

NOVA "Picture a Scientist" Film

Women make up less than a quarter of STEM professionals in the United States, and numbers are even lower for women of color. But there is a growing group of researchers who are writing a new chapter for women scientists, exposing longstanding discrimination, and leading the way in making science more inclusive. A biologist, a chemist, and a geologist lead viewers on a journey through their own experiences in the sciences, ranging from outright harassment to years of subtle slights. Along the way, from cramped laboratories to spectacular field stations, scientific visionaries, including social scientists, neuroscientists, and psychologists, provide new perspectives on how to make science itself more diverse, equitable, and open to all. (Premiered April 14, 2021)

Link to film (NOVA Season 48, Episode 6): [Picture a Scientist](#) | [NOVA](#) | [PBS](#)

(The film is also available on Netflix. The film is 97 minutes long.)

Link to film's website (more information about the film; meet the scientists and ambassadors): [Picture a Scientist](#)

Before the film, ask yourself these questions:

1. How do you picture a typical scientist?
2. What issues do you expect to see in a film about women and diversity in science?
3. Why are you watching the film? What are your goals?
4. Do you have any current events in mind when going in to watch this film?
5. Why is diversity in science important to you?

We'll discuss these questions together after the film (and any others you'd like to bring up):

1. How do you picture a typical scientist now? Has it changed from before the film?
2. How did you feel after watching the film?
3. Did anything surprise you? Why or why not?
4. What new ideas do you have about ways to make science more equitable for everyone?
5. Has the film changed your perspective at all on diversity in science?
6. How can institutions companies change mentorship or management structures to better protect people from potential harassment and inequity?
7. How would you handle the situation if you were caught in one similar (especially the Antarctica situation)?
8. What barriers for women's success in science have been lifted? What barriers still remain, and how do we handle them appropriately?

9. How do some of the experiences shared in the film compare to your own?
10. What would you do if a person junior to you came to you with experiences of sexual harassment?
11. How can the science community accommodate identities who don't have clearly visible markers of marginalization (e.g., sexual orientation, low-income, disability, mental health, etc.)? How might the struggles of people with these backgrounds be different from those portrayed in the film?