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For the Women Who Wear Pi Day Shirts

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FOR THE WOMEN WHO WEAR PI DAY SHIRTS

by

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for a Degree with Honors
(English and Math)

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ABSTRACT

This project, entitled *To The Women Who Wear Pi Day Shirts*, is a poetry manuscript that explores a journey of a women in STEM. While taking college English courses, I read about characters such as the creature in *Frankenstein*, by Mary Shelley, who had intelligence, yet was physically hideous, an outsider from the human population. The creature was an outsider to the normal human, much like how I feel as a woman in STEM, which gave me the idea to write about my own journey. The poetry in this manuscript is a reflection from being in elementary school learning mathematics to teaching high schoolers.

I conclude exploring the behind the scenes of the poetry I have written and my inspirations for the manuscript. I discuss that this manuscript is for other outcasts like myself to see that they are not alone and so that other women who feel that they are not good enough or not smart enough to pursue a STEM degree to not listen to the backlash.

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FOR THE WOMEN WHO WEAR PI DAY SHIRTS

GROWING UP

FEMININE MASCULINITY

I was birthed from a woman
A woman with a deep voice
You were birthed from a woman
A woman with broad shoulders

Our mothers and sisters
Have chiseled chins and hairy arms
Our aunts and grandmothers
Have beards and work on farms

Women hold doors open
Women lift weights
Women eat beef jerky
Women squat in the woods

Did this make you uncomfortable?
If it did
I hope you understand
A woman wrote this

And she will never be silent again.

I COME FROM MEN AND WOMEN WHO WERE KILLED FOR THEIR BELIEFS

Men and women who were brave
Men and women who ran from the gas chambers
Who escaped on a cow boat to America
Who started with nothing
Who sent my ancestors to school
Who raised my mom
Who raised me

I was born of love,
I grew from hate.

I stand five foot two
I am a woman who had her path paved
A path of smooth rocks
With needles in every crevice

I pick out each needle from my path.
I walk on.

BLUE AND PINK WALLS

When you are born around pink painted walls and a pink bonnet,
You are told that you are a girl.

When you are born around blue painted walls and a blue hat,
You are told that you are a boy.

When you are dressed up like a porcelain doll,
You are told you have to be perfect.

When you are handed a toy car and a toy truck,
You are told you have to like cars and trucks.

When you are told to help mom with the dishes,
You are told the woman is meant to be in the kitchen.

When you are told to take the trash out,
You are told you have to do the heavy lifting.

When you are told to wear a dress to the prom,
You are told you have to look pretty for boys.

When you are told to wear a suit to the prom,
You are told you have to match your tie to your date's dress.

When you are told that girls are bad at math and science,
You are told that you will never be good enough.

When you are told that boys are bad at English and art,
You are told that you will never be good enough.

When I was told that I would be bad at math and science,
I was told that I would never be good enough,

Is this good enough?

PINK

I examine myself in my mirror
I am her, she is me, I will be her-

Queen Bitch, Leader of the Thespians
After the star of the basketball team, the ultimate prize

Pink shoes, pink skirt, pink blouse, pink bow
Blonde hair, gleaming nails

My hands quiver
My teeth chatter
My heart has a cadence of any Hairspray verse

I step upon the stage, visualize my first line, "Hi Troy"
emphasizing vowels, capturing with my pluck

The lights strike my newly polished face
My pink shoes, pink skirt, pink blouse, pink bow
My blonde hair
My gleaming nails

She is me, and I am her

And then I speak.

BLUE

I examine myself in my mirror,
I am him.

Captain of the basketball team
After the brown haired cheerleader

Her uniform is a red skirt and a white and red top
She smiles at me from the gym as the buzzer beeps

My hands are sweaty
My hands drop the ball to dribble
My heart has the cadence of any Eminem song

I step on the court, visualizing my first play
Fake it to Chad, then get a three pointer

The lights strike my skin, dripping with sweat
I look back at her
Her red and white top and red skirt
Her smile and wave

If I make this shot, I am hers, she is mine

And then I shoot.

PRIVILEGE

I sit there,
Surrounded by people who think less of who I am
They look at my attire
They laugh and point until their laughter fades to anger

They want this for themselves
They want this for their children and their grandchildren
Their trust fund depends on this
Depends on their attendance and their fake smiles

Above there are strokes
Strokes weaved to images, surrounded by the blue sky
The images smile
Warmth radiates from each and every stroke

I want this for the warmth
I want to close my eyes and rise with the enchanting vibrations
I've practiced this once before
I've lost my touch,

Now, I prefer to listen.

THE INFINITE SPIRAL OF SUFFERING

My mind is in the middle of a tornado
Whipping around in endless spirals

Dust surrounds my thoughts
Clouding the chance to think

My mind reaches for help
For someone to stop this cycle

No one will ever come
They will only watch

They will watch my mind spiral until it turns to dust
The same dust that will surround other minds

in endless spirals.

DOOMSDAY

you watch people, you want to look like them,
i eat my fries and watch the sunset.
why do you eat them with your eyes closed?
we're just going to die someday.

UNFIT FOR ROMANCE

I am unfit for romance, unfit
To be brought flowers
To be told "I miss you"
To be brought home for Christmas
And be paraded around like I matter.
Because I don't
Matter.

WE ARE INFINITE

Two faces were in front of my face
Months ago I would've whispered
But today, I sang
Sang because I knew

Knew that they would come
Knew months of cold walls
Knew months of narrow paper
Led me to my friends, to her

“Can Charlie come out and play?”
Beaming bright lights,
The bass rumbled beneath my seat
She is so beautiful

Months ago I was here
Months ago I was afraid
Months ago I was in the back seat
Today, I am a wallflower

Kneeling on the bed
I stood extending my arms like wings
I swear,

We are infinite.

INTRODUCTION TO MATHEMATICS

THE FIRST PROBLEM

I sit in a small, square desk
The closest one to the back
Notebook slips on the wooden top
Take out my pencil and scribble on the edge of the first page

The bell blares in my ears
Students pile in the front of the class
The teacher begins to write symbols
Teeth ache while the chalk screeches across the board

The chalk drawn symbols float into my mind
Infinite amount of doors open to capture these symbols
Each one has a destination
Behind each door symbols align

Finding x is my only quest
10 to 20 equations my mind conquers
My mind unravels in search of the answer,
The doors to my mind close.

My eyes are the first to lift from the page
Eager for my next equation to solve
I raise my hand and ask,
“Are there any extra problems?”

