

1042-01-6

Jeff A Suzuki*, Department of Mathematics, Brooklyn College, 2900 Bedford Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11210. *The Rise (And Fall?) of Factoring in College Mathematics*. Preliminary report.

Factoring polynomials plays a substantial and significant role in mathematics through calculus; college algebra texts generally devote an entire chapter to the topic, and instructors of later courses assume their students have factoring as a basic tool. It may come as a surprise to discover that factoring is practically non-existent in texts before the twentieth century. We will examine some of these texts, and suggest that the elimination of factoring from the curriculum is not only feasible, but a desirable goal in the reform of undergraduate mathematics. (Received May 01, 2008)