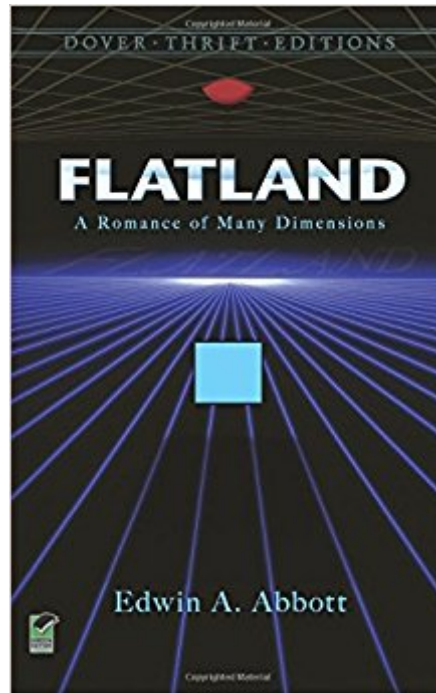




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Flatland: A Romance Of Many Dimensions (Dover Thrift Editions)



Synopsis

This masterpiece of science (and mathematical) fiction is a delightfully unique and highly entertaining satire that has charmed readers for more than 100 years. The work of English clergyman, educator and Shakespearean scholar Edwin A. Abbott (1838-1926), it describes the journeys of A. Square, a mathematician and resident of the two-dimensional Flatland, where women-thin, straight lines-are the lowliest of shapes, and where men may have any number of sides, depending on their social status. Through strange occurrences that bring him into contact with a host of geometric forms, Square has adventures in Spaceland (three dimensions), Lineland (one dimension) and Pointland (no dimensions) and ultimately entertains thoughts of visiting a land of four dimensions— a revolutionary idea for which he is returned to his two-dimensional world. Charmingly illustrated by the author, Flatland is not only fascinating reading, it is still a first-rate fictional introduction to the concept of the multiple dimensions of space. "Instructive, entertaining, and stimulating to the imagination." — Mathematics Teacher.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"One of the most imaginative, delightful and, yes, touching works of mathematics, this slender 1884 book purports to be the memoir of A. Square, a citizen of an entirely two-dimensional world." — The Washington Post Book World "Flatland has remained of interest for over a century precisely because of its ability to engage its readers on so many different planes in so many different dimensions." - Victorian Studies "This reprint of Abbott's Flatland adventures contains

an Introduction by Thomas Banchoff which is worth reading on its own. So if you don't have yet this book at home, go ahead and buy this edition." - Zentralblatt MATH "In 1884, Edwin Abbott wrote a strange and enchanting novella called Flatland, in which a square who lives in a two-dimensional world comes to comprehend the existence of a third dimension but is unable to persuade his compatriots of his discovery. Through the book, Abbott skewered hierarchical Victorian values while simultaneously giving a glimpse of the mathematics of higher dimensions." - Science News "One of the most imaginative, delightful and, yes, touching works of mathematics, this slender 1884 book purports to be the memoir of A. Square, a citizen of an entirely two-dimensional world." - The Washington Post Book World "Flatland has remained of interest for over a century precisely because of its ability to engage its readers on so many different planes in so many different dimensions." - Victorian Studies "In 1884, Edwin Abbott wrote a strange and enchanting novella called Flatland, in which a square who lives in a two-dimensional world comes to comprehend the existence of a third dimension but is unable to persuade his compatriots of his discovery. Through the book, Abbott skewered hierarchical Victorian values while simultaneously giving a glimpse of the mathematics of higher dimensions." - Science News --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

Fifty Years in the Flatland 2012 will mark the 50th anniversary in print with Dover of one of the most significant and influential books of the past century and a half. The mathematical, satirical, and religious allegory Flatland by a little-known but immensely prolific Victorian English schoolmaster and theologian Edwin Abbott Abbott, was first published anonymously in England in 1884. Abbott wrote it under the name "A Square." The unique geometrical romance which is Flatland posited a world and its inhabitants that exist in only two dimensions and forces the reader captivated by the originality of this central idea to think deeply about the meaning of such a world. Generations of readers and students swept into the romance and fascination of geometry and other branches of mathematics and philosophy owe their introduction to this world to Flatland, which continues to entertain and stimulate new readers today, still going strong 126 years after the first edition was launched. Abbott revised the text somewhat for a second edition published just a few months after the first. Dover's 1952 edition was the first American reprinting of the amended second English edition and was published with a new Introduction by physicist Banesh Hoffmann. From the Book: "I CALL our world Flatland, not because we call it so, but to make its nature clearer to you, my happy readers, who are privileged to live in Space. Imagine a vast sheet of paper on which straight Lines, Triangles, Squares, Pentagons, Hexagons, and other figures, instead of remaining fixed in their

places, move freely about, on or in the surface, but without the power of rising above or sinking below it, very much like shadows – only hard and with luminous edges – and you will then have a pretty correct notion of my country and countrymen. Alas, a few years ago, I should have said 'my universe': but now my mind has been opened to higher views of things."

