

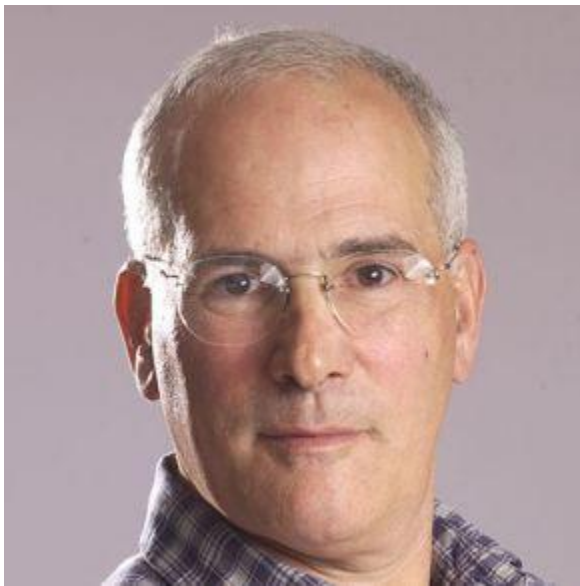
## Interview John Gertz:

SETI Theorist & Former Chairman of the Board | Extraterrestrial Researcher | Author

### ***Reinventing SETI: New Directions in the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence***

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#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR



[John Gertz](#) has been a driving force in the search for extraterrestrial intelligence (SETI) for more than 25 years. A recognized leader in the field, he served three terms as chairman of the board of the SETI Institute. Gertz has also contributed to the academic foundation of SETI through multiple peer-reviewed theoretical papers.

Gertz founded a pioneering organization dedicated to raising \$100 million for global SETI efforts, where he served as President alongside Vice President Frank Drake. The board included some of the most distinguished names in science, including Nobel Laureates George Smoot and Charles Townes, and MacArthur

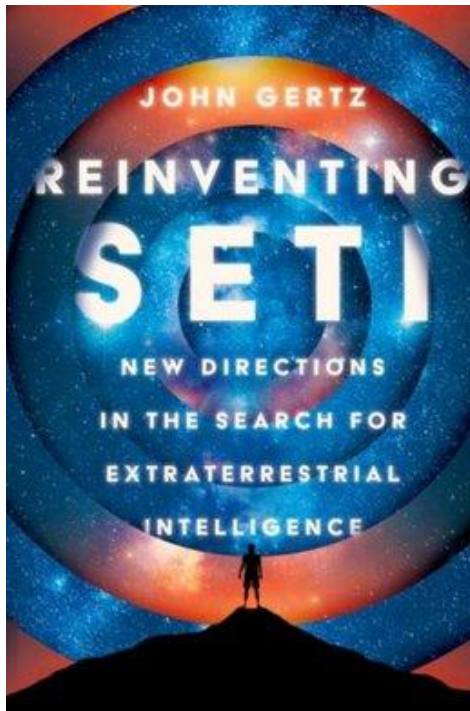
Fellow Sara Seager. When Yuri Milner launched the \$100 million Breakthrough Listen initiative, Gertz's leadership and vision were recognized with his appointment as the sole layman on its advisory board.

Beyond his work in extraterrestrial research, John Gertz is President and CEO of Zorro Productions, Inc., where he has overseen numerous global adaptations of the iconic character, including *The Mask of Zorro*, *Zorro: The Musical*, 12 TV series, and over 75 stage productions. He has collaborated with major talents such as Steven Spielberg, Isabel Allende, The Gipsy Kings, and Quentin Tarantino, with *Django/Zorro* currently in development as a feature film with SONY.

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## ABOUT THE BOOK

### ***Reinventing SETI: New Directions in the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence***



For millennia, humanity has looked up at the sprawling tapestry of stars and wondered what lay beyond Earth. With time, we learned that each star is not a pinprick point in a domed sky, but a massive plasma sphere so far away that the distance becomes incomprehensible to the human mind, measured in light years rather than miles. This vastness invokes crucial questions. Do we share our galaxy of some 400 billion stars with other intelligent lifeforms? If so, how do we approach the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (SETI)? Lastly, do we need to examine our assumptions about extraterrestrial intelligence?

