



MUST I CONFORM?: MOVING FORWARD

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Outline

- ◆ Overview of Group work followed by
- ◆ Glass Ceiling Statistics
 - ◆ EU 2009
 - ◆ KNUST
- ◆ How to break the glass ceiling?
 - ◆ Changing your self perception
 - ◆ Speaking out
 - ◆ Goals and Environment
 - ◆ Role Model/Networking
- ◆ Conclusion



Overview

- ◆ What are societal expectations of a female academic- and what are her own expectations?
- ◆ Too often, female academic end up dissatisfied in many aspects of life because of trying hard to conform to the norms of society, whilst rubbing shoulders with male counterparts, whose societal roles and expectations are sometimes very different from hers. **Must she be a 'man' in order to make it?**



Overview cont'd

- ◆ This workshop will explore the varied lives of a working female academic or researcher:
 - ◆ single without children;
 - ◆ single with children;
 - ◆ married without children
 - ◆ married with children.
- ◆ How can she live a satisfied life, despite the dichotomy in some expectations?



Introduction: The face of Academia and Research?



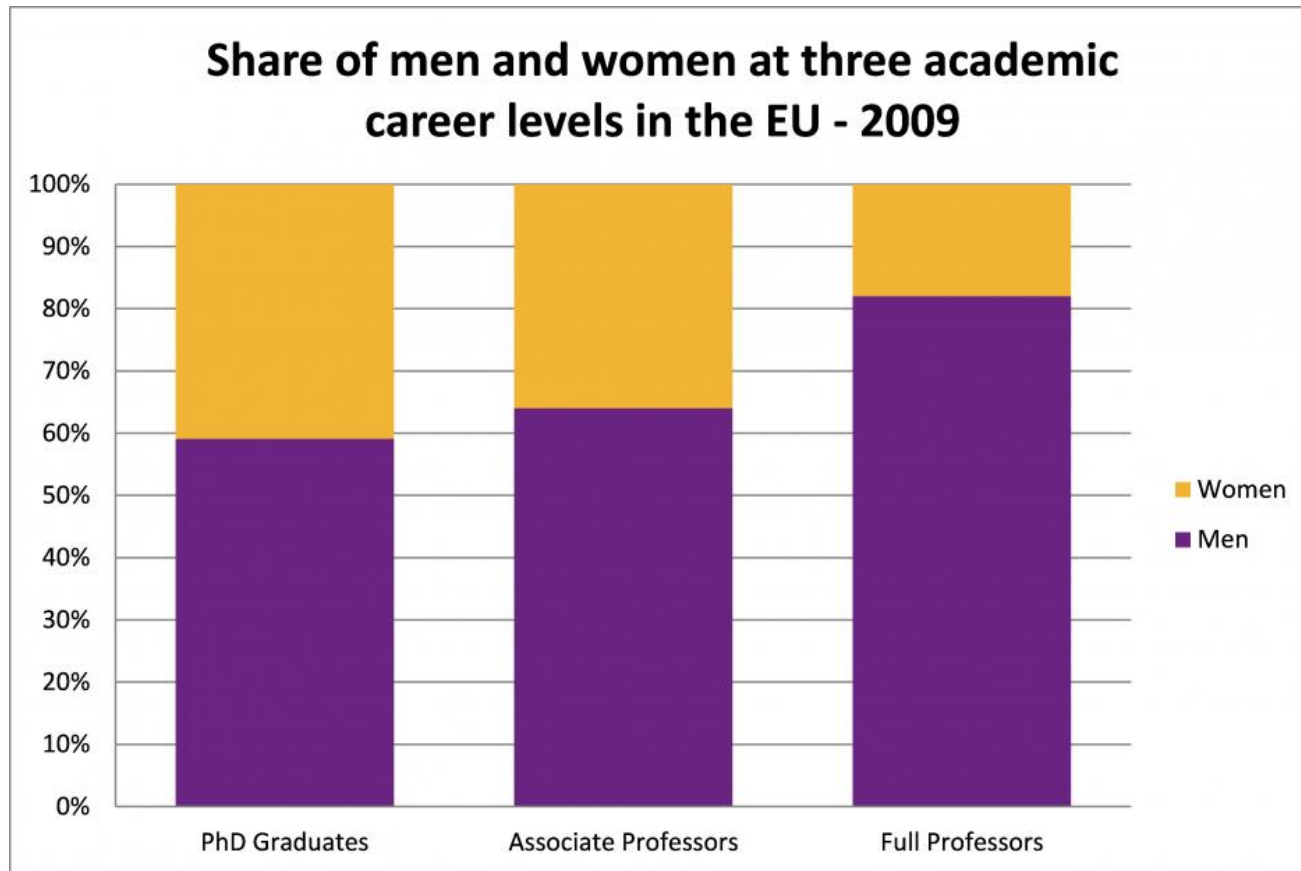
Source: Getty



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The Glass Ceiling

<http://www.theigc.org/blog/5-facts-about-women-in-academia-is-gender-parity-really-around-the-corner/>



