



Bertrand Russell at Bryn Mawr

Distressing Math Collective: Thursday September 15, 2016 at 7 p.m. in Park 338

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As is widely known, the Department of Mathematics at Bryn Mawr College has a distinguished past. Among its early faculty were such luminaries as Charlotte Angas Scott, James Harkness, Anna Pell Wheeler, and the incomparable Emmy Noether.

But fewer people are aware of the strong connection between Bryn Mawr and Bertrand Russell. In 1896, the young Russell was invited to the Bryn Mawr math department, where he gave his first lectures in America. Decades later, the College provided a refuge for him and his family when World War II kept them on this side of the Atlantic. And we mustn't forget that half of Lord Russell's four wives were *alumnae*.

This talk examines how Bryn Mawr figured in Russell's life. Not surprisingly, given his tendency to take unpopular positions, the story holds its share of controversy. But, in the end, it is a testimonial both to Bryn Mawr and to one of the great intellectuals of the 20th century.