William Oliver Stone (born September 15, 1946) is an American film director, screenwriter, and producer. Stone came to public prominence between the mid-1980s and the early 1990s for writing and directing a series of films about the Vietnam War, in which he had participated as an infantry soldier. Many of Stone's films primarily focus on controversial American political issues during the late 20th century, and as such that they were considered contentious at the times of their releases.

Stone's films often combine different camera and film formats within a single scene as evidenced in JFK, Natural Born Killers, and Nixon. Stone has received three Academy Awards for his work on the films Midnight Express, Platoon, and Born on the Fourth of July. He was presented with the Extraordinary Contribution to Filmmaking Award at the 2007 Austin Film Festival.

## Early life
Stone was born in New York City, the son of Jacqueline (née Goddet) and Louis Stone (born Louis Silverstein), a stockbroker. He grew up in Manhattan and Stamford, Connecticut. His parents met during World War II when his father was fighting as a part of the allied troops in France. His father was a non-practicing Jew, and his French-born mother was a non-practicing Roman Catholic. Stone was raised in the Episcopal Church and now practices Buddhism.

Stone attended Trinity School in New York City before his parents sent him away to The Hill School, a college-preparatory school in Pottstown, Pennsylvania. His parents were divorced abruptly while he was away at school (1962) and this, because he was an only child, marked him deeply. Stone's mother was often absent and his father made a big impact on his life; father-son relationships were to feature heavily in Stone's films.

He often spent parts of his summer vacations with his maternal grandparents in France, both in Paris and La Ferté-sous-Jouarre in Seine-et-Marne. Stone also worked at 17 in the Paris mercantile exchange in sugar and cocoa — a job that

Stone was admitted into *Yale University*, but left in June 1965 at age 18[4][10] to teach high school students English for six months in Saigon at the Free Pacific Institute in *South Vietnam*. Afterwards, he worked as a wiper on a *United States Merchant Marine* ship in 1966, traveling to Oregon. He returned to Yale, where he dropped out a second time (in part due to working on an autobiographical novel *A Child's Night Dream*, published 1997 by *St. Martin's Press*).[citation needed]

**U.S. Army**

In April 1967, Stone enlisted in the *United States Army* and requested combat duty in *Vietnam*. From September 16, 1967 to April 1968, he served with 2nd Platoon, B Company, 3rd Battalion, 25th Infantry Division in Vietnam where he was wounded two times,[11] and with the First Cavalry Division participating in long range patrols before being transferred again to a motorized infantry unit of the division in Vietnam driving army vehicles until November 1968.[12] For his service, his military awards include the Bronze Star with "V" Device for heroism, the Purple Heart with Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster to denote two awards, the Air Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal, the Vietnam Campaign Medal and the Combat Infantryman Badge.

**Writing and directing career**

**1970s**

Stone graduated from *New York University* with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in film in 1971, where his teachers included director Martin Scorsese[13] (the same year, he had a small acting role in comedy *The Battle of Love's Return*).[14] Stone made a short, well received 12-minute film *Last Year in Viet Nam*. He worked as a taxi driver, film production assistant, messenger, and salesman before making his mark in film as a scriptwriter in the late '70s, in the period between his first two films as a director: horror films *Seizure* and *The Hand*.

In 1979, Stone won his first Academy Award, after adapting true-life prison story *Midnight Express* into a hit film for British director Alan Parker (the two would later collaborate on a 1996 movie of stage musical *Evita*). Stone's screenplay for *Midnight Express* was criticized by some for its inaccuracies in portraying the events described in the book and vilifying the Turkish people. The original author, Billy Hayes, around whom the film is set, spoke out against the film, protesting that he had many Turkish friends while in jail,[15] Stone later apologized to Turkey for over-dramatizing the script, while not repudiating the film's stark brutality or the reality of Turkish prisons.[16]

**1980s**

Stone wrote further features, including Brian De Palma's drug lord tale *Scarface* and *Year of the Dragon* with Mickey Rourke, before his career took off as a writer-director in 1986. Like his contemporary Michael Mann, Stone is unique in having written or co-written most of the films he has directed. In 1986, Stone directed two films back to back: the critically acclaimed but commercially unsuccessful *Salvador*, shot largely in Mexico, and his long in development Vietnam project *Platoon*, shot in the Philippines. Stone loosely based *Scarface* on his own addiction to cocaine, which he successfully kicked while writing the screenplay.[17]

