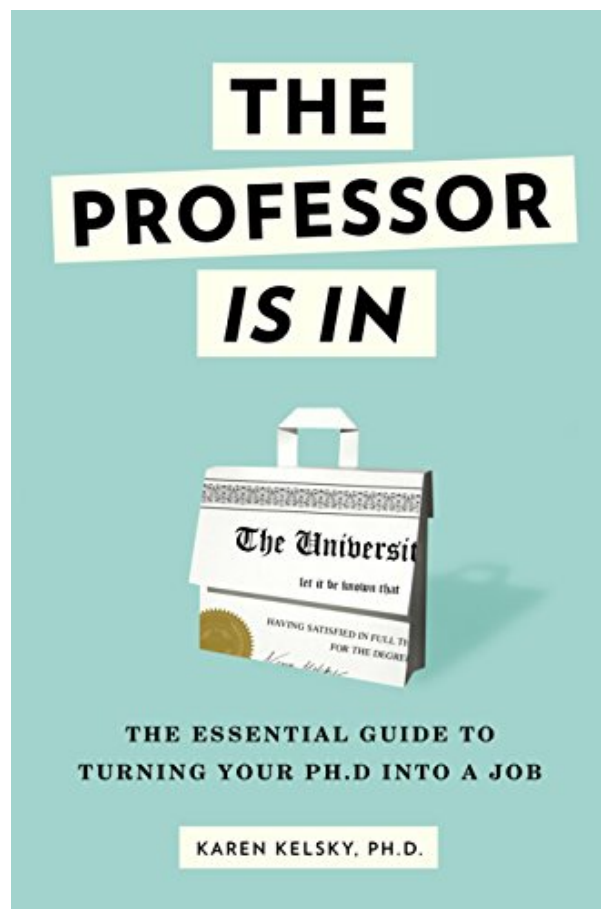


THE PROFESSOR IS IN: THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO TURNING YOUR PH.D. INTO A JOB BY KAREN KELSKY



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KAREN KELSKY, PH.D.

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Review

"For those students---and anyone who cares about them---his cogent, illuminating book will be indispensable." ---Kirkus

About the Author

Karen Kelsky, PhD, is the creator of the popular and widely respected advice site **The Professor Is In**. A former tenured professor and department head, she has taught at the University of Oregon and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

AudioFile Earphones Award winner Elizabeth Wiley is a seasoned actor, dialect coach, theater professor, and dedicated narrator. She brings over twenty-five years of award-winning acting and voice experience to the studio to create memorable, compelling storytelling.

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THE PROFESSOR IS IN: THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO TURNING YOUR PH.D. INTO A JOB BY KAREN KELSKY PDF

The definitive career guide for grad students, adjuncts, post-docs and anyone else eager to get tenure or turn their Ph.D. into their ideal job

Each year tens of thousands of students will, after years of hard work and enormous amounts of money, earn their Ph.D. And each year only a small percentage of them will land a job that justifies and rewards their investment. For every comfortably tenured professor or well-paid former academic, there are countless underpaid and overworked adjuncts, and many more who simply give up in frustration.

Those who do make it share an important asset that separates them from the pack: they have a plan. They understand exactly what they need to do to set themselves up for success. They know what really moves the needle in academic job searches, how to avoid the all-too-common mistakes that sink so many of their peers, and how to decide when to point their Ph.D. toward other, non-academic options.

Karen Kelsky has made it her mission to help readers join the select few who get the most out of their Ph.D. As a former tenured professor and department head who oversaw numerous academic job searches, she knows from experience exactly what gets an academic applicant a job. And as the creator of the popular and widely respected advice site The Professor is In, she has helped countless Ph.D.'s turn themselves into stronger applicants and land their dream careers.

Now, for the first time ever, Karen has poured all her best advice into a single handy guide that addresses the most important issues facing any Ph.D., including:

- When, where, and what to publish
- Writing a foolproof grant application
- Cultivating references and crafting the perfect CV
- Acing the job talk and campus interview
- Avoiding the adjunct trap
- Making the leap to nonacademic work, when the time is right

The Professor Is In addresses all of these issues, and many more.

From the Trade Paperback edition.

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Most helpful customer reviews

31 of 33 people found the following review helpful.

Not as helpful as I would have liked

By Michelle

This book is a helpful resource, but not as helpful as I would have liked. I read many related parts of the blog, where Kelsky spends a significant amount of time telling prospective job applicants what NOT to do with their application documents, giving clear examples, that, sadly, do look like a lot of my own first drafts. What I was hoping for in the book was that there would be additional, equally specific information about what TO DO. Here the advice in this book is much more generic and less helpful. Sentences like "remember to always stay on message," while probably good advice, are not that useful. I can KNOW this and still not know HOW to do this. It is helpful to see others' mistakes so as not to repeat them, but some positive examples would be immensely helpful, or better yet, providing a bad example followed by how to edit/modify, and the resulting positive example. This is, after all, the process most of us go through when we write. The first draft isn't very good, we make modifications, and eventually produce something we're happy (or at least satisfied) about. I appreciate Kelsky tackling this topic, but was disappointed with the lack of concrete advice for writing good job documents.

