

AAS Committee on the Status of Women  
Issue of October 18, 2019

eds: JoEllen McBride, Nicolle Zellner, Heather Flewelling, Maria Patterson, and  
Alessandra Aloisi

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1. US Delegation to the 7th International Conference on Women in Physics  
From: Beth Cunningham via [womeninastronomy.blogspot.com](http://womeninastronomy.blogspot.com)

Every three years, starting in 2002, the International Union of Pure and Applied Physics has sponsored a global conference for women physicists and astronomers. About 200 women and their male allies from approximately 60 countries gather to talk about their success stories and continuing challenges in advancing the careers of women in physics and astronomy.

Read more at

<http://womeninastronomy.blogspot.com/2019/10/us-delegation-to-7th-international-15.html>

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2. Are We Pressuring Students to Choose a Hostile STEM?  
From: JoEllen McBride [[joellen.mcbride\\_at\\_gmail.com](mailto:joellen.mcbride_at_gmail.com)]

By Chanda Prescod-Weinstein

"Up until 20 years ago, Radcliffe College had a program for women in science who were about to start their first year of college at Harvard University. In fall of 1999, I was part of what would be the last class to go through this program, because I was also part of the last class to be enrolled in Radcliffe College, which was closed a month into that academic year. In the process, Harvard took over Radcliffe's endowment, created the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study and shuttered the program that produced cohorts of women studying science. It wasn't until 2006 that Harvard even bothered to open a [women's center](#).

"Today, it might be surprising to hear such a story, because programs to encourage women and girls to participate in science, technology, engineering and mathematics abound -- not just at Harvard but everywhere, it seems."

Read more at

<https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2019/10/11/do-minority-and-other-students-feel-pressured-stem-fields-opinion>

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3. The Style-Quantifying Astrophysicists of Silicon Valley  
From: Heather Flewelling [heather\_at\_ifa.hawaii.edu]

By Arielle Pardes

"Chris Moody knows a thing or two about the universe. As an astrophysicist, he built galaxy simulations, using supercomputers to model the way the universe expands and how galaxies crash into one another. One night, not long after he'd finished his PhD at UC Santa Cruz, he met up with a few other astrophysicists for beers. But that night, no one was talking about galaxies. Instead, they were talking about fashion."

Read more at

<https://www.wired.com/story/the-style-maven-astrophysicists-of-silicon-valley/>

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4. Viewpoint: Feynman, Harassment, and the Culture of Science  
From: Heather Flewelling [heather\_at\_ifa.hawaii.edu]

By Aida Behmard

"When family friends heard that I wanted to be a physicist, I was gifted not one but two copies of *"Surely You're Joking, Mr. Feynman!"*: (Adventures of a Curious Character). Mainly autobiographical, *Surely You're Joking* is a collection of anecdotes from the physicist Richard Feynman that span his youth, work on the Manhattan project, and experiences as a Caltech professor in the 60's and 70's, at which point he was well-established as one of the greatest minds of the 20th century."

Read more at

<https://caltechletters.org/science/feynman-harassment-science>

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5. Doris Lessing at 100: roving time and space  
From: Heather Flewelling [heather\_at\_ifa.hawaii.edu]

By Patrick French

"In the 1920s, growing up on a poor farm in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) Doris Lessing received impromptu outdoor lessons in space science from her mother, Emily. "Stones stood for Pluto, for Mars. I was Mercury and my brother Venus, running around my father, while she was the earth, moving slowly," she wrote."

Read more at

<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-02992-9>

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6. Trailblazer in astronomy and science is Delaware's contribution to innovation coin series  
From: JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride\_at\_gmail.com]

Annie Jump Cannon is going to be featured on a US Mint coin series honoring American innovation.

Read more at

[https://www.wdel.com/news/trailblazer-in-astronomy-and-science-is-delaware-s-contribution-to/article\\_471e4408-ec44-11e9-bab9-dfdf384081c1.html](https://www.wdel.com/news/trailblazer-in-astronomy-and-science-is-delaware-s-contribution-to/article_471e4408-ec44-11e9-bab9-dfdf384081c1.html)

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7. How I overcame impostor syndrome after leaving academia  
From: JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride\_at\_gmail.com]

By Desiree Dickerson

"The pursuit of excellence might have driven us to get high marks at university, but this perfectionism has become so ingrained that it fuels our need to forfeit rest as we work through the weekend. It underlies our tendency to amplify the criticism over the praise. We drag out deadlines as we search for something 'better' or 'more perfect'. Academia might benefit from this imbalance, but often our health as scientists does not.

