



The Newsletter of The North Texas Skeptics

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The third eye

By Pat Reeder

I don't get paid for doing this.

I only write this column for my own (and I hope, for your) amusement. There is really no monetary advantage in it for me. And I have good reason for stating this right up front. Because I know that everyone is going to expect me to offer a lengthy, detailed deconstruction of the CBS made-for-TV movie, *Intruders*. And I cannot.

I didn't watch it.

Oh, I recorded it. I even saw several stretches of it, here and there, while it was airing. I still have it on tape. But based on the excerpts I happened to see, and bearing in mind that I am not paid to do this, I can't think of a single reason to force myself to sit through the whole wretched thing. This is four hours of my life we're talking about! Four hours I can never get back! Talk about "missing time"!

I did see enough of it, though, to convince me that the producers managed the astounding feat of making Bud Hopkins' silly, poorly documented book look like the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* by comparison. For example, Richard Crenna's character, a highly regarded psychiatrist and hypnotherapist, was described as a "composite" of several characters. These characters include Bud Hopkins (an artist with no schooling in medicine, psychology, hypnotherapy, or even aeronautics), several other non-credentialed mesmerists, and various UFO proponents who have made a career out of rehashing the discredited New Mexico saucer crash yarn. Moosh these people together, and you do not get Richard Crenna's character. Maybe Wings Hauser would have been better casting. Or Crispin Glover. At least the producers of *Communion* had the good sense to cast Christopher Walken, an actor whose very presence screams "nutcase."

Consider, also, the scenes of mysterious officials attempting to intimidate Crenna into halting his investigation. Seems odd that these shady, all-powerful forces couldn't prevent the publication of the book by an (eventually rather embarrassed) major publishing house, nor the sale of it to a major television network.

Well, I could dig deeper into this pile of dung, just to see what's at the bottom, but there's really no need. At the bottom of it all is money. CBS needs ratings, and this stuff brings them in. As Jim Mullen said in *Entertainment Weekly* magazine, alien abduction movies pull in the most coveted audience of all for advertisers ... people who will believe

anything.

CBS seems determined to compete with the Fox network in sheer mindless sensationalism. Having already brought us the horrid Mysteries of the Unknown and the laughable Grave Secrets, they felt compelled to dispense this tripe. It's all part of their sad deterioration from the "jewel of the networks" to a gaudy, worthless rhinestone.

And if you need further proof of CBS's sad decline, consider the promotional campaign for Intruders. Throwing all pretense of objectivity out the window, they trumpeted their hokey flick with the fascistic slogan, "You WILL believe!" If that sounds familiar, it's because they stole it from the ads for the movie, Ghost ... whose producers had the integrity to admit that their product was a fantasy.

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Much more interesting than Intruders itself is the reaction to it by the rest of the media. Inside Edition again proved its superiority to the tabloid shows by presenting a well-balanced report that included interview segments with both Bud Hopkins and Philip Klass. They gave at least as much time to psychological explanations of the "abduction" tales as to the extraterrestrial theory.

Locally, Channel 4 (KDFW) continued their questionable practice of using their 10 PM newscast as a promotional tool for entertainment programming, by running a story on UFOs immediately following part two of Intruders. At least the story was surprisingly well done. Reporter Becky Oliver showed the Gulf Breeze "UFO" photos and talked to their creator, Ed Walters ... but she followed this with a recounting of the solid evidence that Walters is a hoaxster, including the fact that the scale model UFO in his photos was found hidden in his attic. Bad timing, but good reporting.

Still, ABC and NBC offered what I consider the only appropriate response: putting the aliens into sitcoms. On ABC's Roseanne, obnoxious Arnie (Tom Arnold) was kidnapped by aliens and annoyed them just as much as he does his neighbors ... and on the final episode of Night Court, the towering Bull agreed to beam up to Jupiter with two short aliens. They promised him he'd be treated like a king, because he was the only man on the planet who could reach the stuff on their top shelves.

