

Chemistry Equality and Diversity News

Embracing a non-binary world

Much recent media attention seems to have focused on discussing concepts of gender identity and affiliation, and how this fundamental aspect of how people perceive themselves colours many areas of life other than relationships. Words and phrases like “genderqueer” and “gender fluidity” are occurring with increasing frequency, and the proliferation of new terms may leave people feeling slightly baffled, and nervous of what language to use for fear of causing offence.

One recently coined term of general conceptual utility is “non-binary”. It seems an incredible oversimplification to expect any aspect of human identity to fit a binary pattern, yet this is what societies worldwide have sought to adhere to, to a greater or lesser extent, for thousands of years, by creating socio-cultural constructs of maleness and femaleness and making life uncomfortable for those who refuse to conform. Only now is momentum really gathering to challenge, stretch and reshape these structures that underlie all gender-related inequality.

Scientists will know that nothing is ever as simple as it may initially seem – at early stages in school, science seems satisfyingly logical and reliable; then as you move on to A level and beyond, all those reassuring certainties disappear. Quantum mechanics is all about duality, uncertainty, superposition – a far cry from those early experiments where you load a spring with weights and draw a nice graph showing its elasticity. The acknowledgement and understanding of ambiguity, of multiple possibilities, is not the province of poetry alone, though Walt Whitman expresses it emphatically in his poem *Song of Myself* – “Do I contradict myself? Very well then I contradict myself, (I am large, I contain multitudes).”

The poet Fiona Sampson, in a recent essay, makes the point that containing the “multitudes” of ambiguity is a key indicator of the psychological functionality of an individual or a society: “Today, the refusal of ambiguity that characterises religious and other types of fundamentalism highlights just how key an understanding of the coexistence of multiple possibilities is to a well-functioning society.” She goes on to stress that it is not without its challenges: “Allowing ambiguity to exist means accepting, for example, that I’m not always right, that there are limits to what I can know, that more than one thing may be going on simultaneously...” Surrendering certainty is uncomfortable. But just as cutting-edge science cannot achieve anything worthwhile by regressing into secondary-school simplifications, we cannot progress in developing an equal and fair society while imposing an over-simplistic structure on such a core element of human identity.

Catherine Jardine, Equality & Diversity Group

Gender balance in academic chemistry and the PhD student experience

A recent Chemistry World paper highlighted the problems faced by the US in achieving good female representation in academic chemistry [Pipeline of US female chemists in doubt <http://www.rsc.org/chemistryworld/2016/03/pipeline-us-female-chemists-women-science>]. A follow up article by Carolyn Bertozzi at Stanford University from the American Chemical Society [Achieving Gender Balance in the Chemistry Professoriate Is Not Rocket Science <http://pubs.acs.org/doi/pdf/10.1021/acscentsci.6b00102>] suggests that the biggest drop-out occurs when PhD students decide on their future career path, with female students more likely to decide that a career in academia is not for them.



The article considers why female students consider Universities to be an unattractive workplace, with interviews with women suggesting that the poor supervision and management they experienced during their studies led to low morale and self-esteem. Other factors included feelings of isolation and exclusion and a concern about the challenges that females will face in terms of poor work-life balance. Carolyn advocates turning experiences gained during your time as a graduate student into positives; it is an ideal opportunity to better understand your strengths and weaknesses, find out which styles of management suit you, enjoy the autonomy and use it to your advantage (particularly when integrating family

and work commitments). If you feel you were mistreated while a graduate student then you have an opportunity to ensure that future students do not suffer in the same way; you can influence the future.

