

Intelligence Officer's Bookshelf—June 2023

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Current Issues

The American Surveillance State: How the U.S. Spies on Dissent, by David H. Price (Pluto Press, 2022) 353 pages, endnotes, bibliography, index.

After publishing his book *Anthropological Intelligence*,^a which examined the contributions of anthropologists to the OSS, OWI, and the FBI during WWII, anthropologist David Price began studying their interactions with intelligence agencies during the Cold War. *The American Surveillance State* presents some results of his investigations.

Price recognizes that state surveillance is not new and in a historical review acknowledges the Soviet Union and East Germany set the gold standard while barely mentioning China. But it is the United States on which he focuses as the strong contemporary threat with its principal intelligence agencies the FBI, NSA, and CIA, subjecting civilians in general and anthropologists in particular to “unthinkable levels of surveillance.” The reasons for such scrutiny, he explains, lie in the “political economic structures within the American capitalist-military-industrial economy that nurtures and profits from these limitations to freedom.” (viii)

The dominant role in *The American Surveillance State* goes to “Hoover’s FBI, and the abusive history of surveillance that he [sic] spawned as an inevitable development

of twentieth century capitalism. . . a system devoted to protecting the inherent inequalities of Capital and the American political economic system.” (9–10) In support of this view Price quotes CIA defector Philip Agee’s comments that CIA functions as the “secret police of American capitalism.” (11)

Then after a rehash of intelligence agency surveillance abuses revealed by the Church Committee and references to the Edward Snowden’s NSA leaks, Prices presents a series of case studies of radical dissident—some might say far-left or fellow traveling—anthropologists describing “seven decades” of what he clearly feels is excessive, unjustified, and damaging surveillance. (290)

The American Surveillance State cautiously reflects that “some of the illegal practices of Hoover’s FBI no longer routinely occur” and that “the FBI of the 1950s is not the FBI in the 2020s” though in some ways “little has changed.” (291) Nevertheless, Price’s overall assessments of pervasive surveillance are politically tainted, are not persuasive, and do not support his contention of the United States as a surveillance state now or in the past.

Hacker, Influencer, Faker, Spy: Intelligence Agencies in the Digital Age, by Robert Dover (Hurst & Company, 2022) 342 pages, endnotes, end of chapter references, index.

Most books with “intelligence” in their titles reveal some surprises in the story told. The surprise in *Hacker, Influencer, Faker, Spy* is that it was published. The proof is in the reading with its impenetrable prose by University of Hull professor of intelligence and national security Robert Dover. The following introductory comments illustrate the point:

To sit alongside intelligence officials is to quickly lose the simplicity that characterises the mission, be it avoiding surprises, or identifying, containing and

rolling back threats. It is to become immersed in the self-referential maze of their operating environment: from the impenetrable jargon, through to the difficulty of forming coalitions of the willing, bureaucratic turf wars and resource conflicts to enact reforms or transformation, to the political positioning of the agencies, the individuals within them, or the very business of intelligence itself. This weight of complexity creates a fog of ambiguity for those trying to communicate what intelligence is, what it does, and how it does it. It prevents them describing what role and influence

a. David H. Price, *Anthropological Intelligence: The Deployment and Neglect of American Anthropology in the Second World War* (Duke University Press, 2008)

intelligence has on our politics and on the individual citizen's relationship with intelligence agencies. (2)

Dover goes on to suggest what informs public understanding of intelligence:

The books, documentaries, social media feeds and other information sources that aim to improve the public's understanding of intelligence have been framed around two basic tropes: the first is a steady conservatism around the description of intelligence organisations and processes, whilst being accompanied by a drip-feed of positive and negative operational details. The second is the show-stopper revelation that generates public discussion. (3)

He cites Peter Wright's memoir *Spycatcher* as an example of the second trope before going on to assert a geographical bias to his position that he never justifies:

Intelligence activity exists to defend and advance the status quo ante. It is a tool for protecting and projecting power and it has successfully managed the politics of the Global South for at least seventy years... the vast majority of commentary about intelligence equates to retelling the partial stories of the British and American intelligence communities and that the academic and commentariat fields fail to acknowledge the aggressive centrality of the Anglosphere to the global intelligence picture: this is a reinforcing

set of actors and narratives that seeks to entrench the dominance of the Global North. (3-4)

