions, or in other administrative, technical, or command positions unrelated to their academic backgrounds. These are employed in the production of a tiered line of MCIA “products” of varying degrees of depth, from cultural “smart cards,” through field guides or country handbooks, to more in depth studies. MCIA engages in outreach with academic experts, who are used for a variety of one-time tasks, such as review of product information (see “Emerging Arrangements” below). Recently, MCIA created two positions specifically designed for anthropologists. These are “command billets” created to ensure greater rigor in the organization’s use of social science, to further develop MCIA’s cultural analyst capacity, to monitor ethics with regard to social science, and to assist with outreach to academic institutions.

### 3. Air University

#### **Type of organization: professional military education (PME)**

Air University is the institution that houses the majority of professional military education for the US Air Force. In contrast to the Navy and the Army, which have spread their schools and colleges out, the Air Force has them located “around the circle” on Maxwell/Gunter Air Force base. The “around the circle” metaphor comes from the location of the main officer’s schools around one circular loop on the main base. This loop does not include enlisted education (housed largely at Gunter, a few miles away), AFOATS (a school that supports ROTC programs and the education of those who come in outside normal channels, such as medical personnel), or the community college, leading to interesting politics of space. AU includes Squadron Officers College (2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenants and captains), Air Command and Staff College (majors), Air War College (colonels), AFOATS (see above), the College for Enlisted Professional Military Development, Community College of the Air Force (enlisted), several other smaller schools and institutes, as well as a wide range of centers devoted to research, teaching, doctrine development, and special topics. One of these is the new Air University Culture and Language Center that resulted from a directive coming from the Air Force Chief of Staff who directed that Air University do a better job of providing education related to language and culture.

**Bias and Priorities:** As above and toward topics that meet curricular needs and away from those a social scientist might think enlisted personnel and officers need to learn. There appears to be at least a slight bias away from concepts and theories and towards data and analysis based on experience. Because of the service, there is a bias toward technological problems and solutions and sometimes active resistance to problems that do not lend themselves to engineering-type solutions. There also is resistance from some faculty and students to anything that does not support the mission of “putting the bomb on the target,” which, of course, removes consideration of most of the problems the US military is currently encountering. Again, because of the service, there is less emphasis on tackling “boots on the ground” problems with social science. Social science is generally associated with negotiation, interaction with foreign military counterparts, interacting with foreign diplomats, and, to a lesser degree, interaction with NGOs, other government agencies, and other military services.

**Secrecy:** Although some of what is developed in the Centers and institutes is classified or “for official use only,” most of the research conducted at Air University is open. A notable exception to this is the war gaming facility, which is restricted and contains classified materials. AU has several locations where storage of classified materials and secure communications can take place. These generally support the needs of people who need to work on things related to ongoing operations rather than the needs of people doing research. Faculty are expected to undertake research and publication agendas in their own fields. They may need to request permission to take time and funds to attend a conference, but are not required to get presentations and publications reviewed prior to release. Students are encouraged to produce papers that can be distributed or published. Most secrecy-related activities relate to force protection and involve things such as how gate lanes are configured, certain aspects of scheduling for important visitors, what aspects of IDs are checked and using which types of equipment, etc.

**Sources of Data and Research Subjects:** Because this is an educational institution, the range of possible research is very broad. AU schools often have encouraged faculty and students to study USAF or the US military in general, but these studies are often pragmatic rather than critical. USAF has been somewhat more hesitant than the other services in starting to use its social scientists to understand itself. There is some movement toward encouraging research that will help USAF understand people and organizations believed to have some potential impact on US policy, as adversaries, allies, or by-standers rather than simply nation states.

**Types of Work:** Social scientists may be employed as faculty, in research positions, or in other administrative, technical, or command positions unrelated to their academic backgrounds. Some students have undergraduate or masters degrees in social science. See also “Emerging Arrangements” below: For the last year, AU has been working to wrestle several positions away from the schools so that there can be full-time social scientists who are not beholden to the curriculum or interests of any particular school, but rather engage in research and curriculum development across the schools. In particular, they want these social scientists to focus on the identification of militarily relevant cross-cultural competencies.

#### 4. Emerging Arrangements

Perhaps the most interesting institutional context in which anthropologists engage with military and intelligence organizations include what we refer to as emerging arrangements. The military and the intelligence community are very large bureaucracies, slow to move when they need to incorporate new types of work or expertise. Over the last several years, and in response to “culture” having become a “new DOD buzzword,” there has been a disorganized scramble to “get more culture.” This has resulted in attempts to get anthropologists involved in a variety of ways. Some of these include:

- IPA positions (inter-service personnel act) – essentially allows an organization to “borrow” an anthropologist from a university or other organization
- Contracting – probably the largest means of incorporating anthropologists, this includes private consulting by individuals in full and part time or occasional capacities, anthropologists who work for large consulting firms and are hired out to organizations, or

situations where a consulting firm runs a program or center for a military organization and hires anthropologists.

- Consulting – often done with little or no payment or honoraria, this involves an anthropologist with some other source of employment working with a military, intelligence, or other national security organization on a limited basis, perhaps reviewing materials, speaking, or just serving as a sounding board.
- Creation of new Centers and positions – recently, military and organizations have started to display a strong interest in hiring anthropologists and getting access to anthropological knowledge. Often in consultation with anthropologists, they create new positions and sometimes new offices, departments, or centers to engage in social science research.
- MITRE/RAND – both of these organizations are non-profit entities that exist primarily to do research for the government. Both have billed themselves as repositories of social science knowledge, but RAND in particular employs no anthropologists in this topic that I am aware of. MITRE has at least one, an AAA member. (*Interestingly RAND conducted a session on the ethics of social science research on terrorism in January of 07. The workshop included only one anthropologist who does not seem to have been aware of this Commission.* [http://www.rand.org/pubs/working\\_papers/WR490-3/](http://www.rand.org/pubs/working_papers/WR490-3/))

