

# **Still Waiting in the Wings?**

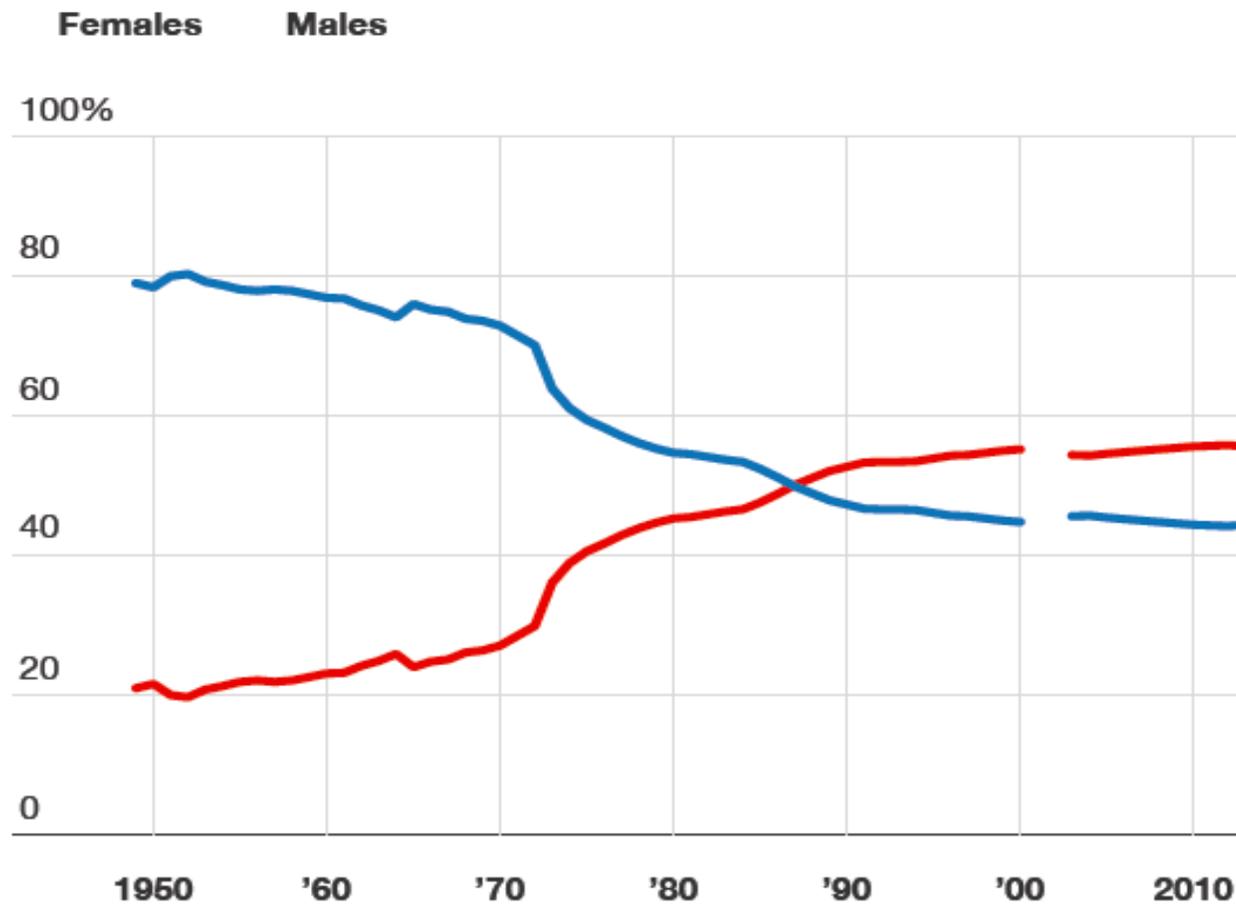
**Early Career Researchers Workshop**

**7 March 2017**

**Professor Sharon Bell**

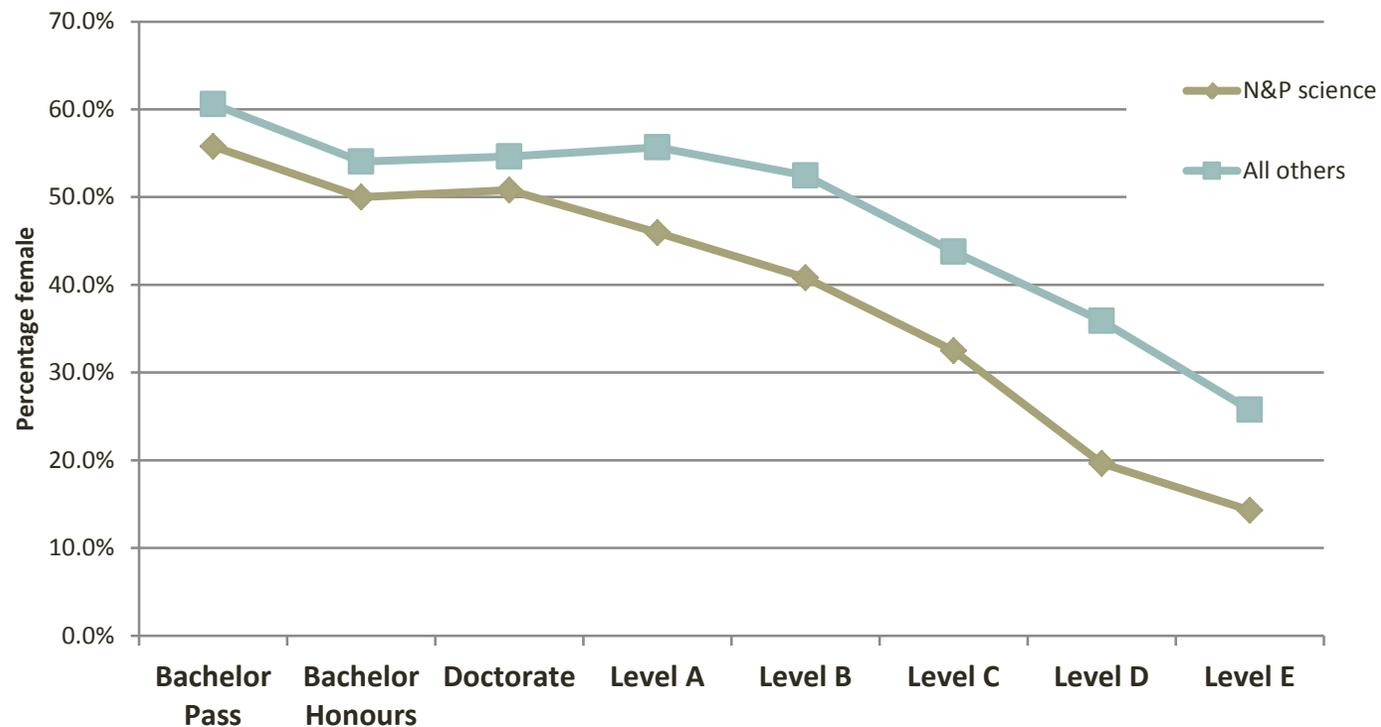
# The Conversation: Who Goes to University? May 2015

Proportion of male and female students enrolled in higher education, 1949 - 2013



Note: Data not available for 2001 and 2002.

# Participation and Seniority



**Female representation by student completions and academic level, 2011** Source: ACER DIISRTE Higher Education Statistics Collection, customised data, 2011

# *A Fair Chance for All (1990)*

**The Objectives:** To improve the balance of participation of women in higher education with particular emphasis on:

- **non-traditional courses, including engineering, business studies, economics and science**
- **research higher degrees.**

**The Targets:**

- **To increase the proportion of women in non-traditional courses other than engineering from the current level to at least 40 per cent by 1995.**
- **To increase the proportion of women in engineering courses from 7 per cent to 15 per cent by 1995.**
- **To increase the number of women in postgraduate study, particularly in research, relative to the proportion of female under graduates in each field by 1995.**



National Board of Employment, Education and Training

Australian Research Council

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**Waiting in the Wings: A Study of Early  
Career Academic Researchers in Australia**

