

# What is Intelligence Studies?

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The academic study of intelligence continues to develop apace, with the evolution of this journal representing another indication of its vitality and geographical spread. Central to this development has been the idea of ‘Intelligence Studies’, yet three key questions about it remain. First, precisely what is ‘Intelligence Studies’, should it be considered to be, or should it aspire to become, a ‘discipline’ and who is it for?<sup>1</sup> Perhaps understandably, more energy has been devoted to the question of what is ‘intelligence’ than what is ‘intelligence studies’. However the continuing growth in academic courses at undergraduate and postgraduate levels that combine historical and social science approaches to the study of intelligence, the increase in undergraduate degree programmes in intelligence analysis aimed at those seeking to enter the profession, and the development of professional training courses internationally, make this an opportune moment to reflect on our approaches to the study of intelligence, the assumptions underpinning them and how the study has evolved since the 1950s.

## Defining Intelligence Studies

In a recent article Stephen Marrin has suggested that Intelligence Studies is an academic complement to the practice of national security intelligence.<sup>2</sup> This view seems to suggest a particular understanding of the origins and development of Intelligence Studies that can be traced back to Sherman Kent’s argument of the early Cold War era about the need to develop a professional intelligence literature. Such a literature, reflecting on experience and providing guidance on best practice, is a fundamental attribute of a profession, which intelligence analysis was becoming in the US by the 1950s. From here it is possible to sketch out, as Marrin does, a lineage of Intelligence Studies through individuals such as Willmoore Kendall, Roger Hilsman, Washington Platt, Klaus Knorr and Thomas Hughes. But this would imply a restrictive view of Intelligence Studies, as being concerned with developing academic knowledge “useful for the intelligence professional”.<sup>3</sup> However, if the academic

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<sup>1</sup> Some of the ideas we develop in this article were first rehearsed in Peter Gill and Mark Phythian, *Intelligence in an Insecure World* 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Cambridge: Polity, 2012) pp. 1-9.

<sup>2</sup> Stephen Marrin, ‘Improving Intelligence Studies as an Academic Discipline’, forthcoming, *Intelligence and National Security*, 2016, p.1. Available at: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/02684527.2014.952932>.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

study of intelligence is viewed as being designed to complement professional practice then it limits itself in ways that are undesirable both from the point of view of practice and, more broadly, of the academic duty to explain the role of intelligence within governance. The academic field of Intelligence Studies must be cultivated for a wider audience, from which effective training may well be derived, but we should not place the cart before the horse.

Arguably, accounts of the development of a literature of professional reflection should be distinguished from the later emergence of Intelligence Studies as an academic endeavour. This has had two core dimensions. First, there is the study of intelligence history, stimulated initially by the release of information relating to the role of intelligence in the Second World War and subsequently by the opening of archives as a consequence of the end of the Cold War and a resulting liberalisation of official file release practices. Second, the study of intelligence as a social science project has developed by drawing on insights from Politics, Sociology, International Relations, Psychology etc. which pose key questions about how we think about and understand intelligence – what it is, how it is conducted, by whom, with what effect, and with what degree of effective control. This latter literature was stimulated by the revelations arising from the Church Committee inquiry into domestic surveillance in the US<sup>4</sup> and the nature and role of covert action in a democratic polity and how this should be regulated.<sup>5</sup> Its focus, then, has been on the relationship between intelligence, the state and the broader society. The literature has expanded greatly in the last forty years with accounts of how both ‘old’ and ‘new’ democracies have sought to answer these questions. One important dimension of the studies that emerged was a focus on the oversight and accountability of intelligence.<sup>6</sup> This sketch of the genesis of Intelligence Studies suggests a broader set of concerns than acting simply as an academic complement to the practice of national security intelligence.

Marrin laments the fact that modern efforts to define intelligence do not acknowledge Sherman Kent’s 1949 distinction between ‘intelligence’ (“a simple and self-evident thing. As

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<sup>4</sup> See, Loch K. Johnson, *A Season of Inquiry: The Senate Intelligence Investigation* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1985).

<sup>5</sup> Gregory F. Treverton, *Covert Action: The Limits of Intervention in the Postwar World* (New York: Basic Books, 1987).

