Oral communication – Recreational Mathematics

The Dichotomy of Recreational Mathematics in History

Tiago Hirth[a]

[a] Institutions: Faculdade Ciências ULisboa, CIUHCT, Ludus
E-mail: thirth@campus.ul.pt https://ciuhct.org/en/members/tiago-hirth

Abstract

As many know recreational mathematics is historically grounded, that is, it has a firm body of knowledge and practitioners, with examples of Mathematical Recreations ranging back to the Sumerians. The treatment of this historical material is as versatile as the subject itself. The views range from a redundancy, all of mathematics is recreational, to an antinomy, a formal subject by definition not being ludic.

In this presentation we will take a look at a big picture of the subject, starting today and diving into the past up to the 17th century when the name *Récréations Mathématiques* was first coined as title of printed octavo format anthology. This serves as grounds for discussion on how history of mathematics informed its readers and consequently how mathematicians themselves view what can be considered a multidisciplinary branch of knowledge that joins history, education, popular culture and, of course, our queen and handmaiden, mathematics.

References

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