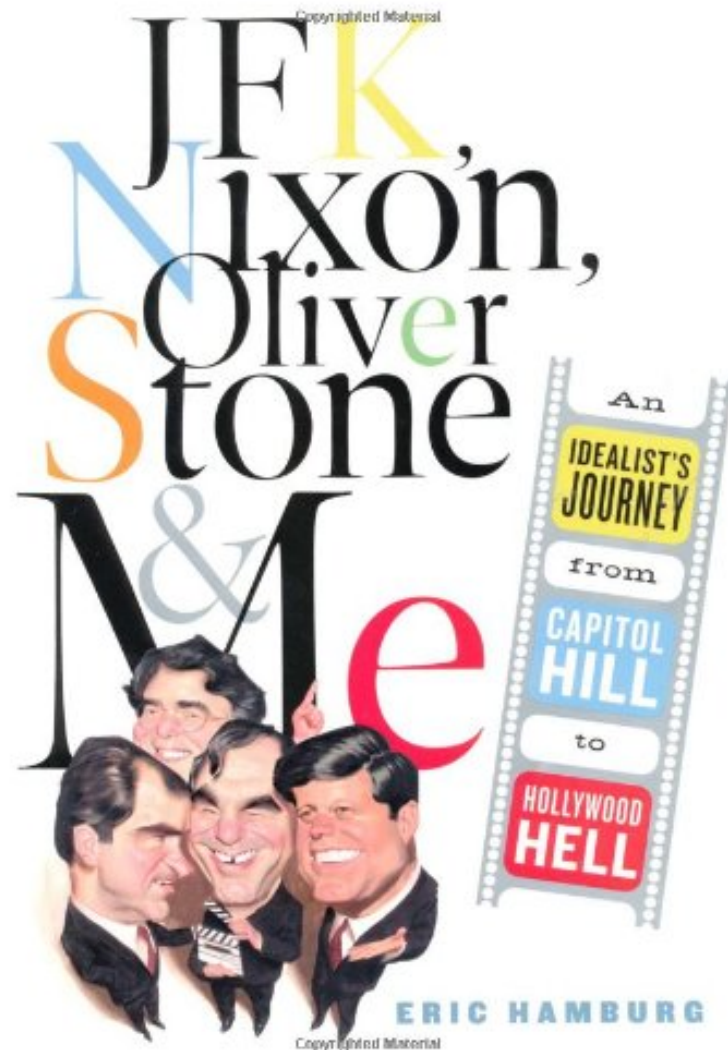


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JFK, Nixon, Oliver Stone and Me: An Idealist's Journey from Capitol Hill to Hollywood Hell

Eric Hamburg

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Eric Hamburg : JFK, Nixon, Oliver Stone and Me: An Idealist's Journey from Capitol Hill to Hollywood Hell before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised JFK, Nixon, Oliver Stone and Me: An Idealist's Journey from Capitol Hill to Hollywood Hell:

4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Tales from the Oliver ZoneBy A CustomerI've read a couple of books now about Oliver Stone and his problems and I almost feel sorry for him (the other book I read was Jane

