Title: Will the conflict concerning the Human Terrain System continue?

Abstract

Human Terrain System has been described as: “Not since World War II has a military consulting been endorsed so publicly; not since Vietnam had it been condemned so fiercely.”¹

The purpose of this essay is to describe what the controversy and the critique presented against HTS consists of and to see if there is a beginning to a solution in some way.

HTS is embedding social scientists within military deployed units and it is argued to violate the ethic codes of research. Pauline Kusiak has presented a solution to the conflict. By analysing the arguments in the public debate between the anthropologists against and HTS’s advocates the purpose is to answer if the U.S. Military recognise the tensions between anthropology methods and their embedding in HTS? To measure ‘recognition’ the model of ‘the feedback Stair’ is used. The answer is that the tension is not recognised and it support the hypothesis that the U.S. Military are not at the first step one the solution presented by Kusiak to diminish ‘the civilian-military gap.

Key words:
HTS, Human Terrain System, Human Terrain Teams, Anthropology’s ethic code

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2 Introduction

“Not since World War II has a military consulting been endorsed so publicly; not since Viet Nam had it been condemned so fiercely.” This is a quote describing Human Terrain System. How can something cause so much attention and what is it all about? Human Terrain System was started around 2004 to solve the lack of cultural knowledge within U.S. military causing failures in Iraq and in Afghanistan. The idea is that Human Terrain Teams, consisting of social scientists and military personnel, are deployed with military units in conflict zones, with the task to gather cultural data and answer to specific research question from the commander. The system has been criticized from the military, the participants and mainly from social scientists. The American Anthropology Association has delivered the strongest condemnation arguing that deploying anthropologists to do research under these terms is incompatible with the Ethic Codes of research such as: “Do not harm the object of study”. Since participation are condemned by influential Academics a big part of the suitable candidates are unwilling to apply. Since this is considered to be to key for the U.S. military to make an amendment and turn the development of the war in Iraq it is in their interest to solve this conflict. To be using civilian academics to gain knowledge about Areas of Operation is something that will continue to be necessary in the future to come. How the U.S. Military handles the different demands, from military needs to academic requirement of autonomy will be an important lesson learned.

2.1 Background

What has been written earlier on this subject? The relationship between Anthropology and Counterinsurgency historically goes back to the Colonial Era. Anthropology and Global Counterinsurgency by J.D. Kelly et al. came out in 2010 and could be considered to be a standard work on this area. Theories on the relationship between the civilian and military within a society are here shortly described in the theory chapter. Counterinsurgency theories are being reborn within military theory. The U.S. Army / Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual 3-24 are an indicator on what they considered to be the way to succeed. Culture is mention 81 times which is an indication of its importance.

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This thesis is part of the officer’s degree in war of science at the Swedish Defence College. The aim of this paper is to increase my knowledge concerning military intelligence. As a Cadet the bachelor’s thesis is a good opportunity to write about an area of interest and what is likely to be a part of my career. After ‘reading in’ on the subject the focus shifted towards the tension between CIMIC and Humint. The area where the military world collaborates with civilians is a subject that will be a challenge for the future and worth examining. My tutor gave me an article about the Human Terrain System since it embodied the question and was an example of the clash between the military solution and the academic discipline. In a debate where most is focused on fixed standpoint the article of P. Kusiak stood out by suggesting a way to reach a solution.

3 Purpose

The purpose of this essay is to analyze what the controversy and the critique presented against HTS consists off. Secondly the aim is to see if there is a beginning to a solution to the conflict in some way.

4 Research question and hypothesis

4.1 Hypothesis

The U.S. Military is not at the first step to the solving the conflict between HTS and social scientists recommended by Pauline Kusiak.

4.1.2 Research questions

The main research question is:

Does the U.S. Military recognise the tensions between anthropology methods and their embedding in HTS?

2) What is the critique presented against HTS consisting of?

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5 Material

The research was drawn entirely on public, open sources. Many of the sources are expressly subjective and their contribution is presented according to their opinion. Sources without an expressed opinion are most often journalist, and it makes it hard to value their selection of facts. By choosing big forums with a variety of writers for these topics the aim is do diminish the influence of individual views.

It has been expressed opinions in the articles that the press are focusing only on the strongest critics and that the spokesman of HTS have been given media space ‘as commercial time’. Since the analysis of the material is qualitative, it should not matter if an argument has been delivered once or several times. It would still be presented in the same way in the description of the debate. To study the arguments of the different parties involved and concerned with HTS, the wish is to let all have the same amount of space.

To a larger extent Anthropologists articles are published than those of military writers, due to the differences within their professions. Anthropologists practise their trade by writing and publishing and are therefore more likely to express their views.

The military sources used are mainly doctrine, actions and decisions described by journalists. To speak on the military behalf are anthropologist that work with and support the military solution of HTS.

6 Limitations and Delimitations

A limitation in material comes from that the research on internet has been on the keywords of the essay. Therefore only a sample of the articles published has been analysed, and the essay can not claim to be all-embracing.

The first delimitation is the way the HTS is investigated which is through published arguments in articles. The forums used are those easy accessed on the internet. Other sources can be viable as well but can be considered not to be a part of the public debate since internet is a source accessible to everyone that wants to have insight in a matter.

The second delimitation is that the efficiency and methods of HTS will not be examined besides referring to the opinions of used sources.

The third delimitation is that articles later than 2010 are not used. This is because different sources as journalists and anthropologists have different time frames required producing work in form of articles.
Fourth limitation is that recognition of critique could be handled or in other ways than response, such as changing terms of employment for example. The arguments validity will not be tested only if it is responded to.

7 Method

7.1 Hypothesis
The U.S. Military is not at the first step to the solving the conflict between HTS and social scientists recommended by Pauline Kusiak4. This step is to recognise the tension between academic methods and the work of HTS.

This will be proven by answering the following two research questions.

7.1.1 Research questions
What does the critique against HTS consists of?
The method used to answer this secondary question is descriptive method. Data is gathered to describe HTS, then and sorted to display relevant steps that lead to the creation of HTS. Thereafter the critique published is described.

Does the U.S. Military recognise the tensions between anthropology methods and their embedding in HTS?
For the main research question the method used is analysis of content and argumentation to display the debate that occurred from the start of HTS to today. To describe a debate the method of analysis argumentation is an often used, and it is common to sort the arguments opposing each other and analyze them5. The arguments are attached to a person or party and the core of the published argument is analyzed in the chapter.

7.1.2 Assumptions
The first assumption is that public debate can be analysed the same way as a verbal argument between individuals or groups; ‘The Feedback Staircase model” as described in the theory chapter.
The second assumption is recognition can be measured by analysing public debate.
The third assumption is that the model of the ‘The feedback staircase model’ can be used to measure if the tension is recognised by the U.S. Military. Since the model is used on

individuals and between groups it should be possible to use on the communication within entire companies and also on the communication between the large groups, such as between social scientists and the U.S. Military.

### 7.2 Measuring recognition

The feedback staircase model is used to measure if the critique is receiving recognition or not. This is used as measure of to what degree critique, and in its more refined form “feedback” is received.

The feedback staircase model consists of following steps.

- **Change:** “I embrace your feedback and are willing to change my behaviour”
- **Understand:** “I have understood your feedback, of ten includes clarifying questions)
- **Explain:** “Yes but, it was because of…this is what happened
- **Defend:** “No, that’s not what happened
- **Reject:** This is non of my business, I don’t care about this”

The level decided for ‘recognition’ is the step of ‘Understanding’. This is a stipulate definition, meaning it is stipulated for this essay and that is not a standard usage.⁶

**Criteria for recognition:**

1) **Response.** If published critique receives arguments for the HTS addressing the same aspect it is considered responded to.

2) The critique should receive a response according to the feedback step of’ Understanding’.

   i. The criterion for understanding is when an argument supporting the HTS program admits there are difficulties for the methods of social scientist. This can for example take form of a suggested solution to make cooperation optimal or that it describes where to draw the line for how much the civilian academics can be embedded.

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7.3 Analysing and Organizing arguments.

Analyse of arguments are best applied to texts where something is claimed. The method is an attempt to make the arguments as visible as possible to be able to side according to which is more valid. There is a difference between describing and assessing analysis. First a thesis and arguments are identified, the describing part, and then the arguments are validated, the assessing part.

Analyse of arguments: When a person is providing arguments an opinion is claimed. An argument consists of:

- Thesis; what is claimed, an argumentation can contain several thesis.
- Argument; the reasons for the thesis

Example: "Anthropologists should not take part in HTS since the Ethic Rule of “do not harm” is violated"

- Thesis: Anthropologists should not take part in HTS
- Argument: the Ethic Rule is violated

The aim is not to evaluate the strongest argument but to see if they are responding in the debate. Therefore further theory concerning validation of argumentation is not needed. When argument are implicitly expressed it is up to the ‘opponent’ to acknowledge them or not. The method analyse of arguments is suitable as a tool for this research question by helping to distinct thesis from argument and facilitate the discussion chapter.

Presentation of arguments

The arguments are first sorted depending on who the sender is. All critique against HTS is presented but, only the one concerning the ethics of embedding social scientists are analyzed in the discussion. The focus is the gap described by Kusiak between Civilians-and Military. The headline for one type of argument will be placed in a chart. The chart is made to get an overview. The arguments are divided into two categories; Conceptual critique/defence and Organizational critique/response. Some arguments incorporate both; this is because depending on how you interpret the reason for the argument, it can address different values.

Only the arguments from the conceptual category will be used in the discussion. Focus is on the critique of social scientists which does not address the concerns about of lack of performance or practical logistic reasons. Interpretative method is used for the discussion. The
arguments will not be analysed through any quantitative measurements such as 4 out of 6 receives a response.

### 7.4 Validity

The question of validity is if the researcher is measuring what is intended to measure? The most important is to decide what the unit of measurement is representing and to use it consistently.

The unit invented for this research is “Recognition”. This is not a unit that claims to work in other context and only with the criteria stated. This raises the question of reliability, how reliable and stable is this measurement?

The unit is based on interpretation and therefore it is not precise depending on how the arguments presented are perceived. By motivating the use of the unit a possibility of traceability is created, which increased the reliability of the units presented.

### 8 Concepts and definition

#### Defining recognition

How can one define if criticism, a problem or a disputed action have received recognition?

When the problem is publicly debated and criticized it can be argued that the recognition should be delivered in the same forum. Second to be able for measurement it has to be documented in writing or on other open sources.

To define if a matter is recognized or not the “feedback staircase model” is used.

**The definition of recognition is:** “recognizing that there may be areas of tension-and even incapability – between the methodological requirements of social science research and the exigencies of military operations”. This meaning that the answer to critique must be corresponding to: “Yes, this is problematic, so we will think of a solution.”

#### Conceptual Critique and Organisational critique

- Conceptual Critique: is focusing on the main idea of HTS. In theory no matter how well the HTS performed the critique would still remain.

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7 R. Ejvegård, p73
8 R. Ejvegård, p75
- Organisational Critique: is focusing on practical issues and are concerned with the performance. It is possible for a critique to support the idea of HTS and wanting the program to continue but still criticise about these matters.

