Annenberg School for Communication

Departmental Papers (ASC)

University of Pennsylvania *Year* 2001

Defending the American Dream: Coverage of the Jonathan Pollard Spy Case

Barbie Zelizer
University of Pennsylvania, bzelizer@asc.upenn.edu

This paper is posted at ScholarlyCommons.
http://repository.upenn.edu/asc_papers/71

Defending the American Dream: Coverage of the Jonathan Pollard Spy Case

Barbie Zelizer

Abstract
This article contemplates the journalistic coverage of American espionage as an attempt to maintain consonance with broader cultural discourses about what it means to be an American. Tracking the American press coverage of the Jonathan Pollard spy case, the article demonstrates that the press turns espionage into a phenomenon upholding fundamental American beliefs in openness, sincerity, and straightforwardness. It shows that, rather than represent espionage as a phenomenon embodying deceit, secrecy, and immoral action, the press turns espionage into a phenomenon that communicates that one is what one says one is and that one's self presentation reflects one's insides. Ultimately, however, this representation of espionage undermines a full understanding of how - and why - spying works in culture.

Not long ago, The Philadelphia Inquirer featured a front-page story about a new book that had been published by a Soviet defector. The article, which drew on crates of files to reveal tales of an espionage center in the heart of Philadelphia during the 1960s, was divided into two separate but related stories: on the left side of the centerfold, readers were told of the haven that the city had offered for Soviet spies during the Cold War. On the right side, they were told of the exploits of Soviet "bad guys, bunglers, bombers and boozers" who had gotten "Britain all abuzz." In reading the article, it was the substitution of Britain for the United States as a locus for spying activity that caught the eye. Why was the second of two related articles about Britain? Why had the United States disappeared?

This article contemplates the strategic disappearance of America as a venue that engages in espionage, arguing that its disappearance is in keeping with broader cultural discourses about what it means to be an American. As a nation-state and as a culture, the United States is highly ambivalent about the espionage in its midst. U.S. public discourse holds that at some level people are what they purport or claim to be and that U.S. culture thrives on its openness, sincerity, integrity, and forthrightness. Spying, however, taints that linkage, by a priori assuming that what one says one is never reflects what lies inside. The internal, private, and subjective world of espionage has no reliable corollary with the external, manifest, and objective world.

This article broadly situates espionage as a phenomenon at odds with America's collective sense of self. It addresses the problematics of how America, as a culture and a nation-state, adapts recountings of problematic action and antithetical public events so as to maintain consonance with that sense of self. It argues that the lack of fit between U.S. public discourse and espionage is so problematic for most Americans that all talk of spying is strategically dumbed-down, with spying represented instead as a "flip phenomenon" in American discourse, a phenomenon that paradoxically upholds not what one would expect of espionage as a cultural system—deceit, secrecy, and immoral action—but its polar opposite. Within the American context, spying becomes a repository for upholding the fundamental beliefs in openness, sincerity, and straightforwardness, transformed into a set of practices that communicate that one is what one says one is and that one's self-presentation reflects one's insides. Ultimately, however, this undermines a full understanding of how - and why - spying really works, and leaves an

appreciation of its uses in our culture incomplete. When applied to the journalistic coverage of the Jonathan Pollard spy case, these issues raise questions about how the collective strives to reinstate balance between what it is and what it wants to be, particularly in cases that undo the connection between them.

ESPIONAGE AS A COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

Although numerous kinds of public action present challenges to a nation's collective image, espionage - and its dark associations with violence, deception, and subterfuge - rarely tops the list of a nation-state's admired and readily admitted achievements. While espionage is not the only profession where one pretends to be something one is not - the same argument being made for politicians, actors, or anchorpersons - it is clear that espionage has its own singular characteristics.

Spying is primarily a visual system. It is a technology of looking that proceeds according to explicit and implicit rules about where one is allowed and encouraged to look for information. While such looking is sanctioned in varying configurations by the group at hand, spying also implicitly refers to that which is not seen. Assumptions about what can be private and concealed, and under which conditions, motivate the spy's fluid transport across boundaries, with technology and technological change providing a changing background to the changing definition of what counts as espionage.

Espionage thrives on an unusual communication system. At the core of that system is a tenuous connection between disclosure and concealment, public and private. Defined as "actions directed toward the acquisition of information through clandestine means" (Fowler 1994, p. 6), espionage refers to the activation of a set of practices of information gathering, transfer, and exchange, which are practiced to engage in what might be called the management of secrecy.

Although the spy as an individual phenomenon dates to the Biblical tales of Samson and Delilah or Moses' twelve spies sent to the Land of Canaan, espionage as a complex communication system is relatively new. It bears a number of curious and somewhat contradictory attributes. First, its morally ambiguous impulses derive in large part from the violence at the core of its activities. The spy exists in a world where usual demarcations between good and evil, moral and immoral, underground and aboveground are obscured. Government detectives and political spies work on the same line, often with no knowledge of the other's presence. Second, the spy is largely invisible and exists within a protected space that removes him or her from sanction from the rest of the community for activities that would normally be problematic, if not reprehensible. Third, the spy is competent, an expert in every action he or she undertakes. He or she can ski well, pick locks, disable machinery or computers, and make love wildly. The spy's errors are usually "errors of inattention, such as killing the wrong man" (Barzun 1965, p. 169). Finally, spying is unscrupulous. As Jacques Barzun recounted, "The advantage of being a spy is that there is always a larger reason - the reason of state - for making any little scruple or nastiness shrink into insignificance" (ibid.). Few spies regard themselves as sinister or intentional lawbreakers but see themselves acting instead to a higher criterion (Nash 1997, p. 7).
Each of these attributes is hidden, obscured, known, and recognized, but rarely admitted in public. In making espionage work, the spy depends on a number of generally unfamiliar tools.

