Your post-PhD dream job: Academic or not? (How well are you preparing yourself?)

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Introduce yourself to the person next to you and discuss:

- What careers are you considering?
- What are you doing in your PhD to prepare yourself for your intended career?
- Do your supervisor/co-supervisor know your hopes so they can help you...
What I hope to do

• Give you a sense of the broader context of post-PhD careers and the results from our longitudinal research program
• Encourage you to consider how to better prepare for your career during the PhD

➔ post-PhD “trajectories are built from the beginning of the PhD” (Mangematin, 2000, 251)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Spain</th>
<th>Belgium</th>
<th>Netherland (14% unknown)</th>
<th>US</th>
<th>Other EU</th>
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<tr>
<td>Higher education</td>
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<td>Business</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
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# Post-PhD sector distribution (OECD, 2013)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Higher education (higher in SS, H)</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>Slo, Hun 55%; Den 30%; Aus 25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business (higher in S)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>Aus 47%, Den 36%; Slo 18%; Hun 9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>Den 33%; Slo 25%; Hun 30%; Aus 23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>Slo 7%; Hun 4%; Den 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher regardless of sector</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>Hun 85%; Slo 80%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

NB broad categories ... how to read???
48 people followed for 4-6 years

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<th>Disciplinary cluster</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
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<td>22 in social sciences: sociology, educational studies, environmental studies, psychology</td>
<td>Early 30s - early 40s Many with partners; 2/3 with children UK: 7/11 international (3 EOL) Can: 1/11 international (+ 2 CDN EOL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 in sciences: biosciences, computing sciences, engineering</td>
<td>Late 20s - mid-30s Many with partners; 1/3 with children UK: 3/5 international (3 EOL) Can: 10/21 international (3 EOL + 2 Cdn EOL)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Over 4-6 years, participants ...

- Began in 2 universities in Canada and 2 in UK ➔ Now over 30 different institutions around the globe
- Experienced new relationships, pregnancy, becoming parents, aging parents
- Dealt with re-location, personal and family illness, separation from family
- Often struggled to maintain quality of life, personal pursuits and social life
Identity-trajectory

Biographical perspective

• Influence of past-present-future
• 'Life' influences work and career choices
  – Relationships, responsibilities, life tasks
  – Quality of life, values

Agency:

• Efforts to achieve intentions
• Recognize/ take advantage of serendipity
• Deal with unexpected challenges
• Sustain commitment; develop resilience
What are you doing in your PhD? (p.1)

- Range of intentional/ effortful behaviour linked to career development

Networking: Inter-personal, Inter-textual

Intellectual

Institutional: responsibilities, resources
Career possibilities: interaction of structure and agency in decision-making

(p.2)
Academic Sector: Seven trajectories (32/48)
Academic job distribution (32, 17 now pre-tenure)
Time to pre-tenure (excludes those going directly from PhD and those still seeking)
Non-academic sector: Three trajectories

- Researcher ➔ Professional
- Research Professional; change position
- Professional; change position

PHD

Research duties; possibly secure
Not defined by research duties; possibly secure
Not defined by research duties; possibly secure
Non-Academic job distribution (immediately post-PhD, 16)
Positions outside academia (p.3)

• Research professional
  – Self-employed research consultant
  – Archaeologist, sociologist, etc. for NGO
  – Social science researcher in research hospital
  – Senior economic or educational policy researchers
  – Senior research scientist for government research centre
  – Research associate in a pharmaceutical company
  – Water quality scientist for a utilities company
Regina: Consulting Scientist (SS)
- My job provides a lot freedom and trust to be self-directed. I offer consultations on people’s research activities in the hospital. This past year, about 50 people came to me for conversations about their research. They range from professors to healthcare practitioners, to medical residents since research is now a required part of their residency.
Positions outside academia (p.3)

• Professional
  – Research council officer
  – Writer, editor for non-academic, academic and education presses
  – Senior program officer for an NGO
  – Environmental policy consultant
  – Quantitative analyst for an investment bank
  – Risk and data management team leader for a company
  – Science and technology policy specialist for government
  – R&D manager for a chemicals company
  – Senior specialist software engineer
Professionals: What did they do? (p.3)

• Daniel: Senior Program Officer for a regional NGO (S & SS)
  – I’m responsible for the identification, negotiation, preparation and management of grants that support climate change policy development and its implementation. I also work to build capacity on specific topics related to climate change policy.

