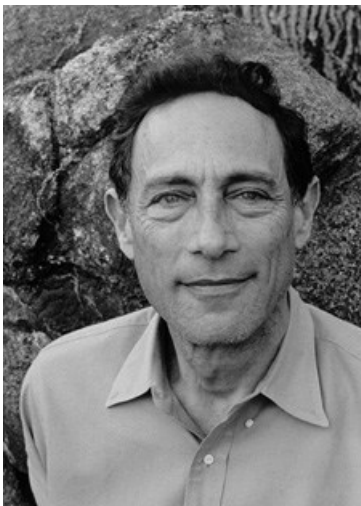




John Mack

A True Story

Harvard Psychiatry Professor and Pulitzer Prize-winning author, Dr. John Mack, a celebrated man of science, risked everything when he reluctantly agreed to work with alleged alien abductees and drew a conclusion that completely shattered and transformed his worldview and his life.



[Click on the audio and video links to hear the real people who inspired this story](#)

[Listen to a BBC correspondent reporting from Harvard Square \(45 sec\)](#)

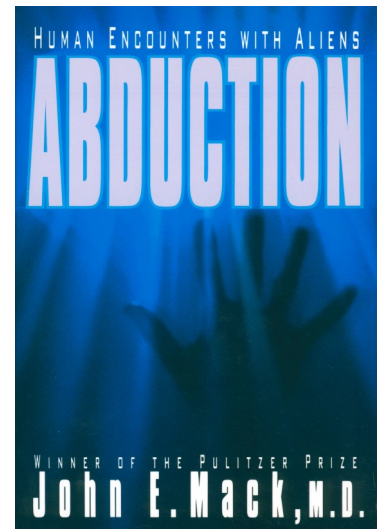
[Listen to Dr. John Mack \(20 sec\)](#)

Dr. John Mack was a highly respected tenured Harvard professor — brilliant, skeptical and mainstream. Handsome and charismatic, John counted the Rockefellers, British aristocracy and the Dali Lama among his friends. His awards included a Nobel Peace Prize that he shared with an international association of doctors against nuclear arms, and a Pulitzer Prize for his psychoanalytic biography of Lawrence of Arabia.

John believed in academia and in the practice of psychiatry as a pathway to understanding the world. But his adherence to these traditions did not protect him when he declared that people who claimed to have been abducted by aliens were not only telling the truth, but that what they'd learned from their experiences is crucial to the survival of humankind.

[Listen to abductees \(60 sec\)](#)

By the end of his life, John Mack was regarded by some as a visionary and modern-day Galileo, and by others as a fool who'd made an error of historic proportions.



"The abductees are not lying and they are not crazy. Someone has to champion them."
—Dr. John Mack

New York artist Budd Hopkins had been a sympathetic ear for “abductees” for years, but was now overwhelmed and ill-equipped to help them. He sought out Dr. Mack at the suggestion of a mutual friend. With great skepticism, John agreed to meet Hopkins, who handed him a box of unopened letters. “I think they're perfectly sane, but you're the psychiatrist — you decide.” John's interest was piqued.

After using his entire psychiatric arsenal on over 200 “abductees”, Dr. Mack's conclusions were a startling revelation to him — these people were not lying and they were not crazy. “I know mental illness and these people are not mentally ill.” He honestly believed they were telling the truth.

[Listen to Sally Mack,
wife of John Mack \(2 min\)](#)

John traveled the world and corroborated identical abduction stories with African shamans and Australian Aborigines. When Dr. Mack documented his findings in his NY Times best-selling book, *Abduction*, he was mocked in the press and ridiculed by his colleagues.

The Dean of Harvard Medical School, embarrassed and fearing the entire university was in danger of becoming a laughing stock, informed Dr. Mack that an ad hoc Faculty Committee had been appointed to privately determine if he had jeopardized his future at Harvard — the first-ever inquiry of its kind of a tenured professor.

[Listen to Committee head,
Dr. Arnold Relman \(45 sec\)](#)

News of the committee was leaked to the public.

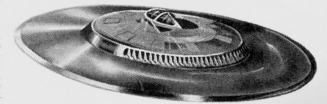
A few colleagues came to his defense, including Alan Dershowitz, Professor of Law at Harvard, who stated: “It appears at this esteemed place of higher learning, angels are OK, but aliens are not. ...This goes right to the heart of all academic freedom.”

“John, if only you'd called it a new psychiatric syndrome, rather than asking Harvard to change its notions of reality.”

—Dean of Harvard Medical School

The New York Times

Should Harvard Beam Him Up?



Suppose somebody writes a book called “Abduction: Human Encounters With Aliens,” consisting mainly of the case histories of 13 people who say they have been abducted by diminutive, large-eyed, gray-colored space creatures and

Then suppose the author is a tenured professor at Harvard Medical School.