Ciphers, codes, cryptography, and secrets all play into the spy's everyday world in a way that few outsiders imagine, with secret communications, disguises, alibis, and hidden meetings all routine (Pratt 1942). Moreover, the tools constantly change with technology. As one U.S. official recently admitted, the "CNN era," in which news and events are broadcast in a near-instantaneous fashion with instant analysis and pictures, necessitates an intelligence enterprise that is "more rapid and thorough than ever before to allow decision-makers to respond speedily [and]... accurate enough to allow public officials to correct the truncated, sound-bite version of events so often provided by television news" (McCurdy 1994, p. 127).

The activities of the spy must be kept secret because they often involve a transgression of conventional, usually moral, boundaries. In fact, espionage rests on the manipulation of the secret, a peculiar act of communication that manipulates private and public impulses in unusual ways. Defined by Simmel as "knowledge about facts hidden to others" (Wolff 1959, p. 332), the secret depends on the simultaneity of communication and concealment (Bok 1982; Goffman 1969). Key here is also the activity of storage, without which there can be no secret. In fact, the receiver need not know of a secret in order for secrecy to occur, for it connects certain people in predictable configurations and excludes others, who may not even know of its existence. Yet, it is the revelation of secrets that continually works itself out in espionage. In fact, it is the immanence of revelation that determines the distribution and storage of social knowledge within the system that circulates it, making us "care so much for truth that we are willing to drug and torture for it" (Barzun 1965, p. 169). This means that the secret is routinely communicated to a select few at the same time it remains by definition a communique that is not communicated at all. The effect of espionage, then, is only partly in the non-message; it also rests in the potential for that non-message to become at some point a relay of crucial importance. Tensions—between what we see and do not see, between what is visible and public, visible and private, invisible and public, or invisible and private, between what is communicated in open space but understood by only a select few—are all givens within the system by which espionage makes its name. While these tensions are often "dissolved in the moment of [their] revelation" (Wolff 1959, p. 333), revelation rarely occurs at once for all people, but rather gradually, in small increments, and over time. Governments and other large-scale institutions are even inclined to keep secret facts that are generally known (Friedrich 1972), tacitly acknowledging the gradual pacing by which disclosure occurs.

Each of these tensions involves a recognition, articulated or implicit, of violence as the core activity of espionage. From the cloak and dagger episodes most actively associated with spy films to the varying activities involved in violating broader moral standards, an underside of violence is assumed to typify most actions associated with espionage. In most spy novels, for instance, the experience of violence is narrativized so as to mark a broader loss of innocence. Violence is everywhere - in systematic torture, the actions of thugs, the inhumane arbitrariness of officials and bureaucracy - and its effect "is to mark out the thin layer of civilization and show its contingency" (Denning 1987, p. 71). Violence's shadowy presence unearths a broader discomfort in the culture at large, an uneasiness about its acceptability as a venue for conflict resolution. The core presence of violence thus makes espionage particularly problematic when viewed as a standard for collective action.

With spies, then, what is said is only minimally reflective of what is known, either to the spy or to his or her audience. Communicating information through espionage thereby thrives on the activation of differential address (Zelizer 1989). It relies on an ability to say different things to different audiences at one and the same time. In this, espionage is a communication system of remarkably wide-ranging and contradictory attributes. And as I will argue, those attributes have facilitated the transformation of U.S. espionage into a flip-phenomenon, a phenomenon that is its polar opposite.

ESPIONAGE IN U.S. CULTURE

How do all of these premises about espionage come into play in U.S. culture? How are its tensions and counter impulses resolved within the collective need to articulate identity, be open, act with integrity, and maintain an equivalence between who one is and who one says one is? Spying in the U.S. has come to be represented in a way that paradoxically upholds the flip side of the phenomenon, supporting a fundamental belief in honesty, openness, and forthrightness. Such a representational about-face thrives on support from many quarters - Western epistemology, notions of democracy and civil discourse, and, finally, American public consciousness.
In much of Western tradition, we have long been familiar with the ocular-centric bias of culture, producing the notion that seeing is the primary mark of reality. Both Plato and Aristotle gave primacy to sight, and Western thought has been associated continually with visual metaphors involving "point of view," "clarity," "reflection," and so forth. Indeed, in Western epistemology, knowledge and visualization have become bedfellows in a default setting for understanding the world. Knowledge has come to be equated generally with its representation, judged by its reflection effect and by how much it reflects external reality (Rorty 1979). Within such a mindset, the insistence that what one sees is what one gets makes sense, and it lends credence to a default setting in which honesty and openness are core values. Thus it is no surprise that ocularcentrism has come to shape arenas of public discourse that enjoy key degrees of public esteem, among them law, journalism, and politics. Ocularcentrism's prevalence makes it difficult to remember, however, that it is not the only impulse at the core of Western tradition. Aural logic, and its concomitant attributes of "dialogue" and "polyphony," have produced the claim that we are in the midst of an aural revival (Hibbitts 1994). Similarly, tactile sensations and olfactory experience promote different ways of understanding the world and different epistemological positions on reality. What this suggests is that ocularcentrism, and its associative claim that what one sees is what one gets, thrives by virtue of its neighbors in lending meaning, whether they be aural, tactile, or olfactory. Our ability to claim knowledge through visualization depends on an array of activities by which no such visualization exists.

