

She's a Physicist!?

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Any minority often feels either left out or at the center of attention. The difficulty of blending in creates both challenging obstacles and unique opportunities. Such negative and positive distractions, whether major or minor, can have a profound impact on accomplishing one's goals. Success requires sustained focus, a constant eye on the "big picture", and the ever-important sense of humor. In other words, don't be distracted by the ups and downs, keep your passion focused on the science, and enjoy the ironies. I will discuss some of my personal experiences as a woman and how I have learned to navigate the physics world since before 1970. Through losses and wins, I will share how I have managed to, at least most of the time, keep on keeping on.

I presently enjoy funding from the U.S. DoE Division of Materials Sciences DE-FG02-07ER46453 through the FSMRL, the NSF DMR 07-06013, and continual support from my sisters and girlfriends. The title of this talk is by Clare Yu, UCI.

References:

Rachel Ivie (AIP):
“the leaky pipeline”

see, for example:

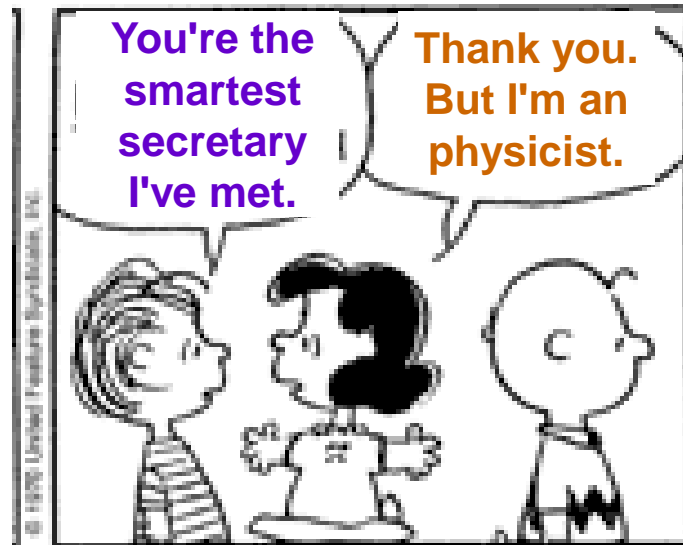
<http://www.aip.org/statistics/trends/reports/iupap05.pdf>, and references therein

Beverly Hartline (Delaware State U.)

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Courtesy of Beverly Hartline:

*Has this happened
to you?*



My own rules:

1. Keep your girlfriends
2. Keep a sense of humor
and throw money at it
3. Keep your girlfriends
... even now!

Airplane Talk

Them: So what do you do?

Me: I'm a physicist

Them: Oh, I hated physics when I was in school!

Me: ... (conversation stopper)

Airplane Talk

Them: So what do you do?

Me: I'm a physicist

Them: Oh, I hated physics when I was in school!

~~Me: ... (conversation stopper)~~

Great comeback:

Me : So what do you do?

Them: I'm a _____

Me : Oh, I hated _____ when I was in school!

Seminar Talk

Them: Who is taking care of your kids
when you travel?

Me: ... their Dad, babysitters, or a
family or whatever we do ...

Them: judgmental looks.

Seminar Talk

Them: Who is taking care of your kids
when you travel?

~~Me: ... their Dad, babysitters, or a
family or whatever we do ...~~

~~Them: judgmental looks.~~

Better response:

Me: So who is taking care of YOUR
kids when YOU travel?

Colloquium Talk

Them: How do you possibly balance family and work?

Me: Keep a sense of humor and
throw money at it.

(which is OK, but)

Colloquium Talk

Them: How do you possibly balance family and work?

~~Me: Keep a sense of humor and throw money at it.~~

~~(which is OK, but)~~

A lot more fun:

Me: How do YOU possibly balance family and work? I sure could use a few pointers!

Solutions?

I have no idea except to get more women in the field, but here are a few things to remember:

- Stop feeling guilty: It's not about you.
- Keep a sense of humor
- Keep your girlfriends
- E-mail me. For this I have time:

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