

Invasion of the Mind Snatchers

BY ELIZABETH BIRD

The triangular, bug-eyed face of the alien stares from the cover of Whitley Strieber's *Communion*, a "true story" of extra-terrestrial abduction that topped best-seller lists for more than a year.

No lovable ET here. Former horror-novelist Strieber tells in gruesome detail precisely how "the visitors" operated on his brain and raped him with enormous, scaly objects.

In the New Age climate of the 1980s, *Communion* and other best-sellers such as Bud Hopkins's *Intruders* have given alien abduction accounts a credibility that extends beyond tabloid headlines to the mainstream world of the morning talk shows and shopping-mall bookstores.

Readers may be impressed by Strieber's eye-witness account, or by the apparently scientific tone of Hopkins's work, which centers on interviews with hypnotized "abductees." But most psychologists agree that such tales spring not from the alien world of extra-terrestrials but from the dark interior world of the human psyche.

The simplest psychological-mechanism fueling UFO accounts is confabulation, something we all do in storing our vast array of memories. Think of those events you remember as if they happened yesterday — that perfect summer, that train ride when you were five years old. They may well be confabulations, tapestries stitched together from actual experience, the stories of others who were there, events that have happened since, and perhaps a dash of wishful thinking. People who have experienced something together — even a recent event — may have strikingly different memories due to confabulation.

And while confabulation is normal, psychologists recognize that some of us are fantasy-prone personalities, people who are highly suggestible and can confabulate in vivid detail. Given the right cues — and existing knowledge of "alien abductions" — their imaginations may soar.

But Hopkins and other investigators use hypnosis to help people recall their abduc-

UFO visions: a pervasive modern myth.

tions. Isn't memory uncannily accurate under hypnosis?

Unfortunately for UFO buffs, no. Countless experiments have shown that, while hypnosis may elicit remarkably detailed accounts, they are no more accurate than normal memories. Indeed, suggestible people may produce notably less accurate accounts under hypnosis. In psychologist Robert Baker's experiments, hypnotized subjects recalled details of objects in the laboratory that were not there and remembered imaginary events that Baker had discussed just before hypnotizing them.

Baker, professor of psychology at the University of Kentucky, doesn't say "abductees" are lying. Rather, they may read something that reminds them of an experience they believe they've had. Once they contact a UFO investigator, the attention makes them feel important. "And the

more the volunteer is observed and interrogated, the greater the motivation to come up with a cracking good story," he says. An abductee who has been written about once, for example, seems remarkably prone to being abducted again. Each successive story becomes more elaborate.

Baker points out that individuals who believe hypnotism unearths deeper truths come to believe the tale more completely each time they retell it. Moreover, people who are not consciously lying will, like Whitley Strieber, easily pass a polygraph test. Baker points out that in *Communion*, Strieber

shows the classic symptoms of a fantasy-prone individual: "He is easily hypnotized; he is amnesiac; he has vivid memories of his early life; body immobility and rigidity; a religious background; a very active fantasy life; he is a writer of occult and highly imaginative novels."

UFO abductions — why are the tales so consistent and the abductees so convinced of their truth that even polygraphs don't trip them up?



SCANDIA

The Shoulder Bag For People On The Go!

Body rigidity and immobility represent another, fairly common psychological phenomenon that may have triggered many abduction tales. Many of us have had the disorienting experience of a hypnogogic (when falling asleep) or hypnopompic (when waking up) hallucination. We suddenly find ourselves wide awake, but unable to move. We open our eyes and are confronted with something bizarre — a dead relative or friend, a ghost, an unrecognizable being. We may feel very happy or very afraid, but we quickly fall asleep again. Later we recall the incident as remarkably real.

Baker sees Strieber's alien encounters as "classic, textbook . . . hypnopompic hallucination." On one occasion, Strieber reports waking and finding the roof of his house on fire, yet goes back to sleep — "clear evidence of a hypnopompic dream," says Baker.

These hallucinations are not symptoms of mental instability or psychosis, Baker says, but examples of anomalous psychological events that can happen to perfectly normal people. Fantasy-prone people, however, may report them more often than others.

But if abduction tales are individual hallucinations, why are they so similar? The aliens are almost always humanoid, two-eyed and gray, white or green. They travel in saucer-shaped craft, and they transport their victims aboard for medical and sexual experimentation.

This consistency is no surprise to anthropologists. They know that individual hallucinatory experiences conform to cultural patterns. Even under the influence of drugs, people hallucinate phenomena that their culture recognizes.

During the witch persecutions in Europe and America, for example, many people, pressured by inquisitors, believed they had flown to sabbaths, taken part in weird rituals and been seduced by demons. Twentieth-century counterparts talk of flying in UFOs, being subjected to medical tests and being raped by lustful ETs.

Folklorist Bill Ellis, assistant professor of English and American Studies at Pennsylvania State University, compares alien abductions with a Newfoundland phenomenon known as the Old Hag: "A person who

IT HOLDS EVERYTHING!

The Scandia is intelligently designed to hold all the books, paper, equipment and clothes you could ever need to carry.