### 8.1 Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BAE Systems</td>
<td>British Aerospace Electronic Systems</td>
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<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Civil Affairs Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>CENTCOM</td>
<td>Central Command</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIMIC</td>
<td>Civil Military Cooperation</td>
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<tr>
<td>COIN</td>
<td>Counterinsurgency</td>
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<tr>
<td>DARPA</td>
<td>Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency</td>
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<td>DSB</td>
<td>Defence Science Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>FMSO</td>
<td>Foreign Military Studies Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Humint</td>
<td>Human Intelligence</td>
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<tr>
<td>IED</td>
<td>Improvised Explosive Device</td>
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<tr>
<td>MAP-HT</td>
<td>Mapping Human Terrain ()</td>
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<tr>
<td>OEF</td>
<td>Operation Enduring Freedom</td>
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<td>OIF</td>
<td>Operation Iraqi Freedom</td>
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<tr>
<td>OSS</td>
<td>Office of Strategic Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>OWI</td>
<td>Office of War Information</td>
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<tr>
<td>PME</td>
<td>Professional military education</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYOP</td>
<td>Psychological Operations</td>
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<tr>
<td>RAND</td>
<td>Research and Development, RAND Cooperation</td>
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<tr>
<td>RCC</td>
<td>Regional combatant commanders</td>
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<tr>
<td>RIP/TOA</td>
<td>Transition of Authority / Relief in Place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPG</td>
<td>Rocket-Propelled Grenade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RRC</td>
<td>Reach-back Research Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRADOC</td>
<td>U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command</td>
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<td>USDI</td>
<td>under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence</td>
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9 Theory

9.1 The Feedback staircase

Examples of individual responses that can occur on each ‘step’:

- **Change**: “I embrace your feedback and are willing to change my behaviour”
- **Understand**: “I have understood your feedback, often includes clarifying questions)
- **Explain**: “Yes, but, it was because of...this is what happened
- **Defend**: “No, that’s not what happened
- **Reject**: This is none of my business, I don’t care about this”

This theory is used as a part of the theoretical base in the leadership education for Swedish soldiers and is frequently used by companies that want to develop the dynamics and working process within.

According to the Swedish Foundation for Enterprise education the reason that the model is in the form of a staircase is because it is difficult to take criticism and energy is required in order to be able to progress up the staircase. The model can be portrayed with slight differences and it can also be a divided line between steps 3 and 4, Explain/Understand. This line would show when one begins to take in criticism instead of just dismissing what is being said.

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To find a solution both parties should be in a receptive mood and can discuss in an objective manner without someone trying to defend themselves or trying to place the blame elsewhere.  

### 9.2 Civil-Military Theory

Searching in Civil-Military theories to find the solution to the HTS – Anthropology conflict it gives few directly applicable results. When Civil-Military relations are analyzed the academic sphere is not the group implied in ‘Civil’. They are an influential group in the civil society but if one group could be represented by the term it is rather politics and the government that watch over the security and human rights of the country’s inhabitants.

Suzanne C. Nielsen provides a guide on Civil-Military relations that focuses on military effectiveness. The focus in civil-military relations has mainly been on civilian control over the military. The civil-military “problematique” is the challenge of reconciling:

“a military strong enough to do anything the civilian ask them to do with a military subordinate enough to do only what civilians authorize them to do”

When attempting to understand the characteristics of a given country’s military institutions, one can start by arguing that: “To the extent that a country’s military institutions does not share the attributes of the society as a whole, a useful starting position is that these differences are due to what the military believes to required for success in war.”

This theory could help to analyze the schism between social scientists and the U.S. Military. The military has a ‘do what has to be done’, an instrumental view of anthropologists by tradition from Vietnam and from failures in Iraq. Anthropologists are more focused on how the military are conducting a war instead of measuring the military success.

Barry Posen, supplies us with another theory: “military organisations will stagnate without civilian involvement, and will be ill-suited to meet the requirements of their political leader’s strategy” It has been argued against the idea that organisations never adapt on their own

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11 Swedish Foundation for Enterprise education  
13 S.C. Nielsen, p77  
14 S.C. Nielsen, p64
instead pointing out that military organizations may need to change over time to remain relevant and effective as Nielsen summarizes it.\footnote{S.C. Nielsen, p 64}

This theory could imply that the academic interference with military ways of conducting warfare and ways of using social scientist are a part of a development process that is natural. This meaning the conflict will pass once the military is fully adapted and are up to date. It could also indicate that civilian academics are necessary to the military and can not be replaced by militaries doing the cultural understanding.

The general litterateur addressing ‘The Gap’ is summarized by Nielsen that concludes that there have been extensive amount of work done in the last decade on the existence of a “gap” between civilians and members of the military in the United States, with a vide variation within the literature. Some authors focus on a growing cultural divide and other find a growing divide in ideological identifications and policy preference. A multi-year project by the Triangle Institute of Security Studies was recently devoted to defining the nature and determining the possible implications of such gap\footnote{S.C. Nielsen, p 64}. Many of the project’s findings have been published in ‘\textit{Soldiers and Civilians: The Civil-Military Gap and American National Security}’. A part of the book is focused on assessments as to whether a civil-military gap even is problematic.

Nielsen summarises the conclusions of the book and that some authors have pointed out the differences between some core American values, such as the priority placed on individualism, and the functional needs of the military. Others have argued for greater military integration with civilian values and believed that this would not necessarily harm military effectiveness.

\section{9.3 Kusiak: The Civilian- Military Gap}


Kusiak derive much of the controversy surrounding the military’s interest in sociocultural expertise to the tremendous chasm that exists between the broad strokes of academic theorizing and the everyday workings of the military.
"The challenges entailed in integrating academic sociocultural expertise into military operations fundamentally reflect much larger gap between civilian and military spheres in American political culture, especially within the academy."\(^{18}\)

Due to that few university professors have any real exposure to members of U.S. Armed Forces, and “in the absence of relationships with real people, it is easy to substitute fantasy and fear for reality”.\(^{19}\) Another reason for the anxieties that scholars raise is a “profound misunderstanding of the range of activities the military members perform”.\(^{20}\) The view is that “the purpose of the military is ‘to kill’”.\(^{21}\) From the military’s perspective this reasoning is “an almost comical over-simplification of the full range of security-related activities in which the military engages”.\(^{22}\) Those military operations whose purpose is actually to avoid killing or to bring violence to an end are completely ignored. Because concerned scholars ignore the complexity and breadth of military operations, their concerns are frequently dismissed as irrelevant within the armed service.

The critique is also motivated by the perfect logical desire for proprietary self-preservation. “The professional world of social and cultural studies scholars is extraordinary competitive, and pretenders to disciplinary titles are routinely submitted to intense scrutiny and “cast out” by their peers and mentors if they do not ‘make the cut’”, and “analysts who work for the military are differentiated from the academic community as ‘practitioners’ rather than included in it as scholarly members.”\(^{23}\)

Since military members lack exposure to civilian postgraduate education means that they often dismiss all academic critique as purely political in nature. Kusiak agrees that some of the critique is “a thinly veiled protest” of the war in Iraq. Another Origination of the critique is the contentious history of the use of social science by the U.S. military and intelligence agencies during the Vietnam era. Kusiaks advice is, rather than avoiding all contact, sociocultural expertise should instead take stock of the lessons from the history and endeavour to do it better this time. It is argued that most press coverage of the debate about sociocultural expertise and the military has been devoted to unilateral condemnations from the academic community, which enhances the fuelling of negative stereotypes. This may lead to that some military commanders rather get rid of the problem about dealing with “civilian academic types” at all. Kusiak argues that there is a need to take the controversy seriously as a

\(^{18}\) P.Kusiak, p 75
\(^{19}\) P.Kusiak, p 72
\(^{20}\) P.Kusiak, p 72
\(^{21}\) P.Kusiak, p 72
\(^{22}\) P. Kusiak p 72
\(^{23}\) P.Kusiak p 73
first step in moving past it, since the need is too vital for cross-institutional misunderstanding to get in the way.

9.3.1.1 Civilian academics are necessary
The angst filled controversy among civilian academics, may be the reason why some military planners may feel that it would be easier to find some internal solutions to its deficit of sociocultural expertise. Kusiak delivers a number of reasons why civilians inside and outside the Department of Defence must continue to be a part of the solution to the military’s sociocultural deficit problem.

First reason is the demand of time and budget to become social scientists of value.

“"The training involved to produce quality ethnographic researchers is extensive, usually requiring anywhere from five to eight years of focused study in language, area orientation, and social and cultural theory. Time constraints and budgetary realities alone would preclude the possibility of educating enough “school-trained” social scientists and cultural experts within the armed forces to support all potential operations”

At present there simply are not enough sociocultural and area experts in all of the DOD combined.

Second reason delivered is that military members are first and foremost soldiers, not scholars. Understanding the sociocultural terrain is one among many things they must master which is the primary for the researcher and analyst. There whole career is based on the quality of their research and the experience gain. Therefore it is hard to argue that the military can deliver the same results.

The final reason to why civilian researchers and analysts should continue to be a part of the solution to the military’s sociocultural deficit is because they are civilians. “Warfare of the future is projected to be increasingly unconventional, irregular, and population-centric, our military will be forced to operate in a largely civilian context. The presence of civilians fill the purpose of not only translating the worldview of foreign area populations, but also translating the norms and practices of non-military U.S. agency to members of the armed force and vice versa.

The three step solution to settle the controversy is for the military to create an environment suitable for the academics. The fact that many scholars not only refuse to work for the military themselves but also dissuade their students and criticise their colleagues needs

24 P.Kusiak, p 75
attention. Attempting to deflate such gestures as mere political grandstanding will change nothing, instead the need is to take them seriously as research challenges to be overcome. The first step in the direction of solving the conflict is “to acknowledge the legitimate challenges raised by concerned academics, recognizing that there may be areas of tension – and even incompatibility – between the methodological requirements of social science research and the exigencies of military operations”

Kusiak solution is:

1) Recognize the areas of tension:
2) The military should overcome academic critique by embracing it
3) Blurring the border between the disciplines to diminish the gap

The first step is that U.S. military must recognize that there may be areas of tension between the methodological requirements of social science research and the exigencies of military operations.

Kusiak means that the manner in which sociocultural initiatives are implemented today will go a tremendous way toward either bridging the gap or deepening the divide between civilian sociocultural scholarship and analysis that support military operations. The “best response is in fact to continue to blur the divide between military and academic spheres, in essence confronting and overcoming the academic critics by embracing them”.

9.3.1.2 Blurring boundaries:
The third and last step in decreasing the gap is a long-term effort to involve civilians in the military training and to expose the military to the high criteria of social science. Bridging the gap can be enhanced in three ways. To build up the Foreign Area officer (FAO) could diminish the gap. This would augment the military capacity for cultural understanding and increase influence of civilians. The influence could be ensured if force protection restrictions are moderately lifted and an effort is made to engage civilian foreign nationals, not just members of foreign militaries.

The second way that “has been suggested is to encourage offices to pursue advanced study in social, cultural, and area studies at civilian universities […] in addition to command and general staff curriculums at military universities.

The third suggested step is adding faculty positions for social scientists and cultural studies specialists at war colleges and cultural studies specialists at war colleges and military universities.
10 Human Terrain System

The creating of the Human Terrain System was initiated by the failures and experiences by the U.S. from Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). The major combat operations that toppled Saddam Hussein’s regime were relatively simple. From 20 March 2003 to the 9th April when Bagdad was seized and the government of Saddam Hussein been overthrown, the U.S. Military was required to do what it does best – conduct manoeuvre warfare in flat terrain using overwhelming firepower with air support. The Army knew what they where getting in to and had the techniques to handle the threats they met. Since the end of the “hot” phase of the war, coalition forces have been fighting a complex war against an enemy that they do not understand. “The insurgents ‘organizational structure is not military, but tribal. Their tactics are not conventional, but asymmetrical. Their weapons are not tanks and fighter planes, but improvised devices (IEDs)” They do not abide by the Geneva Conventions, nor do they appear to have any informal rules of engagement.

