SERVICE LIFE AND BEYOND – INSTITUTION OR CULTURE?

BEVERLY P BERGMAN, HOWARD J BURDETT AND NEIL GREENBERG

In the UK, armed services personnel are perceived to become institutionalised during service, with negative connotations, especially in the process of transition to veteran status. Beverly P Bergman, Howard J Burdett and Neil Greenberg argue that institutionalisation is an inappropriate model, and that becoming a member of the armed forces is better represented by a model of culture shock, with reverse culture shock being experienced upon leaving. The adoption of this model would be useful both in preparing UK service personnel for civilian life and in supporting them after transition, and may help to predict vulnerability.

Around 22,000 people leave the UK regular armed forces annually. The majority cope well with the change, but a substantial minority experience difficulty in transitioning from military to civilian life; these individuals are at increased risk of developing mental-health problems. Predicting those who are at risk of a difficult transition would help with the provision of targeted support.

The problems that may result from reintegration into civilian life following military service have been recognised since at least the eighteenth century and continue to give rise to concern. A difficult transition is not specific to those who have experienced combat, and indeed may disproportionately affect those who have seen the shortest service. Both the British and US armed forces have put in place initiatives which aim to assist the new veteran to reintegrate, and the commissioning by the UK government in September 2012 of the Veterans’ Transition Review demonstrated a strong commitment to address this issue. In the UK, an employment support programme is provided to those who have completed four or more years of service, whilst those who have completed six or more years, or are medically discharged, are entitled to a full ‘resettlement’ programme aimed at retraining for, and gaining, employment in the civilian sector. Those who leave before completing the minimum term of engagement are known as Early Service Leavers and have been shown to be at increased risk of mental health problems. More than two-thirds of Early Service Leavers have not completed initial training. Early leavers are not currently eligible for resettlement programmes, but are only entitled to a minimum of a verbal briefing and a resettlement interview with signposting to civilian employment support. Concern that they may be disadvantaged has led to the piloting of the Future Horizons project which, like the full resettlement package, is labour-market oriented. In a welcome development, however, the recently published independent Veterans’ Transition Review has recommended that the full resettlement package be made available to all service leavers who have completed initial training, with responsibility for those who do not complete initial training to be handed to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

Whilst the possible adverse effects of transition to civilian life – including loss of status, financial difficulties and family readjustment – are now recognised, an understanding of the psychosocial mechanisms underpinning the process of transition has proved elusive. Some authors consider the effects of combat, and in particular the recognition and management of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), to be especially relevant to the process of transition. However, in reality the issues involved in transition are more complex, and many veterans who have never experienced combat have nonetheless faced difficulties when moving back into a civilian environment. A study published in 2003 of transitioned UK veterans who had served during the 1990–91 Gulf War and in Bosnia from 1992 to 1997, and had been identified as being ‘at risk’ due to unemployment or symptoms of poor mental health, identified the lack of advice on social aspects of resettlement to be the main source of dissatisfaction with the existing resettlement process.

A comprehensive understanding of the issues involved in transition is essential to the provision of appropriate support to personnel leaving the armed forces; an inappropriate model will marginalise those whose needs are not recognised and hinder the identification and adoption of optimum management strategies. The aim of this article is to examine a widely used model of transition, that of ‘institutionalisation’
as a result of military service, and to propose the wider adoption of an alternative, less stigmatising model – that of reverse culture shock.

**Institutionalisation**

The perception that soldiers become ‘institutionalised’ during service as a result of living and working within a protected environment – in which their basic needs in terms of food, accommodation, clothing, welfare and administrative support are provided – has gained currency among the UK armed forces and public. There is a widespread belief that this ‘institutionalisation’ hinders their reintegration into the civilian world as veterans. In a study of over 9,000 serving personnel and 508 employers conducted in late 2011 and early 2012, 25 per cent of the serving personnel considered that civilian employers would perceive them as institutionalised, and 10 per cent of the employers surveyed felt that the phrase ‘aggressive, institutionalised or likely to have problems’ best described those leaving the armed forces after several years’ service. Of the 4 per cent of employers who said that they would view an application from someone who had spent time in the armed forces less favourably, over half gave institutionalisation or lack of adaptability as the reason. 14

