

1042-57-162

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New Haven, CT 06520. *Bounding the stable genera of Heegaard splittings from below.*

A theorem of Reidemeister and Singer states that given two Heegaard surfaces for the same 3-manifold, there is a third Heegaard surface, called a common stabilization, resulting from attaching trivial handles to each surface. I will describe examples in which the genus of the smallest common stabilization of two Heegaard splittings is roughly the genus of the first plus half the genus of the second. These are the first known examples in which the stable genus is more than one greater than the larger of the original genera. (Received August 18, 2008)