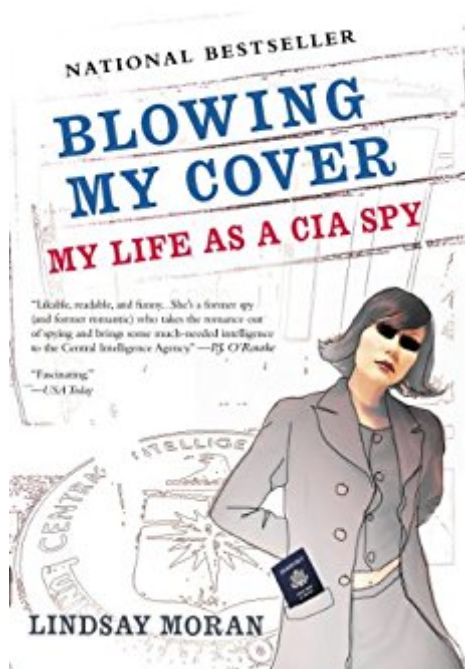


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Blowing My Cover: My Life As A CIA Spy



Synopsis

Call me naïve, but when I was a girl-watching James Bond and devouring Harriet the Spy-all I wanted was to grow up to be a spy. Unlike most kids, I didn't lose my secret-agent aspirations. So as a bright-eyed, idealistic college grad, I sent my resume to the CIA. Getting in was a story in itself. I peed in more cups than you could imagine, and was nearly condemned as a sexual deviant by the staff psychologist. My roommates were getting freaked out by government investigators lurking around, asking questions about my past. Finally, the CIA was training me to crash cars into barriers at 60 mph. Jump out of airplanes with cargo attached to my body. Survive interrogation, travel in alias, lose a tail. One thing they didn't teach us was how to date a guy while lying to him about what you do for a living. That I had to figure out for myself. Then I was posted overseas. And that's when the real fun began.

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Customer Reviews

I loved this book. Moran nails the inner turmoil that one has with the Agency. It is a love hate

relationship perpetually that she captures. From the very get go, recruitment and benign instructions starts candidates off in a wilderness of mirrors. Self doubt, peer doubt, ethical doubt. It is a life of questions and uneasiness. And the fact that she did ops only further puts a target on her back from the enemy and peers. Damned if you do, damned if you don't. There is no confidential HR rep to call, no manager to chat with. Unless you are on the inside, you will never know what it is like---unless of course you read Lindsay Moran's account. Agency life is like tequila. When you are having fun, it's great. Other times you swear it off only to get the itch again. Nothing changes, but you still do it. Moran captures this in spades. The book is honest, well written, funny, and sad, which showed me the author gave it her all and spoke from the heart. I highly recommend the book to anyone who ever wanted an unvarnished glimpse of the CIA. If you are looking for an account of how clan service lets you develop high level targets and see them become dictators run by the CIA, read fiction. If you want to know how you can sit in front of an asset for hours wanting to gouge your eyes out and stop your bleeding ears as they tell the same story over and over, but you have to stay on it in case they drop an exploitable nugget, this is the real world story. Well done.

You'll find some interesting tidbits in this auto-hagiography if you can stomach the author's treatment of the CIA and herself. In a book that regards the agency with nothing but contempt and derision, one hero emerges: the author. Even as she ridicules the tests she's subjected to in training, for example, she manages to let the reader know that she finished first in every one - or second to a retired Green Beret. Nonetheless, she provides a more or less current look into the everyday workings of the CIA and its employees that was interesting.

I read all of the reviews on but I kept my mind open. About every two pages I would look up, or look at her picture in the back and think "Can this be true?" As for being a book and readable story, it is easy to read and interesting. But, if you know anything about intelligence or are able to apply common sense, you will be looking up every couple pages and just wonder if they could have picked a worse person to be a case officer. She complains....about everything! And she is the best....at everything! And if she doesn't come out on top of a certain test or exercise, well it was someone else's fault or she wouldn't want to be like them anyways. She rear-ends an instructor's car and blames him for parking it in her path. She "devours" CIA memoirs but doesn't know what a case officer does. Everyone she meets is a disgusting unintelligent human being, and by the time she is done with her experience she is no longer proud to be an American, she finds out in early 2003 that there are no WMD's in Iraq (look out Valerie Plame) and she comments that George Tenet has

become fat and struggles to lift "paltry" weights. There are books that show what needs to be reformed in the CIA (like Ishmael Jones's book) and then there is nonconstructive complaining, which is "Blowing My Cover". I have heard someone say "men don't like this book because they are sexist," this is obviously a completely ignorant statement. If you want to read about a "real" case officer and her struggles with CIA then read Fair Game by Valerie Plame, read this book if you are bored and want some light entertainment (it does have some interesting details about training however.) In other words, she joined the agency, took a few million dollars worth of training, went on one assignment, quit, and then wrote a book on it and cashed in. I bought it for a penny, which I feel was a fair price.

Worst book I've ever read.

I think there are already enough reviews on here that speak on Moran's point of view pretty well. I definitely agree with all of them. So, I will just note that while this was a book purchased to fill time during a particularly long flight, it was a pretty disappointing read over all. Not necessarily the writing itself, but the perspective. Moran came off as whiny throughout most of the book and seemed offended that she was required to do a job that she obviously did not read the description for. I think it is still selling for pretty cheap on Amazon, so if you're looking for some reading to pass the time, go ahead and buy it. Overall, though, don't expect to be blown away by the author (read: main character) of this book.

I was really torn between a two or a three on this one. I stuck with the two. I will start with the good side. Lindsay has a refreshing writing style. Her wit makes it a fun read. But this is not the biography of an intelligence insider. Moreover, such a person would never write a book like this. With the exception of some descriptive details about the CIA bootcamp (which appears to be about as challenging as the boot camp phase of any of our nation's military academies), there was not a whole lot of new information to be found. And much like the rookie cadet who may have gotten more than she bargained for, Lindsay finds herself out of her element but manages to pull through. My sympathy level is low. While she complains about being sleep deprived, as occurs in many real military training scenarios, she and her buddies prefer to make prank calls rather than grab a cat nap in the corner. She comes across as a debutante in boot camp. I would recommend this book as a primer to anyone who is considering (seriously or not) applying to the CIA. But anyone who is looking for inside information on the workings, procedures, or techniques of the Agency should look

elsewhere. In fact, they may not even be available in any unclassified form.

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