



Philosophy of Mathematics (Princeton Foundations of Contemporary Philosophy)

Øystein Linnebo

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Mathematics is one of humanity's most successful yet puzzling endeavors. It is a model of precision and objectivity, but appears distinct from the empirical sciences because it seems to deliver nonexperiential knowledge of a nonphysical reality of numbers, sets, and functions. How can these two aspects of mathematics be reconciled? This concise book provides a systematic yet accessible introduction to the field that is trying to answer that question: the philosophy of mathematics.

Written by Øystein Linnebo, one of the world's leading scholars on the subject, the book introduces all of the classical approaches to the field, including logicism, formalism, intuitionism, empiricism, and structuralism. It also contains accessible introductions to some more specialized issues, such as mathematical intuition, potential infinity, the iterative conception of sets, and the search for new mathematical axioms. The groundbreaking work of German mathematician and philosopher Gottlob Frege, one of the founders of analytic philosophy, figures prominently throughout the book. Other important thinkers whose work is introduced and discussed include Immanuel Kant, John Stuart Mill, David Hilbert, Kurt Gödel, W. V. Quine, Paul Benacerraf, and Hartry H. Field.

Sophisticated but clear and approachable, this is an essential introduction for all students and teachers of philosophy, as well as mathematicians and others who want to understand the foundations of mathematics.

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