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YSF 2026 Student and Teacher Resources

This document is a DRAFT and will be updated prior to the event with the finalized resources for students, teachers, and moderators. (05/08/2026)

Terminology and Basics:

- [Espionage Facts | International Spy Museum](#)
- [What is Intelligence? | Office of the Director of National Intelligence](#)
- [America's intelligence community, explained](#)

Culper Ring:

- [Makematic - The Culper Spy Ring](#)
- [How a secret spy ring influenced the birth of the US - BBC REEL](#)
- [The Culper Gang - UM Clements Library](#)

Modern Surveillance:

- [Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act \(FISA\) | Congress.gov](#)
- [The USA PATRIOT Act: Preserving Life and Liberty](#)
- [USA Freedom Act | Law | Research Starters](#)
- [National Security Agency/Central Security Service > Signals Intelligence](#)

Ethical Debate:

- [How the Anti-Terrorism Bill Puts Student Privacy at Risk | American Civil Liberties Union](#)
- [Ethics of Surveillance Technologies: Balancing Privacy and Security in a Digital Age - Premier Science](#)
- [Should Americans Worry About Mass Surveillance in the US? | Vice News](#)
- [Government Surveillance: The National Security Perspective](#)
- [Views of data privacy risks, personal data and digital privacy laws in America | Pew Research Center](#)
- [Americans' Attitudes About Privacy, Security and Surveillance | Pew Research Center](#)



Teaching Units/Lessons on a Variety of Espionage Cases

- [Lesson Plans | International Spy Museum](#)
- [CIA | EYES ONLY: Parents and teachers - Spy Kids](#)
- [Cold War Espionage | Spies, Organizations & Events - Lesson | Study.com](#)
- [The New York Times: Espionage Everywhere, Spying in the News and Popular Culture](#)
- [Bill of Rights Institute: Cold War Spy Cases](#)

Primary Source Documents

[George Washington and the Culper Spy Ring: Primary Sources](#) [Culper Spy Ring]

[General Sources - Primary Sources: Espionage - LibGuides at Christopher Newport University](#)
[Duquesne Spy Ring; WW2]

[Primary Sources: Espionage: Rosenbergs](#)

[The Pentagon's Spies: Military Human Intelligence \(HUMINT\) Activities](#)

[National Security, Espionage, and Intelligence in American History: 20th Century Primary Sources](#)

[Intelligence and Espionage | National Security Archive](#)

Secondary Sources - Articles

Usdin, S. (2024). The Face of Soviet Espionage in the United States during the Stalin Era: Vladimir Pravdin, “Man of Truth.” *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 26(2), 78–122.



- [Usdin.PDF](#)

Rethinking Espionage in the Modern Era by Darien Pun.

- [Rethinking Espionage in the Modern Era | Chicago Journal of International Law](#)

Alan Bilansky, “Pinkerton's National Detective Agency and the Information Work of the Nineteenth-Century Surveillance State,” *Information & Culture*, Vol. 53, No. 1 (2018): 67-84

- <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44667575> (Free with account)

Sean Halverson, “Dangerous Patriots: Washington's Hidden Army during the American Revolution,” *Intelligence and National Security*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (4/2010): 123-146.

Julie Wheelwright, “Poisoned honey: The myth of women in espionage,” *Queen's Quarterly*, Vol. 126 No. 4 (Winter 2019): 598-613.

Andrew Hammond. "Through a Glass, Darkly: The CIA and Oral History," *History* Vol. 100, no. 2 (340) (2015): 311-26.

