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The Moment of Proof

By Donald C. Benson

Oxford University Press, USA. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 352 pages. Dimensions: 9.2in. x 7.4in. x 0.9in. When Archimedes, while bathing, suddenly hit upon the principle of buoyancy, he ran wildly through the streets of Syracuse, stark naked, crying eureka! In *The Moment of Proof*, Donald Benson attempts to convey to general readers the feeling of eureka--the joy of discovery--that mathematicians feel when they first encounter an elegant proof. This is not an introduction to mathematics so much as an introduction to the pleasures of mathematical thinking. And indeed the delights of this book are many and varied. The book is packed with intriguing conundrums--Loyds Fifteen Puzzle, the Petersburg Paradox, the Chaos Game, the Monty Hall Problem, the Prisoners Dilemma--as well as many mathematical curiosities. We learn how to perform the arithmetical proof called casting out nines and are introduced to Russian peasant multiplication, a bizarre way to multiply numbers that actually works. The book shows us how to calculate the number of ways a chef can combine ten or fewer spices to flavor his soup (1, 024) and how many people we would have to gather in a room to have a 50-50 chance of two having the same birthday...



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