

The Man Who Saved Britain: A Personal Journey into the Disturbing World of James Bond

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Bond. James Bond. The ultimate British hero--suave, stoic, gadget-driven--he was more than anything the necessary invention of a traumatized country whose self-image as a great power had just been shattered by the Second World War. Bond's creator, Ian Fleming, was an upper-class wastrel who had found purpose and excitement in the war, and to whom, like so many others, its end was a terrible disappointment--the elation of survival stifled by the reality of the new British impotence. In 1952 Fleming set out to repair this damage. By inventing the magical, parallel world of secret British greatness and glamour, he fabricated an icon that has endured long past its maker's death. To grow up in England in the 1970s was to grow up with James Bond, and *The Man Who Saved Britain* is first of all the story of the author's relationship with the "national religion." Simon Winder lovingly and ruefully re-creates the nadirs and humiliations of fandom while illuminating what Bond's evolution--from books to film, from his roots in the 1940s to his "managed decline" today--says about the conservative movement, sex, the monarchy, food, attitudes toward America, class, and everything in between. *The Man Who Saved Britain* is an insightful and, above all, entertaining exploration of postwar Britain through the palliative influence of one of its most legendary icons, the larger-than-life Agent 007.