I am followed with laughter
Testosterone filled teens stare
Ponytails are playing dumb
Afraid of what they are capable of

“Help your classmates finish”
No one looks at me.
I sink into my seat,
Scribble on the margins of the page

I write a new problem,
A better problem with more symbols
I solve and solve,
Smiling with every $x=$

FUNCTIONS

When I was younger,
They told me about the vertical line test
Each input must have one output
Each would create a coordinate

When I grew up,
I told you the same thing
I wanted to be with only you
A true coordinate on a linear function

Our coordinate was aligned
A straight line progressing infinitely
Our first month of dating we held hands,
Our second month we kissed

By our one year together
You told me you loved me
Our function was infinitely linear
You had one output, me.

When I was younger,
They told me about the vertical line test
Each input must have one output
Or else the equation was not a function

You were my input
a perfect coordinate pair
But then you told me there was another output
An output exponentially above me

When I was younger,
They taught me that an output is dependent on its input
Without an input an output is meaningless
And here I was,

utterly meaningless.

MATH ANXIETY

I stutter when I am talking to a new friend
Or talking to an angry customer

I pick my cuticles when I'm standing in a crowd
And I sweat when I have to eat in front of others

But I've never been anxious about counting or
Finding the value of letters

I never cared when people said how hard it was
As if solving equations was as complicated as black holes
Claiming that symbols were meaningless

Because symbols are not meaningless
They have meaning in simple equations such as $X = 2$
Or can stand in place of words

X = price of a shirt
 Y = miles an hour
 Z = how many cats I have

I've never had math anxiety
I've always known symbols have meaning
And solving equations is as simple as one two three.

A RATIONAL MIND

I was small and blonde,
with bangs that hung in my eyes
I grew up with 2 brothers
Who protected me with all their heart
My mom and I played dress up
With pink, purple, and red dresses
When my brothers moved out
I became my parents' favorite
Their sweet daughter brings cookies
to the class on the first day of school
During recess I would hold a hopscotch tournament
Always letting someone else win
During lunch I ate with a fork and a knife
Slowly chewing with my mouth closed

When it was time for quiet reading
I sat next to the girls in my class
We read together
Giggling when a boy kissed a girl
We loved reading romance
Hoping one of the boys in our class liked us

I was rational,
A number that can be simplified into a fraction.

I was defined by the term:

Feminine

Masculine

And I most certainly,

Will always be simplified.

AN IRRATIONAL MIND

I was small and blonde
with bangs that hung in my eyes
I grew up with two brothers
We played HORSE and threw baseballs around
My brothers were much older
But I still wore their hand-me-downs
When my brothers moved out
I stole their Pokémon cards
I would bring them to school
And trade them before classes started
I raced the boys in my class at recess
Always beating them by more than a second
During lunch I ate with all the boys
Dressed in baggy jeans and my brother's shirt

When it was time for learning math
I sat alone, far from the boys
I solved math problems
That those boys could not even understand
These math problems were for 3rd graders
But I was only in 2nd grade

I was irrational,
A number that cannot be simplified into a fraction.

I was not be defined by the terms:

Masculine

Feminine

And I most certainly,

Can never be simplified.

MY MIND

I was small and blonde
with bangs that hung in my eyes

I grew up with 2 brothers
Who chased me around the house
On holidays we would perform for our parents
My brothers on the piano, me with a hairbrush for a mic

I would play Barbies with my mom
Ripping out their perfect long blonde hair
Drawing with red and green markers
On their bald heads

We played with my American Girl Dolls
And did not rip out their hair
My mom was the only one who would play with me
Other girls thought I was weird

At school I had a crush
On a boy who gave me a wedgie after I gave him one
I always went to his house after school
Running through the woods with Nerf guns

At school we had quiet reading time
Which made me hate books
I hated reading cliché stories
Where the boy was always the hero

I was the last to finish our annual donut eating contest
But the first to finish our weekly multiplication quizzes

I was sent to the counselor's office
Only to break their stress balls

I was a cheerleader to men playing sports
But pole-vaulted highest in my grade

I was the only girl in my graduating class
To take a college level statistics class

Not because I had to
But because I wanted to

I am irrational and rational
I am a wallflower.

MATH WAS ALWAYS HARD

I'm sick of people asking me how I could ever like math
I'm sick of people telling me how smart I must be
I'm sick of people assuming that I woke up one day
And understood mathematics

I may have gone home after school
And printed out multiplication worksheets
But I did not wake up one day
With the multiplication table memorized

I may have done my summer math packet
The day before summer started
But I did not wake up
With the answer key in my brain

I may have taken 2 math classes
My senior year of high school
But I did not wake up
Knowing the numbers of pi by heart

I may have gotten an A
In a college level math class
But I woke up
After a long night of studying

I never understood math.
The way you looked at a problem and knew the answer.

I understood math by not having friends to play with after school
By sitting alone on the bus and doing my homework
By getting sick of playing Barbies with my mom

I understood math, because it understood me.

A LOGICAL POEM

When you are a poet,
You use language
To expand on your ideas,
Into a poem.

When you structure this creative language
You count:

Stanzas
Lines
Words
Syl-la-bles
SOUnds
Rhyme

You are writing a creative proof.

When you are a mathematician,
You structure your ideas
You follow a form
The form of a proof

When you structure your ideas,
You draw symbols:

\mathbb{R}
 \approx
 X
 $n!$
 Σ
 $=$

But what kind of proof?

"Pure mathematics is, in its way,
the poetry of logical ideas"
Said Albert Einstein.

If poetry is creative math,
Then math must be,

A series of logical poems.

42 CREDITS OF PURE EXHAUSTION

CALCULUS

You enter,
Stunned by the height of the ceilings
You walk to the front of the class
Sitting in the center of the first row

You act like you're eager to learn
You act like you know what you're doing

Do you think that everyone knows you're a math major
Because you're wearing a pi shirt?
3.141592653589793238462643383279502884197169399375105820974944
Do they expect you to succeed?
And what if you don't?
What if you get the lowest score on the first exam?
What if you can't understand the material?
What if you're not good enough?

The professor writes
Squeaky chalkboard
You grind your teeth
He writes his name
Then "Derivatives"
Derivatives, oh derivatives
Finding where the function is equal to 0
Chain rule
Power rule
Exponent rule
He says this is "review"

REVIEW?

