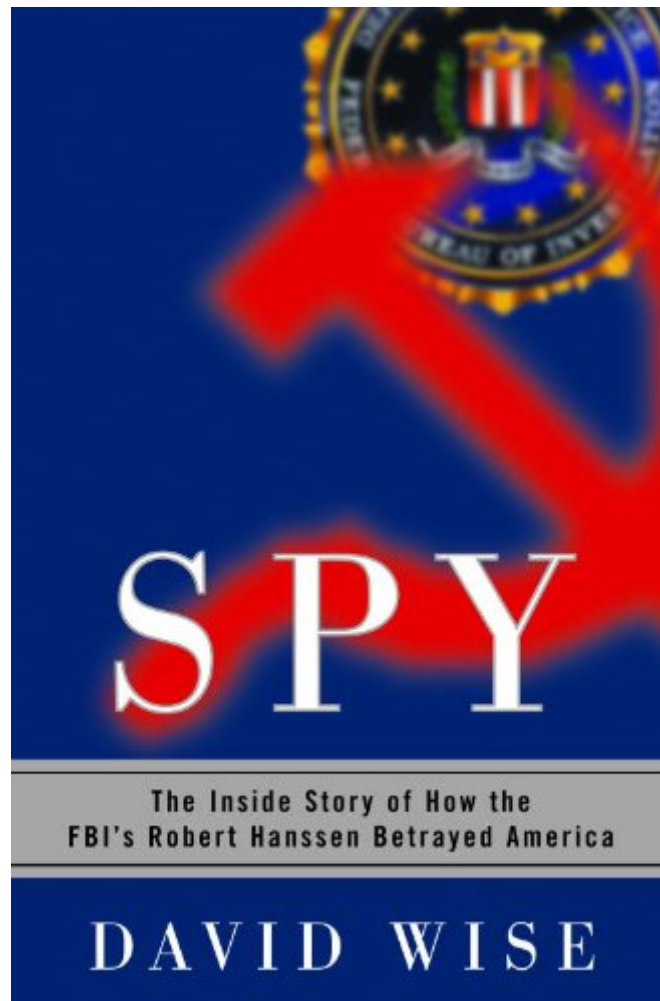


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Spy: The Inside Story Of How The FBI's Robert Hanssen Betrayed America



Synopsis

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.

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Customer Reviews

Before the publication of this book, there had been four others to appear on the market, "The Spy Who Stayed out in the Cold," "The Bureau and the Mole," "The Spy Next Door," and "Into the Mirror." To put it bluntly, none of these books can hold a candle to David Wise's masterful telling of the Hanssen spy story, which is probably the most disgraceful and bizarre chapter in the FBI's long history. What sets Wise's account apart from its predecessors? The answer is diligent, long-term research and unparalleled access to people who knew Hanssen. The fact that the traitor gave his psychiatrist permission to be interviewed by Wise gives readers a window into Hanssen's soul that none of his competitors (who rushed their books to publication with almost indecent haste) were able to give. An added plus to Wise's book is that he gives a fairly comprehensive outline of the research he conducted for the book in his notes at the end. This is in stark contrast to his competitors' books which rest their flimsy conclusions on mostly anonymous sources and in the case of "Into the Mirror" the outright --and admitted by its authors-- fictionalization of Hanssen's life whenever it was convenient. For me, the highlights of "Spy" are the chapters that discuss Hanssen's approach to religion, his twisted obsession with pornography and sex, the way the FBI and CIA procured the entire file that the KGB maintained on Hanssen, and the psychological demons that drove Hanssen to inflict horrific damage on his country's national security. What is particularly shocking is that Hanssen's own brother-in-law (a fellow FBI agent) reported the spy's possession of large amounts of unexplained cash in 1990 to his superiors and the FBI brass did NOTHING about it.

Robert Hanssen was in a league of his own. There wasn't another spy to compare him to, and not only for the amount of damage he did to compromise American intelligence to Russia. This was a man of several contradictions. It must have been hard for him to keep his respective roles straight. He was an agent for the FBI, a devoted family man, devout Catholic, obsessed with porn, spying for Russia, and became infatuated with a stripper to the extent that he took her on a trip to Hong Kong and bought her a Mercedes. He was the computer guru who appeared contemptuous of other co-workers. It appears to me that he often employed the defense mechanism called reaction formation which means he took an attitude with others the opposite of which produced anxiety in himself. He not only betrayed his country by using his job for personal gain, but horribly betrayed his wife by sharing sexual photos of her to his friend. Hanssen justifies his spying by saying his first job at the FBI was in Scarsdale, New York, and the cost of living there with his minimal salary forced him into needing extra money. Hanssen spent over 20 years compromising America's secrets through approximately 18 drops of documents for the Russians. His Russian contact made sure to massage Hanssen's ego with flattery in communication with him. What the Russians paid for this information was a pittance compared to its value. A tunnel built under the Soviet embassy in Washington that cost hundreds of millions of dollars was for naught as he passed this on to the Russians. Three Soviets working for the FBI were named by Hanssen and were called back to Russia and executed. Apparently it didn't bother his conscience because he would always confess his spying along with his other sins to a Catholic priest.

Wow. David Wise. Put that name on your favorite authors list. He is now on mine. In "Spy", he presents a comprehensive look into Robert Hanssen's life as a spy. From A to Z, "Spy" looks at Hanssen's childhood, early years at the FBI, then dives right into his 20yr betrayal. There isn't a lot of fluff or forced drama only because it isn't needed. David takes what could have been just a boring spy case and turned it into something out of a Tom Clancy or Robert Ludnum novel. Seriously. There are parts of the book where I literally couldn't put it down. There is talk about tradecraft, dead drops, and leaving signals for his handlers. Great stuff! One section -- where Hanssen is actually searching the FBI databases for his own name, street address, and other keywords to see if the FBI were on to him made me want to scream, "WTF are you doing, buddy. You are gonna get CAUGHT!". Another chapter involves Hanssen and various computer activities at FBI HQ. How he managed to get away with those. The chapters that led up to and go into his capture are nail-biters. Unforeseen events surface that could wreck the arrest plan. Lots of never-before-read details about

Hanssen and the secrets he gave to the Soviets and then Russians. To read about the sheer magnitude of secrets Hanssen sold to the Russians blew my mind. The book shares the titles of some of the documents Hanssen gave up. Shocking material. Things that an FBI agent had no business having. One example, Hanssen revealed to the Russians some secrets from the NSA. Oh, and the last two chapters delve into Hanssen's motivation for selling out his country. A Ph.D interviewed Hanssen during and after the trial. The book does a wonderful job of dissecting Hanssen's motivations and reasons.

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