

1056-H1-1842 **Thomas Drucker*** (druckert@uww.edu), Department of Math. and Computer Sciences,
University of Wisconsin–Whitewater, Whitewater, WI 53190. *The Historian and the
Mathematician: The Reception of the Biography by Michael Sean Mahoney of Pierre de Fermat.*

In 1973 Michael Sean Mahoney of Princeton University's Program in History and Philosophy of Science published a volume on the mathematical career of Pierre de Fermat with Princeton University Press. It was received by a celebrated and caustic review by Andre Weil, down the street at the Institute for Advanced Study. Many of the criticisms raised by Weil seem to reflect a mathematician's approach to how history ought to be done. It is worth examining other contemporary reviews, as well as how the biography has stood the test of time. (A new edition was published after the announcement of the proof of Fermat's Last Theorem by Wiles.) While both the protagonists have died, the issues remain alive and reflect some of the distinctive aspects of the history of mathematics among the histories of other sciences. (Received September 22, 2009)