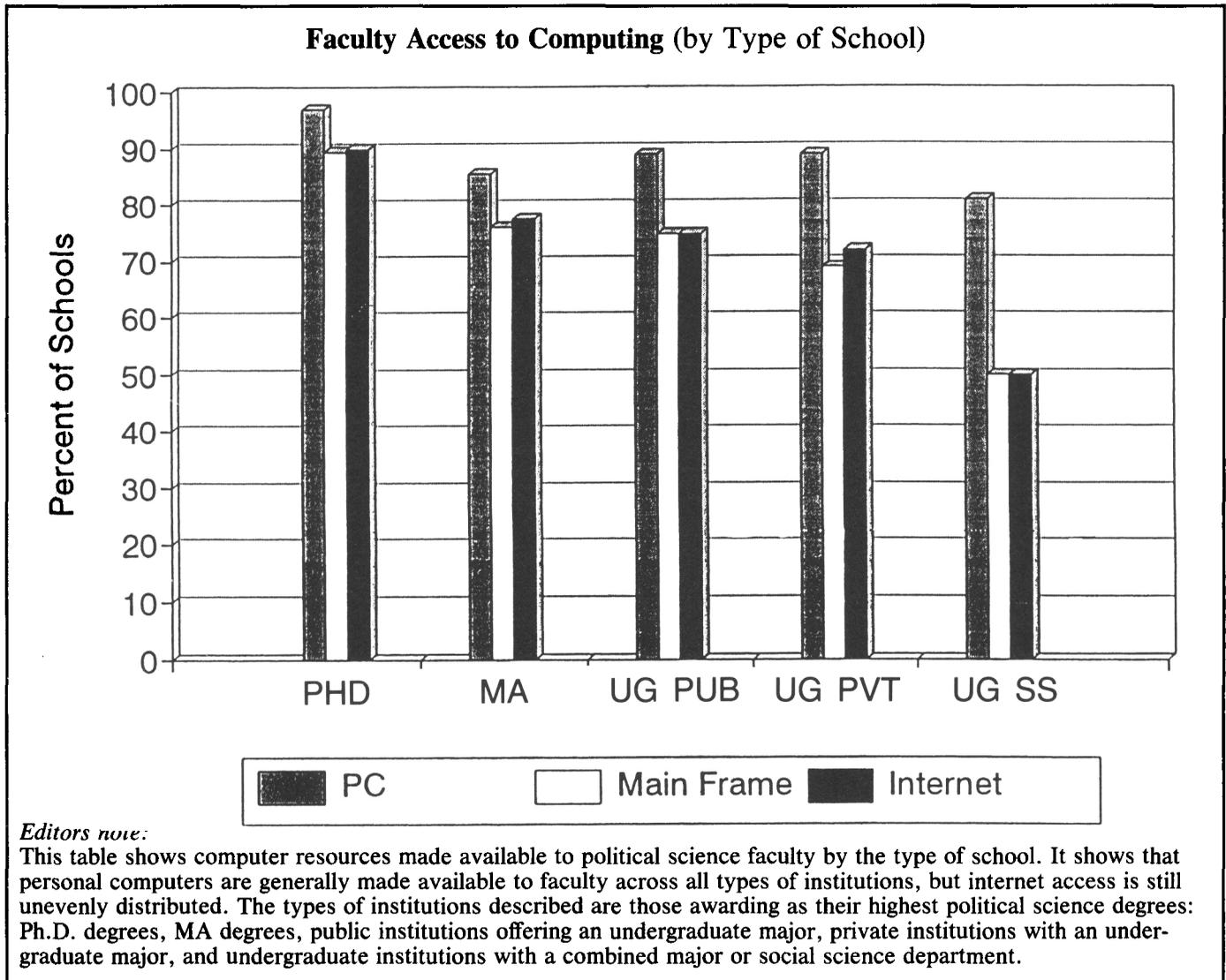


# The Profession

## AT A GLANCE



## Annual Meeting Program Preview: Gender and Generations: Let's Talk<sup>1</sup>

Cynthia Duquette, Wayne State University

More and more often there is embarrassment all around when the wish to hear a story is expressed. It is as if something that seemed inalienable to us, the securest among our possessions, were taken from us: the ability to exchange experiences.

