

Here is a sample of early reviews, feedback, and endorsements for *A Secret of the Universe* (www.asecretoftheuniverse.com):

"Author Gibson takes the hard questions head-on and weaves multiple points of view, including the omniscient storyteller, allowing the reader enough distance to step out of the story and dig into the references in the back of the book. Fans ... will recognize the author's dedication to the quest for truth, and many readers who delight in a well-researched cautionary tale might find themselves dog-eared pages and taking notes as they enjoy the story."

--**Foreword** magazine, Carol Lynn Stewart (see Ms. Stewart's entire review from the September/October 2007 issue of **Foreword** [here!](#))

"*A Secret of the Universe* is a warm and inspiring story that offers a far deeper message than the other 'Secret' book so popular these days, but this secret is based in reality, always a good idea if you live in this universe and not some other! Read *A Secret of the Universe* and be prepared to be moved."

-- Michael Shermer, Publisher of *Skeptic* magazine, monthly columnist for *Scientific American*

"A fine and welcome novel of ideas on some of today's most pressing issues, well and thoughtfully written."

-- Earl Doherty, author of *The Jesus Puzzle* and *Challenging the Verdict*

"Thank you Stephen L. Gibson. You probably struck a chord with more people than you know. I have been waiting for this book for a very long time. I'm only sorry there are only five stars. I'd give it more!"

-- Mary A. Phillips, [Amazon](#) Reviewer

"Steve Gibson has given a wholly original spin to the age-old saga of the 'hero's journey' which we all must face in one way or another. This is a timely tale with profundities and depths far beyond the scope of most—if not all—first novels. A must read!"

-- Tom Harpur, Best-selling author of *The Pagan Christ*, journalist and former Rhodes Scholar

"It is a story about ... the most important secret the world could discover. ... The writing is tight and brilliantly executed. ... I dare readers to pick up this book and read it with an open mind. You won't be sorry. I wholeheartedly recommend *A Secret of the Universe*."

-- Heather Froeschl, author, editor, and book reviewer, [Bookideas.com](#). (Read Heather's [full review here](#).)

"*A Secret of the Universe* is good, exciting, and entertaining fiction; and it contains a lot of surprising information, with plenty of references, that many readers may not be aware of. Read it for entertainment and information. But you might not agree with Gibson's conclusions."

-- Maurice A. Williams, [Bookideas.com](#). (Read Maurice's [full review here](#).)

"Should be required reading for every seminary student! I'll teach it at my church."

-- Reverend Billie Dalton, Methodist Pastor

"It is a very powerful personal story and an intriguing quest for one's religious philosophy ... and philosophy of life. I tried to eat all the '[tomatoes](#),' and I'm fascinated by what they taught me. I confess that originally I thought that aspect of the book wouldn't affect me. However, it has caused me to evaluate many aspects of my beliefs and consider how those of others can influence me. It subtly and masterfully delivers its punch."

-- Michael LoPresto, Adjunct Professor of English, Western Michigan University

"I would suggest that anybody interested in religion, critical thinking, or belief systems read this book. This character driven book was both thought provoking and entertaining. It certainly deserves a second read."

-- M. Neall, Amazon reviewer (see [Amazon reviews](#))

"A book which came to mind while reading this was *The Hamlet Syndrome: Overthinkers Who Underachieve* by Adrienne Miller and Andrew Goldblatt. At the end of this book, they suggested the "Hamlets" of the world were those who could open the eyes of the world to what was going on around them through espousing such principles as tolerance, curiosity, critical thought and skepticism, associative thinking, and seeing the consequences of actions. These, and much more, can be seen in this novel of "love, loss, and the discovery of an eternal truth", and I daresay that Stephen Gibson is one of those "Hamlets". ... Using fiction, he takes us into the lives of believers and non-believers, to broach the subjects of religion, sex, philosophy, metaphysics, and other volatile subjects to help the reader see things from alternate perspectives."

-- Michael Woodhead, TCM Reviews (see Woodhead's [full review here](#))

"... the style is good so that the reader's attention is held for the many hours that the book takes to read. ... Strongly recommended, especially to Christians to get a wider perspective of the world. Readers of other religions too will find the book interesting since fundamentalism is not confined to any one religion but is a basic trait of human nature."

-- SV Swamy, book reviewer, author, and editor from Hyderabad, India--also a physicist, a metallurgist, and Quality Management expert (see [Swamy's Book Reviews](#)).

"An astounding and admirable achievement. ... [It] absolutely demands discussion."

-- Dr. Larry Schlack, Associate Professor Emeritus at Western Michigan University

"The story was excellent. ... I found myself being educated about different beliefs through the discussions in the story. I learned how people explain their beliefs that the earth is only 6,300 years old. ... The questions contained in the study guide are very thought-provoking and could lead to some very stimulating conversations within study groups. I highly recommend that this book be read by readers on a quest for the truth. *A Secret of the Universe* will help direct them on their path."

