

Re: Math as an Experimental Science

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- *From:* cet1@xxxxxxxxxxxxx (Chris Thompson)
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In article <1156928016.247397.38890@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>, Proginoskes <CHeckman@xxxxxxxx> wrote:

Han de Bruijn wrote:

William Elliot wrote:

Riddle of the Day. If the statement of a computer discovered and proven theorem, is so long and complex that nobody can read it, (ie, is incomprehensible), is it meaningful and useful (does it really exist)?

Huh, huh. Riddle of the Day. How about Wiles' Court Room Style Proof of Fermat's Last Theorem? And other such modern "proofs" ...

Including the Four Color Theorem proofs.

Feh. There's nothing in the least impossible about checking the RSST proof (for choice) of the 4CT with pencil and paper. It would be error-prone mostly because it would get so boring after the first few hundred cases. Most of us prefer to check the programs used instead ...

Compare this with, say, the classification of finite simple groups, widely claimed to involve so many thousands of pages of proofs published in so many places that no one person has ever read and checked them all. [This may, of course, be an urban legend. But it certainly puts things like the 4CT in the shade.]

—
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