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Roger Delano Hinkins

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Roger Delano Hinkins (born 24 September 1934), known and published as **John-Roger**, is an American author, public speaker, and founder of the Movement of Spiritual Inner Awareness (MSIA), as well as several other New Age spiritual and self-help organizations.

John-Roger Hinkins	
Born	Roger Delano Hinkins 24 September 1934 Rains, Utah, U.S.
Nationality	American
Other names	"J-R", "John-Roger"
Education	B.S., University of Utah, graduate work at various institutions
Known for	Founder of the Movement of Spiritual Inner Awareness (MSIA)
Title	Spiritual Director of MSIA (retired), Ordained Minister of MSIA (1971)
Predecessor	Founder
Successor	John K. Morton
Religion	Movement of Spiritual Inner Awareness
Website	
http://www.john-roger.org 🔗	

Biography [edit]

Early life and education [edit]

Hinkins was born on September 24, 1934, and raised in the small mining town of Rains, Utah. He was brought up in the Mormon faith; as a youth, he attended the local LDS church's Mutual Improvement Associations and occasionally gave inspirational "three-minute talks". Hinkins describes his childhood as "typical", distinguished only by an early belief that he could spot auras, colorful fields that some people believe surround the human body.[1] Upon graduation from high school, Hinkins attended the University of Utah, where he would go on to earn a Bachelor of Science degree in psychology in 1958 and a Secondary Teaching credential in 1960. While in college, he worked as a night orderly in the psychiatric hospital ward of a Salt Lake City hospital. He then moved to San Francisco to work as an insurance claims adjuster.

He received a Secondary Life Teaching Credential from the State of California, and performed post-graduate work at University of California, Los Angeles, University of Southern California and California State University, Los Angeles. He then began teaching English at Rosemead High School in a suburb of Los Angeles.[2]

The Mystical Traveler [edit]

John-Roger with Pope John Paul II

Hinkins relates having had a near-death experience while undergoing surgery for a kidney stone in late 1963, after which he fell into a nine-day coma. After this experience, Hinkins says he became aware of another "spiritual personality" that had superseded or merged with his previous personality. He began to refer to himself as "John-Roger" in recognition of this transformation.[2]

Hinkins has written that during the surgery he had an experience that all things were "in the Light" – that everything was completely safe, protected and perfect, and that following the surgery he began to experience this higher consciousness expressing more and more into the physical world – i.e. that he could see and perceive everything taking place in this physical world as being perfect in some greater sense, "as being part of a greater whole, part of the highest good". He says that, following the experience, he was able to move back to this state of mind when faced with challenging and difficult times, and that he became "more understanding, kinder, and able to respond and act in a way that was based on the good of everyone, not on his own personal perspective."[3]

Hinkins termed this consciousness the "Mystical Traveler Consciousness" and says that he was given the "keys" or began to "anchor" the Consciousness on the planet after the surgery.[4] He further says there has always been someone on the planet "anchoring" the consciousness to assist individuals spiritually, and has made this idea a tenet of Movement of Spiritual Inner

Awareness (MSIA), the spiritual movement he founded. According to Hinkins, he was passed the "keys" by the previous receptor of the Consciousness, Sawan Singh, the late Radhasoami Satsang Beas master who died in 1948, while he was on the "inner spiritual planes". Hinkens held the "keys" to the Consciousness from December 1963 until they were passed to John Morton, the current Spiritual Director of MSIA, in December 1988.

Hinkins maintains that humans are locked in an eternal cycle of reincarnation and karma, and can only escape by ascending from Earth's negative realms into "a totally positive state of being" called "soul consciousness." This, according to his teachings, is nearly impossible without the assistance of the Mystical Traveler Consciousness he believes he embodies. He has written that "Initiates of the Mystical Traveler Consciousness are those that I am specifically taking home to God."[1]

MSIA   [edit]

In 1968, five years after his coma, Hinkins began to hold seminars as an independent spiritual teacher in homes of friends in Santa Barbara and Thousand Oaks. The demand for his seminars grew and spread, until in 1971, Hinkins resigned from his secular job as a high school English teacher and formally incorporated the Church of the Movement of Spiritual Inner Awareness.[2]

MSIA is a nondenominational and ecumenical church, the stated purpose of which is to "teach Soul Transcendence, which is becoming aware of yourself as a Soul and as one with God, not as a theory, but as a living reality." [5] MSIA currently has participants in over 30 countries, with its largest following in the United States, Australia, Colombia, Brazil, and Nigeria respectively.[6] The church was estimated in 1993 to have 4500 members.[7]

