

Across

1. Blustery
4. Understanding
8. Drier frog
10. Atom
12. Tape archive
13. An area of land
14. Residue from burning
15. Slice
17. Assistant to a general
19. A Chinese philosophy
20. Sequences of 8 spaces
21. Operator
23. Leg joint
25. Agile
28. Writing-liquid
29. Platter
30. Chart for the land
31. The onion network
33. Errand-boy
35. Owners of Canada's atomic clock
36. It is this
37. Having ocular organs
38. Tubes
39. SI base unit closest to 26 down

Down

1. Observe
2. a' AND b'
3. A 24-hour period
5. a' NOR b'
6. By way of
7. Exclamation of happiness
8. Tight
9. Podium
10. Official language of Pakistan
11. Czar
16. Well-armed armoured tracked vehicle
17. Aid
18. See
19. 4 months
22. Material known only for being black
23. Tight tangle of rope
24. Time periods
25. Wise mentor
26. Three feet
27. The opposite of *downcue*? (not really a word)
32. ρ
33. Round mega-tart
34. Look at
35. Mesh

Volume 106, Issue 5

Friday, March 14th, 2008

math

NEWS

gridCOMMENTS

Hello, once again! There was a small turnout for the last *gridWORD*; two correct entries were submitted. However, only one submitter answered the *gridQUESTION*, so guess who the prize goes to? Unfortunately, between the last issue when there was a grid and this one, the submissions were lost so no prize is awarded.

I rather like the 10-by-10 grid I've been using lately. It has only 16 squares that aren't part of two words, but it's still easier to fill than more traditional crossword grids. I'm using it again this time, so I hope you like it too.

The last *gridQUESTION* was kind of short, so this one's longer: How many high-school students does it take to overrun campus?

Note: I have the full support of 50%+ of the editors for the evilness of the clues.

Peter

1		2	3		4	5	6		7
	8			9	10			11	
12			13				14		
15		16	17			18	19		
	20				21				
22	23			24	25			26	27
28			29				30		
31		32	33			34	35		
	36				37				
38					39				



lookAHEAD**mathNEWS**

March 14	<i>mathNEWS</i> Issue #5 released
March 24	<i>mathNEWS</i> Production Night #6
March 28	<i>mathNEWS</i> Issue #6 released

MathSoc

Wednesdays	Games Nights
Thursdays	Movie Nights
March 25	Retro Dance Party

CECS

Now	Continuous Phase Ongoing
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Miscellaneous

March 21	Good Friday
March 23	Easter Sunday

Undergraduate Program Review

Thanks to all students who participated in the Undergraduate Program Review Web Survey. There was a 38% response rate, which is very respectable for a web survey. As promised, four participants were randomly selected to win \$50 gift certificates from Food Services. Congratulations to:

- Sachiko Goto
- Michael Finistauri
- Kathleen Li
- David Ma

The winners will be contacted by the WatCard office via email to claim their prize.

Jack Rehder
Executive Assistant, Faculty of Mathematics

Are you thinking of an MBA?

Wednesday, March 19
5:30 - 7:00, TC 1208

Hear from a current MBA student (a UW grad), a representative from the MBA program from Wilfrid Laurier University, and a Career Advisor from the University of Waterloo about applying for an MBA. This workshop will provide an overview of the requirements for MBA programs, what to consider when choosing a program; advice on personal statements, reference letters, and the interview process. There will be a Q&A period at the end.

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Tezcatlipoca and Quetzalcoatl: Michael Perkins and Michaelangelo Finistauri

mastHEAD

It's a bird! No, it's a plane! Wait — it's a bird getting hit by a plane! As funny as that may sound, it's even funnier to watch. We would like to take this time to remind you that no animals were hurt in the making of this issue of *mathNEWS*. However, some of the production staff passed out due to exhaustion and three classrooms caught on fire. All in all, it was a good day.