While it might be expected that the book discusses the four topics named in the title, the reality will disappoint. "Hackers" are only mentioned twice and Dover argues that "there is a persuasive school of thought that state-sponsored hackers ... are engaged in the wholesale theft of private data." (285) "Influencer" appears once and "Faker" not at all. "Spy" and its various common forms are found throughout but mainly in two chapters that assert spy fiction, in its various forms, makes an "important contribution" to real-world intelligence.

Dover includes lengthy comments on modern intelligence as influenced by the internet, the potential of artificial intelligence and the prospects of quantum computers. He also discusses the importance of open sources, a concept he seems to think is new to the profession, a frequent misconception. But in general, his conclusion that "government intelligence has been disrupted by the development and widespread adoption of the internet and other networked communications" is difficult to accept from the evidence presented. (300)

Hacker, Influencer, Faker, Spy is thoroughly documented with reputable sources, but whether Dover has interpreted them properly is in doubt. (For another perspective of this book see Graham Alexander review on page 55.)

Spy Fail: Foreign Spies, Moles, Saboteurs, and the Collapse of America's Counterintelligence, by James Bamford (Twelve, 2023) 482 pages, endnotes, index.

After serving three years in the US Navy as an intelligence analyst assigned to NSA in Hawaii, James Bamford earned a JD at Suffolk University Law School, a postgraduate diploma from the British Institute of International and Comparative Law from the Sorbonne in Paris, and became a whistleblower for the Church Committee on an NSA program that involved illegally eavesdropping on US citizens. His first book, *The Puzzle Palace: A Report on NSA, America's Most Secret Intelligence Agency*, brought him threats of prosecution, journalistic awards and considerable notoriety. He would go on to write two other books on NSA. His most recent work, *Spy Fail*, as its subtitle suggests, addresses some well-known espionage-related topics, though NSA is not forgotten.

Spy Fail summarizes many US intelligence and security problems, human and technical, experienced from about 2000 to 2022. In Bamford's words, "I discovered dangerous incompetence and vast politicization," attributes that become the thematic focus of the book. (ix) Many of his examples occurred under Presidents Obama and Trump, when the country "became flooded with spies and covert operators." Others occurred in 2016 when "foreign moles went completely undetected and were able to penetrate the very highest levels of both the Trump and Clinton campaigns." Furthermore, writes Bamford, "the FBI's own counterintelligence division...was penetrated almost continuously for nearly forty years, until just recently, by both Russian and Chinese moles." *Spy Fail* offers detailed examples of other supposed penetrations by "adversaries like North Korea, and allies such as Israel and the United

Arab Emirates” that have received “little or no press coverage.” Perhaps the most unsettling account states that “because of dangerous leaks at the highest levels of CIA, the United States lost its most valuable spy in Russia—Oleg Smolenkov—an agent-in-place in President Putin’s Kremlin office.” (x-xi, 355)

Allowing for a degree of hyperbole—if “moles went completely undetected” he would not know about them—Bamford provides lengthy discussions of problem operations. A particularly serious one concerned North Korea’s acquisition of NSA’s most “powerful and potentially deadly cyberweapons in history—three-quarters of their entire arsenal.” (41) Bamford’s complex account of how this happened involves moles in NSA, Russian cyber elements—private and government—Cyber Command, and the FBI.

Turning to Bamford’s charge of “vast politicization,” the key examples involve Israeli agents of influence—one a major Hollywood producer—working in support of Israel and Prime Minister Netanyahu with tacit US support. In

his extensive accounts of these undertakings Bamford’s pro-Palestinian views are striking.

In his introduction Bamford claims that “*Spy Fail* is the first book to take a close look at this vast breakdown of America’s counterespionage system” and that the operations described have one common denominator: “They have succeeded where the U.S. counterspies and intelligence agencies have failed.” But that is not quite accurate. First, at least two cases he describes, one NSA penetration and the CIA mole in Russia, were resolved. Second, other cases were dealt with, just not as rapidly as Bamford wished. Finally, Bamford does not recognize that most of the problems he identifies were not due to counterintelligence failures, but rather, were the result of personnel security issues; matters of individual trust for which there is no absolute deterrent.