However, the origins of the concept of ‘institutionalisation’ suggest that it is not a good model for either the social or societal effects of military service. 15 The term arose in the 1950s, when the British psychiatrist Denis Martin noted its use in clinical records compiled by nursing staff in long-stay, in-patient psychiatric facilities. 16 It was originally used to describe a patient who had ceased to rebel against incarceration in a mental hospital and had passively accepted his lot, although the scope of the word has obviously broadened in recent years. Academic references to ‘institutionalisation’ of military personnel or veterans are rare and are largely restricted to a discussion of the impact of service on those already disadvantaged by institutionalisation or those who are serving under an authoritarian political regime. 17 In one of the few studies which have examined the societal concept of ‘institutionalisation’ in veterans, Dr Hugh Milroy, a former RAF wing commander and now CEO of British charity Veterans Aid, studied forty homeless veterans for his 2001 PhD thesis at the University of East Anglia and concluded that military service did not preclude normal societal functioning. 18 A 2009 study by the University of Leicester Centre for Labour Market Studies noted that ‘Notions of problematic institutionalisation for those who serve in the armed forces seem more likely in those who serve in the military for short periods’. 19 This was supported by a study of transition and resettlement of 5,000 UK service leavers by the National Audit Office, published in 2007, which also found that younger, junior service leavers reported the most difficult transitions. Civilian social life and family relationships were perceived as the most difficult issues. 20 The same conclusion was reached in Lord Ashcroft’s 2014 Veterans’ Transition Review. 21 These consistent observations expose a critical flaw in the use of the terminology; theoretically, institutionalisation should worsen, not ameliorate, with longer exposure to the institutionalising environment. 22

**Culture Shock**

The US armed forces recognise culture shock as a factor in transition, 23 but the concept is still a novel one to their UK
counterparts. This article proposes a model of culture shock on becoming a member of the armed forces, followed by reverse culture shock on returning to civilian life, and postulates that this presents a better fit than the model of institutionalisation.

Geert Hofstede defined culture as ‘the collective mental programming which separates members of one group from the other’.

The concept of culture shock, which has been defined as ‘a state of distress or disorientation brought about by sudden immersion in or subjection to an unfamiliar culture’, was described by anthropologist Kalervo Öberg in 1960 in the context of overseas travellers. Although later studies focused on groups such as international students, overseas aid workers, missionaries, and diplomats and their families, they provide a model for other situations. The concept has been extended to encompass any life-change which involves adjustment to an unfamiliar culture including job change and new relationships, although the term ‘transition shock’ has been used recently to describe this wider interpretation.

Psychologist Paul Pedersen described how psychological discomfort arises from the need to fit into an unfamiliar social situation where prior learned responses no longer apply; anxiety results from not knowing what to do in a new culture. Reactions may range from mild discomfort to profound disorientation. Culture shock, mostly, represents a normal state of adjustment; it is not pathological, and is probably universally experienced. Indeed, it has been described as happening ‘inside each individual who encounters unfamiliar and unexpected circumstances’. It is a learning and developmental process which may take place simultaneously at different levels if the new environment is complex. The process is not smooth, but is characterised by a series of crises, each one of which generates a new learning experience. Responses may be emotional, psychological, behavioural, cognitive or physiological – the latter commonly in response to exposure to changed levels of physical activity, climate or health threats, or to extreme stress.

The armed forces have a distinct culture, founded on tradition, that is clearly different from that of civilian society. Wearing uniform, saluting, military discipline, military ranks, strictly hierarchical management structures, use of acronyms and technical terminology, learning to use a weapon and a communal lifestyle are all alien to new soldiers, even to those recruits who come from military families. The armed forces’ culture – encompassing courage, determination, loyalty, integrity and commitment to duty – is embodied in British defence doctrine and the single-service principles derived from it, and the acceptance of those cultural values is central to the transition from civilian to military life. For many recruits, the timing of entry to the armed forces also coincides with the culture changes inherent in emerging from adolescence into early adulthood.

