



She Was There

Fast facts

- Women's contributions have often been lost in the historical record or misattributed to men. This has been especially true prior to property laws that allowed women to own businesses and copyright and prior to social changes that made it possible for women to have careers outside of the home and receive professional awards.
- The first woman to get a **patent** in her name was Mary Kies in 1809, for her process of weaving straw and silk together. After, many other innovations by women began to be formally recorded.
- As of 2018, **only 10% of patent holders in the U.S.** are women. Though the number of women receiving patents has increased over the years, women are still more frequently denied patents than their male counterparts. Patents with only women as the contributors also receive more detailed parameters, making the patent less valuable.
- The **Hall of Fame** was created to recognize American ingenuity and to encourage future inventors and children in STEM fields. Out of 633 people in the National Inventors Hall of Fame (NIHF), only 45 of them are women. From the founding of the Hall of Fame in 1973 until 1991, a woman had not been inducted.
- **The Matilda Effect** is a bias against acknowledging the achievements of women scientists. This effect was first described by suffragist and abolitionist Matilda Joselyn Gage in her 1870 essay "Woman as Inventor," in which she observes that women's scientific work is either perceived as having lower quality or the credit for it is given to male colleagues.
- Gillian Anderson's character Dana Scully on hit show *The X-Files* inspired an influx of girls and women to consider careers in STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) during the 1990s. The phenomenon of a female character in a traditionally male field, especially the sciences, increased the number of female viewers entering those fields and is referred to as **the Scully Effect**. According to one research study, nearly two-thirds (63%) of women who are familiar with Dana Scully say she increased their belief in the importance of STEM. Of the women surveyed who work in STEM, two-thirds say Dana Scully served as their role model. (Note: Gillian Anderson was paid half of what her co-star David Duchovny was for their roles and was often told to walk a few steps behind him on screen).
- Women are **51% of the population in the U.S.** but make up only:
 - 25% of the U.S. Senate
 - 23% of the U.S. House of Representatives
 - 29% of statewide elected executives
 - 29% of state legislative seats
 - 22% of mayors in cities with populations over 30,000
 - 0% of presidents of the United States



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- Out of the 114 justices that have served on the Supreme Court, there have only been four women, and three of those are currently on the bench. Only 59 of the 175 active judges currently sitting on the 13 federal courts of appeal are female (33%).

SOURCES

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