If Geometry ever somehow became a sentient being and decided to apply its newly sentient mind to writing, this would probably be the outcome. In real life it was written by an English schoolmaster in the 1880s and meant as a satire. I suppose it sort of works as a satire, taking on class differences and, more notoriously, Victorian attitudes toward women. In fact, the misogyny came across all too real and the author even had to defend his writing by cleverly disassociating in a preface to a revised second edition. Purely as a work of fiction it doesn't much to recommend itself, at least not the version without pictures, it's dense and dated and much too odd. It's also terrifically imaginative and original, but that alone just doesn't seem to be enough. It works as a novelty, but not as an enjoyable read. Or maybe you have to be in the mood for it. Or really, really, really into math. It wasn't particularly popular when first published, but seems to have achieved a sort of cult classic status since, partially due to discussing a concept of fourth dimension long before Einstein did. So it's an interesting story ideologically and so quick (Xist edition dedicates almost a quarter of it to a very detailed book club guide), but not exactly a pleasure read. Unless you're all about non Euclidian geometry and dimensions...then go for it. It's great for that. Otherwise kinda flat...no, no, that's too terrible of a pun. Let's just leave it at peculiar.

After watching the movie Interstellar my brain exploded. I wanted to know everything and anything about space and dimensions. I was bursting with questions so I picked up Wired magazine to read about their issue dedicated to the movie. One of the directors mentioned getting some inspiration and ideas from this book so I figured "Ehhhhh its \$3 and shorter than a chapter in my engineering text book, why not?" I went down the rabbit hole and it opened up a whole new door in my mind. It helped me better understand how objects and people from different dimensions may perceive each other. I bought Sphereland as well and highly recommend the two!

Had to buy this for my daughters summer reading. I always read her books too and I have to say I had a hard time getting through this book. It was a bit confusing to me. It seemed a bit boring. I would definitely not recommend as a good read. I did not tell my daughter my thoughts on it until after she had read it and she thought the same things. She is 14.

asks this question about the book, "How would you describe the characters?" with one of the available answers being "One-dimensional". The irony is beautiful here. This book is a classic short read. The concept of dimensionality has made it into common parlance, so the novelty of this book is a little lost in the modern age; however, read with the spirit of grounding abstract and mathematical ideas in our daily life, this book is a little gem. There are vast swathes of math that have yet to find direct application in engineering or whatnot; however, Abbott shows us that mathematical concepts also have the ability to provide fodder for novel metaphors to use in our daily lives. This helps provide context to our current beliefs and ideas, potentially shedding light on them in some new, thought-provoking way. For such a minimal price and a small demand on your time, I would encourage anyone to pick up this book.

A wonderful little classic from a hundred years ago that will get you thinking from different perspectives even today. Only about one hundred pages - an easy and pleasurable read.

Flatland is another science fiction classic that has been on my "must-read" list for years. It is also another science fiction classic that has proven to be, at least for me, a bit of a disappointment. In reading many of the low-star reviews, though, it sounds like the problem may be at least partly due to the particular edition I was reading. Several figures were referred to, but my edition had none of them. Evidently they add a lot to the narrative. The edition I read was called "Xist Classics", and had green, white, and red triangles all over the cover. The story narrative itself was something cannot read quickly. There is a lot of depth to the story, and the concepts are rather "cerebral" in nature. When one remembers that the story was originally written in the 1880s, when understanding of such concepts were a bit different, the depth is quite surprising. What I could not figure out, though, was why they never identified Time as the fourth dimension. Was that not an accepted theory at that time? From what I read in other reviews, it sounds like I should try to read perhaps a library edition to get the full concept of the story. Overall, the story is one that makes you think, and makes you try to think in different numbers of dimensions. I enjoyed the attempt, but I felt something was missing.

I specifically ordered this copy of the book because it was supposed to be the illustrated version. While it has illustrations, they are pixelated pictures of random old paintings that have nothing to do with the story. Aside from that, the book is full of advertisements for an audiobook. Not happy.

I love this strange little book. It has a lot of injustice based on gender and appearance, which was the author trying to point out problems in society at the time. We still deal with those issues. My teen has read it and gave a copy of this book to her high school English teacher and to her Algebra 2 teacher as end of year gifts. Neither had ever read the book and she was surprised. The characters in the book are all shapes and how many lines they have affects their social status. It's a thin book but not for everyone. If you don't normally read in your spare time, then this isn't for you. If your idea of reading is a paperback romance novel, then you probably won't get the ideas in this book at all. Intellectuals typically enjoy discussing this book though.

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