



Name: Ashley Spindler

Current Job: R&D Engineer, Online Content Creator

Scientific Discipline/Field: Astronomy + Space Technology

University: University of Surrey and The Open University

Country: United Kingdom

Pick some letters (L,G,B,T,Q,+, etc.): T, P, Q

Website: www.patreon.com/ashleynova,
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What does your job involve?

I research and design a diagnostic package for electric propulsion devices on space craft. This includes developing the theoretical model, choosing relevant devices and technologies, and designing the instrument layout.

I also work as an online content creator, which means I mostly make videos of me shouting into the void while playing video games. I have a successful talk show called “The Trans Agenda” and have a thriving community of viewers on my twitch channel.

How did you get to this job (education etc.)?

I took part in the SEPnet postgraduate placement program.

Do you feel being LGBT has affected your career decisions?

As an academic, being openly trans rarely affected my day to day. However it has limited my career options as many places in the world which are still hostile to LGBT+ people are off the table for job searching and attending conferences. However, universities in the UK are generally quite positive environments for LGBT+ folk, with many ranking in the Stonewall Top 100 employers, which is a factor in my ongoing search for a post-doc.

Have you had any reactions from colleagues about being LGBT, either good or bad?

Most commonly, I get told I’m “so brave” or “so inspiring” for living my life. Frankly, I think this attitude is a little poisonous, as it shows that people realise that life can be hard for LGBT folks, but don’t want to do anything about it except applaud the few of us that survive.

Did you have any role models growing up (LGBT, STEM, totally unrelated...)?

Growing up, my biggest role model was a character from the TV show Stargate SG-1. Samantha Carter was a double PhD, Air Force Captain (later a general), and didn’t take \$%£! from anyone. As I got older and immersed myself in LGBT+ culture, I find now that many of my inspirations include all kinds of people: Jamie Clayton and Laverne Cox are two of my style icons, my good friend Violet (aka DistractedElf), Karen Masters who I’ve had the pleasure of working with, Alfredo Carpineti and the rest of PridelNSTEM, Beth Hellen... Let’s just say I have a lot of inspirations?

What are your plans for the future?



I'm hoping to start a post-doc soon and get back to staring at galaxies, which is a huge passion for me. Outside of academia, I've started work on my first novel (a Queer Victorian Fantasy), I'm growing my twitch stream and launching new shows and podcasts.