

## Biologist Dr. John S. Mackiewicz to be Featured on CUTV News Radio

ALBANY, NEW YORK, UNITED STATES, October 25, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- One may use the term “parasite” to describe a person who relies on others for a great deal of their welfare, feeding and support, without doing much themselves.

In the field of biology, parasitism is a type of symbiosis where two organisms live together. but one lives at the expense of the other. Though a very different kind of life, parasites exist just as do the vast array of plants and animals, birds, mammals, fish, insects, bacteria. They're of special interest because they require another living environment as a place to live—and some cause very serious diseases in people.

Dr. John S. Mackiewicz is a retired biology professor who dedicated his career to studying the evolution and biology of parasites and the systematics of cestodes, or tapeworms as they are commonly known. Dr. Mackiewicz's primary research focused on the ecology, morphology, systematics, zoogeography, host-parasite relationships.



“I just enjoy studying living things,” says Dr. Mackiewicz. “I've been fascinated with parasites ever since I saw my first ones. It's a group of organisms that most people know very little about. There's a tremendous amount to be learned from them, and I have spent my professional career learning as much as I can about them.”

Your intestine is not a sterile environment. It's filled with bacteria, viruses, and depending on where you've been or where you live, you may also be the host for a parasite.

“Whether you like it or not, you have an awful lot of organisms in your gut,” says Dr. Mackiewicz. “Some can be parasitic, especially if you start traveling in places where transmission is easy. Water gets polluted and before you know it, you've got some parasites and they can be life-threatening. However, if one is a healthy individual, you can have parasites of various sorts. In low numbers, they would have absolutely no effect on your well-being.”

There's no vertebrate group or even vertebrate individual that doesn't have parasites of some sort, because one of parasites' major adaptations are ways of getting from one host to another, just like getting from one island to another. Parasites take on a wide variety of forms, though

most commonly as long, narrow worms, but they can also be single-celled parasites, like malaria, which gets into your red blood cells.

Dr. Mackiewicz began his advanced education at Cornell University, where he earned a Bachelor of Science (1953), Master of Science (1954) and Doctor of Philosophy (1960). Prior to obtaining his Ph.D., he served as Instructor of Medical Entomology and Parasitology at Cornell (1957-1959) and pursued a postdoctoral fellowship with the National Institutes of Health, where he continued his research at the Institute de Zoologie in Neuchâtel, Switzerland.

Upon arriving back in the United States in 1961, Dr. Mackiewicz joined the Department of Biological Sciences at the State University of New York at Albany, where he would remain for 56 years. In that time, Dr. Mackiewicz has authored or co-authored 86 publications and described 22 new species of tapeworms. In fact, his colleagues have named seven species of parasitic worms after him.

“Most students who have taken my course and most individuals that I talk with have very little knowledge of parasites because you don't see them,” says Dr. Mackiewicz. “I get great satisfaction educating individuals to appreciate living things, biology.”

CUTV News Radio will feature John S. Mackiewicz in an interview with Doug Llewelyn on October 29th at 3pm EDT.

Listen to the show on [BlogTalkRadio](#).

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