Being honest and sincere is also particularly crucial to democracy. Ideas of how democracy is supposed to work and how its members behave take shape in ways commensurate with what Alexander and Smith have called "the discourse of civil society." In their view, civil society depends first on the attributes associated with a democratic code - rational, reasonable individuals relying on relationships of openness, trust, and straightforwardness to support institutions that are rule-regulated, contractual, inclusive, and impersonal. While such attributes constitute the default setting for active democracies, as with Western epistemology the presence of alternatives helps keep the default setting identifiable and in place. Thus, by contrast, Alexander and Smith also argue that civil society relies too on a counter-democratic code –

passive, irrational, and unrealistic individuals who activate greed and self-interest so as to engage in deceitful, secretive, and conspiratorial dealings that uphold factious, arbitrary, and exclusive institutions. If only to maintain the boundaries of the democratic code, the presence of the counter-democratic code is crucial for the existence of civil society (Alexander and Smith 1993, pp. 161-163). As with Western epistemology, our ability to lay claim to a civil society depends on the existence of counter-impulses that are uncivil, undemocratic, insincere, and irrational. Each of these domains has particular resonance in the United States, which has been seen in many quarters as both an active setting for shaping contemporary Western thought and the exemplar for contemporary democracy. In Alexander and Smith's view, the United States "has typically been considered the closest approximation to a democratic nation-state. Here, if anywhere, we would expect to find the discourse of civil society in its most pristine form" (Alexander and Smith 1993, p. 161). It is no surprise, then, that the United States might provide a setting amenable to producing a flip version of espionage as part of its cultural system, even if espionage itself is counter to what it means to be an American.

However, assuming that espionage constitutes a phenomenon at odds with America's sense of self does not facilitate its admission into the repertoire of behaviors by which America publicly defines itself. This article suggests that it occurs in a highly strategic fashion: By accommodating only titular claims to espionage, consonance in America's self-image is maintained. This is because alongside these titular claims, espionage is turned into a flip phenomenon, a counter-impulse of itself, that supports the nation-state's own sense of self. Its associative traits—honesty, integrity, rationality—have less to do with espionage and more to do with the default setting by which America defines itself. That setting involves a fallback onto ocularcentrism, a recognition that what one sees is what one gets, and a valorization of a set of behaviors associated with the democratic code and civil discourse. Accommodating the flip side of espionage is thereby crucial to rendering it part of being American.

To say that espionage has not been a singular phenomenon throughout U.S. history is upheld by a cursory look back in time. The different spy scandals throughout mainstream U.S. history have functioned in varied ways. The midnight ride of Paul Revere, America's most noted early spy, embodied the patriotic fervor of the American Revolution, while Nathan Hale's execution by the British so angered George Washington that he vindictively sent a British spy to the gallows in retaliation (Nash 1997). Aaron Burr tried to hack out a country for himself west of the Mississippi, but he went down as one of the hated men in U.S. history who caricatured the activity of land-grabbing for profit (ibid.). The Chambers-Hiss affair lingered as the most crucial political battle of the early Cold War, while the Julius and Ethel Rosenberg case, which exploded comfortable notions of "pure science" into a Cold War nightmare during the 1950s, destroyed all assumptions that technology could be separated from cultural or political life (Walkowitz 1995). Yet public discussions of these scandals have rarely catered to the complexities characterizing the act of spying under question. Rather, the complications surrounding espionage have been admitted only if they can be made to adhere to a larger sense of who Americans are. This means that discussions of espionage have traditionally treated the admission of spying and discussions of what might be termed its flip side or counter-impulse as complementary, but mutually necessary, ways of understanding the phenomenon at hand. With espionage, much of this has had to do with erasing or at least minimizing its clandestine, hidden, violent, and obscure dimensions. Although the United States took its first real step toward institutionalizing espionage

during World War II, it was only primarily in the postwar years that the United States as a nation-state began to consider collectively how secrecy of a sanctioned and institutional sort might look. A sequence of events that included the Cold War, Vietnam, the publication of the Pentagon Papers, and Watergate complicated understandings of spying in the public imagination. Yet the embrace of spying as a complicated phenomenon did not fit public notions of what Americans were supposed to be. Espionage's reliance on deceit, violence, subterfuge, and dissembling remained countervalent to the cultural insistence on honesty, integrity, and forthrightness. Thus, pretending that U.S. espionage existed in strategic, highly contained pockets of its consciousness was easier than loosely admitting the imperfect world of the spy into the broad mindset of U.S. consciousness. And it is this strategy that has characterized national responses to U.S. espionage more often than not.

SPY FICTION

Fiction and popular culture have been active in shaping the national responses to U.S. espionage. The spy of literature has transformed from a do-gooder against the forces of evil to an innocent caught in morally ambiguous circumstances, with tensions pitting the individualistic competitive hero against the large-scale conspiracy that threatened society (Cawelti and Rosenberg 1987; Palmer 1979). Against those tensions, personalities like James Bond or George Smiley persevered.

It is no accident that these personalities were British. The spy thriller has in fact remained "a British genre, a major cultural export" (Denning 1987, p. 6). As Joan Rockwell argued long ago, "Americans read spy stories with avidity, but they read Le Carre, Fleming, and Deighton, not an American equivalent of these" (1971, p. 327). British novelists Graham Greene, John Le Carre, and Ian Fleming, among others, created a spy world populated with heroes and villains who thrived on international intrigue, and their representation directly impacted the fictional shaping of the U.S. spy. For instance, the "gentleman-as-spy," a figure that overpopulated the British spy genre, never developed a counterpart in U.S. fiction, which remained far more populist by nature (Rockwell 1971). More important, U.S. spy fiction never developed a linkage to the real world. In fact, positioning the British spy as a model for understanding political and commercial subterfuge in its broadest sense served U.S. aims well, for it allowed U.S. writers to create another kind of spy in their fiction, one more attuned to the basic values of U.S. public culture. The American spy rarely killed or engaged in devious and covert acts. Engagement in the "dirty tricks" of British fiction almost never occurred. Created by authors such as Robert Ludlum and Trevanian, the spy of U.S. fiction emerged instead as either a physical brute or an intellectually dull bureaucrat. He or she was a character whose physical daring or plodding organizational skills rated more highly than internal complexity.

