

W.P. van Stigt, *Brouwer's intuitionism*, Studies in the History and Philosophy of Mathematics, Vol. 2, North-Holland, 1990, 530 + xxvi pages.

Reviewed by

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Luitzen Egbertus Jan Brouwer was not a nice man. His egotistic and often immature behaviour ultimately turned his closest colleagues, students, and friends away from him. The great appreciation of and interest in Brouwer that many mathematicians and philosophers have are for his genius. His peculiar self-centeredness and disregard for other people's opinions created one of the most original and profound philosophers of mathematics.

Walter van Stigt has gone to great lengths to provide us with an in-depth view of Brouwer, his philosophy, and his foundations of mathematics. He presents the whole of Brouwer's systematic speculation on the origin and nature of mathematics, requiring the inclusion of Brouwer as a person, but using Brouwer's writings as his main source of information. Of these there are more available now than when Heyting and Freudenthal prepared Brouwer's *Collected Works*, such as newly discovered manuscripts of unfinished books [van Dalen 1981]. The need to study Brouwer as a person is made overwhelmingly clear in the pages of this book. It is no coincidence that it playfully consists of six chapters, for the magic number six reappears as the number of chapters in each of Brouwer's three unfinished books. Even Brouwer's dissertation, *On the Foundations of Mathematics* of 1907, was originally supposed to have six chapters, but was compressed into three when financial support finally ran out and time