

# NORML Remembers Dr. Lester Grinspoon

- by [NORML](#)
- Posted on [June 25, 2020](#)

**Cambridge, MA:** [Lester Grinspoon, M.D.](#), the longtime Harvard professor, psychiatrist, and author of twelve books, including *Marihuana Reconsidered* and *Marihuana: The Forbidden Medicine*, passed away Thursday morning. He was 92 years old.

The author of over 180 scholarly articles, Dr. Grinspoon is perhaps most well-known for his work to advance awareness for the therapeutic utility of cannabis. [Marihuana Reconsidered](#), published in 1971, chronicled his evolution from a marijuana skeptic to a cannabis reform advocate. His follow up book, [Marihuana: The Forbidden Medicine](#), co-written with James B. Bakalar and published in 1993, argued for the legalization of cannabis so that its full medicinal potential could be harnessed.

Throughout his career, Dr. Grinspoon played a pivotal role in advancing both marijuana policy and the NORML organization. NORML's founder Keith Stroup [fondly referred](#) to Dr. Grinspoon as “the intellectual leader of the marijuana legalization movement,” and he served in various advisory capacities for the organization for several decades.

Dr. Grinspoon was a former Chair of NORML's Board of Directors and he served as a member of the [NORML Advisory Board](#) up until his death. “Lester's extraordinary personal political involvement with NORML demonstrated his belief that we all have an obligation to fight injustice whenever and wherever we find it,” Stroup said.

Since 1999, NORML has presented an [annual award](#) bearing his name, the Lester Grinspoon Award for Outstanding Achievement in the Field of Marijuana Law Reform. It is among the highest honors awarded by the organization.

Reflecting on Dr. Grinspoon's impact, NORML's Keith Stroup said: “While there have been other medical and public health experts who have taken an active role to advance full legalization of marijuana, it is Dr. Lester Grinspoon who first led the way to insist that our marijuana policies be based on legitimate science. He has made it possible for us to have an informed public policy debate leading to the growing list of states legalizing the responsible use of marijuana.”

*NORML offers its condolences to the family and friends of Lester Grinspoon.*