Spy Culture and the Making of the Modern Intelligence Agency: From Richard Hannay to James Bond to Drone Warfare

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(English Language and Literature)
in the University of Michigan
2018

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to all my students, from those in Jacksonville, Florida to those in Port-au-Prince, Haiti and Ann Arbor, Michigan. It is also dedicated to the friends and mentors who have been with me over the seven years of my graduate career. Especially to Charity and Charisse.

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ABSTRACT

Despite the sometimes fantastic nature of spy fiction, the relation between espionage practice and its cultural reproductions is not as distinct as intelligence agencies might wish. My dissertation breaks from traditional literary analyses of the genre by interrogating *how* authors, policy makers, and the general public talk about spycraft has influenced *what* that spycraft actually entails. Spy fiction and intelligence work are connected in a web of incentivization, influence, and reference, and this connection is not merely uni-directional. This dissertation examines critical moments of this cross-connection, beginning in the early 20th century with the formation of MI6 in relation to William Le Queux's invasion literature and continuing through today's issues and imaginings of the intelligence community: specifically, torture, drone warfare, and domestic surveillance. Throughout, I draw attention to how shifts in masculinity facilitated by cultural representations, especially James Bond, have affected intelligence work. I also contextualize the role of the "Other" within spy fiction. As a part of this analysis of the Other, I trace the lingering Orientalism that has adhered within spy fiction and spy agencies since the late 19th Century. The alternating give-and-take of intelligence work and its fictionalized representations, or, as I term it, the cultural discourse of espionage, is ripe for exploration and analysis at the present moment. This combined literary, cultural, and historical approach reveals spy fiction as a site to explore broader conceptions of the critic's role in public discourse.

Chapter 1 Introduction: Espionage as the Loss of Agency

Here are two spy stories. One: In order to assassinate one of the world's most wanted "terrorists"—Ilich Ramirez Sanchez, aka "Carlos the Jackal"—the CIA created a false identity for an operative, brainwashed him into becoming a killer, and asked him to engage in violent political action of his own. After drawing Carlos' attention and being recruited into the Jackal's organization, the CIA hoped the operative's training and mental conditioning would take over, ostensibly preparing him to kill the Jackal. In actual practice, his mission ended in failure when the agent's conscience got the better of him. Two: In order to assassinate one of the world's most wanted "terrorists"—PLO leader Yassar Arafat—the Israeli Mossad created a false identity for an operative, brainwashed him into becoming a killer, and asked him to engage in violent political action of his own. After drawing Arafat's attention and being recruited into his organization, the Mossad hoped their operative's training and mental conditioning would take over, ostensibly preparing him to kill Arafat. In actual practice, his mission ended in failure when the agent's conscience got the better of him. These stories are almost parallel in their structures, but the first story is the plot of 1980's *The Bourne Identity,* while the second story is of an actual operation carried out twelve-years earlier, in 1968, by the Mossad. The Mossad did not base their plan on the yet-to-be-written Bourne novel; how preposterous to think that one of the world's leading intelligence agencies would design an operation based on a book. They based it on a film. According to historian Ronen Bergman, Mossad commander Binyamin Shalit had seen the 1962 film *The Manchurian Candidate* and felt that it made a good model for turning unwitting civilians into trained assassins (Bergman 118). The Bourne novel calls to mind the Arafat

attempted assassination, which was an idea that stemmed from *The Manchurian Candidate.* What the imbricated nature of these examples points to is the entanglement of the reality and the fictions of espionage.

Here are a few more examples: The story of a high-level Communist traitor in MI6 revealed by his former best friend is the true story of Kim Philby and Nicholas Elliot, but also the fictional story of Bill Haydon and George Smiley in *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*. Also, two secret agents have actually peeled off a wetsuit to reveal a tuxedo—James Bond in *Goldfinger,* Dutch agent Pete Tazelaar during WWII. When an MI6 source makes up a doomsday weapon to improve the life of his family, does one think of Wormold in *Our Man in Havana* or Source Curveball in the run-up to the Iraq War? Was the CIA plan to assassinate Fidel Castro via poisoned wet suit and exploding cigars a real CIA plan, or did it happen in a spy spoof from the 60s? (It was real.) Despite the revelations that all our digital communications are being scanned by NSA algorithms, the general public still has very little direct experience with espionage as a real profession. We primarily experience it as a cultural representation of itself, through the pages and screens of spy fiction. Evidence like Binyamin Shalit's *Manchurian Candidate*-inspired assassination plan indicates that this out-sized reliance on cultural representation can extend to members of the intelligence world itself. Combined with the secrecy and lack of public accountability within spy work, the temptation to enact fantasies into reality has manifested itself in some incredibly outlandish plans.

But what if these fantasies began to shift from the absurd and cartoonish, towards fantasies that devalue the human components of intelligence work—both the human agents that make up the intelligence agency and the common humanity those agents share with the spied-upon? Fantasies in which incentives for efficiency in intelligence work stack one on top of the other,

until they form an obscure bureaucracy? Or fantasies for big, splashy, quick results that can end up incentivizing more and more spectacular violence? Fantasy enters into the world of action as ideology. Examining how these fantasies form, who holds them, and how they become codified into policy can give us insight into how the institution of intelligence relates to the cultural idea of intelligence. In fact, the two are not separate nor are they separately analyzable. Espionage is a discursive entity, one that operates across multiple realms of influence simultaneously. This dissertation tracks that influence in fiction, in policy, in public conversation, and in the personal histories of quite a few individuals—intelligence agents, spy fiction authors, and intelligence agents who became spy fiction authors—who have shaped how the public thinks of spy work. My aim is to present, if not exactly a cultural history of espionage, then a history of espionage as a cultural force.

Methodology; or, Why Study Spy Fiction?

Spies are, in intelligence historian Phillip Knightley's words, the "second oldest profession," so it's no surprise that they have been a feature of Western literature since the Old Testament, when Joshua sends two spies into Jericho in the Book of Deuteronomy. Even then, it is not immediately intuitive how analyzing fictional representation of intelligence work could help us understand intelligence work in the real world. In fact, studying spy fiction at all has not always been widely accepted among critics. Spy fiction, as a genre that can be classified, analyzed, and compared to other novelistic genres, does not emerge until the late nineteenth century. While certainly rooted in the "thriller," spy fiction has branched out from the invasion-paranoia schlock put out around the turn of the twentieth century by authors like William Le Queux, whose anti-German propaganda novels I examine more closely in Chapter Two. As fans of the genre know, however, this branching happened almost immediately—with Kipling and Conrad—and yet the

mass-market thriller is still a fairly sizable portion of the genre's continuing presence, exemplified by the Tom Clancy/Robert Ludlum/James Patterson airport bestseller. The hyper-visibility of this kind of spy fiction calls into question its cohesiveness as a genre; in other words, is there a difference between spy-fiction—which is mass-market, lowbrow or midbrow at best—and literature that features spies and/or espionage as central to the plot, works like Conrad's the *Secret Agent*, Henry James's *Princess Cassamassima,* or John Banville's *The Untouchable*? Critics—and authors—are divided on this question. The result of this generic indeterminacy is that spy fiction, like other forms of "genre fiction" like fantasy and sci-fi, has not always been considered a rich vein for criticism. Spy novels have been dismissed as mindless entertainment, middlebrow fantasies, or as off-brand "divertissements.[1]"

Bringing the analysis of spy fiction into a more mainstream critical discourse has largely been the purview of the cultural studies movement, as a part of its concern with genre fiction as a whole as a meaningful site for ideological coding. Their justifications for doing so largely arise from a Jamesonian insistence on the connection between the tropes and conventions of genre and the ideological (that is to say, the social) conditions that produce them. Michael Denning, who wrote the first generic study of spy fiction and its connection to the social formations that conditioned its birth and ascendency, quotes just such a justification from Jameson's *Political Unconscious*:

> The strategic value of generic concepts for Marxism clearly lies in the mandatory
> function of the notion of a genre, which allows the coordination of immanent formal
> analysis of the individual text with the twin diachronic perspective of the history of forms

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[1] The "divertissements" self-critique is Graham Greene's evaluation of his own spy stories, indicating that even spy authors themselves are ambivalent about classification of their work.

and the evolution of social life…So generic affiliations, and the systematic deviation

from them, provide clues which lead us back to the concrete historical situation of the

individual text itself, and allow us to read its structure as ideology, as a socially symbolic

act, as a protopolitical response to a historical dilemma. (qtd. in Denning 8)

Taking the idea that individual texts can be, as Jameson says here, a "socially symbolic act," and,

elsewhere in the *Political Unconscious,* representative structures of "particular political

fantasies," grants Denning and those such as myself who follow in his footsteps as genre critics

the license to look at cultural texts as more than simply material ephemera that arise from the

economic base of reality and then evaporate away like sea foam once their time is spent. While

always maintaining the importance of thinking of novels as products, the critic can also consider

them as collections of themes, stock characters, tropes, and perhaps even a few key individual

artistic touches that are—like the banking system, the auto industry, the two-party US political

system, and the CIA—part of the mode of production[2] itself. The task of the critic becomes, as

Denning puts it, to account for the "social history of the thriller in terms of its relations of

production and consumption, and in terms of the ideologemes[3] articulated in its characteristic

formulas" (15). Denning, to whom I am greatly indebted, finds in the spy novel a working-out of

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[2] Jameson uses and explicates Althusser's concept of mode of production as "the synchronic system of social relations as a whole" and the "only structure that exists" which has branches like the economic and cultural instead of privileging one or the other as a determinate "base" (Jameson 36).

[3] Denning quotes Jameson to define the term thusly: "The term signifies the basic unit of the 'essentially antagonistic collective discourses of social classes…The ideologeme is an amphibious formation, whose essential structural characteristic may be described as its possibility to manifest itself either as a pseudo-idea—a conceptual or belief system, an abstract value, an opinion or prejudice, or as a protonarrative, a kind of ultimate class fantasy about the "collective characters" which are the classes in opposition'" (qtd. in Denning 155). For Denning, in spy fiction, the class fantasies emerge out of the tension between the agency and the lack of agency experienced by the bourgeoisie under late-stage capitalism (Denning 15).

the difficulty to "narrate the totality of social relations in the terms of individual experience" in a world of late-stage capitalism, a world of imperialism and later neo-imperialism and monopoly. The world of late capitalism, in Denning's analysis, de-agentifies the individual to such an extent that the most popular fantasies are ones in which the individual matters—he or she can do something on the world-stage, can make a difference. Or, in words that I repeat throughout this dissertation: "The secret *agent* returns human *agency* to a world which seems less and less the product of human action" (14). Denning works out precisely what that means for different cultural iterations of a reading public throughout his work. In other words, analyzing spy fiction can help us elucidate how ideologies of agency are reproduced and transmitted within a wider reading (and watching) public. But what Denning leaves unexamined is why and how espionage *itself* internalizes these ideologies of agency and how it propagates that lack within its own bureaucratic and cultural mechanisms. Denning takes it for granted—for reasons I will discuss shortly—that spy fiction is reflecting the general malaise of the twentieth century but fails to see that reflection as connected to actual practices and developments within espionage. Other critics in the Denning vein, such as Alan Hepburn in his monograph *Intrigue,* have similarly divorced the history of intelligence from its fictional representation. My project departs from this tradition by reading these histories together, as mutually constitutive discursive formations with very real and entwined histories, impacts, and futures. Two questions remain however: what can be gained when we examine the reality of espionage with its cultural images, and how can we go about describing the relationship in a way that doesn't overstate fictional determinism nor erects a wall between the "real" and the "fake" aspects of espionage? I address these questions below.

As discussed above, Michael Denning's focus on the social history of the spy thriller largely, and deliberately, ignores the actual history of the intelligence apparatus that the spy

thriller claims to represent. Denning dismisses this history because of the nature of that "claim."

In short, he determines that it is not a very believable claim in the first place. Realism is, in

Denning's view, mystification, or part of the fantasy re-working of social conditions inherent in

the genre.[4] Denning ducks the question of whether or not Le Carré "accurately" depicts spy

work—he's skeptical that anyone really does, true, but he's more content to lay the entire

relationship between spy fiction and espionage itself aside in order to interrogate the genre's

connections with other aspects of the social order. "Realism" in spy fiction is itself, according to

Denning, a telling ideologeme, one that emerges as the thriller as a genre grapples with the end

of the age of imperialism and the game-filled, boy-adventure novel ethos that defined popular

culture during it—think Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* (33). The turn in spy fiction to intricate

description of tradecraft (of espionage as "work" instead of play or adventure), more complex

characters, and moral shades of grey respond to audience demand in a world in which the fantasy

of exotic[5] adventure in "defence of the realm" is replaced by the fantasy of understanding the

intricate bureaucratic and technocratic machinery of modernity. What is depicted in spy fiction,

in Denning's analysis, whether it is the martini-flavored adventures of Bond-like super spies or

the stale-beer tinged musings of George Smiley, does not correspond to reality or need to

correspond to reality. And there is a point to be made here; while some strange things have

happened in the history of intelligence departments,[6] I doubt any spy has had to actually run

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[4] He terms it a "feigned realism, a sleight-of-hand totality" (29). In other words, realism exists to draw the reader into the novel—as a literary device.

[5] Whether exotic in the sense of "over there" (the Orient, or Africa, etc.) as in *Kim* or in the sense of "out of the ordinary" as in the jolting arrival of the spy Scudder into Richard Hannay's drawing room in *The Thirty-Nine Steps*.

[6] For example, the CIA once tried to spy on the Soviet embassy by implanting microphones in stray cats (Macrakis 382).

down the outside of the Burj Khalifa, as Tom Cruise's Ethan Hunt has to do in the fourth *Mission: Impossible* film.

However, I argue that it is a mistake to reduce the relevance of spy fiction to espionage as a political, governmental and social institution to either 1) a debate over representational accuracy or 2) a generic convention that masks an ideological shift in working- and middle-class escapism. In other words, what spy fiction says about espionage and the ideologies of espionage is no less worthy of critical attention than what the genre might say about other aspects of the mode of production, and that while both Denning and I take it for granted that the *details* of espionage practice in spy fiction might be better understood as thematic or ideological points of interest instead of historical accuracies, we disagree about the size of the social map that those points of interest are plotted on. I argue that the social institution of intelligence—a central institution connected directly to state power—should also be included in good faith in the study and analysis of spy fiction. The following passage, once again from Jameson's *The Political Unconscious*, has particular relevance for this claim:

> We may suggest that from this perspective, ideology is not something which informs or invests symbolic production; rather the aesthetic act is itself ideological, and the production of aesthetic or narrative form is to be seen as an ideological act in its own right, with the function of inventing imaginary or formal "solutions" to unresolvable social contradictions. (79)

Clearly, Denning and other critics have very helpfully brought to light how the genre and individual works within it engage with, express (both overtly and covertly) and resolve a wide variety of these social contradictions. But in ignoring the history of real intelligence, critics like Denning and Hepburn miss how these works function as imaginary (in some cases wish-

fulfilling) solutions for the fractures and disagreements in the ideological fabric of the intelligence community. Though spy novels, stories and films are aesthetic products, their production includes the translating of political and social ideology, including ideologies of intelligence work itself, into a consumable and culturally-available narrative.[7] At times, these narratives have been taken up by figures within the intelligence community itself, becoming something more than illustrative, but actually impactful in the policy decisions that guide intelligence work.

Take, as a quick example I elaborate on in detail in Chapter Four from which the former title of this dissertation is taken, "Bond with Burgess." What does it mean to place the most famous fictional spy in a critical conversation with some of the most infamous real ones? Guy Burgess was one of the Cambridge Spies, a group of upper-class government servants and intelligence professionals who converted to communism at Cambridge and then worked as Soviet agents through World War Two and the beginning years of the Cold War. The uncovering of the Cambridge spies was public spectacle of the highest order, and much of the initial conversation around Burgess concerned his homosexuality and its relation to his betrayal of the U.K. I believe that a crucial factor in Bond's invention and immediate popularity was Ian Fleming's revision and reworking of the cultural image of the secret agent as aggressively heterosexual, and thus, to a homophobic public and intelligence community, "trustworthy." Bond is one of those "imaginary or formal 'solutions'" of which Jameson speaks in the quote above. In

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[7] The separateness of the aesthetic, social, economic, and political realms being that which is explicitly rejected in Jameson's explanation of Althusser's "mode of production." As Jameson argues, "social life is in its fundamental reality one and indivisible, a seamless web, a single inconceivable and transindividual process, in which there is no need to invent ways of linking language events and social upheavals or economic contradictions because on that level they were never separate from each other" (40).

this case, the contradiction that Bond resolves was the relationship between the gentlemanly, Oxbridge-educated, aristocratic concept of the ideal spy held by MI6 and that same image's linkage to homosexuality and Communism—a link which becomes an extremely public embarrassment for the intelligence community in the exposure and defection of the Cambridge Spy Ring. As I show, this linkage has, in fact, a longer history in spy fiction than the mid-century defections of Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean (and later, Kim Philby)—as well as the emergence of Bond as *the* cultural image of the spy—might lead one to believe. Bond is indicative of a change in attitude about and around masculinity within espionage and in popular culture. I examine the social, historical, ideological and literary developments that led to his rise and continuing popularity. Intelligence workers and policy-makers, journalists who work on intelligence matters, and spy-fiction writers themselves are a particular subset of the producers and consumers of spy fiction, and whether they intend it or not, spy fiction serves to mediate between their actual professional lives and the public's understanding of what they do. And so I see it as a rich battleground of competing ideas and ideologies, like those surrounding the Cambridge Spies and Bond. These contradictions and their resolutions in and out of spy fiction have molded the ideology of institutionalized intelligence agencies, and thus, are a rich vein of inquiry for critics to explore instead of ignore.

In doing this exploration, one is inevitably confronted by the idea that espionage in its broadest form—its practices, leading figures, policies, narratives—is best described as a kind of cultural discourse. Tracing the development of espionage as a discourse entails tracing its historic forms and representations. Espionage's first few thousand years—whether they began when Joshua sent two spies into Jericho or even earlier—were quite irregular. Private individuals and small networks working directly for a head of state composed the less-than official spy rings

of pre-modernity. Not until Britain formed an Office of Military Intelligence in order to better play the "Great Game" of imperialism in South and Central Asia in the 1870s did espionage enter into the bureaucracy of the modern state. With that change came more people involved, which meant more exposure, and the secret world began to be talked about, reported on, imagined, and dreamed on an unprecedented scale. When espionage became the function of dedicated spy agencies, employing dozens, then hundreds, then thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of people, it became a balancing act, one that teetered between secrecy and exposure. The amount and type of cultural texts about espionage proliferated, and, indeed, are continuing to proliferate. But the nature of spy work means that not all of these texts will be accurate, not all of them will be confirmed, not all of them will be released, not all of them will be official, not all of them will be fiction—in other words, the desire to know is great, in many cases (especially in matters of political rivalry and war) the urgent need to know is great, but the knowledge itself…well, it can't be confirmed or denied. One of the early texts of post-colonial theory—a theory that itself formed in the cultural context of the Cold War and its anxieties of secrecy and exposure—is Edward Said's *Orientalism,* which situates intelligence gathering within a long tradition og imperial knowledge production and cultural discourse. As Edward Said explains in his discussions of the textual origins of Orientalism:

> A text purporting to contain knowledge about something actual [and arising out of an amorphous, hard to understand, obscure-to-the-public context] is not easily dismissed. Expertise is attributed to it. The authority of academics, institutions, and governments can accrue to it, surrounding it with still greater prestige than its practical successes warrant. Most important, such texts can *create* not only knowledge but also the very reality they appear to describe. In time such

knowledge and reality produce a tradition, or what Michel Foucault calls a

discourse, whose material presence or weight, not the originality of a given

author, is really responsible for the texts produced out of it. (94)

In an extremely similar vein, which is not at all a coincidence given the considerable overlap

between Orientalism and the creation of spy agencies, the discourse of espionage arrives and

shapes knowledge of spy craft both for the general public and, as I argue throughout this

dissertation, within the political institutions of espionage as well. This process is exacerbated as

intelligence workers themselves become producers of spy fiction, as the veneer of reality

conferred by, say, John le Carré's former profession induces audiences to take his fiction at face

value, and as they become consumers of spy fiction who then go on to produce intelligence

policy.

The emphasis in my work is on how the cultural products of spy fiction depict resolutions

to ideological contradictions in the intelligence community and also how they, by virtue of being

products consumed in the public sphere, help to map the contours of how 1) the intelligence

community thinks about itself and acts on that knowledge and 2) how the public thinks about the

intelligence community and acts on that knowledge. This approach owes a debt to the ideas of

cultural historians like Mary Renda, whose book *Taking Haiti* identifies the role the cultural

discourse of paternalism—as expressed in popular culture, newspapers, political rhetoric, the

diaries, journals and letters of soldiers, and literary texts—played in the American occupation of

Haiti in the first half of the twentieth century. Renda's argument, like my own, is premised upon

historian Joan Scott's conception of discourse as "a historically specific 'structure of statements,

terms, categories, and beliefs' generated within a particular social and institutional context";

Renda is drawn to this definition because it "emphasizes the institutional relations of power that

undergird processes of signification" (23). The emphasis on mapping those institutional relations

of power—doing the historical work of uncovering the "particular social and institutional

context"—is essential for Renda's argument that culture acts through its products, that a cultural

discourse can influence and incentivize behavior and policy. Incentivization occurs by forming

coherent collective identities. Belonging to an institution, and enjoying the privileges therein,

becomes less and less distinct from holding institutional beliefs. If one wants the privileges as

outlined in the cultural discourse, one conforms. Though she does not reference Jameson, her

argument resonates with how he treats the cultural as a part of the material (and not as a trivial

superstructure) and how Renda emphasizes the specific historical and material origins of certain

cultural discourses. Cultural processes, Renda reminds us, are "never wholly distinct from

economics, politics, and military practice," and the material effects of the cultural discourse of

paternalism, for example, can be read in how that discourse "gives shape and form to human

bodies, the physical environment, and the material resources and tools wielded by human actors"

through processes such as the production of uniforms and guns, the military training that

conditioned soldiers' bodies and minds, and the economic incentives that led to exploitation of

Haitian labor by American companies (23, 24). In order, then, to fully explicate a discourse's

effects, Renda teaches us that one needs to do some history, to dig into the material origins of a

discourse in addition to the cultural and textual. And so I, in order to interrogate how the

discourse of espionage is influenced by and influences spy fiction, on the one hand, and how it is

influenced by and influences the more-readily-visible-as-material[8] practices and institutions of

"real" espionage, on the other hand, have had to do some historicizing myself. Thus, I ground

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[8] Since the aesthetic is just another aspect of the material mode of production itself (in its
Althusserian form as the totality of social relations), it is no less "material" than institutional
history, economics, etc., though we sometimes see it as less so.

readings of individual texts in historical contexts, and analyze overarching trends in spy fiction in relation to the changing profession of intelligence work. James Bond novels and films do not cause spy agencies to act a certain way, but the culture that produces Bond incentivizes a certain kind of intelligence practice by certain kinds of intelligence agents. Additionally, the fictional Bond adventures have proven to be useful for the public and intelligence workers themselves to make sense of that incentivizing structure. Thus, it is necessary to include cultural production in telling the history of the development of intelligence culture, a development which has shaped intelligence practice. They are intertwined.

Renda writes that—at any given moment—what we experience as culture is the "sum total of a collection of overlapping but not coincident discourses and fragments of discourses" (26). The cultural discourse of espionage is one of these constitutive cultures but is also itself made up of smaller discursive fragments, each arising from a combination of political demand, institutional (bureaucratic) logic, and other, pre-existing cultural discourses— such as Orientalism or the discourse of military masculinity. It's an intricate terrain, with cross-cutting pieces that, given the size and power of intelligence agencies, has resulted in abrupt policy shifts and institutional in-fighting with tremendous stakes in terms of human lives, freedoms, and rights (for example, the right to privacy). Currently, this discourse of espionage is both influenced by and significantly contributes to a global climate of mistrust and fear of espionage agencies, primarily driven by their disregard for legal and normative concepts such as national sovereignty, expressed declarations of war, due process of law, and individual civil rights. For example, the Senate investigative report on the CIA's use of torture in the "War on Terror" and its revelations about the culture of the world's largest intelligence service are sobering, but given the history of the organization, not surprising. In this work, I will contextualize the post-9/11

willingness by intelligence departments to engage in torture, as well as the two other most recent

controversial intelligence practices: the invention and proliferation of drone surveillance and

strikes as well as the NSA domestic surveillance program. Far from being separate issues from

human spy work, the increased use of torture, drone strikes, and computerized domestic

surveillance arise from an intelligence apparatus that is steeped in a culture of hyper-

masculinization and the tendency to take a reduced view of the subjectivity and general humanity

of anyone not locatable in an increasingly narrower definition of "us"—by which I mean those

who can be "safely" invested with political agency. Intelligence agencies, of course, have always

been inherently nationalistic, imperialist, conservative, and focused on the defense of the nation-

state to the extent that they are willing to engage in unethical behavior. But, I argue that this

narrowing has excluded possible dissenting voices from the intelligence community and has

resulted in a culture that treats even its own agents as disposable tools instead of as human

actors, and its opponents as targets to be eliminated instead of as human assets that can

themselves be converted to "our" side. This de-agentifying culture is reflected in the discourse of

espionage, composed of training manuals, press releases, internal memos, and, yes, in spy fiction

across all forms of media, both those texts created by those with a familiarity with intelligence

operations and those which exist more generally in the public sphere. The discourse does more,

though, than passively reflect an already-existent culture; it also and more importantly shapes the

vocabularies and tenets of espionage within the closed-off world of intelligence work and

without it, in the public sphere, when those of us without privileged access are forced to grapple

with the actions of the governmental organizations, contracted corporations, and political and

juridical systems that make up the "shadowy world" of espionage. Thus, the Predator drone and

domestic surveillance are not radical breaks from some static and reliable existing tradition of

spy thrillers as reassuring fantasies; rather they are the most recent answers to questions that spy

fiction has wrestled with throughout its history: Who can be a spy? What do spies do? What is

the relation between intelligence gathering and state discipline? Are individuals reliable and do

they matter on the global stage? Or, as Renda asks, "How does the state benefit from cultural

processes that were set in motion by official actions, but that took shape most likely beyond

official control?" (Renda 21). This work focuses on how those questions have been answered

historically and culturally, by individual authors, individual intelligence agents, government

bureaucracies, and the genres of spy fiction and film.

Studying espionage as a cultural discourse allows us to make claims *that* representations

of spy work can influence and incentivize actual behaviors within the intelligence world, but we

are still missing *how* that influence and incentivization operates on the institutional and personal

level. Critics of Renda might point out that her claims that culture "does" are not

uncontroversial, and so I hope to answer some of this criticism in my project. Espionage

provides us with a unique model for examining how culture can mold and be molded by

multifarious discrete phenomena. My thinking along these lines has been in part shaped by

scholar Erin Carlston, whose work *Double Agents* examines the nexus of Jewishness,

Communism, homosexuality, literature, and espionage in the Dreyfuss affair, the Cambridge

defections, and the Rosenberg trial. In her introduction, Carlston tries to articulate the role of the

literary in these social events. The following three quotes elucidate her thinking:

> Tracing the imaginative and expressive forms in which ideas about, for example,
>
> citizenship and difference have been posed enables me to recover the imprints of
>
> concepts that have otherwise largely disappeared from public discourse (2).

The Dreyfus Affair and Proust's response to it provides the imaginative map for my

analysis of how particular identities become ever more closely identified with espionage

in the course of the twentieth century (7).

The writers thus helped construct the framework within which the treason of the so-called

Cambridge spies—Burgess, Maclean, Kim Philby, and Anthony Blunt—would

eventually be received and understood (7).

Carlston's three metaphoric terms here—"imprints of concepts," "imaginative map,"

"framework"—indicate a kind of relation between cultural discourse and public action that is not

merely descriptive. In her first formulation, culture has defined concepts used to judge Dreyfuss,

Burgess and Maclean, and the Rosenbergs. This judgment is both in public discourse, but also

legalistic—the discourse around citizenship and treason is a performative speech act when it is in

the court. In her second formulation, culture (here, specifically Proust's response to the Dreyfuss

affair), maps the relationship between identity categories and government bureaucracy, creating

a vocabulary for individual selves to address their subjecthood in the face of state surveillance. In

her third formulation, culture (here, the writings of W.H. Auden and Stephen Spender) shapes

public understanding of a fairly complex and complicated event (the Cambridge spy defections).

The cultural preparation provided by Auden among others, Carlston argues, provided a readily-

available meaning that could be easily attached to commentary about Burgess, Maclean, Philby,

etc. Carlston's three formulations about cultural discourse envision it as a force that "does," a

conception that Mary Renda and other cultural critics share. Specifically, Carlston's conception

of cultural discourse "does" by shaping and influencing the thinking about discrete historical

events. In some cases, the discursive speech is behavior itself, as in a court or policy decision. In

other cases, the effect is indirect, preparing attitudes and beliefs that then motivate acts. I follow from Carlston and Renda in trying to formulate an idea of cultural discourse that is analyzable and actionable, so that we can, in the hope of changing both for the better, interrogate the relation between how we talk about espionage and its practices.

Let's imagine the cultural discourse of espionage as a field composed of all the ways people engage with the subject—official ways, unofficial ways, political ways, technological ways, aesthetic ways, etc. Various components of that discourse can become over-determined, sometimes deliberately—such as when an intelligence chief issues a policy directive, or regime change ushers in a new set of ideologies—and sometimes as a result of historical and cultural particulars, as in the way the Cambridge defections managed both to re-ignite a long simmering cultural belief that homosexuality was correlated with treason and tap into a feeling among intelligence professionals that the "old boys club" model of intelligence work was outmoded after WWII. As these components become over-determined, they become nodes of reference; eventually, these nodes dominate the conversation entirely, and individual entities (individuals, but also organizations, or even the public itself) make meaning of the discourse as a whole by either gravitating toward a node due to incentivization or away from one to another. The structure that emerges is what I call a "cultural lattice", a connection of these nodes within a cultural discourse that so takes over the public conversation about that discourse that it comes to be seen as the "real thing," though it is only a bare-bones representation. While reality is diffuse, difficult to append meaning to, a squirming thing, the cultural lattice is the squamous box, a structure that allows for explanation and meaning to be made by placing its constituent parts in relation to each other. Cultural lattices can emerge in a wide variety of discourses, but in espionage, the cultural lattice serves as the primary meaning-making frame of reference because

the reality of the profession is almost excessive in its obscurity. For example, take the following, recent exchange from NPR's national radio program, *Here and Now*. The host, Robin Young, is speaking to the White House Correspondent Tamara Keith about the recent ouster of Russian diplomats, widely regarded to be intelligence officers (i.e. spies), in response to the (widely-speculated by the U.K., U.S., and E.U.) Russian poisoning of a former Soviet double-agent on British soil. Keith has just mentioned that the Russian diplomats were suspected spies:

> Tamara Keith, White House correspondent: The U.S. has now, as a part of this broader coalition, in solidarity with the U.K., expelling sixty of what they describe as undeclared Russian intelligence officers. Sixty is a big number! It's a much bigger number than other countries. Of course, we are also a very big country.
>
> Robin Young, host: Also, I'm not meaning to be flip here, but if you watch *The Americans*, which is based on facts, there seems to be a lot of Russian spies in the country. (*Here and Now*)

The TV show *The Americans* is decidedly *not* based on any particular factual case—it merely features some aspects of real intelligence work and some details from various cases the creator of the show, Joe Weisberg, an ex-CIA agent, encountered in his espionage career[9]. But for Robin Young, the TV show's premise that Soviet agents had at one time been in deep cover in the U.S. as a married couple with children who just-so-happen to live next door to an FBI agent (yes, really, that is the initial set-up) carries descriptive power of the real of espionage work, and in fact offers information about a current geopolitical situation within intelligence work. The

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[9] For some specific examples—like how bad wigs are more faithful to intelligence work than the CIA would care to admit, see this 2013 interview with Weisberg in *Rolling Stone*: https://www.rollingstone.com/movies/news/the-americans-invade-new-yorks-paley-center-20131005

fictional work shapes Young's understanding of actual espionage work, and in her capacity as a

journalist, she reinforces that connection. Note that this kind of referencing is not just the case

for the lay-public, but for intelligence professionals as well. Thus, we find the head of the CIA,

Allen Dulles, seeking to hire operatives who will act like James Bond (Kinzer 274). As we will

discuss in more detail in Chapter 5, Dulles knew better than most that Bond's spy work was not

perfectly coincident with the "real thing," but still used Bond to make sense of the agency's pivot

toward covert action. Furthermore, because the node of Bond was equally present to the public,

we let Dulles do it—it made sense to the public that a spy agency would want James Bonds.

Only by analyzing the cultural lattice of espionage can we see that any history of the profession

is a cultural history, an intermixing of representation, misrepresentation and fact. The critic's job

is to analyze how the nodes of the cultural lattice have crystallized into the frame of easy

reference, and to unpack the effect of that crystallization on those who make, enact, and allow

intelligence policy.

A Brief Overview of the Entwined Histories of Espionage as a Practice and Espionage as a Cultural Product

As discussed above, espionage is simultaneously a set of: practices, for example digital

surveillance; policies, for example official determinations where the CIA is allowed to operate;

cultural beliefs, for example, that spy work is primarily in the field; cultural products, for

example, *The Americans*; and intelligence workers themselves. Determining how these

components interact requires parsing their entwined histories. One place to start in doing so is

thinking about the point of espionage in the first place, the "why of spy": the finding of unknown

strategic knowledge. This knowledge is gathered from people, in some fashion—by which I

mean directly, through conversation or coercion, or indirectly, through many different possible

kinds of surveillance. After being gathered from its many disparate sources, this knowledge

becomes crystalized, passed up the hierarchical rungs of vast bureaucracies so that those properly

credentialed can make decisions based on it. In other words, knowledge in espionage is presented

as always and ultimately a balancing act between the *individual* and the *institutional*. This

ambivalence—or rather, this conflict—has not been conclusively resolved in the history of

intelligence, or, as we will see, in spy fiction. This has meant that the growth and expansion of

intelligence institutions has been set within the discourse of espionage against the value and

worth of the individual as a subject of intelligence gathering *and* as an agent of intelligence

gathering. Individuals become suspect, critical, or unreliable, and so in order to chase efficiency

and security the agent has become the network of agents which has more recently become the

computer network. Formal intelligence departments began in an age of imperial colonialism, and

as such their task as described by James Scott in *Seeing Like a State* was "to make society

legible, to arrange the population in ways that simplified the classic state functions of taxation,

conscription, and prevention of rebellion" (2). Military intelligence was the collection of the

statistical, anthropological, and geographic information that would facilitate that "legibility" and

thus extend the colonial reach and control over these populations. Counter-intelligence was the

ascertaining of rival imperial powers' plans and operations in contested zones of influence or

colonial spaces. The end of the imperial era and the Cold War changed the definition of

intelligence and counter-intelligence. Outward expansion became a game of strategic denial and

opening up zones to Western market capitalism, while counter-intelligence took on the fury of a

witch-hunt. Institutional loyalty became the highest virtue, which meant that the definition of a

professional intelligence worker narrowed to only those considered to be above suspicion, a

designation that had as much to do with demographics—gender, race, sexual orientation and

class—as past performance. Professionalism and bureaucracy stood (at least, in principle) as

bulwarks against possible infiltration, ideological or actual. Institutional entrenchment and

compartmentalization have as a whole led to more secretive operations aimed at an increasingly

decentered global network of control, discipline, and information. These changes in intelligence

agency structure have made it more usable in the new globalized capital-E Empire of scholars

Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's formulation[10]. Wide-ranging and heavily bureaucratic

intelligence agencies, while still backing distinct state interests, are more able to justify

themselves the more amorphous and ever-present an enemy against whom they set themselves.

Intelligence agencies feed on the fear of the threat that can spring unexpectedly, and from within.

Given that Empire is assumed to be global and globally desired by those within it, this makes

each conflict an ideological betrayal, a rebellion from within against tenets that have been reified

into an absolute good by hegemonic power, and thus makes the enemy a fundamental evil. As

Hardt and Negri explain, that this evil can live within Empire and rupture it unexpectedly

provides tremendous justification for an aggressive intelligence agency: "Today it is increasingly

difficult for the ideologues of the US to name a single, unified enemy; rather there seem to be

minor and elusive enemies everywhere. The end of the crisis of modernity has given rise to a

proliferation of minor and indefinite crises, or, as we prefer, to an omni-crisis," (189). Omni-

crisis can only be met with omnipotence, which requires omniscience to exercise. Thus,

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[10] For Hardt and Negri, the Empire is the international, post-modern order formed by neoliberal capitalism. This order is no longer nationalistic, but as expansive and inclusive as possible in order to satisfy an ever-hungry market demand. As such, enemies of the Empire are criminals or terrorists, not rivals on equal but opposite footing (as was the case through the Cold War). As the major world powers return to nationalistic bents, we will have to closely monitor what happens to both theorizations and manifestations of Empire.

intelligence agencies have become increasingly able to justify any means in attempting to acquire this omniscience.

As William Wark writes, "intelligence agencies mirror the soul of the state and reflect its structures, passions, and rhetoric" (7). Given this, what one can see in the spy fiction written by authors with intelligence experience is their vision of a soul rapidly shedding its individuality. Recruiting practices of intelligence agencies reflect this trend, moving from using gentleman club or academic networks for recruitment to moving towards more directly from the disciplined and regimented ranks of the military. As I mentioned above, the secret agent, which again according to Denning, was "the link between the actions of the individual—often an 'ordinary person'—and the world historical fate of nations and empires," seems on the whole to be losing the expectation of being able to make an individual difference. But even as early as Buchan and Le Queux prior to the first World War, the early thriller authors who in many ways represent Denning's formula the best, hint at a world rapidly changing, increasingly ignoring and trampling everyone's self-determining agency, even that of its super-heroic spies. Agency requires tension to prove itself against, stories need conflict to work through. In spy fiction, this conflict has at times been more interesting than the protagonists who overcome it. There are four problematic nodes of the cultural lattice embedded into the generic language of spy fiction— conspiracy, bureaucratization, cruelty and technophilia—which trouble Denning's formulation, and which I examine over the course of my first two chapters. The end result of these four nodes is an ambivalent relationship within the genre: they both call into question the ability of any single individual to have a complete and unadulterated relationship with knowledge, but they are also quite often the source of conflict within the stories of the work that are overcome by the singular agent's heroic will. Fiction mines this conflict for entertainment; the catharsis of the spy

novel, in general, is the resolution of this conflict in favor of individuality. However, when these tropes break free from the individual plots of novels or films and become floating discursive structures within the discourse of espionage itself, their effect is not catharsis. As over-determined discursive formations—nodes within the cultural lattice of espionage—conspiracy, bureaucracy, cruelty and technophilia become generative in and of themselves, acting to warp the public conversation around intelligence policy, which warps intelligence policy itself.

Thus, it is crucial to understand the particulars of the relation between these four nodes, and how they have changed over the past century and a half. In the fiction of the early 1900s, British secret agents invariably discovered the secret and far-along plot by another nation-state (usually Germany, but sometimes France or Russia) to infiltrate and undermine Britain's war-making capabilities. In that of the 1920s and 30s, spies stumbled into fascist-capitalist collusion and raced to foil the plans of multinational corporations and would-be dictators in order to wrest power from governments ostensibly elected by and for the people. The Cold War brought a return to the infiltration plot but turned the cat-and-mouse (or cat-and-mole) gamesmanship of Childress or Buchan into a deadly serious meditation on the nature of loyalty and the role of the individual in a large state bureaucracy. The enemy Other in spy fiction has changed considerably from its origins as well. Early spy genre introduced us to the maniacal conspiracy, the acting of shadowy organizations or individuals—splinter groups, terrorists, top-secret spy rings—not just to seize power (which is an old motivation), but to create a vacuum of power through targeted, mass destruction first, and then to establish their new global orders within that empty space. This is not the anarchy of Conrad's Professor, or the revolutionary spirit characteristic of communist villains pre-WWII, or even the paternalistic "we know best" fascism of the 30s. Aurich Goldfinger has no illusions that he is the bad guy. How refreshing, especially given the contrast

with the above-mentioned other strand of Cold War spy fiction, emblematized by George Smiley empathizing with Soviet double-agent Bill Haydon's dissatisfaction with Britain in *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*. The terrorist-as-arch-villain is still with us in post-Cold War spy-fiction, though just as likely now to have a Middle Eastern connection than an Eastern European one, but increasingly we find that the role of the nefarious Big Other in current spy fiction is likely to be played by Western spy agencies themselves, especially the CIA or a rogue splinter-group within the CIA.

In the shadows, on the run, and scrambling over the pages of these changing historical scenarios are a cast of spies, secret agents, intelligence professionals, superheroes, and a disturbing number of men and women who just happened to be in the wrong place at the right time. In its beginnings, spy fiction mostly[11] concerned itself with the differentiation between the good British operative, essentially an older Boy Scout[12], and the evil French, German, or Russian spy couching in cafes and restaurants around the UK. British intelligence work in the buildup to WWI consisted of pretty much the same thing: collecting paperwork on possible foreign operatives, using geographic and academic knowledge to assess military capabilities, and building rudimentary intelligence networks based primarily on professional cordiality, Oxford- or Cambridge-tied social clubs, and aristocratic family relations.[13] British secret agents were conceived as those who already were assumed to have access to privileged information: university men, academics, gentlemen with friends in high places, specialists. These are the men who constituted the core of British imperial rule as well, and indeed the modern intelligence

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[11] With a few exceptions, such as Conrad's *The Secret Agent*
[12] Not a coincidence that the founder of the Scouts, Baden-Powell, wrote a defense of geographic intelligence gathering called *My Life as a Scout*
[13] (Hiley 61)

agency is inseparable from the colonial police forces that were its immediate forebears. Post-WWI, the spy genre and the intelligence community in Britain were not immune to Modernist soul-searching, facing critiques from both the right and the left. As the post-war period also found authors with intelligence work experience such as W. Somerset Maugham writing in the spy genre for the first time (a trend which would become a staple of the genre), many of these critiques were pointed attacks on the effectiveness of the spy himself, as he was currently conceived by MI5 and MI6. Authors' probing of the question "who should be a spy" kept that topic in flux, while the moral wrangling produced in these works also helped the genre flirt with higher-brow entertainment. Some more conservative authors, for example H.C. McNeile in his Bulldog Drummond stories, felt that the spy needed to be a more active shaper of events, while others, like Somerset Maugham in *Ashenden* or Graham Greene in *The Confidential Agent*, questioned the morality of someone who would willingly become the "glorious amateur" spy. One of the aims of my project is to demonstrate the influence of an under-studied, yet crucial, turning point in the public conception of spies: the influence of the life and writings of T.E. Lawrence. Lawrence's experience in Arabia and then his later retreat to the Royal Air Force (under an assumed name) was read even contemporaneously as a fable of British imperial folly and duplicity, of the ill-suitedness of the public-school, academic, upper-class personality type (with its homosexual undertones) for spy work, and of a perceived-as-inherent dishonorable nature of the profession.

After WWII, spy fiction continued to split into two separate styles, if not genres: 1) the pulp thrillers, spearheaded by Fleming and Bond, and 2) the middle-brow novels of intrigue of

which Greene, Le Carré, and Ambler are the most well-known[14]. Both strands focused on the

Cold War, and completed the work of the authors of the 20s and 30s in ending the idea of the

"glorious amateur" for good, positing instead the action hero in the pulp paperback thriller and

the "company man" in middle-brow works. This pulp protagonist, descended from Bond, whose

hyper-masculinity, heterosexuality, middle-class and military origins, and lack of interiority

prefigures the ideal member of a new type of intelligence operative.[15] This soldier-spy was born

out of the war-era Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and was far more concerned with

operational intelligence and physical force—what journalist Mark Mazzetti has recently termed

the "way of the knife"—than the traditional "Great Game," which focused on asset retrieval,

strategic alliances, and evaluating geographic and cultural information for strategic advantage

(Mazzetti 45). Fictional representations of spies—at least, protagonist spies, more often called

"secret agents"—are cloaked in the characteristics and backgrounds to make these operatives of

shadowy agencies and organizations, inherently untrustworthy and viewed with skepticism by

the public, into heroes for the ages that produce them. The palliative fictions themselves have

changed—from university man to soldier, amateur to professional, aristocrat to bureaucrat—but

the idea persists that spies in fiction need to conform to a culturally safe standard.

Palatability for the profession inevitably increases its cultural visibility, which in turn

bolsters its presence in reality. Spy fiction has served to create easy references for spy behaviors

since at least the early twentieth century. As Nicholas Hiley states, before WWI, the British

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[14] The war also managed to send into a prolonged slumber the serious left-leaning espionage novel. After Elizabeth Bowen's *The Heat of the Day*, most spy novels critical of the world-systems that spies served were primarily satirical, like *Our Man in Havana*, or, like much of Le Carré's work, caught up in an unsatisfactory moral equivocating that cast spying as a flawed and morally questionable necessity. Only recently have we found a return to the serious spy work with a clear left-lean—perhaps Banville's *The Untouchable* (1997) restarted this minor trend.
[15] And with the operative, the strategy that fits him.

public's experience with espionage was almost all in the realm of fiction—so much so that "even those officers employed on counter-espionage had little opportunity of testing fiction against reality'" (Hiley 61). Representations of spies became overlaid on the real thing, with actual intelligence agents "'feel[ing] like…character[s] in a spy novel'" and "'standing about aimlessly or whispering in corners much after the manner of spies in the cinematograph'" (Hiley 60). Fiction and reality blur. Men and women are recruited into intelligence work with an already-ingrained idea of what it is. Their reactions to this idea—their attempts to live up to it, or their disillusionment with a false reality—affects their work. What does this mean in an age in which Bond and his hyper-competent, morally-simple ilk have become the de facto cultural image of the modern secret agent in popular culture? How has the corresponding historical period[16] in which both intelligence agencies worldwide have increasingly been ordered to (and have ordered themselves to) "grade their own work," a term which signifies creating an intelligence situation through covert action and then requesting more funding to evaluate that emerging intelligence situation, been shaped by the super spy (81)? As one senior Pentagon official who oversaw the expansion of the Pentagon's own spy program (JSOC) said, "We had all these guys running around trying to be James Bond, and it didn't work very well" (qtd. in Mazzetti 82). Playing James Bond in the intelligence operations of today—as has playing Bill Haydon, or Richard Hannay in other times—has influenced how these agencies operate. In the particular case of the proliferation of the soldier-spy, agencies now both collect intelligence for military operations (including an ever-expanding number of assassinations and kidnappings), and use their own personnel to carry out those same operations regardless of official declarations of war or

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[16] Roughly beginning with Kennedy's administration and continuing through the present, excepting perhaps a brief lull in the mid- to late- 1970s (Mazzetti 43).

international law. No longer a support to defense departments, intelligence agencies are actively

instigating and carrying out armed conflict[17]. This global war has seen the unprecedented use of

surveillance technologies and unmanned aerial drones for both intelligence gathering and combat

operations, including remote assassinations of targets. I see the widespread (though not

universal) establishment acceptance[18] of the mechanization of intelligence work as the inevitable

outcome of a particular re-characterization of the spy in the post-WWII period.

Professionalization, hyper-masculinity (defined as heterosexual and consequently "leak-proof"),

and shifting class-relations in representations of the ideal spy in popular culture have influenced

the development of an intelligence community seemingly devoted to removing human

subjectivity from their operatives, and narrowing down the answer to "who can be a spy" to its

most reductive point: the drone.

The name I have given to the current governing cultural formation that influences who

can be a spy is "drone masculinity." Drone masculinity is itself a discursive formation, born from

policy decisions and James Bond films, training manuals and larger societal gender relations. It

emphasizes violence and covert action and cedes individual agency to the bureaucratic machine

in exchange for sexual and societal reward. It isn't brain-washing, but a set of incentives—

professional, organizational, sexual, cultural—that weights some behaviors and attitudes as more

desirable than others: for example, covert action, torture as a means of intelligence-gathering,

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[17] Mazzetti gives as one illustration of this trend the growth of the Counterterrorism Center of the
CIA, which, as a small corner of Langley after its founding in the 80s, could not get legal or
political approval to carry out assassination operations. After 2001, it quickly swelled to
consume the vast majority of CIA funding, and, as we are painfully aware, conducts regular
lethal operations all over the world (11, 57).
[18] While the use of drones and widespread domestic surveillance projects are opposed by factions
on the left and right, elected officials do not seem to be focused on curbing intelligence agencies,
nor, to my knowledge, has a major political figure campaigned on a platform that includes a
scaling back of the "way of the knife."

Special Forces soldiers masquerading as CIA agents and vice versa. Drone masculinity also helps to set the stage for drone warfare itself. What drone masculinity aspires to be, drone warfare can achieve: a small, controllable, mechanized warfighting force that introduces distance between killer and killed. Drone warfare is supposed to perfect the efficiency and lethality which make drone masculinity a seductive discursive ideologeme in the first place. However, drone warfare has been marked by high civilian casualties (especially as collected by non-governmental watchdog groups and journalists) and by a tendency to radicalize individuals to embrace groups like al Qaeda and ISIS in areas under the drone's surveilling gaze. Both drone masculinity and drone warfare substitute spectacular results for lasting ones, and our intelligence services' reliance on them moves them away from the traditional work of espionage, eroding their ability to do the human-network building essential to using intelligence in the pursuit of peace.

Drone surveillance and image analysis is a part of a larger structure of SIGINT (SIGnals INTelligence), that is electronic surveillance, gathered from intercepted radio and telephone calls, emails, social media posts, satellite imagery, spy planes and drones, and any other way besides another human being giving intelligence information directly to an intelligence worker or contractor. SIGINT has been embraced by spy agencies worldwide, but especially in the U.S. and the U.K. As of 2013, the CIA's total budget was $14.7 billion, of which over half was devoted solely to SIGINT, and the NSA entirely focuses on SIGINT (Grey 274). The British version of the NSA, the GCHQ, was profiled in a 1982 *Times* article entitled "Exit Smiley, Enter IBM." The reference here to John le Carré's arch-spy George Smiley, and his obsolescence, is telling. Unlike Smiley's focus on personal relations, SIGINT furthers the distance between the intelligence agency and the people subjected to its surveillance. Drone masculinity, drone

warfare, and the turn to SIGINT arise from the cultural history of espionage and can be situated within it. The discursive field that produced them and which they help to sustain is a deeply de-humanized one. Over the course of the twentieth and twenty-first century, the discourse of espionage has tried to balance the super-heroic agency attributed to the agent and the de-personalization of the conspiracies, bureaucracies, and technocracies he or she (mostly he) is caught up in or faces down. As my dissertation shows, this balancing act has increasingly become less-balanced; intelligence, in both history and fiction, has tilted away from the human to embrace the policies, metaphors, and structures of the institution, the network, the bureaucracy, the drone.

Chapter Outline: Chapters 2 and 3

As mentioned above, my dissertation maps out the relation between the discourse of espionage in fiction, in public discourse, and in the history and development of intelligence policy. My first two chapters attempt to demonstrate what this analysis looks like—in other words, to examine the idea that a spy agency is not merely a political entity, but a discursive formation, one that acts in the cultural realm and is affected by that cultural realm as well. The political and cultural histories of espionage are linked, and the tropes of spy fiction have had influence in the halls of the CIA and MI6. In these chapters, I examine four master-themes in the discourse of espionage, themes that show up on the page and on screen in fictional spy media, but also in public and political discourse, in how journalists and policy makers, including heads of intelligence and other high-ranking spies, speak about intelligence organizations. These master-themes—conspiracy, bureaucracy, cruelty, and technophilia—ultimately push intelligence towards the dehumanizing, de-agentifying entity it is today. Each arise from one another, forming a mutually-constituted "espionage mindset" that drives the development of

intelligence practices in the U.S. and the U.K. The espionage mindset devalues humanistic principles of individual worth, replacing moral and ethical evaluations with strategic ones. Within the internal logic of an intelligence agency, the espionage mindset appears to be "best practices." But when we analyze this internal logic free of the mandates of secrecy and national security, we can see how its inherent dehumanization prevents our intelligence agencies from being moral, ethical, legal, or even as effective as they could be.

Conspiracy and its relation to spy fiction may seem an unlikely place to begin this dissertation project, but the two have been historically and ideologically linked since the formation of the genre. In fact, spy fiction would not have developed at the time and in the way it did without the conspiracy-mongering of the author William Le Queux, whose anti-French and then anti-German paranoia and aggressive marketing techniques convinced segments of the British populace that their everyday world was plagued by secret agents plotting the overthrow of the U.K. in the years before World War I. In the face of such a dastardly (fictional) conspiracy, the public clamored for a dedicated counter-intelligence agency, leading to the creation of MI5. The cultural discourse of espionage is a field in which conspiracy moves from fiction into reality. One way this happens is the expected one: part of espionage is secret skull-duggery, the creation and, less often, the execution of plans designed to overthrow governments, cartels, etc. Fidel Castro was assassinated many times in CIA writing, though in reality the agency was considerably less successful, though not for lack of trying. But, as evidenced in William le Queux's role in the creation of MI5, there is another means by which that conspiracy can manipulate reality, a means unconnected to the actual machinations of CIA agents or Goldman Sachs. Analyzing the role of conspiracy as a feature of spy fiction, as a part of its beginnings (in Henry James' *Princess Cassamassima* and Joseph Conrad's *Secret Agent*), its

popularity, and its ability to transcend the bounds of the strictly fictional, causes us to reevaluate the role conspiracy plays in our cultural imagination. Contrary to the idea that conspiracy reduces the feeling of agency in those who believe in it, I posit that conspiracies proliferate in fiction and in reality for the exact opposite reason: belief in a secret conspiracy operating behind the scenes re-orients the world into those "in the know" and those who are fooled. Being "in the know" means recovering a sense of lost agency that has been drained by the non-secret, though still sometimes obscure, operations of global capital and politics. In other words, conspiracies are generative. They create avenues for agency to be proved—either by creating one, which authors, spies, businessmen and bloggers sometimes do, or by believing in one, an act which confers special status to the believer. For example, Russian paranoia over the Dulles Doctrine, documents purporting to outline the dismantling of the Soviet and then Russian state by CIA operatives, appears today as justification for Russian meddling in the 2016 election. However, the reality is that the Dulles doctrine was invented in a 1973 Soviet spy novel. There are multiple sense of fictional at play here. A fictional (i.e. deliberately created in a novel) conspiracy has become a fictional (i.e. not based on an actual policy) motivating force for an actual conspiracy, (enacted in reality by secret actors) to undermine American civic institutions. It has become difficult to discuss the hybrid real and fictional concept of the conspiracy without acknowledging that conspiracies can act even when their purported claims don't really exist. Though even here, spy fiction has anticipated such a turn of events; G.K. Chesterton's *The Man who was Thursday* (1908) features a police secret agent ordered to join a conspiracy only to find that every other member is also a police secret agent who has been ordered to spy on the conspiracy. Eventually, the leader of the conspiracy is revealed to be the leader of the police, and he might also be God, able to move the planets and stars via a secret conspiratorial power. There is no inside or outside

to the conspiracy. *The Man who was Thursday* was written in 1908. In spy fiction, the conspiracy

has been meta-fictional, in the sense of drawing attention to its own unreality, since its

beginning. What this points to is that fiction itself is key to the meta-commentary within the

discourse of espionage on the notion and structure of conspiracy. Fiction calls out the process of

discursive world-making that is at the heart of espionage.

My first chapter begins by examining the notion of conspiracy as a feature of the

discourse of espionage and its relation with agency. Conspiracies often provide the "ground" on

which, or against which, the "figure" of the secret agent protagonist proves their agency. I argue

that this is not so very different from how believers in conspiracies engage with conspiracies.

The belief in a conspiracy, far from making people feel like powerless pawns of the system,

motivates them, often with anger, to feel like a privileged visionary of the true history of the

world. When conspiracies appear in the discourse of espionage—broadly writ—they are done so

to examine the individual's role in the world. In Chapter Two, I discuss the trope of the

conspiracy as a call to action in *Princess Cassamassima, Captain America: The Winter Soldier*,

The Secret Agent and *North by Northwest*. The conspiracy is a call to action whether heard by a

novel protagonist or a person on Facebook. But as to what action, this is less clear. Not many of

us are Richard Hannay (from *The 39 Steps*), or Jason Bourne, or Captain America—or even Cary

Grant's somewhat bored socialite Roger Thornhill in *North by Northwest*. In response to William

Le Queux's German panic, the British government created a bureaucracy, collecting and

organizing many people who weren't quite Richard Hannay in the hopes that in the aggregate

they might be. Once born, the spy bureaucracy grew prodigiously. What began as a means to

preserve the individual under the threat of the faceless, malevolent conspiratorial unknown

became a crushing mass in its own right. For this reason ,I discuss both the role conspiracy and

bureaucracy have played in shaping how the public conceives of spy agencies, as well as how those agencies conceive of themselves. Bureaucracy in spy fiction often functions as the "conspiracy of the Same," as opposed to the antagonistic "conspiracy of the Other." By this, I mean that the bureaucracy and the conspiracy as discursive constructs are not different in the assumption of their traffic in secrets, but in who is the target of those secrets. Conspiracies are arraigned against us, bureaucracies include us already, whether we like it or not. In spy fiction, this manifests as the lone agent vs his own organization, the creative, skilled, adaptive individual vs the prosaic, rigid, boring collective. These plots, like conspiracy plots, resonate with a readership that itself feels caught up in the machine of the state, global capital, social institutions, etc. The tension within spy fiction between individual agency and the spy bureaucracy bleeds over into the discourse of espionage as a whole; intelligence leadership and policy-makers themselves go back and forth about wanting independent, motivated agents, on the one hand, and dependable company men on the other. This debate maps onto changing definitions of masculinity and changing notions of spy work, from strict intelligence-gathering to covert action. That mapping occurs both in policy and in fiction. In the former, it manifests in who is hired by intelligence agencies and what they are asked to do. In the latter, in the split between "lowbrow" thriller novels by Ian Fleming or Robert Ludlum and the "more literary" work of John le Carré or Len Deighton.

I examine spy fiction as a cultural formation for the ways the debate within the intelligence community can play out. I analyze the different kinds of fantasy structures that support each side of the debate, from the fantasy of James Bond finding freedom within his bureaucracy to follow his own instincts, to the fantasy of Jim Wormold in Graham Greene's *Our Man in Havana* fooling his bureaucracy, to George Smiley in le Carré's *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier,*

Spy mastering his. Unsurprisingly, one repeated way that authors of spy fiction, especially those with intelligence backgrounds themselves, represent defiance and the preservation of individual agency is by making their protagonists writers. We find it in the first part of the twentieth century in Somerset Maugham's *Ashenden* and in the first part of the twenty-first in Ian McEwan's *Sweet Tooth*. In these works, the craft of espionage and the craft of literary creation are twinned, and facility in the latter demonstrates success in the former as a kind of expert liar. However, the history of intelligence is plagued by literate liars and loquacious loose-tongues, creating misinformation or revealing classified information with the urgency of political action and the force of literary talent. Thus, writing itself becomes a double-edged sword in the discourse of espionage, a tool for better performance and a marker of the "right kind" of spy, but also a potential tool of defiance.[19]

But bureaucracy is not always so easily defied or thwarted, and sometimes an author's moral criticism, as in le Carré's *A Most Wanted Man,* requires their protagonist to be crushed under the weight of red tape. After all, the bureaucratic intelligence agency is not a benevolent machine after all; in the best cases it is cold and paternalistic, the worst corrupt and cruel. Bureaucracy diffuses blame. On one level, bureaucratic diffusion of blame is self-preservation, as structures in which power and responsibility are clearly delineated do not last beyond their head's tenure. There may even be a compelling case to be made that civil society needs an organization like the FBI to ultimately be both larger and less than immediately responsive to its head[20] (despite what J. Edgar Hoover might have one think). But the flip side of bureaucratic

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[19] The former CIA agent who helped create the TV show *The Americans,* Joe Weisberg, was asked in his CIA-polygraph interview whether he was joining just to get information for a novel (Leeds). Oops. Should have asked about a TV show.

[20] We are seeing such a case be made in real time with the Mueller investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 election. A more streamlined intelligence apparatus more directly under

expansiveness is bureaucratic obscurity, and when obscurity meets the national security mandate to know, the potential for cruelty is rife because the potential of getting away with it is extremely high. For example, take Gina Haspel. Haspel ran the black site prison in Thailand in which many actual, suspected, and misidentified al Qaeda operatives were subject to water-boarding and other forms of enhanced interrogation (Kelly). These sessions were videotaped, but despite a Congressional request to preserve these tapes, they were destroyed before the Senate Intelligence Committee could view them. Haspel ordered their destruction; she is now President Trump's nominee to be director of the CIA. When Senate Democrats protested this appointment, the defenses from the intelligence community shared the same tone: someone else ordered Haspell to destroy those tapes (Kelly). And who was that? Well, that remains a secret; we can agree cruelty occured, but not who to blame for it. Cruelty in espionages is the large-scale embrace of illegal, unethical, and immoral strategies for intelligence-gathering and spy work—torture and its euphemistic cousin "enhanced interrogation," black-bag kidnapping covert ops missions, assassination (or "targeted killing" in the parlance). It is one of two topics I address in my third chapter, along with technophilia. Both cruelty and technophilia result from the bureaucratic drive for results and efficiency and the intelligence service mandate for secrecy, making them a thematically-resonant pair to examine together. As internal drivers within the logic of intelligence work and as discourses which sanction a certain kind of spy work, both cruelty and technophilia have shaped the development of the intelligence community over the past 50 years.

Spy fiction in which the protagonists save the day by means of ethically-compromised behavior, like the TV drama *24*, attaches a false sense of urgency to acts of moral cruelty. With

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the executive branch would not likely have the impartiality and qualified personnel to carry out such a sensitive investigation with anything approaching public confidence.

this urgency comes a cultural license for actual agencies to mimic their fictional counterparts. The outrage is tampered down in advance by the theatricality of cruelty. This cultural license is an expectation that the public has about spy work, a willingness to let cruelty go when it matches the accepted definition of what intelligence work is. Unafraid to criticize spy work as cruel, works such as the aforementioned *A Most Wanted Man* and the 2015 film *Sicario* take the opposite track to *24*. However, I have concerns about whether this depiction of cruelty is an effective critique, an ineffective one, or, worse, a choice that reaffirms for audiences the necessity of cruelty in spy work and/or a means to derive enjoyment from this cruelty. I find suspicious the notion that spy fiction can portray cruelty without endorsing it in some small measure, and argue that the reading or viewing pleasure in identifying with the individual intelligence agent can blunt the criticism in portraying the collective as cruel. If the universe of spy fiction is a universe in which the individual agent is always right, whether that agent is *24's* Jack Bauer or *A Most Wanted Man's* Gunther Bachmann, then why worry so much about what the larger organization is doing? Isn't it composed of many Gunther Bachmanns and Jack Bauers, and if not, if there are occasionally some "bad actors," then surely the Bachmanns will straighten it out? The way policy and structure create cruelty is under-emphasized in spy fiction, even though *Sicario* is a good-faith attempt to depict bureaucracy as the ultimate bad guy. The theatricality of cruelty, especially of torture, as it is presented in spy fiction makes the genre complicit in the acceptance of torture by the general public and by the intelligence apparatus itself; military officials have had to ask the producers of *24* to stop portraying torture as the first and best choice for intelligence-gathering because too many soldiers were mimicking Bauer (Nelson 64). I analyze the long relationship between torture, spy fiction, and spy work in Chapter

Three, and argue that treating the issue of torture in intelligence work as solely a policy issue, instead of a cultural one, will not be sufficient to end the practice.

Technophilia, the fascination with gadgets, computer network intelligence-gathering, and radio, satellite and drone surveillance, is similarly situated as cruelty is within the discourse of espionage. It is a set of practices and technologies but also attitudes, shaped as much by capability—what is possible—as by desirability. The coolness of technological spycraft on display in spy media is the product of distortion. While spy agencies do often implement bleeding-edge technological design, and have been known to disguise weapons as pens or other prosaic devices, the mismatch between how technological spycraft is portrayed and its actual use is wide. The fantasy of technophilia is one of frictionless omniscience, of a big brother who stands as the ultimate witness of wrong-doing. What this fantasy ignores is the end of privacy as we know it, the diminishment of human relationships and human networks of information gathering, and the replacement of human agents with field experience with computer analysts. The technocratic spy agency has become inseparable from our modern experience, from our online behaviors and its monitoring (hi NSA!) to the digital penetration of social media by Russian intelligence contractors during political elections. I argue that the willingness of the public to, by and large, surrender to the idea that spy agencies can and should become an all-seeing eye, despite a less-than-stellar track record for technological espionage as a whole, is in large part a product of social conditioning. This conditioning arises from consumer spaces, certainly; the willful self-surveillance that we allow Facebook, Google and Amazon et al. (and there are a lot more) helps to normalize the digital surveillance power of the state. But as journalist Robert Draper points out, the countries in which surveillance culture is most normalized are also the countries that most heavily romanticize espionage, with the U.K. and its

fascination with Bond and Bletchley Park[21] and its leading camera-per-capita surveillance

system leading the way (Draper 48). I analyze Bond's relation with his gadget-master, Q, and the

British television program *Spooks* as two among many examples of how spy fiction makes

technophilia attractive as an appropriate and effective principle of spycraft, and thereby affects

what the public expects and allows from its spy agencies. The technophilic pursuit of efficiency

within the intelligence community is the most visible tenet of the espionage mindset for Western

observers. Whether through spy films such as *Spectre* or TV shows such as *Spooked* or *NCIS,* or

through Edward Snowden (who has had two films and counting made about his life), wikileaks,

Robert Mueller's Russia investigation, or even seeing a targeted advertisement online, the tools,

techniques and technologies that make SIGINT have entered into our collective cultural

consciousness. We know we are being watched, and this changes how we consider those doing

the watching. Faith in intelligence agencies is at a pronounced low. I conclude these two chapters

by examining how the impersonalization and dehumanization that surveillance culture enforces

on its watched subjects makes the espionage mindset counter-productive. Spy agencies mistake

seeing for understanding, and consequently see far less than they imagine. I return to this theme

in the final chapter of my dissertation as well, in the context of drone use.

Chapter Outline: Chapters 4, 5 and 6

Whereas my first two chapters proper are invested in describing the spy agency as a

discursive entity, my middle two chapters seek to answer the question of who *can* be a spy

within this changing cultural discourse of espionage—in other words, what are the characteristics

of the secret agent in fiction and in fact, and how do those characteristics change over time. Spies

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[21] The location of Alan Turing's code-breaking group during WWII, a group which cracked the
famed Nazi enigma machine with proto-computers and thereby hastened the end of the war.

take various forms in fiction. These forms are influenced by time period, shifting cultural norms, whether the character is "with us" or "against us," genre, author, etc. But at its root, the secret agent is an information collector, usually officially licensed by a state or a large, supra-national entity such as the UN, a multi-national corporation, or a global organized movement—a nebulous classification which includes global communism in the vein of the Third International and also fascistic conspiracies, terrorist/anarchist groups, and secret societies. Thus, in examining who can be a spy in fiction, we gain insight into what kinds of people are culturally seen as believable agents of and enemies of the state (and as a consequence capable of examining, analyzing, storing, transporting, and creating state knowledge). We also glimpse as the nature of the facts and speculations that are supposed by popular culture to compose that knowledge. In this respect, spy fiction is like its close generic cousin, detective fiction, in that it, too, concerns the mechanisms of a Foucauldian discipline, the components of which are pervasive surveillance, self-policing, internalizing the ideals of state control, and the use of statistical knowledge to analyze and control populations. Slavoj Zizek writes that the classic detective is akin to the Lacanian analyst, the "subject supposed to know" the "true meaning of our act, the meaning visible in the very falseness of the appearance" (Zizek 57). The omniscience of Hercule Poirot or Sherlock Holmes would be ill-suited to the spy genre though, which hinges not on the near-immediate mental apprehension of a suspect's innocence or guilt, but rather on the belabored, drawn-out discovery of key information that either threatens the disciplinary regime of the state or must be protected to preserve it. The spy is less the "subject supposed to know" and more the "subject supposed to find out" about the "real" threat facing not just an individual, but the very world-system of which the spy is a part.

Spies must therefore be deemed trustworthy by their superiors and the populace at large. This is easier said than done though, as espionage has been somewhat synonymous with skullduggery, lying, manipulation, and other shady-dealings. The discourse of espionage in general and spy fiction particularly have helped with this image problem by transforming the spy into the secret agent. Secret agents are invested with the authority of the state, a prospect which presumes the agent is worthy of that authority. Thus, we find that the cultural shorthands for "worth" are in full effect in answering the question "who can be a spy, or, more accurately, a secret agent?" These shorthands, unsurprisingly, are coincident with privilege—the secret agent comes from the ruling or dominant class, gender, race, etc. In the expected contrast, the "spy," or the subversive enemy agent, diverges from the categories of privilege in some way or ways. They must have some whiff of the cultural Other about them; perhaps they are secretly homosexual, or of mixed-race, or physically disabled, or possess aristocratic airs in a culture of bourgeois middle-managers. We see these distinctions in spy fiction of all stripes, from the most adrenaline-filled thriller to the most cerebral slow-burners. Unfortunately, we also find it in how Ethel and Julius Rosenberg were treated in the press, and how the U.K. media responded to the Cambridge defections. I argue that this is not a coincidence, but an example of how individual choices, ideologies of gender, policy decisions about intelligence gathering, and the numerous other components of the discourse of espionage become entwined.

Chapter Four seeks to map out the relation between the spy in popular culture, homosexuality, and masculinity. I begin by describing the ideal British secret agent, a type of ideal man, at the onset of spy fiction at the turn of the twentieth century. This character—an amateur, belonging to the leisure-class, with a colonial background or experience—is best represented by John Buchan's Richard Hannay. Hannay palliates an anxious British public, riled

up by William le Queux's anti-German conspiracy fantasies. Hannay assures his audience that "our best people" are on the case. At the same time, Hannay's popularity pressures fledgling intelligence departments to recruit men like him into the service; a natural fit, given the overlap between stand-alone intelligence agencies and colonial-military intelligence units at the dawn of MI5 and MI6. The Eton man—the British gentleman bred in the public-school system for colonial service—was the ideal secret agent because he already met the cultural expectations of the ideal spy fiction protagonist. Given the power the patriarchal, patrician system had at the time to select itself as its own successor, we should not be surprised that the first few generations of secret service men conformed to a very similar type. However, we do not find that this Oxbridge gentleman still represents the cultural expectation of a secret agent—even Bond's level of posh has varied significantly over the years. In Chapter Four, I determine when, why and how this change took place. The answers respectively emerge mid-century because of a drastic shift in the public trustworthiness of the classic spy type, and through cultural pressure as much as historical redesigning of intelligence after World War II.

These cultural pressures—cultural catalysts for a complete overhaul in the public image of the spy—focused on an unexpectedly fraught relation between masculinity, class, homosexuality, and trustworthiness. This relation was upended by the Cambridge 5 defections at the onset of the Cold War; but the anxiety of the closet—that is, the anxiety that the kind of *homosocial* masculinity required culturally for governmental service was too close to homosexuality—is an old one in espionage discourse. In fact, it is exacerbated within this cultural space, as the secret and at times underhanded nature of espionage seemed always on the edge of triggering a cultural panic about "covert perverts" in the secret service. Drawing on the work of Eve Sedgwick and Erin Carlston, I explore the metaphorical prevalence of

homosexuality in spy fiction and its attempts to stamp out that anxiety before the Cambridge Spy Ring and the homophobia of HUAC and McCarthy. Like Carlston in her book *Double Agents*, I recognize that a fear of the Other, specifically the homosexual as a threat to the state, is a significant factor in the Cold War redefinition of the spy. Unlike Carlston, however, I offer reasons as to why the first part of the twentieth century seemed to have had no problem with employing gay men throughout the spy service, as the ideal secret agent was felt to require so many of the characteristics--ease in homosocial situations, academic and specialized knowledge, upper-class background, ability to keep secrets, etc.—as the early twentieth century conception of the gay man as Alan Sinfield defines him in his work *The Wilde Century*. Also unlike Carlston, I argue that dissatisfaction with this model of the ideal secret agent actually began in the high Modernist period with attacks on the effectiveness of spy services from both the Right and the Left. The onset of Cold War paranoia over state secrets, rather than being the initial catalyst for a drastic change in spy fiction, is instead, in my view, the last straw for both the old conceptions of the spy and the older ideal of the masculinity they represented. While some authors grappled with those implications, others set about inventing new character-types that aimed to conform to a rapidly changing definition of what makes a "good" spy. The success of these characters in both the marketplace in general and in intelligence circles ensured that they would be the first in the line that ultimately yields the figurative and literal killing machines of the present.