In May 1st 2003 the war was officially declared over but since battles continued it was considered to be ongoing. Suddenly the U.S. was fighting a war on two fronts and facing setbacks and heavy resistance on both. The U.S. forces frequently do and do not know who their friends are, and just as often they do not know who their enemies are. A returning commander from the 3rd Infantry Division observed:

“I had perfect situation awareness. What I lacked was cultural awareness. I knew where every enemy tank was dug in in the outskirts of Tallil. Only problem was, my soldiers had to fight fanatics charging on foot or in pickups and firing AK-47s and RPGs. Great technical intelligence. Wrong enemy.”

Aside from the Special Forces most U.S. soldiers are not trained to understand or operate in foreign cultures and societies. One U.S Army captain in Iraq said: “I was never given classes on how to sit down with a sheik…He is giving me the traditional dishdasha and the entire outfit of a sheik because

26 Kipp, Grau, Prinslow, Smith, p.8
28 Montgomery McFate, Anthropology and Counterinsurgency: The strange Story of their Curious Relationship, p25
he claims that I am a sheik in town so I must be dressed as one. I don’t know if he is trying to gain favour with me because he wants something, or if it is something god or something bad. “29 “

In late 2003, American officers in Iraq complained that they had little to no information about the local population30 and returning combat veterans expressed frustration with the cultural training inadequacies.”31 The units that experienced a lack of information had to try to solve it by themselves, a demanding task when arriving in a hostile environment.

“Commanders arriving in their areas of operation are routinely left to fend for themselves in inventing their own systems and methodologies for researching and analyzing cultural data.32.

Military veterans promoting a change analysed the situation in 2006 as “The current insurgencies in the Middle East are manifestations of the unmet expectations and desires of large segments of the Iraqi and Afghani populations. Disappointed by their unrequited aspirations, the people tolerate and even support the presence of insurgents, thereby making insurgency possible.”33 To change that and meet the expectations of the people the military need to fully understand the culture. Within the U.S. Army a general agreement spread that whatever notable successes they have had in specific localities closely correlate with proactive efforts by coalition units to understand and respect the culture34. On 21 October 2003, the House Armed Services Committee held a hearing to examine lessons learned from Operation Iraqi Freedom. The letter addressed to Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld which said:

"In simple terms, if we had better understood the Iraqi culture and mindset, our war plans would have been even better than they were, the post-war period and all of its challenges would have been far better and we would have been better prepared for the “long slog” to win the peace in Iraq.35

The U.S. forces had discovered that any attempt to separate the insurgents from the population necessitates understanding the human terrain intimately: only deep understanding can point to the conditions essential for success. The question today is “how” soldiers

29 Montgomery McFate, *Anthropology and Counterinsurgency: The strange Story of their Curious Relationship*, p24
32 Montgomery McFate, *Anthropology and Counterinsurgency: The strange Story of their Curious Relationship*, p1
33 Kipp, Ph.D. Grau, Prinslow & Cpt Smith, p.9
34 Kipp, Ph.D. Grau, Prinslow & Cpt Smith, p.10
35 Montgomery McFate, *Anthropology and Counterinsurgency: The strange Story of their Curious Relationship*, p2
operating in COIN environments should seek and obtain detailed understanding of the population? Not why? These question leads to the development of HTS.

10.1 Creating HTS

According to the authors of The Human Terrain System; A CORDS for the 21st Century The HTS concept has largely inspired by lessons drawn from the U.S. experience in Vietnam. In 2004, the failures and the opinions expressed by Iraq veterans had led to a change in general understanding of what was needed to ‘win the war’ In November 2004, the Office of Naval Research and the Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) sponsored the Adversary Cultural Knowledge and National Security Conference, the first major Department of Defence (DOD) conference on the social sciences since 1962.

To help address these shortcomings in cultural knowledge and capabilities the creation of HTS was started by the Foreign Military Studies Office (FMSO), a U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) organization that supports the Combined Arms Center at Forth Leavenworth, Kansas. By 2004 Montgomery McFate was working for the national security establishment as a researcher at RAND Cooperation. McFate was a Yale-educated cultural anthropologist, who advocated using social science to improve military operations and strategy. McFate’s ideas, (shared by a growing number in the military), caught the attention of the science advisors to the joint chief of staff. Montgomery McFate would become the most prominent figure of HTS; her career serves well as the red line that describes the development of HTS.

In 2005 McFate helped develop a database that provided officers with detailed information on the local population. McFate’s initial attempt to make anthropology relevant to the military wasn’t all that successful. She put together a database of ethnographic and cultural details for field commanders. The reaction Colonel Steve Fondacaro, then stationed in Bagdad:

“I threw that shit out of there… The last thing these guys needed was another gizmo… They needed a

37 Montgomery McFate, J.D., Ph D., Anthropology and Counterinsurgency: The strange Story of their Curious Relationship, p1
38 Kipp, Grau, Prinslow, Smith, p.8
McFate later returned with a revised plan, the plan that the Army would embed humanities sciences concepts and traits into fighting brigades. Later in 2005 the embryo to HTS could be red in a pair of articles in Military Review outlining a rationale and strategy for integrating the social sciences into national defence. Montgomery McFate published, An Organizational Solution for DoD’s Cultural Knowledge Needs, in Military Review. This article was a response to the Defence Science Board’s (DSB’s), “Summer study on Transition to and from Hostilities” 2004, where suggestions where made for collecting cultural knowledge, the creation of a National Centre for Contingency Support and how Regional combatant commanders (RCC) establish offices for regional expertise outreach. McFate developed an improved solution and also stated that research is often not available for those specific areas of interest, since the military hasn’t prioritised this topic. Also general academic research that would be accessible isn’t, for the commander. The organization culture in DoD is described as an obstacle to create this system. But it is possible: “Building an organization to capture operational cultural knowledge will require visionary leadership and tremendous persistence from someone inside the system who will not take no for an answer.”

In 2006 Steve Fondacaro, now retired Special Operations colonel, became McFate’s main ally and the program’s chief. He joined the HTS program and advocated embedding social scientist with American combat units. Retired Colonel Steve Fondacaro described the challenge of expanding the Human Terrain System Army-wide, despite the service’s dedication at the time to a purely bombs-and- bullets approach to warfare. “We’re like a germ in the body [of the Army] All of their systems are sending white blood cells to puke me up”

Since Gen. David H. Petraeus, now the overall commander in Iraq, oversaw the drafting of the Army’s new counterinsurgency manual, the strategy of cultural expertise has become the new mantra of the military. McFate was one of the invited to help rewrite the US Army's revised Counterinsurgency Field Manual “it counselled officers to apply all of the tools at their disposal to win the hearts and minds of the local population.”

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42 Montgomery McFate, Andrea Jackson, An Organizational Solution for DoD’s Cultural Knowledge Needs, p21
43 D. Rohde, p2
45 D. Rohde, p2
disposal: not only bullets and bombs, but economic development, propaganda and political deal making.”  

“My feeling is that the military are going through an enormous change right now where they recognize they won’t succeed militarily,” said by Tom Gregg, the chief United Nations official in south-eastern Afghanistan.

Positive response for trial-Team

The first Teams deployed from Fort Leavenworth to Afghanistan and Iraq beginning in the fall of 2006. They would serve as proof-of-concept for HTS.

“In western Afghanistan a brigade of 82nd Airborne Division was being targeted by rockets, over and over, from a vicinity of a nearby village. But no one from the unit had bothered to ask the townspeople why. When Human Terrain Team finally paid a visit, villagers complained that the Taliban was around only because the Americans didn’t provide security, also mentioned was that volleyball net would be appreciated by the town.” So a net was acquired. Patrols were started. There hasn’t been an attack in two months.”

At the HTS’s suggestions, the brigade also invited the province’s head mullah to bless a newly restored mosque on the base. He “was so delighted that he recorded an announcement in Pashto and Dari for radio broadcast denouncing the Taliban,” an after-action report noted. In his initial evaluation, the brigade commander credits the HTS with an astonishing 60-70 percent drop in the number of bombs-and-bullets strikes he has had to make. It’s a number that some HTT members have a hard time believing. But the commander insists that 53 of 83 districts in his area now support the local government. Before the HTT arrived, it was only 19.”

In September, 2007, Defence Secretary Robert M. Gates authorized a $40 million expansion of the program, which will assist the teams of anthropologists and social scientist to each of the 26 American combat brigades in Iraq and Afghanistan. In the same month, five new teams where deployed bringing the total to six. McFate was now the senior social adviser for the Human Terrain System.

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47 D. Rodhe, 2007 p2
48 Kipp. Grau, Prinslow, Smith, p.9
50 N. Shachtman, How technology almost lost the war; in Iraq,
51 D. Rodhe, p2
One of the arguments for HTS is that the current intelligence systems and organisations still remain primarily structured to support commanders in physical combat. They are engineered to collect traditional elements of information like order of battle, enemy dispositions and estimated capabilities. This is the reason why commanders need a cultural orientated counterpart to tactical intelligence systems to provide them with a similarly detailed, comprehensive cultural picture of the area. During this time there were still a lot of questions posed and to be answered concerning how it will actually operate: “Will the social scientists carry guns? Wear uniforms? Will they be conducting field work or just doing research at their desk? How will these people be trained? What kind of credentials do they need? Will commanders listen to what they have to say? And is it ethical to use their skills in wartime?”

“The Official Focus of the U.S. Army” webpage Stand-To! Published the same year an answer to was HTS was all about, and the question: why is this Human Terrain System important to the Army? “Understanding the “human terrain” aspect of the battle space is central to mission success in counterinsurgency operations, stability operations and irregular warfare, success in the war on terror. Human Terrain topics, such as locals and regionally political, cultural, social and economic factors, are highly specialized in the social sciences. While processes and organizations exist to assist commanders in visualizing friendly and enemy forces arrayed with the physical terrain, until now, no such system has existed for understanding the human “population-centric” terrain. The Human Terrain System (HTS) offers a means to gather, process, database, and share cultural data and knowledge with the ultimate goal of integrating this “Human terrain layer” into the Common Operating Picture. Most importantly, it will save lives as it reduces the insurgents’ ability to “hide in plain sight” among the population.”

In 2008 Human Terrain System had become a $130 million Army program that realised the vision of embedding political science, anthropology and economics specialists with combat units in Afghanistan and Iraq.

10.2 Organization

The aim of HTS is to provide commanders with a comprehensive cultural information research system. The will be linked to other existing systems and fill the need for cultural knowledge by gathering ethnographic, economic, and cultural data pertaining to the battlefield.

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52 Kipp, Grau, Prinslow, Smith, p.10
53 N. Shachtman, How technology almost lost the war; in Iraq, p7
55 N. Shachtman, Army Anthropology’s in Controversial Culture Clash,
to support analysis and decision-making.\textsuperscript{56} The core building block of the system will be a five-person Human Terrain Team (HTT) that will be embedded in each forward-deployed brigade.\textsuperscript{57} To enhance the brigade commander’s direct support, HTS will have a Reach back Research Centre connected to a network of subject-matter experts assembled from throughout the Department of Defence and academia. HTTs will serve as a cultural information bridge between incoming and outgoing units’, thereby reducing causalities and unintended missteps from the loss of neighbourhood-level cultural knowledge during Transition of Authority (TOA).\textsuperscript{58} This will give the incoming commander and unit immediate “institutional memory” about the people and culture of its area of operations.\textsuperscript{59}

HTS is built on seven components: human terrain teams (HTTs), reach-back research-cells, subject matter expert network, a tool kit, techniques, human terrain information, and specialized training.\textsuperscript{60}

The Human Terrain Team will deliver three components to the commander:

- A constantly updated cultural database. The HTT has a tool kit called Mapping Human Terrain (MAP-HT) software, an automatic database and presentation tool that allows teams to gather, store, and provide cultural data from hundreds of categories. “Data will cover such subjects as key regional personalities, social structures, links between clans and families, economic issues, public communications, agricultural production, and the like”. The data will be transferred to follow-on units and the system will regularly also transfer data to rear elements for storage in larger archives. This allows for more advanced analysis and wider use by the military.