Why is this so? It may have been easier to externalize the complexities of the spy onto other nation-states than to admit this actor inside the U.S. popular imagination. As Joan Rockwell claimed, "Without the image [of the spy of dirty tricks fame], there was no possibility of developing a literature of espionage in America comparable to that in Britain where the spy was acknowledged, admired, and identified with the exemplary upper class" (1971, p. 330). What has been at stake, then, in U.S. spy fiction is boundary maintenance, developing the kind of representational template that could uphold the preferred version of the group by admitting

representations of the spy that fit its collective image. In becoming either rogue or bureaucrat, the spy in U.S. popular fiction thus upheld the larger insistence on honesty, integrity, and forthrightness. In American spy fiction, what one saw was precisely what one got.

SPY FACT

The spy covered by U.S. journalism has also upheld broader national parameters for positioning espionage in the public imagination. Factual storytelling about espionage, as practiced by the news media, documentary, and nonfiction writings, has catered to a similar ambivalence about the complexities of espionage. Most spy scandals were reported in the guise of the discovery tales of unfolding news. They moved from blow-by-blow accounts of a particular spy's capture to broad considerations of the impact of a spy's activities.

The template for the spy story as news has been a familiar one. Running in conjunction with more formulaic understandings of news narrative, by which the most newsworthy angle of the story comprises its lead and is followed by a recapping of the key points provided by earlier journalistic coverage (Carey 1986), the spy story of journalism tended to focus primarily on what was most sensational about the spy case at hand. It therefore tended to lead with descriptions of extraordinary escapades, with the bizarre and unusual dimensions of espionage receiving a disproportionate amount of coverage.

It is worth noting that the similarity between journalism and espionage may bear on the way in which espionage has been covered by the U.S. news media. Espionage in effect constitutes a deviant, possibly immoral implementation of the same practices of information relay and gathering through which journalism is practiced. Thus, journalists have tended to de-emphasize the similar aspects of both professions, such as the need for legitimation in information gathering routines, and to overemphasize the dissimilarity. In part, this may derive from the ongoing use of the media by spies and other intelligence agents and the struggles over the management of messages between those authorized to manage them (the journalists) and those unauthorized to do so (the spies).

In sum, then, both spy fiction and spy fact have provided an unnuanced picture of espionage that has prevailed in U.S. public consciousness primarily because it fit America's collective sense of self. The spy of U.S. consciousness is dull, sometimes brutish, open, trusting, and simplistic. It is a character that fits broader assumptions about how America wants to be seen.

THE JONATHAN POLLARD SPY CASE

Perhaps nowhere is this as evident as in the journalistic coverage of one recent spy case, that of Jonathan Jay Pollard. Pollard's attempt to spy for Israel against the United States, uncovered in November of 1985, threatened to break down all ongoing intelligence connections between the two nation-states. Yet journalistic coverage of this case was shaped in a way that allowed Americans to maintain their proclaimed belief in integrity and forthrightness, and by extension to support the paradoxical reality of espionage between friendly nations. It helped reinstate the broader belief in an equivalence between what one is and what one claims to be.

A potential dual national who wanted to claim membership in both countries (and eventually did so), Pollard was conveniently employed as a U.S. analyst in the department for naval counterterrorism. Although he had displayed a personal past that was replete with exaggerated resumes, falsifiable claims about past actions, and grandiose understandings about his role in public and private life (Pear 1985), he was later called perhaps the single most productive spy in Israel's history (Richelson 1995, p. 398). The documents he processed, if placed atop each other, would have comprised a pile six feet wide, six feet deep, and ten feet high, and they covered a range of sensitive subjects, including nuclear facilities in Pakistan and Iraq and antiaircraft defenses around the PLO headquarters in Tunisia. In particular, the U.S. intelligence community found most damning his disclosure of the sources and methods by which the community had traditionally worked.

How did U.S. journalism cover this story? Called everything from "good theater"1 to an "epidemic,"2 with Time magazine pronouncing it simply a "strange case,"3 the Pollard case quickly earned stature as the incident that had caused the most damage in U.S. history. It was later revealed in court that then Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger declared he could not "conceive of a greater harm to national security" than that caused by Pollard, maintaining that he had "compromised the most documents ever" through a spying operation (Lewis 1987). Yet the U.S. news media from the beginning offered a less nuanced version of Pollard's involvement and the involvement of others around him primarily because it more effectively fit the reflection America wanted of itself in the public imagination.

When the Pollard case broke, it was replete with a scenario that might have come from Hollywood. Learning of an imminent arrest from U.S. authorities, Pollard and his wife made a secret phone call to the Israeli embassy to request asylum and raced inside the gates of the Israeli embassy. Within ten minutes, they were refused entry and forced outside into the arms of the waiting FBI agents, who immediately took them into custody. Initial reaction on both sides was heated. President Ronald Reagan declared that he would "root out and prosecute the spies of any nation."4 The U.S. administration pronounced itself "dismayed," and U.S. Jewish leaders offered the stronger word "appalled."5 The New York Times ran a scathing editorial in which it denounced Israel's initial claims of noninvolvement as "elaborate nonsense," arguing that "Israel's policy of never spying on the United States is a policy only never to be caught at it. Israel stutters in embarrassment but not much regret."6 Later, as reporters recounted the "darker side of U.S.-Israel ties" (Weinraub 1986), the case was labeled "shameful" (Safire 1986). Although Israeli officials initially denied even knowing Pollard, amidst rumors that he was probably an agent of another nation they soon admitted that Pollard belonged to a "renegade" unit outside the traditional Israeli intelligence community (Hoffman 1986). At first admitting that they were "shocked" and "dazed" by the allegations (Friedman 1985), officials quickly took the offensive and began shifting the blame. When for a time the Americans - torn between the Department of Justice, which recognized a clear violation of U.S. sovereignty, and the Department of State, which remained concerned for the future of U.S.-Israel relations - intimated that Israeli involvement was more widespread than originally believed, [Premier

1"A Brief Guide to Friendly Spying," The Economist, December 7, 1985, p. 56. 2"Spy Epidemic,"Newsweek, December 9, 1985, p. 24. 3"Tensions Without and Within," Time, December 23, 1985, p. 35. 4"Israel Apologizes to U.S. Over Spy Scandal," Toronto Star,

