

# Re: Help in answering news story on refutation of fermat's last theorem

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*Source:* <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.math/2005-05/msg04791.html>

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- *From:* [anzaures1@xxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:anzaures1@xxxxxxxxxxx)
  - *Date:* 25 May 2005 13:42:56 -0700
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Torkel Franzen wrote:

> anzaures1@xxxxxxxxxxx writes:

>

>> When we, mathematicians, say that a statement is true in a given  
>> axiomatic system, we mean that one can logically derive this statement  
>> from the axioms.

>

> People do indeed often speak of a statement being "true in a given  
> axiomatic system" when they mean that it is provable in that system.  
> While mostly harmless, this terminology promotes needless confusion.  
> For example, it sometimes prompts them to contradict the simple  
> observation that there are theories with false axioms.

I assume by a "false" axiom you mean a statement that is self-contradictory in itself. Like

A AND (NOT A)

where A is a statement of your choice.

Right?

But how many theories, created by educated mathematicians, that contain self-contradictory statements, are there? Probably none.

Most statements, on their own, are neither false nor true. For example, is the statement " $1 + 1 + 1 = 0$ " a "false axiom"?

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- *Follow-Ups:*
  - ◆ ***Re: Help in answering news story on refutation of fermat's last theorem***  
◇ *From:* Torkel Franzen

- *References:*

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- ◆ **[Re: Help in answering news story on refutation of fermat's last theorem](#)**  
    ◇ From: Stephen J. Herschkorn
- ◆ **[Re: Help in answering news story on refutation of fermat's last theorem](#)**  
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