

AAS Committee on the Status of Women

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Alessandra Aloisi

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1. Kick-off Post for Two-Body Problem Series

From: JoEllen McBride via womeninastronomy.blogspot.com

The two-body problem refers to the complications of dual-working partners finding jobs in the same location. This is a special issue for academics for several reasons, principally 1) academics are more likely to be partnered with other academics and 2) jobs in academia are scarce and finding two in the same location is difficult. For women, especially those partnered with men, this becomes even more precarious as academics who identify as women are far more likely to [have a partner in the same field](#) or [within academia](#). They are also more likely to ["follow" their partner](#), resulting in compromising their career path for the ability to live with their partner and family.

The CSWA has recognized the impact of the two-body problem on careers for women in astronomy, and frequently posted to this blog. However, our last posts about this issue were in 2014, and we believe it is time to kick-off a new series, bringing in personal stories, insights from the hiring standpoint, and looking for solutions. If you would like to contribute a post, email the Blogger-in-Chief, JoEllen McBride (joellen.mcbride_at_gmail.com).

In this kick-off post, we are sharing an interview with Timothy D. Swindle, Department Head and Director of the Department of Planetary Sciences and Lunar and Planetary Laboratory at the University of Arizona, who shared his insight into how departments and schools can address the problem. This interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.

Read more at

<http://womeninastronomy.blogspot.com/2019/11/kick-off-post-for-two-body-problem.html>

2. New Video Interview Series from the Europlanet Early Career and Diversity Committees

From: JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride_at_gmail.com]

"As a part of Europlanet Early Career (EPEC) Network Diversity working group (<https://www.europlanet-society.org/early-careers-network/epec-diversity-group/>) we try to build diverse working environment for the young and early career researcher community. We interviewed experienced scientists and discussed about their life struggles, motivations and success. This series is specially aimed for the future generation of researchers who face difficult time in their early career.

"Recently we launched our first episode of this series, where we interviewed Dr. Rosaly Lopes, planetary volcanologist at JPL-NASA. Her piece of advise is 'Don't give up. You keep going. And everyone is going to have papers criticized, proposals rejected and also don't take it personally.' Do watch her journey here!!!"

Read more at

<https://womeninplanetarystscience.wordpress.com/2019/11/14/new-video-interview-series-from-the-europlanet-early-career-and-diversity-committees/>

3. How Henrietta Swan Leavitt Helped Build a Yardstick to Measure the Universe
From: JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride_at_gmail.com]

By Aparna Vidyasagar

"At a time when women astronomers were few and most often relegated to working as assistants, it was one such assistant who made a crucial and fundamental discovery about the nature of Cepheid variables. In doing so, Henrietta Swan Leavitt provided the key to solving one of the most significant celestial uncertainties of her time."

Read more at

<https://www.kcet.org/shows/lost-la/how-henrietta-swan-leavitt-helped-build-a-yardstick-to-measure-the-universe>

4. The Scientist Who First Showed Us The Double Helix: A Personal Look At Rosalind Franklin
From: Alessandra Aloisi [aloeisi_at_stsci.edu]

"...One of the most complicated cases of equity and the Nobel Prize is that of Rosalind Franklin. An English chemist, Franklin developed the methods that led to the capture of Photo 51 - the famed x-ray crystallography photo that directly led James Watson and Francis Crick to the discovery of the double-helix structure of DNA. But how Watson and Crick came to receive Franklin's photography is problematic - they obtained it without her knowledge from Maurice Wilkins, a researcher at the same lab. Wilkins and Franklin had a challenging relationship: as head of the lab, Wilkins never communicated to Franklin that she was not working under him and that the two were independent researchers."

Read more at

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/johncumbers/2019/11/21/the-woman-who-first-showed-us-the-double-helix-a-personal-look-at-roosalind-franklin/#42fca0344856>

5. Supporting Parents and Caregivers in Science, Engineering, and Medicine
From: Nancy Morrison [nancyastro126_at_gmail.com] and JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride_at_gmail.com]

"... the National Academies' Committee on Women in Science, Engineering, and Medicine is hosting a one day workshop to explore current state of knowledge on effective policies and programs that support working parents and caregivers. Topics we hope to discuss include the impact of family leave policies, flexible work arrangements and 'stop the clock policies', policies and resources that support mothers in STEM (e.g. availability of childcare, availability of lactation rooms, etc.), the impact of salary in different STEM fields on the persistence of mothers in STEM, and programs that support re-entry into the STEM workforce after a prolonged absence. Confirmed speakers include Shirley Malcom, Hannah Valentine, Mary Blair-Loy, Jessica Lee, Maureen Connelly, Kelly Mack, Kathleen Christensen, Sonia Esperanca, and Betsy Myers."

Monday, December 2, 2019
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM EST
National Academy of Sciences Building
Members' Room
2101 Constitution Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20418

Learn more and register for the workshop at

<https://mailchi.mp/nas/workshop-on-supporting-parents-and-caregivers-in-stemm-youre-invited>

6. The Long Road to Getting, and Keeping, More Women in Science
From: JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride_at_gmail.com]

By Chitra Kannabiran

"Women have entered into various scientific realms ranging from biology to rocket science in varying numbers. Across cultures, the trends are that more women take up 'soft sciences' and, among the so-called 'hard sciences', biological sciences have a higher representation of women than mathematics and physical sciences; engineering has even fewer women."

