

CCSU
DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES
VIRTUAL COLLOQUIUM

Tuesday, March 30

7:20 – 8:20 PM

<https://ccsu.webex.com/meet/jonessem>

EXPLORING MATHEMATICAL
IDEAS IN AFRICAN HISTORY
THROUGH SONA GEOMETRY

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Abstract: Mathematics is a human endeavor that appears in different, yet recognizable forms across continents, languages, and cultures. Ethnomathematics is a field of research that studies the mathematical ideas and activities that are embedded in different cultural contexts. Through the principle that people of every culture have developed their own mathematical ideas and traditions, ethnomathematics presents implications for classroom teachers by asking us to re-examine our beliefs and practices about what counts as legitimate mathematics, and how mathematical concepts can be taught. In this presentation I will share some of the mathematics of the Chokwe people of Northern Angola. They are known for their artwork and also have a tradition of creating elaborate drawings in the sand called “sona”. Together, we will explore some of the contemporary mathematical connections that mathematician Paulus Gerdes brought to light in his ethnomathematical study of the geometry of the sona sand drawing tradition, and I will share ideas of how sona geometry can be used by teachers in the mathematics classroom.

For further information:

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