Pedersen described five stages of culture shock: honeymoon; disintegration; reintegration; autonomy; and interdependence. Based on the five-stage model described by Peter Adler in 1975, a number of other models exist but all have broad similarities. This article presents Pedersen’s stages from both the original viewpoint and an interpreted military perspective.

**Stage One: Honeymoon**

The first phase of adjustment to a new culture is one of anticipation, excitement and enthusiasm. The new culture may represent the realisation of a long sought-after ambition – a short-term objective might be to go on an exotic holiday, or a longer-term one might be joining the armed forces; both may be associated with idealised imagery. Adler described the excitement and euphoria of new experience, with an emphasis on similarities rather than differences. Differences are perceptually deselected since the individual has few psychological mechanisms for dealing with radically new stimuli. Although this phase is relatively brief, for the short-term traveller it may be the only experience they have of culture shock as their journey comes to an end and there is a return to the familiar home environment. For the new military recruit, who may have enjoyed the challenge of initial military selection, the realities of military life are about to begin with the commencement of recruit training.

**Stage Two: Disintegration**

Adler described the second stage of adjustment as representing the frank realisation of the differences between the new culture and the familiar. Individuals may feel disorientated or overwhelmed as they realise that they are dislocated from their ‘comfort zone’. There may be a sense of loss of status, especially in those who were well adjusted to their former environment or who formerly enjoyed high social or occupational status and who have moved into an entirely different role. The long-stay traveller begins to see the realities of poor hygiene, corruption or crime, which are part of their new environment; they must learn to co-exist with this (adapted from Lesser and Peter). The military equivalent of this stage is the realisation by the recruit that they are being stretched both physically and mentally. However motivated and well-prepared they are, military training is challenging and unfamiliar. In the communal environment of the training unit, there is no hiding place. The recruit is the ‘naive newcomer’; member of a squad, who is no longer the school prefect or the gang leader. Every failure to conform to the expected standard is noticed and corrected, or even punished. For the well-motivated, these episodes may be viewed pragmatically as learning experiences but for the less-motivated, there may be bewilderment, alienation, withdrawal and feelings of depression. The reality of training may differ markedly from the recruit’s expectations. A sense of having made a mistake in choosing military service is common.

**Stage Three: Reintegration**

In the third stage, the individual begins to adjust to his or her new cultural setting, although Adler took a more negative view than Pedersen and described a high level of anger and resentment against the new culture during this phase. Nonetheless, new skills and coping strategies have been learned and the environment begins to feel less alien. Friendships and group cohesion have been established, and threats have been identified together.
with strategies for managing them. In the expatriate model, the traveller begins to fit into life in the new country; in military terms, this stage corresponds to the recuit beginning to ‘feel like a soldier’, whilst at the same time the sense of ‘self’ is beginning to be subordinate to the demands of the new culture. The values and standards which form the core of British defence doctrine, have been taught and form the basis of the psychological contract that binds the newcomer to the organisation he or she has joined. Some authors have described this process as indoctrination; however, the word has derogatory connotations as discussed in general terms by Richard Gatchel, who preferred the term ‘enculturation’. Personality changes also begin to emerge during this period. The changes that have taken place may be highlighted to the recruit during the first weekend’s leave with civilian friends (normally several weeks after the commencement of recruit training), when short hair, neat clothes, and the knowledge that drunkenness and recreational drug use are proscribed emphasise the differences and may create barriers to former lifestyles.

Stage Four: Autonomy

Pedersen’s fourth stage represents one of balanced adjustment. Whilst the first three stages are relevant to recruit training and the early years of service, the fourth and fifth stages of the model are applicable only to the longer-serving individual.

There is a clear sense of ‘self’ in harmony with the new culture when, for example, the long-term traveller feels at home in their adopted country of residence. Psychologist Teresa LaFromboise and her colleagues described a behavioural model of cultural competence encompassing a strong personal identity, knowledge of the beliefs and values of the culture, sensitivity to the affective processes of the culture, communication in the language of the cultural group, negotiating the institutional structures of the group, behaving in a way which is sanctioned by the group and maintaining active social relations with the group. This is an apt model for the successful, well-adapted, long-serving member of the armed forces, and the military equivalent is establishment in a full military career, when the military way of life has become what the individual ‘is’, not what he ‘does’. At this stage though, the career soldier may begin to feel frustration with the civilian world, which may be perceived to be inept and disorganised in contrast with the highly regulated military environment.

