

# American Physical Society Gender Equity Conference May 6-9, 2007

International Conference on  
Women in Physics  
October 7-10, 2008  
Arthur Bienenstock  
(substituting for Nora Berrah)

# Conference Facts

- Attendees
  - ~50 chairs or representatives from highest ranked departments
  - 14 from national laboratories
  - National Science Foundation and Department of Energy staff
  - mostly male
- Support
  - Department of Energy
  - National Science Foundation

# Why Such a Conference? (Bienenstock view!)

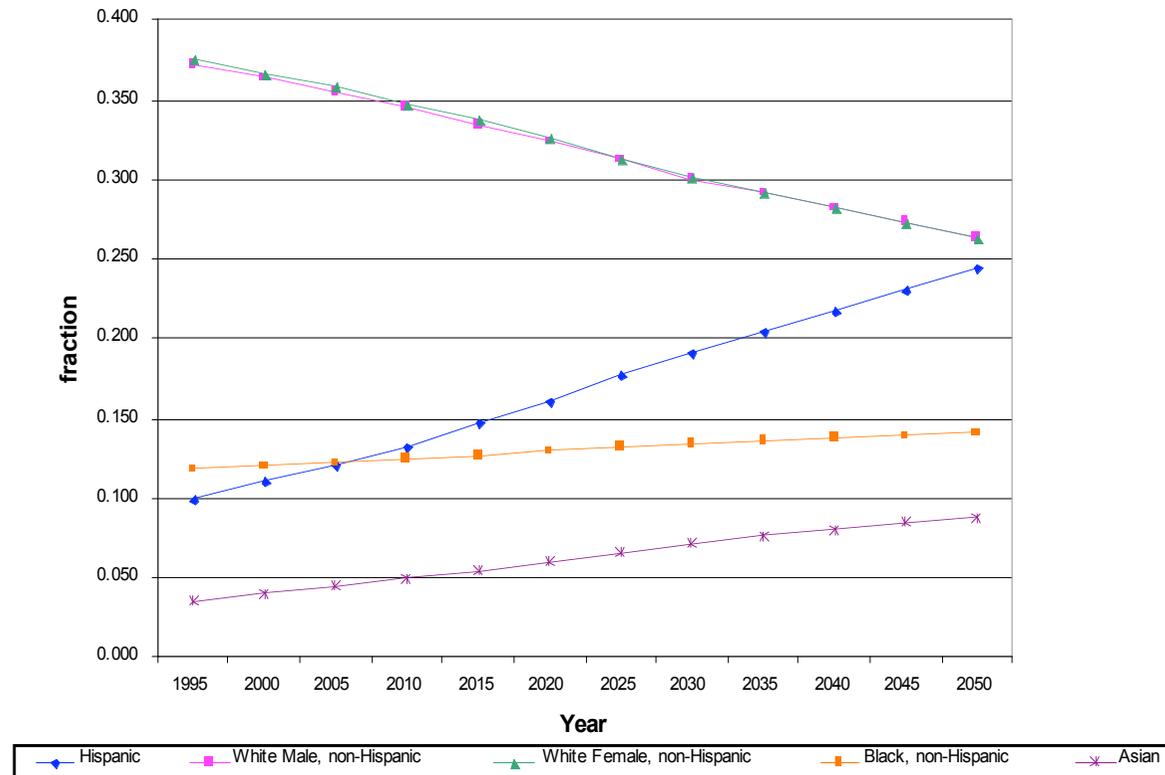
- U.S. needs more women (and under-represented minorities) in physics
- Department chairs must participate actively if we are to have progress
- Must have, and be perceived to have, gender equity to succeed

# Need for More Physicists

- Must have strong S&T workforce for many reasons
- U.S. presently highly dependent on immigrants for S&T workforce
- Home countries competing increasingly effectively for them
- Also drastic U.S. shortage of trained secondary school physics teachers
- Need will grow faster than population or total work force
  - True for last century
- U.S. demographic changes indicate potential difficulty

# Bureau of the Census Demographic Projections - 18-64 year olds

Figure 1-3.



# Conclusions

- Must increase participation of women, Latinos and African-Americans
- Must keep U.S. attractive for immigrants
- We need both!

