

Dear Scott,

10/16/97

Your 10/13 and enclosures are interesting. Thanks! I am particularly interested in the coming Hersh desecration. I am shocked that a man with his reputation would stoop for that kind of writing and would credit what no smart child should have.

Renfro Hayes was his own kind of tragedy. I knew and interviewed him. The only investigative work he ever got until Haines was auto accidents. He told me he made stories up to confuse the FBI. So the book will not be dependable.

The clippings on the Russell-LBJ conversation are correct except that Russell believed that the so-called "compromise" incorporated his objections and that they would be included in the report. The fixer was McCloy and Rankin, which has to mean with Warren, saw to it that there would be no transcript.

I think Truman was an honest man of good intentions who was also beyond his depth. He let Churchill talk him into what otherwise would not have existed, that Cold War and all its suffering and bankruptcies of the past and coming. There was no chance of the USSR starting any war. Churchill wanted to wipe them out. He did other and enormous harm in what finally led to that. We will not finish paying for it in your lifetime.

Hope all clears up well with your daughter. My older sister, who is a year and a half younger than I, had similar troubles when she was a tot and she is now 82.

Thanks and best to you all,

Hardy

I was sent that issue of George in an effort to get me to subscribe, which I did not. I knew Eric Olsen after his father was killed, while he was in high school. He was the friend of a pair of girls I helped with a science fair project with which they were first in the state. He was a good photographer then. When he was teaching school he asked me to address his class and I did. His brother is a dentist.

10/13/97

Dear Harold,

Hope you are feeling well. Enclosed find clippings on various topics of interest.

Can you comment on the LBJ clippings and what you know that LBJ may have told Sen. Russell in confidence regarding the commission.

The L Smith article on MLK is interesting to me. In it Smith makes reference to an investigator named Renfro T. Hays who died home less and broke. Can you tell me anything about Renfro Hays?

I've also sent an article from George magazine JFK Jr's magazine about the Frank Olsen CIA case. Can you tell me anything updated about the Olsen case? That whole 10/97 issue of George was devoted to the history of the CIA due to the 50th anniversary of the CIA. You may want to pick up this issue of George for your records.

Just finished watching a four and a half hour American Experience on PBS on the life of Harry Truman. Found the show and Truman's life fascinating. Can you give me your opinion on Truman the man and President. On where you feel he belongs in history. I've always wondered since Truman dropped the atomic bomb on Japan on how Truman would've handled the Cuban Missile crisis. I've wondered on how Nixon would've handled the Missile Crisis also. Do you have any thoughts on this? I do feel that Truman was absolutely right on dropping the Atomic bomb on Japan. This docu on Truman was excellent though.

Well I won't keep you any longer. Looks like my baby daughter will have to have surgery in her ears as she is constantly getting ear infections and the fluid doesn't drain from the left ear. Will have the surgeon who operated on my wife operate on my daughter. He will install drain tubes in her ears to help drain the fluid. Have been busy working on my house as I'm installing a brand new bathroom on the first floor. Tore the old bathroom out down to the framing studs and will make a new one from soup to nuts. The kitchen will then be torn out and redone. Did you ever find a painter to do the outside of your house? If so how did it turn out?

Stay well and enjoy the clippings.

Scott Wil

LIZ SMITH



Newsday 9/29/97

New Look at Ray, King

OUR HISTORY must be taught in every school just like the history of everyone else is taught in every school. That way it's harder for everyone to pretend or to forget. I want to belong to a people that never forgets." So writes activist supreme Larry Kramer, in the 30th anniversary issue of *The Advocate*.

TWO FIRST-time filmmakers, Karen Johnson and Celia McRee, are in the preliminary stages of producing an eye-opening movie with a unique slant, about the murder of civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr.

The title of this project, "422 1/2 South Main," comes from the address of the Memphis boarding house from where James Earl Ray is said to have fired the shots that killed King. The script, by Mississippi journalism prof Charles Raiteri, is based on the life of Renfro T. Hays, the controversial lone investigator who tried to prove a conspiracy at the time of King's assassination. Renfro died last May, homeless and broke, at the veterans hospital in Memphis.

Johnson is the associate director of TV's "All My Children." McRee is a recording artist on the Mother Records label. They are actively developing this timely project, and there is strong interest on both show-biz coasts. No deals have been set in stone, but the studio heads, directors and actors already contacted have been impressed — as much by the material as by Johnson and McRee's passion.

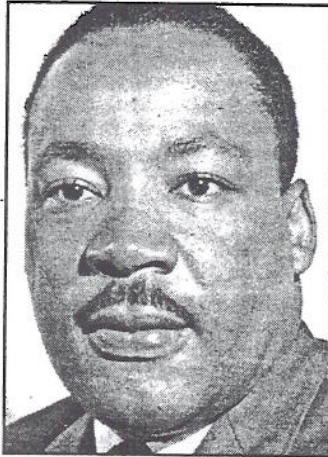
Stay tuned.

SPEAKING OF movie deals and scripts and such, agents at ICM are hot to circulate Eric Kornfeld's "One Man's Heaven" screenplay, which he wrote specifically for Elizabeth Taylor.

AND WHILE we're helping filmmakers put feelers out, super-producer Robert Halimi is "hoping" that Anthony Hopkins will agree to star in his CBS miniseries, "The First Immortal," based on James Halperin's sci-fi novel

on the soundtrack of his new movie, "Telling Lies In America." Kevin's ditty is one of the few original songs on this soundtrack, which consists mostly of early '60s classics.