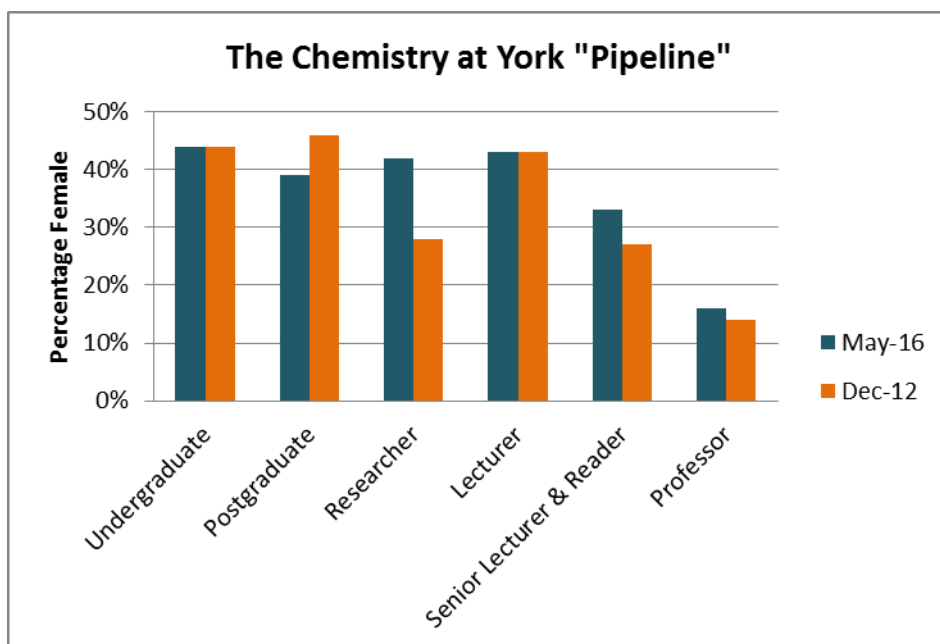
Carolyn also gives some advice to PIs: encourage your students to collaborate and discuss with others (as you never know when a light-bulb moment will strike), give them freedom to manage their own time, trust and respect them, and they will repay with loyalty and productive, innovative research.

We all know that the percentage of all PhD students who will go on to have a successful academic career is low (<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/features/the-phd-experience-this-far-and-no-further/2015113.article>) but our concern is that females are disproportionately discouraged from entering academia. So not only are we losing a huge amount of talent now, but also the time for a significant change in the number of female professors in Chemistry stretches further into the distance.

Here in Chemistry at York, we have worked hard over the last few years to encourage females to apply for research posts and have seen a genuine increase in the percentage of female researchers. However we seem to have lost some ground in the percentage of female PhD students in recent years (see figure below), so we need to encourage more talented female undergraduate students to consider undertaking a research degree.

This forms a core part of our Athena SWAN action plan and recent activities in this area include: training of recruitment panels in unconscious bias; surveys sent to alumni to try to understand decisions made regarding career choice; deadline for studentship allocation decisions made earlier; pioneering equality in provision of maternity, paternity and adoption leave for all graduate students; and wider inclusion of undergraduate students in Chemical *InterActions* events. Further activities are planned in this area, so please let us know of any suggestions that you have.





It is clear that our postgraduate research is strengthened by female researchers (55% of departmental prizes have been won by female students since 2013), so understanding the reasons behind this recent change in PG profile will help us move forward to a more representative balance.

Helen Coombs and Kirsty Penkman

“Yes, #ILookLikeAnLGBTEngineer... but I am much more!”

Chemical *InterActions* has been continuing its series of seminars about different career paths and experiences. These talks are aimed at a wide audience (including all staff and student groups) rather than being research-area specific. To reflect the inclusive nature of Chemical *InterActions*, many of the recent talks have included a diversity element.



The most recent talk was given by Professor Elena Rodriguez-Falcon, Professor of Enterprise and Engineering Education in the Department of Mechanical Engineering at the University of Sheffield. Elena describes herself as many things: female, Mexican, lesbian, a teaching specialist and an engineer - but reminds us not to think of her as a series of labels but as ‘Elena’ an individual. The title of the seminar, “Yes #ILookLikeAnLGBTEngineer... but I am much more!” reflects this sentiment. The session was very informal, and Elena was very generous in sharing her personal story, insights and advice.

Elena was introduced by Chris Unsworth, who attempted to list some of the many awards recognising her work in both teaching and enterprise. She received one of the first personal Chairs in Learning and Teaching at The University of Sheffield, has a string of learning and teaching awards, is a Principal Fellow at the Higher Education Academy and has been Highly Commended by the Princess Royal for her work promoting women in engineering.

We heard about the importance of role models, who encouraged Elena not to be afraid of making mistakes, allowing her to develop a philosophy that proved a powerful tool; to ask oneself, “what is the worst that can happen?”

This philosophy gave Elena the confidence to take some big steps. Moving to the UK, doing an MBA, joining the University of Sheffield, following a career in industry, going on to develop innovative

teaching modules on enterprise and business planning, founding the Enterprise lab which led to a £5M White Rose Centre for Excellence in the Teaching and Learning of Enterprise (WRCETLE).

