

The Felix Klein Award for 2009¹

International Commission on Mathematical Instruction

It is with great pleasure that the International Commission on Mathematical Instruction (ICMI) Awards Committee hereby announces that the Felix Klein Medal for 2009 is given to IAS Distinguished Professor and Professor Emerita Gilah C. Leder, La Trobe University, Bundoora, Victoria, Australia, in recognition of her more than 30 years of sustained, consistent, and outstanding lifetime achievements in mathematics education research and development.

With a background as a highly recognised secondary teacher of mathematics, Gilah Leder moved, through a number of steps, into research in mathematics education, with a particular emphasis—from the very beginning of her research career—on gender success and equity in mathematics education, but also more broadly on students' affects, attitudes, beliefs, and self-concepts in relation to mathematics education, at educational levels ranging from school to university. To a very high degree her work has contributed to shaping these areas and made a seminal impact on all subsequent research.



Professor Gilah C. Leder

Moreover, Gilah Leder has done significant work with regard to assessment in mathematics education, mathematically able students, research methodology, supervision of graduate students, and teacher education. A characteristic feature of Gilah Leder's work—published in almost 200 scholarly publications—is its application of perspectives and theories from sociology and psychology along with mathematical perspectives.

Gilah Leder's achievements include a remarkable amount of work for national, regional, and international mathematics education communities in a leadership role, as well as a committee or board member, an editorial board member for several journals and book series, as a mentor and supervisor of graduate students, as a visiting scholar in several countries, and as an invited key-note speaker at numerous conferences in all continents. Gilah Leder's first degree was a B.A. (Hons) in mathematics earned at the University of Adelaide, South Australia, (1963), where she also earned a Dip. Ed. (1965). She then moved to Monash University, Victoria, to do a M.Ed. (1973), and later on a Ph.D. (1979) on fear of success and sex differences in participation and performance in mathematics. Prior to that, she was a high-school teacher in South Australia and Victoria (1963–1965), and then a research assistant, part-time lecturer, and tutor at Monash University. She served as a Lecturer (1978–1982), a Senior Lecturer (1982–1987), and an Associate Professor of Education (1988–1993) at Monash University, before taking up,

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in 1994, a position as full Professor at the Graduate School of Education at La Trobe University, Victoria, where she remained until her retirement. During the years 2000–2007 she also served as Director of the Institute for Advanced Study and Director of Graduate Studies at La Trobe University. Having retired formally in 2007, Gilah Leder is currently an IAS Distinguished Professor and Professor Emerita at La Trobe, as well as an Adjunct Professor at Monash University.

Gilah Leder has received several honours and awards. She was President of the Mathematics Education Research Group of Australasia (MERGA), 1994–1998, of which she was awarded a Life Membership in 2002, President of the International Group for the Psychology of Mathematics Education (PME), 1999–2001, and a member of the Executive Committee of the ICMI, 1995–2002. In 2001, she was elected Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia. She was a Guest Professor in Sweden 2002–2004. Her biography is included in *Notable Women in Mathematics*². Gilah Leder has had numerous editorial roles in first rank national and international journals and book series.

Another characteristic feature of Gilah Leder’s work is her close collaboration with other researchers in several countries. In particular, she is renowned for her highly significant supervision and mentoring of young researchers. Thus she was named ‘Supervisor of the Year’ at Monash University in 1993 and supervisor of the ‘2002 Exemplary Doctoral Thesis’ at La Trobe University. She has supervised more than 60 research students, many of whom have earned international renown.

It is, of course, impossible to mention more than a few of Gilah Leder’s publications, many of which are highly recognised internationally. Suffice it to mention the following books that she has (co-)edited, *Assessment and Learning of Mathematics* (1992), *Mathematics and Gender* (with Elizabeth Fennema) (1990), *Beliefs: A Hidden Variable in Mathematics?* (with Erkki Pehkonen and Günter Törner) (2002), and *Affect and Mathematics Education* (with Peter Grootenboer), special issue of MERJ (2005). She is also the author of prominent state-of-the-art chapters and papers in special issues of journals (including *Educational Studies in Mathematics* and *ZDM*) and handbooks (including *Handbook on Research on Mathematics Teaching and Learning*).

In summary, Gilah C. Leder is an eminently worthy recipient of the Felix Klein Medal 2009.

²Morrow, C. and Perl, T. (eds) (1998). *Notable Women in Mathematics*. Greenwood Press, Westport, CT.