

ALLYSHIP: EXPERIENCES ON THE GENDER AND LGBTQIA+ FRONTS IN THE MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES AND BEYOND



Simon Chandler-Wilde, University of Reading

WHO AM I?

- **Currently, since 2000, a 20% FTE applied maths professor, otherwise 80% retired** – but doing ongoing EDI stuff, e.g. EDI lead for UK Acoustics Network 2000-24, critical friend for Athena SWAN applications, ...
- In a job-share (with Prof Ellie Highwood) as Reading's first **Dean for Diversity and Inclusion**, 2015-2019, including overseeing our work on LGBT+ equality and co-leading our work on gender equality
- **Head of Maths Dept**, then **Head of School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences**, 2007-15 – incidentally appointing Calvin Smith to Reading – and as joint Athena SWAN Champion in 2014
- **A white, straight male (he/him)** – married to an academic, two daughters (25 & 30)

WHAT WILL I TALK ABOUT?

- What is Allyship and why do we need to do it?
- LGBT+ Allies at Reading
- Gender equality actions and ally stuff at Reading
- What can we individually do?

WHAT IS ALLYSHIP, AND WHY DO IT?

As academics, managers, heads of departments, etc: we want our **students** (at all levels), **research staff, colleagues in our departments, colleagues elsewhere in the university** to:

1. Enjoy working with us.
2. Feel included, valued, and treated equitably.
3. Thrive and develop and have the best careers with us they can.

Because ...

- a. We want them to do well and our uni to be a fair and great place to work.
- b. If our students, PhD students, postdocs, people we line manage, etc. do well, it's a huge source of job satisfaction – and, of course, it reflects well on us.
- c. If our department/school/uni is a place where 1-3 is true we will be successful ... and we will recruit great people.

These are large motivations to be **allies in all sorts of ways to all our students and colleagues**

WHAT IS AN ALLY IN AN EDI SENSE?

Someone who champions underrepresented groups whilst not being a member of the group themselves

Why be an ally in this sense?

As an ally you bring your backing and voice to the movement for equality for all – recognising that it is not the burden of women to ensure gender equality, or of the LGBTQIA+ community to ensure LGBTQIA+ equality, etc.

LGBT+ ALLIES AT READING

- 2014: Bottom up push from a few LGBT staff to create the “LGBT Plus Staff Network”, agreed with Vice-Chancellor, initial membership, mailing list, and social activity

- 2015 February: First network LGBT+ History Month event **“Where are all the gay scientists?”**, talk by chemistry professor **David Smith**



David's research was influenced by his husband's cystic fibrosis. He champions the use of YouTube in teaching and as an outreach tool.

Out in science

Professor David Smith is a relatively rare thing – an out, gay chemist, happy to talk about



- 2015: Network persuades the University to become Stonewall Diversity Champion and assess ourselves in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index



- 2015: VC creates diversity champions on the Board, with himself as LGBT+ champion
- 2015: University creates a (small) D&I team: a Dean job-share + 1 other
- 2016 Feb: University adopts and advertises EDI targets, including Top 50 in Stonewall Workplace Equality Index
- **2016 June: Network has structured brainstorming workshop with the VC supported by Stonewall on next steps – clear steer to create LGBT+ Allies.**

- 2016 July: Stonewall Workplace Allies Programme run at the University, including with VC and other senior leaders

Feedback



As a result of the Allies programme, our Vice Chancellor now has a monthly reminder in his diary asking what he is doing as an ally for our LGBT staff in the coming month.

