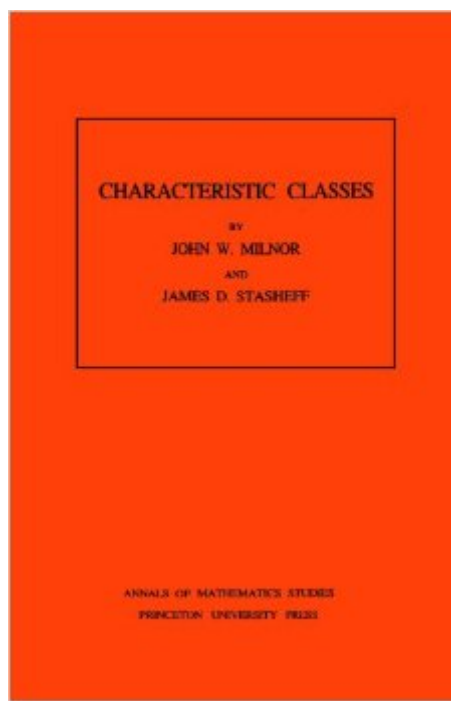**The book was found**

Characteristic Classes. (AM-76)

Synopsis

The theory of characteristic classes provides a meeting ground for the various disciplines of differential topology, differential and algebraic geometry, cohomology, and fiber bundle theory. As such, it is a fundamental and an essential tool in the study of differentiable manifolds.In this volume, the authors provide a thorough introduction to characteristic classes, with detailed studies of Stiefel-Whitney classes, Chern classes, Pontrjagin classes, and the Euler class. Three appendices cover the basics of cohomology theory and the differential forms approach to characteristic classes, and provide an account of Bernoulli numbers.Based on lecture notes of John Milnor, which first appeared at Princeton University in 1957 and have been widely studied by graduate students of topology ever since, this published version has been completely revised and corrected.

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Customer Reviews

Milnor & Stasheff's "Characteristic Classes" is the standard reference for them. It includes a number of different, but equivalent, definitions and properties of the Stiefel-Whitney, Chern, Euler, and Pontrjagin classes, with a formal, heavily algebraic topological flavor. The material presented is all easy to follow and well explained, and there are problems included in every chapter, some of which are challenging, earning this work its high reputation. However, there is a dearth of geometric intuition and many important, basic facts about the classes are absent, so while a student with only a standard background in algebraic topology and differential topology could read and understand

the book, to really gain a practical knowledge of characteristic classes as one would need in studying, say, low-dimensional topology (let alone physics), the book must be supplemented with other book(s) on the subject, such as Bott & Tu's Differential Forms in Algebraic Topology.Characteristic classes associated to a fiber bundle are cohomology classes of the base manifold that behave naturally under pullbacks (i.e., the characteristic class of the pullback of a bundle is the pullback of the characteristic class of the bundle). In particular, the classic classes that this book deals with are associated to vector bundles, either real (the Stiefel-Whitney (S-W) and Pontrjagin classes), real orientable (the Euler class), or complex (Chern classes).

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