For real laughs, though, you can't beat the billboards on the computer networks. I checked out Intruders on the TV billboard of the Prodigy computer service, just to see what the average person was thinking ... or if he was. Those of you without Prodigy might be interested to know some of the things that I learned:

1. These incidents must be true, because there are so many stories about them, and the aliens are always described as looking the same (I've seen the same aliens in Close Encounters, The Interrupted Journey, Communion, Intruders, Unsolved Mysteries, Soap, Beetlejuice, and hundreds of other movies and TV shows. I think you can get them at the Hollywood branch of Abbey Rents. The only place you see unusual descriptions of aliens is in Russia, where the abductees, long banned from seeing western movies and TV, have not yet learned what a real alien looks like.)
2. Skeptics are close-minded, because they want hard evidence before they'll believe anything!
3. It's possible that AIDS was invented by the aliens and deliberately spread to Earth people via the inevitable physical exams (I posted a note saying that this shows the importance of always wearing a condom, since you never know when you'll have a close encounter. This raised such a flurry of indignation among the faithful that I signed off the billboard permanently).

Reading what the general public believes ... as well as the criteria from which they form their beliefs ... has led me to formulate my own theory about the alien visitors. I think they're just coming to Earth on fishing vacations, and their game laws require them to throw the stupid ones back.

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Speaking of life forms from other planets, Rev. Bob [Tilton] continues to make news. At press time, Tilton was awaiting

a hearing to see whether he would be allowed to sue into silence Ole Anthony and several lawyers representing people he has bilked. Someone should have told him that one of the downsides of being a television comedian is that sometimes you get bad reviews.

In May, the China UFO Research Society (CURO) met in Beijing. They claim that their research spans the gamut from hard science to the obscure, including efforts by Chinese mystics to contact life on other planets. CURO noted that nearly 5,000 UFO sightings had been made in China since the late 1970s. Most were discounted as manmade or natural phenomena, but 200 flying objects remain mysterious. I figure they were probably just bullets.

Finally, if you think Jerry Brown is just a little too down-to-earth, you will be happy to know that our choices for president have expanded yet again. Iowa physicist John Hagelin has announced his candidacy as the nominee of the newly formed Natural Law Party, an offshoot of the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's organization. Hagelin, who claims that he has levitated during meditation, plans to use Transcendental Meditation to achieve world harmony and to lower crime and unemployment. So we can see that he does, indeed, have both feet firmly planted on the air.

He also called on George Bush, Ross Perot, and Bill Clinton to follow his lead and submit to a "brain map," which he says shows the positive effects of TM on the brain.

I would like to join him in calling for all presidential candidates to have their heads examined. And I don't need to see the brain map ... if you can find one with a brain at all, he's got my vote.

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Is Ross Perot an Alien?

Astonishing New Evidence!

(Exclusive to The Skeptic)

By Vincent Lofft

Editor's note: Dallas is home to the nation's #1 conspiracy theory. Millions of people have seen Oliver Stone's movie JFK, which puts forth former New Orleans D.A. Jim Garrison's theory that President Kennedy was killed as part of a massive conspiracy.

According to Stone's movie, the conspiracy included, at a minimum, the CIA, the Pentagon, the U.S. military-industrial complex, the Dallas police department, the Secret Service, the U.S. Supreme Court, the mob, then-Texas governor John Connolly, Fidel Castro, the Warren Commission, the FBI and President Johnson. Stone seems to have exonerated only the Tooth Fairy and Mother Theresa.

The Skeptic has obtained astonishing new information about an alleged conspiracy that will make even Stone's theory about the JFK assassination seem like a childish prank. According to our source, uncovered by The Skeptic's Pat Reeder, Dallas billionaire and soon-to-be presidential candidate Ross Perot is an alien. Pat received the following computer message from Houstonian Vincent Lofft. We reprint Mr. Lofft's allegations here with his permission for the first time anywhere.