<sup>6</sup> Thomas C. Bruneau & Steven C. Boraz (eds.), *Reforming Intelligence: Obstacles to Democratic Control and Effectiveness* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007); Wolfgang Krieger, ‘Oversight of Intelligence: A Comparative Approach,’ in Gregory F. Treverton and Wilhelm Agrell (eds.) *National Intelligence Systems: Current Research and Future Prospects* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 210-34.

an activity it is the pursuit of a certain kind of knowledge. In a small way it is what we all do every day ... But no matter whether done instinctively or with skillful conscious mental effort intelligence work is in essence nothing more than the search for the single best answer”) and ‘strategic intelligence’ (“knowledge vital for national survival”).<sup>7</sup> We share the frustration that some of those who engage in the definitional debate might display a greater awareness of what has already been written on the subject.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, there is, of course, a utility in distinguishing between ‘intelligence’ and ‘strategic intelligence’, but simply citing Kent in this way risks reinforcing a rather traditional, and narrow, view of intelligence when, for a quarter of a century now, academic enquiry has focused on a more extensive and critical understanding of what it is. For example, it is not just about the production of knowledge, but also includes ‘action-on’ such as the covert operations conducted by the personnel of national intelligence agencies; intelligence techniques are applied by law enforcement, corporations and other non-state actors; arguably, oversight and accountability should be seen as part of the ‘intelligence cycle’; that is, if the intelligence cycle is still a valid model for understanding intelligence in the 21<sup>st</sup> century;<sup>9</sup> and the policies and practices of cyber intelligence have impacted greatly on understandings of what ‘intelligence’ is.

As this suggests, Intelligence Studies is a field that now converges at a number of points with established academic disciplines. More than twenty years ago researchers were already seeking to apply concepts from elsewhere in the social sciences to understanding intelligence, to explain its successes and failures and to examine intelligence organisations and processes, especially with the normative aim of improving them.<sup>10</sup> Much consideration has been given to the issue of ‘failure’, starting with Betts’ classic article<sup>11</sup> which arguably provides a theoretical handle on our subject equivalent to the ‘causes’ of war in International Relations.<sup>12</sup> Other examples include Michael Herman<sup>13</sup>, Philip Davies<sup>14</sup> and Amy Zegart<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Marrin, ‘Improving Intelligence Studies’, p.5.

<sup>8</sup> For example, Alan Breakspear, ‘A New Definition of Intelligence’, *Intelligence and National Security*, 28:5 (2013), pp. 678-93.

<sup>9</sup> See the collection in Mark Phythian (ed.), *Understanding the Intelligence Cycle*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013).

<sup>10</sup> James Wirtz, ‘The American Approach to Intelligence Studies’, in Loch K. Johnson (ed.) *Handbook of Intelligence Studies* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007) pp. 28-38 at 31-34.

<sup>11</sup> Richard K. Betts, ‘Analysis, War and Decision: Why Intelligence Failures are Inevitable’, *World Politics*, 31:1 (1978), pp.61-89 (re-printed in Peter Gill, Stephen Marrin & Mark Phythian (eds.), *Intelligence Theory: Key Questions and Debates* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), pp. 87-111).

<sup>12</sup> Stephen Marrin first suggested this parallel in ‘Intelligence Analysis Theory: Explaining and Predicting Analytic Responsibilities’, *Intelligence and National Security*, 22:6 (2007), pp. 821-46.

<sup>13</sup> For example, in Michael Herman, *Intelligence Power in Peace and War; Intelligence Services in the Information Age*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), chs.16-18.

deploying ideas of organisational process; and our use of 'surveillance' as an underlying concept for the study of intelligence.<sup>16</sup> These all reflect the point that intelligence is a pre-eminently social and political phenomenon, not simply a technical discipline.

This emphasizes the dynamic nature of the field, its evolution in response to technological advance and the shift in the US and elsewhere in the understanding of the function of intelligence agencies in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks.<sup>17</sup> These developments have increased the number of issues that Intelligence Studies seeks to address, and increased the salience and/or shifted the focus of others – such as the relationship between intelligence practice and normative ethical values. Moreover, the rise of non-state intelligence alongside what some see as the crisis of the Westphalian order has raised fundamental questions about how we can best understand intelligence as it is practiced at a number of levels concurrently by a range of local, national and international actors.<sup>18</sup>

### **Is Intelligence Studies a Discipline?**

This leads us to the second question: is Intelligence Studies a discipline? In our view, it is a coherent subject area, but its project is most effective when it draws on other disciplines and reaps the benefits of interdisciplinarity. This was recognised, at least implicitly, in the relatively early stages of its development by Wesley Wark who offered a framework for thinking about what the study of intelligence entailed by dividing it into eight different projects: research; historical; definitional; methodological (applying social science concepts to intelligence); memoirs; civil liberties; investigative journalism; and popular culture.<sup>19</sup> Thinking about how Intelligence Studies has developed in the succeeding quarter century, we identify four main areas of contemporary work: research/historical; definitional/methodological; organisational/functional; and governance/policy.

