

Original citation:

McCracken, Trevor and Moran, Christopher R. (2018) *James Bond, Ian Fleming and intelligence : breaking down the boundary between the 'real' and the 'imagined'*. Intelligence and National Security . pp. 1-18.doi:[10.1080/02684527.2018.1468648](https://doi.org/10.1080/02684527.2018.1468648)

Permanent WRAP URL:

<http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/102247>

Copyright and reuse:

The Warwick Research Archive Portal (WRAP) makes this work by researchers of the University of Warwick available open access under the following conditions. Copyright © and all moral rights to the version of the paper presented here belong to the individual author(s) and/or other copyright owners. To the extent reasonable and practicable the material made available in WRAP has been checked for eligibility before being made available.

Copies of full items can be used for personal research or study, educational, or not-for profit purposes without prior permission or charge. Provided that the authors, title and full bibliographic details are credited, a hyperlink and/or URL is given for the original metadata page and the content is not changed in any way.

Publisher's statement:

"This is an Accepted Manuscript of an article published by Taylor & Francis in Intelligence and National Security on 09/05/2018 available online:

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02684527.2018.1468648>

A note on versions:

The version presented here may differ from the published version or, version of record, if you wish to cite this item you are advised to consult the publisher's version. Please see the 'permanent WRAP URL' above for details on accessing the published version and note that access may require a subscription.

For more information, please contact the WRAP Team at: wrap@warwick.ac.uk

JAMES BOND, IAN FLEMING, AND INTELLIGENCE: BREAKING DOWN THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN THE 'REAL' AND THE 'IMAGINED'*

Trevor McCricken and Christopher Moran

Submitted for publication to:

Intelligence and National Security – Published on-line May 9, 2018

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02684527.2018.1468648>

In the discipline of Politics and International Studies, the notion that James Bond should be taken seriously is often likely to be encountered with disapproving stares, raised eyebrows or pitiful headshaking. At least, that is our experience; at a recent meeting, a senior colleague audibly harrumphed at the idea that we were writing on the subject of 007. With the shaken martinis, the weaponised cars, the larger-than-life evil masterminds and their pet sharks, third nipples and metallic hands, Bond is still considered by some academics as too lightweight and trivial to be afforded serious engagement. The secondary literature in the 1980s and 1990s did not help since it was dominated by contributions from 'Bondologists' with un-academic titles like *The James Bond Bedside Companion*; *Dressed to Kill: James Bond – The Suited Hero*; and *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang*.¹ In interviews, even Bond's creator Ian Fleming had described his fictional spy as nothing more than cheap entertainment for the masses, specifically 'warm-blooded heterosexuals in railway trains, airplanes or beds'.² Rejecting that there was any deep intellectual agenda behind the books, he claimed that he only invented Bond on the eve of his wedding to offset the 'horror' of settling down at the age of 43. 'James Bond is the author's pillow fantasy', he remarked in July 1963, 'And fantasy isn't real life by definition. It's very much the Walter Mitty Syndrome – the feverish dreams of the author of what he might have been'.³

Further reinforcing the view that scholars of Politics and International Studies should be wary of the subject is the sensitive issue of Bond's lack of political correctness. At the heart of Bond is an antiquated, chauvinistic, idea of patriotism that holds Britain to be the greatest moral authority on earth; regards 'Johnny Foreigner' with disdain; and hankers for that now dirtiest of words, 'empire'.⁴ There are moments in the series that are shamelessly racist: from the cringeworthy scene in *Dr No* (1962) where Sean Connery's Bond orders the Jamaican boatman Quarrel to 'fetch my shoes', which is carried out without hesitation or expectation of gratitude, to the bigoted antics of tobacco-spitting,

* Oral presentations of this article were given at Edinburgh Spy Week, in April 2016, and the American University in Dubai in January 2017. We are grateful to the organisers of these events for providing us with the opportunity to speak to such discerning audiences. We are also grateful to the journal's editor and the anonymous reviewers for their valuable comments and suggestions.

small town Louisiana sheriff J.W. Pepper in *The Man With the Golden Gun* (1974) who jokes about ‘pointy-heads’. Equally objectionable is the series’ often degrading depiction of women. Existing in a world where masculine domination is the natural order of things, Bond ‘girls’ are typically damsels-in-distress, used for sex before being cast off, and objectified with tight outfits, languid poses and innuendo-laden names. Fleming’s hero was also shockingly homophobic. In the novel *Goldfinger* (1959), homosexuals are described as a ‘herd of unhappy sexual misfits’, ‘pansies...confused, not knowing what they are’. One of these ‘misfits’ – Pussy Galore, a trapeze artist turned leader of an all-lesbian gang of cat burglars – even has her sexual orientation changed by Bond’s prowess, described as his ‘Tender Loving Care treatment’.⁵ As a result of the prevalence of such attitudes toward race, gender and sexuality, to study Bond as a site for exploring the meaning and significance of intelligence has been regarded as problematic on moral and ideological grounds.

As scholars of the politics of intelligence, however, it is impossible to escape Bond. In the classroom, when asked about their motivation for studying intelligence, our students will frequently reply that they want to know if spying is ‘like Bond’. When a new film is released, we often find ourselves giving media interviews answering questions like ‘do real spies have a licence to kill?’ It is noticeable that many academic publications on intelligence have Bond-inspired titles, probably at the request of publishers to boost sales. For example, the US version of Christopher Andrew’s landmark 1985 study of the British intelligence community was named *Her Majesty’s Secret Service*.⁶ In 2011, the respected espionage authority Michael Smith produced a history of the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS/MI6) called *Six: The Real James Bonds*.⁷ Another eminent writer on intelligence, Robert Dover, named one of his essays ‘From Vauxhall Cross with Love’.⁸ While researching in intelligence archives, we have been struck by the volume of Bond-related material (of which more later.) Try as we might, staying clear has been no easy task. Accordingly, we concluded it was time to say something meaningful about the subject.

In recent years, the tide has been turning in terms of scholarly acceptance of cultural products as legitimate sources for study and research in history, politics, international relations and more recently intelligence, as well as in cultural studies and cultural history. Serious scholarship on how film and literature represent historical and political subjects has grown considerably and much of that work argues, as we do here, that cultural outputs contribute significantly to the production and reproduction of narratives about, and within, the political world – that they are co-constitutive with politics in constructing our perceptions of ‘reality’.⁹ As Debbie Lisle has contended, film specifically and culture more generally ‘not only reflects reality but also produces it.’¹⁰ Bond is no different. In 14 Fleming books; 25 novels by other authors; 26 official and ‘unofficial’ films; plus countless references elsewhere in popular culture; Bond has played a vital role in

constructing the meaning of secret intelligence and framing the discourse used to understand it.

This article has two objectives. On one level, it looks to answer the question of ‘why James Bond matters?’ In a provocative 1993 essay, Wesley Wark encouraged political scientists and political historians to address this question.¹¹ The years since have seen Bond become the subject of a number of serious academic books, articles and special journal editions. Indeed, there is even now a peer-reviewed online journal, *The International Journal of James Bond Studies*, hosted by the Department of English and Creative Writing at the University of Roehampton.¹² To date, however, most of these newly engaged contributions on the subject have come from other disciplines, such as gender studies, postcolonial studies, cultural geography, as well as film, literary and cultural studies.¹³ James Chapman has undertaken by far the best work so far in the field of political science and political history with *Licence to Thrill: A Cultural History of the James Bond Films*. Using an intertextual approach sensitive to historical context, Chapman connects each film to world events plus the shifting sands of popular attitudes towards issues such as class, race, gender and imperial decline.¹⁴ Somewhat similarly, Jeremy Black’s *The Politics of James Bond* offers an account of the political content of Fleming’s novels and the films up to *The World Is Not Enough* (1999), focusing particularly on Bond’s engagement with Cold War geopolitics.¹⁵ From the disciplinary vantage point of Politics and International Studies, as well as the sub-discipline of Intelligence Studies, we would like to extend Chapman’s and Black’s work by arguing that Bond is important because, rightly or wrongly, and not without inaccuracy, it has filled a public knowledge vacuum about intelligence agencies and security threats. With intelligence services historically unable and unwilling to open up about their operations, we would argue that Bond – unclassified and accessible – has functioned as an important site through which the public has come to perceive intelligence, plus the threats faced by intelligence communities. This is not to say that ‘real’ intelligence *is* James Bond, any more than it is sensible to suggest that ‘real’ intelligence *is* John le Carré’s George Smiley or Robert Ludlum’s Jason Bourne. Rather, as Alexis Albion claimed, it is about recognising that in the public consciousness there is often an automatic association between the two. To paraphrase Albion, ‘Espionage is not James Bond’; but, for millions of people, in a world where knowledge about real intelligence is rationed, ‘James Bond is espionage’.¹⁶

