

# DECOLONIZE MATH EDUCATION

*enderverse*



# DEAD WHITE MEN

I was the only Black person in the senior seminar for Applied Math during college. It didn't help to read textbooks for each class that glorified the same dead white men over and over.

The worship of white men like Fermat in the sidebars of math textbooks make white men the default. Histories of math that involve people of color are optional, and can be swapped out or “replaced” (Eve Tuck) at will.

# MATH IS FOR THE LIVING

*Every culture plays games of strategy. Every culture has math explorers, because strategic thinking is mathematical thinking.*

*Meaning is a fundamental human desire. We crave beautifully written poetry because we enjoy the richness of its meaning (Su).*

*Math is inherently relevant because it is a meaningful human experience. We don't want compound interest, we need fantasy (Lockhart).*

## CHALLENGING WHITE NARRATIVES

*The structure of my math classes focused on individual study, but history + research shows that we should emphasize learning as a communal experience (social constructivism).*

*Studies of “ethnomathematics” meditate on histories of math in non-Western cultures. However, these histories of math from people of color are often seen as illegitimate by white gatekeepers because they reveal that math is done by communities, not individuals.*

Art is not a race - neither is math.  
The private, personal experience of  
being a struggling artist has been  
eliminated (Lockhart).

I am a struggling artist. I have filled  
up notebooks and walls with  
equations that I rediscover from  
Fermat and Diophantus. Deriving a  
congruence of squares from scratch,  
I experience the emotional  
rollercoasters often relegated to  
poets and painters.

Everyone is an artist. For some  
people, their life is their art.  
Algebraic number theory is mine.

# **DECOLONIZATION IS NOT A METAPHOR (PT. I)**

**Decolonization is not a metaphor.**

**The systems that power weapons of mass destruction, allowing for the creation and maintenance of settler colonial states, are created and maintained by mathematicians.**

**After leaving college, I was shocked to find that the only people who wanted to hire me were middle schools and weapons manufacturers.**

# DECOLONIZATION IS NOT A METAPHOR (PT. 2)

Mathematical formalism is a school of thought that says math is something that just exists somehow, out in the world, created by the universe. A newer school of thought, mathematical intuitionism, says that humans created math.

From an intuitionist perspective, we say could that settler colonial states are inventing mathematical frameworks to drive military conquest.

**DECOLONIZATION**

**IS NOT A**

**METAPHOR**

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