It is not really possible to break out all the possible types of engagement that this context creates (although the old table will help somewhat). This fluidity and uncertainty has provided both real and perceived opportunities for anthropologists to have significant impacts on policy and practice in a very wide range of national security areas. With the job market being what it is, many newly minted MAs PhDs (or ABDs) are captivated at the thought of crafting their own job description, being given undreamed of funding for field research, having the chance to shape the course of what is, regardless of how we feel about it, one of the most powerful institutions on the planet. Of course, because it feels so “heady” and excitingly complex, it also has the potential to draw anthropologist in faster and further than they anticipated. This is compounded by the sense of liminality in these positions. Since you have not wholly committed to a military or intelligence organization, it is possible to feel that you are at least somewhat protected against the kinds of pressures that might otherwise be brought to bear. Of course, if you begin to develop rapport with the people you work with/for, other sorts of pressures come into play. (Speaking from experience, it is very hard to look in the eyes of a 30 year old officer about to deploy who wants to keep his 19 year old privates from creating conflict and tell him you won’t help because you think he’s enabling a flawed system.) Those who know little about the military or intelligence community beyond what they know of beltway policy are particularly vulnerable to being “sucked in” by the complexity and diversity of opinion and practice they find behind the headlines. AAA’s somewhat ambiguous guidelines for applied work and casual consulting make this situation difficult to navigate for those without robust and diverse networks of colleagues.

Anthropologists are a scarce enough resource that the Commission can safely assume that there will be at least several more years of Department of Defense and the IC being willing to invent new and accommodating ways to get anthropologists on board. This particular slushy space of engagement is likely to be the place that gets the least official scrutiny and is perhaps the most important reason for devising guidelines that are not tied to particular organizational types or job titles.

## KEY POINTS OF CONSIDERATION ARISING FROM THE WORK OF THE INSTITUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

What follow are fifteen itemized conclusions and positions about the institutional environments within which anthropologists work in MIS. These have been developed as outcomes of the work of the institutions subcommittee. Each point has been reached through committee members' direct experience working within the environment of MIS, and as a result of extensive discussion with other Ad Hoc Commission members, anthropologists working in or on these institutions, and non-anthropologist professionals working within this environment. These positions should be understood to be both descriptive, as compressed interpretive summaries of a widespread state-of-affairs, and practical, representing positions or suggestions arrived at through drawing out further implications of how best to think about these institutional arrangements.

1. At present we find a lack of effective two-way channels of dialogue and interchange between the discipline of anthropology, on the one hand, and military, intelligence and other organizations related to national security,<sup>i</sup> on the other. This contributes to a mutual lack of knowledge about one another, and at worst, helps to maintain what is at times a polarized and polemical atmosphere of mutual suspicion. A majority of anthropologists simply do not know enough about the particular work of the many and variegated arenas and institutions composing these military and intelligence organizations to hold specific views about what they do, and/or how anthropologists might constructively collaborate with them and vice-versa. This lack of specific knowledge has, in turn, debilitated public disciplinary discussion about how and where anthropology might fit in to such efforts in ways consistent with anthropological ethics. We wish to help change this atmosphere by contributing to the opening up of new spaces of dialogue.
2. We should clearly indicate, too, the limits of our own frame of discussion around the choices: engagement versus non-engagement. We are already engaged. Rather, what we need to be doing is to better discriminate among terms and kinds of engagement, and with particular attention to circumstances where secrecy potentially plays a significant role.
3. If the academy is not the only place to do anthropology, the traditional distinction of academic and applied continues to be deeply implicated in how we frame and understand the worth of anthropological work. This includes how we categorize and credential our colleagues as professional anthropologists. But we suggest that such an academic-applied distinction increasingly poorly describes the internal diversity of our own discipline, and we emphasize the need to trouble this boundary, particularly as disciplinary practice is less defined only through the activities of a standard academic career as an "independent scholar."
4. Military and intelligence organizations and arenas do not represent a single monolithic set of like-minded interlinked agencies, but instead represent a widely diverse and internally variegated set of organizations, priorities, personnel, and methods, which do not simply act in concert. We are ill-served by characterizing these primarily through policy considerations (e. g. it would be an error to assume that military personnel uncritically reflect administration policy on the war in Iraq), or by treating them as all of a piece (e. g. as the "Military," or "Military-Industrial Complex," or "National Security System"). This systematically simplifies the situation, confounds views on policy with the work of particular organizations, and runs the risk of misunderstanding the everyday work of military and intelligence organizations.

5. Any sort of anthropological engagement with these arenas amounts to an effort of both dialogue and translation. This includes taking seriously, rather than assuming, the terms of reference, discourse and practice of counterparts, rather than simply applying our own. We would be well served to attend more closely to the particular terms of reference, and including means-ends equations, institutional pressures, and organizational mandates of military and intelligence environments, as these are distinct from, dovetail, or potentially contradict anthropology's own.

6. Rather than solely expressing agreement or disagreement about engaging with military and intelligence organizations agencies at the broad level of policy, we are better served by paying attention to the specific roles, expectations, objectives, and activities of the various corners of these institutions, and of what anthropologists, in particular, are asked to do in these arenas, in relation to prevailing mandates and priorities, but also to anthropology's own ethics.

7. The discipline of anthropology at present has a window of opportunity to influence, though certainly not to control, the shape and direction of a current elevated interest among military and intelligence organizations in our particular methods (e. g. participant-observation ethnography) and in the relevance and application of the cultural concept within and by these institutions. This opportunity represents an invitation to collaboration with colleagues working in these environments. How we decide to recognize and to respond to this window of opportunity will largely shape the relationship between our discipline and military and intelligence organizations for the foreseeable future.

8. We must also recognize that within military and intelligence arenas, there exist many institutional priorities and anthropological expertise is not sought in a single uniform fashion. Nor can such key interests as the perceived relevance of the "culture concept" be taken to reflect the same priorities across these arenas. Depending upon organizational needs, the culture concept and anthropological expertise are being incorporated into a wide diversity of different efforts, and in many different ways. The call for "cultural knowledge," in short, is in fact many different calls, and has to be understood in the immediate context of institutional priorities rather than as part of any coordinated effort, say, to "weaponize culture."