Elena told us about how she keeps a box which contains all of the things she has ever tried to do: she has counted up the successes and failures and estimates that it contains 75% failures and 25% success, including applying for promotion to Professor which took several goes (until recently, teaching only staff were not eligible for professorial roles). This is a very valuable reminder: when we look at people who have 'made it', we only see the success and not all the challenges they have met along the way.

Elena's talk was inspiring for everyone, particularly for those considering the impact of being more open about themselves, and for others thinking about how to take the next step in their career - we were reminded to always ask ourselves "what is the worst that can happen?" [#ILookLikeAnLGBTEngineer](#)



Leonie Jones

Seminar and discussion with Professor Lesley Yellowlees

We were delighted when Professor Lesley Yellowlees CBE BSc PhD FRSC FRSE accepted our invitation to give a diversity seminar on Monday 21 April. Lesley is currently Vice Principal and Head of the College of Science and Engineering at the University of Edinburgh. She has worked with the Royal Society of Chemistry for many years and became their first female President in July 2012.

Lesley is a champion for the promotion of women in science and in 2011 was honoured by the IUPAC as a Distinguished Woman in Chemistry for her scientific contributions to the global chemistry community. She was the first female graduate in Chemical Physics from Edinburgh and her research interests include inorganic electrochemistry and spectroelectrochemistry, EPR spectroscopy, solar energy and CO₂ conversion.

She was awarded an MBE in 2005 for services to science, a CBE in 2014 for services to chemistry, and was elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 2012. She has honorary degrees from both Heriot-Watt and the Open Universities. Lesley is married to Peter and they have two children, Sarah and Mark.



The large audience who assembled in B101 on 25 April were not disappointed, as Lesley's enthusiasm and energy were very evident throughout her presentation "Promotion of Diversity in Chemistry". Her presentation started with her quote about running out of patience and having to take action to make a difference:

"I've often heard myself say we have to be patient, but there comes a time when you have to run out of patience, because if we don't run out of patience and we don't start demanding more from the system, demanding that culture

change to happen faster than it's happening at present, then I think we not only do ourselves a disservice, but we do the generations both past and the ones to come a huge disservice as well.”

Lesley discussed her personal journey as an academic and her long involvement with the work of the RSC, and stressed how important it is to keep on with actions and initiatives that promote diversity and inclusivity, as you can quickly lose any ground you have gained without continued effort. We should not underestimate the wealth of knowledge, skills, expertise and different view-points we are missing out on by not including individuals from diverse backgrounds in all of our teams.

Lesley showed how the drop-off points for females vary in different science subjects, but in all cases there is a drop-off with the percentage of women reaching the highest grades being very low; one of the highest rates of drop-off being in Chemistry.

Many of the audience were very envious when Lesley showed a photo of the new nursery at Edinburgh, just one of the areas where Lesley has convinced the University of Edinburgh to make an investment. Edinburgh are looking at after-school care provision, and funding for parents to have family and friends look after their children at home so that they can go away to attend conferences, and have recently begun working towards a Race Equality Charter Mark.

Following Lesley's talk, a Q&A session was held with PDRAs and PGR students invited to an informal discussion over tea and cake. Leonie Jones, the employability and diversity officer for Chemistry, chaired a lively discussion about issues affecting underrepresented groups in academia. In particular, the reasons for the drop-off in the proportion of females at higher levels, the impact of short contracts and moving around on individuals with partners and families, and the importance of support and encouragement in the form of mentoring relationships. It was great to see representation from across the groups and everyone appeared to find the session both interesting and enjoyable. Many thanks to everyone involved.



Professor Lesley Yellowlees and Leonie Jones meeting PDRAs and PGR students

The slides from Lesley's talk can be found at:

<http://www.york.ac.uk/chemistry/internal/staffinfo/committees/equaldiversgp/#tab-2>

Helen Coombs and Leonie Jones

International equality data highlight weaknesses at home



Over the last six months, Paul Walton has delivered equality seminars in Sweden, Ireland, Holland and Taiwan, gaining an insight into different equality practices across the world. This set of talks included a visit to the Taiwanese Ministry for Equality, a whole government department dedicated towards improving equality in Taiwan. Indeed, the Taiwanese government's efforts seem to be paying off, since Taiwan would rank second best for equality in the United Nations Gender Inequality Index (GII) when compared against other countries (Taiwan is not officially

recognised by the UN, so does not appear in the UN report and its GI needs to be calculated separately). <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data>

Sweden and Holland also do well in the UN's GI (2013 index) appearing 4th and 7th respectively, with Ireland coming in at 20th. But where is the UK? By the 2013 measure it comes in at 35th, way behind most Northern European countries. It's instructive to see that the overseas invitations to speak about gender equality have come from countries where there already appears to be a strong commitment to gender equality. It's also clear that there's still a long way to go here in the UK.

