

Cold War Space sleuths – The Untold Secrets of the Soviet Space Program.
Dominic Phelan, editor // Springer – Praxis, New York, copyright 2013

Editor Dominic Phelan:

The publication of James Oberg's book *Red Star in Orbit* in 1981 can be seen as an important event in the history of space sleuthing because it served to inspire a new generation of researchers with its gripping chapters... As Brian Harvey recalls, 'His book is a terrific read and I read it twice through in six hours! Somebody had actually put the whole thing down in writing and persuaded a publisher to take it – that was the significant bit'." [p. 18]

Harvey, space author, had also commented: "[Oberg] is provocative, interesting, adversarial, and controversial but he does have a basic respect for the facts." [p, 12]

Foreword by William Barry, NASA Chief Historian [p. xiii]: "As a professional pursuit, the study of the Soviet/Russian space programme in the West didn't exist until the people who contributed created it. It was not easy, but these pioneers developed the necessary techniques and persevered in the face of deliberate obfuscation on one side and disheartened ignorance on the other to pursue their passion for understanding [it].... Each of the sleuths developed skills that allowed for remarkable insights with the limited data available. With his doggedly inquisitive mind, Jim Oberg set the early standard for close reading of the published sources. ... Whatever talent they brought to bear, each of these sleuths showed remarkable tenacity in pursuing a better understanding of the Soviet/Russian space programme."

Bart Hendrickx [Belgium], p. 185. "What especially whetted my appetite for the sleuthing business was James Oberg's 1981 book *Red Star in Orbit*, which I even partially translated into Dutch as a thesis project for school. I was amazed by the amount of evidence for the Soviet manned lunar project, the military Salyuts, and those 'missing cosmonauts'. It was the beginning of a passion that has never faded since."

Asif Siddiqi, p. 221: "In 1981 [at age 14] my parents bought me a copy of *Red Star in Orbit* by James Oberg. It would be an understatement to say that my world view was transformed. I practically memorized the entire book, and re-read a hundred times the end section where Oberg listed still unanswered questions." [p. 234] "The significance of this book cannot be overstated because it drew a large audience into the study of Soviet space history,... What distinguished Oberg's work was a certain flamboyance coupled with assiduous and exacting research. He was also not afraid to tell a good story – although not at the expense of the facts."

David Shayler, p. 259: "James Oberg of the United States was one of the first researchers to pose questions or offer theories on the early Soviet manned space flights. Jim did not merely report the facts or repeat the official line, but advanced his own conclusions and theories. His letters and articles ... were a catalyst for other writers to take a deeper look at the programme. The 'golden years' of space sleuthing were about to flourish...."

Phelan, p. 28, "Perhaps the last word should be given to James Oberg, the man who more than most became the archetypal Cold War Space Sleuth.: 'I'm astonished we got so much right, and I'm delighted that we missed so much that our post-Soviet Russian colleagues still had a lot to teach us. I still get chills remembering how I lived long enough, and the USSR died soon enough, for me to stand on the scoured concrete apron in Area 41 where Nedelin's team perished, or to hold in my hand a fragment of the July 1969 N-1 failure, or to shake the hand of a cosmonaut erased from early photographs. Awesome beyond belief. Of all the futures anticipated by me as a young man, none of these events were within range of even the wildest hopes'."