December 2, 1985, p. A14. 5"Spy Scandal Sizzles," U.S. News and World Report, December 9, 1985, p. 11. 6"Israel's Stutter" (editorial), New York Times, November 30, 1985, p. 22.
7] The stake of U.S. accusations was altered as coverage of the case wore on and its cast of characters grew. Within months, it included Pollard's handler, an Israeli Air Force colonel (Aviam Sella), who had met Pollard while in the States as a graduate student at NYU; a Jewish New York philanthropist whose family had long been friends of Pollard's; and a crabby and well-known counterterrorism specialist, Rafael Eitan, who ran Pollard's activities in Washington. Shimon Peres denounced attempts to "foul the atmosphere" between the two countries (Friedman 1986). Israeli Justice Minister Yitzhak Modai argued that "if there is more to the case, somebody has to produce the more. Otherwise it's just talk"
(Shenon1986).8

How did this mess of conflicting prescriptions and scenarios become a tale of unidimensional morality in the U.S. press? U.S. journalists turned the Pollard spy story into a tale that upheld the basic decency, honesty, integrity, and forthrightness of all things American. They expelled the story's nuances and complications so as to make it a tale that fit the reflection America wanted of itself in the public imagination.

Jonathan Pollard: From Money Grabber to Dual National

Initially, two main interpretive frames - "the bad spy" and "the good spy"- were invoked in coverage of the case, each linked to an alternative view of what U.S. culture looked like. The frames evaluated Pollard's actions either as an individual or as a member of a larger social group. The "bad spy" - the individual frame - positioned Pollard as a rogue, an individualistic risk-taker out for primarily personal gain. This frame, though it fit commonsensical notions of espionage, did not suit broader notions of self embedded in America's consciousness.

The frame of "the bad spy" connected to an extensive history derived from the cult of individualism, dating to the one American whose name was most synonymous with treason: Benedict Arnold.9 A bold, able battlefield commander during the American Revolution who was called "the very genius of war" (Ward 1994, p. 14) and who later fell target to his own financial greed, Arnold personified both the height and exhaustion of U.S. individualism, seen as much a hero before his spying as he was reviled a villain afterward.

This individualistic frame for spying made particular sense in 1985. Called by one magazine "the year of the spy" (Schorr 1994, p. 3), other cases of spying.8 For Israel, it continued to be a push and pull situation. On one hand, it was not happy admitting responsibility for the snafu and took months to issue what amounted to a "belated and conditional" apology (see endnote 4). It was even longer before the Israelis agreed to allow American prosecutors to travel to Israel as part of their investigation. Yet somewhat unbelievably, a few days after Pollard was taken into custody, Israel returned some of the documents that Pollard had procured on its behalf ("Israel Has Returned Spy Papers," Los Angeles Times, December 20, 1985, p. 1). The result was that no one was happy with how the Israelis handled the situation. In fact, it was American journalist Wolf Blitzer who called on Israel to "do something to help the Pollards" (cited in Fisher 1986), and Israel eventually paid the majority of the Pollards' legal bills. Years later, many Israelis remained embarrassed by the fact that the Israeli government had initially denied knowing Pollard.9

Long before Arnold contemplated treason, one opponent wrote that "money is this man's God, and to get enough of it he would sacrifice his country" (cited in Ward 1994, p. 16). The plot he concocted: After ten months of negotiation with the British, he decided to give the stronghold of West Point to the enemy; the prize: twenty thousand pounds if he succeeded, ten thousand if he failed; the outcome: a failed plan. Arnold became the living symbol of treason, living in unhappy exile among the British (Brandt 1994).

for monetary gain broke at the same time as did Pollard's: those of John Walker, Ronald Pelton, Aldrich Ames, and Edward Lee Howard.10 The template in each case was clear: "me first," or reaping profit at the expense of one's country. Over the next year and a half, this stretched to twenty-five cases, more than in any other similar period in U.S. history. Infact, four of these agents were apprehended within five days of Pollard, prompting one intelligence expert to proclaim, in a rather understated fashion, that "it stands to reason there are more spies than we know about" (cited in Engelberg 1985b).

The financial kickbacks were high. Pollard's passing of naval intelligence and military codes garnered him $2,500 monthly, promises of a secret bank account of $300,000, and even a $7,000 ring for his wife. Coverage at first portrayed Pollard as singularly driven by his lust for the high life, labeled by Time "the nouveau riche traitor life style."11 The New York Times reported that he had "become literally addicted to the high life style," evidenced by his having booked an entire private compartment on the Orient Express while traveling from Venice to Zurich (Shenon1987).

This frame for spying reflected the underside of America's sense of self and created a sense that Pollard inhabited a dark, unvisualized world. It also gave voice to the counter-democratic code discussed by Alexander and Smith (1993). The "bad spy" depended on a character motivated by pathological greed and self-interest. It suggested a tendency toward hysterical behavior due to the spy's excitable personality and his grandiose and primarily unrealistic plans of action. Though necessary for setting boundaries for the default setting of the "good spy," the tale of "the bad spy" could not persist as the consensual way of making sense of Pollard. Had it persisted, it would have thrown into question broader beliefs about ocularcentrism, the stability of the democratic code, and civil society.

