



Research Ethics in the Securitised University

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Abstract

Addressing the complex and longstanding relationship between universities and security and intelligence agencies, this article provides a tentative, working conceptual framework for research ethics in a global higher education environment. The article does so in the light of intensified threats of international terrorism which have brought this historic relationship to the contemporary foreground of academic life. Seeing higher education environments as part of a broader process of enhanced security in societies worldwide, we use securitization theory to provide an analytical framework specifically for understanding a complex of historical-contemporary relationships between universities and security and intelligence agencies. As the basis for framing the ethical issues which arise for researchers across all disciplines, the intention is to raise awareness of a relationship which by its very, especially historical, nature, has been secret. The article suggests identify a three-fold analytical framework were structural, operational and ethical considerations are interwoven in complex ways. At the structural level we identify three modus operandi (covert, overt, covert-overt); and four academic ethical principles (standards; freedom; engagement; conduct). While the conceptual framework presented makes no pretence of offering a complete or comprehensive picture of a complex and still evolving relationship, the intention is provide some critical balance and coherence to a contentious not to say often divisive aspect of research ethics in the securitised university.

Keywords Research ethics · Security · Intelligence agencies · Universities

Introduction

Recent articles in the academic and broadsheet press have demonstrated general and public interest in the relationship between the Academy and the security and intelligence agencies.

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Reisz's (2018) article in the *Times Higher Education* – 'Following the footprints of spies on campus' (Reisz 2018) – and Golden's in the *Guardian* – 'The science of spying: how the CIA secretly recruits academics' (Golden 2017) – are exemplars of extended coverage, often framed with more than a hint of conspiracy and intrigue. Indeed, such articles capitalize on popular conceptions of the Intelligence Community (IC) engaged in covert or secret operations on the world's campuses, infiltrating academic life, compromising research integrity and even undermining the ethical standards of open democratic societies of which universities remain such an important part. Reisz thus states: 'From MI5 recruiting, to students spying on each other and intelligence agencies funding research' there has been a 'long and often uneasy relationship between espionage and the academy'. In the US context, with resonances of the Cold War, Golden (2017) details CIA interest in nuclear science research within universities, attempts to lure scientists working on theoretical and applied atomic and sub-atomic science to collaborate in efforts for national and international security in a world threatened by newly intensified resurgent fears of nuclear proliferation among 'rogue states'.

In the wake of the defining 9/11 landmark of international security and terror attacks on New York and Washington, and now across a swathe of European cities – Bavaria, Brussels, Copenhagen, London, Madrid, Manchester, Munich, Nice, Paris, Stockholm – Europe, like America, has become increasingly engaged in strengthening its counter-terrorism policies (European Council, 2017). This is part of a wider notion of European security evidenced by the European Agenda on Security, into which universities have now been explicitly drawn (EAS 2015). European universities are then increasingly significant institutions in a securitized Europe (Davies and Gustafson 2013; De Graaff 2017; De Graaff et al. 2016).

To some, Europe's enhanced security environment is seen as a threat to the very freedoms it seeks to protect. Thus Amnesty (2017) defines EU securitising moves as symptomatic of an ever-expanding national security state across Europe. While acknowledging the 'need to protect people from such wanton violence' as 'obvious and urgent' and upholding 'the right to life, enabling people to live freely, to move freely, to think freely ... are essential tasks for any government' these 'are not tasks that should, or can, be achieved by riding roughshod over the very rights that governments are purporting to uphold.' Positing 'a profound shift in paradigm across Europe: a move from the view that it is the role of governments to provide security so that people can enjoy their rights, to the view that governments must restrict people's rights in order to provide security'. Amnesty examine the 'national security landscape in Europe' to demonstrate 'a widespread and deep' "securitization" of Europe', including through international, inter-governmental moves beyond but impacting upon Europe, notably UN Security Council Resolution 2178 (UN 2017).

Whichever narrative one accepts (too much security, too little liberty; or its converse), security is now a pervasive feature of international polity and governance and legally enshrined as part of public policy across Western States in a wide of domains seemingly distant from military operations (cf. Aradau 2004; Agrell 2012; Bigo 2002; Bigo and Tsoukala 2008; Davies and Gustafson 2013; Webber et al. 2004; Christou et al. 2010).

Yet the historic and contemporary relationship of European universities to security runs deeper and wider than current counter-terrorist measures. Not only have universities been and continue to be major sources of recruitment for the security and intelligence services in Europe and the United States, and a reservoir of secret as well as open source knowledge and or (security-sensitive) information, universities have also been integral to the origins and formation of the leading security and intelligence agencies themselves (Aldrich 2010; Andrew 2010; Jeffrey 2011; Sinclair 1986; Weiner 2012; Winks 1987a, b).

). The emergent ‘disciplines’ of intelligence collection, knowledge gathering, generation and dissemination, the very aims and purposes of universities are themselves increasingly critical to security and intelligence processes (Lowenthal and Clark 2015). Universities have long been then the physical and intellectual space where academic endeavour meets security and intelligence agency, where, that is, two types of intelligence agencies have long met in the physical and intellectual space of the university.

Our positioning is more sanguine than suspicious, and might simply be put by accepting that universities are part of the national and global communities which security and intelligence agencies seek to protect. Recent debates in a leading UK educational research journal have brought such matters to the fore, the polarisations being evident by academics such as Durodie (2016) who argue for a distance, and the rarer voice of Anthony Glees (2015) who sees in university-security-intelligence relations a legitimate collaboration.

This is part of a broader picture of securitization across a number of societal contexts. Securitization theory has for the past two or three decades has been delineating this process of securitization. Most prominent has been the Copenhagen School and its critique of the broadening societal-political range of domains into which security concerns have seeped from traditional, narrowly military concerns to a wider range of other fields and public policy domains – ‘military’, ‘political’, ‘societal’, ‘economic’, ‘environmental’ (Buzan et al. 1997; Buzan and Hansen 2009) and subsequently ‘religious’ (Bagge Laustsen and Wæver 2000; also Albert and Buzan 2011a, b; Buzan and Hansen 2009; Dunn Caveltly and Mauer 2012; Huysmans 1998; Van Munster 2012). This securitizing move argument can be applied to universities and all the academic disciplines contained therein. Taureck (2006) provides a useful caveat here, analysing in her assessment of securitization theory the necessity of some existential threat to be present for there to be a genuine securitization; in other words the situation must be serious, a real threat to individual and or social and political stability.

