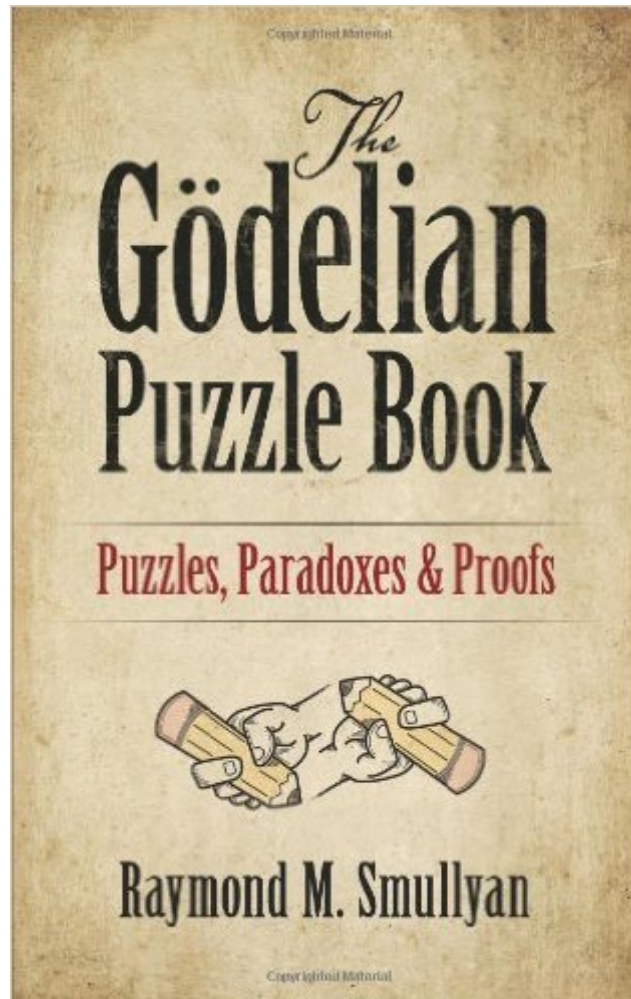


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The Gödelian Puzzle Book: Puzzles, Paradoxes And Proofs



Synopsis

These brand-new recreational logic puzzles provide entertaining variations on Gödel's incompleteness theorems, offering ingenious challenges related to infinity, truth and provability, undecidability, and other concepts. Created by the celebrated logician Raymond Smullyan, the puzzles require no background in formal logic and will delight readers of all ages. The two-part selection of puzzles and paradoxes begins with examinations of the nature of infinity and some curious systems related to Gödel's theorem. The first three chapters of Part II contain generalized Gödel theorems. Symbolic logic is deferred until the last three chapters, which give explanations and examples of first-order arithmetic, Peano arithmetic, and a complete proof of Gödel's celebrated result involving statements that cannot be proved or disproved. The book also includes a lively look at decision theory, better known as recursion theory, which plays a vital role in computer science.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book is extremely entertaining, full of educational, thought-provoking, and sometimes difficult logic puzzles. I'm a huge fan of Smullyan and his work and this book certainly did not disappoint. This book is a great way to learn about Gödel's theorems without any risk of falling asleep. That said, I am not a fan of typos and errors, and this book is full of them. Several of the puzzles are impossible to solve because a wrong name is used in the scenario, and some of the proofs are equally problematic. Anyone paying close attention will be able to work around the issues, but that

should not be required of the reader. I'm not sure why these problems weren't caught during a review phase. Were this book any less excellent I would have given it three or perhaps even two stars as a result of the errors. I'm disappointed by the issues, but would still highly recommend the book. Just be extra-alert as you work through it.

Each time I think that Raymond Smullyan has reached his upper limit, he produces a book even more amazing, wondrous, and stupendous. He is a boundless source of creativity and ingenuity, and not even his advanced years deter him in the slightest. His latest "Godelian Puzzle Book" is a true masterpiece - a mixture of humor and brilliance which entertainingly bares the very mind and soul of the eminent logician Kurt Gödel. I can not recommend this book enough!

My son and I have read several books on logic with an appealing structure. They are a series of puzzles that advance in difficulty and illustrate ideas of formal logic. They are humorous, accessible and educational. The first half of this book is like that. Then it gets much more abstract leading to proof of Godel's important theorem. I found it much more difficult to do and less enjoyable. This isn't a criticism since it is necessary to get to the goal of proving the theorem.

I am not a professional student of Logic but Smullyan's other books have kept very busy over a long time span. This book takes me just where I wanted to go to a practical account of why Godel has made such a tremendous impact

This book is really a disguised coursebook in formal logic: starting with the very concept of a sentence or a proof, and ending with a proof of Godel's incompleteness theorem and Tarski's proof that truth is not predicable in formal systems. Smullyan, a professional logician and author of many books, did a good work in doing so. The book deserves three stars, however, since it has an extremely steep learning curve. It is not a casual book. Each chapter, after some slightly jokey or mind-bending introductions in Smullyan's style, moves very swiftly to difficult problems and puzzles. This is not a book in Smullyan's old puzzle book style, such as "What is the Name of This Book?", etc. To sum up, if you are looking for a coursebook on logic, this is a good choice (but you will have to work hard with the book -- there is no royal road to mathematics, as a Greek mathematician allegedly told Alexander the Great). But do not expect a "fun" or popular book! That is not this book's intention. It is clearly intended for more advanced students. This makes the book somewhat odd -- since it falls between two chairs. It is too advanced for the casual or popular reader, but

actual logicians or math students would be reading the "standard" textbooks on the subject, not Smullyan. I think that, in this case, Smullyan overshot his mark -- he INTENDED to write a more-or-less popular book, but made it a bit advanced. Still, if you are interested in logic and want a challenge, give it a shot.

The author here analyzes particularly the Godel theorem. So we observe how this theorem has earned its fame, because it correlates the logics with the meta-mathematics. Particularly that results from the fact that a proposition can tell something about it-self. The book is reach of exercises and applications, particularly about the fixed point and the Zeno paradox.

The examples are almost self explanatory, and are fun to read. No one and nothing has done a better job of explaining Kurt Goedel's famous theorem.

It's yet another masterpiece by the author. Quite enjoyable and educational, both for adults, and kids. I highly recommend it to people enjoying intellectual challenge and humor.

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