Thus, a second interpretive frame—that of "the good spy"—emerged in the Pollard case, and it set in place a social, rather than individual, understanding of spying. Here Pollard was seen not as an individual but as an active member of a social, bi-national network motivated by nationalism, loyalty, patriotism, and duty. The day after Pollard was caught and taken into custody, the New York Times offered a sidebar under the headline "Spying on Allies Common" (Engelberg 1986a). It is a "longstanding practice," admitted the paper. Elsewhere, when asked if U.S. nationals spy on friendly nations, one administration official was quoted as saying,
10John Walker, a retired Navy warrant officer, sold secrets to the Russians primarily to bail out a bankrupt restaurant. Ronald Pelton, a communications specialist for the National Security Agency, was convicted of selling information about the location of secret submarine wiretaps in Soviet harbors. Aldrich Ames, who has been said to be the most infamous traitor in U.S. history after Benedict Arnold (Nash 1997, p. 28), fed the Soviets information from his top-level position within the CIA. Edward Lee Howard, a Soviet desk officer at the CIA, first sold intelligence

information to the KGB and then defected to the Soviet Union, where he admitted stealing money from vending machines and out of a woman's purse on an airplane.
11"My Country for a Rolex," Time, March 7, 1994, p. 16.

"I would hope so" (Friedman 1985). Within months, the media reported that "the United States will forgive the Israelis for the Pollard case" (Weinraub 1986), and Newsweek pronounced the case a circumstance of "strains in the family."12 Pollard was an "all-American boy" (Marcus 1985). Pollard himself testified that he spied to secure Israel's survival rather than for the money. He was, in the Washington Post's words, "a naive idealist who intended only to help Israel and never to hurt America" (Blitzer 1986).

Unlike the individual gain of the earlier frame, key here was the issue of collective identity and the collective gains accrued from it. What did it mean to serve a larger collective, particularly when there was more than one relevant collective, there was supposed loyalty to both collectives, and the collectives were friends with each other? How to be forthright about those conflicting loyalties was at the heart of this conversation. As the Washington Post termed it, Pollard was the American who loved Israel too much (Blitzer 1986). This frame brought to light the fact that sometimes friendly nations behaved in not so friendly ways toward each other.

Here too the tradition was longstanding: examples included U.S. diplomats kicked out of Spain in the mid-1980s for peeping at military installations, an NSA employee arrested during the late 1950s on charges of spying for the Dutch government, and South Africa's expelling three employees of the U.S. embassy in Pretoria who in 1979 had fitted the Ambassador's plane with cameras to photograph military installations. The incidents were also repeated between Israel and the United States: Israel's bombing of a U.S. ship anchored to "listen" to Israeli military intelligence during the 1967 Six Day War, or the U.S. deciphering of messages between Britain, France, and Israel during the 1956 Suez Crisis (Knightley 1986). And yet, remarkably, one intelligence analyst, writing as late as 1994 in Foreign Affairs, posed a question which was telling for its presumed moral naivete: "Is there such a thing as military espionage conducted against allies, as the Jonathan Pollard case suggested?" (McCurdy 1994, p. 130).

The "good spy" as a frame for interpreting espionage proliferated as coverage of the case continued. Numerous complexities at the heart of U.S. diplomacy and America's presentation of itself and others, such as Israel-U.S. relations, came to light and were simplified. The fuss, argued the British Economist, was "intended to reassure Americans and Israelis that nice friends in the not-so-nice world of spying behave like perfect gentlemen to each other."13 As one Justice Department official commented about Israel's initial reticence to discuss the case, "After the arrest, they really rallied around the flag—but which flag is the question" (Shipler 1985).

Not surprisingly, then, coverage of Pollard embraced the second interpretive strategy, that of "the good spy." Individual gain gave way to collective gain, monetary advancement gave way to legitimation and stabilization of the group. An understanding of Pollard as a greedy individual gave way to an understanding of Pollard as a conflicted dual national, who tried to maintain his honest and heartfelt identity with both nation-states. Pollard himself was quoted as citing novelist

Graham Greene in reference to himself: "I've never met a man who had better motives for all the trouble he's caused." (Blitzer 1986). Spying for money became spying for identity.
Seeing Pollard as "the good spy" was supported by broader notions that helped position espionage as a phenomenon consonant with America's collective self-image. In such a light, what one saw was what one got. And what one got was in keeping with the democratic code and civil society as outlined by Alexander and Smith (1993). Pollard came to be seen as truthful, rational, reasonable, and controlled. He worked in an autonomous and reasoned fashion, and sincerely admitted his own dual conflicts and loyalties. He was a citizen, not an enemy; he was straightforward and open, not calculating, secretive, and deceitful.

And so, details of the case were somewhat magically transformed. Pollard himself admitted that he began to forward documents to the Israelis only when he saw that the United States was not telling Israel all that it needed for security reasons (Blitzer 1986). Despite extensive evidence that monetary remuneration was involved, the Pollard case became recodified as one that resulted from a complicated hyphenated identity. It is not coincidental that this latter scenario fit better with America's broader sense of what it was. As Tom Wicker wrote in an editorial just two weeks after the case broke: "What's going on here? Not only does the Government seem to be infested with spies, but they aren't even the kind of subversives good Americans have been taught to fear and loathe" (1985). Even more important, admitting Pollard's conflicted dual nationality made his spying less heinous, and, significantly, reflected less of a disjunction between who he was and who he pretended to be.

Thus, both the Washington Post and the Los Angles Times offered the somewhat curious notion that Pollard never really wanted to take the money offered him (Blitzer 1986). Indeed, Pollard was quoted as saying that the money was "Israel's idea... I was never comfortable with the money" (ibid.). The metaphors changed: the episode became a "bruise" on a healthy body, a "blip" on a graph of rising cooperation (Shipler 1985). U.S. leaders praised Israel's "full cooperation" and predicted a resumption of the "deep friendship" between the two countries (Pichirallo 1986). Officials went to great lengths to deny the case any kind of context and instead portrayed it as a gross aberration whose significance needed to be downplayed. As David Shipler wrote in the New York Times: The State Department chided Israel a month ago for dragging its feet on promised cooperation with investigators but [now it hails] Israel's full cooperation and praises the "solid foundation of deep friendship, close affinity and mutual trust" between the two governments. The Pollard case [is now] an isolated event that can be consigned to the past (1985).

