

Military Intelligence Officers Analytical Integrity Education

William A. Martin

U.S. Army Intelligence Center of Excellence ethics education offers Military Intelligence Basic Officer Leadership Course, Captains Career Course, and Warrant Officer Training Branch students scaffolded instruction within the 304th Military Intelligence Battalion, 111th Military Intelligence Brigade, at Fort Huachuca Arizona. In this article, I seek to share our analytical integrity introduction class we developed for the Military Intelligence Captains Career Course. First, I identify the need for analytical integrity within the intelligence context. Second, I illustrate how analytical integrity violations occur. Next, I offer strategies and tools to cultivate analytical integrity. Finally, I apply analytical integrity within the four steps of Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield (IPB) and three Army intelligence analysis tasks.

In addition to seasoned Military Intelligence warrant officers and less-seasoned Military Intelligence captains, we train officers with little or no Military Intelligence experience. The fact is that many of our Military Intelligence Captains Career Course students have never heard of analytical integrity. For those officers who have at least heard of analytical integrity, many perceive it to be a trivial subject at best, or at worst, an unnecessary ethical constraint to consider. For this reason, we determined that an introduction to analytical integrity was vital for Military Intelligence professionals.

Introduction

Who would ever imagine German Panzer formations crashing through the Ardennes Forest onward to Antwerp, with enough forces to isolate and destroy four Allied Armies and force the Allies to sign a Nazi-favorable peace treaty to end hostilities in Western Europe? The answer is Adolf Hitler, and the answer is not the Allies. Taken completely by surprise, General Anthony McAuliffe and his 101st Airborne Division Screaming Eagles bore the brunt of this surprise attack, while General Eisenhower and the Allied high command scrambled to react and properly respond. Though the Germans experienced limited success at the operation's beginning, the results were not what the Fuehrer envisioned. There were no destroyed Allied Armies, no Nazi-occupied Antwerp, no begging Allies suing for a war-ending treaty, and effectively no Nazi units capable of deterring Allied forces remaining in Western Europe. Instead, the results of this audacious plan initially were the Battle of the Bulge, and subsequently, the effective destruction of the Wehrmacht in Western Europe.

This German disaster begs the question of why Hitler would even consider such a seemingly foolhardy battle plan. The answer seems ludicrous. Hitler actually believed he had multiple Panzer divisions in reserve. In truth, those divisions simply were not there. We cannot determine if he fabricated those units, or if his analysts wrongly informed him that there were more units. Whether analysts committed false reporting to feed the Fuehrer's twisted desire for phantom units, or omitted truth telling to the raving mad dictator, the West is the benefactor of one of history's great analytical integrity violations.

Analytical Integrity?

Ok, right now you may be thinking, "Thank you, Chaplain Martin for the glorious history lesson. But...so what? What is analytical integrity and what does that have to do with me, and U.S. Army Intelligence? What is the problem?"

Fair question. To resolve this, first I will define analytical integrity, and then get after the “so what.”

To begin, the Merriam-Webster dictionary writes:¹

Analytical—separating something into component parts or constituent elements; skilled in or using analysis especially in thinking or reasoning

Integrity—firm adherence to a code of especially moral values; incorruptibility

Thus, we can deduce that analytical integrity is the production and dissemination of intelligence products that are consistent with the analysis. Violating analytical integrity involves intentionally or inadvertently doctoring analysis and the resulting products. Moreover, analytical integrity violations can occur from tactical (battalion and brigade S2) to strategic (Combatant Command) to governmental level policymakers politicizing intelligence. For tactical level battalion and brigade S2s, we argue that analytical integrity violations can occur within any of the four IPB steps.

What is the Problem?

Clearly, analytical integrity was problematic for Adolf Hitler and the Nazi war machine. That problem, laden with biases and influence, provides an effective introduction for the purposes of this paper. Likewise, we who conduct and develop Military Intelligence Officer training wanted an analytical integrity doorway to bring our students through that would catch their attention and be useful for application. For this doorway, consider with me the great 1998 military movie entitled, *Pentagon Wars*.² This entertaining thought experiment demonstrates analytical integrity violations in light of biases and influence.