Source: European Commission 2009



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KNUST STATISTICS

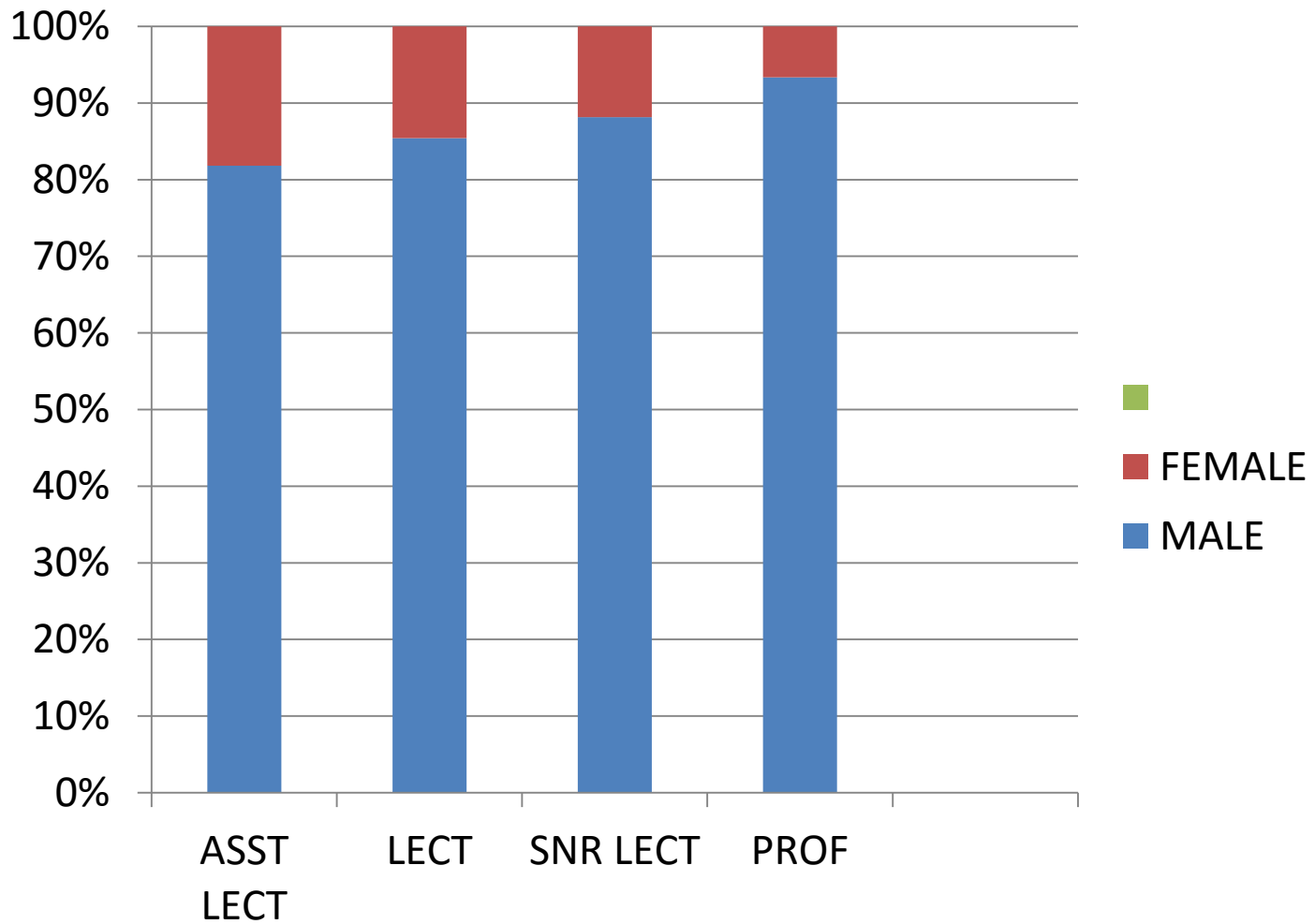
Source: KNUST BASIC STATISTICS HANDBOOKS

