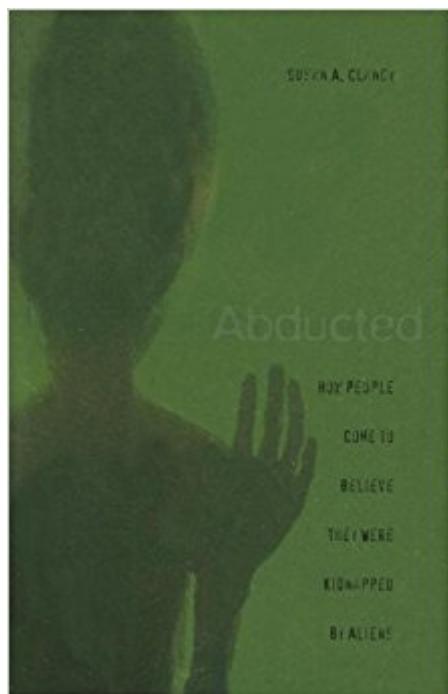


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# Abducted: How People Come To Believe They Were Kidnapped By Aliens



## Synopsis

They are tiny. They are tall. They are gray. They are green. They survey our world with enormous glowing eyes. To conduct their shocking experiments, they creep in at night to carry humans off to their spaceships. Yet there is no evidence that they exist at all. So how could anyone believe he or she was abducted by aliens? Or want to believe it? To answer these questions, psychologist Susan Clancy interviewed and evaluated "abductees"--old and young, male and female, religious and agnostic. She listened closely to their stories--how they struggled to explain something strange in their remembered experience, how abduction seemed plausible, and how, having suspected abduction, they began to recollect it, aided by suggestion and hypnosis. Clancy argues that abductees are sane and intelligent people who have unwittingly created vivid false memories from a toxic mix of nightmares, culturally available texts (abduction reports began only after stories of extraterrestrials appeared in films and on TV), and a powerful drive for meaning that science is unable to satisfy. For them, otherworldly terror can become a transforming, even inspiring experience. "Being abducted," writes Clancy, "may be a baptism in the new religion of this millennium." This book is not only a subtle exploration of the workings of memory, but a sensitive inquiry into the nature of belief.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

If you're going to read just one book about alien abductions, make it this one. And if you think alien abduction stories aren't worth considering seriously, Clancy will convince you otherwise. A postdoctoral fellow in psychology at Harvard, she follows the dictum of William James to "take 'weird

beliefs' seriously but not literally." Thus, she considers that the belief that one has been abducted by little gray beings with large, black catlike eyes, subjected to intrusive and painful physical examinations and exploited to create hybrid human/alien babies serves the deep human need to find meaning in one's life. She presents clear explorations of what most mainstream experts believe are the sources of the abduction story, such as sleep paralysis and the dubious use of hypnosis in "recovering" forgotten memories of the abduction. Her more original contribution, based on her own research, is that abductees score high on measures of schizotypy (they're far from schizophrenic, but are prone to fantasy and "magical" thinking) and, more speculatively, experiencing what in the 19th century was called hysteria. Writing in a nonacademic and witty style, Clancy offers an intelligent and compassionate look at people whose "weird" belief usually elicits derision, and argues convincingly for the need to look deeper into its significance. (Oct.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

