



Center for Research in Mathematics and Science Education

CRMSE Brown Bag Lunch

Chris Rasmussen, Ph.D.

San Diego State University

The Social Production of Meaning

Friday, April 10, 2009

12:30 – 1:30 pm

6475 Alvarado Road, Suite 128

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Abstract: In this talk I analyze how a particularly rich and complex inscription known as a bifurcation diagram emerged in an undergraduate differential equations class. I frame the analysis in terms of the construct of a classroom math practice and demonstrate how the brokering moves of the teacher and some students functioned as a mechanism for the initiation and ongoing growth of this practice. Reflection on the various broker moves led to identification of the following three broad categories of broker moves: creating a boundary encounter, bringing participants to the periphery, and interpreting between communities. Each of these brokering categories highlight the view that teaching and learning mathematics is a cultural practice, one that is mediated by and coordinated with the broader mathematics community, the local classroom community, and the small groups that comprise the classroom community.



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