



Experiencing Mathematics: What Do We Do, When We Do Mathematics?

Reuben Hersh

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Most mathematicians, when asked about the nature and meaning of mathematics, vacillate between the two unrealistic poles of Platonism and formalism. By looking carefully at what mathematicians really do when they are doing mathematics, Reuben Hersh offers an escape from this trap. This book of selected articles and essays provides an honest, coherent, and clearly understandable account of mathematicians' proof as it really is, and of the existence and reality of mathematical entities. It follows in the footsteps of Poincaré, Hadamard, and Polya. The pragmatism of John Dewey is a better fit for mathematical practice than the dominant "analytic philosophy". Dialogue, satire, and fantasy enliven the philosophical and methodological analysis. Reuben Hersh has written extensively on mathematics, often from the point of view of a philosopher of science. His book with Philip Davis, *The Mathematical Experience*, won the National Book Award in science. Hersh is emeritus professor of mathematics at the University of New Mexico.

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