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<sup>14</sup> Philip H. J. Davies, *MI6 and the Machinery of Spying*. (London: Frank Cass, 2004).

<sup>15</sup> Amy B. Zegart, *Spying Blind: The CIA, the FBI and the Origins of 9/11*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007).

<sup>16</sup> Gill & Phythian, *Intelligence in an Insecure World*, Ch.2.

<sup>17</sup> Summarised well by Charles Cogan, 'Hunters not Gatherers: Intelligence in the Twenty-First Century', *Intelligence and National Security*, 19:2 (2004), pp.304-21.

<sup>18</sup> A number of these developments are discussed in Michael Warner, *The Rise and Fall of Intelligence: An International Security History* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2014). See also Gill & Phythian, *Intelligence in an Insecure World*, esp. Ch.3.

<sup>19</sup> Wesley K. Wark, 'Introduction: The Study of Espionage: Past, Present, Future?' *Intelligence and National Security* 8:3 (1993), pp. 1-13.

The **research/historical** project continues to be dominant, at least outside the US. In the UK what has sometimes been described as the ‘British school’ of Intelligence Studies<sup>20</sup> reflects not just the strength of the British community of historians but also that the two twentieth century world wars became the focus of historical research. The body of work includes, for example, that by former intelligence official Michael Herman, Richard Aldrich on UK/US co-operation in the Cold War<sup>21</sup> and GCHQ,<sup>22</sup> and whistleblower contributions.<sup>23</sup> To celebrate their one hundredth anniversaries in 2009, both MI5 and MI6 commissioned official histories,<sup>24</sup> with all the potential and limitations that official sanction implies, and the first volume of an official history of the Joint Intelligence Committee has also been published.<sup>25</sup>

Until twenty years ago there were only memoirs and journalistic writings on French intelligence<sup>26</sup> and even academic writing tended to be by foreigners, though since the mid-1990s academic output of history and other research subjects has increased.<sup>27</sup> David Kahn talks of a re-birth of French intelligence literature in the past decade, mainly regarding the Cold War and facilitated by new archive releases,<sup>28</sup> although Eric Denécé and Gérald Arboit observe that Intelligence Studies in France is only in its infancy. The German intelligence literature is also primarily historical.<sup>29</sup> The International Intelligence History Association had its origins in Germany and has published the *Journal of Intelligence History* since 2001.<sup>30</sup> Kahn notes the creation after re-unification of the office for the administration of the Stasi archives, known as Gauck-Behörde, with many volumes published and which provides

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<sup>20</sup> See, Donald Cameron Watt, ‘Intelligence Studies: The Emergence of the British School’, *Intelligence and National Security*, 3:2 (1988), pp.338-42.

<sup>21</sup> Richard J. Aldrich, *The Hidden Hand: Britain, America and Cold War Secret Intelligence*, (London: John Murray, 2001).

<sup>22</sup> Richard J. Aldrich, *GCHQ: The Uncensored Story of Britain’s Most Secret Intelligence Agency*, (London: HarperPress, 2010).

<sup>23</sup> For example, Annie Machon, *Spies, Lies and Whistleblowers* (Lewes: The Book Guild, 2005); Richard Tomlinson, *The Big Breach: From Top Secret to Maximum Security* (Edinburgh: Cutting Edge, 2001).

<sup>24</sup> Christopher Andrew, *The Defence of the Realm: The Authorized History of MI5* (London: Allen Lane, 2009); Keith Jeffery, *MI6: The History of the Secret Intelligence Service 1909-1949* (London: Bloomsbury, 2010).

<sup>25</sup> Michael Goodman, *The Official History of the Joint Intelligence Committee: Volume 1, From the Approach of the Second World War to the Suez Crisis*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014).

<sup>26</sup> For example, Richard Deacon, *The French Secret Service* (London: Grafton, 1990).

<sup>27</sup> For example, Douglas Porch, *The French Secret Services: From the Dreyfus Affair to the Gulf War* (London: Macmillan, 1995).

<sup>28</sup> David Kahn, ‘Intelligence Studies on the Continent’, *Intelligence and National Security*, 23:2, (2008) pp.249-62.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid*, pp.262-71.

