

Top secret UFO documentary lacks believability

BY JORDAN REID
For the Keizertimes



“I want to believe,” read the iconic poster that hung in Special Agents Mulder and Scully’s office for more than 200 episodes of the iconic series *The X-Files*. It’s a phrase that perfectly sums up how I feel about the concept of extraterrestrial UFOs: I would love for someone to convince me that these things have visited earth because it’s a fascinating, paradigm-shifting idea. But do I believe in little green men from outer space? Not really, as pesky details and logic have a tendency to get in the way. I simply want to believe. This is the mindset I adopt whenever I consume UFO related media: I want you to convince me that there are aliens and I want you to entertain me. *Top Secret UFO Projects: Declassified*, a new (and awkwardly titled) Netflix documentary fails spectacularly with the former thanks to constant illogical leaps, misinterpretations of facts, and a complete lack of skepticism. All of this, plus the lack of new material and unimpressive visuals, leads it to fail on the latter as well.

One of the biggest problems that this and other similar documentaries suffer from is the assumption that if a UFO is real it must mean it is alien in nature. When discussing a press release from Project Blue Book, a legitimate attempt by the US government to investigate the UFO phenomena from the early fifties to the late sixties, *Declassified* claims through various “UFO experts” that it was “the first official admission that extra terrestrial craft of superior speed and maneuverability had been observed in earth’s atmosphere.” I’m sorry, what? The government states that it doesn’t know what a few flying objects are and suddenly that’s an

admission that aliens have visited us? It later says that because the government initially claimed that it didn’t know what crashed at Roswell (you know, that super famous UFO case) before changing course and saying it was a weather balloon means that a cover-up was happening. Or maybe, you know, they were just reacting to new information as it arose? These people clearly want to believe as much as I do; the problem is that they are willing to make leaps and absurd interpretations to get there. A little skepticism goes a long way when trying to prove why that very same skepticism is misplaced, but *Declassified* just claims that all of these outlandish things happened and hopes you don’t think about it harder than they did.

It ultimately felt like *Top Secret UFO Projects: Declassified* was insulting the audience’s intelligence, and that kept me from enjoying it. This frustration threw into relief other issues that the documentary has, namely poor visuals (particularly the CGI), uninspired music, and a lack of anything new to say. This is just like any other schlocky UFO documentary you have seen a billion times on the History Channel at 2:30 a.m. as you try to fall asleep.

Shouting at me to believe is not going to make me believe, documentary. Try harder next time.

Top Secret UFO Projects: Declassified is now available on Netflix.



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Netflix



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Mark your calendar

The library is once again opening its doors. We will re-open “softly” on Tuesday, September 7 on a limited schedule. We invite everyone to a full-scale reopening celebration on Saturday, September 18, at the front of the Keizer Cultural Center, 980 Chemawa Road NE. Come see the newly remodeled library, meet many community leaders, explore our expanded collection of books and movies, meet and greet our volunteers and join in the festivities.

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