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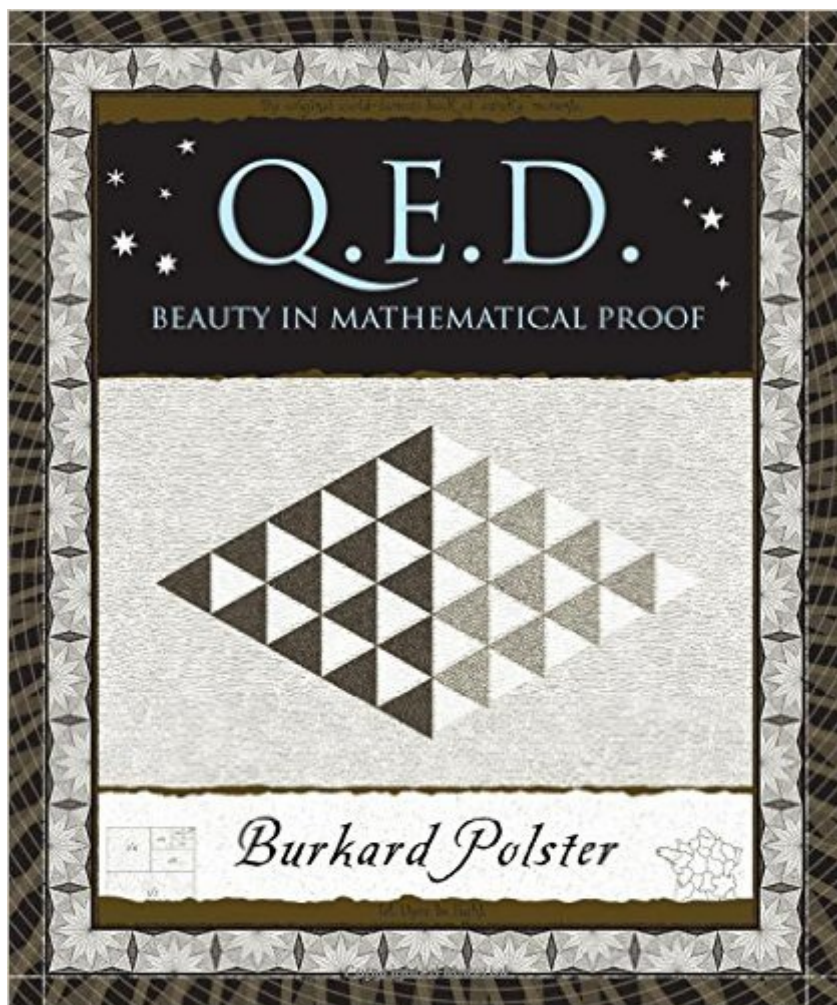
Q.E.D.: Beauty In Mathematical Proof (Wooden Books)

Synopsis

Q.E.D. presents some of the most famous mathematical proofs in a charming book that will appeal to nonmathematicians and math experts alike. Grasp in an instant why Pythagoras's theorem must be correct. Follow the ancient Chinese proof of the volume formula for the frustrating frustum, and Archimedes' method for finding the volume of a sphere. Discover the secrets of pi and why, contrary to popular belief, squaring the circle really is possible. Study the subtle art of mathematical domino tumbling, and find out how slicing cones helped save a city and put a man on the moon.

Book Information

Series: Wooden Books

Hardcover: 64 pages

Publisher: Walker Books (May 1, 2004)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0802714315

ISBN-13: 978-0802714312

Product Dimensions: 6.2 x 0.4 x 6.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (18 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #203,895 in Books (See Top 100 in Books)   #48 inÂ Books > Science & Math > Mathematics > Reference   #113 inÂ Books > Science & Math > Mathematics > Pure Mathematics > Logic   #53336 inÂ Books > Reference

Customer Reviews

Sigh! Unlike the reviewer pond-jumper, I have actually read "QED", in the proper sense. In fact, I have proofread it. Being a colleague of the author, I am hardly an unbiased reviewer, and though I regard "QED" as a gem of a book, the potential buyer needn't accept my opinion. Please peek inside "QED" to judge for yourselves.What I would like to do is to address pond-jumper's criticisms of "QED". To begin, he (it's gotta be a he) objects to the author's characterisation of a mathematical proof. pond-jumper doesn't specify his worry here, but it is fair enough to be concerned or confused over exactly what constitutes a mathematical proof: mathematicians and philosophers have been debating this for thousands of years, and there is plenty of room for disagreement. The approach in "QED" is to avoid the pedantry, to emphasise the clear, intuitive ideas at the heart of some mathematical theorems. As such, the book does not contain completely rigorous proofs, with the last I's and T's dotted and crossed. But the arguments are clear and convincing (and beautiful),

AND the arguments are correct: the mathematicians/pedants CAN easily fill in the details if they so wish. There is no sleight of hand in "QED", no "professor's trick".pond-jumper's substantive complaint is that the author's proof that .9999999... = 1 is incorrect. In fact, the author is absolutely correct; I will briefly explain how pond-jumper has led himself astray.Any use of infinity is problematic, prone to confusion, and infinite decimals are no exception: in high school (and, sadly, often at university), the difficulties are simply ignored. Here, the question is, what happens to .999...999... when it is multiplied by 10? The author (correctly) claims the result is 9.999...999...

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