

EUNICE NEWTON FOOTE

(Scientist, climatologist, and activist
(United States of America, 1819-1888))



GALLERY
of HISTORIANS
and GEOGRAPHERS of
AMERICA

She was the first known scientist to experiment with the warming effect of sunlight on different gases. She theorized that changing the proportion of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere would change its temperature. She conducted a series of experiments that demonstrated the interactions of sunlight with different gases, and among the gases she tested. Foote discovered that carbon dioxide trapped most of the heat, forming the basis of the article, "Circumstances Affecting the Heat of the Sun's Rays," accepted at the eighth annual meeting of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (AAAS).

It is the first known work to identify what lies behind one of the most critical phenomena, the greenhouse effect, which contributes to global climate change. She was a member of the editorial committee, one of the five women who prepared the proceedings of the Seneca Falls Convention, New York, in 1848, being the first convention on women's rights, and as one of the signatories of the Declaration of Sentiments of the Convention, which demanded equality with men in social status and legal rights, including the right to vote.