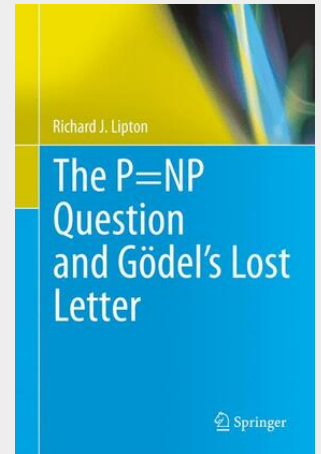


Lipton

The P=NP Question and Gödel's Lost Letter

Does $P=NP$. In just a few symbols Dick Karp—in 1972—captured one of the deepest and most important questions of all time. When he first wrote his famous paper, I think it's fair to say he did not know the depth and importance of his question. Now over three decades later, we know $P=NP$ is central to our understanding of computation, it is a very hard problem, and its resolution will have potentially tremendous consequences. This book is a collection of some of the most popular posts from my blog—Gödel's Lost Letter and $P=NP$ —which I started in early 2009. The main thrust of the blog, especially when I started, was to explore various aspects of computational complexity around the famous $P=NP$ question. As I published posts I branched out and covered additional material, sometimes a timely event, sometimes a fun idea, sometimes a new result, and sometimes an old result. I have always tried to make the posts readable by a wide audience, and I believe I have succeeded in doing this.

The $P=NP$ question is one of the great problems of science, which has intrigued computer scientists and mathematicians for decades. Despite the abundant research in theoretical computer science regarding the $P=NP$ question, it has not been solved. The $P=NP$ Question and Gödel's Lost Letter covers historical developments (including the Gödel's Lost letter), the importance of $P=NP$ and the future of $P=NP$. This guide is also based on a new blog by the author, located at <http://rjlipton.wordpress.com>. Jin-Yi Cai, a Professor in computer science at the University of Wisconsin remarks 'I think it is the single most interesting web blog I have seen on related topics. He has a great insight and wit and beautiful way to see things and explain them.' Richard DeMillo, a professor in computer science at Georgia Tech remarks, 'This is a much needed treatment of great open problem computing.' The $P=NP$ Question and Gödel's Lost Letter is designed for advanced level students and researchers in computer science, and mathematics as a secondary text and reference book. Computer programmers, software developers and IT professionals working in the related industry of computer science theory, will also find this guide a valuable asset.



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