*Platoon* brought Stone's name to a much wider audience. It also finally kickstarted a busy directing career, which saw him making nine films over the next decade. Alongside some negative reaction, *Platoon* won many rave reviews (Roger Ebert later called it the ninth best film of the 1980s), large audiences, and Academy Awards for Best Picture and Best Director. In 2007, a film industry vote ranked it at number 83 in an *American Film Institute "AFI's 100 Years... 100 Movies"* poll of the previous century's best American movies. British TV channel *Channel 4* voted *Platoon* as the sixth greatest war film ever made.[18]

*Platoon* was the first of three films Stone has made about the Vietnam War: the others were *Born on the Fourth of July* and *Heaven & Earth*, each dealing with different aspects of the war. *Platoon* is a semi-autobiographical film about Stone's experience in combat; *Born on the Fourth of July* is based on the autobiography of US Marine turned peace campaigner Ron Kovic; *Heaven & Earth* is based on the memoir *When Heaven and Earth Changed Places*, in which Le Ly Hayslip recalls her life as a Vietnamese village girl drastically affected by the war and who finds another life in the USA. Stone also directed the acclaimed *Wall Street*, which won Michael Douglas an Academy Award for Best Actor as a ruthless Wall Street corporate raider, and *Talk Radio*, based on Eric Bogosian's Pulitzer-nominated play.

**1990s**

*The Doors*, released in 1991, received criticism from former Doors member Ray Manzarek (keyboardist–bass player) during a question and answer session at Indiana University East (in Richmond, Indiana), in 1997. During the discussion, Manzarek stated that he sat down with Stone about *The Doors* and Jim Morrison for over 12 hours. Patricia Kennealy Morrison—a well known rock critic and author—was a consultant on the movie, in which she also has a cameo appearance, but she writes in her memoir *Strange Days: My Life With and Without Jim Morrison* (Dutton, 1992) that Stone ignored everything she told him and proceeded with his own version of events. From the moment the movie was released, she blasted it as untruthful and inaccurate.[19] The other surviving former members of the band, John Densmore and
of whom hold negative views of US manipulations in South America). Stone hoped the film would get the Rafael Correa governments in Latin America, featuring seven presidents: In 2009, Stone completed a feature-length documentary,

"Snowden." Based on the life of Edward Snowden, the film sees Stone returning to his controversial roots. Snowden ended filming in May 2015 and is to be released on September 16, 2016.

Stone made three documentaries on Fidel Castro: Comandante (2003), Looking for Fidel, and Castro in Winter (2012). He made Persona Non Grata, a documentary on Israeli-Palestinian relations, interviewing several notable figures of Israel, including Ehud Barak, Benjamin Netanyahu, and Shimon Peres, as well as Yasser Arafat, leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

In 2007, Stone was intended to direct his fourth Vietnam War film Pinkville, about a Pentagon investigation into the My Lai Massacre of Vietnamese civilians. The film was to have been made for United Artists,[24] but the company officially cancelled the production start due to the 2007–2008 Writers Guild of America strike. Shortly after the strike, Stone went on to write and direct the George W. Bush biopic W., that chronicles the controversial President's childhood, relationship with his father, struggles with his alcoholism, rediscovery of his Christian faith, and continues the rest of his life up until the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

2010s


In 2014, Stone announced on his Twitter account that his Martin Luther King project, which he had worked on for three years, was aborted by the producing studios, Warner Bros and DreamWorks, following the objection of King's estate to his screenplay, which deals with King's adultery. Later Stone commented in a BBC interview: "These are not rumours; these are facts and Hoover had the tapes."

In 2015, he was awarded in Sitges Film Festival with the honorific award.

Stone's next upcoming film is Snowden. Based on the life of Edward Snowden, the film sees Stone returning to his controversial roots. Snowden ended filming in May 2015 and is to be released on September 16, 2016.

Documentaries

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In 2009, Stone completed a feature-length documentary, South of the Border about the rise of progressive, leftist governments in Latin America, featuring seven presidents: Hugo Chávez of Venezuela, Bolivia's Evo Morales, Ecuador's Rafael Correa, Cuba's Raúl Castro, the Kirchners of Argentina, Brazil's Lula da Silva, and Paraguay's Fernando Lugo (all of whom hold negative views of US manipulations in South America). Stone hoped the film would get the Western world to
In 2012, the documentary miniseries *Oliver Stone's Untold History of the United States* premiered on *Showtime*, Stone co-wrote, directed, produced, and narrated the series, having worked on it since 2008 with co-writers *American University* historian Peter J. Kuznick and British screenwriter Matt Graham.[30] The 10-part series is supplemented by a 750-page companion book of the same name, also written by Stone and Kuznick, released on October 30, 2012 by Simon & Schuster.[31] Stone described the project as "the most ambitious thing I've ever done. Certainly in documentary form, and perhaps in fiction, feature form."[32] The project received positive reviews from former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev,[33] The Guardian journalist Glenn Greenwald,[34] and reviewers from IndieWire,[35] San Francisco Chronicle,[36] and Newsday.[37] Hudson Institute adjunct fellow historian Ronald Radosh accused the series of "historical revisionism,[38]" while journalist Michael C. Moynihan accused the book of "moral equivalence" and said nothing within the book was "untold" previously.[39] Stone defended the program's accuracy to TV host Tavis Smiley by saying "This has been fact checked by corporate fact checkers, by our own fact checkers, and fact checkers [hired] by Showtime. It's been thoroughly vetted...these are facts, our interpretation may be different than orthodox, but it definitely holds up.[40]

