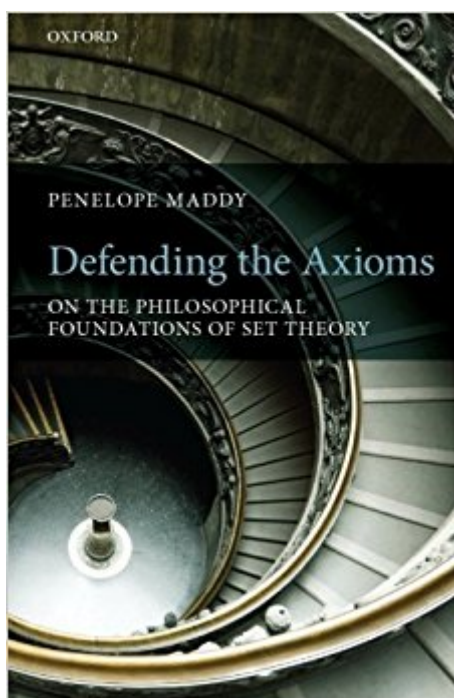


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Mathematics depends on proofs, and proofs must begin somewhere, from some fundamental assumptions. For nearly a century, the axioms of set theory have played this role, so the question of how these axioms are properly judged takes on a central importance. Approaching the question from a broadly naturalistic or second-philosophical point of view, *Defending the Axioms* isolates the appropriate methods for such evaluations and investigates the ontological and epistemological backdrop that makes them appropriate. In the end, a new account of the objectivity of mathematics emerges, one refreshingly free of metaphysical commitments.

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