

Disambiguation of the name “Stone” in topology

Since there were two mathematicians named Stone who made contributions to the subject matter of this course shortly before the middle of the 20th century, we shall identify them more precisely. One of them — MARSHALL HARVEY STONE (1903–1989) — is known for a wide range of important contributions to “soft analysis,” which studies the properties of certain normed vector spaces which arise in analysis, the linear operators on such spaces, and related topics; the modern part of the Stone–Weierstrass approximation theorem is due to him. His father was Harlan F. Stone (1872–1946), who served as Chief Justice of the United States from 1941 to 1946.

The other mathematician — ARTHUR HAROLD STONE (1916–2000) — made numerous contributions to topology and geometry, including the paracompactness theorem for metrizable spaces and the discovery of curious geometrical figures like one known as the *hexaflexagon*. Around the beginning of his mathematical career, he also belonged to a group which published papers under the pseudonym *Blanche Descartes* (conjecturally a play on the phrase *carte blanche*).

More information on each of these individuals can be found using a Google search, and there is an online biography of Marshall H. Stone in the MacTutor History of Mathematics website:

<http://www-history.mcs.st-and.ac.uk/>