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Mathematics Education through the Eyes of Two Worldviews - Possibility, Impacts, and Barriers

Drawing from scholarship within the fields of ethnomathematics, culturally responsive mathematics education, and Indigenous studies, this presentation explores epistemological questions and ideas related to both mathematics and the teaching and learning of mathematics. In particular, two theoretical lenses are used to 'view' mathematical knowledge, and the sharing and creating of that knowledge: the traditional Western worldview and an Indigenous worldview. This discussion of what knowledge is valued and how knowledge is to be obtained as seen through these two theoretical lenses reveals an approach to the teaching and learning of mathematics which has the potential to step beyond the dichotomy of the traditional and reform approaches that are at the foundation of the ongoing math wars. Within this transreform approach to the teaching and learning of mathematics, there is also the potential for the removal of barriers which have marginalized so many of our Canadian students, and in particular those of First Nations, Métis and Inuit descent. Finally, in recognition of the theoretical basis of this presentation, potential barriers to the embracing of this approach will also be considered and entertained.