

EPSTEIN, Marion (Greenebaum). June 14, 1915–.

BARNARD COLLEGE (BA 1935), BRYN MAWR COLLEGE (MA 1936, PhD 1938).

Marion Belle Greenebaum is the third of three daughters of Anna (Rheinhold) (1876–1927), born in Germany, and Milton Greenebaum (1876–1976), born in Baltimore, Maryland. Her mother, who attended the Normal College of the City of New York (now Hunter College), was a teacher; her father, who attended the New York City public schools and was self-educated, was an importer and exporter. Her parents married in October 1907. Their three daughters were born in Brooklyn, and all later earned bachelor's degrees from Barnard College. Marion Greenebaum's sisters, Celine (1910–2003) and Helen (b. 1912), both did graduate studies in social work and became licensed social workers.

Marion Greenebaum attended Erasmus Hall High School in Brooklyn 1927–31 and was awarded the Julia M. Dennis memorial scholarship at the time of her graduation. She was also recognized as one of two obtaining the highest average in mathematics in a graduating class of more than five hundred. She entered Barnard College at age sixteen and graduated four years later with a major in mathematics. Athletics were among her activities at Barnard, and in the spring of her senior year she received a senior service award and numerals in basketball and tenikoit (also known as ring tennis) from the Barnard College Athletic Association. She was later the fund chair for her class.

After receiving her bachelor's degree in 1935, Greenebaum immediately began her graduate work in mathematics at Bryn Mawr College; she earned her master's degree a year later and her doctorate two years after that, at age twenty-three. She held a graduate scholarship in mathematics 1935–37 and a resident fellowship in mathematics 1937–38. Having become interested in abstract algebra when Nathan Jacobson was at Bryn Mawr her first year and finding no one on the faculty in that area at Bryn Mawr, she wrote her dissertation in algebraic number theory under the direction of H. W. Brinkmann of nearby Swarthmore College.

Greenebaum's first position was as a research statistician with the International Statistical Bureau in New York City, where she worked from June 1938 until June 1939 doing economic statistical research for \$25 a week. On June 25, 1939, she married Jess Epstein, a research engineer who worked for RCA Manufacturing Company in New Jersey. Epstein, born in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1907, received a bachelor's degree in 1932 and a master's degree in 1934 from the University of Cincinnati after working as a co-op engineer for the Crosley Radio Corporation in Ohio 1926–31. He was an instructor of physics at the Cincinnati College of Pharmacy for one year before moving to his position with RCA in New Jersey in 1935. Jess Epstein remained with the RCA Manufacturing Company as research engineer until 1942, when RCA Laboratories opened in Princeton, New Jersey. He then worked at RCA Laboratories as research engineer 1942–62, as technical administrator of the Missile and Surface Radar Division 1962–67, and as staff engineer from 1967 until his retirement in 1973.

In May 1940 Marion Epstein wrote to [Helen Owens](#) that “unfortunately circumstances have kept me out of the academic field and I have turned my activities more toward the field of statistics and economic research” (Owens Papers). In her 1940 questionnaire she reported that she was engaged in some volunteer social service

work and some independent research. The first of the Epsteins' three children, Peter, was born on May 24, 1941, in Moorestown, New Jersey. Their two daughters, Barbara and Judith, were born in Princeton on December 16, 1943, and on January 7, 1948, respectively. All of the children earned master's degrees, married, and are or have been working in urban planning, education-related jobs, and therapy and counseling.

In 1944 Marion G. Epstein returned to work part time with the Educational Testing Service (ETS) in Princeton, New Jersey, where she remained, with some breaks, for the rest of her career. She worked in the Test Development Division until 1973. From 1944 to 1948, when her first two children were young, she worked as an associate examiner in mathematics about three hours a day, mainly on actuarial exams. When her youngest daughter was born in 1948, she stopped working at ETS for a time. In 1954, when her daughter entered school, she resumed part-time work as a professional associate in mathematics. In 1962 she began full-time work as senior examiner in mathematics. In this position she was responsible for graduate record exams, advanced placement exams, upper level college board tests, the original development of CLEP general mathematics examinations, development of computer assisted assembly of tests, and was project director for actuarial examinations. She became assistant director of the division in 1967 and associate director in 1968. She noted in 1981 that during her years with mathematics test development she worked closely with many mathematicians; she cited, in particular, A. W. Tucker and Samuel Wilkes of Princeton University and E. P. Vance of Oberlin College as having had special influence on her.

In 1973 Epstein moved to the College Board Programs Division of ETS, where she continued her administrative work. She was director of development and analysis 1973–75, administrative director of professional services (test development, publications, statistical analysis, and systems) 1975–77, and vice president 1977–80. After July 1980 she was senior advisor to the senior vice president for programs.

In connection with her work in educational testing, Epstein was engaged in curriculum writing for the School Mathematics Study Group (SMSG) during the summers of 1959 and 1960. She also served as consultant for test development workshops with teachers of mathematics for the West African Examinations Council in Ghana and Nigeria in the spring of 1964 and for the University of London School Examinations Department in the spring of 1967. Other consulting work included working with the NSF Institute for Teachers of Advanced Placement at Michigan State University.

