

## SCI 199Y: Random Walks and Mathematical Discovery

### Discussion questions, week 16.

You have read the excerpt from the Harvard Assessment Seminars by R.J. Light; the two-page excerpt from “Overcoming Math Anxiety” by Shiela Tobias; and the tiny excerpt from “Women and Gender: A Feminist Psychology” by R. Unger and M. Crawford.

Working with your same group from the math exercise, discuss the following questions. [Note: We will have a bit more discussion of gender issues again next week!]

1. What is the research result discussed in the tiny Unger-Crawford excerpt? What significance does it have for women and mathematics?
2. According to the Tobias excerpt, in what ways are women “tracked” or “socialized” to not study math? Do you feel that these concerns are still relevant today?
3. According to the Harvard Assessment Seminars, in what four ways do women and men feel differently about their undergraduate experiences? For each of these four differences, discuss possible implications for women and mathematics. List as many implications as you can, and relate them to previous readings if possible.

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**Assignment for next week:** There is no reading assignment for next week. Instead, I would like you to think about recommendations for what different sectors of society can do to encourage more women to study mathematics. Concentrate on the following sector, according to which group you are in:

Group A – Parents.

Group B – Elementary and High School Teachers.

Group C – University Professors.

Group D – The Ministry of Education.

Group E – Newspaper Editors.