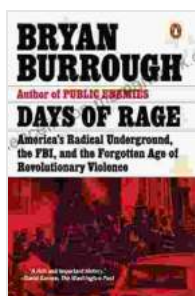


America's Radical Underground: The FBI and the Forgotten Age of Revolutionaries

In the tumultuous years of the 1960s and 1970s, America's political and social landscape was transformed by a groundswell of radical activism. Fueled by a potent mix of anti-war sentiment, civil rights struggles, and a growing disillusionment with the establishment, a new generation of young revolutionaries emerged, determined to challenge the status quo and overthrow the government.

At the vanguard of this radical movement were a constellation of groups and individuals who adopted a militant approach to revolution. Among them were the Black Panthers, a Black nationalist organization known for its armed self-defense patrols; the Weather Underground, a white radical group that carried out a series of bombings; and the Symbionese Liberation Army, a short-lived but notorious group responsible for kidnapping Patty Hearst. These groups shared a common goal of dismantling the existing social order and creating a new society based on their own radical ideologies.



Days of Rage: America's Radical Underground, the FBI, and the Forgotten Age of Revolutionary Violence

by Bryan Burrough

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

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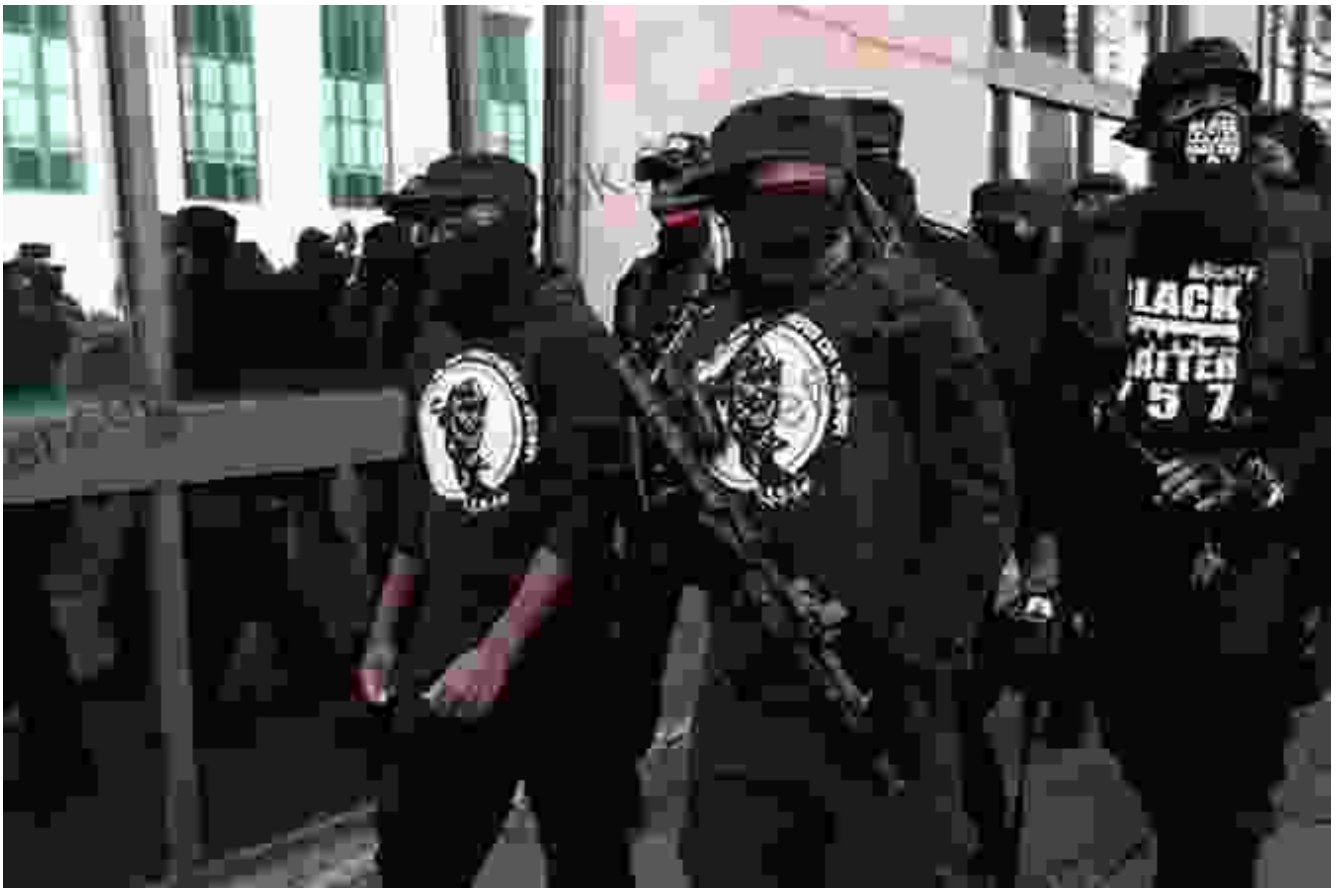
As the radical underground gained traction, the FBI, tasked with upholding the law and protecting national security, found itself drawn into the fray. Under the leadership of J. Edgar Hoover, the FBI launched a covert counterintelligence program known as COINTELPRO, designed to infiltrate and disrupt radical organizations. COINTELPRO agents posed as members of radical groups, spread disinformation to sow discord, and even resorted to illegal tactics such as wiretapping and assassination attempts.

