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Sexism in Science: Changing the conversation with comics

Lucia Perez Diaz¹, Kirstie Wright², Maelis Arnould³, Nicolas Coltice⁴, Melanie Gerault, and Claire Mallard⁵

¹Halliburton, Oxford, United Kingdom (lucia.perezdiaz@halliburton.com)

²Rocktype, Edinburgh, United Kingdom

³Laboratoire de Geologie de Lyon, Lyon, France

⁴Laboratoire de Geologie, ENS, Paris, France

⁵Earthbyte, University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia

Our comics are based on real events experienced by real people, but should never have happened. Some events are blatant, others are subtle, but all leave you wondering "*did this really happen?!?*". Sadly the answer is yes, and they continue to happen, with testimonies on everyday sexism, sexist biases, aggressions and microaggressions regularly received by our team.

Started in 2016, the *Did This Really Happen?!?* project was created from the shared experiences of a group of largely female scientists who found themselves in a male-dominated environment. By 2018 the project had progressed to collecting anonymous accounts of sexism in science from across the world, turning them into comics to share and spark a conversation. In 2020, in reflecting on the project so far, it was clear sexism in science was not confined to one career level in academia, with around half of testimonies coming from PhD and Early Career Researchers, with the other half coming from mid to senior level scientists. Several themes also emerged which were documented in Bocher *et al.*, 2020 and identified the following;

- treating women as objects (in 70% of testimonies)
- questioning female competencies (in 61% of testimonies)
- confining males to stereotypical roles (in 41% of testimonies)

In 2021, the *DTRH?!?* project was relaunched with new team members and a new illustrator as the career and life paths of the original team changed and evolved. Here we present how we aim to document and illustrate the widespread sexist attitudes that affect both women (and men) in science today, challenging this behaviour with humour and to inspire discussion.