



CFA Societies  
Australia

**BALL**  
Dr Catherine, PhD

**2022**  
**INTERNATIONAL**  
**WOMEN'S DAY**  
**#BreakTheBias**



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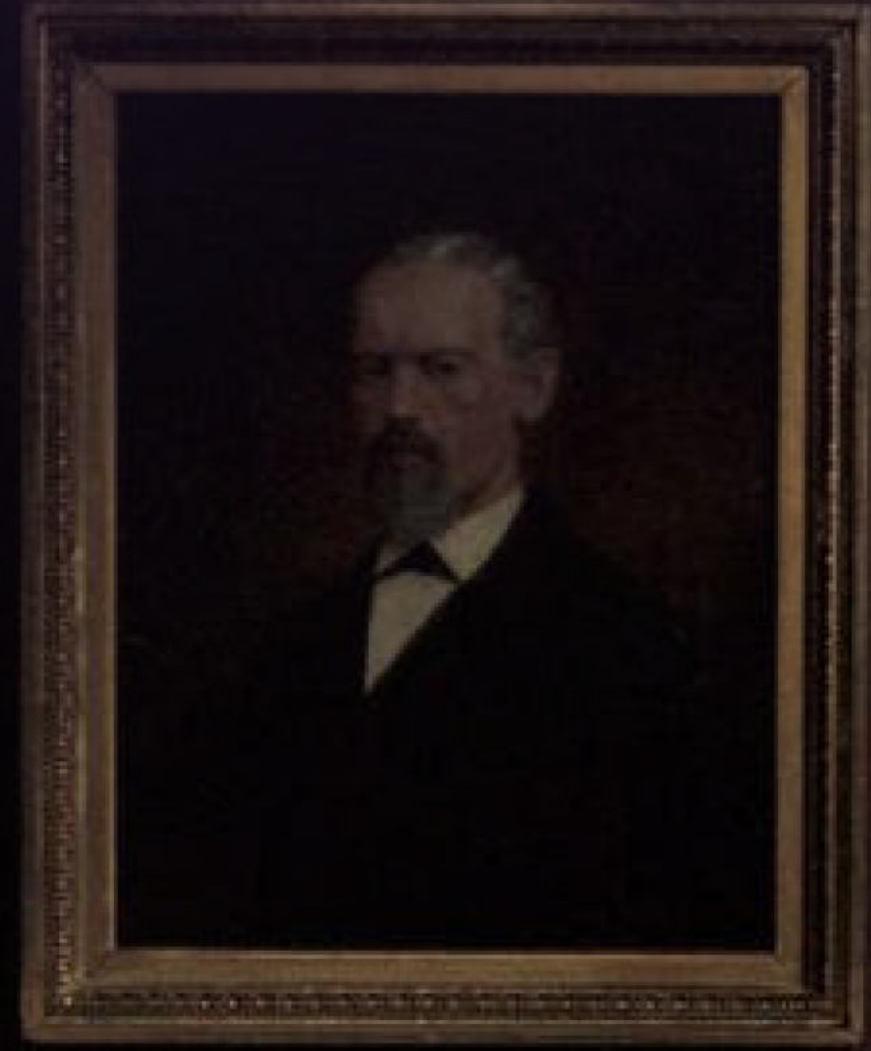
**EBOOK**





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Can you age this photo? It's the ash tray that does it for me, except being in Spain recently those ash trays are still around. When trying to grow and evolve my thinking around being the only woman at the table I have been taking advice from diverse women and the most common guidance was to learn to 'decolonise' my thinking. So, who built this table? Why do we fight to sit somewhere that we are not really wanted? Go where you are celebrated, not where you are tolerated. The book "Lean In" was so very frustrating because I was already leaning in so much I was corporate planking and it was not making a shred of difference. Things we can do here? Dismantle the table (if only it was that easy), other advice to me has been that women should sit together so our presence isn't diluted psychologically. Great men have been allies for me, work with allies to engender change. Build a new table.

