

<p><b>Institution:</b> University of Warwick</p>
<p><b>Unit of Assessment:</b> Politics and International Studies</p>
<p><b>Title of case study:</b> Landscapes of Secrecy: Influencing the Public and Professional Debate about Intelligence, Secrecy and Openness</p>
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b>          Created in 2001, 'Landscapes of Secrecy' constitutes a programme of research into secret service that has informed security and intelligence practitioners, shaped public policy debate and enhanced public awareness and attitudes. The focus has been official secrecy: how it is achieved; when it is appropriate; and how it is weighed against the right of democratic citizens to know about policies conducted in their name. Impact on key Whitehall users (Ministry of Defence, Serious Organised Crime Agency and Defence Advisory-Notice Committee) has been secured via workshops, policy-briefs and input into institutional design and training. Cultural and societal impact has been realised with internationally reviewed bestselling books, radio and television documentaries and a public exhibition in Washington DC.</p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b>          The intellectual catalyst for 'Landscapes of Secrecy' was Professor Aldrich's 2001 book, <i>The Hidden Hand</i>, which hypothesised that British intelligence agencies had long taken an interest in managing their public profile. This led agencies to regulate the writings of journalists, historians and memoirists. Aldrich's work served as the basis for a more widely sourced rendering of the subject by Dr Moran, in his Cambridge University Press monograph <i>Classified: Secrecy and the State in Modern Britain</i> (2013). Keen to examine this phenomenon beyond the British context, Aldrich and Moran made two successful bids to the AHRC to study information management by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA); the second bid was awarded explicitly for impact activities and has since been commended in the AHRC's 2011-12 Impact Report. Subsequent successful bids to the Leverhulme Trust and the British Academy have allowed for additional case studies of secrecy in the context of press, film, memoir and freedom of information legislation. For example, Moran's on-going British Academy research considers how an obsession with practices of concealment pervaded and paralysed the Nixon administration.</p> <p>Taken together, these projects have produced significant research findings, which can be summarised as six core conclusions and recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Secrecy is often counter-productive, causing more problems than it solves. By failing to communicate to the public, the activities of intelligence services can be misunderstood; worse, conspiracy theories harden and become accepted as 'fact'.</li> <li>2. The new intelligence eco-system of the twenty-first century requires public confidence to function. During the Cold War, intelligence belonged to specialist high-level government agencies working mostly against a foreign enemy. This landscape has changed. Concerns about resilience and the arrival of 'Contest' (the UK counter-terrorism strategy) mean that intelligence is owned more broadly, including local government, private corporations such as airlines and banks, even individual citizens who are now expected to report suspicious behaviour. This requires new levels of public confidence.</li> <li>3. The vacuum that is left by secret services failing to communicate to the public has been filled by journalists, historians and popular culture, including Hollywood. This is often disadvantageous, since outsiders, working with limited information and sometimes with axes to grind, often produce sensationalised versions of events.</li> <li>4. By contrast, well-informed journalism and contemporary history offers an important adjunct to the accountability offered by political committees and the judiciary. While government has been reluctant to offer journalists a recognised place in the audit trail, the reality is that – working with whistle-blowers – they are the shock troops of accountability.</li> <li>5. Recognising that it is problematic for secret services to leave their narratives to private hands, they should proactively engage with museums and other forms of cultural production. Official histories, especially when carried out by independent academics with full access, represent a valuable mechanism for enhancing openness.</li> <li>6. Social networking, whistle-blowing and new media heralds a more transparent society and a significant decline in state secrecy. Government, and especially secret government, is ill-prepared for this.</li> </ol>