Stage Five: Reciprocal Interdependence

The final phase represents mature biculturalism, also known as the alternation model, whereby an individual is able to know and understand two different cultures, and is able to switch between them without compromising their cultural identity. Such individuals are better able to withstand the stresses associated with culture change. In the expatriate model, the long-stay sojourner will be equally at ease in his or her adopted country or back home in the parent country. In the military model, the soldier is able to move seamlessly and bidirectionally between the civilian world and the military. This level of cultural adjustment may be difficult to achieve in a military context, and perhaps it is only seen in senior serving personnel who have had the opportunity to live out in the civilian world, whose job has involved civilian contact (for example, in an educational setting through undertaking higher education) or who have strong civilian contacts through membership of societies or religious groups external to the military.

Re-entry or Reverse Culture Shock

Exposure to, and adjustment to, a new culture can have profound implications for the way in which an individual interacts when they eventually return to the parent culture, especially for a unidirectional move such as leaving the armed forces. In a study focused on students and business travellers, Nan Sussman highlighted the unexpectedness of re-entry problems, as few people would anticipate any difficulties on return to an environment with which they expect to be familiar, but after a prolonged period of absence and adjustment to a new culture, both the individual’s frame of reference and the environment he or she left have changed.

There is also a mismatch between how the returnee and those left behind perceive each other. In a 2004 study, Bethany Mooradian interpreted the unexpected nature of reverse culture shock as an example of expectation violation theory. In another example, Professor Mitchell Hammer and his colleagues examined risk factors for re-entry difficulties in international managers and their families and found that only expectation of re-entry satisfaction or difficulty was relevant; neither age, prior experience of the second culture, length of stay nor degree of social interaction with the second culture was a predictor of re-entry difficulty. In a military setting, sociologists Robert Faulkner and Douglas McGaw conducted a study on Vietnam veterans in the 1970s, describing inadequate preparation for homecoming from Vietnam and leaving the military. They noted the contrast between the ‘rites of passage into service’ and ‘programming for socialization at home’ — findings which mirrored those of Professor of Military Sociology Christopher Dandeker and his colleagues, whose 2003 study identified the lack of preparation for UK veterans for the social aspects of transition.

Although formally recognised only in the latter half of the twentieth century, the phenomenon now termed ‘re-entry shock’ or ‘reverse culture shock’ has long been acknowledged, particularly in connection with transition to veteran status. Many men from less privileged backgrounds who served as officers during the First World War experienced difficulty in reintegrating into civilian society at the end of the conflict, a phenomenon which was to become known as the ‘ex-officer problem’. Writing towards the end of the Second World War, the philosopher and sociologist Alfred Schutz attempted to analyse the issues associated with homecoming and noted that during the period of service, both the soldier and his ‘home’ will have changed irreversibly. Any
aspiration to revert to the status quo ante is doomed to fail.\textsuperscript{[51]} This commonly felt sense of discomfort and disorientation on returning to what should be a familiar environment was perhaps most aptly described in literary form by Thomas Wolfe, who highlighted this duality of change in his novel *You Can’t Go Home Again* when he wrote ‘You can’t go back home to your family, back home to your childhood’.\textsuperscript{[52]} And, in the eighth century BC, Homer wrote:

> in the land of his fathers. Not that he knew his whereabouts. Partly he had been absent for so long ... He rose to his feet and stood staring at what was his own land, then sighed ... Alas, and now where on earth am I? Shall I be spurned and savaged by the people of this place, or find them pious, hospitable creatures?\textsuperscript{[53]}

Although in 1981 psychologist Nancy Adler noted a lack of literature on reverse culture shock,\textsuperscript{[54]} just five years later Sussman reported an increasing body of research.\textsuperscript{[55]} In a wide-ranging review of the theoretical literature, published in 2000, psychologist Kevin Gaw noted that no returnee is exempt from reverse culture shock and observed that reported symptoms included anxiety, depression, interpersonal difficulties, anger, hostility and helplessness.\textsuperscript{[56]} There is wide variation in the level to which individuals experience such problems. Furthermore, the impact of reverse culture shock is not limited to the returnee; the family and friends to whom they return may also need to adjust to a changed individual. It is, however, reassuring that contemporary research has shown that the majority of service personnel do not experience any lasting psychological difficulties on returning home,\textsuperscript{[57]} consistent with a study of international students in the US which found that few experienced severe problems on returning home.\textsuperscript{[58]}

