

American Women in Science – 1950s+

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Many women in recent history are only recognized in their field as notable, here are a few.

Astronaut Judith A Resnik As the 2nd woman to fly in space, her career ended with the explosion of the Challenger in 1986. She said she was the only girl in her mathematics class since calculus in her high school senior year. Her PHD in Engineering was put to good use in 1984 in the earth orbiter, Discovery where she operated the robotic arm (RMS) Remote Manipulator System.

Climatology Tamarak Ledley Known for her research on the role of the Polar Regions in climate change, she worked to bring science to the schools, presenting information to elementary school children as well as university students.

Genetics Elaine Fuchs Her research on human skin genes, how they grow and produce keratin proteins led to findings on skin diseases caused by malfunction of the growth process. She is a molecular and cell biologist and geneticist with PHD in Chemistry.

Neurophysiology Candace Duenda Rent Chemical receptors: where molecules of a drug or natural chemical can be used. She did research with her major professor and was co-discoverer with him; it lead to discovery of endorphins, but he got the credit with the Laskey Prize, not her.

Nutrition Jane Ellen Brody She writes magazine articles and books for general public to reflect the science of nutrition. She considers herself a science writer, not a scientist although she has a degree in biochemistry. She urges her readers to adopt a diet rich in complex carbohydrates, moderate protein and lower intake of fat, sugar and salt.

Toxicologist Elizabeth A Weisburger Her research on the mechanisms by which environmental chemicals cause mutations and cancer is the field known as chemical carcinogenesis. She originally wanted to go into biology until a professor told her she had to draw well to work in that field so she changed her major to chemistry.

Women in science are still sometimes overlooked when they are partnered with a male in research, but the results of their research are not singular and often lead to additional new information which, when a scientist is passionate about what they do, brings knowledge in new directions.

Source: American Women in Science, 1950 to the Present, by Martha J. Bailey, There were 78 categories with 1-5 women in each, and these above are just a few random highlights. Initially, a children's book about women in science initiated research that resulted in the above choices.