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The human part of the equation

Too often, in the name of rigor or simply due to lack of time, we choose not to talk about the human beings behind important developments in mathematical theory or to explain what led them to the theorems they worked on. In doing so, we fail to capture the excitement involved in discovering new mathematical concepts. We also miss an opportunity to reach out to young students who might otherwise have been attracted to math and find pleasure in exploring the fascinating world of mathematical sciences. Investigating the life of mathematicians will often help one understand why they succeeded where others failed. In this presentation, we will examine how math education and math outreach could benefit from a more people-oriented approach. We will also point out various international activities in math education and math outreach which have proved successful.