

LIFE WITH A PHD



Findings *from* Social Science PhDs— Five+ Years Out

The Center for Innovation and Research in Graduate Education
University of Washington, College of Education & Graduate School

GPE Week
March 1, 2007

www.cirge.washington.edu

**CIR
GTE**

Center for Innovation and Research in Graduate Education

RESEARCH

INNOVATION

POLICY

PUBLICATIONS

Supporters

Contact CIRGE

Conferences

LIFE WITH A PHD



- **Findings from *Social Science PhDs—Five+ Years Out***
 - **Career Outcomes**
 - **Graduate School Experiences**
 - **Gender & Family**
- **Forces & Forms of Change in Doctoral Education Today**

Social Science PhDs—Five+ Years Out Survey Sample



Survey: April 2005-March 2006

PhD Cohorts: 1995 – 1999

65 US universities (accounted for 63% of PhDs in years surveyed)

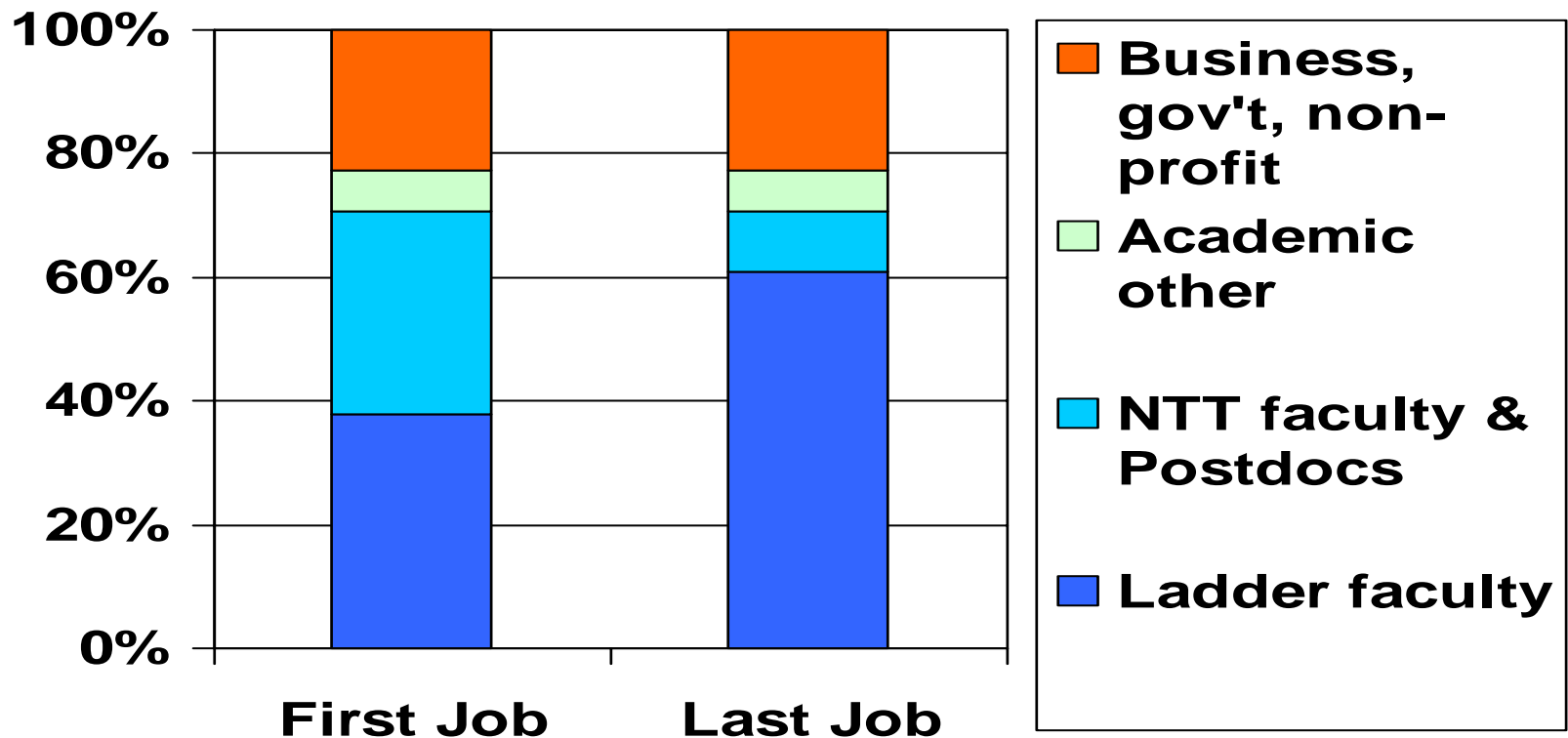
| | N | (% women) |
|--------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Anthropology | 432 | (56.5) |
| Communication | 343 | (52.2) |
| Geography | 164 | (32.3) |
| History | 839 | (43.4) |
| Political Science | 701 | (35.9) |
| Sociology | 546 | (59.2) |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>3025</i> | <i>(46.8)</i> |