<sup>30</sup> [www.intelligence-history.org/](http://www.intelligence-history.org/)

access to personal files for victims/families.<sup>31</sup> Gustavo Matey's discussion of Intelligence Studies in Spain is more normative in tone but notes a similar increase in interest since the end of the Cold War. Earlier work was dominated by history and military studies, reinforced by books on intelligence scandals in the 1980s and 1990s. Matey suggests there are now four main broad approaches in Spain: the historical-military approach, the journalistic approach, the economic, and the international relations/political science (including philosophy and law).<sup>32</sup>

Reflecting the relative youth of the field, the **definitional/methodological** project is very much alive and debates continue.<sup>33</sup> While overly pedantic to some, these matter if they succeed in clarifying what is to be studied and why. On the central question of whether 'intelligence' should be defined purely as an information or knowledge process or whether it is also a power process involving policy and action, we take the latter view. The very act of gathering information can affect others and, if the intended object of intelligence is not to influence action or policy, what is it for? Therefore we have defined intelligence as:

‘the mainly secret activities – targeting, collection, analysis, dissemination and action – intended to enhance security and/or maintain power relative to competitors by forewarning of threats and opportunities.’<sup>34</sup>

We should remember Wilhelm Agrell's observation that 'if everything is intelligence, then nothing is intelligence'.<sup>35</sup> Therefore we must be able to distinguish 'intelligence' from the 'knowledge management' that is the bedrock of all state and corporate activities. We suggest that the key factors are security, secrecy and the fact that its exercise will be subject to resistance. We also need to consider the difference between intelligence and the more general

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<sup>31</sup> [http://www.bstu.bund.de/DE/Home/home\\_node.html](http://www.bstu.bund.de/DE/Home/home_node.html) accessed September 18, 2011.

<sup>32</sup> Gustavo Diaz Matey, 'The Development of Intelligence Studies in Spain', *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence*, 23:4 (2010) pp. 748-65.

<sup>33</sup> Main examples include Michael Warner, 'Wanted: A Definition of Intelligence,' *Studies in Intelligence*, 46: 3 (2002), <http://www.odci.gov/csi/studies/vol46no3/article02.html>, accessed December 5, 2011; Kristan Wheaton & Michael Beerbower, 'Towards a New Definition of Intelligence', *Stanford Law and Policy Review* 17:2 (2006) pp.319-30; Peter Gill, 'Theories of intelligence: Where Are We, Where Should We Go and How Might We Proceed', in Gill, Marrin & Pythian (eds.), *Intelligence Theory*, pp.208-26.

<sup>34</sup> Gill & Pythian, *Intelligence in an Insecure World*, p.30.

<sup>35</sup> Wilhelm Agrell, *When Everything is Intelligence – Nothing is Intelligence*, Occasional Papers, 1, 4, (2002), Sherman Kent Center for Intelligence Analysis. <https://www.cia.gov/library/kent-center-occasional-papers/pdf/OPNo4.pdf>, accessed December 12, 2011.

‘risk-assessment’ process that accompanies everything from business takeovers and foreign investment to organising school trips for children.<sup>36</sup>

Most of the historical work discussed above was essentially descriptive but it provides the essential basis for the third project: the **organisational/functional**. Looking at the potential population of intelligence agencies that might have been written about, it is striking that some have received so much more coverage than others. Probably reflecting the historical interest in international politics and war, foreign intelligence agencies are best covered, especially those gathering human intelligence and involved in covert operations. Within the older democracies, as the Cold War recedes further and the subjects of surveillance are dying, there is now more openness and discussion regarding the rather ‘grubbier’ work of domestic political surveillance<sup>37</sup> which, of course, still provides the main focus for agencies in authoritarian regimes. For the future, there is no doubt that domestic surveillance will become even more central to Intelligence Studies as the traditional foreign/domestic distinction has been significantly reduced since 9/11. Major concerns will remain the potential for agencies at national and international level to cooperate rather than indulge in ‘turf wars’ and the dangers of politicisation through government abuse of agencies for partisan ends. Within the broader context of ‘democratizing’ agencies in former authoritarian regimes, emphasis has been placed on increasing the professionalism of intelligence officials. This involves replacing loyalty to a party or ideology with that to a notion of national security and public safety that reflects a genuine assessment of a country’s needs rather than merely the security in office of a specific faction. Though the existence or not of such professionalism is a factor that normally distinguishes intelligence agencies in democratic from those in authoritarian regimes, agencies in some ‘older’ as well as ‘newer’ democracies have had to reassess the ethical component of professionalism in the wake of the extraordinary rendition scandal.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> With colleagues we have discussed this question in the following articles in *Intelligence and National Security*, 27:2, (2012): Michael Warner, ‘Intelligence and Reflexivity: An Invitation to a Dialogue’ (pp.167-71); David Strachan-Morris, ‘Threat and Risk: What is the Difference and Why Does It Matter?’ (pp.172-86); Mark Phythian, ‘Policing Uncertainty: Intelligence, Security and Risk’ (pp.187-205); and Peter Gill, ‘Intelligence, Threat, Risk and the Challenge of Oversight’ (pp.206-222).

