



Restor(y)ing Mathematics, Restor(y)ing Ourselves: A Spiritual Turn in Mathematics Education

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We are always in and of relation, both with respect to others and with respect to the work we carry out. So, our research methods reflect our desires and our sense of the futures we believe are possible. Our methodologies offer us the ability to deepen our relations with one another, including our more-than-human relatives (Gutiérrez, 2019). Therefore, as researchers, as we begin to open ourselves to new ontologies, new epistemologies, and new axiologies, we are better able to embrace a spiritual turn in mathematics education, one that can continue the work of our ancestors and begin to put ourselves back together. Elsewhere, I have articulated the basis of this spiritual turn as desire-based research and Indigenous futurity (Gutiérrez, 2022). A spiritual turn recognizes that we have all been affected by the grief of diaspora and are trying to find our ways home. The work extends a sociopolitical perspective (Gutiérrez, 2013) by highlighting the axiological (e.g., ethical) aspect of our work and by engaging notions of time in non-linear ways. I offer questions we can consider if we aim to embrace this spiritual turn: (1) *In what way(s) is our research desire-based? And whose desires are centered?* (2) *How are we performing futurity? What are our methods for moving into and inhabiting the next world? (What are our underlying theories of change?)* and (3) *What kinds of (mathematical) futures are we making? And what does that say about who we are becoming as researchers or persons?*

From the perspective of Indigenous futurity (Harjo, 2019), the concept of restor(y)ing allows us to engage with past, present, and future in entangled ways. *Restoring* focuses on bringing back that which has been erased largely by school systems and colonial scripts handed to us from the academy, as both places tend to reflect and perpetuate white supremacy and cisheteropatriarchy. *Restorying* is an act of radical dreaming that treats the future as a form of the present. By recognizing that we can gather under a tree for which the seed has only just been planted, we honor the ways everyday people and lands/waters constantly invent new patterns, relations, structures, and logics to reflect changes in the world. A key aspect of a spiritual turn is recognizing that the work we do affects not just the students, teachers, and communities with whom we work, it affects us as persons.

References

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