

Olga Taussky-Todd

1906-1995



“When I was sufficiently mature to think about my career, and this came to me rather early, I knew that I was dedicated to an intellectual life, with science, in particular mathematics, my main interest.”

Olga was born August 30, 1906 in Olmutz, a part of the Austrian Hungarian Empire. Olga was one of three children; she had two other sisters. As a child, she was interested in grammar and essay writing, but her interests changed once she reached high school. She became interested in science, astronomy, and eventually math.

In 1925 she began studying at the University of Vienna. In 1930 she received her PhD with a dissertation on number theory supervised by the number theorist Philip Furtwangler. While serving as an assistant to Richard Courant at the Mathematics Institut in Gottingen, she worked on the publication of the first volume of the collected works of David Hilbert.

In 1937, she moved to the University of London and there met John Todd who would become her husband. They were married at the end of 1938.

During World War II, Olga was employed by the British Ministry of Aircraft Production at the National Physical Laboratory. After the war, in 1947, Olga and her husband moved to the United States and went to work for the National Bureau of Standards. In 1957, they left the NBS and took positions at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena. Olga had some trouble at Caltech because she was a woman. Her husband, John was hired as a professor. However, because of nepotism laws she couldn't be hired as a professor as well so she was hired as an assistant. She later became a professor at Caltech. Olga Taussky-Todd died October 7, 1995 in Pasadena, CA.

Honors Include:

- ❖ The Ford Prize of the Mathematical Association of America for her paper “Sums of Squares.”
- ❖ In 1963, awarded the *Los Angeles Times* Woman of the Year award.
- ❖ In 1965, the Austrian Government awarded its Gold Cross of Honor, First Class, in Arts and Sciences.

- ❖ She was elected to the Austrian and Brevarian Academies of Science.
- ❖ She was named a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Given the matrix

3	1
6	2

Find the Eigenvalues.

Use the Gersgorin Circle Theorem to graph the corresponding circles and find the area in which the Eigenvalues would lie. (Use back of this sheet for calculations)

$3+4i$	2	2
1	$2+3i$	0
0	2	-2

References

“Olga Taussky Todd. The Many Aspects of Pythagorean Triangles.” www.awn-math.org/noetherbrochure/Taussky-Todd81.html

“Remembering Olga Taussky Todd.” Davis, Chandler. www.agnesscott.edu/Iriddle/women/todd/htm.