### 3. References to the research

1. R. J. Aldrich, *The Hidden Hand: Britain, America and Cold War Secret Intelligence* (London: John Murray, 2001), pp.740. Research monograph. Co-winner of the Cambridge Donner Book Prize; 'A major contribution', *Sunday Telegraph*; 'A superlative record', *The Times*.
2. R. J. Aldrich, *GCHQ: The Uncensored Story of Britain's Most Secret Intelligence Agency* (London: Harper Collins, 2011), pp.666. Research monograph. 'An important book', *The Sunday Times*; 'Magisterial and engrossing', *Daily Telegraph*.
3. R. J. Aldrich, 'Regulation by revelation? Intelligence, Transparency and the Media', in Rob Dover and Michael Goodman (eds.), *Spinning Intelligence: Why Intelligence Needs the Media, Why the Media Needs Intelligence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), pp. 13-37. Peer-reviewed book chapter.
4. C. R. Moran, *Classified: Secrecy and the State in Modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 434. Peer-reviewed research monograph. *Guardian* Bookshop Bestseller of the Week; 'A well-researched and fascinating book', *Guardian*; 'Deeply researched and wonderfully informative book', *New Statesman*.
5. C. R. Moran, 'The Last Assignment: David Atlee Phillips and the Birth of CIA Public Relations', *International History Review*, 35:2 (April 2013). Peer-reviewed journal article.
6. C. R. Moran (ed.), *Intelligence Studies in Britain and the US: Historiography since 1945* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press/ New York: Columbia University Press, 1 April 2013). Peer-reviewed volume with university press.

#### Associated grants:

1. AHRC Research Grant (1 September 2008 – 1 January 2012), 'Landscapes of Secrecy: The Central Intelligence Agency and the Contested Record of US Foreign Policy, 1947-2001', £580,000. PI: Professor Aldrich; Co-I: Professor Matthew Jones (Nottingham); RA1: Dr Moran; RA2: Dr Paul McGarr (Nottingham); PhD Student: Simon Willmetts (Warwick).
2. AHRC Follow-on Funding (1 September 2011 – 31 December 2012), 'Enhancing Openness and Explaining Secrecy: Policy Lessons from the Declassification and Management of US Intelligence and Security Records', £42,000. PI: Professor Aldrich. RA: Simon Willmetts.
3. Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship (1 May 2010 to 30 April 2012), 'Framing Covert Action in US Politics and Cultures', £58,000. Dr. Kaeten Mistry (Warwick, 2010-11, now UEA).
4. British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship (1 September 2011 – 31 August 2014), 'Politics, Partnership and Paranoia: Nixon, Kissinger and US Intelligence', £277,724. Dr Moran.

### 4. Details of the impact

#### Informing security and intelligence practitioners

The 'Landscapes' team led by Aldrich has worked nationally and internationally to secure maximum impact of research findings among key security and intelligence personnel (sources 1, 2, 3 and 10). A series of bespoke workshops were held in the UK followed up with policy briefs for the Ministry of Defence (15 December 2011); Cabinet Office (23 February 2012); Defence Advisory-Notice Committee (6 February 2012); Industry and Parliament Trust (1 February 2012); Serious Organised Crime Agency (18 February 2013); and Space Geodesy Centre (20 January 2012).

Each workshop, attended by at least 20 people, was tailored to the specific needs of the end-user. The DA-Committee, the body that gives guidance on national security to the media, wanted to know how the CIA deals with the press (source 1). The Committee noted that it faced similar challenges to the CIA and resolved to initiate more cross-national dialogue. SOCA requested advice on how it should combat negative press portrayals of policing and resolved to consider the team's suggestion of an official history (source 3). With SOCA being subsumed within the new National Crime Agency (NCA) in October 2013, an official history was regarded as a useful mechanism for institutional memory and a valuable tool for knowledge transfer to the new agency.

To explore European policy-transfer, two workshops on 'PR and Secret Services' were held with the Netherlands Foreign Office and the Hague Centre for Strategic Studies on 29 June 2012. Here, the user was struck by the team's discussion of how the internet represented a rich harvest of 'open source' material. As a result of this, Aldrich has been invited to join the Netherlands accreditation organisation (NVAO) with the purpose of developing a new multi-language training course in intelligence for the Dutch Staff College. Aldrich played a key role in alerting intelligence officers to the value of the internet for intelligence work. Workshops have also been held with the CIA and with the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) (source 4).

