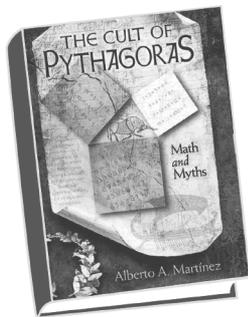


BOOKSHELF

A man is known by the books he reads. —Emerson

New and Noteworthy Titles on Our Bookshelf March 2016



The Cult of Pythagoras: Math and Myth, by Alberto A. Martínez (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2013). This book aims to present historically accurate accounts of many of the colorful legends about mathematics and mathematicians. Among the stories that appear here are the cult of the Pythagoreans, Archimedes's solution concerning the weight

of a golden crown, and Gauss's childhood feat of a fast and clever way to add all numbers from 1 to 100. The embellishments that have become attached to many of these stories are entertaining. "My Calculus class always chuckles when I tell the story of Archimedes running naked through the streets yelling 'Eureka, Eureka' when he determines how to solve the problem," writes Ellen Ziliak in a review that appeared on the web site of the Mathematical Association of America. "I really enjoyed this book and think it would be a worthwhile read for anyone, but especially a student interested in the history behind the rules mathematicians now take for granted," Ziliak concludes.



In the Dark on the Sunny Side: A Memoir of an Out-of-Sight Mathematician, by Larry W. Baggett (Mathematical Association of America, 2012). Larry Baggett is well known for his work in analysis. What's less well known is that he is blind. His ability to calculate in his head is formidable, though Baggett is modest about it. "My feeling is that sighted mathematicians could

do a lot in their heads too, but it's handy to write on a piece of paper," he told the *Notices* in an interview for a November 2002 article on blind mathematicians. In a review of Baggett's book that appeared on the website of the Institute of Mathematics and its Applications (UK), Sean Elvidge writes: "[T]his is a heart-warming and humorous book... Larry's passions and interests are clear—music, maths and his family—and this is a great account of a fascinating life."



In connection with the obituary for Alexandre Grothendieck in this month's *Notices*, we note that Thombooks Press recently put out a book containing translations into English of parts of Grothendieck's memoir *Récoltes et Semailles*. The translation is by Roy Lisker and edited by S. Peter Tsatsanis. The book also includes "The Quest for Alexandre Grothendieck: Report of an

Adventurous Journey to Find the World's Most Famous Mathematician/Hermit", by Roy Lisker. Distributed only by Amazon.com.

The AMS maintains a comprehensive list of reviews of popular mathematics books on its Reviews page at www.ams.org/news/math-in-the-media/reviews. The list highlights current books that have mathematical themes and are aimed at a broad audience potentially including mathematicians, students, and the general public.

Suggestions for books to include on the list should be sent to notices-booklist@ams.org.