9. It is important that we distinguish between institutional secrecy and openness and the kinds of secrecy involved in a particular project. Indiscriminate concerns with secrecy are as problematic as monolithic treatments of the military and intelligence arenas. It is quite possible, especially in the current environment, for specific projects or programs secret or "for official use only" while the institution simultaneously works hard to create and to maintain an overall atmosphere of relative openness. Thus, a particular project might be classified to protect specific sources and methods, while the organization might actively conduct outreach to civilian organizations to provide information on its overall approach. One can contrast, for example, the former secrecy surrounding the National Security Agency, which was jokingly referred to as "No Such Agency" and did not even have road signs showing where it was, with the current good faith outreach on the part of Marine Corps Intelligence Agency, which has (with mixed results) spent the last several years seeking to understand and be understood by academia. Both organizations use the

same standards for classifying particular sets of information, but have different institutional ideas about the value and importance of more general openness.

10. If we are willing to recognize the legitimacy of many possible roles for anthropology in these arenas of engagement, ethical concerns must also of necessity be a basic part of any consideration by anthropological practitioners about what s/he should be doing in any given case. This is particularly the case if one seeks to maintain both an active and public professional profile as a working anthropologist and member in good standing of the American Anthropological Association.

11. Our ethical concerns, including the application of our discipline's Code of Ethics, are best applied not as an overarching model of right conduct. Rather, they are best applied with attention to the particular roles for anthropologists and situations that arise, in the course of working, for example, in military and intelligence contexts. Rather than invoking our Code of Ethics from a distanced remove and as a basis for categorically ruling out possibly constructive ways of working with military and intelligence organizations, we should apply a situational ethics, as determined by the activities characteristic of a given role and set of activities (e. g. the task of analyst). A situational ethics is not against engagement in principle, but also does not subject our ethical principles to watered-down qualifications, and nor does it embrace some sort of ill-defined relativistic ethics.

12. We suggest that "spy" – which significantly simplifies and miscasts the terms of what needs to be a broader discussion – is not the best or more accurate role category to use when evaluating anthropological engagement in these arenas. Instead, we would emphasize the prevalence of other categories, including but not limited to: consultant, analyst, teacher, academic and, to a lesser degree, fieldworker and advisor. Based on our experience in and investigation of these institutional environments, such are the prevailing categories of work characteristic of anthropological activities.

Further, these roles alone cannot be used to determine whether or not the activities of a particular anthropologist are ethical. Instead, one must consider a variety of dimensions including: role, specific project type, specific project topic, financial relationships (who employs the anthropologist, who sponsors a particular project), and secrecy (what aspects of the project, if any, are kept secret and from whom). One must also consider how the institutional context influences the anthropologist's ability to control whether their overall engagement and specific projects are within the Code of Ethics.

13. We should note that, insofar as we are aware, very few anthropologists are currently actively gathering data in the field on behalf of military and intelligence priorities. Those of whom we are aware, such as those involved in the Human Terrain System, do not conduct covert or clandestine work and are open with local communities about their affiliation. This program is discussed in more detail below. Of course, it is impossible to know if any anthropologists are engaged in such work in covert programs. The very fact of their secrecy would preclude our investigation. However, as the work of our sub-committee and the sub-committee on practitioners amply supports, the scope of possible work is very broad and covert work amounts to a vanishingly small percentage of the whole. We do not mean to dismiss the importance of

inquiry into such activities. But we also encourage the discipline to look at the full scope of anthropological engagement in these arenas rather than reducing our discussion to consideration of covert activities only.

14. In military and intelligence contexts of work, the people with whom we work and the people we study are often overlapping and sometimes interchangeable, populations. This means that the relationship between an anthropologist, the field (as a place we go to work), and a research population (as distinct from our own) we normally assume does not adequately identify the social relationships informing professional activities in these contexts.

15. We are particularly concerned about the status and application of anthropology at the operational level in military and intelligence contexts, and specifically data collection where research subjects are not easily distinguishable from targeted communities, where the identity of a given anthropologist as a social scientist is hard to maintain in practice, where the “field” is no longer distinct from the “battlefield,” where the anthropologist may have competing responsibilities to two groups of research subjects – the local community and the military s/he must also study in order to provide assistance, and where the results of the anthropologist’s particular activities are not made available for public dissemination. We recognize that the transparency of such work to the local community may be greater than it is to the academic community, as is the case with classified humanitarian operations on which an anthropologist might be asked to consult. However, the concerns remain and we recommend that anthropologists considering such work receive/seek special advice on the code of ethics, human subjects concerns, and realistic perspectives on complications they will encounter in the field.

## APPENDIX C: REPORT OF THE PRACTITIONER SUBCOMMITTEE

Prepared by

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### Introduction

The question that guided our work was simple: **What kind of work is performed by anthropologists who work in the national security sector?** Although two of the Commission members, McNamara and Fosher, have worked for federal agencies in the ‘national security’ sector<sup>1</sup>, neither felt comfortable drawing from her experience to generalize about the experiences of other anthropologists who work with military, intelligence, or other “national security” institutions. McNamara and Marcus assumed responsibility for fleshing out a stronger sense of what it means to practice anthropology in the area of national security.

The goals of the Practitioner subcommittee were threefold:

- Identify anthropologists who work in some aspect of national security (itself a problem, as we discuss below)
- As a representative sample of these researchers to describe their work
- Use their responses to sketch a cursory profile of practice in ‘national security’ anthropology, with an emphasis on ethical challenges

### CAVEATS

We have two caveats:

Firstly, this report is necessarily cursory, given that we had neither funding nor time to conduct an in-depth study to find out what, exactly, constitutes anthropology in the national security sector. We suggest that this report be read as a starting point for further inquiry, rather than as a finished portrait of the practical and theoretical characteristics of work comprising anthropology in, among, and on behalf of national security agencies.