- 2016 July: Our LGBT+ /LGBT+ Ally postcard launched, designed by the network co-chair Calvin



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- 2016 December: Our LGBT+/LGBT+ Ally lanyard

B18236 RAINBOW LANYARD VISUAL 2



- 2016 December: Our LGBT+/LGBT+ Ally lanyard
- 2016 December: first meeting of our Uni staff/student LGBT+ Action Plan Group

- 2017 February: Our first in-house LGBT+ Allies Info/Recruitment Session
 - Hosted by VC (or other Board Member), more recently also by student union leaders
 - LGBT+ Voices: Staff and Student, experiences, plus why allies important
 - What we want allies to do
 - Signing Stonewall
No Bystander Pledge

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 - What we want allies to do
 - Signing Stonewall No Bystander Pledge
 - **All those signing up put onto allies emailing list (allies members) and follow-up by email about other events, with advice, asking for volunteers, ...**

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 - LGBT+ Voices: Staff and Student, experiences, plus why allies important
 - **What we want allies to do**
 - Signing Stonewall No Bystander Pledge

Here are slides from our **“what we want allies to do”** section

WHAT IS A STRAIGHT ALLY?

Allies are individuals who don't identify as LGBT and believe that lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people should experience full equality, at home, in their communities, and in their places of work.

Josh Willacy, Stonewall

WHAT DOES AN ALLY DO?

BE VISIBLE

- Postcards
- Laces
- Lanyards
- Pronoun badges
- Email signature

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BE INFORMED

- **Transgender Awareness** Thursday May 16th, 10am-12pm
- **Wolfenden Seminar** Thursday May 16th, 4:30pm
 - *Trans experiences in prisons, schools and universities*
- **Wolfenden Lecture** Thursday May 16th, 7pm
 - *Jake Graf and Capt. Hannah Graf (Stonewall Trans Role Model of 2019)*
- **IDAHoBiT** Friday May 17th, 1pm at the flagpole
- **Reading Pride** Saturday August 31st
- And keep an eye on
 - www.reading.ac.uk/diversity-events
 - Staff Portal
 - RUSU website (under Representation/Campaigns)

UHT

“I UNDERSTAND why you said this and that you didn’t mean any harm.

HOWEVER, this language/behaviour is not appropriate and is offensive.

THEREFORE, I respectfully ask you not to do it.”

“NOBYSTANDERS” PLEDGE



EXAMPLE: BEING INFORMED

LIMITLESS POTENTIAL

IDAHOBIT

International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia



THURSDAY 17 MAY 2018 SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR IDAHOBIT!

Join staff and students, led by the LGBT Plus Staff Network and RUSU, for short speeches and reflections from LGBT+ staff and students. Meet 1-1.45pm, 17 May at the flagpole between Whiteknights House and the Library.

Other opportunities in May to show your support, and learn more about LGBT+ history and experiences include:

- **Becoming an Ally to UoR LGBT+ Staff and Students:** info and sign-up session, hosted by the Vice-Chancellor, LGBT+ staff and student networks. Monday 14 May, 12-13.30pm, including lunch. Nike Lecture Theatre, Agriculture.
- **Wolfenden Seminar:** "Section 28: Context, Impact, and Resistance" a discussion panel featuring Rosemary Auchmuty, Eve Featherstone, Deb Heighes, and Boon Temple, 24 May, 4-5.30pm, G15, Henley Business School.
- **Wolfenden Lecture:** "Section 28: A Poisonous Law and Legacy" by Peter Tatchell, 24 May, 7pm, G11, Henley Business School, Whiteknights Campus. Click [here](#) to book.

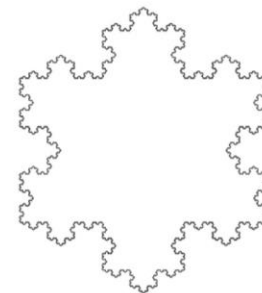
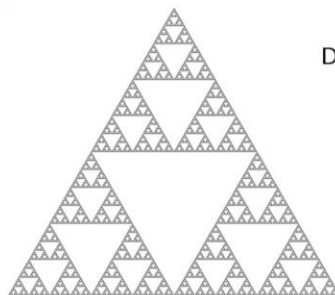
Further details and booking: reading.ac.uk/diversity-events 26

EXAMPLE: BEING VISIBLE

PDE and Integral Equation Formulations for Scattering by Fractal Screens

Simon Chandler-Wilde

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I was away for May 17,
IDAHOBIT 2017, giving
a plenary talk in US, but ...