13 of 13 people found the following review helpful.

Indispensable for those considering graduate school, those in it, and those who are considering leaving it (plus their mentors)

By D. Picard

I'm an avid reader of Kelsky's blog and purchased this book fairly certain of what it would contain. My high expectations were certainly met. While the book did not contain much information that was "startlingly new," its breadth and depth earn the book its place on my bookshelf. I'm certainly happy to have all of this information in one place so that I can share chapters with colleagues, friends, and students.

Kelsky has written a book designed to empower PhD students who are facing a bleak academic job market. She doesn't guarantee that her readers will earn a "coveted" tenure-track position by reading the book - nor is that her goal. Her mission is to help PhDs get a job, be it academia, alt-ac, or non-ac; and she does this by detailing what job candidates need to know about academia. The readers of her blog or columns in *The Chronicle* will not be surprised by this goal, nor should they be. Kelsky is an avowed advocate for PhD students and recent graduates who are struggling on the market because they need more guidance.

The book is written for all academic fields, but Kelsky also calls attention to some of the dire conditions in the humanities, and how that may affect PhD candidates and job seekers.

The bulk of the book focuses on preparing for jobs in academia, but it also provides information on leaving

academia and finding other ways to utilize the PhD. The book is broken down into ten parts covering everything those looking at the tenure-track need to know, including types of academic institutions (R1/SLACs/R2/etc.), job market documents, offer negotiations, grant writing, and how/when/why to leave academia altogether.

For those who are familiar with her blog, here are the biggest bonuses of her book:

- * More real-life examples from emails, letters, and in person conversations Kelsky has had over the years.
- * Chapter 4 details how the academic search process works from the university/department side - a land few grads may know as intimately as Kelsky explains.
- * Figuring out a 5-year plan and determining what issues of the minutiae of graduate school life will distract you from the goal of making your CV the strongest it can be for the job market.
- * Creating your “campaign platform” for the job market
- * More specific information on crafting your elevator speech
- * Key questions to prepare for in an academic interview (and how to tackle Skype and on-campus interviews)
- * Answers the question of what to do when you don’t feel like you belong in academia, for myriad reasons including elitism, racism, gender, sexuality, imposter syndrome, and more

Most importantly for me, having all of this information in one compact book means I have a go-to present for my favorite students who giddily tell me that they want to become a professor. I don't want to discourage them like my undergraduate advisers tried to do to me, but I do want them to be well-informed about what the graduate-school-to-tenure-track life is like. I love having genuinely curious and bright students be interested in becoming a professional in my field (history), but I don't think it necessary that they see "professor" as the only meaningful way to study history or be a historian. I'm glad Kelsky has deepened my understanding of the nuances involved in mentoring students and being a student myself, as well as giving practical and thoughtful advice.

On another note, the book also provides me with a good stocking-stuffer for my non-academic parents who still wonder why I'm “in school” after so many years, and why my work schedule doesn't follow the 9-5 they're used to. I may even send a copy to my adviser.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful.

Must read! Assumes reader is a current grad student.

By Dust

I used to read Kelsky's blog regularly while on the job market last year and preordered this book (it didn't arrive on the day it released, as was promised). I used it to re-do my application materials this year and have already sent out a few applications.

Here are some thoughts:

Kelsky is the advisor you didn't have. She starts by situating the job market process within the current mess academia is facing and exposing us to the underbelly of the beast we all came to be a part of. This, to me, is the best part of the book. I received a PhD in May 2015 and am part of a tier 1 public university's contingent faculty. How I wish I were aware of the looming PhD bubble that is held in place by dedicated, overqualified, and in most cases, unorganized adjuncts.

Kelsky helps with pruning application materials and editing out superfluous language.

Some parts of the book seem more useful than others. For example, the section on the teaching statement

doesn't really add much to what is out there. Kelsky tells us what not to do but gives us no directions on what to do to get this genre right.

Most of this material is already on the blog but this is money well-spent as far as I'm concerned. I find myself getting distracted by tangential posts when I go to the blog for the same advice. Some of the posts seem to be updated in the book version.

I'd recommend that every graduate student or pre-graduate student lay their hands on this, that advisors hand out and discuss this book with their advisees well before they face the job market.

Something I really didn't like about the book - Kelsky's assumption that the reader is a grad student currently finishing their dissertation, which doesn't make a lot of sense considering the first couple of chapters on the situation of the market. This assumption was extremely unhelpful for me as I just received my PhD and, like many others, didn't get a Tenure Track job in the first round of applying. I have a PhD now, publications, and a contract position. What strategies do I adopt? What changes do I need to make to my application that may be different from what a grad student might do? For instance, how should I write my research plan? Do I still need to write a paragraph on my dissertation or might I use that space for something else? Do my recommendation letter writers have to be my dissertation advisors, now that they're not my advisors? So many questions that are unanswered.

I haven't had the chance to practice the tips on interviewing. Will post an update in Mar/April next year after interviewing and, hopefully, getting a job!

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