From PhD to Professor:
Choices, supports, & structures

Geraldine Fitzpatrick
TU Wien, Faculty of Informatics
Human Computer Interaction Group

Email: Geraldine.Fitzpatrick@tuwien.ac.at
Twitter: @geri_fitz @ChangeAcadLife
Main message…

A better PhD to Professor path is possible with better…

Enabling structures

Supportive environments

Recognising also our personal choices,

Empowered, enabled to craft

our own version of what is our good academic life

Acknowledging: diversity of genders and gendered experiences, limitations of the literature around gender
My PhD to Professor

And the stories we tell

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Successful professor by what ‘counts’ in academia
Geraldine Fitzpatrick

I am a Full Professor (B.Inf.Tech (Hons), PhD in Computer Science and Electrical Engineering, MAPPCP), and head of the Human Computer Interaction Group since 2009. I was head of the Institute of Design and Assessment of Technology 2011-2017 until institutes were restructured. I am an ACM Distinguished Scientist and ACM Distinguished Speaker. I am a trained facilitor/coach, and have a Masters in Applied Positive Psychology and Coaching Practice, with a focus on positive organisations/leadership. I also host a podcast series called ‘Changing Academic Life’
Professional Narrative hides Complex **intersections** of identity & experiences

Context dependent ... relevance, prevalence, salience?

- From research to industry to academia
- Qualitative/design
- Situated research
- Non-Austrian bg
- New to the culture
- Woman
- HCI
- Satellite building
- Language differences
- Imposter
- New to lecturing
- New to leading big projects
- Inherit a group & projects
- Different humour, ways of communicating
- 1st gen higher ed
- Personality
- Token woman
- Mental health/stress situations
- Opportunities
Challenges

'Systemic issues, international
Challenges for women in CS & academia

Lack of diversity in computing, leaky pipeline

Gender bias in evaluations & hiring
judging CVs during recruitment, reference letter language
teaching evaluations
peer review/publication decisions, self-citations

Women more interrupted, spoken over, more often in meetings [many studies!]

Workload allocation “Female professors ‘pay price’ for academic citizenship” [Grove, 2016]
Challenges for women in CS & academia

Imposter ‘syndrome’
2/3 of women scholars deal with imposter syndrome [Vaughn et al, 2019]
Women, particularly underrepresented minority women – and early career academics feel like imposters in fields that value brilliance [Muradoglu et al, 2021]

Women don’t self promote as much as men [Exley & Kessler 2019]
less likely to apply for promotions etc; don’t negotiate job offers [Riley Bowles 2014]
self promotion is riskier for women than men – double std [Chamorro-Premuzic 2021]

Underrepresented at most senior levels [Whitford 2020]
COVID amplifying the issues

Impacting women & caregivers more than men; early career more than later career; uneven impacts

'The disproportionate impact of the pandemic on women and caregivers in academia' [Skinner et al, 2021] [Lerchenmüller et al, 2921] [King & Frederickson, 2021] [Bell & Fong, 2021]

Gender gaps in productivity and publishing – larger for junior researchers
Fewer women publishing articles and manuscripts
Fewer women publishing as first authors, last authors, sole authors

‘Women Leaders took on even more invisible work during the pandemic’ [Cooper 2021] [Oleschuk, 2020] [Crabtree et al, 2021]

Family & household care responsibilities – remote work & schooling

Care @work

Zoom fatigue disproportionately affecting women and new hires [Shockley et al, 2021]
Different issues at different career stages

The imposter can accompany throughout!

Post doc, early career *Precarious short term contracts*

Tenure track, pre-tenure

Post-tenure

Mid-career

Later career

Context matters: family, culture, geography, relocations, funding, research area ...
From How to stop the leaky pipeline & retain women – sustainability to How do we create supportive cultures and processes That value diverse perspectives & contributions & develop potential
Moving beyond retaining / diversity

Diversity necessary but not sufficient

**Diversity**
- Having a **seat** at the table
- Retain/keep

**Inclusion**
- Having a **voice** at the table

**Equity**
- Having a voice that is **heard and valued** – all equally

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Diversity in academia / research …

“We understand that scientific **excellence** depends on **creativity**, that creativity emerges from **diversity**, and that the advantages of diversity are realized through **inclusion**”

[Asai 2019]
Diversifying our understanding of what diversity matters matter...

Gender AND ...

