

# JOHN MACK

"I didn't realize that I was having sex with aliens until just a few months ago," Peter Faust is saying over coffee in the living room of his Watertown, Mass., home. "Things unfold: it went from sperm samples to knowing that it had something to do with hybrid children, to knowing that my sperm was somehow being used with extraterrestrials, to seeing myself with an extraterrestrial female."

This tapestry unfolded over the course of a year and a half and eight hypnosis sessions with a Pulitzer Prize-winning Harvard psychiatrist named John E. Mack.

Faust wasn't the only one telling Mack stories. Over the last few years, nearly 100 other U.F.O. "abductees" found their way to him, and told the 64-year-old psychiatrist at Cambridge Hospital stories as bizarre as any he'd encountered in more than 30 years on the wards.

Time and time again he heard of people being floated through walls on beams of light into spaceships, and of people lying paralyzed on tables under alien assault. He was told of "tag-

ging" devices implanted in sinuses and eyeballs removed and put back. From the descriptions of the fetuslike aliens — known, in U.F.O. parlance, as Grays — to the experiments they performed, the sex was nonstop: men told of anal probes and forced sperm-taking; women, artificial insemination and removal of embryos. Mack heard that a human-alien hybrid race was being created on the ships: listless, huge-eyed, wispy-haired children that look like Keane paintings on chemo.

For a Freudian psychoanalyst, this material was compelling. Mack's interest in these patients, and the book he was writing about them, would not have caused a stir.

Except that he believed them.

THERE HAS BEEN A SPATE OF BOOKS ON HUMAN encounters with extraterrestrials — most notably Whitley Strieber's 1987 "Communion," the best-selling book with the

big-eyed alien on the cover. But none by an author with the credentials of John Mack, whose book "Abduction: Human Encounters With Aliens" is to be published next month by Scribners.

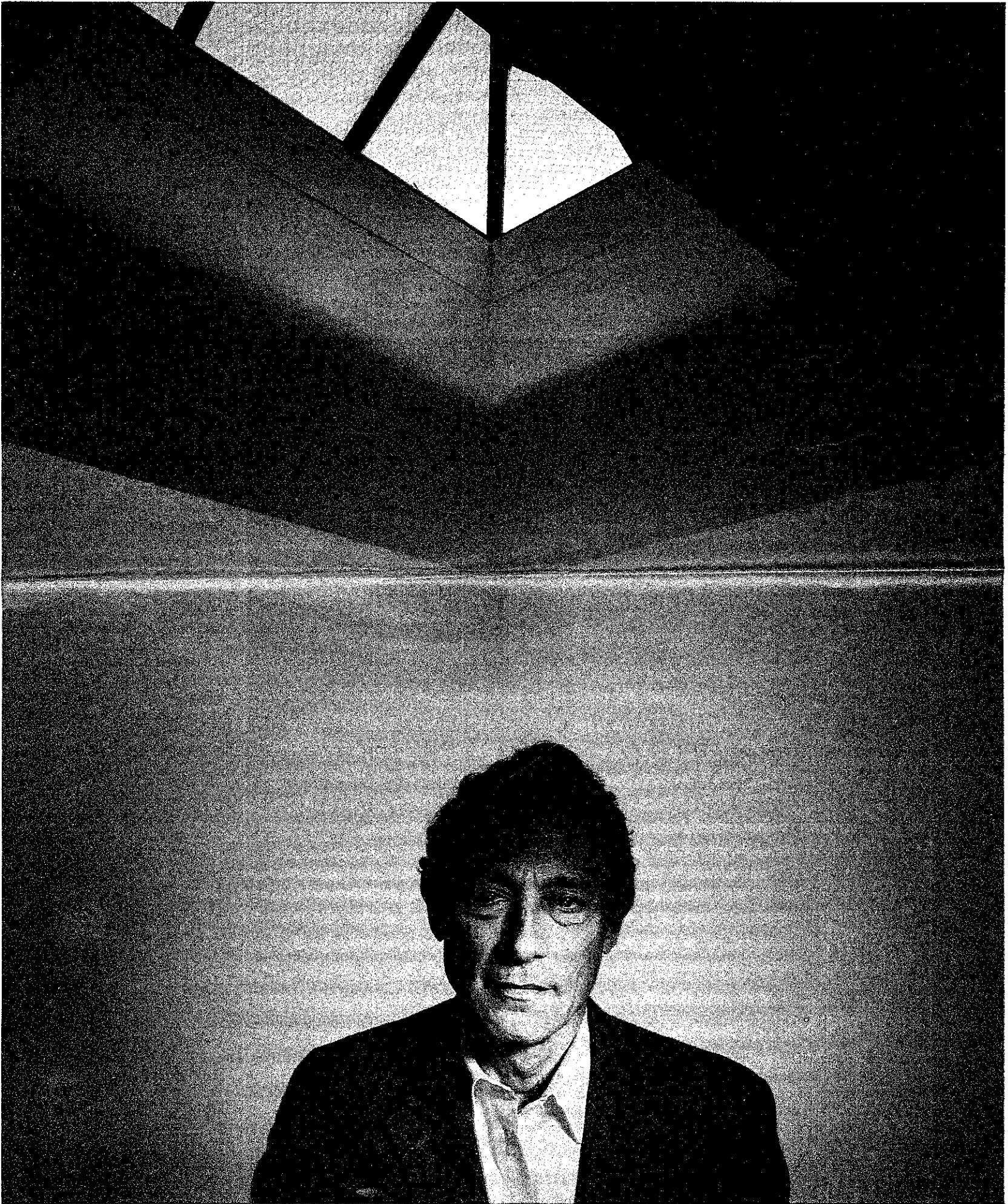
"I really knew when I first talked with them that this was something that I could not explain psychiatrically," Mack says of his patients. He is in his tiny office, just large enough for a desk and chair, a couch and a Tibetan tanka. "It didn't sound like it behaved like anything that had a psychiatric origin. It behaved like a trauma." And traumas come from *outside*. Mack,

