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WHY IS THERE
AN ATHEMA
IN MATHEMATICS
??

-- A Philosophical Investigation in
Mathematics Education

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of
Philosophy in Education at Massey University.

William David Barton
1979
ABSTRACT

This work is a Wittgenstein-based philosophical analysis of mathematics education, primarily in the context of New Zealand secondary curriculum.

In Chapter 1.00 the aims of the Forms I-IV Syllabus are examined in detail with respect to the possible meanings of the statements contained there-in. The consequences and hidden assumptions of these meanings are elucidated.

Chapter 2.00 examines eight specific assumptions arising from Chapter 1.00 and from observation of mathematics teaching. Their consequences for mathematics education are discussed. Alternative assumptions are also considered.

Finally the history of mathematics and mathematics education in the United Kingdom, United States of America and New Zealand are summarised and then used to investigate the origins of the assumptions above.
PLEASE SIR, WHY DO WE HAVE TO LEARN THIS?
Acknowledgements

The thoughts developed in this thesis are the culmination of many years reflection and many discussions on mathematics education. However since deciding to write I have sought particular opinions and dialogue has been more specific. I therefore acknowledge in the text where particular ideas have come from, or in discussion with, other people. My thanks to them.

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