

How Did It Start?

Michael I. Shamos*

Abstract

The field of computational geometry coalesced during the period 1972-78 when then-recent algorithm design techniques were applied to geometric problems. The speaker was deeply involved in the subject during those years, culminating in his Ph.D. thesis “Computational Geometry” in 1978. This talk traces the development of the discipline, starting with a straight-line graph embedding problem that arose at the National Institutes of Health in 1971. This gave rise to flood of other problems and resulted in the discovery of important unifying principles. We will cover the contributions of other researchers and look at some now-forgotten problems and results.

*Carnegie Mellon University

