

How useful is the concept of Just War as an ethical foundation for assessing the activities of the United Kingdom's Intelligence Community?

Abstract

This dissertation seeks to contribute to the debate over the role of ethics in intelligence. The thesis is that Just War theory provides a more effective foundation than the traditional dichotomy between civil liberties and national security in making ethical assessments on the activities of the UK's Intelligence Community (IC). It is more useful because it allows for a wider interpretive framework for all concerned. The paper draws on the Just War tradition based upon the following rationale:

1. Just War is a proven and evolving tradition that guides decision making in the face of ethically ambiguous circumstances.
2. Just War provides the ethical foundation for the Law Of Armed Conflict (LOAC) which guides the everyday operations of the UK's Armed Forces.
3. Armed conflict and intelligence activities are not the same but they are analogous. Both protect national security and include activities that cause harm; harm that would otherwise be considered unethical.
4. Furthermore, the demarcation between armed conflict, diplomacy and espionage is increasingly blurring because of globalization.
5. Consequently, Just War is applicable, suitable and feasible as a foundation in developing a distinct framework of assessment for ethics in intelligence – a so-called Just Intelligence.
6. The lack of a coherent and explicit ethical intelligence framework has arguably led to serious ethical transgressions. This poses a threat to the underlying legitimacy of the UK's IC.
7. The nascent Just Intelligence tradition can serve to mitigate this threat, emulating the role that Just War has in protecting the legitimacy of the UK's Armed Forces.
8. Therefore a coherent and explicit Just Intelligence framework, expanding on the Just War tradition, will be useful for the following constituencies:
 - a. Legislators in framing legislation and oversight bodies in upholding regulatory measures.
 - b. The IC in providing clear guiding principles for their individual members and organisations.
 - c. The wider public in understanding better the ethical dilemmas involved in conducting intelligence activities.

Chapter 7 – Conclusion

There is undoubtedly clear utility in using Just War as a foundation for ethically assessing the activities of the UK's Intelligence Community. This conclusion is based upon the applicability, suitability and feasibility of Just War theory in furnishing a distinct but equally imperative Just Intelligence tradition. The foundation that Just War provides for Just Intelligence is useful for the IC itself, those charged with its oversight and also the wider public.

Just War is applicable because it serves as a proven model for moderating behaviour in conducting otherwise unethical activities before, during and after the fact. It is suitable because of the extant commonalities between armed conflict and intelligence and the increasingly blurred distinction between the two realms. Furthermore, it is feasible because the principles of Just War can, with little and ongoing modifications, map across to Just Intelligence. That the primary proponents thus far of nascent Just Intelligence theory have drawn heavily and directly upon the Just War tradition demonstrates its inherent usefulness.

The IC can use the foundation that Just War provides to frame and guide the unavoidable and constant ethical considerations involved in their profession. A wider and more deliberate framework of Just Intelligence principles is better than the current turgid morass of codes of practice that differ across the community. Universally applicable principles have been found to frame war and the profession of arms. Therefore, it is not unreasonable to expect that the same should apply to the various disciplines of intelligence.

The judicial and parliamentary overseers of the IC can use Just Intelligence principles to anchor primary legislation and set regulatory norms. Based upon two millennia of Just War theory, the expanding jurisprudence of international law over the past two centuries has increasingly bound war and the harm it causes. However improbable it may now appear, it remains an aspirational model that over time Just Intelligence can likewise achieve the same net effect.

The public can benefit from drawing upon the Just War tradition by applying the same framework of understanding to the IC as currently exists with regard to the Armed Forces. Debates over the rights and wrongs of a particular armed conflict or isolated transgressions of expected norms are rarely threats to the underlying confidence the public has in the Military. For the IC, this could be reflected in framing a positive sum analysis that does not envisage an inevitable loss of civil liberties with the increased potential for intelligence collection.