Hamsher's *KILLER INSTINCT*, which demystifies both Stone and Quentin Tarantino). It kind of reminds me of Linda Lovelace apologizing to Sammy Davis jr. in her book *ORDEAL*: Hollywood is filled with plenty of scumbags, Sammy just happened to be the one who did all the nasty stuff with her. It's just that this book was extremely entertaining and interesting. A quick read filled with some funny scenes of Hollywood absurdity... 12 of 13 people found the following review helpful. Interesting story, but reads like a tabloid. By Ken Kardash I bought this book at an inventory clearance, which proved an accurate guide to my expectations. It is the story of a lawyer working as a congressional aide who parlayed his interest in the JFK assassination to become a production assistant to Oliver Stone. The title refers to films of the latter, not JFK and Nixon themselves. The idea of an intelligent, idealistic outsider learning firsthand about the machinations of Hollywood is certainly intriguing, and this is what the subtitle suggests the theme will be. However, this theme becomes subverted to two parallel, personal agendas of the author: 1. a forum for his own speculations about the "truth" regarding the JFK assassination and Watergate, and 2. a catharsis for the estrangement he suffered from Stone in the wake of their collaboration. Towards the end, it reads like an open letter to Stone, pleading for his rehabilitation from a self-destructive lifestyle. For those who like conspiracy theories and juicy gossip about celebrities, this will be a bonus. Personally, I was hoping to learn more about the process by which Oliver Stone gets his movies made, and less about the shortcomings of the man without whom, I think it is fair to say, there would be no market for this book. At one point, Hamburg writes that he came to Hollywood to "learn how to make political films, not do business deals." Perhaps this was meant to be ironic, since after finishing reading his story, it appears to me that film-making is all about business deals. In fact, it would have been interesting to learn how Oliver Stone arranges the funding to realize his creative vision (and hedonistic lifestyle). Here, there are only a few dismissive comments about seedy-sounding "money men". One of the useful aspects of this book is its overview of contemporary published opinion on the JFK assassination and Watergate. A bibliography listing the works mentioned throughout the text would have been helpful. 5 of 7 people found the following review helpful. A riveting inside look at Hollywood and Washington! By A Customer This book is a riveting, entertaining and insightful look into the parallel universes of Washington and Hollywood, and the love/hate relationship that exists between them. Eric Hamburg has moved between both worlds and seen them from the inside in a way that few have. Hamburg, who started as a speechwriter for current Presidential candidate John Kerry in the Senate, provides fascinating glimpses into the power struggles that go on in Washington and especially on Capitol Hill. He also provides an up close look at the man who may be our next President. Hamburg also presents a fair and balanced portrait of Oliver Stone as filmmaker and human being, calling him both a genius and a madman at times. The author obviously knows his way around the JFK assassination as well as Watergate, and delves deeply into both. He presents new information about the murder of JFK which he researched in Cuba on Stone's behalf. He presents the most plausible scenario yet of what really happened in Dallas. For this alone, the book is worth buying. For Hollywood fans, the book also gives an inside look at the making of the movie *Nixon*, and at the human side of stars such as Anthony Hopkins and James Woods. It follows the process of making a film from start to finish in a way that few books have. Probably the best comparisons would be Jane Hamsher's *Killer Instinct*, or Julie Salamon's *The Devil's Candy*. The book is candid, funny and well written. If you're interested in movies, politics or both, read it!

A revealing insider's look at one of Hollywood's most prominent, private, and notoriously difficult directors; at the way the film business works; and at the Washington/Hollywood connection. *JFK, Nixon, Oliver Stone and Me* is the funny, thoughtful memoir of an accomplished former Congressional staffer who left D.C. for Hollywood and a job with Oliver Stone, hoping to help make politically engaged films and a difference, and found himself instead in a wildly dysfunctional universe ruled by greed, paranoia, narcissism, competition, alcohol and drugs. After finishing law school, Eric Hamburg became an unusually effective young staffer on Capitol Hill—convincing his boss, Rep. Lee Hamilton of Indiana, to submit a bill that would release the House's closely held files on the John F. Kennedy assassination investigation, one of Hamburg's own pet obsessions. This led to his meeting Oliver Stone and soon—much to his own surprise—Hamburg found swimming amongst the sneakiest of Hollywood sharks. Hamburg describes his fascinating experiences working on the films *Nixon* and *Any Given Sunday* while navigating the arcane politics of Stone's studio, Ixtlan. Pursuing film projects (and Kennedy assassination leads), he also muses on the ways and means of the movie biz; on the strange symbiotic Washington/Hollywood relationship; on the meaning of success and the price of power. His story is a contemporary *Mr. Smith Goes to Hollywood*, told by a narrator of wit, intelligence, and a singular set of experiences.

About the Author Eric Hamburg originated and co-produced the films *Nixon* and *Any Given Sunday* with Oliver Stone. He is a graduate of UC Santa Cruz and the University of San Francisco School of Law, and is a visiting fellow at UCLA in the Burkle Center for International Relations. He is producing a mini-series for television on the Pentagon Papers case with John Dean and Alec Baldwin. He lives in Los Angeles.