Epstein was active and influential in a number of positions related to education. She was a member of the Princeton Township Board of Education 1955–66; she was vice president 1958–61 and president 1961–63. She was on the New Jersey State Board of Education 1966–77, as vice president 1975–77, chair of the legal committee 1975–77, and chair of the affirmative action committee 1974–77. In 1971–73 Epstein was co-chairperson of the Joint Committee on Postsecondary Vocational Education for the New Jersey State Board of Education and the Board of Higher Education. She was a member of the New Jersey Board of Higher Education 1973–77. In 1978 she became a member of the New Jersey Panel, American Council of Education National Identification Program for Women in Higher Education Administration, and in 1980 she became a trustee of Kean College of New Jersey (now Kean University) and was appointed to the advisory council to the Princeton University

mathematics department. She was also a member of the American Association for Higher Education and the American Personnel and Guidance Association.

In the 1950s, Epstein was active in the League of Women Voters, where she served the Princeton chapter as vice president 1950–54 and president 1954–56. She has also been a trustee of the Princeton Jewish Center and in 1979 became a member of the National Education Committee of the American Jewish Committee. She was elected secretary of Community Without Walls, a nonprofit association of Princeton-area residents supporting senior citizens, when its first governing body was elected in 1995.

Jess Epstein died on December 30, 1998. He was survived by their three children and seven grandchildren, among others. Marion Greenebaum Epstein continues to live in the Princeton area.

Organizational affiliations: AMS, MAA, NCTM, Phi Beta Kappa.

Dissertation:

1938 [Greenebaum, M.] The non-existence of integral normal bases in certain algebraic fields. PhD dissertation, Bryn Mawr College, directed by Heinrich Wilhelm Brinkmann (Swarthmore College).

Publications:

1939 [Greenebaum, M.] The wool top futures market. *The Daily News Record* (May).

1958 with S. S. Myers. How a mathematics test is born. *Math. Teacher* 51:299–302.

1963a Educational testing programs: what they can and cannot do. *Proc. 1963 Annual Meeting Natl. School Boards Assoc.*

1963b with S. S. Myers. Mathematical reform and the College Board mathematics examinations. *Amer. Math. Monthly* 70:665–67.

1966 Curricular change and the College Board mathematics examinations. *Tennessee Math. Bull.* (April).

1967 Computer assembly of tests. *Proc. 9th Annual Conf. Military Testing Assoc.* 49–56. Presented Toronto, ON, 27 Sept 1967.

1968 Testing in mathematics: Why? What? How? *Arith. Teacher* 15:311–19.

1973a Computer assisted assembly of tests at Educational Testing Service. *Educ. Tech.* 13 (3): 23–24. Invited article.

1973b Standardized mathematics tests *can* measure the right things. *Math. Teacher* 66:294,363–66. Invited forum article.

Technical reports:

1971 with others. Selection of products for focused dissemination. Educational Testing Service. PR-71-8 for the National Center for Educational Communication.

1974 Classification scheme for items in CAAT [computer assisted assembly of tests]. Educational Testing Service. Presented at the Computer Assisted Test Conference, San Diego, CA, 14–16 Oct 1974.

Presentations not listed above:

CEEB examinations: new directions. Presented to the NCTM, New York City, 14 Apr 1966.

Advanced placement program in mathematics – present and future. Presented by invitation to the MAA, Toms River, NJ, 6 May 1967.

Computer assisted assembly of tests from an item bank. Speech presented to the Amer. Psych. Assoc., San Francisco, CA, Aug 1968.

Tailoring a mathematics test to measure. Presented to the NCTM, Corpus Christi, TX, 18 Oct 1968.

A report from ETS on mathematical testing. Presented to the NCTM, Boston, MA, 12 Nov 1971.

Testing in mathematics: Why? What? How? Presented to the NCTM, Atlanta, GA, 26 Oct 1973.

“Thorough and efficient” education in New Jersey. Keynote address to the New Jersey Assoc. College Admissions Officers, Pomona, NJ, Jun 1977.

The SAT: How it is developed and what it tests. Presented to meeting of the Pennsylvania Assoc. College Admissions Counselors, Champion, PA, 26–27 Jun 1977.

On further examination: the SAT score decline panel report and implications for curriculum. Keynote speech to the Bergen County Superintendents Assoc., Mahwah, NJ, 16 Nov 1977.

The SAT: What it is and what it tells us. Presented to meeting of the Natl. Assoc. Secondary School Principals, Houston, TX, 2–6 Feb 1979.

Truth-in-testing legislation and its effects on admissions and advising. Presented to the Natl. Assoc. Academic Administrators, Ewing, NJ, 25 Oct 1979.

References to: LEduc 5, WhoAmW 6–7, WhoE 14–15.

Other sources: Owens questionnaire 1940; Smithsonian questionnaire 1981; Smithsonian meeting tapes 1981; Owens Papers; Bryn Mawr College Archives; US Census 1910, 1920, 1930 NY.

Last modified: January 15, 2011.