



Gamma Exploring Eulers Constant Princeton Science Library

By Julian Havil

Princeton University Press. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 296 pages. Dimensions: 9.1in. x 6.0in. x 0.8in. Among the myriad of constants that appear in mathematics, π , e , and i are the most familiar. Following closely behind is g , or gamma, a constant that arises in many mathematical areas yet maintains a profound sense of mystery. In a tantalizing blend of history and mathematics, Julian Havil takes the reader on a journey through logarithms and the harmonic series, the two defining elements of gamma, toward the first account of gamma's place in mathematics. Introduced by the Swiss mathematician Leonhard Euler (1707-1783), who figures prominently in this book, gamma is defined as the limit of the sum of $1/2^k + 1/3^k + \dots + 1/n^k$, minus the natural logarithm of n --the numerical value being 0.5772156... But unlike its more celebrated colleagues π and e , the exact nature of gamma remains a mystery--we don't even know if gamma can be expressed as a fraction. Among the numerous topics that arise during this historical odyssey into fundamental mathematical ideas are the Prime Number Theorem and the most important open problem in mathematics today--the Riemann Hypothesis (though no proof of...



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