

LA-UR-23-29658

Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

Title: Women of Los Alamos

Author(s): Whitacre, Madeline Helene

Intended for: Historical talk of general interest

Issued: 2024-02-12 (rev.1)



Los Alamos National Laboratory, an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer, is operated by Triad National Security, LLC for the National Nuclear Security Administration of U.S. Department of Energy under contract 89233218CNA000001. By approving this article, the publisher recognizes that the U.S. Government retains nonexclusive, royalty-free license to publish or reproduce the published form of this contribution, or to allow others to do so, for U.S. Government purposes. Los Alamos National Laboratory requests that the publisher identify this article as work performed under the auspices of the U.S. Department of Energy. Los Alamos National Laboratory strongly supports academic freedom and a researcher's right to publish; as an institution, however, the Laboratory does not endorse the viewpoint of a publication or guarantee its technical correctness.



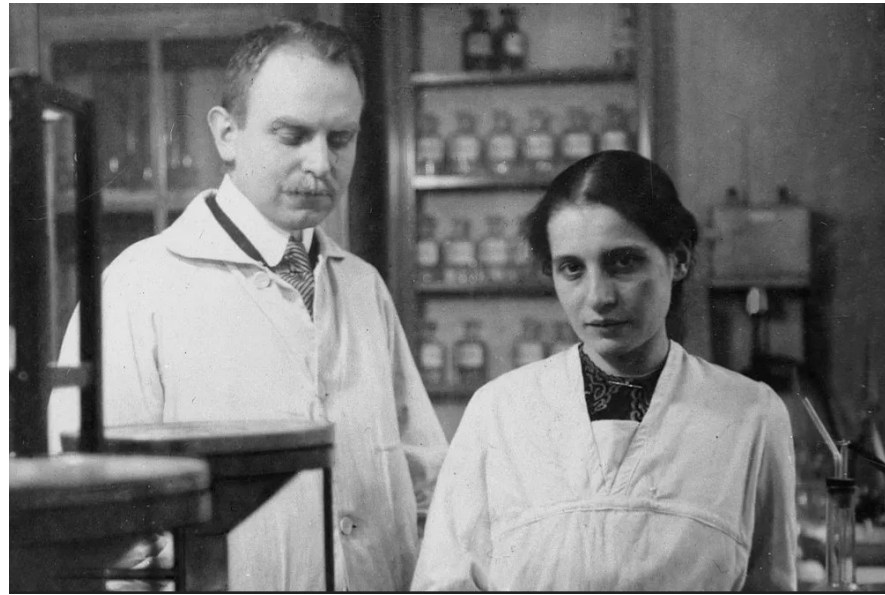
Women of Los Alamos

Women's Contributions to the Laboratory