Read more at

<https://thewire.in/the-sciences/women-in-science-leaky-pipeline-role-models-boys-club>

7. Navigating the 'Old Boys' Club' of Science, With a Friend
From: JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride_at_gmail.com]

By Julie Beck

"This week she talks with two scientists, one from the U.S. and one from the U.K., who both study fossils of the same tiny plankton and bonded over their niche research interest. They discuss the competition and the camaraderie in academia's social scene, building a global community of colleagues, and the support they offer each other as two of the few women of color in their field of study."

Read more at

<https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2019/11/whats-the-social-scene-in-academia-like/602029/>

8. Why I'm not applying for promotion
From: JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride_at_gmail.com]

By Phil Cassey

"If scientists want genuine, rapid change, we must implement actions to address this diversity crisis. One such action is for male academics to delay their senior promotion until bias in their department or at their institution has been reduced and salary gaps have been 'balanced', or they see some other indicator of parity."

Read more at

<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-03487-3>

9. Want more women and minorities in STEM? Address social oppression in the classroom, says new research
From: JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride_at_gmail.com]

By Lehigh University

"According to German A. Cadenas, an assistant professor of Counseling Psychology at Lehigh University's College of Education, systemic obstacles exist for women, minorities and immigrants in STEM, as evidenced by low representation and education attainment gaps. There have been many efforts to close the STEM education gap in K-12, at universities and at the graduate level. However, much is still unknown about how to reach students attending [community colleges](#). Community colleges enroll about one third of all postsecondary students and very significant portions of all underrepresented groups.

"That is why Cadenas and his colleagues at Arizona State University created Poder, a five-week social entrepreneurship program with a focus on technology, and implemented it through one of the largest community college systems in the U.S. Poder, which means "to be able" in Spanish, aims to instill entrepreneurial and technology skills in underrepresented groups: women, minorities and immigrants. Key to the curriculum is engaging marginalized students in critical consciousness - an awareness of the impact of social and political forces - to address systemic oppression as they pursue educational and vocational pathways in entrepreneurial and STEM disciplines."

Read more at

<https://phys.org/news/2019-11-women-minorities-stem-social-oppression.html>

10. 5 Ways to Welcome Women to Computer Science
From: JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride_at_gmail.com]

By Janet Davis

"In some classes, I would sit in the front row with my best (male) buddies, pretending no one else was there. As far as I was concerned, this was between me, my friends, and the professor. In other classes, I kept to myself and receded into the background. Only occasionally was my difference called out, most memorably when a professor started class by announcing, "Now, gentlemen, settle down - and Janet, too." Of course, I was minding my own business, not making a sound.

Twenty years later, I am now founding chair of Whitman College's new computer-science department. Obliviousness is not a strategy I can justify teaching my women students today - especially not when we have all become painfully aware of the [persistent underrepresentation](#) of women in tech. Nor should students have to create the conditions they need to succeed. It is the responsibility of instructors and departments to foster an [inclusive learning](#) environment."

Read more at

<https://www.chronicle.com/article/5-Ways-to-Welcome-Women-to/247541>

11. The mental health of PhD researchers demands urgent attention
From: JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride_at_gmail.com]

By Nature Editorial Staff

"Two years ago, a student responding to Nature's biennial PhD survey called on universities to provide a quiet room for "crying time" when the pressures caused by graduate study become overwhelming. [At that time](#), 29% of 5,700 respondents listed their mental health as an area of concern - and just under half of those had sought help for anxiety or depression caused by their PhD study.

"Things seem to be getting worse.

"Respondents to [our latest survey](#) of 6,300 graduate students from around the world, published this week, revealed that 71% are generally satisfied with their experience of research, but that some 36% had sought help for anxiety or depression related to their PhD."

Read more at

<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-03489-1>

12. Are you guilty of equity offset?
From: JoEllen McBride [joellen.mcbride_at_gmail.com]

By Vu

"Equity Offset is like [carbon offset](#). Carbon offset, in simplistic terms, works like this: Companies or individuals pay for trees to be planted, or parks to be cleaned up, or other things that reduce carbon or other greenhouse gas emissions, in order to offset their own negative environmental impact. This allows them to basically continue polluting while feeling less guilty.

"James may have a different definition, but for this post I'm going to define Equity Offset as: actions that are aligned with equity but are used as excuses to avoid deeper work and to continue being inequitable."

Read more at

<https://nonprofitaf.com/2019/11/are-you-guilty-of-equity-offset/>

13. Job Opportunities

For those interested in increasing excellence and diversity in their organizations, a list of resources and advice is here:

<https://aas.org/comms/cswa/resources/Diversity>

- Non-tenure track instructor, Astrophysical and Planetary Sciences (APS)
Departmentt, University of Colorado, Boulder
<https://jobs.colorado.edu/jobs/JobDetail/?jobId=21523>

- Director, Lunar and Planetary Laboratory, University of Arizona - Tucson
<https://www.lpl.arizona.edu/director-department-head>

14. 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.

15. How to Subscribe or Unsubscribe to the AASWOMEN newsletter

Join AAS Women List by email:

Send an email to 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 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.

16. Access to Past Issues

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

Each annual summary includes an index of topics covered.

AASWomen Newsletter mailing list -- aaswlist@lists.aas.org
To unsubscribe send an email to aaswlist-leave@lists.aas.org