

Did You Know?

The Nobel Prize was the first international award and was started in 1901. It is awarded to people and organizations that have done outstanding research, invented techniques or equipment, or made outstanding contributions to society. The Nobel Foundation is a private institution that was established in 1900 from the financial contribution of Alfred Nobel. The Foundation manages the assets made available through his will for awarding the Nobel Prize in physics, chemistry, physiology or medicine, peace, literature and economics. A total of 776 Nobel Prizes have been awarded to 758 individuals; 725 to men, 33 to women and 18 organizations.

Marie Sklodowska-Curie researched the element Uranium and discovered radioactivity. Marie and her husband Pierre discovered the two elements radium and polonium. They both were awarded half of the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1903, for their study into spontaneous radiation discovered by Becquerel, who was awarded the other half of the Prize. She was the first woman to be awarded a Nobel Prize.

Other women who received Nobel Prize are:

Irene Joliot-Curie: Marie Curie's eldest daughter. She received the Nobel Prize for synthesis of new radioactive elements. She took interest in the social and intellectual advancement of women. She was a member of the Comité National de l'Union des Femmes Françaises and of the World Peace Council. She was also appointed Undersecretary of State for Scientific Research in 1936.

Mother Teresa: Mother Teresa's work has been recognized and highly praised throughout the world. She received the Nobel Prize for peace in 1979. She devoted herself to working among the poorest of the poor in the slums of Calcutta. Although she had no funds, she depended on Divine Providence, and started an open-air school for slum children.

Shirin Ebadi: Shirin Ebadi has been awarded the Nobel Prize in peace in 2003 for her efforts in democracy and human rights. She has mainly focused on the struggle for rights for women and children. She held various positions in the Iran Justice Department. In 1975, she became the President of Bench 24 of the [Tehran] City Court in 1975. She is the first woman in the history of Iranian justice to have served as a judge.

Pearl Buck: Pearl Buck received the Nobel Prize in literature in 1938. Pearl Buck's novels deal with the conflict between East and West. She has been active in many welfare organizations; she set up an agency for the adoption of Asian-American children (Welcome House, Inc.) and also took an active interest in retarded children (*The Child Who Never Grew*, 1950).

The information from this "Did You Know" was found at: <http://www.almaz.com/nobel/women.html> and <http://nobelprize.org/>

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