The Mathematics of Various Entertaining Subjects: Research in Recreational Math

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The history of mathematics is filled with major breakthroughs resulting from solutions to recreational problems. Problems of interest to gamblers led to the modern theory of probability, for example, and surreal numbers were inspired by the game of Go. Yet even with such groundbreaking findings and a wealth of popular-level books exploring puzzles and brainteasers, research in recreational mathematics has often been neglected. *The Mathematics of Various Entertaining Subjects* brings together authors from a variety of specialties to present fascinating problems and solutions in recreational mathematics.

Contributors to the book show how sophisticated mathematics can help construct mazes that look like famous people, how the analysis of crossword puzzles has much in common with understanding epidemics, and how the theory of electrical circuits is useful in understanding the classic Towers of Hanoi puzzle. The card game SET is related to the theory of error-correcting codes, and simple tic-tac-toe takes on a new life when played on an affine plane. Inspirations for the book's wealth of problems include board games, card tricks, fake coins, flexagons, pencil puzzles, poker, and so much more.

Looking at a plethora of eclectic games and puzzles, *The Mathematics of Various Entertaining Subjects* is sure to entertain, challenge, and inspire academic mathematicians and avid math enthusiasts alike.

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Editorial Review

Review
One of *Choice*'s Outstanding Academic Titles for 2016

"Beineke and Rosenhouse have compiled and edited a fantastic collection of essays dealing with popular mathematics. . . . Anybody who enjoys reading about recreation mathematics should definitely explore these writings."**--*Choice***

From the Back Cover

"This book is a fascinating treasure trove of puzzles, brain teasers, and mathematical recreations that will keep your mind busy for months, if not years. A true gem that is destined to become a classic."**--Eli Maor, author of *e: The Story of a Number***

"This entertaining yet rigorous book of recreational mathematical masterpieces presents centuries-old puzzles and new inventions that illustrate the continuing allure of recreational mathematics. The contributions are up-to-date, well illustrated, and startle with unexpected connections. Lay readers and connoisseurs will find imaginative and instructive delights."**--Mircea Pitici, editor of *The Best Writing on Mathematics***

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"*The Mathematics of Various Entertaining Subjects* provides a plethora of elegant and surprising mathematical results that were originally motivated by, or found applications in, games and puzzles. The diverse questions, engaging work, and novel, often beautiful solutions make this book an excellent survey and introduction to this kind of analysis."**--David Neel, Seattle University**

About the Author
Jennifer Beineke is professor of mathematics at Western New England University. **Jason Rosenhouse** is professor of mathematics at James Madison University. He is the author of *The Monty Hall Problem* and the coauthor of *Taking Sudoku Seriously*.

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