

Re: How to visualize limits in category theory

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In article <cpun6f\$oji\$1@panix5.panix.com>, lrudolph@panix.com (Lee Rudolph) writes:

|"Jesse F. Hughes" <jesse@phiwumbda.org> writes:

|>barr@barrs.org (Michael Barr) writes:

|>

|>> When I think about limits, I think about subobjects of products.

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|>That's *much* clearer than what I wrote, when I said a category is
|>complete just in case it has equalizers and products. My answer is
|>relevant to completeness, but not a good answer to how to visualize
|>limits.

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|I was pleased to see Michael Barr rework the verb being used
|into "think about", and I'm distressed to see you return to
|"visualize".

When I visualize products, I often visualize them as boxes. When I visualize subobjects, I often visualize them as amorphous shapes inside the boxes. :-)

Actually, I tend to keep a picture in mind of the diagram used to define the limit object, picturing the object itself as the result of a compromise between two forces. The definition can be considered in two parts; on the one hand the object has to be large enough (it has supporting struts inside...) and on the other hand it can't be excessively big (it has a tight covering surrounding it).

Keith Ramsay