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**Pat Bazeley**

**Lynn Kemp**

**Kate Stevens**

**Christine Asmar**

**Carol Grbich**

**Herb Marsh**

**Ragbir Bhatia**

*University of Western Sydney Macarthur*

*July, 1996*

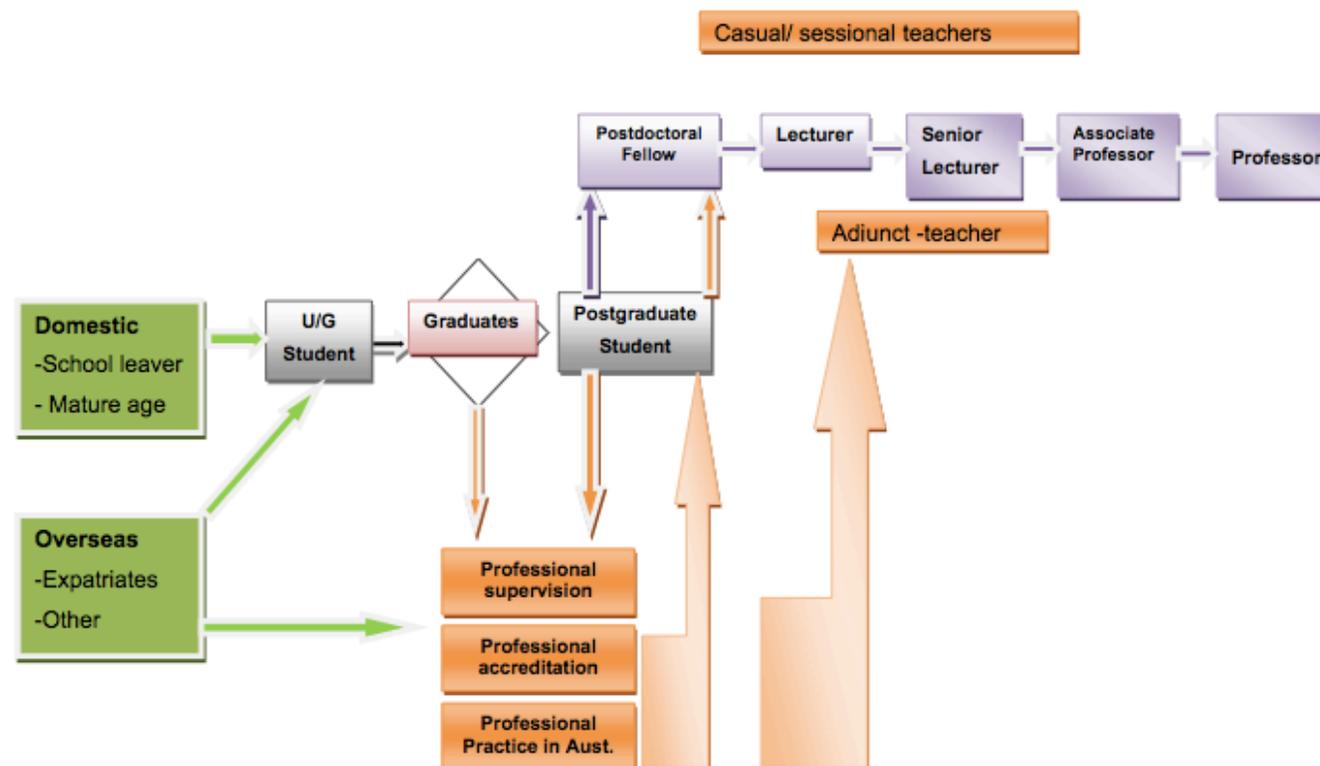
Australian Government Publishing Service  
Canberra

## **Bazeley et al 1996**

**The initial challenge for the early career researcher is to secure appropriate academic employment and to begin to establish a program of research and publication. This is facilitated by longer term appointments, commitment of departmental staff to research, mentoring, opportunities to attend conferences, and development and maintenance of professional networks. Intrinsic factors such as personal motivation and commitment to tenaciously pursue research questions are also crucial and cannot be underestimated in the development of a successful research career.**

# The Academic Career Orthodoxy

Figure 6: Supply Pipeline for Academics in Professional disciplines



Source: Hugo & Morris 2010

## Women in the Science Research Workforce: Identifying and Sustaining the Diversity Advantage



**Sharon Bell and Lyn Yates**  
with assistance from Robyn May and Huong Nguyen

<http://www.womeninscienceresearch.org.au>

## The Marathon

© Professor Sharon Bell



Passion and Commitment	
Strategy	
Self Efficacy/Ability	
Load distribution	
Pacemaking	
Confidence/positive 'self'-talk	
Training	
Resilience	
Sponsors and Incentives	
Competing life demands	
Support for and from team members	

## The Science Career Marathon

© Professor Sharon Bell



Passion and committment 
Sponsorship 
Track record 
Continuous employment 
Confidence 
Post-doctoral achievement 
Long hours 
Political skills/resilience 
Adaptive career strategies 
Domestic duties 
Extended leave 

# Addressing a ‘Wicked Problem’

What is needed is a move away from the ‘heroic’ science paradigm to a new scientific workforce and career paradigm that eliminates the barriers for women, and improves opportunities for a greater diversity of participants, addressing:

- the postdoctoral ‘tipping point’
- the impact of career breaks
- the ubiquity of short-term contracts and project-based support
- an unforgiving – and in some disciplines alienating – competitive culture, and
- disincentives to sectoral mobility and transitions.