Absent a robust and evolving Just Intelligence tradition that supports directly legislation for and regulation of the IC, the threat exists that its underlying legitimacy will continue to fray in the face of diminishing public confidence. The extant ethical and legal framework has not sufficed to protect against this disconcerting dynamic. Ethical transgressions, perceived and real, have been and will continue to be framed with reference to a zero sum false dichotomy between civil liberties and national security.

The increasing velocity of destabilizing events in the international system is only likely to increase as the compounding effects of globalization continue to be realised. Relying on an ethical and legal framework devised in the immediate aftermath of the cold war and thereafter developed piecemeal in response to counter terrorism imperatives is sub-optimal. Just Intelligence instead offers a pragmatic and effective approach that reflects the long-term orientation embedded within the Just War tradition - perhaps the greatest single rationale for using it as a foundation for ethical assessments of the UK's IC.

Towards Just Intelligence: Wielding power more legitimately in an era of persistent conflict.

The principles of Just War form the basis for emerging Just Intelligence theory. There is a requirement for Just Intelligence because the lack of an ethical foundation for intelligence has led to injudicious uses of power that have eroded legitimacy. This discussion paper on ethics in intelligence articulates the following:

- *How Just War serves as a model for wielding power judiciously.*
- *The increasing preponderance of intelligence in wielding power.*
- *The blurring boundary between armed conflict and intelligence.*
- *How the narrative framework of Just Intelligence can resolve the consequent ambiguity.*
- *How narrative frameworks serve to uphold legitimacy and protect power.*

As a serving soldier, I have often found myself in ethically ambiguous circumstances.

Such situations create deep ethical concerns about what is the most appropriate course of action in achieving the tactical mission and contributing to overall operational and strategic success. I imagine my counterparts in the intelligence community find themselves in equally demanding dilemmas daily. However, in contrast to them, c.2000 years of distilled moral philosophy and precedent in the form of the Just War tradition support my decision-making. I am the grateful beneficiary of countless forebears and the dilemmas they faced in understanding what is and what is not acceptable behavior in conflict. Yet, if spying is indeed the second oldest profession, where is its equivalent ethical code? If we can kill ethically surely they can spy ethically too?

The compounding impacts of the Snowden leaks and the CIA's use of torture represent a crisis for the legitimacy of the US intelligence community and by extension for those of its allies. The immediate and visceral partisan reaction to the Senate Intelligence Committee's majority report is as unseemly as it is inevitable given the contemporary political climate in Washington. However, as the initial fuss and froth dies down, the key question over legitimacy remains. Particularly because the ramifications of denuded legitimacy extend far wider than the boundaries of our intelligence communities. They go to the very heart of how America and its

allies wield power in the 21st Century international system as it undergoes revolutionary change. Establishing & protecting the legitimacy of using military power at all the levels of war before during and after conflict is the defining characteristic of the Just War tradition. A nascent Just Intelligence tradition is forming with the same legitimating goal in mind for our Intelligence community.

1. Judiciously wielding The Big M: The model of applying powerⁱ ethically to minimize harm and protect legitimacy

Just War provides the bedrock for the Law of Armed Conflict. Elements of the tradition run directly from the lofty realms of philosophers atop their ivory towers to the orders given to the infantryman at the tip of the spear. In modern conflict, understanding and applying Just War principles such as military necessity, proportionality, humanity and discrimination are as integrated into the training of service personnel as much as the ability to call for fire and give accurate target indications.

The Just War tradition does not therefore represent a mere philosophical abstraction or obscure jurisprudence. Instead, it is a vital instrument in the application of force. It is imperative in achieving sustainable political outcomes in positions of relative advantage— what we quaintly used to call victory. Just War is indispensable in the contest for legitimacy that underpins all conflict – armed or otherwise.

