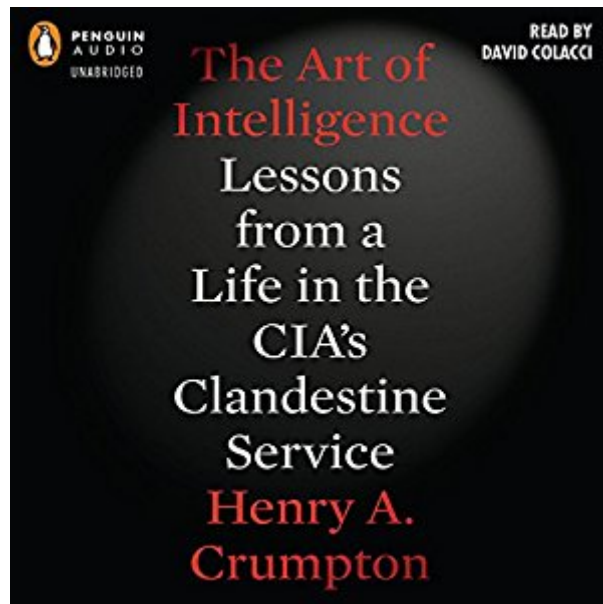


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The Art Of Intelligence: Lessons From A Life In The CIA's Clandestine Service



Synopsis

A legendary CIA spy and counterterrorism expert tells the spellbinding story of his high-risk, action-packed career while illustrating the growing importance of America's intelligence officers and their secret missions. For a crucial period, Henry Crumpton led the CIA's global covert operations against America's terrorist enemies, including al Qaeda. In the days after 9/11, the CIA tasked Crumpton to organize and lead the Afghanistan campaign. With Crumpton's strategic initiative and bold leadership, from the battlefield to the Oval Office, U.S. and Afghan allies routed al Qaeda and the Taliban in less than 90 days after the Twin Towers fell. At the height of combat against the Taliban in late 2001, there were fewer than 500 Americans on the ground in Afghanistan, a dynamic blend of CIA and Special Forces. The campaign changed the way America wages war. This book will change the way America views the CIA. The Art of Intelligence draws from the full arc of Crumpton's espionage and covert action exploits to explain what America's spies do and why their service is more valuable than ever. From his early years in Africa, where he recruited and ran sources, from loathsome criminals to heroic warriors; to his liaison assignment at the FBI, the CIA's Counterterrorism Center, the development of the UAV Predator program, and the Afghanistan war; to his later work running all CIA clandestine operations inside the United States, he employs enthralling storytelling to teach important lessons about national security, but also about duty, honor, and love of country. No book like The Art of Intelligence has ever been written - not with Crumpton's unique perspective, in a time when America faced such grave and uncertain risk. It is an epic, sure to be a classic in the annals of espionage and war.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Crumpton's expertise and dedication cannot be questioned. The subtitle, though, is more descriptive of the book than the main title. This is not a treatise on The Art of Intelligence. It is, however, about the experience of one CIA officer and team leader, at least to the extent he can discuss his experiences. What I found most interesting was Chapter 7, about the differences between the approaches and limitations of the CIA versus the FBI. Crumpton is impatient with political leaders who demand more solid proof than his team would need to take drastic action. He is impatient with those who collect evidence instead of "intelligence," which is often a lower standard. He is impatient with the need to justify and to obtain permission when the mission is clear and the available intelligence seems to point to a resolution clear to the CIA. One thing bothers me about Crumpton's conclusions, in which he seems to be surprised a "how ambivalent, cynical, or ignorant the U.S. public and many policy makers are about intelligence." Really? With an organization that is essentially a secret, with a fairly large budget that is just as largely unaccounted for; with the "I can't tell you where I work or what I do" and "the CIA is necessary, but we can't tell you how or why" constraints (some of which are clearly necessary), it seems not very surprising to me. People - whether members of Congress or the public - tend to distrust what they do not understand, and what will not be explained to them. To suggest that ambivalence, cynicism and ignorance are incredible, is massively naive. I would rather that the book lived up to its main title - a more in-depth description of the hows and whys of intelligence - instead of "Henry Crumpton's Experience with the CIA."

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