

FOREWORD

The theory of knots is a problem in topology which underwent in 1985 a kind of phase transition with the discovery by Jones of his new famous invariant polynomials. Striking as this discovery was, it was even more striking that his work was related to some well known problems in statistical mechanics. There was thus ushered in a new era of cross fertilization of ideas in physics and in mathematics. While the full extent of this welcome development is not yet fathomable, we thought it worthwhile to collect in this single volume articles by workers in the field who have very different approaches. We believe the collection will be useful to many people.

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