



FILM

Sloan Film Premieres, Panel, and Awards at the 2018 Sundance Film Festival

Sloan's film program featured prominently in this year's Sundance Film Festival, including two Sloan-awarded film premieres, a panel discussion with Hollywood stars and NASA scientists, and the announcement of three new Sundance/Sloan film commissioning awards. The Sloan Feature Film Prize was awarded to [Search](#), a thriller told entirely on screens, which also won the Next Audience Award and was bought by Sony in one of the Festival's [biggest acquisition deals](#). This was the first year Sloan announced the Feature Film Prize before the Festival, which led to increased visibility for the winning film and for Sloan's program.



Sloan hosted a reception at the Festival to recognize the *Search* filmmakers (pictured below) and the winners of the three Sundance/Sloan commissioning awards. The outstanding roster of [2018 Sundance/Sloan winners](#) is: Commissioning Grant to writer/director Cherien Dabis for *What the Eyes Don't See*, the true story of how Iraqi American pediatrician Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha blew the whistle on the Flint, Michigan lead crisis; Lab Fellowship to writer C. Wrenn Ball for *Katie Wright*, about the Wright



brothers' sister who unexpectedly emerged to lead their business, fighting resistance from businessmen, society, and her own brothers; Episodic Storytelling Grant to writer John Lopez for a pilot about American financier J.P. Morgan set at the turn of 20th century. During the Festival, Sloan also hosted a panel on representations of science and scientists in film, moderated by actress and writer Kerry Bishe and featuring NASA JPL Planetary Scientist Kevin Hand, NASA/JPL Systems Engineer Shonte Tucker, and Oscar winners Octavia Spencer (pictured above) and Darren Aronofsky.

[The Catcher Was a Spy](#), developed via a Sloan and Tribeca grant, also premiered at this year's festival. Starring Paul Rudd, Jeff Daniels, Sienna Miller and Paul Giamatti and produced by Jim Young (*The Man Who Knew Infinity*), the film tells the true story of Moe Berg an enigmatic professional baseball player and top-secret spy for the OSS who was sent to meet Werner Heisenberg during WWII and helped the U.S. win the race against Germany to build the atomic bomb.



Sloan-Developed Films *To Dust* and *Radium Girls* to Premiere at Tribeca Film Festival in April



Two Sloan-developed films, the nineteenth and twentieth films to come out of Sloan's development pipeline, will premiere at the Tribeca Film Festival in April. Shawn Snyder's *To Dust*, developed by a NYU/Sloan \$100,000 First Feature Award in 2015 and a TFI/Sloan Student Grand Jury Prize in 2016, will make its world premiere at a Sloan-hosted screening during the Tribeca Film Festival on April 22. The off-beat and poignant film, starring Géza Röhrig (*Son of Saul*) and Matthew Broderick (pictured at left), follows Shmuel (Röhrig), a Hasidic cantor in Upstate New York, who is distraught by the untimely death of his wife. He becomes obsessed with understanding the physical processes of the body's decay and teams up with a local community college biology professor (Broderick) to delve more

deeply into the science of decomposition.

Radium Girls, directed by Ginny Mohler and Lydia Pilcher (*The Talented Mr. Ripley*), will also premiere at Tribeca. The film is based on the true story of young women in the 1920s who were poisoned while painting luminous watches at the U.S. Radium Factory. It stars Abby Quinn (pictured at right) as one of the women who watches her sister and friends develop illnesses from radium and fights to expose the truth about radium's dangerous effects. *Radium Girls* received a NYU/Sloan \$100,000 First Feature Award in 2013.



