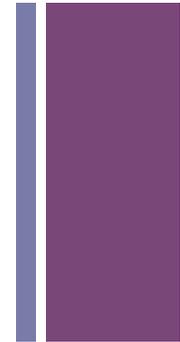


My Career in Astronomy (thus far...)

Sarah Brough (AAO)

+ The CV Version

- 1999: MPhys from The University of Liverpool, UK
- Jan 2005: PhD from Liverpool John Moores University, UK
- 2004 – 2009: Research Associate, Swinburne University
- 2009 – 2014: Research Fellow, AAO
- 2015 – Now: ARC Future Fellow, AAO
- 2017: Associate Professor at UNSW
- 5000 citations of 130 papers; h-index = 37



+ What Really Happened: Studying

- 1999: MPhys from The University of Liverpool, UK
 - I wanted to study medicine but I didn't get the high-school grades.
 - I managed to get into Physics, having not studied maths for 2 years...
 - After a difficult degree, I left.
 - Until...
- Jan 2005: PhD from Liverpool John Moores University,
 - I realised I missed science!
 - So I got a PhD place to study astronomy for the first time
 - And LOVED it!
 - Super-supportive group



+ What Really Happened: Swinburne I

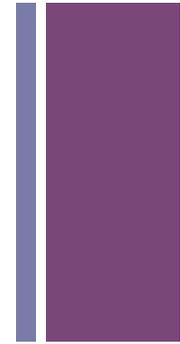
- 2004 – 2006: Research Assistant, Swinburne University
 - I was offered a **2 year** research position in early 2004. I arrived Sept 2004.
 - !! LOVED MELBOURNE!
 - I learned about galaxy groups and how to finish papers.
 - I had to start applying for new jobs in Dec 2005. I applied for 8 and was interviewed for 1.
 - In May 2006, I was getting desperate, I was told that a postdoc at Swinburne was about to be advertised.
 - I applied and was shortlisted and started my **2nd 2 year** position at Swinburne in Oct 2006.





What Really Happened: Swinburne II

- 2006 – 2009: Research Associate, Swinburne University
 - Here I started independent collaborations and joined the WiggleZ survey in early 2007 (but papers didn't come until 2009).
 - I started applying for jobs in Oct 2007. I applied for 13 jobs, only 1 of which I was interviewed for.
 - I accepted an offer to be Director's Assistant & the STACK technical Secretary role to extend my contract for a year.
 - I made 9 applications over 2008. From these I was interviewed 3 times.
 - I turned a job down in May 2008 as it wasn't a step up, even though it might render me jobless...
 - Finally the last job I applied for, with a semi-offer in hand to leave research, I was offered the AAO position and I decided to give astronomy 1 last shot.



+ What Really Happened: AAO

- 2009 – 2011: Research Associate, AAO
 - I joined the AAO and the GAMA survey in July 2009.
 - 3 year position. 30% telescope support.
 - Regular AAOmega spectrograph support.
 - Here I have had regular encouragement which has helped me identify my strengths and use them. I discovered I enjoy surfing the wave...
 - Got involved in Women in Astronomy.
- 2011 – 2014: Research Fellow, AAO
 - 5 year position. 50% telescope support (AAOmega Instrument Scientist).
 - 10 months maternity leave 2013.
 - Still supervised PhD student and finished paper on leave.
 - Returned to apply for ARC Future Fellowship
 - Return-to-Work grant
- 2015 – Now: ARC Future Fellow, AAO



+ Returning To Work After Maternity Leave

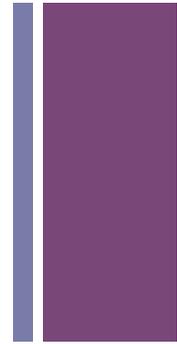
- I used to work 10am-7pm, I was away a week a month and every other month was at the telescope working 16hr nights.
- I returned 3 days a week for 1 year and now work 9-5 Monday-Thursday.
- It took nearly 2 years before I travelled domestically and was over 2 years before I travelled internationally.
- It has taken me a little while to work out how to do my own research in that model but I'm getting there...
- Self care is even more important now than ever before!

+ What Really Happened: Next I

- In December 2016 I am taking part in the Homeward Bound Leadership Initiative
<http://homewardboundprojects.com.au>
- This brings 78 female scientists from around the world together on a leadership course on a boat heading to Antarctica.
- **“Goal:** to create a transformational insight into your leadership mindset, and to significantly enhance your understanding of your influence as a woman and leader in our world”
- I expect to bring back new ideas from what is working in other sciences and other countries.
- I expect to learn new insights into what it means to be a leader and to motivate a diverse team to contribute their very best.

+ What Really Happened: Next II

- 2017: Associate Professor at UNSW
 - Who knows!
 - But I will be advertising for a post-doc and PhD student in the next 6 months...



+ Lessons learnt:

- Self care, Self care, Self care! THIS IS YOUR LIFE!
- Don't be defensive – criticism will generally make you and your work better
- Bitterness doesn't help you and that's all that matters!
- Hang in there (if you are in a position to, if it doesn't make you bitter...)
- Don't let imposter syndrome or anything else stop you. Keep trying!