Social Science PhDs—Five+ Years Out Comments on the Job Market



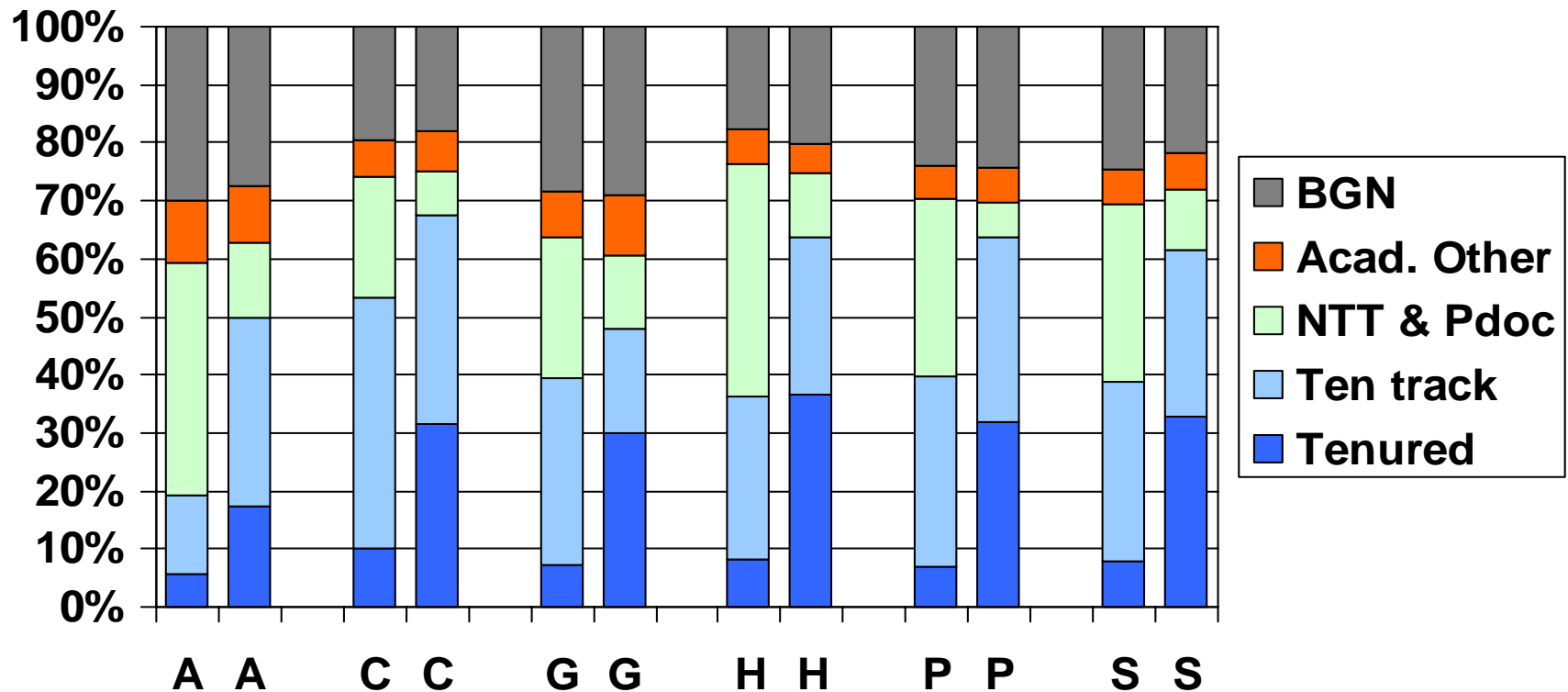
- “. . .you can expect some upheaval during the early years of your career: perhaps taking one-year positions or adjuncting, before you land a tenure-track job . . .” —*anthropologist*

Social Science PhDs—Five+ Years Out First and Last Jobs

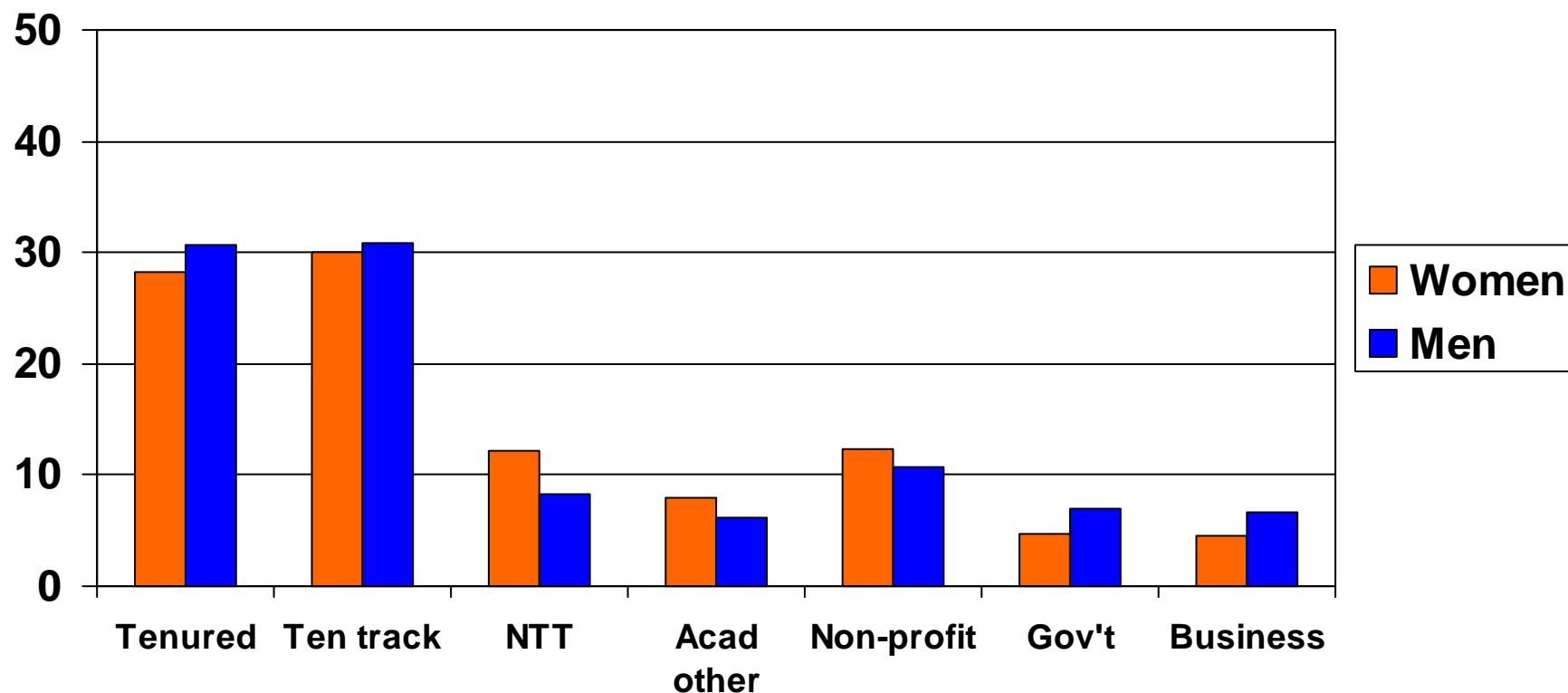


Social Science PhDs—Five+ Years Out

First & Last Job by Discipline



Social Science PhDs—Five+ Years Out Jobs at Survey by Gender



Social Science PhDs—Five+ Years Out **Postdoctoral Fellowships**



| | % | (n) |
|--------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Anthropology | 16% | (57) |
| Communication | | (3) |
| Geography | 10% | (14) |
| History | 7% | (50) |
| Political Science | 7% | (42) |
| Sociology | 16% | (80) |