Spy Fail draws on government and secondary sources and is an interesting overview. But it does not support that charge that America’s counterintelligence operations collapsed.

History

The Bletchley Park Codebreakers: In Their Own Words, by Joel Greenberg (Greenhill Books, 2022) 334 pages, endnotes, photos, index.

The ULTRA Secret (1974)^a was the first book to reveal that British codebreaking and codemaking had been conducted at Bletchley Park (BP) during WWII, but it provided few procedural or organizational details. Gordon Welchman’s *The Hut Six Story*^b (1982) was the first to do that, and many other memoirs and historical accounts have followed. SIGINT historian Joel Greenberg tells the BP story from different perspective: letters exchanged by some who served there.

Greenberg supplements the more than 100 letters reproduced with background commentary. This includes its WWI predecessor organizations, leaders, and the events that led to the location of the Government Code and Cypher School (GC&CS)—then its official name—at Bletchley Park.

Many of the letters—wartime and postwar—show how the men and women of BP “tested each other’s reminiscences against their own.” (xii) They deal with recruitment, supply, technology, personnel assignments, managerial challenges, security issues and traffic analysis. Greenberg adds important biographical and administrative detail to each subject. For example, he reports the critical comments by “Dilly” Knox, Cambridge classics scholar turned cryptographer and former member of the WWI codebreaking element Room 40, about A. G. Denniston the serving head of Bletchley Park, in a letter to “C”, the head of MI6: “Neither Commander Denniston’s friends, if any, expected, nor his many enemies feared, that on the outbreak of war such responsibilities should be left in hands so incapable.” (xiii) Greenberg goes on to paint Denniston in a far more favorable light.

Margret Rock, a cryptographer who worked with Knox, spoke little about her BP work, but her wartime letters to her mother give a sense of day-to-day life at BP. (40) After the war she joined GCHQ and worked on Soviet ciphers.

a. Frederick W. Winterbotham, *The ULTRA Secret* (HarperCollins, 1974)

b. Gordon Welchman, *The Hut Six Story: Breaking the Enigma Codes* (McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1982)

Greenberg gives credit to the Polish contribution to breaking Enigma encryptions and clarifies the roles of Alan Turing and Gordon Welchman in the refinement of the Polish Bomba machines—called Bombes by the British—that sped up the decryption process.

There is also coverage of British correspondence with US and Canadian Allies. William F. Friedman, at the time the US Army chief cryptanalyst, corresponded with Denniston and Welchman during and after the war. OSS officer William Bundy exchanged letters with Welchman in 1981 concerning what turned out to be his very controversial book. (195)

Covert Radio Agents 1939–1945: Signals From Behind Enemy Lines, by David Hebditch (Pen & Sword, 2021) 301 pages, endnotes, bibliography, photos, index.

The cover of *Covert Radio Agents* will be familiar to CIA officers and visitors to cia.gov. It reproduces a painting at CIA Headquarters showing former CIA officer Virginia Hall operating a clandestine radio behind enemy lines for OSS during WWII. It also symbolizes the efforts of all Allied radio agents, a central theme of David Hebditch's book.

The ability to communicate with headquarters and support elements is an indispensable high-risk component of any clandestine operation. And while the function is mentioned in most books and articles on the subject, it is seldom the featured topic. *Covert Radio Agents* departs from that practice and presents examples of clandestine radio operators performing in all theaters of WWII.

Since many of the special operations were undertaken by the British Special Operations Executive (SOE) and the OSS, Hebditch tells how the former was instrumental in training the wireless operators of the latter. Then he gives examples of their wartime contributions. Although he does not ignore those discussed in other accounts, here he includes many of the lesser knowns.

