



MATILDA

EFFECT



Pionierinnen der Forschung **Female Pioneers of Research**

Pt.26

Henrietta Swan Leavitt



BESSEr@KIT





Henrietta Swan Leavitt (1868-1921)
Astronomer

In a permanent position in 1902 (for a salary of 30 cents per hour) with the 'Harvard Computers,' a group of women who analyzed images at the Harvard Observatory, she cataloged variable stars. Women were prohibited from using the telescope.





In 1912, she discovered the period-luminosity relationship in Cepheids, a type of star.

Cepheids have a regular brightness fluctuation, known as the period. The luminosity of a Cepheid correlates with its period duration. Measuring the period and applying the relationship allows the determination of the star's brightness and thus the measurement of the distance to the star.



After her promotion to head of the department of photographic stellar photometry, she actively advocated for women to have a place in scientific professions.

Although a moon crater and an asteroid were named after her, her public recognition always lagged behind that of her male colleagues.

Her research, however, provided the foundation for much of today's astronomical research.





Henrietta Swan Leavitt (1868-1921)

"Die Welt ist voller wunderbarer Dinge, die du noch nicht gesehen hast. Gib niemals die Chance auf, sie zu sehen."

"The world is full of wonderful things you haven't seen yet. Don't ever give up on the chance of seeing them."

