

MSCS



Mess

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This Week's Colloquium

Title:	Math Jeopardy
Time:	1:30 pm Tuesday, December 11 th
Place:	SC 182

Have you ever watched Jeopardy on television? Our version will be similar except all the questions will be related to math, and several teams will compete at once. You can choose to be a contestant or a member of the audience.

Prizes including t-shirts and food will be awarded.

MSCS, War and Peace

In this column we have described applications of mathematics, statistics, and computer science (mscs) to warfare and developments in mscs that were the result of wartime needs. If these columns have stimulated your interest in the subject, check out the book *Mathematics and War*, which is in the St. Olaf Science Library. In the introduction the editors present four questions that outline the themes addressed in the book:

- To what extent has the military played an active part throughout history, and in particular since World War II, in shaping modern mathematics and the careers of mathematicians?
- Are mathematical thinking, mathematical methods, and mathematically supported technology about to change the character and performance of modern warfare, and if so, how does this influence the public and the military?
- What were, in times of war, the ethical choices of outstanding individuals? To what extent can general ethical discussions provide guidance for working mathematicians?
- What was the role of mathematical thinking in shaping the modern international law of war and peace? Can mathematical arguments support actual conflict solution?

An additional use of mathematics is to calculate the costs of war, both human and financial. For information on the costs of the war in Iraq see <http://www.nationalpriorities.org/Cost-of-War/Cost-of-War-3.html> and

<http://www.antiwar.com/casualties/>

MSCS T-Shirts!

Hey everybody! MAA is now soliciting suggestions for this years' MSCS Department T-Shirts. If you have a fun t-shirt idea that's related to Math, Stats, or Computer Science, please submit it to woolums@stolaf.edu. If your shirt design ends up being chosen as one of the two designs for this year, you'll receive a free t-shirt when they get here! So get those creative juices flowing over Christmas Break, and submit your best designs!

Holiday Problem of the Week

A snowflake is made as follows: To the middle third of each side of an equilateral triangle with area = 9, attach a new equilateral triangle, whose side length is one-third the side length of the original triangle. On each edge of the new "snowflake", attach a new equilateral triangle to the middle third, whose side length is one-third the length of the edge. Continue this process ad infinitum. What is the limit of the area of the snowflake?



Joke of the Week

Q: Why do mathematicians get Halloween and Christmas confused?

A: Because $31 \text{ Oct} = 25 \text{ Dec}$.

**No mess next week.
Good luck on finals and have a
safe and happy break!**

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If you would like to submit an article or math event to be published in the Math Mess, e-mail tummers@stolaf.edu.