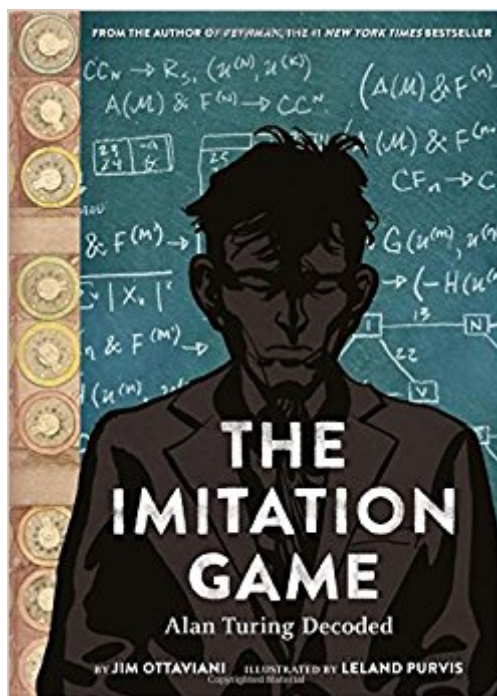


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# The Imitation Game: Alan Turing Decoded



## Synopsis

A New York Times Bestseller Selected as a 2017 ALA/YALSA Great Graphic Novel for Teens: Nonfiction Award winning authors Jim Ottaviani and Leland Purvis present a historically accurate graphic novel biography of English mathematician and scientist Alan Turing in *The Imitation Game*. English mathematician and scientist Alan Turing (1912–1954) is credited with many of the foundational principles of contemporary computer science. *The Imitation Game* presents a historically accurate graphic novel biography of Turing's life, including his groundbreaking work on the fundamentals of cryptography and artificial intelligence. His code breaking efforts led to the cracking of the German Enigma during World War II, work that saved countless lives and accelerated the Allied defeat of the Nazis. While Turing's achievements remain relevant decades after his death, the story of his life in post-war Europe continues to fascinate audiences today. Award-winning duo Jim Ottaviani (the #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Feynman* and *Primates*) and artist Leland Purvis (an Eisner and Ignatz Award nominee and occasional reviewer for the *Comics Journal*) present a factually detailed account of Turing's life and groundbreaking research as an unconventional genius who was arrested, tried, convicted, and punished for being openly gay, and whose innovative work still fuels the computing and communication systems that define our modern world. Computer science buffs, comics fans, and history aficionados will be captivated by this riveting and tragic story of one of the 20th century's most unsung heroes.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Gr 9 Up • British scientist and mathematician Alan Turing pioneered theoretical computer science and artificial intelligence during the first half of the 20th century. Like many geniuses, he was misunderstood by most of his peers, and he was eventually ostracized because of his sexuality. Regardless, his work was instrumental in ending World War II as well as in revolutionizing computer science. This adaptation uses a pastel palette of watercolors, strong black lines, and dynamic storytelling devices to bring Turing's tale to life. Multiple narratives, including those of Turing, his mother, and several of his colleagues and friends, weave in and out, following Turing from adolescence to the end of his short life. Readers not familiar with the man may be confused by the multiple narrators, who are not clearly identified. Others will enjoy the mystery and putting the puzzle pieces together until a clearer picture of Turing is formed. Teens with math or computer science bent will enjoy this slice of history and will learn about logic and algorithms along the way. Those who are interested in social justice and LGBTQ rights will also be engaged. VERDICT While this graphic novel will appeal to a broad range of readers, the technical language describing Turing's work may dissuade some. An additional, although worthwhile, purchase. • Tamara Saarinen, Pierce County Library, WA

“A powerful, sympathetic portrait of one of the twentieth century's great minds.” (Publishers Weekly) “Ottaviani and Purvis's new graphic biography looks utterly fascinating.” (Forbidden Planet International Blog) “Teens with math or computer science bent will enjoy this slice of history and will learn about logic and algorithms along the way. Those who are interested in social justice and LGBTQ rights will also be engaged.” (School Library Journal)

My husband is a physics teacher and he loves Jim Ottaviani's books - he has all just about all of the titles. Great work, Jim!