On March 5, 2014, Stone and *teleSUR* premiered the documentary film *Mi Amigo Hugo (My Friend Hugo)*, a documentary about Venezuela's late President, Hugo Chávez, one year after his death. The film is also a "spiritual answer" and a tribute from Stone to Chávez.[41] At the end of 2014 according to a Facebook post Stone said he had been in Moscow to interview (former Ukrainian president) Viktor Yanukovych, for a "new English language documentary produced by Ukrainians". Stone reportedly also wanted to do a film on Russian president Vladimir Putin.[42]

Stone was interviewed in Boris Malagurski's documentary film *The Weight of Chains 2* (2014), which deals with neoliberal reforms in the Balkans.[43]

**Other work**

In 1993, Stone produced a *miniseries* for *ABC Television* called *Wild Palms*. In a cameo, Stone appears on a television in the show discussing how the theories in his film *JFK* had been proven correct (the series took place in a hypothetical future, 2007). That same year, he also spoofed himself in the comedy hit *Dave*, espousing an (accurate) *conspiracy theory* about the film President's replacement by a near-identical double. In 1997, Stone published *A Child's Night Dream* (St. Martin's Press), a semiautobiographical novel first written in 1966–1967.

On September 15, 2008, Stone was named the Artistic Director of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts Asia in Singapore.[44]

**Personal life**

Stone married three times, first to Najwa Sarkis on May 22, 1971. They divorced in 1977. He then married Elizabeth Burkit Cox, an assistant in film production, on June 7, 1981.[45][46] They had two sons, Sean Stone/All (b. 1984) and Michael Jack (b. 1991). Sean appeared in some of his father's films while a child. Oliver and Elizabeth divorced in 1993. Stone is currently married to Sun-jung Jung, and the couple have a daughter, Tara (b. 1995).[47]

Stone is mentioned in Pulitzer Prize-winning American author Lawrence Wright's book *Going Clear: Scientology, Hollywood, and the Prison of Belief* as having been a member of *Scientology* for about a month, saying "It was like going to college and reading Dale Carnegie, something you do to find yourself."[48] In 1997, Stone was one of 34 celebrities to sign an open letter to then-German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, published as a newspaper advertisement in the *International Herald Tribune*, which protested against the treatment of *Scientologists in Germany* and compared it to the "Nazis" oppression of *Jews* in the 1930s.[49] In 2003, Stone was a signatory of the third *Humanist Manifesto*.[50]

In 1999, Stone was arrested and pleaded guilty to alcohol and drug charges. He was ordered into a *rehabilitation program*. He was arrested again on the night of May 27, 2005 in *Los Angeles* for possession of an undisclosed illegal drug.[51][52] He was released the next day on a $15,000 bond. In August 2005, Stone pleaded no contest and was fined $100.[53]

**Political views**
Latin America
Stone has had an interest in Latin America since the 1980s when he made his 1986 film Salvador and later returned to make his documentary South of the Border about the left-leaning movements that had been taking hold in the region.\textsuperscript{[54]}

U.S. Presidential politics
According to Newsmeat and Entertainment Weekly respectively, Stone voted for Barack Obama as U.S. president in both the 2008 and 2012 elections, instead of John McCain and Mitt Romney, the GOP candidates for the presidency.\textsuperscript{[55]} Stone was quoted as saying at the time: "I voted for Obama because...I think he's an intelligent individual I think he responds to difficulties well...very bright guy...far better choice yes."\textsuperscript{[56]} In 2012, Stone endorsed Ron Paul for the Republican nomination for President. He said that Paul is "the only one of anybody who's saying anything intelligent about the future of the world."\textsuperscript{[57]} then later: "I supported Ron Paul in the Republican primary... but his domestic policy... made no sense."\textsuperscript{[58]} In 2016, Stone wrote on the Huffington Post his support for Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders for the 2016 Democratic nomination.\textsuperscript{[59]}