In Europe, such thinking is self-evidently part of the new European Agenda on Security (EAS 2015). Thus the EAS call for ‘a more joined-up inter-agency and a cross-sectorial approach’ argues in policy terms that ‘[G]iven the increasing nexus between different types of security threats, policy and action on the ground must be fully coordinated among all relevant EU agencies, in the area of Justice and Home Affairs and beyond’ (EAS 2015: 4). Universities themselves are here fully integrated – some would argue rightly, others not – into a programme of social and political protections.

We accept that universities, then, like many public bodies, are subject to enhanced security concerns in a time of the unpredictable features of international terrorism. Hence our notional ‘securitised university’ is not intended a polemical judgement but a statement of fact, that universities like many other aspects of public life have heightened security. Yet we do not by this presume a morally questionable development – security of campuses and their personnel is made legitimate by the necessity of protection – but we do think the broader and deeper relationship between universities and the security and intelligence agencies raises legitimate questions of direct concern to academics undertaking research which makes this relationship closer, and it is natural in this context to reflect upon research ethics. The matter, then, of security and intelligence agencies relations with universities is, we argue, more nuanced than is sometimes seen in popular portrayals, and deserving of more balanced treatment. Our article is an attempt to contextualise specifically the ethical frameworks which arise from the relationship. The co-authors – to identify our own positioning – represent both the Academy and the Intelligence Community – one is an academic with theoretical interests in the relationship and

no formal or covert operational connection to the security and intelligence agencies, the other is a senior officer from US Military Intelligence.

Addressing, then, the complex and longstanding relationship between universities and security and intelligence agencies, this article provides a tentative conceptual framework, a provisional mapping of the field in schematic terms, for research ethics in a global higher education environment. The article does so in the light particularly of intensified international terrorism threats which have brought this historic relationship to the contemporary foreground of academic life.

Universities and the Security-Intelligence Agency Nexus

The most important nexus of universities and the security intelligence agencies is in their reciprocal preoccupation with knowledge or intelligence, the academically inclined personnel who gather it, the universities where such knowledgeable people gather, and the contacts they make which can provide specialist insights. On the surface there seems little obvious connectedness to activities of knowledge and or intelligence gathering in that sector of public civilian life known as the university and the security and intelligence agencies. One of the reasons for a lack of public knowledge of security and intelligence agency involvement with universities is in large measure for reasons of national security, often guaranteeing and justifying legally protected secrecy. Historical accounts of intelligence agencies in the UK and the US show however that the relationships with universities were not simply an additional aspect of the security operations but an integral part of the origins of the agencies themselves, and at times a threat to the security and intelligence agencies themselves. Sinclair's (1986) *The Red and the Blue: Intelligence, Treason and the Universities* thus provides an invaluable and scholarly insight into the Cold War importance of University of Cambridge academics in the history of betrayal, espionage and treason. More positively framed is Winks' (1987a, b) *Cloak & Gown, Scholars in the Secret War, 1939–1961* which meticulously details the central role American Ivy League Universities played in the formation of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Winks outlines in measured tones and informative ways the respective roles of the university as recruiting ground, the campus itself as a meeting place, the professoriate as a source of specialist knowledge and intelligence theorisation, the library as a storehouse of intelligence knowledge, and the sustained nature of the relationship between academics, staff, students and alumni.

If during the Cold War secrecy was at a premium, and remains still integral to operations (the clue is in the definition of *secret* intelligence), the agencies themselves have for some decades been subject to, and ever more closely, political policies determined by openness and democratic accountability. In 2013 Edward Snowden, an employee of the National Security Agency (NSA), as will be well-known, allegedly released information relating to apparently secret surveillance operations by the United States in collaboration with partner security and intelligence agencies worldwide, seeming to show interest not simply in standard military and defined enemy targets but the general populace (Harding 2014). The 2016 film based on Harding's *The Snowden Files: The Inside Story of the World's Most Wanted Man* has rekindled something of the spirit of conspiracy and intrigue somewhat nostalgically missed when the Cold War ended.

Yet there was an added dimension to the nostalgia. Part of the shock of the Edward Snowden revelations was the public sense that secret intelligence agencies were accessing

data not simply on enemies but everyone. This implied perspective of regarding the populace as potential adversaries has brought deep and serious questions not simply about State power but the operational jurisdictions under which security and intelligence agencies operate. A classic instance might be related from the 1975 Church Committee, led by Senator Frank Church, investigating covert and some had charged ethically questionable CIA activity. A then young Loch K. Johnson asked the CIA director of counterintelligence, the renowned James Jesus Angleton, about obeying executive orders. Angleton, a poet and scholar as well as director of CIA counterintelligence, former friend of Kim Philby, and arguably one of the most iconic figures of Cold War espionage, gave a famous, indeed infamous answer: 'It is inconceivable that a secret arm of the government has to comply with all the overt orders of the government' (Winks 1987a, b: 327).

The Intelligence Community defence today would be less detached from due democratic process. In the matter of secret intelligence gathering or any covert action, for example data gathering, would be that all such intelligence gathering must be undertaken in a targeted and lawful way. For example, in the US, members of the IC must get permission to mine and analyse data from private citizens through a range of procedural processes through a FISC or Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court. Challenges to this suggest that the bypassing of legislative process has become endemic, and the necessities of operational secrecy only seem to enhance such a perception. Public consternation however over intelligence operations and its military-security impacts arguably reached a pitch when the public realised that a lot of security and intelligence operations seemed to be as much towards them as towards any well-defined enemy of a hostile foreign power or terrorist non-state actor. Above all else, the Snowden revelations *seemed* – again framed in often conspiratorial ways – to convey a notion new to the public: that intelligence gathering was not simply about the enemy but anyone, not only about known enemy targets but unexpected future ones, anyone that is and everything (Harding 2014; Johnson et al. 2014; Leigh and Harding 2011; Wright and Kreissl 2013). Yet the ethical implications of military, security and intelligence agency operational impacts on civilian populations, within and beyond the field of conflict, combat and war has received a considerable degree of attention in the research literature of security and intelligence studies as well as in the direct field of security-intelligence and military operations themselves (Baker 2015; Lucas 2015, 2016; Goldman 2009, 2011; Johnson and Patterson 2015; Omand and Phythian 2013).

