



The Overseer

Jonathan Rabb

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The deadliest document ever written must be found.

And time is running out.

It has long been rumored in academic circles that a sixteenth-century monk named Eisenreich took Machiavelli several steps further, writing a masterplan for world domination so dangerous the Pope had him killed to suppress it. But Eisenreich's text, *On Supremacy*, survived. Some scholars even believed the Third Reich had a copy. But when the bullet-riddled body of a young girl is found in Montana and "Eisenreich" is her dying word, it becomes terrifyingly clear that not only is the document real--someone is planning to use this explosive piece of history in the late twentieth century.

This deadly document is at the heart of *The Overseer*, a chillingly authentic, compulsively readable thriller of global intrigue and political conspiracy that follows a desperate search for a fabled manuscript, one with frightening modern-day implications. Beautiful, troubled government agent Sarah Trent is given just enough information by her covert office to begin digging into the murder of the young girl. Her search takes her to Columbia University and a brilliant young political theorist named Xander Jaspers, who agrees to help her. But neither Xander nor Sarah fully understand the dangerous situation into which they've been thrown. For *On Supremacy* has fallen into the hands of a cabal intent on using it as a blueprint for ripping apart society as we know it and creating a new world order out of the ashes of the old.

The cabal, led by a coldly intelligent mastermind called the Overseer, begins its campaign of terror. As the acts of terrorism--assassinations, bombings, the collapse of the grain market--go off like clockwork, Sarah and Xander realize the only way to prevent total chaos is to find another copy of the manuscript and uncover the identity of the Overseer--and so the race is on.

This intelligent, full-throttle thriller is the extraordinary literary debut of a young political theorist, author Jonathan Rabb, who asks: What if such a sophisticated and dangerous sixteenth-century document resurfaced at the turn of the millennium? Would it be the most thrilling discovery of the twentieth century...or the most terrifying? Read *On Supremacy* at the end of this provocative novel and judge for yourself.

The Overseer Details

Date : Published May 12th 1998 by Crown (first published January 1st 1998)

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Author : Jonathan Rabb

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From Reader Review The Overseer for online ebook

Paula says

This is a compelling international thriller. Just when you think it is safe to stop, the characters are spun in a new direction that leaves the reader breathless.

Government agent Sarah Trent is sent on a fact finding mission. Little does she know that it is a conspiracy to draw her back into the world of espionage. Her research leads her to Columbia University professor Xander Jaspers. Jaspers becomes Sarah's instructor in understanding an even larger conspiracy.

That conspiracy is centered on The Overseer. The Overseer is two things. It is the central character of a manuscript written by sixteenth-century monk named Eisenreich. It is also the leader of a contemporary cabal that intends the overthrow of the United States government. The blueprint for conquest, from the manuscript, is frighteningly plausible.

The credibility of this plot is what gives the story line its impact. As events unfold-bombings, murders, etc., the world sees them as isolated incidents. The reader knows them to be part of a larger scheme. It calls to mind the horrors that occur in the United States all too frequently. Rabb efficiently plays upon our own conspiracy fears. Even more effectively he has his characters utilize those fears to their own advantage.

Amidst the acts of terrorism and attempts on their own lives Sarah Trent and Xander Jaspers must find The Overseer. They hunt for a way to derail the scheduled events. Sarah and Xander are likable characters who truly need each other if they are to survive. Each brings talents and knowledge necessary to their task.

Jonathan Rabb has developed interesting characters. Not one of them is a cardboard cut out. The heroes and villains alike are absorbing individuals. The conclusion to the story is satisfying while leaving the reader wanting Sarah and Xander to return. The historical aspects are as well constructed as the contemporary portions. The only grating aspect is the insistence that the manuscript would have been sent to a sixteenth century pope in Italian when a Latin copy was available. The Overseer is a clever and original work that demands readers use their minds as well as engaging their emotions.

Mkl says

A strange book! I don't mean a bad one, I mean a strange one! So much so that I do believe I will read it again quite soon. The story is a bit confused at the start. But it gets more and more interesting as it goes. Since English is not my mother language, I had a bit of trouble understanding some things, and had to read it over again until I caught what it meant. I would recommend it to a person that enjoys the language, and is not only in a hurry to know the end of the story.

Erin says

Not great. The stilted writing would have been okay if the plot was suspenseful and engrossing, but unfortunately things just plodded along. The characters were implausible, but not as implausible as the

pseudo-Machiavellian storyline. Oh, well--it was just a beach read.

Richp says

My impressions as I went through this: implausible but slow to get going, much in common with the later Dan Brown Langdon novels but the treasure hunt was less entertaining and the plot more credible, decent finish but with a credibility level about equal to early James Bond novels, and finally the conspiracy plot in some ways is likely closer to reality than a lot of people realize.

