

The John E Mack Institute

Exploring Consciousness and Transformation

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PASSING OF DR JOHN MACK: ANNOUNCEMENT TO FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES

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Details of the passing of Dr John Mack

At this time we must with great sorrow confirm that Dr John Mack has passed away in London, England.

Dr Mack was one of several speakers discussing British officer T.E. Lawrence ("Lawrence of Arabia") at the T. E. Lawrence Society Symposium, in Oxford on Sunday. Dr Mack's 1977 biography of T.E. Lawrence, *A Prince of Our Disorder*, received the Pulitzer Prize in biography (see complete bio below). Dr Mack's presentation at an afternoon panel was so warmly received that he was asked to stay and present an additional talk, which again met with positive response.

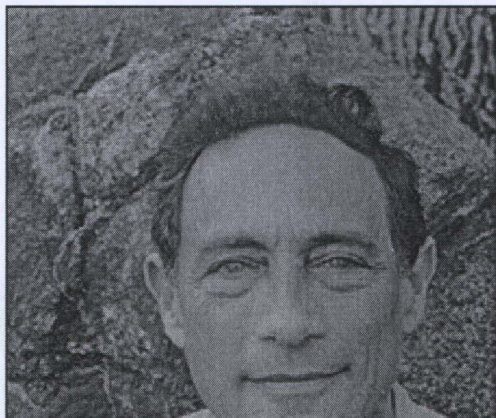
On Monday, he spent time in London and went to dinner with friends.

On his return to the home at which he was staying in North London, while traveling on foot, he was struck at approx. 23:25 by a silver Peugeot 306 headed west on Totteridge Lane. Dr Mack was in a crosswalk near the junction with Longland Drive. Dr Mack was pronounced dead on the scene by London police. The driver of the Peugeot was arrested at the scene on suspicion of driving with excess alcohol.

Dr. Mack and his wife, Sally (Stahl) Mack, divorced in 1995. He leaves a sister, Mary Lee Ingbar of Brookline, MA; three sons, Daniel of Boulder, Colo., Kenneth of Almaty, Kazakhstan, and Tony, of Cambridge; and **two grandchildren**. **Funeral** arrangements were incomplete; a memorial service is being planned to take place in Cambridge in mid October (details to be announced).

This information will be revised as **more information** becomes available. Information will be posted to the John E Mack Institute website, www.johnemackinstitute.org

Biographical Information John Mack (From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia)



John Edward Mack, M.D. (October 4, 1929 - Sep 27, 2004), professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer, considered to be a leading authority on the spiritual or transformational affects of alleged alien encounter experiences.

Mack received his medical degree from the Harvard Medical School (Cum Laude, 1955) after undergraduate study at Oberlin (Phi Beta Kappa, 1951). He is a graduate of the Boston Psychoanalytic Society and Institute and is Board certified in child and adult psychoanalysis.

The dominant theme of his life's work has been the exploration of how one's

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NEWS & EVENTS

- Remembrances of John Mack | links added daily to this section
 - JUDITH ORLOFF, M.D. SEMINAR in Cambridge, MA, Oct 15 - CANCELED -
 - The London Times article on John Mack
 - PASSING OF DR JOHN MACK: ANNOUNCEMENT TO FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES
 - Strange Days Indeed online radio to remember John Mack (Sat Oct 2)
 - Dr John Mack featured in The Psychospiritual Clinician's Handbook: Spring 2005 publication
 - Laurance Rockefeller, early funder of John Mack's work, dies at 94
 - Harvard researcher (not John Mack) publishes study on "experiencers" of alien contact, July 2004
 - DVD of TOUCHED documentary film available
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NEWSLETTER

In this issue:

