



## Pi: A Biography of the World's Most Mysterious Number

Alfred S. Posamentier

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We all learned that the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter is called pi and that the value of this algebraic symbol is roughly 3.14. What we weren't told, though, is that behind this seemingly mundane fact is a world of mystery, which has fascinated mathematicians from ancient times to the present. Simply put, pi is weird. Mathematicians call it a "transcendental number" because its value cannot be calculated by any combination of addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and square root extraction.

In this delightful layperson's introduction to one of math's most interesting phenomena, Drs. Posamentier and Lehmann review pi's history from prebiblical times to the 21st century, the many amusing and mind-boggling ways of estimating pi over the centuries, quirky examples of obsessing about pi (including an attempt to legislate its exact value), and useful applications of pi in everyday life, including statistics.

This enlightening and stimulating approach to mathematics will entertain lay readers while improving their mathematical literacy.



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