[\*Reinventing SETI: New Directions in the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence\*](#) (Oxford University Press, August 2025) clears out the cobwebs of outdated or wrongheaded SETI paradigms such as Fermi's Paradox, the Drake Equation, and METI (i.e., proactively sending signals from Earth to putative aliens). It argues that

scientists should approach the pursuit of extraterrestrials (ETs) in a more effective manner. Author John Gertz states that ETs, as biological lifeforms themselves, cannot accomplish interstellar travel, but have instead placed robotic probes throughout the galaxy, perhaps even in our own Solar System. Gertz also warns that humankind is woefully unprepared for the day of First Contact with an alien probe right here in our own backyard. He suggests contingency planning, involving international cooperation as well as broad cross-disciplinary expertise.

#### **In *Reinventing SETI*, Gertz:**

- Provides a digestible and captivating overview of cosmological topics related to the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (SETI)



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- Disputes past and current SETI processes and introduces a new and unique plan for locating intelligent life in outer space
- Discusses the possibility of First Contact with intelligent ET life in our own Solar System, and how humanity should prepare for such a meeting

Humorous and deeply informative, this book takes the reader through the universe, conventional SETI methods, ideas on future ET exploration, and a discussion on who else shares this space.

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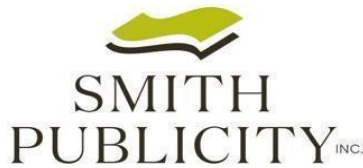
## DISCUSSION TOPICS INCLUDE:

- Why humanity is unprepared for contact from extraterrestrials, and what we should do about it
- Rethinking SETI: Why the Drake Equation and Fermi's Paradox are holding us back in our search for extraterrestrials
- Billions of stars but zero signals: What SETI is getting wrong in the search for extraterrestrials
- Want to Find ET? Look at dying stars, not sun-like ones
- Why biological interstellar travel is nearly impossible - and why if we meet extraterrestrials, they'll almost certainly be machines
- Current research and scientific proof of the existence of extraterrestrials
- What the U.S. administration and the U.N. must address in the search for extraterrestrial intelligence

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## SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

- The Drake Equation is often called the second most famous equation in science, after  $E = mc^2$ , yet you argue it belongs on the ash heap of history. Why?
- You believe alien probes may already be in our solar system, yet you are also a UFO skeptic. Why the apparent contradiction?
- Some argue we should proactively signal ET to start a conversation. Why do you think that this is a horrible idea?
- What do we actually know about ET's intentions toward us? Do you think they want to harm us, save us, proselytize, or trade? And if trade, what could we possibly offer them?



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- How can we be sure that ET is more advanced than we are?
- You write that any probes here in our Solar System are robotic—not “peopled” by little green men. Why is that?
- It’s been stated that Earth is utterly unprepared for an alien encounter, especially one that could happen right here in our own Solar System. What should we do to get ready?

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## ENDORSEMENTS:

"Millions have been enthralled by the SETI search for 'others' out there in the cosmos, especially since the film CONTACT. Less well-known are the arguments and outright tussles that have long roiled the field, which some have called a hybrid: half hard science and half wishful religion. John Gertz has seen it all, as an insider and as an outsider gadfly. His insights and proposals will rock some of your assumptions about the search for tech-sapient life in the universe." - *David Brin, Science Fiction Author and SETI Theorist*

"More than just a skeptic, Gertz intelligently challenges the usual assumptions of those who have considered how we might prove that we have company in the cosmos. For anyone keen to learn if anyone is out there, this book will both inform and provoke." - *Seth Shostak, Senior Astronomer, SETI Institute*

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## CONNECT WITH JOHN GERTZ:

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