In seeking to justify how to wage war ethically, the Just War tradition adopts an important and perhaps counter intuitive precept as its starting point. The very thing it seeks to justify, war, is “*prima facie gravely wrong*”.ⁱⁱ This is because of the harm war causes. Nonetheless, it is inescapable that armed conflict exists and that it may present the lesser of

multiple evils in certain circumstances.ⁱⁱⁱ The body of thought that comprises Just War concerns itself with defining principles and providing a narrative framework that assists decision makers, practitioners and the public in assessing such circumstances. Consequently, it serves as a legitimizing function in justifying the use of force.

2. DIME? The increasingly big I in the construct of national power

Information in all its forms is the basis of intelligence.^{iv} There was a time when the nature of information allowed intelligence agencies to stand outside the explicit exercise of power. The intelligence profession was concerned with better collecting and analyzing information to enable the governments of the U.S. and its closest allies to achieve decision superiority in exercising the various instruments of their national power. However, as Bob Dylan famously said, “*the times they are a changin’*”.^v The exponential growth of information and its ability to literally move at the speed of light has not only created a new domain; cyberspace, it has fundamentally affected each of the existing domains. Arguably, it is doing so in ways that are “*unforeseeable, unpredictable & uncontrollable*” and thereby revolutionary.^{vi}

The traditional boundary between the realms of armed conflict and intelligence is increasingly blurred. The consequence of this trend is increased ambiguity regarding the ethics of intelligence and the use of force in overlapping domestic and international jurisdictions that no longer fit traditional paradigms. Increased ambiguity presents greater risks to the underlying legitimacy of both military and intelligence activities. Should the NSA be using GCHQ to get around constitutionally protected civil liberties as Edward Snowden has alleged? Should rendition through third countries be acceptable to facilitate the use of torture? Should

assassination of American citizens abroad be countenanced by an AUMF signed on 14 Sept 2001 that will seemingly operate in perpetuity?

As much as there may be an aspiration for a firewall to exist between intelligence and armed conflict with the former as a minimally harmful activity that supports decision makers impartially and at one remove, the experience of the last decade and more suggests it is unrealistic. The combined intelligence and military contributions to the prosecution of the GWOT and its equally awkwardly named successor campaigns provide harbingers of modern conflict where blurred boundaries create deep ambiguity over the legitimacy of the measures used. Is such ambiguity inevitable?

3. Unavoidable Ambiguity: The blurring boundary between armed conflict and intelligence

In his seminal 2005 book *"The Utility of Force"*, General Rupert Smith boldly declares, *"War no longer exists"*. Somewhat regrettably, this does not herald the arrival of world peace but rather signals the wicked problem of persistent conflict and confrontation that he terms *"War amongst the people"*. Furthermore, this state of affairs exists not as violent punctuations of a peaceful equilibrium, as industrial era wars did, but instead is constantly present *"in many permutations"*.^{vii} For the purposes of this paper, the important inference from General Smith's deductions on the changing nature of war in the modern world is how the traditional demarcation between the realms of armed conflict and intelligence no longer holds true. Therefore, the traditional paradigms require updating to match changing realities in assessing ethics and protecting the legitimacy of how we wield power.

The Just War tradition, given both its longevity and evolutionary nature, serves as one foundation or model for meeting this requirement. Conversely, the traditional dichotomy that frames espionage ethics, the media trope that pits civil liberties against national security, is far too narrow. This is primarily due to its domestic focus but also the fact that it is a zero sum analysis based upon a logical fallacy that a dearth of civil liberties will guarantee security or vice versa.^{viii}

The blurring of boundaries between armed conflict and intelligence activity also results from the increased impact on national security that non-state actors and individuals now have and the measures governments have taken in response. For Harlan Ullman, a senior advisor at the Atlantic Council, this increased impact can be accounted for by the effects of globalization and the means afforded to individuals and non-state actors to act as nefarious agents in the international system.^{ix}