The story of French-speaking Herbert Brucker is an interesting example. Trained by both OSS and SOE, he became the wireless operator for a Jedburgh team and was dropped into France the day before the D-Day invasion on June 6, 1944. (3ff)

An important Canadian contribution came from Benjamin Deforest “Pat” Bayly, a wartime communications expert recruited by Sir William Stephenson's MI6 station in New York. He invented a new encryption machine for teleprinter traffic, which was christened the “Rockex.” (195)

The Bletchley Park Codebreakers will be of great interest to those who wonder about wartime life at Britain's best known SIGINT organization.

The need for information about occupied Norway caused the British Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) to recruit and train two Norwegian exiles, Atle Svardal and Dagfinn Ulriksen. Hebditch tells how they served as espionage agents and handled their own wireless communications.

The Soviets also had communication problems and Hebditch gives a detailed account of the Red Orchestra (Die Rote Kapelle) a GRU network in Europe and Switzerland. Though interesting, there is nothing new here as it is based entirely on the CIA's public report on the Rote Kapelle.

While the Allies had to develop their European resistance operations from scratch, Hebditch points out that the situation in the Pacific was different because “when war broke ... Australia already had a defensive intelligence network in place” to monitor Japanese movements. Nevertheless, considerable expansion was required, especially in the Solomons—which alone comprised some 1,000 mostly unoccupied islands. Many more watchers were recruited and trained: teachers, district commissioners, fishermen. (55)

A final chapter in the book discusses the radio and other communications gear wireless operators used during the war thus completing the first account devoted to WWII *Covert Radio Agents*. A worthwhile contribution.

The Dirty Tricks Department: Stanley Lovell, the OSS, and the Masterminds of World War II Secret Warfare, by John Lisle (St. Martin's Press, 2023) 338 pages, endnotes, bibliography, photos, index.

Stanley Lovell's 1963 memoir, *Of Spies & Stratagems*, gave an account of his wartime service in charge of the OSS R&D Branch. Since few OSS records had been released at the time, the book was based solely on his memory of the operations he described. One example was the plan to inject sex hormones into Hitler's food that would enlarge his breasts, cause his voice to become a soprano, and thus destroy his masculinity. (76) Historian John Lisle adds background and occasional new detail to this and many other stories in *The Dirty Tricks Department*.

The background material discusses the creation of OSS, the early career of its director William Donovan, and the recruitment of Lovell, whom Donovan nicknamed "Professor Moriarty" after Sherlock Holmes's evil adversary.

Lisle explains that Lovell's mission was to anticipate and develop special devices OSS officers and their agents might need when working against the enemy. The R&D Branch element charged with executing the mission was informally called "Division 19" and was referred to as the "Sandeman [sic] Club" because of the secrecy involved. (29)

The Dirty Tricks Department describes many of the specialty weapons and techniques Division 19 proposed. Examples include umbrella guns, single-shot fountain pens, invisible inks, forged documents, exploding dough (dubbed "Aunt Jemima"), poison pills (called "L-pills"), silent guns, disguises, and attempts to see if marijuana would serve as a truth serum—it didn't. (204)

Lovell's subordinates proposed some bizarre projects. The "cat bomb" operation never got off the ground, although a congressman liked the idea. Lovell himself opposed the "Bat-Bomb" suggested by an eccentric dentist but was overruled by Donovan only to suffer fatal implementation problems. (40) Perhaps the most preposterous project, Operation Fantasia, was intended to "destroy

Japanese morale by exposing Japanese soldiers and civilians to the sight of *kitsune*, glowing fox-shaped spirits with magical abilities." It was abandoned after testing in Washington's Rock Creek Park using foxes coated with radium paint caused local panic. (87ff) One successful concept, called "Javaman," employed remotely controlled fishing boats loaded with explosives—a kind of water-borne drone—to infiltrate enemy harbors and destroy ships. It was successfully tested but cancelled when the atomic bomb did its job. (64)

One question is likely to occur to all readers: What did the special projects created by Division 19 contribute to the war effort? Lisle's account presents no specific operational successes. In fact, he leaves the impression that, with few exceptions, the major OSS legacy was that experienced officers that would go on to form CIA.

After the war, Lovell became a successful businessman, consulted with CIA and advocated the creation of a Division 19 element in CIA, which became the Technical Services Division (TSD). Lisle goes on at length about its director, Sidney Gottlieb and the controversial projects he undertook.