Central to this shift, James Bond emerges into a cultural moment ready to make him the most popular secret agent, real or fictional, and ready to read his characteristics as a part of spy work itself. The second half of Chapter Four examines Bond as a cultural force in depth. The accoutrements that make Bond recognizable across decades, novels, short stories, films and

actors are not arbitrary. They form the Bond cultural identity, a construct unattached to the particulars of any one plot or characterization. As a series of symbols and tropes, Bond has become an integral part of how the public conceives spy work, and as I examine here, how the intelligence community sees itself. This is not to say that real spy work has embraced the absurdity of *Moonraker* exactly, or to suggest that most intelligence work no longer involves analysis. Rather, Bond can be understood as a kind of founding figure in a cultural formation I term "drone masculinity." In the Bond stories and films, we can see how the mindset characteristic of drone masculinity—a tendency to violence, a subordination of the masculine id to patriarchal bureaucracy, a machine-like focus on accomplishing strategic goals—become attached to incentivizing rewards, like sexual pleasure, consumer pleasure and tourist pleasure. Bond is a salesman for drone masculinity, intentionally sometimes, especially during the immediate aftermath of the Burgess and Maclean defections, but sometimes also purely on the basis of his cultural momentum and accrued historical popularity.

Chapter Five builds on understanding Bond as a cultural force by examining his legacy with the cultural discourse of espionage. Here, I describe drone masculinity and its effects within intelligence work more fully. I analyze how Bond and his cultural imitators have become embedded in the language of intelligence work, serving as recruiting tools, easy analogies, and aspirational figures. The "Bond effect," as I call it, has been to present intelligence as less morally complex than it ought to be considered. As a result, we have seen the rise of ethical conundrums within the culture of intelligence. For example, in the practice of sheep-dipping, Special Forces operators are reclassified as intelligence workers in order to avoid legal prohibitions relating to active combat zones. This practice springs both from the desire to have a more flexible, efficient covert action force and from the expectation that intelligence work is

inherently violent and that the rule of law is not a match for the "license to kill." This expectation

to "play James Bond," exists to a high degree within intelligence agencies (Mazzetti 82). But it

also exists in the public sphere, where it mediates our ideas about what kinds of action are

allowed as a part of intelligence work. Sometimes, these allowances about kinds of action extend

to allowances about the people carrying out those actions; drone masculinity also entails ignoring

and downplaying issues in the psychological health and well-being of intelligence and Special

Forces personnel. This means systematic mishandling of spiking PTSD cases, and of the rampant

sexual harassment and assault that occurs in a culture in which violence, hierarchy, sexuality,

and violent forms of masculinity are so closely tied together. It also means licensing illegal and

unethical acts by intelligence agents in the pursuit of their goals. Torture, extraordinary rendition,

and drone warfare by intelligence agencies fundamentally change the relation between the U.S.

and its allies, partners, and the other sovereign nations whose territorial sovereignty we routinely

ignore. However, the evidence that any of these tactics are strategically advantageous ranges

from non-existent (extraordinary rendition) to mixed (drone warfare) to clearly in the negative

(torture). In the long term, drone masculinity has not performed to its own standards, making the

costs it accrues unsustainable. As a discursive feature of the culture of intelligence, it will linger

on as long as cultural representation reinforces the naturalness of the mindset for intelligence

workers. Thus, we must seek other kinds of masculine representation in culture broadly but also

in spy fiction and media itself.

The second half of Chapter Five takes up this search. I examine works by John le Carré,

Robert Ludlum, Eric Ambler, and John Banville, in addition to examining actor Daniel Craig's

performance of James Bond in more detail, in an effort to find alternate masculinities heroically

presented within spy fiction. The emphasis on heroism is important for reasons of cultural

palatability; no other masculinity can displace drone masculinity until the definition of a hero is decoupled from the nexus of tropes, beliefs and attitudes that constitute drone masculinity. However, attempts to do this are mixed, as entertainment value in a populist genre like spy fiction continues to embrace spectacle, and especially the spectacle of violence. The character Jason Bourne may feel intense shame and guilt over his prowess at killing, but his stories are still propelled by the deployment and necessity of violence. Le Carré's George Smiley, Gunther Bachmann, and Jonathan Pine as well as Banville's Victor Maskell shun the covert action turn in intelligence entirely, but the fundamental moral ambiguity in these works prevents these characters from usurping the Bondian ideal from its perch as the most popular and widely-imitated secret agent. Reckoning with drone masculinity and how to defeat it still means reckoning with Bond. Fortunately, the more recent Bond films seem willing, at least in part, to do that kind of reckoning. Bond still sells us the idea of consumer-cool, but actor Daniel Craig's and director Sam Mendes' take in *Skyfall* and *Spectre* on the legacy and relevance of the character attempts to remake Bond as a champion of the human agent. This is more than a little odd. Bond, after all, helped usher in mechanization to the intelligence world. He did so both metaphorically, in the sense of ceding personal agency to hierarchy and bureaucracy, and literally, in the sense of increased SIGINT and drone use. Perhaps, though, reform must start with those who most need it.

Such reform is urgent if intelligence can ever be used to hasten the arrival of world peace, rather than as a strategic tool for managing internal dissent and external wars. Intelligence since its inception as a government bureaucratic entity has chased particularism and national chauvinism over universalism and international cooperation. Heads of intelligence work may say that this split is inherent in the twin mandates of secrecy and national security. I disagree; I see

very little reasoning behind pitting national security and international cooperation against each other. In my final chapter, I examine one reason the discourse of espionage has furthered divides within the nation and between nations. Specifically, I interrogate the role of the Other as a rhetorical construct within that discourse. In other words, if Chapters four and five took as the question "who can be a spy?" Chapter 6 asks "who can be the enemy?" Spy fiction, as discussed above, provided a tremendous push in the run-up to WWI on the British cultural imagination to imagine the Germans—considered ethnically and racially like the British (especially in comparison to the French)—as a malevolent force. Throughout the twentieth century, Germany, the USSR, and then Arabic terrorism have served as bogeymen in the pages and on the screens of spy media at large, and intelligence agencies, recognizing the opportunity to leverage cultural Othering into political influence, have been loath to diffuse the public's paranoia. I begin with a general overview of how Othering has shaped the discourse of espionage and the public's experience of it. Drawing on the work of Edward Said and Homi K. Bhaba and other post-colonial critics, I push beyond simplistic depictions of Others in spy fiction. Transparently evil villains are somewhat of a staple in the genre, but spy fiction hardly draws its interest from the white hat/black hat moralizing of the stereotypical Western. Instead, I argue that the threat of the Other in spy fiction is the threat of the mimic, the threat that enmity and enemy can appear indistinguishable from the safe "reality" of social existence to all but the most trained eyes. This is the fear that incentivizes the ceding of power to intelligence professionals— indistinguishability requires omniscience to out. The dangers of treating this fear for entertainment value are readily apparent: a world in which neighbor cannot trust neighbor unless they are all perfectly observed being presented as entertainment normalizes it. Inter-group and

intra-group mistrust and bias become justifications for police action and for the surrender of liberal notions of privacy as the training-ground for the public soul.

After providing this general overview, which primarily engages with John Buchan, Eric Ambler, le Carré, and Fleming, I examine how one particular case of Othering has affected the intelligence community's inability to fulfill its national security mandate without also being an instrument of discrimination and oppression. In many ways the oldest form of Othering within the discourse of intelligence, Orientalism, is inseparable from the historical origins of the state-licensed intelligence agency. I argue that its latest manifestation is in the practice of drone warfare, best understood as a combination of technological capability, policy, and an Orientalist decision-making framework. The technological properties of drone warfare are not sufficient for the program to achieve its strategic aims--namely, a war of extreme precision. Civilian casualties and radicalization of local populations after heavy drone use make drone warfare's success record hopelessly inconclusive. The inability of drone warfare to be as effective as advertised arises because the practices of drone warfare remain rooted in Orientalism. My chapter aims to trace how elements of that entrenchment within espionage culture have affected the use and abuse of drones as a technology of colonial policing, asymmetrical killing, and voyeuristic surveillance. Without understanding historical strands of Orientalist thought and value-judgments, one cannot grasp how drone warfare has failed as the decisive warfare strategy they were designed to be. Seeing is not understanding, and the surveillance powers of the drone are limited by the very human interpreters of the video and audio feeds provided. The "drone Orientalism" that governs drone use in the Persian Gulf states, Central Asia, and North Africa is a part of the espionage mindset and a feature of the cultural discourse of espionage. It must be

combatted by both policy changes as well as cultural ones, and we face the urgent ethical task to do so.

Drone Orientalism is another example of the intelligence community's tilt away from human-focused intelligence work and towards dehumanization, SIGINT, and violent covert action. Intelligence approaches war in the manner that once frightened George Orwell, who in the quintessential surveillance novel *1984* predicted a future in which

> [W]arfare [is] of limited aims between combatants who are unable to destroy one another, [and] have no material cause for fighting…[It] involves very small numbers of people, mostly highly trained specialists, and causes comparatively few casualties. The fighting, when there is any, takes place on the vague frontiers whose whereabouts the average man can only guess at…In the centres of civilization war means no more than…the occasional crash of a rocket bomb which may cause a few scores of deaths.

War thrives when it is less and less personalized, to the point of becoming eternal. An intelligence community that pursues dehumanization as a strategic choice ensures its continued existence by betraying any hope of real security. As Mary Renda reminds us, culture is not a static product, "it is the doing of something—specifically, the making of meanings and thereby the structuring of human relationships" (25). The culture of espionage has moved away from those human relationships, and the role spy fiction and media have played in that shift marks the genre as culpable for a part of that shift. Even when spy fiction authors have emphasized human agency in their works, the trappings and tropes that constitute the bedrock of the genre's entertainment has worked against them. Critics of the genre have also been problematically asleep at the wheel, refusing to consider the genre with the attention it deserves. Reworking the culture of espionage means fundamentally rethinking the role spy fiction plays in it—the ways it

can shape and reinforce who can be a spy, what is proper action for spy agencies to take, who or what the "enemy" is. In order to do that reworking, we first have to understand where we are at. That is the goal of this dissertation.

Chapter 2 The Spy Agency as a Discursive Formation, Part 1: Conspiracy, Bureaucracy and the Espionage Mindset

The generally accepted history of spy fiction, articulated, among other places, in John Cawelti and Bruce Rosenberg's work *The Spy Story*, is that it grew out of some combination of the colonial adventure story, the detective novel, and the gothic romantic fantasy. These generic precursors offer much to our understanding of the tropes and structures of espionage fiction; from the adventure story spy authors borrowed an imaginary that purported to describe the Other, as well as learned how to write chases, and quests for hidden items (material in the adventure story, informational in the spy story); from the detective novel the spy story inherits master villains, intricate plotting, and brilliant protagonists; gothic romance lends spy fiction its sense of dread and paranoia, its dark halls of hidden strongholds filled with conspirators. But the innovations spy fiction makes to these pre-existing templates define the genre as a major one for the twentieth century, arguably more dynamic and better-selling in the past hundred years than any of its forebears. Double agents, fantastic gadgets, and clever individuals navigating complicated webs of international intrigue have become part of our pop-culture landscape, as have the shadowy organizations that these pop-culture heroes and villains work for—those three letter agencies: CIA, FBI, NSA, MI5, MI6, KGB, FSB, BND[22], etc. The spy agency is a major part of spy fiction, and has, like other features of the genre, come to have symbolic resonances

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[22] Respectively the American international, domestic, and electronic intelligence agencies, the British domestic and international intelligence agencies, the Soviet Union's international intelligence agency, modern Russia's version of the same, and the German intelligence agency.

and memetic tropes attached to it. While each three-letter organization possesses very different

real-life remits and functions, the fictionalization of espionage work in spy fiction has flattened

many of these differences in order to tell spy stories that can resonate for a wide audience of spy

fiction fans. Western spy agencies in particular are recognizable in their bureaucracy, their

conspiratorial secrecy, their technophilia. Perhaps the most readily available archetype of the

Western spy agency is James Bond's MI6: led by a mysterious bureaucrat (M), highly

compartmentalized, eager to show off Q branch's toys. The reader or viewer of a Bond narrative

is never allowed to see the totality of the agency; its presence seems to be endless, with agents

and at times whole branches appearing when and where they are needed by the plot. The

resulting duality is key to the spy agency as a cultural structure: the spy agency is both locatable,

in the offices of M and Moneypenny and Q, and also diffuse—its representatives are around

every corner, its surveillance always turned on. Sometimes, as in the Bond works, this duality is

meant to be comforting; sometimes, when the spy agency is the villainous group in the story, it is

meant to be terrifying and paranoia-inducing; and, sometimes, the absurdity of an infinite Big

Other staffed by bureaucrats and wannabe action heroes is played for laughs, such as in Graham

Greene's *Our Man in Havana* (1958) or the TV show *Archer* (2009). But spy agencies are not

merely assemblages of tropes; they actually exist, are funded by public money and staffed by

thousands of workers with diverse intelligence roles. They work in secret and function as a key

support in the modern nation-state's security apparatus. The actual activities of spy agencies are

covered in a cloak of clandestinity, at least unless they are leaked to the public or they

spectacularly succeed or fail to the point that the agency divulges them. Spy fiction offers a

glimpse into that secret world for a public that finds it fascinating but has little direct experience

of spy agencies themselves—a feeling of inclusion aided by the overlap between spy authors and former intelligence agents.

At the same time, mistaking spy fiction directly for reality is a misstep that critics have not made at least since Michael Denning's *Cover Stories*; as discussed in the Introduction, "realism" in depiction of spies and spy agencies is itself a trope, an authorial choice that can perform ideological work.[23] Cawelti and Rosenberg argue that spy fiction is thus one-half reality and one-half melodrama, equal parts real-world detail and fantasy (56). I am not sure on the exact proportions, but the blend of both reality and fantasy in spy fiction has had a potent effect on the public imagination. The (scant) information to come to the public's attention from actual intelligence organizations has left conceptual gaps in the public understanding of spy agencies and spy work, gaps spy fiction has, perhaps inadvertently but inevitably, filled. The result has been the transformation of the spy agency into a discursive entity. By this, I mean that spy agencies are understood by and to a certain extent understand themselves through the lens of fiction, and that they also are talked about and (to a certain extent) talk about themselves through the symbolic, metaphoric, metonymic, and memetic vocabulary of fiction. While the consequences of spy agency actions are very real, interactions between the public and state intelligence are influenced and mediated by fantasy structures, most notably assumptions about what spy agencies are and what they are allowed to do. Instead of crafting moral, ethical and legal justifications for their actions, or accepting responsibility when these justifications are lacking, intelligence agencies have sometimes leaned on fiction to make the case for covert action or expanded powers, as in the case, examined below, of the actual founding of MI6 in response to the invasion literature of William Le Queux. Additionally, pressure to conform to

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[23] See page #7 in Introduction for a discussion of this trope.

expectations arising from fictional representations of intelligence work that the public, policy makers, and intelligence personnel hold has led to changes, some drastic, in how intelligence agencies operate.

The first two chapters of my dissertation examine the role the spy agency has played in spy fiction, the role spy fiction has played in shaping our understanding of real-world spy agencies, and the way our experiences with real-world espionage have filtered into spy fiction. In order to do this, I will dissect the current role the spy agency plays in cultural discourse, and then trace the lineages both in fiction and in political history of the key components of that role. Spy organizations currently find themselves in an ambiguous position in our cultural landscape, owing to ambivalent feelings about them by the public at large. In recent years, as Cawelti and Rosenburg point out, "there is an increasing awareness of the way in which organizations like the CIA abuse their authority by fomenting problems that threaten the peace more than they work to preserve it" (36). We see this in reactions to the revelations by Edward Snowden, Chelsea Manning, and other whistleblowers that the NSA, CIA, GCHQ (the UK's version of the NSA) and other global intelligence agencies were engaged in widespread domestic and international surveillance, collecting, storing, and in many cases analyzing the digital footprints of every person to use electronic devices, regardless of any legal justification that such collection was necessary for national security purposes. These revelations are the latest examples of the intelligence world's clandestine bubble being punctured to show unethical, immoral and/or illegal activity within. This lineage of "inconvenient" (for the intelligence world) revelations also includes, for example, torture in CIA secret prisons, the arming of the Taliban during the Russian

invasion of Afghanistan, the Watergate scandal, revelations about programs like MK-ULTRA,[24] the Bay of Pigs invasion, and the Iranian coup of 1953. Such revelations increase the public's sense of **conspiracy** in the intelligence world, its intuition that intelligence agencies do not have to play by the same rules as everyone else, and that they are taking advantage of the secrecy of their operations to rig world-events to their own benefit over and above the benefit they are tasked with providing to the citizenry of their respective nation-states. Conspiracy is a key component of the portrayal of the spy agency in cultural discourse, including (and aided by) fictional works as diverse in time, theme, and intended audience as *The Man who was Thursday* (1908)*, The Human Factor* (1978)*, The Bourne Identity* (1980), and *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* (2014).

The sense of conspiracy surrounding intelligence activities and agencies leads to a desire among journalists, watchdog groups, scholars, and concerned citizens for more transparency, a desire often frustrated by another characteristic of the modern spy agency: **bureaucracy.** In the modern era, there is nothing secret about the size of intelligence agencies; they are massive, multi-headed, well-funded, and so integral to the functioning of the nation-state that to imagine a national security apparatus without intelligence services seems impossible. Yet only a little over a hundred years ago, dedicated independent intelligence agencies did not exist, and two hundred years ago even military intelligence branches were loosely organized and purely informal. Espionage is old, but the spy agency as a bureaucratic megastructure is comparatively new. The spies in Queen Elizabeth's spy ring, like Sir Walter Raleigh for example, had no official state standing—they were private individuals who were entirely on their own should they be

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[24] CIA experiments on the mind-control, brain-washing, and interrogation potential of mind-altering drugs and psychological techniques (Eschner).

discovered. Even when, in the 1870s, the British military created in-house intelligence departments, these departments were small, loosely organized (i.e. agents had very few points of contact with command or other agents), and narrowly focused on the gathering of intelligence, especially geographic, cultural, and political information of relevance to the British Empire. Intelligence-gathering, counter-espionage, and covert action are now handled not by one entity, but by hundreds (when one considers contractors) in the U.S. alone, emerging in the years since the end of the Second World War and the dismantling of the covert action wartime agency, the Office of Strategic Services. The most notable of these alphabet-soup organizations, the CIA, was founded to be an intelligence-gathering body, but quickly ballooned into an expansive bureaucracy whose duties became increasingly diffuse. Frank Wisner and Allan Dulles, respectively the head of covert operations and the director of the CIA through most of the 1950s, were responsible for increasing the budget for the CIA eleven-fold between 1948 and the beginning of Eisenhower's presidency. On its own, the covert operations branch—the violent-action wing—received $400 million out of the $587 million allotted to the CIA in 1951 (Weiner 53). Since then, the military-intelligence complex in the U.S. has expanded into a difficult to grasp web of federal and state agencies as well as private contractors, an expansion mirrored internationally.[25] Bureaucratic expansion, an ever-growing set of self-imposed responsibilities, and an ethic of secrecy that enforces strict compartmentalization of different inter-agency and intra-agency departments do not make for transparency or ready accountability. As such, the inefficiencies of the quest for efficient intelligence has proven fodder for authors like Graham

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[25] Private contractors often work for several governments, especially along the lines of the "special relationship" between the U.S. and the U.K.

Greene, John le Carré, and Len Deighton who wish to portray the secret services as stumbling over their own girth.

Bureaucratic diffusion of responsibility has also been integral in shaping two other key aspects of the modern intelligence agency in cultural discourse: the **cruelty** and **technophilia** of the secret services. Lack of transparency in the structural and legal underpinnings of intelligence agencies have allowed them to push an agenda that is more and more concerned with violent action, including extraordinary rendition, torture, and targeted killing (which the agency refuses to term "assassination") missions carried out by drones. Despite the best efforts of the CIA and other intelligence agencies, these activities have become public knowledge; yet, once again, it is primarily through fiction that the citizens of the U.S., U.K. and other Western powers experience these actions. In contrast to those flying in Pakistan, the drones buzzing over the Nevadan desert do not fire Hellfire missiles, and the U.S. government is loath to discuss particulars of violent covert action that happens abroad. Spy fiction, perhaps problematically, has become the primary cultural form through which anxieties over the increase of violence in intelligence work can be expressed. We see this in films such as Denis Villanueve's *Sicario* (2015)*,* novels like John le Carré's *A Most Wanted Man* (2008)*,* and even television shows like *Homeland* (2011) and *Burn Notice* (2007)*.*

As mentioned earlier, there has been in recent years greater public discourse outside of fiction around the issue of domestic surveillance and the role spy agencies play in electronic networks. The intelligence world's fascination with technology is an old one—spy gadgets enter into the espionage vocabulary at the same time as spy agencies do—but no branch of espionage activity has benefitted more from bureaucratic expansion as the real-world equivalents of Q branch. After President Eisenhower's creation of the NSA in the mid-50s, it quickly became the

premiere U.S. intelligence-collecting agency, focusing on Signals Intelligence (SIGINT), that is, intelligence gathered electronically through monitoring, observation, or interception. By 1956, the NSA already had almost 9000 employees and about the same number of contractors, along with the most sophisticated computer technology in the world (Macrakis 322). The NSA also has changed how the other intelligence agencies function. For example, in 2013, the CIA's total budget was $14.7 billion, of which over half was devoted solely to SIGINT (Grey 274). The split within the intelligence community over the primacy of SIGINT over HUMINT (Human Intelligence, especially intel gathered from human agents strategically placed in sensitive positions) was at one time a bitter point of contention within the intelligence community at large. Scholar Kristie Macrakis argues that throughout the Cold War, the Eastern bloc and the U.K. were generally on the opposite side of HUMINT/SIGINT split from the U.S., and were, in fact, much less reliant for initial intelligence reports on SIGINT and electronically-collected data, favoring an agent-based HUMINT system over spy satellites and U2 planes (Macrakis 379). Any resistance intelligence agencies in the U.K. and former U.S.S.R. may have had toward SIGINT has vanished since 9/11, as shown in the revelations provided by Edward Snowden and others, but the conflict over the ethics and efficacy of technological solutions to intelligence problems is very much a live one in the cultural discourse of espionage in the West, both within agencies themselves and in public media at large.

The way spy fiction and spy discourse have addressed conspiracy, bureaucracy, cruelty, and technophilia in espionage have helped to transform the spy agency from a government department into a discursive entity, one with cultural valences as well as political ones. When a reader or watcher of spy narratives encounters the spy agency as a discursive entity, she or he is

reminded of their subjection to a Foucauldian discipline, which D.A. Miller describes in *The Novel and the Police* as composed of three characteristics:

> (1) an ideal of unseen but all-seeing surveillance, which, though partly realized in several, often interconnected institutions, is identified with none; (2) a regime of the norm, in which normalizing perceptions, prescriptions, and sanctions are diffused in discourses and practices throughout the social fabric; and (3) various technologies of the self and its sexuality, which administer the subject's own contribution to the intensive and continuous "pastoral" care that liberal society proposes to take of each and every one of its charges. (viii)

Spy stories remind us constantly that spy organizations are explicitly carrying out number 1, surveilling the populace for threats external and internal. They also see themselves as the necessary defenders of number 2, a regime of normalcy enforced by that very surveillance. Lastly, spy agencies are reliant on the self-policing and public contributions described by number 3 for help in uncovering the non-conforming, non-self-policing, and thus dangerous Other that might be lurking behind the façade of the Self/Same—the Red Scare being the most famous, though not only, example of this. But spy fiction is not known as a genre that in general inspires a kind of Kafka-esque dread (though there are perhaps exceptions that do). In fact, quite the opposite; spy fiction tends to emphasize the heroic overcoming of the conspiratorial, bureaucratic, cruel, and technophilic Big Other, regardless of the letters (KGB, CIA, etc.) that the Big Other goes by. The spy genre makes stories out of the political and cultural anxieties of modern society, but in general the actual plots of spy fiction are focused on the actions and reactions of the hero(es), transforming those anxieties into entertainment. The anxiety-inducing traits of the spy agency get transmuted into their opposites by the heroic plot: bureaucracy

becomes a backdrop to emphasize creativity, conspiracy plots are unraveled by knowledge and exposure, cruelty and violence are disparaged and disavowed, if not outright overcome, by the forces of strategy and morality, and technophilia is shown to be no replacement for old-fashioned human spirit and effort. One reason that this magic trick is so common in spy fiction is that it is a necessary move in the effort to make actual espionage activities and organizations into entertainment. Spy authors use the tools of fictionalization and narrativization to transform a secret world that, as we will see, is *actually* characterized by conspiracy, slow-moving and large bureaucracy, and an increasing technophilia into public entertainment. This necessitates the insertion of what Graham Greene might call (after his spy novel of the same name) "the human factor". However, the human factor—the plot-structure that pits human agency against the dehumanization of the spy agency—is not just a story-telling convention. It performs some ideological work by casting world politics and history as influence-able by lone human actors. This is a comforting thought in the late-capitalist world, a world that seems much too large and complex for any one person to make much of a difference. But the ability of an individual *to be an agent,* both in the sense of working for an intelligence agency and in the sense of affecting international relations, is baked into the appeal of spy fiction, and visible in the themes and tropes spy authors use.

For example, take the way Eric Ambler uses point of view. The Ambler-ian protagonist is generally an amateur caught up in a whirlwind of international intrigue. He often feels "in over his head," overwhelmed, and lost. But, Ambler uses this outsider perspective as a critique; the Ambler-ian protagonist does not, in contrast to James Bond, ever save the day, but he does possess the ability to witness and judge the playing out of structural conflict in the lives of individual people. Michael Denning articulates this nicely when he says that:

Centrality of point of view [in Ambler's novels] marks the dominance of an

ethical mode of thought. The concern for the ambiguity of all points of view, the

obsessive story of the loss of innocence, and the demystifying reduction of all

civilization to violence and brute force: all these aspects of the Ambler

metaphysic join to form a concern for *individual ethical decisions* [emphasis

added] in the context of certain established and permanent aspects of human

nature and experience. (83)

The concern for individual ethical decisions in the face of large-scale structural difficulties

places Ambler's works, and indeed the works of many of the most skilled authors of spy fiction,

including Henry James, Joseph Conrad, Graham Greene, W. Somerset Maugham, Elizabeth

Bowen, and John Le Carré, in the tradition of liberal humanism. This tradition of emphasizing

the importance of individual ethical decisions within the complexities of geopolitical

machinations has formed the foundation for an ongoing conversation about how espionage

agencies have and should conduct themselves. Of course, none of the authors go so far as to

advocate for the abolition of liberal democratic societies or intelligence agencies *per se*—all see

spies as serving some kind of necessary function. Some kind of surveillance is always inevitably

posited as necessary to the social contract. D.A. Miller argues that all novels "confirm the novel-

reader in his identity as a 'liberal subject'" and thereby also affirms the innate worth, if not the

particular points of contention,[26] of the political, social and cultural regimes which the reader is

subject to (Miller x). Spy fiction is no exception, despite its sometimes doom and gloom and

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[26] I.E., a John le Carré novel—for example, *A Most Wanted Man*—can be read as arguing against covert action, but in positing the necessity of doing away with the CIA's love of covert action in order to create a better intelligence agency, the novel still reaffirms the need for intelligence agencies.

railing against the inhumanity of the world. However, Miller also maintains that the liberal

subject "seems to recognize himself most fully only when he forgets or disavows his functional

implication in a system of carceral restraints or disciplinary injunctions" (x). Spy fiction

accomplishes the confirmation of the reader as a liberal subject despite emphasizing her or his

functional implication in a system of surveillance, discipline and restraint. In order to understand

this sleight of hand, it is necessary to examine how that system, metonymized as the spy agency,

talks about itself and is talked about in cultural discourse at large and in spy fiction in particular.

When we examine spy fiction this way, we find that even when the author means to position the

human agent as a critique of an inhuman agency operating in an inhumane world, the act of

representing that agency in a fantastical manner builds into that critique an element of pleasure

and acceptance—an understanding that the spy agency is "supposed" to work that way.

When placing the individual agent against tropes of conspiracy, bureaucracy, cruelty and

technophilia, the later tropes come to compose integral pieces of something I term the

"espionage mindset." The espionage mindset is, is characterized by, and does. It is the

discursive naturalization of dehumanizing and de-agentifying practices because of culturally

reinforced expectations that spy agencies are "supposed" to act in that manner. As discussed

above, even when the agentive opposition exists, the repetitive placement of the inhumane spy

agency as the contrasted term normalizes the inhumanity. The public, and intelligence workers

themselves, buy into the characterization. The espionage mindset is itself characterized by

instrumental thinking, a gamification of politics, and chauvinism for the agency itself, even over

the nation-state. It does in the sense that all discourses do—it convinces, normalizes, suggests,

and incentivizes its own position as the dominant ideology within intelligence. The espionage

mindset is an example of what I termed in the introduction a "cultural lattice," a framework of

easy references created in large part by fiction, material and institutional design, and mental heuristic. Decision-making within intelligence work takes place within this particular lattice, leading to a disproportionate influence of discursive formations like conspiracy and bureaucracy and the spy fiction that helps advance them. In this chapter, I will demonstrate how the espionage mindset emerges through this paradoxical mechanism of critique and acceptance, of personal agency living within the constraints of state-sponsored agencies, by analyzing the way conspiracy and bureaucracy are used to characterize the spy agency. In the next chapter, I will show how cruelty and technophilia in intelligence work are themselves products of the espionage mindset, artifacts of cultural expectations of intelligence work as much as direct orders from superiors.

The SPECTRE of the Many-Headed HYDRA: Conspiracy and the Public's Experience of Spy Agencies

Writing about conspiracy in a time when President Trump continues to decry the election he won as rigged by systematic voter fraud has caused me to reconsider the role conspiracies play in public discourse from the first time I drafted this chapter. In that earlier draft, I posited that conspiracies act as a kind of bad-faith Big Other, omnipotent and omniscient and constantly menacing. Conspiracies inspire in the subject a paranoid reading of signs, as anything might be a clue that the conspiracy exists and is out to get you. These negative psychic feelings in which the subject is forced to confront his or her subjectedness to political (and social and cultural) regimes beyond their control cry out for a therapeutic working-through. I argued that one of the great pleasures of spy fiction is derived from exactly this need for reassurance that the conspiracy can be overcome by the heroic secret agent, an act that, in Michael Denning's words, "returns human agency to a world which seems less and less the product of human action" (14). However, I now

believe that while conspiracies can function this way in fiction, spy fiction especially, I do not think that the reassurance narrative is the reason conspiracy as a kind of belief/believing has had a lasting place in cultural discourse. Namely, aside from the pleasure in exposing and overcoming a conspiracy, there also exists a kind of deeper pleasure in actually *believing one exists* in the first place. President Trump's contentions that only a conspiracy could be responsible for his failure to capture the popular vote helped me to realize that belief in a conspiracy can provide the psychic pleasure of being "in the know." It is a very strange reaction-formation, but the belief in conspiracies, in plots so powerful, widespread and secret that they can accomplish anything, is a reassuring fantasy that the subject who doesn't belong to the conspiracy but who knows about it must be therefore right, good, and smart—that they are privileged subjects who can see the "true nature of the world," or the true (*obviously* reptilian[27]) face of the Big Other. The fantasy here is not in overcoming the conspiracy, but in only failing *because* a conspiracy exists. The subject repeats to himself, "The universe had to cheat to beat me, but I am on to that game." I think it is this aspect of conspiracy theorizing that transforms all pieces of contradictory evidence into proof the conspiracy exists; a believer can assuage all doubt by saying to herself "*of course* the evidence says there is not a conspiracy, that's what we would expect to find if there were one." Conspiracies thus help to bring order to a chaotic, contradictory, possibly meaningless (or at least without an *a priori* meaning) social reality. In hindsight, I should have seen this other pleasure in conspiracy the first time through—in fact, it is essential, to the formation of both spy fiction and formal spy agencies, as I will show through an examination of early works in the genre by William Le Queux, Henry James's proto-spy

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[27] That a race of intelligent prehistoric reptiles controls world government in conjunction with/as the Illuminati is a somewhat well-known conspiracy theory, first put forward by David Icke (Bump).

novel *Princess Casamassima* (1886), and Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent* (1907). I also

discuss the continuing legacy of the conspiracy in the discourse of espionage, both in how spy

agencies are presented in historical discussions of their activities, for example, in the Bay of Pigs

invasion and in more modern works such as Hitchcock's *North by Northwest* (1959), the Bond

series, the *Mission: Impossible* films and even the recent superhero film *Captain America: The*

Winter Soldier (2014).

Conspiracy, as mentioned above, has a central place in the shared history of spy fiction

and spy agencies. Primarily, this place has been that of antagonist, real or imagined. Svetlana

Bloym defines the conspiracy as "a subversive kinship of others, an imagined community based

on exclusion more than affection, a union of those who are not with us, but against us" (41). A

conspiracy is always many-headed,[28] shadowy, powerful; their mere existence makes the

domestic space a possible threatening location. They are often portrayed as the "over there" in

the heart of the "here", or the foreign elements hiding within the power apparatus of the nation.

One has to know about them to stop them. Conveniently, there exists a whole class of

professionals dedicated to uncovering and rooting out the subversive others working in plain

sight to undermine "us": the intelligence agent. I doubt I am being very unique when I observe

that the threat of the Other is often used as a cudgel to "entice" (i.e. force) people to homogenize,

to shake off the luxurious apathy of contentment and rally to the defense of the Same. But the

threat of the *conspiratorial* Other does more—it convinces people to give up portions of their

autonomy and agency in order to be better *known* to their governmental apparatus. The point is

to distinguish themselves from that Other, to say "I am not him." Invoking a conspiracy is a

demand for the license to know who is and isn't a part of it, and thus a justifying factor in the

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[28] The villainous conspiracy of *Captain America: Winter Soldier* is even called HYDRA.

formation of groups dedicated to finding that distinguishing information, i.e. intelligence

services. In fact, some scholars, like Phillip Knightley, take the strong view that the assumption

that fictional conspiracies were real was the only thing that made intelligence services palatable

to the general public:

> The history of intelligence agencies has shown us that they justify their existence
> by promising to provide timely warning of a menace. In the Western world we
> have become so accustomed to this menace being the Soviet Union…that one
> wonders what the agencies did before the Red threat existed. The answer is: they
> invented one. … These pre-1914-1918 spy writers projected their fantasies into
> the real world. [William] Le Queux bore some direct responsibility for the
> creation of Britain's Secret Intelligence Service, from which all others flowed;
> [John] Buchan became a recruiter of SIS spies. Both decided that the monster
> menacing Britain was Imperial Germany, a proposition enthusiastically supported
> by the intelligence services, who quickly realized that without a threat they were
> out of business. (390)

Knightley argues that the conspiracy crossed over from the pages of Le Queux and Buchan into

the real world, that their paranoid imaginings of militant Germany became a cultural paranoia,

which hastened the actual conflict (WWI) by building assumptions that "they" were out to get

"us" into policy—the creation of spy services. David Trotter relates how Le Queux, along the

serialization of his novel *Spies for the Kaiser: Plotting the Downfall of England* in the *Weekly*

News, ran an ad copy before it that read "FOREIGN SPIES IN BRITAIN/£10 Given for

Information/Have you seen a spy?" Le Queux got numerous replies, most for innocuous things

like "swearing in German or wearing a wig," and sent those replies to James Edward Edmonds,

head of military intelligence, who used them to convince the Committee of Imperial Defence to set up a new Secret Services Bureau (the precursor to MI5 and MI6) (Trotter 31). Needless to say that Le Queux and his readers were not actually in possession of any secret information, nor did they possess any leads on actual German agents. What they felt was a strong desire to be "in the know." Le Queux's espionage literature built a cultural discourse for people to participate in, and the opportunity to air grievances, paranoias, biases, and prejudices. This discursive space allowed for a transformation of the terrifying belief that they lived in a world in which even the waiter at the corner restaurant could be an enemy agent into something preferable and pleasurable, a confirmation of "what I have always known," that is, that the world is secretly divided into a "them" and an "us." Participation in this discourse *seems like* vindication (a vindication Le Queux profited on[29]) and vindication—of the self and the self's ability to discern—feels good. But assuming conspiracies exist and talking about them does not prove they are real. Rather, the assumption merely increases the power of the fantasy of conspiracy, and in turn of the century Britain this fantasy was powerful enough to create a governmental department.

The conspiracy is very effective as a fantasy, as a rhetorical bogeyman. Real life conspiracies, since they are by definition not widely known while they are operating, can only be evaluated in hindsight, at which point they have either achieved their aims and "gone public," or have not and been uncovered. Many end up being quite prosaic, motivated by greed or the desire to cover up some illegal actions by its members. As some quick Internet searching will show, it is in fantasy where conspiracies take on their most intricate design, and their most imaginative and generative powers. Conspiracy theories strike at the heart of social knowledge. Political

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[29] Le Queux was probably not the first or last conspiracy monger to be in it for material gain.

scientist Brian Frederking writes that "Social structures help constitute the interests and identities of purposive actors…Human agency is enmeshed in the web of social rules that both constitute and regulate agency…Agents and structures construct each other. Rules make agents and agents make rules" (364). Imagined conspiracies act as hidden, unreadable social structures that upset social legibility by hiding agent loyalty. The "rules" that I play by and the "rules" that I expect others to observe are meaningless if the others are hiding their true loyalty and true plans until it is too late for me to act. Conspiracies thus threaten to make individual agency by those outside of the conspiracy impossible by re-structuring and then hiding social rules. Little wonder, then, that the political and social response to those conspiracies that, like Le Queux's inspired Germanophobia, are compelling enough to be believed (despite at times only the scantest of evidence[30]) has been to pre-emptively throw out the rule book. State power offers to expose and defeat those fantastical conspiracies that threaten the nation as long as the public is willing to give up rights to privacy, due process, habeas corpus, prohibitions against cruel and unusual punishments and torture, the Geneva Conventions, etc. But as these conspiracies are more cultural imagination than political fact, the deal is a bad one—regimes get more authoritarian on the back of a smoke and mirror sideshow or, worse, a witch hunt. Tim Weiner in his book *Legacy of Ashes* describes an example of how the latter has shaped intelligence policy. Weiner writes that President Eisenhower was initially reluctant to acquiesce to his intelligence services' demands for more aggressive covert actions, struggling to justify to himself the competing

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[30] It is true, after all, that Germany was seeking to place spies in position to gather intelligence the UK military—but not on the neighborhood corner. Similarly, some US citizens were actually Communist spies, and terror groups like al Qaeda do carry out operations designed to harm those who do not share their particular ideologies—yet responding to these threats by dismantling the fundamental freedoms which peaceful society strives for is a self-defeating tactic, one that only exacerbates the crisis instead of ending it by virtue of giving evidence to the enemy that we are the villains their own propaganda and conspiracy theories make us out to be.

claims of national security and the values of personal liberty and justice the United States claims

as a nation to hold dear. Eventually though, he relented in the face of anti-Communist hysteria

from the public and from CIA higher-ups angling for larger budgets, declaring that there were

"no rules in the game" between the U.S. and U.S.S.R. and that American notions of "fair play"

need to be reconsidered (Weiner 109). The perceived Soviet crisis, like the perceived German

crisis before it, radically changed how Western intelligence services operated, increasing their

aggression and willingness to employ covert and illegal actions. Now that, as Hardt and Negri

point out in *Empire,* "it is increasingly difficult for the ideologues of the U.S. to name a single,

unified enemy" and the "globalization of economic and cultural relationships, means that the

virtual center of Empire can be attacked from any point," the more geographically locatable

crisis of fascist or Communistic threat has become an "omni-crisis" of global terrorism,

authoritarian regimes such as North Korea and Iran, and a resurgent "Russia" problem[31] (189;

59). An Empire convinced that its enemies are in league, legion, and un-locatable has demanded

a spy service large enough and advanced enough to be everywhere and monitor everyone.

Conspiracies demand and call into being counter-conspiracies—an imagined "conspiracy gap"

creates larger and more secretive measures of surveillance, control, and covert action.

Fictional conspiracies, essential to the historical beginnings of the spy agency, are still

popular plot devices in the espionage genre. In the latest *Mission: Impossible* film (2015), a

"rogue nation" of special agents has split off from the intelligence services of the world and

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[31] George W. Bush and his fellow neocons repeating proclamations that the "War on Terror" was not solely a war on Islam might have rung hollow to many, but in their repeated insistence, they reinforced the idea that danger was everywhere and required the utmost discernment and authority to deal with. This logic is what was used to justify the expansion of the duties of intelligence agencies to include torture, drone warfare, widespread data collection and monitoring, and targeted killing operations globally.

devoted itself to black ops, without any oversight or restraint from governmental checks and balances or legal frameworks. Tom Cruise's Ethan Hunt runs, swims, drives, fights, and hangs off a plane to stop them. Hunt's critics in the American intelligence apparatus decry his reckless tactics, believing him to be simply lucky, and that one day his luck will run out and the bad guys will win. As one might guess, that day does not come in the six months over which the film take place. In the recent superhero film *Captain America: The Winter Soldier*, the fact that a crypto-Nazi organization has infiltrated the American political and intelligence apparatuses turns out to be the reason for the intelligence world's turn towards militarization, strike-first mentality, and unrestricted drone surveillance and warfare. "You've held a loaded gun to the world's head and called it safety," intones Captain America, whose (idealistically mythologized) WWII-era values are set in contrast to this new world order. Captain America believes that all the world needs for freedom and happiness is an end to tyrants; the conspiracy he faces believes tyranny is necessary for stability. Both films' protagonists are men of great agency—physical, mental, moral. The stunt sequences serve to highlight their indomitable nature, their ability to do the impossible. The films are popcorn flicks, facile handlings of some very serious issues, turning surveillance, extra-judicial covert actions, etc. into an excuse for superheroics. (Tom Cruise plays a superhero even when his characters don't have superpowers). But both films, which ultimately feature the heroes bringing down these secret cabals through exposure, hit upon a fact long known by spy fiction authors: conspiracies make great villains as long as they can stay a secret. One of the most classic conspiracies on film is in Hitchcock's *North by Northwest,* which stars Cary Grant as Roger Thornhill. Roger is mistaken for the nonexistent George Kaplan, and forced to play the role of Kaplan against his will and without knowing what game he is playing—or the stakes at risk—by a conspiracy of spies aiming to steal and smuggle microfilm containing state secrets.

North by Northwest captures the nightmarish unreality of conspiracy stories, in which the Lacanian Big Other is vast, unknowable, omni-present, and out to get you, despite your protests that you have nothing to do with the matter—that you are not Kaplan. But you are, because "they" say so; you do not get to determine your social identity; your agency is lost in the machinations of others. This nightmare feeling is perfectly captured in the famous plane-chase scene, in which Thornhill is unexpectedly forced to run through a cornfield as a crop duster attempts to run him down. The scene comes out of nowhere—the audience, like Thornhill, is caught unprepared as the machine turns a bright blue sky and a lazy cornfield into a place of danger and terror. The inhumanity of the airplane (Who is piloting it? We never find out.) is what makes it such a potent symbol of conspiracy. In fact, when Thornhill can boil down the conspiracy plot to its individual members, like secret government agent Eve Kendall and foreign spy Phillip Vandamm, he goes from terrified to nonplussed to heroic. Naming the conspiracy members defeats them by making them into real people. Realness is the domain of agency, not of nightmare. The categorical "real person" may be good or bad or a little of both, but they are assumed to be like "us" fundamentally. And so, realness is rarely imputed to members of conspiracies, inside fiction or out. For example, in a 1953 essay, literary critic Leslie Fiedler argued that the Rosenbergs were incapable of thinking "of themselves as real people" (qtd. in Nicholson 258). And how, one might skeptically ask Fiedler, did they think of themselves? *Obviously* as members of a conspiracy, since that is how the U.S. public thought of them!

  North by Northwest is certainly influenced by John Buchan's WWI-era book *The 39 Steps*, and by Hitchcock's own film version of the Buchan story. Conspiracies, or rather, fear of conspiracies, as argued above, are the genesis of both spy fiction and spy agencies. They were there at the beginning with Buchan and Le Queux, and they are still very common in the genre as

the nameless force against which the initially hopeless hero must pit himself (and more rarely, herself). When the protagonists unmask the conspiracy, name its individual members, and then defeat those individuals by foiling their plot by punching—as in *Mission: Impossible* and *Captain America*, mentioned above—Michael Denning's pronouncement[32] is fulfilled in its most obvious form. But heroic derring-do is not the only resolution in the genre as a whole to a conspiracy plot, even in the age of Le Queux and Buchan itself. Take Henry James's *Princess Casamassima,* for example. A kind of proto-example of spy fiction, the novel's two protagonists, Hyacinth Robinson and the titular Princess, have very different narrative arcs relative to their agency and the Communist conspiracy that moves much of the plot of the book. The Princess, for one, actually finds her agency by conspiring with the Communists, despite—or more accurately, in spite of—her aristocratic status. Casamassima chafes under the societal requirements of her status and her gender. She sees the largesse provided by her husband, the prince, as materialism meant to erode her individuality and independence. "Does he (her husband) count *me* myself, and every pulse of my being, every capacity of my nature, as nothing?" she asks (363). The Prince does not understand that his wife would throw away security and comfort for agency. Other characters in the novel struggle with the notion as well— Casamassima at various points is thought to be a spy, and despite her interactions with the leaders of the conspiracy and her somewhat condescending claim late in the book to Hyacinth that he is "so much out of it now that if I were to tell you [our plans] I fear you wouldn't understand," she never seems to be quite so essential to those plans that she can change them, including her inability to affect the tragic ending of the book which I discuss below (358).

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[32] As quoted before, "the secret agent returns human agency to a world which seems less and less the product of human action."

However, Casamassima's involvement with the conspiracy is radical and not merely an aristocratic affectation. She even eventually shocks her husband enough for him to leave her alone. By the conclusion of the novel, Casamassima does see that perhaps her faith in the conspiracy is unfounded, and that she perhaps should have spent her desire to overthrow the system that oppresses her on better methods than what she did. But she learns that for herself, by herself.

Hyacinth Robinson, ultimately, is a young man torn between his loyalty to a Communist conspiracy and his artistic temperament which values bourgeois expressions of liberty, value and beauty. Hyacinth is initially an easy convert, believing that "It was for the people the world was made; whoever was not of them was against them; and all others were cumberers, usurpers, exploiters" (96). Other characters, however, have serious doubts throughout the first volume of the novel that the conspiracy is even real. Before jumping in whole-heartedly, Casamassima, for example, does not want to waste her time and energy on mere resentment: "is all this going to burst forth some fine morning and set the world on fire? Or is it to sputter out and spend itself in vain conspiracies, be dissipated in sterile heroisms and abortive isolated movements?" she wonders (195). Regardless, Hyacinth swears his loyalty to the group, and in Volume II gives a paradigmatic description of it, one that could apply to generations of conspiracies in thriller plots for the next century:

> It's beyond anything I can say. Nothing of it appears above the surface; but
> there's an immense underworld peopled with a thousand forms of revolutionary
> passage and devotion. The manner in which it's organized is what astonished me.
> I knew that, or thought I knew it, in a general way, but the reality was a
> revelation. And on top of it all society lives. People go and come, and buy and

sell, and drink and dance, and make money and make love, and seem to know

nothing and suspect nothing and think of nothing; and iniquities flourish, and the

misery of half the world is prated about as a 'necessary evil' and generations rot

away and starve in the midst of it, and day follows day, and everything is for the

best in the best of possible worlds. All that's one half of it; the other half is that

everything's doomed! In silence, in darkness, but under the feet of each one of us,

the revolution lives and works…The invisible, impalpable wires are everywhere,

passing through everything, attaching themselves to objects in which one would

never think of looking for them. (44)

The notion of invisible wires calls to mind marionettes, and again, the lack of agency that

characterizes being caught up in a conspiracy. That James is never quite clear just how serious

this particular conspiracy *is*[33] does not matter to Hyacinth, who takes them at their word as

plotters, killers, and revolutionaries. He only begins to chafe under the conspiracy's threat to

render meaningless the art, society and manners to which he is attracted. Hyacinth holds

bourgeois sensibility as a high virtue, as that which is called nobility[34] in the powerful but is

attainable for all under a more just society. He is torn by his oath of "blind obedience" and his

sneaking suspicion that at root the conspiracy is founded on jealousy rather than idealism, that it

stems from "the intolerance of positions and fortunes that are higher and brighter than one's

own" instead of true altruistic motivations (130). Perhaps, he begins to think, only those—like

his friend Lady Aurora Langrish—that have something they can give up can even be altruistic.

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[33] Sometimes "They know everything—everything. They're like the great God of the believers: they're searchers of hearts; and not only of hearts, but of all a man's life—his days, his nights, his spoken, his unspoken words" and other times they seem at worst a bunch of grumblers (341).
[34] Hyacinth himself is the bastard offspring of an aristocrat.

Hyacinth is trapped by his oath and his personal feelings. In the climax of the novel, he is ordered to shoot a "bad institution," i.e. a person in political power the conspiracy wants assassinated, in the name of revolution. Notice how the conspiratorial language even here seeks to erase the man's individuality—it's morally difficult to justify killing a person, after all, but an institution can be toppled without such moral wrangling. Unable to justify erasing another's individuality for political gain, but unwilling to forsake his own honor by breaking an oath and running, Hyacinth instead turns the gun on himself. In suicide, Hyacinth preserves his individuality, neither offending bourgeois honor by going back on his word nor becoming a pawn for a group that strikes furtively from the shadows.

Hyacinth's conundrum at the end of the *Princess Casamassima* may strike readers, perhaps, as a little silly. I think that this is especially the case because James, who is no revolutionary, is loath to imbue the communists with the actual potential to overthrow society. The communist conspiracy *menaces*, but, given that we know several members and what kind of people they happen to be, they do not come across as especially *menacing*. At least though they are not the bunglers of Conrad's *The Secret Agent*. There are technically two conspiracies in the *Secret Agent*: a conspiracy of anarchists, and a conspiracy by a foreign[35] intelligence service to foment these anarchists to action in order to provoke British lawmakers to pass more restrictive censorship and other security measures.[36] The titular secret agent is Verloc, who has been reporting on the anarchist group to his foreign handlers (and, it turns out, the British police) but is tasked with bombing the Greenwich Observatory. This task, to "throw a bomb into pure

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[35] Implicitly Russian.
[36] Presumably, this benefits the foreign power by keeping dissidents from that country freely publishing radical or anti-government texts in Britain that are then disseminated in the foreign country.

mathematics" as Verloc's handler describes it, is meant to be the ultimate attack on order and rationality (27). Other targets, like the church or the monarchy, are deemed ineffective as potent symbols in the modern age. Given Conrad's conservatism, this is one of the early indications that the *Secret Agent* is not a better-written retread of a Le Queux book, but rather a critique of them.

Verloc's conspiracies pass the "eye test" for menace, at least at first. Verloc seems to have arrived from the continent "like the influenza" (6). Plague imagery is common in describing the conspirators throughout the novel, which ends with a conspirator, the Professor, moving "like a pest through the streets full of men" (246). The narration warns the reader of Verloc's, potential for contagion, as well as the potential of those like him to undermine a healthy body politic, spy or not. Verloc possesses the "moral nihilism common to keepers of gambling hells and disorderly houses; to private detectives and inquiry agents; to drink sellers and to the inventors of patent medicines" (11). However, Verloc's nihilism is nothing compared to the Professor's—the latter actively carries a bomb on his person so that he is always a threat to the machinery of power and society around him. But Conrad is skeptical that men like Verloc and the Professor can actually harm, let alone dismantle, bourgeois law and order. *The Secret Agent* reduces anarchic ideology to personal shortcomings, and the spy plot into, in the words of Chief Inspecter Heat, a "domestic drama" (175). Verloc, a fat, lethargic, clumsy, oafish man, lives at the fringes of respectable society, true, but:

> the instinct of conventional respectability was strong within him, being only
> overcome by his dislike of all kinds of recognized labour—a temperamental
> defect which he shared with a large proportion of revolutionary reformers of a
> given social state. For obviously one does not revolt against the advantages and
> opportunities of that state, but against the price which must be paid for the same

in the coin of accepted morality, self-restraint, and toil. The majority of

revolutionists are the enemies of discipline and fatigue mostly. (42)

Verloc's personal slovenliness are indicative of his lack of restraint, a quality, along with

habitual laziness, extended to what Conrad might consider the revolutionary type—anarchists,

socialists, communists or any other of the "thems" over which Edwardian England obsessed. We

are told that even the Professor, while clearly a different type than Verloc[37] is in his anarchic

philosophy "doing no more but seeking for peace in common with the rest of mankind—the

peace of soothed vanity, of satisfied appetites, or perhaps of appeased conscience" (65). That

even Conrad's revolutionaries secretly possess domestic instincts clues us in on the thematic

switch the novel is attempting to pull off: *The Secret Agent* is not actually very political. The

anarchic conspiracy in the book ultimately resolves in domestic murder, as Verloc is killed by his

wife after failing to realize how much she cared for her mentally-disabled brother, who is blown

up accidentally while carrying the bomb meant for the observatory (the indolent Verloc had

tricked him into unknowingly carrying it). *The Secret Agent* is not the story of a protagonist,

using their individual agency and actions, making sense of the world stage of politics, but rather

the inverse: a protagonist, through bumbling and laziness, making the domestic sphere

dangerous. It is the home, not the nation, which proves vulnerable, and that not really due to

political machinations, but to personal failings.

Where the *Secret Agent* has had a lasting influence in the spy genre is a bit unexpected.

Conrad's skepticism of professional intelligence agents and agencies in general because of their

tendency to conspiracy—and even more interesting, inventing and stoking conspiracies in order

to justify their existence—separates him from most of his contemporaries. In Buchan, or in

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[37] Who is after all a spy and thus not a true believer.

Childress' *The Riddle of the Sands* (1903), amateurism is held up as a virtue, as the professional spy class is too associated with double-dealing and shady practice to serve as a profession for the gentleman heroes that are those novels' protagonists. The "heroic amateur" type is an implicit disavowal of what was a very pertinent historical conversation and shift: the move to official, bureaucratic spy agencies. Remember, this is the age of Le Queux; and debate over the ethics and efficacy of creating professional spies was an urgent topic. Professionalization, its proponents argued, was meant to decrease the likelihood of false or deliberately faulty intelligence through mechanisms both material, like a regular salary, and cultural—the gentleman civil service agent's word of honor. Amateurism, in the minds of its critics, led to fabrication, as overenthusiastic assets, paid by results and often of a different class or racial position than their British military superiors, were incentivized to invent threats. Likewise, those in the still fledgling British intelligence apparatus debated the role of secret services in regards to intelligence gathering versus covert actions. *The Secret Agent,* in contrast to the implicit disavowal of heroic amateur novels, is quite explicit in its distaste for a professional spy class. Conrad's forces of law and order are not spies but police officers. Though they themselves fall victim to the temptations of bureaucratic advancement, the police in *The Secret Agent* seem to have an intuitive grasp on what Conrad finds most dangerous about professional spy games. The following passage, spoken by the Assistant Commissioner to the Secretary of State, is both a plea for greater policing powers and a clever grasp of the potential dangers of sanctioning covert action as a tool of the state:

> In principle, I should lay it down that the existence of secret agents should not be tolerated, as tending to augment the positive dangers of the evil against which they are used. That the spy will fabricate his information is a mere commonplace.

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But in the sphere of political and revolutionary action, relying partly on violence, the professional spy has every facility to fabricate the very facts themselves, and will spread the double evil of emulation in one direction, and of panic, hasty legislation, unreflecting hate, on the other. (110)

This passage, indicative of the attitude towards spy organizations of the book as a whole, strikes at the core of the arguments of the time for professionalization and covert operations. The Assistant Commissioner portrays the latter as misguided, dangerous, and foolish, as in the passage above, because of the "evil of emulation" (or escalation) by rival groups on the one hand and the knee-jerk attitudes ("panic, hasty legislation, unreflecting hate") emulation or escalation are likely to produce domestically on the other. Moreover, the Assistant Commissioner intuits the relation between professionalization and escalation, worrying that as a professional spy's job performance becomes evaluated by the amount of covert action he accomplishes, the incentive to be bolder, riskier, hastier, and deadlier increases. Professionalism was meant to create an organizational apparatus that trained its operatives to carry these schemes through to success, but, Conrad seems to hint at, a professional service might encourage more hasty action at an accelerated pace as intelligence agents compete for promotion or attempt to make a statement after a hierarchical regime change. The core covert act in *The Secret Agent* proves the Assistant Commissioner's point. Stevie's accidental explosion is the result of a professional spy's (Verloc) poorly thought-out plan necessitated by his desire to keep his paycheck. This poorly-thought out plan then leads the Assistant Commissioner (in the scene from which the passage is excerpted) to ask for more influence and powers. The plot of the novel suggests that professional incentives in espionage lead to dangerous and counter-productive plans, which leads to domestic panic, which

leads to an expansion of state power to prevent anarchy. This cycle is antithetical to the bourgeois individualism Conrad, and all of the characters in the novel, secretly prize.

The danger of the spy agency as revealed in *the Secret Agent* is that it may, due to its twin mandates for secrecy and results, become a conspiracy unto itself. This idea is Conrad's lasting impact on the genre. *The Secret Agent*'s arguments against spy agencies were doomed to fail, though critiques similar to Conrad's certainly kept the cult of the glorious amateur alive both in fiction and in government until after WWI. However, the novel's casting of conspiracy-hunting spy agencies as master conspirators themselves has extended throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. The odds in a modern spy thriller that the agent's own organization or a splinter segment of it is behind the nefarious actions of the villains in the plot are about 50/50. Conrad's criticisms have been echoed by a politically-diverse spectrum of authors. Cumulatively, their skepticism about an organization that operates fundamentally in secret, with broad powers, minimal oversight or transparency, and with an operational, organizational, philosophical, and monetary drive for results in the name of national security has been justified. Statements such as "[m]any of us who joined the CIA did not feel bound in the actions we took as staff members to observe all the ethical rules," which was said by Richard Bissell, Jr. (an organizer of the Bay of Pigs invasion) after he was let go from the agency make the CIA, especially, an easy target for those looking for conspiracies. Spy agencies are insular cabals skeptical of outside oversight, and especially in the beginning, nepotistic in their hiring practices. Valentine Vivian, deputy head of MI6, for example, justified his hiring of Soviet spy Kim Philby: "I was asked about him, and said I knew his people" (Macintyre 21). Being a hive of like-minds pushed the CIA and MI6 to interventionism, especially if they thought it could be plausibly denied. In 1954, the intelligence

community, in the words of George Kennedy Young,[38] took as its mission "to remedy the situation created by the deficiencies of ministers, diplomats, generals and priests" (184). It's difficult to sound more conspiratorial than that.

And so, given their increasing bent towards clandestine interventionism over the Cold War, it makes sense that the organizations originally formed to combat at least semi-fictional conspiracies have themselves become the largest single source of conspiracy theories. These range from the usual Internet (and before that Usenet, and before that the back pages of specialty interest magazines) crackpotism to the subtle suggestions, like in Don DeLilo's novel *Underworld,* that the CIA and KGB actively kept the Cold War going out of mutual departmental interest. Their conspiratorial reputation makes them easy foils not only for authors, but for ideological opponents in the real world, whether they be congressional opponents, reporters, foreign governments feigning indignation at each other's intelligence activities,[39] domestic and foreign activists seeking more transparency and a reduction in aggressive actions, whistle blowers like Edward Snowden, or even the ideologues of terrorist and/or anti-state groups. The moral high ground is difficult for, say, the NSA, to claim when the only excuse they offer for their actions is national security, but the organization can't or won't define exactly what that means or how their operations are actively safeguarding the nation. Most likely, the Western intelligence apparatus would lose little in the way of autonomy or agency by proposing each of its programs to its executive, legislative, and judicial watchdogs. A national security writ allows a wide latitude, and (all justified skepticism about politician capability and morality aside for just a second), more transparency would ideologically help that national security mandate to appear

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[38] One of Philby's friends and later a deputy director of MI6
[39] Such as the kerfluffle over German Chancellor Angela Merkel's phone being bugged by the CIA, only for the Germans to be forced to admit that they had bugged John Kerry's.

more palatable to the public, via ensuring that the programs proposed were vetted by democratically elected officials. However, the insularity and arrogance of the spymasters turn what could be debatable and democratic policy into the fodder for conspiracy. Spy fiction remains popular in this age of the NSA for similar reasons to those which made William Le Queux popular: it provides a discursive space for people to be in the know, and substitutes the actual anxiety of uncertainty for the pleasure of certainty (even when that certainty is certain doom). The real pleasure from reading spy fiction is not the heroic overcoming of the conspiracy by the protagonist, like Captain America thwarting HYDRA's sinister plot. That plot structure reinforces the agency of the protagonist and, by extension or projection, of any individual's ability to shape the world stage of politics, and so it is a central tenet in the history of spy fiction. But this tenet has not survived unscathed the proliferation of fiction about the spy agency as villainous. As the superhero-icizing of the spy, beginning with Bond's increasingly less realistic adventures and reaching its logical conclusion with the actual superhero/spy Captain America, it has become increasingly less credible for an average person, or even the heroic amateur (John Buchan's Richard Hannay or Hitchcock's Roger Thornhill) to play a meaningful role in stopping the modern conspiracy when that conspiracy has become the sprawling technocratic bureaucracy of the spy agency itself. That is a job for super-agent Jason Bourne, not Hyacinth Robinson. But knowing about the conspiracy, participating in the cultural discourse that unmasks and names them, is still something that spy fiction seems to offer unchanged since the early 20th century. Thus, the act of reading or watching reinforces the agency of the reader/watcher directly,[40] inducts him or her into a community of people with shared interests and provides a vocabulary with which to talk about the secretive world of espionage. Modern-day spy fiction, especially

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[40] I.e. without the intermediary step of projection/identification with the protagonist.

that slice of it aimed at a popular audience, helps to make spy agencies intellectually graspable by boiling them down into conspiracies. Gone are the messiness, inconsistencies, tedium, etc. of actual spy work. Agencies become much more monomaniacal than they really are in order to provide drama; for example, the latest Bond film, *Spectre*, reduces all of MI6 to the 00 Section, allowing the evil conspiracy within MI6[41] to threaten Bond with turning the 00 Section into a drone and data collection program. I certainly acknowledge[42] the troubling rise in importance of drone warfare and electronic surveillance to Western spy agencies, and I applaud attempts to put these issues before the public, since we apparently cannot count on our intelligence apparatus to do so willingly.[43] However, attributing this push to the machinations of an evil conspiracy within MI6, similar to *Captain America's* attribution of all violent covert action to a conspiracy by HYDRA, fails to explore with due diligence the legal, moral, ethical, bureaucratic, and technical messiness of drone warfare and ignores the many other functions of MI6 (not to mention the many other agents not prefaced with a 00). The reduction of the spy agency to a single-issue conspiracy is a more popular move in more popular fare. While this is not strictly true—Len Deighton's *Ipcress File* makes this move, though is not considered low-brow, for example—it is a robust enough trend to worry about what might happen when a large portion of the audience only has a Hollywood-understanding of intelligence work. As we have seen with the example of William Le Queux, complicated situations are not liable to be improved when a public's understanding of intelligence is structured through conspiracy theory.

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[41] Surprise, or not, this conspiracy is revealed to be old Bond baddies SPECTRE back for the first time in the Daniel Craig series.

[42] And analyze, in chapters 5 and 6.

[43] The CIA's drone program has as of this writing not been officially acknowledged, even though it is an extremely poorly kept secret.

More transparency from the intelligence community would undoubtedly help to quell some of the glut of conspiracy theories surrounding spy work, but more transparency has not historically been high on the priority list for these secretive organizations. Partly, this is due to the reality that actual intelligence organizations are not a small, super-focused cabal like Ernst Blofeld's SPECTRE, but rather large, bloated, secret bureaucracies. The imagery of *Captain America's* conspiratorial HYDRA is of a many-headed menace—while the intelligence apparatus of the U.S. or the U.K. might have many heads, they don't all possess the same goals, reach, powers, knowledge, access to politicians, technological capability, etc. Picture a very confused hydra with unequal-sized heads who has eaten too much and is often a little dizzy. It's little wonder that authors and film and TV makers often attempt to represent spy agencies through the lens of farce. This too, like using conspiracy as a stand-in for the spy agency, is a heuristic. Farcical works, such as *Get Smart*, *Archer, Spy, Our Man in Havana,* etc., also make the complex simple, specifically by making spy agencies risible. Good satire is one response, a cathartic one at that, to the expansion of power and scope of the intelligence agency throughout the 20th and 21st century. But farce is not the only tone with which authors address the role bureaucracy has had in the history of espionage. Some turn to stories of the lone talent rising above a stifling bureaucratic weight, others write the opposite, stories of the individual crushed by paperwork, regulations, superiors, and laws. The stories I have chosen to examine in the next section, primarily W. Somerset Maugham's *Ashenden*, Graham Greene's *Our Man in Havana* and Ian McEwan's *Sweet Tooth* are indicative of the variations in the bureaucratic spy story. Each has different valences and thematic thrusts, but each serve to make the case that, whereas conspiracy is the go-to trope for more popular-fiction spy works, the topic of bureaucracy and

how it is navigated by the individual allows for more thorough examinations of the role spy

agencies play in the cultural discourse of espionage.

Writing in the Machine: Bureaucracy and Espionage

Conspiracies are small(ish) cabals, deeply hidden either within the halls of power to

continue secret governance, or adjacent to those in power in order to plot their overthrow.

Bureaucracies, in contrast, are giant, intricate, inefficient, slow to change and slow to respond to

external pressures. Bureaucracies are an essential feature of late capitalism, according to Frederic

Jameson in his book *Post-Modernism*. Historically, they arise during the shift (as described by

Foucault) from state sovereignty to governmentality and have accelerated in their growth through

the late 19th and 20th centuries (xviii). They seem to be fairly opposite to conspiracies in

structure, but as topoi in spy fiction they often look somewhat similar. This may be because, in

an idea that goes back to Marx,[44] both have the same cornerstone: the secret. The conspiracy is

the secret Big Other, the bureaucracy the secret Big Same. The secrets of the bureaucracy, unlike

those of the conspiracy, are official secrets, the (supposedly) strategically hidden inner-workings

of state power. The spy agency is the trafficker of official secrets, responsible in the state

apparatus for their production, their mining from the bedrock of the real world via espionage,

and their transmission and interpretation for the Executive and Legislative branches. In fact, the

intelligence bureaucracy can make official secrets out of things many people already know:

geographic and weather data become classified when Military Intelligence needs it for an

operation, and engineering specifications and techniques become secret when they are used to

build a Predator drone. While we might say in hindsight that it is obvious that any state

department would inevitably in the modern age become a large bureaucracy, intelligence

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[44] From the *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*

agencies were initially envisioned as small cadres of professionals acting independently. The

British intelligence services of the late 19th and early 20th century are not so much organized

spies but a loose collection of museum curators, academics, military police, and their local

connections, almost entirely male, and working independently or with very general orders for the

gathering and storage of militarily or economically beneficial knowledge. But as James Scott, in

his analysis of the formation of state knowledge *Seeing like a State,* suggests, this was not a

tenable arrangement. According to Scott, "The utopian, immanent, and continually frustrated

goal of the modern state is to reduce the chaotic, disorderly, constantly changing social reality

beneath it to something more closely resembling the administrative grid of its observations" (82).

Attempting this reduction creates the demand for intelligence and a robust intelligence agency to

invent and administer the "techniques for grasping a large and complex reality" in order for

"officials to be able to comprehend aspects of the ensemble" (77). In other words, client demand

(that is, state demand) fuels expansion—intelligence is a growth industry, as the aims of

imperialism and later neo-imperialism expand to encompass ever-greater swathes of land,

people, and cultures. Given that competing imperial powers compete for the same goals (whether

territory, influence, resources, etc.), conflict between them creates a need for intelligence on rival

nation-states as well. As the 20th century progressed and non-state international actors

(corporations, terrorist groups, crime syndicates) became major geopolitical powers,

governments realized they needed intelligence on them too. As late as the 1950s, factions within

the CIA envisioned an agency that at its core was a continuation of Wild Bill Donovan's "old-

boy network of connections from Wall Street and the Social Register" with a few operatives

from rougher professions in order to enact covert operations (Weiner 7). Director Allan Dulles,

however, felt that such an agency had no hope of being competitive relative to the agencies of

the U.K. and U.S.S.R., and so pushed the Eisenhower administration for greater scope, funding, and personnel. Unlike the U.S., the British and Russians had abandoned small intelligence operations by the end of WWI—the first Cold War "gap" was the "spy gap," and it was remedied quickly.

Bureaucracies are rarely if ever lovingly represented in fiction, tending to be seen at best as comically ineffective and at worst Kafkaesque. Bureaucracies, especially in spy fiction, but also generally across fiction, are anti-individualistic, and those trapped within them are the proverbial "cogs in a machine." Given the immense popularity of spy fiction, the intelligence bureaucracy is one of the most represented bureaucracies, despite, or because of, the secrecy of its inner workings. But bureaucracies are far too labyrinthine to represent in fiction accurately; indeed, that is hardly ever the point. "Bureaucracies" show up not in their specifics, which are unreproducible in the course of a narrative, but as a series of obstacles, generally anthropic ones such as frustrating superiors or inter/intra agency disagreements on how to handle a situation. Like conspiracy, "bureaucracy" in spy fiction acts as a kind of shorthand, a plot device. Conspiracy shrinks world politics into a consumable narrative of hidden threat, overcome or uncovered by heroic action—it makes the big small so it can be overcome. "Bureaucracy" as a trope in spy fiction does not shrink or clarify politics, rather, it leaves them intentionally opaque in order to contrast the murkiness of policy against the clarity of individual agency. The difference is not all that large, but crucial: conspiracy plots prioritize knowledge and action (the conspiracy must be uncovered and dealt with), while bureaucracy plots prioritize frustration and creativity (the hurdles of bureaucracy must be overcome by thinking outside the box). Both plots are fundamentally about individual agency, but demonstrate it differently. Conspiracy plots indulge the fantasy that world political problems are simple enough to be grasped, and solved, by

individuals. Bureaucracy plots argue that the individual, not the bureaucracy, is the proper unit of politics—that the individual humanity of its component agents should be the (spy) agency's guiding principles.

