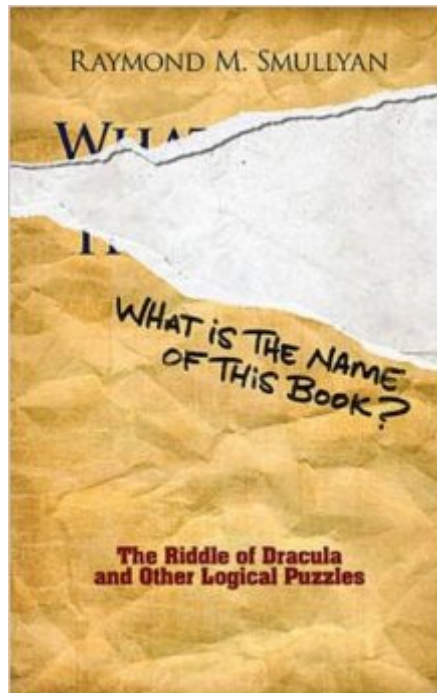


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What Is The Name Of This Book?: The Riddle Of Dracula And Other Logical Puzzles (Dover Recreational Math)



Synopsis

"The most original, most profound, and most humorous collection of recreational logic and math problems ever written." — Martin Gardner, *Scientific American* "The value of the book lies in the wealth of ingenious puzzles. They afford amusement, vigorous exercise, and instruction." — Willard Van Orman Quine, *The New York Times Book Review* If you're intrigued by puzzles and paradoxes, these 200 mind-bending logic puzzles, riddles, and diversions will thrill you with challenges to your powers of reason and common sense. Raymond M. Smullyan — a celebrated mathematician, logician, magician, and author — presents a logical labyrinth of more than 200 increasingly complex problems. The puzzles delve into Gödel's undecidability theorem and other examples of the deepest paradoxes of logic and set theory. Detailed solutions follow each puzzle.

Book Information

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Logic

Customer Reviews

At the time this book was written, Raymond Smullyan was one of the world's leading experts on Gödel's Incompleteness Theorems -- some of the deepest mathematical results of the 20th century. This book is actually a gentle intro to these topics, and the most amazing part of it is that Dr. Smullyan keeps the level suitable for children. That does NOT mean this book is not suitable for adults. It is extremely entertaining no matter what your age is. The book is mostly a progression of logical conundrums. You are started out on the island of knights and knaves. These two types of people are visually indistinguishable, but knights always tell the truth while knaves always lie. You

are then presented with various scenarios where the objective is for you to ask one yes/no question from which you obtain some meaningful information without knowing whether the person you are asking is a knight or a knave. The obvious example of this, you meet one person on the island, and you want to ask them one yes/no question that allows you to determine whether they are a knight or a knave. Obviously, this would be pretty handy under the circumstances. Can it be done? Yes. Ask them, "If I were to ask you if you were a knight, would you say 'yes'?" A knight will always answer this question "Yes" and a knave "No". If you can follow the logic through to conclude this, you are on your way!! It's very easy to follow through for the knight, but the knave is a bit more tricky, but this example indicates the importance of case analysis and the use of hypotheticals in your questions to induce lying about lying. The situations in the book steadily grow more complex.

Let's get the simple stuff out of the way: Yes, this is largely a book of Smullyan's well-known Knights and Knaves puzzles. However, it has a lot more. Beginning and ending sections include jokes about logic and logicians that teach a huge amount about logic itself. A section in the back teaches about Godel's Theorem in a simple way anyone can understand (perhaps more elegantly than Hoftadter did, perhaps not). He gives a feeling for what logic is and why we understand it the way we do. But back to the main thing: the puzzles. First, not all are Knights/Knaves. He has some (slightly silly) puzzles of other varieties (such as the title puzzle: what is the name of the book, after all?). The Knights and Knaves puzzles are followed by other truth/not-truth variants. In increasing difficulty we get people who can lie or not, people who are insane and think true is false and false is true, people whose tendency to lie changes by the day of the week (which is something always unknown, of course) and take side trips into caskets with truth or lies on them and other variants. The important piece there is "in increasing difficulty." This book is a disguised master course in boolean logic. Repeatedly, a puzzle will step back and ask you to solve a general case, without knowing exactly what situation it will be applied to. By the end of the main puzzle section, we come to the actual Riddle of Dracula, which presents the problem of writing one solution that works for every puzzle up until then, across several chapters of the book. Smullyan isn't teaching how to solve a puzzle, he's teaching how the system of these puzzles works.

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