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Filling the Void: Speaking to the Others

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A survey of subscribers to science magazines reveals that roughly 80% of the audience is white, male, well-educated and over forty. During a 20-year career as a freelance writer, Margaret Wertheim has been developing ways to communicate about the physical sciences to non-canonical audiences. For ten years in her native Australia, she wrote columns about science and technology for women's magazines. For the Australian Broadcasting Corporation she wrote and directed a six-part television series, called Catalyst, aimed at teenage girls. Wertheim has written for almost every conceivable medium, including interactive video. In Los Angeles she writes the Quark Soup column for the LA Weekly, sister paper to the Village Voice, and is a regular contributor to the Los Angeles Times and New York Times Science Section. She has recently established The Institute For Figuring, a maverick organization that presents lectures and exhibitions about the poetic dimensions of science and mathematics. In this talk she will discuss how to communicate with audiences who have never heard of Schrödinger's Cat.