Spy authors use bureaucracy for thematic positioning, as a way to make some point about the agency of the secret agent, or about the individual worth of people in contrast to the de-individualization of world politics. Three broader "bureaucratic" tropes in spy fiction that have had some relation and relevance to the actual history of espionage are 1) the confrontation between stereotypical notions of masculine agency, like assertiveness/aggression, individualism, heteronormative sexual relations, etc., and bureaucratic constraints; 2) the use of bureaucracy as a hindrance to the uncovering of double agency; and 3) the opposition of bureaucracy to creativity, especially to writing. The next few paragraphs address each of these in turn. First, I introduce the argument, which is elaborated much more in Chapters 4 and 5, that the version of masculinity promoted in spy fiction as the opposite of bureaucracy acts as a discursive prop to bolster the idea that covert action is the proper activity of an intelligence agency. The enduring popularity of the Bond books and their imitators is essential here, though even spy fiction that eschews the theatrics of Fleming and company has participated in the use of a contrast between masculinity and a neutering bureaucracy as a storytelling device. Next, I discuss one of spy fiction's best known and loved uses of bureaucracy, as the twisting and turning subterranean world of the mole's den. The mole hunt, in which the protagonist must uncover a traitor (or if he or she is the traitor, remain undiscovered), is a classic espionage plot that is fairly unique to the genre, one of its least replicable tropes in other contexts. The mole hunt provides intellectual pleasures that depend in large part on the reader's ability to cut through the obstacles and obfuscations, generally framed as part and parcel of the spy agency itself, that prevent the mole's

identity from being known in the world of the work. This is the same ability that the protagonist must also possess, allowing for an identification between reader and protagonist in their joint ability to navigate and overcome an obstructionist bureaucracy. The relationship between reader and protagonist is one example of the thematic emphasis of the mole hunt plot: that interpersonal relationships and the uniqueness of individuals prove better than institutional rules and regulations at ensuring the proper functioning of the spy agency. John le Carré and Graham Greene are the masters of this plot. I examine le Carré's *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier Spy* and Greene's *The Human Factor* for what they can tell us about how the Cold War structured double agency and its relation to the bureaucratic structure of the intelligence agency. Lastly, I argue that spy authors, with more than a little self-insertion, use creativity in the field of writing as a foil to bureaucratic process. Literariness as a character trait of a spy marks that spy as separate, not easily assimilated to the anti-individualistic culture of the spy agency. In works such as Greene's *Our Man in Havana,* W. Somerset Maugham's *Ashenden,* and Ian McEwan's *Sweet Tooth*, literary imagination actually becomes weaponized, both for and against the spy agency. Not only does this continue spy fiction's tendency to lionize individualism on the world stage, it also privileges a particular kind of individualism, one in contrast to both the formic conformity and unctuous social-climbing of the bureaucracy and the aggressive masculinity of Bond and other more pulp-inspired heroes.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

Rapid expansion brings with it a host of problems in exchange for greater reach. The most immediately noticeable of these problems in the early history of the CIA (the 1950s) was the hiring of hundreds of people, not all of whom—rather, not most—had any experience in intelligence work whatsoever. These recent college grads were mainly hired because they fit the

ideal spy type of the time—that is, they were Ivy League educated, loyal to the values and organizations of their class, and increasingly (as the 50s progressed) given to more and more aggressive actions in order to prove the supposed superiority of Western anti-Communist ideology. I suggest though that this aggression, which was manifest in the groundswell of covert action operations throughout the 50s and 60s, was partly[45] also a response to the bureaucratic structure itself, characterized as an emasculating economic and corporate structure. The emasculation of the American male by bureaucratic society was a common theme in the early years of the Cold War. The social psychologist Stanley Milgram argued that the results to his infamous obedience-to-authority tests showed that "men" were now easily "seduced by the trappings of authority" and that the "kind of character produced in American democratic society cannot be counted on to insulate its citizens from brutality and inhumane treatment" (Nicholson 246). Social critic Arthur Schlesinger complained of a "crisis of American masculinity" in 1958 and books like David Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd* (1950), William Whyte's *The Organization Man* (1956), and C. Wright Mill's *White Collar* (1951) described the proto-typical middle-class man as (in Mill's words) "pushed by forces beyond his control, pulled into movements he does not understand; he gets into situations in which he is in the most helpless position," (qtd. in Nicholson 246). Bureaucracy was seen to strike at the core of American exceptionalism: the individual, agentive, spirit that each citizen (especially the male soldiers flocking back as citizens into the workforce after WWII) was supposed to possess.

In this climate of a kind of perceived masculine malaise, spy fiction offered a transportation from the desks of the office to the halls of political power and the exotic ends of

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[45] The reason I say "partly" here is because this aggression was also certainly a reaction against charges of homosexuality in the intelligence world, as I argue in depth in Chapter 4.

the earth. The tourism of the Bond books, analyzed at length by Michael Denning and other critics, is a tourism of masculine potency, in which Bond goes and does where, what, and who he pleases. And, while a simple point, it cannot be overlooked: Bond is an important person in his world, not a nameless nobody, but his appetites, desires, and frustrations are similar to those of a large swath of his readership. Bond is a consumer of mid-century masculine culture as much as he is a producer of it; Bond smokes particular brands (Chesterfields and Players), drinks particular drinks (vodka martinis, of course, and other gin and whiskey cocktails) and eats particular foods (variants of steak and eggs, primarily). Male mid-century readers may only be able to imagine that they could save the world like Bond, but the ability to replicate the accessories of Bond's masculine agency, i.e. his consumption habits, made the spy a potent advertisement, and the Bond brand leveraged the spy's "masculinity that matters" for the express purpose of encouraging particular patterns of consumption, and not just of Bond merchandise, but also of the other brands and products through which Bond performs his masculinity. In other words, the Bond books tied a particular way of being a man to a particular way of being important and looking important to society at large. Bond still serves this role; for example, a recent *GQ* article declared one of his outfits "the most influential menswear outfit in movie history" (Wolf). This is a fantasy of individuality brought about through the act of conformity to a particular model; however, based on the way spy fiction as a genre imitated, innovated, and re-imagined Bond during the mid-century decades, I would not argue that the irony was common knowledge.

  The fantasy of masculinity in the spy fiction of the time derives a good deal of its power as a trope from the way authors contrasted the masculine agency of their heroes with the bureaucracy of their organization, a fantastic thematic structure that had great resonance with the

office-workers wistfully envying Bond smoking a Chesterfield on a beach with a blonde after saving the world. When a white-collar worker in the 1950s and 60s wished to seek escape from his perceived drudgery and emasculation by immersing himself in the action-adventure of spy fiction, he inevitably found in the first few pages the secret agent initially suffering in a corporate culture similar to his own. Spies, too, chafed under crusty superiors, like the nameless narrator of Len Deighton's *Ipcress File* who introduces his boss[46] to the reader by saying "Ross and I had come to an arrangement of some years' standing—we had decided to hate each other" (Deighton 10). Spies too felt like their golden years of masculine potency were being wasted on meaningless paperwork, even James Bond himself, who at the beginning of *Thunderball* bitterly laments that he has nothing to do:

> More than a month of paper-work—ticking off his number on stupid dockets, scribbling minutes that got spikier as the weeks passed, and snapping back down the telephone when some harmless section officer tried to argue with him. And then his secretary had gone down with the flu and he had been given a silly, and, worse, ugly bitch from the pool who called him 'sir' and spoke to him primly through a mouth full of fruit stones. And now it was another Monday morning. (2).

Bond's whining explicitly connects his frustration at the bureaucratic process with misogyny, his lack of an outlet for his aggression functioning (in his mind) to transform the women in the secretarial pool into aesthetic objects for his pleasure. This sexual frustration is expressed most violently in his assessment of his new secretary, who refuses to play that objectified role and

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[46] The narrator's luck with bosses does not improve over the course of the book—his next superior, who ends up being the mole in the organization, tries to kill him.

keeps Bond at a professional distance. Bond especially, since he is often[47] introduced

languishing behind an office-desk at the beginning of the story before being saved by adventure,

does much to reinforce the idea that *homo bureaucratis* and *homo masculinus* are different

species in the spy world. Even authors that are far more sympathetic to the bureaucrats, for

example John le Carré, do not dissolve this dichotomy. Le Carré's hero George Smiley[48] is a

bespectacled, old, fat, cuckolded bureaucrat—he is great at his job, but le Carré goes to great

pains to describe espionage in such a way that someone like Smiley could be good at it. Le Carré

sees the Fleming-esque adventure plot as a childish version of covert action, which he views with

deep suspicion.[49] Espionage in le Carré's oeuvre is a mind game, in Fleming's it is violence first

and foremost. The former is suited to the intricacies of bureaucracy—the slower pace allows

Smiley to carefully consider each of his options before acting, to be as sure as possible in his

world of murky grayness. The incompatibility between masculine derring-do as an approach to

espionage versus careful navigation of an intricate bureaucracy is perhaps most memorably

demonstrated in *The Spy who Came in from the Cold,* in which the conventionally masculine

Alec Leamas chooses to be shot on the east side of the Berlin Wall rather than return to an

agency that has treated him and his love interest as pieces in a larger game. Whether Le Carré's

characters successfully (Smiley) or unsuccessfully (Leamas, or also Gunther Bachmann from *A

Most Wanted Man*) navigate the intelligence bureaucracy, le Carré builds that navigation into his

plots, mining inter- and intra-agency frustrations for drama, suspense, pacing and thematic

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[47] For an example that is analyzed at more length in the next chapter, in *From Russia with Love* Bond is introduced as a "man of war" that "peace is killing" (*From Russia* 97).
[48] Le Carré mentions in his recent autobiography that Smiley is based on his mentor at Oxford, Vivian Greene (*Pigeon* 2)
[49] This is why Ricki Tarr, a wannabe James Bond in *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy,* is written to be an idiot.

critique. In contrast, in Fleming's works, bureaucracy is no match for Bond's forcefulness. The Bond plot uses bureaucracy only as a rhetorical device, as a foil against which to contrast Bond. Bond's relation to bureaucracy can occasionally be cordial—such as when M allows Bond "passionate leave" at the end of *Live and Let Die* with Domino Solitaire—but he generally ignores it after the first few scene-setting pages (243). This was a powerful fantasy for the mid-century reader, and forms part of Bond's enduring popularity. His direct lineage, the other JBs—Jason Bourne and Jack Bauer—and Jack Ryan (from Tom Clancy's books) or Ethan Hunt (from *Mission: Impossible*), also derive much of their popularity from this particular bureaucracy-bucking fantasy.

The Bond fantasy not only entertained and titillated financiers, bankers, office workers, and pencil pushers—it also tempted actual secret agents into mimicking their most public counterpart. I elaborate this theme in Chapter 5, but for now, I must mention that the culture of masculinity within intelligence, bolstered by the Bond books, stressed covert action over intelligence gathering and inspired many intelligence workers to try to buck their bureaucratic constraints like Bond and "get results." These operations retroactively prove Conrad's Assistant Commissioner correct; over-eager and over-aggressive operations like the Bay of Pigs invasion or the CIA support of anti-communist forces in Indonesia, or the arming of the mujahedeen in Afghanistan in the 1980s were counter-productive in the long-term, serving to discredit the Agency and creating future enemies. Bond-ian adventure works much better in fiction than in reality; in the words of a former head of JSOC (Joint Special Operations Command), "We had all these guys running around trying to be James Bond, and it didn't work very well" (Mazzetti 82). Two separate cultures developed within the CIA specifically, one characterized by oversight, analysis, official secrecy, slow-movement, hierarchy, and compartmentalization, the other prone

to ignore those bureaucratic protocols in favor of tangible, if questionable, immediate results. As journalist Mark Mazzetti reports, throughout the 60 year history of the CIA, traditionally it is the "case officers—the spies who go out into the world—[who believe] they are doing the real work of the CIA and like to boast that they don't follow orders from desk jockeys at headquarters" (56). This hostility between agent and agency has led to ethical, legal, moral, and operational failures. Richard Bissell, the CIA Deputy Director of plans through the late-50s and early-60s (the height of Bondomania), acknowledged in hindsight the tension between the bureaucratic and legalistic rules imposed in intelligence work and the mandate that intelligence agents produce results at any cost—a mandate which too often has led to legal, ethical and moral abuses. The combination of aggressive covert action like that planned by Bissell, partly born out of spite at the (felt) loss of masculine agency due to hierarchy and bureaucracy, with that very same hierarchy and bureaucracy has proven to be worse than either could be separately. In his book *Legacy of Ashes*, as one would expect from the title, historian Tim Weiner chronicles many of the failed operations of the early years of the CIA, including the disastrous joint operation with MI6 to parachute hundreds of political dissidents, special ops soldiers, and partisan factions behind the Iron Curtain, an "ill-fated and tragic" plan that according to official reports resulted only in sending hundreds to their deaths in Soviet prisons (Weiner 45).[50] Similar farces caused the CIA to issue an internal review less than 10 years after its founding, which concluded that "too many in responsible positions apparently don't know what they're doing" (78). The intelligence world at the time still bore the worst excesses of the gentleman's club as well as the trenchant inertia of a hierarchical bureaucracy, so very little changed despite a flood of negative

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[50] The parachuting operations were poorly planned and executed and were undermined from the start by Soviet double agents like Kim Philby.

evaluations like the Eisenhower administration's Doolittle Report, which concluded that the CIA was "filled with people having little or no training for their jobs…dead wood exists at virtually all levels…[The agency] suffers from mushroom expansion…[and] tremendous pressure to accept commitments beyond its capacity to perform" (108). One of the best examples of this is the failing-upward of Tracy Barnes, one of Allen Dulles handpicked covert operations planners. Barnes fit the image of the gentleman spy—Ivy League, well-connected, a frequent traveler, and a connoisseur of languages—but his career shows how ridiculous adhering to that myth of masculinity as a hiring protocol really is. Barnes is known now as the planning architect behind the Bay of Pigs invasion, which was so poorly thought out that even the FBI tried to stop it (Cawelti and Rosenberg 21). Yet, not only did Barnes refuse to heed the many warnings available to him that the Bay of Pigs plan would fail, he continued to make hasty and generally terrible decisions throughout his tenure as head of covert operations. Former CIA-director Richard Helms reflected that "Thanks to Dulles' constant praise and pushing, Tracy apparently remained unaware of his problem," as did many others who similarly were pushed through the hierarchy based on who they were, rather than what they did (Weiner 94). The "dead wood" in intelligence of which Barnes is a prime example prevented agencies from adapting to a changing geopolitical world. At the end of the Cold War, former CIA Director James Woolsey writes, the agency "basically stopped hiring" because of budget cuts and a refusal to lay-off or retire Soviet specialists who were felt to have earned their place (225). As a result, the CIA entered the 90s without a well-developed Middle Eastern or counterterrorism branch, which would prove to be a costly oversight.

In addition to the particular kind of brash incompetence that arises from a toxic mix of a sense of masculinity under attack and few penalties for failure, the growing numbers of

intelligence agencies also opened them up to malevolence, both in terms of those with whom

they worked and those who worked for them. In the first case, pressure to succeed in covert

operations led quickly to riskier and riskier business partners. The CIA especially had a cavalier

attitude to working with criminals and terrorists, beginning with Alan Dulles's proclamation that

"You can't run the railroads without taking in some Nazi party members" (39). The CIA's

willingness to work with regimes and individuals that could be convicted of war crimes is now

well known. In the 90s, then-director John Deutch[51] tried to curtail the practice of working with

assets responsible for human rights violations, instituting the "Deutch Scrub" which purged

many notorious criminals from the CIA's paybooks and made the hiring of questionable assets

reviewable (Diamond 206). The decision, and Deutch's accompanying proclamation that "If

questions of human rights violations or criminal involvement outweigh the value of the

information to our national interest, then we will end the relationship with the asset" proved

controversial, with many arguing that HUMINT is impossible without cultivating relationships

with some unsavory people, and that gaining assets on the inside of a terrorist cell is more

valuable to American national security than what those assets may have to do in order to advance

within that organization (206). Many blame Deutch for the overall lack of human assets in

sensitive positions in the Middle East in general, both in terms of nation-states like Syria and

Iran and in non-state groups. On the other hand, Deutch's intentions were to make the CIA less

interventionist, less imperialist, and less morally culpable when a former asset proves worse than

the initial target for intelligence ever was. Deutch's efforts aimed to redefine the CIA as more

ethical, to curb some of the worst impulses of the secret agency (and indulge in some others,

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[51] Deutch was a big proponent of SIGINT as well, perhaps because of his fundamental mistrust
of human sources.

such as more surveillance). This was not an easy task given the large size of the intelligence

bureaucracy; government departments are not "speed boats," nimble and quick to adjust course,

as President Obama has said.[52] We will examine the legacy of Deutch's principles in the "War

on Terror" in the next chapter, with my analysis of John Le Carré's *A Most Wanted Man*.

The larger an intelligence agency becomes, the more likely it is to be compromised by its

enemies. The Cambridge spies had to rely on the shield of gentlemanliness to protect their

cover—and saw those protections waver as "gentlemanliness" fell out of fashion. As agencies

expanded throughout the 50s and 60s however, the bureaucratic structure itself let rival agents

hide amongst the sheer numbers of employees. For example, only between seven and twenty

KGB agents at any one time throughout the Cold War knew the names of all their double agents

placed within the U.S. In the West, however, the corresponding number (people who knew about

all double agents in the U.S.S.R.) was in the hundreds, and the information was shared fairly

freely between, for example, the CIA and the FBI, the CIA and MI6, the NSA and the FBI

(Diamond 212). Intra-departmental security and secrecy were more wishes than practices,

despite various moves to "compartmentalize" in response to the several instances of double-

agency over the course of the Cold War. As a case study, the example of Aldritch Ames

highlights both how entrenched incompetence can become in state bureaucracies and how open

they are to be infiltrated. Ames was not a very good spy. According to John Diamond, his

"personnel record was replete with stories of Ames arguing with foreigners, passing out at

diplomatic functions, and being unable to perform basic work tasks after lunch" (208). He was

not fired for any of these behaviors—leaving him free to pass to the Soviets the second most-

detailed list of U.S. agents working in the U.S.S.R. to the Soviets in the final years of the Cold

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War.[53] Double agency like Ames' is common fodder for spy stories. When done well, stories about double agents—"moles" or "leaks" in intelligence jargon—hold the bureaucracy of intelligence up to critique in two key ways: revealing how the pressure to perform at all costs in order to move up the hierarchical ladder can induce temptation to sloppy work, and criticizing the myopia of the intelligence community to its own shortcomings when those shortcomings are structured by the attitudes and beliefs of the community itself. Graham Greene and John le Carré wrote several of these kind of stories in their careers, two of which I briefly examine here: *The Human Factor* and *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy.*

Determining an order in which to examine these two works is a bit arbitrary. *Tinker, Tailor* is chronologically first (1974) but, as one reviewer for the *New York Times* wrote in a review of *The Human Factor,* le Carré learned to write this kind of story from Graham Greene, who learned it from Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent* (Leonard). Nevertheless, *Tinker, Tailor* is in many ways the clearer critique as it features more bureaucracy at work. The closest to an action scene the novel portrays as happening in real time is a theft of files from the tightly-regulated, top secret archive—a dramatic moving of paper from one location to the other. While the 2011 film of the novel visualizes a shootout only mentioned in the book, clearly in order to supply an action beat, it maintains the novel's emphasis on the hierarchic grid of bureaucracy that the characters must navigate. This is shown in the repetition of grids throughout the film: in chessboards, stacks of boxes in Control's apartment, and most strikingly in the top-floor meeting room of MI6 (Fig. 1):

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[53] Interestingly, the fact that Ames burned so many agents, and then the USSR fell immediately anyways, has convinced him that espionage is useless.

Figure 1: The Circus' top floor (*Tinker, Tailor*)

The chessboard-patterned walls of the top-floor meeting room call to mind the trope of espionage

as a game, an attitude that George Smiley, the protagonist, sees as endemic to the profession and

as a detriment to it, as a hindrance that drains the humanity from espionage and encourages

strategic thinking with human life. Thus, to Smiley (seated at the back-right), the grid pattern is

also a cage, a symbol of rigidity and hierarchy that Smiley must leave in order to succeed in his

quest to find the Soviet mole. The men sitting around the table, subject to the grid of the

audience's observation as well as the hierarchic grid of the Circus, each represent different ways

of navigating bureaucracy. The plot of the story is a mole hunt, and the mole, Bill Haydon, is

difficult to track down not because he is unsuspected, but because he has tied his own success to

everyone else's so that removing him means admitting that MI6 has been the KGB's lackeys for

at least a decade. Haydon plays the chess-game of espionage well, in other words, and it is those

qualities that allow him to do so that Smiley most admires about him in the novel: "the slow-

burning skills of the natural agent-runner; his rare sense of balance in the playing back of double

agents and the mounting of deceptive operations; his art of fostering affection, even love, though

it ran against the grain of other loyalties" (*Tinker* 161). Haydon succeeds in rising to the top of

the hierarchy through charisma, easily influencing the weaker-personality bureaucrats Alleline,

Bland, and Esterhase, each of whom, according to Smiley, secretly wish they were Haydon

(162). But they aren't, and so each uses a different track. Alleline represents the bureaucratic

social-climber, leveraging his connections in politics and his control over the Soviet source

codenamed Merlin, supposedly a Russian traitor informing MI6 of the classified doings of the

Soviet military, in order to advance through the hierarchy. Bland and Esterhase represent

different flavors of sycophantism: spite-full sycophancy (Bland), characterized by a willingness

to put others down in order to make one more attractive to a superior, and spite-less sycophancy

(Esterhase), which is merely about making oneself look as good as possible. Notably, Esterhase's

spite-less sycophancy allows him to survive the events of the novel relatively unscathed. In

contrast to Alleline, Bland, and Esterhase, Smiley's success lies in his skill at his job, an

insufficient protection to prevent his dismissal when Alleline and Haydon oust Control from the

Circus's leadership at the beginning of the novel. Smiley's forced resignation has the effect of

disentangling him from the bureaucratic structure of the Circus, thus placing him in the perfect

position to uncover the rot within it. Smiley's virtues are the virtues of intelligence as careful

observation and slow-moving conclusions, but the Circus's vices are the vices that Karl Marx

describes when he calls a bureaucracy a "circle [or, in *Tinker, Tailor,* a grid] that no one can

leave" (qtd. in Denning 135). This becomes apparent once Smiley uncovers the truth about

Alleline's vaunted Soviet source Merlin. Merlin is meant to be the Soviet source for an

intelligence-swap operation, in which the British send worthless information to Merlin, who

spins it to the KGB as good info so they trust him more, while Merlin sends "valuable"

information from the KGB to MI6. Given that MI6 has a high level mole problem, the opposite

is actually occurring: Haydon, Merlin, and the KGB are in cahoots, rigging the swap so that the

KGB ends up with real info and MI6 with useless Soviet detritus. But because Alleline and his

cabal have pinned their career advancement on the assumption that Merlin is working for them,

they are unwilling and unable to see the situation for what it is—unlike Smiley, who, having

been dismissed from the agency, possesses greater clarity. Not for nothing is Smiley represented

on the covers of the books as a pair of glasses (Fig. 2):
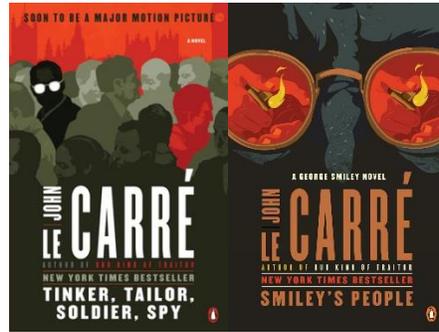
Figure 2: Smiley's Iconic Glasses

Tinker, Tailor decries the ability of the Allelines of the world, concerned only with their

advancement through the intelligence bureaucracy, to keep in their sights the goals of

intelligence work. Seeing the truth in the novel necessitates something like Smiley's

obsessiveness with people, their goals, motivations, and personalities, even if the knowledge of

the Other threatens to erode one's sense of purpose itself.[54] Smiley finds himself in this position

at the end of the novel, when his identification with Haydon nearly pushes him to reject his

mission entirely:

> [Y]et there was a part of him that rose already in Haydon's defence. Was not Bill
>
> also betrayed? Connie's lament rang in his ears: "Poor loves. Trained to Empire,
>
> trained to rule the waves…You're the last, George, you and Bill." …Thus Smiley

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[54] An example of this is when Smiley is about to arrest Haydon, and he wrestles with the tension between the dutiful and the personal: "It worried him that he felt so bankrupt; that whatever intellectual or philosophical precepts he clung to broke down entirely now that he was faced with the human situation" (351).

felt not only disgust, but, despite all that the moment meant to him, a surge of

resentment against the institutions he was supposed to be protecting. (356)

Given the way the Circus is described in the novel, Smiley's resentment is an understandable

one. While not a complete repudiation à la Alec Leamas' at the end of *The Spy who Came in

from the Cold,*[55] Smiley's Gethsemane moment is one in which he and the reader confront the

thematic resonance of a traitor's motivations. Haydon is diminished in a bureaucracy, with the

implication here and throughout the novel that espionage itself is diminished by the way the

Circus operates. Le Carré's vision of the intelligence agency in *Tinker, Tailor* is one in which

professional advancement and unreflective ideologies create blindspots in a highly

compartmentalized and hierarchical structure within which a double agent can hide, and that

these blindspots are made larger by an entity that cannot inspire loyalty or a sense of moral

purpose in its agents. Only outside of that structure, outside of the endemic narrow-mindedness

of an intelligence bureaucracy that cannot see its own flaws, can the agent re-assert personal

knowledge, skills, and motivations as tools of intelligence-gathering. Smiley draws upon his own

experiences with Haydon and Control and the human capital of fellow intelligence-outsiders to

find the mole. Fellow spy Peter Guillam is untrusted by Alleline and his group. Researcher and

analyst Connie Sachs has been fired by Haydon because she was dangerously close to figuring

out Merlin's duplicity herself. Jerry Westerby has never worked directly for MI6; he is a reporter

who sometimes acts as an intelligence source. Without these outsiders and their outsider

perspectives, MI6 would never have uncovered Haydon; he, and his KGB boss Karla, would

have been the unknown ringmasters of the Circus.

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[55] As mentioned elsewhere, Leamas chooses to die with his love interest rather than climb over
the Berlin Wall due to his anger at the Circus using them as pawns.

Tinker, Tailor positions the personal as external to the bureaucracy of the intelligence

agency, and as, despite the pitfalls of the personal,[56] the only hope to save it. Graham Greene's

The Human Factor, in contrast, is a sheer lament at the lack of the personal within the

bureaucracy of intelligence. It also uses a double agency plot, but in this case the protagonist is

the Soviet double agent, Castle. Castle became a Soviet mole after the KGB helped him and his

second wife, a black South African, escape apartheid and the South African secret service

(BOSS) while Castle was stationed by MI6 in Johannesburg. Castle feels he owes a personal debt

to the KGB and begins the novel with a personal animus towards MI6, who refused to help him

and his wife escape, presumably out of fear of ruffling BOSS's feathers. Despite this, Castle has

gone undiscovered for some time. The following scene offers some indication why. In this

particular conversation, the higher-ups of MI6—the director Hargreaves, the doctor Percival, and

the counter-intelligence expert Daintry—have finally become aware that there is a leak from

Castle's section. Greene references the history of Soviet double agency in MI6 in the discussion

of what to do about finding and stopping the leak. Daintry falls into a satiric trap by espousing

his trust in the bureaucratic mechanisms—vetting, compartmentalization, hiring practices—

meant to guarantee the integrity of the organization:

> [Daintry:] "Vetting has been done very efficiently since the Blake case broke, but
>
> we still have a few men who were with us in the bad old days. Some of them even
>
> go back to Burgess and Maclean… Of course, [Castle] belongs to the slack
>
> vetting days, but I'd say he was clear. Dullish man, first-class, of course, with
>
> files—it's generally the brilliant and ambitious who are dangerous. Castle is

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[56] Like over-identification, too much empathy, too close of relationships, and emotion—all are impediments to Smiley, but ones he turns to his advantage, unlike the always-negative pitfalls of bureaucracy.

safely married, second time, his first wife's dead. There's one child, a house on

mortgage in Metroland. Life insurance—payments up to date. No high living. He

doesn't even run to a car. I believe he bicycles every day to the station. A third

class in History at the House. Careful and scrupulous. Roger Castle in the

Treasury is his cousin." (44)

Castle is presumed to be safe because he fits into the bureaucratic mold—he isn't exceptionally

motivated, is good moving paper, values stability and the continuation of his position over risk,

knows the right people (or is related to them), etc. Castle on the surface is the kind of person that

benefits the most from the continuance of the spy bureaucracy, not its undermining. This speech

is Greene prodding at the vestiges of intelligence as an old boy's club, and the myopia that such

an atmosphere can induce. But Greene does not expend all his satire on the easy target (at least,

the easy target by the late 1970s) of the club-like atmosphere of intelligence. A deeper point

becomes apparent; for what Daintry does not realize, but that Hargreaves and Percival do, is that

double agency does not undermine the intelligence bureaucracy: it allows for its expansion—at

least when those at the top of both sides of the intelligence hierarchy see it as a game that can be

played poorly or well. As Percival says: "We are playing games, Daintry, games, all of us. It's

important not to take a game too seriously or we may lose it. We have to keep flexible, but it's

important, naturally, to play the same game" (47). The possibility of double agency creates the

demand for counter-intelligence and the opportunity to enact larger and/or more intricate

operations to try to recapture strategic advantage over the other side. For example, Percival

pushes Hargreaves to allow MI6 to carry out assassinations and uses the possibility of a double

agent to make his case that assassination is a valuable tool for MI6 to use.[57] Historically,

instrumentalist assassination as the purview of an intelligence agency arose out of bureaucratic

expansion, and so Greene's vision of assassination as part and parcel of the normal functioning

of the intelligence bureaucracy, instead of an aberration contrary to its goals, has a critical edge

rooted in reality.[58] The sharpest part of this edge is the fact that ultimately Percival, Hargreaves,

and Daintry decide to kill the wrong man. Castle is too well-hidden as the bureaucratic type, and

so beneath suspicion. His colleague Davis, on the other hand, has not so easily camouflaged his

dissatisfaction with intelligence work. At one point, Davis complains to Castle, "'We sit here

writing meaningless telegrams. We feel important because we know a little bit more than

someone else about the groundnuts or what Mobutu said at a private dinner…Do you know I

came into this outfit for excitement? Excitement, Castle. What a fool I was'" (64). Davis wants

to be James Bond,[59] and the incongruity between his actual bureaucratic position and his fantasy

of spy work induces a malaise that his superiors code as suspicious. Eventually mistaking a

romantic tryst as a meet-up with a Soviet handler, Percival poisons Davis and then fabricates a

natural-causes death certificate. At the same time, Castle, still trusted, gains access to Operation

Uncle Remus, which involves the apartheid South African government's use of nuclear weapons

against African National Congress bases across southern Africa. These twin examples of

instrumental horror treated as mere bureaucratic function push Castle to blow his own cover and

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[57] "When we are quite certain he's our man, then it seems to me we will just have to eliminate him. No trial, no publicity. If we can get information about his contacts first, so much the better, but we musn't risk a public flight and then a press conference in Moscow…I know that elimination is rather a new thing for us. More in the KGB line or the CIA's" (48).
[58] Greene was an ex-spy himself, and in his preface to the *Human Factor* quotes the Hans Christian Anderson line "out of reality are our tales of imagination fashioned" (6).
[59] Who is mentioned several times in the book as the paragon of exciting espionage.

reveal Uncle Remus to the U.S.S.R., an act which necessitates Castle's ultimate defection to Moscow.

Greene makes bureaucracy a critical target by highlighting both its absurd fascination with itself and its own functioning and also its callous disregard for individualism. Throughout the novel, Greene returns to the conceit of using boxes as a metaphor for bureaucratic compartmentalization, and the big-picture blindness that compartmentalization creates. In Greene, institutional blindness pertains specifically to morality, ethics, and even actual efficacy, all of which require something anathema to intelligence bureaucracies: open collaboration and a sharing of ideas. MI6 does not trust MI5,[60] BOSS does not trust MI6, and separate departments within British intelligence do not even know what the others do.[61] Yet, when characters express doubt about the wisdom in such an approach to intelligence operations, they are met with the fallback tenet of bureaucracy: it's not my/your job, so there's nothing to be done. For example, after Percival, Daintry, and Hargreaves think they have identified the mole in Castle's section as Davis (which is incorrect), Daintry openly questions the morality of assassination even in the face of "certain" evidence a man is a traitor. Percival glances around the room at first, before finding an abstract painting of different colored squares on the wall. Percival points out to Daintry one specific yellow square and attempts to mollify him by saying "'There's your Section 6. That's your square from now on. You don't need to worry about the blue and the red. All you have to do is pinpoint our man and then tell me. You've no responsibility for what happens in the

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[60] Hargreaves says, "'I'm never quite happy with those MI5 types. Somehow they always seem to carry with them a kind of police atmosphere. It's natural, of course, dealing as they do with counter-espionage. To me espionage is more of a gentleman's job, but of course I'm old-fashioned'" (96).
[61] At one point, Daintry, Percival and Hargreaves have an extended argument over what the other MI#s besides MI5 and MI6 even do.

blue or red squares. In fact not even in the yellow. You just report. No bad conscience. No guilt'"

(51). This reply equates carrying out one's duties to moral behavior—as long as the former is

completed, the latter is also fulfilled with a clean conscience—"No bad conscience. No guilt."

That such logic leads to everything from wastes of time and money to historical atrocities is, and

was when Greene was writing the book, well-documented as the "banality of evil" in philosopher

Hannah Arendt's words. We are plainly meant to shudder at Percival's willingness to use

assassination, and an internal assassination at that, as a tool meant to ensure proper intelligence

agency functioning, and we share Daintry's lack of conviction[62] that Percival's

compartmentalization logic absolves him of blame for (wrongly) identifying Davis as the mole.

Lest the reader think that Greene is only bitter at the Western intelligence apparatus, when we

finally meet the KGB, their excuses for not acting sooner on the information Castle has given

them sounds disturbingly familiar; Castle's KGB handler Boris tells him: "'But you know how it

is in your own outfit. It's the same in ours. We live in boxes and it's they who choose the box.'

How often he [Castle] had heard that comparison in his own office. Each side shares the same

clichés" (150). Greene is quite clear that the Soviets are also playing espionage as the same game

as the one Percival explained to Daintry. As it turns out, the only way that MI6 knew they had a

leak in Castle's section was because Moscow told them, in an effort to get MI6 to trust a fake

defector from the KGB. Castle is forced to defect, to leave his wife and child to an uncertain

future and a vengeful MI6, because of a plot in which he was ultimately only incidental.

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[62] Daintry, comparing his actions in the Cold War to his father's in WW1, thinks "The Kaiser had
not been a Hitler, but in the cold war they were now fighting it was possible, as in the Kaiser's
war, to argue right and wrong. There was nothing clear enough in the cause to justify murder by
mistake" (267). Daintry's disillusionment with his superiors factors into his decision to give
Castle a head start on his defection.

Both sides demonstrate their willingness to use people instrumentally. However, other moments in the text, such as Castle's skepticism that the firebombing of Dresden in WW2 was an equivalent atrocity to Stalin-era purges, refuse an East-West moral equivocation; I argue that Greene is not, as *New York Times* reviewer John Leonard says, engaging in a facile simplification of world events in order to claim "the West is just as bad as the East" (Leonard). Rather, the critique is that the structure of an intelligence bureaucracy itself creates and incentivizes the espionage mindset, which values using people instrumentally, regardless of the political ideology that bureaucracy nominally serves. In other words, it is not just that both sides share the same cliché that matters, it is what that cliché actually is: a metaphor for the abdication of personal responsibility to a professional duty measured by bureaucratic functionality. The BOSS officer that hands over the plans detailing Uncle Remus to Castle, who is also the same BOSS officer responsible for driving Castle out of South Africa and trying to kill his wife, illustrates this logic upon meeting Castle in England. "'I hope you don't bear me any grudge,'" he says, "After all you and I are professionals, and we are on the same side now'" (128). Castle, concerned with the human factor, whether it be his wife and child or Davis—all ultimately victims of an intelligence bureaucracy unwilling to treat people as other than pawns—cannot see it the same way as the BOSS officer. This perspective leads to his final act of betrayal.

Greene and le Carré pioneered spy stories in which a spy's disillusionment with his own organization drives the plot, and while these kind of stories have become more common, for example in the recent TV shows *Deutschland '84*, novels akin to *The Human Factor* and *Tinker, Tailor* are responsible in large part for the shift in spy fiction's reputation as genre-fare (or "divertissements" as Greene himself once called it) to sophisticated "adult" fiction. Double agent plots in which the agent's psychological and personal motivations for double agency are

thematically relevant, as opposed to those in which the double agent exists as a MacGuffin or a device for a plot twist, feel more "serious" as literature because they ask the audience to derive enjoyment from moral complexity instead of moral simplicity. It would be a mistake to lose sight of spy fiction's tendency to use "seriousness" or "realism" as a feint that disguises its tendency to deliver plots that emphasize the importance of the individual or the personal. However, bureaucracy plots also use their moralizing as critique of a real-world configuration and the pressures that structure places on the ability to gather and evaluate actual intelligence. *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy* and *The Human Factor* both feature characters using the mechanisms of bureaucracy to deceive it from within. But sometimes the potential for deception can be built into the day-to-day incentives of bureaucracy itself, independent of infiltration by double agents. The continuation of the Marx quote above about bureaucracy being a "circle no one can leave" is that a bureaucracy's "hierarchy is a hierarchy of information. The top entrusts the lower circles with an insight into details, while the lower circles entrust the top with an insight into what is universal, and thus they mutually deceive each other" (qtd. in Denning 135). Mutual deception by employees more intent on bureaucratic advancement than national security goals has been a constant throughout the history of intelligence agencies, even though the make-up of those agencies has evolved. Thus, we find accusations in the Eisenhower-era Bruce Report that the club-like atmosphere of the secret service was obsessed with "king-making" and staffed by "bright, highly graded young men who must be doing something all the time to justify their reason for being" (Weiner 135). As the rising importance of SIGINT changed hiring practices, we see critiques like this one from national security expert Edward J. Epstein in 1984, who commented that the nation's spies "are not interested in espionage. They are not interested in the Soviet Union. They are not interested in communism. They are not Cold War warriors. They are

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systems analysts. They are technocrats. They are bureaucrats. They are good at putting together

and working for a bureaucratically efficient organization" (Knightley 381). Soviet double-agent

Aldrich Ames alleged that the "espionage business was a self-serving sham, carried out by

careerist bureaucrats who managed to deceive several generations of American policymakers

about the value of their work" (Diamond 213). The War on Terror has seemingly not changed

this culture of self-advancement. Former SIS agent Alaister Crooke writes that "the pressure to

perform produces error after error. People need statistics and want to tick the box about how

many terrorists they have taken out" (Grey 214). According to journalist Stephen Grey, even al

Qaeda is aware of these limitations, and they have produced policy papers attempting to educate

members on the CIA's lack of translators, dependence on technology, and bureaucratic zeal as

tools for exploitation (185).

The pressure to perform has forced many intelligence agents and assets to move from

intelligence-gathering to intelligence-creation. Sometimes, this means creating one's own

problems and then proposing solutions. This is the case of many of the more interventionist

agency policies, such as, infamously, the systematic arming and training of the Taliban to resist

the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. But, in other instances, intelligence sent up the bureaucratic

hierarchy is outright and deliberate fiction. Tim Weiner reports that Southeast Asian CIA stations

in the years before the Vietnam War were essentially "paper mills" in which agents and assets

would turn in reams of made-up intelligence in order to keep the money flowing in (51). Perhaps

most infamous among assets fictionalizing vital intelligence is Agent Curveball, supposedly an

insider among Iraq's chemical weapons program whose deliberate exaggerations and

fictionalizations were passed on as iron-clad proof that Saddam Hussein was producing chemical

WMDs, and thus were crucial pieces in the justification offered to the public by the Bush

administration for the Iraq War. According to journalist Stephen Grey, Curveball's CIA handler was "too in love" with his source, meaning that since Curveball was giving him the information he wanted to hear, he didn't sufficiently "vet" or "fact check" it (148).

If Curveball's story seems a bit familiar, it may be because it echoes Graham Greene's *Our Man in Havana* from fifty years before the Iraq War. In the novel, the unassuming British vacuum salesman Wormold is recruited into the British secret service rather unwillingly, acquiescing mostly because his teenage daughter's expensive whims compel him to find another source of money. Wormold shares a first name with Bond (Jim/James), but little else. Unwilling and unable to form a network of informants to keep tabs on the volatile situation of 1950s Cuba, Wormold just starts "making things up." He begins by using the names and positions of people he has met in passing, but eventually creates characters out of whole cloth, writing reports based on newspaper articles and his own imagination, and sending in detailed drawings of vacuum parts with a modified scale to insinuate that they are missile platforms. While his immediate handler Hawthorne suspects Wormold is lying (he recognizes the vacuum parts), he does not say anything for fear of his own career being damaged. As a result, Wormold's fictions grow more elaborate and are received with more and more seriousness. At the end of the novel, when Wormold has finally been caught as a fabricator, he is not even really punished. Instead, he is promoted to a position in the U.K. (where he can do less damage) and recommended for an OBE.[63] This final bureaucratic absurdity, as critic Denis Smyth writes, shows that "[t]he same vested interest in maintaining the prestige and therefore the intra-governmental influence of the Secret Service—its power to command administrative resources and rewards—prevents Wormold's spymasters from either officially repudiating his literary inventions or disowning him

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[63] Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, a fairly prestigious award.

professionally, once his fictions are revealed" (130). For the secret services to admit that they were fooled, whether in *Our Man in Havana* or in the case of Agent Curveball, is to admit that as an intelligence agency they have failed their governmental mandate, their mission *to know*—a mission that supposedly licenses tremendous amounts of money and unethical, immoral, and questionably legal tactics.

    Our Man in Havana is a critique of bureaucracy in the intelligence world, pointing out how easy it is for these large organizations to clannishly protect themselves and their members, to miss the obvious because it isn't what they want to hear. Wormold's imagination is obviously a key component in this critique, but Greene gets more mileage out of his fictionalizing spy than just a critique of bureaucratic myopia—especially since fictionalizing and the literary are slippery concepts in the novel. Writing seems to become a form of covert action, for example. At least, as Wormold's inventions are taken for real intelligence, they become actionable. The unassuming people who are the templates for his agents are attacked, and in one case, killed. When he hears that one of his agents—whom he did not think was a real person—has been killed, Wormold asks himself "Can we write people into existence?" (119). He is stricken with fear when he realizes that whether the answer is yes or no, people can surely be written out of existence, and he has (inadvertently) done so. Wormold himself is put in danger, almost poisoned at a social function. His reports cause meddling on a geopolitical scale, and accelerate the destabilization of Cuba. Even though he initially chooses to start fabricating reports in order to further spoil his daughter (with the gift of a horse, specifically), we should not take Wormold's unexpectedly potent imagination as Greene warning us that, in the fraught

circumstances of the Cold War, personal matters are also political,[64] though they certainly are.

For one, it is not only Wormold that possesses the capacity to be fanciful—the head of MI6 back

in London won't listen to Wormold's handler Hawthorne give him a true account of Wormold's

shop or operation: "The small shop for vacuum cleaners had been drowned beyond recovery in

the tide of the Chief's literary imagination" (49). Invention seems to be endemic to the

profession, and its wellspring is a combination of that "pressure to perform" that SIS agent

Alaister Crooke warned about 50 years later, and the "mutual deception" that Marx describes as

endemic to bureaucracies. Wormold's lies could be easily uncovered, but they aren't, because he

is handing excuses to take action to MI6 and rival intelligence agencies. In *Our Man in Havana*,

Greene gives us an early critique of how twisted intelligence work becomes when agencies are

allowed to, in journalist Mark Mazzetti's words, "grade their own work," by which he means

create a situation through covert action that then requires intelligence agency intervention to

understand (81). Greene locates this flaw as a product of laziness in agent recruitment and a

willingness to believe anything that confirms what the agency wants to hear, made up or not. In

other words, as an inherent flaw of an organization that operates outside of public scrutiny and

that has gotten too large too quickly.

The novel is quite critical of bureaucratic imagination, which sees what it wants and

creates figures out of its own image, but Greene is not Kafka. Greene's Catholic worldview and

fundamental belief in individual worth will not allow him to grind his characters up in the

machinery of words like the prisoners of "In the Penal Colony." *Our Man in Havana* seems to

suggest that though literary imagination is misplaced when involved in intelligence work, it is in

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[64] Perhaps the first iteration of this claim actually emerges as a warning in the propaganda posters
of the World Wars and the Cold War, as in the advertisement for Scot Towels that asks "Is your
washroom breeding Bolsheviks?", before being reclaimed as a political action rallying cry

and of itself the antithesis of bureaucratic drudgery, a mechanism that allows agency to flourish. Wormold *does* through his writing, and, again, though this has terrible consequences, we can't ignore that Wormold finds excitement, purpose, resolve, and ultimately love with his secretary Beatrice by embracing a creative and agentive side to himself that would have gone untapped as a vacuum salesman. The novel begins by setting up reality itself, in Dr. Hasselbacher's words, as something "not to be faced," as bleak and on the precipice of the abyss: "We live in an atomic age, Mr. Wormold. Push a button—piff bang—where are we? Another Scotch please" (11-12). "Dream more" Hasselbacher tells Wormold, and he does so, becoming an "imaginative writer" as he tells his daughter while he fabricates nuclear missile sites (77). Espionage and agency both are revealed to be dependent on fantasy; in the former case, this is dangerous, but in the latter case, fantasy ultimately creates a world for Wormold that espionage can't accurately know, a world of individual goals and a personal reality separate from the state and state service. Beatrice reminds Wormold of this other definition of reality, of a reality that his imagining has made real. She tells him that even when the espionage world seems make-believe, "What happens after work is real. I mean, your daughter is real and her seventeenth birthday is real" (102). Embracing this personal reality—and ignoring that other one filled with nuclear gloom and doom, bureaucratic intelligence agencies, and unscrupulous police captains—is an authorial, agentive choice, or so Greene suggests.

Our Man in Havana features in a long line of spy novels that link the act of writing and espionage. As expected with Greene, the novel's resolution doubles as a call to embrace quiet inter-personal relationships instead of international politics. Writing in spy fiction is a common antithesis of espionage because of their shared affinities—attention to detail, the managing of characters, the emphasis on plot/plots, the insistence that both involve fabrication. When they are

set directly in opposition, writing, at least in the works of spy writers who themselves aspire to the literary, is positive and agentive, creating a world that espionage falsely attempts to control and know. However, not all "serious" spy fiction ends with a firm renunciation of the political for a separate private sphere. Some, instead, posit that a complete disentanglement of the political and the private is not possible. In these cases, writing as a trope serves as a shorthand for an urgent sensitivity and sensibility to the personal and individual spheres that would benefit the intelligence world tremendously. This turns out to be an old theme in the genre, older even than the Cold War bureaucratic expansion against which *Our Man in Havana* reacts. For example, W. Somerset Maugham's prefaces his novel *Ashenden* with a description of spy work as boring and monotonous, needing the authorial flourish to be made palatable to the public: "The work of an agent in the Intelligence Department is on the whole extremely monotonous. A lot of it is uncommonly useless. The material it offers for stories is scrappy and pointless; the author has himself to make it coherent, dramatic and probable" (X). The titular Ashenden is himself an author, and regularly compares his life as a spy to the melodramas he writes. The comparison isn't favorable; Ashenden would much rather the people he meet behave more like a plot-based fiction, as then they would be more predictable, since his espionage work itself is "as unsatisfactory as those modern novels that give you a number of unrelated episodes and expect you by piecing them together to construct in your mind a connected narrative" (7). Nevertheless, Maugham implies that what makes Ashenden a good spy is his writerly ability to imagine how people will react to a given scenario. Ashenden may already feel like a "tiny rivet in a vast and complicated machine," but this novel set in WWI and written in 1928 does not anticipate the explosion of bureaucracy in store for the Secret Service in the next few decades (7). Ashenden is, in fact, given laughably few orders, as his superiors rely on his status as, in the words of his

commanding officer, "the right kind of person" (meaning a gentleman) to see him through his missions (2). And since being a writer is part of being the kind of person Ashenden is, the scenarios in the book showcase how writerly imagination allows him to read and then manipulate the people around him, to take one "little incident" and use it as "a key to their whole lives," as a way "to reconstruct their histories, circumstances and characters" (162). Ashenden isn't Wormold, though, and he knows how to limit his imagination: "but he pulled himself up: he could not allow himself the luxury of creation" (162). Ashenden's writerly gifts are thus in sync with the state, despite his literary disposition setting him apart from his more martial colleagues (for one, he cannot think of people as numbers as his superiors do, only able to imagine them as characters) (54). Unlike Wormold, Ashenden does his duty to the best of his ability, employing the creative faculty as a counterpoint to the bureaucratic machine of the secret service, but one within the same rhythm. This does not mean that *Ashenden* the novel is uncritical of the world of espionage, however, just that the critique is at the meta-level. It is left to Maugham to exercise his literary technique to portray the Service as callous, hypocritical, inept, etc. Ashenden the character (who, being based on Maugham, does doubt the probity of his own cause) is forced by wartime circumstances into using his gifts for Britain. Ashenden at one point describes patriotism as "in peace-time an attitude best left to politicians, publicists, and fools, but in the dark days of war an emotion that can wring the heart strings" (46). Reading this as biographical *mea culpa* is hard to resist here—Maugham was an ex-spy himself.

Ashenden, like *Our Man in Havana*, likes to play narratively or at a meta-level with the conventions of fiction and those of espionage. For one, the book itself is one of those "modern novels" Ashenden hates, composed of multiple, fragmented, often conclusion-less stories. The narratives resist closure; no spy mission is completed satisfactory: they kill the wrong man, the

target commits suicide instead of being blackmailed into treason, a coin is flipped to decide whether a factory is to be destroyed and Maugham does not show us the result. Enemy agents are shown as human (unlike the German agents in Buchan and other contemporaries), while Ashenden's superior R is at best a dissembling puppet-master and at worst a callous hypocrite. In other words, the world of espionage that Maugham portrays is in fact "scrappy and pointless," as he announces in the introduction. The novel feels disjointed and inconclusive, introducing characters that seem on the verge of revealing a complicated humanity but who then get frustratingly used, abused, or forgotten by the narrative. A fitting symmetry, as revealed by the content in the vignettes of the book, with espionage itself.

Greene, like Maugham with *Ashenden*, may have written *Our Man in Havana* or *The Human Factor* out of personal discomfort or dissatisfaction with his time in the secret service. Another way that spy fiction authors who themselves have a background in intelligence work use writing as a trope is to make their characters writers themselves. This choice signals their possession of a creative skill stifled or misused by or otherwise in conflict with the bureaucratic intelligence agency. Even Le Carré's Günther Bachmann[65] has written an unpublished novel. However, one does not need to be a disaffected ex-spy to position writing as an antithetical act to espionage. Ian McEwan's *Sweet Tooth* takes place in the late 60s and early 70s, after bureaucratic expansion has brought the entrance of women into intelligence services, primarily, though not exclusively, as support and secretarial staff. These women faced an entrenched disrespect for their inclusion among the old guard. The main character, Serena, has just been hired by MI5, but not, as she had hoped, as a field agent. She describes a bit of her training as support staff:

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[65] For a fuller discussion of *A Most Wanted Man*, see Chapter 3.

> We were spending more time now with the scores of other girls in the Registry,
> learning the strict rules of file retrieval and discovering, without being told, that
> there were concentric circles of security clearance and that we languished in outer
> darkness…I absorbed the general spirit of the place and, taking my cue from the
> other girls, began to accept that in this small part of the adult world, and unlike in
> the rest of the Civil Service, women were of a lower caste.

Serena is eventually brought out of the "outer darkness" and given a field assignment. Her task is to financially support a young, non-communist leftist writer and push him to publish works that conform to MI5's standards for inoculating political dissent, which allows the creative left to express dissatisfaction but in such a way that confirms national hegemony instead of undermining it. The task proves noxious to her. Project Sweet Tooth, as it is called in the book, is directly inspired by the CIA's funding of Steven Spender's *Encounter* magazine, and many other liberal left and centrist art projects throughout the Cold War. But in the novel, the agency's plan is foiled as Serena and the author, Thomas Haley (like Wormold and Beatrice in *Our Man in Havana*) fall in love—love here taking up its stock role as that which is contrary to the spirit of bureaucracy and the aims of state control. The ending of *Sweet Tooth* features a characteristic-for-McEwan twist, one that firmly sets creative power and emotional agency against the world of espionage and the bureaucratic, hierarchic governmentality it represents. It does so through a kind of transmutation, in which the text of the novel the reader has just read is revealed not to be in the head of Serena (where it has seemed to be) but to be an actual in-universe novel, written by Thomas Haley. This is revealed to the reader in the letter that composes the final chapter. And it is done in such a way to confirm Serena's resignation from MI5 and both her and Haley's condemnation of an intelligence bureaucracy willing to treat them both as pawns. Serena's life,

the chronicle of her memories of her induction into MI5, her chaffing under the sexism present within it, her hesitance to help the organization control and direct the aesthetic sphere has all been weaponized against MI5 in the (published) form of an aesthetic object itself—though one, perhaps problematically, written by someone else, a man, both in and out of universe. The argument in the book is that the aesthetic sphere and individual will must trump service to the state when the state and its institutions abandon service to the people for domination. This argument is also, like the novel itself, both in- and out- of universe. Since the novel exists in both realities as a novel, it can be both Serena and Hayley's act of defiance and McEwan's jab at the historical, and ongoing, attempts by government to directly or indirectly determine what is and isn't acceptable as art. In other words, both versions of *Sweet Tooth* resist the instrumentalist espionage mindset, even while portraying the world of intelligence as hopelessly in its thrall.

McEwan has good reasons for this resistance. *Sweet Tooth* dates from 2012, 140 years since the birth of the intelligence apparatus as a part of the "Great Game." Those years offer plenty of examples that the intelligence community has become more, not less, enamored of the espionage mindset. The espionage mindset is hopelessly addicted to complexity, and specifically to the belief that complex systems can be mapped, analyzed, and fully understood with the right tools and techniques. It is obsessed with secrets and conspiracies, and believes that being in the know confers moral and ethical absolution for any action. Seeing global politics through the espionage mindset is what led the initial individuals who formally enshrined espionage as part and parcel of government action to call it the "Great Game" at the end of the 19th century, and the mentality has yet to leave us. The "Great Game" evokes the picaresque of Kipling's *Kim*, in which the fates of nations turned on the skill and bravado of heroic individuals. Espionage has never been so sanguine, and the intelligence world's turn towards bureaucracy, conspiracy,

cruelty and technophilia described over this chapter and the next is not so much an abandonment of an earlier ideal but an embrace of the anti-human potential always-already suggested by the fundamental belief of espionage: that peoples' lives, safety, security, and privacy are stakes able to be gambled. The Great Game of espionage is a poor master trope in an era in which the vast majority of the population of the planet are unwilling and unequal "players" in it—most of us caught in electronic webs of surveillance, many fearing that each speck in a bright blue sky might rain Hellfire missiles down upon a mistaken wedding or market convoy, some disappeared into the black holes of secret prisons despite innocence or mistaken identity. As le Carré himself points out, espionage gains much of its power from the secret nature of its business and the closely-guarded mystique of its practitioners:

> Nobody can do corporate rot more discreetly than the spies. Nobody does better mission creep. Nobody knows better how to create an image of mysterious omniscience and hide behind it. Nobody does a better job of pretending to be a cut above a public that has no choice but to pay top price for second-rate intelligence whose lure lies in the gothic secrecy of its procurement, rather than in its intrinsic worth. (*Pigeon Tunnel* 58)

Dismantling this mystique means refusing to play the Great Game or indulging in its master tropes of geopolitics as contest and human worth as a strategic quantity. Considering that spy fiction derives much of its pleasure from telling stories featuring human agency triumphing against this anti-human backdrop, one may come to the conclusion that spy fiction is already doing its part unraveling the espionage mindset. But as we have seen over the past chapters, the relationship is more complicated than that. For example, portrayals of intelligence work as conspiratorial or massively bureaucratic, even when these are negative portrayals, reinforce the

idea that intelligence work is inherently so, and only heroic willpower can keep an intelligence worker can help the individual resist the bureaucracy, expose the conspiracy, or stay relevant in the age of the machine. Spy fiction has turned espionage into a culture of the exception and the exceptional; that is, a culture that flouts legal and ethical concerns under the absolution of a national security aegis, and a culture that promotes the heroic figure/secret agent as an exceptional state-actor, one who should have exceptional licenses. As one might imagine, actual intelligence organizations are not quick to disabuse the public of its belief that the work of intelligence depends upon exception and exceptionality. The former (exception) can be spun to justify the espionage mindset's gamification of human relations and willingness to do seemingly anything to uphold its governmental mandate to know, control, and destroy state enemies. The latter (exceptionality) drives intelligence agencies towards exclusivity, obscurity (and obfuscation), and ideological remove from the public at large. The next chapter discusses how the culture of exceptionality of has led to inhumane cruelty and inhuman technophilia. The next two chapters after that focus on the exceptionality of the secret agent, and the pinning of that exceptionality to changing ideologies of masculinity. It is a pinning that would be impossible without support from the spy agency, an organization that operates in both the cultural and political spheres, created and molded as much by spy fiction as by policy. The discursive spy agency is not the CIA or MI6, but a collection of beliefs, legislation, attitudes, and actions that find their expression in the workings of the CIA, MI6, NSA, GCCHQ, Mossad, etc. The discursive spy agency *is* the espionage mindset—prone to conspiracy, devoted to bureaucracy, drawn to cruelty, enamored of technology.

Chapter 3: The Spy Agency as a Discursive Formation, Part 2: Cruelty and Technophilia

The previous chapter engaged with two trends, conspiracy and bureaucracy, within the cultural discourse of espionage that have shaped that discourse into its modern form. Both conspiracy and bureaucracy have become such a firm part of the espionage mindset—the cultural lattice within the institutional-decision making process of intelligence agencies—that it is difficult to imagine talking about intelligence without them. This chapter examines two more such trends—cruelty and technophilia—that have become similarly reified within the discourse, in part because of the preparatory work done by conspiracy and bureaucracy in changing the public's understanding of espionage. Recall that the conspiracy derives its potency as a trope from both fantasies of overcoming conspiracies and fantasies of being stopped only because of them. Bureaucracy in spy fiction, in contrast, is either the obstacle to be overcome or worked around in a similar manner to the heroic overcoming of the conspiracy, or the pleasure-less final crushing weight that renders the hero's plans impotent (thwarting his masculinity in the process). Even when bureaucracy is benign, as in Ian Fleming's MI6, it is still an obstacle that Bond must successfully navigate and ignore in order to accomplish his "real work" of solo (or small group) adventuring. Bureaucracy as a defining trope of spy fiction enters into the genre with the mass expansions of spy agencies during the Cold War, and, even more specifically, with the classic man vs agency plots of John le Carré, e.g. *The Spy who Came in From the Cold*, and Graham Greene, e.g. *Our Man in Havana*, though the roots of this kind of positioning between the stifling or malevolent agency and the individual agent has a somewhat forgotten precursor: Somerset

Maugham's *Ashenden*. The lineage of Maugham-Greene-le Carré is both the lineage of using an agent's own bureaucracy as a morally compromised, obstructing force and the lineage of spy fiction as middle-brow "serious" novels, instead of low-brow/mass market "entertainment." The relationship between an expansion of bureaucracy plots and the spy genre's move towards more mainstream respectability is causal; it is the use of bureaucracy in this way that allows these authors to address weightier themes than John Buchan dared, such as moral equivalency between oneself and one's enemy, ambivalence about national duty, the role of individual creativity/individual agency versus top-down orders in large organizations, and the transcendence of the bureaucratic structure by the individual will. Len Deighton, whose novel *The Ipcress File* pitted the Mod culture of the 60s against the shadowy world of espionage, pioneered the influential "lone agent disavowed completely by his corrupt organization" plot structure, creating an oft-used spy fiction template that still endures today. This lineage of authors, especially le Carré and Len Deighton, have proven quite successful and influential, enough that even pulp television spy thrillers such as the *24* series have obstructionist bureaucrats as characters. Generally, this has much to do with a general "cog in the machine" malaise characteristic of late capitalism. Specifically though, it has had great relevance on how the public conceives of spy agencies: as compartmentalized yet expansive, busy but inefficient, powerful but bound in red tape. This characterization does more in the public imaginary than create fussy bureaucrats for Jack Bauer to ignore. The CIA has capitalized on the public idea of itself as an intentionally convoluted and opaque agency. The reiteration of spy agencies as bureaucratic megaliths makes shrugging off that monolith seem exciting and daring. We give latitude to the secret world because we expect to find it difficult to comprehend. Thus, the trope of incomprehensibly complex bureaucracy facilitates a culture of cruelty and moral failure, both

in real life—as in the cases I discuss below concerning the role of the CIA in the Vietnam War and the 2003 invasion of Iraq—and in works such as le Carré's *A Most Wanted Man* (2008)*, Greene's *The Human Factor* (1978) or Denis Vilanueve's film *Sicario* (2015).

I call the first topic of this chapter "cruelty," instead of "evil" or "violence" for two reasons; first the general public, and the espionage community,[66] acknowledges that torture specifically is an extended duration of pain and suffering inflicted by spy agencies on the bodies and minds of their enemies and thus, it is not adequately described as violence, which can be sudden, swift, and in some cases perhaps merciful, but a particular kind of extended violence designed to mentally and physically break incarcerated subjects. Secondly, there are great disagreements, even within the agencies themselves, over the necessity, effectiveness, and morality of practices such as extraordinary rendition, waterboarding, stress positioning, sensory deprivation, and the other cruelties carried out in the name of national security. Thus, it does not seem to me to do these debates justice if I were to label all these practices with the blanket term "evil," though I personally think some of them are. "Cruelty" in the secret services has fundamentally altered the world's image of both spy agencies and the nations that seemingly give them free reign. This is especially true in the Middle East and Central Asia during the War on Terror, as journalist Mark Danner explains: "Post-9/11 America became the America the jihadists depicted: an imperial, aggressive, blundering power that managed, by means of lurid, deathless images of tortured Muslims, to prove to the world that all of its purported respect for human rights and freedom was nothing but base hypocrisy" (Danner xxv). After Abu Ghraib and

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[66] At least, the American Psychological Association, high ranking members of which have colluded with the CIA and Department of Defense to construct and implement so-called "enhanced interrogation" techniques, has acknowledged that their role in advising the use of these techniques facilitated abuse and miscarriage of justice ("New APA Policy").

Guantanamo Bay, the idea that spy agencies could be unambiguously heroic, already a tenuous position in spy fiction after the decades of the Cold War, became unsupportable, leading to a rise in plots casting the CIA or MI6 as villainous (*A Most Wanted Man,* the *Bourne* films, *Sicario*), comedic parodies of traditional spy fiction (*Spy, Archer*) and a return of spy stories set in the Cold War (*Red Joan, The Sympathizer, the Americans*, *Sweet Tooth*). Taken together, these three moves in the genre are a reaction against the cruelty on display in the War on Terror, but these shifts have also raised questions in the public conception of what a spy agency is and does. For example, what does it mean for a spy parody not to take issues of torture, drone warfare, or electronic surveillance "seriously," and who benefits from portraying the CIA as bumbling or silly? Does a comedic portrayal keep the agency grounded and cognizant of public opinion, or allow further mystification of their actual activities? When the CIA or MI6 is portrayed as "the bad guy" in a genre that still gears itself towards entertainment, who is the audience, and what kind of entertainment are they consuming?

The last arch-trope of the spy agency I examine in this chapter is technophilia, or the technocratization of the spy agency—the rise of SIGINT over HUMINT, the use of totalizing domestic surveillance programs, and the fascination with technological gadgets in the secret world. A certain kind of fetishization of machines, special techniques, disguise, and surveillance can be found at the very beginning of the genre, in John Buchan's *The 39 Steps,* for example. The use of sophisticated technology became inextricably linked with the genre through the Bond series and Q branch, and their many imitators, in the Cold War. Concurrently, increased defense spending allowed the fledgling CIA and NSA to experiment with electronic computing, signals collection, and surveillance, rapidly leading to an American advantage when it came to technological methods of espionage, a dominance which had both the USSR and the UK

worried. In fact, the anxiety of the latter even makes its way into the Bond series itself in *From Russia with Love*. These anxieties were not without cause. As we know now from revelations by whistleblowers, the NSA (in partnership with its British and Canadian equivalents, at the least) has grown into the most prolific intelligence-gathering organization in the history of the world, collecting the digital communications for every single Internet user, algorithmically analyzing the meta-data (time, location, and address of sent messages) of all of them, and directly observing not only those targeted by a specific intelligence operation, but any that triggered certain "suspicious" patterns as read by the algorithm. The intelligence world's relation with technology is often portrayed positively, as in the U.K. TV series *Spooks* (2002-2011), but can also veer directly into the Orwellian Big Brother, especially after the surveillance revelations of the early 2010's. Not surprisingly given the subject matter, this is the tack taken in both the documentary about Edward Snowden, *Citizenfour*, and the Oliver Stone dramatization of his life, *Snowden*. Technology has greatly expanded the reach of intelligence agencies, both their capacity to surveil and to kill, especially via remote drone strikes. Critics of this expanded reach frequently object on moral, legal, ethical, and efficacy grounds. One of the most common criticism is that a reliance on technology erodes the agency's ability to understand the human relationships and factors required for long-term intelligence success. In this chapter, I chronicle the ways technology has shaped the way intelligence agencies operate and how spy fiction has employed technological tropes and themes to comment on the larger intelligence world, from Buchan to *Spooks* and the Daniel Craig-led Bond films. Cruelty and technophilia are thought of as Cold War and War on Terror developments in espionage, but as I argue throughout this chapter, the mentality that drove the initial Great Game may have changed in the details, but not in the form.

Bureaucracy and Cruelty in Spy Fiction: *A Most Wanted Man* **and** *Sicario*

As a reminder from the previous chapter, critic Michael Denning asserts that the secret agent is a fantasy of a returned agency to a world that feels less like the product of human action than the result of capitalist and governmental forces. The three novels I ended the last chapter by discussing—*Our Man in Havana, Ashenden, and Sweet Tooth*— trouble Denning's proclamation not by refuting human agency, since they all do ultimately affirm it, but in questioning the ability of a secret agent to embody it. Wormold may think to himself that ""In a mad world it always seems simpler to obey," and Greene does expose the madness at the heart of espionage-politics, but Wormold *chooses* not to obey; he deliberately misbehaves, as it were, and refuses to perform the role of the "man in Havana" that MI6 wants (28). Greene, Maugham, and McEwan see the bureaucracy of espionage in the same way that Le Carré sees ideology in *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*—as a threat to the personhood of the agent him or herself. Nor are these the only examples of works that echo the same criticisms of Eisenhower's Doolittle report. Generally, the protagonists of these works come out the other end intact—a little more cynical perhaps, with shattered illusions about the secret operations of the world, but ultimately affirmed in the value of the ideals of bourgeois individualism, of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness despite a new awareness of their fragility. This is the Ambler-ian ending, a kind of defeated triumphalism or triumphal defeat, common also to other forms of hard-boiled fiction by, for example, the works of Hammet and Chandler. I think that genre, and the community that the recognized, shared features of a genre creates in consumers, goes a long way to explaining why this type of ending is popular. Happy endings in spy fiction are surely a means of entertainment, of giving the reader what they want by praising their intelligence (you too are in the know, you too will not fall for the machinations of the large impersonal forces of the world) while also massaging their

ego and keeping them comfortable (you, unlike the large world-running bureaucracy, know that the simple things are the most important). Despite these generic conventions, I think it is a mistake to dismiss the idealism behind this kind of ending as solely a move for entertainment, and not a critique of an intelligence apparatus that many, not just fiction writers, feel would be better served by reconnecting and re-centering those ideals to their practice. Greene means his happy endings.

Just the same, the ending that affirms the individual against the bureaucracy, even when this affirmation comes as a result of a complete renunciation of the intelligence world altogether (like in *Our Man in Havana* and *Sweet Tooth*) may still be blunting the teeth of any criticisms the author intends. Conventional endings are a hallmark of genre fiction, and thus may not be seen as capable of making a critical point for the reason that they mark and stigmatize the works that feature them as "middlebrow" or "for entertainment." In other words, the endings devalue the message; plot gets in the way of theme. Perhaps this is why John le Carré's work outside of the Smiley books, which tends to eschew any sort of affirmative ending for the characters—hits harder than Greene and Ambler. Le Carré's morals are intended for the reader to learn, but the inability of his characters to learn those morals can feel brutal and cynical. His latest works are warnings against an intelligence apparatus that has grown powerful enough to redefine citizenship and personhood. These late works are noticeably free of affirmations of the individual self.[67] His 2008 novel, *A Most Wanted Man,* turned into a film starring the late Phillip Seymour

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[67] Le Carré has mentioned that those involved in the spy world who read his works often complain to him about his seeming unfairness to his former profession. For example, Maurice Oldfield, former Chief of the Secret Service, once complained to Alec Guiness with le Carré in the room: "It's young David [Le Carré's given first name] and the like…that make it that much harder for the Service to recruit decent officers and sources. They read his books and they're put off" (*Pigeon* 15).

Hoffman in 2014, seemingly takes a good deal of pleasure in grinding up its protagonists in the service of an appeal to a reading public to come to action—though what that action could be is sadly unstated, and as a result the novel wallows in malaise and frustration.

The novel's scope is no less than an indictment of the entire intelligence community after 9/11, decrying its focus on SIGINT over HUMINT, the knee jerk assumptions of guilt of Islamic peoples, American trampling of state sovereignty under the aegis of a global war on terror, and the transformation of intelligence agencies into policing bodies. The plot centers on the figure of Issa Karpov, a Muslim Chechen who has inherited millions of dollars in blood money from his Soviet general father. Karpov makes his way illegally to Hamburg, where the money is being kept in the bank of Tommy Brue. Karpov has been jailed and tortured in Russia and Turkey, and his past is a narrative of conflicting accounts and voices. Russian intelligence jailed him as an Islamic terrorist, but then again, they hardly need an excuse to jail Chechens. He confessed, under torture, to terrorism, but then again, who wouldn't say anything to make torture stop? He claims to be a devout Muslim but does not know some of the basic tenets of Islam. He has endured years of abuse and imprisonment, yet he strikes everyone he meets as fragile and naïve. In other words, he is a cipher, the titular "Most Wanted Man," a figure symbolic of Islam itself in the eyes of the modern West. To the human rights lawyer, Annabel Richter, who assists him, he is an innocent destroyed and displaced by global politics. To the banker Tommy Brue, he is a reminder of the past misdeeds of his family and nation; Brue considers his father's acceptance and laundering of Soviet blood money to be shameful, even after he finds out it was done at MI6's request. To Gunther Bachmann, the German intelligence chief in Hamburg, Karpov is either a potential agent or a source, a way to entrap the upper echelons of terror cells lured in by Karpov's money. And to the CIA and their allies in the German government, Issa Karpov is just

a terrorist, to be disposed of in a secret prison whenever they see fit. It is through Gunther that le

Carré gives a direct condemnation of the problems of modern intelligence, writing for the

German spy extended rants, or "sermons" as they are called, such as the following on the

descent, in Bachmann's opinion, of intelligence agencies into law enforcement:

> We are not policemen, we are spies. We do not arrest our targets. We develop
>
> them and redirect them at bigger targets. When we identify a network, we watch
>
> it, we listen to it, we penetrate it and by degrees control it. Arrests are negative
>
> value. They destroy a precious acquisition. They send you scrabbling back to the
>
> drawing board, looking for another network half as good as the one you've just
>
> screwed up. (246)

Bachmann is a rough and quarrelsome figure, prone to irreverence, alcohol, and treating people

like pieces in a puzzle. He and his second in command Erna Frey are the good spies, as far as

spies can be good in a le Carré novel,[68] because they are under no illusions about spy work. Le

Carré insists that seeing one's job for what it is as a high virtue in a spy; recall Smiley and his

glasses symbolic of his own clarity of vision. Bachmann and Erna Frey are in the mold of

Smiley. However, they are not in the same time period. *A Most Wanted Man* illustrates how the

intelligence bureaucracy has changed to limit the potential Smileys in its ranks. In Bachmann's

BND, committing to a specific, non-hedged, non-bureaucratic course of action is a radical break

from a culture of oversight, deference to foreign interests (namely the CIA), and red tape. When

Bachmann does act of his own accord at the end of the book, he bases his reasoning on the only

thing he can guarantee, his own individual knowledge: "I'm on my own, where I always am. The

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[68] Which is to say, always compromised by spying, but can be decent-ish given those constraints, depending on their personal beliefs.

man on the ground knows best. Fuck them" (316). As in *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier Spy,* le Carré is

skeptical of spies who act on ideology, especially when it interferes with pragmatism. Bachmann

wants to use Karpov and his money to ensnare an Islamic religious leader, Abdullah, whom

Bachmann believes is masking contributions to terrorist groups under charitable donations.