On another level, this article explores the unexpected yet important interactions between Bond and the actual world of intelligence. There is an orthodoxy dictating that Bond and spying are diametric opposites: one is the stuff of fantasy, the other is reality, and never the twain shall meet. Publicly, intelligence services distance themselves from Bond. In October 1965, a few months after resigning as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), John McCone wrote to *The New York Times* stating, ‘I was soon to learn that there existed not an assembly of mysterious James Bonds but rather an assembly of thoughtful men

and women whose purpose is to collect every scintilla of information on countries of interest to the United States'.¹⁷ In the twenty-first century, intelligence and security agencies remain committed to telling the public that Bond is nothing like 'real life'. On the FAQ page of its website, the CIA poses the question, 'Are there secret agents like James Bond with secret gadgets?' Their answer: CIA officers are 'not nearly as glamorous or thrilling'.¹⁸ On its homepage, Britain's Security Service (MI5) asks a series of 'true or false' questions, one being 'Films and TV give an accurate insight into the work of MI5?' If someone clicks 'true', they will be informed that they are 'incorrect', since spy fiction is 'entertaining but rarely realistic'.¹⁹

In this article, we would like to suggest that the logic of 'never the twain shall meet' is problematic, for the worlds of Bond and real intelligence collide, overlap and intermesh in fascinating ways. Renowned espionage writer Nigel West hinted at this blending of spy fact and spy fiction in an important piece in this journal in 2004, but thus far his appeal for further investigation by scholars of intelligence has gone largely unanswered.²⁰ In private, intelligence agencies have long taken a keen interest in Bond, belying their public pronouncements of the fictional spy as trivial and bearing no resemblance to 'what really goes on'. It will be argued that intelligence services worry about the impact that Bond has on public understanding of their work, since perceptions can influence important matters like recruitment, funding, and morale. Moreover, it will be shown that certain services have even drawn inspiration from Bond – in a classic case of life imitating art – especially when it comes to gadgets and gizmos. In short, Bond is important for scholars because he is an international cultural icon that continues to operate at the borders of fiction and reality, framing and constructing not only public perceptions but also to some degree intelligence practices.

I

James Bond has had a major, if not disproportionate, influence on popular understandings of intelligence. Lyman Kirkpatrick, a former executive director of the CIA, referred to this as the 'James Bond syndrome'.²¹ For the sake of transparency and accountability in a healthy democracy, it would be wonderful if agencies could talk about what they do, in real time. But, of course, absolute openness is not possible. The success of ongoing and future operations, plus analysis, dictates that secrecy is essential, especially in regards to fragile sources and methods. Moreover, to entice agents and allies to work with them, agencies have to earn their trust – and this means maintaining a certain mystique about their activities. In the United Kingdom, the impulse for secrecy was so great that for most of the twentieth century the three main agencies were not even on the statute book, a situation that prevailed until legislation was introduced in 1989 and 1994

respectively.²² Parliamentary discussion about intelligence was forbidden, regarded as ungentlemanly and un-patriotic, whilst D-Notices and the draconian Official Secrets Act stymied reporting of intelligence matters in the press, historical writing, and official memoirs.²³ The very name of SIS – Secret Intelligence Service – suggested the public must know nothing about it. Because of the secrecy employed by the authorities, therefore, popular culture has enjoyed a privileged position in terms of how the public has come to know about and conceptualise intelligence work. As the longest and most commercially successful spy franchise in history, Bond has arguably played the biggest role in shaping that understanding. Indeed, John le Carré once remarked that his biggest frustration as a ‘realist’ spy fiction writer was that the public instantly assumed that ‘Spy meant Bond’.²⁴

Intelligence professionals recognise Bond’s impact on popular attitudes, but disagree on whether 007 works to their advantage. Kirkpatrick’s opinion was that the ‘James Bond syndrome...hasn’t helped the CIA image’, because it gives the mistaken impression that intelligence is less about analysis and more about action and cloak-and-dagger escapades.²⁵ In his memoir, ex-CIA Director William Colby suggested that one of the reasons people were so outraged in the mid-1970s by revelations of real dirty tricks and bumbling ineptitude by the Agency was because they had been led to believe – by ‘the scenarios in the James Bond films’ – that secret agents ‘were the derring-do boys...matching fire with fire in an endless round of thrilling adventures’.²⁶ Similarly, ex-CIA Director Robert Gates has lamented that Bond creates unrealistic public expectations about what real intelligence agencies can achieve. In 007’s universe, the impeccably-attired hero goes to SIS headquarters where he receives orders from his boss, the old sea dog ‘M’, and 90 minutes later is seen sipping a celebratory cocktail, girl in his arms, the enemy having been roundly defeated. Real life, of course, does not work like that: intelligence is usually a painstakingly slow business, where it takes months, even years, for threats to be identified, monitored and stopped, mostly without any public acknowledgment. ‘More than any other institution in America’, claimed Gates, in a lecture at Texas A&M University in November 1999, ‘I suspect that CIA...has been subject to mythology and misinformation. The result...of too many James Bond and Jack Ryan movies, and at least one too many movies directed by Oliver Stone’.²⁷

By contrast, there are intelligence professionals who regard Bond as a positive force. Anecdotal evidence suggests that British intelligence has profited from the cachet provided by Bond. Former SIS chief Sir Colin McColl has described the fictional spy as ‘the best recruiting sergeant in the world’.²⁸ Another retired head of the service has claimed that, while rival intelligence agencies may have to entice agents with cash-filled envelopes, assets recruited by SIS would simply hear the English accent and ‘virtually stand to attention, such was the honour’.²⁹ The same spy chief tells the story of when SIS first made contact with a tribal leader in an African state, he knew only three words: ‘Hello, Mr. Bond’.³⁰ Fleming, a personal assistant to the Director of British Naval Intelligence (DNI)

during the Second World War, had no doubt that Bond helped the real spooks. Writing to the Foreign Office in 1959, he said with pride: 'I have taken pains to see that they [the books] would not cause offence to my old friends in the Intelligence world. I also know from senior members of that world that, far from causing offence, the adventures are followed with affectionate interest tinged with hilarity by members of "The Firm"'.³¹

Perhaps surprisingly, owing to his reputation as a notoriously traditional and discreet civil servant (hence the epithet 'the man who kept the secrets'),³² CIA Director Richard Helms welcomed the impact that Bond had on the public imagination since the hero exemplified the unassuming belief of CIA officers in the importance of their work, and the ability of the individual to make a difference.³³ Interestingly, according to his widow Cynthia, Helms despised le Carré and worried about the negative effect the cerebral spy-chronicler had on public perceptions.³⁴ While le Carré's gritty spy fiction was perhaps more accurate and believable than Bond at the literal level, philosophically it was not a representation that Helms found palatable.³⁵ The suggestion that East and West were equally corrupt and violent – two sides of the same dirty coin – was anathema to him.

In an article for an Italian magazine in 1966, journalist Lietta Tornabuoni gave a powerful illustration of how Bond impacted perceptions of intelligence.³⁶ Tornabuoni had invited her readers to send her questions they would ask a real life Italian secret agent. She received thousands of letters, with the most popular questions being: did you have to be a bachelor; did the job come with a fast car; what if I have a fear of flying; and 'If I entered the secret service, how many people exactly would I have to kill in a year?'³⁷ Clearly, her readers had been influenced by fiction. The things they associated with the life of a spy – independence, excitement, travel, violence, and a licence to kill – were synonymous with Bond.³⁸ What is important here is not whether Italian intelligence was *like* Bond. Rather, what is important is that people made a connection between the two and *imagined* that it *must* be.