Sloan Hosts *Bombshell* Screening and Women in STEM Panel at Athena Film Festival



Sloan hosted a sold-out screening and panel discussion of the Sloan-funded documentary *Bombshell: The Hedy Lamarr Story* at the Athena Film Festival in February. Organized by Barnard's Athena Center for Leadership and the organization Women and Hollywood, Athena showcases films that tell the stories of women in leadership positions. The post-screening panel on women in STEM was moderated by Jen Schwartz of *Scientific American* and featured women writers and directors of four Sloan-developed projects about great women scientists. Alex Dean spoke about *Bombshell*. Cherien Dabis discussed her Sloan and Sundance-supported project about the Flint

water crisis, *What the Eyes Don't See*. Ginny Mohler and Lydia Dean Pilcher spoke about the forthcoming Sloan and NYU-funded *Radium Girls*. And Jenny Halper discussed her Sloan and Tribeca-



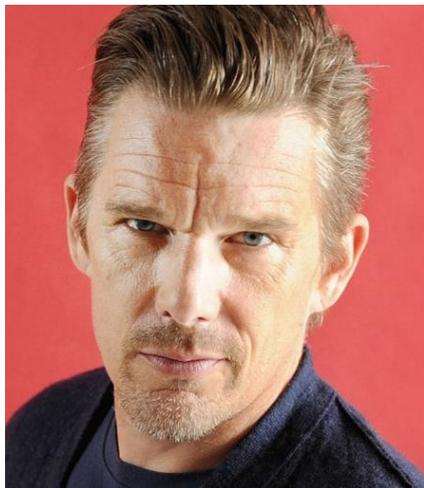
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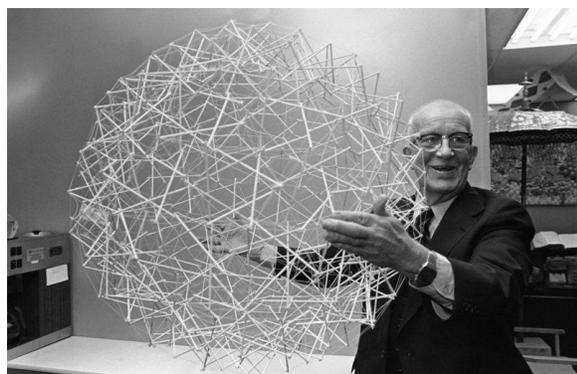
supported screenplay *The Burning Season* about a female scientist studying lemurs in Madagascar. Bombshell will air May 18 on [America Masters](#) on PBS stations nationwide.

Ethan Hawke to Play Tesla in Sloan-Supported Biopic



Ethan Hawke has been [cast](#) to play pioneering inventor Nikola Tesla in the biopic [Tesla](#) written and directed by Michael Almereyda, who also directed the Sloan-developed *Experimenter* and the Sloan-awarded *Marjorie Prime*. Almereyda received the inaugural Sloan Science in Cinema Filmmaker Fellowship at the San Francisco Film Society in 2017 for the Tesla script, which he first wrote in 1980 but returned to while he was filming *Marjorie Prime*. The film, produced by Passage Pictures and Campbell Grobman Films, will follow the life of Tesla, including the invention of the AC motor and his rivalry with Thomas Edison.

The House of Tomorrow in Theatres This April



The Sloan-developed film [The House of Tomorrow](#), based on the award-winning novel by Peter Bognanni, will open theatrically on April 20. The film, directed by Peter Livolsi and starring Ellen Burstyn, Maude Apatow, Nick Offerman, Asa Butterfield, and Alex Wolff, is a coming of age story about a young protagonist living in a geodesic dome with his grandmother, a passionate advocate of the architect, inventor, and futurist Buckminster Fuller (pictured at left), whose ideas pervade the narrative. *The House of Tomorrow* received a 2015 Tribeca Film

Institute/Sloan Filmmaker Fund Screenplay Development Award and a 2017 Film Independent/Sloan Distribution Grant. It premiered at the San Francisco International Film Festival with a Sloan-sponsored screening and was also shown at the Museum of the Moving Image as part of a Sloan-hosted event during the World Science Festival this summer.



