Maira Agnesi Essay, Research Paper

Maria Agnesi

Maria Agnesi was the first woman in the western world to have earned such a name in mathematics. She was not a typical child, woman, or even a typical student. Her childhood, published works, and aid to the sick have, in many ways, made her historical.

Maria was born in Milan, Italy on May 16, 1718. She was the oldest child of twenty-one children. Her father, Pietro Agnesi was a wealthy professor at the University of Bologna. Mr. Agnesi encouraged Maria?s interest in math and language by supplying her with many teachers and tutors. Her language skills began to grow greatly. At age five, she learned how to speak French fluently. Soon, by the age of nine, she translated Latin, from memory. Finally, at age nine, Maria released a speech to promote greater education for women. By the age of eleven, she could recite Greek, German, Spanish, and even the Hebrew Language. To further her young education in math, she participated in seminars with her father. These seminars spoke of

philosophical and mathematical discussions. Maria Agnesi was well on her way to becoming a successful mathematician.

At the age of twenty, in 1748, she began composing one of her most famous works; it was called the Istituzion Analitiche or Analytical Institutions. This textbook was originally meant for teaching her brothers and sisters. However, Analytical Institutions soon became more serious to her and was published in 1748. Maria dedicated her book to the Empress Maria Theresa of Austria. In return, the Empress sent her a diamond ring and a letter enclosed in a case of crystal, which was covered with diamonds. She also, for her great accomplishment, received a gold medal. Among the many that were congratulating her on Analytical Institutions was the Pope Benedict XIV. This book and its contents were noted to be one of the most complete, precise, and finished works of her time.

Another one of her contributions to the study of math was an equation that she had been credited for. The equation created a cubic curve when graphed. The equation is stated in the form of a\*squt(a\*x-x\*x)/x. The formula

was called the ?Witch of Agnesi? or Versiera. When Versiera, or the curve, was translated into English, the world was confused with the word ?witch.? This soon cause the name that we know it to be now, ?Witch of Agnesi?

Despite the talent Maria possessed in mathematics, Maria had a love for religion. After her father?s death in 1752, she withdrew from the science and math field. Maria began to practice religious studies and social work. She volunteered for time at the Pio Instituto Trivulzo. There she cared for the sick and dying women. She remained here until her time of death in 1799.

Maria Agnesi has touched the world with her childhood, published works, and aid to the sick. She has left a mark on the world with her accomplishments, still, to this day. Her accomplishments are still benefiting mathematicians and scientists with their studies.