



Spy: The Inside Story of How the FBI's Robert Hanssen Betrayed America

David Wise

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Spy tells, for the first time, the full, authoritative story of how FBI agent Robert Hanssen, code name grayday, spied for Russia for twenty-two years in what has been called the “worst intelligence disaster in U.S. history”—and how he was finally caught in an incredible gambit by U.S. intelligence.

David Wise, the nation’s leading espionage writer, has called on his unique knowledge and unrivaled intelligence sources to write the definitive, inside story of how Robert Hanssen betrayed his country, and why.

Spy at last reveals the mind and motives of a man who was a walking paradox: FBI counterspy, KGB mole, devout Catholic, obsessed pornographer who secretly televised himself and his wife having sex so that his best friend could watch, defender of family values, fantasy James Bond who took a stripper to Hong Kong and carried a machine gun in his car trunk.

Brimming with startling new details sure to make headlines, **Spy** discloses:

- the previously untold story of how the FBI got the actual file on Robert Hanssen out of KGB headquarters in Moscow for \$7 million in an unprecedented operation that ended in Hanssen’s arrest.

- how for three years, the FBI pursued a CIA officer, code name gray deceiver, in the mistaken belief that he was the mole they were seeking inside U.S. intelligence. The innocent officer was accused as a spy and suspended by the CIA for nearly two years.

- why Hanssen spied, based on exclusive interviews with Dr. David L. Charney, the psychiatrist who met with Hanssen in his jail cell more than thirty times. Hanssen, in an extraordinary arrangement, authorized Charney to talk to the author.

- the full story of Robert Hanssen’s bizarre sex life, including the hidden video camera he set up in his bedroom and how he plotted to drug his wife, Bonnie, so that his best friend could father her child.

- how Hanssen and the CIA’s Aldrich Ames betrayed three Russians secretly spying for the FBI—including tophat, a Soviet general—who were then executed by Moscow.

- that after Hanssen was already working for the KGB, he directed a study of moles in the FBI when—as he alone knew—he was the mole.

Robert Hanssen betrayed the FBI. He betrayed his country. He betrayed his wife. He betrayed his children. He betrayed his best friend, offering him up to the KGB. He betrayed his God. Most of all, he betrayed himself. Only David Wise could tell the astonishing, full story, and he does so, in masterly style, in **Spy**.

From the Hardcover edition.

Spy: The Inside Story of How the FBI's Robert Hanssen Betrayed America Details

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From Reader Review Spy: The Inside Story of How the FBI's Robert Hanssen Betrayed America for online ebook

Tom says

Sorry to say not very well written. But, fascinating story, very worthwhile read. Oh. And. Just horrible: the man, his actions, and the obliviousness of the FBI (which I'm not bashing; just noting). Still nothing compares to the Cherkashin book so far.

Andrew says

Despite the difficulty of the subject matter -- such as the betrayal of one's wife and country in the ways Robert Hanssen betrayed his -- I found this to be a fair-minded, and not entirely unsympathetic or dehumanising depiction.

Hanssen unquestionably emerges as the villain, as he undoubtedly ought to be seen: his actions were reprehensible. At the same time, he was a terribly lonely, deeply wounded individual. Evil causes suffering, but the reverse is also true. Yet it does not minimise the suffering of others, nor diminish the evil of the acts themselves.

The mystery of human nature is revealed (but not explained, leave that for the philosophers, ethicists, and theologians) in this strange, tragic tale of one of the worst spies in U.S. history.

Gary Kubit says

The spy who killed but lives

Interesting read and documentation of a very damaging spy who indirectly caused the death of other counter intelligence agents in a betrayal of trust for very complex and difficult motivation factors.

Frank Brennan says

An amazing story about how one mid-level FBI agent turned over a treasure of US secrets to the Soviet Union, then Russia. If you can, watch the movie Breach beforehand. Then the book. The movie takes all kinds of liberty with the real story. The book will fill in the blanks and give you a greater appreciation for how sick Robert Hanssen actually was (is).

Steve Paulson says

Could not put this down. What an interesting story. Really well written. Boy this guy was a brazen douche! Great book.

RACHEL E PEACOCK says

Thorough, detailed, endlessly interesting

If you want to know how and why spies betray their countries, read this book. Describes his spying and how he got away with it for over 20 years.

Amanda Hanson says

Okay, so I've changed the rating on this book a couple times already. I have mixed feelings! It was interesting, but some of the chapters felt out of place, and some of the information really didn't seem necessary, and it DRAGGED. But when I finally got to the end, I was glad I read it. Idk. Maybe I'll change the rating again later. ?

Adrienne says

Interesting subject, but the writing is fairly repetitive.

