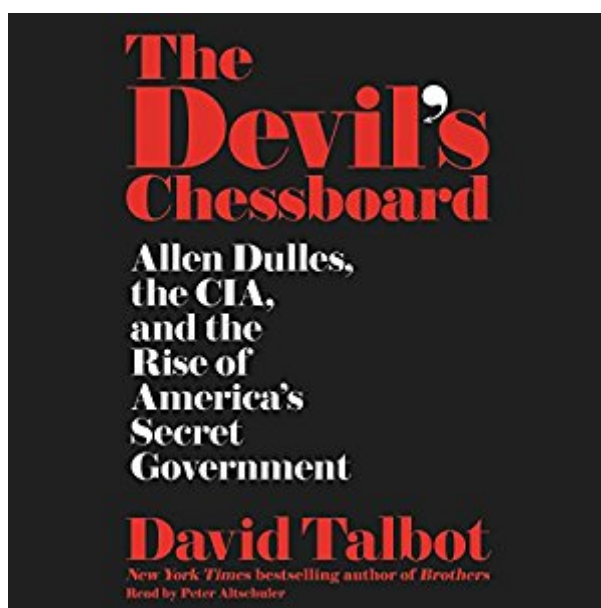


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# The Devil's Chessboard: Allen Dulles, The CIA, And The Rise Of America's Secret Government



## Synopsis

An explosive, headline-making portrait of Allen Dulles, the man who transformed the CIA into the most powerful - and secretive - colossus in Washington, from the founder of Salon.com and author of the New York Times best seller *Brothers*. America's greatest untold story: the United States' rise to world dominance under the guile of Allen Welsh Dulles, the longest-serving director of the CIA. Drawing on revelatory new materials - including newly discovered US government documents, US and European intelligence sources, the personal correspondence and journals of Allen Dulles' wife and mistress, and exclusive interviews with the children of prominent CIA officials - Talbot reveals the underside of one of America's most powerful and influential figures. Dulles' decade as the director of the CIA - which he used to further his public and private agendas - were dark times in American politics. Calling himself "the secretary of state of unfriendly countries", Dulles saw himself as above the elected law, manipulating and subverting American presidents in the pursuit of his personal interests and those of the wealthy elite he counted as his friends and clients - colluding with Nazi-controlled cartels, German war criminals, and Mafiosi in the process. Targeting foreign leaders for assassination and overthrowing nationalist governments not in line with his political aims, Dulles employed those same tactics to further his goals at home, Talbot charges, offering shocking new evidence in the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. An exposé of American power that is as disturbing as it is timely, *The Devil's Chessboard* is a provocative and gripping story of the rise of the national security state - and the battle for America's soul.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I came to this book knowing nothing about Allen Dulles. I learned not just about him and his control of what we do and do not know about our country's dark past, but also new (to me) information about JFK's murder. I was less interested in the Nazi section than the assassination section, but the whole book is solid reading. Talbot kept firm control of his material and laid it out in inviting prose that prompted me to keep turning the pages. This struck me as a feat not many writers could have pulled off so successfully. The amount of research that went into this book is impressive (an understatement), but it's the delivery of that research that makes *The Devil's Chessboard* so readable. Update: I read the book a second time and changed my mind about being more interested in the JFK section than the Nazi section. This time around, the Nazi section unfolded in my mind like a movie. In fact, I'd like to see a movie based on this entire book. Yet again I am wowed by Talbot's research.

A tremendous resource of breathtaking depth and clarity. Talbot builds on the now decades-old body of research initiated by investigative reporters Tom Mangold (*Cold Warrior*) and David Wise (*Molehunt*), and largely developed by assassination researchers James DiEugenio and Lisa Pease (*The Assassinations*) and adds groundbreaking new information. Talbot focusses extensively on James Jesus Angleton, the shadowy counterintelligence figure at the heart of the domestic assassinations of the 1960s, and examines the inner-workings of Dulles' ambitious (and dastardly) plot to consolidate and control global political power. *The Devil's Chessboard* is a startling and revelatory masterwork. In terms of easy-to-access assassination research, this book is second only to James Douglass' *JFK and the Unspeakable*. In terms of biographies of Dulles and Angleton, two of history's most infamous figures, this work is second to none. Note: Be wary of one-star reviews for this book. Some trace back to commissioned-review services, the same services that give five-star reviews to shady/suspicious health and beauty products. Go figure.

I am reviewing this book as I go along. It is a page turner. It's been awhile since I have read a book where I am using so many highlights to be able to go back to pertinent key words and sentences as the material is so rich. I have put down all other books I am reading for this book. It is bound to be a classic I believe. I have a feeling it will do for this subject matter much as James Douglass's 'JFK and the Unspeakable' did for pure assassination research. I was not aware of HOW deep the

Dulles/Nazi connection was. The writing style is crisp and to the point. Thank you Mr. Talbot for this wonderful book.

The CIA, as part of its implied charter to protect and serve and despite numerous loyal dedicated civil servants within its organization, this organization contained a septic like corrosion that undermined democracy. This corrosion included this book's primary character the manipulative Allen Dulles. Even Supreme Court Justice Arthur Goldberg goes so far as to say, "That both Dulleses were guilty of treason. The crafty Allen Dulles utilized his position to free some Nazi criminals who were instrumental in the unethical mind control programs. Allen had the habit of using people and betraying then discarding them to their potential demise when they were no longer useful." The repeated evoking of national security by the CIA to more deeply disguise its operations exploited anxiousness about supposed enemies and violated the public trust. No accountability and no responsibility marked this era. The chapter on Brain Warfare is of keen personal interest. When Dulles said the mind is susceptible to the impact of outside influences that it is proving a malleable tool in the hands of sinister men turned out more truthful to him than those he was accusing of the same. Having myself been a subject of these mind-control programs I wish the author would have included the use of look-alikes and synthetic telepathists in this chapter. That the Rockefellers helped finance CIA projects like MKULTRA is a sickening reality. Schlesinger's comments naming Helms as complacent in playing a central role in the brainwashing experiments is likely true. James Angleton's comment, "It is inconceivable that a secret intelligence arm of the government has to comply with all the overt orders of the government" fits many of the tragedies that were a result of the CIA's workings their mindset of boundless authority. The author makes a convincing argument that the CIA, Dulles himself and the military leaders laid the groundwork and atmosphere for the Bay of Pigs failure and President Kennedy's assassination. I enjoyed this book and highly recommend it.

Probably one of the most important analysis on the evolution of the national security complex (especially the CIA), and its role as arbiter of foreign policy post-WWII. Many will decry the book as conspiracy theory, especially when it turns away from the Nazi-Fascism of the 19th century to domestic politics, but these critiques fall apart as the reader investigates the plethora of endnotes that can easily be references and verified. A background of US imperial foreign policy since the Monroe Doctrine will help in understanding the implications of the book, but will also give a unified

narrative of the myriad of clandestine operations undertaken by the US in the late 19th century to present. The most controversial element in this work will be the argument-given-from-evidence on the culpability for the assassination of JFK, but it all fits within the MO, not only of the power players in the national security complex, but of US foreign policy in general. In no way comprehensive, but it is beyond illuminating. Would definitely recommend.

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