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It's just as well kids don't vote: the positioning of children through public discourse around national testing.

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Summary: The importance of mathematics or its alter ego 'numeracy' is being cemented in the public's mind with the instigation of national, high-stakes testing in Australia. Discussions about national testing in press releases, online news articles and online public comments tacitly attribute importance to mathematics. In these discussions, children are positioned as commodities, with mathematics achievement being the value that can be added to them. Deficit language identified some children as being less valuable commodities and less likely to gain value from schooling. In the same public discourse, the value of the sort of mathematics that can be assessed in these tests appeared to be so accepted that it did not need to be mentioned. This has social justice implications.

Classification: A40 C60 D60

Keywords: media; public discourse; national testing; children; social justice

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