

➤➤ deLeeuw Lecture Spring 2011◀◀

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Wednesday, April 20

7:30pm

Cubberley Auditorium

“Linguistics, Poetry, and Mathematics”

ABSTRACT:

Mathematics pervades all the sciences, but it also lies at the heart of a number of fields in the humanities. Two important such subjects, which go back to ancient times, are linguistics and poetry; in fact, many of the modern mathematical tools used in probability and combinatorics, and applied in varied technologies such as those on NASA space missions, originate in problems encountered by linguists and musicians thousands of years ago. A look at some of these ancient, poetic problems—and their remarkable solutions through the ages—reveals much about the nature of human thought and the origins of mathematics.