Paul Walton

Guidance for avoiding gender bias in reference writing

The University of Arizona's Commission on the Status of Women has produced a concise and helpful document pointing up a number of common pitfalls into which unconscious bias can lead everyone (male and female).



Facts highlighted include –

- Letters of reference for men are four times more likely to mention publications and twice as likely to have multiple references to research;
- Letters for men are on average 16% longer than references for women;
- Letters for women are 2.5 times more likely to make a minimal assurance (“she can do the job”) rather than a more strongly positive endorsement;
- Letters for women are 50% more likely to emphasize effort (e.g. using words such as “hardworking”) rather than emphasizing accomplishments or ability;
- Letters for women are seven times more likely to mention personal life (nearly always irrelevant).

It is recommended that anyone writing a reference should stop and check the language used (the guidance includes a list of adjectives to avoid and words to include, and to make sure that formal titles and surnames are used for men and women.

See the full guidance here –

http://www.csw.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/csw_2015-10-20_lorbias_pdf_0.pdf

Catherine Jardine

Mental Health Matters

16-22 May 2016 was Mental Health Awareness week with the theme of 'Relationships'. Some activities were held at the University of York and the Mental Health Foundation promoting the need for nurturing relationships.



The message is that we need to understand just how fundamental relationships are to our health and wellbeing. We cannot flourish as individuals and communities without them. In fact, they are as vital as better-established lifestyle factors, such as eating well, exercising more and stopping smoking.

10 ways to look after your mental health:

 <p>Do something you're good at</p>	 <p>Take a break</p>
 <p>Keep in touch</p>	 <p>Eat well</p>
 <p>Talk about your feelings</p>	 <p>Keep Active</p>

 <p>Drink sensibly</p>	 <p>Ask for help</p>
 <p>Accept who you are</p>	 <p>Care for others</p>

Recently the University of York shared the report from the Student Mental Ill-health Task Group commissioned by the VC to consider actions the University could take to better support students whose wellbeing is compromised by mental ill-health. The University Executive agreed to implement all the recommendations.

The VC said “The report reflects an excellent and thorough piece of work, made possible by the University’s outstanding academic expertise in this area. I welcome the clarity of the recommendations, and I pledge my personal support for their swift implementation. This is a very important issue for the University, and I look forward to working with colleagues from academic and support departments as we put in place the report’s recommendations.”

The Department’s Equality and Diversity Group also held a Mental Health action plan meeting in March (as part of the Athena SWAN work) and we are preparing a list of priority areas to try to improve the help and support available to staff and students – watch this space for more news.

Helen Coombs recently attend a Mental Health First Aid course run by Jo Hardy in the Health, Safety and Security Department. If anyone would like to find out more then please contact Helen (helen.coombs@york.ac.uk).

Helen Coombs

An introduction to Intersectionality

The Athena SWAN Charter introduced the principle of Intersectionality in May 2015. A year on, this concept is starting to be more widely discussed but I have noticed that a lot of people have not heard of it before.



According to the Equality Challenge Unit, [intersectionality](#) means recognising that people’s identities are shaped by several factors, which create unique experiences and perspectives.

Individuals may experience sexism, racism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism (thinking of the world solely from the perspective of able-bodied experiences), class discrimination, amongst others.

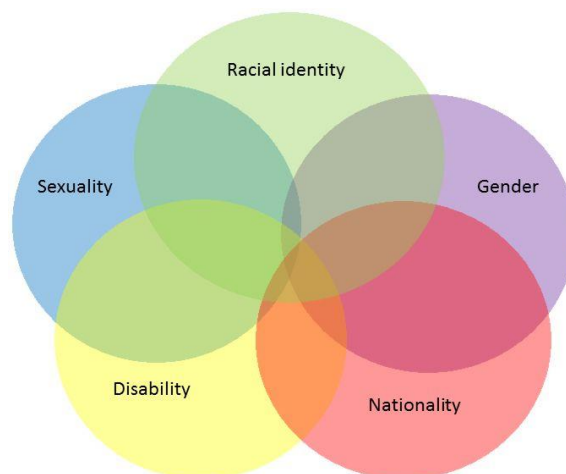
But importantly, rather than looking at various inequalities in isolation, we must consider the negative synergies between them. A useful example used by

Stonewall is that lesbian women experience a ‘double-glazed glass-ceiling’ where gender discrimination and homophobia combine.