Social Science PhDs—Five+ Years Out Indexes of Career Satisfaction



Indexes for 3 Dimensions of Current Job

- 1. The Work**
- 2. Status**
- 3. Quality of Life**

Social Science PhDs—Five+ Years Out

Indexes of Career Satisfaction



With the Work

Intellectual Challenge

Autonomy

Level of Responsibility

Contribution to Society

Use of dr. education

**Good fit with my abilities
and interests**

With Status

Career growth opportunities

Prestige

Job security

Salary

Availability of resources

Recognition

Social Science PhDs—Five+ Years Out Indexes of Career Satisfaction



Quality of Life

Ability to balance work + family/personal life

Support/tolerance for all types of people

Opportunities for spouse/partner in area

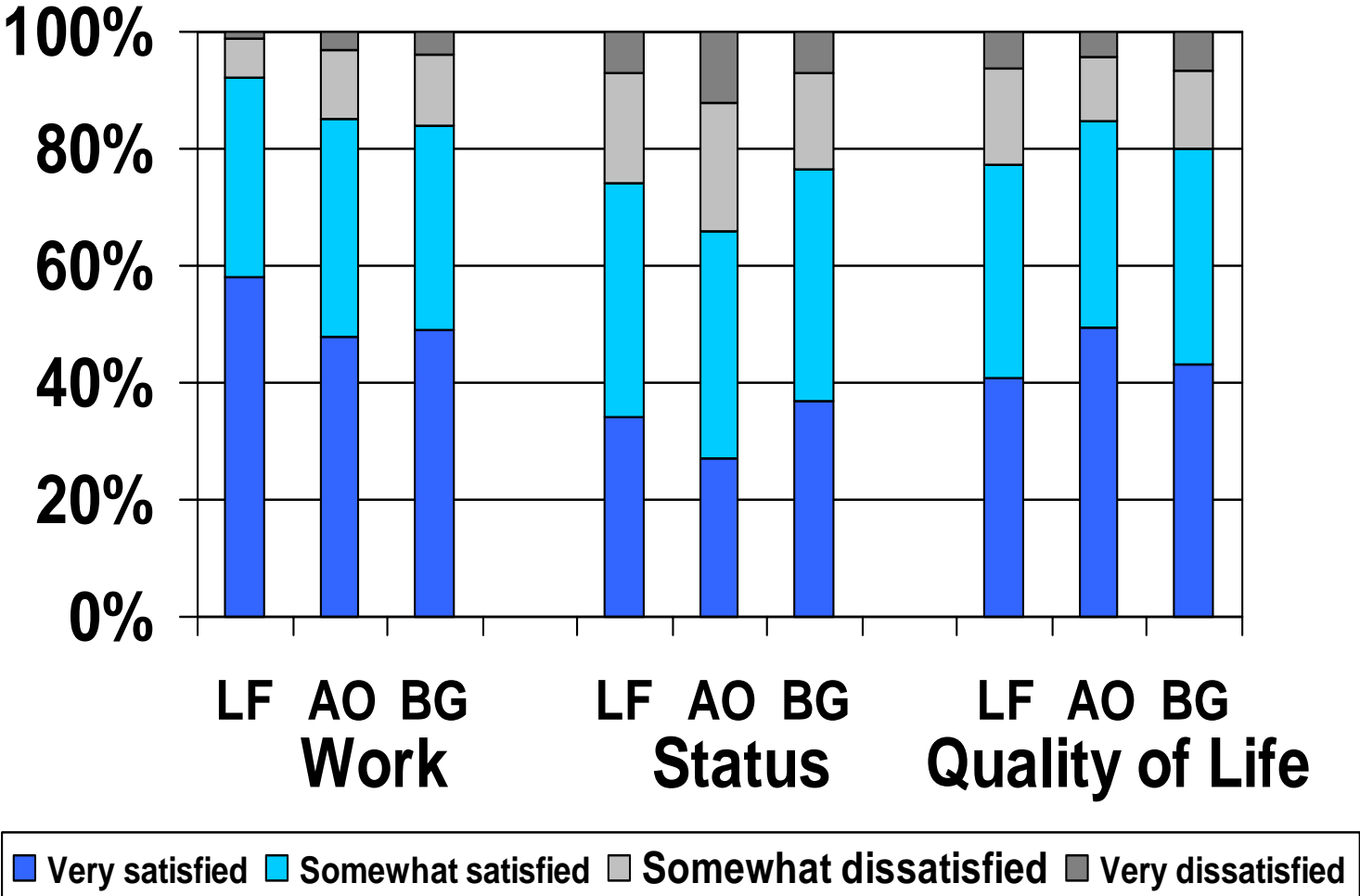
Proximity to extended family

Geographic location

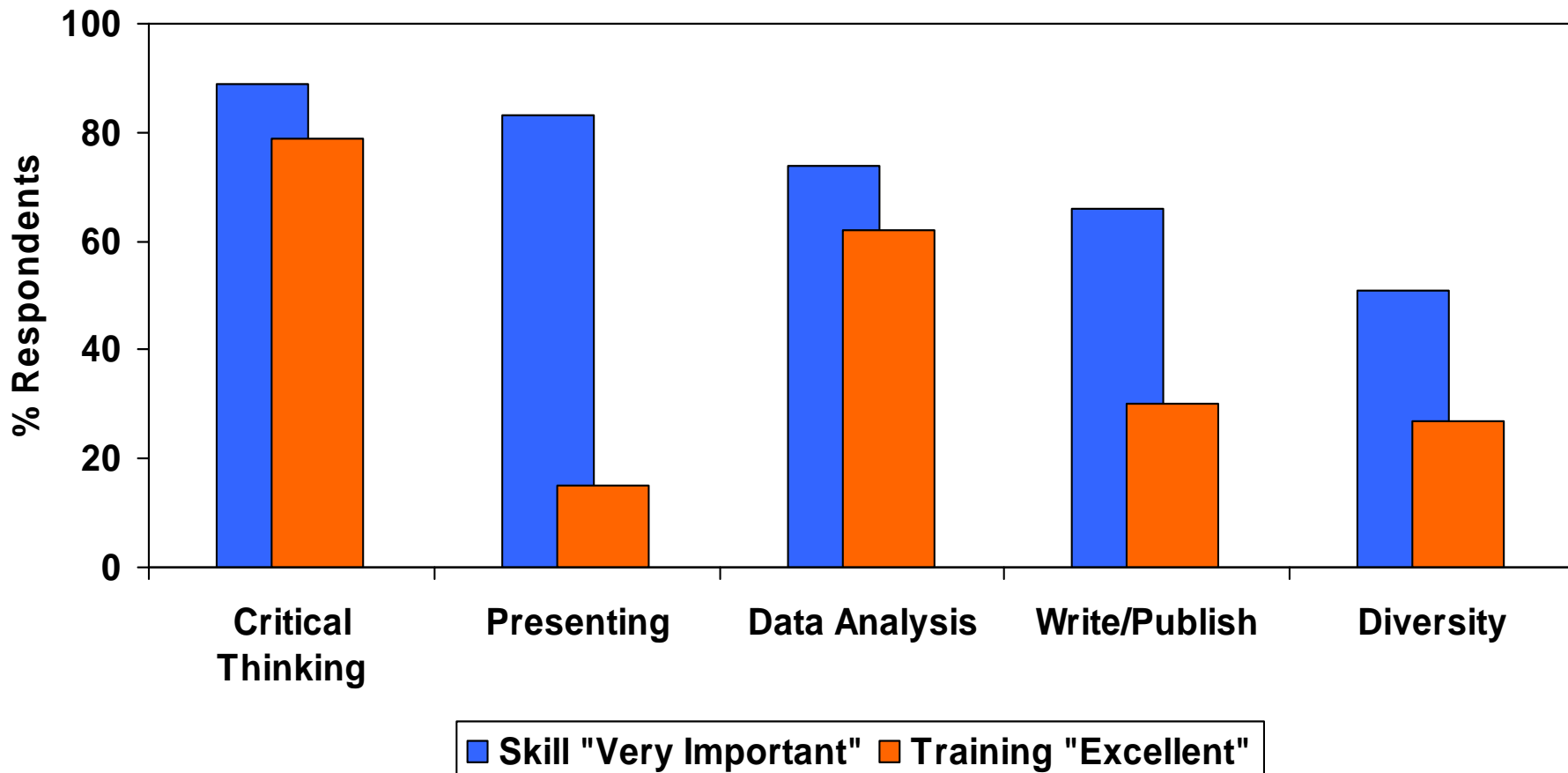
Flexibility in schedule or location

Three Dimensions of Career Satisfaction by Job Type

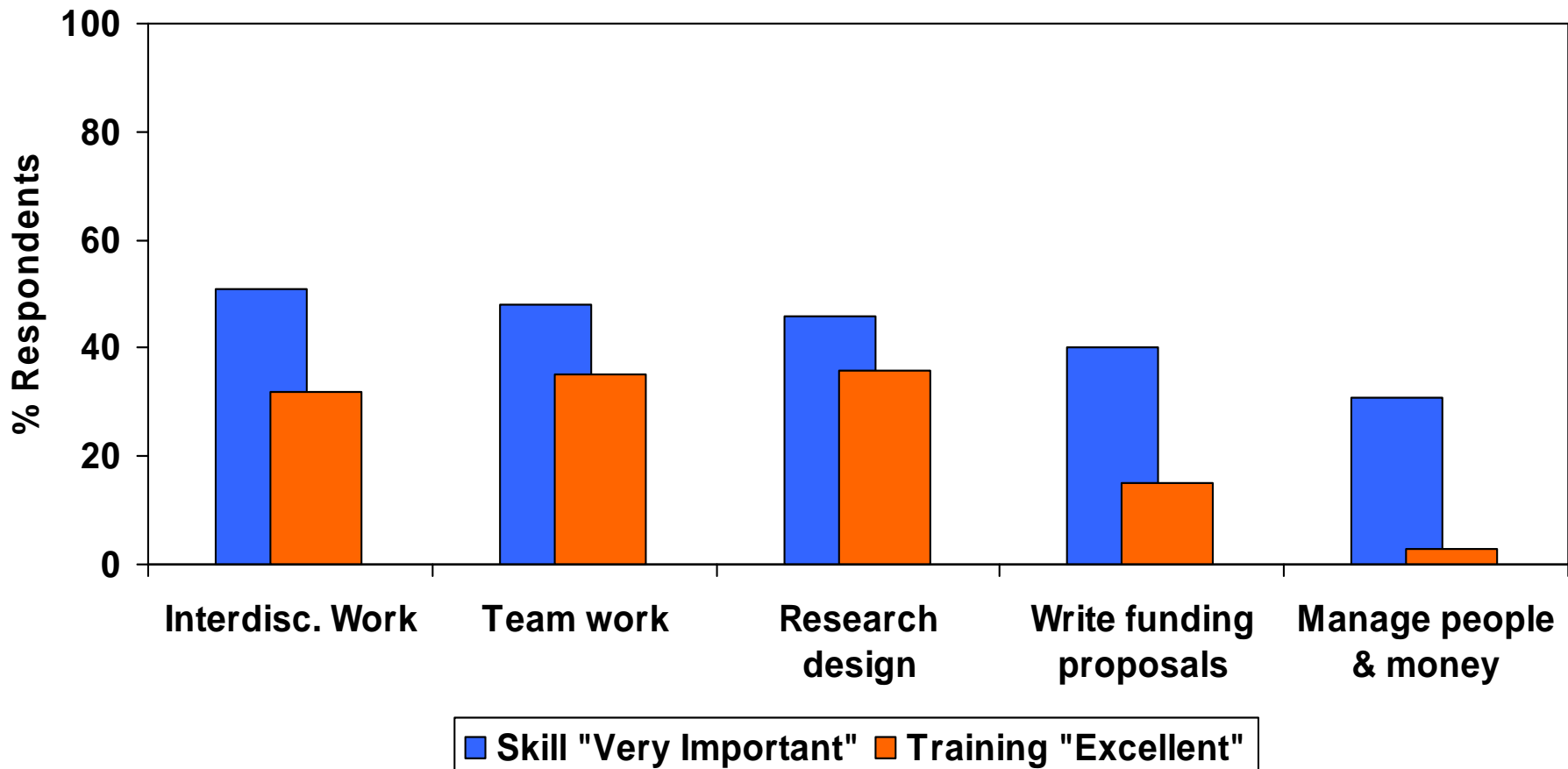
LF 'ladder faculty' AO 'acad. other + NTT' BG 'BGN'



