

Geoffrey Grinstein Biography

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Geoffrey Mark Grinstein (4 October 1949--) was born in Montréal, Québec, Canada, the son of Lorne Grinstein, an optometrist, and Betty Grinstein (née Leznoff), a homemaker and office manager. He spent his childhood in the nearby suburb of Côte Saint-Luc, where he attended public school, notably Wagar High School.

Grinstein was an undergraduate at McGill University, where he obtained a BSc in physics (1970) before attending Harvard, where he obtained a MS and a PhD in physics for a thesis entitled “Magnetic Phase Transitions in Alloys: A Renormalization Group Approach,” completed under the supervision of Alan Luther. He was then a postdoc with Michael Wortis and Gordon Baym at UIUC (1974-1976), supported by the National Research Council of Canada; assistant professor of physics at UIUC (1976-1977); and visiting scientist and assistant professor of physics at Nordita (1977-1979), in Copenhagen. In 1979, he joined the IBM T. J. Watson Research Center in Yorktown Heights, New York, where he worked as research staff member until his retirement in 2008. He spent the spring term of 1989 as visiting professor of physics at Yale University. Since his retirement, he has been writing fiction, and is the co-author of the play *Art of Questionable Provenance*, produced at the STAGE theatre (Scientists, Technologists and Artists Generating Exploration) at the University of Chicago.

Grinstein's early work was on the impact of disorder on phase transitions. His thesis was one of the first recorded uses of the replica trick to average over quenched disorder. He went on to study various other condensed matter systems with and without disorder, including random field models, neural networks, liquid crystals, the superfluid-insulator transition, and the phases and phase transitions of nonequilibrium systems.

Grinstein was named fellow of the APS (1985) “for contributions to the understanding of the phases and phase transitions of quenched disordered systems and liquid crystals.”