The movie chronicles from 1968 to the movie’s present day the design and implementation of an infantry transport vehicle that would be a worthy replacement to the M113 armored personal carrier. *Pentagon Wars* shifts between the original Bradley Fighting Vehicle project officer and his audience, and modern day archivists who look back to research the evolution of the Bradley’s development. Colonel Smith, the 1968 Bradley project officer, briefs a panel of three General Officers with Infantry and Armor backgrounds. He regurgitates to them their communicated desire for the Bradley, namely, that this vehicle will bring troops swiftly, carry 11 Soldiers plus a driver, and project a 20mm cannon. Colonel Smith continues that it will be lightly armored, speedy, and solidly engineered, yet still cost effective at \$1.5 million each. However, the Generals then begin to inject their biases. It should be a scout vehicle... it should have a bigger cannon... it should carry more ammo... it should blow up tanks... oh yeah, it should still be a troop carrier... While initially Colonel Smith offered some critical rebuff, he soon wilted under their barrages, and told them what they wanted to hear.³

Finally, and over many years, Colonel Smith produces the final scale model and briefs the Generals and room of congressional representatives. As he does so, the scene switches back and forth to the modern day archivists. The following transaction demonstrates the analytical integrity violation impacts:

Colonel Smith: “...Featuring scout, troop transport, and anti-tank capabilities, it carries six men...”

(Modern Day Archivists: How many was it supposed to carry? Eleven.)

Colonel Smith: “The Bradley is outfitted with the most sophisticated surveillance equipment ever developed. It is also equipped with a rapid-fire canon and an anti-tank rocket launcher.”

(Modern Day Archivists: ...which means it’s loaded with 1,500 shells and 10 tow anti-tank missiles...)

Colonel Smith: “So, in summation, what you have before you, gentlemen, is...”

(Modern Day Archivists: ...a troop transport that can't carry troops, a reconnaissance vehicle that is too conspicuous to do reconnaissance, and a quasi-tank that has less armor than a snow blower, but has enough ammo to take out half of D.C.!)

Generals: “Fantastic! Congratulations, GENERAL Smith! Hell of a job! Let’s build it!”⁴

Upon completion of the *Pentagon Wars* clip, I then confront the class with application questions. Among other questions, I ask them to describe the General Officers’ biases. To this point in the class, many officers still see analytical integrity as a non-factor. *Pentagon Wars* serves as an effective transition to application as I confront students to consider real life examples of analytical integrity congruent with the film. While they wrestle among themselves, I then offer the students recent quotes to bring it home:

We conclude that the **Intelligence Community** was dead wrong in almost all of its pre-war judgments about Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction. This was a major **intelligence failure**. Its principal causes were the Intelligence Community’s **inability to collect good information** about Iraq’s WMD programs, **serious errors in analyzing** what information it could gather, and a **failure to make clear** just how much of its analysis was based on assumptions, rather than good evidence. On a matter of this importance, we simply **cannot afford failures** of this magnitude.⁵ (Emphasis added.)

As well as the following:

400 Islamic State Intel Analysts: ‘Analytical Integrity’ of Our Work Is Flawed

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Forty percent of intelligence analysts working at the U.S. military’s Central Command (CENTCOM), which is charged with the war against the Islamic State (ISIS/ISIL), warned that the “analytical integrity” of their work is flawed, the chairman of a top House panel said on Thursday.⁶

CENTCOM Altered Intel to Make Obama’s War Against Islamic State Look Better

WASHINGTON, D.C.—A congressional task force has confirmed allegations that senior U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) leaders manipulated intelligence assessments in 2014 and 2015 to make it appear that President Barack Obama is winning the war against the Islamic State (ISIS/ISIL).⁷

For many students, these quotations offer perspectival transition from “them” to “us.” This seems especially true for students not previously intelligence. Our intent is to facilitate ownership of analytical integrity within our students. From testimonies of former students, we have found that acknowledged analytical integrity produces Military Intelligence leaders who will own the products their shops produce. We have found that ownership yields inquiry into the nature of analytical integrity violation. It seems that Military Intelligence Officers who invest in their shops’ analysis and products may be more apt to dig into the integrity of their shop’s advisement and products.

