

AAS Committee on the Status of Women

Issue of May 31, 2019

eds: Nicolle Zellner, Heather Flewelling, Maria Patterson, JoEllen McBride, and Alessandra Aloisi (guest ed.)

Today's guest editor is Alessandra Aloisi. Alessandra studies stars and gas in nearby star-forming galaxies with UV/optical/NIR imaging and UV/optical spectroscopy to infer their chemical and evolutionary state. She received her PhD from Bologna University (Italy) in 1999. She then landed in the US and launched her career as postdoc at the Space Telescope Science Institute (STScI), and as associate research scientist at Johns Hopkins University. Alessandra joined the research staff at STScI in 2003, working first for the European Space Agency (ESA) and transferring to a position with the Association of the Universities for Research in Astronomy (AURA) in 2009. At STScI, Alessandra started as instrument scientist for the Space Telescope Imaging Spectrograph and the Cosmic Origins Spectrograph on the Hubble Space Telescope, and became the lead for the team responsible for the calibration, operations, and user support of these spectrographs just before the Hubble Servicing Mission 4. She then moved to be the Deputy Division Head of the Operations & Engineering Division, and is now the Head of the Science Mission Office where she oversees the science career and infrastructure of STScI as well as HST and JWST science policies.

[AAS has migrated their email system to Mailman, so please check your spam folder if you did not receive the newsletter this week. It is no longer possible to subscribe or unsubscribe to the *AASWomen* newsletter by means of Google Groups, and we continue to work on developing new instructions. Please follow us on social media for updates and bear with us as we work out all the kinks. Twitter @AAS\_Women Facebook <https://bit.ly/2PkU9of>]

This week's issues:

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1. Maunakea Gender Equity and Inclusion Survey

From: JoeEllen McBride via [womeninastronomy.blogspot.com](http://womeninastronomy.blogspot.com)

By Jessica Dempsey

"Maunakea has the largest collective of astronomers in a single location - and the largest number of female scientists and engineers. After network and career building initiatives such as the women of Maunakea annual events - a survey was initiated to poll the demographics, experiences, and attitudes of the Observatories and astronomical institutes on the Hawaii islands to the challenges of equity and inclusion in our community."

Read more at

<http://womeninastronomy.blogspot.com/>

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## 2. The Hidden Heroines of Chaos

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

By Joshua Sokol

"Two women programmers played a pivotal role in the birth of chaos theory. Their previously untold story illustrates the changing status of computation in science."

<https://www.quantamagazine.org/hidden-heroines-of-chaos-ellen-fetter-and-margaret-hamilton-20190520/>

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## 3. Commentary: Celebrating and supporting African American women in physics

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

[African American Women in Physics](#) (AAWIP) maintains a list of all of the African American women with PhDs who identify as physicists, allowing connections with allies interested in promoting diversity in physics and other STEM fields. Later this year, the 100th physics PhD to an African American woman is expected to be awarded; thus, "AAWIP is both celebrating the trailblazing accomplishments of those who earned their degrees and emphasizing the progress that will be necessary to make the list grow far more quickly."

Read more at

<https://physicstoday.scitation.org/doi/10.1063/PT.6.3.20190529a/full/>

Find the database at

<http://aawip.com/aawip-members/>

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## 4. 8 Tips For Generating Creative Ideas From The Mind Of A 'Genius' Woman Scientist

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

Dr. Ingrid Daubechies, the first female tenured math professor at Duke University and a 2019 recipient of the prestigious L'Oreal UNESCO International Award for Women in Science (among other honors), shares eight tips for generating creative ideas. Among them, finding alignment between your goals and the goals and strategies of your organization is crucial.

Read more at

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/joanmichelson2/2019/05/28/8-tips-for-generating-creative-ideas-from-the-mind-of-a-genius-woman-scientist/#214c88982dde>

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## 5. Astronomer Enrico Ramirez-Ruiz appointed to endowed chair for diversity in astronomy

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

Dr. Enrico Ramirez-Ruiz, professor and chair of astronomy and astrophysics at UC Santa Cruz, is the inaugural holder of the Vera Rubin Presidential Chair for Diversity in Astronomy. "Ramirez-Ruiz has worked vigorously to support the promotion and retention of women and people from under-represented groups in astronomy and related fields."

