

# Hypatia

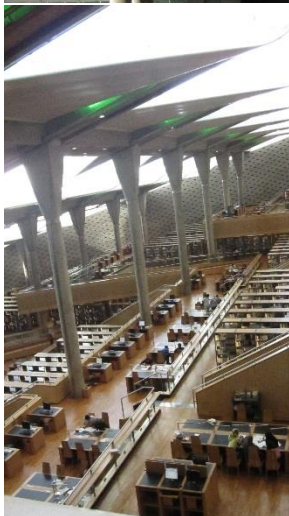
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[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hypatia\\_portrait.png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hypatia_portrait.png)

Hypatia is the first (and only ancient) female mathematician known by name. She lived in Alexandria, Egypt. The exact date of her birth is unknown, but was around 370. More is known about her death which was in March of 415. You will read about the gruesome details of her death in the required reading, an article by Michael Deakin, a well-known expert on Hypatia.

Hypatia's father Theon was associated with the famous Library of Alexandria and was also a mathematician. Hypatia was known as a gifted teacher and a Neoplatonist, becoming the head of the Platonist school at Alexandria around the year 400. She never married and was celibate by choice. The pictures below were taken by me in 2009. The first three are the modern library of Alexandria. The fourth is a statue at the library called Hypatia. The last 5 pictures are at the site of the Serapeum and Daughter Library, a place probably frequented by Hypatia (and maybe where she gave speeches) since it was a known meeting place of Neoplatonists.



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Many people have been inspired by the story of Hypatia. Raphael's *School of Athens* painting in the Vatican has a figure whom some have claimed is Hypatia. I took the pictures below in 2012.



There have been plays about Hypatia, books, and a movie, called *Agora*, in 2009.

## Required Reading

JOURNAL ARTICLE: **Hypatia and Her Mathematics**, Michael A. B. Deakin, *The American Mathematical Monthly*, Vol. 101, No. 3 (Mar., 1994), pp. 234-243. doi:10.2307/2975600

Available via JSTOR: [www.jstor.org/stable/2975600](http://www.jstor.org/stable/2975600) or  
<http://library.pittstate.edu:2091/stable/2975600>

## Optional Reading

- **Math Equals: Biographies of Women Mathematicians+Related Activities**, by Teri Perl, Addison Wesley, ISBN 0-201-05709-3, p. 9-13
- **Women in Mathematics**, by Lynn M. Osen, MIT Press, ISBN 0-262-65009-6, p. 21-32
- **Hypatia of Alexandria**, <https://mathshistory.st-andrews.ac.uk/Biographies/Hypatia/>
- **Hypatia**, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hypatia>
- **Hypatia of Alexandria: Mathematician and Martyr**, by Michael Deakin, 2007, ISBN 9781591025207