(Benjamin 1968)

This symposium is part of a collective attempt to make room for personal experience within the discourses of political science, feminism/s, and feminists. Storytelling is its method. The authors write here as a prologue to participating

in a roundtable sponsored by the Women's Caucus for Political Science at the 1996 APSA meetings in San Francisco. Also participating in the roundtable will be Jeane Kirkpatrick, former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations.

The roundtable theme elicits our personal experiences, ranging across diverse professional, political, and historical arenas. Our goal is to recognize experience as a ground for dialogue based on commonalities that are ordinarily obscured by the polarities of ideology.

The idea for this roundtable was sparked when, in the course of my membership and participation in the national and regional women's caucuses of the APSA, I found myself discouraged, emboldened, saddened, or cheered by the stories women would share privately and publicly, at caucus meetings and through the newsletters. I was touched by the personal, forthright quality of their storytelling in these settings. More than that, though, I realized that women of my own and younger generations often take for granted the access our own voices have found subsequent to the efforts of others (past and present). It is easily lost on the beneficiaries of such gains that they come at a high personal price. I thought that if more stories were told, feminists (and those who refuse the name) might have a harder time labeling, and worse yet, dismissing, each other's positions. My goal was not

explicitly to change anyone's mind, but simply to foster dialogues. Individual women, and women collectively, would have everything to gain.

Each woman asked to participate in the roundtable was felt in some way to be representative of a generation. Yet while Jo Freeman and Virginia Sapiro both completed their degrees in the 1970s, their careers took widely divergent paths. Which woman can lay claim to be representative? Had I followed a traditional timeline to my Ph.D., I would have received it at approximately the same time as Peregrine Schwartz-Shea and nearly 10 years before Cathy Cohen. Yet, I am just now beginning to write my dissertation. To which generation do I belong? To use these concepts as guidelines for framing the relationship of our own experiences to those of others is useful; yet, to try to fit them to real life in a thoughtful manner, we are forced to realize how flexible we must remain in their application and *any* attempt to broadly categorize women's experience. Again, it is stories that reinforce our awareness of this personal and political imperative.

For many women, the collective effort is often added to the top of personal agendas, responsibilities, and deadlines. Each of the women whose story appears here has graciously squeezed out a few moments from tightly packed schedules to give readers of *PS* a taste of the stories she has to tell.

To help set the stage for the roundtable interchange, each writer was asked to address three questions about her graduate years and the early stages of her professional career. These questions (What hazards faced you as a graduate student? What were some of the challenges of your first job search? What has been the biggest boost to you professionally?), while posed identically to each author, have clearly produced unique responses that I am sure will only raise new questions to be addressed in San Francisco. All parties are encouraged to reflect on these stories, together with their own experiences, and come to the APSA meetings ready to talk more.

So, before you move ahead to scan *PS* quickly for the latest news, sit back. Relax. We have a story or two to tell you.

## We've Come A Long Way . . . ?

### Jo Freeman

You may not believe it, but we've come a long way in 20 years. To appreciate how much things have changed for women, you need to know what they were like when women were oddballs in the profession and feminism was a dirty word.

Let me begin by describing myself in 1975. I was two years past the Ph.D., which I had received from the University of Chicago after five years on a full National Institutes for Mental Health fellowship. My mentor, Theodore J. Lowi, wrote glowing letters of recommendation. In April, I published two books: *Women: A Feminist Perspective* quickly became the

leading introductory textbook in women's studies, and my dissertation, *The Politics of Women's Liberation: A Case Study of an Emerging Social Movement and Its Relation to the Policy Process*, won a \$1,000 APSA prize that year for The Best Scholarly Work on Women and Politics. I published many articles and guest lectured at 42 schools. In May I was a finalist in the White House Fellows competition.