Lisle relies heavily on secondary sources, which probably accounts for two errors involving Donovan. First, Lisle refers to him as "most decorated officer in the entire U.S. military," a distinction that belongs to Douglas MacArthur. Second, Lisle writes that before the war in Europe started, Roosevelt sent Donovan "on a series of trips to Europe to gather information on the state of international affairs and to gather rare stamps for Roosevelt's private collection. (4) In fact, the only trip Donovan made for Roosevelt occurred in 1940.

The Dirty Tricks Department documents Lovell's innovative ideas and Donovan's willingness to try anything to help the war effort.

G-Man: J. Edgar Hoover and the Making of the American Century, by Beverly Gage (Yale University Press, 2022) 837 pages, endnotes, bibliography, photos, index.

Between 1944 and 1958, CBS Radio aired *The FBI in Peace and War*. Each episode was ostensibly based on an

FBI case involving international—mostly Soviet—espionage. In an ironic touch, the series' distinctive theme song

was a march from Sergei Prokofiev's opera *The Love for Three Oranges*. In 1965, a television series, *The FBI*, starring Efrem Zimbalist Jr. began a run that lasted until 1974. FBI director J. Edgar Hoover encouraged and exercised control over these and other media programs to convey his concept of the Bureau he headed. In *G-Man*, Yale historian Beverly Gage, presents a finely documented view of the Bureau and its notorious first director.

Born in 1895 in segregated Washington, DC, Hoover was a good student from "a loving if troubled household." (16) In high school he was a captain of cadets, a star debater and valedictorian. For family and financial reasons, he worked at the Library of Congress while attending George Washington University, where he studied law and joined Kappa Alpha, a fraternity that championed the myth of the Lost Cause. Eligible for the draft after graduation in June 1917, he found an exempted position with the Justice Department, a decision, Gage writes, that had less to do with reluctance to serve than with his situation at home.

Assigned to alien issues in the War Emergency Division during the war and to arranging for the arrest of subversives during the first Red Scare after the war, Hoover impressed management with his hard work. He secured a postwar position in the Radical Division of the Bureau of Investigation. Although initially he focused on finger print records and financial matters of potential law breakers, Gage tells of his steady progression in the more active aspects of law enforcement, counterintelligence and bureaucratic finesse. At the height of his prominence he was perceived as master of all three.

It was Hoover's attention to law enforcement matters, especially during prohibition, that resulted in the G-Man ethos. Then, early in the Roosevelt administration, he was tasked to monitor subversive activities. The experience he gained served the Bureau well, although not without controversy, in the post WWII second Red Scare era, when concerns about Soviet wartime and postwar espionage were rife.

Mission France: The True Story of the Women of SOE, by Kate Vigurs (Yale University Press, 2021) 301 pages, endnotes, bibliography, appendices, photos, index.

In 1940 the British created the Special Operations Executive (SOE) to conduct sabotage, subversion, and related missions behind enemy lines. One Branch,

G-Man gets mixed marks in terms of its counterintelligence coverage. Hoover's stormy relationship during the war with the British services and OSS is discussed, as is his opposition to creation of CIA after the war. There is passing reference to communist subversion during the 1930s, but no discussion of particular cases. Gage does describe how the Bureau learned of the many communist agents that were operating in the early postwar era and how some were neutralized with the help of the Venona decrypts. These included the Rosenberg network, Klaus Fuchs, Elizabeth Bentley, Kim Philby, Alger Hiss, and Harry Dexter White, to name a few. For reasons not clear, later cases that involved the Bureau, such as Yuri Nosenko and Anatoli Golitsyn, are omitted.

Domestic counterintelligence conducted under the controversial and lengthy COINTELPRO program concerned communist subversion—especially in Hollywood—the Socialist Workers Party, the KKK, the new Left, the Black Panther Party, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Gage shows how the handling of these issues diminished Hoover's reputation in some circles, though he retained nominal, but sometimes grudging, presidential support throughout his service.

