

Women scientists who made nuclear astrophysics

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Female role models reduce the impact on women of “stereotype threat” [1], i.e., of “being at risk of confirming, as a self-characteristic, a negative stereotype about one’s social group” [2]. This can lead women scientists to underperform or to leave their scientific career because of negative stereotypes such as that they are not as talented or interested in science as men. Sadly, history rarely provides role models for women scientists; instead it often renders these women invisible [3]. In response to this situation, we present a selection of twelve outstanding women who helped develop nuclear astrophysics - some famous, some less so. The final aim is to produce a calendar, which will be translated into several languages. This project is developed as part of the COST Action ChETEC (chetec.eu, CA16117).

References

- [1] See, e.g., "Delusion of gender", Cordelia Fine, 2010, W.W. Norton and Co. ISBN 0-393-06838-2, page 36 and references therein.
- [2] Steele & Aronson, 1995, "Stereotype threat and the intellectual test performance of African-Americans", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69, 797-811.
- [3] "...by moving a woman to the background, by making her disappear completely from the narrative, by minimising her involvement, by fiddling with the story [...], by diminishing or stealing her work, by confining her to the role of "wife of" or "sister of" [or "assistant of"], auto-erasure" (source <http://www.cafebabel.co.uk/society/article/georgette-sand-when-history-makes-women-invisible.html>)