I really liked this book. The artwork was well done, the book was well researched, and the story was very intriguing. This isn't just a book about math or logic. This is a book about World War II history, breaking the German Enigma machines, and the gender bias in British Army. This book even has the first computers! That's how intriguing Turing's life really is, it involves so much world history. Yes, there are long(ish) segments where Turing talks through his ideas on logic, but they are written in a natural language that makes a lot more sense to a layman than a logic book. What's funny to me is

that the artwork for these streams of consciousness, it often shows Turing moving on ahead while his acquaintances are left behind, having problems keeping up with him. Considering how few people seemed to understand him, it makes sense in the moment and overall. This is not just a book for mathematicians or logicians. This is a good read for people interested in cryptography, World War II, LGBT history, or even just real life drama. The art style is appropriate for the story and the dialogue is easy to read.

The Imitation Game: Alan Turing Decoded by Jim Ottaviani and Leland Purvis is the story of Alan Turing's life. It is a graphic novel told in the style of people being interviewed about him and then telling the story of his life with their narration. Although it is a little hard to follow because you don't always see who was talking. The story is about Alan Turing's contribution to the war and to science with his universal machine. I found this book really interesting, I had seen the movie The Imitation Game and liked it and so I wanted to learn more about Alan Turing. This is the perfect way to do so, it goes more in-depth about his life before and after the war, not just what he did during the war. It also highlighted the ideas of the time that people had about the LGTBQ+ community. I would recommend this book to anyone who liked The Imitation Game movie or who likes to learn about the secret heroes of World War II.

The Imitation Game was a very interesting take on Alan Turing's life. I was familiar with some of his work in computer science but not on what exactly he did. Ottaviani clearly did a great deal of research to make the story as accurately as possible. What really made the story interesting, though, was the story of his personal life. How the government handled this at the time is clearly something many in 2016 could not possibly fathom. Turing was humiliated and how the story ended proved just how much that affected him. The art was also well done. This wasn't a superhero story so there was no need for the bright colors and crisp drawing. This story felt real and the art perfectly complimented that.

I thought the idea of telling Alan Turing's story in this graphic format was really interesting, but the execution was lacking a bit for me. I read the ARC and that meant all the images were in black and white. There was a note included in the book that said that the finished copy would have colored sections and black and white sections. This was supposed to help the reader distinguish who's point of view the story was being told from at the time. Hopefully, this does help in the finished copy, because I found myself really confused throughout a lot of the book. The story was set up like an

interview. There was an interviewer asking questions, which were being answered by friends and family of Alan Turing (and I think sometimes Alan's voice made and appearance, too, but I'm honestly still a little confused about that). I don't really see why the interview format was needed. I think the story would have been just as effective if it was told from just one point of view - and it would have been a lot less confusing, too. I thought Alan's story was really interesting, but the confusing shifts in point of view really jarred me and pulled me out of the story. One thing that really disappointed me about this book was how the LGBTQ aspects of Alan's life were breezed over and felt like they were thrown in at the last minute. Alan Turing was a gay man living in a time when homosexuality was illegal in England. When it was revealed that he was gay during a court case, Alan was forced to undergo hormonal treatments in an attempt to "fix" him. These treatments ravaged his body and destroyed his spirits. He ultimately ended up committing suicide and a brilliant mind was lost. But these tragic points of Alan's story were barely mentioned! There are just a couple pages on his hormonal treatments and then suddenly the book ends and he has committed suicide. The book mostly focused on Alan's contributions to science and WWII, and yes, these are important aspects of his life that should be remembered. But the fact that he was a gay man forced to undergo hormonal treatments which led to his suicide should not be brushed under the rug. I think this is definitely an interesting read if you are interested in science and the history of World War II. But although the synopsis makes it appear that LGBTQ issues will be addressed, that is not the case. This is more a record of Alan Turing's contributions to cracking the German Enigma code, not a record of Alan Turing's life.

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