There are even special pockets for all those little odds and ends that seem to get lost in ordinary bags. The sturdy canvas Scandia measures 14½" across, 11" deep, and 4" wide (the perfect size for an airplane carry-on), and has six inner and outer pockets. And for those times when you need a little extra space, just open the Scandia's inside zipper and the bag expands to a full 8 inches in width! No matter how much you pack into the Scandia, it will still be trim enough to carry comfortably.

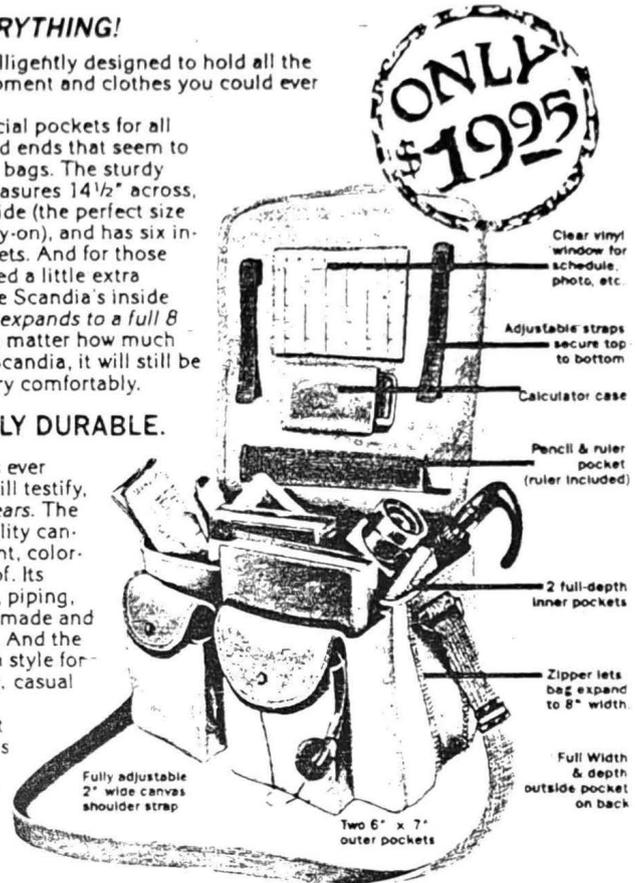
IT'S EXTREMELY DURABLE.

As anyone who has ever owned a Scandia will testify, *this bag lasts for years.* The Scandia's high-quality canvas is water-resistant, color-fast, and scuff-proof. Its heavy duty zippers, piping, and snaps are well-made and extremely durable. And the Scandia will stay in style for years; its attractive, casual look goes as well with a business suit as it does with jeans and a sweater. And with six handsome colors to choose from, you might want to own more than one!

IT'S A REMARKABLE BARGAIN!

If you've shopped around for high-quality shoulder bags, briefcases, and purses, you're probably aware that most of these items cost at least \$50. But, because we've made a mass purchase of Scandia bags, we are able to sell them at the remarkably low price of only \$19.95 each. Surely, that's a small price to pay for a big capacity, smart-looking bag that will last for years.

ONLY \$19.95



NOW ONLY \$19.95

Barnes & Noble Unconditional Guarantee

You must be completely satisfied with every item you order from Barnes & Noble by mail or you may return it to us for a full refund.

24 HOURS - 7 DAYS A WEEK
IN NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ 08901

• CREDIT CARD CUSTOMERS CALL TOLL FREE • 1-800-228-3535

Barnes & Noble
Booksellers Since 1873

DEPT. B236, 126 FIFTH AVE., NY, NY 10011

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

Check VISA Mastercard American Express

CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____

EXP. DATE _____

SIGNATURE _____

ITEM #	STYLE	QTY	TOTAL
#1377068	BLUE		
#1377027	BLACK		
#1377019	GRAY		
#1377035	BROWN		
#1377043	KHAKI		
#1377050	BURGUNDY		
Merchandise Total:			
Add sales tax for deliveries to MA, PA, NY, NJ & MN.			
Add \$2.50 per bag ordered for shipping & insurance			
ORDER TOTAL			

Psychology Today Tapes

All tapes are \$10.95 each (\$11.95 each outside the U.S.A.). New York residents add appropriate sales tax. See order information below.