The conscious production staff were joyous to know that they were still among the living at the end of the production night. So we celebrated with song and dance as represented by eating tasty, delicious pizza. As the joviality came to its peak, someone posed the question: Where do yuppies come from? And they responded. The production staff, not the yuppies. With words, no less. Impulse Vector "You see, when a man loves a woman...", Val "Laurier?", Peter "Killing puppies with badly written regexes", ebering "Hippies who surrendered to the man", Matt "Yogs", Thor "It's kind of like the bubonic plague, see...", StaticIP "Every time a bell rings...", Math.random() "Boobies?", Megaton Panda "Demented-shaped Guppies!", 42 "Badly encrypted midterms"; Kaitlyn 'Half-Pint' "When the first college graduate tried on his first power suit and cackled, the cackle broke into a thousand pieces and they all went skipping about, and that was the beginning of Yuppies."

Thanks go out to Graphics, whose intrepid adventures inspired such classics as Sherlock Holmes, Chip & Dale's Rescue Rangers and Canada's Next Top Model. We also appreciate oxygen and are hoarding almost all of the world's supply in our office. We thank daylight savings time for being the nation's euphemism for "Sleep robbers", the fridge in the MathSoc office for making me attractive by comparison and Mr. Potato Head for being my #1 place for hiding the bodies.

Michael 'perkiEd' Perkins "The kingdom of Yupp."
Michaelangelo 'AngelED' Finistauri "They come out of the sky in pods, known as mini-vans, and once you go to sleep you wake up as one of THEM."

Retro Dance Party

Dancing to songs older than you

It's retro! It's a dance! It's a party! It's RETRO DANCE PARTY!

MathSoc is hosting an all ages dance party at Fed Hall (for those of age, alcohol is upstairs) open to all UW students. It will be on either March 25th (look out for the posters or join our facebook event) from 9 pm to 1 am. Visit www.phatalbert.ca/retrodanceparty.html to request the songs you would like to hear. Sign up early at mathsoc.uwaterloo.ca/retrodanceparty to get in for free, it will be \$2 at the door otherwise so feel free to show up and dance the night away to your favourite hits, or bombs, from the 70s and 80s.

Tell all your friends!

Math.random()

profQUOTE

(A tutorial in RCH 101)

(Prof is writing on bottom board)

(Top board slides down spontaneously)

(Prof after recovering) Need to strangle some engineers...

Marshman MATH138

CSC Flash

Greetings, humans! Your Chairbeing Extraordinaire here for another flash of CSC. Currently on the horizon is a talk on Game Theory by Professor Kate Larson, another contest, and the glorious defeat of the Pure Mathematics Club, despite their most valiant efforts to overcome the unstoppable Dalek army of the CSC.

Game Theory

This talk promises to be of interest to all CSC members; university politics are often referred to as “The Game” and I infer that after this talk those in attendance will be able to figure out the exact combination of signatures needed to be given a degree without actually taking any more courses. Also along this line, attendees should be greatly helped in future CSC competitions, as we all know those are based exclusively on board games in one way or another.

Contest

The acclaimed *CSC Covert Operations Department* is again cooking up a unique programming contest to offer to members. Details are currently on a need to know basis, and frankly you don’t need to know now. What I can tell you is that it won’t be based on any board game and will require concepts from Social Implications of Computing for the best performance; so study up on those implications and practice your essay writing ability as this contest is sure to be a challenge.

Expansion of Glorious Empire

The date has been set for the PMC-CSC Pentathlon: March 29-30. I am informed by my counterpart in the PMC (We Daleks have our hands in most student governments at this university) that they are still in need of competitors for some events. Sadly this is also true for some parts of the CSC contingent; however, member executions promise to be up this week unless our teams are filled in. I don’t think this will be an issue, since the CSC Dodgeball team, a wing of the Covert Operations Department, is rumored to be flinging 15 Kg medicine balls at significant velocities and spine cracking accuracy. To the dodgeballers: EX-TER-MI-NATE!

Chairbeing Extraordinaire
Calum T. Dalek

Picard’s Theorem

Or: How I learned to stop worrying and love mathematics

Many of you may have heard of this “Picard’s Theorem” from the mumblings of the crazed pure mathematicians, but I’ll bet few of you actually know what it is. First, there are two: Little Picard and Big Picard, but nobody ever uses Little Picard since it’s too small to be of any use, so if you’ve heard mumblings about Picard it was definitely Big Picard.

What does the theorem state?