## Humans report abduction by aliens! Harvard psychiatrist swears it's true!

BY STEPHEN RAE

the author of the classic "Nightmares and Human Conflict," also was convinced these stories weren't dreams: They had a narrative consistency, within themselves and from person to person. He was sure his abductees were not making up stories to get attention. "They don't *want* to believe it! It's the *last* thing they want! They want to be told that this is a dream, that this is even madness." What strikes a visitor most about him are his hands: always in motion, painting pictures, grabbing at you, trying to bring you into his vision.

We are talking in the Macht Building, the red-brick home of Cambridge Hospital's renowned psychiatry department. It might have been called the Mack Building, after its founding director, if a psychiatrist named Macht hadn't died first and if Mack's colleagues hadn't feared their beloved professor had gone mad. Of course, people thought Mack was crazy back in the early 60's, too, when he joined the derelict municipal



facility. But then Harvard, in a stab at town-gown rapprochement, affiliated with the hospital. Clearly, Mack was anything but nuts. He built the psychiatry department from scratch and helped turn around the other departments, earning much of the credit for shaping the hospital into another jewel in Harvard's teaching crown.

Later, Mack, a German Jew from New York, would cut a quixotic figure on a camel, traipsing around Jordan to research the psychoanalytic biography of T. E. Lawrence that would win a Pulitzer Prize in 1977. "I was traveling among the Bedouin, trying to get the principles of diplomacy and negotiation, which I would then come back and apply to the City Council here," he says. Mack was always bridging something. In 1980 he even met with Yasir Arafat in a Beirut safe house.

In 1983, Mack and Robert Jay Lifton, a Yale psychiatrist, founded the Center for Psychological Studies in the Nuclear Age as a Harvard Medical School affiliate. Now called the Center for Psychology and Social Change, it shifted perceptions of the psychodynamics of human conflict, bringing into currency concepts like "us vs. them." It connected Russians and Americans, Arabs and Jews, and helped them to acknowledge the sense of victimization of the "other" and to challenge the cultural identity that said, "I exist in opposition to you."

"He really is, you know, a do-gooder," a friend says. And always a seeker. "In medical school, he was the first to get into psychoanalysis, and he had not just one psychoanalysis but two." Mack's identification with Lawrence was so intense that friends read his book in part as self-analysis. "[Lawrence] had certain confusions of identity similar to mine," Mack agrees. "What fascinated me was the resonance between the inner world and the acted-out, political world, and how we try to transform the world according to our inner struggles and needs." He quotes Lawrence's famous vision of a "new commonwealth," in which "white and red and yellow and brown and black will stand up together . . . in the service of the world." Given that Mack's "Abduction" is likely to obscure all his past accomplishments, this could also be his epitaph — if you add the Gray.