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THEATER

EST/Sloan Commissioned Play *Bump* Opens in May



Opening May 14, *Bump*, a [new play](#) by Chiara Atik (pictured at left), tells the serendipitous story of the car mechanic who invented a new birthing device. The plot follows a girl in colonial New England, expectant mothers on a pregnancy message board, and a mechanic about to become a grandfather, all attempting to better understand the miracle of childbirth. For two decades, the pioneering [EST/Sloan partnership](#) has commissioned, developed, and produced hundreds of new plays that explore science and technology and challenge existing stereotypes of scientists and engineers.

MTC Holds Reading of Sloan-Commissioned Play about Development of the Pap Smear

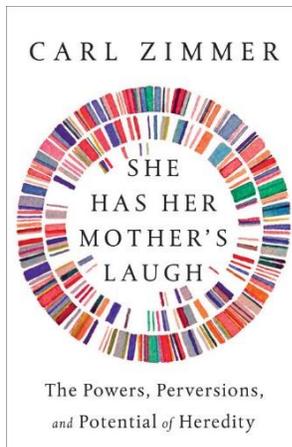


In February, Manhattan Theatre Club (MTC) held a reading of the Sloan-commissioned play *Nan and the Lower Body (The Pap Smear Play)* by actor and writer Jessica Dickey (pictured at left). Set in the 1950s, the play tells the story of Nan, a young scientist who becomes the lab assistant to Dr. Papanicolaou, the creator of the Pap Smear and a leading force in women's reproductive health. But as Nan embarks on pioneering research into women's bodies, she begins to realize that something is very wrong with her own body. Inspired by a true story, it is a powerful new work about scientific discovery and finding one's purpose. Dickey received a commission from Sloan and MTC in 2015, and MTC will continue to develop the play as part of its Sloan Initiative, an ongoing partnership between Sloan and MTC.



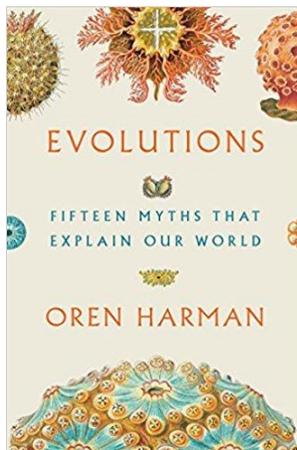
BOOKS

She Has Her Mother's Laugh, on Heredity, to be Published in May



[*She Has Her Mother's Laugh: The Powers, Perversions, and Potential of Heredity*](#), by *New York Times* science columnist [Carl Zimmer](#), will be published on May 29 by Penguin Random House. In the book, Zimmer presents a history of our understanding of heredity, from the birth of genetics in the early 1900s to the prevalence of at-home genetic tests today. Drawing on historical and current scientific research, his own experience with his two daughters, and original reporting, Zimmer unpacks urgent bioethical quandaries arising from new biomedical technologies, as well as long-standing presumptions about who we really are and what we can pass on to future generations. Zimmer received a Sloan grant in 2017 to support the research and writing of this book.

Evolutions, by Oren Harman, to be Published in June



[*Evolutions: Fifteen Myths That Explain Our World*](#), by Oren Harman, Professor and Chair of the Program in Science Technology and Society at Israel's Bar Ilan University, will be published on June 5 by Farrar, Straus and Giroux. This unique book with original illustrations uses modern science to create new and original mythologies. Harman connects the latest scientific findings to enduring themes such as motherhood, death, loneliness, language, and truth. The work reminds readers that science may not solve humankind's existential puzzles, but its discoveries can help us continue the never-ending search for truth.