Picard’s Theorem (I know there are two, see above if you are still confused) states: Any mathematician confident enough in his work to summon Big Picard to defend it must be right. The first question you probably have is “What is this self referential nonsense?” and my answer is that mathematicians, having inherently poor writing skills assign the same name to many different things based on context. In the context of the statement of the theorem, Big Picard refers to a giant version of Jean-Luc Picard, who is identical to the regular Jean-Luc Picard but is 1 kilometer tall and reacts violently to incorrect mathematical statements. He can be summoned by convening what mathematicians call a “trial by Picard” where senior mathematicians convene in secret chambers with the person invoking Picard’s Theorem in a special chair donated by Paramount studios. Here they whisper the sacred incantations “Red Alert; Picard to the Bridge” and sound a loud klaxxon alarm. Upon the arrival of Big Picard the person in the chair must read their mathematical statement, and should Picard disapprove they are plucked from the chair and flung into the Sun. Should Picard approve, they will be granted a guest stay of one hour aboard his starship, considered an honour greater than the Fields medal by some.

“You can’t prove that, it’s just brute intimidation!”

Really? I think I can. Proof: By Picard’s Theorem, Picard’s Theorem is true. Everyone knows the good Captain is far too egocentric to let it be false. If you doubt me further I will without fear submit to the trial.

Wesley Crusher, Boy Genius

Brawl

Samus has a Zero-Suit? Samus is a girl?

As every self-respecting gamer already knows, Super Smash Bros. Brawl came out this Sunday, bringing with it a revised character list, featuring more characters along with the classics: Mario, Kirby and Link. The only thing I wonder is who decides which characters make the cut.

Don’t let Mario touch you, he’s not a real doctor! That’s right. Dr Mario MD just couldn’t make the new list. As one of the soon-to-be-forgotten characters, he joins Roy and Young Link on the bench.

Pokemon also took a huge hit, losing both Mewtwo and Pichu in this new edition. Replacing them are some newer, wierder magical animals from the pokemon games I never bought. I openly admit, I never heard of Lucario before Brawl came out. Frankly, I stopped paying attention to Pokemon once they discovered land outside Kanto.

I wonder what happened to the characters we all loved back in the day, before all these crazy new games? Why can’t characters like the Deer from *Deer Hunter*, the Duck from *Duck Hunt*, or the left paddle from *Pong* get a spot on the lineup? Wouldn’t we all like to see the L-shaped piece from *Tetris* bash the hell out of Mario?

Overall, Brawl is good. Very good. The extended character list makes playing a hell of a lot more fun. I can now watch pokemon whip little children like Ness (Ness deserved it for beating helpless animals in the previous versions of Smash Bros) and wonder how Zelda could fight Sheik (multiple personality disorder, maybe?)

Impulse Vector

Dress code for classes

A topic requiring debate

It's the eleventh hour and I still haven't figured out how to phrase this politely. It's my intent to write a fair, balanced and rational article about a fairly odd and sensitive topic.

A particular instructor of mine dresses casually for lectures. This in itself is perfectly acceptable to me. However, on occasion her outfits show some skin at the waistline and it got me to thinking: if this crosses the line I feel has to exist for dress code for the people at the front of the classroom, where is the line? Also, where is the line for everyone *else* in the classroom?

Instructors are clearly at their job when they are teaching us, which I find makes it easier to set a particular bar:

- no spaghetti straps, halter tops, or strapless tops
- no shirts whose necklines are designed specifically for maximum cleavage
- no midrifts
- no shorts or skirts shorter than mid thigh
- generally-neat clothes (no tears or other holes — I know how much money you make)
- comfortable shoes (although, that's a me-worrying-thing, not an "appropriate"-thing).

When it comes time for me to list appropriate wear for students, I find it more difficult to pin down. I think it comes down

to deciding what role the students play in the classroom. Are they also professionals, since learning is usually considered a step in one's career? Alternatively, are they customers in the marketplace of learning, and; therefore, can dress any way they like since they've paid their fee to be here?

Not only do I suspect that it falls somewhere in the middle, I suspect that one might argue (if they were really stretching reason) that if the classroom is one like the 4th floor MC rooms, what's happening below the waist isn't in question, since it's not visible during teaching [*Down with pants! — AngeLED*]. Also, since students are often in a negative-income situation, their general shabiness may be excused since, sad to say, \$10 for an outfit from the VV Boutique may break a student's budget.

