

= Encyclopedia of the Central Intelligence Agency =

Encyclopedia of the Central Intelligence Agency is a 2003 book by W. Thomas Smith , Jr . It is an encyclopedic work on the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) , the only independent agency of the United States federal government that is tasked with intelligence @-@ gathering . The work chronicles the history of the agency from its founding in 1947 through the War on Terror , which began after September 11 , 2001 . The encyclopedia 's chronology ends in 2003 . It provides approximately 550 entries across 282 pages on topics including notable contributors , intelligence operations , historical events , and depictions of the CIA in fictional media .

The encyclopedia was praised by the School Library Journal for its reference value and comprehensiveness . Booklist recommended the encyclopedia be placed in academic , public , and high school libraries as a helpful resource . Publishers Weekly was critical of the author 's objectivity , suggesting that the encyclopedia was biased in favor of the agency 's intelligence operations , but concluded that the book was still a useful reference tool .

= = Background = =

Encyclopedia of the Central Intelligence Agency is written by W. Thomas Smith , Jr . Prior to authoring the work , he served in the United States Marine Corps as a paratrooper and leader within the infantry . Smith worked as a journalist for the Star @-@ Reporter in Columbia , South Carolina , and subsequently taught journalism at the University of South Carolina .

Smith gave an interview to the Columbia newspaper The State about his book and his interest in researching the history of the Central Intelligence Agency . He explained that he was long interested in researching military history , and was initially asked by the American Society of Journalists and Authors to put together a monograph on the 1944 Invasion of Normandy by Western Allied forces during Operation Overlord in World War II . His literary representative later telephoned him to ask if he would instead be interested in writing an encyclopedia detailing the history of the CIA . Smith agreed as he felt the CIA was highly relevant to military history .

= = Publication history = =

Encyclopedia of the Central Intelligence Agency was first published in 2003 by Facts on File . It was released in both hardcover and paperback formats . An eBook edition was published the same year . Additionally an eBook was also published in 2003 in Great Britain .

= = Contents summary = =

In the Encyclopedia of the Central Intelligence Agency , Smith discusses and defines key concepts relating to intelligence gathering , including " clandestine mentality " , a colloquial term used to characterize what may be called a more paranoid perspective of the world . The book is 282 pages in length , and contains more than 500 separate entries on topics such as the roles played by key contributors to the agency , notable historical events , major intelligence operations , and depictions of the organization in fictional media . The work cites approximately 300 reference sources .

Starting with the founding of the CIA in 1947 as the successor to the Office of Strategic Services , the author provides the reader with a chronological overview of the agency 's history . He documents the CIA 's involvement in the 1953 Iranian coup d'état , and provides a biographical assessment of the motivations of Mohammad Mosaddegh , the Iranian leader deposed in the coup . In briefly describing individuals , organizations and events related to the history of the CIA , Smith notes Russian intelligence Colonel Vilyam Genrikhovich Fisher (Rudolf Ivanovich Abel) , and discusses the U.S. intelligence operation that used a front company called Zenith Technical Enterprises . The chronological presentation of CIA history is used to provide additional background with regard to the agency 's involvement with the War on Terror . The encyclopedia 's chronology ends in March 2003 .

= = Reception = =

In a review by School Library Journal , Smith 's encyclopedia was praised for its reference value . The review called the encyclopedia comprehensive , and noted it contained helpful appendices including a glossary , lists of executive staff members of the CIA , and a large bibliography and index . Booklist commented in its review that the encyclopedia was a good resource to have in libraries at the academic , public , and high school levels . Publishers Weekly reviewed the encyclopedia and criticized Smith 's objectivity , suggesting that he took an unabashedly positive view of the agency 's role and focused exclusively on its operational successes . Despite the issue with bias , the review concluded that the book was still a useful reference work .