Importance of Skill vs. Quality of Training in it During Studies

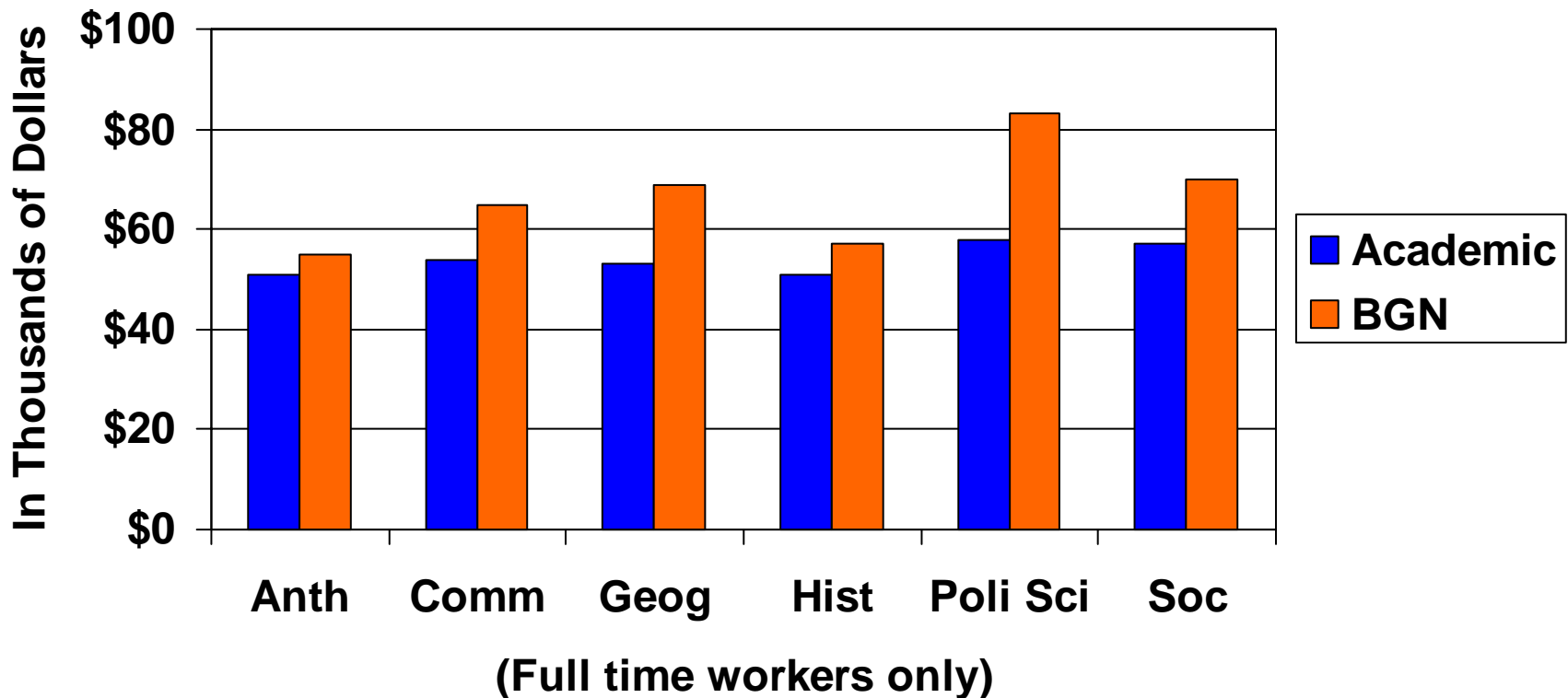


Importance of Skill vs. Quality of Training in it During Studies



Social Science PhDs—Five+ Years Out

Median Incomes by Field and Sector



Social Science PhDs—Five+ Years Out



GRADUATE SCHOOL EXPERIENCES

Social Science PhDs—Five+ Years Out

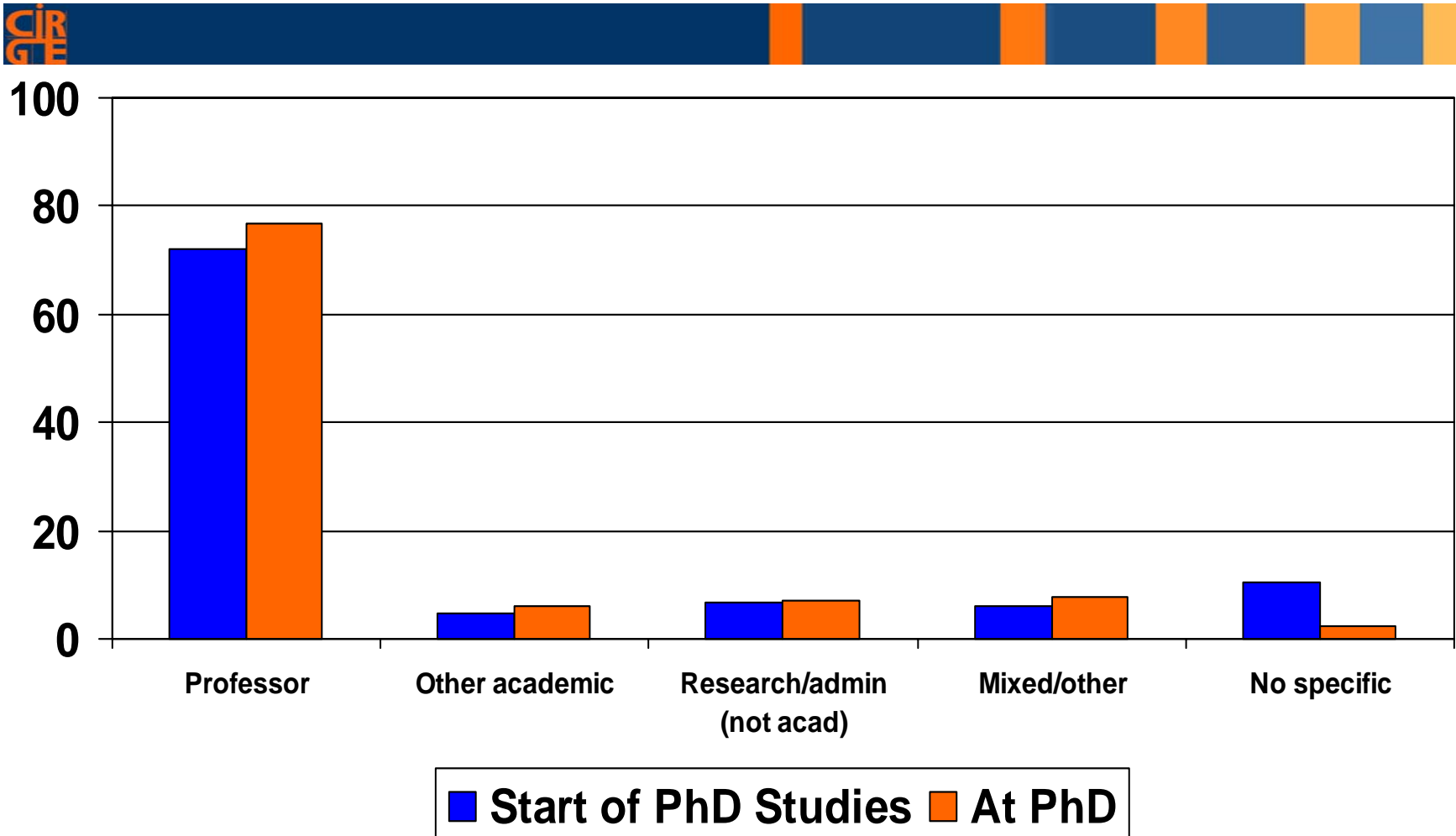
Crucial Considerations for Getting a PhD



| Reason | % Endorsing |
|--|--------------------|
| Intense interest in the field | 78% |
| Necessary credential for desired job | 46% |
| Encouraged by family or friends | 37% |
| Desire to have an impact on the field | 24% |

Social Science PhDs—Five+ Years Out

Career Goals at Begin & End of PhD Studies



Social Science PhDs—Five+ Years Out Time in PhD Program in Years



| | <i>Mean</i> | 25% | Median | 75% |
|-----------------|-------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| Anth | 8.4 | 6.7 | 7.7 | 9.7 |
| Comm | 5.5 | 4 | 5.2 | 6.3 |
| Geog | 6.3 | 4.7 | 5.7 | 7.3 |
| Hist | 7.5 | 5.9 | 7 | 8.7 |
| Poli Sci | 7 | 5.6 | 6.7 | 7.9 |
| Soc | 7.3 | 5.7 | 6.7 | 8.3 |

Social Science PhDs—Five+ Years Out **Publications During Graduate School**



Peer-reviewed Journal Articles (author or co-author published or in press at PhD)

| # | Percent Respondents |
|----------|----------------------------|
| 0 | 49% |
| 1 | 25% |
| 2 | 13% |
| 3+ | 13% |

Social Science PhDs—Five+ Years Out

