



## Performing Math

A History of Communication and Anxiety in the American Mathematics Classroom

by Andrew Fiss

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### DESCRIPTION

*Performing Math* tells the history of expectations for math communication—and the conversations about math hatred and math anxiety that occurred in response. Focusing on nineteenth-century American colleges, this book analyzes foundational tools and techniques of math communication: the textbooks that supported reading aloud, the burnings that mimicked pedagogical speech, the blackboards that accompanied oral presentations, the plays that proclaimed performers' identities as math students, and the written tests that redefined "student performance." Math communication and math anxiety went hand in hand as new rules for oral communication at the blackboard inspired student revolt and as frameworks for testing student performance inspired performance anxiety. With unusual primary sources from over a dozen educational archives, *Performing Math* argues for a new, performance-oriented history of American math education, one that can explain contemporary math attitudes and provide a way forward to reframing the problem of math anxiety.

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### AUTHOR/EDITOR BIOGRAPHY

ANDREW FISS is an assistant professor in technical communication at Michigan Technological University in Houghton, Michigan.

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