- To meet the needs of the commander with direct focused study on ethnographic or cultural issues.

- A reach-back link to a central research facility in the United States. The reach back draws on government and academic sources to answer any questions the commander and staff might have.

Finally the HTT will not displace upon change of responsibility in the area. The HTT will transfer in its entirety to the incoming commander and unit.

\textsuperscript{56} Kipp, Grau, Prinslow, Smith, p.1  
\textsuperscript{57} Kipp, Grau, Prinslow, Smith, p.9  
\textsuperscript{58} Stand-To!, \textit{Human Terrain System}  
\textsuperscript{59} Kipp, Grau, Prinslow, Smith, p.9  
\textsuperscript{60} Kipp, Grau, Prinslow, Smith, p.13
The HTT leader is an officer, major or LtC, and will be the commander’s principal human terrain advisor, responsible for supervising the teams efforts.

The cultural analyst will advise HTT, brigade staff or conduct research in the AO. The analyst will be a qualified cultural anthropologist or sociologist handling Geographical Imaging Software and fluent in the local language.

The regional studies analyst has similar tasks and qualifications.

The human terrain research manager will have a military background in tactical intelligence. The manager will integrate the teams work with the unit intelligence collection effort, debrief patrols and interact with other organisations.

The human terrain analyst will also have a military intelligence background and be a trained debriefer. Primary work tasks will be as human terrain data researcher but also the same as the human terrain research manager.

The Reach-back specifics

All HTTs will have direct contact with the Reachback Research Center (RCC). The RRC’s main purpose is to help HTTs answer the forward-deployed commander’s specific request for information. The RRC will systematically receive information from deployed HTTs through

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61 Kipp, Grau, Prinslow, Smith, p.13
the MAP –HT system. Data will be catalogued, and placed into a central database. Initially the RRC will have 14 researchers, all experts in the cultural and ethnographic characteristics of the area they support. RRC will be able to access a network of researchers throughout the government and academia. RRC researchers will also constitute the primary pool from which replacements for HTTs will be drawn. There will be a system of periodically rotation between HTTs and the RRC.62

Overall system

In addition to the capabilities HTS officers to brigade commanders and other decision makers in given area of operation, the data will be available for training and simulation to support deploying forces in their mission rehearsal exercise scenario development. Secondly, other U.S. governments will have access and benefit from the central database. “And finally, to facilitate economic development and security, the compiled database will eventually be turned over to the new government in Iraq and Afghanistan to enable them to more fully exercise sovereignty over their territory and to assist with economic development.”63

Unclassified Data

Most civilian and military education is based on unclassified or open-source information derived from social sciences. Most cultural information about populations is unclassified. To ensure that the data obtained by HTS isn’t made inaccessible to the large numbers of Soldiers and civilians involved in stability operations, the information and database assembled by the HTS will be unclassified.64

10.2.1 HTS 2010

During the year front man Steve Fondacaro left his post as HTS manager and the program. The spokesman didn’t comment much65 “Effective 11 June 2010, Steve Fondacaro departs the G2 and the HTS program.”66 “He was not the right guy to institutionalize” the program […] At some

62 Kipp, Grau, Prinslow, Smith, p.14
63 Kipp, Grau, Prinslow, Smith, p.14
64 Kipp, Grau, Prinslow, Smith, p.14
point, for any program to endure, it has to become part of the system”. During the summer of 2010 also Montgomery McFate resigned and reasons appear to be that she was looking for a change.\(^67\)

The troubling reports in media culminated in a House Armed Service Committee decision to direct a review of HTS and in June 2010, congressionally directed investigations started to investigate HTS’ allegedly lax oversight of its field teams.\(^68\) The congressionally mandated report was conducted by the Centre for Naval Analyses and presented to the House Armed Services Committee and the Defence Department in September. The report has not been cleared for public viewing. Col. Sharon Hamilton, new manager of HTS, said she could not discuss specifics in the report, but its overall message was that the government needed to be more involved in the administration of the program and rely less on contractors. “There were definitely some assessments we needed to respond to” she said. “Previously, we had very few government personnel in the structure of HTS and this is not a good situation as far as government oversight”\(^69\)

Hamilton said in a Dec. 8 2010 interview that U.S. Central Common has issued a requirement for 31 HTS teams in Afghanistan – an increase of nine teams-by the summer 2011. “I use that definitely as a metric for the success of our teams” she said. “The fact that Central Command increased the requirement for the number of teams they would like on the ground says a lot. CENTCOM has a limited amount of resources it has been allocated, to do so any time they request a human terrain team, it’s a zero sum, there’s something else they cannot request.”\(^70\)

There are now 10 HTS teams operating in Iraq, and Hamilton said the Army has decided to keep them there as long as American forces remain in the country.\(^71\)

Hamilton said she also stepped up the program’s engagement with the academic community by attending conferences for relevant groups, namely the American Anthropological Association.\(^72\)

The human-terrain budget has increased from $40 million in 2007 to nearly $150 million last year. A development that bodes well for the future of the program is that General David Petraeus, the new commander of international forces in Afghanistan, is a staunch supporter.”\(^73\)

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\(^70\) T. Bertuca

\(^71\) T. Bertuca,

\(^72\) T. Bertuca,

\(^73\) J. Motlagh, *Should Anthropologists help contain the Taliban?*, Jul 01, 2010 accessed by [http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2000169,00.html](http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2000169,00.html) at May 28, 2011
11 Anthropology’s history

To understand the controversy of HTS it is essential to have in mind the heritage of Anthropology science. The American Anthropological Association defines Anthropology as “A multidisciplinary field of science and scholarship, which includes the study of all aspects of humankind—archaeological, biological, linguistic and sociocultural. Anthropology has roots in the natural and social sciences and in the humanities, ranging in approach from basic to applied research and to scholarly interpretation.”

Anthropology is the only academic discipline that explicitly seeks to understand foreign cultures and societies. Anthropology is a social science discipline whose primary object of study has traditionally been non-Western, tribal societies with the task of translating knowledge gained in the “field” back to the West. The methodologies of anthropology include participant observation, fieldwork and historical research. One of the central epistemological tenets of anthropology is cultural relativism—understanding other societies from within their own framework.

Anthropology has been called “the handmaiden of colonialism” and was born as a warfighting discipline, even then, there were those who argued for separation. In 1902, when the American Anthropological Association was founded with an initial membership of 175, anthropology was dominated by British scientists reporting on the empire’s subjects in Africa, or Americans studying the Sioux for the Bureaus of Ethnology.

After the classic age of empire came to a close, anthropologist and archaeologists became key players in the game of espionage during World War I. Their habits of wandering in remote areas and skill at observation proved to be quite useful to the government. A number of anthropologists worked as spies during World War I, as an example S. Morley was one of the most respected archeologists of the early 20th century, and was also the “best secret agent the United States produced during World War I.” Morley’s activities were not well regarded by

75 Montgomery McFate, Anthropology and Counterinsurgency: The strange Story of their Curious Relationship, p2
76 Montgomery McFate, J.D., Ph D., Anthropology and Counterinsurgency; p2
78 H. Sadler, “The Archeologist was a Spy: University of Press, 2003 as quoted in Montgomery McFate, Anthropology and Counterinsurgency, p27
79 H. Sadler as quoted in Montgomery McFate, Anthropology and Counterinsurgency, p27
some anthropologists. A letter was published by leading anthropologist Franz Boas, 1919 in The National, accusing without name that ‘they’ have

“Prostituted science by using it as a cover for their activities as spies. A soldier whose business is murder as a fine art…. Accepts the code of morality to which modern society still conforms. Not so the scientists. The very essence of his life is the service of truth”

For his allegation of the unnamed anthropologists the American Anthropological Association censured Boas in 1919.

During the World War II the role of anthropologists within the national-security arena was greatly expanded, most anthropologists where helping wage the war, studying everything from Japanese culture to the physiques of draftees. In December 1941, the American Anthropological Association passed a resolution stating: “Be it resolved that the American Anthropological Association places itself and its resources and the specialized skills of its members at the disposal of the country for the successful prosecution of the war” After World War II many anthropologists regretted their involvement in propaganda efforts; others complained that their advice was ignored, such as that the Japanese could be persuaded to surrender without a large-scale attack. Sociologist Alexander Leighton, after his effort in the war, concluded in despair that “The administrator uses social science the way a drunk uses a lamppost, for support rather then illumination”.

The Vietnam War

To select a sample that describes the conflicts between military and researchers, Condominas provides an example. In 1962 the US Department of Commerce translated from French into English the anthropologists Georges Condominas’ published work of village life in the central highlands of Vietnam. The Green Berets used the documents for assassination campaigns

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80 F.Boas, Scientists as Spies, The Nations 109, 20 Dec 1919, as quoted in Montgomery McFate, Anthropology and Counterinsurgency, p27
81 Montgomery McFate, Anthropology and Counterinsurgency, p27
82 D. Winslow, p 4
83 M.B. Stannard
85 Montgomery McFate, Anthropology and Counterinsurgency: The strange Story of their Curious Relationship, p27
targeting village leaders. For years, the author did not know the work had been reprinted for military ends. In 1972, Condominas described his anger at this abuse of his work, saying⁸⁶:

““How can one accept, without trembling with rage that this work, in which I wanted to describe in their human plenitude these men who have so much to teach us about life, should be offered to the technicians of death –of their death! […] You will understand my indignation when I tell you that I learned about the ‘pirating’ [of my book] only a few years after having the proof that Srae, whose marriage I described in Nous avons mange la forêt, had been tortured by a sergeant of the Special Forces in the camp of Pii Ko.”⁸⁷

Following the Vietnam War, a large part of anthropologists rejected the discipline’s historic ties to colonialism. Shying away from the ‘handmaiden of colonialism’-title, anthropologists refused to ”collaborate” with the powerful, instead vying to represent the interest of indigenous people engaged in neo-colonial struggles. Anthropologists would now speak for the subaltern⁸⁸.

### 11.1.1 Anthropology scandals from 70’ies

The friction between the military and anthropology exploded in a series of meetings of the association in the 70s, fuelled by two of the “last gasps of anthropological cooperation” with the military: Project Camelot and the Thai Scandal.⁸⁹ Those involved said their goals were salutary –studying other cultures with the goal of preventing war. ”A less charitable way of looking at it is was to keep regimes in power that were favourable to the United States” and ”If the regime is being propped up by the military, those regimes are probably not helping the peasants, which is who the anthropologists are out studying”.⁹⁰ Following these incidents heated debates took place within the AAA’s Committee on Ethics.

