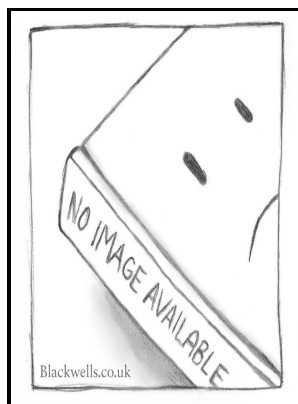


Mathematicians apology

Cambridge University Press - TOP 25 MATHEMATICS QUOTES (of 1000)



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Notes: Includes bibliographical references.

This edition was published in 1992



Filesize: 31.62 MB

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A Mathematician's Apology

It is not lack of understanding or of sympathy which is the trouble in Whitehead's cases; but he forgets, in his enthusiasm, distinctions with which he is quite familiar. The application of mathematical concepts is not the reason that Hardy is an applied mathematician somehow inferior to pure mathematics, though, is the simplicity and everyday life that relate to the field of applied mathematics that led him to describe them as he did.

A Mathematician's Apology : G. H. Hardy : 9781107604636

I particularly like the part when he argues why mathematics is beautiful, and what constitutes a beautiful mathematical theorem.

A Mathematician's Apology

Hardy wrote A Mathematician's Apology in the twilight of his career when he no longer was a creative, productive mathematician--and one of the many apologies in the book is the very notion of writing about what mathematics rather than actually doing mathematics. Hardy identifies curiosity, professional pride and ambition for reputation within the profession as general aesthetic aspects, applicable to many others than mathematicians. To appreciate a particular face, a meal, a tree, a note, a book, a fact, an idea is something available to most of us.

A Mathematician's Apology by G. H. Hardy, Paperback

This is not too difficult: it is harder not to make his subject and himself ridiculous by shutting his eyes too tightly. In May of this year, the University of Montpellier struck an agreement with his estate to publish never-before-seen notes, most of them from the 1960s and 1970s. For Hardy, the most beautiful mathematics was that which had no practical application in the outside world of pure mathematics and, in particular, its own special field of number theory.

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Indeed this assertion has vast implications for the practice of mathematics. They would do better, he says, to restrict themselves to the very second-rate tasks of criticism and appreciation. I am a bit of a sucker for esoteric works that stand out beyond their field.

A Mathematician's Apology — Wikipedia Republished // WIKI 2

Some 100,000 pages of notes were found after his death, and they have triggered legal battles and injunctions already. And as with many spectra, at each extreme the signature thought style is dialed up too high to be fully functional.

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I may add that even a pure mathematician may find his appreciation of this geometry quickened, since there is no mathematician so pure that he feels no interest at all in the physical world; but, in so far as he succumbs to this temptation, he will be abandoning his purely mathematical position.

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