

Diana Johnstone's "Circle in the Darkness - Memoir of a World Watcher"

A Book Review

By [Jim Miles](#)

Theme: [History](#)

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Diana Johnstone has done a masterful job of writing her autobiography, Circle in the Darkness, that provides many details of her life, her early influences, and the various stages of her career throughout the second half of the Twentieth Century and the first part of Twenty-first. It is a wild ride through various aspects of society, concentrating on the historical events of her era.

Much of what she writes is not news to those who do follow alternative news sites, but what is added is a strong personal perspective based on – not surprisingly – facts and truth, both from her own experiences in regions of concern and a wide arrange of conversations with both people of significant influence and those with no influence but feeling the impact of developments in their country. The details Johnstone adds are a strong and valuable retort to mainstream media disinformation that has “moved farther and farther away from informing the public and nearer and nearer to instructing them in what they should think.”

Themes



One of three themes that impressed me and are developed throughout the book, the media takes a large hit. While discussing NATO crimes of the Balkan, she writes, “The journalist was no longer asked to dig for new information and provide fresh analysis, but to contribute to the “common narrative”” as originated by NATO and the media. When discussing mass media and the Military Industrial Complex she writes, “those private interests coincide quite closely with those of the U.S. government, since the same economic powers are behind both.” Relying on “open sources and thoughtful analysis of known facts” rather than “spook revelations” her work is significantly more accurate than the mainstream.

NATO and European unity covers another large thematic area. She discusses how NATO and the European Union actively promote the neoliberal order as conditioned by the U.S. and other global hegemonic financial powers against the best interests of their own people

and against the best interests of many sovereign states in the world.

When discussing the idea of Joint Criminal Enterprise as argued by the U.S. in relation to Serbia (essentially all Serbs are guilty of war crimes) she reverses the argument with clear examples, and summarizes, "U.S. strategy basically boils down to the implicit or explicit threat to wipe out the whole nation it is attacking....This war is not the result of a clever plan by some ragtag Balkan clan leaders. This war was deliberately planned and carried out by the real Joint Criminal Enterprise: NATO."

The third theme was her development of ideas concerning the development of the "left". It has changed from operating with the best interests of the people in mind - anti-war, support for workers and societal infrastructures - to becoming a supporter of war and more interested in the distractions of identity politics, "The Left has evolved from a program to an attitude." Certainly there is merit in people's identity but it comes at the cost of no longer working against class structures that keep workers down, and keep the rich getting richer. Johnstone follows the developments in France to its present day neoliberal U.S. supporting government of Macron; and follows the developments in Sweden as it turned away from the left of Olaf Palme towards a strong non-NATO supporter of all NATO adventures.

A host of other ideas

Many other ideas are presented in Circle in the Darkness.

Israel is discussed directly only briefly but Zionism's influence is related throughout. While discussing false flags, the USS Liberty attack is mentioned threading into the theme of the media as "the mainstream media have persisted in ignoring what happened, even as evidence mounted that General Moshe Dayan personally ordered the attack."

The relationship between the dropping of the gold standard and the introduction of the petrodollar is touched upon, a topic that is rare if ever in mainstream journalism. Again just touching on it she discusses the "debt trap" on a personal level when two local Minnesota farmers commit suicide after being enticed to overextend themselves into debt.

In general however, this is Diana Johnstone's story of the many people she meets and interviews, or argues with, debates with, or simply discusses the many issues of her career spent mostly within European journalism. That overlapped with her employment by the German Green party and how she watched it change from an anti-war truly green party, to a pro-war neoliberal supporter of capitalism.

She continues to write as an independent journalist today, with her work published globally in several alternate new sites. While I am familiar with the same history background as Ms Johnstone, I do not have the expertise of overseas experience, the philosophical background, and the wide range of contacts she has had available throughout her career.

Circle in the Darkness covers an amazing and productive lifetime and provides valuable insights and factual details in support of her views and reporting.

It is entertaining - not in the distractive sense but for the quality of the writing and her combination of anecdotal stories combined with researched ideas. Thus it is a very strong informative work on our modern history, an important read to more clearly understand the machinations of the modern political-military scene.

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Jim Miles is a frequent contributor to Global Research.

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