

Loving and Loathing: Portrayals of School Mathematics in Young Adult Fiction

Por: [Darragh, L](#) (Darragh, Lisa)^[1]

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Abstract

Images of mathematics and mathematicians are often negative and stereotyped. These portrayals may work to construct our impressions of mathematics and influence students' identity with and future participation in the subject. This study examined young adult fiction as a context in which school mathematics is portrayed and constructed. I used positioning theory and the notion of story lines to analyze a sample of 59 books. Portrayals of school mathematics within this sample involved multiple story lines, including school mathematics as being obligatory but not useful and mathematics classes as tense, terrible, difficult, and different but perhaps as places in which to find love. Portrayals of mathematics teachers were extremely stereotyped, and some girls were just as likely as boys to be positioned as able mathematics learners.

Palabras clave

Palabras clave de autor: [Mathematics identity](#); [Popular culture](#); [Societal curriculum](#); [Stereotypes](#)

KeyWords

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Información del autor

Dirección para petición de copias: Darragh, L (autor para petición de copias)

+ Univ Chile, Ctr Math Modeling, Beauchef 851, Edificio Norte, Santiago, Chile.

Direcciones:

+ [1] Univ Chile, Ctr Math Modeling, Beauchef 851, Edificio Norte, Santiago, Chile

Direcciones de correo electrónico: darraghlisa3@gmail.com

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