Beth says

This is the 5th book written about Robert Hanssen, a man who loved his wife, technology, and being a religious member of Opus Dei but also loved the intrigue of working for the FBI while giving FBI Intelligence information to the Soviet Union/Russia. Well researched, this book lists many facts. It was amazing to find quotes of Bob's conversations about how he and the KGB should communicate and where "drops" would be. What is harder and difficult to understand is how the man lived with himself. The facts point to what he did; what we can't find out is what goaded him, a religious man to also love porn, betray work the FBI was doing, and also get commended by the FBI for his work there. How schizophrenic!

Ann Vallimaa says

Why did you spy on Ray and Mary all these years? All the movies and books. Was I some kind of target? I believe it was an Inheritance Scam. We recently had a lamp busted in our house. They knew about bloody wash cloths. They knew about cutting crosses. Read page. 208. Trash searched, underwear sniffed, toys destroyed. G's were there to keep me alive? They were watching for suicide. You know what, I started taking to them. You could probably make a documentary. You also know what else was recorded. You chose to ignore certain actions.

These people didn't get busted toes and fractured faces.

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As summer turned to fall, Kelleys was having repeated problems with the telephones at his home. In October, a technician dispatched by the telephone company to investigate the trouble found a bug on the line.

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it gave that information the code name Karat.

* (Want a carrot peeler?) I thought that was your sex toy....seriously!

*Chemistry

*Potassium Cyanide

Also note on page 259 about Rohypnol/Flunitrazepam.... (maybe how they take photographs)sleeping pill/*Tranquilizer.

Patrick says

Robert Hanssen's motives are some of the most complex in American espionage, and Wise offers decent thoughtful insights on them while covering a lot of ground in great detail; however, the background information sometimes seems irrelevant. I'm not into Wise's writing style(and the last chapter is garbage), but this is probably the best book available on Hanssen due to Wise's research efforts - supposedly he interviewed some 150 key individuals and was, after Hanssen's approval, given exclusive access to the psychiatrist assigned to Hanssen, Dr. David L. Chartney. That last part's from the back cover.

Peg says

I recently revisited the movie Breach, with Chris Cooper and Ryan Phillippe, which impressed me with its taut retelling of the story of Robert Hanssen, the FBI story turned Soviet spy. Hanssen is an intriguing figure--a fundamentalist Catholic member of Opus Dei, father of six children, and former cop who sold invaluable national security secrets in exchange for a few hundred thousand dollars and plenty of ego-stroking on the part of the Russians.

The movie unwound the story masterfully, from the point of view of Hanssen's young and inexperienced assistant, and I thought that reading a book about Hanssen would provide even more flavor and context. It should have, anyway, but this book didn't. Although it was the best-reviewed volume on the subject, the book never rose above the level of a cheap true-crime story: ie, on this day, Hanssen dead-dropped 200 pages of classified material in a park near his house, signalling his counterparts with white adhesive tape, etc.

To me, the part of this story that would have been fascinating is why those breaches *mattered.* The author apparently didn't have trouble getting permission to disclose what was in the various packages that Hanssen leaked--that information was fairly well cataloged. But a more intelligent and better-researched book would have tried to provide a taste of how those breaches affected national security, and this author barely bothered to try. He did mention some of the obvious consequences of the breaches--three Soviet double agents who were killed as a result of Hanssen revealing their identities to his handlers, for instance--but the book offers nothing on subtler points such as how the leaked information influenced the larger Cold War struggles. Did Hanssen's leaks ever affect the Cold War dynamics between the superpowers at all? If they did, I still don't know about it even after reading the book. How unsatisfying is that? This could be a great story if someone took the time to research it and tell it in context, but this book is not that work.

Michael Hinton says

An insightful look into the career of one of the most damaging spies in our nation's history. What made Robert Hanssen spy for the Soviets, and how did he get away with it for so long? The author's detailed and well-researched account goes a long way towards answering these questions. If you're interested in espionage and the FBI, this book is well worth your time.

Beverly says

Scary deviant let loose on an unsuspecting govt.--Ours!

Bill says

This book was a decent account of how Robert Hanssen spied for the Soviets/Russians for over twenty years. I read it because it was one of the books Nancy Pearl recommended in "Book Lust". Her description of the book made it sound a lot more interesting than it actually was. David Wise includes some rather lurid details about Hanssen's private life that only seem to be there for the sake of titillation. None of this adds anything to the story. I guess I was disappointed by the complete absence of artistry in this book. I mean, Wise obviously did his research, and the book is clear enough, but it's prose is very flat. I guess reading Simon Winchester has raised my standards somewhat.