DCAF have commissioned the team to produce 'Toolkit 10', which will incorporate our findings into their security reform handbook *Overseeing Intelligence Services: A Toolkit*. Finally, since September 2012, the findings of Aldrich's research have also fed directly into the work of a consultative committee designed to frame new security mechanisms within the UK in the context of possible constitutional change. Documentary evidence of this is available on request (source 6).

#### **Shaping public policy debates about declassification**

In November 2010, Aldrich succeeded Lord Hennessy as one of two academic advisers serving on the Cabinet Office Consultative Group on Security and Intelligence Records. The group, which meets at six-month intervals, considers requests by researchers for the declassification of official material and is thus a vital mechanism through which scholars can lobby government. Aldrich has secured further releases on the financial control of intelligence (e.g. TNA CAB 301). He has also advised on patterns for future releases and the impact of the shift to a twenty-year rule in the UK. Moreover, he has used his research on CIA record management to alert UK government departments to declassification developments in the US. This has helped officials in London to better understand where UK release policy sits in a global context (source 5). Specifically, he has informed GCHQ about releases on joint UK-US operations by the National Security Agency (NSA).

#### **Enhancing public awareness of and attitudes towards secrecy**

The team has shaped international public understanding of intelligence, security, and secrecy (sources 6, 7, 8 and 10). The project mounted the largest ever conference on the CIA, held at the East Midlands Conference Centre. All nineteen panels and plenaries were recorded by Backdoor Broadcasting and the conference, including the post-panel discussions, can be 'attended' for free via a dedicated web-site. According to statistics provided by Backdoor Broadcasting Company, this website has received 4.75 million 'hits' since its launch in May 2011. The number of downloads of material produced by Aldrich and Moran from the website stands at 36,690 (July 2013). The intelligence resources pages at Warwick have received over 240,220 visitors (July 2013).

In the service of public engagement and the enhancement of cultural understandings of espionage, between 2011-12 Moran served as principal historical consultant to the International Spy Museum in Washington DC, working on the exhibition 'Exquisitely Evil: 50 Years of James Bond Villains' (source 6). The Museum's chartered responsibility is to inform the public about the fact, not fiction, of espionage. Moran's research was instrumental in convincing the Museum that spy fiction should be taken seriously, since it provides the public with a unique, if not necessarily accurate, window onto clandestine security relations. Moran's idea that public perceptions about intelligence are disproportionately influenced by fictive ideas derived from popular culture is the overriding message of the exhibition. On the basis of his research, Moran devised the intellectual framework of the exhibition; selected artefacts from the Bond film archive; and wrote many of the sidebars. During launch week, he gave media interviews (Fox News, Reuters, France 24) and spoke at a reception to mark the opening, held at the British Ambassador's Residence in Georgetown. The exhibition has been widely reviewed, and has increased attendance at the Museum by 14%.

To improve public understanding of secrecy, the team has produced a number of influential cultural artefacts (sources 7 and 8). For example, Aldrich and Moran's research led to two 30-minute BBC Radio 4 documentaries for 'Document'. One explored a fracture in Anglo-US intelligence and the second revealed that Britain's greatest post-war secret, the existence of GCHQ, was nearly blown by an inebriated journalist in 1951; the latter was reported by the *Telegraph* and featured on the BBC homepage. Aldrich's research on the alleged traitor, Lord Sempill, was also the subject of an hour-long BBC 2 documentary, which featured Aldrich extensively. Finally, on 10 June 2013 Aldrich informed media debate about data sharing between the US National Security Agency and the UK's GCHQ via a live interview with Jeremy Paxman on BBC2's flagship *Newsnight*, which attracted 708,000 viewers <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b02xd16y> (accessed 30/9/13).