EVEN BEFORE HIS WORK WITH U.F.O. abductees, Mack's quest led him down what are considered heretical paths. It was a stunner when this prominent member of the Boston Psychoanalytic Society and Institute questioned psychoanalysis. "I think there are places the Freudian system has trouble going,"

*Stephen Rae is a New York writer.*

he says, citing dissatisfaction with his own analyses and their "endless" rehashing of childhood events. For an emerging activist, the rarefied air of psychoanalysis — the blank screen, the silence, the mirroring — was stultifying.

Then Mack found EST. "He was very struck by how powerful these large-group experiences could be on the workings of people's lives, including his own," says Dr. Edward Khantzian, a longtime colleague. "And I told John way back then that I think he discovered the power of groups too late in his career and was too, uh, taken in." Mack served on EST's board of directors, and in 1982 he brought Werner Erhard to Harvard to speak. "It raised eyebrows because people saw Erhard as a con-

**'They don't want to believe it,' Mack says. 'It's the last thing they want.'**

**Some of the people who told Mack they had contact with extraterrestrials.**



man," Khantzian says. "I was given a terrible time by the powers that be," Mack admits.

In 1987, at a United States-Soviet conference of physicians at the Esalen Institute, he met Stanislav Grof, a Czech-born psychiatrist who had written much about LSD and consciousness expansion. Grof and his wife, Christina, had developed a therapy they called holotropic breathwork. It used Eastern breathing techniques and percussive music to produce LSD-like changes in consciousness without the legal risks.

Mack found it revelatory. "I became in touch profoundly with the loss of my mother as an infant and my father's grief at the time," he says. Grof's system of transpersonal psychology also smashed the boundary constraints imposed by psychoanalysis, recognizing that in any human connection, a "co-creation" or "commingling of consciousness" goes on.

Mack plunged into Eastern philosophy and shamanism. He read Huxley's "Doors of Perception" and Castaneda's

"Teachings of Don Juan." A straight-ahead guy who passed up the chance to take LSD in the 50's, when it was offered to Harvard psychiatric residents as a way to mimic a schizophrenic state, Mack had sat out the 60's drugfest. He made up for that now.

The John Mack who emerged from these explorations was possessed of the notion that humanity's present predicament was rooted in the 300-year-old paradigm of Western dualism, which severed awareness of connection to one another, the environment and the cosmos; and in materialism, which cuts off spiritual realms. Every previous culture has accepted "a huge range of entities and gods and spirits" who share our universe," Mack says.

tors of the Mutual U.F.O. Network. He was a consultant on the "Intruders" TV movie, in which Richard Crenna, as a psychiatrist who discovers abductees among his patients, played a Mack-Hopkins hybrid. And he contributed the foreword to "Secret Life: Firsthand Accounts of U.F.O. Abductions," by David M. Jacobs, a Temple University historian.

"A huge, strange interspecies or interbeing breeding program has invaded our physical reality and is affecting the lives of hundreds of thousands, if not millions of people," Mack wrote.

"Oliver Stone, call your office," The New Republic jeered.

IT WOULD TAKE ALL OF MACK'S diplomatic skills to reconcile the ultimate us-them: terrestrial vs. extraterrestrial. To help abductees shed their isolation, Mack set up the Program for Extraordinary Experience Research. He helped them recover memories in hypnotic screamathons. When combined with breathwork, Mack says, hypnosis undoes the repression of memory imposed by the aliens. As the traumas are brought to consciousness, relived with "feelings of terror, rage and grief as intense as any I have encountered as a psychiatrist," their power was dissipated.

It was tougher to overcome what he calls ontological shock, "the bleak realization that what they have experienced actually occurred and that reality as they have defined it is forever altered." Most abductees came to Mack plagued by what they call vivid dreams and what Mack calls denial. The "undoing of denial," he writes, is effected by having the abductee stare into the "engulfing, searching eyes" of the alien. "This will make them real and remove, once and for all, the denial that has operated as a psychological defense." With the end of denial comes a "shift in their relation to the alien beings," Mack found. A more reciprocal and "even loving" relationship evolves; us-themness diminishes. The more communicative aliens may impart "useful information about fundamental ecological and global dangers," like nuclear war. For Mack, ever the diplomat, the key was to stop fighting.

