

1015-01-271 **Deborah Kent*** (deborahk@sfu.ca), Department of Mathematics, Simon Fraser University, 8888 University Drive, Burnaby, BC V5A 1S6, Canada. *Benjamin Peirce and Educational Initiatives at Mid-Nineteenth-Century Harvard.*

Nineteenth-Century American science was both geographically and intellectually removed from scientific and mathematical activity in Europe. There was, however, a small group of self-appointed American scientific elites who self-consciously worked to organize the pursuit of science and to establish it as a legitimate profession in the United States. As the mathematician among them, Benjamin Peirce introduced major curriculum reforms at Harvard over the course of his career there, from 1833 to 1880. The archival record indicates Peirce's educational objectives and reflects his efforts to elevate the level of general mathematical education while working to reorient the traditional college curriculum towards one that would encourage scientific education and foster research.

This talk will discuss Peirce's role in educational initiatives at mid-nineteenth-century Harvard, including the Lawrence Scientific School and the elective system. Although his initiatives sometimes failed, Peirce had introduced Harvard to structured scientific education. (Received February 07, 2006)