

Acknowledgements

The book you are about to read is a compilation of material originally published in periodic installments to the World Wide Web between September, 2005 and March, 2008.

It must be stated emphatically here that this is the first draft of a work that, due to the unusual nature of its underlying material, necessarily remains very much a “work in progress.” As such, you can expect to see typos, grammatical errors, and all the other blemishes that you’d expect of a “first draft.” There is good reason for that.

An enormous amount of research has gone into this undertaking since it began in earnest in the spring of 2003. Still, there remains a great deal about the life and work of Thomas Townsend Brown which remains hidden — apparently concealed by forces and for reasons unknown and perhaps unknowable. It is not only that much of Brown’s work was officially “classified;” there is also the bizarre specter that much of his work is truly “secret,” beyond the reach of even those official institutions that do all the classifying.

Despite all the research, there remains a great deal about the underlying fundamentals of the life of Townsend Brown that we do *not* know, making it difficult if not downright impossible to coherently unify the intriguing details that we *do* know.

This is, or is at least supposed to be, a book about science, and offer a fair representation of a man who devoted his life to both the theory and practice of what appears to have been an unorthodox school of physics. It is first and foremost a biography, and as such should find its foundation in a steady narrative stream of verifiable facts. But the curious nature of Townsend Brown’s life is that the substantial record of his existence is, oddly... nonexistent.

There may also be a metaphysical dimension to such a pursuit — how, after all, do we learn anything new if we do not look askance from all that which we think that we already “know”? Nevertheless, a grave injustice is committed to the scientific method if we ignore the principal that some form of empirical evidence must follow any bold new hypothesis before it can be readily stated — even temporarily — as a manifestation of new knowledge or truth.

I labored under the assumption that such evidence exists within the pages of Townsend Brown’s life, but finding that evidence in a form that can be placed within the pages of a book has created a challenge that at times has proven insurmountable.

Until such time as some kind of further evidence is revealed, this “first draft” is offered as marker to establish as much as we do know now. There is no telling where the necessary information will come from — or when.

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There is, for example, an archive that interests us from World War II. Its files contain the records of something called the “Targeted Information Committee” — top-secret missions during the closing weeks of World War II — that are destined to remain classified until 2012, nearly seven decades after the actual events. Brown’s own travels intersected with those TICOM missions, behind enemy lines in Germany just before the end of the war. Perhaps there is something in those files that will reveal the unifying secret of his life. Or, perhaps, those papers will be reclassified indefinitely before their scheduled release in 2012.

For all we know, there may be some key information buried in the recesses of some “Raiders of the Lost Ark” warehouse that is scheduled for future declassification at some time in the future that will shed further light on the real nature of Townsend Brown’s life and work. But all we know for certain now is that, absent more concrete information, this “unexpurgated” first draft of the biography of Townsend Brown will have to suffice for the growing legion of enlightened readers who want to know the basic facts of Townsend Brown’s life and its impact on the people around him.

Today’s easy access to digital publishing makes it possible to offer this draft to willing and interested readers. This draft could certainly benefit from some refinement and proof-reading, but whatever further work is put into it now would be tantamount to polishing an oyster shell because we simply cannot get to the pearl — regardless of how certain our faith may be that this is the one mollusk in a thousand that indeed contains a jewel.

In the meantime, there are quite a few people whose contributions to this stage of the enterprise deserve generous and sincere recognition.

There is probably no way this project could have been undertaken without the Internet, and easy access to the web’s vast, instantly searchable global library. So I guess I should thank Tim Berners-Lee, Mark Andreessen, Larry Page and Sergey Brin for making it all possible. But even having the largest library in history at my fingertips is not enough. It still takes special sources — just the kind of resources that appear almost magically once you start offering content online.

One novel aspect of first publishing this book to the web over an extended period of time is that the work became somewhat “interactive.” Once the first installments began to appear on the web in the fall of 2005, a small but dedicated cadre of readers from around the world began to regularly tune in — and offer a lot of helpful feedback on each chapter.