So, I'm not going to try and enumerate equivalent rules for students, other than to say I think we could all agree that unnecessary cleavage is a disruption in any semi-public location. Another writer points out that shoes are a must, but I'm not sure I agree (other than any health code reasons).

Perhaps the only way to decide is through a debate I would love to hear.

anon (female) student

Thor gets a lesson on encapsulation

I recently had the opportunity to get a textbook example of the value of accessors and mutators, which I thought I'd share. I've always considered getters and setters a little dumb because they seemed to be exactly the same as public fields, except slightly more inconvenient. I know they allow you to pre-process variables a little before assignment in the future should that ever need to happen, but that never really seems to happen to me or become necessary. But there's another benefit to getters and setters. A co-worker of mine and I (both Visual C++ developers) ran into an odd problem after a recent update to our code base. Under certain circumstances, our code was crashing with a corrupted pointer to configuration data. Both of us had code that relied on this pointer and modified it. The difference was that I used good object-oriented encapsulation. We both set about debugging why this pointer was corrupted. I simply set a breakpoint on the setter for the pointer, ensured that my code wasn't modifying it, and demonstrated that the pointer was probably being deleted prematurely in one of the DLLs we had. I went over to tell my co-worker that we'd probably have to get a few other people involved, only to find him still crawling over his code adding breakpoints everywhere he'd modified the pointer to make sure none of them happened at the wrong time. Because he didn't have a setter function, he couldn't really be sure that his own code wasn't at fault. I, on the other hand, knew that the pointer was a private member of one of my objects, knew that it was only being modified at the right times (because I'd centralized access to that pointer), and rightly concluded that I wasn't to blame. Encapsulation saved me time and effort!

Thor

Hockey shorts!

Because I ran out of time writing the other article

The hockey season is winding down, so here are my quick picks for certain end of year awards:

- **Hart Trophy:** Alexander Ovechkin has this award down if his team makes the playoffs. If not, then Malkin makes a good case; although, I really like the play of Brodeur here as well.
- **Norris Trophy:** This may be Lidstrom's award to lose, but his injury has opened up the possibility for Zdeno Chara, who logs almost 30 minutes a night in Boston and is feared on both the offensive and defensive ends.
- **Vezina Trophy:** There is no argument: Brodeur takes this award again. Leclaire, Luongo and Nabakov tried, but won't be good enough.
- **Bill Masterton Award:** This award might as well be called the "whoever got a really big disease award". Kessel took it last year, but this year it has to be Jason Blake, and if Zednik comes back, he's got it locked up next year.
- **Calder Award:** While Kane was the most outstanding rookie in the first half, Nicklas Backstrom in Washington has really come to life with Ovechkin on his wing. I think if Backstrom overtakes Kane in point totals, his second half surge should get him the award; although, there is no wrong answer between the two.
- **Surprise of the Year Award:** Mike Ribero is a good candidate for this, but Pascal Leclaire in Columbus also makes a strong statement. On the flip side, maybe I'll just give this imaginary award to Mikka Kiprusoff, that disappointment.

Megaton Panda in a Rush

The Definitively Subjective Top 10 Games List

In my not-so-humble opinion

Everyone has a different opinion when it comes to games. Some prefer it old school, with games like Tetris and Pong taking high marks for their nostalgia factor, while others prefer the glossiness of the newer graphics, a feature that games created a decade ago cannot offer (except Plasma Pong!). For me, good games come from all over, be it the nostalgia, a wonderfully crafted story, or even a gameplay system that works so well that it is unforgettable. Behold! My list of my favourite games ever!

10. **Tales of Phantasia(SNES):** A wonderfully crafted RPG with a great sense of humour in just the right places, ToP is a masterpiece of its time. Featuring an engaging storyline, lovable characters (including one named Chester!), and a fun battle system, ToP is a must play for any fan of RPGs. Unfortunately, Nintendo was reluctant in porting it to America, so you will have to find an alternative fan-translated version online.

