

Re: Opinions on mathematics.

# Re: Opinions on mathematics.

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- *From:* Michael Press <jack@xxxxxxx>
  - *Date:* Mon, 11 Dec 2006 18:17:35 GMT
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In article

<BLOCKSPAMfishfry-F49691.22540810122006@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx  
om>,  
fishfry <BLOCKSPAMfishfry@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

In article <jack-872DE5.20595710122006@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>,  
Michael Press <jack@xxxxxxx> wrote:

In article

<BLOCKSPAMfishfry-934B15.19505210122006@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx  
om>,  
fishfry <BLOCKSPAMfishfry@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

In article

<jack-9BB5C5.19391010122006@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>,  
Michael Press <jack@xxxxxxx> wrote:

In article

<BLOCKSPAMfishfry-1B105C.19230410122006@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx  
om>,  
fishfry  
<BLOCKSPAMfishfry@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>  
wrote:

In article

<jack-0A4BC5.16490010122006@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>,  
Michael Press  
<jack@xxxxxxx> wrote:

Folks have  
talked about  
the how  
mathematics

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is  
practiced  
and the  
nature of  
mathematical  
objects. It is  
difficult to  
address  
these  
matters  
without  
saying  
'mathematical  
objects' and  
expecting to  
be  
understood.  
It looks like  
we are stuck  
with the  
notion of  
mathematical  
objects.

From time  
to time  
someone  
tells me that  
mathematics  
is  
not science.  
I disagree  
with this  
assertion.  
The reason  
is that a  
mathematical  
object is a  
structure  
that we  
construct in  
our mind  
with the aid  
of writings  
and  
diagrams.  
When doing  
mathematics  
we are  
mapping  
our

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minds, and  
changing  
our minds.  
This is my  
outlook in a  
nutshell.  
Mathematics  
is a science.  
Our minds  
are real.

Unicorns are a construction  
of our minds. By your logic,  
are unicorns  
real?

Somebody writes a story about a unicorn. At  
the end the  
unicorn dies. Some people who read the  
story will feel  
sad.

So in your opinion, a unicorn has the same reality as the  
Golden Gate  
Bridge or any other physical object?

No. Observe that I did not bring in unicorns.

I answered to illustrate my drift, that we take  
seriously our mental constructions.

Yes, we do. Do we take the mental construction of unicorns seriously in  
the same way as we take the mental construction of the natural numbers?

Depends who we ask.

If not, then what's the crucial distinction we're trying to make?

I am not trying to draw a distinction. I examine the  
notion mathematical object, since it just won't go  
away.

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Because some people would say that the natural numbers exist as an object of mathematical interest; whereas unicorns do not actually exist, even though some people enjoy them.

The notion of unicorns are not a mathematical object. I am very surprised to discover the notion in a math forum.

I think that mathematical objects are mind constructions developed from observation, abstraction from observation, mappings of mental processes, and striving for explication that leads to forming new mental paths.

—  
Michael Press