G-Man does not ignore the most controversial aspect of Hoover's personality, his suspect sexuality. A lifelong bachelor, his closest personal and professional friends were men, and he made little attempt to hide the fact at work or when dining at his favorite nightspot, The Stork Club. On the other hand, in the 1950s in response to congressional hearings, dubbed the Lavender Scare, seeking to identify homosexuals in government, he initiated a program to monitor "sexual deviates." (398) Gage's treatment is balanced with the final judgment left to the reader.

J. Edgar Hoover's legacy was probably inadvertent. As Gage sees it, he stayed too long, accrued too much power, and died with a tarnished reputation. A well written and documented contribution.

F-Section, conducted operations in all of France to which it "deployed 480 agents, 39 of whom were women." (8) This groundbreaking and controversial decision was based

on the field work in France of Virginia Hall and Christine Granville. Books and articles have been written about the exploits of several of these women while others are barely known. *Mission France* is the first book to include all 39.

For convenience, British historian and author Kate Vigurs begins the book with a listing of the women agents of F Section that includes basic biographical data. The narrative discusses the always risky, sometimes heroic, roles played by these women as the war progressed. Some served as couriers, others as radio operators, and some even ran networks. Most survived but of the 16 who were

arrested, imprisoned and sent to concentration camps, 13 did not return. (257)

Of these, one of the lesser known stories involved Vera Leigh, known as "Simone," courier to the INVENTOR circuit, a sub-circuit of PROSPER. A successful business woman in civilian life, she spent time in several prisons before dying at Natzweiler-Struthof with her colleagues Sonia Olschanesky and Andrée Borrel. (207)

Mission France avoids exaggeration while documenting the precedent-setting exploits of patriotic women some for the first time. A worthwhile and valuable contribution.

Secret Alliances: Special Operations and Intelligence in Norway 1940–1945 — The British Perspective, by Tony Insall (Biteback Publishing, 2019) 422 pages, endnotes, bibliography, photos, maps, index.

The Norwegian campaign of April–June 1940 involved the unsuccessful attempt by British land and sea forces to defend Norway against invasion by Nazi Germany. Halfway through the campaign, following growing dissatisfaction with its handling, Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain was replaced by Winston Churchill, and the Norwegian government in exile was formed Britain. Since these events occurred during the evacuation of Dunkirk, the imminent fall of France, and the threat of a German invasion of Britain, the Norwegians received less support than they anticipated. Cooperation was further strained when the British did turn their attention to developing resistance operations and insisted on controlling them. By 1945, the records show that these initial differences had been overcome and, with the help of their allies, many, mostly successful, joint resistance operations had been conducted. *Secret Alliances* tells that story.

Although the topic of Norwegian resistance is not new, British historian Tony Insall has drawn on recently released files from archives in both countries that add additional detail. He discusses the role of British intelligence services involved including the Secret Intelligence Service (MI-6, SIS), the Security Service (MI5), the Government Code and Cypher School, the Special Operations Executive (SOE), and the military intelligence services. The Norwegian intelligence office (FO.II) also played an important role, as did Milorg, the military resistance movement in Norway. Even the NKVD contributed unwittingly in the form of handwritten documents from Kim Philby that provided evidence of an Abwehr agent

in Norway with whom SIS was in touch throughout the German occupation.

Secret Alliances gives examples of combined operations that recovered German cypher equipment and codes. Others uncovered Norwegians the Abwehr had recruited and sent to spy in Britain. On the positive side, the Norwegian coast-watching stations provided intelligence about German naval and merchant shipping movements.

The well-known attack on the heavy water plant at Vemork (Operation GUNNERSIDE) is discussed, as is the ill-fated Operation MARTIN in March 1943, when SOE sent a team to organize and train resistance groups to attack German airfields in Norway. Another well known contribution from Norway was The Oslo report, a document sent anonymously to the British legation in Oslo in November 1939. It was forwarded to Professor R. V. Jones, the principal scientific adviser in SIS. Insall gives a good summary of its contribution.

