

to a discussion of the putative wavelengths of the various lights, kundalini energy (divine energy coiling at the base of the spine) or the absolute necessity of the literal validity of the resurrection as Groothuis does.

Consequently, just as with that missionary back in 1968 who agreed with the progressive view concerning aboriginal people but had a weird concept of astronomy, Groothuis and I share a skepticism regarding NDEs and the associated mystical prose; but we part company rapidly after that as he seeks a justification for his theological position that Scripture explains all and always.

We further share, as demonstrated by the very opening lines to the first chapter of *Deceived by the Light*, a leaning towards the words of someone who has made a living at poking fun of his need for psychiatric care, Woody Allen. Although Allen is not a scientist, a theologian, a Christian or an NDEr, he may have said it completely with, "I'm not afraid of death. I just don't want to be there when it happens."

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Top Secret/Majic, by Stanton T. Friedman, Marlowe and Company, New York, 1996, 272 pp., \$22.95, ISBN 1-56924-830-3.

This is Stan Friedman's first book authored solely by himself. Although some of the material has appeared in other publications such as the *Mufon Journal* or the *International UFO Reporter*, this book is a unified presentation of the principal documents bearing the code word Majic within them, and includes several previously unpublished new documents, including an alleged 1954 operations manual that gives instructions to various project teams on how to "be able to more expertly deal with Unidentified Flying Objects, Extraterrestrial Technology and Entities, and increase the efficiency of future operations."

Mr. Friedman presents his often stated trademark position that some UFOs are someone else's spacecraft, and introduces with high clarity the documentation that strongly suggests that our government contains agencies which have consistently, successfully and intentionally misled the public by trying to cover up the evidence: the evidence of crashes, the testimony of witnesses, and the existence of a covert UFO investigation program.

Friedman's book begins with a foreword by Whitley Strieber, who speaks to the quality of the book, and does not refer to his own experience or reputation as an abductee. This very readable foreword provides some facts about the bizarre record of federal court judge Gesell's decision to keep 156 classified National Security Agency UFO documents secret, including the majority of the rationale for such a decision.

Following the foreword is an introduction by Friedman himself, who interweaves his own career with the UFO history in an engaging manner, revealing for the first time in print that he was hired for three months in the late 60s by McDonnell Douglas to do technical work on novel propulsion ideas. An interwoven bonus is an understandable summary of U. S. work on nuclear propulsion in the 50s and 60s, with a tribute to John Luce: "technological progress comes from doing things differently in an unpredictable way." Much of Friedman's technical background, presented in a fairly unassuming manner, is highly relevant to qualifications for evaluating UFO data.

The main text presents, in twelve chapters, a more or less chronological summary of what Friedman thinks is very likely to have happened, starting with the famous Roswell crash of July 1947. Friedman was the one who "found" Jesse Marcel on February 20, 1978, the first military person to see one part of the Roswell wreckage and was the officer responsible for gathering parts and submitting the report. And he describes how the first *Top Secret/Majic* document arrived by mail in December 1984 at the home of Jaime Shandera, a producer with a plan to direct a UFO movie.

His important chapter on "The Double Life of Dr. Menzel" provides an impressive and highly credible scenario that resulted in Donald Menzel being both the principal UFO debunker to the public and "insider" for Government projects. He well makes the point that secrets CAN be kept. It is suggested that the reason Menzel doodled pictures of Martians, for which he was well known, is that he had seen what the aliens actually looked like.

Principal Majic-related documents presented and discussed in the book are:

- Directive from Harry Truman to Lieutenant General Twining (9 July 1947)
- Memorandum from G. C. Marshall for the President (19 September 1947)
- Letter from L. Gen. Twining to Brig. Gen. George Schulgen (23 September 1947)
- Memorandum from Hillenkoetter for the President (February 1948)
- Memorandum from W. B. Smith to unknown Canadian official (21 November 1950)
- The Eisenhower Briefing Documents including Memorandum from Harry Truman to Secretary Forrestal dtd 24 September 1947 (18 November 1952, 8 pp.)
- Memorandum from Robert Cutler to Gen. Twining (13 July 1953)
- Special Operations Manual, "Extraterrestrial Entities and Technology, Recovery and Disposal," SOM1-01 (7 April 1954)
- Memorandum from Robert Cutler to Gen. Twining (14 July 1954)
- Letter from the Truman Library to Friedman (23 June 1987)

It is regrettable that more of these documents were not included in their en-

tirety without re-keystroking, because the security markings, signatures, dates, and printing details are all germane to authentication issues.

The Eisenhower Briefing Document is the one that shows the names of the 13 "members" of the alleged Majestic-12 Group, with one extra to replace James Forrestal, who was dead by 1952. The other twelve are covered with interesting little mini-biographical sketches, highlighting their linkages and associations outside the MJ-12 group. A nice touch is a high quality photographic section in the middle of the book, showing good photos of each of the group members, as they looked at the time. A helpful tabular summary of what each of these men was doing in July 1947 permits one to calculate their average age as 49.8.

The chapter on authenticating the briefing documents provides correlation with other related documents and events, and deals with issues that have arisen: similarity of Truman's signature to another one (suggesting forgery to the skeptics), date format, language style. In this presentation Friedman shows an easy familiarity with the archive process, important for document authentication. However, he fails to establish an objective authentication procedure. Furthermore, there has been so much criticism of the authenticity of the Eisenhower Briefing Document in print by skeptics that a simple table with the best answer to each challenge would have been a welcome addition.