The US armed forces recognise the concept of reverse culture shock, where programmes are in place in order to explicitly manage these issues in relation to those who are returning home after combat,\textsuperscript{[59]} or transitioning after injury.\textsuperscript{[60]} Reverse culture shock in peacekeeping soldiers transitioning to civilian life is also explicitly managed in the Canadian armed forces, for example.\textsuperscript{[61]} Based on Canadian military guidance, Jennifer Anderson defined reverse culture shock as:

> a term that is typically used to describe the unanticipated adjustment difficulties that many military people experience when returning to civilian life. People attempting to move beyond their military experiences can find themselves feeling disoriented and confused, neglected or frustrated, often unemployed, or under employed and generally struggling in their careers as well as personal relationships.

Adler found that skills acquired as a result of the new cultural experience could paradoxically hinder readjustment by creating a ‘xenophobic’ barrier with colleagues in the home setting which may have particular relevance for deployed reserve personnel returning to their former employment with new or enhanced skill sets.\textsuperscript{[62]} Furthermore, the strong social resilience collectively developed by military personnel as they progress through training and service together is no longer available for support as the individual readjusts to life outside the military,\textsuperscript{[63]} leaving him or her to rely on personal resilience, which is likely to be lowest in those who are most vulnerable.\textsuperscript{[64]}

It has been suggested that reverse culture shock follows a staged process, similar to that seen in culture shock. John Hogan proposed a four-stage model of re-entry comprising: naiveté or denial; disillusionment or pessimism; perspective; and commitment or reorganisation. In this process, the expectation that re-entry will be easy (naiveté) gives way to a realisation that return is more problematic than was expected (disillusionment). A sense of perspective returns as the individual begins to make sense of his or her situation, before settling down, in the fourth stage, to more realistic goals and expectations. However, an unsuccessful transition may progress to alienation and rejection.\textsuperscript{[65]} Parallels in successful and unsuccessful military transition can be drawn readily.

### Culture Shock and Transition

The process of cultural adaptation has been mapped to a U-shaped curve encompassing a lowering of mood during the honeymoon and disintegration phases, followed by improvement of mood during the reintegration phase and, ultimately, a return to equilibrium as the stage of autonomy is reached. The U-shaped curve model – attributed to Lysgaard but modified by Michael Zapf\textsuperscript{[66]} – reflects the initial reduction in wellbeing followed by recovery.\textsuperscript{[67]} Ruth Jolly identified a similar arc when she interviewed more than sixty transitioning individuals of all ranks and services in the mid-1990s. She described a three-stage process of change, comprising acknowledgement of the need for and desirability of change, disengagement from the previous lifestyle, and finally resocialisation.\textsuperscript{[68]}

An unsuccessful transition may progress to alienation and rejection

However, John Guillaum and Joanne Guillaum proposed that the shape of the curve is better described as a letter W or a double-U, in order to encompass the total experience of adjusting to a different cultural environment and then, eventually, returning to the parent culture. Their research was based on studies of US academic staff and students in receipt of grants to work and study overseas, which found that the process of re-acculturation on return to the US was problematic, but only minimally so for senior academic staff (professors and lecturers). Their research suggested that the prior social experience of these more senior returnees enabled them to make the transition back to their familiar environments relatively easily. However, students were much more likely to feel ‘lost’ on returning to the US, and the authors found that this was particularly likely amongst those who, on initial relocation, felt that they ‘had not yet “found themselves” in their own culture’. They had enthusiastically embraced the culture and stability offered by the new environment and felt its loss keenly on
return to what should have been their ‘home’ environment.79