- **HEALTHY SUPER EXECUTIVES: WHAT SETS THEM APART?**
by Kenneth R. Pelletier #20314
- **WOMEN IN MANAGEMENT: HOW TO GET TO THE TOP**
Ann M. Morrison #20333
- **CONQUERING THE FEAR OF PUBLIC SPEAKING**
by Michael Motley #20337
- **ERICKSONIAN TRANCE: INTERIOR ROAD TO EXCELLENCE**
by Eleanor Field #20339
- **PEAK PERFORMANCE**
by Charles Garfield #20300
- **NEW WAYS TO PUT JOY AND ZING INTO YOUR LIFE**
by Donald C. Klein #20334
- **MEDITATION: AN INSTRUCTIONAL CASSETTE**
by Daniel Goleman #20033
- **DEEP RELAXATION**
by Daniel Goleman #20040
- **MENTAL IMAGERY: YOUR HIDDEN POTENTIAL**
by Arnold A. Lazarus #20286
- **STIMULATING CREATIVITY**
by Teresa M. Amabile #20312
- **OVERCOMING SHYNESS**
by Philip Zimbardo #20102
- **HE WHO HESITATES IS LOST**
by Albert Ellis #20267
- **A SIX-SECOND TECHNIQUE TO CONTROL STRESS**
by Charles F. Stroebe #20285
- **SELF-DETERMINATION**
by Edward L. Deci #20283
- **HOW THE POWER OF SELF-HYPNOSIS CAN WORK FOR YOU**
by Shirley Sanders #20330
- **HOW TO DEAL WITH DIFFICULT PEOPLE—AN UPDATE**
by Gerald Piaget and Barbara Binkley #20338
- **TAKING RISKS FOR PERSONAL GROWTH**
by David Viscott #20255
- **BECOMING MORE SELF-RELIANT**
by Gary Emery #20292
- **PERSONAL IMPACT**
by John Cooper #20297
- **THINK YOURSELF INTO HEALTH AND HIGH PERFORMANCE**
by Martin E.P. Seligman, #20331

Check those you're ordering and send with your check or money order to:
PSYCHOLOGY TODAY TAPES
Dept. 963
Box 059073
Brooklyn, NY 11205-9061

Credit-card customers may
CALL TOLL FREE 1-800-345-8112

BEYOND SELF

is relaxed but apparently awake," he explains, "suddenly finds himself paralyzed in the presence of some nonhuman entity. Often, the sensation is accompanied by terrifying hallucinations — of shuffling sounds, of humanoid figures with prominent eyes. Often the figure even sits on the victim's chest, causing a choking sensation." While Newfoundland culture recognizes and names the phenomenon, American culture has not — at least until now.

Psychologist Milton Rosenberg of the University of Chicago suggests that UFO abduction tales represent a "pervasive

*Abduction evidence
produced by UFO-ologists
is science-fiction
cultism — flimsy at best,
fraudulent at worst.*

modern myth that has been much propagandized, circulated, and diffused through the telling and the retelling." As the myth spreads, in supermarket tabloids and "nonfiction" bestsellers, more and more people recast their own hallucinations or fantasies in terms of the myth. An experience that in a different time or place might have been understood as an attack by a demon or the Old Hag is interpreted as an extra-terrestrial abduction.

Psychologists and other researchers generally agree that abduction evidence produced by UFO-ologists is flimsy at best and fraudulent at worst, most accurately described as science-fiction cultism. But is the abduction myth harmful? Baker thinks not. Although abduction books "should be moved to the science-fiction shelves," rational people view the stories with amusement. Ellis argues that "the proper response is not amusement but concern — not over the risk of UFO invaders, but over the treatment of such victims." He feels they should be helped rather than having their delusions encouraged by believers or laughed at by cynics. □

Elizabeth Bird, Ph.D., is an anthropologist who lives and writes in Minnesota.

John R Salter, Jr
503 Oak Street
Grand Forks, ND 58201
(701) 775-4146
September 5, 1989

Dear Friends:

Frustrated and angered by our recent Notice of Appeal to the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court at New Orleans, vis-a-vis Judge Barbour's open disclosure order in the Sovereignty Commission files case, at least some of the self-serving proponents of throwing the long defunct Commission's myriad of sealed (and grounded on falsehoods and malice) files to the profitable media and publishing winds, have reverted, in however veiled a fashion, to Red-baiting.

See, as one example, the attached editorial/article by Sid Salter (who, as he quickly points out, is no relation!): editor of the Scott County, Mississippi Times, out of Forest. This column appeared in many of the state's papers, including the major Clarion-Ledger/Jackson Daily News which apparently isn't printing my letter of August 26, '89, written after grossly misleading headlines in that paper distorted our position in the case: "Two File Notice Of Appeal To Keep Sovereignty Records Closed -- Two Civil Rights Activists Want Files Open To Them And Not The Public." (See our position as outlined in the aforementioned 8/26 letter).

Incidentally, as the whole world knows -- at least that portion which has read my readily available book on the historic Jackson Movement, Jackson, Mississippi: An American Chronicle of Struggle & Schism, (1979, with new somewhat enlarged edition appearing in 1987 via Krieger Publishers), I enjoyed a very public relationship with the excellent and effective Southern Conference Educational Fund, leaving Tougaloo Southern Christian College to take a full-time civil rights organizing job with SCEF for a critical piece of the 60s. SCEF was a fine outfit and it was damn good to be an important part of it.

Although we have, frankly, been subjected to considerable calumny, it's important to point out that we've received many expressions of support -- across racial, academic, and social class lines. The National ACLU (in contrast to its Mississippi affiliate) appears supportive of our privacy rights position; the National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee, some of whose lawyers pioneered the first major Freedom of Information/Privacy Acts cases, is very much so. Some leaders of the American Friends Service Committee have expressed concern about the situation and support for our perspective. There is a possibility that some sort of honorable compromise can be negotiated.