Describing one abductee's experience, Mack writes, once he "surrendered," he was enlightened about "the way humans are conducting themselves here in terms of international politics, our environment, our violence to each other, our food and all that" — by an alien who sounds just like Mack.

If this smacks of "commingling" or "co-creation of consciousness," Mack disputes the notion. "That would imply that I'm creating the ideas," he says vehemently. "These people are

So Mack was predisposed to seeing entities the winter day in 1990 that he met Budd Hopkins, father of the U.F.O. abduction movement. Hopkins showed Mack the proof he'd amassed: photos of strange scars and scoop marks and a collection of symbols seen on the alien ships. Mack met people who said they'd been abducted and came away convinced. "They were very straightforward, healthy-minded folks who had had these unusual experiences," he recalls. "Their stories jibed, and as far as I could tell, they hadn't heard this from anybody else, and it all seemed very real."

And he was fascinated by the entities. "They seem to act like spirit beings much of the time," Mack observes. Yet they "penetrate and enter the physical world, and to that extent they're a little different from spirit entities."

Mack began seeing abductees that spring. Ignoring friends' pleas that he "stay in the closet with this one," he delivered papers at U.F.O. conferences and was elected to the board of direc-

very hard to lead. You throw curves at them: 'Was the hair brown or yellow?' No hair. You can't influence them. This idea that the hypnotist somehow leads them is just not the way it is."

He acknowledges that it is possible to implant false memories under hypnosis, but only memories of inconsequential events — an issue at the center of fierce debates over recovered memories of Satanic cults and childhood sexual abuse. The people at Mack's research program tell me of a Cambridge Hospital psychiatrist whose studies back up this assertion, but in what I've noticed to be a trend among Mack's colleagues, he doesn't return my phone calls.

"NOBODY BELIEVES IT," SNAPS DR. Malkah Notman in her Cambridge Hospital office. She is acting chairwoman of the psychiatry department and Mack's boss. "I wish he were doing something else. This is so off-base." Like other Mack colleagues who don't dodge me, Notman gives the clear impression that she would rather be swallowing glass. "I think it's part of an ongoing search that he's had for issues he defines as spiritual," she ventures sympathetically. "It fits in with his interest in EST and even the nuclear and nationalism issues — you know, a kind of international presence or cooperation."

Mack is increasingly being compared with Timothy Leary, who gave LSD for homework and was dismissed from Harvard in 1963. But Mack's tenure and issues of academic freedom would insure his right to research.

"I don't know any of his colleagues who would say, 'You gotta stop this,'" Notman declares, drawing a line between believing in someone's work and letting him pursue it, "as long as it doesn't cause any harm."

But some worry that Mack may indeed be causing harm. "We're terribly concerned that he is hurting himself, his patients and psychiatry," says a friend who attributes Mack's recent separation from his wife of 34 years to his abduction "obsession." He raises the specter of Wilhelm Reich, the psychiatrist whose notions about orgone energy destroyed his career.

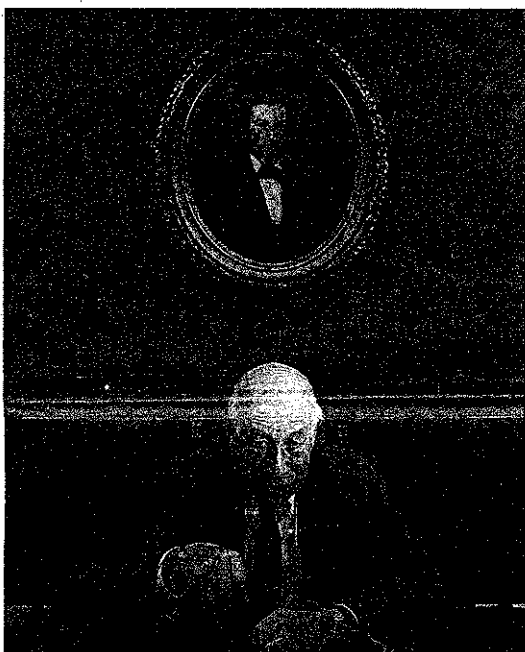
"I would almost buy the Brooklyn Bridge from him," Philip J. Klass says of Mack. Klass, the publisher of the Skeptics U.F.O. Newsletter, says the abductees are not crazy. Those he's met are just "people seeking celebrity status," people who would never otherwise be invited on Oprah Winfrey's show. "They are, he says, 'little nobodies.'"

