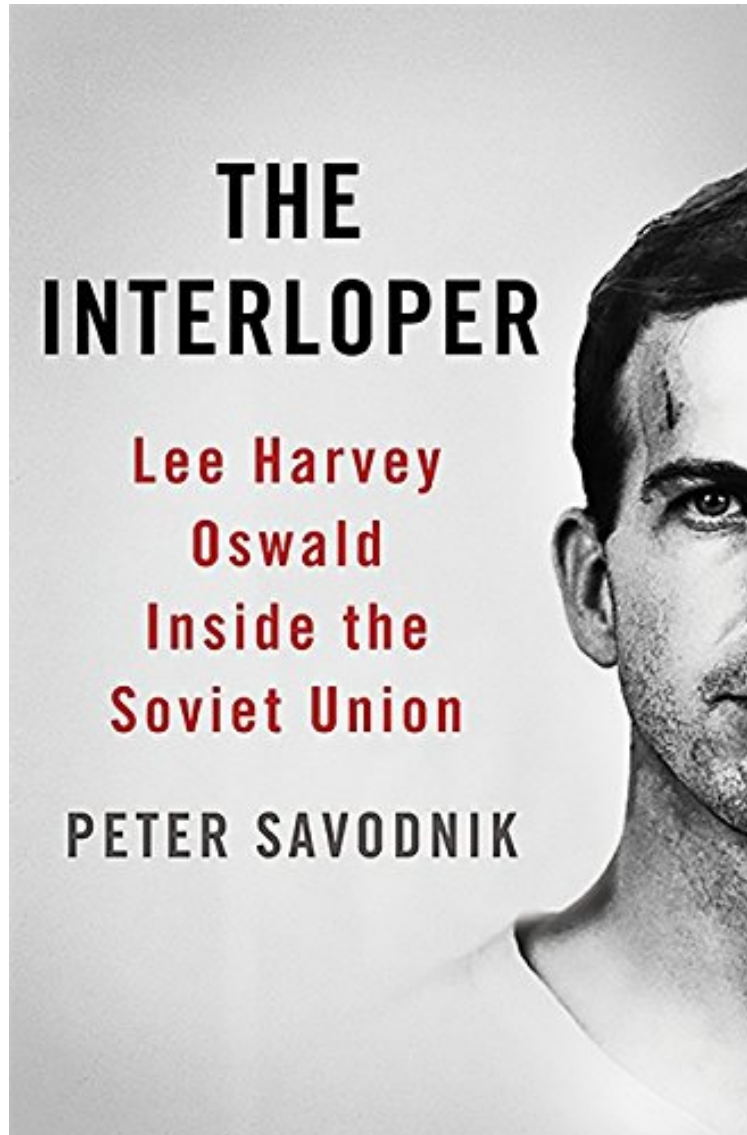


[Ebook free] The Interloper: Lee Harvey Oswald Inside the Soviet Union

The Interloper: Lee Harvey Oswald Inside the Soviet Union

Peter Savodnik

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Peter Savodnik : The Interloper: Lee Harvey Oswald Inside the Soviet Union before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Interloper: Lee Harvey Oswald Inside the Soviet Union:

4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. What Seahaven was to Truman Burbank, Minsk became to Lee Harvey OswaldBy Andy Orrock'The Interloper' is a fascinating, well-written, exquisitely researched account by Peter Savodnik of Lee Harvey Oswald's nearly three-year sojourn into the Soviet Union. Ernst Titovets, Oswald's erstwhile