Secondly, our guiding question cast a very wide net, since ‘national security’ is a rubric encompassing an impossibly large (and probably expanding) number of institutions, activities, funding sources, interests, levels of government, and people in the post 9/11 United States. Since the end of the Cold war, ‘national security’ has morphed beyond international diplomatic and military crises to include other classes of concerns and events: threats to the economy, disruption of communication networks, security at seaports, even natural disasters. Incidents that were once defined as outside the scope of control (or concern) of national security decision

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<sup>1</sup> Fosher did her fieldwork among emergency planners and responders over two years starting just before 9/11/2001 and now directs the cross-cultural competence project in the Culture and Language Center at USAF's Air University on Maxwell Air Force Base in Alabama.. McNamara has spent the past decade working in two different National Nuclear Security Administration laboratories and has conducted fieldwork among military intelligence analysts.

makers – for example, wildfires, power outages, and flu epidemics – are now likely to be defined as potential threats to the security and stability of the American nation-state.

As a result, defining what constitutes the ‘national security state’ is an increasingly complicated problem. Particularly since 9/11, institutions that were once considered purely local and state responsibilities are now making legitimate claims to membership in the ‘national security’ community – e.g., local police departments, hospitals, emergency responders, the port authority. Moreover, federal agencies who do not appear to have a direct connection to ‘national security’ in the classical sense – such as the Department of Agriculture, or the National Institute of Standards and Technology – have staked their claim to some piece of the post 9/11 national security pie.

For the purposes of this report, we have set the boundaries around two kinds of institutions: military/defense and intelligence agencies. We chose these because anthropologists, as a whole, tend to express a great degree of concern about the affiliation of their discipline with these institutions. This means, however, that we do not speak thoroughly or adequately to research activities that fall into the ever-expanding rubric of national security in the United States and Europe.

Lastly, we note an increasing number of anthropologists who are studying the ‘security sector’ from outside the walls of its comprising institutions. With a few exceptions, we did not include them in our interview pool. For this study, we focused heavily on anthropologists who are receiving funding and/or direct support for their research from/through national security institutions, *and* who pursue their research with the explicit intent of having a direct impact on some aspect of those institutions’ operations. A quick, if messy, heuristic differentiates between researchers who are working *for*, as opposed to scholars who are writing *about*. We were interested in the former, which is largely invisible in the larger anthropology community. Scholars who study the military, intelligence, homeland security, or other ‘national security’ institutions from an outside perspective – often with funding from external sources, and without direct access to the agencies themselves – tend to approach national security from a perspective of scholarly critique, not the application of knowledge for problem solving. This is a different angle than the explicitly applied intent of most of individuals that we interviewed for this study. It also represents a somewhat different kind of ethical entanglement – though we do not address that issue in this report.

#### DATA COLLECTION

*Approach.* We decided to conduct a snowball sampling strategy to identify anthropologists who work in, around, or for military and intelligence agencies. We relied heavily on Mil-Anth-Net, a listserv that is frequently used by anthropologists who work in and around military and intelligence agencies in the United States and, to a lesser extent, Canada and Europe. Many of these researchers are members as well of the Interuniversity Seminar on the Armed Forces and Society (IUSAFS), a professional association for scholars who study civil-military relations throughout the world.

*Data.* Data for our practitioners discussion comes from three sources.

- The largest source consists of interviews and/or questionnaires completed by anthropologists who self-identified as having work in the ‘security sector.’
- A second source of material includes articles and essays written by or about anthropologists who work in national security.
- Lastly, we drew on our professional connections to identify anthropologists who work in, around, and/or for the military, intelligence, homeland security, and other ‘national security’ institutions. Although we did not interview these individuals, we drew on our knowledge of their work to augment this characterization of the practice of anthropology in and around national security issues.

*Pool.* We identified 35 anthropologists who work in the described a wide range of institutional affiliations. Some of these scholars self-identified in response to an email call that McNamara sent to colleagues on the Mil-Anth-Net list. Others are individuals that McNamara and/or Marcus identified through professional contacts and/or general knowledge. Of the 32 that we identified, we had direct contact with 18 of these, either through a telephone interview or an email questionnaire.

*Interviews.* We conducted 18 interviews and had 2 additional informants provide responses to the interview questions via email. Fifteen of the interviewees self-identified as anthropologists, while one described himself as a social psychologist who works closely with anthropologists in an intelligence analysis environment. Our pool included interviewees from the United States, Great Britain and Canada.

*Analysis.* Given time and financial constraints, analysis was minimal: review responses to questions, identify general themes, and develop a brief report.

## FINDINGS

As we discuss below, practitioners and scholars of anthropology assume various roles in a wide range of institutions. As we discuss below, it was impossible to find a single theme that unites these scholars’ practice.

We organize our findings into a set of parameters that characterize practitioner anthropologists. Each of these is presented as a question that one might ask about this population.

### 1. *Where do they work?*

The scholars we identified described a wide range of institutional affiliations.

- **Federally-funded research and development centers (FFRDCs)**, such as the MISTRE corporation, RAND, and the DOE national laboratories. We identified four scholars in this category, including 2 interviewees and 2 research colleagues identified by McNamara. Three of these have PhDs, one has a Masters’ degree. (4)
- **Private consulting companies**, including individuals who ‘freelance’ as private contractors. This category included two interviewees and one additional individual identified by McNamara. All three have PhDs in anthropology. (3)
- Teaching in **military and intelligence colleges and universities**; e.g., the Air University at Maxwell AFB in Alabama. This category includes two interviewees who are currently

teaching in culture and language programs in DoD universities, as well as 5 other anthropologists that McNamara identified through professional networks and contacts. All of these have PhDs in cultural anthropology. (7)