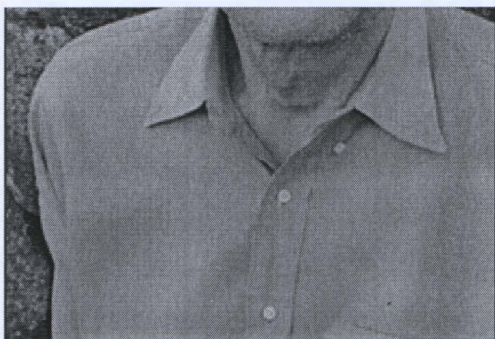
- In Remembrance of Dr John Mack

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AUDIO FILES FOR RADIO USE:
PLEASE ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE FOLLOWING AUDIO EXTRACT IS FROM THE DOCUMENTARY FILM "TOUCHED" BY FILMMAKER LAUREL CHITEN:
mack01.mp3
(Right-Click and Save Target to download clip to your computer)

contact itself may be more spiritual than physical in nature — yet nonetheless real — set him apart from many of his contemporaries such as Budd Hopkins, who advocated the physical reality of aliens.

In 1994 the Dean of Harvard Medical School appointed a committee of peers to review Mack's clinical care and clinical investigation of the people who had shared their alien encounters with him (some of their cases were written of in Mack's 1994 book *Abduction*). After fourteen months of inquiry and amid growing questions from the academic community (including Harvard Professor of Law Alan Dershowitz) regarding the validity of Harvard's investigation of a tenured professor, Harvard issued a statement stating that the Dean had "reaffirmed Dr. Mack's academic freedom to study what he wishes and to state his opinions without impediment," concluding "Dr. Mack remains a member in good standing of the Harvard Faculty of Medicine."

Mack's explorations later broadened into the general consideration of the merits of an expanded notion of reality, one which allows for experiences that may not fit the Western materialist paradigm, yet deeply affect people's lives. His second (and final) book on the alien encounter experience, *Passport to the Cosmos: Human Transformation and Alien Encounters* (1999), was as much the culmination of his work with the "experiencers" of alien encounters (to whom the book is dedicated) as it was a philosophical treatise connecting the themes of spirituality and modern worldviews.

Trivia:

Mack is a student of Grof Holotropic Breathwork, a meditative technique developed by Stanislav Grof.

Mack's life and work was documented in the film *Touched* by Emmy-nominated filmmaker Laurel Chiten.

HIGH RESOLUTION (3.5 MB) PORTRAIT OF DR JOHN MACK

The John E. Mack Institute, recently dedicated in his name, is meant to honor his courageous examination of human experiences, and his landmark explorations of the ways in which perceptions and beliefs about reality shape the human condition: www.johnemackinstitute.org

Letter written by Dr Mack a week ago

We would like to provide a picture of what John Mack was doing a week before his passing.

On September 17th, six weeks before the American Presidential election, he was in Manchester New Hampshire.

He shared this email (composed originally as a letter to his sons) with several of

perceptions of the world affect one's relationships. He addressed this issue of "worldview" on the individual level in his early clinical explorations of dreams, nightmares and teen suicide, and in his biographical study of the life of British officer T. E. Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia), for which he received the Pulitzer Prize in biography in 1977.

Mack advocated that Western culture requires a shift away from a purely materialist worldview (which he feels is responsible for the Cold War, the global ecological crisis, ethnonationalism and regional conflict) towards a transpersonal worldview which embraces certain elements of Eastern spiritual and philosophical traditions.

Mack's interest in the spiritual aspect of human experience has been compared by the New York Times to that of fellow Harvard alum William James, and like James, Mack became a controversial figure for his efforts to bridge spirituality and psychiatry.

This theme was taken to a controversial extreme in the early 1990s when Mack commenced his decade-plus study of 200 men and women who claimed that recurrent alien encounter experiences had affected the way they regarded the world, including a heightened sense of spirituality and environmental concern. Mack's interest in the spiritual or transformational aspects of people's alien encounters, and his suggestion that the experience of alien

his close friends, so we would like to present it here so that it may in some way make John's passion for a better future seem more real to people:

"I had an extraordinary, and really quite wonderful, experience today [Saturday]. It consisted of showing up at an old transformed textile mill in Manchester, followed by door-to-door training in groups, and then a rally with speeches culminating in a barn-burning appeal by Ellen Malcolm, the national chair of ACT (America Coming Together), several hours of canvassing (it was a good day for that because more were home as a result of the heavy rain) with another fellow, and then returning back to headquarters with our "data." There were literally hundreds of volunteers there of all ages, with a huge commitment and great energy.