Minsk-based friend, calls him "the most deeply researched common man in history." That proves true here: every aspect of this man's otherwise short, regrettable life is picked clean in 'The Interloper' and in numerous other contemporaneous volumes. Many of these new works hit the market late last year to coincide with JFK50 commemorations. Savodnik's work is surely one of the standouts. I love the description of Oswald's life in Minsk - Savodnik speaks to its artificiality and as a "Potemkin village." As the author notes, there's not a single interaction that takes place in Oswald's life that hasn't been somehow planned by one of the country's security organs. My thought turned to 'The Truman Show.' What Seahaven was to Truman Burbank, Minsk became to Lee Harvey Oswald. What distinguishes Savodnik's book are his first-person interviews -- most notably with Titovets and the beguiling Ella German (Tablet magazine asks "Could a Jewish Beauty Have Saved Kennedy by Marrying Lee Harvey Oswald in Minsk?") -- and his expert analysis, noting for example that Oswald's dim view of history doomed his time in the USSR. Oswald went to find a workers' paradise, but Soviet residents by then had been left with a hollowed-out shell of that vision, brutally transformed by its years under Stalin.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I can't really complain about this book but there are ...
By David Cohen
I can't really complain about this book but there are limits to what the author had access to, and that is a serious handicap. Still, the book paints a compelling portrait of Oswald, and that is nothing to sneeze at.

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A valuable portrait of America's most infamous killer - and the 2 societies that shaped him
By Dan
"The Interloper" is a highly readable and informative account of Lee Harvey Oswald's life in the Soviet Union from 1959 to 1962. "The Interloper" is essential reading not only as a unique biographical and psychological portrait of JFK's assassin but also as a fascinating exposition of the cultural and political context that surrounded an event that has shaped American consciousness for the last 50 years. Journalist Peter Savodnik comprehensively documents Oswald's time in the USSR based on impressive original research and interviews with those who knew Oswald in Minsk; deep knowledge of the places in the Soviet Union where Oswald lived; and review of the existing public information on Oswald, from the Warren Commission and other government reports to the memoirs of Oswald's Soviet acquaintances. Refreshingly, "The Interloper" goes beyond the typical conspiracy-oriented discussions of Oswald as "the lone gunman" (or not) and examines the disturbed and unrooted psyche that decided to kill President Kennedy. Savodnik convincingly builds the thesis that Oswald's assassination of President Kennedy was the culmination of a lifetime of "interloping," referring to Oswald's existence as an unmoored loner from birth. As Savodnik shows, Oswald sought refuge in the Soviet Union to escape a chaotic, unanchored life in the US - only to fail to find the home he wanted in the USSR and return to the US more disappointed in himself and unhinged from society than ever before. Understanding Oswald's time in the Soviet Union is thus key to understanding his motives in killing President Kennedy - and "The Interloper" is the first attempt to create a full account of this time. Savodnik's research is thorough, entertainingly taking up questions like the amount of grime expected to be under the fingernails of Oswald's factory co-workers in the Soviet Republic of Belarus - and what Oswald's co-workers thought about the American's clean fingernails. Throughout Savodnik leverages Oswald's extensive diaries to overlay the details of Oswald's daily life and interpersonal relationships in the USSR with his changing emotional and psychological state. At the same time "The Interloper" contains compelling and highly readable social and political overviews of the two most important countries of the second half of the 20th century: America and the Soviet Union. Savodnik builds a detailed picture of the Soviet Union - poorly understood by Americans today - as Oswald would have seen it: from the shabbiness of the Russian countryside when entering by train from prosperous Finland, to the informant "tour guides" that greeted foreigners in Moscow, to the growing bourgeois consciousness of Soviet citizens in the Khrushchev era, to, most importantly, the Truman Show life the KGB built for Oswald in Minsk. Oswald found in Minsk a Soviet citizenry who, in contrast to Oswald's communist revolutionary zeal, are seeking material comfort after years of political predation. Savodnik shows why Oswald failed to find the sense of belonging he wanted in the USSR: Oswald was an outsider to Minsk residents bound by a common history forged through war, Soviet deprivation, and the postwar effort of rebuilding a destroyed city. Rejected in Minsk, Oswald returns to the only place he could hope to fit into but which he scorned - America. In its account of Oswald's final months after returning to Texas up to and including the assassination, "The Interloper" offers intriguing conclusions about the significance of Kennedy and his death. Savodnik suggests that Oswald's existential out-of-place-ness was representative of a disillusionment with postwar America prominent in the 1950s subculture but which largely fell by the wayside during the heady days of the Kennedy presidency. Would exposure to that new national mood during his 2+ years in a Soviet radio factory have changed Oswald? While the answer seems a likely no, Savodnik suggests that Oswald, left behind by the new societal optimism, killed a president he poorly understood. The country found a confidence and sense of community during the brief Kennedy presidency that Oswald desired but could never have - and which US popular culture and politics have strived to re-create for the past 50 years.

