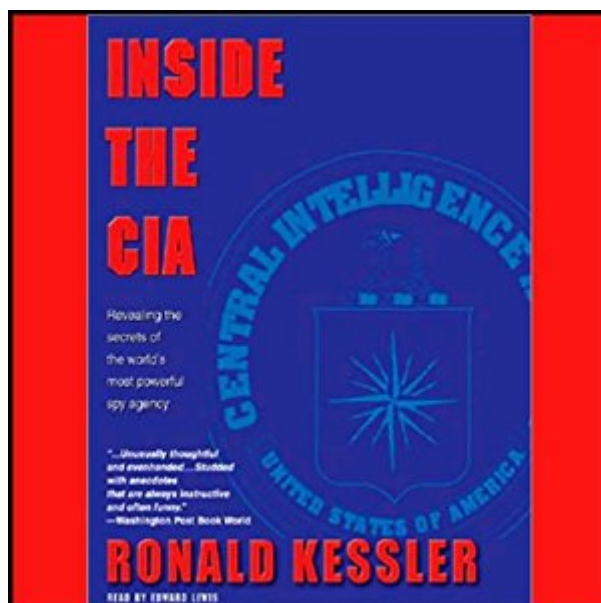


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Inside The C.I.A.



Synopsis

Ronald Kessler's explosive bestseller, *The FBI*, brought down FBI Director William S. Sessions. Now, in this unparalleled work of investigative journalism, Kessler reveals the inner world of the CIA. Based on extensive research and hundreds of interviews, including two with active Directors of Central Intelligence William H. Webster and Robert M. Gates and with three former DCIs, *Inside the CIA* is the first in-depth, unbiased account of the Agency's core operations, its abject failures, and its resounding successes. Learn how the CIA spies on every country in the world except Great Britain, Australia, and Canada, undertaking covert action to influence or overthrow foreign governments or political parties. Discover how CIA analysts botched the job of foreseeing the Soviet economy's collapse. This is your extraordinary tour through the world's most successful house of spies. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 11 hours and 31 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Blackstone Audio, Inc.

Audible.com Release Date: November 7, 2000

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B0000545HX

Best Sellers Rank: #4 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Politics & Current Events > Current Events #108 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > True Crime > Espionage #176 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Nonfiction > True Crime

Customer Reviews

Those touting access to the CIA are usually not the ones to explain the bureaucratic infighting, dramatic capers and beautiful agents betrayed. But this is a good book for learning the foundational stuff including how the agency is organized and its mission. The book is useful for gaining background information that can later be important for understanding events in context. I'm not dismissing the book for those looking for some entertainment value, just warning that it's not a page-turner.

The author received the cooperation of the CIA in the writing of this book. As you can imagine, I think that both helped and hindered him. How it helped: We get a nice look at a day in the life of the Director. We get a clear explanation of how the CIA functions as an organization. We get an idea of how the different branches within the CIA feel about each other and the rivalries they nurse. We get an interesting look into the mindset of the officers, today and yesterday. We get an interesting look at how the personality of an individual Director affects the way the organization does business. How it hurt: The CIA is presented the way the CIA wants to be seen. It comes across as little more than a big 'ol benevolent think tank with daring aspirations of bureaucratic inertia. It is strongly implied that the most nefarious activities they engage in during this modern era are fishing the fecal matter of foreign dignitaries out of hotel room toilets and recruiting OTHER people to spy. While I don't doubt things like this make up the bulk of the daily grind for Operations Officers, I also had the strong feeling the job descriptions of the Operations Directorate were... neutered. If you're expecting an officially sanctioned expose, this is NOT it. If you're looking to understand the culture of the CIA and how it functions as an organization to do what it does (whatever that is) this book offers a tantalizing look, but you have the feeling you're only seeing the tip of the iceberg.

I've thoroughly enjoyed this glimpse into the inner workings of the world's most powerful spy agency. Kessler does a very nice job outlining the multiple Directorates within the CIA while offering interesting anecdotes and tidbits about various past players within each Directorate. I especially enjoyed the different profiles of past CIA directors. The author consulted both with retired employees and people who are still employed with the United States government today. A good example is Robert Gates, recent Secretary of Defense and past director of the CIA. Kessler's writing covers both criticism and accolades, giving this book a well-rounded feel. Having never read much concerning the CIA, I cannot offer a perspective on whether this book agrees with other works on the agency. As a stand alone read I found it to be informative and thought provoking. For someone who has no idea how the CIA works this is a nice place to start.

I was hoping for a book that was more the STORY of the CIA: what does it feel like to work in each department, does it really do all the nefarious, against-the-law stuff of the movies? The book gave a good structural overview of the Agency but it didn't reveal any dirty linen (like, was some rouge part of the Agency behind the JFK assassination?) The book was functional, informative and a bit dull. I'll have to keep digging for the dirty tricks department rumored to have what?

This book is not bad, but it is clearly dated. Unfortunately, a significant portion of the book is dedicated to the state of the organization in 1991 (focusing even on particular individuals relevant only at that point in time), but the book provides a sound historical background. Readers should realize that the organizational structure has changed since the book was written and there is really a lot left to be desired by the book at this point in time.

Typical Gov't. book. They tell you crap that you already 'know', even though it's mostly lies. But that's just because I know the 'Truth' regarding the CIA. If you just want a book to read that you know NOTHING about the topic, but are interested in the topic? It's worth buying it for that reason only.

Mr. Kessler has done it again. One of the most enlightening peeks into this highly respected organization. Loved his antidotes on some of our presidents and their quirks and behavior. Some surprised me and others such as Mrs Clinton's behavior only reinforced my opinions of her.

Actually my husband is reading it and can't put it down. He has read several of Ronald Kessler's books and finds them informative and gripping. Interesting to find out so many things you never knew about.

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