You ask the person next to you,
"Have you learned this before?"
He says,
"No I haven't"

Your breathing slows
Your mind focuses
You are the same

Boy and girl
New to derivatives
New to tall ceilings

Not new to mathematics

All the bodies in the room rise
Filing through the back doors
You walk to the front
Shake the professors' hand
Utter words you won't remember
But he will remember you

And you will succeed.

CALCULUS PART 2

You enter
Not stunned by the height of the ceilings
You walk to the middle of the room
Sitting as close to the end of the row as possible

You don't care if anyone knows you're a math major
You are not wearing a pi shirt
You are wearing a blue sweatshirt with "MAINE"
Written in bold black letters

You don't care if anyone expects you to succeed
Or not to succeed
You don't care if you get the lowest score exam
You know you won't
You know you're good enough

Until,
The professor writes
Squeaky chalkboard
You grind your teeth
He writes his name,
Then "Integrals"
Integrals, oh Integrals
Finding the antiderivative of the function
So much to be left unknown
How will you know if there is a missing constant?
Integration by Substitution
Integration by U-Substitution
He says this is "review"

REVIEW?

You ask the person next to you,
"Have you learned this before?"
He says,
"No I haven't"

Your breathing slows
Your mind focuses
You are the same

Boy and girl
New to integrals

Not new to tall ceilings
Not new to mathematics

All the bodies in the room rise
Filing through the back doors
You follow those bodies
You don't shake the professor's hand
You go to your dorm
You search "Integrals" on Google
You study Integration by Substitution
You study Integration by U-Substitution
You know Integrals now,

And you will succeed.

CALCULUS PART 3

You enter
You are not in a room with high ceilings
You are in a small, boxy, windowless room
You walk to the second row of the room
Sitting in the best spot to see the chalkboard

You don't care if anyone knows you're a math major
It doesn't matter what you're wearing

You don't care what anyone thinks of you
You know you've gotten this far already

The professor writes
Squeaky chalkboard
You don't grind your teeth
He writes his name,
Then "Triple Integrals"
Integrals, oh Integrals
You know those.
But what about Triple Integrals?
What makes it Triple?

He says this is our first topic

Your breathing slows
Your mind focuses
You are not new to derivatives
You are not new to integrals
Not new to mathematics

You are only new to small, boxy, windowless rooms

All the bodies in the room rise
Filing through the front doors
You follow those bodies
And you know,

You will succeed.

LINEAR ALGEBRA

When I was younger,
I learned how to
Add
Subtract
Multiply
Divide
To solve for:
Where my Barbie doll ended up
A Nancy Drew mystery
Why someone didn't want to date me
Why my parents got divorced
Why my friends and I drifted apart
Why I didn't eat enough.
To solve for X when $X =$
Why I feel so broken.

INTRODUCTION TO PROOFS

To write a mathematical proof,
We must first know our audience.

Some audiences will understand the math
Some will not

If they understand the math
We can start from the definition of the concept

If they don't understand the math
We will have to start from very simple concepts

Let us assume that they understand the math
For us mathematicians are lazy

We will learn to prove by contradiction first
Proving something based on assuming the opposite

Let us begin,
Assume that women cannot be mathematicians.

By the traditional definition of being a woman,
Women are capable of running a household.

If women are capable of running a household,
Then women are capable of taking care of children.

If women are capable of taking care of children,
Then women are capable of educating their children.

If women are capable of educating their children,
Then women are capable of being educated.

If women are capable of being educated,
Then women are capable of graduating from college,

If women are capable of graduating from college,
Then women are capable of majoring in mathematics.

Since we know that women are capable of majoring in mathematics,
It follows that women are capable of being mathematicians.

Therefore,

Women can be mathematicians \square

DIFFERENTIAL EQUATIONS

This was my first A,
I wasn't smarter
Or more motivated
Or at least I didn't try to be

I showed up the same 10 minutes before
In the front of the class
The same mechanical pencil and highlighter combo
Writing every single word on the chalkboard on my paper

This time, everything clicked
The words on the paper floated straight into my mind
With perfect clarity
I never left a class with questions

I started my homework the same day of class
My mind unraveled the words I had written on my paper
Solving Equations like I had done this my entire life
Like I was one of the famous mathematicians in my textbook

This was my first A in collegiate math.

INTRODUCTION TO ABSTRACT ALGEBRA

The hand struck five
55 hours remain
I distract myself,
Season 24, episode 3
Just in
I wrote a list
Desires, a Christmas list
I looked
53 hours remain
It's not too bad,
53 hours still remain
Star Wars episode 1
Anakin and Padme meet
Eyes shut
50 hours still remain

40 hours still remain
I rest, but feel unrested
9 in the morning is the time
I looked again
I did one, the easiest.
I went on a walk,
Fresh air was not enough.
37 hours remain
9 hours would soon be wasted
Bringing people boxes of shoes
Measuring their 4-year-old screaming son
Helping people
Who don't give a shit

28 hours remain
Election results
Blue won
I smile, first time in 27 hours.
Eyes shut
16 hours remain
7 hours would soon be wasted
Bringing people boxes of shoes
Measuring their 4-year-old screaming son
Helping people
Who don't give a shit

9 hours remain.

It was time.
Mind blurs
McDonalds arrives
Iced coffee made
Music blares
7 hours spent to find solutions
Submit.

Clock strikes 10
2 hours ahead
2/55 hours to breathe
Meaningless.

INTRODUCTION TO MATHEMATICAL STATISTICS

what's the probability that I will
not procrastinate tonight
wake up feeling inspired
go to classes and actually learn something
eat 3 proper meals
smile at least once,

can you teach me that?

INTRODUCTION TO REAL ANALYSIS

When learning Real Analysis,
We learn about when a sequence converges.
A sequence is an infinite list of numbers
Convergence is when a sequence approaches a certain number

To prove convergence
Use epsilon, ϵ ,
It will be defined in terms of another symbol.
This symbol will be what the sequence converges to,
Call it A.

Your sequence, long but simple
Will inevitably lead to something
The proof would not lie
Use simple methods

Your sequence may be positive or negative
But your sequence will always tend to A.
You must now write an expression,
This expression must be less than epsilon
It must look like this:

$$|X-A| < \epsilon$$

Now simplify,
It will look like this:

$$X < \epsilon$$

You are done
Wasn't that simple?
This is only the beginning,
Introduction to Real Analysis continues.

INTRODUCTION TO REAL ANALYSIS PART 2

When learning Real Analysis,
We learn about when a sequence converges.
A sequence is an infinite list of numbers
Convergence is when a sequence approaches a certain number

To prove convergence,
I will tell you a tale
This tale speaks of two lovers
One lover was drawn to the other,
Call it fate.