A local TV station has been airing a special report on the "intruders." Apparently, we are being observed from outer space -- little gray beings with large eyes. We are not only being observed, but members of the human race are also being abducted and subjected to medial examinations and experiments by the aliens.

It has been suggested that these aliens are taking genetic material from humans, and perhaps cross-breeding this material with their own to make an "infiltrator" force of aliens with normal human appearance. No doubt, much of this is already known to many of you from the [Whitley Strieber] book Communion.

I heard yesterday that 1992 is the year of "the announcement," the time that these aliens will make themselves known to the world. In the words of one of the victims of abduction, there will be no resistance because they are already in control.

Hey, folks! This is serious stuff! Could it be? Could Ross Perot be an ALIEN INTRUDER, planted on this earth as an embryo decades ago to grow into his role as the person to take control of the entire world in the name of an alien race?! Outrageous? Well, let's consider the facts.

Indisputable Facts

The alien race is short. Perot is short! You can only stretch a genetic recombinant so far before you run into the "regression towards the mean" problem. Compared to your typical alien, Perot is the equivalent of an NBA franchise superstar! Alexander the Great was short. Napoleon was short. Hitler was short. Is this a fourth attempt by a race of short alien people to gain control of the planet?

The aliens are hairless. Ross Perot keeps his hair very, very short. Is this a telltale clue as to who Ross Perot's ancestors were? Back in the 60s, it was fashionable for black Americans to wear their hair in a large "Afro" style to celebrate their African roots. Is Perot celebrating his roots -- his GRAY roots?

Ollie North said that Perot believes in conspiracy theories, and that he is "driven" by such theories. Well, if you were on the leading edge of the largest conspiracy in the history of mankind, wouldn't you feel the same? Sounds like the old adage: it takes one to know one! CONSPIRATORS believe in conspiracies!

Perot's Iran-Contra Connection

Speaking of Ollie, he said that Ross Perot was the one who talked him into staying in the Marine Corps at a time when he was considering quitting. Why did Ross want Ollie to stay in the Corps? Was it because Perot planned the entire Iran-Contra episode as a way of destroying North's reputation so that you wouldn't believe what Ollie said about Perot's being "driven" by conspiracy theories? Does Ollie North know too much? Hmmm...Ollie North is pretty short...AND he has short hair! Coincidence?! I think not!

How did Perot gain national attention? Try to get an hour and a half on C-SPAN for yourself -- it's not easy! Perot did it. How? First of all, by becoming rich. As any good liberal can tell you, the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. How did Perot break the well-known maxim that the "elite" control everything and one cannot succeed unless one is on "the inside?"

It is no surprise that Perot gained his wealth through use of the new high-tech field of computers. The "old money" rich were not aware of the possibilities that this new technology afforded with respect to acquiring wealth and power. They were used to labor-intensive industries that gave REAL PEOPLE real jobs. Were they "blindsided" by Perot with this "inside" information?

The alien race could not have advanced to the point of interstellar travel without having already acquired computer technologies that make our present capabilities seem like nothing more than pencil and paper. Is it possible that the "mother ship" has been helping Perot throughout his entire life? Have they been supplying him with the technological edge and programming know-how to let Perot blow the competition out of the water, winning those fat government contracts?

And that's not all Perot's technological edge could do for him! More and more, this country's bureaucracy depends on computers to do the work. Most of the votes in this country are compiled by computer! Has Ross Perot already cinched the election by virtue of his having his minions alter the computer programs that will tally the vote? What do we know about the four or five companies that have an oligopoly on the computerized elections systems? Virtually nothing! Are they merely "shell" companies run by (yep!) Ross Perot?

Truthfully, now: how many of you have actually been "polled"? Ah-HAH! None of you! I knew it! Are the polls a fake? Are they nothing more than a carefully-planned computer program designed to give pre-determined results? Has Ross Perot and his minions gained control of the polling organizations by writing the computer programs that add up the results? By forcing whatever result they want, are they able to make it appear that Perot is slowly gaining national recognition and favor despite the fact that NO ONE knows how he stands on the issues? Oooooohhhhhh! Devilishly clever!