The FBI's efforts to crush the radical underground were both effective and controversial. COINTELPRO's tactics often violated civil liberties and led to the imprisonment of innocent individuals. Yet, there is no doubt that the FBI's surveillance and infiltration played a significant role in disrupting the

plans of revolutionary groups and preventing them from carrying out large-scale acts of violence.

The story of America's radical underground and the FBI's response to it is a complex and multifaceted one. It is a tale of idealism, violence, and the limits of dissent in a free society. The forgotten age of revolutionaries left an enduring legacy on American history, and the FBI's role in shaping that legacy continues to be debated today.

The Black Panthers: Armed Resistance and Black Power



Founded in 1966 by Huey Newton and Bobby Seale, the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense was a militant Black nationalist organization that advocated for armed self-defense against police brutality. The Panthers

established armed patrols in Black neighborhoods, challenging police harassment and demanding community control. The group's charismatic leaders and radical rhetoric quickly drew a large following, making the Black Panthers one of the most visible and influential organizations of the radical underground.

The FBI viewed the Black Panthers as a major threat to national security and targeted them with COINTELPRO's full force. FBI agents infiltrated the Panthers, spread rumors to create division within the group, and even went so far as to attempt to assassinate Newton. The FBI's efforts were ultimately successful in weakening the Black Panthers and driving them underground.