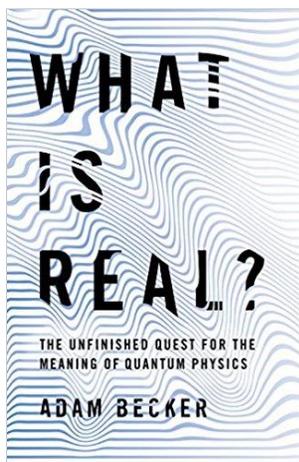


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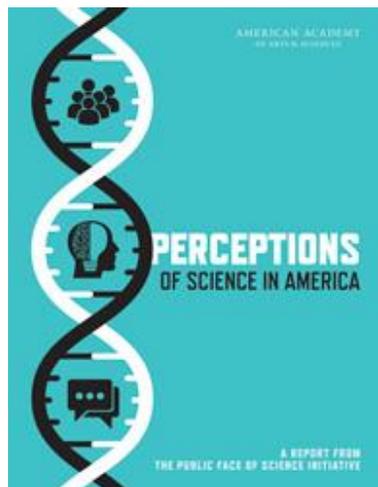
What is Real? The Unfinished Quest for the Meaning of Quantum Physics Is Published



[*What is Real? The Unfinished Quest for the Meaning of Quantum Physics*](#), by science writer and physics-trained [Adam Becker](#), will be published on March 20, 2018 by Basic Books. The book focuses on the dominance of Niels Bohr's Copenhagen interpretation and how physicists historically dismissed questions about the reality underlying quantum physics. Becker argues that Bohr's students vigorously protected his legacy and that questioning the status quo in the physics community long meant professional ruin. However, from the 1920s to today, physicists such as John Bell, David Bohm, and Hugh Everett persisted in seeking the true meaning of quantum mechanics. *What is Real?* tells the story of this battle of ideas and the scientists who stood up for truth. Becker received a Sloan grant in 2016 to support the research and writing of this book.

NEW MEDIA

American Academy Releases Sloan-Funded *Perceptions of Science in America* Report



In February, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences released a report on [*Perceptions of Science in America*](#), the first in a series of reports as part of the Sloan-funded “Public Face of Science Initiative.” Three key takeaways from the report are: 1) Public confidence in science has remained stable over the last 30 years. 2) Public confidence in science varies based on demographics such as education level, age, and race. 3) There is no single anti-science population, but more research is needed to understand what drives skepticism about specific science issues. This report analyzed decades of public opinion surveys to identify gaps in our current understanding, underscoring the need for additional studies on attitudes toward science and how those attitudes impact personal decisions and support for evidence-based policy. The report was also supported by the Moore Foundation and the Rita Allen Foundation.



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World Science Festival Returns to New York May 29 through June 3



The eleventh annual [World Science Festival](#) (WSF) will be held from May 30 to June 3 throughout New York City. Sloan has supported WSF since its founding in 2008. This year's festival will include over 70 events—including debates, theatrical performances, film screenings, town hall gatherings and fireside chats, hands-on experiments, and outdoor explorations—on the themes of inspiration innovation, and ingenuity. WSF draws hundreds of thousands of attendees each year. The World Science Festival is the recipient of a final grant to support the production and execution of the annual Festival and related year-round activities.

TELEVISION

Computer History Museum Hosts Launch for Sloan-Supported Silicon Valley Doc, Airing March 19



The Computer History Museum in Mountain View, California hosted a high-profile [launch event](#) in January for *Silicon Valley: The Untold Story*, a three-part Sloan-supported documentary series from the award-winning team at Kikim Media. The sold-out event featured a panel with some of Silicon Valley's best-known innovators: Apple co-founder Steve Wozniak, WhatsApp co-founder Jan Koum, entrepreneur Kim Polese, and venture capitalist Heidi Roizen. Sloan VP Doron Weber attended and spoke about Sloan's role in commissioning the film. The three-hour documentary, set to air March 19 on the Science Channel, provides

television's first comprehensive look at the century-and-a-half history of this unique region and its unending stream of innovation. It includes interviews with key Valley figures such as Wozniak, Koum, and Alphabet chairman Eric Schmidt, as well as with leading scholars and historians.