9. **Titan Quest(PC):** Most people may not agree with this being included, but I absolutely loved Titan Quest. The story, like just about every other hack 'n slash RPGs, is on the flimsy side (In fact, in the core campaign, you fight only 1 titan.) That said, the gameplay is excellent. The loot is vast, as are the skill trees, making for a good time waster each time you play. Choosing 2 masteries out of the 9 is a new adventure every time. The graphics are also no slouch, as the grass sways as you move through the plains. The gloominess of the caves, and even the majestic mountains are all a treat to the eyes. Titan Quest is a deserving candidate here, even if you feel like the gameplay is as old as Diablo.

8. **Pokemon Crystal(GBC):** The younger fans may disagree, but I feel Pokemon hit its peak between the second and third generation. Crystal offered a unique blend of nostalgia that carried over from the RBY era and the new ideas incorporated with the next gen games that vaults it to the top of my pokemon favourites. Its roster of 251 pokemon may be small in comparison, but the game is still extremely fun. With a story that takes you through both Johto and Kanto and back, you will have a blast plowing through the simple gameplay with your squad of supermonsters. The replayability and its excellent link battling system are why it's on this list at number 8.

7. **Resident Evil 4(Multi):** I'm not a big fan of horror-related games, but RE4 is by far the best third person shooter I have ever played. A pretty cool story and fun surprises everywhere really makes the game a lot of fun. While linear, this story has enough interesting characters and awesome monsters to keep you coming back to it more than once. The customization of weapons, the side games, and more makes this a worthy buy for any gamer.

6. **Rock Band(Multi):** Think Guitar Hero, but better. A great party game, the developers have really taken the idea of Guitar Hero one step forward and created a masterpiece. Not much to say here, but if you haven't tried it, you need to, now.

5. **Rollercoaster Tycoon(PC):** Fans of tycoon-type games would love RCT. While there are RCT2 and RCT3(the latter being in 3D), the original was still the best of the franchise with its

quirky characters and great roster of rides to build, while not being overbearingly sandbox-y (RCT2) or too much of a graphics whore(RCT3). There's even death to the peeps, with crashing coaster accidents and simple drowning for you to spend your time on when you get bored.

4. **Sims 2 (With Expansions)(PC):** Yes, I know. The Sims, while being a simple game where you play as families of people eating virtual food and playing virtual computer games like the Sims, is strangely addictive. With its many expansion packs and user-made objects, it has a lot of things to explore, and you get a chance to do things with "sims" that would be otherwise obscene or frowned upon in real life. (Wife sleeping with your female maid while husband is in the bathroom? It can happen!)

3. **The Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion(Multi):** Rarely do you find an RPG that combines sandbox play with an interesting story and excellent sidequests. Oblivion has all of the above! I spent a good 50 hours doing sidequests without even scratching the surface of this incredibly deep and well-written game. What makes this game even more amazing is the incredible number of mods that have been created for the game, giving you a whole new game experience altogether. If you haven't played this game yet, now would be a good time to treat yourself: Go play it!

2. **Eastside Hockey Manager 2007(PC):** Hockey fans, look here! EHM is the single greatest hockey simulation management game ever! Based off the 2006-7 season, you can choose to take the GM role with any of the NHL teams, OHL teams, AHL teams and even teams in Europe and other minor leagues around the world! Featuring realistic financial limitations (Salary cap in the NHL, for example) and your ability to create lines and tactics for your team down to how much they should shoot at the net, this is a complete package that is well worth \$40. In fact, you can even start the game with an optional fantasy draft! Scouting, drafting and developing players are also all in this robust package. What warms your heart more than a 7th rounder who ends up as a 2nd liner in the NHL? If you're a true hockey fan, you must try out the game! Get it from eastsidehockeymanager.net and give it a whirl!

1. **Earthbound(SNES):** An RPG that manages to charm its way into everyone's hearts, this timeless classic is often forgotten because of its simple graphics, but beyond it lies a tale with great twists and humour. Set in the modern day, it replaces swords and wands with baseball bats and frying pans. The battle sequences are filled with psychedelic colours and bluesy tunes and the enemies are just downright whacky. For example: the New Age Retro Hippie and the Unassuming Local Guy. The game also maintains a good laugh with references to the Beatles and even the odd fart joke, it's plain awesome. If you can find this game somewhere, give it a whirl!

I hope you can take at least one game off this list that you want to try out, and if you do, let me know how you liked it!

