

# Feminist Reading Circle for Computer Scientists

## Women-only meeting

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OR

How to combine something that we like with something useful?

# Who are we?

- Young researchers in Computer Science (PhD students from 2018 to 2021)
- IRISA Research Lab in Rennes
- Colleagues working in the same team
- Members of the Gender Equality Task Team



# Context & History

## Starting Point:

- January 2020: Do something as PhD students for young researchers
- Without any training/qualification in this topic?
- Without experience?
- Idea: Teach ourselves while sharing knowledge with others → **Reading Circle**



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## Concept:

- 1 Collect possible books to read → **Collaborative list**
- 2 Define framework: Who to invite? How to reach? When and how to meet?
- 3 Goal: Learn collectively and propose a safe space for discussions

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Then... First lock down due to Covid-19 :/

# Collaborative List of Feminist Literature for CS

- [\[link of the list here\]](#) (you can still add books :))
- IRISA bought most of the CS-related books (ca. 30)

 CHANGED 2 MONTHS AGO 



## Feminist Literature for Computer Scientists

We ([Égalité Femmes-Hommes IRISA & INRIA](#)) started a list of literature that treats feminist topics with regards to computer science. This includes anything about important women in the field, sexism arising in particular in this area, industry related or research related.

Feel free to add any comments if you have any.

### Literature (targeting Computer Science)

Title	Author	Language	Category	Link	Access
Cracking the Digital Ceiling	Carol Frieze, Jeria L. Quesenberry	English	Scientific book	<a href="#">amazon link</a>	Buy <27€
Invisible Women	Caroline Criado Perez	English	Scientific book	<a href="#">amazon link</a>	Buy <20€

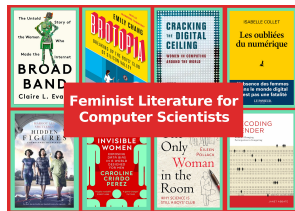
# Now in free access at the IRISA/Inria Rennes Cafeteria!



# The books we read so far

## Phase 1: Only Katharina and Solène

- **Brotopia** by Emily Chang (Tech Industry)
- **Invisible Women** by Caroline Criado Perez (Everyday Life)

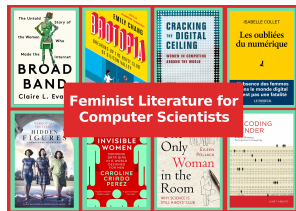


[website of our reading circle]

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[website of our reading circle]

## Phase 2: Virtual reading circle

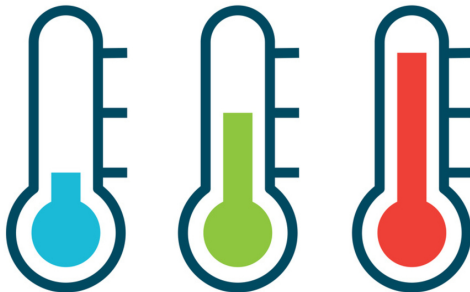
- **The Matilda Effect** by Ellie Irving (Child Book)
- **The Only Woman in the Room** by Eileen Pollack (Personal Experience)
- **A Global Approach to the Gender Gap** in Mathematical, Computing, and Natural Sciences : How to Measure It, How to Reduce It? (Final Report)
- **Numérique, compter avec les femmes** by Anne-Marie Kermarrec (ABC Book)

# How does our reading circle work?



- Virtual meeting every Friday afternoon for 1 hour
- One person writes a recap of the main discussion points
- Common server for sharing links / short-term notices (Discord)
- Wiki with all important information and recaps of every meeting
- Besides reading: reference sharing and film screening (Picture a Scientist)
- In July even our first picnic in real :) (no picture :( )

# How well is it working?



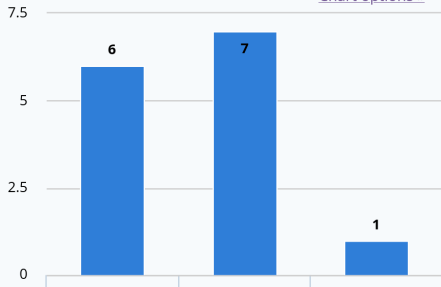
Idea while reading about good practices in  
*A Global Approach to the Gender Gap*



# Poll after the 3rd Online Edition

## How did you get to know about the reading circle?

[Chart options »](#)

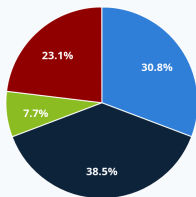


Mail	6
Personal Recommendation	7
Other	1

# Poll after the 3rd Online Edition

How many books have you already read before on the topic of feminism / gender gap in general?

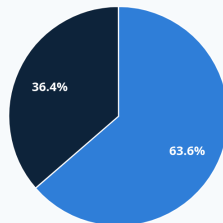
[Chart options »](#)



0	4
1-5	5
6-10	1
>10	3

How many books have you already read before on feminism / gender gap in Computer Science?

[Chart options »](#)

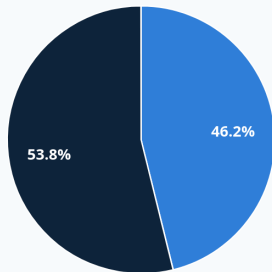


0	7
1-5	4

# Poll after the 3rd Online Edition

**Did you feel free to talk about the topics you wanted to?**

[Chart options »](#)



Everytime

6

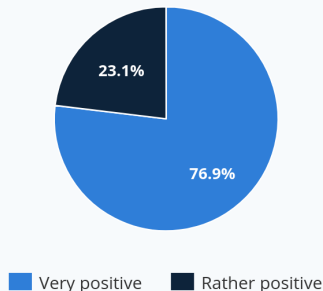
Most of the time

7

## Poll after the 3rd Online Edition

**How is your overall feedback regarding the reading circle?**

[Chart options »](#)

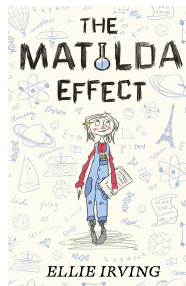
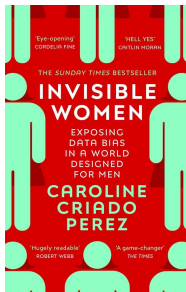
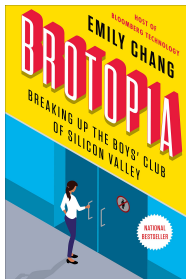


# Conclusion (So Far)

- Personally: Very nice exchanges, easy to organize, low mental load
- Poll after the 3rd Online Edition: Very positive feedback
- Experiments: With/without men
- Open questions: Keep virtual meetings? How to ensure strong presence of women?
- Suggestions? Questions? Ideas?

# Thanks :)

# Extracts



Anne-Marie Kermarrec  
**NUMÉRIQUE,  
COMPTER  
AVEC  
LES FEMMES**  
PRÉFACE DE GÉRARD BERRY