"Looking back, I can see that this voice played a large role in my departure from academia. Now that I run well-being and resilience workshops for academic institutions across Europe, and work one-to-one with academics as an academic-resilience coach, I know I am not alone."

Read more at

<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-03036-y?sap-outbound-id=695865145305373976282A89F766F10B6CDD7B2A>

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8. Shared parental leave: making it work for the whole family  
From: JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride\_at\_gmail.com]

By Lynsey Bunnefeld

"My husband Nils and I work in the biological and environmental sciences department at the University of Stirling, UK, and we had our first baby in May 2018. Before our son Euan was born, we decided to make use of the United Kingdom's shared parental leave (SPL) policy. This scheme allows parents who meet certain eligibility criteria to share up to 50 weeks of leave, of which 37 are paid, in their child's first year of life. Our decision placed us among the 1% of all eligible couples nationwide who actually take the leave."

Read more at

<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-03019-z?sap-outbound-id=695865145305373976282A89F766F10B6CDD7B2A>

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9. Why the 2019 Nobel Prizes in STEM struggled with diversity  
From: Heather Flewelling [heather\_at\_ifa.hawaii.edu]

By Gretchen Frazee

"On Monday, Esther Duflo became the second woman [to win a Nobel Prize in economics](#) in the award's 50-year history. The French economist, along with Americans Abhijit Banerjee, her husband, and Michael Kremer, were honored for their work to alleviate poverty.

"While Duflo's award is being hailed as a win for female scientists worldwide, she is the only woman to be awarded a Nobel Prize in the sciences this year. Out of the 12 prize winners in physics, chemistry, medicine and economics, all but three -- including Banerjee, who was born in India -- are white men from either North America or Europe."

Read more at

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/economy/making-sense/why-the-nobel-prizes-in-science-are-struggling-with-diversity>

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10. Once, most famous scientists were men. But that's changing.  
From: JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride\_at\_gmail.com]

By Angela Saini

"I have something to tell you."

'I was ready to head home after giving a lecture about [Inferior](#)--my book documenting the history of sexism in science and its [repercussions today](#)--when a

soft-spoken woman approached me. She told me she was studying for a Ph.D. in computer science at a British university and was the only woman in her group. Her supervisor wouldn't stop making sexist jokes. He never picked her for workshops or conferences.

"Every interaction is awkward for me. I feel intimidated," she said. "Most of the time I just find myself counting every minute." Her plan was to see out the final years of her Ph.D., leave the university, and never look back."

Read more at

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2019/10/women-stem-gaining-recognition-feature/>

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11. Transitioning from postdoc researcher to gig-economy scientist

From: Nicolle Zellner [nzellner\_at\_albion.edu]

By Amanda Niehaus

"[A]cademia isn't what I thought it was. The work world is changing rapidly -- the 'gig economy' is upon us, and members of the next generation will probably work in [17 different jobs in 5 career fields during their lifetimes](#). Early-career scientists are now caught between the multidecadal jobs of their parents' and mentors' generations and the freelance, contract-to-contract workplaces of the next.

"[But] the gig economy gives us the freedom to pursue our passions and wildest dreams, while asking us to self-promote, self-motivate and self-direct. To keep up, we must be resilient, improve our skills and push continually for personal 'success'."

Read more at

<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-03021-5>

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12. NASA's First All-Female Spacewalk Set For Friday

From: JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride\_at\_gmail.com]

By Rachel Treisman

"The first all-female spacewalk in NASA's 61-year history is finally happening and will even take place a few days ahead of schedule.

"Friday's spacewalk is set to begin at 7:50 a.m. EDT and last about 5 1/2 hours, [according to NASA](#). The two astronauts will replace the faulty power regulator, which has been in operation since 2000 and failed to activate after new lithium-ion batteries were installed on the space station last week."

