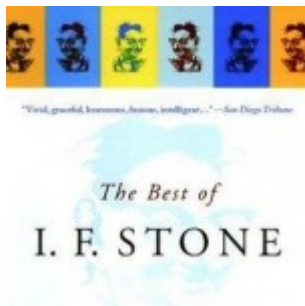


Collection of I.F. Stone columns relevant decades later

By Kathryn Reed

I admit I didn't know much about I.F. Stone until I read a collection of his columns.

"The Best of I.F. Stone" (published in 2006) is a series of his writings with the earliest being 1941 and the latest from 1971. Think about all that happened in the United States and throughout the world during that time span – then you'll realize this is not light reading.



Stone was a serious journalist who didn't have a problem calling a spade a spade. He didn't back away from pointing out the truth even if that wasn't what the politicians were spewing. There was depth to his work that is so often missing today in journalism. Stone wasn't afraid to dig deeper, provide insight. He knew the back-story so he was able to give readers perspective to what he was writing.

Tom Wicker, former associate editor of the *New York Times*, said on the jacket cover, "I.F. Stone was perhaps our most independent journalist. Instead of attending news conferences, he searched out government documents – learning far more than by listening to 'official statements.' We could certainly use more like him today."

This book is full of 63 highly charged political columns that are thought provoking and enlightening.

My friend Bill gave me the book; thinking I might identify

with Stone. (More about Stone may be found online.)

(I'm intrigued by the idea of not having advertisers and only paid subscribers. That's something to think about.)

But it's Stone's writings that captured me. It was like a trip through history that happened almost entirely before I was born. And while I knew of many of the bigger stories, it was the intricate details that were never written in any history book I had to read.

From going to the Mideast to see for himself what was happening with the Israelis and Palestinians, to criticizing Bobby Kennedy for not being stronger against Vietnam as he ran for president, to the atrocities of Joseph McCarthy – Stone was not afraid to tackle any subject or person.

This isn't easy reading. At times it's not even fun. But every page was educational. It either made me remember something long forgotten or taught me something I never knew.

Besides being disturbed to learn things I think I should have known by now, what was more alarming is how some things have not changed. It makes we wonder if we are progressing and evolving as a people.