Two American operations in Norway are mentioned. One, Operation RYPE (Norwegian for grouse) which was commanded by Maj. William Colby, was partially successful when Colby succeeded in blowing up a bridge near Tangen and then another section of the line. The second, Operation Kitten, the plan for an OSS Mission to deploy to Norway failed for bureaucratic reasons. Insall assesses the main OSS contribution as provision of prodigious quantities of weapons and equipment to the resistance.

Secret Alliances reads well, is thoroughly documented and adds substantially to knowledge of the Allies contributions to the Norwegian resistance in WWII.

Unbreakable: The Spies Who Cracked the Nazis Secret Code, by Rebecca E. F. Barone (Henry Holt, 2022) 260 pages, endnotes, bibliography, photos, no index.

Author Rebecca Barone never explains how a secret code can be cracked and be unbreakable at the same time. She does tell, without mentioning its inventor Arthur Scherbius, the well known story of the Enigma cipher machine and its role in WWII. Using entirely secondary sources, she follows the prewar contributions of the Polish cryptographers, the French counterintelligence service and its German agents with access to Enigma data, and the British role throughout war.

Unbreakable's narrative is roughly chronological, with occasional digressions into Hitler's behavior and rationale. It also tracks the counterespionage battle between Germany and France in the search for the Enigma traitor. But most importantly it deals with how the Enigma machine functions and the principal people who contributed to its success at various stages of the war. While it does not mention that other encryption devices were used by Germany and that their output was also broken by Britain, it does provide a single source summary of Enigma's influence.

Biography/Memoir

The Kneeling Man: My Father's Life as a Black Spy Who Witnessed the Assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., by Leta McCollough Seletzky (Counterpoint, 2023) 287 pages, no index.

On Thursday, April 4, 1968, just before six in the evening, Marrell McCollough was in the courtyard of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee, and was the first to offer aid after hearing the fatal shot that struck Martin Luther King Jr. A photograph of the scene shows him kneeling beside the prostrate King. In *The Kneeling Man*, Marrell's daughter writes about the events that led to his presence in Memphis that day and how they affected his career in the Memphis police, the US Army, and CIA.

At the time of the shooting, 23-year-old Marrell (known as Mac to his friends) was a Memphis police officer serving undercover as member of a Black militant group called the Invaders. That he had been accepted by the police department was itself unusual. The product of a broken home with minimal education, he enlisted in the Army in 1962 and served as an MP while obtaining his GED.

After one tour, Mac returned to Memphis and became one of the first Blacks to attend the Memphis Police Training Academy. Then, following several years undercover, he became Officer McCollough, got his college degree, and worked varied assignments until informed he would never be promoted to senior positions. So Mac

applied to the FBI and when he didn't get a response, he turned to CIA.

Based on conversations McCollough had with his daughter Leta, *The Kneeling Man* summarizes McCollough's CIA career in the Office of Security and the Directorate of Operations. During this period he was investigated by the FBI for involvement in the King assassination. Leta tells of the many times over the years that he discussed his role with others present. Eventually he testified on the subject before a congressional committee investigating assassinations. In 1999, by then a GS-15, he retired after being informed he would never be promoted to supergrade status.

From time to time, Seletzky describes her own background—she is a lawyer—alludes to her relationship with her father, and comments on how she decided to write the book. She characterizes CIA's culture as “clubby—white, male, Ivy League” and refers to the many instances of racial bias that affected her father's career as well as her own as she sought to collect data about him. (267)

The Kneeling Man is an impressive account of a man who began life in poverty, played a unique role in civil

rights history, overcame precedent and prejudice in the

Memphis Police Department, had a remarkable CIA career, and retired with dignity.

Six Car Lengths Behind an Elephant: Undercover & Overwhelmed as a CIA Wife and Mother, by Lillian McCloy (Bordertown Publishing, 2016), 240 pages, photos, no index.

In his memoir *Night Watch*, the late David Atlee Phillips describes his early career in CIA under nonofficial cover. In her memoir, *Six Car Lengths Behind an Elephant*, the recently deceased Lillian McCloy, with the editorial help of her daughter Johanna, gives a family's view of life with a nonofficial cover officer.

