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Current Problem Borreliosis

Ticks Born Innocent?/The Art of Caution

We discuss an illness reported by the media to be afflicting more and more people, with Asst. Prof. Anna Bajer and Prof. Joanna Zajkowska. **4–11**



Focus on the PAS

New Female Members of the Academy

We kick off a series of interviews with all nine female researchers who became members of the Polish Academy of Sciences last year, starting with Prof. Agnieszka Chacińska, Prof. Krystyna Chojnicka and Prof. Magda Konarska. **14–25**



Briefly Speaking

Lady of Ice

"I had to surmount obstacles and barriers, to overcome stereotypes, to conquer spaces which had been the exclusive domain of men," says the polar lichenologist Prof. Maria A. Olech. **50**

COVER PHOTO AND PAGE 2:
 JAKUB OSTAŁOWSKI

FROM THE EDITORS

THIS IS NO COUNTRY FOR WOMEN?

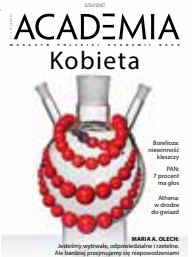
Technical subjects are not for you, they are told in primary school, middle school, secondary school. They therefore choose university programs in the humanities or perhaps the biological sciences. "You won't manage to care for your children and work as a researcher at the same time, and even if you don't have kids you still don't have the right predisposition," later they hear from their fellow male scientists. Even if they do earn a PhD, they climb up to higher rungs in much smaller numbers than they could.

They rarely hold high-profile posts, infrequently serve as heads of institutes, faculties, universities. Along the way, some (fortunately) of them encounter behavior that it takes a large dose of leniency to see as anything other than sexual harassment. So goes the story for a woman on the career path of science in Poland.

But are things really that bad? Have emancipation, gender quotas, the growing awareness that significant gender differences (aside from physical ones) do not exist, all really brought about so little change? That is not an easy question to answer in a clear-cut way. And so, we turn this issue over exclusively to the women of science themselves. They tell us about their career paths, their doubts, their advantages and obstacles. We showcase their research, the projects they lead. And through their eyes we try to see what position female scholars hold, or should hold, in Polish science. Perhaps – as one of our interviewees puts it – "there are no women in science, there are simply scientists" and the notion lingers on only in the minds of those who are unable to overcome stereotypes and prejudices.



Ewa Held (born 1953), "The Ewa Reactor", acrylic 190×140. Born in Poland, the artist emigrated to France with her parents, where she earned a degree in architecture. This work is part of a cycle entitled "Structure of Connections," inspired by a set of recently rediscovered technical documentation and photographs recording the construction of Poland's first nuclear reactor in Świerk in the late 1950s. They had been left behind in suitcases at a friend's house by the artist's father, a construction engineer, prior to the family's departure in 1968.



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