An Interstellar Alliance?

And finally, why is Ross Perot trying to get [his new Ft. Worth] Alliance Airport on the fast track for more federal funds? Is it because he's expecting someone (or something) to drop in for a visit?

Ross Perot couldn't sell out the human race all by himself, however. He would need help. Do we now know why the "abductions" have been taking place? Have the aliens been infiltrating us for generations and is it only now that they have sufficient numbers to gain control of the world?

Has anyone else noticed how single-minded Perot's supporters are? It doesn't matter what he says or does -- they're for ROSS PEROT! Are they aptly named Perobots, folks? Are they genetically wired to support a short, hairless person?

Are we doomed? Are we about to willingly surrender our world to a bunch of short, hairless aliens with a penchant for sticking needles in people's eyes and making them forget everything? Uh-oh! Do you suppose they have gotten hold of ronald reagaaannn alllso? i....i must go....i feeeel verrrrry slll;;eeeeeeeeeeepx.sdjlll....-----mlalhqyudfrgwq

[Message ends abruptly at this point.]

Readers may try to contact Mr. Lofft on the Prodigy computer service. His Member ID is GWSH39A. Good luck.

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Magic by Mail

Armchair Shopping for New-Agers

By Mike Sullivan

I don't think I'll order the Miraculous Boji Stones from Pyramid Books and New-Age Collection of Chelmsford, Massachusetts. Nor will I phone them to buy the Magical Quartz Crystal Point Pendants shown on page 12. And I think I'll do without the \$30 "Witches Cauldron," the deluxe model that Pyramid says can be used to store herbs and potions. I think it looks like a cheap cast-iron pot in the photo on page 23. But if I did want these items, or any of the hundreds of others trinkets, books, tapes and candles offered by the firm, I know that Pyramid operators are standing by 24 hours a day at 1-800/333-4220.

Pyramid has assembled a truly astounding collection of goods for sale by mail-order to the uncritical and unquestioning across America, and illustrated them all in their 68-page full-color catalog. Although their mailing address is Chelmsford, the cover of the catalog notes proudly that the company was "Founded in Salem, Massachusetts," some 25 miles east of Chelmsford. An odd business decision, one might think, until it is seen in the context of the offerings and target customers of this unusual catalog marketer.

The Skeptic readers may recall our visit to Overtones, a Dallas new-age retail store (The Skeptic, August 1991). The breadth and depth of new-age trash in this catalog makes Overtones look like a Circle-K to Pyramid's HyperMart USA. There is something for everyone in the Pyramid warehouse -- everyone, that is, who believes in pixies.

You need to read no farther than page 2 to know you're holding a very different type of catalog. It is on that page that we are treated to this excerpt from Waldo Japussy's The Tao of Meow: "To see the Way in others is the first step in

wisdom. To see the Way in yourself is an omen of good to come. To rule by invoking the Way within others Takes (sic) you many miles. To let the Way rule yourself completes the journey." Make sense? If not, you can order the \$14.50 book, written by a cat and described on page 46, and wade through 120 more pages of incongruous gibberish pawed out by the puss.

Those Miraculous Boji Stones I'm going to pass up are featured on the inside front cover. Pyramid says, "Their balanced energy takes away pain by closing holes in the human energy field. Male boji has tiny angular projections, female boji is smooth. People sensitive to vibrations of stones note an immediate sensation of energy when the rocks are held. Found at the bottom of a natural earth pyramid located at the epicenter of North America, Bojis are old as the earth itself and no more are being created." Sounds like a steal for only \$22, but get your order in soon: when they're gone, they're gone!

One thing there is plenty of are incredible claims made for the myriad baubles stocked by Pyramid. The onyx and obsidian earrings on page 7 "ground spiritual energy onto the physical plane" for only \$29. The purple sugilite stone pendant on page 10 "enhances meditation and channeling" for only \$35, and the shiny \$39 Love Amulet on page 11 promises, "As you wear this amulet powerful universal love energy penetrates your chakras." Pardon my asking, but are my chakras something I would want penetrated?

