

(Download pdf ebook) The Men Who Stare at Goats

## The Men Who Stare at Goats

Jon Ronson

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#36444 in Books Simon Schuster 2009-10-13 2009-10-13 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.44 x .70 x 5.50l, #File Name: 1439181772272 pages Great product! | File size: 16.Mb

**Jon Ronson : The Men Who Stare at Goats** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Men Who Stare at Goats:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A quirky, humorous, and sometimes sad look at ESP and mind control programs in US military intelligence By Bernie Gourley Ronson investigates the US military intelligence community's forays into extrasensory perception (ESP) and mind control. Those who've seen the movie loosely based on this book will be aware of the quirky-humorous tone it takes. (If the title wasn't enough to convey that the author

was aiming for quirky humor.) Ronson's style, favoring punchy simple sentences, offers a kind of deadpan delivery that supports the tone of the book. That said, the book also has a sad edge as it can be seen as a commentary on military officers who came back from the war in Vietnam damaged and grasping at straws as to how to prevent history from repeating itself. It's as if what these men experienced made some eager to believe because they so wanted to believe they could win with the mind and avoid the carnage of war. While the book's sixteen chapters are not divided by the author, they can be roughly divided into three parts. The first is the pursuit of ESP starting in the late 1970's. This includes remote viewing and the titular psychokinesis (i.e. starring goats to death.) The middle section is the resurgence of these esoteric approaches in the late 90's and, especially, after 9-11 (also speaking to how dire blows to the psyche lead to wild approaches.) Much of this section is about mind control rather than ESP. One may remember the news story of the "I Love You, You Love Me" song from Barney [i.e. the purple dinosaur] being played over and over again to break terror suspects. The question remaining unanswered is whether there was anything else going on besides torture by Barney song (i.e. subliminal messages or sonic / ultrasonic frequencies [as used in non-lethal weapon technology.]) The latter section deals with the famous case of a scientist who jumped from a hotel room window to his death. It was later admitted that the scientist had been the unwitting victim of hallucinogen experimentation as part of the famed MKUltra project, and his death was written off as a trip gone bad. Ronson presents the story of the scientist's son, a man who firmly believes that the story copped to was neither the full story nor the true story. This book is interesting and entertaining, despite the fact that many of the questions that Ronson sets out to answer remain unanswered and probably always will. While the author got several key people to talk to him, the projects discussed are highly classified and the possibility of disinformation is ever-present. Ronson manages to walk a fine line throughout the book. He presents all this quirky and bizarre activity in a way that neither comes across as mocking nor even particularly skeptical. (His punchy delivery does hint at this intention on occasion.) He lets the reader do the mocking and be the skeptic. At times he comes across as a believer. That is, while many of the happenings of the book reflect bat-shit crazy behavior / decisions, he suggests that all but the most hardened skeptics would believe that some of the people involved had inexplicable gifts. I'd recommend this book. If you're interested in government sponsored esoteric activities like psi and mind control and related scandals / conspiracies, you'll find it fascinating. On the other hand, even if you're not, it's still an entertaining read that provides a sort of commentary on the effects of war on the psyche.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Good Job  
By dralice  
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.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. From Goats to Naked Prisoners  
By Beverly Kai  
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.

**Bizarre military history:** In 1979, a crack commando unit was established by the most gifted minds within the U.S. Army. Defying all known laws of physics and accepted military practice, 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. They were the First Earth Battalion, entrusted with defending America from all known adversaries. And they really weren't joking. What's more, they're back—and they're fighting the War on Terror. An uproarious exploration of American military paranoia: With investigations ranging from the mysterious "Goat Lab," to Uri Geller's covert psychic work with the CIA, to the increasingly bizarre role played by a succession of U.S. presidents, this might just be the funniest, most unsettling book you will ever read—if only because it is all true and is still happening today.

.com Just when you thought every possible conspiracy theory had been exhausted by The X-Files or The Da Vinci Code, along comes *The Men Who Stare at Goats*. The first line of the book is, "This is a true story." True or not, it is quite astonishing. Author Jon Ronson writes a column about family life for London's Guardian newspaper and has made several acclaimed documentaries. *The Men Who Stare at Goats* is his bizarre quest into "the most whacked-out corners of George W. Bush's War on Terror," as he puts it. Ronson is inspired when a man who claims to be a former U.S. military psychic spy tells the journalist he has been reactivated following the 9-11 attack. Ronson decides to investigate. His research leads him to the U.S. Army's strange forays into extra-sensory perception and telepathy, which apparently included efforts to kill barnyard animals with nothing more than thought. Ronson meets one ex-Army employee who claims to have killed a goat and his pet hamster by staring at them for prolonged periods of time. Like Ronson's original source, this man also says he has been reactivated for deployment to the Middle East. Ronson's finely written book strikes a perfect balance between curiosity, incredulity, and humor. His characters are each more bizarre than the last, and Ronson does a wonderful job of depicting the colorful quirks they reveal in their often-comical meetings. Through a charming guile, he manages to elicit many strange and amazing revelations. Ronson meets a general who is frustrated in his frequent attempts to walk through walls. One source says the U.S. military has deployed psychic assassins to the Middle East to hunt down Al Qaeda suspects. Entertaining and disturbing. --Alex Roslin

From Publishers Weekly This exploration of the U.S. military's flirtation with the supernatural is at once funny and tragic. It reads like fiction, with plenty of dialogue and descriptive detail, but as Ronson's investigation into the government's peculiar past doings creeps into the present-and into Iraq-it will raise goose bumps. As Ronson reveals, a secret wing of the U.S. military called First Earth Battalion was created in 1979 with the purpose of creating "Warrior Monks," soldiers capable of walking through walls, becoming invisible, reading minds and even killing a goat simply by staring at it. Some of the characters involved seem well-meaning enough, such as the hapless General Stubblebine, who is "confounded by his continual failure to walk through his wall." But Ronson (*Them: Adventures with Extremists*) soon learns that the Battalion's bizarre ideas inspired some alarming torture techniques being used in the present-day War on Terror. One technique involves subjecting prisoners to 24 hours of Barney the Purple Dinosaur's song, "I Love You," and another makes use of the Predator, a small, toy-like object designed by military martial arts master Pete Brusso that can inflict a large amount of pain in many different ways ("You can take eyeballs right out... with this bit," Brusso tells Ronson). Ronson approaches the material with an open mind and a delightfully dry sense of humor, which makes this an entertaining, if unsettling, read. Indeed, as the events recounted here grow ever more curious-and the individuals Ronson meets more disturbing-it's necessary to remind oneself of Ronson's opening words: "This is a true story." Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

From Booklist Ronson follows up his offbeat *Them: Adventures with Extremists* (2002) with an even more offbeat look at a secret government program and the people behind it. In the 1970s, the American government became very interested in psychic research and the potential military applications of paranormal abilities. The subject has since been tackled from a number of angles, but Ronson's angle is certainly the most entertaining. He interviews—or, in some cases, tries to interview—the people behind the formerly top-secret program (which did, yes, involve men staring at goats); he explains their mind-bending (and occasionally cutlery-bending) ideas; and explores the weirdly shocking ways in which some newfangled 1970s notions about psychological interrogation techniques have manifested themselves in today's War on Terror. The strangest thing about the book? The fact that this stuff really happened and that these people and their out-of-left-field ideas aren't the product of the author's imagination. --David Pitt