

## Obituary

### Bernice H. Cohen, a Pioneer in Genetic Epidemiology

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Dr. Bernice H. Cohen, professor at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, died on April 12, 2011. Dr. Cohen, whose distinguished career spanned over 50 years, was a pioneer in the area of genetic epidemiology, having had the foresight to bring together the scientific fields of epidemiology and genetics decades ago. She established the first formal academic training program in genetic epidemiology at Johns Hopkins in 1979. She was a driving force in establishing a new scientific discipline and helped define its importance in public health. In addition to many peer-reviewed publications, she authored 13 book chapters and coauthored 3 scientific books. She engaged in a wide range of scientific research projects, including studies of birth defects and respiratory diseases. As evidence of the esteem in which she was held by her peers, she served on numerous national scientific advisory panels and study sections.

Dr. Cohen was born in 1924 in Baltimore, Maryland. She attended Western High School, graduating in 1940. She received her bachelor's degree in physiology and hygiene from Goucher College in 1944, and taught and conducted research at the Johns Hopkins University and Goucher College throughout the 1940s and 1950s. She received a PhD in human genetics at Johns Hopkins' School of Arts and Sciences in 1958, after which she joined what was then the Division of Chronic Diseases (later the Department of Epidemiology) at the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health in 1960. She was granted full professorship in 1970.

She approached her work with enthusiasm and determination, and was a generous and enthusiastic mentor to numerous graduate students and postdoctoral fellows. After her retirement, she was appointed professor emerita at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public



Bernice H. Cohen, 1924–2011

Health. Her contributions were many, and she will be greatly missed by her friends and colleagues.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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