"Telling Lies . . ." the story of a boy who idolizes a radio disc jockey, was written by our favorite blond, Joe Eszterhas, directed by Guy Ferland, and also stars Brad Renfro, Maximilian Schell, Calista Flockhart and Paul Dooley. It has been selected to screen at the New York Film Festival.



Martin Luther King Jr.
Different slant on his assassination

philosophic on how love never lasts, and how he's not hubby material anyway. Oh, George, take a chance on love!

BRAVO TO the editors of *Life* magazine! The legendary publication's special double issue, in which they choose the most important events, discoveries and people of the past 1,000 years, is superb. Every student in this country who can read (and isn't that a pathetic proviso in this richest of nations?) should be required to study this magnificent offering from cover to cover. It is a genuine mind-blower, a "keeper" and a nostalgic reminder of the good old days of *Life* magazine, when every issue was an event.

ENDQUOTE: The other night on "Geraldo Live," author Kitty Kelley told the show's studly host that Prince Philip could have dabbled a bit with men. "Possibly Philip danced both sides of the ballroom," said Kitty in her famously coy manner.

Geraldo immediately responded, "Well, don't invite me to that party."

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In 1953, Eric Olson heard the kind of horrible news that would shatter any nine-year-old. His father had died violently, having fallen 13 stories from the window of a Manhattan hotel room. The death was ruled a suicide—the result of his dad's recent struggle with depression. Not until Eric was 31 and a clinical psychologist did he learn that Frank Olson had unwittingly taken LSD as part of a CIA mind-control experiment nine days before his death. A 1975 apology from President Gerald Ford followed. Now, with Manhattan D.A. Robert Morgenthau's help, Eric Olson hopes to prove his father did not jump out of the window after all.



George
Magazine 10/97

In 1953, a scientist was slipped a dose of LSD at a CIA retreat. Now, prosecutors are looking into his mysterious death.

Frank Olson toiled as an army "germ warrior," a scientist who develops lethal viruses and toxins for military use. Just before Thanksgiving 1953, Olson and colleagues were summoned to a CIA-army retreat at a secluded camp in western Maryland. Minutes after drinking Cointreau cocktails, the men were told that they had just been dosed with LSD. The Korean War had ended months before, and the feds were analyzing why so many captured Americans had spilled secrets in captivity. The CIA, suspecting chemical persuasion, wanted to study LSD's effects. Frank Olson became one of the agency's "experimental monkeys."

FRANK OLSON FILE: THE CIA'S BAD TRIP

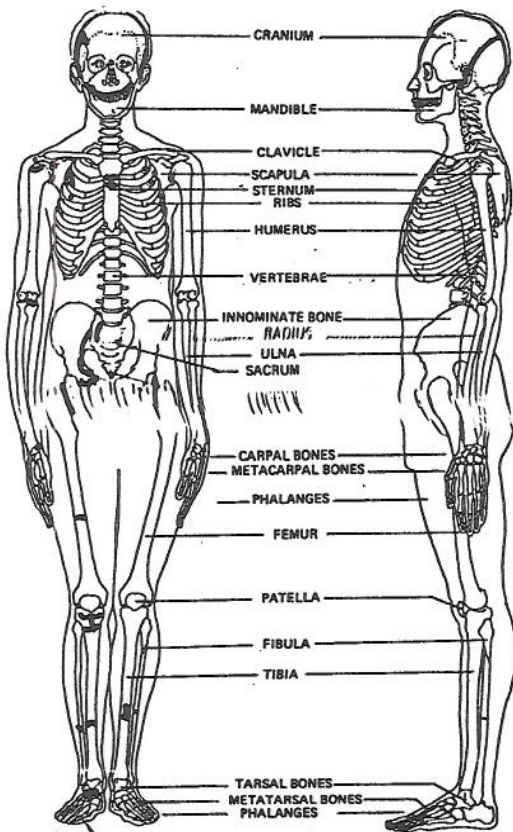


Figure 2. General elements in the human skeleton.

Immediately after the retreat, Olson sunk into a depression. "I've made a terrible mistake," he told his wife and then asked his boss for a new post. His boss phoned Robert Lashbrook, a CIA retreat attendee, who then rushed Olson to Manhattan to see a special doctor—the agency's LSD expert. After two days, they registered Olson in a psychiatric hospital. He died the night before he was to be admitted.

In 1994, Frank Olson's body was exhumed by James Starrs, a top forensic scientist. "We were told we couldn't see the body after he died because of its condition," says Eric Olson. "So I was surprised to see how good he looked. He was embalmed, and I still recognized him 40 years later." According to Starrs's investigation, completed this year, there were no signs of cuts or abrasions from broken glass. What Starrs did find was a severe bruise on Olson's forehead—not enough to have resulted from the fall but enough to have knocked him uncon-

scious. "There is a possibility of some form of criminal wrongdoing," Starrs says.

This October, prosecutors are investigating the old evidence through a new historical cases unit. Lashbrook and his bosses—former CIA director Richard Helms and mind-control expert Sidney Gottlieb—are expected to be questioned. "By the time this is over, you will know how your father really died," a New York prosecutor told Olson.

"The implications kind of frighten me," says Olson. "But the story has just never checked out. After 43 years, I feel like I'm back where I was at nine years old, scratching my head." —Melissa Roth



Clockwise from top: Frank Olson holding his son Eric; Olson in happier days; the new forensic examiner's record of Olson's mysterious wounds.