Anthropologists feared that were such research to continue, the indigenous people they studied would assume they were all spies, closing off future field opportunities abroad. Also there was a belief that the information would be used to control, enslave, and even annihilate many of the communities studied.⁹¹

As a result the AAA’s Standing Committee on Ethics produced the 1971 ‘Principles of Professional Responsibility’. Stating that “anthropologist’s paramount responsibility is to

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⁸⁶ D.Price, p21
⁸⁷ D. Price, 2007 p21
⁸⁸ Montgomery McFate, *Anthropology and Counterinsurgency*, p28
⁸⁹ M.B. Stannard p7
⁹⁰ M.B. Stannard p 6
⁹¹ M.B. Stannard p 6
those he studies. When there is a conflict of interest, these individuals must come first.” The strictness of the “Professional Responsibility” decreased with time. By 1995 a commission concluded that AAA lacked the authority to investigate complaints about ethical misconduct.92 The degree of cooperation with the military had changed and by 2005, less than 4 percent of American Anthropological Association members surveyed by the association where working for the government. The discipline also had become politically homogenous. A George Mason University survey found Democrats outnumbering Republicans in anthropology and sociology by 20 to 1 in 2004. In a largely symbolic act, the association rescinded the 1919 censure of Franz Boas in 2005.93

11.2 AAA Ethics Code

Direct invitations to anthropologists to engage in intelligence work, (as in the CIA advertisement on the AAA jobs website in autumn 2005), led to the creation in 2006 of the AAA Commission on Engagement of Anthropology with the US Security and Intelligence Communities.94 The Commission released its Final Report in November 2007 but the work has been extended for another two years, until 2010. The Executive Committee of the American Anthropological Association (AAA) expressed official disapproval of the HTS program on ethical grounds.95 Many signed a “Pledge of Non-participation in Counterinsurgency “circulated by the newly organized Network of Concerned Anthropologists, at the 2007 AAA annual meeting.96 From the Code of Ethic stated in 1998, those that are adaptable to current affairs will be presented. The guidelines address general contexts, priorities and relationship which should be considered in ethical decision making in an anthropological context97. The Ethics codes are informal public statements of conduct that are not enforceable, each anthropologist determines for him/herself what morally and ethically acceptable behaviour is.98

92 D. Winslow, p 7
93 M.B. Stannard, p 6/
96 C. Fluehr-Lobban, p18
98 C. Fluehr-Lobban, p22
III Research A “Responsibility to people and animals with whom anthropological researchers work and whose lives and cultures they study.

1. Anthropological researchers have primary ethical obligations to the people, species, and materials they study and to the people with whom they work. These obligations can supersede the goal of seeking new knowledge [...]. These ethical obligations include:
   • To avoid harm or wrong, understanding that the development of knowledge can lead to change which may be positive or negative for the people or animals worked with or studied.

2. Anthropological researchers must do everything in their power to ensure that their research does not harm the safety, dignity, or privacy of the people with whom they work, conduct research, or perform other professional activities [...]

3. [...]

4. Anthropological researchers should obtain in advance the informed consent of persons being studied, providing information, owning or controlling access to materials being studied, or otherwise identified as having interest which might be impacted on the research. It is understood that the degree and breadth of informed consent required will depend [...] Further, it is understood that the informed consent process is dynamic and continuous [...] Informed consent, for the purpose of this code, does not necessarily imply or require a particular written or signed form. It is the quality of the consent, not the format that is relevant”.

B. Responsibility to scholarship and science

(4) “Anthropological researchers should utilize the results of their work in an appropriate fashion, and whenever possible disseminate their findings to the scientific and scholarly community.

(5) Anthropological researchers should seriously consider all reasonable requests for access to their data and other research materials for purposes of research. They should also make every effort to insure preservation of their field work data for use by posterity”.

The AAA does say anthropologists are “obliged to help improve U.S. government policies through the widest possible circulation of anthropological understanding in the public sphere.” But what isn’t clear is what sort of support is acceptable, and under what conditions.

12 Critique of HTS

To gather all the critique and assessments of HTS and to match it with the response and defending that has occurred from 2004 to 2010 is a challenging task “There was a sense of perpetual chaos swirling around HTS, however. The program came under assault from nearly every angle: the quality of the Human Terrain “experts,” the depth of its training, the utility to infantry leaders, the competency of its managers, the exposure of civilian researchers to hostile environments, the ethics of turning social science into military intelligence. Dozens left the program, disgruntled. Three social scientists were killed in action. One

99 AAA, Code of Ethics
101 S. Weinberger
Human Terrain employee pleaded guilty to manslaughter. Another was charged with spying. A third was taken hostage in Iraq. The aim is to display it in a way easy to overview. The critic is divided into origin and what opinion the writer has about HTS, the groups are Military, AAA members and ‘Others’ in favour of HTS.

12.1 Military critique

The main voice of critique is from Major Ben Connable, U.S. Marine Corps, a Middle East Foreign Area Officer. In All Our Eggs in a Broken Basket he criticized the HTS-program and called for investments in a military solution. The resistance of changing the focus from kinetic force to “popular centric” warfare are described in the chapter ‘Creating HTS’. Within the U.S. Military there are most likely several others opponents of HTS. But in public press there are few contributions, I draw the conclusions that Connable with his long experience within the profession speaks for several others. It is unlikely that he would draw these conclusions, developed this opinions in autonomy, contradictory all his colleagues.

Connable argues that the progenitors of HTS took a requirement that called for a comprehensive and sustainable solution—trained combats to navigate the cultural terrain – and instead created a costly quick-fix response to an immediate need. That response relied heavily on “non-organic technology” and contracted support. By doctrine, mission and organization, the U.S. military is mandated to train and maintain organic cultural expertise.

Culture is not generally unclassified:

Statement: “The HTS team’s response to the cultural intelligence failures of the early war period was to argue that cultural information is generally unclassified and is best processed by academic researchers.”

According to Connable this proposed solution ignores the fact that that the intelligence staff is, by doctrine, specifically designated to collect and analyze cultural data. The inference that cultural information is inherently unclassified shows a clear lack of appreciation for the contemporary operating environment.

No more than common COIN sense: On its website, HTS provides examples of programmatic successes, or “impacts”. These include an HTT-designed plan to engage with

102 S. Featherstone
104 B. Connable, p63
105 B. Connable, p63
local mullahs in Afghanistan, to hold a tribal congress to address grievances, and to provide volleyball net to build rapport with local villagers. These examples demonstrate common sense in a COIN environment, not breakthroughs. Hundreds of Army and Marine staffs that accepted culture as a significant element of terrain have been doing these things on a daily basis across Afghanistan and Iraq for years without HTS support.\textsuperscript{106}

**Doctrine Appoints FAO’s.** Army’s civil affairs FM states that the role of the CA officer is to: “Advise commanders on the political, cultural, and economic impact of planned operations and their impact on overall objectives”\textsuperscript{107}

The doctrinal description almost mirrors the claimed capabilities of a HTS human terrain team.\textsuperscript{108} According to the 15 July 2008 HTS briefing, the HTT is staffed by at least two officers or enlisted soldiers with FAO, Civil Affairs Officer (CA), Special Forces, or intelligence backgrounds. The team is led by an experienced combat arms officer. Why is it necessary to create a separate program, costing (at a minimum) tens of millions of dollars, to assign these personnel to the very staffs to which they were trained to serve? What do the Human Terrain Team FAO and CA officer bring to the table that the organic FAO and CA officers do not?\textsuperscript{109}

Combatant staff has proven capable: Even without the FAO, CA officers, and PSYOP units, combatant staffs have proven capable of both reading the cultural terrain and devising culturally savvy operational plans.\textsuperscript{110} As an example for a successful unit the experience gained during OIF V, Task Force Dragon can be used\textsuperscript{111}. In the article ‘*Human Terrain Mapping: A Critical First Step to Winning the COIN Fight*’\textsuperscript{112}, published 2008 four well experiences officers described how the unite reached success

**The Reachback Cell has an insufficient capability:** The HTS program has attempted to create its own contracted reach-back capability in the form of the expensive cell the Research Reachback Center at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. This cell provides feedback to HTTs but is incapable of providing cultural support to the full range of deployed forces around the world according to Connable. Solution: If the Department of Defense has ascertained that the entire

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\textsuperscript{106} B. Connable, p62  
\textsuperscript{107} B. Connable, p61  
\textsuperscript{108} B. Connable, p61  
\textsuperscript{109} B. Connable, p61  
\textsuperscript{110} B. Connable, p61  
\end{flushright}
intelligent community has failed to provide sufficient cultural reach-back support to
operational units the USDI should work with the Director of National Intelligence to fix the
existing system, not spend limited resources on an entirely new and unproven program.\textsuperscript{113}

The Army Cultural training center is drained of resources: as DOD contemplates making
HTS a program of record, The Army and Marine cultural training centers remain staffed
primarily with contractors and subsist on fluctuating budgets. HTS had sapped the attention or
financing and focus from nearly every cultural program in the military according to Connable.
A negative effect is that the human terrain team has given a number of staff officers an excuse
to ignore complex and challenging training requirement.\textsuperscript{114}

HTS are damaging academic-military relations: “The HTS program has widened a long-
existing schism between academics willing to work with the military and those who are not.
This degrades the ability of patriotic social scientists that help the military through less
controversial means”\textsuperscript{115}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories of HTS Military critique</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural is not generally unclassified</td>
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<tr>
<td>COIN doctrine states ‘culture’ as Military responsibility, Specific: FAO’s assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military culture capacity decreases due to: 1) less funding, 2) less education since the solution is outsourced</td>
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<tr>
<td>HTS only ads common COIN sense</td>
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<tr>
<td>HTS- controversial is damaging for military-academic relations</td>
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The argument that: HTS doesn’t ad anything unique but common COIN sense, are placed in
both categories due to that it could originate in the performance of an individual HTT and the

\textsuperscript{113} B. Connable, p63
\textsuperscript{114} Ben Connable, p64
\textsuperscript{115} B. Connable, p63
measuring the results and competence. It could also be directed at social scientist at whole, which and then it is a concept of HTS being criticized.

12.2 Critique by ‘Others’

Personnel are unqualified due to insufficient screening and testing Steve Fondacaro claims as recently as December 2010. “over a third of those researchers never should have been a part of the program in the first place”, “Thirty to 40 percent of the people were not qualified”. Fondecaro speaks out after his firing because the contract to supply HTS with social science experts was due for procurement, and the company, BAE Systems that had the contract as he claims inhibited the program and were also applying for a renewal. “. The contractor find it difficult to provide “what I needed in terms of people and function” meaning social scientists both intellectually and physically fit to operate in austere conditions in Iraq and Afghanistan, and “flexible enough to work with a military organization” For example in one case, BAE provided HTS with an octogenarian Iraqi-American for a job translating in Iraq, in another case the applicant had a warrant out for her arrest for vehicular manslaughter.

Complaints about the program’s recruits metastasized from the first promising start, making the program look like an unworthy enterprise. One of it translators was charged with espionage. Hamama had since 2003, been under the investigation by the FBI, still he made it in on the HTS team. In 2008 he was charged on several acts, and the military officials are trying to figure out how he managed to get the security clearance needed for the Human Terrain job.

Ambition without resources?

Zenia Helbig was a part of the HTS program but got suspended before departure. Being recruited she was flattered to hear from Steve Fondacaro, the chief of the Human Terrain Team program. But Helbig thought she was under qualified to join the project. She delivers critic to the administration of HTS but is pro anthropologic and military collaboration.

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116 S. Ackerman, , 2010, p1
117 S. Ackerman, , p2
118 S. Ackerman, p2
120 N. Shachtman, Accused ‘Human Terrain’ Spy Free on Bond
According to Helbig, HTS greatest problem is its own desperation. Desperate to hire anyone or anything that remotely falls into the category of “academic”, “social science”, “regional expert” or “Phd” The program has therefore made numerous of regrettable decisions regarding both civilian and military personnel. Out of the 18 individuals serving in 2007, when Helbig held her presentation at the AAA annual meeting, out of the 10 civilians she had encountered during training only two where sufficient for the task. The rest lacked necessary competence.123.