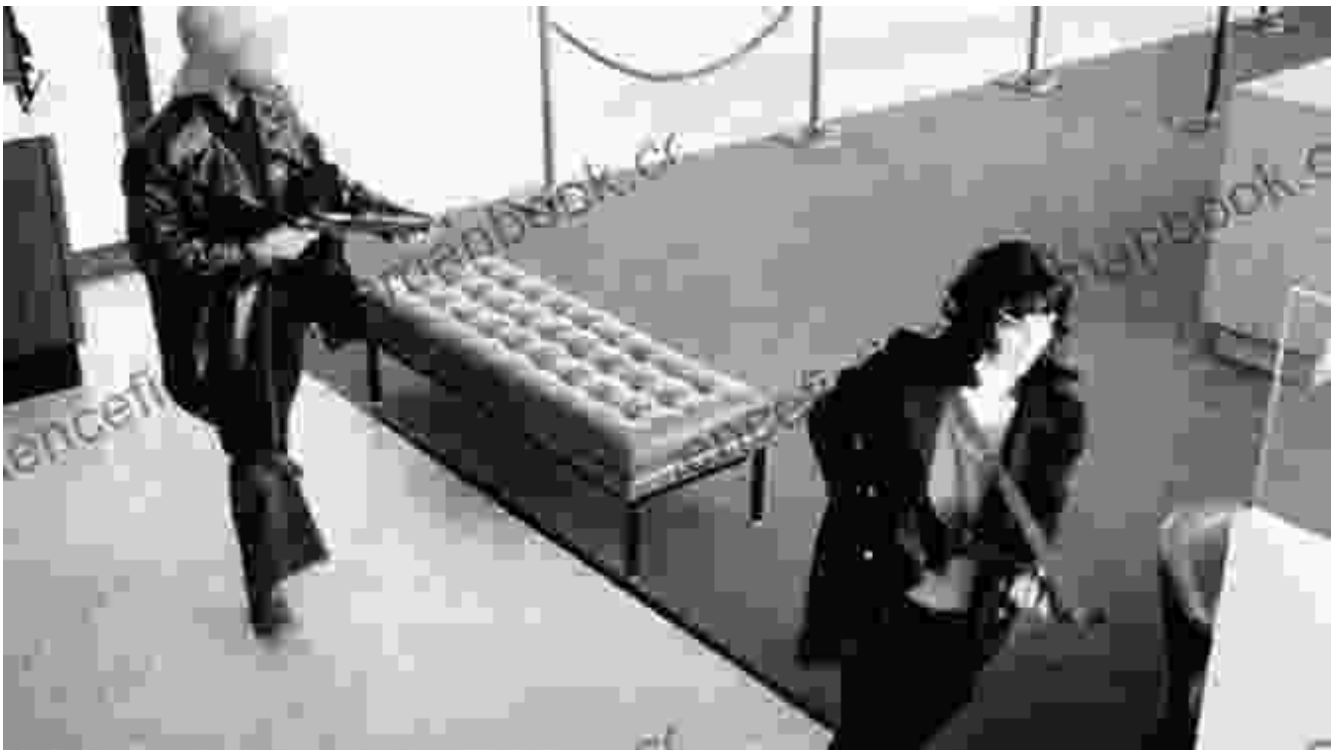
The Weather Underground: Bombings and Revolution



The Weather Underground, originally known as the Weatherman, was a white radical group that emerged from the anti-war movement in the late 1960s. The group's ideology was based on the belief that the United States was an imperialist power waging an unjust war in Vietnam. The Weather Underground adopted a strategy of violent resistance, carrying out a series of bombings of government buildings and other symbols of American authority.

The FBI's response to the Weather Underground was swift and decisive. COINTELPRO agents infiltrated the group and provided information that led to the arrest of several of its leaders. The Weather Underground eventually dwindled in size and influence, but its legacy as one of the most prominent radical groups of the era remains.