**BEING  
INVITED**





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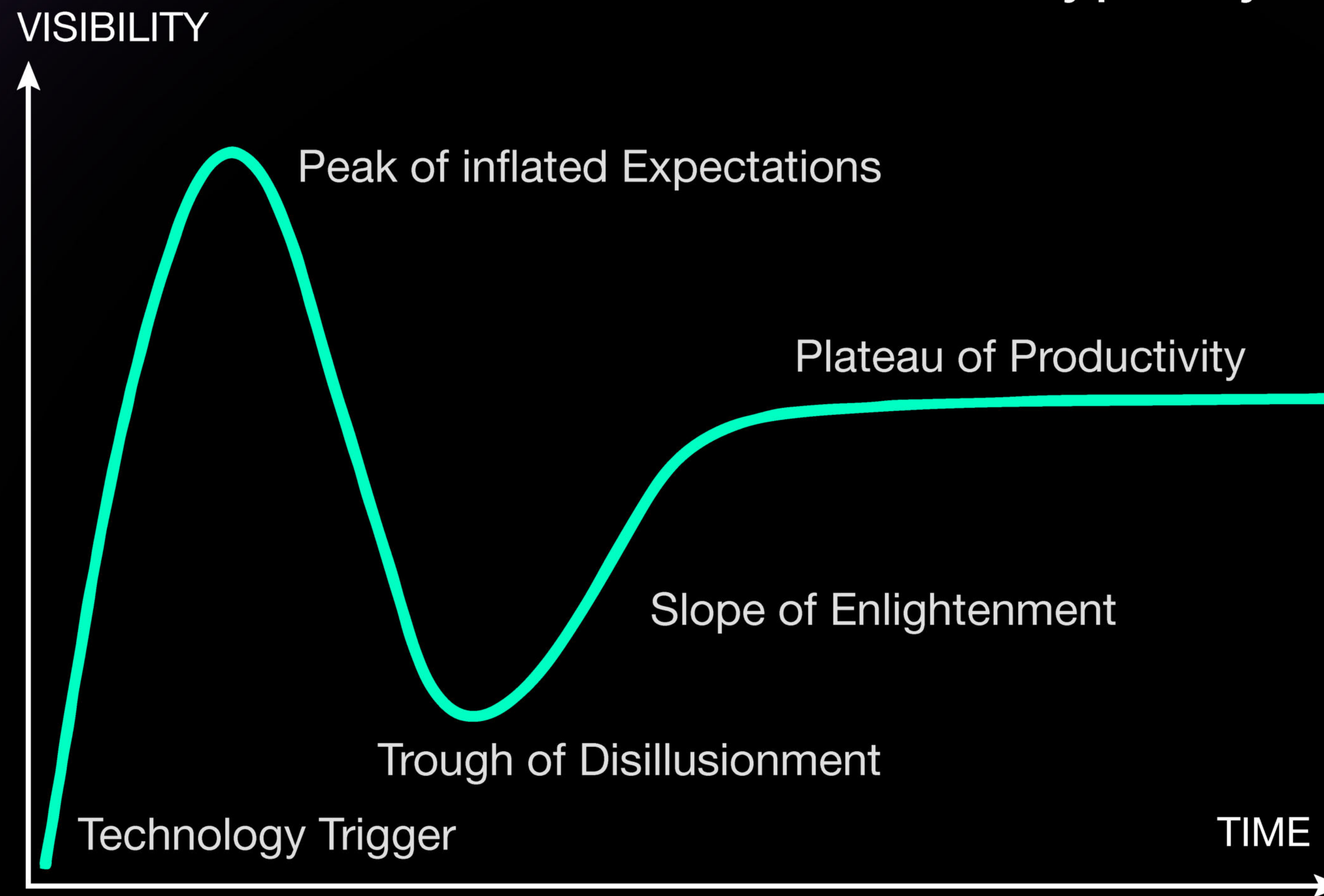
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# PASSIVE REPRESENTATION

The average percentage of women in film as extras is 18-20%. Women and girls are poorly represented. Use the Bechdel test to see if the film you are choosing represents women: <https://bechdeltest.com> you'll be surprised at the ones that fail. I was first introduced to the Bechdel test by this TED talk (How movies teach manhood) which is worth a watch: [https://www.ted.com/talks/colin\\_stokes\\_how\\_movies\\_teach\\_manhood?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/colin_stokes_how_movies_teach_manhood?language=en) So, what else can we do to call out the bias? Put your money where your mouth is. Only go to the cinema or rent movies that pass the Bechdel test. Also, check out Femeconomy who apply diversity tests to businesses: <https://femeconomy.com> You can also challenge yourself with the 'Project Implicit' tests, I did the gender and work one: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html> Let me know how you go.



# Gartner Hype Cycle



So, the waves of change lap at our shores, and some travel higher up the beach than others. Why is there such a gap between capability and action? Why are we still over one hundred years away from equity? And what are the barriers, troughs, late adopters, and inertia of change mechanisms that are preventing or slowing progress. Well I turn to the adoption of new and emerging technologies as my analog for this. As we know from Newton's 3rd Law of Motion: For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. Combine this with apathy, push back, and anger we get a pretty heady mix of toxic anti-feminism. I am systems engineer, I see empirical evidence that quotas actually work, and I don't think we should be afraid of them. To curate change we need to utilise radical mechanisms. Otherwise, our grandchildren will be paying the price and our country will suffer on a global stage.