The impact of intersectionality on employment has recently been highlighted in a [report](#) entitled *Forgotten Women: The Impact of Islamophobia on Muslim Women*. It summarises a number of CV testing studies from across Europe showing a 'gender penalty' for female candidates, an additional 'ethnic penalty' for individuals with Arabic sounding names and further 'headscarf penalty' when CVs contained a photograph, meaning ethnic minority, Muslim women suffered multiple forms of discrimination and were less likely to be selected for interview.

These studies remind us of the impact of negative stereotyping and the importance of selection panels being aware of their own bias. This is something which the EDG has been working hard to address in Chemistry with updated recruitment and selection guidance prepared by Eliza and Helen and the use of unconscious bias observers in both shortlisting meetings and interviews (see [Spring 2016](#) newsletter).

It is important for us all to understand the issues around intersectionality and continue to develop practices which benefit everyone. The department has extended the areas considered by EDG to include support for: Mental health including stress, Disability, Age, LGBT, Ethnic minorities and all categories of staff. This work is ongoing, for example the work on mental health which Helen discusses in the 'Mental Health Matters' article in this newsletter.



<http://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/athena-swan-faqs/intersectionality/>

<http://www.enar-eu.org/Forgotten-Women-the-impact-of-Islamophobia-on-Muslim-women>

Leonie Jones

Chemical *InterActions* Seminar: Unconscious Bias Training for Undergraduates



Unconscious bias training has become an important part of equality and diversity initiatives in the Department of Chemistry. The training is widely considered among the most engaging seminars attended by postgraduates and staff. Recently, a session on unconscious bias was introduced into the iDTC as part of the Employability and Professionalism workshop run by Leonie Jones. In addition, including equality awareness training in our undergraduate programmes forms part of our Athena SWAN action plan.

Dr Calvin Smith and Dr Joy Singarayer (pictured) have introduced unconscious training for undergraduates studying in the mathematics department in the University of Reading. Chemical *InterActions* invited them to the Chemistry Department to speak about the training last month.



The visit provided an excellent opportunity to share ideas and good practice over lunch with members of the Equality and Diversity Group. It was interesting to hear Reading's experience and to compare notes on equality and diversity training with UG and PGR students. We were able to

share our experiences of preparing an Athena SWAN gold submission and also some early insights into York's recent innovation in using Unconscious Bias Observers as part of our recruitment process.

The Chemical *InterActions* talk drew a large audience and it was nice to see a great mix of staff and students from all areas of the department. Calvin and Joy discussed all aspects of what unconscious bias is and how it affects all of our lives. Beyond this they discussed how unconscious bias can be introduced to undergraduates and the observations made that led to the most effective training environment. They also discussed the merits and intended aims of the training; the main aim being informing and guiding future leaders so that STEM can be a more diverse and therefore effective working environment.

It was also nice to hear from Calvin that

"The University of York, and in particular its Chemistry Department, has been hugely influential in our own Athena SWAN activities in The School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences at the University of Reading. Much of Reading's early involvement with the Athena SWAN charter was led by Professor Averil MacDonald, a York physics graduate, who has since gone on to promote under-represented groups in science through her work with WISE. The 2013 visit from Professor Walton to address our School on gender inequality helped build momentum and "kick started" local activities aimed at addressing unconscious bias in decision making which have resulted in the development of our student facing pilot on working with diversity (unconscious bias awareness training)."

Calvin's comments really highlight the importance of getting out there and sharing good practice between institutions through invited talks and visits.

The seminar was very thought-provoking and hopefully the messages and practices discussed can be put to good use in our own department's undergraduate programme very soon.