[www.womeninscienceresearch.org.au](http://www.womeninscienceresearch.org.au)

# Strategies for Individuals

## Key questions for individuals to address include:

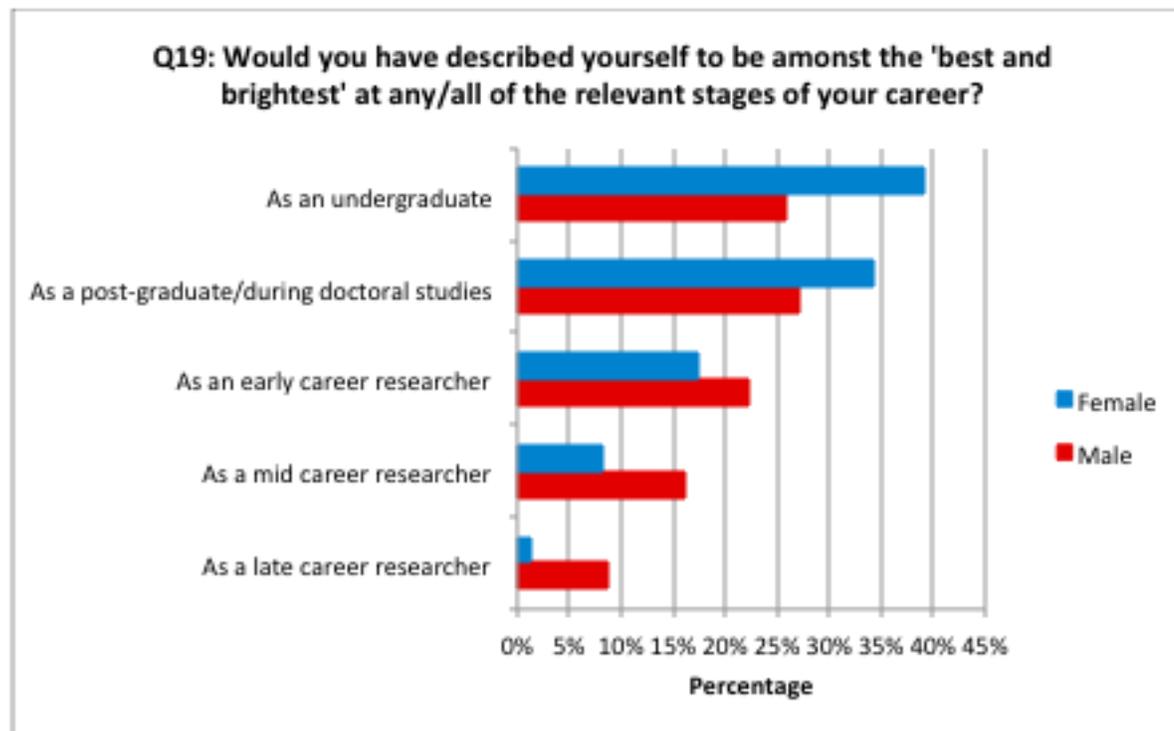
- What do I value?
- Am I modelling leadership appropriate to an inclusive environment?
- Do I understand the environment in which I work?
- Is there a long term plan in place to assist my own and others' development?
- Are my professional and personal interactions with colleagues respectful of diversity?
- Am I taking responsibility for my own advancement?

# Personal Advancement

- **Have I sought out a mentor and approached them?**
- **Am I confident in my role and ability?**
- **Do I have a career marathon strategy?**
- **Have I developed a career plan and discussed this with my mentor/manager/team leader?**
- **Do I have a sponsor?**
- **Do I actively seek roles/research projects that will lead to advancement?**
- **Have I strategies to be appointed as team leader/lead researcher?**
- **Do I have strategies to actively challenge aggressive, sexist or patronising behaviours?**
- **Have I requested more flexible working arrangements to meet my other obligations?**
- **Do I request appropriate title and remuneration changes when role responsibilities increase?**

