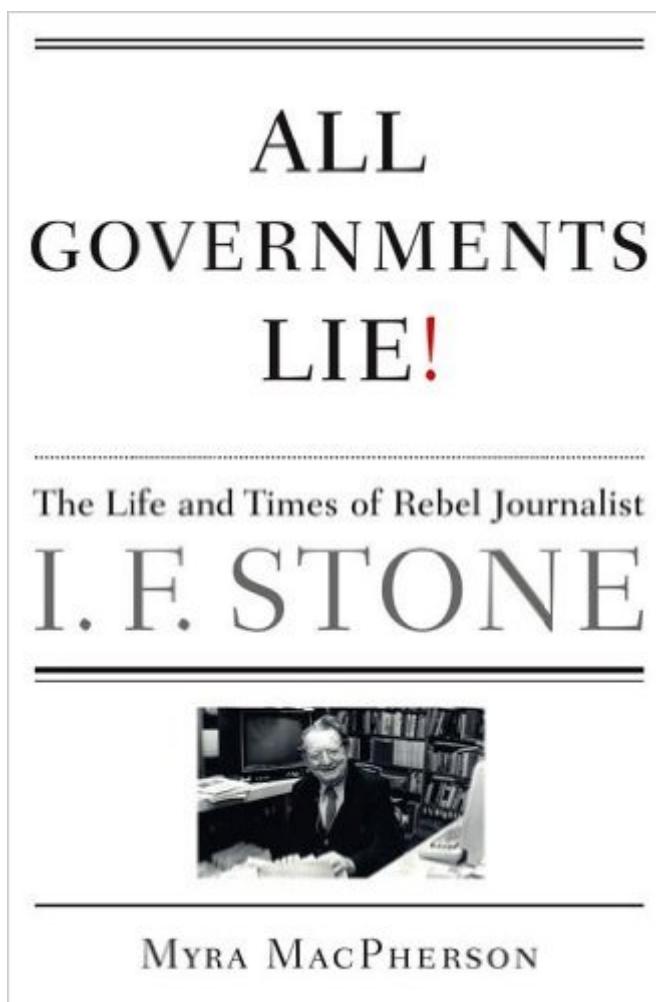


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All Governments Lie: The Life And Times Of Rebel Journalist I. F. Stone



Synopsis

Boasting equal parts scholarship and style, "All Governments Lie" is a highly readable, groundbreaking, and timely look at I. F. Stone -- one of America's most independent and revered journalists, whose work carries the same immediacy it did almost a half century ago, highlighting the ever-present need for dissenting voices. In the world of Washington political journalism, notorious for trading independence for access, I. F. "Izzy" Stone was so unique as to be a genuine wonder. Always skeptical -- "All governments lie, but disaster lies in wait for countries whose officials smoke the same hashish they give out," he memorably quipped -- Stone was ahead of the pack on the most pivotal twentieth-century trends: the rise of Hitler and Fascism, disastrous Cold War foreign policies, covert actions of the FBI and CIA, the greatness of the Civil Rights movement, the horror of Vietnam, the strengths and weaknesses of the antiwar movement, the disgrace of Iran-contra, and the class greed of Reaganomics. His constant barrage against J. Edgar Hoover earned him close monitoring by the FBI from the Great Depression through the Vietnam War, and even an investigation for espionage during the fifties. After making his mark on feisty New York dailies and in *The Nation* -- scoring such scoops as the discovery of American cartels doing business with Nazi Germany -- Stone became unemployable during the dark days of McCarthyism. Out of desperation he started his four-page *I. F. Stone's Weekly*, which ran from 1953 to 1971. The first journalist to label the Gulf of Tonkin affair a sham excuse to escalate the Vietnam War, Stone garnered worldwide fans, was read in the corridors of power, and became wealthy. Later, the "world's oldest living freshman" learned Greek to write his bestseller *The Trial of Socrates*. Here, for the first time, acclaimed journalist and author Myra MacPherson brings the legendary Stone into sharp focus. Rooted in fifteen years of research, this monumental biography includes information from newly declassified international documents and Stone's unpublished five-thousand-page FBI file, as well as personal interviews with Stone and his wife, Esther; with famed modern thinkers; and with the best of today's journalists. It illuminates the vast sweep of turbulent twentieth-century history as well as Stone's complex and colorful life. The result is more than a masterful portrait of a remarkable character; it's a far-reaching assessment of journalism and its role in our culture. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

Hardcover: 592 pages

Publisher: Scribner (August 29, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0684807130

ISBN-13: 978-0684807133

Product Dimensions: 6.4 x 1.6 x 9.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.7 pounds

Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (15 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #252,978 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #40 in Books > History > Military > Napoleonic Wars #481 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Professionals & Academics > Journalists #1385 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Communication & Media Studies

Customer Reviews

I had been looking forward eagerly to All Governments Lie, Myra MacPherson's thorough study of I.F. Stone's work and times. I had a deep personal interest in the project and confess to being absolutely delighted with the results. I mention a deep personal interest and the reasons for this are many. For starters: I am a contemporary and there aren't too many of us left. It is true that he was 10 years my senior but still we shared depression and war and cold war years. I can't say that we knew each other, although we did meet on a few widely scattered occasions, but I did attend his school, The University of Pennsylvania. There in his home town of Philadelphia, I moved in circles that included relatives and friends with whom he had grown up. That enables me to say that I had a good second hand acquaintance with him. I introduce myself in this manner to justify the comments I am about to make about the book. I confine myself to just one area of the book's treatment of the life of the man the author calls "the rebel journalist". I felt warm satisfaction in the way she swept into the garbage pail the ludicrous charge that Stone was guilty of espionage for the Soviet Union. She is convincing on the subject and reminds us of what should put an end to this baseless gossip. The F.B.I. never found one shred of evidence, and it was not for lack of trying. J. Edgar Hoover was a stubborn, determined man when he had a hated target in his sights. He despised Stone to the point where he had made up his mind to get rid of him. To him the Stone threat was in the same class as those of Martin Luther King and Albert Einstein and we recall the viciousness and relentlessness of his attempts to ruin them.

In the interest of full disclosure, I have a bit of personal history with Izzy, Esther, and their son Chris, as well as a smaller bit with the author. From 1959 to 1962 I was a classmate and acquaintance of Chris in law school. Chris told me about his dad and convinced me to subscribe to I.F. Stone's

Weekly, which I continued to do until its demise. Sometime in 1966 or 1967 while living in Washington, DC, I threw a party and on a whim invited Izzy and Esther, and to my great surprise, they accepted and showed up. Then, to cap it off, two months ago, when I was about halfway through the book, I was at a cocktail party and was introduced to someone named...Myra MacPherson. Of course I was entranced with the bizarre coincidence of meeting someone whose book I was currently reading. I mention all this in case you might want to discount my enthusiasm for the book because of possible bias. This book is valuable for so many reasons: first, it tells the story of a life well lived, of a man who had the courage to follow his passion and tell the truth as he saw it, letting the chips fall where they would without being intimidated by any possible reactions. It is an inspirational story. Second, it provides a perspective on American history from the thirties and into the seventies, with Izzy's prescience about our role in Vietnam presaging similar concerns about our current role in Iraq. Third, it traces the history of leftist politics with all the various and twisting strands during that period. Fourth, it documents the depredations of the FBI in its view of certain varieties of free speech as subversive, along with those of the House Un-American Activities Committee.

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