



You Failed Your Math Test, Comrade Einstein: Adventures and Misadventures of Young Mathematicians or Test Your Skills in Almost Recreational Mathematics

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This groundbreaking work features two essays written by the renowned mathematician Ilan Vardi. The first essay presents a thorough analysis of contrived problems suggested to “undesirable” applicants to the Department of Mathematics of Moscow University. His second essay gives an in-depth discussion of solutions to the Year 2000 International Mathematical Olympiad, with emphasis on the comparison of the olympiad problems to those given at the Moscow University entrance examinations. The second part of the book provides a historical background of a unique phenomenon in mathematics, which flourished in the 1970s-80s in the USSR. Specially designed math problems were used not to test students' ingenuity and creativity but, rather, as “killer problems,” to deny access to higher education to “undesirable” applicants. The focus of this part is the 1980 essay, “Intellectual Genocide”, written by B Kanevsky and V Senderov. It is being published for the first time. Also featured is a little-known page of the Soviet history, a rare example of the oppressed organizing to defend their dignity. This is the story of the so-called Jewish People's University, the inception of which is associated with Kanevsky, Senderov and Bella Subbotovskaya.

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- Rank: #11460637 in Books
- Brand: Brand: World Scientific Publishing Company
- Published on: 2005-05
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.75" h x 5.75" w x .50" l, 1.11 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 232 pages

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