According to Richard Aldrich, a Professor of International Security at the University of Warwick, there have been three specific consequences of globalization on intelligence activities.^x The ability of multiple illicit opponents to exploit seams such as cross border flows of money and people has shifted the balance in their favor vice the power of nation states. This has resulted in an increased imperative for intelligence agencies to operationalize in order to disrupt and fix threats using increasingly coercive means. Simultaneously however, these dynamics have played out against increased expectations from empowered civil societies that intelligence activity meet explicit ethical standards. Consequently, *“the most perplexing challenge for intelligence in the era of globalization is presented by the contradictory demands of more active operations...set against expectations of ethical behaviour and good governance”*.^{xi} This dilemma put forward by Aldrich, whose 2009 paper provides prescient warning of the dangers of

'regulation by revelation',^{xii} itself illustrates the need for an explicit ethical framework for our intelligence communities. How can we better frame this ambiguity in order to create norms and workable narrative constructs?

4. Framing Ambiguity: Updating our narrative constructs

The topography of the evolving paradigm of threat and conflict in the international system is opaque. Likewise, the implication for how we wield national power in response is unclear. One proposition that has generated much debate is the prospect of “*21st Century Combat as Politics*” put forward by Emile Simpson in his 2012 book “*War from the Ground Up*”. His description of fragmented audiences not bounded along traditional nation-state lines behoves a much more fluid and dynamic approach to protecting national interests and security. Simpson does much to put flesh on the bones of Smith’s *'many permutations'* of the *'war amongst the people'* paradigm. For Simpson, “*War is expanded to incorporate all means which deliver political effect: violence is mixed into other political activity, so that there is a severe erosion of the interpretive difference between military and political activity; war and peace*”.^{xiii}

The implication of Simpson’s deductions on conflict for ethics in intelligence is that the contest for legitimacy fought across all the levers of national power; be they diplomatic, informational, military, or economic curtails the traditional freedom of maneuver for intelligence activities. Consequently, there is a need for unambiguous interpretive constructs that enable the sustained legitimacy of a given narrative. Just Intelligence can provide one such construct.

Increasing reference to Just Intelligence theory, based upon the Just War tradition, enables us as practitioners, decision-makers and citizens to understand better the dynamics at play and consequently wield power more legitimately.

This is because the assessment and interpretation of intelligence and/or military action or inaction will be a vital battleground itself in protecting national security. Essentially, referring again to the reflections of Smith and Simpson, the continuum of contemporary conflict and confrontation to protect national interests against multifaceted threats is an ongoing contest to “*maintain the narrative—perpetually to win the argument*”.^{xiv} The implication for ethics in intelligence is that sustaining legitimacy becomes an end in itself in the contest for narrative dominance and protecting against narrative fragmentation. Ultimately, “*a strategic narrative which neglects ethos completely is in danger of finding itself illegitimate in the longer term.*”^{xv} What specifically therefore can Just War offer Just Intelligence in meeting this legitimizing function?

5. From Just War to Just Intelligence: Evolving Principles

Just as armed conflict has been present throughout history, intelligence, the need to keep secrets secret and discover the secrets of an adversary, is likewise a constant. Nonetheless, in spite of blurring boundaries, intelligence and armed conflict are evidently not the same. They are however analogous. Both protect national security and include activities with the potential to cause harm: harm that we would otherwise consider unethical. We may therefore also consider intelligence activities, like armed conflict, as *prima facie* wrong and therefore requiring ethical justification. At some level, they will potentially cause a form of harm, whether that be to the target, the intelligence officer/agency or the wider societies involved.^{xvi}

However, unlike the *prima facie* case of harm in Just War, the underlying precept of harm always resulting from intelligence is not universally accepted. The ethical spectrum for assessing and rationalizing intelligence runs from Immanuel Kant the absolutist to Niccolo

Machiavelli the realist. For Kant, all forms of espionage were “*intrinsically despicable*” and therefore prohibited.^{xvii} Whereas for Machiavelli ethical considerations were dispensable constraints, a distant second to the need to maintain power at all costs relative to real or perceived adversaries.^{xviii}

