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The Men Who Stare At Goats



Synopsis

In 1979, a secret unit was established by the most gifted minds within the US Army. Defying all known accepted military practice - and indeed, the laws of physics - they believed that a soldier could adopt the cloak of invisibility, pass cleanly through walls and, perhaps most chillingly, kill goats just by staring at them. Entrusted with defending America from all known adversaries, they were the First Earth Battalion. And they really weren't joking. What's more, they're back and fighting the War on Terror. The Men Who Stare at Goats reveals extraordinary - and very nutty - national secrets at the core of George W. Bush's War on Terror. With first-hand access to the leading players in the story, Ronson traces the evolution of these bizarre activities over the past three decades, and sees how it is alive today within US Homeland Security and post-war Iraq. Why are they blasting Iraqi prisoners-of-war with the theme tune to Barney the Purple Dinosaur? Why have 100 de-bleated goats been secretly placed inside the Special Forces command centre at Fort Bragg, North Carolina? How was the US Military associated with the mysterious mass-suicide of a strange cult from San Diego? The Men Who Stare At Goats answers these, and many more, questions. Jon Ronson is an award-winning writer and documentary maker. He is the author of many best-selling books, including Frank: The True Story that Inspired the Movie, Lost at Sea: The Jon Ronson Mysteries, The Psychopath Test, The Men Who Stare at Goats and Them: Adventures with Extremists. His first fictional screenplay, Frank, co-written with Peter Straughan, starred Michael Fassbender. He lives in London and New York City.

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Customer Reviews

The writer has put together an intelligent and well integrated narrative in his story telling way. I'm aware of quite a lot of the content, previously published in many other books and videotaped documentation from first person testimony. The conclusion that the deterioration of American life and leadership lies in the many secret areas of our government rings true. It is sickening.

The movie of the same title, with George Clooney hamming it up, caused me to order this book- --which is pretty much mostly true. I recall when "remote viewing" was known to be used by the CIA as a way of spying on Soviet science and weaponry. Our CIA did this when they got word that the Soviets were doing it against us. The story is as true as the Seventies.... because after the defeat in Vietnam, the Army honchos were desperate to find different way to run an Army. The New Age approach was explored - -and it seems that one man could, once, cause a goat to fall over and die. The goal was 'mind control." This trendy beginning led to a cascade of events which led directly to the photos we have all seen from the Abu Ghraib prison. The process degraded from "getting inside The Other's Mind," to "Controlling The Other's Mind.' The prison photos were taken to intimidate the Iraqi population.. to show them how cruel we could be - -to discourage young Iraqi men from joining the opposition forces. The photos were a kind of psychological rape of the Iraqi male mind: a clothed woman with a bare face had naked men in a sexual pile at her feet. The Army's New Age process which led to this prison event makes sense if you lived thru the Sixties and Seventies in California, which I did..... and even Dr. Zimbardo's prison experiment at Stanford didn't make much of a wave in the counterculture. The experiment, I remember, got a big play in local papers, but not everything was described. It seemed to have no connection to our naked hot-tubbing. But as we have seen, nudity is powerful. It seems that the Army had one man paying attention, and he formed the First Earth Battalion. The general who kept trying to walk thru his office wall, really exists, and gets credit in the forward to the book. Hey, it is theoretically possible to walk thru a wall. But somebody had to seriously really try to do it, officially, to see if it could be done. They tried, it couldn't. But in those days, so many conventions were being overthrown that trying to walk thru walls was not regarded as nuts.

This government agency really existed... I just cannot follow the logic of this book to a believable conclusion.

Military techniques vary with the Administration, the challenges faced and the level of brain power

sitting on the Joint Chiefs of Staff. During the Cold War a lot of outlandish spying and interrogation techniques were tried out, including psychics and 'remote viewers,' giving prisoners LSD without their knowledge, getting them hooked on heroin, using subliminal messages, psychological torture involving humiliation, fear or cultural prohibitions, and various other alternatives to respected methods. The clear result from all of these experiments -- not all of them non-lethal, by the way -- was that they were all completely worthless. It is somewhat surprising therefore, that after 9/11 many of these same failed programs were quietly reactivated, with the miserable results we have subsequently seen at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo and on the battlefields. Well, maybe not so surprising if you consider the Presidential Prayer Team, the unsuccessful search for 'missing' WMDs, the quagmire from having no exit plan and the general wanton disregard for the lessons of history. This book is proof positive that a government conspiracy could never be successful with the current crop of comedians running things.