But, on the other hand, we are fighting on and preparing for a long haul. We feel it's critically important to (1) expose the repressive workings of the Sovereignty Commission -- a secret police agency and, (2) fully protect the privacy rights of its hundreds and thousands of victims.

In Solidarity,




John R Salter, Jr

seems, is for real.

just they very well shouldn

Judge made the right decision on Sovereignty Commission files

■ State taxpayers deserve to know how far their government went to avoid racial integration.

The confusing, often comical legal battle to keep the files of the now-defunct State Sovereignty Commission closed caught fire again last week as two civil rights activists filed suit in the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to keep them closed.

The files, closed more than a decade ago by legislative mandate and sealed for 50 years from public view, were ordered opened by U.S. District Judge William Barbour on July 27. But the judge ordered that the seal remain on the files until all appeals of his ruling were completed — which effectively seals the files for years.

The Rev. Ed King of Jackson and John Salter Jr. (no relation) of Grand Fork, N.D., were prominent in the civil-rights movement in Jackson in the 1960s and were close confidantes of the late Medgar Evers. They were originally involved in the efforts of the



**SID
SALTER**

Editor
Scott County Times

American Civil Liberties Union and others to gain access to the files, but the pair now claims that the proper course is to make the files available to those who were the targets of Sovereignty Commission probes but not the general public.

King and Salter argue that public exposure of the document would abridge their right to privacy — and those same rights for others who were under fire in the 1960s and early 1970s by the commission. The Sovereignty Commission was established as a free-wheeling watchdog agency for the promotion and maintenance of segregation in the late 1950s. In its heyday, the commis-

sion doled out monies to avowed segregationists groups like the Citizens Council — an expenditure of public funds that was patently unconstitutional.

It seems ludicrous at first that King and Salter would oppose throwing the files open for public consumption. In doing so, they would achieve no small amount of vindication in proving to the state and nation what they had claimed 25 years ago — that the state of Mississippi was using tax dollars to support a spy agency that systematically violated the constitutional rights of black and white Mississippians in an effort to preserve and defend segregation of the races.

But a Sovereignty Commission file leaked to this columnist proves that King and Salter might have some valid concerns in wanting to review the files before they become public records.

The file reveals a June 29, 1964, memorandum sent by the Sovereignty Commission to presidential envoy Allen Dulles entitled: "Communist Influence in the Racial Movement."

The rambling, 12-page report outlines allegations of "communist" activities on the part of civil-rights activists in Mississippi and in the deep South. One segment of the report deals with King and Salter and their involvement in the civil rights movement at Tougaloo College in Jackson:

"One of the members of the faculty at Tougaloo was John Salter Jr. Salter, who was a professor of sociology, resigned in October in 1963 to join the staff of the Southern Conference Educational Fund. Salter, along with the Rev. Eddie King, Methodist chaplain at Tougaloo, helped originate and develop many of the demonstrations perpetrated by the students in Jackson, Mississippi. We have records to show that Salter corresponded with the SCEF while he was still on the faculty at Tougaloo.

"Our files on Tougaloo are too extensive for a report like this. However, the point is clear that Tougaloo became a haven for communist sympathizers who used demonstrations and other aspects of the racial movement to further their causes."

If King and Salter are worried that their activities during the civil rights struggle branded them as communists with official Mississippi in the 1960s, their fears are justified.

This columnist has reviewed an extensive number of Sovereignty Commission files, — files obtained from an unimpeachable source — during the last 10 days. Those files reveal a shocking disregard for constitutional rights in the name of preserving segregation.

The files further reveal a "dirty tricks" approach to neutralizing civil rights activists that make the Committee To Re-Elect the President during the Nixon era look like Ned and The First Primer.

Judge William Barbour made the right decision. The Sovereignty Commission files should be made available to the public, for the taxpayers of Mississippi deserve to know how far their government went to avoid racial integration in the 1960s.

Spying, bribes and dirty tricks were just the tip of the iceberg.

Clairion - Le Dyer -
Jackson Daily News
9-3-89

L - para.

John R. Salter, Jr.
503 Oak Street
Grand Forks, ND 58201
(701) 775-4146
8/26/89

Editor
The Clarion-Ledger
Jackson, Mississippi

Dear Editor:

Those devoted to unyielding traditionalism will certainly find comfort in the fact that, judging from the current hue-and-cry by the open-files advocates in the Sovereignty Commission case, Mississippi's commitment to cultural emotionalism has made no accomodation -- let alone surrender -- to the winds of rationality. Local press headlines the other day noting the Notice of Appeal to the Fifth Circuit made by myself and Rev. Ed King (and, I should add, my wife, Eldri, is very much a part of this) of Judge Barbour's open disclosure order, stated explicitly that we want the files open to ourselves and not to the public. However inadvertant this may or may not be, this constitutes garbled distortion. Let's look at the facts:

Our ^{basic} position is (1) non-personal Sovereignty Commission ^{material} should be released to the public through Archives & History; (2) the personal material should be processed along the basic lines of the Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts and released to the individual, respective victims; (3) the State should absorb all processing and notification costs; (4) the victims should have the right to sue the State for damages. As things stand at the moment, everything would be released to the public -- and the victims be damned; the State would pay nothing; and the right to sue for damages is seriously clouded.

