



Dismantling the Barriers

for Women in Computing Internationally





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Dismantling the Barriers

- ★ Background
- ★ Presentations from around the world
- ★ Discussion



Alice is not in this land

- ★ The land of computing is a frontier country, and, as in the development of most frontier territories, there are more men than women.
- ★ Indeed, it appears that at all levels of learning about computers - in school, in higher education, in further education, in training, in adult education classes, and in independent learning
 - women tend to be strikingly under-represented

(Gerver 1989 p483)

Background - Education

	Pop'n (mill)	School	Age	University % Women	Literacy
Australia	20	7/6	15	57%	100%
Austria	8	4/4/4	15	52%	98%
Germany	83	4/6/3	15	50%	95%
India	1030	5/7	14	37%	<i>total</i> 65%; M: 75% F: 52%
Pakistan	150	6/4/2	10	50%	<i>total</i> 46% M: 60% F: 31%
South Africa	45	7/5	15	52%	<i>total</i> 86% M: 87% F: 86%
Turkey	68	8/3	14	41%	<i>total</i> 87% M: 94% F: 78%
UK	57	7/5	16	50%	99%
USA	293	4/4/4			97%

Background - Society

	% of Workforce	% of Parliamentarians	Right to Vote
Australia	45%	26%	1902
Austria		25%	1918
Germany	46%	31%	1918
India	38%	9%	1950
Pakistan		33%	1947
South Africa	42%	30%	1930 (whites) 1994 (blacks)
Turkey	35%	4%	1930
UK	45%	17%	1918
USA	47%	14%	1920



Background - Workforce

	Where they are	Where they are not
Australia	Health/education/sales/clerks	Engineering/ Senior management/ construction
Austria	Health/ social work/ trade	Researcher + development
Germany	Nurses/Secretarial/teachers	Construction/senior positions
India	Agriculture/domestic workers	construction
Pakistan	Healthcare/ education/ secretarial	Engineering / architecture/ scientists/ defence
South Africa	Nurses/ teachers/ clerks/ domestic workers	Legislators/ senior officials and managers
Turkey	Nurses/ teachers/ Pharmacists/ programmers	Engineering
UK	Secretary/Nurses/Cooks/domestic	Engineering/ Senior positions
USA	Social services/ education/ health/ domestic	Engineering/ construction/ automotive

Background - Computing

	% IT Professionals	% Studying IT
Australia	24%	23%
Austria	27%	15%
Germany	20%	15%
India	21%	47%
Pakistan		30%
South Africa	27%	32%
Turkey		21%
UK	20%	20% U/G 26% P/G
USA		28% U/G



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Reflections

- ★ Gender and IT - The inequality does matter.
- ★ A complex array of issues contribute to the problem.
- ★ There are a variety of strategies for change.
- ★ There is no quick and easy solution.
- ★ We need to continue to chip away at the barriers
- ★ We need to make a difference

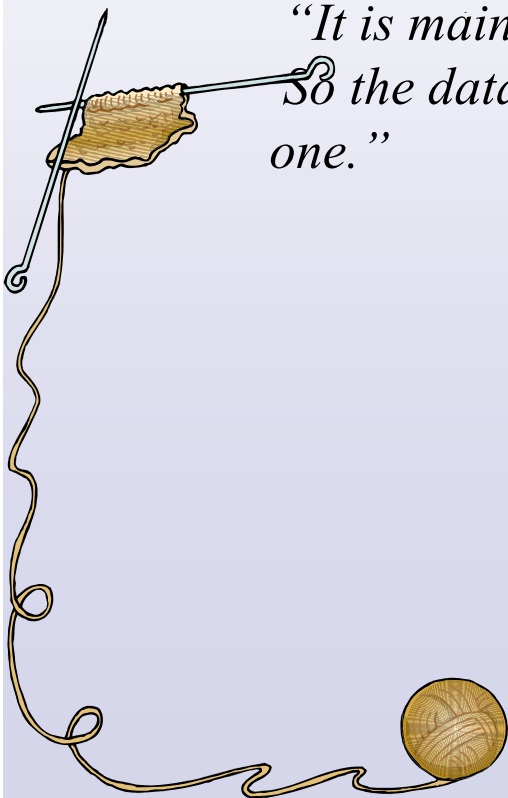
Relative Complexity

*In my parents' lounge room after Christmas dinner
I am talking to my brother the computer programmer.
He is explaining to me the principles of cyberspace.*

*"It is only relatively complex," he says finally, peeling the icing off his
fruitcake,*

"It is mainly a system of binaries, permutations of zero and one.

*So the data may be stored as, say, zero, zero, one, one, one, zero, zero,
one."*



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one."*

My mother sighs.

She is next to us, half-listening.

She is knitting a fair-isle sweater.

"I'll never understand how you get your brain around it," she says.

*"It's beyond me" she says, and turns half her attention back
to her fair-isle pattern: Purl purl plain, plain plain plain purl purl.*

Cate Kennedy