Operationally, there are three historically and contemporaneously complex levels of interaction between the security and intelligence agencies and public bodies such as universities: *covert*, *overt* and a blended *overt-covert* (Gearon 2015; 2017a, b, 2018). The *covert* illustrates the default, secret involvement of security and intelligence agencies with universities. In Britain for example until the 1980s there was an official cross-party agreement that matter of security and intelligence were not discussed in the UK Parliament, nor were the operational matters of security and intelligence agencies subject to scrutiny, indeed the very existence of agencies such as the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) were neither affirmed nor denied (Aldrich et al. 2014; Aldrich and Cormac 2016). The *overt* demonstrates the position, largely elicited by historic concerns over secret agencies within the State and parallel moves towards enhanced transparency in polity and governance in open, liberal democracies. In Britain the Intelligence and Security Committee (largely) publicly holds the machinery of the security and intelligence agencies to account, and public inquiries do the same, most notably in the UK

Government commissioned report on the Iraq war (Chilcot 2016). The overt-covert is the grey and difficult territory of operational secrecy under the pretext of accountability, openness and transparency.

Covert

The Covert Model reflects the traditional, historical model of a secret and clandestine collection of intelligence. In security and intelligence terms the 'spy schools' (Gearon 2015) are higher education level centres for the training of officers and agents of intelligence collection for the purposes of military and the advancement and defence of strategic national advantage.

In the United States at least, more than in any other national context, an integral connection between universities seems to be a defining characteristic from the origins of the modern Intelligence Community itself. Dirks, provides an acute and insightful analysis of the origins, development and security/ intelligence applications of academic endeavour in anthropology, area and global studies and lauds a close synergy of spies and scholars (Dirks 2012). As Dirks puts it:

When Franklin D. Roosevelt recruited William J. (Wild Bill) Donovan in 1941 to be his first coordinator of information, Donovan established the Research and Analysis Branch in Washington, D.C., and started hiring top academics. The fledgling office was reborn as a key unit of the Office of Strategic Services, itself established a few months after Pearl Harbor. As the United States joined the Allied war effort, Donovan hired several senior, and a great many younger, academics, principally from the Ivy League, to coordinate the collection, sorting, and analysis of material relevant to the war. Although academics were initially recruited by discipline (like history, anthropology, geography, economics, politics), Donovan's 'dean' of the OSS, the Harvard historian William L. Langer, soon recognized the need for area-specific interdisciplinary teams (Dirks 2012)

Not only, then, was there a reciprocal relationship between universities and intelligence agencies in terms of the formation of and subsequent recruitment to the intelligence agencies but these same intelligence agencies, in ways which have not been fully explored, were critical in the shaping of disciplines within US universities.

Histories of British as well as American intelligence agencies show universities were a major, if strictly covert or secret and secretive, source of personnel in the founding of all these organisations – in the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) (Weiner 2012), General Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) (Aldrich 2010; MI5 (Andrew 2010); and MI6 (Jeffery 2011). Just as for recruitment to British Intelligence has depended on graduates from Oxbridge, Weiner's critical history of the CIA have confirmed Dicks' assertions and shown the extent to which the newly formed post-Second World intelligence agency drew extensively from Ivy League Universities.

If scholarly debate has questioned the actual impact or operational efficacy of such developments on the course of war, and weighed in the balance the politicised, not to say securitised, character as well as academic quality of this work, what is less recognised, according to Dirks, is 'the agency's [the OSS, later the CIA's] most enduring influence – on the nature and conduct of research and teaching in the post-war university', one defined most clearly in those disciplines where the study of known foreign countries (in anthropology, area studies, latterly development and global studies) which become sources of information for the intelligence agencies.

Citing McGeorge Bundy, former Harvard Dean of Arts and Sciences, Dirk concurs that the early OSS, was ‘a remarkable institution, half cops-and-robbers and half faculty meeting’.

Such historic, Cold War contexts are a critical backdrop to understanding the precedence to very different contemporary, present-day settings but the past here forms an important element of understanding the present (Sinclair 1986; Winks 1987a, b; Witaneck 1989; Zwerling 2011). Regardless of our moral assessments of this, universities have thus become critical loci for the security and intelligence agencies in ways which reflect an intensification of a complex, covert or secretive historical and reciprocal relationship which reached an apogee during the Cold War (Gearon 2015, 2017b; Aldrich 2010; Andrew 2010; Jeffery 2011; Weiner 2012). Today the covert relationship continues, incorporating but extending beyond terrorism and counter-terrorism and flourishing in ways which shows an ever deepening, a further embedding of security interests across universities.

Levels of enhanced security and operational secrecy are thus most apparent in those universities aligned with or integral to the security and intelligence communities themselves.

All branches of the US military (Army, Navy, Air Force, or Marines) have, then, members of the military assigned to work in the IC (such as the National Security Agency (NSA), The National Geospatial Agency (NGA), the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) go to intelligence training together to learn their specific intelligence discipline and related jobs. In many cases the students earn college credits. Before the education begins, each student must have their relevant security clearance granted (CLASSIFIED, SECRET, TOP SECRET) in order to receive the intelligence training. These are effectively in-house college programs. The intelligence training is not only entry level, but continues throughout a military member’s career, regardless of enlisted or officer, or their specific intelligence discipline.

Not only do the military intelligence schools have in-house securitized ‘universities’, but so do the intelligence agencies. Each agency in the IC has in-house ‘universities’ where the employees can take classes, though few of them award degrees. The benefit of having these ‘universities’ within the classified environment means that the courses offered can be taught using classified examples and the all of the research can be done through classified databases. This research and course work is designed to benefit academically and operationally. The only difference is the courses offered at the agencies are voluntary and the military intelligence training is not.