After service in the Marine Corps as a fighter pilot and attaining a masters degree in political science and international relations, Frank McCloy interviewed for the Foreign Service and was told CIA was a better fit. He applied and his pregnant wife told her doctors and friends the exciting news. Fortunately, he was accepted and soon began his nearly 25 year career as an operations officer serving under nonofficial cover with the help and support of his wife and children.

Six Car Lengths Behind an Elephant is a chronological account of Frank's assignments in Spain, India, Japan and Venezuela. The book's title was taken from advice Frank gave to visitors traveling in India. In each country he worked as an executive in the local offices of an American firm while also handling CIA agents in his "off" hours. In some cases Lillian participated in his clandestine activities by entertaining agents, filling deaddrops, and translating documents.

The problems all CIA families experience during overseas assignments were amplified for the McCloys, and they varied in magnitude, depending on the country involved. Spain went well. but India was a culture shock. Even in New Delhi the "potable" water produced

dysentery, which the family discovered the hard way. Everyday life became something of an ordeal due to the rampant corruption that affected every aspect of society from pro-curing safe food and transportation to the essential but sometimes unreliable security personnel.

Japan was a welcome relief compared to India. And while overcoming some marital hitches, Lillian found the language less difficult than anticipated, but she never grew accustomed to the crowding and groping on the subways. As usual the children adjusted well to the shock of different cultures as they had to the surprise of learning that their father worked for CIA.

At various points in his career, Lillian writes, Frank was challenged by a CIA superior's administrative and operational decision. In one case he opposed breaking a promise made to an agent, and his career suffered temporarily. Even after his retirement, an agency man attempted to negatively affect his new civilian job but was unsuccessful. And finally, Lillian notes several instances of bean-counter bureaucracy that resulted in refusal to pay for a car suitable for Frank's cover position and other instances of invoice denial for agent entertainment they had to absorb instead. Still, in the end, she concludes "Frank had loved working for the CIA and was proud of what he had accomplished." (238) Frank McCloy died unexpectedly, age 54, in 1986.

Six Car Lengths Behind an Elephant was endorsed by John le Carré as "A charming and unusual portrait of the secret life." He was spot on.

Fiction

A Spy Among Friends (The TV Series – 6 Episodes; Streamed on MGM+).

Based on Ben Macintyre's nonfiction book of the same name, MGM+ makes it very clear at the outset that the six part TV series is "a work of imagination." It then goes on to scatter elements of truth amid fictional characters and

dialogue with no way of distinguishing between the two without prior knowledge of the case.

The series opens with Flora Soloman, a former friend of Kim Philby's, confirming to MI5 that Kim was a

communist and probably a Soviet agent. Nicholas Elliott, an MI6 friend of Philby's, is sent to Beirut to confront him and offer immunity in return for a detailed confession of all aspects of his KGB service. Philby declines and defects to Moscow. Elliott returns to London, where he is interrogated by MI5.

Enter Mrs. Thomas, a fictional character who questions Elliott about his interrogation of Philby to establish the details of the exchange. She poses questions probably asked by MI6 but not made public. For example, she wants to know if Elliott let Philby escape. She appears in each episode, some with her fictitious husband whose existence serves only to confuse.

Subsequent episodes add color to the basic story by fabricating situations and locations involving familiar figures such as Guy Burgess, Donald Maclean, Anthony Blunt, James Angleton, Anatoli Golitsyn, MI5 Director-General

Roger Hollis, and Jane Sissmore to name a few. One bizarre example of an event that never happened has CIA's James Angleton in London running an agent in Moscow after Philby settled there. Another has MI5 D-G Hollis personally giving Elliott, an MI6 officer, instructions at his home. On the technical side, Mrs. Thompson listens to clear recordings of Philby's Beirut interrogation, when in reality they were nearly unintelligible.

The fabrications are not the only source of viewer confusion, especially for those unfamiliar with the Philby story. The editing of episodes is atrocious! Flashbacks occur frequently and unexpectedly without identifying time, location, and in some cases participants involved.

While some may find *A Spy Among Friends* (the TV Series) entertaining, this muddled attempt to tell a famous espionage case exceeds the customary bounds of literary license and should be viewed with caution, if at all.

