



The TV Column

By Lisa de Moraes

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Posted at 07:42 PM ET, 12/16/2011

FX orders pilot for drama about Reagan-era KGB spies in Washington

By [Lisa de Moraes](#)

FX will shoot a pilot for a new drama series about KGB agents posing as travel agents who live in Washington during the Reagan administration.



"The Americans" was created by Joe Weisberg, who worked at the CIA for about three and a half years, after which he wrote the novel "An Ordinary Spy." These days Weisberg writes for TV; his credits include TNT's "Falling Skies" and FX's "Damages."

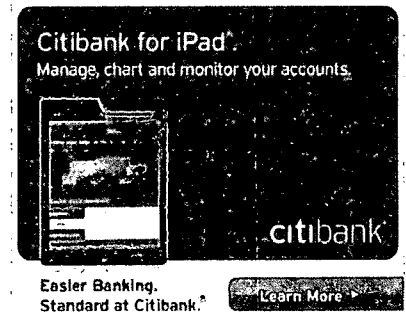
In the pilot, the marriage of Phillip and Elizabeth Jennings was arranged by the KGB and they now have two children who are unaware of their parents' identity. So far as they know, Mom and Dad run a travel agency in Falls Church, VA. In the pilot episode, Reagan has just been elected, "the Cold War heats up considerably," and the Jennings are dealing with a KGB defector "and handle it in a way I won't reveal," Weisberg told the TV Column coyly in a phone interview.

Phillip, meanwhile, is grappling with his growing sense of affinity for what FX describes as the "American way of life" in the script, which Weisberg created after being approached with an idea by Justin Falvey and Darryl Frank, co-presidents of DreamWorks TV. DreamWorks produces "Falling Skies" — a sci-fi drama about the aftermath of a global invasion by a mess o' aliens, including lizard-like beings known as Skitters, some grey-toned humanoid beings who seem to be running the show, and mechanical attack drones, who are all making life a perfect hell for Noah Wyle, who is a Boston University history professor. You had to be there.

Anyway, Falvey and Frank also would be among "The Americans" many exec producers, should it go forward to series — which is still a ways off, since they're now looking for a director and have yet to cast any of the roles.

Should FX turn "The Americans" into a series, Weisberg will take the inevitable "notes" — not just from DreamWorks, Fox TV Studios — which is also getting in on the act — and all those other executive producers, but also from the CIA, which has vetted the pilot script.

"Anything I write about intelligence has to be vetted," Weisberg explained. The vetting is done, he said, by the agency's Publications Review Board, which also vetted his novel — a thriller about two CIA Case Officers.



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It's the second CIA-esque FX pilot Weisberg has written. The first, about a CIA station in Bulgaria, did not move forward.

By [Lisa de Moraes](#) | 07:42 PM ET, 12/16/2011

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