

From preface to M. Schatzman's book : "Numerical Analysis: A Mathematical Introduction"

Since this preface is so romantic, let me mention that love for a scientific subject is exactly the same as love for a human being: you always hate quite a few things in the loved one, but the balance looks good enough to keep the attachment going.

.....

Looks are so important, and, alas, numerical analysis with all its burden of notations looks more like a heavy matron than a gracious ballerina. So what? Maybe a heavy matron can take care of a brood of children. Better a heavy theory with many applications than an elegant one without offspring.

....

Numerical analysis has to do with real life computation I observed that numerical analysis requires more maturity from mathematics students than other subjects at the same level of difficulty. A naive vision puts numerical analysis between two stools: the physicist or the engineer wants methods, and is satisfied with experimental numerics; the mathematician wants beautiful problems, and is not much interested in constructive solutions using a fallible and limited machine. However, I believe that numerical analysis sits on both stools motivated problems where getting a solution and getting it fast can make a difference, and tools which can be, at the same time, elementary and powerful: not necessarily a contradiction...