-- Paige Lovitt for *Reader Views*: "reviews, by readers, for readers" (9/07). [Read the entire review here](#) (.pdf form)

"The information provided within this book is staggering and extremely eye-opening, and you will have to stop once in a while to digest all the information, but it will make you see things that you might never have thought of. You will get upset with some of the views he explores, and you will sometimes feel like throwing the book across the room and stomping on it. Do stick to it until the end though, and you will understand it better when you do, and don't just believe everything you read, do your own research and find your own truth, that's what *A Secret of the Universe* eventually tells you."

-- Betty Wong, reviewer for *Blog Critics Magazine*, Malaysia. (Read Betty's entire review at <http://blogcritics.org/archives/2007/09/23/165357.php>.)

"It is a well-plotted story and could easily stand as a standard story of two boys growing apart because of different views on life, but the really intriguing part of the book is the presentation of the "secret of the universe" as seen through the eyes of science and reason. These ideas will shock some people, especially the traditional Christians, but the author has presented the views (which I assume are his) in such a way that one could hardly avoid looking at the ideas objectively.

Whether the reader rejects some or all of the ideas, this is a book that will cause some serious thinking. It was an intriguing read."

-- Willie Elliot, book reviewer for Myshelf.com. (See Ms. Elliot's full review at <http://www.myshelf.com/literary/07/secretoftheuniverse.htm>.)

Real e-mail reactions to A Secret of the Universe (update 01/01/09):

"I began reading it that evening... and couldn't seem to stop. I continued reading through the entire weekend--that's not my usual mode. WOW! How in the world did you ever get that story/information pulled together?! Fantastic. With your huge reference list I now have a solid direction for further exploration-which I will do. You have given me a great gift!"

With immense appreciation,
Jan Livesay

"I don't often write to authors ... but, boy am I ever compelled to write to you. I really have to say you are among a few individuals with a real awareness of what the other side is feeling. Absolutely. ... you have a great ability to actually communicate the essence of the message ... you should be very very proud of the way you take/took the energy and time to carefully do this. I think an essential characteristic of this is humility. Well done. On the other side, I feel I can honestly say I really listen. I really listen to WL Craig, or Bob Dutko, et al. I know you do because of the points you raise in the book.

Seriously, you have enriched my life and improved the landscape! I greatly appreciate your efforts."

Very sincerely,
Mike

"I am thoroughly enjoying the [audiobook] podcast version of "A Secret of the Universe". ... I can't express how much I appreciate you sharing your journey ... helping me on my journey in many ways. You've even helped me formulate the questions that I was struggling with articulating."

Bonnie McKenzie

"When I put down the book I walked down the hallway to where my children were sleeping (daughter 9 and son 6), and kissed them each on the forehead and told them I loved them. I suppose my hope is that when I lie dying, those two will be there with me. Thanks for the book."

Matt Dick

"What an honour to be having a real life dialogue with the author of one of the best books I have ever read. I feel like a character in your book! Perhaps that's the Gnostic in me, amazed that the writer of such sacred eternal truths should cross into the profane plane. It's gratitude too, for how you have distilled your search and your learning process, into a framework that is truly non-dogmatic and emotionally rich.

If ever I wrote a book about my own inner experience of life, I would try my hardest to emulate your mix of raw human relationship details, and the ongoing revision and clarification of beliefs and knowledge. It is a rare skill I think to be able to bring the two together as you have. I have read great students of thought and analysis, and great students of emotion, but you stand tall in both."

Keep writing!
David Ackling

"A Secret of the Universe has changed me. It has allowed me to question my whole world view in a positive way and hopefully helped to strip away arrogance and bigotry as well as instill humility and healthy open mindedness. Your book not only asks the big questions, but it somehow seems to answers them too. Well, at least as much as they can be answered.

Your understanding of human nature and ability to eloquently articulate it is brilliantly masterful. In particular I related so much to your delineative description of grief. In the early part of the book when Ian lost his father I thought here's an author who knows about grief. The quality of the narration in the Audio book form (the only version I've thus far been exposed) is wonderful and embellishes the tale by pleasing delivery, emphasis, punctuation and pronunciation.

I believe this book will stand the test of time and be utilized and valued as a personal growth tool for many years to come. I will certainly value and use A Secret of the Universe in this way."

Ben Hewett

"This is to say thank you for writing A Secret of the Universe and Truth-Driven Thinking as well as for your other Truth Driven initiatives. They have all been helpful to me. After finishing Secret I am almost through a second time listening to Truth Driven Thinking. Thanks for sharing your experiences and ideas. Sometimes this journey can feel very lonely. It's good to encounter another pilgrim once in a while. I am reminded of a piece in Edward Hirsch's book How to Read a Poem: and Fall In Love With Poetry in which he compares a poem to a message in a bottle that the author sets adrift on the seas of time and space. Eventually sometime somewhere the poem resonates in the heart of a reader. Thanks again."