For example, it was not long after I started publishing the chapters online that I received an e-mail message from Lace Lynch, an historian and genealogist in Brown’s hometown of Zanesville, Ohio. Lace already knew a little bit about Brown from newspaper accounts she had found from the 1920s and ‘30s. Lace, and another Zanesville local, Renee Huddleston, became indispensable volunteers on my research team. They escorted

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me around Zanesville when I visited there in the fall of 2004, and Lace uncovered some surprising and previously unknown information about Townsend Brown's marriage to another Zanesville native, Josephine Beale.

After the first chapters appeared online, a group of "regulars" began to chime in to an online forum after the publication of each subsequent chapter. There are well over a hundred active members of the forums, too many to single out every one, but among those who stand out now are: Mark Culpepper, who encouraged me to a higher level of scholarship with every chapter; Trickfox, who amazed members with his incisive insight into Townsend Brown's science; Mikado, who always insisted that contributors get to the point; Jim Zimmer, who never wavered from his certainty that there was something at the bottom of the rabbit hole; Radomir, who was often a voice of sanity amid a cacophony of contentious perspectives; Kevin.b, the hobbit navigator; Langley, who had his own intriguing angle on what it's all about; and Victoria Steele, whose gentle needling was instrumental in making new chapters on Thursdays a nearly regular event.

I am also extremely grateful to Jan Lundquist, who offered invaluable editorial assistance and did her level best to help find an agent and/or publisher. A nod also to UFO researcher Ryan Wood, who was the first to show me how to navigate the labyrinthine corridors of the National Archives in College Park, Maryland.

I don't think any of this would have been possible without the very generous contribution of Andrew Bolland and his wife Linda, who rightfully deserve to be regarded as the torch-bearers for the Townsend Brown legacy. Andrew created the website where I first learned about Townsend Brown in the summer of 2002. Andrew has served as the "official science advisor" to this project, doing his level best to help me understand the real gist of Townsend Brown's work. He is also the person who introduced me to Townsend Brown's daughter, which introduction really got the ball rolling on this whole endeavor.

Much of this story is derived from "covert" sources, without whose input I don't think I would have been able to do even as much as I'm offering here. Much of what these mysterious sources had to offer has found its own life in the pages that follow; for now I will just offer another heartfelt word of thanks to "Morgan," "Boston," and "Bentfeather."

Finally, I am indebted in ways I will perhaps never fully recognize to the indefatigable Linda Brown, the daughter of the subject of this volume and herself a principal in its multiple story lines.

When I first approached Linda with the idea of writing her father's biography, she expressed deep-seated reservations about revisiting potentially painful memories of the struggles she shared with her family. Over the course of a "snail mail" correspondence that we exchanged over several months, we found enough common ground and trust in each other that Linda was finally able to cast aside those reservations.

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Linda Brown and I have been in almost constant daily contact for a period of nearly six years. It seems at times that what started out as a contractual, working arrangement had evolved into something much more akin to a marriage: sometimes constructive and functional, and sometimes maybe not so much.

A substantial portion of the material contained herein comes from the recollections of a devoted daughter, who had the presence of mind during much of her early life to maintain a voluminous personal journal of her travels and observations. Given the lack of substantive information from other sources, were it not for the generous and trusting access Linda provided to the intimate recollections of a young woman coming of age in the most unusual of circumstances, this book probably would not exist at all.

As stated, this is just “the first draft.” This work is not done. Despite all the effort thus far, there remains a great deal to learn about Townsend Brown.

The central mysteries of his life persist: Did Townsend Brown discover the key to a parallel universe, or is all of the speculation that swirls around such possibilities the result of a deliberate misinformation campaign designed to conceal other — possibly more prosaic but nonetheless important — aspects of Brown’s life and work?

The answers to these questions have yet to emerge in a solid, credible, verifiable form. The best we can do for now is to assemble what we do know about Townsend Brown’s life, send it down the river and see who takes note.

Paul Schatzkin
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