(Bachmann is right, as it turns out—about 5% of the money that Abdullah distributes to charities

goes to fund terror groups). Bachmann does not want to arrest either Abdullah or Karpov, who

he believes is innocent of most everything the Russians have charged him; he wants to use them

as assets, as entry-ways into understanding terrorist networks and financial flows. Bachmann is

willing to let Karpov remain in Germany for his involvement, and as for Abdullah, Bachmann

remarks "If Abdullah is not part of a known network, I personally will make him part of one. If

need be, I will invent a network, just for him" (246). Note here the connection once again

between the good spy and the creative author, an analogy that in previous eras of spy fiction

would signal Bachmann's ability to transcend, if not entirely subvert, the bureaucratic structure

of intelligence work. However, in this new era, Bachmann's plans are destined to be ruined. The

CIA blows his operation, sending a van crashing into the cab in which Bachmann waits to pick

up Abdullah and Karpov. Bachmann had sought to "offer [Abdullah] a new definition of loyalty"

by convincing him (under threat of arrest, but also with a promise of immunity should he

comply) to become an informant on the terrorist networks he finances (250). But CIA agents

emerge from the unmarked van, black-bag Abdullah and Karpov, and then whisk them away to a

CIA black-site prison, a veritable black hole.[69] A CIA agent explains himself to Bachmann: "Eye

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[69] The movie ends here, with a confused and angry Phillip Seymour Hoffman impotently driving after the van, then in a circle, then getting out of the car and muttering "Shit, shit" and frantically moving offscreen, then the fade to black. It is altogether a powerful ending to a powerful final, full performance from Hoffman before his untimely death.

for a fucking eye, Gunther. Justice as retribution, okay? Abdullah was killing *Americans*. We call that original sin" (321). Le Carré plainly calls that attitude stupid—and has his whole career. But unlike in *Tinker, Tailor,* political ideology is not an individual hangup, a personal problem for the master spy to solve or ignore, as Smiley does, in favor of an approach that prizes human relations by prizing pragmatism. *A Most Wanted Man* argues that in the War on Terror, American ideology has become entrenched throughout the espionage bureaucracy. Indeed, the bureaucratic structure has made that entrenchment possible by lavishing increased funding and influence in the hierarchy on those agents that can deliver immediate results. Bachmann refuses to play the bureaucratic game, and for this, he is deemed an apostate. There is a brilliant scene late in the book in which Bachmann has to beg permission for his operation from the Federal Police, the Judiciary, the Joint Steering Committee for espionage, MI6, and the CIA. The scene is an ordinary conference room, with Bachmann and his team giving a PowerPoint presentation on the plan to capture and turn Abdullah to the representatives of the various bureaucracies that must be appeased for this operation to commence. Le Carré draws the reader's attention to the subtle jockeying and positioning that is happening in this conference room. We see that seat position in the conference room (closer to the CIA liaison the better, of course), eye contact, and nods of the head are signs and signals, more deterministic of the success or failure of Bachmann's operation than all of the prep work he has done until that point. Bachmann, invested in trying to make his case, misses those signs, and as a result is defeated in this meeting. He fails to comprehend that the CIA has bullied and bought its way into turning a long-term, intelligence gathering operation into a couple of quick arrests (one of a most-likely innocent person) that will make the agents involved look good to superiors in Washington and Berlin. But le Carré, in the third person narration, makes sure to point out those secret signs to us.

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What separates *A Most Wanted Man* from other le Carré works disparaging the shortsightedness and ruthlessness of espionage—for instance, *The Spy who Came in From the Cold*—is that *AMWM* eschews any moral victory, any affirmation of human life in the face of defeat. When Alec Leamas from *The Spy who Came in From the Cold* climbs back down the Berlin Wall to be executed along with his love interest, he is doing so as a renunciation of the spy world (represented by Smiley calling to him from the other side of the wall) and its inhuman games played with human lives. Leamas is a moral victor; his suicide, like Hyacinth's in *Princess Cassamasima*, is a final expression of his individuality and a defiance of his Agency. Jerry Westerby in *An Honourable Schoolboy* has a similar fate; he dies defying MI6 and attempting to help his love interest. But Bachmann doesn't even have the opportunity to defy: the CIA is already ahead of him; his defiance dies in committee, he just doesn't realize it. The other characters too are left utterly defeated—Karpov and Abdullah obviously so, but Annabel must watch yet another client disappear into the bowels of state power with no hope of returning. Brue has struggled with making sense of his feelings for Annabel over the course of the novel, asking himself if they are romantic, paternal, or idealistic, and if Annabel might represent a second chance at a relation with a distant daughter, or an opportunity to be a better man than his father. At the end of the novel, he finds not a clarification and fulfillment of any of these emotions, but an impotence. The last line of the novel reads "Brue put his arm round her shoulders where he had always wanted to put it, but he doubted whether she knew it was there" (322).

     A Most Wanted Man is a post-9/11 spy novel written by the greatest spy novelist of the Cold War. For le Carré both espionage itself and the spy genre have changed. The developments in espionage over the 20th century—the expansion, the rigid hierarchy, bureaucratic management, the rise of SIGINT, the favoring of covert action instead of intelligence

gathering—have made the conventional individual-affirming ending to spy fiction all but impossible. Gunther Bachmann's (as well as Brue's and Annabel's) failure at the end of the novel reveals the historical limits of the "lone creative" vs bureaucratic machine plot. While the critique of bureaucracy (as the stultification of the lone individual talent) inherent in that plot still persists in *A Most Wanted Man,* the actual playing out of an affirmation on par with *Our Man in Havana* seems impossible in the face of the "War on Terror" intelligence apparatus, especially the CIA and its oft-resented dominance in Western intelligence work. *A Most Wanted Man* is certainly not alone in terms of current spy stories refusing even a moral victory. In fact, I would argue that just as "serious" (i.e. middle- or high-brow) spy fiction in the Cold War was marked by its engagement with bureaucracy vs individuality and the moral closeness between the USSR and the West, then post-9/11 "serious" spy fiction is characterized by pessimism, "evil vs evil" story structures in which moral compromise is shared by every state and non-state actor in the work's central conflict. This new generation of spy fiction carries the implication that everyone, audience included, is complicit in the abuses of the intelligence agency.

Emblematic of this new trend is Canadian director Denis Villeneuve's 2015 film *Sicario.* *Sicario's* plotting ably demonstrates the worst aspects of 21st century spy work, including bureaucratic sleight of hand, sheep-dipping, assassination (i.e. "targeted killing" missions), extra-ordinary rendition, torture, drone surveillance, and a culture of aggressive masculinity that I term "drone masculinity" in Chapter 4. Taken together, these are the worst impulses of the Post-9/11 intelligence apparatus, and demonstrate their rejection of individuality and the embrace of instrumentalist evaluations of their own agents and those they wish to manipulate or remove in the name of national security. The film finds FBI agent Kate Macer (played by Emily Blunt), a specialist in kidnapping rescue operations and a SWAT commander, recruited to an inter-agency

anti-drug cartel task force led by CIA agent Matt (Josh Brolin) and his mysterious partner

Alejandro (Benicio del Toro). It becomes apparent quickly that Kate has been recruited merely to

allow Matt to operate within the United States, something the CIA cannot do without a domestic

agency attached. In other words, she was recruited because Matt felt she could be steamrolled

into going along with his actual plan: to have Alejandro, a Columbian cartel hitman, infiltrate the

Sinaloa operation in Mexico, kill their leadership, and allow the Columbians (with CIA

guidance) to, in Matt's words, restore "order" to the drug trade into the US:

> [U]ntil somebody finds a way to convince 20% of the population to stop snorting
>
> and smoking that shit, order's the best we can hope for. And what you saw up
>
> there [Alejandro infiltrating Mexico in order to track and kill the Sinaloa
>
> leadership], was Alejandro working toward returning that order.

When Kate complains about the questionable legality of her mission to her superiors, she is

asked if she feels that the Agency's by-the-books tactics have had an impact on drug violence in

the U.S. or Mexico, to which she replies that she does not feel so. Her supervisor attempts to

reassure her that her status as a bureaucratic cover for illegal operations by the CIA is a

worthwhile one:

> I don't have the authority to hire advisors, or authorize joint agency missions, or
>
> fly agents from Air Force bases. Are you understanding me? These decisions are
>
> made far from here, by officials elected to office, not appointed to them. So, if
>
> your fear is operating out of bounds, I am telling you, you are not. The boundary's
>
> been moved.

"The boundary's been moved" serves as a post-script to intelligence operations after 9/11, and

Sicario does not portray this boundary movement positively, though neither does it flinch from

the violence of the drug war, a violence primarily enacted against people in vulnerable socio-economic positions far from the relative safety of the average U.S. citizen's experience. Kate's familiarity and frustration with the continuation of this violence (she is shown at one point privately looking at photographs of victims of drug-related violence in Juarez, particularly the infamous "missing women of Juarez[70]") initially pushes her, uneasily, to go along with the CIA operation. However, after she learns the full scope of the operation, which involves extra-ordinary rendition from a Juarez prison of a Sinaloa higher-up, his torture by water-boarding, the use of U.S. Army Special Forces as sheep-dipped CIA agents, and the afore-mentioned assassinations, she threatens to go public. *Sicario* remains one of the few films to depict and criticize sheep-dipping, the practice of temporarily deputizing Special Forces soldiers into the CIA so that they can operate outside a declared theater of war. Sheep-dipping is an especially cynical shell game, a bureaucratic sleight of hand in which the spirit of the law is blatantly violated to maintain its letter. Ultimately, the end of the film has Alejandro force Kate at gunpoint to sign off on a sanitized report of their activities in order to legalize them under her protections as an FBI agent, and despite her clear distress at being forced to betray her ethical compunctions, she does so, with Alejandro then advising her in the film's last bit of dialogue: "You should move to a small town, somewhere the rule of law still exists. You will not survive here. You are not a wolf, and this is a land of wolves now." There is no redemptive moment, Matt and the CIA and Alejandro and the Columbian cartel "get away with it" and the final frames of the film show a soccer game in Juarez interrupted by the sound of gunfire, as if to emphasize that despite the "success" of the plan, nothing will change.

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[70] See, for example, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jul/21/juarez-mexico-women-murdered-corruption

Sicario is pessimistic filmmaking, and many viewers may be put off by its bleak worldview. However, it also represents a new possibility in spy fiction in terms of its treatment of gender relations in spy film, its use of cinematography more characteristic of art film than spy genre fare, and its willingness to bite the hand that feeds so to speak by deconstructing traditional spy tropes and highlight the complicity of these tropes in the making of a cruel intelligence agency. Having a woman as the main character in spy fiction today is, thankfully, not as infrequent as it has been in the genre's history. The success of everything from spoofs such as Melissa McCarthy-led *Spy* to popcorn action flicks, for example, the Angelina Jolie-starring *Salt*, to the slow-burning prestige TV show *The Americans* starring Keri Russell show that female protagonists in spy fiction appeal to an audience that wants to see them as more than "Bond babes." But whereas *Spy* and *Salt* either explicitly (in the former) or implicitly (in the later) make the argument that there is no reason a woman cannot assume the cultural role of the Bond/Bourne superspy, *Sicario* criticizes the toxic masculinity inherent in modern intelligence work. Without a doubt, Matt chooses Kate to be his bureaucratic cover because he believes he can intimidate and control her, and this is, at least partly, because she is a woman. For example, after Matt and Alejandro refuse to explain to her why they have border patrol hold dozens of captured immigrants for questioning,[71] Kate expresses her frustration to her partner in the FBI, Reggie, played by Daniel Kaluuya. Reggie says he will "get" answers, to which Kate responds, "What makes you think they will talk to you?"; yet, as soon as Reggie demands (not asks for) answers, Matt and Alejandro give them. In the background, Kate rolls her eyes. Toxic masculinity is on display throughout the film. The CIA agents and Delta Force operatives joke

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[71] It is because they are looking for a tunnel used by the cartel by which they can sneak Alejandro into Mexico.

about venereal disease upon Kate's arrival to their base of operations. Later in the film, a Delta force operative semantically links violence and sexuality when he yells out during a fight "Lay back and take it." For Kate, the most immediately threatening instance of the linkage of sex and violence occurs when a corrupt police officer poses as a random encounter/pick-up in a bar, manages to invite himself over to her apartment, and assaults her in order to find out what she knows about cartel activities. To make matters worse, in this situation Matt and Alejandro are actually using Kate as bait to draw out just this kind of response from the cartel's support network in the U.S., so that they can further map out that operational network north of the border. Kate is unaware, thinking that the guy she is picking up at a bar to blow off stress is a chance encounter, and is unprepared for his violence. One way to read the unrelenting misogyny that Kate experiences is as a punishment that the culture of intelligence and Special Forces inflicts upon her for her own non-conformance to the stereotypical female gender role; recall that she is introduced leading a SWAT team in a kidnapping-response operation. *Sicario*'s commitment to showing the unethical/illegal side of intelligence work and its determination to erase the idea that intelligence work is Bond-like flair includes showing how a particular type of toxic masculinity, which I call drone masculinity, has warped both motivations of intelligence workers and operational planning itself. But to do so by heaping punishment on Kate moves the film closer to shockers like Wes Craven's *Last House on the Left* than *Goldfinger*, though tonally Kate's story is meant to be tragic rather than exploitative. Nevertheless, images in the film like the one below (Fig. 3), which shows Kate showering off blood early in the film after a rescue SWAT operation that became violent, associates Kate's femininity with a fragility under threat by the overtly masculine world in which she operates:

Figure 3: Emily Blunt as Kate in *Sicario*

Alejandro's "land of wolves" comment at the end of the film (referenced above) links Kate's feminine fragility with the fragility of "law and order" itself, excluding both from the borderland struggle of the Southwest, and linking *Sicario* to works of art[72] that use the frontier/border as a metaphor for the tenuousness of society itself.

   Sicario is ultimately more concerned with showing how toxic masculinity, inefficient bureaucracy, and overenthusiastic wannabe cowboys have transformed intelligence work than it is in probing its own use of sexual violence, sexualized violence, and violence-ified sexuality[73] to advance its theme of border conflict exacerbated by the "wolf-like" nature of both sides, a move which has problematic issues in its own right. But despite this oversight, it is a key entry into the genre of spy fiction because of its willingness to undermine the traditional assumptions that make spy fiction or film a pleasurable read or watch—namely, the assumptions that the spy agency works for the public, that intelligence workers "on our side" react in response to a crisis

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[72] This is a lineage that contains many westerns, from *The Searchers* to the modern westerns of Cormac McCarthy (to which *Sicario* owes considerable debt), but also spy fiction such as Eric Ambler's *Journey into Fear,* and more canonical referents like Conrad's *Heart of Darkness.*
[73] By which I mean the use of violent imagery to de-sexualize the erotic image, like Emily Blunt covered in blood in the shower, or the nude, headless bodies on display in the aftermath of a gang-related killing in Juarez. Perhaps the "de-eroticized erotic" is another term I could have used, though that elides what is doing the de-eroticization.

rather than creating one, that violence is a last resort, that individuals matter on a global scale, that heroes exist and can save the day, etc. That the film also challenges the critical circumspection that places spy fiction stylistically nearer to kitsch than to high art also places it as part of a trend in the genre that can be read as rehabilitative. *Sicario* and films and fiction like it aim to tell spy stories without the thematic, plot, and stylistic "hang-ups" that once caused Umberto Eco to decry Ian Fleming as an author who "simulates literature by pretending to write literature" (qtd. in Vegso 160). Eco's sentiment may sound too pithy to be sharp commentary, but after one reads enough Bond one does begin to question whether or not Bond's moral haranguing is anything more than an empty parroting of modernist angst, especially given that it is never consequential in the execution of his duties (not to mention the skepticism that Fleming's attention to Bond's consumption habits is less characterization and more advertisement). However, literary simulacra or not, the Bond books and films (as I keep insisting) have influenced the practice and reception of intelligence work, the results of which are portrayed graphically, clearly, and memorably in *Sicario*. Like all of Denis Villeneuve's work, *Sicario* is haunting and gorgeous to look at.[74] The clearly composed nature of the shots lend a deliberate coldness to the film. Unlike in a Bond film, Villeneuve does not want his audience to become invested in the success of the intelligence operation. The camera-work in the film is skeptical, at times ironic in its framing of the activities of Matt, Alejandro, and the Special Forces team they lead under the aegis of a domestic intelligence operation. A good example of this skepticism is the following image (Fig. 4), part of a completely silent scene in which the SF

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[74] The cinematography is by Roger Deakins, who worked with Villeneuve on *Prisoners* and was director of photography on the similarly genre-bending Bond film *Skyfall*.

team march towards the tunnel into Mexico through which Alejandro will enter and make his way to assassinate the head of the cartel.

Figure 4: Special Forces Silhouetted In the Colors of a Faded American Flag in *Sicario*

The camera ironizes the operation, an assassination mission, by framing it against a red, white, and blue sky and silhouetting the operatives against it. By this point in the film, only the most unreflective nationalist would consider what they are watching to be a patriotic flag-framing akin to George C. Scott's Patton standing in front of the flag.[75] Rather, by referencing that kind of full-screen patriotism and muting it in shadow and silence, Villeneuve forces his audience to reflect on the unethical nature of the mechanisms that support American democracy. This is what spy fiction can do at its finest: expose what critic Roland Vegso in *The Naked Communist* calls the "reduplication of worlds within democracy", the supposed "need" of executive/state power to operate in secret itself in order to defend public openness and public good (141). *Sicario* demonstrates how this reduplication is hidden by bureaucratic structures and inevitably leads to cruelty. *Sicario* does not give a sense that there is a better way that intelligence work *could* be done. Unlike in *A Most Wanted Man*, there is no Gunther Bachmann to chastise and harangue his colleagues (and the reader) with a vision of intelligence that can ultimately be forgiven its means because of the subtle, creative genius in achieving justifiable ends. *Sicario,* instead, argues that

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[75] In the 1970 film *Patton*

violent means have violent ends, and that cruelty in the service of an ideal demeans that ideal. It is a spy film for the post-Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo public perception of the spy agency as an institution forever marked by its willingness to employ cruelty. The film's depiction of assassination, extra-ordinary rendition, and water-boarding condemns this cruelty, present not only in covert operations designed to overthrow a regime or assassinate a key player in a hostile[76] organization, but as a means of intelligence collection itself. In the next section, I examine the use of torture as an acceptable means of gathering HUMINT (human intelligence), as a policy, and its relation to spy fiction, in more detail.

Torture, Cruelty, and Spy Fiction in the "War on Terror"

It is one of the most oft-referenced and parodied scenes in film: the nefarious Aurich Goldfinger has restrained the infamous super-spy James Bond on a metal table, and a high-powered laser is slowly inching its way up, slicing through the metal table and threatening to do the same to the agent. Given that the laser is moving feet-to-head, it threatens first Bond's genitalia—got to hit him where it counts, after all. "Do you expect me to talk?" snarls Bond. "No Mr. Bond, I expect you to die," chuckles Goldfinger in reply. One might be skeptical of this; if he wanted Bond to die, he could have aimed the laser at his head first, or, as Scott Evil in the parodic *Austin Powers* movies suggests to his Goldfinger-esque father Dr. Evil, just shoot him and be done with it. But Bond villains hardly ever really want Bond dead, at least immediately. They want him to suffer first. In this sense, cruelty in spy fiction is not new. The perils of suffering at the hands of the enemy and the near-escape from a certain and brutal death that a hero braves are the supposed pleasures of the reader. Torture in the fiction of masculine bravura is always a marker of sadism on the part of the enemy, the final proof that there is an irreducible

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[76] Whether the hostility is actual, perceived, hypothetical, or wholly imagined is incidental.

gap between hero and villain, between he-who-resists and he-who-likes-to-inflict. In this strain

of spy fiction, torture is not about interrogation or information—the only information transmitted

is to the audience, to the reader, not to the torturer, and that information communicates the

steadfastness of the hero, the depravity of the villain, and, metonymically, the truth of the hero's

cause and the falsity of the villain's. Even in the more "serious" spy fiction, in which tortures are

far less over-dramatic than a death course that ends with a giant squid[77] and far more effective at

extracting intelligence, the torture is still not *about* the intelligence. When Jim Prideaux is

tortured by the KGB in *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy,* the fact that he talks is immaterial to the plot

of the book—the Soviets already know everything about MI6 because of their mole Bill Haydon.

Le Carré includes the torture to contrast Smiley's cerebral intelligence gathering process with the

KGB's physical one, to develop Prideaux's character as damaged and forlorn, and, like much of

the "realism" in Le Carré, to further distance his works and his villains from the cartoonishness,

and thus the perceived moral simplicity, of Fleming and Goldfinger.[78] Torture and cruelty in spy

fiction before the "War on Terror" exist functionally in the story, and are not ever the point of

the story. In other words, spy fiction historically poorly equips us to confront the role of torture

and cruelty in the actual practice of espionage, a confrontation made unavoidable and urgent

since 9/11.

The use of torture by intelligence agencies and secret police did not begin in the early

2000s, nor did the CIA only begin to use techniques like waterboarding, stress positioning,

forced exercise, sleep and sensory deprivation, and humiliation in Iraq and Afghanistan. As a

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[77] Dr. No's plan in the books. The movie tamps it down a little, but not much.
[78] I say "perceived" because I am not certain that the Bond books are as simplistic as they may first appear (at least not all of them), and I also somewhat dispute the idea that cartoonishness equals simplicity and realism equals complexity.

1960 CIA handbook describing the uses of these techniques for intelligence gathering demonstrates, to call these "enhanced interrogation" tactics[79] an "abuse" of guidelines is incorrect—they are *the* guidelines, followed to the letter (Danner 504). Plainly these guidelines are torture, meaning that the policy of using torture on captured targets for the purpose of extracting information has been ingrained in the policy of US intelligence since at least 1960. We now know that within the Bush administration and the intelligence community at large, there was significant disagreement over the use of torture; after being briefed on the subject, Attorney General John Ashcroft reportedly said: "Why are we talking about this in the White House? History will not judge this kindly" (505). Ashcroft's position was shared by the FBI, whose more conventional interrogation techniques had proved effective in getting crucial information from the first wave of al Qaeda and Taliban detainees, and also by many in the US Army's Military Intelligence branch. For example, Lt. Gen. John Kimmons, Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence, has stated that "[n]o good intelligence is going to come from abusive practices" (546). Indeed, there is much evidence to suggest that torture as an intelligence gathering tool is ineffective, independent of the morality and legality of it. The combination of the fact that the tortured will give any information in order to get the torturers to stop and the torturer's belief that any information given under physical pain must be correct—a psychological post-hoc justification for the infliction of that physical pain—creates a toxic mix of misinformation being taken as gospel. This was the case of one of the architects of the 9/11 attacks, Khalid Shaik Mohammed, who told an International Red Cross team investigating Guantanamo prison, "I gave a lot of false information in order to satisfy what I believed the interrogators wished to hear in

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[79] One of the favored euphemisms for them among the Bush administration along with "alternate set of procedures."

order to make the ill-treatment stop.…I'm sure that the false information I was forced to invent…wasted a lot of their time and led to several false red-alerts being placed in the United States" (515). The wasted time and effort spent investigating information such as that provided by Khalid Shaik Mohammed led Colin Powell's chief of staff Lawrence Wilkerson to admit:

> It has never come to my attention in any persuasive way…that any intelligence of significance was gained from any of the detainees at Guantanamo Bay other than from the handful of undisputed ring leaders…clearly no more than a dozen or two of the detainees, and even their alleged contribution of hard, actionable intelligence is intensely disputed in the relevant communities such as intelligence and law enforcement. (540)

Nevertheless, the CIA convinced the administration to allow it to take over interrogation at the "black site" prisons in Iraq, Afghanistan, Thailand, and at least four other countries (502). There, away from public scrutiny and political oversight, the CIA engaged in "policies and practices developed and approved for use on al Qaeda and Taliban detainees who were not afforded the protection of the Geneva Convention" due to their non-state combatant status (393). Due to a culture of impunity in the CIA, torture was used in Iraq as well, even though many of the captured Baathist and Republican Army soldiers there would, in fact, qualify for Geneva Convention protections. It was from one such Iraqi prison site, Abu Ghraib, and the leaked photos taken by Military Police demonstrating their abuse and dehumanization of the prisoners there, that the CIA's open secret of torture was confronted by the public at large. These photos showed military police posing with prisoners in dehumanizing and humiliating poses, but despite the best efforts of administration officials such as General George R. Fay to distinguish the behavior of these Military Police (which he termed "serious incidents") and that of intelligence

workers using waterboarding for intelligence gathering, the role of torture in espionage, and the

cultural realization that "we", i.e. the U.S. intelligence services, were the torturers, has greatly

affected the cultural discourse of espionage and the image of the U.S. and Americans abroad

(403). [80]

Given the damage done by torture to the cultural image of America and the fact that

torture simply does not work, why engage in it at all? Critic Elaine Scarry, in her study of the

philosophical underpinnings of torture and war, *The Body in Pain*, argues that the idea of

torturing *for* information and the public rhetoric that posits gaining information as an excuse to

torture, is fundamentally untruthful. According to Scarry, the interrogation is not the *reason* for

torture, but part of the torture itself: "the interrogation does not stand outside an episode of

torture as its motive or justification: it is internal to the structure of torture, exists there because

of its intimate connections to and interactions with the physical pain" (29). The questioning and

searching for information is torturous because it reminds the person being tortured that he is a

body in pain and that he, being "weak", would capitulate utterly to his torturers if it would make

the pain stop. In this way, confessing or surrendering information is a self-betrayal, akin to the

way that the prisoner's own body is made to hurt him through forced exercises and stress

positions (47). So, if intelligence-gathering is not the actual reason for torture but actually

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[80] Torture, much like drone warfare (discussed in later chapters) also creates new enemies by helping to confirm the worst visions of the West in the Islamic world. For example, in response to Abu Ghraib, Sheik Mohammed Bashir had much cause to say: "It was discovered that freedom in this land is not ours. It is the freedom of the occupying soldiers in doing what they like…abusing women, children, men and the old men and women whom they arrested randomly and without any guilt. No one can ask them what they are doing, because they are protected by their freedom…No one can punish them, whether in our country or their country. They expressed the freedom of rape, the freedom of nudity and the freedom of humiliation" (Danner 392). Somewhat lost in the discussion of the efficacy or not of torture as an intelligence-gathering technique is the idea that much of the time the moral high ground is quite a useful and strategic position to take.

another form of it, why pretend that it is the reason? Unsurprisingly, the rhetorical use of intelligence-gathering as a justification for giving detainees "a hard time" (as the official CIA parlance calls it) is for the other "body" involved in torture: the body politic (Danner 510). Scarry remarks:

> Almost anyone looking at the *physical* act of torture would be immediately appalled and repulsed by the torturers. It is difficult to think of a human situation in which the lines of moral responsibility are more starkly or simply drawn, in which there is a more compelling reason to ally one's sympathies with the one person and to repel the claims of the other. Yet as soon as the focus of attention shifts to the *verbal* aspect of torture [that is, the "questioning" and the "betrayal of information"], those lines have begun to waver and change their shape in the direction of accommodating and crediting the torturers. (35)

Scarry is formulating here that torture has an audience beyond the bodies in the room, that it has a discursive part in a regime's constant need to justify itself. Claiming that the information gained from torture is vital to state-security, the logic that underpins Dick Cheney's statement that "I have no problem [with torture] as long as we achieve our objectives," is part of a political-theater that has as its aim the convincing of moral superiority of the torturing regime and the physical and mental inferiority of those being tortured (Friedersdorf). Speaking of Cheney and political theater, from the same *Meet the Press* interview, Cheney redefines torture several times in just a few minutes, depending on the rhetorical use he needs the word to have, in order to avoid directly admitting that the actions taken by CIA interrogators were morally wrong. In sequence, he claims that rectally force-feeding detainees was not systematically-sanctioned torture because it wasn't in the CIA guidelines for interrogation, a defense that shifts the culprit

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from the U.S. regime as a whole to a few "bad actors." He then claims that enhanced

interrogation itself is not torture in an attempt to issue a blanket disavowal of any U.S.

involvement in torture. However, this directly contradicts his previous talking points, because

"enhanced interrogation" is most definitely in the CIA guidelines for interrogation, and thus

should, ostensibly, fall into his justification of torture as acceptable if it achieves its objectives.

Lastly, he attempts to transform the meaning of the word torture entirely to make it into an

ontological category that Americans by definition cannot engage in, claiming that torture is

actually "what 19 guys armed with airline tickets and box cutters did to 3000 Americans on

9/11" (Friedersdorf). Cheney plays fast and loose with language in order to avoid saying on the

record that American policy supports torture, and as a result reveals the discursive nature of the

concept of torture itself. Scarry points out the insidiousness of this discursive use of torture as a

spectacular speech act in which the pain of the tortured is not the primary point of torture itself:

"[Torture] goes on to deny, to falsify, the reality of the very thing it has itself objectified [pain of

the tortured] by a perceptual shift which converts the vision of suffering into the wholly illusory

but, to the torturers and the regime they represent, wholly convincing spectacle of power" (27).

While we cannot forget that the pain is very real to the tortured, in the manner that Scarry is

describing it, torture is analyzable as a cultural act.[81] I argue that too much of spy fiction has

participated in this cultural act by reifying torture as the job of the spy, and, ignorant of reality,

as always effective as an intelligence-gathering tool when used by the "good guys." Spy fiction,

for example, the show *24* or the film *Zero Dark Thirty* help "sell" torture as justifiable to the

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[81] Scarry points out the overlap of vocabularies of cultural productions and torture: "It is not accidental that in the torturers' idiom the room in which the brutality occurs was called the 'production room' in the Philippines; the 'cinema room' in South Vietnam, and the 'blue lit stage' in Chile: built on these repeated acts of display and having as its purpose the production of a fantastic illusion of power, torture is a grotesque piece of compensatory drama" (28).

public, especially to the American/Western public, through their use of specific tropes, scenarios, and standardized scripts.

Spy fiction offers a long historical visual and linguistic vocabulary of torture and cruelty, from Bond's torture at the hands of le Chiffré to Ethan Hunt's beatings at the hands of the "Rogue Nation" in *Mission Impossible 5*. But these are examples of heroes being tortured by villains. As critic Maggie Nelson argues, "There is, however, evidence to suggest that the advent of glorified torture in popular entertainment serves a political function, insofar as it creates a network of identifications through which people find themselves warming to torture and torturers at a time when our government has begun to permit and utilize torture" (63). I might call this the "Jack Bauer for President" effect, after an Internet meme lionizing by far the worst fictional offender of easy, consequence-free, always-useful torture. Over the course of the show *24*, each season of which is structured around the conceit that agent Jack Bauer has only one day to avert a terrorist plot, Bauer goes out of his way to enact the philosophy that torture—whether the breaking of fingers one by one to get someone to talk, capturing and threatening a suspect's family, or shooting a criminal in the knee after he was already in custody—is justifiable in situations of intense need. This need is frequently given visual form, represented on the screen by a ticking clock (Fig. 5) that reminds the audience both that the events on the screen happen in real time and of Bauer's urgent need to get information.

Figure 5: The Ticking Clock from *24* (Pinedo)

The clock is half of Bauer's justification for torturing; the other half is that Bauer pretty much always gets the information he needs, and the physical pain is always the necessary part of getting that information. For example, in the figure above (Fig. 5), Bauer is interrogating the already-captured criminal Tomas Sherek. Bauer's bad-cop routine of throwing the table around, screaming in Sherek's face, and pointing a gun at him fails to intimidate Sherek. Again, this takes place in a government agency's HQ, and even though the other agents yell impotently at Jack to stop, that he does not face lasting consequences for this act reinforces the idea that most intelligence workers condone torture or want to do it, and need the Jack Bauer "types" (uber-masculine, angry, loose-cannon, etc.) to do the "dirty work" that others won't. Quickly exasperated by Sherek's refusal to talk, Bauer shoots him in the kneecap, and immediately Sherek confesses the next plot point Bauer needs in order to rush off to the next action sequence. In this way, *24* links scenes of torture to audience enjoyment; torture makes the story progress, and so in this sense too it is "justified" by its status as plot device. Torture as plot device normalizes it for the audience, places it within the context of other story-structure mechanisms. This reinforces aspects of the cultural discourse in which uncritical representations of mythically

effective and deserved[82](within the logic of the show) torture fall within the range of "normal" things to show on network TV. The cavalier attitude on the part of the show's producers to portray torture positively, and the possible pernicious effects on audience behaviors that this positive portrayal may have, actually concerned some members of the military-intelligence complex. A 2007 *New Yorker* article reports that US Army Brigadier General Patrick Finnegan flew to LA to talk to *24*'s producers, hoping "to convey the severe, adverse effects they felt the show's depiction of torture was having on American soldiers, who seemed to be increasingly seduced by Bauer's 'whatever it takes' motto, and decreasingly inclined to take seriously the importance of adhering to international and military law" (qtd. in Nelson 64). The producers did not listen to Brig. Gen. Finnegan, as the show, which continued to be quite popular (and in fact was recently rebooted on Fox) and continued to portray torture as effective and necessary. *24* was on the air concurrently with the larger public discussion of torture as an intelligence-gathering tool, and it clearly argued for a particular vision of torture as "good entertainment."

Of course, spy fiction is too large a genre to argue that all of it aligned during the mid-2000s with *24* in its depictions of torture. In fact, there are plenty of anti-torture messages, especially in regards to physical torture, to be found in spy fiction of the time-period, from the pulpy (TV's *Burn Notice),* to the expected (John le Carré's *A Most Wanted Man*), to the literary (Viet Thanh Nguyen's Pulitzer-Prize winning novel *The Sympathizer).[83]* These anti-torture

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[82] Bauer never tortures someone who actually doesn't know anything, or a true innocent, in another near-mythical assertion of the usefulness of torture.

[83] These refutations of torture are often phrased very similarly; here is *Burn Notice'*s protagonist Michael Westen: "A lot of people's first instinct when they need information out of a captive is to grab a baseball bat or a gun... The fact is, torture is for sadists and thugs. It's like getting groceries with a flame thrower; it doesn't work and it makes a mess" and here is the *Sympathizer'*s agent Claude: "Brute force is not the answer gentlemen, if the question is how to extract information and cooperation. Brute force will get you bad answers, lies, misdirection, or,

messages have different thematic roles; for example, in *Burn Notice* and *A Most Wanted Man,*

Michael Westen's and Gunther Bachmann's (respective) anti-torture stances mark them as the

"good spies" in contrast to their enemies, whereas Claude's proscription that physical torture

doesn't work in the *Sympathizer* spurs him (and his students) to use increasingly more terrifying

methods of psychological torture. However, what these anti-(physical)torture messages fail to

counter-act is the feeling of catharsis that an audience can feel watching "the bad guy" suffer and

the "good guy" win. Spy fiction that glorifies torture, such as *24,* draw upon masculinist, racist,

and imperialist tropes, for example "bad guy=brown, good guy=white" and "real men are

violent" to set up the torture scene as a morality play, ending with the release of strategic

information by the tortured as a confession of their sin and an affirmation of the rightness of the

torturer and the institutions and cultural structures they serve—the CIA, the U.S. military, the

U.S., the West, etc. Defenses of actual torture being committed by U.S. personnel as justifiable

catharsis have been made by torture apologists such as Rush Limbaugh, who remarked in

reference to Abu Ghraib and the Military Police abuses there that "I'm talking about people

having a good time, these people [the MPs], you ever heard of emotional release?" (Nelson 63).

This kind of defense of torture, whether offered by *24* or a talking head, upholds the pernicious

idea that the body of the Other is the body that can and should be tortured for the benefit of the

Self, the nation. As Brig. Gen. Finnegan tried to warn *24*'s producers, when a nation as a whole

believes this, the possibilities and actualities of cruelty in the day to day operations of the

intelligence world multiply exponentially. Phillip Zelikow, who served on President Bush's

National Security Council, provides us with a glimpse of an executive branch that feels it has a

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worse yet, will get you the answer the prisoner thinks you want to hear. He will say anything to
stop the pain." ("Comrades"; Nguyen 169)

public mandate to torture enemies of the state; instead of debating the efficacy and morality of torture, Zelikow says, the Bush administration was only interested in legality: "'The focus, that is, was not on 'what we should do' but on 'what can we do.'" (qtd. Danner 542). The answer was, as we know now, the dehumanization of prisoners, the creation of enemies abroad, and yet another mark of shame in the history of intelligence work. President Trump has vowed a return to these practices, saying that he will "bring back a hell of a lot worse than waterboarding," an opinion in direct conflict with his military and security advisers and all the evidence and hard lessons of the past fifteen years (O'Toole). Clearly, the public and media cannot sit by and idly let this happen. Spy fiction, including the new revival of *24*, must also play a part, perhaps by showing the consistent failures of torture as a means of intelligence gathering.

Technophilia, SIGINT, and the Attack on Privacy

The ethics of our intelligence services engaging in systematic torture of prisoners has been one of the two most public intelligence news stories since 9/11. The other is undoubtedly the exposure of the NSA's domestic surveillance program and the capacity of intelligence agencies to collect and analyze all electronic personal communications both domestic and international.[84] Perhaps though we should not be all that surprised at these allegations, first revealed by whistleblowers Chelsea Manning and Edward Snowden (among others who acted as whistleblowers within the intelligence world). Spy services may have paid lip service to the idea

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[84] Other candidates for top intelligence stories include the rise of drone warfare, the militarization of the CIA, and the failure to find WMDs in Iraq. However, I would argue that the public at large has yet to wrestle with these developments in the same manner as torture and electronic surveillance. Despite their importance (I spend ample time on the first two over the next few chapters), they have not shifted the public discourse of espionage in the same way. The effects of drone warfare and intelligence agency militarization are not as immediately visible and visceral to the American public as torture allegations, which shock and appall, and electronic surveillance, which directly effects everyone who has ever sent an email or text message.

that "gentlemen do not read another gentleman's mail" at their inception in the late 19th/early 20th centuries, but this has always been more spin than substance (Macrakis 379). The NSA's long-running and long-reaching PRISM program, which intercepted and stored the domestic phone records of every phone in the U.S., has been declared unconstitutional,[85] but PRISM is in many ways only the tip of the iceberg of the intelligence community's commitment to electronic surveillance and signals intelligence (radio, satellite, wiretapping). From tapping East German phone lines in a secret tunnel under Berlin to PRISM, the CIA, FBI, and NSA have made gathering and interpreting information electronically a cornerstone of its practice. In fact, SIGINT is a growth industry. As I mentioned in the introduction to these two chapters, as of 2013, the CIA's total budget was $14.7 billion, of which over half was devoted solely to SIGINT (and of course, the NSA entirely focuses on SIGINT) (Grey 274). Really, the shift to SIGINT makes a certain kind of sense. SIGINT is a computer-age extension of the same simplification and abstraction impulses that scholar James Scott argues led the state's bureaucratic development. As Scott writes, "the only way to accomplish [the governing of a modern state] is to reduce an infinite array of detail to a set of categories that will facilitate summary descriptions, comparisons, and aggregation" (Scott 77). Scott lists census data, mapping efforts, cadastral lists, etc. as the tools of simplification and surveillance for the modern state, a list that I think can now be expanded in the computer age to include phone meta-data, GPS tracking, Facebook posts and intercepted emails. SIGINT allows intelligence agencies to map connections and relationships between individuals and groups without tipping off anyone in that group that they are being surveilled. This is undoubtedly an advantage to an espionage agency. Scholar Kristie Macrakis writes that proponents of SIGINT in the intelligence community are quick to harp on this and

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[85] http://www.cnn.com/2013/12/16/justice/nsa-surveillance-court-ruling/

other advantages of using technical means of intelligence-gathering over relying solely on human

agents: "Advocates of technical intelligence often argue that machines are less risky than

humans: they do not lie, spend time in prison when caught, or betray their country. Because they

do not possess a long list of human weaknesses, they also cannot be persuaded to betray their

own country by the enemy" (380). Given the number of double agents highly placed in both U.S.

and British intelligence over their histories, one can imagine why this might be compelling.

Lastly, intelligence agencies may be bolstered in their use of wide-reaching SIGINT technology

by the seeming lack of outrage among the public whenever they are caught. Though public

outcry over PRISM did lead to its day in court, the outrage has seemingly faded, leading to a

slow creep by our intelligence agencies back towards the power and practices that they

ostensibly abandoned post-Snowden.[86]

Reasons for a lack of sustained public outrage are numerous. Perhaps a culture that shares

so much of itself with strangers online is not overly concerned with a few more strangers looking

in.[87] Or, maybe, recent intrusions by Russian state-sponsored hackers on our political institutions

provide a strong impetus to bolster our own cyber-security and cyber-warfare divisions for

defense and retaliation (Kelly). The Soviets prized themselves on being better at HUMINT and

leaving SIGINT to the West, and, as far as the public record corroborates, the KGB held a

distinct advantage throughout the Cold War when it came to turning double agents and extracting

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[86] For example, the Obama administration in January 2017 ok'd an expansion in who the NSA can share their collected information with, once again setting up the framework for the kind of inter-agency collusion that caused Edward Snowden to come forward in the first place: https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/12/us/politics/nsa-gets-more-latitude-to-share-intercepted-communications.html

[87] This was the explanation given to me by my class of undergraduates while teaching a unit on SIGINT in my history of espionage class. They did not feel they had anything to "hide" and were unswayed by my arguments that privacy is a foundation of personality, and that they might want safer spaces to explore their identity and beliefs without the NSA or FBI monitoring them.

sensitive information from blackmailing schemes (Mackrakis 379). However, Putin's Russia has bolstered its SIGINT capacity and activity considerably. It would not be the first time that an intelligence agency seizes upon an actual threat as a reason to expand its own power base, and given the Russian interference was targeted to help Donald Trump gain the Presidency, liberals may find themselves swayed to the intelligence community's cause in this situation in order to prevent it from happening again. I expect that the hostility between the President and the intelligence community over Russia might make for some strange bedfellows, and increased support for cyber-monitoring among the center-left could be one result; or perhaps, in an effort to save face, the right will swing back and encourage a cyber-war with Russia. Finally, public apathy towards systematic, warrantless domestic and international surveillance may come in part from a feeling akin to the one expressed by agent Tom Braden in a *Saturday Evening Post* article after *Encounter* magazine[88] was revealed to be CIA-funded: "I'm glad the CIA is immoral" (Barnhisel 139). This attitude, encouraged by intelligence agencies, tacitly agrees with the assertion made by former intelligence officials Victor Marchetti and John D. Marks that:

> [t]he intelligence profession, because of its lofty "national security" goals, is free from all moral restrictions. There is no need to wrestle with technical legalisms or judgments as to whether something is right or wrong. The determining factors in secret operations are purely pragmatic: Does the job need to be done? Can it be done? And can secrecy (or plausible denial) be maintained? (Cawelti and Rosenberg 15)

SIGINT collection seems at first glance relatively harmless an intrusion in exchange for increased national security. This might be especially true for those who feel that the state already

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[88] The non-Communist leftist literary and policy magazine run in part by Stephen Spender.

works for them, those who have not had to deal with the consequences of increased surveillance

and policing in their communities (i.e. those who possess the racial/ethnic/class/sexuality etc.

privileges that allow them to feel protected, instead of targeted, by state power).[89] These are all

compelling attitudes and beliefs capable of shaping the cultural discourse of espionage in general

and SIGINT in particular. But I suggest there is another factor that has tailored how the public

interprets and responds to the growing role of SIGINT in intelligence and the revelations that the

technical tools of espionage have been used indiscriminately (including against US citizens)

under a national security mandate. This factor is, as I'm sure comes as no surprise, how spy

fiction, film, and TV have engaged with SIGINT, a relation I now turn to in order to explain how

representations of SIGINT have conditioned the public to accept its rise in intelligence as

inevitable, if not always desired.

Spy fiction, at least, as a genre claiming to represent the world of espionage, shares both

its intended subject's (espionage) and its original cultural moment's (modernism) fascination

with technology. Given that spy agencies, spy fiction, and literary modernism are roughly

contemporaneous in their historical genesis, some overlap is inevitable. John Buchan's obsession

with planes, trains, cars, the telegraph and the radio in the Richard Hannay books can be

analyzed in terms of the early 20th century fascination for speed, steel, and the marriage of

machine and man. Over the course of the 20th century, spy agencies have shown that they share

spy authors' fascination with technology, sometimes to strange and/or counter-productive ends.

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[89] There is a moment in the documentary *CitizenFour* in which a segment of a CNN program discussing Edward Snowden and surveillance is shown. The news ticker at the bottom mentions the at the time on-going George Zimmerman trial for the shooting of Trayvon Martin. I remember thinking upon seeing that juxtaposition that perhaps the Snowden revelations might trigger an awareness in the general public of the feeling of being constantly surveilled, something with which many minority groups are all too familiar.

For an example, the CIA once surgically implanted microphones into stray cats in the hope that they would pass close enough to the Soviet embassy in Washington for the agency to listen in to the goings on inside (Macrakis 382). Ventures like this one, as ill-conceived as it was, did not dampen the enthusiasm for technical spying. Nor has the argument that an over-reliance on SIGINT undermines the ability of a spy organization to gather reliable HUMINT and to place agents strategically in "enemy" organizations. This critique, made by many within the official spy community, like former National Security Advisor Brent Snowcroft, and by many outside the spy community, like, as we will see, John le Carré, have fallen on deaf ears (Grey 10). By the end of the 1970s, the head of the CIA (Adm. Stansfield Turner) was proclaiming that technical spying "all but eclipses traditional, human methods of collecting intelligence" (Grey 3). Historians of intelligence agencies such as Stephen Grey, Tim Weiner, and Kristie Macrakis identify the expansion of SIGINT from Eisenhower to the present day as the expression of a kind of "technophilia" within the intelligence community. I argue that this technophilia is not separate from the ways technology operates within spy fiction. Increasing technological capability in actual espionage has changed how characters within spy fiction do their jobs, and allowed for new plots and characters to take shape in response to new technologies. Conversely, the *metaphoric* and *aesthetic* importance of technology in spy fiction can influence the larger discourse of actual espionage, shaping beliefs and practices around the use and efficacy of technological systems in spycraft.

The metaphorical role of technology in spy fiction is described by critic Alan Hepburn as a kind of prosthetic, an extension of the capabilities of the agent and the agency, "dispers[ing] masculine authority by extending it through space and time" (210). Thus the human ear becomes the listening device, the eye the remote camera. Hepburn's analysis depends upon an earlier

160

substitution: that the agent in spy fiction is a metaphoric reflection of the agency that produces

him (or her, but mostly a lot of hims). Thus, the agency finds its personification in the agent, and

the agent finds his metonymization in his tech. Bond's Walther PPK pistol is inseparable from

his purpose within MI6; the listening equipment with which Stasi officer Wiesler in *The Lives of*

Others uses to spy on his targets becomes so associated with his character that the central moral

conflict of the film becomes "will Wiesler cease to be the Stasi's ear by putting down the

headset?", or, in other words, can the human come out from behind the technological device that

makes him a spy.

Figure 6: Wiesler the Conflicted Ear from *The Lives of Others*

Even when a work seems to be pitting the solitary, skilled, cunning spy against the technological

agency hunting him down—a situation which might be read as an endorsement of a Luddite

point of view—technology still accomplishes its second metaphorical role: as a symbol of the

omnipresent and omniscient capability of the spy agency. Alan Hepburn recognizes this in the

plot of the 1971 novel *The Day of the Jackal*, in which the titular assassin, a clever and

dangerous man, is ultimately foiled because the agencies chasing him use the semi-visible power

of technology to see through his disguises and bluffs: tapping phone lines reveals that the

villainous Jackal has a mole on the council tasked with hunting him, databases make sorting

through the Jackal's assumed IDs quickly possible, cameras force him to abandon the costumes

he wears before he can exploit their full potential. Had Hepburn wished to expand his analysis,

he could have found parallels throughout the history of the genre, from Hannay trying to hide from a surveillance plane in *The 39 Steps*, to Jason Bourne being identified from across the world by a bank camera in *The Bourne Identity,* to the two most recent Bond films, *Skyfall* and *Spectre,* which both find 007 struggling to assert his relevancy in an intelligence landscape that prioritizes drones and internet data collection. While authors may mine conflict between the human agent and the technical world that entraps him for plot-related drama, more often than not, any existential friction between a heroic spy protagonist, such as Bond or Bourne, and the technological capability of a changing espionage landscape gets resolved. In other words, few works conclude with a Luddite point of view, fully endorsing a retreat from technical espionage. For example, Bond's antagonists are generally more technologically capable than he, especially in the new, Daniel Craig-led films: Javier Bardem's villainous Silva from *Skyfall* is a master hacker, and *Spectre* reimagines long-time Bond bad guy Ernst Blofeld as a network surveillance whiz, played by Christoph Waltz. Ostensibly, these films pit the low-tech, uber-masculine Bond against a high-tech menace that he can't simply punch or shoot into submission. But those battle lines are blurrier than they first appear. Despite the Daniel Craig Bond's penchant for angst and loner-ism, the character is fundamentally a team player, so much so that Craig's Bond learning he can't do it alone structures the arc of his character development, starting with his isolation after the death of Vesper in *Casino Royale* and culminating in his acceptance of the *people* in MI6 as his family and his retirement from the *business* of MI6 to romance Dr. Madeline Swann at the end of *Spectre*. Bond's team in *Skyfall* and *Spectre* supplements his own technological inefficiency, especially in the person of Q, played by Ben Whishaw.

Figure 7: Ben Whishaw as Q from *Skyfall*

Figure 7 demonstrates both the intended appeal of the new Q and his role in the franchise. Bond

stands off to the side, useless here in the technical domain. But he looks on approvingly at Q.

Critic Claire Hines identifies the new Q as emblematic of a new kind of masculinity—one that

shows technical expertise, but is also polished, urban, hip, and unafraid to demonstrate traits

traditionally coded as feminine.[90] Hines argues that Q supplements Bond as a symbol of

masculinity, in that the film's willingness to place Q as the necessary missing piece in Bond's

MI6 can also be read as a tacit acknowledgment that the masculinity Bond represents is

incomplete without its softer, less aggressive and less aggressively heterosexual supplement.

Hines' argument about Q, as compelling as it is in regards to the changing nature of masculinity

in the Daniel Craig Bond films as opposed to Fleming's original stories or the Connery version,

elides the surface-level observation that the new Q also supplements Bond as a technological

expert (in the plot), as evidenced by his introductory scene in *Skyfall*. The scene takes place in a

museum. Bond gazes at a painting of a battleship from the Napoleonic Wars being hauled away

for scrap by a steamship when Q [whom Bond has not yet met in this iteration] sits by him. The

following conversation ensues:

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[90] In her paper "'Now Pay Attention 007': The New Q, Contemporary Masculinity, and the Bond Franchise" delivered at the "Spies on British Screens" conference, June 17, 2016.

Q: Always makes me feel a bit melancholy. Grand old warship being

ignominiously hauled away for scrap…the inevitability of time, don't you think?

What do you see?

B: A bloody big ship. Excuse me. [Makes to leave]

Q: 007…I'm your new quartermaster.

B: You must be joking

Q: Why, because I'm not wearing a lab coat?

B: Because you still have spots.

Q: My complexion is hardly relevant.

B: Your competence is.

Q: Age is no guarantee of efficiency.

B: Youth is no guarantee of innovation.

Q: Well, it has it, I can do more damage on my laptop sitting in my pajamas

before my first cup of Earl Grey than you can do in a year in the field.

B: So why do you need me?

Q: Every now and then a trigger needs to be pulled.

B: Or not pulled. It's hard to know which in your pajamas…Q.

Q: 007. [They shake hands]

This conversation is as succinct a demonstration of spy fiction's compromise between human

agency and the lure of technophilia as one could imagine. Bond's worth as a human agent is *not*

being contrasted to Q's technical espionage here. Rather, the two men and the approaches to

espionage they represent (technophilia and covert action) are supplemental to each other. Bond's

job is to be a smart triggerman, drawing on his own agency and world experience—his

HUMINT—whereas Q's SIGINT and technical sabotage does the day-to-day damage of espionage. Both need each other, Bond as the physical executor of Q's computer code. The gadgets Q hands to Bond at the end of this scene—a gun and a radio side by side in a case— mirrors Bond (the "gun") and Q (the "radio") sitting side by side and their equal partnership in espionage. Q's engagement in electronic surveillance, hacking, etc. are essential to the success of Bond and the MI6 he represents. Like Bourne's reliance on rogue CIA computer analyst Nicky Parsons, Bond's reliance on Q shows the genre's embrace of technology as a kind of inevitability. It simply isn't possible, even for the best (fictional) spies in the world, to engage in espionage without tech support. I argue that the pleasantry and amicable bantering characteristic of Q's and Bond's partnership (or Bourne's and Parson's, or Gibb's and Abbie's from *NCIS,* etc.) does some ideological smoothing over of the truly disruptive history and potential of technical espionage and its symbiotic relationship with violent covert action. Moreover, this smoothing out is happening in how technophilia is *portrayed* in spy fiction, and I mean portrayed as both text and subtext, explicitly and implicitly. Thus, an analysis of the metaphoric/supplemental relation between tech and agent misses some of this presentation; in order to catch it, we must focus on the aesthetics of technology within the genre.

My use of "aesthetic" to describe an argument about appearances and surfaces in spy fiction may seem out of place, but part of what I am presenting is indeed the idea that appearances, in the sense of beauty and judgments of beauty, matter in a cultural discourse. Advertisement is built on the principle that ideas can take on some of their luster from the glamour of their aesthetic packaging, and as I have been and will continue to argue, intentionally or not the spy genre can advertise for a certain kind of espionage practice, agent, or agency. And so it is significant to note that the characters who embody this tech-support espionage are near

universally portrayed as young and attractive, and that this, perhaps inadvertently, makes the idea of cyber-surveillance uncomfortably sexy:
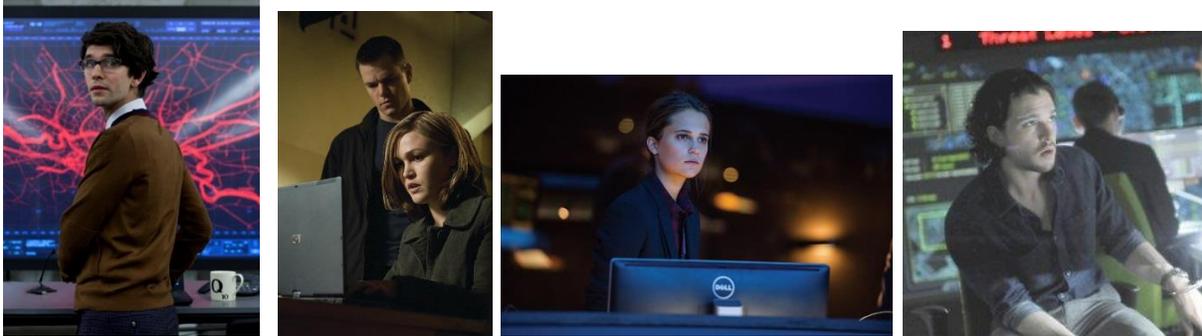
Figure 8: Ben Whishaw from *Skyfall*, Julia Stiles from *The Bourne Supremacy*, Alicia Vikander from *Jason Bourne*, and Kit Harrington from *Spooks*—Who wouldn't want to be spied upon by them?

Undoubtedly, the decision to cast young and attractive people as tech-savvy spies has more to do with the "young and attractive" part than the "spies" part. In other words, I doubt the film industry has a specific agenda to promote SIGINT as hip. Nevertheless, Hollywood's desire to be successful in key demographics means putting the best looking computer experts ever on screen, fingers dancing effortlessly over keyboards. Bloodless, simple, easy. The spy film version of technological spycraft is aesthetically pleasing, incredibly effective, easy to do, and necessary for spy work, in the sense that the plot can't move forward without it. While technological espionage is essential to intelligence work today may in fact be true to life—it is hard to imagine a real world spy agency being very successful while eschewing SIGINT entirely—the effect of the aestheticization of technological espionage as a whole is a normalization of data collection, surveillance, and privacy violation. SIGINT is not just shown as the *usual* practice of a spy agency (a portrayal which can inspire resistance), but as the cool and desirable practice of a spy agency. The desirableness of SIGINT is on full-display in *Spooks,* a U.K. television show

featuring a young cast of MI5 agents who use cutting-edge technological devices and

surveillance techniques to save the day. The show clothes MI5 in the cultural language and

aesthetic of Silicon Valley.[91] Filming for the episodes makes good use of the London dock

district, the "new" and modern London, for its backdrops and locales. Its characters are, like Ben

Whishaw's new Q, intentionally hip, attractive, and willing to "bend" the rules, both written and

unwritten, in a manner that will accomplish the mission.
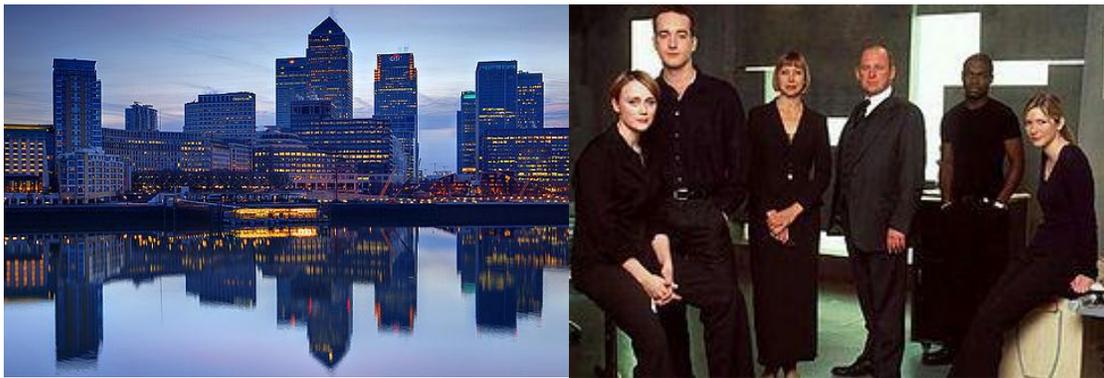
Figure 9: An establishing shot from *Spooks* portraying the gleaming modernity of the Dock

District, and the cast of *Spooks* season 1.

While this inevitably, given it is a modern spy show,[92] results in shootouts, *Spooks* prominently

features technological surveillance, hacking, the creation of malware designed to exploit

computer systems, and various other 21st century tools of the SIGINT trade. *Spooks* is

entertaining, engaging, and very cool. But that is part of the discomfort *Spooks* and media like it

engender in critics wary of how spy fiction can shape the cultural discourse of espionage. As an

illustration, let's contrast the design choices in *Spooks* with those in the recent film version of

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[91] Nor is it the only TV show to combine espionage plots with tech aesthetic; in the U.S., *Scorpion* is a similar, though worse, procedural in which attractive "geeks" use bleeding-edge tech to thwart terrorists, and a "hacker" character is pretty standard fare for any law-enforcement/FBI procedural at this point (see *CSI, NCIS, Criminal Minds,* etc.).

[92] And thus well into the age in which violence and espionage have become inseparable in the public imagination.

Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy, discussed earlier, and a pinnacle of (masterfully designed)

intentional uncoolness. The aesthetic emphasis in *Tinker, Tailor* draws us in to the strategic

mind-games and the relationships of the characters trapped within the brown-beige chessboard of

the 1970s Circus; the cutting-edge aesthetic of *Spooks* inverts this, emphasizing a frictionless[93]

kind of espionage, one in which tech, agent, and agency work together to operate at maximum

efficiency. The computer monitors in *Spooks* are so omnipresent that they provide the lighting

for some scenes. Technology becomes a character in its own right, an integral piece of the team.

In *Tinker, Tailor,* the framing grids draw our eyes to and emphasize the totality of the characters

playing the game within. In *Spooks*, the diffuseness of the electric glow provided by monitor

screens transforms the main characters into hands and faces, seemingly parts of their

sophisticated machines. Despite the fact that *Tinker, Tailor* and *Spooks* both date from the early

21st century, their thematic thrusts are totally opposite: the former shows its 1970s origins as a Le

Carré novel by being about the importance, and failures, of HUMINT, while *Spooks'* lionization

of SIGINT places it squarely in the current aesthetic of technological inevitability in espionage.

Technological inevitability in spy fiction appears in another aesthetic location as well,

namely, at the level of the "MacGuffin." The term "MacGuffin" was popularized by director

Alfred Hitchock, who describes it as a catch-all term for the plot device that sets a story in

motion: "plans or documents…a secret, it doesn't matter what it is" (Truffaut 138). Famous

examples of MacGuffins in fiction, such as the Maltese Falcon or the Holy Grail (in either the

Arthurian grail mythos or *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*), are generally items, but can, in

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[93] Another example of frictionless espionage: in the *Bourne Identity* the head of the CIA brags "Our transmissions equipment is literally instantaneous" as a way to convince the other heads of U.S. intelligence to entrust the job of finding Bourne to the CIA (Ludlum 255). Nothing is said about the suitability of the CIA for the task, and given their ultimate handling of the case, this becomes a costly oversight.

practice, be anything. The point, as Hitchcock points out, is not what the characters are chasing, but that whatever it is "be of vital importance to the characters" (138). The MacGuffin is thus treated as a kind of empty signifier, an aesthetic choice by the writer and/or director and prop designer, but not one meant to be thought very deeply about. However, that doesn't mean we should not think shallowly about them. MacGuffins in spy fiction have become increasingly technical over the last century. From the beginning of spy fiction to the time of Hitchcock (who first talked about MacGuffins in the context of his adaptation of John Buchan's *The 39 Steps* in 1935), MacGuffins were plans—invasion plans, operation plans, sometimes technical plans for new battleships or aircraft. These choices match an era preparing once and then again for a world at war. But a spy agency is no longer solely a war-prevention service; as mentioned throughout this project, agencies are larger, more bureaucratic, more devious, more micro-managing, more segmented, better networked, better funded, and crueler than their architects could have imagined. Technological capability and organization have made this expansion of espionage (its aims, agencies, and abilities) possible. Also, the U.S. or U.K. being invaded by a large occupying force is no longer a cultural or political fear. Thus, given these changes in the structure of the intelligence agency and the cultural milieu it finds itself in, spy fiction has had to adapt its primary MacGuffin design in order to adhere to an assumed fidelity to the reality of espionage. The *Mission: Impossible* films provide excellent examples of the genre's embrace of technological MacGuffins: in the first film Ethan Hunt is after a CD-ROM loaded with agent identities; in the third, he is after a technological doodad called the "rabbit's foot" that the audience, in true MacGuffin fashion, never quite finds out what it does other than blink with LED lights; the fourth features a missing nuclear briefcase; and the fifth an electronic file ledger showing financial support for illegal espionage activities. Stolen computer files, superweapons,

and the various other technical MacGuffins of the *Mission: Impossible* films and beyond

reinforce the aesthetics of technology within the genre, an aesthetic that portrays technology as

the means and ends of spycraft. For the public watching these films or reading these stories—

especially those of us not privy to the day-to-day details of spy work—it becomes difficult to

imagine espionage without its techy tools and gadgets. The use of technologically sophisticated

and relevant MacGuffins make a spy story feel current—so current and up-to-date that the

audience can feel "in the know" after having read or seen it. The striving to show the "very

latest" aesthetics of technology is another technique to increase the perceived "realism" of the

fantastical spy plot. But the effect of this aesthetic is to link espionage to a certain kind of

unreality, an unreality in which the work of espionage is inseparable from the operation of

technology. Frederic Jameson in his seminal work *Post-Modernism* identifies this unreality as

the result of the difficulty for a work of art to accurately convey the networks of power, labor,

control, and exploitation that undergird society:

> The technology of contemporary society is therefore mesmerizing and fascinating
>
> not so much in its own right but because it seems to offer some privileged
>
> representational shorthand for grasping a network of power and control even more
>
> difficult for our minds and imaginations to grasp: the whole new decentered
>
> global network of the third stage of capital itself. (37)

The goal of the spy agency is precisely to grasp that network of power and control and then to

influence it. This is a task bordering on the impossible, even when billions of dollars are spent on

its execution. But it *is* possible in spy fiction. And so representations of technological mastery in

the genre are in some sense creating the meta-fiction inherent in the espionage mindset: that

spying can be a solved game if only one possesses the right tools and toys. Technology is the solution to the problem of knowing one's fellow man.

Much like the Bond-fantasy of covert action which I discuss in the next chapters, this idea, presented in fiction, has proven seductive for spy agencies. The two fantasies—covert action and technological supremacy—share some commonalities. For example, the most salient commonality is the idea that covert action and SIGINT are more effective and less risky than traditional human-intelligence gathering methods. Philosophically one can see an instrumentalism inherent in the shift of the secret agent to covert action; information-gathering does not produce the kind of instant result that covert action does, leading to an embrace of the latter by a bureaucratic structure in which promotions and privileges are tied to spectacular successes. The same instrumentalism is at work in the embrace of actual instruments as a perfected version of the human secret agent—technology promises more, better, faster and safer results than relying on all-too fallible humans. We can see that increasingly over the 20th century, manpower in espionage has been replaced by computing power. The Killian Committee's recommendation to the U.S. Senate in the mid-1950s already hinted at this replacement ethos, as it concludes that conducting traditional espionage operations in the U.S.S.R. was too costly and difficult to maintain, and recommended increased use of satellite and spy plane reconnaissance instead (Weiner 113). This report fueled Eisenhower's increased funding and enthusiasm for the NSA in order to create the premier intelligence agency capable of leading espionage into the fledgling computer age. In 1982, the Sunday *Times* ran an article on the GCHQ, Britain's NSA equivalent, entitled "Exit Smiley, Enter IBM" (Knightley 374). A report on big data espionage in Afghanistan concluded that the DARPA (Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency) project Nexus 7, a 2011 program that collated and analyzed data submitted by informants on the ground

to predict terrorist activity, was accurate between 60 and 70 percent of the time (Weinberger).

That's not bad, as these things go, but to describe being accurate two-thirds of the time as

"literally being able to predict the future", as one intelligence official did, speaks to a culture of

technophilia in which the newness of the idea behind the tech unduly influences its

implementation and evaluation (qtd. in Weinberger). The CIA too has experimented with a

similar project to Nexus 7, an Artificial Intelligence named KARNAC designed to do the work

of HUMINT—"track leads, form hypotheses, narrow outcomes" and identify targets—faster and

with less errors (Singer 277). Though less data is available about KARNAC than Nexus 7, even

the program's supporters admit it is not perfect; especially when fed inaccurate initial

information, KARNAC jumps to a hasty conclusion, as many human agents have done before it.

Clearly, big data and AI analyses have not brought a swift end to terrorism in Iraq, Afghanistan,

Syria, or Yemen. Nexus 7 was shuttered a little over a year after its implementation. Journalist

Stephen Grey describes multiple cases of mistaken identity, bad geo-locating, and confused

surveillance resulting from over-reliance on SIGINT and a lack of effort developing traditional

HUMINT sources—sometimes with fatal ends, as in the case of Afghan Parliament member

Zabet Amanullah, who was erroneously identified as a terrorist by a SIGINT algorithm and

subsequently killed. But chillingly, the failures of Nexus 7, KARNAC and other AI pattern-

recognition systems has not dampened enthusiasm for such projects. Setbacks—whether the

fizzling out of Nexus 7, cases of mistaken identity as in the case of Zabet Amanullah, the

misidentification by electronic surveillers and subsequent drone bombing of a market convoy

(discussed in Ch. 5), or the immediate backlash to the Snowden revelations of domestic

surveillance—scarcely seem to give pause to our intelligence officials. Grey writes that in the

culture of modern intelligence, "Cool gadgets and smart techniques inspired awe and a

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confidence that was comparable to religious zeal" (Grey 209). Likewise, journalist and foreign

policy expert Noah Shactman warns that "instead of us telling machines where to go, it is

increasingly machines telling us" (Singer 109). In other words, intelligence agencies, like lay

audiences, seem to find the spy-fiction fantasy of total knowledge through technology highly

prescriptive and persuasive.

SIGINT continues to grow in proportion to other espionage activity. This despite few

unquestionable successes[94] and much criticism. This criticism comes from both inside and

outside the espionage industry, and takes two primary forms: overreliance on SIGINT erodes the

more crucial ability of spy agencies to develop HUMINT, and that digital espionage threatens

civil rights and liberties. The former criticism begins with U.S. National Security Advisor Brent

Scowcroft's warnings that the CIA was getting worse at human intelligence in 1994 (Grey 10).

Journalist Stephen Grey points out that "getting worse at human intelligence" means losing

something fundamental to espionage work: cultural and regional understanding. Given state-

sponsored espionage's origin in map rooms, museums, traveling diplomats, undercover

geographers, and Orientalists, cultural knowledge has held a central place in intelligence

analysis, used for determining potential allies in the region, plotting out possible consequences

and power vacuums of covert actions, recruiting "runners" and other local "assets" to go where

foreign spies cannot, etc. Proponents of SIGINT may claim that cultural knowledge is not

objective, that human agents can be duped whereas recorded phone calls stand for themselves, or

that the CIA, or any other agency for that matter, should not bother itself with local concerns but

only with their overarching goals and objectives. Other critics of cultural embeddedness and

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[94] Probably the biggest SIGINT triumph is that spy satellite SIGINT allowed the U.S. to count the U.S.S.R.'s nuclear missile launch sites, allowing for a more accurate negotiation process in the signing of the nuclear disarmament SALT and START agreements (Andrew 328).

network-building HUMINT might argue that it is little more than manipulation, done by pseudo-experts who bring in their own bias and thirst for results to vulnerable populations. Electronics are cleaner, this line of thinking goes, less opportunities for human messiness to interfere. There is undoubtedly some wisdom in this—especially given the CIA's penchant to use local forces to fight their battles for them, often to disastrous results for those local forces (for example, in Cambodia during the Vietnam war) or in the long term for the U.S. (for example, arming the Mujahedeen in Afghanistan). But as mentioned above, machines err, and interpreters of machines err by having ingrained or implicit cultural bias in their interpretations of electronically-gathered data. An outsized faith in the "objectivity" of SIGINT is more technophilia than fact. Former MI6 agent Sir Alastair Crooke warns that the shift to SIGINT and espionage-at-a-distance dehumanizes the people on the ground, reducing them to meta-data and blips on a screen that are at best inessential and at worst expendable (Grey 242). Likewise, U.S. Army Lt. Col. John Nagl warns that without human connection and relationships on the ground—i.e. in the theaters of conflict in the world—lasting peace in the age of international terror groups is impossible:

> Counterinsurgency is a long, slow process that requires the integration of all elements of national power—military, diplomatic, economic, financial, intelligence, and informational—to accomplish the tasks of creating and supporting legitimate host governments that can then defeat the insurgency that afflicts them…It cannot be done long-distance or over croissants and lattes in teak-lined rooms. It is done in the dirt, over chai, conversation, and mutual understanding. (Singer 214-215)

As he is a counter-terrorism expert, Lt. Col. Nagl may not be surprised that one of those

international terror groups agrees with him. Al Qaeda produces white papers and other

documents analyzing weaknesses in Western intelligence agencies, and primarily lists a lack of

willingness to do the ground-network HUMINT building, an overreliance and potentially

exploitable faith in technological surveillance, a lack of Arabic translators, operatives, and

double agents, and a bureaucratic emphasis on quantitative results (Grey 185). Lt. Col. Nagl

might be more surprised to find that WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange also considers the

intelligence community's increasing reliance on technology to spell doom for the long-term

future of these organizations, though not for the same reasons. Assange argues that digital

espionage requires the hiring of people (such as Edward Snowden) who are skilled in computer

use, and fluent with the culture of the Internet, and that "this means they are hiring our moles

[i.e. those willing to leak information on principle] in vast numbers" (Hedges 182). Assange

predicts an internal collapse in an intelligence apparatus plagued by constant leaks and internal

sabotage made more damaging by the expansion and dependence on technical espionage.

Historically, there are three spurs for double agency: money, blackmail, and ideology. Assange's

argument—that a computer-literate, Internet-educated, millennial spy force will not share as

absolutely the ideology of the CIA and NSA higher-ups that employ them—may be in the

process of proving correct, given the culture of leaks and reveals throughout this decade, from

Chelsea Manning and Edward Snowden to the Clinton email fiasco to the daily drip of

embarrassing details from the Trump administration. Journalist Jenna McLaughlin identifies the

intelligence system's dependence on contract labor as one reason why leaks have become more

prevalent: "In recent years, the intelligence community has largely failed to detect insider threats

and stem leaks from contractors. Thousands of private companies and their employees make up a

massive percentage of the intelligence community's workforce. As of a decade ago, about 70 percent of the intelligence community's budget was spent on contracts, according to the Congressional Research Service." A recent leak of NSA and CIA hacking tools prompted one former cyberintelligence official to opine that "[t]here really isn't a never-ending supply of tools and techniques. I don't know if our SIGINT [signals intelligence] ability will recover from this for decades. I mean that with deadly seriousness" (qtd. in McLaughlin). The SIGINT agencies are facing a serious loss in trusted and well-vetted manpower through contractor work and a loss of capability because of constant leaks and a lack of innovation. This might be less worrying, or even positive, were our espionage system not structured to be so weighted in favor of electronic surveillance.

SIGINT, touted as making espionage less risky due to the removal of the human factor, alienates the people (both the spies and the spied upon) impacted by espionage. This alienation breeds risks—risks that those caught without cause in the wide net of surveillance will not trust the intelligence apparatus, risks that overconfidence in a so-called objective espionage will lead to error, risks that reliance on computer networks opens up sensitive information to hacking and leaking. However, it is difficult to imagine the proverbial genie returning to the bottle in this case. Disagreements on whether the intelligence community's focus on SIGINT has an outsized prominence compared to the necessities of continuing long-term HUMINT are in a sense disagreements over what constitutes the architecture of state power in the 21st century. Critics that decry the seeming abandonment of the practice of developing HUMINT networks argue that people are still making political and military decisions, and knowing, influencing or coercing

those people is crucial to the job of an intelligence agency to protect national interest.[95] But the knowledge of digital infrastructure and the electronic exchange of information are arguably more valuable now than a knowledge of the railroads of a foreign land, precisely because knowing how people communicate allows direct mapping of human networks. It is as if the unconscious desire of the spy agency—a desire to become the all-seeing eye, which it has had since its inception as a cultural construct and political reality in the late 19th century—is finally possible. Before the digital age, intelligence depended on inference and gauging the reliability and trustworthiness of the relationships between human agents (in both the official sense of agent and in the sense of agentive human beings). The desire to know without guesswork, without having to depend on potentially uncontrollable others has proven to be an especially intoxicating desire for an organization that is primed already to believe itself to be the guarantor of safety and security for millions of people.