Controversy has surrounded MSIA: it has been accused of being a cult by some former members and by the Cult Awareness and Information Centre, and claims have been made that Hinkins had unethical sexual relationships with members.[8]

MSIA has also been accused of being an "offshoot" of Lifespring,[9] a private, for-profit, New Age/human potential training company founded in 1974. According to Nan Kathryn Fuchs, a devoted member of MSIA for 13 years and a minister who served on the Ministerial Board for a number of years, Hinkens' teachings changed substantially in tone when Russell Bishop introduced his version of Lifespring Training to a group of MSIA ministers and John-Roger took it over and promoted it as his own idea, calling it "Insight Training Seminars". "As the money began to roll in, John-Roger became more inaccessible, and his aphorisms changed from 'Help yourself so you can help others' to 'Use everything to your advantage'. He certainly has."[10]

Lifespring was the subject of several investigative reports by the media, criticism by former staff and participants,[11][12] and a series of lawsuits in the 1980s which alleged that Lifespring was responsible for mental damages to the plaintiffs.[13]

Other organizations founded   [edit]

In addition to MSIA, Hinkins has founded several other non-profit organizations.

In 1976, he founded Koh-e-nor University, later renamed the University of Santa Monica (USM), a private, unaccredited institution offering master's degrees in Spiritual Psychology and Consciousness, Health & Healing, and a doctoral degree in Spiritual Psychology.[14] John Roger serves as the chancellor of the University.

In 1977 Hinkins founded the Peace Theological Seminary & College of Philosophy (PTS) as an educational non-profit organization for MSIA students to undertake undergraduate workshops, courses and retreats, and also postgraduate programs. The school, which is ecumenical and non-denominational, offers a Master and Doctorate degree in Spiritual Science. Its headquarters is home to the Peace Awareness Labyrinth and Gardens ⧉. Hinkins received his doctorate in Spiritual Science from this organization,[15] and is its President.

In 1978 Hinkins created the Insight organization with friend and fellow MSIA Minister Russell Bishop. Insight Seminars is an international non-profit educational organization headquartered in Santa Monica, California. Hinkins serves as Insight Seminars' Chairman of the Board.[16]

In 1979, Hinkins founded the Heartfelt Foundation, a volunteer-driven, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to serving and assisting people in any form of need.[17]

In 1982, Hinkins founded the Institute for Individual and World Peace (IIWP), a volunteer-driven 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to studying, identifying, and presenting the processes that lead to peace. IIWP owns and operates the Windermere Ranch ⧉, a 142-acre property in the Santa Ynez Mountains that is used to breed and train Arabian horses.[18]

Author and filmmaker   [edit]

Hinkins is the author of over 55 books. His most recent books are 'The Rest of Your Life' (2007), 'Timeless Wisdoms: Volume One' (2008) and 'Timeless Wisdoms: Volume Two' (2008). He has given more than 6000 seminars over the last forty years, most of which have been recorded either in audio or video format by NOW Productions. Hinkins also produces his own national cable TV show, 'That Which Is', and has appeared on other television and radio programs, including CNN's Larry King Live, The Roseanne Show, and Politically Incorrect.

In 1988, Hinkins partnered with actor Jsu Garcia to create 'Scott J-R Productions', a film production company committed to creating "spirit-filled" films. Their first full length feature was 'My Little Havana', followed by 'Spiritual Warriors', based on Hinkins' book 'Spiritual Warrior: The Art of Spiritual Living'.

Present day   [edit]

Hinkins currently lives in Los Angeles, California, and still participates in some MSIA and PTS annual events. His public speaking is now limited to the PTS and the Insight Seminars websites.

Notable followers and associates   [edit]

Several well-known individuals and public figures have worked with, or, with varying levels of dedication, have been associated with Hinkins since the 1970s. The most prominent of these is Arianna Huffington.[19][20] Other notable students of Hinkins are the Beach Boys' Carl Wilson,[21] model / actress Jaime King-Newman,[22] actress Sally Kirkland, an MSIA minister since 1975,[21] actress Leigh Taylor-Young,[23] also an MSIA minister since 1975, actor Jsu Garcia,[24] and author and management consultant David Allen.[25] Author Peter McWilliams was also an MSIA minister but later repudiated MSIA and made a series of personal allegations

against MSIA leader John-Roger in his book *Life 102: What to Do When Your Guru Sues You.*[26][27]

Accusations of cultism, criminal conduct and abuse   [edit]

> This section **may be unbalanced towards certain viewpoints**. Please improve the article by adding information on neglected viewpoints, or discuss the issue on the talk page. *(December 2013)*