Chris Unsworth and Leonie Jones

Transgender awareness training for staff

As part of the University's activities around Transgender Awareness Week, a well-attended and highly interesting training session was provided for staff on Transgender Awareness. Rikki Arundel, who led the session, gave an in-depth talk about what it means to be Trans, the challenges faced by gender variant individuals and the importance of language (e.g. using neutral pronouns 'they, them, their' rather than 'she, he, her, his') to prevent misgendering of a person. Other points included:

- 'Transgender' is mainly used as an umbrella term to describe all gender diverse people – there are many other, often dynamic, terms which fall under this and individuals chose how they define themselves with these, if they choose to use a label at all.
- [The Gender Identity Research & Education Society](#) (GIRE) estimates that about 1% of the UK population are gender nonconforming to some degree. That's around 630,000 people.
- Gender Reassignment is a protected characteristic in law. In the UK it is a criminal offence to make an unauthorised disclosure of someone else's previous gender, once they have made a successful gender recognition application.



Overall the conversation was very open and Rikki encouraged the group to ask questions they were perhaps concerned to voice in other environments, so that clarity could be given. One of the most distinct messages from this session was that Trans issues affect all of us - from our day to day interactions with a range of people at work, through to our personal friendships and also to how gender and identity are portrayed in the media. We are all taught to 'be' a certain gender from an early age and questioning the validity of this, and the wider implications in relation to Trans issues, can ultimately benefit everybody.

A shorter version of Rikki's talk is here: <http://www.genderspeaker.com/tedx-talk-on-gender-identity/>

Eliza Bonello

Picture source: www.uwgb.edu

Parent... carer... scientist

The Royal Society has created a new web page and online conversation entitled "Parent Carer Scientist" to celebrate the diversity of work-life patterns of 150 scientists across the UK, with the aim of increasing the visibility of people combining a career in science with a family life.

<https://royalsociety.org/topics-policy/diversity-in-science/parent-carer-scientist/>



There is a booklet of stories to download and others available online, and people can participate via Twitter ([#AndAScientist](https://twitter.com/AndAScientist)). The booklet carries a foreword from Ottoline Leyser, ex York, who originally collated a collection of stories called "Mothers in Science" in 2008 as part of her Rosalind Franklin award. The new collection contains stories from both men and women.

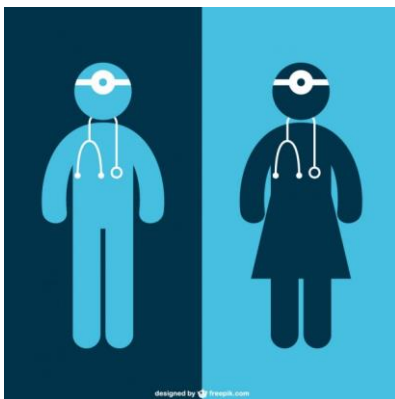
I loved the comment from Dave Haddleton, my first York research student. He was working in industry when his triplets were born and writes, "At the time company policy was for up to three days paternity leave. My manager granted me two days. With three children in intensive care and Maxine in hospital, I wondered what you would have to do to be eligible for three days."

Robin Perutz

[image: BBC]

Junior doctors and a widening pay gap

The ongoing battle between Jeremy Hunt, the Minister for Health, and the nation's junior doctors cannot have escaped the attention of even the most committed news-avoider. What has perhaps not been so widely publicised is the issue of inequality in the proposed new junior doctors' contract.



It was reported that the government's own equality assessment of the originally proposed contract concluded that it may "disadvantage lone parents (who are disproportionately female) due to the increased cost of paid childcare in the evenings and weekend". This same assessment caused a lot of anger on social media, however, because it went on to suggest that the new contract "actually benefits other women, for example where individuals have partners," on the assumption that this would

make it easier to make “informal, unpaid childcare arrangements”.

In addition, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) presented a number of concerns about the contract to the UN (as part of a wider review of the UK government's human rights record). Their findings “confirm that women would be disadvantaged under the contract the government is trying to impose,” and expressed a view that the “total disregard for equality and fairness is frankly appalling.”

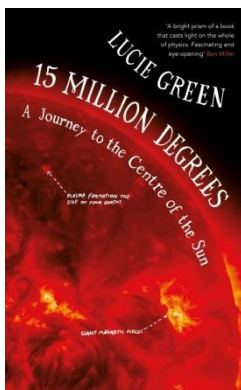
The revised new contract, achieved from the negotiations eventually agreed when Hunt was about to impose the previous version, now includes “terms and conditions which appropriately respond to the diverse characteristics of the junior doctor community” according to the government’s Equalities Statement on the subject, dated 27 May 2016.

The BMA will hold a member referendum later this month on whether to accept the revised new contract, but we can all be grateful for the courage shown by junior doctors in facing down the imposition of conditions that would have aggravated existing disadvantages to women, children and families.