**INERTIA  
OF CHANGE**





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Ah, sexy robots. Still a thing. This movie, Ex Machina, fails the Bechdel Test. AI assistants are predominantly female, especially after beta testing, humans prefer female sounding voices. <https://www.pcmag.com/opinions/the-real-reason-voice-assistants-are-female-and-why-it-matters> It was not a shock to me that when Apple developed their native health app it was missing something that 51% of the population might use: A period tracker, and it wasn't a shock because I doubt a single woman was involved in its development. Gender bias in technology has been around for a long time, and as bionics advances it will likely still occur. I am more likely than my husband to die in a car accident because of how the seat belts were designed and tested. Caroline Criado Perez's book Invisible Women is a must-read: <https://carolinecriadoperez.com/book/invisible-women/>

**GENDER  
& TECH**





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The late, great Peter Drucker once said: "Culture eats strategy for breakfast", and I think we have evolved since then. Culture IS the strategy. We have people spending lots of time and money on how to increase recruitment of diverse candidates into roles, but the mantra "build it and they will come" is the strategic approach of this decade. Drucker also said "Do what you do best, and outsource the rest": this could also be applied to the recruitment and retraining pipeline. McKinsey and HBS have produced numerous studies over the years about diversity leading from the top down. The only key metric I look for in a potential investment is the board and ownership composition. Diversity equals better performance, better returns, and better staff happiness. (this is not financial advice).

**CULTURE  
EATS STRATEGY**





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Some people look at this photo and see an empowered woman making choices for herself. Free the nipple! Others look at this photo and see a failing of modern society. What do you feel when you see this picture, can you sit in your discomfort for a while? The idea of flexible working for men and women has been a thorny issue for years, until the pandemic came along. Globally, the working week is changing and a 2012 study from Japan showed that a 3-day working week was the most productive. NZ is trialling a 4-day working week, and Sweden has it started (with desks that rise up at 5pm so you can't get to them). A great book recommendation here is *The Shallows* by Nicholas Carr:

<https://www.booktopia.com.au/the-shallows-nicholas-carr/book/9780393357820.html>

**FLEXI-HYBRID  
WORKING WEEK**





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As the USA passes through a 'great resignation' the cultural aspects of Aussies are not going to be shown the same way. It would seem there will be a 'great exfoliation' with people dumping the excess energy draining things that don't serve us. Making better choices. And even resigning. If you are on a board and you should have staff turn over as a top 3 risk. Also, this is a time for a great reshuffle of how we live, work, and play. There will be pandemic babies, divorces, marriages, and a load of global travel coming up for a lot of Aussies. What next? The sea change and tree change push for remote working, new life blood into our regional towns, closer relationships with family. Or maybe living and working abroad, a year in Tuscany anyone? In the post-plague economy, we will find some change comes fast, and others are slow. Qantas are starting direct flights to Rome, just saying.

# THE BIG EXFOLIATION?





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It's all just a bit too much. Converging technologies, needing to catch up, a call to action to change. After what we have all just been through and some are still going through, how much more can we actually do? I'll direct you here to an article I wrote recently: <https://www.griffithreview.com/articles/tech-future-human-rights/> and maybe the best thing we can do when faced with a decision-tsunami, is not to make any decisions at all. We need to think about who we are as individuals and what the brand persona is of our businesses. Do our values align? Are we working on things that make our hearts sing? All our works are love letters to our grandchildren. You can do courses now at TAFE and online, pick up a subject you loved at school, e.g. a language, or a science subject? Check out the MasterClass I did for Study Australia <https://youtu.be/6m6N-IU49WY>, and also the rest of the series. Put instagram down.

**PARADOX  
OF CHOICE**





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When we think about the things that women have had to do to even have a voice, and to get represented it makes me so angry that we are still even having to have these conversations. Actions speak louder than words, so what are YOU going to do about it? How can we accelerate and evolve the change? My main call to any leaders reading this is to have an independent assessment of salaries and compensation, e.g. bonuses. Women are still underpaid compared to their male counterparts. Women are facing poverty in ways men aren't. Women have had to dip into their Super to escape family violence. Something in Australia needs to change, and it starts with you. Please do keep in touch and free free to reach out if you have any questions or thoughts about the content here and what we discussed during the roadshow. Be well, and all the best, Catherine.

**DEEDS  
NOT WORDS**



# 2022 INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

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To enquire about Catherine speaking at an event,  
please contact:



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