Quality of Mentoring by Thesis Advisor



| | % “Very Satisfied” |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Advice with PhD Topic | 55% |
| Guidance to finish | 55% |
| Overall mentoring | 48% |
| Support in career decisions | 51% |
| Support in job search | 43% |
| Help in publishing | 27% |

Social Science PhDs—Five+ Years Out **Comments on the Thesis Advisor**



“You can't choose your
dissertation chair too
carefully.”

—political scientist

Social Science PhDs—Five+ Years Out

Evaluation of Program Elements



| <i>% Rating the item “excellent”:</i> | |
|--|------------|
| Academic rigor | 66% |
| Clear requirements | 54% |
| Overall quality | 49% |
| Support/guide diss write | 42% |
| Prep for QE | 37% |
| Students encouraged to take initiative in academic activities | 36% |

Social Science PhDs—Five+ Years Out **Evaluation of Program Elements**



| <i>% Rating the item “excellent”:</i> | |
|--|------------|
| Financial support | 35% |
| Socializing students into an academic community | 32% |
| Feedback on student progress | 32% |
| Academic career preparation | 32% |
| Having a diverse student population | 28% |
| Non-academic career preparation | 6% |

Social Science PhDs—Five+ Years Out Advice to Programs



- “Recognize that most students are not going to teach at an R1 institution . . . without making students who choose liberal arts universities or corporate jobs feel like second-class citizens . . .”

