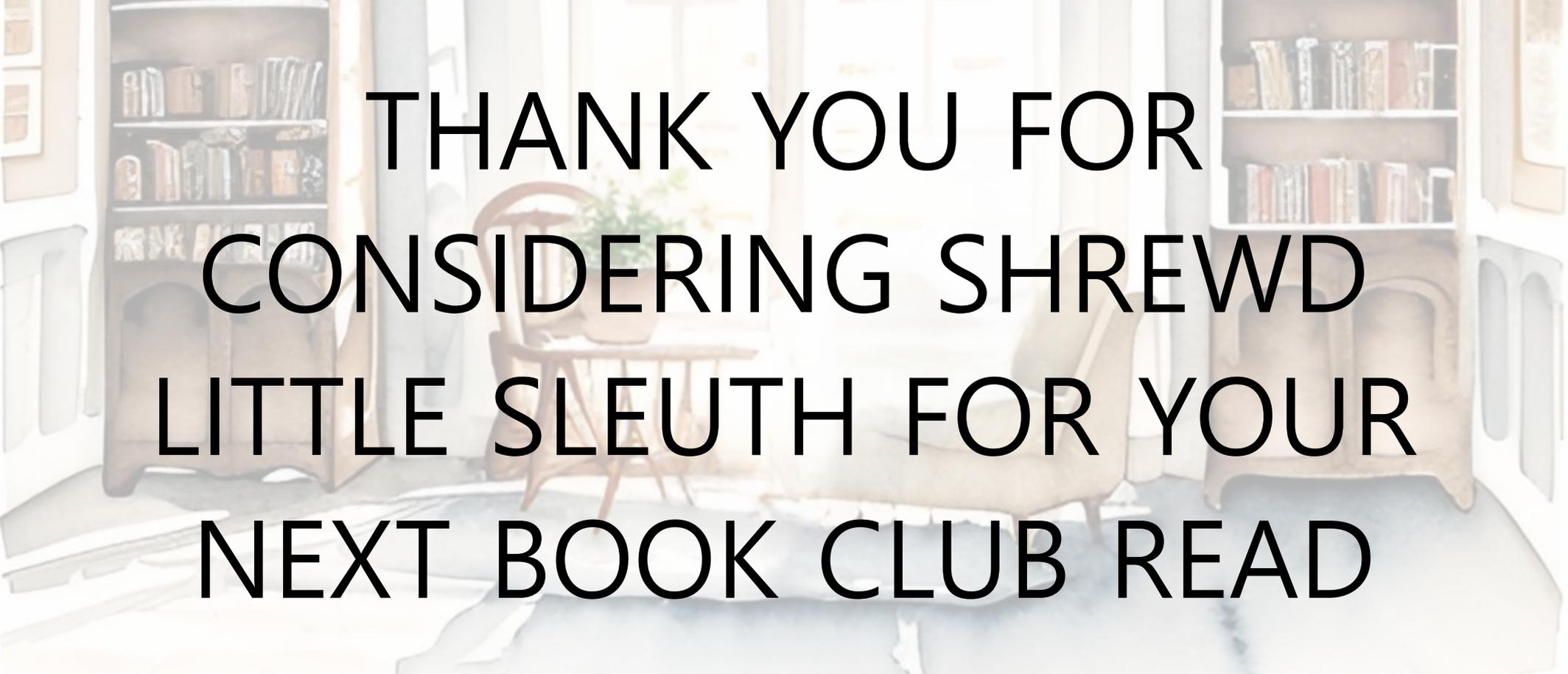


BOOK CLUB RESOURCE GUIDE

Narrative NonFiction



THANK YOU FOR
CONSIDERING SHREWD
LITTLE SLEUTH FOR YOUR
NEXT BOOK CLUB READ

BOOK CLUB
RESOURCE GUIDE

SCOTT LECKIE

Shrewd Little Sleuth is a masterclass in personal excavation. Scott Leckie's prose is both intimate and razor-sharp, peeling back layers of family myth to reveal a man entangled in the machinery of American power. The book pulses with noir energy—cigarette smoke, whispered secrets, and the ever-present shadow of Hoover's surveillance state. But beneath the cloak-and-dagger drama lies a tender portrait of a grandson reaching across time to understand the man who shaped him. A gripping memoir of legacy, lies, and the ghosts that linger in family archives. Dive into the intrigue. Discover the man behind the myth. And ask yourself: how well do you really know your bloodline?

