

New Book of Puzzles – Reviews 1992

Crux Mathematicorum



with
**Mathematical
Mayhem**

the Digital supplement to the
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Problem Solving Journal

NEW BOOKS OF PUZZLES,
by Jerry Slocum and Jack Botermans,
published in 1992 by W. H. Freeman and Company,
41 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10010,
ISBN 0-7167-2356-5, hardcover, 128 pages, \$19.95,
reviewed by Andy Liu.

This is a book every puzzle lover should have. It gives full description of 101 puzzles, both classic and modern. These are all manipulative or mechanical puzzles, illustrated with precise drawings or colour photographs by Jack Botermans.

Among other puzzles described are dissection puzzles, geometrical vanishes, secret boxes, burrs, rope puzzles, wire puzzles as well as solitaires. The book concludes with a challenge to the readers, to explain how Gary Foshee's Arrow through the Bottle puzzle is made.

This book is a sequel to the highly successful "Puzzles Old and New" by the same authors (see Mini-Review, Crux [1991:76]). As in the earlier volume, the current one contains detailed instructions on how to make most of the puzzles described, as well as how to solve some of them. The switch to a major publisher in popular mathematics will bring this superbly produced book to an even wider audience. Both volumes are highly recommended.

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PUZZLEMENTS GALORE

Slocum, Jerry and Jack Botermans. *New Book of Puzzles: 101 Classic and Modern Puzzles to Make and to Solve*. W. H. Freeman and Co., 41 Madison Ave., New York NY 10010 USA. 1992. 128 pp. \$19.95 hardcover.

Another gorgeously illustrated book of puzzles by Slocum and Botermans (see review of their earlier book, *Puzzles Old & New*, *Cryptologia*, 13(3): 235).

Customer Reviews – Amazon.com

Reviewer: **J. Guild** (Toronto,Canada)

Here,try this one..., December 2, 2003

Boy!! what a book for a puzzle lover and/or collector.You just wont find a better book on the subject than this;for the simple reason that the two authors are the top puzzle guys.Well,maybe their other books are just as good.Can you imagine someone with a collection of 20,000 mechanical puzzles and 2,000 puzzle books. Some of these puzzles date back to the 17th.century.This book is so well put together I would suspect that even someone who doesn't particularly like to solve ,or for that matter don't even think they could solve puzzles ;would find this book a joy to thumb through.

The book includes 101 puzzles ,directions on making and solutions.Going through this book is almost as interesting as would be a visit with the authors and looking at this fantastic world class collection.Without question,a book no puzzle lover should be without .I own about 500 puzzle books and this is one of the best and one of my favorites.

Reviewer: **Daniel McGuire** (Manchester, NH)

Colorful and fun, August 25, 2000

Excellent book covering a wide variety of puzzles, old and new, simple and complex. Full of color photos and diagrams that illustrate the puzzle and its workings, but with a light touch so the reader is not bored with details.

Reviewer: **Charles Ashbacher** (Hiawatha, Iowa)

A Great Collection of Mind Twisters, March 16, 2000

The best puzzles satisfy the following criteria:

- (a) Easy to understand and look easy to solve.
- (b) Difficult to solve.
- (c) In reality, easy to solve and the solutions are easy to understand.

All of the puzzles contained in this book, many of which have been in existence in some form for many years, fit the mold defined above. Detailed instructions on how to construct them as well as solutions are included. While most require only standard materials, such skills as wood and metal working are sometimes necessary.

It is easy to feel like an imbecile when you are unsuccessful in solving some of these items and then in desperation go to the solutions and see how simple it is. In many cases, the secret is to abandon the "obvious" approach and look at the problem sideways. The path that first appears least likely to lead to a solution is often the proper one. If you enjoy puzzles, this book is a necessary purchase.

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