- Research topics
- Applied or not
- Theory, Methods
- Disciplinary background
- Technical skill areas
- Tools, Platforms
- Experience
- Ways of thinking
- etc

Values
- Strengths
- Relative teaching/research
- Previous institutions
- Cultural background
- Ethnic background
- Communication style
- (Dis)abilities
- etc

Brainstorm

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Multi-dimensional responses

AND challenges – whole systems approach
Systems & structures – changing research culture

Towards diversity

**Initiatives** as encouraging trends

- DORA Dec. on Research Assessment;
- The metric tide report;
- Leiden Manifesto;
- Nuffield Council 2015 Report;
- Dutch Research Council

Recognition-Reward: Room for everyone’s talent’, Athena Swan

Recognition and reward structures

Different career paths, Different contributions

Practical examples

- Narrative CVs – beyond the h-index
- Glasgow example: collegiality [podcast]

Broaden notions of diversity

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Image: Recognition-Reward: Room for everyone’s talent
Systems & structures – changing research culture Post COVID

Things to think about …

COVID-contextualization of metrics
Revisit tenure clocks
Re-evaluate metric indicators
Invite COVID impact statements
Revisit faculty practices
Re-distribute service roles – eg waive service for those who home-schooled
Additional support – teaching relief, admin help, proposals etc

Peer/professional
Fast track reviewing/publications for women

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Supportive structures & culture change
revisit ‘implicit bias’ training initiatives - towards an A-B-C model of actionable strategies

**Awareness**
- Cognitive inclusion
  - Self awareness
  - Empathy, perspective taking
  - Pause between stimulus-response
  - If-then strategies

**Behaviour**
- Habits of inclusion
  - Recognising, valuing diverse differences
  - Curiosity, Deep listening
  - Practicing new habits
  - Micro-affirmations

**Culture**
- Culture of inclusion
  - Supportive structures, policies, processes, reward systems
  - Small wins

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Supportive research culture – empowering enabling local practices

Strong leadership

Deliberate practices for inclusion & equity

Rethinking meeting/discussion cultures – Psychological safety

Making it safe to speak up, have a heard valued voice, civil collegiality

Setting everyday expectations

Hours of work, flexibility, meeting times etc

Making invisible work visible and accountable

Sharing the load around

Promoting autonomy, trust
Supportive culture – empowering, enabling great work

Example evidence base – Managing for Trust

**Compared with people at low-trust companies, people at high-trust companies report:** 74% less stress, 106% more energy at work, 50% higher productivity, 13% fewer sick days, 76% more engagement, 29% more satisfaction with their lives, 40% less burnout.

[Zak, P. The Neuroscience of trust, HBR, 2017]

**Strategies:**
- Recognise excellence
- Give people discretion in how they do their work
- Enable job crafting
- Share information broadly
- Intentionally build relationships
- Facilitate whole person growth
- Show vulnerability
Supportive peers – connection & promotion

Role **modelling** & setting expectations

‘WLB’, making it ok to take breaks, weekends off, etc

Saying yes/no with care

Encouraging everyday **connections**

Acknowledge, celebrate, thanks (more impactful than monetary incentive)

Social connections – seen and heard

**Looking out** for one another

Promote each other’s work

ACM Europe Awards webinar
Personal choices – YOUR good academic life ... aligning values & career choices

Permission & support – every choice has a tradeoff, a price and a prize

Negotiating

external requirements & ‘should’ expectations

& what is important for you - defining/owning your unique academic identity

Red thread of your core values, what drives your work,

What difference you want to make,

What you uniquely bring to it, your individual strengths & superpowers

Making authentic choices that honour all areas of your life
Personal choices – YOUR good academic life

There are good role models - share stories, see that there are alternatives

Katherine Isbister on finding your fit, being productive 8-5 and praising yourself

Ali Black on doing academia differently...caring, connecting & becoming

Evan Peck on making choices, accepting trade-offs, and liberal arts as a great middle way

Podcast series www.changingacademiclife.com
What drives me: I focus on people-centred perspectives in complex environments, with an emphasis on enabling positive growth and development and doing more of what is working well. I have expressed this as women-centred midwifery practice in my clinical life as a midwife, as human-centred technology research and teaching in my academic life as a computer scientist, and as facilitating the crafting of a good academic life and of good academic leadership in my professional development work as a facilitator/coach/consultant.
Wrapping up…
Main message...

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Thank you