- Working in or for **agencies in the intelligence community**, including **civilian and military intelligence agencies**. One interviewee was directly employed by the US intelligence community and performs internal organizational studies for a major all-source intelligence agency in Washington, DC, and has a PhD in cultural anthropology. Four other interviewees are employed directly by the British government in one of its military intelligence departments. Two of these four have PhDs in cultural anthropology; one has a Masters' degree and is contemplating completion of a PhD. The last has a PhD in social psychology, but works very closely with the anthropologists in the group (5).
- Working directly **for the military** in an operational context, usually international military-to-military contacts (i.e., between Canada and Bolivia) and in peacekeeping operations (e.g., Sweden and Germany). McNamara identified 8 individuals who are currently consulting directly with military personnel. Three have Masters' degrees; four have PhDs. Because of difficulty contacting these individuals – most are deployed – none were interviewed for this project. (8)
- Working in **civilian academia, but pursuing studies that are funded by intelligence, defense, or homeland security**. We identified five researchers who are tenured faculty at major US universities, but who have or are currently receiving funding to study some aspect of the military, intelligence, or homeland security communities. We interviewed two of these individuals and identified three others, who we did not interview due to lack of time. (6)
- **Military or intelligence personnel who are not practicing anthropologists, but who have a background or educational interest in anthropology**. We interviewed one individual who is currently receiving funding from the Pat Roberts Intelligence Scholars Program (PRISP) to get a Masters' degree in anthropology. Another interviewee described a long career in the US military and an educational background that included a Masters' degree in cultural anthropology. (2)

## 2. *How did these individuals enter into military or intelligence agencies?*

Interestingly, very few of the people we interviewed had intentionally designed a career path with the express intention of doing research in the military or intelligence communities. In other words, patriotism does not seem to be a strong motivator for entering the intelligence or military communities. Instead, funding sources and connections from other colleagues play an important role in introducing anthropologists to military and intelligence institutions:

The people in the military...heard I was working [in the automotive industry] on the integration of new information technologies at work group level, and they asked, 'Can we do [a similar project]in the Air Force?' And I said yes.

I'd been in anthropology as an undergrad, then went into the defense consulting world. And while I was there, I did a Masters' in operations research, systems analysis, wargaming. Then I was hired into [an FFRDC]. Once I got there, I realized they were doing studies on things like manpower, the military and gay/lesbian issues, families, any

number of things that seemed appealing to me. I wanted to do more of that...and it was then that I went back to get an anthropology degree.

Sometimes, interest in military culture (due to a family connection or experience in the military) is a driver for anthropologists who choose to work with the Department of Defense:

I started out doing contracting for the 100<sup>th</sup> Area Support Group US Army in Vilseck, Germany on the effectiveness of DoDEA schools. I was married to an Army officer, and it was the only type of work available, aside from volunteering at the Red Cross bake sale.

There are a few striking exceptions: one interviewee made an explicit decision to work in intelligence after experiencing two close calls in major terrorism incidents (one in the UK and one in the United States):

On a personal side note, I was scheduled to be in a meeting at the Pentagon, and the meeting was on the side of the building that got hit by the plane. At the last minute, the guy running the meeting changed it to an offsite meeting in the Annex. So I would have been in a conference room, exactly where the plane hit, that's where we were going to be. At that moment, I said, whatever I'm doing, it's not enough.

Another individual chose to pursue a degree in anthropology after ten years spent performing intelligence analysis in the military. This individual felt that anthropology would provide a better basis for understanding the data he was asked to synthesize.

### 3. *How much of this work is secret?*

Although fewer than half of the anthropologists we interviewed hold a federal government security clearance, many work in politically sensitive areas of research: workforce studies for the Department of Defense, for example.

Most of my work is published by [my employer]. My audience is generally a DoD audience, although my work is also sold to the public [on our website]. I also brief members of Congress and am an invited speaker at conferences and meetings related to DoD issues, such as those focused on military spouses and families.

However, some anthropologists perform their research in the context of information that their employers considers sensitive. One ethnographer who works with the intelligence community reported,

Because what I do really is organizational effectiveness, with the role I currently have, I'm helping improve the performance of people who work in this agency. However, everything they work on is classified. So essentially, very little of my research is classified, but at the same time, it's *all* classified because I deal with other people's stuff.

Similarly, an anthropologist who works closely with the military told us,

Some of the documents are classified, and some of the programs too. However, the vast majority of the work I do is unclassified... the research done by me for [the Department of Defense] owned by the sponsor, so they make decisions about where and how to publish it. Articles that I write on my own time can be freely published, and I have done so frequently in military journals.

#### 4. *What kind of work are these anthropologists doing?*

We asked our interviewees to describe the kinds of work they do as anthropologists in military, intelligence, or other ‘national security’ contexts. The diversity of work that anthropologists perform in, around, or for the national security sector makes it difficult to pick out any general themes in their experiences. At the same time, the outlines of activity among these scholars are not so different from those that characterize mainstream anthropology: some scholarship is applied, while other research is more academic in spirit; some scholars teach, while others eschew the classroom; some are area studies experts with extensive fieldwork experience in other countries, while others have focused on institutional contexts in their native countries.

- *Active Research.* Interestingly, very few of the scholars in our pool, respondents or otherwise, are currently involved in fieldwork among an ethnographic Other (e.g., in Iraq, Afghanistan, or studying populations commonly affiliated with the GWOT). Instead, the vast majority of active fieldwork projects seem to focus on institutional studies within the intelligence or defense communities.
  - *Institutional studies.* Several of the interviewees described what sounds like classic organizational anthropology: identifying bottlenecks in information and resource flows in large bureaucracies; critically assessing the impact of discursive practices around ‘privatization’ in the Department of Defense, or conducting evaluations of user interfaces for new software among intelligence analysts. One anthropologist teaching in a military university is using her position as a chance to conduct field research among troops and intends to write an ethnography about her experience.
  - *Military-to-military relationships.* A second form of research focuses on military-to-military relationships in peacekeeping or training exercises involving two or more countries. McNamara is aware of several countries, including Germany, Sweden, and the UK, where anthropologists are deployed in combat situations to support military-to-military relations during peacekeeping exercises. One anthropologist is currently supporting the Canadian government’s military-to-military training program in Latin America. Some of this work is intended to be applied in the settings in which it is conducted, while other research is more academic in intent.
- *Teaching.* Anthropologists have been teaching in the Department of Defense’s educational system for many years. For example, anthropologist Ana Simons (who was not interviewed for this project) has been teaching at the Naval Postgraduate School for over a decade. However, since 9/11, and particularly since the invasion of Iraq, military educational institutions have been investing resources in expanding programs in area studies, culture, and language training, and anthropologists are involved in developing and implementing these programs.