Megaton Panda - Off to play the Sims while watching CSI.

mathQUOTES

Like profQUOTES, only with 700 times more megalomaniacal, ego-tripping, inside-joke-filled, self indulgent narcissism!

- “Two seconds before I initiated this conversation, I popped through a hole in space time and warned myself not to. Unfortunately, in doing so, I removed the reason for which I went back in time in the first place, and so I did anyway. Shit.”
- “It’s so stupid it causes physical pain. The person who created those is my idol. He has achieved a level of evil and sadism that I can only dream about.”
- “I once put a keystroke logger on a guy’s computer, then found out his email password and emailed stupid chain letters to everyone in his address book so they’d hate him, and then he died because he had leukemia. True story.”
- “Asking for advice of any kind at the CSC is a bad idea. Even if you do get a response that sounds helpful, it’s probably just someone trying to make your problem worse for their own sadistic enjoyment.”
- “I dunno, it seems a bit heavy handed. Maybe a more subtle approach to improving turnout would be better. Like “Come write for *mathNEWS* or we’ll come to your house and kill you, desecrate your father’s corpse, rape your mother, put your children to work in the coal mines, burn down your village, salt your fields, and make a pile out of the skulls of your neighbors.”
- “It’s not like you can have crap and opposite crap (anticrap as it were) and make no crap. Instead, the crap builds up and causes an abundance of crap.”
- “Every time we talk, you steal a tiny fraction of my life. I’ve decided to stop talking to you and instead use the time to hunt down and execute your parents for the crime of giving birth to you.”
- “In a theoretical world where I cared, I’d go through and point out which people you should ignore and which ones you should listen to. Obviously, such a world cannot exist outside the realm of mathematics.”
- “And then, suddenly, a squadron of English teachers appeared to spank you for your mutilation of tense!”
- “The ice cream Jihad has begun!”
- “Where do hermaphrodites fit in to this discussion?”
- “There are thousands of ways of sending a deep message that don’t involve inserting objects into the rectum.”
- “Little known fact: For every *mathNEWS* article you write, you get three more concubines for your personal harem in the afterlife as well as 200 “JesusBucks” to be redeemed upon death.”
- “Don’t hate, man. Love. Love is the answer. Actually, love is the question. The answer is “All night, baby, YEAH!””
- “Fulfillment is overrated. I pawned it for more drug money.”
- “Pay \$16 a month so Blizzard can drain the humanity out of my soul? Sounds like a bargain!”
- “That is an incredibly stupid idea, but at least it’s *entertainingly* stupid, as opposed to the kind of stupid exhibited by, for instance, George Bush, which is more of the “oh-god-I-can’t-believe-he’s-really-running-the-country” kind of stupid.”
- “But let’s face it: Making graphs is way more fun than social interaction anyway”
- “I have just three things to say: 1) Age-based legislation is inherently unjust. 2) Use protection. Seriously. 3) You, me, and a stick of butter, baby.”
- “I think I’m subconsciously a nudist.”
- “My god! I think phishing has become a sentient life form! Now it’s using Nigerians to reproduce! Humanity will surely perish in a hellstorm of email!”
- “Are Darwin and I the only the people that see a potential problem in sexually educating math students?”
- “On an unrelated note, does anyone want 25,000 alpacas and a batman costume?”

Thor

Slogans

- *mathNEWS*: Now with 20% more of your doctor-recommended minerals!
- *mathNEWS*: Where Funny goes to die.
- *mathNEWS*: the Manhattan Project’s least anticipated side-effect.
- *mathNEWS*: Remember in Brave New World when they sent all the dissenters to Iceland? Well, this is Iceland.
- *mathNEWS*: Only God knows what goes on here... and he’d rather not.
- *mathNEWS*: La la la la la, I can’t hear you!
- *mathNEWS*: Just like that movie, with that guy!
- *mathNEWS*: Ignorance really IS bliss!
- *mathNEWS*: NOT a government psychological experiment. Trust us.
- *mathNEWS*: We don’t have WMDs either.
- *mathNEWS*: You’re not in Kansas anymore.
- *mathNEWS*: Nothing that cannot be condensed to a single scream of bloodthirsty rage.

Thor

Poetry for the soul*Just kidding*

Blue eyes, white dragon
You walked into my trap card.
I play Mirror Force!