If you're Harvard, what do you do?

That's the conundrum that for the past year has bedeviled Daniel Tosteson, dean of the Harvard Medical School.

The best-seller by Professor John E.

“It doesn't help the world to have influential, talented people like John advocating the belief that there are aliens.

He needs a little dose of reality.”

—Committee head,
Dr. Arnold Relman

[Listen to Harvard law professor,](#)

[Alan Dershowitz \(30 sec\)](#)

After an increasingly bitter 14-month long "inquisition", Dr. Mack was granted full academic freedom, however, in the committee's view, he had failed as a psychiatrist and failed as a scientist.

[Listen to John's attorney,](#)

[Eric MacLeish \(20 sec\)](#)

Once the "It" couple of Cambridge, John's marriage ended under the strain, however his belief that the abductees were telling the truth never wavered. He published *Passport to the Cosmos* and continued to champion them.

[Listen to Dr. Mack Interview a student at the Ariel School UFO sighting in Zimbabwe \(20 sec\)](#)

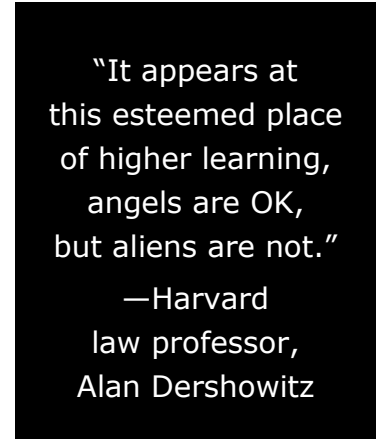
In 2004, after appearing as the keynote speaker at Oxford University on the anniversary of his Pulitzer, John Mack stepped into the street, was hit by a speeding car and killed instantly.

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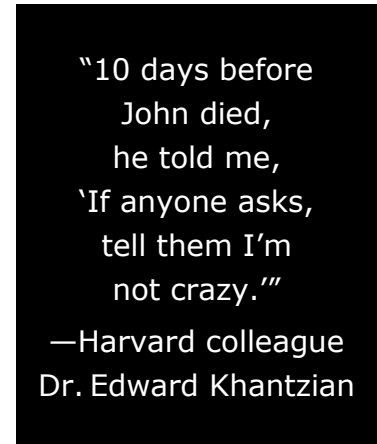
Dr. John E. Mack ...in his own words:

"I have come to realize this alien encounter phenomenon forces us, if we permit ourselves to take it seriously, to re-examine our perception of human identity – to look at who we are from a cosmic perspective.

"These phenomena tell us many things about ourselves and the universe that challenge the dominant materialistic paradigm. They reveal that our understanding of reality is extremely limited, the cosmos is more mysterious than we have imagined, there are other intelligences all about (some of which may be able to reach us), and our knowledge of the properties of the physical world is far from complete.



[Click article to enlarge](#)



[Listen to John Mack \(30 sec\)](#)

"The secular assumptions about reality, dominant during my university training, were in fact a grand illusion, a materialist superstition that had kept Western thought stranded and imprisoned for the last 300 years. How do the keepers of the dying, yet more traditional paradigm respond to these phenomena? Many raise the cry of 'pseudoscience'.

"The methods of science – hypothesis, testing, rigor, experimentation, control – are valuable and essential for studying phenomena that reside primarily in the material world. But they may be inadequate for exploring matters that straddle the visible and unseen realms. They surely are insufficient for learning about realities beyond the manifest. Here we must rely more upon experience, intuition, non-ordinary states of consciousness, and holistic or heart knowing, thoughtfully and rigorously applied.

"The alien encounter experience seems almost like an outreach program from the cosmos to the consciously impaired.

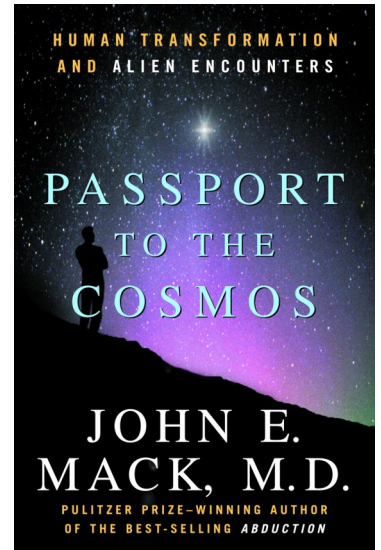
"So for me, a journey that began with the investigation of a strange anomaly, has led to a greater appreciation of the gift of being and a deeper commitment to helping to preserve the life of the planet and its infinite possibilities."

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[Watch John Mack interviewed on Oprah](#)

[Listen to a 2005 radio documentary, "Abduction, Alienation and Reason",
BBC Radio 4 \(30 min\)](#)

[Watch a 1999 BBC TV documentary \(10 min excerpt\)](#)



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