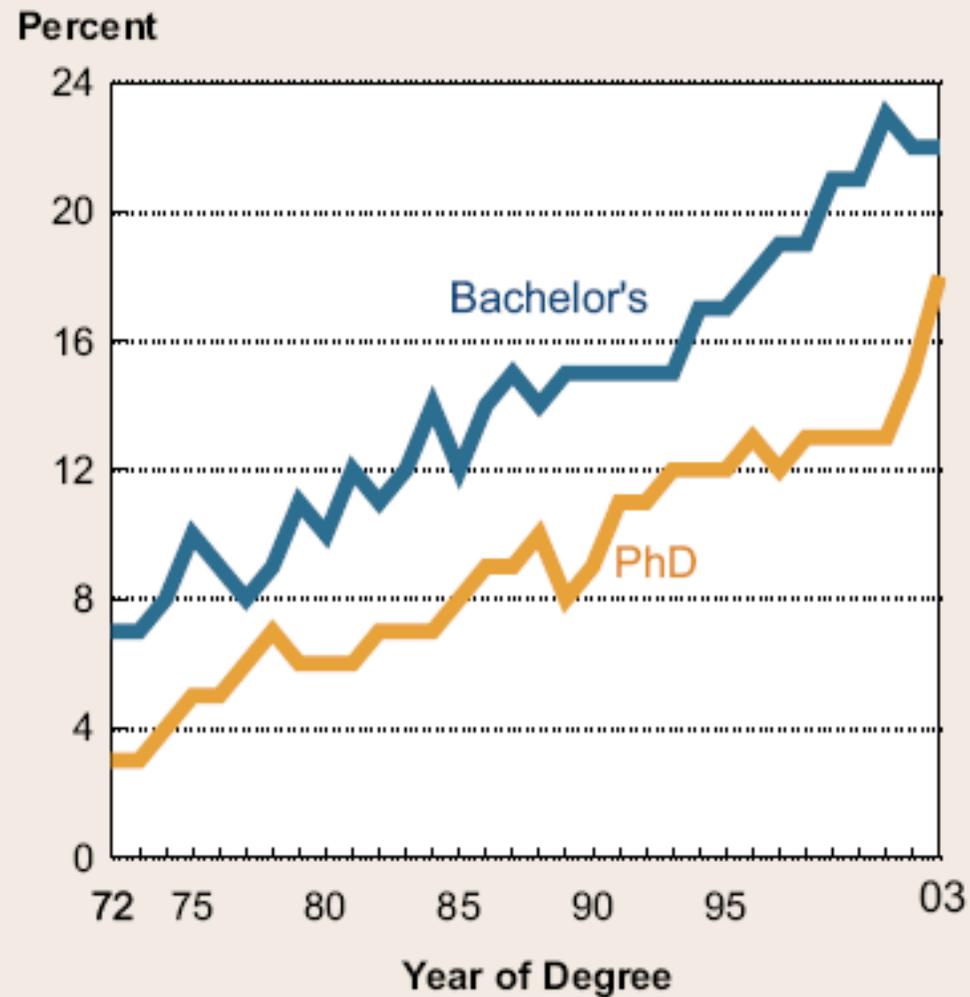
# Some Conference Sessions

1. Defining the Issues
  1. Need for women
  2. Bias
  3. University of Michigan CRLT Players Theatre Performance
2. Equity and Bias
  1. Slow advancement of women
  2. Impact of babies
3. Recommendations to Increase Recruitment, Hiring, Retention and Promotion of Women
4. Challenges and Opportunities at Funding Agencies
5. Development of Action Items