Pokemon battle!
Pikachu, thunderbolt now!
Gotta catch’em all!

Skip five episodes,
It’s still on the same damn fight.
I hate Dragon Ball.

TV sucks today.
Must get off the comfy couch.
Got to do homework.

Megaton Panda
Impulse Vector
Static IP

Conversations with Idiots

The thin blue line

Time to talk to you about a very special kind of idiot: the self-righteous fucktard, more commonly known as the “numbskull”. This type of idiot is seen naturally in city environments with an unusual penchant for hating law enforcement officers while breaking the law. The numbskull is more often than not uneducated, brash and has a criminal record. Having met many numbskulls in my life, I have noticed that they seem to have suffered cranial damage and will use any argument they possibly can to make themselves seem superior to police officers. On the outside, their arguments may differ on a contextual basis; however, they are usually very easily categorized.

- **I was only committing a minor offence, they didn't have to bust me** — there are two huge problems with this argument. First, committing a minor offence is still committing an offence. As citizens, we do not have the right to select which laws we obey or disobey. When we disobey a law it is a conscious decision to do so and as adults we should recognize that there are consequences for breaking a law. Secondly a law **enforcement** officer would not be **enforcing** the law if they just decided to not bust you. Why shouldn't they bust you? That's what your precious tax dollars pay for? If you want the police officers to sit in coffee shops all day and eat donuts, then vote on it, but then don't complain when you get robbed and they don't help you.
- **I see cops turning on their sirens to pass red lights** — Your point? First of all, just because you see a cop car at a stop light and they suddenly flash their sirens doesn't automatically mean that they just don't want to wait. Any emergency vehicle is more likely to flash their lights at an intersection because that's where there is the highest probability of a collision. Secondly, just because they stop flashing their si-

rens afterward doesn't mean that they aren't going somewhere that they've been called. And finally, let us suppose that finitely many police officers do use their sirens to pass red lights. I say: let them. Yes, this is contradictory to my previous statement saying “citizens don't get to choose which laws they obey or disobey”; however, how many citizens perform public services that involve them getting insulted, disdained and hated by the general public? I'm willing to give some slack to the people who put their lives on the line for my overall safety. Furthermore, just because someone else does it that doesn't make it acceptable for you to do as well. In fact, the more people doing certain illegal activities, the bigger the problem!

- **Cops use too much force!** — well, so do criminals. Generally speaking we would like more police officers alive than criminals, and as criminals get access to more deadly weapons of course officers are going to be more apprehensive because they have this inexplicable desire to live. I do not deny that there are officers that use too much force; however, they wouldn't have to if more people stopped treating cops like the bad guys.

This conundrum is akin to “Which came first: the chicken or the egg?” Which happened first: people started hating cops because some of them abuse their power or some cops started abusing their power because people hate them. However, one thing is certain: people hating cops for doing their jobs does not solve the problem. In fact, it only makes it worse. That's what makes numbskulls numbskulls: despite the brain damage, they just keep hitting their heads against walls.

AngelED

profQUOTES

This might be slightly old-fashioned, but then again, so am I.

Marshman MATH138

What year are you guys in again?

Marshman MATH138

How do you get an agnostic to leave town? Burn a question mark on his front lawn. [No reaction from the class.] Satellite delay, here. Just think about it later, you'll laugh...

Burris PSYCH231

I have no data on this, but I swear it's true.

Burris PSYCH231

There are some strong similarities in these algorithms, in that they're identical.

Mosca CO481/PHYS467/CS467

So we're inching closer and closer to the idea of the discriminant of... [student's phone rings] IT'S THE SAME PHONE! I'D RECOGNIZE THAT RING ANYWHERE!

Stewart PMATH441

Oh, you've never seen a Möbius strip? That's terrible!

Moraru AMATH333/PMATH365

This is the physicist's decomposition: break the thing up into atoms. This is the chemist's decomposition: allow for some compounds.

Lawrence PMATH444

Why? Why, Santa? Why do you handle poisonous snakes?

Burris PSYCH231

If you will, Slayer is like a corrupt televangelist. Isn't that wild?

Burris PSYCH231

If you see Popeye, you're not going to feel blessed unless Popeye is a significant symbol of your faith.