Does this read like a good launching pad for the academic fast track? It wasn't. My last academic job offer was in 1974.

After seeing my books, the only

tenured faculty member in the tiny department of the small state college where I taught said that my "commitment to scholarship interfered with [my] ability to perform effectively as a faculty member." In 1977, faculty reviewers recommending my dismissal admitted that my "works have been well received and widely reprinted," but this was not as important as my lack of "outstandingly active" participation in campus governance.

Before I gave up and went to law school in 1979, I applied for every posted job in American politics and many other positions as well. I had four interviews in 1976 and one

each for the next three years, none of which resulted in a job offer. I spent two years in Washington on fellowships, first from the Brookings Institution and then as an APSA Congressional Fellow. But I was not a hot item on the job market.

No one ever told me that writing about women was "academically incorrect," but I was told, "We don't really need anyone to teach Women and Politics." I never taught that course; I taught American government and politics. I wrote about women and politics. Departments hiring junior faculty said I was overqualified, and those looking for more senior personnel said I didn't have enough experience. As a radical feminist and a

mainstream political scientist, I heard from the radicals that I was too mainstream and from the mainstream that I was too radical.

Why was it so hard for those of us who wrote about women before it was fashionable? In part, we were in the wrong place at the wrong time. Those on the cutting edge of social change always get shot at and sometimes get shot down. Furthermore, political scientists were uneasy with women as colleagues and did not think the study of women was a legitimate field in the discipline.

It was the mid-1980s before any woman whose primary field of study was women got tenure in a department of political science. Prior to that, some women political

scientists got tenure by writing on more legitimate topics before turning their scholarly attention to women; some got tenure despite a few publications on women among more traditional titles; some held joint appointments in women's studies; others simply made their permanent homes in other departments.

I wasn't smart enough or lucky enough to do any of these things. Nonetheless, I remain committed to scholarship despite my exile from the places in which it is normally pursued, and I remain a political scientist despite the fact that I practice law, journalism, editing, and many other things to earn my bread. I may not teach, but I do write, and I am read.

## It Was Twenty Years Ago Today

Virginia Sapiro, *University of Wisconsin–Madison*

Twenty years is supposed to be a generation's worth of time. I can't say it feels that long ago. Exactly 20 years ago I was finishing my dissertation at the University of Michigan and was afflicted with the usual jitters about finding a position. I had raced through my degree quickly (in four years), partly because of the gas lines and recession of 1974, and partly because of warnings that I had to be twice as good to get as far as my male colleagues. I had plenty of hints that that might be true, especially given the tiny proportion of women in the profession. Indeed, there was already at that time a backlash against feminism. By 1974 I had already been told by male colleagues I would do well only "because of affirmative action."

I made things worse for myself by ignoring the counsel of many friends and choosing women and politics as my dissertation topic. In fact, at a time when women were advised not to do any women's

studies until after tenure (even though I held a joint appointment in a Women's Studies Program), I did nothing but gender politics work before tenure. I would not have believed in the spring of 1976 that 20 years later I would be completing my term as chair of a "top ten" political science department and would have a distinguished professorship in recognition of scholarship that is marked by feminism and interdisciplinarity.

What were the biggest boosts? Getting fine graduate training with a supportive mentor and having a great set of graduate colleagues, especially within the Women's Caucus in my then-department. Getting the experience to teach one of the early courses on women and politics while a graduate student, even if I had to make it up as I went along. Enjoying the supportive environment of the APSA Women's Caucus. Finding a joint appointment in both a great Department of Political Science and Wom-

en's Studies Program, especially the intellectually diverse and tolerant climate of the Political Science Department. My own bloody-minded determination. Some luck. Some skill. And some things in my personal life I don't care to write about in *PS*.

