Special Issue Call for Papers: Ethics in Mathematics

Catherine Buell  
*Fitchburg State University*

Victor Piercey  
*Ferris State University*

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

Part of the Applied Ethics Commons, and the Mathematics Commons

Recommended Citation


©2021 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.
Special Issue Call for Papers:

*Ethics in Mathematics*

Catherine A. Buell  
*Department of Mathematics, Fitchburg State University, Massachusetts, USA*  
cbuell1@fitchburgstate.edu

Victor Piercey  
*Department of Mathematics, Ferris State University, Michigan, USA*  
VictorPiercey@ferris.edu

*The Journal of Humanistic Mathematics (http://scholarship.claremont.edu/jhm/)* is pleased to announce a call for papers for a special issue on *Ethics in Mathematics*. Please send your abstract submissions via email to the guest editors by September 1, 2021. Initial submission of complete manuscripts is due December 1, 2021. The issue is currently scheduled to appear in July 2022.

The use and misuse of data has erupted into a global ethics crisis exemplified by scandals such as Cambridge Analytica, the Russian hacking of U.S. election machinery in 2016, the NSA hacking of private individual phone and online records, and mathematicians providing problematic statistical analysis for use in the Trump lawsuits to overturn the 2020 election results.\(^1\)

Increased computing power and the growth of modern areas of mathematical science such as predictive analytics and data science have resulted in considerable growth in the power differential between those who use mathematics and those who are subjected to the results of mathematical analysis. This raises the need for an ethical framework. This isn’t limited to those mathematicians who design algorithms that are used to abuse data. As Cambridge philosopher Anna Alexandrova declared at the recent *Ethics in Mathematics 1 conference* in April 2018, “No research, no matter how pure, is immune from social responsibility.” It is time that mathematicians recognize the importance of taking this responsibility seriously and training the next generation of mathematicians to identify and resolve ethical issues in their professional lives.

\(^1\)For background on these events and issues see the relevant Wikipedia articles [1, 2, 3, 4] as a starting point.

*Journal of Humanistic Mathematics*  
*Volume 11 Number 1 (January 2021)*
For this special issue, we invite papers about ethical perspectives concerning the role of mathematics in 21st century life. The special issue is intended to be a conversation regarding the profession of mathematics and the culture of mathematics as well as how we do it, how we live it, and also, how we teach it. We call for submissions concerning ethical problems connected with mathematics, case studies or examples of ethical dilemmas or unethical mathematical practices, position papers recommending action by professional governing bodies, philosophical reflections on the growth of the influence of mathematics and its ethical consequences, social and cultural barriers in the mathematics profession that inhibit the field’s ethical growth, and related topics. Submissions may also address the ethical teaching of mathematics, or critical and ethical considerations of the role mathematics plays in education.

We sought to partner with the open-access Journal of Humanistic Mathematics due to its commitment to presenting mathematics as multi-faceted and mathematicians as whole humans. Our struggles with ethics in our profession are also multi-faceted and may come in the form of traditional research papers, but these conversations can also be aspirational or a call for action — suited for editorial submissions, personal accounts, or poetry. We welcome all these forms for consideration. If you are considering contributing and have additional questions, please email one of the guest editors.

Proposals emailed before September 1st, 2021, that include tentative titles and brief formal or informal abstracts will be considered by the guest editors. The guest editors will respond by October 1st, 2021, and the full contributions will be due December 1st, 2021. The issue is currently expected to be published in July 2022.

Catherine A. Buell, cbuell1@fitchburgstate.edu
Victor Piercey, VictorPiercey@ferris.edu

References