Kate Berardo, meanwhile, rejected both the U and the W models, arguing that although they were widely used in training for readjustment, the supporting evidence base was insufficient; that the limitations of the model were often overlooked; and that it had become distorted from the original concept over time. She proposed an alternative model on which to base training and preparation, comprising a continuum of ‘what’, ‘why’, ‘how’ and ‘what now’.80

Nonetheless, the W model remains widely used, and may have utility in mapping and understanding the process of entering the armed forces on recruitment and ultimately returning to civilian life on transition to veteran status. Recruit training and the early months spent as a trained soldier encompass the stages of culture shock as the individual adapts to military service, eventually reaching ‘a steady state’ at Stage 3 (reintegration) for a private soldier or junior non-commissioned officer (NCO), or equivalent; lesser peaks and troughs of culture shock will follow with deployments, periods of adventurous training and other challenges. Many will leave and return to civilian life at this stage, having completed their period of engagement, entering the reverse culture shock pattern of readaptation to civilian life; those who stay on will generally reach a higher rank (senior NCO, warrant officer or commissioned officer) and progress to the more mature cultural adaption of Stage 4 (autonomy) or even Stage 5 (reciprocal interdependence). The more mature the level of adaptation, the easier the process of readjustment is likely to be, especially if Stage 5 is achieved.

Indeed, research has shown that the Early Service Leaver – the individual who leaves before completing basic training or before completion of the minimum engagement (which varies from three to four-and-a-half years, depending on the branch of the armed forces and the designated period of service) – is especially at risk of developing mental-health problems. Those in this category are likely to leave prematurely because they are unable to adjust to the demands of military training, because they have failed to achieve the required standard, because they have developed health problems (including those of mental health) that are incompatible with continued service, or because they have been discharged for disciplinary reasons.81 They will be unlikely to look back positively on their short military career; by contrast, satisfaction with the previous military career was a key factor in successful transition identified by Jolly.82

The Early Service Leaver is especially at risk of developing mental-health problems

Furthermore, if mapped to a culture shock model, these veterans’ discharge comes before they have completed the process of cultural adjustment; they are still in the negative phase of the first U-shaped curve on entry to service, and will not yet have returned to the baseline of a sense of normality. Thus they will commence the re-entry phase back to the civilian world, and the right-hand loop of the W, at a disadvantage. Already culturally disoriented from commencing the process of becoming a soldier, they now have to face returning to a civilian world which already regards them as ‘different’. Self-perceptions and the way in which they are received by family and their former peers are also likely to be influenced by their failure. If young and inexperienced on enlistment, or from a disadvantaged background, they may equate to Gullahorn and Gullahorn’s students who ‘had not yet “found themselves” in their own culture’, and they are likely to find the process of returning to civilian life especially challenging. It may be postulated that they will experience a deeper trough on re-entry as a consequence of entering this phase at a low ebb, without having first returned to stability. Anne Braidwood’s 2009 study of Early Service Leavers confirms that this group is particularly vulnerable,83 as recognised by the Ministry of Defence,84 whilst at the other end of the spectrum, McDermott’s 2009 study of NCOs and warrant officers who had completed twenty-two years of service found that most did well on returning to their home environments.85

It is reassuring to note that the recently published Transition Mapping Study identifies cultural differences between the services and the civilian world as an important factor in the transition process, although the perpetuation of stereotypical examples early in the report (‘In terms of effective transition, one of the biggest differences is that the Armed Forces have drinking cultures and increasingly the world of civilian work does not’) detracts from the more fundamental cultural differences of team bonding, discipline and military ethos, correctly identified in later chapters of the report, which distinguish between the service member and the civilian.86

The adoption of a culture-shock model would facilitate better understanding

The adoption of a culture-shock model would facilitate better understanding of the important psychological processes associated with becoming a member of the armed forces – and likewise, reverse culture shock provides a more appropriate model for understanding the transition to veteran status. Unlike institutionalisation, cultural adaptation improves with increasing length of exposure. By contrast, reverse culture shock is most likely to impact adversely on recruits who are younger and less experienced, which is consistent with the effect observed in Early Service Leavers who are known to have suffered considerable childhood adversity.82 An understanding of this mechanism will aid the development of appropriate strategies to assist leavers to cope with transition and further reduce the numbers who experience adverse outcomes, and may help in predicting vulnerability.

