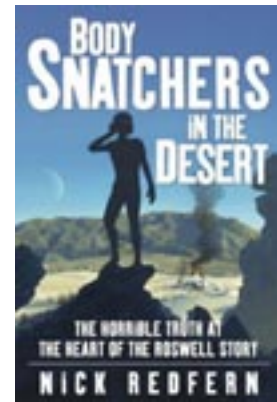




Book Review: *Body Snatchers from the Desert: The Horrible Truth at the Heart of the Roswell Story* (Paraview Pocket Books, 2005) ISBN: 0-7434-9753-8.

Nick Redfern's new book, *Body Snatchers in the Desert*, advances the controversial thesis that the 1947 Roswell crash did not involve a crashed UFO but was a highly classified balloon project involving deformed Japanese citizens who were secretly part of biological and nuclear experiments secretly conducted out of the White Sands missile base in New Mexico. Redfern contends that the initial reports of a flying saucer crash were little more than an 'honest mistake' by Major Jesse Marcel and other officers at



Roswell Army Air Field who had never before seen the materials used in the experiments conducted out of White Sands. Furthermore Redfern contends that other alleged UFO crashes such as the 1948 Aztec crash and the Spitzbergen crash (1946) was disinformation designed to cover up classified biological experiments involving abducted Japanese. He says that prominent military whistleblowers such as Col Philip Corso were fed disinformation about Roswell in a counter intelligence ruse to uncover a Soviet mole. Redfern concludes that many stories about UFO crashes, meetings with extraterrestrials, and reverse engineering of extraterrestrial vehicles have as their origin clever disinformation stories orchestrated by experts in psychological warfare.

The main sources of Redfern's ambitious thesis are five alleged 'whistleblowers' giving different strands of a story he weaves together in his book. The first is a "Mr Levine"

who worked inside the British Home Office and disclosed to Redfern in 1996, information about the US having performed classified work involving human rights violations of captured Japanese (pp. 79-81). Redfern met Mr “Levine” on one occasion only. The bizarre story told to Redfern aroused immediate suspicion.

Another source is a former official from Defense Intelligence Agency, “the Colonel,” who claims to have been involved in spreading disinformation about crashed UFOs during the Cold War (98-118). This former DIA official claims that the US military brought to America, captured Japanese scientists/military personnel who had performed secret biological experiments for the elite Japanese unit 731. The real name of the Colonel is not given; he is simply described as a very mysterious figure who revealed highly classified information to Redfern after their meeting at a UFO conference in 2003.

The next whistleblower is the “Black Widow” who had worked at a classified facility at Oak Ridge Tennessee. There she claims to have seen the deformed bodies of human subjects exposed to biological/nuclear experiments (pp. 1-10). She claims to have been told that these experiments had been conducted at the White Sands missile range. She categorically stated that the alleged bodies were in fact the remains of deformed Japanese test subjects.

The two final whistleblowers, Bill Salter and Al Barker, who worked respectively in the Psychological Strategy Board and in the Army’s Psychological Warfare Unit (pp. 90-97). Both Salter and Barker contend that the PSB and other psychological warfare units used contrived stories of UFO crashes, alien bodies and underground bases to misinform the general public about the true events at White Sands and elsewhere. According to Salter and Barker, these UFO stories were used to cover more classified activities concerning the testing of nuclear powered aircraft using deformed Japanese victims.

The above five whistleblowers, all interviewed by Redfern, allegedly gave him the ‘inside scoop’ on what was really happening with supposed UFO crashes. His book explores their claims extensively. He research includes documented historical activities

of the elite Japanese medical experimentation unit 731; Fugo balloons launched by Japan; and Operation Paperclip. He combines these different strands to weave a bizarre narrative of what has really been happening behind the scenes concerning the alleged crashes of UFOs. Redfern claims that he was initially skeptical of the claims of these whistleblowers, believing them to be some kind of disinformation campaign. Subsequently, he became a believer, following his two year investigation (see: <http://www.uforeview.net/documents/issue12.pdf>).