While the agencies in the IC offer in-house college-level courses in intelligence, the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) has taken this to a completely new level. The DIA has a securitized university called the National Intelligence University (NIU). The NIU offers both bachelor’s and master’s degrees (NIU 2017a). What is not commonly known is that individuals in the IC are obtaining bachelor’s and master’s degrees in security and intelligence studies from the NIU and have been doing so since the early 1980’s. The NIU (formerly known as the National Intelligence School and the National Defense Intelligence College) has been offering intelligence courses and academic programs since the early 1960’s (NIU 2017b).

The NIU, which recently relocated to its own campus in Bethesda Maryland from the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) Headquarters located at Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling, is a degree granting institution that has a far-reaching mission to educate intelligence specialists in current and future national security challenges (NIU 2017b).

The NIU is a unique and technologically advanced university that focuses on the profession of intelligence and is the only institution of higher education in the nation that allows its students to study and complete research in the Top Secret/Sensitive Compartmentalized Information (TS/SCI) arena.

The NIU offers three degree programs in intelligence and security studies. It offers the Bachelor of Science in Intelligence (BSI), the Master of Science of Strategic Intelligence (MSSI), and the Master of Science and Technology Intelligence (MSTI) (NIU 2017a). The BSI degree focuses on core intelligence concepts, issues and methods. This fourth-year program enables students to become a true professional on issues of national-level intelligence and its consumer. The MSSI degree is designed to prepare students for the complexity of intelligence work in the twenty-first century. The 43-credit curriculum focuses on three main themes: Globalization, Future-focused Intelligence, and Intelligence for National Security. You can obtain the degree at the NIU campus or through a cohort at several intelligence agencies. You can be part of the DIA Cohort, the National Security Agency (NSA) Cohort, the National Geospatial Agency (NGA) Cohort, or through the European Academic Cohort located at the University's Academic Centre at the Joint Analytic Centre at RAF Molesworth, U.K. Lastly, the MSTI degree prepares students to recognize the impact of technological change on national security and intelligence. MSTI students study one of four core concentrations established to focus their education to their area of thesis research. The four concentrations are Weapons of Mass Destruction; Information Operations and Cyber; Emerging and Disruptive Technologies; and Geostrategic Resources and the Environment.

While technically still part of the government, the United States Military Academy at West Point (West Point) and the United States Naval Academy (USNA), have set up institutes and centers that do have a symbiotic relationship. In 2014, West Point opened the Army Cyber Institute (ACI) at West Point (Bunkley 2014). The Army is not the only military branch developing these relationships. The USNA has the Center for Cyber Security Studies, which serves a similar purpose. These institutions not only provide help to the IC in the form of research and analysis, but also as a good way to find great candidates for both civilian and military positions within the IC like the United States Cyber Command (CYBERCOM) and the NSA. The ACI has a program called the Cyber Leader Development Program that identifies, develops, and tracks cyber leaders. This is a rich pool for US intelligence agencies to pull from for quality future members of the IC.

Even therefore in this covert, militarily secret and security sensitive research environments there is a developing interface or nexus between universities and the security and intelligence agencies. In very many senses – what we call the Overt Model – this relationship has about it a semblance of openness and public engagement.

Overt

The Overt Model is in large measure an attempt to restrict the clandestine operations into the sphere of public, that is legislative and in the UK Parliamentary or in the US Congressional and Senate accountability (Davies 2002). Apparent legislative openness and accountability is

here, evidently, no measure of any security and intelligence agencies compliance within what most members of democratic societies would consider legitimate action.

In a context of an intensified climate of international terrorism, educational institutions have become a critical element in counter-terrorist efforts as part of a rapidly changing security and intelligence landscape, not insignificant here has been the contested role of universities (Gearon 2015, 2017b). As part of this historical-contemporary analysis (Sinclair 1986; Winks 1987a, b; Witaneck 1989; Zwerling 2011), there are three multi-dimensional strands of an historically rooted, *chronic*, and contemporaneously, *acute*, disciplinary and institutional relationship between universities and the security and intelligence agencies which have become on the surface overt, in large measure a response to the same public calls for accountability and transparency which were at the heart of the formation of the CIA.

The CIA today operates with a much greater degree of openness than in its formative years. The CIA thus looks openly for high quality candidates, people from diverse backgrounds, to take the all-day CIA aptitude test in a variety of universities like the University of New Mexico, and the NSA is developing special liaisons with universities like Carnegie Mellon. The NSA assigns representatives called Security Education Academic Liaison (SEAL)'s (Bing 2017) who partner with universities in order to pick the best and the brightest for employment at the NSA. SEALs promote collaboration between the IC and universities. The NSA, as well as, the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) sponsors National Centers of Academic Excellence in Academic Institutions Education (CAE/IAE) and National Centers of Academic Excellence in Research (CAE-R) (Wolkow 2013). Many of the agencies in the IC have Directors of Academic Outreach whose mission is to develop CAE/IAEs and CAE-Rs. Some of the of the NSA's CAE's are located at Dakota State University, University of Tulsa, Auburn University, and Mississippi State University to name a few (Wolkow 2013). The NSA has not only established CAEs for their traditional mission set, but also in Cyber Operations (Wolkow 2013).

The reciprocal relationship works in other ways too. Many universities are not only teaching unclassified and open source intelligence and security courses (OSINT), but they are also using current and former members of the Intelligence Community (IC) as guest lecturers and co-lecturers for courses. One example is Columbia University in the City of New York. Columbia offers a variety of intelligence and security focused courses, such as, *Strategic Intelligence and Political Decision Making*, *Topics in International Security, Terrorism & Counterterrorism*, and *Global Energy: Security and Geopolitics*. One of the authors of this article is a Signals Intelligence Officer in the US Army and has guest-lectured in several of the Columbia courses. For example, in *Strategic Intelligence and Political Decision Making*, he taught a two-hour class on Signals Intelligence (SIGINT), a two-hour class on Geo-Spatial Intelligence (GEOINT), and a two-hour lesson on the Intelligence Cycle, also known as the intelligence process, (Direction, Collection, Processing, Analysis, Dissemination, & Feedback). SIGINT and GEOINT are two types of intelligence collection disciplines. The intelligence cycle is used across and incorporates all the five main types of intelligence collection disciplines (Lowenthal and Clark 2015). Having actual members of the IC come and teach these courses at universities, while still only taught at the unclassified level, gives the students a different perspective when the instructor is able to use vignettes, case studies, and exemplars to illustrate important points. Having the

members of the IC lecturing the course serves the dual purpose of allowing the instructor to see which students might be good candidates for their, or other, agencies in the IC. It serves as a recruiting tool (IAFIE 2018).

