Book Review

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Top Secret Files: World War One
Stephanie Bearce
Prufrock Press Inc.
Paperback, $8.95, 120 pp.
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I am addicted to Gelato ice-cream and Stephanie Bearce's Top Secret Files books. I review every one I can get my hands on, but I must admit that WW1 was hard to review.

WW1 is like all the Prufrock books. It has all the wonderful little boxes and pictures that appear in just the right places. Prufrock even tells our children how to do spy work at home with safe, approved ways. So clever!

All these books are written for the 9-12 set, and I repeatedly say that these books are perfect for adults, too. Most of us do not know the facts that are written by Stephanie Bearce.

But WW1 seems more bloody and primitive even though all wars seem primitive. I would suggest that adults read this book before giving it to their children. That is probably true for all books, but when you are familiar with a set like "Top Secret Files," you can rely upon your previous opinions. In this case, I suggest that you read it and give it only to mature children.

"Can a war really start because of a secret society? WWI did. It all began with a secret society called The Black Hand. In 1911, the country of Serbia was under the rule of Austria, Hungary. Many Serbians did not like this and wanted to govern their own land, so a few members of the Serbian army formed an undercover operation called the Black Hand. This undercover operation was designed to free Serbia from the control of Austria-Hungary."

So starts Top Secret Files: World War One.

1. Secrets,
2. Spies,
3. Special Missions,
4. Secret Weapons, and
5. Secret Forces

make up the table of contents. But the chapter on spies has very familiar names such as the Red Baron, Sidney Reilly, and Mata Hari.

I hate to admit it, but I bet our kids will love all this…even if I am a bit squeamish! Sigh.

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