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## Caroline Criado Perez's ground-breaking gender bias exposé wins 2019 Royal Society Science Book Prize

Judges praise Criado Perez for drawing together compelling research to reveal systemic discrimination

Tonight, Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2019, *Invisible Women: Exposing Data Bias in a World Designed for Men* (Chatto & Windus) by writer, broadcaster and feminist campaigner Caroline Criado Perez, becomes the 32<sup>nd</sup> winner of the prestigious Royal Society Science Books Prize, sponsored by Insight Investment.

In *Invisible Women*, Criado Perez brings together for the first time a range of case studies, stories and new research from around the world that highlights the ways women are 'forgotten' on a daily basis. From government policy and medical research to technology, media and workplaces, she exposes to readers the lack of gender-specific data that has unintentionally created a world biased against women.

Criado Perez presents a clear case for policy change by exploring the myriad ways the world is designed for men; from the size of mobile phones to women being more likely to be misdiagnosed following a heart attack. *Invisible Women* is a rallying cry to close this gap by paying attention to the whole population, not just half, and ensure that our world is constructed for everybody.

Criado Perez becomes the fifth woman to scoop the Prize in as many years, following last year's winner Sarah-Jayne Blakemore (*Inventing Ourselves*, 2018), Cordelia Fine (*Testosterone Rex*, 2017), Andrea Wulf (*The Invention of Nature*, 2016) and Gaia Vince (*Adventures in the Anthropocene*, 2015). The panel of judges praised the 35-year-old writer for challenging their worldview and perceptions by revealing the systemic discrimination caused by a data gap.

Chair of this year's judging panel, Professor Sir Nigel Shadbolt FRS, Principal and Professorial Research Fellow in Computer Science at Jesus College, University of Oxford, said: "*Invisible Women* is a brilliant exposé of how the world is designed around the default male. Caroline Criado Perez writes with energy and style, every page full of facts and data that support her fundamental contention that in a world built for and by men gender data

gaps, biases and blind spots are everywhere. As an AI researcher and data scientist, it makes me look at my field afresh. Read it and be prepared to think again.”

Fellow judge and bestselling author Dorothy Koomson added: “*Invisible Women* shows quite clearly: modern-day life has been built for one particular type of person and if you do not fit that type, the world doesn’t work properly for you. From tech that doesn’t recognise feminine pitched voices to health symptoms that are dismissed and often prove to be fatal; from work situations that are set up to prevent women being promoted to public transport networks that make life harder for the people who use them most, we have a real world problem that needs to be talked about. And changed. This important and vital book is only the beginning of the conversations we need to be having about how to make sure modern life works properly for everyone, no matter who they are. It’s definitely a worthy winner.”

Professor Brian Cox OBE FRS, The Royal Society’s Professor for Public Engagement in Science, hosted the awards ceremony at The Royal Society at which Criado Perez’s book was announced winner. He commented: “We look to science to provide objectivity and curb our human biases. To be reminded then – as Caroline’s book so forcefully does – that our modern society is built upon a foundation of incomplete and often biased data, is cause for real reflection, not just for readers of popular science writing, but for the science community too. This book proves why contemporary science writing is vital and relevant and has an important role to play in challenging us to do better.”

Caroline Criado Perez received a cheque for £25,000 at the ceremony and the five shortlisted authors were each awarded £2,500. *Invisible Women* is Criado Perez’s second book, following the well-received *Do it like a Woman*.

Professor Sir Nigel Shadbolt FRS was joined on the judging panel by: **Dr Shukry James Habib**, stem cell specialist and Royal Society University Research Fellow; bestselling author, **Dorothy Koomson**; actor and science communicator, **Stephen McGann** and **Gwyneth Williams**, former Controller of BBC Radio 4 and 4 Extra.

Founded in 1988, the Prize is the only major international award that celebrates popular science writing for a non-specialist audience. Over three decades, it has championed writers such as Stephen Hawking, Jared Diamond, Stephen Jay Gould and Brian Greene and last year’s winner Sarah-Jayne Blakemore.

**Caroline Criado Perez is available for interview. For press queries please contact Hephzibah Kwakye-Saka or Katy MacMillan-Scott at Riot Communications: 020 3174 0118 / [hephzibah@riotcommunications.com](mailto:hephzibah@riotcommunications.com) / [katy@riotcommunications.com](mailto:katy@riotcommunications.com)**

## NOTES TO EDITORS

### THE SHORTLIST

## **1. About the author**

**Caroline Criado Perez** is a writer, broadcaster and award-winning feminist campaigner. Her most notable campaigns have included co-founding The Women's Room, getting a woman on Bank of England banknotes, forcing Twitter to revise its procedures for dealing with abuse and successfully campaigning for a statue of suffragist Millicent Fawcett to be erected in Parliament Square. She was the 2013 recipient of the Liberty Human Rights Campaigner of the Year Award and was awarded an OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours 2015. Her first book, *Do it Like a Woman*, was published in 2015. She lives in London.