I argue that spy fiction fuels this desire in its assumed role as the mirror of the profession. Looking into this mirror shows a gleaming, frictionless, sexy, effective surface, a world in which technological superiority aligns with both moral and political superiority—a world in which the good guys use good gadgets to stop the bad guys. Spy fiction melds technological superiority with heroic derring-do, as the complicated and decidedly mixed record of real-life SIGINT bows to the pressures of the genre to deliver escapism, if not always a happy ending. Even writers who are critical of the technophilia of the intelligence community, such as Graham Greene, can blunt their own criticisms when trying to balance character, plot, and moral. *Our Man in Havana*

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[95] Note how different this mission is than President Truman's "secret news service" blueprint for the CIA. That an intelligence agency's remit requires interference and involvement in international affairs is taken for granted in this debate, even by some who ought to know better by now.

portrays MI6 as technical dilettantes, eager and anxious over technology's changing role in espionage and in geopolitical struggles to the point of absurdity: they are unable to tell vacuum parts from weapons of mass destruction because they desperately want evidence of the latter. However, Greene's disdain for taking his former profession seriously and his decision to subsume the espionage plot to a love story (with a love story happy ending) between Wormold and Beatrice turns possible vitriol into bemused scoffing. Oliver Stone's recent film *Snowden* offends similarly, unfortunately. Stone chooses to make Edward Snowden (played by Joseph Gordon Levitt) into a spy hero, focusing the tension of the film on the question of 1) whether he will get caught, which is a source of ineffective tension given that the audience knows he did not[96] and 2) whether his relationship with his girlfriend will survive his work with the NSA and his betrayal of them. In lionizing his subject and attempting to use the same cinematic language as more conventional genre fare in order to draw in his audience, Stone ends up making the revelation of the largest domestic surveillance apparatus history has ever known incidental and kind of boring. The impulse Greene and Stone have, to tell a human story[97] in the face of an increasingly inhuman (because technophilic) and inhumane (because cruel) espionage agency, is an understandable one. But there is a key difference between telling a human story about spies and telling a story that argues for the re-centering of the human—human agents, human considerations, human ethics, human relationships—in espionage work.

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[96] One scene that illustrates this pseudo-tension is when Snowden is leaving his NSA facility with the stolen files on a small drive he has hidden inside a Rubix cube. Snowden must pass through an X-ray machine to leave, which will pick up the drive. The scene is shot and scored to maximize audience tension, but we know the outcome already—he is going to get away with the drive—so it falls flat.

[97] By this, I mean a story that valorizes humanistic qualities—agency, human emotion (especially love and romance), community, etc.

If one wished truly to tear up the stitching that spy fiction has done in portraying espionage as inseparable from technological inevitability, one must do the latter of these. And this means making a work that potentially makes one's audience uncomfortable. Perhaps the best example of someone doing this in the genre is le Carré's *A Most Wanted Man*, discussed earlier. It is a savagely critical book, and its refusal to resolve in a way comforting to its audience makes its anti-bureaucracy, anti-technocracy, anti-cruelty stance more jarring. Gunther Bachmann is spy fiction's greatest advocate for HUMINT over SIGINT, and in one of his several lectures in the book, he lets the reader know it:

> [Bachmann] warned them that however many of the latest spies' wonder toys they had in their cupboards, however many magic codes they broke and hot-signals chatter they listened to, and brilliant deductions they pulled out of the ether regarding the enemy's organizational structures, or lack of them, and internecine fights they had, and however many tame journalists were vying to trade their questionable gems of knowledge for slanted tip-offs and something for the back pocket, in the end it was the spurned imam, the love-crossed secret courier, the venal Pakistani defense scientist, the middle-ranking Iranian military officer who's been passed over for promotion, the lonely sleeper who can sleep alone no longer, who among them provide the hard base of knowledge without which all the rest is fodder for the truth benders, ideologues and politopaths who ruin the earth. (236)

Bachmann is clear that he believes espionage to be a human-relations activity. But he is also ranting and raving on this point, shown by the text taking on the characteristics of a rant: appended clauses and phrases running on until they find their end in an insult. The implication

here is that Bachmann himself might be blinded by his own biases—and indeed, Bachmann, the

HUMINT advocate, ultimately fails to realize how he and his team are being used by the

colluding CIA and his own BND (German foreign intelligence) superiors.[98] Bachmann ends the

book alone, confused, and angry at a system that prioritizes the quantitative, instant results of

black-bagging "terrorists" (though Issa is probably not one) to the development of human

intelligence networks. Ironically, it is Bachmann's own failure to develop relationships within

his secret world, a difficulty for his arrogant and irritable personality type, which dooms his

operation and most likely his career. Bachmann's defeat at the end of the book, however, should

not be read as an endorsement of the "wonder toys" that he decries in his speech. Better SIGINT

would not have helped Bachmann convince an entrenched-in-its-mindset intelligence apparatus.

But le Carré, unlike Bachmann, is skeptical that the tactical-ization of human relationships into

HUMINT would have been any more beneficial. Bachmann may resent the CIA's ideological

predilection to turn people like Issa Karpov and Abdullah (the philanthropist/financial backer)

into a quantifiable score—tick marks in the war on terror—but he is stymied by his own myopia

in trying to turn them into assets. This is what separates *AMWM* from other critiques of

technophilia in the spy genre; whereas *Our Man in Havana* and *Snowden* find redemption and

resolution, and the possibility for happy endings, outside and apart from the secret world of

espionage, le Carré wrestles with the possibility that the "outside"—a world in which espionage

has no reach or loses its power—cannot exist in a world in which spy organizations are willing to

place results over ethical and moral concerns. The problem isn't merely the technology, even

given its seductive visions of easy solutions to complicated problems; rather, it's the espionage

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[98] As discussed earlier, this collusion becomes apparent to the reader, though not to Bachmann, in a joint intelligence briefing. Bachmann misses the non-verbal cues and shifts that would have tipped him off that his operation has been compromised.

mindset of those who wield that technology, those who see human behavior as something to be solved in the first place, which leads spies and spy agencies into trouble. The attitudes and beliefs of the Great Game are still with us, even as extraordinary rendition, torture, drone warfare, and all-encompassing surveillance have made that "Game" far less sporting for those of us who do not wish to be caught up in the espionage mindset—all of us who are unwilling players.

Chapter 4: Hannay, Burgess, and Bond: Drone Masculinity and the Making of the Modern Intelligence Agent

On January 27, 2011, a former high school football star, U.S. Green Beret, and

Blackwater contractor—Raymond Davis—shot and killed two Pakistani men on a street in

Lahore. A car coming to help Davis killed a third man before driving off, leaving Davis to be

arrested by Pakistani authorities. The U.S. State Department argued that Davis should be

released under diplomatic immunity, while the Pakistani government insisted that diplomatic

immunity did not apply to murder charges. Additionally, the Pakistani government openly

questioned Davis's role in the country, despite the Obama administration's classification of him

in public as a "diplomat." As it turns out, the Pakistanis had ample reason to be suspicious. As

journalist Mark Mazzetti puts it, Raymond Davis was much more than a state department

employee; he was "the face of an American spy agency, the CIA, that has been transformed…No

longer a traditional espionage service devoted to stealing the secrets of foreign governments, the

CIA has become a killing machine" (Mazzetti 4). Despite widespread protests against Davis, the

U.S., and the drone program in Pakistan—which Davis, as the acting CIA station chief in

Lahore, helped to oversee[99]—Davis was released in March after the victims' families were paid

$2.4 million in monetary compensation from a source that Mazzetti indicates may have been

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[99] An arrangement made necessary because the U.S. is not in a declared state of war with
Pakistan, thus making it illegal for the armed forces, such as the U.S. Air Force, to operate in the
country, but the CIA faces no such legal barriers (in exchange for less legal protections should
they get caught).

U.S. government-connected. Davis has since disappeared back into the intelligence apparatus that produced him.

The next two chapters chronicle the making of Raymond Davis within modern intelligence agencies. I argue that Davis has been recruited into, trained by, and promoted according to the standards of a new masculinity developed within intelligence agencies and Special Forces, one that I term "drone masculinity." Like the paternalist discourse that critic Mary Renda identifies as operating in the U.S. occupation of Haiti (1915-1940)[100], drone masculinity is a discursive formation, a cultural script reinforced not only by the institutional practices of intelligence agencies, but also by popular media—specifically for this chapter, but not exclusively, in spy fiction and film. Drone masculinity can be characterized by a belief in objectivity (as opposed to subjectivity) and in objective-based approaches to intelligence and war, a belief in the value of violence and aggression to protect national interests, and a willingness to subsume personal agency to a hierarchic and bureaucratic structure in exchange for cultural and sexual rewards. Drone masculinity is potent because it links fantasies of masculine id, of unfettered male agency, to state service and institutional bureaucracy. As a result, both violence and sexuality become matters of quantification, and high enough "scores" are rewarded by advancement within the system that promotes the drone masculine mindset. Drone masculinity as a term connotes the disposability of the human agent—the "drone"—as well as the cultural conditioning inherent in a cultural formation of masculinity that induces an individual to accept his position as disposable. The ethos of intelligence agencies that have embraced drone masculinity is one that is objectifying and aggressive, and prioritizes hierarchic and bureaucratic structure over the personal initiative and agency of intelligence workers. Drone

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[100] Discussed in the introduction to the dissertation.

masculinity is not the only available governing discursive formation for spy agencies and their relations to their agents, their superiors, their enemies, and their public; it is, in fact, a historical formation, one that drastically changed the role and function of intelligence agents and intelligence agencies in the latter half of the twentieth century.

In this chapter I chronicle those changes in intelligence attitudes and practices. I show how these changes result in large part from the dominance of certain competing masculinities in spy fiction and intelligence work at various points in time, from the homosocial patriotism of the early twentieth century to the rise of drone masculinity in response to a crisis in masculinity and espionage after World War Two to the embrace of actual drone warfare in the early twenty-first century. Drone masculinity has its origins in a larger cultural discourse, in this case, the discourse of intelligence and espionage. In order to understand its origins in popular culture around mid-century, and its growth in power and influence throughout the latter half of the Cold War and the beginning of the War on Terror, we must delve in to the representations of intelligence agents across the twentieth century, and how those representations affected the public's, and the intelligence world's, conception of who spies are and what they do. Essential to my argument is that certain prevailing ideologies of masculinity have proved crucial in the lay population's understanding of intelligence work and workers. For organizations that work in secret, what the public "knows" about their operations can serve as broad license or cover for a huge range of activities—as long as those activities can fit within the dominant cultural discourse of espionage. In other words, culture sets limits on what spies are "supposed" to do, and further what spies do inspires cultural actors and creators such as writers and filmmakers. This means a change in one affects the other; shifting cultural norms in espionage can change spy fiction, and changes in spy fiction can shift the boundaries of the practices of espionage. An integral piece of

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the cultural discourse of espionage concerns the masculinity of the spy agent and spy agency. The particular dominant masculinity in the discourse of intelligence has changed considerably over the past century. The traits, behaviors, and attitudes that constitute masculinity are always contested terms within patriarchal structures. National intelligence and Special Forces, as patriarchal structures themselves, have been both shapers and subjects of these vacillations. Cultural figures, such as James Bond, influence or reinforce certain kinds of masculinities via imitation and idealization, and so a large portion of this chapter is devoted to the reciprocal relationship between the cultural and the organizational, and how both have been affected by changes in the concept (or concepts) of masculinity operating within the intelligence community at large. I begin by discussing the patriarchal, aristocratic homosociality of early intelligence agencies in the U.K. and its representation in the Richard Hannay stories of John Buchan. Having established that particular kind of gentlemanly masculinity as dominant in intelligence work and in conceptions of agents, I then tell the story of its decline, a process that happened over the course of the first half of the twentieth century and can be traced in the cultural figures of Oscar Wilde, T.E. Lawrence, W.H. Auden, and, finally, in the Cambridge Spies Guy Burgess, Donald Maclean, and Kim Philby. Drone masculinity was the replacement discursive script on hand once gentlemanly homosociality had worn out its welcome, and I end this chapter arguing that the outsized influence of James Bond has made many of the most culturally salient aspects of drone masculinity palatable to the public and to intelligence agencies, especially, and perhaps unexpectedly given Bond's British origins, within the CIA. To demonstrate how drone masculinity functions, I analyze several Bond texts, including *Casino Royale, From Russia with Love,* and several short stories, while also showing how Bond's popularity played out within the intelligence community. I then, in the next chapter, move to the consequences of drone

masculinity in modern day intelligence, first by discussing the growing role of covert action in espionage, and then by arguing that drone warfare is the technological fulfillment of drone masculinity for intelligence agencies that wish to remain aggressive and focused on violent covert action[101] while at the same time removing as much human agency, and human error, as possible from spy work. Lastly, I conclude these two chapters with a kind of postscript— readings of *The Bourne Identity* novel and film; John Le Carré's classic novel *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy;* and John Banville's *The Untouchable*. In this postscript, I hope to point to alternate masculinities within the genre of spy fiction that react to and contradict drone masculinity. This has two aims; the first is to show that the genre itself is not defined solely by its associations with drone masculinity. The second is to suggest that, given the power of fictional figures in the shaping of the spy as both a pop culture fixture and an operational agent in the past, perhaps spy fiction can influence the current climate of intelligence work to move beyond a culture of drone masculinity that has made it more aggressive, less accountable, and potentially less effective.

The Public School Boy Goes to War: Buchan, Hannay, and Sandy Arbuthnot

When Jimmy Carter cut CIA funding in the 70s, the agency decried that it had been "emasculated" (Knightley 365). This turn of phrase draws upon a history of patriarchal power, nepotistic promotion, and self-mythologizing in the intelligence community that connected intelligence work to masculine authority. As we will see, masculinity is shorthand in the discourse surrounding espionage for trustworthiness and authorized or licensed agency—the presumptive ability to act in the best interests of the nation. But masculinity is a kind of moving target, a discursive formation that changes in its composition as social, cultural, public and political forces negotiate and renegotiate its terms. When the "operational" (i.e. in use by those

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[101] Instead of human-intelligence network building.

that make up the power structure of the intelligence community) definition of masculinity is in flux, as it was at several moments over the course of the long twentieth century, the intelligence apparatus, having pinned its own legitimacy to that of the masculine authority of its constituent members, finds itself in crisis. The world of espionage, like the world of spy fiction that mirrored and shaped it, began as the terrain of aristocratic British gentlemen, for whom "gentlemanliness" itself was a kind of masculine authority tied to class, upbringing, education, and attitudes. Gentlemanliness was a protection against the charge of being a "spy," an agent of the Other, a subversive person, a danger to the state. Gentlemen were scholars, experts, agents of the Empire, players of the Great Game. The lineage of this figure progresses from men both real and fictional: Richard Burton, Colonel Creighton from Kipling's *Kim,* Alexander Burnes. These men were above reproach, because they controlled the mechanisms of reproach. The institutions which brokered social and political power—government, social clubs, secondary school, academia at large—in the U.K. in the late 19th and early twentieth centuries were deeply interconnected through the overlapping personal, homosocial relations of their members. In effect, membership in one of these institutions was membership in all of them, at least for a man who was known to be "one of us." In the United States as well, according to historian Robert Dean, a similar notion of a "brotherhood" of privilege, power, "service," and "sacrifice" was central to the "identity narrative" of the foreign policy establishment (13). Dean continues on: "[Brotherhood] is not simply a metaphorical use of language; it refers to a ritual pattern enacted in the course of an individual's life in a sequence of sex-segregated institutions" (13). Critic Alan Sinfield also highlights the importance of sex-segregation and the "disciplining" of boys and young men who did not conform to the standard masculine roles expected of them in the U.K.'s public school system:

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> [T]he parting of boys from the women who were generally dominant in their
> childhood, and subjecting of them to systematic brutalization, were not the
> incidental price of a 'good education'; *they were the point.* Thus boys might
> develop a man-to-man loyalty, and an insensitivity, suitable for the prevailing
> pattern of cross-sex relations,[102] and for service to Britain's imperial destiny, or in
> the law, administration, the army or business. (65)

Sinfield's analysis of the public school system makes clear that the homosocial relations amongst

the governing class of the U.K. were the essential feature in an education fashioned for one over-

arching purpose: to run an empire. Formal intelligence agencies arose for the same purpose in the

last decades of the 1800s and the first of the 1900s, and this branch of government service, like

all others, was predicated on homosociality. But the history of espionage and of spy fiction make

visible to us the constant anxiety within this ruling apparatus over what it considered the most

dangerous corruption of this homosociality: homosexuality. Eve Sedgwick's *Between Men* and

Epistemology of the Closet investigate the relationship between these homosocial institutions and

homosexuality, and also interrogates the reaction-formation against that linkage on the part of

soi-disant heterosexual social agents and institutions. She argues that "because the paths of male

entitlement, especially in the nineteenth century, required certain intense male bonds that were

not readily distinguishable from the most reprobated bonds, an endemic and ineradicable state

of…male homosexual panic became the normal condition of male heterosexual entitlement,"

(*Epistemology* 185). Exclusion of homosexuals and the fear that they might be infiltrating the

highest level of power to advance their own "subversive" agendas became a part of male

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[102] In other words, for a pattern of heterosexual relations that coded rationality and coldness as masculine, and considered it feminine to show emotion and empathy.

privilege, and the public performance of homophobia another method of demarcating who could be trusted to act in the interests of the state, and who could not be. That homosexuality was seen as so antithetical to the nation is a direct byproduct of the integral role exclusive male-male bonds play in forming the nation.

A few qualities of spy fiction particularly make the genre a useful place to examine both the prevalence of homosociality as the "glue" of the imperial U.K. and the kind of rigorous, insistent exclusion of homosexuality that Sedgwick and others like Alan Sinfield, Cameron McFarlane, and Jonathan Goldberg describe. For example, the fact that power-relations, secret organizations and machinations, politics, and the safety of the nation are the stuff of spy fiction's overt plots, not to mention the genre's penchant for broad character types that signify to the audience their status as either trustworthy or suspect, naturally raises the critic's ideology alarm, inviting skeptical readings precisely because of an apparent openness.[103] Another reason to examine spy fiction for its relation to masculinity, or rather, to cultural narratives of masculinities, is the lineage that spy fiction shares with adventure fiction. Critic Joseph Kestner's work on the relationship between John Buchan's early spy-genre Richard Hannay stories and the adventure genre usefully outlines an architecture of that relation in a way that emphasizes the central role of masculinity to both. Kestner begins with masculinity critic Martin Green's argument that "the adventure tale [is] historically speaking the most important of all our literary forms…Adventure has been the liturgy—the series of cultic texts—of masculinism" (84). When one examines the genre that encompasses H. Rider Haggard, Robert Louis Stevenson, Kipling, Burroughs, etc., it is easy to see how deeply connected these texts are both to cultural notions of

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[103] Though see the discussion of Michael Denning's book *Cover Stories* in the introduction of this dissertation for a more thorough account of the possible pitfalls and rewards of this approach.

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masculinity and to the nascent genre of spy fiction that began to emerge in the 1890s. That the

colonial adventure tale reached its zenith at the same time that spy fiction began—as both

paranoid invasion literature and in a more picayune form in Kipling's *Kim*—is not coincidence.

Critic Elaine Showalter suggests that that decade was marked by a 'crisis of masculinity' in

[British] culture, arguing that "the dehumanizing effects of industrialization; difficulty in

policing the Empire; the physical deterioration of army recruits; the emergence of the New

Woman; the rise of Germany and its naval power; the economic competition of the United

States; invasion scare literature; the falling birth rate; labour unrest; 'race' degeneration; and the

fear of secret and terrorist societies" had combined to elicit this "crisis" "on all levels—

economic, political, social, psychological, as producer, as power, as role, as lover" (qtd. in

Kestner 82). The adventure tale, and the early spy stories spun-off from the adventure genre,

dramatizes and simplifies this multi-faceted crisis into one plot line and then solves it, creating

an imaginative space in which masculinity is called into question but ultimately reaffirmed.

Additionally, the protagonist's masculinity is always reaffirmed in such a manner that also, as

the analysis of Linda Dryden reminds us, grounds the hero's capability in his masculinity, and

his masculinity in his national character and its (generally racialized) "superiority" (qtd. in

Kestner 83). Finally, Kestner presents critic Graham Dawson's argument that what passes as

masculinity in a given cultural moment is itself a discursive formation, that "masculinities are

lived out in the flesh, but fashioned in the imagination," meaning that these adventure tales and

their depictions of chauvinistic masculinity did more than entertain audiences (84). Dawson

continues:

> As *imagined* forms, masculinities are at once 'made up' by creative cultural
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> activity and yet materialize in the social world as structured forms with real

effects upon both women and men…The narrative resource of a

culture…therefore functions as a currency of recognizable social identities…The

narrative imagining of lived masculinities is powerfully shaped by such a

repertoire of forms. It organizes the available possibilities for a masculine self.

(qtd. in Kestner 84)

As we will see throughout this chapter, Dawson is not only right to suggest that cultural

imaginings "organize the available possibilities for a masculine self," but his analysis can be

extended further: these "narrative imagining[s] of lived masculinities" organize the possibilities

for the male-dominated intelligence service throughout the twentieth century. They do so by

making desirable, and thus rewardable, certain kinds of masculinity; for example, boy's

adventure tales in the late Victorian period functioned to promote a kind of masculinity that was

gentlemanly, nationalistic, skilled, resourceful, and carefully enmeshed in homosocial

institutions and relations that conferred legitimacy to their adventures.[104] As we will discuss

later, spy fiction can and has promoted other kinds of masculinity than this, but the congruence

between the genres in the age of *Kim* and *Riddle of the Sands* meant that spy stories began with

the same tropes in play, including those surrounding this particular vision of masculinity. But it

wasn't just early spy authors, dabbling in genre experimentation/origination, who were

influenced in this way. Early generations of formal intelligence agencies were staffed by men

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[104] In other words, the protagonist's homosocial relations are what separates him from the villains, who do not properly share in the legitimacy of membership in British power structures. This legitimacy is the difference between the gentleman adventurer and the pirate (like Jim and "Gentleman" Brown in *Lord Jim*), or, in early spy fiction, between the amateur British spy and the foreign professional. For example, in Erskine Childers' *The Riddle of the Sands*, Carruthers and Davies, the protagonists, are proved to be worthy of the club atmosphere they come from by uncovering that the British expat Dollmann has thrown away his honor to help plot a German invasion.

who were boys in precisely this era of the heyday of the colonial adventure tale.[105] They were

also themselves colonial officials and ex-military men, and they drew openly on both their

experiences in these homosocial institutions and their childhood readings for inspiration in the

field, the planning of intelligence operations, and even how to relate bureaucratically to their

superiors. Thus, both early intelligence agencies and spy fiction share an origin in the male-male

bonds that constituted the power structure of the nation, bonds which were delineated and

reinforced in cultural narratives of adventure.

Of course, when speaking of the twin overlaps between popular adventure and early spy

fiction and forms of masculinity, one name stands paramount: John Buchan, whose work helped

to distinguish spy fiction as a distinct entity from adventure fiction and whose life provides

ample evidence of the role of homosociality in political success in the early twentieth century,

whether in his advocacy for the re-enlistment of T.E. Lawrence (discussed below) or his ultimate

appointment as Governor General of Canada. Buchan's most enduring creation is Richard

Hannay, gentlemanly spy extraordinaire, the star of five Buchan novels including the so-called

"War Trilogy" of *The 39 Steps, Greenmantle,* and *Mr. Standfast.* Hannay begins and ends as an

amateur intelligence agent, roped into unraveling the caper by virtue of being the right "kind" of

person in the right place at the right time. But in 1916's *Greenmantle* we see Hannay officially

acting as a spy, under cover, behind enemy lines. *Greenmantle* directly connects the

"homosocial, not homosexual" male-male relationship to the health of the nation through

Hannay and its secondary protagonists and their World War One-era mission to Istanbul. Hannay

and his compatriots—Sandy Arbuthnot, Peter Pienaar, and John Blinkiron—each represent a

different approach to masculine authority and the licensed agency it confers, but it is their ability

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[105] Not coincidentally, "Kim" Philby got his nickname from the Kipling book (Macintyre 35).

to cooperate with each other and other men that ultimately allows for success: Blinkiron's wealth and public persona buys influence, Peter's hunting and tracking skills prove invaluable even in wartime, Sandy's academic knowledge and mastery of disguise allows him to work with various factions within Turkey, and Hannay's resourcefulness and moral compass keep the whole enterprise moving. The novel is plainly a wish-fulfilment fantasy in which the very skills schools like Eton preached get a chance to shine in turn. This plot is sometimes referred to an "Eigen plot" after the mathematical concept, and is common in thrillers featuring a team. Eigen plots, especially those like *Greenmantle*'s featuring a team of all men, reinforce the tool-like efficacy that can get attached to cultural notions of masculinity, a feature that will become part of the groundwork for drone masculinity in particular. This band of gentlemanly brothers is not without temptation, though. Beautiful but dangerous German millionaire and operative Hilda von Einem proves to be a formidable enemy, a *femme fatale* whose gender and national Otherness threatens the heroic masculine bonds of Hannay and Co. In the following passage, Buchan connects von Einem's Otherness with an ability to subvert and reverse the male gaze, an effect which Hannay, steeped in a patriarchal masculine world, finds uncanny:

> Her cool eyes searched me, but not in suspicion…She was sizing me up as a man. I cannot describe that calm appraising look. There was no sex in it…This woman's eyes were weighing me, not for any special duty, but for my essential qualities. I felt that I was under the scrutiny of one who was a connoisseur in human nature…To be valued coldly by those eyes was an offence to my manhood. (*Greenmantle* 90)

This passage posits manhood as a discrete quality that can be "appraised", "weighed", "scrutinized" and, perhaps most revealingly, "offended." The language blurs that of

commodification and essence, and the last sentence indicates that such blurring, since it suggests that manhood/masculinity is something discrete and variable instead of fixed and essential, is an assault on Hannay's sense of his own place in the cosmic order. *Greenmantle* extolls the virtues of a traditional masculinity that genre-expectations and Buchan's nationalistic bent ensure as ultimately invincible, but nevertheless the text mines significant thrills from the suggestion that masculinity *might be* vulnerable and contingent, something that can be earned and lost. Von Einem functions in the text as a plot device to tease (primarily male) readers with the (never-realized) potential of masculine failure, as well as to titillate them with the erotics of surrendering control. She does almost succeed in seducing Sandy Arbuthnot to her cause over the course of the novel, but is ultimately rebuffed in a manner that re-links the immediate male-male bonds Sandy is invested in with the larger structure of the nation: "'I stay with my friends,' said Sandy [to Hilda]… 'You can offer me nothing that I desire…I am the servant of my country, and her enemies are mine," (138). In other words, Buchan posits patriotic homosociality as the core value of the secret agent, the component of masculinity that does not wither under von Einem's castrating gaze.

But Sandy's temptation by von Einem is more than an opportunity for Buchan to extoll the virtues of manly co-operation and the gentleman's club atmosphere of international politics. The mere hint that Sandy *could* be tempted by von Einem offers a tacit confirmation that Sandy is indeed straight. I argue that this confirmation is doing some work beyond the kind of generic trope of the proto-*femme fatale* that von Einem represents. Nor is von Einem solely a metaphor for the attractiveness of some aspects of imperial German ideology—the attraction of the Same that must be repudiated to view the Germans of World War One as the enemy.[106] Rather, Buchan

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[106] Discussed in Chapter 6.

is already, in 1916, responding to and attempting to head off what would become the loudest and most damaging criticism of the gentleman spy and intelligence agencies: the suspicion that the public school, Oxbridge, aristocratic government official was, in writer (and friend of Ian Fleming) Cyril Connoly's words, "in the last analysis homosexual," (qtd. in Carlston 159). Buchan is quite aware of how damaging the charge of homosexuality can be to a male subject's credibility and even their likeability, since he uses the hint of homosexuality to further demonize the German officer Strumm:

> At first sight you would have said it was a woman's drawing-room. [But] There had never been a woman's hand in that place. It was the room of a man with a passion for frippery, who had a perverted taste for soft delicate things. It was the complement of his bluff brutality. I began to see the queer other side to my host, that evil side which gossip had spoken of as not unknown in the German army. The room seemed a horribly unwholesome place, and I was more than ever afraid of Strumm. (Buchan 40)

In context, the "evil side" and the "queer other side" are one and the same, and are clearly signaling that Strumm, and thus Germany, the enemy, are compromised by their homosexuality. Hannay's experiences in Strumm's home (which is an otherwise stereotypically Gothic castle) expose what he (Hannay) sees as the pervasive perversity that has transformed the Germans into the "bad guys" of thriller books. Buchan wants the reader to know that "softness" in a man is perversion, and that the Germans—who before the War were not seen as culturally or racially very different from Christian, white England—are Othered by, and compromised by, this perversion. As it did for von Einem, the text figures the challenge (Strumm's "queer other side") to Hannay's and Buchan's conception of homosocial masculinity as a reversal of the traditional

male gaze. In this case, Strumm intentionally walks in on Hannay bathing, causing the British

agent (who is under cover) to feel exposed physically and psychologically. When Joseph Kestner

analyzes this moment of literal and symbolic nudity, he terms it "an interrogation of whether

[Hannay] can sustain the penis/phallus equation of dominant masculinity"—in other words,

whether he has the goods to back up his talk (Kestner 89). Strumm's challenge fails, as Hannay

is not shaken enough by the intrusion to blow his cover (or his host). But, unlike Kestner, I argue

that Hannay is not the member of the fellowship the text is most concerned about—it is Sandy

who is tempted by von Einem, and who, like Strumm, is an aristocrat, a polyglot, a master of

disguise, and an unashamed Orientalist (in both the sense of expertise and of desire for a

fantasized version of the Other). Sandy though, when the chips are down, is heterosexual,

homosocial, and a patriot, and thus, in Buchan's world, untainted with evil or moral weakness.

The problem, for Buchan as well as the intelligence community as a whole, is that one of the

real-world models for Sandy, Buchan's friend T.E. Lawrence, was not without a "queer other

side," nor was he the only one with such a side who was highly placed in military intelligence.

The cumulative exposures of homosexuality and other "deviant" behavior in espionage and in

the aristocracy throughout the early twentieth century weakened both patriotic homosociality's

place as the defining characteristic of the British secret agent in fiction *and* the real-world

cultural, political, and social apparatuses that produced spies who sought to model themselves on

Richard Hannay, Sandy Arbuthnot, and the gentleman adventurers of the late 19th and early

twentieth centuries. Following the revelations of the Cambridge Five and the linking of

homosexuality, gentlemanliness, and Communism, the idea that the Hannay and Sandy types

could actually have the nation's best interests at heart became outright laughable. It was at the

point of Burgess' and Maclean's defection that the previously invincible-seeming masculinity of

Buchan's Hannay novels was discarded among the intelligence world. Naturally though, this change was precipitated by a history of erosion of this particular masculinity in the cultural discourse of espionage. In the next sections, I examine how both the history and imagined history of espionage helped to lay the groundwork for the overthrow of the "gentlemanly" masculinity of patriotic homosociality and set the stage for its replacement by drone masculinity, aggression, technocracy and bureaucracy in intelligence work.

The Foreign Sodomite Becomes Domestic

The groundwork for the questioning and ultimate shift in the governing cultural formation of masculinity within intelligence work can be found in spy fiction's particular role in shaping how the public conceives of espionage as both a cultural force and as an actual practice. This shaping role goes back to the beginning of the genre itself in the 1890s invasion literature of William Le Queux and its depictions of German spies hiding out around every corner.[107] Nicolas Hiley, author of "Decoding German Spies," argues that Le Queux characterizes his invented German spies in such a way as to connect the world of espionage and the world of "perversion", especially sexual perversion (including homosexuality), in order to stoke a public panic that would lead to the creation of the first official counter-intelligence agency (and sell a lot of Le Queux books) (65). Through Le Queux and his imitators' efforts, "perversion" becomes linked to fantasies of foreign espionage agents.[108] This connection between the two secret worlds (of perversity and espionage) was primarily used before World War One to characterize the foreign

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[107] I engage with Le Queux and the Othering of German spies more prominently in Chapters 2 and 6.

[108] For an example (from a better writer), one may think of Verloc's shop in Conrad's *The Secret Agent* as the archetypical nexus point between the lower class, sex-obsessed, vaguely foreign elements that inevitably came together to compose the figure on the fringes of Victorian society working actively to bring it down.

spy rather than the domestic *agent.* As critic David Stafford argues: "The character and behavior of enemy spies in Edwardian fiction, therefore, is of importance in helping to establish and emphasize the value and legitimacy of the gentleman secret agent" (qtd. in Hiley 68). Thus, "perversion" was a reliable method to identify political subversives in addition to moral ones. This attitude, as I mentioned in the introduction, carries through the revelation of the Cambridge spy ring and the Lavender Scare in the U.S., but in the first decades of the twentieth century the thought that *British* government and intelligence workers might be implicated under its wide sweep was not yet conceivable. Homosexuality among the public school set was the very definition of D.A. Miller's "open secret." The conscious policing of this secret among the members of those institutions responsible for conferring social status in a patriarchal society — the club, the school, the government office—ensured that the secret only, as Alan Sinfield's writes, "hovered on the edge of public visibility," instead of becoming a full public spectacle or disappearing altogether into the private sphere (and thus becoming untraceable and even more "dangerous" to the social order) (Sinfield 9). The protective aegis of these institutions, and the "gentlemanly" masculinity that membership in them conferred, functions up until the First World War as "a kind of social security, defending the privacy of private life from its invasion by policelike practices of surveillance" (Miller 15). The fear of these homosocial institutions was that this open secret among the members might become a public fact, and in so doing expose the entire ruling apparatus as filled with, in the words of one 1918 right-wing magazine article on the use of English homosexuality as a blackmail device by German spies, "evils which all decent men thought had perished in Sodom and Lesbia" (qtd. Hiley 65).

    As the above quote implies, World War One-era paranoia over espionage attacks and security concerns grafted very quickly on to pre-existing prejudices against homosexuals.

Cameron McFarlane in his study of the figure of the "sodomite" in the 17th century is already

alert to the ease with which the penetration of sodomy can be shifted into the penetration of the

nation: "the act of sodomy introduces the alien into the social order and the sodomite thus

becomes a substitute alien—so like the enemy—reproducing internally foreign corruption and

danger as domestic perversion and deviance" (58). The (il)logic here, that connects secretive

(because prohibited) meetings between men for sexual purposes with secretive (because

conspiratorial) meetings for political purposes extends well into the twentieth century. This logic

has infused the cultural discourse of espionage with a special attentiveness to the overlaps, both

real (Guy Burgess) and imagined (the Lavender Scare), between homosexuality and betraying

national security, either through deliberate action or vulnerability to blackmail.[109] The specific

attachment of subversive homosexuality to the ruling class and to government and intelligence

workers in particular is the stigma that would ultimately lead to the replacement within

intelligence of the late-Victorian/Edwardian patriarchal, patriotic homosociality as the dominant

masculine discourse, and thus the replacement of the people and organizational structures

steeped in that discourse as well. This stigma begins to adhere to this specific class of military

and intelligence agent after the First World War due to a crisis in masculinity exacerbated by the

failures and carnage of the Western Front. McFarlane, quoting from Jonathan Dollimore's

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[109] This logic is on full display in author and journalist Countess Waldeck's proclamation that "Homosexuals make natural secret agents and natural traitors" in her infamous 1960 pamphlet, "Homosexual International," which argued that homosexuality was integral to Communism and vice versa (Carlston 176). Waldeck and her ilk, like a broken clock, were not always wrong in the sense that homosexual honey traps (luring a target into a compromising position via a sexual enticement in order to photograph the encounter and blackmail the target into giving up information) were considered fair game by both sides of the Iron Curtain, though this is arguably a greater argument for the destigmatization of homosexuality than anything else. Additionally, Guy Burgess is known to have used homosexual rendezvous as a cover to meet with his Russian handler—though this is very much the exception and not the rule.

formulation of disavowal and displacement as the basis for the legitimation of social order, theorizes why such a moment of crisis might lead to the stigmatization (in this case, as homosexual) of a group previously immune to such a charge:

> When groups whose authority is sanctioned by the dominant term in the order/disorder binary actually produce disruption—say, by fighting among themselves—such conflict threatens to delegitimate order by reproducing the binary within the dominant term itself. Authority maintains its legitimacy, however, and restabilizes the binary by identifying the disruption with the demonized figures signified by the binary's subordinate term. To call disruption 'sodomitical' is thus to enact a displacement of responsibility for it, making it appear as though it were a perversion of the institution of "order" rather than their effect. As Dollimore elucidates, such displacements of crisis "on to the sexual deviant, be he or she actual, imagined, or constituted in and by the displacement, are made possible because other kinds of transgression…are not only loosely associated with the sexual deviant, but 'condensed' in the very definition of deviance" (237). This process of displacement is, naturally, most prevalent during periods of intensified social crisis. (80)

I argue that World War One provided just such a period of intensified social crisis, and the twin strain of having to differentiate and define the German people as separate from the English and thus the Enemy, and the resultant political infighting among liberals and conservatives in England over wartime and immediate post-war decision-making primed a new era of homosexual scapegoating, one that took as its target the English ruling class and their monopoly on defining masculinity. In other words, when the War proved that traditional ideologies of

masculinity did not guarantee honor, victory, or safety, the response was to disavow those notions of masculinity, not by calling into question the idea that masculinity equals authority itself (alas), but by questioning whether what had appeared to be masculinity (this patrician, nationalistic homosociality) might not be compromised by proximity with its Other, homosexuality. The discourse of espionage in turn provided those who would wield homophobia as a cudgel a ready-made language of threat and a repository (largely spurious and embellished) of instances in which those formerly defined as "gentleman" were undone or compromised by their sexual deviance. I agree with critic Erin Carlston that this language was already in play before the Cambridge Spy Ring finalized the image of the Communist spy as gay or seeking to exploit homosexuality for blackmailing purposes. As she tells us, long before the Cambridge spy ring,

> British writers had helped fashion an image of the left-wing intellectual—particularly the homosexual intellectual—as a subject exceptionally inclined to disloyalty and alienated from the dominant national culture; these writers both responded to and helped invent the context within which they, and the Cambridge spies, would be understood as traitors. (142)

Carlston's research in her book *Double Agents* focuses on the Auden circle,[110] but to that lineage I would like to add, following Alan Sinfield, the specter of Oscar Wilde, and most relevantly, since most directly tied to intelligence work and espionage, T.E. Lawrence.

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[110] The poet W.H. Auden and his friends, collaborators, and associates, like Steven Spender and Christopher Isherwood. The Auden circle combined the images of gentlemanly leisure, Modernist experimentation, academic sensibilities (all were Oxbridge educated), left-leaning politics, and homosexuality.

The Wilde/Lawrence/Auden "Type" in the Inter-war Period

The change in the dicourse of masculinity that intelligence work experienced after the Burgess defection and the unveiling of the Cambridge Five had its groundwork laid in two conceptual pairings: 1) that of homosexuality with treason (and specifically Communism), which as discussed above has old origins; and 2), a newer pairing that linked the governing class as susceptible to homosexuality (and thus, as not masculine). While the Burgess and Maclean defections provided the final impetus for the intelligence world (in both fiction and reality) to change its conception of the ideal agent, no one event could have affected that change alone. In this section, I argue that this conceptual linking between homosexuality, treason, and the "gentleman" occurred in no small part due to the public personas of Oscar Wilde, T.E. Lawrence, and W.H. Auden. Wilde, Lawrence, and Auden were each interpreted by the public and press through the lenses of changing cultural norms around masculinity, class, and sexuality, while at the same time each one of them, due to their large public personas, shifted the cultural discourse of masculinity, especially of masculinity among the "gentlemanly" class. In beginning with Wilde, I take after scholar Alan Sinfield, whose work *The Wilde Century* takes as its central thesis that the visibility of the Oscar Wilde trial tied together various, separate strands of modern homosexuality and appended them to the figure of Wilde: "at that point, the entire, vaguely disconcerting nexus of effeminacy, leisure, idleness, immorality, luxury, insouciance, decadence and aestheticism, which Wilde was perceived, variously, as instantiating, was transformed into a brilliantly precise image" (Sinfield 3). Sinfield argues that the Wildean type became what a gay man "looked like" to the British in the early twentieth century, and even though far from

factually accurate[111], the idea that the upper-classes, especially left-leaning aristocrats and academics, tended toward or were easily seduced into homosexuality—and thus were threats to the domestic order—took hold among the upwardly mobile middle-class. The cultural term most contested between the old guard and new was that of "manliness" or masculinity. Traditionally, given its relation to political power and patriarchal aristocracy, manliness was the domain of the upper classes to define, and so, as expected, it was defined to be the attitudes and beliefs they valued—Richard Hannay and the other heroes of *Greenmantle* being examples of these attitudes and beliefs. However, in the eyes of many, the War had done irreparable damage to the cultural image of the sporting soldier, the unflappable English gentleman, as the ideal man. Critic Martin Green suggests that, among the upper classes, a rebellion against traditional Victorian masculinity and the attitudes that supported it took hold of many who came of age during the post-war period: "They refused to grow up into men of responsibility, fathers of families and of the state, soldiers," (qtd. in Sinfield 132). Concurrently, according to Sinfield, "manliness [was becoming] a particularly middle-class preoccupation. The newly-dominant middle class justified itself by claiming manly purity, purpose and responsibility, and identified the leisure class, correspondingly, with effeminate idleness and immorality" (68). The middle-classes and their far-right allies in the nobility seized on the Wildean type as an explanation for the turn away from Victorian masculinity among the aristocracy in the inter-war years, an explanation that also functioned more broadly to discredit the aristocratic ability to set the terms of what "manliness" was. These class-based tensions over who can and should be able to define masculinity overlapped significantly with the debate over who can and should be in charge of the

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[111] Homosexuals aren't more likely to be security risks, there was no homosexual conspiracy to overthrow the government, upper class aesthetes weren't all gay, etc.

government (given the masculine=proper authority pairing endemic to patriarchy itself). This overlap, and the prevalence of the Wildean type as a stigmatic label, helps us explain how a figure like T.E. Lawrence, who as a soldier, an establishment figure, and an intelligence agent fit many of the older definitions of the ideal man and the ideal citizen (he was the model for Sandy Arbuthnot, after all) moved in the cultural landscape from a national hero into a pariah. Lawrence is perhaps most familiar to modern-day audiences as the central larger-than-life figure of the film *Lawrence of Arabia,* but as I will show, lost without the context of the film's creation is the fact that the movie was actually a rehabilitation project, considered feasible by friends of Lawrence in the 60s due to shifting attitudes towards sexuality in the U.K. The quasi-mythic protagonist of the film, a figure which one film reviewer in the *Listener* calls a "superior Richard Hannay" and someone who "gives us the picture of imperialism we all crave for: the man himself stimulates our nostalgia for lost glory, while his doubt and anxieties act as a sop to our conscience"—was very much not the image of Lawrence in the 1940s and 50s (qtd. in James 449). During those decades, Lawrence's outsized reputation was the object of a systematic attack carried out in the name of truth. In fairness, Lawrence was at times an inveterate liar, but this attack was heavily homophobic in tone. This dismantling of the myth was led by biographer Richard Aldington and military figures like Major General Lord Burnham who wished to distance themselves from Lawrence's character, by which was clearly meant his "queerness"— his theatricality, lack of respect for authority, sardonic nature, academic (indeed, Modernist) leanings, and his sexuality.

Lawrence's sexuality is still a debated topic in biographies and studies of the man, but what is uncontested[112] is that Lawrence had homosexual masochistic tendencies, and indeed sought out places and people with which to express this preference during the 1920s and 1930s. Lawrence's biggest mistake, at least from the perspective of those like his brother and literary executor A.W. Lawrence who wished to keep his sexual proclivities hidden from the public, was his refusal to hide behind the protective shield of gentlemanliness. His refusal, in concert with his extensive political and social connections knowing about that refusal and seeking to cover for him, undoubtedly weakened the effectiveness of that shield at deflecting attacks from a rising upper-middle class, anxious to poke holes in aristocratic holds on political power. The most spectacular manifestation of Lawrence's unwillingness to play the gentleman card took the form of his attempts to re-enlist under another name entirely, shedding his rank and his fame. It is easy[113] to psychologize Lawrence, his enlistment and re-enlistment, his attendance at Chelsea flagellation clubs or his payments to John Bruce throughout the 20s and 30s for regular beatings. Lawrence was, on his own admission, raped while a Turkish prisoner at Deraa, and that undoubtedly affected his sense of self and his sense of his own sexuality in ways that are difficult to parse given Lawrence's proclivities in his letters and writings towards both understatement and braggadocio. Instead of psychologizing however, I wish instead to concentrate on how Lawrence was "read" both as a public figure and, later in a comparison to Fleming's *Casino*

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[112] What is contested is whether or not Lawrence sought out lasting homosexual relationships, whether or not he engaged in homo- or hetero-sexual sex willingly at any point in his life, and the role of the trauma stemming from Lawrence's rape in prison in Deraa on Lawrence's own determination of his self-worth and his sexuality, including, recently, questioning of Lawrence's account of it entirely (James Barr's 2006 biography *Setting the Desert on Fire* doubts the story entirely). In a letter to EM Forster, Lawrence in no uncertain terms describes himself as being raped, and actually declares himself "unclean" as a result, but it is unclear whether this feeling stems from the violence of the act, the homosexual nature of it, or both (*Letters* 360).

[113] And interesting.

Royale, in his own words from his autobiography, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*. By the end of his life in 1935, and until the film's rehabilitation project, Lawrence was read through the lens of the crystallization of homosexual identity begun by Wilde, and continuing through the Auden circle, Lawrence himself, and ultimately Guy Burgess. Lawrence's contribution to this chain of associations is to begin building the idea that the subversive type can be firmly placed within the governing institutions of power, even in the military and intelligence worlds. Lawrence was not just well-connected and of aristocratic bearing and education—he was an Army officer and an intelligence agent, privy to the secrets of the state while harboring secrets of his own.

Like Wilde, Lawrence was perceived as being aloof, strange, and removed from the common man, typified by Lawrence as the common soldier in his memoir of his own time as a (re)enlisted[114] RAF private, *The Mint*. Lawrence makes clear in *The Mint* that he wished enlistment under a different name would allow him to shed the social, class, and emotional differences that he felt removed him from the "monopoly on manliness" that the common soldier possessed, though he also at the same time acknowledges that the experience will probably only serve to reinforce those differences and Lawrence's sense of his own strangeness (*Mint* 90). For example, one chapter centers on Lawrence trying to cheer up a fellow soldier who is being pressured into marriage due to his girlfriend's accidental pregnancy. It would seem that Lawrence intends this chapter to be about male solidarity in the Royal Air Force (which Lawrence desperately sought), as the men think of ways to keep the air man from being transferred away from his girlfriend, to get married quickly in a civil ceremony, and (hinted at more obliquely) to secure an abortion for her in a military hospital. Yet the chapter is full of

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[114] Lawrence took a false name and enlisted in the RAF in 1922, seeking comfort and silence in the routine of an enlisted private's life.

contradictions between Lawrence's upper class status and his desire to divest himself of that status. For example, Lawrence asserts that "in the RAF all men are equal" and yet is called posh at the bar because he won't drink beer, only a port wine (110). Likewise, when Lawrence discerns that the despondent air man does not have the money to accomplish any of their plans, he gives him the needed funds. Lawrence then realizes that getting the money was the sole point of the man's invitation to go out drinking, remarking, "The money was what he had wanted all the time, but his hardness had made him too brittle to ask me directly" (101). This admission permits Lawrence to reflect on his general estrangement from the masculine identity of the enlisted man: "You see, I cannot play at anything with anyone: and a native shyness shuts me out from their freemasonry of fucking and blinding, pinching, borrowing, and talking dirty: this despite my sympathy for the abandon of functional frankness in which they wallow" (110). Lawrence's wish to join in seems tragically shortsighted, as the very qualities that repulse him— the misogyny, boisterousness, aggression, and pathologization of homosexuality—are the very bulwarks of the kind of masculinity he envies in his squad mates. Over and over in the *Mint* and in Lawrence's letters from the same time period, Lawrence finds himself unable, though ostensibly willing, to shed his upper-class sensibilities. He is put off by the vulgarity and "frankness" that he perceives as characteristic of their "monopoly on manliness." In one letter to Robert Graves, Lawrence's disgust at barracks talk has him at his wit's end. However, his complaint that the men's constant gossip of "fucking" with their girlfriends, wives, prostitutes, and one-night stands has put him off of the idea of sex permanently must have caused Graves to laugh, for as Graves and Lawrence's other friends and associates such as E.M. Forrester, Lady Astor, Mrs. Bernard Shaw, Clare Sydney Smith, and John Buchan already knew, Lawrence had never entertained the idea of heterosexual relations (James 416). They had been apologizing for

it for years by the time that particular letter was written. In his autobiography, Lawrence's

colleague at the British Museum Leonard Woolley recounted an anecdote about Lawrence

persuading his Arabic companion Dahoum to pose naked for a sculpture as a gift for Lawrence.

Woolley insisted after this anecdote that Lawrence was "in no sense a pervert" but merely "liked

to shock"—a defense regularly offered up to defend Wilde as well (69). Lawrence's behavior

attracted these kinds of defenses throughout the 1920s and until his death in a motorcycle

accident in 1935. His dandy-ish snobbery, academic superiority, and Wildean flippancy, coupled

with the open secret of his masochistic practices,[115] won him many enemies intent on

dismantling the mythic figure of Lawrence of Arabia with accusations of moral perversion. This

was easy for them to do, as Lawrence, an upper-class, intelligent, eccentric, aesthetic

homosexual man already fit the Wildean image. But Lawrence added a key dimension to that

image: Lawrence was not removed from the military and political spheres; rather, he was

enmeshed and celebrated within them. To his friends, Lawrence was one of "us," a gentleman,

who, though eccentric, was "in no sense a pervert" but an asset to the early days of military

intelligence. To his enemies, Lawrence represented the fox in the henhouse, a symbol of moral

weakness compromising national strength by virtue of the nepotistic political and social

apparatus that tolerated and covered for him. Lawrence himself was aware of this criticism,

writing to John Buchan (by this time highly placed within the political system himself) an

apologia for his military and intelligence exploits and accomplishments, ending it with "I tell you

all this not to boast of it, but to show that you and [Stanley] Baldwin, in gratifying what may

have seemed to you my indulgences, have not harmed the public service" (James 434).

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[115] Lawrence was blackmailed on several occasions by underworld figures who discovered his homoerotic and masochistic relationship with John Bruce and his attendance at sadomasochistic parties. Lawrence's friends often paid these blackmailers off (James 414).

Nevertheless, by the time Richard Aldington's deconstructive biography of Lawrence—which included a chapter on Lawrence's homosexuality clearly intended as a smear—was published in 1954, Lawrence's friends had, for the moment, lost the battle to show him as having "not harmed the public service" (440). Aldington's book was not just an attack on Lawrence and the embellishments and outright myths that had grown up around him (partly by his own wishes), it was also an attack on the cabals of power that had elevated and sheltered Lawrence from criticism while he was alive—an attack on the "gentlemen" of the inter-war years.

Aldington's deconstruction of Lawrence was an inevitable consequence given that Lawrence seemed to inhabit and solidify the nexus between the ruling class gentleman and the homosexual, and the homosexual and the spy. Throughout the inter-war years, these links grew from plausibly deniable (at least for those who wielded the political power to deny) to accepted as general wisdom. Nor were these links entirely imposed; as Erin Carlston argues, some left-wing aristocratic men, most notably in the Auden circle, embraced the metaphorical potential of the spy. Of course, in Auden's writing the spy is not the agent of the state—not Hannay or Bond or even Somerset Maugham's Ashenden. Rather, Auden intends the spy to stand as a subversive figure, a double agent in the heart of a culture that may have use for him but does not claim him (Carlston 154). According to Carlston, the spy in Auden is a figure for the anxiety of the ruling-class homosexual, invested with power but nevertheless always living a life under cover (157). This is particularly visible in the 1928 Auden sonnet the "Secret Agent", which blurs the boundary between a spy mission and a homosexual rendezvous, and between counter-intelligence and a homophobic society:

> Control of the passes was, he saw, the key
>
> To this new district, but who would get it?

He, the trained spy, had walked into the trap

For a bogus guide, seduced by the old tricks.

At Greenhearth was a fine site for a dam

And easy power, had they pushed the rail

Some stations nearer. They ignored his wires:

The bridges were unbuilt and trouble coming.

The street music seemed gracious now to one

For weeks up in the desert. Woken by water

Running away in the dark, he often had

Reproached the night for a companion

Dreamed of already. They would shoot, of course,

Parting easily two that were never joined.

Richard Bozorth reads the poem's suggestive diction, like "passes," "seduced," and "tricks," as indications that the sonnet "allegorizes cruising as espionage," (qtd. in Carlston 161). However, Carlston goes further, explicating the various sources of frustration in the poem, both internal—the "trained spy" realizes he has fallen for "old tricks,"—and external in the form of the "they" that have ignored his cables, leaving him stranded to face trouble, and another "they" who will shoot at two lovers who were never allowed to be together (162). Carlston's reading of the spy in the poem is as a symbol of external, homophobic and class tensions and the internal conflicts that these tensions "engender and are engendered by" (159). Carlston extends this reading to all of Auden's uses of spy and espionage figures throughout his poetry of the late 20s and early 30s. For Auden, the open secret of homosexuality among Britain's elite combined with the "social,

political, and psychological pressures" on the gay upper-class male made him feel like a double agent, whose power and influence depended both on the connections provided by homosocial and frequently homosexual networks and the public disavowal of homosexuality in order to appear trustworthy (159).

As one would expect, Auden's playing with the trope of the upper-class homosexual as spy, and thus as a danger to national security, fed in to the already-prevalent cultural discourse on the dangers of homosexuals in positions of power. Like Wilde before him, Auden seemed to crystallize an image of a certain "type" of gay man; this "type" though was not, like Wilde, simply inherently untrustworthy or weak (because not conforming to bourgeois masculinity), but actively engaged in subverting the aims of the nation. Lawrence and later his friends and family at least had a patriotic myth to fall back on when accusations reached their fever pitch. Auden, with his immigration to the U.S. at the onset of World War Two, had forsaken the chance of this. Even in the U.S., he could not escape a cultural image which he himself had contributed to: Carlston relates one of Auden's anecdotes in which his US neighbors came up to him hesitatingly and questioned whether or not he was a foreign agent. "Obviously," Auden writes, "they thought I'd come off a submarine" (qtd. in Carlston 146). Auden was read as a spy. His homosexuality, aristocratic and aesthete airs, intelligence, and uneasy relation with conventional notions of national pride coded him as suspicious and subversive, as with Wilde and Lawrence. However, the entrenched nature of patriarchal, homosocial masculinity among the elite meant that it was not an easy discursive formation to be completely overturned, despite the weakening and doubts sowed in the public imaginary by Wilde, Lawrence, and Auden. In fact, it would take another World War, a reorganization of the international landscape, and the revelation that several of the "gentlemanly" brotherhood were actual traitors to link espionage, duplicity,

aristocratic gentlemanliness, and homosexuality so firmly that both intelligence agencies and intelligence fiction, that is, both the institutional and the cultural spheres, would feel the need to change who they could trust as a useful and loyal secret agent. I now turn to this pivotal cultural moment in the history of espionage, the 1951 defections of Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean and the immediate cultural and political contexts and aftermath. This moment of crisis in the governing cultural formation of masculinity is also the beginning of the modern intelligence agency and modern intelligence agent.

The Cambridge Spy Ring and the Lavender Scare

On May 25th, 1951, Guy Burgess, a former intelligence officer and a Foreign Office official, arrived at the house of Donald Maclean, another Foreign Office diplomat and the former Second Secretary at the British embassy in Washington. The two men packed a few bags and boarded the *Falaise*, a pleasure boat headed to Saint-Malo in France at midnight. Though Burgess shouted, "Back on Monday!" to one of the dockworkers as he boarded the boat, neither man would return to England. Burgess and Maclean were defecting to the Soviet Union; they had both been recruited to be Soviet agents at Cambridge in the 1930s and had been feeding Moscow high-level intelligence ever since. The resulting scandal of the revelation of their decades-long treason and their sudden defection upended British and American intelligence and governmental work. In Britain especially, the "missing diplomats" as they were called caused a soul-searching inquiry that would eventually reveal two other highly placed Soviet agents, Kim Philby and Anthony Blunt, and fundamentally change the way MI5 and MI6 operated.

The uncovering of the so-called Cambridge Spy Ring was also a symbolic betrayal of the principal assumption of the British secret service: that the "gentleman," meaning the ruling-class, Oxbridge-educated male, was above reproach, and thus could be trusted with national safety and

security in the most dangerous of contexts. This betrayal deeply affected those within the intelligence apparatus. For example, John Le Carré, who was forced out of espionage when his name was given to the Soviets by Kim Philby and whose novel *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy* is profoundly influenced by the Cambridge Spies, extolled, "Effortlessly [Philby] played the parts which the establishment could recognize—for was he not born and trained into the establishment! Effortlessly he copied its attitudes, caught its diffident strammer, its hesitant arrogance; effortlessly he took his place in its nameless hegemony" (qtd. in Denning 119). Likewise, Cyril Connoly writes in his book *The Missing Diplomats* (published by fellow intelligence-worker Ian Fleming), "Two facts distinguish Burgess and Maclean from the so-called 'atomic spies'—first, they are not known to have committed any crime, second, they are members of the governing class, of the high bureaucracy, the 'they' who rule the 'we' to whom [other, middle or lower class spies like Edward Fuchs] belong" (15). The solution for an embarrassed intelligence establishment, though painful to the old boys' club of intelligence, was to make sure that Burgess, Maclean, Philby and Blunt would no longer be a part of the "they."

The groundwork for this revision in who could be a secret agent, as we have seen, had been laid in Britain by the increasingly public linkage between the gentleman state servant and the subversive homosexual. Guy Burgess was openly gay, and Anthony Blunt, though more reserved than Burgess and whose revelation as a spy did not come until the 70s, was also homosexual. Burgess's homosexuality made him the primary instigator in the public imaginary. Despite MI5 director Vernon Kell's open hostility to homosexuals and Catholics for being "disgusting and unreliable" and having "loyalties that extended beyond Britain," the gentlemanly code, or the open-secret of the closet, prevented Kell and others in intelligence from addressing in public how this particular case touched the highly charged signifiers of homosexuality,

espionage, and the upper classes (Carlston 177). This silence became a part of the scandal itself;

the *Sunday Pictorial,* not subject to the same codes of silence as a government intent on

protecting its privilege, wrote that "this sordid secret of homosexuality—which is one of the keys

to the whole scandal of the Missing Diplomats—is ignored by the Government White Paper"

(Carlston 179). Cyril Connoly's *The Missing Diplomats* is basically an extended apologia for

Maclean, outlining a case in which Burgess, characterized as morally perverse, bullied and

cajoled a psychologically weaker (and too often inebriated) Maclean into spying and then

defection. On the other side of the Atlantic, U.S. intelligence and the State Department were

furious that the British had failed to find the two (later three, then four) Soviet moles. J. Edgar

Hoover, who did have Maclean under surveillance while he was in Washington, also specifically

pointed, as a cause for the deception, to the British over-reliance on "gentlemanliness" as a mask

for any conduct that Hoover[116] believed undermined national security (Carlston 179; Macintyre

187). While Anglophile proponents in the CIA like James Jesus Angleton[117] protested the writing

off of the British gentleman as fundamentally a security risk, the subsequent defection of Kim

Philby in the 1960s and the way that Philby's defection was seemingly so lightly regarded by the

Brits[118] eroded even Angleton's nigh-boundless faith in the virtues of gentlemanliness

(Macintyre 160). After Philby, the U.S. State Department could not resist rubbing the British

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[116] Hoover's attitude here and throughout the Lavender Scare was potentially quite ironic given the recent trend in discussions of Hoover to make the case that he himself was a closeted homosexual or was in other ways queer in private.

[117] A CIA deputy chief, obsessed with the lifestyle of the British gentleman.

[118] John le Carré writes of a conversation he had with Philby's friend and former colleague in MI6, Nicholas Elliot, about the difference in attitudes among MI6 and Parliament towards the treason of the Cambridge Five and that of John Vassall, the homosexual clerk of the U.K.'s Naval Attaché to the U.S.S.R. who was sentenced to 18 years in prison for spying for the KGB. Eliot's response—'Ah well, *Vassall*—well, he wasn't top league, was he?'—indicates how class distinctions and gentlemanliness can massage treason into something apparently more tolerable in the eyes of a culture steeped in patriarchal homosociality (*Pigeon Tunnel* 181).

intelligence lapse in their faces, sending them a scathing indictment of the security failures

surrounding Burgess and Maclean that included the line: "In the State Department repeated

drunkenness, recurrent nervous breakdowns, sexual deviations and other human frailties are

considered security hazards and persons showing any one or more of them are summarily

dismissed" (Macintyre 164).

This communique was true, however, for only one of those categories: sexual deviance.

In practice, as critic Erin Carlston explains, "in a culture that criminalized homosex [sic] and that

in addition was saturated in both Freudian and Protestant conceptions of normative sexual

behavior, only homosexual conduct was assumed to be relevant to the psychological and moral

profile of the traitor" (182). Drunkenness, in contrast, was far from *verboten*; alcohol was the oil

that lubricated the cogs of the growing bureaucracy of intelligence agencies. As just a few (of

many possible) examples, Bill Harvey, former FBI deputy chief and the head of CIA counter-

intelligence at the time of the defections, is described by biographer Michael Holzman as "a

bloated alcoholic with the manners of a comically corrupt cop in a Raymond Chandler thriller",

and his deputy chief (and Philby apologist) James Jesus Angleton was one of the few men who

could keep up with Philby and Burgess in drinking bourbon (Macintyre 148). But Congress

never systematically interrogated the many lushes that made up the upper echelons of the FBI,

CIA, or State Department, nor ever called for the expulsion of "bloated alcoholics" from

government work—that was reserved for Communists and homosexuals, which were in the

minds of many the same thing. The U.S. in the early 1950s was in the midst of the Lavender

Scare, an offshoot of McCarthy's Red Scare that in many ways was even less rational and more

destructive. The Lavender Scare, in which a series of internal and Congressional investigations

into homosexuality in the State Department, most notably the Hill-Wherry Subcommittee and the

Hoey Committee, led to the purging of anyone[119] in the State Department and other federal government departments that could be accused or linked to "sexual deviance," i.e. (male) homosexuality. The fundamental logic behind the investigations and purges can be summed up by the following quote by Senator Kenneth Wherry: "You can't hardly separate homosexuals from subversives" (Johnson 176). Note that the link between homosexuality and treason finding a toxic expression in the anti-Communist fervor of the late 40s and early 50s Lavender Scare is the same logic that Cameron McFarlane has identified as being a feature of the Renaissance, the same logic that hung over the Wilde trial, and the same logic that Lawrence had to assure his patrons was not true in his particular case. While there was some talk of direct connection between homosexuals in government being active Communist agents, especially on the right,[120] most of the rhetoric hinged on the argument that homosexuality was moral weakness, and that moral weakness in one area meant a susceptibility to bribery, corruption, or—most worryingly to the Hoey Committee—blackmail by the Soviets.

Two key pieces of testimony reinforced this view. The first was the testimony of Admiral Roscoe Hillenkoetter, head of the fledgling CIA, who told the story of Alfred Redl, the leading figure of pre-World War I Austrian intelligence. Redl, so Hillenkoetter explained, was homosexual, and the Russians covertly arranged for him to meet with a boy for sex and then blackmailed him into betraying Austrian military positions and capabilities. Modern historians doubt the veracity of this story—Redl seems to have worked with the Russians, but for that oldest of traitorous motivations, money, rather than out of blackmail.[121] Nevertheless,

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[119] Ultimately around 400 people (Dean 88) and (Johnson 21).
[120] Guy Gabrielson, Chairman of RNC in 1950 at beginning of the largest set of purges, remarked: "Perhaps as dangerous as the actual Communists are the sexual perverts who have infiltrated our government in recent years" (Johnson 18).
[121] See David Johnson, *The Lavender Scare* 109.

Hillenkoetter's testimony and position as the new head of American foreign intelligence weighed heavily on the Committee's deliberations. The second key testimony was from the White House's panel of experts, psychologists and scientists that the State Department actually assembled to downplay the threat of homosexuals in government by using studies by famed sex researcher Alfred Kinsey and other sociological data to demystify homosexuality. This backfired spectacularly, as the already-prejudiced senators took the revelation that homosexuals could not readily be identified from the general population as proof of their excellent potential for espionage. Senator Mundt, after asking a testifying researcher if an x-ray could detect homosexuality and being told "no", concluded that homosexuals were the "worst conceivable security risk" and since "there is no means of detecting them and the percentage is as high as [researchers] indicate, we just are not going to have any security in this country" (Johnson 114). Congress's ultimate conclusion was unequivocal, as represented by the Hill-Wherry subcommittee verdict below:

> It is the opinion of this subcommittee that those who engage in acts of
> homosexuality and other perverted sexual acts are unsuitable for employment in
> the Federal Government. This conclusion is based upon the fact that persons who
> indulge in such degraded activity are committing not only illegal and immoral
> acts, but they also constitute security risks in positions of public trust. (qtd in
> Dean 63)

Certainly, there were other political motives at work in the removal of homosexuals from the State Department. Republicans were angry over Truman's containment doctrine, favoring a more aggressive approach. Yet even here, according to historian Robert Dean, Republicans were using the rhetoric of homosexuality and effeminacy to disparage any seeming appeasement of the

U.S.S.R. or other communist regimes (Dean 65). Just as in the U.K., the issue at hand was a struggle over who could define masculinity, and who could wield the political power attached to that definition. As Dean writes, "The public performance of "respectable" masculinity became increasingly crucial as a test of political legitimacy for men in public life" (66). This "respectable" masculinity, at least at the upper echelons of the government, had been not much different from the aristocratic Oxbridge type in England. These men who walked the halls of Harvard and Yale and then Wall Street and the State Department were clearly the target of the anti-Communist and anti-homosexual purges. Joseph McCarthy remarked that "the bright young men in the State Department who are born with silver spoons in their mouths are the ones who have been the most traitorous," while Washington columnist John O'Donnell was even more direct in his assertion that anti-New Deal Republicans felt the State Department was a "secret inner circle of highly educated, socially highly-placed sexual misfits…all easy to blackmail, all susceptible to blandishments by homosexuals in foreign nations" (74; 72). These attacks had political heft, indicating that the same or similar connections to those in the U.K. between homosexuality, education, class status, government work—especially intelligence and diplomatic work, as lawmakers seemed to be immune from the stigma—and betrayal were in the cultural discourse. The background and life experiences that had just a few years before been attached to an idealized "gentlemanly" masculinity, a masculinity that was considered to be perfect for government service, was being called into question. Intelligence agencies on both sides of the Atlantic rushed to answer these questions by attempting to, intra-organizationally and publically, redefine the kind of man[122] that could be trusted enough to be a "secret agent" for the state.

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[122]Recently, women have begun to be seen as more than secretaries in intelligence work—specifically in analysis and management. We can see this effect in popular culture through more,

For some within espionage, this redefinition could not come fast enough. By the time Burgess and Maclean defected and James Bond debuted (one year after the defections), certain contingents within both the American and British spy organizations had begun, with only limited success, the turn to covert action that would characterize espionage throughout the Cold War. These would-be reformers had begun to make their complaints with the old guard known during the Second World War, but wartime establishment changes are somewhat rare, especially in an era in which the shield of gentlemanliness that protected the scions of intelligence work was still mostly intact. These early grumblings presage the narrative that really entered the public discourse only after the Burgess and Maclean defections: namely, that the spy recruited directly from the University was ill-suited, because too effeminate, academic or homosexual, for a new, and increasingly more violent, kind of covert action. This narrative was coterminous with a rapid expansion in intelligence work fueled by the geopolitics of World War Two and the Cold War. The result was a change in the makeup of the intelligence community, especially "in the ranks" as opposed to the top leadership. Increasingly over the course of the Cold War, middle-class functionaries and bureaucrats, and soldiers from all classes, were swept into intelligence fieldwork, which began to range from traditional intelligence gathering and propaganda to more violent operations like sabotage, targeted killings, and planning the overthrow of entire regimes. These new hires brought their cultural backgrounds and attitudes with them, and these attitudes were often hostile to the gentleman's club atmosphere of the upper echelons of the CIA and MI6. When the defections did happen, the intra-intelligence hostility between proponents of conventional espionage and those of covert action threatened to come to a head.

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and more varied, works that feature female protagonists, but the effect on the institutional culture of intelligence work is harder to gauge in the short term.

The Burgess and Maclean defections, taking place within the context of the Lavender Scare and seemingly confirming its correctness, convinced the public and policy makers that the intelligence world was blind to its own shortcomings. In other words, the defections were the final proof for an already skeptical audience both inside and outside the secret world of intelligence that the shield of gentlemanly silence did not only protect state secrets, but allowed enemies of the nation free rein behind closed doors. The pressures of the defections were to affect spy fiction as well, given that spy fiction is the primary way culture at large experiences espionage. Spy fiction and the history of espionage were perhaps at no point since the beginnings of the genre so closely connected; for, just as the birth of spy fiction coincided with and influenced the birth of spy agencies, so this major redefinition of what spy-work was and who could do it found its fictional representation springing into being out of the same cultural miasma that instigated the change in intelligence work itself. The cultural representation of the new spy that was to come out of this moment of crisis in intelligence and crisis in masculinity, as we will see, subsequently influenced the direction that the intelligence community developed. By the early 1950s, the culture of espionage, under suspicion due to allegations of nepotism, croney-ism, Communism, and homosexuality, clearly could not be marketed and represented to the public in the same way it had in the days of Richard Hannay and Sandy Arbuthnot. In short, within the intelligence world and without it, the stage was being set for the emergence of that most famous spy, James Bond, and the drone masculinity that he helps to originate in the cultural discourse of espionage. Ian Fleming's James Bond serves to soothe over the skepticism some felt about a profession that seems inherently dishonest and institutionally compromised. Bond's success in the marketplace undoubtedly has multiple related causes; for example, as Michael Denning argues, Bond figures a yearning for a particular representation of the superiority of the

English tourist in an age of decolonization and the end of the Empire (Denning 102). However, another crucial and under-examined factor in Bond's popularity was that the public-school spy image that Bond represents addresses some of the criticisms leveled against actual public-school spies from without and within the intelligence apparatus after the Burgess and Maclean defections. The intelligence worker, a servant of the state, must be trustworthy. Thanks in large part to Bond and his popularity in the wake of the defections and the dawn of a new kind of spy service, trustworthiness would become lastingly linked to heterosexuality, violence, and professionalism.