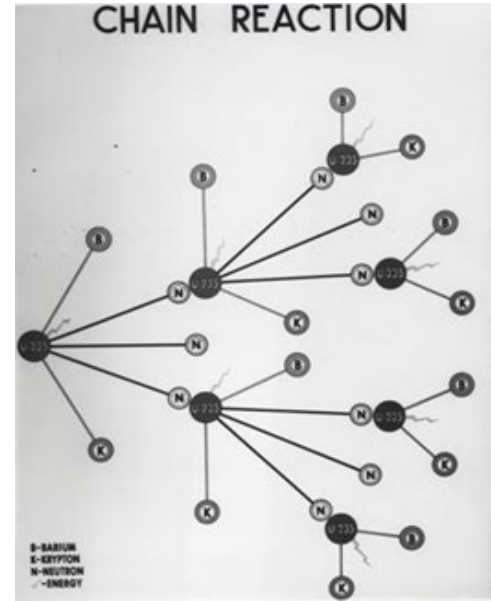


Madeline Whitacre

Historian



Otto Hahn and Lise Meitner



Fission chain reaction



Annexation of Poland



Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941

The Lab at Los Alamos



The Trinity Test – July 16, 1945



Little Boy



Fat Man

Women in the Wartime Workforce



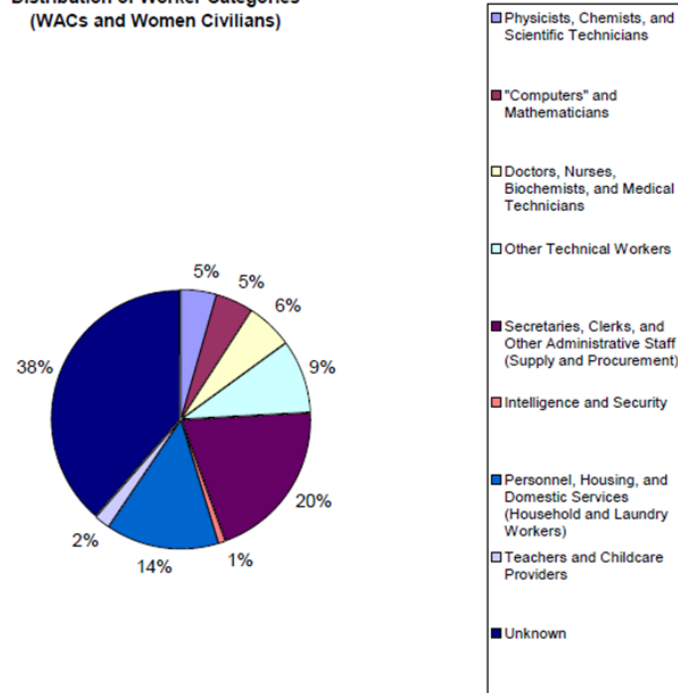
Women at Los Alamos

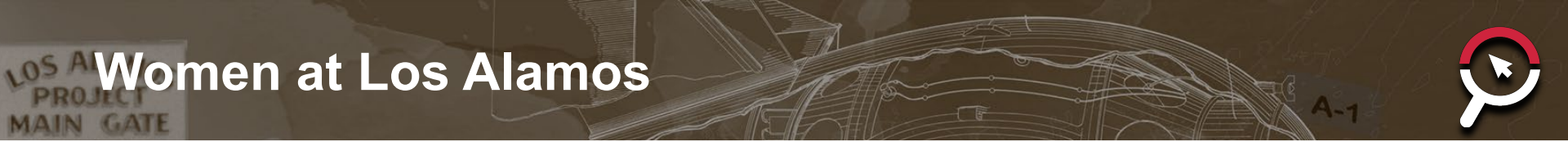


“Some of the wives were scientists in their own right, and they, of course, were in great demand, but with labor at a premium we could put to good use everyone we could get, whether as secretaries or as technical assistants or as teachers in the public school that we started for children.”

General Leslie Groves
Head of the Manhattan Project

**Distribution of Worker Categories
(WACs and Women Civilians)**





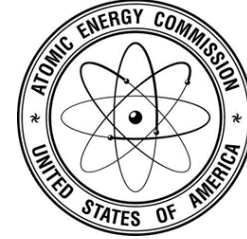
Women at Los Alamos



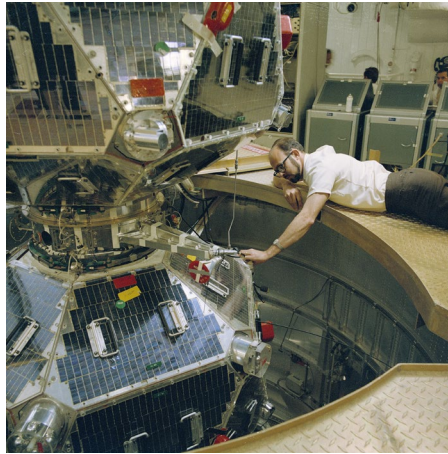
“To have been a working entity on the Project is something we [the women of Los Alamos] don’t forget easily. Even at the time, it was impressive. We were doing a war job in a period when people were needed badly.”