Their story begins as a simple tale
A girl meets a boy on a college campus
They become friends, the best of friends
One day the girl simply professes her love to the boy

The boy had two decisions, friends or lovers
They ate dinner together every night
They did 6am yoga classes together
They complained about their classes
How was this even a choice?

He knew he was drawn to her
He was meant to converge to her
He knew that it was always her
He then professed his love to her

He was done!
Wasn't that simple?
This was only the beginning,
The story of these lovers will continue.

THEORY OF NUMBERS

Seriously, where did ZERO come from?
Did someone just wake up one day and scream ZERO?
Did someone buzz like a bee and yell HERO at the same time?
Did someone coin the term ZILCH first?

What about ONE?

TWO must've come after ONE
I mean, how else would you know there are TWO things

THREE might come from triangle
Or Thrice, if that is even a word that exists
But we are discussing the theory of NUMBERS not WORDS.

FOUR may come from TWO + TWO
Or ONE + ONE + ONE + ONE
Or ONE + THREE
Or even ZERO + ONE + TWO + ONE,

FIVE stems from hive or jive
Or hive and jive might come after FIVE
Did they know FIVE is half of TEN?
Or
Did they not know about TEN yet?

SIX seems like someone must've truly not done their job well
Forgetting to add letters to the end
Seriously,
SIX sounds as if I am saying sick
Like when I had a lisp.
If I was their boss I would've fired them.

Have you ever heard that SEVEN EIGHT NINE?
Seven must've been pretty hungry for that to happen
I've always wondered what came first:
SEVEN or ELEVEN
Or 7-Eleven.
Maybe whoever created these numbers worked at 7-Eleven
Or maybe not, since they spelled out ELEVEN and not 7,

And what comes after NINE?
TEN.

NUMERICAL ANALYSIS

Please wait for the host to let you in
The host is letting you in
Mute
Camera off
“Hi everyone, welcome to Numerical Analysis”

Open your notebook, still sitting there from two days ago
Pick up your pencil
Please try to listen
This isn't ideal
You're trying

The professor explains how to estimate instead of solve,
Estimations to questions you learned in eighth grade
Like how to solve for x-intercepts in a function.
But if you can clearly see when x crosses the x-axis,
Why do you need an estimate?

Sit for hours of the day,
Hands will cramp until they can't open anymore
Try to speak into the microphone today
To moving images, glitching
Stare until your eyes blur

You sit here, in a room full of emptiness
hunching blindly.

CAPSTONE

I am not in a classroom
Not listening to a professor aimlessly talking
Watching someone write on a squeaky chalkboard

I am in front of a screen
Typing symbols over and over again
With a red ERROR message every time I press enter

I thought this was about learning a new concept
Not writing symbols in place of other symbols
For hours of my semester

Why couldn't I just write some poems?
Poems that still uncovered symbols
Instead of writing a proof on a screen

And why do I write code for every symbol?
Shouldn't a computer be smart enough to know what symbols mean?
Or why can't I just write this on a piece of paper?

I am not in a classroom
Not listening to a professor aimlessly talking
Watching someone write on a squeaky chalkboard
I am in front of a stupid screen
That can't even understand symbols without my help.

THE OUTCOME

I AM MISTAKEN FOR A STUDENT

I sit at my desk.
Far from the first row of students
Ending the day with Expo all over my hands
I teach lessons
Where students' eyes are closed
Or with blank stares, wondering why they have to be here
I write the answer key
To answer students' questions
Questions about material I have taught them
I write emails
To parents telling them their child is failing
To administration that a student has skipped my class

I am a teacher, mistaken for a student,
Maybe it's because of my
Height or hair or shoes or pink water bottle
Or maybe it's because I walk in with a backpack on

Or maybe it's because I will always,
Be a student in my eyes.

FREAKY FRIDAY

Five am beeps
Freshly ironed clothes laid out the night before
Hanging next to ripped jeans and cropped tops
I put on enough foundation to disguise my teenage acne

The coffee pot shrieks
I pour until the cup is about to spill

The ironed clothes, foundation, and overflowing coffee
Get into my stickered 2007 Subaru Outback
That I hope makes the twenty-mile drive to school

The classroom clock strikes six-thirty as I set down my bag,
Immediately put in headphones to
Watch The Vampire Diaries
Print papers from the copy machine
Reorganize desks
Plan lessons,
Mentally prepare to teach kids five years younger than me.

The clock strikes two as I slump in my chair
I leave all my work on my desk, hurrying to my car,
Hoping it makes the twenty-mile drive home

I place my dirty coffee cup next to the sink
Running upstairs to change into
My ripped jeans and cropped top
Remove my foundation with a makeup wipe
Jump onto my bed,
And turn on the Vampire Diaries.

MISS WEAVER'S CLASS

Have you seen Spiderman No Way Home?

You have Dunks?

Are you going to the game tonight?

What do you put in your coffee?

Can you go over that question again? I have no idea what you just said.

What are you doing this weekend?

Can we have the homework now?

Have you seen what Gary is wearing today?

Can we play Kahoot?

Where'd you get your pants?

Is this right or am I lost?

Are you dating Mr. Wood?

Can you give me the answer to question 3?

How many tries did the Wordle take you?

When is our real teacher coming back?

Do you have Tik Tok?

Are you going to teach us next year?

THOSE WITH THEIR EYES CLOSED

They enter, texting, headphones in, eyes closed
I mark A or P, determining if they will have perfect attendance

My throat is dry
My hands are full of paper cuts
My feet ache
My eyes have bags under them

But I never notice until the clock strikes two.

Before they all leave,
My throat is not dry
I don't notice the paper cuts
I can't feel the aches in my feet
I can't feel the bags under my eyes

I only think about those with their eyes closed.

THESIS DISQUISITION

INTRODUCTION

As a freshman in college, you do not choose your first semester schedule, other than suggesting a few classes that might sound interesting, but there are no guarantees. During college orientation, I sat down with the head of the math department with a piece of paper that had my first semester schedule. It read: “Calculus 1, Intermediate Spanish 1, Introduction to Creative Writing, Success in College, and Civil: Past/Present/Future 1.” As a math major, I was confused at my schedule and how seriously they took my suggestions of maybe taking a writing class and taking Spanish. I was nervous about if I would enjoy my schedule. When the semester started, I was skeptical about taking a creative writing class, as I had only taken college level English classes in high school.

