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## Perhaps calling it the gender gap is missing the point!

*Wednesday 31 May 2017 13:30 (30 minutes)*

A persistent gender gap in physics—particularly in both conceptual understanding and retention in programs—has concerned educators and policy makers for decades. Though women make up the majority of undergraduate students, they represent only 20% of physics undergraduates. We found that in a study of 790 students from our institution, physics *identity* plays a significant role, distinct from prior knowledge, in mediating the gender gap in conceptual understanding and intention to continue in a physics program. This suggests that teaching techniques that target identity growth could help close the gap. Examples of techniques used in the classroom that correlate with identity growth (and some that seem to stifle it) will be discussed.

**Presenter:** Prof. JAMES M., Fraser (Queen's University)

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