Charlotte Serber

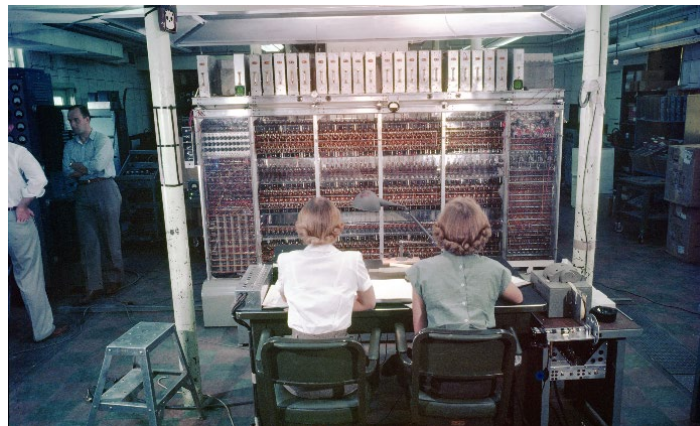
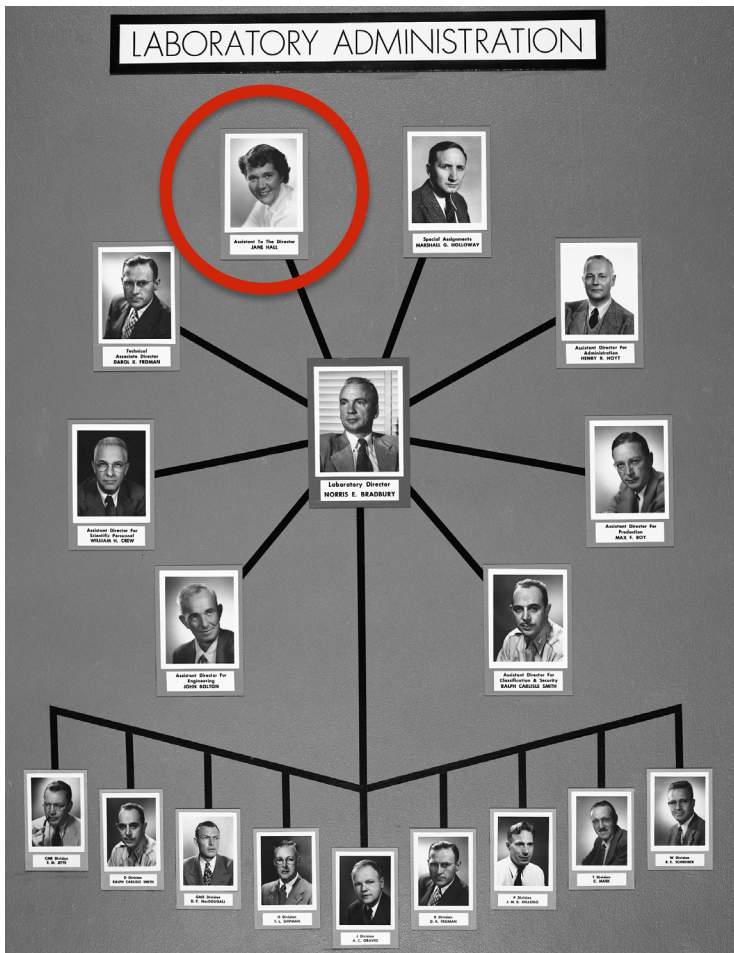
The Early Cold War



- 1963: The Equal Pay Act is passed, promising equal pay for equal work regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, or gender
- 1965: in Weeks vs. Southern Bell sets an important precedent and helps repeal restrictive labor laws, opening more jobs to women
- 1968: Executive Order 11246 prohibits gender discrimination by government contractors and requires affirmative action plans for hiring women



Women at Los Alamos



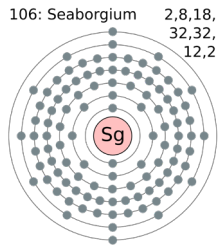
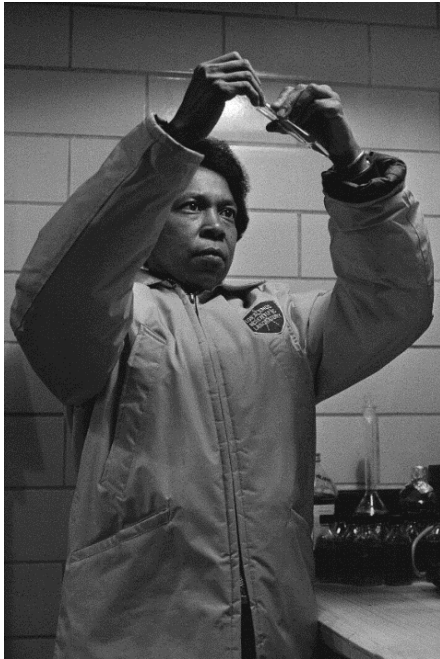
The Late Cold War