Intelligence agencies are mindful – and increasingly so – of the connections people make between what they see or read in fiction and what they imagine actual secret intelligence to entail. Popular culture, they recognise, is a powerful social force. Declassified documents reveal that, during the 1960s, both the CIA and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) kept files on Bond, consisting largely of newspaper cuttings, to monitor the possible effect of the fictional spy on their public image.³⁹ Contained in one FBI file is a memo, dated 1 January 1964, written by Cartha DeLoach, a trusted adviser to Director J. Edgar Hoover, noting that Fleming's novels 'are generally filled with beautiful women presenting themselves in scantily attire'.⁴⁰ Another memo explained that since 'Fleming's stories generally center around sex and bizarre situations...[they are] not the type where we would want any mention of the FBI or portrayal of FBI agents'.⁴¹ Hoover evidently agreed, scribbling at the bottom of the document 'I concur'. Behind the Iron

Curtain, illegal copies of the novels flourished, despite the censor's tight grip. The KGB became so paranoid that good communist citizens would abandon the socialist project and embrace 007's decadent and depraved bourgeois ideology, that in response they sponsored Bulgarian writer, Andrei Gulyashki, to pen an anti-Bond novel in an attempt to win Cold War hearts and minds. First published in 1966, *Avakum Zakhov vs 07* depicts Bond as little more than a thug in a dinner suit, his secret agency no match for the brainpower of his communist rival, a PhD in archaeology.⁴²

Emulating their old KGB opponents, Western intelligence agencies are today more ambitious in how they think about fiction, going beyond simply archiving press clippings. Since the mid-1990s, the CIA has employed an Entertainment Liaison Officer to advise filmmakers in a bid to generate more realistic – and more positive – cinematic representations of the Agency.⁴³ It has collaborated on several high-profile films, including *Zero Dark Thirty* (2012), the dramatization of the nearly-decade long international manhunt for Osama bin Laden, and Ben Affleck's Oscar-winning *Argo* (2012), the story of how CIA exfiltration expert Tony Mendez rescued 6 US diplomats from Iran during the 1979-1981 Hostage Crisis by flying them out of the country disguised as a Canadian film crew. The adage – 'an intelligence success revealed is an intelligence failure' – is breaking down as agencies recognise that a bad image is bad for business. Securing public trust is essential: without it, they will struggle to recruit the most talented people or obtain the necessary resources from appropriators. Moreover, poor perceptions undermine the self-worth of intelligence officers, which can damage efficiency and cause doubt in the mission. CIA Director George H.W. Bush once told a packed auditorium at Langley not to watch *Three Days of the Condor* (1975), starring Robert Redford and Faye Dunaway, because it 'lay at the CIA's doorstep all kinds of outrageous things that the CIA by its severest critics has never been accused of'.⁴⁴ Ex-interim CIA Director John McLaughlin has written that since perceptions of intelligence work 'depend to a large extent on what [people] see in cinematic, documentary and novelistic sources', agencies have to take fiction seriously.⁴⁵

II

Most analyses of the political content or impact of novels and films focus on how they can be read in the context of when they were made or released. What can they tell us about the concerns and trends of the time they were produced, and what messages about their subjects were their makers trying to project to their audiences? There is, however, another more temporally long-term element involved in reading the political facets in film. Due to their repeated screenings on television, plus widespread distribution on video, then DVD, and now via

downloads and streaming, films have acquired a life that makes them so much more than a marker of attitude at a particular moment in time. They become temporally detached from their original release, seen again and again in different contexts by their original audiences, or viewed for the first time by new viewers perhaps decades after they were made.

For films, this means that readings of them and their significance are bound to change over time as tastes shift, attitudes adapt to evolving standards, and also technological developments both in filmmaking and in society more generally can make older films look rather quaint or outdated. For a series like Bond, these processes have still deeper effects. *Aficionados* will watch each film as it is released, bringing some understanding of the contemporary context to the viewing but also carrying with them certain expectations and meanings from previous entries in the series. They will interpret each film, perhaps quite critically, in relation to the earlier films. New or occasional viewers of the series are likely to experience the films differently – they may see them for the first time many years after their initial release with little understanding of the context within which they were made. They may see the films out of sequence or skip episodes. They may only see some of the films but frequently. Or they may begin watching the films at a particular juncture, perhaps when a new actor takes the lead role or a new story arc begins. In the case of Bond, that means that viewers may only have seen the Daniel Craig films and never sought out the earlier iterations. It may be that older viewers gave up on Bond after Sean Connery. It could also be that some readers of the novels disregard the films – or those that have delved into the books, have done so sporadically and again without knowledge of, or concern for, their contexts or chronology. They may not know Fleming's novels at all but have been introduced to 007 through Charlie Higson's 'Young Bond' adventures, or the other literary interpretations in the years since Fleming's death.

All these permutations need to be acknowledged when considering the public's understanding of intelligence as received through Bond. There will be readers of the novels for whom they have offered a guide to what intelligence is about for over 60 years; there are others for whom the Connery films are their key source material; while others will perhaps know nothing about intelligence other than what they might have gleaned from the Craig era. Then there is the broader Bond phenomenon that reaches into music, television, other films, other novels, merchandising, advertising, and journalism, and indeed every day language where events, gadgets and individuals are often said to look or act 'like something out of James Bond'. This abundance of material, and the different ways that different audiences access, interpret and engage with it, creates problems for any analysis of Bond's significance. Most existing studies either give a chronological assessment of the novels and films or generate themes that can be addressed across time. In terms of what Bond can tell us about intelligence it is necessary to do two things – to consider the meanings attached to the books and films that are contextually and temporally significant for the time of release, but then also to look at how the

novels and films convey meanings about intelligence to audiences whether they encounter a Bond product at its time of release or many years later.

Popular films help to frame public discourse on the subjects they address and are co-constitutive of public perceptions with those officials who perform the political institutionally. Building on Rosenstone's scholarship, McCrisken and Pepper have argued that films, no matter how commercialised or seemingly apolitical and removed from 'reality' they may be, are useful sources for engaging with politics if they raise questions and challenge the audience to think about what they are seeing.⁴⁶ While a lot of Bond output fits the high-octane action genre, with a heavy emphasis on spectacle over political content, it nonetheless raises important questions about intelligence, which, over the decades, have helped frame public discourse as well as the practices and representations of intelligence agencies themselves. In each Bond adventure, we would contend, there are five inter-related core questions:

- 1) What is intelligence?
- 2) How ethical is spying?
- 3) How important is human intelligence (HUMINT)?
- 4) How significant is British intelligence relative to other nation's services, especially the United States?
- 5) What are the security threats facing contemporary society?

The importance of the franchise lies in its ability to pose these questions about intelligence consistently over time, and offer perspectives on them, to millions of people across the globe who rarely glimpse the inner workings of 'real' intelligence agencies.

If Bond had a mission statement it would be this:

[I] work secretly overseas, developing foreign contacts and gathering intelligence that helps to make the UK safer and more prosperous. [I] help the UK identify and exploit opportunities as well as navigate risks to our national security, military effectiveness and economy. [I] work across the globe to counter terrorism, resolve international conflict and prevent the spread of nuclear and other non-conventional weapons. [I] help protect the UK's people, economy and interests.

Replace 'I' with 'We' and this is actually the official mission statement of SIS, stated publicly on their website.⁴⁷ It is telling how close 007's objectives appear to be to the current self-view of SIS's purpose. There are clear messages that run throughout much of Bond that reflect or project the concerns of contemporary intelligence agencies: the threats we face are existential in nature; intelligence is essential to the foiling of plots that threaten our safety and prosperity; UK agencies must work together to advance mutual interests; the role of the individual is

crucial; lethal force is a necessary part of counterterrorism, resolving international conflicts, and preventing the spread of nuclear and other highly destructive unconventional weaponry. These are all positions that can be problematized and challenged by scholars of security, but as the following analysis will show, the Bond series suggests to its audiences that these are normalised aspects of intelligence work that should not only be accepted as legitimate and necessary, but even celebrated as heroic.

Many of the Bond storylines are spectacular or even fantastical. Master criminals hold the superpowers to hostage; megalomaniacs seek to control the world or destroy it; rogue agents seek to avenge their former bosses or take the fight to the enemy in ways their own governments deem unacceptable. There is a largely formulaic approach to both the novels and the films, with story arcs developing and resolving in similar ways, involving various binary relationships between Bond and M, Bond and the villain, and Bond and a woman, following mostly predictable patterns.⁴⁸ It is through these formulaic elements, however, that the franchise delivers its main messages in answer to the question of ‘what is intelligence?’

One of the best-known, and much parodied, elements throughout the series is the self-defeating egotism of the villains. Bond’s opponents inevitably capture him, place him in mortal danger, and then, in a fit of hubris, reveal their entire evil plot to him, only for Bond to escape and frustrate their plans while sealing their own doom. This repetitive narrative device has become a mainstay of the series – we come to expect the moment when the villain, believing their own invincibility and underestimating Bond’s, reveals themselves and their plot. What this has suggested over the decades to audiences is that intelligence, espionage, and infiltration, are worthwhile, indeed crucial, tools in the defence not only of national security but also in the avoidance of catastrophe on a global scale. Such a narrative suited the Cold War perfectly but also has resonance for audiences today who since ‘9/11’ have been told by their political leaders that terrorism poses an existential threat to their societies. Indeed, as Jeremy Black argues, even Fleming’s ‘novels were primarily tales of anti-terrorism...rather than novels about espionage in the sense of collecting or disseminating information.’⁴⁹ Fleming introduced SPECTRE – Special Executive for Counter-intelligence, Terrorism, Revenge and Extortion – as Bond’s main opponents in his 1961 novel *Thunderball*, eight years before the widely agreed point at which modern terrorism was born with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine’s hijacking of an Israeli airliner on July 22, 1968.⁵⁰

