

WRITING ASSIGNMENT #2: Due Tuesday, 09/15.

WRITING: Submit first draft as described below.

Chapter 2 discusses background information and statistics about the thirty-six women mathematicians whose biographical information will be explored in the subsequent chapters. These mathematicians are explicitly stated to be *representative* (on p. 22) of the approximately three hundred women who earned advanced graduate degrees in mathematics during the 1940's and 1950's, but the author leaves unstated the precise sense in which they may *representative*. For this writing assignment you should do the following:

a) In your own words try to describe as clearly and precisely as you can what you believe it means to claim that this group is *representative* and why it would probably be important to understand this. Are there specific aspects of the study mentioned explicitly (or perhaps assumed implicitly) that you believe might make the group non-representative in some ways?

b) After reading all the statistical and background information about these mathematicians that takes up most of the chapter, try to identify and discuss three characteristics about the group that you believe are likely to contribute to their being *representative*. Explain clearly why you believe this. Also try to include some aspect(s) that is probably representative in a positive way that helped to promote the entry and success of some of the women in mathematics, and also include some aspect(s) that is probably representative in a negative way that helped to inhibit their efforts.

c) The completed paper should be one to two pages long with three or four paragraphs. The exact length is less important than having a paper that is clear and justifies your positions based on the reading.