

The Puzzle Arcade – Awards & Reviews - 1996

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Games Magazine

HANDS-ON SCIENCE

The Puzzle Arcade: For People Who Like Lots of Hints
BY JERRY SLOCUM

Varied inclusions and a zippered pouch of puzzle parts.
Klutz, Inc., Palo Alto, 1996 (spiralbound, \$19.95)

Bent wires, cut-up cards, a grand maze, colorful printing and breezy but sympathetic prose only begin to describe this book. Its real nature lies in its ingenious demonstration of the interactivity of hand, eye, language and form. The author is a renowned collector of mechanical puzzles, about 20 of which are here; they are accompanied by picture puzzles, illusions and a gaggle of word puzzles. At the simplest, a small plastic pyramid can be fitted together of two bits. Some classical puzzles are offered in new form, like Sam Loyd's famous movable drawing that shows either 12 or 13 personages. Most important is not the head-scratching puzzles alone, but the freely offered help—hints for those who gamely struggle, and then full solutions to all the puzzles. This open sharing disarms the usual unalloyed challenge that can injure the sensitive and the unlucky.



Journal of Recreational Mathematics

The Puzzle Arcade, by Jerry Slocum, Klutz, Palo Alto, California, 1996. 46 pp., \$19.95. ISBN 1-57054-056-X. Order line 1-800-558-8944.

When these puzzles are placed in front of you, they seem simple. Like all good puzzles, they incorporate the principles of optical illusions, where the brain is fooled by natural clues that must be applied in unusual ways. My favorite is Sam Loyd's mules, where it seems impossible but is in fact trivial, at least after the fact and a few dents in the cranium and/or wall.

All of the parts to the puzzles are included and hints and solutions are provided. Which is both helpful and frustrating, as some of the bumps on my head were made after I realized how stupid I had been.

If you enjoy being aggravated, buy this book. Just keep in mind that frustration can be a healthy thing. This review would be longer if I could only figure out how to get those two wires apart.

Charles Ashbacher

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29 Sep 96

Dear Jerry:

A thousand thanks for the Klutz book. What a beautiful job you did of selecting choice items, and what a beautiful format Cassidy provided! It should do well for both of you.

ALSO NOTABLE

Jerry Slocum's collection of puzzles is up to 22,000 and counting, and that's only the mechanical ones (where does the guy sleep?). Unfortunately, he could fit only a handful of them into **The Puzzle Arcade** (Klutz, 415 857-0888, \$19.95). Let's call it a book. But it's really a wire-bound mini-collection of the best classic brain-frazzlers, including a few you may not have seen before, lots of word puzzles along the margins, and hints and solutions. These aren't just pictures of puzzles but the actual puzzles themselves, some of them bound into the book like pages, others packed into an attached plastic pouch. Treasures to be

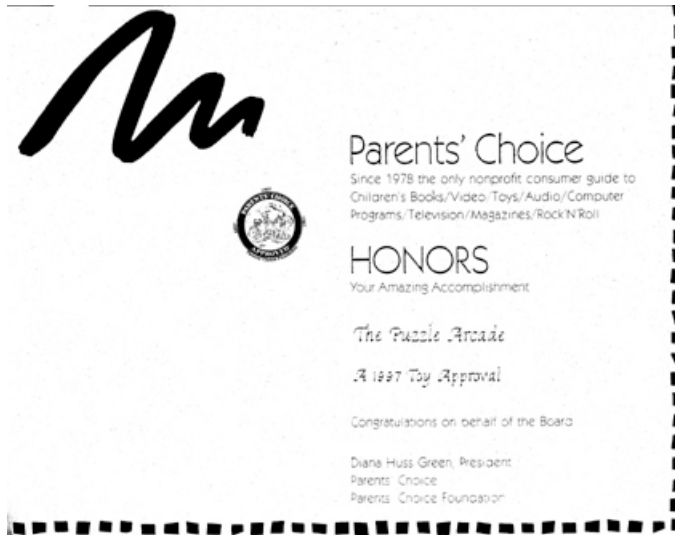


found here include Sam Loyd's historic "Wheel of Disappearing Pirates"; "The Richter Cross" (tangrams); string puzzles; stick puzzles; a drop-out maze; picture puzzles; and much more. A gorgeous production in every way, done with irresistible verve.

**National Association of Parenting Publication
Awards – Honors Award 1996**



**Parents Choice Award
Honors Award 1997**



Scientific American Young Readers Book Award 1996

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Dear Publishing Colleague:

I am writing to extend my congratulations: *The Puzzle Arcade: For People Who Like Lots of Hints* by Jerry Slocum is one of the winners of the 1996 SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN YOUNG READERS BOOK AWARD. This new annual prize recognizes outstanding achievements in the communicating scientific or technical topics to a youthful audience.