

The mathematician as a formalist.

In: Dales, H. G. (ed.) et al., *Truth in mathematics. Lectures of a conference, Mussomeli, Sicily, Italy, September 13–20, 1995*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, (ISBN 0-19-851476-X/hbk). Oxford Science Publications. 181-200 (1998).

One of the main purposes of this essay is to discuss "a continuing debate about what it means to say of a statement [as a formalist] that it is true" [p. 181]. Throughout this discussion, mathematicians should be aware that: 1) any new result in mathematics has philosophical relevance; and, 2) the style of how new mathematics is presented is the orthodoxy of the present day; "for this style should represent the (perhaps implicit) thoughts of the community of mathematicians about the fundamental notions of their subject" [p. 182].

A comment [p. 183] on the rôle of the paradoxes at the beginning of this century shows that the authors are unaware of insightful historical references on this topic (see, e.g., Garciadiego [1986, 1987, 1992], Geattan-Guinness [1972, 1978, 1983], Moore and Garciadiego [1981], and Peckhaus [1990]).

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