YEAR	PROF/ ASSO. PROF		SNR LECTURER		LECTURER		ASST. LEC/TUTOR		TOTAL	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
2014/15	69	3	165	19	342	71	54	14	630	107
% FEMALE		4.2		10.3		17.2		20.6		14.5
2013/14	70	5	164	22	498	85	81	18	813	130
% FEMALE		6.7		11.8		14.6		18.2		13.8
2012/13	56	2	135	16	381	69	46	7	618	94
% FEMALE		3.4		10.6		15.3		13.2		13.2
2010/11	71	3	136	18	368	67	35	1	610	89
% FEMALE		4.1		11.7		15.4		2.8		12.7
2008/9	75	4	132	17	434	68	---	---	643	88
% FEMALE		5.1		11.4		13.5	---	---		12.0

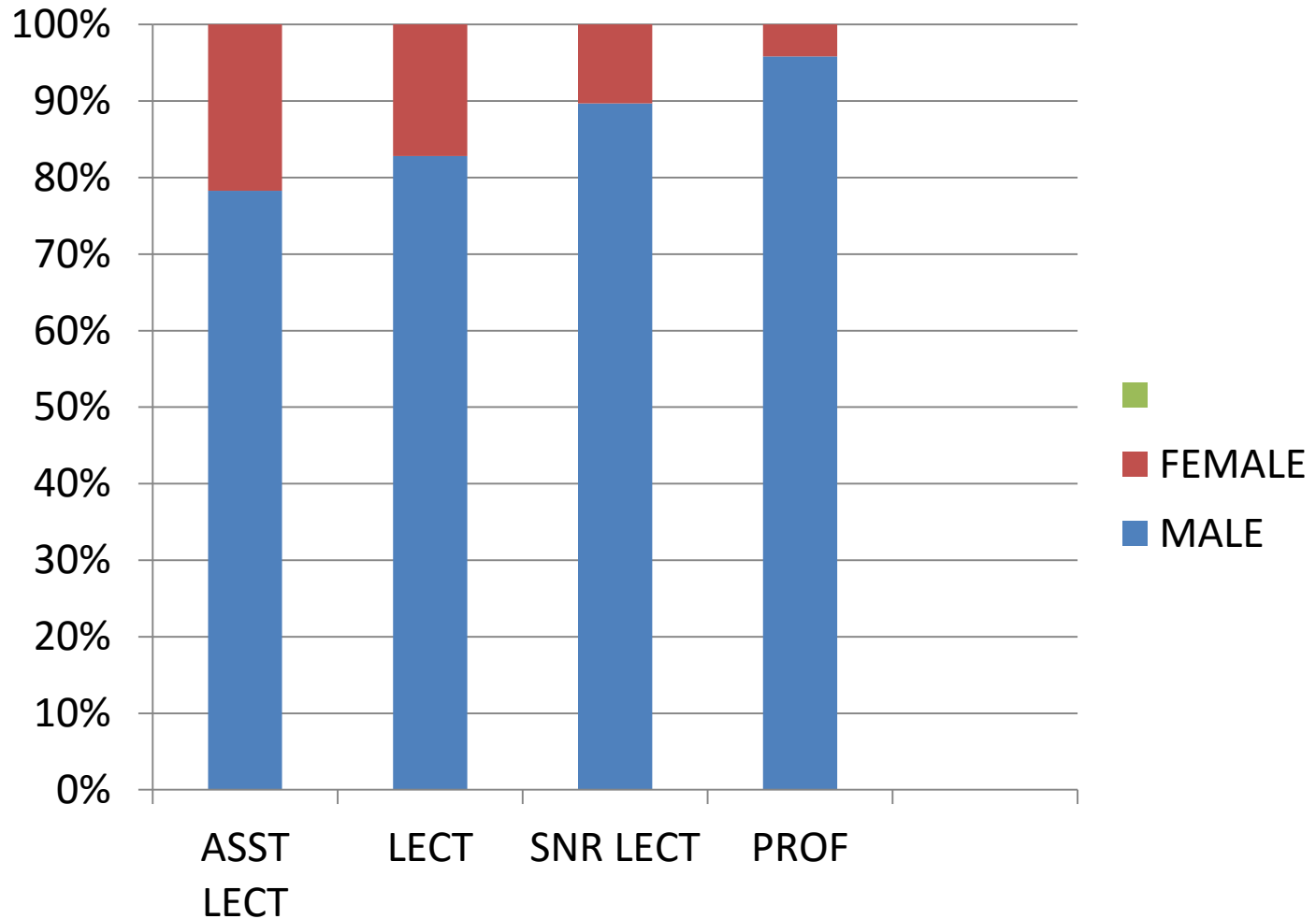


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KNUST GLASS CEILING? 2013/14



KNUST GLASS CEILING? 2014/15



HOW TO BREAK THAT CEILING?