On my first day of college, I had my Calculus class. In Calculus 1, I was in a lecture hall with eighty other students, writing notes the whole class period. This course was in a lecture format and did not include any collaboration with my peers. The next day I had my creative writing class, where all of the desks were arranged in a circle. Every class, we would learn about literary devices and how to write poems and short stories, and always have at least ten minutes of class dedicated to free writing. In both classes, I felt at home. In mathematics, I think critically where in my creative writing courses, I think creatively. As I progressed through college, I realized that I did not have to only be a math major, but could also take creative writing courses.

When it came time to think about what I wanted to write for my honors thesis, there was no doubt in my mind that I wanted to write a poetry manuscript. Throughout the last four years of creative writing, I have grown fond of writing poetry, and knew that writing a manuscript would be the best reflection of my creativity. As far as the content

of my writing, I was unsure of my direction until I took ENG471: Literature, Gender, and Gender Theory. In this course, we talked about Edmund Burke's essay "A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful." This essay defines the sublime and the beautiful, and the characteristics of both. Burke writes, "Beauty should not be obscure; the great ought to be dark and gloomy; beauty should be light and delicate; the great ought to be solid, even massive" (Burke 2). Burke associate's beauty with femininity, describing it as small and delicate, and the sublime with masculinity, describing it to be dark and gloomy, the opposite of beauty. I think of sublimity as dark and grandeur in nature. In its time this essay influenced the definitions of femininity and masculinity, however, does not align with modern day definitions. These definitions of the sublime and beautiful insinuate that individuals should be put into categories, which is completely outdated. In this course we discussed when characters have characteristics of both sublimity and beauty and how they defy these definitions. For example, the creature in *Frankenstein*, by Mary Shelley, was outcast by the world, even by his creator Victor Frankenstein. The creature learned language and was as intelligent as any other citizen, yet he was physically hideous, aligning with both beauty and the sublime. Reading about these characters who were outcast made me think of modern-day society and how the world still tries to put people into categories, and if you don't fit into one, you're an outcast.

Growing up, I did not fit into the categories Burke wrote of. I was not the traditional feminine girl and would've considered myself more masculine. I was also one of the only Jewish people in my entire town and was considered weird for not going to church on Christmas. I grew up with two older brothers, which made all of my clothes,

their hand-me-downs. Instead of focusing on my appearance or my lack of friends, I focused on school. I excelled at reading and writing; however, I was grades ahead in math. I would sit in the back of my elementary school classroom solving math problems they don't give you until middle school. When I got to college, I was even more of an outcast, a female math major. I am one of three female math majors graduating in the spring, as well as the only double Math and English major at the University of Maine (that I know of).

Although I wasn't as physically hideous as the creature in *Frankenstein*, I felt like an outcast by my peers, who always asked how I could even like math. My poetry manuscript follows my journey from growing up as a little girl who excelled at math to an adult woman, who teaches math. Reading about characters who were in between the beautiful and the sublime gave me the idea to write about my own journey, as a woman in the STEM field.

PURPOSE

When I began writing this manuscript, my intention was to write poetry about math. I wanted to combine mathematical language within a poem. When this process began, I wrote a few poems with mathematical language, however, my main focus became writing poems about my experiences in a classroom setting. One of the first poems that I wrote was “The First Problem” which was a description of one of my first formal classroom experiences in middle school. I began writing more of these types of poems before I realized this manuscript was evolving to become not only poems with mathematical language, but my story. In order to combine poetry and math, I needed to show how I have done this in my own life.

My manuscript starts from elementary school and goes up to the classes I now teach as a long-term-substitute. In it, I am able to reflect on my life in academia thus far. Once there was a directed path to my manuscript, the writing process allowed me to relive my experiences and how I have grown as a person. When I began this process, I had forgotten episodes of my childhood where I was outcast from my peers. I had remembered that my classmates were confused that I liked math, however, I hadn't before realized how connected this was to my seclusion. I dressed and acted differently than the girls in my grade, and my few friends were all guys. I was as foreign as a monster in a lab. Once I got to middle school, I moved across town and lost all of my friends. To combat this loneliness, I focused on my schoolwork, specifically mathematics. Writing poetry about my experiences allowed me to recover these memories of feeling like mathematics was the only thing that would combat my loneliness. As I continued to write, I reflected on my college experiences and the

overwhelming major I chose. As I describe in my poetry, as the level of mathematics increased, the more effort I needed to put in. Being one of the only women in my college math classes was very intimidating, especially when I had to work harder than I had before to understand the material. I was told by people in my courses and professors that I didn't have what it takes, I felt alone in my pursuit. I prevailed and am now about to graduate with a mathematics degree. The intent of this manuscript is for other outcasts like myself to see that they are not alone and so that other women who feel that they are not good enough or not smart enough to pursue a STEM degree, don't listen to the backlash.

While taking mathematics courses in high school and college, I have noticed the complete lack of confidence in women as well as a lack of women in my classes. When I tell anyone that I am a math major, I am always asked "why?" and "that must be hard, why would you do that to yourself?" The stigma around mathematics and the discouragement of women to pursue mathematics is a serious issue that I have been dealing with for my entire college experience. This stigma stems from the lack of women in math related fields and the lack of confidence education instills in young women. I want to write poetry to bring down this stigma and explore how math can really be as simple as writing a poem or that writing a poem can be as complicated as solving a math problem. And when I began writing this poetry, I realized that in order to connect to other women in STEM, or to people who feel outcast from the world, I should tell my own story. I hope that my reader is able to relate to my story in their own way.

LITERATURE REVIEW

When I began my research, I consulted poetry about math and other poetry manuscripts to get an idea of how to start writing a formal manuscript. I specifically searched for poems that use mathematical language so that I would have an idea of how to use this language in poetry. In my initial research, I found many poems combining the language and form of mathematics into a poem. I also found several blogs of poets who claim that poetry and math are supposed to be connected. JoAnne Growney posted a blog on “Intersections--Poetry with Mathematics” a quote by Albert Einstein: “Pure mathematics is, in its way, the poetry of logical ideas” (Growney 1). This quote really opened my mind up to the connection between poetry and mathematics. In my math classes, I have always been told that mathematicians are useless unless they can convey their proofs to others. I simply thought this was about writing clear proofs, however, Albert Einstein’s quote alludes to expressing mathematics through poetry rather than just proofs. I found this quote very interesting and inspiring as I continued to write my poetry. This quote also inspired “A Logical Poem” in my manuscript.