Joint work with: Dave Hewett (UCL) and Andrea Moiola (Reading)

Waves 2017, Minnesota

International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia



ANOTHER TAKE

7 ways you can be an LGBTQ+ ally at work - Prishita Maheshwari-Aplin

<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/news/7-ways-you-can-be-lgbtq-ally-work>

1. Educate yourself and others.
2. Don't expect to be perfect immediately.
3. Put your pronouns in email signatures.
4. Find out about reporting processes at your workplace.
5. Rally senior leaders to be active champions for Pride networks.
6. Don't ask LGBTQ+ people intrusive questions.
7. Step back and ensure you're centring the voices of LGBTQ+ people

AND WHAT ABOUT OUR LGBT+ TARGETS?

We didn't make Top 50 in the Stonewall WEI, but moved up to:

204 in 2016

168 in 2017

138 in 2018

80 in 2019

More recently in 2023 we stopped our annual WEI assessment for reasons articulated in this blog at the time

<https://blogs.reading.ac.uk/diversereading/2023/02/13/blog-working-for-action-in-lgbt-inclusion/>

ALLYSHIP ON GENDER FRONT

IS WORK ON GENDER EQUALITY STILL NEEDED?

TATE BRITAIN
EXHIBITION

NOW BOOKING



WOMEN IN REVOLT! ART AND ACTIVISM IN THE UK 1970- 1990

UNTIL 7 APRIL 2024

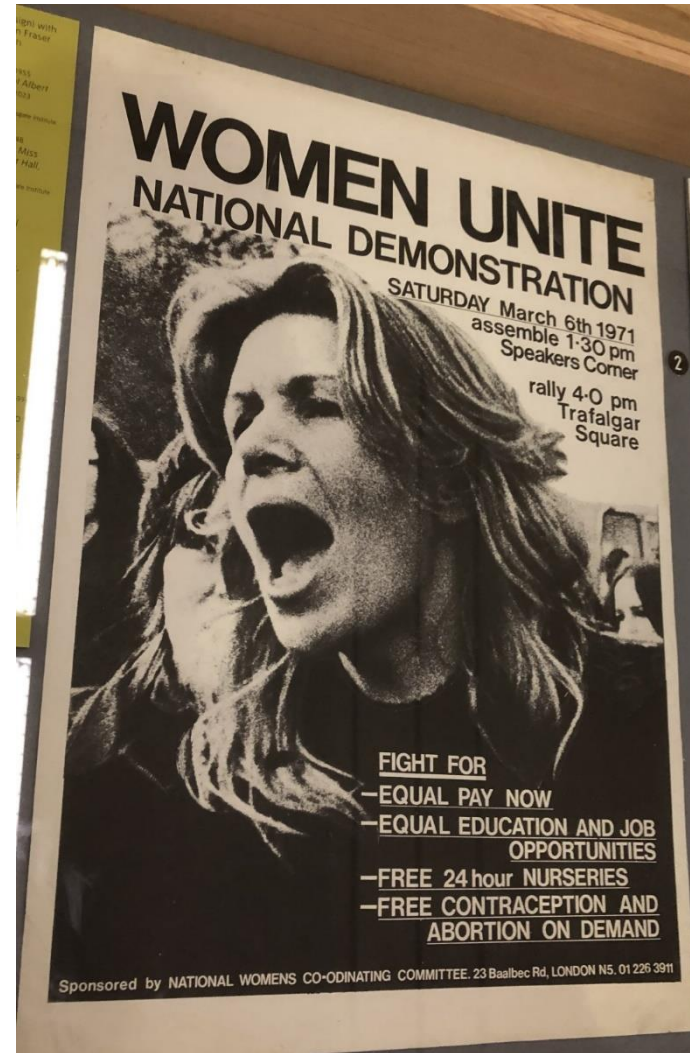
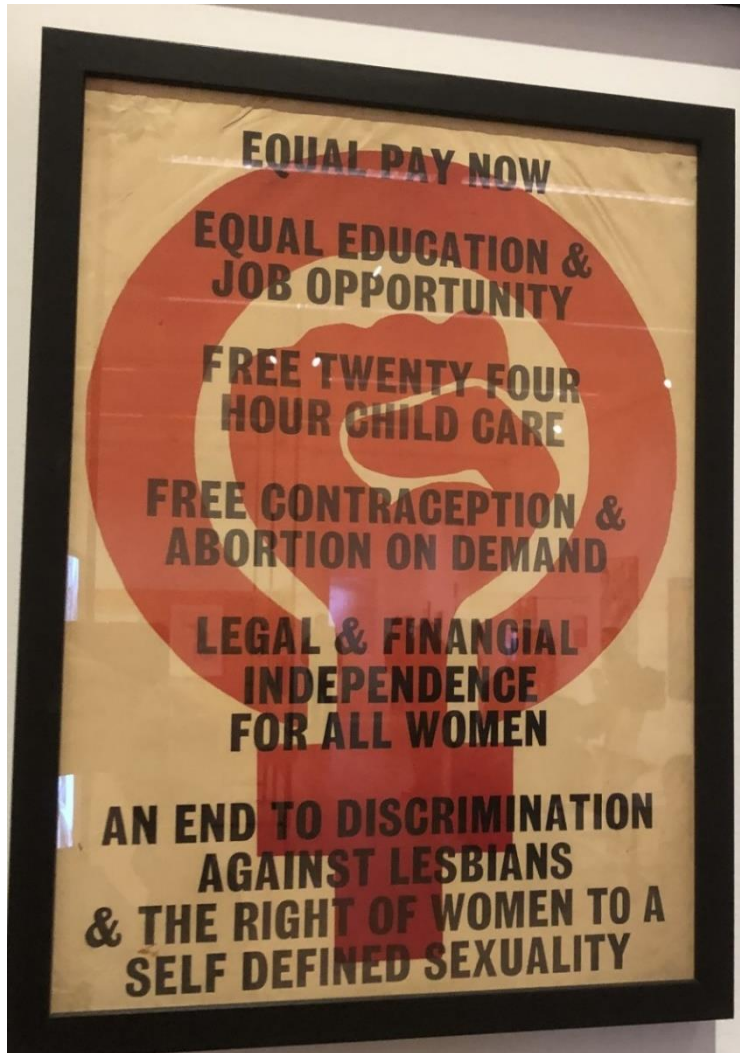
Free for Members