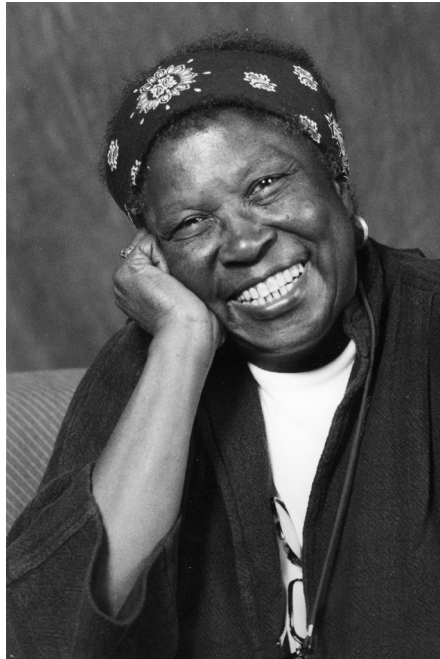
- 1972: Title IX prohibits discrimination based on gender in academic programs that receive federal support
- 1978: the Pregnancy Discrimination Act prohibits discrimination against pregnant women in the workforce
- 1984: in Roberts vs. Jaycees the supreme court forbids gender-based discrimination for membership to organizations
- 1994: the Gender Equity in Education Act is passed to train teachers in gender equity



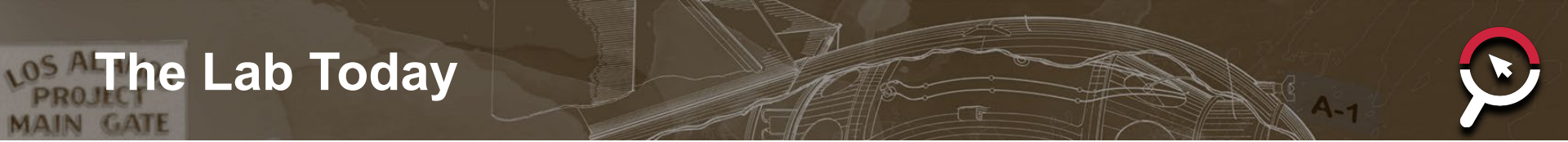
Darleane Hoffman



Julia Hardin



Merri Wood-Schultz



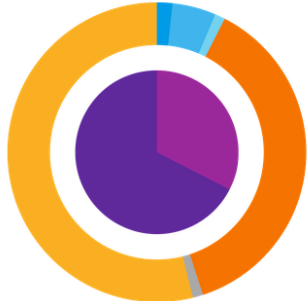
The Lab Today

Women

32.5%

Men

67.5 %



- 2.1% American Indian, Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian, or Other Pacific Islander
- 5.4% Asian
- 1.5% Black or African American
- 38.5% Hispanic or Latino
- 1.6% Two or more races
- 50.9% White

Types of jobs	% Women	% URM	% OPC
Senior Leadership Director/President, Deputy Director/Vice President, Associate Lab Director	30.00%	6.67%	0.00%
Research/Technical Management (First-line and Mid-level) Engineering Management, Research Management, Technical Management	25.00%	17.11%	5.00%
Operations (or Research Support) Management Business Management, Computer Systems, Communications, ESHQ, Facilities Ops, HR, Legal, Tech Transfer, Strategic Planning	33.12%	44.20%	1.16%
Technical Research Staff Non-management: Researchers, Scientists, or Engineers	25.07%	17.86%	7.90%
Operations Support Staff Non-management: Support Roles	40.97%	54.11%	2.11%
Post Doctoral (Post-doc employees)	25.67%	8.56%	34.72%
Graduate Students (Funded by Lab)	34.07%	23.49%	18.94%
Undergraduate Students (Funded by Lab, do not include undergrad student funded by DOE directly (i.e. SULI))	41.85%	41.34%	7.45%

*URM = Under Represented Minorities

*OPC = Other People of Color