In the 1980s and early 1990s, several former members of MSIA accused Hinkins of various crimes and abuses, including high-tech charlatanism, the sexual coercion of young male staffers, brainwashing and intimidation, and plagiarism. These allegations, as well as the revelation of the high-profile Ariana Huffington's association with the group, led to a series of investigations by publications such as People, Playboy, the Los Angeles Times and Vanity Fair. MSIA began to be referred to by some elements of the media as a cult.[2] Cult expert and psychologist Steven Hassan, when asked by ABC News Nightline's Ted Koppel if MSIA qualified as a cult, responded:

> "In my professional opinion it does. It's a pyramid-structured authoritarian regime that uses deception in recruitment and mind control techniques to keep people dependent and obedient. People are instilled with phobias that if they ever question John-Roger or if they ever leave the group terrible things will happen to them."[28]

Charlatanism   [edit]

Dissidents in the organization say Hinkins employed covert listening devices at MSIA's Santa Monica headquarters to support his claim of possessing extrasensory perception. One disenchanted member claimed "What people thought was J-R's clairvoyance was just his cunning and deceitful information gathering."[8]

Sexual coercion   [edit]

Susan and Wendell Whitmore, who joined MSIA in the early '70s, finally decided to leave MSIA in 1983 after several male staff members confessed during an informal group discussion that Hinkins had used spiritual threats and promises to coerce them into having sex with him. The Whitmores claim that MSIA members had been led to believe that Hinkins had taken a vow of celibacy, and therefore did not question the series of attractive young men that stayed in his house. "He always had someone sleeping in his bedroom at night, supposedly to protect his body while he was out of it," says Whitmore.[8] Former MSIA members charge that staffers who submitted to their leader's sexual advances were promoted to positions of authority and were praised by Hinkins for their spiritual qualities. Ex-MSIA member Victor Toso, said that although he was not homosexual, he consented to Hinkins's requests for sex because he feared being expelled from the MSIA staff. "Whenever we fell out of line, having another sexual encounter with him was sort of required to seal us back in the brotherhood," said Toso.[8]

Intimidation   [edit]

Wesley Whitmore, Wendell's twin brother and also former MSIA staffer, recalls that in "contrast to his public behavior, Hinkins in private was often angry, vindictive and bizarre, occasionally shouting that he was under attack from negative forces." He and his wife said that their devotion to Hinkins kept them from addressing these issues.[29]

According to Susan Whitmore, MSIA defectors hesitated to challenge Hinkins publicly even after leaving the movement "because we were made to be afraid." She claims that Hinkins would declare that people who questioned him had placed themselves "under the Kal (a devil-like spirit) power and its field of negativity, known as the Red Monk," and would essentially be warning that members who associated with defectors risked spiritual disaster. Whitmore alleges that one woman was told she had had a miscarriage because she had hugged one of the defectors.[29]

The Whitmores also claim that after they left MSIA, their cars were vandalized, they received obscene letters accusing them of homosexuality, and phone calls in which threats were made on their lives. Similarly, Eve Cohen, the daughter of ex-MSIA ministers Matthew and Ellen Cohen, and at the time a teenager, received a letter graphically alleging that her father had had sexual acts with other men. The letter claimed to be from a friend of Eve's in Los Angeles.[8]

Religion academic and writer David C. Lane claims that in the fall of 1983, after he called Hinkins, who at that time he considered to be a friend, to get his response to the allegations of plagiarism, sexual manipulation, and charlatanism that had been raised by other friends, he was subjected to a series of threats, including several made against his life and the lives of his friends/informants. His home was subsequently ransacked and a number of his research files were stolen. He claims that documentary evidence implicates John-Roger with the robbery, as well as with implementing a smear campaign including threats against Lane and other of his critics. This included setting up a front organization called the "Coalition for Civil and Spiritual Rights", an act which was eventually traced directly back to Hinkins.[30]

Plagiarism   [edit]

Claims of plagiarism have also been levied against Hinkins, in connection with both MSIA's core teachings and as other publications. Many of these have centered on the reportedly close similarity between certain MSIA materials and doctrine and that of Paul Twitchell's Eckankar, known prior to 1985 as "The Ancient Science of Soul Travel". One of the main allegers, religion academic David C. Lane, has published evidence that Hinkins took without attribution key spiritual teachings from Twitchell, who, Lane further claims, took them in turn from Radha Soami Satsang Beas, a movement with which Lane was at the time actively involved.