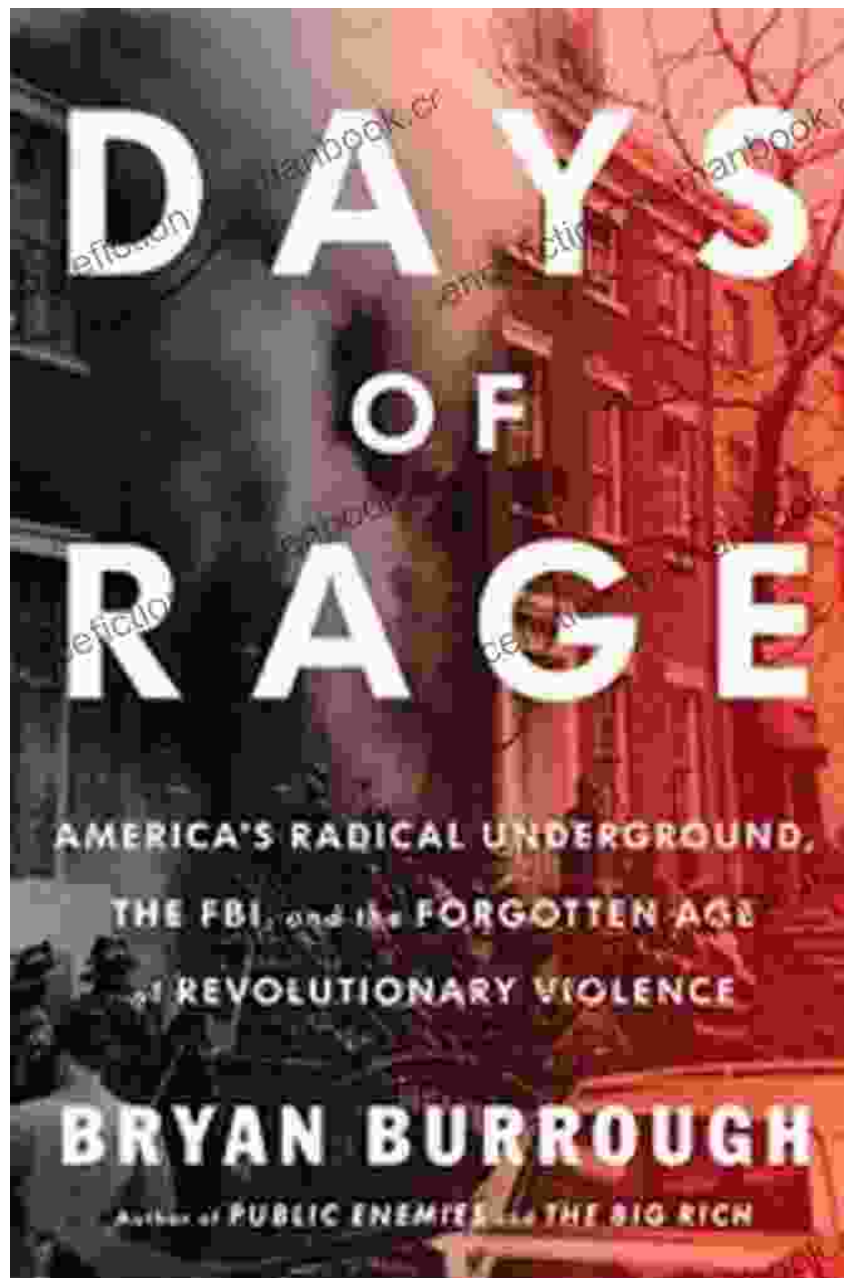
The Symbionese Liberation Army: Kidnapping and Chaos



The Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA) was a short-lived but notorious radical group responsible for a series of high-profile crimes, including the kidnapping of Patty Hearst, the granddaughter of newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst. The SLA's revolutionary ideology was a bizarre mix of Marxism, Maoism, and Black Power. The group demanded the release of imprisoned SLA members in exchange for Hearst's safe return, and the ensuing media circus captivated the nation.

The FBI's handling of the SLA case was criticized for its heavy-handed tactics. In a botched rescue attempt, six SLA members, including Hearst's fiancé, were killed in a shootout with police. Hearst herself was eventually rescued, but her experience with the SLA had a profound and lasting impact on her life.

COINTELPRO: The FBI's Secret War



COINTELPRO, short for Counter Intelligence Program, was the FBI's covert counterintelligence program designed to disrupt and neutralize radical organizations. Under the direction of J. Edgar Hoover, COINTELPRO agents infiltrated radical groups, spread disinformation, and even resorted to illegal tactics such as wiretapping and assassination attempts.

COINTELPRO's operations were often illegal and violated the civil liberties of innocent individuals. The program targeted a wide range of organizations, including the Black Panthers, the Weather Underground, and the American Indian Movement. COINTELPRO's activities were eventually exposed by investigative journalists, leading to a public outcry and congressional investigations.

The Legacy of the Radical Underground

Notes from the Underground

Radical Music of the Twentieth Century

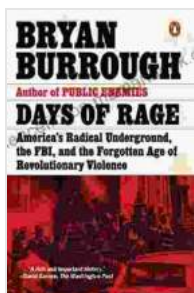


The radical underground of the 1960s and 1970s was a tumultuous and transformative period in American history. The radical groups of this era challenged the status quo, pushed the boundaries of dissent, and left a lasting legacy on American politics and society.

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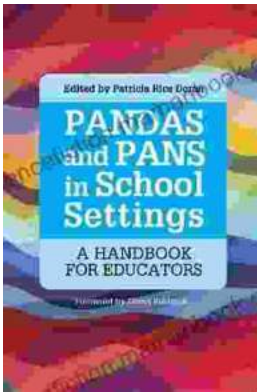
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