Another key message is that British intelligence is professional, morally upright, and globally significant. The films offered a cultural reassertion of the influence of Britain even as its geopolitical power waned with the ending of empire and the sometimes painful processes of decolonisation. Alongside other popular cultural phenomena such as The Beatles and Mary Quant’s mini-skirt, the Bond films were at the core of a swathe of cultural outputs that suggested Britain’s

creative skills were at the forefront of modernity and progression. It was important to Fleming, and to the filmmakers, that Bond be seen as a professional and well-trained individual, directed by an extremely reputable service. There is far less in Bond of the moral ambiguity or deceit that runs through the works of le Carré.⁵¹ In the novels especially, Bond is portrayed as an accomplished assassin. For all the frivolity in the films, the underlying narrative is of the consummate professional rather than a devil-may-care chancer or brutal, shoot-first-ask-questions-later, killer of so many imitators. Despite the licence to kill and its normalisation of assassination in the name of Queen and Country, the British Secret Service is portrayed as a positive force and through the conviction of M, there is more often than not no quarter offered to ambiguity about the necessity and legitimacy of Bond's missions, and the lethal force he is licenced to use. In the novels, and as played in the films by Bernard Lee, Robert Brown, Judi Dench, and Ralph Fiennes, M is always there as the voice of authority and reason. Bond can be reckless, even rebellious, but ultimately his actions fall under the control, guidance and legitimisation of M as the Head of Her Majesty's Service, even when rogue internal elements try to undermine that legitimacy and authority as they do in the most recent films.

Bond will do whatever it takes protect Britain, the US, and indeed the world. At times this can mean, as *Sunday Express* critic Thomas Wiseman complained in 1962, that 007 is 'a man whose methods and morals are indistinguishable from those of the villains.'⁵² In the opening of *Dr. No*, station chief Strangways and his secretary Mary Trueblood are both murdered. In both the novel and film, the shooting of the unarmed secretary is brutal, designed to shock and arouse the emotions of the audience: 'Trueblood opened her mouth to scream. The man smiled broadly. Slowly, lovingly, he lifted the gun and shot her three times in and around the left breast. The girl slumped sideways off her chair'.⁵³ From the outset, the message is that the enemy in a Bond adventure is serious and deadly, willing to use lethal force without hesitation, even against an unarmed woman. Yet later in the film, Bond is seen to be just as callous when he kills Professor Dent, a geologist and ally of Dr No. Dent is ordered to kill Bond and unloads his gun into a decoy of pillows in Bond's bed. 007 reveals himself waiting in a chair, gun drawn. After a brief conversation, Dent recovers his weapon from the rug and shoots again at Bond, but he is out of ammunition. Bond casually observes 'That's a Smith and Wesson, and you've had your six', then calmly shoots him, rather than capturing him, even though he is unarmed. Bond then shoots Dent a second time to finish him off, this time in the back after he has fallen to the floor, apparently dead already. The scene was controversial, according to director Terence Young, but less so than Bond's apparent use of SPECTRE agent Fiona Volpe as a human shield in the film of *Thunderball*, spinning her swiftly around as they dance so that a would-be assassin's bullet flies mortally into her back rather than his. Although Bond laughs it off with a tasteless quip, the scene and many others in the series

demonstrate that 007 is prepared to kill in cold blood to protect himself, his allies, and ultimately his mission.

Daniel Craig's Bond has heralded a return to the cold and clinical assassin of the books and early films. In the opening to 2006's *Casino Royale*, he earns his '00' licence with the requisite two-kills. The first in a bloody hand-to-hand fight in a men's restroom that ends with Bond apparently drowning his assailant in a hand basin before having to finish him off with a single shot as the barely recovered target desperately aims his pistol; the second is a crooked SIS station chief, Dryden. Bond is seen waiting for him in his Prague office. With echoes of the killing of Dent in *Dr No*, there is a brief conversation establishing that Bond is yet to earn '00' status before Dryden pulls his gun from his desk and attempts to shoot Bond, only for Bond to reveal that he has removed Dryden's ammunition clip. Bond calmly dispatches the now defenceless traitor with a single, lethal shot. Before this, Dryden mocks Bond for how his first kill has affected him:

DRYDEN

Made you feel it did he?

(sees the truth in

Bond's eyes)

Well, no worries, the second is--

Bond raises his silenced Walther and fires, cutting off the words before they reach Dryden's lips.

BOND

Yes. Considerably.⁵⁴

The viewer is left with no doubt that Bond will use whatever force is necessary, even if it amounts effectively to carrying out summary executions on behalf of the state. In Bond, the message is clear: keeping Britain safe sometimes requires the use of lethal force, even if there may be ethical questions over the way that force is used.

Far from being fantasy, such sentiments are central to contemporary counter-terrorism in Britain. For example, as Prime Minister David Cameron told the House of Commons in September 2015 after an RAF drone strike had killed two British citizens in Syria who were allegedly members of so-called Islamic State (ISIL):

If there is a direct threat to the British people and we are able to stop it by taking immediate action, then, as Prime Minister, I will always be prepared to take that action....We should be under no illusion; their intention was the murder of British citizens, so on this occasion we ourselves took action.⁵⁵

Such an approach to counterterrorism is now commonplace and normalised, not only in UK but also in US policy.⁵⁶ This normalisation of violence on behalf of Her Majesty's Government is central to the character of Bond since it is his licence to kill that defines his purpose as a secret agent. In delivering this message over and over to audiences, he plays a key role in creating acceptance that the work of secret intelligence should legitimately and almost unquestioningly include the lethal use of force.

III

The relationship between SIS and other intelligence services, particularly the CIA, is central to many of the Bond stories and constitutes another major facet in their significance in answering the question of 'what is intelligence?' Cooperation between services is portrayed as essential – whether it is with René Mathis of the French DGSE in *Casino Royale*, Tiger Tanaka of Japanese intelligence in *You Only Live Twice*, or Wai Lin of the Chinese People's External Security Force in *Tomorrow Never Dies*. Long before the Cold War drew to an end, Bond also found himself collaborating with his purported enemies in the KGB, not least in the form of recurring character General Gogol who worked tirelessly in several films to try to keep a balance between east and west so as to prevent the Cold War turning hot. In *The Spy Who Loved Me* (1977), the fictional head of the KGB announces, somewhat prematurely given the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan two years later, that: 'We have entered a new era of Anglo-Soviet cooperation'. Bond not only works alongside Soviet intelligence officer Anya Amasova as an equal in the film, but the plot sees Bond commanding British, American and Soviet forces together against the common foe of Stromberg in what James Chapman describes as an 'allegory of the international alliance of the Second World War'.⁵⁷ Here and elsewhere in the series, the view is promoted that liaison can bring more effective outcomes than being driven blindly by ideology. Of all the cooperative relationships, however, the most important is with the CIA as personified by Bond's closest recurring associate (other than M, Moneypenny, and Q) in Felix Leiter.

Leiter appears in six of Fleming's books and ten of the films (if *Never Say Never Again*, the 1983 non-Eon Productions remake of *Thunderball*, is included). Bond has great affection for his American counterpart, perhaps mirroring the friendship that Fleming himself developed with CIA Director Dulles (of which more later), with his character being utilised to demonstrate the so-called Anglo-American 'special relationship' and its importance for both sides. As Kingsley

Amis observed, however, Fleming was not willing to accept that the US had supplanted its former colonial master as the preeminent global power:

The point of Felix Leiter...is that he, the American, takes orders from Bond, the Britisher, and that Bond is constantly doing better than he, showing himself, not braver or more devoted, but smarter, wittier, tougher, more resourceful, the incarnation of little Old England with her quiet ways and shoe-string budget wiping the eye of great big global-tentacled multi-billion-dollar-appropriating America.⁵⁸

As Chapman argues, Leiter's relationship with Bond offers a 'quaint reversal of the real balance of power' between London and Washington in what is perhaps the core of Fleming's 'ideological project' to 'redress the decline of British power'.⁵⁹ At various points in the series, Leiter operates as a 'sidekick' to Bond, and collaboration with the American is often essential – not least when Leiter bails out Bond in *Casino Royale*, in both the 1953 novel and 2006 film, when he has lost millions to Le Chiffre playing cards.⁶⁰ Nonetheless, the underlying subtext, even when Bond relies on American firepower to assist him in films like *Thunderball* and *Moonraker*, is that while the US may have great military strength, it is Bond's ingenuity and class that will prove the ultimate difference in defeating threats to Western security.