Lee Harvey Oswald's assassination of President Kennedy in 1963 remains one of the most horrifying and hotly debated crimes in American history. Just as perplexing as the assassination is the assassin himself; the 24-year-old Oswald's hazy background and motivations—and his subsequent murder at the hands of Jack Ruby—make him an intriguing yet frustratingly enigmatic figure. Because Oswald briefly defected to the Soviet Union, some historians

allege he was a Soviet agent. But as Peter Savodnik shows in *The Interloper*, Oswald's time in the U.S.S.R. reveals a stranger, more chilling story. Oswald ventured to Russia at the age of 19, after a failed stint in the U.S. Marine Corps and a childhood spent shuffling from address to address with his unstable, needy mother. Like many of his generation, Oswald struggled for a sense of belonging in postwar American society, which could be materialistic, atomized, and alienating. The Soviet Union, with its promise of collectivism and camaraderie, seemed to offer an alternative. While traveling in Europe, Oswald slipped across the Soviet border, soon settling in Minsk where he worked at a radio and television factory. But Oswald quickly became just as disillusioned with his adopted country as he had been with the United States. He spoke very little Russian, had difficulty adapting to the culture of his new home, and found few trustworthy friends; indeed most, it became clear, were informing on him to the KGB. After nearly three years, Oswald returned to America feeling utterly defeated and more alone than ever—and as Savodnik shows, he began to look for an outlet for his frustration and rage. Drawing on groundbreaking research, including interviews with Oswald's friends and acquaintances in Russia and the United States, *The Interloper* brilliantly evokes the shattered psyche not just of Oswald himself, but also of the era he so tragically defined.

From Publishers Weekly Unlike previous accounts of the man who assassinated Kennedy, which focus on whether he acted alone, journalist Savodnik here delivers a genuine biography that emphasizes the nearly three years Oswald spent in the Soviet Union and attempts to address the oft-neglected question of why he wanted to kill the President. A mildly rebellious youth whose mother never provided a stable home, Oswald joined the Marines at age 17—his service was undistinguished and men in his squadron considered him odd because he was already expressing pro-communist views. Soon after discharge, he traveled to Moscow where he requested Soviet citizenship; suspicious authorities dithered for months before assigning him a factory job in Minsk. Oswald made friends and enjoyed success with women who considered him exotic, but he became bored and dissatisfied. His marriage to Marina Prosakoba briefly improved matters, though he soon resumed efforts to return home, passing the last year and a half of his life growing increasingly irascible. Savodnik's impressive research—which includes many Russian sources—does not turn up any revelations, but it paints an intriguing portrait of a restless, tormented soul who accomplished little in a short life until he turned himself into an infamous historical figure. Agent: Ted Weinstein, Ted Weinstein Literary Management. (Oct.) From Booklist A lot of people, Savodnik points out, have spent a lot of time speculating about whether Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone when he shot and killed President John F. Kennedy. Very little time, on the other hand, has been spent in examining Oswald as a man. Savodnik begins with the assumption, for which he later offers plenty of evidence, that Oswald acted alone, and he devotes his time to exploring the reasons why this 24-year-old assassinated an American president. His focus is on Oswald's years in the Soviet Union—his reasons for going there, his disillusionment (Russia, it turned out, wasn't a workers' paradise), and his state of mind when he returned to the U.S. in 1962. Savodnik busts a few myths along the way; for example, pointing out that the notion that the Russians would use Oswald as a Manchurian Candidate–style programmed assassin is absurd. But his real interest lies in presenting a picture of Lee Harvey Oswald the man, not merely the murderer. A very welcome addition to the voluminous literature about the Kennedy assassination. --David Pitt Editor's Choice, New York Times Book "An incisive study of a pivotal sojourn." New York Times Book