

Video Librarian

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Erdos 100 Plus ★★1/2

(2018) 180 min. DVD: \$24.95, Blu-ray: \$29.95: individuals; DVD: \$129.95, Blu-ray: \$134.95 w/PPR: institutions. Zala Films. ISBN: 978-0-9855347-3-8 (dvd).

Paul Erdos (1913-1996), a recognized pioneer in probabilistic number theory and discrete mathematics, was also known for his peripatetic lifestyle. His nearly constant travels—with all of his belongings packed in a single suitcase—included visits to 500-plus colleagues, and he was the most prolific mathematician of his time, with more than 1,500 publications to his credit. Documentarian George Paul Csicsery, who made an excellent film about Erdos called *N is a Number* (VL-11/04), also helmed *Erdos 100* (2013)—a half-hour portrait celebrating the centenary of Erdos's birth—which includes reminiscences and testimonials from peers. In this anthology, *Erdos 100* is accompanied by four substantial interviews that Csicsery conducted with Erdos between 1988-91, as well as four 2018 featurettes on particular elements of Erdos's work ("On Erdos-Bacon Numbers," "The Rise of Combinatorics," "Large Gaps Between Primes," and "A Brief History of the Probabilistic Method"). The final film in this collection, *Something New Every Day* (2015), centers on Ronald Graham, Professor of Computer Science and Engineering at the University of California San Diego—a major force in discrete mathematics and a friend and admirer of Erdos. Taken together, Csicsery's films offer a profile of a man not only devoted to his discipline but also one who encouraged younger members to tackle math's most difficult problems. But unlike *N is a Number*, this will be of interest primarily to specialists rather than a general audience. A strong optional purchase. Aud: C, P. (F. Swietek)