

Re: Math discovery versus math society

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.math/2005-02/7299.html>

From: Proginoskes (proginoskes_at_email.msn.com)

Date: 02/19/05

Date: 19 Feb 2005 00:31:34 -0800

jstevh@msn.com wrote:

- > *I am on my fourth major mathematical discovery. It is a new way to*
- > *factor integers. Mathematicians have so far managed to avoid*
- > *properly acknowledging all four of my discoveries.*

And if you check the thread you started about the "simple test", you'll find that your latest discovery fails the test; there is no way to interpret your instructions to obtain a factor of 91. (I used $M = 91$, $j = 10$ and couldn't even get a rational number for Ax .) You have yet to respond to this statement.

- > *I am an amateur mathematician.*

I'll buy the "amateur" part. But you're not approaching things systematically, like a mathematician.

Instead you say, well if I do this, then I do this, then it looks like I might be able to do this (but proving that it does is way too hard, and so is looking for a counterexample, so I'll just say it because my word is "good enough"), then I'll post it, then I'll say that if anyone doubts it I'll call them a "liar" (the proper word here is "disagree", not "lie"), then I'll rant about TPTB, then I'll claim originality, even though I haven't bothered to look in the literature, then I'll co-write a paper with a known crank, and when it gets removed, I'll rant more about TPTB and how I'm going to get all those @##@\$heads for removing my paper instead of going back to actually prove things like REAL mathematicians do, then lather, rinse, and repeat ...

- > *About three years ago I started on a*
- > *burst of creativity which has produced four major mathematical*
- > *discoveries. Before that I had over four years of failures, some*
- > *of them kind of big, as I'd proclaim I had wonderful simple proofs*
- > *of Fermat's Last Theorem, only to eventually find out I was wrong.*

Failure is something that happens to every mathematician in the world. Nobody has scored 100%. (Well, unless they say that $2 + 2 = 4$, then quit at that.) It's a part of the process.

> *What I learned from public humiliation,*

Public humiliation requires action on YOUR part. That's what you should learn; don't post anything until you're 100% sure it's right. In the case of mathematics, actually prove it.

> *and outright failure that*

> *happened more than once, is in mathematics, wishes don't make*

> *truth, great desire does not mean you are right, and if you are*

> *wrong, then you are just wrong.*

>

> *When you are wrong mathematically, it does not change. Giving it a*

> *couple of days won't make it where you are right. Denial is just a*

> *waste of time.*

Which fails to explain your repeated posts.

> *Two of my four results are without debate in terms of actually*

> *working, but they are debated in terms of how important they are.*

The ones I can think of are (1) the prime counting function which is a variation of the Meissel–Lehmer–Lagarias–Miller–Odlyzko Method, which you made more inefficient; (2) factoring algebraic numbers (the paper of yours which was removed because it had no theorems, no proofs, only one example; (3) Your new integer–factoring procedure using Ax and Az (which, as I pointed out earlier, fails spectacularly, and which you have not responded to). What's number 4?

> *I have repeatedly brought up one, which is a formula that counts*

> *prime numbers.*

>

> *There is no debate about whether or not the formula works.*

>

> *Math people just keep claiming it's not important.*

It's too inefficient to be important. Sure it works, but it's the same running time as the following algorithm:

```
. For n = 3 to 100000 step 2
. Isprime = True
. For m = 3 to sqrt(n) step 2
. If n/m = Int (n/m) Then IsPrime = False
. Next
. If IsPrime Then Print n
. Next
```

Which takes time $O(n)$ to determine whether n is a prime, and $O(n^2)$ to determine which numbers between 1 and n are prime. "Your" procedure works and takes similar time. So "Your" procedure can only be valued as a curiosity, nothing more.

- > Now I have a set of equations with which you can factor:
- >
- > $Ax = Az(-Az \pm \sqrt{(Az - 2M^2)^2 - 4TM^2}) / (2j^2 - 2Az)$
- >
- > $Az = Ax(-Ax \pm \sqrt{(Ax - 2j^2)^2 + 4Tj^2}) / (2M^2 - 2Ax)$
- >
- > where $T = M^2 - j^2$.
- >
- > Here you have a two equations defining rationals Ax and Az , where
- > M is the number to be factored and j is an integer you pick to try
- > and factor it.
- >
- > They do work, if you can pick a rational Ax .

So, to solve a hard problem, we need to solve an even harder problem?

- > So, at this point, I'm not doing so well picking that rational Ax ,
- > so the math people are jumping up and down, getting excited, and
- > claiming my result is not important, yet again.
- >
- > Um, it's a new factoring method, at a base level, at such a base
- > level that no factoring method at this level has been discovered in
- > centuries.

Then don't act like it works 100% right now. Sometimes you can be your own worst enemy.

- > Yeah, I can't quite get it to factor really big numbers yet (like
- > hundreds of digit numbers but I can factor smaller numbers) but it's
- > new factoring method.
- >
- > Supposedly mathematicians care about such things.

That should read "Mathematicians care about such things, IF THEY WORK," and you can even take the "Supposedly" out of it with this qualification.