The Nature of Analytical Integrity Violations

The need to produce invested intelligence leaders drives our pedagogical philosophy. We seek to lead students to a place where they investigate and inquire into the reasons behind analytical integrity violations. To this end, our instructional intent is to guide students from superficial doing to foundational being. We draw students from merely doing to being by coaxing them to first consider a leader’s competence, and then to strive toward a leader’s character.

We generally have competent leaders. Competence is not our problem. Leaders are competent. The Army promotes competent Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers. Top leaders have a history of success. Competence is not the problem. If competence is not the problem, we goad our students, then why do people violate analytical integrity?

We want to communicate that leader bias causes individuals to unintentionally violate, or influence others to violate, analytical integrity. We are successful if we can help students not only indict others for bias, but to seek awareness toward their own blind-spotted biases. We offer the students multiple types of bias and examples of those biases.⁸ It is interesting to see students begin to integrate the simple, somewhat silly *Pentagon Wars* clip's occurrences of biases, and then make the leap to recall personal instances of bias. It is also powerful at this point to experience those students' trending toward awareness, and begin to internalize ethical ramifications.

This sympathetic paralleling process between student and ethical condition affords a natural location to ease into the darker side of analytical integrity. To wit, certainly many analytical integrity violators and influencers of violation do so unintentionally. "Blind spot" biases shape perception and influence, but intentionality forms the darker side of analytical integrity. Character failure informs intentional wrong.

According to Tim Irwin's *Derailed*, authenticity, self-management, humility, and courage inform character.⁹ Leaders with these qualities inherently seem to have awareness of followers' needs, engendering subordinate loyalty while maintaining the big picture. The leader lacking in any one of these will fail oneself and those around oneself. We term Army leaders without these four traits toxic leaders. Leaders who intentionally influence others to politicize or otherwise subvert analysis or resulting products are toxic. They embody all that is disingenuous, are not self-aware, and use others for individual gain.¹⁰ Ultimately, inaccurate intelligence production or dissemination is the intelligence realm's danger. People intentionally violate analytical integrity because they lack character.

In addition to internal character failure, intelligence community professionals may also intentionally violate analytical integrity due to external pressure. An instance of succumbing to external pressure includes an individual who may bow to a commander's wishes to support a certain course of action. Furthermore, we operate in a time constrained environment. An individual may violate analytical integrity for the perceived sake of saving time. Moreover, FM 2-0 *Intelligence* describes Large Scale Combat Operations' brutal conditions that almost certainly will affect the intelligence community.¹¹ Whether pressure emanates from toxic commanders, perceived time saved, or LSCO conditions, the key to combat external pressure is to guard against cutting corners and ultimately fatalism.

At this point in the class, students often begin to express their perceptions of helplessness, indicated through their expressed fears and excuses. "We have to do what our commander says." "We don't have enough people." "Nobody cares." We walk them right into our question: "How can I cultivate analytical integrity at my level?"

Cultivating Analytical Integrity

We first challenge our officers to counter inadvertent analytical integrity violations, where we believe most occur. One must first be aware of one's own biases. Only through the fostered trust of brutal and humble self-awareness will another yield to me permission to identify their bias. Moreover, one must be a leader of character in order to stand in the face of temptation and weakness, guarded and empowered by the authenticity of self-management, humility and courage.

Intelligence officers are responsible for, and in a position to positively influence, others' behaviors and performance. For instance, we can encourage communication across all four IPB steps and related intelligence products. Furthermore, we can create a culture of openness where we permit all stakeholders

to challenge assessments, and have their assessments challenged. Analytically speaking, there is simply too much at stake for big “I’s” and little “you’s.”

