

MAR11-2010-000563

Abstract for an Invited Paper
for the MAR11 Meeting of
the American Physical Society

M. Hildred Blewett and the Blewett Scholarship

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M. Hildred Blewett became a physicist at a time when few women were physicists. After beginning her career at General Electric, she became a respected accelerator physicist, working at Brookhaven, Argonne, and eventually CERN. Blewett was married for a time to John Blewett, another accelerator physicist, but the couple divorced without children and she never remarried. She felt that her career in physics was hampered by her gender, and when she died in 2004 at the age of 93, she left the bulk of her estate to the American Physical Society, to found a Scholarship for women in physics. Since 2005 the Blewett Scholarship has been awarded to women in physics who are returning to physics after a career break, usually for family reasons. Family/career conflicts are one of the most important reasons why young women in early careers leave physics—a loss for them as well as the physics community, which has invested time and money in their training. The Blewett Scholarship is one way for the physics community, under the leadership of CSWP, to help these young women resume their careers. I will discuss the life and work of Hildred Blewett, the Blewett Scholarship, and its benefits to the physics community.