

Experimental Article

#GenocideMath, Problem Set 1

Anonymous¹

- 1) If 1 child is killed every 15 minutes, (a) how many must die before an entire future is extinguished? And (b), before a mother's heart ruptures into uncountable pieces? (results may vary) ما أُنْقِلُ الاسى ما أُنْقِلُ الاسى ما أُنْقِلُ الاسى ما أُنْقِلُ الاسى ما أُنْقِلُ الاسى ما أُنْقِلُ الاسى
- 2) If an apartheid ethno-state calculates the # of calories in which Palestinian life remains strategically malnourished where min (# of cal) 2000 kcal/day, what epigenetic trauma is passed down from mother to child to adult to womb in this infinite repetition of pain and death? [Assume $t = 75$ years].
- 3) $\sum(\text{dead Palestinian children}) \geq \sum(\text{all dead children from conflicts since 2019}) \geq 11000$
How many more must burn before you (reluctantly) agree that it is a genocide? (Oxfam, 2024)
- 4) Assume $E(X) = \mu = \sum x P(x)$. What is the expected value of Palestinian life?
- 5) Let $n = 2.2 \text{ million}$ lives, where 40% of $n \leq 18$ years old. How many must die before the West's bloodlust is sated?

Expected Calculated Responses from Republican politicians:

- All of them
- All of them
- All of them

¹ Due to the current political situation that this article addresses, the author has chosen to publish anonymously. This is the first submission we (the editors) have ever accepted to be published anonymously. When this request was presented to us, we embarked on a lengthy self-study of editorship and our roles in the academic enterprise. In this self-study, we reaffirmed our commitment to academic voices and reavowed our specific role in challenging the capitalist logic of academic knowledge production. This poem now appears here in *JTM-ME* with an appended editorial comment at the end, the reading of which we encourage.

- 6) How much more will it take for you,
White liberal man to say something?

Expected Calculated Responses:

- (redacted)
- (silence)
- (“both sides”)
- (it’s complicated)
- (we’ll need a subcommittee)
- (silence)

- 7) And you, White woman committed to DEI
in her Instagram handle?

Expected Calculated Responses:

- (silence)(silence)(silence)(silence)(silence)(I’m processing and
learning)(silence)(silence)(silence)(silence)(silence)(silence)(silence)
(silence)(silence)
(you’re being divisive)(silence)(silence)(silence)
(silence)(silence)(I don’t
need
To
comment on
everything that happens
in the world)(silence)(silence)(silence)(silence)(I need you to understand that this
is impacting my mental health too)(silence)(silence)(silence)(silence)(silence)
(silence) (silence)
(silence)
(silence)

[I hope the summation of your silence swallows you whole]

Editorial Note: There Are No More Universities Left Standing in Gaza

So, what about mathematicians? It bears mention that this violence is being carried out by a state that bills itself as one of the most important technological and scientific hubs in the world. Its crimes are committed only with the technical expertise of scientists and engineers with which mathematicians work and train. Its most prestigious technical universities aid the occupation in a variety of ways—not only through supplying it with brainpower and technology, but also by working directly with the military to facilitate the recruitment of soldiers both in and outside of Israel. Contrary to what many propagandists would have you believe, Israeli academic institutions (very much like American academic institutions) are not politically neutral bastions of intellectual exploration. They are complicit—in literal, material ways—in the maintenance of apartheid.

–Tarik Aougab, “X” in the Time of Genocide

We are aware that many readers will experience myriad powerful emotions when engaging with this piece, and we also recognize that some readers might position this poem as “controversial.” Emotions can be powerful and productive, but they can also close us off to growth; similarly, things we experience as “controversial” can be used to expand our worlds or they can be used to raise our walls. For these sorts of reasons, we consider it prudent to expand on our decision to (1) publish the piece and (2) to leave the author anonymous (for now). We will not aim to be exhaustive in conveying our reasoning, aiming instead to be as accurate as possible while maintaining brevity.

Why publish this piece? In short: It is brutal, beautiful, deeply critical, deeply human, its constituent claims are all corroborated with evidence, and the overall artifact builds on current research conversations in important ways. There is much critique nowadays of the ways in which mathematics can be used in actively dehumanizing ways (e.g., abstracting away the humanity of victims), and even some growing critique of our tendency to position mathematics among the sciences as opposed to among the arts and humanities. The present piece embodies the alternative: it presents mathematics *as the tool of an artist*, leveraging it towards humanizing the scale of violence that genocide embodies. Rather than just posing a critique of the status quo, it is also actively imagining and producing an alternative within its very form. Skovsmose (2023) has evocatively described mathematics as being a discipline of wonders *and* horrors, and this piece surfaces the turbulent effervescence of that dialectic.

Why publish this piece anonymously? In short: White (Christian, Imperial...) rage. We are intentional here in using the language of White Rage as opposed to White Fragility. The language of “fragility”, posed by Robin DiAngelo (2018), centers the feelings of the privileged; The language of “rage”, posed by Carol Anderson (2016), is more accurate to the reality of the marginalized. We don’t consider anything about this piece to be “controversial” because we don’t consider anti-genocide to be a controversial position, but we do realize this piece will be challenging to some readers because genocide is the status quo. We have opted to publish this piece anonymously because of the danger posed to the author by White (Christian, Imperial...) rage. We hope that sometime in the future, when it is “safe enough,” we can share with you who authored this piece along with offering space for the author to provide further context and insight on why this piece was written in the first place. In the meantime, we reaffirm the crucial role of academic publishing outlets in protecting and facilitating intellectual debate and pluralistic discourses, although, sadly, many of them do not rise to hear the music of this clarion. If the aforementioned is not, in fact, the foundational role of the academy in society—viz. encouraging the articulation of speeches

rather than censoring them—then we are not sure what is. At the time of this writing, there are no more universities left standing/operating... or journals publishing... in Gaza.

Nothing in my view is more reprehensible than those habits of mind in the intellectual that induce avoidance, that characteristic turning away from a difficult and principled position, which you know to be the right one, but which you decide not to take... For despite the abuse and vilification that any outspoken supporter of Palestinian rights and self-determination earns for him or herself, the truth deserves to be spoken, represented by an unafraid and compassionate intellectual.

—Edward W. Said, *Representations of the Intellectual*

References

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