<sup>37</sup> For example, see the discussion of MI5 surveillance of the eminent British Marxist historian Eric Hobsbawm by Frances Stonor Saunders, ‘Stuck on the Flypaper’, *London Review of Books*, 37:7, 9 April 2015, pp.3-10.

<sup>38</sup> For example, Jan Goldman (ed.), *Ethics of Spying: a Reader for the Intelligence Professional* (Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, 2006); David Omand, *Securing the State* (London: Hurst, 2010) pp.261-87.

The objective of the fourth project - **governance/policy** - might be summarised as: what impact does intelligence have on government and what impact does government have on intelligence? The strength of UK official secrecy ensured little on peacetime intelligence emerged before the 1990s and made the study of contemporary intelligence developments almost impossible.<sup>39</sup> However, this is now changing: a further trove of information appears in the evidence to and reports of inquiries into intelligence failures on Iraq, especially Butler, Hutton and Chilcot.<sup>40</sup> The second Intelligence and Security Committee (ISC) report into the July 7, 2005 bombings in London<sup>41</sup> and the ISC report on the murder of Lee Rigby in 2013<sup>42</sup> provide fascinating detail of counter-terrorism operations and, by implication, the challenges of oversight.<sup>43</sup> One central aspect of the literature, especially in the US, is the extent to which intelligence does or does not actually affect government policy. But in the wake of the Iraq WMD controversy there has been much study of the reverse: when policy determines what is defined as ‘intelligence’. Currently, the Pentagon inspector general is investigating claims by analysts at U.S. Central Command that military commanders have been changing intelligence reports to paint an overly optimistic picture of the impact of the bombing campaign against ‘Islamic State’.<sup>44</sup> In the last quarter century or so, a great deal more attention has been given to the issue of how much control and oversight elected governments exercise over intelligence agencies, both in the older democracies where scandals about the abuse of

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<sup>39</sup> For an overview, see Christopher R. Moran, ‘The Pursuit of Intelligence History: Methods, Sources, and Trajectories in the United Kingdom’, *Studies in Intelligence*, 55:2 (June 2011), <https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/vol.-55-no.-2/index.html>.

<sup>40</sup> Lord Butler, *Review of Intelligence on Weapons of Mass Destruction*, HC898 (London: TSO, 2004) <http://www.archive2.official-documents.co.uk/document/deps/hc/hc898/898.pdf>; Lord Hutton, *Investigation into the circumstances surrounding the death of Dr. David Kelly*, 2004, <http://www.the-hutton-inquiry.org.uk/> accessed January 31, 2012; The Chilcot Inquiry is unlikely to be published before 2016 after a long delay while negotiations took place over what documents could be published and those criticised were given time to respond.

<sup>41</sup> Intelligence and Security Committee, *Could 7/7 Have Been Prevented?* Cm 7617 (London: TSO, 2009); [http://7julyinquests.independent.gov.uk/hearing\\_transcripts/index.htm](http://7julyinquests.independent.gov.uk/hearing_transcripts/index.htm), accessed 10 August 2011.

<sup>42</sup> Intelligence and Security Committee, *Report on the Intelligence Relating to the Murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby*, HC 795, (London: TSO: November 2014).

<sup>43</sup> For example, Gill, ‘Intelligence, Threat, Risk and the Challenge of Oversight’.

<sup>44</sup> Mark Mazzetti & Matt Apuzzo, ‘Military Analyst Again Raises Red Flags on Progress in Iraq,’ *New York Times* September 23, 2015.



intelligence have led to reforms and in post-authoritarian states where more democratic intelligence architectures have been constructed.<sup>45</sup>

A second key area within the governance/policy project is international intelligence collaboration. The earliest work here discussed the post war UKUSA signals intelligence agreement between the US, UK, Australia, Canada and New Zealand<sup>46</sup> but there is still relatively little literature on this question because it is one that all countries and agencies seek to keep very secret. New urgency was injected into the subject by the post-9/11 surge in collaboration, mainly at the behest of the US, vis-à-vis the perceived global threat of terrorism and the subsequent controversies around extraordinary rendition and torture, and has now been reinforced by the release of NSA and GCHQ files providing unprecedented detail of these arrangements.<sup>47</sup> Current arrangements for the control and oversight of international intelligence cooperation are, to put it mildly, underdeveloped.<sup>48</sup>

