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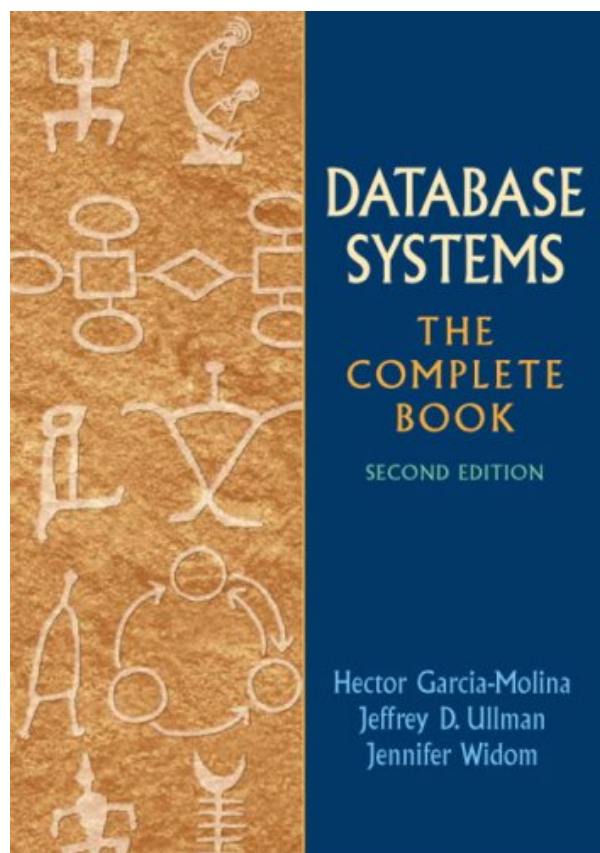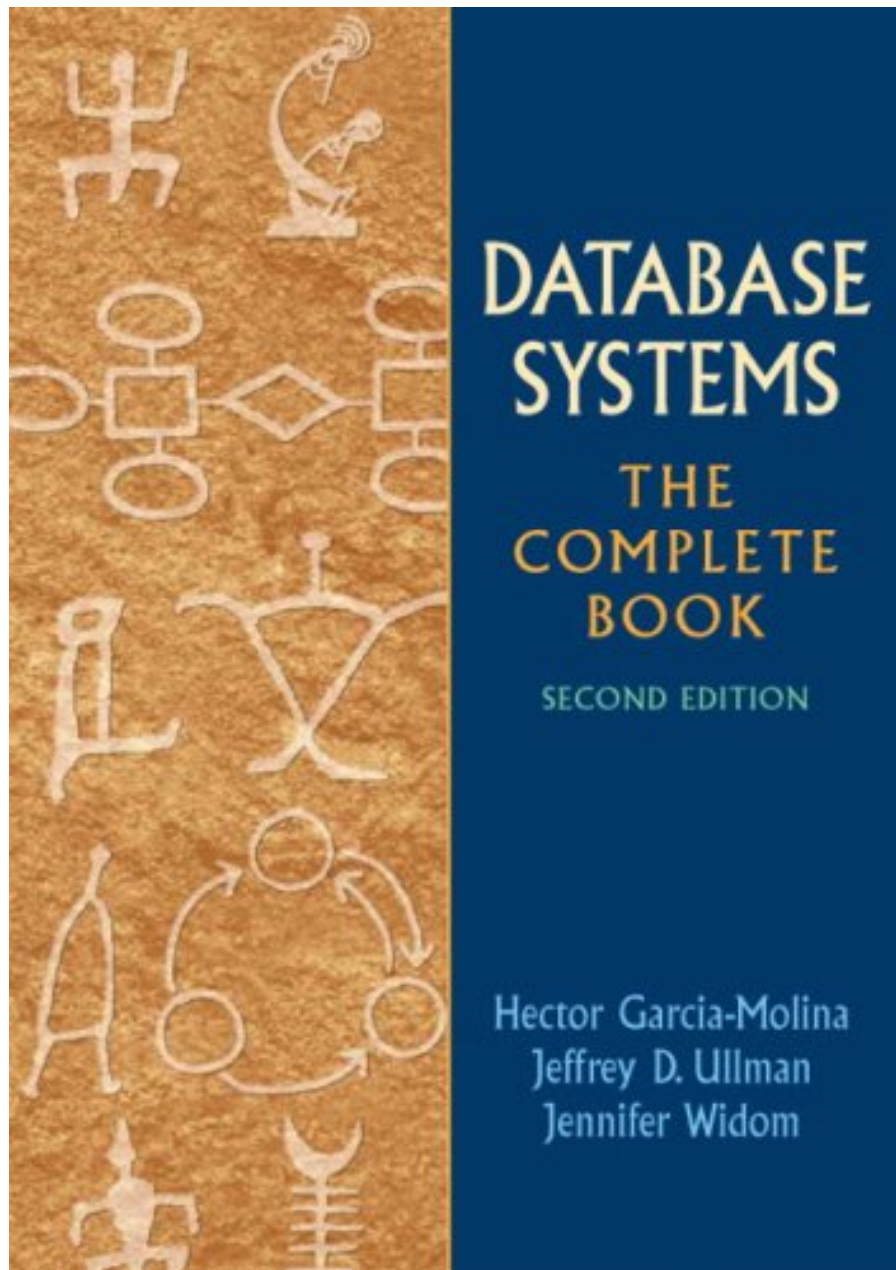

