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Sinopsis

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What are the chances of a game-show contestant finding a chicken in a box? Is the Hanukkah dreidel a fair game? Will you be alive ten years from now? These are just some of the one-of-a-kind probability puzzles that acclaimed popular math writer Paul Nahin offers in this lively and informative book.

Nahin brings probability to life with colorful and amusing historical anecdotes as well as an electrifying approach to solving puzzles that illustrates many of the techniques that mathematicians and scientists use to grapple with probability. He looks at classic puzzles from the past--from Galileo's dice-tossing problem to a disarming dice puzzle that would have astonished even Newton--and also includes a dozen challenge problems for you to tackle yourself, with complete solutions provided in the back of the book.

Nahin then presents twenty-five unusual probability puzzlers that you aren't likely to find anywhere else, and which range in difficulty from ones that are easy but clever to others that are technically intricate. Each problem is accompanied by an entertaining discussion of its background and solution, and is backed up by theory and computer simulations whenever possible in order to show how theory and computer experimentation can often work together on probability questions. All the MATLAB® Monte Carlo simulation codes needed to solve the problems computationally are included in the book. With his characteristic wit, audacity, and insight, Nahin demonstrates why seemingly simple probability problems can stump even the experts.

Paul J. Nahin is professor emeritus of electrical engineering at the University of New Hampshire. He is the best-selling author of many popular-math books, including *Duelling Idiots and Other Probability Puzzlers*, *The Logician and the Engineer*, *Number-Crunching*, *Mrs. Perkins's Electric Quilt*, and *An Imaginary Tale* (all Princeton).

Review:

Teléfonos: 55 44 73 40 y 55 44 72 91

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"A wonderful book for trained math lovers who enjoy the mental stimulation provided by a good mathematics puzzle."--Harold D. Shane, Library Journal

Endorsement:

"Readers of this absorbing book will gain significant pleasure as well as a broadened understanding of the nuances of mathematics, along with a wonderful picture of how analytics and simulations complement each other. Nahin is a master at this. I love this book!"--Joseph Mazur, author of *What's Luck Got to Do with It?: The History, Mathematics, and Psychology of the Gambler's Illusion*

"This book will be of interest to anyone who loves the challenge and surprise inherent in probability theory, and who likes to tinker with their computer as a simulator. Nahin's style is easy and informal."--Julian Havil, author of *The Irrationals: A Story of the Numbers You Can't Count On*