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**Ben Klaff\*** (klaff@math.uic.edu) and **Peter B. Shalen**. *Modular character varieties of knots.*

I'll discuss some of the ways in which the number theory and algebraic geometry of the  $SL(2)$ -character variety (over a finite field) of a hyperbolic knot can be used to draw conclusions about the algebraic structure of the knot group and the coverings of the knot. (Received February 02, 2009)