



# Women and Science, 17th Century to Present: Pioneers, Activists and Protagonists

*Donna Spalding Andreolle*

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If women's interest and participation in the advancement of science has a long history, the academic study of their contributions is a far more recent phenomenon, to be placed in the wake of 'second wave' feminism in the 1970s and the advent of women's studies which have, since then, given impetus to research on female figures in specific fields or, more generally speaking, on women's battles to gain access to knowledge, education and recognition in the scientific world. These studies while providing a useful insight into the contributions of a few more or less well-known figures have mostly focused, however, on the obstacles that women have had to overcome in the field of education and employment or in their quest for acknowledgement by their male peers. The aim of this volume is to try and approach the issue from a different and more comprehensive point of view, taking into account not only the position of women in science, but also the link between women and science through the analysis of various kinds of discourse and representation such as the press, poetry, fiction, biographies and autobiographies or professional journals including that of women themselves. The questions of the presentation or re(-)presentation of science by women are thus at the core of this study, as well as that of the portrayal and self-portrayal of women in the sciences (whether in the educational, or the professional field). A final part examines how women are represented in science fiction which, like science itself, has traditionally been a field dominated by men.

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