



Audio transcript of Meet Sharon Ann Holgate

I'm Sharon Ann Holgate. I'm a science writer and broadcaster and I write mainly about physics and technology. I've also presented on BBC Radio. I've presented on BBC World Service and also a couple of documentaries for BBC Radio 4.

{Text: Who have you written for?}

I've written for a range of different publications including Science, Science Careers, New Scientist, the Times Higher Education Supplement, Focus. I've written for E&T magazine, Materials World and Physics World.

{Text: What do you like to write about?}

So I focus mainly my writing on physics and technology. But I also like to do some light-hearted science as well. So I've written a feature on the world's worst inventions, which included a nappy for parrots, rather bizarrely! And I've also written a piece about the science of toilet paper, which was good fun, and a piece on the science of underwear, which actually ended up quite a serious piece. There's an amazing amount of technology goes into underwear, particularly bras which can have up to 50 components in them.

{Text: Childhood inspiration}

When I was a child I used to love watching a programme called Fingerbobs on the television and there was this, actually a little hand puppet called Crow, and Crow wanted to drink the water in the bottom of a beaker, you see, but he couldn't reach. So there were some pebbles nearby, so Crow began gradually dropping stones into the beaker so that the water level rose up enough for him to reach. I

was absolutely fascinated with this. I think I was about 4 years old. And I dragged my Mum out into the garden to go and get some stones so that we could recreate this experiment in the kitchen. I can remember her grumbling because of course these stones were all covered in mud and I was dragging them into the kitchen. But we got out a jug and we repeated the same thing, and I was just absolutely fascinated by it.

{Text: Favourite science book}

My favourite science book is probably Longitude by Dava Sobel. I'm particularly interested in that period of history and I just really like the way that she brought the story to life. So I would say that that's my favourite.

{Text: Favourite scientist from history}

My favourite scientist from history is actually not a physicist. It's actually Sir Joseph Banks who I will be honest was quite a heartthrob of mine when I was a teenager. So I spent many, many years with a copy of a portrait of him in my bedroom. So while most of my friends had posters of pop bands, I had a nice portrait of Sir Joseph Banks in my bedroom, which I still have to this day and I still enjoy looking at.

{Text: If I had a superpower...}

I think I'd like to be able to time travel.

{Text: The thing I like most about my job}

I guess one of the things I like the most about my job is just the privilege of being able to talk to scientists who are working on these amazing things that could potentially change all our lives. I think that really is a great privilege, and it's something that I never tire of.

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