—communication

Social Science PhDs—Five+ Years Out



GENDER, FAMILY & CAREERS

Center for Innovation and Research in Graduate Education (CIRGE), College of Education & Graduate School, University of Washington, Seattle, <http://depts.washington.edu/coe/cirge/>

Social Science PhDs—Five+ Years Out Survey Sample



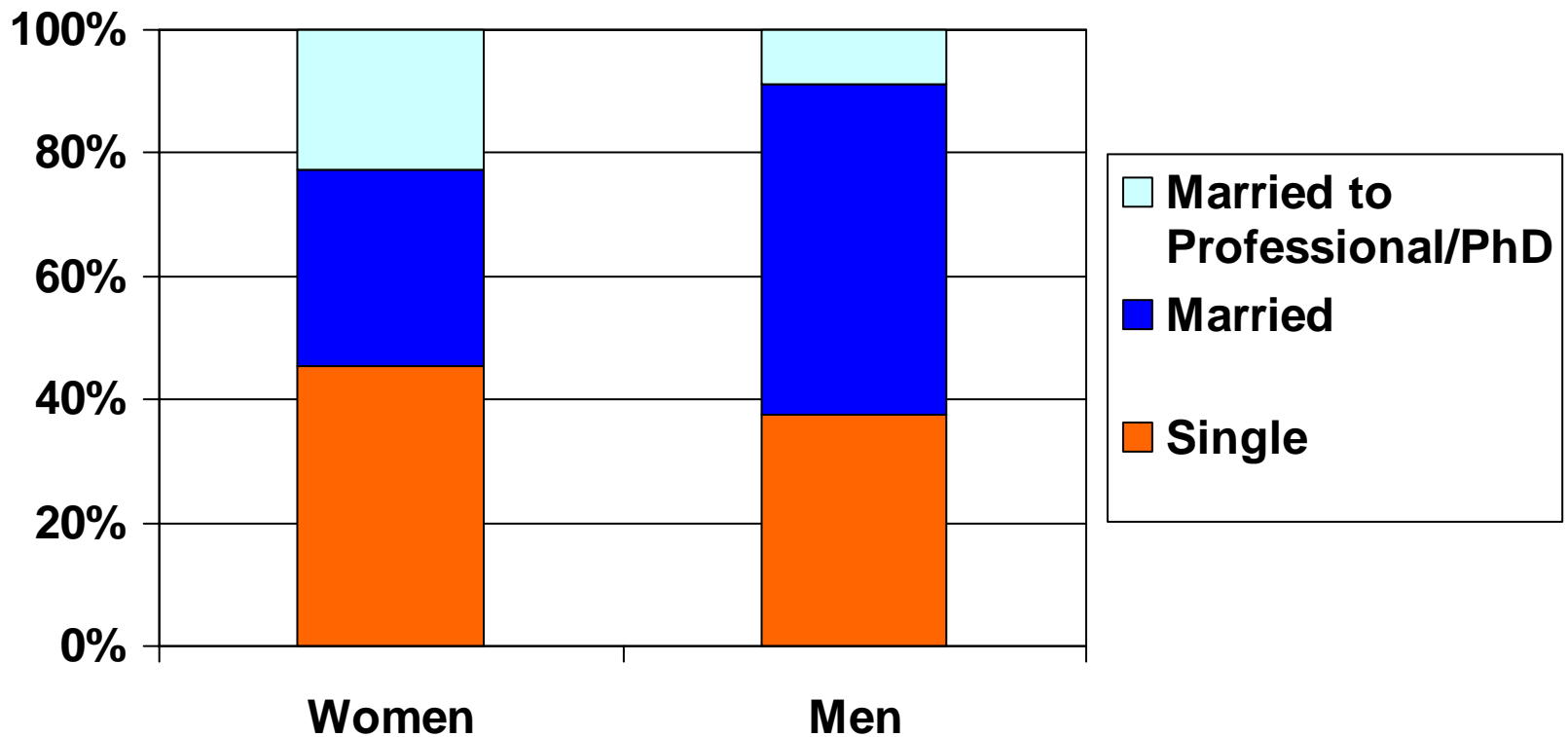
Survey: April 2005-March 2006

PhD Cohorts: 1995 – 1999

65 US universities (accounted for 63% of PhDs in years surveyed)

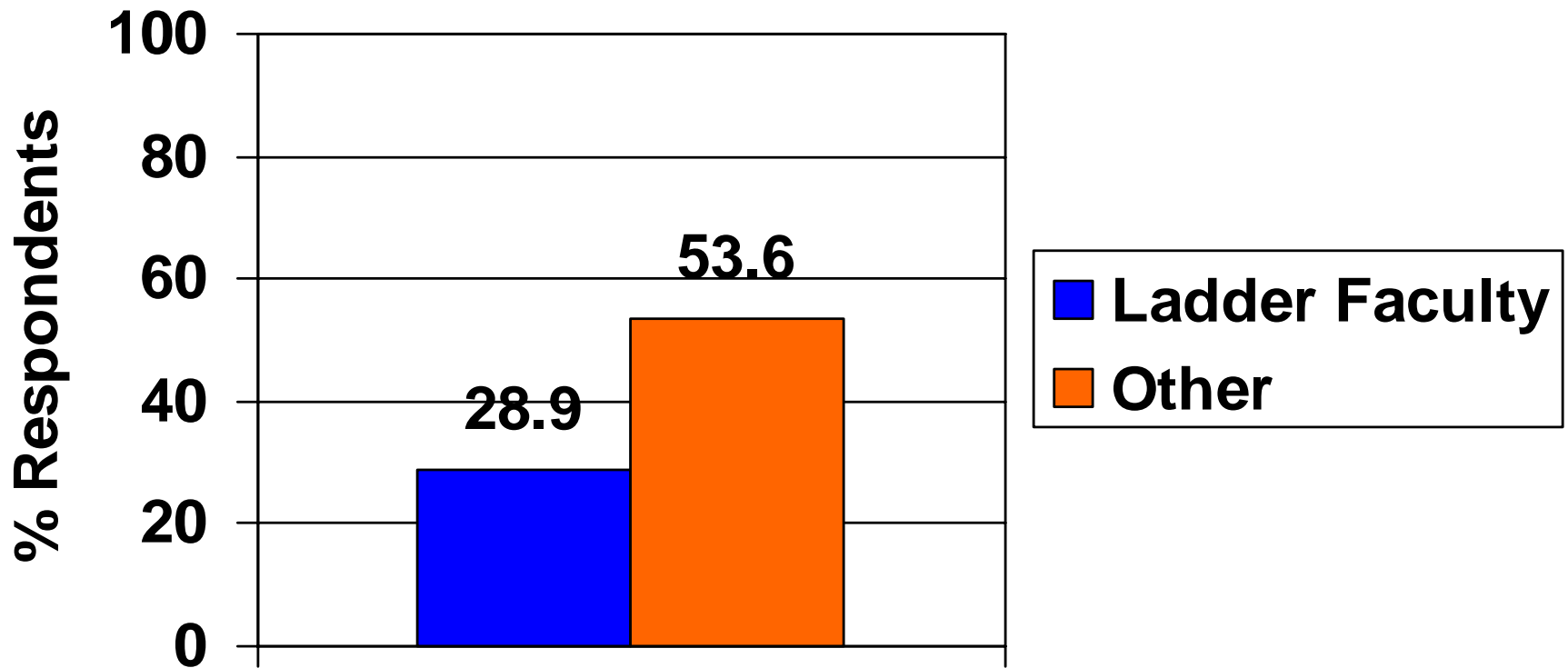
| | N | (% women) |
|--------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Anthropology | 432 | (56.5) |
| Communication | 343 | (52.2) |
| Geography | 164 | (32.3) |
| History | 839 | (43.4) |
| Political Science | 701 | (35.9) |
| Sociology | 546 | (59.2) |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>3025</i> | <i>(46.8)</i> |