Redfern's approach was to take the claims of the whistleblowers at face value and see how much evidence he could unearth to confirm or disprove different strands of their stories. None of the five 'whistleblowers' were known to UFO researchers before Redfern's book appeared. The two willing to have their identities revealed are former employees of psychological warfare units. To date no one else has been able to track them down and offer independent assessments. None of the five whistleblowers have been interviewed by others, had their identities confirmed, or had their testimonies checked. Redfern's method is highly questionable, contrasting greatly with the methods of other well known investigators. Whistleblowers such as Clifford Stone, Philip Corso, Bob Lazar, Robert Dean, and Charles Hall have all come forward and offered their testimonies. They have exposed themselves to great scrutiny by researchers and a skeptical public. Despite great ridicule, their reports remain consistent. This contrasts strongly with Redfern's whistleblowers who contacted him secretly, and make themselves unavailable to other researchers.

Another significant problem is that all the whistleblowers knew one another, aside from the British Home Office employee. Three of them directly worked in psychological operations and disinformation with the DIA, the Psychological Strategy Board and the Army's Center for Psychological Warfare. The possibility that they collaborated in spreading disinformation is very real given their former professions, and their testimonies lack of independent verification. It is also possible that disinformation was directed to them, by one or more organizations authorized to mislead individuals and groups.

Unfortunately, Redfern's approach to the whistleblowers' testimonies in terms of possible disinformation being fed to him is not persuasive. He merely confirms that the whistleblowers are who they claim to be in terms of their former service as government/military personnel, based on them presenting some documents, and then assumes that all he has to do is check out the various aspects of their stories to conclude whether they are telling him the truth rather than promoting disinformation. However, checking out such claims may confirm only those parts of the testimonies based on fact, e.g., classified biological experiments, high altitude balloon projects, effects of nuclear propulsion systems on humans, etc. This may lead to acceptance of disinformation concerning key UFO events such as alleged UFO crashes at Roswell, Aztec and Spitzbergen. While Redfern has been able to authenticate some classified biological experiments involving Japanese citizens and high altitude gondola balloons were being conducted at White Sands, that's a long way from conclusively determining that these classified projects were really behind the UFO crash stories at Roswell, Aztec, etc. Since three of his five whistleblowers were previously involved in psychological operations, they may have known or been told what information to supply Redfern to encourage him to reach predetermined conclusions.

Redfern's five whistleblowers remain the primary source for the idea that UFO crashes were really a cover for the biological experiments involving high altitude balloons. We are only told the names of two whistleblowers who worked in psychological operations at the Psychological Strategy Board and the Army Psychological Warfare Unit. They disseminate an incredible story that is inconsistent with much of the available information on the crash at Roswell. On their own, these two might easily be dismissed as spreading disinformation. As for the other three whistleblowers whose true names are withheld, we are unable to assess their testimonies in terms of whether they are spreading disinformation intentionally or otherwise. There have been many whistleblowers who have come publicly forward and been willing to subject themselves



to the scrutiny of UFO researchers to determine whether they are spreading disinformation or telling only the facts of what they experienced.

Many whistleblowers discuss classified projects or events that they directly worked in and which reveal data on various aspects of the extraterrestrial hypothesis. Instead, Redfern's whistleblowers are disclosing testimonies concerning a cover up of biological experiments which they could partially verify from their own experience and hearsay of others. This is a very risky strategy since assessing whistleblower testimonies should be restricted directly to events they directly experienced rather than plots/strategies they allegedly deduce from activities outside their field of expertise. The 'Colonel', for example, claims he was instructed to spread fake UFO crash stories to deter the Soviets. This only confirms that much disinformation exists in the field of UFOs and doesn't negate a particular case. It is very risky to deduce intentions and agendas from those professionally employed in disinformation strategies. When does one genuinely cease such activities, and how much should UFO researchers rely on their testimonies? Three out of the five whistleblower used by Redfern were professionals in psychological operations. That is a very dangerous foundation for the kind of ambitious thesis Redfern is promoting.