Carl Sagan, a longtime acquaintance who had once donned a blindfold and headphones and breathed rapidly and deeply to evocative rhythms when

Mack got into breathwork, is also concerned. In 1991 he came up from Cornell University to discuss the validity of the alien abduction claims.

"I tried to argue that on issues of this importance, extraordinary claims demand extraordinary evidence," Sagan says. "And John would have none of that. He was quite content with anecdotal cases and his judgment that these people must be telling the truth because they are so extremely distraught." Sagan's article debunking alien abductions in Parade magazine last year did not help their relationship.

"Hallucinations are common," Sagan wrote, and "may occur to perfectly normal people under ordinary circumstances." But they are also associ-



ated with sleep paralysis, a little-known but surprisingly prevalent occurrence, striking at least 8 percent of the population. In twilight states between sleep and wakefulness, people may feel paralyzed and sense strange presences. Sexual stimulation is often reported, a result of a diminished flow of oxygen to the brain. In the Middle Ages, these presences were called succubi and incubi. Later, fairies were said to paralyze and rape human victims.

"Is it possible that people in all times and places occasionally experience vivid, realistic hallucinations, often with sexual content — with the details filled in by the prevailing cultural idioms sucked out of the Zeitgeist?" Sagan asked.

His friend was kind. Others will be less so. But Mack is almost mystically detached and certain that he is right.

"WE'RE PREPARING FOR AN ONSLAUGHT HERE," says Vivienne Simon, executive director of the Center for

Psychology and Social Change. "When you have a Harvard professor who is saying these people aren't crazy, and not only are they not crazy, but I've been able to help them, and in some cases actually embrace it, then you've got a flood of people" at the door, she says.

In anticipation of the tsunami, a new telephone system has been installed to route callers: abductees to one extension to leave confidential messages; therapists to the network coordinator; abductees who want to be studied to the research department; overseas callers to the international coordinator; journalists to the program director.

"A year ago my board was flipping

**'They are little nobodies,' Philip Klass, professional skeptic, says of the abductees.**

**The abductees aren't crazy, Klass maintains. They're just hungry for celebrity.**

out about this," says Simon, a 43-year-old lawyer who used to coordinate Greenpeace's campaign against the nuclear industry. "I've watched a tremendous change, from when people were afraid John was losing his mind to the point where they are really beginning to understand."

(That might have something to do with why some members of the board of directors left.)

JOHN MACK IS NOT ALL alone. Some colleagues who have met his patients at grand rounds and less formal settings come away scratching their heads. Khantzian recalls a woman who seemed "quite responsive and available and connected — all those nice, healthy things." He says a common reaction to a Mack case conference is "I went in disbelieving and I came out not knowing what to believe."

Though Mack may be "on the front lines of abductee research," as his book jacket puts it, he's got lots of company

in the rear guard. "There is what is sometimes called the Hidden College" of U.F.O. abduction researchers, an M.I.T. physicist says — a sort of closet intelligentsia. "But they keep their heads down, they don't want their names in the papers."

As is true of most other U.F.O. abductees who have been studied, psychological tests suggest that Peter Faust isn't crazy. Nor is his story all that unusual. A 1991 Roper survey revealed that 2 percent of American adults had experienced four or five of the "strong indicators" of having been abducted.

And John Mack has made Peter Faust and others feel better. Between Faust's first meeting with Mack, when he remembered abductions from childhood, and his third, in which he saw the "little black chip" implanted in his brain, he felt abandoned and helpless. But after that "dark night of the soul," the 36-year-old acupuncturist came to know that he was "connected to something infinitely wiser and more powerful than I could understand, that the phenomenon had some meaning that was greater than just me and the sperm sample."

Subsequent regressions taught Faust, who has a psychotherapist to help him deal with what he uncovers with Mack, that the aliens were "longing to connect." More recently he discovered the extraterrestrial girlfriend he'd been breeding with "for eons." More striking was the vision he had of himself as an alien.