We went to about twenty homes in a very depressed urban neighborhood. There is so much to say about that. I'll hold it now to this: many people were "undecided," not because they've weighed Bush/Kerry and haven't made up their minds, but because they are so oppressed that they haven't had the time or energy to bring to even thinking about an election in this embittered nation (some, a few men included, had little ones on their hips, peaking around them or even greeting us). And these people do care about their children's future, and health care, education, jobs and war matter to them. But they need to be persuaded that one national leader is preferable to another, and that's not hard to do with the information that we all have at our fingertips.

When they saw two pleasant mature gentlemen (I was paired with a retired chemist from Sudbury) who cared enough to come from Massachusetts in the pouring rain they listened, and some started to get persuaded. ACT is so meticulously organized (it is working in 19 swing states and is networking with many other grassroots organizations with a similar purpose), especially in its targeting of voters and follow-up (among other things), that they will make sure this experience is repeated until these people get into the voting booths, And they will vote for Kerry for just about all the reasons you and I would. This is, to a large degree, an untapped base, because, it would seem, human door-to-door contact is what it will take, and the campaigns in the past haven't had the people power to do that. We do now, and the growing ranks of volunteers (many, like me, have never done this before, which, by the way, was a powerful talking point) will be able to take advantage of this potential.

I will go back the next Saturday or Sunday that I can, and you might want to try it one day.

Warmly,
John

Article on Dr Mack from The Boston Globe

The Boston Globe
September 29, 2004, Wednesday THIRD EDITION

PULITZER WINNER IS KILLED IN ACCIDENT
By Mark Feeney, Globe Staff

John E. Mack, a Pulitzer Prize-winning author and Harvard Medical School professor whose research on purported extraterrestrial abductions generated widespread publicity and controversy, died Monday in an automobile accident in London. He was 74.

According to Will Bueche, of the John E. Mack Institute in Cambridge, Dr. Mack had been attending a conference in England on T.E. Lawrence. Lawrence is the subject of his psychoanalytic account, "A Prince of Our Disorder: The Life of T.E. Lawrence," which won the 1977 Pulitzer Prize for biography. Dr. Mack was struck by a car while crossing the street. London police pronounced him dead on the scene.

"He was a restless, highly creative man who was many-sided," said Robert Jay Lifton, the psychiatrist and author, who was a longtime friend of Dr. Mack's. They worked together in the antinuclear movement, a longstanding concern of Dr. Mack's, and in the application of psychological approaches to the study of history.

"He was as sensitive to others' needs as anyone I've known," Lifton said in a telephone interview from his Cape Cod home.

A Cambridge resident, Dr. Mack founded the psychiatric department of Cambridge Hospital. He was certified as a practitioner of both child and adult psychoanalysis. His early research interests in psychology included dreams, nightmares, and teenage suicide.

In 1990, Dr. Mack began his research on people who say they have encountered extraterrestrials. He held that such encounters were real, though probably more spiritual than physical in character. His work drew widespread attention in 1994 with the publication of a best-selling book, "Abduction."

That year, Harvard Medical School appointed a special faculty committee to review Dr. Mack's clinical care and clinical investigation of his subjects. After a 15-month process, the committee declined to take any action against him.

Dr. Mack eventually interviewed some 200 individuals who said they had encounters with extraterrestrials. Although he was subjected to widespread ridicule because of his work, Dr. Mack saw it as a unique opportunity to study spiritual or transformational experience, a theme that ran through much of his earlier work.

