

Title: Mathematics and its history, through literature

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Abstract:

Mathematics has always been part of the fabric of culture. References to mathematics in literature go back at least as far as Aristophanes, and encompass everyone from Dostoevsky to Oscar Wilde. In this talk I'll explore some of the ways that literature has engaged with mathematical ideas, from the 17th and 18th century obsession with the cycloid (the "Helen of Geometry") to the 19th century love of the fourth dimension.