"There are not enough Afghan experts in the entire United States to staff more than one or two human terrain teams, which has been the Achilles’ heel of the program from the start”” Chris Mason, a former State Department specialist on Afghanistan, tells the Globe.124

Organizational Critic; Administration lacks Competence

Several teams were reshuffled during their deployment for a variety of competence concerns and there have been at least one mass exodus from the program. In February 2009 one third of the total 27 Human Terrains Teams in Afghanistan and Iraq quitted.125 Due to a change in salary, and condition of employment Human Terrain Teams where asked to make the choice to switch. Today the job has a $200,000-plus annual salary. In February in 2009, there were between 135 and 243 HTT members. And Human Terrain officials later commented that one third dropped out.126

The main flaws in within the HTS are according to Helbig institutional level and failing to implement a good solution. “HTS has proven unable to deliver because of its own internal tensions, and due to a lack of professionalism, organization, and general competence on part of its staff, contractors and administrators.”127

Damaging for the Anthropologic discipline

“The effect of not having and loosing qualified participants will lead to discredit the notion that academics and specialist might have useful knowledge to impart on conflicts”128

The military needs Intel not advanced research

123 Z. Helbig
124 N. Shachtman, Mass Exodus from 'Human Terrain' Program
126 N. Shachtman, Mass Exodus from 'Human Terrain Program
127 Z. Helbig
128 Z.Helbig
Donna Winslow is an anthropologist working for the US Army with adding cultural awareness in teaching programs. Winslow raises the question: what type of cultural knowledge the military need? Do the need to understand all aspects of anthropology? The conclusion is no, out of practical necessity soldiers are able to gather cultural knowledge when it is useful to their endeavor\textsuperscript{129}, as the example of Task Force Dragon deployed to Iraq in mid-2007. The appeal is claimed to be that then there are no confusion. “When someone gives up information to a military person they know what it means. With some training and insight I believe that the military can in fact be culturally aware and recognize cultural intelligence for what it is –Intelligence.”\textsuperscript{130}

**Open research needed**

“Without some way to loop sociocultural research back into academic channels, military planners risk putting into academic channels, military planners risk putting too much faith in the untested assumptions of their sociocultural researchers and of putting on a pedestal “academic expertise” that is no longer truly tested as such.”\textsuperscript{131}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptual critique</th>
<th>Organizational critic</th>
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<tr>
<td>Unqualified personnel are recruited.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organizational Critic: Administrative lack of competence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Failures is damaging for the influence of the Anthropologic discipline</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unspecified working terms discontent = resulting in mass exodus</td>
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Mass exodus qualifies as a symptom of critique even if the outspoken reason for it isn’t expressed in the public press. Noah Shachtman, the well known editor of Danger room and a journalist that reports on national security and technology, reports that one of the mass

\textsuperscript{129} D. Winslow, *Anthropology and Cultural Awareness for the Military*, 2010 The school of Policy Studies, Queen's University at Kingston, p 20 accessed at 
\textsuperscript{130} http://www.almc.army.mil/ALU_CULTURE/docs/Winslow%20Docs/39%20winslow.pdf May 2011
\textsuperscript{131} P. Kusiak. 71
exoduses took place after a change in terms of employment\textsuperscript{132}. Therefore it qualifies that it is a criticism of the organization rather than that all personnel left because of ethical dilemma.

12.3 Critique by AAA

The main critique from the AAA is drawn from or motivated by the AAA Ethic’s Code. The code is not a fixed set of rules but has been changed through the years as reaction to political events as was the way, HTS times. Therefore it is hard to determine whether AAA reacted to on HTS due to the Ethics codes or they reacted to HTS and thereafter changed the ethics code to make the paragraphs more distinct, make a point or to exclude anthropologic participation. The picture shown here are more uniform than the debate in real life. The most negative is given a voice since this chapter describes the critique, the anthropologists that agree only on one of the statements or are against some of AAA conclusions will be substituted by the arguments of the HTS supporters.

In sum, AAA says, the ”HTS program creates conditions which are likely to place anthropologists in positions in which their work will be in violation of the AAA Code of Ethics and that its use of anthropologists poses a danger to both other anthropologists and persons other anthropologists study.”\textsuperscript{133}

“Voluntary Informed Consent”

“\textquote{To enter a community as a member of the military, a person with the power and the weight of the US army behind her/him, brings about a level of power that the local person cannot act against – since any reaction can get them arrested or killed.}”\textsuperscript{134} “HTS anthropologists work in a war zone under conditions that make it difficult for those they communicate with to give “informed consent” without coercion, or for this consent to be taken at face value or freely refused. As a result, “voluntary informed consent”) is compromised.”\textsuperscript{135}

A thing that is of concern is researchers wearing uniform and carry guns and that Human Terrain Team members are normally carrying a gun as described in a reportage on Karl Slaikeu, psychologists and conflict-resolution specialist . “Like the other social scientists on the

\textsuperscript{132} N. Shachtman, \textit{Mass Exodus from 'Human Terrain' Program}
\textsuperscript{134}Network of Concerned Anthropologists, Anthropology, Human rights and 'Human terrain, accessed by shr.aaas.org/coalition/Meetings/HughGusterson.pp May 20011
\textsuperscript{135} S. Weinberger.
“Do not harm”

‘Do not harm’ is the gold standard of ethical codes in the biomedical and behavioural sciences. What does ‘not harm’ mean when anthropologists study people engaged in conflict with the researcher’s immediate employers or funders? In a military-intelligence working environment these studied populations would be defined as ‘the enemy’. For most anthropologists this would be unethical and regarded as intelligence work rather than science.

“What about the anthropologists working in a UN peacekeeping mission where the ‘good’ and ‘bad guys’ are defined by international politics?”

The higher ambition of ‘Doing good’ is, of course, an extremely subjective concept, varying widely between different anthropologists and the different cultures in which within they work. ‘Do not harm’ is in AAA Code of ethics also addressed as avoidance of harm to the ‘integrity and reputation of the discipline’ However, since moral philosophers argue that the fundamental reason for being moral and ethical is to avoid causing harm to others, not to act out of self-interest, we must distinguish between harm to the people studied, as primary harm, and harm to the anthropology discipline, as secondary harm. “HTS anthropologists are charged with responsibility for negotiating relations among a number of groups, including both local populations and the U.S. military units that employ them and in which they are embedded. Consequently, HTS anthropologists may have responsibilities to their U.S. military units in war zones that conflict with their obligations to the persons they study or consult, specifically the obligation, stipulated in the AAA Code of Ethics, to do no harm to those they study (section III, A, 1).”

‘Banning secret research’

“At the 2007 AAA business meeting a resolution was approved to consider reinstating the 1971 language code banning secret research: specifically, no secret research, no secret reports or debriefings of any kind should be agreed to or given” In ‘compartmented ‘ projects the anthropologists may not have full knowledge of the mission or methods and thus may lack the necessary information about risks and benefits involved in research of affected populations.

137 C. Fluehr-Lobban, p19
138 C. Fluehr-Lobban, p20
139 C. Fluehr-Lobban, p20
140 Sharon Weinberger
141 C. Fluehr-Lobban, p21
The best current advice to practitioners is that such engagement should be avoided. This question applies equally to large development projects controlled by powerful, bureaucratic governmental and non-governmental institutions. Secretive marketing research for corporations has generally escaped scrutiny.

The obvious utility of the anthropologist for the military intelligence agencies begs the questions of whether this engagement is anthropology or intelligence-gathering. It has been “argued that contracted research with is neither subject to public review nor to be publicly disseminated, and may involve deception, is not anthropologic research but intelligence work.” Pauline Kusiak points out that the military requirements can make the process of ‘peer review’ challenging if not impossible: “part of what moves ethnographic observation beyond mere subjective musings and grounds its findings in objectivity is the regular practice of sharing one’s analysis with colleagues. […] researchers verify and corroborate what they think the are seeing in the field. This process, called peer review, it involves at a minimum presenting studies at meeting and journals with rigorous reviewing processes.”

The Network of Concerned Anthropologists said that they scholars to pledge “not to undertake research or other activities in support of counter-insurgency work in Iraq or in related theaters in the ‘war on terror’.” Furthermore, they believe that anthropologists should refrain from directly assisting the U.S. Military in combat, be it through torture, interrogation, or tactical advice.

“This raises ethical questions; if embedded anthropologists collect detailed information’s for databases accessible by the military, the CIA, the Iraqi police or the Afghan military, what is to keep any of these groups, from sooner or later using the data target suspected insurgents for assassination, or even simply to gain economic, cultural or political control?”

There is a general distrust shown in the response to panel member’s statement that they did find not find evidence of anthropologists doing clandestine work:

“Why should they [the panel] feel confident that they were pointed to all those doing anthropological work when the answer was from an administration that “has never acknowledged that water boarding is torture” and from an intelligence and military community that has been ‘repeatedly lying’ about matters related to the war in Iraq.”

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142 C. Fluehr-Lobban, p21
143 C. Fluehr-Lobban, p21
144 C. Fluehr-Lobban, p21
145 P. Kusiak, Ph.D. p 72
146 S. Jaschik
148 R.J. Gonzáles, p22
‘HTS is likened to project during the Vietnam war’.

One Pentagon official likened Human Terrain anthropologists to the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support project during the Vietnam War. This parable doesn’t add support from Anthropologists since that effort helped identify Vietnamese suspected as communists and Viet Cong collaborators; some were later assassinated by the United States. The title for the article: “Human Terrain System, A Cords for the 21st Century,” also links the development to the Vietnamese programs. This, is one argument itself against the HTT anthropologists claim that they are ‘saving lives’ and are teaching troops how to recognize and protect non-combatants. HTS anthropologists often compare themselves to the American anthropologists of World War II, but their role more closely resembles anthropologists serving colonial interests. This remark by Gonzales shows there is a difference in values concerning participation in wartime.

‘The aim is to kill’

The quote of Lt Col. Gian Gentile was used to describe the ‘true meaning’ of HTS: “anthropologists should not fool themselves. Human Terrain teams whether they want to acknowledge it or not, in a generalized and subtle way, do at some point contribute to the collective knowledge of a commander which allows him to target and kill the enemy.”

According to Gonzales HTT personnel appear to be unaware of the possible misuses of the data they are collecting. In a war zone, the embedded anthropologist may well find Special Operations forces or CIA agents using such data to kill people, or to target entire populations for propaganda or PSYOPS designed to manipulate public attitudes. An professor at the University of Chicago, Marshall Sahlins, responded to the statement that HTS scientist can help the people by advising soldiers, was that all the military was doing for scholars was to “make lethality more effective.”

As members of HTS teams, anthropologists provide information and counsel to U.S. military field commanders. This poses a risk that information provided by HTS anthropologists could be used to make decisions about identifying and selecting specific populations as targets of U.S. military operations.
operations either in the short or long term. Any such use of fieldwork-derived information would violate the stipulations in the AAA Code of Ethics that those studied not be harmed”

This critique most likely found fuel in the unclassified presentation by Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense John Wilcox at meeting in Arlington, February 2007. “It asserts that in the global war on terrorism, human-terrain mapping "enables the entire kill chain.””

‘Anthropologists methods are long term studying’.

Robert Albro, a member of the AAA commission that authored a 2009 report criticizing HTS, “If you’re going to say that you’re bringing anthropologists to bear, then you have to allow the people you’re calling anthropologists to work in ways that meet their own professional obligations,” he said in a Dec. 9 interview. “Human terrain teams operate in a context where it’s hard to understand how ethical considerations aren’t made deeply problematic. It’s hard to do ethnography at the point of a spear. It is done over long periods typically measured in years, not even moths.”

A similar argument is given by David Price, a member of the Network of Concerned Anthropologists. He says it takes at least a year of hands-on fieldwork for trained anthropologists to get their bearings. "Given [the Human Terrain System's] difficulty in hiring culturally competent social scientists," he says, "seven minutes isn't even enough time for an ethnographer to get properly confused.”