One dark night in 1961 an event occurred that opened a new chapter in paranormal psychology: two Americans were, they later claimed, abducted by aliens. Similar claims have been coming ever since. Susan A. Clancy, a Harvard psychologist who describes herself as "a reluctant scholar of alienology," has investigated many of them and written this short, insightful and often funny description of abductees and the psychology behind their experiences. Clancy is never condescending toward the 50 subjects she interviewed; she simply asks questions, listens and then presents her own carefully reasoned explanation for why they might believe they were abducted. Fortunately, Clancy is well equipped to understand strange events. She has not only studied hypnosis but experienced it and the false memories it can "recover." She has also awoken to the terror of "sleep paralysis," an unusual state in which an individual perceives senses as if she is awake but is unable to move because parts of the brain are still asleep; hallucinations are common. Clancy believes this phenomenon, which typically lasts about a minute, is behind most of her subjects' narratives. Many share the same basic storyline: the person awakens in the dark with aliens moving around her and is transported to a spaceship, where she is subject to medical or sexual experiments. Abductees may be able to recall every detail or instead only "know" that it happened. In quests to make sense of the traumatic experience, they usually read up on abductions and seek therapists who will help them recover and understand their memories of the event; often through hypnosis. Frequently they associate with fellow abductees, either in person or online. Clancy gained access to this faith-based community in the simplest possible way:

she put an ad in the newspaper asking, "Have you been abducted by aliens?" She interviewed her subjects at length and gave those who volunteered various tests to reveal any mental health problems (only one person qualified) and how susceptible they were to false memories. The book explains how individuals can have memories of events that never occurred and describes the types of people who are more likely to become believers. In a nutshell, they are fantasy-prone and are often unhappy and trying to make sense of their lives. The abduction provides a touchstone. At the very end, and with obvious reluctance, Clancy concludes that abduction beliefs provide "the same things that millions of people the world over derive from their religions: meaning, reassurance, mystical revelation, spirituality, transformation." Jonathan Beard --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This book was pretty good and does a decent job of laying out why some people think they been abducted by aliens. It's not a long book at all but despite that I got bored with it towards the end. There is a whole chapter where the author describes her interviewees and I just couldn't push myself through that chapter. The first part of the book is pretty well done however and I liked it. Not a great book but worth the read.

Through out this book I kept thinking "this part, this is what I want to read aloud to someone" then a page later I would say, "no this part I want to tell someone about" And on and on throughout the entire book. I wanted to share what I was learning to lots of people. So here I am now writing a review and all I can say is I really loved it, learned a lot and recommend this to anyone who wants to understand why people believe in things when there is no evidence to do so.

Be sure to check out the negative reviews in this space. They are an indispensable companion to the text itself.

Susan A. Clancy provides an excellent explanation for the alien abduction phenomenon, and she manages to do so in a conversational tone that makes this an easy and informative read. This subject is not to be taken lightly, and Clancy takes her subject and her subjects seriously and treats both with respect. I thoroughly enjoyed reading this book and would recommend it highly to anyone interested in the complexities of the human mind. Totally worthwhile!

What a great topic! This book is about why people believe they were abducted by aliens. It is a

skeptic's look at the psychological reasons some people think they've been abducted. It's a brisk read (you could read it in 1 day) with humor and insight. Also, it has a cool green metallic cover. Seriously fascinating stuff!

All I can say is its an excellent starting off point (Psychologically) why people believe they were abducted by aliens. What it didn't address is the emotional/physical/sexual abuse they might have received as a child and it is llite on hyypgerenia, a prime driving component. Overall, it is easy to understand, is to digest. I recommend you also review FMS, hypergenia to obtain a complete picture. As a study tool, it is indispensable.

Susan Clancy clearly defines abduction experiences in a way not belittling of the folks having them but at the same time asking the age old question "where is the proof?" I found myself feeling sympathy while also remaining unconvinced of the abduction experiences. The unreliability of human memory is incredibly well explained.

The author makes a very comprehensive, cogent and rational case for understanding the alien abduction phenomenon. This is actually quite surprising for she blindly accepts non-expert opinion in a variety of subjects outside her field. For example, she doesn't think highly of "holistic medicine," without even having the slightly grasp of its meaning. She accepts the notion of "hysterical" disease, even though the thesis originates from half-baked historical literature not through rigorous scientific scrutiny. She attempts to argue the Fermi paradox, without any apparent awareness of the numerous arguments to explain it. As long as she sticks to her own subject matter, which she does an exemplary job on, she's OK, but I wouldn't put her on any panel to judge scientific matters.

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