Moreover, intelligence professionals can mitigate analytical integrity violations by conducting analysis in accordance with Intelligence Community Directive 203 *Analytical Standards*.¹² The Office of the Director of National Intelligence drafted and enacted Intelligence Community Directive 203 to establish analytical standards. Prior to this, there were no set standards on which analysts could rest. Intelligence Community Directive 203, *Analytical Standards*, mandates that analysis must include: Objectivity, Independent of Political Considerations, Timeliness, Based on All Available Sources of Intelligence, and Exhibits Proper Standards of Analytical Tradecraft.¹³ Analytical tradecraft dictates that these standards must produce and direct analysis that:

- Describes quality and reliability of sources
- Distinguishes between underlying intelligence and analysts’ assumptions and judgments
- Incorporates alternative analysis where appropriate
- Uses logical argumentation
- Exhibits consistency of analysis over time, or highlights changed and explains rationale
- Makes accurate judgments and assessments¹⁴

Intelligence Community Directive 203 yields implications for analysts and S2 shops. Prescriptively, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence requires all intelligence community members to conduct analysis in accordance with Intelligence Community Directive 203. However, and more importantly, this means Intelligence Community Directive 203 protects analysts and their leaders. The president directed the Director of National Intelligence to standardize analysis. This is the ethical analyst’s trump card against external coercion or internal sloth. Similar to the doctrinal definition of military expertise, Army analytical tradecraft is only successful when applied ethically.¹⁵

Intentional or inadvertent violations jeopardize mission achievement across the defense enterprise. Analytical integrity matters to other members of the Army, the Joint Force, and our partners. Tactical to strategic consequences of analytical integrity violations destroy our trust and interdependent efficacy. It is incumbent upon our team of teams to mutually support analytical integrity. Add to this that the Department of Defense expects organizational leaders to safeguard our analysts and support them when those analysts challenge assumptions. The Army postures organizational leaders within the Force such that they inform and influence within and without formations to foster, empower, and safeguard the analyst and the analysis. Mission accomplishment is at stake.

Practical Exercise

Practical exercises check knowledge and application. We expect our Military Intelligence Officers to demonstrate rigor through applying lessons learned in conjunction with doctrine. In the analytical integrity class, we split the class into squads, and assign two tasks.

Task 1: Per ATP 2-01.3 *Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield/Battlespace*, NOV14, identify and explain where and how within each step of IPB one might violate analytical integrity. There are four squads, and each squad directs their attention to one IPB step.

In case you do not know, the four IPB steps are:¹⁶

IPB Step 1—Define the Operational Environment

IPB Step 2—Describe Environmental Effects on Operations

IPB Step 3—Evaluate the Threat

IPB Step 4—Determine Threat Courses of Action

While answers have ranged, most fell into the following common domains:

IPB Step 1—Define the Operational Environment

- Individual bias anchored from a previous unit's experience
- Leaving out analytical integrity information that conflicts with an assessment
- Downplaying possible civilian presence to mask potential collateral damage
- Upselling collateral damage to justify a predetermined course of action

IPB Step 2—Describe Environmental Effects on Operations

- Downplaying effects of weather to complete an operation
- Modify Avenues of Approach in order to support a course of action
- Overemphasize enemy forces in a certain area in order to pursue a specific target

IPB Step 3—Evaluate the Threat

- Under/overestimate the threat
- Evaluate the threat to meet operational needs
- Cut corners on threat capabilities

IPB Step 4—Determine Threat Courses of Action

- Enemy courses of action will always be what you have experienced
- Mirroring—caving to pressure that enemy actions will be the same as U.S.
- Appeal to the masses and go along without evidence

Next, students complete practical exercise task two. Unlike task one, where each squad only completes a single IPB step, all squads complete task two in its entirety.

Task 2: FM 2-0, JUL18, para. 6-9ff, and fig. 6-1 identifies three intelligence analysis tasks (see below) that follow from IPB. Identify how one might violate analytical integrity within each task.

