



Complexities: Women in Mathematics

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Sophie Germain taught herself mathematics by candlelight, huddled in her bedclothes. Ada Byron Lovelace anticipated aspects of general-purpose digital computing by more than a century. Cora Ratto de Sadosky advanced messages of tolerance and equality while sharing her mathematical talents with generations of students.

This captivating book gives voice to women mathematicians from the late eighteenth century through to the present day. It documents the complex nature of the conditions women around the world have faced--and continue to face--while pursuing their careers in mathematics. The stories of the three women above and those of many more appear here, each one enlightening and inspiring. The earlier parts of the book provide historical context and perspective, beginning with excursions into the lives of fifteen women born before 1920. Included are histories of collective efforts to improve women's opportunities in research mathematics. In addition, a photo essay puts a human face on the subject as it illustrates women's contributions in professional associations.

More than eighty women from academe, government, and the private sector provide a rich mélange of insights and strategies for creating workable career paths while maintaining rewarding personal lives. The book discusses related social and cultural issues, and includes a summary of recent comparative data relating to women and men in mathematics and women from other sciences. First-person accounts provide explicit how-tos; many narratives demonstrate great determination and perseverance. Talented women vividly portray their pleasure in discovering new mathematics. The senior among them speak out candidly, interweaving their mathematics with autobiographical detail. At the beginning of a new century, women at all stages of their careers share their outlooks and experiences.

Clear, engaging, and meticulously researched, *Complexities* will inspire young women who are contemplating careers in mathematics and will speak to women in many fields of endeavor and walks of life.

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