

Some memories of the sixties

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I came to the Berkeley Psych Department in January 1964, at age 24, with a fresh PhD from Harvard. The Department had recruited me to establish a new discipline, psycholinguistics. I came from a Russian Jewish immigrant world of strong women. My mother had an M.A. in English literature. The women of her parents' generation were all literate in Yiddish, Russian, English, and often Modern Hebrew. They and their daughters were professionals of one sort or another, and/or active in social and political organizations. I remember, as a small child, musing that although half of the population were women there were hardly any women in government or science that I knew of.

I inherited an office in Tolman Hall from Catherine Landreth, who had just retired. I came to know important women researchers in the Institute of Human Development: Jeanne Block, Marjorie Honzik, Diana Baumrind, Dorothy Eichorn. It soon became evident to me that none of these women—of the same generation as my teachers—had a ladder faculty position. There was, in fact, already a psycholinguist on the Berkeley faculty: Susan Ervin-Tripp, with whom I had published an invited paper on psycholinguistics in the *Annual Review of Psychology*. She was in the Department of Speech (later Rhetoric). We taught seminars together, did research together, shared graduate students—but I always had to be the dissertation chair, though she was a generation older than I and well-known internationally. My first doctoral student was a woman, Jacqueline Strunk Sachs, who went on to a faculty position at the University of Connecticut. And in my first decade I had a number of women doctoral students who became productive faculty members at leading universities.

The lack of women faculty in our department disturbed me. I remember a lunch discussion at the Institute of Human Learning in which I asked my senior colleagues something like: "About half of our grad students are women, what are we training them for when we don't have any women faculty?" I was cut off by comments that I've never forgotten. To paraphrase: Oh yes, they're very talented. But, you know, they'll want to have children and then they'll drop out of the profession. What they learn from us will make them good mothers. As for our own faculty, we have to invest in junior faculty who will achieve tenure and remain. Maybe some of our women grads can go to state colleges or community colleges, where they won't have our sort of research demands.

Finally the glass ceiling cracked. In the search for a social psychologist, there was no doubt that Eleanor Rosch and Christina Maslach were the superior candidates and the department argued for two positions within the same academic year. But Sue Ervin-Tripp was still in Rhetoric, without grad students or courses in psychology. So, along with a few other junior faculty members (Jonas Langer, Ed Samson, maybe a few others), we went to the Dean of the College (there was a single dean then) and presented a case for moving Sue to the Dept of Psychology, where she obviously belonged. The Dean agreed and negotiated with Rhetoric. They agreed to "lend" Sue's FTE to Psych for the duration of her career (but, decades later, no one remember

to move that slot back to its place of origin). By the way, Sue had three children and continued to do research and publish until her death.