"A new breed or 'tribe,' a hybrid form, is being created between the alien race or races and human beings," Mack, ever hopeful, proclaims in his book. "Peter and other men and women like him with a dual alien-human identity, appears to be playing a vital role ... breeding with an alien or hybrid mate to produce offspring that would be able to survive in some sort of post-apocalyptic future."

Membership in this vanguard may have its privileges, but it leaves Faust with questions. "Did John's spiritual bent affect all of us, or did our experiences influence him?" he asks.

"Is it real? I'm always left with: How much of my memories are real? Is some of it the book I read 20 years ago that is somehow lurking in my deepest memory? Are my memories true or are some of them true and other ones part of psychologically transferring a father figure onto John and trying to please him and stay the center of attention — is that part of it, or are my regressions, each one, part of my reality and part of my experience?"

"Believe me," he says. "That's why I'm in therapy." ■

people will be able to buy more groceries and warehousemen will keep working. The three Teamsters in the room, whose jobs at the warehouse are not guaranteed past 1995, nodded without conviction. Between the outreach center's long-term plans for reindustrialization and the Teamsters' short-term anxiety, there's a huge gap of almost separate realities.

The scramble for jobs resembles a desperate game of musical chairs, continually undermining the possibility of human community. Yet the project can't secede from the world its members live in. When Galdston brought up "democratic economic development strategies" at the training session, only a professional woman from Andover seemed to know what the phrase meant, and it didn't come up again. To the people who approach him for help and training, the issues are more specific and dire—threatened jobs, crime-ridden streets, unlivable housing. So the project looks for winnable fights and tries to create a community that can hold out amid all the opposing forces: the decay of cities, the emptiness of government coffers, the cynicism of politicians who don't see the point of dealing with an organization that doesn't deliver votes, the globalization of the economy. The mere fact that eighty churchgoers, workers and professionals from across the valley came to an organizational meeting to hear about one another's campaigns, as one of them later said, "on a weekday night in the middle of January, with the kind of winter we've had, in Lawrence, which is not a place where people go for fun," is an achievement of sorts in 1994 America.

"There is great success in developing individuals," Ken Galdston says. "But it can be evanescent, and you're always wrestling with the question of proportionality." Most members labor under the strain of families and jobs and constant worry about money. Mike Ferguson, the warehouseman, attends up to ten meetings a month, a pace that has burned out others, like Bill Middlemiss, a firefighter who worries that the life-span of other groups he's seen is about the five years of the project's existence. Some members seem to fall away when their particular campaign ends; some become frustrated with the difficulty of getting people around them to act on even the narrowest self-interest. Dennis Walsh, an electronics worker at A.T.&T., who joined because "the idea of the community coming together, meeting in a church, struck me as something lacking lately," wonders whether people he's trying to help are trying to help themselves.

Which brings us to the conundrum of quid pro quo—the project's "dynamic," according to Galdston. In theory, though they seem to have little in common, Lois Valentin helps Mary Georgoulis and then Mary Georgoulis helps Lois Valentin. Self-interest, not altruism, is the basis for community. But what if Andover, or even Lowell, doesn't really need Lawrence? What if reciprocity breaks down? Dennis Walsh said, "I can see that being the end of an organization." If, on the other hand, the project's "ethos," as Paul Dettman, a retired regional planner, put it, is "the idea that to some extent you are your brother's keeper," then there have to be enough people of decency and vision, like those I've described, to keep it going. Mutual support is no more inevitable than the war of all against all. Even most nice people find it hard to care, hard to act.

And yet this time the middle-class Protestant congregations from the suburbs, historic do-gooders from abolition to Nicaragua, are taking the risk of joining with poor people who live next door. The women at Hancock Courts are taking the risk of joining with suburban liberals who may abandon them in an instant. It's difficult to imagine a better organization or better people emerging from the battered Merrimack Valley. The project has already won some battles and prevented total loss in others; if it doesn't arrest a decay that's almost as old as the century, it will have done no worse than anyone could expect. And it will leave behind fifty or a hundred or 300 people who at least share an idea that their destinies in the valley are somehow connected. □

