

Symmetric Bilinear Forms (Ergebnisse der Mathematik und ihrer Grenzgebiete. 2. Folge)

John Milnor, Dale Husemoller

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The theory of quadratic forms and the intimately related theory of sym- metrie bilinear forms have a lang and rich his tory, highlighted by the work of Legendre, Gauss, Minkowski, and Hasse. (Compare [Dickson] and [Bourbaki, 24, p. 185].) Our exposition will concentrate on the relatively recent developments which begin with and are inspired by Witt's 1937 paper "Theorie der quadratischen Formen in beliebigen Korpern." We will be particularly interested in the work of A. Pfister and M. Knebusch. However, some older material will be described, particularly in Chapter II. The presentation is based on lectures by Milnor at the Institute for Ad- vanced Study, and at Haverford College under the Phillips Lecture Pro- gram, during the Fall of 1970, as well as lectures at Princeton University ill 1966. We want to thank J. Cunningham, M. Knebusch, M. Kneser, A. Rosenberg, W. Scharlau and J.-P. Serre for helpful suggestions and corrections. Prerequisites. The reader should be familiar with the rudiments of algebra., incJuding for example the concept of tensor product for mo-dules over a commutative ring. A few individual sections will require quite a bit more. The logical relationship between the various chapters can be roughly described by the diagram below. There are also five appendices, largely self-contained, which treat special topics. I. Arbitrary commutative rings I H. The ring of V. Miscellaneous III. Fields integers examples IV. Dedekind domains Contents Chapter r. Basie Concepts ...



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