As the geographical range of research on intelligence continues to expand and our understanding of intelligence beyond the Anglosphere develops,<sup>49</sup> so the potential for comparative analysis can be realised. This is a requirement that is relevant to each of the projects identified above and, as discussed by Michael Warner, has itself been underway since the early 1990s.<sup>50</sup> There are excellent recently-published examples where models of change are used to compare the causes of shifts in intelligence systems in various parts of the world.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> For example, Hans Born, Loch K. Johnson & Ian Leigh (eds.), *Who's Watching the Spies? Establishing Intelligence Service Accountability*, (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2005); Thomas C. Bruneau & Steven Boraz (eds.), *op cit*.

<sup>46</sup> Jeffrey T. Richelson & Desmond Ball, *The Ties That Bind* (2<sup>nd</sup> edn. Boston, MA: Unwin Hyman, 1990).

<sup>47</sup> These can be found at <http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/the-nsa-files> last accessed March 31, 2015

<sup>48</sup> Hans Born, Ian Leigh & Aidan Wills (eds.), *International Intelligence Cooperation and Accountability* (Abingdon, Routledge, 2011).

<sup>49</sup> See, for example, Philip H. J. Davies & Kristian C. Gustafson (eds.), *Intelligence Elsewhere: Spies and Espionage Outside the Anglosphere* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2013).

<sup>50</sup> Michael Warner, 'Building a Theory of Intelligence Systems,' in Trevorton and Agrell (eds.) *National Intelligence Systems*, pp. 11-37 at 12-15.

<sup>51</sup> For example, Marina Caparini, 'Comparing the Democratization of Intelligence Governance in East Central Europe and the Balkans,' pp.498-522; Marco Cepik and Cristiano Ambros, 'Intelligence, Crisis and Democracy: Institutional Punctuations in Brazil, Colombia, South Africa, and India,' pp. 523-51; Eduardo Estévez, 'Comparing Intelligence Democratization in Latin America: Argentina, Peru and Ecuador Cases,' pp. 552-80, all in *Intelligence and National Security* 29:4 (2014).

Intelligence Studies, then, is a rich and expanding academic field but it should not strive for the status of an academic discipline. There may not seem to be much difference between the definitions of a ‘discipline’ as ‘a branch of knowledge’ and a ‘field’ as ‘a branch of study or sphere of activity’<sup>52</sup> but, for us, the former implies a narrower, more technical approach which risks losing the advantages of interdisciplinarity and failing the necessary test of examining intelligence within its social and political context. Therefore, Stephen Marrin is missing the point when he suggests that “intelligence studies as a field of knowledge is subordinate to other more traditional academic disciplines including political science, history, anthropology, sociology, psychology, and communications disciplines”.<sup>53</sup> As an interdisciplinary field of study, Intelligence Studies is not ‘subordinate’ to established disciplines; rather, its aim is to draw on those disciplines to the extent that they contain useful ideas and research that helps us to understand and explain how intelligence works at personal, organisational, state and transnational levels. Far better that intelligence researchers seek to build on these interdisciplinary strengths than waste their time in patrolling the ‘borders’ of a wannabe discipline and the inevitable disputes that arise with neighbours.

There is much space for cooperation and mutual learning between academics and practitioners but they should not confuse their roles and we must also acknowledge the potential for tensions. The relationship between scholars and practitioners has a direct analogy with that of analyst and policymaker: if the relationship becomes too close there is a risk that research or analysis is compromised but, on the other hand, if the analysis pays no attention to the needs of policy or practice, it may be simply irrelevant. Those academics who have never been practitioners can learn much from those who have and whose reflections on their experience are central to their subsequent scholarship. There is a third, smaller, group of practitioner-scholars who write and reflect while still working inside agencies or companies and who face not just the requirement to submit writings for official screening but the added bureaucratic pressures to toe the line. Of course, most academics who are consulted by the agencies are not Intelligence Studies scholars *per se* but are employed for their specialist knowledge in other areas. They must consider carefully the implications of their work: in some circumstances it may not be appropriate; for example, the American Anthropological Association (AAA) examined concerns over the involvement of anthropologists in the U.S. Army’s Human Terrain Teams (HTTs) in Afghanistan and Iraq. The AAA concluded that the

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<sup>52</sup> Concise Oxford Dictionary (11<sup>th</sup> edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

<sup>53</sup> Marrin, ‘Improving Intelligence Studies’, p.13.