The relative decline of US power in global affairs has exercised a range of scholars since at least the 1970s, and this debate is reflected in the films. In the late 1960s and early 1970s films, the Americans are portrayed as less reliable and effective, as the debacle in Vietnam demonstrated their real-life impotency. Moreover, the CIA plays a gradually less prominent role before disappearing altogether, a reflection of the Agency's real-life woes during this period when many of its dirty tricks were unearthed. As the CIA's first film industry liaison officer Chase Brandon contends: 'In the early movies, he [Leiter] was portrayed with respect and fundamental trade-practice correctness. As the Bond films drifted into caricature in the 70's, so did Leiter. I didn't like that, and I don't think anyone around here did either.'⁶¹ Indeed, when Leiter returned, in 1989's *Licence to Kill*, it was as a Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) officer. The film reproduces a scene from the novel *Live and Let Die*, where Leiter barely survives being fed to a shark, losing a hand and a leg. In the film, Bond goes on a personal vendetta, against the express orders of M, to avenge his American friend whose newly-wed wife has also been brutally murdered. The film's significance in terms of the US-UK relationship is open to a complex reading. The relative weakness of the Americans is reflected not only in the maiming of Leiter himself, but also in the need for Bond to become a rogue agent in order to more effectively prosecute what is essentially the US war on drugs.

By the time Leiter again featured in an official Bond film, in *Casino Royale*, it was seventeen years later returning as a CIA agent and reinvented as an African

American (as he had been earlier in the unofficial *Never Say Never Again*), reinvigorated with all limbs intact. His position relative to Bond is also re-established, playing the supportive role he does in Fleming's original novel by providing the losing Bond with a stake of \$5 million (32 million francs in the book) because he believes the British agent has the skill to defeat Le Chiffre in their card game while he does not. The American is the moneyman ('Does it look like we need the money?' Leiter quips), but it is the Briton who sits at the centre of the film as hero, with only Bond able to deploy the resources offered by Leiter to best effect.

In the sequel, *Quantum of Solace* (2008), Leiter is in a more ambiguous position under the command of the brash but blinkered CIA Section Chief in South America, Gregg Bream. The US is allying itself to entrepreneur Dominic Greene, who Bond reveals to be a member of the mysterious Quantum organisation, to secure oil interests for the US in Bolivia. In a frank discussion with Leiter, Bond issues stinging criticism of US policy and its intelligence services: 'that's what I like about US Intelligence, you'll lie down with anybody....Do you know you're being played?' Leiter knows that his smart British friend is right and assists Bond, building his personal loyalty in opposition to his naïve section chief. Throughout the film, it is British intelligence that is the most professional service, with the best understanding of how the villain's scheme is unfolding, and the strongest moral compass, while Bream represents the worst of 'ugly' hubristic Americanism. Released in 2008, the film's critique of US foreign policy seems to point a critical finger toward George W. Bush's Middle Eastern adventures. Perhaps in a nod to the changing of the political order that was about to happen in the US after two terms of Bush, it is revealed by M at the end that Leiter has been promoted over Bream, much to Bond's approval: 'Well then the right people kept their jobs.'

Prime Minister Tony Blair was, of course, a willing accomplice in Bush's 'war on terror', utilising 'dodgy' intelligence that supported his preferred course of action to deal with the supposed threat of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. In *Quantum*, there is a key scene when M goes to the UK Foreign Secretary to convince him of the threat posed by Quantum. In a not so subtle critique of Blair's approach to intelligence five years earlier, the Minister chastises M: 'Foreign policy cannot be conducted on the basis of hunches and innuendo'. M calmly responds: 'Then give us time to gather enough evidence so you can make informed decisions.' It is a clear example of a common theme in the Craig films – the rehabilitation of British intelligence in the wake of the Iraq War. The strong message here and elsewhere in the rebooted series is that politicians need to treat intelligence agencies with the seriousness and respect that the filmmakers believe they deserve.

Long a central feature of Bond is the fundamental necessity of HUMINT. Bond foils plots by gathering and acting upon vital human intelligence. His missions usually involve making contact with other agents or assets in the field to

determine the nature of the threat and to get closer to its source. His methods often require deception and infiltration. A familiar device is Bond's ability to turn a member of the villain's organisation, usually a woman through his powers of seduction. Lisa Funnell has described Bond's skill at 'turning' a female enemy, through haptic intervention, as 'ideological repositioning'.⁶² Typically, the villain discovers these betrayals, leading to a range of grisly deaths including informants being fed to piranhas and torn apart by dogs. Bond rarely mourns these assets – they serve their purpose and when they are gone he moves on, though often with a deepened determination to defeat the villain. Bond often ends up fighting the villain with the assistance of an ally, but ultimately it is he alone who wins the day, bringing his unique skills to bear on the intelligence that he acquires. Bond emphasises what Jeremy Black calls 'the capacity of the individual to affect, indeed effect, a solution in the world of great power politics'.⁶³ Bond does so in a time when technology appears to be transforming all our lives, potentially making the individual and the role of human intelligence far less relevant as the world becomes increasingly mechanised and computerised. Gadgets have been a mainstay of Bond through Q-Branch, but rather than Bond becoming reliant on these technical innovations they serve instead as 'an enabler for Bond's potency' and the films actually celebrate 'the supremacy of the individual and his qualities over technology and mechanization'.⁶⁴

The importance of HUMINT lies at the centre of the 50th anniversary film *Skyfall* (2012). At the mid-way point, M finds herself before a Parliamentary hearing, defending the intelligence services and arguing for their future. The haughty Minister chairing the session berates M for her 'old fashioned' beliefs: 'It's as if you insist on pretending we still live in a golden age of espionage where human intelligence was the only resource available'. M's response, given moments before former agent Raoul Silva shoots his way into the building, is an eloquent defence not only of the intelligence services but also human intelligence itself. It ranks as one of the most pivotal and reflective speeches to be delivered in a Bond film:

Today I've repeatedly heard how irrelevant my department has become. Why do we need agents? The double-O section? Isn't it all rather quaint? Well, I suppose I see a different world than you do. And the truth is that what I see frightens me. I'm frightened because our enemies are no longer known to us. They do not exist on a map. They're not nations, they are individuals. And look around you - who do you fear? Can you see a face, a uniform, a flag? No. Our world is not more transparent now, it's more opaque. It's in the shadows – that's where we must do battle. So, before you declare us irrelevant, ask yourselves – how safe do you feel?

Judi Dench, as M, looks straight into the camera, straight into the eyes of the film's audience, as she delivers the last five words. It is the most explicit advocacy of

human intelligence anywhere in the Bond series, and the whole film serves as a reminder to its audiences that the intelligence services and HUMINT are not anachronistic remnants of the Cold War but an absolute necessity in facing down 21st century threats.

The Craig films also explore the idea that technological advances might have rendered HUMINT passé. Q warns Bond in *Skyfall*: 'I'll hazard I can do more damage on my laptop, sitting in my pyjamas, before my first cup of Earl Grey than you can do in a year in the field.' In *Spectre* (2015), the theory is tested by Max Denbigh, head of a newly formed Centre for National Security, who establishes a global surveillance network linking together the digital and signals intelligence capabilities of nine major powers. His vision for the future of intelligence is one of computer desk-jockeys, crunching data and operating drones with joysticks. We are told he 'wrote a dossier last year on how the Double-O programme was obsolete, how drones could do all our dirty work abroad.' This vision, however, is flawed. The villain of the film, a rebooted Ernst Blofeld, is defeated by Bond's HUMINT, not a super-computer. Moreover, Denbigh is himself unmasked as a traitor, in league with Blofeld, thanks to Bond's expertise in the field. The film ends ambiguously with 007 throwing his gun from Westminster Bridge, hinting that this could be Craig's final outing in the role, or even that the franchise might be wound-up. Minutes later, at the conclusion of the credits, audience members are nevertheless reassured that 'James Bond Will Return.' As Q had explained in *Skyfall* when Bond himself had questioned why he was still needed – 'Every now and then a trigger has to be pulled.'

IV

The popularity of 007 has enabled the 'imagined' world of Bond to become a major influence on perceptions of the 'real' world of intelligence. However, without the veracity of Fleming's own experiences as a Naval Intelligence officer during World War II and his connections to members of the intelligence services in the UK and US afterwards, it would have been a poorer creation and would not have achieved the same level of cultural resonance it has acquired. While it was inevitable that Fleming's intelligence experiences would inform his fictional creation, it was less so that practitioners in the British and American intelligence services would also be influenced by the fictional accounts of spying in his novels and later the films. It is clear from the evidence, however, that they were and in significant ways.

Chief among those to be inspired by Fleming was none other than Allen Dulles, head of the CIA from 1953 to 1961. Socially and ideologically, the two men were natural bedfellows. Both were part of the Establishment in their respective countries. A Princeton alumnus and white shoe corporate lawyer, Dulles came

from a family of illustrious public servants. He was the grandson of one Secretary of State, John Watson Foster, and the nephew of another, Robert Hansing. His elder brother, John Foster, continued the tradition by serving as President Eisenhower's Secretary of State. The son of a Conservative Member of Parliament and the grandson of a merchant banker, Fleming was born into privilege and was schooled at Eton and Sandhurst, plus universities in Munich and Geneva. The similarities did not end there. Both were serial womanizers. To the anguish of his long-suffering wife Clover, Dulles had, according to his sister Eleanor, 'at least a hundred' affairs.⁶⁵ Fleming's bed hopping was legendary – his sexual appetite every bit as voracious as 007's. Importantly, both men held the same Manichean worldview and were determined to defeat what they regarded as the scourge of international communism. As perfervid believers in the importance of this mission, they both felt that intelligence agencies should devote more of their energies to covert operations, intervening whenever and wherever they saw fit, and without scruples.