Whistleblower testimony concerning the retrieval of crashed UFOs, reverse engineering of extraterrestrial vehicles, or direct contact with extraterrestrial biological entities is typically distinguished by the claims of personal experience of whistleblowers in such projects. This was certainly a criterion used by Steven Greer in the Disclosure Project where direct experience rather than hearsay was critical for acceptance of such testimonies. Redfern's dismissal of contrary whistleblower testimony is startling, especially in the case of Col Phillip Corso who he believes was fed disinformation from the Psychological Strategy Board (pp. 179-80).

Corso's last public act was to sign a sworn affidavit two months before his death in 1998 affirming that he had seen an EBE from the Roswell crash and that he had control of the Roswell file at the Foreign Technology Desk of Army Research and Development. The

idea that Corso, along with his superior Lt General Arthur Trudeau, would have been fed disinformation by a counterintelligence operation really stretches the bounds of credibility. More so since Trudeau and Corso were both previously attached to the Army's Military Intelligence which Trudeau headed in the 1950's. Both were very prominent in counterintelligence activities aimed at flushing out Fabian Socialists from the State Department, CIA, FBI and other agencies. This experience earned them the enmity at least of the FBI.



The biggest problem for Redfern's thesis is that FBI files and Corso's service record confirm that Corso served on the Psychological Strategy Board in 1953. Corso undoubtedly would have had first hand access to any counterintelligence strategy being used to mask classified biological experiments by fabricating stories of crashed UFO as Redfern claims.

Redfern's claim, based on his two psychological operations whistleblowers, that the cover-up for biological experiments using UFOs was hatched in the Psychological Strategy Board means that Corso would have known of this. Yet we are told by Redfern that Corso was out of the loop concerning the Roswell cover story. This is not possible given Corso's position and reveals a major flaw in Redfern's thesis. This reveals how Redfern sidesteps major inconsistencies in whistleblower testimonies, some of whom he supports, and others he wants to rationalize away as a product of disinformation.

My conclusion is that Redfern pursues an overly ambitious thesis using a limited number of whistleblowers almost all of whom were acquainted and very likely influenced one another in a story tied very closely with spreading disinformation. Redfern dramatically underestimates the risk of working with whistleblower testimonies that may be influenced by or laden with disinformation, especially with former professionals in psychological operations. Redfern's claim that all the people he interviewed, aside from British official, knew each other suggests they may have intentionally been part of a disinformation strategy that Redfern ingenuously has disseminated into the UFO

community. Redfern completely ignores the many whistleblowers who have come forward to disclose direct participation in classified projects involving ETVs or EBEs.

Redfern has accepted in part or whole disinformation fed to him by alleged ‘whistleblowers’ who were previously attached to psychological operations of the Army, the Psychological Strategy Board and the DIA. He has abandoned caution as he pursues the ambitious thesis that key UFO crashes were cover stories for more ‘mundane’ classified projects involving biological experiments with abducted Japanese nationals. This kind of reductionist thesis is very risky since it tends to dismiss all contrary testimony and evidence pointed out by others concerning the UFO crash at Roswell.

The lesson to be learned from the deficiencies in Redfern’s ambitious book is to be very wary when assessing the testimony of whistleblowers advancing stories that conflict with existing testimonies disclosed by other whistleblowers and witness testimonies on UFOs. The deficiencies in *Body Snatchers in the Desert* will be helpful in illustrating the dangers in studying stories of disinformation concerning UFOs, and weaving this in with actual events and classified projects without comparing this with alternative testimonies, and available data on UFOs and the extraterrestrial hypothesis (ETH). Redfern’s book is overly ambitious and flawed. He dismisses too much contrary evidence to advance a thesis supported by limited testimony. His conclusion that the UFO crashes at Roswell and elsewhere are no more than disinformation has no merit. Redfern is ingenuously promoting disinformation fed to him by those actively seeking to sow confusion in the study of the UFO phenomenon and the ETH.

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