In terms of rating it swings from 2 to 4 and I think 3 is a fair rating. The story without the manuscript could be shortened by about a third without losing the 4 stuff but excizing the 2 stuff..

Joanne says

A well-written and seat-gripping thriller. Might make you think of the DaVinci Code because it's got people searching for a manuscript, but that's about where the similarity ends, since this one is all about political theory and its application to controlling states via terrorism pre-9/11.

The female protagonist is a smart and sensitive government operative, the male protagonist a gentle golly-gee-whiz academic, and they actually seem like believable people, at least as far as thrillers and vast conspiracies go. It's also a lot less gritty than your usual thriller (like Jason Bourne) -- yes, people get shot at and blown up, but not in gory detail, and even the sex and profanity are restrained. The Bad Guy is obvious early on, but it doesn't matter. Even the ending, which ties together things a little too neatly, doesn't really matter. This one is all about the characters.

Tomi says

I found the basic premise of the book to be rather farfetched...so that made it hard to believe the things that happened in it. There was also too much discussion of political philosophy for a mystery/thriller. The action scenes were well-written and the characters believable.

Ken Rogerson says

A little overly descriptive, but fun.

Mario J. says

I plodded through this one, it got somewhat better towards the end but nevertheless it was a struggle.

Pedro Figueras says

Something gave me this book in the year 2000 and since then I've tried to read up to five times. Finally, I have done so.

Author's narrative is insufferable. Interspersing chapters, he breaks the continuity of the story, jumping scenes and actors in the same chapter in a chaotic way. It does that, you mislead so many. There is too little action and suspense, and too much unnecessary talk and reflects.

Bill says

This novel started out well - I was quickly drawn into the story and the two main characters were plausible and interesting and the writing was crisp and tight. However, as it went on, it just went on and on. Sarah became more of a fantasy James Bond character, Xander seemed to become too quickly adept at thriller work and everyone seemed to know more and more than the reader. In the end, it was a struggle to finish and the climax, when it came owed way too much to James Bond movies, with large multi-billion dollar underground lairs and villains with private armies too easily defeated.

Dokusha says

Eine Gruppe von Leuten setzt an, die Theorien eines Mönches aus dem 16. Jahrhundert zur Erlangung der absoluten Staatsmacht in die Praxis umzusetzen. Voraussetzung für diese dauerhafte Staatsmacht ist es, erst einmal Chaos und Panik zu erzeugen.

Erst als die ersten Probeläufe für das Chaos analufen, wird klar, daß es diese Leute ernst meinen und sie gewillt sind, alles zu zerstören, um dann ihren neuen Staat aufzubauen. Die Zeit, sie noch aufzuhalten, ist knapp...

Spannend geschrieben, trickreich erzählt. Und auch die Überraschung am Ende fehlt nicht, in der sich wieder ganz andere als die Drahtzieher entpuppen. Als besonderes Schmankerl hat das Buch als Anhang eine Übersetzung des Büchleins, das die ganze Geschichte auslöste. Eine wirklich schöne Idee.

Jody says

Excitement on every page. Love the international flavor as well as the intrigue. Keeps you guessing.

Gerardo Tiburcio says

Excelente libro, en la misma vena de las novelas de Dan Brown con un toque de Maquiavelo. El manuscrito que es base de la novela sugiere temas interesantes que de ser puesto en practica generaria

desestabilizaciones sociales en búsqueda de adquirir poder. El tercer acto de la novela me decepciono un poco y el final apresurado, sin embargo es una lectura ampliamente recomendable.

*Escrito sin acentos.

Seamus says

It was very hard to put this book down. Rabb went so far as to write the "400 year old manuscript" that is at the center of the story. All-in-all a very clever piece of work...both the story and the manuscript.

Cyn Armistead says

I never had any interest in reading the Da Vinci Code, and if I'd heard about this, I might not have been interested in it, either. But somehow I picked up a damaged copy of it, and got terribly interested but it was in such bad shape that there was no way to go on reading. I found that I had to request it from the library, and as soon as it arrived I started over at the beginning. I've read it in chunks since then.

If I'd read this book when it was first released, back in 1998, I'm sure it would have been much more chilling. It was quite effective, even in 2011. I can easily remember the public figures who are echoed in Rabb's books - there are certainly similar ones in the news every day right now (some of them the same ones!)

I did, however, enjoy The Overseer for what it was. I didn't find myself chafing at the flaws other reviewers here have mentioned. Yes, government agents in such thrillers have to be nearly superhuman, and the protagonist, in order to survive, has to learn new rules very quickly. But the reader also has to suspend her disbelief, or she has no business reading such things. If the hero is an idiot, I'll accept that he's a slow learner and likely to die - but then he wouldn't be the hero, would he?

All in all, a decent read if you enjoy thrillers.