BOOK
TICKETS

BECOME A
MEMBER

LIMITLESS **POTENTIAL** | LIMITLESS **OPPORTUNITIES** | LIMITLESS **IMPACT**

IS WORK ON GENDER EQUALITY STILL NEEDED?



EDI ALLYSHIP AT SCHOOL LEVEL

1. Sponsorship of (female) School professional staff for career development, including applied MBA's, with **dissertation on the leaky pipeline in our school**, including **eye-opening surveys and focus groups**.
2. Female and male representation – at least 30% - on **key** committees (only) – e.g. promotions, management committees + mixed academic/professional staff.
3. Use of **Job Share for Heads of Department**, and in Leadership of Doctoral Training Centres, e.g. **Prof Beatrice Pelloni**.
4. Job-share School EDI Leads appointed.
5. Work to **understand, showcase, and normalise flexible working**, through survey and School website – using this in our staff recruitment.
6. Work in academic recruitment to seek and attract strong female applicants.
7. Successful Athena SWAN Silver applications.

UNIVERSITY OF READING GENDER EQUALITY WORK 2016-20

Driven by 2016 Athena SWAN Bronze award and associated action plan + UoR gender equality targets announced Feb 2016.

Athena SWAN very helpful for:

- Systematic reflection on where institution is on gender equality, including quantitative/qualitative data
- Developing broad, evidence-based action plan

GENDER EQUALITY TARGETS FOR 2020

ANNOUNCED BY UNIVERSITY IN FEB 2016

- At least 30% of either gender in all key committees, including the University Executive Board (UEB). **Baseline 0% female UEB**
- Maintain at least 45% of either gender in the University Leadership Group
- At least 40% of professors of either gender. **Baseline 30% female.**
- Reduce pay gap at senior (professorial and Grade 9) levels. **Baseline 11%**
- Achieve University-wide Athena SWAN Silver Award, plus all Science Schools holding awards and all other Schools working towards awards.