By the time that Pollard had confessed, was convicted, and was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1987, his place as a conflicted but honest potential member of two nation-states had been secured in U.S. popular consciousness. The American dream, once again, was defended.
This frame—that softened accusations of treason in recognition of Pollard's conflict over his dual loyalties—reigned in the coverage that also followed his conviction. Pollard "the naval analyst" became "the naval analyst who has pleaded guilty" (Kurtz 1987). Emphasis on his articulation of guilt reinstated the basic premise that one is what one says one is. Moreover, the Pollard case was remarkable because Pollard pleaded guilty early on; there was no case per se to be covered. It was here, however, that the discussions became broader than the case itself. To quote Israeli political commentator Annette Dulczin: Espionage is to diplomacy what infidelity is to marriage:

it is the apparently loving relationship between the couple—in this case, the United States and Israel—rather than the deed itself that makes the case of Pollard so shocking (1986).

Somewhat predictably, the case did not die a natural death, launching what one newsmagazine called "one of the most tenacious efforts ever to win a spy's release" (Duffy and Makovsky 1999). Indeed, since 1986, Pollard's case has been championed by two Israeli presidents, several prime ministers, and legions of U.S. supporters of Israel, most of whom have asked for his release. Those requests were tied to the Wye Accords in 1998 (Aizenman 1999), even while it was disclosed that Pollard had leaked CIA manuals produced by sensitive CIA satellites (Hersh 1999). This is not to say that the Americans either forgave Pollard or relented. In each case, pleas for clemency were rejected, as U.S. intelligence and law enforcement agencies remained opposed to freeing Pollard. As late as 1999, CIA director George Tenet threatened resignation if Pollard's sentence were commuted. When rumors floated that Clinton might commute the sentence to twenty-five years, making Pollard eligible for parole in 2002, members of the Senate Intelligence Committee complained in writing that any release would "give credence to the claim that espionage is somehow less serious when Americans spy on behalf of a friendly nation with which they sympathize" (cited in Duffy andMakovsky 1999). But was this so far from the truth?

DEFENDING THE AMERICAN DREAM

How a collective repairs potential challenges to its self-image provides telling clues to what is particularly crucial about its sense of self. This analysis supports not only the importance of consonance within a nation-state's self-image and the significance of boundary maintenance in upholding consonance (Vinitzky-Seroussi 1999), but also reveals the degree to which consonance depends on extending beyond the image's boundaries so as to keep it in place. In the case of espionage, it is necessary to go beyond commonsensical assumptions about spies and spying so as to find a way to reinstate it within the repertoire of acceptable behaviors by members of the nation-state.

The case of Jonathan Pollard bears this out well. If Jacques Barzun was correct in his observations about espionage over thirty years ago, Jonathan Pollard reflects an unsatisfying image of our culture's fragilities. This is not only because he was a victim of "the ambiguity of the American-Israeli relationship," but because he was a victim of the autonomy through which most intelligence agencies operate. The rule broken by the Pollard case was, to quote The Economist, "not one that says 'never fib to your friends' but rather the first in the spymaster's book: 'don't get caught.'"14 Or, as the Israeli newspaper YediotAharonot headlined it in a somewhat sober wrap-up of the various complications of the Pollard case, "Everyone is guilty so no one is to blame" (Cooper 1987). In getting caught, however, the only way to deal with the complications of the case that came to light was to invoke a moral standard that would speak to the heart of all things American, and thereby sidestep the problems involved in putting that standard in practice.

Ostensibly, what disappeared in such a sidestep were all the larger ambivalences about espionage: its deception, the violence at its core, secrecy, and morally ambivalent behavior. Their disappearance, it has been argued, was a central precondition for the flip phenomenon of espionage—its counterimpulse—to emerge within U.S. public consciousness. Not only did this

maneuver allow titular claims to be made in the name of espionage while cleansing it of its problematic dimensions, but it also reconstituted espionage in a way that made it an acceptable American phenomenon.

This raises the fundamental question of what spies are for. Spies play a major role in helping us determine who we are as a culture. They measure a collective's fears and vulnerabilities, constituting the barometer ofits collective soul (Stafford 1991, p. 3). By extension, then, the spy's actions also reflect a collective's subjunctive sense of who it wants to be. This is where the flip side of espionage made sense. By playing to the core of civil society, it established consonance in America's self-image, permitting a continued belief in ocularcentrism, democracy, and civil society, and its associated belief that what one sees is what one gets. Pollard, in the end result, came off as being far more of a "usual guy" than a treasonous monster. His reconstitution as the conflicted member of two nation-states fit the fundamental American premise that who one says one is parallels who one is inside. It also allowed the U.S. government to ease its way out of the conflict. For when faced with the two alternatives, the prospect of admitting to conflicted but honest identities within a positive template of friendly nations was far less damning than admitting the presence of a money-grabbing traitor hungry for the high life. Even more important, admitting Pollard's conflicted dual nationality reflected less of a disjunction between who he was and who he pretended to be. It upheld the basic premise that we are what we say we are.

How is it possible that espionage can be so many things to so many people? It may be that its referents of anonymity, secrecy, and privacy function as chameleonlike parts of a larger recognizable communication system. Though they make claims to be absolutes, they in fact exist in varying degrees for varying publics. Spying as a communication system, then, perhaps rests upon hidden concepts of gradation that are activated differentially as rhetorical devices in the securing of given communicative (and ideological) aims. In other words, U.S. espionage thrives because it is able to lend unusual wrinkles to our common understanding of absolutes like secrecy, anonymity, and privacy. In supporting a claim to openness at the same time as it engages in covert behavior of the most fundamental sort, the U.S. representation of espionage upholds the basic premise of forthrightness at the same time that it undermines its implementation. Significantly, it does so by extending outside the parameters of the phenomenon, using counterimpulses to lend espionage its shape. What this suggests is that public discourse may work more effectively at the interstices between phenomena, at the places where polar opposites collide, than in recognizable territories inhabited by already converted populations.