<https://www.swansea.ac.uk/media/a-womans-place-in-academia-moving-forward-v2-2-DT.pdf>

<https://methodsblog.wordpress.com/2017/03/08/breaking-academias-glass-ceiling/>

- ◆ Change your self-perception
- ◆ Speak up and challenge the norm
- ◆ Actively seek a favourable environment
- ◆ Communicate
- ◆ Design your goals to suit your environment
- ◆ Be a role model
- ◆ Network! Network!! Network!!!



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Change your Self-Perception (1)

- ◆ See yourself as a set of qualities and competencies- **not a woman first?**
- ◆ Be yourself: *“When I was first appointed to Lecturer I had always worked part-time, having small children, but the advertised position was full-time and I was told to apply for the post and then later negotiate a part-time contract. So around a year later, I enquired about going part-time and was advised by senior colleagues that this might suggest that **my family was more important than my career.**”*



Change your Self-Perception (1)

- ◆ *.....For me this was a critical point, when I felt that by opting to go part-time I was making a potentially bad career choice. But my family were, and are, much more important to me than my career – and the good thing is that now, some 10 years later, that is OK. It is so much more acceptable to be part-time, ask for flexible hours to accommodate child care duties or just spend time with your family.”* marine turtle biologist, Dr Annette Broderick



Change your Self-Perception (2)- **some notions to grapple with**

- ◆ I have to have short hair or a severe hair do because that makes me more manly and blended-in
- ◆ Make-up makes me noticed and vulnerable to..?
- ◆ I have to wear trousers because then I can mix in with the men
- ◆ I must not wear traditional clothes because that undermines my competence
- ◆ Dresses are 'frilly' and denote non-seriousness
- ◆ Any others?



Speak out and Challenge the Norm

◆ Be assertive: “Yes Gentlemen...Well, Gentlemen....I had to cut in..

“LADY and gentlemen! I had to make myself noticed

I had to upset the norm in some traditional practices

◆ Speak out for junior colleagues even if they might have appeared not to support you

◆ ***Be active in pro-gender circles. It can serve as a positive influence, despite some negative repercussions***