Three Tasks	See also:	<u>FM 2-0</u>	<u>ATP 2-01.3</u>
Warning Intelligence		para B-4	para 1-32ff
Situation Development		para B-28	para 1-42ff
Intel Support to Targeting		para B-57	para 1-27ff

Within the intelligence analysis tasks' construct, answers generally included the following:

Warning Intelligence—

- Relying on a single source of intelligence to confirm one's bias when other sources may disprove your analysis
- Shaping the threat to meet U.S. Forces' needs
- Favor preconceived bias of enemy location or capability over subordinate element's reports
- Information/ sources not properly vetted

Situation Development—

- Complacency or oversimplifying a task or situation
- Modifying threat intent/effectiveness and civil considerations
- Neglecting area of interest/area of operations aspects
- Framing intelligence to fit a maneuver course of action
- Making assessments match the S3's assessment

Intel Support to Targeting—

- D3A—Desired effect was to suppress, but the assessment on the actual outcome was not completed
- Collection bias to capabilities; allowing one piece of intelligence drive collection
- Prioritizing easy targets over higher impact but more difficult targets
- Create high value target list based off commander's high payoff target list without properly communicating with fires, and without conducting target value analysis

Awareness and thinking through situations and implications is the purpose of this practical exercise. We operate on the philosophy that if leaders think through analytical integrity implications in the institutional environment, then they will be better equipped in the operational domain to emulate analytical integrity and with character deter or engage violations.

Conclusion

The fact is that many of our Military Intelligence Captains Career Course students have never heard of analytical integrity. For those officers who have at least heard of analytical integrity, many perceive it to be a trivial subject at best, or at worst, an unnecessary ethical constraint to consider. For this reason, the U.S. Army Intelligence Center of Excellence trains analytical integrity awareness at the Military Intelligence Captains Career Course. Analytical integrity was significant for WWII in the Ardennes, and influenced the 2003 invasion of Iraq. It is still significant for tactical to national level intelligence. Analytical integrity violations can occur inadvertently from one's biases. Individuals can also intentionally violate analytical integrity, or influence others to do so. Yet character, openness, and intelligence communitywide analytical standards empower our Military Intelligence officers and their subordinates to set the conditions for an ethical climate.

End Notes

- 1 Merriam-Webster.com. <https://www.merriam-webster.com> (accessed December 03, 2018).
- 2 *Pentagon Wars*. Directed by Richard Benjamin. New York City: Home Box Office, 1998. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=suP_Z_R-Fx4 (accessed December 03, 2018).
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction, *Report to the President of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2005), 1.
- 6 Edwin Mora, “400 Islamic State Intel Analysts: ‘Analytical Integrity’ of Our Work Is Flawed.” *breitbart.com*. February 26, 2016. <https://www.breitbart.com/politics/2016/02/26/400-intel-analysts-at-centcom-warn-analytic-integrity-of-their-work-is-flawed> (accessed December 03, 2018).
- 7 Ibid, “CENTCOM Altered Intel to Make Obama’s War Against Islamic State Look Better.” *breitbart.com*. August 11, 2016. <https://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2016/08/11house-task-force-confirms-u-s-military-manipulated-intel-make-seem-obama-winning-islamic-state> (accessed december 03, 2018).
- 8 April Kearney, *Think Critically and Creatively*. Lesson Plan for Mid-Grade Learning Continuum for 2016 Common Core Lesson L130. Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College School of Advanced Leadership and Tactics, 17.
- 9 Tim Irwin, *Derailed*. New York: Harper Collins Publishing, 2012, 34.
- 10 Denise F. Williams. *Toxic Leadership in the US Army*, U.S. Army War College Strategy Research Project. Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College. March 18, 2005, 1.
- 11 FM 2-0 *Intelligence*, 06 July 2018, para. 6-4.
- 12 Office of the Director of National Intelligence, *Analytic Standards*, Intelligence Community Directive 203, January 02, 2015.
- 13 Von H. Pigg, “Common Analytic Standards: Intelligence Community Directive # 203 and U.S. Marine Corps Intelligence.” *Small Wars Journal*, 2009, 2-3.
- 14 Ibid, 4-8.
- 15 ADRP 1 *The Army Profession*, 14 June 2015, 1-4. Note: The definition of military expertise is the ethical application of land power.
- 16 ATP 2-01.3 *Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield*, 10 November 2014, 1-2—1-4.