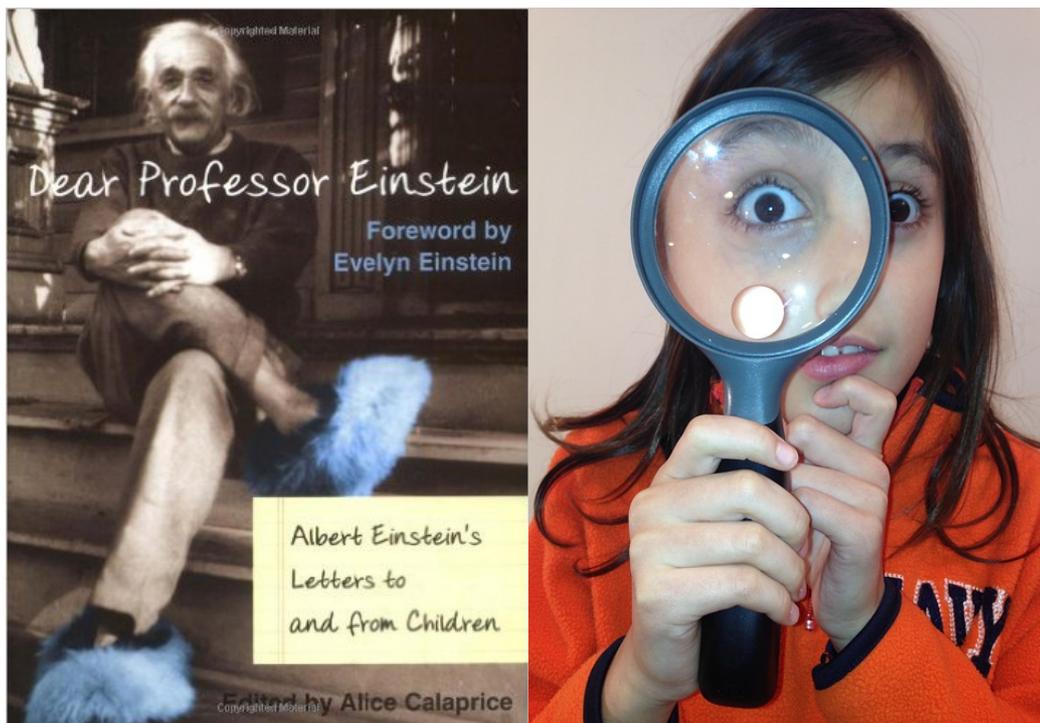


Einstein's Advice to a Little Girl Who Wants to Be a Scientist

By [Worth Sharing](#) | Sep 8, 2015



Gender imbalance is arguably more pronounced in science than in any other field. It's a systemic problem solved not simply by putting more women in the Science section of the bookstore or on the TED stage or on the science faculties of higher education, but by encouraging more little girls to become scientists in the first place. But, how?

Here is a delightful exchange between Einstein and a bright, witty South African girl named Tyfanny, who reminded Einstein of his own granddaughter and with whom he exchanged several letters despite being at the height of his career and cultural prominence.

In a letter dated September 19, 1946, Tyfanny writes:

I forgot to tell you, in my last letter, that I was a girl. I mean I am a girl. I have always regretted this a great deal, but by now I have become more or less resigned to the fact. Anyway, I hate dresses and dances and all the kind of rot girls usually like. I much prefer horses and riding. Long ago, before I wanted to become a scientist, I wanted to be a jockey and ride horses in races. But that was ages ago, now. I hope you will not think any the less of me for being a girl!

Sometime between September and October 1946 — a snappy response time by the day's standards — Einstein replies:

I do not mind that you are a girl, but the main thing is that you yourself do not mind. There is no reason for it.

This is an excerpt from Maria Popova's article in [Brain Pickings](#)

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