

Official and Confidential

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The Secret Life of

J. Edgar Hoover



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Author of GODDESS

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Presidents yearned to fire him, but were daunted by his storehouse of damaging secrets. Public officials and private citizens lived in fear of his illegal surveillance and harassment tactics. Now, in this ground-breaking, at times shocking biography, J. Edgar Hoover, the man who ruled over the FBI for nearly fifty years, emerges definitively as one of the greatest menaces of our times. Official and Confidential, by the award-winning investigative journalist and author Anthony Summers, is the first book to expose the public and the private J. Edgar Hoover. Other biographers have hinted at the dark secrets in the Director's life, but Summers courageously discloses the truth. After conducting more than eight hundred interviews and obtaining access to previously concealed documents, Summers has created a chilling portrait of a legendary figure who blatantly abused the public trust. * J. Edgar Hoover, Summers establishes, was a closet homosexual and transvestite. Mafia bosses obtained information about Hoover's sex life and used it for decades to keep the FBI at bay. Without this, the Mafia as we know it might never have gained its hold in America. * J. Edgar Hoover shamelessly accepted gifts and free lodging from millionaire oilmen, and appropriated FBI facilities for his personal use. * J. Edgar Hoover influenced the course of World War II by ignoring an early warning about Pearl Harbor. * J. Edgar Hoover used his knowledge of John F. Kennedy's womanizing to ensure that Lyndon Johnson became Vice President. He relied on dirty tricks to stay in office under Kennedy and subverted the Warren Commission's probe into the investigation of his death. * J. Edgar Hoover himself was the target of a Watergate-era burglary attempt - and perhaps even a murder plot. With these and other astonishing disclosures, Summers defines a man and his times. He explores Hoover's troubled youth as the son of a mentally ill father and a highly demanding mother, and the development of the obsessive behavior that dominated his later years. Summers takes the reader on an extraordinary journey, as a zealous young lawyer rebuilds an ineffectual corps of agents into a massive force capable of police-state tactics. With riveting detail, Summers documents Hoover's behind-the-scenes role in war and peace through fifty years and eight presidential administrations. Richly anecdotal, meticulously researched Official and Confidential depicts some of the most controversial and colorful events of our century. Here is a disturbing lesson in how one man was able to abuse his position of power and change the course of American history.

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