From a background in labor activism and Native American rights, I came to

Mississippi with my wife in the summer of 1961 (not in 1970 or thereafter; or even in 1965 when much had, comparatively speaking, changed). Ed King had been in and out of Magnolia Land (mostly in) since the day he was born. We were privileged by history to play key roles in the Civil Rights Movement in Mississippi and elsewhere in the South through most of the Sixties. I've continued to organize to this very moment (and will for the rest of my life) and Rev. King has certainly been busy in rights-oriented endeavors. None of us -- myself, Ed, Eldri, or any of the early "pioneers" -- saw (or see) ourselves as "heroes." We did what needed to be done. The heroism came from grassroots people who overcame a lifetime of fear conditioning to effectively challenge a vicious system. And that system was vicious -- in the purest fashion. The Sovereignty Commission was widely known as simply one of a number of repressive dimensions and its voluminous files ~~reflect that~~ very vigorously reflect that viciousness.

Early in 1985, Rev. King and I and a few others were permitted by the Federal Court to examine these files at length and in detail. After some days, it was clear that there were (are) many hundreds of people "in the files" in a substantial sense -- and many thousands of others in one fashion or another. Almost all of these people have been victimized and in a quite hideous way: via false and/or malicious information -- poisonous data illegally and maliciously gathered and stored and frequently so utilized. When I finished my examination of the files, I turned over to then Mississippi ACLU lawyer, Charles Bliss, all copies of Commission documents (as Rev. King did a bit later) and I gave him, by hand, a long letter in which I outlined my basic findings. Speaking to the utterly

rank nature of the personal stuff in the files, I gave my opinion that this kind of material should never be thrown to the public-at-large but should be released only to the individual victims. I then suggested, in the letter, that the MCLU set up a 12-20 person Advisory Committee, representative of Sovereignty Commission victims, which could work out an "orderly mechanism" through which to process and disseminate this material. My Advisory Committee suggestion was never even acknowledged; less than a year later, I made the same suggestion in a letter to then MCLU Director, Hillary Chiz, but received no response.

└ In their hungry and self-serving fashion, some news media would love to romp and roll in this paper sea of falsehood, deceit, and malice. The most vociferous of the MCLU plaintiffs, Ken Lawrence, never involved in the old Civil Rights Movement, wants to get his book on the Sovereignty Commission published -- and apparently ^{needs} Judge Barbour's open disclosure order to effectively do that. (Incidentally, my lawyer, Dixon Pyles, has sworn affidavits (April, 1989) from me stating that I have no interest in, nor intention of, using anything I've seen in the Sovereignty Commission files for lecturing or writing purposes. Ed King feels the same way).

└ Other people are stridently calling for the names of the informers used by the Commission. In my 1985 letter to Lawyer Bliss, I pointed out that, in protecting the privacy rights ^{OF} ~~for~~ thousands of innocent victims, "some scoundrels" would be protected -- but that "the greater good and deeper decency" made this unavoidable. Only the intriguingly creative Henry Kirksey could say, incredibly, in his press conference in early

August that, because of our position, Rev. King and I "will be suspected of co-conspiracy with the state Sovereignty Commission." (Ole Ross is rolling in his grave on that one!) ^{In Mississippi,} along with many others (including Ed King), I was arrested (and my wife was, too) many times, beaten badly on occasion, called every kind of vile name, and almost killed in an assassination attempt. Some of the informers -- pathetic people -- were known at the time. In any case, some (the worst of the species) were in it for money, others for vindictive reasons, others were simply suckers and dupes. There never really were that many informers and I suspect that numerous ones are now gone forever from the scene. But there is a much, much deeper and higher principle here: the Movement -- the Civil Rights Movement -- drew much of its inspiration from Christian teachings and, as such, it was never grounded on revenge: it always sought the high ground in the circle of the Sun.

Finally, what of the Mississippi Civil Liberties Union -- which couldn't entertain the idea of a victims' Advisory Council and which now, through omission and commission, is willing to subordinate (in fact, abandon) individual privacy rights in the face of mindless emotionalism and self-serving agendas laced with lots of talk about Truth and Right-Thinking and the Rights of Society? Where would you all have been, MCLU, in the 1950s, when many indeed (including many liberals) were willing to scuttle the privacy-protecting Fifth Amendment and those facets of the First, in the name of God and Country?

In times like 1961, 1962, 1963, when things ⁱⁿ Mississippi were marked by extreme adversarial emotionalism and characterized also by the silence of people who knew better but who were afraid, a slowly growing number of us began tangibly taking a stand and marching forward. But it came slowly and, believe me, it was lonely. But we kept on doing what we saw

as right. And we are going to keep right on doing that: in the fight against racism and cultural ethnocentrism, in the struggle for socio-economic justice, and in the endless fight to strengthen our individual rights and freedom. We've got thick hides by now and the old Micmac saying holds true: "When you fish for trout, you have to expect to be bitten by mosquitoes -- but keep fishing."