• Julius: Owner of consultancy company (S)
  – My days are varied: managing projects, putting together proposals and negotiating with clients, dealing with accounting issues, writing for professional journals, and investing in marketing, convincing people that I’m offering services that would be good for them.
What do we know about experiences of professionals and research professionals?

- Generally satisfied with decision (also Vitae, 2010, UK)
- Can see how they use the PhD (also Kyvik & Olsen, 2012, Norway)
- Value range of PhD skills (also Kyvik & Olsen, 2012)
- Able to translate PhD experience into largely decontextualized descriptors (useful in applying for non-academic positions) (also Kyvik & Olsen, 2012)
- Satisfaction levels somewhat lower for ‘intellectual challenge’ and ‘opportunities for advancement’ (OECD, 2013)

NB Kyvik & Olsen, 2012 - Norway, 55% in non-academic
Academic professionals (p.3)

- Educational/academic developer
- Researcher development officer (support for postdocs)
- Careers counsellor
- Social media development advisor
- Research officer (support for those applying for grants)
- Faculty research facilitator (develop unit’s long-term research potential)
- Student affairs officer
- Research and public affairs officer
- Scientific portfolio manager in research institute (includes dissemination strategies)
Mike: Program director of distance education (SS)
- I work with academics to develop online distance education course materials. My job is part academic and part administrative. I am an instructional designer and project manager. I don’t directly manage any staff, but work with a team of about 30 to develop and deliver courses.

Katherine: Research co-ordinator for well-funded inter-disciplinary research group (S)
- I coordinate events, research collaborations and funding schemes across three initiatives; two spanning university departments and one a small remote team. I constantly interact with many people as I organize international conferences, manage ethical research, and promote open and collaborative working practices. I can combine my interests in biology and open knowledge.
What do we know about academic professional careers?

- Significant number teaching, supervising, mentoring
- Used advanced reading, writing, oral communication skills developed in PhD
- PhD gave status, legitimacy, knowledge of research culture
- Research translated to interviewing staff, conducting surveys

(Berman & Pitman, 2010; Whitchurch, 2009)
See urls p.4
Your own doctoral experience …

• Intellectual:
  • Thinking systematically/ analytically/ problem solving
  • Methodological knowledge, skills
  • Dealing with complex questions
  • Doing multi-disciplinary work, thinking creatively

• Networking:
  • Communicating with public
  • Connecting with foreign colleagues
  • Developing (inter)cultural understanding
  • Negotiating with external partners

• Institutional:
  • Project administration
  • Management and leadership

Examples for each?? P.5
(Also Kyvik & Olsen, 2012; Borrell-Damian, 2009)
What do we know about academic careers?

• Contingent academic positions increasing (Desjardins & King, 2011)
• Pre-tenure
  • More time pressure; work expanding beyond the workplace (Menzies & Newsome, 2007)
• Challenge of having a family (Misra et al., 2012)
• Increasingly ‘luck’ plays a role in research funding (van Arensburgen & van den Besselaar, 2012)
• Postdocs/researchers
  • Period before moving on gradually lengthening (Nature, 2011)
  • Less likely than those outside the academy to be ‘very satisfied’ with position (Vitae, 2010)
• Teachers
• Lower status (University Affairs, 2012)
What were concerns before pre-tenure?

- Develop a unique profile
- Intellectual strand:
  - Expand areas of expertise (especially during postdoc; sometimes feeling ‘deskilled’)
  - Publish (strategically)
- Networking strand:
  - Interpersonal, e.g., expand networks
  - Intertextual, e.g., learn to read more strategically, use reading to learn new areas, but lack time
- Institutional strand:
  - Gain teaching/supervision experience
  - Seek ways to contribute
  - Active in governance
Take aways (p.6)

• Your journey/ your future begins today.
• Be agentive: make the PhD experience your own; it is your future/career on the line, no one else’s.
• If you are convinced you want a research-teaching position, then ….
• If you like the academy but don’t want to take on a research-teaching position, then …. 
• If you want a position outside the academy, then …
• If you are undecided, then explore, explore, explore; do all of the above.
• *Remember your life will change and your intentions as well.*
Going forward ...(p.6)

• Post-PhD trajectories are built from the beginning of the PhD (Mangematin, 2000)
• Consider
  • The career possibilities explored today
  • Where the gaps are in your knowledge
  • The need to be strategic.
• Take a moment and write down three concrete tasks/goals you want to achieve in the next three months.

NB possibly useful? www.learning.ox.ac.uk/supervision