- *Teaching in civilian institutions.* Several of our respondents hold positions in mainstream academic institutions, but pursue research on, in, or among military or intelligence personnel. One of our respondents has built a career studying peacekeeping forces and conflict resolution, while another has spent time deployed with Canadian forces in combat situations. While neither has paid consulting arrangements or works directly for military institutions, they do serve on committees, attend conferences, give talks, and provide advice to military personnel who request it.
- *Teaching in military universities.* As interest in ‘culture’ expands among military decision makers, there is greater recognition that anthropology could be a valuable component in the military’s educational programs.

### *Drawing on anthropological training*

A final way in which anthropology is tied to national security issues is when individuals trained in anthropology – for example, with a Master’s degree – move into other career fields, but take their training with them.

For example, one of the interviewees was a retired military officer who had pursued a Masters’ degree in anthropology while still on active duty. He felt that his anthropological training was very important in his career, which has emphasized disaster response and has included tours of duty in the post-tsunami Philippines and in Iraq. Although he does not consider himself an anthropologist, he described how he had drawn on his anthropological training in his work:

My area of emphasis was urban ethnography. I guess I did what is now called Military Anthropology ... One thing that might help [illustrate my work]: I wrote [a handbook] for the Army Medical Department. I was preserving what I learned as a [medical officer]. It basically is application of anthropology to understand organizational culture, to provide medical services in a foreign milieu.

Another interviewee is a student in an anthropology department in the United States. During his career in military intelligence in Europe, he saw that military units in Germany include social scientists, and decided to get a degree in anthropology:

I don’t know if I’m going to... make an interdisciplinary major in security studies, together with anthropology and a geographic region. My geographic region is Germany. Many people looking at Iraq and Afghanistan, but I think that looking in at the military, looking at the government, what we need to do to understand the Other better. I don’t want to reinvent the wheel, but in America a lot of times we do that, we don’t look at what people are already doing, or what are our allies doing, and that’s something I can bring to the table. I can say, Hey, if you go to Germany, you’ll see that their military units can bring social scientist on board, and those social scientists bring an understanding of population where they’re deploying. That person becomes an adviser to the planning staff. Anthropologists and the military tend not to do that, because of something that we call “risk.” We avoid risk. Well, some of the Europeans and Germans call that risk management. They don’t do risk avoidance, in that sense at least.

5. *Perceived value to organization*

Many of the interviewees described themselves as unique to the institutions that employ them.

Basically, I don't think that [my employer, a national security FFRDC] really gives much of a hoot about anthropology or anthropologists. I know that they appreciate my work, but I think they believe that I am an aberrant anthropologist. They took a gamble on me. It paid off – at least, I think they think so. But they don't walk around asking for anthropologists.

Another interviewee holds a Masters' degree in anthropology, but works in the design of computer-based collaborative technologies for intelligence analysis. He described the value of his anthropological education as such:

I'm more of a methodologist... We have tools in anthropology for understanding things quickly, [and I use those to] change the way that people do their work. So I work on two levels: I'm using anthropology in doing my job, but also in [demonstrating] in the general sense that thinking like an anthropologist can really help analysts do their job, to see things that they weren't seeing before.

However, another respondent felt that the skill set that anthropologists offer these organizations is not necessarily unique to anthropology.

[Anthropologists are] in demand here. ... That said, a sociologist that says they want to do ethnography could be hired on here, too. If I've got an ethnographic sociologist, why do I need an anthropologist? [I know that the] distinction is more than research methodologies, but to a large extent that's what [this agency] sees.

6. *Kinds of projects*

Many of the areas that anthropologists work in involve applied work that might be familiar to many anthropologists working in industry: for example, designing computer-supported collaborative work environments:

[I study] people engaged in knowledge work. [An idea] came out in Defense Review last year, which basically said there's no way the US can win this 'long war' on its own. Not enough strength, not street smart. So they've got to have other people help. How do you work with other people in other cultures, how do you build collaborative spaces to enable things to happen? Lots of [interest in] distance learning, collaboration... [Lately I've been] working more with [intelligence and other federal] agencies around DC, and working in information distribution and collaboration spaces.

Another anthropologist described her work as comprising institutional studies of organizational dynamics in the military:

I do military manpower research. Lots having to do with how better to manage, develop, promote (etc) our officers. Also anything having to do with military families, race issues in the military, gender in the military, and elite units (like SEALs, SF) in the military.

Another group of anthropologists works in a military intelligence cell, reading and summarizing ethnographies for intelligence analysts:

We don't do any fieldwork at all where we are, simply because we can't ... What we can offer is – people who aren't familiar with anthropology, who are using cultural information, we can help them by using ethnography a framework. They are immersed in data and information about a country.... We're in a strategic analysis group. And we look at what the defense community, the software side, the issues they're dealing with. [Our work] draws on psychology, international relations, operations research, and from my perspective the interest in anthropology is that it can facilitate drawing in different groups. It can provide understanding of the environment that [military analysts] are looking at. What's the environment for conflict? How do norms and values create conditions for conflict? We can offer insight.

7. *What kind of anthropologist are you, anyway?*

Given the diversity of work, institutions, and themes that characterize the practice of anthropology inside military and intelligence institutions, it is not surprising that none of the interviewees expressed consensus about a single category that describes their work. Although the monikers 'security anthropology' and "military anthropology' have been applied to anthropologists who work in intelligence and military areas, many of the interviewees rejected these monikers in favor of more traditional labels:

[I'm a] cultural anthropologist. I do a lot of qualitative research, but I don't often do things unique to anthropology, though I do have a different perspective because of my anthropology [background].

Another anthropologist who works exclusively in the intelligence community described himself in the following terms:

These days, I'm [an] applied [anthropologist]. I've done such minimal academic work. Almost everything I've done has been applied.

He added,

[The Inter University Seminar on the Armed Forces and Society] classified me as a military anthropologist, though I don't know what that means.

Another said,

I would describe myself as a socio-cultural anthropologist who works for the military.