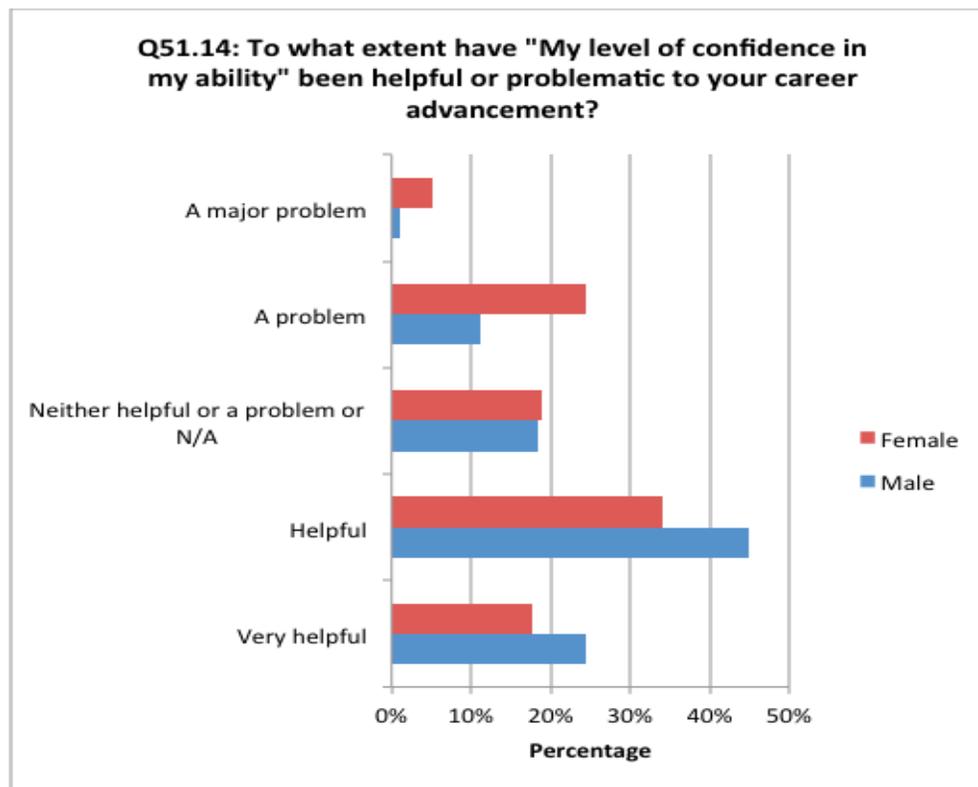
# The Imponderables...A Tale of Two Charts

Bailyn (1999)...'*unconscious ways of thinking that have been socialized into all of us, men and women alike*'.



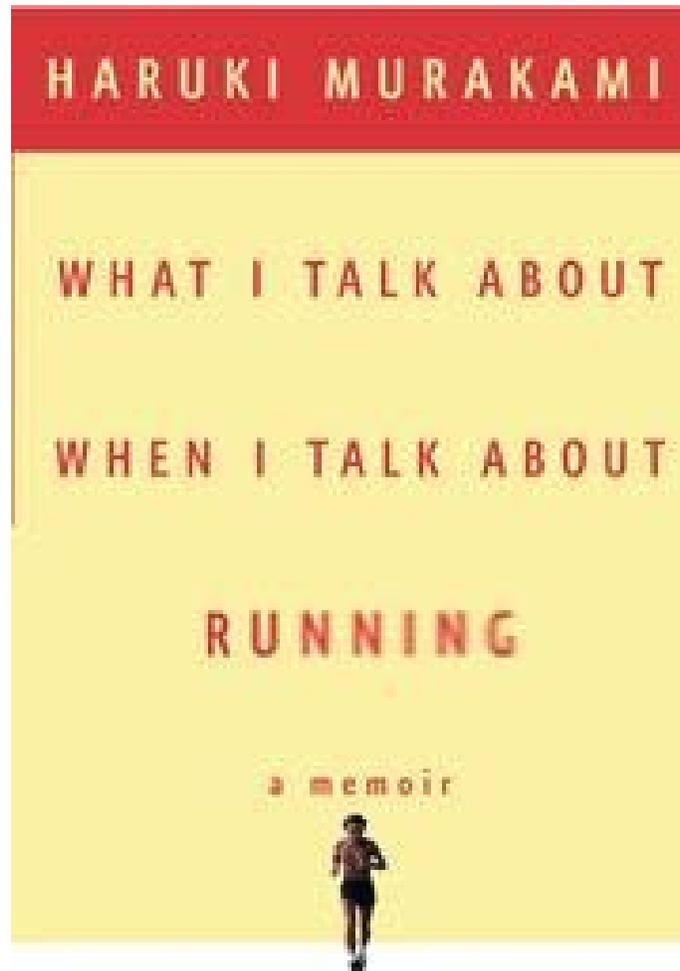
# The Imponderables... A Tale of Two Charts

Bailyn (1999)...'*unconscious ways of thinking that have been socialized into all of us, men and women alike*'.



# The Imponderables..the 'gig economy'

Strategies to develop a research profile in the 'gig' economy...



# Judy Horacek's Take





**Thank you**