

WOMEN IN STEM

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MARION HILLIARD

Her Positive Smear Campaign

Dr. Hilliard helped simplify the Pap Test — a critical screening procedure for detecting precancerous cells in the cervix. Her advocacy work in the 1950s increased women's participation in this lifesaving cancer screening process.

Ingenium is committed to encouraging and empowering women and girls in science, technology, engineering, and math. Learn more at: ingeniumcanada.org/womeninstem/

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CONCEPTS AND CONNECTIONS

Marion Hilliard's work in simplifying the Pap test has improved the early detection of cervical cancer.

A patriarchal system marginalizes women and allows men to have a disproportionate influence in or on society. For instance, the concept of a “standard man” as the subject for medical tests and safety gear was predominant, leading to research that produced results that were often inaccurate, uncomfortable or impractical when applied to women.

Did you know?

A 1986 study on the effects of obesity on breast and uterine cancers was conducted at Rockefeller University. The study was called into question when people learned that none of the participants had a uterus – as they were all male.¹

Grades 4-6	Grades 6-8	Grades 9+
<p>From designing furniture and electronics to safety and medical tests, industry tends to design things that ideally suit an average-sized man. Can you think of examples where this could negatively impact others, such as women or children?</p>	<p>From designing furniture and electronics to safety and medical tests, industry tends to design things that ideally suit an average-sized man. Can you think of examples where this could negatively impact others, such as women or children?</p> <p>How would more participation from women in engineering help?</p>	<p>How could not considering the differences between men and women negatively impact others, such as women or children, in the design of everyday objects?</p> <p>How would more participation from women in engineering help?</p> <p>What repercussions could arise from performing safety tests, such as crash tests, that only involve test subjects that correspond to an adult man? What about medical studies that only deal with men as subjects?</p>

¹ References:

Flynn, Trisha. “Female Trouble” Rocky Mountain News. Republished in Chicago Tribune, October 29, 1986.