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From the Editor

The Network is growing in a natural and healthy way. The early response to humanistic mathematics questioned how it is defined. Now that question is rarely asked. Recent books such as *The Art of Mathematics*, *The Nature and Power of Mathematics,* and *Patterns in Mathematics* explore some humanistic aspects. Hermann Weyl wrote: "We do not claim for mathematics the prerogative of a Queen of Science, there are other fields which are of the same or even higher importance in education. But mathematics sets the standard of objective truth for all intellectual endeavors; science and technology bear witness to its practical usefulness. Besides language and music, it is one of the primary manifestations of the free creative power of the human mind, and it is the universal organ for world-understanding through theoretical construction. Mathematics must therefore remain an essential element of the knowledge and abilities which we have to teach, of the culture we have to transmit, to the next generation".

At the January '95 mathematics meetings in San Francisco, the Humanistic Mathematics Network will be assigned a room in the evening for an hour and a half. (Check FOCUS and the meeting program.) The room will have a slide projector and a VCR and monitor, so you are invited to share slides and videos. You are also invited to share poetry—your own or someone else's. You will have an opportunity to make a short presentation about humanistic mathematics. JoAnne Growney has arranged an evening of poetry reading at the San Francisco meeting. Please let me know your plans so that informal scheduling can occur.

The essays by Shobha Gulati, Susan Byerly and Jo Anne Growney have some points of contact. The course Female Voices in Mathematics reviews the struggle and discrimination that women have faced to be educated and recognized in mathematics. A math-phobic young woman is awakened to the excitement of mathematics by reading Marcia Ascher's book *Ethnomathematics*. Jo Anne Growney quotes a passage from *Gone With the Wind* where Frank learns, to his dismay, that Scarlett O'Hara is competent at arithmetic and business. "Now he saw that she understood entirely too well and he felt the usual masculine indignation at the duplicity of women. Added to it was the usual masculine disillusionment in discovering that a woman has a brain."

In *Space, Time, Matter*, Weyl says: "Not only in geometry, but to a still more astonishing degree in physics, has it become more and more evident that as soon as we have succeeded in unravelling fully the natural laws which govern reality, we find them to be expressible by mathematical relations of surpassing simplicity and architectonic perfection. It seems to me to be one of the chief objects of mathematical instruction to develop the faculty of perceiving this simplicity and harmony, which we cannot fail to observe in the theoretical physics of the present day. It gives us deep satisfaction in our quest for knowledge."

There are now over 1100 on our mailing list from every continent. Humanistic mathematics is growing as an influential concept. I am teaching a seminar on humanistic mathematics next fall. The first Ph.D. in humanistic mathematics may be awarded within a few years. The next issue of our journal will be mailed near February 1995. We'll try to maintain a twice a year schedule.

Your essays, descriptions of teaching or learning experiences, opinions, criticisms, book reviews, and discussions of "humanistic mathematics" and its place in the world are welcome.

Alvin White