programme's goals - research, data collection, sources of intelligence and a counterinsurgency tactic - were potentially irreconcilable and incompatible with disciplinary ethics and practice.<sup>54</sup> Similarly, there is continuing controversy concerning the collaboration of the American Psychological Association with the CIA during the development of its 'enhanced interrogation' programme after 9/11.<sup>55</sup>

### **Who is Intelligence Studies For?**

This is the third core question that needs to be addressed. Internationally, the largest audience is clearly within the US where there are the largest number of under- and post-graduate courses in intelligence specifically, mainly at private universities since there is still some resistance to studying the subject at many public universities. Additionally, there are many modules in intelligence on more general degrees in Politics, International Relations, Security Studies *et al.* Outside of the US, most courses are at postgraduate level. There are currently some seven UK universities with specific postgraduate courses in intelligence: Aberystwyth, Birmingham, Brunel, Buckingham, King's College London, Leicester and Salford. Of these, Brunel and Buckingham market themselves most explicitly towards existing practitioners or those who are aiming for a career in intelligence, while Salford deploys distance learning for part time students already employed in military intelligence. The courses at Buckingham and Leicester were in part developed in response to demand for professionally-relevant intelligence education from the police and cognate professions. Part of the programme at King's has been developed in response to the Butler Report's recommendations for reform of analyst training.<sup>56</sup>

In several European countries there has been an explicit attempt to construct an 'intelligence culture' in recent years which reflects post-reform openness and has sought to develop not just increased awareness of the importance of a 'democratic intelligence' but also greater readiness by academics and other professionals to lend their expertise to the intelligence

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<sup>54</sup> <http://www.aaanet.org/issues/policy-advocacy/CEAUSSIC-Releases-Final-Report-on-Army-HTS-Program.cfm>, accessed September 18, 2011. See also Terry Quist, "'Human Terrain' and the application of social science to intelligence," Paper to the International Studies Association Annual Convention, New Orleans, February 2015.

<sup>55</sup> James Risen, 'American Psychological Association Bolstered CIA Torture Program,' *New York Times* April 30, 2015.

<sup>56</sup> Michael S. Goodman & David Omand, 'What Analysts Need to Understand: The King's Intelligence Studies Program,' *Studies in Intelligence*, 52:4 (2008), <https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/vol-52-no-4/teaching-intelligence-analysts-in-the-uk.html>, last accessed December 12, 2011.

community.<sup>57</sup> *Universidad Rey Juan Carlos* in Madrid established a National Intelligence Centre and, in 2005, a Chair of Intelligence Services and Democratic Systems and the following year an Institute of Intelligence for Security and Defence was set up at *Universidad Carlos III de Madrid*. These initiatives are sponsored as part of a broader ‘intelligence culture’ project by the Spanish intelligence service: *Centro Nacional de Inteligencia* (CNI). 2009-10 saw the first cohort of thirty graduates on the MA in Intelligence Analysis taught by the two universities. *Inteligencia y seguridad: Revista de análisis y prospectiva*, first appeared in 2006 and is now succeeded by this journal. The ‘intelligence culture’ project in Romania has been developed similarly by political scientists at the University of Bucharest in cooperation with the National Intelligence Academy. Working through an NGO initiative – KROSS – which encourages OSINT research, annual Academic Intelligence and Security Studies (AISS) conferences have been held in Bucharest.

Now, some of these students may well hope to pursue a career in some state intelligence agency and probably many more will go on to jobs requiring the careful analysis of information, with or without security implications. But Intelligence Studies in the universities must strive for wider relevance than as professional ‘pre-training’. If it is right to note that intelligence has been relatively ignored by other disciplines,<sup>58</sup> then we must consider to what extent this is because the field has isolated itself behind fences labelled ‘private property, keep out’ and, consequently, reinforced a tendency to self-absorption. Reflection on the part of practitioners as to how they perform is a necessary aspect of any healthy profession but Intelligence Studies must reach further afield. Conceptually, it must work not just at those theories *for* intelligence that may preoccupy practitioners but also more broadly at theories *of* intelligence that can explain how this somewhat arcane field of governance works.<sup>59</sup> Its historians make important contributions to rectify the so-called ‘missing dimension’ of international and national histories; its political scientists are rightly concerned with questions of control and oversight, its social psychologists worry about the impact of organisational context on the propensity for analytical failures and so on. It is not enough that Intelligence Studies speaks to students and, more broadly, to citizens as a by-product;<sup>60</sup> rather, it must

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<sup>57</sup> For example, Matey, ‘The Development of Intelligence Studies in Spain.’

<sup>58</sup> See, for example, Marrin, pp. 13-14.