Dulles loved Bond. He had a full hardback set of Fleming's thrillers in his library, and even sent fellow Bond enthusiast President John F. Kennedy typed notes offering his analysis.⁶⁶ To the dismay of more 'serious' spy novelists like le Carré, Dulles enthused about 007 publicly. For example, addressing the annual conference of the Bookseller's Association in 1963, he declared that the CIA could do with half a dozen or so James Bonds.⁶⁷ In his 1969 book *Great Spy Stories from Fiction*, he ranked *From Russia with Love* alongside such classics as *The Riddle of the Sands* by Erskine Childers and Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Agent*.⁶⁸ The celebrity endorsement of America's premier spy chief did wonders for Fleming's book sales. Delighted, Fleming privately thanked Dulles, his 'organization and staff [for] always co-operating so willingly with James Bond'.⁶⁹

At CIA, as Dulles confessed, 'some of the professionals working for me...never could quite understand this weakness of the boss'.⁷⁰ Although the real trials and vicissitudes of global politics are reversed in Fleming's universe – with CIA officer Leiter firmly at the beck and call of 007 – Dulles liked Bond because of the messages the series communicated to the public about espionage. Dashing playboys sticking it to the Soviets in tourist playgrounds was the image of the spy business that Dulles wanted the public to have in their minds. Through Bond, he hoped, people would understand that intelligence was absolutely necessary.⁷¹ So impressed was he with Fleming's propagandising of the intelligence mission that when, in 1963, the author suggested that he might retire his most famous creation, Dulles pleaded with him not to do so: 'I hope you have not really destroyed our old friend and colleague James Bond'.⁷² To further promote Fleming's vision of intelligence, and somewhat jealous of British spy fiction, he even asked covert operations specialist E. Howard Hunt, a gifted novelist in his youth, to come up with an American equivalent of 007. In the late 1960s – using the pseudonym David St. John – Hunt wrote a series of novels featuring the character Peter Ward. Unfortunately, Ward was a poor man's Bond and the trashy thrillers flopped.

Moreover, by the early 1970s Hunt had lost interest, his mind preoccupied by the unfolding Watergate scandal, in which he was implicated as the ringleader of the infamous ‘Plumbers Unit’ that had carried out the ‘third-rate burglary’ of the Democratic National Committee HQ.

Dulles was particularly fascinated with Q-Branch, the fictional research and development division that equipped Bond with life-saving gadgets in the novels and the films – from underwater jet packs to machine guns masquerading as bagpipes, cyanide cigarettes to Geiger counter watches. Interviewed by *Life* magazine in August 1964, he revealed that he instructed his engineers at CIA to try to replicate as many of these devices as they could. Dulles said that he had been keen to see invented the pocket size homing radio beacon which, in the film *Goldfinger*, Bond furtively slips into the boot of the villain’s Rolls Royce to track him down after their round of golf: ‘I put my people in CIA to work on this as a serious project, but they came up with the answer that it had too many bugs in it. The device really didn’t work very well when the enemy got into a crowded city’.⁷³ Scientists did manage to reproduce the iconic, spring-loaded, poisoned-tipped dagger shoe with which Rosa Klebb, posing as a hotel maid, tries to stab Bond in *From Russia with Love*. Sadly, it is unknown whether these lethal brogues were ever used in the field.

Dulles was not the last spy chief who sought to emulate Bond’s gadget-powered success. CIA Director Bill Casey tasked his technicians to invent the facial recognition software that the psychotic Max Zorin uses to ID Bond in *A View to a Kill* (1985). Robert Wallace, a retired Director of the CIA’s Technical Services Staff, has recollected that: ‘Whenever a new Bond movie was released, we always got calls asking, “Do you have one of those?” If I answered “no”, the next question was, “How long will it take you to make it?” Folks didn’t care about the laws of physics or that Q was an actor in a fictional series – his character and inventiveness pushed our imagination’.⁷⁴ Most extraordinary, perhaps, is that KGB defector Oleg Gordievsky has claimed the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party watched each new Bond film in the hope of copying some ingenious bit of kit.⁷⁵

It was not only in the realm of technology that Dulles valued Fleming’s blue-sky thinking. There are hints that he also turned to Fleming for operational advice. The evidence is limited, with the smoking guns just out of reach, but nevertheless warrants discussion. On 13 March 1960, Fleming was invited to a dinner party at the Georgetown home of John F. Kennedy, then a presidential candidate. For the evening, the young Senator had assembled a distinguished guest list of in-the-know Washingtonians that included John Bross, a high-ranking CIA official, and Joseph Alsop, the syndicated newspaper columnist who was part of the Agency’s informal information economy, writing articles that championed US foreign policy and dished the dirt on the Soviets. With everyone sipping coffee and brandy, post-prandial conversation tackled the issue of how to unseat the newly ascendant Cuban rebel leader Fidel Castro, a socialist threat 90 miles from Florida

who threatened to undermine Camelot's star power. With boyish enthusiasm, Kennedy asked 'What would Bond do?' A great raconteur, Fleming shot from the hip, suggesting that killing Castro was not enough; he had to be humiliated in the eyes of his people. Cubans, he told JFK, valued three things: money, sex, and religion. Exploiting this, the CIA should drop counterfeit money over Havana, with notes saying 'compliments of the United States'. Then, it should flood the country with pamphlets claiming that radioactivity, caused by atomic testing in the region, was attracted to men with beards and resulted in impotence. To protect their virility, the barbudos would be shamed out of their macho facial hair, thus severing a symbolic link to the revolution. Finally, the CIA should project a religious manifestation over the Havana skyline, ideally a crucifix, to imply divine opposition to the communist regime. Everyone, including the Presidential hopeful, burst into laughter.⁷⁶

The next morning, in a beguiling postscript to this story, Bross regaled Dulles with Fleming's hare-brained ideas. Remarkably, Dulles thought them wonderful, since they resonated with plans already being developed by the Technical Services.⁷⁷ As Bross recalls it, they tried to reach Fleming to invite him to Langley.⁷⁸ However, he was already on a flight to Jamaica. Sadly, this is where the paper trail ends and it would clearly be unwise to infer from this evidence that the British novelist was the architect of JFK's Cuba policy. However, it is tempting to speculate that Fleming did at least play some part in encouraging the CIA down the path of fantastical solutions to the Cuban threat. The campaign later waged by the CIA against Castro – Operation Mongoose – involved ludicrous stunts to discredit the Cuban leader that bore an uncanny resemblance to the author's proposals, from cigars laced with LSD to cause disorientation during public speeches, to contaminated handkerchiefs that would destroy his beard and pubic hair. During the Church Committee hearings in the mid-1970s into CIA improprieties, one intelligence officer confirmed at the witness table that the Agency had seriously considered the 'elimination by illumination' idea, which would have involved a US submarine surfacing off Havana and firing starshells into the sky, to convince the natives that the Second Coming was at hand.⁷⁹ The Soviets were certainly convinced that Fleming had seduced the CIA. In April 1962, *Izvestia* reported: 'Fleming's best friend is Allen Dulles...who even attempted (but unsuccessfully) to try methods recommended by Fleming in his books. American propagandists must be in a bad way if they have recourse to the help of an English retired spy turned mediocre writer'.⁸⁰

Fleming certainly enjoyed a special acquaintance with Dulles. Appreciative of the spymaster's gushing public statements about Bond, Fleming returned the favour by including flattering references to him and the CIA in his novels, which were welcomed by the Agency as it sought to rehabilitate its image after the Bay of Pigs fiasco in April 1961. In *Thunderball* (1961), 'M' gives Bond his orders to recover two missing atomic bombs and enthuses, 'We've teamed up with the CIA to cover the world. Allen Dulles is putting every man he's got onto it and so am

I'.⁸¹ In *You Only Live Twice* (1964), Dulles is referred to affectionately as the 'old fox'.⁸² And, in *The Man with the Golden Gun* (1965), Fleming even marketed the spymaster's new book, commenting that Bond recovers from his duel with Scaramanga by 'sitting in his chair, a towel, around his waist, reading Allen Dulles's *The Craft of Intelligence*'.⁸³ Arguably, we might even think of the two men as a citation ring.

