



## *IN MEMORIAM*

**John David Jackson**  
Professor Emeritus of Physics  
UC Berkeley  
1925 – 2016

John David Jackson was a Canadian-American theoretical physicist internationally known for his publications and teaching in high-energy physics. Jackson was a treasured member of the faculty in the Department of Physics at the University of California, Berkeley, and at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL) for nearly three decades.

Born on January 19, 1925, in London, Ontario, Canada, to Walter David and Lillian Margaret Jackson, Professor Jackson received a B.Sc. in Honors Physics and Mathematics at the University of Western Ontario, and a Ph.D. in Physics (1949) at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), where he studied under Victor Frederick Weisskopf. While living in Cambridge, Jackson met his beloved wife, Marilyn Barbara Cook, to whom he was married for 65 years until her death in 2014. He died on May 20, 2016, at the age of 91.

In 1950, Jackson accepted an appointment as an assistant and then associate professor of mathematics at McGill University, where he taught for seven years. Jackson then became a professor in the Physics Department at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, for 10 years. During this period he lectured at three summer schools: on dispersion relations at the first Scottish Universities Summer School in Physics (1960), on weak interactions at the Brandeis Summer Institute (1962), and on particle and polarization decay distributions at the Summer School of Theoretical Physics, Les Houches (1965).

In 1967, Jackson came to UC Berkeley and LBNL. At UC Berkeley he chaired the Department of Physics from 1978-1981, and was the head of the LBNL Physics Division from 1982 to 1984. He also held appointments at the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory and CERN. During his extraordinary career, Jackson authored three books, including *Classical Electrodynamics* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 1999), which is known worldwide as the preeminent text on the subject. Jackson also served as editor of the *Annual Review of Nuclear and Particle Physics* for 17 years and was active in the Superconducting Super Collider Project in the 1980s, at which he was deputy director for operations for two years. He was a Fellow of the American Physical Society and American Association for the Advancement of Science, and a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the National Academy of Sciences.

Jackson was also an extraordinary teacher. As he once said, "A short philosophy of teaching might be love your subject and convey that love. All else is secondary." In 1986, he received the Distinguished Teaching Award at UC Berkeley, the university's most prestigious recognition for excellence in the classroom. Moreover, the American Association of Physics Teachers honors Jackson's legacy as a teacher through the John David Jackson Award for Excellence in Graduate Physics Education. The McGill University Physics Department also awards its own John David Jackson Award for Excellence in Teaching. Among his doctoral students are physicists John T. Donohue, Gordon L. Kane, Robert Cahn, Richard Field, and Chris Quigg. Although he retired from teaching in 1993, Jackson remained active as a Participating Retiree at LBNL and professor emeritus in the UC Berkeley physics department. During his career at UC Berkeley, Jackson served on several Academic Senate committees: Academic Freedom (1971-1972), Graduate Council (1983-1984), Status of Women and Ethnic Minorities (1983-1984), Academic Planning and Resource Allocation (1990-1991), and Budget and Interdepartmental Relations (1991-1993). In 1993, Jackson was awarded the Berkeley Citation, an honor given to those whose contributions to the university go beyond the call of duty and whose achievements exceed the standards of excellence in their fields. Beyond his exceptional contributions to teaching and scholarship, Jackson was a staunch advocate for human rights and academic freedom. He was actively involved in Scientists for Sakharov, Orlov and Sharansky (SOS) and was a lifelong major donor to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), and the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC). He was also a great lover of jazz and hiking in the mountains.

Jackson is survived by his four children, Ian (Ann Arnold), Nan (Vern Mesler), Maureen, and Mark, and three grandchildren, Aldo, Nico, and Catalina.

Steven E. Boggs  
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