Iran and Holocaust controversy
In an interview with The Times newspaper on July 25, 2010, Stone claimed that America does not know "the full story" on Iran and complained about Jewish "domination" in parts of the U.S. media and foreign policy, notably his view that Adolf Hitler was misunderstood due to Jewish control of the media.\textsuperscript{[59]} When Stone was asked why so much of an emphasis has been placed on the Holocaust, as opposed to the 20-plus million casualties the Soviet Union, for example, suffered in World War II, he stated that in Washington the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) was an overly powerful Jewish lobby within the U.S. The remarks were heavily criticized by Jewish groups, including the Simon Wiesenthal Center, from which Yuri Eidelstein described Stone's remarks as what "could be a sequel to the Protocols of the Elders of Zion",\textsuperscript{[59]} and the American Jewish Committee,\textsuperscript{[60]} as well as from Israel's Diaspora Affairs and Public Diplomacy Minister.\textsuperscript{[59]}

A day later, Stone stated: "In trying to make a broader historical point about the range of atrocities the Germans committed against many people, I made a clumsy association about the Holocaust, for which I am sorry and I regret. Jews obviously do not control media or any other industry. The fact that the Holocaust is still a very important, vivid and current matter today is, in fact, a great credit to the very hard work of a broad coalition of people committed to the remembrance of this atrocity—and it was an atrocity."\textsuperscript{[61]}

Two days later, Stone issued a second apology to the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), which was accepted. "I believe he now understands the issues and where he was wrong, and this puts an end to the matter," said ADL National Director Abraham Foxman.\textsuperscript{[62]}

WikiLeaks
Oliver Stone is a vocal supporter of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange. Stone signed a petition in support of Assange's bid for political asylum in June 2012.\textsuperscript{[63]} In August 2012, he penned a New York Times op-ed with filmmaker Michael Moore on the importance of WikiLeaks and free speech.\textsuperscript{[64]} Stone visited Assange in the Ecuadorian Embassy in April 2013 and commented, "I don't think most people in the US realize how important WikiLeaks is and why Julian's case needs support." He also criticized two upcoming WikiLeaks films from Alex Gibney and Bill Condon.\textsuperscript{[65]}

In June 2013, Stone and numerous other celebrities appeared in a video showing support for Chelsea Manning.\textsuperscript{[66]}

Ukraine
In December 2014, Stone made statements supporting the Russian government's narrative on Ukraine, portraying the 2014 Ukrainian revolution as a CIA plot and former Ukrainian president (who was ousted as a result of the 2014 Ukrainian revolution) Viktor Yanukovych, whom new Ukrainian authorities accuse of the murder of over a hundred protesters, as a legitimate president forced to leave Ukraine by "well-armed, neo-Nazi radicals."\textsuperscript{[68]}

The University of Toronto's Stephen Velychenko, the author of several books on Ukrainian history, and James Kirchick of The Daily Beast criticized Stone's comments and plans for a film.\textsuperscript{[74]}

Filmography

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**As actor**
- *The Battle of Love’s Return* (1971)
- *Platoon* (1986) (cameo)
- *The Doors* (1991) (cameo)
- *Dave* (cameo) (1993)
- *Any Given Sunday* (1999)
- *Greystone Park* (actor) (2011)
- *End the War on Animals* (narrator, PETA video) (2012)

**Screenwriter only**
- *Midnight Express* (1978)
- *Conan the Barbarian* (with John Milius) (1982)
- *Scarface* (1983)
- *Year of the Dragon* (with Michael Cimino) (1985)
- *8 Million Ways to Die* (with David Lee Henry) (1985)
- *Evita* (with Alan Parker) (1996)

**Producer/executive producer only**
- *Sugar Cookies* (1973)
- *Blue Steel* (1989)
- *Reversal of Fortune* (1990)
- *Zebrahead* (1992)
- *South Central* (1992)
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Further reading

- Stone, Oliver. "A Child's Night Dream".

External links

- Wikimedia Commons has media related to Oliver Stone.
- Wikiquote has quotations related to: Oliver Stone
- The Oliver Stone Experience (official Oliver Stone website)
- Oliver Stone at the Internet Movie Database
- A biography of Oliver Stone
- Oliver Stone Bibliography (via UC Berkeley)
- Oliver Stone, an Independent American Director
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Awards for Oliver Stone

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Oliver Stone accused of groping by former Playboy model. Carrie Stevens claims Stone touched her breast at a party in the 1990s, following the director’s comments about accusations against Harvey Weinstein. Published: 14 Oct 2017. Oliver Stone accused of groping by former Playboy model. Get a Guardian digital subscription. Subscribe. The film-maker is taking heat for snuggling up to the Russian president in his new documentary.