James Bond, Drone Masculinity and the Making of the Soldier-Spy

Bond represents an answer for a public that had deep doubts about the effectiveness and competence of its intelligence apparatus during a historical moment which seemed to continually reinforce the need for intelligence services. In other words, Fleming's stories and their later movie versions allowed the public to once again see spies as heroes, as trustworthy servants of the state. Bond, emerging after the Burgess and Maclean scandal and the Lavender Scare, replaced an older template for the pop-culture spy—which was something akin to John Buchan's Richard Hannay—because that older template had been irreversibly damaged in the cultural imagination. This new template linked masculinity, heterosexuality, trustworthiness, and the capacity to inflict and endure violence in the name of the state. Nowhere is this more evident than in scenes where Fleming creates a scenario that puts it to the test. As readers and audiences are quite familiar, Fleming and later writers have created some, let's say, convoluted tortures for Bond to endure. But arguably the first such torture scene is the most harrowing, despite being the simplest, as it involves nothing more than a wicker chair and a knotted rope. Midway through *Casino Royale* (1953) the villain, Le Chiffre, has Bond stripped and tied down, and proceeds to

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smash his genitals to get him to reveal where he has hidden his poker winnings. Le Chiffre does

not attempt to hide the symbolic and psychological blows he inflicts in addition to the physical,

telling Bond that this form of torture is always effective because: "It is not only the immediate

agony, but also the thought that your manhood is being gradually destroyed and that at the end, if

you will not yield, you will no longer be a man" (*Casino* 115). Pinning down exactly what it is

under threat here, or in other words, what it means for James Bond to be a man, will help reveal

how Bond is a pivot-point in the development of the spy in contemporary popular culture. Bond,

strapped to the wicker chair as Le Chiffre winds the rope, worries about an induced homosexual

attraction (one that would, in a post-Burgess era, compromise his trustworthiness as a secret

agent):

> [Bond] had been told by colleagues who had survived torture by the Germans and
>
> the Japanese that towards the end there came a wonderful period of warmth and
>
> languor leading into a sort of sexual twilight where pain turned to pleasure and
>
> where hatred and fear of the torturers turned to masochistic infatuation. It was the
>
> supreme test of will, he had learnt, to avoid showing this form of punch-
>
> drunkenness. (113)

Note how this passage connects homosexual attraction to security risks—Bond must resist

infatuation with Le Chiffre so that he does not give Le Chiffre what he wants, which is specific

information (where Bond has hidden the money), but also a kind of submission to his will. Bond

is rescued from Le Chiffre before he blabs, but nevertheless, after his physical recovery, Bond

fears that he remains psychologically damaged. Specifically, he worries that his heterosexuality

has been lost: "And now when he could see [Vesper Lynd] again, he was afraid. Afraid that his

senses and his body would not respond to her sensual beauty. Afraid that he would feel no stir of

desire and that his blood would stay cool" (155). As one can guess, Bond ultimately has no problems performing. He treats Vesper first as a test of his own virility but very quickly discovers that his fascination with her is not just as a physical sexual object—he becomes obsessed with and aroused by the idea that she has a secret he cannot know (which, granted, she does—she is a Soviet double agent). Bond's misogynistic pleasure in penetrating Vesper's privacy as well as her body allows him to experience what he calls "the sweet tang of rape" in each sexual encounter (156). Bond's interactions with Le Chiffre and Vesper link his sexuality, brutality, masculinity, and capability as a secret agent. He resists giving Le Chiffre any of *his* secret knowledge, and he passes the "supreme test of will" by refusing homosexual desire—an act that would function by itself as a betrayal of the British state, regardless of any information he actually passes on, since simply being homosexual is treasonous enough. Bond then seeks to forcibly possess Vesper's body and *her* secret knowledge, a secret that once known directly benefits MI6. Taken together, these are a double confirmation for the audience of his straightness and his spying prowess.

In order to show the break that Bond instigates in the depiction of the secret agent, and to better illustrate how the cultural moment of the defections affects how sexuality and its relation to trustworthiness are depicted in the Bond books, it is useful to compare Bond to an older conception of the ideal intelligence agent—in this case, T.E. Lawrence. Remember that by the time of *Casino Royale*'s publication, Lawrence's image was being very publically raked over the coals due to questions about his honesty, his sexuality, and the perceived conspiracy among some of his powerful friends to cover these things up. In short, Lawrence, at the same time of the defections and the Lavender Scare, had (not coincidentally) become that which Bond is deliberately set against: the old, outdated model, extravagant, protected by a shield of upper-class

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status, a liar, a dandy, gay. Fleming seems well aware of this. Take, as a somewhat ghoulish comparison to Bond's interrogation by Le Chiffre, this scene from Lawrence's *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* (1922) in which he has been captured by Turkish forces as a spy and, after refusing the sexual advances of the prison commander, is tortured:

> I remembered the corporal kicking with his nailed boot to get me up; and this was true, for the next day my right side was dark and lacerated…I remembered smiling idly at him, for a delicious warmth, probably sexual, was swelling through me: and then he flung up his arm and hacked with the full length of his whip into my groin. (*Pillars* 445)

The similarities, especially the linking of masochistic sexual pleasure to torture and the use of a rope/whip to attack the groin, are enough to suspect that Fleming was deliberately referencing Lawrence's account while writing *Casino Royale*. Regardless of whether it was deliberate or not, that Bond adamantly and explicitly resists the formation of sexual pleasure towards his torturer indicates that Fleming's idea of what was acceptable for a spy to feel under duress was quite different from Lawrence's. Lawrence in 1922 had no qualms describing and publishing his experience, but by 1953, audiences would see such behavior as weakness, as rendering Lawrence unfit as an intelligence worker. Eve Sedgwick reads the passage in which Lawrence is tortured as an expression of "the wrenching disjunctions in his ability, as a man, to master the map of male homosocial desire" (*Between Men* 195). Sedgwick's reading stems from the frustrations and confusion that Lawrence felt dealing with his homosexuality in an imperial bureaucracy that was intensely homosocial but also homophobic. This frustration pushed Lawrence hubristically to graft his sexual identity (in an unequal and Orientalizing relation) on to Arabic homosocial culture. His torture and rape at the Turkish garrison town of Deraa broke his fantasies of

mastering that Other. But by the time Fleming wrote *Casino Royale,* the secret agent must not be broken. He must be the master.

And so James Bond helps to usher in a new era in which the older characterization of the spy—a gentleman steeped in a homosocial world of public schools, university clubs, bureau offices and map rooms—no longer functions as an adequate justification of spy work to the public. Bond is a cultural salve to the anxiety raised by the Cambridge Spies—namely, that the old guard homosociality associated with the spy world in fact overlapped too much with homosexuality, and homosexuality was dangerous to the state because it could be exploited, either through blackmail, subversion or inherent weakness. Though Bond seems, at first glance, to be a tuxedo-clad throwback to the gentlemanly, amateur spy—the gambling, the sporting adventures, the chases and thrills all echo Buchan and Hannay—his brutality, explicit heterosexuality, and success would make him a trustworthy government agent to a Lavender Scare Senate sub-committee. Both critic Alan Hepburn in his study of the spy genre, *Intrigue,* and Erin Carlston draw attention to the metaphorical connection between the national body, seen as male, and the penetrative, homosexual, power of the rival nation's intelligence agency. Homosexuals, seen as already inhabiting a secret world of underground connections, were thus especially "leaky" in Hepburn's phrasing (Hepburn 187). Bond's detached, cruel heterosexuality is meant to be a safeguard against this charge; Bond is leak-proof (pun intended), even under extreme duress.

Bond as a symbol reflects on the prior history of his profession, and as I argue, represents a significant, culturally-motivated break from previous depictions of secret agents. The figure of Bond has also provided an ideological template that has affected not only how spies are perceived, but also how they are hired and what they are asked to do. Bond's legacy in the

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discourse of espionage is as an early template for what I call "drone masculinity", which is, once again, characterized by an objectifying mindset, aggression, and willingness to subsume personal agency to a hierarchic and bureaucratic structure in exchange for cultural and sexual rewards (in other words, in exchange for the cultural license to be seen as "real men"). Bond's treatment of women throughout his 60-year history as the premier pop-culture spy amply demonstrates each of these. We have just seen how his hyper-heterosexuality, formed in response especially to anxieties raised by the Burgess and Maclean defections, functions to objectify Vesper in *Casino Royale* as an object-with-a-secret that must be penetrated.[123] Sexual pleasure (for Bond) is used as a reward in Bond fiction; the "passionate leave" is granted by M at the end of the adventure (as it is in *Live and Let Die*) in exchange for service well done on behalf of the state (*Live and Let Die* 243). Before that final reward, Bond proves his masculinity by violence, sometimes to the women he later beds, and always to the many male henchmen he kills in the name of Her Majesty's Secret Service. Bond popularizes the change in spy work to more military operations during and after World War Two, and its constant reinforcement in book after book and film after film, and the frequent proximity of violent set pieces and sexual reward generalizes these changes, removing any specific historical context. Bond has mowed down Soviet agents, Soviet soldiers, mercenaries, Western terrorists, Middle Eastern terrorists, thieves, ninjas, and turncoats with equal abandon; the only constant is that he solves his problems with violence. Bond exists to show the superiority of the ideology that sustains him by being rewarded for inflicting violence on others and taking violence himself without breaking. Fleming, who is, of course, not

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[123] Or see the even more misogynistic and heteronormative example of Pussy Galore, whose homosexuality is associated with her duplicity as an agent of Goldfinger, and thus homosexuality and villainy are set up as equivalent pathologies which Bond can cure simultaneously via a forced sexual encounter.

the greatest wordsmith, reserves his best and most urgent descriptions in the books invariably for descriptions of bodies in pain, and when it is Bond's body, it is almost always coupled with the affirmation that pain is not enough to derail the mission. The following passage from *Dr. No,* in which Bond is being forced to crawl through a superheated passageway at the center of Dr. No's "proving ground," is indicative:

> There was no air. His lungs were bursting…He lurched and his bruised shoulder hit the metal. He screamed. He went on screaming, regularly, with each contact of hand or knee or toes. Now he was finished. Now he would fall flat and slowly fry to death. No! He must drive on, screaming, until his flesh was burned to the bone. The skin must have already gone from the knees…Go on! Go on! This isn't where you're supposed to die. (*A James Bond Omnibus* 703)

Similar passages become a staple of the genre after Bond, littering the espionage thrillers of Tom Clancy and Robert Ludlum, and airport novels everywhere. Bond's license to kill is the same as his license to act as a servant of the state. The association between the intelligence worker and that license to kill, which Bond's legacy helps cement, has become a key part of a discursive structure that changes people into "targets," first within intelligence work and then in the culture-at-large. We expect our spies to be killers, a fact directly at odds with the history of the profession and the history of the genre of spy fiction up until James Bond. Male-centered spy thrillers like the Bond stories and films and their descendants like the *Bourne* franchise and the new *Mission: Impossible* movies exemplify the masculinist model of agency set forth by Bertrand de Jouvenel: "A man feels himself more of a man when he is imposing himself or making others the instruments of his will" (qtd. in Nelson 164). This model sounds like it could be a line penned by Fleming, and the prevalence of this philosophy in Bond and in the genre

Bond's popularity shaped and defined has proven to have a profound effect on the future of espionage work: it has become more violent, more domineering, and less likely to feel constrained by law.

The template that Bond provides for the secret agent, a template that will become drone masculinity when it crosses over from spy fiction and enters fully into the way intelligence agencies recruit, train, and "run" (i.e. manage, in spy parlance) covert agents, is worth exploring in more depth in order to uncover the cultural work it actually does. In other words, the next few paragraphs show how the Bond-ian model was seen as convincing as a replacement for the Hannay-type, homosocial, gentleman-adventurer. The work the Bond-ian model does is visible in each of the many Bond films and stories throughout the 50s and 60s.[124] At first glance a rather atypical example of a Bond tale, the short story "The Property of a Lady" finds Bond not seeking to foil the plans of an egomaniacal madman, but rather to uncover a KGB spy in London at a jewel auction.[125] Much more relevant than the short and simple plot, though, is how Fleming portrays Bond, and the secret service he represents, in terms of this new, post-Burgess framework of masculinity. In this respect, "The Property of a Lady" is not atypical at all. Bond first appears reading a manual on covert means of assassination using poison-capsule guns. When startled from his reverie, he immediately and instinctively reaches for his side-arm (*Octopussy* 48). Keep in mind this is a story about forcing the KGB to show their hand through economic entrapment (they have to bid up the titular "property," a Faberge emerald, in order to mask a payment to a double agent); the plot is actually much closer to the kind of cerebral intelligence work associated with the profession in pop culture before Bond and after him in the

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[124] And in the films and stories of Bond's immediate copycats, those spies on the "Bondwagon" as scholar Allan Burton terms it.

[125] Would you believe that this story has not yet been made into a film?

counter-strain of espionage fiction descending from John Le Carré. And yet even within this

divergent (for Bond stories) plot structure, Bond is still introduced as an *intentional* (because he

is studying up on assassination) and also an *automatic* killer. Bond is then called into a meeting

with M and a Dr. Fanshawe, who works for customs and who has uncovered the suspicious

provenance of the jewel. Here is how Bond sizes up Dr. Fanshawe: ""The stranger was middle-

aged, rosy, well-fed, and clothed rather foppishly in the neo-Edwardian fashion…Bond summed

him up as something literary, a critic perhaps, a bachelor—possibly with homosexual

tendencies" (50). Fanshawe is at once the un-masculine trifecta: academic, homosexual, and

fop.[126] He is portrayed as incapable of even looking Bond and M in the eye, always staring "at

his boots" or "at a point above M's left shoulder" (51). Bond and M, meanwhile, are incapable of

withholding their feeling of masculine superiority over Fanshawe. For example, after M makes a

comment about art being overpriced, Dr. Fanshawe nearly faints "at this bare-faced revelation of

M's philistinism." M tries to placate him: ""Forgive me, Dr. Fanshawe. I expressed myself

clumsily. I have never had the leisure to interest myself in works of art nor, on a naval officer's

pay, the money to acquire any'" (55). M's attempt at placation is to assert a vision of the Secret

Service as, essentially, having too much probity and import to be caught up in the frivolousness

of the concerns of the learned gentleman. M tacitly portrays himself as the protector and

guarantor of Fanshawe's foppishness, but does so in a way that also reasserts the boundaries

between Fanshawe's type and the Secret Service itself—a crucial move in making a profession

damaged by allegations that it was composed of Fanshawes (and Communist Fanshawes to boot)

seem more palatable. This is not to say that "Property of a Lady", or indeed the Bond series in

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[126] And of course Fleming's dig at literary critics is noticeable as well given the public reception
vs critical reception of the Bond stories.

general, seeks to overthrow the idea that "gentlemen" have the reins of government securely in hand. In fact, when Bond meets his actual auction-hall contact, an art dealer, the contact is at first quite guarded when he perceives Bond as little more than a roughneck policeman. It is only after Bond mentions some other art houses and fancy hotels he has stayed at that the contact trusts him (60). Gentlemen have buying power after all, and if that isn't quite the same thing as taste in Bond's world, it is a fairly good proxy. Bond's character walks a fine line between old guard and new: he is a killer, but he stays at the Ritz; he has no time for art, yet he can make art dealers comfortable. This tightrope-act is precisely what has made Bond so popular, and it is also what allows the Bond-ian archetype to originate the concept of drone masculinity within the cultural discourse of espionage under the perfect cover: Bond is a fantasy of endless agency masking an espionage mindset that dehumanizes enemy, civilian, and agent alike.

I understand that arguing James Bond, whose adventures seem to epitomize Michael Denning's famous dictum that "The secret agent returns human agency to a world which seems less and less the product of human action," is actually an integral part in a cultural discourse of espionage that pushed real intelligence towards drone masculinity and actual drone warfare, may seem like a paradox, or at least counter-intuitive (Denning 14). Especially the final component of drone masculinity, the willingness to self-mechanize, to cede one's personal agency to a large organization (and not, in contrast, to a direct superior on the battlefield or even to a particular ideology) seems like it doesn't quite fit the secret agent premiere. Bond, in the books, often shows outright disdain for MI6, especially in the short story "The Living Daylights" from 1962. In the story, Bond is asked to kill a KGB sniper from across the East/West Berlin demarcation line. He is less than thrilled at the mission, first forcing M to stop using euphemisms to describe it as anything else than a kill mission ("This was to be murder. All right. Let M bloody well say

so"), and then disparaging that he had been "fired off by M, like a projectile, at some distant target where a problem waited for his coming"—in other words, that he had been treated as a drone (86; 88). Bond is openly insubordinate to his boss on site in Berlin, and "sneer[s] at his profession" when that commanding agent uses the language of tradecraft to tell Bond what to do (93). Lastly, Bond refuses to ultimately kill his target, instead wounding the KGB sniper's shooting arm permanently. But these elements of the Bond mythos have not been picked up in his cultural image. Much more essential elements to Bond's lasting fame are also found in the "Living Daylights": M's refusal to call a murder a murder is justified in the story as a mechanism to diffuse the responsibility, and thus the guilt, an agent has, an act which dehumanizes the enemy and the agent alike; Bond's refusal to kill the opposing sniper is not out of a recognition of their complementary positions and thus shared humanity, but because she turns out to be a she; Bond becomes infatuated with this dangerous woman while staring at her through his sniper-scope; Bond ultimately fights off this infatuation by describing himself as "married to the gun[127]" (100). Lastly, the superior that Bond is openly insubordinate to is the old model of intelligence worker, the "backbone of the Civil Service…a good second at Oxford…the ideal staff man," or, in other words, the type discredited by the defections as being unfit for the new world of espionage (89). Little wonder Bond treats him contemptuously.

But surely, one might object, if drone masculinity is prefigured anywhere in the Bond books or films, it isn't really in Bond himself, but in his antagonists. As Patrick O'Donnell claims, on the surface, "The logic here seems irrefutable: Bond represents democratic freedom, vigorous manhood, mobility, life; the villains represent totalitarian bondage, machinic entropy, paralysis, death" (O'Donnell 62). Bond villains sometimes *actually* blur the line between man

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[127] The phallicism of the male gaze on full display in this scenario.

and machine, like Dr. No and his mechanical hands, and when they don't have artificial parts themselves, they are often described as automatons. Red Grant in *From Russia with Love*[128] is a great example; Fleming goes to great lengths to contrast Grant and Bond and, by proxy, the services they represent. Grant is SMERSH's chief executioner, a killer who, unlike every other person to hold the post, doesn't seem to tire of killing. Grant is immune to the "melancholy and drink…and a dreadful lassitude which brings a glaze to the eyes and slows up the movements and destroys accuracy" that Grant's KGB superiors have seen ultimately end the usefulness of other state-sponsored assassins (22). He is introduced, in a sentence that only makes sense discussing Bond novels, as pointedly *not* getting an erection as an attractive girl massages him. Lastly, Grant is anti-intellectual, scoring poorly at spy school in ideology and theory, but exceptionally well in tactics and the violent skills of sabotage, close-quarters combat, and marksmanship. Grant enjoys killing and little else, save for the Order of Lenin medal he imagines he will get for killing Bond. He obeys his orders automatically and carries them out efficiently. If it weren't for his monthly periods of "lunacy" on the nights of a full moon, in which he becomes so violent that he is uncontrollable, he would be a Soviet automaton.[129]

Bond, and MI6 in general, are contrasted to Grant and SMERSH/the KGB. Fleming has a Soviet intelligence chief extoll that, unlike Red Grant and his external reward of the Order of Lenin, British secret agents:

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[128] I will be referring to the novel version, in which Soviet Intelligence Agency SMERSH decides to embarrass and kill James Bond to deal a moral blow to MI6 by striking at the myth of the upright and capable British agent. They plan to force a relationship between Bond and SMERSH agent Tatiana Romanova in Istanbul and on the Orient Express, before having chief executioner Red Grant kill the pair before they get to Paris. Naturally, the plan fails.

[129] The KGB just puts him in a prison with criminals who are to be executed on this night and let Grant go wild.

serve with devotion. Yet these agents have no special privileges in

England…Their social standing abroad is not high, and their wives have to pass as

the wives of secretaries. They are rarely awarded a decoration until they retire.

And yet these men and women continue to do this dangerous work…It is perhaps

the Public School and University tradition. The love of adventure. But still it is

odd that they play this game so well, for they are not natural conspirators…Of

course, most of their strength lies in the myth—in the myth of Scotland Yard, of

Sherlock Holmes, of the Secret Service…this myth is a hindrance which it would

be good to set aside. (41-42)

Here Fleming offers a defense of a traditional romantic view of espionage in the U.K. that, while

acknowledged to be something of a myth (a myth that can be embodied in James Bond), is still

behind the success of the British intelligence apparatus. Elsewhere in the novel too Fleming

seems to be bemoaning the changes in intelligence towards violence and covert action. For

example, when the Istanbul section-chief Kerim kills a man from a distance with a sniper-rifle,

Bond, "who has never killed in cold blood,[130]" recoils in a mild disgust (179). Even more

tellingly, a rare passage of Bond's internal thought includes the secret agent waxing nostalgic at

the difference between his youthful life of adventure and his cynical life as a spy:

If that young James Bond came up to him in the street and talked to him, would

he recognize the clean, eager youth that had been him at seventeen? And what

would the youth think of him, the secret agent? Would he recognize himself

beneath the surface of this man who was tarnished with years of treachery and

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[130] This is either a mistake on Fleming's part or a very charitable reading of certain previous
encounters in the Bond books, like in *Live and Let Die* in which Bond feeds henchman The
Robber to a shark.

ruthlessness and fear—this man with the cold arrogant eyes and the scar down his

cheek and the flat bulge beneath his left armpit?...What would he think of the

dashing secret agent who was off across the world in a new and most romantic

role—to pimp for England? (117)

Bond here resents an agency that would force him to conflate his sexual desire with service to his

country. Bond's "weakness for women" as his KGB file reads should be a personal weakness,

not a professional one. Bond, of all people, suggests earlier in the book that this separation of

personal "vice" and professional work should extend to everyone in the Secret Service.

Appointed to a committee to determine whether intellectuals should be recruited into MI6

following the Burgess and Maclean defections,[131] Bond is the only voice who thinks they should

in order to match the Soviet's facility for human intelligence and long-term mind games. His

point of view is met by the committee chairman with resistance: ""So you [Bond] suggest we

should staff the organization with long-haired perverts. That's quite an original notion. I thought

we were all agreed that homosexuals were about the worst security risk there is" (103). Though

this logic on display in the book further reinforces the intellectual/dandy/gentleman/homosexual

linkage we have been discussing, Bond doesn't agree with it: "Not all intellectuals are

homosexuals," he retorts (103).

　　From Russia with Love reminds us that while the discourse of drone masculinity may be

beginning to circulate in the 50s and 60s, it has not yet crystallized as a desirable force even in

the genre of masculinist spy fiction (let alone in the other, Le Carré-an, Graham Greenian, strand

of spy fiction). Yet, even in *From Russia with Love,* Fleming can't seem to be consistent in

describing Bond's relation to a changing Secret Service. Each of the moments I highlighted

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[131] Which are mentioned explicitly as the context of the meetings.

above in which the text seems to want to resist the drone masculine discourse it nevertheless

invokes (usually in description of Grant, the KGB, or espionage in general) is itself undercut.

Sometimes this subversion is an immediate reattachment in the text of Bond to the proto-drone

masculinity that he helps originate in the cultural imagination of espionage. For example, despite

the many contrasts between the uber-violent, mechanistic Grant and Bond, and the romantic

description of British espionage in the novel, this is how Bond is introduced in the text:

> The blubbery arms of the soft life had Bond round the neck and they were slowly
>
> strangling him. He was a man of war and when, for a long period, there was no
>
> war, his spirit went into a decline. In his particular line of business, peace had
>
> reigned for nearly a year. And peace was killing him. (97)

This introduction is in some ways a familiar trope in the genre. The male protagonists of

adventure and spy fiction are often introduced as bored with their domestic lives, thirsting for the

adventure "out there" that will restore meaning and potency. However, the way that Bond is

specifically described as a "man of war" in an intelligence service is very new here. Compare

John Buchan's take on the descriptive trope in *The 39 Steps:*

> Here was I [Richard Hannay], thirty-seven years old, sound in wind and limb,
>
> with enough money to have a good time, yawning my head off all day. I had just
>
> about settled to clear out and get back to the veld, for I was the best bored man in
>
> the United Kingdom. (*Thirty-Nine Steps* 1)

Buchan's description makes sure to signal Hannay's class status ("enough money") as well as his

fitness for adventure, while keeping the emphasis on boredom. The emphasis in the Bond

description is on violence ("strangling" "man of war" "killing him") and Bond's (currently

wasted) capability for it. Nor is this the only moment at which Bond is contrasted with the old-

school gentlemanly spy à la Richard Hannay. At the climax of the novel, Red Grant imitates the British gentleman spy archetype (having studied under a British defector in Russia—clearly another shout out to Burgess and Maclean) in order to fool Bond into thinking that he (Grant) is backup from M. Remember, Grant is machine-like and lacks social skills, to put it lightly. Bond, though, is thoroughly fooled because he cannot look past his own judgments about that archetype. Bond reads Grant's surface accoutrements with clear distaste: "Bond mistrusted anyone who tied his tie with a Windsor knot. It showed too much vanity" (230). Even though Bond is wrong about this particular "gentleman," his thinking reinforces the idea that this type of spy is outmoded for Cold War secret service. Even when Grant slips up with an accent or an inappropriate usage of slang, Bond takes it as a symptom of a gentleman-spy nervous and out of his depth now that he is in the field. A gentleman-spy, in Bond's universe, ends up being a great cover for the sociopathic Soviet agent Grant because it conceals danger under the guise of surface respectability and institutional naivety—exactly the charges against this type of espionage agent made by its critics. In this scene, Fleming gets to make both points about the unsuitability of the Buchan spy-type at once: gentlemanliness, if "true," makes one unsuitable for violent spy work (Bond's judgment), and if feigned, masks Soviet allegiance (Grant's actual motives). This can be seen in Bond's "Not all intellectuals are homosexuals" retort as well— notice Bond does not say "not all homosexuals are untrustworthy," "not all Communists are homosexual or intellectual," or some other phrase that would short-circuit the Lavender Scare logic in the novel. Rather, Bond seems in a meta-textual move to be more interested in justifying the usefulness of the intellectuals the real MI6 actually still had on staff than in actively challenging the idea that sexuality and politics are entwined.

It is this entwining of sex and political ideology that makes drone masculinity different from complete mechanization (such as found in the sexless Red Grant, for example). It is also what makes the Bond fantasy so appealing and so effective at shaping the cultural discourse of espionage. Bond's contradictions in terms is his appeal—he is aggressively sexual, but automatic and machine-like in his efficiency, a fantasy of the romantic hero, but a "man of war" that peace is "killing," a gentleman who mistrusts anyone who ties a Windsor knot, a man who resents being made to "pimp for England" but in the very next sentence shakes off that mutinous thought and re-embraces duty: "Bond put the thought of his dead youth out of his mind. Never job backwards" (*Russia* 117). Patrick O'Donnell calls Bond the "cyborg-aristocrat" due to these contradictions, these vacillations between drone and agent, machine and capital-M Man. O'Donnell elucidates this concept of cyborg-aristocrat by making reference to Tom Wolfe's *The Right Stuff* and its depictions of astronauts:

> [astronauts] are technological marvels who have survived the tortures of being converted from man into machine, and yet who, at the same time, retain the quintessence of their humanity by possessing "the right stuff" that transforms them from mere mortals into the post-human elite…Portrayed as the high priests of the national security state, the astronauts are a contradiction in terms: at once robotic and the idealization of "the human," at the same time (merely) technological prostheses and, yet, super-men… (O'Donnell 56)

Bond is portrayed similarly—as the apotheosis of the state servant into machine god. As O'Donnell describes him, Bond "is a contradiction in terms: on the one hand, [he] instantiates a fully incarnate, passionate, highly intelligent, powerful heterosexual male that might be considered the end product of secular humanism—a recuperation of all that is threatened by

capitalism's conversion of the heightened individual into mass subject; on the other hand, this figure is machinic and prosthetic" (57). Bond's mechanism is more than just a reliance on gadgets, technology, and firearms as prosthetics for his own agency. It is present even when Bond is without gadget, in situations in which one might expect him to appear most fully human. For example, in *From Russia with Love*, Bond and Tatiana's sexual encounter in Istanbul blurs the human form into the machine-work of the cameras filming them: "And the view finders gazed coldly down on the passionate arabesques the two bodies formed and broke and formed again, and the clockwork mechanism of the cine-cameras whirred softly on and on" (190). The "formed and broke and formed again" seems identical to the clockwork mechanism of the camera, making the whole strange incident into an unsettling mix of man, machine, and voyeur. Bond also seems more machine than man when under duress. In *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* his mind whirrs "like an IBM machine" (qtd. in Hepburn 189). Mathis in *Casino Royale* tells him that it would be a shame for the service to "lose such a wonderful machine" (136). After Bond endures Dr. No's death course, Fleming writes that "Inside the torn envelope of his skin, the machine was quietly, solidly ticking over" (*A James Bond Omnibus* 718). Bond has very little interiority, and his past seems irrelevant for understanding his character or present motivations. (In fact, he doesn't really receive a past until 2012's *Skyfall*.[132]) This "cyborg-aristocrat" image of Bond is the one that has endured and shaped how intelligence work is

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[132] The Daniel Craig films in many respects react against the character's history in addition to embracing certain aspects of it. Certainly, Craig's Bond is not an exemplar of drone masculinity—despite the film's acknowledgment of the embrace of the mindset within intelligence. This is shown well in the two most recent films, *Skyfall* and *Spectre*, in which the 00 program's affinities with drone programs are made explicit. In both films, M must fight government higher ups who wish to replace the 00s with a drone-warfare section and a beefed-up electronic surveillance section, only for Bond to prove the 00s worth over any machine replacement by the end of the movie.

represented in print and on screen precisely because it yokes together efficiency, violence, heterosexual pleasure, and trustworthiness.

Even when the actual character of Bond does not act in such a way to reinforce the discourse of drone masculinity that he helped inaugurate (as in "The Living Daylights"), people seem to want him to. Bond's status as a cultural symbol seems to trump the characterization and plots he actually experiences, and even the actors that play him. For example, critic Stephanie Jones in her paper[133] on the Bond of the 80s and 90s has pointed out how the critical and audience response to the Timothy Dalton-led Bonds of the 1980s was both quite negative and also concerned about the disconnect between Dalton's version of the super-spy and the tropes they were expecting. As Henry Fitzherbert put it in a review of the much bloodier and bombastic Pierce Brosnan films,

> In the late Eighties, before the series went into limbo, the films were fatally in thrall to realism and political correctness. The storylines became less fantastical - in *Licence To Kill* the villain was a pedestrian drug trafficker with no ambitions for world domination- and Bond became a mumsy Nineties man. I still shudder at the memory of Dalton cooking himself a quiche. Not only was he a dab hand in the kitchen, he was also caring and monogamous. And, in what was trumpeted as a great leap forwards into gritty realism, we even saw Bond bleed. The result? Awful box office and a Bond movie only in name. Where were the gags, the girls and the megalomaniacs? (Fitzherbert 28)

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[133] Entitled "Get Your Clothes on and I'll Buy You an Ice Cream: The Unlikely History of James Bond and the New Man" and presented at the conference Spies on British Screens held at the University of Plymouth.

Fitzherbert's complaints were noticed at the time of the Dalton Bonds as well; reviewers in the *Daily Mail,* the *Independent,* and the *Times* all concurred that "after Connery's feral drive and Moore's caddish mischief, this Bond for the safe sex era seems a bit subdued" (Usher 22). It's plain to see that Fitzherbert and the others are reacting against the aspects of this iteration of Bond that don't conform to what has become expected from depictions of spies and secret agents—they are somehow against respecting women, being less violent, and having traits perceived as feminine (though it's Roger Moore that cooks the quiche—perhaps further highlighting the replaceable nature of the actor who plays Bond). That the original character to begin to shape this discourse in intelligence is himself vulnerable to revisions seems to incense Fitzherbert and other reviewers even more.[134] The Bond archetype though (which is, as we see with poor Timothy Dalton, not the same as the Bond character) has become so entrenched that the variations witnessed within an individual Bond story, or the series of films of one Bond actor, are perceived within the framework of that archetype. There is a Bond-type of character, in other words, and it exists as an assembled set of characteristics that stick in the cultural imagination, regardless of what the specific Bond is doing in any specific film. In this way the trajectory of Bond, the cultural originator of drone masculinity in intelligence, mimics the trajectories of the actual intelligence workers indoctrinated into that discourse. As the next chapter argues, the world of intelligence has come to see the covert-action "type" as what is needed—the individual self of the agent, with his or her individual spins and twists and riffs are ephemera that, if not capable of being overwritten, are fairly safely ignored.

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[134] As Patrick O'Donnell writes in "James Bond, Cyborg-Aristocrat": "Cinematically, [Bond] is both a mode of repetition and a representation of corporeality: across twenty films, the same character with a different body (often enough, partially unclothed, or rigged out in some kind of special gear) attached to the name of various actors, hence the game of who is the best Bond, the one who conforms to our image of who Bond should be" (63).

Chapter 5: The Bond Effect: James Bond, Drone Masculinity, and Spy Fiction Masculinities

Ian Fleming died at the beginning of his creation's ascension to the height of pop culture stardom. The character has by now had a 60+ year lifespan of his own. In the last chapter, I ended by discussing how that character has been received by the public, and how he primes the cultural imagination to associate intelligence work with covert action. I argued that Bond is an integral node in the cultural lattice of espionage, a node which incentivizes us to think of spy work as drone masculinity.[135] This chapter examines the adoption and consequences of drone masculinity within the intelligence world, with a special focus on how Bond, a purely fictional spy, has served as a reference point both within and without intelligence for crafting espionage and Special Forces policy. Bond as a nexus point between pop culture and policy may seem far-fetched initially, but I am not the first to explore the idea. Surprisingly though, the first to do so were not on "our" side of the Iron Curtain. Soviet critics like Yurii Zhukov and Grigor Cherney bemoaned the influence of Bond on what they saw to be a cheapening of human life when it came to warfare. Zhukov, writing in *Pravda,* described the Bond-ian view of espionage as a "world where they write laws with the butt of a pistol, where violence and outrage against female honor is looked on as prowess, and murder, like an amusing game," an apt assessment of the effect drone masculinity has had on an espionage mindset already primed to think of human life

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[135] As a reminder, drone masculinity is characterized by a belief in objectivity (as opposed to subjectivity) and in objective-based approaches to intelligence and war, a belief in the value of violence and aggression to protect national interests, and a willingness to subsume personal agency to a hierarchic and bureaucratic structure in exchange for cultural and sexual rewards.

strategically (qtd. in Albion 209). Zhukov was also the first to connect Bond's influence on

public perceptions of military service: "The idolization of the killer Bond in a world where the

use of napalm substitutes for persuasion and bombs drown out the voice of conscience is, to

some extent, natural…A good number of [Fleming's fans] have cursed James Bond as they

choked in blood on the ground in South Vietnam" (210). Here, Bond is both a result and a cause

of a military culture too willing to resort to violence and covert action over an exchange of ideas

or a more HUMINT-focused persuasive tactic. Soviet criticism of Bond, and to a large extent

Western policy, is inevitably self-serving and hypocritical; Soviet policy was not exactly pacifist

in nature, as the participants in the Prague Spring, the mujahedeen fighting to overthrow Soviet

occupation in Afghanistan, the victims of Stalin's Great Purge, and many, many others can attest.

Soviet media was propagandistic (a trait still present in Putin's Russia), and "whataboutism", in

which politicians and media members attempt to deflect criticism by arguing that other people do

similar or worse things, can be considered a practiced Soviet (and now Russian) tactic[136]

(Kurtzleben). But even given that Zhukov's words are perhaps disingenuously said, the

connection he draws between Bond, Bond's popularity, and violence as policy cannot be easily

ignored.

The first section of this chapter concerns that connection. I argue that the Bond effect has

left its mark on intelligence policy since the Kennedy administration and CIA director Alan

Dulles agreed to expand the covert action wing of the organization. Covert action by espionage

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[136] Journalist Danielle Kurtzleben writes in an article for NPR that Trump's recent rebuttal to Bill
O'Reilly's admonition to distance himself from Putin because Putin "is a killer" is an example of
Trump's embrace of whataboutism. Trump replied "There are a lot of killers. You got a lot of
killers. What, you think our country is so innocent?" (Kurtzleben). That the President of the U.S.
is willing to be so…unpatriotic…about our history of bloodshed in the world would almost be
refreshing, if it weren't being offered as a defense of Vladimir Putin.

services demands a particular kind of ideological shift within intelligence, and this shift was made more palatable when Bondomania took a central place in the cultural discourse of espionage. The particular ideological script within espionage that makes covert action more attractive is drone masculinity, and its rise vis-á-vis patriarchal homosociality as the dominant framework for the recruitment, training, and use of agents devoted to covert action has resulted in a more militarized and more aggressive intelligence community. I discuss what I see to be the consequences of drone masculinity within intelligence policy and in the actions of the CIA, MI6, and other intelligence organizations. I then move to what I consider to be the furthest extension of the cultural logic behind drone masculinity, drone warfare. This is the first of two different occasions I take up the subject. In the next chapter, I discuss the impact of drone warfare in the context of the West's relation to the Middle East, and in relation to narratives of Self and Other in spy fiction and intelligence culture. Here though, I discuss drone warfare as an extension of drone masculinity, as the ultimate expression of an espionage mindset that embraces violent action yet is skeptical that the human agents it tasks with the violence are up to the job. If drone masculinity is in part a reaction against the betrayal of the old guard patrician class in espionage (figures like Burgess and Philby), drone warfare is an attempt at ensuring that the intelligence world cannot be placed in position that could be betrayed ever again, by stripping its covert agents of any kind of agency.

The last half of this chapter returns to spy fiction more directly in a search for alternate ideologies of masculinity and alternate masculinities that the genre may offer. Counter-programming the Bond effect is necessary to changing the current culture of intelligence. But a counter-programming from completely outside the cultural discourse of espionage is unlikely to resonate within the secret world given its cloistered and elitist nature. So, attending and

celebrating what is already present can reveal potential points of change and inform policy makers, authors, movie and TV producers, fans, and spies themselves that drone masculinity is not an inevitability, but a choice that has proven convenient and complicit in the militarization of intelligence work. Alternates exist, even under the aegis of state service (let alone outside of it). I examine three alternates to Bond-ian drone masculinity already existing within spy fiction: Jason Bourne from the *Bourne Identity,* George Smiley from *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy,* and Victor Maskell from *The Untouchable.* Each of these characters responds to and challenges the Bond typos in different ways, but their shared challenge to the intelligence community is to abandon drone masculinity and its yoking of mechanized violence to sexual reward, and instead return to a philosophy of espionage more human and humane.

Drone Masculinity, Covert Action, and Drone Warfare

Bond as a cultural figure, not as the individual character in any given film or story, has endured as a Cold War fantasy of a safe and efficient secret agent, emerging from a historical context that had shown the previous fantasy was a compromised one. Bond, as a "particular political fantasy" as Frederic Jameson would put it, has not stayed in the realm of spectacle, though, and as a result Bond cannot just be set aside as a pop-culture reaction against the Cambridge Spies (*Political Unconscious* 48). Bond, and the drone masculinity he comes to figure throughout the Cold War, have grown beyond their original historical and cultural moment. As I argue, it is in part through Bond and his imitators—both fictional and, as we will see, actual—that drone masculinity entered into the institutional logic of intelligence and Special Forces agencies worldwide. Drone masculinity can be considered a politico-cultural resolution to the problem of individual, personal agency within the secret bureaucracy of intelligence itself, a problem revealed to intelligence higher-ups each time Burgess, Maclean, Philby, and all the

other double agents who have been uncovered over the years demonstrate that when secret agents actually have agency, they can abuse it. Bond's cultural influence has informed the practice of espionage akin to the way in which the practice of spycraft has influenced cultural expressions of spy work. Violence as proof of effectiveness—the license to kill as the license to act—has increasingly become a staple of evaluating covert actions. Bond's early adventures reflect the activities of the Special Operations Executive during WWII, whose saboteur operations contrasted with the sister Special Intelligence Service. In the words of one SIS recruit: "SIS's role…was to watch enemy troops crossing a bridge while SOE's brief was…to blow up the bridge," (Knightley 118). These operations had at the time a divisive effect in the intelligence community. Former SIS officer Henry Kirby actually called the split over whether intelligence organizations should focus on gathering intelligence or undergo violent subversive acts "the biggest, bitterest internal battle in the history of our intelligence services," (118). However, after the Lavender Scare and the defections of the Cambridge Spy Ring, the Bond-solution to a shaky public reputation proved too easy. Bond gets things done, after all, and is wrapped in enough trappings to convince skeptics and possible detractors that he, and his type, are the right men for the job. With Bond came a renewed trust in and fascination with intelligence agencies, allowing them a kind of cultural license to pursue secret operations in line with what the public expected Bond's employers to do, despite the huge caveat that Bond did not exist in real life. Nevertheless, the scruples about sabotage and assassinations began to disappear under the popularity of the Bond illusion and his imitators, both real and fictional, and soon the lyric, "I'm

ten percent cloak and ninety percent dagger" from the mid-century song "Boo Boo Baby I'm a Spy[137]" was standard operating procedure.

The embrace of drone masculinity in espionage is intricately linked both temporally and symbolically with Bond as a cultural force, most likely helped by the fact that Fleming was well-connected himself within intelligence on both sides of the Atlantic. Bond's influence in US intelligence is a bit interesting given the character's British roots, but, as discussed in the previous chapter, the toxic homophobic discourse which shattered the image of gentlemen spies such as the Cambridge Five was very much also present in the US, and the connections between the fledgling CIA and the more established British services in the early years of the Cold War were quite strong, as the agencies shared resources and information both formally and informally through the social networks of Anglophiles like James Jesus Angleton. Bond's popularity certainly transcended national borders, especially after President Kennedy named *From Russia with Love* as one of his favorite books (Kinzer 274). In his biography of the architect of the modern CIA, director Allen Dulles, Stephen Kinzer argues that both Dulles and Kennedy somewhat conflated real espionage with the James Bond novels, most worryingly by increasing their faith in covert action (274). Dulles did in fact remark that he "would be glad to hire several James Bonds," given the spy's usefulness and trustworthiness, and by all accounts he tried to do so, as over his tenure the CIA pivoted from Truman's news service to a covert action entity supported by teams of analysts (274). Though these analysts outnumbered (and still do) the secret agents that enacted covert operations, under Dulles and his deputy Frank Wisner, the CIA's budget for covert actions dwarfed that of intelligence gathering (Weiner 32). As former

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[137] The band of the Park Hotel in Istanbul actually played this song when one of the heads of the many spy organizations (Allied, Axis, and then Western, Soviet) came to eat throughout WWII and the 40s-50s (McIntyre 63). So much for cover identities.

CIA director Walter Bedell Smith prophesized when Dulles and his group came to power, "the

operational tail will wag the intelligence dog" (53). He has been proven right, both in the US

and, according to MI6 historian Phillip Knightley, in the U.K. agencies as well (Knightley

118).[138] Starting with Dulles, when government officials seek to convey a sense of covert action

to the public (in fairness, sometimes to criticize it), they mention Bond. Bond has been cited by

heads of the CIA, JSOC, MI6, and even in a U.K. High Court as a justification by the judge for

the state's refusal to pay child support to women that MI5 agents had impregnated while

undercover in Northern Ireland (Grey 281).[139] Royal Marines carried out Special Forces missions

under the heading "Operation James" during the Iraq War, with their targets code-named

"Goldfinger, Blofeld, Pussy Galore, and Connery" (Albion 214). Citing Bond and his cultural

imitators makes covert action look far more effective than it is to a general public. This

glamorized, though fictional, effectiveness, and the acceptance of this mythic effectiveness by

the public, in turn makes the temptation to play Bond irresistible to covert organizations

regardless of actual results: in the words of a former head of JSOC (Joint Special Operations

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[138] One example of the mania for covert action in the early days of the CIA, and of the interconnectedness of the CIA and MI6, is the sad tale of the several operations to parachute Albanian rebels and other would-be anti-Soviet forces behind the Iron Curtain to create a Fifth Column in the event of a ground war (a real worry in the early days of the Cold War). Each one of these missions was a catastrophic failure, ending with every paratrooper caught, captured, and presumably executed (they were never heard from again). The problem: the MI6 liaison to the operation was…Kim Philby.

[139] From Stephen Grey's *The New Spymasters*: Justice Tugendhat, a High Court judge in the U.K., dismissed 10 women's lawsuits against the Metropolitan police…said "James Bond is the most famous fictional example of a member of the intelligence services who used relationships with women to obtain information, or access to persons or property…[F]ictional accounts (and there are others) lend credence to the view that the intelligence and police services have for many years deployed both men and women officers to form personal relationships of an intimate nature…in order to obtain information or access" (281).

Command), "We had all these guys running around trying to be James Bond, and it didn't work

very well" (Mazzetti 82).

The mythic effectiveness[140] of drone masculinity propagated by Bond and his cultural

imitators[141] tempts intelligence agencies by offering a different standard of what that

effectiveness looks like. Despite numerous failed missions and PR disasters, intelligence

agencies have embraced drone masculinity because, unlike traditional intelligence gathering,

violent covert operations are spectacular and quantifiable. They can be measured in terms of

damage: enemies killed, structures destroyed, etc. In other words, they seem to demonstrate their

own success immediately. I argue that this has had a kind of addictive effect within intelligence,

since the immediate reward—a seemingly successful operation—is in the short term powerfully

present, whereas any consequences or failures of violent covert operations[142] only manifest in the

long term. This addictive effect in turn reinforces the ethos that the masculinity martialed to

train, evaluate, and control the personnel who carry out those missions is the only guarantee of

successful results. The militarization of the secret agent is a direct result of intelligence agencies

changing who and how they recruit, eschewing the conventional cradles of intelligence

workers—Ivy League Universities—for former Special Forces personnel who volunteer for or

are conscripted into CIA service.[143] As John le Carré points out, the idea that espionage

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[140] Note that this is the same myth of effectiveness the Russians try to puncture in *From Russia with Love* by killing Bond.

[141] For example, the *24* Wiki reveals that Jack Bauer kills 309 people over the 9 days the show takes place ("On-screen"). Given that the U.S. army spent 250,000 rounds of ammunition per insurgent killed in Iraq in the mid-2000s, Bauer's kill rate with his pistol and bare hands is a mythical feat (Buncombe).

[142] Such as further destabilization of the region or a shift in local (within the theater of operations), national, or international attitudes towards the intelligence agency and the nation it represents

[143] It should be noted that for analysts, Ivy League, Ivy League equivalent, and think tank recruitment is still alive and well, but not for those agents tasked with covert action.

recruitment no longer relies upon networks of gentlemanly connections is due to the fear of

betrayal and double agency lingering from the Cambridge Five: "[In the old days] you had to be

spotted. If you applied [as now you can do] you could be enemy, whereas if you were spotted,

you couldn't possibly be. And we all know how well that worked" (*Pigeon Tunnel* 165). As a

consequence of the change in recruitment strategies, the line between soldier and spy has been

slowly erased over the past 40 years. During the first two decades of the twenty-first century, this

line has almost entirely disappeared, and journalist Mark Mazzetti argues that "Just as a

generation earlier Ross Newland and his training class had been told that the spy agency should

eschew killing at all costs, many CIA officers who joined the agency since September 11, 2001,

have experienced *only* man hunting and killing" (Mazzetti 318).[144] One process that has further

entrenched the idea that successful intelligence work is violent action—the (perceived) surgical

removal of threats to the home country—is known as sheep-dipping. Sheep-dipping is a

bureaucratic process by which Special Forces personnel can temporarily become intelligence

workers in order to run an operation in a country with which the US is not officially at war (i.e.

Navy Seals becoming CIA agents in the raid to kill Osama bin Laden, or Air Force pilots

becoming CIA agents to pilot drones active in Yemen). This makes the idea that the successful

intelligence worker is Bond-like, or, more accurately, has been conscripted by the discourse of

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[144] The passage from which this quote is taken is quite illuminating; from Mazzetti's *Way of the Knife:* "The CIA's closed society has fundamentally changed, and a generation of CIA officers is now socialized in war. Just as a generation earlier Ross Newland and his training class had been told that the spy agency should eschew killing at all costs, many CIA officers who joined the agency since September 11, 2001, have experienced *only* man hunting and killing. This new generation has felt more of the adrenaline rush of being at the front lines than the patient, "gentle" work of intelligence gathering and espionage. The latter can be tedious, even boring, and as one former top CIA officer put it, 'How are you going to keep these people on the farm now that they've seen the bright lights of the city?'" (318).

drone masculinity, all the more powerful. The bureaucratic shell game of sheep-dipping

encourages the CIA to think of its personnel as tools for particular assignments instead of human

agents embedded in intelligence networks and dependent on the good will of locals for their

safety. The attitude of "Navy Seals for this, drone operators for that, analysts to support the Seals

and drones" treats the intelligence agent as disposable and replaceable, only granting them

latitude to improvise when that improvisation also conforms to a drone masculinity cultural

formation. While the "ours is but to do or die" mentality is not new to the military, its application

in intelligence represents a significant evolution in institutional logic. That application has had

severe repercussions as drone masculinity has fostered the expanded reach of covert military

operations under the bureaucratic cover of intelligence activities and has influenced both the

public and institutional conceptions of what intelligence work is "supposed" to be. Targeted

assassination programs, once rejected by the intelligence community during the late years of

World War Two as more trouble than they were worth, seem more than ever to accord with what

the public expects its spy agencies to do (Mazzetti 45). In fact, assassinations, despite by

definition removing possible sources of human intelligence, have paradoxically increased the

public's confidence in the CIA's ability to gather and analyze intelligence. As Mark Mazzetti

reports, according to one public poll from the middle of Obama's presidency, "69% of

respondents expressed confidence that American spy agencies had accurate information about

what was happening inside Iran and North Korea," a number nearly 20% higher than the answer

to the same question in the middle of the Bush years (315)[145]. When the public believes in the

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[145] This discrepancy possibly also reflects the heavy (and clearly warranted) skepticism about
Bush's CIA following the weapons-of-mass-destruction debacle in Iraq, but the improvement
also seemingly ignores the widely-reported fact that the CIA did not know that Kim Jong Il had
died until weeks later, after North Korean television reported it (Mazzetti 315).

mythic effectiveness of its spy agencies, it becomes easy for those agencies to retreat further into

protective shadows of bureaucratic secrecy, away from public scrutiny. This retreat into the

shadows has facilitated an intelligence world of assassination raids carried out worldwide by

sheep-dipped military personnel. Private black-site prisons are run by contractors in which

detainees (not official prisoners—another bureaucratic shell game meant to deny them the rights

of prisoners of war) are tortured for inaccurate information. Meanwhile, drones hover invisibly

over civilians, threatening them by their presence, surveillance, and, occasionally, their

"mistaken" strikes.[146]

In conclusion of this section, I'd like to begin to think about the relation between the

inculcation of a culture of drone masculinity within intelligence and Special Forces work and the

actual use of drones, or Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs). A *New York Times* op-ed entitled

"How Drones Help Al-Qaeda" highlights the dangers of embracing drone warfare for

intelligence agencies by quoting a Yemeni lawyer, who wrote: "Dear Obama, when a U.S. drone

missile kills a child in Yemen, the father will go to war with you, guaranteed" (Mothana). The

Yemeni lawyer, and the thousands protesting the increased lethal use of drone strikes over the

past decade, are reacting to a US policy which states that "in an area of known militant activity,

all military-aged males were considered to be enemy fighters. Therefore, anyone who was killed

in a drone strike there was categorized as a combatant, unless there was explicit intelligence that

posthumously proved him to be innocent" (Mazzetti 291). This policy still obscures the ability of

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[146] The Obama administration claims that 116 civilians have been killed by drones outside of war zones since the beginning of drone strikes in 2008, but the number is disputed—independent investigators believe it to be significantly higher (Whitlock). An average of several non-governmental human-rights groups figures compiled by *Foreign Policy's* Micah Zenko pegs the number at around 474 civilians in Yemen, Somalia, and Pakistan (Zenko). Civilian death totals within Afghanistan and Iraq are much more difficult to find but are liable to be higher.

journalists and watchdog groups to gather reliable information on the number of civilian

casualties caused by drones (Mazzetti 291). That drone strikes are unpopular in the regions they

unblinkingly patrol, and that their continued use can cause the same militancy and radicalization

they are meant to combat, are not news to the administration or the public in general; the recent

film *Eye in the Sky* (2015) dramatizes just such a scenario: an innocent girl is killed in a strike

meant to stop a group of suicide bombers. Yet the use of drones, a feature of the modern CIA,

only seems to be increasing. The Predator drone and its more-current models, the Reaper and

Avenger, are aptly named for their purpose: to track, target and kill quickly with the surgical

precision, it is hoped, of a jungle cat. Drone strikes are meant to be the very point of the Obama

and Trump administrations' philosophy of a war of the scalpel—small, focused, effective

operations that remove key figures in terror networks from those networks. This policy has,

according to both administrations, been a great success. Perhaps arising in part out of the Obama

administration's reluctance to continue the Bush administration's practices of capture and

interrogation,[147] drone use, along with widespread electronic surveillance, has become a go-to

strategy for waging the War on Terror, despite the extreme unpopularity of drone use within

America's ostensible allies, like Pakistan, and among a large set of Obama's constituency at

home. Oddly enough, it might be a theoretical concept from the analysis of performance art that

helps us to better understand the appeal of drones to political and military decision-makers in the

face of this unpopularity and uncertain effectiveness.[148] Art historian Jane Blocker in her essay

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[147] John Rizzo, a career CIA lawyer who had helped getting DOJ approval for CIA's torture program: "They [Obama's staff] never came out and said they would start killing people because they couldn't interrogate them, but the implication was unmistakable. Once the interrogation was gone, all that was left was the killing." (Mazzetti 219)

[148] Drones are certainly effective at killing people, but their use as a long-term strategy to end the War on Terror is heavily debated. Even former heads of the CIA acknowledge this point at the end of the Showtime documentary *The Spymasters*.

"Aestheticizing Risk in Wartime: The SLA to Iraq" uses the phrase "risk transfer" to refer to how an artist gets a reputation as a "fearless risk-taker by transferring the risk to those around him or her" (Nelson 129). Blocker's essay goes on to argue that risk transfer "also applies to the West's current method of waging war, in which bodily risk gets transferred to the populations of other, faraway countries; the costs, to future generations" (129). While Blocker does not directly consider drone warfare in the article, drones are perhaps the best representation of risk transfer as she is defining it. Drones are built to accomplish missions that are best described by one of the "3 Ds": dangerous, dirty, or dull (Singer 63). Their entire point is to remove human actors from the consequences of those missions—and here I mean consequences in the sense of physical harm, but also in the sense of moral harm and moral hazard—while continuing the U.S.'s, and perhaps more specifically in-power administration's, reputation as dangerous to its enemies. The ability to follow targets for days, learn their habits, and kill them when you choose, all from a screen thousands of miles away, is unprecedented in the history of war. The distance between actor(s) and action, and the displacement of that action onto a metal, disposable, replaceable body instead of the pilot's human one must affect the psychological and moral decision-making by the pilot, the drone support staff,[149] and the higher-ranked architects of drone missions. Drones encourage aggression because the consequences for the aggressors are only metal and the consequences for the targets are flesh. We would thus expect to see that drones are downed at a much higher rate than traditional aircraft, due to this aggressive proximity to targets and the pilot's lack of sense of personal stakes in the operation—it's not their body that suffers—and indeed this is the case (Whitlock). Drone warfare is asymmetrical in a way that has shifted the

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[149] Drone warfare is extremely decentralized, and it is usual for each drone to have half a dozen personnel responsible for different components of one mission like surveillance, research, weather, etc.

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costs and consequences of war. The idea of disposable soldiers, of humans as living weapons, has finally reached its technological perfection. Drones allow the same precision as a 00 agent with a license to kill without actually endangering the agent at all.

As we have been discussing, drone masculinity, like other masculine ideologies (and most ideologies in general) links desired behaviors to rewards. It is these inducements that invite willing participation. In drone masculinity, these inducements are heterosexual conquest, advancement within a bureaucratic system that values violence, and a monopoly on "real" manliness; contrast to the patriotic patrician-ism of pre-WWII espionage, in which the rewards were homosocial ties, advancement within an aristocratic system that valued traits like parentage, breeding, and education, and a monopoly on "real" manliness. The last term looks the same, though how those groups would define "manliness" differs considerably. The idea of drone masculinity has been tremendously effective at changing how intelligence agencies hire and train agents and what kind of operations are conceived of and carried out by those agents. But people are people, and humans are agentive, even if they are culturally conscripted to be less so. Drone masculinity is a cultural discourse, a powerful one, but not a totalizing one—it isn't brain washing, and there needs to be some willing participation on the agent's end for it to continue to function. But this participation can become far less willing when that agent faces incongruous situations, especially when asked to actually confront the Other he has been trained to see as the enemy. Combat, life overseas, working directly with local communities, and a lack of medical and psychological services at home all complicate the cultural messaging for military and intelligence personnel, and can lead to crises of conscience, stress, burnout, diminished performance, and other consequences—perhaps corroborated by the high incidence of PTSD

among Special Forces operatives and overseas intelligence workers who see combat.[150] Even the

spy genre has plenty of examples, mostly more recent, of cultural push-back against the concept;

alternative masculinities in current spy fiction are discussed in the next (and last) section of this

chapter. Remember though, even Bond "sneer[s] at his profession" sometimes. All told, it seems

that Bond-as-fantasy and the drone masculinity which that fantasy crystallized into cultural

consciousness after the Burgess and Maclean defections has proven imperfect as a mechanism of

control over those that are required to actually enact the violence. Drone warfare, in contrast,

might be the closest one gets to a pure distillation of the ideal that drone masculinity tries to

approximate, a perfection of the institutional logic that led to the embrace of drone masculinity

after Burgess and Maclean. Whereas drone masculinity tries to tie heterosexuality and violence

with a willingness to submit to a bureaucratic organization in order to guarantee agent

trustworthiness, drone piloting gets the same efficient results without needing to do so much

cultural legwork resolving the Bond paradox (i.e., how to sell to human agents the idea that

taking orders is a kind of agency). Drone operations involve dozens of people all across the

world operating simultaneously: a pilot and co-pilot on a US military base (most likely in

Nevada), an operations commander closer to the target zone, a base commander in the US, teams

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[150] A 2012 study published in the *Journal of Special Operations Medicine* found that due to their advanced training (correlated, as I would argue, with their advanced steeping in the culture of drone masculinity), Special Forces personnel are more resilient to combat-induced stress than non-SF service members, and yet even given this, PTSD rates among Special Forces operatives were twice as high as the general Army population (Hing et al). Statistics from the Department of Veteran Affairs suggest that since a peak level of PTSD among all service personnel in the first decade of the twenty-first century, the past few years have seen a decline as less troops are exposed to direct combat ("PTSD: A Growing Epidemic"). This fits with my argument above— even drone masculinity can break down when confronted with a more complicated reality than that found in a spy novel, and part of the move to more indirect, distanced military interventions such as drone warfare and (relatively) small Special Forces deployments are to diminish the psychological risks for U.S. forces in addition to the physical risks and economic concerns.

of image analysts, communications specialists, etc. Thus, drone piloting represents a fusion of

man and two separate machines: the robotic flying phallus itself and the bureaucratic machinery

of the modern-day intelligence agency. Alan Hepburn writes that the symbolic function of

gadgets in spy fiction is to act as technological prosthetics for masculine authority "by extending

it through time and space" (Hepburn 210). The drone does this in a way that Ian Fleming could

not have imagined for Q branch, but the drone pilot, the user of the "gadget", is not the one

having his masculine authority extended—the drone pilot is the prosthesis of the agency. The

machine and the mission can outlast any individual pilot (shifts are 8-12 hours long but drones

stay aloft for far longer) and, when assassination orders are issued, the pilot acts as a mere

functionary in the chain of command. Unlike, say, a jet fighter pilot, who must physically fly the

vehicle to the point of contact and then decide when to strike, drone operations are carried out

over extreme distances, over multiple days (so the pilot that positions the drone might not be the

one to launch the missile), under strict operational conditions (drone pilots do not determine

when to strike, operations command does) and pose little risk to the U.S. No one mourns for a

downed drone (except perhaps an accountant), and drone pilots in Nevada don't form

relationships with Pashtuns in Peshawar; the turn to automation and action-at-a-distance in

intelligence work, like the turn to drone masculinity before it, seeks to further remove human

agency from the world of secret agents. This is done in the name of increased safety (for the

intelligence workers, the intelligence agency, and the national interest) and increased

effectiveness, but at the cost of long-term human intelligence networks, empathy, and public

scrutiny and oversight.[151] There's an Air Force joke, repeated by P.W. Singer in his book *Wired*

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[151] Perhaps the turn to true automation in terms of using algorithms for intelligence gathering, such as the CIA's experimental KARNAK system or the NSA's data collection projects, is also

for War, which goes "UAVs [Unmanned Aerial Vehicles] are the answer, but what's the question?" (224). I think the question is something like, "How can state power be even further removed from the humanity of its enemies, citizens, and even its enforcers?" It isn't a very funny joke.

Spy Fiction, Anti-Bonds, and Alternate Masculinities

This chapter and the one before it have argued that twentieth century spy fiction has both reflected and influenced the rise of a certain cultural formation in espionage, that of drone masculinity. I have examined spy fiction's role in shaping the cultural discourse of espionage in such a way as to trace a lineage between patriarchic homosociality, drone masculinity, and drone warfare. But spy fiction, an incredibly popular genre of literature, film, TV, video games, comics, and every other media form one can imagine, does not in its multiplicity and expanse have one coherent ideological message. I would be remiss if I did not end this section of my dissertation with a look at some of the alternate masculine ideologies that spy fiction offers instead of the drone masculine model. Like Bond and drone masculinity, these examples respond to specific historical and cultural moments in intelligence and pop culture more generally. While no alternate masculinity post-World War Two has so far had the impact that the Bond-ian model has had in defining what a spy is and does, some, like John Le Carré's George Smiley, have had substantial influence in their own right, and others, like Jason Bourne or Sterling Archer,[152] show some promise at developing into full-blown cultural figures in their own right. This section examines three alternate masculinities in post-World War Two spy fiction and the characters that embody them. I begin closest to the Bond model, with Jason Bourne, in an effort to show what a

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at least partially explained by a belief within these organizations that humans are ultimately too fallible for the goals of the state.
[152]A spoof of Bond from the FX television series *Archer*.

Bond type divorced from the government licensing that makes Bond a loyal agent of the state would look like. I then examine George Smiley for the opposite case—a devoted state servant without many of the pathologies of drone masculinity. Lastly, I end this section and this chapter with a brief discussion of Victor Maskell from John Banville's *The Untouchable*, who is an example of a queer masculinity in modern espionage fiction. In Maskell, Banville creates a spy character directly at odds with the elements of the genre that have pushed seemingly relentlessly towards drone masculinity.[153]

At first glance, the Jason Bourne series by Robert Ludlum (and a series of ghostwriters) and the films adapted from that series by directors Doug Liman and Paul Greengrass starring Matt Damon as Bourne might be declared the inheritor of the Bond mantle. Timing helps with this evaluation; the first three films came out in a Bond-free pop-cultural gap between the end of the Brosnan-era Bond film and before the Daniel Craig-led period. The Bourne films also, like the Bond films of the 60s, seemed to fit the zeitgeist of espionage at the time, addressing the changing role of intelligence agencies and agents at the beginning of the War on Terror. Bourne, like Bond, is heterosexual, ex-military, and supremely skilled at both ranged and melee combat—actually even more so than depictions of Bond through Pierce Brosnan. For while, in the Brosnan Bond films especially, Bond kills a lot of people, this violence is almost cartoonish.[154] Bond either executes his foe in an ironic way, and makes a disarming quip

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[153] While I could have chosen many examples of alternate masculinities in spy fiction, I settled on these three for two reasons: 1) I liked being able to show that works conventionally slotted into "low-brow" (the Bourne franchise), "mid-brow" (Le Carré's works), and "high-brow" (Banville) can each challenge and shape genre conventions and cultural discourse; and 2) each of these three examples also helps me to clarify some points about drone masculinity that might be lingering.

[154] According to the *Economist*, the Brosnan films average around twenty kills for Bond, whereas the Dalton Bonds average five. For an examination of why the Dalton Bond is so different from the others, see Stephanie Jones's paper "Get Your Clothes on and I'll Buy You an Ice Cream:

afterward, or mows down countless nameless henchmen with preternatural ease and automatic weapons or his signature Walther PPK pistol. The cartoonishness of violence in these Bond films ostensibly keeps audience sympathies with the British superspy; PG-13-rated violence, killing without carnage, death without consideration of life before it, normalizes the use and mastery of violence by protagonists while toning down the consequences of what could, in works with different ideological goals perhaps,[155] be seen as sociopathy. The effect is to reinforce the idea of action-hero as robot, the drone man who feels no compunction over killing and is in no real danger from the consequences of violence.[156] However, the Bourne series marks a cultural shift in which that old espionage genre trope, "realism", affects the way violence itself is portrayed. As a reminder,[157] most critics follow the lead of Michael Denning and pay little attention to the vetting of the realness of "realism" in spy fiction, instead exploring the reasons authors and filmmakers employ "realistic" levels of detail in their work. Over the course of this dissertation, I am arguing for a different approach; while I think this kind of interrogation of the ideological function of "realism" in spy fiction is crucial, it is a mistake to look past the surface details of what is passing for realistic at a given cultural moment. The violence in the Bourne books and films is a good place to show how both a depth and surface reading can be productive. Like the other moves towards aesthetic "realism" in spy fiction—more attention to actual tradecraft, less cartoonish villain motivations, etc.—more "realistic" fight scenes are employed to ground the

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The Unlikely History of James Bond and the New Man." The other Bonds are all around ten kills each. The same *Economist* study showed that Daniel Craig's Bond is by far the most alcoholic, averaging 4x as many drinks per film as the next closest Bond. ("Booze, Bonks, and Bodies").

[155] As in Denis Villanueve's film *Sicario*, discussed in chapter 3.

[156] Or, put another way, it's like Hollywood still wants to replicate the thrills of 80s action icons like *Robocop* and *Terminator* without considering that those films don't portray losing humanity in exchange for efficiency in killing as a good thing.

[157] Discussed in the introduction.

story in the "real" world, that is, the world of late-capitalism and bureaucracy, a world in which

spycraft has become increasingly militarized. This increases the ideological potency of Bourne's

combat mastery, aligning it with the arch-spy fiction fantasy of individual agency cutting through

a depersonalizing world. This fantasy is an essential part of the conscripting discourse of drone

masculinity, which makes self-mechanization, quantification, and aggression in the service of the

state the necessary condition of obtaining this fantasy of agency. It remains a fantasy even in its

obtainment, because once an individual has embraced the mindset, there is an incongruity

between the cultural narratives surrounding them (which is the narrative of the hero) and their

lived experience (which is as a disposable tool of the state). This disconnect is readily visible to

the public in the difference, for example, between how veterans are revered at sporting events on

the one hand, and the horrible state of veteran health care on the other. But drone masculinity is

not the only possible discursive formation reinforced by fantasies of individual agency in spy

fiction—for example, in the Hannay novels of John Buchan, it is patriarchal homosociality that

serves as the necessary condition for the attainment of agency. So there can be alternate

possibilities, and it is in the surface details of the violence in the Bourne films that we can start to

see that Bourne is, actually, an anti-Bond, deliberately set against the drone masculinity in

intelligence. In the first book, the *Bourne Identity,* Bourne becomes sickened by the other

government assassins sent to stop him, though he himself was one. Bourne is quick to associate

the violent attitudes and willingness to kill on the part of other assassins as a kind of pathological

masculinity: in one scene, Bourne observes a CIA assassin "fondling his gun as though it were a

sexual object, cracking the breech, unable to resist peering inside. He ran his palm over the

inserted shells, the gesture obscene" (506). Bourne's own mastery of combat, in contrast, is

generally portrayed as shocking to him and to the audience, not eroticized and easy. The books

devote an excessive amount of time directly to Bourne mentally agonizing over his martial

abilities.[158] The films accomplish this angst visually. Action scenes in the Bourne films focus on

close-combat or car chases, cut in a hyper-kinetic visual style with many fast-paced edits

designed to simulate the jarring impact of blows on protagonist and combatant alike, all

reinforced by a sound mix that lets every thud, smack and muffled grunt be audible over the

backing score. Juxtaposed with this very technical depiction of violence, a depiction which can

overwhelm and disorient the audience with sensory detail (and dizziness), is the after-shot of

Matt Damon's face: an expression of pain, disgust with the situation, and fear of himself. The

technical editing highlights the visceral nature of violence, its effects on the bodies of the

combatants on-screen. The after-shot emphasizes Bourne's vulnerability and his reluctance to

fall back into patterns of violence. The juxtaposition of the two deconstructs the robotic

efficiency of the action hero—there is nothing easy about Bourne winning a fight. True, the

Bourne films, as popular entertainment, have still sought to make a spectacle out of this anti-

spectacular[159] violence, and since Bourne always wins it is still very much a fantasy of heroic

agency, but it's a non-robotic fantasy, a fantasy that regrets and bleeds.[160]

The series as a whole attempts to use more "realistic" fantasies to deconstruct the

romance of Bond-ian spy fiction and highlight the hypocrisy of intelligence agencies creating

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[158] Here's a sample three lines from a paragraph full of the same kind of rhetorical questions:
"What kind of past was it that produced the skills he had displayed in the past 24 hours? Where
had he learned to maim and cripple with lunging feet, and fingers entwined in hammers? How
did he know precisely where to deliver the blows?" (43). You're welcome that you don't have to
read more.
[159] In that it is actually quite difficult to witness as an audience member due to the editing.
[160] Bond, as you may recall from Fitzherbert's review at the end of the previous chapter, did not
bleed on screen until the 80s, and indeed any emphasis on the suffering of Bond's body did not
arise until the Daniel Craig films more consciously and thematically embraced the franchise's
latent masochism and sadism.

assassination programs. In the books, the (real-life) assassin Carlos the Jackal figures into Bourne's backstory. Here is how Carlos gets described:

> Whereas tales of his exploits give rise to images of a world filled with violence and conspiracy, high explosives and higher intrigues, fast cars and faster women, the facts would seem to indicate at least as much Adam Smith as Ian Fleming. "Carlos" is reduced to human proportions and in the compression a truly frightening man comes into focus. The sado-romantic myth turns into a brilliant, blood-soaked monster who brokers assassinations with the expertise of a market analyst, fully aware of wages, costs, distribution, and the divisions of underworld labor. (212)

This passage is a proto-typical one for spy fiction authors who want to contrast their works to the Bond series—Ludlum even directly references Fleming in the description of Carlos as a shorthand for the world of espionage. But it is in the passage's specific deconstruction of the Bond villain where we see the Bourne series' approach to espionage. Ludlum couches his villain in economic terms, arguing the rationality of the other side instead of its sheer Otherness. While not an unexpected move for someone like Le Carré to make, to find an intentional jab at the romanticization of heroes and villains in a series that relies on action and violence for its ostensible audience pleasures (instead of Le Carréan style mind-games) does make the Bourne series stand out.

As part and parcel of its de-romanticization of the Bond-ian spy story, the Bourne series is not shy about attacking the power structures and individuals in those structures that have embraced drone masculinity—and indeed, I mean literally attacking, in the sense that Bourne fights them as they try to stop him from unraveling and revealing to the public the covert

assassination program that trained him. The CIA in the Bourne universe bears a much closer

resemblance to the CIA in ours than it does to depictions of the agency in the Bond series and its

close imitators, especially in that the CIA is portrayed as both encouraging covert violent

operations and trying desperately and futilely to make sure the public does not know the full

extent of its involvement in them; or, as CIA chief Alexander Conklin puts it in the *Bourne*

Identity, "The specter of such an operation [the program that produced Bourne] wouldn't do

much for the glory of Old Glory. We don't train assassins, much less field them…And

somewhere here just happens to be an assassin we trained and fielded and now can't find" (273).

