

IRVING REINER

1924–1986

Biography

Irving Reiner was born February 8, 1924 in Brooklyn, New York. He attended elementary and high school there and began his undergraduate work at Brooklyn College in 1940 with majors in mathematics and physics. His talent for mathematics was demonstrated early when he published his first mathematical paper [1], which appeared in his third year as an undergraduate. In the summer of 1943, he studied at the School of Advanced Instruction and Research in Mechanics at Brown University. It was there that he first met Alex Heller, a fellow student, with whom he later did joint work. He earned his B.A. magna cum laude from Brooklyn College in 1944 and entered the graduate school at Cornell University. His Master of Arts degree was awarded in February of 1945. His master's thesis, written under the direction of Burton W. Jones, was published in 1945 [2]; Jones also directed Reiner's doctoral work; his Ph.D. degree was awarded in June, 1947, and his thesis was published in 1949 [3].

While a graduate student at Cornell, Irving met Irma Moses, also a graduate student of Burton Jones. Irving and Irma were married in August of 1948 and they both came to the University of Illinois that year.

After completing his thesis, Irving Reiner went to the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton where he met L. K. Hua. They worked together that year and agreed that they would seek employment at the same university in order to continue their collaboration. Both accepted offers from the University of Illinois. As it turned out, this was the only job offer Irv ever accepted. During his thirty-eight years at the University of Illinois, he wrote one hundred seven research papers, survey papers, books, and other scholarly works, many with co-authors. A discussion of his research is given below. He directed the thesis work for seventeen doctoral students. During his career, he received many awards and other recognition for his outstanding work, among these a Guggenheim Fellowship (1962), the Distinguished Alumnus Award from Brooklyn College (1963), and a NATO Senior Fellowship (1977). He received research support every year after 1953 either from the Office of Naval Research or the National Science Foundation. At various times he held visiting appointments at Queen Mary College and King's College of the University of London, the University of Paris, and the University of Warwick, Coventry. He made short term visits to and gave invited addresses at many