Dennis Asbury

"After listening to "A Secret" for the last three weeks, I feel like I have actually met you and know you a bit. I found "Secret" thought-provoking and a refreshing respite amid the "Us vs. Them" battles between the sacred and the secular."

Jason Reagan, Editor, *Mountain Times*

"The weird thing about it is that this novel is so much more realistic than most fiction. It feels so real, that during the funeral and stuff, I was feeling real sadness as if I were there too. Other books have done that to me ... but it's pretty rare."

Danny Schade

"Just one more person who thoroughly enjoyed your well written and obviously well researched book—A Secret of the Universe—well done Sir!"

Paul Neff

"Very well done and a great read. ... Thanks so much for going public with your revelations, it was a very courageous thing to do."

Jeffrey Bolduc

"I received your book just before Christmas and was riveted to it right to the end. I found it to be inspiring and challenging at every turn and it certainly gave me a lot of food for thought. I loved the way you managed to incorporate vast amounts of factual data into the fictional framework - it worked perfectly. The endnotes have also provided a useful springboard for further investigation. If only more books could be like this!"

Craig Smith

"...Congratulations to you on an outstanding work of fiction!! Your "Secret of the Universe" audio [book] podcasts are actually the only audio-book podcasts I have listened to. I tune in to many interviews, instructional shows, documentaries etc. but I truly enjoyed a work of well thought-out fiction as a break from the usual. Your story was a brave one. I was very curious and looked forward to each and every chapter."

Leah Walsh

"I finally finished your amazing book! It was truly awesome ... very thought provoking ... I earmarked many pages, and I sincerely wish that the seminar series and final publication so central to the story were entirely true. I even did some searching online, hoping that it WAS true. I hope you're experiencing great success with this venture, and that you write lots more books!"

Dr. Matt Navarre

"I have just finished A Secret of the Universe, and write to say thank you for this book. Having recently read both Spong and Ehrman, my life has had profound parallels to Ian's. I watched Ian grapple with epistemology and ontology as I had. His struggles with the widening gap in his relationship with Bill were my struggles that I have had ... I was moved to tears watching Ian deal with the loss of ... [characters]. What your story allowed me to do was to map the theoretical against the practical and very human experience of loss.

When I was 12, I had a dream that Jesus visited me and told me that my life was "his." It was not like any other dream I'd ever had, palpable and life-altering. Even after having read and understood how the brain makes things up ("Stumbling on Happiness"), this visitation was not something that I thought that I "made up," until now.

Where I am left standing is in a place of deep inquiry. If who I have considered myself to be (specially called by Jesus into service) wasn't "True," then, "who am I?" If my own self-definition might be "wrong" (misinterpretation), then who else might I be "wrong" about? And after all those questions are considered, just what is my life about and what will I spend my time doing?

*Not an easy place to land, but any landing you walk away from is a good one."
With deep gratitude,*

John [last name withheld for privacy]

"My wife thanked me for asking her to read your book! ... Although we have similar beliefs, I've only been able to get her to read a little bit here and there of Hitchens, Dawkins, Spong and others. This morning we were talking about some frustrations with a friend of hers and she said, I'd like to give her a copy of "A Secret of the Universe". She went on to thank me for encouraging her to be a rational thinker, told me how much she liked your book and thanked me for requesting that she read it. She's enjoying the story and likes your way of explaining topics that might be dry reading otherwise. I think that is a big compliment for you. I don't recall her thanking me like that for reading any other books in this area and the others have been written by some pretty big and talented luminaries."

Russ Schussler

"It's one of the deepest and most moving books I've ever read (and I've read many) and I continue to regard it as an astounding work. The number of men who have the depth of thought, let alone the skill, to write a novel "about a philosophical journey through love, loss, and personal discovery" is miniscule. You are unique."

Dr. Larry Schlack

"This is my first letter to you. I wanted to take a few minutes to express to you my enjoyment of your ... new book "A Secret of the Universe". ... I truly thought that no one in the world thought as I did. But now I know there are at least two of us. ... I am now much more comfortable in my skin and I feel much more at peace with the universe. For that I am eternally grateful."

Robert Lombardi

"I really love this book! ... Thank you Stephen for the book and the podcast that brought me to it!"

Jeremy

"Thank you for your book ... I plan to order about 10 more copies to give to friends and maybe a co-worker or two that need their world views challenged."

Matt Cormier

"I caught you on Skepticity and went to your site to check out the book and what can I say it's wonderful to find a book that doesn't push one side versus the other but really makes you think and challenge yourself to think for yourself."

Bob

"I couldn't imagine how good this novel would be until I got it in the mail. I like how each character plays a role in what determines their individual beliefs. Honestly I had no idea that Bill becomes apologetic and Ian more skeptical. No wonder it's enjoyable, it takes a broad look at both ends of the spectrum. I most admire the 'politeness' of each character when engaging in honest dialogue. Thanks Stephen for the great literary work ..."

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