

John L. Challifour

John L. Challifour was born in 1938 in Bristol, England. His undergraduate degree was obtained at the University of California, Berkeley (UCB) in 1960, where he graduated with highest honors. He was elected to Phi Beta Kappa and was awarded the Departmental Citation in Mathematics by the UCB mathematics department.

He then returned to the United Kingdom for his graduate work, and received his Ph.D. in mathematical physics from Cambridge University in 1963. John was clearly no stranger to transatlantic travel, for he then returned to the United States, taking a position as instructor and then lecturer in the Princeton University mathematics department, where he worked from 1963 to 1966. He joined the faculty at Brandeis University in 1966 as an assistant professor, and in 1968 joined the Indiana University faculty as associate professor of mathematical physics. He was promoted to full professor in 1978, and holds appointments in both the IU Bloomington mathematics and physics departments.

John's research has been concentrated on mathematically rigorous formulations of quantum field theory. In this work he has never allowed the mathematics to overwhelm the physics. He is perhaps best characterized as a physicist who handles mathematics rigorously, as opposed to a mathematician with an eye on physical applications. However, several areas of John's research—Feynman path integrals, quantum field theory, and Yang-Mills theory—have profoundly influenced theoretical mathematics in recent years.

John has an excellent reputation among mathematical physicists, as evidenced by his many outside appointments over the years. These include a visiting membership in the Mathematics Research Center at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, visiting scientist at CERN, membership in the Cargese Institute on Gauge Theories, and visiting professorships at the Institut für theoretische Physik (ItP) at the Universität Göttingen, the University of British Columbia, and the Center for Interdisciplinary Research at the Universität Bielefeld. In 1984 John was elected as a fellow of the American Physical Society. In 1987 he was awarded the prestigious Alexander von Humboldt Prize and was a member of the ItP in Göttingen.

John was a mainstay of IU's mathematical physics Ph.D. program and the driving force behind the mathematical physics seminar for decades. He advised many Ph.D. students, giving them a training in mathematically rigorous foundations of physics. He taught courses in gravitation and in group representations that attracted math doctoral students as well as physics and math physics students.

John served as an associate editor of the *Journal of Mathematical Physics* for 13 years, from 1992 to 2005, and in that capacity was valued by the editor, Roger Newton, for his extensive knowledge of both physics and mathematics as well as for his good judgment.

John contributed greatly to the IU physics department in his outstanding service over the last six years as the associate chair of physics. The current chair of the department can attest that John's extraordinary efforts over this time have made the department a substantially better place—he has truly made a difference for the better. He has managed the academic side of the department with unrivaled effectiveness, and has the gratitude and thanks of the physics department for a job well done. Whatever the chair has accomplished is largely thanks to the work that John has done “in the trenches.” John, we chairs thank you.

Jim Musser and Jim Davis