In the roundtable I will reflect on my experience as part of a distinctive generation—the "late sixties" students, the youthful members of the revived women's movement, and the first generation of professional women's studies scholars. I will comment not just on my observation of changes in the mainstream of the profession, but on the relationship among the generations of women and feminist scholars, the special negotiations necessary for those of us who do gender politics and research, especially when formally associated with women's studies programs, and on the paths we have yet to break as we move through the ranks and stages of our careers.

## Shifting Feminist Perspectives

Peregrine Schwartz-Shea, *University of Utah*

I grew up in a small town in Montana, raised by parents who had fled East Coast society for the vastness of the West. In the early 1970s, I keenly felt the oppressively sexist norms of a small-town high school. Luckily, competitive skiing gave me a sense of competence, a sense of self. One of my clearest memories is of a group of boys and girls asking me to join the Pep Club. I responded coldly: "I do sports. I don't cheer on the sidelines for the boys." I didn't call myself a feminist, but certainly this was feminist action.

When I went out of state to college I felt liberated, free to invent myself as an intellectual, as a woman, without the confining expectations of my hometown. Though the memory of high school remained, I attributed those experiences to backwardness, and though there may have been obstacles in college based on my sex, I saw only opportunity. In graduate school, being female still seemed to make no difference—though I was exceedingly careful in my personal

life, marrying a man who proved willing to move to two states for my career and postponing child-bearing until I was twenty-nine. I was the classic post-feminist (I'm not a feminist but . . .): focusing on my narrow interests, intent on surviving in academia.

During the early years of my career, however, two key experiences planted the seed that developed into feminist consciousness. During 1982–84, I taught at a small college in upstate New York, near the Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice, about which I eventually published an article. Exposure to the Encampment required me to read some feminist literature. And, just prior to moving to Utah, I attended a rational choice conference at Carnegie-Mellon University where I was the only woman. The strangeness of that experience nagged at me: I became mute during the formal proceedings and enraged by the arrogance and ignorance of a couple of the men, one of whom said to me, "Historically women have done nothing."

As I read the feminist scholarship I began to understand parts of my life that had been a mystery to me, including my high school experiences and the Carnegie-Mellon conference. And, gradually, I realized how lucky I had been: escaping Montana, avoiding a bad marriage, planning my two pregnancies. Many capable young women may not be quite so lucky. Just recently, a student told me of her appalling experiences as a token girl on a high school debate team—in 1990.

Thanks to feminist scholarship I look at my life, my teaching, and my research much differently than I did in 1983 when I received my degree. I have come full circle—from an angry teen battling small-town sexism, to a young woman who believed gender no obstacle, to a tenured associate professor who realizes how many more battles must be fought before her daughter and her daughter's generation obtain the full political and social power they deserve.

## The Struggle Continues

Cathy Cohen, *Yale University*

As I prepared for graduate school at the University of Michigan, former professors and soon-to-be graduate colleagues called to ready me for the difficulties ahead. Despite the thoroughness of these conversations, what I found to be the most persistent obstacle largely went unmentioned—the contradiction between a professed commitment to diversification and the absence of institutional structures to support research in nontraditional areas such as black politics or women and politics.

In the late 1980s, general agreement seemed to exist that research in areas such as black politics and/or women and politics was legitimate. However, very few faculty members specialized in such areas. The lack of institutional structures left it incumbent upon those of us interested in the politics of oppressed communities to build an infrastructure that could support and validate our work. While many of my colleagues were researching their next paper in the library, some of us spent enormous time

and energy recruiting more graduate students of color (in search of that critical mass), pushing our department to hire faculty who could offer courses, for instance, in the areas of black politics or feminist politics, and identifying resources that might support research projects in this area.