"No one has been able to come up with a counter-formulation that explains what's going on," Dr. Mack said in a 1992 Globe interview in which he discussed his view of alien encounters. "But if people can't be convinced that this is real, that's OK. All I want is for people to be convinced that there's something going on here that is not explainable."

He published another book on the subject, "Passport to the Cosmos: Human Transformation and Alien Encounters," in 1999.

John Edward Mack was born on Oct. 4, 1929, in New York. His parents were Edward C. Mack and Ruth (Prince) Mack. He earned his bachelor's degree from Oberlin College in 1951 and his medical degree from Harvard in 1955. He was also a graduate of the Boston Psychoanalytic Society and Institute.

Dr. Mack interned at Massachusetts General Hospital and did his residency at Massachusetts Mental Health Center. He served in the US Air Force from 1959 through 1961, rising to captain.

Joining the Harvard Medical School faculty in 1964, Dr. Mack became professor of psychiatry in 1972. In 1983, he founded the Center for Psychology and Social Change, which this year became the [John E Mack Institute]. He published about 150 scholarly articles. Among the 11 books he wrote or collaborated on are "Nightmares and Human Conflict" (1970) and, with Holly Hickler, "Vivienne: The Life and Suicide of an Adolescent Girl" (1981).

In a 1994 Globe interview, Dr. Mack said, "I have this innocent confidence that if you do your work in a comprehensive and objective way, it stands on its own."

Dr. Mack and his wife, Sally (Stahl) Mack, divorced in 1995. He leaves a sister, Mary Lee Ingbar of Brookline; three sons, Daniel of Boulder, Colo., Kenneth of Almaty, Kazakhstan, and Tony, of Cambridge; and two grandchildren. Funeral arrangements were incomplete.

UPI Wire Report

United Press International
September 29, 2004 Wednesday 9:22 AM Eastern Time

John Mack, Pulitzer winner, dies

DATELINE: CAMBRIDGE, Mass., Sept. 29 (UPI)

John E. Mack, who won a Pulitzer Prize for his study of T.E. Lawrence and who researched people reporting encounters with extraterrestrials, has died at age 74.

Mack was a Harvard Medical School professor and the John E. Mack Institute in Cambridge, Mass., released news of his death. Mack was crossing a street in London Monday when he was hit by a car driven by a drunken driver, the institute said in a release. London authorities said Mack was dead at the scene.

Mack was in London for a conference on T.E. Lawrence -- "Lawrence of Arabia." Mack's "A Prince of Our Disorder: The Life of T.E. Lawrence" won the Pulitzer Prize for biography in 1977.

He also interviewed some 200 individuals who said they had had encounters with alien beings. Mack reportedly believed such encounters were real, although perhaps more spiritual than physical, information on the institute Web site stated. That work was berated by other academics, but Mack held that the spiritual or transformational aspects of those alleged encounters gave important psychoanalytic insights.

The New York Times

The New York Times
September 30, 2004 Thursday
Late Edition - Final

Section A; Column 1; National Desk; Pg. 27

Dr. John E. Mack, Psychiatrist, Dies at 74

By JENNIFER BAYOT

Dr. John E. Mack, a Pulitzer Prize winner and Harvard psychiatrist who studied people who said they had encounters with alien beings, died in London on Monday. He was 74 and lived in Cambridge, Mass.

Dr. Mack was struck by a driver suspected of being drunk and evidently died on impact, according to the John E. Mack Institute, formerly the Center for Psychology and Social Change.

Dr. Mack was in Britain to speak at a conference on T.E. Lawrence, the British officer known as Lawrence of Arabia. Dr. Mack's book "A Prince of Our Disorder: The Life of T.E. Lawrence" won the Pulitzer Prize for biography in 1977.

He was drawn to psychoanalytic analysis of the misunderstood or vulnerable, including children contemplating suicide, teenagers troubled by the threat of nuclear war and finally, people plagued by what they believed to be recurrent alien encounters.

