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Algebras, Lattices, Varieties, vol. 1, by Ralph N. McKenzie, George F. McNulty, and Walter F. Taylor. Wadsworth & Brooks/Cole, Monterey, California, 1987, 361 pp., \$44.95. ISBN 0-534-07651-3

Lest the title leave any uncertainty, Volume 1 initiates a comprehensive four-part overview of universal algebra as the subject is understood today. It concerns properties of algebras that are, by and large, independent of their particular operational type. Special algebras, such as lattices, are dealt with from the point of view of their role in the study of universal algebras (nonempty sets augmented with an arbitrary system of finitary operations). Varieties, or equational classes of algebras, arise as one of the central themes in universal algebra. This volume presents a thorough and exquisitely executed account of the foundations of universal algebra together with a fine exposition of several sample results that illustrate the depth and the beauty of the subject.

The sheer quantity of new work published in universal algebra makes a strong case for the need for such a series. The Mathematical Reviews' Mathematics Subject Classification encompasses most of the universal algebra in two categories: 06XXX Order, Lattices, Ordered Algebraic Structures; and 08XXX General Mathematical Systems. But the 1970 version, which offered the single letter sections 06AXX and 08AXX, quickly proved to be a poor reflection of the explosion of research that was erupting. Grätzer [3] estimated that about a thousand publications in universal algebra appeared between 1968 and 1979, and it seems likely that an equal