Beverly Berdman is a doctoral researcher at the Institute of Health and Wellbeing, University of Glasgow. A
consultant public health physician, she is a retired Army Colonel and former professor of preventative medicine at the Army Health Unit, Camberley. Her PhD study is on the long-term health of Scottish military veterans.

Howard Burdett is a post-doctoral researcher based at the King’s Centre for Military Health Research, King’s College London. He has previously worked at the Surgeon General’s Department of the Ministry of Defence. His PhD thesis explored the epidemiology of veterans’ transition and the resettlement process, and he currently works on the mental wellbeing of military personnel and their families.

Neil Greenberg is an academic psychiatrist and Professor of Defence Mental Health, based at King’s College London, and is a consultant occupational and forensic psychiatrist. He served in the British armed forces for more than twenty-three years, earning the coveted Royal Marines’ Green Beret, and has deployed, as a psychiatrist and researcher, to a number of hostile environments including Afghanistan and Iraq. He has been the Secretary of the European Society for Traumatic Stress Studies and is the President-Elect of the UK Psychological Trauma Society and the Royal College of Psychiatrists’ Lead for Military and Veterans Health.

Notes

3. The terms ‘military’, ‘soldier’ and the male or female pronoun are used generically to refer to members of all three services and to both genders, except where otherwise dictated by the context. See Amy Iversen et al., ‘What Happens to British Veterans When They Leave the Armed Forces?’, European Journal of Public Health (Vol. 15, No. 2, April 2005), pp. 175–84.
12. Buckman et al., ‘Early Service Leavers’.
15. In this article, the term ‘social’ is used to refer to individual interactions and ‘societal’ is used to refer to the way in which wider society perceives the armed forces and its members (and vice versa).

21 Lord Ashcroft, ‘Veterans’ Transition Review’.

22 Denis Martin’s discussion of institutionalisation in The Lancet, under the heading ‘In the Mental Hospital’, describes how patients ‘settle down’ into the hospital routine, gradually becoming co-operative and submissive as they become ‘well institutionalised’. It is easy to appreciate how this theoretical model came to be applied to the new soldier, learning to accept military discipline and authority. See Denis V Martin, ‘Institutionalisation’, The Lancet (1955), pp. 1188–90.


25 As defined in the Oxford English Dictionary, 3rd ed.


29 Williamson Murray, ‘Does Military Culture Matter?’, Orbis (Vol. 43, No. 1, 1999), pp. 27–42.


35 Adler, ‘The Transitional Experience’.

36 Ibid.

37 Hogan and Astone, ‘The Transition to Adulthood.’


41 Adler, ‘The Transitional Experience’.


46 Ministry of Defence, ‘British Defence Doctrine’.

47 Thomas and Anderson, ‘Changes in Newcomers’ Psychological Contracts during Organizational Socialization’.

48 Arkin and Dobrofsky, ‘Military Socialization and Masculinity’.


52 Dandeker et al., ‘Improving the Delivery of Cross Departmental Support and Services for Veterans’.

53 LaFromboise et al., ‘Psychological Impact of Biculturalism’.

54 Nan M Sussman, ‘Re-Entry Research and Training: Methods and Implications’, International Journal of Intercultural


58 Dandeker et al., ‘Improving the Delivery of Cross Departmental Support and Services for Veterans’.

59 Sussman, ‘Re-Entry Research and Training’.


64 Sussman, ‘Re-Entry Research and Training’.


72 See Adler, ‘Re-Entry’. There is anecdotal evidence that the enhanced skill sets with which reservists return to the workplace following deployment have, in some cases, hindered reintegration by creating resentment among former colleagues, especially when the skills and experience acquired have led to accelerated promotion (David McArthur, personal communication, cited with permission).


81 Buckman et al., ‘Early Service Leavers’.

82 Jolly, *Changing Step*.


84 Ministry of Defence, ‘Early Service Leavers’.

85 McDermott, ‘Struggling on Civvy Street?’.

86 Forces in Mind Trust, ‘The Transition Mapping Study’.

92 Buckman et al., ‘Early Service Leavers’.

© RUSI JOURNAL OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2014