V

When the Bond film franchise celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2012, the platitudes were far and wide. All attested to the enduring popularity and influence of 007 on perceptions of spying not only in the UK and US but also globally. As this article has argued, core narratives of intelligence among not only the public but also policymakers and intelligence officers are imagined, sustained, deepened, produced and reproduced through and by Bond. The very words 'Bond', 'James Bond', and '007' have a cultural resonance that give deep meanings beyond the mere name or number of the fictitious secret agent, penetrating both the public sphere and secret intelligence communities. Bond and intelligence should be thought of as co-constitutive; the series shapes representations and perceptions of intelligence, but it also performs a productive role, influencing the behaviours of intelligence agencies themselves. Dulles taking cues from 1960s Connery-era Bond films, which in turn encouraged the filmmakers to invent even more outlandish spy gizmos such as the white Lotus Esprit that transformed into a submarine for Roger Moore's Bond in *The Spy Who Loved Me*, is a perfect example of what James Der Derian describes as a feedback loop wherein the 'reel' and the 'real' co-constitute one another.⁸⁴

For more than half a century, the Bond franchise has conveyed unclassified, public answers to five core questions about intelligence that we have explored in this article. To the fundamental question of 'what is intelligence?', Bond in all its forms articulates a consistent view that it is a profession crucial to national and international security, essential both to contain and overcome existential threats. While the skills required for successful intelligence activities are wide and varied, the role of the individual is central to its effectiveness. Moreover, there can be no qualms about the necessity and legitimacy of the use of lethal force. This latter point contributes to the second question of how ethical spying should be. Bond, and particularly his superior M, are portrayed as professionals who are expertly trained, disciplined and morally upright. While Bond may sometimes appear rebellious, he is always loyal to Queen and Country; moreover, he knows what lines can and cannot be crossed.

Throughout the series, but particularly since the Craig era reboot, 007 provides an unequivocal answer to a third question, namely 'how important is human intelligence?' On practically every mission, Bond's success is rooted in the necessity of human assets and allies; the need to personally infiltrate and deceive enemy networks; the utility and power of individual skill over reliance on

technology; and ultimately the effectiveness of the use of lethal force by an agent who is licenced to kill. The fourth question addressed by Bond is how significant British intelligence is relative to other nation's services. A clear message is that cooperation is often key to success, but that British intelligence remains not only significant after the demise of empire, but also uniquely able to contribute to global security. While other services, particularly US intelligence, might have superior access to resources and firepower, it is Bond's greater class, skill and intellect, coupled with M's voice of reason, that sets the British apart and ensures victory. The Bond novels and films represent a cultural reassertion of Britain's significance globally.

Finally, Bond has presented audiences with answers to a timeless fifth question; namely, what threatens contemporary society? The Bond franchise has been adept at keeping abreast of the perceived changes in security fears from the Cold War threat of nuclear annihilation through to so-called 'new' globalised security threats, many of which such as terrorism, bio-threats or transnational crime, Bond stories anticipated before they became commonplace on political or academic agendas. For millions of readers and film viewers, therefore, for better or worse, the 'imagined' world of Bond and the 'real' world of intelligence interact with each other in deeply significant ways. To understand how intelligence is perceived, and to a degree how it is constructed and narrativised, contrary to the reticent naysayers in the Ivory Tower, we avoid engaging with the 'imagined' realm of James Bond at our peril.

Notes

¹ Benson, *James Bond Bedside Companion*; McNerney et al., *Dressed to Kill*; Barnes and Hearn, *Kiss Bang Bang*.

² Fleming, "How to Write a Thriller," *Books and Bookmen*, 1963.

³ Cited in Lycett, *Fleming*, 220.

⁴ Cannadine, *Churchill's Shadow*, 279-311.

⁵ Fleming, *Goldfinger*, 189, 222-223.

⁶ Andrew, *Her Majesty's Secret Service*.

⁷ Smith, *Six*.

⁸ Dover, "Vauxhall Cross with Love," 201-20.

⁹ See Rosenstone, *Visions of the Past*; McCrisken and Pepper, *American History and Contemporary Hollywood Film*; Carter and Dodds, *International Politics and Film*; Willmetts, *Secrecy's Shadow*.

¹⁰ Lisle, "Screening Global Politics," 135-136.

¹¹ Wark, "Introduction: Fictions of Espionage: Past, Present, Future?" 9.

¹² <https://www.roehampton.ac.uk/research-centres/popular-literature-and-culture-research-group/journal-of-james-bond-studies>.

¹³ Linder, *James Bond Phenomenon*; Comentale et al., *Ian Fleming and James Bond*.

¹⁴ Chapman, *Licence to Thrill*.

¹⁵ Black, *Politics of James Bond*.

¹⁶ Albion, "Spy in All of Us," 155.

¹⁷ John McCone to John Finney, 21 October 1965, McCone Papers, BANC/MSS 95/20 Container 7.2.

-
- ¹⁸ <https://www.cia.gov/about-cia/faqs>.
- ¹⁹ <https://www.mi5.gov.uk>.
- ²⁰ West, "Fiction, Faction and Intelligence," 275-89.
- ²¹ Kirkpatrick, *Real CIA*, 5.
- ²² See Aldrich and Cormac, *Black Door*.
- ²³ Moran, *Classified*.
- ²⁴ John le Carré, "Spy Story," *New York Times Review of Books*, 12 March 1978.
- ²⁵ Kirkpatrick, *Real CIA*, 5.
- ²⁶ Colby and Forbrath, *Honorable Men*, 180.
- ²⁷ Lathrop, *Literary Spy*, 153; See McCrisken and Pepper, *American History and Contemporary Hollywood Film*, Chapter 5 on Oliver Stone's views on conspiracy, corruption and the activities of the CIA.
- ²⁸ West, *At Her Majesty's Secret Service*, 214.
- ²⁹ "Cats' Eyes in the Dark," *The Economist*, 17 March 2005; Albion, "Spy in All of Us," 155.
- ³⁰ Corera, *Art of Betrayal*, 1.
- ³¹ Ian Fleming to Frederick Millar, June 1959, in Fleming, *Man with the Golden Typewriter*, 204-5.
- ³² Powers, *Man Who Kept the Secrets*; Moran, "From Confession to Corporate Memory," 337-55.
- ³³ Riebling, *Wedge*, 84.
- ³⁴ Author interview Cynthia Helms, 2011.
- ³⁵ Riebling, *Wedge*, 85.
- ³⁶ Albion, "Spy in All of Us," 156.
- ³⁷ Tornabuoni, "A Popular Phenomenon," 22.
- ³⁸ Ibid.
- ³⁹ See CREST, NARA.
- ⁴⁰ Memo cited in Jack Anderson, "FBI Targeted Fictional Spy," *Washington Post*, 24 June 1980, CREST, NARA.
- ⁴¹ Ibid.
- ⁴² "James Bond as Villain in Soviet Novel," *Daily Telegraph*, 8 October 1965.
- ⁴³ See Jenkins, *CIA in Hollywood*; Willmetts, *Secrecy's Shadow*.
- ⁴⁴ DCI Speech to CIA, "Today and Tomorrow: Headquarters Auditorium," 4 March 1976, CREST, NARA.
- ⁴⁵ McLaughlin, "Intelligence in Contemporary Media," 3.
- ⁴⁶ McCrisken and Pepper, *American History and Contemporary Hollywood Film*.
- ⁴⁷ <https://www.sis.gov.uk>.
- ⁴⁸ Eco, "Narrative Structure in Fleming," 25-26.
- ⁴⁹ Black, *Politics of James Bond*, 85.
- ⁵⁰ See Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 63-65.
- ⁵¹ Chapman, *Licence to Thrill*, 24, 29.
- ⁵² Ibid., 68.
- ⁵³ Fleming, *Dr No*, 11.
- ⁵⁴ Neal Purves and Robert Wade, *Casino Royale*, Second set of revisions by Paul Haggis, 13 December 2005, <http://www.dailyscript.com/scripts/Casino-Royale.pdf>.
- ⁵⁵ The Prime Minister, "Syria: Refugees and Counterterrorism," *Hansard Daily*, 7 September 2015, <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201516/cmhansrd/cm150907/debtext/150907-0001.htm>.
- ⁵⁶ See Jackson, "Genealogy, Ideology and Counter-terrorism," 163-193.
- ⁵⁷ Chapman, *Licence to Thrill*, 157.
- ⁵⁸ Amis, *James Bond Dossier*, 70.
- ⁵⁹ Chapman, *Licence to Kill*, 34.

