

# John Hajnal

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**John Hajnal**, FBA (b. 26 November 1924 in Darmstadt, then People's State of Hesse, Weimar Germany – d. 30 November 2008 in London), born **John Hajnal-Kónyi**, was a Hungarian-British academic in the fields of mathematics and economics (statistics).

## Contents

- 1 Life
  - 1.1 Education
  - 1.2 Main scientific work
  - 1.3 Private life
  - 1.4 Career
- 2 Notes
- 3 References

## Life

Hajnal was born in Weimar Germany as the son of Jewish Hungarian-born parents. In 1936 his parents left then Nazi-ruled Germany where, as a Jew, the ten-year old Hajnal had been made to sit at the back of the class, and placed him in a Quaker school in the Dutch countryside while they arranged to settle in Britain.

## Education

In 1937, John was reunited with his parents in London, where he attended University College School, Hampstead. At age 16, he entered Balliol College, Oxford. He gained a first there in economics, philosophy and politics in 1943. His skills in academic-level mathematics were mostly autodidactical.

## Main scientific work

Hajnal is best known for identifying, in a landmark 1965 paper at LSE <sup>[1]</sup> the historical pattern of marriage of northwest Europe in which people married late and many adults remained single. The geographical boundary of this unusual marriage pattern is now known as the Hajnal line.

## Private life

He was, from 1950 until her death in 2008, married to Nina Lande, a German-born teacher. They had three daughters and a son.

## Career

- Royal Commission on Population, 1944–48
- United Nations, New York, 1948–51
- Office of Population Research, Princeton University, 1951–53
- Manchester University, 1953–57
- London School of Economics, 1957–86. Reader, 1966–75, Professor of Statistics 1975–1986 <sup>[2]</sup><sup>[3]</sup>
- Visiting Fellow Commoner, Trinity College, Cambridge, 1974–75
- Visiting Professor, Rockefeller University, 1981

He was a member of the International Statistical Institute and was elected FBA in 1966.

## Notes

- <sup>^</sup> "European Marriage Patterns in Perspective," in Glass and Eversley, eds., *Population in History, Essays in Historical Demography, 1965*
- <sup>^</sup> London School of Economics obituary (<http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/alumniRelations/newsAndPublications/obituaries/2008/hajnal.htm>)
- <sup>^</sup> Jewish Chronicle obituary (<http://www.thejc.com/articles/obituary-john-hajnal>)

## References

- Who's Who, 2006

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