

Abstract Submitted
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The Manhattan Project and its Effects on American Women Scientists SAMUEL FLETCHER, Princeton University — There have been many detailed historical accounts of the Manhattan Project, but few have recognized the technical role women scientists and engineers crucially played in the Project's success. Despite their absence from these prominent accounts, recent studies have revealed that, in fact, women participated in every non-combat operation associated with the Manhattan Project. With such extensive participation of women and such a former lack of historical attention upon them, little analysis has been done on how the Manhattan Project might have influenced the prospectus of women scientists after the war. This talk has two aims: 1) to recount some of the technical and scientific contributions of women to the Manhattan Project, and 2) to examine what effects these contributions had on the women's careers as scientists. In other words, I intend offer a preliminary explanation of the extent to which the Manhattan Project acted both as a boon and as a detriment to American women scientists. And finally, I will address what this historical analysis could imply about the effects of current efforts to recruit women into science.

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