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NOVA Wonders to Premiere in April



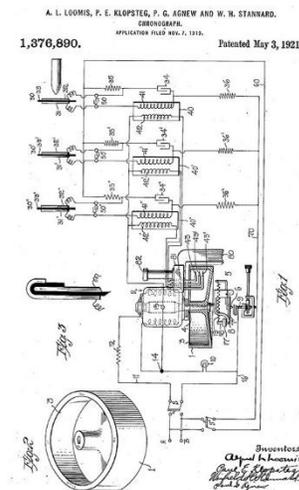
[NOVA Wonders](#), a new series from NOVA previously called *NOVA ScienceNow*, will premiere on PBS on six consecutive Wednesday nights this spring, starting April 25. The season features six one-hour episodes that each tackle a major question in science—about artificial intelligence, extraterrestrial life, animal communication, genetic engineering, dark matter and dark energy, and the microbiome. The series is hosted by [Talithia Williams](#), Associate Dean for Research and Experiential Learning and Associate Professor of Mathematics at Harvey Mudd College (pictured at left); [André Fenton](#), Professor of Neural Science at New York University; and [Rana el Kaliouby](#), CEO and co-founder of Affectiva. The series is supported by a current grant to WGBH.

Two Recent Sloan-Supported Documentaries Reach Millions via Premiere Broadcasts and Streaming



Sloan continues to support science stories on public television that reach a broad audience and have a special resonance with viewers. “[Black Hole Apocalypse](#)”, the first *NOVA* special to be hosted by a woman scientist, premiered on PBS January 10. Hosted by astrophysicist and author Janna Levin, professor of physics and astronomy at Barnard, the premiere reached 5.3 million viewers across the episode. It also reached a large audience online, with more than 113,000 streaming views in four

weeks, making it one of *NOVA*’s top-performing episodes online. “[The Secret of Tuxedo Park](#)”, a Sloan-supported *American Experience* documentary about Wall Street tycoon and physicist Alfred Lee Loomis (whose chronograph patent is featured at left), premiered on January 16. It reached 2.5 million viewers across the episode and was streamed over 93,000 times across four weeks, much higher than the average number of streaming views for *American Experience* episodes.





Sloan-Supported *Africa's Great Civilization* to be featured in NAACP Curriculum

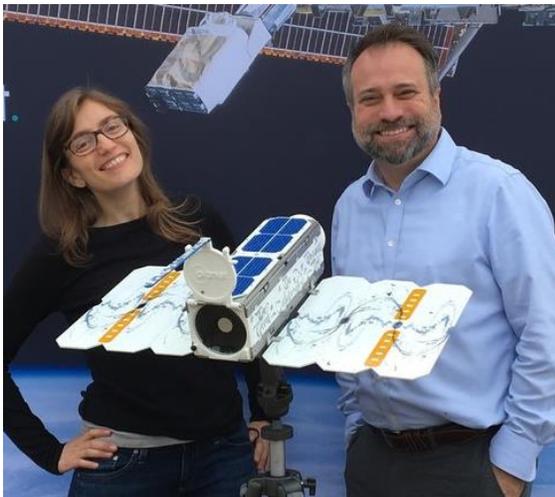


The Sloan-supported six-part series *Africa's Great Civilizations*, hosted by Henry Louis Gates, Jr., will be featured in a [new curriculum](#) developed by the NAACP and the Africa-America Institute (AAI) designed to highlight the accomplishments, achievements and history of Africa and its diaspora. NAACP chapters and other partners will be able to attend screenings of this and other films and engage with a broad range of content for both children and adults that underscores the importance of African

contributions to cultural and scientific knowledge. With this program, NAACP and AAI hope to promote positive images of people of color and encourage civic engagement among people of color.

