

## **Early Career**

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In 1970, I was a graduate student at Stanford University, writing my dissertation and looking for a job. A local news article caught my attention, about the low number of women professors (only about 3%) at the University of California, Berkeley. The article had two tables: one listed departments that had never hired women to be faculty (the zero club), and the other listed departments that had hired women, but arranged in order of how long it had been since the last hire. The department at the top of the latter list was Psychology – it had been 47 years since their last hire of a female professor, Jean Macfarlane, in 1923. I did not know it then, but someone who had prepared that report was Susan Ervin-Tripp, a subsequent colleague.

The report had a major disconnect – many women from Berkeley had published research articles (which I had studied as a student), so why had they not been faculty? Then I became more interested in Berkeley because they wanted to hire someone in social psychology (my area of specialization) and they were “flexible with regard to sex.” Awkward phrasing, but it meant that they would consider female applicants. But would they really? The uncertainty led one person to call me “Chris” throughout the recommendation letter, avoiding pronouns, presumably to get my application taken seriously.

I gave a job talk, and eventually the Department hired two women, both Eleanor Heider Rosch and me. But when I entered Tolman Hall through the back entrance into IHD, and saw the names listed there – where the famous women I had studied were all “research associates” – then I realized they had never been faculty but had had this lesser position instead.

When I started my job, most faculty colleagues were welcoming (but a few would make remarks like, “Why are you gossiping in the hall?”). More interesting reactions came from students. Some would come to my office, and when they did not see a male professor there, they would ask the female “secretary” to let him know that they had shown up to see him. Others (usually women) would stop by to shake my hand, and say, “I’m so glad you are here!” My first large lecture course had three TAs who were all male and older than me, and who did not take kindly to my being “the professor.” At the end of the course, one male student told me that he would not give me a positive teaching evaluation, and when I asked why, he had no answer until he finally spluttered, “I could be dating you!” (an interesting comment on gender and power dynamics!).

Susan Ervin-Tripp transferred from Rhetoric to Psychology a few years later, when there was a lot of interest in issues of sex and gender. We co-taught a seminar on this topic several times and became part of a group that developed Women’s Studies. Later, I developed a lower-division lecture course, “Psychology of Gender,” and taught that for many years.

After I received tenure, I began to do more university service, and a lot of this involved gender issues. I chaired the Academic Senate committee on the Status of Women and Ethnic Minorities (SWEM) and worked with a colleague to review the patterns of faculty membership

on the most powerful Senate committee (that oversees academic personnel decisions but is called the "Budget Committee"). Not only did we find that female and minority faculty were rarely appointed to serve on this committee, but that some departments always had a committee seat, while other departments had none. Our report led to changing the process of Budget Committee membership. Then I became the Faculty Assistant on the Status of Women, which was a half-time position that reported to the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost (EVCP), who was Carol Christ at that time. My job was twofold -- to review every personnel case involving a female faculty member, to ensure that the process was being done fairly, and to meet confidentially with any women faculty who were concerned about how they were being treated. If I discovered any problems, I would bring them to EVCP Christ's attention, and she would follow up with some appropriate action.

I served twice as Chair of the Academic Senate, and then retired. But I have returned virtually to the 1970s, to start a new project. That report about the dwindling presence of women faculty had compelled the university to open up its hiring practices -- and so a "new wave" of women were hired as professors during the 1970s. I have been conducting interviews with many of these women -- their stories are fascinating, and it is wonderful to see how far we have come in the past half century!