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Nicolas Rashevsky

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Nicolas Rashevsky (1899- 1973): American physicist and mathematical biologist who was the Founder of Mathematical Biophysics and Mathematical Biology, and also Professor of Mathematical Biophysics at the University of Chicago in the Committee for Mathematical Biology until 1968. He established also the first Mathematical Biophysics journal, the *Bulletin of Mathematical Biophysics*, later changed under his editorship to “*Bulletin of Mathematical Biology*” to emphasize the transition towards abstract relational biology and relational theory of organismic sets beyond numerical and analytical functions characteristic of simple physical systems. His later efforts focused on topology of biological systems and the formulation of fundamental principles in biology and hierarchical organization of organisms and human societies.

Rashevsky’s numerous publications and basic textbooks span almost half a century; among his first published papers was a physical, probabilistic treatment of molecular diffusion using a different approach from that of Albert Einstein’s but with similar, concurrent solutions to the same problem.

Some of his closest coworkers were: George Karreman (former Professor at the University of Pennsylvania), Herbert Landahl (former Professor at the University of California), Robert Rosen (his mathematics PhD student and later Professor of Biophysics at Dalhousie University), and Anthony Bartholomay (former Chairman of the Mathematical Medicine Department at Ohio State University).

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