## **2. About the book**

***Invisible Women: Exposing Data Bias in a World Designed for Men* by Caroline Criado-Perez (Chatto & Windus)**

*Invisible Women* shows us how, in a world largely built for and by men, we are systematically ignoring half the population. It exposes the gender data gap – a gap in our knowledge that is at the root of perpetual, systemic discrimination against women, and that has created a pervasive but invisible bias with a profound effect on women's lives.

From government policy and medical research, to technology, workplaces, urban planning and the media, *Invisible Women* reveals the biased data that excludes women. Caroline Criado Perez brings together for the first time an impressive range of case studies, stories and new research from across the world that illustrate the hidden ways in which women are forgotten, and the impact this has on their health and well-being. In making the case for change, this powerful and provocative book will make readers see the world anew.

*'Here are the facts! Caroline Criado Perez shines her penetrating gaze on the absence of women from the creation of most societal norms – from algorithms to medicinal doses to government policy. Knowledge is power – we all need to know how our systems work if we want change. Arm yourself with this book and press it into the hands of everyone you know. It is utterly brilliant!' - Helena Kennedy*

## **3. The 2019 shortlist in full (in alphabetical order by author surname):**

1. *Invisible Women: Exposing Data Bias in a World Designed for Men* by Caroline Criado Perez (Chatto & Windus)
2. *Six Impossible Things: The 'Quanta of Solace' and the Mysteries of the Subatomic World* by John Gribbin (Icon Books)
3. *The Remarkable Life of the Skin: An Intimate Journey Across Our Surface* by Monty Lyman (Bantam Press)
4. *Clearing the Air: The Beginning and the End of Air Pollution* by Tim Smedley (Bloomsbury Sigma)
5. *The Second Kind of Impossible: The Extraordinary Quest for a New Form of Matter* by Paul Steinhardt (Simon & Schuster)
6. *Infinite Powers: The Story of Calculus – The Language of the Universe* by Steven Strogatz (Atlantic Books)

#### **4. About the Royal Society:**

The Royal Society is a self-governing Fellowship of many of the world's most distinguished scientists drawn from all areas of science, engineering, and medicine. The Society's fundamental purpose, as it has been since its foundation in 1660, is to recognise, promote, and support excellence in science and to encourage the development and use of science for the benefit of humanity. <http://royalsociety.org>. Follow the Royal Society on Twitter (@royalsociety) or on Facebook ([facebook.com/theroyalsociety](https://facebook.com/theroyalsociety)).

#### **5. About Insight Investment:**

Insight Investment is a leading global investment manager, founded in 2002 and headquartered in London. Insight primarily manages money for pension schemes by providing liability-driven investment strategies and investing in fixed income and currency and multi-asset.

[www.insightinvestment.com](http://www.insightinvestment.com)

#### **6. About the prize:**

Set up in 1988 as the "Science Book Prizes", The Royal Society Science Book Prize sponsored by Insight Investment, was named the Rhône-Poulenc Prizes for Science Books from 1990 - 2000, the Aventis Prizes for Science Books from 2001 – 2006, the Royal Society Prize for Science Books from 2007 – 2010 and the Royal Society Winton Prize for Science Books from 2011 – 2015.

#### **7. Complete list of past winners of the Prize:**

- 2018: *Inventing Ourselves* by Sarah-Jayne Blakemore
- 2017: *Testosterone Rex* by Cordelia Fine
- 2016: *The Invention of Nature* by Andrea Wulf
- 2015: *Adventures in the Anthropocene* by Gaia Vince
- 2014: *Stuff* by Mark Miodownik
- 2013: *The Particle at the End of the Universe* by Sean Carroll
- 2012: *The Information* by James Gleick
- 2011: *The Wavewatcher's Companion* by Gavin Pretor-Pinney
- 2010: *Life Ascending* by Nick Lane
- 2009: *The Age of Wonder* by Richard Holmes
- 2008: *Six Degrees* by Mark Lynas
- 2007: *Stumbling on Happiness* by Daniel Gilbert
- 2006: *Electric Universe* by David Bodanis
- 2005: *Critical Mass* by Philip Ball
- 2004: *A Short History of Nearly Everything* by Bill Bryson
- 2003: *Right Hand, Left Hand* by Chris McManus
- 2002: *The Universe in a Nutshell* by Stephen Hawking
- 2001: *Mapping the Deep* by Robert Kunzig
- 2000: *The Elegant Universe* by Brian Greene
- 1999: *The Man Who Loved Only Numbers* by Paul Hoffman

- 1998: *Guns, Germs and Steel* by Jared Diamond
- 1997: *The Wisdom of Bones* by Alan Walker and Pat Shipman
- 1996: *Plague's Progress* by Arno Karlen
- 1995: *The Consumer's Good Chemical Guide* by John Emsley
- 1994: *The Language of the Genes* by Steve Jones
- 1993: *The Making of Memory* by Steven Rose
- 1992: *The Rise and Fall of the Third Chimpanzee* by Jared Diamond
- 1991: *Wonderful Life* by Stephen Jay Gould
- 1990: *The Emperor's New Mind* by Roger Penrose
- 1989: *Bones of Contention* by Roger Lewin
- 1988: *Living with Risk* by the British Medical Association Board of Science