EXAMPLE ACTIONS TAKEN

Impact from 2016 Athena SWAN Action Plan

AP2016:E2 The Vice-Chancellor brought proposals to Leadership Group in 2017 for diversifying University Executive Board, including use of job-share, to achieve target 30% either gender by 2020. Has led to increase from **0%F on UEB at 1/4/16 to 37.5% F from 1/1/20**, plus **first UEB job-shares** (Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation, PVC Education).

Parveen Yaqoob appointed Deputy VC; Elizabeth McCrum and Julian Park Pro-VC (Education)

Wednesday, 04 December 2019

The University Council has approved the appointment of Professor Parveen Yaqoob as the new Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Professors Elizabeth McCrum and Julian Park in a job share as the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Education.

Both these appointments are effective from 1 January 2020.

Parveen has been in a jobshare with Dominik Zaum as the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation since August 2018. As Deputy Vice-Chancellor, she will deputise for the Vice-Chancellor in both executive and ceremonial functions when he is unable to do so himself.

Elizabeth is currently the Teaching and Learning Dean responsible for Engagement and Future Direction while Julian heads the School of Agriculture, Policy and Development. They will start their five-year term on 1 January 2020 – representing the second job share arrangement in the University Executive Board (UEB). Parveen Yaqoob and Dominik Zaum have been working as Pro Vice-Chancellors for Research and Innovation since August 2018.

Vice-Chancellor Robert Van de Noort said, "I am delighted with the appointments. Parveen has been a fantastic colleague in the University Executive Board. Her perspective and inputs have enriched our discussions and decision-making.

For the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education), we set out to recruit the best candidate. In Elizabeth and Julian, we have two excellent educators who have taken different



Professors Elizabeth McCrum and Julian Park



EXAMPLE ACTIONS TAKEN

Impact from 2016 Athena SWAN Action Plan

- AP2016:C7** In 2016/17 the University Academic Promotions process completely overhauled introducing:
- Criteria-based application and pro-forma rather than judgement of CV
 - Citizenship criterion, requiring demonstrating taking share of important non-research/teaching work
 - All Schools have formal promotion committees (with gender-balance sought by governance), plus Promotion Mentors
 - Systematic training in applications, open to all, before promotion round, plus training for Mentors

Large impact on promotion of women to Professor. **In the three rounds (2016/17 to 2018/19) with the new system there have been approx 85 promotions to professor (65%F). In the previous three years there were approx 45 professorial promotions (26%F).**

'I definitely fit the profile of a woman who was over ready for promotion but unconfident to apply. I would have applied earlier if the new processes had been in place'

EXAMPLE ACTIONS TAKEN

Closed out actions and impact from Bronze Action Plan

AP2016 D2(i)

We have created the “Faces of Reading” webpages, profiling 49 staff (25F:24M, 16 BAME (9F:7M), 1 Trans (Fig 6.5)), each with picture and text profile, showcasing diversity of: protected characteristics, roles (P&S, A&R), grades, working arrangements (flexible working, two job-shares), family leave, etc. Impact has been created by linking via banner on our main jobs page (plus links in letters to applicants), with page views as Table 5.6.14. Inclusion of L-G-B-T visible role models praised in Stonewall WEI feedback.



FACES OF READING

I'm interested in

Everything

Stories featuring

Everything

All our Faces

Disability

Flexible working

LGBT+

Parental or family leave

Staff from outside the UK

Staff who are Reading graduates

GENDER EQUALITY TARGETS FOR 2020

ANNOUNCED FEB 2016

- At least 30% of either gender in all key University committees and boards, including the University Executive Board (UEB). **Baseline 0% UEB. 37.5% Jan 2020**
- Maintain at least 45% of either gender in the overall University Leadership **43.3% Nov 2019**
- At least 40% of professors of either gender. **Baseline 30%. 35% at 31/3/19 (UK figure 25.5%)**
- Reduce pay gap at senior (professorial and Grade 9) levels. **Baseline 11% 9.28% at 1/1/19**
- Achieve University-wide Athena SWAN Silver Award, plus all Science Schools holding awards and all other Schools working towards awards. **Done.**

WHAT CAN WE EACH DO TO HELP?