Burris PSYCH231

[After answering a student's question] I just made that up, but it sounds true.

Burris PSYCH231

Whatever is in these brackets you put right here, so if YO MAMA was in these brackets, then you put YO MAMA right here. I'm going to make you remember the YO MAMA rule so today on the test you'll go “Ah, YO MAMA!”

Metzger STAT230

Being a mathie in the real world

Are you 4Bers ready?

(Cause if you are, can you teach me?)

As I prepare for real life (no snooze-button grad school for me), I have a lot of responsibilities to tend to. Once I know where I'm moving, there will be lodgings to arrange, jobs to hunt down, and thank-you cards to send post-wedding. I am ready for most of what life has to throw at me, thanks to, for the most part, having already lived on my own and working at real jobs for real money (thanks co-op!).

One of the things I'm still terrified of is how I will fit into the real world again after 52 comfy months living in a mathie world.

My mom (and I) still remember the first call home I made. It was during frost-week (Jan Frosh props!) and I snuck away to the payphones. "Mom! Today we had a math scavenger hunt, and I'm holding a pink balloon that says 'I [heart] Math! I'm among my own kind!'"

In my frosh leaders, as well as the more keen of my colleagues, I found an excitement and love for math that I hadn't even realized was dormant in me. The changes weren't immediate, but by the end of the term, I had a new crew, my first sense of volunteerism, and had completely alienated my high school boyfriend with my "math stuff."

At the other end of my degree, now I have to worry that I've spent too long in Neverland ("I won't be normal! Not me!") and I won't be able to integrate myself into a non-mathie society. (Heh heh... unless I'm a polynomial, because even I remember how to integrate a — DAMN IT! You see what I mean?! Maybe I'm e^x ...)

The problem isn't really that I can't be normal. I can be normal when the context calls for it. The problem falls somewhere in the middle.

I find that there isn't a one dimension spectrum you can really draw wherein people fall as "mathie" or "non-mathie." Instead we need to draw two axes, one for level of enthusiasm and romantic love felt toward math, say the y, and one for mathematical (or, analytical skills which transfer well into the mathematical world) deftness, say the x.

If someone has no knowledge and no interest, I can talk about the news, or maybe the content of one of my artsie electives (excellent places to sharpen your "normal" skills).

I'm also always comfortable in any region with sufficiently enough y. Even among people who are interested by math but never got training, I can usually use curiosity to find an interest-

ing topic of conversation. By black-boxing the math, I can explain why public-key cryptography is so freaking cool. If someone doesn't appreciate the difference between mathematical proof and scientific proof, I can try to set the record straight by proving a simple result which irrefutably holds for all of something, like the infinity of primes or the Pythagorean theorem.

But if I meet someone who I know is capable of conversing in the precise language of mathematics but who is *uninterested or even disgusted* by my casual use of it, I find myself at a loss.

Consider, for example, my use of a plane to describe kinds of mathie-ness. I fall back on those terms unless I'm certain my audience can't handle it. I consider it a language I'm lucky enough to have at my disposal, and if I am lucky enough that my audience will understand it, I feel at ease mixing it with "normal" language.

So when I am met with blank stares, or even recently, mockery from a grad student on this very campus, I feel at a loss. If I can't speak freely among those with the same training as I, with whom can I?

My question, dear reader, is this: when the world is likely to shy away from the terms and techniques I've learned to apply to every part of my life, is it my job to either live happily with some geeky friends, few and far between, or am I supposed to change, or, should I keep at it and try to change those around me? The language is pure — they should be able to look past their fear of math, or realize that I'm not trying to get them to work after hours, and understand my meaning, shouldn't they?

For now, I've finally lost that pink balloon, and the last of my frosh leaders graduated last year. My newest good friend isn't in math and is so normal that she's not even a closeted geek, and I'm set for a career in tech support which will have smart people, but probably not mathies.

Maybe I can learn some jokes to which the punch lines aren't math theorems. Maybe I can learn some songs that didn't first appear in viral videos. Maybe I can learn to say "whatever the number of chairs less one" instead of "n minus 5."

But my wedding cake will still be in the shape of the MC, complete with pink tie. You can graduate the girl out of math, but...

Half-pint

Did you know that MEF has π million dollars?