Hinkins, himself, admits that he had some level of involvement with the group: around the time of his surgery and religious experience, he had been exploring a variety of different spiritual teachings, and these explorations included Eckankar. Religion scholar James R. Lewis, in his book on Hinkins and MSIA, quotes a conversation in which Hinkins acknowledges that he studied with Eckankar, had a private interview with Twitchell, and received information from the group stating that he was an initiate, but denies being formally initiated into the group.[2] Nonetheless, side-by-side text comparisons of materials published by Lane appear to clearly show that Hinkens copied nearly verbatim, Twitchell's idiosyncratic cosmology (as found in Twitchell's 1971 *The Spiritual Notebook*) in his own 1976 publication *The Sound Current*. Hinkens also appears to have clearly plagiarized in his work *Affirmations* (1981) from Florence Scovel Shinn's book, *The Game of Life and How to Play It* (DeVorss & Company, 1925).[30]

In 1994, Peter McWilliams, a former high-level member of MSIA, published *Life 102: What to Do When Your Guru Sues You*, which

charged that Hinkins had repeatedly abused his power as a guru. McWilliams claimed, among other things, that he was the sole author of the highly successful *Life 101* and several subsequent books purportedly coauthored by Hinkins (as "John-Roger"), who was his spiritual adviser and church leader at the time. Hinkins countered with a libel lawsuit. Ultimately, McWilliams agreed to abandon the copyright to *Life 102: What to Do When Your Guru Sues You* to Hinkins to settle the suit.

Defense against cult charges   [edit]

James R. Lewis, an academic who researches new religious movements, conducted a study of Hinkins and the Movement of Spiritual Inner Awareness. Lewis stated that he did not consider MSIA a cult.[2] Lewis's book was published by Mandeville Press, the publishing organ of MSIA. Lewis has been accused by skeptical societies and anti-cult groups of serving as an apologist for several cults, including the Family and AUM Shinrikyo.[31][32][33]

List of works   [edit]

Books   [edit]

Books in print	[show]

Books out of print	[show]

Audio   [edit]

- The Anointed One, CD set (2006) ISBN 978-1-893020-39-9
- Health from the Inside Out, CD set (2006) ISBN 978-1-893020-40-5
- Inner Worlds of Meditation, CD (1998) ISBN 978-0-914829-64-5
- Inner Worlds of Meditation (incl. Master Chohan), CD set (1997) ISBN 978-0-914829-45-4
- Joyful Meditations, CD set (2005) ISBN 978-1-893020-37-5
- Living In Grace, CD set (2005) ISBN 978-1-893020-38-2
- Momentum, CD set (2005) ISBN 978-1-893020-41-2
- Money, The Great Mirror of Consciousness, CD set ISBN 978-1-893020-06-1
- Turning Points to Personal Liberation, CD set (2006) ISBN 978-1-893020-45-0

Video   [edit]

- Journey To The East, DVD set (Year) ISBN
- Moments of Peace, Video (1999) ISBN 0-914829-60-2
- Spiritual Warriors Movie, DVD, UPC: 700261245539

References   [edit]