Not only are universities using intelligence officers as guest lecturers, but also IC agencies are assigning officers tours of duty in selected universities. The CIA Officer-in Residence (OIR) Program was established in 1985 to place officers in teaching and research positions at universities.

These are not covert or clandestine positions, but are open and publicized. In fact, the CIA understands the need for openness and goes out of their way to make sure the individuals are identified as agents and encourage faculty and staff around the universities to work with the agents. Agents are even encouraged to hang CIA awards and certificates on their office walls at the university in an attempt at transparency. The openness and transparency does not mean that OIRs leave behind their background and experience to focus on lecturing in Government or research English Literature, the OIRs actually teach courses on intelligence. This began in the late 1980's, when the CIA OIRs at both Boston University and Georgetown offered courses that were devoted strictly to intelligence. To this day, newly selected OIRs are allowed to develop their own syllabus for any intelligence course they teach. The focus of their courses is not on tradecraft, but around the issues and challenges of the intelligence process and how it works.

Covert-Overt

The functions, remit, limitations, and means of accountability of the security and intelligence community in the UK were demarcated far later than in the US – by the Security Service Act 1989 (SSA) and the Intelligence Services Act 1994 (ISA) (MI6, 2015) – and seeming non-existence of such agencies themselves prior to what is known as ‘avowal’ was long-evidenced by British Prime Ministers neither confirming nor denying their existence (Aldrich and Cormac 2016). In the UK today, the cross-Party Intelligence and Security Committee holds the intelligence and security agencies to account often in public hearing in ways which would have seemed and been deemed unthinkable in the early decades of their formation (Aldrich et al. 2014).

In both the UK and the US however Parliament and Congress or Senate have long held the Intelligence Community to account, whether in the US with the post-Vietnam Church Committee or in the UK and the US with post-Iraq deliberations of the Senate Intelligence Committee’s Study of Its Detention and Interrogation Program (Harlow) or the Chilcot Report (Chilcot 2016), the UK Government commissioned report into the Iraq War, shows the extent to which the security and intelligence agencies are not only subject to critique but how fundamental they are to the mechanisms of government itself, yet perhaps above all how critical the information gathered is integral to policy decisions around military engagement. The overt model then presumes that operationally the actions of Intelligence Community will remain secret for reasons of national and public security but implies in historical and actual terms an enhanced degree of accountability and openness.

The blended *overt-covert* position largely defines the operational grey area which characterises the modus operandi in present-day practice of the security and intelligence agencies. This justifies the continued need for some secrecy on the basis of national security

but allows for a wide range of activities which cannot for said justification be disclosed. At a very basic level this means some knowledge is secret (or classified) and some knowledge is open, in the public domain (unclassified). Of what are known as the five disciplines of intelligence collection, the latter domain of unclassified knowledge, as mentioned earlier, is one of the five disciplines of intelligence collection, known as OSINT; for consideration of the other four intelligence disciplines, see Lowenthal and Clark (2015). A lesser examined, more symbiotic aspect to this relationship is that both universities and intelligence agencies engage in knowledge gathering, if for very different purposes (Lowenthal and Clark 2015). A shared interest in the aims, purposes and uses of a systematic collection of knowledge highlights the implications for academic research ethics in newly intensified security environments across universities worldwide. We cannot hope systematically to treat each of the ethical dimensions of such engagements in depth but a schematic outline is, we think, a good starting place to provide some suggested parameters for structuring our understanding of the issues in situ.

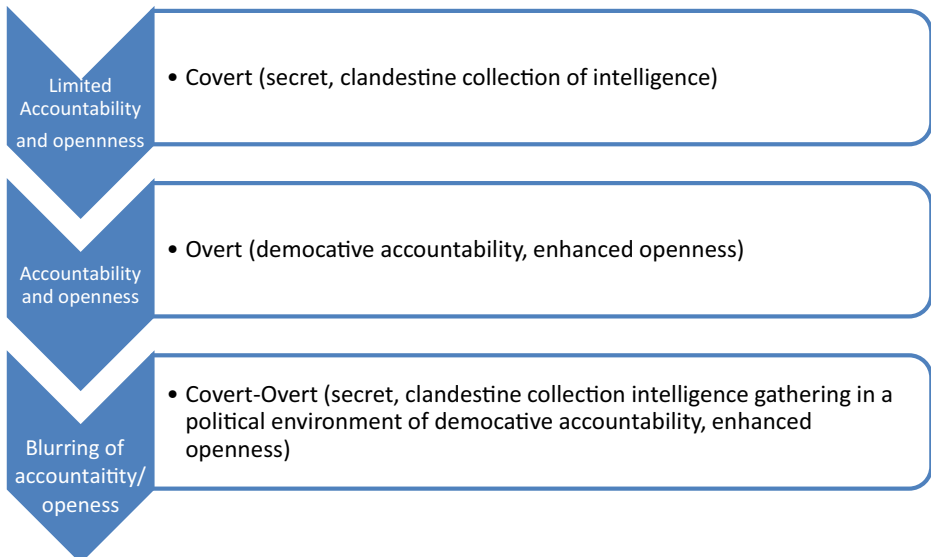
Four Academic Principles: *Standards; Freedom; Engagement; Conduct*

Research may be defined in many ways. The revised Frascati Manual (OECD 2015) divides research into three categories of basic, applied and experimental. For work to be considered research by this international benchmarking, work must be: ‘novel, creative, uncertain, systematic, transferable and or reproducible’ (OECD 2015: 28–29). In ethics, researchers will invariably follow the specific guidance of respective professional associations and use these as guiding principles for the duration of the research process. Lesser explored in academic research ethics are those issues raised by engagements of universities with security and intelligence gathering connectedness of research ethics: the British Sociological Association (BSA 2018), with a first published ‘Statement of Ethical Principles’ in 1968; the British Psychological Society (BPS 2018) first published ‘Ethical Principles’ 1978, the British Educational Research Association (BERA 2018), first published its ‘Ethical Guidelines’ in 1992, the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) (ESRC 2018). Educational researchers most obviously concerned with pedagogical and institutional concerns with education itself, including universities, have, even post-9/11, demonstrated a neglect of security and intelligence concerns even when explicitly dealing with policies and philosophies of research ethics (Bridges et al. 2007). The lead (non-statutory) body guiding university governance – Universities UK (2017) has, naturally, in the heightened case of terrorism and new counter-terrorist legislation which directly impacts universities, has sharpened its guidance counter-terror responsibilities in the light of what in the UK is known as Prevent (UUK 2016). UUK has raised ethical-related issues too prior to this, including guidance on *Freedom of speech on campus: rights and responsibilities in UK universities* (UUK 2011) and *Oversight of security-sensitive research material in UK universities: guidance* (UUK 2012). While none of this amounts to a satisfactory overview of the relationship between the conduct of academic research in the light of the current security climate, nevertheless our outline of such should show that the ethical principles at play are not new as such but rather new in application.