# Making Physics More Attractive for Women

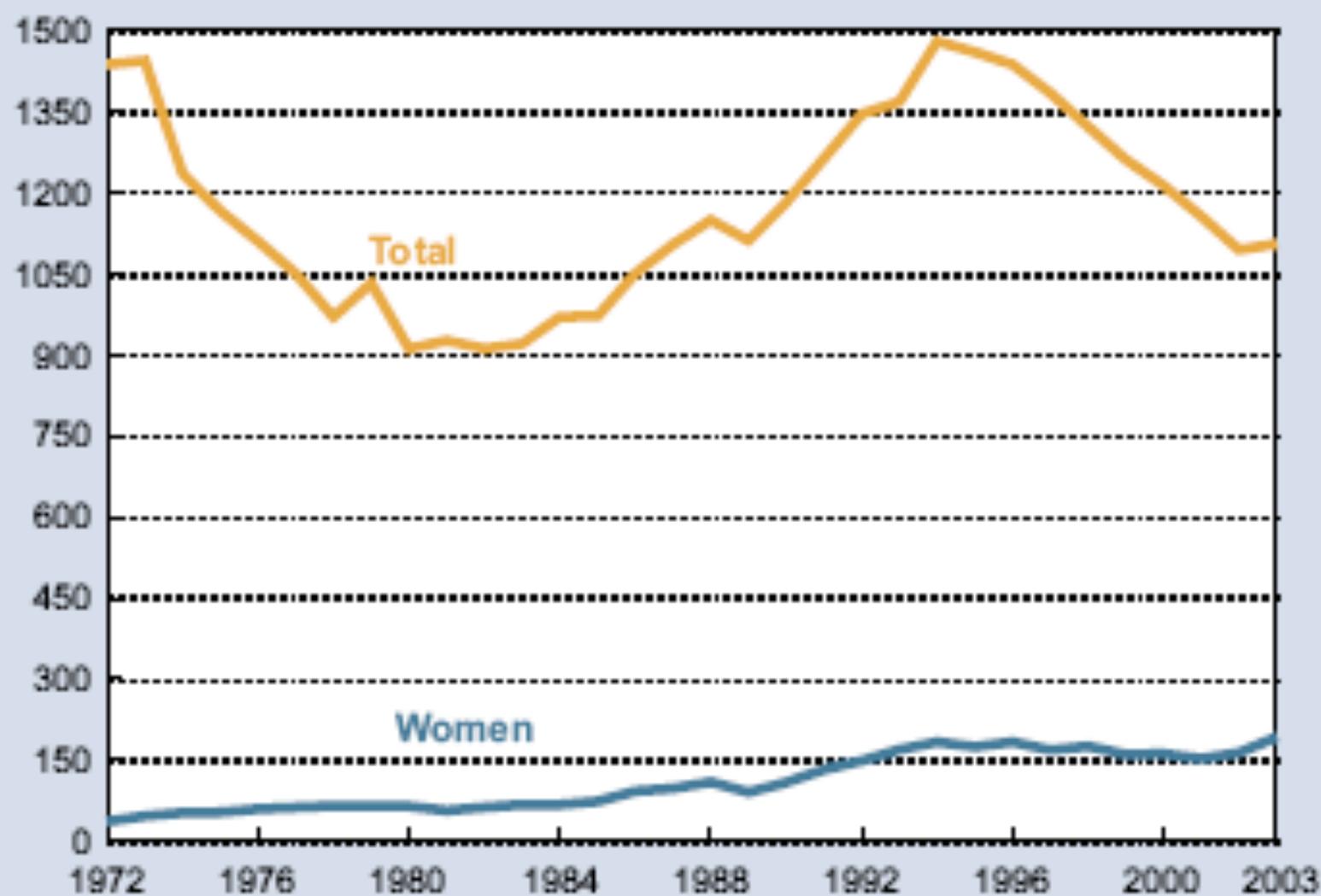
- There must be – and there must be perceived to be - equity in
  - Promotions
  - Salaries
  - Lab space
  - Proposal review and grant awards
  - etc.
- Recognize that society needs women to be both physicists and mothers
  - Maternity leaves
    - Tenure and promotion decisions
    - Peer review and grant renewals
  - Child care opportunities and support
- There should be repeated and thoughtful discussions of what gender equity means (as there should be of other ethical issues within physics and academia)
  - [www.aps.org/programs/education/ethics/index.cfm](http://www.aps.org/programs/education/ethics/index.cfm)

**Figure 1. Percent of physics bachelor's and PhDs earned by women, 1972 to 2003.**



AIP Statistical Research Center: Enrollments and Degrees Survey.

Appendix 1. Number of PhD degrees earned in physics, 1972-2003.



AIP statistical Research Center: Enrollments and Degrees Survey.

# We Are Making Progress

- 17.5% of assistant professors at top 50 U.S. physics departments are women
  - Consistent with Ph.D. production
- Percentages of associate and full professors is consistent with relevant Ph.D. acquisition rates
  - Rachel Ivie
- Encourage your young women to become physicists – they are likely to be treated close to equitably and to gain great satisfaction from their work
- Gains thus far give us confidence to go further
- Must continue to encourage department chairs

[www.aps.org](http://www.aps.org)