Another quote by JoAnne Growney that was inspiring was, “Mathematical language can heighten the imagery of a poem” (Growney 1). This made me interested in how I can use the language of math to express imagery in a poem. For example, Lucien Blaga posted a poem on “Intersections--Poetry with Mathematics” entitled “Tally” which uses the mathematical idea of counting to explain the passing of time. The first stanza of “Tally” writes,

I tally in the ancient way.
I count like the shepherd
how many white. how many black

--days, all year round. (Blaga 1)

This first stanza explains tallying in simple methods such as which sheep are black and which sheep are white throughout an extended period of time, all year round. This poem explains the idea of tallying as the “ancient way” insinuating how inefficient tallying truly is. Counting one thing at a time would take more time than counting in pairs, threes, fours, or fives. This shows the obscurity of tallying that the shepherd counts his sheep slowly all year round. What is interesting about this poem is that counting is not necessarily an obscure mathematical idea, yet it is used in poetry. Using known mathematical language can be key in writing mathematical poetry. While I wrote my manuscript, I have sometimes become stuck on what exactly I should write about as there are infinite subjects in mathematics. Using simple methods such as the poem “Tally” inspired my future poems. I kept Blaga’s poem in mind as an example of how to blend simple mathematics into well-crafted poetry, such as my poem “Theory of Numbers.”

In trying to find poetry that involves mathematics, I came upon an article entitled “Can an Equation be a Poem?” written by Stephen Ornes, who points out that April is both Mathematics Awareness Month and National Poetry Month. Ornes goes on to explain how math can enhance poetry and how these two ideas have always been connected. I found this article to be extremely interesting as I saw connections that I have never encountered before. Ornes writes:

I think mathematical poetry is more than just a literary party trick: Math can propel a poem into an interesting and surprising place. That said, I don’t know if the reverse is true because I’ve yet to interview a mathematician who cited a poem as inspiration, but that doesn’t mean they’re not out there.” (Ornes 1)

Ornes discusses that math can make a poem interesting and surprising, enhancing poetry.

I agree with this source as I have been writing poetry with mathematical ideas and

themes, my poetry has definitely surprised me. Incorporating two seemingly different fields has allowed my poetry to become interesting and unique. Overall, these sources have helped me see the connection between poetry and mathematics and how I can use mathematical language to enhance my poetry.

After my initial research and writing a few poems, I began writing poetry about my own experiences in a classroom setting, rather than about math. During this part of my process, I did not do formal research but researched and reflected on my own experiences. I reflected on my time in elementary school through college by thinking about classes I have taken and even looking at past assignments. Upon reflection, I realized how centered my experiences were on gender. I always felt outcast from my classmates from elementary school to college as I was one of the only girls to actually enjoy math or admit they enjoy math.

Another major influence on my poetry is the movie “The Perks of Being a Wallflower,” directed by Stephen Chbosky and based on his book *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*. My poem “We Are Infinite” is based on this story. This movie and book have greatly influenced my understanding of what it means to be a wallflower, which is defined numerous times in my manuscript. This film follows Charlie, a socially awkward teenager, who recently lost his best friend to suicide. Charlie writes letters to his friend, telling him how he’s doing, as Charlie doesn’t have anyone to talk to. Charlie decides to go to a school football game where he sits next to Patrick, a rebellious kid from his woodshop class, and Sam, Patrick’s step-sister. Patrick and Sam decide to take Charlie under their wing and expose him to their crazy life and unforgettable drives through the tunnels on the highway. Sam tells Charlie that he is a wallflower in the line, “You see

things. You keep quiet about them. And you understand. You're a wallflower” (Chbosky). From my understanding of the film, a wallflower is someone who is different from the norm, a special person. The Oxford English Dictionary defines a wallflower as “a person who does not dance at a party because they do not have somebody to dance with or because they are too shy” (Oxford Dictionary). This definition explains a wallflower as being shy and not outgoing, similar to the movie definition. In my manuscript a wallflower does not necessarily have to be shy, however, they are different from the norm, such as a girl liking math.

I identify with this film because of how I have felt like a wallflower in my life. Two friends took Charlie under their wing and helped him open himself up to the world, just like I hope to do with the readers of my manuscript. I find myself always coming back to this film, each time having a different viewpoint based on what is happening in my life. I hope that the readers of my manuscript will be able to have different viewpoints, based on where they are in their lives, like how I come back to “Perks of Being a Wallflower.” There is no one way of reading any of my poems, and each poem could mean something completely different at each stage of someone's life. For example, this manuscript could be inspiring to a woman in high school pursuing mathematics. “Perks of Being a Wallflower” inspired me to write about myself and the concept of being a wallflower.

METHODOLOGY

As far as my creative process is concerned, writing poetry can be daunting at times, especially if you are not in the creative mindset. For these poems I have taken time to think about my experiences as a woman in a math class, and have thought about how different math concepts can relate to poetry. For example, the inspiration for my poem “Functions” stemmed from thinking of the basic properties of a function, and how they could connect to personal relationships. Reflecting on my past experiences and knowledge has been useful in helping inspire more thoughtful poetry. In my weekly meetings with my honors thesis advisor, I am pushed to think more about connecting the language of math into poetry, which inspired “Introduction to Real Analysis” and “Introduction to Real Analysis Part 2.” “Introduction to Real Analysis” uses very technical language, mimicking the style of a proof, while “Introduction to Real Analysis 2” uses similar language but applies it to a romantic relationship. Mirroring two poems which each have the same end result but different content shows how the language of math and poetry can enhance one another. These two poems explore how poetry might help unlock the key to understanding mathematics.

While writing poetry, I noticed my tendency to mirror poems and ideas within poems. For example, the poem “Blue and Pink Walls” mirrors the ideas of growing up as a girl with growing up as a boy. Each couplet mirrored the previous one:

When you are born around pink painted walls and a pink bonnet,
You are told that you are a girl.

When you are born around blue painted walls and a blue hat,
You are told that you are a boy. (8)

In the first couplet, it describes being born with pink walls in your bedroom that is associated with you being a girl. The next couplet describes being born with blue walls in your bedroom, that is associated with you being a boy. I do this technique in many of my poems in order to emphasize the duality in everything. There are also instances where after I wrote a poem, I felt the need to write the other side of the poem. For example, after I wrote “Pink”, which describes my definition of a traditional feminine women, I felt obligated to write the poem “Blue”, which describes the extreme alternative, an athletic boy. I also compare opposites, with the overall content of my manuscript, as I compare mathematics with English.