One whole chapter is devoted to "Cutler-Twining" memos, declassified top secret notes showing the MJ-12 alphanumeric in the text and alluding to covert meetings with President Eisenhower.

Chapter 6 highlights the government rebuttal of MJ-12 material and also the Roswell crash. Friedman makes it clear that there has been aggressive avoidance of responding to the Freedom of Information Act requests, coupled with deception. In the process, the Air Force has officially stated that documents relating to MJ-12 are "not classified" and "bogus," thereby presumably permitting their presentation in public without violating any security laws even if they are genuine. The degree to which a letter from an Air Force counterintelligence Colonel might protect a citizen from prosecution of revealing UFO secrets has not yet been tested. Friedman takes to task the media for failing to perform their famous "watchdog" role in this area, but does not speculate what they might have done.

In his chapter on the MJ-12 debunkers, he takes on an impressive array of personalities. Friedman has no fear when he thinks he has the facts, attacking Carl Sagan just as hard as Phil Klass and Kevin Randle. His rebuttals are generally effective because Friedman usually deals with very factual material, while challenging the specifics and the sources of the others. His "top ten" list of debunker principles apply to many more topics than UFOs. Occasionally his analogies stretch beyond the limits of professional debate to a humorous chiding, such as: "Klass's second... article... contained so much baloney it should have been distributed by a delicatessen."

The chapter on the new MJ-12 documents presents three documents from

Timothy Cooper, a California researcher who has been sending Friedman material from unknown sources. These three documents are supportive of the existence of an MJ-12 **Majic** project. The chronology and to some extent their authenticity is discussed.

Chapter 9 presents the entire available content of the alleged Majestic 12 Operations Manual, mentioned at the beginning of this book review. The Special Operations Manual SOM1-01 has been totally retyped by the printer, and therefore unfortunately introduced several errors. For example, the number in fine print on the title page has been typed incorrectly, the type size is different, the pagination has been redone to tighten up the text, and no attempt has been made to preserve the original hyphenation. There is no guarantee that misspellings originally present have been retained, although two misspellings I am aware of have been spelled as in the original: incorrectly.

Chapter 10 discusses security and classification management, the development process for classified programs, and speculates that the development of the transistor might have been related to prior UFO crash recoveries, noting that the official birthday for the transistor is December 23, 1947. But one gets the impression that Friedman doesn't really believe that we were smart enough to recover an extraterrestrial solid state device in July and make a working transistor in December.

The recent famous "alien autopsy" film is discussed, and Friedman joins nearly all other researchers in suspecting that it is not an autopsy of a genuine recovered alien.

Friedman's concluding chapter is the beginning of a reasoned conversation about why the cover-up, what is the alien agenda, and why is all this important anyway? Friedman joins most of us in believing that it would be good if the secrecy would end, but concedes that a lack of knowledge of the alien agenda is disturbing. He leaves room for the possibility that our government could be making a wise societal decision in keeping the secret... but like most of us, would like to keep going into space with the expectation that Homo sapiens would be better off thereby.

The material at the back of the book warrants mention. Appendix A presents the complete (photocopied) Eisenhower Briefing Document. Appendix B presents a (declassified from Secret) letter from Twining to Schulgen issued one day before the alleged Executive Order creating MJ-12. Appendix C provides insider information about relevant chronological events, special interests and activities of Don Menzel, and procedures and data pertinent to document authentication. Appendix D lists the exclusions from the Freedom on Information Act, thereby clearly demonstrating that the Government is almost certainly acting within the law to aggressively withhold UFO data if they think it is related to national defense, foreign policy or to a legitimate Executive Order. Appendix E is the standard non-information USAF response to a Senator denying any knowledge of records pertaining to Roswell, including Friedman's devastating rebuttal to the Air Force. Appendix F is a chronological list of the

17 Directors of the CIA, showing that the first four were all said to be members of the MJ-12 Group. Whether subsequent Directors have been privy or not is left to the reader to guess. His list of sources is helpfully grouped by category, but is not helpful for the novice who might just want to spend a day or so on a few references. The index is quite complete and contains many multiple page references to the same topic.

Top Secret/Majic will be eagerly read by both those who are looking for evidence of a decades-old cover-up as well as those who feel that such documents can be easily faked. However, Friedman has raised the bar higher for those who would suggest that the documents are fake by showing how they interweave with unquestioned genuine documents, and dealing with most of the criticisms offered in the past. His publication of the Special Operations Manual 1-01 might be, perhaps, premature, because he does not deal with any of the known criticisms of authenticity or their rebuttals. But because this manual has been widely circulated among researchers since it was received in 1994, it may not hurt much to have it available without caveat, since the content of the document is self-evident, and because establishing the authenticity beyond doubt will require a professional, dedicated and comprehensive effort.

For the scientist who has not really been exposed to the UFO literature in an orderly manner, this book might not be the place to start. Better to read it after reading the excellent guide to the literature by Michael Swords (1993), "A Guide to UFO Research," *Journal of Scientific Exploration*, 7, No. 1. But *Top Secret/Majic* is very focused on just a tiny sliver of the broad UFO subject, and will not overwhelm those unfamiliar with the literature.

I recommend that everyone who wonders whether there may be evidence that we recovered craft with occupants, and everyone who assumes that governments cannot keep secrets should read *Top Secret/Majic*. In this reviewer's opinion, It is increasingly clear to all who pay attention to the Government reactions of today and the documents included in *Top Secret/Majic* that a project was real in the 40s and 50s and that it has not gone away. The success in concealing this sophisticated UFO investigation project is a significant achievement of our highly refined counter intelligence community, simultaneously duping the media and educational institutions along with the public.

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