Thus while security and intelligence studies has begun to develop explicit attention to ethics in intelligence, security and intelligence, academics recognise ethics has been neglected within

the field (Johnson 2012; Omand and Phythian 2018), it is arguable that this has been in part pressured by outcry over the seemingly (in public opinion) unethical behaviour of the security and intelligence agencies. In the UK this was most evident with the publication of the Chilcot Report (Chilcot 2016) and the suggestions – not proven – of apparent political manipulation of intelligence about Iraqi weapons of mass destruction as a means of justification invasion, war and occupation. Security dossiers which justified the invasion or Iraq seem piecemeal exposés compared the scale of remits of a more generalized surveillance such as Snowden's. Yet still, even in the security and intelligence literature related to the practice of academic research, such as for example, a relatively recent and path-finding volume on research methods in security and intelligence studies has no chapter devoted to ethics.

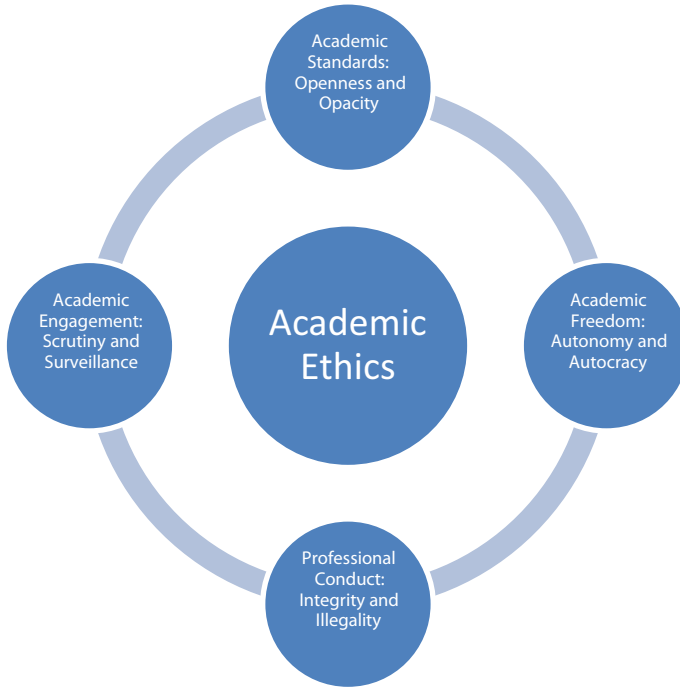
A tentative modelling of research ethics provides here a conceptual sketch of the ethical dimensions of university and security/ intelligence agency relations. While adding to the complexity of such relations, the tripartite overt, covert and covert-overt modelling gives some sense of the operational milieu of such ethical contexts and in itself refines more often negatively framed responses to this important historic but ever intensifying nexus of security and intelligence agency interactions with the Academy.



A multi-disciplinary interstitial model of the interface of universities and the security and intelligence agencies suggests a marked historical shift from the covert, an increased tendency in an era of accountability to Government and the government of public opinion, to the overt. And yet, the intelligence and security services, being by their nature secretive, even in an era of increased public and political accountability needs must in actual operational tendency blend the covert and the overt, the covert-overt. Hence the latest stage of the relational nexus blends openness and secrecy, transparency and opacity, a blurring which is or can be perceived as offering opportunities to skirt public, democratic accountability. Here, the three-fold model can also be represented in more likely appropriate cyclical and complex ways.

These new security agendas raise old ethical dilemmas for universities on many levels. We provide here a framing of key, critical issues in academic research ethics for universities today

under four categories: Academic Standards; Academic Freedom; Academic Engagement; Professional Conduct. For each category it is argued a binary opposition becomes evident of potential ethical challenges, dichotomies, dilemmas, all of which are specific to security-specific academic research ethics.



Academic Standards; Academic Freedom: Academic Engagement: Professional Conduct

We thus identify four research ethics themes potentially arising from university engagement with security and intelligence agencies: professional conduct; academic standards; academic freedom; research conduct, each broad category has within it a scale of ethical principles either in tension or opposition. In order to provide a framework for further discussion and research, we seek here simply to outline in provisional and tentative ways the range of ethical considerations raised by university relations with security and intelligence agencies, providing illustrative exemplars from a range of specific disciplinary contexts.

Academic Standards: Openness and Opacity

However, contested discussions over epistemology may be across any discipline, knowledge, including methods of enquiry, to be seen as credible, is expected to be testable and open to challenge, subject to peer review as well as public account. Indeed revisions and additions to knowledge are made on the basis on the soundness of prior knowledge. If research and publication is framed so as to involve deception, deceit, or falsification, this becomes a matter of not merely academic but public concern.

In our present consideration of university relations with security and intelligence agencies, the very hint of covert action or secrecy seems immediately to draw into question the very possibility of openness. If an academic is working in covert collaboration in secrecy with an espionage agency, this first principle of academic openness is immediately questioned. Whether this is the falsification of results or findings or plagiarised is one matter, but the very notion of secrecy militates de facto against openness.