They fear that the assassin that they can't find has gone rogue, or sold his services to the enemy,

to Carlos himself. But it is worse than that for the higher-ups of Treadstone—Bourne has

abandoned the mentality of drone masculinity altogether. As he begins piecing together his past,

he calls that past self a "reproduced illusion" (377). This shows that he has come to understand

the power of the cultural conscription that led him to volunteer for the program in the first place,

but that the result of that conscription was to make him a disposable piece of someone else's

puzzle, sold on the fantasy that he could make a difference as a tool of the CIA.[161]

Despite the "realism" of the series relative to Bond, the Bourne series is still very much

doing some ideological fantasizing. The fantasy of Jason Bourne is the fantastic return and

triumph of liberal subjectivity in the military-industrial complex. He is a have-your-cake-and-

eat-it-too superhero for fans of action films who have grown queasy at the right-wing

mythologizing that suffuses the genre. Bourne achieves this precisely because the plot and

characterization of his stories, especially the movies but in the books as well, posit him as a

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[161] Bourne is, operationally, a failure. His mission in the books is to stop Carlos, which he does
not accomplish. In the films, he is a more generic assassin, and has a crisis of conscience when
ordered to execute a man in front of his son.

reformed conscript of drone masculinity, still possessing all the skills but aimed now at the shadowy world that created him instead of a foreign Other. That this reformation occurs because of trauma-induced amnesia speaks to how difficult the conscription of drone masculinity is to throw off. Bourne's bosses believe him to be a thing, a "$30 million dollar malfunctioning weapon" according to Conklin (portrayed by Chris Cooper) in the film of the *Bourne Identity* (Liman), a weapon that is "beyond salvage" as Conklin remarks in the book (Ludlum 366). Nevertheless, Bourne has forgotten the machine to regain the man—his eyes even change from "steel gray" to innocent blue when he is fished, amnesiac, out of the water at the beginning of the first book (Ludlum 11). Bourne's overarching quest is to find a self underneath the training, skills, and violence of his past—a past that he realizes he need not know the totality of in order to make a future for himself; as he says, he only has to know "enough to make a decision…but maybe not everything. A part of me has to be able to walk away, disappear. I have to be able to say to myself, what was isn't any longer, and there's a possibility that it *never* was because I have no memory of it. What a person can't remember didn't exist…for him" (181). Bourne wants amnesia to be absolution in this quote from early on in the novel, but over the course of the book he realizes this is impossible. And as he comes to realize that he will still have to answer for his past, he grows more determined to set himself against the organizations—the CIA, Treadstone, Blackbriar—that made him what he was. Bourne's resolution to do this is the end result of his quest to recover a de-mechanized, personal self. This recovery project is shown as intimately linked to his relationship with Marie St. Jacques, the only love-interest in the Ludlum Bourne books (a clear contrast with the serialization of women in Bond). Though she has more characterization than any single female in the Bond stories, Marie as a character still gets used to

make a symbolic[162] point by Ludlum, but for a very different purpose than Fleming's use of women as proofs of Bond's trustworthiness as a secret agent. Marie represents the attractiveness for Bourne of a heteronormative masculinity rooted in staid bourgeois respectability instead of violence and conquest, thereby inverting the traditional "bored man finds fulfillment in action" narrative structure of the adventure tale and its spy fiction counterparts. Bourne wants to be bored, wants to be left alone in contemplation of his guilt in crimes he can't quite remember. If Bourne has become a cultural symbol of espionage approaching Bond in popularity, he has done so by shedding the bureaucracy, sidekicks, organizational backing, gadgets, weapons, women, cars, luxury, food, gambling, tuxedos, and exotic locales of his British counterpart. Bourne is Bond on Walden Pond, an anti-Bond, an individual who in the text is both ensnared in and fighting the drone masculinity that at one time created him.

The question is whether culturally Bourne is enough of an anti-Bond to shift the public discourse about espionage in any meaningful sense. The character is popular and recognizable, but has probably not reached the cultural status that Bond has, let alone what he had in the 60s, the peak decade of "Bondmania"[163] and the height of Bond's impact in pop culture and the beginning of his influence on espionage itself. Unlike Bond, whose changing actors lend to the logic of replace-ability essential to drone masculinity, Bourne is attached to one actor, Matt Damon, and Damon's star power may fuel the film franchise's success more than attachment to the character, the trappings of a Bourne story, the themes, etc. Notably, the one Bourne film, the

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[162] Use of women as symbols instead of subjects being a depressingly common trope in masculine-focused genres. However this is changing a little, as mentioned in chapter 4.
[163] See Allan Burton's "Jumping on the Bondwagon: The Spy Cycle in British Cinema in the 1960s and 1970s" and Edward Biddulph's "Bond Girls, Bondmania and Bondsmanship: James Bond's Impact on the English Language" for a good introduction on the pop cultural obsession with Bond in the 60s.

Bourne Legacy, that has been released without Damon was not nearly as successful as the four films with him, nor did that film even try to recast Bourne—it starred Jeremy Renner as another former Treadstone-trained assassin turning against the CIA. The other hesitancy I have before anointing Bourne as the "Bond-buster" is the question of violence. As I have argued above, I think the violence in the Bourne books and films is pointedly different than in Bond. The violence is partially decoupled from heteronormative masculinity, which is proved instead by a monogamous, loving relationship with Marie. Additionally, as the quote cited above detailing an assassin's love of his gun indicates, any hint of sexuality in violence, not just homosexuality as in the Bond stories, is portrayed as pathological. The violence in the later series is also quite distinct from the robotic invincibility, cartoon-like violence in the Bond films pre-Daniel Craig. But, just the same, Bourne still solves his problems with killing. This killing may be done unwillingly and reluctantly, it may be in self-defense, it may be a close call each time, with each fight taking a little more out of an increasingly broken man, but it is still killing. I worry that the Bourne series does less to dismantle the cultural associations between espionage and violence than the protagonist of the series might like. And without dismantling the cultural associations first, the institutional ethos that has redefined spy work as violent covert action, carried out by pre-amnesiac Jason Bournes steeped in drone masculinity, will be impossible to change.

John Le Carré's oeuvre is an extended examination of the health and purpose of Britain's, and later the West's more broadly, intelligence community from an author who was at one point a part of it. As such, his Smiley trilogy (*Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*; *The Honourable Schoolboy; and Smiley's People)* written throughout the 1970s are thematically tied to the changes in intelligence work occurring over that period, especially the end of the era of homosocial "gentlemanly" masculinity and the rise of Bond's hyper-violence and hyper-heterosexuality.

Tinker, Tailor is especially useful to examine as a response to the rise of Bond and the end of

Richard Hannay because, with a characteristic ambivalence, Le Carré both mourns the direction

in which the intelligence world is headed while plotting a novel that is frank about the dangers of

the old boys' club as a sacrosanct marker of worth or virtue.

   The plot is a mole hunt: forcibly retired spy George Smiley is approached by members

of Parliament to root out a highly-placed Soviet agent in "the Circus," Le Carré's term for MI6.

The traitor, Bill Haydon, is directly compared with T.E. Lawrence, with a great helping of Philby

and some of Burgess for good measure:

> [Bill] was of that pre-war set that seemed to have vanished for good, which
>
> managed to be disreputable and high-minded at the same time. His father was a
>
> high court judge, two of his several beautiful sisters had married into the
>
> aristocracy; at Oxford he favoured the unfashionable right instead of the
>
> fashionable left[164], but never to the point of strain. From his late teens he had been
>
> a keen explorer and amateur painter of brave, if over-ambitious, stamp…He had
>
> connections in every embassy and consulate across the Middle East and he used
>
> them ruthlessly. He took up remote languages with ease…He was ubiquitous and
>
> charming; he was unorthodox and occasionally outrageous. He was probably
>
> heroic. The comparison with Lawrence was inevitable. (161)

Haydon is also queer, having various lovers both male and female and strongly intimated to have

had a relationship with an agent he "burned" (and his eventual killer) Jim Prideaux, though when

MI5 and the CIA in the 1950s requested MI6 to interrogate Haydon and Prideaux, their public

school connections cover up the true nature of their relationship (274). Haydon is

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[164] As Burgess was instructed to do by his Soviet handlers as a cover

paradigmatically the untrustworthy, "leaky" agent against which Bond is a reaction—and, unlike most of the intelligence workers and government employees fired or forced out in the 1950s, he *is* actually a Soviet spy hiding behind the shield of gentlemanly masculine power. If the uncovering and removal of Haydon were the only thematic thrust of the novel, then it would fit quite nicely in the post-Bond revolution. But of course, Haydon's betrayal, while it may move the plot of *Tinker, Tailor*, is secondary to Smiley's investigation not only of the actions of the betrayal, but also of the pieces that informed it, from world-systems to interpersonal relations, governments to public schools, and ideological ideals and personal foibles.

Smiley is well-positioned to reflect on the mid-century changes in intelligence work he experiences throughout the novel because, like Bill Haydon, his career has lasted long enough to see that the kind of spy he is has been demoted from the ideal to the obsolete. The new world of espionage that we see in *Tinker, Tailor* is a world in which drone masculinity is replacing gentlemanly homosociality, and bureaucrats like Percy Alleline, who can only speak in banter, have seized (C)ontrol[165] from the aristocratic old guard (187). Alleline's bureaucracy is making the shift to the kind of worship of efficiency that has made covert action so seductive, and while, in the 1970s, the intelligence world is still only in transition to this ethos, one can already see how the over-reliance on technology, especially satellite surveillance instead of human networks, and the prioritization of immediate results will lead to an intelligence apparatus that forgets to gather and cultivate human intelligence. This is shown in the novel in the Circus's dismissal of people like Smiley (at least initially), Connie Sacks and Jerry Westerby, whose value lies in the characteristics they share with the talented amateur of an earlier generation of spy fiction: dedication, obsessiveness, and passion in the pursuit of the answer that will unravel the grand

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[165] The former head of the Circus before Alleline was codenamed Control.

conspiracy. Smiley, as the primary viewpoint character, offers a stark contrast to James Bond. Smiley shudders at the idea of the scalp-hunters, covert operations specialists who have increasingly focused on kidnappings, assassinations, and the other less cerebral aspects of espionage work. He views agents like Ricky Tarr, who revels in the Bond-like aspects of the job—the danger, the women, the exotic/erotic tourism—as childish and immature. Smiley is a man of reflection instead of covert action,[166] but he isn't like Alleline either; Smiley is aligned with neither violent covert action nor the bureaucratic cult of technocracy and efficiency, making him an outsider within the new paradigm of intelligence work unfolding around him. Smiley becomes a lens[167] for the reader to view intelligence work and the ambivalent nature Le Carré assigns to it. *Tinker, Tailor* is not simply the complaint of someone who feels intelligence is moving in the wrong direction, that it was better in the old days. To Le Carré, what hasn't become outright worse about intelligence work is actually exposed as never very great to begin with. Control, the previous head of the Circus and Smiley's mentor, is paranoid and cruel, willing to sacrifice Jim Prideaux to catch the mole he is convinced is in MI6. The public school system, the traditional breeding ground of British intelligence workers, is where Prideaux is sent as a forced retirement after his near fatal injury—a spy's graveyard instead of cradle. Smiley may not be a fan of the Circus's new methods, but his old ones (reverse interrogation, building rapport, forming networks behind enemy lines, gathering human contacts) are revealed to be predicated on an ideological position—that the West is worth fighting for/deserves to "win"—

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[166] The 2012 film version of *Tinker, Tailor* has a great scene demonstrating this to the audience, in which several characters are riding in a car when a fly buzzes in; other characters swat and miss at the fly, agitating it further, while Smiley patiently observes its flight pattern, and then when it is close to a window, simply rolls the window down, sucking the fly out.
[167] That Smiley's glasses have become an iconic symbol of the character reinforces the "seeing/being seen" nature of his role in Le Carré's fiction, as discussed in Ch. 1.

that Smiley does not even believe in, and thus these methods prove to be ineffective when confronted with either true believers or people equally as cynical as Smiley.

Smiley's ideological cracks show when he interrogates his nemesis Karla, who is either very much the believer or the arch-cynic (the text allows the reader to project his or her own answer, much like Smiley does). Smiley's interrogation of Karla soon becomes an interrogation of his own blindspots and weaknesses as a spy. After he decides not to "make speeches to [Karla] about freedom—whatever that means—or the essential goodwill of the West" since "they were not favourable days for selling that story, and I was in no clear ideological state myself" (215), Smiley decides to take "the line of kinship," and approach Karla as if they were the same:

> I had asked myself—lazily, no doubt—what would a man think of in such a situation, what would I? And my mind came up with a subjective answer: his woman…I exchanged my predicament for his, that is the point, and as I now realise I began to conduct an interrogation with myself…There were certain externals, it is true, to which I pinned the approach. He *looked* connubial; he *looked* like half a union; he *looked* too complete to be alone in all his life. Then there was his passport, describing Gerstmann [Karla] as married; and it is a habit in all of us to make our cover stories, our assumed personae, at least parallel with the reality…The more identities a man has, the more they express the person they conceal. The fifty-year-old who knocks five years off his age. The married man who calls himself a bachelor; the fatherless man who gives himself two children…Or the interrogator who projects himself into the life of a man who does not speak. Few men can resist expressing their appetites when they are making a fantasy about themselves. (219)

Smiley's reflection is meant to be read as a micro-examination of the intelligence world itself, as the speech moralizes that making a fantasy about itself has been the primary job of the intelligence community since at least World War Two. Smiley is disturbed by the possibility that the differences between West and East in the Cold War are not so different, and that he and Karla are alike. Most of all, Smiley worries here that espionage isn't even very political; or, rather, it makes the political very personal. Nor is this the only moment in the novel in which this concern is visible: Guillam feels "orphaned" when he finds out Haydon is a traitor (358); Smiley knows that Bill's affair with Smiley's wife Ann is the root of his distrust of him (164); Smiley's resolution of the case is tied both metaphorically (through a dream) and at the conclusion of the plot to a reunion with Ann (276); Jim Prideaux blows the initial operation to catch the mole by warning Haydon out of love (374); Haydon's final screed against the West stems, in Connie Sack's opinion, from a personal sense that the British empire had betrayed him by "retreating" from the world stage via decolonization and the American surge (a feeling which Smiley shares) (367, 356). Michael Denning argues that part of the function of espionage thrillers is to make "the spy the link between the actions of the individual…and the world historical fate of nations and empires" through devices like apparent realism and unity of character in order to restore a sense of agency "to a world which seems less and less the product of human action," (14). *Tinker, Tailor* plays with the nature of that link, and questions whether or not the modern (at the time, the 1970s) intelligence agent can have a sense of agency within the de-personalizing and bureaucratic world of espionage.

At first glance, the personalization of the political in *Tinker, Tailor* does not leave Smiley with a sense of agency restored or a feeling that the work he does is useful or meaningful:

Like an actor, he had a sense of approaching anti-climax before the curtain went

up, a sense of great things dwindling to a small, mean end; as death itself seemed

small and mean to him after the struggles of his life. He had no sense of conquest

that he knew of. His thoughts, as often when he was afraid, concerned people. He

had no theories or judgments in particular. He simply wondered how everyone

would be affected; and he felt responsible…He thought about treason and

wondered if there was mindless treason in the same way, supposedly, as there was

mindless violence. It worried him that he felt so bankrupt; that whatever

intellectual or philosophical precepts he clung to broke down entirely now that he

was faced with the human situation.

Smiley is an "actor" not on the world stage but in a psychodrama, wherein even treason can be

mindless, and motivations to act are empty and bankrupt in the face of people suffering.[168]

Smiley's final assessment of himself at the moment just before he apprehends Haydon is a

portrait of another type of anti-Bond than Jason Bourne. Bourne was an individual turning drone

masculinity against the state to guarantee his individuality, but Smiley is a state servant who can

only succeed because he has not been conscripted into drone masculinity. Smiley does not share

Bond's athleticism, violence, sexual prowess, belief in British or Western superiority, or even

professional status (as he has been fired from MI6). He is "a fat, barefooted spy, as Ann would

say, deceived in love and impotent in hate, clutching a gun in one hand, a bit of string in the

other, as he waited in the darkness," (357). Smiley feels—and increasingly is—out of place in a

post-Bond world. However, waiting barefoot in the dark, he has maneuvered himself to be in

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[168] Though "people" definitely only refers to people Smiley knows, i.e. individuals, rather than
people in the abstract or even specific groups.

place to catch Haydon. Le Carré knows that Smiley is outdated, but can't shake the feeling that he is more needed than ever. Smiley doubts everyone's, including his own, motivations, feels morally and emotionally bankrupt, and moves like a piece in a deterministic machine that began clicking at the end of World War Two and has placed Smiley and Haydon in a dark room in a safe house as a matter of inevitability; but of course Smiley is good at his job, has the right temperament for it (as opposed to Alleline, Tarr, or Haydon), and despite, or perhaps because of, his deep skepticism about espionage he finds himself drawn back into the Circus as a watchdog in several novels until his final retirement in 1990s *The Secret Pilgrim*. Smiley is Le Carré's perfected version of the gentleman spy, written as a reaction against the Bond type and the fantasization in espionage work that accompanied him, but at the same time the text responds to the criticisms Fleming and Bond raise for the inter-war secret agent. To Le Carré, Hannay's amateurism, jingoistic enthusiasm, and plucky optimism are inappropriate in a post-war world, so Smiley is professional, skeptical, and dour—but, because of his surface unremarkability, is even more an everyman than Hannay. Lawrence's flamboyance, success, and self-mythologizing are suspect, so Smiley is straightlaced (and straight), middling, and quiet—but is the only one who can catch Haydon. Bond's violence, aggressive heterosexuality, and fantastic adventures are a strange kind of wish-fulfillment, so Smiley is cerebral and a cuckold, and is surrounded by petty politics and petty people—but is still a gentleman in breeding and action, one of "Us," a Cold Warrior to the core. Le Carré wants espionage to be petty instead of grandly fantastical like the Bond books and movies, because pettiness is human, and thinking any ideological, political, or bureaucratic system is more important than humanity is the wrong conclusion to make in Le

Carré's works—it's Bill Haydon instead of Smiley.[169] Thus, the author and his most famous

character come to opposite conclusions; Smiley questions how much of a difference an

individual human can make in an age of bankrupt ideologies, but through the process of that

questioning Le Carré insists that human considerations should be at the heart of the intelligence

community.

Le Carré is committed to making the point that intelligence services, failing to thoroughly

question themselves and falling into the trap of drone masculinity, are morally compromised

institutions. But because of this ideological commitment by his author, Smiley's world is a dour

and cynical one, filled with deep tragedies and only half successes. The play and pleasure of the

adventure genre has been drained out of Smiley's Circus—for good reason, to be sure.

Portraying MI6, or any intelligence agency, cavalierly can very easily come off as

propagandistic, such as in the novels of Tom Clancy or in properties like *The Man from

U.N.C.L.E*. Nevertheless, the austerity and coldness of the spy world in Le Carré champions a

kind of detached, stoic, cynical masculinity, a masculinity without Bond's swagger, and with

considerably more individualism and contempt for bureaucracy than what Bond feigns at, but

still a masculinity of "tough men making tough decisions." To the extent that Le Carré is

formulaic, he is formulaic in replicating protagonists with this mindset (or who start out naïve

and come to this mindset); Alec Leamas from *The Spy Who Came in From the Cold,* Smiley,

Gunther Bachmann from *A Most Wanted Man*, and Jonathan Pine from *The Night Manager* are

examples I discuss throughout the dissertation, and yet they are not close to an exhaustive list.

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[169] Ironically given Le Carré's liberalism, it's a rather conservative conclusion—one that
manages not to remove the need for intelligence agencies altogether because they are features of
a corrupted system, as in Ambler, but also one that dismisses targeted movements as "just
politics" and disconnected from the "real truth" of the world, which is found in individuals.

But spy fiction, often slotted into "adventure" or "realist" categories, has occasionally offered

more choices for masculine attitudes than cavalier or cynic. John Banville's *The Untouchable*

(1997) reflects back (though from a further distance) on the same period[170] as *Tinker, Tailor* and

similarly critiques the turn towards drone masculinity within intelligence that arose within the

Cold War era. But it also responds to the genre of spy fiction itself, and questions the role the

genre has had in perpetuating toxic masculine discourses. A fictionalized account of Cambridge

Spy Anthony Blunt, *The Untouchable,* in critic Alan Hepburn's words, "offers a critique of

joyless heterosexuality in espionage narratives," through its main character, Victor Maskell, a

version of "the queer pleasure-seeking spy," (208). Maskell's outsider status, his inability to

"take seriously the self-deluding, school-brigade, boys-with-men's-mustaches world of military

intelligence" certainly acts as a foil to that institution and its obsession with heterosexual

masculinity (Banville 73). Maskell, a double-agent like Blunt, makes sport of the relationship

between espionage work, homosexuality, and heterosexuality by specializing in and running

homosexual honey-trap[171] operations for the Brits—thus making the disavowed relationship

(even more) integral to the functioning of British intelligence. Maskell is plainly delighted by

being doubly subversive (as a Communist spy and as a homosexual), drawing analogies between

the two frequently, and even, channeling Lavender Scare rhetoric, describes how the one career

prepared him for the other: "When I began to go in search of men it was all already familiar to

me: the covert, speculative glance, the underhand sign, the blank exchange of passwords, the

hurried, hot unburdening—all, all familiar" (287). Of course, that Communism comes first for

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[170] The late 30s-Philby's defection.

[171] The honey-trap is a common blackmailing scheme (generally, though they have been used for assassinations and theft) in which a target is seduced by an agent or someone working for an agent, and the affair is then used as leverage over the target.

Maskell, and then homosexuality, is also a joke on how seriously government officials took the potential threat of gays in the State department. As Hepburn writes, "Maskell's homosexuality [is] a ruse, not in the sense that he withholds it, but in the sense that it does not explain his personality or actions," (224). Maskell was an aesthete first, then a Communist, then a British spy, then a Communist spy, then both, then a homosexual. The chronology upsets the causal link between the Wildean-type and treason that mid-century panic rhetoric depended on, and, as Sinfield, MacFarlane, and Sedgwick have outlined, has been a feature of responses to queer identity in mass culture for much longer.

Alan Hepburn reads the sensual, aesthete, homosexual Maskell as a direct commentary on what he terms the "masculine orthodoxy of antipleasure" that he sees as characteristic of espionage novels post-Bond (207). Bond is illustrative of this concept. As I have argued above, the emphasis on Bond's sexuality in the novels is not about emphasizing the pleasure of sexual encounters.[172].Bond's sexuality serves as a cultural marker of his trustworthiness, a vouchsafe that the public is right to trust him and the institution he represents with the agency of the secret agent, that is, the agency to act in secret, outside of the public knowledge, for the good of the nation-state. Spy fiction, like Le Carré's, that jettison the actual sex from their narratives keep the idea that sexuality itself is illustrative as a character trait, and can signal trustworthiness or treason (like it does with Haydon in *Tinker, Tailor).* Banville's Maskell—and even more obviously, Boy, who was based on Guy Burgess—are characters in an espionage novel that do not conform to that model. Their sexuality is not a vouchsafe; it is sexuality (and thus can be

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[172] Sexual pleasure is a reward in Bond fiction: the "passionate leave" with Domino Solitaire in *Live and Let Die*, the penetration of Vesper's secret in *Casino Royale*, and even the turning of Pussy Galore from villain/lesbian into heroine/heterosexual are all things Bond "earns" in the course of doing his job as a secret agent (*A James Bond Omnibus* 243).

pleasurable), and though they are not actually very trustworthy in a political sense (at least not to

Britain) Banville takes pains to separate any causal relationship between one's sexuality and the

ability to act as a spy.[173] In fact, the novel's, or at least Maskell's, take on trying to police or

proscribe specific qualities, including agent sexuality, among espionage agents might actually

reduce the effectiveness of spy services, which need agents who can be fluid in their identities to

be successful. Maskell anticipates the turn from aristocratic homosociality to drone masculinity

in hiring practices, remarking that "the Americans, who now hold power, were demanding that

professionals be put in charge, company men like themselves, whom they could bully and

coerce, not mavericks like Boy or…me," (313). The word "mavericks" in the quote indicates that

Maskell, though homosexual, still aligns himself with a kind of masculine agency. This agency,

ironically, is proven (to Maskell) by his decision to spy for the Soviet Union; he, unlike Bond

and other "company men", actually have the agency to make that kind of radical choice. It isn't

the licensed agency that Bond possesses, but it reads as much more agential, responsive,

individual—in short, more like the gentleman spy of spy fiction before Bond.

Despite the attention paid to the concept, I think *The Untouchable* critiques more than the

relationship between modern-day espionage novels, masculine antipleasure, and the genesis of

the link between the two in the cultural connection between homosexuality and treason made

visible by the Cambridge Spies. The novel goes further in its examination of identity and

characterization then Hepburn supposes. For one, Boy, the Burgess character, does gleefully

participate in the cultural trappings and the historical lineage of the orthodoxy of espionage

fiction, and while his cavalier attitude is undoubtedly a partial subversion given his true

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[173] The novel also contains a Philby character as well, who is "depressingly" straight and the master-double agent (Banville 271).

allegiance, there is no reason to doubt Maskell's assessment that Boy "adored the trappings of

the secret world, the code names and letter-drops and the rest. Brought up on Buchan and Henty,

he saw his life in the lurid terms of an old-fashioned thriller and himself dashing through the

preposterous plot heedless of all perils" (116). Espionage is still for Boy, as it was for Hannay, a

place of play, a field in which one can pick up and put down identities to advance the game. One

characteristic of spy fiction, especially those texts that deal with cover identities, double agents,

and the like, is the tease that both the job of being a spy and identity itself are performative

instead of innate. Take for example, Eric Ambler's *Epitaph for a Spy,* in which the protagonist

must track down a German spy staying at a resort hotel in the south of France in order to save his

own skin, as he has, due to a coincidence, been arrested for espionage. Every character except

the protagonist[174] is ultimately revealed to be playing a part: the high status military major and

his wife are broke and involved in shady dealings and scams, the American brother and sister are

eloping cousins, the most suspect guest is an escapee from Nazi-occupied territory and the shifty

innkeeper is actually the member of the underground helping him, and the sweet elderly couple

are Gestapo agents there to track the refugee down. The actual spy is revealed just to be doing it

for the money (the eponymous epitaph) rather than any deep-seated ideology. Identities are roles

these characters play, though Ambler does seem to skew closer to the "don't judge by

appearances/things aren't what they seem" moral rather than making a statement that *all*

identities are *all* performative. This is the same logic behind Haydon's character in *Tinker,*

Tailor: Haydon proves that one's identity as a gentleman does not rule him out as a traitor. The

principal conflict in *The Untouchable* though is not "will Maskell be found out?", as it is in

Tinker, Tailor, since the reader knows from the beginning that he already has been. Rather, it is

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[174] A missed opportunity in my opinion.

this very question of the possibility of an innate quality to identity. Maskell wants there to be such an innateness. At various times he presents sensation, guilt, Communism, and art as enduring qualities of the human experience, experiences that are themselves not dependent on a performance to have action and agency in the world. He describes himself and his fellow Cambridge spies as "latter-day Gnostics, keepers of a secret knowledge, for whom the world of appearances was only a gross manifestation of an infinitely subtler, more real reality known only to the chosen few, but the iron, ineluctable laws of which were everywhere at work" (45). However, this "more real reality" is troubled by how easily the categories that Maskell assumes are fixed melt into one another, are abandoned, or are revealed to be an act: sexuality gets analogized to playing the role of an ideological double agent and vice-versa; Nick, the Philby character, betrays Maskell to save his own reputation; Maskell's prized painting the *Death of Seneca* might be a fake; the novel's final scene has Maskell looking for shapes in the clouds, attempting to impose an order on a visual field that is highly subjective.

The Untouchable suggests that the spy himself is in a state of tension between the fear of all identity being absolute performance, on the one hand, and the necessity of adopting a convincing cover identity and remaining undetected, on the other. Maskell reflects upon the dual attraction and terror of being a spy: "Attraction, because in the midst of such uncertainty you are never required *to be yourself*; whatever you do, there is another, alternative you standing invisibly to one side, observing, evaluating, remembering" but also "fear…of the possibility that nothing, absolutely nothing, is as it seems," (131). This state of tension calls into question the very mechanism by which drone masculinity was presumed to guarantee agent trustworthiness, by suggesting that even these "trustworthy" traits—heterosexuality, aggression, professionalism, a certain set of anti-elitist attitudes—might be equally as performative as Kim Philby's

aristocratic stammer. If, as *The Untouchable* suggests, in the spy world (and perhaps the world at large), no personality characteristic or specific attitude can be read as actually saying something meaningful about the person demonstrating it—that any trait shown cannot exclude the possibility that the person being evaluated is in fact a very good double agent—then there is no point in seeking out specific "types" of people for spy work, and no point in prioritizing for ideological reasons one version of masculinity over another.

This is a crucial lesson to learn; without an ideological justification (i.e. that it guarantees loyalty and effectiveness) to back it, drone masculinity can be evaluated on its evidence of success. Intelligence officials might point to the high-profile killings of terrorist leaders, most notably Osama bin Laden, as proof of the usefulness of drone masculinity as an organizing principle for covert action agents. However, due to the spectacular nature of these successes and the secrecy of espionage agencies, it can be difficult for the public to focus on the numerous failures of modern intelligence agencies. Drone masculinity prevents the formation of human intelligence networks and the recruitment of human assets in sensitive positions. As a result, intelligence agencies have embarrassingly little knowledge of the inner workings of their traditional targets: terror groups, states like North Korea, Iran, and Russia, multinational corporations or international criminal syndicates. Critics of drone masculinity, many of which I have quoted throughout this chapter, point out that the covert-action, anti-intellectual but pro-technical ethos of modern espionage has resulted in an apparatus that, in the words of an anonymous Naval intelligence officer, "shoot[s] a whole lot better than we aim" (qtd. in Diamond 322). Shooting without aiming, or, in other words, carrying out targeted intelligence operations without gathering enough systemic and environmental intelligence first, has further destabilized the globe, creating power vacuums from which new dictatorial and authoritarian

regimes and new terror groups like ISIS have sprung. Without human intelligence to rely on, the

US's intelligence apparatus has constructed the largest and most comprehensive Signals

Intelligence in the world, a system that electronically surveilled every email, cell phone, and

social media post, regardless of the legality of that surveillance, let alone its morality. As drone

masculinity has gained in prominence in cultural representations of intelligence and within the

intelligence community itself, it has spread to other areas of civil society, most notably manifest

in the militarization of U.S. police forces. According to a leaked 120-page catalogue[175] from a

British defense firm specializing in intelligence and Special Forces gear, American police forces

are buying technology designed to illegally intercept and record cell phone conversations, record

numbers of automatic weapons and tactical armor, surplussed military vehicles, and millions of

dollars more of technology designed to facilitate drone masculinity rather than community-based

policing (Biddle). For these reasons, as well as others I have already mentioned, such as the use

of torture by intelligence agents, the victimization of hundreds of innocents via drone strikes, the

higher rates of PTSD among Special Forces personnel, and the Bond-ian attitude that sexually

assaulting a woman is getting what is "owed" for service to the state, we desperately need

another change in the cultural discourse of espionage akin to the one that excised gentlemanly

homosociality from it. This other change needs to sever drone masculinity entirely from the

cultural expectations of what spy work is and who intelligence agents are.

Such a cultural untangling is a difficult task, but, as I have argued in the past two

chapters, it has been done before, and the cultural shift can affect the institutional practice (and

vice versa). I believe that we can create, perhaps even in spy fiction itself (as Bourne, Smiley,

and Maskell show), both alternate masculinities and alternatives to masculinities, the adoption of

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[175] Obtained by the website *The Intercept*.

which might even be affecting Bond himself. Daniel Craig's Bond films update much of the franchise, including, perhaps, some playing with the linking between Bond's heterosexuality and his loyalty—the first foundation of drone masculinity. The scene in which Bond meets the villainous Silva from 2012's *Skyfall* is one such example. Bond has been captured and tied to a chair in Silva's abandoned and dilapidated island town. In one continuous take, Silva descends an elevator into the room and walks towards Bond, telling him a story about his grandmother's efforts to eliminate the rats plaguing her by getting them to eat each other. The story is meant to undermine Bond's faith in the head of MI6, M (played by Judi Dench), as Silva wishes Bond to see himself and Silva as rats M has set to metaphorically "eat" each other. Bond doesn't seem fazed, so Silva moves closer to the captured superspy and begins to get more…intimate:

S: Just look at you. Barely held together by your pills, your drink…

B: Don't forget my pathetic love of country

S: [laughs] You are still clinging to your faith in that old woman [M] when all she does is lie to you.

B: She's never lied to me.

S: [Reveals in detail that M has lied to Bond about his fitness for this mission—he did not pass the fitness tests required of him after his gunshot wound earlier in the film]

S: What is this if not betrayal? She sent you off to me knowing you are not ready, knowing you would likely die…Mommy was very bad…hmmm? [begins unbuttoning Bond's shirt, sees his bullet wound] See what she's done to you.

B: Well she's never tied me to a chair.

S: Her loss. [Plays with Bond's chest hair]

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B: You sure this is about M?

S: It's about her…and you…and me. You see we are the last two rats. We can either eat each other…[seductive glance, lifted eyebrow] hmm?...or eat everyone else. [Strokes Bond's cheek]. How you are trying to remember your training now! What's the regulation to cover this? Well first time for everything [caresses Bond's legs]

B: What makes you think this is my first time?

S: Oh Mr. Bond. [Draws back] The physical stuff is so dull, so dull. Chasing spies…so old fashioned. [Silva unties Bond]. Your knees must be killing you. England [scoff] empire [scoff] MI6 [scoff]…you are living in a ruin as well, you just don't know it yet.

At this point, Silva actually tries to hire Bond, tempting him with the opportunity to leave MI6 and become a rogue agent (like Silva himself had done), profiting off the chaos inherent in the wake of covert action. This scene is a bravura performance by Javier Bardem as Silva. Additionally though, I could not help but notice how this scene seems to be in conversation with the torture scene from *Casino Royale*—the movie version (which also stared Daniel Craig as Bond), but also Fleming's original version, which I analyzed in the last chapter. Like Le Chiffre in *Casino Royale*, Silva here presents a kind of homosexual threat, specifically, the threat that homosexuality will lead to treason. Silva even directly references Bond's training in how to resist this temptation—remember, Fleming has Bond reflect on this training in *Casino Royale* when he thinks to himself that it is "the supreme test of will" to avoid giving in to homoerotic identification induced by torture (*Casino Royale* 113). Silva is clear that he finds Bond's "pathetic love of country" to be shallow in the face of personal wrong, in this case, the wrong

that M has committed by turning Silva over to the Chinese (which sparked his rebellion) and then sending Bond to kill Silva despite knowing Bond would most likely die in the attempt. Silva is, like Le Chiffre, aligned with forces that scoff at England, empire, and MI6. But there is one key difference in this scene that clues us in that Craig's Bond is not Fleming's. "What makes you think this is my first time?" Bond asks Silva, a line that, given its placement as Silva is actively caressing Bond's legs, references both torture (it isn't Bond's first time being tortured) and homoerotic encounter. Of course, Bond may be bluffing—perhaps this is part of his training, to use his sardonic wit to bravura his way past desire. But we never find out. The film leaves the answer as unimportant. Given how crucially important that answer would have been to spy writers like Fleming and Buchan and heads of MI5, MI6, the FBI, the CIA, etc., that it doesn't seem to matter very much in the Daniel Craig-era films is remarkable.

Ultimately, *Skyfall* tells a very personal Bond story, one in which love of country is left aside for Bond's love of a person, his mother figure M, and Silva's desire to kill that same mother figure for her betrayal of him. Loyalty, state service, and espionage do not have their genesis in a kind of masculinity in *Skyfall,* but rather in a personal, familial relationship—at least at first. Notably, the movie's final set piece action scene takes place at Bond's family home in Scotland, where he was orphaned as a child. M dies there, orphaning him again (Bond tenderly kisses M's forehead as she dies in his arms), and the home burns down. After this trauma, Bond is next seen in a scene that homages the classic films: he flirts with Moneypenny, walks through M's office door, and receives a file from the new M, played by Ralph Fiennes. Fiennes as M asks Bond if he is ready to be a dutiful soldier and serve his country, and Bond answers "With pleasure." Craig delivers the line with no real pleasure, and the audience knows that Bond, now a man without a family and a past, feels hollow. The homage ending of *Skyfall* turns the idea of

drone masculinity around a little bit by placing the homage in the context of the intense personal trauma Bond has undergone. *Skyfall*'s plot shows the painful birth of the automaton Bond which earlier films show unreflectingly. We, the audience, are not uplifted by this transformation, just as we are not uplifted when we hear of cases like Raymond Davis's, whose story of drone masculinity gone wrong began the previous chapter. Whether or not a change in how Bond films or spy fiction more broadly represent masculinity will lead to better, more just, more transparent but not less effective intelligence agencies remains unknown. However, until we can live in a world without the need for intelligence services, such a reform is direly necessary.

Chapter 6: Drone Orientalism: A Discourse of the Other in the Culture of Intelligence

The first great theme of spy fiction is identity. The first wave of what is generally considered spy fiction—*Kim, The Riddle of the Sands, The Thirty-Nine Steps*—are novels about identities: finding one's own identity, uncovering the identity of an enemy, mistaken identities, identities as social constructs, identities as innate, or racialized or gendered.[176] Spy fiction shares with the profession it supposedly represents this concern with knowing who is who. John Buchan's *The Thirty-Nine Steps* is a book driven by the difficulty in proving identity, in holding it static and fixed in the social sphere. First, there is the slipperiness of the identity of protagonist Richard Hannay's upstairs neighbor, Scudder. Scudder is a spy, and admits as much to Hannay, and must change his appearance and fake his death because of the information he has uncovered. After "faking up the corpse" he has procured to make it seem more like him, Scudder approaches Hannay with his story and asks for help (7). Hannay lets him put on a disguise in his apartment, a process which seems to change his entire being:

> In half an hour's time a figure came out that I scarcely recognized. Only his
>
> gimlet hungry eyes were the same. He was shaved clean, his hair was parted in
>
> the middle, and he had cut his eyebrows. Further, he carried himself as if he had
>
> been drilled, and was the very model, even to the brown complexion, of some

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[176] I don't mean to imply that identity has ever gone away as a key theme in spy fiction (ask Jason Bourne), just that it was the first concern of a genre that has grown slightly more complex in the century since.

British officer who had had a long spell in India. He had a monocle, too, which he

stuck in his eye, and every trace of the American had gone out of his speech.

'My hat! Mr. Scudder—' I stammered.

'Not Mr. Scudder,' he corrected; 'Captain Theophilus Digby, of the 40th Gurkahs,

presently home on leave.' (8)

Scudder is now Digby, in appearance, habit, and past. Not that it saves him, as Hannay finds

Scudder/Digby murdered, and himself framed. The bulk of the book has Hannay on the run, a

case of mistaken identity. As discussed in Chapter 3 of this dissertation, though Hannay's social

identity is threatened by this mistaken identity, it is his white, colonial, gentlemanly background

that grants him the skills to survive his ordeal on the run in Scotland, from the ability to blend in

at a political rally to his South African "veldcraft" which allows him to trek stealthily across the

moors. Throughout the novel, Buchan plays with an identity dichotomy: on one end, identity is a

social marker, fluid, changing, threatened; on the other, identity is innate, stable, something that

can be disguised but will ultimately be revealed, will "out." Hannay's enemies are themselves

masters of disguise. The kindly archaeologist who takes Hannay in from the moor is actually the

nefarious "man who can hood his eyes like a hawk," the leader of the German spy ring who has

framed him (47). Later, the same man fools a military intelligence committee into thinking he is

the First Sea Lord of the Navy. Only Hannay can see through the disguise, and only too late—the

enemy spy walks out with the plans he had meant to steal. In the climax of the novel, Hannay,

having cleared his name, thinks he has solved the mystery of the thirty-nine steps and discovered

the German hideout. But when he surveilles the occupants, he is disheartened. He finds three

middle-class Britons, merrily playing bridge and tennis and taking tea—they look and sound

"horribly English", leaving Hannay feeling like a "precious idiot" and openly wondering, "These

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men might be acting; but if they were, where was their audience? They didn't know I was sitting thirty yards off in the rhododendron. It was simply impossible to believe that these three hearty fellows were anything but what they seemed" (80). It is only by remembering a story about his friend Peter Pienar, who once sat next to a detective who was after him in church without the fellow noticing precisely because Peter acted so plainly like he belonged there, that Hannay can summon up the courage to believe that the three men are "playing a part" (81). Nevertheless, when Hannay confronts the men and their disguises do not crack, their attitudes do not change, he almost loses heart and abandons his mission. Just then, he notices a "tell"—one of the men taps his hand on his knee like the archaeologist had done: "[I]n a flash, the air seemed to clear. Some shadow lifted from my brain, and I was looking at the three men with full and absolute recognition" (86). Hannay notices the last shred of difference visible under this disguise, what might be psychoanalytically read as a symptom, a shard of the reality of hostile intention underneath a façade of civility. The threat, ultimately, is locatable to the expert. Hannay can now, and in fact does, act on his certainty, calling in the police and getting the three spies to crack under their eminent arrest.

The emphasis on hidden difference we find in *The Thirty-Nine Steps* and early spy fiction as a whole broaches the fundamental philosophical tangle of espionage—that it is necessary, but in reality quite difficult, to tell "them" from "us." After all, if it were a simple matter to determine whether or not a person or group were an enemy, and what their nefarious plans were, then intelligence agencies would be tremendous wastes of taxpayer money. Recall that as early as the turn of the 20th century, spy agencies found justification by stressing the difficulty of discernment: William Le Queux mobilized public anxiety, caused in large part by his own suggestion that German spies were everywhere, to convince James Edward Edmonds, head of

British Military Intelligence and the House of Commons' Committee of Imperial Defence to set up a new Secret Services Bureau (Trotter 31). It's a useful line to take for a government bureaucracy seeking to expand, and as we have discussed throughout this project, espionage has been and still is a growth industry. Spy fiction such as *The Thirty-Nine Steps* or Le Queux's invasion literature played up the paranoia of the "secret German" hiding the impulse to barbarity behind a seemingly civilized face. It's really quite difficult when analyzing the first moment of popular spy fiction to determine if the genre is more entertainment or propaganda, or to distinguish where those categories are separate. Spy fiction certainly did not trouble the notion that there was a good and a bad, and that the Brits and the Germans were emblematic of those poles, respectively. If anything, spy fiction's emphasis on the cleverness and capability for disguise of the enemy increased that polarization. However, after the First World War, especially in the writing of Eric Ambler, the genre found what could be considered it's saving grace: taking the seeming ease by which one person can play as if they are another not as paranoia-fuel, but as a useful conceit for interrogating the dialectic between the Self and the Other. Spy fiction learned to question the distance between the terms in the dialectic, the ideological determinations that construct it, and the necessity of it in the realm of personal interaction and world politics. Let's take Ambler's *Journey into Fear* (1940) as exemplary of this turn in spy fiction. The novel begins with the attempted assassination of an English armaments engineer named Graham designing a defense system for the Turkish government in Istanbul. The Turkish secret police determine that it is (of course) not an accident that the Nazi regime is attempting to kill Graham in an effort to hamper British mobilization in this, the immediate build-up to WW2. Graham is secretly smuggled under an assumed name onto a steamer from Istanbul to Athens. But on the voyage, Graham cannot help himself from thinking—perhaps one of his fellow passengers is not

who he or she claims. Beset by paranoia, Graham interrogates those aboard the ship. He finds a

German anthropologist, Fritz Haller, to be a comfort. Both Graham and Haller share a (very

Modernist) sense of moral ambiguity, and they are anti-patriotic humanists in a time of political

fever. When a Serbian passenger, Josette, criticizes Graham's benefactors the Turks, calling

them "heathen animals" who have committed atrocities against the Armenians and Syrians,

Graham equivocates:

> "Does your memory go back to nineteen twelve? I was thinking of the Serbian
>
> atrocities in Turkish villages. Most armies commit what are called atrocities at
>
> some time or other. They usually call them reprisals."
>
> [Josette:] "Including the British army, perhaps?"
>
> [Graham:] "You would have to ask an Indian or Afrikaner about that. But every
>
> country has its madmen. Some countries have more than others. And when you
>
> give such men a license to kill they are not always particular about the way they
>
> kill. But I am afraid that the rest of their fellow countrymen remain human
>
> beings." (Ambler 81-82)

Graham insists upon common humanity, upon the difficulty in discerning right and wrong when

partisanship is a first consideration. He finds his echo in a conversation with Haller a few pages

later. Haller and Graham discuss the possible awkwardness of a German and Englishman eating

together under the looming shadow of war. Haller reassures Graham, saying: "Perhaps it is that I

am old, but I find it extremely difficult to identify men with their ideas. I can dislike, even hate

an idea, but the man who has it seems to be still a man," (85). Graham's "the rest of their fellow

countrymen remain human beings" and Haller's "the man who has it seems to be still a man"

ideologically rhyme. Which makes sense, as the two men are very similar: both academic, both

cautious. Over the course of the novel the two men spar over Spengel, history, and the nature of the soul. And then, surprise, Haller is actually a Nazi spy named Moeller, on board to kill Graham. The self and the other, thesis and antithesis, prove difficult to tell apart, yet nevertheless are irreconcilable to each other.

Yet, paradoxically, both spy fiction and spy work depend on the conceit that, despite a high degree of similarity or a clever disguise, what is hidden can be revealed, especially under the professional gaze. A shorthand for this belief is the representation (or assumption) that the enemy has a "tell," an irrepressible symptom of their true identity, such as the hand-tapping of the German spy in *The Thirty-Nine Steps.* Another great example of this is from the Bond novel *Diamonds Are Forever.* In the climax of the novel, Bond realizes two hired killers from the American mob are on board the same ocean-liner he is (shades of *Journey into Fear)*, but he does not know exactly what they look like because he has previously only seen them masked. However, one of the killers cannot resist sucking on a large red welt (or wart) on his hand, a gesture that clues Bond in to his real identity since he had seen the man do the same action before. The killers are red warts on society, at least within the logic of the novel, and so they are given away by this symptomatic mimesis, a physical flaw which reveals a flawed heart. From Le Chiffre to Blofeld to Oddjob and Jaws, it is quite a common conceit for Bond villains to be marked by these symbols of irreducible difference:

Figure 10: Christoph Waltz as Blofeld in 2015's *Spectre*

These physical marks are empty in and of themselves—it doesn't really matter how Blofeld got

his scar—but serve to distinguish these men (and occasionally women) as apart from the society

that must be defended by Bond. The discourse of espionage reinforces the logic that the

difference between the Self and Other is small (thus necessitating professional agencies with

wide state powers) yet obvious when the expert looks. When this logic enters into the institution

of the intelligence agency it becomes the structural belief that malfeasance does not originate

within an unreadable heart; it instead has clear markers that can be read and interpreted only by

professionals. But in reality, villains do not have diamonds embedded in their skin (Zao from *Die

Another Day*) or a condition that causes them to weep blood (Le Chiffre in *Casino Royale*).

Power's insistence that "evil" can be seen—if one knows how to spot the "right kind" of

difference—actually produces that difference as significant; in other words, the spy agency as an

organization that ought to know becomes an organization that makes the knowledge worth

knowing.

The linkage of double-agency to homosexuality discussed in previous chapters and the

fallout from that link provide one example of what can happen when the internal logic of

intelligence aligns a particular marker of identity with threat. The double-agent plot, connected

to homosexuality or not, is an elevated form of the genre's general concern with identity, agency, and ideology. From *Casino Royale* to *The Ipcress File; Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy* to the TV show *The Americans,* many of the classics of the genre depend upon not only the ambiguity and difficulty in determining who is who, but in the angst and moral wrangling inspired by that ambiguity. For example, in *Tinker, Tailor,* George Smiley's inherent identification with the Soviet double agent Bill Haydon[177] means that he cannot hate his enemy, even in the depths of the Cold War. Smiley even "takes the line of kinship" when talking to his KGB counterpart and ostensible arch-enemy, Karla, reframing the ideological conflict undergirding the confrontation between East and West, which one might fine exaggerated in more overtly nationalist works, as a personal interaction (*Tinker Tailor* 219). But the double agent plot does not exist in a vacuum, and throughout the discourse of espionage, double-agency, an ideological position, became mapped onto a homosocial and homosexual version of gentlemanly masculinity. Fiction, like Buchan's *Greenmantle* and the Bond stories, and cultural figures like T.E. Lawrence, W.H. Auden, and the Cambridge Five operated in a discursive conjunction, feeding off each other and fueling Lavender Scare fears. The rifts within intelligence agencies between intelligence-gathering and covert action became exacerbated as the CIA and MI6 attempted to shed the image that they were havens for gay Communist double agents. Ultimately, the pivot away from homosocial gentlemanly masculinity to drone masculinity has transformed how spy agents are

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[177] As discussed in Chapter 5. As a reminder, right before Smiley arrests Haydon he thinks this: "Haydon had betrayed. As a lover, a colleague, a friend; as a patriot; as a member of that inestimable body that Ann loosely called the Set: in every capacity, Haydon had overtly pursued one aim and secretly achieved its opposite. Smiley knew very well that even now he did not grasp the scope of that appalling duplicity; yet there was a part of him that rose already in Haydon's defence. Was not Bill also betrayed? Connie's lament rang in his ears: 'Poor loves. Trained to Empire, trained to rule the waves…You're the last, George, you and Bill.' …Thus Smiley felt not only disgust, but, despite all that the moment meant to him, a surge of resentment against the institutions he was supposed to be protecting" (*Tinker Tailor* 356)

recruited and what they are expected to do. Believing homosexuality is an indicative proxy for double-agency is a fantasy, a fantasy that the hidden Other cannot help but betray himself by some kind of noticeable flaw. It is a particular fantasy, one with a long history in Western culture and the culture of espionage, but nonetheless it is a fantasy that takes coincidental, incidental, and accidental histories and makes them pregnant with hidden meaning. Homosexuality does not lead to Communism, but for a generation of intelligence worker, whether he personally believed it or not, the two terms were unavoidably linked, affecting how one behaved, who one befriended, and what one was expected to do as a professional agent. And this linkage is regrettably not the only such fantasy that conflates identity categories for symptoms of malevolency. Unsurprisingly, race can also serve as a symbolic marker of the irreducible difference between agentive self and enemy other. The trope is found throughout both the history of intelligence work and in its cultural shadow, spy fiction, where the reinforcement of racial difference as the difference between Self and Other reinforces the always-already tendency to conflate the two by agents of state power.

In order to get a grasp of how the metaphoric feedback loop operates, it is helpful to begin with examining the interplay of race and hidden subversion through the lens of the most popular and influential bit of spy fiction, James Bond. Racial difference suffuses many of the Bond books and films, but perhaps the most directly relevant to us is 1954's novel *Live and Let Die.*[178] *Live and Let Die* finds Bond brought to the U.S. to investigate the ties between a Harlem kingpin, Mr. Big, and a drug smuggling operation out of British-controlled Jamaica. The novel is steeped in a racial and at times racist Othering, manifest in its pre-occupation with voodoo,

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[178] *Live and Let Die* demonstrates that the quality of a Bond book and the quality of its film version are not correlated. The novel is one of the few actually *about* something, the movie one of the bottom two or three out of 25.

superstition, racial difference as filtered through white experience, government involvement in

black communities, and crime and law-enforcement. Because of this, it is tempting to think of

Live and Let Die as a novel that gawks at the spectacle of the Other, and indeed reading

Fleming's interpretation of the dialect of African-American English spoken within Harlem is

cringing: "Guess ah jist nacherlly gits tahd listenin' at yuh. Why'nt yuh hush yo' mouff'n let me

'joy mahself 'n peace 'n qui-yet" (53). This attempt at "verisimilitude" is nothing of the sort, as

it is the only differently-presented speech in the novel; the British Bond and American Felix

Leiter do not have any difference in how their speech is portrayed on the page, though there is

little chance they would pronounce "color/colour" the same. But Bond (MI6) and Leiter (CIA)

are both agents of the state. The portrayal of "realistic" African-American speech actually serves

to highlight difference, to separate and remove the Other from the purview of the Self, and fix it

as the proper recipient of the law-enforcement gaze. The voodoo angle in the book on first

glance has a similar function: to cast black people as barely civilized, an irrational force within

the heart of the national body threatening to burst forth, as in this quote from an FBI agent

explaining to Bond why they haven't previously arrested Mr. Big:

> 'Do you want a race riot?'" objected Dexter sourly. 'There's nothing against him
>
> and you know it, and we know it. If he wasn't sprung in half an hour by that black
>
> mouthpiece of his, those Voodoo drums would start beating from here to the Deep
>
> South. When they're full of that stuff we all know what happens.' (43)

Or this reflection by Domino Solitaire, a fortune-teller in the employ of Mr. Big and Bond's

love-interest du jour, about the inherent mysticism of the regions of the world not fully under the

dominion of Anglo-Saxon whiteness:

> How can one explain to someone [i.e., Bond] who hasn't lived close to the secret
>
> heart of the tropics, at the mercy of their anger and stealth and poison; who hasn't
>
> experienced the mystery of the drums, seen the quick workings of magic and the
>
> mortal dread it inspires. What can he know of catalepsy, and thought-transference
>
> and the sixth sense of fish, of birds, of negroes…(113)

In Domino's thoughts, the "negro" is a type of being akin to fish and birds rather than a kind of

person. Likewise, in FBI agent Dexter's analysis, black people are a kind of supernatural mob,

liable to lose themselves to mystic frenzy. These attitudes reflect classic tropes of

dehumanization, the comparison to nature and the fear of the horde, endemic in many pulpier

forms of entertainment, and inherited from the adventure novels of Rider Haggard and Edgar

Burroughs. But, and this distinguishes *Live and Let Die* from its pulpier cousins and even its own

movie version, within the logic of the novel (let alone outside of it) Domino's and Dexter's

attitudes are thought to be ridiculous. Spectacular difference is not the domain of spy fiction, as

spectacular difference does not require the expert to see. Spectacular difference is not as

threatening within the espionage mindset as hidden difference, a tenet Fleming knows well.

Ultimately, the threat of Mr. Big is far more subtle and thus far more insidious than the voodoo

spectacularism hints. It is not a threat of racial revenge, or culture clash; instead, like the threat of

homosexual double-agents, it is the threat that Mr. Big might actually be able to pass undetected

into the national body.

Remember, spy media, whether print or visual, found its uniqueness as a pop-culture

genre in the question it asks about the distance between the Self or Other and the capacity of

either one to appear, seem, and act like its ostensible opposite. Critic Erin Carlston identifies the

fear of the Otherness of double agency as linked to the fears of the Otherness of homosexuality,

writing "[as] double agents, invisible Others passing as the Same, [homosexuals and Jews] could act like, and on behalf of, both the "us" within the nation and the "them" outside it" (5). The thrills in spy fiction in both *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy* and *Live and Let Die* come from uncovering this duplicity, revealing that passing Other within the national and cultural body that Carlston is terming "the Same." But this is not to say that espionage in pop culture has been uniform in its handling of its central thematic concern. When the distance at first prefigured by the self/other dialectic is proved mutable or circumstantial, we are in the Conrad-Ambler-Greene-Le Carré lineage of spy fiction (print or visual). When the distance is proved immutable, though deeply hidden, we are in the Buchan-Fleming-Ludlum lineage. The former allows for the humanist critiques of an amorphous and ambivalent "system" we examined in the first two chapters, that is, the critiques of a spy bureaucracy that threatens to grind out individual agency. Larger structures are to blame for the conflicts in these kinds of novels; their themes suggest that without such "silly ideas" as "capitalism" or "communism", or "West" or "East", or "CIA" or "KGB", etc., then people could get along fairly well as people. In the second strain, the conflict is driven by the suppressed danger of the Other, difficult to discern because of its ostensible similarity and its positioning always already within the borders of the Same. The presence of the Other makes the Same dangerous or uncanny because it divorces the contiguity of the Self and the Same—the Same harbors the Other as well as it does the Self. We might call this the "Is your bathroom breeding Bolsheviks?" style of paranoia, after the infamous Scot Tissue ad that first appeared in the 1930s:

Figure 11: Bolshevik Scott Towel Ad (Wilson)

This ad, whether with its tongue-in-cheek or not (there is some debate as to its seriousness), leverages the idea that the Other can appear in the heart of the Same as a kind of splinter-Self (or splinter-cell). It is the job of the professional secret agent to make sure that if this happens, it is quickly found out. I wrote about the arguments for intelligence work professionalization within spy fiction a bit in Chapter 1, and indeed it is that difficulty in distinguishing the carefully hidden enemy and alien that reinforces the Le Queux-esque mechanism in which spy fiction does the job of helping to justify the existence of spy professionals. However, I argue that meta-textual arguments for bureaucracies are not the only, nor potentially the most important, impact spy stories make when they obsess over the Self and Other dialectic. To be honest, by this point spy agencies are pretty good at drumming up their own justifications anyway, and fiction is no longer required as a cultural catalyst. Rather, it is what the professional secret agents of fiction find when they look for the difference between the Other and the Self that has had a subtle but crucial influence in the discourse of espionage. Within spy fiction, the Other is not similar to the Self, but its uncanny mimic.

My use of the term mimic calls to mind the work of Homi K. Bhaba, specifically his essay "Of Mimicry and Man." Bhabha describes mimicry as a colonial discourse that, in an attempt to create a more recognizable, and thus governable, Other, inadvertently undermines itself:

> Colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, *as a subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite.* Which is to say, that the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an *ambivalence;* in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference. (86)

The successful mimic is threatening because he or she fits in well enough to be beneath suspicion. From the perspective of authority, the mimic fools the national body's immune response, and once in, it spreads its disease. Red Grant in *From Russia, With Love* is a murderous psychopath who can pass as a British gentleman. The eponymous Aurich Goldfinger is a business magnate whose ruthlessness in the boardroom and golf course camouflages a pathological desire to steal (or destroy, in the film) all the gold from Ft. Knox. In the recent *Spectre* (2015)*,* the difference between Blofeld's Spectre and MI6's surveillance program is only that the former uses it for his personal profit. Bond consistently fights warped, or perhaps simply more honest, versions of the ideologies he represents, embodied by enemies who are jealous and resentful of what the Self has and they, as the Other, do not. Mr. Big's voodoo spectacularism is too obvious a mark of Otherness; it does not take the personified form of the state's expertise, the secret agent, to determine it and so it cannot really undermine the cohesion of the state. But Mr. Big's voodoo schtick is not directed at the wider, white world in the novel—but his network of informants, his surveillance apparatus, is. Mr. Big threatens to be a better spy than Bond himself.

In Bhabha's terms, we might say that what Mr. Big does is "[return] the look of surveillance…as the displacing gaze of the disciplined" (89). It is this more subtle threat, that he can simulate and mimic the conditions of the Self well enough that he understands how to exploit it, that makes him a dangerous opponent, and reveals the insidious way the discourse of espionage can transform difference into threat.

Mr. Big consciously uses the voodoo trappings attributed to him to his strategic advantage, in order to prevent both fearful FBI agents and rival black criminals from making a serious attempt to discover his real business: he is a Soviet-trained agent provocateur (27). Bond and Felix are actually not fooled by this feint nor are they very perturbed by any overt cultural difference they encounter on their Harlem investigation/cruising bar trip (we will talk more about Bond's missions sounding suspiciously like tourist activity in the next section). Bond's takeaway from his Harlem experience is the opposite of the increasingly provincial-seeming Dexter; his judgment of the partying at the Harlem nightclub is total acceptance: "Got the gist of it. Seems they're interested in much the same things as everyone else—sex, having fun, and keeping up with the Jones's. Thank God they're not genteel about it" (55). Lest the reader think that Fleming is making a point about an "enlightened" British perspective versus a backward American one, Leiter is quick to join in on making the observation that, gasp, the citizens of Harlem are pretty much like everyone else, responding to Bond's assessment with "'Some of them are…Harlem's riddled with social distinctions, the same as any other big city'" (55). There is still an "us and them" separation here, as in Felix Leiter's earlier assertion that "[he] like[s] the negroes and they know it somehow" (48). But the novel goes out of its way to undercut the more sensationalistic aspects it also presents, introducing the spectacle of the Other only to insist that the difference between "us and them" is not really all that large. I argue that this is crucial for establishing the

actual threat of Mr. Big, and by extension the actual threat of the Other in the novel and in the Fleming Bond books in general: the Other resents the Self because of their closeness, and thus is motivated to overturn it. Mr. Big threatens Anglo-Saxon dominance not with voodoo drums, but with the specter of a black man successfully navigating the white world on his own terms despite his lack of access to it. Here is how M describes him to Bond at the beginning of the novel:

> [T]he Negro races are just beginning to throw up geniuses in all the professions—scientists, doctors, writers. It's about time they turned out a great criminal. After all, there are 250,000,000 of them in the world. Nearly a third of the white population. They've got plenty of brains and ability and guts. And now Moscow's taught one of them the technique. (27)

Racial difference is very real in M's description, but it does not seem to be biological, rather a matter of education. And if the West won't educate them, then Moscow will, at least in M's analysis. Mr. Big seems to agree, after a fashion:

> It is unfortunate for you, Mister Bond, and for this girl, that you have encountered the first of the great negro criminals. I use a vulgar word, Mister Bond, because it is the one you, as a form of policeman, would yourself use. But I prefer to regard myself as one who has the ability and the mental and nervous equipment to make his own laws and act according to them rather than accept the laws that suit the lowest common denominator of the people. (224)

Mr. Big threatens the social order not through overthrow, but supersession. His ability to excel as a businessman, intelligence agent, leader, and community support is a threat because it makes the white, imperial order of the U.K. and the U.S. superfluous. By mastering the techniques of his oppressors—with their help, it might be said, as he has been professionally trained—Mr. Big

reveals that "[t]he menace of mimicry is its *double vision* which in disclosing the ambivalence of colonial discourse also disrupts its authority" (Bhabha 88). Fleming makes him into a black ubermensch, a much more frightening supposition for the policemen of the world like Bond than a voodoo horde. Within the logic of the novel, Mr. Big is the terror of proximity but not quite nearness, similarity without sameness—or, as Bhabha says, "almost the same but not quite…almost the same but not white" (89). The concept of the "uncanny valley," a term originating in computer science to describe the sense of unease, revulsion, and uncanniness elicited when viewing a being (digital, robotic, corpse, undead, etc.) that is too-close to human without being exactly considered one is useful as a conceit to describe how Bond views Mr. Big. Upon their first face-to-face meeting, Bond notices both that "the photographs had conveyed nothing of this man, nothing of the power and the intellect which seemed to radiate from him" and that his "skin was grey-black, taut and shining like the face of a week-old corpse in the river" (70). Genius and corpse, Mr. Big upends Bond's social order because he is similar enough to Bond and the Self he represents and defends to replace Bond's order with an order of his own: a mirrored order in which the cultural Other, in this case, a racial Other, can dominate and impose his will upon white men (Bond) and women (Domino Solitaire). This threat of reversal reveals secret agent Bond for what he really is: in Mr. Big's words, a "form of policeman." In fact, it reveals all police as "forms" of police, themselves the performers of a supposed "law and order" that may not exist in and of itself (i.e. ontologically), but only in the very performance by the Bonds of the world. Though Jean Baudrillard is associated more with media studies than literary, I think a line from "Simulacra and Simulations" captures the anxiety behind the Other in spy fiction, and by extension in the cultural discourse of espionage itself. Simulation—the representation of the real, independent of the object being represented—is dangerous "since it

always suggests, over and above its object, that *law and order themselves might really be nothing more than a simulation*" (177). If the espionage agent, the "form of [a] policeman" is the simulation of law and order, then law and order may not exist without him. Similarly, if the mimic can so successfully imitate the colonial authority that oppresses him, this suggests that that authority itself isn't an inviolable order. Authority is exposed as a performance of power, not the right to it, and a performance based on historical contingency and accident rather than destiny, purpose, or inherent racial, class, or national superiority.

Exposing the truth that power is a performance of itself, and not an unquestionable, ontological mandate, is the true threat of the Other in the cultural history of espionage, the general threat behind the specific machinations of villains like Mr. Big. The mimicking Other presents the (very dangerous) ideas that history is contingency and not destiny, that difference can be arbitrary and/or based on bias instead of truth. Insistence that the opposite is the case—in other words, that reality exists as it does because it *has* to be this way, and that the Other's very existence threatens "us"—is the foundational justification of state violence against those who dissent. The Le Carrean spy, confronted with the contingency of it all, agonizes over his place within what comes to seem increasingly a web of inhuman circumstance. The Fleming spy, on the other hand, polices the borders between "them and us" in order to stave off the uncanniness of being confronted with his own mimic. Thus, Bond must continually remind himself that Mr. Big can be put into his place, that he is "a man who walked and defecated, a mortal man with a diseased heart" (223). This is true (at least within the novel), but that Bond must repeat it to himself before confronting Mr. Big makes the statement a kind of symptom of its own. Bond is anxious, not at the theatricality of voodoo, but at what must to him seem an equally uncanny vision: a world in which a black man is better at maneuvering the secret corridors of power than

white men. Mr. Big is fine forgoing destruction in exchange for usurpation. Bond and Felix are actually aware somewhat of the injustice of race relations, and not without some sympathy. For example, when Bond imagines the finding of the pirate Henry Morgan's treasure cave by a black Jamaican, an event which kicked off the plot of the novel, he understands why the man would seek out Mr. Big to help him, thinking that "a white man would cheat [the finder of the treasure]" (212). Regardless, Bond's loyalty is to his country and his agency and the regimes of supremacy they represent and defend. In other words, Bond's knowledge of the Other does not translate into empathy. The expert can be judged an expert because of the distance between him and the subject studied—it's a close distance, but it is immutable. As we will see, this logic of expertise has a long history within both spy fiction and spy practice, in the cultural discourse and the institutional logic of espionage.

I have been making the case that the Self/Other dialectic plays a key part in structuring both narrative choices in spy fiction and spy media; however, the policing of the boundary between the self and the other and the assumption that only an expert can do so constitute key tenets of the institutional logics that lie behind the formation and expansion of spy agencies themselves. Furthermore, I think these phenomena are linked, that the popularity and purported representationalism of fictional espionage has exacerbated the tendency of agencies and agents of state power to think dualistically in terms of Us and Them, good guys and bad. In other words, anxieties within the cultural discourse of anxiety become written into intelligence practices. Intelligence work draws moral authority from positing that there is a threatening Other, but that this Other cannot be uncovered without the close scrutiny of the expert. When racial, cultural, gender, national, sexuality and other less plastic and less individualized criteria become the distinguishing marks of a disguised enemy, then discrimination becomes intelligence policy. The

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oldest illustration of this concept within the actual history of intelligence work is the relationship

between espionage and Orientalism. The next section of this chapter is concerned with that

relationship and a disturbing new development within it, the advent of a set of procedures,

beliefs, structures, and technologies I call "drone Orientalism." In analyzing the origin and

functioning of drone Orientalism, I show how the particular role of the Self and Other dialectic

within the discourse of intelligence has had consequences in the lives of thousands (if not more),

and how a concern with expertise as a scholastic category, instead of an expertise that arises

from human relationships and an empathic lived experience, can lead to abuse of state power on

the one hand, and failures of intelligence-gathering work on the other.

Drone Orientalism

The bulk of the rest of this chapter reconfigures drone warfare as a particular way of

viewing the Other that has its origin in the cultural discourse and history of espionage. Prominent

within this analysis is the history of Orientalism as a shifting set of cultural beliefs and political

policies. Orientalism suffuses much of early spy fiction and its ancestral DNA in adventure

fiction and was also integral to the discursive structure of the modern spy agency. I have termed

the specific discursive logic I am investigating here "drone Orientalism," a term which addresses

how the cultural, technological, political, and bureaucratic components of drone warfare have

combined to form a particularly pernicious way of shaping and policing a Self and Other dyad

between the (imagined) "West" and the (imagined) "Orient." Before I analyze drone Orientalism

in earnest, I would like to introduce the topic with an example that intuits drone warfare as a kind

of (flawed) seeing of the Other.

Born in Istanbul to Iranian parents, poet Solmaz Sharif directly addresses the human costs

of the "War on Terror" and the U.S.'s history of intervention in the Middle East in her collection

of poems, *Look.* The poems within *Look* are short, fragmented at times, emphasizing the fragmented reality created by war and violence. The titular poem, "Look", addresses drone warfare by positioning two kinds of incongruent languages, the legalistic and the personal, into a tension that cannot be resolved through recourse to either language alone. In the stanzas I excerpt here, the poem directly addresses drone warfare, and, in doing so, places into tension three possible ways of viewing the Other: as a dog, as a thermal shadow, and as the "exquisite face":

> Whereas it could take as long as 16 seconds between
>
> > The trigger pulled in Las Vegas and the Hellfire missile
> >
> > Landing in Mazar-e-Sharif, after which they will ask
> >
> > *Did we hit a child? No. A dog.* they will answer themselves;[…]
>
> Whereas this lover would pronounce my name and call me
>
> > *Exquisite* and LAY the floor lamp across the floor,
> >
> > Softening even the light;
>
> Whereas the lover made my heat rise so that if heat
>
> > Sensors were trained on me, they could read
> >
> > My THERMAL SHADOW through the roof and through
> >
> > The wardrobe; […]
>
> Whereas *ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is*
>
> > *Your life?* It is even a THERMAL SHADOW; it appears
> >
> > So little, and then vanishes from the screen;
>
> Whereas I cannot control my own heat and it can take
>
> > As long as 16 seconds between the trigger, the Hellfire
> >
> > Missile, and A dog, they will answer themselves;

> Whereas *A dog*, they will say: Now, therefore,
>
> Let it matter what we call a thing.
>
> Let it be the exquisite face for at least 16 seconds.
>
> Let me LOOK at you.

The poem is predominantly a series of quasi-legalistic sounding clauses; the first several stanzas begin with the conjunction "whereas", and the last few begin with the command "let." This structure alone primes the reader to recognize and indict the legal, instead of ethical and moral, framework through which the U.S. government views its interactions with Muslims in the U.S. and in the Middle East. Contrasted to the legalistic mimicry of the stanzas' form is the speaker's fear of being reduced to a "thermal shadow" in the eyes of the West—a reduction made even more painful and poignant by the speaker's remembrance of a lover.[179] Sharif imagines drone operators reassuring themselves that they "only" killed a dog instead of a child. Unfortunately, this imagined scenario is not a far-fetched one. Scholar Hugh Gusterson in his study of drone warfare, *Drone,* relates a particularly horrendous case of post-hoc reassurances connected to a particular drone operation. During this mission, all levels of oversight, from the drone pilots to their image spotters to the commanding officer, mistook a convoy heading to market, including several children, as a terrorist column and destroyed it. Despite the certainty at all levels before the strike that the convoy was a threat, after the strike, when the image analysts began questioning the pilots whether or not children had been present, one pilot, in charge of operating millions of dollars of surveillance equipment, is quoted as saying that there was "[n]o way to tell" that the market convoy was harmless (Gusterson 69). Major General James O. Poss oversaw

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[179] This lover, the poem reveals in a section not excerpted here, may have been captured and sent to a detention center.

an Air Force investigation of the incident and concluded that "technology can occasionally give you a false sense of security that you can see everything, that you can hear everything, that you know everything" (69). This is a convenient kind of excuse—the same kind offered by the drone operators in "Look" who claim they see a dog—that ignores the way technology, culture, and bureaucracy intersect. Major General Timothy McHale was also on that Air Force investigation, but he concluded that the Predator crew "were out to employ weapons no matter what" (70). This is the danger in seeing people as thermal shadows, as targets first and foremost that have to be proven *not* to be a threat.[180] This dehumanization process is not remedied by adding more surveillance; drone operators track and record individuals for 8-12 hour shifts at a time and yet give the excuse "no way to tell, man" after firing upon a shopping convoy. Letting the powerful see more does not transform a thermal shadow into an "exquisite face."

The phrasing "exquisite face" in the poem calls to mind the work of philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, who throughout his work uses the confrontation between the ego and the face of the o/Other as the basis for ethical relation. For Levinas, to come into contact with the face of the other is to confront both "that which cannot be found in the self through any introspection" as well as the "very *mortality* of the other person" (19; 107). Levinas argues that this conflict "puts into question the ego's natural position as subject," a destabilization that is not solved by gaining more knowledge of the other, a tactic which will ultimately fail to reassert the primacy of the ego due to the "irreducible" nature of difference itself (108). Rather, Levinas

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[180] As mentioned in Chapter 3, the official Obama administration statistics for people killed in drone strikes counts *all* military aged males as combatants, not civilians, unless proven to be innocent *after* the strike—a nearly impossible task. This policy drastically undercounts the true number of civilian deaths due to drone strikes.

argues, it is only love that can answer the demand that responsibility for others places on the ego, only love that can transform the Other into the "exquisite face":

> Responsibility for the Other—the face signifying to me 'ego's natural position,' and consequently also 'you are responsible for the life of this absolutely other other'—is responsibility for the unique one. The 'unique one' means the *loved one*, love being the condition of the very possibility of uniqueness. (108)

"Look" places this love/uniqueness recognition in contrast to observation: observation by a legal system that sees Muslims as potential terrorists, and observation by a drone operation that sees them as thermal shadows. Its ending co-opts the legalistic language of the observer into a plea for the transformative power of love to change observation into an authentic encounter with the other: "Let it be the exquisite face for at least 16 seconds." But the "16 seconds" in this line, the same 16 seconds as the time after a Hellfire missile launch and before its impact, already hints at the structural difficulties that the attitudes and the technical mechanisms of the "War on Terror" have placed upon this kind of encounter. Drone warfare, as the poem suggests, creates too much distance between actor and acted-upon, confuses observation for understanding, and relies on stereotypical assumptions of the people at the other end of the drone's camera. The result in Sharif's poem is a Levinasian transformation in reverse; instead of love transforming an unknowable other into a "unique one," the love between the speaker and her lover inadvertently facilitates the transformation into the thermal shadow of state observation: "Whereas the lover made my heat rise so that if heat / Sensors were trained on me, they could read / My THERMAL SHADOW through the roof…" Within state observation, even love can be misread, can lead to Othering.