Complementing this effort was the twin, and possibly more important, project of legitimizing such study to others. I, as well as many of my friends, can recount the endless search for faculty, colleagues,

and outside sources to validate the importance of our ideas, the thoroughness of our knowledge, and the contribution of our work to the communities from which we came and cared about. It was not just extreme encounters with racism, or sexism, or homophobia that were most debilitating to my confidence, but also the unquestioned assumptions about who and what was worth studying that wore most consistently on my determination. I remember one senior professor stating in a statistics seminar, “If you can’t count it, it isn’t science.” The class sat there in apparent agreement, while I raised my hand to confront once again a professor’s narrow understanding of political science. My guess is that my professor never contemplated the fact that not all the relevant parties were represented in those “objective” databases he believed to be the foundation of good political science. Nowhere in his consciousness was there an understanding of what it meant to live in marginal communities and therefore what it meant to teach students how to study these communities.

This contradiction between superficial acceptance and the absence of real structures to facilitate and *respect* such work is indicative of political science in the 1990s, and it follows me and many of my junior friends to our first positions

as assistant professors. However, despite my frustration with the amount of time needed to develop programs, write grants, recruit women and graduate students of color, and pressure departments to hire in areas like race and politics, feminist theory, or lesbian and gay politics, I recognize this as an essential part of my own scholarly production. I never would have made it through graduate school without the community of those of us struggling to make central the study of marginal communities. Through this community of scholars comes some of the most interesting, innovative, and important work to cross the boundaries of political science, affirming my research interests, but also the experiences of people most often discounted and excluded in political science.

### Note

1. Special thanks are given to Jane Mansbridge, President, and Judith Stiehm, President-Elect of the Women’s Caucus for Political Science, for their strong support and encouragement of the roundtable project that surrounds this article.

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Leskov.” In *Illuminations*, ed Hannah Arendt, Trans. Harry Zohn, New York: Schocken Books.

### About the Authors

**Cynthia Duquette** studies political theory and cultural studies in the Ph.D. program of the Department of Political Science at Wayne State University. She will be chairing the roundtable “Gender and Generations: Let’s Talk” at the 1996 APSA Meetings in San Francisco.

**Jo Freeman** received the 1993 Mary Lepper Award from the Women’s Caucus, given in recognition of effective actions towards women’s equality. Her anthology, *Women: A Feminist Perspective*, is currently in its fifth edition.

**Virginia Sapiro** holds the Sophonisba P. Breckinridge Chair in the Department of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her book, *A Vindication of Political Virtue: The Political Theory of Mary Wollstonecraft*, won the 1993 Victoria Schuck Award for the best book on women and politics.

**Peregrine Schwartz-Shea** is associate professor at the University of Utah. She teaches in the areas of American politics and public administration, and her research examines the application of rational choice theory to organizations, individual-group relations, and gender inequality.

**Cathy Cohen** is an assistant professor in African and African-American Studies at Yale University. She is currently working on two books: an edited volume on women and politics, and a book on black communities’ response to AIDS.

## The Role of the Historical Advisory Committee, 1990–94, in the Declassification of U.S. Foreign Policy Documents and Related Issues\*

Betty Glad and Jonathan Smith, *University of South Carolina, Columbia*

The *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS)* volume, *Iran, 1952–54*, published in 1990, contained no mention of U.S. involvement in the overthrow of Iranian Prime Minister Mosadegh, and the subsequent installation of the Shah as Head of State. This significant gap occurred despite the fact that President Dwight D. Eisen-

hower had bragged of U.S. involvement in that episode in *Mandate for Change* (1963), and Kermit Roosevelt, the CIA’s head officer in Iran during the episode, even detailed his exploits in his book, *Countercoup* (1979). As Bruce Kuniholm (1990, 1) noted in his review of this volume for the American Historical Association,

these “omissions combine to make the Iran volume in the period of 1952–54 a *fraud* (italics added).”

Earlier, on February 14, 1990, Warren Cohen, the Chairman of the State Department’s Advisory Committee on Historical Diplomatic Documentation (HAC, hereafter), had resigned as a protest measure. In his letter to Secretary