<sup>59</sup> For an excellent comparison between the potential for intelligence analysis to become a theoretically-informed scientific discipline as opposed to the search for theories *of* intelligence, see Wilhelm Agrell and Gregory F. Treverton, ‘The Science of Intelligence: Reflections on a Field that Never Was,’ in Treverton and Agrell, *National Intelligence Systems op cit*, pp.265-80.

<sup>60</sup> Marrin, ‘Improving Intelligence Studies’, pp. 1-2.

address itself self-consciously and directly to legitimate public concerns as to how intelligence can work in democracies.

## Conclusions

Intelligence Studies has now reached a stage in its development where it is able to pose important and interesting questions and suggest answers to them by reference to an increasingly broad range of actors, both in terms of geography and level of analysis. It is now possible to identify the trajectory of Intelligence Studies which has taken it from issues of the 1950s to a broader-based set of international concerns. We summarise this in Table 1, below.

Table 1 The Evolution of the Study of Intelligence		
	Early	Contemporary
<b>Definition</b>	Aspiring discipline	Naturally interdisciplinary
<b>Focus</b>	<i>Narrow</i> : strategic national intelligence	<i>Broad</i> : security intelligence including ‘human’
<b>Conceptual concerns</b>	Theories <i>for</i> intelligence	Theories <i>of</i> intelligence
<b>Key questions</b>	How to improve analysis The analyst-policymaker relationship How to avoid intelligence failure	Relationship between intelligence, state and individual Oversight and accountability Causes of intelligence failure
<b>Area focus</b>	US/UK intelligence	International/comparative intelligence
<b>Level of analysis</b>	National	Multi-level: organisational, national, regional, international
<b>Primary audience</b>	National security practitioners, especially US	Practitioners, policy makers, researchers, scholars, students, concerned citizens

As the study of intelligence develops, it is clearly important to continue to discuss understandings of Intelligence Studies in order to foster further reflection about its past, present and future trajectory. In sum, we do not believe that it is helpful to view Intelligence

Studies as a discipline in the academic sense; rather it is a rich field of study, whose interdisciplinary potential has been one of its defining strengths. This is clear from its success in developing a range of insights into the phenomenon of intelligence failure, identifying the particular obstacles to democratic control compared with other fields of government policy, and providing detailed insights into the problematic relations between those supplying intelligence and those responsible for making policy. While some of these insights derive from the close study of what is specific to the intelligence process, others come from the more general study of how individuals, small groups and organisations process information as they seek 'knowledge'. We do believe that Intelligence Studies is much more than an academic complement to the practice of national security intelligence. Where, in this formulation, for example, would be the scope to discuss the implications of the information released via the Edward Snowden leaks? Practitioners have understandable concerns at the damage caused to COMINT processes by these revelations and the changes now required in personnel security but these must be considered in the broader context of debates about privacy and surveillance, and the adequacies or otherwise of intelligence laws and current oversight arrangements.

These are core to the study and understanding of the contemporary nature of intelligence. Yet discussion of these is not always seen as helpful by governments and intelligence agencies themselves. Indeed, in at least some places, the preference has been to try and close down such discussion.<sup>61</sup> Intelligence Studies should, of course, be relevant to intelligence practice; this is not an argument for irrelevance. Indeed, one's purpose might be 'to improve the practice of intelligence'<sup>62</sup> but it should not be simply to serve national intelligence bodies. Rather, Intelligence Studies academics can promote normative values and thinking - not just about efficacy, but also concerning the relationship between intelligence, the state and the individual, the means of providing security through intelligence, and the implications of the 'cost' of this security in a liberal democratic context. This is especially important for all those countries in which there is a struggle to 'democratise' intelligence, often in the face of stiff resistance. At best, then, Intelligence Studies should not just service national security

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<sup>61</sup> For example, speaking in advance of the release of the UK Intelligence and Security Committee's report on *Privacy and Security* in response to the Edward Snowden leaks, British Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond offered the view that there was a need to "draw a line under that debate so that the agencies can get on with the job of keeping this country safe...this debate cannot be allowed to run on forever." Philip Hammond, speech at RUSI, 10<sup>th</sup> March 2015, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/foreign-secretary-intelligence-and-security-speech>.

<sup>62</sup> Agrell and Trevorton, 'The Science of Intelligence,' *op cit*, 265.

intelligence; it has a much broader role and responsibility, that is, not only to be a ‘critical friend’ to intelligence practitioners but also to speak to a wider audience of citizens who are concerned about the effectiveness, control and oversight of this important activity whether conducted by states or non-state actors.