RADIO

Sloan-Supported *Planet Money* Podcast Goes to Space

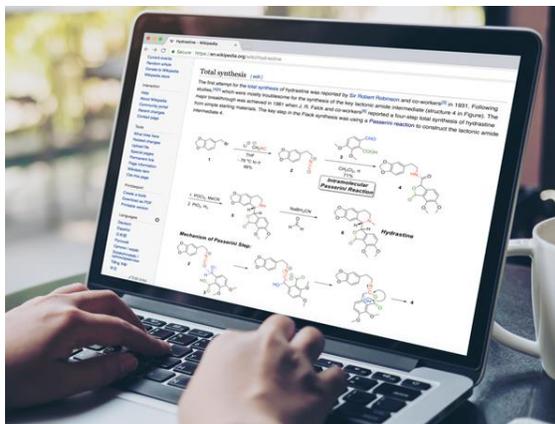


The Sloan-supported NPR economics podcast *Planet Money* embarked on an unusual and ambitious journey this winter. In a [special series](#) of four episodes, the *Planet Money* team set out to investigate the world of private space exploration, which has put billions of dollars into tiny satellites and new rockets, and gathering information on earth from above. The series, which gives listeners first-hand insight into the space exploration market, chronicles the journalists' journey from buying a cube satellite, selecting and purchasing space on a rocket, and launching their satellite into space. *Planet Money* journalists Stacy Vanek Smith and Robert Smith are pictured at left, shopping for a satellite.



UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGE

Study Shows Wikipedia's Influence on Scientific Community



Science News published [an article](#) about the 2017 University of Pittsburgh [study](#) that shows how Wikipedia has become a factor not just for universal access to knowledge but also for the development of science as a field. The study's results show "that Wikipedia is not just a passive resource, it also has an effect on the frontiers of knowledge." The article ends with an exhortation for scientists to edit entries within their expertise: "This is a big resource for science and I think we need to recognize that." As Wikipedia's single largest funder and first Board visitor, the Foundation has played a key role in the development of the largest encyclopedia in human history.

John Bracken Joins DPLA as Executive Director



John Bracken, former vice president of technology innovation at the Knight Foundation, joined the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) as executive director in December. Bracken (pictured at left) is a leader in the field of digital innovation with nearly two decades of experience working with public libraries, cultural institutions, and foundations. Prior to Knight, Bracken held positions at the Ford Foundation and the MacArthur Foundation. Now in its fifth year of

operation, DPLA will focus on growth, innovation, and enhanced services for its partners and users. Sloan has supported DPLA since its inception and currently funds DPLA's efforts to expand its hub network and to increase access to ebooks via a library-owned ebook platform.



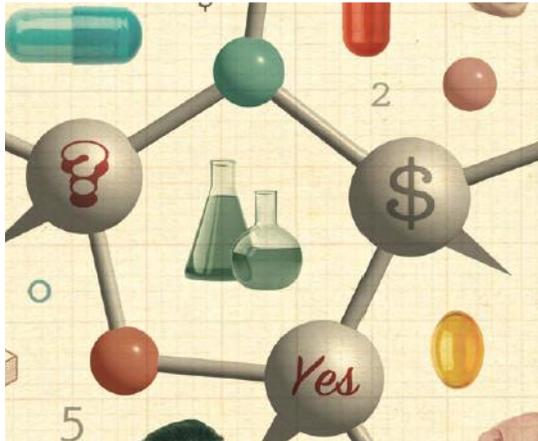
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SLOAN IN THE NEWS

Public Understanding Program Cited in Stanford Social Innovation Review



Leaders at the Rita Allen Foundation, the Kavli Foundation, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison recently published “[The Civic Science Imperative](#)” in the *Stanford Social Innovation Review*. The piece calls for philanthropic support of “civic science”—in which scientists take active roles as citizens, and people from all walks of life engage with scientific research and its social and ethical implications. The authors cite Sloan’s longstanding support for science-related media as a model for other funders and quote VP, Programs Doron Weber on *Hidden Figures* as an illustration of how science can bring people together through the prism of art.

Program Team: Doron Weber, *Vice President, Programs and Program Director* | Eliza French, *Program Associate* | Delia DiBiasi, *Senior Program and Investments Assistant*