My creative approach to writing a poem begins by getting myself into a mindset to reflect on my past and present experiences of being a woman in mathematics. Once I have myself in this mindset, I am able to use my logical mathematical skills to write ideas or complete poems. Although I do not typically write in traditional form, I am very structured and logical when it comes to writing a poem because of my mathematical background. For example, “Blue and Pink Walls” has eleven couplets of similar rhythm and a stanza of one line at the end. In this poem I use anaphora, the repetition of words at the beginning of a line, when I repeat “When you are told” at the first line of each couplet. Along with anaphora, I also write list poems such as “Introduction to Abstract Algebra,” where I list everything that I did in the span of fifty-five hours. Although my manuscript is technically free verse, I use tools such as anaphora, repetition, consistent rhythm, and lists to structure my poems. While these tools have been useful in my creative approach, most of my poems have been written without the conscious use of figurative language. My poems consist of straight-forward language of everyday speech.

My manuscript is split into four sections: Growing Up, Introduction to Mathematics, 42 Credits of Pure Exhaustion, and The Outcome. The section that was the most planned would be 42 Credits of Pure Exhaustion, as I knew I wanted to write a poem for every mathematics course I have ever taken in college. These poems began as twelve blank poems with only the titles of the courses. I began with “Calculus,” reflecting back to my first course. To write these poems, I tried to put myself back into these classrooms and think back to how I felt and what I learned. For “Calculus” the first thing I could think of was how scared I was to be in a college-level math class. After writing these poems, I would workshop them with my thesis advisor, reading them out loud and discussing what each poem was doing to enhance my manuscript or what it was lacking. During these workshops, I would get inspiration for future poems I could write, such as after writing “Pink” I felt it necessary to write “Blue.” Other than the occasional inspiration or random burst of energy to write a poem, there was no logical step-by-step process to writing this manuscript. Some weeks I only wrote one poem, while other weeks I wrote four to five, it all depended on if I had inspiration or not. In some of the poems I have written, they did not turn out to be what I had planned but something else entirely. This is one of the things I find so appealing about poetry in that most poems I write are not planned but are simply my thoughts written down.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS

As far as the work itself, the poems in this manuscript mostly centered around themes of gender and identity. In the first section, “Growing Up,” my poems explore general ideas of masculinity and femininity and general insecurities that come with being a woman in a patriarchal society. The first poem “Feminine Masculinity” prepares the reader for the topic of gender by listing attributes that are not usually associated with being a woman:

Women hold doors open
Women lift weights
Women eat beef jerky
Women squat in the woods. (6)

In this stanza, I describe women holding doors open and eating beef jerky, attributes that are usually associated with men. I thought this would be a powerful opening to the manuscript to show the reader that women do not have to follow gender standards. This is not just about women in STEM, it is about breaking the stereotypes for women and men. The next few poems, I describe my background and how I grew up, to personalize my story. “Blue and Pink Walls” describes the stereotypical younger boy and girl, such as boys doing the manual labor while the girl is meant to be in the kitchen. This poem is followed by “Pink” and “Blue” which are two poems from the perspective of a female then a male. These two poems were specifically inspired by a musical I performed in, “High School Musical.” In this musical, Sharpay Evans, the role I played, is a traditionally feminine character who is obsessed with the star of the basketball team, Troy Bolton. Troy, however, is in love with a not so traditionally feminine cheerleader, Gabriella Montez. “Pink” is the perspective of Sharpay, who has pink everything with blonde hair, the ultimate stereotype of a traditionally feminine girl. “Blue” is the

perspective of Troy who is watching a cheerleader, Gabriella, before he plays his basketball game. This idea that a girl is so obsessed with the “perfect” guy who is looking at a completely different girl, speaks to not only romantic experiences in my life, but also academics. When I told my professors that I wanted to be a mathematics professor they told me it was impossible and I would never be able to get good enough grades or make it through a PhD program, without even having me as a student. I was judged before I had even received a grade in college because I am a woman. And in some respects, they were right, since I am not pursuing a PhD after I graduate, I am becoming a high school mathematics teacher. So, I may not have gotten the “star of the basketball team,” however, I never gave up on my dream. The next few poems have less to do with being a woman in STEM, but about general insecurities. “Doomsday” and “Unfit for Romance” are both what I would call depressing poetry. There are a lot of insecurities that come with being a woman in her early twenties. These poems are not necessarily how I feel at any moment, however, the darkest aspects. Specifically, “Unfit For Romance” doesn’t imply I feel unfit for romance, however, many people do feel this in the back of their mind and it's important to acknowledge our insecurities.

I have already touched on the last poem in this section, “We Are Infinite” as it was inspired from “Perks of Being a Wallflower.” This poem takes all of the ideas of being different from the constraints of femininity and masculinity and defines what a “wallflower” is. Despite all our insecurities, described in the previous poems, the poem ends with the line “we are infinite.” This idea carries throughout the manuscript, that no matter how much we are broken down, we will prevail.

In the second section, “Introduction to Mathematics,” contains poems about my experiences in a mathematics classroom, and some poems using the language of math. Most of these poems are the first poems I had written for the manuscript. “The First Problem” being one of my first poems, delving into my experience in a mathematics classroom. One of my first memories of enjoying mathematics was my sixth-grade class. I had just moved across town and did not have many friends, which resulted in me sitting alone in most of my classes. I have specific memories of sitting alone in the back of my math class, finishing all of my work on time and always being asked to help my classmates. Since I did not have any friends, I would just sit in my seat and write a really complicated long division problem for myself to solve until class was over. This poem is the first look into what it felt like to be an outsider. “Math Anxiety,” a few poems afterwards, describes the infamous math anxiety that students have. In my research, I have found that students may experience math anxiety due to the way it is taught. The International Journal of STEM Education conducted a study on math anxiety and found that “mathematics anxiety can be caused by several different factors. For instance, unpleasant teaching and assessment strategies for students, like time testing (Ashcraft & Moore, 2009) and assigning mathematics as punishment (Oberlin, 1982)” (Rozgonjuk, D., Kraav, T., Mikkor, K. et al. 1). Math anxiety may stem from the teaching methods for mathematics, specifically putting pressure on math assignments with methods such as timing quizzes or assigning math as punishment.

In my experience in high school, mostly everyone did not enjoy math and some people would refuse to even try. When I became a long-term substitute, I realized that students get a lot of anxiety around math, completely shutting down when they step into

the classroom. I try to take my research into thinking when I teach math, however, most students have already experienced pressure when it comes to mathematics. I myself struggle with anxiety around schoolwork and anxiety in my general life, however, I have never struggled with anxiety around math. I decided to write a poem to explain this after I heard my students name their anxiety “math anxiety.”