Emma Dux

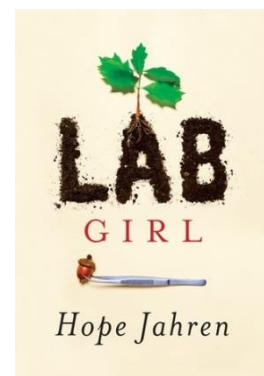
Summer reading recommendations

A couple of – linked – book reviews that have appeared recently in the *Guardian* struck me as being of interest in the context of equality and diversity (as well as on science, and life).



Lucie Green’s book “[15 Million Degrees: A Journey to the Centre of the Sun](#)” includes the contributions of several women physicists/astronomers, among them an early female astronomer, Annie Jump Cannon (1863-1941). Lucie is a solar physicist herself (a professor at UCL) and also contributes to TV programmes on astronomy. I found myself sitting next to her at the Royal Society’s Diversity Committee in mid-May. When I asked her about how she managed to write the book, she said she would book a cottage “holiday” for two weeks at a time and go and write solidly. A good tip for all of us.

It is then Lucie Green who reviews a new book by Hope Jahren, called “[Lab Girl: A Story of Trees, Science and Love](#)”. Hope Jahren is a professor of geobiology at the University of Hawaii, and her memoir tells the story of her fight to establish and fund her own research laboratory. As Lucie puts it, “The main theme of Jahren’s memoir is survival: in science, in life, in love”, and the extra difficulty of surviving and thriving as a female scientist is a thread throughout her story.



Robin Perutz

Teetering on the brink of farce: the high heels furore

On 11th May, a story emerged in the headlines about a receptionist being sent home from work without pay because she refused to wear high heeled shoes. Nicola Thorp was working at PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) as a temporary receptionist, hired via the agency Portico Corporate



Reception Services. She arrived at PwC to be told that women were expected to wear shoes with a 2 to 4 inch heel, and sent off to buy some. After refusing to comply, and complaining that it was unfair that this rule was not enforced for male colleagues, she was sent home.

Much of the media attention arose because Nicola Thorp wanted to challenge the legality of enforcing such a dress code. She started an online government petition to “make it illegal for a company to require women to wear high heels at work”. The petition attracted enough signatories to warrant investigation by cross-party Petitions

Committee, and evidence is being sought from those who have found themselves subject to such rules, and relevant experts.

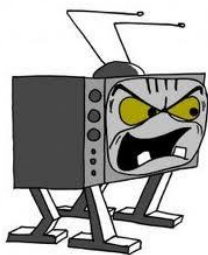
When the story emerged, various statements were released by the companies involved. PwC stated that the requirement to wear heels was “not a PwC policy”, whereas Portico’s response was that Nicola had “signed the appearance guidelines [which contained the requirement to wear high heels]” and it was “common practice within the service sector to have appearance guidelines”, but that it would now review them, having “taken on board the comments regarding footwear”. This review was done within 24 hours and resulted in a change of policy.

The idea that high heels can be required in the work place is an interesting one – presumably if someone has been required to wear them and then suffers associated problems in their feet, lower leg and / or back, then they may have grounds to seek compensation from their employer!

The parliamentary investigation is going to look at the current legal position, and whether and how it needs improving. Those who have endured comparable experiences are invited to join a web forum at <http://www.parliament.uk/high-heels-petition-forum> and provide their comments by 10 AM on Thursday 16 June.

Emma Dux and Catherine Jardine

Insidious gender bias in TV ratings brought under scrutiny



An online article highlights an interesting example of non-obvious bias – the writer investigates how ratings for TV shows on IMDb (the International Movie Database) are out of kilter with visible recognitions of a TV show’s quality – such as national and international awards – due to less visible activity online, namely the discrepancy between how men rate TV shows aimed at a primarily female audience and how women rate shows aimed at men...

<http://fivethirtyeight.com/features/men-are-sabotaging-the-online-reviews-of-tv-shows-aimed-at-women/>

Tim Kirk

The Five Best and Worst Attempts at Bridging the Gender Gap

From ‘I Look like an Engineer’, ‘Hack a Hairdryer’, ‘Pretty Curious’, ‘Science: It’s a Girl Thing’ to ‘Are you Man enough to be a Nurse’ – which of these campaigns do you think missed the point?

<http://www.qsdigitalsolutions.com/blog/five-campaigns-that-tried-to-bridge-the-gender-gap/>

Helen Coombs