In conclusion, it is worthwhile to briefly return to the Philadelphia Inquirer's story about the spy dens in the city center during the late 1960s. The news article tracked three locations in the city that had served to mobilize espionage activities. Yet now, a little more than three decades later, each of the three meeting places cited by the Soviet defector has been transformed into other sites. On one, the clothing store Urban Guerrillas has taken over the dusty movie theater that once graced the spot. Spies for Urban Guerrillas? It may be that the retailers know something that the rest of U.S. culture still needs to figure out.

REFERENCES

Aizenman, N. C. (1999). Intelligence test. New Republic, March 22, 26.
Alexander, J. C., & Smith, P. (1993). The discourse of American civil society: A new proposal for cultural studies. Theory and Society, 22, 151-207.
Barzun, J. (1965). Meditations on the literature of spying. American Scholar, 34, 167-178.
Blitzer, W. (1986). A spy speaks out. Washington Post, November 30, C5.
Bok, S. (1982). Secrets: On the ethics of concealment and revelation. New York: Pantheon.
Brandt, C. (1994). The man in the mirror: A life of Benedict Arnold. New York: Random House.
Carey, J. (1986). The dark continent of American journalism. In R. Manoff & M. Schudson (Eds.), Reading the news (pp. 146 -196). New York: Pantheon.
Cawelti, J. G., & Rosenberg, B. A. (1987). The spy story. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Cooper, N. (1987). A pileup ofscandals in Israel. Newsweek, June 8, 42.
Denning, M. (1987). Cover stories: Narrative and ideology in the British spy thriller. London: Routledge.
Duffy, B., & Makovsky, D. (1999). The spy who is still stuck in the cold. U.S. News and World Report, January 18, 22.
Dulczin, A. (1986). The spy and the American Jew. New York Times, July 9, A27.
Engelberg, S. (1985a). Spying on allies common. New YorkTimes, November 23, A1.
Engelberg, S. (1985b). Intelligence experts see no link among arrests. New York Times, November26, B6.
Fisher, D. (1986). Pollard was reluctant to take money for spying on U.S., Israeli newspaper reports. Los Angeles Times, November 15, 5.
Fowler, W. (1994). The secret world of the spy. London: Bison Books.
Friedman, T. (1985). "Shocked" Israel investigates charge by U.S. of espionage. New York Times, November 25, D12.
Friedman, T. (1986). Peres sees efforts in U.S. spy inquiry to mar Israeli ties. New YorkTimes, June 9, A1.
Friedrich, C. J. (1972). The pathology of politics. New York: Harper and Row.
Goffman, E. (1969). Strategic interaction. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
Hersh, S. (1999). The traitor: The case against Jonathan Pollard. The New Yorker, January 18, 26-33.
Hibbitts, B. J. (1994). Making sense of metaphors: Visuality, aurality, and the reconfiguration of American legal discourse. Cardoza Law Review, 16, 229.
Hoffman, D. (1986). No vendetta, Bush assures Israel. Washington Post, July 30.
Knightley, P. (1986). The second oldest profession: Spies and spying in the twentieth century. New York: W. W. Norton.
Kurtz, H. (1987). Spy papers kept by Israel, court told. Washington Post, January 7, A1.
Lewis, N. (1987). Pollard gets life term for spying. Washington Post, March 5, A1.
McCurdy, D. (1994). Glasnost for the CIA. Foreign Affairs, 73, 125-132.
Marcus, R. (1985). Accused spy called an "all-American boy." Washington Post, November 23, A10.
Nash, J. R. (1997). Spies. New York: M. Evans and Company, Inc..
Palmer, J. (1979). Thrillers: Genesis and structure of a popular genre. New York: St. Martin's Press. Pear, R. (1985). Analyst told 10 years ago of working for Israeli intelligence, friend says. New York Times, November 27, B8.

Pichirallo, J. (1986). Deeper Israeli role in Pollard case seen. Washington Post, June 17, A3.
Pratt, F. (1942). Secret and urgent: The story of codes and ciphers. Garden City, NY: Blue Ribbon Books.
Richelson, J. T. (1995). A century of spies: Intelligence in the twentieth century. New York: Oxford University Press.
Rockwell, J. (1971). Normative attitudes of spies in fiction. In B. Rosenberg & D. M. White (Eds.), Mass culture revisited (pp. 325-340). New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.
Rorty, R. (1979). Philosophy and the mirror of nature. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
Safire, W. Israel stonewalls. New York Times, June 2, A17.
Schorr, D. (1994). Foreign policy vexations. The New Leader, February 14-28, 3-4.
Shenon, P. (1986). Spy once regained access to secrets. New York Times, June 17, A1.
Shenon, P. (1987). U.S. describes data that spy provided Israel. New York Times, January 7, A14.
Shipler, D. (1985). Israel and the U.S. stay on speaking terms. New York Times, December 29, E3.
Stafford, D. The silent game: The real world of imaginary spies. Athens: University of Georgia Press.
Vinitzky-Seroussi, V. (1999). The social reaction to treason within a pluralistic society: The Pollard affair. Advances in Criminological Theory, 8, 3 89-4 08.
Walkowitz, R. L. (1995). Secret agents. In M. Garber & R. L. Walkowitz (Eds.), Secret agents: the Rosenberg case, McCarthyism, and fifties America (pp. 1-11). New York: Routledge.
Ward, G. C. (1994). The great traitor. American Heritage, 45, 14-16.
Weinraub, B. (1986). Darker side of U.S.-Israeli ties revealed. New York Times, June 5, B9.
Wicker, T. (1985). Spies real and unreal. New York Times, December 2, A15.
Wolff, K. H. (1959). Georg Simmel, 1858-1918: A collection of essays, with translations and a bibliography. Columbus: Ohio State University.
Zelizer, B. (1989). Saying as collective practice: Quoting and differential address in the news. Text,9, 369-388.