Nevertheless, perhaps the most memorable and convincing argument put forward on the place of ethics in intelligence came from the late British strategist Sir Michael Quinlan who observed that, as all intelligence is ultimately a human activity, “*we can no more step outside ethics than we can opt out of the force of gravity*”.^{xix} Quinlan also notes that in 1985, the then CIA director, Admiral Stansfield Turner, wrote that the true test of ethics in intelligence is whether those authorizing the actions could justify them if they became public.^{xx} This observation seems particularly apposite now in light of the CIA’s use of torture. To sustain legitimacy in the modern world, intelligence must therefore be demonstrably ethical.

As yet, there are no agreed principles for a so-called Just Intelligence. Nevertheless, a number of academics and practitioners from the trans-Atlantic intelligence community have identified the requirement and proposed principles to form the basis of Just Intelligence doctrine.

In order to help resolve ambiguity and counter threats to legitimacy, recourse to Just Intelligence in framing ethical dilemmas will ultimately provide for better assessments by all concerned. Just War provides a ready and practical interpretive framework that serves to clarify ambiguity and sustain legitimacy in armed conflict.^{xxi} It is therefore reasonable to expect that a concomitant Just Intelligence will serve the same ends especially as boundaries between the two realms blur. Such an observation should not however be equated with advocating for a complete erosion of the legal and moral boundaries between armed conflict and intelligence.

<i>Just War (EXTANT)</i>		<i>Just Intelligence (PROPOSED)</i> (Quinlan 2007 pp.7-8) (Omand 2010 pp.286-287) (Bellaby 2014 p.25)
<i>jus ad bellum</i>	Just Cause	<i>Omand: There must be sufficient sustainable cause.</i> <i>Bellaby: There must be a sufficient threat to justify the harm that might be caused by the intelligence collection activity</i>
	Proportionate Cause	
	Right Intention	<i>Omand: There must be integrity of motive.</i> <i>Bellaby: The means should be used for the intended purpose and not other (political, economic, social) objectives.</i>
	Right Authority	<i>Omand: There must be right authority.</i> <i>Bellaby: There must be legitimate authority, representing the political community's interests, sanctioning the activity.</i>
	Reasonable Prospect of Success	<i>Omand: There must be reasonable prospect of success.</i>
	Last Resort	<i>Quinlan</i> <i>Omand: Recourse to secret intelligence must be a last resort.</i> <i>Bellaby: Less harmful acts should be attempted before more harmful ones are chosen.</i>
<i>jus in bello</i>	Discrimination	<i>Bellaby: There should be discrimination between legitimate and illegitimate targets.</i>
	Proportionality	<i>Quinlan</i> <i>Omand: The methods used must be proportionate.</i> <i>Bellaby: The harm that is perceived to be caused should be outweighed by the perceived gains.</i>
<i>LOAC</i>	Military Necessity	
	Humanity	
<i>jus post bellum</i>	Legitimate peace for all sides by protecting rights, prosecuting wrongs and rehabilitation (Orend^{xxii})	

Figure 1 – Comparison of Just War and Just Intelligence principles

As with the relationship between Just War and the Law of Armed Conflict, Just Intelligence principles should be enshrined in law to form a concrete chain that links moral philosophy to policy. Indeed necessity and proportionality are finding their way, seemingly by osmosis, into some of the relevant primary legislation in the UK. Strengthening such bonds does not guarantee future transgressions will not happen. Instead, it creates a narrative framework that practitioners, along with their legislative and judicial overseers, can use to engage in a much more constructive and legitimizing deliberation.

I strongly believe that the public can also use the concept of Just Intelligence to understand what is, and what is not, acceptable intelligence conduct. To take two examples; collateral damage has entered public discourse in rationalizing civilian casualties against military necessity. Is it unreasonable to expect that we may similarly use ‘collateral intrusion’ resulting from unintentional collection of privileged material rather than frantically reaching for the nearest copy of Orwell’s *1984*? Secondly, as Just War helps us understand the difference between murder and lawful killing in war, can we not expect Just Intelligence to help frame the difference between the forbidden (torture) and the essential (interrogation)?