Sincerely,

John R Salter, Jr

Filed by
JRS 9-5-89:

From a
Clarion -
Ledger
article,
Aug 13,
1989

In a recent interview, Salter said he and King have always supported the release of any commission files that were of a non-personal nature.

Salter said he and King believe personal material included in the files should be released only to the people the files were about. He argued these people should be able to use the material to bring damage suits against the state.

"The position we're (Salter and King) taking is grounded in two dimensions," Salter said. "One is the fact that we went through the most intense period of the civil rights movement in Mississippi and are fully aware of the utter viciousness practiced by diehard segregationists, both in the public sector and in the private sector.

"Second, we spent many days in the spring of 1985 going over those Sovereignty Commission files with the permission of the court," Salter said. "We're quite aware of the extraordinarily vast amount of utterly vicious material residing in those files, material that for the most part is downright false in nature, but in any case, maliciously gathered and maliciously aimed."

DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN STUDIES
BOX 73
213 MEYERFIELD
GRAND FORKS, NORTH DAKOTA 58202
701-777-4314

Mailing Address:

503 Oak Street
Grand Forks, ND 58201

6/23/89

Editor
Psychology Today
80 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10011

Dear Editor:

The rather arrogant, supercilious article by Elizabeth Bird, "Invasion of the Mind Snatchers," an attempt to relegate the UFO interceptions of earthly humans to the status of simple psychological fantasies, (PT, April, '89), is not only 'way off the mark -- but personally offensive to me (and, I'm sure, to many others). I have had the sort of experience to which she refers.

Chairperson of the Indian Studies Department at UND, trained as a sociologist, and with a 35 year background in effective trade union, civil rights, and civil liberties social justice pursuits, I've sometimes been called "red" and once was even honored with the tag, "cut-throat do-gooder." But I've never been called fantasy prone -- not even by my worst enemies!

On March 20, 1988, I and my son (a graduate student), were enroute from North Dakota to the Deep South where I was scheduled to give several civil rights presentations and a conventional academic paper. Neither of us had any prior conscious interest in UFOs. In a gentle, but extraordinary fashion involving a series of stages, we were diverted to a lonely side road in the deepening twilight of southwestern Wisconsin, incurred an hour and a half of "missing time" -- coming out of it in the immediate area where the curtain of amnesia

(but not unconsciousness) had fallen. At mid-morning the next day, a few miles east of Peoria, Illinois, a technologically spectacular UFO appeared two hundred yards or so in front of our pickup -- a friendly appearance, obviously for our benefit and ours alone -- before zipping off at fantastic speed. Within a few weeks, an orderly and vivid (non-hypnotic) recall process began with me and, somewhat later, with my son. Our respective recall vignettes and sequences are complementary and mutually supportive in every sense -- indicating a fascinating, very friendly, and quite positive meeting with ^{extraterrestrial} humanoids, initially at our pickup (parked on the lonely road) and then, a few hundred yards away, in a landed UFO. In addition, I've had over a dozen positive physiological changes (e.g., immediate clotting of cuts and scratches and fast healing) which are still on-going.

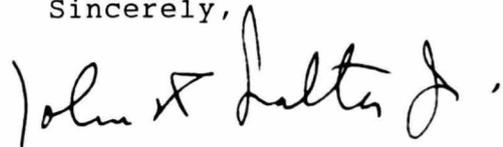
Ms. Bird cannot be faulted for not having had a comparable experience of her own. But she can be very properly criticized for failing to recognize a large number of very thoughtful, scholarly studies of the UFO interception (or, as some put it, "abduction") phenomenon -- of which a number of works done by Dr. Thomas E. Bullard are exemplary. She appears to be unaware also (or at least to ignore) a large number of very thoughtful personal accounts by thoroughly rational and reputable people.

In a generally subtle, but sometimes direct fashion, the Federal government has systematically attempted to ridicule persons attesting to UFO happenings. I certainly don't think Ms. Bird is functioning -- at least consciously -- in that context. But William James put it well when he remarked ("Challenge of Psychical Research") that indisputable and admitted facts are best interpreted by the "academic and critical" people -- "but on the other hand if there is anything which history demonstrates, it is the extreme slowness with which

the ordinary academic and critical mind acknowledges facts to exist which present themselves as wild facts, with no stall or pigeon hole, or as facts which threaten to break up the accepted system. . ."

Ms. Bird and her like-minded colleagues have sounded an eerie echo of certain sorts of Christian fundamentalists -- a frightened flight from the future, but a fruitless one.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John R. Salter, Jr." with a small flourish at the end.

John R. Salter, Jr.
Professor & Chairperson

701-7754146

JOHN R. SALTER JR.

503 Oak Street • Grand Forks, ND 58201
(701) 775-4146

5/24/90

Mr Grant Cameron
Winnipeg, Man.

