

## Mental Logic: Two Poems

Ashley Delvento  
*Saint Bonaventure University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarship.claremont.edu/jhm>



Part of the [Mathematics Commons](#), and the [Poetry Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Ashley Delvento, "Mental Logic: Two Poems," *Journal of Humanistic Mathematics*, Volume 10 Issue 2 (July 2020), pages 553-556. DOI: 10.5642/jhummath.202002.26. Available at: <https://scholarship.claremont.edu/jhm/vol10/iss2/26>

©2020 by the authors. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons License.

JHM is an open access bi-annual journal sponsored by the Claremont Center for the Mathematical Sciences and published by the Claremont Colleges Library | ISSN 2159-8118 | <http://scholarship.claremont.edu/jhm/>

The editorial staff of JHM works hard to make sure the scholarship disseminated in JHM is accurate and upholds professional ethical guidelines. However the views and opinions expressed in each published manuscript belong exclusively to the individual contributor(s). The publisher and the editors do not endorse or accept responsibility for them. See <https://scholarship.claremont.edu/jhm/policies.html> for more information.

# POETRY FOLDER



## *Mental Logic: Two Poems*

Ashley Delvento

*St. Bonaventure University*  
ashleydelvento@gmail.com

---

I am currently completing a dual Computer Science and English degree. In the process of completing this double major I have taken a lot of both literature and mathematics classes. I often come across the idea that people can only be good at one of these two topics, not both. This mistaken theory ignores the commonalities shared by and essential to both disciplines, such as the creativity involved in problem solving or the logic necessary to construct both proofs and essays. In exploration of the intersection between mathematics and the humanities, we can not only create innovative mathematical solutions but logically inspired literary works. Keeping this exploration in mind, I created this collection of poems.

“Mental logic” is comprised of two poems that aim to intertwine mathematical themes with that of creative struggle. By coupling these themes of mathematical innovation and mental health exploration together, I aim to challenge readers to analyze their way of thinking through a mathematical lens. Thus, the purpose of these poems is to give readers the ability to see the ubiquity of mathematics and logic in their mental state.

The first poem in this pairing is titled “-ematics” and is a literary work that was created while solving mathematics problems posed in the University of Rochester Mathematics Olympiad. The poem itself takes the themes of probability and algebra from the Olympiad to frame a discussion of perceived social standards. The coupling of these themes exposes the implications of social standards through a vastly different angle than is usually considered. Creating a more logically driven definition of normality, an idea constructed on patterns and trends in social behavior, exposes the logical fallacy of holding the fluid human condition to such a standard. Gaining this understanding, one no longer has to subject themselves to the mental harm that comes from trying to find logical equivalence where none exists.

---

“Finite Speculation”, the second poem in the pairing, was formed while studying discrete mathematics for an exam. While studying different logical rules I began to consider how these rules applied to different elements of life. Ultimately, I decided, all elements of life are comprised of logic or the lack thereof. This idea began to plague my thoughts until I decided to experiment with it. I composed this poem to be an analysis of mental illness through this lens of life being based solely on logic or non-logic to test my idea. Because I was using this mathematical theme of logic, I felt that this poem should also take the form of a proof to be as true to the source analysis as possible. This poetic proof set out to prove the statement that there exists some subset of individuals within this world that are not ignorant to the implications of mental illness on a given individual’s life. After completing the proof, I realized that my idea was flawed. Even in falsehood, elements of life proved to be logical and therefore life became an element of solely different kinds of logic.

This pairing of poems, using different styles in reflections of different elements of math, have the same central goal: to create an analysis of emotional wellbeing through the lens of mathematics and logic.

–ASHLEY DELVENTO, Southbury, Connecticut, USA

Bring in that moment  
but an ounce of  
deliverance from that which  
the laws of reality  
have not yet quantified.

Bring in that moment  
but a mote of  
linear explanations of  
exponential failures as if  
traversing this timeframe was  
anything but fruitless.

Bring in that moment  
but a word spoken of  
the mental capacity of  
some for whom numbers exist in  
the same plain of reality as emotional  
analysis and strife.

And then bring in that moment  
but a passing mark  
for which some have revised  
estimates of their demise whilst  
others seemed to have  
lengthened with just the  
sheer accomplishment of a  
newly developed logic.

---

FINITE SPECULATION

Prove to me the cardinality of the set  
Composed of the illiterates and blind.  
Those not without sight nor scrutiny,  
But those without understanding.

Proof:

Individual elements of the set arbitrarily exist  
Within the construct of my mind,  
Echoing chemical undesirables laced between letters  
As the words trail from my mouth with micro-depressions.

Trace them back to the universal set  
Of kamikaze cells of cancerous infestation  
Trapped in the confines of the definition of my skin  
And the definition of a bystander.

For every infinite set mapping between mind and matter  
Exists a bijection between truth and falsehood,  
Creating a balance between imaginary improvements  
And real downfalls and discrepancies in my existence.

Therefore, there exists some individual  
Whom maps to me through functional societal norms,  
Out of guilt or true automatized nurture,  
Who inverses these words to benefaction.