1. ^ *a b* Sipchen, Bob; Johnson, David (14 Aug 1988). "John-Roger: The Story Behind His Remarkable Journey From Rosemead Teacher to Spiritual Leader of a New Age Empire". *Los Angeles Time*. Retrieved 27 March 2010.
2. ^ *a b c d e f* James R. Lewis, *Seeking the Light: Uncovering the Truth About the Movement of Spiritual Inner Awareness and its Founder John-Roger* (Los Angeles: Mandeville, 1998), p. 19,20.
3. ^ John-Roger Sanderson, Pauli, *When Are You Coming Home? A Personal Guide to Soul Transcendence"* (Los Angeles: Mandeville, 2004), p. 70,71.
4. ^ John-Roger, "Fulfilling Your Spiritual Promise" (Los Angeles: Mandeville, 2006), p. 221.
5. ^ MSIA.org *MSIA Website* January 18 2009
6. ^ Lewis, James R. & Petersen, Jesper Aagaard, *Controversial New Religions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 337.
7. ^ Melton, J. Gordon; James Lewis (1993). *Religious Requirements & Practices of Certain Selected Groups: A Handbook for Chaplains*. contract #: MDA903-90-C-0062 w/ Dept. of Defense.
8. ^ *a b c d e* Brower, Montgomery; Suzanne Adelson, Leah Feldon (September 26, 1988). "Cult Leader John-Roger, Who Says He's Inhabited by a Divine Spirit, Stands Accused of a Campaign of Hate". *People Magazine* (Vol 30 No 13: Time, Inc.). Retrieved 26 Feb 2010.
9. ^ Frost, William P. (1992). *What Is the New Age?: Defining Third Millennium Consciousness*. Edwin Mellen Press. p. 8. ISBN 0-7734-9192-9."A similar enterprise is Lifespring, founded by John Hanley in 1974. MSIA is an offshoot of Lifespring. It is conducted by Mystical Traveler Consciousness."
10. ^ Fuchs, Nan Kathryn (11 Sep 1988). "John-Roger Revisited". *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved 27 Feb 2010.
11. ^ The Nominee's Soul Mate, The Washington Post, Laura Blumenfeld, September 10, 1991; Page F01
12. ^ The Newsletter of The North Texas Skeptics,*March program looks at Lifespring*, Volume 3 Number 3, May/June 1989
13. ^ Anne McAndrews, Redbook Magazine, May, 1994
14. ^ *University of Santa Monica Website* January 18 2009
15. ^ *John-Roger Website* 26 Feb 2009
16. ^ http://www.insightseminars.org/ourteam.htm
17. ^ *The Heartfelt Foundation Website: Inspiring Service Stories* January 18 2009
18. ^ *The Institute for Individual and World Peace Website* January 18 2009
19. ^ *New Yorker* profile, October 13 2008
20. ^ *Rolling Stone* profile, 4 December 2006
21. ^ *a b* Bright, Laren. "The Less Known Side of Sally Kirkland". sallykirkland.com: Sally Kirkland. Retrieved 27 March 2010. "on December 4, 1975, Sally was ordained as a minister by MSIA's founder, John-Roger."
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24. ^ "Jsu Garcia Biography". jsugarcia.com. Retrieved 27 March 2010. "One of the most important aspects of Garcia's life is his dedication to Peace Theological Seminary College of Philosophy, for which he and and his friend, author John-Roger, have traveled throughout the world each year for the past nine years in an effort to bring peace to troubled areas such as Egypt and Israel"

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26. ^ www.life102.com 🔗
27. ^ Peter McWilliams, Life 102: What to Do When Your Guru Sues You (Prelude Press: Los Angeles, 1994). ISBN 0-931580-34-X, pp 6-7.
28. ^ "ABC News Nightline" 🔗. Ted Koppel: "What I'm asking about is whether indeed Mr. Rogers' organization is necessarily... Does it qualify as a cult?" Steve Hassan: "In my professional opinion it does. It's a pyramid-structured authoritarian regime that uses deception in recruitment and mind-control techniques to keep people dependent and obedient. People are instilled with phobias that if they ever question John-Roger or if they ever leave the group terrible things will happen to them.". 5 October 1994. 3:28 - 4:12 minutes in. ABC.
29. ^ *a* *b* LA Times, 1988
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31. ^ James R. Lewis - religious cults, sects and movements 🔗. Apologeticsindex.org. Retrieved on 2013-07-17.
32. ^ Tokyo Cult Finds an Unlikely Supporter 🔗, *The Washington Post*, T.R. Reid, May 1995. "The Americans said the sect had invited them to visit after they expressed concern to Aum's New York branch about religious freedom in Japan. The said their airfare, hotel bills and 'basic expenses' were paid by the cult"
33. ^ Kent, Stephen A; SKrebs, Theresa (1998). "When Scholars Know Sin: Alternative Religions and Their Academic Supporters" 🔗. *Skeptic Magazine* (Altadena, California: Michael Shermer, Skeptic Society) **6** (3). Retrieved 26 Feb 2010.

Related organizations founded by John-Roger   [edit]

- Peace Theological Seminary & College of Philosophy (PTS)
- University of Santa Monica (USM)
- Institute for Individual and World Peace (IIWP)
- Insight Seminars
- Heartfelt Foundation
- Mandeville Press

External links   [edit]

General

- Hinkins' website 🔗
- *People Magazine* article on Hinkins [1] 🔗

Organizations controlled and/or started by Hinkins

- Heartfelt Foundation 🔗
- Institute for Individual & World Peace 🔗
- Insight Seminars 🔗
- Mandeville Press 🔗, MSIA publisher
- The New Daily Herald 🔗, MSIA newsletter
- MSIA 🔗
- Peace Theological Seminary & College of Philosophy 🔗
- University of Santa Monica 🔗

Categories: 1934 births | Living people | Former Latter Day Saints | People from Carbon County, Utah | Movement of Spiritual Inner Awareness | New religious movements | University of Utah alumni | University of California, Los Angeles alumni | University of Southern California alumni | California State University, Los Angeles alumni