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Simulation: a woman's world

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Dear Editor-in-Chief,

There is no limit to what we, as women, can accomplish.

– Michelle Obama

We recently had the great fortune of attending the 2023 SESAM (Society for Simulation in Europe) conference and attending a fascinating keynote by three Editors-in-Chief: Debra Nestel, Nicole Harder and Gabriel Reedy [1]. Among many other things, we learned of Professor Nestel's concerns about the possible disproportionate lack of women's voices in the simulation literature [1].

We wondered if, as women and simulation-based researchers, we should be concerned about our places in the simulation world. Would we be able to have an impact within a domain dominated by men? Would our voices be heard? Would a man's opinion carry more weight or be more likely to be published? We began to worry that we may be swimming against the tide.

As the conference continued, we breathed sighs of relief. Our fears were unfounded. We had the great pleasure of listening to, and interacting with, several high-profile, fascinating and brilliant women who had enjoyed great success within the field. These included Debra Nestel herself, Nicole Harder, Jenny Rudolph, Michaela Kolbe and Laura Rock, among many more.

Inspired by these women, we looked closer to home and reflected on our 12-year-long research partnership, our encouraging boss, our talented collaborators and the vibrant fellows with whom we are privileged to learn and work. We discussed our research teams past and present. All around us were women producing remarkable work, sharing new thoughts and engaging in genuine collaboration to achieve great things. Here in simulation, women are truly thriving.

We don't want to take anything away from the inspirational men who presented at the conference, and who also continue to influence our work every day. We have, of course, been inspired by many men within the simulation sphere, and continue to enjoy working with them and learning from them as much as we have from women. However, women have traditionally been underrepresented [2] and, at times, repressed [3]. It was therefore extremely heartening to see such a strong attendance from successful and influential women.

We have a message for women considering joining us in this truly fascinating research field. Here, in the magnificent domain of simulation, you can flourish. What is more, you will be surrounded by other, like-minded, ambitious and collaborative women who will cheer you on. Please, come and join us!

Yours sincerely,

Dr Samantha Eve Smith and Dr Victoria Ruth Tallentire

Declarations

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None declared.

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