Dear Grant:

Trust this letter finds you well. Haven't heard from you for 'way too long a time. Nothing too wildly new on this end. As you've gathered, there has been a big signup for my Fall, '90 UFO course -- more than 100 enrolled in the initial registration **period** and we may pick up about 50 more in the late summer reg. period. While this may have quietly upset the fuddy-duddies, they dare not speak out in the face of this! Frankly, it's a nice testimonial to my credibility but, even more deeply and significantly, a heartening reflection of growing UFO interest among young people. (And some not so young: several prominent UND administrators -- closet UFO buffs -- plan to informally audit the course) All of the many physiological changes which came in me following the 3/88 encounter are continuing right along. It's been a bit more than a year since I suddenly stopped smoking after decades of super-heavy smoking (4 packs of unfiltered Pall Malls a day and then a switch to a full pound of pipe tobacco per week); stopped, as you know, without a single physical or psychological twinge; and haven't smoked anything since! (But I still support the civil liberties of smokers). My view and that of my son toward the humanoids and the whole thing continues to be very positive. I hear now about twice a week from people in the US or abroad who are seeking information about my experiences and I always send them what I can. There've been a number of media interviews from this region which have gone quite well, Last winter, a Dr Franklin Ruhle from California interviewed me for a story he was writing on our experience; he sold it to the National Enquirer (a readership of 35 million or whatever and a not high calibre and certainly not high brow mag). We learned this when photographers arrived to take a flood of pictures three weeks ago; it'll come out at any time now. Penthouse (not something I read regularly) did an odd little piece (enclosed). I hear very regularly from Betty Hill -- doing well; occasionally from Sprinkle-- also doing well -- and others . I don't know if I told you but, last winter, I withdrew my report/article on our experiences from UFO Magazine because of the increasing gloom/doom slant of the editors and most of its writers and most of its advertisers. I think the gloom/doom thing has a lot to do with the paranoid tradition in US politics and culture generally; often has some commercial and ideological connotations (money-makers and Red Scare drum beaters); and sometimes reflects an effort to get attention after years and decades of being ignored. But my view of the UFO thing and its

over



JOHN R. SALTER JR.

503 Oak Street • Grand Forks, ND 58201
(701) 775-4146

5/26/90

Mr Grant Cameron
Winnipeg

Dear Grant:

Thanks much for your good letter of May 20th -- and by now you should have gotten mine of May 24. Seems strange to me that it takes 6 days (5/20 to 5/26) for a Winnipeg letter to reach Grand Forks. The Indians may have recognized various territorial boundaries of sorts -- but it remained for others to make such a Goddamned sacrosanct fetish of the whole thing. Anyway, it was good to hear from you, I'll follow your suggestions (I've just finished viewing UFOs are Real which I got from Friedman and which I like very much indeed except for the Billy Miers stuff at the very end).

I neglected, in my letter of 5/24 (and realized it right after I'd sent it off), to mention how much I appreciate and like the Swamp Gas Journal which you all put out. Please indicate my appreciation, too, to Chris Rutkowski. It's very nicely done: the content is first-rate and appropriate; the layout is neatly organized. It's an art to do a solid newsletter sort of thing. Most people try to cram too much in and readers shy from that like a thinking horse from a quicksand bog. You all are doing a fine job.

Take care.


Yours,

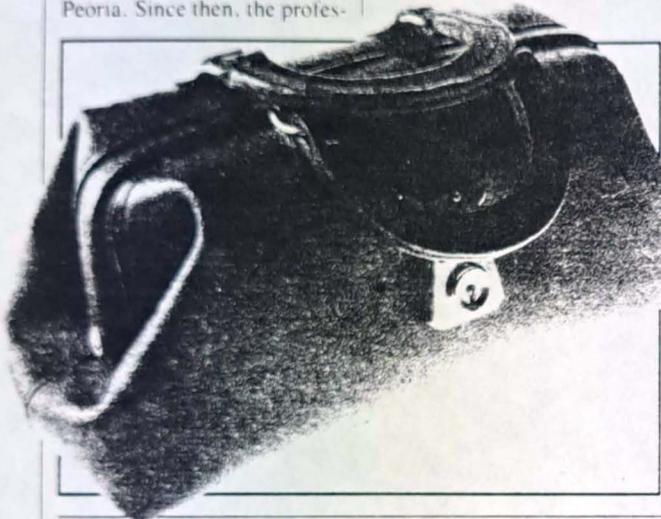
John



DOCS FROM OUTER SPACE

Feel lousy? Got bags under your eyes? Don't fret. Just wait for a UFO to pick you up and—presto!—you'll be back on your feet in no time. A University of North Dakota professor claims UFO aliens took him aboard their spacecraft and cured his ills. It was back in 1988 when the prof and his 24-year-old son were abducted by a six-foot-tall space alien and three or four smaller beings while walking through a Wisconsin field. The next day they spotted what seemed to be a silvery spacecraft, just east of Peoria. Since then, the profes-

sor has attributed 18 physical changes—among them, improved skin tone, circulation, eyesight, and hair growth—to his extraterrestrial encounters. "After all these years, I have a five o'clock shadow," says the professor, who also claims the visitors from outer space may have inserted a "transplant" inside his body that's causing his physical improvements. (Fargo, North Dakota, Forum—submitted by Ken Benzel, Moorhead, Minn.) We bet his medical bill is out of this world.—Editor