In the 1990's, Dr. Mack studied dozens of people who said they had had such contact with aliens, culminating in his book "Abduction: Human Encounters with Aliens" in 1994. In it, he focused less on whether aliens were real than on the spiritual effects of perceived encounters, arguing that "the abduction phenomenon has important philosophical, spiritual and social implications" for everyone.

The book led Harvard Medical School, where Dr. Mack had been a tenured professor for several years, to appoint a committee to review his research methods and consider censuring him. After 14 months of investigation, it released a statement saying that it "reaffirmed Dr. Mack's academic freedom to study what he wishes and to state his opinion without impediment."

His work was the subject of the 2003 documentary film "Touched," made by Laurel Chiten.

John Edward Mack was born in New York on Oct. 4, 1929. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Oberlin College in 1951 and received his medical degree from Harvard in 1955.

He completed his residency at the Massachusetts Mental Health Center in Boston before joining the Air Force in 1959 for a two-year tour of duty as a psychiatrist in Japan.

He then received advanced training at the Boston Psychoanalytic Society and Institute, and was certified as a child analyst in 1969.

In the late 1960's, he started the psychiatry unit at the Cambridge Hospital, one of Harvard's teaching hospitals, and was chief of the department from 1969 until 1977.

Early in his career, Dr. Mack focused on the psychology of sleep and dreams. He later became an expert on the psychological effects of the nuclear arms race, writing dozens of scholarly articles and advocating for disarmament. In the 1980's he was academic director of the Center for Psychological Studies in the Nuclear Age.

Dr. Mack started the John E. Mack Institute in 1989 as the Center for Psychology and Social Change, and in 1993 he started the Program for Extraordinary Experience Research with a grant from Laurance Rockefeller.

He was also an assistant editor of The Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association and was on the editorial board of The American Journal of Psychoanalysis.

He wrote several scholarly books on psychiatry. A second book for general readers, "Passport to the Cosmos: Human Transformation and Alien Encounters," was published in 1999.

Dr. Mack's marriage to the former Sally Stahl ended in divorce. Survivors include a sister, Mary Lee Ingbar of Brookline, Mass.; three sons, Daniel, of Boulder, Colo., Kenneth, of Almaty, Kazakhstan, and Tony, of Cambridge; and two grandchildren.

The Los Angeles Times

Los Angeles Times
October 2, 2004 Saturday

SECTION: CALIFORNIA; Metro; Metro Desk; Part B; Pg. 19

Obituaries; John E. Mack, 74; Psychiatry Professor Stirred Controversy With His Research

By Mary Rourke, Times Staff Writer

John E. Mack, a Pulitzer Prize-winning author and professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, died Monday in an automobile accident in London, according to Will Bueche of the John E. Mack Institute in Cambridge, Mass. Mack, who was 74, was in England to lecture at a conference sponsored by the T. E. Lawrence Society and was hit by a car while walking across the street. He was pronounced dead at the scene.

Mack's "A Prince of Our Disorder: The Life of T. E. Lawrence," a psychological study of the man better known as Lawrence of Arabia, won a Pulitzer in 1977.

Earlier in his career, Mack explored the meaning of dreams and nightmares. He also worked with suicidal teenagers and wrote "Vivienne: The Life and Suicide of an Adolescent Girl" with Holly Hickler (1981).

He was primarily interested in how an individual's worldview affects relationships. The question was a starting point for his biography of Lawrence, the British Army intelligence officer stationed in Egypt who became devoted to the Arab cause.

"The value of psychology in a biography is that it deepens our appreciation of the inner life of public figures," Mack later said. "I've used psychology to relate the motivations of historical figures to the larger picture."

After being widely praised for his work on Lawrence, Mack stirred controversy with his clinical studies about people who claimed to have been abducted by aliens. He interviewed several hundred who claimed to have encountered extraterrestrials. He wrote two books on his findings, "Abduction: Human Encounters With Aliens" (1994) and "Passport to the Cosmos" (1999).