The advent of *jus post bellum* in recent years is an example of the inherently evolutionary nature of the Just War tradition. This presages that the military instrument of national power is better placed to anticipate and absorb the ethical implications of ongoing upheavals in the international system. The absence of such an equivalent tradition in intelligence at the very least foretells a less desirable outcome. As Quinlan simply puts it, the complexities of modern day circumstances result in a “*greater need than ever before of a workable and relevant moral compass*”.^{xxiii} Seeking to rely on a solely consequentialist or realist foundation of ethical assessments of intelligence will not satisfy the increasingly complex requirements demanded in a globalized world. More bluntly, it will likely lead to more 2003 and less 1776 in the unfolding evolution of American Power.

6. Framing American power: The City on the Hill as a legitimizing vision.

Why is legitimacy important? The exceptional power of America in particular is as multifaceted as it is unprecedented. Therefore understanding what it consists of and from whence it came requires conscious framing. Perhaps the most powerful and enduring allegory of

American power is that of the John Winthrop's allegory of the City on the Hill. As such, it is worth quoting at length:

"...for we must Consider that we shall be as a City upon a Hill, the eyes of all people are upon us; so that if we shall deal falsely with our God in this work we have undertaken and so cause him to withdraw his present help from us, we shall be made a story and a byword through the world, we shall open the mouths of enemies to speak evil of the way of God and all professors for God's sake; we shall shame the faces of many of God's worthy servants, and cause their prayers to be turned into Curses upon us till we be consumed out of the good land whether wee are going".^{xxiv}

Winthrop's impassioned plea to his fellow settlers aboard the *Arabella* in 1630 set out a vision for the new world based explicitly on the **moral** and **exemplary** exercise of power. Subconsciously, he established what was to become the great declaratory tradition of idealism that weaves together the threads of American history. Subsequent examples include, *inter alia*, the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and its associated Bill of Rights, the Gettysburg Address and the Civil Rights Act. Together they are the foundation of American power and a source of its continuing legitimacy as the self-proclaimed leader of the free world. Crucially, for this framing of American power, Winthrop's sermon also forewarns what shall happen when such idealism is forsworn. In short, a failure to live up to its ideals will render America illegitimate in the eyes of its citizens, its allies and its adversaries alike. Protecting that legitimacy is therefore of the utmost importance.

There are of course extant legal frameworks and policy documents that direct and regulate our intelligence communities. They are however relatively recent and the crisis of legitimacy now faced by the intelligence community suggests they are insufficient.

The Just War tradition is a model of how we can calibrate this framework and ground it in ethics to serve the respective interests of our nations better. Taken together, the practitioners and academics referred to in this paper are attempting to articulate practical principles for the intelligence community in weighing up the moral hazards of any given course of action. Their underlying and worthy intent is seeking to protect the legitimacy of the intelligence community.

Absent a robust and evolving Just Intelligence tradition, the threat exists that our intelligence communities underlying legitimacy will continue to fray in the face of diminishing public confidence. The extant ethical and legal frameworks on both sides of the Atlantic have not sufficed to protect against this disconcerting dynamic.

The increasing velocity of destabilizing events in the international system is only likely to increase as the effects of globalization continue to arise. Consequently, our armed forces and intelligence agencies are likely to get busier and face circumstances that are even more ambiguous. Expecting our intelligence communities to rely on a scant ethical and legal framework devised during the cold war, and thereafter developed piecemeal in response to counter terrorism imperatives, is insufficient. Pursuing a tradition of Just Intelligence offers a pragmatic and proven alternative approach to protect the legitimacy of the intelligence profession and with it an opportunity to stay true to the idealism that is the hallmark of American exceptionalism.

