

Actor Crenna believes 'Intruders' lurk among us

By STEPHANIE DuBOIS

"This is going to bring a lot of people out of the space closet," said Richard Crenna of his fact-based CBS "Intruders" miniseries that explores the subjects of extraterrestrials, UFOs and alien abductions.

Crenna plays a character based on psychiatrist John Mack, the former head of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, in the four-hour miniseries that airs today and Tuesday at 9 p.m. on Channel 7.

During filming Crenna met several people Mack worked with (played in the miniseries by Mare Winningham, Daphne Ashbrook, Susan Blakely and Ben Vereen) who claimed to have been abducted by extraterrestrials.

"There was one young man who told that this had given him his first chance to explain what he's been through," said Crenna.

"He's lived in abject terror for most of his life that he'd be abducted again, but he was afraid to say anything until he started working with John Mack."

Crenna also worked with Mack and said, "He told me he was very skeptical about these incidents until he started dealing with these people. Then he did a 180-degree turnaround. After investigating and hypnotizing dozens of them, he's absolutely convinced they are telling the truth."

The actor admits to a healthy curiosity and interest in the subject of extraterrestrials and UFOs, but said, "I went into the project with a certain amount of skepticism, too. I always believed something was going on ... but I was a little ambivalent as to whether I believed people had actually been kidnapped."

But, he said, after working with several alleged abductees, he too became a believer.

"I worked with Bud Hopkins, whose book 'Intruders' is



TRUE UFO BELIEVERS: Susan Blakely, top left, and Richard Crenna portray people who are drawn into the harrowing world of alien abductions.

roughly based on," said Crenna, who learned how to hypnotize from Hopkins.

"I watched him put three people under hypnosis and the more you hear these people, the more open you are to the possibility."

"What's so interesting about all these spaceship stories is that they're all the same. All the people who are hypnotized, whether they're from Peru, Borneo or China, tell essentially the same story. The spacecraft and the beings are always described the same and the happenings are very similar."

As the film points out, many of the abductees weren't actually aware of what had happened to them until they had undergone hypnosis and therapy.

"When they first tell their stories," explained Crenna, "they don't come in and say 'This is what happened to me.' They only know something very disturbing has taken place ... that they're missing time."

"I kind of likened the process to what happens with victims of child molestation," he

said.

"They're people who've sublimated the act and blocked it from their experience, but as they get older they start remembering fragments of things ... Then after working with a psychiatrist, the incidents become reality again."

"Another interesting thing about so many of these people," he continued, "is that they exhibited scars, that some of them had kept in secrecy, from operations performed on them."

But, according to Crenna, "their medical records indicated they'd never been operated on in such a way. They're surgical scars and there is evidence of perfect surgical procedures."

He went on to say that investigators even reportedly "found metal implants in some of the abductees. Bud Hopkins told me one such object is currently undergoing metallurgical analysis at MIT."

Crenna commented, "People who are very skeptical are not going to change their mind as a result of this film — and that's not the intention."



willingness to embrace the prospect of extraterrestrials is based on fear.

"It's a frightening prospect to most people. You can imagine what would happen to our sense of all that we hold nearest and dearest, if somebody told us these people were out there. It would mean a rethinking of our religions, our mathematics ... of our entire existence."

"It would be a total disruption," he added, joking. "Almost as bad as having Jerry Brown as president. It would be as confusing as that."

Crenna, however, is convinced we have nothing to fear. The way he sees it, "There's a kind of optimism (among investigators and experts on the subject) that these abductions were not meant to be hostile acts, but perhaps investigative in some way."

"The thought that's the most comforting to me is that if these people meant harm to us, they would have done it long ago."

And then he added with a laugh, "If I were going to take over this world, I would have done it during Norman Rockwell's time. I would have knocked us off around about 1900 — before we'd messed everything (the planet) up."

"Why hang around to take over now?" □

"But it does pose enough questions that if you are an inquisitive person at all, you're going to be tempted to probe beyond what you hear on this show."

He's fully aware that "the general public thinks there's a kind of loony fringe who believes in flying saucers, because people have always equated such topics with supermarket tabloids."

He believes a lot of the un-

LATE TV LISTINGS

9:30 a.m. — Ch. 4 — "Meet the Press" / Topic: New Budget Strains. Guest: Richard Darman, director of the Office of Management and Budget.

11 a.m. — Ch. 5 — "This Week with David Brinkley" / Topic: Endeavour and the Future of NASA. Guests: Captain Daniel C. Brandenstein, Endeavour commander and

chief of the Astronaut Office, and NASA Administrator Daniel S. Goldin.

11:30 a.m. — Ch. 7 — "Face the Nation" / Topic: The Law and Los Angeles. Guests: Attorney General William Barr; Rep. Maxine Waters, D-Calif.; GOP pollster Ed Rollins; and Jeff Faux of the Economic Policy Institute.

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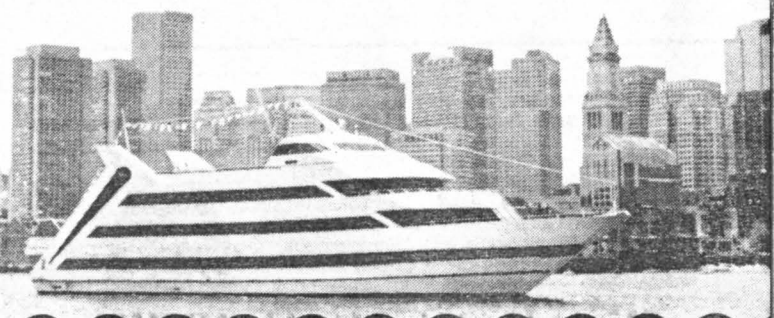
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