BEAM ME UP, BIGFOOT



Captain Kirk and his crew are not the only ones who can beam themselves around the universe. It seems bigfoot can also astrally project himself into other dimensions whenever he pleases. This startling news comes from a Sasquatch investigator who spoke with one of three hairy creatures after they teleported themselves into his Milwaukee, Wisconsin, bedroom. "After they woke me up telepathically, I was fascinated to observe these living apparitions as they moved around the room," he recalls. "Among other revelations, the bigfoot people told me that they can traverse eight different dimensions, including astral projection, dematerialization, teleportation, and the ability to enter the nucleus or door of a vortex, which purportedly leads to another plane of existence in time and space." (National Examiner) If they can do all that, what the hell were they doing in Milwaukee?—Editor

LIBERACE'S SPIRIT SPOOKS FAN

Liberace's fussy phantom is haunting the house of his biggest fan, and it's making the poor guy crazy! "I used to idolize Liberace, but I'm so sick of sharing my home with his sissy ghost that I'm ready to burn the place down just to get rid of him," says the West German banker. "He's a real pest, prancing around here as if he owns the place. He's always re-arranging my closets and throwing out my clothes because he says they're too boring." More than a dozen visitors to the home have spotted Liberace's ghost. Reports one witness, "We'll be visiting and suddenly Liberace will just appear out of thin air, grinning and wearing one of his gaudy sequined jackets." The banker is determined to get the ghost out of his house. "Frankly, I never realized what a swish the guy was," he adds. "His cologne's so sweet, it almost takes my breath away." (Weekly World News) If the ghost asks where he can put his candelabra—don't answer!—Editor



JOHN R. SALTER JR.

503 Oak Street • Grand Forks, ND 58201
(701) 775-4146

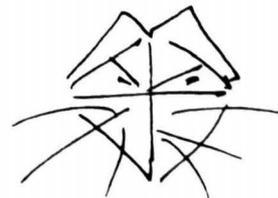
3/23/90

Dream Relating to the Zeta Reticuli System -- a Shot into the Future:

This dream is not recall from the 3/20/88 encounter. While it may be pre-cognitive in the parapsychological sense (I have occasionally had dreams which proved to be very precognitive), I strongly believe this dream to have been telepathically induced in the contemporary context by a humanoid in the ZR system -- possibly the tall humanoid with whom we have an especial relationship. The dream came in the early morning hours of March 4, 1990.

In this dream, I and Eldri (and probably Josie) are on what I'm aware is literally another world. The light is dim. The buildings are white -- very white. While I cannot see the other people -- the humanoids -- I am aware that they are right there with us. The feeling is very pleasant. We are ushered into a building and into a room (also quite white) and rather large. This lighting is artificially dim. A large video film is now shown for our benefit, appearing on one wall of the room. It is of a (human) man talking. He's a person in, say, his late 50s or early 60s; very properly dressed in a suit and tie (possibly a double-breasted suit); his face is moderately thin and he has a beard and glasses. He is speaking in American English. Indicating that he came "here" many years ago (my sense is in the 1950s), he tells us that this video film is his idea, that it is a way in which he can tell those of us who follow him, so to speak, the rich store of knowledge that he has accumulated regarding the humanoid people, their society, and their culture (s), the best ways of doing things, how to get along -- because he, himself, has now gone on somewhere else. At this point, the dream ended.

The dream was vivid and, as soon as I awoke, it was there in all of its clarity. (I have learned over the years to pay attention to dreams which are vivid and whose clarity continues once I've awakened). This dream was not, as I've said, recall from 3/20/88: in the dream itself, I knew it was not recall. Further, recall would have arisen in the early morning hours but then receded temporarily -- arising again in full consciousness later that same day along with the recollection of its initial surfacing hours before. It is known that the twin suns in the Zeta Reticuli system, while very much like our sun, are older and it has been conjectured that the lighting is dimmer than that on our planet. The dimness of the light is something that I've known. On the other hand, I could not figure out the consistent whiteness of the architecture until I realized, suddenly, that in a dimly lighted planetary system, white would be widely used to maximize what light there was! But this is not the sort of thing I'd know on my own nor is it anything that I've ever heard conjectured anywhere about the ZR system (or anything else). The idea of a human visitor -- a "Dr Livingstone" (to use a very rough analogy) -- leaving behind a video of a cultural anthropological nature to help attune others who were to come is not, again, the sort of thing which I would come up with on my own -- yet it makes eminently good sense indeed.



I believe this dream was telepathically induced to provide a sense of our future -- a trip that we are some day going to make, a visit we are eventually going to have. We very much look forward to this.

I immediately told all of this to Eldri, then to Kevin Henke, and to Betty Hill by letter; and, during phone conversations, to John III and Ed King. Someone, either Ed or John III, came up with the interesting thought that perhaps the reason only the initial part of the film was shown (and perhaps there'll be more to come) might be attributed to the fact that the humanoids wanted to see how I'd react to this matter of a trip; that this was a gentle way -- and they've been consistently gentle and considerate -- of introducing me to the idea of a very significant trip. If so, the reaction from me could not have been (or be) more positive.

John R. Salter, Jr.

John R. Salter, Jr.
3/23/90