Read more at

<https://www.npr.org/2019/10/16/770743547/nasas-first-all-female-spacewalk-set-for-friday>

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13. Working Scientist podcast: How to inspire young women to consider scientific careers

From: JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride\_at\_gmail.com]

Two women won the 2019 Inspiring Science Award, one of two offered by *Nature Research* and the Estée Lauder Companies for their work encouraging young girls to pursue STEM careers.

Listen to the podcast at

<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-03127-w>

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14. Award recognizes efforts to inspire girls to pursue science careers

From: Alessandra Aloisi [aloiisi\_at\_stsci.edu]

By Amber Dance

Nature Research and The Estée Lauder Companies honour two initiatives to encourage girls and young women in the United States, Ghana, Nigeria and Pakistan.

Read more at

<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-03153-8>

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15. REGISTER NOW: Astro2020 Webinar on October 28 at 1:30pm ET  
From: JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride\_at\_gmail.com]

How should we determine the key priorities for the field of astronomy and astrophysics for the coming decade? The National Academies invite you to attend a town hall webinar on Monday, October 28, 2019 from 1:30-2:30pm ET as part of the Decadal Survey on Astronomy and Astrophysics. During the webinar, co-chairs Fiona Harrison and Rob Kennicutt will discuss the progress and current plans for the study. Their talk will be followed by a Q&A session with the audience.

Read more at

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/astro2020-town-hall-webinar-registration-76316593987>

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16. Extreme Galaxies and their Extreme Environments as Probes of Galaxy Formation Conference  
From: Gregory Rudnick [grudnick\_at\_ku.edu]

On behalf of the SOC, I am pleased to say that pre-registration and abstract submission for the conference "Extreme Galaxies and their Extreme Environments as Probes of Galaxy Formation", to be held in Reykjavik, Iceland, from April 20 to 24, 2020 are now open. We especially encourage applications from individuals identifying with groups who have been traditionally underrepresented in Astronomy and Astrophysics.

Read more at

<https://extremegalaxies.blog.ku.edu/>

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17. Workshop announcement: How to start a peer-led SVSH prevention program  
From: Wren Suess [suess\_at\_berkeley.edu]

Respect is Part of Research, a graduate student group in the UC Berkeley astronomy & physics departments, is excited to announce a workshop on Jan 16 & 17, 2020 designed to train physics & astronomy graduate students on how to start a peer-led SVSH (sexual violence and sexual harassment) prevention program at their home institutions. All graduate students-- from any institutions-- are invited to attend! The workshop is free of charge and food will be provided; unfortunately, we are not able to provide travel support.

Learn more at

<http://www.respectispartofresearch.com/workshop-how-to-start-a-peer-led-svsh-prevention-program/>

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18. How to Submit to the AASWOMEN newsletter

To submit an item to the AASWOMEN newsletter, including replies to topics, send email to aaswomen\_at\_lists.aas.org

All material will be posted unless you tell us otherwise, including your email address.

When submitting a job posting for inclusion in the newsletter, please include a one-line description and a link to the full job posting.

Please remember to replace "\_at\_" in the e-mail address above.

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19. How to Subscribe or Unsubscribe to the *AASWOMEN* newsletter

Join AAS Women List by email:

Send an email to [aaswomen\\_at\\_lists.aas.org](mailto:aaswomen_at_lists.aas.org). A list moderator will add your email to the list. They will reply to your message to confirm that they have added you.

Join AAS Women List through the online portal: Go to <https://lists.aas.org/postorius/lists/aaswlist.lists.aas.org> and enter the email address you wish to subscribe in the 'Your email address' field. You will receive an email from 'aaswlist-confirm' that you must reply to. There may be a delay between entering your email and receiving the confirmation message. Check your Spam or Junk mail folders for the message if you have not received it after 2 hours.

To unsubscribe from AAS Women by email: Send an email to [aaswlist-leave\\_at\\_lists.aas.org](mailto:aaswlist-leave_at_lists.aas.org) from the email address you wish to remove from the list. You will receive an email from 'aaswlist-confirm' that you must reply to which will complete the unsubscribe.

Leave AAS Women or change your membership settings through the online portal: Go to <https://lists.aas.org/accounts/signup> to create an account with the online portal. After confirming your account you can see the lists you are subscribed to and update your settings.

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20. Access to Past Issues

<https://cswa.aas.org/AASWOMEN.html>

Each annual summary includes an index of topics covered.