### **5. Sources to corroborate the impact**

#### **Evidence for impact on security and intelligence practitioners:**

1. **Secretary of the DA-Notice Committee.** In his testimonial (available on request) the source confirms that the DA-Notice Committee was influenced by the team's presentation on 6 February 2012: "Professor Aldrich and Dr Moran gave very insightful briefings on US approaches and put forward several key conclusions: that the new intelligence 'ecosystem' requires public confidence to work; a new global accountability gap has been created by increased cooperation; intelligence officers have been obliged to pursue more active

methods leaving a potential ‘trail’ which might compromise their secrecy; as a result of technical and social developments, the US has advanced state secrecy in the courts, raising the question whether the UK will in due course follow suit. This use of a similar practice is now being considered by certain elements of the UK’s security and intelligence services”.

2. **Head of Corporate Information, Ministry of Defence.** In his testimonial (available on request), the source confirms that the MoD was influenced by the team’s presentation on 23 February 2012: “The presentations were pitched perfectly, providing sufficient detail but set in a helpful ‘lessons’ context. The MoD audience was particularly struck by the resonance between the US experience and our own. You also usefully identify some of the difficult issues faced by the US in this area on which we will reflect in our handling of public affairs”.
3. **Head of Strategy, Coordination and Development, Serious Organised Crime Agency.** In his testimonial (available on request), the source confirms that SOCA was influenced by the team’s presentation delivered on 18 February 2012: “The meeting was of interest to us because, in common with other law enforcement, security and intelligence agencies, SOCA confronts complex issues in the area of openness and secrecy. Aldrich, Moran and Willmetts offered interesting presentations on US approaches, focusing on the experience of the Central Intelligence Agency with its long-standing press office. The presentations have informed ongoing internal discussions about the possibility of commissioning narratives before or after the creation of the National Crime Agency”.
4. **Contribution to DCAF project.** Joint Workshop by The Norwegian Parliamentary Intelligence Oversight Committee and the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) on Accountability of International Intelligence Cooperation, Norwegian Parliament, Oslo 17-18 October 2008. Programme available on request or online: <http://bit.ly/1cxBhJ5>.

**Evidence of impact on public policy debate about declassification and new structures:**

5. **Chair, Cabinet Office Consultative Group on Security and Intelligence Records.** The source can testify that Aldrich has had direct input into recent declassification of intelligence and security records.
6. **Minutes of a Meeting on the Security and Intelligence aspects of Constitutional Reform, Police Scotland.** This ‘Restricted’ document dated 28 June 2013 outlines Aldrich’s role in providing advice on the design of new organisations in Scotland related to terrorism and organised crime. Available on request.

**Evidence of impact on public awareness of and attitudes towards secrecy:**

7. **Director of Exhibitions and Programs, International Spy Museum.** In her testimonial (available on request) the source confirms that Moran has enhanced cultural understandings of secrecy in his work with the international spy museum: “Dr Moran played an important role as a consulting curator. In addition to providing input on the interpretive framework of the exhibition, he reviewed scripts for accuracy. Chris proved to be an excellent and engaging spokesman and attendance at the Museum has increased 14%”.
8. **Contribution to radio documentaries as cultural artefacts.** The following items are evidence of the team’s ability to enhance cultural understandings of secrecy: a) BBC Radio 4, ‘The Collapse of the “Special Relationship”’, 15 August 2011, available online: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0137tff>; b) ‘GCHQ: Keeping the Past Great Secret’, BBC Radio 4, 5 November 2012, available online: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b01npjph/Document\\_GCHQ\\_Keeping\\_the\\_Last\\_Great\\_Secret/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b01npjph/Document_GCHQ_Keeping_the_Last_Great_Secret/) (accessed 30/9/13).
9. **Contribution to television documentaries as cultural artefacts.** The following item is further evidence of the importance of Aldrich’s work for popular attitudes to espionage: ‘The Fall of Singapore – The Great Betrayal’, BBC2, 23 May 2012, available online: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01j73yv> (accessed 30/9/13).
10. **AHRC Impact Case Study.** Aldrich’s research impact has been showcased by the AHRC as an example of best practice. Available on request or online: <http://bit.ly/19TE710>.