WORD COUNT: 55,599

PAGE COUNT: 210

KEY WORDS: Arthur Bernard Leckie | J. Edgar Hoover Secrets | Noir Nonfiction

DEMOGRAPHICS: Readers aged 35+, especially those drawn to historical nonfiction, Cold War intrigue, and memoirs with emotional depth

COMP BOOKS: *The Secret Life of J. Edgar Hoover* | *The Night Guest* | *A Gentleman's Murder* | *The Coldest Case*

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Atmosphere & Decor

Transform your space into a moody 1950s lounge with hints of FBI surveillance and Hollywood glam

- **Lighting:** Dim amber bulbs, flickering candles, and vintage desk lamps
- **Backdrop:** Black-and-white photo booth with props—fedoras, trench coats, redacted files, and typewriters
- **Table Decor:** Scattered classified folders, old postcards, and faux FBI badges
- **Ambient Smoke:** Use dry ice or incense to evoke a smoky noir vibe (optional for ventilation)

Dress Code: Closeted Glam & G-Man Chic

Encourage guests to dress in character

- **Men:** Suits, suspenders, trench coats, slicked-back hair
- **Women:** Vintage curls, pearls, cocktail dresses, dramatic eyeliner
- **Wildcard:** Marilyn Monroe tribute, Hoover impersonator, or Redacted Identity (black shades, mystery persona)

PARTY THEME: Secrets & Cigarettes

Signature Drink Station

Feature The Hoover Hangover as the centerpiece cocktail, with a DIY garnish bar

[FIND SIGNATURE DRINK LATER IN THIS GUIDE]

- Orange twists, maraschino cherries, smoked cinnamon sticks
- Optional mocktail version: black tea, orange bitters, splash of cherry juice

Themed Menu

[FIND MENU LATER IN THIS GUIDE]

Book Discussion Ritual

After dinner, gather in a circle. Dim the lights. Read aloud a passage from the book—perhaps the moment ABL danced before Marilyn's death. Let it linger. Then begin the discussion with the question: What secrets do we inherit—and which ones do we choose to uncover?

PARTY THEME: Secrets & Cigarettes

Activities & Games

Redacted Truths

Each guest writes a secret (real or fictional) on a slip of paper. Shuffle and read aloud anonymously. Guess who wrote what.

Sleuth Bingo

Create bingo cards with quotes, character traits, and historical references from the book. First to sleuth five wins a prize.

Who Killed ABL?

Speculative roundtable: guests pitch theories based on clues from the book. Bonus points for dramatic flair and historical accuracy.

Memory Lane

Set up a Legacy Wall where guests post photos or notes about their own mysterious ancestors or family secrets.

PARTY THEME: Secrets & Cigarettes

Starter: The Hoover Deviled Eggs

- Classic with a twist—smoked paprika, Dijon mustard, and a hint of bourbon in the yolk mix. Serve chilled with a dusting of cayenne for intrigue.

Main Course: G-Man's Glaze Meatloaf

- A rich, bourbon-glazed meatloaf with caramelized onions and cracked pepper. Serve with a side of FBI-style secrecy: a hidden layer of cheddar in the center.
- **Alternative:** Southern fried chicken with buttermilk brine and cayenne crust—crunchy, bold, and unapologetically indulgent.

Sides

- **Wiretap Greens:** Collard greens slow-cooked with bacon, garlic, and a splash of apple cider vinegar—tangy and soulful.
- **Redacted Potatoes:** Garlic mashed potatoes with black garlic swirl—creamy with a hint of mystery.
- **Hollywood Hush-Hush Rolls:** Soft yeast rolls brushed with herb butter and sprinkled with flaky salt.