- <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/1468-229X.12098>

In-Depth Reading

The Sisterhood: The Secret History of Women at the CIA by Liza Mundy

Circle of Treason: A CIA Account of Traitor Aldrich Ames and the Men He Betrayed
by Sandra V. Grimes and Jeanne Vertefeuille

- <https://archive.org/details/circleoftreasonc0000grim>

Southern lady, Yankee spy : the true story of Elizabeth Van Lew by E. R Varon

[Family of Spies: A World War II Story of Nazi Espionage, Betrayal, and the Secret History Behind Pearl Harbor](#) by Christine Kuehn—How the Japanese knew what to bomb at Pearl Harbor

[Code Name: Lise: The True Story of the Woman Who Became World War II's Most Highly Decorated Spy](#) by Larry Loftis—A woman was World War II's most highly decorated spy



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[The Princess Spy: The True Story of World War II Spy Aline Griffith, Countess of Romanones by Larry Loftis](#)—The American fashion model who spied for the Allies in World War II

[An Impeccable Spy: Richard Sorge, Stalin's Master Agent](#) by Owen Matthews—The greatest spy of the twentieth century?

[Double Cross: The True Story of the D-Day Spies](#), by Ben McIntyre—A new spin on why the Normandy Invasion succeeded

[Operation Mincemeat: How a Dead Man and a Bizarre Plan Fooled the Nazis and Assured Allied Victory](#), by Ben McIntyre—Finally declassified, the true story of “the man who never was”

[Agent Sonya: Moscow's Most Daring Wartime Spy](#) by Ben MacIntyre—The extraordinary Soviet spy who gave Stalin the bomb

Geniuses at War: Bletchley Park, Colossus, and the Dawn of the Digital Age by David A. Price—The top-secret story of the first digital computer

[Need to Know: World War II and the Rise of American Intelligence](#) by Nicholas Reynolds—The rise of American intelligence in World War II

[Wild Bill Donovan: The Spymaster Who Created the OSS and Modern American Espionage](#), by Douglas Waller—One remarkable man and the origins of the CIA

Digital Stories:

1. The World's Second Oldest Profession - History of Spying. 28 mins. [Overview of Spying throughout history. Good intro to issues and landmark events.]

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g7Y_bQoae5g

2. The Story of America: Culper Spy Ring. The White House, 2025. 14 mins. [Revolutionary War]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xs7tRxbNa0Q>

3. The General Who Was Also a Spy: The Story of Elizabeth Van Lew. 13 mins. [Civil War]



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZU0Id9qPc0>

4. The Spy Inside the Confederate White House | Mary Bowser. 16 mins. [Civil War]

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ikpMQ_WcLA

5. HOW ONE JAPANESE SPY INSIDE AMERICA CHANGED THE WAR'S DIRECTION [attack on Pearl Harbor] 13 mins.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c-H-IyKeOhs>

6. The Complete History of the CIA The American Intelligence Spies documentary. 8. Mins. [quick history]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7yv1j72od6k>

6. Former CIA Operative Explains How Spies Use Disguises. Jonna Mendez. 9.24 mins. [Cold War Contemporary]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JASUsVY5YJ8>

7. The Most Damaging Mole in the CIA. 23 mins. [Aldrich Ames. Warning: use of the F-word from Ames when he was finally caught, quoted in the documentary]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DP7x6Zs1gP0>

8. Edward Snowden: Whistleblower or Traitor? 16 Mins. [good overview; raising question of balance between privacy and national security]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eILRyreZFa8>



Interested in learning more about this topic? Check out the sources below:

Feature-Length Films (Recommendations from CIA analysts)

Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy, 2011 (Rated R)

North by Northwest, 1959 (Rated PG)

- Tubi – free

Argo, 2012 (Rated R)

- Tubi – free

Bridge of Spies, 2015 (Rated PG-13)

The Good Shepherd, 2016 (Rated R)

The Hunt for Red October, 1990. (Rated PG)

Novels for High School-Age Students

Code Name Badass: The True Story of Virginia Hall by Heather Demetrios: Non-fiction biography of an Allied spy.

A Spy in the House (The Agency, #1) by Y.S. Lee: Features a young female spy in Victorian London.

Sekret by Lindsay Smith: A story of psychic teenagers spying for the KGB in 1960s Soviet Russia.

Rebel Spy by Veronica Rossi: imagined life of Agent 355 of the Culper Ring

Code Name Verity by Elizabeth Wein WW2

The Book Spy: A WW2 Novel of Librarian Spies by Alan Hlad



The Spymistress: A Novel by Jennifer Chiaverini [life of Elizabeth Van Lew; civil war]

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