



Diversity & Inclusion Moment

NSF PHASE I CENTER FOR ADAPTING FLAWS INTO FEATURES

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Elizabeth Fulhame



“The first solo woman researcher of modern chemistry”

- Attempted to dye fabric with Au and Ag – a “domestically oriented” science project
- One published work (1794): *An Essay Of Combustion With A View To A New Art Of Dying And Painting Wherein The Phlogistic And Antiphlogistic Hypotheses Are Proved Erroneous*
- First person to generalize observation of catalysis to a whole class of reactions (metal salt reduction)
- Observed that gold in aqua regia was only reduced in the presence of light – precursor to photography
- Some positive response to her work: became a corresponding member of the Philadelphia Chemical Society in 1798
 - “Mrs. Fulhame has now laid such bold claims to chemistry that we can no longer deny the sex the privilege of participating in this science also”
- Rare case of a woman in science in the 18th and 19th centuries whose work we can actually trace, although there is no evidence of her work after 1810