THEMED MENU - Secrets & Sides

Dessert: Custard Confidential

- Inspired by ABL's favorite—rich vanilla custard with freshly grated nutmeg, served in vintage ramekins. Add a drizzle of bourbon caramel for extra depth.
- Optional: Lemon chiffon pie with graham cracker crust—light, tart, and nostalgic.

Drink Pairing

- **The Hoover Hangover:** Rye whiskey, sweet vermouth, absinthe rinse, Angostura bitters, orange twist. Smoky, seductive, and perfect for sipping while secrets swirl.
- **The Marilyn Fade:** vodka, elderflower liqueur, lemon juice, topped with champagne and a sugared rim

Bonus: Marilyn's Midnight Macarons

- Black cocoa and raspberry macarons with edible gold dust—glamorous, bittersweet, and perfect for late-night sleuthing.

THEMED MENU - Secrets & Sides



A smoky, seductive cocktail with secrets in every sip.

Ingredients:

- 2 oz rye whiskey
- ½ oz sweet vermouth
- ¼ oz absinthe rinse
- Dash of Angostura bitters
- Orange peel twist

Instructions:

- Rinse glass with absinthe, discard excess.
- Stir whiskey, vermouth, and bitters over ice.
- Strain into chilled coupe.
- Garnish with orange twist.

Sip slowly. Secrets may surface.

SIGNATURE DRINK - The Hoover Hangover

Harlem Nocturne by Earle Hagen
Cry Me a River by Julie London
Nature Boy by Nat King Cole
Strange Fruit by Billie Holiday
The Sound of Silence by Simon & Garfunkel
Everybody Knows by Leonard Cohen
Mad World by Gary Jules
Wicked Game by Chris Isaak
Back to Black by Amy Winehouse
The Great Pretender by The Platters
Boulevard of Broken Dreams by Tony Bennett
I Put a Spell on You by Nina Simone
Ghosts by Laura Marling
The Killing Moon by Echo & the Bunnymen
Exit Music (For a Film) by Radiohead



SPOTIFY MUSIC RECOMMENDATIONS

A watercolor illustration of a cozy living room. In the center, a wooden chair with a curved back sits on a light-colored rug. To the left and right are tall wooden bookshelves filled with books. A small table with a plant on it is visible behind the chair. The background features a window with light streaming in, creating a warm atmosphere. The text is overlaid on this scene.

THIS GUIDE CONTAINS POSSIBLE
SPOILERS FOR THIS BOOK IN
THE DISCUSSION SECTION.

WARNING

- How does Scott Leckie balance fact and fiction in reconstructing ABL's life?
- What role does memory play in shaping historical truth?
- How does the book explore masculinity and identity across generations?
- What do you make of the Hoover-Leckie relationship?
- How does the author reconcile his human rights work with his grandfather's legacy?
- What does the book suggest about secrecy within families?
- How does the narrative style reflect noir traditions?
- What ethical dilemmas arise in telling someone else's story?
- How does the book challenge the reader's perception of patriotism?
- What unanswered questions linger after the final chapter?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



Scott Leckie ([scottleckie.com.au](https://www.scottleckie.com.au)) is a global citizen who's lived in over a dozen countries. After studying at the University of Oregon, he left the U.S. in the mid-1980s and has since worked across Europe, Asia, the Pacific, and Australia.

He's led human rights efforts in 80+ countries, protecting hundreds of thousands from forced evictions and helping displaced people reclaim their homes. For two decades, he's focused on climate-related displacement.

Scott founded three international NGOs, including Displacement Solutions and Oneness World Foundation. He also directs the OHOF initiative in Bangladesh, which has built 18 free homes for climate-displaced families.

He's taught at top universities, created the first law school course on climate displacement, and authored 28 books and 300+ academic works. His creative writing includes two novels in the Pacifica Series and biographies of his grandfather and uncle

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