

**University of Virginia
Woodrow Wilson Dept of Politics
Spring Term 2008**

Seminar – The Myth and Reality of Espionage

PLAD 224

**Weds: 1300-1530
CAB 236**

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Office Hours : TBA**

Course Description

The seminar will follow the general theme of myth vs, reality in the world of espionage. We shall concentrate on great works of spy literature from the inception of this literary genre at the end of the 19th century to the present. We shall then contrast these fictional tales with accounts of real life spying. The texts we shall read will grapple with the moral questions posed by espionage – the manipulation of other human beings; its alleged justification in protecting the national interests of one’s country; the long term corrosive effects of deceit and clandestinity on the soul of the spymaster; the role of the spy bureaucracy; and the attraction of the game of espionage for its own sake. The works of fiction will then be contrasted with the true lives of master spies – double agents – Kim Philby, Aldrich Ames and Richard Hanssen, as well as master spy handlers Viktor Cherkashin and Dewey Clarridge. This will pose the question whether the myth of espionage is stranger than the real thing.

Two papers will be assigned: One of 1500-2000 words, due at the end of mid-term break and a second of 3000-4000 words due at the end of the semester. A short critical essay of 500 words on the book assigned for the week’s reading shall be prepared by the presenters each week; to be completed and distributed to the instructor and other members of the seminar on the Tuesday before each Wednesday session.

Week One, January 16 – “Kim” by Rudyard Kipling

Week Two, January 23 – “A Secret Life” by Benjamin Weiser

Week Three, January 30 - “Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy” by John Le Carre

Week Four, February 6 - “Coffin for Demetrios” by Eric Ambler

Week Five, February 13 – “ My Silent War” by Kim Philby

Week Six, February 20 – “ Blood of Victory” by Alan Furst

Week Seven, February 27” The Day of the Jackal” by Frederick Forsyth

Mid-Term Break, - March 3-7 (First paper due on March 12)

Week Eight, March 12 – “The Spy Who Came in from the Cold” by John Le Carre

Week Nine, March 19 – “Nightmover” (The life of Aldrich Ames) by David Wise

Week Ten, March 26 – “The Human Factor” by Graham Greene

Week Eleven, April 2 – “Spy” (The Life of Robert Hanssen) by David Wise

Week Twelve, April 9 – “Spy Handler” by Victor Cherkashin

Week Thirteen, April 16 – “Body of Lies” by David Ignatius

Week Fourteen, April 23 – “A Spy for All Seasons” by Duane Clarridge

Final Papers due, Monday, May 5 2006.