## ■ GULLIBLE TRAVELERS

# Spaced Out—and Other Delusions

ANNE BERNAYS

Some years ago, at the height of the antinuclear movement, John Mack, a psychiatrist and professor at Harvard Medical School, chained himself to a fence surrounding the testing grounds in Nevada. This gesture was altogether in character. Dr. Mack is a binary sort of fellow, an enthusiast searching for inspiring answers to big questions. The Harvard-affiliated department of psychiatry at Cambridge City Hospital is his creation; he's also the founder of the Center for Psychology and Social Change. Over time Mack has made some of his more conventional colleagues uncomfortable by endorsing Werner Erhard's EST and, more recently, "breathworks," a method of breathing under supervision meant to help a patient recollect nasty things long kept under wraps. It's hard to imagine how he found the time, but in 1978 he published a biography of agitated iconoclast T.E. Lawrence; it won him a Pulitzer Prize. John Mack has magnetic eyes and a reassuring presence.

These days psychiatrist Mack has moved on to other worlds, spending a good deal of time interviewing, hypnotizing and "treating" men and women who claim to be victims of alien abduction. They say that during their several hours of captivity inside hovering space vehicles they are physically invaded in various ways, including sperm and egg removal and implantation of odd matter, usually in an arm or leg muscle. When their space odysseys are over, the abductees are returned to earth, thoroughly *fartootst*. This is where Dr. Mack takes over, assuring them that it's O.K. to be temporarily upset but not to worry: Their small gray kidnappers mean well and have come from outer space only in order to keep our planet from self-destructing.

I saw Dr. Mack on *Oprah*. He said that while he's aware all this sounds farfetched, the abductees he's talked to are nei-

*Anne Bernays, who teaches at Holy Cross College, is the author of, most recently, Professor Romeo (Penguin).*

ther psychotic nor neurotic in any conventional way. Their stories sound authentic and are amazingly similar to one another, even when related by people who have had no chance to meet and compare notes. While unwilling to go all the way and say they are telling the truth, Mack is far more convinced by tales of extraterrestrial abduction than he is skeptical.

If John Mack were the local chiropractor or small-town dentist, few would pay much attention to him or the ideas contained in his book, just published and now orbiting its author on the nation's airwaves. But this man is a Harvard professor; surely a man on the faculty of the Big H knows what he's talking about. His credentials alone give his narrative the wings it needs to fly; as a result, thousands, perhaps millions, believe it.

It seems we'll believe almost anything, and the more of us there are, the more likely we are to embrace total nonsense, a phenomenon known as mass hysteria. You're ashamed to admit that you saw Elvis twiddling the knobs on the gas grill, but as soon as a couple of the neighbors say they too saw him in their backyards, you figure it's O.K. to go ahead and call the folks at *The National Enquirer*. I see nothing to distinguish alien abduction—in its high moonshine content—from such other foolishness as astrology, Silva Mind Control (we once had a babysitter who swore she could find a parking place in Harvard Square by focusing her mind), pyramid power, numerology, the orgone box, phlogiston, Scientology, alchemy and the presence of witchcraft in Salem, Massachusetts—all of them wacko responses to the normal anxieties of everyday life.

Moreover, John Mack and his fellow believers want it both ways. On the one hand they charge us to open our closed, "Western," "rationalist" sensibilities to other systems of "knowing" and accept the "unacceptable." On the other hand, they claim to have "scientific" (that is, physical) evidence that scores of abductions have taken place—although they have yet to produce a single convincing item. But one either buys the whole ball of wax through absolute faith, as a Christian does the Resurrection, or, as in the case of fluoridation, through concrete proof that children who brush with Crest have fewer cavities than those who don't. Are we supposed to believe in aliens in our midst because we need to believe *or* because space cadets have left behind a pair of peculiar footgear or half-eaten metal-filing sandwiches? One way or the other, please.

An analogy to the belief in extraterrestrial kidnapping is the conviction that the Holocaust never happened. When confronted by hard evidence—documentation, mass graves, camps and ovens, the number of disappearances corresponding to the shrinkage of Europe's Jewish population, and the word of eyewitnesses—the deniers persist: The Holocaust didn't happen. *Punkt*.

And so we have a phenomenon with two heads. Defying—or, at the very least, ignoring—reason, common sense and logic, the one head believes without evidence, while the other believes *in spite of* evidence. Not that our age is unique: Historians of religion call this kind of superstitious thinking-by-the-gut "animism," and it's been around since the first cave-person bored a hole through a mammoth's tooth and wore it around his, or her, neck on a length of bull's intestine.

