



YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED



Catherine Heymans

"I saw it first!" In science you can really say this. Imagine discovering a new planet, working out how the brain functions or unveiling the fossils of unknown creatures! In science you get to ask the questions and then find out the answers.

Catherine Heymans is an astrophysicist. She uses telescopes all around the world to look at very distant galaxies.

She says

"I have always really been interested in astronomy. At school I did 9 GCSEs including science, maths and French. I then studied physics, chemistry and two maths A-levels before going to university to study astrophysics. I spent a summer in Sydney working at the Anglo-Australian Observatory and loved it and I am now doing a PhD in astrophysics.

"What I love about my job is looking through telescopes far away from the city lights where you can see so many more stars. I get to travel to observatories around the world. It's amazing to think that the stars we see are huge burning balls of gas millions and millions of miles away!

"My job does not give me a huge salary, but it's enough and every morning I am excited about coming to work - I would much rather be an astrophysicist than have a boring city job!"

If you think you might like a job like Catherine's talk to your careers advisor at school or visit your local Connexions partnership. Connexions is an advice and guidance service. You can find your local Connexions partnership by logging onto www.connexions.gov.uk.

The Institute of Physics can also help - call them on **020 7470 4800** or go to www.iop.org. It's also worth checking out The Royal Astronomical Society's web page at www.ras.org.uk.