As exciting as all the jewelry, beads and pebbles are in the Pyramid catalog, some of the most effusive writing is reserved for the books and tapes section. We start off with a giant 4-page spread devoted to Tarot decks, ranging from a budget-priced \$6.95 Gypsy Witch starter set ("Easy -- fun! Instruction book included.") to the top-of-the-line Salvador Dali set for \$90.

For the kiddies, Pyramid offers the Color-Your-Own Tarot Set, complete with 24 colored pencils. Pyramid says of the kit, "The attention you must give impresses the Tarot patterns upon the cells of your brain, and builds the details of the designs into your consciousness." It's also a good way to sell 56 pieces of white cardboard and \$2 worth of pencils for \$12.

Also offered is the "Tell a Fortune" board game, described with this startling claim: "You don't have to be a card-reader or know any astrology to play and get answers. Just shuffle and lay out the cards on the board - and tell the future for yourself and others!" If that doesn't sound easy enough, then check out the Karma Cards! "Shuffle the cards, choose one from each deck, place them side by side, read across -- there's your answer. Use as a light-hearted party game or consult on serious issues. No astrology knowledge needed." Imagine that!

Indeed, it seems that little knowledge of anything is needed to benefit from the Pyramid offerings. Most likely, little knowledge is preferred by the Pyramid folks of their customers. They are only too happy to become your one-source supplier of wisdom and the secrets of the universe through their giant book and tape selection. Start off your library with the subliminal tape section, where titles range from "Self-Healing" to "Develop Your Psychic Abilities" to "Chakra Meditation."

Tired of earth? Then listen to the subliminal messages allegedly buried in the Astral Projection tapes: "The programming for this tape was proven successful in consciousness classes conducted by the author. Numerous people who had no prior knowledge or awareness of this concept successfully completed their astral trip. Allow two weeks to prepare, using this tape, and you can experience outofbody travel." Order #P51-019 for only \$9.98, then start packing your bags!

Dick Sutphen appears to be quite an expert on everything, judging from the selection of subliminal tapes he's produced. Pyramid stocks his whole library of no-effort, no-results sham cassette programs, all priced at \$18.98 each. Dick's titles include "Astral Projection," "No-Effort Weight Loss," "Viewing Past Lives," "Rapidly Develop Psychic Ability," "Healing Acceleration," "Why Are You Here?" and "Ultra Monetary Success." All are billed as "Hypnosis, Subliminals and Sleep Programming," kind of a three-for-one fringe cover-all approach.

Did you know that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was on the lecture circuit in Texas from 1987 to 1991? If you missed her in person, you can read transcripts of her talks in a \$12.95 paperback by A. Kirkwood called Mary's Message to the World. Pyramid tells us that "Mary predicts specific earth changes in this decade that will disrupt every continent -- a

timetable of dates and places is given. Must reading for every individual on the planet." Quite an endorsement! I just wonder why I haven't seen a review of this stupendous work in The New York Times Review of Books.

Jesus has a few books out as well, and Pyramid can charge them to your Visa card. Have you read The Secret Teachings of Jesus, or Jesus Lived in India: His Unknown Life Before and After the Crucifixion? Pyramid says about the latter, "German theologian cites astonishing evidence for his conclusions, including the fact that Jesus survived the crucifixion and lived out his long life in the Near East and India. A serious and scholarly work ..." Another one The Times reviewers missed!

Fringe medicine is well-represented in the Pyramid line as well. You can choose from a panoply of quackery, ranging from aromatherapy to crystal healing to reflexology. All the popular fringe titles are here, and dozens of (thankfully) lesser-known volumes on light therapy, kinesiology, aura healing, pendulum medicine, and others.