Social Science PhDs—Five+ Years Out

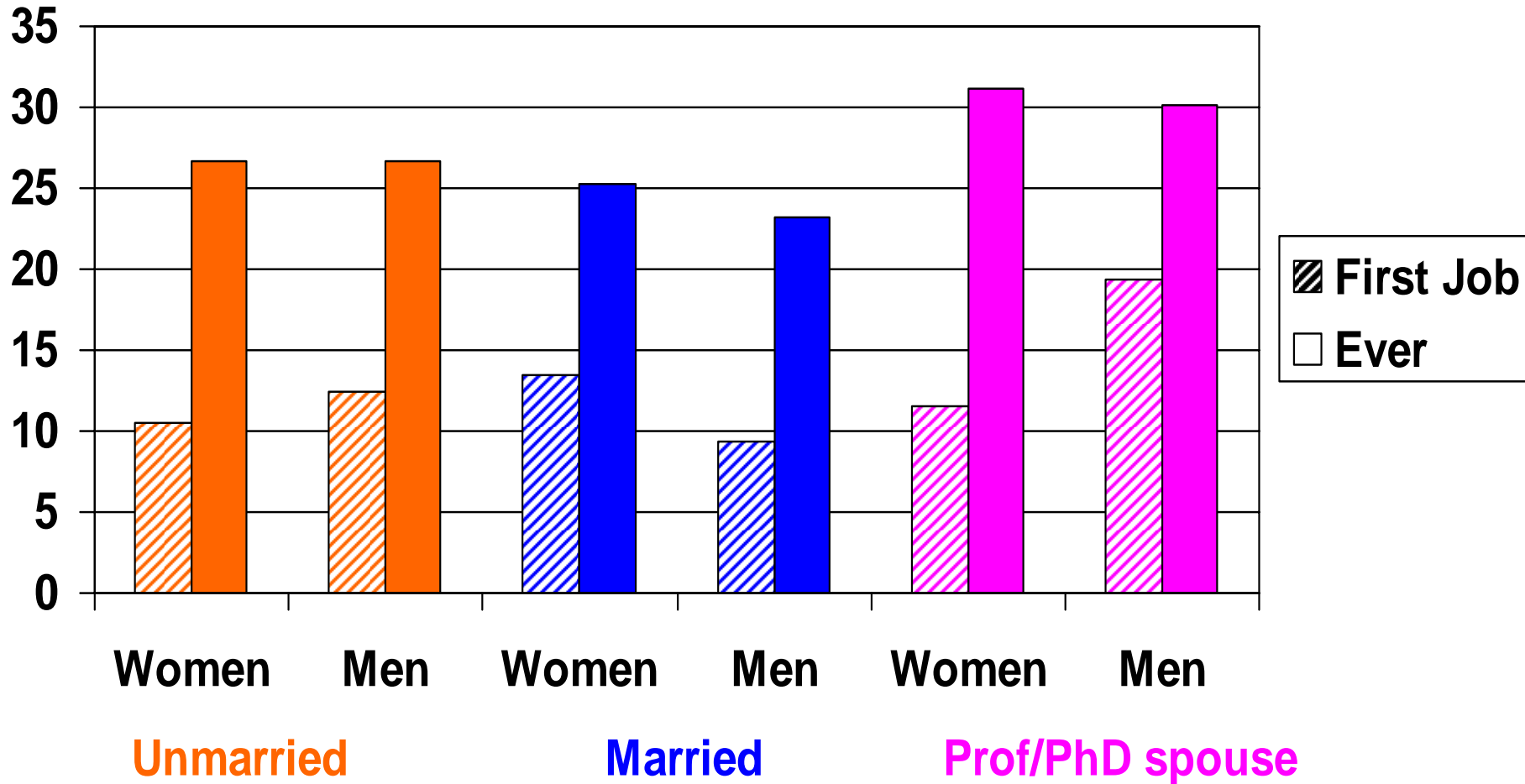


Social Science PhDs—Five+ Years Out

Job and PhD Institution in Same Area (Census Division)



Ladder Faculty at Research Universities by Sex and Marital Status



LIFE WITH A PHD



Forces & Forms of Change in PhD Education

Forces of Change in PhD Education



- **Globalization**
- **Knowledge-based economy theory**
- **Expanded notions of need for PhD-educated workers**
- **Interdisciplinary work**
- **ACCOUNTABILITY demands!**

Forms of Change in PhD Education



- **Internationalization**
- **Interdisciplinary**
 - *supported by general course on different ways of knowing*
- **Professional skills development**
- **Teamwork more important, e.g., co-author dissertation chapters**
- **Education for labor market beyond academy**
- **Foreign language requirements**
- **More in-built evaluation and assessment**