Mack concluded that the experiences of those who said they had been abducted could have been more spiritual than physical, but they were real nonetheless.

Harvard Medical School launched a formal academic probe into Mack's controversial work. Fourteen months later, the dean of the school concluded that Mack was free to study what he wanted and to state his opinions. Though his critics at the university claimed he was no longer taken seriously, others saw him as a pioneer in the field of mental health.

"John Mack was regarded as a brilliant thinker who stretched the boundaries of traditional psychiatry," said Dr. Judith Orloff, an assistant clinical professor of psychiatry at UCLA who was scheduled to lead a workshop with Mack later this month. "John believed that spirituality and faith need to be brought into the practice of psychiatry."

Born in New York City in 1929, Mack graduated from Harvard Medical School in 1955 and studied at the Boston Psychoanalytic Society. He joined the Harvard faculty in 1964 and became a professor of psychiatry in 1972.

In 1983, he founded the Center for Psychology and Social Change, which was later renamed the John E. Mack Institute. He wrote 11 books. A documentary about his life and work, "Touched," was released in 2003.

Mack is survived by three sons and two grandchildren.

GRAPHIC: PHOTO: JOHN E. MACK: His "A Prince of Our Disorder: The Life of T. E. Lawrence" won a Pulitzer Prize in 1977. PHOTOGRAPHER: Copyright Stuart Conway.

Cambridge Chronicle

Prof struck, killed by car
By Amanda McGregor/ Chronicle Staff
Thursday, September 30, 2004

The community is mourning the loss of John E. Mack, Harvard professor and researcher of alien abductions, who was struck and killed by a car in London Monday night.

Mack, 74, who lived on Brattle Street, was a psychiatrist and a Pulitzer-Prize winning author on Lawrence of Arabia. He was speaking at a T.E. Lawrence conference in England at the time of his death. An alleged drunken driver struck Mack as he was crossing a London street, according to Paul Clark at Scotland Yard.

Mack founded the psychiatry department at Cambridge Hospital in the 1960s, according to Alison Harris at the Cambridge Health Alliance, and began teaching at Harvard Medical School in 1972.

He began 20 years ago to extensively interview "experiencers," as he coined them, of alien abductions and study the effects of such encounters.

"Dr. Mack found ... that men and women had been touched by a part of reality they hadn't been prepared for ... and after supportive therapy were able to be more spiritual, deeper people," said Will Bueche of the John E. Mack Institute, Mack's organization dedicated to his research. "He was obviously widely rebuked at first."

Mack, whose home was at the corner of Brattle Street and Mercer Circle, founded in 1983 the Center for Psychology and Social Change at Harvard, which this year became the Mack Center.

"Dr. Mack was known nationally and internationally for his contributions to ... psychiatry," said Dennis Keefe, CEO of the Health Alliance, in a press release issued Tuesday. "He remained very proud of his long association with the city of Cambridge and his students, colleagues and patients at the Cambridge Hospital."

Mack won a Pulitzer Prize in 1977 for his psychoanalytic account of T.E. Lawrence called "A Prince of Our Disorder."

"The seed of [Mack's] life work has always been how one's experience of the world has affected one's perceptions," said Bueche. "As with his study of Lawrence of Arabia, he looked at how experience forces one into living a certain way."

Born in New York in 1929, Mack graduated with a degree in medicine from Harvard in 1955. Mack and his wife, Sally, divorced in 1995. Mack had three sons, one of whom still lives in Cambridge. Funeral arrangements were incomplete as of Wednesday morning.

Correction to above text: paragraph 9 should be replaced with:

"The seed of [Mack's] life work has always been how people can change when their perceptions are broadened," said Bueche. "As with his study of Lawrence of Arabia, where he looked at how appreciation of a new culture can redefine both ourselves and our relationships."

Harvard Statement

Harvard Medical School: The Cambridge Hospital statement

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