A now contemporary classic exemplar of such a case we may draw here from the social sciences. In a notorious cause célèbre in the history of anthropology, at the height of the Vietnam War, revealed that some prominent US social scientists were covertly engaged in counterinsurgency activities in Thailand. The case made against the latter being that their activities had potential to impact in harmful ways on those with whom the researchers were collaborating. The Ethics Committee of the American Anthropological Association debated the case in a time when the academic community as a whole was polarized by the Vietnam War. The case led to the formulation of American Anthropological Association's ethical code for researchers. Eric Wakin's (2008) now reprinted *Anthropology Goes to War: Professional Ethics and Counterinsurgency in Thailand*, details the controversy. Anthropologists, with their credible rationales for access to remote and often otherwise difficult to access peoples and places provide considerable potential cover for covert action. The issues over anthropology continued to be reported long after the end of the Vietnam War: 'The revelation that the quiet American studying at a university near you might be a trainee spy brought cries of consternation from British anthropologists ... (Times Higher, "CIA outrages UK academics by planting spies in classroom", June 3, 2006). The impact of potential covert actions by academics, or even the hint of its possibility, as we can see from this instance, provoked a wider uncertainty about the openness of an entire discipline; see for example Price's (2004) *Threatening Anthropology: McCarthyism and the F.B.I.'s Surveillance of Activist Anthropologists*.

This same first principle could be applied to any area of university work. With heightened involvements of security and intelligence agencies in an era of global terroristic threat, universities a marked locus of special interest for the monitoring of extremism and counter-terrorism, matters have arguably become more but less intensified (Gearon 2018). In these latter cases, the more pressing ethical matters of those of the other, the second and third principles – of academic freedom, and of academic integrity.

Academic Freedom: Autonomy and Autocracy

For the UK as for much of the western world, 9/11 remains a defining landmark in such terrorism and counter-terrorism narrative. Crelinsten (2014), for example, argues that there is, in security terms, 'September 12 thinking' and 'September 10 thinking'. The former 'privileges a war model of counterterrorism, while the latter approach is assumed by the former to privilege a criminal justice model of counterterrorism' blurring between internal and external security, international and domestic jurisdictions, and state and non-state actors (Crelinsten 2014: 1; cf. Crelinsten 1978). Such post-9/11 thinking has intensified security and intelligence operations on campuses worldwide (for a review of this terrorism and counter-terrorism literature, see Author 2018).

There are, however, numerous historic and still current cases, which embroil the Academy in less obvious and lesser-known way. The arts, for instance, may seem as distant from espionage as any aspect of university life. The independence of aesthetic vision is here closely

related to notions of academic autonomy, indeed with universities being associated with the same intellectual spaces as are perceived for artists in the domain of aesthetic endeavour. Yet, as the aesthetic and intellectual activity have always been integrally political, in specific ways we can illustrate this in the history of the arts has in modern times been closely associated with the maintenance of autocratic, dictatorial and totalitarian regimes. Thus, for example, that all of twentieth century totalitarian movements saw the arts as having a pivotal role in the shaping of political systems indicates the power of modern aesthetics in all aspects of modernity (Adamson 2003). Writing in particular, and the arts more generally, played an important political role in post-Revolutionary Russia (Trotsky's (1971) *Literature and Revolution* representing a key delineation of this. In post-Revolutionary Russia, the All-Russian Association of Proletarian Writers and the subsequent Union of Soviet Writers, created by the Central Committee of the Communist Party in 1932, made the arts a critical weapon in the arsenal of the Revolution itself. The 1934 Congress of the Union of Soviet Writers gave to this role an existential, as much as ideological role, when Stalin's mouthpiece Andrei Zhdanov declared Socialist Realism to be the only acceptable purpose for literature, somewhat brilliantly if chillingly encapsulated in Stalin's epigram that artists were to be 'engineers of the human soul' (Garrard and Garrard 1990).

The Western Academy and the world of the arts had its corresponding if less overtly stated engagements with political agency. Here Linda Risso's (2014) *Propaganda and Intelligence in the Cold War* has pioneered our understanding of the NATO Information Service or NATIS, the cultural wing if you like of its military alliances designed to win (largely) Soviet hearts and minds. Other scholars such as Sarah Miller Harris (2016), with her *The CIA and the Congress for Cultural Freedom in the Early Cold War*, and Frances Stonor Saunders (2013), with her *The Cultural Cold War: The CIA and the World of Arts and Letters*, shed much the same light on university and arts engagement with espionage agencies. Joel Whitney's (2018) *Finks: How the C.I.A. Tricked the World's Best Writers* and Finn and Couvee (2015) *The Zhivago Affair* detail further levels of CIA involvement in the world of letters. With modern literary studies in universities being seen as a bastion of autonomous critical thought, such revelations illuminate autonomy tinged by the secret hand of espionage, something expected in international relations (Aldrich et al. 2014; Aldrich and Cormac 2016) but perhaps less expected in the Academy, the world of letters or in the media (Wilkinson 2009). The persistent critique of security engagements with the arts raises especially sensitive ethical questions, notably when the paragons of aesthetic autonomy (artists, musicians, writers) are shown to be less than independent of power State authority the argument can be made for a State moving in autocratic directions or at least centralizing ways. In research ethics, the question of autonomy make their appearance when security and intelligence purposes, or even sources of funding, make possible research across a range of disciplines (Technopolis 2015; Tilley et al. 2014). We do not argue there is a lack of legitimacy here, in either the funding or proximity of academic institutions to security agency agendas, for it is as easy to argue that security and intelligence agency engagements are as legitimate an aspect of the wider polity as any other department of Government. Our argument is that issues of autonomy are worth examining as an aspect of the broader outline of such engagements.