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About the Author

Hector Garcia-Molina is the L. Bosack and S. Lerner Professor of Computer Science and Electrical Engineering at Stanford University. His research interests include digital libraries, information integration, and database applications on the Internet. He was a recipient of the SIGMOD Innovations Award and a member of PITAC (President's Information-Technology Advisory Council). He currently serves on the Board of Directors of Oracle Corp.

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Database Systems: The Complete Book is ideal for Database Systems and Database Design and Application courses offered at the junior, senior and graduate levels in Computer Science departments. A basic understanding of algebraic expressions and laws, logic, basic data structure, OOP concepts, and programming environments is implied.

Written by well-known computer scientists, this introduction to database systems offers a comprehensive approach, focusing on database design, database use, and implementation of database applications and database management systems.

The first half of the book provides in-depth coverage of databases from the point of view of the database designer, user, and application programmer. It covers the latest database standards SQL:1999, SQL/PSM, SQL/CLI, JDBC, ODL, and XML, with broader coverage of SQL than most other texts. The second half of the book provides in-depth coverage of databases from the point of view of the DBMS implementor. It focuses on storage structures, query processing, and transaction management. The book covers the main techniques in these areas with broader coverage of query optimization than most other texts, along with advanced topics including multidimensional and bitmap indexes, distributed transactions, and information integration techniques.

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Disappointing
By Bruce G
If you want to learn Relational Database Theory, try to locate a copy of David Maier's book, The Theory of Relational Databases. His explanations are perfect and perfectly simple. Dr. Widom seems to go to great lengths to avoid using Codd's original terminology, i.e. first normal form, second normal form, and third normal form. She also seems to go to great lengths to make it more complicated than it is. Why? Not all tables can be put in BCNF. Frankly, I never encountered a situation where I needed to. Third normal form is adequate for the majority of circumstances and is always achievable. Dr. Widom ignores first, second, and third normal forms and proceeds to a tedious algorithm for BCNF leaving most students scratching their heads. The material is disorganized and piecemeal and does not do justice to Codd's work. The relational algebra and sql sections are reasonable. Regarding the later chapters on programming languages for XML, you are better off buying books that are limited to these topics. There are some errors in the text in the few examples provided which was frustrating. To be fair, Dr. Widom's video lecture series is outstanding.

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By David Alan Tussey
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