The specious and irrational, a huge slavering dog with fangs, has pushed the sweet purring pussycat of sanity and reason off her bed, taken her place at the hearth. Impatient with rational thought, we'd far rather "feel" or "believe in" or "relate to."

No one appreciates the imagination more than a novelist, a person who spends at least half her waking life making up stories and writing them down. And that's why she's aware of the risks of letting fact and fiction blur into each other. John Mack is a man of undeniable talent and energy, so I'm baffled by his eagerness to groom and breed gullibility. But I guess he's not out of step with the animism parade. The next thing we'll be told is that Richard Nixon has made yet another spectacular comeback. How many will not believe it? □

■ NOW, FINANCIAL MELTDOWN?

## T.V.A.'s Blighted Nuclear Romance

DANIELLE DROITSCH

Some sixty years ago, Franklin D. Roosevelt gave the country what one writer would call "the greatest single American invention of this century"—the Tennessee Valley Authority. At the time, the region was plagued by floods, widespread soil erosion and poverty that was grim even by Depression measurements. The arrival of T.V.A., with its shock therapy of electric power, spurred industry, created thousands of jobs and helped restore much of the ravaged land throughout the Southeast. By the early 1970s, the area's income had increased twenty times and stood at 75 percent of the national per capita average, up from 45 percent in the 1930s. Today, the authority serves 80,000 square miles, employs more than 19,000 citizens, manages the country's fifth-largest river system and produces 128 billion kilowatt hours of electricity a year, enough to run three cities the size of New York. It is also \$25 billion in debt.

This financial crater is largely the result of T.V.A.'s romance with atomic power, an affair that shows little sign of waning despite years of mismanagement and the cautionary message of the industry's meltdown nationwide. In the 1960s, when the country first embraced atomic power as an energy panacea "too cheap to meter," T.V.A. ordered seventeen reactors to meet its projected demand. To pay for their construction, the authority persuaded Congress to allow it to borrow on the public bond market. But building delays and cost overruns plagued the reactors from the start, and the promise of cheap nuclear power quickly dimmed. Of the seventeen reactors originally planned, eight have been canceled. Five have received operating licenses, but only three of these are produc-

*Danielle Droitsch, director of the Global Sustainability Energy Project and on the board of directors of the Tennessee Valley Energy Reform Coalition, lives in Knoxville. James Riccio contributed reporting to this article.*

## No Censure for Professor Who Studies U.F.O.'s

BOSTON, Aug. 3 (AP) — Harvard Medical School has decided not to censure a Pulitzer Prize-winning professor who studies people who say space aliens abducted them for sexual experiments.

But the professor, Dr. John E. Mack, was publicly warned by the dean not to let his enthusiasm for U.F.O. research steer him from the path of professionalism.

The decision, disclosed today, followed a one-year investigation that Dr. Mack's lawyer, Roderick MacLeish, called a challenge to academic freedom.

"This is the type of thing that

almost by its existence can be intimidating," Mr. MacLeish said.

Dr. Mack's fellow professors supported him because they were afraid they might be the next to be scrutinized, Mr. MacLeish said.

Members of the faculty contacted by The Associated Press during the investigation refused to speak for the record.

The review began after Dr. Mack appeared on "Unsolved Mysteries" and other television programs to promote his 1994 book "Abduction: Human Encounters With Aliens," (Charles Scribner's Sons) about his patients, including a man who re-

members an alien female extracting a sperm sample from him, a woman who says she gave birth to a human-alien hybrid and a man who says he had an alien wife in a parallel universe.

The faculty committee investigated whether Dr. Mack's work met professional standards and whether it could be considered research on human subjects, which requires special permission from the university.

A medical school spokeswoman, Keren McGinity, would not say how often such investigations are conducted. The school would not release the findings, and Ms. McGinity re-

fused to answer questions.

Dr. Mack, 65, was traveling today and could not be contacted, an assistant said.

In an interview last year, he said that he did not necessarily believe in space aliens but thought that some unknown traumatic experience explained his patients' memories.

Dr. Mack founded the psychiatry department at Cambridge Hospital, one of Harvard's teaching hospitals, and is director of the Program for Extraordinary Experience Research at the Center for Psychology and Social Research, which is affiliated with Harvard.

He won a Pulitzer Prize in 1977 for his biography of Lawrence of Arabia.