‘Increased danger for other civilian anthropologists’

According to Patricia Omidian militarized anthropology increases the danger to anthropologists as the local people with whom they work find it difficult to distinguish between combatants and non-combatants, the soldiers and the civilian aid workers jeopardizing personal safety and development, while increasing likelihood of future violence.

Risk for the researchers:

In May 2009, Michael Bhatia, an Oxford-trained political scientist working in eastern Afghanistan, was killed, along with two soldiers, by a roadside explosive. Less than two months later, a bomb detonated inside the Sadr City District Council building in Iraq. Social

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158 C. Fluehr-Lobban, p22

159 J. Motlagh

160 M. Forte, p 3,
scientist Nicole Suveges was inside. She and 11 others died instantly. Another team member Don Ayala, was recently indicted for 2nd degree murder, for an alleged revenge killing in Afghanistan, after an attack on his colleague Paula Loyd, who later died from her injuries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AAA critic of HTS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Conceptual</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Voluntary informed consent-Rule” is violated due to the nature of the warzone</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Do not harm-Rule” is violated due to mixed loyalties to military and subject of study</td>
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<tr>
<td>Banning secret research</td>
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<tr>
<td>A general distrust against military purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The aim is to kill</td>
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<tr>
<td>HTS are intelligence gatherers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anthropologic methods are long term</td>
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<tr>
<td>Embedding in Military forces poses a risk to other anthropologists and neutrality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Risk for researchers deployed</td>
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### 13 Support of HTS

‘Anthropologists are saving lives’.

Anthropologist Montgomery McFate, describes HTTs as ‘an angel on the shoulder’ of brigade commanders, and claims that these anthropologists will help save lives by improving intercultural communication. The same argument is delivered by participants interviewed for an article on Fort Lewenworth. The two interviewed participants, Loynab and Nori, said their goal is to serve as a bridge between the military and the community. They describe themselves as a police community outreach program. They say that they hope to reduce causalities on both sides. “My goal is to help the U.S. military to make Afghanistan a better place to live for the citizens of Afghanistan”, Loynab said.

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163 Noah Schachtman, *Third 'Human Terrain' Researcher Dead*

164 R. J. Gonzáles, p21

The army has published short informative articles on what the new Human Terrain System is on their web pages. The first on states “Most importantly, it will save lives as it reduces the insurgent’s ability to “hide in plain sight” among the population.”

Helbig claims that “HTS promoters are selling this program as something to help the military fight wars more effectively, as if the military can turn anthropology into useable intelligence.” And therefore understandably, anthropologists shy away from the program. But she claims that the “true interest” of HTS lies in helping the military engage with locals, build relationships with them, and understand their culture well enough to help rebuild everything that has been physically and socially destroyed.

The argument to joint the program are presented by a Human Terrain Team member:

"While critics have pointed to HTS as an example of the military "weaponizing anthropology", Braye and her peers believe that their work will bring long-lasting benefits to the people of Iraq. "If the weapon is using tools of peace to better understand those we have conflicts with, and to use those tools to resolve conflicts peacefully, then that's the weapon. I would challenge my colleges who say we are weaponizing a tool that I believe is being used to promote peace," said Braye. "Our goal is to help save lives, and that includes both U.S. lives and Iraqi lives. "I am really excited that one day the Iraqi children will see conflict resolution settled non-violently, and that they will have the tools to know that there are things you can do to settle and resolve conflict without having to resort to violent means."

It is ethical because it does ‘good’

David Kilcullen responded to the criticism delivered in several articles from Gonzáles in Anthropology Today, 2007. He divided the criticism in two questions: the first is whether using anthropological knowledge in counterinsurgency is ethical, that is: This is jus in bello – right conduct in war once engaged. The answer to the first question seems clear: “evidence suggests that anthropological knowledge (properly applied by people who understand both the discipline and the security environment) do contribute to the greatest good of the greatest number ands its use in counterinsurgency is therefore ethical, in my view.” Since the greatest number are non-belligerent populations, the people’s welfare (not that of insurgents or governments) is what counts and its use in counterinsurgency is therefore ethical.

Anthropologists are not politicians

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167 Z.Helbig
Kilcullens sorts the critic into a second question: is whether it is legitimate for anthropologists to support or countenance the current conflict (in Iraq, Afghanistan and the greater war on terrorism) This is a *jus ad bellum* question – were we right to engage in these wars in the first place?\(^{170}\)

Kilcullens answer to the second question is that it is not a question for anthropologists to answer on their own terms, but one for all citizens. If the war is unjust, then no one – neither anthropologists, nor anyone else – should support it. “we need to distinguish between political opposition to the war and professional research ethics, which are two very different things.”\(^{171}\)

He points out that democracies, the decision to wage war is one for the people’s elected representatives – soldiers and civil officials do not get to decide whether the nation engages in war. This means that the proper ethical sphere for military officers or civil servants is *jus in bello* once war is declared. Once war is declared the job of officials is to execute it effectively and humanely, in line with the policy of the government of the day or, if they cannot support that policy, to resign. In the current context, this implies that critics of war would more usefully focus their efforts on changing elected leaders or their policies, rather than on restricting the ability of professionals to prosecute, the conflict properly and humanely.\(^{172}\)

### ‘Informed consent is gained through freedom of choice’

In a radio program, host Susan Page asked McFate about how anthropologists were able to obtain informed consent in war zones. McFate replied:

“When the Human Terrain Teams interact with indigenous populations, they’re not conducting covert nor clandestine activities. They identify themselves by name and the unit that they are with to anyone they talk to. So it’s not a secret program by any means […] no one is forced to talk to these Human Terrain Teams. The people who choose to talk to them are in fact making a choice. Indigenous local people […] are smart, and they can draw a distinction between a lethal unit of the US military and a non-lethal unit of the US military.”\(^{173}\)

P. Kusiak are not a outspoken supporter of HTS in its current form and focuses on finding a solution because civilian-military cooperation is necessary and vital for the long-term national security. With experience of ethnographic fieldwork the explains that the bottom line should be simple:” if carrying a gun or wearing a uniform interferes with a researcher’s ability to build rapport with local informants, then these conditions will likewise frame and limit the data that a researcher ultimately walks away with.”\(^{174}\)

And that the task is not to provide “pure” ethnographic conditions, but to be

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170 D.Kilcullen, p20
171 D. Kilcullen, p 20
172 D. Kilcullen
174 P.Kusiak, p70
persistent “self-reflective about the conditions in which the data are collected and to be rigorous in qualifying the analyses that are ultimately made from this data”\textsuperscript{175}

‘Duty calls, Anthropologists knowledge is needed’

DOD yearns for cultural knowledge, anthropologists en masse, bound by their ethical code and postmodern idea won’t likely contribute. “If anthropologists remain disengaged, who will provide the relevant subject matter expertise?”\textsuperscript{176} An argument is that the military, CIA and other agencies will turn to others for the information they need. This information will be more incorrect.

“They’ll turn to the people who will give them the kind of information that should make anthropologists want to rip their hair out because the information will not be nearly as directly connected to what is going on in the local landscape”\textsuperscript{177} She has argued that incomplete knowledge is more dangerous and more contra productive if you act on it rather than without it. Montgomery McFates last conclusion is that “despite the fact that the military applications of cultural knowledge might be distasteful to ethically inclined anthropologists, their assistance is necessary.”\textsuperscript{178}

Zenia Helbig shared here experiences at the AAA’s annual Conference\textsuperscript{179}. “She describes the difference of mindset between the military and academics as fundamental. “It is the civilian and academic “common sense” –namely to think outside the military box of “I take orders, and I do what my chain of command tells me, and nothing else concerns me” – that is so desperately needed in the Army. This ability to be creative and function without official approval is the greatest asset that a program such as HTS has to offer the military.”\textsuperscript{180}

‘New Military tasks such as rebuilding of societies’

Helbig’s argument for Social science- military cooperation is that: “Your collective ethical concerns would be relevant if the military were only “fighting the enemy” and nothing more. In a situation where the military has been ordered to create governments, restore public services, rebuild economies and foster social ties within stratified societies, anthropologists should ask themselves if they want to leaves such complex tasks in the hands of people who almost universally have little training and no pre-existing interest in either these tasks or the

\textsuperscript{175} P.Kusiak, p70
\textsuperscript{176} Montgomery McFate, Anthropology and Counterinsurgency: The strange Story of their Curious Relationship, p37
\textsuperscript{177} Montgomery McFate, Anthropology and Counterinsurgency: The strange Story of their Curious Relationship, p37
\textsuperscript{178} Montgomery McFate, Anthropology and Counterinsurgency: The strange Story of their Curious Relationship, p37
\textsuperscript{180} Z. Helbig,
“The military is changing in a dramatic way,” said Brian Selmeski, an anthropology researcher at the Royal Military College of Canada who consults with the US Army and Air Force. "It is re-evaluating itself not just to make war but to fix some profound deficiencies."

He stressed that the highly controversial human terrain teams are just one way anthropologists assist the military. Others include teaching at military colleges and helping draft cultural training programs for soldiers operating overseas. "I don't want to help them kill people," Selmeski said. "What I want to do is help them avoid conflict."

**War is not always oppression**

Kilcullen also questions the view that any conflict against a non-state-enemy constitutes, by definition, the oppression of innocent populations. He gives the example of to engage in armed conflict against pirates, drug cartels, slave traders, terrorists or insurgents can be just or unjust just like any other conflict. Claims that wars against non-state actors are unethical by definition are simply insupportable on the evidence. “Some are; some are not”.

**Open research**

The exploring articles about the line between open research and intelligence are hard to find. It is mentioned in the informative article *Human Terrain System, A Cord for the 21st century it is told that* "Most civilian and military education is based on unclassified or open-source information derived from social sciences. Most cultural information about populations is unclassified. To ensure that the data obtained by HTS isn’t made inaccessible to the large numbers of Soldiers and civilians involved in stability operations, the information and database assembled by the HTS will be unclassified."

The reportage from HTS training tells following story by John Townsend, Human Terrain System senior seminar leader. Townsend has worked in a team himself after retiring from a military career and said that HTT are different from military intelligence gathering, because human terrain teams are interested in the wider social picture. "We focus on the civilian population as a whole. There's nothing secret about what we do". A difficult situation that social scientists find themselves in is described by Townsend: “during his HTS training in 2008, candidates were told to operate separately from the brigade's intelligence operations, but he was invited to attend a targeting board and decided to go as a learning experience. He listened as the brigade combat team went through the top 10 people they were targeting as a threat. Townsend thought he recognized one of the names on the list. He went back to

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181 Z. Helbig,
182 B. Bender
183 D. Kilcullen,
184 Kipp, Grau, Prinslow, Smith, p.14
his human terrain team, who confirmed the name of the No. 2 suspect as the son of an important local tribal leader. [...] It could hurt the brigade's mission immediately and into the future if this suspect's arrest went bad,” Townsend said.