Read more at

<https://news.ucsc.edu/2019/05/rubin-chair-investiture.html>

[Stay tuned for a blog post about Dr. Ramirez-Ruiz's appointment. -- eds.]

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6. Mary Sherman Morgan, The World's First Woman Rocket Scientist

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

By Dale Debakcsy

"On October 4, 1957, the United States received the greatest single blow to its prestige since the burning of the White House in 1814 with the announcement that the Soviet Union had become the first nation in world history to launch an artificial satellite into Earth's orbit. This remarkable achievement, the brainchild of former political prisoner Sergei Korolev, caught the nation utterly flat-footed. The US possessed some of the greatest rocket scientists in the world, but had spent a decade frittering away their talents on the development of intercontinental weaponry rather than space flight. We had to get a rocket up, and fast, to save face, but had not yet invented the fuel capable of achieving that feat. To craft such a fuel, the nation needed someone who was both a brilliant chemist and mathematician with deep experience in analyzing the properties of combustion. "

Read more at

<https://womenshouldknow.net/mary-sherman-morgan-first-woman-rocket-scientist/>

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7. Eastern European universities score highly in university gender ranking

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

By Giorgia Guglielmi

"The annual [Leiden Ranking](#) of institutes' scientific performance includes a measure of gender balance for first time."

Read more at

<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-01642-4>

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8. Commentary: Diversity in physics: Are you part of the problem?

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

Dr. Ann Nelson, Chair of the Department of Physics at the University of Washington, offers her perspective on diversity in physics. "If your career is established and you are not making an explicit and continual effort to encourage, mentor, and support all young physicists, to create a welcoming climate in your department, and to promote the hiring of diverse faculty members, you are part of the problem."

Read more at

<https://physicstoday.scitation.org/doi/10.1063/PT.3.3536>

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9. I Am Fed Up With All-Male Panels. Here's How We Change Them.

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

Some great actionable advice for making our conferences more diverse and inclusive.

Read more at

<https://www.phillymag.com/business/2019/05/28/the-problem-with-all-male-panels->

[manels/](#)

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10. An astronomer's poetic soul meets Dante's scientific mind

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

By Marcia Bartusiak

"At first glance, it seems an odd pairing of topics: In what way could Dante, the 14th-century poet, be linked with astronomy? But to my delight Tracy Daugherty -- essayist, novelist, and biographer of Joseph Heller and Joan Didion -- has uncovered a small gem within the history of astronomy. Along the way, readers become acquainted with the British romantics, Australian aboriginal astronomy, the folklore of India, and brief lessons on the sun's energy production and Einsteinian physics. "Dante and the Early Astronomer" is an eclectic and engaging look at the Victorian and Edwardian ages, from the perspective of minor-league astronomers working in the hinterlands."

Read more at

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/an-astronomers-poetic-soul-meets-dantes-scientific-mind/2019/05/24/704462ca-3eb8-11e9-9361-301ffb5bd5e6\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/an-astronomers-poetic-soul-meets-dantes-scientific-mind/2019/05/24/704462ca-3eb8-11e9-9361-301ffb5bd5e6_story.html)

If you cannot access via the website, a PDF version can be found here

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1HPKrWRoN2NWIuKyx1A-U2GVydn8wvu8i>

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11. 'Alien' turns 40: How the classic changed the game for women in action films

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

Actress Sigourney Weaver [told Reuters](#) that she believes the reason a woman was cast as the last survivor in the film "was shock value, because no one would think a woman would be the last "man" standing so to speak." Weaver ended up portraying the game-changing Ripley "only after a last-second change to the script that previously had an all-male cast."

Read more at

<https://www.goodmorningamerica.com/culture/story/alien-turns-40-classic-changed-game-women-action-63231045>

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12. How to Submit to the *AASWOMEN* newsletter

To submit an item to the *AASWOMEN* newsletter, including replies to topics, send email to [aaswomen\\_at\\_aas.org](mailto:aaswomen_at_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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13. How to Subscribe or Unsubscribe to the *AASWOMEN* newsletter

AAS has migrated the mailing list for this newsletter to Mailman. Please watch this space for updated instructions on subscribing and unsubscribing to the *AASWomen* Newsletter.

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14. Access to Past Issues

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

Each annual summary includes an index of topics covered.