Men Who Stare at Goats I chose a book that seemed interesting, so I would want to finish it and still learn something from it. The book is called I chose is The Men Who Stare at Goats by Jon Ronson. The book is a good read and kept me at the edge of my seat, for I bought the audiobook rather than the hard copy and the narrator does an amazing job at reading the book for you. I had watched the film when it came out, but after reading the book I found out that it was completely different than the book. There were some parts I had to reread because it transitions badly on some chapters, but overall it was a good book. This book starts off saying that it is a true story, but I don't know if I believe that or not. This book is about how the journalist, Jon Ronson, stumbles on the information about how the military and physiological worlds unite. He meets a series of men who tell him, in exact detail, how there are military psychic spies and how they have developed powers to do, what seems to be, impossible things. Chapter one begins in 1983 with General Stubblebine imagining running through the wall but of course fails to do so. Stubblebine is the chief of the secret military spying units and after bashing his nose against the wall he thinks he passing through objects, such as walls, could be useful in the future and that is how the men staring actual goats begins. Jon goes on a series of interviews to find the men who started the group of men who were training to become psychic soldiers. He flies around the world to find as much information as he can, to make the story begin. He interviews men such as Guy Savelli, martial arts teacher who claims to have the Death Touch and to be able to kill goats by staring them to death. He interviews General Albert Stubblebine, who apparently believes, that walking through walls and levitation are possible if one is in the right mindset. He also interviews a

man who believes his brother, Frank Olson, was murdered over fears he would reveal it to the press. At last he finds Jim Channon a cornel in the United States army, who wrote the "First Earth Battalion". Jim is the one who started training men to obtain psychic powers; the manual he wrote explains how to pacify with the enemy with indigenous music with subliminal messages, positive energy, or discordant sound. Goats are used in the military more and more, he says. The goats are de-bleated so they will make no sound. He explains how the goats got to the military base and what they are essentially used for, but he wants more and he goes on the journey to find out more for himself and experience and record all of this in his book. The book in itself is really good and interesting. I found humor in it to be really dark and twisted, but funny nonetheless. Jon Ronson knows that there is both an amusing and serious side to his research, and he lets the readers know when he is trying to be funny and when it is time to get down to business. Ronson has a way of making the reader become engaged and fully interested with what he writes about. Although, I do not know if to believe that the story is true. Maybe Ronson was having a dream or a vision of some sort, which led him to believe that those things did happen or that he has a really good imagination. He could have just researched all the information and made up a few names to tie up with what his research said. He sounds really convincing and at times I feel like the United States as a government does have a lot of secrets and will not disclose them, but I believe they do not disclose them for the Americans security. Ronson depicts the United States military operation in a way that, I can assume, only men high up in the military would be able to. He says things that are in a way disturbing, such as the soldiers who are being tortured with the song with subliminal messages. I imagine the United States military would have to do anything and everything to defend and defeat the enemy, but is the United States military really capable of all the things Ronson writes about? I had always put myself in the mindset that an army was suppose to help even those who were trying to hurt them, but now I think that that is what the government made me believe. Ronson clearly has a problem with George W. Bush and is not afraid to make that known to his readers. He blames the War on Terror on the president and, I feel that, he wants him to admit what he did. He thinks all of the War on Terror is a hoax and that the United States military is corrupt. The de-bleated goats are kind of a symbol to me in this book. The goats represent the soldiers who cannot speak of their psychic powers because they have been manipulated to keep their mouths shut. I recommend this book if you are looking for a great non-fiction book. Ronson is a really good author and makes you see the side of things that maybe we should be looking at too. He supports his arguments with evidence that seems legit. He goes on a bizarre journey to find answers to the questions many have, but only he was willing to find out the answers. He uses the

humor to engage the reader and keeps the reader hooked for the entire book. I would not recommend this book if you believe that there is nothing wrong with the United States government or any other government for that matter. I would also not recommend this book if you do not like to hear bad things being spoken about the former president George W. Bush. Overall I give the book a 5 out of 5 stars.

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