

Dear, Peter

**Mathematics and morality on the cusp of modernity.** (English) Zbl 1029.00005  
Rev. Hist. Math. 7, No. 2, 277-293 (2001).

Summary: This note suggests that a fruitful way of investigating the history of mathematics lies in consideration of its pedagogical purposes. As a general illustration of the directions that such an approach might take, the paper discusses early-modern arguments for the practical utility of mathematics and its capacity to inculcate good habits of thought, as well as the appearance of new uses for mathematical training in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries that served the purpose of the modernizing state, with its characteristic emphasis on impersonal criteria of evaluation and assessment of individuals. The paper encourages an understanding of mathematical pedagogy that refuses to treat it as unproblematic, and that seeks answers in social and cultural history.

**MSC:**

00A35 Methodology of mathematics  
01A05 General histories, source books

**Keywords:**

mathematics; education; history; Europe