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Robert Eugene Megginson* (meggin@umich.edu), LS&A Dean's Office, 6530 Haven Hall, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1045. *Participation in mathematics by American Indians: A case study in underrepresentation.*

To illustrate the interwoven complexities that make the under-representation of minorities in mathematics such an intractable problem, this talk will examine some of the factors affecting the participation in mathematics of the smallest of the three major under-represented U.S. minority groups. It will be shown how history, attitudes about the needs of American Indians for mathematics, mistaken theories about the very ability of American Indians to do mathematics, and other factors have all contributed to the problem, to the extent that hopes for a simple solution are not realistic. The talk will include a brief history of American Indian education to show how it has had some negative impacts on participation in mathematics, and also a brief look at some pre-Columbian Central American mathematics to counter the notion that American Indians are somehow inherently incapable of doing mathematics. In addressing these areas the presenter hastens to point out that he is not, by training, a mathematics educator or ethnomathematician, but an interested bystander to these areas who has spent several decades trying to figure out why so few people from his own ethnic background now participate in an academic area that is so fascinating and should be the province of all humankind. (Received September 26, 2005)