- ⁶⁰ Interestingly the roles were reversed in the 1954 live CBS television production of *Casino Royale* in which “Jimmy” Bond was portrayed as a CIA agent and Felix Leiter became his British counterpart Clarence Leiter.
- ⁶¹ Quoted in Thomas Vinciguerra, “Holmes had Watson. Why Can’t Bond Keep Leiter?” *New York Times*, 17 November 2002.
- ⁶² Funnell and Dodds, *Geographies, Genders, and Geopolitics of James Bond*, 29.
- ⁶³ Black, *Politics of James Bond*, 99.
- ⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 118.
- ⁶⁵ Kinzer, *Brothers*, 44.
- ⁶⁶ Kinzer, *Brothers*, 274.
- ⁶⁷ Fleming, *Golden Typewriter*, 352.
- ⁶⁸ Dulles, *Great Spy Stories from Fiction*.
- ⁶⁹ Ian Fleming to Arthur Krock, 12 July 1961, Box 25, Krock Papers.
- ⁷⁰ Allen Dulles, “Our Spy-Boss Who Loved James Bond,” *Life*, 28 August 1964.
- ⁷¹ For more information on Dulles’s broader efforts, post-Bay of Pigs, to promote the CIA’s image see: Willmetts, “Burgeoning Fissures of Discontent,” 167-88.
- ⁷² Allen Dulles to Ian Fleming, 24 April 1963, Russell Papers.
- ⁷³ Dulles, “Spy-Boss Who Loved James Bond,” *Life*.
- ⁷⁴ Mark Wilson, “Ex-CIA Officer Laments Q’s Absence from Modern James Bond,” *Gizmodo*, 10 November 2008, <http://gizmodo.com/5082085/ex-cia-officer-laments-qs-absence-from-modern-james-bond>.
- ⁷⁵ Burton, *Historical Dictionary of British Spy Fiction*, 369.
- ⁷⁶ John Pearson, “An Evening with JFK,” *Globe*, 27 January 1967; Riebling, *Wedge*, 162; Russo, *Live by the Sword*.
- ⁷⁷ Rasenberger, *Brilliant Disaster*, 54.
- ⁷⁸ Pearson, “Evening with JFK”.
- ⁷⁹ Thomas, *Robert Kennedy*, 150.
- ⁸⁰ “Books of Human Bondage,” *Time*, 13 April 1962.
- ⁸¹ Fleming, *Thunderball*, 77.
- ⁸² Fleming, *You Only Live Twice*, 30.
- ⁸³ Fleming, *The Man with the Golden Gun*, 183.
- ⁸⁴ See Der Derian, “Virtuous War/Virtual Theory,” 771-88.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Archival Records

Bancroft Library, University of California Berkeley (BANC): John McCone Papers.
 Lilly Library, Indiana University, IN: Leonard Russell Papers.
 National Archives II, College Park, MD (NARA): CIA Records Search Tool (CREST).
 Seeley G Mudd Manuscript Library, University of Princeton, NJ: Arthur Krock Papers.

Books and Articles

Albion, Alexis. “The Spy in All of Us: The Public Image of Intelligence.” PhD Diss., University of Harvard, 2005.
 Aldrich, Richard, and Rory Cormac. *The Black Door: Spies, Secret Intelligence and British Prime Ministers*. London: William Collins, 2016.
 Amis, Kingsley. *The James Bond Dossier*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1965.
 Andrew, Christopher. *Her Majesty’s Secret Service: The Making of the British Intelligence Community*. New York, NY: Viking, 1985.

-
- Barnes, Alan, and Marcus Hearn. *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang: The Secret History of James Bond*. Woodstock, NY: The Overlook Press, 1998.
- Benson, Raymond. *The James Bond Bedside Companion*. New York, NY: Dodd Mead, 1984.
- Black, Jeremy. *The Politics of James Bond: From Fleming's Novels to the Big Screen*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2000.
- Burton, Alan. *Historical Dictionary of British Spy Fiction*. London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016.
- Cannadine, David. *In Churchill's Shadow*. London: Penguin, 2002.
- Carter, Sean, and Klaus Dodds. *International Politics and Film: Space, Vision, Power*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2014.
- Chapman, James. *Licence to Thrill: A Cultural History of the James Bond Films*. London: I.B. Taurus, 1999.
- Colby, William, and Peter Forbath. *Honorable Men: My Life in the CIA*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1978.
- Commentale, Edward. P, Stephen Walt and Skip Willman, eds. *Ian Fleming and James Bond: The Cultural Politics of 007*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005.
- Corera, Gordon. *The Art of Betrayal: Life and Death in the British Secret Service*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2011.
- Der Derian, James. "Virtuous War/Virtual Theory." *International Affairs* 76, no. 4 (Oct. 2000): 771-80.
- Dover, Robert. "From Vauxhall Cross with Love: Intelligence in Popular Culture." In *Spinning Intelligence: Why Intelligence Needs the Media, Why the Media Needs Intelligence*, edited by Robert Dover and Michael S. Goodman, 201-220. London: Hurst, 2009.
- Dulles, Allen. *Great Spy Stories from Fiction*. New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1969.
- Fleming, Fergus, ed. *The Man with the Golden Typewriter*. London: Bloomsbury, 2015.
- Fleming, Ian. *Dr No*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1958.
- Fleming, Ian. *Goldfinger*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1959.
- Fleming, Ian. *The Man with the Golden Gun*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1965.
- Fleming, Ian. *Thunderball*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1965.
- Fleming, Ian. *You Only Live Twice*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1964.
- Funnell, Lisa and Ken Dodds. *Geographies, Genders, and Geopolitics of James Bond*. London: Palgrave, 2017.
- Harling, Robert. *Ian Fleming: A Personal Memoir*. London: Robson Press, 2015.
- Hoffman, Bruce. *Inside Terrorism*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2006.
- Jackson, Richard. "Genealogy, Ideology and Counter-Terrorism: Writing Wars on Terrorism from Ronald Reagan to George W. Bush, Jr." *Studies in Language and Capitalism* 1 (2006): 163-193.
- Jenkins, Tricia. *The CIA in Hollywood: How the Agency Shapes Film and Television*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2012.
- Kinzer, Stephen. *The Brothers: John Foster Dulles, Allen Dulles, and Their Secret World War*. New York, NY: Times Books, 2013.
- Kirkpatrick, Lyman. *The Real CIA*. New York: Macmillan, 1968.
- Lathrop, Charles. E. *The Literary Spy: The Ultimate Source for Quotations on Espionage and Intelligence*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Linder, Christoph, ed. *The James Bond Phenomenon: A Critical Reader*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003.
- Lisle, Debbie. "Screening Global Politics." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 5, no. 1 (March 2003): 135-141.
- Lycett, Andrew. *Ian Fleming*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1995.
- McCriskin, Trevor, and Andrew Pepper. *American History and Contemporary Hollywood Film*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005.

-
- McInerney, Jay, Nick Foulkes, and Nick Sullivan. *Dressed to Kill: James Bond – The Suited Hero*. New York, NY: Flammarion, 1996.
- McLaughlin, John. "Intelligence in Contemporary Media – Views of Intelligence Officers." *Studies in Intelligence: Special Review Supplement* (Summer 2009): 3-4.
- Moran, Christopher. *Classified: Secrecy and the State in Modern Britain*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Moran, Christopher. "From Confession to Corporate Memory: The Memoirs of CIA Director Richard Helms." *International History Review* 35, no. 2 (April 2013): 337-355.
- Powers, Thomas. *The Man Who Kept the Secrets: Richard Helms and the CIA*. New York, NY: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1979.
- Rasenberger, Jim. *The Brilliant Disaster: JFK, Castro and America's Doomed Invasion of Cuba*. New York, NY: Scribner, 2011.
- Riebling, Mark. *Wedge: The Secret War between the FBI and CIA*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994.
- Rosenstone, Robert. *Visions of the Past: The Challenge of Film to Our Idea of History*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995.
- Russo, Gus. *Live by the Sword: The Secret War against Castro and the Death of JFK*. Baltimore, MD: Bancroft Press, 1998.
- Smith, Michael. *Six: The Real James Bonds, 1909-1939*. London: Biteback, 2011.
- Thomas, Evan. *Robert Kennedy: His Life*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2000.
- Tornabuoni, Lietta. "A Popular Phenomenon." In *The Bond Affair*, edited by Oreste del Buono and Umberto Eco, 13-34. London: Macdonald, 1966.
- Wark, Wesley. "Introduction: Fictions of Espionage: Past, Present, Future?" *Intelligence and National Security* 8, no. 3 (July 1993): 1-13.
- West, Nigel. "Fiction, Faction and Intelligence." *Intelligence and National Security* 19, no. 2 (2004): 275-89.
- West, Nigel. *At Her Majesty's Secret Service: The Chiefs of Britain's Intelligence Agency MI6*. London: Greenhill, 2006.
- Willmetts, Simon. "The Burgeoning Fissures of Discontent: Allen Dulles and the Selling of the CIA in the Aftermath of the Bay of Pigs." *History* 100, no. 340 (April 2015): 167-88.
- Willmetts, Simon. *In Secrecy's Shadow: The OSS and CIA in Hollywood Cinema*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016.