The next three poems in the manuscript explore a rational mind, an irrational mind, and my mind. Society has these expectations for little girls to play with Barbie dolls, play dress up, and wear the color pink. These expectations are explored in my poem “A Rational Mind,” combining the English and mathematical definition of “rational.” The English definition of rational is something that is based on clear thought and reason while the mathematical definition is one integer dividing another integer, where an integer is simply a whole number. Both definitions describe the term rational as something that can be deduced or simplified, just as women are seen. The next poem “An Irrational Mind” defines irrational, the opposite of “A Rational Mind.” “An Irrational Mind” describes wearing my brother's clothes and hanging out with boys, rather than wearing pink and playing with Barbies. An irrational mind is one that can never be simplified, there are no restraints that it needs to follow. Now, after describing extreme sides of both a rational and an irrational mind, I conclude with a poem that is a mix of both, “My Mind.” I go on to describe specific details about my own life, concluding,

I am irrational and rational,

I am a wallflower. (24)

This poem brings up the theme of a wallflower yet again, defining a wallflower as someone who is irrational and rational, a combination of these constraints. The next

poem “Math Was Always Hard” follows similar themes, of not being rational or perfect at mathematics.

When you major in mathematics, people automatically assume you are a genius or have a photographic memory because it is such a difficult subject. This could not have been farther from the truth for me just because I was good at math doesn’t mean that it came easy for me. This poem is an attempt to explain why I like math so much, explaining that it was simply a distraction from my loneliness that I ended up enjoying. The last line of the poem “I understood math, because it understood me” truly speaks to why I like this subject so much and although it was always hard for me, I persisted until I understood it. Following this poem, “A Logical Poem” is an attempt to compare a poem to a mathematical proof, explaining that the only difference is that a poem is a creative proof and a proof is a logical poem. This poem concludes that math is a series of logical poems, alluding to the Einstein quote, which is a perfect interlude to the next twelve poems that deal with my collegiate mathematics experience.

In the third section “42 Credits of Pure Exhaustion” I wrote a poem for each mathematics course I took in college, beginning with Calculus. I have discussed before, “Calculus” was inspired from the surroundings I first saw and feelings I first had when I walked into my first college math class. The next two poems, “Calculus Part 2” and “Calculus Part 3” follow the form of the first poem, however, each poem, I am less nervous about not knowing the material. The more math classes I took, the less nervous and less capable I felt, which is what I tried to convey in my poems. All of the following poems in the manuscript were made possible by reflecting back to my experience in each course. The following poems, “Linear Algebra” and “Introduction to Proofs” both take

the topics of the course and use them in the poem. In “Introduction to Proofs” I took the concept of a proof being a series of logical statements and used it to prove women can be mathematicians. I thought this would be clever in conveying exactly how practical proofs can be. The next poems in this section are based on my experiences, such as “Differential Equations” is a class where everything clicked and I could not recall a thing from “Introduction to Abstract Algebra.” In “Differential Equations” I explained the feeling I experienced when everything clicked, while “Introduction to Abstract Algebra” is a chaotic list poem attempting to explain the anxiety I experienced.

“Introduction to Mathematical Statistics” is a poem based on a statistics-based course where you mostly learn about probability, therefore I felt the need to delve into probability. This was also a class that ended up going online because of the pandemic, which brought out a darker poem about the probability that something positive in my life would happen. Another course I took online was “Numerical Analysis,” so the poem about that class describes a day in the life of staring at Zoom. The difference from being in a room of eighty people in Calculus to staring at a computer screen alone in my apartment was quite jarring. Coming to college, I was able to be around a lot of people, suppressing my inner wallflower, however, by the end of college, I identified myself as a wallflower once again. The last poem in this section “Capstone” is a complete juxtaposition to “Calculus.” I am not in a classroom with a teacher, I am alone staring at a computer screen trying to code. By the end of college, I am once again alone, still doing mathematics, only now I have the confidence in myself to know I can do this.

The final section, “The Outcome,” shows a sneak peak of my future after college, which I am already experiencing. I am currently working as a long-term substitute for

geometry at a high school in the midcoast Maine area, which is an interesting situation as I am a teacher who is still a student. In “I Am Mistaken For a Student,” I delve into how it feels to be sitting at the desk at the front of the room instead of a desk facing the teacher. This theme continues in “Freaky Friday,” which takes its title from the movie of the same name. In the movie “Freaky Friday,” a daughter and her mom somehow switch bodies and have to figure out how to get back into their own bodies. I used this idea in thinking about my two current identities of a high school teacher and twenty-one-year-old college student. My poem “Miss Weaver’s Class” is a snapshot of my classroom as a young teacher. All of the questions in this poem are real questions I have been asked while teaching. And the last poem of the manuscript, “Those With Their Eyes Closed” explores the idea of being a teacher who sees the wallflowers like myself when I was in high school. As a teacher, I notice the kids who sit in the back of the class or the kids who are afraid to admit they are good at math because they are afraid of being made fun of. I notice them, and this poem describes that while I am at school my focus is on those with their eyes closed, not myself.

In all of the poetry I write, I am writing across two different fields, mathematics and English. In terms of where my manuscript falls within the broader context of the genre/form and the literature review, it is difficult to define. My manuscript is free verse poetry that is across two academic fields. I am writing based on my own experiences or personas that I can take on for writing specific poems. I use common techniques in my poetry such as repetition, anaphora, alliteration, and assonance. In terms of the literature review, the poems that I found are using mathematical language in their poetry, however,

it is not based on experiences. With my unique experience of being a math and English major, my manuscript is a different approach to mathematical poetry.

CONCLUSION

This manuscript begins following a scared blonde-haired girl who felt out of place to a math teacher who is focused on those who lack confidence in themselves. Throughout the process of writing this manuscript and the disquisition, I have learned how far I have come as a writer and as a person. Coming into college, I was scared of my classes and wondered if I would be able to find my place, and I have now accomplished more than I ever thought I would, and I have not even graduated yet. This manuscript allowed me to reflect on my experiences and combine two things I love, math and poetry. I also learned the process of writing a formal manuscript and how many drafts of each poem are necessary to have a completed project. Writing this manuscript has been an amazing experience, and I cannot wait to share this with not only the honors thesis committee, but anyone who is open to reading poems combined with the language of math.

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