An analysis of how drone warfare has changed how our intelligence agencies view the world must have at least two separate domains: political and cultural. From the policy perspective, drone use is clearly the most technologically advanced form of covert action and one of the two most technologically advanced forms of surveillance (along with data collection). Drones are being used to track, record, and kill specific individuals (called a "personal drone strike") and also to strike and kill large groups exhibiting suspicious behavior as a deterrent to possible insurgent or terroristic groups in the region (called a "signature strike"). As I argued in the last chapter, covert action, precisely due to its spectacular and quantifiable nature (i.e. it allows intelligence agencies to count kills, captures, and damage), has encouraged a mentality that turns people into targets. Drone warfare threatens to take this mentality to its extreme, transforming people into thermal signatures, red when living, blue when not. The continuing violence of these transformations calls our attention to the cultural ramifications of drone warfare. I addressed some of those ramifications—specifically those for drone operators and intelligence workers—in an earlier chapter (Chapter 4). Here, I mean to take a different track, focusing on how drone use structures and re-structures encounters between Western powers, specifically intelligence agencies and the military, and the people who live under the threat of drone surveillance and drone warfare, that is, the people of Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, and everywhere else drones have been used (officially or unofficially). I cannot claim to speak for such a diverse and varied group; rather, I hope through my analysis to spur discussion about how discursive structures can cause real violence, pain, and fear.

Drone use is a practice enmeshed in discourse, a discourse that sets binaries of Self and Other, West and Orient, here and there, distance and immediacy. Though drone use only became

a prominent surveillance and killing tool in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, the discourse

that has encouraged its expansion as a tool of intelligence policy is reminiscent and in some ways

a descendant of 19th century imperialism. It is the "War on Terror," an amorphous, poorly-

defined concept that seemingly justifies military action across wide swaths of Africa and Central

Asia, in which drone warfare has found its niche. As critic Adam Kirsch reminds us, the porous

boundaries and ill-defined goals of the War on Terror mean that an inherent end to conflict, or

even the achievable goals that would herald that end, can not immediately be seen: "Compared to

Vietnam or World War II, wars that involved or convulsed all of American society, our "forever

war" seems like an anomaly. But it would have been quite familiar to a nineteenth-century

Briton: For these are the border wars of empire, which can never be won because no empire is

ever free from threats" (qtd. in Gusterson 117). Indeed, it is difficult to imagine in future

conflicts the U.S. using drone warfare in Russia or Germany or China to the extent it uses it in

the Middle East and horn of Africa, as a tool for targeted killings and signature strikes. Social

anthropologist Hugh Gusterson concludes his work *Drone* with a scathing analysis of the role

drone warfare plays in creating political inequality and instability among nations:

> Drones are an imperial border-control technology for the age of late capitalism.
>
> They can be used only against countries that lack the technological sophistication
>
> to shoot down the slow-moving planes and whose internal affairs, conforming to
>
> Western stereotypes of 'failed states,' provide a pretext for incursion that is as
>
> persuasive to liberal interventionists today as the white man's burden was to their
>
> Victorian ancestors…Enacted on the basis that countries such as Yemen and
>
> Somalia are in some sense lawless, the drone strike further establishes through its
>
> performance the abject status of countries that do not have the legal right to

territorial integrity employed by more mature nations…it simultaneously

bifurcates the world, establishing a moveable master seam between one side

where drones can be used and another side where they cannot. (148-149)

Gusterson's criticism of where and how drone warfare is implemented directly touches on a

continuing problem with the way the Middle East and Middle Easterners are narrativized in

Western thought—in other words, with Edward Said's concept of Orientalism. These problems

with narrativization begin with the fact that the power-relations inherent in narrativization

prevent it from being a way to experience the other as the "exquisite face" in the first place. This

is a difficulty in representation itself, discussed by scholars like Saidiya Hartman in her work

Scenes of Subjugation, and outside of the scope of my current project. However, the *particular*

ways drone warfare is influenced by and influences the way the people of the Middle East

become narrativized as a particular kind of "Muslim other" are inseparable from the discourse of

espionage itself, and its long history of blurring depictions of the "real," or at least a pretense to

the real, with outright fantasies of heroism.

The fantasy structure that fuels the expansion of drone use is only one of several different

manifestations that results when state power becomes enmeshed in the fantasy of knowing an

Other while still keeping them Other—the general form of the fantasy that Edward Said

examines with reference to Central Asia in his seminal work, *Orientalism*. Edward Said claimed

in 1978 (the year *Orientalism* was published) that "the Orientalist reality is both antihuman and

persistent. Its scope, much as its institutions and all-pervasive influence, lasts up to the present"

(44). Criticisms of Said, especially that of Robert J.C. Young in *White Mythologies*, question the

monolithic nature of Orientalism, and its ability to totalize academic or cultural thought in one,

non-contradictory way. Young particularly decries Said's inability to get outside of dualistic

thinking, writing: "As soon as Said has set up the traditional opposition of particular versus universal, individual agency as opposed to the determinations of culture or system, the problem remains by definition insoluble. To the totalizing culture the individual opposes a consciousness derived from experience: but how has that consciousness or experience been produced outside that culture if it is indeed totalizing?" (174). One way that I think Young's criticisms can be answered is by reframing Orientalism as Orientalisms, non-monolithic discursive structures that nevertheless achieve hegemonic (though not absolute) status within particular institutions and at particular times due to various incentivizing structures. The specific Orientalist discourse that I wish to examine here, which I term (perhaps unsurprisingly) "drone Orientalism," is by no means the only discourse, or even the only Orientalism, in operation in the CIA, the state department, or Western culture. But it is an active discourse, a discourse that *does* in the real world, and in order to accurately evaluate, analyze, and modify (or extinguish) the use of drones by our intelligence and military services, we must understand it. There exists a non-equal relation between the "real life" that the drone pilot claims to understand through observation and the lives that they see and sometimes end on their screens. This discordant relation is the result of a discursive structure, a cultural lattice. As mentioned in the introduction, a cultural lattice is a conceptual frame of easy references, mental heuristics, and material design, in which individual meaning-making occurs. Cultural lattices assume their rigidity by institutional repetition, as individual decisions influence future decisions which become bureaucratic policies. Drone Orientalism is a node of the cultural lattice of espionage, and has assumed its rigidity due to several factors: the mental heuristic of the "PlayStation mentality" of war at a distance, the material design of the drone cockpit, a Western cultural emphasis on individual moral choice theory, and, perhaps most perniciously, the easy references describing the Muslim subjects of the

drone gaze as a particular and peculiar Other, references reinforced in their place as nodes by the history and evolution(s) of Orientalism in espionage and international policy. It is with this last phenomenon that I begin my analysis of drone Orientalism and its effects, because this inherited history bears the most responsibility for the presence of drone Orientalism within the cultural lattice of espionage today.

When adventurer and proto-intelligence agent Richard Burton claimed that in the middle of the 19th century that "Egypt is a treasure to be won," he began a decades-long push that would move Orientalist thought from description to evaluation and bring it from the scholastic to the military domain (*Orientalism* 197). From the strain of academic Orientalism practiced by Burton and other scholars of the 19th century, drone Orientalism has inherited an undue emphasis on the power of *discovery*, especially on the (fallacious) analogy that seeing is knowledge. Said writes that for those Orientalists responsible for making Orientalism into imperial policy, the accrual of "[k]nowledge was essentially the *making visible* of material….Scholarly discipline was therefore a specific technology of power: it gained for its user tools and knowledge which had hitherto been lost" (127). Scholarship within the framework of Orientalism is a tool of Orientalism, constrained by its governing discourse. Scholarship under Orientalism produces not objective facts or neutral analysis, nor does it traffic in a free exchange of ideas. Rather, it produces governing power via producing knowledge; geographic knowledge for army deployments and resource exploitation, cultural knowledge to better subjugate the multiple ethnic groups inhabiting the imagined spaces of Empire; historical knowledge to entrench fundamental difference between a European "us" and an Oriental "them." The use of surveillance drones in the modern War on Terror is, as scholarship was for Burton, another such "specific technology of power," one that literalizes and mechanizes the impulse to make visible the Other. Orientalist

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scholars such as Richard Burton or David Hogarth made pretense to objectivity and dispassion, but as Said reminds us, "to be a European in the Orient, and to be one knowledgeably, one must see and know the Orient as a domain ruled over by Europe" (197). Likewise, the temptation to view drone surveillance data as objective truth in order to advance mission goals belies the Othering gaze that peers through the Predator's camera—that is, the gaze of the pilot and data analyst steeped in an Orientalist mindset. In the following passage, Said is describing the panoramic quality of the 19th and early 20th century Orientalist scholarship:

> The Orientalist surveys the Orient from above, with the aim of getting hold of the whole sprawling panorama before him—culture, religion, mind, history, society. To do this he must see every detail through the device of a set of reductive categories (the Semites, the Muslim mind, the Orient, and so forth). Since these categories are primarily schematic and efficient ones, and since it is more or less assumed that no Oriental can know himself the way an Orientalist can, any vision of the Orient ultimately comes to rely for its coherence and force on the person, institution, or discourse whose property it is. (239)

This passage characterizes Orientalism as totalizing in its sweep as well as reductive in its categorization. The totalization inherent in Orientalism prevents it from being *wrong* in any meaningful sense to those caught up in its discursive trap. Because Orientalist scholarship was conversant about a wide range of phenomena, it begat the illusion of perfect understanding to the imperial powers that relied on it. As a reminder that discourses *do,* colonial and imperial powers acted upon this fantasy of perfect knowledge, designing and implementing policy, including violence, based on generalizing and totalizing knowledge that only relates to its purported object of study by creating it as a pseudo-fiction. The use of drones adds the only missing component in

the imagining of the "Orient": the ability to "know" what "they" are doing in real time. The goal that state power put Orientalist scholarship to during the 19ᵗʰ century was, in reality, an impossible task: to ascertain via extrapolation from essentialist categories the threat-level the Empire faced in a given region. Drones induce the confidence that we no longer need to extrapolate, that certainty is as close as a digital video feed. The claim drone surveillance makes to objectivity is powered by one of the oldest and most potent metaphors in human thought and language: vision as knowledge. As incidents such as the convoy bombing described above (in relation to Sharif's poem) illustrate, vision is not certainty when devoid of understanding. Remember, one pilot was quoted as saying there was "no way to tell" that the attacked convoy was a group of villagers heading to market rather than a terrorist column (Gusterson 69). This is patently false; one human agent placed in the region could have informed central command of the regular practice of driving to market. What the pilot meant, though unawares, is that there was no way to tell given the constraints of his vision. Though he could see what was going on, his vision was hampered by being steeped in a discourse. This discourse is one that reinforces the mental script that "strange behavior"—behavior that intelligence, assumed to be total within the bureaucratic structure of Military Intelligence, does not mark as safe—is tantamount to terrorist behavior. The pilot presumed his own values as the values of those he was watching, and then "trusted his own eyes." In other words, since he would not rise pre-dawn and drive en masse to market, armed, he assumed no one else would either, careless of the difference between life in Las Vegas and in rural Afghanistan. This is a mental error, but one structured by a fantasy of knowing the Other, a fantasy of mastery through (assumed) understanding and prediction.

The technologies at work in drone warfare shape a particular manifestation of this fantasy. The interior of the drone "cockpit" is designed to look and feel like the interior of a jet

aircraft, yet the lack of embodied feedback is one of the most common reasons given when pilots crash drones (for example, pilots often don't realize they are flying the drone upside down). The lack of clear boundaries extends to the time of drone operations as well as their space. Drone pilots, like many military personnel who have seen combat duty, have difficulties re-assimilating to civilian life—but unlike a Navy Seal, a drone operator must re-assimilate at the end of every shift.[181] Gusterson argues that the lack of clear boundaries between combat and non-combat that is a particular feature of drone warfare disconnects the pilot from traditional narratives of war, specifically morally-simplistic narratives about risk, courage, and danger. These narratives are crucial, as Elaine Scarry argues in her book *The Body in Pain,* for buying into the master-trope of "war as a contest" between two competing, and relatively equal, relatively vulnerable, powers (145). Drone warfare is not a contest between equal powers; as I wrote in the last chapter, drone pilots face no physical dangers, their fleshy bodies thousands of miles away from the metal shell armed with Hellfire missiles and the capacity to surveil the "enemy" for 48-hour flight times. The unilateral nature of danger in drone warfare does not resemble traditional narratives of conflict and battle. I would argue instead that drone warfare, especially in conjunction with increased electronic surveillance and small Special Forces team strikes, transforms both war and espionage into police action. The corollary to this is a transformation in representation of the people on the other end of the drone's cameras: when war or espionage are contests, the enemy are rivals (for example, the U.S.S.R. in the Cold War), but when they are police actions, the enemy become criminals. Gusterson points out that for the drone pilot, one piece in the

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[181] *Stars and Stripes* quotes a drone operator: "You've just been on a combat mission and half an hour later your spouse is mad at you because you're late to soccer practice" (Gusterson 50). This kind of whiplash is built into the structures of drone warfare, and its effects on the psychology of drone pilots is not yet fully known.

responsibility-diffusing machinery of bureaucracy, unaware of the whos, whats, and whys behind

a particular mission on a given day, it is tempting to view the figures on the screen as always-

already guilty:

> Judgments are made about people simply on the basis of their observed actions or
>
> their placement on an intelligence agency's target list for reasons that the drone
>
> operator often does not know…Drone operators are confronted with a local social
>
> logic that they often do not understand and which they then recode through the
>
> cultural logic of American moral individualism. (78)

American moral individualism is a particularly poor logic from which to draw conclusions about

the many people surveilled by drones each day. Especially because, as I have argued in Chapters

2 and 4 already, drone surveillance and covert action do not take the place of Human

Intelligence, and so the cultural understanding gap can be extreme despite the massive amount of

visual and audio data gathered. Seeing more does not translate into more knowledge when the

framework to interpret that data is inadequate or biased, yet the discourse of drone Orientalism

assumes that it does. The logic of American moral individualism and the transformation of war

into a police action without physical risk for one power combine to place undue emphasis on

"good guys" and "bad guys," casting all behavior as a clear moral choice performed in a vacuum

without social pressures. This idea is reinforced by much of spy fiction, but do not correspond

well to reality. Gusterson writes about the membership of groups like the Taliban:

> Far from populations consisting of clear 'good' and 'bad' guys, some of their
>
> members often move in and out of insurgency depending on the economic
>
> opportunities available to them, shifting alliances in local tribal politics,
>
> ethnoreligious antagonisms, and the stimulus of atrocity, invasion, and

subjugation. People may be part-time insurgents…some young men have no

choice [and are forcibly conscripted by organizations like the Taliban or

ISIS]…Journalist Steve Coll observes, 'In such a landscape, the binary categories

recognized by international law—combatant or noncombatant—can seem

inadequate…A young man of military age holding a gun outside a *hujra* might be

a motivated Taliban volunteer, a reluctant conscript, or a victim of a violent

coercion.' (107-108)

On an institutional level, observations like this one contrast with the psychological assessments

of the professionals consulted by the CIA after 9/11. For example, psychologist Eric Shaw

argues that terrorist psychologies are "symptomatic of an incomplete or fragmented psychosocial

identity" (Puar 56). Attitudes like this posit that joining organizations such as al Qaeda, the

Taliban, or ISIS can never be a rational choice, but always a symptom of an irreducible distance

between the reasonable, rational West and the incompletely developed East. These attitudes are

easily reinforced by stereotypical depictions of "the terrorist" in Western media as fanatics,

lunatics, or zealots, such as the "Crimson Jihad" group in the Arnold Schwarzenegger spy film

True Lies (1994) or Abu Nazir (who believes Osama bin Laden didn't go far enough) from the

TV spy show *Homeland*. The number of civilian casualties[182] drone warfare has produced

indicate that the structural mechanisms, media narratives, and bureaucratic policies of drone

Orientalism encourage pilots to see any person visible in the Predator's eye as a terrorist or

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[182] As mentioned last chapter: The Obama administration claimed in 2016 that 116 civilians have been killed by drones outside of war zones since the beginning of official drone strikes in 2008, but the number is disputed; independent investigators believe it to be significantly higher (Whitlock). An average of several non-governmental human-rights groups figures compiled by *Foreign Policy's* Micah Zenko pegs the number at around 474 civilians in Yemen, Somalia, and Pakistan (Zenko). However, the London-based Bureau of Investigative Journalism estimates that civilian deaths range from 2,438 to 3,942 in Pakistan alone (Gusterson 88).

potential terrorists, regardless of the reality on the ground.[183] The consequences of this policy

have been the creation of militancy and anger among the people under threat from drone

strikes,[184] perpetuating conflict by perpetuating anti-American sentiment in the Middle East.

Drone Orientalism, like other forms of Orientalism and other totalizing discourses, does

not arrive via magic; it is incentivized by a hierarchic, bureaucratic apparatus that rewards instant

results and over-values sound-bite news over deeper dives. Incentivization flattens contradiction

and dissent, and this was true for the 19th century as well as the 21st. Richard Burton and T.E.

Lawrence were rewarded—with fame, promotion, money—for advancing a vision of the people

and territories of the Middle East that lent itself to British material gains. The common thread

between scholastic Orientalism of the 19th century and drone Orientalism is the flattening of

human life into a puzzle that can be solved, and in recognizing that there is strategic value in

doing so. The "Orient" as described by the imperial agent of any century is a place that can be

mastered for the good of the home nation. However, the specifics of how that mastery is possible

will vary and have varied based on differing scholastic, economic, technological, and any other

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[183] Several scholars have remarked on the similarities between the kind of profiling drone operators engage in and that which U.S. police enact in African American communities here. Micah Zenko of the Council of Foreign Relations, for example, points out the dark irony in President Obama's response to shootings of unarmed black men in the U.S. to the logic of drone signature strikes, which his administration embraced (especially in his first term): "It is striking to compare Obama's deliberate and thoughtful commentary about the tragic killing of Trayvon Martin with the military tactic that will forever characterize his presidency: killing people with drones. The president posits that it is wrong to profile individuals based upon their appearance, associations, or statistical propensity to violence. By extension, he believes that, just because those characteristics may seem threatening to some, the use of lethal force cannot be justified as self-defense unless there are reasonable grounds to fear imminent bodily harm. But that very kind of profiling and a broad interpretation of what constitutes a threat are the foundational principles of U.S. 'signature strikes'—the targeted killings of unidentified military-age males…" (Gusterson 95).
[184] See Ibrahim Mothana's 2012 op-ed in the 2012 op-ed in the *New York Times* entitled "How Drones Help al Qaeda" for a discussion of how the organizations that we now know as ISIS and al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula use anger at drone warfare as a recruitment tool.

incentivizing structure. The fantasy of knowing at a distance, propped up by a rich tradition of scholastic Orientalism as well as modern-day media depictions, combines with the physical and digital technologies in the drone apparatus itself and the bureaucratic and design technologies of remote war. As a result, drone Orientalism traffics in a fantasy that the "Oriental Other" becomes mastered when "it" comes into view; showing up on the screen as a thermal shadow, as Solmaz Sharif suggests in "Look", is always-already enough to be understood as a potential target.

The scholastic Orientalism of the 19th century has had a profound influence over drone Orientalism, but by no means is it the sole progenitor of the modern-day discourse. Throughout the almost two centuries between Richard Burton and drone warfare, the way the culture of espionage has interacted with, has influenced, and has been influenced by different strands of Orientalism has undergone various permutations, each leaving some mark on how drone Orientalism operates today. Burton may stand as the forebear to the Orientalist secret agent, but even in the half-century span between Burton and his descendants who composed the ranks of the first intelligence divisions and organizations, we can see changes in how the fledgling intelligence world interacted with and sought to understand the peoples and cultures that area studies have trained us to call the "Middle East" and "Central Asia." Burton's gift as an Orientalist is, according to Said, his ability to evaluate his conception of the Orient without subsuming his identity to the fantasy (197). By the age of T.E. Lawrence, fantasy, and the appropriations that sustained those fantasies of the imperial imagination, was the order of the day. Lawrence especially could not resist inserting himself into the picture; he was in his own estimation "a hero rescuing the Orient from the obscurity, alienation, and strangeness which he himself had properly distinguished," (121). Lawrence admits in *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* that his Arabian campaign was motivated by his desire for "the power of self-expression in some

imaginative form," (549). Lawrence's adoption of Arab dress and desire to "[quit his] English self and [look] at the West and its conventions with new eyes" reveals his commitment to a dialectic of West and Orient that only he himself can exist in the middle of, critical of both sides (31). Lawrence describes himself as an infidel that cannot be converted to another faith, indicating his ambivalence to both the monoliths he had fashioned out of his conceptions of "East" and "West" (32). But we must keep in mind Lawrence was incentivized to his Orientalism by two tremendous pressures: his mission to induce the Arabs to revolt against the Turks and the alienation he felt due to his sexuality from his fellow soldiers (which Lawrence details in his memoir *The Mint* and I address in an earlier chapter). When he admits that male-male love was common among his Arab guerilla band, he justifies it by claiming that "friends quivering together in the yielding sand with intimate hot limbs in supreme embrace" found "a sensual co-efficient of the mental passion which was welding our souls and spirits in one flaming effort," (30). The "flaming effort" Lawrence is alluding to is the Arab revolt itself, a political ideal that he has been tasked with fomenting and which directly benefits British interests. Critic Joseph A. Boone points to this yoking of the sensual and the political, as well as other instances throughout *Seven Pillars*[185], as evidence that in Lawrence's writings "[a]n erotic ideal thus finds its reflection in a political ideal that, under the sign of male-male love, tenuously combines British colonial interests and the movement toward Arab sovereignty" (Boone 472). In Boone's analysis, the discursive tropes which characterize the "Orient" as a place inherently sexual and

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[185] For example, Lawrence's contrast of the dirtiness of his sexual contact with the enemy, the Turks at Deraa, with the "cleanliness" of Arab male-male sex, and the dedication of the work to S.A. (commonly considered to be Dahoum, one of Lawrence's attendants and a possible lover) in which Lawrence writes essentially that he fomented the Arab revolt out of love (Boone 472-473). I agree with Boone's analysis in general, though if Lawrence were actually raped at Deraa, this might have had an influence Boone does not attend to on Lawrence's depiction of the difference between Turkish and Arab homosexuality.

dangerously homosexual are the same tropes which allow for Lawrence's self-expression, though this self-expression problematically allows Lawrence to advance British military interests. In other words, an Orientalist understanding of Arab homoeroticism is the foundation on which he can craft a heroic fantasy capable of reconciling his roles as imperial agent and queer subject. Ultimately, the fantasy will break for Lawrence, as the realities of the Sykes-Picot Agreement, a pact between Britain and France dividing up the Ottoman Empire signed in secret in 1916, shatters Lawrence's hubristic vision of "delivering Arabia to the Arabs." Said reminds us that Lawrence's own ego is the paramount fantasy he seeks to preserve, a motivation which spurs Lawrence to make imperialism itself a reflection of his own personal failures, thus ignoring the consequences for the various Arabic people, peoples, and factions that he interacted with during the Arabian campaign: "And when, for whatever reason, the movement failed…it is Lawrence's disappointment that counts" (*Orientalism* 243). Lawrence abandoned his role as diplomat and intelligence officer in disappointment after his efforts to negotiate between British interests and those of King Hussein in the early 1920s were met with broken promises on the British side and stubborn refusal to acknowledge a growing Wahhabist threat from the ibn-Saud family on the other (Anderson 493). Later in his life, Lawrence re-enlisted in the military under an assumed name, desperate for the rituals and routines of enlisted life but loath to resume his failed fantasy of "Lawrence of Arabia." The life of T.E. Lawrence provides us with a vision of what happens when two strains of Orientalist discourse overlap. On the one hand, we see Lawrence's embrace of a psycho-sexually tinged Orientalism for the purpose of personal myth-making, which Boone and Said go into great detail explicating.[186] On the other, Lawrence's enmeshment in an imperial

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[186] In Boone's article "Vacation Cruises; Or, the Homoerotics of Orientalism" and, among other places, in Ch. 4 of Part 2 of Said's *Orientalism,* "Pilgrims and Pilgrimages, British and French."

Orientalism, the strain that views the Middle East foremost as a materially wealthy region to exploit, ultimately disgusts him, despite his own responsibility for increasing its scope and influence in the West. For Lawrence, the psychological and political aspects of the Orientalist discourse that surrounded him (and that he participated in) were at odds. It is a conflict that seems more and more idiosyncratic as the 20th century would continue. In fact, I argue that spy fiction, and its close cousin imperial adventure fiction, help to facilitate a link between psychological, especially psycho-sexual, Orientalist self-fashioning narratives and the political exploitation and domination of the people of the Middle East and Central Asia.

The cultural discourse of espionage has shaped drone Orientalism, or, more broadly, in affecting how the various strains of Orientalism have impacted spy work and intelligence policy throughout the long 20th century. Spy stories, whether on the page or on the screen, based in history or invented whole-cloth, have served as reference points for attitudes within intelligence work toward the people and countries of the Middle East and Central/South Asia. This is especially true when it comes to considering how Orientalist discourse can both admire (certain aspects of) the presumed[187] culture of the Oriental Other and seek to dominate it. The contradiction inherent in these positions must have been smoothed over before drone Orientalism arose. If it hadn't been, drone Orientalism would have run into one of two structural barriers:

1) Too much emphasis on identification: Drone pilots, after surveilling their "targets" for hours, would identify with them too closely and be unable to pull the trigger. Drone pilots begin to see themselves as a part of an invading army (and thus evil) rather than a global peacekeeping force (and thus heroic).

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[187] By which I mean always filtered through the experiences of the observer, i.e. not objective knowledge, but a subjective experience of knowledge.

2) Too much emphasis on domination: Unable to see the peoples of the "Orient" as human, the military and covert action intelligence organizations abandon drone use for indiscriminate bombing campaigns.

Drone Orientalism operates somewhere in between these two poles, though, as no discourse is omnipotent, individuals may drift more towards one or the other depending on their own particular backgrounds and circumstances. Nevertheless, drone Orientalism as a discourse has a cultural script that balances identification and domination, a cultural script in part written by authors like Rudyard Kipling and Ian Fleming. Edward Said, in his Introduction to the 1987 Penguin Edition of Rudyard Kipling's *Kim,* begins to analyze how narrative serves to balance the impulses toward both identification and domination within Orientalism. *Kim* is Kipling's most complex and elusive work, yet is fundamentally a story in which British imperialism is reaffirmed and celebrated. Said spends much of his introduction teasing out the inconsistencies in a work that vacillates between propaganda and (in Said's words) "a work of great aesthetic merit [that] cannot be dismissed simply as the racist imagining of one fairly disturbed and ultra-reactionary imperialist" (Introduction 315). Part of the difficulty in reading *Kim* lies in figuring out Kipling's own position in regard to his subject matter. At times, the book itself seems to echo the identity crisis of its main character, torn between whether it is a bildungsroman or a spy story, or an adventure tale or a philosophical treatise on spirituality. Kipling treats the relationship between Kim and the Tibetan lama he guides throughout India with great tenderness, such as when the lama admits that he relies on Kim "as an old tree lives on the lime of a new wall" (Kipling 273). Likewise, Kim's other father figures in the story—the Muslim horse trader/spy Mahbub Ali, scholastic Spencerian/spy Hurree Babu, and anthropologist/spy master Colonel Creighton—are all, despite their diverse ethnic and racial identities, portrayed as clever,

intelligent, heroic, kind, and, most importantly, enough like Kim to offer him role models at how to navigate dual and conflicting identities. On the other hand, the book also reproduces Orientalist essentialism in lines like "Kim could lie like an Oriental" or "the huckster instinct of the East" (313). One scene, in which a soldier glosses over the Great Mutiny of 1857 by casting it as a temporary "madness" in some soldiers, falls squarely within the propagandistic (310). Said resolves the conflict between the sympathy, emotion and artistry behind much of Kipling's text and its moments of totalization, Empire-championing, and Oriental essentializing by declaring there is no conflict, that Kipling's vision of India in *Kim* posits an imagined world in which there is no contradiction or inconsistency between British values, goals, and actions in India on the one hand and the health, happiness, and livelihoods of the diverse peoples of the Indian subcontinent on the other.

At the climax of the novel, Kim and Hurree Babu succeed in thwarting two foreign (one is French, the other Russian) spies' mission to foment revolution in the Himalayan foothills by causing their baggage-handlers to revolt and run off with key documents via a series of accidents and lucky coincidences. Kim and Hurree separately remark on the effortlessness and humor of the situation; Hurree thinks back on the beneficent chaos and thinks to himself "How I shall laugh with the Colonel!" about the foreign agents' carelessness and unsuitability to operating in India (251). The two spies' failure at the end of *Kim* is ironic given their earlier claim that only it is only France and Russia, not the British, "who can deal with Orientals" (240). Their inability to be "colonial" by keeping control of their baggage servants convinces Kim and Hurree (and perhaps the reader in 1900) how funny that claim is (250). The picaresque resolution to the spy plot in the novel suggests that in the immutable world of British imperial order, espionage is nothing more than a prank, a game, the Great Game, a plot device that makes boys into men.

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And this is the insidious influence the first generation of spy fiction (roughly 1880-WWI) had on intelligence policy: spy fiction gave Orientalism a hero fantasy by reducing geopolitics to the white imperial agent's self-actualization. This process is a subset of a phenomenon that we have examined throughout this dissertation; namely, we have seen how heroic fantasy weds individual agency to the reproduction of state power through government Agencies. For example, the Bondian masculine myth incentivizes violent covert action in service to the state by tying that behavior to a specific, consumerist-based masculinity and hetero-sexual reward. At the outset of spy fiction, the particular form of the fantastic synthesis that could turn self-fulfillment into a tool of the British Empire was suffused throughout with Orientalism, no doubt owing to the large personnel overlap between Orientalist scholars, proto-spies and intelligence officers, and nascent spy-fiction authors. In short, these were mostly the same people. Said explicitly compares the fantasy-making of *Kim* with the Arab identity co-option of T.E. Lawrence, drawing a parallel between Kim's capacity to disguise himself and his service to Creighton with Lawrence's imperial agent in Arab dress:

> This is the confluence between Creighton's Great Game and Kim's inexhaustibly renewed capacity for disguises and adventure. Kipling keeps the two things tightly connected in the novel. The first is the device of political surveillance and control; the second, at a much deeper and more interesting level, is the wish-fantasy of someone who would like to think that everything is possible, that one can go anywhere and be anything. T.E. Lawrence in *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom* expresses this fantasy over and over, as he reminds us how he—a blond and blue-eyed Englishman—moved among the desert Arabs as if he were one of them. (Introduction 329)

In this passage, Said identifies the work *Kim* does in tying together fantasies of individual

identity, Orientalist appropriations of cultures not their own, and imperial surveillance and

control through a comparison to Lawrence. But as discussed above, Lawrence is not the only

example of an imperialist agent expressing this particular fantast that Said could have chosen,

nor even the example *par excellence.* Lawrence's barely contained self-loathing and depression,

and his alienation from both poles (English and Arab) of his imagined binary,[188] incessantly bite

back and deflate his fantasies. As discussed in chapter 3, Lawrence's fictional counter-part is not

Colonel Creighton, but John Buchan's Sandy from *Greenmantle,* the friend of protagonist

Richard Hannay. Sandy can blend in anywhere in the Ottoman Empire, yet faces a crisis of

identity related to his sexuality—though Sandy pointedly faces heterosexual temptation, a re-

working of Lawrence's queer identity to be more palatable to audiences at the time. Sandy is an

Orientalist-turned-spy, and the huge popularity of Buchan's spy novels helps to reinforce the

connection between the careers as much as actual figures like Lawrence, Dave Hogarth, Gertrude

Bell, or St. John Philby. Philby makes a great contrast to Lawrence, as he embraced the

opportunity to aggrandize his own stature by participation in an appropriating Orientalist

discourse. St. John Philby is often described as larger-than-life, but it was a deliberate attempt to

embrace the heroic fantasy that combined imperial action and becoming an Orientalized vision

of an Arabic cultural other. As an advisor to the house of Saud, Philby once remarked that "[m]y

ambition is fame, whatever that may mean" (*A Spy Among Friends* 36). He attempted to make

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[188] Lawrence is not of course the only one to take his or her conceptions of what constitutes "Englishness" and "Arabness" and make them into polar opposites—much of Orientalist discourse depends on doing the same thing. However, I feel confident in saying that what Lawrence eventually coalesced (and/or what eventually coalesced for Lawrence) from his cultural environment, training, and life experience into those poles was unique. In fact, I think all encounters with discursive forces are ultimately unique, despite shared similarities that make discourses analyzable and active in the material world.

good on his ambition by inserting himself in the post-WWI carving up of the former Ottoman empire much more successfully than Lawrence did, despite his at times cantankerous and arrogant personality.

Figure 12: St. John Philby, as photographed in his book *The Heart of Arabia*

St. John is the first post-*Kim* Orientalist-cum-imperial agent-cum-spy to acknowledge the effect of the book on his and subsequent generations. St. John nicknamed his son "Kim" in a nod to Kipling's boy hero (35). History would prove the choice of nicknames an ironic one—Kim Philby ends up using his capacity to play many roles in service of the USSR, not Britain.

Imperialist adventure fiction and the fledgling genre of spy fiction help to solidify the marriage of Orientalist description and heroic self-fashioning, even beyond the historical moment of the late-19th or early-20th century. Ben Macintyre relates that as a young man covering the Afghan revolt against the USSR in the 1980s, Kipling's "The Man Who Would Be King" was required reading for the foreign press, spies, and mercenaries hanging out in Peshawar (*The Man Who Would Be King* 4). Kipling's story is based on a real person, Josiah

Harlan, who, inspired by his own dreams of adventure and conquest, became the first American

to enter Afghanistan. A century and a half later, in the 1980s, military and intelligence personnel

were still imbibing Kipling's version of Harlan's story and the Orientalist narrative within.

Intelligence still depends on these self-fashioning Orientalist narratives in the 21st century; while

Kipling is no longer on the required reading lists[189], intelligence personnel attached to U.S. Joint

Forces Command in Afghanistan are still asked to read Macintyre's biography of Josiah Harlan,

as well as Charles Allen's book *Soldier Sahibs: The Daring Adventurers Who Tamed India's*

Northwest Frontier, a book that lauds imperialist agents like Harlan, Philby, Lawrence, and

Kipling's Colonel Creighton ("Pre-Deployment"). Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* also

makes modern intelligence reading lists ("Pre-Deployment"). *The Kite Runner* is not a spy novel,

but it's inclusion is still insightful into how deeply our military and intelligence services depend

upon fiction (or mythologized history like Charles Allen's *Soldier Sahibs)* for an understanding

of the geographic and cultural regions within which they operate. In and of itself, that people can

learn from fiction is a neutral phenomenon—after all, much of cultural criticism depends on

analyzing and explicating fictional or quasi-fictional "texts" (here in the widest possible sense) in

order to learn something about the world that informs their creation and/or that they shape in

some sense. But, as I have insisted throughout this project, exactly what those texts are matter.

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[189] Military and Intelligence recommended and required reading lists are fascinating artifacts, reflecting the administrations currently in power, the current conflict, anticipated future conflicts, etc. Current lists have the classic Clausewitz and Sun Tzu, and Thucydides is back after quite an absence. All lists look back on previous conflicts, but the Bush-era lists reflected on WWII while Obama-era lists were Vietnam-heavy. Pop social-science books, especially those concerning psychology and decision-making (think Malcolm Gladwell, Nate Silver, and Steven Pinker) are also common on modern-day lists. Chinese history books appear in force in the last few years, as do books on cyber-warfare and drone warfare. Many of my sources appear on various lists, such as P.W. Singer's *Wired for War*, Ben Macintyre's *The Man Who Would Be King*, and Mark Mazzetti's *The Way of the Knife*. The website www.militaryreadinglists.com does an excellent job of collating as many lists as possible from the U.S.'s multiple Armed Services branches.

Specifically, when those texts are narratives of white men using the cultural tropes and scripts of Orientalism to prop up the very same imperial mechanisms of knowledge production and political domination that *create* Orientalism a discursive practice, the possibility of continuing into the present day the flattening and totalizing errors of the generation of the Orientalist-cum-imperial agent intelligence worker of the pre-WWII era remains as a potential pitfall to intelligence and military work today.

Finding that the intelligence and military personnel of today are still being steeped in the "adventure" of Orientalist self-fashioning narratives like *Kim*, "The Man Who Would Be King" or *Soldier Sahibs* may help explain the sheer bravado of some U.S. and U.K. military operations in Central Asia. Certainly, the idea that the Peshawar exists as a place for white men to make themselves into heroes by serving empires on the other side of the world complements the CIA's "way of the knife" approach to covert action. Described in detail in previous chapters, the "way of the knife" (the term comes from journalist Mark Mazzetti's book of the same name) is an intelligence strategy that emphasizes violent covert action—such as targeted killings, sabotage/ disruption of supply lines, and kidnapping suspected leaders of groups either deemed or proven hostile to the U.S. This strategy, I argue, is made possible by a system of cultural pressures, bureaucratic advancement, and psycho-sexual reward I have termed "drone masculinity." Hero narratives that posit using one's individual initiative to serve the state faithfully as a core component of the definition of the hero are a key part of drone masculinity. This is why Bond grumbles, but always gets the job done; the grumbling shows he possesses a particular masculine individualism, the service shows that he willfully subordinates that masculine individualistic agency to the state (as "you" should too, potential soldier/spy/male media consumer). Orientalist self-fashioning is another way to play the hero, another set of incentives to encourage individuals

to accomplish the goals of the state. Whereas drone masculinity often depends upon the existence of the totalized category "women" so it can cast the members of that category as symbols or sexual objects, Orientalism in intelligence turns distinct and varied cultures, peoples, groups and individuals into an Other. But, and this is key, not an inscrutable Other—the ostensible expertise of the Orientalist intelligence agent means that the "Oriental Other" is considered knowable and predictable to the specialist. Nevertheless, the inhabiting Orientalist adventure narrative, whether presented in *Greenmantle* or *Kim*, the lives of men like Lawrence, Harlan, or St. John Philby, or modern-day biographers and historians who tell the history of the region through the lens of the "Soldier Sahibs", does not intuitively lead us to drone Orientalism. The illusion of close, personal knowledge provided by the "regional expert" who has travelled in the country seems at first glance an opposite kind of knowledge than the surveillance at a distance characteristic of drone use. However, the two forms of Orientalism share a similar knowledge-assumption model. Knowledge of the "regional expert" takes the place of institutional practice, allowing policy to be decided upon at a distance under the illusion of closeness; drone surveillance functions similarly—video and audio are assumed to be complete forms of knowledge, rendering on-the-ground experience as a part of general intelligence practice less prioritized.[190] Complement is not explanation though, and there is still a "how we got here" gap between an Orientalism that combines political conquest with appropriation of the "Other" for the purposes of heroic self-fashioning and the particular strain, drone Orientalism, that I wish to explore here. Part of filling in that gap involves returning more closely to spy fiction and its relation to another genre of writing: the travelogue.

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[190] Of course this is not to say that the CIA or the international intelligence community has or ever will abandon HUMINT entirely—only that the increase in SIGINT creates a sense of total knowledge and understanding that has proven misplaced.

Michael Denning in his seminal work on spy fiction *Cover Stories* argues that Ian

Fleming's Bond books re-orients the post-WWII world into a tourist's playground, dividing the

world not into the West and the Communist East, but into the center/periphery of the seat of

declining imperial power and the "pleasure periphery" in which imperialism is giving way to

neo-colonialist economies of service and tourism (105). The pleasure periphery is the zone in

which adventurous self-fashioning is possible, and Denning ignores the connection between

Bond's touristic voyeurism—his "license to look" at exotic locales, women, and spectacles—and

the pleasures of Kim's ability to assume multiple identities, or the homoerotic "vacation cruises"

(European male vacations to "exotic" locales with the intent of engaging in homosexual activity)

that critic Joseph Boone explores as essential components to Orientalist discourse around the

turn of the 20th century.[191] Likewise, Denning glosses over the use of international locales,

especially Turkey or the Ottoman Empire and other "Oriental" destinations, in British spy fiction

as liminal spaces between the "civilization" of Western Europe and the forces of chaos and

barbarity of a monolithic and inscrutable "East," which sometimes (depending on the proximity

to a world war) includes Germany. One of the patriarchs of "serious" spy fiction, Eric Ambler,

invokes Istanbul twice in this fashion, in *Journey into Fear* and *The Mask of Dimitrios,* the latter

of which Bond reads while he himself travels in Istanbul in *From Russia, With Love* (*From*

Russia 115). I assert the relevance of this lineage to bring further context to Denning's

discussion of Bond's tourist impulses, because I think Denning's point may have further

relevance than he could have known when *Cover Stories* was written in the 1980s. Denning

points to the moment in *Live and Let Die* in which Fleming quotes a tour book for several pages,

or the tedious selections of straightforward travelogue in *You Only Live Twice,* as evidence for

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[191] In his article "Vacation Cruises; or, the Homoerotics of Orientalism."

how easily the similarities between the desire of the tourist to know and the desire of the spy to

know can disrupt the generic boundaries between the two kinds of writing (103). The

comparison is a stealth insult; likening espionage to tourism undercuts the professed expertise of

the former, imagining the intelligence worker as a dilettante interested in seeing what he already

expects to find. Even when, as Denning points out, Bond gets to glimpse the

"secret worlds" of Mr. Big's Harlem (in *Live and Let Die)* or Kerim's Istanbul (in *From Russia,*

With Love), he does so as a voyeur and an outsider, as someone who does not belong and indeed,

can't belong: Kerim reminds him he is a *gajo* when they go to a gipsy camp*;* Felix Leiter warns

him that "Harlem doesn't like being stared at any more" when they go to visit Mr. Big's

nightclub (*Live and Let Die* 48). Bond's involvement in these secret worlds is thus always

temporary and conditional—he needs to go there for his work, he goes, he has a good time, he

succeeds in his mission. When one places the Bondian tourist ethos in the context of the history

of spy fiction and spy work before it, one can see that it introduces further distance between the

"expert" and his purported subject by tweaking appropriation. A discourse in which the white

imperial agent believes themselves an expert by attempting to inhabit and/or hybridize salient (or

over-salient) cultural signifiers of a "target" population is replaced by an interested

commodification of the readily apparent. By this latter term, I mean the reduction of supposed

knowledge of the Other to only that which is immediately obtainable and necessary for the

completion of the mission. For Bond, the foreign locale is something to be consumed: it is food,

picturesque views (like of "the dancing waves of the unsheltered Bosphorus"), women, and

mission-critical information (*From Russia* 124). For the tourist secret agent, "out there" still, as it

had for the imperial Orientalist, only exists in so far as it matters to the (neo)imperial center. But

what constitutes "out there" no longer requires the veneer of academic expertise to understand—

a tourist visa serves the same purpose.

Espionage as an aggressive form of tourism may have originated with Bond, but it has

endured as a feature of spy stories, films, and TV that cater to an audience's desire for escapism.

The latest *Mission Impossible* film takes its audience to Minsk, London, Washington DC,

Havana, Vienna, and Casablanca within the first hour. The genre contains a dizzying array of

exotica, displayed on page and screen for the titillation of secret agent and consumer alike. I

argue that this has impacted assumptions about intelligence work, including assumptions held by

intelligence workers themselves. The first danger that a tourist discourse carries is a lowered

research bar for decision-making. Journalist Tim Weiner relates an anecdote in which after

getting denied a briefing with the CIA before going to report on the Mujahadeen in Afghanistan

and going anyway, he was invited upon his return to CIA HQ in Langley (Gladwell). Weiner

assumed he would be intimidated, bullied, or otherwise treated heavy-handedly (as he was before

his trip) for heading to Afghanistan on his own initiative. Instead, the CIA officers and analysts

assembled for his meeting asked him to lecture on the situation in the country, as none of them

had ever been there. Relying on a stable of Orientalists (or Russia hands, or China hands, or any

other area studies grouping) to craft policy has its own drawbacks, several of which were

discussed above. However, replacing Hogarth and Lawrence's Arab Bureau with some eager

CIA agents in Langley asking Tim Weiner to talk to them about a place none of them have spent

any significant time has about the same effectiveness as classifying a Frommer's travel guide.[192]

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[192] No offense to Tim Weiner. He too was shocked at the lack of first-hand knowledge in the CIA, so much so that he was inspired to write his history of the agency *Legacy of Ashes* after getting this first-hand glimpse of the at times stunning lack of expertise in Langley. No offense to Frommer's either.

One can see how a travelogue understanding of a place may make it seem less real, less immediate in consequence or even proximity. Tourism emphasizes and advertises frictionless contact between the Self and the Other; when that discourse begins to infiltrate militarized policy, then killing becomes better as it becomes less visceral and embodied. The use of drones to advertise a location's natural beauty relies on the same conceptual framework as their more tactical uses: being there and seeing there should be as pleasurable for the tourist as possible. The more sense-data a drone provides, the less the difficult knowledge, the experiential and interpersonal knowledge that is forged and formed at great risk to all, is deemed necessary.

The tourist ethos has externalized libidinal pleasure in intelligence work, by which I mean that the pleasure of identity-assumption and appropriation have been replaced by an erotics of distance. Bond's "license to look," when translated to the work of espionage, is actually the desire to look, reframed as a national-security mandate to know the enemy. A tourist ethos insulates from too much identification with the Other by attaching the pleasure to seeing and categorizing rather than identifying and embodying. According to Danny Kaplan, in his book *Brothers and Others in Arms: The Making of Love and War in Israeli Combat Units,* once eroticization enters the picture, objectification is not far behind; in fact, "[the] eroticization of enemy targets…triggers the objectification process," (qtd. in Puar 86). Even though opposition to the objectification inherent in the tourist ethos in intelligence work is an opposition to the central power imbalance that makes that ethos possible and pleasurable, it often finds itself cast as an opposition to the tourist himself, and thus as a further mechanism of objectification. Critic Jasbir Puar argues that tourism becomes overly-virtuous when placed dialectically against terrorism: "terrorism has long been articulated as the foe of tourism, the former breeding intolerance and hatred, while the latter is constituted as a democratizing and liberalizing venture that embraces

pluralism" (Puar 64). Placing terrorism as the *ressentiment* of tourism undermines the political and social realities that inform any individual's decision to join a terroristic group, flattening coercion, political passion, economic incentivization, revolutionary ardor, etc. into irrationality or "backwardness". De-agentifying the Other in this way furthers the objectification already present in an erotics of distance.

Drone Orientalism inherits the erotics of distance from the tourist strand within the discourse of espionage. In fact, drone Orientalism exacerbates the problem, allowing the agent to indulge in objectification without even the tourist's proximity, already itself a considerable distance. This objectification is, as we would expect, dependent on erotic pleasure, visual pleasure, and violent pleasure. "Predator porn" is a genre of video passed around by drone operators and other military and intelligence personnel that capitalize on the drone's constant recordings. The videos feature everything from nudity and sex recorded by surveillance drones, to sweeping natural vistas filmed in a panoptical fashion, to particularly graphic and visceral acts of violence, both drone strikes and violence committed by people on the ground (Gusterson 64). The objectification of Predator porn undoubtedly serves a dark purpose: allowing for the drone operators to see the people in the camera's eye as less than the same kind of human as the pilots, as a kind of human-thing, silly and awkward in its desire to fuck, kill, or escape death. Predator porn presents the regions of the world in which drones operate as places of spectacle, places peripheral to the global world order and free to have their people, geography, and to some extent their cultural difference mined for libidinal and voyeuristic pleasure. In other words, as tourist zones too dangerous for embodied Western tourism.

The PlayStation Mentality and War at a Distance

I am suggesting that a particular discursive structure, drone Orientalism, is influencing intelligence and military policy, and that drone Orientalism cannot be analyzed without attending to the legacy of other strands of Orientalism it has inherited, such as the metaphorical slipperiness between witnessing and understanding from scholastic Orientalism or the voyeuristic libidinal pleasure of tourist Orientalism. However, this position is not the only critical one to take. For example, critics like the *Guardian* newspaper's Philip Alston and Hina Shamsi or journalist Pratap Chatterjee, argue that a kind of "PlayStation mentality[193]" is responsible for the sometime callous disregard of other human beings that we see in drone warfare at large (71). In an International Red Cross report critical of civilian casualties by drone operators, "PlayStation mentality" is made into a biological argument: "'advanced technologies which permit killing at a distance or on the computer screen prevent the activation of neuro-psychological mechanisms which render the act of killing difficult" (qtd. in Gusterson 71). The PlayStation mentality argues that it is the distance in the killing at a distance of drone warfare that matters. Art historian Jane Blocker in her essay "Aestheticizing Risk in Wartime: The SLA to Iraq" comes to a similar conclusion. Blocker uses the phrase "risk transfer" to refer to how an artist gets a reputation as a "fearless risk-taker by transferring the risk to those around him or her" (Nelson 129). Blocker's essay goes on to argue that risk transfer "also applies to the West's current method of waging war, in which bodily risk gets transferred to the populations of other, faraway countries; the costs, to future generations" (129). While Blocker does not directly consider drone warfare or the PlayStation mentality in the article, drones are perhaps the best

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[193] The wording is Philip Alston's and Hina Shamsi's from *The Guardian;* Chatterjee calls it "desktop killing" but seems to mean the same thing.

representation of risk transfer as she is defining it in relation to military policy. Drones are built

to accomplish missions that are best described by one of the "3 Ds": dangerous, dirty, or dull

(Singer 63). Their entire point is to remove human actors from the consequences of those

missions—and here I mean consequences in the sense of physical harm, but also in the sense of

moral harm and moral hazard—while continuing the U.S.'s reputation as dangerous to its

enemies. The ability to follow targets for days, learn their habits, and kill them when you choose,

all from a screen thousands of miles away, is unprecedented in the history of war. The distance

between actor(s) and action, and the displacement of that action onto a metal, disposable,

replaceable body instead of the pilot's human one must affect the psychological and moral

decision-making by the pilot, the drone support staff,[194] and the higher-ranked architects of drone

missions. Drones encourage aggression because the consequences for the aggressors are only

metal and the consequences for the targets are flesh. We would thus expect to see that drones are

downed at a much higher rate than traditional aircraft, due to this aggressive proximity to targets

and the pilot's lack of sense of personal stakes in the operation—it's not their body that suffers—

and this is in fact the case (Whitlock).

But the phrasing "PlayStation mentality" implies a relation between simulation and actual

killings—that drone pilots see their control of the drone as if it were a video game. This might

make us wonder about the contributions of video games themselves to this mindset. Indeed,

video games like the *Call of Duty* series have been implicated in the desensitization of the

American public to the military interventions it sanctions. These games are first-person shooters,

in which the player sees through the eyes of an American soldier, and the enemies are a near-

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[194] Drone warfare is extremely decentralized, and it is usual for each drone to have half a dozen
personnel responsible for different components of one mission like surveillance, research,
weather, etc.

infinite pool of brown (and sometimes Eastern European or Russian) faces that the player kills with super-heroic skill and moral abandon. No actual soldier has anywhere close to the kill-count of the fictional protagonists of the modern military first person shooter. It is a powerful fantasy of agency that relies on chauvinistic "us vs them" tropes and rhetoric to bolster a pencil-thin narrative of a world in crisis, only solvable by you, the player. One could imagine that the dehumanization inherent in tying plot advancement and/or a high score to killing stereotyped enemies conditions players to expect professional advancement and/or pay raises for doing likewise, even without the games themselves directly involving drones. But as war has changed in the 21st century, war video games have changed with it, and so drone use and drone warfare are now explicitly represented in digital form. After the game *Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare* introduced drone warfare to the first-person shooter genre, it has now become common to find copycat scenarios in which the player's virtual avatar pilots a drone, and the perspective shifts from the human, ground-level display to the drone's sky-high view. Enemies appear as blobs of heat, and the player must use the drone's offensive capabilities to extinguish these "blobs" so that they can advance in the story. If one buys the "PlayStation mentality" argument, these sections are the key piece of evidence. As anthropologist Antonius Robben claims, there exists an "ambivalence of enemies as both human and virtual" in drone warfare that prevents something like empathy from forming, and this implies exposure to virtual enemies in order to feel the ambivalence (qtd. in Gusterson 75). I would frame a strong version of the PlayStation argument like this: just as the players of *Call of Duty* during these drone sections of the game feel a sense of completion at progressing through the section, so drone pilots each time they pull the trigger feel nothing at best, or, at worst, joy and fulfillment at accomplishing an objective. Not for nothing, the latest *Call of Duty* game is subtitled "Infinite Warfare." That feels to me to

be darkly prophetic, and I agree that there are some aspects of this argument that demand further research. But I do not believe that it is distance alone or a combination of distance and the technologically-facilitated ambivalence between real and virtual targets that fully captures the complicated relation between drone pilots, support staff, machine, and the people of Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Yemen and Libya above whom drones circle. I argue that this relation is better captured by drone Orientalism, to which the PlayStation mentality contributes and is itself shaped by.

Ultimately, a strong, causal, assertion that the distancing and dehumanization of video games can be seen as analogous, and not merely contributory, to the distancing and dehumanization of drone warfare proves makes a stronger claim than reality bears out. Evidence like the existence of Predator porn clearly points to a dehumanization of those in front of the robotic camera by those behind it. However, we also find several cases in which drone pilots refuse to fire despite being given the order, a difficult decision if they were biologically or behaviorally conditioned to an almost Pavlovian degree, but more understandable if instead they were navigating a cultural discourse (79). Additionally, there is substantial evidence of the incidence of trauma-related stress disorders among drone pilots caused by the mental incongruity of war at a distance: a 2011 Pentagon study of 840 drone operators "found that 46-48% experienced high levels of 'operational stress,' with 17% 'clinically distressed,' and 4% experiencing full-blown PTSD" (79). [195] Additionally, interviews with drone pilots indicate that many are keenly aware that they are not playing a game; one explicitly commented that "we feel

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[195] As Hugh Gusterson points out, this is less incidence than ground troop levels, however there is a prevalent belief among Armed Forces personnel that drone pilots can't experience PTSD (because they aren't "real" combatants) that may skew reported numbers and disincentives drone pilots from seeking a diagnosis.

it [the strike], maybe not to the same degree [as] if we were actually there, but it affects

us…When you let a missile go, you know that's real life—there's no reset button" (75). This

data suggests that the guilt-reduction mechanisms of the PlayStation mentality, or Blocker's risk

transfer, or the erotics of distance I describe above, are not biological commandments, but

cultural incentives, ways to feel less guilt about one's actions that are more or less convincing

relative to an individual's experience with them. It is their simultaneous presence rooted within

the institution of drone warfare that collectively makes drone use so seductive a tool—a many-

faceted discourse is much harder to avoid and counter.

The last point against the idea that the "PlayStation mentality" alone is not responsible

for the dehumanization we find in the drone bombing campaigns of the War on Terror is a point

about the source of the phrase itself. Video games are not a monolith and laying the blame for

warfare at a distance on the brain's relation to digital representation in video games *in toto*

undersells the form. Some video games, even some war games, seek to increase empathy and

recognition of the incongruity between the digital representation and the reality represented. For

example, the 2012 game *Spec Ops: The Line* attempts to deconstruct first person shooters like

Call of Duty, including the use of drones and remote warfare. One scene in the game begins very

similarly to what one would see in a more traditional modern military action game—the

protagonist (controlled by the player) and his squad are behind enemy lines, beset on all sides by

hostiles in a fictionalized and war-torn Dubai. Finding their way forward blocked, the player and

the protagonist must mutually decide to use white phosphorous in order to progress; it's an

illusory choice though, as refusing to use the chemical weapon is tantamount to turning the game

off and giving it away, since there *is* actually no way to proceed without it. The player's display

transforms to the drone view that the protagonist is using it to aim the white phosphorous mortar rounds:

Figure 13: The Drone-View from *Spec Ops: The Line*

Here you see the thermal blobs of people and vehicles, and the player/protagonist—for by changing the screen to this view, the difference between the two becomes very small—must extinguish those blobs. In a *Call of Duty* game, that would be that. But *Spec Ops* does something different; the way forward is after all through the area that was just bombed, and so the squad must progress through the carnage they just caused. The results are gruesome, and as they progress, the protagonist and the player (again, intentionally conflated by the mechanics of the game) come to a haunting realization: the white blobs they extinguished were not all, or even mostly, military targets; they were civilians seeking shelter.

Figure 14: Civilians burned by white phosphorous in *Spec Ops*

Spec Ops attempts to reattach a humanity to the white blobs of drone surveillance and a human cost to the dehumanization of war at a distance. It does so by shock factor, and this means that, unfortunately, the people of the Middle East are still being used as a prop, as dead and burned bodies meant to evoke moral guilt and a sense that war is horrible in the player. Nevertheless, games like *Spec Ops* demonstrate that particular aspects of a video game matter; since video games are themselves cultural products, this suggests that something beyond biological mechanism is at work—the PlayStation mentality does not explain drone Orientalism fully in its application or its contradictions (like the high level of combat stress among drone pilots). The PlayStation mentality, as a fusion of cultural bias and biological response, is undoubtedly a part of the discourse (possibly even a particularly salient and conscripting aspect of it) but it is not drone Orientalism's totality nor does it totalize the men and women presumably under its thrall. Drone Orientalism has arisen out of a particular history of Orientalism within military and intelligence work and out of particular technological circumstances. Both are necessary components, neither sufficient on their own. The technological and bureaucratic design in drone surveillance and drone warfare are the material and logistical structures that facilitate the enacting of a specific ideological structure. But the reverse is also true—the ideology and erotics of distance influence the design of drone technology and policy. For drone Orientalism to have entered into policy in the way that it has—i.e. as a hegemonic (though not omnipotent) discursive force—the biological, behavioral, technological, bureaucratic, cultural and ideological components must find resonances and points of contact with each other, pushing and pulling at each other until they together form an incentivizing discourse, one that has seemingly captured the imaginations of those responsible for crafting policy in the "War on Terror."

Over the last few pages, I have traced how different strands of Orientalist thought and philosophy within the culture of espionage have found new expression in the technological possibilities of drone warfare, a phenomenon I call drone Orientalism. Not incidentally, this has also led me to making the claim that Orientalism itself, despite the totalizing impulse within it, has not been a monolithic, eternal discourse. Rather, what scholars call "Orientalism" at a given time is a snapshot of a multi-headed and fluid discourse, one that has proven stubbornly difficult to remove due to its adaptability to changing social and cultural situations. The particular tropes and heuristics emphasized by a specific Orientalist strain invariably fit the needs and wants of the institutions and individuals powerful enough to control that strain of discourse. Given that Orientalism as Said defined it is not based on some kind of discoverable, objective reality, but rather the subjective judgments, stereotypes, and knowledges of its interpreters in the West, that what is determined Orientalism itself has multiple branches, offshoots, and permutations tied to shifting priorities and incentives should not be too surprising. Nor, though it may seem counter-intuitive, do I take Orientalism's fluid history as a sign of its invincibility. Quite the opposite in fact; I hope that the malleable nature of Orientalism is a sign that cultural discourses are somewhat less than eternal. If cultural discourses can be influenced and changed even as it itself influences and changes, then perhaps we can change them for the better or dismiss them entirely. Regrettably, when it comes to the discursive structures categorized under the umbrella of "Orientalism", we still find stereotype, hasty judgments, appropriation, and exploitation. As I argue here, the consequences of this discourse are urgent to address. We must find a way to counter the dehumanizing discourse of drone Orientalism within our military and intelligence organizations. Drone warfare as it is currently practiced fails to recognize and protect civilian life, creates more resentment of the U.S. abroad, further reinforces the imperialist boundaries

between nations in which drone warfare is allowable and those it is not, affronts a human right to

privacy, and has poorly understood psychological consequences for the drone pilots themselves.

Drones hold out the promise of more precise and less risky warfare, ostensibly for both sides—

the aggressor does not risk human life, while the precision of drone surveillance ensures that

only the "guilty" are punished. However, as long as drone use is enmeshed in the Othering

discourse of drone Orientalism, it cannot be anything more than a technology of trauma,

incapable of the objectivity and precision it promises.

Coda

Perhaps there is time for one last spy story. In 1985, Nick Deak, a CIA agent and financier known as the "James Bond of money," was killed ostensibly at random by a 44 year-old homeless woman (Ames and Zaitchik). Deak had founded a Wall Street investment firm in 1947 with the express purpose of laundering money and investing on behalf of the fledgling American intelligence community. His fingerprints can be found over many covert operations throughout the second half of the 20th century, from funding South American dictatorships and drug cartels to bribing the Japanese government to buy Lockheed fighter jets via the yakuza (Ames and Zaitchik). Very few believe that Deak's killing was accidental. Conspiracy theories abound. The woman who killed him, Lois Lang, seemed to be staking out the offices all morning. At one point committed to a mental institution in Washington state, Lang was under the care of a psychiatrist implicated in the CIA's brain-washing program MK-Ultra (Ames and Zaitchik). After shooting Deak in his office hallway, she reportedly said "Now you've got yours," (Ames and Zaitchik). Lang was arrested and maintained that she was instructed to kill Deak, but could not clearly say by who, when, or how. She was forcibly institutionalized, where she remains today (Ames and Zaitchik). I bring up this story because it touches upon so much of what I have tried to outline over the past 360 or so pages. Deak and people like him were the architects of the transition of the CIA from Truman's news service to the massive bureaucracy focused on covert action it is today. The money he handled fueled the expansion of drone masculinity, and his own nickname—the "James Bond of money"—demonstrates how

influential of a reference point Bond was during the Cold War. Keep in mind that Deak was called this by his intelligence worker colleagues; spies are themselves steeped in the cultural discourse of espionage. And, of course, the conspiracy theories surrounding Deak's death make the event itself into a kind of spy fiction, blurring the boundary between real and fake, classified and unclassifiable.

But this story is also quite sad. Lois Lang is potentially a woman with profound mental delusions, a woman who was brainwashed by the CIA or one of Deak's many enemies, or both. She is a victim herself, certainly of the broken-down mental health social safety net of the 1980s and potentially of her own country's intelligence service or foreign actors wanting to eliminate Deak. Deak was 84-years-old when he was killed. Perhaps, one might argue, these are the violent acts he helped fund coming home to roost, either directly (because it was a political assassination) or karmically (if it was coincidental). But striking down an 84-year-old in his office doesn't sound approximate killing Bond in his prime. It certainly isn't as dramatic as the death traps Bond has had prepared for his demise over the years. Reality, strange as it can be, rarely ever forces us through super-heated corridors only to force us to fight a giant squid at the end.[196]

I point out both the summative aspects of this incident and the tragic ones in order to discuss the limits, subversions, and alternatives to the espionage mindset that I have spent the rest of the dissertation describing. Deak was an integral part in the planning and financing of covert action. He contributed directly to an intelligence community that valorized spectacular results over the quiet work of intelligence-gathering. His death, whether assassination or random act of violence, did not slow or stall that culture in the least. This is because the espionage

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[196] This happens to Bond at the climax of *Dr. No.*

mindset is not an individual psychology, but an institutional culture. It adheres as a common frame of reference for decision-making across the boundaries of an individual mind. This makes it influential, but it also means that it isn't totalizing. No one figure—not Deak, not Raymond Davis, not even James Bond—embodies the totality of a cultural discourse. One can read every Bond novel in the search for a perfect expression of drone masculinity and be disappointed; nevertheless, as I hope I have shown, the character is integral to the formation of this instrumentalist attitude within the culture of espionage. The myth of Bond, like the myth of T.E. Lawrence or the myth of Kim Philby (and those are all quite different myths), seems to matter much more than the details. The complexities of the figures, texts, and events that become the common references for explaining espionage, even to intelligence workers themselves, get lost in the referencing. This is what I described as the "cultural lattice," that network of the most common reference points within a cultural discourse that have had an outsized impact on the actions and justifications of actors within it. When intelligence agents "play James Bond," they are using the cultural symbolic power of Bond as a reference point, not because they are brainwashed or automatons, but because they are influenced by the salient components of Bond's mythic example—his effectiveness, his swagger, his loyalty, his initiative (Mazzeti 82). When intelligence workers reference Bond, as the British SIS did in Iraq, they hope to borrow his cultural idea as a kind of messaging, a signaling to their superiors and the public that they are mythic as well (Albion 214). The cultural lattice is a part of a conversation; specifically, it is the part of the conversation that everyone keeps coming back to. The conversation is much larger than the nodes of the lattice, but the terms in the cultural discourse that become important enough to shape both public and institutional ideas of espionage work have gotten that way because they do some kind of work for the "havers"—the interlocutors—of the conversation.

In other words, if a term has become a part of the cultural lattice, it is because it is useful, not because the lattice itself is deterministic. There is nothing inevitable about drone masculinity, but I hope I have shown how its history—or the history of conspiracy, or of drone orientalism, etc.—has been tied to cultural forces just as much as political ones. Lois Lang may have been brainwashed, but I don't think any one cultural script can completely overwrite the will of an unwilling participant. But the nodes of the cultural lattice that the public understanding of espionage rests upon have proven useful as incentivizers and influencers. Espionage is hardly the only profession one might be attracted to because of a cultural representation. But while cultural representations of lawyers such as the TV show *Suits* may inspire people to become lawyers, they don't affect the practice of law itself—if *Suits* did, the legal profession would be the most melodramatic affair imaginable. Espionage is a special case because of its intensely secret nature and the wide latitude provided to intelligence agencies under a national security aegis. The former ensures that 1) future intelligence agents have primarily cultural representations of the profession as their reference pools before starting; and 2) bureaucratic compartmentalization within intelligence work prevents easy lesson-learning, as the proverbial left hand not knowing what the right hand does means mistakes are repeated. Thus, the culture of "bright, highly graded young men who must be doing something all the time to justify their reason for being" (Weiner 135). The latter point—the excuse of national security—ensures that what the "something" is that intelligence workers do can be nearly anything they can imagine. Spies are inherently spy fiction authors; some complete the process and publish a novel (or start a TV show as *The Americans'* Joe Weisberg did), others enact their plots on the world stage.

This concerns me, and has driven my interest in studying spy fiction and its relation to espionage practice. Spy fiction seems uniquely poised among genre fictions because the "there"

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it purports to represent is actually a thing, a political reality and process, while at the same time a secret, intentionally obscured from the public--a public that includes the members of intelligence agencies themselves. No one knows the full picture, and so many segments of that picture get filled in by culture. But again, this in and of itself is not so unique. The "secret" Orient drew T.E. Lawrence and Richard Burton and countless others to it, and their desire "to be in the know" became a performance of knowing, a self-narrative of surety. Or, looking at a domestic issue, the "unknown" of racial relations has informed cultural depictions of African American culture throughout Hollywood's history. If a secret is considered worth knowing—and many secrets in espionage are considered so, for example, there is considerable strategic advantage that knowing how a nation's intelligence agencies operate, or in knowing how the "Other" acts or behaves in general—is it any wonder that in the absence of experiential revelation we create apparati of imagination? As I have studied the cultural discourse of espionage, I have come to question whether or not these apparati, these attempts to understand a secret world, are mystifications or indicators that the secrecy of espionage is hiding an emptiness, a performativity of rules and structures when really there is only gamesmanship. As an example of what I mean by this, let us briefly consider sheep-dipping, discussed in Chapter 2 and more in-depth in Chapter 4. Sheep-dipping is a bureaucratic solution to a bureaucratic problem—it is the deputation of Special Forces personnel as CIA agents so that they can legally operate in a country with which the U.S. is not currently at war. Plainly, this is sleight of hand. If the law preventing Army personnel from operating in non-combatant zones cannot stop sheep-dipping, what good is it? Whose legal system does this practice make a mockery of? The CIA and the Army engage in sheep-deeping because they want to enact a certain mission—the pro forma legality of the paperwork filled out in order to deputize soldiers is a performance of legal ethics, nothing more. I quoted in Chapter 2

former intelligence officials Victor Marchetti and John D. Marks, who said of espionage that "[t]here is no need to wrestle with technical legalisms or judgments as to whether something is right or wrong. The determining factors in secret operations are purely pragmatic" (qtd. in Cawelti and Rosenberg 15). In such an environment, we can't expect intelligence agencies to hold themselves accountable. At least, we have not been able to so far. So what can we do in order to build a more just, more humane, and yes, more effective[197] intelligence agency?

Perhaps the special power of cultural representation as it relates to espionage must also be a part of any solutions. After all, as I have argued throughout this dissertation, culture bears some responsibility for an incentivization and facilitation of abuses of ethics within intelligence work. It is only fitting that the makers and consumers of that culture take some role in changing the nature of that influence. Remember, espionage and its attendant discourse have not been static. Cultural representation led the way in conditioning the public to expect spies like Bond instead of Hannay. In Chapter 5, I examined a few alternate masculinities that might help us to move on from drone masculinity. These alternates—Jason Bourne, George Smiley, Victor Maskell, and the specific Bond as Daniel Craig portrays him—have a cultural presence, but are far cries from the mythical figure that Bond has been over most of the 20th century. More work needs to be done in understanding how fictional characters become mythic, or, relatedly, how individual aspects of culture coalesce into a node in the cultural lattice. This work has not been the

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[197] I do not believe that a more just intelligence agency is inherently less effective, nor am I alone in this opinion. Alasteir Crooke, a former MI6 officer whose nickname is "the peacemaker spy," argues that the manhunting and killing characteristic of modern intelligence makes intelligence agencies less effective, as potential assets are eliminated instead of converted (Grey 242). A more just intelligence agency will also lead to better mental health for intelligence agents. CIA agent John Stockwell remarks: "You can't spend your life bribing people, seducing people into committing treason, betraying their own movements, sometimes betraying their own families— and that's the nice-guy stuff—and come away a healthy, whole person whatever your rationales are" (Knightley 388)

traditional aim of literary scholars, but I think there are advantages to expanding our concept of literary criticism away from the narrow close-readings and to do more cultural analysis. Literary critique as a tool is itself under review, and one of the loudest criticisms of it is a perceived lack of relevance. As scholar Mark Wollaeger writes in a recent letter in *PMLA*:

> Many of us would like to believe that our critiques of contemporary structures of power, particularly in the age of Trump, can gain traction beyond the university. The sad fact is that few do, and it is not pleasant to be reminded of the possibility that our efforts to intervene in society through literary criticism may amount to little more than well-intentioned yet routinized gestures. (222)

Engaging with culture more broadly defined may help extend the academic's reach outside of the ivory tower. It has been a while since literature departments used critique to advocate for some works over others, as we instead seek to better contextualize and understand works on their own terms. I don't think this has done much but sequester us within our academic audiences. I think we can use the tools of literary criticism to make arguments to and for the public at large.

For one, we can argue that aspects of cultural representation are not harmless, and demonstrate why, as this dissertation seeks to have done. For example, exploring how different kinds of masculinities are shaped by cultural representations can help us interrogate the cultural origins and influences of gender roles more broadly. Both the homosocial masculinity of Richard Hannay and the drone masculinity of Mark Mazzetti's "way of the knife" reveal a kind of thread in masculinity itself that prizes being useful. Culture helps shape the way that thread is expressed—it sets the available possibilities of "usefulness." This means that the culture of masculinity can and has been shaped differently than it is now. This holds for espionage itself. Perhaps figures that question drone masculine narratives, whether fictional (Victor Maskell) or

actual (Chelsea Manning) can push the cultural discourse of espionage away from Bond and his imitators. Or perhaps the record number of women who have joined the CIA since the agency was sued for sex discrimination in the mid-1990s can ultimately oust the remnants of the old boys' network (Shapira). Or, then again, maybe locating the potential for political agency within any gender role is misguided or doomed to fail. Any of these possibilities require cultural back-up to be successful; in order to change spycraft, the public has to consider different possibilities for spycraft. As scholars and critics, we can leverage our expertise for the uncovering and advocating for new arrangements of genres, forms, and tropes to disrupt the institutional rigidity of a cultural lattice. Any cultural discourse is larger and more fluid than the piece of it that becomes routinized and rigid through constant reference. We can and should use cultural analysis to position disruptions to easy frames of reference—garden gnomes that unsettle the cultural latticework. *24* needs not to be the "go-to" understanding of enhanced interrogation and torture for the public at large. Critics need to be involved in that disentangling. Of course, academia is not a monolith, nor is there a vast and empty "public" out there waiting to be filled with "the right kind of ideas" about culture. Encouraging individual scholars to make arguments that include proscriptions or prescriptions invites vigorous disagreement and debate. To this, I say good—at least let's make it a more public debate, a more inclusive and more meaningful one.

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