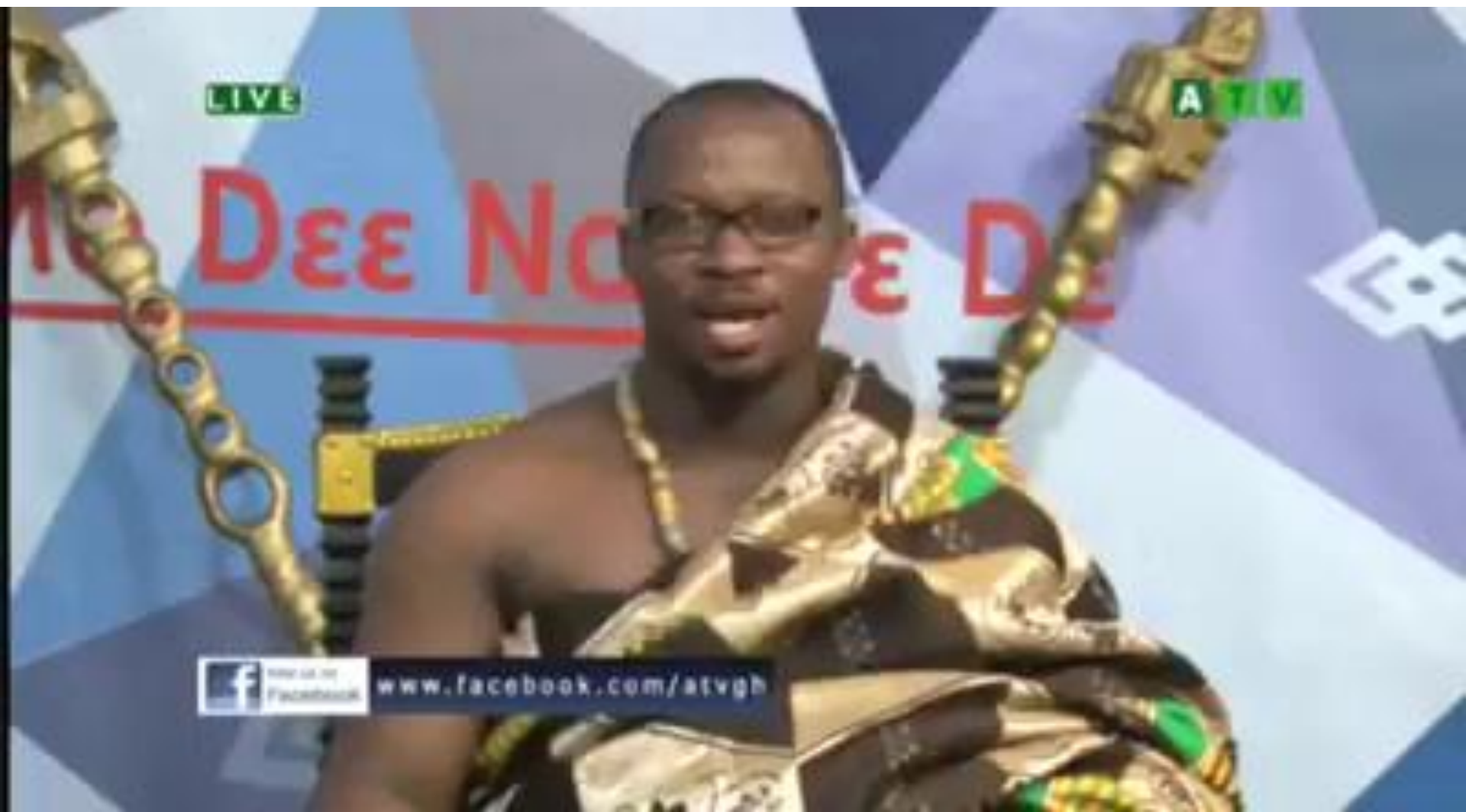


Actively seek a Favourable Environment

- ◆ Find a strong peer group. I actively sought out female counterparts, initially outside and later in my Faculty
- ◆ Find gender sensitive supervisors/mentors if you have the choice!
 - ◆ Greatly benefitted from a few (both males and females)
- ◆ Marry a supportive husband! (short video)
- ◆ Try NOT to take work home! Instead, take home to work!!



VIDEO DEMONSTRATION FROM ATV GHANA



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COMMUNICATE!

- ◆ Break the Silence! Encourage people to think about culture and beliefs:
 - ◆ Are those social paradigms considered “normal” truly valid?
 - ◆ Do above benefit society as a whole?
 - ◆ *“When women know their rights, they can take steps to claim their rights”*
- ◆ Talk about adverse situations faced as a woman academic/ researcher.
- ◆ ***Talk with the ‘Significant Others in your life’. Don’t assume ANYTHING!***



Design your Goals to Suit your Environment

- ◆ If no one helps and no one listens, fear not, don't give up!
- ◆ The road is not easy, it's not meant to be!
- ◆ "As for the cynics, first they laugh at you, then they hear you and the thrill finally comes when **they *cite* you.**"
- ❖ **Till then, keep the faith!**



BE A ROLE MODEL

- ◆ You might have to work on your personality if you are a born introvert
- ◆ Get involved in mentoring schemes- both informal and formal (eg AWARD)
- ◆ Offer support to other women whenever /wherever you can
- ◆ Celebrate your successes rather than dwell on your setbacks. Be Positive



NETWORK! NETWORK!! NETWORK!!!

“Women’s networks typically contain fewer highly ranked individuals, and tend to be more emotionally supportive but less instrumental. “

❖ We need both

❖ Don’t be shy about asking for help: career wise and emotionally



CONCLUSION: MUST I CONFORM?

- ❖ A big resounding NO! Be yourself, but don't go off on a tangent (hair issue)
- ❖ Be passionate about what you do
- ❖ Set your priorities, right from the beginning. You can't eat your cake and have it **all** the time
- ❖ “besides having a life partner who also works full time **but who completely shares with you the work of raising a family** (single parents exist on a whole other plane; I am convinced they have superpowers and we should all bow down and worship them and bring them gifts), there is no secret... you have to work your ass off” Stephanie Vanderslice
- ❖ “The trick is to breathe”! Julianna Baggot

GROUP WORK- 4 SCENARIOS

- ◆ single without children
- ◆ single with children
- ◆ married without children
- ◆ married with children.



GROUP WORK- Questions to consider

- ◆ How does society perceive such a woman (complete? Normal? Etc) Could there be disadvantages? What are the advantages?
- ◆ If you (academic/researcher) are/were in such a situation, what would be your concern(s)?
- ◆ If both situations are not possible and you had the power to choose- Would you rather be married and be unfulfilled career wise? (as applicable)
- ◆ If both not possible and you had the power to choose- Would you rather have children and be unfulfilled career-wise? (as applicable)
- ◆ Identify and write a “letter” to ONE significant person or group of persons in your situation, expressing your **feelings** and your **expectations** of how he/she can help you have a fulfilling life