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Endnotes:

ⁱ As defined in JP 1-0, p I-11 para 9, there are 4 elements of national power. They are commonly referred to using the DIME mnemonic; Diplomatic, Informational, Military & Economic.

ⁱⁱ Guthrie & Quinlan (2007) p.11

ⁱⁱⁱ Whetham (2011) p.68

^{iv} See JP 2-0 p GL-8 for the definition of intelligence used in this paper.

^v Bob Dylan, *The Times They Are A Changin'*, 1964 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e7qQ6_RV4VQ

^{vi} Knox & Murray (2001) p 7. They are the characteristics of 'military revolutions' that result in fundamental changes in the nature of war and its social construction.

^{vii} Smith (2005) pp.403-404

^{viii} Omand (2010) p 267

^{ix} Talk given at the British Embassy Washington 17 Oct 2014

^x Aldrich (2009) p.890

^{xi} Aldrich (2009) pp.899-900

^{xii} *ibid.* p.902

^{xiii} Simpson (2012) p.231

^{xiv} Simpson (2012) p.210

^{xv} *ibid.* p.213

^{xvi} Bellaby (2014) p.3

^{xvii} Quoted in Herman (2004) p.382

^{xviii} Skinner & Price (1988) Chapter 17 *Cruelty and Mercifulness; and whether it is better to be loved or feared.*

^{xix} Quinlan (2007) p.2

^{xx} *ibid.* p.2

^{xxi} Wall, *The Ethical and Legal Challenges of Operational Command* in Whetham (2011) p.221

^{xxii} Orend (2013) chapters 6 & 7

^{xxiii} Guthrie & Quinlan (2007) p.3

^{xxiv} For further analysis of Winthrop's sermon see: <https://thehistoricpresent.wordpress.com/2010/06/28/the-city-upon-a-hill-and-puritan-hubris/> {accessed 29 Mar 2015}

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John Jeffcoat "JJ" is a Major in the British Army. He is an infantry officer in the Royal Gurkha Rifles and is currently a student at the US Army Command and General Staff College in Fort Leavenworth, KS. He is also reading for an online MA in War in the Modern World at King's College London.

Born 24 March 1983 in Edinburgh, one of five brothers, all of whom are highly musical. The fact therefore that I am pretty much tone deaf raises perennial questions about my parentage. Having struggled gainfully through music school as a child I took the earliest opportunity I could to differentiate myself from my musical brethren by competing for an Army Scholarship in 1999 aged 16. As well as giving a welcome alternate focus, this scheme helped fund my developing wanderlust by enabling me to travel. Since 1999, I have visited multiple countries across five continents in both a personal and professional capacity. These various travels have served to both broaden my horizons and enable me to better understand where I come from.

In 2004, while studying Politics and East European Studies at University College London, I met Kate. At that time she was a first year student of veterinarian medicine. Showing immense patience and forbearance, she stuck by me, and four years later, after she had graduated, we married in Edinburgh. By this time I had commissioned into the Royal Gurkha Rifles from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS) and had served in Bosnia and Afghanistan. Subsequently, in six years of marriage, we have lived in seven separate quarters including in Brunei, Kent, Surrey, London and now the US. During this time, I have been twice more to Afghanistan, served as an Instructor at RMAS and most recently worked as an assistant to the Chief of the General Staff.

We have an infant son, William, born on 3 May 2014 and a five year old black Labrador called Vesper. As new parents, our main preoccupation is keeping up with whatever mischief William gets himself into but we are nevertheless determined to take the opportunity that the US provides to explore as much as we can over the coming months.

Outwith work I enjoy a variety of sports including football (soccer), squash, boxing and trail running. I am also finishing up a master's in War in the Modern World. This is an online modular program through King's College London that has been funded by the military. My thesis is on ethics in intelligence and the applicability of Just War theory. Looking ahead, I am excited at the prospect of joining the 'book a night' club in the Advanced Military Studies Program from June 2015 onwards...