8. *Ethical Challenges*

Many of the anthropologists we spoke with said that they did not perceive themselves as experiencing ethical issues or problems with their research. The few researchers who were

pursuing applied research projects with human subjects all reported that they worked through Institutional Review or Human Subjects Boards to vet their research designs:

I really don't confront ethical challenges. [My employer] has an IRB process very carefully vetted by the HHS, and I am careful with my data.

However, this individual added that IRB requirements do not always cover all human studies research, particularly that outside the United States, and called attention to this gap:

I have some concern with data-gathering exercises involving, for example, Iraqi or Afghani people, because they fall outside the DoD human subjects processes.

As with most anthropologists, the practitioners we interviewed have developed their own heuristics for identifying boundaries around ethical research and knowledge production. These vary, however, from practitioner to practitioner: for example, some anthropologists are uncomfortable with any affiliation with intelligence activities, though they are willing to engage in educational activities in military settings.

Intelligence is an issue for me. [Intelligence officers] they've approached me and said things that have set the hair on my neck. Intelligence is different than teaching culture. It's information on specific individuals' behaviors that can be targeted to individuals and [used to] harm them.

This same practitioner, however, expressed frustration with what she perceived as the poor quality of work produced by the intelligence community that had approached her:

But teaching people about principles of Islam, that doesn't target an individual or a group, [so I'm okay with that]. Like, I came across a handout that Marine Intelligence had written] about [my area of research], and I said, "This is garbage." [It was full of stuff like] cultural taboos, dos and don'ts. [I'm okay with intelligence people if they're] going to write a booklet that's useful. I know they've got researchers in area studies. That's fine with me.

None of the anthropologists we spoke with reported involvement in fieldwork among foreign populations – certainly the most ethically fraught form of engagement for anthropologists working in the military or intelligence sectors. However, the emergence of the Human Terrain System in the past few months means that a small number of anthropologists are now deployed with military personnel in Iraq and Afghanistan. We did not interview any of these anthropologists in time to include their data in this report.

#### 9. *Relationships with the AAA*

Many of the anthropologists we interviewed felt disconnected from the AAA. Several had renounced their membership because the meetings were either "irrelevant to what I do," or because they felt uncomfortable attending conferences where they would have to explain their involvement in military, intelligence, or law enforcement work to what they perceived as a potentially hostile audience. One interviewee, an academic anthropologist who does contract

work for the Defense Department, joked about his security clearance, saying, “I’m trying to stay in the closet so I don’t lose friends.” Another told McNamara that he had never told any of his colleagues that his contracts sometimes involved intelligence and military institutions: “I do workplace studies,” he said, “but even though they’re completely innocuous, if people knew I did that in the intelligence community, I’m afraid they’d hate me.”

This discomfort reflects larger disciplinary concerns about whether or not anthropologists should be involved with any institution whose mission space potentially includes highly unethical, secret, and/or violent activities. Even when anthropologists are not involved in applied work involving foreign populations – when their work is focused solely, for example, on teaching military personnel – the very affiliation with military institutions raises red flags for many of their colleagues.

One scholar links current worries over anthropologists working around military institutions to her own experience as a member of the vanguard of anthropologists who first began studying corporations.

[That’s] all the military is – it’s an organization... People see [the military] as especially evil. Anthropologists like to put horns and a tail, they used to do that with business too. It’s a peculiar neurosis about anthropology, and it’s more about anthropology than it is about the organizations we study. We’ve carved out huge parts that we won’t study, and they’re more significant than any other parts in society, powerful parts... [In the 1980s] members of AAA signed a petition against me. The AAA president came and talked to me about it, told me that 75 people wanted to prevent any sessions on business from being held at AAA. They’d had to discuss the petition at the Executive Committee, and they decided it was a restriction on academic freedom. He wanted me to know. This was in the mid 1980s. I was shocked and dismayed.... As it turned out, that reaction was not unusual at all. That was a preview of coming attractions. Everywhere I was invited, and I got invited lots of places to talk about business anthropology because it was very novel. Lot of people wanted me to come to their conference. There was only one question I was ever asked: How can you be ethical and do this work? Or variations on that theme. What kinds of ethical problems have you experienced; this isn’t ethical, how can you do this? It was the only question I ever got, addressing an anthropological audience, until there were so many in business and they started forming their own conferences.

One practitioner related a tale of being called a ‘fascist’ during a session she organized at the AAA meetings in 2002:

It’s sort of blurry, I’m trying to remember... I was presenting a chapter in my book – the topic was on subjectivity, audience, and voice; difficulties doing research in the military. And someone called me a fascist for dealing with the military. It was obscenity laden as well. It was so crazy that I don’t even remember it well.

*What was your reaction?*

I was shocked. I was like, this is ridiculous, because I do manpower research.

*What was the reaction of the audience?*

They didn't separate themselves from him. It was so weird. And if I'd been, say.. more attuned with operations, strategic planning, and that kind of thing, [I might be able to see it]. Me, I'm just studying family support groups, so calling me a fascist was ludicrous.

In the wake of this experience, this individual dropped membership in the AAA:

I just –when it came time to prioritize, I wasn't getting anything out of it. I used to enjoy the intellectual exchange, to surf the channels intellectually, even if it was not all relevant to what I was doing, a good brain exercise. But they seemed increasingly flaky and weird, and I didn't have time. And I'm encouraged by what [the Commission] is doing, but I didn't want to give them money.

Other anthropologists remain members of the AAA, but do not speak publicly about work they do in the military or intelligence communities:

We had Air Force funding, looking at how to shorten cycle times for plane repair. Those created a lot of tension because it was politically incorrect. And in anthropology, there is a strong anti-war element.

It is fair to say that the majority of anthropologists working in military, defense, or other 'national security' areas they are pursuing research on behalf of an interested party, often one that provides funding for the studies being conducted. Indeed, applied anthropology was an important theme in this brief research. The vast majority of anthropologists working in, around, or for national security agencies are working outside academia. Indeed, only two of the 18 people that McNamara interviewed are in academia – and both of these are active in the Society for Applied Anthropology as well.