On and on it goes. A random sampling of the some other titles stocked by Pyramid and enthusiastically promoted in their catalog includes Witchcraft for Tomorrow, Ninja Secrets of Invisibility, Dowsing for Health, 101 Ways to Avoid Reincarnation, Advanced Pendulum Instruction & Applications, and What Color is Your Aura?

Serious UFO believers won't be disappointed by the Pyramid catalog, which lists several pro-UFO tomes under the heading "New-Age Bestsellers." No UFO library would be truly complete without titles like these from Pyramid: New World Order: Prophecies from Space Channeled by Ashtar Command, Underground Alien Bases by Commander X, and Extraterrestrials in Biblical Prophecy.

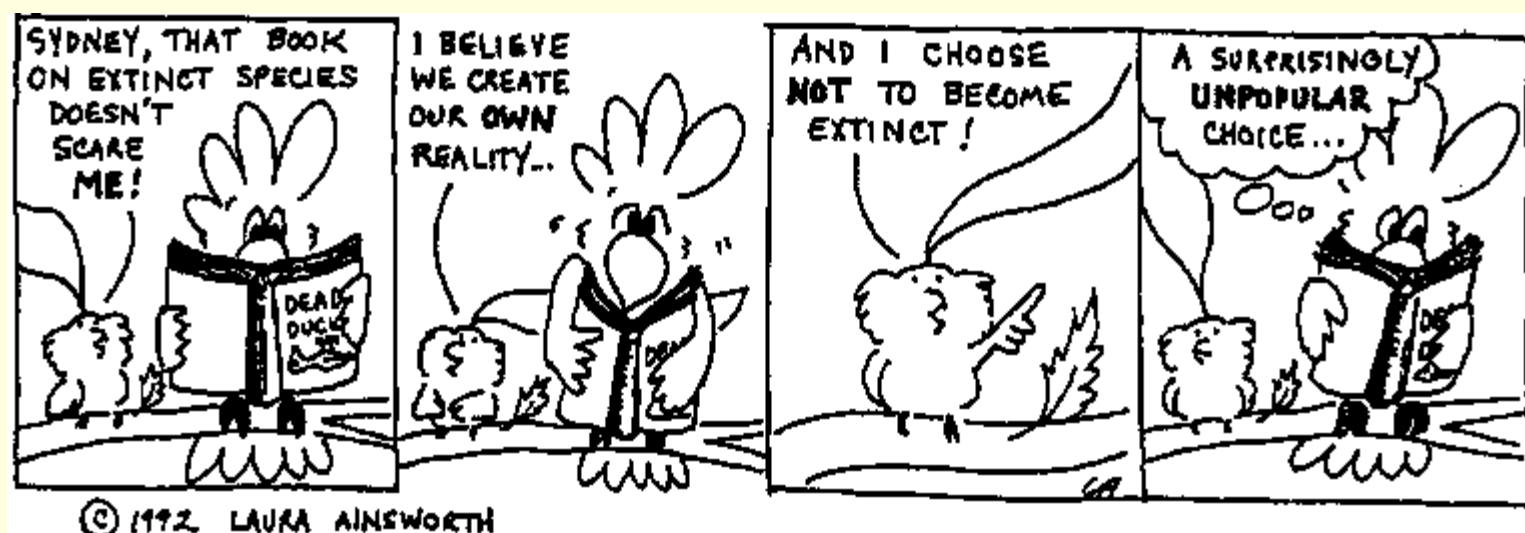
Ashtar's book, Pyramid tells us, "spreads the word of Ashtar, Commander of a spaceship orbiting earth, whose telepathic broadcasts have made astonishing predictions about the events on Earth. The true nature of the cosmos is revealed by this visitor from a higher realm, with thrilling news about the New Age on Earth!" Sounds plausible to me! Here's my \$9.95!

All these, and literally hundreds more, are yours from Pyramid, a company devoted to filling part of the New Age demand for the outlandish. I'll never know what mailing list Pyramid bought to get my name, but my chakras are channeling some pretty strong auras that it didn't come from CSICOP!

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Up a tree: a skeptical cartoon

By Laura Ainsworth



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