Suggestions for getting involved at Reading on our [UoR Diversity and Inclusion website](#), including how to contact your local D&I lead – opportunities to be involved in local EDI teams in your departments and other units, e.g. CDTs, or as allies in staff networks

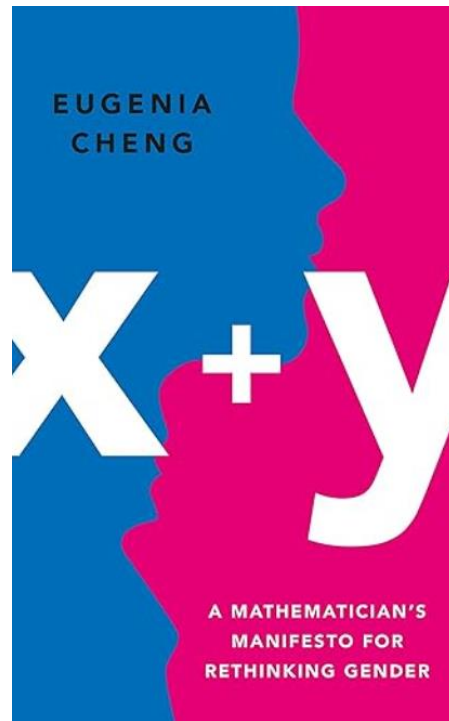
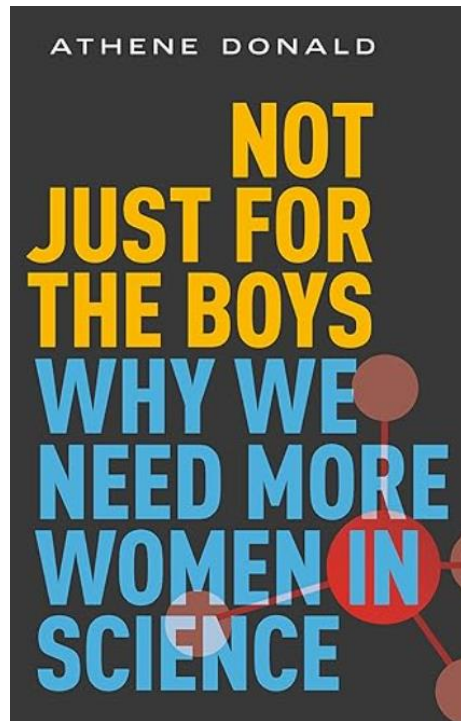
Excellent (and regular) practical suggestions for supporting gender equality in day-to-day life in universities on the blog from Prof Dame Athene Donald FRS: [click here](#), eg

- Act as a sponsor or mentor;
- Refuse to serve on single sex panels or at conferences without an appropriate level of female invited speakers;
- Nominate women for prizes, fellowships etc;
- Tap women on the shoulder to encourage them to apply for opportunities they otherwise would be unaware of or feel they were not qualified for;
- Move the dialogue on from part-time working equates to 'isn't serious' to part-time working means balancing different demands;
- Be prepared to be a visible role model;
- Think broadly when asked to make suggestions of names for any position⁴⁰ or role.

TAKE HOME MESSAGES

- There continues to be a huge need for work on LGBTQIA+ and gender equality on many fronts: female representation in STEM and in senior roles; equal pay; providing a supportive and inclusive environment; eradicating harassment/bullying; support for and normalisation of flexible working and job shares; supporting and encouraging equality in childcare; ...
- There is much that we can do as allies, as departments, institutions, individuals, to make positive change happen, not least through getting involved as allies in staff networks, or other departmental and uni EDI teams
- This is work for us all, in larger or smaller ways

SUGGESTED READING AND LISTENING



Below:
Podcast recording
with Helen Sheldon



Women in Acoustics Podcast Series within the larger, award-winning **The Rest is Just Noise** podcast series with my **UK Acoustics Network** colleague **Dr Hasina Begum** as interviewer.