- > One of the four results that is not so easily demonstrated, as a
- > prime counting formula, or a new way to factor, I wrote up in a
- > paper, and sent to a math journal, which after NINE FREAKING MONTHS,
- > told me they liked the paper and would publish.
- >
- > Well someone posted that they were publishing my paper on the
- > sci.math newsgroup, and some sci.math'ers promptly began attacking
- > the journal and its editors in posts, talking about how horrible
- > they were, etc., and THEN some of them decided it would be a good
- > idea to send emails challenging my paper.
- >
- > Well I got an email the NEXT FREAKING DAY from the chief editor of
- > the journal who told me that publication was a mistake, and then he
- > claimed that he'd accidentally told me the paper was accepted, but

sci.math: Re: Math discovery versus math society

- > *included in his email text posted by a sci.math'er the day before.*
- >
- > *Then they just yanked my paper.*

This is what happens to ANYONE who posts a bad paper, IF it gets to this step. Usually, bad papers are weeded out. What probably happened is that the referees decided it wasn't worth their time, so they didn't respond. Some editor then decided that no news was good news and went ahead with the paper.

I make no claim that this is what happened, just that it is possible that this happened.

- > *An electronic journal so for those of you who have thought about*
- > *using those, consider this experience. Some editor can try to*
- > *just yank a paper.*
- >
- > *They didn't even leave anything there at first, so the pages were*
- > *all off, and eventually they settled on saying it was withdrawn:*
- >
- > <http://www.emis.de/journals/SWJPAM/vol2-03.html>
- >
- > *And that's from a math journal, when maybe you thought math people*
- > *followed freaking rules.*

Yeah, rules like: Only print things which can be defended.

- > *That journal no longer exists. I don't know exactly why,*

A journal prints a paper which isn't true, that somehow got past the referees and editors? That would be sufficient reason for at least an investigation.

- > *but they*
- > *just quietly shut down, though you can see what was in the journal*
- > *from its mirrors which are still up.*
- >
- > *Weird math society. Freaking journal shuts down, its main website*
- > *GONE but you can still see it on freaking mirrors.*
- >
- > *So what do you do?*

Learn from the experience, PROVE your results, (f you don't know what "prove" means, you'd better take a logic class.) then publish them.

- > *You're an amateur mathematician, got major mathematical results,*
- > *lots of people on Usenet hate you and will email, get a paper shut*
- > *down, what do you do?*

They killed YOUR PAPER, not YOU. You're the only one who seems to be taking it personally.

sci.math: Re: Math discovery versus math society

- > *I don't know what you'd do, as you're not freaking me, but I*
- > *re-wrote the goddamn paper and sent it to a BIGGER journal.*
- >
- > *That journal is at Princeton. The editor in charge of the section*
- > *that has my paper is Andrew Wiles.*
- >
- > *I'm not freaking worried about freaking sci.math'ers and stupid*
- > *emails with this goddamn paper!*

And has it been published yet? Has it even been accepted?

If you think it's so easy to get a paper recalled, why not try the following: Get a hold of the editor of the Discrete Mathematics journal (you should be able to google for it), and try to get him to remove the following paper:

Heckman, C., and Thomas, R. "A New Proof of the Independence Ratio of Triangle-Free Cubic Graphs." Discrete Mathematics, Vol 233/1-3, pp. 233-237.

- > *So yeah, it's great being me in many ways. I can peruse my own*
- > *research into prime numbers, or deep properties of algebraic*
- > *integers, or play with my own method for factoring--trying to*
- > *figure out how to get the goddamn thing to work!!!*

But you still need to play by the basic rule: Put up or shut up. That means you have to be able to explain precisely why your work is part of the truth, instead of attacking other people. The rules that math journals follow were geared for this kind of a situation.

- > *But also, there are the negatives, the people still calling me*
- > *names, priding themselves on putting me down, feeling like they're*
- > *doing something with their hostile postings, and their webpages.*

And you give them more fodder. If you want to regain any respect, you need to (1) STOP POSTING (2) Study logic, so you know how to really prove things (3) Go back to your work, and prove results, instead of just stating them, and saying they must be true. (4) THEN post/publish the result.

If you don't do this, people will continue to think of you as a crank, a quack, and your posts will further that opinion. Have ANY of your posts changed ANY people's minds about you? Or have they just reinforced what people believe about you and your work?

- > *Hell! Life is something, eh?*
- >
- > *...It's about time. History shows that what's happening now is*
- > *what happens with truly massive discoveries, as they so upset the*
- > *status quo.*
- >

sci.math: Re: Math discovery versus math society

- > *And don't yap about Einstein or some other discoverer who*
- > *supposedly didn't go through this crap, as I have read the history*
- > *thoroughly, and you don't know as much as you think if you think*
- > *even Einstein had an easy going.*
- >
- > *Besides, I'm no Einstein. I'm some guy who found out that there*
- > *were these relatively simple equations and formulas that the math*
- > *people missed, and I didn't.*
- >
- > *But they want to make me hurt for it.*

The government didn't burn Wilhelm Reich's books, destroy his laboratories, and put him in jail to die, because of what he had discovered (orgone) --- in fact, the government was actually using his results ---- but because he was an @\$hole.

You need to read more history.

---- Christopher Heckman