



# The FBI Encyclopedia

*By Michael Newton*

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## **The FBI Encyclopedia** By Michael Newton

The Federal Bureau of Investigation, America's most famous law enforcement agency, was established in 1908 and ever since has been the subject of countless books, articles, essays, congressional investigations, television programs and motion pictures--but even so it remains an enigma to many, deliberately shrouded in mystery on the basis of privacy or national security concerns. This encyclopedia has entries on a broad range of topics related to the FBI, including biographical sketches of directors, agents, attorneys general, notorious fugitives, and people (well known and unknown) targeted by the FBI; events, cases and investigations such as ILLWIND, ABSCAM and Amerasia; FBI terminology and programs such as COINTELPRO and VICAP; organizations marked for disruption including the KGB and the Ku Klux Klan; and various general topics such as psychological profiling, fingerprinting and electronic surveillance. It begins with a brief overview of the FBI's origins and history.

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## **The FBI Encyclopedia** By Michael Newton **Bibliography**

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## Editorial Review

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Newton, author of two other books on the FBI, asserts that "nearly everything you know about the FBI is wrong" and the organization is "deliberately shrouded in mystery." Newton's purpose is to eliminate some of the secrecy that surrounds the FBI while acknowledging that it is impossible to disclose a complete picture of an organization whose records are in large part unavailable to the public.

Coverage begins in 1908, the year of the bureau's creation, and ends in early 2003. Entries are arranged alphabetically and range from a single paragraph to several pages. Access to articles is aided by cross-references directly in the text and a detailed index. Entries fall under broad categories: biographical sketches (*Hoover, John Edgar*); organizational practices (*Wiretapping*); programs ("*COINTELPRO*"); notable cases (*Watergate scandal*); federal legislation authorizing investigations (*Mann Act*); histories of other relevant organizations (*KGB*); and miscellaneous entries (*Prohibition*). The text is supplemented by appendixes, including a chronology that is current as of November 2002 but omits some significant events, such as the Oklahoma City bombing. Finally, the book contains an extensive bibliography of both scholarly and popular sources.

The work successfully reveals the sinister side of the FBI, such as its surveillance of individuals and groups, questionable information-gathering practices, and J. Edgar Hoover's inaction with respect to civil rights investigations. Articles are generally well written in a journalistic style; however, information is not always presented in a neutral tone. Furthermore, the text contains typographical errors, which detracts from the quality of the writing.

*The FBI Encyclopedia* covers material similar to *The FBI: A Comprehensive Reference Guide* (Oryx, 1999), though Newton's offering is neither as scholarly nor as objective. It is useful as an overview that is accessible to a general audience. Moreover, it contains articles on topics of current interest, such as the USA Patriot Act, the anthrax cases of 2001, and spy Robert Hanssen. This work is suitable for public libraries. *RBB Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved*

### Review

"informative and interesting...this excellent reference tool will have great appeal to a wide audience...highly recommended"--*Library Journal*; "unique...recommended"--*Choice*.

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### About the Author

Michael Newton is the author of 254 books with 10 more awaiting release through 2012. He lives in Nashville, Indiana.

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