

Re: JSH: Learning consensus

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.math/2006-05/msg05783.html>

- *From:* "Justin" <no@xxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Wed, 31 May 2006 10:58:34 +0000 (UTC)
-

jstevh@xxxxxxx wrote:

: But human nature is that you can fail to see your own mistakes, and
: those of others you believe in.

No debate here, but I think you highly underestimate the professionalism
of the modern mathematician.

: The problem with "pure math" is that you ultimately rely on human
: judgement, which means you ultimately rely on human fallibility.

It's not a problem so much as a feature that needs to be overcome. Simply
because YOU can't understand a proof doesn't mean someone else can't.

For example, if I solve a basic algebra problem like $3x+1=6$, I don't need
a computer to check my work because the steps make sense. Competent
mathematicians can do this with more complicated arguments and proofs.
Simply because YOU have problems following such arguments does not mean
that everyone else does.

: Computer science people can listen with amazement as mathematicians and
: other math people go on and on about how computers can't comprehend
: mathematics, knowing what I know, computers can do it—but math people
: don't want to be checked objectively.

Who are you kidding? Every mathematician I know would love to be able to
feed his or her latest work into a computer and have it chew away and see
if it's correct.

Justin

.