"Based off the human terrain team's trusted relationship with the tribal leader, their recommendation was made to the BCT to inform the tribal leader and give him the opportunity to turn in his son. The brigade decided to go with the human terrain team's recommendation, the man did turn in his son, and the son was found to be guilty of what he was accused “.185

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptual Support</th>
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<td>HTS saves lives “it lessens harm, ethical because it does good”</td>
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<td>Anthropologist are not politicians:</td>
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<td>The right to start war, is a political question</td>
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<td>War against a non-state enemy is not always oppression</td>
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14 Summary Conceptual Critique, Support

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<tr>
<td>Open research needed</td>
<td>Informed consent is gained through freedom of choice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conceptual Critique Anthropologist Association</td>
<td>HTS saves lives “it lessens harm, ethical because it does good”</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 “Voluntary informed consent-Rule” is violated due to the nature of the warzone</td>
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<td>2 “Do not harm-Rule” is violated due to mixed loyalties to military and subject of study</td>
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<td>3 Banning secret research</td>
<td>Duty calls; Anthropologists knowledge is needed</td>
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<td>4 A general distrust against military purpose</td>
<td>New military tasks such as</td>
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The aim is to kill

War against a non-state enemy is not always oppression

Anthropologic methods are long term

Anthropologist are not politicians:

Embedding in military forces poses a risk to other anthropologists and neutrality

15 Discussion

This discussion will be following the chart with critique and delivered or not delivered response in the media. A short sentence will present the critique used and followed by a statement if the critique is recognised or not by the spokesmen of HTS or not. The discussion will focus on why the argument is responded to or not. It could be interesting to see why the debate responds to some critique but not other arguments but that is not the focus of this research.

1) “Voluntary informed consent-Rule”. The argument of Montgomery McFate is ” no one is forced to talk to these Human Terrain Teams. The people who choose to talk to them are in fact making a choice. Indigenous local people […] are smart, and they can draw a distinction between a lethal unit of the US military and a non-lethal unit of the US military.”\(^{186}\) This is a defense that is a large oversimplification over what is included in the term of voluntary consent. The rule focuses on the quality of the consent and raises the question how it can be obtained when: “a person with the power and the weight of the US army behind her/him, brings about a level of power that the local person cannot act against – since any reaction can get them arrested or killed.”\(^{187}\) Or at least make them a suspect. But there is another response in the debate delivered by P.Kusiak. In writing of this she was on detail to the Office of Defence for Policy, subject matter expert on social science research. Her

\(^{186}\) Montgomery McFate as quoted in R J. Gonzáles, p22

\(^{187}\) Network of Concerned Anthropologists
arguments that it is the challenge of the researcher to understand how the conditions will affect the data and take it into account when analyzing the data. By arguing this she understand the academic need and method and offers her view how to tackle the difficulty. Since Kusiak is working indirect for DoD and published her argument in Military Review this critic has received the response of ‘Recognition’ according to the criteria.

2) The “Do not harm” ethical rule are met in some ways. The rule are quite complex and have many different applications for a social scientist in the field. At the ‘feedback stair’ it is at the level of ‘Explaining’. The advocates of HTS offers as a respond in their point of view: that it is helping to decrease violence on both sides. The response is that is can save lives but it does not take in to account other aspects as that it can be “harm” done to the people studied that are less severe than lethal. The view of Patricia Omidian is that in a military-intelligence working environment these studied populations would be defined as ‘the enemy’. This view has been without resemblance in the arguments for HTS. The view is more divided into the ‘good’ population and the ‘bad’ insurgents and those that will receive some ‘harm done’ are in the least case criminals and therefore it is just. The division is shown in this quote” it will save lives as it reduces the insurgent’s ability to “hide in plain sight” among the population”.  

The general rule of Kilcullen can be applied here and to many of the reasons of critique. It is his definition of what is Ethical: it is ethical if it engenders the greatest good to the greatest number, and the greatest number is the non-belligerent population. This view also rimes with the dividing the population against Omidian that the people studied are the people targeted, the view is that they are helped. In the view of an individual it is hard to argue that the actions of a researcher cant have negative effect even if the goals is to save lives. Due to Kilcullens argument which has the highest level of reaching out to the critics it receives the step of ‘Explanation’.

3) The answer to the concerns about secret research and covert intelligence. ” To ensure that the data obtained by HTS isn’t made inaccessible to the large numbers of Soldiers and civilians involved in stability operations, the information and database assembled by the HTS will be unclassified. It is surprising that this message is not repeatedly sent out since it is one of the main points of critique. Montgomery McFate answers that : “When the Human Terrain Teams interact with indigenous populations, hey identify themselves by name and the unit that they are with to anyone they talk to. So it’s not a

189 Kipp, Grau, Prinslow, Smith, p.14
secret program by any means.\textsuperscript{190} McFate’s answer is that the anthropologists are not undercover but the question of secret research has more aspects than that. What possibilities does the researcher have to share results and methods of questioning? Kusiak who is for an emerging between military and social scientists see an conflict in that military requirements can make peer review, the open process challenging if not impossible\textsuperscript{191}. The facts about what the researcher can not report and where to draw the line between research and protection of forces is not mentioned.

The military can make intelligence out of open sources which is uncontroversial, but if the info received by HTT later is used within intelligence is this a problem?. The quote from Townsend is probably very cut down and limited but it provides a strange definition on where to draw the line for intelligence; HTS are different from Intelligence "We focus on the civilian population as a whole. There's nothing secret about what we do" The critique is met by the step of “Defend”

4) Distrust and the link to the dirty past of Vietnam with the lies about the war in Iraq is used as as an argument for not joining the HTS are. Some military employs use parables to Vietnam to sell in the concept in to their own ranks describing the CORDS program as a source of information. The reason can be that it takes time for the military to get a grip of a new concept and to adapt and that there is not a common view about how to view culture and handle the HTTs. Addressing a general mistrust and keep on defending one self against the past is a hard to do. It can be so that the military is interpreting the mistrust as a sign of only political critique. This is the way Kilcullen responds to the general critique is “we need to distinguish between political opposition to the war and professional research ethics, which are two very different things.”\textsuperscript{192} There are many possible reasons why allegation like this are not responded to in the debate but concerning HTS the critique is ‘Rejected’ by the military.

5) The argument that: people will go into “the kill chain”. Which is probably based on more than the presentation in 2007 which stated that human-terrain mapping "enables the entire kill chain."\textsuperscript{193} This critique can be met by many arguments, the definition of good by Kilcullen, that HTS are there to save lives but again with a individual focus it is hard to argue against that it could have this effect for someone. The problem with this also mixes with the

\textsuperscript{190} Montgomery McFate as quoted in R. J. Gonzáles, Phenix Reborn?, p22
\textsuperscript{191} P. Kusiak, p 72
\textsuperscript{192} D. Kilcullen, Ethics, Politics and non-state warfare, p 20
double loyalties against the subject and the military. If information reveals a threat to the military or others in the population how would the researcher choose according to AAA? Probably by not have been in a condition like that in the first place. That the kill-chain exist is not a secret, but the answer to if HTS could be a part of it is probably a gray area: “maybe, it could happened, depending on the situation” The story described by Townsend where a name the team knew was one of the top then of the unit is more than plausible and could concern more severe charges than in this case. The response are given in general terms that the aim of HTS is to do good so this critique receives rejection.

7) **Anthropologic methods are long term**, This critiques is interpreted to be aiming at the fact that qualitative research can not come out of this short time field-studies on patrols. The argument of Kusiak about “voluntary consent” can cover this question; it is up to the researcher to adjust the analysis made. Helbig also argued that anthropology can not be used as a direct instrumental tool for the military. In overall this discussion is ignored and responded by ‘Rejection’.

9) **Risk for researchers deployed.** When members of HTT have been killed it raises media attention, naturally since their American citizens. Besides condolences the military has no respond. That people die in a conflict zone is natural but the reason for raised attention could be that it points out that the academic personnel are not just “peaceful helping researchers” but also a target for the adversary. The respond is nothing which equals “Rejection”

8) **Embedding in military forces poses a risk to other anthropologists and neutrality:** This concern is have been brought up also in the debate about voluntary organisations and aid-workers. It could be argued that this is a larger question than just concerning HTS since:in the words of Helbig, the military has been ordered to create governments, restore public services, rebuild economies and foster social ties within stratified societies. It is question that is to be solved in the fure to come and the debate is most likel y taking place but not in this forum. It receives Rejection.

When all the categories of critique have been looked over there are other arguments can be analyzed. The supporters of HTS promotes participation whit an argument that refer to duty of anthropologist. The AAA does say anthropologists are "obliged to help improve U.S. government policies through the widest possible circulation of anthropological understanding in the public sphere."194 The argument is that a failure of HTS due to lack of competence will

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194 S. Weinberger
reflect poorly on the entire discipline. This meaning that the AAAs condemnation could lead to the unwanted effect that the Rule of “Not harm the profession” will be violated.

Kilcullen argued that critique often derived in an opposition against the war itself rather than social scientists ethic rules. The quote of Gonzales strengthens that point. “HTS anthropologists often compare themselves to the American anthropologists of World War II, but their role more closely resembles anthropologists serving colonial interests.”

This remark reminds us that there is a difference in values concerning participation in wartime.

Some critique argues that the military are launching a “program to kill more efficient’ and some that it is ‘to save lives’. The interesting thing here is that different arguments are appealing to different recipients. This description of reality can be taken as a symptom of the dichotomy between military culture and AAA’s values. The theory of the Civilian- military gap explains differences like this, “these differences are due to what the military believes to required for success in war.”

Due to two incompatible cultures those who supports HTS sells it as an: “effective intelligence tool to win the fight” to gain military acceptance and at the same time to attract anthropologist as a: “program with the task of helping, increasing knowledge and to intermediate between the different parties.” It could be that if the Civilian-Military gap would be smaller which P. Kusiak arguments for the difference in rhetoric would diminish or disappear.

**Could one say that the military is recognizing the problems for social science methods?**

Well, in general one could say that the argumentation is asymmetric, some critique are met as in the case of ‘voluntary informed consent’. But the answers are over simplified and do not address the core of the question. In most cases there are different views in how to interpret the rules for research, since it is not laws but recommendations it is natural that it should be a debate about where to draw the line. The general conclusion is that the method of dealing with the critique is not by recognizing it and reassuring that the conditions will be suitable for sociocultural studies. The focus seems to bee on defending the program.

This conflict is important because in all material concerning the subject not one have argued that the military can do without civil academics. It has on the other hand been argued that the

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195 R. J. Gonzáles, p22
196 S.C. Nielsen, p64
197 Z. Helbig, p2
right place is in training and education only. But without to decide at what level of engagement, the thing both militaries and anthropologists agree on is that the knowledge of academics are necessary.

The most evident example of an attempt to solve the conflict is not delivered as an argument in the debate but by Col Sharon Hamilton saying that she have also stepped up the program’s engagement with the academic community by attending conferences for relevant groups, namely the American Anthropological Association.¹⁹⁸

One can argue that if the military can’t understand and respect the criteria for sociocultural research that are there for a reason, how they could understand why academic studies are considered valuable?

15.1 Conclusions

Does the U.S. Military recognise the tensions between anthropology methods and their embedding in HTS? The response to the AAA’s critics of HTS has not reached the level of recognition. The responses in public debate vary from the levels of ‘Defence’ to ‘Explain’ the critique. The general response is that of Defence, some argument never receive a response and are therefore Rejected. So it can not been argued that the U.S. Military are at the first step one the solution the recommended by Pauline Kusiak to diminish ‘the civilian-military gap’.

16 Abstract

“Not since World War II has a military consulting been endorsed so publicly; not since Vietnam had it been condemned so fiercely.”¹⁹⁹ This is one description of Human Terrain System, How can something cause so much attention and what is it all about? The purpose is to analyze what the controversy and the critique presented against Human Terrain System consists off and to see if there is a beginning to some solution to the conflict in some way.

By analysing the arguments in the public debate between the supporters and the anthropologists against and that social scientist should be embedded in deployed units to produce cultural knowledge. I have augmented for that the U.S. Military are at not at the first step one the solution recommended by Pauline Kusiak to solve diminish ‘the civilian-military gap’.

¹⁹⁸ T. Bertuca
gap’. Due to that U.S. Military does not recognise the tensions between anthropology methods and their embedding in HTS?
17 Bibliography


