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Joan Birman

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Joan Sylvia Birman née *Lyttle* (1927 -) American mathematician and educator. Considered one of the pioneers of braid theory, she has published extensively on the topic. Now a professor emeritus at Columbia University, she has won several awards since 1974, such as the Chauvenet Prize in 1996. Birman currently has a National Science Foundation grant to further research braids.

Birman has <http://planetmath.org/ErdHosNumberErdős> number 3: she co-authored “Abelian and solvable subgroups of mapping class groups of surfaces” in *Duke Math. J.* **50** No. 4 with Alex Lubotzky, who co-authored “Discrete groups of slow subgroup growth” in *Israel J. Math.* **96** with László Pyber, who co-authored “Isomorphic subgraphs in a graph” in *Colloquium Math. Soc. János Bolyai* **52** with Erdős.