#### *Summary*

We concur strongly with Fosher and Albro's finding that 'People in [national security organizations] are reaching out to anthropologists to help them to at once redefine and refine mandates, atmospheres, and modes of operation as much, if not more than, they are to support existing ones.' Expanding on this observation would require a full ethnographic study covering the conditions in which anthropological knowledge is produced, used, pursued within the institutional contexts comprising the 'national security community' – itself a slippery construct.

Doing such a study might entail pursuit of the such problems as:

1. What is the nature of anthropological knowledge production, research, and functions within bureaucracies or agencies comprising the security, military, or intelligence communities? This category would include anthropologists who are making careers inside these institutions, and would force us to ask questions about internal institutional culture, forms that are distinctive to these kinds of organizations.

2. The problem of secrecy, which is impossible to specify sitting outside the complex range of contexts in which it reigns. How can we characterize the hierarchy of access to classified knowledge, and how anthropologists are producing knowledge with regard to this hierarchy?
3. The efficacy and/or effectiveness of such knowledge: what does it mean to say that it is “used,” if it is at all? Is it credited as anthropology, or filed in reserve? We wonder how it is possible to assess its impact. Auto-ethnography on the part of anthropologists working in these sectors would go far to help the community understand the dynamics of knowledge production and consumption in these contexts.
4. Within these institutions, we expect that anthropologists are often involved in interdisciplinary collaborations and mixings. We would be interested to know how anthropologists work with other researchers, what backgrounds those researchers have, and the nature of those interdisciplinary entanglements and the products that result.
5. We wonder as well about anthropological knowledge production and research functions that are pursued over shorter time scales – for example, anthropologists who advise, consult, or maintain relationships with security bureaucracies, either in the very short term or over longer periods of time
6. How is anthropological knowledge or ethnographic intellectual property appropriated without sustained anthropological involvement? This could include the citation or appropriation of anthropological concepts and data, and the possibility or opportunity for anthropologists to track this and comment on it publicly. For example, how is General David Petraeus approaching and employing culture? We have heard a great deal about military interrogators reading Raphael Patai: What does it mean for them to interpret and employ ethnographic writings?
7. What are the implications of the appropriation of anthropological knowledge? We wonder if it is possible for anthropologists to anticipate unintended consequences, or if they can look to develop some produce sensitivity or capacity for such anticipation.
8. Trends in applied anthropology research seem to be morphing, in some limited sense, into security related questions. For example, several of the anthropologists we spoke with do workplace or manpower studies in the military or intelligence communities. Such studies would not be out of place in large corporations. Likewise, can we begin to discern how the academic community is pursuing its own questions related to security?
9. For example, do we see that are pointing more anthropologists toward security-related research? We might look at how National Science Foundation, Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, and other federal agencies are funding academic research in security related issues, and how anthropologists have responded. We are thinking specifically here of projects in biosecurity, risk analysis, regional conflict; or ways in which subjects not traditionally seen as having a “security” component are being redefined as national security issues. We are thinking here of global warming, or HIV-

AIDS research in Africa as a security issue: the reclassification of established research interests in security terms.

10. What about changes in anthropological knowledge production in relation to NGOs or activist organizations, research that overlaps or has a relationship to work in security/intelligence/ military domains? For example, anthropologists in these organizations might be pursuing studies of humanitarian and/or military governance during states of emergency, the provision of refugee assistance, the breakdown of political order, and the introduction of peacekeeping forces to conflict zones.

While such questions go well beyond the limits of what the Commission was asked to do, we see these areas as comprising the space where most of the relevant, interesting, and independent research on military/security issues is occurring. Anthropologists would do well to become aware of the manifold ways in which the discipline is growing and changing, particularly in nontraditional contexts that force the discipline into uncomfortable, but potentially highly productive and exciting directions.

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is your degree? Where did you go to school?
2. Describe your career trajectory. How did you get involved in the work that you do?
3. Where do you work now? What do you do? How do you describe your work to others?
4. What 'type' of anthropologist are you? How do/would you describe yourself to other anthropologists?
5. To what professional organizations do you belong? If you're a member of the AAA, how do you perceive yourself in relation to other members?
6. Do you interact with other anthropologists? In what contexts?
7. What does "national security" mean? Do you consider your work to be "national security" work? If so, why?
8. What portion of your research is classified, if any? How far can you go in describing your work without violating classification guidance? Do you consider your work secret?
9. Why does the organization with whom you work find you valuable?
10. To what extent is the organization with whom you work aware of the fraught historical relationship between anthropology and the federal government?
11. To what extent do you feel free to publish about your research or your work? TO what extent do you take advantage of that freedom? Where do you publish? Who's your audience?
12. What are the biggest ethical challenges you face in your work? To what extent do these relate to your being an anthropologist? What can the AAA do to support you in facing those ethical challenges?
13. What are the top ethical issues that the AAA should be concerned about?
14. Which are unique to military or intelligence activities?

#### APPENDIX D: ANTHROPOLOGY NEWS ARTICLES BY COMMISSION MEMBERS

- November 2006 – Does Anthropology Need a Hearing Aid? (Robert Albro)
  - December 2006 – US Security and Intelligence Commission Charts Ethnographic Course (Paul J. Nuti)
  - January 2007 – Ethical Challenges for Anthropological Engagement: In National Security and Intelligence Work (Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, Monica Heller)
  - February 2007 – Open Source Experiments: What They Should Know About the Analyst's Frustrations in Intelligence Communities (Christopher Kelty, George E. Marcus)
  - March 2007 – Anthropology and the Wages of Secrecy (David H. Price)
  - May 2007 – SAR Hosts Seminar of the Anthropology of Military and National Security Organizations (Laura A. McNamara)
  - September 2007 – Should AAA Publish Announcements From Intelligence and Military Agencies? (James Peacock)
  - October 2007 – Reflecting Back on a Year of Debate with the Ad Hoc Commission (Kerry Fosher, Paul J. Nuti)
  - November 2007 – Update on the AAA Ad Hoc Commission (James Peacock)
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