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## *Review*

### **Fleshing Out Skull & Bones**

**Investigations into America's Most Powerful Secret Society**

**Edited by Kris Millegan**

**Hardcover: 712 pages; US\$39.95**

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February 11, 2004—Despite the publicity in recent years, Skull & Bones is not a household name. Even those Americans who have heard of Yale's oldest and most secretive society tend to dismiss it as nothing more than just another college fraternity.

Kris Millegan has done a masterful job in assembling and compiling what is known about Skull & Bones, including writing several chapters of his own, in "Fleshing Out Skull & Bones: Investigations into America's Most Powerful Secret Society"—so masterful that it may be more than you ever wanted to know about this secret society, its history, and the history of the secret, but nowhere as influential, societies born in its wake.

To date, three Bonesmen have occupied the White House: William Howard Taft, George Herbert Walker Bush and George Walker Bush. Also from the ranks of Skull & Bones have come two chief justices of the Supreme Court, more than 20 senators and members of the House, cabinet officers, judges and state officials, in addition to captains of banking and industry.

This is not just another old boys' (and now girls') network. It is a network extraordinaire in all American history, which may surpass even that of the Freemasons. One difference between members of Skull & Bones and Masons is that the former are forbidden from publicly acknowledging their membership in Bones. Moreover, from what is known about Skull & Bones' rituals, they are dark—some say satanic.

George W. Bush has reportedly walked out of rooms when asked about his membership. Senator Kerry, also a Bonesman, fobs off such questions.

The on-campus group is small and is made up of seniors: only 15 members. Each year those 15 members each "tap" one junior as being worthy to join their secret society. But it's a "tap" that lasts a lifetime, opening doors to the powerful elite. Does this sound more like the Mafia than the antics of kids in an American university?

Yet, if the current trend holds and John Kerry becomes the Democratic nominee for president, for the first time in history, two Bonesmen will be squaring off for the White House in November. That alone raises interesting questions as to why this secretive, powerful and influential society would pit two of its own against each other. Unfortunately, the answer is not in the book.

What does such an influential secret society say about an open and democratic America? Combine Bonesman, who may or may not hold memberships in other secretive organizations, with Freemasons, Opus Dei, P2 and, perhaps, even the Mafia, and you have a worldwide network of extraordinary power.

Put "Fleshing Out Skull & Bones" on your must-reading list. You won't be disappointed.

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