Academic Engagement: Scrutiny and Surveillance

Academics must, by necessity, engage with the world beyond universities. The increased emphasis on 'impact' across universities worldwide is designed to show the value of academic

research in all disciplines to the cultural, economic, political and social environments beyond the confines of the Academy. And whether academic life depends on public or private funding it is difficult to support the idea that academic life, including engagement within and beyond the academic, are not subject to levels of scrutiny which ensure academic enquiry is worth financing. Objections become concerns when scrutiny shifts into surveillance. In the UK, for example, the latest example of a decades-long history of counter-terrorism legislation, the Counter Terrorist and Security Act 2015 (CTSA 2015) has particularly impacted UK higher education policy and research (Gearon 2018). With the CTSA bringing significant legal responsibilities and obligations to public authorities through, and significantly extending the range and public responsibilities of the Prevent Strategy, countering of extremism has become a not uncontentious part of UK university policy (Durodie 2016; Glees 2015; Russell Group 2015; UUK 2016; also UUK 2011, 2012, 2013, 2016). The reception of the policy by UK Universities has ranged from welcome acceptance to caution and wariness through to hostility and strong ideological opposition (Durodie 2016; Gearon 2015, 2017b; Glees 2015; NUS 2015; 2017). The UK Government moves at counter-terrorism is perceived by some as an intrusion into, and de facto curtailment of, scholarly and research independence through legal, security and intelligence service agency involvement in higher education. Such involvement is far from lacking either historical precedent (Sinclair 1986; Winks 1987a, b) or present day currency (De Graaff and Nyce 2016; IAFIE 2018; Zwerling 2011). If the reception of CTSA duties have been contentious (Busher, Choudhury, Thomas and Harris, 2017), the body representing UK university interests has expressed strong reservations over the potential of such responsibilities to impinge on academic freedom (UUK, 2017). Related concerns are shared by the UK's National Union of Students over the impacts on its members in the CTSA surveillance powers unfairly to target cultural, racial and religious minorities (NUS 2015, 2017). Monitoring of campus activity, terms by opponents as surveillance, has campuses perceived as loci extremist and radical activity. The education sector made a third of Prevent (or counter-terrorist) referrals in 2015–16, with two and a half thousand individuals named (Home Office, 2017). The Eighth Report of Session (2016–17) of the Home Affairs Committee (2017) itself came to several critical conclusions about the implementation of the CTSA as a means to counter radicalisation in schools as well as universities, largely raised over questions of surveillance and monitoring of student and academic activity. Our third academic principle shows, then, that balance between academic and public accountability of staff and students elides into concern when scrutiny becomes surveillance.

Professional Conduct: Integrity and Illegality

The three prior academic principles culminate in a more general category of professional conduct. With wide differences in the nature of professional codes (entry for example into the professions, such as education, law or medicine) and research ethics codes (invariably disciplinarily specific), the three preceding cases may indeed be incorporated into the notion of academic integrity. The case we may wish to present here is where such issues of integrity – the conduct for example of ethically conducted research – breaches into illegality.

As the intensification of threat has widened, so too have interests in the security and intelligences services, as directed by the governments they serve, widened and deepened their interest in universities. The epistemological range of what the security and intelligence community call ‘intelligence collection disciplines’ (Lowenthal and Clark 2015) and the ‘intelligence collection cycle’ (Pythian 2015) shows an integral relationship between scientific

discipline knowledge interests and the knowledge interests of the security and intelligence agencies. What is known as ‘security sensitive research’ generally here relates to the development of knowledge that may have commercial, economic, industrial or directly military uses and is conducted in both civilian and military research contexts (UUK 2012). The access of and to such security sensitive research becomes part of intelligence gathering, then, both as a means of advancing defence and preparing for prospective offence in times of direct attack from hostile sources, whether corporations, individuals or nation states. The protection of campus personnel, staff, students and researchers, becomes here part of protection of the public.

Today, concerns are prevalent among security and intelligence agencies over similar lapses in hostile access to research. There are cases where university academics face dilemmas too in collaboration with law-enforcement in direct confrontation of conflicts between legal demands for access to academic research when confidentiality has been assured to participants. While researchers in ethically sensitive areas (prisons, schools or other publication institutions) may face issues over disclosure of harm or even criminality in their investigations, Palys and Lowman’s (2012) ‘Defending Research Confidentiality “To the Extent the Law Allows:” Lessons From the Boston College Subpoenas’ is a well-known instance. Here, Boston College researchers on Northern Ireland terrorism gave assurances of confidentiality to former convicted terrorists but were ultimately unable to vouchsafe this – UK and US security and intelligence agencies working in collaboration with respective law-enforcement bodies requested and ultimately gained access to the researchers’ findings through court subpoenas.

Conclusion

We have, we will admit, sacrificed some in-depth analysis of the component parts, in particular our outline of the four academic principles. And in particular as regards the breadth of internal dichotomies each of these contains: the tensions, that is, between academic standards of openness and opacity; the tensions in academic freedom which cherish autonomy and fear autocracy; the question of academic engagement which depends on scrutiny but is suspicious of covert surveillance; and in professional conduct where integrity and truth must be at the heart of the production and dissemination of new knowledge, but not at all costs, and certainly not where knowledge-gathering strays into illegality. We would have loved to develop exemplars here, but we are content with these as a set of outline parameters for others to fill and expand of the nuance of ethical detail and argument.

Our delineation too of the three levels of university and security/ intelligence agency relationship – covert, overt, covert-overt – is intended as an operational typology of security and intelligence agency involvement with universities for those more familiar with the latter than the former.

Our critical intention has therefore been not simply to further debate but to provide some working tools for engagement with some critical research ethics themes and the means to structure these in a current geopolitical environment. Here, we suggest, security and intelligence relations with universities are likely not only to endure but to intensify, and with ever new modes of knowledge-gathering not simply to intensify but diversity in form and modus operandi. We are not here to take sides as such – though one author is, as noted, a long-serving US Military Intelligence officer and bound by military codes, the other author is bound by the professional ethical guidelines of his academic research community – but we think a growing relation of the kind we have outlined in this article, is one which is diversifying in form and types, merits attention in terms of prospective research ethics.

The generalized picture we have presented we also think is intellectually interesting; and perhaps not all of the allure of the security and intelligence agencies has not been lost with the Cold War after all. For many though not all academics this is as yet uncharted territory, yet the security and intelligence agencies may themselves be stepping more tentatively than might be imagined than publicly disseminated stereotypes of all-powerful organs of the Secret State. All of this is a still emergent landscape, and one in which further insights and understandings can only be of benefit to the Academy seeking to justify its social and political impacts. Our short incursion into this territory is but a sketch of the coordinates rather than a fully formed map. Research ethics in increasingly securitized universities are, then, but part of a wider landscape of securitization. Here research ethics have an especially important place in this lesser charted terrain, providing moral and professional guidance as both universities and the security and intelligence agencies continue to take tentative steps towards collaborations which are ever likely to be characterized by moral nuance and ethical ambiguity.

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